

Unknown Speaker 0:00
Music.

Tegan 0:10

Welcome back to Revere House Radio. I'm your host, Tegan Kehoe. This September holds some important anniversaries of Paul Revere's lesser known rides, and we're going to spend some time on the podcast discussing some of the occasions for these rides. Today's episode is also related to a new Revere House Gazette article. The Gazette is a quarterly print newsletter, which is a benefit of Revere House membership, and episodes centered around an article are intended to give non-members a taste of what's in the article, as well as to give some background and context for those who have read this issue. With me today is Diann Ralph, who wrote our Fall 2024 Gazette article, and who sometimes fills in for our regular interpreters here at the Revere House. Welcome to the show, Diann.

Diann 0:51

Thank you so much, Tegan.

Tegan 0:53

Can you tell us about your background and your connection to the Paul Revere House? How did you get involved here?

Diann 0:58

Yes, I work as a historian and a biographer, and I focus on early America, especially on topics related to Massachusetts and the Boston area. I'm also the curator at the Milton Historical Society, the owners of the Suffolk Resolves House, where the 1774 Suffolk County Convention met and approved the Suffolk Resolves. I often work at historic house museums or historic sites, because I believe in their importance in preserving and telling the stories of our history. My first connection with the Paul Revere House was almost 10 years ago, when I first came here as an interpreter, a guide. More recently, as we thought about the 250th anniversary at the Milton Historical Society, we began to think about, well, wanting to know more about the Resolves of course, but also about this other ride by Paul Revere that's related to the Suffolk Resolves. And I know we'll talk a little bit more about that shortly, but the resolves and the ride bring together these two houses, the Paul Revere House and the Suffolk Resolve house. So we were delighted when you invited us to participate in some of these 250th activities.

Tegan 2:00

Yeah, no, it's a really natural partnership. We were also delighted. So your article is a deep dive into the Suffolk Resolves, and that is a document that Paul Revere delivered to the First Continental Congress in September 1774. So to start out, can you tell us a little bit about that document and why it's important?

Diann 2:18

Sure, I'd like us to go back to the summer of 1774 in Boston and learn a little bit about what it was like there at the time. That will help to explain more about what the Suffolk Resolves are.

Boston was suffering under the Coercive Acts, the punishment that King George III decided to give Boston for the Tea Party. Not only had the colonists destroyed this private property, the tea worth quite a bit of money, but also they were once again demonstrating, as they did with the Stamp Act and the Tea Act and the Townsend acts, that they were not going to abide by Parliament's authority to make legislation for the colonies. The King and his ministers decided that they would punish Boston by closing the port, and they also canceled much of the Massachusetts charter, eliminated a lot of the self government that the colony had had and placed it in the hands of royal officials. So the port is closed. That has a lot of economic consequences. The government is literally taken out of their hands. There are warships blockading Boston Harbor and British troops camping on the commons. Largely due to efforts of people like Sam Adams and Joseph Warren and other Boston patriots, the colonies have called the Continental Congress to meet in Philadelphia to decide and a unified response, if that's possible, how to respond to the Acts.

Diann 3:49

Now the Boston leaders who are opposing Great Britain, people like Dr. Joseph Warren and the Adamses, they know that their own plans for resisting all of this could not succeed without the support of the other colonies. There's no way that they can take on and win against the greatest power on the globe, and so they know that they need to get support from the Congress. So Joseph Warren and others called together the eighteen towns of Suffolk County -- now today, that would be Suffolk and Norfolk County, so that covered a lot of territory -- and they call this convention to prepare their case or their resolutions to send to Congress. So they draft a document, and it contains a declaration of their rights, their grievances, and their solutions to this problem. Now they needed to get it to Philadelphia quite quickly, because Congress was already underway, and there was no guarantee the results of this Congress would be what the radicals in Boston wanted, because there were loyalists in Congress, moderates. Some had plans for peace and reconciliation, but the Boston leaders and the members of the convention thought if they could get this document to the Congress in time that their delegation up there, which included Sam Adams and John Adams, could put this in front of Congress and get, hopefully, its approval. So Paul Revere picked it up and took it off to Philadelphia in what is said to be one of his fastest rides that he has ever made.

