

FRIENDS OF SAXONVILLE

NEWSLETTER • WINTER 2016

The Potting Shed

by Gina Offenstine

In the late 1890's, the Robertsons, an English family of talented potters, located in Dedham Massachusetts, began production of a line of pottery decorated with a fanciful cobalt blue rabbit pattern highlighted with a crackle glaze. Their pottery appealed to customers near and far nourishing the growth of The Dedham Pottery for almost 40 years. Unfortunate circumstances lead to the closure of the business in 1943.

In the early 1970's, Chotsie Allen began painting pottery with the Dedham Bunny pattern to augment a collection of the original pottery left to her

by her mother. Her

pottery caught the imagination of neighbors and friends, much the way that The Dedham Potters' had, and demand grew beyond her capabilities. In

1977, Chotsie convinced two

of her sons to join her as she incorporated her business as The Potting Shed, Inc. Demand from neighbors and friends blossomed, first to a few local retail



(Left) Sampling of animals © Damianos Photography
(Above) Rob Starr, owner © Damianos Photography

stores and, from there, to wholesale and retail customers nation-wide. The pottery's space requirement outgrew the cellar of Chotsie's home in Concord, Mass., so they moved production to a warehouse in West Concord.

In 2012, "The Shed" relocated its production facility to the historic Saxonville Mills expanding the range of production to include contract work for other retail businesses in the Boston area. (Continued on page 4)

Mama Dee's at Nikos

by Gina Offenstine

Saxonville native, Diana "Dee" Palmer remembers Tasty Donuts as a child, and Friendly's where she started her food career. Growing up on Elm Street and now back there again, it seems fitting that she works in the neighborhood where she created so many wonderful memories.

Now, many years later, Dee was given the opportunity to do what she had always dreamed of ... opening her own breakfast shop, Mama Dee's at Niko's (a separate business from the pizza restaurant). She looks forward to going to work each day and enjoys chatting with the customers. On any given day, you can find her cooking, baking, waiting tables, prepping and all things associated with a restaurant. You can also meet her family members at the restaurant including her grandchildren who take turns helping. (Continued on page 4)



Mama Dee © Damianos Photography

Long Time Saxonville Civil Servant Approaches Retirement

by David Longden

On the small street of Watson Place in Saxonville, hidden from view of most of the commuters zooming by on Concord Street, stands a quaint brick building with three large doors and a tall tower on one side. Known officially simply as "Station 2", this ancient building is the oldest active fire station in the town of Framingham. And it is due to be retired after many, many loyal years of service.

According to the history books, the first fire engine arrived in Saxonville around 1828. An engine house was soon built in 1833, located on Central Street between Water and Elm streets. The official fire department in Framingham was established on Feb 3, 1847 by a government act, and after a short while the department was organized in 1853.

By the late 1800's, that old Saxonville fire station was deemed to be inadequate. As would happen even today, a committee of town officials (including firemen) was formed to come up with a solution, and at the Framingham Annual Town Meeting of 1899, the town

"Voted that the sum of \$10,000 be granted, and that the money be expended under the direction of the same Committee." and

"Voted that in view of the gift of a lot of land for the location of the New Engine House in Saxonville by Mr. F.E Simpson, the Town extend to him a note of thanks, and it was so voted."

The project was put out to bid, but the lowest bid, from Mr. J.J. Prindiville, came in higher than the approved sum. The August 1900 Fire Engineers' report requested additional funds with this statement:

"It was suggested that part of the building be left unfinished ... by omitting heating, plumbing concreting, finishing apparatus room, and all but one of the rooms in the second story, the remainder of the building could be erected within the appropriation ... your Committee ... on the contrary, consider it good business practice to complete the building according to the plans and specifications".

An additional \$2600 was then moved from other parts of the town budget, including the balance from the "Street Watering" appropriation (a necessary expense before paved roads). Part of the additional money was to be used for "horses, harness, furniture and necessary equipment". From the Framingham Fire Department Engineers' report in 1900:

"Last year your Board recommended that a new Engine House be built at Saxonville; the money was appropriated and work on the building began in the early fall, and is now well along toward completion. When this house is ready for occupancy, Engine 2 and Engine 2 wagon, together with four horses and drivers will be quartered there; then Saxonville will have what she has long required; proper shelter for apparatus and men, and motive power to draw them to a fire." The building design included a tall brick tower, designed with two purposes; (1) it housed a bell to sound fire local alarms, and; (2) as a place to hang-dry fire hoses after use.



Saxonville Engine House © David Longden

The building was completed in 1901 and put into service. The old Engine House was then sold the next year at auction, and no longer exists today.

