



# COMMONWEALTH MUSEUM

Connections YOUR LINK TO OUR MASSACHUSETTS STATE MUSEUM

A Division of William Francis Galvin, Secretary of the Commonwealth

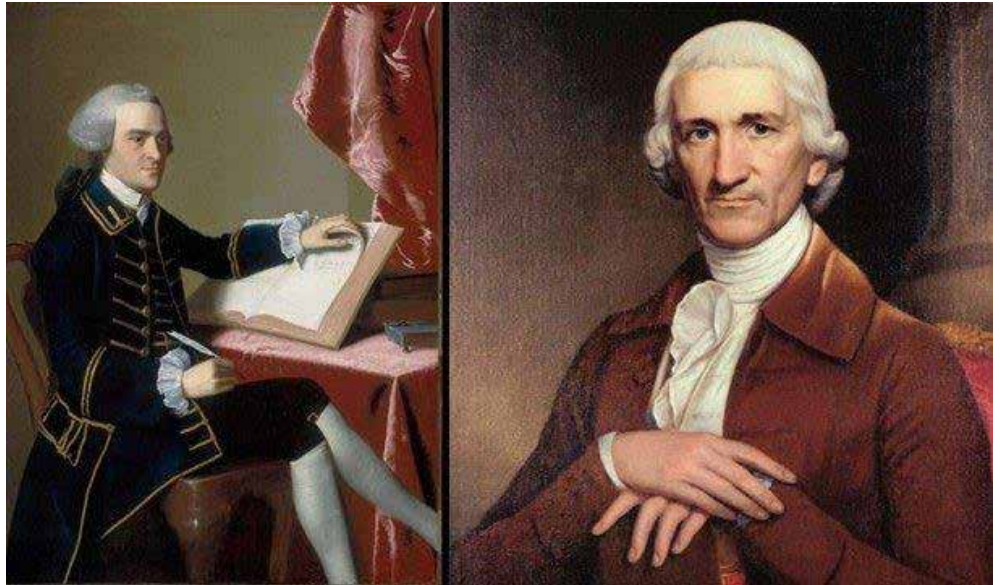
Fall 2017

## Celebrating Independence

On July 4th the official Massachusetts copy of the Declaration of Independence was viewed by nearly sixteen hundred visitors at a special Commonwealth Museum opening. Signed by John Hancock, the document was sent by the Continental Congress during the American Revolution. Many took the opportunity to sign their own name to a large printed copy and “take a selfie with Sam” (a mannequin representing Mr. Adams). The document remains on display at the Commonwealth Museum, one of many “national treasures” that surprise and delight new visitors.

We hope to welcome you soon.

Stephen Kenney, Ph.D.  
Director

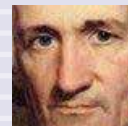


As President of the Continental Congress, John Hancock signed the printed copy of the Declaration of Independence on display at the Commonwealth Museum. It also bears the signature of Charles Thomson, the Continental Congress Secretary.



**Free Cell Phone Audio Tour Available!**

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### WINTER HOURS AT THE COMMONWEALTH MUSEUM



The Commonwealth Museum is located in the Massachusetts Archives building on Columbia Point next to the John F. Kennedy Library and Museum and the Edward M. Kennedy Institute for the United States Senate. Winter hours are Monday – Friday 9:00 – 5:00. Admission and parking are free. Call 617-727-9268.

## The Case of Sacco and Vanzetti

In the spring of 1920 two Italian immigrants were arrested for murder in a South Braintree payroll robbery. Their anarchist political beliefs became a central issue in the case. The trial of Sacco and Vanzetti shocked the world in the 1920's and continues to fascinate legal historians and arm-chair detectives alike. Nearly a century later we still debate its fairness. In this episode award winning producer Anna Fisher-Pinkert explores the Sacco and Vanzetti case with Associate Justice Peter W. Agnes, Jr., of the Massachusetts Appeals Court.



FROM THE VAULTS

## Bill of Lading, Port of Boston, 1693

Travel and trade have been important to Massachusetts from the beginning. This 1693 Bill of Lading reflects trade with plantations on the island of Barbados. Captain John Ware of the ship Friendship will carry horses including “one large ... horse with two little snippis off of each ear, bob tail ... five years old.” Some captains returned to Massachusetts with African slaves purchased on Caribbean islands. *Massachusetts Archives*

## Travel Game

Visitors to the Federal Period Gallery have a chance to try their luck at travel in the early nineteenth century. Three contestants compete to reach Boston by stagecoach, canal boat, or offshore packet. The game highlights the perils of period travel. The coach is scheduled to leave Sturbridge at 5:00 am but departs at 4:00, leaving the traveler stranded. (This was an early scam. A second carriage would arrive with an offer to catch up with the stagecoach for a fee.) A farmer gets his leg caught in the canal's tow rope and the trip is delayed while a doctor is consulted. At sea, a packet boat has departed from Cape Cod. As the wind dies down, all get sea sick in fifteen foot swells. These are not imagined events—every one represents an actual travel experience in Federal period America.

