

Lee Historical Society Newsletter



Vol. 11, No. 2

February 2014

OUR UNIQUE HISTORY AND BLEND OF PEOPLE DEFINES
THE FOUNDATION OF OUR TOWN.

Crossway Tower

P. O. Box 170

Lee, MA 01238

Visit us: www.leehistoricsociety.homestead.com

Contact us: Lee.Historical@hotmail.com



A VERY HAPPY VALENTINE'S DAY TO EVERYONE

The next meeting of the Lee Historical Society will be a business meeting for Officers, Board Members, Committees and any interested members. It will be held on Thursday, February 13th starting at 6:30 pm in the Hyde Meeting Room at Crossway Tower.

Please send in your 2014 membership fees, thank you.

Unless you have renewed your membership or have become a new member after October of last year, your 2014 membership fees are now due. If you are not sure if your membership has expired or have a question, please let us know and we will look up your membership status.

Below is this month's picture sent to us from the Lee Library's Historical Collection of Lee photographs. This collection has been digitalized for the Lee Library by the Boston Public Library. We thank the Lee Library for making this possible for our readers. If any of our readers would like to comment or add additional information, please contact **Mary Philpott** at maryphilpott@mindspring.com.



This is the house where Minnie Baird was born in 1871. The house was on Main Street, on the Northwest corner of Main and Railroad Streets. In 1952, this was the site of a block occupied by Doctor Edward Cerruti and the Pittsfield Coal Gas Company and in 1990, the Lee Hardware Store. The library received this photo in 1990. Minnie Baird was the founder of the Lee Visiting Nurses Association in Lee.

If anyone has any information or ideas about the above photo, please share it with us. We think that this photo is the location of where the Consolati Block now stands and where the barn is pictured would be the Central Block. This is hard to believe, but that is what is suggested on the photo.

Also in last month's issue a member questions the existence of the Western Mass Railroad in the area. If anyone may know about this railroad or of the picture please let us know.

Library News

Do you have an eBook reader? The Lee Library has been chosen to participate in an e-book program. Search here for new and exciting eContent – books and other materials available to Lee Library patrons before anyone else in the state. Just search, checkout and download to a device, and you're off and running! The MA eBook Project is brought to you by the Massachusetts Library System in partnership with the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners and your local library, funded, in part, by the Federal Institute of Museum and Library Services. <http://ebooks.masslibsystem.org/>

In the Gallery – Welcome to Our World in the Milky Way Galaxy, an exhibit of paintings by Rick Costello. Rick Costello is an amateur astronomer and artist. He paints astronomically correct paintings of our place in the Milky Way Galaxy.

Rick Costello will give a talk **on Monday, February 24th at 7 pm.** in the J. Peter Scolforo Gallery at the library. His topic will be “How Telescopes let us see the History of the universe.

Saturday, February 22nd, at 11 am – FamiLEE Movie, Balto. This movie is rated G, and runs for 79 minutes.

Coming in March, another exhibit of photos from the Lee Library Historical Collection.

If any of our readers have an article, picture or just a question about the town, please let us know and we will post in in one of our newsletters. Also if anyone has an interest in a special topic, let us know about that and we will see if we have any information about your subject or maybe we can do some research for you.



The above photo is one of the 130 photos donated to the society by Peter Brown. This photo was taken on May 23, 1912 at the home of Edward J. and Catherine Maloney on Main Street. The Convenience Plus Store now stands in this location. Mr. and Mrs. Maloney were the grandparents of Peter Brown.

RECOLLECTIONS XIV

By U. S. Navy Retired Commander Vic Mottarella
A Lee native

(Continued from the January-14 issue)

