



Annual Newsletter December 2014

# HALEY HOUSE

23 Dartmouth Street (02116) ● Boston, Massachusetts ● 12 Dade Street (02119)  
South End: 617.236.8132 ● www.haleyhouse.org ● Roxbury: 617.445.0900

## Roots & Gratitude

Dear friends,

In 1966 a small group of passionate individuals joined together to make a difference in their struggling South End neighborhood. Recognizing the hunger in their neighbors' eyes, they offered simple meals, a warm place to sleep, and companionship.

In that same year they cobbled together spare change and generous donations in order to purchase the building that has been home to our Soup Kitchen ever since. The spirit of generosity of that original group endures today in the other programs that have since emerged: 100 units of affordable housing, an urban farming and education program and a social enterprise Bakery Café (now sited in Roxbury) which brims with community-based arts and cultural programming.

Purchasing that first property was critical to the survival and expansion of Haley House programming over the years.

We have a similar opportunity now. We have signed an agreement to purchase the property that houses our Bakery Café at 12 Dade Street. Doing so secures our Dudley home at a time when Roxbury rents are on the rise, and displacement imminent. This purchase will offer a permanent home for the vital community space that has become a cornerstone of our city.

Thank you for the many contributions you have made to Haley House over the years. In addition to the funds you have donated, your many hours spent washing dishes, mopping floors, weeding gardens, speaking with guests, and reaching out to a stranger are at the heart of Haley House's original tradition of generosity of spirit.

Haley House has shown the power of an engaged community to effect change in the world through individual acts of kindness. Thank you for joining us on this journey.

Happy Holidays,



Clarkie outside of 23 Dartmouth Street in 1977

## Pull Up A Chair

Clarkie's Story by David Manzo

When I met Clarkie in 1977, he was sleeping in the fireplace at the old Pine Street Inn, then located in Chinatown. I never asked him why he slept there huddled with an old blanket. I suppose he felt safer having three walls surrounding his slight body and a roof, albeit a fireplace flue, over his head.

Each morning Clarkie walked 15 minutes to Haley House. There, at 6 AM, I'd see him standing with 50 other men waiting for coffee, breakfast, warmth and maybe a peaceful respite.

At that time, it was not unusual for one or two volunteers to cook breakfast and lunch, distribute clothing, comfort a guest having a seizure, and clean the soup kitchen at noon when the shift ended. Given the volume of work, assistance from one of the guests, like Clarkie, was especially welcome.

(Continued on page 3)

# How Going to Jail (and God) Saved My Life

*The Story of Jason Roman*



As he walked out of the doors of the Federal Prison, Jason Roman didn't know the details of what his future held, but he did know this: he was ready to live a different sort of life than he had ever known, a life that would make his children, family, friends, and God proud. He was going to make the most of his second chance and Haley House was going to help him to do just that.

Life had never been easy for Jason, who lost both of his parents much too early and got caught up in the traps of the streets as a teenager, despite the best efforts of his grandparents who had committed to raising him.

But Jason is not one to blame others for the challenges he's faced--he's more interested in being grateful that his heart, liver and spirit are in good working condition and that he finally has the freedom to be a part of his kid's lives and make a difference in the world.

In the months before his release, a caseworker connected Jason to the Transitional Employment Program (TEP) at Haley House, knowing of his interest in food and his earnest commitment to changing his life. As a trainee in TEP, he spent evenings in the Café kitchen, preparing thousands of the famous Haley House cookies. While scooping cookie batter, participants engage in the cornerstone of the program: guided reflections and deep discussions meant to build strength, confidence, and supportive community amongst the trainees in their most vulnerable days.

As part of the program, trainees also volunteer in the Haley House Soup Kitchen, a venue where Jason's creativity and passion for cooking blossomed. Upon completion of TEP, Jason was accepted to be part of the Live-In Community during this transitional time in his life. While volunteering on Soup Kitchen shifts and participating in community life, Jason continued a course he had begun at Le Cordon Bleu College of Culinary Arts. It wasn't uncommon to find Jason up at 4 am to prepare elaborate meals for the Soup Kitchen before he'd head to school and family commitments.

Ask anyone who lived with him during that time and they'll gladly talk for a good long while about their friend Jason (and he's just as quick to credit his community members for inspiring him). In the words of his friend Peter Matthews: "Jason is an incredibly loving and loyal friend. As far as I have ever been able to estimate, his spirit of generosity

knows no bounds. There are few people I know who would be more willing to give the shirt off their back to someone in need, friend or stranger. I am blessed to have such a good friend."

While living at Haley House and going to school, Jason took a part-time job doing dishes at America's Test Kitchen. After about six months, Jason was offered a promotion to full-time kitchen assistant. As much as he enjoyed his time in the Soup Kitchen and the community, he knew that his commitments to work, family, and school (where he's set to graduate in September 2016 with an A-average) required that he find permanent housing. A room in one of Haley House's affordable housing buildings became available and after filling out stacks of paperwork, he was able to move into his own space a few months ago, something that has made a world of difference for him.

Jason's commitment to the mission of Haley House was evident from the start and he's still very much a part of the community, helping out whenever he can. "Haley House is a sanctuary where people from all walks of life can come and find a warm place, a great meal, and feel like family." Jason has helped to make this vision a reality. These days, he feels nothing but gratitude and awe for the blessings he's received: "I couldn't ask for a better life." And anyone who's met him couldn't ask for a better friend.

## Dartmouth Street Updates

As winter sets in, the daily struggle for survival of our guests has been significantly impacted by the tragic closing of the bridge leading to Long Island, where the city's largest homeless shelter and several recovery centers were located. The sudden closure in October, a result of long-deferred maintenance, will leave as many as 400 homeless people and 300 others in recovery programs out of luck for up to five years.

