

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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***The Hidden Treasures of Fitchburg Welcome Visitors***  
**to the Fitchburg Historical Society and the Fitchburg Fire Department**  
**On Saturday, May 13**

**(Fitchburg, MA—May 5, 2017) On Saturday, May 13, 2017 the Fitchburg Historical Society is welcoming visitors to two family-friendly Open Houses in downtown Fitchburg as part of the “Hidden Treasures” celebration organized by the Freedom’s Way National Heritage Area. The Fitchburg Fire Department and the Fitchburg Historical Society are throwing open their doors to visitors who wish to learn more about the history of firefighting and fire prevention.**

**The Fitchburg Historical Society’s “If These Walls Could Talk” Wallace Foundation exhibition will be open to visitors from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00p.m.** The exhibition features the history of fire fighting in Fitchburg from early colonial days, when residents used bucket brigades to move water and quench fires, to the development of firefighting “clubs” in the 1800’s, and finally, to today’s modern, professional firefighting force. It also features stunning photos of the devastation wrought in Fitchburg by some of the city’s most dramatic fires. Many visitors will find the stories of fire chiefs and fire fighters that they know or remember.

The exhibition is free and open to the public at the Fitchburg Historical Society, located in the Phoenix Building at 781 Main Street, Fitchburg. For more information, call 978-345-1157 or email welcome (at) fitchburghistoricalsociety.com.

**During the same four hours on Saturday, May 13, families and visitors of all ages can see how the fire trucks and fire equipment work, while also learning important fire safety techniques, at an Open House sponsored by the Fitchburg Fire Department at their central Fire Station, located at 33 North Street, in downtown Fitchburg.** Professional fire fighters will be there to meet the kids and share stories of their exciting work.

The Fitchburg Historical Society is also co-sponsoring a nature and history walk up Rollstone Hill that will be offered by Peter Capodagli at the Boulder Gallery on Saturday, May 20, starting at 10 a.m. This fascinating walking tour takes visitors from the Rollstone Boulder on Fitchburg’s upper common up the nearby hill where it was originally located. Along the way, participants will see historic quarry sites and explore Fitchburg’s granite quarries. The walk is suitable for all ages. For more information on this Hidden Treasures event, call 978-345-7000.

Throughout May 2017, communities across the 994-square-mile Freedom’s Way area, home to over 750,000 people, are offering free, public programs featuring a “hidden treasure” in their Discover Freedom’s Way – Explore the Hidden Treasures within your National Heritage Area

town. Towns and community organizations surrounding Fitchburg are offering fun and creative activities that enable residents of the region to explore the nature, culture and history of Freedom's Way's 45 communities. For more information, visit [www.fitchburghistoricalsociety.org](http://www.fitchburghistoricalsociety.org), [www.freedomsway.org](http://www.freedomsway.org) or call 978-345-1157.

***If These Walls Could Talk: The History of the Fitchburg Fire Department***

March 27 -- June 7, 2017

George R. Wallace Jr. and Alice G. Wallace Exhibit Hall, Fitchburg Historical Society  
Free and open to the public.

***Open Hours for Hidden Treasures***

Additional exhibition hours: *If These Walls Could Talk: The History of the Fitchburg Fire Department*

Saturday, May 13, 2017, 10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

George R. Wallace Jr. and Alice G. Wallace Exhibit Hall, Fitchburg Historical Society  
Fitchburg Fire Department Central Station will also be open for an Open House and Fire Safety Day.

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**About the Fitchburg Historical Society:** Founded by James F.D. Garfield in 1892, the Fitchburg Historical Society is an independent non-profit that was created to collect, preserve, and interpret the history of Fitchburg. Now located in an historic H.M. Francis-designed building on Main Street, the Society hosts lectures, exhibits and annual events relating to the city's history. Exhibitions and educational programming about Fitchburg history are supported by a grant from The George R. Wallace Foundation, and are presented in the George R. Wallace Jr. and Alice G. Wallace Exhibit Hall.

**Freedom's Way** connects the people, places and communities of the Heritage Area through preservation, conservation and educational initiatives to protect and promote our shared resources and to encourage residents and visitors to explore our landscape, history and culture. The Freedom's Way Heritage Association works in partnership with the National Park Service to support the Freedom's Way National Heritage Area in Massachusetts and New Hampshire.

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