Halloween Goose Bumps, a program not to be missed!
Sunday, October 30 at 2:00 pm

The Bedford Historical Society will enter the spooky world of Halloween with a talk about Halloween history by a leading Boston-area Halloween authority and a presentation of the classic Hitchcock thriller, “Dial M for Murder.” Author Lesley Bannatyne will speak about “The History of America's Most Creative Holiday.” She will trace the one-time children's holiday-turned-blood-and-guts carnival from its tiny origins in northwestern Europe through its recent popularity in the U.S. Bannatyne will cover such topics as spirit communication, monster culture, extreme haunted entertainments, and horror films.

Ms. Bannatyne, has written extensively on Halloween, especially its history, literature, and contemporary celebration. Her five books range from a children's book, Witches Night Before Halloween, to her latest book, Halloween Nation: Behind the Scenes of America's Fright Night, which examines the holiday through the eyes of its celebrants. The book was nominated for a 2011 Bram Stoker Award.

Ms. Bannatyne has shared her knowledge on television for the History Channel ("The Haunted History of Halloween," "The Real Story of Halloween"), with Time Magazine, Slate, National Geographic, and has contributed the Halloween article to World Book Encyclopedia.

After her 45 minute talk, one of Alfred Hitchcock's greatest thrillers – "Dial M for Murder" – will be shown at approximately 3 pm. This classic movie featuring Grace Kelly, Ray Milland and Robert Cummings is a detective fiction film about a tennis pro who plots to kill his rich wife after discovering that she is having an affair. Like all Hitchcock classics, it has an ingenious, and deadly, twist.

Don Corey

Note: This program will occur before the next Preservationist, which will be published in late November.

Sunday, November 13 at 2:00 pm

2:00 pm – Refreshments, 2:30 pm – Program

! At the American Legion Post 221, 357 Great Road!

54th Mass. Infantry Regiment

Americans know that the Civil War was fought over the issue of slavery, but few are aware that, after the issuance by President Lincoln of the Emancipation Proclamation giving all slaves their freedom, President Lincoln and his Union Army commanders established a few regiments comprised entirely of African-American soldiers.

One such regiment was authorized here in Massachusetts by Governor John Andrew in March, 1863. Known as the 54th Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry Regiment and nicknamed the “Swamp Angels,” it saw extensive action during the Civil War, and is acclaimed for its bravery and heroism.

This Civil War unit was re-activated in 2008 to serve as a ceremonial unit for the MA National Guard, and provides military honors at funerals and state functions. Today's 54th Regiment is comprised of re-enactors who will describe the major Civil War battles fought by this unit, relate interesting biographies of some of the soldiers in the original 54th Regiment, and describe each re-enactor's role in the re-activated company.

This event will begin at 2 pm with refreshments at 357 The Great Rd., home of the Anthony-Hunt-Hamilton American Legion Post 221 which is co-hosting this Historical Society program. After short announcements at 2:30, the re-enactors will be introduced to begin their presentation. They will display their Civil War uniforms and equipment, and answer questions.

The original 54th Regiment had their first battlefield action in a skirmish with Confederate troops on James Island, South Carolina in July, 1863. Later that same month, the 54th Regiment spearheaded an assault on Fort Wagner near Charleston,

Carol Amick
South Carolina, where 272 of the 600 men who charged the fort were killed, wounded or captured.

The 54th was widely acclaimed for its valor during this battle, which helped encourage additional enlistment of African-American troops – an important development that President Lincoln noted as helping to secure the Union's final victory.

A large bronze sculpture by Saint-Gaudens stands at the edge of the Boston Common, across from the Boston State House, to remind today's citizens of this Regiment's accomplishments.

A grant application to support this program has been submitted to the Bedford Cultural Council, a local agency which is supported by the Massachusetts Cultural Council, a state agency.

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**Dairy Day at the Job Lane House**

Not so long ago, Bedford was the home for two large dairies, and at least a few dairy cows were found on almost every farm in town. All are gone now, but the Historical Society has greatly expanded its collection of dairy artifacts in recent years, primarily through donations but also by several acquisitions on Ebay and elsewhere. One of the recent Job Lane House open houses provided an opportunity to bring out and display many artifacts in the collection, which otherwise must be stored away until a town historical museum again becomes a reality. Several artifacts owned by the Friends and its members were included in the display.

Two antique milking stools and special copper milking pails stood by the Friends' papier-mache cow Bridget (see photo); the pails are seamless, which ensured cleanliness and prevented contamination. A newly donated Fairbanks platform scale also stood outside of the barn. The scale was important for weighing the milk sold to dairies and grain purchased for livestock. The scale was a gift of Kathy Wright's estate; years ago her family acquired the Pfeiffer farm at the end of Page Road that had included land in Bedford, Lexington and Burlington.

Inside of the barn were 10-gallon and 5-gallon galvanized containers for collecting and transporting raw milk, including one from the former Paul Little farm on Old Billerica Road and one from the former Stephen Kazarian farm on Carlisle Road. Various implements for straining milk and skimming cream as well as buckets from the Prescott and Blue Ribbon Dairies were included in that portion of the display. A hand-cranked DeLaval Cream Separator that was donated last year was another important addition to the collection. Developed during the later half of the 19th Century, DeLaval separators were fast and efficient in separating cream from raw milk and revolutionized the dairy industry.

Processed milk was bottled and sold locally, primarily by the Prescott (later Bedford Farms) Dairy and the Blue Ribbon Dairy but also by some farms that bottled and sold their own milk. The Society's collection includes numerous bottles of various sizes and ages from the large dairies as well as several bottles from the Lexford dairy farm on Old Billerica Road and Petersen dairy farm on Carlisle Road.

