

ACTON 250TH COMMITTEE

History Subcommittee

April 13, 2023

Meeting minutes

Attending: Bob Ferrara, Anne Forbes, Pamela Lynn, Alissa Nicol, Sue Peterman. Absent: Mary Price Maddox

The meeting was called to order by chair Pamela Lynn at 4:20 p.m. in the Acton Memorial Library second-floor conference room.

Minutes of the April 6 meeting were reviewed, and on a motion by Alissa (seconded by Bob), were unanimously approved with a few revisions.

Procedural matters

Pam has spoken to the Town Clerk, and reported that a subcommittee like ours cannot be larger than a quorum of the full Acton 250th Committee. We are presently at our allowed maximum number of five full members. She was assured, however, that others from the main committee with relevant expertise can attend our meetings and share information with us. Also, following on the discussion at the last meeting about the library's upcoming plans, Pam recommended that we introduce ourselves individually to Children's Librarian Robert Carter.

Town staff has recently posted some Patriots' Day activities notices in the Municipal Quarterly and on some of the blinking street signs around town. Pam proposed thanking the Town for those efforts, and will mention it at the upcoming full committee meeting on April 24.

In other recommendations, Pam urged us to read Chapter 5 of Bob Gross's *Minutemen and their World* as soon as possible to enhance our understanding of Acton's role in April 19 and the Revolution. She also recommended Robin Wall Kimmerer's 2015 *Braiding Sweetgrass: Indigenous Wisdom*, which is on the NY Times best-seller list. Anne recommended visiting the current Concord Museum's April 19th exhibition, and also watching the museum's online "Shot Heard Round the World" video exhibit. Both touch on Acton's involvement in April 19, 1775, and highlight some of the Acton-related items in the museum's collection.

Publicity update

Anne distributed a list of publicity outlets commonly used by local non-profits, to which committee members recommended some additions. (Attached).

Planning timeline: speakers and local events, continuing discussion.

Given the Acton-related content of the Concord Museum's collection and inclusion of Acton items in its exhibits, Pam wondered if asking the Museum about hosting an "Acton day" of some sort would make sense as part of the upcoming 250th events.

Continuing the discussion on a potential month-by-month calendar of speakers and local events that might parallel those leading up to the original April 19, Pam distributed a summary of some ideas, and Bob gave an update on possible speakers and a speaking schedule. It was noted, however, that discussions about a budget to fund a roster of speakers are still to come.

Alissa has begun a list of events over the five years prior to 1775 that might be linked to present-day programs. It was suggested that the overall schedule could include collections items or events planned by other entities. Some examples are the April 1775 letters of Jonathan Hosmer and Francis Faulkner at the Concord Museum. Anne offered to reach out to Bill Klauer and Lisa Soo of AHS to see what plans they may have, and to see what collection items the Society has that might be linked to particular dates. The same should be done with the library and the Iron Work Farm.

Bob has been experimenting with a month-by-month chart that can be filled in as we go along. Various planning formats other than straightforward lists were discussed. Sue will bring some ideas to the next meeting.

Activities other than speakers and exhibits were also discussed. Among them were the use of various quiz formats, history trivia, games, scavenger hunts, self-guided tours, etc. Involving a publication like *Action Unlimited* might be a way to disseminate a quiz or trivia question, perhaps once a month. The tour or quiz ideas might also be linked to short historical presentations of some sort. Anne will bring the 2015 “Made in Acton” map as an example of a self-guided tour. Alissa suggested that we consider a handout or short publication in connection with a quiz, a scavenger hunt, or a similar idea. The question of seeking the help of an intern, inviting proposals for Eagle Scout projects, etc., applying for grants for particular projects, etc. was also raised.

Ideas for other types of potential projects were also discussed, with an emphasis on the visual or concrete. One example is the “witness houses” or sites connected with certain events that have been marked in other communities. Online formats, such as “story maps” were also cited as examples. Overall, it was agreed that the more that both images and stories can be used, the better.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:45 p.m.

NEXT MEETING: Thursday, April 20, 10:30 a.m. The agenda will include a review of take-aways from this year’s Patriots’ Day events, and a continuation of the discussion on a framework for moving forward with the committee’s plans.

Respectfully submitted,
Anne Forbes