# **DOT DAY** 19

#### **COMPLETE GUIDE TO SUNDAY'S PARADE JUNE 2 • 1 P.M.** Along Dorchester Ave. from Richmond Street to Columbia Road



A column of young people representing VietAID marched up the avenue in the 2016 Dorchester Day Parade.

Chris Lovett photo

## Parade follows historic trail

BY CHRIS LOVETT SPECIAL TO THE REPORTER The first observance

The first observance of Dorchester Day, in June of 1904, took place under a tent on Savin Hill. A celebration of local history and pride, it was also meant to protect an urban wild with a panoramic view from a frenzy of new development.

But by the beginning of the 20th century, the fast pace of change in Dorchester was hard to ignore. Over the fifty years after its annexation to Boston. in 1870. Dorchester's population would increase more than ten-fold. And, even by 1910, more than one-third of the growing population in all of Boston was made up of immigrants. During this period, Dorchester, connected to the rest of Boston by public transportation and water and sewer lines, was filling up with multi-family housing. It was now easy to live in one part of the city and work in another. Too remote and spacious to be an extension of the Back Bay or the South End. but no longer a selfcontained community, Dorchester had become the hybrid that would later seem oxymoronic-



hill could even become "a new place of pilgrimage for the tourist whose steps are annually bent toward Massachusetts."

In 1904, the preservation effort earned a campaign promise from a recent transplant to Dorchester, John F. Fitzgerald, a former congressman who a little more than three years later, as the city's first Irish Catholic mayor born in the United States, designated the hill as a park.

The 200 people who had "toiled up" the hill for the first Dorchester Day celebration were reminded that the old town was home to the nation's first free public school and that incubator of participatory democracy, the town meeting. Among the details of the day noted by a Boston Globe reporter: lemonade provided for  $women \, at the \, observance$ and, fluttering above the tent, a pennant attached to a kite that proclaimed, "Dorchester Day 1630-1904."

Final sectors of the sector of

A crowd of teens and kids watched the Dorchester Day Parade in 1979.

the "streetcar suburb." Despite all the growth, there were also signs of decline, or change of a different kind. As early as 1891, the Dorchester Antiquarian and Historical Society was down to only three members. In the same year, it would be succeeded by the lead organization behind the first Dorchester Day, the Dorchester Historical Society.

By 1910, even the mix of Boston's new arrivals

had changed, with the Irish being outnumbered by Jewish and Italian immigrants. In 1914, a Unitarian minister in Grove Hall noticed fewer people at church. A local newspaper, the Dorchester Beacon, listed properties changing hands, moving from families with names like Brooker, Hutchins and Greenwood to those with names like Weiner, O'Loughlin, and Mugardichian. And, at a "mass meeting," the Fields Corner Women's Temperance League rallied support for a cap on liquor licenses.

A HILL WITH A SPECIAL LEGACY

For the Historical Society, the "long-neglected spot" known as Savin Hill had special meaning. It was the piece of "wilderness" where settlers who arrived from England in 1630 had built their first fort—and where an archival photograph would

#### Chris Lovett photo

later show a "last Indian camp." From the top of the hill, there was a view of Dorchester Bay from the Neponset Estuary to the Columbia Point Peninsula and, beyond, as if at the edge of a continent, to the Boston Harbor Islands. For neighbors, the hill later became a destination for underage drinking and a treacherous magnet for broken glass. But, as one account of the first celebration envisioned, the

From below the pennant, the reporter also heard state Rep. Guy A. Ham talk about the present day, lamenting that, since Dorchester had become part of the (Continued on page 18B)

#### Page 2BTHE REPORTER DORCHESTER DAY SUPPLEMENT

May 30, 2019

dotnews.com

## **DOT DAY** The Official Dorchester Day Parade Roster

This is an alphabetical listing of participants updated through Tues., May 28. It is subject to change.

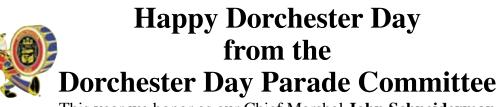
Alejandra St. Guillen, Candidate for Boston City Council At Large Althea Garrison, City Councilor Andrea J. Campbell, Boston City Council President Angelie Mcgrath, Young Miss Dorchester Ayanna Pressley, United States Congress **Bay Cove Human Services** Benjamin Franklin Institute of Technology Bernie Vision 2020 **Boston Bowl Boston Emergency Medical Services** Boston Emergency Medical Services Honor Guard **Boston Fire Department** Boston Fire Dept. Honor Guard Boston Party Adventures Characters **Boston Police Gaelic Column Boston Police Department** Boston Raiders Youth Football & Cheer Boston School of Music Arts **Boston Windjammers Boston Windjammers Concert** Carney Hospital CASH Army ROTC Codman Square Health Center Colonial Pipers Bag Pipe Band **Disabled American Veterans Dorchester Brewing Company** 

**Dorchester Food Coop** Dorchester Not for Sale **Dorchester People for Peace** Dot Out **Dynasty Production** East Boston Savings Bank East West Mortgage Erin Murphy, Candidate for Boston City Council At Large **Estrellas Tropicales Fields Corner Main Street Firehouse Dixies** First Baptist Church Frank Baker, City Councillor Fuerza Internacional Dance Group Gretchen Haase, Mayor of Dorchester Herb Chambers Hot Tamale Brass Band Jeffrey Ross, Candidate for City Council At Large Jha'niyla Tinker, Little Miss Dorchester John Schneiderman, Chief Marshall Julia Mejia, Candidate for Boston City Council, At Large Kenny School Marching Band Living Art Unc. Martin J. Walsh, Mayor of Boston Mass IPOB USA Suffolk County McCall Ambulance Michael Flaherty, City Councillor Michelle Wu, City Councillor Mike Ritter/Ritterbin Photography

National Lancers **New England Wailers** New Magnolia Jazz Band Next Birthday Project Nick Collins, State Senator Pretty Gurlz Club Priscilla Flint Banks, Candidate for Boston City Council, At Large **Providence Brass Band** Quincy-North Quincy Band **River Street Civic Association Roberto Clemenete Dancers Roma Band Musicians** South End Dynamite Spartans DBC Standish Village Strolling Hobos Suffolk County Sheriff Tempo International The New Liberty Jazz Band **Titan Majorettes** Tony Barrie Band Uncle Sam Jazz Band Unknown Hype Marjorette Uphams Corner Health Center Vietnamese American Community of Massachusetts Waltham American Legion Band Waymark Church Worcester Brass Band Worcester Sound & Lights

#### 115th Dorchester Day Parade/Sun., June 2nd, 2019

Starts 1:00 pm from Dorchester Lower Mills along Dorchester Avenue to Columbia Road



This year we honor as our Chief Marshal John Schneiderman





John Schneiderman and his wife Janice.

#### Dot Day Parade's chief marshal takes the stand A Q&A with John Schneiderman

By Elana Aurise Reporter Staff

**Q.** Chief Marshal, can you tell me what Dorchester means to you?

**A.** I was recently asked what I meant when I jokingly said I was going to coin a new phrase to be added to Dorchester By Choice (DBC) and Originally from Dorchester (OFD). The new phrase, DWAC, stands for Dot Without Any Choice.

When I was first introduced to the woman who is now my wife of 36 years, Janice Marie Mullen, she made it perfectly clear that if we were to be married, she would never uproot her two children and move to where I came from, or anywhere else for that matter. So, the choice was made, and to this day I have no regrets whatsoever.

