

Wyoming Semiquincentennial Task Force

**AMERICA**



**YEARS IN THE MAKING**

Shawn Reese, Executive Director, Wyoming Humanities  
[shawn@thinkwy.org](mailto:shawn@thinkwy.org)

**Senator Wendy Schuler** and  
**Representative Sandy Newsome**, Co-Chairmen, TRWCR Committee

**Justice Kari Gray**, Wyoming Supreme Court

**Superintendent of Public Instruction Megan Degenfelder**

**Councilwoman Teresa His Chase**, Northern Arapaho Business Council

Designee from Eastern Shoshone Business Council

**Nick Neylon**, Deputy Director, State Parks and Cultural Resources

**Diane Shober**, Director, Wyoming Office of Tourism

**Dr. Paul Flesher**, Director, University of Wyoming American Heritage Center

**Greg Blikre**, Wyoming Community College Commission

**Cindy Brown**, President, Wyoming Historical Society Executive Committee

**Kevin Voyles**, Wyoming Arts Council Board of Directors

**Joanna Kail**, Chief Executive Officer, Wyoming PBS

**Shawn Reese**, Executive Director and CEO, Wyoming Humanities Council

**Rebecca West**, Executive Director, Buffalo Bill Center of the West



STATE OF WYOMING EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT  
EXECUTIVE ORDER

Order 2023-03

**ESTABLISHMENT OF THE WYOMING SEMIQUINCENTENNIAL PLANNING TASK  
FORCE**

**Whereas**, the United States Declaration of Independence was adopted on July 4, 1776, representing the founding of our union;

**Whereas**, 2026 will mark the semiquincentennial anniversary, two hundred and fifty years, since that date;

**Whereas**, the signing of the Declaration of Independence is of major significance in the development of the United States' national heritage, establishing foundational American values of individual liberty, representative government, and the attainment of equal and inalienable rights;

**Whereas**, this national heritage, and the rights it embodies, have had a profound influence on the State of Wyoming and around the world;

**Whereas**, the State of Wyoming is a part of this union and proudly recognizes the significance of the Declaration of Independence, as well as the history and rights that it represents;

**Whereas**, in order to commemorate this important anniversary, Congress established the United States Semiquincentennial Commission in 2016 to provide for the observance and commemoration of the 250th anniversary of the founding of the United States through local, state, national, and international activities; and

**Whereas**, the State of Wyoming intends to participate in the commemoration of this important anniversary through the planning and coordination of events and activities celebrating our national heritage and history;

# Committees and Chairs

- **Themes** Rebecca West, Buffalo Bill Center of the West
- **Timeline/Scheduling** Rep. Newsome
- **Fundraising/Grants** Rep. Newsome and Nick Neylon, SPCR
- **250 Events at Capitol** Justice Kari Gray
- **K-12 Curriculum** Superintendent Degenfelder
- **Marketing** Diane Shober, Office of Tourism
- **Community Outreach** Shawn Reese, Wyoming Humanities



**US@250:  
Wyoming's  
Declaration of  
Imagination**

Honoring our past; examining our present; imagining our future.

To commemorate America's 250, Wyoming will:

- Celebrate its history, places, and peoples.
- Review its role in America today.
- Plan for its leadership in America's future.

# Commemoration Activities

## Statewide

History Publications  
Documentaries about WY in 1776  
Song/Art competitions  
Commemorative Beer  
Traveling museum exhibits  
Outdoor recreation  
Historic Sites  
And all sorts of other cool stuff

## Local

Monuments/markers  
Local histories  
Historic preservation  
Beautification, recreation  
Exhibits, performances  
Civics projects  
Publications  
Celebrations  
And all sorts of other cool stuff



1. Of this other funds appropriation, two million dollars (\$2,000,000.00)S14 is for purposes of planning and providing grants for initiatives recognizing the two hundred fiftieth anniversary of the declaration of independence. This appropriation shall not be transferred or expended for any other purpose. It is the intent of the legislature that this appropriation not be included in the Wyoming tourism board's standard budget for the immediately succeeding fiscal biennium.

OFFICIAL  
**GUIDEBOOK**

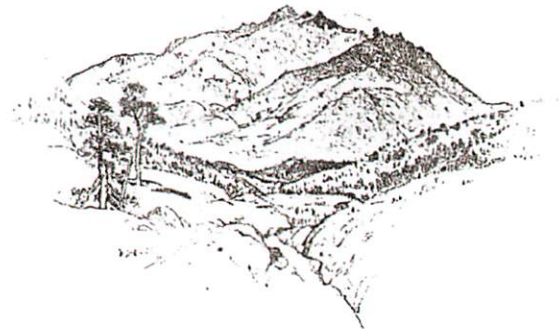
**THE SPIRIT OF '76**  
**In the American West!**



Official Logo of the  
*Wyoming Bicentennial Commission*

PROVIDED BY THE  
**WYOMING BICENTENNIAL COMMISSION**

for  
**COMMUNITY  
BICENTENNIAL  
COMMITTEES**



LANDSCAPE FROM THE ART SOCIETY TRAVEL

**CRITERIA FOR WBC PROJECTS**

1. Should be Bicentennial oriented or related
2. Should have historical value to Wyoming
3. Should invoke the "Festival" theme of hospitality
4. Should allow citizen participation
5. Should enhance Wyoming natural or man-made attractions
6. Should inform Wyomingites about Wyoming
7. Should have responsible sponsoring agency or individual
8. Should be physically possible to complete by 1976
9. Should appeal to broad segments of Wyoming



Actor Robert Redford (left) attended the re-burial of Jeremiah Johnson at Cody's Trail Town.



"Trail End", Mansion Home of cattleman John B. Kendrick (also Wyoming Governor and U. S. Senator) was saved when an ARBA grant of \$12,000 to pay off the mortgage was given to the Sheridan County Historical Society. The Society has preserved the home as a museum.





Local celebrations took precedence in Wyoming. Above, costumed school children sang at Wamsutter while, below, an old-time dance brought cowboys—and their horses—to the town hall at Lost Springs, nation's smallest Bicentennial community.



# Questions

- How to best form local committees and local chairs?
- How counties and municipalities can best coordinate?
- How local committees can best coordinate with Governor Gordon and Task Force?
- What resources (besides financial) are needed for local activities?
- What other questions do you have?

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