July 4th is typically a day filled with celebrations for our nation’s independence. This summer, please take a moment to remember. Our past is all too easy to forget because our ancestors did the hard part. It is up to us to remember and preserve their efforts.

The Declaration of Independence was signed July 4, 1776. The Declaration was the promise and the Constitution was the fulfillment. Thomas Jefferson lived at the Graff house in Philadelphia (7th and Market Streets) while he was writing the Declaration of Independence.

“We the People of the United States, in Order to form a more perfect Union, establish Justice, insure domestic Tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general Welfare, and secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America”. On September 17, 1787, the Constitution was adopted by the Constitutional Convention / Constitutional Congress in Philadelphia, PA. It was ratified in 1788 and the promise was fulfilled.

With that vision in mind, on June 14, 1777 the Continental Congress adopted the following resolution. The flag of the United States will be thirteen stripes, alternate red and white. The union will be the thirteen stars, white in a blue field representing a new constellation. The stars represented Delaware, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Georgia, Connecticut, Massachusetts, Maryland, South Carolina, New Hampshire, Virginia, New York, North Carolina and Rhode Island. The Pledge of Allegiance was written in 1892 by Francis Bellamy.

A natural born leader, George Washington, was unanimously elected president of the United States twice by the Electoral College and remains the only president to receive 100% of the electoral votes. He essentially ran unopposed. John Adams was his vice president. Polls for this election opened on December 15, 1788 and closed January 10, 1789. Today, we have one day dedicated to cast your vote which consists of about 13 hours to vote.

In today’s news, the Thornbury Historical Society (THS) hosted their annual dinner on May 3rd where our own Mike Payton became the 22nd recipient of the THS Luckenbach Service Award. This award is presented to someone who has distinguished her/himself in the preservation, protection and promotion of the history of our community. Mike becomes the fourth person from the Historic Commission who has been so honored.

Thanks to Joan Dehm and the THS Board, the dinner also became our venue for presentation of the Historic Register Plaques. These stately bronze plaques were given to the owners of the nine historic resource properties located in Thornton’s Historic District. With the approval and encouragement of the Board of Supervisors,
the Historic Commission designed these plaques in 2009. They represent our appreciation for the care given to preserve these properties. It is our Commission’s goal to mount these plaques on the front of each resource property for all to appreciate. Thank you to property owners: Mr. and Mrs. Beebe, Mr. and Mrs. Carbutt, Mr. and Mrs. Clinger, Mr. and Mrs. Dietz, Mr. and Mrs. Ryan, Mr. Sheller, and Mr. and Mrs. Weersing. It is through their efforts that we are able to enjoy and learn from our past. They are a major part of why Thornton Village qualified for National Register Status and today is officially recognized by the United States Office of the Interior.

Please visit the Historic Commission portion of the Township website thornbury.org.

- Ric Miller
  Historic Commission Chairman

“When the well is dry, we will know the worth of water” – Ben Franklin