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Note to Editors: Visiting hours, tour times and events are subject to change as a result of COVID-19. Please verify information before publishing.

**ESSENTIAL REVOLUTIONARY WAR SITES SURROUND PHILADELPHIA,
HEADQUARTERS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION**
Historic District Sites & Countryside Battlefields Recount Fight For Independence

PHILADELPHIA, April 14, 2021 – Long before 1775, when the first musket shot was fired in Lexington, the seeds of the American Revolution had taken root in Philadelphia. Today, Philadelphia's Historic District, home of iconic **Independence Hall** and dozens more 18th-century landmarks, offers visitors firsthand experiences of the United States' early days. In the heart of the district, the remarkable, four-year-old **Museum of the American Revolution** uses rare artifacts and interactive exhibits to recreate the drama and the details of the country's dramatic birth. Visitors who want to go beyond the district can discover more rich Revolutionary War history in the Philadelphia countryside's significant battlefields, historic homes and parks, including **Valley Forge National Historical Park**, debuting a full renovation of its official Visitor Center in summer 2021, along with a five-part museum exhibit and film, an expanded trail system with interpretive signage and more.

Here are Philadelphia's and its environs' essential Revolutionary War sites:

Fomenting Revolution:

- **Carpenters' Hall:** Fed up with King George's taxes and trade policies, representatives from 12 colonies (Georgia didn't attend) gathered here in 1774 for the First Continental Congress and voted on a trade embargo, the first of many unified acts of defiance against the realm. This Georgian-style gem's history is significant, but modern-day visitors often stop by to appreciate the building's architecture, courtesy of the country's oldest craft guild.
- **Graff House:** Amid the city rush, it's hard to believe this site, also known as the Declaration House, was once the quiet country refuge where Thomas Jefferson drafted the *Declaration of Independence*. But it was. Building is currently closed. Check the park website for news about its reopening.
- **Independence Hall:** During the blistering summer of 1776, 56 delegates gathered at the Pennsylvania State House and pledged their "lives, their fortune and their sacred honor" in the pursuit of independence. Now known as Independence Hall, the UNESCO World Heritage Site is where the *Declaration of Independence* was signed, finalizing the colonies' break with England. Tickets are not required at the Hall due to COVID-19 — although that policy is subject to change as the pandemic subsides.

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Building Arms:

- **Hopewell Furnace National Historic Site:** The Continental Army and Navy needed armaments, and this Chester County foundry supplied the troops with cannons, shots and shells, including 115 big guns for the Continental Navy. The circa 1771 intact iron-making village includes a furnace complex, ironmaster's mansion, village store, blacksmith shop and the homes of some of the ironworkers. While park grounds are open Wednesday through Sunday, the Visitor Center and Hopewell Village remain closed due to COVID-19.
- **New Hall Military Museum:** This reconstruction of the first Secretary of War's headquarters features exhibits that trace the founding of the U.S. Marines, Army and Navy during the Revolution. Modern day visitors will find dozens of examples of colonial-era weaponry, scale models and other artifacts. Museum is currently closed. Check the park website for news about its reopening.
- **Mikveh Israel:** When the American troops were low on weapons, food, supplies and the money to purchase them, Haym Salomon, a member of this synagogue, stepped up and helped finance and underwrite the war. He was so generous with his personal resources that he died penniless. Salomon is buried at Congregation Mikveh Israel Cemetery.
- **Thaddeus Kosciuszko House:** The ragtag Continental army had this Polish war hero to thank for the brilliant military engineering that helped them pummel the Redcoats in several battles. Kosciuszko was a military giant — he also fortified West Point — but resided in a humble one-room apartment in a corner boarding house. House is currently closed. Check the park website for news about its reopening.

