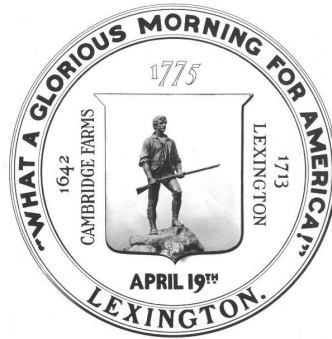


SEMIQUINCENTENNIAL COMMISSION

TOWN OF LEXINGTON



INVITATION RECOMMENDATIONS

REPORT TO

THE SELECT BOARD

July 8, 2024

Members:

- Suzanne E Barry, Chair (Select Board)
- Monami D Roy, Vice Chair (Community Member)
- Noah S. Michelson, Clerk (Community Member)
- Cleveland M Coats Jr (Community Member)
- Steven Connors (Reenactment)
- Barry Cunha (Historical)
- Bebe H Fallick (Tourism)
- Jane Hundley (LPS)
- Cerise Jalelian (TCC)
- Dr Jillian Tung (Music & Arts)

- Douglas M Lucente (Select Board)
- Bridger E McGaw (Community Member)
- Julie O'Leary (Community Member)
- Paul O'Shaughnessy (Community Member)
- E. Ashley Rooney (Community Member)

Liaisons:

- John F Rossi, Commission on Disability

Staff Support:

- Sandhya Iyer, Director of Economic Development

Select Board Charge to the Semiquincentennial Commission

Excerpt from the charge adopted by the Select Board on January 13, 2020:

“Description: To evaluate, make recommendations and coordinate the Town-wide activities to be held to commemorate the 250th Anniversary of the Battle of Lexington (which will take place in April 2025) and other historical events related to the founding of our Country. And to further the coordination of the Town's events with local, state, regional and federal events.”

Historical Context of Dignitary Invitations in Lexington

Lexington has a long tradition of inviting dignitaries to mark significant historical milestones, underscoring the town's pivotal role in American history.

Notable Historical Visits and Invitations

- **President Ulysses S. Grant (1875):** President Grant visited Lexington for the centennial celebrations, highlighting the national importance of our town. It is generally estimated that 100,000 people reached Lexington and that as many more were unsuccessful in their effort to get here.
- **President Calvin Coolidge (1925):** President Coolidge was invited to participate in the 150th-anniversary events through a Town Meeting article in March of that same year. Among the Town's many honored guests were Vice-President Dawes and General John J. Pershing.



The Board discussed the Bicentennial Committee's recommended list of invitations to activities scheduled for Patriots' Day weekend of 1975. It was agreed to recommend the following changes: (1) Confirm the number for Scottish Rites for 4 people. (2) Raise the number for ESK Hanscom to 6 people. (3) Dignitaries for the rededication ceremony under "Other Countries" should be included on April 19, and the invitation to England should be of a higher rank than the Consul General. (4) Reserved seating for the distinguished visitor not on the list.

Guest Lists for Patriots Day Weekend 1975

Saturday, April 19, 1975

Number
(Including Spouse)

United Nations:

Secretary General	2
Brad Morse	2

Other Countries:

British Consul General	2
Mayor, Dolores Medalgo	2

United States:

Chief Justice Burger	2
Senator Brooke	2
Senator Kennedy	2
Representative	2

States:

Governors of 13 Original States	26
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- **1975 Invitations:** The Lexington Board of Selectmen meeting minutes from **November 18, 1974**, provide detailed insights into the planning and decision-making process for the 1975 Patriots' Day Bicentennial Celebrations. These minutes reveal the town's commitment to honoring its historical significance by inviting notable dignitaries and ensuring the event's success through planning and coordination. These minutes underscore Lexington's extensive efforts to involve a diverse and distinguished array of guests in their Bicentennial Celebrations. The invites included:

SUMMARY OF INVITES FROM 1975:**International Invites:**

- United Nations:
 - Secretary General
 - Brad Morse
- Other Countries:
 - Queen or representative of the British royal family
 - British Consul General
 - Mayor Dolores Hedalgo
 - President or Ambassador of Mexico
 - Prime Minister or Ambassador of Canada
 - President or Ambassador of France

National Invites:

- United States:
 - President Ford
 - Chief Justice Burger
 - Senator Brooke
 - Senator Kennedy
 - Various Representatives
- Other States
 - Governors of the 13 Original States

State Invites:

- Massachusetts:
 - Governor
 - Lieutenant Governor
 - Chief Justice
 - Adjutant General
 - Senator MacKenzie
 - Representative Cole
 - One Additional State Senator
 - Two Additional State Representatives

