

PENNSYLVANIA SOCIETY
OF
SONS OF THE REVOLUTION



Let Freedom Ring®
2026

1888



2026

*The Board of Managers
of the
Pennsylvania Society of Sons of the Revolution
Requests the pleasure of your company
to celebrate the*

*250th Anniversary of
The Declaration of Independence
Saturday, July 4, 2026
at*

*Washington Memorial Chapel
King of Prussia, PA*

*Welcome Brunch
Patriot's Hall*

11:00am

*Let Freedom Ring® Celebration
1:00 pm*

Celebration Program

11:00 AM	BRUNCH RECEPTION
12:30 PM	Parade of Colors & Memorial Wreath Laying
1:00 PM	LFR Main Program

Pledge of Allegiance & National Anthem

- President C. Michael Whelan & Assembly -

Invocation

- The Rev. Tommy A. Thompson -

Society Historian's Remarks

- Dr. Edwin S. Hart, III -

WMC Historian's Remarks

- Gardiner P. Pearson -

Keynote Speaker

- Christopher Coelho -

Introduction of Declaration Readers

- Matthew L. Forester -

Reading The Declaration of Independence

- Assembly -

Let Freedom Ring® Bell Ringing

- Doug Gefvert -

Matlack Descendants

Today's Honored Readers of
The Declaration of Independence

Andrew Peter Forester
Matthew James Forester
Michael Arlie Forester
Ethan Kent Heinly
Craig Johnsonius Neubert
Rose Johnsonius Neubert
Hector Ruiz
Sarah Ruiz
Lucia Marie Wilson
Poppy Josephine Wilson

ABOUT CHRIS COELHO

Chris Coelho is the author of *Timothy Matlack, Scribe of the Declaration of Independence*, *Pirates in Uniform*, *Cien Años de Perdón*, and *Matlack's Declaration: How a Philadelphia Brewer Proclaimed America's Independence*. He has published articles in *The Trafalgar Chronicle* and the *Journal of the American Revolution* and was a featured speaker in the Historical Society of Pennsylvania's Pen to Paper program series.

Coelho grew up in the Washington Heights neighborhood of New York City. He received his degree from Lafayette College in Easton, Pennsylvania. He has lived in New York and San Francisco and now splits his time between Cambridge, MA and Buenos Aires. His current historical fiction project chronicles the multi-generational saga of a family empire—from its nineteenth century rise on the Argentine pampas and the streets of Recoleta to its collapse in the twentieth.

The Declaration of Independence

In Congress, July 4, 1776. A Declaration by the Representatives of the United States of America, in General Congress assembled.

WHEN in the Course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another, and to assume among the powers of the Earth, the separate and equal station to which the Laws of Nature and of Nature's God entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation.

We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.

That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed, - That whenever any form of Government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the right of the people to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new government, laying its foundation on such principles and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to affect their Safety and Happiness.

Prudence, indeed, will dictate that Governments long established should not be changed for light and transient causes; and accordingly, all experience hath shewn, that mankind are more disposed to suffer, while evils are

sufferable, than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to which they are accustomed.

But when a long train of abuses and usurpations, pursuing invariably the same Object evinces a design to reduce them under absolute Despotism, it is their Right, it is their Duty, to throw off such Government, and to provide new Guards for their future security. Such has been the patient sufferance of these Colonies; and such is now the necessity which constrains them to alter their former Systems of Government. The history of the present King of Great Britain is a history of repeated injuries and usurpations, all having in direct object the establishment of an absolute Tyranny over these States

To prove this, let facts be submitted to a candid world.

He has refused his assent to laws, the most wholesome and necessary for the public good. He has forbidden his Governors to pass Laws of immediate and pressing importance, unless suspended in their operation till his Assent should be obtained; and when so suspended, he has utterly neglected to attend to them.

He has refused to pass other Laws for the accommodation of large districts of people, unless those people would relinquish the right of representation in the legislature, a right inestimable to them and formidable to tyrants only.

He has called together legislative bodies at places unusual, uncomfortable, and distance from the depository of their public Records, for the sole purpose of fatiguing them into compliance with his measures.

He has dissolved Representative Houses repeatedly, for opposing with manly firmness his invasions on the rights of the people.

He has refused for a long time, after such dissolutions, to cause others to be elected; whereby the Legislative powers, incapable of Annihilation, have returned to the People at large for their exercise; the State remaining in the meantime exposed to all the dangers of invasion from without, and convulsions within.

He has endeavoured to prevent the population of these States; for that purpose obstructing the Laws for Naturalization of Foreigners; refusing to pass others to encourage their migrations hither and raising the conditions of new Appropriations of Lands.

He has obstructed the Administration of Justice, by refusing his Assent to Laws for establishing Judiciary powers.

He has made Judges dependent on his Will alone, for the tenure of their offices, and the amount and payment of their salaries.

He has erected a multitude of New Offices and sent hither swarms of Officers to harass our people and eat out their substance.

