



Kathryn Toomey
Register of Deeds

Hello and welcome to our Newsletter.

We spotlight one community per month and hope to share with the other communities in our district some historical or social significance of the region.

This month we chose Grafton, MA. On a personal note, I celebrated my wedding in the Grafton Town Center Gazebo. When we decided to get married, my husband was very involved in the planning of our big day. We visited and sampled food from more than 30 venues. Our wedding planning tour made us weak and weary and late in the process the Grafton Inn came onto our radar. We instantly fell in love with the town common area. During our first visit to the Inn, we booked



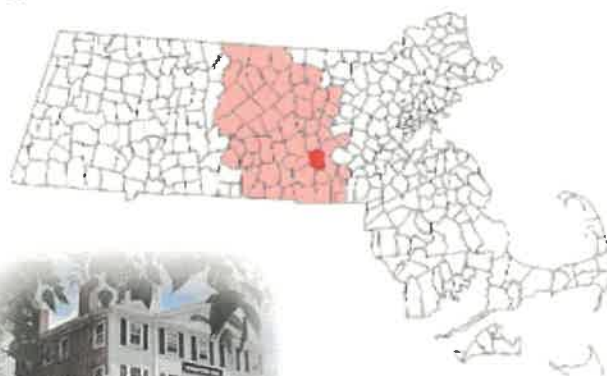
Worcester Registry of Deeds

Newsletter

June 2021 ~ Issue #9 ~ Town of Grafton

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beautiful Wedding Day in Grafton.

it and decided to have our reception in Grafton. Our marriage ceremony was in the gazebo on the common. Honestly before I was planning my wedding I only visited Grafton sporadically to eat, shop or visit friends. We had no real ties to the community. Now I have such wonderful memories of our wedding day and the beauty of the Grafton Town Common. I am proud to visit and tell people all about our

When we choose our location each month sometimes we try and pick people or topics that can be less mainstream. Who knew Tupperware had its start in Grafton, not me. I just knew that my summer homemade popsicles were made in the Tupperware mold my mom bought at a home demonstration party. I invite you to learn about Earl Tupper and this "burpable" Tupperware, from Grafton, MA.

Community Statistics

471

Number of Recordings in April 2021

\$354K

Median Home Value

76%

Homes Owned vs. Rented

7,261

Total Housing Units

318

Density (Houses per Square Mile)



By Kathryn Toomey

In or about 1942, Earl Tupper opened a plastics factory in an old mill building located at 134 Ferry Street in So. Grafton, Massachusetts. His product achieved a fame rare for commercial items, a pop artifact, in step with the classic Coca-Cola bottle, or the Campbell's Soup can.

What did he make? You might have guessed it: Tupperware. The earliest items are in the permanent collection of New York's Museum of Modern Art.

Earl Tupper was a typical unconventional inventor, additionally, he was private man who never appeared anywhere socially. He would only speak to people one on one.

This lends itself to the question: why did Earl Tupper build a business on the demonstration and sales pitch we commonly refer to as a Tupperware party. To some it was marketing genius, albeit the direct opposite of his reclusive character.

Tupperware developed a direct marketing strategy to sell products known as the Tupperware party. The Tupperware party enabled women of the 1950s to earn an income while keeping their focus in the domestic domain.

Tupper, a native of Berlin, N.H., founded the company in 1938 and moved to Grafton in 1942. By the mid-1940s he had developed the burpable, bouncing, unbreakable containers we know as Tupperware.

Mr. Thomas Damigella comes as close as anyone to being the person who invented the "Tupperware party". He indicated that there were home demonstrations of other products, his wife got a tupperware product and he knew it was entirely different from anything previously seen. The seal

Town Spotlight

Earl Tupper
"Tupperware"

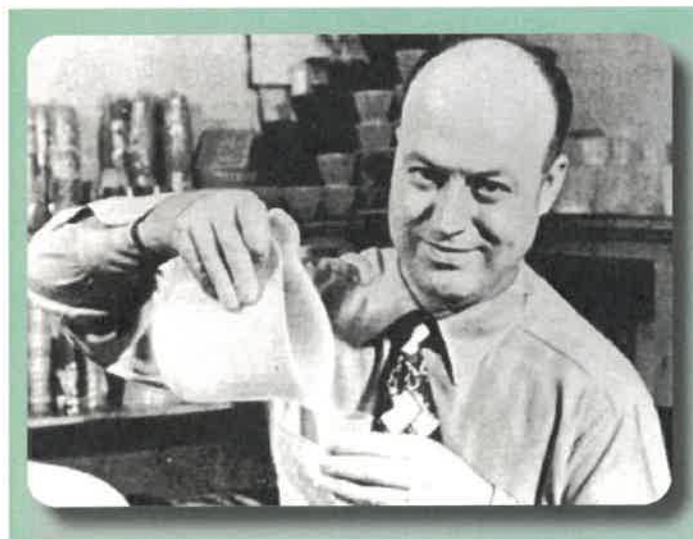
Grafton

was marvelous, tighter than water tight.

Earl Tupper told Mr. Damigella that he got the idea from a paint can lid, except that he made it in reverse. Damigella knew the way to sell it was the home party.

