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From the President's Desk . . . Central Ohio in June 1776: Weather, Crops, and the Frontier on the Eve of Independence

By Mike Wise

In June 1776, Central Ohio was still part of the Ohio Country, a contested frontier rather than an organized American state or a settled interior. The region had already been shaped by the French and Indian War, Pontiac's War, British imperial policy, Native diplomacy, colonial land hunger, and the competing claims of empire, settlers, and Native nations long before the Declaration of Independence was adopted in Philadelphia.

To eastern colonists, June 1776 was a month of revolutionary decision. The Continental Congress was moving toward formal independence, and colonial leaders increasingly saw the war as a struggle not merely for redress of grievances but for national separation. Yet west of the Appalachians, including the lands that would become Central Ohio, the meaning of independence was far less simple.

While leaders in Philadelphia were crafting a formal break from the Empire, the Ohio Country stood at the edge of a different kind of revolution. British officials regarded the Ohio Country as a strategic Western buffer. The region was not yet an organized American farming society, but settlers and land speculators had long viewed it as land for future settlement and agriculture. By contrast, Native peoples—Delaware, Shawnee, Wyandot, Mingo, and others—saw it as their homeland, hunting ground, and domain of Native sovereignty. That clash of visions made the region one of the Revolution's most consequential borderlands.

The surviving sources do not provide precise weather records for June 1776 in Central Ohio. Most likely, the region experienced typical early-summer warmth, humidity, periodic rain, and thunderstorms. Regardless, settlers and Native peoples in the Ohio Country were highly dependent on mild weather for successful crops, though in different ways.

For Native nations, crops such as corn, beans, squash, and other garden produce were central to village survival and part of a broader food system (To Page 2

American History Facts and Trivia



Van Young

Van Young will present "American History Facts and Trivia, Part 2" to the Big Walnut Area Historical Society members and guests beginning at 7:30 on Tuesday evening, July 14 in the Myers Inn Museum. He did the first part last year.

To help celebrate America 250 and to remind us of our nation's proud past, join us as we learn some remarkable facts and trivia about American's early days right up to and including President Trump.

We are looking forward to lots of audience participation as well as educational facts and knowledge about our great country. As always, Van's programs are fun, entertaining, and always enlightening.

Myers Inn Museum is located opposite the southwest corner of Sunbury Square. It is open on Saturdays 10 to E 3 and Sundays 12 to 4. Admission is by donation. The program is admission free.

Happy Birthday, America!

<https://bigwalnut250.org/>

Big Walnut Civic Association is in charge of the July 4th celebration which begins with the Parade which starts at the former B.W. High School and follows the CCC route to Sunbury, turns right on Cherry Street and left on Morning Street and follows 37 past Letts back to the former B.W. High School. Check the website above for more details.

Events begin at 6 p.m. at the former B.W. High School yard with games, food trucks, etc. ending with the fireworks at dusk.

Myers Inn Museum will be Open 9 to 10 and after the parade for an hour. Also, watch for our horse drawn wagon in the parade.



From the Presidents Desk

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that included hunting, fishing, gathering, trade, and diplomacy. A failed crop could weaken food security, reduce winter stores, and leave communities more vulnerable during war. Still, Natives could fall back on hunting and fishing skills honed over centuries.

For settlers, crop success was even more directly tied to survival and longevity. Frontier families relied on local production because transportation was difficult, markets were distant, and war could disrupt supply lines. Thus, the Ohio Country's appeal was closely tied to land hunger and agricultural opportunity, if not necessity. Crops were not merely economic; in 1776, they shaped survival, settlement, military endurance, and the struggle over land itself.

Yet war posed the greater danger. The Ohio Country became a zone of violent conflict among British, American, and Native forces. Raids, displacement, fear, disrupted trade, military movements, and uncertainty threatened crop production. So, June 1776 was a month of gathering consequences: in the East, a war for independence had not yet been declared, but its consequences were already moving westward. Traders, scouts, military messengers, and Native diplomats carried rumors and news through river valleys, villages,

forts, and trails.

What was decided in Philadelphia would reshape the Ohio Country, but the region's future would also be determined by councils, alliances, raids, negotiations, and resistance on the frontier. For Central Ohio, June 1776 was not a month of local battles or formal state politics. It was a month of gathering consequences. The Revolution was becoming a war for independence in the East, but in the Ohio Country, it was also becoming a struggle over land, sovereignty, food security, and survival,

Docents Needed July 4 & July 8

Myers Inn Museum will be open an hour before the July 4th Parade and an hour after it for tours.

On July 8, we need docents from 5 until the 6:00 reading and following the reading of 6 to 8 minutes to Open the Museum for tours for about an hour. Let Mike or Polly know.

Horn to Give "A Historic Tour Around Sunbury Square" in Community Library

Based on the former Walking Tour, this tour will be viewed from the comfort of seats in the library. Doug Linnabary and Polly Horn have been working to update the 2020 version. Call 740-965-3901 to make a reservation to attend this 250th program which starts at 6:30p.m. Thursday, June 25 in 44 Burrer Drive.



Big Walnut America 250
BigWalnut250.org

Sharing the Spirit of America

Declaration Reading

Wednesday, July 8, at 5:45 p.m.

Americans in all 50 States and 16 Territories of the United States will read the Declaration of Independence "together" at 6 p.m. to commemorate that first public reading on July 8, 1776. Stay to enjoy birthday cake!

All ages

Myers Inn Museum/Big Walnut Historical Society
45 S. Columbus St., Sunbury, OH 43074
[Big Walnut Area Historical Society](http://www.bigwalnuthistory.org/)
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