**Q.** How have you celebrated Dorchester Day in past years, and what significance does the day carry for you?

**A.** I remember when I attended my first parade in June of 1983. I was amazed. I had no idea of the scope of this great event. In those early years, we had the family BBQ in our backyard on King Street. All of my wife's family came back to Dot that day and we had loads of good clean fun. I knew that I was in the right place and never ever thought about leaving. This was going to be my home.

In 1985, we bought the home where we still reside here on Ashmont Street. In the next couple of years, I was asked to coach Cedar Grove youth baseball. We won our first and only championship in 1987. Some of the players on my team were Chris O'Sullivan, who went on to play in the NHL for a number of years before retiring and taking a job with the BPD. Then there was Ed Kelly, who went on to become the general secretary and treasurer of the International Association of Fire Fighters with an office in DC. Whenever Edzo and Chris see me, they still call me "coach," which is a great honor; it's nice to be remembered. In fact, they just recently had a reunion at The Industry with a group of guys who grew up together here in Neponset, and I was invited. It was a great night to see how all of these boys grew up to be so successful. **Q.** You have served in other civic positions, like president of the Pope's Hill Neighborhood Association (PHNA). How do you think that service impacted the neighborhood? A. In 2005 I was introduced to Phil Carver, then president of PHNA, and I soon found out the value of neighborhood associations. Phil was passionate about our neighborhood and taught me what that value is. I became an executive board member and attended every meeting. We all had a voice in what went on in our neighborhood. In 2011, I took a bigger role and became vice president when then VP Mike Juliano stepped down. I learned about development issues and got to have a bigger voice in what I call "protecting our neighborhood." When Phil stepped down in 2015, I was elevated to president and found myself in a position where I could substantially make a difference in my neighborhood. I've always said transparency and honesty is what I believe in, and I think I've proved that.

#### We also congratulate our 2017 Mayor of Dorchester Gretchen Haase

Little Miss Dorchester - Jha'Niyla Tinker

Young Miss Dorchester - Angelie McGrath

#### **2016 PARADE E-BOARD**

President: Kelly Walsh Vice President: Marty Hogan Parade Clerk: Dieu Phan Secretary: Brianne Gore Treasurer: Peter Sasso Judge Advocate: Karen MacNutt At-Large Director: Chris Isabelle-Hogan At-Large Director: Carol Houghtaling At-Large Director: Colleen Walsh

#### PARADE COMMITTEE

Work Inc

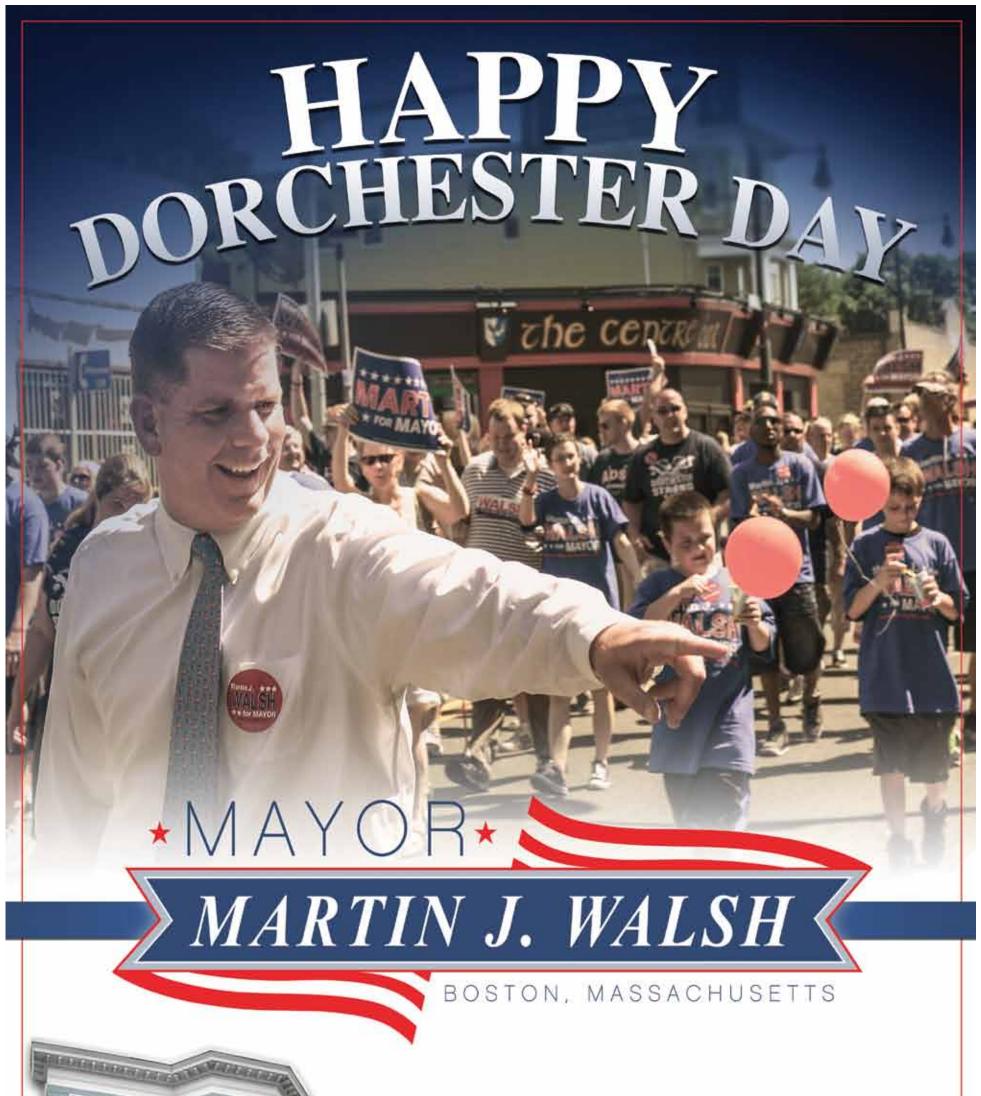
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We want to thank all of those who helped out with fundraisers for the parade and those who work throughout the year to put the parade on the street. *Especially our parade sponsors*.

PARADE WEBSITE: www.DotDayParade.com

(Continued on page 14B)





