



Dr. William R. Hayden's New York  
Pharmaceutical C. Laboratory,  
built in 1888 as it appears in 1892

# The Preservationist

Newsletter of the Bedford Historical Society, Inc.  
Bedford - Massachusetts

Founded in 1893

October 2011

Volume 119, Number 5

*Not to be missed!*

## History Day Projects & What Is It?

Wednesday, October 26 at 7:30  
at the **BEDFORD LIBRARY**  
(Meeting Room)

Two exciting and diverse topics will be presented at the next lecture program. It features local students who placed in the State and National History Day competition. Once again the Society will honor the 11 Bedford High School students who won awards. They will describe their projects, you might remember the fabulous presentations from last year. The second half of the program will feature interesting and unusual objects found in the Society's archives - donated by past and present Bedford families to be saved as part of the Town's history hidden in boxes and packed away. Our Board Member Don Corey, will present the program and ask the audience to guess what each item is or how it was used.

**Program note:** Time to get together, get coffee and a light dessert is from **7:30 to 7:55**. There will be a very short business announcement, and the **lecture program starts at 8:00 SHARP!**

**Other Great Lectures to Come!**  
See page 2.

## Wonderful Dolls

Among the artifacts that were displayed during Bedford Day this year were various dolls that belong to the Society. Due to the interest shown, an on-going exhibit has been prepared in one of the display cases outside the office in the Stearns Building- Police Station.

One of the many items of interest in the Society's archives are the contents of a doll box that belonged to Lucy Webber, born June 5, 1811. Her twin sister, Lydia, died in infancy. An undated note nailed inside the doll box lid states that the box was made

continued pg. 3



## A Successful Bedford Day.

Thanks to more than twenty volunteers, Bedford Day 2011 was a grand success for our Society.

The booth looked great and was manned all day with enthusiastic members. The beautiful exhibition of many of our archive items in the Police Station was very well attended and the very large Bedford Flag in the parade was a welcome, new attraction. Laura Larsson, disguised as Ruhama, cut more than four hundred small pieces of fringe which were handed to many boys and girls watching us when our float passed. Supporters, walking next to the flag, were all dressed in appropriate colonial outfits provided by Jeannette Porthier. I am sure that thousands of pictures were taken, especially of our grandson who - at five years old and visiting from Denmark -- marched like he was used to this kind of adventure.

It is my hope that we can repeat this exiting presentation again next year. Our presence was magnificent and extremely important. This is one of the few event that the Society can show residents and onlookers who we are and the important role we play in presenting the richness of our history. In addition to Ruhama's fringe, a small flyer with the slogan "We Don't Make History...We Keep It Alive...!" was handed out during the parade.

The following volunteers made it all possible: Peter Corey, Don Corey, Frank & Joan Gicca, Kara Kerwin, Brown & Lois Pulliam, Barbara & Jan van Steenwijk, Meg LeSchack, Lorrie Dunham, Bob Slechta, Don & Lois Jenkins, Marrietta & Art Ellis, Carol Amick, Laura Larsson, John Dodge, Bea Brown, Sue & Thomas Crowther, and Frank & Emily O'Hara.

Thank you all so much!

Jan van Steenwijk

## Many Ways of Contacting Us

Bedford Historical Society members represent the full range of age groups that love history and enjoy learning more about Bedford's past. Members include young people as well as the more "seasoned" residents of Bedford and other communities around the Bedford area and all over the country.

The Society is modern when it comes to computer technology. It has an excellent, informative website ([www.bedfordmahistory.org](http://www.bedfordmahistory.org)) and a "virtual face" on Facebook ([www.Facebook.com/BedfordMAHistory](http://www.Facebook.com/BedfordMAHistory)). Facebook is a social networking service and website that has more than 750 million users who create personal profiles, add other users as "friends," and share messages.

For those who are not Facebook members themselves, the Historical Society's Facebook page can be accessed by clicking on the Facebook connection on the Society website; there is no need to log onto Facebook or have a personal Facebook account.

The Society's Facebook page includes a "wall," which resembles an electronic bulletin board where Society announcements are posted. It is also possible to view messages that people contacting the Society through Facebook have left.

Several recent messages or "posts" are from a Florida resident who was trying to find out whether his relative, originally buried in Bedford's Old Burying Ground on Springs Road, but now in a family plot in the Shawsheen Cemetery, was a Revolutionary War veteran and if the graves in the old cemetery are marked with American flags. (As a result of his Facebook inquiry, Old Burying Ground expert and Bedford Historical Society member Robert Slechta, as well as Society *Administrative Assistant* Kara Kerwin, were in contact with this gentleman, did additional research on his ancestor, Simeon Blodgett, and provided significant historical information to the Florida man. He learned that Simeon Blodgett was born too late to have been a soldier, but his father, Isaac Blodgett, served under Lexington's Captain John Parker on April 19, 1775! The Bedford Minuteman Company marks the graves of Revolutionary War soldiers each year around Patriots' Day.)

