



Daily Life and Diversity in 18th Century Philadelphia

To help you have the most enjoyable visit to our historic sites, here are a few **helpful hints**:

- **First, get a “Building Hours” list with this packet. Several of the sites you will visit have changing hours and are closed on some days.**
- Get your **free** timed tickets to the **Todd and White houses (Stop# 6)** at the **Independence Visitor Center**. **Reserved tickets are needed to go into these houses.** Tickets are distributed on a first-come basis for an hour-long, ranger-led tour of the houses. No more than ten people are permitted on a tour. If the tours are filled, you can visit the other sites on your own walking tour. **The outlined sites are suggested for extending your tour.**
- Since our sites are located in a busy city, be extra careful when crossing the streets. Cross at the corner and watch your step; some of the pavements are uneven, just like they were in the 18th century!
- Some of the structures that you will visit are nearly 300 years old. Please take care to insure that your children’s children will also be able to visit these sites and learn about 18th Century Life by respecting the structures.
- Sites in boxes are places that relate to your Daily Life and Diversity in 18th Century Philadelphia tour and they are places that you can visit if you have more time to explore.



Stop #1 Entrance to the Visitors’ Center

(Market Street sidewalk between 5th & 6th Streets) Walk East toward Fifth Street. In the 1700s many merchants had shops along High Street, now called Market. The name was changed to describe the stalls that lined this street many years ago.

- Read the sidewalk inscriptions about the people who lived and worked here. What were some of their professions? (merchant, Chandler, lawyer, grocer, gentleman, etc.)
- How did we learn information about the early residents? (city directory and archeology discoveries)

Stop #2 Free Quaker Meeting House

(5th & Arch Streets) Turn left on Fifth Street and walk one block to the corner of Arch Street.

The group of Quakers who decided to give up their belief of pacifism and join in the fight for American freedom during the Revolutionary War were known as Free Quakers. In 1783 this group split from the Quakers and built this building to hold their meetings. Thirty to fifty men and women, including Betsy Ross, attended worship services in this meetinghouse.

- While you are there talk to Timothy Matlack and learn about some important contributions the Quakers made to Philadelphia.



Stop #3 Christ Church Burial Ground

(5th & Arch Streets) Cross Fifth Street walking East. In 1719 Christ Church opened this burial ground at the outskirts of town when its graveyard adjacent to the church ran out of space. Today this land is in the heart of a busy city.

- Read the wall plaque describing Franklin’s accomplishments. Compare it to the simple inscription on Franklin’s gravestone. Why did Franklin want such a simple grave? (Franklin always thought of himself as a printer by profession)
- Who else is buried here? (Franklin’s wife, Deborah; his daughter, Sarah; the founder of the US Navy, five signers of the Declaration of Independence, colonial leaders, and everyday citizens.)





Betsy Ross House

(239 Arch Street) Walk 2 ½ blocks East on Arch Street.

This house commemorates the life and legend of Betsy Ross, 1752-1836. The legend claims that in 1777 she was commissioned by George Washington to create the first American flag. We know that Betsy Ross did make flags ordered by the Pennsylvania navy for ships' colors during the Revolution.

- What trade did Betsy Ross practice? (upholstery seamstress)
- What was a woman's role in the 18th century? (wife and mother with few personal rights)



Elfreth's Alley

(2nd between Arch & Race Streets) Turn left on 2nd Street and walk 1 block North. Elfreth's Alley is the oldest continuously occupied residential street in the United States. The houses date back to 1713.

- Explore the museum about the history of the neighborhood. What occupations were practiced here? (blacksmith, cooper, sailor, seamstress - mantua maker)
- Did people have any personal space in early houses? (rooms were shared and quarters were cramped)



Stop #4 Christ Church

(2nd Street above Market) Walk 2 blocks South and cross 2nd Street.

Christ Church was the first church to break from the Church of England and it became the American Episcopal Church. Many famous Revolutionary-era leaders worshipped here, including George Washington, Benjamin Franklin, Benjamin Rush, and Robert Morris.

- While you are visiting, see if you can figure out a connection between Benjamin Franklin and the steeple of the church. (He raised funds to build the steeple with the first lottery.)
- How was Bishop William White a leader of the times? (He began the American Episcopal Church; he organized many community services to help the poor; he was a patriot for the Revolution. Some historians claim that he was second only to Franklin as a civic leader.)



Stop #5 Independence Living History Center

(3rd & Chestnut Streets) Walk 1 block South to Chestnut Street. Turn right and walk to 3rd Street. Across the street the large modern brick building is the Independence Living History Center. An archeology laboratory displays artifacts from past centuries in Philadelphia.

- What specific objects can you see that help you learn about life in the 18th century? (plates, cups, bowls, chamber pots, money, food, and bones)
- See the film of a "dig" at the site of the Constitution Center.
- Question archeologists about the artifacts on display.

