

Celebrating HOLYOKE'S 150th



Schermerhorn's Seafood - 111 Years

This story began over a century ago when Winfield Schermerhorn, whose family made a living from the sea, as far back as the Revolutionary War, opened a fish market in Springfield. Grandfather Peter Proulx started working as a clerk in the store in 1917. He became manager, then co-owner, and finally purchased the Holyoke market.

Peter Proulx and his sons Robert and Donald were committed to the Schermerhorn's tradition of providing customers the finest fresh seafood available. They built a complete fish market on Division Street. This early store thrived in the midst of factories and mills that generated Holyoke's economy.

Keeping pace with the city's progress, the store relocated to Appleton Street. It was a remarkable era for Holyoke and for Schermerhorn's. With a large Roman Catholic population and a diversity of ethnic backgrounds the fish business thrived.

The Appleton Street location was unique for its time. The Proulx family revolutionized the business in several areas. They were pioneers in fish take out, a forerunner of the fast food stores of today. A plane flew fish from Boston to Barnes Airport in nearby Westfield to provide customers with seafood sold on the day it was caught. The wholesale and retail segments grew along with the innovations.

His son Robert Proulx opened a Schermerhorn's in Chicopee. The new store continued to offer the selection and quality of fresh seafood that contributed to the Holyoke store's outstanding reputation. James Proulx stayed in Holyoke with his father to handle this thriving fish market.

Over time all things change, and to keep in step, Schermerhorn's evolved again. Marilyn Proulx married Michael Fitzgerald and began their chapter in this history. The store moved to its current location at 224 Westfield Road in 1994. In addition to the well-known fish market, a restaurant was added. This was followed by delivery services catering to homes as well as businesses. Soft serve ice cream, pizza, grinders, and a variety of other selections were added to the traditional menu. Michael felt these innovations were vital if the business was to remain competitive in the new era of supermarkets. Customers may remember the famous, but controversial 'Blimpy' which hovered over the store to attract customers from I-91.

What remained unchanged was the commitment to provide the very highest quality of food to our customers.

In this twenty-first century, the latest venture is the creation of "Fishtales Bar and Grill" located in Hatfield. It is a restaurant that offers, in the long-standing Schermerhorn's tradition, the finest fresh seafood available. The menu is complimented by a wide selection of choices for any appetite.

In this era, many seafood chains have turned to frozen seafood. Our trucks continue the run from the harbor to our Western Mass locations. We strive to remain as we always were by offering the freshest seafood from Boston Harbor to your plate.

Thank you all for your loyal support over the years.

With best regards,

Marilyn & Michael Fitzgerald



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Happy Anniversary Holyoke

Dear current and future readers,

Welcome to the commemorative 150th Anniversary special publication created by The Sun. This special magazine is a look back at so many of the elements that have given the City of Holyoke its unique identity.

Please join with us in celebrating this milestone anniversary as a city, and take a look back on so many of the things that have brought Holyoke to where it is today.

Turley Publications, which started The Holyoke Sun in 1995, is honored and privileged to have this special edition included in a time capsule. We hope that future generations will be able to enjoy looking at this when the time capsule is re-opened.

Capturing history is such an important part of the work we do at The Holyoke Sun. While we have always tried to capture the essence of Holyoke from week-to-week, this special edition gives a more concentrated look at many of the

aspects that make Holyoke special, such as its history of baseball, how it got its reputation and nickname as the "Paper City," and the history of places such as Wistariahurst Museum and Heritage State Park, and of course, Volleyball Hall of Fame.

There are many people, places and events that have given this city its unique character during the past 150 years, and we hope you will revel in this jam-packed magazine about everything Holyoke.

Also, be sure to also get an exclusive look at the 150th Anniversary Gala, which was held Oct. 28, at Holyoke City Hall; a masquerade ball as the culmination of the activities held throughout 2023 to celebrate the city's historic anniversary.

We thank you, the people of Holyoke, for giving us the privilege of providing you with this great keepsake, and hope it will bring you memories for some time to come.

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Paper mills gave city its identity

By **Quinn Suomala**
Staff Writer

The city has long been known as The Paper City due to its wide success in the past with the paper mill industry.

Now, the paper mills have shut down or have been repurposed for various uses, including cannabis use, manufacturing, and the entertainment center—The Gateway City Arts.

However, while these mills may no longer be churning, it is still important to look back and acknowledge how they helped shape Holyoke into the city it is today.

In 1848, the first of three dams was built at South Hadley Falls. Unfortunately, this dam was built improperly and did not last more than a few hours. Within a year, the second dam was completed. This dam was used throughout the rest of the 19th century, although a new dam was started in 1892.

These dams were the first steps to Holyoke's birth as the first planned industrial city.

In 1850, the first Cotton Mill was built in Holyoke; this eventually grew to be Lyman Mills. The incorporation of this company marked the beginning of the textile industry in Holyoke.

This industry was further bolstered thanks to the waterpower Holyoke had.

Waterpower was essential to many different industries in the 1800's and Holyoke, thanks to the Connecticut River, which had that in abundance.

It was due to this need for water power that in 1872, according to "The Story of Holyoke" by Wyatt E. Harper, John Chapin, Stephen Chapin, Warren Chapin, and Alfred Smith were authorized by the Massachusetts



The Valley Paper Company, seen from across the Second Level Canal in Holyoke, around 1892.



Lyman Mills on 2nd level of canal (later Whiting Paper).

Legislature to construct a wing dam extending diagonally up the river somewhat above the present Holyoke dam.

This corporation was named the Hadley Falls Company, and its main purpose was to manufacture cotton and woolen goods as well as processing grain and metals.

The founder of this corporation was George Ewing, another significant figure in the history of Holyoke. He is credited as being one of the chief founders of the city. Ewing worked as a traveling

salesman and representative for a company called the Fairbanks Company. When he came across what would eventually be known as Hadley Falls, he immediately knew it could be an opportunity to create a dam and harness its power.

Ewing reached out to a group of financiers in Boston made up of George Lyman, Edmund Dwight, William Appleton, Samuel Cabot, and Ignatius Sargent.

Ewing worked with this group to construct a dam and a city in conjunction with the Fairbanks Company.

Soon after this, a disagreement arose between Ewing and the Boston financiers, so Ewing and Fairbanks withdrew from the agreement. Ewing then worked to purchase more than 11,000 acres of land adjacent to the falls and created the Hadley Falls Company.

The Hampden Mills were constructed by the Hadley Falls Company. These mills were completely dedicated to the textile industry. They were later known as the Mackintosh Mills.

Another well-known manufacturing plant established on the Holyoke canal line was the Parsons Paper Company, which was founded in 1853 by Joseph C. Parsons. This company was dedicated to making fine writing papers for letters, notes, blank books, and ledgers.

Parsons was just the beginning of the paper industry that was soon booming in Holyoke. The Holyoke Paper Company was set up in 1857. It was the first mill built at the southern end of the canal system. That very site is now occupied by the hydroelectric plant of

Please see **MILLS**, page 8



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**Congratulations Holyoke
For 150 Years!**

MILLS from page 6

Holyoke Gas and Electric.

The founding of these paper companies was brought about by the significant increase of demand for paper in the United States in the 1850's.

Both companies demonstrated that Holyoke was the perfect place for the manufacturing of paper. The papermaking process required a lot of reasonably clear, good water, which Holyoke had in abundance. This amount of pure water for processing combined with the amount of water for power Holyoke had made Holyoke the perfect place to produce paper. Due to this, Holyoke quickly rose to the top of the country and the world for its paper production. By 1870, the city was the largest single producer of paper out of any other city in the U.S and the world.

By 1890, Holyoke had 25 paper mills, employing 3,500 people with a capital investment of around \$10 million.

The total income from paper that year was estimated to be about \$11 million. It was these successes that earned it the moniker of the "Paper City."



Construction area for stone dam showing new retaining wall from canal gatehouse to new dam. c1892-1900

This increase in industry caused a surge in the city's population. Holyoke grew from a small area with a population of 3,200 in 1850 to about 45,000 by the 1900s. With this large population feeding the city, and many of them working in the paper industry, Holyoke unionized its paper industry early. In fact, Holyoke is often credited as having some of the first unions in the industry.

