SALISBURY CULTURAL DISTRICT

Discovery Trails

Meet the Trailblazers in the Salisbury Cultural District

Journey into Worcester's innovation history!

Get to know some of the extraordinary entrepreneurs, heroes, inventors, artists and visionaries whose creativity and ingenuity helped shape the city of Worcester and lay the groundwork for future achievements. Follow this suggested trail or create your own.

Photo of Robert Goddard.
Courtesy Worcester Polytechnic Institute.

0$-25 7$</25 $1' 7+(0$-25 7$</25 086(80 $W WKH &RXUWKRXVH /RIWV LQ WKH 2OG :RUFHVWHU &RXUW 0DLQ, :RUFHVWHU 0$

In 1899, Worcester's Major Taylor rose to unprecedented fame when he became the world's first Black cycling champion. His amazing story is told in vintage photographs, graphic arts and memorabilia at the Major Taylor Museum inside the Courthouse Lofts.

Taylor lived in Worcester at the peak of his career, where he was famously known as the "Worcester Whirlwind." An exceptional sprinter, he broke scores of international cycling records and was one of the highest paid athletes in the country.

Despite his international fan base, however, Major Taylor experienced racist attacks including physical assault. In addition, poor health and unsuccessful business ventures depleted his savings. Taylor died in a Chicago hospital charity ward.

In addition to the museum, a kiosk is planned on nearby George Street. It's there, on a 500-foot, 18 percent incline, that Taylor trained.

Photo of Major Taylor courtesy of Indiana State Museum and Historic Sites.

7 + (6 $ / , 6 % 8 5 <) $ 0 , / < $ 1 ' 6 $ / , 6 % 8 5 < 0 $ 1 6 , 2 1
+ L J K O D,Q: 6R U6FWH V W H U 0 $
508-753-8278 | worcesterhistory.org/museum/salisbury-mansion/

Worcester would not be what it is today without the ingenuity and foresight of people like the three generations of Salisburys who lived from the mid-18th to the early-20th centuries.

Throughout the Salisbury Cultural District you'll find many examples of the family's commitment to the community they loved. The Salisburys generously supported and/or founded the American Antiquarian Society, Worcester Polytechnic Institute (WPI), Tuckerman Hall, Institute Park and the Worcester Art Museum.

Their legacy began in 1767 when Stephen I moved to Worcester to expand his business importing and selling hardware and other merchandise. Learn more about this enterprising family with a stop at Salisbury Mansion, the home of Stephen Salisbury I.

Stephen II proved exceptionally gifted in business, like his father. He built the original Northworks mill and leased it to Ichabod Washburn. Further, he was a founder, benefactor and the first president of Worcester Polytechnic Institute, and an overseer of Harvard College.

Stephen III followed suit. He traveled extensively, became deeply interested in Central American culture, served on many boards, and presided over companies like the Worcester & Nashua Railroad Co. and the Worcester National Bank.

Portrait of Stephen Salisbury II. Photo courtesy American Antiquarian Society.

6$5$+ :<0$1 :+,70$1 $1' :$06:25.6
,QVWLWXWH5RDG:RUFHVWHU0$
508-755-2329 | wamsworks.org

The good work going on at WAMSworks — The Worcester Area Mission Society — is an inspiring chapter in the life of this Worcester landmark, once the home of the Central and United Congregational Churches.

The beautiful stained-glass windows you see are the work of trailblazer Sarah Wyman Whitman (1842-1904). Her success was rare for women artists of her era. Championed by the era's most innovative stained-glass artist, John La Farge, she founded Lily Glass Works and made stained-glass windows for churches and colleges in the Northeast.

In Boston, Whitman built a vast network of accomplished artist friends. Passionate about education, she donated her energies and funds to colleges such as Radcliffe, which began as an annex to Harvard, dedicated to women's education. Multi-talented, she was a popular interior decorator and an esteemed graphic artist. She is known for her striking book cover designs. She also wrote books and poetry, and taught.