Tegan 5:18

Yeah. This was not his first ride, although certainly not his most famous. And his first ride was actually right after the Boston Tea Party, so he had some experience with these longer courier journeys. He had also ridden in May after the news of the Coercive or Intolerable Acts came to Boston, and he was sharing that news, so there's kind of a continued political thread in a number of these rides.

Diann 5:43

Yes, and you had asked about the importance of the document, well, I spoke a little bit about the importance of it from the point of view of the Boston opposition. John Adams said that the day it was adopted by the Continental Congress was one of the happiest in his life, so it was very important to him. The united front was the most important thing to the Boston radicals, and they

got that out of the Congress, and that would encourage them to continue in their resistance. And it would also, they hoped, discourage the enemy, discourage General Gage and the British from, particularly, taking military action against Boston now that it had the backing of the other colonies.

Tegan 5:44

As you briefly mentioned, the house where the Suffolk Resolves was signed still stands. Could you tell us a bit about that historic site and your relationship to it, and how you got involved there?

Diann 6:36

Sure. Well, we're very fortunate that it does still stand. It was about to be demolished in the 1950s it had gone through a number of different owners, and it had a cake shop in the front parlor, and things like that had been happening, and the house was in bad condition. It was saved by a woman named Hannah, Hannah Ayers and her husband, Dr. James Ayers. They bought it for \$1 and they had some land three miles away on Canton Avenue, and they were able to move it there. So it no longer stands in Milton village by the Neponset River, where it once stood and where it stood when the resolves were signed. But we have the building that this happened in, and it was restored by Mrs. Ayers. It was built in 1760 and had an addition in 1780, but it is otherwise very much the way it was when the Suffolk Resolves meeting was held there.

Tegan 7:32

Great, and I think that's the story of many historic homes, is that they were something else in between when they became historic and when they became a historic site. The cake shop makes me laugh because there was a candy shop at one point in the first floor of the Paul Revere House before we became a museum.

Diann 7:49

Everyone should have a candy shop in their parlor, I think.

Tegan 7:52

Yeah, that would make... would make life sweeter.

Diann 7:55

Yes.

Tegan 7:56

And how far away is the Suffolk Resolves house from its original location?

Diann 8:01

It's about three miles.

Tegan 8:02

Okay.

Diann 8:03

About three miles from where it was originally.

Tegan 8:06

I understand that the Suffolk Resolves house is operated by the Milton Historical Society. Could you tell us a little bit more about that?

Diann 8:13

Sure. After Mr. and Mrs. Ayres restored the house, eventually, they did gift it to the Milton Historical Society, which owns and operates it today. Milton was founded in seven- in 1672 so they're almost 400 years of history in Milton, for which the Historical Society is responsible. But of course, this house and the Suffolk Resolves story is really one of the central pieces of what we do there. I think I mentioned, I'm the curator for the Historical Society. I've been interested in this idea of, well, really, how did they do it, these patriots? How did they manage both, sort of practically and logistically and in terms of changing people's ideas about government? How did they pull off this revolution? So I've been very interested in this lead-up to the revolution for a while. I worked at one point at the Concord Old Manse, and before it became famous for philosophers and authors like Cawthorn and Emerson, it was the home of Reverend William Emerson, Concord's Patriot minister. And so I had an opportunity to look at and work with some of the materials, some of his sermons and letters, and through his sermons, especially how ideas about opposition to the British were changing, and how he was also helping to form the community's ideas about that. So it was a great opportunity to come to Milton and work on another aspect of the same story.

Tegan 9:46

Yeah, that's great. When I first heard that the Resolves were signed at a private home, I had pictured maybe a dozen men standing around someone's kitchen table, but I learned from you that I should, I should be picturing something different. What did that day look like?