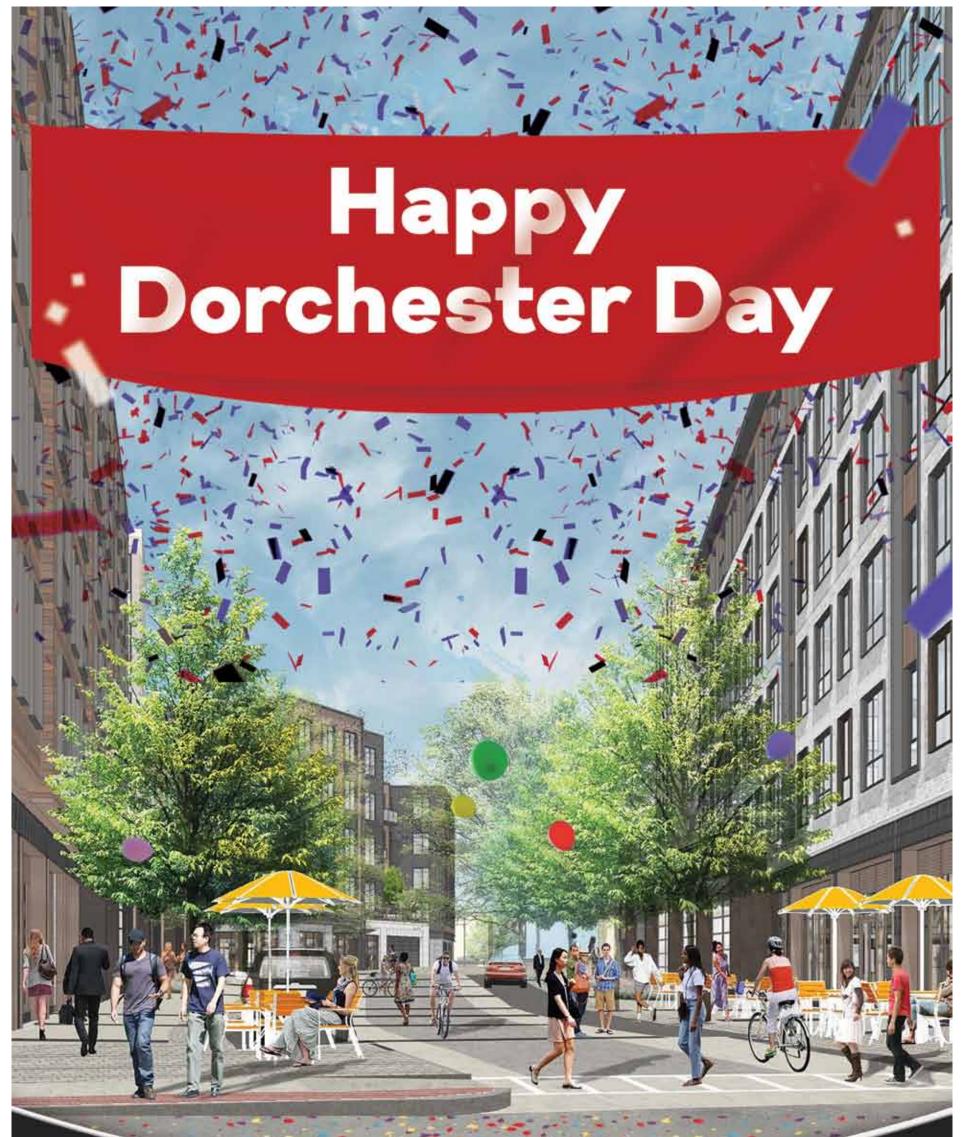
## As a kid from Taft Street,

I cannot be more honored

to serve you.

Paid for By The Committee to Elect Martin J. Walsh.

Page 4BTHE REPORTER DORCHESTER DAY SUPPLEMENT



# From your friends at DOT BLOCK

May 30, 2019

THE REPORTER DORCHESTER DAY SUPPLEMENT Page 5B



The contestants, past winners and current winners (seated, center) of the Little Miss Dorchester and Young Miss Dorchester contest were all gathered inside First Parish Dorchester on Sat., May 18. Councillor Annissa Essaibi-George is shown at top left. *Photo courtesy Sonia Essaibi* 

#### Young Miss, Little Miss Dorchester to ride in parade

By Elana Aurise Reporter Staff

The annual Little Miss and Young Miss Dorchester contests took place on Sat., May 18, Margaret Janulewicz and Janessa Cosgrove were runners-up for Little Miss Dorchester, at the First Parish Church in Meetinghouse Hill. The contest is held annually for girls ages 7 to 12 in the weeks leading up to Dorchester Day.

The competition–organized by City Councillor Annissa Essaibi-George and her family–is meant to motivate girls to have confidence in public speaking while celebrating the love young women have for Dorchester and its traditions. This year's Little Miss Dorchester is nine-yearold Jha'Niyla Tinker, a third grader at Match Community Day Charter School who loves art, competitive cheerleading, singing in Mattapan's Greater Victory Temple Church choir,

and riding bikes. Margaret Janulewicz and Janessa Cosgrove were runners-up to Miss Tinker.

"Jha'Niyla and one of her younger sisters, who also competed, both spent a couple of weeks practicing their essays using hairbrushes as microphones," said Jasmine Tinker, Jha'Niyla's mother. "The day of the contest, they were wearing the dresses I got them and they were so excited, but the nerves were there. When Jha'Niyla won, she looked at me and was just so happy, she said later that she almost cried."

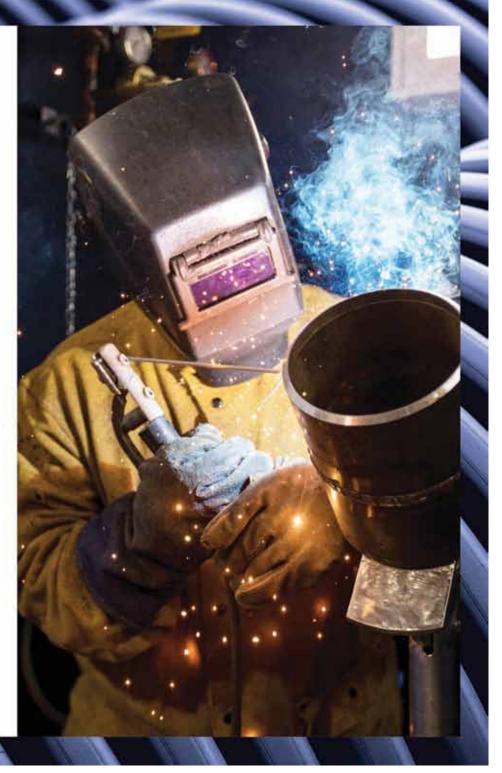
Tinker was presented with a brand-new bike – one she will share with her sister – together with the customary trophy, sash, and tiara. Meanwhile, in the 10-12 age division, this year's Young Miss Dorchester is Angelie McGrath. Samantha Forster was the runnerup in the Young Miss category.

As is tradition, the winners will ride in a convertible near the front of Sunday's parade.



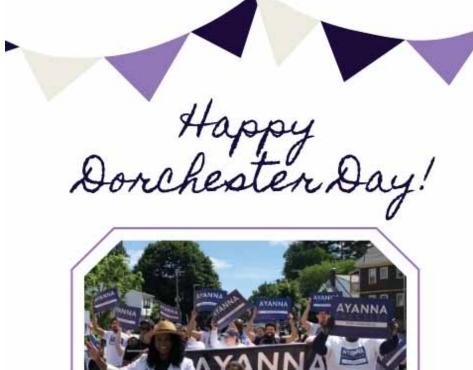
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Love, Ayanna, Conan, and Cora

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## HAPPY DOT DAY!

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### Congressman STEPHEN F. LYNCH

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## HAPPY DORCHESTER DAY! From Andrea J. Campbell

Boston City Council President, District 4

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#### THE REPORTER DORCHESTER DAY SUPPLEMENT Page 7B dotnews.com May 30, 2019 In stock: College Hype's Class of '19 Dot Day apparel

**By JASMINE BRASWELL Reporter Correspondent** 

This Dorchester Day will bring another round of exclusive t-shirt designs for Sundav's parade. The neighborhood's premier apparel company, College Hype, produces shirts that bring it all home for people from the neighborhood — or people who wish they were.

Since 1987, College Hype has been producing t-shirts, hoodies, hats and accessories with a customized approach. There have been some popular parade day sellers like the classic "Dot Rat" and "Parishes of Dorchester," which has been a hit seller for some 25 years.

