



NORTHERN YORK COUNTY HISTORICAL & PRESERVATION

Society

August 2026 Newsletter

“I have never had a feeling politically that did not spring from the sentiments embodied in the Declaration of Independence” ~ Abraham Lincoln

250 years ago...

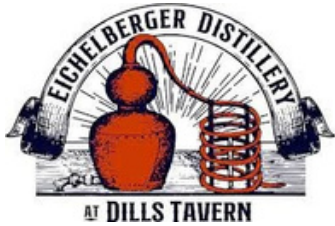
August 1776 marked a shift from the political triumph of declaring independence to the military challenge of defending it against a large British campaign in New York.

- **August 2, 1776** — Signing of the Declaration of Independence: Most delegates to the Continental Congress signed the engrossed Declaration of Independence on this date, after Congress had approved independence in July. Those not in Philadelphia signed later.
- **August 22, 1776** — British landing on Long Island: British forces under General William Howe landed at Gravesend Bay on Long Island, beginning the major phase of the New York campaign.
- **August 27, 1776** — Battle of Long Island / Battle of Brooklyn: This was the first major battle after the Declaration of Independence and the largest battle of the Revolutionary War. British forces defeated George Washington's Continental Army and pushed the Americans back to Brooklyn Heights.
- **August 29–30, 1776** — Washington's evacuation from Brooklyn to Manhattan: After the defeat on Long Island, Washington carried out a nighttime retreat across the East River to Manhattan. The evacuation preserved the Continental Army and prevented a potentially disastrous capture.

As for the populace, the **Patriots** began to grasp that independence would be difficult to defend after the defeat on Long Island. They continued to support the Continental Army, joining militias, gathering supplies, or backing Washington's retreat as a necessary move to keep the army alive. **Loyalists** saw the British campaign in New York as a hopeful sign that royal authority might be restored. Some welcomed British forces, provided intelligence, or expected protection from Patriot retaliation. The **Native Americans** were weighing neutrality or alliance in trying to protect their own lands and communities while watching the conflict expand.

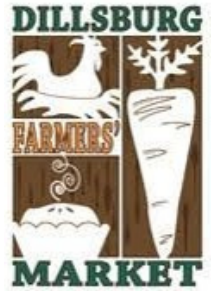
August Regular Happenings

Saturdays at Dills Tavern



Distillery Tours Every Saturday
Noon to 3 pm on the hour
\$10

Farmers Market
Every Saturday
8:00 am - noon
[Vendor List Here](#)



August 22 & September 19
Dillsburg Library Storytime
at the Farmers Market
10:00 - 11:00 am

Join Ms. Sue for stories, rhymes, and songs!



1st Saturday of the Month
August: Kylie & Gabe



Sundays at Dills Tavern



Distillery Tours Every Sunday
1:00 pm - 3:00 pm
on the hour
\$10



Spinning Demonstration
August 9th & September 13th
during Tavern tours



Tavern Tours - Every Sunday
2:00 pm & 3:00 pm
\$5 adult / \$10 immediate family

Upcoming Special Events



Women & Whiskey

August 19th; 6-8pm

Eichelberger Distillery at Dills Tavern

In the spirit of celebrating our 250th birthday, we will be discussing the role women played during the American Revolution, specifically

the women of Northern York County. These women in Warrington and Monaghan Townships played essential, often overlooked, roles during the American Revolution as both townships were active participants in the early resistance movement. Find out what life looked like in these communities during the 1770s.

[For more information and tickets click here!](#)



Balderdash

September 12th; 1-5pm

Dills Tavern



Balderdash is a combination of our traditional homebrew festival along with our Cherry Bounce festival. This merger, though muddled, provides the visitor with an entertaining opportunity to sample homebrews created by amateur and aspiring brewers and unique variations of historic cherry bounce created by local cherry bounce fans. One single \$25 ticket allows guests to sample and vote for Best Homebrew AND Best Cherry Bounce. Over 21 only. No dogs, please!

~ Cherry Bounce and Homebrew contestants do NOT need to pay to enter ~

Contestants desiring to enter the People's Choice Cherry Bounce competition should contact Karen at knellis@northernnyorkhistorical.org. Contestants desiring to enter the Homebrew competition should contact Sam at traditionalbldr@comcast.net.

[Contestant rules and tickets for the event may be found here!](#)

In Case You Missed It...

Highlights from NYCHAPS' America 250 Celebration

Looking back over the last few months, there has been much to celebrate as well as, appreciate the many hands and talents that have contributed to sharing the stories and experiences of early americans in Northern York County.

