



## President's Overview New Year's Resolutions

by John Anderson



I'd like to start the New Year by thanking everyone for caring so deeply about Medford, our hometown, and preserving the record of its long

history. We have approximately 20,000 documents, books, photographs, textiles, military memorabilia, and other objects that would be dispersed or lost without the efforts of our members and volunteers over the decades. We use this wealth of material to develop educational materials, public programs, and conduct historical research. You are the reason we're still here after over 100 years, surviving and thriving in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

In 2019, we hope you will resolve to:

- Visit the Museum as we develop new exhibits
- Bring a friend to one of our public events
- Spread the word about our work
- Renew your membership or contribute to the Annual Appeal
- Encourage friends and neighbors to become supporters as well
- Become a volunteer – participate on a committee or just a single project
- Witness improvements to the building, especially the new HVAC system

*continued page 4*

### Society Officers

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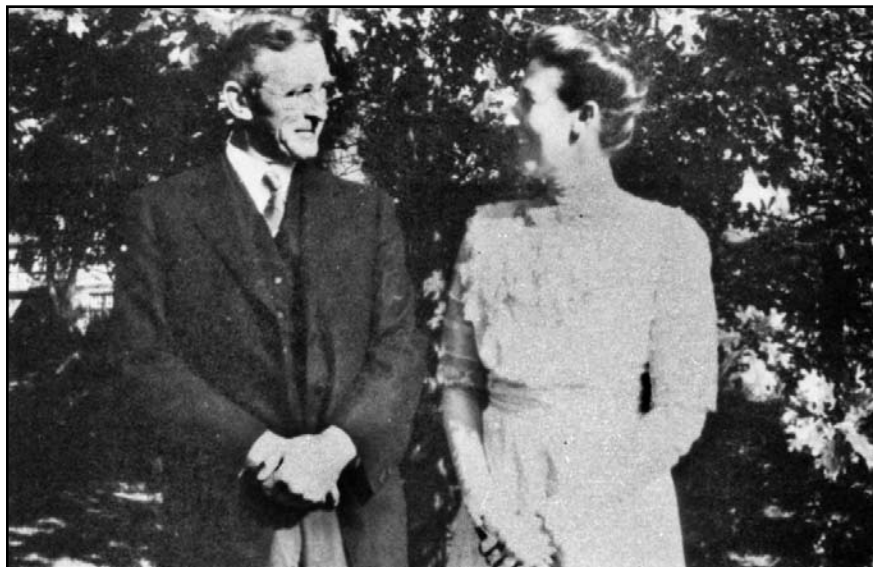
Charlotte Scuderi

Susan Gerould

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## The Amazing Susan Hallowell Brooks

by David Fedo



*Lawrence and Susan Hallowell Brooks on their 25<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary, October 12, 1937*

### A Remarkable West Medford

**Woman.** Among the notable American women writers with varied Greater Boston connections in the tumultuous 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries—Louisa May Alcott, Lydia Maria Child, Harriet Beecher Stowe, Margaret Fuller, and Edith Wharton, to name only a few—one who might be added to a more inclusive list is Susan Hallowell Brooks, who lived for most of her long life in West Medford. She was not a public figure. Mrs. Brooks, born in December of 1883, was what some might modestly call a loving wife and private homemaker, and she was, but the gifts of her wide interests and humanity extended beyond her home and family on the historic Mystic Street. And one of those gifts—some rightfully call it a treasure—is the unexpected but extraordinary memoir she patched together in 1985; she called it, with both wonder and amusement, “Recollections of a One Hundred and One Year Old Grandmother.”

The voice that Mrs. Brooks speaks in her amazing prose journal is that of a centenarian who has lived a full and enviable life, and who is still enjoying it. She dotes on family and friends; she travels widely and climbs mountains; she is an avid reader; she is, like most in her family, a Quaker and abolitionist; she graduated from Radcliffe, but her education has been informed by her willingness to engage the world through both the bad (the slaughters in the Civil War and the looming horrors in World War II), and the good (her husband and children and many friends in Medford and well beyond). Her handsome home at 45 Mystic Street was the center of her life, but her universe was deeply enriched by a spirit willing to explore almost anything, and in her old age to write movingly about her life, including details which are insightful, serious, and often funny.

