



Volume 38

Fall Newsletter

September 2012



In Memoriam John Goodwin

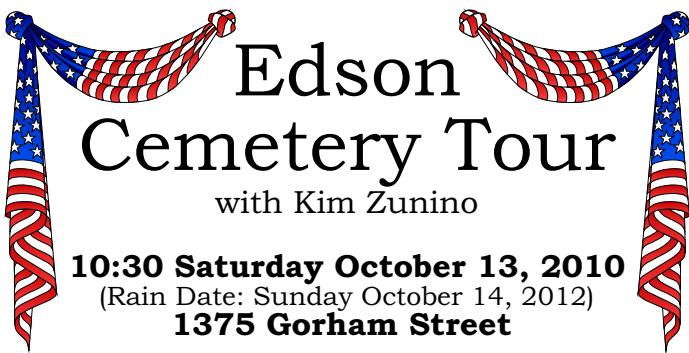
Over the summer, the Society lost another long-time member and former board member/president with the passing of John A. Goodwin. John left us almost a year to the day of his wife Catherine's passing.

Although he and Catherine were well-known as a team and complemented each other, John, like Catherine, was known in his own right. Yes, he was a respected professor at Lowell Textile School/Lowell Technological Institute/University of Massachusetts Lowell, but his interests were many and extended well beyond his background in textile engineering. He not only had a wealth of knowledge on a variety of topics ranging from pipe-organ playing and tuning to local history and railroads, but also shared that knowledge by serving as an advisor and counselor to a variety of charities in the Merrimack Valley and in Maine. When in doubt about a fact, a location, or a person, we all turned to John, who either knew it off the top of his head or found the answer in his extensive library at home.

John left his mark on the Society through his extensive support and involvement as an officer and board member over the years. As Lowell Historical Society president, he also had the distinction of serving as the first president of the Lowell Museum, which, prior to the Lowell National Historical Park, was the only institution focusing on the city's history through exhibitions, publications and educational programs.

As a couple and as individuals, John and Catherine were equal to no one when it came to Lowell's history and their generosity to share what they knew and had. In fact, the family is carrying on that tradition by donating selected Lowell-related books, photographs and ephemera to the Society in memory of their parents.

John will surely be missed for his generosity, his spirit and for his many contributions to Lowell.



Edson Cemetery Tour

with Kim Zunino

10:30 Saturday October 13, 2010
 (Rain Date: Sunday October 14, 2012)
1375 Gorham Street

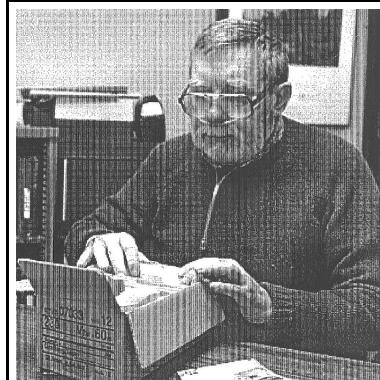
Edson Cemetery had its beginnings in 1845 when 30 acres were purchased along Gorham Street. Officially known as Cemetery Yard # 3, it became Edson Cemetery in 1878 to honor its founder, Rev. Theodore Edson. Founded a few years after the opening of the expensive and exclusive Lowell Cemetery, Edson provided affordable burial space in the rapidly growing city. Today Edson is the largest in Lowell, with 46 acres and 10,000 lot owners. Buildings include the 1883 Edson Chapel, designed by Lowell & Worcester architect Leroy J. Cherrington. The grounds include monuments from many of the city's prominent clubs and fraternal organizations, such as the Elks and the Knights of Pythias. The most famous of the interred is Jack Kerouac, an American poet and author, but there are many other notable residents buried here, such as former slaves, women leaders, veterans and con men, that deserve to have their story told. Join the Lowell Historical Society on a 45-minute walking tour Saturday October 13, 2012 (Rain date Sunday October 14). We will meet at the front gates at 10:30 am.

Growing Up In Lowell XIV

Edward Harley

In October 1985, Paul Page interviewed Edward Harley as part of the Oral History Collection created as a joint project between the University of Massachusetts Lowell, and the Lowell National Historical Park. The following article represents a small segment of the information on Edward Harley as edited by Cliff Hoyt. The full text is on the website for the Center for Lowell History, University of Massachusetts (<http://library.uml.edu/clh>). It can be found under "Oral History" then "Working People of Lowell."

Father's parents were both born in Ireland. Grandfather came to America in the 1880's. He got a job with the street railway and remained with them for 54 years. He drove one of the last horse-drawn trolley's in Lowell, and one of the first of the electric cars. He remained with the electric cars until the buses came in.



Edward Harley, January 1993, from The Lowell Historical Society's Lowell Sun Collection.

