

ACTON 250TH COMMITTEE

History Subcommittee

December 13, 2024 meeting minutes

Attending: Bob Ferrara, Anne Forbes, Pamela Lynn

The meeting was called to order by Chair Pamela Lynn at 10:35 a.m. in the Acton Memorial Library, with a quorum of the members present.

Approval of past minutes

The minutes of the November 22 meeting were unanimously approved as amended.

Schedule of upcoming Acton 250th and related events.

2025	January	9: 250 th Committee meeting
	"	17: History Subcommittee meeting
	"	27: 250 th Committee meeting
	"	29: Joel Bohy: "Dreadful Were the Vestiges of War"
	"	31: History Subcommittee meeting
	February	26: Volunteer program for Black History Month
	March	6: sculptor Meredith Bergman: title to be determined
	"	22: Amy Cole: South Acton walking tour
	"	25: Council on Aging breakfast event
	"	31: John Bell: topic to be determined
	April	5: Amy Cole: South Acton walking tour
	"	17: 250 th celebration, AML

DEBRIEF of Dec. 12th 250th COMMITTEE MEETING

With the 250th anniversary fast approaching, at its last meeting the committee examined how to go forward for the time remaining in our committee's charge, which will run through the summer of 2026. It may be that there may be a broader emphasis of Acton's role in the larger context of the Revolution, including its aftermath. We will probably continue to strengthen the partnerships that we have built up with other organizations, to continue to seek out formerly unheard voices, and to place more emphasis on the preservation of our material and the committee's legacy. Suggestions regarding the latter goals included consulting with the library staff and the Acton Historical Society, and comparing notes with Bob Allison on how Revolution 250 is approaching these questions.

HISTORY SUBCOMMITTEE PLANNING

In terms of specific program planning, it was suggested that we will probably schedule 5 or 6 more programs, including some by previous speakers such as John Bell, Bob Allison, Daniel Mandell, Joel Mackall, or Bob Gross. We might also approach local experts such as Steve Crosby and Bill Klauer, who have extensive local historical knowledge. For other outside speakers, Stacy Schiff might be invited to speak about Phyllis Wheatley, or someone to give a talk on Thomas Paine.

It was agreed that we may be at the point where reducing subcommittee meetings to once a month makes sense.

REVIEW OF RECENT PROGRAMS

The most recent talk, by Daniel Mandell, was briefly reviewed. While all agreed that the program was excellent, there were still some technical problems with the Room 204 acoustics, especially at the front. Some slides were hard to read; in the future, Bob will warn speakers about the problem, and ask that the projected words be made large enough to be legible.

UPCOMING LECTURES.

1/29/25: Joel Bohy. "Dreadful Were the Vestiges of War." Bob will let him know about the legibility problems.

In discussion, it was suggested that we again ask attendees to sign in with their email addresses so that they can be notified of future programs; also that the publicity committee should send the program announcements to the overall contact list.

2/26: Acton's Black History presentation (no title as yet). The speakers are still working on a title, and will send a short summary to the publicity committee by the beginning of January.

3/6: Meredith Bergman, sculptor. Bob will contact her for more information on a title and topic.

3/31: John Bell. Potential topics were discussed at the last meeting. Bob will be in touch with him.

Council on Aging spring event. Pam reported that a meeting of the Friends of the COA is scheduled for next week to further this along. It will be a catered dinner event, probably on March 25. Some suggestions for a program included a speaker (possibly Mary Fuhrer), and/or a volunteer presentation from the Historical Society about April 19th celebrations over the years. Another idea was to ask Tom and Cathy Griffin to present something from the Acton Minutemen.

ARTICLES.

Following on the discussion at the last meeting, when it was decided not to pursue anything further with *Action Unlimited*, Anne has contacted editor Franny Osman about the possibility of publishing the committee's historical articles in the online *Acton Exchange*. Franny expressed her enthusiasm for the proposal, and she plans to discuss it with her editorial board.

Anne will keep a running list of planned and completed articles. (Attached). Seven are either completed or in draft form. Three have already appeared in other publications, including one on the Acton Minutemen by Steve Crosby published last year in *Discover Concord* magazine.

PLANS FOR FUTURE ACCESSIBILITY OF 250TH MATERIALS.

As was discussed at the main 250th Committee meeting, our subcommittee also needs to plan for the preservation and future accessibility of our materials. At present, recorded talks, speaker information and meeting minutes are available on the town website, but it was agreed that a more permanent solution is necessary. For a future archives, it was agreed to look into the Memorial Library or the Historical Society as a possible repository for 250th written or printed materials. As a start, Bob offered to develop a "Legacy list" of our activities, articles, partnerships, etc.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:40 p.m. Next meeting: January 17, 10:30 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Anne Forbes