

City of Philadelphia



Council of the City of Philadelphia
Office of the Chief Clerk
Room 402, City Hall
Philadelphia

(Resolution No. 000322)

RESOLUTION

Memorializing the Citizen's Stamp Advisory Committee to consider and recommend to the United States Postal Board of Governors to issue a joint commemorative stamp with the Republic of Ireland marking the 200th Anniversary of the death of Commodore John Barry, the father of the United States Navy.

WHEREAS, John Barry was born in Tachumshain, County Wexford, Ireland in 1745, and immigrated to Philadelphia at the age of 15, finding employment with a shipping firm where he prospered and became master of several merchant vessels; and

WHEREAS, On October 31, 1767, John Barry married Mary Cleary at Philadelphia's Old St. Joseph's Chapel. Mary's premature death in 1774 at the age of 29 occurred when Barry was at sea and her loss was a great personal tragedy for the Captain; and

WHEREAS, John Barry was consoled by his second marriage to Sarah Keen (Sally) Austin. They were married on July 7, 1777 in Old Christ Church by the Reverend William White, rector and founder of the American Episcopal Church; and

WHEREAS, Sarah, an Episcopalian, eventually converted to Barry's Roman Catholic faith. The Barrys' were regular parishoners at several Philadelphia Catholic churches: Old St. Joseph's, Old St. Mary's and St. Augustine's. Although the Barrys' had no children, they did raise two boys from Barry's deceased sister Eleanor's household; and

WHEREAS, At the outbreak of the Revolutionary War, the Continental Congress commissioned Barry as captain of the ship "Lexington", which in 1776 captured the British sloop, "Edward", the first warship ever captured by the Americans; and

WHEREAS, On December 24, 1776, his fleet unable to reach open water, Barry left his ships behind and recruited a company of volunteers with whom he rushed to the

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aid of General George Washington on the banks of the Delaware River, and participated in the American victories at Princeton and Trenton; and

WHEREAS, During the War of Independence, John Barry boldly and skillfully engaged and captured many British vessels, and was wounded in service to his country; and

WHEREAS, On June 4, 1794, President Washington conferred Commission Number One upon John Barry, designating Commanding Officer of the U.S. Navy; and

WHEREAS, On September 13, 1803, at his home on Strawberry Hill, Philadelphia, Commodore Barry died from complications of asthma. He received a full military burial in Philadelphia's Old St. Mary's Churchyard; now therefore

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, That we memorialize the Citizens' Stamp Advisory Committee to consider and recommend to the United States Postal Board of Governors to issue a joint commemorative stamp with the Republic of Ireland marking the 200th Anniversary of the death of Commodore John Barry, the father of the United States Navy.

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CERTIFICATION: This is a true and correct copy of the original Resolution,
Adopted by the Council of the City of Philadelphia on the eleventh of May, 2000.

Anna C. Verna
PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL

Michael A. Decker
CHIEF CLERK OF THE COUNCIL

Introduced by: Councilmember Kenney

Sponsored by: Councilmembers Reynolds Brown, Clarke, Ortiz, Goode, Miller,
Rizzo, Nutter, Cohen, Tasco, Blackwell, Longstreth and
Krajewski

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