



President's Overview Reflections from the Past

by John Anderson



I often use MHSM's many resources to better understand what our citizens were thinking 100 years ago.

In January of 1920, Mayor Haines gave his annual speech addressing the challenges of the New Year. He gave a very upbeat assessment of the city but explained the need for increased taxes partly to address a "great problem" of illiteracy.

"Here in our own beautiful city of homes, well governed and highly efficient we do not appear to be immediately concerned with the great problem [of illiteracy], but it is for us to maintain the high standard of efficiency to make up for those sections of our Commonwealth and our nation which are not so blessed with our opportunities and our excellent class of citizenship...we must carry our burden as Americans, having in mind that only by our strenuous activity and our endurance of hardship can we keep our country in such a condition as to assimilate and educate the great hordes of ignorant people in our midst, filled with unrest and with passions inflamed by dangerous agitators."

I found his sentiment surprising, so I investigated the events of 1919 to better understand the context. 1919

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Of Harpsichords and Clavichords: Medford's Allan Winkler

by David Fedo

Nearly every day, longtime Medford resident Allan Winkler leaves his house in West Medford and takes a short walk to the two-story workplace, formerly a carriage house, which stands on the edge of his grassy backyard. It is in this cluttered workplace—perhaps better called a studio these days—where Allan creates his magic. The 71 year-old professional has, over the past decades, used his artistry and what he calls his "mechanical memory," along with an extraordinary understanding of the mixed disciplines of music, engineering, design, and carpentry, to bring to life the treasures of the worlds of harpsichords and clavichords, both ancient and now contemporary instruments. The sounds that now spring forth continue to bring pleasure to generations of listeners and followers just as they have over the centuries.

Harpsichords and clavichords have been around for a long time, appearing in Europe as early as the Middle Ages and flourishing well into and beyond the Renaissance. Later, the growing popularity of the piano led to a declining interest in both by composers, musicians, and audiences, but a revival of interest in early classical music in the 19th and 20th centuries brought back a renewed appreciation of early instruments. When Allan opened his workshop decades ago, he surmises

that there were somewhere around nine separate artisans then constructing harpsichords and clavichords in Greater Boston. But today he appears to stand alone here in this special craft, and as such he is a one-person cottage industry.

Allan has lived with his wife Joann in Medford for some 18 years. "I had known about the West Medford area for many years," he recalls. "Finding a pretty old house with a great carriage house for a workshop is a bit of a dream come true, though

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Master craftsman Allan Winkler builds harpsichords and clavichords in his West Medford workplace.



President's Overview *continued*

was a tumultuous year here and abroad. I was struck by the many parallels between 1919 and 2019 including world-wide violence, battles over immigration, and concerns about presidential powers.

We think of WW I as ending with the armistice on 11/11/1918, but violence continued.

Czar Nicholas II abdicated in 1917 and was executed in 1918, but the Russian Revolution raged on. The Russian and Austro-Hungarian monarchies were defeated in WWI. Much of their area eventually fell into the USSR's orbit, but in the meantime the region was plagued by communist or nationalist revolutions and invasions, with huge civilian casualties and periodic massacres or genocides.

Things were not much better in Germany. Uprisings in Berlin were suppressed by armed force. The German Communist Party and the German Workers Party (forerunner of the Nazi Party) were formed. Adolf Hitler made his first public speech. There was a general strike in the Ruhr. The German mark lost 75% of its value in one year, with worse to follow. German troops crushed the upstart "Bavarian Soviet Republic" and suppressed a revolt by the Poles in Silesia. On a more positive note, even though it was eventually suppressed by Hitler, the Bauhaus movement began and eventually revolutionized architecture around the world.

The European "winners" had problems as well. Great Britain engaged in the Anglo-Irish War, an Egyptian Revolution, the massacre of 379 Sikhs in India, the killing of four protestors in Malta, and the third Anglo-Afghan War. Somehow, Britain also found time to attack the Bolshevik Navy docked in the Baltic and assist the Greeks in an invasion of Smyrna, Turkey while Kemal Ataturk started the Turkish Revolution. At home, the British Army was used to quell worker riots in Scotland. Canadian soldiers, still waiting to return home from Britain, rioted in two separate incidents, resulting in deaths and injuries. France also had violent confrontations between left-wing demonstrators and police. Benito Mussolini founded the Fascist Party in Italy.

