

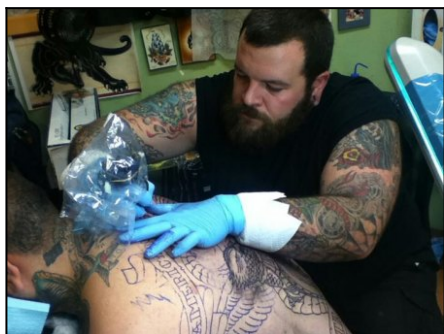
North Atlantic Tattoo – New Bedford’s in-demand, premier tattoo shop’s expansion includes new talent



North Atlantic Tattoo at 1881 Acushnet Ave now has three talented artists inking locals.

Back in March of last year we told you about North Atlantic Tattoo in a spotlight article. Since then, the response has been overwhelmingly positive and North Atlantic Tattoo has been catapulted into top position when it comes to talent and service. Now booked months out, everyone now knows what we knew: the South Coast has one of the best shops in the country.

Because of the response, current owners Jae and Andrew have expanded their staff to meet the demands of locals. They've brought on board Rhode Island native, Tom Butts – who started his apprenticeship at Providence's Hope Street Tattoo in 2005 under the watchful eyes of Luke Taylor and Matt Brotka.



*North Atlantic
Tattoo's newest artist
Tom Butts hard at work
doing what he loves.*

After a lengthy 3 year apprenticeship he continued to work his craft there until 2010. Sometime around 2008 he began to add Newport's Anchor Steam Tattoo to his resume, working part-time and eventually switching to a full-time gig. Since then he has traveled as far as Virginia to hone his craft, under some well-known talent including Nate Moretti, TJ Mcinnis, Pete Fortune, Forrest Curl just to name a few.

Tom's love for art goes so far back, that he can't recall a time when he wasn't drawing, painting or creating. In fact, his love for the specific medium of tattooing goes back to his earliest childhood memories when he was surrounded by friends and family who were soldiers and airmen. Growing up, his particular circle of friends – skateboarders and musicians – were bedecked with tattoos, especially those in the Punk Rock scene. This would inspire him to get involved in tattooing as an art-form and had a huge influence on his individual approach to tattooing.

While he is from Rhode Island, Tom has always visited friends

in the greater New Bedford area and has always enjoyed New Bedford's colorful history. He has an affinity for historic New England towns and cities like the Coventry he grew up in, and has always had a fondness for Melville's 'Moby Dick.' So, when he found out there was an opportunity for an artist to develop his craft even further, in one of greater New Bedford's premier shops – it was a no-brainer. To be around experience and talent of Jae and Andrew's caliber was something he wouldn't turn up.



Tom is capable of strong line, shading, and fine detail.

This isn't the first time Tom has heard of Jae and Andrew – Jae and Tom have been friends for approximately 20 years and he was a mentor to Tom in his early years of tattooing. He met Andrew a couple years ago while he and Jae worked together in Swansea. He has been a friend and fan of Andrew and his work ever since.

So, how would Tom define his style of tattooing? I'll let his words speak for themselves: "I am primarily a traditional tattoo artist with a heavy nautical background ...but I like to think of myself as a jack-of-all trades – though I am not a portrait tattooer. I can take anything and render it into a solid, clean tattoo. I love to do clean, solid, bright, and bold tattoos that will stand the test of time, large or small."

His tattoos are quintessential American Traditional. Perfect for the blue collar, hard-working person – the one Tom has been around his entire life. His family consists of mostly military, civil servant or tradesman, so working in a geographical region, like New Bedford that is high with these types of professions is important to him.

While Tom sees a lot of people seeking an artist to do their tattoo, he feels the biggest mistake one can do is to look for the cheapest rates around. He feels there should be a balance between art and rate. Since it's going to be on you for life – one should be willing to pay the *right* price. Of course, you don't want to pay a low price and get shoddy workmanship or inversely, pay an exorbitant, over-priced rate, even if it's perfect art.



A little color never hurt anyone!

Tattooing for Tom is serious business, “it’s not only my job, but its also my life and hobby. A true artisan tattooer takes his work home with him and everywhere in between. We never shut it off. Always drawing, painting, promoting and planning.”

Having said that, he feels having a wide variety of interests and hobbies will indirectly contribute to his artistry by preventing burn-out, and it will also serve to inspire and motivate. Of course, an artist without muses is lost. With

that in mind, Tom is an avid outdoors-man, a collector of odd antiques, and even DJ's regularly. These and other hobbies and interests also help him build rapport with potential and current customers – keeping people comfortable while under the needle, is an important aspect to being a professional, world-class artists. Keeping their mind of the pain and buzzing, helps relax the customer – besides a relationship is just as important as the art.

If you are in the market for some new ink, and love that American Traditional style, you'll want to stop in and see Tom's art and meet the man himself. When you the love he has for tattooing and the pride he has in his art and craft, you'll go nowhere else. But that's what North Atlantic Tattoo does. One visit and you'll have no need to go anywhere else in the city.

North Atlantic Tattoo

1881 Acushnet Ave

New Bedford, Massachusetts

Phone: (774) 202-1973

EEmail: northatlantictattoo@gmail.com

Mon, Tues, Fri, & Sat: 10:00am-8:00pm

Wed & Thur: 12:00pm-8:00pm

Sun: By appointment only

Facebook: [facebook.com/pages/North-Atlantic-Tattoo/674524539310849](https://www.facebook.com/pages/North-Atlantic-Tattoo/674524539310849)

Website: northatlantictattoo.com

Shop Instagram: [instagram.com/northatlantictattoo/](https://www.instagram.com/northatlantictattoo/)

Jae's Instagram: [instagram.com/jaeaudette1776/](https://www.instagram.com/jaeaudette1776/)

Andrew's Instagram: [instagram.com/panzzerfaust/](https://www.instagram.com/panzzerfaust/)

Tom's Instagram: [@tombutts_tattoo](https://www.instagram.com/tombutts_tattoo)

Tom's Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/tombuttstattoo>

Tom Butt's Art

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Commonwealth Firearms and Training Center, Ltd. offers firearms, accessories and world-class firearms instruction



Commonwealth Firearms and Training Center, Ltd., a family-owned and operated, fully accredited firearms, accessories and firearms

training center.

Barely a day passes without guns or gun control being mentioned in the news. These past few years the topic has frequently cropped up in radio, TV and of course, the internet. Since the nation's battle for independence, there hasn't been a time when guns and/or gun control has been a hotter topic.

Some Americans are even considering taking another look at the 2nd Amendment and ratifying it – creating quite the bit of discussion, often heated. One aspect of the entire discussion that virtually everyone can agree on, is firearms training. While the mention of firearms often generates a discussion of criminal activity, the vast majority of firearm enthusiasts are law-abiding citizens.



Almost a dozen courses are offered, like this one, a 'Women Only LTC/DIF Firearm's Safety course.

The reasons for owning a gun will, of course, vary from owner to owner. Some use them for hunting, some for a coming Zombie-apocalypse, others for the self-defense. What makes America one of the greatest nations on earth, is our freedoms – freedom to choose why we own a firearm is just one of the many ways to exercise this freedom.

The chance that most of us will encounter a situation where we would have to use a firearm to defend our person, family or

home, is quite slim. A more genuine “threat” is the use, misuse of such firearms or lack of training. In addition, the effectiveness of a firearm is either lessened or improved based on the frequency and amount of training.

Lastly, since the amount of time in one’s life spent defending himself/herself with a firearm could be counted in seconds, if at all, the vast majority of enthusiasts become hobbyists – spending time in the field, at the range or in training courses.

One of New England’s premier firearms facilities is Commonwealth Firearms and Training Center, Ltd. located in Somerset. Commonwealth Firearms and Training Center, Ltd. not only sells high-quality firearms, accessories, as well as tackle, but they offer firearms training through a dozen courses. “The courses offered at Commonwealth Firearms & Training Center are designed to build a solid foundation around the safe operation of a pistol, to ensure proper shooting techniques and to meet your specific goals.”

