

**WE CELEBRATE
200 YEARS of
AMERICAN INDEPENDENCE**



**Report of the
Chelmsford Revolutionary War
Bicentennial Celebrations
Commission**

**FINAL REPORT
OF THE
CHELMSFORD
REVOLUTIONARY WAR BICENTENNIAL CELEBRATIONS COMMISSION**

To the People of Chelmsford

After six years of planning, preparation, and finally the culmination of the work of many dedicated people, the Chelmsford Revolutionary War Bicentennial Celebrations Commission, like the Arabs, "folds its tents and as silently steals away" to take its place in local history. However, before ringing down the final curtain, the Commission is obligated to record its accomplishments, first, to the taxpayers of the Town whose appropriation at Town Meetings provided the "seed" money that made it all possible and second, to record for posterity, the part Chelmsford played in our nation's 200th Anniversary.

Readers may wonder why certain activities were included while others, with which they may have been more closely associated, were omitted. This is the reason. Since this is a report, not of "the Bicentennial celebration", but rather of the Bicentennial Commission, subject matter has been limited to those activities that were either **sponsored, co-sponsored, or funded** by the Commission.

Within this framework, the report that follows attempts to tell the story of your Bicentennial Commission.

THE BICENTENNIAL COMMISSION REPORTS

- 1971 -

Chelmsford's part in the commemoration of our nation's 200th anniversary began officially at the Special Town Meeting held in the High School Gymnasium on June 28, 1971 with the passage of three articles of the warrant — Articles 5, 6, and 7 submitted by Mrs. Margaret E. Mills, chairman of the Historical Commission. Under Article 5 it was voted "to hold a Revolutionary War Bicentennial Celebration." Article 6 authorized the Board of Selectmen "to appoint a committee for the purpose of making preliminary plans for the observance of the revolutionary War Bicentennial Celebration." Article 7 asked that "the Town vote to petition the General Court to enact legislation authorizing the Town to appropriate money annually, from and including the year nineteen hundred and seventy-one to and including the year nineteen hundred and seventy-six for the celebration of the 200th Anniversary of the American Revolution; and to establish in the Town treasury a special fund in which shall be deposited such sums as shall be appropriated by the town for said celebration, and any and all such sums received by the town treasurer shall be kept separate and apart from all other funds of the town and the principal and interest thereof may, from time to time, be expended for the purposes of the celebration by and upon the authorization of the Board of Selectmen, and any surplus remaining in said special fund after said celebration is concluded shall be transferred by said treasurer into the treasury of the town." It was so voted.

The Board of Selectmen appointed to the committee known as "the Preliminary Executive Committee to Plan a Celebration of the Revolutionary Bicentennial in Chelmsford in 1975 and 1976" Mrs. Margaret E. Mills, John C. Alden, Walter R. Hedlund, Vincent J. R. Kehoe, and J. Perry Richardson. In August, 1971 Mrs. Mills, who had served as chairman of the committee, found it necessary to submit her resignation and George Adams Parkhurst was appointed to fill the vacancy on the committee. John C. Alden was named chairman.

Preliminary Planning

Following meetings with representatives of the Federal and State Bicentennial Commissions, as well as those of some of the surrounding towns, the members of the local committee agreed that Chelmsford's celebration should not be just parades, fireworks displays, or a carnival. Rather it should be a continuing program of carefully planned, coordinated "sanctioned" activities. It should be concerned not only with Revolutionary War history but, using the historic heritage of our town as a base, it should also provide the climate for assessing where we are today and the direction in which we are going.

While the committee (whose official name had been changed to the Chelmsford Revolutionary War Bicentennial Celebrations Commission) had been given the responsibility of planning, organizing, and coordinating Chelmsford's part in the national celebration, such a small group of citizens could not be expected to direct or manage all of the activities — nor would it be desirable. Therefore, it was decided the Commission's primary function would be to enlist the aid of as many local organizations as possible to plan and carry through Bicentennial programs and projects appropriate to them. The aim was to involve a majority of our people, young and old, newcomers and old settlers, with the Commission serving as coordinator. In addition, the Commission would sponsor a few projects of its own.

The national Bicentennial program encompassed three thematic elements: (1) **Heritage '76**, focusing on activities recalling our nation's heritage and giving historical perspective to the community; (2) **Festival USA**, which included the arts, athletics, education, travel, hospitality, exhibits, fairs, and festivals; and (3) **Horizons '76**, commemorating the past by working toward an even better future. The local Commission followed these three themes in its programing.



Members of the Bicentennial Commission (1976) in the 1802 Schoolhouse. Standing l. to r.: John Perry Richardson, Walter R. Hedlund, Hedwig H. Zabierek, Mary J. Guaraldi, Richard O. Lahue, Sr., Anna F. Normand, Audrey A. Carragher, Janet Lombard, John C. Alden. Seated at schoolmaster's desk: George Adams Parkhurst. Not present: Charles J. Marderosian.

- 1972 -

In 1972 the Commission elected George Adams Parkhurst chairman and John C. Alden, clerk. Mr. Alden was also appointed by the Selectmen as Chelmsford's representative to the Middlesex Bicentennial Liaison Council which included many of the towns of Middlesex County. A seal, or logo, of the Commission (shown on the cover of this report) was adopted for use on all official correspondence and publications, consisting of a five-pointed white star on a red, white, and blue background with the Town Seal superimposed on the star. This was an adaptation of the logo of the national Bicentennial program. The use of the logo was extended to tickets, programs, and other publications of officially sanctioned Bicentennial activities.

The Commission received its first appropriation of funds under Articles 66 and 67 of the 1972 Annual Town Meeting. On motions by Mr. Alden, the Town voted \$500. to the Accumulation Fund and \$300. for operating expenses for the current year.

