
New York State American Revolution Bicentennial Commission
TO HIS EXCELLENCY, MALCOLM WILSON, Governor of the State of New York, and the Honorable Members of the Senate and Assembly:

Pursuant to the provisions of Chapter 630 of the Laws of 1968, the New York State American Revolution Bicentennial Commission hereby respectfully submits its Fifth Annual Report.

JOHN H. G. PELL
Chairman

E. K. FRETWELL JR.
Vice Chairman

March 1, 1974
THE NEW YORK STATE
AMERICAN REVOLUTION
BICENTENNIAL COMMISSION

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STAFF

Dr. Louis L. Tucker ........................................... Executive Director
Dr. Thomas E. Felt ............................................. Principal Historian
Richard S. Allen .............................................. Program Director
Paul J. Trela .................................................. Ass’t. Program Director
Nancy A. Laribee .............................................. Commission Assistant

Office:
Office of State History
State Education Department
99 Washington Avenue
Albany, New York 12210

Covers: The official New York State Bicentennial Medal, first issued June 14, 1973. Available in 2½” and 1½” silver ($40 and $10) in limited quantities, and in the same sizes in bronze at $6 and $1, they may be purchased at cooperating banks throughout the state or directly from the Medallic Arts Company, 708 3rd Avenue, New York, N. Y. 10017. The appropriate sales tax should accompany mail orders. Royalties to the State Commission are used to further its bicentennial programs.
Fifth Annual Report
1973 - 1974

Perhaps the surest sign of approaching middle age comes when we stop giving each new birthday a spontaneous greeting as a sign of further growth. We are convinced of our maturity, and growth is a word apt to remind us of waistlines. We may be tempted to pass the occasion off as something inevitable, as if it would always return. Birthdays begin to require a pause for reflection before they can be met with any cheer at all. Yet if the time to reflect is taken, there can be a special value in the birthdays of the middle aged.

Granted that nations and states are not biological organisms, it might be agreed that after the passage of 200 eventful years the bloom of careless youth is no longer on the America born in the War for In-
dependence. We have lost the naive belief that every year must be seen as a chronicle of progress, though it may be a challenge to make progress. Like other nations, we have met reverses as well as successes, and fought ourselves as well as others. We have found that some of our energy has been borrowed, and some of our power is useless. Whether we are really "number one" among world powers has become a meaningless question now that powers of the second rank are also capable of destroying continents. In short, it has become evident that no form of physical prowess, whether it be wealth, population, energy, or armaments, can separately or together insure our safety, much less improve the quality of our lives. Gathering our strength is not going to be enough unless at the same time we gather our wits.

Seen this way — as a means of helping us to gather our collective wits — the forthcoming years of bicentennial observances can be welcomed as an occasion which is badly needed. It is not merely inevitable, but timely. If it were not due on the calendar anyway, we would do well to invent something like it. The bicentennial is a birthday for an adult nation. It can best be enjoyed if it is respected as a time for relating the future to the past.

It is too early to judge whether the bicentennial will achieve its potential in depth, but the breadth of its appeal has been growing rapidly. In the year since February, 1973 federal, interstate, and state agencies have accelerated the pace of their plans and commitments; local bicentennial committees and commissions in this state have tripled in number. The State Commission's report can only be understood in the context of this very gratifying response among its new allies at every level.

Perhaps the development which best typifies the interlocking of federal, state, and local commitments has been the undertaking late in this past year of the BINET system within the state. This computerized information system for the exchange of intelligence on plans and programs for the bicentennial era was initiated in Washington with the purpose of covering the nation. The American Revolution Bicentennial Administration (successor to the federal Commission) screens and programs all inputs, pays for the terminal to be located in the Commission's Albany office, and will sponsor a series of informative publications to be based on BINET data. The State Commission, through a contractor, has joined with the State Council on the Arts in making a survey of approximately 2,600 cultural organizations in the state to learn their
bicentennial plans and prepare entries on them for the BINET system. When the system is fully operative, as it will be during 1974, inputs from federal, state, and local organizations will be repaid through access to information which will expedite the work of all of them. Private businesses will also find BINET a useful tool in planning. As of early this year, with the survey results incomplete, the system includes 650 entries of which 114 are from New York.