THE GRUMMAN F9F-6 COUGAR

The Navy was already eight years into the Jet age in 1953 so I was a little behind the average fighter pilot but finally I was about to fly the latest jet in the Navy inventory. The Cougar was not a

supersonic plane since it did not have an afterburner but it would do so if you put it into a dive. Supersonic relates to the speed of sound. Mach one is the speed of sound in aviation parlance and a jet aircraft always has an instrument to display the mach number of the speed you are going in addition to an airspeed indicator indicated in knots. The speed of sound was a big mystery for a long time because the experts didn't know exactly what would happen when this speed was penetrated. The speed at which this happens varies with altitude and is primarily dependent on the temperature of the air so it will vary slightly even at sea level. The higher the altitude the slower the speed of sound since air is normally colder at higher altitudes. (The standard for the speed of sound at sea level is 710 mph). The Cougar, like all Grumman airplanes, was very sturdy and was designed to withstand a speed of Mach 1.2. During World War II Grumman earned the nickname of "The Grumman Iron Works." The Navy had a contract with North American Aviation at the same time the Cougar was being developed by Grumman and that was to modify the Air Force F-86 Saber for possible carrier operations. North American failed in this endeavor for several reasons but the main failure was that it could not match Grumman in airborne time because it could not carry enough fuel. Even with drop tanks the Saber would barely equal the Cougar in airborne time and the drop tanks added to drag, speed and performance problems. Several years later North American finally produced a jet aircraft that qualified for carrier operations.

The Cougar was rated at 647 mph and was powered by a Pratt and Whitney J-48 reciprocal-flow jet engine with about 7200 pounds of thrust. Most of us tried to go supersonic at least once so we could brag that we had done so. The plane was armed with four 20-millimeter automatic cannon, the same as the latest version of the Bearcat. It weighed in at 20,089 pounds while fully loaded for a catapult shot. It was 42 feet long and over 12 feet high. It had a range of 1050 miles. We went through the usual cockpit blindfold checks as we had done before when getting ready to fly a new plane type. This was so that in an emergency we could expeditiously reach for a critical lever or scan a vital instrument. While the plane had an ejection seat the one thing the Grumman engineer stressed was that you could not expect to survive an ejection below 1000 feet. I was always a little nervous at take off, at least until I reached that altitude because most engine failures occur while at full power which you always use on takeoff. I learned that an old friend, Frank Sheffield, with whom I served in my Bearcat squadron, was killed while taking off in a Cougar. This has happened to others and the results were almost always fatal.

One thing that really amazed me was that when you started the engine with your helmet strapped on there was almost a complete silence. This was also true, I learned later, when flying at maximum speed at high altitudes. On the other hand when standing beside a starting engine without any kind of noise suppressors the screeching noise was deafening. That really got my attention because the old radial engines were always noisy whether you had a helmet on or not or for that matter when taxiing or flying at any speed. We always took off and usually taxied with oxygen primarily because it was safer and because a jet is more efficient at higher altitudes and where oxygen is required for the pilot. Another thing, if you happened to end up in the water after surviving a bad a catapult shot, you might be able to breathe under water until you got orientated and released all the straps that tied you to the plane.

The starting procedure for the Cougar was relatively easy as compared to starting an old eighteen-cylinder radial engine. There were no mixture controls or propeller settings to worry about and the danger of an engine fire was close to zero because you were using JP fuel as opposed to gasoline. Jet fuel has a higher ignition temperature than gasoline. An auxiliary power unit was used to feed electrical power to initiate rotation of the engine's turbines. You then fed the engine a little fuel with a switch. At a certain RPM of the turbine you moved the throttle sideways to feed power to an electrical igniter. When you advanced the throttle to taxi, more fuel is consumed so more heat is generated and causes an increase in RPM and power. Thrust results from the increased velocity of the exiting air from the tail pipe versus the incoming air from the nose section of the plane. A compressor is also involved in the process, which helps to further expand the pressure and speed of exiting air many times faster than the incoming air.

(Continued until the March-14 issue)

HOW ABOUT BECOMING A MEMBER OF THE LEE HISTORICAL SOCIETY? OR GIVING A GIFT MEMBERSHIP TO A FRIEND, OR RELATIVE. IT IS INEXPENSIVE, IT DOESN'T HURT AND IT MAKES PEOPLE HAPPY AND IT SUPPORTS OUR SOCIETY.

