



LEEDS LETTER

FEBRUARY / MARCH 2016

UPCOMING EVENTS 2016

FEBRUARY 9

LCA Meeting

Tuesday, 7:00 - 8:00 pm
Leeds School teachers lounge
Come and share your ideas!

- Pizza Party planning
- Historical Walking Tour sign project
- Hotel Bridge fund-raising ideas

FEBRUARY 27

Beat the Winter Blues Pizza & Raffle Party

Saturday, 4:00 - 8:00pm
Northampton Country Club

MARCH 8

LCA Meeting

Tuesday, 7:00 - 8:00 pm
Leeds School teachers lounge
Come and share your ideas!

- Late winter tree pruning plan
- Wild flower seeding plan
- Historical Walking Tour sign project
- Trail clean up planning

Leeds Civic Association

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Leeds, MA 01053
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www.leedscivic.org

FUN
LEEDS BEAT THE WINTER BLUES
PIZZA PARTY
RAFFLE PRIZES
MUSIC
CASH BAR

FEBRUARY 27 from 4:00-8:00pm
Northampton Country Club
All Leeds residents welcome!
LCA adult members - \$5 / NON-members - \$10
LCA members' kids - \$3 / NON-members' kids - \$5
Join the LCA at the party and get the admission discount!
Please bring an appetizer or dessert to share.

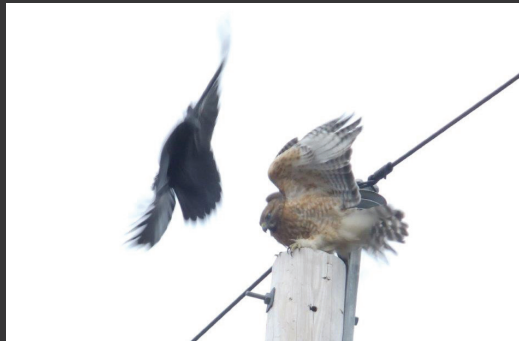
All kinds of prizes and surprises await you at the Annual LCA Pizza Party.

Whose lucky tickets will be drawn from each little brown prize bag? Nibble on appetizers, eat hot pizza, break your New Year's resolutions and enjoy delicious desserts! There will be free juice drinks for kids and a cash bar for adults. All parents are reminded to mind their kids. Hope you can make it to the party and have fun with your Leeds neighbors! Contact Heidi to arrange for prize donation pick-ups and drop-offs, 585-9923 or email heidi@heidistevens.com.

Holiday Ups and Downs

On a warmer than usual Saturday in January Robin Forsythe-Mias decided to take advantage of the pleasant weather and began taking down the holiday lights at Mulberry Park. Nice! Soon Joan Anderson of Grove Avenue came along and chipped in. Nice again! Soon Linda Butler out for a walk came by and there were now three women slipping and sliding on the snow as they reclaimed the light strands. It remained an entirely "women-only" event until one guy toolled by on his bike and removed one of the last strands of holiday lights. Taking care of the village doesn't happen by magic, although sometimes it feels that way. Thank you ladies and gent for your efforts.

A Cooper's Hawk being watched ... and then pestered by a crow ... and ultimately unruffled!



Photos taken on Grove Avenue by Joan Anderson

A Date with the Past - Heidi Stevens

The LCA has been sleuthing for the exact date of this train derailment photo so it can be included on historical photo signage that will be placed on the bike trail railing near the site of the wreck. The photo is part of the Robert P. Emrick collection at Forbes Library. Emrick had a life long interest in photography and documented wonderful scenes of Leeds during his lifetime. Emrick also collected other photographers' work like the glass plate photo of the scene of the train accident, opposite. Robert Emrick's grandson donated his grandfather's valuable and important photo collection to Forbes Library in 2000. Thank you Joel Emrick!

We are also appreciative of Dylan Gaffney's assistance. Not only did Dylan, a librarian at Forbes, help us find the date of the wreck, he found the newspaper article describing the incident in detail.

