



Freedom's Way National Heritage Area

Fall 2011

Hollis, NH Strollin' & Rollin' Huge Success

On September 24, 2011 the Freedom's Way National Heritage Area featured Hollis, NH as the **2011 Strollin' & Rollin'** town. The Lawrence Barn (28 Depot Road) served as the starting point for self-guided walking, driving and biking tours through the historic and natural sites of this beautiful, rural town.

Freedom's Way Heritage Association is dedicated to the preservation of the important historic, cultural and natural resources of the Freedom's Way National Heritage Area, which includes 45 towns in New Hampshire and Massachusetts that have shared a common heritage since our country was founded. These communities share a common revolutionary history that began in Concord and Lexington where the opening engagements of the American Revolution took place on April 19, 1775. This region is home to a series of historic events that influenced the formation of democratic institutions and the intellectual traditions that underpin the concepts of American freedoms, democracy, conservation and social justice.

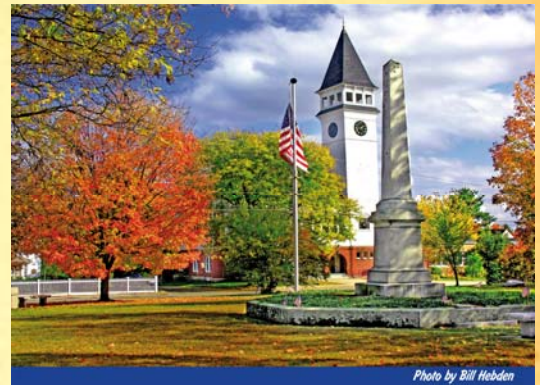


Photo by Bill Hebdon

Hollis, New Hampshire

The **Hollis Historical Society**, the **Hollis Heritage Commission** and the **Beaver Brook Association** partnered to present the **Strollin' & Rollin' Heritage Tours** on the same day as the annual

Continued on page 3.

Please join us for the
ANNUAL MEETING

of the
Freedom's Way Heritage Association

October 16, 2011

Cocktail Reception at 5:00 p.m. Annual Meeting & Dinner at 6:00 p.m.

Harley House Inn

909 Massachusetts Avenue/Route 2A in Lunenburg, MA

Cash Bar Registration Required 978-772-3654

TALES OF HAUNTED HERITAGE OVER DESSERT



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear Friends of Freedom's Way,

Fall is truly the height of our year in Freedom's Way. Mother Nature joins all our communities in featuring the spectacular beauty and the fascinating history of New England villages throughout this National Heritage Area. If your community is planning a special event and you wish to have it promoted throughout the Freedom's Way network, please let us know about it. This fall will be especially busy for Freedom's Way Heritage Association as we continue to develop our plans and funding in order to most effectively serve the forty-five communities in the Area.



Pam Resor, President

When Freedom's Way National Heritage Area became official, our first requirement as an association was to develop a management plan and begin implementation. As part of that process we have held public meetings, and drafted mission and vision statements. Our first public meeting, held in January, gave all attendees the opportunity to express their wants and needs (and maybe hopes and dreams?) for how Freedom's Way Heritage Association can be of assistance to the many stakeholders throughout the area. Proposals ranged from creating a Speakers Bureau to networking opportunities for members and organizations. Continuing our services of developing themed activities and standard frameworks, or templates for activities to assist communities in their planning ranked high in the priorities, as did linking to the business community. Providing online information, connection, and a calendar of activities was viewed as key to a successful plan. Seeking opportunities to share expertise, especially in technical areas and provide workshops and other training events was often mentioned in the discussion.

In March, a second public meeting, with special guest Dorr Fox from Preservation Mass, discussed assistance opportunities through the National Trust for Historic Preservation.

Throughout the first six months of the year the Association has worked on the Mission and Vision statements, which will be presented to the public this fall. We look forward to the participation of a wide number of stakeholders as we continue to hold public meetings to refine our management plan and move forward to implementation. These meetings are your opportunity to participate in the process and we hope to see you involved!

Freedom's Way Heritage Association

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Hugh Field,
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Freedom's Way Heritage Association serves the Communities of Acton, Arlington, Ashburnham, Ashby, Ayer, Bedford, Bolton, Boxborough, Carlisle, Clinton, Concord, Devens, Dunstable, Fitchburg, Gardner, Groton, Harvard, Hudson, Lancaster, Leominster, Lexington, Lincoln, Littleton, Lunenburg, Malden, Maynard, Medford, Pepperell, Princeton, Shirley, Sterling, Stow, Sudbury, Townsend, Westford, Westminster, Winchendon and Woburn in Massachusetts. Amherst, Brookline, Greenville, Hollis, Mason, Milford, Nashua and New Ipswich in New Hampshire.

