

ACTON 250TH COMMITTEE

History Subcommittee

March 8, 2024 Meeting minutes

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

The meeting was called to order by chair Pamela Lynn at 10:40 in the Acton Memorial Library second-floor conference room.

Approval of past minutes.

Minutes of the March 8 meeting were approved as amended. Pam reminded us to periodically review our committee's progress by checking back through the minutes.

Confirmed upcoming schedule

Acton 250th meetings and events:

March 22: 10:30 a.m.: Acton 250th History Subcommittee meeting

March 25: Acton 250th Committee meeting

April 2: 7:00: John L. Bell: lecture

April 5: 10:30 a.m.: Acton 250th History Subcommittee meeting

April 6 and 12: Acton center walks with Amy Cole

May 3: 10:30 a.m.: Acton 250th History Subcommittee meeting

Updates and reports; review of recent events, etc.

2/26 Acton 250th meeting: Great progress was reported by the merchandising committee, in particular. They are on target for having some merchandise to sell at the next 250th event. As for publicity updates, there was a discussion on whether it's appropriate to refer to our committee (or Acton) as "partners" of Freedom's Way Heritage Association, although FW's definition of the term seems to be fairly loose.

Upcoming 250th events

March focus: coordination with Women's History Month. This year, Phyllis Wheatley is being highlighted by the two local book groups. Pam plans to prepare a summary for them of 250th activities. The committee agreed to look forward for a focus for March 2025 that might tie in with the Women's History Month theme.

John L. Bell lecture, April 2. Bob reported that the speaker's logistics are all set. Discussion focused on the arrangement of Room 204 to facilitate both the display of information and the sale of speakers' books and our committee merchandise. It was decided that the books should be displayed, but that people will be directed to purchase them online. Anne will print up a sign to that effect.

For the larger "kit" that has been discussed, it was also agreed to set up a display of related 250th events, possibly in poster form (divided into quadrants?), with the logos and websites of participating organizations such as the Historical Society, Iron Work Farm, Pine Hawk, and the library, with Acton 250 in the middle. That could be accompanied on the table by the organizations' brochures and handouts, etc.

We will decide on site about the number and arrangement of the entry tables when we see the extent of the items to display, especially what space may be needed for the books and the merchandise items.

Pam offered to work on a summary for the library staff. It was suggested that it might include some information from our programs as well as other timely material.

The Acton Exchange is planning to report on our talks after they take place, as they have already started to do. But flyers and posters, the town website, and *Action Unlimited* still appear to be the most effective publicity outlets to spread the word on our events.

Two Acton center walks with Amy Cole, April 6 and 12. Planning for these is all set, which are to depart from the Library parking lot. Bob requests people arrive by 12:45.

Future speakers.

Bob distributed an updated speaker schedule. Bob Gross has been confirmed for 10/23/24. Bob Allison has agreed to speak, probably during the summer. He's open to topic suggestions, but the committee has suggested he might discuss the impact of the Coercive Acts or something else leading up to Mary Fuhrer's Sept. 25 talk on Crown Resistance Day.

As for the search for a speaker on Native Americans, Bob reported that Christine di Lucia has given some leads but no one has been found yet. Pam noted that we could always fall back on something in another format, such as the "braiding sweetgrass" event that was held recently at Stonefield Farm. Anne suggested that we might look at Atlantic Black Box for some speaker names, although most of their presenters are based in northern New England. Other ideas from the committee included the possibility of a talk on beer by M. Purrinton. The question of holding an event at Jones Tavern was raised, although the building is not handicap-accessible. Scheduling something jointly with Fruitlands Museum was another idea. Presenting something on local loyalists next year was also raised; it was agreed to ask upcoming speakers for their ideas and recommendations.

18th-century house programs.

Bob reported on a recent conversation with David Mitchell-Hardt about a possible slide lecture about the Nathaniel Edwards House, perhaps in June. The committee then discussed arranging a "mini-series" of house tours in late spring/early summer that could include the Edwards House (328 Pope Road), and the three house museums that would already be holding their regular open-houses: the Iron Work Farm's Faulkner Homestead and Jones Tavern, and the Historical Society's Hosmer House. Tentative dates that would align with their already-scheduled openings are 5/26: Faulkner House (1-3 p.m.) and Jones Tavern (3-5 p.m.), and 7/7 for the Hosmer House, leaving June for the Edwards House. Bill and Anne will talk to their respective organizations about this idea, and adjusting their publicity accordingly. Bob will talk again with David.

Framing April 19, 1774/2024.

Pam plans to include this and other future events in her introduction to the lecture on 4/2.

Action Unlimited articles.

Pam is drafting an article on 18th-century taverns. We need to pin down whether there were three or four in Acton in 1775. Anne and Bill agreed to firm up the article on Acton in 1775 next.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:30. Next meetings: April 5 and May 3, 10:30 a.m. at the library.

Respectfully submitted,

Anne Forbes