



LEEDS LETTER

APRIL 2013

UPCOMING EVENTS 2013

April LCA Meeting

Tuesday, April 9 @ 7:30
Leeds School Teacher's Lounge

Village Spring Clean Up

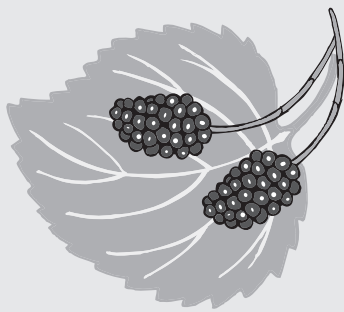
Saturday, April 13
Registration is from 8:30 to 9am in front of the Leeds Post Office.

Hotel Bridge Bike Ride

Saturday, May 19 - 8:00-2:00
Registration 8:00am
Chartpak parking lot, 1 River Rd
\$30 Individual
\$40 family 3+

Saratoga Race Track Trip

Friday, July 26th
Friday, August 23rd
Trip Details to Come



HAPPY SPRING!

Annual Spring Clean Up

The Leeds Civic Association's Annual Spring Litter Pick-Up Day will be Saturday, April 13, 2013. Registration is from 8:30 to 9:00 am in front of the Leeds Post Office. We work from 9am to 11am and the LCA will supply trash bags, a pick-up truck and a dumpster. Just choose a street or section of town to clean up then just pick up the trash and leave the bag (or bags) on the side of the road and our pick up truck trash crew will come along and haul it away to the dumpster. Bring a friend, a neighbor or a complete stranger along to help. And, this is dirty work, so a pair of Garden/Work Gloves is strongly recommended.

Beat the Winter Blues Low Down - Jim Mias

Amidst a rambunctious, but joyful clamor of kids, parents happy not to have to pay for baby sitters and all other folks just wanting to be at another fantastic neighborhood event - the annual Beat the Winter Blues seemed to be fun to all 100+ that attended. Thanks to the last minute, step-up-to-the-plate efforts of Heidi Stevens and a core group of volunteers including the MC Shawn Gunderson and lots of donations from so many. The event continues to be three hours of fast, furious, funny - and just oh-so heartwarming when you come right down to it. Never take it for granted!

Meanwhile, those Christmas lights at Mulberry Street Park that we all love to see were still up as of mid-March. While it's so much fun (and effort) to put 'em up - it's sort of a drag taking 'em down, wrapping, boxing, etc. But kudos to 4 year old Zachy Roberge and one adult... two hours later, lights were down and ready to go for next year's enjoyment for all to see.

Youth Volunteer Opportunities

Leeds Civic Association is looking for young people who might be interested in rounding out their resumes with some civic-minded volunteering. The LCA always needs help planning, setting up and cleaning up for parties and events, putting up posters, clearing trails, newsletter submissions, etc. We also receive requests for volunteers from Leeds Elementary, Linda Manor, and neighbors to help with a variety of projects. When and how much a child volunteers is entirely up to them. If you would like to put your child's name on the LCA youth volunteer list please contact Heidi Stevens at heidi@heidistevens.com or call 585-9923.

This could be a great opportunity for Leeds kids to gain experience and realize that their efforts can make a difference. Community volunteering also looks great on college and job applications!

The Fourth Annual Leeds
**HOTEL BRIDGE
BIKE RIDE**
SUNDAY, MAY 19, 2013

10 mile, 25 mile, 50 mile routes 8am - 2pm



Rider Fees \$30 Individual, \$40 family of 3 or more

Supported Ride Food and Drinks Provided with Stops,
Waiver / Helmet Required

Registration + Start Location ChartPak Inc., 1 River
Road, Leeds, MA (Parking lot is located on Mulberry Street
across from the Leeds Post Office)

Leeds Ride part of Massbike Baystate BIKE WEEK

If you would like more info about this LCA sponsored ride or would like to help out at a station during the ride, please call Alice or Stephy at 860-803-0134.

100% of the May 19th bike ride proceeds will go toward preservation of the Hotel Bridge. The Historic Leeds Bridge, built in 1880, was first referred to as the Shanty Row Bridge by local residents. The Leeds Hotel was constructed at the foot of the bridge in 1885 to accommodate the growing industrial village and the new, more appealing name of the Hotel Bridge was born. The bridge was closed to vehicle traffic in 2004 due to safety concerns.

Part 4 - Continued from February newsletter

Daily Hampshire Gazette Article about Leeds

by Alice Manning, Sept. 27, 1975

According to "Smith College Studies in History," the first fully developed factory on the Mill River here was the Shepherd Woolen Mill, which began operations in 1809. The Shepherd firm was founded by three sons and a nephew of Levi Shepherd

of Northampton. Dr Levi Shepherd was a prosperous druggist whose old account books are still in existence. Solomon Clark in his "Antiquities" reports that as early as 1768 Levi Shepherd, who died in 1805, traded in Northampton and later Dr Levi and sons had a factory on Pleasant St. The Shepherds apparently began business as a family partnership as James Shepherd & Co. and from 1814 to 1817 it was Thomas Shepherd & Co. but was actually managed by James Shepherd.

The woolen mill obviously became an important industry. The Shepherds were progressive men with plenty of money behind them and they were not afraid to try new methods of production and to listen to new ideas. They brought skilled laborers from England to initiate up to date methods and teach the skills to others.

One of the experts who came here from Yorkshire suggested that installing "spinning jennies" to run by waterpower would greatly increase production. At the Yorkshire man's urging Shepherd received a patent for a power loom in 1816 and construction of these looms was undertaken in 1822.

With in introduction of the power loom, the cost of producing a yard of broadcloth, which ranged from 18¢ to 23¢, was reduced to 10¢ a yard. In 1823 the factory had a capacity of 250 lbs clean wool per day, produced by 12 double carding machines which were "of new construction, worked by water power" and 1300 spindles were kept busy.

Shortly after the factory opened, to keep up with the demand for raw wool, Thomas Shepherd acquired a small flock of merino rams. These were used for raising merino fleeces for the factory and for letting. The "mania for merinos" like the mulberry craze some years later, had cooled down by 1818. The "merino mania" was replaced by a widespread, though somewhat lesser mania, importation of Saxony sheep, whose fleece was used to produce an even finer quality of wool.

James Shepherd is said to have been the first to import the Saxony breed of sheep, probably in 1822, some three or four years before the trend became widespread. Shepherd had by then increased his flock to between 1,200 and 1,400 sheep, which supplied the factory with 3,200 lbs of wool in 1826.

The village takes shape

--to be continued in next newsletter

