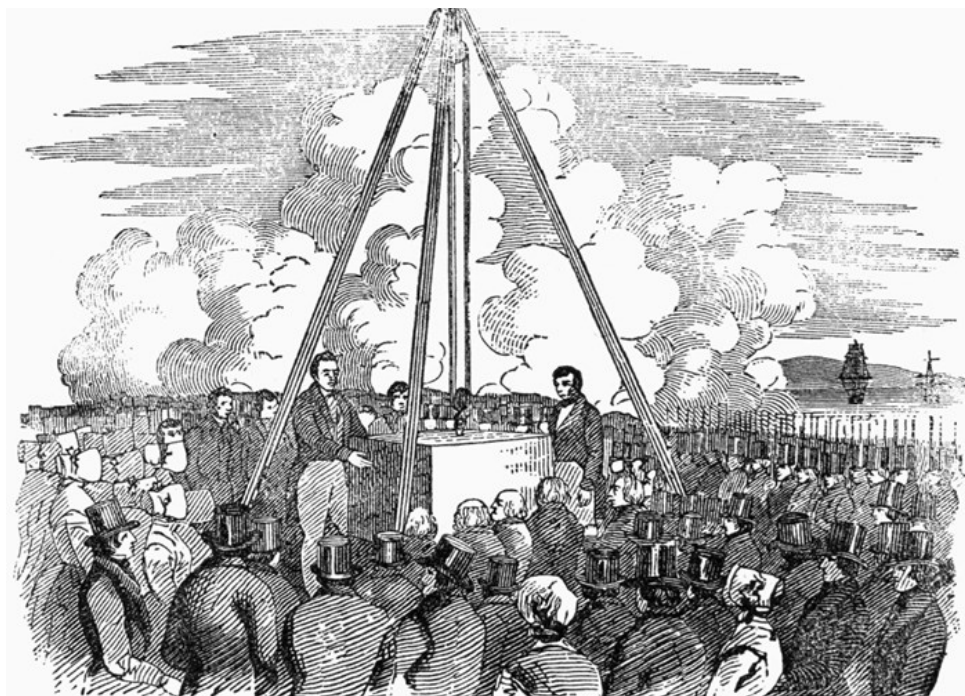


THE BUNKER HILL MONUMENT IS BEGUN!
The Cornerstone Laying and Prayer Service of 1825
REENACTED ON JUNE 16, 2025



The Bunker Hill Monument Association
The Grand Lodge of Masons in Massachusetts
Massachusetts Charitable Mechanic Association
The Ancient and Honorable Artillery
The American Friends of Lafayette
Boston National Historical Park
The Society of the Cincinnati

The Orator of the Day: Daniel Webster
Honoree: General Lafayette



The Grand Lodge of Massachusetts and the Founding of a Monument

Chartered in **1733**, the Grand Lodge of Massachusetts is the oldest chartered Grand Lodge in the Western Hemisphere, marking the formal establishment of Freemasonry in America. the Grand Lodge, as it exists today, came about from a merger of two provincial Grand Lodges from England and Scotland in 1792, the latter of which **Joseph Warren** was Grand Master when he gave his life at the Battle of Bunker Hill in 1775. Freemasons of **King Solomon's Lodge A.F.&A.M.** erected the first Bunker Hill Monument in 1794 in memory of Warren, caring for it for 30 years. When it came time for a new monument, Grand Lodge's deep historical roots and enduring influence were powerfully demonstrated during the 1825 ceremony commemorating the 50th anniversary of the Battle of Bunker Hill when Masonic Brethren marched at the front of the procession to lay the new monument's cornerstone.

Thousands of Freemasons marched in the procession, representing all six New England states, as well as Royal Arch and Knights Templar appendant bodies. Upon reaching the site for the new monument, **Grand Master John Abbot** and his officers joined the **President of the Bunker Hill Monument Association** and the **Marquis de Lafayette** to begin the **Cornerstone Laying Ceremony**.



Grand Master John Abbot
1824-1826, 1834

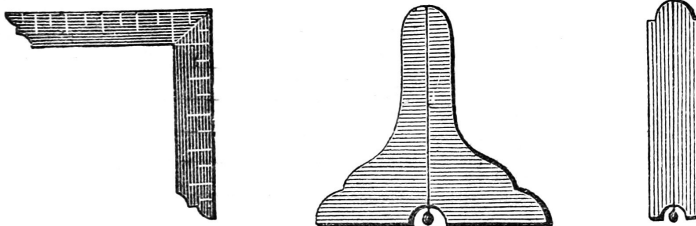
Two Hundred Years Between Stones

Freemasons lay cornerstones as a symbolic act rooted in their ancient building traditions and as a way represent an individual Mason's journey into the Craft. A cornerstone is the first stone placed as construction begins and on it determines the future success of the building. To ensure it is "well formed, true, and trusty," the Grand Lodge of Massachusetts uses a stonemason's working tools as practical and symbolic tests.