Military Invites:

- Commander, Fort Devens
- Commander, 1st Naval District
- Commander, 1st Coast Guard
- Commander, ESD Hanscom

Federal Partner Invites:

- National Park:
 - Superintendent
 - Director

Local Invites:

- Other Towns:
 - Representatives from 21 other Lexingtons in the U.S.
 - Selectman Chairmen from 28 neighboring 1775 towns
 - Representatives of Concord Celebrations Committee
- Lexington:
 - Town Manager
 - Board of Selectmen
 - Lexington Celebrations Committee
 - Lexington Bicentennial Committee
 - President, Lexington Historical Society
 - Parade Chief Marshall
 - White Tricon Hat Recipients
 - Chairman, T.M.M.A.
 - Stan Maxwell, Scottish Rites

<u>Saturday, April 19th, 1975 (Con't.)</u>	<u>Number</u> <u>(Including Spouse)</u>
<u>Massachusetts:</u>	
Governor	2
Lieutenant Governor	2
Chief Justice	2
Adjutant General	2
Senator MacKenzie	2
Representative Cole	2
One Additional State Senator	2
Two Additional State Representatives	4
<u>Other Towns:</u>	
21 Other Lexingtons in U.S.	42
<u>Lexington:</u>	
Town Manager	2
Board of Selectmen	10
Town Celebrations Committee	18
Lexington Bicentennial Committee	30
President, Lexington Historical Society	2
Parade Chief Marshall	2
White Tricon Hat Recipients	7
Chairman, T.M.M.A.	2
Stan Maxwell, Scottish Rites	4
<u>National Park:</u>	
Superintendent	2
Director	2
<u>Military:</u>	
Commander, Fort Devens	2
Commander, 1st Naval District	2
Commander, 1st Coast Guard	2
Commander, ESD Hanscom	6
<u>Sunday, April 20, 1975 (Rededication Ceremony)</u>	
The guest list for April 20th closely resembles that for April 19th. Probable deletions include:	
(a) 21 Other Lexingtons and	
(b) Military representatives	

Sunday, April 20th, 1975 (Rededication Ceremony-Con't.)

Probable additions include:

(a) Other Countries

England - Queen or representative of royal family
 Mexico - President or Ambassador
 Canada - Prime Minister or Ambassador
 France - President or Ambassador

(b) United States

President Ford

(c) Other Towns

Selectman Chairman from 28 neighboring 1775 towns
 Representatives of Concord Celebrations Committee



President Ford and Selectman Chair Allan Kenney with a crowd of 35,000 people.

- **President Gerald Ford (1975):** On April 19, 1975, President Gerald Ford visited Lexington, to commemorate the 200th anniversary of the Battle of Lexington. His visit included a ceremonial address, underscoring the historical significance of the site as the location of the first battle of the American Revolution. President Ford's speech highlighted the enduring values of freedom and democracy symbolized by Lexington's role in American history

- **Queen Elizabeth II (1976):** In July of 1976 for the Bicentennial Celebration of Independence Day, Queen Elizabeth II visited Boston. In her speech, she acknowledged the shared history and evolving relationship between the US and the UK. She said:

*"We have been very moved by the welcome we have received here in this city, particularly since it was here — in Boston — that it all began and not many miles from here, at **Lexington** and Concord, that the first shots were fired in the war between Britain and America 200 years ago,"*



Queen Elizabeth II and Gov. Mike Dukakis riding in a parade in Boston.

She added: "If Paul Revere, Samuel Adams and other patriots could have known that one day a British monarch would stand beneath the balcony of the Old State House, from which the Declaration of Independence was first read to the people of Boston, and be greeted by the mayor and others in such kind and generous works, well — I think they would have been extremely surprised," she continued. "But perhaps they would have been pleased. Pleased to know that eventually we came together again as free peoples and friends and defended together the very ideas for which the American Revolution was fought."

Community Engagement for the 250th Invites

Article 46: Invitation to the Royal Family

Background: Article 46 at Annual Town Meeting 2024, a non-binding resolution, proposed inviting the Royal Family of the United Kingdom to the 250th anniversary of the Battle of Lexington. This invitation aimed to symbolize the transition from historical conflict to modern friendship between our nations, reflecting the enduring bonds and mutual respect developed over centuries. The presence of the Royal Family was intended to highlight the reconciliation and strengthened ties between the UK and the US.