Over the past 6 months, Richard Conley and Lisa Decker Lupold have spent hundreds of hours researching the history of the Patriots from Northern York County, giving us insights into our area's contribution to the Revolutionary War. This research resulted in securing two grants, one from the Cumberland Area Economic Development Corporation and one from Explore York, to provide funding for:

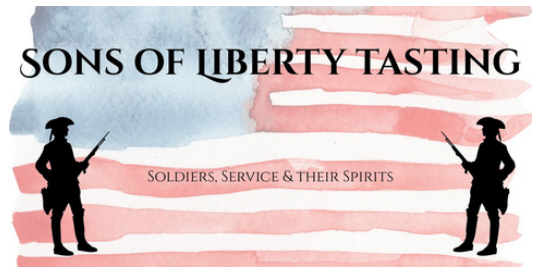
- a new flag pole to display the Pennsylvania militia flag
- a display of 735 patriots names on the 1798 barn
- two wayside signs



Richard also was instrumental in having the Tavern site be included on the Patriot's Path Revolutionary War Trail program spearheaded by the Army Heritage Center Foundation. This was launched June 30th at the Cumberland County Historical Society.

NYCHAPS' America 250 Celebration... cont.

Murray Small and a cast of dozens planned and coordinated the **Artistry in the Ordinary** program at our historic site, featuring many of our artisan members and friends on Saturday mornings. Many also enjoyed the historical **Sons of Liberty** experience.



Richard and Noel Taylor organized our local community organizations, coordinating projects designed to honor our patriots, such as: tombstone cleaning at cemeteries and Living History programs featuring fifth graders at the Warrington Friends Meeting House and Dillsburg Cemetery, and many more.

On July 3rd, the **Oaths to Toasts** Event involved guests in a living history program sweeping from 1776 to 1826. The reading of the Declaration of Independence and the dramatized reaction from “local colonials” was very meaningful in depicting the varied perspectives of the time. Our thanks to the cast, the musicians, the cooks, and Dara Kane, who developed and produced the historical drama.



NYCHAPS' America 250 Celebration... cont.

One nation. One moment. One sound.

On July 4th, at noon, communities across Pennsylvania paused to ring bells in honor of 250 years of American independence. Our fence was also lit with red, white, and blue lights as part of America250PA's **Light To Unite** project by Dara Kane. Sam Mckinney's special contribution to this national birthday party was purchasing, building, and firing a period Mountain Howitzer cannon!



The **America 250 National Potluck**, planned and prepared by Mark and Brenda Baumgartner on July 5th, was another opportunity to come together as a community with great food, music, and company!



Thanks to everyone for your continued support of all that NYCHAPS has to offer! It was actually our nation's Bicentennial celebration that sparked the beginning of this organization and we can only hope that this 250th anniversary will rekindle that national pride and hope for the future.

~ Doug Riley - NYCHAPS Board of Directors ~



Vol 1.7

The Flying Camp of 1776

In July of 1776, while the Declaration of Independence was being celebrated across the colonies, the Continental Congress continued its preparations to defend the colonies. Believing that New York, or possibly New Jersey, would be the next target of the British, on June 3, 1776, Congress authorized the creation of a “Flying Camp”—a mobile force of 10,000 men from the mid-Atlantic states enlisted to serve until December 1, 1776. These troops were intended to act as a rapid-response reserve, ready to reinforce General Washington’s Continental Army wherever the need was greatest. The enlisted men of the Flying Camp, under the act of Congress, were required to furnish their own arms, blankets, haversacks and knapsacks. Washington’s personal friend, General Hugh Mercer, of Franklin County, was chosen as commander of the Flying Camp.

Pennsylvania was asked to supply 6,000 of the 10,000 men. When the Pennsylvania Assembly adjourned in June of 1776 without addressing this request, a conference of committees for Pennsylvania resolved that the 6,000 troops would be comprised of 1,500 men already in the pay of the province under Colonels Miles and Atlee and 4,500 to be called from the ranks of the Associators. York County’s quota of the 4,500 was initially 400 men, increased in August by an additional 515, all to be drawn from its Associator companies.