The Square proves right angles just as it calls on Masons to act with virtue.

The Level determines horizontals just as it reminds Masons that they are traveling on the level of time.

The Plumb tests perpendiculars just as it teaches Masons to walk uprightly before God and man.



Typically, these tools are used by officers of the Grand Lodge to test the stone's qualities but at the Bunker Hill Monument cornerstone laying in 1825, the tools were also handed to the Marquis de Lafayette and President of the Bunker Hill Monument Association for them to inspect the cornerstone.

With the cornerstone prepared and placed, vessels of corn, wine, and oil were poured onto the stone to, as Grand Master Abbot declared, "*protect the workmen against every accident and long preserve this structure from decay. And grant to us all in needful supply the Corn of nourishment, the Wine of refreshment, and the Oil of joy.*" The Grand Master then struck the cornerstone three times with his mallet, ending the ceremony so work could commence.

The Generals and the Craft

The Marquis de Lafayette, renowned hero of both the American and French Revolutions, held deep ties to Freemasonry, a fraternity that shaped his ideals and actions on both sides of the Atlantic. A dedicated Mason, Lafayette embraced the Craft's core values of brotherly love, relief, and truth—principles that inspired his lifelong struggle for human rights and self-determination. His Masonic identity was formed in America when he took his degrees at Valley Forge, and it deeply connected him to other revolutionary figures, such as Major General Joseph Warren, the fallen Patriot and Grand Master of the Massachusetts Grand Lodge.

Lafayette's return to America in 1824 was marked by widespread celebration and in August of that year he visited Bunker Hill remarking "*the blood of Warren and his companions, early and gloriously spilled, aroused the energy of three millions, and secured the happiness of ten millions and of many other millions of men in times to come.*" With this trip he laid the foundation for the deeply symbolic cornerstone laying ceremony on June 17, 1825, the 50th anniversary of the Battle of Bunker Hill.

The Bunker Hill Monument, rising from the ground where Warren fell in battle, became a physical embodiment of Masonic and revolutionary values. Lafayette's presence at the ceremony gave further weight to this symbolism. His toast, offered with reverence and resolve, echoed the unity of spirit between the Old World and the New: "*Bunker Hill is the holy resistance to oppression, which has already disenthralled the American hemisphere, and the anniversary toast at the jubilee of the next half-century will be to Europe, freed.*"

As a final testament to Lafayette's connection to Bunker Hill, he returned home with soil from the battlefield that would cover his grave in 1834.

Freemasonry's Ongoing Service to History and Nation

Since its founding in 1733, the Grand Lodge of Massachusetts has played a vital role in shaping civic life and preserving historical memory. Beyond its ceremonial and symbolic functions, the Grand Lodge's nearly 20,000 members serve the public through a wide range of charitable initiatives. These efforts include scholarship programs, community outreach, and partnerships with youth, first responder, veteran, and other civic organizations aimed at promoting a better world.

Freemasonry's mission of building a better society is guided today by dedicated leadership committed to upholding its centuries-old values while addressing the needs of a modern world. The Grand Lodge is currently led by Grand Master **George Forest Hamilton**, whose vision and stewardship carry forward the Masonic tradition of service. Supporting him on the 250th Committee are **John Mitchell** (Chair), **Jim Holmes** (Vice Chair), and **Bryan Simmons** (Past Chair), a team working to ensure that Freemasonry is remembered as an active and meaningful force for good in the Nation from the American Revolution to today.

From laying the cornerstone of the Bunker Hill Monument to fostering the next generation of men ready to live by Masonic principles, the Grand Lodge of Massachusetts exemplifies Freemasonry's enduring commitment to history, education, and the common good.

Masonic program assembled by Matthew Ahern, Grand Lodge of Massachusetts

During Ceremony: Mozart's Masonic Funeral Music

TRANSITION MUSIC

AN EXAMPLE OF THE OLD REVOLUTIONARY MUSIC

which inspired the American Patriots of 1776

"Joseph Warren, an American Hero" by Andrew Law

Services
ON
BUNKER HILL,
FOR
17 JUNE, 1825.