Community Feedback: Below is a summary of Article 46 feedback from Town Meeting Members through the online TMMA List:

Opposition:

- **Against Inviting British Royalty:** Some Town Meeting Members (TMMs) opposed inviting any member of the British monarchy, citing historical grievances from British colonial rule and the potential divisiveness of such an invitation. Some emphasized that the invitation could alienate residents with personal or historical trauma related to British rule.
- **Preference for Inspirational Figures:** Some TMMs suggested inviting figures who represent modern struggles for freedom and justice. They argued that the 250th anniversary should uplift voices fighting for independence and democratic values today.
- **Logistical and Security Concerns:** Some TMMs raised concerns about the logistical challenges and security needs of hosting members of the British Royal Family or other international dignitaries. They felt that the event should focus on the historical significance of the Minutemen and the American Revolution rather than on high-profile guests.
- **Invitation to Elected Officials:** It was proposed that instead of royalty, representatives who embody current democratic values should be invited.

Support:

- **Reconciliation and Historical Significance:** Some TMMs supported inviting the British royal family, viewing it as a symbol of reconciliation and the strong alliance between the US and the UK. They argued that honoring former adversaries could reflect the progress from conflict to friendship over 250 years.
- **Recognition of Allied Contributions:** There were suggestions to invite consulate generals from countries that played significant roles in the American Revolution, such as France and Poland, to honor their historical contributions.

Suggested Invites:

- **Inspirational Figures:** Malala Yousafzai, Greta Thunberg.
- **International Representatives:** Secretary General of the United Nations, British and French consulate generals, Polish consulate general to honor Thaddeus Kosciuszko and Casimir Pulaski.
- **Government Officials:** MA US Senators and Representatives, State Senators and Representatives.

Indefinite Postponement: After careful consideration and the extensive community and TMMs input, the Select Board made a decision to Indefinitely Postpone Article 46, the invitation to the Royal Family. The primary concern was to ensure the celebration is inclusive and representative of Lexington's diverse community. Feedback emphasized the importance of reviewing a broader scope of international invitations to and possibly reflect global connections beyond a single nation. Moving forward, the Semiquincentennial Commission's agreed to have a listening session with the larger community to assess invitations of a wide range of dignitaries to better represent the global significance of Lexington's historical legacy.

Lex250 Public Listening Session (June 12, 2024)

The Semiquincentennial Commission conducted a public listening session on June 12, 2024, to discuss invitations for the 250th Anniversary events. Additionally, Commission received several email comments on the topic. The listening session was promoted by the public information office and was featured on the town website. It was also publicized through social media, the TMMA list, and the Link to Lexington newsletter. The session saw participation from several community members, both in person and via email.

Summary of Listening Session Feedback on Inviting Dignitaries to the Lex250 Celebration:

Support for Inviting Foreign Dignitaries

1. **Polish Contributions:** Advocates emphasize the importance of recognizing Tadeusz Kościuszko and Casimir Pulaski, who were instrumental in the American Revolutionary War. Their commitment to liberty and republican ideals exemplifies the shared values between Poland and the United States.
2. **Indian Historical Significance:** Suggestions included inviting a dignitary from India, such as the Consul General from New York. The Battle of Cuddalore in 1783, which involved British and French forces in India, is highlighted as the last battle of the American Revolutionary War, underscoring India's role in the broader global conflict.
3. **Other Community Input:**
 - Support for reconciliation and inviting former adversaries to demonstrate the evolution of international relationships.
 - Recommendations to invite representatives from the Taiwanese Consulate, a sister city from Mexico, military personnel, and dignitaries attending the Kennedy School of Government.
 - Emphasis on the historical significance of inviting Indian representatives to acknowledge conflicts with Britain.

Opposition to Inviting Certain Dignitaries

1. **Democratic Representation:** Some oppose inviting foreign nobles or dignitaries who were not elected through a democratic process, arguing that the celebration should focus on the power of democratic action. They suggest inviting elected officials from democratic countries instead.
2. **Financial Concerns:** Concerns about the cost of inviting dignitaries and suggestions to fund these expenses through private donations, reflecting a cautious approach to town expenditures.

Suggested Invites from Community Members

- **British Royal Family:** Members of the British Royal Family.
- **Indian Dignitaries:** Emphasizing historical conflicts and contributions from India.
- **Taiwanese Consulate:** Representatives from Taiwan.
- **Mexican Sister City:** Representatives from a sister city in Mexico.
- **Former Adversaries:** Advocating for reconciliation by inviting former adversaries to foster international friendship.
- **Kennedy School of Government:** Dignitaries attending the Kennedy School of Government.
- **Military Representatives:** Invitations to military personnel.