He has kept among us, in times of peace, Standing Armies without the Consent of our legislatures. He has affected to render the Military independent of and superior to the Civil power.

He has combined with others to subject us to a jurisdiction foreign to our constitution, and unacknowledged by our laws; giving his Assent to their acts of pretended Legislation:

For quartering large bodies of armed troops among us: For protecting them, by a mock Trial, from punishment for any Murders which they should commit on the Inhabitants of these States:

For cutting off our Trade with all parts of the world:

For imposing Taxes on us without our Consent:

For depriving us in many cases, of the benefits of Trial by Jury:

For transporting us beyond Seas to be tried for pretended offenses:

For abolishing the free System of English Laws in a neighboring Province, establishing therein an Arbitrary government, and enlarging its Boundaries so as to render it at once an example and fit instrument for introducing the same absolute rule into these Colonies:

For taking away our Charters, abolishing our most valuable Laws, and altering fundamentally the Forms of our Governments:

For suspending our own Legislatures and declaring themselves invested with power to legislate for us in all cases whatsoever.

He has abdicated Government here, by declaring us out of his Protection and waging War against us. He has plundered our Seas, ravaged our Coasts, burnt our Towns, and destroyed the lives of our people. He is at this time transporting large Armies of foreign Mercenaries to complete the works of

Death, Desolation and Tyranny, already begun with circumstances of Cruelty & Perfidy scarcely paralleled in the most barbarous ages, and totally unworthy the Head of a civilized nation.

He has constrained our fellow Citizens taken Captive on the high Seas to bear Arms against their Country, to become the executioners of their friends and Brethren, or to fall themselves by their Hands,

He has excited domestic insurrections amongst us and has endeavored to bring on the inhabitants of our frontiers, the merciless Indian Savages, whose known rule of warfare, is an undistinguished destruction of all ages, sexes and conditions.

In every stage of these Oppressions We have petitioned for redress in the most humble terms: Our repeated Petitions have been answered only by repeated injury.

A Prince, whose character is thus marked by every act which may define a Tyrant, is unfit to be the ruler of a free people.

Nor have we been wanting in attentions to our British brethren. We have warned them from time to time of attempts by their legislature to extend an unwarrantable jurisdiction over us. We have reminded them of the circumstances of our emigration and settlement here.

We have appealed to their native justice and magnanimity and we have conjured them by the ties of our common kindred to disavow these usurpations, which would inevitably interrupt our connections and correspondence.

They too have been deaf to the voice of justice and of consanguinity. We must, therefore, acquiesce in the necessity, which denounces our Separation, and hold them, as we hold the rest of mankind, Enemies in War, in Peace Friends.

WE, THEREFORE, the Representatives of the UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, in General Congress, Assembled, appealing to the Supreme Judge of the world for the rectitude of our intentions, do, in the Name, and by Authority of the good People of these Colonies, solemnly publish and declare, That these United Colonies are, and of Right ought to be, FREE AND INDEPENDENT STATES;

that they are Absolved from all Allegiance to the British Crown, and that all political connection between them and the State of Great Britain, is and ought to be, totally dissolved;

and that as Free and Independent States, they have full Power to levy War, conclude Peace, contract Alliances, establish Commerce, and to do all other Acts and Things which Independent States may of right do.-

And for the support of this Declaration, with a firm reliance on the protection of divine Providence,

we mutually pledge to each other our Lives, our Fortunes and our sacred Honor.

Signed for Pennsylvania by:

Robert Morris - Benjamin Rush - Benjamin Franklin -
John Morton - George Clymer - James Smith - George
Taylor - James Wilson - George Ross

Let Freedom Ring®

Liberty Bell Tappers
Junior Members of Descendents of Signers
of The Declaration of Independence

Liberty Bell Tapper

Andrew James Casey
Delaney Rose Dynan
Liberty Grace Dynan
Madison Lynn Good
Olivia Bernice Good
Clara Elizabeth Hanby
Martha Anne Hanby
Abigail Clare Heyward
Thomas James Heyward
Theodora Margaret Pagano
Charlotte Riely
Atlee Teillon

Descended From:

Thomas Heyward Jr.
Benjamin Franklin
Benjamin Franklin
Francis Hopkinson
Francis Hopkinson
John Witherspoon
John Witherspoon
Thomas Heyward Jr.
Thomas Heyward Jr.
George Ross
John Hart
Thomas McKean

ABOUT THE CARILLONNEUR

Doug Gefvert, the Carillonneur at Washington Memorial National Carillon, began his musical career at an early age by singing in his hometown church choir and taking organ lessons from local church organists. Before coming to Washington Memorial National Carillon, Mr. Gefvert was Bellmaster at historic Old Christ Church in Philadelphia for 21 years. He has written and arranged numerous pieces for carillon and has given recitals in the United States and Canada. Doug is also the Coordinator of the Chapel's Veterans Wall of Honor. Its bronze plaques, displaying the names of U.S. military veterans, help fund the carillon.



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