In the mid-1970s, the Norfolk & Western Railway boldly painted a locomotive—the number 1776—red, white, and blue to celebrate the USA’s Bicentennial of national independence and to demonstrate the railroad’s commitment to America’s strong future.

A fundraising campaign was mounted in 2011 for a cosmetic restoration of the 1776. A railfan favorite, the engine was a 2011 People’s Award Choice Winner in the Virginia Association of Museums’ Top Ten Endangered Artifacts competition. Trains Magazine awarded the 1776 its prestigious annual Preservation Award, the sole recipient from among 120 entries. The restoration was completed in 2012 in the Norfolk Southern Shops in Chattanooga, TN.

Paint, Paint and Repaint... The 1776 was first Peveler blue, then painted for the Bicentennial celebration with Red, White and Blue, then black in 1978 and back to red, white and blue in 1991 but faded quickly. The 1776 got the final beautiful paint job that is meant to last in 2012. So 244 years after the signing of the Declaration of Independence, we celebrate with this beautiful engine. Visit this website to learn more: http://www.vmt.org/collections/rail/diesel-locomotives/norfolk-western-emd-sd-45-1776/.