The College Hype online shop – and its retail space on Gallivan Boulevard-offers about 40 themed Dorchester clothes and hats, many festooned with street signs, three-deckers, and other neighborhood iconography. An in-house art department is on call for customers who want to create their own design and have a custom look to any apparel.

Jack Doherty, the founder and owner of College Hype, has been enjoying Dorchester Day and selling shirts at the gas station between Hallet and Gallivan Boulevard for more than 30 years. The St. Gregory's parish native started the company when he was 20



The newest Dot Day t-shirt designs from College Hype include a patriotic theme.

and has been the owner for 32 years.

"We do have a new shirt this year that I think people will really like. It's 'Dorchester, Where My Story Began," said Doherty. "I think we're inspired every year, honestly, just because we were from here, myself and a number of the managers are from this area, and we know that people like to have a unique shirt every year."

"Dorchester Day is a great time to see old friends and make new friends," said Doherty, "I think it's a great holiday to see the old neighborhood.'

Some of the new designs include the DOT name emblazoned in a

star-pattern with patriotic colors. Another features emojis with the slogan "It's Dot Day." The store in Adams

Village still stocks a popular throw-back, the "All Roads Lead to Dorchester" shirt with the name of every street people who've been out

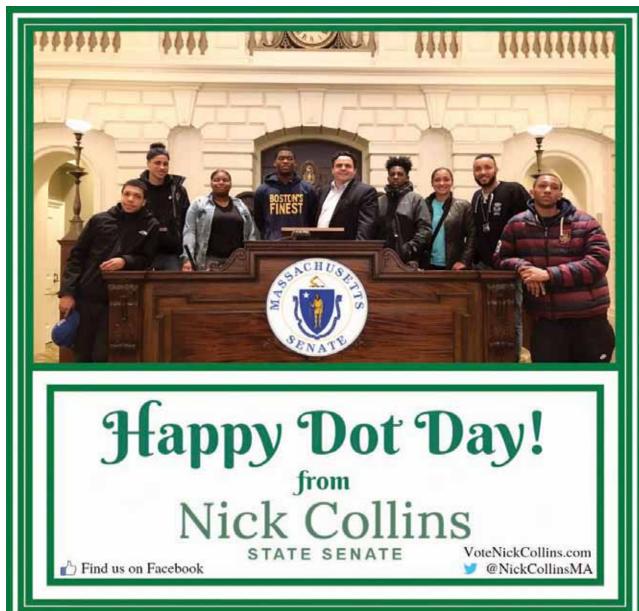
in the neighborhood incorporated into a big letter "D."

"You have a lot of

of Dorchester for years and they're very proud of their roots and they want to promote that,

Image courtesy College Hype

said Doherty.







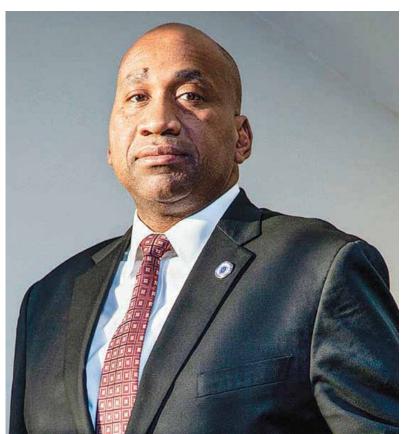
Paid for by the Flaherty Committee

### Happy Dorchester Day!

**City Councilor Frank Baker District 3** 



### Wishing your family a Happy Dorchester Day!!



## State Representative Russell Holmes

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## Have a Happy and Safe Dorchester Day



State Representative **DAN HUNT** 

## Happy Dorchester Day!



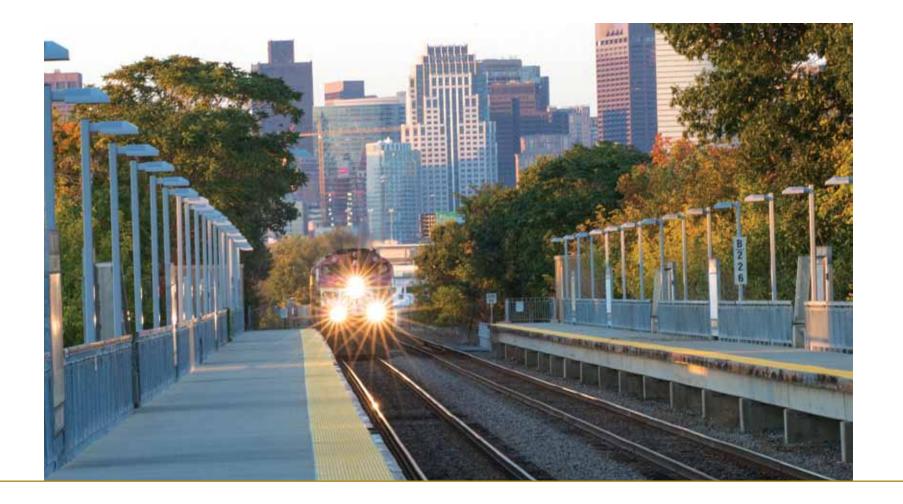
## Annissa Essaibi George Boston City Councillor At-Large

Paid for and authorized by the Committee to Elect Annissa Essaibi George

The Boston Foundation, Greater Boston's community foundation, joins in celebrating Dorchester Day 2019! We are proud of the many partners we work with to help make Boston's biggest neighborhood a safe and vibrant place to work and live. Congratulations on another great year, Dorchester!

For more about the Boston Foundation, visit www.tbf.org.





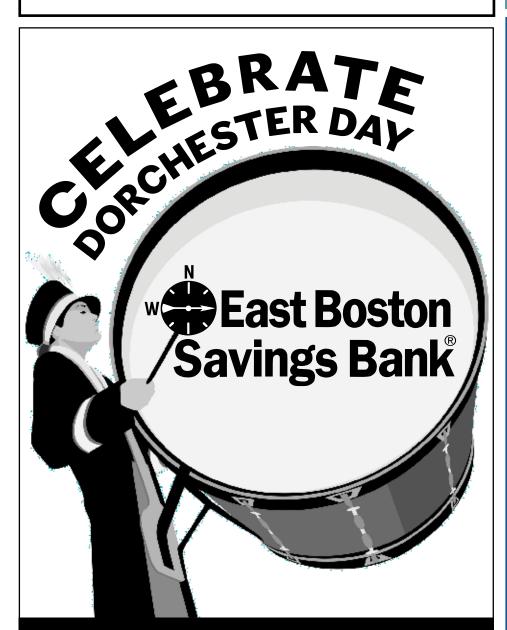
# HAPPY **DORCHESTER DAY**



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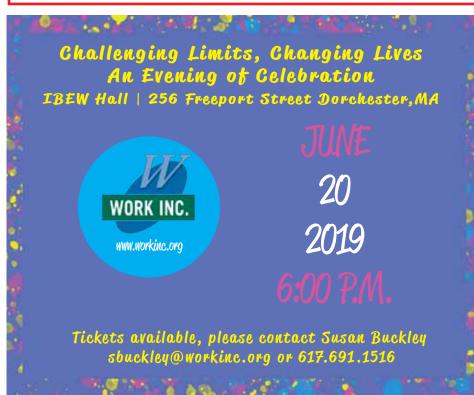




#### Happy Dorchester Day Parade!



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#### Page 12B THE REPORTER DORCHESTER DAY SUPPLEMENT

May 30, 2019



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#### dotnews.com Chief Marshal takes the stand

#### (Continued from 2B)

**Q.** As a well-known and active community leader, can you name one thing that people might be surprised to learn about you?