INTRODUCTORY PRAYER

BY THE REV. JOSEPH THAXTER (the Rev. Paul Minor)

Chaplain of Col. Prescott's Regiment, 17 June, 1775

O Thou who rulest in the armies of heaven, and doest whatsoever seemeth good to Thee among the children of men below, we desire at this time to remember Thy loving, kindness to our pious ancestors, in rescuing them from a land of intolerance and persecution. We thank Thee that Thou didst conduct them in safety through the mighty deep to this then howling wilderness; that Thou didst protect and defend them when few and helpless. We thank Thee that by Thy blessing on their endeavors and labors the wilderness was soon made to blossom as the rose. We thank Thee that Thou didst animate them with an invincible attachment to religion and liberty, that they adopted such wise institutions. We thank Thee that they so early established our University, from which have flowed such streams as have made glad the city of our God; that Thou hast raised up of our own sons, wise, learned and brave, to guide in the great and important affairs of church and state. May Thy blessing rest on that seminary, and continue it for a name and praise as long as the sun and moon shall endure.

We thank Thee that by the wisdom and fortitude of our fathers every attempt to infringe on our rights and privileges was defeated, and we were never in bondage to any. We thank Thee that when our country was invaded by the armies of the mother country, Thou didst raise up wise counsellors and unshaken patriots who, at the risk of life and fortune, not only defended our country, but raised it to the rank of a nation among the nations of the earth. We thank Thee that Thou hast blessed us with a Constitution and a Government which, if duly administered, secures to all — high and low, rich and poor, their invaluable rights and privileges. We ask Thy blessing on our President and Congress, on our judges, and on all our civil officers. Make them, we beseech Thee, ministers for good to Thy people. Bless the ministers of the Gospel and make them happy instruments in Thy hands of destroying Satan's kingdom, and of building up the Redeemer's.

We thank Thee that in Thy good providence we are assembled to lay the foundation of a monument, not for the purpose of idolatry but for a standing monument to rising and future generations, that they may be excited to search the history of our country, and learn to know the greatness of Thy loving kindness to our nation. May the services of this day be performed under the most profound awe of Thy glorious majesty, and be an acceptable sacrifice. We thank Thee for the unparalleled progress in arts and sciences; in agriculture and manufactures; in navigation and commerce, whereby our land has become the glory of all lands. We thank Thee that the light which came from the East and enlightened the world, is now reflected back, and that the nations of Europe are now learning lessons of wisdom from our infant nation.

We pray that these rays may be spread with greater power, until the rod of oppression shall be broken through the whole world, and all mankind become, free and wise and happy. We humbly ask and offer all in the name of Jesus Christ, our great and glorious Mediator, through whom be glory unto God the Father, now and forever. Amen.

HYMN

BY THE REV. JOHN PIERPONT.

Tune— “Old Hundred” Arranged by Mark DeVoto

**1 O, is not this a holy spot!
'Tis the high place of Freedom's birth:—
God of our fathers! is it not
The holiest spot of all the earth?**

**2 Quenched is thy flame on Horeb's side:
The robber roams o'er Sinai now;
And those old men, thy seers, abide
No more on Zion's mournful brow.**

**3 But on this hill thou, Lord, hast dwelt,
Since round its head the war-cloud curled,
And wrapped our fathers, where they knelt
In prayer and battle for a world.**

**4 Here sleeps their dust: 'tis holy ground
And we, the children of the brave,
From the four winds are gathered round,
To lay our offering on their grave**

**5 Free as the winds around us blow,
Free as yon waves below us spread,
We rear a pile, that long shall throw
Its shadow on their sacred bed.**

**6 But on their deeds no shade shall fall,
While o'er that couch thy sun shall flame:
Thine ear was bowed to hear their call,
And thy right hand shall guard their fame.**

ADDRESS

**BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE ASSOCIATION
Daniel Webster (Mike Douglas)**

HYMN

BY THE REV. JAMES FLINT.

Tune— “St. Martin’s” arranged by David Stevens

**1 O glorious day! that saw th’ array
Of freemen in their might,
When here they stood, unused to blood,
Yet dared the horrid fight;**

**2 The sons are met to own the debt
Due to their fathers’ fame;
And here they place the column’s base
To bear their deathless name.**

**3 ’Tis not that here the victor’s cheer
Rung o’er the falling foe,—
That earth here drank of many a rank
Th’ life-blood’s gushing flow.**

**4 The pledge here given to earth and heaven,
Freemen to live or die—
This gives their fame its sacred claim
To immortality.**

**5 To God, who willed a state to build,
Based on the rights of man,
Glory we give, who this day live
To hail th’ accomplished plan.**

CONCLUDING PRAYER

BY THE REV. JAMES WALKER (the Rev. J. D. Mangrum)

Walker's Ode.

