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## **Revolutionary Spaces to Host Book Launch for *Polly Sumner: Witness to the Boston Tea Party***

*Polly Sumner doll will be displayed at Old South Meeting House  
as part of the 250th anniversary of the Boston Tea Party*

**Boston, MA** - On Wednesday, April 19, [Revolutionary Spaces](#) will host the official [book launch](#) for *Polly Sumner: Witness to the Boston Tea Party* (Lawley Publishing). Written by Richard C. Wiggin and illustrated by local artist/illustrator Keith Favazza, this children's book tells the heartwarming story of the Polly Sumner doll, a real doll that arrived in Boston aboard one of the Tea Party ships in 1773. The 250-year-old toy, which was purchased in a shop across from the Old South Meeting House, is currently part of Revolutionary Spaces' expansive [collection](#).

Beginning at 6:30 PM, Wiggin will read excerpts from his book and participate in a panel discussion with historians and writers, including renowned children's book author Vivian Kirkfield and Dr. Robert Allison, Professor and Chair of History, Language & Global Culture at Suffolk University. While at this program, guests may also view a stunning reproduction of the Polly Sumner doll—made possible through the generous support of Richard C. Wiggin and Agnes Connors. Reproduced by artist and sculptor Janet Cordell, the doll will be on display for a limited time at [Old South Meeting House](#) starting in April 2023. Revolutionary Spaces Associate Director of Collections Lori Erickson will also be available at the book launch to talk with guests about the doll.

In announcing the event, Revolutionary Spaces President & CEO Nat Sheidley said, "We are honored to host the launch of this important new book as part of our year of activities commemorating the 250th anniversary of the Boston Tea Party. Rick Wiggin invites us to see the events of 1773 through the eyes of the children who lived through them. Revolutionary Spaces is committed to creating entryways for young audiences to learn more about the historic people and events connected to our two sites. By telling Polly Sumner's story and viewing the reproduction of the doll, we hope that visitors of all ages will feel inspired to learn more about Revolutionary history."

An author and historian, Wiggin is the former Executive Director of The Bostonian Society (now Revolutionary Spaces) and former Captain and Historian of the Lincoln Minute Men. His award-winning book, *Embattled Farmers: Campaigns and Profiles of Revolutionary Soldiers from Lincoln, Massachusetts, 1775-1783* (Lincoln Historical Society, 2013), chronicles the American Revolution through the experiences of 256 soldiers from a single New England farming community. As a living historian and battlefield volunteer at Minute Man National Historical Park, Wiggin appears regularly in school classrooms and speaks

before civic and historical groups. He has organized and conducted scores of public ceremonies and written audio tours for Minute Man National Historical Park and Boston's Freedom Trail. His articles have appeared in *Alaska Magazine*, *The Boston Globe*, *Civil War Courier*, *The Lincoln Review*, and *American Ancestors*.

"This story has deep Boston roots, with broad national significance," said author Rick Wiggin. "Polly Sumner is a real doll who arrived in Boston on one of the Tea Party ships and who has inspired fan-mail from young visitors to the Old State House during the past 100 years. Her story is under-told, and my object in writing this book was to familiarize more young people with her story, to inspire them with this tangible connection to the past, and to encourage them to learn about our nation's history and founding ideals."

The original Polly Sumner doll was displayed at Old South Meeting House in 1876. It was later donated to the Bostonian Society, where it was displayed at the Old State House and remained in the collection for more than a century. Through the 2020 merger between the Bostonian Society and Old South Association, the Polly Sumner doll can now be reunited with her old haunts.

This book launch, which will take place at [Old South Meeting House](#) located at 310 Washington Street, is free and open to the public. Doors will open at 6:00 pm. Light snacks and refreshments will be provided. For more information about *Polly Sumner: Witness to the Boston Tea Party* visit, [pollysumner.com](#). Pre-register for the book launch event at [revolutionaryspaces.org/sumner-book-launch](#). For more information regarding the book launch, please contact [communications@revolutionaryspaces.org](mailto:communications@revolutionaryspaces.org).

### **ABOUT REVOLUTIONARY SPACES**

Formed in January 2020 through a merger between the Bostonian Society and Old South Association, Revolutionary Spaces tells the interwoven stories of two of Boston's most iconic sites—the Old State House and Old South Meeting House. Revolutionary Spaces brings people together to explore the American struggle to create and sustain a free society. We steward these buildings as gathering spaces for the open exchange of ideas and the continuing practice of democracy, inspiring all who believe in the power of people to govern themselves.

Constructed in 1713, the Old State House was the center of royal government in the Massachusetts Bay colony and the focal point for many of the Revolution's most dramatic events, including the Boston Massacre. Built in 1729, the Old South Meeting House was the largest building in colonial Boston and the site of the most stirring mass meetings that led to the Boston Tea Party and the American Revolution. Today, these historic sites and museums—located just two blocks from each other in the heart of downtown Boston—provide thought-provoking exhibits, compelling walking tours, exciting educational offerings, and engaging public programs.

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