A. Most people who know me don't know that I am not OFD, and to me this is what makes it more special to be a PHNA president, that the trust placed in me by my neighbors, the association, and elected officials will never be compromised. To think that when Janice and I went to work on Jim Brett's mayoral campaign in 1993, we met such a great family in the Brett family and others at phone banks. We would often sit next to a young man named Marty Walsh. [Now knowing] that we were sitting next to a future mayor of Boston is truly unbelievable. I am so proud to have watched him grow into a world class mayor of a world class city.

**Q.** In closing, as a veteran, how do you view the annual Dot Day parade and the other events?

**A.** As a veteran, but more as a civic leader, I am thrilled that I will be leading the 115th edition of the Dorchester Day Parade. I am proud to be a veteran, although I was fortunate in that I didn't serve in a war zone.

I'm proud to know that my name will be added to the list of chief marshals in the archives of the 115-year history of the Dorchester Day Parade. I will tell you that I am extremely proud to have lived most of my life in this wonderful community. A phrase that's often used by OFDers comes to mind: This is truly 'God's country."

## Project DEEP & The Blarney Stone DOT DAY 5K

June 2, 2019 • Registration @ 11, Shotgun Start @ 12 The Blarney Stone – 1505 Dorchester Ave., Dorchester Register @ www.projectdeep.org

Pre-Race Entry Fee: \$30 Adult/\$15 Kids Under 12 Day-Of Entry Fee: \$35 Adult/\$20 Kids Under 12 nd by Ferdiner Clarks C. Willington Demonstration of Tamas and Descent Jamas Valuate or the Strategiese Case

When Last the Glorious Light

Sunday, June 16, 2019 2 pm at the William Clapp House

Join the Dorchester Historical Society for a conversation with Ed Quill, author and former journalist at The Boston Globe, as he shares his new book *When Last the Glorious Light*. This is the first full-length book on the Massachuset tribe – the people of the Blue Hills – for whom the Commonwealth was named. Ed will discuss the history of influential chieftains including Chickataubut, Chickataubut's brother Cutshamekin, Chickataubut's son Wampatuck and Wampanoag chief Obbatinewat.

Dorchester Historical Society 195 Boston Street Dorchester, MA 02125



www.dorchesterhistoricalsociety.org

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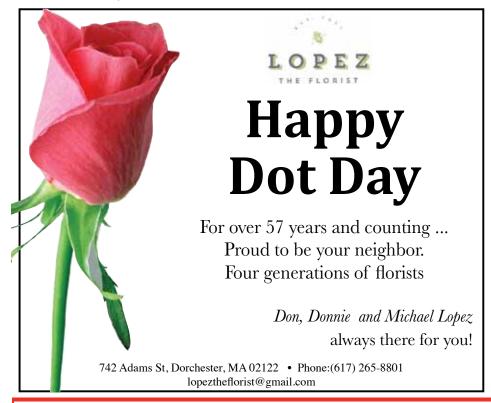




#### THE REPORTER DORCHESTER DAY SUPPLEMENT May 30, 2019 Page 16B Beginner's guide to celebrating Dot Day

parade is Sunday, June 2 - starting at 1 p.m.in Lower Mills.- Editors Never been to Dot Day? Kid, you're in for a treat.

Here's what you need (OFD) to the DBC to know about the biggest day in Dorchester-a roadmap from the Originally From Dorchester





#### Happy Dorchester Day!

ARL is proud to have served the Dorchester community through pet wellness clinics and events, helping more than 500 pets and their owners in 2018.



www.arlboston.org/wellness-waggin

(Dorchester by Choice). For the uninitiated,

Dot Day could appear to be just another ubiquitous summertime parade. False.

The parade brings together all the different ethnic groups that make up Boston's biggest and best neighborhood. You could spend a year going to all the different ethnic fests across Boston. Or just come to Dot Day and see them all in one two-hour, 3.2 mile-long extravaganza.

Dot Day itself is steeped in tradition. It started as a way to mark the foundation of Dorchester as a Puritan settlement back in May 1630. Sunday's parade is the culmination of a series of events that started in March with a chili cook-off and meatloaf dinner-all to raise money for the parade,

which costs the parade committee upwards of \$30,000 to put on.

And now to the brass tacks: The parade itself starts at 1 p.m. from Dot Ave and Richmond Street in Lower Mills and troops up Dot Ave all the way to the Polish Triangle at the border of Southie. The head of the parade will reach its end-point at Columbia Road more than an hourand-a-half later.

Project DEEP (projectdeep.org) co-hosts a 5K run beginning and ending at the Blarney Stone- the other sponsor- on Dot Avenue before the parade. Locals will tell you it's not a bad way to snag a prime and well-hydrated spot in the shade along the parade route.

Getting there: The MBTA is your friend on Dot Day and it's your best bet, since the neighborhood's main drag will obviously be closed down most of the day. (Cars will be ticketed and towed along Dot Ave. and Richmond Street ahead of the parade, so if you typically park on the avenue, have a plan to move it a few hours ahead of time.) Take the Red Line to Ashmont or Fields Corner. Both stations are right on Dot Ave. and just steps from big crowds.

Where to watch (and blend in with the big crowd)? Along the wall (and under the trees) at Dorchester Park in Lower Mills, south of Carney Hospital; intersection of Dot Ave and Gallivan Boulevard; Peabody Square; in front of St. Mark's Church; the Blarney Stone; and the Savin Hill Ave. intersection.

If you like to watch the parade in a more intimate setting (e.g. small crowd). stick to the stretch between Freeport Street and Hecla Street. It's typically quite thin, albeit a bit of a hike from either the Savin Hill and Fields Corner T stops. Pro-tip: There's usually a raucous group watching from the side-lot at Peggy O'Neill's (now called The Blend) bar.

And even when the street cleaners come through, Dot Day isn't over. Longtime families host post-parade BBQs, so get to know your fellow spectators along the route and you're likely to score an invite.

A final note, from the department of your mother: The absolute worst view of the parade route is from the Area C-11 jail block. Open containers are absolutely NOT allowed on the route and Boston Police have been serious about making this a far-less sudsy affair than the March parade in South Boston.

Adult spectators may, however, enjoy their beverage of choice on private property or from one of the Dot Ave's favorite establishments including Ashmont Grill, Harp & Bard, and the Banshee. The Blarney Stone is a very popular spot because its windows open up to the route and it has an amazing outdoor patio. It's usually a big crowd, especially among those who run in the pre-parade Blarney Stone-Project DEEP 5k.

Sodust off those Adidas Gazelles and get ready to party like a Dot Rat this Sunday for the biggest day in Dorchester.

See you on the Ave.