Diann 9:59

Yes, well, it was not like that, a few people around the kitchen table, and that's largely due to the organizers of the convention, people like Joseph Warren and Sam Adams. They wanted the entire county to be very well represented at the convention, just like today, when you can gain credibility for your ideas by or the outcome of a voting process, gained credibility through having good representation there, having the right people there. It didn't start out like that for them. They actually, their first meeting for the convention was held in Stoughton, and while they had good luck, good productive meeting to turn out a nice set of resolutions, apparently, they didn't feel they had enough attendance. And part of the problem was that they hadn't had enough time to send word out to everyone in the county and allow time for delegates to be voted on by the town and get them to a convention. So they postponed vote on the resolutions and had a committee that went to work to get all the towns to participate. Now also, why did it end up in Milton? Well, they wanted a place that was outside of Boston for two reasons, again,

to encourage participation of people from the rural areas, and also to have this not look like something driven solely by the Boston radicals. There was a lot of opposition to some of their ideas.

Tegan 11:26

That makes sense, because I think that both today in how it's remembered, but also at the time, Boston had this reputation for radicalism within the revolution, and that was partly deserved, although a lot of radicalism had also come from other parts of the colony at the time, so I can see how not making it look like it came from Boston would have been a kind of a strategic advantage.

Diann 11:49

This is one of the fascinating things I learned in reading the letters, is the degree to which they were aware of and managing this at the Continental Congress, their strategy was to step back, not be too too much of a presence there, and quietly work behind the scenes and so forth, because they knew that just what you were saying was an obstacle for them.

Tegan 12:14

Yeah.

Diann 12:14

So that's also why they wanted this convention to be the way it was. And finally, they thought they had enough delegates set up that they could have their voting meeting in Milton. It was 10 miles out of the city. It was also quite convenient. Two or three major highways met up there. I've read also that perhaps they wanted it outside of Boston to keep away from the spying eyes of the British there.

Tegan 12:40

Oh, of course.

Diann 12:41

Although they weren't keeping too quiet about what was going on. But, and also, Dr Benjamin church was among the delegates. If you remember, he ends up being America's first traitor by giving information to General Gage. Don't know if he was doing that yet, but he might have been. But well, what happened on that day? We know the weather. Apparently, it was very pleasant early September day, and delegates were coming from all across the county. We know the names of most of them. There were over 70.

Tegan 13:10

Wow.

Diann 13:10

So they would definitely not fit around Daniel Vose's kitchen table. And it's Daniel Vose's house, the Suffolk Resolves House. The most notable arrival was probably Dr. Warren, because he

came in his red, it is said, red Berlin carriage, which is, I guess, a high end kind of high style carriage for four, covered with a nice seat for your coachman and another in the back for your footman. And that they his servants came in fancy livery that day, so they would have they had their fancy uniforms on. So he made a bit of a stir with his carriage.

Tegan 13:47

A little bit of ceremony for that.

Diann 13:48

Yes, yes. He also brought the Suffolk Resolves draft with him. And it was a tradition, I understand, for town meetings to be held outdoors, if weather permitted. So the size of the crowd, plus the idea that meeting outdoors was something that we did at these meetings, meant that the delegates were gathered outside, around the door, and Dr. Warren stood in the doorway, and he read the document, resolution by resolution. And it is quite long. It can be condensed down pretty easily into a much shorter document, but it's full of vigorous and passionate and flowery language, as they liked to do in those days. So he read each one carefully to the seventy people. They voted on each one and approved all of the resolutions unanimously. Daniel Vose may have fed them because he, he was famous for giving large, large parties. He would later feed one of the regiments in Cambridge on April 19, 1775, he had them come on down. They were gathering there after the battle that day, as you may know, the army, the militia, were all gathering there. He invited a regiment down for dinner. So, he had the room to feed seventy people.

Tegan 15:02

Wow. And what kind of foods might he have served if he did feed them?

Diann 15:06

Well, when he- he wanted to do his part to support the army that was gathering in Cambridge after the battles in Lexington and Concord, so he brought them down, and he went around town, and he had farmers bring in sheep, people baking bread and chocolate. The chocolate factory was operating in Milton. That became quite famous over time. So they may have had mutton, bread and chocolate.

Tegan 15:29

Sounds like a strange feast, but maybe a good one. So those seventy delegates, Paul Revere was not one of them, and he was typically not on the inside of that sort of meeting, or in this case, attending outside, as it- as it would have been, largely because of his lack of formal education and his social class. Can you tell me about the other delegates? Were they all of the Adams's and Warren's class, or was it more of a mix?

