

Dedication of the Lee Garden Barn Plaque to the Dannemann's
as written and told by Carol Seldin at the Spring Tea and Luncheon on May 4, 2022.

When George Lee bequeathed his property to Beautification League 44 years ago, it included his modest home, which eventually became a rental. By 2014 it became apparent that Beautification League did not need a two-story 3 bedroom house to maintain. Member Peggy Jay oversaw a house inspection that revealed the many repairs that would be required. We did need storage space, access to water from the well and electricity. All of these essential elements were available in the basement. So what to do? We considered totally tearing down the house while retaining just the basement and garage to meet our needs, but eventually our vision changed.

The multi-year process was directed by our longstanding member Peggy Dannemann. Peggy had served NCBL in many important and outstanding ways: as Secretary, Treasurer, Vice President of Beautification, Programs, Vice President and President from 2005-07. She also happens to be a 1980 graduate of the Yale School of Architecture. Peggy was essentially the General Contractor of the project. She handled all aspects of permitting, worked with architect Scott Phillip, Town Planner Steve Palmer, and local construction contractors Peter and Gino Lanni. Renovation of Lee's home became a process of planning, persistence, patience – all managed by.... Peggy Dannemann.

So the structure at Lee Garden evolved from Lee's home to home for New Canaan Beautification League. It's a simple structure that preserved the original fireplace and half-moon windows. We have a meeting space with electricity, light, storage, running water and a bathroom. From the patio and sliding glass doors there are charming views of the garden below. And the sliding barn doors that cover the glass ones were crafted by Peggy and her husband Eric in their garage and then put into place. Peggy has said: "It works better than we might have thought. At the end of the day, it's much more than we would have envisioned. It's perfect for what it is."

We are all so very grateful for Peggy's many contributions of time and exceptional talent and will install this plaque at Lee on the building she was instrumental in creating.