The Commission proposed that the local celebration officially open with activities on Sunday, April 20, 1975, followed by a "Kick-Off Banquet" on April 22nd with the climatic events on the weekend of July 3-5, 1976. However, it was expected that there might be some Bicentennial activities leading up to and following this time bracket. (These proposals, made 3-4 years in advance, were carried out.)

- 1973 -

Hike to the Concord Bridge

The first Commission-sponsored activity of the Bicentennial took place on Monday, April 16, 1973 when, as part of the Patriot's Day Celebration, approximately 400 Boy and Girl Scouts from the Greater Lowell area hiked to the Concord Bridge over the trail taken by Chelmsford Minutemen in 1775. The Boy Scouts camped on the grounds of the South Chelmsford Gun and Rod Club on Mill Road Sunday night in anticipation of an early morning start. That evening the present day Chelmsford Colonial Minutemen entertained the boys with a concert of fife and drum music followed by a musket firing demonstration. After a pre-dawn breakfast served by the members of the Gun Club, the Scouts and Minutemen were joined by several Girl Scouts and adults who accompanied them to the Concord Bridge. A specially designed blue and white emblem, bearing the words, "Chelmsford Trail to Concord 1775" was presented to each participant in recognition of his, or her, achievement.

In order to carry out its responsibilities the Bicentennial Commission requested \$450. for operating expenses for 1973 and also a sum of money to be added to the \$500. voted the previous year to the Accumulation Fund for use in 1975-6. The voters at the Annual Town Meeting on April 2nd approved the former but, on the recommendation of the Finance Committee, refused to appropriate anything in the latter category.

The Commission was occupied throughout the year promulgating plans for the celebration and on August 6, 1973 the Commission was incorporated by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts as a non-profit corporation with the five Commission members as the incorporators.

Chelmsford A "Bicentennial Community"

Under a Bicentennial Communities program, the (national) American Revolution Bicentennial Commission designated those towns and cities throughout the country, that had planned Bicentennial programs involving all three thematic elements, as "Bicentennial Communities." Chelmsford was accorded this distinction on November 15, 1973, being among the first communities so designated. An official Bicentennial flag was presented to the Town at the Annual Town Meeting the following May. This Bicentennial flag was flown below Old Glory on the flag pole in the Center each day throughout the celebration.

Commission Enlarged

During 1974 the Commission was enlarged to 13 members when the Board of Selectmen appointed the following new members: Audrey A. Carragher, Robert R. Charpentier, Robert J. Geary, Mary J. Guaraldi, Janet Lombard, Charles J. Marderosian, Anna F. Normand, and Hedwig H. Zabierek. Mr. Parkhurst continued as chairman with Mr. Richardson as vice chairman; Mrs. Zabierek, clerk; and Mr. Alden, treasurer.

Allen's History of Chelmsford

The Bicentennial Commission voted to republish the first "History of Chelmsford," written by Reverend Wilkes Allen, pastor of the "Church and Society in Chelmsford" (now the First Parish Unitarian-Universalist Church) in 1820. This is reputed to have been the first town history of the "dignity of a volume" published in the United States. A new foreword and title page were added but otherwise the book was unchanged from Allen's work which was reproduced photographically from one of the originals. One hundred deluxe, serially numbered copies were printed along with 1000 regular hard cover editions and were offered for sale with income being used for other Bicentennial activities.

Publication and distribution of the History were handled by a committee consisting of Anna F. Normand, chairman, Audrey A. Carragher, Ada P. Dumont, Catherine L. Goodwin, Janet Lombard, and J. Perry Richardson.

Second Hike to Concord

Between 200 and 300 Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts participated in the second hike to Concord sponsored by the Bicentennial Commission on Sunday, April 21, 1974. The boys camped the night before at the 4-H grounds in Westford while the girls "camped" in the parish house of the Central Baptist Church. Breakfast was served at the Central Congregational Church followed by a flag raising and Liberty Pole capping in Central Square, after which the hike over the Minuteman Trail began, the young people being accompanied by several members of the Chelmsford Colonial Minutemen. The participants were greeted at the North Bridge in Concord by Congressman Paul W. Cronin of the 5th Congressional District, State Representative Bruce N. Freeman of Chelmsford, Acting Captain Edward Harris of the Minutemen, and Bicentennial Commission chairman Parkhurst. A short time previously the "Chelmsford Trail to Concord" had been approved by the National Boy Scout organization as a National Historical Trail.

Schoolhouse Restoration

Although restoration of the former Hearse House in the northeast corner of Forefathers Burying Ground was not completed until early 1977, the building was turned over to the Bicentennial Commission near the end of 1974, the former occupants, the Park Department, having acquired new quarters for the storage and maintenance of its equipment. The building, constructed of brick manufactured in East Chelmsford, had been erected in 1802 on the site of the first schoolhouse in Chelmsford (1718) and served as the seat of learning for pupils in the Center area until 1851 when the "yellow schoolhouse" was opened across the Common where the Central Fire Station stands today.

A new roof was installed, the structural timbers reenforced, and the existing windows, which had deteriorated badly, were replaced, making the building structurally sound and weather tight. The two windows on the front, having previously been bricked up, were reopened and the garage-type door was replaced by a pedestrian door of typical 19th century design. Work inside the building included a wide board wooden floor over the existing concrete one, installation of a plaster ceiling,



Chelmsford's 20th century "Colonial Minutemen" who played an active part in the Bicentennial Celebration.



