

Proclamation 7581 of July 29, 2002**The Bicentennial of the United States Patent and Trademark Office, 2002**

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

For two centuries, the United States Patent Office has played a vital role in the scientific, technical, and economic development of our Nation by granting inventors patents for their inventions. As Abraham Lincoln once stated, patents “added the fuel of interest to the fire of genius.”

The first Patent Act of the United States was signed into law by President George Washington on April 10, 1790. Under this legislation, patent applicants petitioned the Secretary of State for the grant of a patent. The Secretary, in consultation with the Secretary of War and the Attorney General, determined whether the invention or discovery was “sufficiently useful and important.” At that time, both the President and the Secretary of State signed patents.

As the number of applications for patents grew, it became necessary to develop an organized review process to handle the increasing volume. In 1793, the law was changed to eliminate examinations, and the job of receiving and granting patents was given to clerks in the Department of State.

On June 1, 1802, the Secretary of State appointed Dr. William Thornton to serve as the first clerk at the Department of State. In that position, Dr. Thornton was solely responsible for receiving and recording patent applications and issuing patents, and his office effectively became the first patent office. From this simple beginning, the Patent Office has grown to become a modern institution of ideas and innovations.

For 200 years, millions of inventors have sought to protect their inventions through the American patent system. These patented inventions include Thomas Edison’s electric lamp, Alexander Graham Bell’s telegraphy, Orville and Wilbur Wright’s flying machine, John Deere’s steel plow, George Washington Carver’s use of legume oils to produce cosmetics and paint, and Edwin Land’s Polaroid camera.

In 1881, the functions of the Patent Office grew to also include the registration of trademarks. Today, the United States Patent and Trademark Office annually receives more than 326,000 patent applications and 232,000 trademark applications. Since the signing of the first Patent Act over two centuries ago, more than 6.3 million United States patents have been issued. The United States Patent and Trademark Office represents one of the largest repositories of scientific and technical knowledge in the world, and much of this information is available on the Internet. Similarly, 2 million current trademark registrations are also available online.

As the Patent Office enters its third century, we commend the important work of the United States Patent and Trademark Office that supports scientific, technological, and intellectual property developments; promotes growth in our economy; and encourages increased prosperity for our Nation.

Proc. 7582

Title 3—The President

NOW, THEREFORE, I, GEORGE W. BUSH, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim the Bicentennial of the United States Patent and Trademark Office. I call upon all Americans to recognize this anniversary with appropriate programs, ceremonies, and activities, thereby honoring the Office's many scientific, economic, and cultural contributions to our Nation and the world.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this twenty-ninth day of July, in the year of our Lord two thousand two, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-seventh.

GEORGE W. BUSH

Proclamation 7582 of August 14, 2002

National Airborne Day, 2002

*By the President of the United States of America
A Proclamation*

The history of Airborne forces began after World War I, when Brigadier General William Mitchell first conceived the idea of parachuting troops into combat. Eventually, under the leadership of Major William Lee at Fort Benning, Georgia, members of the Parachute Test Platoon pioneered methods of combat jumping in 1940. In November 1942, members of the 2nd Battalion, 503rd Parachute Infantry Regiment, conducted America's first combat jump, leaping from a C-47 aircraft behind enemy lines in North Africa. This strategy revolutionized combat and established Airborne forces as a key component of our military.

During World War II, Airborne tactics were critical to the success of important missions, including the D-Day invasion at Normandy, the Battle of the Bulge, the invasion of Southern France, and many others. In Korea and Vietnam, Airborne soldiers played a critical combat role, as well as in later conflicts and peacekeeping operations, including Panama, Grenada, Desert Storm, Haiti, Somalia, and the Balkans. Most recently, Airborne forces were vital to liberating the people of Afghanistan from the repressive and violent Taliban regime; and these soldiers continue to serve proudly around the world in the global coalition against terrorism.

The elite Airborne ranks include prestigious groups such as the 82nd Airborne Division, "America's Guard of Honor," and the "Screaming Eagles" of the 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault). Airborne forces have also been represented in the former 11th, 13th, and 17th Airborne Divisions and numerous other Airborne, glider and air assault units and regiments. Paratroopers in the Army's XVIII Airborne Corps, the 75th Infantry (Ranger) Regiment and other Special Forces units conduct swift and effective operations in defense of peace and freedom.

Airborne combat continues to be driven by the bravery and daring spirit of sky soldiers. Often called into action with little notice, these forces have earned an enduring reputation for dedication, excellence, and honor. As we