### Donation Needs:

- razors, deodorant
- toothpaste, toothbrushes
- hand cream
- good winter coats & boots for men
- men's sweaters/sweatshirts (med. & lg.)
- winter hats, gloves, scarves
- new underwear and socks
- thermal underwear/long underwear
- men's belts
- warm wool/fleece blankets
- backpacks and reusable (canvas) totes
- mugs (not chipped or cracked per health code)
- silverware, bowls, plates
- hot chocolate & apple cider packets

## Dudley Updates

*(Clarkie's Story, continued from page 1)*

**The Ferdinand:** Right in the heart of Roxbury, the newly renovated Ferdinand building is set to open its doors this spring. Haley House has been offered one of the prime retail spots in order to pilot our economic inclusion project, featuring healthful pizza and a vision for greater justice for food service workers.

**Haley House Catering:** We want to offer special thanks to all those who choose to call on Haley House for your catering needs. Your support has created many employment opportunities, and the revenue generated through this program helps HHBC to continue to be a place of possibility for our community. THANK YOU!

**The House Slam:** Adding to the already fantastic roster of arts and cultural programming at HHBC, The House Slam offers a space for Slam Poets and fans to appreciate the spoken word (2nd, 4th Fridays).

As the guests made their way into Haley House at opening, Clarkie would offer to wash dishes. Throughout breakfast and lunch I watched him hunched over our 3-bay sink scrubbing away, all the while making humorous comments about my Italian heritage. I will forever cherish Clarkie's thoughtfulness and I miss his banter!

Now Haley House has given me an opportunity to honor Clarkie with its new "Sponsor a Chair Program." With the purchase of new tables and chairs in the soup kitchen, each of us has the opportunity to remember someone special in our lives. Maybe you volunteered at Haley House and had a special relationship with a guest? Maybe you'd like to honor a family member or friend who values the uniqueness of Haley House by naming a chair in his/her honor? With the holiday season ahead, please consider remembering someone special in your life, with a gift that will keep on giving for years to come.

<http://www.gofundme.com/haleyhousechairs>

## Common Ground at 95 Thornton

*Exciting Growth for Urban Agriculture at Haley House*

After years of dedication on the part of our Roxbury neighbors at Hawthorne Youth and Community Center (HYCC) and Highland Park Neighborhood Coalition, a long neglected city-owned lot at 95 Thornton Street has been reclaimed as committed green space. As the urban landscape of Roxbury continues to shift, preserving the rare gem of undeveloped land has become a rallying point for Highland Park residents. Our partnership with these groups fits auspiciously with our recent shift towards more accessible, local farming (following the sale of Noonday Farm to a land-trust in May 2013).

The lot at 95 Thornton Street has a unique history. According to long-time Highland Park resident Jon Ellertson, the lot was part of an estate owned by the prominent Josiah Wheelwright family (19th century). City atlases indicate that the land was used as a pasture. Charming animal play-structures (made out of concrete and metal) remain on the lot, indicating that the land was likely managed by the Parks Department in the 1950's. The land was later abandoned, and spent years overrun with trash and weeds, despite being valued by residents as a quiet and peaceful enclave.

After two years of community lobbying, the City of Boston licensed the lot at 95 Thornton (along with a second vacant lot at 184 Highland Avenue) to HYCC this spring. In April, Highland Park neighbors and volunteers from Haley House built ten raised garden beds along the fence lining Thornton Street. Residents diligently tended gardens this summer and fall, yielding a rich harvest including tomatoes, kale, squash, collard greens, and corn. During July and August, Haley House partnered with HYCC to present an ambitious summer program for middle and high school-aged youth called "Grow It - Cook It - Share It." During the program, 95 Thornton became an "urban agriculture learning laboratory" for youth leaders as they learned to clear the land, build raised beds, trellises, and container gardens. The youth faithfully completed their daily work in the gardens alongside Haley House gardening coordinators, monitoring the seedlings they planted with great interest. "Look, I planted that patch over there!" shared one excited teen. Garden lessons were intertwined with cooking and nutrition lessons from chef Didi Emmons and nutritionist Luisa Siniscalchi.



Plans are underway to begin planting the back plot of land as a working urban farm early this spring. A generous grant from the Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources will allow for the installation of an irrigation system, to the great benefit of all involved. Produce from this plot will be shared in our Soup Kitchen, Community Tables Program, Bakery Café and Take Back the Kitchen cooking classes. We invite you to join us this spring and summer as we work together to make this community project in support of local farming and preservation of green space a success!

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## Save the Dates

**Art Opening (Susan Thompson)**

Thursday Dec. 4 (5:30-7 pm, HHBC)

**Annual Charlie King Folk Concert**

Friday, Dec. 5 (7 pm, HHBC)

**Garden Work Day**

Saturday Dec. 6 (10am-12pm, McKinley Garden-South End)

**A Sweeter Life Dessert Fundraiser**

Sunday Jan. 18 (3-5 pm, HHBC)

**Souper Bowl 2015**

Sunday Feb. 8 (2-6 pm, HHBC)

**Silent Auction and Wine Tasting**

Saturday June 6 (4-6 pm Dartmouth St.)



## Send us your photos!

In anticipation of the celebration of our **50th anniversary in 2016**, we are compiling a Haley House archive. Send us photos and other artifacts! Questions? Contact [mlbozza@haleyhouse.org](mailto:mlbozza@haleyhouse.org)

*Sponsor a chair for our soup kitchen! <http://www.gofundme.com/haleyhousechairs>*

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