

ACTON 250TH COMMITTEE

History Subcommittee

November 10, 2023
Meeting minutes

Attending: Bob Ferrara, Anne Forbes, Pamela Lynn Absent: Bill Klauer, Mary Price Maddox

The meeting was called to order by chair Pamela Lynn at 10:05 a.m. at the Iron Work Farm's Faulkner Homestead, 5 High Street.

Approval of past minutes.

Minutes of the October 20 meeting were reviewed, and unanimously approved as written.

Upcoming Acton 250th meeting and event schedule:

November 13, 7 p.m.: Mary Fuhrer--lecture on life in Acton 1773-75
November 27, 7 p.m.: Acton 250th Committee
November 30, 10 a.m.: Acton 250th History Subcommittee meeting
December 10, 2 p.m.: Amy Cole—tour of Acton center
December 15, 10 a.m.: Acton 250th History Subcommittee meeting
January 12, 10 a.m.: “ “ “ “

Upcoming related events:

November 21: AML book group: Stacy Schiff's book on Samuel Adams: *The Revolutionary*
December 9: AML hosts Rick Hamelin, potter, on "Patriots and Potters"
December 16: "The Boston Tea Party: Steeped in Secrecy"—virtual program from Tewksbury.

Updates and reports: review Acton 250th Committee progress looking forward

Pam announced that she will write a report on the relevant Acton 250th activities to date, to be included in the Memorial Library's annual report for the 2023 Acton Town Report.

In a general discussion about planning, it was agreed that we should line up more speakers as soon as possible. We should also further develop partnerships with other entities, such as the library, the Historical Society, and the Iron Work Farm. This could include posting our events with them, and vice versa. We might also look at their emails and campaigns as models for our own publicity.

Next speaker event: 11/13. Mary Fuhrer lecture on life in Acton 1773-75: discussion and “run of show”

It was agreed to meet at 6:30 to set up. Pam will do the introduction, and will include highlights on some of our partners. AHS and IWF, for instance, will be invited to bring handouts on their organizations. Mass. Humanities' *MassMoments* will also be mentioned, especially because of Mary's longtime role in its production. We hope to show a slide of the town's 250th website. Bob and Pam will monitor the question period at the end. Bob will talk to the tech crew about how people can send in follow-up questions. Anne will oversee the sign-in table.

Action Unlimited ARTICLES.

Pam is working on an article on Samuel Adams, to include information on the AML book group's 11/21 discussion of *The Revolutionary*.

Anne and Bill will try to draft their article on Acton in the 1770s next.

EVENTS

Next event: public tour of Acton Center with Amy Cole, Sunday, December 10

There will be pre-registration, as the number of participants will be limited. It was agreed that the starting point should be the lower parking lot at the library/Town Hall.

Ideas for future tours and programs

While considering both the relevant historical period and the potential walking distance involved, the following locations for walking tours were suggested:

South Acton center/"Mill Corner": The concentrated area around the dam, original mill sites, and the 18th-century Faulkner Homestead and Jones Tavern; plus archaeological remains such as the boundary wall of the 17th-century Iron Work Farm.

North Acton: Wheeler Lane/"Trail through Time". Although buildings here post-date 1800, this tour would include the 1720s Wheeler farmstead and mill sites, the dam and associated stone structures, as well as some Native American sites. It was suggested that we ask Linda McElroy or Kimberley Connors if they might lead the tour.

There was also some discussion about what we might do regarding any tours or lectures focusing on Native Americans. Bob suggested we might pursue both Cedric Woods of UMass Boston and Katherine Grandjean for a talk, and we might see about co-sponsoring something with the Friends of Pine Hawk. Another idea was to apply for a Freedom's Way Hidden Treasures grant for next May—possibly to focus on an object or two in the library's collection.

The upcoming calendar was then discussed. Pam distributed a draft outline of some thoughts and scheduled activities for the next three years, "The Crisis is Coming" (attached). For 2024 (1774) another tour in the spring, and a joint Native American event with Pine Hawk for the fall were discussed.

Looking at what we might do in regard to a contextual understanding of the role of African- and Native Americans and the Revolution, Elise Lemire's name was raised as someone who might speak. The library book group will include a recent book on Phyllis Wheatley in March 2024, and we might try to do something related to that. While the local role of most of the east Acton Oliver family is post-1800, the family patriarch, John Oliver, was a soldier in the Revolution, so they and that part of town might be worked into at least part of a program.

18th-century newspapers were another possible topic that was raised. Joseph Adelman was suggested as a possible speaker.

With Crown Resistance Day highlighted in past years, along with the Suffolk Resolves, it was suggested that we might approach Mary Fuhrer about another talk in September.

Other speakers suggested for 2024 were Joel Bohy (on the objects of war[?]), and Bob Gross for the fall (October?) Bob could speak on a variety of topics.

2025 (1775): Anne offered to work up a slide talk on Acton's 18th-century architecture and/or buildings standing in 1775, probably for January 2025.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:15 p.m. Next meeting: November 30, 10 a.m. at the library.

Respectfully submitted,

Anne Forbes