



Betsy Ross

The Great Debate:

Who Designed the U.S.

No one knows for sure who designed the U.S. flag or who created the first one. Today, most experts agree that Francis Hopkinson, a delegate to the Continental Congress from New Jersey, designed the flag. But, in 1870, William J. Canby claimed that his grandmother, a seamstress from Philadelphia named Betsy Ross, made the first U.S. flag.

To learn more see:

http://www.educationworld.com/a_lesson



AS AMERICAN AS APPLE PIE

Finding where the phrase came from is not 'As Easy as Pie.'

In fact, it seems no one really knows, but I will share what I found posted by a guy named Bob on 9/1/2000.

The expression "as American as apple pie," is not that old. "Apple pie figures in our figurative language, as in the expressions 'simple as pie.'

it was only in the twentieth century, apparently in the 1960s, that we began to be 'as American as apple pie.'" According to a book written in 1984 book by Susan Purdy, 'As Easy as Pie':



UNCLE SAM DAY

September 13th

Uncle Sam Day celebrates a symbol of America. Uncle Sam is certainly one of America's most recognized symbols. Uncle Sam appears on everything from military posters to cartoon images to advertising media.

Origin of Uncle Sam Day:

There are two theories as to how Uncle Sam emerged. Both date back to the early 1800's.

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The Officially recognized theory date back to soldiers stationed near Troy New York during the war of 1812. Barrels of meat received by the soldiers were stamped "U. S." The supplier was Samuel Wilson of Troy, New York. Soldiers jokingly referred to him as "Uncle Sam." In 1813, the first image of "Uncle Sam" appeared. In 1961, the U. S. Congress issued a resolution recognizing "Uncle Sam" Wilson, and authorizing a monument in his home town of Troy, New York.

The second and less popular theory of the creation of Uncle Sam dates back to the early 1800's. Irish immigrants were coming to America and some believe that Uncle Sam emerged from these immigrants. In their language, the United States of America was "Stait Aontaithe Mheiricea." "SAM" abbreviated

Did you know

- In 1814, Francis Scott Key wrote a poem, "Defense of Fort McHenry," when he saw the flag still flying the morning after an attack by the British. Today, that poem is known by another name: "The Star-Spangled Banner."
- The Flag Act of 1818 states that a star be added for any new state on the Fourth of July following that state's admission.
- Flag Day was observed for the first time in 1877, the 100th anniversary of the adoption of our country's red-white-and-blue banner.
- Students first said the Pledge of Allegiance in 1892, the 400th anniversary of Christopher Columbus's arrival in the Americas.
- In 1916, President Woodrow Wilson established Flag Day as an annual national celebration.
- Congress officially recognized Flag Day by passing the National Flag Day Bill in 1949, during President Harry Truman's administration.

FLAG DAY

June 14th

National Flag Day

Short history lesson:

The Pledge of Allegiance

Bellamy, a Baptist Minister, wrote the Pledge in 1892.

It was originally published in *The Youth's Companion* on September 8, 1892.

In its original form it read:

"I pledge allegiance to my Flag and the Republic for which it stands, one nation, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all."

In 1923, the words, "the Flag of the United States of America" were added. At this time it read:

"I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all."

In 1954, in response to the Communist threat of the times, President Eisenhower encouraged Congress to add the words "under God," creating the 31-word pledge we say today.

The original Bellamy salute, first described in 1892 by Francis Bellamy, who authored the original Pledge, began with a military salute, and after reciting the words "to the flag," the arm was extended toward the flag.

At a signal from the Principal the pupils in ordered ranks, hands to the side, face the Flag. Another signal is given; every pupil gives the flag the military salute – right hand lifted, palm downward, to a line with the forehead and close to it. Standing thus, all repeat together,

slowly, "I pledge allegiance to my Flag and the Republic for which it stands; one Nation indivisible, with Liberty and Justice for all." At the words, "to my Flag," the right hand is extended gracefully, palm upward, toward the Flag, and remains in this gesture till the end of the affirmation; whereupon all hands immediately drop to the side.

The Youth's Companion, 1892

In 1942 Congress also established the current practice of rendering the pledge with the right hand over the heart.

The official name of The Pledge of Allegiance was adopted in 1945.

The last change in language came on Flag Day 1954, when Congress passed a law, which added the words "under God" after "one nation."



FLAG DAY

June 14th

Did you Know? If you like to study flags, then you are a Vexillologist!

