



AMERICAN
INDEPENDENCE
MUSEUM

2022 ANNUAL REPORT



THIS ANNUAL REPORT IS DEDICATED
TO THE MEMORY OF

*AIM Trustee Dr. Hollis Merrick III,
whose dedication and service to our mission
was beyond measure. He is greatly missed.*





Dear Museum Family,

For an organization by definition all about the past, your American Independence Museum is manifestly looking to the future. As you are likely aware, the 250th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence is just around the corner in 2026, and your team is busy building its capacity to take advantage of this opportunity. And whatever you think “capacity” means, you are correct – volunteers, sponsors, partners, great ideas, gifts, grants, connections – we want it all!

I believe we will remember 2022, the Museum’s 31st year, as a foundational one. With pandemic-created uncertainty on the wane, this was a time for “getting back to normal”, but that did not necessarily mean “getting back to the same”. How refreshing it was that your Museum was able to host no less than 30 in-person events, each done with a fresh approach... and we so much enjoyed reconnecting with many of you.

We also welcomed our new Executive Director, Jennifer Carr, the Museum’s former Curator and Collections Manager. Jen’s love of Revolutionary history is boundless, and not only did she handle the Museum’s resurgent summer season with aplomb, she is undaunted by the opportunities ahead and is rapidly building a terrific team for the Museum’s next phase of growing our impact. We all feel lucky to have Jen at the helm.

I really do want to stress that the Museum wants and needs your help during this coming time of great celebration and opportunity. As you ponder the Museum’s Mission, Vision, Values and accomplishments in this Annual Report, please ask yourself how this organization might be a conduit for achieving your own impact – and let’s talk about it.

We appreciate every ounce of your help. As always, thank you so much for your fresh ideas, your encouraging words, your bold actions, your generous financial gifts, your curious visits and your most interesting questions. Your Board of Governors, Ambassadors, Staff and Volunteers are deeply appreciative of your engagement with the Museum. ***You make our work a joy!***

Ozzie Ayscue

President, Board of Governors

STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

MISSION

To engage, educate and excite people of all ages to understand and celebrate the American struggle for freedom and self-governance, and to preserve and share our buildings, grounds and collection so they will be an inspiration for generations to come.

VALUES

- Inclusiveness
- Discovery
- Innovation
- Accountability
- Integrity

VISION

All people inspired to civic engagement.



Potter Steve Zoldak demonstrates his craft for guests at the American Independence Festival

GOALS AND STRATEGIES TO STIR AND STRENGTHEN...

Our Collective Imagination

Stimulate imagination by sharing diverse, vivid, unique stories of the local people, places, events and artifacts of the Revolutionary era in honest, relevant, compassionate and unexpected ways.

Our Conversations

Inspire all people to come to our forum to learn about and wrestle with the big questions of the American Revolution that are still alive and informative today, such as who we are as Americans and how we want to be governed.

Individual Civic Engagement

Motivate and help people to participate directly and constructively by providing a home base for learning and an interface with civic leaders and active participants, both political and non-political.

Our Place in Exeter • The Seacoast

Create the ambulatory center of Exeter, an open, inviting and spirited whole campus that is provocative, enriching and enjoyable for all.

Our Broader Impact

Transcend our borders by working with mission-aligned partners and using the full range of available physical and digital media.

Our Core Capabilities

Cultivate a sustainable and resilient institution that can stay light on its feet, try new things and compete tenaciously for the peoples' attention beyond our own lifetimes.



2022 YEAR IN REVIEW

We presented 30 in person programs this year!

From onsite Tavern Talks, to visits from school kids, to summer camps and Beer for History events, to off-site visits at local senior centers and assisted living facilities with our new Adult Traveling trunk, we were busy in 2022! From May through November we also hosted three StoryWalks® along Stewart Park, making us a constant presence downtown.

The American Independence

Festival welcomed over 900 guests as our first one-day celebration since the pandemic. Held entirely on the museum's campus, the Festival included the Traditional Artisans Village, militia groups representing the Patriot, British, and French perspectives, a reading of the Declaration of Independence by a Gilman descendant, and a Beer Garden on the Ladd-Gilman House patio. The Dunlap Broadside was on exhibit, marking its first return to the Festival since 2019!





Historic Preservation is a constant effort, so we hired our first Facilities Manager, Rebecca Seely, who has been busy planning several large projects to preserve our buildings, including a new roof for the Folsom Tavern, campus-wide drainage work to mitigate water infiltration, plaster repair in the Ladd-Gilman House, and new HVAC systems for both buildings. Welcome Rebecca!



THE PEOPLE WHO MAKE IT POSSIBLE

American Independence Center Trustees

Dr. Hollis Merrick III, *Chairman*
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2022 Museum Staff

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Manager and Curator*

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Donna Kelly
Bookkeeper

Sabina Ion
Content and Marketing Manager

Sarah Jaworski
Program Manager

JoAnn Keeler
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Rob Levey
*Consultant, Grant Writer
and Webmaster*

Rebecca Seely
Facilities Manager

Intern
Joe D'Alessandro

*Board Members, past and present, enjoy
Members' Evening on the Ladd-Gilman patio*



AMERICAN INDEPENDENCE MUSEUM

THE VOLUNTEERS WHO MAKE IT HAPPEN

Our volunteers are at the heart of our work. They give tours, serve on our committees, and help in all aspects of our work.