A second example of cooperative action throughout the federal system is the matching grant funds allocated this past year in the amount of $40,000 to each state. The Commission has so far approved the following grants from this source during 1973:

The New York City Bicentennial Corporation ($5,000) to enlarge the distribution of its newsletter, *Focus '76*.

The After Dinner Opera Company ($5,000) for research and presentation of 17th and 18th century American operas, in New York City.

The Hall of Science, Flushing, N.Y. ($1,500) for an exhibition which will highlight the work of American scientists who did their major work in New York State.

The Performing Arts Repertory Theatre Foundation ($5,000) for touring two plays “Young Ben Franklin” and “Young Jefferson” among schools within the state.

The Town of Laurens, Otsego County ($300.00) for publication of an updated town history.

The Heritage Foundation of Oswego County ($1,000) through the City of Oswego for a historical buildings and sites workshop to be held in July 1974.

Genesee County ($2,000) for publication of a new county history and a *Special Day July 4, 1776* program.

The Adirondack Center Museum-Essex County Historical Society ($675.00) for the development of a darkroom, recording, and photographic center at the museum.
The Society for the Preservation of Long Island Antiquities ($3500.00) for an archeological survey of Nassau and Suffolk counties commencing in the summer of 1974.

The Fishkill Historical Society ($7,000) for the archeological exploration of the Fishkill Depot area.

The Rochester Museum of Science ($850.00) in support of a bicentennial exhibit which was part of the Museum's folk festival held on September 27, 1973.

The State Commission is not empowered to make direct grants from its appropriated state funds, but it has been assisting local and specialized groups realize their plans through other forms of cooperation. Two publications in the past year are examples. The Champlain Valley in the American Revolution, an illustrated booklet based on a text by the late Col. Edward P. Hamilton, was published in the spring jointly by the Commission and the Champlain Valley Committee for the Observance of the Bicentennial of the American Revolution. At the end of the year, Letters from a Revolution, a small hardbound book of documents from the Bronck Family Papers edited by Raymond Beecher, was published jointly by the Commission and the Greene County Historical Society, Coxsackie. Other publications calling for a sharing of costs and editorial talents are being planned.

The Commission has also participated in the development of a major regional organization, the Bicentennial Council of the Thirteen Original States. J. Moreau Brown of the New York State Commission is vice-chairman of the Council. After opening a central office in Atlanta under a full-time director this year, the Council has begun to undertake programs related to the mutual interests of its member states. A half-hour film on the Revolution in New York and the other middle states will be produced as one of a three-part series. A 13-state high school debate contest will be held in Williamsburg, Virginia, under Council sponsorship in February, 1974. New York will be sending its two leading teams to the finals to be held in the old House of Burgesses' chambers in Williamsburg. The New York State Commission is underwriting the cost of this representation, but in other respects the Council's activities are financed entirely from its own funds.
Another indicator of the level of activity at this early stage is the list of officially designated Bicentennial Communities within the state. These are communities of every sort — counties, cities, towns, and villages — which have submitted sufficient evidence of their organizational plans and programs to be nominated by the State Commission for designation as a Bicentennial Community by the American Revolution Bicentennial Administration. This is a new program of recognition, the first approvals having been given only last October. It is continuing into the years ahead, and eleven applications are now pending. To date, there are twenty Bicentennial Communities in New York State:

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If the growing strength of federal, regional, and state participation is gratifying, the upsurge of local leadership has been remarkable. The list starting on page 10 suggests the scope of this phenomenon. One year ago it showed 33 bicentennial organizations, including 19 at the county level. Today it shows 111 organizations, 41 of them county-wide. This does not include the many voluntary service and patriotic organizations with bicentennial committees.