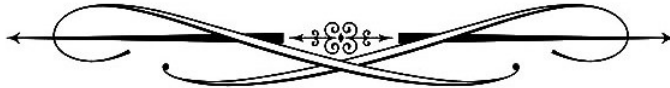
Tune — "*Ye Mariners of England*" arranged by Mark DeVoto

1 Why hangs the sword unhonoured ?
Why sleeps the weary gun,
And why your eagle folds his wing,
As if death's work were done?
It is, that on this sacred hill
Your gallant fathers bled,
And your shore
Never more
Shall bear the hostile tread;
Then treasure till life's latest hour,
The memory of the dead.

2 They knew the hour of slavery
Brings ages of despair,
And they cast away the servile chain
For willing slaves to bear:
Too proud were they to bend the knee
Till life's last power was fled;
Then they gave
To the grave
Both the young and hoary head;
Oh! treasure till life's latest hour,
The memory of the dead.

3 Oh ! that those sons of glory
From every grave would start
To welcome now the Nation's Friend,
The dear to every heart,
The Pilgrim to their sainted tomb
By high devotion led,
To declare
And to share
The honours of the dead;
To treasure till his life's last hour,
The memory of the dead.

4 The day went down that evening
In glory and in tears;
But lasting honour crowns them now
Through all departing years:
And, now the star of glory burns
Where once those tears were shed,
Let us raise
Songs of praise
In memory of the dead;
And treasure till life's latest hour,
The memory of the dead.



Benediction: the Rev. John Sheridan

"Columbia Land of Liberty" by John Bray
arranged by David Stevens

To Liberty's enraptured sight,
when first Columbia's regions shone
She hailed it from her starry height
and smiling claimed it as her own.
Fair Land the Goddess cried be free,
soil of my choice to fame arise.
She spoke and strait Heavn's minstrelsy,
Swell's the loud chorus through the Skies

War blew her Clarion loud and long
Oppression led his legions on
To battle rushed the patriot throng
And soon the Glorious day was won.
Each bleeding Freeman smil'd in death
Flying he saw his country's foes
And wafted by his latest breath
To heaven the cheerful pæan arose

All hail forever great and free:
Columbia Land of Liberty

Content I die for thou art free
Columbia Land of Liberty

And shall we ever dim the fires
That flame on Freedom's kindred shrines?
Shall glory's children shame their sires?
Shall cowards spring from Heroes' loins?
No—by the blood our fathers shed
O Freedom in thy holy cause
When streaming from the martyred dead
It sealed and sanctified their laws

We swear to keep the great and free
Columbia land of Liberty

Authentic Odes and Music discovered and reconstructed by
F. Lee Eiseman and performed by Dee Opera Orchestra and Chorus,
Stephanie Beatrice, conductor.

Biographical Notes and Ephemera

Today's Award-Winning Conductor and Music Director **Stephanie Beatrice** has been praised as "A Force of Nature with a Baton" praised for her "Smart" musical direction and capturing the "dynamism of the music and ever-shifting moods with great sensitivity." The Founder-Artistic Director of Dee Opera and the Beatrice MasterSingers, she also currently serves as Music Director of the Boston based Cambridge Chamber Ensemble, Music Director of Calliope, Music Director of the Philharmonic Society of Arlington, Arlington Belmont Chorale and Chamber Chorus.

Walter Janes (1779 - 1827), a farmer from Ashford, Conn. was a Masonic Grand Master who served as General Putnam's representative at the Grand Lodge. He became well known as a teacher and composer of music and also as a poet, though he was a mason by trade. In 1807 he published "Harmonic Minstrelsy," a collection of sacred music in three and four parts running to 104 pages. He taught many singing schools and led the 1000 musicians at the 1825 cornerstone-laying ceremony.

Joseph Warren (1741-1775) practiced medicine and surgery in Boston, and began associating with John Hancock and Samuel Adams. After the Boston Massacre, Warren became chairman of the Committee of Safety, raising militias and superintending the procurement of gunpowder, arms, and other supplies. When Hancock and Adams returned from the Continental Congress, they had learned a bounty was placed on their heads by the British crown. Joseph Warren directed Paul Revere and William Dawes to warn the leaders that the British were coming.