There's an old saying that "There's no sense in being Irish, if you can't be thick." My grandfather was certainly Irish. He was a very good man to me, but he was thick. He was opinionated, stubborn, and if he did something wrong, he'd refuse to admit it. He considered himself right in all things. He drove a bus the same way he drove a trolley, right down the

middle of the street as if there were tracks on the road. This was not the way it was meant to be. So he then worked in the maintenance barn, and stayed there for another six or seven years, until he broke his hip and had to retire.

Mother's parents were both mill people. My grandfather on my mother's side was three quarters French while my grandmother was Irish. They both came to work in the mills in Lowell. My grandfather became an overseer at the Boott Mill. Mother and most of her family followed him into the mill. She went in at fourteen. My grandfather remained there until he died two weeks after I was born. And it's interesting to see in the newspaper accounts that the management of the Boott attended his funeral which was kind of rare, but he had been with them for a good many years at that time.

My parents had two children, my sister and myself. I was born in 1927. I went to parochial schools. These schools are a big influence on the children who attend them. This is where the mind is molded and the training received is retained by almost all parochial school graduates to the end of their days.

Mother (and father when he was in Lowell), sister, and I lived with my father's folks until I was nine. My grandfather always worked, even at the worst of times, and made fairly decent money for the times. Additionally there were usually others in the house working. So we always ate extremely well in that house. My father still has that attitude, that the only things important in life are having a roof over your head, and having something to eat. Everything else is just extra.

Work was very hard to get for my father. At the time of his marriage he had obtained a job with Drake's cake franchise in Brooklyn. He drove a horse and wagon to stores, and sold them cakes. When the depression really hit, that job folded and he came back to Lowell but periodically he left home to find work. Once in awhile he would work for the W.P.A. When things got better he went to work for the city of Lowell and also as a bartender in a bar on Whipple Street off back Central.

My neighborhood was very mixed. It was basically Irish and Portuguese, but there were Italians, Scotch, French, and a couple of Swedes, all on the same street, and all as part of the neighborhood. It was a very cohesive neighborhood, and a very, very neighborly neighborhood with absolutely no types of antagonism towards one another. Each person looking out for the other person's interest at all times. Every mother, every woman on the street was my mother. If I was doing something wrong I'd get wacked by anybody that was there. It was considered the thing to do. A kid had a place in the world: it was keep his mouth shut and be good. Your parents expected anybody else that caught you doing something wrong to give you a little bit of a whack. In the adult world of my childhood there was no apparent feeling of distrust, or uneasiness between different ethnic groups in the neighborhood.

I played baseball on an Irish team but still you always had friends on the other teams. I mean, we were friendly off the field with a lot of the Greeks and French fellows. On the field there would be fights but it was a matter of conflict about the game, not nationality.

Walking was a fairly a big occupation, at the time. In days where cars were not as available and there was nothing else to do at night, you went walking. While walking, conflict would come from an invasion of turf. If you were going in any part of the city, and you saw a large group of fellows who you thought might be residents of that particular corner, you'd go out of your way perhaps to get around them, especially if you're alone. It happened all the time. I mean you tried to avoid it, or else get through fast.

In every neighborhood there was an amazing number of small variety stores. Almost every corner would have one. I lived on Crosby Street. At the top of the street there was a little variety store run by, by Margaret Finnegan. Right across the street there was the same type of store, run by Minnie Clancy. At the bottom of Crosby Street there was a store run by Mr. & Mrs. Shaw. One block away from that there was a store run by Mr. Blair, a blind man. All of these little places would sell bread, small can goods and things of that nature. Most everybody had one of these stores as their favorite. The people that run these of course, would live in one room behind it. They would open at 6:00 in the morning till 10:00 at night, hard life. Especially putting up with kids with 2 pennies worth of candy, rubbing their dirty noses all over the candy counter.

If you wanted to buy meat or get the food for the week, you went to a larger market. I worked in one for many years, and it was very different from the markets we know today. In the market we would receive plywood boxes containing an enormous amount of tea. The box would be curled and breaking apart from having been wet, on the trip. My job would be to put the tea in paper bags. I would tear off the plywood and inside there was this very heavy foil. While tearing off

the foil, your nostrils would be assailed by the fantastic smell of this fresh tea. I would take a scoop and measure out either a half pound or a pound of tea using a set of balanced scales. I would then pour that into a small brown bag. We would do the same with sugar.

