

House History Workshop

By Kim Zunino

April 21, 2018 11am-1pm
Center for Lowell History
40 French Street, Lowell, MA

Do you know when your house was built? Have you ever wondered who once lived in your home? Or when the addition was added? Or why the ghost likes the back hallway so much?

The Lowell Historical Society welcomes you to its first House History workshop on April 21st where you will learn how to uncover the mysteries of your home or property using public records and other resources. This three-hour workshop will go over what records are available, how to access them, and how to put the information together to form a complete history of your property. After the workshop you are welcome to stay at the Center for Lowell History and start your journey by utilizing the records found within. This workshop can aid more than Lowellians, as the resources discussed can be found in most Massachusetts towns and cities.

This workshop is also great for Real Estate professionals, business owners, or anyone who wants to create a one-of-a-kind housewarming gift for loved ones! This workshop will be led by Society President Kim Zunino who has researched historical properties in her former position as the Assistant Administrator of the Lowell Historic Board.

Lowell Trivia

By Martha Mayo

1. Where did the pontoon bridge cross the Merrimack River?
2. Who was chief of the Penacook Indians?
3. What area company produced over 330,000 feet of glass in 1820?
4. What Metropolitan Opera Singer was born in Lowell?

Branding Lowell Exhibit to Open in March 24th

By Tony Sampas

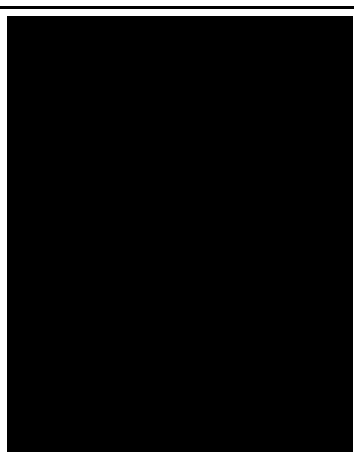
"Branding Lowell" is an exhibit that takes a new look at Lowell history by viewing it through the lens of graphic design. The exhibit is slated to open at the Mogan Cultural Center on March 24th at 2:30 PM and will be up throughout the spring and summer. Branding Lowell focuses on the stylistic depiction of images and mottos that have become emblematic of the Lowell community from the Industrial Revolution to the present day. It covers the creation of the original City Seal on up to the development of such logos as the UMass Lowell River Hawk. The idea for this new perspective on Lowell's graphic self-image began with a conversation between area designer Mark Vander Hyde and Lowell Historical Society Archivist Tony Sampas concerning a decades old "Lowell's Back" bumper sticker. The sticker's powerful graphic design had held its own against time and it was clear to Tony and Mark that it and other such items should be preserved for posterity and shared with the public. Further exchanges brought a recognition of the continuity that exists between Lowell's contemporary logos and trademarks and the more traditional items found on Lowell's monuments, advertisements, and the official correspondence of guilds and community organizations.

Soon the idea of creating an exhibit emerged and Tony and Mark reached out to the Lowell National Historical Park and received enthusiastic support from Chief of Cultural Resources, Laurel Racine. The timing could not have been better as Laurel was sponsoring an Internship for Sarah Black who is enrolled in the Masters Program in Archives and Public History at UMass Boston. Sarah delved into the LNHP collections and brought out such items as a commemorative Key to the City featuring Lowell's motto, "Art is the Handmaid of Human Good," which had been gifted by Mayor Armand W. LeMay. Other LNHP memorabilia include

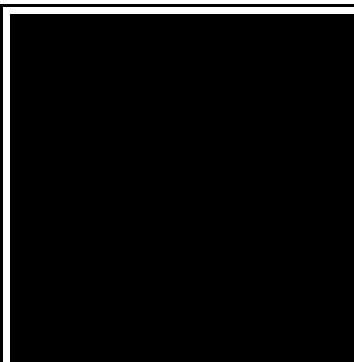
local and national symbols of canals, mill girls, trolleys, and the iconic National Park Service arrowhead.

