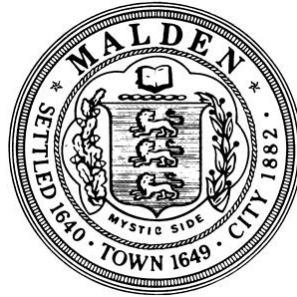


On the 250th Anniversary of Malden Declaration Day, The City Unveils a Historic Bell in Bell Rock Memorial Park

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On Wednesday, May 27, the 250th anniversary of Malden Declaration Day, a group of Malden citizens gathered at Bell Rock Memorial Park for the dedication of a historic memorial bell. Malden Declaration Day – hosted by the Mayor’s Office and the Malden Public Library – celebrates Malden’s unanimous vote to sever ties from Great Britain and create an independent American republic. Malden citizens were the first municipality to vote for and deliver this message to the Second Continental Congress. The vote, on May 27, 1776, occurred weeks before the Declaration of Independence was adopted.

The centerpiece of the 2026 Malden Declaration Day festivities was the dedication of a historic bronze memorial bell, generously funded by the Adelaide Breed Bayrd Foundation. The City of Malden purchased the 150-year-old, 1,200-pound bell from Verdin Bells & Clocks Inc. of Ohio. The bell’s inscription quotes the Malden Town Meeting from that significant May day in 1776: “...if they should declare America to be a free and independent republic, your constituents will support and defend the measure, to the last drop of

their blood, and the last farthing of their treasure.” The opposite side of the bell features an illustration of a Minuteman, an elite member of the colonial militia during the American Revolution.

“The unveiling of the restored memorial bell stands as a meaningful reminder of the importance of preserving the landmarks and stories that connect us to our shared history,” said Malden Mayor Gary Christenson. “For generations, this bell has served as a symbol of Malden’s heritage and civic pride. Today, we not only celebrate its restoration, but also honor the community members whose dedication ensures that our history continues to inform and inspire future generations.”

In addition to the bell dedication, the William Diamond Junior Fife and Drum Corps performed, and Captain Tom Coots, a professional reenactor from the Charlestown Militia Company, read the Malden Declaration.

Additionally, Beebe School students performed a Readers’ Theatre piece about the Boston Tea Party, connecting to their social studies curriculum and our revolutionary history. Students in costume reenacted the roles of Revolutionary War figures, helping them understand what motivated the most dramatic act of protest in American history. The students were led by Linda Zalk and Tonette Carroll, and this performance was made possible through a grant from Malden Reads.

After the students’ performance, Malden Public Library Director Dora St. Martin addressed the group assembled at Bell Rock Memorial Park, taking excerpts from an article by Jeff Cronin of the Malden Historical Society.

“On a day in May, two hundred years ago, the town bell began to ring at the North Parish Meetinghouse at Bell Rock. For well over a century, a bell, which had once been suspended from the Bell Rock, summoned the townspeople of Malden to Sabbath meetings, mourned their funerals, alerted their militiamen and opened their town meetings and market days. On Monday, the 27th of May 1776, it sounded to assemble the people of Malden to a meeting to vote a final end of allegiance to the King,” she said.

St. Martin continued, “Late in the day on May 27, men, women and children of town began to assemble in small groups and excitedly discuss the impending vote for independence. Upon hearing the familiar sound of the meetinghouse bell, they filled into the North Parish Meetinghouse and awaited the opening of the town meeting that was destined to place Malden in the very forefront of the movement for independence among the thirteen colonies in the spring of 1776.”

The event culminated with Mayor Gary Christenson, who along with Chair of ABBF C. Hank Kezer, unveiled the Memorial Bell and ceremoniously rang it for the first time.