

## WHAT HAPPENED THAT DAY

by John Daniel, 2024

Down in the valley, people starting their day,  
A gray, rainy Saturday in the middle of May.  
They're on to their business, there's so much to do,  
While danger lurks above them, if they only knew.  
Some start their work, making buttons or silk,  
While others eat their breakfast, or deliver the milk.  
With a boom and a roar, now the monster's unleashed.  
Heartbreak awaits those below it.

For a mountain of misery is tumbling their way.  
None will forget what happened that day.

No time to think about which way to go.  
No time to think of loved ones, whose fate they don't know.  
No time to run now and no place to hide,  
And so they are caught by the merciless tide.  
No time for mourning, there's work to be done.  
They rise to the challenge together.  
For they've all lost someone in each village, each town,  
And nothing is the same now, their world upside down.

And as we look back on that day long ago,  
With the benefit of hindsight, there are things that we know.  
So was it an accident, or was it a crime?  
The hubris of humans lives on in our time.  
The valley recovered, though never the same.  
The heartache is passed through the ages.  
For the unlucky souls who were carried away,  
We'll not forget what happened that day.

EVENT DESIGNED AND ORGANIZED BY LEEDS NEIGHBORS

WITH CONTRIBUTIONS FROM

MARNEY ELECTRIC • CHARTPAK, INC.

HISTORIC NORTHAMPTON • MILL RIVER GREENWAY

LEEDS CIVIC ASSOCIATION



## LEEDS 150 YEAR COMMEMORATION OF THE MILL RIVER FLOOD DISASTER

LEEDS MAIN STREET CHURCH

SUNDAY, MAY 19, 2024

1:00 P.M.

## WELCOME LEEDS FRIENDS AND NEIGHBORS



### The Flood Reaches Leeds and Myron Day's Warning

Heidi Stevens



### Fred Howard's Letters to His Brother About the Flood

Excerpts read by Sam Daniel



### "What Happened that Day"

Original song by John Daniel

Performed by David, Trine, Alma, Clara, & Isabella Rondina  
With Greg White and John Daniel



### Reading of Names

Penny Geis, John Dietrich, Erin Mahon-Moore, Sam Daniel,  
Elsie Baker, Raine Maiore, Isabella Rondina



### Tree Planting Honoring Myron Day

Gaby Immerman, Mill River Greenway Memorial Tree Project



View Myron Day's Tiffany Medal and the Mill River Art Display  
Enjoy Refreshments

## ART FROM THE MILL RIVER

The exhibit includes art pieces that use patterned ceramic shards and glass smoothed and sanded by years spent in the Mill River, and artwork inspired by and specific to the 1874 Mill River Flood.

Leeds Button Mill Clock, by Nancy Meagher

River Rising, by Nancy Meagher

Mill River Flood in Leeds, by Nancy Meagher

Illustrations from The Day It Rained Buttons, by Nancy Meagher

Aftermath, by Greta Moore and Lora Sandhusen

Lost Then Found, by Ben O'Connor and Heidi Stevens

Pumpkin Seed, by Julie Akeret, Mark Van Duser, Jim Mias

Sturgeon, by Julie Akeret, Mark Van Duser, Jim Mias

Moon Rise, by Julie Akeret, Mark Van Duser, Jim Mias

Our Mill River, by the Leeds After School Enrichment River Arts Club

Mill River and Bridge, by Kris Cobb

Map-Leeds Swept Away, by Heidi Stevens

No Time for Tea, by Heidi Stevens

River Shard Stepping Stone, by Heidi Stevens

River Glass Scales, by Heidi Stevens

Light as a Feather, by Heidi Stevens

Emery Wheel, by Bill Cobb

River Stuff, by Jim Mias



## WITH APPRECIATION

A special thank you to Kris and Bill Cobb for the generous use of their lawn and church hall, and their behind-the-scenes creative efforts that made this gathering possible.

Thank you to the Leeds folks who helped organize this event, to the musicians for sharing their talents with us, to the readers and bell ringer, to Shawn Gunderson for sound setup, to Michael Kester for videotaping, and to friends and neighbors who baked delicious treats.



We all owe a debt of gratitude to those who record history.

The research and documentation of historical details about the 1874 Mill River Flood by Elizabeth Sharpe, Eric Webber, Christopher Clark, Ralmon Black, and Jim Parsons will continue to inform future generations and ensure that the victims of the 1874 Mill River Flood will never be forgotten.