



# *Massachusetts National Guard & Salem Veterans*

*Present the 386th Muster*

Featuring The Dedication of  
The Restored Washington Arch  
Saturday, April 22, 2023 at 10:00 AM

In 2010, the City of Salem assigned the Washington Arch restoration to the Salem Common Neighborhood Association (SCNA). The SCNA thanks all our donors and members for making this historical initiative a reality. We also thank our elected representatives as well as City staff for their help.

The artistry of Skylight Studios in recreating the carvings and the preservation efforts of the McIntire originals by the PEM was also critical. The SCNA is honored to have the Arch be a part of the Annual Muster and thankful for the current and past service of all our military members.



**Our Mission:** The Salem Common Neighborhood Association (SCNA), Salem's oldest neighborhood association, is dedicated to the improvement, preservation, and protection of the Salem Common Neighborhood and the Historic Salem Common. A non-profit, SCNA is devoted to the principle of fostering goodwill and camaraderie among neighbors.

**Beginning in 1775 with “Leslie’s Retreat”, the first armed resistance to British authority, Salem began its significant role in the American Revolution. Its privateers would account for over half of all captured British vessels.**

Six years after the war ended, President George Washington used his first year in office to visit all 13 states to build support for the new federal government.

On October 29, 1789, celebrations were held throughout Salem when President Washington visited to thank local militiamen and sailors for their wartime service. Washington predicted a great future for Salem and his words proved prophetic.

In the decades following, Salem’s hugely profitable trade with China and East Asia transformed this hardscrabble seaport into a global powerhouse. By the early 1800s, Salem had become the wealthiest city per capita in the United States and its port was one of the world’s busiest.

In 1801, wealthy merchant families funded the transformation of Salem Common into a park enclosing a training ground for the militia. In 1805, these families and the town commissioned Salem’s own Samuel McIntire, a distinguished wood carver and architect, to design and construct four decorative entrances to the park. The main entrance, styled after a Roman triumphal arch, was designated “The Washington Arch” as a tribute to Washington’s legacy.

The Washington Arch featured McIntire’s ornate carvings, including an oval portrait of Washington flanked by swags of drapery and topped by a golden eagle, symbolizing the recently formed country. The Arch stood in the Common until it was removed in 1850 when the park underwent extensive renovations including new walkways and the addition of an elaborate cast iron fence. The streets around the Common were renamed in Washington’s honor.

In 1976, Salem’s Bicentennial Commission authorized the creation of a smaller replica of the original Washington Arch to be located near the Hawthorne Hotel. Unfortunately, this Arch deteriorated in subsequent years. In 2010, the City authorized relocating the Arch to its current location and requested that the Salem Common Neighborhood Association (SCNA) raise funds to restore the Arch. Having raised the needed funds, the SCNA worked with the City in 2022 to repaint the Arch, add decorative brick work, new landscaping and an explanatory sign.

In April 2023, restoration was completed with the unveiling of the carvings of Washington, the accompanying swags and the shining golden eagle. We recognize the work of carver Skylight Studios for their stunning recreations of McIntire’s originals, which had been carefully preserved by the Peabody Essex Museum.

Thanks to the men and women of the Massachusetts National Guard who have included the Arch in their Annual Muster. We honor their unbroken service since 1636 and memorialize the Common as the site of their first muster in 1637. The lineage of the original North, South, and East regiments continues today in the 181st and 182nd Infantry, the 101st Field Artillery, and the 101st Engineers, earning the Massachusetts National Guard the title of “Nation’s First.”

Thanks to our donors and members for funding the Arch restoration. Special thanks to Lt. Governor Driscoll, Senator Lovely & DA Tucker for ongoing support.

**To support the Arch restoration and other projects or to learn more about the Common’s history, please go to SCNA’s website: [www.salemcommon.org](http://www.salemcommon.org).**