Chelmsford Bicentennial literature. Back row: "Ezekiel Byam and the Lucifer Match"; "Reading, 'Riting, 'Rithmetic"; "Bicentennial Quilt"; "The Village Clock at Chelmsford Center — 1876 - 1976"; "A Walking Tour of the Chelmsford Center Historic District". Front row: "From Settlement to Suburbia, A New History of Chelmsford"; "Chelmsford - A Historic Tour"; Rev. Wilkes Allen's "History of Chelmsford, 1820" (republished).

and repairs to the wainscoting. Wooden student desks and benches, similar to those found in early 19th century schools were installed as well as an antique schoolmaster's desk, a dunce stool, and a non-operating wood burning stove. Two concessions were made to modern comfort: forced hot air heating and electric lights. A new granite step was installed outside the door, the lawn graded and seeded, and a flag pole set in place. The Commission received a gift from the Chelmsford Historical Society of the school bell that had hung in the belfry of the Chelmsford Academy, which occupied the site of the present Central Baptist Parsonage at 7 Academy Street and later in the "Yellow Schoolhouse" on North Road. This was hung in the belfry of the restored school.

The restoration work was funded by Town Meeting appropriation and a \$3,000. matching grant under the Bicentennial Community Grants Program of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, as well as several private donations. At the completion of the Bicentennial celebration, the schoolhouse was turned over to the Historical Commission who will maintain it and have their office there. In the fall of 1976 several groups of students from the Center School held classes here as they relived the experiences of school children of 150 years ago. The School Department plans to hold similar classes in the future for students from the other schools.

The committee in charge of the restoration included Richard O. Lahue, Sr., chairman, Audrey A. Carragher, clerk, John C. Alden, Walter R. Hedlund, Louis E. Kelly, Fotine A. McCarthy, Charles A. Parlee, and J. Perry Richardson. The committee was indebted to Chairman Lahue, Dana P. Caffelle, and Donald Skelton and a group of Boy Scouts from Troop 66 for many hours of volunteer labor on the restoration. Donald Skelton used his work on this project as part of the requirements for his Eagle Scout badge.

Colonial Costume Ball

On February 22, 1975 Chelmsford residents turned the clock back two centuries as, dressed for the occasion, they gathered at the Elks Hall on Littleton Road for a Colonial Ball. Although billed as a Colonial Costume Ball, guests were asked to choose their attire from either the 1675, 1775, or 1875 period.

Dances of the Colonial period were enjoyed between 8 and 9 p.m., to music by the University of Lowell Baroque Ensemble with minuet instruction by Mrs. Edward W. Center of Arlington and Ronald W. Malkesian. During the grand march, costumes were judged by Mrs. Marjorie Hicks and Mrs. Jane Broderick from the U.S. Department of Interior in Concord. Miss Janice Carragher was selected as the winner of the 1875 period while there were dual 1775 winners: Roy LaRoche and Vincent J.R. Kehoe. The most outstanding couple award went to Mr. and Mrs. John C. Carragher. From 9 p.m. until 1 a.m., the Cosmo Valente orchestra furnished music for modern dancing with the dancers taking time out for champagne and hot and cold hors d'oeuvres. Each guest was given a pewter key chain as a souvenir of the Ball.

Arrangements for the Ball were handled by a committee consisting of Mr. and Mrs. George L. Guaraldi, chairmen, Mr. and Mrs. John C. Alden, Mr. and Mrs. J. Paul Bienvenu, Mr. and Mrs. John C. Carragher, Mr. and Mrs. Thomas G. Elliot, Mr. and Mrs. Charles J. Marderosian, Mr. and Mrs. George A. Parkhurst, Mr. and Mrs. J. Perry Richardson, Mr. and Mrs. George A. Ripsom, Mr. and Mrs. Carl W. Seidel, Mr. and Mrs. Harold A. Witt, and Mr. and Mrs. Stanley Zabierek.

Patriots Day, 1975

Commemorating the 200th anniversary of the Battle of Concord in which minutemen of Chelmsford and the surrounding towns took part, the Bicentennial Commission and the Boy Scouts of Chelmsford sponsored a Historic Trail Jamboree over the weekend of April 18-20. This Jamboree was the outgrowth of the organized hikes over the minuteman trail of the two previous years but was on a much larger scale with scouts from the New England and Middle Atlantic states participating. The boys camped on the former Middlesex County Training School grounds in North Chelmsford Friday night, April 18th.

In the pre-dawn hours of the next morning, the scouts had breakfast and then boarded buses that took them to the Center Common where they were joined by Girl Scouts and several adults. Following a brief flag raising ceremony, they proceeded to hike over the same trail used by local minutemen just 200 years earlier, arriving at the North Bridge in Concord in time for the ceremonies that included a visit by President Gerald Ford. Bus transportation was provided for the return trip to their campsite.

"Chelmsford Bicentennial Day"

By an official proclamation, the Chelmsford Board of Selectmen proclaimed "Sunday, April 20, 1975 as Chelmsford Bicentennial Day and urged that all the citizens of this town join in observation of this historic achievement by participating in the various commemorative events of that day and throughout our Nation's Bicentennial years, 1975-1976."

Five Bicentennial events took place on April 20th: At 10:45 a.m. a Colonial church service was conducted at the First Parish Unitarian-Universalist church. A large number of townspeople, many in Colonial costume, attended the service and the "coffee hour" that followed.

The athletic field of the McCarthy Junior High School on North Road was the scene of a colorful bit of pageantry in the afternoon when the American Contingent of the 10th Regiment of Foot of 1775 — the recreated British unit — presented its annual inspection and review before a large crowd of spectators. The high point of the ceremony was the presentation to the regiment of a 6 foot square 18th century style British flag by Major General Sir Christopher Welby-Everard who came from Britain specifically to make the presentation. The reviewing party included, in addition to General Welby-Everard, two British guests: Brigadier General William Malla and Consul General Gerald Kent; Colonel Vincent J.R. Kehoe, the regimental commander; Father Armand Morrisette, regimental chaplain; and Selectmen Arnold Lovering and Philip Currier.