*continued page 2*

**The "Recollections."** Some months ago the Medford Historical Society and Museum (MHSM) was introduced to Mrs. Brooks through an old manuscript copy of her "Recollections." It is a memoir of some 153 pages (41 short chapters), including copies of family photos, and has never been published. Mrs. Brooks died a year after she had completed the work by longhand and dictation. Her grandson Larry Carter, who is now living in New York, had given a copy of the document to Julie O'Neill, a longtime West Medford neighbor of the Brooks family. Ms. O'Neill, for many years a teacher in the Medford School System, has recently made an additional copy for the Medford Historical Society and Museum. A photocopy is also housed in the Medford Public Library.

**Mr. and Mrs. Brooks.** On the occasion of Mrs. Brooks' 100<sup>th</sup> birthday celebration (December 19, 1983), Maura Fitzgerald of the *Medford Mercury* wrote that "A conversation with Susan Brooks is as invigorating as a gulp of cold spring water, as informative as a trip to the Smithsonian, and as uplifting as all the self-help manuals on the *New York Times* best-seller list—combined." That about summarizes the character of this woman, who at the time was the mother of 4, the grandmother of 12, and the great-grandmother of 11. Her husband, Lawrence Graham Brooks (not directly connected to the well-known Brooks family of Medford), was for many years the Chief Justice of the First District Court in Malden; he also lived a long life of 100 years. Mr. Brooks, called "a giant in the Massachusetts courts," also wrote down his own recollections for a privately printed book, published in 1981 and called "The Memoirs of Lawrence Graham Brooks." It, too, is an interesting although more formal and less personal narrative than his wife's more chatty remembrances. MHSM holds a copy of Lawrence Brooks' book, but Mrs. Brooks' manuscript was never officially published and exists, as noted above, only in photocopy duplications.



**A young Susan Hallowell with her beloved Newfoundland, Deric**

**The War Between the States.** Family and the tragic circumstances surrounding the devastating Civil War are both major topics in Mrs. Brooks' document. As the *Medford Mercury* put it, "She is fiercely proud of her family and recounts her father's well-known exploits in the Civil War and his commitment to abolitionism in a voice that rings with emotion." Susan's father, Norwood Penrose Hallowell (1839-1914), originally from the Philadelphia Hallowells and an 1861 graduate of Harvard, was commissioned into the 20<sup>th</sup> Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry in 1861. He fought in the Battle of Ball's Bluff in October of 1861, and was severely wounded in the left arm in the Battle of Antietam in 1862. In 1863 he was cited for "bravery" and promoted to Lieutenant Colonel of the 54<sup>th</sup> Massachusetts Regiment behind the newly appointed Robert Gould Shaw. Mrs. Brooks touches on the fame of this all-black Regiment which led to the siege of Fort Wagner in Charleston, South Carolina. As the world knows through popular history and film, Shaw was climbing a parapet in the battle when he was shot three times and died instantly. Norwood's brother Edward also served in the 20th Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry in 1862, and was wounded in the siege of Fort Wagner. The Hallowell and Stearns families, Quakers but claiming that service to the country in perilous times must overcome their Quaker vows of pacifism, played major roles in the fight to save the Union. Thus another Hallowell brother, Richard Hallowell, served as one stop on the Underground Railroad. And a close friend of the Hallowells was George Luther Stearns, an industrialist from Medford, who was one of the "Secret 6" who provided financial and other support to John Brown.

**To West Medford.** Mercifully, the War finally ended, and Norwood and his wife, the former Sarah Wharton Haydock of New York, would settle in West Medford on Mystic Street. It was 1869, and Norwood was a wool broker and Vice President of Boston's Bank of Commerce. The years drifted by. Susan Hallowell was the youngest of six children; the others were Anna, Robert, Norwood, Jr., John, and Esther. She described her childhood as being "a very important part of my education for life. I had the example of my parents and all of my brothers and sisters." She added: "But don't get the impression that the Hallowell homestead was a stern place. I grew up in an atmosphere of happiness and fun."