Stop #6 Tour of Dolley Todd House & Bishop William White House –

(4th & Walnut Streets) Walk 1 block South and turn right on Walnut. Walk 1 block West to find entrance on 4th Street corner.

Get your **free** timed tickets to the **Todd and White houses** at the **Independence Visitor Center**. **Reservation tickets are needed to go into these houses.** Tickets are distributed on a first-come basis for a ranger-led tour of the houses. No more than ten people are permitted for a tour. Allow about an hour. (If the tours are filled, you can visit the other sites on your own walking tour.)

Todd House

(4th & Walnut Streets)

Dolley and John Todd occupied this house from 1791-1793. John was a lawyer, who died of yellow fever in 1793. Dolley later married **James Madison** who became the fourth president of the United States.



Note the objects in each room that depict the lifestyle.

- How did people heat their homes? (fireplaces)
- How did they light their rooms? (candles and oil lamps)
- How did they cook? (kitchen hearth)
- Where did they get water? (well-water had to be carried indoors)

Bishop White House

(309 Walnut Street)

The Reverend Dr. William White lived in this house from 1787 to 1836. He was rector of Christ Church and St. Peter's Church and chose this location because it was between his churches. He was one of a few clergymen who stayed loyal to the Patriot cause. This made him very popular with the average citizen. Remember that we were introduced to Bishop White at the Christ Church stop.



- What roles did he play in the early national government? (Chaplain of the Continental Congress, later to the U.S. Senate)
- Name some organizations in Philadelphia that he founded or helped to found: (School for Black and Native Americans, Philadelphia Association for the Alleviation of Miseries in Public Prisons, Dispensary for Medical Relief for the Poor, School for the Deaf, and Episcopal Academy)

Behind Dolley Todd's house are the privy pit and well. People of the 18th century did not understand the effects of water pollution. They placed a privy pit too close to the well for drinking water. Gardens were common in the 18th century, where vegetables, fruits, and herbs were grown. Much of the other food was bought on market day from the farmers who set up stalls to sell their wares on High Street. Meat was also hunted in the woodlands nearby.

Dock Creek used to flow behind the Bishop White and Todd houses. Today there is a ditch in the grass. During the 18th century, people threw trash and waste into this tidal creek. There were inadequate sewer systems, so the water tempted those who needed to dump their trash and they became polluted. Mosquitoes were attracted to the polluted water. Many carried yellow fever and infected the populace. An epidemic raged in 1793, killing more than three thousand Philadelphians.

Dr. Benjamin Rush's house once stood at the corner of Third and Walnut Streets, where a garden exists today. He established the first free medical dispensary in Philadelphia in 1786. He taught medical theory and practice at the University of Pennsylvania. During the yellow fever epidemic of 1793, Dr. Rush believed that radical "bleeding", or blood letting in exaggerated quantities, was a way to restore health.

Carpenters' Hall

(320 Chestnut Street) Walk behind Bishop White's house toward Chestnut Street.

The First Continental Congress met here in September 1774. Later it was the site of three secret meetings between Franklin and a French agent. The colonists were seeking the French government's help in their revolution against Great Britain. It is here where Patrick Henry makes his famous "I am an American" speech. This is also the place where Pennsylvania officially broke away from England and writes its own constitution.

- Explore the exhibits and talk to the interpreters to find other connections that make Carpenters' Hall important to colonial Philadelphia. (first bank, library, early trade union hall, large rented space)



New Hall Military Museum

(Chestnut Street between 3rd and 4th Streets) Walk toward Chestnut Street and find the building on the left.

Henry Knox, the first secretary of war, leased the first floor of New Hall (reconstructed) from the Carpenters Company during 1791. This small space can be compared to today's Pentagon in Washington, D.C. Now the building houses exhibits about the U.S. Army, Navy, and Marine Corps and offers a 12 minute film focusing on the military aspects of the American Revolution.

- While looking through the museum, try to discover what African-American and women's roles were during the American Revolution. (See second floor exhibits for your answers.)



Stop #7 Portrait Gallery in the Second Bank of the United States

(Chestnut Street between 4th & 5th Streets) Turn left on Chestnut and walk 1 block West.



The Second Bank houses the new exhibit “People of Independence”, which features the Park’s portrait collection. You can ask a ranger for an art or a history exhibit activity to help you navigate, or feel free to explore on your own.

- Notice the diversity of the subjects who were painted. What were some of their professions? (artists, politicians, bankers, merchants, Native American chiefs, clergymen)

Stop #8 Franklin Court

(314-322 Market Street) Turn right on Chestnut and walk 1 block East. Across the street in the middle of the block is an entrance to Franklin Court.