Unfortunately, the days of Holyoke as the largest singular producer of paper were not to last.

While Holyoke had plenty of water power, due to the climate of the area, the

power was not available year-round, putting Holyoke at a disadvantage in comparison to other cities with a more temperate climate.

Additionally, due to the number of workers skilled in papermaking in the area, cost for labor increased. Companies had to compete for labor as they knew if they did not pay well enough, workers could simply go elsewhere. Also, there were higher costs of distribution involved for smaller units, of which Holyoke had plenty.

These factors led to Holyoke losing the title as largest single producer of paper by World War I.

However, that is not to say that the city has lost its potential for continued improvement. Remnants of Holyoke's history remain in the city today with buildings that once were used for paper production being converted so they can continue to be used once more. The dams and canal systems that were built back in the 1800's and 1900's still work to provide electricity to the city of Holyoke.



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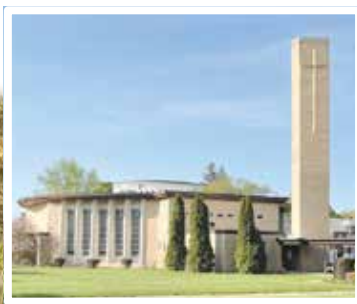
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Holyoke Celebrates 150th Anniversary with Masquerade Gala

By **Quinn Suomala**
Staff Writer

A recent gala event offered an evening of food, dance, music, and more to celebrate Holyoke's 150th anniversary of being a city.

The Holyoke 150 Gala was held in City Hall.

"We always knew we wanted to end on a high note with a gala," said Co-Chair of the event Kathy McKean.

The event included the Holyoke Civic Symphony, a silent auction, an open bar, food from the Log Cabin, and even more music from the band Maxxtone. Additionally, every attendee got a goodie bag which had a stained-glass window puzzle in honor of the stained-glass window project in City Hall.

This gala had been in the planning process for more than a year, since Mayor Joshua Garvia reached out to the Friends of City Hall and asked for there to be a celebration for Holyoke's 150th anniversary.

"A year and a half ago, the mayor asked the Friends of City Hall if they

would organize a sesquicentennial celebration," McKean said. "That has included all kinds of things, the dedication of City Hall, all kinds of events, birthday parties, anything that Holyoke was doing in the last year we've tried to incorporate into the 150th."

The gala aimed to be the peak of all the celebrations. Planning took many hours, and McKean was grateful to all the volunteers who helped pull everything together.

"There have been just some absolutely fantastic volunteers helping us to put this all together," McKean said.

Throughout their work planning the gala, McKean said they tried to create a theme around the stained-glass window project in City Hall, including not only the puzzle in the goodie bags, but also the dance floor itself had a stained-glass window pattern.

The project is almost complete, and the proceeds from the gala will go toward finishing the last steps.

"The Friends have been involved in raising money to restore the stained-glass windows up here,"




The room for the Holyoke 150 Gala was set up in beautiful shades of purple for people to come and enjoy the festivities.




TURLEY PHOTOS BY QUINN SUOMALA

Holyoke Civic Symphony performed during the cocktail hour as gala attendees milled around the silent auction.




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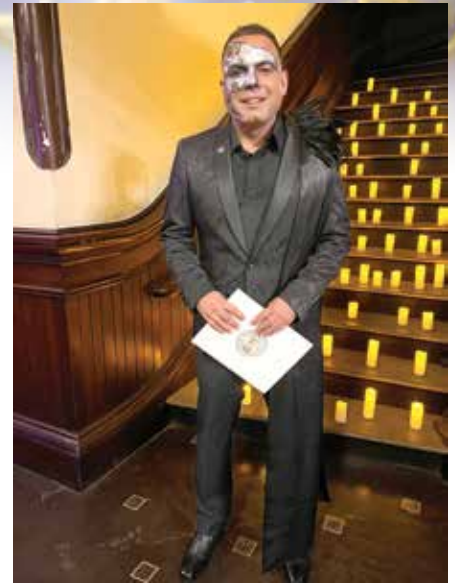
"Where Friends Meet!"



Mark and Kristy Cutting enjoyed the gala and having the opportunity to see Holyoke at its best.



Karen Spear and Frank Dailey were both dressed elegantly and looked forward to the evening ahead.



Mayor Joshua Garcia was excited to be at the gala to celebrate this important anniversary of Holyoke.



(Left to right) Bevon Brunelle, Bonnie Park, Nicole Arnold, Kaitlyn Cropanese and Samantha Garcia were excited to enjoy the festivities.

McKean said. "We're almost done, we have two more to go and some of the top pieces...the proceeds from tonight will go toward finishing that."

The gala was also meant to celebrate Holyoke itself. According to McKean, Garcia had said from the start that the gala needed to take place in City Hall to truly honor the history of the city.

"The mayor really wanted it to be here at City Hall," McKean said. "So, we planned it around that, and here we are."

"It shows Holyoke at its best," Gala Attendee Mark Cutting said.

McKean agreed. She was excited to see the work of all involved with planning the gala pay off as attendees enjoyed themselves.

"I'm looking forward to just being here in this wonderful hall," McKean said. "It's all about celebrating 150 years and looking out into the future."



Lisa and Mark Russo were costumed and ready to get into the gala festivities.



Alex Torres and Osvalvo Santiago enjoyed the gala together.



Elizabeth Ryan was ready to enjoy an evening of celebrating Holyoke.



Joseph Tissi, who had been awarded best quality photographs for the Key to the City Scavenger Hunt early that day, was excited to return to City Hall for the gala.



Co-Chair of the event Joseph Charles wore an elegant gown and looked forward to enjoying the event that had taken over a year of preparation.



Kathy Henderson (left) and Tracey Gauthier (right) both had eye-catching costumes on for the evening.



(Left to right) Nancy and Tom Condon, dressed as the King and Queen of Halloween, enjoyed the gala with co-chair Kathy McKean.



Tara Tessier and Paul Accorsi were excited to enjoy the gala and to get to know more people in the community.



Eboni Rafus-Brenning wore a stunning star gown and was prepared for an evening of fun.



Jane and Gary Mantolesky looked forward to an evening of music, food and dancing at the gala.



The silent auction was filled with a variety of different items from community members and businesses for people to bid on.



The gala was packed with local community members all coming together to celebrate Holyoke.

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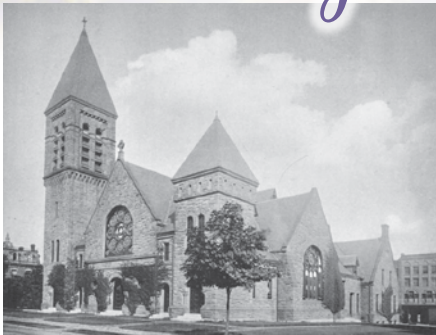
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The Second Congregational Church, seen from Maple Street near the corner of Appleton Street in Holyoke, around 1891



3rd Summit House - demolished in 1939.



Holyoke 75th Anniversary Parade, Sept. 6, 1948.



1958 Holyoke High School baseball players Dick Peloquin, Dan Sullivan and George Hurley.



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The Sacred Heart Church (right) and rectory (left), seen from Maple Street in Holyoke, around 1891.

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The First Congregational Church, circa 1910.



Cunningham Building, circa 1910-1915.



Looking north on Springfield Street from the corner of Casino Avenue in Chicopee, around 1892.



Hadley Company mills, from the corner of Canal and Center Streets in Holyoke, around 1892.



The Connecticut River Railroad station, seen from the corner of Bowers and Mosher Streets in Holyoke, circa 1892.



The former post office on Main Street, between Dwight and Race Streets in Holyoke, circa 1908.



The Holyoke House hotel, at the corner of Main and Dwight Streets in Holyoke, around 1867.

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Holyoke Heritage State Park

Site of former mill honors the city's industry and culture

By Paula Ouimette
pouimette@turley.com

Located in the heart of the city's industry is Holyoke Heritage State Park, a seven-acre parcel overseen by the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation.

Once the site of the William Skinner Silk Mill between Appleton St. and Dwight St., Holyoke Heritage State Park features a lush green landscape with a stunning view of the canal.