Mrs. Brooks remembers that the Medford of her childhood was considered to be "country." An arbor of elm trees shadowed the length of Mystic Street, which was paved in dirt like all the streets in Medford. Mrs. Brooks loved ice skating on the nearby Brooks Estate pond, pony riding, reading, basketball, and even learned to play the piano. She adored all pets, but especially loved her devoted Newfoundland puppy named Deric. Transportation from Medford to West Medford was by horse car. Later Susan attended the prestigious Winsor School in Boston, taking a train



from the North Station to reach her destination. She recalls in her narration that “Life was simple, peaceful and healthy, but always busy in those days.” She would eventually enroll in and graduate from Radcliffe College (1905); while a student, she won a tennis tournament and was named the “strongest” woman at the College. Sunday dinners at the Hallowell home often numbered 20 members of the Brooks clan and friends. Family and guests were often encouraged to take part in lively dramatics. (Susan loved Shakespeare.) The family often vacationed in a summer rental in Buzzards Bay; Susan adored it, and took up sailing. And soon the new inventions of the telephone and motor car (the Brooks owned an open Model T Ford automobile) would change the lives of everyone.

**Marriage.** Susan married Lawrence Graham Brooks in 1901, at the dawn of a new century. Mr. Brooks was intelligent and capable, a graduate of Harvard College and its Law School, and proved to be a perfect match for Susan. Both loved hiking and mountain climbing. They would eventually have five children: John Graham (born 1913), Helen Lawrence (born 1915), Ann (born 1917), Charlotte Hallowell (born 1920) and Catherine Lawrence (born 1922). The family had five cats, too. In the meantime, Mr. Brooks had established himself as a prominent Judge, and Susan ran the busy household. Her “Recollections” demonstrate that she appeared to be happy and active as a wife and a mother. But she was involved outside the home, too, serving as a supporter of an organization called the International Friendship League, which promoted letter writing between American students and students from other countries, and becoming an advocate for the nuclear freeze movement.

**Travels.** Mrs. Brooks also became a global traveler. Her first trip abroad was to Greece in 1906, accompanied by her father and mother and Esther, a sister; they laughingly called themselves the Hallowell Traveling Club, but Susan said they should have been termed the “Innocents Abroad.” Another trip took her to the Philippines, Japan, Hong Kong, and Hawaii, where the party was frightened by a wild boar. In 1939, with tensions rising in Europe, Susan and her party daringly sailed to Europe, with planned stops in England, France, Switzerland and even Germany. But, as Mrs. Brooks reported, the rumblings of War were growing louder, especially in France, and the Brooks contingent departed early—and safely. A happier trip came 10 years later, when Mrs. and Mrs. Brooks attended their daughter Charlotte’s wedding in Paris. It was the union of two staff members of the American Friends Service Committee; both lived and worked in Europe.

**Mrs. Brooks’ Introduction to Her “Recollections”:**

*“All through my life I never seemed to have time enough to complete all I had planned to do each day. In my eighties I began to realize that my life had been so busy that I’d never taken time to think about much else than what was involved in our daily lives. I real-*



**Susan and Lawrence towing grandsons Roger and Clifton and their mother Charlotte Read.**

*ized I had taken too much for granted on what had been given us in the miracle of life. Practically for the first time I began to do some independent thinking.*

*“I had a stroke in 1983 about eight months after Lawrence died, which left me with a pretty useless left side and lots more time to think. It was then that it occurred to me that I might have fun and utilize this time, of which I now had plenty, to bring into existence these random recollections. They began to formulate in my mind during that summer in South Orleans and proved to give me lots of enjoyment and excellent occupation for several years thereafter. The whole would have never been completed without the invaluable help of my family and my nurses. My niece Susan Morris Putnam and her new electric typewriter made legible and orderly my manuscript, part of which I had written long hand and part of which I had dictated. Occasional editorial advice and sharing of laughing approval was given by her husband Johnnie as she read him the amusing bits along the way. This gave me encouragement. It was just what I needed. Additional editorial help came from my daughter Ann Carter, who pulled this all together, Charlotte Read and Charlotte’s husband Charlie, and from my son John and his wife Miriam, and my grandson Larry Carter. My granddaughter Susan Read-Brown is responsible for the beautiful calligraphy on the cover. My nurses were an essential part as they took dictation, assisted with the typing or generally helped me keep track of things. To all the above and others I have neglected to mention goes my enormous gratitude. I hereby humbly submit the final product (April 1985).”*

**Dee Morris.** The above closing note of explanation is an honest, generous and self-effacing capstone. One might only wish that Mrs. Brooks had set aside some time earlier in her life to write, since it is clear that she had the talent to do so. For more information on the Hallowells and Brookses, we must turn to Medford’s historian Dee Morris, who has in the past given a walking tour of Mystic Street. I suspect a repeat of this walk would be welcomed by many.