With the completion this month of the half-hour color film, “And Take Me By the Hand,” the Commission has brought to fruition a major project begun early in the year. More than 25 Revolutionary war period historic sites of New York are shown in this informative film made by Andre de la Varre and narrated by Howard Da Silva, the star of “1776.” Prints are available for loan on request to the Commission’s office. A growing public interest in visiting the sites where history happened has been evident from the continued demand for the
Commission's 1972 booklet, *Landmarks of the Revolution in New York State*, which has gone to a second printing for a total of 37,000 copies.

An awakening interest in the serious study of the period's history has been met to a degree in 1973 by four symposia devoted to special topics. On May 12 the State University College at Plattsburgh was host to a symposium on "Northern New York in the Revolution." "The Revolution in Western New York" was the theme of the October 13 symposium co-sponsored by the Buffalo and Erie County Historical Society. "The Loyalist Americans" were the topic at the Tarrytown symposium November 1-2, and Sleepy Hollow Restorations, Inc. was cosponsor and host. On November 10, "Music of the Revolutionary Period" was both discussed and performed at a symposium held at Saratoga Springs in cooperation with the Saratoga County Bicentennial Committee. A number of the papers presented at these conferences will be published, and the series will be continued in 1974 as programs can be arranged.

Taking a different format, the Suffolk Museum in Stony Brook in January began a series of six weekly sessions devoted to Long Island and the Revolution, attracting a capacity enrolment of students and local historians from that area to a "short course" cosponsored by the Commission.

Scholars and many others sharing a concern for the preservation of historical records have long urged the Commission not to let the bicentennial pass without making an effort to insure the security of the many important documents from the state's early years which are still held in local depositories away from the major research centers. The problem is most acute in the case of deteriorating early town and village records. By the end of 1973, the Commission had developed the staff and equipment capability to begin a series of field visits with a portable microfilm camera to meet this need. The first stops were made in January to film the early minute books of the town of Canaan (Columbia County) and Cambridge (Washington County). At least fifteen other locations are now scheduled for visits. Staff direction by the Public Records Section of the Office of State History is particularly helpful in this program because it draws on their knowledge of both local officials and microfilming techniques.

Scholars of a special kind — dedicated to recreating, reliving, and reenacting the daily life of the Revolutionary soldier — are the members of the Brigade of the American Revolution. Their musterings have
been sponsored on five earlier occasions by the Commission and again in 1973 they found large and appreciative audiences at Eisenhower Park in East Meadow, Richmondtown, Crown Point, New Windsor, and Cooperstown.

The continuing need for frequent contacts between Commission staff and local organizations has been met in part by telephone and informal visits and in part by responding to requests for talks on the bicentennial before interested groups. The executive director has logged 28 such presentations, the program director 24, and other staff 5. These audiences alone, not counting radio and television broadcasts, were scattered over 26 counties from Chautauqua to Clinton to Suffolk. In addition to the speaking engagements, the Commission has continued to give voice to the Bicentennial in the state through its quarterly newsletter, *The Correspondent*. Started in September, 1970 with a press run of 10,000, this six-page illustrated digest of news and features has finished its third year requiring a run of 18,000 copies to meet the demand. An attractive complementary newsletter publication has appeared during 1973 in the form of *Focus '76*, from the New York City Bicentennial Corporation.

**Quarterly meetings** of the full Commission have been held in New York City in February and April, in Johnstown (at Johnson Hall) in October, and in Albany in January. The executive committee has met more frequently, as have the more specialized subcommittees. On several occasions members and staff have represented the Commission at interstate meetings in Boston, Washington, Atlanta, San Juan, Hershey and Washington’s Crossing, Pennsylvania, and Williamsburg, Virginia.