***Fragments of Franklin Court** shows that Franklin’s house is no longer here, but by examining archaeological and architectural exhibits, you may explore his world. Look at the two ghost structures. The smaller frame closest to the entrance arch represents the printing office Franklin built for his grandson, Benjamin Franklin Bache. The larger frame represents the house built for the Franklins in the 1760s with an enlargement Ben added after his final return to Philadelphia in 1785.*

- Look into the archeology pits and read the descriptions of the rooms in Franklin’s house on the ground. Can you tell what some of his interests were by what the rooms were used for? (an office, music room, and large library were in the plans)
- What was it like to live at Franklin Court? (It was a quieter location removed from the busy street; Ben Franklin liked to sit under the mulberry tree in his yard. He landscaped his courtyard with gravel walks and trees. He was able to give up his kitchen garden because the market was at his door.)



Also visit these sections of Franklin Court

(314-322 Market Street)

***Printing Office** demonstrates the operation of a printing press and the power of the press at the time of Franklin’s “*Pennsylvania Gazette*”.*

Ask to see the “type”. It took many hours to type-set a newspaper for weekly publication.

- What articles were printed? (personal news, politics, stories, comments, letters, ads, runaway slave notices, political cartoons like “Join or Die” of 1754)

Read an excerpt from *Poor Richard’s Almanac*. It was first printed in 1732 and became a bestseller.

B. Free Franklin Post Office recalls Franklin’s time as the first U.S. Postmaster.

- How long did mail take to be delivered in the colonies? (2 weeks to 1 month) to England? (about 2 months)

Underground Museum shows Franklin’s life, family, inventions, and has a 20 minute film.

- How did Franklin improve life? (inventor of the Franklin Stove, lightning rod, bifocals, to name a few; established the first fire company and fire insurance; organized the postal system and sanitation service; created the Philosophical Society and Pennsylvania Academy (now the University of Pennsylvania); and started the first public library)

Congratulations on completing a journey through a very important century in America’s history! Next, visit our website for an interactive tour of more 18th century Philadelphia households. www.independenceparkinstitute.com

Print Resources:

Anderson, Laurie Halse. Fever 1793. Simon & Schuster, 2000.

A fictionalized account of a young girl's struggle to survive the yellow fever epidemic of 1793.

Conley, Kevin. Benjamin Banneker, Scientist and Mathematician. Chelsea House Publication, 1989.

This biography describes Banneker's connection to the Philadelphia Abolitionist Society.

Fleming, Candace. Ben Franklin's Almanac, Being a True Account of the Good Gentleman's Life. Atheneum Books for Young Readers, 2003.

This book has the format of Franklin's Poor Richard's Almanac. It describes Franklin's life and provides background information on the mid to late 18th century.

Fleishman, Paul. Path of the Pale Horse. Harper Collins, 1983.

Fictionalized story of a doctor's apprentice who goes to Philadelphia in 1793 to help victims of yellow fever.

Greenberg, Judith. Journal of a Revolutionary War Woman. Scholastic, 1996.

A collection of diaries, letters, family recollections, church records, and other primary sources that describe a woman's life during the Revolutionary period.

Hakim, Joy. A History of U.S. From Colonies to Country 1735-1791 and The New Nation 1789-1850. Oxford University Press, 2003. Nonfiction alternative textbook suitable for students in grades 5 and up that details the history of the period in a narrative style. These textbooks provide excellent lists for further reading on the history of this time period.

Loeper, John F. The House of Spruce Street. McClelland and Stewart, Ltd., 1982.

The story of a house built in 1772 for merchant Thomas Morton. It is typical of the design of the time period.

Murphy, Jim. An American Plague: The True and Terrifying Story of the Yellow Fever Epidemic of 1793. Clarion Books & Houghton Mifflin, 2003.

A well-documented nonfiction account of the yellow fever epidemic of 1793. This book has an extensive bibliography on the topics covered in this unit.

Rinaldi, Ann. Stitch in Time Quilt Trilogy Series #1. Scholastic, 1995.

A fictionalized account of a family during the post-Revolutionary War era. The author uses a quilt metaphorically in order to tell the story.

Rinaldi, Ann. Taking Liberty: The Story of Oney Judge, George Washington's Runaway Slave. Simon & Schuster Childrens, 2003.

A fictionalized story of Martha Washington's enslaved African, Oney Judge. The story takes place in New York and Virginia, as well as in 1790s Philadelphia.

Web Resources:

www.nps.gov/inde/visit.html Independence National Historical Park, Free Quaker Meeting House, Christ Church and Burial Ground, Dolley Todd and Bishop White Houses, Carpenters' Hall, New Hall Military Museum, Portrait Gallery in the Second Bank of the U.S., and Franklin Court

www.betsyrosshouse.org Betsy Ross House

www.elfrethsalley.org Elfreth's Alley



The National Park Service cares for special places saved by the American people so that all may experience our heritage.

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Independence Park Institute