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DUAL MEETINGHOUSE EXHIBITS A HUGE SUCCESS

By Sean Driscoll

On Friday, February 28th, the Society gathered at the Jaffrey Civic Center to celebrate the opening of two JHS exhibits. In the Display Cases, a show entitled *A Behind the Scenes Look at the Jaffrey Meetinghouse* offered a compelling look at the history, use, and preservation of the Jaffrey Meetinghouse. Curated by Jeanne Duval, the photographs, documents, and artifacts delighted both Society members and the public.

At the same time, the Auditorium Gallery hosted *Some Meetinghouses & Historic Churches of New England*, a collection of 83 posters designed and authored by Rob Stephenson. Rob's posters highlight the significant architectural, historical, and preservation elements of selected meetinghouses and churches. The show drew many preservationists from the Monadnock region, and comments like "There's our Meetinghouse" and "We were married in there" were overheard throughout the night.

visitors. Phil D'Avanza, who takes care of the Meetinghouse Clock, visited on a Saturday and got a chance to see his work on display. Dick and Wendy Dunning, of Peterborough, stopped by on a weekend and, looking at the poster of the Temple Meetinghouse, said, "We were married there."



Part of Jeanne Duval's curated display of Jaffrey Meetinghouse history and related artifacts. Photo Credit: Peter Lambert

"REDCOATS AND REBELS" THE FOCUS OF ANNUAL POTLUCK

By Vicki Arceci

On April 10 JHS members and members of the public enjoyed a talk given by Mary Adams, of the Humanities to Go program of the NH Historical Society. Her talk, with slides, was a fascinating study at New Hampshire's often overlooked involvement in the early years of the American Revolution. We learned of the background of several historical sites in our State, and the men and women who became patriots in their desire to rid our new country of British rule.



Photo Credit: Peter Lambert



Rob Stephenson talking to the crowd at the opening reception of the two meetinghouse-related displays on Feb 28. Photo Credit: Sean Driscoll

The Society's hospitality committee provided a wonderful collation of finger foods. Wine, and soft drinks were provided. Vice President Sean Driscoll made opening remarks to a crowd of about seventy people. He was followed by Rob Stephenson, who gave a brief talk on the history and development of his exhibit and answered a few questions. Since the reception, both shows have been well received by

MEETINGHOUSE ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION JUNE 17

By Sean Driscoll

There will be a celebration of the Jaffrey Meetinghouse's 250th birthday on Tuesday, June 17. Several organizations, including the Jaffrey Meetinghouse Committee, The Village Improvement Society, the Jaffrey Historical Society, The First Church of Jaffrey, The Amos Fortune Forum, and the Descendants of Laban Ainsworth are planning a modest weeknight event to commemorate the raising of the Meetinghouse.

Legend has it that the Meetinghouse framers heard the sound cannon fire from the Battle of Bunker Hill on the day of the raising (a recollection both disputed and discussed in Annett & Lehtinen's Town History, Vol. 1). Jaffrey will "respond" 250 years later by having the Lafayette Artillery Company of Lyndeborough fire its cannon on the Meetinghouse lawn.

Starting at 6:00 PM there will be a brief program in The Meetinghouse. The still-in-development program includes opening remarks by David and Kathy Torrey, dressed as Laban Ainsworth and Mary Minot, a poem, a rendition of "Fisher's Hornpipe" (the first tune played on the Meetinghouse organ), and a promenade around the building. Following the program, beginning at 6:30 PM, there will be a contra dance and light refreshments until 8:00 PM. Mark your calendars!



The Jaffrey Meetinghouse will be a hub of celebration this summer with observances of the building's 250th birthday, and our nation's 249th birthday. Photo Credit: Rob Stephenson, Lafayette Artillery Company

Declaration of Independence Reading July 4

On Friday, July 4, the JHS and VIS will co-sponsor the annual reading of the Declaration of Independence at the Jaffrey Meetinghouse. Members of the community will continue reading the Declaration, along with patriotic songs and an ice cream social to follow. Your JHS will be the host this year. We hope to see you there!

LITTLE RED SCHOOLHOUSE NEWS

The Little Red Schoolhouse committee recently met and chose Cathy Proulx as the new committee chair. She succeeds Jackie Johnson.

Opportunities to volunteer at the Schoolhouse will be available to all JHS members! If you are interested, please contact Cathy Proulx at 603-532-6002, or bmsproulx@yahoo.com.

The schoolhouse will be open to the public June 17 during the Meetinghouse celebration, and July 4; thereafter, Saturdays and Sundays 2-4 PM through Sunday, August 31.



Two JHS Board members were recently honored at the Jaffrey Volunteer Dinner. Cathy Proulx was honored at the Jaffrey Volunteer of the Year, primarily for her work restoring and cleaning veteran's stones as part of the Cemetery Committee. Carolyn Garretson was honored for many years serving as an Election Volunteer and the Conservation Commission. Congratulations to you both! Photo Credit: Peter Lambert

THANK YOU TO OUR NEW MEMBERS!

Bill Quintilio - Individual

And our new business members:

Mountainshade - Daffodils - Hill Family Insurance

Please thank them by patronizing their business!