The Chelmsford Colonial Minutemen conducted three events that day. At 5 p.m. they marched to Bartlett Park where they were joined by townspeople for the planting and dedication of a Liberty Tree. At 8 p.m. they held a colonial candlelight service at the First Parish Church, assisted by the minister of the church, Rev. Roland E. Morin. Following the service, a Liberty Tree Candle-Lighting Service was held on the Center Common by the Minutemen.

Kick-Off Banquet

At 7:45 p.m. on Tuesday, April 22nd a drummer from the Chelmsford Colonial Minutemen "drummed" the more than 300 guests to the banquet tables at the Elks Hall for Chelmsford's Bicentennial Kick-Off Banquet. When the keynote speaker had been escorted to the head table, the Colonial colors were posted by a color guard from the Colonial Minutemen. The present day American colors were then presented by a U.S. Marine Corps color guard and the assemblage joined in singing "the Star Spangled Banner" under the direction of Mrs. Patricia Brown with piano accompaniment by Mrs. Marion Keith. The invocation was offered by the Rev. Roland E. Morin, pastor of the First Parish Church.

Following the dinner, George Adams Parkhurst, Bicentennial Commission chairman, introduced those seated at the head table and the other dignitaries present. Arnold J. Lovering, chairman of the Board of Selectmen, extended the official greetings of the Town and presented a Key to the Town to the guest speaker. Chairman Parkhurst spoke briefly on Chelmsford's plans for the Bicentennial celebration. He then introduced the keynote speaker, the Honorable F. Bradford Morse, Under Secretary General of the United Nations and former Congressman from the Fifth Congressional District, who took as his theme, "the interdependence of all people on earth" and the need for us to accept the responsibilities engendered by this interdependence.

John Perry Richardson, vice chairman of the Bicentennial Commission, presented Mr. Morse with a pewter key chain and a copy of Allen's "History of Chelmsford". Raymond Day gave him a Colonial Minuteman mug.

The evening's festivities closed with a program of choral music by "The Guys and Dolls" under the direction of Mrs. Sandra Stewich.

The banquet was sponsored by the Bicentennial Commission with the arrangements being handled by a committee consisting of George A. Parkhurst, chairman, Mrs. John C. Alden, Mrs. Henry A. Brown, Mrs. John Carragher, Mrs. John F. Geary, John W. Gurich, Mrs. Vincent F. St. Hilaire, Mrs. Paul F. Jahn, Mrs. George A. Parkhurst, and J. Perry Richardson.

Historic Building Markers

One hundred thirty-five historic homes and other buildings had historic markers attached to them, giving the name of the building and the approximate date it was erected. This project was planned and executed by the Historic Homes and Sites Committee, Richard O. Lahue, Sr., chairman, in cooperation with the Bicentennial Commission and the Historical Commission. As a guide to the various buildings, a brochure was published containing a brief history of each and a map prepared by Charles J. Marderosian showed their locations.

The work of identifying the historic buildings and researching their past was carried out by Mrs. Leo Bourgeault, Mrs. William H. Drury, Mrs. Donald H. Fogg, John A. Goodwin, Mrs. John Gregg, Mrs. Richard O. Lahue, Sr., Janet Lombard, Mrs. Gordon MacPhail, Mrs. Paul F. McCarthy, Mrs. Edward P. McKeon, Mrs. Ronald W. Nelson, Mrs. Helen R. Poland, Edward G. Quinn, Thomas S. Shedd, Bertha F. Trubey, and Arnold Wilder. The markers were installed on the buildings under the direction of Richard O. Lahue, Jr., assisted by Peter T. Blechman, Dana P. Caffelle, Henry Eriksen, David Lewis, and Thomas S. Shedd.

Parker Junior High School Named

On Monday, May 26, 1975 the school on Graniteville Road, formerly known as the Junior High School, West, was officially named the Lt. Col. Moses Parker Junior High School at a ceremony held on the lawn in front of the school. This program was a joint venture of the Bicentennial Commission, the Chelmsford Colonial Minutemen, the Chelmsford Historical Commission, the Chelmsford Historical Society, the Old Chelmsford Garrison House Association, and the Chelmsford School Committee. John C. Alden was chairman of the arrangements.

The school was renamed in memory of Lt. Col. Moses Parker, a veteran of the Indian Wars and the commander of a company of Chelmsford Minutemen who responded to the alarm on the 19th of April, 1775. Wounded at the Battle of Bunker Hill June 17, 1775, he was taken prisoner by the British troops. He died, a prisoner of war, on July 4th, 1775, exactly one year before the Colonies gained the independence for which he had given his life. A suitably engraved plaque was presented to the School Department by the Minutemen.

As a further tribute to the hero for whom the school was named, a painting depicting Lt. Col. Parker in the midst of battle was hung in the school. The painting was executed by Chelmsford artist Edward F. Harris on a piece of ¼ inch gray slate two feet by three feet. The Chelmsford Colonial Minutemen were the donors of this painting to the Town.

Middlesex Canal Toll House — 1832

At the time of Chelmsford's Tercentenary celebration in 1955, the heirs of Judge Samuel P. Hadley presented to the Town the toll house that had been located at the northern end of the Middlesex Canal. This man-made waterway, believed to have been the first traction canal in the U.S., provided a transportation link between the Merrimack River in Chelmsford and Charlestown. For the Bicentennial, the Toll House was moved to the lawn of the Town Hall where it served as an information center manned by a group of senior citizens and other volunteers.

