

The West End Museum

150 STANIFORD STREET, SUITE 7, BOSTON, MA 02114

New Exhibit Recounts History of Education in the West End *Highlights Several Academic Firsts for the Nation*

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Boston, MA—[The West End Museum](#) is set to host a new exhibit honoring the neighborhood's rich history of education. *School Days in the West End* runs from January 19 through July 9, 2016 in the Museum's Main Exhibit Hall. The show reception takes place on January 26 from 6:30 to 8:00 p.m., when attendees can tour the exhibit and enjoy light refreshments. The exhibit and reception are free and open to the public. *(Media note: Downloadable show-related images appear [here](#).)*

Between 1800 and 1975, no fewer than 20 schools called Boston's West End home. Following urban renewal, the last school in the community—the Peter Faneuil School—closed, and there has not been another public school in the West End or Beacon Hill since. Still, the neighborhood boasts a robust history of education, with several scholastic firsts. *School Days in the West End* recounts that exceptional past through graphic story panels, artifacts, photographs, report cards, textbooks and more.

In 1821, one of the first public high schools in America, English High School, opened in The West End. The Abiel Smith School was the first building in the country raised to be a public school for African Americans. The Phillips School became one of the first integrated schools in Boston in 1855. And the kindergarten program started in 1870 at the Somerset School predates the claim of Susan Blow's St. Louis kindergarten as the first in the US in 1873.

Notable West End students and teachers include:

- Leonard Nimoy, who graduated the Mayhew School and went on to become a famous actor
- Martin Lomasney, who dropped out of the Mayhew School to become a legendary Boston politician
- William Cooper Nell, an Abiel School graduate who fought for racial integration and became a prominent abolitionist and historian
- Lowell Mason, a music teacher at the Bowdoin School who wrote more than 1000 songs and hymns, including "Mary Had a Little Lamb" and "Joy to the World"

School Days in the West End is free and open to the public during regular Museum hours.

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About the West End Museum:

The West End Museum is dedicated to the collection, preservation and interpretation of the history and culture of the West End neighborhood. The Museum's permanent exhibit, "The Last Tenement," highlights the immigrant history of the neighborhood through its decimation under Urban Renewal in 1959; two additional galleries feature rotating exhibits. The Museum is located near North Station at 150 Staniford St. Suite 7. Hours: Tuesday - Friday 12:00pm - 5:00pm; Saturday 11:00am - 4:00pm. Admission is free.

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