

# REVOLUTIONARY STORIES



The Enduring Legacies of  
the American Revolution  
in the Freedom's Way  
National Heritage Area





# Freedom's Way National Heritage Area

- 1 of 55 NHAs working in partnership with the National Park Service and local communities to tell uniquely American stories celebrating our nation's diverse heritage. [Learn more!](#)
- Comprised of 45 communities in Massachusetts and New Hampshire. [View map.](#)
- Includes Lexington and Concord, [Minute Man National Historical Park](#), and the [Battle Road Byway](#)—designated an All-American Road in 2021.
- Guided by three themes outlined in an interpretive framework: 1) A Mosaic of Subtle Beauty, 2) Inventing the New England Community, 3) Revolutionary Ideas: Visionaries & Experimenters. [Explore the themes.](#)



# What is Revolutionary Stories?

An initiative to **gather, record, interpret, and share** both **well-known and underrepresented stories** about the **people, places, events, and objects** that relate to the period **before, during, and after the American Revolution** within the Freedom's Way National Heritage Area.

*Revolutionary Stories* is made possible by the generous support of the **National Park Service** and the **Massachusetts Society of the Cincinnati**.

[Click here to view the \*Revolutionary Stories\* program page on our website.](#)





## Why now?

**America250**, a multi-year effort to commemorate the semiquincentennial—or **250<sup>th</sup> anniversary**—of the United States, is underway! The commemoration period began in 2020, culminates on **July 4<sup>th</sup>, 2026**, and officially concludes in 2027.

*Revolutionary Stories* provides an opportunity for **municipalities and organizations** to develop **programming, projects, and heritage tourism itineraries and resources** to engage residents and visitors in the forthcoming celebrations with **guidance and financial support** from the Freedom's Way NHA.

[Click here to learn more about the nation-wide America250 initiative.](#)



# Goals of the Initiative

- **Engage stakeholders** from the Heritage Area's 45 communities.
- **Explore new ideas and perspectives** to “tell the full American Story,” drawing inspiration from and building upon the history of the Revolutionary War era.
- **Empower individuals and organizations** to research, record, and contribute stories within a shared framework; provide resources to support their work.
- **Create a publicly accessible online repository** of collected stories that can inform the creation of programs, projects, and heritage tourism itineraries and resources to engage residents and visitors leading up to, and beyond, 2026.



# The Repository

- Is a publicly accessible, web-based museum of the region.
- Its collection includes entries—crafted as stories—about **people/groups, places/locations, objects/things, and events** associated with the American Revolution.
- Will remain **permanently available** through the Freedom's Way NHA website following the conclusion of the America250 commemoration period.
- Integrates place-based entries with the website's interactive map and mobile app for an enhanced user experience.





REVOLUTIONARY  
STORIES

# People & Groups

[Click here to keep reading!](#)



*This story was adapted from "Ebenezer Locke—First Shot or Not?" submitted by Bill Poole of Lexington, MA as part of the program, [Revolutionary Stories: The Enduring Legacies of the American Revolution in the Freedom's Way National Heritage Area](#).*

## CATEGORY:

EXPERIENCE: [STORIES](#)

TOPIC: [HISTORY, PEOPLE](#)

THEME: [AMERICAN REVOLUTION](#)

LOCATION: [LEXINGTON, MA, WOBURN, MA](#)

AUDIENCE: [EDUCATORS & RESEARCHERS](#)



## Ebenezer Locke

Ebenezer Locke of [Woburn, Massachusetts](#) fought at Concord and Lexington on April 19, 1775. Persistent rumor had it, starting in the early 1800s, that he was the one who fired the "first shot" made famous by [Ralph Waldo Emerson](#) in his 1836 poem, "Concord Hymn."





# Places & Locations

[Click here to keep reading!](#)



*This story was submitted by the [Westford Historical Society & Museum](#) as part of the program, [Revolutionary Stories: The Enduring Legacies of the American Revolution in the Freedom's Way National Heritage Area](#).*

## CATEGORY:

EXPERIENCE: [PLACES TO GO](#)

TOPIC: [COMMEMORATIONS, HISTORY, PLACES](#)

THEME: [AMERICAN REVOLUTION, SHAKER/RELIGIOUS HERITAGE](#)

LOCATION: [WESTFORD, MA, MEDFORD, MA](#)

AUDIENCE: [EDUCATORS & RESEARCHERS, VISITORS](#)



## Reverend Willard Hall Monument

FAIRVIEW CEMETERY, WESTFORD, MA

Reverend Willard Hall was born in [Medford, Massachusetts](#) in 1703. He was married to Abigail Cotton (1705-1789) and had eleven children. A 1722 Harvard College graduate, he came to [Westford, Massachusetts](#) in the summer of 1726.





