



The regularly scheduled June 2026 public meeting will be held on **Wednesday, June 3rd, 2026**, starting at **7:00 PM**. **Ken Mott of the NJ Jersey Museum of Boating** will present a program regarding their museum, local history and the PT Boats of World War II. **Meeting location:** Point Pleasant Borough Municipal Building, 2233 Bridge Ave., Point Pleasant Borough. The meeting is free and open to the public.

The Birth of our Nation *250th Anniversary 1776 - 2026*

This year we celebrate the 250th anniversary of our Nation and the signing of the Declaration of Independence. The Colonists were not originally seeking independence from Great Britain. Britain implemented taxes, tariffs, and trade restrictions on the Colonists without their consent, leading to resistance. Prior to the war, ten of the thirteen Colonies, including New Jersey, engaged Benjamin Franklin to negotiate with Great Britain while still preserving their colonial status. Before the seven-year French and Indian War, Great Britain's debt was seventy million pounds; after the war ended in 1763, their debt had increased to over one hundred and forty million pounds.

The colonists thought that King George III and the English Parliament planned to solve their debt by taxing the American colonies. The Stamp Act of 1765 was a new and deeply unpopular tax requiring colonists to pay for legal transactions such as wills and the buying or selling of property. In response to the Stamp Act, colonists organized protests, formed groups like the Sons of Liberty, and boycotted British goods. The Colonists never complied with the Act. Tensions also escalated from restricted trade through proclamations and orders such as the Navigation Acts that restricted trade to Great Britain and the Proclamation of 1763 that prohibited our westward expansion. Lacking a voice in these decisions, the American Colonies declared to Great Britain: "No Taxation without Colonial Representation."

Each of the thirteen Colonies had State Assemblies that imposed taxes and was the State's law-making process. Requiring the Colonies to pay more tax to Great Britain and imposing restrictions was unpopular even for Colonial Loyalists. Britain's attempt to exert greater control over the Colonies was meeting with increased and greater resistance.

The increasing tension created a desire for self-governance. The Boston Massacre in 1770 is where British troops killed and wounded protesting Colonists. Further tariffs and restrictions led to the Boston Tea Party in December 1773 by the Sons of Liberty spearheaded by Samuel Adams and were the precursors leading to the first battles of the Revolutionary War.

The Battles of Lexington and Concord in Massachusetts occurred on April 19, 1775, known as the "shot heard 'round the world". These engagements marked the start of open armed conflict between British troops and Colonial Militia. The conflict started when British soldiers aimed to seize colonial gunpowder and arrest leaders Samuel Adams and John Hancock. However, the Battle of Bunker Hill on June 17, 1775, is considered to be the first major battle of the Revolution. Imagine the surprise of the British when Colonists were able to hold their own at this battle against what was then the strongest military in the world.

The Declaration of Independence was formally adopted at the Pennsylvania State House on July 4, 1776, in Philadelphia. It is now known as Independence Hall and is also where the U.S. Constitution was signed by Congress in 1787 and is also known as the Birthplace of America. Today Independence Hall is an historical landmark and museum. On September 9, 1776, Congress voted to change the name of our new Nation to the United States of America from the United Colonies of America.

A committee of five men led by Thomas Jefferson drafted the Declaration of Independence creating a new Nation based on republic-style governance where the power resided with the people. Fifty-six delegates to the Second Continental Congress signed the Declaration of Independence. The signing of the Declaration of Independence was considered a high treasonous act against the British Crown, punishable by death. To Great Britain the fifty-six signers were committing treason against their sovereign, George III, and knowingly risked execution, forfeiture of property, and harm to their families.



Point Pleasant Historical Society
Phone: (732) 892-3091
Email: ppbhistoricalociety@gmail.com
Website: pphism.org

Point Pleasant Historical Society
PO Box 1273
Point Pleasant Beach, NJ 08742

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The act was viewed as a death warrant, and many signers suffered, including five captured as traitors, nine dying from war-related hardships, and over a dozen having their homes destroyed. Had the British won the Revolutionary War, the signers would have faced harsh penalties, including hanging and disembowelment. The founders understood the danger, with Benjamin Franklin famously saying, "We must indeed, all hang together, or most assuredly we shall all hang separately".

During the Revolutionary War we were not part of Ocean County. What is now Point Pleasant Beach and the Borough of Point Pleasant was part of Shrewsbury Township, Monmouth County whose borders were from the Navesink River down to the Mullica River. New Jersey played a major part in the war for liberty and independence, and many Revolutionary War conflicts took place in what is now Ocean County. On April 6, 1778, and April 22, 1780, British troops and Colonial Loyalists sacked the salt works on the south side of Point Pleasant Manasquan Inlet then called (Squan Inlet). At the time, the Inlet was north of its current location. The British also destroyed other salt work operations along the coast. These essential, small-scale boiling operations were targeted to disrupt the patriot supply of salt, essential for preserving food. These salt works were rebuilt and needed to be guarded.

During the war, the British were successful at forming blockades affecting, trade, military supply and troop movement on the ocean. As a result, our newly formed government began to plan the Inter-coastal Waterway that would stretch from the Northern Atlantic Ocean to the Gulf of Mexico. That Canal, conceived by our Nation's founders, was not completed until 1925 for various reasons and is now known as the Point Pleasant Canal.

Point Pleasants oldest still existing home predates the Revolutionary War. It was built in 1768 by Robert Morris, a Ship Captain from Wales, on what is now Route 88. A descendant of the Captain, Richard Morris is a retired Borough educator and our Museum Curator. Mr. and Mrs. Morris still reside in the home.

The Revolutionary War lasted approximately eight years, beginning on April 19, 1775, with the Battles of Lexington and Concord and ending on September 3, 1783, with the signing of the Treaty of Paris. The conflict concluded after the 1781 British defeat and their surrender at Yorktown, VA which led to the formal recognition of U.S. independence by Great Britain. The Treaty of Paris established generous boundaries for the new nation, extending west to the Mississippi River, north to Canada, and south to Florida. It was a global conflict that caused France, Spain, and the Netherlands involvement. Treaties were signed at Versailles in 1783 resolving these wider international conflicts.

Throughout Ocean County there will be a series of commemorative events and a July 4th fireworks at Jenkinson's. Point Pleasant Beach is hosting a community-wide three-day celebration June 25–27 primarily at the Band-shell featuring a mix of patriotic, historical, and family-friendly activities with live music, a movie night and a block party highlighting local history and the Town's role in the nation's milestone.

In closing, it would be very difficult to name all of the revolutionary war heroes; however, we need to recognize George Washington, Commander-in-Chief of the Continental Army and the first President of the United States. We also need to thank the signers of the Declaration of Independence along with countless other men and woman who fought and risked their lives in the fight for liberty, freedom and independence and thereby creating the United States of America. We wish you and your families a Happy Independence Day.

Written by Fred Potter