The family owned business is comprised of some of the most experienced staff in the nation. Everyone there has real-world experience with their firearms, either from hunting or police work. All have spent countless hours using their firearms and decades instructing their safe use.



Commonwealth Firearms & Training offers a wide variety of high-quality firearms and accessories in-house

and online.

Husband and wife, Edwin and Kate Scallon founded the business in with their own money, namely their retirement pensions. Their intention from the get-go was to eventually pass it on to their sons – Korey and Kenneth Freeborn, president and vice-president respectively. A genuine family-owned and operated business.

In 2012 they incorporated and started out by renting hospitality suites at the local hotels and teaching classes. In 2014 they moved to their current location, applied for a Federal Firearms License and state licenses. They held classes at the new location until they received their Federal and State licenses. They finally opened the retail Firearms and Training Center in December of 2015.

Ed is a retired Providence Police Detective and retired, but practicing Trial Attorney. These days he writes and teaches law and is the company's acting Chair and Corp Secretary. Kate, a retired Letter Carrier for the United States Postal Service, is a full-time travel agent, whose business is literally right next door. She runs the firearm safety courses and acts as treasurer.

Both Kate and Ed learned about firearms licensing from Korey and Ken when they attended their Basic Firearms Class. They also received their Licence To Carry for the state of Massachusetts by attending the Basic Firearm's Safety class offered at Commonwealth Firearms & Training. In addition, they possess a gunsmith license from the state of Massachusetts – with Ken being the resident gunsmith.

Ed is a Law Enforcement Officers Safety Act instructor and received his license to instruct based on his years of detective work, while Kate followed based on her previous training. Kate also holds an NRA '**Refuse to be a Victim**' License to instruct, which is one of many courses that she

offers. This particular course teaches the personal safety tips and techniques you need to avoid dangerous situations and avoid becoming a victim in a 4-hour seminar.



People come from far and wide to purchase items, get training, and become certified.

Korey and Ken are both avid hunters and have a genuine passion for firearms, which they've been around most of their lives. While all four are National Rifle Association instructors. Ed, Kate and Korey are NRA certified Range Safety Officers.

Combined they offer decades of knowledge and experience in one place through world-class instruction. So, you can not only purchase a firearm, but follow up and learn to properly use it, as well as hone a number of other related skills.

They *literally* wrote the book on firearms safety including the national history and Massachusetts firearms history. In addition, they integrated a laser portion of classroom instruction. What are some of the courses you can take?

- **Co-Ed LTC/FID Firearm's Safety:** for people that are interested in obtaining their firearms license, either Firearms IDentification Card or License To Carry.
- **Non-Resident Concealed Carry Course:** 4 hour training course for Utah (good in 39 states) and Florida.
- **New or Yearly Pistol Certification:** obtain your yearly qualification or your Rhode Island Pistol Certification.

- **NRA Basic Firearms Safety Course (Co-Ed):** NRA course designed to improve skills with handguns. Obtain Certificate for NRA and MA LTC. Meets the Requirements for a Massachusetts License to Carry or for a Massachusetts Firearms Identification Card.
- **LEOSA Course:** Title 18 U.S.C. § 926C Permits retired law enforcement officers to carry concealed within all 50 states. Ed Scallon is a Massachusetts State Police certified LEOSA instructor. This course is designed to comply with the requirement 515 CMR 6.00 Retired Officers must attend classroom instruction and then qualify at the range.
- **Refuse To Be A Victim Course:** 4 hour NRA Certified security course. These classes do NOT include the use of a firearm, but does include instruction in the use of mace/pepper spray. □Students are provided NRA materials and a certificate upon successful completion.
- **'Learn to Shoot or Sharpen your Skills' Course:** Retired Providence Police pistol expert and Certified Range Safety Officer will instruct individual students in the proper methods of obtaining the highest scores. LIVE range fire time. Individualized student instruction. Become competent and capture the 6 fundamentals of shooting.
- **Massachusetts LTC/FID Home Firearm Safety Course:** Required Course of a Massachusetts License to Carry or for a Massachusetts Firearms Identification Card. Required course for all Massachusetts Residents and Non-Residents.

Soon Commonwealth Firearms & Training will offer an NRA Pistol Instructor Course which is required to teach others to become instructors. This Course is designed to present the Pistol Instructor with the essential tools to successfully teach a class of future instructors, including ethics, teaching plans, NRA Policies and procedures, responsibilities of the instructor, organizing a course, training athletes with

physical disabilities, course outlines and lesson plans.

Of course, if you are already licensed and own a firearm, you can purchase some range time on Sundays. One of the really interesting services they offer is the 'On Campus Laser Range' where you use your actual firearm, carry gun, duty gun, or rent one of ours. Fire at AMY-L targets as if you were qualifying on a police range. Shoot at your own leisure or receive firearms training from one of the instructors. Also, you can rent one of their Air Soft simulator recoil "GLOCK Mark-up" handguns.



Get your FID/LTC or simply learn the fundamentals.

The retail side houses every type of firearm available in Massachusetts and sports a \$4.7 Million dollar co-oped warehouse available on-line on their website. Starting out with just firearms, they recently expanded and in addition to selling firearms, ammunition and accessories they now have all divisions of sporting goods including fishing tackle, fresh and salt water bait, clothing and hunting accessories.

The family's sole mission is to train and meet the goals and objectives for ALL levels of shooting enthusiasts – from the new student with no experience handling firearms to the seasoned shooter. When you arrive at Commonwealth Firearms and Training, the staff will bring all their experience and knowledge to bear in assisting you with selecting and even

customizing course to meet your specific instructional needs.

Deciding on purchasing a firearm is a pretty serious responsibility – one that should be accompanied with training and regular practice. There are a fair number of gun ranges in the area to choose from. However, there are few place to receive the quality of instruction that you'll find at Commonwealth Firearms & Training.

Outside of hunting or using firearms as a hobby, owning a firearm is chosen because it may increase your chances of you or your loved ones surviving a violent encounter. With that being said, firearm instruction is an extension of that original purpose.

Commonwealth Firearms and Training Center, Ltd.

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Hours of Operation:

Mon-Fri: 8:00am-7:00pm

Sat: 8:00am-6:00pm

Sun: 12:00pm-4:00pm

Facebook: facebook.com/commonwealthfirearms

Website: commonwealthfirearms.com/

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19th Century Perspectives: Pharmacies, Apothecaries, and Medicines

With this new series of articles, we're hoping to shed a little light on how things were done in the 19th century. A fun way to lend perspective to our modern way of living. We often hear "You don't know how good you have it. When I was a kid..." or "You should clear your plate, there are starving kids in Cambodia/Ethiopia." So this is an attempt to add images and detail to those perspectives – without the hyperbole.

Well, maybe a little bit.

When we peer back into the past and see how things were, we come to appreciate the things we have – perhaps taking them for granted a little less or no more. Of course, I will keep this as local as possible and share any anecdotes I come across in my historical research. While no one today was alive in the 19th century, this is a series on perspectives, so by all means share YOUR story on how things were in the era that you grew up in!



*An example of
early medical*

*treatments:
bloodletting. A
method that has
been revisited
today.
(listverse.com)*

In a day and age where virtually everyone has a prescription and radio, TV and print is flooded with commercials and adverts for them, it's hard to imagine a time when when it *wasn't* so ubiquitous. We are clubbed over the head on a daily basis, over and again.

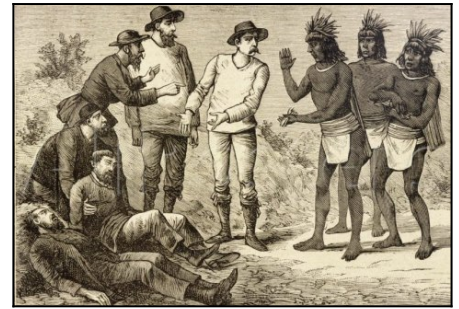
Before we had this monumental pharmaceutical complex called "Big Pharm," most medicine was a mixture of magic, folk remedies and placebo. As civilization and science progressed, these methods were slowly shunned an replaced by scientific empiricism – looking for objective results and performance based approvals.

