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History Museum of Mobile

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**HISTORY MUSEUM OF MOBILE AND COLONIAL FORT CONDÉ TO
PRESENT REVOLUTIONARY WAR REENACTMENT AND OPEN 1976
TIME CAPSULE**

MOBILE, Ala., June 11, 2026 — The History Museum of Mobile and Colonial Fort Condé invite the public to a special afternoon of history, living interpretation, and discovery on **Sunday, July 5, 2026**, featuring the annual Independence Day reenactment **The Capture of Captain James Willing** and the opening of the **1976 Colonial Fort Condé Time Capsule**.

The free event will begin at **4:00 p.m.** in the courtyard of Colonial Fort Condé, located at **150 South Royal Street**, with a one-hour historical reenactment presented by the Fort's Living History staff. Following the program, the History Museum of Mobile and the City of Mobile will open the time capsule at **5:00 p.m.** Guests will have the opportunity to view its contents after the ceremony.

The Capture of Captain James Willing tells the story of a little-known chapter of Mobile's Revolutionary War history. Willing, a Continental Navy officer, led a series of raids against British plantations along the Mississippi River during the American Revolution. After completing his mission, he stopped in British-occupied Mobile while traveling back to Philadelphia. There, he distributed copies of the newly adopted Declaration of Independence and was subsequently arrested by British authorities. Willing narrowly escaped a death sentence through a prisoner exchange.

Based on research conducted by Colonial Fort Condé staff, the reenactment brings this dramatic story to life through a complete reading of the Declaration of Independence, live musket demonstrations, period clothing, audience participation, and interactive living history experiences.

"This event brings the Revolutionary War era to life in Mobile through the story of James Willing, whose daring raids in British West Florida demonstrated that support for American independence extended far beyond the colonies along the Atlantic coast," said **Kyle Williams, Curator of Living History at Colonial Fort Condé**. "Willing's actions remind us that the fight for independence reached the Gulf Coast and that Mobile has a unique place in our nation's founding story."

Immediately following the reenactment, visitors will witness the opening of the Colonial Fort Condé time capsule, which was buried in **1976** during the nation's Bicentennial celebrations. The opening commemorates both **America's 250th anniversary** and the **50th anniversary of the reconstructed Colonial Fort Condé**.

"The opening of the Bicentennial time capsule is a unique opportunity for Mobilians to see a glimpse of what celebrations were like 50 years ago as our community honored the founding of the nation," said **Jon Sexton, Director of the History Museum of Mobile**. "As a proud supporter of America250 celebrations across the United States, the History Museum of Mobile is honored to share these artifacts that create a bridge between Mobile's celebrations in 1976 and 2026, uniting Mobilians as a community across time."

As one of America's oldest cities and the only city to have been governed under French, British, Spanish, Confederate, and American flags, Mobile offers a unique perspective on the nation's history. This special event provides visitors with an opportunity to explore the city's role in the Revolutionary era while reflecting on how previous generations commemorated the nation's founding.

The event is free and open to the public.

Event Schedule:

Sunday, July 5, 2026

4:00 p.m. — *The Capture of Captain James Willing* historical reenactment

5:00 p.m. — Opening of the 1976 Colonial Fort Condé Time Capsule

5:00–7:00 p.m. — Public viewing of time capsule contents

Colonial Fort Condé

150 South Royal Street
Mobile, AL 36602

For more information, visit www.historymuseumofmobile.com or call **(251) 208-7569**.

ABOUT THE HISTORY MUSEUM OF MOBILE: The History Museum of Mobile is where Mobile's story begins. Over 117,000 objects weave together the rich, diverse, and often turbulent histories of Mobile and the surrounding area, from the prehistoric past to the present. Located in the heart of downtown, the History Museum of Mobile operates four campuses: The primary exhibitions are located in the Old City Hall-Southern Market building at 111 South Royal Street; Colonial Fort Condé is at 150 South Royal Street; Africatown Heritage House is at 2465 Winbush Street; and the Phoenix Fire Museum is at 203 South Claiborne Street. For more information, please visit: www.historymuseumofmobile.com.

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