

HISTORY OF THE U.S. FLAG

The U.S. Flag may be the most recognized in the world. It also has inspired the design of flags of other nations, including Liberia, which was founded in the 1840s by freed American slaves.

But the Stars and Stripes, as we know it today, had several ancestors, including the continental Navy's "Don't tread on me" flag, the Sons of Liberty Flag, the New England flag and the Forster flag, according to the Betsy Ross home page on ushistory.org.

Betsy Ross is credited with sewing what is regarded as the first American flag. The other flags that preceded hers had similar elements but not all. In addition to being red, white and blue, Ross' flag contained, for the first time stars, albeit in a circle.



HISTORY & TRADITION

Here are some historical tidbits about America's most potent symbol of freedom, according to the site usacitylink.com:

- ★ The United States Flag is the third oldest of the National Standards of the world; older than the Union Jack of Britain or the Tricolor of France.
- ★ The flag was first authorized by Congress June 14, 1777. This date is now observed as Flag Day throughout America.
- ★ The flag was first flown from Fort Stanwix, on the site of the present city of Rome, N.Y., on August 3, 1777. It was first under fire three days later in the Battle of Oriskany, August 6, 1777.
- ★ The red in the flag is for valor, zeal and fervency. The white is for hope, purity, cleanliness of life and rectitude of conduct. The blue is the color of heaven, for reverence to God, loyalty, sincerity, justice and truth.
- ★ The Flag was first carried in battle at Brandywine, Sept. 11, 1777.
- ★ It first flew over foreign territory January 28, 1778, at Nassau, Bahama Islands; Fort Nassau having been captured by the Americans in the course of the war for independence.



The Betsy Ross House in Philadelphia, Pa., honors the woman traditionally credited with sewing the first American flag. The Stars and Stripes has evolved over nearly 250 years into one of the world's most recognizable symbols of freedom and democracy.

Preserving The Tradition, Empowering Our Future





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