Yesterday's shaman or witch doctor used teas, spells, herbs, plants, poultices, salves, and balms – even poison in small doses. Often placebo or coincidence was the real remedy for many of these cocktails of random ingredients.

However, every once in a while something wouldn't just work for a tiny few, but *really* worked and nursed an individual back to health. These would, of course, garner the attention of the healer. As cities grew and populations with them, there began to be a financial aspect to the profession that didn't exist before and the chemist, apothecary, and pharmacist would eventually become bonafide occupations.

The positive aspect of a financial boon to healing folks, was that one could make a substantial amount of money with remedies that actually worked. With this in mind, modern healers in the 17th and 18th century would begin to re-look at folk remedies that were centuries old and reconsider them – this was the precursor to today's Research & Development

departments and clinical studies.



Early colonists in the Americas were gifted with Cinchona Bark from which Quinine was extracted and used to treat Malaria. (Nephicode)

If you could produce a medicine that would work for “all” in a city of tens of thousands, it wouldn’t take long to spread via word-of-mouth and for one to make substantial revenue from it.

The negative aspect is that because placebo and coincidence has always played some role, one could convince people that a remedy worked when in fact it didn’t. When you factor in that many are gullible, one simply needs to make sure it is promoted and marketed to net these groups, even if the remedy did not work. Often just making an outlandish claim with lots of bells and whistles would be enough for people to open their wallets.

Seems like much hasn’t changed since the 18th century, has it? Studies, research, trials, marketing, and promotion are inseparable elements of medicine today just as they were then. Driven by profit just like yesteryear. I could rail against Big Pharm, but that would be another article for another day.

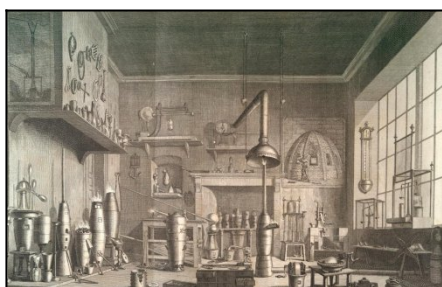
Let’s move on to some of the more fascinating aspects of historical medicine!

Earliest Beginnings

It is always said that the very first explorers to the New World were arriving for profit, glory and gold. We are aware that they were looking for fame, recognition, "immortality," fortune, spreading the "good" word, natural resources, etc. Often left out are the minor reasons for taking such a perilous journey across the Atlantic, one of those being the discovery of new herbs and plants for medicinal uses.

Tobacco stole the limelight and all the headlines in this department, but if you dig a little you'll find that plenty of profit was made with Sassafras, Jesuit's Bark from which quinine was extracted to treat Malaria, Guaiacum, and Peru balsam, amongst others.

By the 17th century more than 200 medicinal plants and herbs were uncovered from the New World. Most of these, like the ones mentioned above, were beneficial and either improved quality of life for those that used them, sped up the process of recovery or even provided a cure altogether. However, there were plenty that were disastrous and many had their ailments worsened or many actually died because of the "medicines."



*Engraving from William Lewis's book *Commercium Philosophico-Technicum*, circa 1764, showing an 18th-century chemical laboratory.*

By the 18th century there were many trying to crack into the profits. Since there hadn't yet been a wealth of accumulated knowledge there was a lot of experimentation and since no one wanted to share these profits, no one shared the remedies that really worked. In fact, if you were looking for healing you had to choose which type of healer to go to: chemist, apothecary, herbalist, homeopath, local shaman, family folk remedy.

The earliest modern equivalent of a pharmacist was the Apothecary, which has been around since at least 3,000 years BCE. Most cities in the Old World had an Apothecary – a healer who would not only provide you with remedies for ailments, but supply you with perfumes, refreshments, cosmetics or even general supplies. Sound familiar? That name brand pharmacy store is not a new idea!

Odd, unusual and often disgusting concoctions and methods of treatment

In the earliest days of medicines and treatment of ailments, some rather unusual beliefs and scientific ignorance lead to even stranger treatments. Some were steeped in ancient folk remedies or misunderstandings. The mere mention of ancient or medieval doctors usually conjures up images of leeches for bloodletting, trepanation (drilling into the skull), amputation of limbs without anesthesia, electric shock therapy or cocaine.

Many vintage photos depict a variety of colored leech jars, Posset pots, medicine spoons, and adverts for cocaine. Yes, cocaine was once one of the ingredients for Coca-Cola – it's not an urban legend. However, a disclaimer: many medicinal products carried cocaine back then and in the case of Coca-Cola it was in such a small amount that it barely merits mentioning. Bayer and many other companies would even put heroin in their medicines for coughs. One "Dr. Batty" even sold Asthma Cigarettes "For your health...and the temporary relief of paroxysms of asthma." Seems his surname was a fitting one.

In an attempt to see if anything would turn out a result, it seemed chemist, druggists, apothecaries and their ilk would place anything in their medicines in a desperate attempt to strike gold. Bone ground into powder, mercury, animal fat, arsenic, lead, dung, mold, urine and so on. It seemed there was nothing that shouldn't be considered. Ironically, in the right dosages some of these "silly" ingredients actually DID treat ailments.

Some of the more notable casualties of these odd treatments were George Washington whose bloodletting contributed to his death (40% of his blood was sucked out of him), Abraham Lincoln who spent his last days suffering with mercury poisoning which would likely have eventually taken his life as it likely did with author of Little Women, Louisa May Alcott, and Napoleon Bonaparte – who may or may not have been killed by the combination of arsenic and potassium tartrate used to induce vomiting, but caused a deadly potassium deficiency.

The first pharmacists

The pharmacist title came about with the advent of the very first license to be handed out in the New World, New Orleans to be exact. In 1769 Louisiana was considered "Franco-Spanish" as opposed to much of the nation which was British occupied and controlled. The Jesuits coming from the France and Spain to the New World made a concerted effort to improve the Old World system with some of the new plants and herbs utilized in local Amerindian folk applications.



Some rather unusual ingredients were included in yesteryear's

As is typical of the first centuries here, Spain, France and England competed in everything. They tried to best one another in every rung of society. The reason that the British apothecaries weren't quick to throw their hats into the pharmacist "ring" was because of their more skeptical nature and scientific lean.

After the Revolutionary war, defining regions as New France, New Spain or British controlled, began to thin. Things were thought of as "American" after the war and Americans would finally enter the world of pharmacy and do so with in a big way. In March of 1821, sixty-eight apothecaries assembled in Carpenter's Hall – the same place the Declaration of Independence was signed – and set up the Constitution of the first pharmaceutical association in the United States: the Philadelphia College of Pharmacy. The profession was not only born, but regulated, defined a strict code of ethics, and medicines were standardized.

The "father" of American pharmacy was William Procter, Jr. who was not only a graduate of the Philadelphia College of Pharmacy, but one who stayed on and taught there for more than two decades from 1846–1874. Without him there would be no American Pharmaceutical Association – he was instrumental in its founding, before becoming an officer, secretary and eventually president of the organization. He also wrote the very first, definitive textbook on the subject in 1844 called *Mohr, Redwood, and Procter's Practical Pharmacy*.

Growth of the Profession; The Industrial Revolution; Conclusion

In the decades that followed, Pharmacy schools would crop up around the nation, particularly in Boston and New York. As doctors began to gravitate and focus on pharmaceuticals, pharmacy gained legitimacy as a practice and the two began to merge. In the 1880s, pills, capsules and tablets became the preferred vehicle for medicines. These were not only

easier to take – many medicines were downright disgusting to take – but easier to produce, package and ship.