I also had to clean chickens. They came from local farms often barely plucked. I'd have to chop the head and feet off. Then I removed all the insides and replace the giblets into the bird. It was a most distasteful job. During the hot summer, it was a really, really odorous job. In the winter, when they were frozen, your fingers just went numb while handling the icy, slushy stuff. On Thanksgiving and at Christmas we would have turkeys which came in that same way. Additionally, you had to break the legs off the turkeys. You didn't chop them, you broke them off. I think, next to the material that's used on space ships, the toughest thing in the world is a turkey leg. We used a metal gadget hooked on the wall. When you put the turkey's leg in the gadget, some tines held the turkey in place and made sort of a fulcrum. When you put some weight on that turkey, that fulcrum was supposed to help break that leg leaving the end you traditionally see in pictures. But if you came in when I was doing that job, you'd probably find a sixty-pound kid in a dirty white apron swinging like hell on the end of a turkey and not being able to snap that thing. I'd finally get it, but it was difficult. It was a hard, hard job.

All that activity went on behind the scenes. At that time, when a customer come in to get an order, they came to a counter. Very little was placed where a customer could pick it up. Instead they would stand in line and wait until they got to the counter. They would then tell one of the clerks what they wanted individually. The clerk would then walk back and forth filling your order. When the entire order was complete, including the meats and everything, he would then turn one of the bags over and write down the price of everything, add it up, and tell you the total. He would then either charge it to your account, or take the money. The clerk would then allow this person to take the order or put it in a box to be delivered later on. Every person that bought anything was treated very very individually, and with a great deal of personal service.

We ate extremely well while living at grandmother's house. After we left that house, my mother and I, and my sister, it wasn't always true. In 1936, my mother got a bit of a job, and decided to go on her own, because it wasn't her house. We were treated very well at grandmother's, and mother was extremely fond of everybody. Still she wanted her own home. We moved into a tenement owned by my uncle. The rent was three dollars a week at that time, for four rooms. The four rooms had pine floors that had no under flooring, just pine planking, over a dirt cellar. Absolutely no insulation, no storm windows and no hot water. The heat came from a coal stove in the kitchen. We did have a toilet and a tub, but in the draftiest bathroom in the world. This was a very hard place.

The focal point in our house was the kitchen and dining room. This is where you lived. The dining room was large, and after supper everybody would sit at the large table, drink tea and talk. The radio would be turned on, and I would be underneath it listening to programs like Jack Armstrong and Little Orphan Annie. My head would be near the speaker at the bottom of the radio, so I could hear it over the other's talking. We'd stay there until 7, 8, or 9 o'clock, until people starting going out or going to bed. Till this day I still am a kitchen person.

I fondly remember the events around the Fourth of July. Many of the small stores would build an outdoor stand two or three weeks before the Fourth of July, and cover them with red, white and blue crape paper bunting. From these stands they would sell a large assortment of fireworks: salutes, lady fingers, and cherry bombs, and all sorts of great things that would blow your fingers off. Although I know it is safer for children now that they've been outlawed, I miss it. There was a great deal of excitement about lighting fireworks off. Another thing was being allowed to stay up late at night to witness the fireworks on the South Common. There was also an extremely large carnival, during the annual Fourth of July celebration. It would usually go on for a week, with rides, free acts, and things of that nature.

Although times were hard, all in all I had a good life, growing up in Lowell.

Lowell Historical Society – Trivia Night –

Date: November 3, 2012
Time: 7:00 pm (doors open at 6:00)
Place: Club Lafayette, 465 Fletcher St. Lowell
Donations: \$10 Per Person

- An evening of Trivial Pursuit (with some Lowell Trivia mixed in)
- Open to families, friends, neighbors, individuals & civic groups.
- Teams can be 2-12 people (Think of a team name)
- Don't have a team? Come anyway, we'll find you one.
- LHS will provide the coffee, a raffle & fun
- You can bring food or snacks, no drinks.
- The Club Lafayette will provide a bartender for soda & liquor

To reserve a table or for more information call:

Martha Mayo 978.934.4997
Marie Sweeney 978.851.3867

Support Your Historical Society

LHS Corporate Memberships

The Lowell Historical Society proudly acknowledge our 2012 Corporate members who demonstrated their organization's commitment to the preservation of Lowell's past and the dissemination of information to keep Lowell's heritage alive in the future. The following organizations have made this commitment:

Blue Taleh Restaurant
CARSTAR Atlantic Collision Ctr.
Dr. Evan Coravos, DMD
D'Youville Senior Care
Enterprise Bank & Trust Co.
Fred C. Church Insurance
Fuse Bistro
Jeanne D'Arc Credit Union
Lowell Co-operative Bank
Lowell Five Cent Savings Bank
Lowell General Hospital
Lowell Sun Charities, Inc.
Mazur Park Apartments
Morse-Bayliss Funeral Home
Washington Savings Bank
Watermark

We would like to add the listing of your company here in the future.

2012 Corporate Membership

Enclosed is a \$100 tax deductible gift for a Lowell Historical Society Corporate Membership.