Diann 15:57

That's a really interesting question. I think there's an interesting research project that could be done there to delve a bit more into who all of these delegates were. But we do know that there were many Harvard educated men. There were doctors, there were lawyers. Most of them were

probably prominent in their towns. In some ways, they were elected by the towns, for the most part, to come to the convention. But it's also believed that they were arranged so that there were blacksmiths there, gunsmiths there, yeoman farmers there. Also they were not all the highly educated professional men that you- you mentioned as being sometimes at the head of the radical group.

Tegan 16:39

So it sounds like some people who would have been peers of Revere's in terms of social status might have been present, but he was- he had a different relationship to this gathering.

Diann 16:39

I would say yes. And also it may have been that even so, perhaps it didn't always, wasn't always an overt piece of this. The Boston delegates included that core group that was kind of running the Sons of Liberty and things like that. So they were sort of natural people to go and be the delegates.

Tegan 17:08

Yeah, that makes sense. So your article describes what this document meant, both to patriots here and to British government officials, and you color your descriptions with a number of quotes from primary sources. Can you tell us about your research process, either for this Gazette article or for other projects about the Suffolk Resolves? Where do you start? And do you have any favorite sources you find yourself returning to?

Diann 17:31

As most people who do this kind of research probably understand it's a very iterative process.

Tegan 17:36

Yes!

Diann 17:36

You start out with certain ideas and go to certain sources or and the sources, you get certain information from them. But as you continue through the process, you go back and you read the sources again, and you understand them in different ways, because you know more. So something of a messy process in that way.

Tegan 17:54

Yeah.

Diann 17:55

Not necessarily linear. I always seem to find out something really important towards the end that tends to change some things that I thought so that's the process. But you're absolutely right in this case, for sure, the primary sources were really key in answering my research question was I wanted to understand what role the Suffolk Resolves had played in the relationship between America and Great Britain at the time that all this was going on. There are good discussions of

the Suffolk Resolves in a number of places, but it's usually as a part of a larger discussion about what is going on, and not not too much focuses in on, specifically, on the Resolves and their impact. And so one of the main places to go for that was the primary sources. Although there were some excellent secondary sources and histories that I would definitely recommend to anyone who's interested in this topic. One is Mary Beth Norton's book, *1774: The Long Year of Revolution*, very useful in understanding, well, this long year of revolution from the Tea Party until war breaks out in April of '75. Also, this is a book I hadn't come across before, but it is excellent. Jerrilyn Greene Marston's *King in Congress: the Transfer of Political Legitimacy: 1774 to 1776*. I'd highly recommend that. And of course, biographies of participants like Joseph Warren were helpful. There's one specific book on the Suffolk Resolves, a pamphlet, really. It was produced in 1976 as part of the Bicentennial by the Milton Historical Society. It's called *The Story of the Suffolk Resolves*. It's short, and we know a lot more now than we did in 1976, so it could be updated. But as a beginning piece, for someone who's interested in the Resolves, I recommend that. But the best were the letters and diaries of the participants, particularly the Adams Papers. Richard Frothingham's *Life and Times of Joseph Warren* prints a lot of his letters, and then the diary and letters of Thomas Hutchinson, also, who was an observer of what was going on, a first person observer what was going on in England once the Suffolk Resolves were there. And then newspapers were helpful, also as primary sources.

Tegan 20:20

And just to give you a sense of the geography of colonial Boston, before he left for England, Hutchinson had been just up the street, about two blocks from the Paul Revere House. So. Very small town at the time.

Diann 20:33

Yes, and you may know his country estate was in Milton. He actually went past the Suffolk Resolves House the day he left to go back to England, and before he got on the boat. So, yes, small world.

Tegan 20:44

Yes, definitely, definitely. So the Suffolk Resolves represented a major change in how parliament and colonists in Massachusetts saw themselves and their relationship with parliament. What stands out for you about the changes encapsulated in the nineteen resolutions that make up the document?

