

Newcastle U3A General History Summary of Meeting June 20th 2018

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'Birth of a Nation. America to 1776,'

Part 2:

Catherine began the ppt presentation with a review of May's talk led by Alan. Members got another opportunity to look at the maps provided in the history packs.

The leaders of the British and American slides were illustrated followed by the question, 'Who wrote the first draft of the Declaration of Independence?'

A picture was shown and the figure of Thomas Jefferson circled. Also, shown was a primary source: the first draft itself showing the many penned in additions and alterations made.

Profiles were given of the men involved in the declaration e.g. Benjamin Franklin. There was then a description of the two opposing armies – the British army and the Continental army. The key question was **'Who should have won the war?'**

The British army e.g. was well trained, had good weaponry and from one of the world's richest countries but far from the mother country.

The Continental army e.g. many mercenaries, older men, untrained men. No navy but had the heart to win on their own land.

ON January 3rd, 1777 the American general, Mercier, was killed which could

have disheartened the Americans but instead, General Washington rallied them and they won Princeton. John Trumbull's paintings of the scene were shown as well as what was believed to be Washington's flag. This was explained as possibly being one of many some of which did not match contemporary descriptions of it.



It was to be the defeat of Cornwallis at Yorktown which helped the Americans win the war.

On looking at a contemporary drawing of the capitulation of the British army members commented on the amount of French involvement.

An activity followed for members to deduce for themselves who should have won. In 2s or 3s, members used a Venn diagram and description cards.

The answer to the key question seemed to be that the British should have won. Some photos were shown of elderly men all centenarians. They were veterans of this war. Their profiles were outlined about their roles in the war. A short video was shown of a

re-enactment of the war.
The members then reflected on what
they had learned.



Cornwallis at Yorktown by John
Trumbull

Thank you to all the members for
another great meeting with some
excellent comments and questions.

*Our next meeting is
Wednesday 18th
July.*

*EE continue with
our exploration of
the history and
peoples of the
North American
continent.*

*Great MOVERS AND
SHAKERS!*