

## Charitably



## Speaking

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**A PUBLICATION OF THE MASSACHUSETTS CHARITABLE MECHANIC ASSOCIATION**

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### President's Message

Greetings! I hope by the time you read this we are past the rains of early spring and we are enjoying the good spring/summer weather we long for as New Englanders.

We had a great Quarterly Meeting at Spinelli's in Lynnfield on April 24. Tom Crowdis and his team put together another wonderful event. We were fortunate to have Max Lane, former lineman for the New England Patriots as our speaker. Max was a pleasant, gentle giant of a man who shared with us his experiences playing for the Pats under Bill Parcells, Pete Carroll, and Bill Belichick. It was surprising to hear that a 6-foot 5-inch, 300 pound lineman actually had experiences of being lifted up and backwards by opposing rushers. That takes a lot of force! Thank you Vice President Chuck Sulkala for arranging this enjoyable and informative speaker. The Summer Quarterly will be held on July 17 at the beautiful, oceanside, Gloucester home of Paul and Jessica Lohnes. Please plan to be there and join us for an afternoon of camaraderie with fellow members and guests. Details will be forthcoming. Tom and his team are also planning a Christmas event for December 8 at the Neighborhood Club in Quincy, and we'll update you as those plans develop.

At our May meeting, MCMA's Board of Government and Finance Committee received its annual briefing from State Street Global Advisors about our investment portfolio. The Board and the Finance Committee believe SSGA is doing a commendable job in managing our funds in these turbulent times. Our funds have grown with the growth of the national financial markets, and we all hope this will continue so we can continue to fund the many excellent programs that look to us for support. In that regard, our Planning Committee is currently involved with their work to determine which organizations will receive 2019's MCMA grants.

Joe Valante and his Building Committee have also been busy lately. Our Quincy office just got a new roof. The work was supervised by Board Member Dick Peterson. We will also be replacing the entrance door and foyer glass which has been in need of repair. And we have a new tenant in our building; Granite Realty signed a three-year lease and is busy renovating their space for a July 1 move-in date. Thank you, Joe and your committee, for taking such good care of our building.

Finally, Chuck Sulkala and Tom Crowdis joined me to visit the American Meteorological Association at their office on Beacon Street in Boston. Their building is the former home of Harrison Gray Otis, a colonial political leader who served as mayor of Boston. MCMA has as one of its many artifacts a 10x5 foot portrait of Otis painted by Chester Harding. The portrait has been on loan to AMA for many years. The AMA wants to have the painting and frame cleaned and repaired at their own expense. We agreed to this and permitted the \$30,000 restoration in exchange for our assurance that the painting will continue to remain on loan with the AMA.

Thank you for your support of MCMA. Let me know if there is anything you feel could make MCMA a better organization. As you interact with friends and acquaintances, consider sponsoring someone you think would be a good fit for membership.

See you at the next Quarterly! Be just, and fear not. – **Peter**



## Helping Others

Boat building programs are not new to MCMA. We of course encourage the fact that such programs teach woodworking skills and the boatbuilding craft. We have also seen how they help students learn to work with others, understand scale measurement and displacement, recognize the importance of mathematics, and, most importantly, build self-esteem. So we have been supporters of at least three of these programs. But until last year we had not encountered **Lowell's Boat Shop & Museum**, even though it happens

to be the oldest operating boat shop in America and is a National Historic Landmark. Located in Amesbury, it is the sole survivor of the area's renowned dory manufacturing industry. Established in 1793, and building boats continuously since then, Lowell's works to preserve and perpetuate the art and craft of wooden boatbuilding, teaching woodworking, boatbuilding, finishing, engine maintenance and repair, etc. to a broad range of young people and adults, and engaging a very active group of volunteers.

Lowell's flagship program is its after-school apprentice program for students in grades 10-12. These students, accepted on a competitive basis, spend three hours after school three days a week building wooden boats and learning how to maintain them. A junior apprentice program is geared for students in grades 8 and 9, and



additional programs are conducted with individual high schools and middle schools. Lowell's also holds transition-to-work programs with three local developmentally-disabled groups wherein students perform basic work tasks at the shop and then learn basic carpentry skills.

As a working museum, Lowell's uses many hand tools and some archaic power tools that are in keeping with their historic status. But in their dedicated classroom space they require modern equipment for reasons of health, safety, and efficiency. MCMA was able to help in that regard with a 15" planer, a 14" drill press, dust collection equipment, and smaller power and hand tools. We're pleased to have formed a relationship with this highly-regarded organization, and we hope to maintain that relationship going forward.



### MCMA History

In the following article about the Bunker Hill Monument we'll be revisiting several individuals and events described, sometimes at length, in previous articles. This one, based upon a Moment in History presented by our now-President Peter Lemonias, focuses more directly on the role played by MCMA in raising funds to complete its construction, but it hopefully will also give a more comprehensive view of MCMA's involvement with that construction. Peter's main source was a recent biography of Dr. Joseph Warren entitled *Founding Martyr: The Life and Death of Dr. Joseph Warren, the American Revolution's Lost Hero* by Christian Di Spigna. The book reminded of the incredibly important role Dr. Warren had leading up to the American Revolution. It was he who sent his friend Paul Revere and William Dawes on their rides to alert John Hancock and Samuel Adams that the British troops were on their way to Lexington and Concord, leading to the battle that triggered the American Revolution.