In January 1974, the Commission lost the highly valued participation of Supreme Court Justice Guy A. Graves through resignation. In his place Governor Wilson appointed Robert Moses, the former New York City Park Commissioner and president of the 1964 World’s Fair. Staff changes have included the first additions since 1970 with the appointments of Mrs. Margaret Brandon as clerk-typist in August, Miss Nancy Laribee as staff assistant in October, and Mr. Paul Trela as assistant program director in November. These additions were offset by the loss of Mrs. Phyllis Winkelman in December, leaving a net of five staff positions supplementing the regular staff of the Office of State History, which continues to serve as the Commission’s administrative arm under the arrangement offered in 1969 by State Education Commissioner Ewald B. Nyquist.
The year ahead will see the completion of several projects currently in preparation. Among them are an annotated guide to historical writings on the Revolution in New York, a guide to the manuscripts of the Revolutionary period in the New York State Library, a booklet surveying the role of women in the Revolutionary period in New York, the erection of at least three historical markers (at Fishkill and near Elmira and Saratoga), and a wall map depicting the events of the time. One or more small traveling exhibits on the bicentennial are also scheduled, and a booklet for elementary school teachers on children’s participatory theater is in preparation. The design and construction of a history-mobile, the preparation of two television documentaries, and an underwater archeological project are being proposed. A variety of other commitments will be made or met during the year as cooperative arrangements with other organizations develop. An hour-long dramatic film remains a hope for production during the year for release in 1975. A proposal for assistance in financing it is now before the National Endowment for the Humanities.

The Commission’s executive director is a member of the Governor’s Inter-agency Committee on Tourism and is working with that group under Commissioner Neal L. Moylan of the Commerce Department to coordinate plans for accommodating the expected influx of visitors in the next several years. Most of what local residents will enjoy
in the bicentennial program will also appeal to visitors, which means that the involvement of this state's $3.4 billion dollar tourist, travel, and recreation industry is a vital part of statewide planning. Significant contributions to bicentennial observances across the state may also be expected from other state agencies. Notable efforts being made by in particular the Office of Parks and Recreation, and the State Council on the Arts. These two agencies are strategically important for any well-rounded approach to the needs of residents and tourists alike in the coming years, and the Commission endorses their bicentennial planning proposals.

State funding of the Commission's work so far has been basically for supplementary staff and early planning needs, with the fiscal 1972-73 appropriation of $115,000 exceeding the previous year by $16,000. Production even more than planning will be the key to success in the coming fiscal year, since what is offered the public during the 1975-77 peak years of celebration must first be paid for. The Commission's proposed budget of $350,000 for fiscal 1974-75 begins to reflect this need. It is a proposal for obtaining the means not to pay for the bicentennial but to keep it moving in a way that will assure its success as a statewide celebration involving many funds and individuals and promising a renewal of the dedication of our founders as we mark the beginning of our third century of statehood and nationhood.
LOCAL BICENTENNIAL COMMISSIONS

The following list includes all regional, county, and local bicentennial commemoration groups reported to the State Commission as of January, 1974.

Albany Bicentennial Observance Commission, Judge John H. Pennock, Chairman, Albany County Court House, Albany, N.Y. 12207

Albany County Historical Association Bicentennial Committee, Mrs. James H. Linden, Jr., Chairman, 9 Ten Broeck Place, Albany, N.Y. 12210

Alleghany Bicentennial Committee, Mr. Bill Green, Jr., Coordinator, 20 Willets Avenue, Belmont, N.Y. 14813

Allegany County Historical Society Bicentennial Committee, Miss Frances Johnson, Chairman, R.D., Friendship, N.Y. 14739

Amsterdam Bicentennial Commission, Mayor John P. Gomulka, City Hall, Church Street, Amsterdam, N.Y. 12010

Amsterdam Chapter of NSDAR Bicentennial Committee, Mrs. Waldeman S. Raymond, Chairman, R.F.D. #3, Amsterdam, N.Y. 13021

Auburn All-American Bicentennial Commission, Mr. James H. Draucher, Chairman, Memorial City Hall, Auburn, N.Y. 13021

Bayville Bicentennial Commission, Mrs. Gladys M. Mack, Historian, 15 Beaver Drive, Bayville, N.Y. 11709

Bethlehem Historical Association Bicentennial Committee, Mr. William Weisheit, Sr., Chairman, 80 Fernbank Avenue, Delmar, N.Y. 12034

