



# Newsletter

Vol. 19, No. 12

December

2022

Our unique history and blend of people defines the foundation of our town.

Crossway Tower 130 High Street P O Box 170 Lee, MA 01238

Contact us: [Lee.Historical@hotmail.com](mailto:Lee.Historical@hotmail.com)

Our website: <https://leehistoricsociety.homestead.com/>

The next Society meeting will be held December 8, 2022, at 6:30 - in "our office".

## Happy December



5<sup>th</sup> Volunteers



13<sup>th</sup> Cocoa



17<sup>th</sup> Maple Syrup



21<sup>st</sup> Mid-Winter

### From the Editor(s):

Gary – I've enjoyed editing the newsletter and I appreciate the compliments you sent. This "number" marks the end of my term.

Linda Buttery and Tracie Etheredge have volunteered to take over the Newsletter beginning in 2023. I look forward to their contributions.

## Society Activities:

### **2022 RECIPIENT OF THE CONSOLATI-DAVIS-DENNIS AWARD**

A more deserving recipient of this award would be hard to find. Phil Smith, a long-standing member of the Lee Historical Society Board of Directors, has been honored this year in recognition of his continuing significant and exemplary contributions to preserving the history of our Town of Lee.



Under Phil's initiative and guidance, the Society has been able to showcase several historical exhibits in the Scolforo Gallery in Lee Library. "Rock Stars and Paper Tigers" gave Lee Library visitors an extensive and fascinating insight into the marble and paper industries that brought Lee to national prominence. "Lee Answers the Call" gave recognition to our Lee veterans for whose service in the Armed Forces we are indebted from the Revolutionary War through to the more recent wars in the Middle East. The dedicated research and attention to detail, compiled by Phil and the team of volunteers he led, has gone above and beyond.

Phil is a constant presence at the Society's monthly meetings where he is never a "silent" member, offering his educated opinions, suggestions, and thoughtful insights. During the pandemic, he and his wife Kathy, also a dedicated Board member, offered their home for various meetings when Zoom wasn't appropriate.

Congratulations and thanks for his contributions, both now and over the years, are extended to Phil from the entire membership of the Society

### **WHAT IS THE CONSOLATI-DAVIS-DENNIS AWARD?**

It was back in 2005 that the Lee Historical Society Board of Directors approved a resolution for this award. It is given in recognition of "significant contributions to the collection and preservation of the history of Lee, Massachusetts". Since then, it has been presented annually to individuals who have fulfilled this description, the latest, of course, being Phil Smith.

But who are the three whose names have been given to this prestigious award? Many will recognize the name of Florence Consolati, she being the author of Lee's bible on the history of the Town of Lee – "See All the People". She came to Lee from the Bronx as a young girl and graduated from Lee High School with her husband-to-be John in 1931.

She began a career as a journalist, reporting for the Berkshire Eagle and various other newspapers in a free-lance capacity, as well as being a columnist for The Advocate. She was very involved in Lee and served on many varied committees, including Sandy Beach, a place for which she had much affection. Florence left the Town she had loved at the age of 95 in 2010.

Charlotte Davis was a Town Representative for many years, but was also well known as the Town's historian and genealogist, being a founding member of the Lee Historical Society and a member of the Daughters of the American Revolution. If this were not enough, she also served on the Lee Historical Commission, the Lee Cemetery Commission, and taught Physical Education in the Lenox Public School District.

Elizabeth "Betty" Davis, whose articles often appear in the Society's newsletters, was Head Librarian of Lee Library from 1942 until 1987. Her stories of historical events pertaining to Lee, written at the behest of the Tri-Town Rotary Club, appeared in the Penny Saver from 1971 – 1977. With permission from all the agencies involved in their publication, these articles have been compiled into a book entitled "Historical Lee", which is available for purchase through the Society.

### **An Article:**

Betty Dennis was Lee's Head Librarian from 1942 to 1987. Here is one of her local history articles.  
From the December 16, 1971 *Penny Saver*

A Berkshire Gleaner of 1868 tells us that "Christmas was more generally observed throughout the country this year than ever before. It is fast becoming "our most popular holiday". July 4, 1859 was ushered in with the ringing of "our eight bells". (Church and factory bells) Processions of "Horribles" and a parade of silver trumpets marked all special days. A balloon ascension was a "fluke" as it became tangled and could not go up. Our townspeople were thrilled when a successful ascension took place in Pittsfield and their balloon was sent to soar over our town.

Home gatherings were numerous and exciting according to local items, but large and formal parties were almost unknown. Chief means of entertainment were old-fashioned games. Dancing was ruled out by public opinion, as were cards and all games of chance...these being considered the tools of the Devil. By the mid 1800's though we find Lee's social life enlivened by corn popping parties, butternut cracking and molasses candy pulls, and building up to cider parties and even kitchen dances! Debating societies were formed, and a "Highland Association" for the "promotion of social welfare for the community". The Lee Harmonic Association was one of some few others which helped toward the study and enjoyment of music.

