

York-Lancaster to celebrate anniversary

LANCASTER - The Continental Congress of 1777 will come to life in Lancaster and York counties September 23 to 25 as Lancaster and York each celebrate its 200th anniversary as the capitol of the nation.

In 1777 the Continental Congress fled Philadelphia when the British military approached the city. First the Congress traveled to Lancaster where it held session for one day, Sept. 27.

It journeyed westward to York Town, placing the Susquehanna River between it and the British. For nine months the Congress remained in York.

Celebrations of this historic event begin Sept. 23 at 3:45 p.m. when a reenactment of the Congress' meeting will be held in the Heritage Center Masonic Hall, Lancaster, Pa. Area residents will

portray the Congressmen and following the session, they will meet the public in Penn Square. Lancaster Mayor Richard M. Scott will also present a proclamation during this time.

The Congress will then dine at Rock Ford, restored home of Gen. Edward Hand. The program, which includes a reception and tour of the home, is sponsored by the Lancaster County Chapter of

Pennsylvania Society of Sons of the Revolution.

The morning of September 24 the Congress leaves Lancaster County Park on horseback in various carriages on its way to York. It will be guarded by a mounted military escort of 12 riders and accompanied by several Conestoga and Colonial freight wagons. All 65 participants will be in colonial costume except the Lancaster County Sheriff's

posse which leads the march as it did the wagon train in 1976. A second company of volunteer riders in twentieth century garb is anticipated. Details on how to register and where to join the train will be publicized later.

The Congress' first stop is at 8:10 a.m. in Penn Square for a presentation by the Mayor. The wagon train then leaves the square at 8:25 a.m. while festivities in Lancaster continue with a continental breakfast, entertainment, and Hickory Town open house tour.

On its way to York, the Wagon Train will travel on Pa. Rt. 462 and visit Mountville, Columbia, Wrightsville, and Hallam where special activities are planned before arriving in York on Sept. 25 at 3 p.m.

The highlight of the September 24 events will occur at 3:45 p.m. when some members of Congress will cross the Susquehanna River by ferry from Columbia to Wrightsville.

When the Congress arrives in York, it will convene in the York Colonial Courthouse. Special events are planned for the afternoon including a presentation by Mayor John Kraut.

The highlight of the entire week-end events will be the Continental Congress Ball Sunday evening at the Yorktowne Hotel. The public is invited to attend the affair. Advance ticket registration (\$15 per person) is required. One should contact York County Bi-Centennial Commission, C/O York Area Chamber of Commerce, P.O. Box 1229, York, Pa. 17405.

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