

Freedom's
Way NATIONAL
HERITAGE AREA



THE OLD MANSE BOATHOUSE, CONCORD, MA

2021-2022 Years in Review

If it appears the last two years have passed in a blur...

...THEY HAVE! And while we have been acclimating to the changes wrought by the ongoing impacts of Covid, as an organization we have used this time to grow and adapt while continuing to advance the mission, vision and goals set out in the organization's management plan, approved by the US Secretary of the Interior in July of 2015.

Since then, the Freedom's Way National Heritage Area has accessed more than \$1,600,000 in federal financial assistance and leveraged \$1.95 of non-federal match for every dollar of financial assistance accessed. With this funding, the Freedom's Way Heritage Association—the coordinating entity for the heritage area—has collaborated with nearly 1,300 partners.

It is these partners we continue to support.

During the past two years our enhanced grant program has committed a minimum of 10% of our annual NPS funding allocation and been reconfigured to include an emphasis on inclusive storytelling. *Revolutionary Stories: The Enduring Legacies of the American Revolution in the Freedom's Way National Heritage Area*, has provided

a shared forum for the region to commemorate the 250th founding of our nation. Hidden Treasures, reimagined as a month-long festival of virtual and in-person programs has continued to showcase the natural, cultural, and historical treasures of our partners. And a study of conserved land in the region has underscored our commitment to conservation and stewardship.

Most significantly, we also completed one of our most ambitious undertakings yet—the rebranding of Freedom's Way National Heritage Area and the creation of a robust interactive website to serve as an online museum of the region. Designed to be engaging and accessible to diverse audiences, our new website and accompanying mobile app allows the user to explore the region by experience, theme, topic, and location.

We are pleased to report on our progress during the past two years and look forward to working with you in 2023. We hope you will join us as we continue to connect the 45 communities of the Freedom's Way National Heritage Area and share the themes, stories, people, and places that make this region unique.

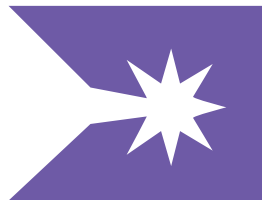
Freedom's Way National Heritage Area Act of 2021

On December 8, 2021, Senator Edward J. Markey (D-Mass.), Senator Elizabeth Warren (D-Mass.), and Congresswoman Lori Trahan (MA-03) introduced the Freedom's Way National Heritage Area Act of 2021, legislation that would eliminate the total funding cap for the Freedom's Way National Heritage Area and extend its authorization to 2036.

Designated by Congress in 2009, Freedom's Way's authorization expires on March 30, 2024. Without reauthorization we will be unable to access the remaining funds allocated in the original legislation.

We are one of 45 National Heritage Areas scheduled to sunset in 2022, 2023 and 2024. A uniform program bill, S. 1942, the National Heritage Area Act, that would extend sunsets for all and develop uniform and consistent guidelines for the National Heritage Area Program was reported out of the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee in May 2022. The bill must pass before the 117th Congress adjourns.

We are Bedrock & Fertile Ground



Freedom's
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Introducing Our New Logo & Brand

Collaborative, Committed, Community-focused, Welcoming, Innovative are some of the words stakeholders used to describe Freedom's Way during the rebranding process.

In the fall of 2020 as the first phase of an ambitious redesign of our website, the organization explored the creation of a new identity to express the diversity of the histories, stories, and people important to the area and be inclusive and welcoming of everyone.

The goals of the brand refresh and new website included raising awareness about the organization and the heritage area, especially among younger generations and new residents, clarifying the intent of the organization's name, refreshing the messaging, and designing an intuitive and interactive guide and online archive.

The choice of a vibrant purple, a modern and open typeface and a new logo set the intent. The logo's elements, an abstraction of a banner/flag and a beacon/lantern, combine to create a strong visual mark that is a unique symbol of the area without referencing an individual object or place.

Thank you to Carlisle-based brand strategy and design firm D&CO for working with us to develop the strategy, design, and implementation of the brand refresh, website, and mobile app.

We connect the people, places, and communities of the Freedom's Way National Heritage Area through preservation, conservation, and educational initiatives to protect and promote shared resources and encourage residents and visitors to explore its landscape, history, and culture.