#### **Happy Dorchester Day!**

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#### THURSDAY, JUNE 13, 2019 - 6:00 pm

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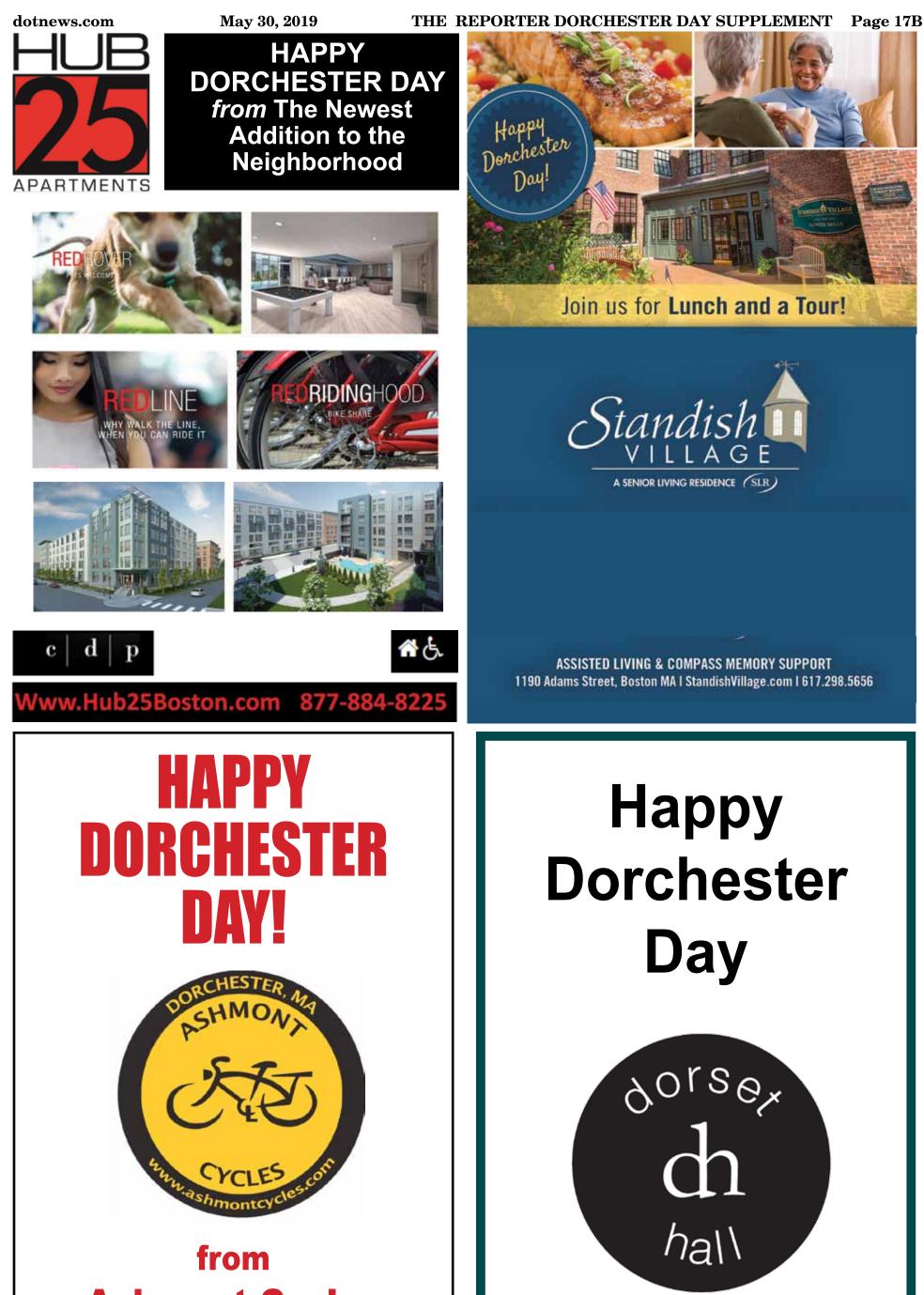
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some with their own place in history. In a 1917 celebration at the newly dedicated Ronan Park, the Shepard Women's Rifle Club recruited men for military service in WWI. In 1927, the featured speaker at the banquet was the next year's Democratic nominee for president, New York Governor Al Smith.

Not surprisingly, funding from the city was cut back during the Great Depression. In 1931, City Councillor Israel Ruby provided free ice cream, athletics and entertainment at Franklin Field. But, by 1938, *The Globe* was reporting that there would be no support for Dorchester Day from the city "due to necessary economies." In 1940 "Dorchester All-Together" raised funding at a banquet, selling tickets at \$10 apiece. And in 1942, with the country at war again, 200,000 people were on hand for a parade that included infantry from Fort Devens and a float that encouraged the reporting of enemy aircraft. "As evidence that gasoline rationing is being felt," *The Globe* added, "several horses and buggies appeared in the parade."

In one of the buggies was Frankie Kelly, the youngest lieutenant governor in Massachusetts history. The self-described father of the state lottery, Kelly was best known for filing bills 29 years in a row to establish a Massachusetts sweepstakes that promised a windfall in tax relief. Even after he drew the state's first lottery ticket in 1972, he continued to ride in the parade as one of its most enduring political curiosities.

#### AFTER THE WAR, A MATTER OF 'ROUTINE'

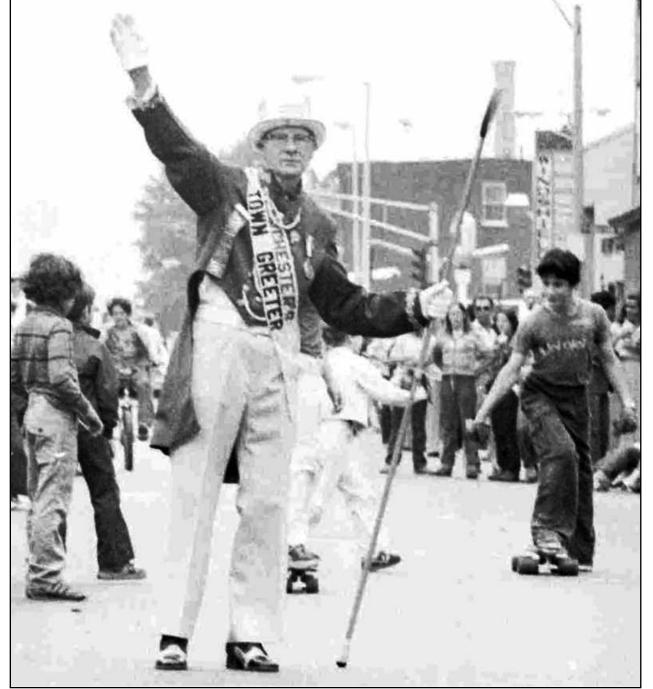
The parades resumed in 1948, after a hiatus during the later war years. As late as the 1960s, there were still reviewing stands for mayors and governors. But there was also an impression that the event had become more routine. As early as 1923, *The Globe* had mentioned "exercises" and field events while noting that "the occasion was at one time observed with great ceremony."

There were also changes in the parade route. The earlier routes had included Codman Square, Uphams Corner, and a stretch of Dorchester Avenue, ending at Fields Corner, with marching units crossing or going parallel with the trolley tracks. By the late 1960s, the parade route was usually along the avenue, but going north to south, from Columbia Road to Pierce Square in Lower Mills. By the 1970s, the direction had been reversed, and parade units marched with the sun at their backs.

In 1967, despite an attempt to ban political signs, the first line of march comprised members of Boston's all-white school committee, at a time when the city was already embroiled over the racial divide in education. In 1968, the June 9 parade was "postponed indefinitely," out of respect to Robert F. Kennedy, who had been assassinated three days earlier.

As late as the 1980s, the parade featured one other office-holder: the Dorchester Town Greeter. With his top hat, red jacket, white trousers, and two-toned shoes, "Boston Billy" Melchin presented himself as the affable gate-keeper to a Neverland as foreign to spectators along the avenue as it would have been to 17th-century settlers. If the parade came to one of its all-too-frequent stops, he would stand with one hand in a white glove holding a sceptre tipped with the town seal, and the other greeting an imaginary multitude, as restless kids swarmed the avenue or sped off on bikes and skateboards.