William Skinner immigrated to the U.S. from London when he was 20, bringing his skills as a silk-dyer with him. He moved his family to Holyoke in 1874, where he also reestablished his booming silk mill after his previous mill in Haydenville was destroyed after a dam failed.

According to records at Wistariahurst Museum, where the Skinner family lived for two generations, Skinner received an



TURLEY PHOTO BY PAULA OUIMETTE

Managed by the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation, Holyoke Heritage State Park pays homage to industry and the city's past, and also offers free programming for all ages.

offer from the city of Holyoke to rebuild his mill on the canal site rent free for five years. He paid \$1 for a one-block plot of land to relocate his Haydenville home to the city.

The business continued to grow and adjusted to the changing demands of the textile industry, producing a variety of fabrics beyond silk.

The family sold the business in 1961, and the mill was closed not long after. A fire in 1980 destroyed the mill, and the site eventually became the greenspace it is today.



PHOTO BY MILAN P. WARNER

The William Skinner Silk Mill was located on what is now Holyoke Heritage State Park, located between Appleton and Dwight streets.



TURLEY PHOTO BY PAULA OUIMETTE

The architectural landscape has changed around the canal, as seen in this 2018 photo.

When you visit the park you can enjoy a picnic, take a walk or a run, or climb and slide on the playground. During the summer, make sure to check out the spray deck.

The Visitor Center has historical exhibits and a slideshow that details the city's rich history. Admission to the Visitor Center is free, with hours Tuesday through Sunday from noon - 4 p.m.

Free parking is available in the Visitor Center lot. Accessible restrooms are available during open hours.

Free educational programs are held regularly, including guided walks along the canal, nature programs for children, story walks, and hands-on looks at the industry that shaped Holyoke. Group tours are also available at no charge.

To register for any of these programs, call the Visitor Center at 413-534-1723.

Holyoke Merry-Go-Round

Holyoke Heritage State Park is also the home of the Holyoke Merry-Go-Round, which has been bringing smiles to carousel riders of all ages since it was placed there three decades ago.

Originally located at Mountain Park, the merry-go-round was the fifth-to-last one made by the Philadelphia Toboggan Company. The ride first opened to the public in 1929.

The wooden carousel features 48 hand-carved horses, with 16 "standers" on the outside row that are stationary, including lead horse, Lancelot. The middle row has 14 "jumpers," and the inner row has a mix of 18 standers and jumpers and two chariots.

Lancelot is a deep, glistening black, and he is the only horse that is wearing armor.

Like Lancelot, each horse has a name that reflects its uniqueness—no two horses are exactly the same. Riders have their choice



The Holyoke Merry-Go-Round was first located at Mountain Park almost 100 years ago, before being moved to Holyoke Heritage State Park in 1993.

from regal bays, grays, and blacks to fiery chestnuts and flashy paints and palominos.

Rasperry Razzamatazz, Scout, Flower Power, Lilac's Treasure, Curly-Que, Trigger, Hickey's Hero, Tim's Toy, Blueberry Bramble, Quicksilver, Betsy, and many more have pranced and galloped their way into the hearts of the community for almost a century.

The Merry-Go-Round boasts 56 scenic panels, 864 colored lights and 98 beveled mirrors.

According to the Holyoke Merry-Go-Round's social media, on Dec. 7, 1993, the



Children can climb the curvy climber as well as investigate dinosaur bones at the Children's Museum at Holyoke.

Holyoke Merry-Go-Round started "spinning in its new home at Holyoke Heritage State Park. Thirty years later, we are still known as the Happiness Machine."

For its 30th year at Holyoke Heritage State Park, the Holyoke Merry-Go-Round's preservation fund campaign is helping to fund a full renovation of the bathrooms, the installation of a security camera system, updating the pavilion surround- and concession-stand lighting to energy-efficient LEDs. The campaign will also fund repairs to the Merry-Go-Round's operating mechanism, continue restoration work of the carousel horses and more.

The Holyoke Merry-Go-Round is open Saturday and Sunday from noon - 4 p.m.

Tickets are \$3.50 per ride or four for \$10. Private parties and school tours can also be booked.

For more information, call 413-538-9838 or visit holyokemerrygoround.org.

Children's Museum at Holyoke

Another popular place to visit at Holyoke Heritage State Park is the Children's Museum at Holyoke, an interactive, educational, and cultural experience that is fun for the whole family.

According to the Museum's website, "through hands-on exhibits, children challenge themselves, discover how the world works, explore new roles for themselves, and learn by doing."

The Museum celebrated 40 years of continuing to honor its mission back in 2021.

Each section of the museum is geared toward different age groups, starting with toddlers and up.



The Holyoke Merry-Go-Round is open on weekends, year-round.

The Museum's website states that "whatever the age, we suggest that as long as your children are still enjoying their visits to the Museum, age is irrelevant."

Located inside the museum is a world of industry, including a shop-and-scan grocery store, a kitchen and diner, a public safety complex, an ambulance and a forklift, a mail room, art studio, and more.

Children can climb to new heights on the Curvy Climber or guide boats from one end of the lengthy water table to the next.

There's also a dinosaur dig, puppet theater, frozen shadow room, animation station, Magna Tile table, and Light Bright wall. There is always something to explore at the Children's Museum at Holyoke.

The Museum is open Tuesday through Friday from 9 a.m. - 4 p.m., Saturday from 10 a.m. - 4 p.m., and Sunday from noon - 4 p.m. Admission is \$8 for children and adults, \$5 for seniors ages 62+, and free for children one-year-old and younger.

For more information, call 413-536-7048 or visit childrensmuseumholyoke.org.

Volleyball Hall of Fame

The International Volleyball Hall of Fame celebrates Holyoke as the birthplace of volleyball, while honoring and recognizing athletes of the sport from around the world.

The Hall of Fame hosts a number of tournaments and clinics, and a museum that displays hundreds of items related to the sport that was invented by William G. Morgan in 1895.

The Hall of Fame is open Tuesday through Sunday from 11 a.m. - 3 p.m. Admission is \$8 for adults, \$5 for active and retired military, students and seniors



Lancelot is the lead horse on the carousel, and the only one to wear armor.



PHOTOS BY CHILDREN'S MUSEUM AT HOLYOKE

The World of Motion is a popular area to explore how things work at the Children's Museum at Holyoke.

ages 65+, and free for children ages 12 and under.

For more information, call 413-536-0926 or visit volleyhall.org.

Plan your visit

For more information about Holyoke Heritage State Park or to see a schedule of events, call 413-534-1723 or visit www.mass.gov/locations/holyoke-heritage-state-park.

This website will also provide information and links to the Holyoke Merry-Go-Round, Children's Museum at Holyoke, and the International Volleyball Hall of Fame.

Parking is available at the Visitor Center, at metered parking spots and in parking garages.



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City's history and more told at Wistariahurst Museum

By Quinn Suomala
Staff Writer

Wistariahurst Museum and Gardens is a beautiful location in the city, and according to reports, it is well loved by the community.

"The people and the community of Holyoke love history," Holyoke City Historian and Wistariahurst Curator Penni Martorell said. "We are thankful that city funds go toward paying to keep our doors open. It is wonderful that the community values its unique history and continues to support the work of the museum."

Wistariahurst has been a museum since 1961, however, the building itself has a long history even before that. According to Martorell, the building was built by William Skinner in 1868 in Havenville, Northampton.

In 1874, however, there was a flood that wiped out Skinner's mill. This was right when Holyoke was opening the canal, so Skinner was offered a plot of land on which to rebuild his business on the canal. Accepting the invitation, Skinner had his house dismantled and moved to Holyoke to be rebuilt, where it has remained.

The museum took more time to move to the current Wistariahurst location. Originally, part of the city's public library was used as the city museum, dating back into at least the 1930s. However, this changed when the Skinner family left their house to the city in 1959.

William Skinner's daughter, Katharine Skinner Kilborne, and her heirs made the decision to give the house to the city, according to reports.

"They left it to the city for it to be used as a place of education," Martorell said. "And so, the city had this large open space, and they figured it would be a good place to move the museum materials."

The museum was then moved out of the library and put into place at what is now Wistariahurst.