The Society's Facebook page also prominently displays the number of Facebook users that "like" the Bedford Historical Society page, currently at "118", and continuing to increase. This means that 118 Facebook page members have a direct link to the Society's Facebook page. So, whenever page administrator Kerwin adds information to the Facebook page about an upcoming program meeting, or other news related to Bedford's history (such as the Society's own Robert Slechta being named "Citizen of the Year" by the Town of Bedford), the 118 people who "like" the page will immediately get these postings as well.

In addition to the "wall" on the Society's Facebook page, there are sections called "Info," "Photos" and "Events." The "Info" section provides general information about the Society's office location, phone number, directions, etc., while the "Photos" show past Bedford activities and the "Events" section presents upcoming programs. In addition, there are various links from the Society's Facebook page to Facebook pages of the Bedford Chamber of Commerce (the Society is a member), the Job Lane House, the Bedford Free Public Library, and the Bedford Flag.

The Society's Facebook page is another way that Bedford's history can be transmitted to interested individuals around the world! If any of you are on Facebook and have not already done so, please "like" our page. Also, please feel free to comment and add your own Bedford photos. We welcome your participation!



## Historic Preservation Commission

The town's Historic Preservation Commission currently has several vacancies.

The Commission's responsibilities are spelled out in the Bedford General Bylaws, [www.town.bedford.ma.us](http://www.town.bedford.ma.us). Its activities include maintaining an inventory of Bedford's historic buildings and other assets; protection of historic municipal properties; administering the Demolition Delay Bylaw protecting historic buildings; promoting a signage and plaque program to identify historic assets; coordinating with the Mass. Historical Commission; and, administering contracts including grants for preservation planning, nomination of properties to the National Register of Historic Places, and preservation and rehabilitation of historic properties.

Anyone interested in preserving Bedford's heritage and serving on the Commission is encouraged to talk to any of its current members – Lee Yates, Bob Slechta, Don Corey, Rose Pappert or Lorrie Dunham.

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## Commonwealth Museum Exhibition

We would like to call members' attention to the Commonwealth Museum, located at the Massachusetts State Archives on Columbia Point next to the Kennedy Library. The current exhibition includes rare documents that are national treasures, including:

- The Massachusetts Bay Charter (1629)
- The William and Mary Charter (1691)
- Massachusetts' official copy of the Declaration of Independence
- Massachusetts' official copy of the Bill of Rights (1789)
- "John Adams" Massachusetts Constitution of 1780
- Paul Revere's original copper plate used to engrave the Boston Massacre image.

Admission and parking are free. Museum hours are M – F, 9 am to 5 pm. Contact the museum: (617-727-9268) for more information.

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## Add to your calendar!

### *Our 2011-2012 Lecture Series.*

**Sunday, Nov. 13, 2011** at 2 pm, First Church of Christ, Congregational (Fellowship Hall): Veterans from the War for Independence to the Iraq/Afghanistan conflict: "*A History of Bedford Veterans.*"

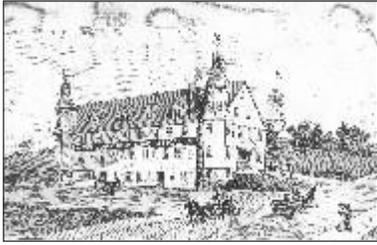
**Wednesday, Feb. 22, 2012** at 7:30 pm, Bedford Library (Meeting Room): Dr. Gary Hylander, "*Masters of Enterprise: Henry Ford*" with photos and memories from Town Historian John Dodge, whose father owned a local Ford dealership in the early 1900s.

**Sunday, April 1, 2012** at 2 pm, First Church of Christ, Congregational (Fellowship Hall): Christopher Daley, "*Lizzie Borden: The Mystery Continues!*"

**Wednesday, April 25, 2012** at 7:30 pm, Bedford Library (Meeting Room): Gill Solomon, Chief Sachem of the Massachusetts-Ponkapoag Tribal Council, "*The Time Before Now.*"

**Wednesday, May 23, 2012** at 6:30 pm, First Church of Christ, Congregational (Fellowship Hall): Potluck Dinner and Annual Meeting to elect new Officers. Speaker will be Christopher Klein, "*A History of Boston Sports: From Playful Puritans to Football Patriots.*"

In addition to the Society's lecture series, a Holiday Party has been scheduled in December at the home of Selectman William Moonan and his wife, former State Senator Carol Amick.