## President's Overview *continued*

- Consider acquiring one of our historic house markers for your home. The 20<sup>th</sup> century is historic too!
- Share your thoughts and ideas – we welcome everyone's input

All of us on the Board sincerely appreciate the part your membership and participation has played in our progress in 2018.

## Get a Historical Marker for Your House

To order, print and fill out our Historic House Marker order form. Details at [medfordhistorical.org](http://medfordhistorical.org).



## Medford's Brownie/Girl Scout Troop 72091

by Nancy White

On November 17<sup>th</sup>, a lovely autumn morning, the Medford Historical Society organized a tour of Lydia Maria Child's Medford and a visit to the Medford Historical Society & Museum for Brownie Troop 72091. Troop leader Sharon McCarthy requested the tour because she wanted the girls in her Brownie troop to be introduced to the early history of Medford and Lydia Maria Child. I led the tour for the troop and their parents. At the Museum, Beth Hayes explained the 1855 diorama of Medford Square.

The troop gathered on the new Riverside Avenue Plaza. Our first tour stop was at the Salem Street Burial Ground to look at a monument erected to honor Medford's only Governor, John Brooks. On Salem Street we looked at sites of Lydia Maria's House and her father's bakery. Next we traveled to the Sloane Garden in front of Century Bank to look at the original foot and tow paths. These paths are still being used as roads in Medford Square.

We continued on to the Cradock Bridge. The girls listened to the stories of Matthew Cradock, the history of the Mystic River, and shipyards. While standing on the bridge, the girls were intrigued by the river flowing downstream under the Cradock Bridge. (This was one of their favorite places.) Most had never stood on this site to look at the river. Another surprise was the lovely walkway along the river. From this walkway the girls (and their parents) had the opportunity to imagine what the river and the landscape looked like in the nineteenth century. It was also a treat to look at

the birds in their habitats along the river. Looking at the old buildings from the river's edge gave the girls the opportunity to look at 19<sup>th</sup> century architecture. Leaving the quiet walkway and crossing the pipe bridge while walking into High Street was akin to leaving the quiet rural 19<sup>th</sup> century and walking into the industrial 21<sup>st</sup> century, surrounded by contemporary noises of motor vehicles and traffic galore.

A special treat was viewing two of the oldest houses in Medford Square. These houses were built in the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> century. They are the Isaac Hall House, a stop on Paul Revere's ride to Lexington to warn the Medford Colonists that the Regulars were coming, and the Wade House. We looked at the Wade House from its original front entrance facing Forest Street which allowed the girls to imagine the design of the original landscape. We also stopped at the site of Governor Brook's House on High Street. Governor Brooks entertained Lafayette in this house.

The tour ended inside the Medford Historical Society and Museum. The girls viewed the current exhibits including the 1855 diorama of Medford Square. Beth Hayes pointed out the tour route and stops. Cupcakes and Medford Crackers were served to the girls. We ended the tour by singing Lydia Maria Child's Thanksgiving Day song, "Over the River and Through the Woods." It was an honor to provide a tour for Brownie Troop 72091 and their parents to share with them Medford's history.