At that time, it was set up as a Holyoke history museum. There was a group of workers from the library who ran it.

There is also a carriage house in place that has a lot of taxidermied animals, creating a natural history museum for children and families to enjoy. Now, Wistariahurst is a city department and it is a museum dedicated to art,



music, and history.

Wistariahurst also has its gardens and an archive of historical items, which draw more community members to the museum.

"We're not just a museum," Martorell said. "We have the garden space, which is a public space for people to use and enjoy, and we also have an archive of historical items that people can use to do research."

The museum is focused on including the community of Holyoke, both in the events they do now and in the way they tell the stories of the community.

"We've done a lot with local artists," Martorell said. "We've done concerts, we've done all sorts of gallery exhibits with local artists...and we've done an Indigenous heritage celebration and a Juneteenth celebration, which will hopefully become regular events that we have here."

These new events reflect how the focus of the museum has shifted with the different directors over the years. Currently, the museum

is working to ensure that the many stories of Holyoke are told through their exhibits.

"Right now, we are kind of looking to go back to the original Holyoke history, but to be more inclusive—to include different communities and get a different perspective of telling Holyoke's history," Martorell said.

This recent attempt to reframe Holyoke's history through the eyes of communities that had been overlooked in the past has been in the works for several years now. There was a Museum Assessment Plan done to give the museum feedback on what they were doing well and what they needed to improve upon. This plan was run by the American Association of Museums, a national affiliation of museum professionals.

Currently, the staff is using that advice and professional guidance to work on reframing the interpretive message of the museum. They are writing different scripts, looking at interpreting rooms differently, and getting more community input as to what stories should be told and how they should be told.

This process is expected to go on for five more years, with these steps being the initial stages in the reframing process.

"Right now, we're just at the initial planning stages; overall, it's at minimum a five-year process," Martorell said.

Over the next several years, Martorell anticipates that they will go through the museum room by room.

"We want to recognize the different folks who have contributed in the area and give them the space to tell their story as well," Martorell said.

For example, there is one room the museum hopes to set up as a tenement so that visitors can get an idea of what it was like to live in one of the mill houses in the early 1800s. Having this will create a contrast to the Skinner house, as that family was much wealthier than the average mill worker at the time, reports indicate.

While staff is working on reframing the museum, Wistariahurst has still had several outstanding exhibits that have brought forth different voices from the community. Once such exhibit was done by Erica Slocumb, who did a two-part exhibit focusing on the history of the Black residents of Holyoke. The first part of

the exhibit was called “Reliquary of Blackness: Oral Histories” and it took place just before COVID.

“Slocumb had just started to collect information with community members about what they remember, where their families came from, how they ended up in Holyoke, what kind of things they were involved with in Holyoke, and events that would have affected them,” Martorell said.

The second part of the exhibit was open just this past summer. It was called “Reliquary of Blackness Chapter Two: A Legacy of Hope.” This part delved more deeply into the history of Black families in Holyoke and how they contributed to the community.

Another exhibit was “Nuestras Abuelas” in 2016. This exhibit was curated by Waleska Santiago, and it focused on young people in Holyoke and their relations with their grandmothers. This exhibit is dedicated to celebrating the legacy of grandmothers’ lives and love through the eyes of their grandchildren. It particularly focused on the experiences of Latina and Puerto Rican women.


These exhibits are just the beginning of Wistariahurst’s mission to ensure that the stories of all the people in Holyoke are told.

“The more perspectives that we can highlight, the fuller and richer story we’ll have for future generations to look back on,” Martorell said.

Martorell and the other workers at the museum want to encourage the people of Holyoke to continue coming to Wistariahurst and telling their stories.

“We’ve worked really hard to try to make history be more approachable for the regular person on the street,” Martorell said. “We want people to know that their history is valuable, we want to hear their voice, we want to hear the whole community’s voice, not just one perspective.”

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Congratulations Holyoke on your 150th birthday

By David Bligh

In 2023, the Holyoke Ancient Order of Hibernians are celebrating our 143rd birthday. The city and AOH have been around for a long, long time.

Holyoke, the first planned industrial city, previously known as Ireland Parish or Ireland Depot, was built on the backs of Irish immigrants who hand dug the city's three levels of canals and Holyoke to Westfield railroad.

In 1880, the Holyoke Ancient Order of Hibernians was granted a charter to raise a fund to help maintain aged, sick, blind, infirmed members and to provide benefits to widows of these newcomers from the Emerald Isle.

Celebrating our 50th anniversary in 1930, it was proclaimed, "the Ancient Order of Hibernians has been successful from the start. Many are the acts of benevolence and charity that has marked its years of service."

Today, the AOH continues to follow its motto, Friendship, Unity, and Christian Charity both remembering and promoting our Irish heritage.

In 2010, our chapter was renamed in honor of late steadfast member/benefactor/champion/do-it-all/curator James A. Curran. The late Paul F. Hogan Jr., often referred to as the AOH Division 1 President for Life, served as Massachusetts State President in 2016. Our Ladies also achieve state and national recognition. Paula Paoli was Massachusetts AOH President in 2018 while Barbara Twohig and Noreanne Duquette serve as state president and vice president in 2023.

Officers for the 2023 year include: President Joseph O'Connor; Vice-President Patrick Hogan; Treasurer Jay Whelihan; Recording Secretary Owen Donohue; Financial Secretary Peter Hogan and Sentinel Steve Suprenant. The LAOH is led by President Paula Paoli; Vice President Rosalie Pratt, Treasurer Janet Dwyer, Recording

Secretary Barbara Twohig; Financial Secretary Mary Pat Murphy; Sentinel Patti Clayton; and Mistress at Arms Patricia Pluta.

Past and present luminaries in the AOH and LAOH include Monsignor David Joyce, John "Banker" Kennedy, Ned Dean, Dr. Tom Moriarty, Phil Flanagan, Vin Barrett, Dr. William Dean, P. B. Bresnahan III, Maurice Ferriter, John and Kim Gaughan, Attorney Thomas Griffin, Elroy Barber, Jim Cannon, Ed Welch, Bill Geraghty, Ed Moriarty, John Cuniff, David K. Bartley, Bobby Cameron, Patty Meon, Dan and Cindy Murphy, Charlie Haller, Charlie Kelly, Charlie Popp, Dr. John J. Driscoll, Ed Nugent, Dave Miller, Paul Paoli, Shirley Bolduc, Skip Clayton, Tom Dillon, Tim O'Shea, Helen Paoli, Cheryl Dupont, Judy and Rose Pratt, Mary K. O'Connor, Jack Scanlon, Paul Mengel, Jim Sheehan, Fran Hennessey, John Carlon, Marty Fullwood, Jerry Sheehan, Mike Moran, Judy Pratt, Tim Allen, Alice Greaney, Esther Meehan, Dan and Cindy Murphy, Susan Sullivan, Paula Lunney, Kit Collamore, Tom and Mary Laura Hohol, Samantha Methot, Kathy Dunn and with so many more to fill pages upon pages.

In 2023, being a Hibernian means celebrating and promoting our Irish heritage. Our Irish Night is one of the largest in Western Mass. It features Irish dancing, Irish music, a corned beef and cabbage dinner (of course) and a side of Danny Curran's famed epicurean delicacy, corned ribs.

Every March 1, the club hosts Holyoke's annual Irish flag raising ceremony at City Hall.

The club's longest running activity is our Communion Breakfast where we recognize Mr. Hibernian, Ms. Hibernian, and our Catholic Charity award recipients. The event is hosted by maestro emcee, Attorney John Driscoll, and Nora McMahon. Our Catholic identity is integral to our Irishness. At St. Jerome Church, we participate in the yearly novena to St. Patrick.

The AOH has been involved with the

Holyoke Saint Patrick's Parade since its inception. The 1940 AOH Junior President, HHS Senior Michael Donohue, later an attorney in 1952, incorporated the Holyoke Parade Committee. Our contingent of dignitaries, floats, marchers and Irish dancers stretches three city blocks long. Our floats are designed by Peter Hogan and hand-crafted by JD Watson have won numerous prestigious trophies from the Parade Committee.