Jaffrey Time Capsule - The Mower Block -

By Dick Boutwell

The Third New Hampshire Turnpike, incorporated in 1799, today's Route 124, served Jaffrey well. By the mid-19th Century goods from overseas as well as all surrounding regions were available. Travelers could be accommodated in numerous hostleries. And Jaffrey's Village Square on the west side of the Contoocook was bustling. But little was developing on the east side. The Baptists had built a large Meetinghouse in 1830 and homes were being constructed, but little of a commercial nature was appearing other than the mills at the river's edge and a drug store.

This began to change when after his service in the Civil War, Nahum Washington Mower built a shop on the Village Square to carry on his wheelwright business. He soon moved his business to the east side where in 1870 the railroad came to Jaffrey. His shop was moved closer to the bridge where it began to grow. Old photographs depict the building adding more space and a number of commercial enterprises moved in. Nahum opened a furniture business and altered the upper level to create a "commodious" hall that was home to some local fraternal organizations and available for other uses. Some of the first movies in Jaffrey were presented there.

Romolo Vanni moved to Jaffrey in 1910 and purchased the Mower's Block in 1912. The name was changed to Riverside Block. He and his wife Lena opened a fruit store in the building. Businesses flourished until a series of chimney fires culminated in a fire which caused the loss of the property on January 27, 1927. Four days later *The Monadnock Breeze* reported the event caused the loss of the fruit store, a milliner, beauty shop, barber, meat store, bakery, a bargain store and a three-room apartment. Total losses were reported at \$50,000.

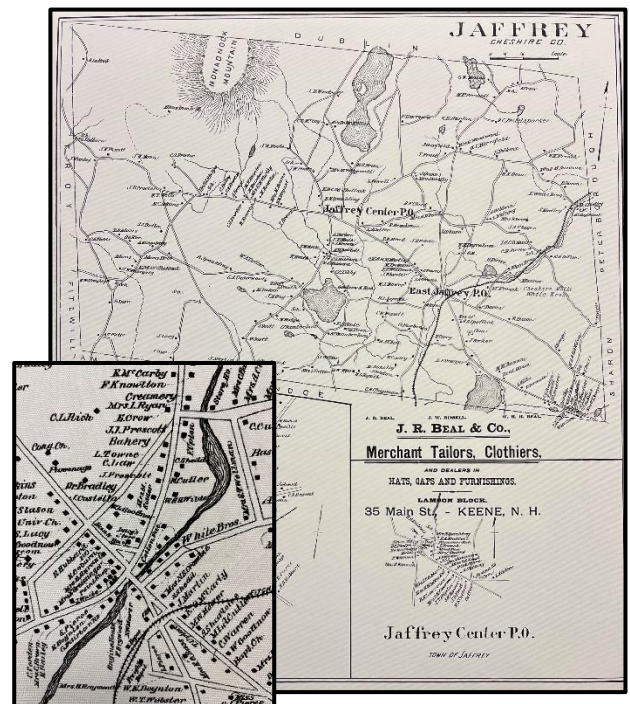
In 1928 Vernon Bean erected a fireproof building, close to the same footprint of the Mowers Block, which still stands. It included a space designed for a post office and East Jaffrey's US Post Office moved east to occupy it. The Bean Block has remained a prime commercial address for many decades.



Main Street, early 1900s. The photographer is standing in front of the Town Common, looking east towards the Mower Block (now the Jaffrey Chamber of Commerce and the Bean Block). Signs can be seen for the J.M Lamb House, Mower's Plumbing - Heating - Stoves - Ranges, and Chouinard's Meats & Provisions. JHS photo

From the Archives

Recently the Board of Directors approved funding for the high-resolution scanning, printing, and mounting of a map of Jaffrey, circa 1891. The work was done at Inkberry Inc in Surry, NH. This map is unique in that, in addition to the roads and natural features, all of the businesses and residences in town are shown *and labeled!* This is a fascinating look at Jaffrey at the turn of the century.





New Birds due to Arrive!

Thanks to the incredible and continued generosity of Bob Warfield, the JHS is receiving five additional Warfield Bird Carvings purchased from the Chittick Collection. This includes the Wood Thrush and Carolina Wren, pictured above. The new birds will arrive and be on display this May.

UPCOMING DATES

May 1: Executive Committee Meeting

May 8: Board of Directors Meeting

June 17: Meetinghouse 250th Celebration, 6 pm

July 3: Executive Committee Meeting

July 4: Independence Day Celebration

July 10: Board of Directors Meeting

August 7: Executive Committee Meeting

August 14: Annual Meeting. *More info to follow*

JAFFREY HISTORICAL SOCIETY
40 MAIN STREET
JAFFREY, NH 03452

Jaffrey Historical Society Officers and Directors

President: Peter Lambert

Vice Presidents:

Sean Driscoll - Vicki Arceci

Recording Secretary: Meg Gourley

Corresponding Secretary:

Lyn Lambert

Treasurer: Peter Davis

Directors

2022-2025

Jeanne Duval - Jackie Johnson

Fran McBride - Ray Record

2023-2026

Lyn Lambert - Cathy Proulx

Karl Putnam - Diane Schaumann

2024-2027

Judith Goff - Peter Maki

Bob Schaumann - Betty Shea

Genealogist:

Carolyn Garretson

Trustees of the Trust Funds

Clay Hollister (2022-2025)

Betty Royce (2023-2026)

Mike Shea (2024-2027)

Archivists

Dick Boutwell

Bruce Hill Assistant