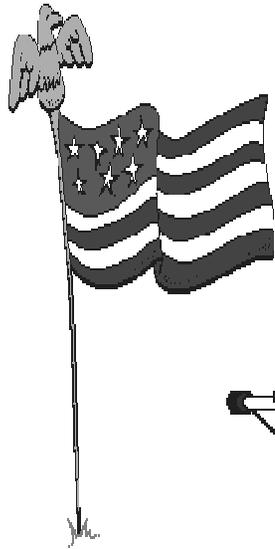


July-August
2008



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A Meeting at the End of the Day

"The first Stone of the President's House was laid on the 13th Day of October, 1792, and the 17th Year of Independence of the United States of America."
The Charleston City Gazette, November 15, 1792
Stonemasons labored for almost 10 years to complete the design by Freemason James Hoban (c.1762-1831) who immigrated to America in 1785.

Abundant work was available for immigrants with such skill, and Scottish Presbyterian and Irish Catholic stonemasons flocked at the opportunity. Shortly after the cornerstone was laid, they took the opportunity to organize into a Masonic Lodge in 1793, a Lodge that was ultimately to become Federal Lodge No. 1, with James Hoban as its charter Master.

The daily construction work was managed from a building that was conveniently located midway between the White House and the current fountain in Lafayette Park. Wearing silver jewels emblematic of their position in the Lodge, the three main officers, James Hoban, Clotworthy Stephenson and Andrew Estave begin an evening meeting with new brothers. Although James Hoban went on to an illustrious architectural career, little is known of Stephenson and Estave, other than they were both stone masons and master carvers and were associated with the construction and decoration of numerous federal buildings.

Guidelines for Displaying the Flag

1. The flag of the United States should be flown daily from sunrise to sunset in good weather from public buildings, schools, permanent staffs, and in or near polling places on election days. The flag may be displayed 24 hours a day on patriotic holidays or if properly illuminated.
2. The flag should not be displayed on days when the weather is bad, except when an all-weather flag is used.
3. The flag should always be flown on national and state holidays and on those occasions proclaimed by the President. On Memorial Day, the flag should be half staffed until noon.
4. The flag should be hoisted briskly and lowered ceremoniously. It should never be dipped to any person nor should it ever be displayed with the union down, except as a signal of dire distress.
5. The flag should never touch anything beneath it, nor should it ever be carried flat or horizontally.
6. It should never be used as wearing apparel, bedding, drapery, or decoration, nor for carrying or holding anything.
7. The flag should never be fastened, displayed, used, or stored in such a manner as to be easily torn, soiled, or damaged. It should never be used as a covering for a ceiling.
8. The flag should not be draped over the hood, top, sides, or back of a vehicle. When a flag is displayed on a car, the flag's staff should be fixed firmly to the chassis or clamped to the right fender.
9. The flag or its staff should never be used for advertising purposes in any manner whatsoever. Nor should any picture, drawing, insignia or other decoration be placed on or attached to the flag, its staff, or halyard.
10. The flag should not be embroidered on cushions, handkerchiefs, or other personal items nor printed on anything designed for temporary

use and discarded. However, a flag patch may be affixed to the uniform of military personnel, firemen, policemen, or members of other patriotic organizations.

11. When the flag is so worn or soiled that it is no longer suitable for display, it should be destroyed in a dignified manner, preferably by burning.

History of the Fourth

"WHEN IN THE COURSE OF HUMAN EVENTS..."

Taxation without representation! That was the battle cry of the 13 colonies in America that were forced to pay taxes to England's King George III with no representation in Parliament. As dissatisfaction grew, British troops were sent in to quell any signs of rebellion, and repeated attempts by the colonists to resolve the crisis without war proved fruitless.

On June 11, 1776, the colonies' Second Continental Congress meeting in Philadelphia formed a committee with the express purpose of drafting a document that would formally sever their ties with Great Britain. The committee included Thomas Jefferson, Benjamin Franklin, John Adams, Roger Sherman and Robert R. Livingston. The document was crafted by Jefferson, who was considered the strongest and most eloquent writer. (Nevertheless, a total of 86 changes were made to his draft.) The final version was officially adopted by the Continental Congress on July 4.

The following day, copies of the Declaration of Independence were distributed and, on July 6, The Pennsylvania Evening Post became the first newspaper to print the extraordinary document.

The Declaration of Independence has since become symbol of liberty.

On July 8, 1776, the first public readings of the Declaration were held in Philadelphia's Independence Square to the ringing of bells and band music. One year later, on July 4, 1777, Philadelphia marked Independence Day by adjourning Congress and celebrating with bonfires, bells and fireworks.

The custom eventually spread to other towns, both large and small, where the day was marked with processions, oratory, picnics, contests, games, military displays and fireworks. Observations throughout the nation became even more common at the end of the War of 1812 with Great Britain.

On June 24, 1826, Thomas Jefferson sent a letter to Roger C. Weightman, declining an invitation to come to Washington, D.C., to help celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence. It was the last letter that Jefferson, who was gravely ill, ever wrote. In it,

Jefferson says of the document:

"May it be to the world, what I believe it will be ... the signal of arousing men to burst the chains ... and to assume the blessings and security of self-government.

That form, which we have substituted, restores the free right to the unbounded exercise of reason and freedom of opinion. All eyes are opened, or opening, to the rights of man. ... For ourselves, let the annual return of this day forever refresh our recollections of these rights, and an undiminished devotion to them."

Congress established Independence Day as a holiday in 1870, and in 1938 Congress reaffirmed it as a holiday, but with full pay for federal employees. Today, communities across the nation mark this major midsummer holiday with parades, fireworks, picnics and the playing of the "Star Spangled Banner" and marches by John Philip Sousa.

Washington, D.C. celebrates the Fourth of July with the modern equivalent of "bonfires and illuminations," just as John Adams suggested on July 3, 1776.

Although Francis Scott Key's "Star Spangled Banner" was immediately popular, it was not officially adopted as our national anthem until March 3, 1931, through an Act of Congress.



Remember the 4th of July and Fly your Flag