



Kathryn Toomey  
Register of Deeds

Hello and welcome to our Newsletter.

Generally I give a snapshot of what is happening in our world at the Worcester Registry of Deeds, but this month we will be discussing Women's History Month and International Women's Day (March 8, 2021).

Women's History Month had its origins as a national celebration in 1981 when Congress passed Pub. L. 97-28 which authorized and requested the President to proclaim the week beginning March 7, 1982 as "Women's History Week." Throughout the next five years, Congress continued to pass joint resolutions designating a week in March as "Women's History Week." In 1987 after being petitioned by the National Women's History Project, Congress passed Pub. L. 100-9 which designated the month of March 1987 as "Women's History Month." Between 1988 and 1994, Congress passed additional resolutions requesting and authorizing the President to proclaim March of each year as Women's History Month. Since 1995, presidents have issued a series of annual proclamations designating the month of March as "Women's History Month." These proclamations celebrate the contributions women have made to the United States and recognize the specific achievements women have made over the course of American history in a variety of fields.

UN Women is the global champion for gender equality, working to develop and uphold standards and create an environment in which every woman and girl can exercise her human rights and live up to her full potential. We are trusted partners for advocates and decision-makers from all walks of life, and a leader in the effort to achieve gender equality.

Women of the world want and deserve an equal future free from stigma, stereotypes and violence; a future that's sustainable, peaceful, with equal rights and opportunities for all. To get us there, the world needs women at every table where decisions are being made.

# Worcester Registry of Deeds

## NEWSLETTER

March 2021 ~ Issue #6 ~ City of Worcester

### What's Inside?

#### Women's History Month

#### Town Spotlight: Worcester

Abby Kelley Foster (p.2)

#### Word Search (p.4)

### Community Statistics



2,252  
Number of Recordings in February



\$227K  
Median home value



41% Homes Owned vs. Rented



34 Median Age



2,098 Density (Houses per Square Mile)

# TOWN SPOTLIGHT

## WORCESTER

### *Abby Kelley Foster*

By: Kathryn A. Toomey

*“Go where least wanted, for there you are most needed.”*

Worcester was lucky to have a true visionary settle in the city. Abby Kelley Foster originally born in Hampshire County, moved to Millbury then further east to Lynn Massachusetts, in her role as a teacher.

In Lynn, she joined the Female Anti-Slavery Society, where she became corresponding secretary and later, a national delegate to the first Anti-Slavery Convention of American Women in 1837. The following year, Foster made her first public speech against slavery, and was so well received that she abandoned her teaching career and returned to Millbury. There, she founded the Millbury Anti-Slavery Society and began lecturing for the American Anti-Slavery Society.

After a four-year courtship, Kelley married fellow abolitionist Stephen Symonds Foster in 1845. In 1847, she and her husband purchased a farm in the Tatnuck region of Worcester, Massachusetts. The house was located at 116 Mower Street, Worcester, MA (Bk 423 Pg 256). The home was named “Liberty Farm” (built c.1810). They were early vocal abolitionists and women’s rights activists. The Fosters used their house as a shelter on the Underground Railroad, and famously refused to pay taxes on the property because Abby was unable to vote.

Currently, 2021, the property, is a private residence and is not open to the public, Liberty Farm was designated a National Historic Landmark September 13, 1974.

The Fosters ran what was described as one of the most prosperous farms in the area, but also used the property to further their political activities. The blatant refusal to pay taxes because of a lack of a woman’s right to vote, was deemed civil disobedience and resulted in the property’s sale at tax auctions on several occasions; however, it was purchased by their supporters and given back to them.

For more than two decades, Foster served as a lecturer, fundraiser, recruiter and organizer in the fight for abolition and suffrage.

# Abby Kelley Foster

Abby Kelley Foster helped organize and was a key speaker at the first National Women's Rights Convention in Worcester, Massachusetts in 1850. (Note: The Seneca Falls Convention, the first women's rights convention, held in 1848, was not national). One of her more famous speeches was made in Worcester, Mass. where she challenged women to demand the responsibilities as well as the privileges of equality, noting "*Bloody feet, sisters, have worn smooth the path by which you come hither.*"

In 1854, Foster became the chief fundraiser for the American Anti-Slavery Society, and by 1857, she was its general agent. Through the American Anti-Slavery Society, Foster continued to work for the ratification of the fourteenth and fifteenth amendments.

After the Civil War, Kelley Foster's attention shifted to fully onto equal rights and the enfranchisement of women, lecturing to crowds of shocked listeners who had never seen women speak in public before.

Worcester has memorialized Abby Kelley Foster in many ways. A facility that I have personally supported is Abby's House. On June 7, 1976, the porch light of the Abby's House shelter went on, and it's never gone out over the last 45 years. The women who arrive at Abby's House come from many different circumstances. Some may have just escaped an abusive relationship. Others may have lost their job. Every situation is unique, and every woman has unique needs the shelter relies heavily on the support of the community. Abby's House is able to serve women from many different circumstances, helping each woman meet her individual goals.

Abby spent her life giving humanity to those being discriminated against and those who were brutally mistreated.



# Did you know?

In 1897 Addie Gillette Hayden at the age of 28 attempted to be the first women lawyer in Worcester County, she was officially sworn in 1903. Her refusal to be held back by gender restrictions won out.

## ST PATRICKS DAY

|   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| B | E | R | C | L | I | V | D | F | Z | G | H | I | C | S | X | I | V |
| L | L | V | Q | E | N | R | V | P | U | S | O | R | O | A | L | O | N |
| A | T | I | S | A | L | U | I | Q | L | N | L | E | R | I | E | Q | M |
| R | W | V | M | H | G | E | C | S | H | F | I | L | N | N | P | J | A |
| N | C | Z | E | E | A | O | B | L | H | O | D | A | E | T | R | D | R |
| E | A | M | E | M | R | M | O | R | Q | A | N | D | P | E | L | C |   |
| Y | B | H | B | G | E | I | R | D | A | V | Y | D | B | A | C | U | H |
| S | B | G | G | V | R | R | C | O | L | T | E | K | E | T | H | C | X |
| T | A | M | O | K | Z | E | A | K | C | U | E | R | E | R | A | K | G |
| O | G | G | P | L | K | Q | E | L | I | K | C | K | F | I | U | Y | O |
| N | E | D | B | B | D | W | K | N | D | F | J | K | H | C | N | A | J |
| E | T | E | W | L | G | E | J | I | G | X | P | P | W | K | J | K | G |

Find the following words in the puzzle.  
Words are hidden → ↓ and ↘ ↙.

BLARNEYSTONE  
CABBAGE  
CELEBRATE  
CLOVER  
CORNEDBEEF  
EMERALD  
FUN

GOLD  
GOODLUCK  
GREEN  
HOLIDAY  
IRELAND  
IRISH  
JIG

LEPRECHAUN  
LIMERICK  
LUCKY  
MARCH  
SAINTPATRICK  
SHAMROCK

Created by REGISTRY OF DEEDS using Word Search Generator on  
Super Teacher Worksheets