



Kathryn Toomey  
Register of Deeds

February was the perfect month to highlight Sutton, why?:

I have some ties to Sutton. During my younger years, when my age was in single digits, I was a campfire girl. My troop would camp at Camp Marion on Lake Singletary. My parents would make the trek from Holden to Sutton to have us hike the Chasm. I have made many a hole in my jeans sliding down the rocks in Purgatory.

My parents relocated to Sutton in 1998. I was in law school and living in Boston. Upon my graduation in 2000, I moved home with my parents in Sutton. Immediately I met a neighbor who became a huge influence in my life, Alta Eaton. Wondering about the February connection? She shared her birthday with Ground Hog Day and treasured that connection. Alta was born in Sutton and live many of her 91 years in Sutton, she did try living in other towns and states but always returned.

*Letter continued on back page*

# Worcester Registry of Deeds

## Newsletter

February 2023 ~ Issue #18 ~ Town of Sutton

### What's Inside?

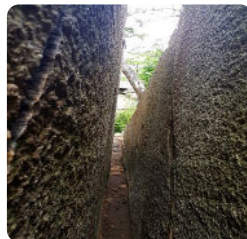
- ★ **Town Spotlight: Sutton** (p. 1 and 2)
- ★ **Word Search** (p. 3)
- ★ **Upcoming Events** (p.4)



### What do you believe?

#### Geologists or The Legend of Purgatory Chasm.

In the town of Sutton, is Purgatory Chasm State Reservation. Geologists say that the 70-foot chasm was carved approximately 14,000 years ago when a massive tidal wave of dammed-up water was released from a towering glacier. The sheer force of the gushing water was enough to tear cleanly through the rock in one fell swoop. It resembles a wound from the world's largest hatchet creating smooth, straight walls and



a chasm. That's the scientific explanation for this geological wonder.

According to legend, an Algonquin Indian woman found herself in a tight spot shortly after she killed a white colonial settler. As she walked away from the scene of the crime, she encountered another settler who asked for her company on a short walk. Naturally, having just murdered one of his people, she was apprehen-

*Chasm continued on page 2*

### Community Statistics

52

Number of Recordings in December 2022

\$475K

Median Home Value

93%

Homes Owned vs. Rented

3,435

Total Housing

101

Density (Houses per Square Mile)

# Purgatory Chasm



Devil's Corn Crib



Fat Man's Misery!



Inside the Chasm



Lover's Leap



Devil's Pulpit



Picnic Area

## What do you believe? *continued from page 1*

sive and tried to run away.

He lunged and grabbed her by the wrist.

When she called out to the Native American god Hobomoko to save her, the second settler revealed himself as none other than Hobomoko in the flesh. Morphing into a devil-like guise, Hobomoko grabbed his captive by the waist and flew to Purgatory Chasm.

Colonists said that the devil's actions on that day formed the chasm. The deep depressions were allegedly

the places he stomped and threw his victim. The large, deep cuts in the rocks were from a tomahawk.

The colonists said that it was Hobomoko's actions on that day formed the chasm, but historians argue that the settlers had ulterior motives. Creating the story may have been part of their attempt to convert the Native Americans to Christianity by demonizing one of their gods and instilling fear. The parable also created a handy warning against attacking settlers.

Now, Purgatory Chasm State Reservation is a popular hiking and picnic spot for tourists and local families. The chasm itself can be entered by visitors – if they are slender enough. One particular area of the gorge is known as Fat Man's Misery!

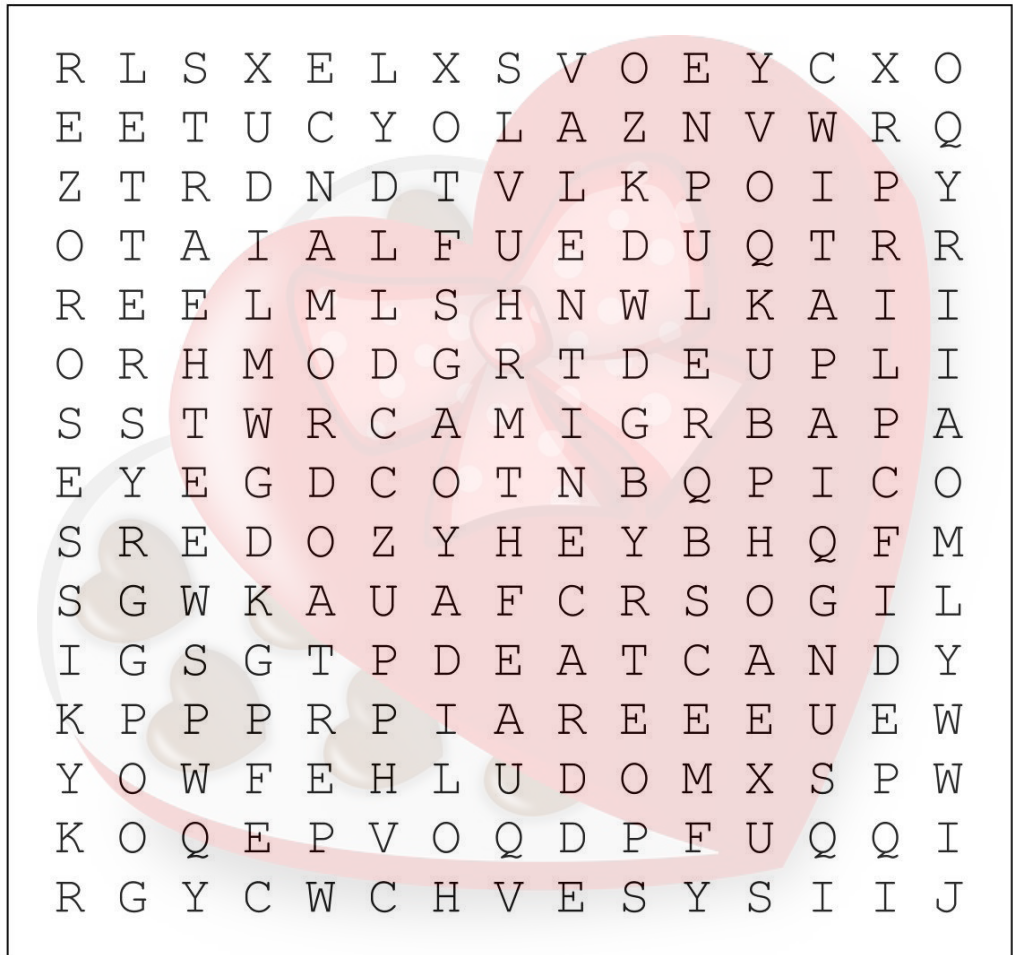
The park includes hiking trails, indoor washrooms, a visitor's center, an eating area, an impressive playground, and even a food truck that parks nearby. The chasm itself is a bit of a hike into the woods and includes a good deal of climbing and

