



**American
Red Cross**
of Massachusetts Bay

Celebrating 100 Years

AMERICAN RED CROSS OF MASSACHUSETTS BAY HISTORICAL HIGHLIGHTS

- May 21, 1881 – Oxford, MA, native, Clara Barton, founds the American Red Cross.
- January 5, 1905 – The American Red Cross receives its Congressional Charter to provide assistance to victims of disaster. It is still in effect.
- May 31, 1905 – The Massachusetts Branch of the American Red Cross holds first organizational meeting in Tremont Building, Boston. Dr. Arthur J. Cabot elected Chair.
- November 7, 1905 – First Annual Meeting takes place. Dr. Edward H. Bradford elected President.
- April 18, 1906 – The Great San Francisco Earthquake. The Red Cross and the Massachusetts Relief Fund collects \$955,243 to support California's recovery efforts.
- 1910 – American Red Cross launches its First Aid program.
- 1914 – American Red Cross launches its lifeguarding program across American beaches.
- December 14, 1915 – Boston Metropolitan Chapter of the American Red Cross is formed. Covered territory almost identical to current Massachusetts Bay jurisdiction.
- December 6, 1917 – Ship explosion in Halifax, Nova Scotia. Boston and the MA Red Cross send the first relief. To this day, each Christmas the huge tree that glitters in Prudential Plaza in Boston is a thank-you gift from the people of Nova Scotia.
- WWI - Boston Red Cross volunteers called on to knit 90,000 pairs of socks for the Armed Forces.

- 1918-1919 – Metropolitan Boston Red Cross Nurses work with the Department of Public Health to combat the flu epidemic that entered the United States through Boston. In Massachusetts alone the flu killed 15,000 civilians in four months and went on to afflict nearly one-quarter of the U.S. population.
- January 15, 1919 Great Molasses Disaster in the North End kills twenty-one and injures 150. The Red Cross provides canteen and ambulance service.
- November 28, 1942 - Coconut Grove fire, which killed over 400 people, was instrumental in establishing a more effective disaster response system for the Metropolitan Boston Red Cross. The Red Cross marshaled 1,000 volunteers within 25 minutes of its response.
- March 1943 – President Franklin Delano Roosevelt declares March as “Red Cross Month,” a recognition that continues today.
- WWII – Red Cross begins its National Blood Program.
- June 9, 1953 - The Red Cross provides relief after a massive tornado rips through Worcester, killing 90, injuring 1,288, and leaving 10,000 homeless.
- 1963 – International Red Cross celebrates its centennial.
- 1975 – Red Cross launches CPR training program.
- February 6, 1978 – The Red Cross opens shelters across the region as the “Blizzard of ‘78” kills 99 and causes \$2.3 billion in damage.
- 1983 - The American Red Cross of Massachusetts Bay is formed when a number of Greater Boston units merge into a single chapter.
- 1988 – Massachusetts Bay develops the Nurses Assistant Training program based on new federal standards. The curriculum becomes a model for similar programs nationwide.
- 1990 – Massachusetts Bay launches its Food Drive for the Hungry program in collaboration with Project Bread.
- 1995 – Harvard University students launch the first college Disaster Action volunteers program in the country. Today, local university students lead the majority of weekend disaster runs for Massachusetts Bay.
- 1995 – The first annual Clara Barton Humanitarian Awards dinner is held. Then President of the American Red Cross, Elizabeth Dole, is the keynote speaker.

- 1996 – Massachusetts Bay and the Merrimack Valley Red Cross respond to major floods throughout eastern Massachusetts.
- 1998 – Red Cross launches AED training program.
- 2000 – Red Cross responds to Worcester Warehouse fire, which took the lives of six firefighters.
- September 11, 2001 – Massachusetts Bay responds to the terrorist attacks by establishing a Family Assistance Center at Logan Airport and by deploying 330 staff and volunteers as well as funding and resources to New York City, Washington, DC, and Pennsylvania.
- September 2004 – The largest domestic natural disaster response in American Red Cross history: Massachusetts Bay deploys staff and volunteers to the Southeast United States and raises nearly \$900,000 in local aid following the devastation caused by Hurricanes Charley, Frances, Ivan and Jeanne.
- December 26, 2004 – The Red Cross responds to the devastation in South Asia and Africa following an earthquake and tsunami.
- 2005 – Celebration of centennial in Massachusetts