We Thrive Through

Launch of New Communication & Collaboration Platforms

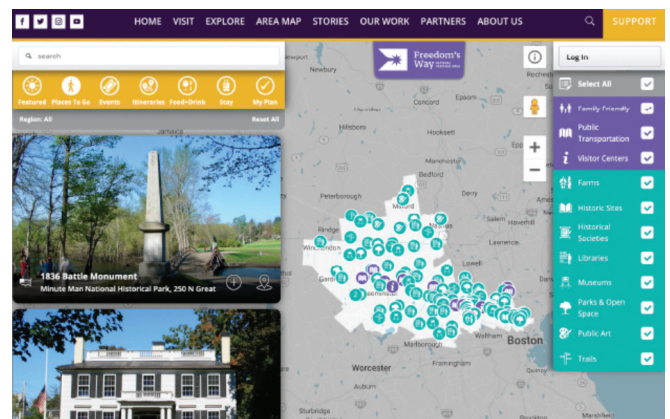
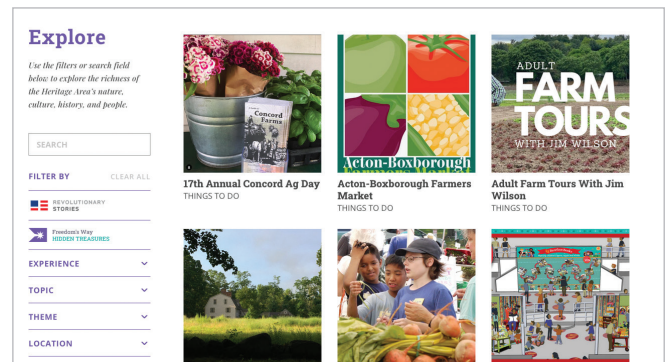
Website

Inspired by the idea of an online museum, our **new website** is deeply interactive and dynamic, fully integrating stories, places to go, itineraries, and events, allowing the user to experience the heritage area through a fresh perspective.

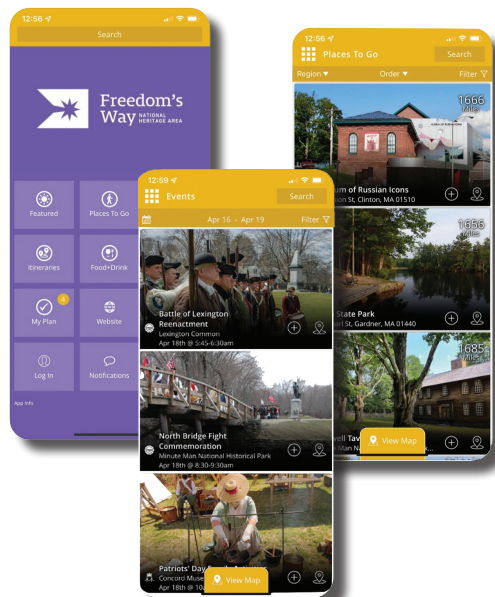
Evocative photography pairs with declarative and open headlines to welcome visitors and encourage them to explore. A state-of-the-art **custom database** provides the ability to browse by topic, theme, experience, location, and audience, while the robust event calendar highlights the work of our many partners.

Plan your adventure in the region using the **interactive map** and curate personal itineraries featuring places to go, including historic sites, museums, farms, parks, open spaces and trails.

Visit freedomsway.org/area-map to get started!



Education & Access



Mobile App

Available on iOS and Android devices, the Explore Freedom's Way NHA mobile app can be used to:

- Navigate an interactive map of places to go and things to do!
- Peruse our selection of thoughtfully curated itineraries or create your own!
- Create personalized travel plans using the 'My Plan' feature!
- Share the details with friends and family!

E-Newsletters

Published twice a month, e-newsletters provide up to date information about partners, programs, and events in the region.

A Closer Look

Featured in our newsletters "A Closer Look" provides insight into the people and places of Freedom's Way National Heritage Area that contribute to its unique regional identity.



Amos Fortune—Woburn

A survivor of the trans-continental slave trade, Amos Fortune (c.1740-1801) purchased his freedom while living in Woburn, MA becoming a prominent tanner, bookbinder, and philanthropist. Upon relocating to Jaffrey, NH, Fortune became the town's first benefactor, establishing what would evolve into the Amos Fortune Fund, administered by the Jaffrey Public Library.



