

The Easton Flag

It is claimed the Easton Flag is the standard first displayed on July 8, 1776, when the County Clerk, Robert Levers, read "The Declaration of Independence" on the steps of the Court House in Center Square.

The Flag appeared again on September 6, 1814 when George Beidleman's 14 year old daughter, Rosanna, presented it to Captain Abraham Horn's company as they left for Camp Dupont at Marcus Hook to serve in the War of 1812. At the conclusion of the war, the company disbanded and returned home with the flag.

Members of Captain Horn's company, along with Captain Peter Nungesser's company of Light Infantry, formed the Easton Union Guards in 1816 and in 1821. They decided to deposit the flag with the Easton Library Company for safekeeping in Library Hall (currently the Archive Shop on North Second Street).

During the time of the Sesquicentennial held in Philadelphia in 1926, the flag was removed from its pole, placed between two pieces of plate glass, and framed for exhibition. On its return it was bolted to the east wall of the Easton Public Library's marble stairway in the front entrance to the Carnegie building.

In 1947 Katharine F. Richey stitched the flag to Irish linen using the best preservation techniques known at that time. In 1968 Easton Library underwent renovations and a place of honor was found for the flag and its heavy oak case. It was placed directly across from the new circulation desk at Easton Library.

Fonda Ghirardi Thomsen of Textile Preservation Associates, Inc. in Harrisburg, who is known for restoring the Civil War flags, was contracted to restore the Easton Flag in 2000. Textile Preservation Associates, Inc. restored the flag, used stabiltex for support, placed it behind acrylic in an aluminum frame. The Easton Flag now hangs in the climate controlled Marx Room of Local History on the main floor of the Easton Library.

Careful examination of the banner shows that each of the thirteen, eight pointed stars, is seven inches across from point to point and is slightly different from all other flags. The flag is made of two kinds of material, the stripes are grosgrain and the field is Indian silk. The field, which is indigo blue, is in two pieces. The stripes have also been pieced together. The white stripes show more patching than the red. The flag measures 55" by 97".

Precise dating of the flag has been a matter of controversy and historical research since the 1890's. Locally it is believed that the women of Easton actually made the Easton Flag for the occasion of the reading of the Declaration and that it was lost for some years until the War of 1812.