

Easton Heritage Days Easton, Pennsylvania

On 9 July 2023, AGFA participated in the Easton Heritage Day celebration (<http://heritageday.org/>). Heritage Day celebrates Easton's historic significance in the founding of the United States. At noon on July 8, 1776, Easton was one of three places where the [Declaration of Independence had its first public reading](#). It was read on the steps of the old courthouse in Easton's historic Centre Square by the Chair of the Committee of Safety, Robert Levers. A reenactment of that event, and a festival organized around it, first occurred during the Bicentennial Celebration in 1976. From that year on Heritage Day has been celebrated as Easton's own Independence Day celebration.

The members of AGFA who participated in the event were John Dwyer, Joel Gonzalez, Anne Lutkenhouse, Jerry Still, John Uhler, and Shawn Welch.

The educational objective was to provide an interpretation of the Coast Artillery, medical and chaplain operations during World War II.

AGFA members John Uhler and John Dwyer brought their jeeps and we flanked the display area with jeeps on each end.

This year's event was significantly impacted by the weather. Most of the membership arrived between 0800 and 0900 and began setup. During setup we had intermittent rain. Our displays were set up by 1100 hours and the public descended upon us quickly. The reading of the Declaration of Independence started around 1230 and by 1300 hours the rain was a steady downpour that did not stop. The public stayed engaged in dwindling numbers until about 1400 hours. The forecast for the rest of the afternoon had about a 45 minute break in the rain, and then heavy rain starting again at about 1630 and continuing all night. The event was closed as of 1500 hours and ~~the by the~~ last items were loaded at 1630 just as the heavy rains started.

Setup time ran from 0800 to about 1100 hours. T-3 Dwyer's medical jeep and display setup took shape early on in the morning.



There were many displays being set up despite the threat of rain. Below 2LT Gonzalez pauses next to a small blacksmith's forge.



Below is a better look at the 18th Century forge.



By 1100 hours all our displays were in place and the public was engaging our team. The Coast Artillery display is shown below, with the M1910A1 Azimuth Instrument on the left. The OD tarps were used to protect the historic items from the rain. From left to right 1LT Lutkenhouse is discussing medical materials, 2LT Gonzalez is chatting with a visitor and 2LT Still is also chatting with visitors.



Below 1LT Lutkenhouse is discussing the various medical items on display as a family in clear rain ponchos begins discussions with T-3 Dwyer at his medical jeep.



Below 2LT Still and 1LT Lutkenhouse relax during a pause in visitation with another light rain storm beginning.



The view below has the Chaplain's jeep about 50 feet from the Coast Artillery display.



A closer view of the display items and CPT(CH) Uhler and 2LT Gonzalez.



Across from the AGFA displays was a Field Artillery display.



Through the morning there were intermittent rains. Below the public walks around a weapons display that is well covered in plastic for protection from the rain.



Beginning at 1130, various presenters read key historic documents from our Nation's founding. By 1230 the rain was well underway - yet our fellow citizens stayed to hear the Declaration of Independence.



Below a family is discussing medical items with T-3 Dwyer.



Below is a closer view of the contents of a field medic's bags on display.



Once the rain really started, many of the exhibitors began packing and protecting their equipment. Below two "frontiersmen" from the 18th Century pack their equipment.



By 1300 hours, the rain was intense and continued with heavy downpours. At 1500 hours the event coordinators closed the event. The forecast called for a one-hour break in the rain from about 1500 to 1600 hours. This break enabled the remaining participants to pack and depart. The forecast then called for heavy and persistent rain from about 1600 until at least two hours from the scheduled 1800 hours end of the event.



Easton Heritage Days is a very welcoming event with historians from all relevant American time periods of US military history. We encourage you to attend next year!