- In 1983, the world's largest flag was displayed in Washington, D.C. The flag, which measured 411 feet by 210 feet, weighed 7 tons! Each star measured 13 feet across! - See more at: http://www.educationworld.com/a_lesson



Perhaps the oldest continuing Flag Day parade is At Fairfield, Washington. Beginning in 1909 or 1910, Fairfield has held a parade every year since, with the possible exception of 1918.

Some Facts About the Flag

- The Red Stripes on the Flag symbolize England, and the white stripes represent America's separation from it's mother country.
- The American Flag is older than the U.S. Constitution
- When New States join the union, stars are added to the flag on the following July 4th
- The design of the American flag was standardized in 1912 by President William Howard Taft.

Source: Citizens Flag Alliance and News USA

Folding the Flag

- Two persons facing each other, hold the flag waist high and horizontally between them.
- The lower striped section is folded, lengthwise, over the blue field. Hold bottom to top and edges together securely.
- Fold the flag again, lengthwise, folded edge to open edge.
- A triangular fold is started along the length of the flag, from the end to the heading by bringing the striped corner of the folded edge to meet the open edge.
- The outer point is turned inward parallel with the open edge forming a second triangle
- Repeat the triangle folding until the entire length of the flag is folded.
- When the flag is completely folded, only the triangular blue field should be visible.



National Anthem The Star Spangled Banner

Francis Scott Key wrote our US National Anthem, *The Star Spangled Banner*, after being inspired by the sight of a huge American flag still waving at Ft. McHenry following a fierce night of battle between American and British forces.

The battle occurred during the **War of 1812** and more specifically the Battle of Baltimore. Mr. Key, a lawyer and amateur poet, had boarded a British ship in hopes of freeing Dr. William Beanes. The British agreed to the release but would not let them go until after an attack the British had planned on Ft. McHenry.

Through the night Francis Scott Key watched the bombs light up the sky but could see little else of the fort and had great concern.

On the morning of September 14, 1814, with "dawn's early light", he saw the huge flag that U.S. soldiers had raised to celebrate their victory over the British troops. Relieved and moved by the sight of the flag, he wrote the poem, which was originally titled *Defence of Fort McHenry*. It was set to the tune of a British song "The Anacreontic Song".

It grew to be a popular patriotic song, played at July 4th celebrations, baseball games, military occasions, and flag raisings. Yet, it wasn't until March 3, 1931 that President Herbert Hoover signed a law adopting it as the official American National Anthem.

US National Anthem

The Star Spangled Banner

O say! can you see by the dawn's early light,
What so proudly we hail'd at the twilight's last gleaming?
Whose broad stripes and bright stars, thro' the perilous fight,
O'er the ramparts we watch'd, were so gallantly streaming!
And the rocket's red glare, the bombs bursting in air,
Gave proof thro' the night that our flag was still there.
O say, does that Star-Spangled Banner yet wave
O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave?

On the shore, dimly seen thro' the mists of the deep,
Where the foe's haughty host in dread silence reposes,
What is that which the breeze, o'er the towering steep,
As it fitfully blows, half conceals, half discloses?
Now it catches the gleam of the morning's first beam,
In full glory reflected now shines in the stream;
'Tis the Star-Spangled Banner, O long may it wave
O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave!

And where is that band who so vauntingly swore
That the havoc of war and the battle's confusion
A home and a country should leave us no more?
Their blood has wash'd out their foul footsteps' pollution.
No refuge could save the hireling and slave
From the terror of flight, or the gloom of the grave;
And the Star-Spangled Banner in triumph doth wave
O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave!

O thus be it ever when freemen shall stand
Between their loved homes and the war's desolation!
Blest with vict'ry and peace, may the heav'n-rescued land
Praise the Pow'r that hath made and preserved us a nation.
Then conquer we must, when our cause it is just,
And this be our motto: "In God is our trust."
And the Star-Spangled Banner in triumph shall wave
O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave!

~ Francis Scott Key, 1814



American Independence Day 4th of July

July 4th – American Independence Day! This is a remarkable day in our history – on July 4, 1776 the Second Continental Congress formally declared that the thirteen American colonies were now independent states.

The colonies had been at war with Great Britain since the battles of Lexington and Concord on April 19, 1775. Read the [Concord Hymn](#), written by Ralph Waldo Emerson, which describes the Battle of Concord.

The Parliament of Great Britain had passed various acts imposing taxes on the colonies. Of course, the colonies were not represented in Parliament and therefore argued against **taxation without representation**. Arguments expanded to Great Britain's overreach of authority in the affairs of the colonies.

Following the Boston Tea Party, Parliament enacted more acts to punish Massachusetts, set an example, and discourage the colonists from such future actions. These acts included putting the government of Massachusetts under control of the British government.