trying to reach the 1/4 mile long gorge, so be sure to wear proper hiking shoes and bring plenty of water along.

However you choose to explain its origin, Purgatory Chasm is still a magnificent geological wonder. It has inspired novels (Steve Ulfelder's *Purgatory Chasm*), poems (Susan Edmonds Richard's collection, titled *Purgatory Chasm*), and even a song (*Neptune's Car's Lover's Leap: The Purgatory Chasm Song*).

# Valentine Word Search

LOVE  
 POETRY  
 SECRET ADMIRER  
 ROMANCE  
 VALENTINE CARD  
 KISSES  
 CHOCOLATE  
 FLOWERS  
 BE MINE  
 HOLIDAY  
 COURTSHIP  
 ROSES  
 CANDY  
 RED  
 LETTERS  
 SWEETHEARTS  
 FEBRUARY 14  
 RIBBON



African American history month actually grew from an event called “Negro History Week” which was the brainchild of noted historian Carter G. Woodson and other prominent African Americans.

The story of Black History Month started in 1915. Harvard historian Carter G. Woodson and prominent minister Jesse E. Moorland founded the Association for the Study of Afro-American Life and History, an organization dedicated to researching and promoting achievements by Black Americans and other people of African descent.

The group started Negro History Week in 1926, choosing the second week of February to coincide with the birthdays of Abraham Lincoln and Frederick Douglass.

With the arrival of the civil rights movement in the late 1960s and a growing awareness of black identity, Negro



History Week evolved into Black History Month on many college campuses. President Gerald Ford officially recognized Black History Month in 1976. Since then, every American president has designated February as Black History Month.

# Upcoming Events: 2023

## Tuesday Feb. 28, 2023 - 11am

Leicester Senior Center  
40 Winslow Ave, Leicester, MA 01524

Come meet with Katie Toomey the Register of Deeds for Worcester County and Stephanie Fattman Registrar of Worcester Probate Court.

## Wednesday March 8, 2023 - 1pm

Sutton Senior Center  
19 Hough Rd, Sutton, MA 01590

Come meet with Katie Toomey the Register of Deeds for Worcester County and Stephanie Fattman Registrar of Worcester Probate Court.

Come and learn the Registry's role in recording documents that effect land. Come and ask questions about the types of ownership of property.

## Friday March 17, 2023

St. Patrick's Day Event  
Worcester Senior Center  
128 Providence Street, Worcester, MA 01604

Come meet with Katie Toomey the Register of Deeds for Worcester County. For a day full of fun, food and information.



## Special Notice: Regarding Registered Land Recording

### Effective January 1, 2023

Beginning January 1, 2023, all Registered Land documents that you intend to submit to us for registration must first be emailed to us for pre-approval. Send your fully executed documents to [worcester.deeds@sec.state.ma.us](mailto:worcester.deeds@sec.state.ma.us). We will review the documents and email our determination that the documents may be submitted to us as is or we will specify any changes that must be made before sending the documents to us.

Beginning January 1, 2023, original Registered Land documents will be returned to customers once the recording process is completed.

**A return envelope with postage will be required so that we can return the documents to you via the USPS.**

*Thank you – Register Kathryn A. Toomey*

*Letter continued from front page*

My friendship with my "Grammy Alta" has been one of the greatest relationships of my life. Alta would tell me stories and facts about Sutton and its'

characters, she was a living history book. Alta passed in 2016, but remains in Sutton and in my heart forever.

February comes from the Latin word februa, which means "to cleanse." The month was named after the Roman Februalia, which was a month-

long festival of purification and atonement that took place this time of year.