Chemists like this one in Manhattan offered medicine...and food, supplies, coffee and more. (Library of Congress)

When the Industrial Revolution arrived in America, mass production launched what would become “Big Pharm” by making it possible to produce enough medicine to surpass demand as well as be circulated far and wide – increasing revenue.

It seems both, that little and a lot, has changed in the pharmaceutical world. While today’s pharmacies mirror yesterdays in offering general supplies, refreshments, coffee, and many other unrelated goods, there are many ways that it has changed. We have stricter standards when it comes to the creation of new medicines, they undergo extensive and rigorous testing, and if taken as prescribed, much, much safer. Lastly, there is more culpability and liability involved with meting out drugs to the general populace.

Unfortunately, it can’t be said that they are without dangers. There is rarely an advert on TV where there isn’t a disclaimer for the many side effects that can result from taking the medication, including death. To be fair, this disclaimer is a bit hyperbolic in the sense that they have to mention each side effect reported during clinical regardless of its

frequency, whether it was actually a result of the medicine itself, or there is a bit of placebo or coincidence.

Often people will attribute an ailment to something even if there is no real connection to it, in the same way that when you buy a particular brand of car, you begin to notice that brand more often. Or when you begin to take a medicine you hyper-focus on every single sensation and attribute it to the medicine.

The future of medicine is looking towards stem cell research, nanotechnology, gene therapy and manipulation and lab grown organs. When these things become prevalent, people will look less and less to drugs and medicines for ailments. Though there will always be hoaxers, charlatans and profiteers hawking their wares and promises...because there will always be a gullible mass to buy into them – literally and figuratively.

Halloween History in New England: The Dover Demon, Leatherman, Bennington Monster and other creepy denizens

There is a debate on whether Halloween's origins lie with ancient Celts (or going back even further to Babylonians) or it is purely a Christian holiday. Some say it was a holiday stolen from Pagans and adopted by Christians to ease the

process of conversion. I'd rather follow the old adage "If you want to keep your friends, avoid discussion of politics and religion."

Ultimately, regardless of its origin, it has morphed into the consumption holiday that we have today – most have no idea about its origins and/or find it unimportant. It's certainly not a necessary ingredient to celebrating it. It can be celebrated as an American holiday or a secular one, just as Christmas or Easter are. In fact, I think it's safe to say that there is only a small minority that actually celebrates Halloween as a religious holiday.

If you are interested in the origins and perhaps the debate, the information is ubiquitous and the easily accessed. I'd rather focus on its history here in New England – this isn't "hard" history, it's light and tasty. A real treat – pardon the pun.

Of Samhain; Origins of Trick-Or-Treating

The holiday was practiced by the Celts as Samhain and there are aspects of this observation that are still practiced today like the bobbing for apples, wearing of costumes or making jack 'o lanterns – made from potatoes or turnips.



Halloween can trace its origins back to Europe, particularly Ireland and the Celtic celebration of Samhain.

When the potato famine arrived in Ireland in 1845, many left

the Emerald Isle and came to America bringing many of Samhain's traditions. Before this time, you wouldn't have seen anything that resembled Hallows' Evening or Hallowe'en.

The "trick" aspect to trick-or-treat refers to the pranks that mischievous leprechauns or other *fae* would practice on their victims. The "treat" aspect is manifold: it has its roots in food offerings left out for visiting ghosts so they wouldn't kill the livestock or curse the household, because beggars would be attracted to these celebrations and people in a festive mood are more prone to make donations, and eventually Christians would offer soul-cakes.

There seems to be a misunderstanding about whether this holiday was "allowed" by the religious leaders in America. The answer is as the Germans would say "jein." Yes and no. Christianity as we know can be quite diverse. Catholics were OK with the holiday, and in fact, practiced a three version of the holiday called "Allhallowtide" where the faithful would honor and remember martyrs, lost loved ones and saints – which is why it is sometimes called All Saints' Eve.

While Catholics embraced or observed the holiday, depending on your point of view, many Protestants were not happy at all about it. The difference lay in the belief among these Protestants that returning souls could not come from Purgatory to heaven. Eventually, the sheer number of Catholics coming from the Old World outnumbered those religious folk that did not observe the holiday and it grew in popularity.

Melon Heads

No, not your little brother. This legend shared in Michigan, Ohio, and Connecticut. How? No one knows why they cropped up in three unconnected states.



*The Melon Head legend can be found in three different states.
(WeirdUS.com)*

Who are they? They are reclusive folks with misshapen heads and slender out-of-proportion bodies. The debate is whether they are inbred, a failed government experiment, escapees from a mental hospital or people with hydrocephalus. One thing that isn't debated, is these feral mutants won't hesitate to attack you on any foray into the woods.

The legend is so common-place in Connecticut that not only can people tell you the areas that you will encounter them, but can narrow it down to specific streets, like Saw Mill City Road in Shelton or Marginal Road in New Haven. Want more Melon Heads? There's quite a bit of information to be found online and there's even an eponymous movie.

Pigman of Devil's Washboard

With a name like "Devil's Washboard" it seems like it's sort of mandatory to have some creepy legend attached to it. Imagine a shaved head person with a pig's snout that seems allergic to clothing. He likes to run around Northfield, Vermont squealing – preferably with an ax, but has no qualms about biting you.

Since the legend began sometime in the 1950s it's had a lot of time to morph and change. In some variants, he is covered in white fur and in others he is a serial killer who runs around

with a decayed, rotten pig's skull for a mask. No thanks.

He seems to single out teenage couples. Like many of these legends, they seem to be a creative attempt to discourage teenagers from hanky-panky. If you're a girl, you're somewhat safe: he seems to target boyfriends and leave girls screaming. We don't know if they were screaming because of the pigman, or that they are happy they finally got rid of lead weight. Even the police with K9s have given him chase.

Let's hope he stays in Vermont.

Derry Fairy

The Derry Fairy was first revealed to the world by a Derry, New Hampshire man in the 1950s who went into the woods to harvest some Christmas trees to sell. He ran into a 2' tall little green man, with long, droopy ears, reptilian eyes and wrinkly skin.



The Derry Fairy: a creepier, scarier version of E.T.
(GhostHunters.org)

After a few moments of staring, both decided to carry about their business – keeping an eye on one another.

The unnamed man had some time to think. Whether for fame, because he wanted a new pet or because no one would believe him, he decided to tackle the little green man and take him home. "I'm going to love him, squeeze him and hug him and call him George." he must of thought.

Problem was that after he grabbed George, he let out a shrill scream that was so piercing that it stopped him in his tracks and made him unsettled. This allowed George to escape and ne'er be seen again.

Dover Demon

The Dover Demon is a similar legend from here in Massachusetts – this one from the late 1970s. This one started when 17-year-old young man was driving along minding his business when he spots a creature standing on a mortar-less wall. Like the Derry Fairy, he had wrinkly skin, weird eyes but the difference was that the Dover Demon wasn't 2' tall, he was more like 9' or 10' feet tall and had tendril-like fingers. Great – I could beat up George, but think my chances are much slimmer with his dad.

Soon many sightings followed. Some even swore "...on a stack of bibles." Of course, the Dover Demon was explained away as a moose, foal or prank. Because we all know how hard it is to tell the difference between a moose and a humanoid. Sometimes I even mistake people for moose, but that's another story.

Bennington Monster

Bennington, Vermont seems to be a sort of magnet for the supernatural, legends, and myths. Many have heard of the Bennington Triangle – an area of southern Vermont where many people went missing from the 1920s through the 1950s. Maybe related, but perhaps not: the Bennington Monster.

This guy is the quintessential Sasquatch or Bigfoot. He's the New England version with a far more boring moniker. This one goes as far back to the 19th century when the stagecoach was utilized as a common mode of transport. The story goes that a stagecoach broke down and when the coachman climb downed to work on some repairs, he noticed a massive footprint.



