



MAY 2015

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P.O. Box 114, Leeds, MA 01053

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LeedsCivic.org

MAY 23 - Armed Forces "Family" Appreciation Day

This event is open to all veterans and their families.

Please spread the word to all the vets you know!

Saturday, May 23, 2015 • 9:30 - 5pm Look Park Dow Pavillion

FREE to all area veterans and their families • FREE Food, DJ & Live Music •

FUN FOR KIDS: Face Paintng, Balloons, Clowns, Look Park Train, Water Park, Zoo, Lawn Games and more!

5k Road Race starts at 9:30 am • Race info/registration: 413-203-1479

Info Booth available for all veterans • For more information: 587-1299

MAY 24 - Leeds Memorial Day Celebration

The Annual Leeds Memorial Day Celebration will take place on Sunday, May 24th at 1:00pm at the Veterans Memorial Park across from the Leeds School. Activities will include a color guard from the V.F.W Post 8006, A wreath laying ceremony, a cannon salute, and the playing of taps. There will also be a reading of the Gettysburg Address. The Reverend David Whitely, chaplain at the V.A.M.C, will officiate. Hope to see you there!

*****ECRWSS*****

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HOTEL BRIDGE



NEWS

JUNE 1 - Workin' Bridges Community Meeting Restoration Options for Hotel Bridge

The Workin' Bridges community meeting will be held Monday, June 1st at 6:30pm at Leeds School Cafeteria. In addition to Workin' Bridges presenting a plan for full restoration and the cost involved, a plan to open the bridge to foot traffic and bicycles while restoration funding is sought will be offered. The city of Northampton owns the bridge and must approve of any bridge opening. If the historic 1880 iron bridge can be opened in a safe way, it will greatly improve the enjoyment and movement of Leeds folks and others who relied on the bridge to cross the river. An open bridge will also increase restoration fund raising opportunities.

What made this special meeting come about: The Community Preservation Act grant that was used in 2011 to hire Stantec Assoc. to assess the bridge had a balance of \$5,292. Rather than use the funds for a Stantec public meeting about their findings (which are available for free on the Northampton website), the LCA requested that the money be used to hire Workin' Bridges, a team of iron bridge specialists, to perform a site visit, submit a scope of work report, and hold a larger community meeting here in Leeds.

The LCA, DPW, and Workin' Bridges took advantage of the frozen river in early March by quickly organizing the site-visit. The WB site-visit team consisted of iron worker, Nels Raynor of Bach Steele, Jim Schiffer, bridge engineer and Julie Bowers, project manager. They flew in, spent a day and a half assessing, measuring and photographing the top and bottom chord members, abutments and deck. The river was frozen solid so the team could inspect underneath while standing on the ice – no boat, no scaffolding necessary! The Workin' Bridges' Scope

of Work report was recently submitted to the city and on Monday, June 1 at 6:30 the third part of the Workin' Bridges contract will take place with a community meeting led by WB project manager, Julie Bowers. You are all invited, as well as the mayor, city officials, bridge historians and enthusiasts, engineering professors and students, bicyclists and walkers. Please mark your calendars, bring your friends and find out what it will take to open the Hotel Bridge.

National Register of Historic Places

Hotel Bridge has an excellent chance of being listed on the National Register of Historic Places which could allow access to grant funding for restoration. On Tuesday, April 28, the Northampton Department of Public Works submitted the Leeds Civic Association's nomination for the Hotel Bridge to be officially recognized as a national historic place. The nomination must first be evaluated by the Massachusetts Historical Commission, a process which can take 14 to 18 months, before they then submit it to the the National Historic Register. Letters of support from Mayor Narkewicz; DPW director, Ned Huntley; The Mill River Greenway Initiative chairman, John Sinton; and Northampton Historical Commission Chair, David Drake were included with the application. Volunteer researchers, writers, and editors helped with the application. Many thanks to Penny Geis, Jim Montgomery, Jason Johnson, Sue Carbin, Heidi Stevens, Megan Freedman, Megan McNally, and Andy Kuether.

