

Minutes
America's 250th Anniversary Committee
Wednesday, July 10, 2024, at 10:30am in the Town Clerk's Office

Attendance: Jim Dassatti, Kathleen Nutter, Todd Stewart, Therese Lounsbury
The meeting was called to order at 10:30am.

Committee Reports:

Jim – shared some black/white images from old historical themed calendars with local connections; shared copies of “The Story of Old Vermont” which was an item published by National Life Insurance Co. – it was printed many times over the years; shared a chronology for Vermont; shared with Kathleen a full chronology of the Revolutionary War period; reported some more information on glass display cases (Store Supply Warehouse and Tweed Drop-Front Storage Boxes and that he has display linens for covering tables for the tabletop displays; shared some framed pictures with historic images and one to consider from “Revolutionary Boston” by the National Historic Society; shared the opportunity to include a coloring contest with materials he is able to order (able to get Crayola to donate crayons before); shared commemorative program called “Civil War News 2022 Gettysburg Edition”.

Kathleen – discussed women of Wilmington – 2003 Molly Stark Statue, 2005 Betty Wolf bench, 2011 Tropical Storm Irene bench, looking for others; researched Vermont Humanities Grants – there is September 15 deadline; not finding much on celebration of July 4th through the years.

Todd – Shared website displys2go.com for another website to check on display cabinets and cases; continued research on the soldiers buried here using Margaret Greene materials and others – some conflicting information on service but individual too young to have served, 69 soldiers buried in the area – but many came here after the Revolutionary War – were not sons of Wilmington; discussed use of first census of 1790; shared that there was a lawsuit on the legality of the Wilmington charters found a bit of material on that; spoke with Vermont Bowl on potential creation of house markers.

Banner Discussion:

Three exhibits? Rotate? Graphic designer needed? How many banners? When launch?

Consensus on three exhibits of 5 banners each (3 National / 2 Vermont & Wilmington)

No rotation – instead bring them all together as one big exhibition in Memorial Hall for July 4, 2026.

Locations still to be decided from: OSEC / Memorial Hall / TVMHS / Historical Society

Besides banners include flags, clothing, artifacts, parchment copy of Declaration of Independence

Determine themes like: Green Mountain Boys / Battle of Bennington / Battles in Vermont / Timeline

Tasks:

Kathleen: Look through Revolutionary War period chronology for items that we could highlight for banners, etc.; see if there are Vermont Humanities offerings in terms of individuals/programs available to book in the coming years

Therese: Research easels/tripods for displaying framed images. Price foam core, begin budget work, create letters for businesses and clubs, ask Blueberry Fest about t-shirts, find old maps, create Excel sheet of the calendar to share.

Contact Wings/DV Players for themed performances in Summer 2026. Find designer for retractable banners. Determine if there are some historian interviews (Evelyn Keefe, Margaret Greene) that could be part of our installations from Mount Snow TV or TSN archives. Add reading of the Declaration of Independence up on Lisle Hill and reading of “Paul Revere’s Ride” by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow to events within our timeline. Also, a parade of the colonial flags within our Blueberry Festival Parade in July 2026.

Jim: Little colonial flags for parade handout. Could “Friends of Old Bennington” be a resource for talks/presentations?

Todd: Share link with Therese for purchase of large parchment Declaration of Independence; continue review of charter lawsuit to see if it is worth pursuing and sharing; follow up with Vermont Bowl; possible to find more information on folks like Joseph Courtemanche who brought electricity to town? Who had traditional jobs of blacksmith/cobbler/carriage maker? Local inventors like the Wheelers?

Next meeting: Wednesday, July 24, at 10:30am at the Town Clerk's Office

More banner work – pick themes, pin up a mix and match for planning the graphics.

Respectfully submitted by Therese Lounsbury 7/10/2024