*The New York Pharmaceutical Co. laboratory at Bedford Springs as it appeared in 1892 and what it looks like today, after having been converted in 1988 to the Sweetwater Condominiums at 99 Sweetwater Avenue.*

Dolls, continued fr. pg. 1

by Amasa Lane and the bedstead was made by John L. Webber.

The doll box contents also include a tiny trunk made of playing cards, which contained clothing for a tiny doll. The seamstress of most of the tiny clothing was Lucy Webber herself. The tiny doll probably disintegrated with age, and only one tiny wooden leg with a red shoe remains.

Lucy married Benjamin Hartwell in 1828, had two daughters who died early, and died herself in 1834, aged 22.

Also included in the collection is a doll which has a painted wooden head with braided hair, dressed in an Empire style dress with a red striped silk sash. A note with it says "Sent from London in this dress and sash, 1826, to Mary Sage of Bedford..."



The Society's current exhibit also contains some early 20th century dolls, including several Native American ones. Stop by the office and enjoy!

Don Corey



### *Bedford Rail History Talk*

As part of the Society's community outreach efforts, Don Corey will present a program at the Council on Aging (COA) about Bedford's railroad history and on-going preservation efforts at Depot Park. The talk is scheduled on Tuesday, November 8, 2011, at the Town Center following the Friends of the Bedford COA meeting at 1:00 PM. Similar programs were presented earlier this year for residents at BrightView-Concord River and Carleton-Willard Village.

### *What is It?*

From our vast archives: This beautiful turned wooden item is about 3.5" tall and can be taken apart. On the top it has a series of tiny holes - no it is not a salt or pepper shaker. Age, ca. 1890.

*PS: You can find the answer by visiting our new exhibition in the Police Station.*



*What was It? Thank you for your answers!*



We asked for your help in identifying this item. Shelley Soillis, Beatrice Corcoran, Carl Barels and Dorothy Klepper knew the correct answer: A shoe buttonhook.



*Coincidentally: Did you know that the largest collection of shoe buttonhooks is in the Bedford Museum- Bedfordshire England? This picture is from the Bedford Museum.*

# The Preservationist

Bedford historical Society, Inc.  
2 Mudge Way  
Bedford, MA 01730-1238

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*We Don't Make History...  
We Keep It Alive..!*

The Bedford Historical Society was founded in 1893, and has expanded its collections ever since!

## Officers

Jan van Steenwijk, *President*  
Brown Pulliam, *Vice President*  
Phyllis Cooke, *Secretary*  
Frank O'Hara, *Treasurer*

## Directors

Frank Gicca - *Chairman*  
Judie Toti - *Board Clerk*  
Carol Amick (2012)  
Barbara Clifford (2012)  
Julie McCay Turner (2012)  
Bea Brown (2013)  
Joan Gicca - 2013)  
Marion Bryan (2014)  
Donald Jenkins (2014)  
Robert Slechta (2014)  
Don Corey (2015)  
Atty. Paul Dick (2015)

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Frank Gicca - *Chairman*  
Frank O'Hara - *Treasurer*  
Donald Jenkins  
Neil Leary  
Robert Schlechta  
Jan van Steenwijk - *President*

## The Preservationist.

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Jan van Steenwijk  
Contributing writers:  
Carol Amick, Don Corey, Kara  
Kerwin, Bob Slechta

Come and see us. Visit our website. Visit our FaceBook page.  
Write us a note or call us if you want more info.

Web site: [www.bedfordmahistory.org](http://www.bedfordmahistory.org)  
email: [info@bedfordmahistory.org](mailto:info@bedfordmahistory.org)

781-275-7276

*The Bedford Historical Society, Inc. is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization*

*Support your Heritage. Please become a Member and  
receive all the benefits plus this newsletter seven times a year!*

## Membership Application

## Dues

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
City/Town: \_\_\_\_\_  
State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
Email: \_\_\_\_\_

\_ Student: \$ 15.00  
\_ Single: \$ 25.00  
\_ Couple or Family: \$ 45.00  
\_ Life - Single: \$250.00  
\_ Life - Couple: \$450.00

Supporting or Business:  
\_ Contributing: \$100.00  
\_ Patron: \$175.00  
\_ Benefactor: \$300.00  
\_ Donation: \$

Amount enclosed: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Please send check to:

Bedford Historical Society, Inc. - 2 Mudge Way - Bedford, MA 01730-2138