Byam Match Factory Marker

Ezekiel Byam, a native of South Chelmsford, began the manufacture of the first lucifer matches to be produced in the United States in 1835. His factory was a small building located on the east



Costumed guests at the Bicentennial Ball on February 22, 1975 line up for the grand march under the supervision of Chelmsford Colonial Minuteman Raymond Day.



Chelmsford Colonial Minutemen at the Library Tree planting in Bartlett Park, April 20, 1975.

side of Robin Hill Road. In recognition of this early industry, the Chelmsford Historical Commission erected a granite marker near the site of the Byam manufactory in September, 1975, the 140th anniversary of the inception of the business. Mr. Richard O. Lahue, Sr., was chairman of the committee that carried out this project. The marker was donated by the Colmer Monument Works and the cost of lettering the stone and installation was defrayed by donations from the following individuals and organizations: Mr. and Mrs. John C. Alden, Mr. and Mrs. Angelo A. Balzarini, Mr. and Mrs. Edwin C. Byam, Mr. and Mrs. Dana P. Caffelle, Michael J. Caffelle, Mr. and Mrs. John C. Carragher, Chelmsford 4-H Horse Lovers, Chelmsford Historical Commission, Chelmsford Historical Society, Mr. and Mrs. Bruce N. Freeman, Mr. and Mrs. Richard O. Lahue, David Lewis, Miss Janet Lombard, Miss Eleanor Parkhurst, Mr. and Mrs. George A. Parkhurst, Robert H. Parkhurst, South Chelmsford Village Improvement Association, Mr. and Mrs. George T. Stewart. The area around the stone was landscaped by the Four Seasons Garden Club.

Sunday afternoon, September 7th, a program of dedication was held at the First Baptist Church in South Chelmsford with Richard O. Lahue, Sr. as master of ceremonies. A pamphlet, "Ezekiel Byam and the Lucifer Match", was published in conjunction with the dedication.

- 1976 -

Town Song

In association with the Bicentennial Commission, the Chelmsford Choral Society sponsored a contest for a town song. Ralph E. Funaro was awarded a prize of \$200. for his composition, "Let Children Guard What Sires Have Won." The winning selection was first performed for the public at the Society's annual spring concert on March 13, 1976 at the McCarthy Junior High School.

1776 Town Meeting Reenactment

On March 15th, the First Parish Unitarian-Universalist Church was the site of a reenactment of the Town Meeting of March 4, 1776 when local residents, many in Colonial costume, gathered to act upon the problems of 200 years ago. The parts of the members of the Board of Selectmen of 1776 were played by four of their present day counterparts: Arnold J. Lovering, Philip L. Currier, William R. Murphy, and Thomas A. Palmer, Jr. The Rev. Roland E. Morin portrayed the Rev. Ebenezer Bridge, the local minister of that period. The moderator, Capt. Oliver Barron, constable Amos Kidder, and acting town clerk Reuben Gould were impersonated by George A. Parkhurst, Raymond Day, and Robert J. Noble respectively.

The program was sponsored by the Board of Selectmen. The script was researched and written by Raymond Day and Ralph E. House, Jr. The reenactment was repeated on May 27th.

Chelmsford's Bicentennial Quilt

Through the combined efforts of more than 80 Chelmsford residents, a Bicentennial Quilt was designed and fabricated by a committee of which Mary J. Guaraldi was chairman. Sally Palmer Field served as advisor to the committee.

The quilt was first displayed at the Old Chelmsford Garrison House Association's Bicentennial Quilt Show at the Elks Club on April 6 and 7. It is now on permanent display in the children's house of the Adams Library. Thirty-four squares, each depicting some historic scene of Chelmsford, surround a large central square showing the Center Common and several points of historical interest in that area.

Those who helped Mrs. Guaraldi and Mrs. Field on this project were: Margaret E. Adams, John C. Alden, Joanne Allard, Janice Baird, Helen Barris, Robert Barris, Betty Belanger, Eleanor Bragdon, Audrey Carragher, John Carragher, Mrs. Francis L. Clancy, Lorraine Clark, Val Clark, Jane Drury, Brenda Dudley, Mrs. Henry Emmons, Eleanor Ferreira, Virginia Fielding, Nancy Fiske, Eustace Fiske, Julie Fogg, Irene Foster, Louise Fulton, James Geary, Robert Geary, Jeanne Glenfield,

Catherine Goodwin, George L. Guaraldi, Jr., Walter R. Hedlund, Mrs. William C. Hinckley, Burt Hood, Mary Hubbard, Bill Hynes, Judy Haas, Natalie Jones, Vincent Kehoe, Carol Kennealy, Mrs. Jean E. Kilburn, Mrs. Richard O. Lahue, Sr., Richard O. Lahue, Sr., Elizabeth Ann Lombard, Janet Lombard, Sandra Ludwig, Charles Marderosian, Jean Mansfield, J. Michael McBride, Prue McBride, Elizabeth A. McCarthy, Joyce McKenzie, Ann Meeker, Margie Molar, Helen Monahan, Dr. Howard Moore, Fran Murphy, Anna Normand, Mrs. Edward Norton, David Panciera, Eleanor Parkhurst, George A. Parkhurst, Mrs. Ralph S. Parlee, Mary Partridge, Robert Picken, Mrs. Helen Poland, Ernest Pouliot, Irene Pouliot, J. Perry Richardson, Betty Ripsom, Marjorie Sargent, Connie Scarth, James Scarth, Judy Seredynski, Clara Sills, Mary Slattery, Chris Stavros, Hazel Stevens, Marilyn Supple, Mrs. Charles E. Watt, Dot Webb, Linda Webb, Mrs. Malcolm Weeks, Roger Welch, Barbara Willman, Kathy Willman, Hedy Zabierek.

