



Foundation Document Overview

Thaddeus Kosciuszko National Memorial

Pennsylvania



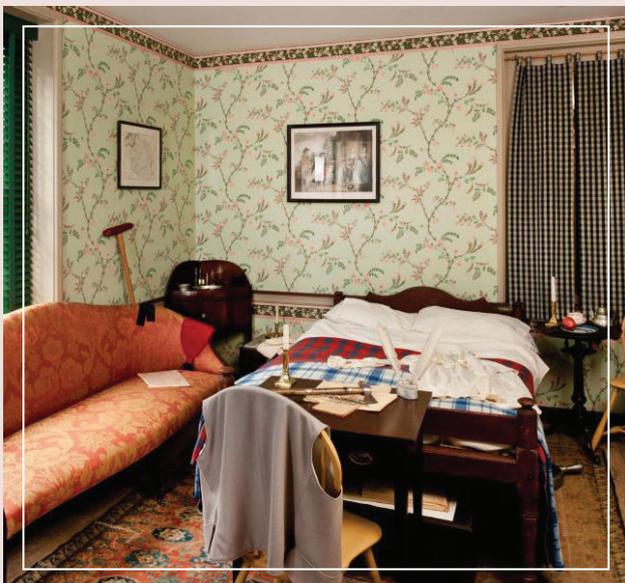
Contact Information

For more information about the *Thaddeus Kosciuszko National Memorial Foundation Document*, contact: inde_superintendent@nps.gov or (215) 597-7120 or write to:
Superintendent, Independence National Historical Park and Associated National Historic Sites and Memorials
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Purpose



THADDEUS KOSCIUSZKO NATIONAL MEMORIAL honors Kosciuszko as a great Polish patriot and a hero of the American Revolution by preserving and interpreting the Philadelphia house where he lived.



Significance

Significance statements express why Thaddeus Kosciuszko National Memorial resources and values are important enough to merit national park unit designation. Statements of significance describe why an area is important within a global, national, regional, and systemwide context. These statements are linked to the purpose of the park unit, and are supported by data, research, and consensus. Significance statements describe the distinctive nature of the park and inform management decisions, focusing efforts on preserving and protecting the most important resources and values of the park unit.

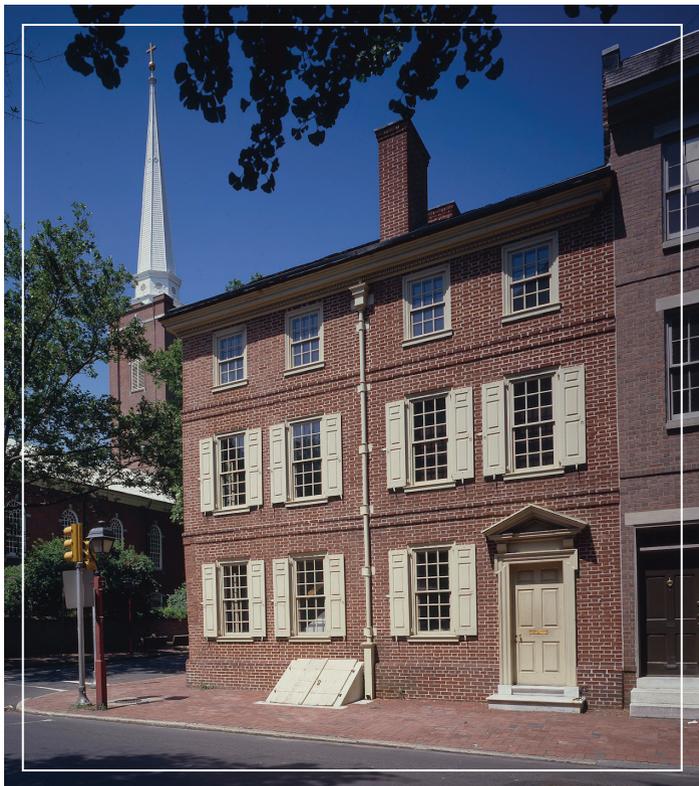
- **Commemorating Kosciuszko:** Serving as a memorial to the legacy of Polish national Thaddeus Kosciuszko, the Philadelphia house where he resided during the winter of 1797–1798 pays tribute to his life spent in pursuit of liberty and freedom.
- **Military Career:** A respected military engineer, Colonel Kosciuszko served the United States in the Continental Army, making many important contributions to the American Revolutionary War effort, most notably including the design and construction of fortifications at Saratoga and West Point in New York.
- **Champion of Human Rights:** Thaddeus Kosciuszko was a lifelong champion of human rights and freedom, leading an insurrection of his native Poland against Tsarist Russia, and opposing slavery in America.