Now fast-forward 116 years to 2016. The Framingham Fire Department has grown from three Engine Houses to five modern Fire Stations. The Saxonville fire station, upgraded and repaired along the way, has been serving the village well for over a century, much longer than its predecessor. It has seen the change in "motive power" from horses to gasoline engines and the gradual increase in size and weight of the vehicles used to combat the destructive forces of fire. But it is showing its age. The building that was originally built to house horses now is home to a 1984 Pierce 1250/500 (still called Engine 2). However, it cannot continue to support those large new vehicles, and in fact is not even large enough to hold some of the larger ones being used by the Framingham Fire Department. The Town's Buildings department has decided that the station needs to be retired as soon as possible, for safety reasons. Similar to the process 116 years ago, the Town officials have made the replacement of "Station 2" its top Capital Budget priority. The present site is not large enough for a modern station, and being historic, many would prefer that the building be preserved. A new site has been selected on A Street, and is being reviewed at this time. It is expected that the new Station will be built within two to three years and become the new "Station 2".

So what will become of the building on Watson Place? Like its predecessor, it will likely be sold at auction, or maybe leased. According to the Town, it needs some renovation work, but is expected that it could be re-purposed for a lower impact use. Plans for the next door Athenaeum call for the two buildings to be linked by a new common core to make them both Accessible and ADA compliant. At least one business in Saxonville has expressed strong interest in using the building. Like many folks you may know, it will ease its way into retirement, and start a new career. It could enjoy a long retired life as offices, retail or light industrial. ❖

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New FOS Business Members

Mama Dee's at Niko's
Diana "Dee" Palmer
1645 Concord Street
(508) 861-3497

The Potting Shed, Inc.
Rob Starr
2 Watson Place, Building 5C
(978) 369-1382
www.harelooms.com

NEWS from Saxonville Studios

By Emily Myerow

The artists of Saxonville Studios recently hung a group show titled "Repairing the World" at the Rubin-Frankel Hillel @ BU Hillel, 213 Bay State Road, Boston. Joanne Tarlin, artist and owner of MetroWest Arts Academy at Saxonville Studios curated the exhibit. Artists Emily Myerow, Mary Kostman, Rebekah Lord Gardiner and Rosalie Shane (artist and owner of Saxonville



Studios) helped hang the exhibit. Exhibiting artists include: Emily Rubinfeld, Kaffee Kang and Patience Epstein. The exhibit runs through mid-December 2016. For information about the gallery and hours, visit

www.bu.edu/hillel/about/gallery.

The artists of Saxonville Studios exhibit their art year-round in Gallery 2B at Saxonville Studios



(Left) "Cupcakes" by Rosalie Shane, currently in the "Luscious" exhibit at the Brattleboro Museum of Art in Brattleboro, VT through February 6, 2017, www.brattleboromuseum.org. © Warren Patterson
(Above) "Repairing the World" group show. © Mary Kostman

on the second floor of Building B in the Mills. Call Rosalie Shane for gallery hours at (508) 283-3500. www.saxonvillestudios.com ❖

Vibes from the Village

- Framingham items are available for sale in SensationWare, 2 Watson Place, Building 5C, 3rd Floor in the Mills: books, glassware, ceramics, greeting cards and more. Great for holiday gifts. Please stop by!
- Look for parallel parking adjacent to the Mills southbound on Concord Street soon!

- Damianos Photography & Publishing is moving to 1630 Concord Street in the Mills December 5.
- Do you know where the names of streets and places in Saxonville originate? Find out on page one of our 2009 Summer issue of the FOS newsletter archived on our website: www.Saxonville.org/news.htm. ❖

The Potting Shed (continued)



Kathie Rosko, 34-year employee © Damianos Photography

The company's factory outlet store remained in Concord for several years but was eventually moved into the Sax-onville Mills as well. It is located on the third floor of building 5C and has a robust array of both first and second quality lamps, dinnerware, cookware, home accessories, figurines, and items tailored to various national holidays. With the various holidays forthcoming, the store is laden with appropriate gifts for Thanksgiving, Christmas, New Years, etc. Explicit directions are available online at www.Harelooms.com. ❖

Mama Dee's at Nikos (continued)



Coffee mug
© Damianos Photography

Mama Dee's offers seasonal items such as Pumpkin Spice Pancakes topped with (made from scratch) Pumpkin Syrup, Banana Bread or Blueberry Cinnamon French Toast, Corned Beef Hash, Fresh Mini Loaf of Breads and Mini Chocolate Chip Pudding Cookies, as well as typical breakfast items like eggs, pancakes and omelets, and daily specials. Wait to see what

December holds! They also provide catering.

Dee grew up in a farmhouse on Elm Street, with both grandmothers, her parents, two sisters and a brother. Her house was always full of people and laughter. She was taught to give back to others and help those less fortunate. With those instilled values, she has participated in many Mission Trips, managed the Community Garden at Church, donate time to Daniel's table, Family Promise, and other nonprofits.

Her motto: If I stay busy I stay young and I can sleep when I die ... ❖

Mama Dee's @Niko's

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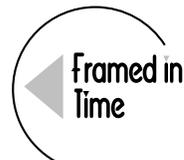
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