*In November Nancie White led a group of Brownies and Girl Scouts for a tour of Medford Square that included a trip to the Medford Historical Society & Museum. They learned about Lydia Maria Child and the early history of Medford Square.*





*At the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century these young and forward thinking women interested in politics on a national scale, worked for change on a local scale. In the back row are Beth Hayes' maternal grandmother, Mary Louise (White) Tague, second from right, and her great aunt, Hellen (Nellie) White, second from left.*

## The Pansy Pleasure Club

*by Beth Hayes*

During the late 19<sup>th</sup> century and the early 20<sup>th</sup> century women were starting their upward climb to total recognition of their rights and contributions to society. In pursuit of this they campaigned and marched and badgered their Congressmen to vote for women's rights and give them the right to vote. For those who did not have a strong presence in the world they pursued their goal in quiet, yet very effective ways. They gathered together in small groups to discuss and plan ways of doing this. An acceptable way of gathering was to meet in the afternoon for the purposes of discussing literature, doing fancy needlework, and engage in like activities while talking of more serious matters. One such group called themselves the Pansy Pleasure Club, all of whom lived nearby each other. They dedicated themselves to the "cause."

They had a strong ally in Peter F. Tague, the brother-in-law of one of their women members. Tague was a State Representative to the Massachusetts House of Representatives from 1897 to 1905, and later the Democratic Representative from the 64<sup>th</sup> and 65<sup>th</sup> Congressional District. He supported these "strong willed" women in their fight for the right to vote and attempted to further their "cause" with every speech he gave.

After the 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment was ratified and women could act on it, there were further complications on their home fronts. Their husbands did not always agree that this was a "proper" way for women to behave and made it difficult for them to get to the polling booths. But the Pansy Pleasure Club stepped in and helped these women. They went to their homes

in the afternoon, relieved them of their duties of child-care and cooking, took on the chores and allowed the women to go do their recently hard-won civic duty.

The women of the Pansy Pleasure Club remained friends for the rest of their lives. They turned their energies to charitable work and helping their neighborhoods. As they grew older and their income got smaller, due to small pensions, they once again banded together to support each and help each other financially. They opened a small shop in the living room of Mary L. Tague, where they sold artifacts which they made and provided services such as tailoring for a fee. They led the way for many of us, and we are grateful.

*Women who had fought so hard for the right to vote, later found it difficult to manage to get out of the house to do it. The Pansy Pleasure Club found a way to empower them.*



## MHSM Events Calendar

### JANUARY

#### Lydia Maria Child: Author and Abolitionist

**EXHIBIT: *Gathering Up the Fragments*, Sundays, 12:00**

**– 4:00 PM, or by appointment, at MHSM, 10**

**Governors Avenue**

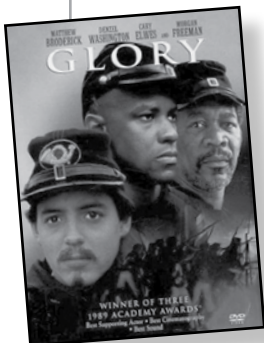
Learn how Lydia Maria Child, a Medford-born daughter of a baker, became one of the most important writers and activists in nineteenth-century America. Special focus is given to her portraits and personal items.



### JANUARY/FEBRUARY

#### Winter Snow Socials/Mini-fundraisers

\*Donations are requested at the door as admission to each of these events; all donations go to support MHSM. Refreshments provided by Medford Brewery and MHSM at no additional charge. (Ages 21+)



**HISTORY ON HOPS, Friday, January 18, 7:00 PM, MHSM, 10 Governors Avenue**

**Popcorn and a Movie, *Glory* (1989)** is a film based on the books and the personal letters of Colonel Robert Gould Shaw. It features the struggles and training, and service of the first Black Regiment in the Union Army, called the 54<sup>th</sup> Massachusetts Infantry. Starring Matthew Broderick and Denzel Washington. (Ages 21+)\*

**POETRY ON HOPS, Friday, February 8, 7:00 PM, MHSM, 10 Governors Avenue**

**Sponsored and arranged by Poet and Medford Brewery Founder Max Heinegg** Featured poets include **Julia Lisella** and **Robert Carr**. (Ages 21+)\*

### MARCH

**TRIVIA NIGHT FUNDRAISER, Saturday, March 9, 7:00 PM, Doors open at 6:15 PM at the Medford Public Library, 111 High Street.**