Our commitment to the poor in Holyoke shines throughout the year and includes our involvement with Providence Ministries for the Needy. Each month we prepare a Sunday lunch of PB&J sandwiches and collect non-perishable food items.

The LAOH is integral to our success. For the past 23 years, the Ladies hand-stitch a large quilt celebrating Irish culture and history. Panels have included Ireland Parish's historical locations, the Lisdisfarne Gospels, and for 2024, Irish wildflowers. The quilt, organized by LAOH President Paula Paoli, becomes an instant family heirloom and is raffled after the parade.

Throughout the year, the Ladies organize and coordinate ceremonies with AOH rituals at wakes and memorial services. They support Bethlehem House and Womanshelter/Companeras and send Christmas cards to veterans at the Holyoke Soldiers Home. Masses are also requested celebrating the LAOH Patron, Saint Brigid, and commemorating the disgrace of An Gorta Mor, The Great Hunger.

The 2023 Maurice A. Donahue Memorial Scholarships are presented at our summer picnic with Gavin Sullivan, Patrick Sweeney, and Caroline Taylor, each receiving \$1,000 toward school expenses.

Holyoke and the Ancient Order of Hibernians have thrived in boom times, survived World Wars and depression, and yet it is our commitment to Holyokers that we look forward to the tercentenary (Holyoke's 300th birthday).

Holyoke Gas & Electric a strong facet of the city

Nestled along the banks of the Connecticut River, Holyoke was America's first planned industrial city. Since the 19th century, it has been a hub of energy innovation. The river's 57-foot drop and robust hydropower potential drew wealthy industrialists who constructed the dam and canal system in the late 1800s. This engineering foresight powered the mills that led manufacturers to flock to Holyoke, transforming the city into a thriving industrial center.

In 1902, the forward-thinking citizens of Holyoke saw ownership of a municipal utility as a way to stabilize rates and maintain local control over energy services. At that time, Holyoke Gas & Electric was established through the purchase of a gas and electric plant from the Holyoke Water Power Company.

Over the past 120 years, HG&E has triumphed over immense challenges, including devastating floods, severe storms, monumental shifts in the utility industry, and most recently, a global pandemic. In 1965,



Holyoke was the only community in New England that kept the lights on during the infamous Northeast blackout that plunged nearly 30 million people into darkness.

Throughout its storied history, HG&E has been an innovative utility, constantly exploring new technologies and opportunities. In 1997, long before the internet was considered a critical utility service, HG&E had the foresight to construct a high-speed fiber optic network across the city, which was later expanded throughout the Pioneer Valley.

In 2001, just a day short of its 99th birthday, HG&E acquired the remaining

Holyoke Water Power assets, including the Holyoke Dam and the city's canal system. Today, these green hydroelectric resources produce over 65% of the city's electrical power at some of the lowest utility rates in New England.

Holyoke was named a Green Community in 2010 by the state of Massachusetts. HG&E has proudly carried on a legacy of innovation with research and development as part of Holyoke's Clean Energy Test Assessment Center, as well as implementation of emerging clean energy technologies.

HG&E's focus on innovation and sustainability extends to natural gas operations as well, where its gas franchise includes both Holyoke and Southamptton. HG&E was the first natural gas distribution company in New England to convert to 100% natural gas in its distribution system in October of 1951. HG&E is one of the few companies in the region that operates a

Please see **HG&E**, page 28

CONGRATULATIONS ON 150 YEARS OF INNOVATION



Holyoke Gas & Electric (HG&E) is proud to be a part of Holyoke's great history. Since 1902, HG&E has proudly served the community, offering competitive rates, innovative and sustainable energy solutions, reliable service, and excellent customer care.

Congratulations to the City of Holyoke, from your neighbors at HG&E!



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Birthplace of Volleyball

International Volleyball Hall of Fame has a home in Holyoke

By Ryan Drago
Staff Writer
rdrago@turley.com

Part of the city's unique history is the origin of a popular sport, volleyball.

The International Volleyball Hall of Fame (IVHF) recently welcomed its 2023 class, and the organization reflected on the sport's upbringing in the town of Holyoke. Executive Director of the Hall of Fame, George Mulry, shared the history of the sport, as well as the exhibits inside Hall of Fame. The purpose of the International Volleyball Hall of Fame is to honor the legends, recognize the greats, and preserve the history of volleyball.

The town of Holyoke is the official birthplace of volleyball. It all began with



SUBMITTED PHOTOS BY THE INTERNATIONAL VOLLEYBALL HALL OF FAME

Class of 2023 waiting to receive their jackets and have their plaques revealed.



Shanrit Wongprasert of Thailand next to his exhibit and plaque.



Phil Dalhausser of the USA next to his exhibit and plaque.



Silvano Prandi of Italy next to his exhibit and plaque.

William G. Morgan, who invented the game at the Holyoke YMCA in 1895. He was honored posthumously as the first inductee of the Volleyball Hall of Fame in 1985. Morgan was the director of the Holyoke YMCA in 1895 when he came up with the concept and rules for volleyball—a sport he envisioned as a less physically-challenging sport than basketball, pulling concepts from other sports such as baseball, tennis, and basketball and mixing them into what eventually inspired the idea of volleyball. He also had ties with James Naismith, the creator of basketball in Springfield, as they met each other on a football field. Naismith at the time worked at the YMCA in Springfield.

In December of 1895, Morgan publicly displayed the game for the first time. Temporarily, the game had a name prior to becoming volleyball and was called “Mintonette”. After some fine-tuning, the



Larissa Franca Maestrini of Brazil next to her exhibit and plaque.

game of volleyball made its official debut eight months later in July of 1896 at the YMCA in Springfield. The game was accepted as a success. However, it was determined that the name should be changed. It was renamed volleyball, since that was the objective of the game, to volley the ball back and forth.

Morgan left the YMCA in 1900 to pursue various careers in business, but the game of volleyball was spread worldwide and was brought to a national and international status in the late 1940's. Variations of the game would soon follow, such as beach volleyball. First started in Hawaii in the 1910's, beach volleyball was soon popularized as a professional tournament-based sport in the 1950's. There is also grass volleyball, snow volleyball, and water volleyball.

As part of the history of volleyball, the Hall of Fame could only be in the place where it was born, Holyoke. In the 1970's, the Greater Holyoke Chamber of Commerce established an ad hoc committee for the purpose of promoting Holyoke, birthplace of volleyball, as the future home of the Volleyball Hall of Fame. In 1978, the committee incorporated Holyoke Volleyball Hall of Fame, Inc., a nonprofit corporation

established for the purpose of planning, promoting, establishing, and maintaining a living memorial to the sport of volleyball. The current location of the Volleyball Hall of Fame is at 444 Dwight St. in Holyoke and was open to the public on June 6, 1987. The first international Hall of Fame induction ceremony was in 1998. Since then, inductees have come from around the world and contribute to the honoring of the sport and its home in Holyoke.

As of 2023, the Hall of Fame has welcomed 167 inductees from across 26 countries.

“This brings all of the volleyball world together,” Mulry said.

The Hall of Fame works year-round to find future inductees who have sustained excellence during a long period of time in the sport of volleyball. Many who are inducted come from all over the world and have experienced success on an international level.

The ceremonies for the most recent inductee class consisted of an induction ceremony at the Wyckoff Country Club in Holyoke and a VIP reception with the Mayor of Holyoke. The Hall of Fame welcomed six new inductees as the class of 2023, along with four recipients of special awards.

Representing the United States is Olympic gold medalist and four-time Olympian Phil Dalhausser, professional beach volleyball player. Representing Brazil is two-time Olympic medalist and five-time FIVB world tour champion Larissa Franca Maestrini, who is also known for playing beach volleyball. Representing Japan is three-time Olympic medalist and iconic setter Katsutoshi Nekoda, who played indoor volleyball. Representing Cuba is four-time Olympian and three-time Olympic medalist Yumika Ruiz, indoor volleyball player. Representing Italy is Silvano Prandi, Olympic medalist and longtime professional and National Team Coach.

Representing Thailand is longtime administrator within various national and international federations, Shanrit Wongprasert. Wongprasert is the first member to represent the nation of Thailand in the International Volleyball Hall of Fame.

