



NEWS

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AMERICA’S DECISIVE REVOLUTIONARY WAR VICTORY CELEBRATED OCTOBER 18-19
Yorktown Day Parade and Commemorative Ceremony
Yorktown Victory Center & Yorktown Battlefield Military Interpretive Programs
Godspeed Tours at Riverwalk Landing

YORKTOWN, Va. – To mark the 227th anniversary of America’s decisive Revolutionary War victory at Yorktown, a variety of commemorative events, engaging hands-on interpretive programs and tours will be held October 18-19 in the historic village of Yorktown, including at the Yorktown Victory Center, the Yorktown Battlefield and Riverwalk Landing.

On October 19, 1781, following a nine-day siege, British forces in Yorktown under Lord Charles Cornwallis surrendered more than 8,000 soldiers and sailors to the combined American and French armies, commanded by General George Washington. This represented the close of the last major military action of the American Revolution, ending the fighting phase of the war and effectively granting independence to the American colonies following a six-and-a-half-year military struggle.

Yorktown Day Commemorative Events – October 19

Every year since the British surrender, patriotic observances have been held in Yorktown. The modern day observance traces its roots to 1922, when the Daughters of the American Revolution began an annual wreath-laying ceremony. Today, the Yorktown Day Association, comprised of 13 civic, patriotic and government organizations, coordinates the traditional commemorative events.

The official Yorktown Day parade steps off at 1:30 p.m. The route will follow Yorktown’s Main Street and pass in front of the Yorktown Victory Monument, erected in 1881 to commemorate the military victory a century before. Included in the parade are representatives of all branches of the U.S. military, fife and drum corps, JROTC and NJROTC units, and patriotic organizations.

The Patriotic Exercises will commence at the Yorktown Victory Monument at 2:15 p.m. with the annual pageant of flags, a colorful display that includes the American and French national colors, the flags of the 50 states and the District of Columbia, and the flags of the 13 Yorktown Day Association members. During the Patriotic Exercises, the keynote address and greetings from France, a key American ally in the defeat of the British in 1781, will be delivered by His Excellency Pierre Vimont, Ambassador of France to the United States, who also will acknowledge the 225th anniversary of the Treaty of Paris that formally ended the Revolution. At the conclusion of the Patriotic Exercises, a wreath will be placed on the Yorktown Victory Monument in memory of those who fought and died during the siege of Yorktown in 1781.

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YORKTOWN VICTORY WEEKEND – 2

At 3:30 p.m., the 3rd United States Infantry (The Old Guard) will present a demonstration of 18th-century tactical skills on the Yorktown Battlefield near the National Park Service Visitor Center. The demonstration will include the Commander-in-Chief's Guard and the Old Guard Fife & Drum Corps. The Old Guard is the oldest infantry unit in the active Army, predating the Constitution of the United States to 1784. As a unit of the Military District of Washington, the 3rd U.S. Infantry is charged with the unique mission of serving as the U.S. Army's official ceremonial unit, performing tactical infantry missions and providing security for the nation's capital.

Revolutionary War Interpretive Programs at the Yorktown Victory Center

The Yorktown Victory Center, a museum of the American Revolution, will feature military demonstrations, including musket, artillery and militia drills, and hands-on interpretive programs in re-creations of a Continental Army encampment and 1780s farm during its "**Yorktown Victory Celebration**," Saturday and Sunday, October 18 and 19, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Visitors to the re-created Continental Army encampment will be invited to experience Revolutionary War military life firsthand by enrolling in "A School for the Soldier," offering opportunities to drill with wooden muskets and apply tactical skills in mock combat, as well as learn about soldiers' provisions and sleeping quarters. The program also explores methods of troop communication, espionage during the war and the importance of earthworks during a siege. "School" sessions will be offered at 10:35 a.m. and 12:35, 1:35 and 4:05 p.m. on both days. Visitor participatory artillery demonstrations will be held at 11:05 a.m. and 3:05 p.m. each day. Revolutionary War re-enactors also will be on hand to demonstrate military life and tactics.

