

## Spotlight on Job Lane

By Mike Day/Correspondent, Bedford Minuteman Newspaper  
Wed Apr 15, 2009, 03:13 PM EDT, edited by Don Corey.

Bedford, Mass. - The Friends of the Job Lane House played host Monday afternoon to special guest JoAnn Young of Rickmansworth, England – the birthplace of the first Job Lane, grandfather of the man Job Lane House is named for.

Job Lane was born in Rickmansworth, a town about 30 miles south of England, in 1620. After moving to the New England area, he acquired the Winthrop grant in 1664, which gave him a 1,260-acre parcel of land encompassing the Billerica portion of what would become Bedford. His grandson, Deacon Job would eventually build the Job Lane House there almost fifty years later.

“I found out about this house because I’d been on to the Rickmansworth Historical Society,” said Young. “In one of their old magazines, they talked about this house and the three brothers who had come from Rickmansworth.” The three brothers Young referred to are the first Job, James and Edward Lane, who arrived separately in the 1640’s and 1650’s. Job acquired the Winthrop grant in Billerica, James went to first to Malden, MA then Casco Bay, ME, and Edward settled in Boston.

The Lane Family history from the first Job (pronounced “jobe” like the biblical character) down, the history of the Winthrop grant and a basic history of the Bedford/Billerica area was painstakingly reconstructed by Bedford Historic Preservation Commission member, Don Corey, over a six-month period starting in late 2008, which according to Corey was a bit of a mystery to unravel.

“(Grandfather) Job Lane was the original first settler in this part of Bedford that had been Billerica,” said Corey. “But where the heck did, he live? There had been speculation as to where his house was, but nobody knew.”

After poring over historical documents, deeds, and books, some dating as far back as 1664, Corey was able to reconstruct the Lane family tree and how the land was passed down from one generation to the next. Find the original Job Lane’s house, however, proved to be elusive. “We knew the house was in the area,” said Corey. “After Job Lane’s only son John was married, he left the original homestead to his son. When he died, he split the land between his three sons. It went to Job and then to his youngest son James.” The homestead was replaced in 1858 by the existing farmhouse at 130 North Road.

The Job Lane House itself, built by Deacon Job sometime around 1713, would be passed on to his son John and wife Martha (along with their six children) as an inheritance when Job passed away in 1762. At that time, the house was about half the size that it is today, consisting of three small downstairs rooms and a bedchamber and garret for a second floor. The house would not be expanded to its current size for another 100 hundred years.

Oliver Abbott acquired the house from Job Lane descendent Stephen Lane in 1827 and enlarged it to include a new kitchen. In 1843, Hiram Dutton bought the house and operated a farm there. Hiram's grandson Warren Dutton would in turn inherit the house from his grandfather in 1901.

Just over 70 years later, Bedford Town Historian Louise K. Brown purchased the house from the Dutton family hoping that the town of Bedford would eventually purchase it, and one year later at the 1973 Town Meeting Bedford residents voted to do just that, charging the Bedford Historical Commission to oversee it.

Five years later in 1978, the group The Friends of The Job Lane House formed to help the commission operate and maintain the house, and last year the group celebrated its 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

"We operate it for educational purposes," Job Lane House Hostess Jeannette Pothier said. "We do children's tours, open houses and events. The house is now in the National Register of Historic Places."

Open house season for what is now called The Job Lane Farm Museum House and Barn begins Sunday, May 10 and runs through Sunday, October 25. For a schedule of events, as well as a slideshow of pictures of the house, the farm and the surrounding grounds of the museum go to <https://joblanefarmmuseum.org>.

Unfortunately, The Job Lane House and Barn is not open during the winter, as JoAnn Young found out on her first trip to the historic site. "I first came here in 2001," said Young. "And I didn't realize the house was closed during the winter. I turned up and the place was shut. So, I left a postcard under the door and wrote a letter to the museum."

Young would return in 2003 and then again in 2009. She plans to come again, too, but it's not an easy excursion to come all the way from across the pond. "I just wish it wasn't so far away," said Young. "So, I could come more often."

Ed. Note: The article was mostly correct but has now been corrected by Don Corey and Jeannette Pothier. For example, the three brothers mentioned in the third paragraph were wrong and were corrected by Don Corey.