The article below was transcribed from the Springfield Republican, March 28, 1902.

A PASSENGER TRAIN DERAILED. YOUNG MAN SERIOUSLY INJURED.

CREW RECEIVED PAINFUL BRUISES—

OVER EMBANKMENT AT HAYDENVILLE—NARROWLY ESCAPED RIVER.

A passenger train was derailed on the Williamsburg branch of the New York, New Haven, and Hartford road at Haydenville yesterday morning at 10:40, and plunged part way down a steep bank, 30 feet high toward the Mill River. The train crew of three men and two passengers were on the train. The train crew and one of the passengers escaped with slight injuries. The other passenger, Michael Mansfield, 19, of Haydenville, received injuries of doubtful result. The injuries received by all five men at first appeared trifling, and young Mansfield walked home in Haydenville. When he entered the house he said to his mother, "Mamma, I came near getting killed," and had hardly spoken when he fell to the floor unconscious. He remained in that condition for several hours. He was conscious at intervals late in the afternoon. Dr. Collins of Northampton was summoned and found that the symptoms indicated injury to the brain, which might prove serious. Young Mansfield also suffered injury to his right knee and right elbow. He has been employed in Michelin Bros' store at Northampton. Conductor Chandler suffered painful injuries to the face, and may be kept in the house for a few days. Engineer William Watson and Fireman Eugene Waltermayer received no injury more serious than painful bruises. One of the passengers was a drummer, who was a stranger to the people of Haydenville, and did not give his name. He did not appear injured, and took the next car back to Northampton.

The point at which the engine left the track was opposite the silk mill in Haydenville, on a steep embankment above the river. The derailment was complete, and the engine, followed by a single car, started down the bank head first. Fortunately, the embankment was of light soil, from which the frost had departed, and the engine and truck plowed deep into the earth. This threw the engine upon its side and brought it to a standstill before it had gone half-way to the river. The car was not overturned, and part of it remained at the top of the embankment, though both trucks left the rails. The fireman was thrown through the cab window and down the embankment with sufficient force to keep him out of the way of the engine. He was only slightly injured by his fall

upon the soft earth. The engineer remained in the cab, and when the engine ceased moving, he climbed out of the window that was uppermost. The conductor and passengers were roughly thrown about in the car, and received their injuries from contact with the car furniture. Conductor Chandler was also cut on the face and hands by broken glass from the windows. Engineer Watson gave his first attention to putting out the fire in the engine, taking water from the tank in the tender for this purpose.



The track was badly torn up by the engine and car after they left the track, and this made it impossible to tell whether derailment was caused by a defect in the rails or roadbed. It is probable, however, that the action of the frost had caused a depression of the roadbed or spreading of the rails. No rock or foreign material were found on the track, except a loose spike, which looked as though it had been run over. But it is not thought that a loose spike could derail the train. The wrecking car from Westfield arrived at 1 o'clock and quickly replaced the car. It was decided not to begin work on the engine until today. The track was shifted and repaired, and the evening trip was made with the same car and engine crew, but a different conductor.

View a scene from the past

To compliment the self-guided historical walking tour, the LCA and Leeds-Mill River Greenway Initiative will be applying for a small grant (\$3,000) from the Community Preservation Committee to place interpretative historical signs in the village. The application deadline is very soon—FEBRUARY 8th!

Historic images placed in corresponding present day locations will draw folks into scenes from the past, accentuating their experience and understanding of the industrial importance of the silk and button industry in Leeds during the 19th and early 20th century, and the catastrophic impact the Mill River Flood of 1874 had on the village.

We are hoping to have at least \$500 in matching funds committed by Feb 8th. If you can contribute (no amount is too small) to this effort, please contact Jason Johnson ASAP at cookjohnson@comcast.net. Checks can be made out to Leeds Civic Association with "Historic Signage" written in the memo line.