THE PARADE AS A MESSAGE BOARD Over the last 40 years, the parade has been used as a platform for messages of all kinds. In the 1980s,



Boston Billy Melchin, Dorchester's official town greeter, in the 1980 parade.

#### (Continued from page 1B)

city, "the district and the citizens as well had lost much of their identity, as well as their pride and interest in their home."

Another speaker at the first celebration, Rev. Peter Ronan, the pastor of St. Peter's parish, was concerned about the spread of dense, transit-oriented housing. Three years later, at the 1907 Dorchester Day Banquet, he was applauded for warning about the spread of "three-apartment houses" and for asserting that local residents "did not want such things to mar the spot where the first settlers of the now great district landed."

Accounts of the early celebrations contain no explicit references to changes in religion or ethnicity among Dorchester residents, nor to the hardships and persecution that were driving many of Boston's newest immigrants out of Europe. But, in his speech at the 1906 celebration, former Boston mayor Josiah Quincy acknowledged that the settlers of 1630 were fleeing tyranny and civil war. "The settlers of New England," he explained, "were half colonists, half refugees." Although he stopped short of any comparison with more recent immigrants, Quincy suggested that the hill should be the site of an "enduring monument," a tower with a commanding view of the harbor that would embody a "loftiness

constructive or healthful than horse racing, except baseball."

Chris Lovett photo

During the first decade of reports on the Dorchester Day celebrations, there was no shortage of superlatives, from "biggest" to "best yet," with as many as 75,000 people viewing the parade and as many as 20,000 watching the fireworks.

In 1911, there was landing of a Burgess-Wright biplane at Franklin Field, piloted all the way from Squantum by Harry Atwood, who had invited Mayor Fitzgerald to join him. The first try at landing had to be put off because of weather conditions. By the time Atwood touched down, at the center of the field, the last horse race was coming to an end, and the police details had already left the site. "The crowd swarmed around the machine, gazing upon and feeling it," *The Globe* reported. "It was feared that the machine would be torn apart by souvenir hunters."

SHIFTING TIMES, SHIFTING FOCUSES Over the years, Dorchester Day celebrations were consistently affected by more passing developments,



of the historical outlook. "Whoever has absorbed its true spirit," he said, "has escaped from the transient interests of the hour and regarded for a while those vaster issues and movements which sketch their shadows across the centuries."

#### CELEBRATION BECOMES EXTRAVAGANZA

In 1906, under Mayor Fitzgerald, the city spent \$2,000 on Dorchester Day activities—supporting everything from the main parade to horse racing, water sports, and fireworks. The first celebrations also included band concerts and a regatta, and a torchlight parade led by the Dorchester High School baseball team. Flags were displayed on verandas and housetops. In 1907, at his home on Welles Avenue, Fitzgerald put up bunting and, between two large American flags, a "great Irish flag."

With a cast of fortune-tellers, dodgers, and "fakirs" hawking balloons, popcorn, ice cream, and soft drinks, the celebrations were not immune to transient interests. Fitzgerald took part in carriage races organized at Franklin Field by the Dorchester Gentlemen's Driving Club, as did his rival and successor, James Michael Curley. In 1916, after rolling the first ball on a new bowling green, *The Globe* reported, Curley "said he knew no sport more

A parade float entered in 1987 by former presiding justice James Dolan to call for a permanent expansion at Dorchester District Court, instead of the overflow trailers. Chris Lovett photo

THE REPORTER DORCHESTER DAY SUPPLEMENT Page 19B



View from the firehouse at Peabody Square, 1979.

a trailer dramatized the long wait for badly-needed expansion of the Dorchester District Courthouse. In 2015, a parade unit promoted the designation of Boston as a host city for the 2024 Olympics. Over the last decade, another contingent, "Dorchester Not For Sale," has been drawing attention to local residents being displaced by gentrification.

Joined by ranks of veterans for most of its history, the parade has also served as a platform for the anti-war message of Veterans for Peace, who would continue to march into the 21st century, after military engagements in Kuwait, Iraq, and Afghanistan.

In the early 1990s, after racial diversity had become very noticeable in the avenue's storefronts, Boston City Councilor Albert "Dapper" O'Neil gained notoriety for taking exception to the influx of Vietnamese immigrants into Fields Corner. In 2008, he achieved the unique distinction for a politician of being represented in the parade posthumously - by a black 1967 Lincoln Town Car bearing his name in green and orange on a sign that said "The legend lives on." But "Dapper" was outlasted by the presence and investment along the avenue of Dorchester's Vietnamese-Americans.

Over the years, the parade has shown that change can lead to improvisations. Around 1980, a re-enactment of the arrival of settlers at Savin Hill Beach included a local Unitarian minister and a local family dressed as 17<sup>th</sup>-century "pilgrims"—along with a Catholic priest. As pastor of First Parish Church-established by Dorchester's first religious congregation, Rev. James K. Allen was known for his devotion to local history and support of local civic groups, but he also allowed his church to be used for gatherings by refugees who came to Dorchester from southeast Asia. If uniforms and costumes are a constant in the parades, they also highlight changes, whether donned by veterans, active military units, Little Leaguers, Pop Warner players, or marching bands. The same goes for other contingents who have marched in recent years: Estrellas Tropicales, the Roberto Clemente 21 Dancers, traditional Irish dancers, and Vietnamese-American contingents with lion dancers and martial arts displays. Others have previewed coming attractions on the calendar: the Caribbean American Carnival and, in floats changed every year by DotOut, the Boston Pride celebration. The common denominator has been the element of carnival—a stream of appearances, enacted once a year by people who are something else in everyday life. As the parade has changed over time, so does its sense of history. Originating more than a century ago from a pursuit of a fixed identity in the past, Dorchester Day's premier event has also reached

Chris Lovett photo



A perch above Dorchester Avenue, 1983.

Chris Lovett photo

in the other direction: a rolling identity that, while crowds are noticeably thinner. as local as ever, borders on the panoramic. HISTORY AS PREDICTOR OF THE FUTURE u

To finish the walk on a Sunday in June is to work up a sweat and feel thirsty, if not altogether fatigued. At the corner of East Cottage Street, you go inside Patty's Pantry and find it crammed with people buying cold soft drinks. Almost 40 years ago, on the other side of the avenue, you maybe dropped in for a beer at Vaughan's Tavern (now the Banshee), where a bust of Bobby Kennedy was flanked by a pair of rifles right behind the bartenders. Inside the bar, there's too much noise to hear what the veteran is saying to a teacher young enough to be his daughter as he points to the medals on his chest. They're surrounded by a crowd of people who live in Dorchester, people who used to live there, and people who could be somewhere else in a few years. Outside, along a quiet avenue just swept and sprayed by street cleaners, there's no pennant attached to a kite, though another reporter in another year might have noticed an escaped balloon riding a breeze that, like the parade, goes from south to north. As it pulls away, its shadow skipping from one building to next, it gets smaller and smaller until there's nothing left but a speck reflected against the sunlight in a deep blue sky. The Dorchester Historical Society helped greatly with this report by providing access to news accounts of the parade's first decades.

