

THE FOXBOROUGH HISTORICAL SOCIETY

APRIL 2015 46th Year Issue #7

Liberty's Martyr The Story of Dr. Joseph Warren



Trumbull, "The Death of General Warren at the Battle of Bunker Hill." Museum of Fine Arts, Boston

Joseph Warren: 'Had He Lived, the Name of Washington Might be Obscure'

At the Foxborough Historical Society's April 28 meeting, Eastham author **Janet Uhlar** will discuss General Joseph Warren and his short but significant life.

Joseph Warren was a prominent, colonial physician and father of four motherless children. A member of the secretive Long Room Club, Warren was an outspoken patriot leader who carried the title and respect of Grand Master of North America through Scottish Rite Freemasonry. Indeed, British General Thomas Gage declared the death of Joseph Warren equal to 500 ordinary colonials. (Unbeknownst to the general, his own wife was in all probability Warren's chief informant of British activity!)

It was Warren who united the First Continental Congress. It was Dr. Warren who sent his close friend, Paul Revere, on his famous 'midnight' ride. It was Joseph Warren who held together the rag-tag army of provincial soldiers that formed following the Battles of Lexington and Concord, while imploring his friends in Philadelphia to appoint a commander in chief – even suggesting that George Washington be that man.

Warren's name was known throughout the colonies, and his person respected by Whig, Tory, and British officer alike. In the year prior to Lexington and Concord, and during the eight weeks leading to Bunker Hill, Joseph Warren was possibly the foremost patriot leader.

Warren took his position on Bunker Hill (Breed's Hill), determined to stand with his fellow colonists. There, at the age of thirty-four, on June 17, 1775, he was tragically and prematurely killed while attempting to hold the enemy back in hand-to-hand combat as his men retreated.

Contemporaries claimed that had Warren survived the war, the name of Washington might be obscure. George Washington himself referred to Warren as "the Commander in Chief." Streets, towns, and counties have been named for him – and for more than a century, every schoolchild in America knew his story. Today, the story of this extraordinary man lies buried beneath the dust of time.

John Trumbull's painting, "The Death of General Warren at the Battle of Bunker Hill," while an idealized depiction of Warren's death, shows a number of participants in the battle. John Small, a British officer who was among those storming the redoubt, was a friend of Israel Putnam's and an acquaintance of Trumbull. He is depicted holding Warren and preventing a redcoat from bayoneting him.

Our speaker is author, lecturer, screenplay writer **Janet Uhlar**. Her passion for the American Revolution is evident. Through her writing, Janet presents biography through a living, breathing form -- biographical fiction. The characters lived; the events occurred. The dialogue carries the stories. Janet firmly believes that when the private lives and unique personalities of historical figures are presented, and the dynamics between these characters are brought out, history becomes more than cold black print on a stark white page. She is a volunteer and trustee at the Nathanael Greene Homestead, Coventry, RI. She is author of

“Liberty's Martyr: The Story of Dr. Joseph Warren” and “Freedom's Cost: The Story of General Nathanael Greene.” Janet was born and reared in Quincy; she now lives in Eastham on the Cape. Her books will be available for purchase and signing after the presentation.

The historical society meeting is on Tuesday evening, April 28, at 7:30 pm in the Boyden Library (lower level) at the corner of Bird and Baker streets, in Foxborough center. There is limited parking at the library. Parking is available on nearby streets and against Foxboro common.



Gravestone in Rock Hill Cemetery, Foxborough.

After Dr. Joseph Warren died, his children lived with their uncle Ebenezer Warren. Young Joseph Jr. died April 2, 1790 at the age of 22 years.

**Memorial Hall is open every Wednesday evening, 7 p.m. to 9 p.m.
and on the second Saturday of each month from 9 a.m. to noon.**

2014-2015 Foxborough Historical Society Members

Please add to the membership list of 2014-2015

David and Marie Crimmins

[If I've missed someone, contact me – Paul Godin]

.Members who have volunteered to serve on the board for 2015-2016

Please give some thought about serving on the board for a year or two as we need a few more members. Also the Historical Commission wants to remain open a few days a week and could use volunteers for this to happen. The following have agreed to serve on the board for 2015-2016: **Margaret Boldrighini, Janet Haynes, Ralph Guimond, Ann Childs, Joan Stafford, Mary Anne Baker, Raymond Toomey and Charles Clifford.**
We have 2 vacancies to fill on the Board, so let us know if you can serve.

We were saddened to learn that a former member of our society, **Elizabeth “Betty” Cottrell** of Walpole, passed away April 3, 2015 at age 97. She and her late husband were active in many societies of neighboring communities and will be missed.

Past Historical Society and Commission videos are now archived and we can thank Deb Wendell, a member of our society for this service. She worked very hard to achieve this goal at Foxboro Cable Access with the guidance of Michael Webber, Executive Director. Deb says that we can access videos (some dating back to 1985) by simply doing the following:

Double click on these hyperlinks to view programs (currently in alpha order):

[Foxborough Historical Society Presents](#)
[Foxborough Historical Commission Presents](#)

or

Here are the links to all shows:

<https://archive.org/search.php?query=%22foxborough%20historical%20society%20presents%22>

<https://archive.org/search.php?query=%22foxborough%20historical%20commission%20presents%22>

50 YEARS AGO IN FOXBOROUGH

[extracted from Foxboro Reporter newspapers at Memorial Hall]

April 1965

- . Water shortages alarming. Outlook serious as town enters 3rd drought year.
- . Town officials attend seminar on route 495.
- . State hospital variety show is enjoyed by many.
- . Capacity crowd at Father-Daughter Scout banquet.
- . Minstrels USA to be staged by the Legion at the auditorium.
- . Officials on hand for the ground-breaking ceremonies of the new school on South Street.
- . 50th Anniversary open house at Doolittle Home.

Foxborough Historical Society Officers & Board Members

President: Charles Clifford 543-840 Vice President: Raymond Toomey 543-4388

Clerk: Joan Stafford 543-6292 Treasurer: Mary Anne Baker 543-8945

Board Members: Past President Robert Hicks, Ralph Guimond, Ann Childs

Program: Patrick Lyons 543-3728 Membership: Emelie Bonin 543-6160

Newsletter: Paul Godin 543-7945