



The Gateway Gazette

The Newsletter of the Lee Historical Society

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

Email: Lee.Historical@hotmail.com

Website: leehistoricsociety.homestead.com

Facebook: Lee Historical Society Lee MA

The next meeting of the Society will be Thursday, March 9 at the Meeting Room at the Crossway Tower on High Street, Lee. 6:30 pm – 8:00 pm.



Our life is March weather, savage and serene in one hour.
-Ralph Waldo Emerson-

FROM THE EDITORS

In our wisdom, we thought it would be special for our newspaper to have a name of its own, rather than just “Newsletter”, so may we present The Gateway Gazette! What do you think – like it, don’t care for it, indifferent? We do value your opinion, so please feel free to drop us an email and let us know. As the term “gazette” originates from mid-16th century Venice, (gazetta, in Italian), we thought it an historically appropriate title.

To keep beating the same drum, as members of the Society, this is YOUR newsletter. We would love to hear from you. Your input is important to us – are there any items of historical interest pertaining to Lee that you would like to hear more about? Do you have any articles of your own, photos, even the odd poem, that you would like to have us include? Do contact us – ethere@gmail.com for Tracie and lindabreader@icloud.com for Linda.

LEE'S HIDDEN TREASURE
UPPER GOOSE POND

Nestled away in an ancient forest, embraced by our glorious Berkshire Hills, Upper Goose Pond quietly laps at its shores, blissfully unaware of the stresses of the outside world. Lee's hidden treasure is known by few and loved by all who have met her, have canoed and swum in her waters, hiked and camped by her shores. This is a brief story of the more recent history of one of the largest undeveloped ponds in our State.



*(Photo courtesy of Debra Cranwell,
Appalachian Trail Community Application
Committee)*

Reproduced below with kind permission from author Leonard Adkins is the more recent history of the Pond.

“Around the turn of the 20th century, William Chipman Stevenson and his partner in the insurance business, Edward Murphy, and their families began visiting Upper Goose Pond. Edward L. Murphy built a cabin in the spot where he had been camping near Upper Goose Pond’s western end, and his family continued to use the site for nearly 100 years.

William Chipman Stevenson bought his first land next to the pond in 1919. He continued to purchase additional property and, within 15 years, owned most of the land around the pond.

His daughter Helen married Winfred Stilwell and though they lived in Pennsylvania, they came often to the pond with their children. Within a few years, the family had built a cabin complex, with several outbuildings, a dock, and other amenities.



(Photo courtesy of David & Caroline Stilwell)



William C. Stevenson hiking Mt. Greylock in 1906
(Photo courtesy of David & Caroline Stilwell)

In 1982, as a way to honor William Chipman Stevenson, the Stilwell family transferred their holdings to the National Park Service, thereby bringing the Appalachian Trail’s route beside the pond into the public domain.” In 1926, what is now called the Upper Goose Pond Cabin, was built by a Mr. Jacot. He was a jeweler in Stockbridge with a store on Main Street. He sold his property in 1936 to William Chipman Stevenson. The Stevenson and, predominantly, the Stilwell family either rented it out or allowed people they knew to stay there. This cabin now provides a welcome shelter to hikers of the Appalachian Trail.

From left to right, Mary Goodman Stevenson, William Stevenson Stilwell, Robert Newton Stilwell, and Helen Newton Stilwell were photographed around 1930 on the front porch of the cabin the Stilwell family had built beside Upper Goose Pond. The two young boys were the third generation to enjoy the property and its surroundings.



(Photo courtesy of David & Caroline Stilwell; text by Leonard Adkins)



(Photo courtesy of David & Caroline Stilwell)

Volunteers from the Appalachian Mountain Club Berkshire Chapter over many years have helped maintain the area and the Upper Goose Pond Cabin so all visitors can enjoy this wondrous place.

Editor's Note: We are very grateful to Leonard M. Adkins and the Appalachian Trail Conservancy for their permission to reproduce the text from "Along the Appalachian Trail, Massachusetts, Vermont, and New Hampshire". This book is available through Mr. Adkin's website www.habitualhiker.com, and most bookstores.