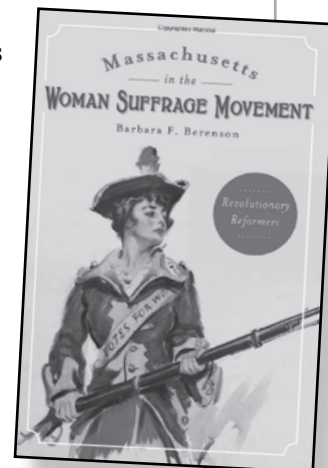
For the fourth year in a row, enjoy a lively and sometimes hilarious Trivia Night. This is a great way to support the programs of two Medford organiza-

tions—MHSM and Friends of the Medford Library. Light appetizers provided with \$20.00 admission price; soft drinks, beer and wine sold at the Circulation Desk. Raffle tickets for unique prizes are 3 for \$5 and 10 for \$15. Tickets at the door or sold in advance at the Library beginning March 1. (Ages 21+)

### 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Event

**AUTHOR/LECTURE: Barbara Berenson, Massachusetts in the Women's Suffrage Movement, Thursday, March 21, 7:00 PM, at MHSM, 10 Governors Avenue**

2019 marks the Centennial Anniversary of the 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment to the U.S. Constitution and Women's Suffrage. It was a long road from the founding of our country to the year 1919. The Women's Rights Movement was initiated in Massachusetts with the first convention held in Worcester. Attorney Barbara Berenson's book details the role of leading Massachusetts women and how their efforts laid the foundation for the movement. Attorney Berenson is Senior Lawyer for the MA Supreme Judicial Court. Co-sponsored with the Medford Public Library.



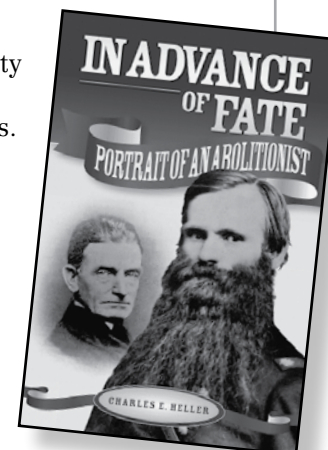
### APRIL

#### Continuing the Abolitionist Theme

**EXHIBIT: Stearns, Shaw, and the Hallowells**

**AUTHOR/LECTURE: Charles E. Heller, In Advance of Fate: Portrait of an Abolitionist, Wednesday April 3, 7:00 PM at the Medford Public Library, 111 High Street**

The "Portrait" in the book title is a biography of George Luther Stearns (1809 – 1867), a leading industrialist and abolitionist in his time. His property was located on land that is now part of the Tufts University campus. Among his many contributions is the recruitment of the first Black troops for the Union Army, including the 54<sup>th</sup> and 55<sup>th</sup> Massachusetts Infantries. Heller creates a carefully researched picture of the life and times of this prominent and intriguing Medford citizen who achieved National acclaim. Co-sponsored with the Medford Public Library.



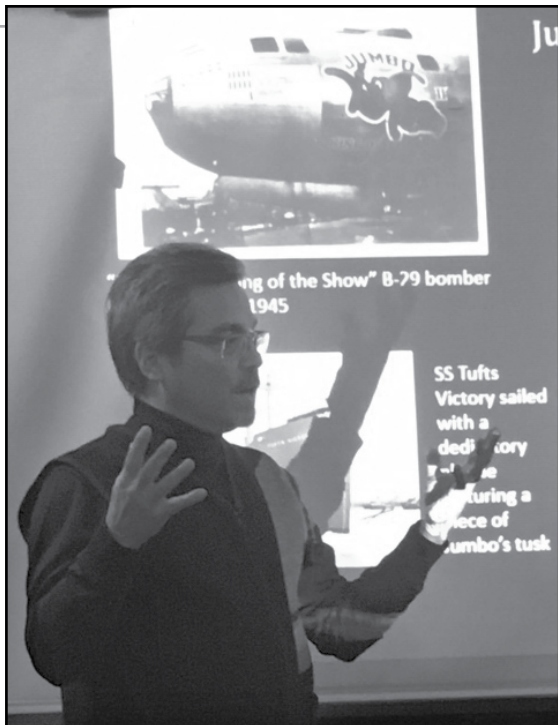
**EXHIBIT OPENING: Sunday, April 7, 2:00 PM at MHSM, 10 Governors Avenue**