Fundamental Resources and Values

Fundamental resources and values are those features, systems, processes, experiences, stories, scenes, sounds, smells, or other attributes determined to merit primary consideration during planning and management processes because they are essential to achieving the purpose of the park and maintaining its significance.

- **Kosciuszko House and its Connections to the Polish American Community:** Located at 3rd and Pine Streets in what is now known as the Society Hill neighborhood of Philadelphia, the Kosciuszko House serves as both a tangible connection and memorial to Thaddeus Kosciuszko. The three and a half story masonry building contains an exhibit space dedicated to Kosciuszko and a visitor contact station on the first floor. The second floor bedroom where Kosciuszko resided in the winter of 1798 has been restored to reflect his occupancy while recovering from wounds he suffered while fighting for his native Poland during the Polish insurrection. Dedicated as a national memorial in 1972, the site remains an important touchstone and source of pride for the Polish American community, linking them to a fellow countryman and to the roots of our nation.



Interpretive Themes

Interpretive themes are often described as the key stories or concepts that visitors should understand after visiting a park—they define the most important ideas or concepts communicated to visitors about a park unit. Themes are derived from—and should reflect—park purpose, significance, resources, and values. The set of interpretive themes is complete when it provides the structure necessary for park staff to develop opportunities for visitors to explore and relate to all of the park significances and fundamental resources and values.

- **The Struggle for Human Rights:** Throughout his life, Kosciuszko championed human rights by joining the American Revolution, by leading an insurrection in his native Poland against Czarist Russia, and (through his will) by seeking to purchase the freedom and education of enslaved Africans in the United States.
- **Kosciuszko's Military and Engineering Expertise:** Representative of the many foreign patriots who helped the United States win its war for independence, Kosciuszko used his military engineering expertise and problem-solving ability to aid the American Army.
- **Remembering Kosciuszko:** Kosciuszko, “the hero of two continents,” is memorialized in Poland and the United States (and throughout the world).



Description

Thaddeus Kosciuszko National Memorial commemorates and interprets the life of international human rights champion and Polish hero, Thaddeus Kosciuszko. Located on the corner of 3rd and Pine Streets in the Society Hill neighborhood of Philadelphia, the house was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1970. Later dedicated a national monument in 1972, the house was donated to the National Park Service and is currently managed by Independence National Historical Park. The National Park Service restored the exterior of the building and the second floor bedroom to its 1798 appearance when Kosciuszko resided there while recovering from wounds suffered while fighting for his native Poland. At .02 acres, the Thaddeus Kosciuszko National Memorial is the smallest national park unit in the system.

Despite its size, the Thaddeus Kosciuszko National Memorial honors a man who was, in Thomas Jefferson's words, "... as pure a son of liberty as I have ever known, and of that liberty which is to go to all, and not to the few or the rich alone." Visitors to the memorial are able to get a glimpse into the life of Thaddeus Kosciuszko, who served with distinction during the American Revolution and advocated the principles of liberty and democracy throughout the world. The first floor of the memorial includes museum exhibits related to Kosciuszko's military career as an engineer during the American Revolution and his work as a freedom fighter for his native Poland. The second floor includes the painstakingly restored room where Kosciuszko took up residency during the winter of 1797–1798, receiving notable visitors such as Chief Little Turtle and Thomas Jefferson. A short orientation film is presented in both Polish and English. The memorial serves as a window into the legacy of Thaddeus Kosciuszko, reminding us of universal struggles for liberty and freedom.