National Preservation Month May 2011 **THIS PLACE MATTERS**

Freedom's Way kicked off Strollin' & Rollin' mini tours of Ayer, Devens, Harvard, Littleton and Shirley. Visit www.freedomsway.org to learn more.



(Above) The Bull Run Restaurant declared "This Place Matters" for Preservation Month, and generously sponsored **Strollin' & Rollin': Spotlight on Shirley** to celebrate the town's heritage. (Right) Isabella Reich practices Preservation and walking on ramps at the Shirley Meeting House.

Hollis Rollin' & Strollin', continued from page 1.

Beaver Brook Fall Festival and Art Show. Visitors participated in self-guided walking tours around the town's historic district or could drive or bike through the farming countryside. Any of the 9 connected heritage tours provided views of the Beaver Brook nature preserve, Hollis farms, historic homesteads and four museums – The Wheeler House, the Always Ready Engine House, the Pine Hill Schoolhouse and the Gould House (restored from the original town of Monson, NH 1737-1770). Exhibits of historic town assets were on display at the Lawrence Barn to highlight the many treasures that tell the story of the town's rich heritage. A FREE guidebook with tour maps for all visitors was made possible by a donation from the Marie LeDoux Foundation.

Special thanks to all our sponsors and the many volunteers who made this event possible!

NOTES

from the Executive Director

To All Our Friends in Freedom's Way,

The strength of this organization has always been its ability to build partnerships and to take on common goals in a way that any one organization cannot do alone. Freedom's Way consists of not only the Freedom's Way Heritage Association, but of the historical and conservation organizations, Chambers of Commerce and Visitors' Bureaus, the State and Local governments, towns and individuals. And we exist because of the belief (confirmed by the U.S. Congress, I might add) that we live in a place that is special to and *critical* to the history of the United States of America.

This is a big, beautiful idea—*what ever does it mean?!?*

It means that

... **Everyone who takes an interest** in Freedom's Way can participate in our tours and talks. (See *Strollin' & Rollin'* page 1, *Harvard Historical Society*, page 10.)

... **Everyone who believes in the promise** of this organization can join us for public meetings to shape the future endeavors of our National Heritage Area. (See *President's Message*, page 2.)

... **Each town within the boundaries** of Freedom's Way has their own story to tell that, when linked together, shows the powerful history and beauty of this region. (See *Strollin' & Rollin'*, page 1.)

... **We have a responsibility** and an opportunity to carefully plan for the future. With the help of planning consultant Jon Lane and many participants in our public meetings, the Board has drafted Mission and Vision Statements, which are available for your review on our website:

www.freedomsway.org.

*We live in a place
that is special to
and critical to the
history of the
United States of
America.*

... **We can dream bigger.** Right now we are developing a thematic trail through Freedom's Way following Thoreau's Footsteps (*page 6-7*). Our fascinating Oral History project documenting Farmer's Voices has bloomed into an innovative project that kicked off with an Agricultural Think Tank this past September (*page 10*).

... **We have to communicate** and build community. The Freedom's Way Heritage Association will share the news of this past year and the plans for the coming year at our Annual Meeting on October 16. I do hope to see you there.

We here at Freedom's Way have been inspired by these events and are looking ahead to many more opportunities this coming season. I appreciate your support, your membership, and your continued investment in Freedom's Way.

Alene W. Rich

FWHA at the AAA Marketplace

by Hugh Field

From March 3rd to 6th, the American Automobile Association (AAA) held its 8th Annual Travel Marketplace (information fair) at Gillette Stadium in Foxborough. John Ott and I went on Saturday, March 5th to help out at the National Park Service (NPS) table. For those who have not been to the area recently, it should be noted that the huge Patriots' stadium complex is an amazing change from the minimalist, cheap-looking old Foxboro Stadium. Once one finds the door and enters, a great escalator takes one up to the exhibition area. We met Paul Revere in costume on his way to the Lexington exhibit. At the end of the second floor was the area for NPS New England and its private partner Eastern National, which sells NPS mementos.

