



National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior

Independence National  
Historical Park

143 S. Third Street  
Philadelphia, PA 19106

Public Affairs Office

215-597-0060 phone  
215-597-0042 fax

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## Independence National Historical Park

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For Immediate Release

For more information contact:

Jane Cowley, 215- 597- 0060

### Independence National Historical Park Commemorates First Public Reading of the Declaration of Independence

On Tuesday, July 8<sup>th</sup>, join the staff of Independence NHP to commemorate the 232<sup>nd</sup> anniversary of the first public reading of the Declaration of Independence. This free event begins at 11:45 AM with an introduction by a park ranger and will be held just behind Independence Hall. Visitors may enter through the security screening tent at 5<sup>th</sup> and Chestnut Streets or participate from beyond the security barricades on the southern half of Independence Square (entering from Walnut Street). An American Sign Language (ASL) interpreter will be interpreting the reading for our deaf visitors.

On July 4, 1776, the Second Continental Congress approved the Declaration of Independence inside the Pennsylvania State House (now Independence Hall). Four days later, on July 8<sup>th</sup>, the citizens of Philadelphia were summoned to the State House Yard by the bells of the city. At 12:00 noon, Colonel John Nixon publicly read the Declaration of Independence for the first time. Following the event, and continuing long into the night, the bells of the city rang in celebration.

Visitors are invited to experience the sights and sounds of that dramatic day in 1776. Costumed park rangers will mingle with the crowds and distribute free copies of the Declaration of Independence. Visitors are encouraged to watch and participate as park staff present a faithful recreation of this decisive moment in the American Revolution. Following the event, both uniformed and costumed park rangers will be available for interviews and photographs. In the event of inclement weather, the rain location will be Congress Hall (seating limited to 150), located just next to Independence Hall.

A unit of the National Park Service, Independence National Historical Park, was created by an Act of Congress on June 28, 1948. Independence NHP covers almost 54 acres in Historic Philadelphia, and includes Independence Hall, the Liberty Bell, Congress Hall, and other historic buildings associated with the founding of the United States. A visit to Independence NHP should start at the Independence Visitor Center, located at 6<sup>th</sup> and Market Streets. Here, visitors can pick up a park brochure, park map, and free timed tickets for guided tours of Independence Hall. For more information visit the park's website, <http://www.nps.gov/inde>.

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