Current Invitations to National and International Dignitaries

Invitation to Antony France by Lexington

The Lexington Select Board has confirmed an invitation to our sister city, Antony, France, for the 250th anniversary celebrations. This relationship, with France starting with Lafayette's visit in 1824, has flourished through multiple cultural exchange visits over many decades. Most recently, in September 2019, a delegation from Lexington visited Antony, participating in their Wine and Cheese Fair and celebrating Place de Lexington, which underscored our enduring friendship. By inviting a delegation from Antony to our milestone celebration, we are reciprocating their hospitality and fostering further cultural, educational, and civic exchanges. This partnership not only enriches our community but also highlights the global significance of Lexington's historical legacy.



Dan H. Fenn, Jr. and Thomas O. Fenn of the Lexington Minute Men Company at the Dedication ceremony of the rotary gifted to the citizens of Lexington, Massachusetts by the citizens of Antony, France in 1999.

Recent Invitations to National and International Dignitaries by Others

An invitation to the "Office of the President of the United States" has been sent by Massachusetts Governor, Maura Healey. These efforts ensure that our regional celebrations will feature a broad and distinguished representation, reflecting the significance of the event on both national and international levels.

In addition to our local efforts, other organizations and municipalities in the region are reaching out to notable figures. Concord, for example, has extended invitations to King Charles, the "Office of the President of the United States" and Vice President Harris.

Recommendation for Inviting Dignitaries to the Lex250 Celebration

We recommend inviting a broad range of dignitaries to the Lex250 celebration to align with the spirit of inclusivity and recognition of the global impact of the American Revolution. The proposed list of invites for the Select Board includes representatives from countries that contributed to the Revolution, current diplomatic allies, and notable historical figures. This approach ensures a diverse and enriching event that honors the multifaceted history of the American Revolution and promotes international unity and understanding.

Key Points Supporting the Inclusion of More Dignitaries

1. **Enriched Historical Narrative:** Recognizing contributions from countries like Poland and India enhances the narrative of the American Revolution, showing how global alliances shaped the outcome. Inviting dignitaries from these nations can offer unique perspectives and foster a deeper understanding of shared history.
2. **Enhanced Diplomatic Relations:** Inviting dignitaries from various countries promotes goodwill and strengthens diplomatic ties. It acknowledges historical alliances and contemporary relationships, which are crucial for international cooperation.

3. **Educational Opportunities:** Including dignitaries provides a platform to discuss the broader implications of the American Revolution. It allows for a comprehensive exploration of history, including lesser-known contributions and global impacts. These educational opportunities can be integrated into school curriculums and community programs, enriching our local educational resources.
4. **Commitment to Reconciliation and Unity:** Inviting former adversaries, such as representatives from Britain, demonstrates a commitment to reconciliation and healing historical wounds. It highlights progress in diplomatic relations and the importance of moving forward together. This message of unity and reconciliation is particularly relevant in today's global context and resonates with our community values.
5. **Inclusivity and Representation:** A diverse guest list reflects the inclusive values of the celebration, ensuring that various perspectives and histories are honored. It sends a powerful message about the importance of recognizing all contributors to the revolutionary cause. This inclusivity strengthens our community's sense of belonging and pride in our shared heritage.

Proposed List of Invites

SEE NEXT PAGE FOR RECOMMENDED INVITE LIST

AS VOTED BY SEMIQUINCENTENNIAL COMMISSION:**International Invites:**

- *International Organizations:*
 - Secretary-General of the United Nations: António Guterres
 - President of the European Commission: Ursula von der Leyen
 - Director-General of UNESCO: Audrey Azoulay
- *Delegations from Sister Cities:*
 - Delegation from Antony, France: Mayor Jean-Yves Sénant
 - Delegation from Dolores Hidalgo Mexico: Mayor Adrián Hernández Alejandri
- *British Royal Family:*
 - His Majesty King Charles and members of the Royal Family
- *Heads of State:*
 - Prime Minister of Canada: Justin Trudeau
 - President of France: Emmanuel Macron
 - Chancellor of Germany: Olaf Scholz
 - Prime Minister of the United Kingdom: Rishi Sunak
 - President-elect of Mexico: Claudia Sheinbaum
- *Ambassadors and Consulates:*
 - Ambassador of Canada: Kirsten Hillman
 - French Ambassador to the United States: Laurent Bili
 - Consul General of France in Boston: Mustafa Soykurt
 - British Ambassador to the United States: Dame Karen Pierce
 - British Consul General in Boston: Dr. Peter Abbott
 - Consul General of Poland: Adrian Kubicki
 - Consulate General of India: Binaya Srikanta Pradhan
 - Taiwanese Consulate representatives: James Lee, Director General of the Taipei Economic and Cultural Office in Boston