Student Membership - \$5.00

Senior Membership (one person over the age of 65) - \$5.00

Business Membership - \$25.00

Individual Membership (one person under the age of 65) - \$10.00

Family Membership (all members of one family living at home) - \$15.00

Name: _____

Mail to:

Address: _____

Lee Historical
Society,

City/Town: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

P. O. Box 170,
Lee, MA 01238

Telephone: _____ Email: _____

Officers of the Lee Historical Society for the year

President – Stephen Cozzaglio – 413-243-3204 or scozzaglio@roadrunner.com

Vice- President – Gary W. Allen – 413-2543-2140 or garywallen@earthlink.net

Treasurer – Mal Eckert – 413-243-1797 or MalEckert@msn.com

Secretary – Bambi Johndrow – 413-243-2845 or disdeer62@netzero.net

Board of Directors of the Lee Historical Society

Mary Morrissey

Ethel Noonan

Peg Biron

Alan Buckes

Christine Paresi

JoAnn Zarnoch

Brenda Liebenow

Adele Hawley

Society Historian – Charlotte Davis

Collection Chairman – Open Position

Newsletter Editor – Mal Eckert

The Lee Historical Society has the following items that are related to our town available for sale.

Picture Packets – Six, 8” x 10” colored pictures of “Old Lee” for \$8.00 each or 3 for \$20.00 plus \$2.50 if shipped.

Refrigerator magnets – (approx. 2” x 3”) street scenes of early Lee for \$3.00 or \$10.00 for a set of four different scenes. No Shipping charges.

Cookbook, “Boiling Water” – A 400 recipe cookbook put together by the ladies of the society for the price of \$10.00, plus \$3.50, if shipped.

“Historical Lee”, a tribute to Betty Dennis. A seventy-three page book containing the articles written by Betty between April of 1971 and August of 1977 that appeared in the local Penny Saver. Cost is \$8.00, with an additional \$2.50 if shipped.

Picture note cards – Five note cards, including envelopes, with different early Lee scenes. Cost is \$5.00 per packet with a \$1.50 shipping fee.

Commemorative mugs with six different images;

1. Memorial Hall
2. Central Fire Station
3. Lee Library
4. Congregational Church
5. Hyde School
6. South Lee Covered Bridge

These mugs are \$8.00 each or buy the whole set for \$40.00. Shipping and handling will be priced according to the shipping location.

PLEASE SUPPORT OUR "BUSINES MEMBERS" THAT SUPPORT OUR SOCIETY

The following is a list of the area businesses that are currently "Business Members" of the Lee Historical Society for this year. If you would like your business or company listed here, please fill out the membership application below and send it to us with a check for \$25.00.

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

Ben's Shop
68 Main Street
Lee, MA 01238
413-243-0242

Charles Flint Antiques
52 Housatonic Street
Lenox, MA 01240
413-637-1634

Lee Audio 'N Security, Inc.
65 Fairview Street
Lee, MA 01238
800-369-3905

Quality Plus Custodial
260 Chestnut Street
Lee, MA 01238
413-243-2197

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

Paperdilly, Inc.
74 Main Street
Lee, MA 01238
413-243-1928

Dresser Hull Company
60 Railroad Street
Lee, MA 01238
413-243-4545

Robert M. Kelly, Paperhanging
South Prospect Street
Lee, MA 01238

Deely & Deely, Attorneys
218 Main Street
Lee, MA 01238

Jonathon Foote 1778 House
1 East Street
Lee, MA 01238

Monk's Professional Barber Shop
91 Main Street
Lee, MA 01238
413-243-3341

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

Devonfield Inn
85 Stockbridge Road
Lee, MA 01238
413-243-3298

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

Terrace Hair Studio
135 Housatonic Street
Lee, MA 01238
413-243-1799

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

Kelly Funeral Home
3 Main Street
Lee, MA 01238
413-243-0204

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

Berkshire Mt. Country Store
151 Main Street
Lee, MA 01238
413-243-2144

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

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

Pumpkin Patch Quilts
58 West Center Street
Lee, MA 01238
413-243-1635

Considine & Leary, Attorneys
49 Main Street
Lee, MA 01238
413-243-4900

Karen Keenan Gifts & Home
69 Main Street
Lee, MA 01238
413-243-2689

Check out TownOfLee.com for information about Lee; where to eat, places to stay, shopping, etc.