Butter was made by agitating non-homogenized raw milk until the butterfat coagulated out of the buttermilk. The Society's display included three different style antique wooden butter churns that had been used in homes, a wooden firkin that the butter would have been stored in, and a wooden paddle and butter mold for making attractive designs on the small pads of butter set out at the dinner table (see photo).

Following this event, the artifacts disappeared back into storage until another opportunity arises.

_Article and photos by: Don Corey and John Linz_

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THANK YOU!

Donations: John Gibbons and James Burton
New Members and Renewals: Jane & Dan Puffer, Sharon McClatchey, Irma Carter, Pat Mahar, Carol Grof, Lois Denaro, Maureen Reyling, Michael Cashman, Brian Magee, Linda Young, Lawrence Graff, Barbara Claflin, Heather & Dan Pullin.
Bedford Day Revisited

Fair weather again prevailed for Bedford's 287th birthday celebration. It allowed the Society to bring out a number of attractive but somewhat fragile textiles for visitors to appreciate at the Bedford Day booth. Included were an antique quilt, some young girls' samplers, formal women's and men's attire modeled by several mannequins and some not-so-formal attire on other half mannequins (men's under drawers and women's hoop skirt, bustle and petticoats). Interactive displays included old wash-day tubs with washtub, a hand-cranked clothes wringer, and several antique clothes irons that would have been heated on wood stoves. An old portable hand-turned sewing machine and a variety of sewing implements perhaps reminded some of not-so-long-ago days.

Below is an article about the samplers, which were an important element of every young girl's education at one time.

Some of our Samplers

Young girls often studied sewing in school and samplers such as these were created as a demonstration of their needlework abilities.

Sampler: Lucy Porter

This sampler was worked by Lucy Porter, who was born in Concord to William and Lucy (Kibbey) Porter in 1784. Her sampler reveals her age as 9 years old, so it was probably created in the year 1793; she ran out of room before she was able to complete the "3". Lucy appears to have been highly educated. The Society has several of Lucy's poems in our collections, as well as a letter, written in 1809 and addressed to Lucy Porter, schoolmistress.

Lucy married Samuel Sage (1775-1860) on New Years Day of 1815. She died in 1865, at the age of 81. A sampler completed by their daughter, Mary (born in 1816), is shown below.

Sampler: Mary Sage

34 years after her mother, Lucy, completed her sampler (above), Mary, at age 11, created her own. Mary Sage was born to Samuel and Lucy Sage in 1816. She never married, but based on census records, lived with her family until her mother died, before being listed on her own in the 1870 census. She died in Billerica in 1897, and is buried in Shawsheen Cemetery. Along with her name and vital dates, her stone is inscribed "Auntie Sage."

Mary's younger brother, Samuel Sage (1826-1877) served in the Union army during the Civil War. When he became ill, his wife Martha (Hill) Sage served as a volunteer nurse.

Member Application

Annual Membership Dues:

- Individual: $25.00
- Couple/Family: $45.00
- Contribution: $100.00
- Patron: $175.00
- Benefactor: $300.00

Name:________________________
Address:_______________________
City:_________________________
State:____________ Zip:________
Phone:_______________________
Email:_______________________

Return this with your check to:
Bedford Historical Society
2 Mudge Way
Bedford, MA 01730

Wish to pay by credit card?
Please visit our website at:
www.bedfordmahistory.org
Look for the PayPal “Donate” button on the bottom left of our page.

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People have speculated for years over how the new town taken from parts of Concord and Billerica in September 1729 came to be named Bedford. It is well understood that Bedford is somehow named after Bedford, England, which was chartered under King Henry II in 1166, but specifics are hard to come by.

The most common theory is that it was named in honor of Rev. Peter Bulkeley, who emigrated from Bedfordshire, England in 1635 and was Concord's first minister. A 1966 article by Alice Burke in the Boston Sunday Herald debunked that explanation. “Bulkeley died 70 years before Bedford MA was incorporated and it's doubtful that he was on the minds of the people who named the town”.

A second theory is that it was named for the third Duke of Bedford, England, who acquired the title in 1711 but died in 1732 at age 24. According to Frank Branston, the mayor of Bedford, England, “The Duke of Bedford paid for colonists to go over to America and start colonies there. I don't know how he profited in the end ... I'm sure he got something out of it”.

Another theory is that the name was inspired by Paul Bunyan's “Pilgrim's Progress”, a best selling book at the time. Mayor Branston's comment was, “Bunyan was from Bedford and wrote his book while in a Bedford [England] prison for non-conformist preaching ... 'Pilgrim's Progress' is listed as one of the world's 10 most boring books'. Not a ringing endorsement of that theory.

Several recent books have perhaps shed more light on this question. Last year The Great Migration Directory by Robert Charles Anderson was published by the New England Historic Genealogical Society. It used virtually every known source to create an accurate directory of every immigrant family to New England between 1620 and 1640. The Bedford Historical Society was also recently given a Hartwell genealogy, The Descendants of William Hartwell, Concord Settler, … by Joy F. Peach (2007). These two sources provide the origins of many of Concord's earliest immigrant families. Of the 26 families whose origins are known, 8 or almost one third of them came from Bedfordshire, more than from any other location. They included Rev. Bulkeley, William Hartwell, multiple Wheeler families and others. We also know that a number of Hartwell and Wheeler descendants only a generation or two removed from their immigrant ancestors owned considerable land in the NE section of Concord that became part of Bedford. Their names appear as petitioners for the new town and in Bedford's 1729 Charter. Based on that information, it seems quite likely that a very mundane explanation of Bedford's name is simply that those responsible for naming the town wanted to remember their roots; those from Bedfordshire were in the majority and prevailed.

Don Corey