National Invites:

- *United States:*
 - President & First Lady: Joe & Dr. Jill Biden
 - Vice President & Spouse: Kamala Harris & Douglas Emhoff
 - Former Presidents and their spouses:
 - Donald & Melania Trump
 - Barack & Michelle Obama
 - George W. & Laura Bush
 - Bill & Hillary Clinton

- Jimmy Carter (note: current health status should be considered)
- Former Vice Presidents and their spouses:
 - Dan & Marilyn Quayle
 - Albert Gore, Jr
 - Dick & Lynne Cheney
 - Mike & Karen Pence
- U.S. Ambassador to Great Britain: Jane Hartley
- U.S. Ambassador to France: Denise Bauer
- Senator Elizabeth Warren
- Senator Edward Markey
- Representative Katherine Clarke
- Speaker of the House of Representatives: Mike Johnson
- Senate Majority Leader: Chuck Schumer
- Secretary of State: Antony Blinken
- Secretary of Defense: Lloyd Austin
- Secretary of the Interior: Deb Haaland
- Chief Justice of the United States: John Roberts
- *Other States:*
 - Governors of the 13 Original States
- *Military Representatives:*
 - Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (Air Force): General Charles Q. Brown Jr.
 - Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (Navy): Admiral Christopher Grady
 - General of the U.S. Army: General Randy A. George
 - Secretary of the Army: Christine Wormuth

State Invites:

- *Massachusetts Govt Officials:*
 - Governor Maura Healey
 - Lieutenant Governor Kim Driscoll
 - Attorney General Andrea Campbell
 - Secretary of State Bill Galvin
 - State Treasurer Deborah Goldberg
 - State Auditor Diana DiZoglio
 - Secretary of the Executive Office of Economic Development Yvonne Hao
 - MA Senate President Karen Spilka
 - MA Speaker of the House Ronald Mariano
 - State Senator Mike Barrett
 - State Senator Cindy Friedman
 - State Representative Michelle Ciccolo

- State Representative Ken Gordon
- Former Governors
- *MA 250th Celebration Officials:*
 - Kate Fox, Director, Mass Office of Travel & Tourism
 - Sheila Green, State 250th Coordinator
 - Jonathan Lane, Executive Director, Rev250
 - Rep. Mindy Daub, Co-Chair State 250th Commission
 - Senator Paul Mark, Co-Chair State 250th Commission

Military Invites:

- Hanscom AFB Installation Commander : Col. Taona Enriquez

National Park Invites:

- Superintendent of Minute Man National Historical Park: Simone Monteleone
- Director: Charles F. Sams III

Local Invites:

- *Other Towns:*
 - Representatives from 21 other Lexingtons in the U.S.
 - Select Board Chairs from 28 neighboring 1775 towns
 - Representatives of Concord250
 - Lincoln and Arlington as well
- *Lexington:*
 - Town Manager
 - Select Board
 - Town Celebrations Committee
 - Semiquincentennial Commission
 - Parade Chief Marshall
 - White Tricon Hat Recipients
 - Chair, T.M.M.A.
 - Town Moderator
 - Community Group Representatives (Presidents/Chairs)

Additional Key Invites:

- *Descendants:*
 - Descendants of notable figures of the Battle of Lexington
- *International Delegations:*
 - Delegations from countries with historical ties to the American Revolution (France, Spain, the Netherlands)
 - Representatives from international organizations promoting democracy and human rights
 - East India Tea Company CEO Sanjiv Mehta
 - Representatives from Native American tribes in Massachusetts

NOTE: The Semiquincentennial Commission recommends that, where appropriate, invitations be sent to the "office" rather than the individual to avoid politicizing the event. Although the list above contains the names of the current office holders, the invitation protocol will focus on the position rather than the person, unless otherwise specified such as "former" office holders.

Logistical arrangements for invitations and the event itself will be based on the confirmed attendance of invitees. This includes considerations for security, transportation, accommodation, and other necessary provisions to ensure the smooth execution of the celebrations.

Conclusion:

By extending invitations to these dignitaries, we will create a richer, more inclusive event that honors the diverse contributions to the American Revolution and fosters international unity and understanding. This approach not only commemorates our past but also looks forward to a future of global cooperation and mutual respect. The Lex250 celebration will be a testament to Lexington's enduring legacy and its commitment to fostering a vibrant, inclusive, and globally connected community.

***This Report and Recommendations were Approved by a Unanimous vote of the
Semiquincentennial Commission on June 26, 2024.***