

A step back in time

Some of Duxbury's oldest businesses

BY CLIPPER STAFF

In a town that is deeply rooted in history, Duxbury's historic businesses still thrive. Here, we take a look at five of the oldest businesses in town. Though they may have changed names and owners over the years, they have remained Duxbury staples for decades. Take a moment and step back in time with us.

In the Ashdod section of town, there is a tavern that has served as a stomping ground for many locals and visitors for centuries.

The Sun Tavern, located at 500 Congress Street, was originally built in 1741. By the end of the 19th century, it was owned by Lysander Walker, who is best known as the subject of a Boston Herald article, "Last Duxbury Hermit." Walker lived alone, and was well known in town for his stubbornness. He refused to leave his home and relied on good neighbors, such as the Belknap family, for social interaction and support. It became a tradition that Walker would hang an American Flag on the corner of the house if he needed something from the store, and one of his neighbors would bring it by.

On Oct. 3, 1928, 11-year old Gladys Belknap saw the flag hanging on the corner at his house. When she went in, she discovered Walker seated on the sofa with a loaded revolver gripped in his hand. The Sun Tavern recently received a post card from Gladys Belknap, confirming the story.

After Walker's untimely death, the property was purchased by Father Francis Keegan as a property for his summer home. He later befriended Mary Hackett and in the 1930s suggested she take over his home and run it as a restaurant. The restaurant was quietly successful until 1964, when David Wells purchased the property and changed the name to Fiddler's Green Restaurant, in the hopes of conveying the feeling of an English Pub. As the story goes, Wells claimed the building was haunted by the ghost of Lysander Walker, because each night when the restaurant was being closed down and every candle extinguished on the table, one would be relit as David was about to walk out of the front door. Later, an alarm went off late one night, and the police responded and investigated. After finding nothing suspicious, they heard footsteps inside the restaurant as they were about to leave. With guns drawn, they entered the house but found no evidence of anyone being in the house. In 1987, the restaurant was named The Sun Tavern, as it remains today. Current owners, Larry and Carol Friedman, previously owned the Tavern from 1996 to 2001 and hope to maintain the integrity and history of the restaurant.

Take a trip down Washington Street and you are sure to find many historic homes and storied buildings. One such building has been in town long before the town — and the country — were incorporated and invites locals and visitors alike to connect with the his-

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tory of the town while enjoying good food and company.

The Winsors arrived in America onboard the Mayflower and eventually migrated from Plymouth to Duxbury, where they settled in and started their lives. They took advantage of the proximity of the town to the water and developed a prosperous shipbuilding company, eventually building ships that sailed around the world.

The Winsor House Inn property, upon which a two story building currently sits next to Pilgrim Church on Washington Street, was a wedding gift from Nathaniel Winsor, Jr., to his daughter and son-in-law. The newlyweds built their home on the land in 1803.

Throughout the 19th century, the house and property were maintained by the Winsor family, but at the turn of the 20th century the home was abandoned as its owners moved to England. The building sat for over 30 years with its gates and windows shut and the shades drawn.

In 1932, the property was given to Daniel Winsor, who converted the home into an inn. With his wife, Marie, Daniel set about transforming the inn into a place that welcomed residents and travelers to Duxbury.

The property changed hands quite a bit over the years, and Daniel and Marie were last Winsors to own the property. In 1976, David and Patricia O'Connell bought the property, and maintained the integrity of the inn for nearly 37 years. The property was purchased in 2013 by Chuck Weilbrenner and Holly Safford. It is now open throughout the summer as a destination for good drinks, outdoor eating and good company.

Around the corner was Westwinds Bookshop, a bookstore nearly every Duxbury resident has visited at least once in their lifetime. Westwinds was established in 1946 by Margaret Carter Metcalf, who started the business in the hopes of collaborating with the local libraries to feature writers, poets, and illustrators. Westwinds has changed locations several times but it was started on the second floor of Metcalf's carriage house. After Metcalf's death in 1957 the shop moved to Snug Harbor and then again years later to its current location at the Depot Street Marketplace.

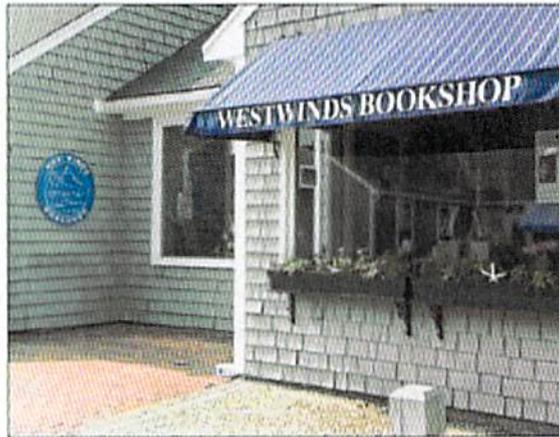
Brooke McDonough, the manager of Westwinds, is also a member of the Duxbury Free Library. Together with library director Carol Jankowski, Mc-Donough hosts myriad literary programs at the bookshop and library. With everything from author series to workshops, Westwinds continues to provide Duxbury with the access to and quality of literature it has become accustomed to.

Every Thanksgiving season Duxbury residents stand in line for hours to get their Bongi's turkey. Bongi's Turkey Roost has been a functional farm since 1947. The original Bongi's store was just

an old motel cabin. Bongi's is deeply rooted in tradition using many of the same recipes that they used nearly seven decades ago. Bongi's has many loyal customers and they express their appreciation for them by putting out the best product possible.



Bongi's



Westwinds Bookshop