Battle Sites:

- **Brandywine Battlefield:** On September 11, 1777, 30,000 American and British soldiers faced off here in the largest land battle of the Revolution. Despite being led by a who's who of the Continental Army — Washington, Wayne, Lafayette, Knox and others — the Americans suffered a major blow. The site is now a park, offering terrain to freely explore, and, for a fee, access to a small museum of artifacts and two historic houses, including one that served as Washington's headquarters. The park is currently closed due to COVID-19.
- **Cliveden:** On the morning of October 4, 1777, Washington and his army fought for hours trying to remove the British troops who had taken shelter in this historic Germantown estate. After several hours of intense fighting, the defeated patriot forces retreated to Montgomery County. Today, Cliveden commemorates the Battle of Germantown on the first Saturday of every October; the Revolutionary Germantown Festival features two reenactments and family-friendly activities. Any time of year, visitors can experience the museum and grounds through tours and exhibitions.
- **Fort Mifflin:** For six long, cold weeks in 1777, a cadre of 400 soldiers huddled inside this stronghold to fend off British ships attempting to bring supplies to British-occupied Philadelphia. Despite lack of food, freezing temperatures and rampant illness, the rebels held the ships back, giving Washington time to flee to Valley Forge. Philadelphia's only fort is open Wednesdays through Sundays, March 1 through December 15, and features barracks, a blacksmith shop, cannon demonstrations, a nature trail along the Delaware River and more.

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- **Historic Waynesborough:** During the Continental Army's winter encampment at Valley Forge, General "Mad" Anthony Wayne, one of Washington's most celebrated generals, would sometimes return to his family home for a good night's sleep. The Battle of Paoli took place steps away from the front door and yet the house survived unscathed. Guided, by-reservation tours lead visitors from the carriage house through the elegant residence itself and tell stories about objects, art and seven generations of Waynes who dwelled here until 1980.
- **Paoli Battlefield:** At midnight on September 20, 1777, 1,800 British troops used bayonets to raid General Anthony Wayne's 2,200 troops camped in this field, in what became the war's ninth bloodiest battle. The country's second-oldest Revolutionary War monument commemorates lives lost during the "Paoli Massacre." Today, the 60-acre site serves as a historical park and memorial grounds with self-guided tours along a three-quarter-mile trail. Other features to take in: monuments, cannons, interpretive panels and, on the on the first Sunday in June, one of the country's oldest continuously held community-run Memorial Day parades. Lectures, walking tours and paranormal tours are also held at various times throughout the year.
- **Peter Wentz Farmstead:** In early October 1777, General Washington and his staff chose this farm as a temporary headquarters while planning a strategy to engage the British forces in Germantown, a major defeat for the Continental Army. Washington's contingent returned to the Wentz property for four days later that month before marching in for the winter at Valley Forge in December. Visitors to the restored site can take on-the-hour tours to view livestock, kitchens, German furnishings and 1777-inspired recreations of farmstead life.
- **Stenton:** During its long, storied history, this Germantown mansion saw both sides of the war. In August 1777 as he made his way to the Battle of Brandywine, General Washington sought refuge in this elegant manse. Then, Britain's General Howe occupied the estate for the month leading up to and through the Battle of Germantown. Appointment-only tours are offered in the afternoon, Thursday through Saturday from April through December.
- **Valley Forge National Historical Park:** This 3,500-acre national park is the site of the 1777-1778 winter encampment of George Washington's Continental Army. Woodlands, streams, meadows, monuments and more than 26 miles of trails commemorate the sacrifice and transformation of the Continental Army during these pivotal six months during the Revolutionary War. While the grounds are open to the public, most buildings are closed due to COVID-19. Tours, exhibits, live demonstrations, children's activities and more will resume at a later date.
- **Washington Crossing Historic Park:** In 1776, General Washington gave the Hessian troops a morning-after-Christmas surprise — a sneak attack that ultimately turned the tide of the Revolutionary War. Echoes of that historic event are evidenced throughout this park, where centuries-old historic houses and buildings and a visitor center recount that daring trip. Each Christmas day, hearty souls don colonial attire and recreate that daring and dangerous river crossing. One-hour Crossing the Delaware tours are available seven days a week.

Revolutionary Homes & Houses of Worship:

- **Betsy Ross House:** Not once, but twice, the Revolutionary War left the young upholsterer (and famed flag maker) Betsy Ross a widow. After losing her first husband to an ammunition explosion, she wed John Ashburn, who would later die after being captured by the British. Betsy herself is on site daily, plying her trade as she welcomes visitors with stories of colonial-era life.