Many thanks also for David & Caroline Stilwell's invaluable assistance in providing photos of their family's cabin and filling in gaps on the history of the AT cabin.

The Town of Lee is an anticipated off-trail destination for AT thru hikers as they hike into town to resupply for their long journey. Hikers look forward to the lodging accommodations and restaurants that are available to them in town and the events offered in downtown Lee. To increase stewardship and involvement with conservation and maintenance of the AT by the local community and increase support and awareness for hikers the Town of Lee has applied with the AT Conservancy to become designated as an AT Community with the ATC. This designation will put Lee on the map as an AT connection and destination point for hikers, residents and Berkshire County visitors alike and generate support for AT management.

Below is another extract from Mr. Adkins book:
"AMC Berkshire Chapter Member Eleanor Poole of Middleton, Connecticut was a volunteer caretaker for the Upper Goose Pond Cabin for more than 25 years. The cabin has no water source, so to provide for hikers, she rowed across the pond and ferried the water back in the canoe."



(Photo courtesy of Debra Cranwell, Appalachian Trail Community Application Committee)

REMEMBERING A LEE VETERAN

The Town of Lee has been the home of many, many veterans who have served their country since the Revolutionary War through to the latest wars in the Gulf. Each month, we will give an account of one of these brave men and women.

LT. COL. BOYD F. ETHEREDGE (1934 – 2011)

Boyd was a Texan, but his connection to Lee was made when he tied the knot with Jarolyn Jones, a Lee native. Both he and Jarolyn were in the Air Force when they met, she a Flight Nurse with the rank of Lieutenant and he, a Lieutenant with the Air Force's Strategic Air Command. Jarolyn had to leave the service when she became pregnant, as per the Air Force regulations of the time.

During his 20 years in service, Boyd's engineering training found him working in the space and satellite programs with high level security clearance. His department monitored the "Wild Weasels", swift aircraft mounted with radar detecting and jamming equipment that would fly over North Vietnam in search of radar installations. He was eventually promoted to Lieutenant Colonel.

His headstone denotes him as a Vietnam Veteran, but he always would state that the word "era" should be inserted after "Vietnam" as he fought the war from Cape Canaveral in Florida.

Editor's Note: The more observant amongst you will have noticed that Tracie, our co-editor, and Boyd share the same last name. Yes, he is Tracie's father and Jarolyn her mother. Should there be a suspicion of favoritism here, rest assured that these articles are being published in alphabetical order!

HONORING ALL LEE VETERANS

The Lee Veterans Wall, recognizing all men and women who have served honorably in the armed services of the United States and its allies, made its debut last July with about 2500 names found mostly in public sources. The wall is incomplete and there are plans to add missing names on new banners this year. Our goal is to find every qualified veteran and if you know of any veteran who was missed earlier please let us know.

Any person who served honorably for any period of time in the armed services is qualified to be on our wall if that person ever lived in Lee, is buried in Lee or went to school in Lee. This includes honorable National Guard or reserve service. Any person who ever put on the uniform and swore to defend the nation qualifies.

Partial listings of veterans now on the wall can be found on our website, leemassveterans.homesteadcloud.com. The lists are incomplete, so if you are in doubt please send us information about veterans we may have missed at 2rockpaper9@gmail.com. You can see the kinds of information we are including by looking on our website above. Please don't let the old vets in your life go unrecognized.

THE SOCIETY ON TELEVISION

If you missed, or would like to revisit, the Society's last four exhibits that were held in the Scolforo Gallery in Lee Library, they can all be found on CTSBTV's website at www.ctsbtv.org. Just click on Public Channel 1301 and enter the name of the exhibit in the Search box. Then, at your leisure, in the comfort of your own home, you can watch:

"The Lee Veterans Website"

"Lee Earns a Living"

"Rock Stars & Paper Tigers"

"Lee Answers the Call: Honoring the Veterans of Lee"

IF YOU LOVE LOCAL HISTORY ...

... how about joining us and becoming a member of the Lee Historical Society? You can also give a Gift Membership to a friend or relative and not only help support our Society, but also join fellow lovers of this wonderful little town in learning about and helping to preserve its history.