*Does New England have
its own version of
Sasquatch?
(sasquatchchronicles.c
om)*

150 years later, he would have watched enough movies to know that this usually is a misdirection, setting you up for an ambush. Since Netflix hadn't been invented yet, he was ambushed. Out came the Bennington Monster – all hair covered 7' of him. Luckily for this group, the monster just took his frustrations out on the couch and pounded on it, flipped it over and then ran back into the woods where only his piercing eyes could be seen watching over them.

Since that time, he has been “spotted” over and over again. Like all Sasquatch-like creatures, he manages to continue to elude capture or even a clear photograph. Likely he was just Uncle Steve – the one who looks like he's wearing a sweater, even when he's shirtless. No, wait – I think I'm getting the hang of dismissing these legends: he was a moose!

Halloween Connection has been

keeping boos and ghouls in good spirits year after year



Halloween Connection has two superstores, one in New Bedford and another in Taunton.

Pop-up stores come and go, often in different locations, under different names. They always have the sort of feel that someone is having a seasonal project to make some extra money. Who is this guy or gal? Did this stuff fall off of a truck? Did a factory in China decided to cut its prices?

There IS a seasonal pop-up store that is the direct opposite of this. The Halloween Connection is owned and operated by local Walter Mandeville who also owns Unplugged Toys in the Dartmouth Mall. See a theme here? Walter's fondest memories in life drive him – memories of childhood. He gets a particular enjoyment seeing the new generation of kids walking in those same footsteps. He finds it highly rewarding to know that he is helping provide the necessary ingredients for some happy childhood memories.



*You'll find every
possible
Halloween prop
under the sun...er,
full moon.*

The Halloween Connection, which has two locations -966 Kings Highway in New Bedford and 2 Galleria Mall Drive in Taunton – has been coming back year after year. 5 years running at these locations to be precise, though Halloween Connection has been around a few years more. This is no extra project – this is the career choice and livelihood of many.

Walter found his inspiration for the stores in the great success he would have throwing his own Halloween parties. He LOVES the holiday – the costumes, the role-playing, the props, the laughter and screams. It seemed opening a store would be the natural next step, and he began to use a few locations before settling permanently at the current locations.

Each Halloween, Walter would dedicate his time, money and lots of hard-work to make a party to remember. To fund his obsession and try to make each subsequent celebration a bigger, better one, he began to sell props and decor. The more he would sell, the more he would buy. Each season he would buy something different and learned the ins-and-outs on hundreds of different props, costumes and accouterments. Folks ranted and raved about the festive shin-digs and the rest is history.

So why in tarnation should you head to Halloween Connection this year? Halloween Connection is locally owned for one. The money you spend here won't be benefiting some corporate headquarters in another state – it'll benefit a staff and owners, all of whom are local.



Scary or creepy not your "thing"? You can find many alternative options – be a princess or a queen!

Yeah, yeah – that's all wishy-washy and trendy some of you will say: tell us something that matters. Well, how about this: the Halloween Connection has a bigger store and larger selection than anything you will see in a large, mega-chain store or any other pop-up store. They offer a much bigger selection on kids, women and men's costumes, as well as accessories, masks, make-up/appliances, designer shoes, 70+ styles of contact to choose from and so much more. Top brands from industry leaders like Disney, In Character, Disguise, California Costume Collections, Inc., Dream Girl, Fun World and more.

One of the aspects of the Halloween Connection superstores that people have grown to love and has contributed to their popularity is that you can actually try the costumes on *before* you purchase them. There's no going home to try them on and finding out something doesn't fit. No return trip for exchanges!

And the bottom line? Yes, the prices – fret not. They won't

make you scream and remind you of the real horrors of Halloween: the amount of money you have to spend. They are as affordable or in most cases beat the socks off the prices you see in the big stores. You won't have any nightmares, night terrors or sleep paralysis!



*These guys and gals
LOVE Halloween and
what they do!*

The staff at both stores is always a returning one. Who wouldn't return when your job is working at a store filled with fun? Each person is there because they love the holiday and everything about it. They love that their "uniform" is a costume and that they get to help kids and adults alike find that perfect costume and one that fits their budget – it's one smiling face after the other.

Because the superstores have costumes for ALL ages, including infants and adult-themes, it means you can bring the entire family to one spot and find costumes for everyone. Having a party? Not dressing up and are a yard or home decorator? You will be shocked by the sheer variety of props and decorations. Gravestones, fog machines, skeletons, backdrops, cut-outs, lighting, special effects, etc.

It will scramble your brains...if the undead didn't eat them yet.

Halloween Connection

966 Kings Hwy, Kings Plaza, New Bedford, MA 02745

2 Galleria Mall Dr, Taunton, MA 02780

New Bedford Phone: (508) 991-2900

Taunton Phone: (508) 821-7709

Email: halloweenconnection@yahoo.com

Taunton Hours: Monday-Saturday 10am-9pm and Sundays 12-6pm

New Bedford Hours: Similar to Taunton's, but soon changing.

Best to call the store.

Facebook: facebook.com/Halloween-Connection-151792608185407/timeline/

Website: hhalloweenconnection.net/

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10 Ghoulishly Creative Halloween Ideas for the Yard or Home

If you have some dolls, ketchup and a little bit of imagination you can have a creepy yard!

With Halloween just around the corner, it's time to consider decorating our yards, windows, porches, walkways, etc. to make sure the local kids have a positive blast Trick or Treating this year. It seemed that the easy, lazy way to celebrate

Hallow's Eve was to just stop by a chain store and grab a few bags of candy, toss them in a bowl and mete it out when the kids rang.



Easy to make, fun to eat.

Boring!

I'm happy that the "Tricking" aspect of the holiday has had a sort of revival these past years. I am seeing bigger, more creative, displays. More holiday spirit. Some are so elaborate they could charge an admission fee!

If you're just stopping by the pharmacy to grab a few bags of candy then this isn't for you. Keep your boo-ring self away! For those of you who have loads of Halloween spirit, this article is for you. I'll share some of the best ideas I have seen in local yards or online, so you can add a little extra to your decorations. Some are incredibly cheap, others will take a bit of money to pull off – it just comes down to how much spirit you have. Pardon the pun.

Dismembered Digits

Use some hot dogs or cocktail wieners, and cleverly slice them up to resemble the wrinkles on knuckles. Shape some onion slices and glue them onto the "fingers" with some pasta sauce

and serve! Make them really fun, by putting them in a hot dog bun before serving.

Zombie Heads from Food

All you need for this one is some pasta for hair and the base, a bunch of mozzarella cheese to sculpt the face, a few olives for eyes, peeled tomato chunks for the nose, and either tic-tacs or chiclets for teeth. Voila – very creepy!

Have a Gruesome Barbecue

Almost everyone has a grill. Unhook the propane tank, drag it out. Use some rubber body parts or create some eyeballs or fingers with some arts and crafts or the hot dogs or pasta and cheese that we mentioned above.



Serve this for actual dinner or use as a display in your yard or home.

Add a little extra, by writing up a menu complete with prices. Maybe even have a zombie waitress offering to serve the boos and ghouls.

Creative Signs

Don't have a heck of a lot of money to spend or time to create? If you have a tractor, excavator, backhoe or even a few shovels, you can place a sign like the one in the photo. "Halloween Special: bodies buried \$5. Buried very deep: \$10." Let your imagination run wild and you can come up with something even better, even let the kids get involved and you can litter the yard with signs to strike terror into the local trick-or-treaters – perhaps even straighten out the annoying

neighbor.

Skeleton Invasion

Over the years, you may have accumulated the popular Halloween skeleton. Perhaps you can borrow a few from the neighbor. Attach them to the house with some nails or heavy staples, so it looks like they are climbing up the side and trying to get into the house through the windows. Even one skeleton will look great!

Horrible Pumpkins

Instead of the classic pumpkin, you can make a vomit pumpkin that will be a conversation piece for the kids coming towards the house. Simply make a larger mouth and instead of clearing out the inside of the pumpkin, pull it all out through its mouth – spill the contents down a step or two.