# Objects & Things

[Click here to keep reading!](#)



*This story was submitted by the [Concord Museum](#) as part of the program, [Revolutionary Stories: The Enduring Legacies of the American Revolution in the Freedom's Way National Heritage Area](#).*

## CATEGORY:

EXPERIENCE: [STORIES](#)

TOPIC: [HISTORY, OBJECTS & COLLECTIONS](#)

THEME: [AMERICAN REVOLUTION](#)

LOCATION: [CONCORD, MA, GREATER MERRIMACK VALLEY CVB,](#)  
[BATTLE ROAD SCENIC BYWAY](#)

AUDIENCE: [EDUCATORS & RESEARCHERS](#)



### **Abner Hosmer Powder Horn**

CONCORD MUSEUM, CONCORD, MA

On April 10, 1775, Jonathan Hosmer of [Acton](#) wrote a letter reporting that "There came a post to Concord a Saturday [sic] night which enforms [sic] them that the Regulars are coming up to Concord." He predicted that "if they come I believe there will be bloody work." The post rider Hosmer mentioned was Paul Revere who rode to [Concord](#) on a false alarm. Nine days later Hosmer's son Abner was killed in the first firing at the [North Bridge](#).



## Explore

*Use the filters or search field below to explore the richness of the Heritage Area's nature, culture, history, and people.*

**FILTER BY**

**CLEAR ALL**



**EXPERIENCE**



**TOPIC**



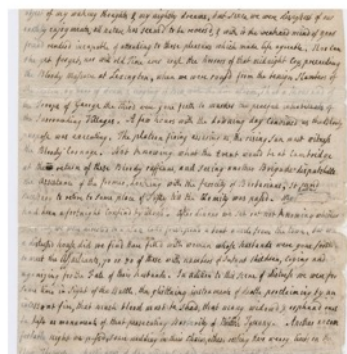
**THEME**



**Ebenezer Locke**  
STORY



**Jonathan Curtis Fife**  
STORY



**Letter From Hannah  
Winthrop Murphy To Mercy  
Otis Warren**  
STORY

**Gershom Swan Cooper's  
Tool**  
STORY



**Joshua Bentley Pocketbook**  
STORY



**Locke Powder Horn**  
STORY

**Home Of Colonel John  
Robinson Memorial**  
PLACES TO GO



**Lantern**  
STORY



**Peter Salem**  
STORY

[Click here to explore the repository on our website!](#)



## A note on participation...

Our goal is to engage all those interested in sharing information—or simply learning more—about all things Revolutionary War related within the Freedom's Way National Heritage Area.

We recognize that everyone has different interests, priorities, areas of expertise, availability and staff/volunteer capacity to assess when considering if and how they will participate.

Regardless of your educational/professional background, level expertise/formal training, or organizational capacity, **we can meet you where you're at** to ensure that everyone has the opportunity to participate in this exciting commemorative period in our nation's history.

**Let us know what you're thinking and what you need to make it happen!**





# How can YOU contribute during this phase?

- Compile lists/inventories
  - Muster rolls, gravesites, extant historic structures, etc.
- Digitize/transcribe documents
  - Diaries, Town Meeting minutes, correspondence, etc.
- Research items/topics of interest to you or your organization/community.
- Write descriptions/stories about people, places, things, and events to be added directly into the Repository.
- Photograph sites in the landscape or items in collections that may accompany stories to be written.
- Discover underrepresented subjects and/or themes to explore.



# Next Steps

1. **Check the Repository**—What’s already there?
2. Start a list of the “**low-hanging fruit**,”—What do you already know?
  - What items and documents are in your collection?
  - What historic sites/structures are in your community?
  - Who were the key figures in your community (i.e., local/military/religious leaders; prominent families; business owners, etc.)
  - What important events took place in or affected your community?
3. **Determine how you’d like to share this information** through *Revolutionary Stories* and what resources, if any, you’d need to make that happen.
4. Let us know you’re ready to **get started**!



## Next Steps

5. If you feel ready to submit an entry, [visit the online submission form.](#)
6. If you think you need some additional guidance or want to talk through your ideas, don't hesitate to reach out—we're here to help!
7. If you're interested in researching or writing about an underrepresented subject or topic, let's schedule a call—there may be additional resources available to support this important work.