Name of Company: _____

Contact Person: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Approximate Number of Employees: _____

Send to Lowell Historical Society, PO Box 1826,
Lowell, MA 01853

FROM THE BOOKSHELF

by Pauline M. Golec

Are you a fan of TV's long running "Jeopardy?" Is the study of Lowell History one of your passions? You should find the following facts interesting. They are found in captions beneath images of postcards in the Society's LOWELL: THE MILL CITY.

- Cloth produced in Lowell was found throughout the country and around the world from...slave plantations, to hotels, to whaling ships.
- In the early 1830s, Merrimack House, a fine hotel, was situated on the corner of Merrimack and Dutton Streets.
- The U.S. Cartridge Company explosion in Lowell destroyed 65 homes and the shock was felt for 50 miles.

Want to learn more facts? The Society's companion book, LOWELL: THE RIVER City contains these gems.

- In the 1860s, the first drawing classes in Massachusetts schools were taught by Bertram Harrison at the Moody School in Lowell.
- The First Swedish Methodist Episcopal Church, located on the corner of Moore and Bourne Streets, was organized in 1892 to serve Lowell's Swedish immigrants.
- The steamboat HERALD carried passengers on the Merrimack River from Lowell to Nashua in the 1830s.

We hope that the above has whetted your interest in both LOWELL: THE MILL CITY and LOWELL: THE RIVER CITY. These postcard image books were written by the Society's Publication Committee for Arcadia Publishing Company and may be purchased through the Society (10% member discount) and at local book stores.

Lowell Triva

By Martha Mayo

1. Who was Lowell's first woman mayor?
2. Where was the first bridge across the Merrimack River?
3. What former Lowell Machine Shop employee invented the sewing machine?
4. What was produced by Whipple's Mill on the Concord River?

Answers on page 6.

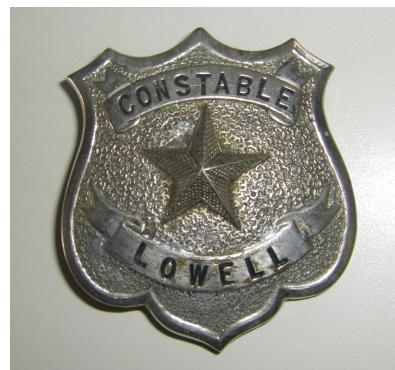
EBAY Auctions of Lowell Interest

1910 Mass Firemen's Association Convention Badge "Lowell Ma. Delegate" A 1910 Lowell "Delegate" Convention Badge for the Mass Firemen's Association measuring 1-3/4""x 3-1/4". It was in excellent condition with no dents, bends, breaks or repairs but is missing the ribbon. Price realized was \$25 including shipping and handling.



Harvard Ale – Harvard Brewing Co - Lowell, MA-Near Mint Flat Top. A near mint flat top beer can from the mid 50's. Price realized was \$66 including shipping and handling.

Lowell Constable Badge. Silver colored badge with a star in the middle and "Constable" printed above the stare and Lowell below the star. It is 2.25" x 2.5" in size, with a good pin and clasp type back. Price realized was \$36 including shipping and handling.



Lowell Historical Society
P.O. Box 1826
Lowell, MA 01853

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The preservation of Lowell history depends heavily on your membership. If you have not yet sent in your membership renewal, please do so as soon as possible.

Lowell Historical Society

The Lowell Historical Society's Mission is to collect, preserve and publish materials related to Lowell and to promote the study of the history of the City. We are located at the Boott Cotton Mills Museum, 115 John Street, Fourth Floor, Downtown Lowell Massachusetts 01852.

The office is open 9:00 am to 12:00 Noon on Monday and Wednesday. The site telephone number is 978-970-5180 or on the Web at:

<http://www.lowellhistoricalsociety.org>.

Center for Lowell History

The Center for Lowell History, 40 French Street, currently is open on Monday through Friday from 9 am to 5 pm. For Saturday from 10 am to 3 pm.

The contact point for information is Martha Mayo, 978-934-4998. The Center's web address is:
<http://library.uml.edu/clh/>

Calendar of Events

- Program:** Edson Cemetery Tour by Kim Zunino
Date: Saturday October 13, 10:30-11:30 am
Rain Date Sunday October 14th
Location: 1375 Gorham Street
- Program:** Lowell Historical Society Trivia Night
(The competition is super friendly. You will not be disappointed if you come.)
Date: November 3, 2012 at 7:00 pm (doors open at 6:00)
Location: Club Lafayette, 465 Fletcher St. Lowell
- Program:** The Lowell Textile Strike of 1912 by Bob Forrant
Date: Sunday November 18, 2012 at 2:00 pm
Location: National Park Visitor Center, 246 Market Street, Lowell. Use parking lot at 304 Dutton Street

Answers to Trivia Questions

- 1) Ellen Sampson, 2) Pawtucket Falls, 3) Elias Howe,
4) Gunpowder.