On November 29, 1775, **Thomas Jefferson** said:

"Believe me, dear Sir: there is not in the British empire a man who more cordially loves a union with Great Britain than I do. But, by the God that made me, I will cease to exist before I yield to a connection on such terms as the British Parliament propose; and in this, I think I speak the sentiments of America."

Thomas Paine published his pamphlet *Common Sense* in 1776, which argued in favor of independence. This prompted public debate over the pros and cons of separating from Great Britain.

On July 2, 1776 the Continental Congress voted to adopt the resolution of independence. This officially severed our political ties with the British Empire. On July 4, 1776, the Congress finalized the wording of the declaration and it became our [Declaration of Independence](#).

In the United States, our American Independence Day, better known as the 4th of July, is a day for parades and picnics, fireworks and barbecues. We get together with family and friends to eat, play games, and laugh.

It is also a time to reflect on the momentous and extraordinary decisions made more than 200 years ago regarding our independence. Can you imagine the sacrifices made to secure that independence?

"We must all hang together, or, assuredly, we shall all hang separately." - **Benjamin Franklin** at the signing of the [Declaration of Independence](#), July 4, 1776

"Is life so dear, or peace so sweet, as to be purchased at the price of chains and slavery? Forbid it, Almighty God! I know not what course others may take; but as for me, give me liberty or give me death!" - **Patrick Henry**, March 23, 1775

You will think me transported with enthusiasm, but I am not. I am well aware of the toil and blood and treasure that it will cost to maintain this Declaration, and support and defend these States. Yet through all the gloom I can see the rays of ravishing light and glory. I can see that the end is worth more than all the means; that posterity will triumph in that day's transaction, even though we [may regret] it, which I trust in God we shall not." - **John Adams**, letter to his wife Abigail Adams, July 3, 1776





This declaration of our independence is often considered the moral guide of our country. Read these words of **Abraham Lincoln**, as he debated Stephen Douglas for a Senate seat on August 17, 1858 in Lewistown, Illinois:

"They erected a beacon to guide their children and their children's children, and the countless myriads who should inhabit the earth in other ages. Wise statesmen as they were, they knew the tendency of prosperity to breed tyrants, and so they established these great self-evident truths, that when in the distant future some man, some faction, some interest, should set up the doctrine that none but rich men, or none but white men, were entitled to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness, their posterity might look up again to the Declaration of Independence and take courage to renew the battle which their fathers began—so that truth, and justice, and mercy, and all the humane and Christian virtues might not be extinguished from the land; so that no man would hereafter dare to limit and circumscribe the great principles on which the temple of liberty was being built."
(http://www.larouchepub.com/other/editorials/2008/3527lincoln_declaratn.html - "Abraham Lincoln on The Declaration of Independence")

July 4th is our American Independence Day. Read the [Declaration of Independence](#). Share it with your children. Discuss it with friends.

Renew the spirit!

Share Your Spirit of Independence

Do you have a great poem, story, or quote about America's independence?

<http://www.celebrate-american-holidays.com/American-Independence-Day.html>



The Land of Liberty

~ Author Unknown

I love my country's pine-clad hills,
Her thousand bright and gushing rills,
Her sunshine and her storms;
Her rough and rugged rocks, that rear
Their hoary heads high in the air
In wild, fantastic forms.

I love her rivers, deep and wide,
Those mighty streams that seaward glide
To seek the ocean's breast;
Her smiling fields, her pleasant vales,
Her shady dells, her flow'ry dales,
The haunts of peaceful rest.

I love her forests, dark and lone,
For there the wild bird's merry tone
I hear from morn till night;
And there are lovelier flowers, I ween,
Than e'er in Eastern lands were seen,
In varied colors bright.

Her forests and her valleys fair,
Her flowers that scent the morning air--
All have their charms for me;
But more I love my country's name,
Those words that echo deathless fame,
"The Land of Liberty."



Concord Hymn ~ Ralph Waldo Emerson

By the rude bridge that arched the flood,
Their flag to April's breeze unfurled,
Here once the embattled farmers stood,
And fired the shot heard round the world.

The foe long since in silence slept;
Alike the conqueror silent sleeps;
And Time the ruined bridge has swept
Down the dark stream which seaward creeps.

On this green bank, by this soft stream,
We set today a votive stone;
That memory may their deed redeem,
When, like our sires, our sons are gone.

Spirit, that made those heroes dare
To die, and leave their children free
Bid Time and Nature gently spare
The shaft we raise to them and thee.