The NPS is not allowed to sell items, but we did a great job giving them away! Our main item was a brand new "Passport" booklet that describes the 23 places, mostly in Massachusetts and New Hampshire, which are part of the NPS. Freedom's Way National Heritage Area appears with a description along with our partner, Minute Man National Historic Park, which is within Freedom's Way's National Heritage Area. John handed out our Freedom's Way flyer with the passport. In addition we had pens, pencils,

badges, bumper stickers, tattoos (for the kids), and Freedom's Way buttons. There was also a display of a set of symbols that visitors could view with their smart phones, which would link it to various pages of NPS's website. We had never seen that before!

Our guide for the day was Barbara Dixon from Blackstone Valley NHP, and also Emily Prigot from the New Bedford Whaling Park, both resplendent in NPS uniforms, as well as a couple of ladies in colonial costume. The

new and the old. We told each visitor that once each place in the Passport is stamped when visited, it can be exchanged for a free "silver" edition of the NPS National Passport, otherwise sold by Eastern National.

The booth was lively and colorful with posters and balloons, and hundreds of people; there were slide shows as well. It got

busy as visitors took the passports and guides to the various parks, including the original one, Acadia in Maine, and also Blackstone, Roger Williams, Springfield Armory, Salem Maritime, Lowell, the Adams Houses, New Bedford, the Saugus Iron Works, and many other Historic Parks. Sites within New England are generally day trips, while NPS sites much further away like Yellowstone or Zion National Park would be the



Hugh Field distributes information about Freedom's Way and the National Parks of New England's Passport at the AAA Travel Marketplace, held in March at Gillette Stadium, Foxboro, MA.

Continued on page 12.

In Thoreau's Footsteps

He's "just a walk away" for many – Jennifer Ingram, Walden Pond

Freedom's Way is about the ideas, places, and people who shape our thinking about democracy, freedom and stewardship. Our area encompasses 45 singular towns that produced nationally renowned patriots, writers, environmentalists, thinkers, and visionaries. Today, more than 150 years after the publication of *Walden*, Henry David Thoreau continues to invite 21st-century people to "go walking" and to live more simply in a hectic complex world.

During two planning forums with historical societies, libraries, museums, and recreational destinations, people were asked to consider how HDT's words and actions linger on in the 39 Freedom's Way towns where he traveled, surveyed, and lectured. Held at The Thoreau Farm Birth House in March and at Indian Hill Music Center in September, these conversations were co-chaired by Heritage Institute Advisors **Corinne H. Smith**, a Thoreau researcher and reference librarian at the Mondor-Eagen Library, Anna Maria College; and **Jayne Gordon**, Director of Education and Public Programs at the Massachusetts Historical Society.

Corinne Smith shared her research and maps that inspired participants to create Thoreau experiences that would become a centerpiece to FW's trail efforts. Smith took the group "around" Freedom Way towns and places where the Transcendentalist appeared. Jayne Gordon encouraged everyone to explore common themes while developing effective ways to collaborate and leverage support. Participants shared ideas and resources and programs like the exciting on-line Mapping Thoreau's Country project coordinated by The Thoreau Society.

More HDT conversations are being planned for 2012, along with the launching of a new Thoreau trail brochure and In Thoreau's Footsteps collaborative events with interested towns. Freedom's Way National Heritage Area looks forward to offering trail and program outreach throughout the 45 communities that make up this great "New England Landscape of American Ideals."

And on your next exploration, by foot, bike or car, take Thoreau's words along as inspiration, and observe anew the nearby natural and built landscapes that connect us to the past and the future.

"Two or three hours' walking will carry me to as strange a country as I expect ever to see. . . . The walker in the familiar fields ... sometimes finds himself in another land. . . . The landscape lies far and fair within, and the deepest thinker is the farthest travelled." —Henry David Thoreau, "Walking" (1862)



Henry David Thoreau, portrayed by actor Richard Smith, joined the meeting to discuss his experiences in numerous towns in Freedom's Way.

Lane Provides Spark for Fledging NHA



Jonathan S. Lane, AIA, AICP

Jon Lane, Architect, Urban Designer, and Planner has had a long and fascinating career in heritage preservation and development. Lane earned a Bachelor in Architecture from MIT and Masters degrees in Architecture and City Planning from the University of Pennsylvania. While President of icon architecture, inc., Lane completed the feasibility study for the Freedom's Way Heritage Area. We are pleased to be working with him once more!