The special awards categories include the Association of Volleyball Professionals (AVP) for the Court of Honor. Kathy DeBoer for the Mintonette Award for significant individual achievement and dedication to the sport of volleyball or the IVHF. DeBoer has been in the role of the Executive Director of the



Class of 2023 members or representatives standing together with their plaques.

American Volleyball Coaches Association since 2006.

The William G. Morgan Award went to the Homewood Suites/Susan Concepcion. The official Induction Headquarters Hotel since 2011, providing a “world-class experience” for IVHF guests.

The Mayor’s Award went to Hector “Picky” Soto. The award recognizes a person, group, or organization that has directly contributed to the sport of volleyball and represents the ideals and spirit of the city of Holyoke.

As the Hall of Fame honors legends, recognizes the greats, and preserves volleyball’s history for future generations, many current events take place thanks to the efforts of the organization. The IVHF supports a high school girls’ volleyball all-star tournament. Thirty-six high school teams across the Northeast come to compete for a big event at AIC in Springfield.

The Hall of Fame is in the process of working on new projects. One of them is to offer at least one public volleyball court at their location and be a part of the museum. In addition to tournaments, IVHF runs the

Morgan Classic Tournament and clinics. The event is the premier annual men’s collegiate tournament, held at Springfield College, featuring the top NCAA Division III teams in the country. The Morgan Classic also features its popular Players & Coaches Clinics. It is named in honor of the sport’s creator, William G. Morgan, and has been an event for the Hall of Fame since 1972.

“We have a nice core group of attendees,” said IVHF Exec. Director George Mulry.

Mulry has been working for the International Volleyball Hall of Fame since April of 2011. Many exhibits at the museum honor the heroes of volleyball as the plaques of every Hall of Fame inductee are displayed on their walls.

The International Volleyball Hall of Fame is a part of the history of Holyoke and can be found at 444 Dwight St., next to Holyoke Heritage State Park and the Children’s Museum. Visit volleyhall.org for more information about the organization.

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Trey Mancini, who made the major leagues with the Baltimore Orioles, played for the Blue Sox in Holyoke in 2011.

The Holyoke Millers were remembered earlier this year by the Valley Blue Sox.

Millers start rich baseball heritage in the city

By Gregory A. Scibelli
gscibelli@turley.com

While the city is the birthplace of volleyball and home to its Hall of Fame, another sport that has had a great deal of history in the city is baseball.

Baseball has roots going back many years, and professional teams have even called Holyoke home.

Professional baseball came to the city in 1977 when the Holyoke Millers, the AA affiliate of the Milwaukee Brewers, moved over from Pittsfield. The Millers competed in the Eastern League and got their name in line with the Paper City theme because of the numerous paper mills in the city.

After competing for four seasons at Holyoke's Mackenzie Stadium, the Millers got a new affiliate, the California Angels (now known as the Los Angeles Angels). At the end of the 1982 season, however, the Millers organization chose to move the team after its relationship with the city and public schools deteriorated. The Millers had to share Mackenzie with the high school teams and it impacted their ability to practice.

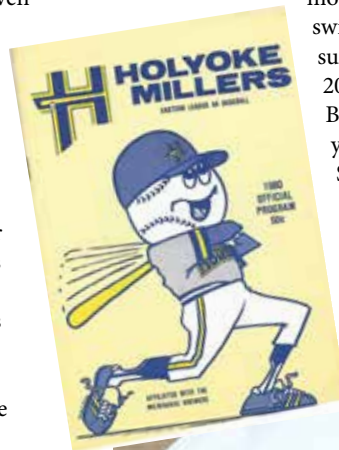
Their final game was Aug. 31, 1982, against the Reading Phillies. The team went 406-426.

Following that, Mackenzie Stadium would play host to Holyoke High School team, as well as numerous American Legion and other recreational league teams. But a higher level of baseball returned in

2004 when the Holyoke Giants came to Mackenzie in 2004. The Giants were part of the budding New England Collegiate Baseball League, a league much like the Cape Cod League, which features some of the best college baseball players in country.

The Giants played their home games at Mackenzie, drawing great crowds, but moved to Lynn and switched collegiate summer leagues after 2007. The Holyoke Blue Sox landed the year after. The Blue Sox were also an NECBL team that used to be known as the Concord Quarry Dogs. The Blue Sox have managed to stick around through the

present in 2023.



present in 2023.

The only change that was made came in 2014, when the team changed its name from Holyoke to Valley to reflect the Blue Sox being a team representing the entire Pioneer Valley.

The Blue Sox play more than 35 games



The Valley Blue Sox are a mainstay that have lasted throughout the last 15 years. They host many events at their games, including having three Boston Red Sox World Series trophies visit Mackenzie Stadium in 2014.

each summer, with half of them being held at Mackenzie. The Blue Sox also helped to make major renovations to the field and re-locate the bullpens from foul territory to outside the field to eliminate potential injuries.

The Blue Sox have many promotions and special events, and draw crowds from all over the region. They have hosted two NECBL All-Star Games and have won two NECBL titles. They were back-to-back in 2017 and 2018.

One of the key players on those championship teams was Endy Morales, who pitched for Holyoke High School. Morales had his number 40 retired by the Blue Sox.

Their logo has received some makeovers during their time in Holyoke. Their lettering has resembled the Boston Red Sox lettering and now has more of a Toronto Blue Jays look in 2023.

Like the Cape Cod League, many NECBL teams have had players drafted to MLB. One of the most notable MLB players to play their home games in Holyoke was Trey Mancini, who came up with the Baltimore Orioles organization and achieved success as an outfielder and first basemen. He played for the Blue Sox in 2011 and was an all-star for them. In the MLB, he also had stints with the Houston Astros and Chicago Cubs.



Endy Morales, a Holyoke native, had his number retired by the Valley Blue Sox.

Holyoke baseball also produced one very notable major leaguer in Mark Wohlers.

The former Atlanta Brave graduated Holyoke High School in 1988. He once held a mark for throwing the third-fastest pitch in baseball history. He threw a pitch 103 mph in a spring training game in 1995, the same year Wohlers' Braves won the World Series.

Wohlers was the Braves closer during that year, and closed out the final game of the World Series. His success was not long-lasting, as he recorded 119 saves over nine seasons before having control problems that would eventually end his career.

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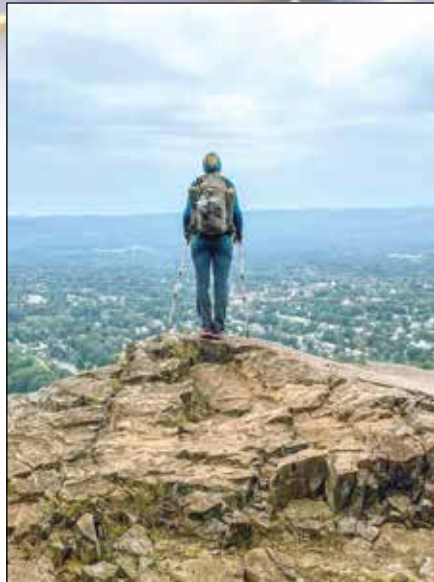
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Goat Peak Observation Tower



The ledges below the summit of Mt. Tom



The old quarry, which ceased operations in 2012

Hiking the Mount Tom Range

By Julie Midura
Correspondent

With more than 2,100 acres of forest, 22 miles of hiking trails, babbling brooks, vernal pools, scenic vistas, and a tranquil lake, Mt. Tom State Reservation is a perfect destination for nature lovers who enjoy hiking, bicycling, snowshoeing, picnicking, fishing, or cross-country skiing.

This popular outdoor recreation area is known for its rugged character, its scenic views, and its annual hawk migration in the fall. Additionally, Mt. Tom's western face serves as a launch area for paragliders.

The Mt. Tom Range runs north-south and is located within the towns of Easthampton and Holyoke on the west bank of the Connecticut River. It rises steeply between 400 to 1,100 feet above the Connecticut River Valley below, which makes it the most topographically prominent peak in Massachusetts outside of the Berkshires. Mt. Tom is the southernmost and highest peak of the entire Mt. Tom Range.

