



**200TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION
THE MARQUIS DE LAFAYETTE'S
1824 "GUEST OF THE NATION" TOUR**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: 26 September 2024

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**Celebrate Lafayette's Return to Delaware 50 Years After American Revolution
October 6 Festival to Follow His Footsteps Across Delaware from Claymont to Old New Castle**

WILMINGTON, DE: A 13-month bicentennial celebration of the Marquis de Lafayette's jubilant "Guest of the Nation" tour of America is taking place from August 2024 through September 2025. Delaware will participate in this national event to showcase the triumphant return of the popular Revolutionary War general two hundred years ago and recall his leadership in helping the fledgling United States gain independence from Great Britain. The First State will host a daylong festival of events open to the public on Sunday, October 6, and related programs will be held throughout the coming year.

In the run-up to the celebration of the 250th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence in 2026, hundreds of events planned across America will trace Lafayette's footsteps on the exact dates, and in the exact order, he traveled on his 6,000-mile farewell tour of America. In Delaware, reenactors will bring military hero Lafayette and Continental Army spy James Armistead Lafayette to life. Throughout the day there will be proclamations, speeches, activities and displays at each site to recreate the excitement felt throughout the young nation when Lafayette, the last surviving major general of the War for Independence, revisited the 24 states of the United States in 1824.

Celebrate Lafayette's return of two hundred years ago and follow his route through Delaware:

- **9 a.m. Ticketed breakfast, Hagley Library, 294 Buck Road, Wilmington, \$55.** Includes full breakfast, brief talk by Hagley Library director Erik Rau, music by Libby & Michael McDowell, display case of Lafayette-related documents, and free tour of Hagley Museum. Reservations required. Get tickets: <https://halebyrnes.org/index.html>.
- **11:30 a.m.–4 p.m. Historic Robinson House (circa 1723), 1 Naaman's Road, Claymont.** First site visited on Lafayette's return to Delaware. History buffs, teachers, students, and families will gather for speeches, a house tour, wool spinning, and colonial games and crafts. Reenactors will set up an American Revolutionary War encampment, and Lafayette will stop by. Fifth-grader Caroline Grow, will read her national award-winning essay on Lafayette. On-site parking. Admission: Free
- **12-3 p.m. Brandywine Village (c 1640), 1800 Block, N. Market Street, Wilmington,** a thriving 18th century milling community where Washington, Lafayette, and other officers met at the home of miller Joseph Tatnall to plan for the Battle of Brandywine. The day includes, colonial reenactors, choir performances, and entertainment. The Delaware militia will escort General Lafayette from the Brandywine Mills Plaza **to the new W3R Welcome Center, 1883 Superfine Lane at 1 p.m.** to give a speech. On-site and street parking. Admission: free.

- **10 a.m.–4 p.m. Delaware History Museum and Old Town Hall, 504 N. Market Street.** The Town Hall, est. 1798, was the hub of political and social activities in the 1800s. Enjoy English country dancing, French treats, colonial children’s games, and the Lafayette traveling exhibit. **At 3 p.m., Williamsburg reenactor Stephen Seals portrays “James Armistead Lafayette: The Marquis’ Spy”** – a loyal citizen enslaved in Va. but freed for courage spying for the Continental Army. Street parking. Admission: Free but registration required. <http://weblink.donorperfect.com/Lafayette2024>.
- **4–6 p.m. Amstel House (c 1730), 2 E. 4th Street, Historic New Castle.** The day ends with a Lafayette wine and charcuterie reception, chamber music, and room tours. On-street parking. Admission: Free, but maxed out. Register for the waiting list for this ticketed event: battelandread@gmail.com.
- **6 p.m. Ticketed dinner, Jessop’s Tavern (Est. 1674), 114 Delaware Street, New Castle.** Enjoy a memorable farewell dinner at the historic tavern. Tickets \$75 per person. Although sold out, you may register for the waiting list for this ticketed event: battelandread@gmail.com.

Events will be happening at most of these sites throughout the day, and **there will be an appearance by the Marquis de Lafayette at all locations**. Please visit website calendars and social media for each site.

- **This program is sponsored by:**

The American Friends of Lafayette, a historical and patriotic society dedicated to the memory of Major General Gilbert Motier, Marquis de Lafayette and to the study of his life and times in America and France.

- **This program is funded in part by:** Delaware Humanities, dehumanities.org

- **And also by:**

George Washington Society DE • Daughters of the American Revolution • Sons of the American Revolution

- **Other contributing organizations:**

Brandywine Village Partners • Claymont Historical Society
 Delaware Masonic Society • Delaware Press Association • DSPA – Hale-Byrnes House
 W3R • Girl Scouts of the USA • Boy Scouts of America

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