Jon Lane has partnered with Freedom's Way to provide Strategic Planning Services for the beginning stages of our Management Plan. Thanks to Mr. Lane we have blended the comments from our public meetings into a Mission and Vision for Freedom's Way. The draft statements are available on our

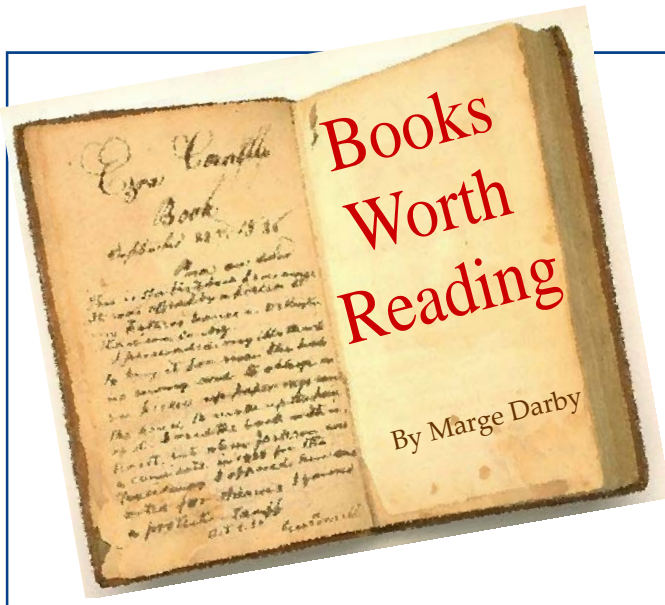
website: www.freedomsway.org.

Continuing in this process, Mr. Lane will help Freedom's Way to frame the next steps of the Management Plan. His extensive work with the National Park Service and with National Heritage Areas in over a dozen states has proven to be the spark that has enabled us to move forward as a fledgling National Heritage Area and we head into the coming season with great momentum.

Thoreau Conversations

Educational Advisory: Corinne Smith, Anna Maria College Library; Jayne Gordon, Massachusetts Historical Society; and Maud Ayson, Freedom's Way Board of Directors

Attendees in March and September: Maria Cole, Minute Man NPS; Mike Frederick, Thoreau Society; Susan Frey, The Walden Woods Project; Susan Gallagher, Mapping Thoreau Country Project/ Thoreau Society; Nancy Grohol, The Thoreau Farm Birth House; Jennifer Ingram, Walden Pond State Reservation; Ruth Rhonemus, Ayer Historical Commission; Alan Rohwer, Boxborough Historical Society; Sharon Bernard, Director, Fitchburg Public Library; Mary Wilson, Director, Harvard Public Library; Denis Wagner, Curator, Harvard Historical Society; John and Heather Anderson, Medford Historical Society; Denise Morrissey, Freedom's Way Board of Directors, Superintendent, Wachusett State Mountain Reservation, MA DCR.



After the Boston Tea Party, the Boston Committee of Correspondence considered it would be important to build united support among the states. Realizing that task would take time, the Committee also began garnering support from the Massachusetts communities. A request to try to collect the "Sentiments of the Gentlemen of Your Town" and report those results back to the Boston Committee of Correspondence was sent out to the Selectmen and merchants of the other port towns.

It was soon realized that it was important to encourage support from towns other than ports of entry. The Boston Committee decided to communicate to the towns' Committees of Correspondence in the outlying areas about the actions of the British.

In order to facilitate an agreement, the Boston Committee drew up a form of a covenant "to be subscribed by all adult persons of both sexes." The Covenant and an accompanying circular were sent out on June 8, 1774. The Covenant was titled the *Solemn Act and Covenant*. Many towns objected to various provisions of the Covenant and so they were encouraged to accept only those provisions of the Covenant they wanted and delete those that were unacceptable.

Support for Boston poured in from all over the province. More than eighty towns sent moral and material encouragement. The towns generally accepted the principle of non-consumption of luxuries as a test of moral self-denial, but many refrained from adopting the Covenant for fear of unfairly penalizing local merchants. Many towns enthusiastically entered into some form of boycott covenant, while expressly rejecting some of Boston's provisions.