Diann 21:00

I think it's important first to just to say that as remarkable as the Suffolk Resolves would turn out to be, it was only one of many sets of resolves that were created during this time period. And actually this practice of having a meeting, a town meeting, usually, and then sending a document to the government to say, "We don't like what you're doing. Here's what we what needs to be changed" was a very common practice. I think it may go back to the Magna Carta in England. So that wasn't unusual, and so there were these meetings all over the towns and the counties in this period, we're talking about, of 1774. The historians who've looked at this, and I would agree from the ones that I've looked at, certainly, among all of the resolves, the Suffolk

Resolves stood out for a number of reasons. First of all, and these are the things that I would say in response to your question, as far as what it... what do they tell us about this change in the relationship and the ways of thinking about parliament. The resolutions by the convention, Suffolk County Convention went far beyond what most of them did in terms of laying out their complaints and ideas. Most of the ones that were produced in this time talked about economic boycotts, perhaps closing courts. But the Suffolk Resolves went on to touch on many different aspects of government, and not only did they talk about their complaints in those areas, they suggested ways of replacing the royal government, at least temporarily. So, for instance, they said, "We should not give our tax money to the crown. We'll keep it here in America." Courts were closed, so they suggested an alternate system of handling a lot of legal matters. As one historian put it, they were moving from protesting British authority to beginning to replace it.

Tegan 22:58

That's huge. I mean, that's that's the revolution, right there.

Diann 23:01

So this protesting has gone from -- over this period of like 1760 to 1774 -- of protesting a tax, "We don't like this tax. We don't think you should be taxing us for paper," to, "we don't believe that you have the authority to govern us at all." And the Suffolk Resolves are really showing that. I would say the other thing that struck me about it was the amount of preparation for military action that they cover in the Resolves. So not only do they say that all towns should establish militia companies under the command of patriots and start practicing the art of war or drilling, they also put in place a system where if they get attacked, they'll call other towns for help. If their leaders are arrested, they will detain royal officials. And a number of different points where they are proposing military preparation and laying out criteria to describe when they might not only defend themselves, but actually take the offensive in war. Now, all of these things, of course, England sees as illegal, unconstitutional and treasonous.

Tegan 24:13

Mm-hmm. And often in telling the story of the American Revolution, people focus on what was happening here, but your article delves into the reaction of people with influence in the British government. Clearly, that's on your mind as you're looking at the importance of this. Can you tell us a little about that? What was it about the adoption of these resolutions that made them sit up and pay attention?

Diann 24:32

I found this to be the most interesting thing about looking into this question once one started to look at it from the British point of view, an understanding of what of the impact of these resolutions really came forward. In some sense they were, they were a manifestation of this change in how the colonists were seeing things, and a statement that they were going to continue with it. But from the British point of view, I think, uh the impact was many times greater even than that. So let me explain what I mean.

Diann 25:05

The British government officials -- let's see the words that were used once they heard about the Suffolk Resolves and their adoption, they were "thunderstruck." They were "astonished." They were "amazed." This was absolutely not what they had expected. The reaction to be to the Coercive Acts. The King and his ministers thought that in response to the Coercive Acts, the colonists would accept that Parliament had authority over them, and perhaps, say, Great Britain would respond with a few concessions to something that the colonists were asking for, and then everything would go back to the way it was. And they also did not expect the other colonists to come to the support of Boston -- the other colonies. They thought that the colonies would be too concerned that Great Britain might turn its punishing actions on them as well. So not only did they find the language of the resolves to be inflammatory, which is one of the words used for it, but they were just could not believe that they had gained the support of the other colonists. So completely astonished them, the way this had gone.

Tegan 26:18

Why do you think it was so surprising to them? Do you think that it was, kind of, hubris on the British officials' part, or that it was really that unprecedented for this kind of change to happen, or something else?

Diann 26:30

That's something I've thought about. I'm not sure I have a good answer, because --

Tegan 26:34

That's fair.

Diann 26:34

They were so far off the mark, right? I did realize that, in a way, this was something that had happened before. So from the 1760s with each of with the Townsend acts and the Stamp Act and so forth, the colonists had, they had even gotten together and kind of coordinated responses, there had been all kinds of opposition that had happened. So the pattern was not unsimilar to what had happened before. And what would eventually happen is, what they thought would happen this time, was that there'd be some kind of reconciliation that would go on, some negotiation or something that would go on, and, and, both sides would get things that they wanted and, and this, and things would settle down.