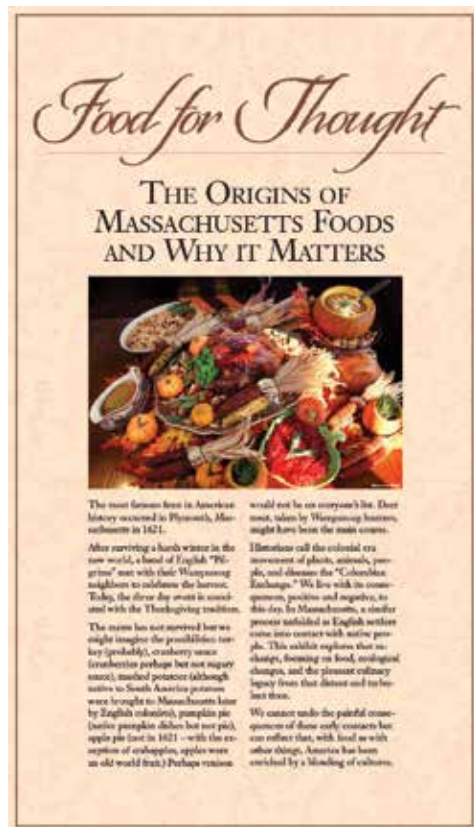




## ALWAYS SOMETHING...

# Women's Suffrage Celebration Coalition of Massachusetts

In August, Secretary of the Commonwealth William Francis Galvin was the keynote speaker at an event sponsored by the Women's Suffrage Celebration Coalition of Massachusetts. At the Swan Boat Landing, in the Boston Public Garden, he announced the Commonwealth Museum's project to celebrate a "Suffragist of the Month," each month between now and 2020 (the 100th anniversary of the 19th amendment that guaranteed voting rights for women). Individual panels will be displayed in the lobby and on the website. Joining Secretary Galvin was documentary film maker Eric Jenkins-Sahlin great, great, great grandson of feminist pioneer Elizabeth Cady Stanton.



## Traveling Exhibits

The Commonwealth Museum offers popular exhibits for display at libraries and town halls across Massachusetts.

"Food for Thought" traces the origins of Massachusetts foods.



In July, nearly 600 visited for special programming on Free Fun Friday. Although always free, the museum participated again in this popular Highland Street Foundation program.

## Reaching Out

The Commonwealth Museum podcast about the "Know Nothings," the nineteenth century group that opposed Irish and German immigration, was re-broadcast on several National Public Radio stations in August. The museum also participated in the "Museum without Walls" program. Participants from across the country signed up for a live, online presentation about the Commonwealth Museum, featuring images of the museum exhibit, and a question and answer session.



@MassMuseum



@thecommonwealthmuseum



@massachusettsarchives

## Donate!

Donations to the Commonwealth Museum provide buses for low and moderate income school districts and help expand museum programming. For information call 617-727-2816 x 204.

Donations can be made to:

**Friends of the Commonwealth Museum**

220 Morrissey Boulevard  
Boston, MA 02125

The Friends of the Commonwealth Museum is a 501 (c) 3 organization.

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Boston, MA 02125

**COMMONWEALTH**  
**MUSEUM**



**The Commonwealth Museum** is located in the Massachusetts Archives building, next to the John F. Kennedy Library and Museum and the Edward M. Kennedy Institute for the United States Senate, on Columbia Point, Boston.

Open 7 days a week, May to October  
Monday through Friday, November to April  
Free Admission, Free Parking  
For hours or to schedule group tours call 617-727-9268

*Thanks and praise for the University of Massachusetts, Boston and Northeastern University students who make Commonwealth Museum field trips so successful.*



*L-R, Chris Norton, History Graduate Program, University of Massachusetts, Boston; Karen Del Cid, Josephine Bergersen-Lewis, Kevin Moreno, University of Massachusetts, Boston.*

*Amin Ahmed, University of Massachusetts, Boston; Jingyu Li, Northeastern University. Thanks also to Dijana Asani, University of Massachusetts, Boston.*