Fairfield

AMERICA 250
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Committee Structure

Fairfield Museum and History Center
AMERICA 250

Fairfield Museum is leading a planning partnership of more than two dozen local and regional cultural partners that include museums, performing art organizations, universities, and libraries.

- That committee has met 3 times and is planning 2-3 additional meetings in 2025
- The goal of those meetings is to explore program collaborations and cross marketing opportunities

We are also working closely with Fairfield's municipal government, specifically the 1st Selectman's office, Dept. of Economic and Community Development, and Parks and Rec.

- The Town has allocated funding to support creation of a series of free educational videos of Fairfield history, a free community-wide event on July 4th, 2026, and a Revolutionary War re-enactment over labor Day weekend, 2026
- Our partnership with the Dept. of Economic Development is focusing on ways to effectively market the commemoration and attract visitors to Fairfield

Accomplishments

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Thanks to planning support from CT Humanities, Fairfield Museum has:

- Facilitated meetings with our cultural partners and is planning more
- Planned a robust calendar of exhibits, lectures, family programs, and community events. Highlights include:
    - Exhibitions that:
        - Explore how taverns like Fairfield's Sun Tavern served as important gathering places for citizens to meet and draft the rules for a new democratic society.
        - Compare Fairfield in 1776 to the community today to explore the historic context behind contemporary society. What progress has been made toward achieving a more equitable society, and what inequities still exist.
        - Celebrate Fairfield's diverse community today through an outdoor "Portraits of Fairfield" photography exhibit with downloadable oral histories.

Accomplishments

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Other planned programs and events include:

- Lectures exploring various perspectives on the Revolution and its impacts on the enslaved, women, loyalists, and other people who were swept up in the conflict.
- Programs that delve into the Burning of Fairfield by the British in 1779 and how communities then and today recover from destruction.
    - Unveiling a newly commissioned mural on the Burning of Fairfield
- Community events including fireworks, a community wide-July 4th picnic, and re-enactment of the British invasion of Fairfield over Labor Day weekend.
- Unveiling new Enslaved database

Goals

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- To reaffirm the ideals of the Declaration of Independence during a time of unprecedented threats to American democracy, and to encourage civic action in building a more just and equitable future.
- To commemorate the contributions of all people to Fairfield's history, including the powerful and powerless, the free and enslaved.
- To use the best scholarship available to explore honestly and unflinchingly the complex facts of our community's history.
- To make space for community conversations that explore the legacy of the Declaration and the work that still needs to be done to live up to those ideals.
- To attract new, more diverse audiences to Fairfield Museum.
- To strengthen our partnerships with other cultural organizations.
- To grow Museum membership and social media engagement.

Challenges

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- Coordinating various activities among our partners
- Identifying funders in a changing fundraising landscape
- Using the opportunity of the 250th to take inspiration from the ideals expressed in the DOI to encourage greater civic engagement, encouraging people to make their voices heard, while avoiding partisan minefields. Maintaining Fairfield Museum as a safe space for learning and engagement.

Opportunities

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- To engage in some important conversations about our current political landscape and to inspire citizens to take action.
- To bring people together to celebrate the diversity of our community, and the role of everyday citizens in Fairfield's history.
- To strengthen Fairfield Museum's role as a community center for learning and dialog.
- To enhance Fairfield as a vibrant visitor destination long after 2026