



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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***The Worcester Public Library Presents
Remembering the Cocoanut Grove Fire***

***With author Stephanie Schorow and special guest
WPI Professor Nicholas A. Dembsey.***

Worcester, MA – The Worcester Public Library presents *Remembering the Cocoanut Grove Fire* on Tuesday, November 7 at 6:30 p.m. in the Saxe Room of the Main Library, 3 Salem Square. Author Stephanie Schorow will explore the story of the Cocoanut Grove nightclub fire, which took place in Boston in November of 1942 and took the lives of 492 people (32 more than the authorized capacity), including many from central Massachusetts.

“The Grove fire had an impact throughout the region,” said Schorow. “Nearly everyone in the area had a connection to the fire - via family, friends or work acquaintances. People in Worcester mourned as much as those in Boston, it was seen as a New England tragedy.”

The Cocoanut Grove fire remains the second-deadliest single-building fire in U.S. history to this day. The aftermath of the fire led to major changes in the treatment of burn victims, as well as reform of building safety standards and codes across the nation.

The fire occurred the night of a 55-12 upset victory by the College of the Holy Cross football team over Boston College. Many residents of central Massachusetts were in attendance to celebrate that evening. According to records, at least 20 Worcester residents lost their lives in the fire.

Special guest WPI Professor Nicholas A. Dembsey will also be speaking about a project from this past summer when he used the Cocoanut Grove fire as a case study in his fire

modeling course. Students used modern fire modeling tools along with fire investigation data to simulate the fire as described by witnesses. Prof. Dembsey will present the findings.

There will be time for those who wish to share their stories of "the Grove." Please join us for this moving, interactive event to commemorate the 75th anniversary of the fire.

Sponsored by the Worcester Historical Museum and the Friends of the Worcester Public Library. Free and open to the public.

For more information on the Worcester Public Library and a complete list of events and programs visit mywpl.org. For more information on *Remembering the Coconut Grove Fire* contact Linnea Sheldon, Community Relations and Communications Manager, at 508-799-1654 or lsheldon@mywpl.org.

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