Maria Moreira—Lancaster

An Azorean immigrant, Maria Moreira nurtures community through agriculture. As a founder of Flats Mentor Farm and World Farmers in Lancaster, MA, Moreira assists refugee and immigrant farmers in establishing successful businesses, building upon the region's rich agricultural heritage.



Freeman Tilden—Malden

Deemed the father of heritage interpretation, Malden native Freeman Tilden (1883-1980) greatly influenced the development of the National Park Service. His principles and theories of park interpretation have inspired generations of interpreters across the world and his book *Interpreting Our Heritage* remains a definitive text for the discipline.

Fostering a Culture

Partnership Grants

The Freedom's Way Partnership Grant Program is designed to provide strategic investments in the cultural, natural, and historical resources that enhance the sense of place within the Freedom's Way National Heritage Area.

Grants are offered within the categories of:

- Historic Preservation
- Education, Interpretation, and Curation
- Community Planning for Resource Conservation
- Special Events



Partnership Grants Awarded in 2021 & 2022

Arlington Historical Society

- Samplers of West Cambridge Archive & Digitization

Chair City Legacy MakerSpace (Gardner, MA)

- Heirloom Skills Workshop Series Pilot

Concord Museum

- "Summer Under the Stars" Women in History Film Series
- 2021 Indigenous Peoples' Day Family Program
- "Alive With Birds: William Brewster in Concord" Exhibition

Cyrus Dallin Art Museum (Arlington, MA)

- Redesign of Museum Entry & Indigenous Peoples Gallery

Fort Devens Museum

- "Our War Too: American Women in WWII" Exhibit

Friends of Fitchburg Abolitionist Park

- Creation of Fitchburg Abolitionist Park Phases 1, 2 & 3

Friends of Minute Man National Park

- Buttrick House Gardens Hardscape Rehabilitation
- Community Ambassador at Minute Man NHP
- Patriots' Day 2022

Friends of Pine Hawk (Acton, MA & surrounding towns)

- 2022 Fall Program

Great American Downtown (Nashua, NH)

- Self-guided Audio Tour of Public Art Part II

Harvard Conservation Trust

- Nature Inspired Juried Art Show

Lancaster Historical Society

- Lancaster History Trails: 22 Sites of Early Settlement 1642-1706

Lexington Historical Society

- Preservation of c. 1769 Rachel Dwight (Gould) Bed Hangings

Mass Audubon's Wachusett Meadow Wildlife Sanctuary (Princeton, MA)

- The Science of Massachusetts: Educational Science Unit

Nashua International Sculpture Symposium

- 2021 Symposium: 'Introspection'
- 2022 Symposium: 'Merriment'

Nashua River Watershed Association (Groton, MA)

- Oxbow National Wildlife Refuge & the Nashua River: Family Adventure Series

Pepperell Historical Commission

- Historic Resources Survey Plan

The Thoreau Society (Concord, MA)

- 2022 Annual Gathering: The Global Thoreau

Thoreau Farm Trust (Concord, MA)

- Connector Path Project Phase II

Town of Mason, NH

- Mason Town Hall Renovation Phase I

Townsend Historical Society

- Spaulding Cooperage Preservation & Revitalization

Westford Historical Society & Museum

- "Cato & Dolly" Theatrical Performance
- "Westford Women Go To War" Series

of Stewardship



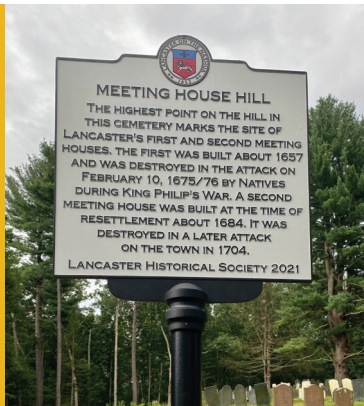
Featured Projects

New this Year is **Inclusive Storytelling** funding projects that support research, documentation, and interpretation of the stories of the region with an emphasis on those who have been excluded from the historical narrative.

Inclusive Storytelling grants can be used for the creation of interpretive products, such as waysides, web content, videos and exhibits, oral histories, podcasts, blogs, and the development of programs that share these stories with the community.