Closer to home, the Mexican Revolution was in full swing, with numerous casualties. Pancho Villa and US troops skirmished near the border. In Argentina, an anarchist uprising was suppressed by government forces.

Back in the USA, the Spanish Flu epidemic, though winding down in 1919, sickened nearly 30% of Americans and killed 670,000. That's equivalent to two million deaths today. Early in 1919, the 18th amendment to the Constitution was ratified, setting the stage for Prohibition. In June, Congress approved the 19th amendment, granting women the right to vote. Massachusetts was the 8th state to ratify but the fight continued until final approval by three-fourths of the states in 1920.

In 1919, the Paris Peace Conference opened and the League of Nations was established. Woodrow Wilson campaigned tirelessly, but unsuccessfully, for approval by the United States Senate. After President Wilson suffered his second stroke in October, his wife Edith tried her best to mask the severity of his illness for months, controlling access and making decisions in his stead. She became, in effect, what some historians term America's first female president. The 25th amendment to the Constitution dealing with Presidential disability was not in place until 1965, so there was no way to address this Constitutional crisis.

There was labor unrest in both the US and Canada with general strikes in Oregon, Winnipeg, as well as a US nationwide steel strike. These strikes often ended with fatalities after intervention by police or armed soldiers. In April, over 30 bombs were mailed to prominent politicians and officials, presumably by "Italian Anarchists." Combined with the labor unrest and the belief that unions were infiltrated by communists, newspapers and politicians promoted a "Red Scare," and claimed that the country was threatened by chaos. Italian immigrants and eastern European Jews were the frequent targets.

Woodrow Wilson installed a controversial Attorney General, A. Mitchell Palmer, using the "recess appointment" loophole in the Constitution. Palmer organized the "Palmer Raids." Thousands of immigrants, and sometimes actual citizens, were rounded up, utilizing questionable procedures, alleged police brutality, and unsanitary detention facilities. The intent was to deport the 3,000 people arrested, but only 556 were actually deported. At that time, the Labor Department was responsible for deportation and insisted that actual evidence needed to be presented to a judge prior to deportation.

Returning African-American veterans faced race riots Chicago, Omaha, Norfolk and many other cities, resulting in the wholesale burning of neighborhoods and lynchings. President Wilson, a staunch segregationist, stated opposition but took no action.

Even the 1919 World Series was tainted by controversy after Chicago White Sox players were accused of rigging games.

What about our part of the world? Massachusetts re-elected Governor Calvin Coolidge in 1919. In those days, governors ran for election every year! The following year Coolidge was nominated and elected Vice-President with President Harding under the Republican slogan "Return to Normalcy." (It's easy to understand why this slogan appealed!) In Boston, the infamous Molasses Flood killed 21 and wiped out entire blocks in the North End. Boston Police went on strike over wages and working conditions. They were called "deserters" and "agents of Lenin." Governor Coolidge called out the National Guard and the strike was broken. And, to make matters worse, the Red Sox traded Babe Ruth to the Yankees!

In this first newsletter of 2020, let me finish by thanking all the members, volunteers, contributors, and Board members who did so much in 2019 and will make this another great year for MHSM.

Opportunity:

**Are you a CPA or Accountant?
Are you retired? or just starting out?
or in-between with a love of history?**

**MHSM is seeking a Treasurer
to serve on the Board of Directors**

*To express interest or
request additional information
please write to
mhsqueries@yahoo.com*

Of Harpsichords and Clavichords *continued*

it took a stroke of luck, an incredible amount of hard work and more money than we could afford. It has been worth all of the effort.”

