

Clue 5) Methodist Church: The Melrose Methodist Episcopal Church was established as a religious society in 1813. Services were held in school houses, homes and other public spaces before building a church here in 1874. In 1900, there were 12 churches in Melrose - a town of 12,500. The Methodist Church was one of the most attended with nearly 600 active members. The Church as we see it today was built in 1904.

The names of two Methodist ministers are found in the Melrose History Quilt. John Pickles, and Joel Leonard. It is possible that the Melrose History quilt was organized as a fundraiser to renovate the parsonage of the Methodist Church (the parsonage is the gold house next door, 647 Main Street).

Clue 6) Lynn Fells Parkway & Bellevue Avenue: Elbridge Goss described the Middlesex Fells in 1902 as "...wild and romantic. In the very centre slumbers the ever beautiful Spot Pond..." The Metropolitan Park Commission had recently approved the study of a parkway to link the Fells with the Lynn Woods.

7) Library: In 1897, this was the site of the Melrose High School. In 1900, the Melrose Public Library was housed in the YMCA. Citizens decided that a larger, permanent structure would best serve the City. They submitted a successful funding request to Andrew Carnegie. The library opened in 1904. The Library expanded in 1969 and renovated in 1990. A new improvement plan was just approved in 2015 and awaits funding. Go in and see the quilts on exhibit in the library!

Learn more at melrosehistoryquilt.org or
At the December 8, 1pm lecture at the Beebe Estate.

Find Clues in a Quilt



Saturdays, December 1–22, 2018 • 11 am to 3 pm • Beebe Estate

Melrosehistoryquilt.org/Clues



Stories from a red and white Victorian Quilt tell us about Melrose in 1900. Learn more with this scavenger hunt... (answers inside).

- 1) This 19th Century Greek Revival building hosts arts exhibits The Melrose Hospital Association formed here in 1893.
- 2) The southern Melrose playground was a center of industry throughout time.
- 3) In 1900, this newly constructed downtown building hosted the Melrose Public Library.
- 4) In 1900, this one block long street west of the City lot was home to 15 people named on the quilt.
- 5) Melrose's first religious society built their church building in 1876. They dedicated this new structure in 1904.
- 6) This parkway did not exist in 1900, but the neighborhood Victorian homes did.
- 7) This center of learning was the site of the Melrose High School until 1897.

Clue 1) Beebe Estate: Constructed in 1828, this building hosts the December 2018, Melrose celebrates the return of an inscribed quilt in Stitched Connections exhibit.

In 2015, Ann Wasserman began to repair and conserve a quilt for a client. The more than 200 names penned on the red and white quilt tickled Ann's curiosity. She discovered that nearly every name on the quilt lived in Melrose in 1900. Using church membership directories and census data, she pinned the quilt date to 1897 - 1898. It was probably fundraiser quilt. People would donate money to have their name on a quilt block. When complete, a raffle or auction would raise additional funds.

Clue 2) Lebanon Street Playground: Kids play ball and swing at the Lebanon Street Playground in 2018, but this area has hosted a long history of industrial activities. Native Americans quarried Melrose Green Rhyolyte from the rock ledges behind the playground centuries before English colonists arrived. Lebanon Street was the first major thoroughfare in Melrose or "North Malden" as it was known before 1850.

Founded in 1853, the Boston Rubber Factory became the largest employer in Melrose. Owned by Elisha Converse, factories in Malden and Melrose made 33,000 pairs of rubber shoes a day, employing 2,700 people in this area.

Herbert and Christina Chandler's names are found on the Melrose History Quilt, and they lived just south of the Playground. Christi was the matron of the almshouse or poor farm which lodged elderly or disabled people who had no other options. In 1900, five people called the poor house their home. Three of these were over 75 years old.

Clue 3) YMCA: Since its establishment in 1890, there was great excitement about the Melrose Young Men's Christian Association. They envisioned a place for non-denominational religious study, public meeting rooms and a well-furnished gymnasium. Citizens financed this project quickly and the building opened to the public in 1895.

Melrose citizens were proud of the amenities the small community provided, especially considering it only became a town in 1850. The arrival of the Boston and Maine railroad changed the character of the area.

In 1900, Melrose had a population of 12,500 - a 1,000% increase in 50 years. The downtown business district boasted sidewalks. Horse drawn trolleys provided public transit up and down Main Street before motorized vehicles replaced them in the early 1900s.

Clue 4) Vine Street: Five houses on this one block street provided 15 signatures on the Melrose History Quilt. Vine Street shows us a microcosm of the housing arrangements in 1900.

- Extended families and multigenerational houses were common.
- The 1900 Melrose Business Directory listed four official boarding houses. Other boarding situations were more informal. Young workers without family, seniors or young couples frequently opted to board.
- Live in servants were not uncommon. Nearly always, they were female immigrants from Canada, Scotland, Sweden or Ireland.