Tegan 27:26

Right.

Diann 27:26

That's absolutely not what happened this time.

Tegan 27:28

Yeah.

Diann 27:29

But what was different here was that the acts were so punitive. It was the Coercive Acts were intended to cause harm and pain and suffering.

Tegan 27:41

Right, right.

Diann 27:42

And that, talking about how the colonists changed their views towards Great Britain, that was something Joseph Warren said, "The King has broken the cord of allegiance" by using this punishing act on his subjects. So the king and the ministers had gone a little too far and too much in a in a different direction. So that may have been part of it, but they were people like Thomas Hutchinson and Lord Dartmouth who were very sympathetic to the colonists. Thomas Hutchinson loved America, but they all had this bottom line of the colonists will accept the authority of Parliament, and there are reasons for it. I mean, if they had said, okay, you don't have to listen to us, that would have had enormous ramifications.

Tegan 28:30

Right, right.

Diann 28:31

But that's what really happened here, which is so interesting, is that this line was drawn.

Tegan 28:36

Right.

Diann 28:36

Neither side could budge on this fundamental idea, even the Suffolk Resolves, which talk about a lot of things, one of the things that struck me so much was they also come right out and say, "and we are not going to accept Parliament's authority. We know you want us to, and we're not going to." There wasn't much room for negotiation. But it did surprise England greatly. The content of the resolves, and especially the adoption of them by Continental Congress was, was startling to the British.

Tegan 29:09

Yeah, definitely. And I don't know for sure whether Paul Revere knew what was in the document that he was carrying. I don't know whether that's actually documented, but I imagine that he would have been because he was very connected and involved with what was going on politically, even though he wasn't in the, the in-group within these political discussions. So I imagine that over that six day ride, he knew the importance of the document he was carrying, knew not just that he was bringing it to the First Continental Congress, but that it was, it was this incendiary thing, and I wonder what that was like for him, knowing that when he arrived, something was going to change in this Congress, this meeting that was called between the colonies.

Diann 29:53

That is interesting to think about. I don't recall seeing anything in what I was reading that specifically speaks to that. But it's clear that Paul Revere is more than just someone who carries messages.

Tegan 30:03

Yes, absolutely.

Diann 30:05

Both in how he's involved in Boston and the way that people that he's working for talk about him. But you do wonder what it was like. I have wondered whether the... we know what the British were expecting was going to happen, and they were very wrong, but I've tried to figure out what the Patriots, people like Joseph Warren and Samuel Adams, thought was going to happen if they went through with this and it worked the way they wanted. And I do think you're right that this wasn't a secret, exactly.exactly.

Tegan 30:35

Right, right.

Diann 30:35

What was going on. If nothing else, you can't have 70 people at a meeting keep it quiet. Yeah, I don't know if I mentioned this before Joseph Warren, just before the Suffolk's convention began, he wrote to Sam Adams and said, Yeah, this is going ahead the way we think. And -- I'm paraphrasing a little bit, but -- believe me, the convention will have consequences, significant consequences.

Tegan 31:00

Yeah.

Diann 31:02

And so I think my impression of the sort of the Patriot leaders are that they were really thinking strategically and thinking ahead, and I wouldn't think that they were terribly surprised about what happened. I think they might have been surprised that Congress actually adopted the resolution so quickly, but I don't think they were surprised at the consequences.

Tegan 31:24

Well, thank you so much for being on the show today, Diann., if listeners are interested in visiting the Suffolk Resolves house, can you tell us how they can do that?

Diann 31:31

Sure, the best thing to do is to check our website or our Facebook page for announcements of various programs that might be going on. We are generally open the second Sunday of every month (there's a couple of exceptions) in an open house format. And you can also go through

our contact information on the website if you'd like to contact us. And we could set up tour outside of our regular opening hours.

Tegan 31:59

And can you tell us about the events that the Milton Historical Society has planned for the anniversary of the Suffolk Resolves?