Mill River Greenway Initiative's Leeds History Walk - Penny Geis

Last year, I joined the Mill River Greenway Initiative on several of their river walks guided by people who know the history and the ecology of the river. On one walk I saw where the river used to run through downtown Northampton. This spring, an MRGI canoe trip took us through the floodplain forest and marsh just before our Mill

River joins the Connecticut River at Acadia. An Audubon ecologist guided us to an owl nest, where his young daughter spotted a baby Great Horned Owl on a branch just above the water in front of us. For ten or fifteen minutes, we stilled our canoes and our hearts as we watched that baby owl just “this” far in front of us.



photo by John Body, MRGI

MRGI offers guided walks and paddles. I loved the walks - and highly recommend them. But don't delay; you have to sign up early, because they fill up fast. Go to their website at MillRiverGreenway.org for information about this year's walks, for information about the history and ecology of the Mill River, and to volunteer to help with projects in art, history, pulling invasive species, children's activities, and more.

JULY 19th - Leeds MRGI guided history walk

Leeds MRGI self-guided history walk brochure is available!

The Leeds chapter of the Mill River Greenway Initiative is excited to launch the Leeds MRGI self-guided brochure titled, **Leeds Center to Hotel Bridge**. It is the second self-guided river walk brochure to be produced (The first being the Northampton section of the Mill River.) The handsome eight panel, color brochure contains amazing historical photos of Leeds, an easy to follow map marking eight sites of historical significance along the river and interesting information on each site. There is also a 160 year timeline of Leeds mills and their manufacturing milestones. The history of Leeds mills and the impact of the Mill River on the industries is fascinating. Many U.S. manufacturing firsts occurred right here on Main Street, Leeds. You can pick up a brochure at any LCA event. Brochures will also be available at the Northampton Chamber of Commerce. To volunteer for the Leeds Mill River Greenway, contact Jason Johnson, at cookjohnson@comcast.net.

Rail Trail spur to Hotel Bridge

Three Smith College engineering students have completed their senior capstone project designing a bike path spur from the Norwottuck Rail Trail to Main Street in Leeds. The bike spur would curve down to Main Street along the border of the Alternative Recycle lot. The proposed bike spur project helps to focus attention on the Hotel Bridge and how it is a much needed span that when opened offers folks a route to Water Street, Roberts Hill Conservation Area and Musante Beach.

People pitch in at Leeds Civic Litter Pick-Up - Sue Carbin

The weather was pretty near perfect for the April 25th village clean up. Twenty seven volunteers turned out. Don Willard and his band of enthusiastic ATVers whipped through Sylvester Rd. Ben Weil, Jason Johnson, Tim Reynolds (and little helpers Rafe, Adi, Luco), Ananda Lennox, Rachel, Julia, Nava, and Patricia, did a great job on Reservoir Rd...they even pulled a sleeper couch out of Robert's Meadow Brook! Joanne Kelliher covered Audubon as she does every year and Annie Morehouse and Mary Hulbert did Water St. Margie Riddle took care of Arch St. and Rob did the trail off of Arch down to Look Park. Penny Geis and her grandson, Leo, did the area around Top Dam. Chartpak sent two employees out on Friday, April 24th, to clean up River Rd. So, Leeds is looking pretty good.

The bad news is that while Rob was down picking up litter on the trail his bike was stolen. So, if anyone happened to see two guys pushing a bike or riding on a bike down Arch or Florence Street the morning of April 25th between 8 and 8:30am please let us know.

Tom Quinn and I hauled all the trash up to the dumpster provided by the Northampton DPW. And everybody got a coupon from Friendly's for a free ice cream sundae!

JUNE 13 - Leeds Village Wide Tag Sale

The annual tag sale will be held Saturday, June 13, from 8:00-12:00. The LCA will place a notice in the Gazette and Hampshire Life, and post a large "Village-Wide Tag Sale" sign at the beginning of Florence Street (Rt 9 entrance). We encourage you to add your own signs at each entrance to your street.

Please consider joining the Leeds Civic Association! Stay informed about events, news, and opportunities. Either fill out and mail the form below or become a member online by going to www.leedscivic.org.

Name

Address

Phone

Email

- ☐ I would like to receive my newsletter electronically.
- ☐ I would like my newsletter hand delivered.
- ☐ I would like my newsletter mailed (include additional \$6 for postage).
- ☐ I am interested in volunteering. Please contact me.

New

Renew

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\$10 Family Yearly Membership

☐
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\$25 Business Yearly Membership

(1 year LCA website advertising, please enclose business card)

Additional Donation \$

Total Amount Enclosed \$

Make checks payable to Leeds Civic Association
and return this form to: P.O. Box 114, Leeds, MA 01053