

Kathryn A. Toomey Register of Deeds

uneteenth is a federal Holiday in the United States commemorating the emancipation of enslaved African Americans. Deriving its name from combining "June" and "nineteenth", it is celebrated on the anniversary of the order, issued by Major General Gordon Granger on June 19, 1865, proclaiming freedom for slaves in Texas. Originating in Galveston, Juneteenth has since been observed annually in various parts of the United States, celebrating African American culture.

Abraham Lincoln issued the preliminary **Emancipation** Proclamation in the midst of the Civil War on September 22, 1862 declaring that if the rebels did not end the fighting and rejoin the Union, all slaves in the Confederacy would be freed on the first day of the following year. On January 1, 1863, Lincoln issued the final Emancipation Proclamation, declaring that all slaves in the Confederate States of America in rebel-

# Worcester Registry of Deeds

## Newsletter

June 2023 ~ Issue #22 ~ Town of Athol

## What's Inside?

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More isolated geographically, planters and other slaveholders had migrated to Texas from eastern states to escape the fighting, and many brought slaves with them, increasing by the thousands the enslaved population in the state at the end of the Civil War. Although most lived in rural areas, more than 1,000 resided in both Galveston and Houston by 1860, with several hundred in other large towns. By 1865, there were an estimated 250,000 slaves in Texas. Despite the surrender of Confederate General-in-Chief Robert E.

Lee at Appomattox Court House on April 9, 1865, the western Confederate Army of the Trans-Mississippi did not surrender until June 2. On the morning of June 19, 1865, Union Major General Gordon Granger arrived on the island of Galveston to take command of the more than 2,000 federal troops recently landed in the department of Texas to enforce the emancipation of its slaves. In 2021, Juneteenth became the first new federal holiday since Martin Luther King Jr. Day was adopted in 1983.

# Community Statistics













# Town Spotlight Athol

Agreat sporting event that might not be on your radar: The Athol-Orange River Rat. The race is scheduled in April in the North Central Massachusetts town of Athol. It is a 5.2 mile canoe race on the Millers River, specifically between Athol and the Or-

ange Dam. They schedule the race in the beginning of the spring when people are feeling the doldrums of a long New England Winter. The water is freezing and sometimes there is snow on the ground. The River Rat is 58 years strong and one of a kind. The first River Rat

was in 1964, with 12 canoes participating. The winning canoe was manned by Art Forand and Sonny Soucie. Their canoe was made of canyas.

The original winning canoe can be viewed at the Orange Historical Society. In Honor of Forand and Soucie there is an annual award given to the team that passes the most canoes. The idea to race came from a group of people in a local pub discussing a particular fishing hole. It started as a friendly wager between a few guys from Athol and a few guys from Orange. Who could paddle to the fishing spot first? The Race was born. The following year they raced again. Over time the race became an event on the calendar. In the beginning it was loosely organized, but the fun was contagious. The locals had all winter to plan

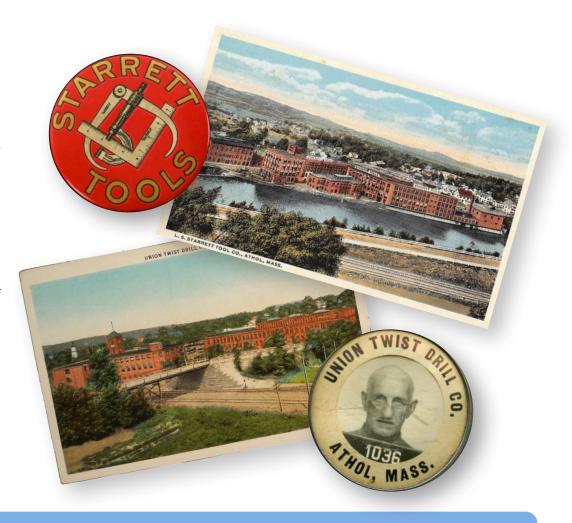
their canoe and fuel the rivalry of the event. The race has expanded to a carnival and a parade. The race is competitive, but there remain those who are there just for fun. Today, the planning is months in advance. The race participants are sponsored and safety teams line the river to make the event safe. The River Rat brings thousands of spectators to the riverbanks. Today, 200 to 300 canoes enter the race. One particular year, they had 468 boats with paddlers. On race day, Main Street is blocked to vehicle traffic and the Race owns the district for the day. The River Rats include nationally ranked paddlers, local athletes, legacies, tourists and entire families. Many of the entrants dress in costumes. The day begins with a pancake breakfast and ends with a spaghetti supper.



#### Tool Town

n 1868, the Athol Machine Company was formed and developed a chopping machine. The inventor of the machine: Laroy S. Starrett. Fast forward to 1881 he founded the L.S. Starrett Company. Today his company is international and produces high-quality precision tools. The Starrett mills dominate the downtown and river-front of the Millers River. L.S. Starrett remains the largest local employer.

An additional player in the mill industry, Union Twist Drill Company, was located in downtown Athol and at its peak employed 800 people. Union Twist Drill closed in the 1980s. Athol has earned and maintained the nickname: "Tool Town".

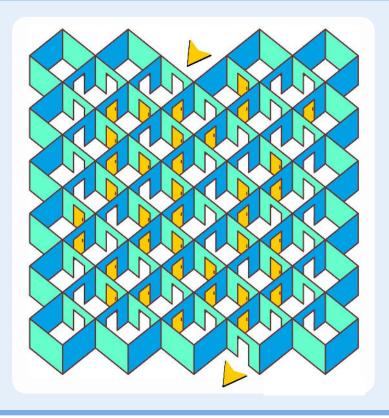


#### **Puzzle**



Find the only door the key will open to get you through the maze.

Puzzle answer on page 4



#### **Upcoming Speaking Events**

Tuesday, June 27, 2023 – 1:00pm — Westborough Senior Center 4 Rogers Road, Westborough, Ma 01581

Wednesday, September 13, 2023 – 11:00am — Templeton Senior Community Center 16 Senior Dr., Baldwinville, Ma 01436

**Wednesday September 27, 2023 – 10:00am — Paxton Senior Center** 19 West St #15, Paxton, MA 01612

If there are any other Senior Centers or organizations that would like to have Katie Toomey come and do a presentation with questions and answers, please email me at margaret.freeman@sec.state.ma.us or call 508-368-7000

Katie would gladly accommodate your group.

# 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. 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

# Consumer Notification Service

### Get notified when documents are recorded.

This service alerts you by email whenever a new document is recorded for your property. If you made this change, you don't need to do anything. If you did not, you should contact your local Registry of Deeds office.

#### Who can set up an account?

This service is provided at no cost to Massachusetts residential property owners. You can set up an account and register up to 3 properties. This service is not available for commercial properties. Create a new account by visiting the link below.

#### cns.masslandrecords.com

Puzzle Solution