The pursuit of the history of Dorchester Day can also point to the future. In 1914, when the Dorchester *Beacon* was already noticing that the celebrations had become less elaborate, the president of the Dorchester Historical Society, Frank D. Young, arrived on the scene after driving 3 hours and 70 miles in his car. It was a little too soon to imagine how the streetcar suburb of Dorchester would be transformed by the mass production of automobiles, federally funded highways, and federally guaranteed mortgages. But that year, barely three weeks before events leading to a world war, Young paid respect to the settlers of 1630 while warning about the dangers of anarchy and hailing his commute by vehicle that day as a sign of "swift moving progress."

Fast forward to another decade, and the celebrations overlap, rippling out from marchers to spectators crowding the avenue, tiered on porch decks, or regrouping for backyard cookouts. To walk down the avenue from south to north is to see what is new and what has disappeared. Some churches, stores, and restaurants no longer exist. Also missing are several no-frills bars, some notorious as magnets for spectators requiring intervention by police. And, as with the celebrations in many communities, the

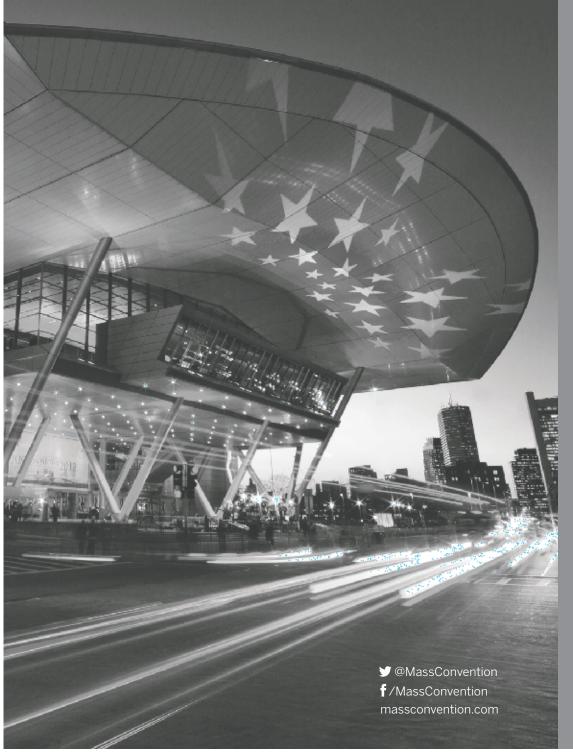
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## **Erin Murphy** For Boston City Council At-Large



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likely identify the scene's

inspiration - the Blue

Hills. The 1865 commit-

tee, testifying to those

slopes' importance to

the town's early devel-

opment, asserted: "In

the background will

be recognized the Blue

Hills, which served as

a landmark to pilot the

early settlers to the

mouth of [the] Charles

River, and from behind

which the rising sun is

shining upon a colony

who left their homes in

the mother country, not

as adventurers in search

of gold, as exiles, or for

conquest, but the more

precious boon of religious

A regal image mate-

rialized atop the shield,

soaring above the rolling

contours of the Blue

Hills. A castle with three

imposing turrets crowned

the slopes, the mill, the

school, and the church.

Baker and company

proudly summed up their

castle as a fitting symbol

"The triple-towered

castle surmounting the

shield is adopted in

for the town:

liberty."

#### Page 22B THE REPORTER DORCHESTER DAY SUPPLEMENT ME The story behind Dorchester's Town Seal

By Peter F. Stevens Special to the Reporter

In April 1865, Dorchester's Town Meeting took up an important civic measure - "to procure...a Corporate Seal of the town." Many modern residents of Dorchester are familiar with that seal, which is emblazoned with the words "Dorchester 1630" and the Latin motto "Pietate, Literis, Industria" - Piety, Learning, Industrybut some may not realize the depth of thought that the men at that 1865 town meeting put into the enduring and proud symbol.

A range of political, historic, and civic considerations compelled Dorchester's leaders to want a seal testifying to the town's unique history and sense of place in Massachusetts. With the Civil War coming to its savage end, and with so many Dorchester families having lost fathers, sons, and brothers on the conflict's far-flung battlefields, local leaders wanted to extol the town's more than 250 years of contribution and sacrifice and its unique place in the nation's history, to wit:

"The town of Dorchester...the mother of free public schools, whose patriotism and liberality have been so tried in the early wars with the Indians, with the French in colonial days, in the War of the Revolution, in the Shay's Rebellion, in the last war with England, and in the dreadful war so lately gloriously closed."

A town seal, in the opinion of people from Neponset to Savin Hill, would help "sacredly preserve the beautiful tribute of her citizens to the memory of sons, who, in obedience to early instructions, and inherited purpose in morality, patriotism, and humanity, have laid down their lives on the altar of their country."

Along with patriotism, a large band of Dorchester's residents hoped a local seal would reinforce its status as an individual town, for in 1865, the prospect of annexation by Boston was on the horizon. (The town voted to approve annexation and officially joined Boston in 1870.)

Many locals already lamented that in 1804, "that part of Dorchester's territory lying upon her northern border... including Dorchester Heights," had been appropriated by Boston. In the 1850s, Dorchester leaders had vainly struggled as "Washington Village was swallowed up by the city [Boston]." With many residents still hoping to fend off further incursions by Boston, a who's who of prominent Dorchester men - Edmund J. Baker, Edmund P. Tileston, Nathan W. Tileston, and others - formed a committee to design a town seal in April 1865. Joining the effort was Dorchester's Antiquarian and Historical Society.

The contingent described their purpose: "Your Committee have sought to emblazon upon the Town Seal such a device as would symbolize the acts which rendered the early settlers of this town a peculiar [particular] people, and objects of gratitude and veneration by their descendants for all time to come."

The centerpiece of the committee's design was a shield embossed near its base with the image of a rough-hewn, thatch-roofed church, without a chimney. In explanation of the church's significance in Dorchester's annals, the committeemen noted: "The early settlers of Dorchester organized themselves as a church at the New Hospital in Plymouth, England, in March of 1630, prior to their embarkation for this country, which act was pre-eminently

the cornerstone of the foundation of this town, although they did not arrive here until early in June of that year."

To the rear of the seal's church, another rude, thatched structure appeared on the shield. The second structure represented Dorchester's first school.

"The free school," Edmund Baker and his colleagues asserted, "the system of which has been exerting a beneficial influence over the whole country, was established in this town in 1639, and is said to be the very first free school in the world. The foundation of this institution is recognized on the shield..."

In another image engraved upon the shield, the committee cited the portrait of a "rude mill, with its large wheel, which is seen upon the left bank of the Neponset River, the course of which river, from its source to its mouth, lay through the ancient territory of Dorchester."

The image symbolized Israel Stoughton's corn mill, which he built in 1633 "by grant of land and timber by the town... and is said to be the first water-mill in the colony, if not the country."

Readers scrutinizing the impressive background of the shield will



respectful memory of Dorchester in Old England, of whose seal this is the principal charge (in commemoration of that borough having been formerly a Roman fortress), and from which place the infant colony derived much of its strength, both physically and spiritually."

A banner draped beneath the castle and along the top and sides of the shield bore the motto "Pietate, Literis, Industria." The words represented a direct link between the early settlers and the residents of 1865, words reflecting values passed down through the centuries.In the case of Dorchester's town seal, the adage that a picture is worth a thousand words might well be revised: The seal's carefully chosen symbols are worth a thousand words - plus three more that speak volumes: piety, learning and industry.

This article was first published in the Reporter in 2000.





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