BEDFORD FLAG  304 YEARS OLD

The Bedford flag was carried by the Cornet of the Bedford Militia, Minuteman Nathaniel Page, at the Battle of Concord on April 19, 1775, the first day of the War of the Rebellion.

This flag, which shows an armored arm, sword and cannon balls emerging from the clouds of heaven, is perhaps the oldest flag still in existence in the United States. The flag has an obverse and a reverse, each being slightly different in design than the other.

The original fabric, with its pomegranate design was made of woven silk damask in Italy in about 1680 according to Mr. Franco Scalamandre, the founder of Scalamandre Silks and the Scalamandre Silk Museum. The design was then painted on this intricately woven silk material. Where and when this was painted and finished into a flag is still a matter of speculation and research.

The words on the flag “Vince aut Morire” are Latin, meaning “Conquer or Die.” It was an English banner in its early years.

The original flag — the only one carried by the Minutemen at the battle — is preserved in the Bedford Free Public Library, Bedford, Massachusetts, and can be seen between the hours of 10:00 A.M. and 3:45 P.M., Monday thru Friday. It is this flag of which Ralph Waldo Emerson wrote:

By the rude bridge that arched the flood,
Their flag to April’s breeze unfurled,
Here once the embattled farmers stood,
And fired the shot heard ‘round the world.

A number of silk reproductions have been made by Mr. Scalamandre in the 1970’s. He believes that because of the physical evidence still apparent in the original fabric, the flag was approximately 100 years old at the start of the American Revolution.
NOTES from Grace Rogers Cooper NAVA President

We have all wondered, "What happened to NAVA News?" One of the big problems with this association is one of logistics. We are very far apart, and we can't just jump in the car and run across town to pick up or deliver an item for the "News." Some were a little slow delivering the needed data from NAVA 17; consequently although John Szala had the issue all ready to go to press in November there was a delay. We must do better next year supplying the needed information. This is always one of the most important issues as it carries to the entire membership the proceedings of the Annual Meeting. Because of this it is doubly important that it contains this information. Until you have held each and every office in NAVA, it is difficult to understand the amount of work involved. The more that members participate, by taking their turn serving in an office, the more we will all appreciate the amount of work there is to be done. Think about it and if you are willing to devote the time, offer your name to the Nominating Committee during the coming months. Share the load.

The International Congress of Vexillology (XI) will be held in Madrid, Spain, during the last week of May 1985. An information brochure about the Congress will be included with a future issue of NAVA News. For all who have been looking for a good excuse to go to Spain . . . here it is. And for the many who know and love Spain, we know you will want to take this opportunity to return.

We hope with this issue you will be receiving a copy of the updated NAVA membership list of names and addresses. I initiated this list in December, but it was necessary to circulate it to both the Secretary and the Treasurer in an effort to make it as up-to-date as possible. Many of the names do not show the area of interest. If this is missing it is because we do not have it in our records. We would like to know if you would care to share it with us. It would be good if we could share information with fellow members with common interest. Or, possibly, in some geographical locations there may be enough members to get together once in a while for "Vexillological times" between Annual meetings. Let us know if you do. NAVA News would like to report your activities.

The necessary lead time for each Issue is about two months; send along items of interest to Editor, John Szala; he appreciates and would like your help. Send your complaints and your suggestions for improving NAVA to me. We want to hear from you and we want to make this the best Vexillological Association it can be.
ALAND
New Scandinavian Country

Bob Walsh helps Melanie McVie of Lynn Woods School raise a new flag in Lynn after she won the city's Step-Up-With Lynn poster contest.
from: Sunday Post, Lynn
3 July 1983

AMERICA'S "SHOE CITY" FLYES FLAG TO PROJECT NEW IMAGE

STEP UP WITH LYNN, INC., City Hall, Rm. 315, Lynn, Mass. 01901, is a non-profit corporation established as a cooperative effort of the public and private sectors to promote the good image and to foster the revitalization of the City of Lynn. As part of its promotional activities, a special flag has been designed and can be seen flying on public property and outside business establishments.

The field of the flag is white with a border of blue. The logo in the center is also in blue.

Law Barring Flag Burning Is Challenged

A man arrested for attempting last month to burn a Soviet flag in front of the Russian chancery in Washington, D.C. has challenged the constitutionality of a city law that bars acts that reflect on the reputations of foreign governments.

Raymond D. Battocchi, attorney for Floyd Brown, 22, vice chairman of the conservative Young Americans for Freedom, told D.C. Superior Court Judge Geoffrey Alprin that the law violates First Amendment rights to free speech. But Assistant U.S. Attorney Craig R. Lawrence asserted that the statute is necessary for the U.S. government's conduct of foreign affairs.

Under the misdemeanor law, Brown could be sentenced to 60 days and fined $100. No trial date has been set, and Alprin scheduled further arguments on the constitutional issue.

Thank you . . .

The North American Vexillological Association is a non-profit organization dedicated to the promotion of vexillology, the scientific and scholarly study of flag history and symbolism. Its members include men and women in all fields of vexillology and life professions.

NAVA does not involve itself with projects concerning the patriotic promotion of any flag.
You are invited ... to submit a design for consideration and possible use as the NAVA 18 flag.

* All entries should be sent to:

MRS. DOREEN BRAVERMAN
2081 WEST 4TH AVENUE
VANCOUVER, B.C. V6J 1N3
CANADA

* Deadline - the end of April