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SPORTS, 1B

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The Herald News

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CITY WHITEOUT



This photo taken at the corner of Underwood and Pearce streets shows the nearly whiteout conditions in Fall River during the winter storm Feb. 23. DAN MEDEIROS/HERALD NEWS



Inventor Lewis H. Latimer is buried in Fall River's Oak Grove Cemetery. PROVIDED BY WIKIMEDIA

Shaped by pioneers of Black history

Several Fall River area sites help tell the stories of prominent leaders

Dan Medeiros
The Herald News
USA TODAY NETWORK

Since 1976, February has been designated as Black History Month. Like everywhere in America, Fall River has been shaped profoundly by the Black experience, just as the city played a role in the lives of prominent Black people.

During the first half of the 19th century, Fall River was a hotbed of activity for those who sought to end the evil of human slavery. The city was home to anti-slavery societies for both men and women, with the Fall River Female Anti-Slavery Society admitting free Black women as members.

Here are five-plus places around the Fall River area to learn more about Black history.

Lewis Latimer's grave

One of the country's most unsung hero inventors, Lewis Latimer, was an inventor who lived for a time in Fall River. Latimer was born in Chelsea in 1848 and became a draftsman, inventor, writer and artist whose scientific work was crucial to the development of the light bulb alongside Thomas Edison. As a draftsman, he produced the blueprints for the first telephone by Alexander Graham Bell, helping Bell file his patent hours before a rival. Latimer is credited with other inventions — improvements to train toilets, electric lighting fixtures, even an early form of air conditioning. He is buried in Oak Grove Cemetery, where in 2023 he was finally given a headstone.

Sarah Anna Lewis' grave

Sarah Anna Lewis was born in 1846 and raised in Fall River, her father working on the luxurious Fall River Line steamships — the ships, considered to be floating palaces that carried many of the nation's elite between New York and Boston, were largely run on the labor of Black Americans. In a time when women received little formal education and Black women even

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City snow cleanup met with challenges despite solid prep

Emily Scherny
The Herald News
USA TODAY NETWORK

FALL RIVER — A roundtable discussion of the City Council Committee on Public Works and Transportation on Feb. 19 brought municipal department heads together with public safety chiefs and the school district's operations director together to better prepare for major snowstorms following the 14 inches dumped on Fall River at the end of January.

But the conclusion fell short of finding a solution to bleary streets of slush: that the city would continue to do its best to keep main thoroughfares clear for emergency apparatus in the face of Mother Nature.

Department of Community Maintenance's Al Oliveira and Division of Traffic and Parking Director Stephanie MacArthur, along with Fall River Police Deputy J.T. Hoar, Fire Chief Jeffrey Bacon, Emergency Medical Services Chief Bethann Faunce, and the school district's Chief of Operating Officer Ken Pacheco listened as the city's Director of Inspectional Services Glenn Hathaway expressed his concerns.

Fall River is a hard city to plow

Public perception of the city's efforts may lead to a barrage of complaints, said Hathaway, but not all city residents comply with parking bans, nor do they keep plowed streets clean when it comes time to dust snow off their cars.

"I'm speaking for the drivers you



Locust Street in Fall River is seen on Jan. 26. PHOTOS BY COLIN FURZE/HERALD NEWS

didn't invite to this meeting," Hathaway said to City Councilor Michael Canuel who co-sponsored the resolution for a post-storm review, and Councilor Joseph Camara, chair of the public works subcommittee.

Hathaway said contracted plow drivers ran up against "a whole host of problems," including acute weather changes when the first flakes of dense, wet snow started to fall on Jan. 25. Once three inches coated the ground, plows started making the rounds — with one plow clearing 12 to 15 streets.

Among these "problems," wrote

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Workers plow on Oak Grove Avenue in Fall River on Jan. 26.

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