Diann 32:04

Yes, I'd like to do that. Yes. Thank you. We've already done a few. The ones that we have coming up on October 6 and 20th in the parlor at the Suffolk Resolves house. I will be doing a talk, same talk, on both dates, the sixth and the 20th, going further into this topic about what was going on with the Suffolk Resolves and getting them to Congress and the impacts great those are the main ones for this year. We actually are going to be also doing more programs for the 250th that are focused on the involvement of Milton in the things that happened after the Suffolk Resolves. And possibly also, in conjunction with the Milton cemetery, it goes back to the beginning of Milton's history, and we know that we have in the cemetery a number of people, soldiers and others who were very involved in the revolution. So we'll be trying to bring back some of those stories as well.

Tegan 33:00

That sounds great. And the Milton Historical Society and Suffolk Resolves house are also partners on our fall Lecture Series this year. And the one that will be most closely related to this topic is September 10, which is an all-online lecture by Ray Raphael on the events of 1774 and the political revolution that took place. So thanks again for being on the show today, Diann.

Diann 33:25

Thank you very much for having me.

Tegan 37:09

We just heard from Diane Ralph, curator of the Milton Historical Society. Now here are the opening paragraphs of the Suffolk Resolves read by one of our interpreters at the Paul Revere House, Gabe Quealey.

Gabe 37:21

Whereas the power but not the justice, the vengeance but not the wisdom of Great Britain, which of old, persecuted scourged and exiled our fugitive parents from their native shores, now pursues us their guiltless children, with unrelenting severity, and whereas this then savage and uncultivated desert was purchased by toil and treasure or acquired by the valor and blood of those venerable progenitors who bequeathed to us the dear brah inheritance, who consigned it to our care and protection, the most sacred obligations are upon us to transmit the glorious purchase, unfettered by power, unclogged with shackles, to our innocent and beloved offspring, on the fortitude, on the wisdom and on the exertions of this important day is suspended the fate of this new world and of unborn millions. If a boundless extent of the continent, swarming with millions, will tamely submit to live, move, and have their being at the arbitrary will of a licentious

minister, they basely yield to voluntary slavery, and future generations shall load their memories with incessant execrations.

Tegan 38:38

Next episode, we'll follow the Resolves to Philadelphia, and we'll also hear another excerpt of the document. Now, listeners, if you'll follow me, we'll step into the Paul Revere House for our next segment our favorite questions.

Tegan 38:55

Welcome to the favorite questions segment of the podcast. With me right now is Derek Hunter an interpreter here at the Paul Revere House, and he will actually be the primary host of this segment going forward. So I want to welcome you to the show, Derek, but also want to ask you these questions about your favorite questions.

Derek 39:14

Hello. Thank you for having me here,

Tegan 39:16

Absolutely. So can you tell us a little bit about yourself? How long have you been at the Paul Revere House.

Derek 39:21

Yeah, so I've been at the Paul Revere House now for, I think it's like eight months. So I started in October 2023. I went to school for journalism, which has, you know, nothing to do with exactly Paul Revere or history. But I do love working here. So I'm helping out with the podcast, because I was basically going to school for really similar things.

Tegan 39:41

I forget who it is who famously said that journalism is the first draft of history. So there's, there's a connection, even if it's a metaphorical one. So to jump into the questions, what's your favorite question that visitors ask you regularly, and how do you answer it?

Derek 39:54

I love when visitors ask about, I guess, what's original to the house itself. Yeah, I feel like people walk in expecting to just hear about Paul Revere, and then you walk in and you learn that it's, you know, the oldest house in downtown Boston, and it has this huge history. So I love to talk about stuff that's really been there the whole time. So a lot about the frame, 90% of the posts and beams in the subflooring in the house is still original. So a lot of the wood that you're looking at in the house itself is, you know, almost 350 years old, or at least it was put up that long ago. And I love to point out the builders markings that are still in the house, the like little tally markings, because I tend to focus my answering questions and pictures on things that'll like, get a reaction out of people to make them sort of focus on what I'm saying, instead of just "uh huh, okay, whatever," And then move on, right? And I feel like always pointing out, you know, these really cool facts about things they can literally look at and feel in their senses like, "Oh, wow.