## Revolutionary Stories: The Enduring Legacies of the American Revolution in the Freedom's Way National Heritage Area

Step 2 of 5

40%

### Tell us what you found!

#### What is it? *(Required)*

- ☐ Person or group of people
- ☐ Place or location
- ☐ Thing
- ☐ Event or story
- ☐ Other

#### What is it called? *(Required)*

#### Which of the Heritage Area's communities is it related to? *(Required)*

This may include, but is not limited to: place of birth/residence/death/burial; place/location where something is/was; place/location where something took place, etc.

*You may select more than one community by pressing the COMMAND key on a Mac or the CTRL key on a PC while clicking each desired community.*

Acton, MA  
Amherst, NH  
Arlington, MA  
Ashburnham, MA  
Ashby, MA  
Ayer, MA  
Bedford, MA

Previous

Next

 Save and Continue Later

[Click here to access the online submission form.](#)



# Potential Themes & Storylines to Explore

- Underrepresented Stories
- The Road to Concord
- Landscape of History
- Landscape of Memory
- Freedom's Way — Ideas of Freedom and Liberty
- Militia/Continental Army Participation
- Choosing Sides

[Click to learn more on page 26 of the Community Partners Guide.](#)



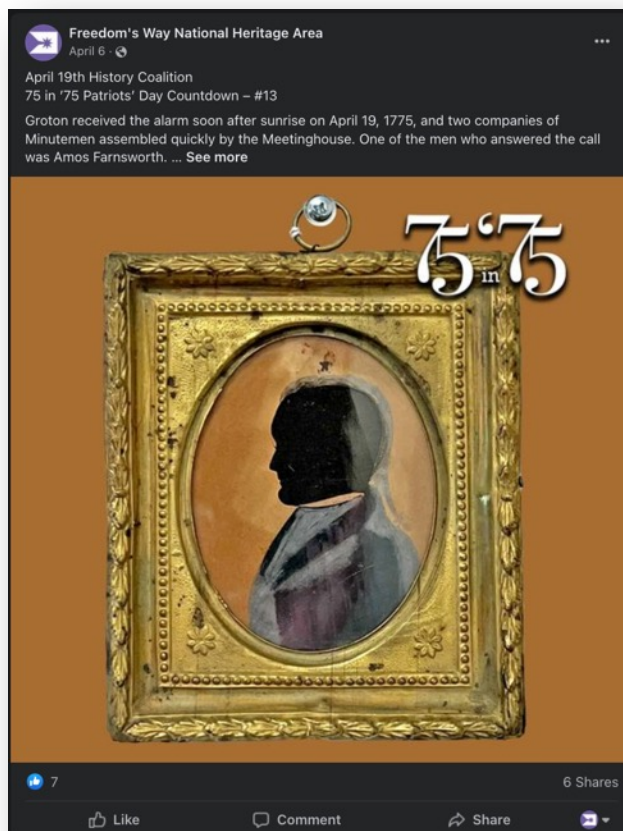
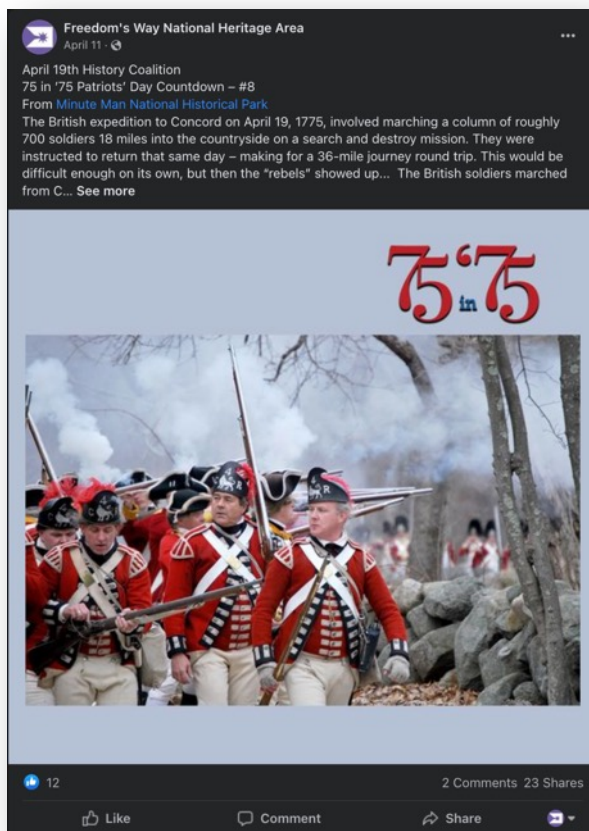
# How can the information collected be used by community partners?

- To develop **commemorative projects and programs** such as exhibits, tours, presentations, and quests.
- To augment and expand educational curricula to include **local stories**.
- To create **region-wide thematic initiatives**.
- To provide **access to resources** that are otherwise unavailable to the public.