Lillian Alsonso
Barbara Anderson
Douglas Aykroyd
Elizabeth Aykroyd
Brian Beck
Greg Bisson
Elizabeth Blanchard
Matthew Breen
Donna Buxton
Mary Ann Capiello
Don Clark
Bob Davidson
Hon. William Delker
Donald Denning
Rebecca Dillman

Greg Driscoll
Tony DeVecchio
Geno DiFiore
Maris DiTolla
Dot Fisher
Sharron Fontaine
Melissa Foy
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Greg Gilman
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Dave Vaught
Mike Welch
Jennifer Wheeler

Thank you to those who worked alongside us.

SUPPORT

Thank you to the following individuals who supported the preservation and growth of the American Independence Museum in 2022.

SPECIAL PROJECTS

**Gifts for special initiatives –
from our Master Landscape Plan
to our Collections Fund, and more**

\$1,500 Governors Lane Steps

In honor of Jude Hall

– Renay Allen Hitzrot

*In honor of all those who
have served our country*

– David and Kathy Brown

GENERAL OPERATIONS

**Support of general operations
through membership and gifts
to our 1776 Annual Fund.**

\$5,001 and above

Stephen and Kimberlea Jeffries *

\$1,001-\$5,000

Ozzie Ayscue and Kathleen Mahoney

John Bristol

Todd Burne *

Douglas and Evelyn Chamberlain,

*In honor of Dr. Hollis Warren Merrick III **

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Maris DiTolla and Eugene DiFiore

Randall Hammond and Andrew Thomas,

*In Honor of Hollis Merrick III, MD **

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Paul Staller and Deirdre O'Byrne

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In honor of my darling Hollis *
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 and Geno DiFiore's Wedding Day*
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1783

* Indicates donor is a member of the
 Society of the Cincinnati in the State of New Hampshire.

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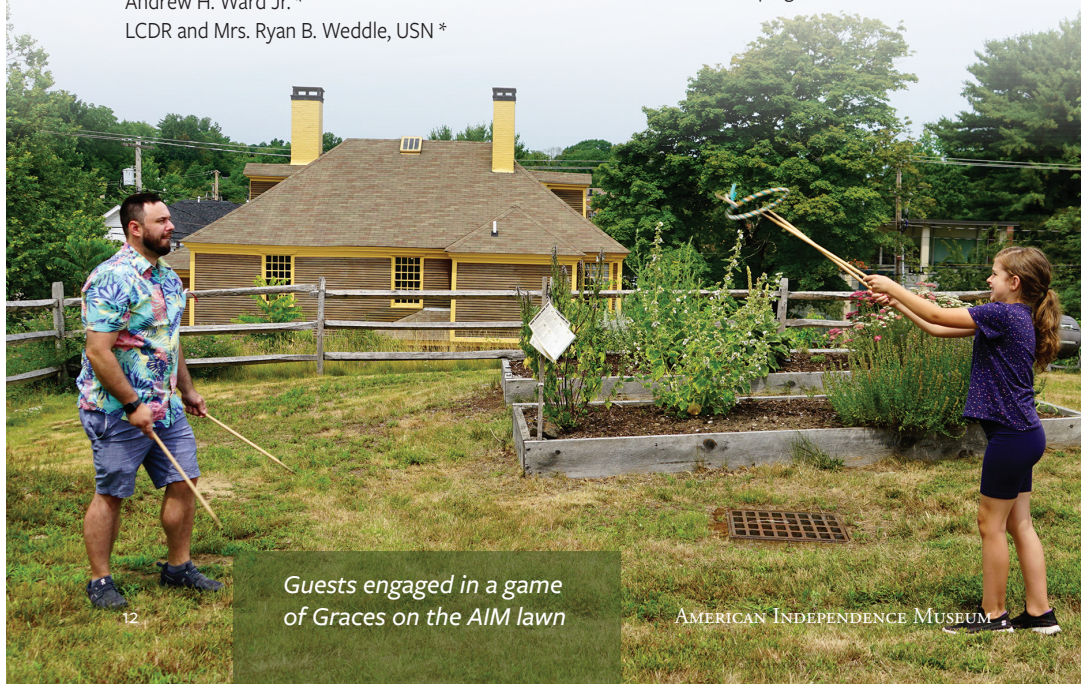
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Dot Fisher
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Nancy Smith
Ozzie Ayscue
Yeti Landscaping



*Guests engaged in a game
of Graces on the AIM lawn*

AMERICAN INDEPENDENCE MUSEUM

SUPPORT

BUSINESS PARTNERS

Supporting our special programs and initiatives ranging from our American Independence Festival to our Traveling Trunk

\$5,000

Newburyport Bank Charitable Foundation, Inc.

\$1,000 – \$1,500

Kennebunk Savings RiverWoods Exeter

\$3,000

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Additional support is provided through matching gifts and direct donations

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\$1,000 - \$9,999

The Bauman Family Foundation
Eventide Foundation
New Hampshire Humanities Council
The Warren M. Little Trust

2022 by the Numbers

PROGRAMS

13,660
miles

traveled by the Traveling Trunk, across seven states, twelve communities, serving **1,870** students

1,919 people experienced our on-site, off-site and virtual programs

1,096 Museum tours guided and self-guided

30

In-person programs presented



1

In-person Festival



FINANCIAL

301 Museum members

127 New donors

VISIBILITY

127,000 views on our most popular instagram reel

196 Facebook posts

175 Instagram posts

10,423 Views on TikTok



23

News stories on our website

SOCIAL MEDIA FOLLOWERS

f 3,125 **y** 370

i 2,624 **d** 210

t 832

OPERATIONS

1

New staff member

3

New volunteers

CONNECT WITH US!

f **i** **y** **d** @americanindependencemuseum **t** @aimuseum

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