Many home talent shows were presented in Northrup's (now Central Block). Merchants' Carnivals were also big in those days. Each store in town was represented by an act in the show and a prize awarded for the best performance. These carnivals were usually climaxed in a Grand Performance at which all the mills were represented. The paper mills usually dressed their girls in lavish gowns made entirely of paper.

### **IT'S ALL IN THE DETAILS**

(a Q & A QUESTION):

There isn't a question this month. Gary just didn't have enough time to find something to highlight.

### **What's in our Attic?**

We have articles for sale; mugs \$5, picture packets \$6, tee shirts \$15.  
Mugs include a dozen buildings around Lee – ask if you have a particular one you'd like.  
Picture packets with 6 scenes of Lee, suitable for framing and hanging.

Books: Historical Lee \$12, a Cookbook \$8, Third Strike \$5, and See All the People \$26.

**The Society on Television:**

If you go to [WWW.CTSBTV.org](http://WWW.CTSBTV.org) and search on Channel 1301, you will find four shows: "The Lee Veterans Website", "Lee Earns a Living", "Rock Stars and Paper Tigers", and The Lee Historical Society presents "'Lee Answers The Call,' Honoring the Veterans of Lee" with Phil Smith.

**What's in Your Attic?**

We ask people to think of the Lee Historical Society while cleaning out and downsizing. The Society is looking for old pictures, postcards and items related to the history of Lee. We will add them to our collection, where they can be shared with people in the future who wonder was it was like in the old days. Consider: in 20 years, your car will be "classic" (in America – in Canada, it takes 25 years).

Please remember, if you don't want to donate any items, you can let us scan or copy them or maybe borrow them for a display. Please share!



**WE LOVE LOCAL HISTORY**

**HOW ABOUT BECOMING A MEMBER OF THE LEE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OR GIVING A GIFT MEMBERSHIP TO A FRIEND OR RELATIVE AND HELP SUPPORT OUR SOCIETY?**

**Individual - \$10.00    Family - \$25.00    Business - \$35.00  
Supporting Membership - \$50.00 or more    Sponsor Membership - \$100.00 or more**

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Mail to:**

**Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Lee Historical Society  
P. O. Box 170  
Lee, MA 01238**

**City/Town:** \_\_\_\_\_ **State:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Zip:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Telephone:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Email:** \_\_\_\_\_

**NEW** \_\_\_\_\_

**RENEWAL** \_\_\_\_\_

**Every thing you Wanted to Know ( Q&A Answer )**

*This goes with what's above, but it is also empty in this number.*

**THESE BUSINESSES SUPPORT US.....PLEASE SUPPORT THEM**

**Bartini Roofing Company**  
290 Pleasant Street  
Lee, MA 01238  
413-243-0570

**M. J. Kelly, Inc.**  
3 Main Street  
Lee, MA 01238  
413-243-0204

**Fraser's Service & Sales**  
139 West Park Street  
Lee, MA 01238  
413-243-0326

**Locker Room Sports Pub**  
232 Main Street  
Lee, MA 01238  
413-243-2662

**Frank Consolati Ins. Agency**  
71 Main Street  
Lee, MA 01238  
413-243-0105

**Dresser Hull Company**  
60 Railroad Street  
Lee, MA 01238  
413-243-1400

**Robert M. Kelly, Paperhanging**  
65 South Prospect Street  
Lee, MA 01238  
413-243-3489

**Henry Holt Art**  
P. O. Box 699  
Lee, MA 01238  
413-243-9918

**Lee Bank**  
75 Park Street  
Lee, MA 01238  
413-243-0117

**Hunter & Graziano P.C.**  
10 Park Place  
Lee, MA 01238  
413-243-0789

**Henry's Electric**  
252 Main Street  
Lee, MA 01238  
413-243-0690

**Lee Hardware Store**  
221 Main Street  
Lee, MA 01238  
413-243-0786

**Wilcox Plumbing & Heating**  
P. O. Box 561  
Lee, MA 01238  
413-243-2494

**NBT Bank of Lee**  
76 Park Street  
Lee, MA 01238  
413-243-1800

**RW's Incorporated**  
35 Run Way  
Lee, MA 01238  
413-243-0946

**A. F. Viale Ins. Agency**  
75 Main Street  
Lee, MA 01238  
413-243-0347

**Cottage Care Inc.**  
230 Stockbridge Road  
Lee, MA 01238  
413-243-4257

**Ta-Ga-Soke Campgrounds**  
7820 Higginsville Road  
Blossvale, NY 13028  
1-800-831-1744

**Eagle Mill Redevelopment**  
50 West Center Street  
Lee, MA 01238  
413-425-4850

**Greylock Credit Union**  
47 Main Street  
Lee, MA 01238  
413-243-2121

**Ford's Auto Service**  
1075 Fairview Street  
Lee, MA 01238  
413-243-1107

**Hunter & Graziano & Distantis, PC**  
10 Park Place  
Lee, MA 01238  
413-243-0789

**Mike's Professional Barber Shop**  
93 Main Street  
Lee, MA 01238  
413-394-5829

**Michael/Shawn Considine, Attys. At Law**  
42 Main Street  
Lee, MA 01238  
413-243-4900

**"Yesterday is history, tomorrow is a mystery, today is God's gift, that is why we call it the present."**