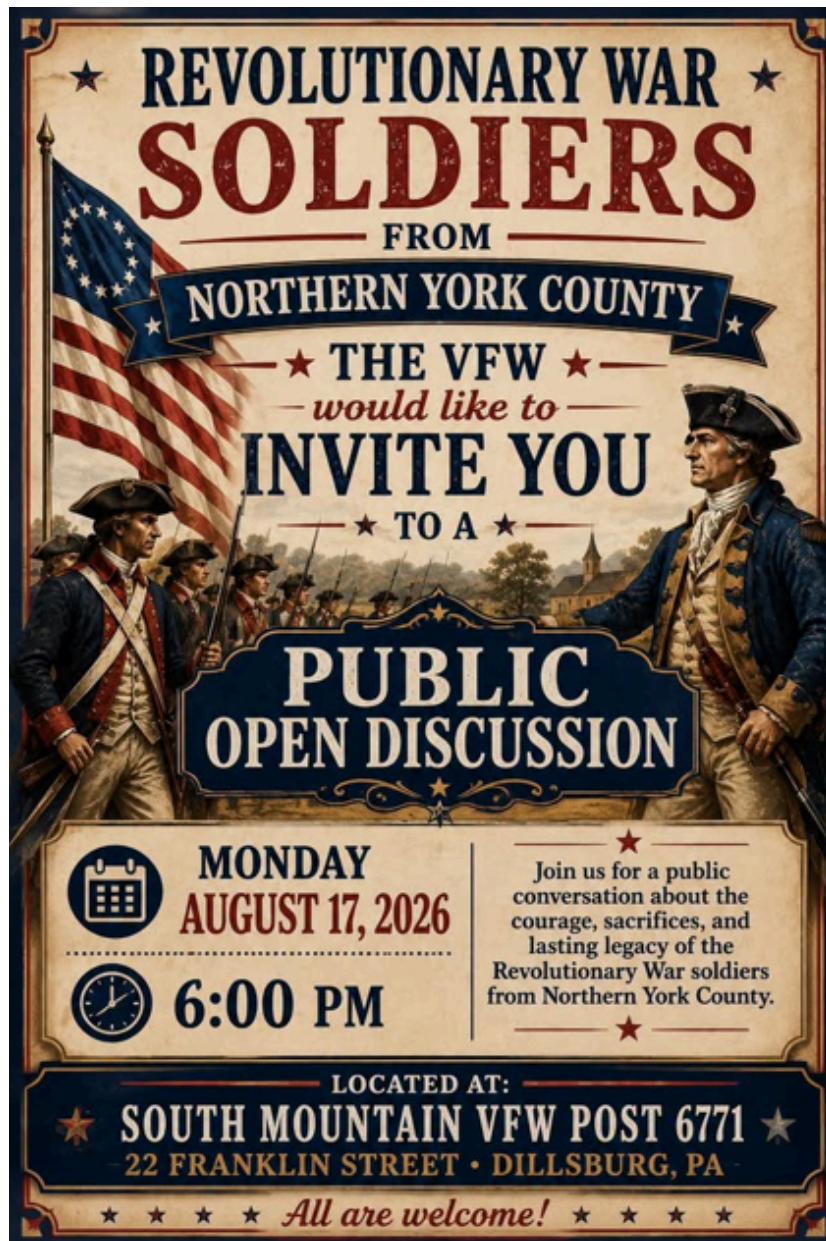
On June 25 the committee issued a patriotic appeal to the Associators to fill the ranks:

We call upon you, therefore, by the respect and obedience which are due to the authority of the United Colonies to concur in this important measure. The present campaign will probably decide the fate of America. It is now in your power to immortalize your names, by mingling your achievements with the events of the year 1776—a year which we hope will be famed in the annals of history to the end of time, for establishing upon a lasting foundation the liberties of one quarter of the globe.

At an organizational meeting held in Lancaster on July 4, 1776, James Ewing of York County was elected to command one of two brigades of Pennsylvania Associators. Also on July 4, 1776, Congress directed that available militia of Pennsylvania go to Trenton in all haste until the 10,000 men of the Flying Camp arrived. Colonel Miles and Colonel Atlee marched their troops to New Jersey, arriving on July 16 and July 21, respectively. These troops were ordered to New York in August. There, they fought, and lost, at the Battle of Long Island

[Read the rest of the article here!](#)

Learn more about the NYCHAPS Revolutionary War Project



In the spirit of America's 250th, come on out while Richard Conley introduces you to some Revolutionary war soldiers who lived right here in the Northern York County area and who are resting in our local cemeteries. Maybe you even have one in your family tree!

All are welcome to this public presentation.

From the Garden Shed Vol 1.7

Your Work is Paying Off

by Gary A. Reneker, Head Gardener



Gardeners with large gardens find August their busiest time of the year. Many vegetables are maturing, and gardeners spend so much time processing and storing for the coming winter. Even if you buy large quantities of produce for such activities instead of growing them, August will often be the month you do more of it than any other month.