Visitors to the re-created 1780s farm can observe open-hearth cooking at 11:35 a.m., learn about the role of tobacco in the colony at 1:05 p.m., and take part in 18th-century games at 4:05 p.m. At 2:05 p.m. each day, "The Price of Liberty" provides insight to the sacrifices and hardships endured by Americans who sought independence, including military and political leaders, soldiers, farmers, merchants, women and slaves. During a militia drill at 3:35 p.m. each day, visitors can experience the colonists' fight for freedom by training as a member of the citizen militia.

Thematic gallery exhibits provide eyewitness accounts of the American Revolution, describe the convergence of forces on Yorktown in 1781 for the climactic military engagement of the revolution, and examine the development of the Constitution and Bill of Rights and how people from many different cultures shaped a new society.

Participation in event activities is included with **Yorktown Victory Center** admission of \$9.25 for adults and \$5.00 for ages 6 through 12. Children under six are admitted free. The Yorktown Victory Center, open 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. daily year-round, is located on Route 1020 near the Colonial Parkway in Yorktown. "Yorktown Victory Celebration" is funded in part by the York County Arts Commission. For more information, call (888) 593-4682 toll-free or (757) 253-4838, or visit www.historyisfun.org.

Anniversary Programs at Yorktown Battlefield

The **Yorktown Battlefield**, scene of the surrender concluding the climactic battle of the American Revolution, will offer a variety of special programs and tours to mark the 227th anniversary of the British surrender at Yorktown. These special activities will highlight the 1781 siege of Yorktown and provide a look at the victory by General George Washington that secured American independence.

YORKTOWN VICTORY WEEKEND – 3

Visitors can join a variety of interpretive programs to learn more about the Siege of Yorktown and the British surrender throughout the weekend. On Saturday, October 18, the Moore House will be open to tour from 10 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., on the 227th anniversary of the negotiations that took place there and ended the siege. Also on Saturday, a guided walking tour to Redoubts 9 & 10 at 10:15 a.m. will discuss the importance of the British fortifications and the pivotal hand-to-hand assaults against these positions that helped secure the Allied victory at Yorktown. At 7 p.m., an evening program at the Visitor Center will provide insight to the events that took place on the battlefield after the sun went down and feature the firing of an 18-pounder siege cannon.

Military demonstrations will take place at the Yorktown Battlefield Visitor Center throughout the weekend. The Royal Marines, called the most trusted troops in the British army, will camp at the Visitor Center on Saturday and Sunday, showing how the troops lived in the field. They will provide musket-firing demonstrations at 11:15 a.m., 1:15 p.m. and 3:15 p.m. on Saturday and 11:45 a.m. and 12:45 p.m. on Sunday. Also on Sunday, Lamb's Artillery, a re-creation of Colonel John Lamb's Second Continental Artillery, will demonstrate the firing of an 18-pounder siege cannon at 11:15 a.m. and 12:15 p.m.

All programs begin at the **Yorktown Battlefield Visitor Center**, located at the eastern end of the Colonial Parkway, 12 miles from Williamsburg. On Sunday, October 19, admission to Yorktown Battlefield will be free as part of the Yorktown Day celebration. Admission on Saturday, October 18, is \$10.00 per adult, under age 16 admitted free, which also includes admission to Historic Jamestowne. National Park Service passports are honored. For more information, call (757) 898-2410 or visit www.nps.gov/colo.

Godspeed Tours at Riverwalk Landing

At Riverwalk Landing, Jamestown Settlement's Godspeed, a re-creation of one of the three ships that brought America's first permanent English colonists to Virginia in 1607, will host free public tours on Saturday and Sunday, 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. The ship last visited Yorktown in October 2006 for the 225th anniversary of the siege of Yorktown.

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