Meanwhile, Vander Hyde set his sights on rounding up and determining the authorship of logos such as the Lock Monster, the smiling Lowell Sun trademark, and the Sesquicentennial and Flowering City logos. The exhibit includes early sketches of the River Hawk, created by Brian Trainor. These and other works in the exhibit demonstrate that the archives reveal the creative process at work when designers try to come up with the right look. The work of over fifty graphic artists has been gathered together for Branding Lowell and Mark has devised a color-coded timeline to make the exhibit as comprehensive and coherent as possible. Mark also sent Tony digging into the Human Service Collection at the Center for Lowell History where the origins of the Sesquicentennial Logo were uncovered. In the process, Tony also learned that his uncle, Charles Sampas of the Lowell Sun, had been Chairman of the Lowell Bicentennial Sesquicentennial Commission.

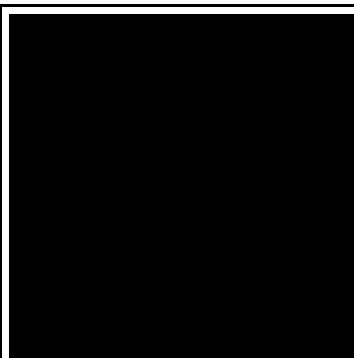
Other discoveries emerged from the Center for Lowell History as Tony worked to trace the lineage of UMass Lowell's legacy institutions and emblems, which include the 19th Century Lowell Textile School and Lowell Normal School and their successor colleges. The most well-known of the Lowell Textile seals depicts two idealized Mill Girls holding vigil over a crest, but with the help of LHS board member Janine Whitcomb, another seal was found in the form of a metal printing plate mounted on a wooden block. At Mark's suggestion, Tony brought the plate to Sweet Pig Press at Lowell's Mill 5 where Sergio Vasquez was able to strike fresh prints using a 1906 Chandler Letterpress. While the plate had suffered some corrosion over time, it



1976 Lowell
Sesquicentennial



1895 Lowell Textile School



1929 Circa Lowell Textile
Institute

clearly depicts a sheep and a blooming cotton boll, representing the two chief textile fibers of the time, wool and cotton, flanking a weaving shuttle. Interestingly, despite a thorough search of the surviving documents of the era, no print versions of the seal have yet been found. However, its design elements were included in the center of the Mill Girls seal to signify the art and science of textiles. When the School grew to be an Institute in 1928, the Mill Girls motif was redrawn to reflect the light, graphic design style of that era and was rebranded with a circular "Lowell Textile Institute" while "Lowell Textile School" remained intact in the crest. This is but one of many stories to learn from the Branding Lowell exhibit. The event is free and open to the public and refreshments will be served!

The Immigrant Experience In Lowell II

Lisa Dagdigian

[In March 2008, Lisa Dagdigian provided an interview as part of an ethnographic assessment of immigrant communities in Lowell. This assessment was conducted by Robert Forrant, Ph.D. and Christoph Stobelas, Ph.D. under contract to the Lowell National Historical Park. The following article represents a small segment of the information on Lisa Dagdigian 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 "ETHNICITY IN LOWELL".]

My name is Lisa Dagdigian. I was born in Iran with thoroughly Armenian heritage. I came to the United States in 1963 to work on my master's degree in English Literature at Ohio State University in Columbus, Ohio. Initially I chose the university because my brother was going to school there. I experienced culture shock at Ohio St. and I hated it passionately. I wasn't used to a big university environment. Within a year I moved to Cleveland and went to John Carroll University. John Carroll was a small Catholic school and I could relate to students better. I was very happy there and I got my Master's in English Literature. However, I did not feel like going for a PhD in English Literature. I knew with the Masters I wasn't ready to teach high school. Besides, I really didn't understand the mentality of high school students. I was very much interested in Library Science. The wife of the head of the English Department at John Carroll was a professor

at Case Western University, which had a Library Science School. He knew I enjoyed doing research and encouraged me to get a Masters in Library Science from Case Western. While at John Carroll, I met my future husband who was from Lowell, and he was there visiting his brother. By the time I started at Case Western, we were already engaged. After graduation, I moved to Lowell, since my husband was from Lowell and I did not have a family nearby.

My husband is also Armenian. His mother was born in Rhode Island and his father, who had died before we were married, was born in Texas. That's right, Texas, an Armenian from Texas. It's unusual. His grand parent fled the genocide in the Turkish Ottoman Empire.

Armenian is a very family-oriented culture. I was brought up in Iran among the Armenians and very often when you marry somebody, you would live with your husband's family. I knew my mother-in-law was alone in Lowell, living in one side of a duplex, that she owned on Windsor Street. I suggested, to my future husband, that "if you want for me to come and live with your mother it's okay with me." At the time, he misunderstood me, and he thought that I wanted to live next door to her. We ended up renting the other half of the duplex from her and that's how it worked and I ended up living in Lowell.