MEMBERSHIP FEES:

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

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY/TOWN: _____ STATE: _____ ZIP: _____

TELEPHONE: _____ EMAIL: _____

NEW: _____ RENEWAL: _____

Mail with membership fee to:
Lee Historical Society
PO Box 170
Lee, MA 01238

WHAT'S IN YOUR ATTIC?

STOP! Before you run to Goodwill or the dumpster with those old photos, pictures, prints, post cards, other alliterative pieces of memorabilia, that old "piece of tat" you inherited from Great Uncle Fred, please pause for a while. If these relate in any way to Lee, they may have significant historical value.

At the Lee Historical Society, we have a very comprehensive collection of what the folks of Lee may have considered as a donation to the landfill, but which we have rescued. Everyday items from the past hold fascination once they've become obsolete, isn't that so? If you'd rather not donate the item, we can scan or copy it, or maybe borrow it for a display.

If you are wondering if something you have could be worth donating, please contact us and we'll be happy to make an assessment. If they're unworthy, we'll even take them to Goodwill or the dumpster for you! Please contact Tracie Etheredge ethere@gmail.com

WHAT'S IN OUR STORE?

We have some truly wonderful items relating to Lee that we would love to bring out of our store room and into your hands. Our prices are also truly wonderful and the funds we gather from your purchases go toward, as one example, our ability to put together such fascinating exhibits as our most recent "Lee Answers the Call" at the Scolforo Gallery.

Here's a menu of what we have on offer:

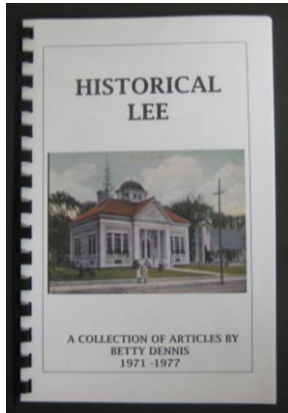


MUGS depicting various places of historical interest in Lee. **\$5**

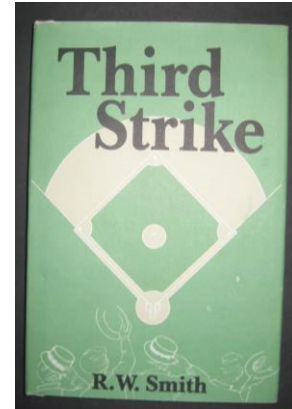


PICTURE PACKETS Six beautiful prints with scenes of Lee, perfect for framing. **\$6 per packet**

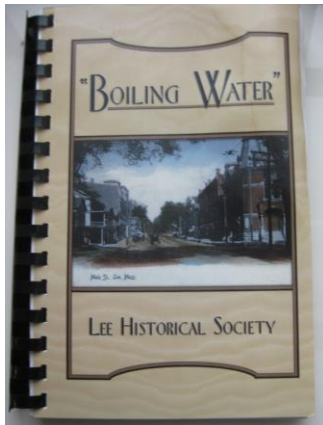
T-SHIRTS Show your pride and support of your Town of Lee with a Lee T-shirt. Sizes: Small, Large, XLarge, and 2XLarge (Sorry, no Mediums left) **\$15**



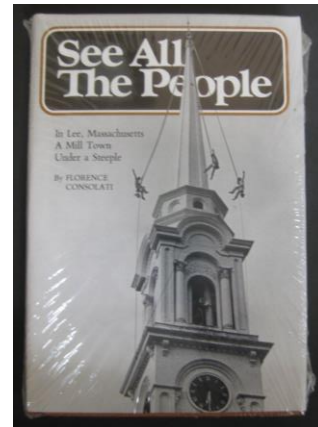
“HISTORICAL LEE” A lovely little book of articles collected by Lee’s beloved librarian, Betty Dennis **\$12**



“THIRD STRIKE” by R.W. Smith For all you baseball fans and Lee lovers, this is the perfect book! At only **\$5**, it’s a home run!