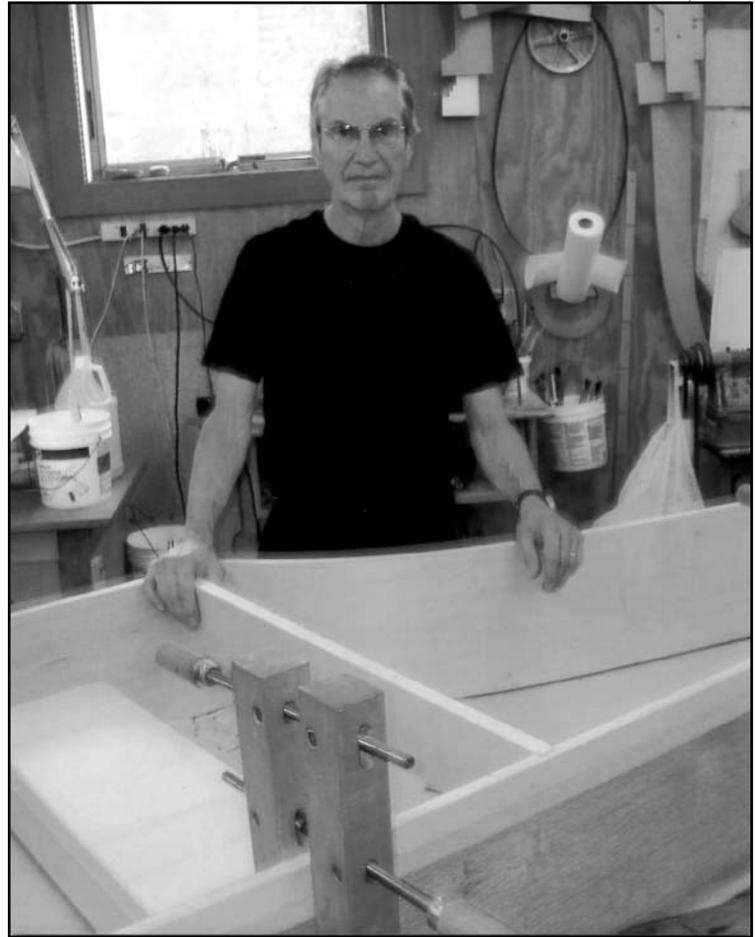
“All early music artists tend to be passionate about their music,” Allan has said. “Similarly, professional instrument makers can have intensive feelings about their work. As a harpsichord maker, I am committed to producing instruments that are inspiring to the eye, the ear, and the hand.” He adds that “I hope my instruments will be as timeless as the antiques on which they are modeled, and I am devoted to the continuing satisfaction of their owners.”

Born in Cambridge (his father was a musician deeply involved in teaching and performing early music), Allan, who studied at Boston University, acquired much of his knowledge and many of his professional skills through the Cambridge teachings of Eric Herz, an expert in the field. Then in 1977 he founded his own shop and developed eight models of harpsichords based on French and German antiques as well as one German model of the clavichord. “My instruments embody more than 48 years of research in both archival study and hands-on work examining, measuring and restoring antique harpsichords.” He elaborates: “With proper care the instruments I make will last as long as the 17th and 18th century ancestors.”

The sound of a harpsichord or clavichord is, according to Allan, “brilliant,” and he says listening to Bach on a well-played harpsichord is a “transcendent experience.” But there are considerable differences between the harpsichord and clavichord. For one thing the clavichord is physically much smaller than the harpsichord. Allan explains that “the harpsichord and clavichord “are two distinct instruments that developed along unique lines. They share the characteristics of having a keyboard for the player, and strings that produce the sound, but there the comparison really stops. Mechanically and tonally they are distinct from each other.” Down through the centuries, the low volume sounded by the clavichord accounts for it being frequently employed as a practice instrument.



This French harpsichord was crafted by Allan in 2016. The instrument is an almost exact copy of one by François-Étienne Blanchet II from 1765. In addition to its elaborate decoration, it is voiced in bird feather.



Allan Winkler is “committed to producing instruments that are inspiring to the eye, the ear, and the hand.”

On the other hand, the harpsichord allows the player to produce a much stronger tone. Its keyboard has a more piano-like appearance. The clavichord strikes its strings with a very simple mechanism, but the harpsichord plucks them.