We lived in Lowell from 1968 to around the end of 1972. We then moved to Westford. Both locations were central to our jobs. When I moved to Lowell, I already had a job at the Worcester Public Library. I didn't have a car so I had a long commute by bus early in the morning and late into the evening. I had only been working in Worcester for a couple of months when my parents came from Iran for our wedding. I decided to quit my job so that I could be with my parents who I had not seen for over four years. I remember the day they first came to the United States, it was one of my most exciting days. I left work early in Worcester, took the bus to Lowell, then with my husband we drove to the airport. I was just in tears, I hadn't seen them in four years. I hadn't talked to them. It was very exciting. They stayed here for a couple of months and when they left, I started working as the Director of Burlington Public Library. At the time, my husband worked in Nashua and we only had one car. We would get up in the morning, I would drive to Nashua, and drop him off there. I would then drive all the way to Burlington. After work we would then reverse the drive with me picking him up and coming back to Windsor Street in Lowell.

I worked in Burlington for five years. Then I had my daughter in 1973 and I left. At that time I wanted to be a full-time mom. However, ten years later in 1983, I wanted to begin working again outside the home. I knew most of the directors in the area. If they needed somebody temporarily, I would accept the job. I would tell them that I'm going to take the job as a part-time temporary until you find the employee you need. I did that for ten years. I worked twice in Chelmsford, once as an Assistant Director, once as a Reference Librarian. I worked in

Lowell as Reference Librarian. I worked in Westford as Library Director. Finally I accepted a permanent but very part-time position as Assistant Reference Librarian in Wilmington. I worked one or two evenings a week and some Saturdays. Then a Director's position in the town of Harvard became available and that is what I wanted. I accepted that as a part-time position, and then built it up to full-time.

When I came to Lowell, there was still a strong Armenian community. There is a division among the Armenians because of the church. I would say that it is both political and religious. At one time the head of the Armenian Church was in Armenia. One faction of Armenians believed that he is still the head of the church, even during Soviet times. The other group, which is very much anti-Soviet believes that their head of the church is now in Lebanon. I really don't know what had transpired in the United States to cause this big division between the two groups but in Iran there wasn't any split. The church with the head in Armenia had the church in Lowell, which now has moved to Chelmsford. While the church in North Andover is from the other faction. I'm not a church person myself. I go only occasionally, Easter and Christmas, and funerals and weddings. Usually when I go to church it is North Andover. However, I've always told my husband "I'm not a believer to be honest," but I said, "If I were a believer and I wanted to go to church, I would go to the close one." I would go to Chelmsford, because if you believe in God it doesn't make any difference, where the head of the church is. I think my husband has come to understand that, and now very often we go to the church in Chelmsford.

Except for the first nine months going to Ohio State University, I have never wanted to go back to Iran except to visit. Before the revolution, I would go and visit my parents every other year. And every other year

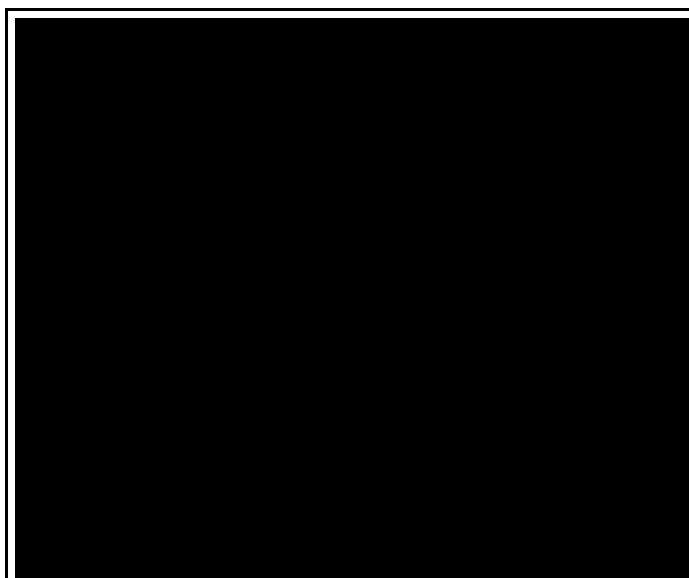


Image of Lisa Dagdigian while visiting Yerevan, the capital of Armenia in 2018.

they would come and visit us. I only had two weeks vacation, and then eventually three weeks vacation. Sometimes I would take it without pay just to spend at least four weeks there, because it was a long flight. We visited back and forth like this till the Iranian revolution. One of the things that the revolution did was to eliminate all of the movie theaters. My father owned and operated theaters at that time. So my father lost those. It was a good source of income. So they took it away without any compensation. I talked my parents into coming to the United States. It was good for them to come here.

