American Revolution Bicentennial Commission

On July 23, 1969, Governor Paul Laxalt assigned the State Archivist, Frederick C. Gale, to institute an organization for the planning of Nevada's participation in the Bicentennial Celebration of the American Revolution. By Executive Order, Governor Mike O'Callaghan created a Bicentennial Commission on December 3, 1971, designating the Deputy State Archivist as Chairman. On January 11, 1973 the Governor issued another order that rescinded the appointment, and the State Archivist was designated as Chairman, instead. The Legislature that convened immediately thereafter passed the act that created the American Revolution Bicentennial Commission, providing for the composition, powers, and duties of the commission, and providing for other matters relating thereto. "The year 1976 being the 200th anniversary of the independence of this nation, it is desirable that such anniversary be fittingly observed and commemorated throughout the State of Nevada in cooperation with the national bicentennial observance."

The Commission functioned along the lines of the national American Revolution Bicentennial Administration, which embraced three thematic elements: Heritage '76, Festival USA, and Horizons '76. Nevada State and local programs contained all three elements. Heritage '76 covered activities which primarily recalled the nation's heritage, and gave an historical perspective as related to the community. Its concerns include what could be seen, touched, and felt of the historic past: houses, churches, bridges, and parks that form a heritage of the man-made environment. Festival USA related to efforts to share the traditional celebrations, culture, hospitality and character of the nation's people and communities: a 200th Birthday party with purpose and meaning. Horizons '76 were those activities planned to be ready for implementation in or before 1976 to improve the quality to life in a bicentennial community. The same Assembly Bill designated the termination of the Commission as June 30, 1977.