“Well thought-out design enables the player to control the full power of musical expression», asserts Allan. “I select all woods, wires and all felt cloth with great care. Most important I use only hot hide glue; above all other factors, this seemingly lowly substance is indispensable to the durability and musical integrity of the instruments. Finally, I use the best quality paint finishes that resist abrasion and allow the wood to expand, contract and resonate naturally.” This close attention to detail is obvious to anyone who observes Allan in the workplace with his materials. His long trail of experience in his craft is extraordinary. He calls the totality of his work an “historically oriented” approach.

What about cost? Early instruments are not inexpensive, according to Allan. He markets his harpsichords from \$40,000 to \$42,000, and his clavichords for \$32,000.

Baroque music still lives, and Boston with its rich collection of musical groups, is a good place to enjoy it. Kudos to Allan Winkler for his role in keeping early music flourishing.

Recent Events at MSHM

*right: "Poetry on Hops"
Our successful mini-fundraiser,
on October 25th at MSHM was
sponsored by Medford poet,
teacher, and co-founder of
Medford Brewery, Max Heinegg.
Pictured left to right are poets
Heather Sullivan, Max Heinegg,
Aaron Smith, and Medford's Terry
E. Carter.*



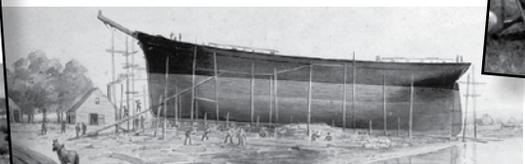
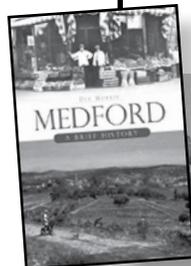
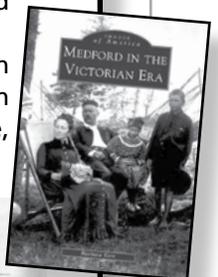
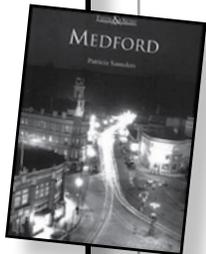
*below: Reenactment
Solomon Pierce, father of
four and a private in the 54th
Massachusetts Volunteers joined
us for the annual Christmas party.
Joseph Zellner's portrayal brought
to life the experiences of this Civil
War enlisted man.*



Our Medford Book Shop **OFFERINGS**

MSHM carries books for sale about Medford by Medford authors, perfect for personal enjoyment and gift giving. Our books cover the life and times of some of our 18th, 19th, and 20th century historically significant people and events. These include patriot Sarah Bradlee Fulton, abolitionist George Luther Stearns, activist Lydia Maria Child, and the Hallowell Family, and others. We also have fascinating contemporary Medford books with information and photographs of today and yesterday authored by Barbara Kerr, Patricia Saunders, and Dee Morris. The Shop carries beautifully framed photos by Patricia Saunders and prints of Medford Square and ships in the 19th century by James F. Murray. Additionally, we offer books about clipper ships and ship building, pamphlets on many local subjects, vintage postcards, and interesting items at reasonable prices.

The Museum and the Shop are open every Sunday afternoon from noon to 4:00 pm at 10 Governors Avenue, Medford, MA 02155.



MHSM Events Calendar

New WWII Exhibit Plans

The year 2020 marks the 75th anniversary of the end of WWII. Event plans for the recognition of this milestone have rekindled reminiscences across the country. While few of those who served in the war (military or civilian) survive today, their memory and the memories left with their families are very much with us. MHSM plans to share its WWII collection in the coming year and wishes to invite Medford families to share their memorabilia and WWII period items for possible inclusion in this exhibit.

If you have items from WWII or from the war years that you are willing to share with our volunteer curators for consideration as an exhibit loan, please come by or call MHSM, 10 Governors Avenue, on any one of the following dates: Sunday, January 12, 19, or 26, between 1:00 and 3:00 PM

Please plan to bring your items, or a photo or description, or leave us a call-back message at 781-391-8739

JANUARY Continuing Exhibits

Sundays, 12 Noon – 4:00 PM, at MHSM, 10 Governors Avenue

See the Museum's displays of clipper ships, rum, books on Medford, and more. Enjoy the diorama of Medford (circa 1855) and find recognizable buildings today as well as the location of the Medford ship building industry. You will also find these two special exhibits:

Lydia Maria Child: Author and Abolitionist: Gathering Up the Fragments;

Stearns, Shaw, the Hallowells, and the Massachusetts 54th and 55th

Author/Lecture

**Richard Smith: Transcendentalists, Abolitionists, John Brown and Beyond:
The New Englanders Who Made John Brown a Hero**
Sunday, January 12, 2020, 7:00 PM, at MHSM,
10 Governors Avenue



John Brown's raid on the Harpers Ferry arsenal in 1859 brought the United States one step closer to civil war. Many people, South and North, considered him a deranged fanatic. And while his actions were misunderstood, a small by vocal group of New England writers, po-

ets, and abolitionists did their best to make Brown a hero. It was, after all, a "secret six" coalition of New Englanders who'd given Brown the money and weapons for the raid! Learn why the New England literati adored Brown and how Ralph Waldo Emerson, Henry David Thoreau, Lydia Maria Child, George Luther Stearns, and others reinvented Brown and turned him into an Abolitionist martyr. Jointly sponsored by the Royall House & Slave Quarters, the Friends of the Medford Public Library, and MHSM.

MARCH Fundraiser

4th Annual "Trivia Night"

at the Medford Senior Center, 101 Riverside Avenue, Saturday, March 28, 2020, 7:00 PM (doors open at 6:30)

Join us for the 4th Annual "Trivia Night" sponsored by the Friends of the Medford Public Library and the MHSM. We will do our best to create the old Library atmosphere at the spacious and inviting Senior Center. beer, wine, soft drinks, and additional refreshments are included in the \$20.00 admission fee. Raffle tickets are 3 for \$5, 15 for \$10.00. The proceeds are shared by our two organizations and will support future programs. This event is for age 21+.

APRIL Author/Lecture

A Salute to 1620 with Stephen Kenney: A Tale of Two Colonies: Plymouth and Massachusetts Bay in the Seventeenth Century

Tuesday, April 28, 2020, 7:00 PM, at MHSM, 10 Governors Avenue

Most visitors to Massachusetts know that the "Pilgrims" arrived in Plymouth aboard the Mayflower in 1620. Less well-known is the landing of a "Puritan" fleet ten years later. On the flagship *Arbella*, John Winthrop carried a royal charter establishing the Massachusetts Bay Colony. Learn about the similarities between the colonies (like the banning of the celebration of Christmas) and the differences that shaped Massachusetts to the present day.

Stephen Kenney has been Director of the Commonwealth Museum at the Massachusetts Archives since 2002 and serves as curator for Commonwealth Museum exhibits. He holds a Ph.D. from Boston University.

MAY Annual Meeting

**Special Guest Speaker, Barbara Kerr:
The History of the Medford Public Library, Wednesday, May 6, 2019, 7:00 PM at MHSM, 10 Governors Avenue**

Join us for this annual MHSM gathering which includes a brief recap of 2019 and election of officers by members, and a very special guest, Barbara Kerr. Barbara will share stories of the past about this important Medford institution and update us on the promise of the grand new library now under construction. Refreshments and conversation follow.

Remembering World War II



“This year marks the 75th anniversary of the end of World War II,” asserts Beth Hayes, exhibit volunteer at the Medford Historical Society & Museum (MHSM). “And the date will be recognized in countless ceremonies and

gatherings, exhibits, media presentations and other public remembrances throughout the country, including here in Medford, as well as abroad.” An insightful TV production by CBS portraying America’s “unsung heroes”—the hundreds of women who served the military during the devastating war—has already been aired to wide acclaim, and much more is to come.

MHSM Exhibit MHSM has also begun preparing for a major WWII exhibit which is projected to open in 2020 and is focused on the MHSM’s WWII collection. The collection includes a notebook with detailed information on each Medford soldier by name, address, and details of their service, along with a host of other records, materials, and war items and artifacts. At present, the MHSM’s exhibit planners are reviewing the varied collection and have invited members of MHSM, as well as the Medford community, to support the project by sharing their memorabilia and WWII period items for possible inclusion in the exhibit. If interested, please see the Events Calendar in this MHSM Newsletter for more information.