Lancaster Historical Society: Lancaster History Trails: 22 Sites of Early Settlement 1642-1706

Strengthened interpretation of the town's early settlement sites by creating a sign to identify the location of the first two meeting houses and developing a brochure and map.



Town of Pepperell Historical Commission: Historic Resources Survey Plan

Developed strategy to update and expand listing and documentation of historic resources throughout entire town, as prior efforts are decades old and limited to a single historic district.

Friends of Minute Man National Park: Buttrick House Gardens Hardscape Rehabilitation

Designed and installed interpretive panels about the garden's history to coincide with the hardscape restoration at the North Bridge Visitor Center in Minute Man National Historical Park.



Cyrus Dallin Art Museum: Redesign of Museum Entry & Indigenous Peoples Gallery

Realigned the museum's interpretation with its ongoing work to engage in public dialogue centering Indigenous perspectives on history, oppression, representation, and resilience.



Friends of Fitchburg Abolitionist Park: Creation of Fitchburg Abolitionist Park Phases I, II, & III

Established to commemorate the men and women of Fitchburg, Massachusetts, and beyond, who fought for the abolition of slavery in the US.



Great American Downtown: Self-Guided Audio Tour of Nashua's Public Art Phase II

Expanded the public art tour to include sites along the city's riverfront and develop a Spanish language version.



We are Deeply Connected



REVOLUTIONARY STORIES

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

We are a region of small towns and independent minds. We are stronger when we respect our differences and work together. One individual or town didn't start the American revolution or build democracy, we came together as interdependent towns and people to create a country built on shared ideals and individual freedoms.

As we prepare for the 250th anniversary commemoration of our nation's founding we are undertaking a region-wide initiative to gather, record, interpret and share both well-known and underrepresented stories about the people, places, events, and objects that relate to the periods before, during and after the American Revolution in the region.

Revolutionary Stories: The Enduring Legacies of the American Revolution in the Freedom's Way National Heritage Area will bring awareness to the diverse perspectives, inequities, and experiences of those who lived within the 45 communities that now comprise the Heritage Area during this complex period of history.

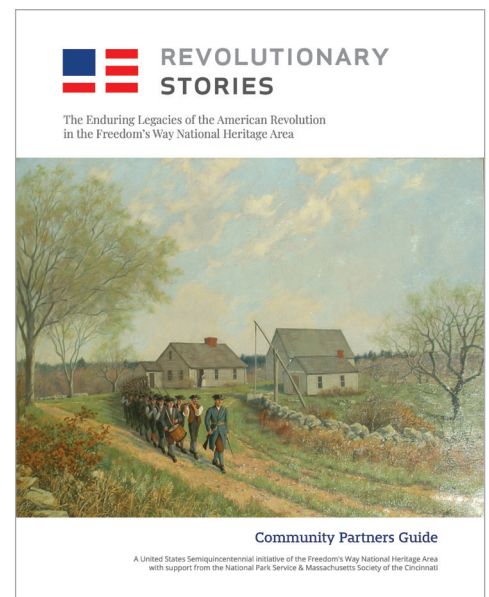
During the past year a framework for gathering and sharing stories was created along with a community partners guide. These have been field tested by the Westford Historical Society and Museum. Introductory discussions have been held with eleven historical organizations to solicit feedback. A series of webinars this fall on research techniques featured public historian Mary Fuhrer and LexSeeHer.

Stories are available on a publicly accessible, free, interactive online repository housed on our website. These will be used to inform collaborative programming, projects, and itineraries that engage new audiences in the story of the American Revolution and its enduring impacts on the social and cultural fabric of our country.

For more information visit: <https://freedomsway.org/revolutionary-stories/>

This program is made possible with support from the Massachusetts Society of the Cincinnati.

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75 in '75

In partnership with the April 19th History Coalition, Freedom's Way coordinated The Patriots' Day 75 Facts of 1775 Countdown (75 in '75). Launched on February 3rd, 2022, and ending on April 18th, the countdown shared a new fact/story daily on Instagram and Facebook about people, places and objects related to the American revolution.

Repository

Stories shared through this initiative are accessible to the public via a dynamic relational database on the Freedom's Way website. Entries are categorized by type, location and theme and the use of tags further links related stories to each other for an enhanced browsing experience. Entries that are place-based are integrated with the website's interactive mapping tool and associated mobile app, allowing users to build travel itineraries which can be accessed from multiple electronic devices and shared with others.



