

# **ACTON 250<sup>TH</sup> COMMITTEE**

## **History Subcommittee**

January 31, 2025 meeting MINUTES

Attending: Bob Ferrara, Anne Forbes, Bill Klauer, Pamela Lynn

The meeting was called to order by Chair Pamela Lynn at 10:15 a.m. in the Acton Memorial Library.

Olivia Wennerod, the new Acton Programming Librarian, was welcomed to the meeting, and offered her services to the committee.

### **Approval of past minutes**

The minutes of the January 17, 2025 meeting were unanimously approved as written.

### **Acton 250 outreach and recommendations.**

Pam strongly recommended Amitav Ghosh's recent book *Smoke and Ashes* for everyone's background reading. It was also agreed that Thomas Paine's *Common Sense* should be read or reread.

Pam reminded everyone about *The Hive*, the yearly gathering for reenactors that will take place in February (Feb. 8 and 9), when area authors speakers about the Revolution in New England will share their knowledge. Among them this time will be Bob Allison, Jared Fuoss of Minuteman Park, and historic landscape historian Brian Donohue. For us, the Hive connection has led to the initial contact with most of our speakers, and this time Pam plans to explore whether Brian or Jared (if his job will allow it) might be a good fit for Acton's roster this year.

### **Review of Jan. 29 presentation: Joel Bohy: "Dreadful Were the Vestiges of War"**

All agreed that this most recent talk was excellent and engaging, and that we might ask Joel to return to speak on the ensuing events of the day of April 19, 1775 in Concord and the surrounding area.

### **Review of Jan. 30 250<sup>th</sup> committee meeting and discussion of future plans.**

It was reported that some plans for April are still in flux, but in spite of some concerns about drawing a sizeable crowd, a local celebration is still likely, either on 4/16 at Acton Congregational Church, or possibly 4/17 at the Discovery Museum. Possible alternatives include a summer outdoor event, perhaps based on the 7/4/1776 acceptance of the Declaration of Independence. As for talks and presentations, ideas raised were highlighting Evacuation Day in 2026, or approaching Bob Allison or Brian Donahue about a presentation. A theme like "Beyond the Bridge" could focus on aspects of the Revolution after its April 1775 beginning.

### **Next lectures.**

2/26: "A Snapshot of Acton's Early Black Residents." Bob recommended a dry run for the speakers and slides in Room 204. He will try to arrange a time before the next subcommittee meeting on 2/14, and will send his usual instructions to the panel members. He will also be prepared to do the introduction at the event, as Pam will be away. Also, it has been confirmed that the organizations represented by the panelists will be able to sell publications at the talk in the usual way. Consequently, the display of past speakers' books may have to be reduced somewhat. Joel Bohy, however, has been invited to sell his book at that time, as it was not available for his recent talk.

3/6--Meredith Bergman, sculptor: "A Sculptor Speaks for Her Statues." Details to be discussed next time.

Pam recommended we produce a new “binge watching” handout for the display tables listing the past 250<sup>th</sup> presentations that are available for viewing on YouTube. It was agreed to have it ready by the 2/26 event.

**Schedule of upcoming Acton 250<sup>th</sup> and related events.**

2025	February	14: 250 <sup>th</sup> subcommittee meeting and dry run of 2/26 slides, Room 204
	“	24: 250 <sup>th</sup> committee meeting
	“	26: Volunteer program: “Snapshot of Acton’s Early Black Residents”
	“	28: 250 <sup>th</sup> subcommittee meeting
	March	6: Meredith Bergman: “A Sculptor Speaks for her Statues”
	“	13: Isaac Davis Brown Ale: Second big release party. Dirigible Brewing Co.
	“	22: Amy Cole: South Acton walking tour
	“	25: Council on Aging dinner event
	“	31: John Bell: “Spies and Military Intelligence”
	April	5: Amy Cole: South Acton walking tour
	“	16 or 17: 250 <sup>th</sup> local celebration
	“	17: Visit by Willard/Davis family reunion
	“	18: Acton Minutemen: march and “Robbins Ride”

**Acton Exchange.**

Bob reported that he has done the training for entering an event directly on the *Exchange* calendar, and asked that we do postings through him.

**Other future planning.**

Bob asked if we might consider promoting the books of authors other than our past speakers at our events. It was concluded that the display tables are full enough for now, especially as the number of our own speakers continues to grow. Pam mentioned the Library’s practice of placing recommended books around the library building, and suggested that we might try something similar there, or perhaps at the Discovery Museum.

Bob also introduced the question of adding more “at-large” members to the 250<sup>th</sup> committee or subcommittee. It was agreed to raise this with the main committee, as some members of the public have expressed interest in helping out. Included will be the question of involving interested students somehow, perhaps as 250<sup>th</sup> interns. Bob will speak to Chair Steve Trimble about it.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:15 p.m.

Next meetings: February 14 and 28.

Respectfully submitted,

Anne Forbes