



**Virginia American Revolution 250 Commission (VA250)  
Signature Event**

***A Common Cause to All: A Convening of the States***  
**250<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Committees of Correspondence**  
March 10 – 12, 2023  
Colonial Williamsburg

**Background**

March 12, 2023, marks the 250<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the formation of Virginia’s Committee of Correspondence. The Committees of Correspondence were established in each colony and had no central entity guiding them. Research indicates that the desire to secure united action among the colonies was the chief purpose of the committees. Virginia’s committee in particular called for the states each to form committees to correspond with each other to secure information “of all such act and resolutions of the British Parliament, or proceedings of Administration, as may relate to or effect the British colonies in America, and to keep up and maintain a correspondence and communication with our sister colonies, respecting these important considerations.”

Committees of Correspondence were not uncommon entities, but this was the first act uniting the colonies. Remarking on the origin of the Virginia committee, which met in the Raleigh Tavern in Williamsburg, Thomas Jefferson noted its purpose as

“... a common cause to all, ... to produce a unity of action; and for this purpose that a committee of correspondence in each colony would be the best instrument for intercommunication; and that their first measure would probably be, to propose a meeting of deputies from every colony, at some central place, who should be charged with the direction of the measures which should be taken by all. We therefore drew up the resolution.”<sup>i</sup>

This Signature Event will reflect the Committees of Correspondence by including colleagues in other states, state 250<sup>th</sup> commissioners, along with representatives of Virginia local committees, to spend a weekend of mutual learning, discussion, and collaboration in Colonial Williamsburg on March 10-12, 2023.

As this will be the first gathering of states to mark the 250<sup>th</sup>, Virginia, once again, will lead the nation by inviting collaboration, information sharing, and opportunities for states to partner together during the semiquincentennial, signaling our shared commitment not only to a meaningful commemoration for Virginia, but for every state and the nation as a whole.

*A Common Cause to All*  
**250<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Committees of Correspondence**  
**DRAFT AGENDA**

**Location:**

Williamsburg Lodge  
310 South England Street  
Williamsburg, VA 23185

**Friday, March 10**

11:00 am: Registration check-in open

5:00 pm: **Welcome to Virginia Reception and Dinner**  
Location: Virginia Room

The Honorable Terry L. Austin  
*Chair, VA 250 Commission, Member of Virginia House of Delegates*  
Cliff Fleet  
*President and CEO, Colonial Williamsburg Foundation*  
Carly Fiorina  
*Chair, Colonial Williamsburg Foundation*

Attire: Business Casual

**Saturday, March 11**

8:00 am: Continental Breakfast  
Location: Virginia Room

VA250 Information table open

8:30 am: **Welcome and Introduction**  
Jamie Bosket, *President and CEO, Virginia Historical Society*

**Opportunities of the Semiquincentennial**

John Dichtl  
*President and CEO, American Associate of State and Local History (AASLH)*

9:30 am: **Americans, Our History, and the 250th**

Susie Wilkening  
*President, Wilkening Consulting: Consumer Research on the 250<sup>th</sup>*

11:00 am: **More in Common: Navigating the Perceived Political Divide**

Matt Williams  
*Managing Director and Chief Growth Officer, Brand Federation*

12:15 pm: Lunch

1:00 pm: **Panel discussion: Creating a Meaningful Commemoration for all Americans**

Moderator: Barbara Hamm Lee, *Executive Producer and Host, WHRO-TV*

Christy Coleman, *Jamestown-Yorktown Foundation*  
Valerie Paley, *New York Historical Society*  
Nat Sheidley, *Revolutionary Spaces*  
Scott Stephenson, *Museum of the American Revolution*  
Noelle Trent, *National Civil Rights Museum*

2:00 pm: Break

2:30 pm: Depart for walking tours or explore the Historic Triangle of Jamestown, Yorktown, and Williamsburg on your own

Colonial Williamsburg guided tours include:

- **Newest Discoveries: Walk and Visit the Williamsburg Bray School and First Baptist Church** (capacity 60)
- **Walking Tour: Legacies of Indigenous Peoples** (capacity 60)
- **Walking Tour: History and Restoration in Williamsburg** (capacity 100)
- **Conservation Lab Tour** (capacity 45)
- **John D. Rockefeller, Jr. Library Special Collections Tour** (capacity 10)

*\*Sign up for tours at VA250 information desk*

Free admission is being offered to “A Common Cause” attendees at **Jamestown Settlement** and the **American Revolution Museum at Yorktown** on Saturday, March 11. *Please present your conference badge upon arrival. Brochures and directions are available at the VA250 information desk.*

5:30 pm: **States Dinner at the Governor’s Palace** and special event in Colonial Williamsburg with distinguished speakers

Meet in Arrival Hall at the Williamsburg Lodge at 5:30 p.m. to process to the Governor’s Palace for dinner and a special evening event.

The Honorable Thomas K. Norment, *Senate of Virginia*  
Stacy Schiff, *Pulitzer Prize-winning author, “The Revolutionary Samuel Adams”*  
Bill Whitaker, *“60 Minutes” Correspondent and award-winning journalist*

*\*Weather permitting, this is an outdoor tented event. Attendees will process from the Williamsburg Lodge to the Governor’s Palace, comfortable shoes are recommended. Please plan for the weather accordingly*

## Sunday, March 12

8:00 am: Continental Breakfast  
Location: Virginia Room

8:45 am: **Welcome and Introduction**

**The Pursuit of Happiness: Twelve Ancient Virtues the Inspired the Founders' Quest for the Good Life**

Jeff Rosen, *President & CEO, National Constitution Center*

9:15 am: **"Revolutionary Road Trips with Darley"**  
Darley Newman, *PBS host of "Travels with Darley"*

9:30 am: **250<sup>th</sup> Across the Nation (State Track)** – Virginia Room  
**250<sup>th</sup> Across Virginia (Local Track)** – Piedmont Room

Noon: Lunch

**Lafayette's 1824 Reflections on the Revolution**

*Renowned historical interpreter Mark Schneider as Marquis de Lafayette*

1:30 pm: Guests are encouraged to make their way from the Williamsburg Lodge to the Courthouse on Duke of Gloucester Street for closing ceremony.

Comfortable walking shoes are recommended

2:00 pm: **Virginia Committee of Correspondence Resolution (March 12, 1773)**

*Historical Interpreter Kurt Smith as Thomas Jefferson*

**Our Common Cause Resolution**

*"A Common Cause" State Representatives*

Join colleagues from each state for a special conclusion event at the Raleigh Tavern, where Virginia's Committee of Correspondence, including Thomas Jefferson, met on March 12, 1773.

After a reading of the 1773 Committee of Correspondence resolution, state representatives will affirm a resolution of mutual support, collaboration, and partnership, signaling the beginning of the nation's semiquincentennial.

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