Hopefully tomatoes, cucumbers, turnips, beets, carrots, and other veg guys have provided you with healthy meals. If you're getting more than you can eat or process there are usually family, friends, neighbors, or food banks that will joyfully accept your abundance, even if it is just a small amount.

Faithfully checking and collecting crops is particularly important at this time of year. Garden pests are prolific breeders and voracious eaters of plants and fruits.

If you are careless and leave things unpicked for too long you can be sure insects and critters will take every opportunity to enjoy them for you. Regular harvesting is also important for increasing your harvest. When mature fruit is left on the plant beyond maturity it internally signals the plant that the season is ending. The plant then begins to shut down and stop producing more fruit. If you're blessed with a really large harvest, and can't handle it all before it would start going bad, place it in the freezer in large freezer bags. Then as you get time to work on it in the next few weeks, remove them from the freezer, let them thaw a few hours, and process them as usual.

Culinary and medicinal herbs can be clipped in early August, and hung to dry away from sunlight for later use. This gives the plants time to heal from your cuts and produce another harvest by late September. Then when harvested again they have time to heal before our first anticipated frost around October 25th. Remember to always harvest when plants are dry.

Parsley is an odd one. You can freeze it like other herbs, but if you hang it to dry it will lose its flavor. To dry parsley collect it, chop it, and place it in a shallow layer in a paper bag. Put the bag in your frig, or at least a cool, dry place. Every couple of days shake up the bag, so the parsley doesn't get matted and all the parsley gets equal, open drying time. After several weeks your parsley should be dry and retain its flavor and much of its color.

[Continue reading the article by clicking here!](#)



Education in Action

History Camp Highlights



Our week long History Camp at Dills Tavern (July 13-17) reflected another year's success in fulfilling NYCHAPS commitment towards education. As in all our events, the Dills Tavern property along with our volunteers created a potent setting conducive for learning. The 21 students who attended History Camp gained knowledge about early American life through presentations, demonstrations, and hands-on experiences. Although we successfully weathered the hot temperatures all week, we did have to end camp early due to air quality concerns on Friday. Our heartfelt thanks goes out to all our volunteers for sharing their time, interests, and talents with us during the week of camp.

Karen Nellis & Viki Wonders - History Camp Coordinators



Our History Camp "village" of Volunteers

Demonstrators:

- Viki Wonders - One Room School House
- Karen Phillippi - baking
- Linda Zeiders - applesauce
- Erica Hill - soap making
- Karen Nellis - herb sachets
- Greg Weaver - candle dipping
- Cindy Knisley - weaving
- Christine Ecker - painting candle box
- Grace Siguenza - pomanders
- Ed Bennett - soldiering
- Rich Conley - Cemetery talk

Group Leaders:

- Becky Gentzler
- Carol Hugar
- Mariann Hunt

Multi Assistance:

- Cindy Diodato
- Grace Siguenza
- Clair Zeiders
- Char Knudsen

High School:

- Rebekah Hugar
- Sarah Briant
- Rebecca Briant

Demonstrators / Assistants:

- Hornbook
 - Clair Zeiders
 - Viki Wonders
- Colonial Clothing
 - Char Knudsen
 - Sherry Morgan
- Tin Punch Candle Holder
 - Don Peroni
 - Jim McClay
 - Jim Hugar
- Wooden Candle Box
 - Clair Zeiders
 - Bud Cobb



A Reflection on the Impact of NYCHAPS History Camp

by Sarah Sabol-Tarka

My sister's birthday is the twenty-second of July. This is a fundamental detail for the beginning of this reflection, but a more pressing one is the fact that a birthday is celebrated over the course of a single day. However, my family would spend about a week in Dillsburg with my grandparents for this event, so I had to find something to do with the other few days. That something ended up being history camp at the Dill Tavern.

The Dill Tavern is always on the first page of my mind when I'm asked what I love about history. At the time, I don't think I appreciated how unusual the experience was. To me, it was simply where I spent part of my summer. I wandered through rooms furnished for another century, learned how people lived, what they ate, what they wore, how they worked, and how ordinary lives found their place in the greater story of history. It wasn't until much later that I realized how uncommon those summers were.

As I look back on it now, I realize that the camp dissolved the invisible barrier between the past and present. History ceased to be a sequence of names and dates that existed within the margins of a textbook and instead became tangible; the smell of wax-dipped candle's and the texture of the more expensive honey comb ones. The feel of course fabric and the sound a feathered pen makes when it scratches against it's surface. The past took shape, and that I think is one of the biggest reasons I became so interested in understanding history.