Centennial of the Town Clock

Following the second Town Meeting reenactment on May 27, 1976, a brief ceremony was held in recognition of the hundred years that the Town Clerk has counted out the hours from the steeple of the First Parish Church. (It was erected May 17, 1876.) A suitably engraved plaque was presented to Harold J. Davis, clerk of the First Parish, by the Chelmsford Historical Commission, to be installed in the "Meeting House." A pamphlet entitled, "The Village Clock at Chelmsford Center, 1876-1976" was published and distributed by the Historical Commission.

THE CLIMAX — INDEPENDENCE DAY WEEKEND, 1976

Between noon on Friday, July 2nd and the following Monday afternoon, Bicentennial events were taking place nearly all of the time somewhere in Chelmsford. While many groups and organizations were involved, the responsibility — and credit for its success — of planning, organizing, and carrying out the myriad activities was turned over to the Chelmsford Colonial Minutemen, Robert J. Noble, general chairman, assisted by sub-chairmen Richard H. Rienstra, William F. Fay, Dana P. Caffelle, Derrin M. Alberghene, James K. Gifford, Mrs. Marion Yonge, and John McLaughlin in cooperation with the Town Celebrations Committee, Walter R. Hedlund, chairman, and the Bicentennial Commission. Mrs. Evelyn Haines and Bonnie Towle of the Selectmen's office handled arrangements for our visiting dignitaries.

Guests from England and Canada

As one of the high points of our celebration, Chelmsford (Massachusetts) entertained official guests from our sister municipalities of Chelmsford, Essex, England and Chelmsford, Ontario, Canada. Mrs. Helen How, Chairman of the Chelmsford (Essex) District Council, accompanied by her husband, Aubrey How, was met at Logan International Airport (Boston) by an official delegation Friday afternoon, July 2nd. That morning Councilmen Esko Laakso and Silvio Mainville had arrived from Chelmsford, Ontario accompanied by their wives, Lois Laakso and Andreanne Mainville. The Selectmen greeted the visitors and gave them a tour of the Town Hall where they met several of the Town employees. This brief reception was followed by a visit to our Central Fire Station and Police Station. That evening the Board of Selectmen hosted a reception at the "Banqueteer."

On Saturday morning our visitors were guests of the local Minutemen on a trip to Concord and the National Park Headquarters at the North Bridge. That noon, Mrs. How was hostess of a luncheon at the Princeton Lounge in North Chelmsford. At the conclusion of the luncheon, the guests visited the Barrett-Byam museum of the Chelmsford Historical Society and the Garrison House where tea was served. During the next 48 hours, they attended, and in many cases took a leading part in, the official celebration activities. Monday evening they were guests of the Minutemen at dinner and on Tuesday they toured the State House and historic Boston.

Saturday Evening, July 3rd

Like a 3-ring circus, three Bicentennial events took place concurrently on Saturday evening. Approximately 400 people gathered at the Elks Club for the Bicentennial 4th of July Banquet in

honor of our visitors from "the other Chelmsfords." Following an excellent meal prepared and served by members of the Elks, Selectmen Chairman Paul C. Hart extended the official greetings of the Town. Gifts were presented to the guests of honor by the Selectmen, the Town Celebrations Committee, and the Bicentennial Commission, and the recipients, in turn, presented mementos from their communities. General dancing was enjoyed until midnight.

At the same time, Chelmsford's celebration of our nation's 200th birthday got under way at the Center Common. With more than 30 booths, operated by local organizations, along Westford Street, the annual Country Fair attracted several thousand celebrators between 6 and 11 p.m. A band concert by the Chelmsford Community Band on the common was the third event from 7 to 9 p.m.

Sunday, July 4th

Bicentennial activities on Sunday opened with a special church service at All Saints Episcopal Church in which Mrs. How and Mr. Mainville participated. This was followed by a reception and "coffee hour" on the church grounds. At noon the guests were entertained at lunch on the lawn adjacent to St. Mary's Church by the Chelmsford Art Society, after which they were given a preview of the Art Society's 8th Annual Art Festival Exhibit.

At 2 p.m. Chelmsford joined communities throughout the nation in marking the anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence by the ringing of the church bells in all sections of the town.

When the last notes of the church bells had faded away, Richard O. Lahue, Sr., opened the rededication ceremony at the newly restored 1802 Schoolhouse. Several hundred people joined our visitors from England and Canada to learn of the work that had been done on the building and, following the ceremony, took advantage of the opportunity to examine the interior of the schoolhouse and exhibits that included the Bicentennial Quilt. A brief history of the 1802 Schoolhouse and other seats of learning that have been located around the Common was published under the title: "Reading, 'Riting, 'Rithmatic."

Meanwhile the booths of the Country Fair were attracting crowds, having opened at 1 p.m. They continued in operation until 11:00 that night. From 7 to 9 p.m. the Lowell Musicians Union Band presented a band concert on the Common adjacent to the Country Fair. During a brief interlude at 9 p.m., a signal lantern, similar to those that hung in the Old North Church in Boston 201 years ago, was lighted by Selectman Philip L. Currier and dispatched to the belfry of the First Parish Church by J. Perry Richardson where its candle will shine out as a symbolic beacon as our nation enters its third century. The concluding event of July 4th was a Square Dance in the vicinity of the Country Fair from 9-11 p.m.

