

## **Published in 2014**

The towns of Billerica and Lexington are approximately 10 miles apart, but on April 19, 1775, they shared a part of American history.

Billerica farmer Amos Wyman, and his wife Kezia Kendall Wyman, much to their probable surprise, provided refuge to two of the colonies' leaders, Sam Adams and John Hancock, who had escaped the British as the Redcoats marched to battle in Lexington early that morning.

For many years since that fateful day, Billerica has recognized the part the Wyman's played in that drama, but the commemorative bronze plaque located on their homestead site was stolen in 2012

Now, that loss is about to be remedied.

The Billerica Historical Society hosting a ceremony on Saturday, April 19, to rededicate a new plaque recognizing the Wyman's and their historic efforts.

Saturday's program begins at the Amos Wyman Homestead, located behind 55 Middlesex Turnpike, and next to Homewood Suites by Hilton, 35 Middlesex Turnpike, Billerica.

Former Historical Society President and event chairman Bob Kinsman said this week that on the recommendation of the Billerica Police Department and the bronze plaque's designer, the new plaque has been converted to a granite material.

He said that a 1-inch-thick slice of granite has been polished and laser-etched with the same inscription as the original one, which was dedicated in 1898. The slab has been adhered to the original monument boulder, using a high-strength epoxy adhesive, and sealed with silicone rubber.

Kinsman said, "The finished product is an elegant addition to the site, will be long-lasting, and will have no intrinsic value to potential thieves."

Funding for the new plaque includes a \$1,000 grant from the Billerica Community Funds program, and a \$100 sponsorship from Homewood Suites on Middlesex Turnpike.

On April 19, 239 years ago, Adams and Hancock escaped the Redcoats, going to a home in Woburn's Second Parish (today's Burlington), where they had just sat down to enjoy a salmon dinner cooked by the widow, Madam Jones, when they were alerted that the British were close on their heels.

The Second Parish's minister, Rev. John Marrett, led them to the Amos Wyman home, where Mrs. Wyman, unprepared for guests, served them cold salt pork, boiled potatoes

and brown bread. According to the Francis Wyman Association, Hancock later sent Mrs. Wyman a cow in appreciation of her hospitality.

Amos was a descendant of Francis and John Wyman, who settled in Woburn in 1640, and became successful tanners there. They purchased their 500-acre grant land in Billerica from the Rev. Henry Dunster, Harvard College president, in 1655. Amos' land was originally part of John's farm. Amos died in Billerica in 1797.

By Judy Wasserman, [billerica@wickedlocal.com](mailto:billerica@wickedlocal.com)