Creative Uses of Clothing

Take some old shoes and pants, place some sticks through the legs to add some structure. Stuff with rags and/or hay. Place upside down so that all that is seen is from the waist down and it looks like the rest of the body is stuck underground. Inversely, if you have more money or “gear” you can do just the upper body and make it look like the lower body is underground and this person or creature is crawling out.



Everyone has a grill – head to the local novelty store or one of the seasonal Halloween store for

*body parts. Add a menu
and let 'er rip!*

If you have a bunch of white pillow cases or sheets, make a circle of half a dozen ghosts. Add some branches or twigs underneath, with balloons for heads and make it look like they are holding hands.

Creepy Dolls

Have a bunch of dolls in the attic or cellar. Pull them out, remove a head here, a limb or eye there. Put some fake blood and wounds on them and place a bunch of them in the yard standing up or beckoning trick-or-treaters.

Crow Wreath

The dollar stores have crows for cheap. You can glue them in a circle. Place a few eyeballs or hot dogs fingers within the circle. Attach to your door.

Use Peppers instead of Pumpkins

Want a cheaper, cleaner alternative to pumpkins? Use yellow, green, red and orange peppers. Cut the top so it's a lid, just like you would with pumpkins. Carve a face just like usual.

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Newsbreak offers thousands of magazine titles, trading cards, maps, lottery, tobacco products and more



Newsbreak offers two locations, New Bedford and Swansea, where you can find thousands of magazine titles, trading cards, lotto, comic books, tobacco products and more.

Sure, we live in a digital age. Many of us are connected at all times – to our smart phones, laptops or tablets. When we want information, we simply swipe and start typing. There's so much information, that you can easily get swept up and find yourself in a completely unrelated topic and 20 minutes have passed.

Who hasn't started searching for "chicken recipe" and found themselves watching videos of fail compilations, replete with people slipping, falling, and missing piñatas and whacking

crotches? And reading material is easy to come by. There's certainly not a want for it.

Now you can color me old-fashioned, but I love to sit down to a good book or magazine. I like not having to search for 15 minutes to narrow down the information I need, and hoping there isn't a dropped signal interrupting my queries.



Newsbreak carries all your favorite sports and non-sports trading cards including Upper Deck, Topps, Pokémon, Benchwarmers, Score, Bowman, Magic, and more.

I like the break from technology. I like the disconnect. I like the feel of the pages, getting the slight smudge of dark ink on my fingers, and even the aroma. I know I'm not alone.

My go-to spot for magazines and a place I love dearly, since I am an avid reader, is Newsbreak at 53 Pope's Island. Or as we say colloquially: "The magazine store on the bridge."

There's an analogy here with the "starting to search for one thing and 20 minutes later, you're onto an unrelated topic." Often I'll go in to get a Science magazine or National

Geographic and 15 minutes later, I'm holding a magazine on reptilians having built Atlantis. How did that happen?! With over 5,000 magazine titles, this is an easy thing to do. There seems to not only be a magazine for every imaginable niche, but there seem to be many to choose from within that tiny niche.

Walking through Newsbreak is like being in a library -so much so that it's not uncommon to hear people shush a companion or child they are with and forcing them to whisper. The selection is massive and current – it's what Newsbreak is known for and what President, Jim Stanton, is particularly proud of.

That selection includes international magazines in a myriad of languages. There are a score of different Fantasy Football publications, Knitting, Crafting, Science, Archaeology, adult, etc., if you can imagine it, there are a few – or even many – magazines covering it. In fact, if you don't see it, just let someone on staff know, and they will order it for you!

What many people don't know is that Newsbreak offers more than magazines. They have a selection of greeting cards, maps, sport and non-sport trading cards including Upper Deck, Topps, Pokemon, Benchwarmers, Score, Bowman, Magic, and more. You can get lottery tickets, scratch tickets, tobacco products, and of course, gift certificates.



You name it, Newsbreak carries it. If they don't have it, they'll order it!

In all the years, I have visited Newsbreak – intentionally or unintentionally – when the bridge “gets” me, I have always found that whomever is behind the counter is friendly and knows the store and titles well. If I’m looking for something obscure, perhaps looking for something to help my research on an article, the staff often replies with an instant answer of exactly where the article is. At times, they have been so knowledgeable that they go beyond just point out where the title is, but they have even recommended a specific title to help me out.

The point being that in spite of the fact that Newsbreak can be said to be a chain – it has two locations, the flagship in Swansea near the mall has been around for 30 years – there is a very mom-and-pop, local atmosphere. My kind of thing.

Check out Newsbreak’s Facebook page below – they often post about specials or special events, like the annual FREE Comic Book Day, or FREE Hockey card day.

So if you are a bit old-fashioned like me, picked up a new hobby and looking for literature, or maybe just got caught on the bridge, take a stop by Newsbreak and browse. You’ll be glad you did. If you see a Neanderthal browsing the MMA, Linux, archaeology or “reptilians built Atlantis” section, that’s me. Say “Hi!” but don’t say it loudly and make me hush you!

Newsbreak

53 Pope’s Island

New Bedford, Massachusetts

New Bedford Phone: 508-997-NEWS (6397)

Swansea Phone: (508) 675-9380

EMail: newsbreak@cox.net

Hours of Operation:

Mon-Sat: 7:00am-9:00pm

Sun: 7:00am-6:00pm

Facebook: facebook.com/NewsbreakInc?rf=121407877873440

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Flour Girls Baking Co. a quintessential café that offers sweets, breakfast and lunch with heapings of love



The colorful menu at Flour Girls is symbolic of the personalities behind the counter.

I'll just be up front and state that Flour Girls Baking Co. in Fairhaven is one of my favorite spots on planet earth. No need for subterfuge or clever, creative writing that takes a convoluted path to tell you whether a place is worthy of garnering our attention or not. I love it. I love the food, staff, and ambience.

It wasn't always so – or I should say in its previous incarnation under a completely different owner and name, it wasn't the special place it is today. Back then I was often treated like I was bothering the staff when I walked in. Once, a barista sighed when I approached the counter and just glared at me without saying a word. Geez – she never saw a Neanderthal order an espresso before?

It was easy to let go of that place, as many people did – apparently enough people had a bad enough experience that it closed its doors. I want those of you who had a bad experience with the previous café to know: Flour Girls has absolutely no association with that place. Nothing. Nada. Nichts.



While famous for their sweets, Flour Girls offers a full menu of breakfast items, sandwiches, soups and more.

Current owner Jill Houck took over the location in December 2012 and turned that boat around with the help of effervescent, affable manager Corrie McCue. Today Flour Girls has atmosphere: “eclectic-comfortable yet with an interesting décor” as Jill would describe it. It has friendly faces that often rib you in jest and always call you by your name. While you are waiting for your coffee or meal, you are guaranteed to overhear some pretty funny banter between the staff and customers. You will be entertained or leave with a smile on your face.

It's that kind of place. This isn't something forced or fake: these gals all love what they are doing. You can't fake passion.

As the name of the business suggests, you will find mind-boggingly delicious, natural baked goodies like cookies, bars, sweet treats, cakes and cupcakes. They will tempt you, call your name and tell you that they are good for your soul.

Of course, Flour Girls also offers bagels, muffins, scones (my FAVORITE), croissants, etc. I could try to utilize some fancy-schmancy adjectives to describe these mouth-watering creations and try to get you salivating – but, the pictures will be far more effective than any creative writing that I can whip up. I dare you to look at these pictures and not think to yourself “Oh, I gotta have that!”

Of course all the café standards are present: there is coffee, cappuccino, espresso, tea, latte and smoothies made from scratch, but beyond that they offer a full menu of breakfast and lunch items. This is something that many people are surprised about when I tell them. Well, “unsurprise” yourself and make haste to Flour Girl for breakfast or lunch.



