

The Bigelow Tavern Times

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Website: www.wbhistory.org

News from The West Boylston Historical Society

President's Letter

This year is our country's semiquincentennial, marking the 250th birthday of the Declaration of Independence, or simply called "America 250". The

society has been planning programs this year to reflect our country's 250th celebration.



In the year 1776 when this country was fighting for its independence, West Boylston was not yet a township, but was called the North Parish of Shrewsbury. There were many citizens of the North

Parish who were patriots or sometimes referred to as "sunshine patriots", who fought in the battles of the Revolutionary War. No one could have been more of an outstanding patriot than the Militia Captain of the North Parish, Mr. Ezra Beaman, our town's founder.

In 1786, the North Parish of Shrewsbury became a separate town and took the name Boylston. There was soon local discontent with the formation of Boylston, which then led to the Second Precinct of Boylston, consisting of parts of Boylston, Sterling, and Holden. In 1808 under now Major Ezra Beaman, efforts were put forth to form the town of West Boylston, with parts taken from the towns of Sterling and Holden

In 1764, Ezra Beaman erected a dwelling house of very large proportions, known as the Beaman Tavern, it was a very typical way-side inn of the pre-Revolutionary War period. The Bigelow Tavern, our headquarters, was also a typical way-side inn, was also built in the pre-Revolutionary War era, but on a smaller scale,.

The tavern was a power in the community; during the days of the Revolution. Frequented by Tories or Patriots, it was here where schemes were devised, either for or against the patriot cause. It was at the tavern where people most frequently assembled, in a formal or informal manner to discuss, debate and devise plans and projects. The influence of the Beaman and the Bigelow Tavern was decidedly in favor of the Patriot cause, and a favorite stopping place for soldiers on their way to and from the army, there to impart or receive the latest information in regard to events rapidly transpiring.

Major Ezra Beaman was a true and ardent patriot. He was with the army near Boston in 1775, and during the whole war was active in whatever tended to the advancement of the cause. His time, his influence, and his property were all devoted to the cause of colonial independence.

Regards, Steven Carlson, President

What was the Worcester Revolution?

It came to a boil in December of 1773. The British Crown was steeped in outrage over the costly dumping of tea during The Boston Tea Party. The Crown's punishment for this rebellious action was to close the port of Boston in the Spring of 1774, causing financial distress to the Bay colony.

The British Parliament also passed The Massachusetts Government Act, closed the MA house of representatives, restricted colonist's right to conduct town meetings, and eliminated the right to select their own representatives. The Crown would now appoint the colonist's representatives, as well as judges, sheriffs and the Governor's council.

These *Intolerable Acts* essentially revoked the original charter established in 1629 and 1691 and ended 150 years of self-rule. The citizens felt that the Crown-controlled court would not have their best interests at heart. They wanted to prevent that change.

At dawn on September 6, 1774, a group of militiamen barricaded the Worcester courthouse. Soon, nearly 5,000 unarmed men from 37 towns, assembled on either side of Main Street. The 25 would-be magistrates arrived and made their way down the street heading to the courthouse. Denied entry, they were led to a nearby tavern by a selected group of militia leaders. There, the appointees reluctantly signed documents disavowing their allegiance to the King George II. They were then humiliated and forced to walk the gauntlet of Main Street repeatedly, recanting their oaths to the angry jeering crowd.

Months before the "shot heard 'round the world", these acts of rebellion in Worcester and other courthouse towns, had overthrown the British Crown's authority. Worcester county citizens soon set up their own government, fire public officials, and stop sending tax revenue to British authorities. The revolution had essentially begun.



Upcoming Programs!

See our new website for additional details
wbhistory.org/programs

All programs are to be held at Beaman Library at 6:30 pm, unless otherwise noted

May 6: *How Isaiah Thomas Brought the Revolution to Worcester.* Ashley Cataldo of the Worcester Antiquarian Society will tell us how Isaiah Thomas, revolutionary printer traveled with his printing press from Boston to Worcester in April of 1775.

September 2: *A Lively and Revolutionary Conversation with America's Second President.* John Adams talks about his life and times in a humorous and inspiring performance, discussing many incidents in Adams' life. George Baker will portray John Adams.

September 12: Town Wide Yard Sale

October 7: *Farm Girl on the Front Line with Janet Parnes.* Meet the woman who hoodwinked George Washington's army! Deborah Sampson is the only woman known to have served as a soldier in the Continental Army and earned a pension!

November 4: *Jon Rosetti* will portray a Mucquishium Manitoo of the Tihasset tribe of the Nipmuc Nation. "I am a Fur and goods trader and have made alliances with the French and Colonist. I join with the Colonist in the Fight against the English."

December 5, 3-5 pm: *Holiday Open House.*
Details to come.

Cocktails of the American Revolution

"Revolutionary War Americans consumed roughly three times more alcohol than modern Americans, with staples like rum, Madeira wine, whiskey, and hard cider serving as essential daily beverages, and safer alternatives to often-contaminated water. Taverns were central to social life, where popular drinks included Flip (ale, rum, sugar), Rattle Skull (porter, lime, rum), and Stone Fences (cider and rum)."

<https://cocktailconcoctionsandconnections.com/?p=338>



Revolutionary Era Hot Ale Flip Recipe Yields: 2 large mugs

Ingredients:

- 1 pint (16 oz) Dark Ale/Beer: Stout, Porter, or a strong British brown ale.
- 3-4 oz Dark Rum: Often called "killdevil" in the era.
- 2 tablespoons Sweetener: Traditionally molasses, brown sugar, or dried pumpkin.
- 1-2 Large Eggs: Used to thicken the drink (optional, but traditional).
- Freshly Grated Nutmeg: For garnish.

Instructions (Stovetop Method):

1. Prep the Mix: In a small bowl or large measuring cup, whisk together the eggs, sweetener, and rum until well combined.
2. Warm the Ale: Pour the ale into a saucepan and heat over low-medium heat. Bring it to a simmer (steaming), but do not let it come to a boil.
3. Combine and Froth: Slowly pour the hot ale into the rum/egg mixture while whisking vigorously to prevent the eggs from curdling.
4. The "Flip": To create the signature frothy texture, pour the mixture
5. back and forth between two metal or heat-safe mugs.



Reminder to submit your membership dues if you haven't already.



Visit us at Bigelow Tavern!

Open Hours: Thursday mornings
from 10 am - 1 pm.

Summer Open Houses: June 29, July 27 and Aug. 31 from 6-8 pm.

Board Meetings

April 13, May 11, June 15, July 13, August 10, September 17, October 19, November 9. All meetings are held at 6:30 pm at Bigelow Tavern. The public is welcome.

Donations:

- We accept historic **donations** year-round.
- **Yard Sale donations** will be accepted after July 15th for our yard sale on town wide yard sale day in September.
- We accept monetary donations through the Greater Worcester Community Foundation.

Please check out our website:
www.wbhistory.org or email us
at bigelow@wbhistory.org.

We look forward to hearing from you.



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