

## BATAVIA DENTIST IS “FATHER OF FLAG DAY”

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On 14 June 1777, John Adams introduced the following resolution before the Continental Congress, meeting at Philadelphia, which approved the design of a national flag:



*Resolved, that the Flag of the thirteen United States shall be thirteen stripes, alternate red and white; that the Union be thirteen stars, white on a blue field, representing a new constellation.*

On 4 April 1818, a new resolution was passed, setting the thirteen stripes to represent the original colonies and the stars to represent the states.

There have been 27 versions of the flag over the years. The last two stars were added on 4 July 1959 and 1960, representing the admission of Alaska and Hawai‘i as the 49th and 50th states.

Bernard J. Cigrand, a 19-year-old grade school teacher in Waubeka, Wisconsin, held the first recognized formal observance of Flag Day at Stony Hill School in 1885. He moved to Chicago to attend dental school and, in June 1886, first publicly proposed an annual observance of Flag Day in an article, “The Fourteenth of June,” published in the *Chicago Argus*.

From the late 1880s on, Cigrand spoke around the country promoting patriotism, respect for the flag, and the need for the annual observance of a flag day on June 14. Cigrand became president of the American Flag Day Association and later of the National Flag Day Society, which allowed him to promote his cause with organizational backing.

Cigrand moved to Batavia in 1913 and built a house at 1184 S. Batavia Ave., which still stands. He practiced dentistry in the lower level of his home until 1920, when he moved his office to Aurora. Cigrand continued to live in Batavia until 1932, the year he died.

After 30 years of Cigrand’s advocacy, President Woodrow Wilson proclaimed June 14 as Flag Day in 1916. The United States Congress formally made the proclamation law in August 1949.

Cigrand generally is credited with being the “Father of Flag Day.” The *Chicago Tribune* noted that he “almost singlehandedly” established the holiday.



*Bernard J. Cigrand*

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Bernard J. Cigrand’s dental office is part of the Early Streets Museum at Blackberry Farm / Pioneer Village in Aurora. The exhibit depicts Cigrand’s office as it would have looked in the early years of his practice, including his original roll-top desk, old-fashioned dental chair, and hand-powered equipment, including a pedal-powered drill. For more information on the exhibit, as well as additional biographical information on Cigrand, please visit [www.luxamculturalsociety.org/CigrandDentalOfficeMuseum.htm](http://www.luxamculturalsociety.org/CigrandDentalOfficeMuseum.htm).