

## Along Boston's Freedom Trail



FOLLOW THESE SIGNS to places of historic interest in Boston.

### 40,000 People Take This Path Each Year

By JOAN McPARTLIN

Notes on a walk down Freedom Trail. The man behind Freedom Trail is the cheerful, energetic acting custodian of the Old North Church, Robert M. Winn of Wollaston.

For years Mr. Winn, an authority on historic Boston, has been suggesting—by means of a map and a guidebook, both written by himself in the breezy, entertaining style in which he talks—that tourists wind through Boston from the State House through the North End and back up Beacon Hill.

That route is roughly the path now followed by Freedom Trail. Mr. Winn includes many other spots of interest in his map and book, but the nucleus of historical Boston is on Freedom trail.

His suggestions were picked up by a Boston newspaperman and the City of Boston followed with official signs and an official title for the route.

Today, two years after Freedom Trail was blazed, Mr. Winn is pleased with the response—about 40,000 persons walk or ride the trail each year—but has some more suggestions.

"Visitors ought to know it is a walking trail. It's only a mile and a fifth long. They can ride it, of course, even with Boston's one-way streets. Fortunately, the streets all point the right way to follow the trail.

There should be metal signs. The ones that now mark Freedom Trail are of wood and they should be permanent. More important, the signs should be marked consecutively: No. 1, No. 2, and so on. That way, if a person has visited place No. 8 and suddenly finds himself at a sign marked No. 7, he can retrace his steps and find the missing building.

That would save him from finishing the tour and finding suddenly that he'd skipped a building in the middle of it.

And there should be a plaque or marker denoting the beginning of the Trail, say on the corner of Park and Tremont sts. opposite the Park Street Church.

One of Mr. Winn's suggestions is being followed right now. In the paint shop of the city's traffic department are a pile of metal signs, waiting to be painted with the distinctive design of Freedom Trail signs.

Those metal signs will replace the plywood ones which have been up for two years.

Freedom Trail signs carry an original design thought up by

Daniel MacAuley of Watertown, an employee in the shop.

Here's his description of them:

"The signs are 24 inches wide and 14 inches high. They're oblong, with rounded ends and a semi-circle protruding out of the top.

Background of the signs is blue. In the circle is a picture of Paul Revere on his horse, all gold. The rounded ends are red and white striped. Across the face is written the name of the place the sign is pointing to, like "Old North Church." The letters are in white, so is the hand painted underneath, pointing the way to go. We used to have arrows pointing, but they confused traffic, so now we use a hand.

The first signs we made, two years ago, were plywood, because they were called for in a hurry and it would have taken too long to get the metal.

These new ones of metal will be better. Plywood warps in the weather and kids pull down plywood signs easier than metal.

Of course, not all the wooden signs have been there for two years. People take them for souvenirs and they get broken.

The new ones will be up by Spring. Some of them are one-sided, some two-faced. Where did I get the design? Right out of my head.

One other suggestion, made by a Bostonian who took the trip: the handsome Moses Pierce-Hichborn House, open to the public only three years ago and a fine example of a Colonial mansion, should be added to the Trail. It stands next door to the Paul Revere house and shares a brick-and-grass courtyard.

TOMORROW—In Boston one never mentions "the New State House."