



APRIL 2026

NORTHERN NECK HISTORY CULTURE HAPPENINGS

# Virginia Resolved:

## Celebrating Richard Henry Lee's Role in American Independence



On July 4, the United States celebrates Independence Day, but the colonies actually severed ties with Britain days earlier—a revolutionary step set in motion by Northern Neck native Richard Henry Lee.

In 1774, Parliament imposed the Intolerable Acts, including the Boston Port Act, which closed Boston's harbor in response to unrest—especially the Boston Tea Party. Virginia stood as an ally to Massachusetts.

With Britain's clench on freedom, discontent grew across the colonies, boiling over into armed conflict at the Battles of Lexington and Concord in 1775.

As tensions escalated, King George III declared the colonies to be in open rebellion and ordered civil and military officials to suppress it.

By 1776, a growing number of colonists believed the only way forward was independence.

Lee, a rebel with a cause, one staunchly opposed to British overreach, viewed Virginia as a leader in the resistance movement.

"And many now look to her with anxious expectation," he wrote to Patrick Henry.

In May 1776, the Virginia Convention convened in Williamsburg. It was agreed delegates would push for independence from Great Britain during the Continental Congress.

On June 7, the Second Continental Congress met in Philadelphia. Lee rose and presented a resolution with three main calls to action: (1) that the colonies become independent states, (2) seek foreign alliances, and (3) establish a confederation.

Not all delegates were ready to support the break with Britain. The vote was postponed to allow representatives to consult their colonies and build consensus.

Even so, Congress began preparing for independence, including appointing a committee to draft what would become the United States Declaration of Independence.

On July 2, Congress approved the Lee Resolution, with 12 colonies voting in favor and New York abstaining—marking the moment the colonies formally declared freedom.

Two days later, on July 4, the Declaration of Independence was adopted.

### Virginia Resolved

250 years after Lee introduced his resolution, his home, Stratford Hall, will commemorate the moment with a weekend of events.

On June 6, festivities begin with an optional country buffet and family-style seating in the Stratford Dining Room from 5 to 7:30 p.m.

Carly Fiorina, VA250's National Honorary Chair, will present the keynote address. The evening will include a patriotic performance by the

United States Navy Concert Band and concludes with a grand fireworks display over the Great House.

On Sunday, June 7, a living history program will run from noon to 4 p.m., featuring:

- A citizenship ceremony at 12 p.m.
- Interpretive discussions with Richard Henry Lee and Hannah Corbin Lee
- 1st and 4th Continental Light Dragoon cavalry drills
- Sons of the American Revolution musket demonstrations
- Patowomeck eel pot demonstrations
- Colonial foodways in the historic kitchen
- Chocolate-making demonstrations
- Colonial, music, games and activities

This celebration offers a chance to reflect on Virginia's pivotal role in the push for independence—and on the resolution that helped turn a rebellion into a nation.



To RSVP & Get Tickets for Virginia Resolved, Visit: [stratfordhall.org/virginiareolved](http://stratfordhall.org/virginiareolved)

## Tour & Explore



Spring is here—it's time to say hello to the open road!

And what better place than the Northern Neck to shake off cabin fever?

The region is teeming with history, culture, outdoor adventure, and fantastic food.

Best of all, you don't have to plan a thing. The Northern Neck National Heritage Area has done the work for you, offering curated driving tours through all five counties.

Just visit: [northernneck.org/driving-tours/](http://northernneck.org/driving-tours/)



## Save the Date: NNK Signature Speaker Series

May 17 at 2 pm

When the Declaration of Independence Was News is being published to mark the 250th anniversary.

The book explores the nation's founding document at the moment of its creation in 1776—before anyone knew whether the United States would win the war against Britain—and reveals the stories of the people involved

in declaring independence, from printers and soldiers to diplomats and translators.

The author, Dr. Emily Sneff, will be in Warsaw to take listeners between the covers.

Don't miss out.

WHERE: Rappahannock Indigenous Conservation Education Center, 2570 Newland Road, Warsaw