Outside of camp, the Dill Tavern became a tradition in its own right. My grandparents would take my sister and me to Farmer's Fair, where we wandered through rows of local vendors before making our way to the historical activities. We took turns grinding corn to spit out feathered cobs, tried our hand at tomahawk throwing, and by the end of the day had somehow done each activity twice. As a child, I was drawn to the excitement of it all. As I grew, I began to value not just the event itself, but all the things that went into preserving the Tavern and presenting the history to the community. I began to appreciate that every demonstration, and every craft represented someone's decision to preserve a piece of the past so that the next generation could experience it, just as I had.



A Reflection... cont.

As I grew older I was able to return as a camp counselor and helper. This was when I came to the realization of the value of the camp in my youth. I recalled the many questions I had when I was a camper, and now I was guiding younger campers to find these answers on their own. I helped them lace up heavy clothing after they learned the names for each item, remembering the first time I had participated in the same activity, and the pride I felt when I showed a photo to my grandparents of me in my floral print dress and bonnet afterwards. It was rewarding to watch the campers become excited over something they had probably never thought about before because I knew exactly what that felt like. Only a few years earlier, I had been standing on the very same wood floor.



The more I progressed through high school, the more my passion for history grew. I wanted to know why and how things had happened, and why and how those decisions have impacted us to this day. One of the largest opportunities that I had was this past year when I was in a constitutional debate competition on whether the American Colonies in the British Empire should be separated from Great Britain. I worked for the majority of my school year reading through around sixty historical documents discussing a question that I thought had been retired, and I'm proud to say that I went very far in the competition. I ultimately was invited to Washington D.C to argue my case and meet professional judges, including a Justice of the United States Supreme Court. That was one of those moments where I realized that the history I had been learning about for years wasn't a thing stagnant in the past. The ideas debated during the founding of our country are still relevant today, and they continue to influence the government and legal system that we live under.

All of these experiences have inspired me to want to major in history in college. I really enjoy researching topics, asking questions and writing about the past; I feel there are always more stories to be told than the ones we usually hear. There's something that's fun in discovering a detail that nobody else noticed and realizing it alters how you perceive a greater event. Those are the kinds of experiences I wish to continue doing in college and beyond.

History has always been a story of cause and effect. Looking back, it is hard not to see my own life the same way. One birthday led to a week in Dillsburg. A week in Dillsburg led to history camp. History camp led to years of returning, first as a camper, then as a counselor. Those summers led to research, debate, and a desire to continually study the past. I still think it is funny that something as ordinary as my sister's birthday could set all of that into motion. Then again, the beginnings of history are almost never recognizable while you're living them.

From Our Collections...

A Tale of Three Chairs



Perhaps you are curious as to why we are featuring these three unmatched plank bottom chairs in this issue. They are not especially rare as thousands were made and are still in daily use. However, they are special in one respect. These chairs were purchased at the auction of the contents of the Logan House (present day Dills Tavern) by an anonymous bidder.

The auction was conducted over two days on site in December of 1990. The property had been in the Logan family for generations. The building was left vacant but furnished for over 30 years after the last permanent residents, Helen and Caroline Logan, passed in the 1960's and the extended family could not agree on its disposition.

As you can imagine, due to the nature of an auction, the contents were dispersed in a myriad of directions to new owners. From time to time buyers come forward with items they purchased at the sale. NYCHAPS is interested in retrieving these items and documents as they come available. If you purchased anything from the auction and are ready to part with them, we are always available to talk with you.

~ Greg Wonders - NYCHAPS Archivist ~

Community Interests



View of a Pass over the South Mountain from York Town to Carlisle

James Thackara, 1767-1848; etching and engraving

Thomas Bedwell; produced the drawing for the engraving.

(Information from the Palmer Museum of Art)

The Columbian Magazine, featuring an collection of history, science, and literary articles, regularly included images of the American landscape on its pages. The view above, which would have been well known to travelers on Dill's Road between the towns of York and Carlisle, served as the frontpiece to the magazine's May 1788 issue. The location is near present-day Dillsburg, at the foot of South Mountain, where Matthew Dill constructed a tavern around 1755 that became an important way station for the area during the latter years of the eighteenth century.



NORTHERN YORK COUNTY
**HISTORICAL &
PRESERVATION**
Society

www.northernnyorkhistorical.org

admin@northernnyorkhistorical.org

Maple Shade Barn Office 717-502-1440

35 Greenbriar Lane Dillsburg, PA 17019

Office Hours: Tues-Fri 11am - 3pm