“BOILING WATER” This delightful book was compiled by the Society’s Cookbook Committee back in 2005 and is full of the most mouth-watering recipes, such as Molasses Spice Cookies. It includes some pages by Florence Consolati on various places of historical interest in Lee. **\$8**



“SEE ALL THE PEOPLE” by Florence Consolati If you want the intimate details of every aspect of the history of Lee, and don’t already own at least one copy, this is a must-have purchase! **\$26**

FROM THE VALLEY GLEANER ...

As we mentioned previously, we're reprinting interesting articles from old editions of the Valley Gleaner. The story of "A Great Fire", the one that devastated a large section of Lee's Main Street, is so extensive in its coverage that it will be recorded in our newsletter in installments.

A GREAT FIRE **FEBRUARY 5, 1879** **PART TWO**

On it crept, gaining inch by inch till it soon got beyond immediate control.

Anticipating such a result the occupants of these two blocks, as well as of Morey's and Oman's blocks below began moving out their goods as rapidly as possible, and soon the stores across the street, the Morgan House, Memorial hall and many private homes were made the receptacle of property of various kinds and natures. The west side of Main street was also lined with the goods hastily moved out. What slight wind there was when the fire was discovered was from the northwest.

Of course, during all this time the gallant fire-lads whose efforts we learn to appreciate in times of imminent peril if at no other, had not been idle. The Water Witch was soon at work after the alarm had been sounded, taking up its position at the park tank. And not long was it before the Forest boys of East Lee were ready to help – ever ready, as in days of old, to do all they could to help their suffering neighbors. They took their first stream from the tank near the Catholic church. It is no fun, on such a raw day as Monday was, to work the brakes, and the men who stood at them steadily did noble service, and to them be all praise. For by these two companies, the Forest and the Water Witch, was the fire so kept back, from its first discovery till nearly 3 o'clock, that its destroying force was greatly lessened.

But, while giving due praise to our home companies, it must be acknowledged, and with a deep feeling of gratitude, that only the arrival of the Edwin Clapp steamer from Pittsfield, accompanied by Engineer Teeling, saved this fire from becoming the most disastrous that ever visited Lee. Beyond doubt the Edwin Clapp saved Oman's block, and had that block gone, with the wind that had, after a while, sprung up, the Congregational church and parsonage, would in all probability, have gone too, taking with them, very many others on Park street. When the steamer reached here Oman's block was evidently the key of the position, and by saving that much other loss was avoided. The steamer took water from the canal near the Housatonic mill and played one constant stream over six hundred feet of hose. It reached here on the milk train at 2:35, and with a very few minutes was playing upon the fire.

And here we leave the action again and our readers still on the edge of their seats! In next month's installment, read what happened to the Episcopal Church on Franklin Street!

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

Bartini Roofing Company
290 Pleasant Street
243-0570

**Michael Considine & Shawn
P. Leary, Attys. at Law**
42 Main Street
243-4900

Frank Consolati Ins. Agency
71 Main Street
243-0105

Cottage Care Inc.
P.O Box 753
243-4257

Dresser Hull Company
60 Railroad Street
243-1400

Eagle Mill Redevelopment
50 West Center Street
425-4850

Ford's Auto Service
1075 Fairview Street
243-1107

Fraser's Service & Sales
138 West Park Street
243-0326

Greylock Credit Union
47 Main Street
243-2121

Henry Holt Art
125 Golden Hill
243-9918

Henry's Electric
252 Main Street
243-0690

Hunter & Graziano P.C.
10 Park Place
243-0789

Kelly Funeral Home
3 Main Street
243-0204

**Robert M. Kelly,
Paperhanging**
65 South Prospect Street
243-3489

Lee Bank
75 Park Street
243-0117

Lee Hardware Store
221 Main Street
243-0786

Locker Room Sports Pub
232 Main Street
243-2662

**Mike's Professional Barber
Shop**
93 Main Street
394-5829

NBT Bank of Lee
76 Park Street
243-1800

RW's Inc.
35 Run Way
243-0946

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

A. F. Viale Ins. Agency
75 Main Street
243-0347

Wilcox Plumbing & Heating
P. O. Box 561
243-2494

“History is not the past but a map of the past, drawn from a particular point of view, to be useful to the modern traveller.”

- Henry Glassie-