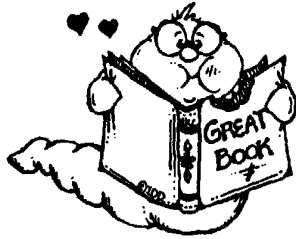
I have changed since coming to the United States. I had always been a very casual person. I won't call myself outspoken, but I call a spade a spade. I'm that kind of a person. And you can't be like that in Iran. You just can't. You know, you have to be very careful about what you say, your manners, and the way you dress. I mean they used to be, and they still are, very conscious of what they wear. Iranian women love the latest styles. Even right, now women covering themselves with the most those.

Solvey father M&R

FROM THE BOOKSHELF

by Pauline M. Golec

Yes! Spring is almost here as are the season's special days. Consider buying *LOWELL: THE MILL CITY* or *LOWELL: THE RIVER CITY* (or both) for a Mother's Day, Father's Day or Graduation Day gift.



Written by members of the Society's Publication Committee and published by Arcadia as part of its Postcard History Series, it preserves Lowell scenes and stories using postcard images from the 1890's-1940's.

LOWELL: THE MILL CITY features postcards illustrating the growth of an industrial city. The Table of Contents summarizes the story - mills, businesses, community services, disasters, streetscapes and leisure activities. This volume pictures a city and people of grit and enterprise.

LOWELL: THE RIVER CITY emphasizes an industrial city with soul; a city of culture and beauty. Waterways, bridges, school, churches, residences, parks, cemeteries, monuments, and neighboring environs are richly depicted. Both books have informative text and a last chapter in color.

Each book is an easily handled repository of preserved Lowell history and can be viewed and appreciated often. In the Mill City book, postcards of the flood of 1936 are fascinating reminders of this almost legendary disaster, while early views of Clark Road and Princeton Boulevard are unrecognizably pastoral. Images of Pawtucket Falls (in both books) could soon be collectors' items as the appearance of the falls will be altered by the controversial new bladder dam. Scenes of bridges in the River City volume may inspire comparisons to the bridges of today. Related point - the Lowell Waterways Vitality Initiative, a collaboration between the city and the Lowell Heritage Partnership, plans to dramatically illuminate the Cox Bridge (aka The Bridge St. Bridge). Rare postcard views? The River City book has an exterior scene of Immaculate Conception Church with a fine view of the Massachusetts Mills as the neighboring Memorial Auditorium had not yet been built.

Hope that the above teasers have tempted you to buy a book for yourself as well as for others. Books may be purchased from the Lowell Historical Society (10 % membership discount) and at the Lowell National Historical Park bookstores.

EBAY Auctions of Lowell Interest

S. Bartlett Soda Bottle from Lowell, Mass. with scarce Thomas Closure. This bottle is 7.5 inches tall and made with clear glass. The bottle was blown in the mold and hand finished. It is embossed on the front with:

S. Bartlett/160 & 162 / Middlesex, St. / Lowell, Mass. The back is embossed Registered/The Thasmo [*sic.*] / Pat. Appld. For. The seller notes that: The closure was patented by Frederick R. H. Thomas on December 10, 1895. The bottle sold for \$69 including shipping.

Bulls Eye Roach Killer cardboard cylinder with metal top and bottom, manufactured by C.L. Sweetsir, at 276 Westford St., Lowell, MA. The four inch high yellow container has black lettering with a red and yellow bulls eye. Sold for \$129 including shipping.

Victorian Trade Card for U. S. Cartridge Co., Lowell MA, dated 1876. Sold for \$178 including shipping.

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

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The preservation of Lowell history depends heavily on d

Answers to Trivia Questions

1) Rourke Bridge, 2) *Passaconaway*, 3) Chelmsford Glassworks, and 4) Rosaline Elias.