The range is composed of traprock, also called basalt. This dark iron-containing rock weathers to a rusty brown when exposed to the air, which gives the ledges a distinct reddish appearance. Basalt frequently



Eyre House Ruins on Mt. Nonotuck

breaks into octagonal columns, creating the dramatic cliff faces that one will find along the ridge. Hiking along the tilted edges of this linear ridge offers a great perspective of not only the distant horizon, but also of the nearby fractured basalt talus slopes.

It is believed that Mt. Tom was named after Rowland Thomas, an English colonist, stonemason, proprietor, and surveyor who worked for the settlement of Springfield in the 1660s. Thomas surveyed the mountain, along with Elizur Holyoke. Thomas purportedly named Mt. Tom after himself.

In 1897, the one-mile Mt. Tom Railroad was built to take visitors to the Summit House, which was built in conjunction with the railway. The Summit House did not offer overnight accommodations, but catered

only to day visitors. The multilevel building held a dining room, a stage, numerous observatories, two piazzas that extended around the entire building, an open deck, and a cupola which was outfitted with telescopes. It was reported that the Summit House welcomed between 75,000 to 80,000 visitors during its peak six-month operating season.

Unfortunately, the Summit House burned to the ground in 1900, was rebuilt in 1901, and was destroyed by another fire in 1929. A temporary structure was built, but was ultimately demolished in the late 1930s, along with the railroad tracks, due to declining business.

Climbing Mt. Tom today, one will find very little evidence that the Summit House ever existed. The summit is now used by several radio and television stations, and the concrete foundation is occupied by towers and transmitter buildings. The old railway has been replaced with a paved access road. The only surviving feature from the house is the concrete boardwalk and metal railings along the western cliff of the summit.

Approximately 300 feet below the summit alongside the access road is the Mt. Tom B-17 Memorial. This granite monument

was built to honor the 25 servicemen who lost their lives when their plane crashed into the mountain on a dark and rainy night in July of 1946. The bomber had been converted into a transport plane, and the passengers were returning home after serving their country in Greenland during World War II. The aircraft disintegrated after tearing through trees and striking a rocky outcropping. The resulting fire burned through the night. There is a scorched area located behind the monument with burn marks from the fire still evident. At that time, the crash was considered the single worst air disaster in New England's history.

A hike to the northern end of the Mt. Tom range will take you to the 18th century Eyrie House Ruins, a significant historic site located on the summit of Mt. Nonotuck. The site was once a hotel owned and operated by William Street. It opened in 1861 and included an elegant restaurant, a croquet

field, and a picnic area. However, in April of 1901, the Eyrie House burned to the ground after the owner started a funeral pyre for two deceased horses. He went to bed believing that the fire was out, but it reignited overnight. Unlike Mt. Tom's Summit House, the cellar holes and the walls of the hotel's stone understory still stand today.

In addition to visiting the numerous historical sites of the Mt. Tom range, the miles of trails will take one through a forest abundant with wildlife. The woodlands of both the Mt. Tom Range and the nearby Mt. Holyoke Range provide habitat for small forest birds, falcons, hawks, eagles, Copperhead snakes, and Timber Rattlesnakes. Additionally, large mammals such as deer, mink, bobcat, and black bear make their home amidst the thousands of acres of forest.

The area is also a prime seasonal raptor migration route. With the right weather

conditions, it's possible to see thousands of hawks soaring overhead from September through November. A great location to view the raptors is from the tower on Goat Peak. Outside of the raptor migration season, it's still worth the trip to the tower, since a climb to the top will reward you with beautiful views of the rolling hills of Massachusetts, Vermont, Connecticut, and New Hampshire.

With winter fast approaching, there is still much to do at Mt. Tom Reservation. Visitors can cross country ski on the numerous park roads, ice skate on Bray Lake, take a casual stroll, or snowshoe along some of the lower trails. Visitors can tailor their hike to any schedule or fitness level, and Mt. Tom affords a local opportunity to leave the hustle and bustle and stresses of everyday life behind and simply enjoy the healing properties that nature provides.

Celebrating All That Holyoke Was, Is and Will Be



Thursday night shopping on High St. in the 1930's. Looking south from Dwight St.



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Holyoke Community College

Making History in Holyoke Since 1946

The first two-year college in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, Holyoke Community College (HCC), has brought a tradition of excellence to the region since it opened its doors in 1946.

In those days, classes were held in classrooms made available in the evenings by Holyoke High School and taught by Amherst, Mount Holyoke, and Smith College professors to working adults, many taking advantage of the G.I. Bill.

Today, HCC is located on a 135-acre

campus just off Interstate 91 and serves approximately 7,000 students annually in credit and non-credit courses. Students primarily come from Hampden, Hampshire, and Franklin counties, and approximately 800 students receive degrees each year.

The college plays a key role in the economic health of the region by providing a launchpad, a fresh start, and a smart choice for hundreds of students each year, many of whom build lives and careers right here in the community. Since its inception, HCC has

been a cornerstone of the region's economic vitality, providing an affordable and quality college education for all, and the college remains a steadfast and active partner in its growth and prosperity, according to a press statement.

Founded September 9, 1946, when the Holyoke School Committee voted to establish the Holyoke Graduate School, classes began soon after at Holyoke High School. The following year, the school was renamed Holyoke Junior College (HJC).

HG&E from page 21

Liquid Natural Gas (LNG) plant for peaking operations. HG&E continues to adapt to regional pipeline constraints and is working to help Massachusetts meet its carbon reduction goals through the introduction of cleaner fuels, energy efficiency and electrification.

In 2020, the global COVID-19 pandemic brought significant corresponding economic hardships for utility customers, which highlighted the importance of the services that HG&E provides to the community. In spite of these significant challenges, HG&E's dedicated employees remained focused on our mission.

As utilities look to the future, there are significant legislative and regulatory challenges that will shape the industry. For example, the 2021 Roadmap for Massachusetts Climate Policy commits the commonwealth to reducing greenhouse gas emissions below 1990 levels by 50% by 2030 and 75% by 2040, and to achieve net zero

emissions by 2050. HG&E has worked very hard over the past several years to reduce its carbon footprint and is well positioned to meet the incremental targets of the new climate bill.

HG&E has been an early adopter of energy storage technologies, which helps stabilize utility and ratepayer costs during periods of peak demand and volatile pricing, reduces stress on the local distribution infrastructure, and contributes to the region's low carbon goals. HG&E currently hosts two battery energy storage systems: One system totals 3 MW/6 MWh (Mt. Tom Solar + Battery Storage), and the other system totals 4.99 MW/10 MWh (Martin Dunn Energy Center on Water Street).

HG&E takes immense pride in being an integral part of the Holyoke community and continues to be one of the largest contributors to the city's tax base through its annual payment in lieu of tax (PILOT) program to the city

HG&E also works with local students, offering safety and energy conservation

programs as well as the Cornelius J. Moriarty, Jr. Scholarship for Cadet engineers. The Cadet program has aided Holyoke residents who are interested in pursuing careers in engineering with invaluable on-the-job training with HG&E engineers each summer. Currently, 14 full-time employees came through the program at the start of their careers.

HG&E has been honored to receive numerous national and regional awards and recognition, including the The Ira W. Leighton, Jr. Outstanding Innovative Technology Award from Environmental Business Council of New England for Mount Tom Solar & Energy Storage System and the Safety Achievement Award from the American Gas Association

Driven by a commitment to reliable service, environmental stewardship and community growth, HG&E continues to build upon its legacy of innovation. For more information about HG&E, please visit www.hged.com.

HJC flourished, although the city-sponsored school lacked resources traditionally associated with colleges. Until 1958, founding president George Frost, Ph.D., and secretary Ellen Lynch were the only full-time employees, together scavenging chalk, erasers, and pencils for the part-time faculty who taught in the borrowed quarters during the evenings.

In the fall of 1967, after joining the state's fledgling community college system and a brief relocation to other downtown buildings, Holyoke Community College moved back into a renovated Holyoke High School. Four months later, the building burned to the ground.

The 1968 fire was a pivotal moment for HCC. Then-Holyoke Mayor William Taupier joined business and civic leaders to ensure the college remained in Holyoke. The day after the fire, Mayor Taupier took an option for the city to buy land where a new campus could be built. Holyoke residents flooded the governor's office with letters urging that the college be rebuilt in Holyoke.

