

'Our American Story' to Record in Lexington & Natural Bridge

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Eric Wilson, Regional Co-Chair, Rockbridge-VA250 Committee
Executive Director, Rockbridge Historical Society
Director@RockbridgeHistory.org
540.260.5091 (cell)

On Constitution Day, September 17 – less than a year now until the United States' landmark birthday next July 4 – the American Revolution is coming to Lexington. Or rather, the vanguard of “America’s Evolution,” as the national commission of the United States’ 250th Anniversary visits our historic area.

The media team from America250 will be spending the day here with their mobile recording studio, reaching out to capture your voice, on your own home turf. In their eye-catching, purpose-built Airstream trailer, they’ve set out to “engage our citizens where they live,” capturing punchy, diverse oral histories canvassing all 50 states. This is your chance to be part of the community-sourced national efforts that aim to ground – in the ambitious words of [America250 Chair and former U.S. Treasury Secretary Rosie Rios](#) – “a historic journey to build the largest oral and visual collection in our country’s history.”



America250, the VA250 Commission, and our regional [Rockbridge-VA250 Committee](#) (co-chaired by Rockbridge Historical Society Executive Director Eric Wilson and Lexington Rockbridge Area Tourism Director Sheryl Wagner) are strategically partnering to arrange interviews that broadly share distinctive stories from our area. They seek to include community leaders and citizens who can speak to a diverse range of life experiences: varied by their heritage, professional work, and affinities; their legacies of service and sacrifice; their vital contributions to the arts, education, and entrepreneurship.

Visit America250.org/our-american-story for a sleek video preview of the once-in-a-lifetime initiative, framing its commemorative goals, and a sampling of both famous and representative voices they’ve begun to record. Collectively, here and nationally, these interviews will supply both spirited and serious chords to score an inclusive “American Symphony.” Accessible through a [YouTube Playlist](#), the digital archive will provide a reference point to lastingly speak to our own moment in time and place, just as the 1976 bicentennial did for earlier generations, 50 years ago.

Our American Story is a year-long, cross-country journey, collecting thousands of recorded interviews. Each tour stop will feature local activation events, media opportunities, and community engagement activities.

Facilitated by trained interviewers, sessions will follow curated storytelling prompts centered around themes of identity, service, community, and personal legacy. Conversations will be recorded and archived, and a portion will be preserved at the Library of Congress, ensuring these voices become a permanent part of the American record.

Select stories — especially those featuring veterans, educators, and intergenerational families — will be shared with the public through collaborations with documentary filmmakers, broadcast outlets, and digital platforms.

[Watch Video Recaps from the Tour](#)



America250 has chosen to represent Virginia through its tour of the Shenandoah Valley this week, with Lexington chosen as one of the state's four featured locales. On Wednesday, 10:00 AM - 2:00 PM, they'll set up right outside the RHS Museum and Visitor Center (106 Washington Street). Inside their mobile studio, they'll engage conversations with "everyday people" here: voices who feel called to purposefully or opportunistically share their ideas on American identity, to reflect on their own felt place in that still-developing narrative, and to pay tribute to some of the important moments or figures they look to, more broadly.

From 3:00 – 5:00 PM, interviews will then be conducted at Natural Bridge State Park, outside their own Visitors Center, fittingly backed by the iconic natural landmark that would become Rockbridge County's revolutionary namesake after Thomas Jefferson, the Bridge's first American owner, bought it from King George III on July 3, 1774. Check in at VA250.org/Rockbridge and facebook.com/rockbridgehistory for updates on these stops, and related local resources and events.



America250 Launches "Our American Story"

This one-day effort complements the long-term commitments of the Rockbridge Historical Society to interview people in this area, to enrich its local community archive, and ensure its preservation and accessibility to the greater Rockbridge Community. To arrange a recording with “Our American Story” – or with the RHS oral history project now spanning three years of revolutionary commemoration ahead – write to Eric Wilson at Director@RockbridgeHistory.org.