

ACTON 250TH COMMITTEE

History Subcommittee

December 15, 2023 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 10:10 in the Acton Memorial Library second-floor conference room.

Approval of past minutes.

Minutes of the November 30 meeting were reviewed, and unanimously approved as revised.

Confirmed schedule

Upcoming Acton 250th meetings and events:

January 12, 10:30 a.m.: Acton 250th History Subcommittee meeting

January 26, 10 a.m.: “ “ “ “

January 29, 7 p.m.: Acton 250th Committee meeting

January 30: 7 p.m.: Joseph Adelman: talk on 18th-century newspapers

Upcoming related events:

December 16: “The Boston Tea Party: Steeped in Secrecy”—virtual program from Tewksbury.

+ many December area events related to the Tea Party in Boston and elsewhere

Updates and reports; review of recent events and meetings, etc.

Past events.

Pam and Bob reported on a recent ZOOM conference with A-B schools staff members, including Dora Sanchez, who will be our contact there. Dora said she is eager to coordinate with our committee and others on 250th matters and will plan to stay in communication with us. She will meet again, with Pam and library staff members, on January 19.

Pam reported that the elementary schools curriculum, in particular, is heavily focused on literacy, and there was a brief discussion on certain terms, such as “colonials” and “loyalists”, that have been the subject of much recent attention. It was noted that the term “loyalist” does not appear until 1774.

The library’s hands-on program by master potter Rich Hamelin on 12/9 was well attended, and a hit with the kids who attended.

16 people showed up for the 12/10 public tour of Acton center with Amy Cole, but due to bad weather the group was moved indoors at the library, and the walk was rescheduled to 12/17.

A thank-you note from Bob Allison was briefly reviewed, and ideas were raised as to how best to thank our speakers. Giving or sending them a commemorative Acton coin was one suggestion.

It was agreed that the recently adopted partnership model of sharing publicity and each others’ news with related local organizations is working well.

Upcoming events and meetings

Much is scheduled regionally this month around the 250th anniversary of the Boston Tea Party, beginning with the Tewksbury Library’s virtual Steeped in Secrecy, and we will all plan to attend what we can.

After the Tea Party commemorations, the next historical anniversaries will mark the closing of the port of Boston in 1774 and the increased tension that was building from late 1773 through early 1774. It was suggested that we might do articles on each of the five official acts that took place around that time, and also that we might ask Bob Allison(?) to do another lecture about the evolving local atmosphere as 1774 got under way.

Joseph Adelman's talk on 18th-century newspapers is coming up on January 30, and a draft press release for it was briefly reviewed. A snow date will be scheduled, as well.

Next subcommittee meetings: Jan. 12 and 26; next full 250th committee meeting: Jan. 29. There will be a long gap before the next meetings. In the meantime we will look for opportunities for engagement. Pam is planning to attend the "The Hive" (yearly meeting of Revolutionary reenactors) in January, and a workshop in Concord.

Action Unlimited articles.

Pam presented an idea for an upcoming article on 250th-related New Year's resolutions, which she will write. Since attending a scheduled event will be one of them, it is hoped that AU may be able to use a photo of a recent 250th tour.

In discussion of future article ideas, Anne offered to write one on the establishment of the Patriots' Day holiday, probably for the spring of 2024.

It was suggested that Larry Kerpelman's completed article A Race to Remember would be good to publish in late April or May, 2025; also that we might ask him to write another on the origin of the loyalists, especially including the aftermath of the tea party.

Continuing the discussion of topics we may suggest to 250th Committee members, we may ask Steve Trimble to write an article on the Isaac Davis plow.

Speakers

Bob will update the draft speakers timeline, focusing on the schedule through March. It was decided to try to contact Katherine Grandjean again in January, perhaps about a lecture in the fall of 2024. We are still seeking a speaker for a talk on African Americans in the 1770s. Bob may approach John Bell to speak about the cannon; Steve Crosby and Bob Gross will be kept in mind for possible talks in 2025.

Other activities

Ideas for future activities and informational resources will be taken up next time. More tours may be scheduled in the spring.

Also for the next meeting, the "Useful materials list" should be reviewed and updated.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:20 p.m. Next meeting: January 12, 10 a.m. at the library.

Respectfully submitted,

Anne Forbes