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Town Manager John Mangiaratti's Remarks to Minutemen Marchers and Community Members at a Ceremony Held Next the Davis Monument on April 18, 2025 7:15AM

Good Morning Everyone,

I'm honored to be here today as Town Manager to witness the Acton Minutemen's march and to take part in commemorating the refurbishment of this historic monument behind me.

I want to begin by thanking the Select Board for establishing the 250 Committee and for the Board's strong support of the thoughtful planning and meaningful work that has taken place over the past year or two. I'd also like to express deep appreciation to the 250 Committee itself for all of the memorable events and programs they've put together for our community. It's been an incredible effort.

Thank you to the Acton Minutemen for the vital role you play in preserving and sharing our town's history. Your annual march—and the many other events you lead throughout the year—keep Acton's story alive. You are a treasured part of the fabric of this community.

We are also grateful to Bob Davis and his family for being with us this morning, and for the generous donations they have made to help commemorate this special 250th anniversary. The Select Board was honored to accept several items from Mr. Davis, including:

- A stone monument, temporarily placed behind Town Hall, listing the names of the Acton men who marched to the North Bridge;
- New interpretive signage here and along the trail at several key locations;
- And new plaques for a historical installation in the entry of Town Hall.

Before I turn things back over to the Minutemen to continue their march, I'd like to say a few words about the history of this monument.

The Isaac Davis Monument stands as a powerful tribute to the Acton Minutemen and their sacrifice at the Battle of the North Bridge in Concord on April 19, 1775.

It was built in 1851, stands 75 feet tall, and is topped with a 25-foot flagpole. The granite used was quarried right here in Acton, on land owned by Reverend James T. Woodbury, who was instrumental in securing funding for the monument.

The Massachusetts Legislature contributed \$2,000 to the effort, and the Town of Acton added another \$500—bringing the total cost to \$2,500. It was designed by Charles G. Parker of Boston and constructed by Eastman and Hutchinson of Manchester, New Hampshire.

In 1900, the Town of Concord presented a steppingstone from the causeway at the North Bridge—believed to mark where Captain Davis fell. That stone was placed right here, in the mounds supporting this monument.

The monument was fully restored in 2005, and again just this past year in 2024. This most recent project was made possible through the Veterans' Heritage Grant Program and Community Preservation Act funding.

Captain Isaac Davis, along with Privates Abner Hosmer and James Hayward, are buried at this very site. Their remains were moved here from Woodlawn Cemetery, where they had rested for 75 years. Their original gravestones now stand with them here.

I'd like to close by echoing the words spoken at this monument's dedication on October 29, 1851. Governor Boutwell concluded his remarks that day with these powerful lines:

“Here its base shall rest, and its apex point to the Heavens through the coming centuries. Though it bears the name of humble men and commemorates services stern rather than brilliant, it shall be as immortal as American history.”

Thank you all for being here to honor Acton's past and to carry its legacy forward.