The *Stearns, Shaw, and the Hallowells* exhibit features MHSM Civil War Collections items, drawing attention to the connections between George Luther Stearns, Robert Gould Shaw, and the Medford Hallowell brothers, Edward and Norwood. Stearns, who

**Lydia Maria Child: Author and Abolitionist events are funded in part by a grant from the Medford Arts Council, a local commission that is supported by the Massachusetts Cultural Council and the City of Medford. It is also funded by the Tufts Neighborhood Service Fund.**







*Professor Andrew McLellan of Tufts University shared the fascinating story of Jumbo the Elephant at the December holiday party.*

recruited Black Infantry Union troops, recommended Shaw to train and lead the Massachusetts 54<sup>th</sup> Infantry. Shaw was killed at Fort Wagner; today a stately statue stands at the top of the Boston Common, dedicated to Shaw and the Massachusetts 54<sup>th</sup>. Medford's Edward Hallowell would take Shaw's place; Edward's brother Norwood led the 55<sup>th</sup> Massachusetts. Join us for an introduction to the exhibit and refreshments.

### Anniversary Event

**AUTHOR/LECTURE: Stephen Puleo, *Dark Tide, the Great Molasses Flood*, Thursday, April 25, 7:00 PM, at the Medford Public Library, 111 High Street**  
**Commemorating January 15, 1919.** Stephen Puleo will tell the gripping story of the explosion of a 50-foot steel tank in Boston's North End waterfront neighborhood. The tank contained 2.3 million gallons of molasses which destroyed everything in its path. Puleo recounts the loss of lives, bodily injuries and destruction of property. The lawsuit that followed laid the foundation for workplace safety.

## MAY

### MHSM Annual Meeting

**SPECIAL TOPIC SPEAKER: To be announced. Check our website, [www.medfordhistorical.org](http://www.medfordhistorical.org). Friday, May 10, 7:00 PM, at MHSM, 10 Governors Avenue**  
 The Annual Meeting is a time for celebration of accomplishments and election of the Board of Directors. All who enjoy history, especially Medford History, are invited to attend; only MHSM members are permitted to vote on the slate of elected Board positions. Refreshments and conversation follow. We encourage you to attend and consider becoming a MHSM member.

## The Paul Revere Restaurant, West Medford

*by David Fedo*

Stopping for breakfast at the neighborhood diner is a cherished American tradition, and those of us living in New England have many satisfactory options. Happily, our very own Medford offers plenty of choices, one of which includes the venerable Paul Revere Restaurant, located for decades at 447 High Street in West Medford. It's a true classic, with a lot of history.

My wife Susan and I love this place, which dates back to the 1930s and is lauded for its good food, good service, and good prices. The down-to-earth ambience is also an escape from the busy traffic outside (Paul Revere himself rode by on his famous ride), and instead gives patrons a feeling that the world has somehow slowed down à la Norman Rockwell, and that life is good. "We're like a family here," says Alice Miller, the waitress who has been with the Restaurant for 29 years. The chief cook is co-owner Jim Wright, who is assisted in the kitchen by co-owner Joe Schanda. Hungry folks who make their way to the Paul Revere are almost certain to come back. "We have some regulars who come in here seven days a week," Wright said recently on a busy wintry morning. "I'd say that 75 percent of our patrons are repeaters." One diner we met lives in Jamaica Plain, works in Cambridge, and comes to Medford to have breakfast at the Paul Revere Restaurant.

Of course breakfast is the king at the Paul Revere, with eggs and bacon dominating the menu in various combinations. As usual, all was perfection the morning we were present. There is also an assortment of more ambitious temptations, including the so-called "truck driver's special," consisting of 3 eggs, ham, bacon, sausage, house fries, toast, and coffee. Cost: \$11.50.

Wright offers a surprisingly tempting lunch menu to a smaller crowd as well, with a variety of tasty options. Deli and Club sandwiches clearly dominate the selections.

The Paul Revere Restaurant provides both counter and table service. The Restaurant closes daily at 1:30 PM. Parking in busy West Medford usually is open at a lot across High Street.





*In 1863, the 54<sup>th</sup> Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry, the first black regiment from the North, paraded in full dress uniform on Boston Common.*

## *Your Medford Historical Society Newsletter*

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



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