Monday, July 5th

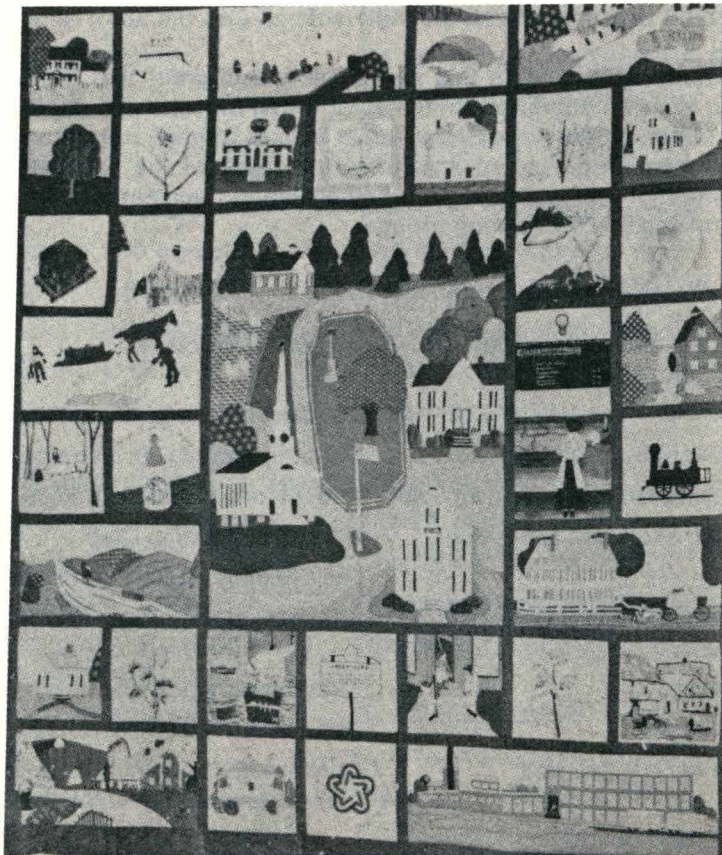
The final day of the celebration began at 6:30 a.m. when the waiters served the first patrons of the Holiday Breakfast at the First Parish Church. The Chelmsford Colonial Minutemen raised the town flag and fired their cannon at 8 a.m., and the Country Fair booths opened for the last time.

Prior to the parade, approximately 40 participants ran the annual 4th of July Road Race down North Road from the McCarthy Junior High School to the Town Hall. The Recreation Commission was the sponsor of this event. Winners in the senior division were Frank Durkin, Bruce Clements, John Sherman, James McDade and Joe Palermo. In the junior division, Danny Butler, Dave Walsh, Kevin Sullivan, Dan Palermo, Danny Cajka, and Paul O'Connell finished in that order.

As reported by the "Lowell Sun" as they described the mammoth parade which, they said attracted 60-70,000 viewers, "It was an All-American finale to the Bicentennial Weekend." Directly behind the police escort and the American Legion color guard were the honorary parade marshals — our distinguished guests from England and Canada — in shiny convertibles. When they reached



1802 Schoolhouse in Forefathers Burying Ground restored by the Bicentennial Commission.



Chelmsford's Bicentennial Quilt was presented to the Town and placed on permanent display in the Children's House of the Adams Library.

the Town Hall, they left the parade and mounted the reviewing stand directly across the street. From there they watched and applauded the 25 floats, 15 musical aggregations and many more marching units.

Floats were judged in three categories — senior, junior, and commercial — with the winning entries being, Senior Division: first prize, Stony Brook Fish and Game Association; second, Chelmsford Breakers; third, Old Chelmsford Garrison House Guild; fourth, Alamo Circle Association. Junior Division: first prize, Daughters of Liberty; second, St. Mary's CYO; third, Campfire Girls; fourth, 4H Silver Spurs. Commercial Division: first prize, Girl Scout Troop 371 sponsored by Purity Supreme; second, The Yum Yum Shop; third 4H Horse Lovers sponsored by Chubb's Pier Seafood Restaurant; fourth, Aldrich Stables.

With clear skies and the temperature in the 80's, the weather could not have been better. It was about an hour and a half after the first units arrived at the reviewing stand that the host group, the Chelmsford Colonial Minutemen brought the parade — and for all intents and purposes the Bicentennial celebration — to a close with an 11-gun salute to America's birthday and the playing of "Yankee Doodle." For the people of Chelmsford, the Bicentennial was history.

Sanctioned Programs

In addition to the events, discussed above, in which the Bicentennial Commission was directly involved through planning and/or funding, the Commission sanctioned sixty Bicentennial programs. These programs, planned and carried out by more than a score of local organizations and public school classes, involved thousands of Chelmsford people, making the Bicentennial a participant, rather than a spectator, celebration. This was exactly as it should have been and the Commission is deeply indebted to those who so willingly entered into the spirit of '75 and '76.

There were only three requirements that had to be met in order that a program qualify to be "sanctioned": It had to be (1) conducted in the spirit of the Bicentennial; (2) in some way conceivably related to one or more of the three Bicentennial themes; and (3) not for any individual's monetary profit. The Commission presented a certificate to each of the sponsors of the sanctioned programs in recognition of the important part they played in the celebration. Listed below are the sanctioned programs and the sponsoring groups.

