

## The Knox Trail - 1976 Reenactment



*In the winter of 1976, during the American Bicentennial, a group of living history interpreters and volunteers reenacted the trek of General Henry Knox from Fort Ticonderoga to Boston in 1776.*

*This webpage provides a glimpse of that event, which for most participants was a definitive experience among many in that Bicentennial year.*

The Massachusetts Bicentennial Commission conceived of the idea of reenacting the trek and enlisted Albert Robbins of Mechanicville as the organizer of the New York State portion of the route.

Using clues in the Knox diary written during the original expedition, as well as the 56 Knox Trail monuments erected along the route by New York and Massachusetts in 1927, the trek was planned in great detail.



On December 10th opening ceremonies were held at Fort Ticonderoga, and the New York group arrived at the Massachusetts state line on January 10th. There the New England contingent took over and headed on to Cambridge, arriving 17 days later.

One of the features of the reenactment that caught the public imagination was the collection of authentic wagons, carts and period artillery, managed by people in 18th century military and civilian garb and using, wherever possible, equipment true to the period of the original event. Along the route local reenactors and history buffs joined the march briefly for local events, and residents turned out to greet and support the procession.

Averaging less than nine miles a day, the caravan encountered wintery conditions that added perhaps a bit too much realism to the reenactment; including sleet, rain and freezing wind. They were supported at each stopover with food and lodging for man and beast alike, these having been arranged beforehand with the many cooperative citizens along the route.

Although smaller than the original train of artillery - eight teams of horses instead of two hundred, and a handful of vehicles instead of the eighty-two sleds used by Knox, this modern train of artillery had become a sort of historic event in its own right by the time it reached the outskirts of Boston on January 27th. It proved the power of living history programs; able to rekindle interest in, and appreciation for, the formative events of the past and to make that history somehow seem a meaningful part of the present.



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*The images used on this webpage appeared in an article titled **The Knox Trek** by Avon Neal in AMERICANA MAGAZINE (American Heritage Society, Volume 4, Number 6, January 1977).*

*Photographs by Ann Parker.*