Owner Jill Houck has a genuine passion for cooking and putting smiles on faces, including her own.

One of my particular favorites is **The Vermonter** – smoked

turkey, Vermont cheddar cheese, bacon, red onion, green apple, hot pressed to 'gooey perfection.' Madness.

The Grampy consists of "straight up ham 'n cheese, hot pressed (or not) with lettuce and tomato. The popular **Tammy** is pastrami, Swiss cheese, sauerkraut and Russian dressing, hot pressed on wheat. If you are a "*Where's the beef?*" kind of guy or gal, you'll certainly want to have a go at the B² – roast beef, Boursin cheese, with red onion, hot pressed and *delicious*.

A vegetarian (or not)? No problem, dive right into the hearty **Veggie Wrap** with hummus, black bean salad, loaded with veggies and feta. A vegan? Order the Veggie Wrap without the feta. If you're a meat lover, you won't even notice the lack of the meat, and you won't miss it. Don't worry...they won't tell any of your mates that you ate hummus.

Best of all, is that the menu consists of fresh ingredients which means no preservatives. Whatever your lifestyle, the Flour Girls will accommodate it gladly – without sighing! Well, maybe they'll sigh, but they'll do it with a smile and a poke.

Whether you are a vegan, vegetarian, have allergies, prefer gluten-free, want soy instead of dairy, simply let them know. I am there enough to overhear some insanelly, convoluted requests from customers and ever single time these requests are taken gladly and nailed. I'm one of those who would never have the patience, but apparently the Flour Girls have it in spades.

When I asked Jill what her inspiration for starting a café was, without hesitation she had an answer...or rather a quip: "I had some great influences in my family growing up – both in the business and baking worlds. I have no formal training...[I'm] self-taught. Or maybe I'm just crazy?" Anyone who is a regular, can hear Jill's voice in their heads while

reading those words. *That's* quintessential Jill.



*Look up, down,
left or right:
there's something
tempting!*

It just comes down to the fact that Jill finds that cooking food with love and sharing it with people to be exceedingly rewarding and it certainly comes through.

While I feel the images will serve you in a far superior fashion than my cruddy writing will, I have to mention a particular favorite of the locals: the Ginger-Molasses cookie. While she switches up the cookie flavors, this cookie is making 'em rabid. Trust me, have one or six.

To the right of the counter is a board which lists that day or week's specials, whether it's the aforementioned cookie flavor, the soups which are so good that she sells out of it every time, or the creative sandwich and coffee specials. Always keep an eye out. Remember it's to the right of the counter and small enough to miss.

The Flour Girls' offerings can also be had if you are lucky enough to track down the Flour Girls Sweet Truck – the first truck of its kind on the South Coast and is available for hire at private parties and events from Cape Cod to Boston to Providence. If you want to see where the sweet truck is or

heading to, just follow the Flour Girls Twitter – the link is provided below. If you want the truck to stop by your place of business, you can make a request here.

If you're wondering if you can have the Flour Girls cater that special birthday party, anniversary, reception or wedding – yes, you can! They cater. Lastly, there is a Shop & Ship section on their website where you can have select items mailed to you.

The Flour Girls is a spot I am at regularly – lest I get an ear beating. One time deservedly so, when I “chewed and screwed.” Jokes about calling SWAT or the Sheriff circulated for a while as did mention to the rest of the staff to keep an eye on me. I love the various, distinct personalities of everyone that works at Flour Girls as much as I love the breakfast, lunch in general and the specifically, the scones.

If you see a Neanderthal using his left thumb and right pointer finger to type on a laptop, that's me. Be sure to say “Hi! or help Jill tackle me the next time I try to chew and screw.

Flour Girls Baking Company LLC

230 Huttleston Avenue

Fairhaven, Massachusetts

Phone: (774) 202-5884

Email: Jill@flourgirls bakingco.com

Hours of Operation:

Mon-Fri: 7:00am-4:00pm

Sat: 8:00am-4:00pm

Sun: 8:00am-2:00pm

Facebook: facebook.com/FlourGirlsBakingCo

Twitter: twitter.com/FlourGirlsTreat

Instagram: instagram.com/flourgirls bakingco/

Website: flourgirls bakingco.com/

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Donald J. Medeiros Insurance Agency – providing South Coast locals with all their personal and business needs for over two decades



The helpful people at Donald J. Medieros Insurance Agency at 154 Rhode Island Avenue, Fall River have well over 20 years of experience helping people with their insurance needs.

In this day and age we are virtually beaten over the head when it comes to insurance. It seems one thing insurance companies do well and frequently is advertise.

You can't turn on the television or radio and not hear an advert. Drive down the road and you'll encounter billboards. Check the mail and you'll have sales pitches waiting for you. Go online and deal with pop-ups, and if you make the grave mistake of ever requesting a quote, you can expect snail mail and spam for the rest of your life.

I made the mistake of just requesting a quote from one of those big online companies whose commercials are always on television. Apparently, the fine print – which I must have missed – contained an agreement to receive email messages and mail. I unsubscribed to the email, but to get the snail mail to stop, I had to call them – also part of their evil plan. Call in to cancel and they pitch you again. Clever.



Scores of local businesses on the South Coast – likely places you frequent, like the Flint Fish Market – trust Donald and his stuff with

their livelihoods.

The good part about this glut of insurance companies, is that the competition drives the rates down. Often, simply telling your current provider that you are considering jumping ship will elicit a plea to stay. They'll offer you a reduced rate. Not only does that leave a bad taste in one's mouth – if they could make such a large drop and still make a profit, why wasn't that the original rate in the first place?

So, with rates a slow as they are going to get, what is the difference between the companies and their plans? What should the determining factor or factors be when making the decision to go with one insurance company over the other?

If all prices are equal or within the same ballpark, the difference – a defining one – is choosing one that is local, you see face to face, and they know your name – you aren't customer #334AE3. These factors alone make it worth paying a little more, if one has to. How local? You can walk in and speak Portuguese!

But you don't have to. Donald J. Medeiros Insurance Agency is a local company that offers rates that compete with all of the mega insurance agencies. But you also have a name, support local, and since they are so accessible, you have a history based on a *relationship*. Minus the spam and endless mailbox fodder that is first world extortion to get you sign up.

How about getting someone to sign up for insurance, because of the rates, the service, and the relationship instead of cute marketing? Imagine that!?



Can you imagine footing this bill out of your own wallet, because of a lack of insurance or proper amounts of coverage?

Donald J. Medeiros Insurance Agency is a full service agency that specializes in providing personal & commercial insurance for all of Massachusetts, Rhode Island & New Hampshire. Whether it's auto, boat or home insurance policies, business or commercial. Located in Fall River, the company consists of its eponymous owner/president, Personal Lines Manager, Melinda Pedro and the Commercial Lines Manager, Heather Williamson.

What people particularly enjoy about choosing a local company is that they get to have a face-to-face discussion with a provider who has a vested interest in helping you make some smart choices for your coverage, even offering financial planning. They know that the best way to have a successful insurance agency is to have a happy customer who spreads their satisfaction by word-of-mouth, not some witty marketing. Mr. Medeiros and his staff they prefer to prove it through their friendly, professional service, instead of having the commercials drive any profit.

Before any of these e-companies took over the television and radio waves, and the internet, Mr. Medeiros was already an experienced insurance agent, having started his career with Mass Mutual Life Insurance well over two decades ago. After a few years with that company, he decided to strike out on his own. Spend two minutes with Donald and you'll see that he is

just a people lover. He is affable, courteous and thrives off of helping people with their insurance needs.

When I asked him if there were moments that he has that make him glad he is doing this for a living, he wasted no time in saying " when I get a personal note from someone telling me about how pleased they were with our service and the person that helped them.



*Everyone at
Donald J.
Medieros
Insurance Agency
loves what they
do!*

That's when I do say that to myself. And I'm happy to say that it does happen often enough." Can you picture a service representative from one of the big companies saying this? "Hi #7D7R3, you really made my day for choosing E-Guano." Gee, thanks Twiki.

