BEAUFORT
Historic Site

PRESENTS

BECOMING BEAUFORT
FROM CHAOS TO COMMUNITY

Welcome, we invite locals and visitors to reflect on factors that shaped America's arrival of independence as it happened here and throughout the 13 colonies. With the historic Courthouse and Old Jail as prized structures on the Beaufort Historic Site, topics of justice, law, order, and the complexities of crimes and punishments that challenged early settlers in Beaufort from 1700 to 1800 seem fitting for our America 250 exhibit. This tribute does not attempt to provide a comprehensive history of the American Revolution. Rather, our goal is to shed light on how lives were lived in centuries past upon this small, volatile bit of land that we hope will prompt contemplation and conversation.

For further exploration and resources regarding topics throughout the exhibit, scan the QR Code found on each panel

Coastal North Carolina's population at the turn of the 18th century was diverse and conditions were harsh. The lives of explorers, freedom-seeking Europeans, exiled prisoners, free and enslaved black individuals, Native Peoples, privateers, and pirates collided under the rule of the British Crown an ocean away that ultimately led to tensions, conflicts and unimaginable chaos. In contrast to the laid-back charm of Beaufort today, 18th century Beaufort was a sparsely inhabited seaside village attempting to manage basic law and order with the small port setting adding further complications of maritime-related matters.

Though isolated by its geographical location, Beaufort was nonetheless a microcosm of the broad societal challenges facing colonial America. Crime and punishment were deeply intertwined with the economic and social fabric of the town, exposing the complexities of justice in a developing community. Understanding historical context provides insight into how concepts of law and order were formed, perceived and carried out in towns, large and small, as a new nation emerged.

The "great" experiment, as America has often been called, has reached its 250th anniversary. As you consider the context and content within the exhibit, what sparks your thoughts?

REFLECTION

- **How is, "…with liberty and justice for all" playing out in America today?**
- **How have we made progress or failed to make progress compared to our ancestors in navigating justice, peace, and social order?**
- **In what ways has the tapestry of American stories transformed over time or in what ways are they the same?**
- **How does looking back to the past help strengthen the fabric of our nation, our state, our town?**

CELEBRATE
E PLURIBUS UNUM.
AMERICA 250

Created Image of Ship Sailing Toward What Soon Was to Become the Town of Beaufort, Circa 1700