Explore

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

SEARCH

FILTER BY

CLEAR ALL



EXPERIENCE



TOPIC



THEME



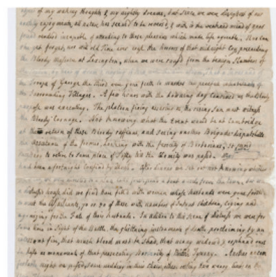
Jonathan Curtis Fife
STORY



Joshua Bentley Pocketbook
STORY



Lantern
STORY



Letter From Hannah Winthrop Murphy To Mercy Otis Warren
STORY



Locke Powder Horn
STORY



Prince Hall
STORY



INDIGENOUS PEOPLES DAY AT THE CONCORD MUSEUM, CONCORD, MA

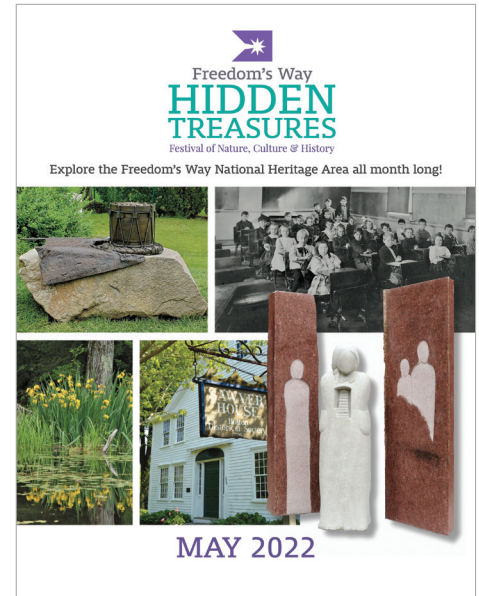
Program & Project Updates

Hidden Treasures Festival of Nature, Culture & History

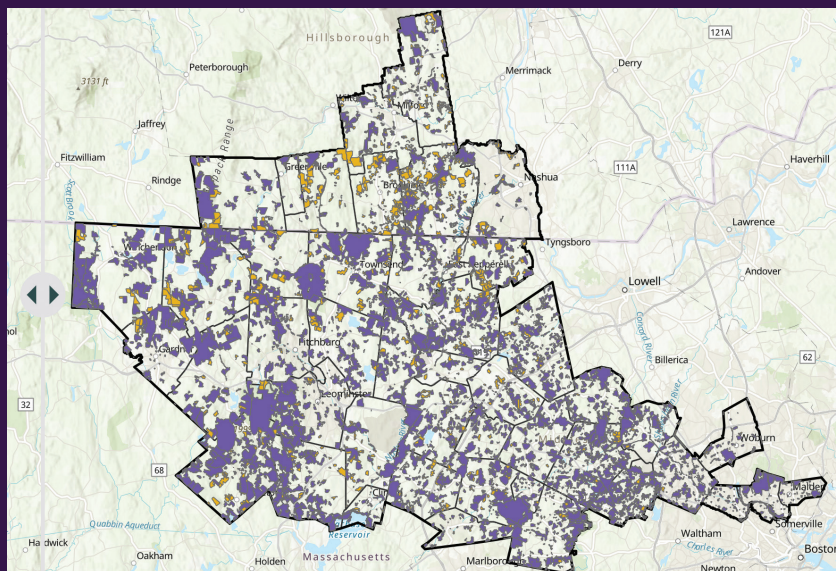
Building upon the successes of Hidden Treasures' 5th Anniversary in 2019, and following a one-year hiatus in 2020, our signature program returned in 2021 as the Hidden Treasures Festival of Nature, Culture & History—a month-long festival featuring an immersive mixture of online and physical events and activities showcasing the landscape, traditions, and stories of the Heritage Area.

A desire to reconnect with our partners and community members prompted us to venture into the world of virtual programming. We organized three, two-part webinar series showcasing the innovative work of our partners in the months leading up to the 2021 Festival. Additionally, we hosted a weekly online speaker series, "Exploring Nature in the Freedom's Way National Heritage Area," featuring four experts who live and work in the Heritage Area.