Bicentennial Gold Star Committee, Manhasset American Legion Post #304, Mr. Donald G. Cronan, Chairman, 40 Old Estate Road, Manhasset, N.Y. 11030

Boonville Bicentennial Commission, Mr. Harold T. Fitch, Supervisor, Boonville, N.Y. 13309

Brockport, Clarkson, Hamlin and Sweden Bicentennial Commission, Mr. William W. Hiler, Chairman, 288 South Main Street, Brockport, N.Y. 14420

Bronx County Bicentennial Commission, Mr. Lloyd Ultan, Chairman, 3266 Bainbridge Avenue, Bronx, N.Y. 10467

Brookhaven Bicentennial Commission, Mr. David Overton, Chairman, Lake Grove, N.Y. 11755

Broome County Bicentennial Commission, Mr. Josial Newcomb, Chairman, R.D. #5, Brooks Road, Binghamton, N.Y. 13901

American Revolution Bicentennial Commission of Buffalo and Erie County, Dr. I. Frank Mogavero, Chairman, Buffalo and Erie County Historical Society, 25 Nottingham Court, Buffalo, N.Y. 14216

Camillus Bicentennial Commission, Miss Jane Maxwell, Historian, 13 Genesee Street, Camillus, N.Y. 13031

Canajoharie Bicentennial Committee, Mr. Raymond Kiefl, Chairman, Canajoharie, N.Y. 13317

Cayuga County Bicentennial Commission, Prof. Walter Long, Chairman, Cayuga Museum of History and Art, Auburn, N.Y. 13021

Champlain-Upper Hudson Revolutionary Bicentennial Commission, Mrs. Jane N. Lape, Chairman, Fort Ticonderoga, N.Y. 12883
Bicentennial of Charlton Committee, Mrs. Barbara Fagan, Chairman, 4 Meadowlark Lane, Ballston Lake, N. Y. 12019

Chenango County Bicentennial Commission, Mrs. Mae Smith, Chairman, Woods Corners Road, Norwich, N. Y. 13815

Clifton Park History Advisory Committee, Mr. William Washington, Chairman, Rt. 146, Rexford, N. Y. 12148

Village of Clinton Bicentennial Commission, Mr. Howard W. Chaney, Chairman, Clinton, N. Y. 13323

Clinton County Bicentennial Commission, Col. F. J. Glavin, Chairman, 51 Cumberland Avenue, Plattsburgh, N. Y. 12901

Concord Bicentennial Commission, Mrs. Lillian D. Geiger, Chairman, Norton's Corners Road, Springville, N. Y. 14141

Cortland County Bicentennial Commission, Mr. Frank Taylor, Chairman, R.D. #3, Cortland, N. Y. 13045

Cow Neck Peninsula Historical Society Bicentennial Committee, Mrs. Meredith Warren, Chairman, 336 Port Washington Boulevard, Port Washington, N. Y. 11050

Cuba Bicentennial Commission, Mrs. James Cross, Chairman, Cuba, N. Y. 14727

Delaware County Bicentennial Commission, Mr. Frank B. Lane, Chairman, 18 Mead Street, Walton, N. Y. 13856

The Diocesan Committee on the National Bicentennial Observance, The Reverend Dr. Laman H. Bruner, Jr., 107 State Street, Albany, N. Y. 12207

Dolgeville and Manheim Committee for the American Revolution Bicentennial, Mr. Richard Zientek, Chairman, 25 Park Avenue, Dolgeville, N. Y. 13329

Dunkirk Bicentennial Commission, Mr. Richard Magliozi, Chairman, Dunkirk, N. Y. 14048

Dutchess County Bicentennial Commission, Prof. I. Jack Lippman, Chairman, Dutchess Community College, Poughkeepsie, N. Y. 14310

East Hampton Town Bicentennial Committee, Ms. Mary Fallon, Chairman, 159 Pantigo Road, East Hampton, N. Y. 11937

Essex County Bicentennial Commission, Mr. James Bailey, Chairman, P. O. Box 428, Elizabethtown, N. Y. 12932

