

MEDFORD BRICK BY BRICK

BIKE TOUR OF MEDFORD



1. City Hall

Built in 1936 on the site of the historical Medford Commons, it was dedicated in 1937 on the 307th anniversary of the founding of Medford. The building was to have been constructed of cinder blocks and stucco, but brick was substituted. Some details are still visible today which show the effort put into the building. Note the corner quoins, as you also see at the Royall House.



2. Ship Marker

Ship building began on Riverside Avenue, formerly known as Ship Street as early as 1631. The first shipyard in Medford was founded in 1802 by Thatcher Magoun of Pembroke. From 1802-1873, Medford Shipbuilders worked in 10 shipyards and built a total of 568 ships. By 1879, the shipping industry had died out and the street name was changed. The location for the ship yards was chosen because of its passage to Boston Harbor and its high tide depth could accommodate up to a 2,500 ton vessel.



3. Peter Tufts House

Built ca. 1680, it is one of the

oldest all-brick houses in the U.S. and the first of three 17th-century brick houses in Medford. Built by Peter Tufts Sr. in a transitional style that incorporates Georgian and Colonial features with a Flemish bond brick-laying. Historic New England acquired the house in 1930 and sold it to the Medford Historical Society in 1982. Charles Tufts (1781-1876), a descendant of Peter Tufts Sr., later donated the land for the campus of Tufts University.



4. Train Station

Built between 1893-94, this station was built

at the urging of Samuel Crocker Lawrence, a VP of the Boston and Maine Railroad and Medford's first mayor. Known as the Medford Branch Railroad, it ran only two miles with stations at Glenwood, Park Street, and Medford village. Some of the old tracks can still be seen today in various locations across the city. The building was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 1975 and is now a home for Alzheimer's patients.



5. Old High School

Construction of the High School

began in 1894 and was completed in 1896 with expansions added in 1914, 1929, and 1939. Characteristic of each period, the new wings were built of combining elements of Renaissance and Colonial Revival styles. After a fire in 1965, Medford High School was used as an annex for the City and listed with the National Register of Historic Places in 1983 before eventually being developed into condominiums.



6. Jonathan Wade House

One of the three oldest brick

houses in Medford, it is known to have been standing on this site in 1689, when Jonathan Wade, Jr., died. The house was given Georgian styling in the mid-18th century, and was owned for many years in the 19th century by Samuel Crocker Lawrence. It is privately owned today.



7. Royall House & Slave Quarters

One of the oldest brick houses in Medford, in

the 18th C, the Royall House and Slave Quarters was home to the largest slaveholding family in MA. Today, RH&SQ is a museum whose interpretive collections bear witness to intertwined stories of wealth and bondage. Tours are available in the summer months.

Stops

1. City Hall, 85 Hassett Dr
2. Ship Marker, Riverbend Park
3. Peter Tufts House, 350 Riverside Ave
4. Train Station 20 Magoun Ave
5. Old High School, 54 Forest St
6. Jonathan Wade House, 13 Bradlee Rd
7. Royall House & Slave Quarters, 15 George St
8. College Brickyards, College Ave
9. Ballou Hall, Tufts University
10. Slave Wall, 90 Grove St



8. College Brickyards

In the 19th century, a large

part of the south and east of Medford was underlain with fine clay from which bricks were made. By the early 20th century, brick-making declined in Medford. By 1921, Tufts tried to purchase the abandoned clay pits on College Avenue. The purchase was not authorized until 1926. Additional clay pits was acquired in 1927. What you see now are the athletic fields and the Cousens Gymnasium.



9. Ballou Hall

Charles Tufts inherited several hundred

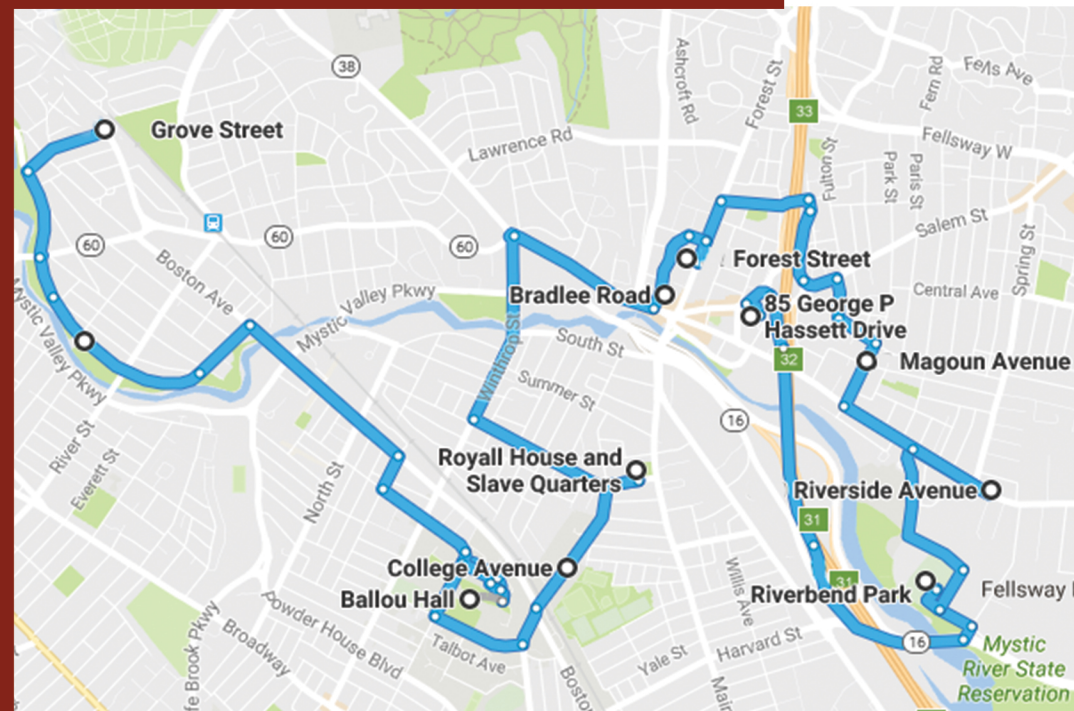
acres in the early 19th century then known as Walnut Hill, the highest point in Medford. The College was founded by Universalists who wanted a non-sectarian institution. P.T. Barnum, one of the first Trustees, donated the carcass of "Jumbo" to be the mascot. Initially called College Hall, Ballou Hall, built in 1853/54 was the first building on the young Tufts campus and housed classrooms, the library, laboratories, a museum, administrative and faculty offices, student living quarters, and a chapel.



10. Slave Wall

Also called Pomp's Wall, it is capped

with thin stone slabs and a granite post at the southern end. Built by Pomp, an enslaved man owned by Thomas Brooks, around 1765. The wall, like the Slave Quarters at the Royall House is a visible remnant of the slave trade in 18th-century Medford. It stands as a testament to Pomp's masonry abilities as well as the efforts of the other unsung individuals who made Medford's prosperity possible.



Information and Images provided by the Medford Historical Society & Museum.
More Information at medfordhistorical.org



Medford Historical Society & Museum
Organized in 1896 by concerned citizens from the city of Medford, MA

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Created by Helen G. Houghton