Despite the ongoing challenges of the pandemic during these two years, nearly 60 partners found creative ways to host in-person, online, and self-guided programs and activities, representing more than half of the Heritage Area's 45 communities.



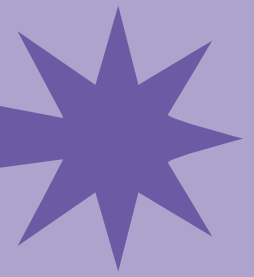
Conserved Lands Mapping Project



The communities within the Freedom's Way National Heritage Area have played an important role in shaping American ideas and actions through conservation initiatives, spanning multiple centuries. From the town commons of the earliest English settlers to the establishment of one of the nation's first land trusts, the region has been at the forefront of protecting and preserving land for public use and as a legacy for future generations.

In 2014, as part of the management planning process, Washington University mapped the amount of conserved land in the heritage area (24.92%). Working with Fitchburg State University in 2021, we updated that work to discover that 27.51% of the heritage area's is conserved, a 2.59% increase.

We are Stronger Together



Members & Supporters

The Freedom's Way National Heritage Area is comprised of a network of individuals and organizations who work in partnership with the Freedom's Way Heritage Association and the National Park Service. Without their support our work could not be accomplished. **THANK YOU!**

Individuals ▪ Ingrid & Robert Adam • Robert Allison • Jennifer Annand • Maud Ayson • Meg Bagdonas • Franca Barricelli • Georgia Barry • Eugene Beresin & Michaela Moran • Melvin & Laura Bernstein • Sue Billings • Sydney & William Blackwell • Court Booth • Pleun Bouricius • Helen Bowdoin • Lisa Carlin • Timothy Castner • Russ Cohen • Michelle Collette • Kim Colson • Margaret Coppe • Patricia Costello • Marge Darby • Anne DeBoalt • Louis DiMola • Maribeth Eugene • Bebe Fallick • Elizabeth Fletcher • Susan Fonda • Anne Forbes • John Forcucci • Kara Fossey • Patricia & Edmund Frederick • Rachel Frick Cardelle • Paul Funch • Charles David Gordon • Susan & Robert Hamelin • Jennifer Harris • Ann Himmelberger • Daedra Jones • Jeanne Kangas • Chris Kauffman • Dan & Penny Lacroix • Roberta Lasky • Heather Leavell • Libby Levison • Robert & Jean Lidstone • Peter & Marilyn Lowitt • Will & Jeanne Ludt • Phil Lupsiewicz • Pamela Lynn • Meredith Marcinkewicz • Erica McAvoy • Stephen Meno • Kevin Natwick • Susan Navarre & Tim Olevsky • Lisa & Brian Noble • Janet & Steve O'Riordan • Michael Pearson • Theodore Peluso • Paul Przybyla • Sally Purrington Hild • Nancy & Barry Reinbold • Pam & Griff Resor • Heidi & Mark Ricci • Rachael Robinson • Marc Sevigny • Mary Shasta • Catherine Shortliffe • Bobbie Spiegelman • Doreen Stevens • Dan Stimson • Marion Stoddart • Dr. Marcia G. Synnott • Dan Thibeault • Janet Tice • Alison Tocci • Anita Tonakarn-Nguyen • Electa Tritsch • Lucy Wallace • Peter Webb • Joan Wotkowicz • Jennifer Zanolli • Marilyn & Thomas Zavorski