ACTIVITY	SPONSOR
Sale and distribution of embroidered patches and decals with Logo	Boy Scout Troop 74
Handcrafted items	Old Chelmsford Garrison House Guild
New England Patchwork Book on Quilting	Old Chelmsford Garrison House Guild
Sale of pewter plates and mugs with Town Seal	Chelmsford Historical Society
"Chelpex 74" Stamp show and exhibition	Chelmsford Stamp Club
Fashion Show	Old Chelmsford Garrison House Association
Slides Depicting Historic Sites and Historic Homes of Chelmsford	Chelmsford Historical Society
Colonial Church Service	First Parish Unitarian-Universalist Church
"The Music Man" musical	Chelmsford Theatrical Society
Flag Raising Ceremony on Common	Chelmsford Colonial Minutemen (Chelmsford Bicentennial Day Activities)
Liberty Tree Planting and Dedication	
Colonial Candlelight Church Service	
Liberty Tree Candle Lighting	

Camp Fire Girls Festival	Chelmsford Camp Fire Girls
Landscaping Grounds at Site of Byam Match Factory	Four Seasons Garden Club
Review, Inspection, and Presentation of Colors	10th Regiment of Foot
Oral History of Chelmsford	Adams Library
Colonial Week at School, Apr. 14-18	Westlands School
Program of American popular music from Revolutionary period to present	"Guys and Dolls"
Planting of Norway Red Pine in Crooked Spring Brook Reservation	Woodridge Gardeners
"Bicentennial Potpourri"	Center School
"The Silversmith of Williamsburg" (Film)	Friends of the Library
Chelmsford Historical Bicycle Path	Boy Scouts — Scott Cinsavich
Freedom Fair	Harrington School
"H.M.S. Pinafore"	One Penny Opera Company
4th of July Parade (1975)	Chelmsford Colonial Minutemen
Patriots and Prisoners Day	Chelmsford Colonial Minutemen
Colonial Ball, "Change of Command Ceremony"	Chelmsford Colonial Minutemen
Total Art Event	Chelmsford Art Society
Drum and Bugle Corps Competition	Golden Buccaneers Drum and Bugle Corps.
Making Ends Meet Project	McCarthy Junior High School
Explanation and Illustration of the Old Middlesex Canal Route	McCarthy Junior High School
Colonial Living at the Garrison House	McCarthy Junior High School
Illustrated Talk on "Dolls of Yesteryear"	Friends of the Library
Four Productions	Chelmsford Free Theatre
Pop Warner Bicentennial Football Game	Pop Warner Football Association
Color Guard Competition and Show	Golden Buccaneers Drum and Bugle Corps
3rd Annual Summer Spectacular Field Competition	Golden Buccaneers Drum and Bugle Corps
Town of Chelmsford Community Bulletin Board	Camp Fire Girls
"Quills and Cannonades" by Carl DeSuze	Friends of the Library
Town Song Contest	Chelmsford Choral Society
Candlelight Service, All Saints Church	Chelmsford Colonial Minutemen
New History of Chelmsford by Students of the U.S. History Seminar Course	Chelmsford High School
Colonial Town Meeting Reenactment	Board of Selectmen
Bicentennial Concert	Chelmsford High School Band and Chorus
Dedication of Military Exhibit Room	Chelmsford Historical Society
Celebration of Centennial of Town Clock	Chelmsford Historical Commission
Exhibit of Photos of Chelmsford People and Places in the last 125 years	Chelmsford Historical Society
Bicentennial Musical, "Heritage '76"	St. Mary's Women's Club

Bicentennial Quilt Show	Garrison House Association
Independence Week — April 12-16, 1976	Chelmsford High School
Lincoln-Douglass Debate — Persuasive and Extemporaneous Speaking	Chelmsford High School Debating Team
Costume Doll Display	Westlands School
Bicentennial Field Day	Harrington School
Bicentennial Jr. Committee of Correspondence	Westlands School, Class 4-C
Events Surrounding the American Revolution in Social Studies	South Row School, Class 4-A
Bicentennial Quilt	South Row School, Grade 4
Patchwork Confederate Flag	Brownie Troop 283
Bicentennial Quilt	Westlands School, Grades 2D and 2E
Bicentennial Mazes	McCarthy Junior High School Robert Weiss, Grade 9
Bicentennial Quilt — Picture Story of the Gold Rush of 1849	Westlands School, Grades 3A, 3C, 3D, 3E
Three Day Language Arts Festival and Open House	Westlands School, Grade 3
Bicentennial Rug	South Row School, Grade 5
Voter Registration Program	League of Women Voters

And that's not all. There were other Bicentennial events and programs of which the Bicentennial Commission was not informed. Although it is not possible to report these activities, the Commission recognizes that they played an equally important part in making Chelmsford's celebration both noteworthy and meaningful.

Commission Dissolved

On March 29, 1977, the Bicentennial Commission met in the 1802 Schoolhouse and, having completed the work for which it was created, voted to dissolve. All records, properties, and publications were turned over to the Historical Commission and any funds remaining after the payment of outstanding bills will be returned to the Town.

IN APPRECIATION

It would be impossible to give individual recognition to each of the hundreds of people who were part of our celebration. However, many of these have been mentioned above in the reports of the various activities. The Commission is most appreciative of the cooperation of the Town departments, particularly the Board of Selectmen, the Police, Fire, Highway, School, Library, Park, and Cemetery Departments, the Town Celebrations Commission, and the Historical Commission. A sincere "thank you" is extended all of those who contributed in any way to a very successful 200th Birthday of our nation.



Our English and Canadian visitors with Richard O. Lahue left rear: Silvio and Andreeanne Mainville, Aubrey and Helen How, Lois and Esko Laakso.



Re-enactment of the March 4, 1776 Town Meeting. Front row: Present day Selectmen portraying their counterparts of 1776 — Philip Currier (playing the part of Deacon Aaron Chamberlain), William Murphy (Lt. Samuel Stevens), Arnold Lovering (Benjamin Spaulding), Thomas Palmer (Benjamin Fletcher). Second row: Raymond Day (Constable Amos Kidder), Robert Noble (Acting Town Clerk Reuben Gould), George Parkhurst (Moderator, Capt. Oliver Barron).