

## **Danvers, MA: Spanning almost 400 Years as you Walk Thru History!**

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The Two Town Walking Club is looking forward to hosting a pre-convention walk in historic Danvers, Massachusetts! To fully savor the experience in Danvers, walkers may bring to mind its place in history. It all began when the English colonists improved an existing Naumkeag trail to be the Old Ipswich Road connecting Boston to Salem. On that road in 1636, Salem Village was founded as an agricultural center to provide food for Salem Town (now Salem). The present name was adopted in 1752 in honor of Sir Danvers Osborn, the colonial governor of New York. The town was incorporated in 1757, but King George II declared that null and void. Thus the Danvers town seal quotes the motto "The King Unwilling!" As you walk in Danvers, also unofficially known as Ontiontown, you'll be walking thru almost 400 years of distinguished history!

### **Colonial Times**

This history was already in the making during the 1600's. The oldest cultivated fruit tree, the Endicott Pear Tree, planted between 1632 and 1649, is still thriving today. John Endecott, Danvers resident regarded as one of the Fathers of New England, served as the first Governor of the Massachusetts Bay Colony during the mid-1600's. While it was still known as Salem Village, the 1692 Witchcraft Hysteria began in Rev. Samuel Parris' house (you'll see the foundation). The 1985 movie *Three Sovereigns for Sarah*, starring Vanessa Redgrave, is considered to be the most accurate movie of the Witchcraft Hysteria. Walkers will see The Nurse Homestead, a National Heritage Site, the home of Rebecca Nurse, who was falsely accused of witchcraft and hanged. The Witchcraft Victims Memorial is on the walk route as is Wadsworth Cemetery, where some of the accusers were buried as well as an African slave, North American Indians, and those buried during American Revolution times.

### **Revolutionary Times**

Many noteworthy Revolutionary War era sites are on the walk route. There is a memorial to an encampment of troops under Benedict Arnold during their march to invade Quebec during American Revolution. The Page House, now the home of the Danvers Historical Society, was the temporary headquarters of British General Thomas Gage, commander of the British forces and the Royal Governor. The house of Judge Samuel Holton, who served in the Continental Congress and was the president pro-tempore of the US Congress, is a National Heritage Site.

### **Nineteenth Century**

George Peabody (1795-1869), American financier and considered the father of modern philanthropist and was born in South Danvers into a poor family. Walkers will see the Peabody Institute Library, one of the many results of his philanthropy in New England and London, England. Danvers was a station on the Underground Railroad and walkers will see some of the associated houses. The route passes Town Hall where War memorials commemorating the Civil War, World War I, World War II, the Korean War and the Vietnam War are displayed. Walkers will see the private Roman Catholic St. John's Preparatory School founded by the Xaverian

Brothers in 1891. The Glen Magna Estate is on the National Register of Historic Places; the original house was purchased by Joseph Peabody in 1812 and later expanded to its present size. Walkers will see the Carriage Visitor Center in Endicott Park where there are live animals in the barn. Crayola Crayons got their start in the late 1880's in Danvers; the original site is on the walk route!

### **Twentieth Century**

Manufacturing was once a major component of the economy. The Sylvania Lighting Company had a long association with Danvers between 1901 and 2015. Walkers will pass by the site of Mrs. Day's Baby Shoes, founded 1902, and worn by the Dionne Quintuplets and Queen Elizabeth II. Tapley Memorial Hall, next door to the Page House, was built in 1930 to house the collections of the Danvers Historical Society.

### **Twenty First Century**

Meghan Duggan, the captain of the Gold Medal Winning Hockey Team at the 2018 Winter Olympics, and Mark Bavaro, All-American football pro, are taking their places in the history of Danvers. The Volkssporters will descend into Danvers on Monday, June 10<sup>th</sup> as they Walk Thru History!

### **Nearby Walks – More to Do During This Convention Prewalk Day!**

Now that you have spanned almost 400 years *Walking Thru History* in Danvers on a morning in June, consider a nearby afternoon walk. At this time, the Two Town Walking Club hosts walks in Ipswich, Beverly, Salem and Gloucester, all memorable and historic towns a short distance from Danvers. In addition, the Walk 'N Mass Volkssport Club hosts close to 20 wonderful walks and the Twin State Volkssport Association sponsors walks in both Vermont and New Hampshire highlighting the scenic, historic and cultural wonders of both states.