Photo of WAMSworks, once home of the Central and United Congregational Churches. Stained glass designed by Sarah Wyman Whitman, courtesy Salisbury Cultural District.

+,*+/$1' 675((7
3DXVH IRU VKRSSLQJ DQG WDVW\ WUHDWV

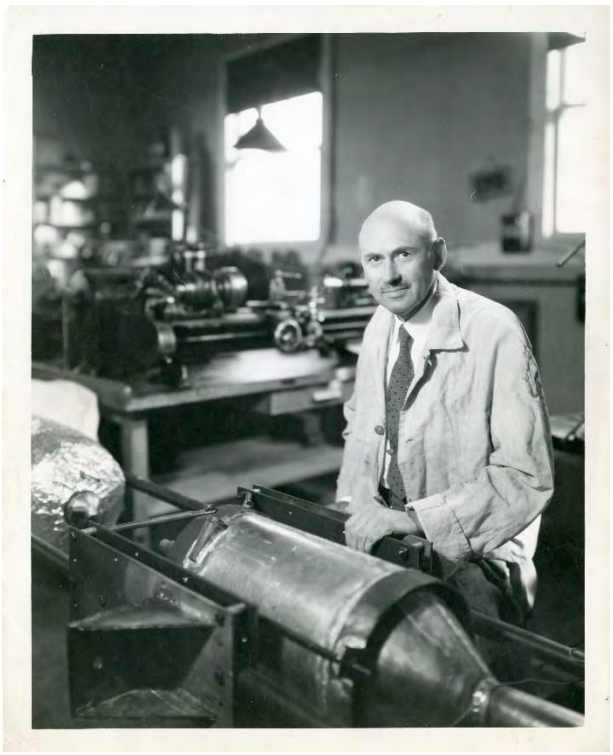
Tracking trailblazers requires lots of energy! If you need to refuel, consider a break for delicious food and some shopping afterward. You'll find both along Highland Street.

You have lots of choices, from really fine pub cuisine to Thai, Middle Eastern and more. Check out Bean Counter Bakery Café for a delectable selection of beverages including coffees, teas and, of course, pastries and sandwiches.

Stop by Prints and the Potter Gallery for contemporary arts and crafts. If this history-oriented Discovery Trail has ignited your taste for the retro, spend some quality browsing time at Modern Muse Consignment Shop where you'll find quality vintage wear.

Photo of Modern Muse Consignment Shop. Courtesy of the Salisbury Cultural District.

52%(57 *2''$5' $1' :25&(67(5 32/<7(&+1,& ,167,787(
,QVWLWXWH RI 7HFKQRORJ\ 0$
508-831-5000 | wpi.edu



Worcester Polytechnic Institute (WPI), one of the nation's leading schools in science and engineering, has propelled the careers of many trailblazers.

One example is Worcester native Robert Goddard (1882-1945), who graduated from WPI in 1908 and became known as "the Father of Modern Rocketry." While still a boy, he dreamed of going to the moon and in 1926, launched the first liquid-fueled rocket in the nearby town of Auburn. Goddard taught physics at Clark University in Worcester and made significant contributions to rocket research over the course of his career, laying the foundations for the development of long-range rockets, missiles, satellites and spaceflight.

Additional WPI trailblazers in the field of space include astronaut Albert Sacco, who was head of WPI's Chemical Engineering Department while aboard the space shuttle Columbia in 1995, and distinguished NASA scientist Laurie Leshin, who became WPI's first female president in 2014.

Photo of Robert Goddard.Courtesy Worcester Polytechnic Institute.

,6$,$+ 7+20$6 $1' 7+($0(5,&$1 $17,48$5,$1 62&,(7<
6DOLVEX:UR\UGFWVWHU 0$
508-755-5221 | americanantiquarian.org

The American Revolution was fueled, in large part, by the printed word, and the patriot printer, Isaiah Thomas, used the power of his press both to inform and inflame.

When the British tried to disband Thomas's printing press in 1775, he moved his operations from Boston to Worcester. Thomas then published the first eyewitness account of the Battles of Lexington and Concord in his newspaper that helped unite the 13 colonies and build a case for war against Great Britain. This newspaper was the first piece ever printed in Worcester.