As the year progressed, the significance of the Boston Committee of Correspondence declined, although most towns recognized the sacrifices and hardships that the citizens of Boston continued to endure. Not content to simply voice support for Boston, towns began to exert their own wishes and influence through County conventions. Although these conventions never had legal authority, they served as vehicles for achieving unified action. A growing consensus was emerging—towns would maintain order and discipline, while organizing resistance and political action. The conventions followed the models of town meetings, electing moderators and committees and subcommittees. Generally, the conventions were based upon an underlying premise that the people acting through their town governments possessed sovereign power. As the initiator of events, the Boston Committee of Correspondence had succeeded in providing the framework for a revolution-

Summary and quotations for this article were taken from: *Revolutionary Politics in Massachusetts: The Boston Committee of Correspondence and the Towns 1772-1774* by Richard D. Brown, (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1970)

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ary zeal to flower. County conventions called for donations to Boston, and days of fasting and prayer to underscore the sense of moral obligation. And towns thanked Boston for their effort to enlighten the populace.

The Town of Westford wrote to the Boston Committee that the pamphlet and covenant had opened the "eyes of the many who have not the opportunity of informing themselves concerning these important matters." Another town felt the covenant so inspiring that it was suggested that it be read annually at a public meeting.

By April of 1773 at least 119 of the existing 260 Towns and districts in Massachusetts had taken some action and at least 25 more responded within the succeeding five months. These figures, from the record of the Boston Committee are not as accurate as local records.

Freedom's Way would appreciate receiving documentation of any Town records that you would be willing to bring to our attention pertaining to correspondence with Boston or votes taken in conjunction with the Solemn Act and Covenant.

Join Freedom's Way

There is no other organization in this region that brings such diverse interest as museums, cultural institutions, government officials, businesses, and educators, to capitalize on our regional features. Our cultural heritage resources are plentiful, but the larger community may not have grasped its potential. If you have been receiving this newsletter without ever making a contribution, consider changing your status now . With your help, we can do this together.



Renewal New Membership

Annual Membership Categories

- Individual \$35
- Family/Nonprofits/Community \$50
- Business Roundtable \$100

Supporting Membership Categories

- Minuteman \$250-\$499
- Thoreau Associate \$500-\$999
- Patriot's Circle \$1,000-\$4,999
- Golden Eagle \$5,000 & up

Please Print

Name: _____

Address: _____

Town: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: (____) _____ Email: _____

Important for email newsletter and other FWHA information

Thank You!

Protecting the Future of Heritage Landscapes

On Wednesday, September 21st, **Freedom's Way Heritage Association** convened a diverse group of farmers, planners, and educators from Massachusetts and New Hampshire to help us explore initiatives to serve our 45 communities. Taking place at Thayer Memorial Library in Lancaster, MA, these experienced thinkers and doers shared common successes, educational outreach, emerging issues, and explored future collaborations promoting farm viability.

Landscape preservation, economic development, rural character and open space retention are priorities in the towns that encompass our 994 square-mile footprint and population of more than 750,000 people. Freedom's Way's "Farmers Voices" oral history project and *Strollin' & Rollin'* heritage tours affirm our commitment to foster connections and alliances promoting preservation strategies for the long-term sustainability of our working landscapes and historic community character.

Supported by a generous grant from the **Bruce J. Anderson Foundation**, Freedom's Way Heritage Association launched a pilot project that will identify ideas and actions aimed at providing opportunities for



The Valley Farm, Shirley, MA

increasing agriculture's value to the area's economy, tourism, and quality of life.

Past BJA support enabled FWHA to offer kits and workshops on doing oral history interviews using community volunteers. Learn more about this program at www.freedomsway.org/oralhistory

Farm Advisory participants: Brain Donahue, Assoc. Prof. of Environmental Studies, Brandeis; Wayne Castonguay, Director, Ctr. for Agriculture & Environment, The Trustees of Reservations; Dorothy Suput, Exec. Director, Carrot Project; Bobbi Spiegelman, Board, Farm-School Groton Local; Joanne Dinardo, President and Peggy Christoforo, Event Co-Chair, Friends of Sholan Farms; Jennifer Hashley, Director, New Entry Sustainable Farming Project, Tufts; Stacy Purslow, NH Farm to School Coordinator, UNH's Sustainability Academy; Eleanor Whittemore, Owner, Brookdale Fruit Farm; Maria Moreira, Proj. Director, Flats Mentor Farm; Sonia Schloemann, State Coordinator Northeast SARE, UMass Center for Agriculture; George Hamilton, Extension Coordinator, Education Center UNH Agricultural Cooperative Extension Services; Kathryn Ruhf, Co-Director, Land for Good NH/MA; Denise Morrissey, Supt. Wachusett State Mountain Reservation, MA

Old Houses: Sharing Stories

In May, we partnered with the Harvard Historical Society to begin “conversations” about identifying the age and uniqueness of older buildings. Few older homes look the same as the year they were built – houses grow to accommodate growing families. Subsequent owners made idiosyncratic changes: an ell for Grandpa, a shop in back for a home business. Today, the steward of an older home may want to know the age of various interior elements.