"Holyoke Community College is a transformative place of learning," a press statement reads. "Wrap-around services



ensure that barriers are removed so students have everything they need to succeed. Engaging deeply with their academic subject matter and forging meaningful connections, our students benefit from networks leading to new careers and from educational opportunities at prestigious four-year colleges and universities."

Today, HCC is building upon existing—and developing new—strategic partnerships with regional businesses, industries, and local organizations to continue to positively impact the community. Diversity, equity, inclusion, and building a sense of belonging for all students are fundamental to the HCC

experience.

"These are demanding times for our students and our community, but they also provide us with a great opportunity to empower each other to share and implement our ideas to improve the lives of the students and the community we serve," says George Timmons, Ph.D., fifth president of Holyoke Community College. "As we strive to become a college of academic excellence known for helping students overcome barriers to success, our collaboration will enable us to achieve the goals identified in our strategic plan and to further our mission."

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MAKING HISTORY IN HOLYOKE

SINCE 1946.

Holyoke Medical Center

A history of providing local health care



In the spring of 1891, the need for a city hospital to “provide a refuge for the sick and distressed” was great and had been noted for a decade by the city’s prominent businessmen, congressmen, pastors, and residents alike.

When a good friend of local industrialist and ex-mayor William Whiting became ill at a hotel and needed care that wasn’t available, Whiting called a meeting of mayors, doctors, and clergymen that was ultimately the catalyst for what would become Holyoke City Hospital just two years later.

The Beech St./Northampton St. location where the Medical Center presently stands was chosen. The hospital’s first building was formally completed on May 13, 1893, offering two ward rooms each holding 14 beds, with a total capacity of 45, although it could easily hold more.

HMC has come a long way in its 130-year history since then, always having risen to meet the needs of the ever-growing community it serves, so often ahead of the curve in terms of recruiting physicians, nurses, and staff, providing award-winning services, implementing innovative problem-solving approaches, and installing state-of-the-art technology.

What has remained a constant for over a century continues to be the driving force behind HMC today—a never-ending commitment to serving our community. Now a 219-bed facility with over 1,600 employees, all serving the individuals and families throughout the cities and towns



New service line physicians in recent years have included from left to right: Drs. Balaji Padmanaban Athreya, Rani Athreya, M. Saleem Bajwa, Shaji Daniel, Sandip Maru, Andrey Pavlov, Frederik Pennings, and Miguel Rodriguez.

of the Pioneer Valley with a medical staff that includes more than 375 physicians and advanced practice providers.

One of just a few hospitals in Massachusetts to remain an independent, locally-focused institution, HMC is hard at work maintaining its well-established reputation of going above and beyond to provide the highest quality of care in a compassionate and welcoming, safe and respectful, environment. HMC’s ability to transition smoothly and surpass expectations through the ever-changing world of healthcare—throughout its long and storied history—is why it continues to find success today.

Since the turn of the century, and most significantly in recent years, Holyoke Medical Center has experienced significant growth. Some of the major accomplishments are chronicled in this timeline:

2017

A brand-new, much-needed \$25 million Emergency Department (ED) opened in the summer of 2017. The transformation more than doubled the original space 21,400 square feet and a total of 40 treatment areas (replacing the former 26). Several years in the making, HMC was proud to finally open the ED our community deserves.

A new comprehensive integrated pain management resource was introduced in 2017 with the opening of the Pain Management Center. Treating chronic and acute pain from injury, illness and/or surgery, individualized care plans are provided to patients seeking an alternative to opioid medications.

2018

The battle against opioid addiction was also addressed with the opening of the Comprehensive

Care Center in 2018. The department offers a medication management program for suboxone treatment and other therapeutic services for substance use disorder.

Advanced artery and vein care became available close to home in the Pioneer Valley when the HMC Vascular Center opened under the medical direction of Dr. Sandip Maru. The expanded vascular and endovascular surgery services offer complete care for an array of vascular conditions—from varicose veins and ulcers to complex wounds, arterial blockages and aortic aneurysms.



The exterior of the new Emergency Department our community deserves in 2017.

Providing more convenient care for patients who live and work in Chicopee became another focus in 2018 when HMC expanded services in Chicopee with a new Memorial Drive location. Specialties available at the location includes Adult Primary Care, Walk-In Care, Lab Services, Imaging, and CORE Physical Therapy.

2019

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in 2019, more than a third of American adults weren't getting enough sleep. Hence the need for the start of the HMC Sleep Medicine program, led by Dr. Rani Athreya. The program would go on to expand into the HMC Neurology and Sleep service in 2022.

Westfield became the next area for expansion in 2019 when HMC expands began providing care at the Southampton Road location. Similar to the services opened in Chicopee, the new Westfield site began offering Family Medicine, Walk-In Care, Lab Services, and CORE Physical Therapy.

Another new addition in 2019 was the opening of the HMC Pulmonology Center. With the addition of three pulmonologists (M. Saleem Bajwa, MD; Andrey Pavlov, MD; Miguel Rodriguez, MD) and a convenient location off of the hospital's main entrance, patients are now able to breathe a little easier while coping with respiratory conditions.

2020

Attacking a pandemic head-on, as soon as it became clear that COVID-19 posed a significant threat in 2020, leaders at HMC began preparing for the biggest health crisis in a generation. As the first hospital in the region to restrict visitation, maintaining the goal in providing the best possible patient care while maximizing staff and patient safety.



During the height of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, staff attire included various layers of Personal Protective Equipment, including respirators, gowns, and gloves.

When the state asked HMC to take in 39 residents of the Soldiers' Home, rooms and care were arranged in a matter of hours. Staff quickly came together to convert two hospital units for the veterans, where they would live for what would become nine months, ending in January 2021.

2021

In response to a growing need for mental healthcare, HMC created two new behavioral health units for adults and older adults in 2021. The expansion increased the number of licensed beds in the hospital to 219.

With the introduction of the two new units, the cardiac and neurologic testing suite needed to be relocated. With help from a longtime donor, Barbara Bernard, the hospital was able to upgrade the department as part of the move, building a brand-new 2,500-square-foot dedicated space on the first floor of the hospital.

2022

Specializing in the diagnosis and treatment of movement disorders, sleep disorders, headaches and migraines, memory disorders, and more, the HMC Neurology & Sleep opened in 2022 under the medical direction of Dr. Rani Athreya. The new offices, treating conditions related to the nervous system, are dedicated to helping patients feel better and improve their quality of life. A new Sleep Lab Center, located on New Ludlow Road in Chicopee, would quickly follow to support the needs of the Neurology & Sleep patients.

2023

The Institute for Minimally Invasive Spine Surgery opened in April. The experienced spinal surgery team is able to tailor treatments using patient-centered, evidence-based, multidisciplinary care with either traditional open spine surgery



Drs. Yanniss Raftopoulos and Martin Walko with a model of a gastric balloon for weight loss treatment.

or minimally invasive techniques. Led by Dr. Frederik Pennings, an internationally-recognized expert in minimally-invasive spine surgery and the only spine fellowship-trained neurosurgeon in the area.

In the summer of 2023, the HMC Weight Management Program began offering a new gastric balloon procedure. During a six-month placement period, patients can expect to lose at least 40 pounds, or 20 percent of their initial body weight.

Rounding out this significant year was the opening of Kidney Associates at HMC with Drs. Balaji Padmanaban Athreya and Shaji Daniel. Providing care for patients with chronic kidney disease, dialysis treatments, and transplant care, this is the first hospital-based nephrology service in the region.

"HMC is known for never compromising patient care. With a proven reputation for forward thinking and creative problem-solving through collaboration and cooperation, partnered with its ability to envision innovative solutions and bring them to reality, will surely propel its growth and success for decades to come."

"The caring nurses, doctors, and staff at HMC look forward to serving you and surpassing your expectations, right here at home, at our community hospital for another century to come."



Proud to
Serve & Grow
with Our
Community!



Here's to Our Future, Together!

Our caring nurses, doctors, and staff look forward to serving you and surpassing your expectations, right here at home, at our community hospital for another 150 years to come.

