

Danvers Historical Society to host Revolutionary War events

By Caroline Enos, Staff Writer, August 14, 2025

DANVERS — The Danvers Historical Society will host three events over the next two months to celebrate the 250th anniversary of the American Revolution. Could the first shot of the war have been fired in Danvers, not at the famous battles of Lexington and Concord? William Kossowan will discuss that theory during a presentation at Tapley Memorial Hall on Page Street at 7 p.m. on Wednesday, Aug. 20. The bullet in question was fired at the Hooper-Collins house that once stood on Sylvan Street in Danvers on Aug. 24, 1774, during British Governor-General Thomas Gage's occupation of the North Shore.

Gage commanded all British troops in North America and replaced the Massachusetts governor in response to colonists rebelling against the crown's authority. He closed Boston's port after colonists had dumped tea in Boston's harbor in December 1773, then temporarily moved the colony's capitol to Salem in the summer of 1775 and made Marblehead the official port of entry. He lived in Danvers that summer, much to the chagrin of local Patriots.

"This talk is to review the mosaic of known facts significantly pertinent to the American Revolutionary War, which occurred during those 87 days and put into perspective the overt acts of revolt which both preceded and followed that time," the Historical Society said. On Sunday, Sept. 14, a presentation and reenactment of Benedict Arnold's troops moving through Danvers will begin at 1 p.m. inside Tapley Hall, when local historian Dan Gagnon will discuss Arnold's presence in town during the war.

It was September 1775 when Arnold led 1,100 Continental Army troops from Cambridge to Quebec City. During their journey north, some of the troops and Arnold himself camped in Danvers on Sept. 14. At 1:45 p.m. that day, guests will proceed to the Benedict Arnold monument in Danvers Square to watch a 2 p.m. commemoration and rededication of the newly refinished monument that was erected in 1912 by the Sons of the American Revolution. The Danvers Alarm List will march to the site from the Rebecca Nurse Homestead for the ceremony and drill in honor of all Patriots who fought for freedom 250 years ago. Attendees can socialize at the Berry Tavern from 2:30-3:30 p.m. following the event.

The Historical Society will also host another dramatization of Lucy Larcom's 1875 poem, "A Gambrel Roof," on Wednesday, Sept. 17, at 7 p.m. at the historic Jeremiah Page House on Page Street.

The performance is based on a true story at the house, when the original owner and Revolutionary War veteran, Jeremiah Page, told his wife Sarah that "no tea shall be drunk in this house" once the British monarchy began taxing tea in the colonies around 1770. Then, while he was away, Sarah and her friends had tea on the roof of the house because, as she said, "Upon a house is not within it."

The evening will also feature colonial-era music and an art installation. For more information on these events and the Danvers Historical Society, visit www.danvershistory.org/.



The Jeremiah Page House in Danvers, Jaime Campos
Staff File Photo