

# INDEPENDENCE DAY CELEBRATION

4<sup>TH</sup> JULY 2025

On the anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence



## THE MEN WHO LOST AMERICA

### EXCLUSIVE HISTORY SEMINAR

In 2026, the USA will mark the 250th anniversary of the 1776 United States Declaration of Independence.

This unique study day at Knowsley Hall will focus on three of the key men who lost America. You will hear more about George Sackville Germain, General John Burgoyne, General Charles Cornwallis and learn about their stories and their families. There will be a dinner in the State Dining Room to celebrate the Declaration signing.

The Cornwallis Sword is believed to be the sword offered by Cornwallis as a symbol of the surrender of British armed forces and during your stay at Knowsley Hall, you will have the extraordinary experience of viewing the sword close up, in a way that is not normally made available to the public.



### SPEAKERS AND TIMINGS

**09.15 - Opening remarks by Lady Derby**

**09.30 - Professor Jeremy Black** - Why the Revolution occurred/Mapping early American history

**10.30 - Professor Andrew O'Shaughnessy** - The Men who Lost America

**11.30 - Refreshments**

**12.00 - Professor Jeremy Black** - Could the British have won the War of Independence

**13.00 - Book Signing and Lunch**

**14.00 - Professor Norman Poser** - General Burgoyne and his long connection with the Stanley Family

**15:00 - Andrew Lambert** - How America was lost in the English Channel, and the vital lessons that enabled the Royal Navy to win the next naval war

**16:00 - Refreshments**

**16:30 - Professor Andrew O'Shaughnessy** - Republic and Empire

**17:30 - Closing Remarks by Lady Derby**

This study day discusses the role of Lord George Germain as chief architect of the American Revolutionary war who was the youngest and favourite son of the Duke of Dorset and became Secretary of State to the Colonies in 1775 to King George III. It also discusses his life and long association with the Stanley family. General Burgoyne eloped with the youngest daughter of the 11th Earl, Lady Charlotte Stanley, when she was 23 years old. She was cut off by the family but was later reconciled and came back to live at Knowsley. They had one child, Charlotte who died in infancy.

The 12th Earl of Derby shared a love of France and the theatre with his uncle, General Burgoyne, who wrote the play 'The Maid of the Oaks' for the engagement in 1774 of Lord Stanley to Lady Elizabeth Hamilton, daughter of the 6th Duke of Hamilton.

Burgoyne had a long relationship with the actress Susan Caulfield, who was a friend of Eliza Farren, the celebrated comic actress and 2nd wife of the 12th Earl. Susan was his mistress during the last twelve years of his life from around 1780 until his death in 1792. They had four children together, a boy and three girls, who all grew up at Knowsley Hall.

Charles, Earl Cornwallis' role at the Battle of Yorktown 1781 was as the General leading the English troops. He later became Marquess and was appointed Governor-General of India and Lord Lieutenant of Ireland. Lady Derby is his direct descendant.



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## SPEAKER BIOS



**Andrew O'Shaughnessy** is Professor of History at the University of Virginia. Between 2003 and 2022, he served as Vice President of The Thomas Jefferson Foundation (Monticello), and the Saunders Director of the Robert H. Smith International Center for Jefferson Studies. He is a dual citizen of Britain and the United States. After completing his undergraduate and doctoral degrees at Oxford University, he taught at Eton College before becoming a visiting professor at Southern Methodist University in Dallas, Texas and a professor of American history at the University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh, where he was chair of the History department between 1998 and 2003.

His book *The Men Who Lost America: British Leadership, the American Revolution and the Fate of the Empire* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2013) received eight national awards including the New York Historical Society American History Book Prize, the George Washington Book Prize, The National Society Daughters of the American Revolution Excellence in American History Book Award and The Society of Military History Book Prize. He is also the author of *An Empire Divided: The American Revolution and the British Caribbean* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2000) which was the alternate designate selection of the History Book Club. His most recent book is *The Illimitable Freedom of the Human Mind: Thomas Jefferson's Idea of a University* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2021).

