



Friends of Rockbridge History,

In April of 1775, 250 years ago, “the shot heard round the world” on the Battle Green of Lexington, MA ignited growing revolutionary energies that would spur a broader American Revolution, and two and a half centuries of “American Evolution,” whose legacies the Rockbridge Historical Society continues to witness and advance, today.

Three years later, in 1778, our own namesake founding of Lexington and Rockbridge would pay tribute to that landmark moment, while contributing to the growth and strength of Virginia’s frontier, and to the Shenandoah Valley communities that have settled and culturally enriched our region since the 1730s.

Looking ahead to July 4, 2026, as we near the *semiquincentennial* celebrations of American Independence on July 4, 2026, we hope you will credit and contribute to the near-century-long leadership of the Rockbridge Historical Society, and the lasting community service we provide. The care and confidence you continue to show through the RHS Annual Fund is vital to our mission to inclusively and sustainably “*preserve and promote the histories of the Rockbridge area, through public programs, publications, exhibits, and educational outreach.*”

2025 has been a Revolutionary Year for RHS, itself: in the tempo, topical variety, and partnering reach of our creative efforts, across those arenas. To continue our own care, contributions & commitments to local and national history through our “3 Year Birthday Party” ahead, we count on your own, as donors and volunteers!

Contribute Online Now: RockbridgeHistory.org

RHS has targeted our projects and priorities around some core opportunities:

- **Digital Resources & Educational Outreach**: Web & Video archives; newspaper series; K-12 school visits, resources & displays; ‘Minutes in History’ for local City Councils & Boards
- **Creative Connections & Partnerships**: New collaborative programs with state & local agencies, museums & community centers, and many area non-profits & educational institutions
- **Public Programs & Exhibits**: Free community programs; walking tours for students and the general public; virtual guides featuring RHS’ innovative research, archival assets & artifacts; exhibits at our free downtown museum and in local libraries, spotlighting core community themes and histories

In 2026, our Nation’s Revolutionary Year ...

Your 2025 Annual Fund Contribution will help the Rockbridge Historical Society achieve our essential fundraising goals, along with the investments and advocacy of the RHS Board of Directors, whom we gratefully acknowledge at RockbridgeHistory.org/about-us. In this year’s final months, your show of confidence will help us finish strong, and plan ahead. Your gifts both affirm and ensure our mission in historic preservation, and our civic leadership in guiding audiences of all ages through authentic, creative, and honest engagements with our local past. These encounters can help us all to variously and better understand our present circumstances and shared prospects, as well as the legacies that we’ve inherited, and those we seek to shape for others.



Our final third of the year, with several interactive December programs still ahead, demonstrates our institutional leadership in advancing the statewide commitments to commemorate 250+ years of *American Evolution*: from the intra-colonial conflicts leading to the War of Independence; through our country's next civil war in the 19th century and Civil Rights Freedom Struggle through the 20th; and our last 50 years spanning from the close of the Vietnam War in 1975, to the Appalachian Trail Centennial of 2025.

How can YOU connect with RHS, in 2026?

BOOK GROUPS & FILM SERIES

Revolutionary Bookshelves, 1776-2026

Partnering with public libraries & 'Bring Your Own' selections

Revolutionary Film Series, 1776-2026

Movie nights, spanning eras & staged across the community

EDUCATIONAL OUTREACH

We're recruiting veteran teachers, retired educators, and curious volunteers to develop local history projects for **K-12 Project-Based Learning**, and to supplement Virginia's evolving Social Studies Standards. VA250 provides new cultural reach and timely relevance to support and challenge Virginia's next generation of young citizens, and historically-informed leaders!

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Help welcome visitors at our museum to explore RHS' permanent collections and rotating exhibits. Coming next, Spring 2026: **UN/BOUND: Free Black Virginians, 1619-1865**. Contact us to discuss how you can help with cataloguing artifacts, preparing exhibits, and public programs. We have particular needs for Media Skills that will help capture, edit, and most effectively reach the public, so as to preserve **THIS** moment in History: the **Big Bicentennial+50** that we'll want our next generation to remember, as so many of us do from *The Spirit of 1776!*

Contribute Tax-Deductible Gifts Online:

RockbridgeHistory.org

Soon ahead, come 2028, the joint 250th birthdays of Lexington and Rockbridge, established not just during the Revolution, but strategically because of it. In the stretch run of 2025, we thank you for all new first-time gifts and standing support of RHS' mission, and the audience, volunteer work, and feedback you share.

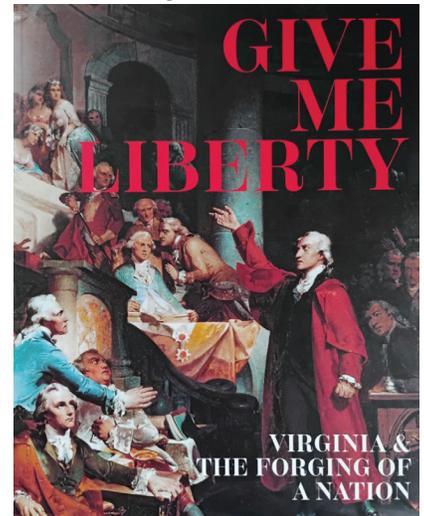
As both **Founders** and **Revolutionaries** in our promotion of **Local History** & **Lifelong Learning**, since 1939, we're excited to both authentically commemorate and inter-generationally celebrate our landmark and lasting histories with the entire Rockbridge community, in 2026 ... in 2028 ... and beyond!

Grateful for your Care, and Confidence,

Eric Wilson, RHS Executive Director

Regional Co-Chair, VA 250: American Revolutions

RHS & VA250 Exhibits & Programs
*The American Revolution;
Virginia & The Vietnam War*



Community-Sourced Exhibit:
*Rockbridge at Play
Toys, Games & Histories*

LEXINGTON, BUENA VISTA
& ROCKBRIDGE

VA250

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