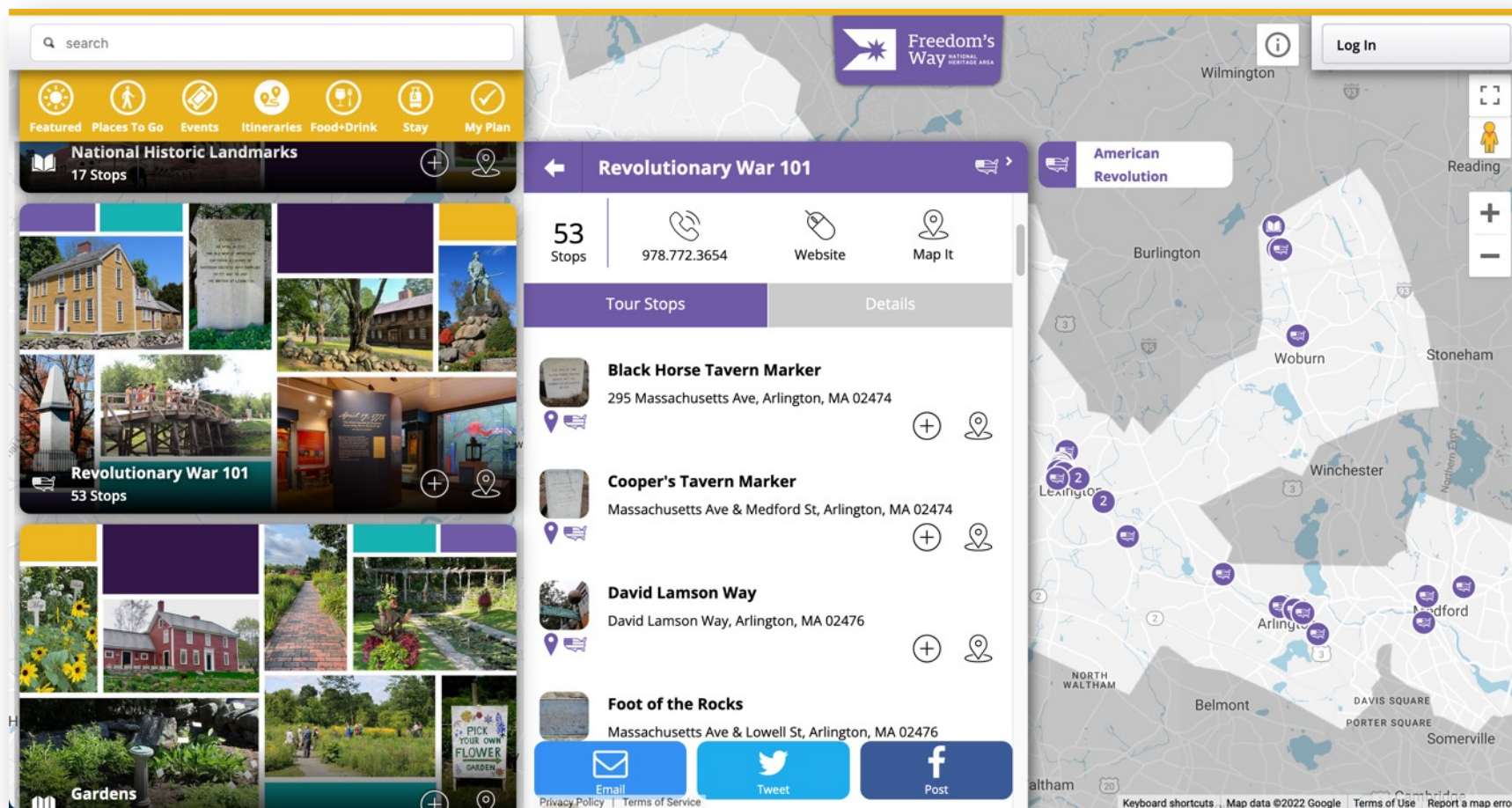




# Coordinate Social Media Campaigns



# Develop Heritage Tourism Itineraries



# How will Freedom's Way support this initiative?

- Offer direction via the [Community Partners Guide](#).
- Manage the shared framework to **gather and share stories via the online repository**.
- **Provide small grants** to support research, public programming, and other related projects.
- Coordinate and host **educational webinars**.
- **Have other ideas? Let us know how else can we support your work!**





# Get involved—share your community's stories!

- Visit [freedomsway.org/revolutionary-stories](https://freedomsway.org/revolutionary-stories).
- Read through the [Community Partners Guide](#) to learn more.
- **Let us know** you're interested!
- Schedule a **follow-up conversation**.