West Medford Community Center Of additional and particular community interest is an ongoing project sponsored by the West Medford Community Center. This program focuses on African-Americans from West Medford who served in what was then a strictly segregated military. These soldiers and supporting staff, including those in the various branches of the

military, were often relegated to roles behind the scenes and thus their existence, responsibilities and activities were often underestimated. The work undertaken by these men and women was not the glamorous kind that made the newsreels and headlines, but they were significant, nonetheless. It is worth noting that African-Americans served with distinction in many actions and locations.

The recent Black History Month celebration event at WMCC provided a more personalized introduction to this WWII Veterans Project. A video of this program is available on the WMCC website, www.wmcc.us, and is titled **Black History Month, February 8, 2019, Afro-American Vet Project Kick-off, A Celebration and Acknowledgment of the African-American Veteran**. This YouTube video features some of the community members involved in the project as well as interviews with several West Medford veterans who share their experiences in the war as they lived it.

The longer-term goal for this project, according to Bill Hager, Executive Director, and Terry Carter, Director of Elder Services, is the creation of a full production video which will bring to light the service of these veterans of West Medford, revealing the unique nature of their experiences and their contributions and bravery in a military where discrimination was an ongoing reality and challenge.

The Medford Historical Society & Museum commends the West Medford Community Center on its efforts to bring to light memories of this community of veterans and their families, with a special focus on the local African-American soldiers and supporting personnel, who were all important in helping to finally secure peace after a conflict so severe that the loss of life and general devastation in Europe, Asia, and Africa was hard to measure.

Counting the Medfords

Most of us who live in our Medford love it, but did you know that there is more than one Medford to love?

In fact, a quick online scan reveals that there are 10 other cities or towns named Medford in the United States, all scattered from Maine to Oregon. There are also two other cities, in Canada’s Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, bearing Medford as their names. The list:

Medford, USA:

Medford, Indiana
Medford, Maryland
Medford, Massachusetts
Medford, Minnesota
Medford, Missouri
Medford, New Jersey
Medford, New York
Medford, Oklahoma
Medford, Oregon
Medford, Tennessee
Medford, Wisconsin

Medford, Canada:

Medford, New Brunswick
Medford, Nova Scotia



Of course, generations of years back in Matthew Craddock’s settlement of what was then called “Mystick,” there was no name of Medford at all. It wasn’t until much later that the name of Medford was adopted by its citizens who, because of what they perceived to be “a meadow by the ford in the Mystic River.” How the other Medfords were named, and in honor of what, is a much longer story.



MHSM Opens Connecting Communities: Walks & Talks, Storied Women

Sponsored by Freedom's Way National Heritage Area

This collaborative series involves 12 New England communities and features 12 "Storied Women." The first stop, Medford, offered by the Medford Historical Society & Museum in October, recognized Lydia Maria Child.

The series is sponsored by the Freedom's Way National Heritage Area in honor of the celebration of the 2020 Women's Vote Centennial and presents 12 visionary women who were born in and shaped by their time living in the Heritage Area.

October 25, 2019 was rainy and windy, forcing the cancellation of the walk, but the talk and exhibit tour went ahead in the warmth of the Museum at

10 Governors Ave. Some of the hearty attendees are pictured here. The Medford presenters included Beth Hayes, Kyna Hamill, and Nancy White.

Coming up:

January—Arlington, MA *Patricia Fitzmaurice*

February—Milford, NH *Harriet E. Wilson*

March—Fitchburg, MA *Eleanor Norcross*

April—Pepperell, MA *Prudence Cummings Wright*

May—Lancaster, MA *Mary Rowlandson*

For more information, including dates through September 2020, visit: FreedomsWay.org/Programs/Connecting-Communities-Walks-Talks.

No charge. Registration is appreciated.