After the war, Thomas became the foremost printer of his generation and one of the wealthiest men in the new nation. In 1812 he founded the American Antiquarian Society (AAS), as the first national historical society which you see before you.

The AAS is now an esteemed research library and learned society of pre-20th-century American history and culture. It is used by researchers from all over the world. It is open to the public, for tours, for research and for public programs.

Portrait of Isaiah Thomas. Photo courtesy American Antiquarian Society.

67(3+(1 6$/,6%85< ,,, $1' ,167,787(3$5.

This lush stretch of parkland lies in the heart of the beautiful Salisbury Cultural District. Like so many gems here, it owes its existence to the Salisbury family. Stephen Salisbury III created this 18-acre park beside Worcester Polytechnic Institute for recreational use by students, residents and workers at the nearby Washburn & Moen wire manufacturing factory. He later gave the park to the city of Worcester.

Institute Park is an ideal stop along the Trailblazer Discovery Trail. Birdwatchers may enjoy the view from the boardwalk that borders the pond, and the lawns are perfect for a game of frisbee. For those who prefer a picnic lunch or a deep dive into a good book, spread a beach towel and go for it!

If you are lucky, you may catch one of the summer concerts performed by the Massachusetts Symphony Orchestra (celebrating its 70th year of free summer performances in 2021) or one of the many festivals or celebrations that take place in the park. The magical setting beside Salisbury Pond draws families and fans from all directions.

Portrait of Stephen Salisbury III. Photo courtesy American Antiquarian Society.

Institute Park postcard from the 1998 Worcester Historical Museum publication titled "Wish You Were Here...Worcester Postcards ca. 1905-1920" by Anne Morse Lyell.

$50(1,$1 75$,/%/$=(56 $1' 7+($50(1,$1 &+85&+ 2) 285 6$9,
6DOLVE,X:UR\UGFWVWHU 0$
508-756-2931 | facebook.com/Armenian-Church-of-Our-Saviour-257853407658976/

The story of the first Armenian church in the Western Hemisphere — established in Worcester in 1891 — is a story of 600 Armenian trailblazers with a mission.

The enterprising Armenian immigrants wanted to erect a church but did not have enough money. They hatched a plan to mail letters soliciting donations to “Mr. John Armenian” in 20 U.S. cities with Armenian neighborhoods. Mailmen delivered the letters to the first Armenians they encountered, just as Worcester’s Armenians suspected. Success! The 600 Worcester Armenians received donations from around the country and were able to build their church.

A few things to know:

First, the beautiful church you see here was built in 1952, replacing the earlier structure described above.

Second, Worcester was one of the earliest places in America settled by Armenians drawn to the city by jobs at the mills.

Celebration Mass of the Armenian Church of Our Savior dedication, 1952, courtesy of Worcester Historical Museum.

)$11< %8//2&. :25.0$1 $1' 585$/ &(0(7(5<
*URYH:RUFHVWHU 0$
facebook.com/RuralCemeteryCrematoryWorcester/

This 40-acre garden cemetery is the resting place of 13,000. As you explore this peaceful oasis, you will encounter the graves of industrialists, cultural and artistic legends, war heroes, explorers, political leaders and many others known to us for their accomplishments.

If you like to look for gravesites, consider the world-class adventurer Fanny Bullock Workman (1859-1925) of Worcester. She helped break the British stranglehold on Himalayan mountain climbing, set several women's altitude records and climbed more mountains than any of her male peers. Along the way she advocated for women's rights, including the vote. She was only the second American woman to address the Royal Geographical Society of London.

Rural Cemetery, created in 1838, was just the second rural cemetery established in New England. The first, built seven years earlier, was Mount Auburn rural cemetery. Rural cemeteries are carefully designed to include trees and flowers, paths and rolling hills to mirror the serenity of a natural setting in contrast to the earlier church or town burying grounds.

Fannie Bullock Workman, depicted on cover of book titled "Queen of the Mountaineers."