



POSTAL NEWS

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Celebrating 250 Years of the Declaration of Independence *New stamp honors the bold beginnings of the United States of America*

PHILADELPHIA — As the United States marks the 250th anniversary of its birth, the U.S. Postal Service pays tribute to the document that put America’s founding ideals in writing with the release of the Declaration of Independence Forever stamp. A dedication ceremony for the stamp was held today at the B. Free Franklin Post Office, part of Independence Historical National Park, in Philadelphia.

Adopted on July 4, 1776, the declaration announced the Colonies’ break from Great Britain and expressed the bold new idea that government is a social contract based on the consent of the people it governed.

“The declaration has served as a mission statement for our nation that has inspired generations of Americans to do their part in fulfilling its promises for all,” said Lucy Trout, secretary to the USPS Board of Governors. “In the 250 years since ratification of that mission statement, the American people have been engaged in a perpetual and honorable battle to make good on that promise.”

Joining Trout for the ceremony were Will Elston, president, National Society of the Children of the American Revolution; Susan Gillette Meer, Pennsylvania State regent for the Daughters of the American Revolution; and Lauren Gurniewicz, chief of Interpretation and Partnerships, Independence National Historical Park.

The significance of America’s founding document has been recognized on U.S. stamps before, including notably during the nation’s bicentennial in 1976. This new issuance is part of a broader Postal Service celebration commemorating the U.S. Semiquincentennial, or 250 years, of independence, detailed on our website: [Postal Service Celebrates America’s 250th Anniversary](#).

The location and celebration honor both the Declaration of Independence’s birth and the Postal Service’s earliest beginnings under Benjamin Franklin, who was appointed the first postmaster general of the United Colonies on July 26, 1775, by the Second Continental Congress. Philadelphia was not only where the document was written and signed, but it also served as the nation’s first capital and Franklin’s home.

The B. Free Franklin site did not serve as a Post Office during the Colonial period but now sells stamps and displays historical information about Franklin and the Postal Service's importance in colonial life.

At its core, the declaration affirms that all people are created equal and born with rights that no government can take away. These include life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness — phrases now deeply woven into the American way of life. This was a radical message at a time when monarchies still dominated much of the world. In stating these principles so plainly, the Declaration of Independence gave the American Revolution its moral foundation, upended centuries of tradition and inspired democratic movements around the world.

The Colonies' declaration was more than just a statement of ideals. It was also a response to years of mounting tension with Great Britain. As the British government first taxed the Colonists without their input, then cracked down on dissent, many colonists came to believe that their rights as British subjects were under attack. The declaration lists 27 specific grievances — including taxation without representation, dissolution of colonial legislatures and denial of trial by jury — to make its case that independence was not only justified but necessary.

After months of debate among the Colonies, the tide began to turn in early 1776 when the pamphlet "Common Sense" by Thomas Paine delivered compelling arguments for cutting ties with the monarchy.

Momentum built quickly in Philadelphia. In June 1776, the Second Continental Congress formed a committee to draft a formal declaration with Thomas Jefferson, then just 33 years old, drafting the initial document. Following days of editing and debate, Congress voted for independence on July 2 and approved the final text of the declaration two days later.

In its final form, the declaration did more than justify rebellion. It laid out the reasons for separation and went on to define the values that would shape the nation under a new form of government. Over time, these ideals have been taken up by Americans working to ensure the country lives up to its founding promises. The document continued to inspire across generations and changes in society that helped to spur the abolition of slavery in the North, shaped President Abraham Lincoln's vision of democracy, and influenced the women's rights movement.

The stamp's bold design in red, white and blue features a vertical layout with the year "1776" arranged against a deep blue background, with each numeral taking the shape of a feather quill pen as a nod to the instruments used by the 56 brave patriots who signed the nation's founding document. Juan Carlos Pagan created the stamp design and typography and Greg Breeding was the art director for the project.

The Declaration of Independence commemorative stamps are issued in panes of 20 and is a Forever stamp. Forever stamps will always be equal in value to the current First-Class Mail 1-ounce price. News of the stamp is being shared with the hashtag **#DeclarationofIndependenceStamp**.

Now preserved at the U.S. National Archives Museum in Washington, DC, the Declaration of Independence endures as both a founding document and a living symbol of the principles that have guided the United States for 250 years.

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The Postal Service generally receives no tax dollars for operating expenses and relies on the sale of postage, products and services to fund its operations.

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