After Lexington and Concord, the British troops stayed in Boston, with colonial militia blockading the city. The militia set up earthen mounds and trenches for protection one night on Breed's Hill in Charlestown after hearing that the British were planning to break out of Boston at that location. The colonists had about 1200 men and some cannons. The British fired cannons from Copp's Hill in the North End and from their ships of war, and then landed 2200 troops to attack the colonists. After a day of fighting, the colonists retreated as they were running out of ammunition. The British had over 1,000 men killed and wounded, while the colonists had about 700 casualties. Warren was killed (shot in the head) in the final British assault (and later immortalized in John Trumbull's famous painting). Recognizing Warren and knowing his role in the battle, and in frustration of their losses, British troops decapitated Warren and ran their bayonets through his body. He was then buried in a shallow grave along with the other dead. After the British evacuated Boston, friends and family went to look for Warren's body. It was found and identified in part by the dental work Paul Revere had performed on him. He was buried in Granary Cemetery, the second of several burial sites.

After the war, Dr. John Warren, Joseph's brother, purchased the 15 acres of Breed's Hill to protect it from development. His son Dr. John C. Warren later banded with a number of other Boston men to form the Bunker Hill Monument Association in 1823. [*This was the Dr. Warren who presented to MCMA the Revere etchings we now display.*] The Association called for design proposals for a monument and reviewed about 50 different plans. The granite monument we know today was the design of Solomon Willard, and Willard was selected to be the architect and superintendent of the project. He selected Laommi Baldwin and Gridley Bryant to be the chief engineers.

Money for the project was raised by public donations large and small and was strongly supported by the Freemasons in recognition of Joseph Warren being a former Grand Master. The cornerstone was laid in 1825 by

the Marquis de Lafayette, who was on tour of the United States and who had recently been honored by MCMA at a special dinner. The granite blocks used to build the monument were from Quincy. Willard, who had chosen the quarry site, ultimately became deeply involved in the quarrying operation, where his genius for overcoming the obstacles to quarrying and handling the uncommonly-large blocks he proposed for the monument would revolutionize the granite industry. And the Granite Railroad, the first commercial railroad in the United States, was designed and built by Bryant to bring the blocks to the Neponset River in Milton for transport by barge to Charlestown. (Bryant spawned the railroad industry in this country, and much of the technology he developed is still in use today.)



*The Death of General Warren  
at the Battle of Bunker's Hill, 17 June, 1775  
by John Trumbull (1756-1843).*

But the involvement of the Masons in the project led to problems in fundraising as an anti-Masonic sentiment developed in the country. The association sold off 10 acres of Breed's Hill to help keep the project going, leaving only the crown of the hill for the monument, and in 1834 MCMA became an active financial partner in the construction of the Bunker Hill monument, paying for the remaining stone and other expenses during that year. In 1835, the economy took a downturn, with the monument only 85 feet tall, far short of the planned 220 feet. Consideration was made to lower the height of the monument. According to Ray Purdy's book, *The Quiet Philanthropy*, Amos Lawrence, a wealthy businessman on the Monument Committee, approached MCMA and offered to donate \$10,000 if MCMA would raise another \$10,000. MCMA accepted the offer and raised money with subscription books and by sending members to cities and towns in greater Boston to raise funds, and ultimately raised \$22,000. In addition, a women's group approached MCMA about holding a fundraising fair. We paid for them to hold a seven-day fair at Quincy Market where they raised over \$30,000. MCMA then helped supervise the completion of the Bunker Hill Monument and had over 100 of our members in attendance when it was dedicated on June 17, 1843, with an oration delivered by Daniel Webster. In appreciation of our efforts, the Bunker Hill Monument Association made the current president of MCMA their Vice President in perpetuity.

The Bunker Hill Monument Association maintained the monument and grounds until 1919, when it was turned over to the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. In 1976, the monument was turned over to the National Park Service and became part of the Boston National Historical Park. It was the nation's largest-scale memorial prior to the completion, decades later, of the Washington Monument in Washington, D.C. [*That monument's designer, Robert Mills, had submitted one of the unsuccessful designs for the Bunker Hill Monument.*]

While many of our members were involved in the actual construction of the monument (most prominently, **Solomon Willard** and **Gridley Bryant**), many others took part in fund-raising efforts to support that construction. And several of our Honorary Members (including the **Marquis de Lafayette** and **Daniel Webster**) also played a part. As our former president Ray Purdy wrote in *The Quiet Philanthropy*, we, as MCMA members, can take great pride in our organization's role in helping to complete construction of the Bunker Hill Monument ... and we can thank Ray for helping to spur our own efforts to learn much more about the intriguing history of MCMA.