If you are on the search for personal rates – whether for your car, home, umbrella, tenants, boat or even a recreational vehicle, they have something for you. Own a business? You can get affordable rates for liability, property, commercial auto, workers' compensation or bonds – that won't require you digging deep into your profits to have.

If you would like a quote – and one that isn't followed up with an obligation, tons of snail mail or hundreds of spam mails – you can get one right online. For automobile insurance you can get a FREE quote here and for home insurance, you can get a quote here. If you want quotes for other insurances or perhaps want more information, their website is a wealth of information and is provided below.

Of course, there is no better way than communicating directly via a phone call or even having a face-to-face meeting. Spend a few minutes in conversation with Donald, Melinda, Heather or anyone else on staff and you'll be glad you did. We promise there is no one named Flo that works there.

Donald J. Medeiros Insurance Agency

154 Rhode Island Avenue

Fall River, Massachusetts

Phone: (508) 678-1271

Email: <http://www.donmedeirosinsurance.com/contact-us/>

Hours of Operation:

Mon-Fri: 8:30am-5:00pm

Facebook: [facebook.com/donmedeiros](https://www.facebook.com/donmedeiros)

Website: [donmedeirosinsurance.com/](http://www.donmedeirosinsurance.com/)

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Barcelos Bakery: a genuine family-owned and operated bakery that offers traditional Portuguese recipes in a modern setting



Pastries, cakes, and other desserts that looks so amazing you won't want to ruin them by eating them...ok, you will.

I'm a foodie through and through. I don't have a heck of a lot of vices, so this is one of the guilty pleasures that I relish – pardon the pun. Having lived and traveled throughout this country and Europe in my younger years, I've been fortunate to see what many different communities offer in terms of ethnic food.

One thing we locals take for granted is the Portuguese community – the Fado, Festas and food, seem “normal” to us. We've grown up on it, we've always been around it. It wasn't until I first moved out of the area that I discovered with great horror that the rest of the country (outside a few

pockets) has absolutely no idea what linguica or chouriço is. They've never had carne de espeto, bifanas, or caldo verde. Never a pop, feijoada or Pastel de nata. At best, someone has heard of and perhaps sampled bacalhau – but, that's a universal food across many cultures.



A smiling face makes everything taste better.

Can you imagine life without these things? I can't.

When I say take it for granted, I mean we don't give it much thought. It's ubiquitous on the South Coast. The region covering New Bedford to Fall River has all the Portuguese food we'll ever need. However, when you move to another state or country, it won't take but a month or so before you begin to crave all things Portuguese.

One of my favorite things to do is visit the Portuguese bakeries and cafes. Stepping into one is like stepping back into America in the 1950s or 1960s. It was more common to see family shops – where often the husband and wife who owned the shops would be the only employees and even the kids would put in a few hours after school. Back then America ate at home and cooked regularly. These days it's not altogether uncommon for households to spend more days eating out than they do sitting around a dinner table eating a home-cooked meal. America is changing.

So when I step into these bakeries and cafes, I feel like I'm stepping into that era. The Portuguese bakeries are often run

by families and frequented by local Portuguese. Typically they are modeled after the cafes in Europe and almost always Portuguese will be heard in lieu of English. I feel like I'm back in Europe all over again.

The Family Background; Origins of Barcelos Bakery

One of the spots that is the quintessential cafe/bakery in that region from New Bedford to Fall River, is Barcelos Bakery, owned and operated by Antonio Rodrigues and his wife Sara. Antonio is the pastry, chef, and all-around handy-man and Sara is the front end, handling customers, or anything else including lending Antonio a hand whipping up your favorite Portuguese pastries. Their daughters Sara and Nichole have been working in the bakery in some capacity since they were 4 years of age, learning how to make all the pastries that dad creates on a daily basis.



Whether for breakfast, lunch, snacks, or other repast, you'll be happy, happy.

Antonio has been in a bakery all his working life. When he arrived to America at 16 years of age, he went straight to work in local bakeries. This is where he met his soon-to-be wife Sara. They talked for years about owning their own bakery someday and after they were married, they revisited the idea. A little inspiration and a lot of perspiration later, they turned that dream into a reality.

Now they are 11 years on – the first ten right next door to

where they are currently, the old Ventura Pharmacy. There's no secret to their success: they are well-known to their regulars for pouring their heart and souls into what they are doing. This has allowed them to actually purchase the building where they are now and completely renovate it over a three year period. Yes, "Tony" in true handy-man tradition, did virtually all the work, from carpentry and sheet rock, to painting and tiling. Nothing puts a bill of ownership on something more than building it yourself.

They didn't let go of their first spot though: they turned into a lounge and private function room. These days, they get so busy that often people spill over into this area. Barcelos Bakery epitomizes the aforementioned spots that really make one feel like they've been zipped away to a European Cafe.

The white brick fireplace is a nice contrast to the dark hardwood tables and chairs, the flooring consists of white floor tiles, and one aspect of the dining area that I am a massive fan of is the vintage tin, artisan ceiling – there are many places in downtown New Bedford that have these ornate ceilings that harken back to the 19th century, when craftsman took great pride in detailing their stonework, carpentry and metal-smithing.

It's little details like this that evoke the rhetorical question "If they put that much effort and attention into something relatively unimportant and mundane, how much will they apply that to what they are passionate about?"

The mouth-watering fare

Yes, let's cover what they are passionate about: pastries, sandwiches, and Portuguese delicacies from both the "islands" and the continent. Sure, they have the cafe staples that you'll find just about anywhere – the donuts, cupcakes and cakes – but they have those favorites that those of us who grew up in the area salivate over, like Malassadas. One of my all-time favorites is the Queijadas de Nata or custard cups:

creamy custard sweetened just enough, surface charred just enough, in a perfectly cooked, flaky pastry shell. It'll only take one or five with an espresso to whisk me away to happy land.



Everything, like these Queijadas de Nata, is made from scratch with love.

The very traditional Azorean treat *Queijadas de feijao* is a bean tart, that is incredibly popular and for good reason: it's another example of treat that is balanced in sweetness and tartness. While the flavor profile is complex, if you pored over the recipe, you'd be stunned: beans, sugar, eggs, margarine. Love these.

Barcelos Bakery has all varieties of fresh baked breads imaginable, like Pao de Avó, Brazilian rolls, Vienna bread, and of course, sweet bread, including a coconut version. All versions of caffeinated beverages from tea, coffee, and cappuccino, to espresso or Galão. Got a large appetite? Barcelos Bakery serves breakfast and not just your traditional bacon and eggs, but a European breakfast. For example, you can get that coffee (or if you are wiser, smarter, and better looking, an espresso) with ham, Portuguese cheese, or *Presutto Corisco* sandwich (fresh goat cheese with pepper). Yum.

If you're off to a late start, or perhaps working and ready for lunch Barcelos Bakery has more favorites for you: bifana, caçoila, Mortadella & Swiss or chouriço and peppers sandwich. Codfish plates, pasta salad, croquettes, Portuguese tuna salad and more.

The Chicken Noodle Soup, *caldo verde* or kale soup are great for any time of year, but perfect for Autumn. Every day these soups are made from scratch, like *everything* made at Barcelos Bakery and you can taste the difference.

Closing

At the end of the day, you may feel that many of the Portuguese bakeries are similar and love them all. What makes "Barcelos" special and worth a visit is the immediate and extended family. Just look at Facebook pictures and see all the smiling faces – it's as warm and friendly of a spot as you'll find on the South Coast. Even though it's been over a decade, Sara and Tony still feel that they are living their dream and can barely believe it. It comes through in the food and in the service.

Barcelos Bakery is one of the best kept secrets on the South Coast, and hopefully we don't ruin it for the regulars, who likely want to keep it that way!

Barcelos Bakery

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Hours of Operation:

Mon-Sun: 5:00 am-8:00 pm

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