Old photograph shows rear of Houghton house and various additions.

To help explain how to identify age and offer a brief overview about old houses in general, we asked our own in-house expert, **Robert Adam, FWHA Board member** and former faculty member of the North Bennett Street School, to share some of his knowledge.

His presentation gave attendees an opportunity to learn various aspects of dating older houses. Of great interest were his sketches showing how houses grew. He used two houses as illustrations: the **Houghton House** in Still River and the former **Coolidge Farm House** on Brown Road in Harvard.

Most historians prefer buildings to remain

on their original sites. Occasionally the only way to save an old house is to move it. Joining our conversation, **Ed and Susan Leeming**, shared their poignant and compelling story of how they saved a house in Bedford, dismantled it and then rebuilt it in Harvard, where it sits in a little orchard.

What’s the point? First, how important is it for a building to remain in its current location? When you are remodeling how can you decide what is best to do? How do you modernize? Should I change the doors? How do you learn to know the age of a house?

Robert Adam described elements of older houses by way of demonstrating the enormous difficulties in assessing older homes. There are many pieces to the old house jigsaw puzzle. He has plans to return to the Historical Society this winter to talk more about his work on the Houghton House.

FWHA offered this program with the Harvard Historical Society as part of **National Preservation Month** and as a way to whet people’s appetites for more such offerings in the future.

Visit www.harvardhistory.org to learn more about the Harvard Historical Society offerings.

The Harvard Historical Society is located at 215 Still River Road in Harvard.

Freedom's Way Heritage Association

New England Landscape
of
American Ideals

Serving 45 Communities in
Massachusetts
&
New Hampshire



Freedom's Way

100 Sherman Avenue, Suite 2
Devens, MA 01434

www.freedomsway.org

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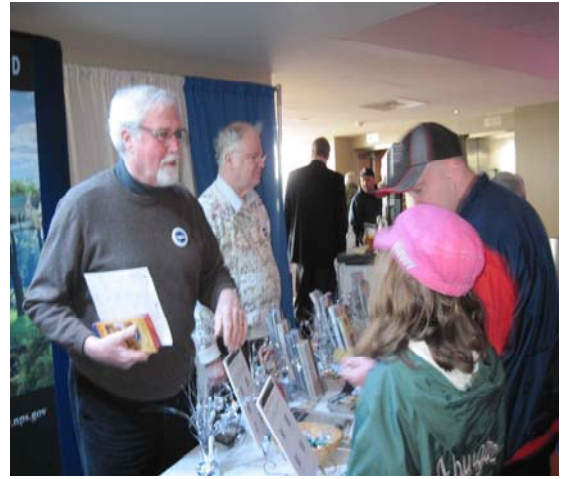
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focus of a vacation. It was impressive how many visitors were park enthusiasts who had already been to several of the 23 sites but were ready for more.

In short order our 3½ hour time span was up, and we went for lunch at the other end of the huge display area, passing displays for places all

over the Northeast, Canada and beyond. After a bite to eat at Dunkin Donuts we picked up flyers and other free items. The building was warm, a welcome change from recent weeks back home, the presenters were enthusiastic, and we finally left with a couple of bags of flyers each. For anyone who wants information before planning a trip, whether to an NPS park or a scenic spot, the Travel Marketplace is an excellent place to go.

And best of all— **Freedom's Way** got its name out there!



FWHA board members John Ott (left) and Hugh Field (right) at the AAA Travel Marketplace.

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National Park Service: Freedom's Way Partner

Since 1916, the National Park Service has been caring for our national parks, preserving and protecting America's special places. The NPS also provides technical, planning and limited financial assistance to National Heritage Areas, including the Freedom's Way National Heritage Area. The NPS is a partner and advisor, with decision-making authority remaining in the hands of local people and organizations.