Hundreds of people have been in this house, and they've all stared at the same wood that I'm staring at." I love when people do that, because then you can expand from that and start to lay the foundation of the history of the house itself, because it's so long.

Tegan 41:03

Definitely. And what's your favorite question, or one of your favorite questions that a visitor has ever asked you?

Derek 41:08

Actually, today, this little kid came up to me and he said, "How did Boston get bigger?" Which I thought was really cute. He apparently came with his mom to Boston. I mean, it was definitely a vacation, but one of his big things is he wanted to figure out the history of Boston and how it got to be the way it is. And I love when people ask about, you know, the city of Boston, how much has changed. Because not only is the house a great way to talk about, you know, the North End and its history, but honestly, the entire city and who was living in it, and why the city of Boston itself was really, really tiny. Initially, it was basically an island, and then it became much, much larger. It was filled in the city today looks like basically nothing like it used to.

Tegan 41:54

Yeah,

Derek 41:54

The joy in this child's face about the answer I gave and how it's all super different. He was so into it. I think that's really fun. Usually, my favorite questions tend to come from kids, because there's just something about them. They're so much more interested because they are so excited to ask a question.

Tegan 42:14

Yeah, yeah. I think it's always exciting for a kid to have an adult take their questions seriously, and hopefully that's an experience they get to have a lot, but it isn't for everyone. And, yeah, I've gotten that kind of question, but never from a kid, so that's extra fun.

Derek 42:27

Yeah, I've never got it from a kid either. I think that's why it sticks out in my head so much right now.

Tegan 42:31

Yeah. And what's a question that you wish that visitors asked more often, or a topic you wish you got asked about more often?

Derek 42:37

I love to talk about, obviously, the Midnight Ride, because that's, you know, his whole thing. That's why he's famous. But Revere himself is such a fascinating figure. You know, he was like a pretty normal guy compared to a lot of the other, I guess, founding fathers. You know, he

wasn't of the upper class. He wasn't a lawyer. You know, he was a relatively middle class guy. And I think it's just really interesting to kind of delve into his history. Of course, he became wealthier later on, and you can argue that he wasn't a very normal guy from the amount of things that he was doing. But there are just so many things to talk about who he was and kind of his importance, at least locally in Boston history set aside from just the midnight ride. So I love when people ask me, "what did he do after the war," or, like, "Where was he born? What's his ancestry?" A lot of people really want him to be Italian.

Tegan 43:30

Hm, right.

Derek 43:30

And sometimes when I tell them that he was half French, they get a little sad. But I love to talk about it anyways, just because it's kind of fascinating, yeah, because there's just so many things that you can talk about on the basis of Revere, and his history, where I feel like a lot of historical figures, they maybe have one specific focus that you're gonna talk about. But with Revere, there's like a dozen things that you can bring up, basically.

Derek 43:55

Yeah. Do you think that visitors want him to be Italian because the neighborhood is Italian now? Or...?

Derek 44:00

Absolutely, yeah, it's usually coming from people, I think, who are Italian,

Tegan 44:04

Ohh.

Derek 44:04

and they really want him to be, yeah, Italian. I don't know why a lot of people come in and they're like, "I learned he was Italian in school." And I'm like, how? and why? It's very strange, yeah.

Tegan 44:15

Christopher Columbus, yes. Paul Revere, no.

Derek 44:17

Yes, yeah. But yeah, no, I mean, anything that gets me to expand the horizons of the guests that come in is what I'm focusing on.

Tegan 44:25

Yeah, that's awesome. Well, thank you for taking the time. Listeners, you'll be hearing more from Derek soon. Thank you for tuning in to Revere House Radio. I'm your host, Tegan Kehoe, and I am the Research and Adult program Director here at the Paul Revere House. Our production

team for this season includes Derek Hunter, Tyler McDonald, CadeeStefani, Gabe Quealey, and Adrienne Turnbull-Reilley. Revere House Radio is a production of the Paul Revere Memorial Association, the nonprofit which operates the Paul Revere House Museum. You can find more information, subscribe to our mailing list or social media, or become a member on our website at www.paulreverehouse.org. Or, come visit us in Boston!