A Fellow of the Royal Historical Society, he is an editor of the Jeffersonian America series published by the University of Virginia Press. He coedited *Old World, New World: America and Europe in the Age of Jefferson* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2010) and *The Founding of Thomas Jefferson's University of Virginia* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press: 2019), and *The European Friends of the American Revolution* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2023).



**Jeremy Black** is author of numerous books, including *A Brief History of History*, *Tank Warfare*, and *Charting the Past: The Historical Worlds of Eighteenth-Century England*. He is Emeritus Professor of History at the University of Exeter and a Senior Fellow both of the British Foreign Policy Group and of the Foreign Policy Research Institute. Black is a recipient of the Samuel Eliot Morison Prize from the Society for Military History.

Follow Black on his website, [jeremyblackhistorian.wordpress.com](http://jeremyblackhistorian.wordpress.com)



**Norman S. Poser** was born in London. As a young boy, he attended Highgate School. He emigrated with his family to the United States at the age of eleven.

Professor Poser has had three separate, but related, careers. The first was in financial regulation. As a government lawyer in Washington, D.C., he served as an assistant director at the Securities and Exchange Commission. Following that, he was an executive vice president of the American Stock Exchange. He has also acted as a consultant to the World Bank, the Central Bank of Brazil, and the Ministry of Finance of India.

His second career was as a law professor. In 1980, Professor Poser joined the full-time faculty of Brooklyn Law School, where he taught for twenty-seven years. His two-volume treatise, *Broker-Dealer Law and Regulation*, is now in its 4th edition. He also served as an expert witness in several securities-fraud lawsuits and arbitrations.

In his third career, Professor Poser is the author of non-fiction books. Before he wrote *From the Battlefield to the Stage: The Many Lives of General John Burgoyne*, the book he will discuss here today, he penned a biography of Lord Mansfield, the great eighteenth-century judge, entitled *Lord Mansfield: Justice in the Age of Reason*. For those interested in theatrical history, he wrote *The Birth of Modern Theatre: Rivalry, Riots, and Romance in the Age of Garrick*. He is also the author of *Escape: A Jewish Scandinavian family in the Second World War*, an account of how the members of his mother's family met the challenge of the occupation of Denmark and Norway by Nazi Germany.

Professor Poser is a graduate of Harvard College and Harvard Law School.



**Andrew Lambert** is Laughton Professor of Naval History in the Department of War Studies at King's College, London, and Director of the Laughton Naval History Unit. His work focuses on the naval, strategic, and cultural history of the British Empire between the Napoleonic Wars and the First World War, the evolution of naval historical writing and the history of technology.

He has made several television documentaries, including the 2005 BBC series *War at Sea*. His books include: *The Crimean War: British Grand Strategy against Russia 1853-1856*. Manchester 1990, 2nd edn Aldershot 2011; *'The Foundations of Naval History': Sir John Laughton, the Royal Navy and the Historical Profession*. London 1997, *Nelson: Britannia's God of War*. London 2004, *Franklin: Tragic Hero of Polar Navigation*. London 2009 and *The Challenge: Britain versus America in the Naval War of 1812*, London 2012, winner of Anderson Medal of the Society for Nautical Research. *Crusoe's Island: A rich and curious history of pirates, castaways and madness* of 2016 examined English insularity through the South Pacific. *Seapower States: Maritime Culture, Continental Empires and the conflict that has shaped the modern world*, Yale University Press 2018 focused on the cultural construction of maritime identity: winning the 2018 Gilder Lehrman Book Prize in Military History and has been translated into several languages. *The British Way of War: Julian Corbett and the Battle for a National Strategy*, Yale 2021, was awarded the 2024 Hattendorf Prize for Distinguished Original Research in Maritime History. His latest book; *No More Napoleons: How Britain balanced Europe between Waterloo and World War One* was published in 2025 by Yale University Press.