Fulton County Bicentennial Commission, Mrs. Emma Krause, Chairman, County Office Building, Johnstown, N. Y. 12095

Historical Planning Committee for 1976 Anniversary for Genesee County, Ms. Virginia M. Barons, Coordinator, Holland Land Office Museum, 131 West Main Street, Batavia, N. Y. 14020

American Revolution Bicentennial Committee of Goshen, Mr. H. J. Jonas, Historian, Goshen, N. Y. 10924

Greene County Bicentennial Commission, Mr. Raymond Beecher, Acting Chairman, P. O. Box 467, Catskill, N. Y. 12414

Hancock Bicentennial Commission, American Legion Post #289 Auxiliary, Mrs. Joseph Walter, Chairman, Old Bridge Street, Hancock, N. Y. 13783

Town of Hempstead Bicentennial Commission, Mr. Roger A. Malfatti, Jr., Chairman, Town Hall Plaza, Hempstead, N. Y. 11550
Herkimer Bicentennial Commission, Mr. Charles E. Crandall, Historian, City Office Building, Herkimer, N. Y. 13350

American Revolution Bicentennial Committee for the Town of Highlands, Mr. Donald F. Clark, Chairman, Fort Montgomery, N. Y. 10922

Hudson Falls Bicentennial Commission, Mr. William Larowe, Chairman, Hudson Falls, N. Y. 12839

Huntington Bicentennial Commission, Mr. Rufus Langhans, Chairman, Town Hall, 227 Main Street, Huntington, N. Y. 11743

Town of Islip Bicentennial Commission, Mr. Radford J. M. Sprague, Chairman, Town Hall, Islip, N. Y. 11751

Kingston Bicentennial Commission, Mr. Edward Levine, Chairman, 26 Beckett Street, Kingston, N. Y. 12401

Lake Luzerne Bicentennial Commission, Mr. Lester S. Thomas, Chairman, 5791 Bridge Street, Lake Luzerne, N. Y. 12846

Lewiston Bicentennial Committee, Dr. Samuel Bruni, Chairman, Plain Street, Lewiston, N. Y. 14092

Liberty Bicentennial Committee, Mr. Howard Bernstein, Chairman, Bradley, Liberty, N. Y. 12754

Village of Lindenhurst Bicentennial Commission, Ms. Evelyn M. Ellis, Chairman, Lindenhurst, N. Y. 11757

Locust Valley Bicentennial Commission, Miss Dorothy H. McGee, Historian, Box 142, Piping Rock Road, Locust Valley, N. Y. 11560

Minerva Bicentennial Commission, Mrs. Patricia Hewitt, Chairman, Olmstedville, N. Y. 12857

Bicentennial Congress of Monroe County, Ms. Jean C. Dignan, Secretary, 366 Cromwell Drive, Rochester, N. Y. 14610

Montgomery County Bicentennial Commission, Mr. Carlo Palidore, Chairman, Old Court House, Fonda, N. Y. 12068

Nassau County American Revolution Bicentennial Commission, Mr. Edward J. Smits, Chairman, Research Center, Muttontown Road, Syosset, N. Y. 11791

American Revolution Commission of the City of Newburgh, Mr. William H. Bradford, Chairman, City Hall, Newburgh, N. Y. 12550

Town of New Windsor Bicentennial Commission, Mr. Theodore F. Marsden, 555 Union Avenue, New Windsor, N. Y. 12550

New York City Bicentennial Corporation, Mr. Clarence J. Davies, Chairman, 331 Madison Avenue, New York, N. Y. 10017


Niagara County Bicentennial Commission, Mr. H. William Feder, Chairman, 739 Eighth Street, Niagara Falls, N. Y. 14301

Niagara Falls Bicentennial Commission, Mr. R. W. Hooker, Chairman, 563 Park Avenue, New York, N. Y. 10021

Northern Border Congress on Planning for the Bicentennial (Clinton, Franklin, Jefferson, Oswego and St. Lawrence Counties), Mr. Wallace Workmaster, Chairman, Fort Ontario, Oswego, N. Y. 13126