He commanded troops at the Battle of Bunker Hill on June 17th, where legend says he joined the battle line as a regular volunteer. On the third British assault, Warren was shot and instantly killed. When the British took the field and began burying the dead, they put Warren in a mass grave. His remains were later identified by Paul Revere, who was able to identify him by the false set of teeth he had fashioned for him. *American Battlefield Trust*

The Rev. Joseph Thaxter, who offered the prayer, was a native of Hingham, and graduate of Cambridge in 1768. While preparing for the ministry he was a revolutionary volunteer and fought in the battles of Concord bridge and Bunker Hill. He served afterward as army chaplain surgeon under Washington at Cambridge and at White Plains. He was minister at Edgartown in Martha's Vineyard for 47 years, from 1780 to 1827. In 1825, when eighty years old, he was chosen to make the consecrating prayer when the cornerstone of Bunker Hill monument was laid, on the 50th anniversary of the battle. By virtue of his office as Grand Master of the Massachusetts Lodge of Free Masons in 1825, he laid the cornerstone of the Monument. Daniel Webster, the eloquent orator of the occasion, and Lafayette, the nation's honored guest, who assisted in laying the cornerstone with an immense audience of people, probably the largest ever gathered at that time in this country, reverently listened to the prayer.

John Pierpont (1785 - 1866) poet, patriot, preacher, philanthropist, was the grandfather of the financier J. P. Morgan. At 15 he entered Yale College and he graduated in 1804. After some years of practicing law, he earned a D. D. from the Harvard Divinity School. As a poet, he is remembered best by a few hymns. His series of Readers introduced the pupils to the best literature and exercised a most refining influence over the taste and literary culture of the times. He was for several years a member of the Boston School Committee and established English High School in 1821. "As a preacher, he was eloquent, incisive, prophetic. As a reformer, he was bold, steadfast, unflinching. As a man, he was upright, full of tenderness and sympathy, a Puritan in his devotion to duty, a patriot in his ideals of good citizenship, a philanthropist in his love of all mankind."

Poet and preacher **James Flint** served as pastor of the East Unitarian Church in Salem after having graduated from Harvard College in 1802. Husband of Lydia Harriet DeBlois, son of James and Mary Hart Flint, he was born in North Reading in 1799 and died in Salem in 1855. His Collection "Hymns for the Christian Church and Home" (Boston: James Munroe, 1843) is considered important and is available in facsimile editions.

James Walker (1794 - 1874) attended the Lawrence Academy in Groton, Massachusetts (1801-1810) and graduated from Harvard University in 1814. After graduation, Walker taught for one year at the Phillips Exeter Academy and then returned to Harvard University to study at the Divinity School (1817). Walker spent the next 20 years as a Unitarian minister for the Harvard Church in Charlestown, Massachusetts. He helped organize the American Unitarian Association (1825), contributed to American Unitarian Tracts, and edited the Unitarian movement's journal, the Christian Examiner, from 1831 to 1839.

In his writings, Walker discussed various philosophical questions involving ethical theory, natural religion, and phrenology. His most important work was “The Philosophy of Man’s Spiritual Nature in Regard to the Foundation of Faith” (1834), a combination of several philosophical arguments supporting the existence of God.

In 1853, Walker was elected President of Harvard University. His administration of the school was uneventful, and no great reforms were instituted by him. The only new subject added to the course curriculum was music. Evening prayers were discontinued in 1855, the Appleton Chapel was completed in 1858, and Boylston Hall was built in 1857. Suffering from various infirmities, Walker resigned in 1860. After retiring from Harvard University, Walker spent his time writing, lecturing, and preaching. He devoted his studies to philosophy and literature. When the American Civil War started, Walker gave speeches in support of the Union cause. Walker died on December 23, 1874. At his death, he left his books and the bulk of his estate, \$15,000, to the Harvard College Library and a personal reputation of modesty and good humor.

—from *The Papers of James Walker*



George Walker

**We gratefully acknowledge generous grants from the
Ellis L. Phillips Foundation, The Massachusetts Charitable Mechanic
Association, The City of Boston, and the Mass. Society of the Cincinnati**

Grand Marshall, Lee Eiseman; Annette Tecce, President, Bunker Hill Monument Association

The Musicians

***Sopranos:* Erin Dilworth, Kate Wood; *altos:* Eliza Howells, Darby
Clinard; *tenors:* Michael Gonzalez, Thai Johnson;
basses: Raphael Laden-Guindon, Thaddeus Bell**

**Ming-hang Tam, *concertmaster;* Kristina Sharra, *violin;* Yaisiya Sokolova
viola, Yhasmin Valenzuela, *cello;* Seth MacLeod, *double bass;* Grace
Helmke, *flute;* Kristi Scaccia, *horn;* Matt Dao, *trumpet;* Kevin Virgilio,
*trombone***