

LMM Women Guidelines & Expectations

Our Mission

The Lexington Minute Men are dedicated to faithfully recreating the lives and experiences of the men and women of Captain John Parker's Company and the town of Lexington in 1775. Our organization takes great pride in honoring the people of Lexington 1775, and we do not make any compromises in pursuit of that goal.

Membership

The Lexington Minute Men welcomes individuals who share our passion for American history and are willing to share our commitment to accurately representing the Lexington residents of 1775. We strive to honor the people of that time by participating in events that celebrate and promote the American Revolution and Lexington's contribution toward independence. These events include:

- Historical reenactments of military, political, and social events
- The Battle of Lexington and Civilian Evacuation of Lexington reenactments
- Battle Road and the Storm of War
- Living history demonstrations
- Interpretive programs
- School presentations
- Academic symposiums and lectures
- Drills and workshops
- Parades
- Conventions
- Film shoots
- Community outreach opportunities
- Routinely interact with the public at large

In short, we are looking for members who want to elevate our representation of the civilians of Lexington 1775, meaningfully share their stories, and honor their experiences.

Members are expected to attend as many events and activities as their schedule permits. Generally, members are encouraged to attend 50% of our organization's annual schedule. However, we do recognize life gets in the way and, as a result, ask that potential members attend at least 30% of our scheduled events. Remember, you get out of our organization what you put in!

We ask potential members to consider why they wish to join the Lexington Minute Men. If you are joining only because your husband, father, son, or boyfriend is a member of this organization and you want to spend quality time with him, then our group is likely not the right fit for you. Similarly, we are not the right group if you only join because you wish to participate in the 250th Anniversary of the Battles of Lexington and Concord.

We do not engage in fantasy role-playing or pretend we are acting out scenes from a popular movie or television show. We are considered a “mainstream unit” but are quickly moving toward becoming a “progressive unit.” This means that while at events, we will leave behind the comforts of modern life. We attempt to ensure our clothing is as accurate as current research allows. We wear wool in the summer, march (and sometimes run) significant distances across rough terrain, carry our belongings on our backs, sleep in period tents or under the stars, and prepare our meals over open fires. We come prepared with researched facts and documentation when we speak to the public, constantly engage in self-assessment, and adjust our impressions when new research reveals we are doing something incorrectly.

Potential members are expected to be reasonably physically fit when fielding with us and should be comfortable moving three or more miles at an event. Likewise, new members should know how to sew or be willing to learn how to sew. Unfortunately, unlike their male counterparts, the women of the Lexington Minute Men are often required to make their clothing based on period patterns. This is because suppliers of women’s clothing frequently do not offer entire outfits and instead sell bits and pieces. By comparison, many male suppliers will offer entire outfits to their customers.

While this might be overwhelming, rest assured a new member will be assigned a mentor to help them acquire the appropriate clothing and equipment to attend events with us. We also partner with new members with the Ladies Association of Revolutionary America (LARA). This progressive, researched-based 18th-century living history group encourages, supports, and promotes increased women’s voices and stories at historical sites and events. The Lexington Minute Men shares a close relationship with this organization, and they have been very generous in assisting our new members in getting up to speed.

New members have one year after joining to assemble clothing and equipment. We have a limited supply of “loaner” clothing for new members to use while they put together their kits.

Potential new members must understand that they must avoid the temptations of going to an “off-the-rack” historical or costume supplier to buy an entire outfit in one swoop. Do not be tempted to do this, as it will likely be a costly mistake. Most “ready-made” outfits produced by historical costume companies are poorly made and inaccurate. New members must listen to their mentor and only create or purchase items from the approved list of suppliers we share with new members once they are formally “sworn in.”

Potential female members of the Lexington Minute Men are strongly encouraged to learn the domestic trades of women of 1775 Massachusetts. This does not mean we want a woman to cook or prepare meals for men at an event. Instead, new members are encouraged to explore the different skill sets Lexington women embraced in 18th-century Massachusetts. This could include business owners (urban and agricultural), homemakers, mothers, caretakers, farmers, etiquette and school mistresses, midwives, tavern help, and other occupations.

More importantly, new members, including women, will be assigned specific personas of Lexington residents who witnessed or participated in the April 19, 1775 events. Because it is vital that the public at large “know their names” and honor their sacrifices, new members must

conduct exhaustive research on the person they portray and share their research findings with the membership. (Rest assured, we'll help you!)

A new member does not have to portray the woman they represent in a "first-person" manner (e.g., role-playing). Still, they should be well versed in the person's life and experiences of April 19, 1775, familiar with 18th-century Lexington society, and willing to share this information with the public.

Conclusion

Joining the Lexington Minute Men is a commitment to accurately representing the lives and experiences of the men and women of Lexington in 1775. It requires dedication to historical accuracy, physical capability, and a willingness to learn new skills. Potential members should be prepared to participate in various events, from reenactments to educational programs, and contribute to the organization's goal of honoring the people of Lexington 1775. By joining the Lexington Minute Men, individuals can become part of a community dedicated to preserving and sharing American history.