Organizations ▪ Amherst Land Trust • Andres Institute of Art • Arlington Historical Society • Ashburnham Community Church • Ashburnham Historical Society • Ashby Historical Society • Ayer Historical Commission • Beaver Brook Association • Bolton Historical Commission • Bolton Historical Society • Boxborough Historical Society • Carlisle Conservation Foundation • Carlisle Trails Committee • Chair City Legacy MakerSpace • City Arts Nashua • Clinton Greenway Conservation Trust • Concord Art • Concord Land Conservation Trust • Concord Museum • Cyrus Dallin Art Museum • Devens Eco-Efficiency Center • Discovery Museum • Farrington Nature Linc • Fitchburg Access TV • Fitchburg Art Museum • Fitchburg Historical Society • Fitchburg Public Library • Fort Devens Museum • Friends of Fitchburg Abolitionist Park • Friends of Forbush Memorial Library • Friends of Minute Man National Park • Friends of Pine Hawk • Friends of Sholan Farms • Fruitlands Museum | The Trustees • Great American Downtown • Groton Conservation Trust • Groton History Center • Groton Public Library • Groton Trails Committee • Harvard Conservation Trust • Harvard Historical Society • Historic Piano Concerts, Inc. • Hollis Heritage Commission • Hutchinson Family Singers Memorial Project • Iron Work Farm in Acton • Lancaster Historical Commission • Lancaster Historical Society • Lawrence Library • Lexington Historical Society • Littleton Conservation Trust • Littleton Historical Society • Mass Audubon's Wachusett Meadow Wildlife Sanctuary • Massachusetts Society of the Cincinnati • Medford Historical Society & Museum • Minute Man National Historical Park • Munroe Center for the Arts • Nashoba Conservation Trust • Nashua International Sculpture Symposium • Nashua River Watershed Association • National Park Service • North County Land Trust • Old Frog Pond Farm & Studio • Old Schwamb Mill • Pepperell Conservation Commission • Pepperell Historical Commission • Pepperell Invasive & Native Plant Committee • Positive Street Art • Project Apples • Prudence Wright Chapter, NSDAR • Rauscher Farm Management Subcommittee • Reuben Hoar Library • Sandy Pond School Association • Shirley Historical Society • Stow Historical Society • Sudbury Historical Society • Sudbury Valley Trustees • Thayer Memorial Library • The Shirley Meeting House • The Wayside Inn Foundation • Thoreau Farm • Town of Pepperell, MA • Townsend Historical Society • Unitarian Universalist Church of Winchendon • USS Constitution Museum • Westford Historical Society & Museum • Woburn Historical Commission • Woburn Historical Society • Woburn Public Library

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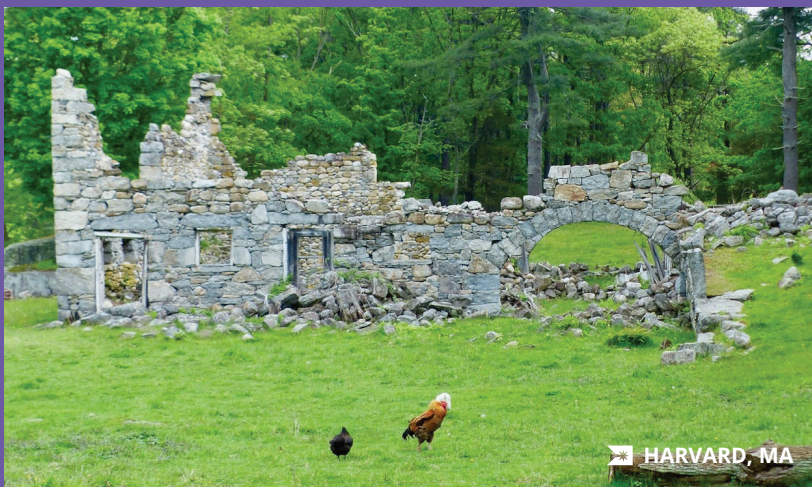
Congressional Delegation ▪ **US Senators** • Maggie Hassan (NH) • Ed Markey (MA) • Jeanne Shaheen (NH) • Elizabeth Warren (MA) • **US Representatives** • Katharine Clark (MA 5th) • Annie Kuster (NH 2nd) • Jim McGovern (MA 2nd) • Seth Moulton (MA 6th) • Lori Trahan (MA 3rd)

A Word About 2023



Revolutionary War Monument & Memorial Survey

There are more than two hundred Revolutionary War related monuments and memorials within the heritage area. This survey will provide information about the origin, location, and story behind each, informing dialogue about commemoration and memorialization as we plan for the nation's semiquincentennial.



Interpretive Sites Survey

Building upon research completed for a 2018 National Historic Landmarks survey of the heritage area, the Interpretive Sites Survey will identify historic landscapes, communities, sites, and stories within a thematic framework to support the creation of interpretation projects, the development of preservation strategies and to further develop an online museum of the region.



Operation Pollination

An inclusive partnership endeavor, Operation Pollination, supports the creation of an interconnected mosaic of pollinator habitat on public and private land to stabilize and/or increase populations of pollinator species throughout the region. Webinars and small grants will support heritage area communities in this work.



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