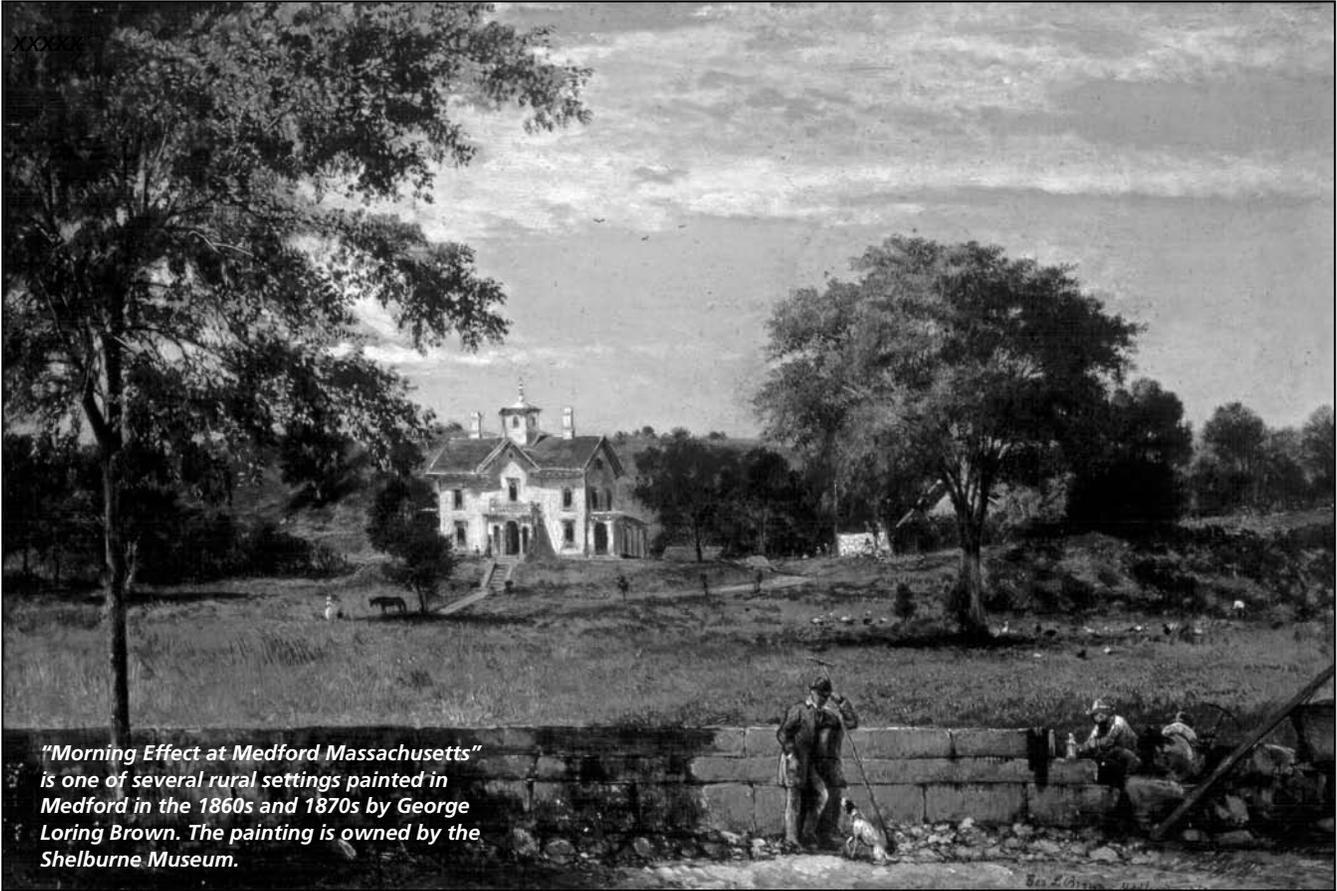
MHSM was the first stop for a series of events featuring "Storied Women" to recognize Lydia Maria Child.

above: Beth Hayes locates Lydia Maria Child's home for visitors in our 1855 diorama.

right: Kyna Hamill describes Child's scrapbook which is currently on display at the museum.

Photographs by Freedom's Way Desiree Demski-Hamelin





"Morning Effect at Medford Massachusetts" is one of several rural settings painted in Medford in the 1860s and 1870s by George Loring Brown. The painting is owned by the Shelburne Museum.

Your Medford Historical Society Newsletter

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

MEDFORD HISTORICAL SOCIETY & MUSEUM
10 Governors Avenue
Medford, MA 02155