Tupper began to notice that Damigella and his wife were selling huge amounts of Tupperware, and in 1947 asked for a meeting. Damigella showed him what he and wife did and Tupper fell in love with the concept. Tupper went for broke, Tupper pulled out of retail stores and focused on home sales.

Tupper lived with his family on a farm in South Upton. It was reported that he rarely entertained and was something of a recluse. He built a new factory in Rhode Island in 1955, and in 1958 sold out to Rexall Drug Corp. He retired to Costa Rica and died in 1983.



From his retirement Tupper watched the American economy change. Manufacturing moved to countries where labor was cheaper. The buzzwords became the “service” and “high tech” industries. In the 1980s would come the era of real estate speculation, junk bonds, savings-and-loans thievery and leveraged buyouts, but even before much of this transpired Tupper believed he saw a change for the worse in this country.

Seven months before his death in 1983 Tupper told the Burlington (Vt.) Free Press, “I think the U.S. has lost its objective: to do things with verve. I doubt they will ever recover because they lost what they were aiming for. They became dulled.”

The Ferry Street factory originally sold to Tupper in 1942 ([Registered Land Book 15, Page 107](#)) for \$19,000, the most recent transfer of ownership was to Rock River Re-Development Inc., in 2017 for \$1,245,000 ([Registered Land Book 90, Page 27](#)).

Today, Premark International Inc. owns Tupperware.



REGISTERED LAND *VS.* RECORDED LAND

Registered land means that the title is certified by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. All documents pertaining to a particular parcel of land is registered with the Land Court (in addition to the County Registry of Deeds), must follow certain guidelines, and is carefully reviewed. This includes any encumbrances and liens on a property. Because it follows a more formal process and is essentially guaranteed by the state, title to registered land can have a greater likelihood to be correct. Purchasers of registered land may have less to worry about when it comes to title issues and chain of title.

One of the key features of registered land has to do with property boundaries. At some point, the Land Court reviewed the boundaries of a property and rendered a decision on the exact

boundaries. This information is insured by the Certificate of Title and will reduce future dispute. Registered Land can provide some peace of mind to owners.

A majority of real estate in Massachusetts is recorded land, rather than registered land. All land records are filed with the Registry of Deeds. Although the Registry does ensure that documents are in compliance with the indexing standards, there is no required additional substantive review of the content of documents that are on the Recorded Land side. They are not guaranteed in the same way.

When recording any documents that involved registered land in Massachusetts, your recording generally will take place in person at the Registry of Deeds

(frequently referred to as Land Court). Registered land documents must be filed in person or by mail. There is no option to file electronically. The original is kept to generate the record for the issuance of the Certificate of Title.

The Land Court in Massachusetts was established to implement the Registered Land System.

I. Recorded Land

Dealings with Recorded Land are based on the buyer beware concept. Registry personnel will accept or reject a document for recording on the basis of whether it meets minimum recording requirements—not whether the document properly relates to a particular property. For example, a deed from John Doe to Jane Doe for Doe’s

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Beach would be accepted for recording if John Doe's signature was notarized and if the deed meets minimum recording requirements. If John Doe does not own Doe's Beach, it is not the registry's responsibility to inform Jane Doe of this fact. This is where the buyer beware concept becomes obvious. It is Jane Doe's responsibility to check the property history to determine who the legal owner is and from whom she would get a deed if she were to buy the property. The recording of a deed in the Recorded Land section of the Registry does not guarantee that the real estate is free from all liens, encumbrances, and other legal issues that could cloud the ownership. A title search conducted by a qualified attorney or title examiner will determine the status of a Recorded Land title or property.

In Massachusetts, Recorded Land is the most common form of land recording. When dealing with Recorded Land, there will be a reference to a book and page number in the document description.

II. Registered Land

Land that has gone through a Land Court Registration and Decree process is called Registered Land. This is a more complex form of land ownership. The "Land Court" or "Registry District" is separate from the regular (recorded land) section of the Registry of Deeds. Registered Land is an adjunct of the Land Court and has a main office located in Boston. As a department of the Trial Court, the Land Court has exclusive jurisdiction over Registered Land. Generally, Registered Land is land which, at some point in time, had been the subject of an ownership or boundary dispute. Once the Land Court renders a decision as to the ownership or boundary lines of real property, those issues cannot be disputed again as they relate to that property. Subsequent documents affecting the property in question have to be registered with the appropriate registry district.

Registration of title will occur when the Land Court, after having the title exhaustively searched by a court-appointed examiner, and after due process is afforded to all interested parties, the court reviews and then adjudicates and decrees the state of the title. As the current state of title is sequentially updated by the registration of future transactions, it embodies a certificate of title that not only evidences title, but in fact guarantees title and is subject only to the exceptions

provided by statute and matters of federal law. A title, which according to the evidence of documents in the traditional recording system, may be insufficient to support a conclusion of ownership, may, through the adjudicatory process of registration, be made good and marketable.

Registry personnel will not accept documents for registration unless they meet the strict requirements set forth by the Land Court. As with recorded land, it is generally necessary to have a qualified attorney or title examiner conduct a title search to determine the status of a Registered title/property.