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- **Christ Church:** On any given Sunday during the Revolutionary War, one could find a who's who of the era worshipping at this Historic District landmark. Still active, Christ Church served as the house of worship for seven signers of the *Declaration of Independence*. Self-guided and guided tours take place daily, except during services/ceremonies or on Mondays and Tuesdays in January and February.
- **Christ Church Burial Ground:** Dating to 1719, this plot is the final resting place for many who toiled for American independence. Among the 4,000 graves are those of Benjamin and Deborah Franklin, Dr. Benjamin Rush, Francis Hopkinson and Continental Army officers Major William Jackson and General Jacob Morgan. The burial ground is open for self-guided and guided tours daily for a small fee; visitors on the sidewalk often toss pennies onto the Franklins' grave.
- **Concord School House & Upper Burying Ground:** Many who gave their lives in the pursuit of liberty went nameless when they were laid to rest at this Germantown site. Today, 52 of the soldiers have been identified, although six more who perished in the Battle of Germantown remain unknown. The grounds and 1775 school house are temporarily closed due to COVID-19.
- **Grumblethorpe:** The bloody business of war still haunts the home of the Wister family, occupied by British Brigadier General James Agnew before the Battle of Germantown. Shot in his back, Agnew bled to death and more than two centuries later, the bloodstains are still visible on the floor. Tours are available on Saturdays from Memorial Day through Labor Day, and by appointment.
- **Old St. Mary's Church:** George and Martha Washington, John Adams and other notable colonials attended this house of worship, and history continues to permeate the gravesite here. Commodore John Barry, founder of the American navy, is buried in the adjacent cemetery, along with General Washington aide-de-camp Stephen Moylan and other heroes of the Revolution.
- **Powel House:** The elegant 18th-century Society Hill townhouse of Samuel and Elizabeth Powel opened to Founding Fathers for post-planning soirees, the Washington's 20th wedding anniversary, a meal John Adams referred to as a "Sinful Feast" and dancing in the Rococo ballroom. Today, the elegant Georgian home, with antique portraits, clocks, china from Martha Washington and a formal garden, opens for on-the-hour tours Thursdays through Sundays.
- **Thompson Neely House:** In December 1776, wounded and ailing soldiers recovered at this Bucks County home, where hundreds of soldiers encamped in the weeks prior to the daring crossing of the Delaware River on Christmas night. James Monroe, who would later become the fifth president, was among the many who camped there.
- **Wyck House:** During the Battle of Germantown, this Quaker estate was used as a field hospital, the 18th-century version of a MASH unit. Visits to Wyck — walk-ins are welcome Thursdays through Saturdays, early April through mid-November; other times by appointment — include tours of the house's antique-filled first floor, the country's oldest rose garden in original plan and a working quarter-acre farm.

Where To Learn More:

- **American Philosophical Society (APS):** Founded by Benjamin Franklin for the purpose of "promoting useful knowledge," the American Philosophical Society today is home to a research library with over 13 million pages of manuscripts and 250,000 books with strong holdings in
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Early America, the history of science, and Native American and Indigenous studies. Collections and research operations for the David Library of the American Revolution have relocated to the APS recently. It is here that American Revolution buffs can now find 10,000 reels of microfilm, nearly 8,000 books, 2,000 pamphlets and more — all devoted solely to the American Revolution.

- **Chester County History Center:** This library and research facilities hold a wealth of information about people and events that played a regional role in the Revolutionary War. These include resources on the three battles fought in Chester County, family genealogy collections and various museum objects. The center is open by appointment from Thursday through Saturday.
- **Historical Society of Pennsylvania (HSP):** More than 3,000 books, pamphlets and serials, along with 210 archival collections dealing with the American Revolution are included in this vast array of primary source materials and research resources for inquiring minds. HSP is temporarily closed due to COVID-19.
- **Museum of the American Revolution:** One of Philadelphia's newest museums brings to life the world-changing Revolutionary War through an unmatched collection of artifacts, including weapons, documents, personal items, works of art and General Washington's headquarters tent. With powerful films, digital touchscreens and historical vignettes, the museum makes its home in the heart of Philadelphia's Historic District.
- **The Polish American Cultural Center:** This is the spot to visit for a glimpse into the life and contributions of Thaddeus Kosciuszko, whose engineering genius helped win the Revolution.

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