



America's 250th in The Last Green Valley

VISION

History is a shared remembrance of the past, one that influences the present and shapes the future. Yet stories of our past have rarely represented the full breadth and scope of contributions from the diverse array of people, from the first inhabitants until today, who have called The Last Green Valley home.

As part of our effort to commemorate America's 250th anniversary, The Last Green Valley and its partners share a commitment to ensuring Americans of all backgrounds see themselves in our shared history. Through our research, education and programming we commit to deeply engaging with the entirety of our past, one that both challenges and inspires us to become a more inclusive and vibrant democracy.

The America 250 commemoration provides an exceptional opportunity to strengthen our connections with history as we explore the power of this unique place and its people throughout the ages.




The Power of Place

The Last Green Valley is a place defined by its landscape. Our geography and abundant natural resources have shaped the lives of all who resided or traveled through this place, from Indigenous Peoples dating back more than 8,000 years to today.

Our region's deep engagement with place enables us to reconsider significant questions about our history: from Indigenous Peoples' past and present connections with American spaces, to a community's relationships with and use of the natural resources, to the profound and unequal consequences of imperial expansion, colonization and development. This theme encourages us to reexamine ideas about our natural and created environments and to reorient when and where we find our region's history.

Programming for this theme can help audiences consider:

- What was happening in our communities during the Revolutionary Era?
 - Beyond the Revolution itself, what other revolutionary moments in the history of our country, our states and our communities were shaped by this place?
 - How has our place changed over time? Who has historically lived in our communities and how did they experience major events in our past?
 - How did the natural environment—from rivers, lakes and streams to hills and valleys—shape past events, such as settlement and migration, imperialism and expansion, or economic development and innovation? How did those events affect the environment?
 - How can Indigenous Peoples' past and present connection to places and environments inform our understanding of historical developments and contemporary challenges?
 - What places are typically preserved today for their historic value? What other kinds of stories could be told at preserved places?
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The Power of People

The Last Green Valley's people shaped our role in the American Revolution and sparked moments of significant change – change that enabled disenfranchised groups like women, free and enslaved African Americans, Indigenous Peoples, immigrants, people with disabilities and the poor to strive for full integration within our political, economic and cultural life.


Programming for this theme can help audiences consider:

- How did diverse people experience and influence the events of the American Revolution in this region?
- What other revolutionary moments in the history of our country, states and communities were shaped by people connected to this region?
- Who is considered an “American” – and who gets to decide?
- How, when and why have definitions of “the people” and ideas about belonging changed in our communities?
- When and how did different groups of people gain the status of citizenship and what rights and responsibilities did that include?
- Who has been, and remains, excluded from full participation and representation in our democracy?
- How have ordinary people done extraordinary things, past and present?

Connecting with History

America 250 provides an opportunity to reimagine how we research, interpret and explain history to engage and connect with new audiences, and inspire existing audiences to learn new and significant stories. Inviting audiences to engage with our process of “doing history” can invigorate a deeper understanding of the always-evolving nature of history and the importance of learning about our shared past through an inclusive lens.

Programming for this theme can help audiences consider:

- Whose stories have been collected in archives and museums and whose have been undervalued and overlooked? How has that influenced the way history here, and the nation as a whole, is typically told?
 - How can we uncover and discuss the lives of individuals traditionally silenced by written records?
 - How can the inclusion of multiple perspectives and experiences clarify our understanding of the past?
 - How can we foster greater engagement, understanding and innovative storytelling by incorporating other disciplines such as the creative arts, humanities and sciences into our process for sharing history?
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Timeline

- 2023 – Outreach & roundtable discussions
- 2024 – Review themes, plan, begin “doing history” activities
- 2025 – Begin America 250 events & programming
- 2026 – Comprehensive programming throughout the year

Contact

For more information or to get involved, contact Lois Bruinooge at
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Additional Resources

The Last Green Valley, Inc. (TLGV)

www.thelastgreenvalley.org

CT Humanities

www.cthumanities.org

America 250 | CT

www.ct250.org

Mass Humanities

www.masshumanities.org

America250 Foundation, Inc.

www.america250.org

American Association for State and Local History (AASLH)

Making History at 250: The Field Guide for the Semiquincentennial (2021)
<http://download.aaslh.org/Making+History+at+250+Field+Guide.pdf>

Executive Order Establishing Connecticut Semiquincentennial Commission

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/Office-of-the-Governor/Executive-Orders/Lamont-Executive-Orders/Executive-Order-No-22-2.pdf>

Legislation Establishing Massachusetts 250th American Revolution Anniversary Commission

<https://budget.digital.mass.gov/summary/fy22/outside-section/section-132-250-th-american-revolution-anniversary-commission>



This project is made possible in part by a CT Cultural Fund Operating Support Grant from CT Humanities, with funding provided by the CT Department of Economic and Community Development/CT Office of the Arts from the CT State Legislature.

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