

JAFFREY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

YEAR FOUNDED: 1958

PURPOSE OF ORGANIZATION: Primarily educational, including the preservation of Jaffrey history for the transmission to later generations.

OFFICERS: *President*, William M. Driscoll; *Vice Presidents*, 1.) Robert B. Stephenson, 2.) Priscilla Palmer; *Secretary*, Owen Houghton; *Treasurer*, Mark Bean; *Corresponding Secretary*, Jennifer Sawyer.

Directors: (1992-95) Diana Gallup, Catherine Seiberling, Virginia Warfield, Helen Krause; (1993-96) Elinor Moore, Claire Moore, Kent Royce, Hester Ames; (1994-97) David Kemp, Wilma Jewell, Jacqueline Johnson, Mary Payson.

Trustees of Trust Funds: Daniel Johnson (1995); Mary K. Duquette (1996); Peter Rivard (1997).

Jaffrey's history, people, and places are recorded by the Jaffrey Historical Society, and the numerous letters, documents, news clippings, books, and records are stored in the basement of the Jaffrey-Gilmore Foundation. The society was founded in 1959 to save and collect Jaffrey's history and to keep its past alive. This is done through monthly meetings at the Jaffrey-Gilmore Foundation Civic Center and the use of the display rooms in the basement for its permanent exhibits. In the trophy cases on the first floor there are rotating displays of some of the more interesting collections: the Warfield birds have been shown, some of Helen Shattuck's button collection, Hannah Davis's bandboxes, original newspaper clippings and artifacts of the Dean murder, and even a lock of Paul Revere's hair.

The Historical Society continues to sponsor several lectures on Jaffrey's history, and in October the group makes an annual excursion to one of the surrounding towns to visit with the local historical societies and gather information on the various communities.

The society is very active in the protection of Jaffrey's historic places. In 1969 the society sponsored a warrant article to have the Jaffrey Center area declared a historic district, and as an indirect result of the work of several members, many buildings in Jaffrey Center, including the meetinghouse, are listed in the National Register of Historic Places. Members of the society have played major roles in the restorations of both the Old Meetinghouse and the Cutler Memorial building, location of the town clock. Presently all the members of the Town of Jaffrey Historic District Commission are members of the society as the community tries to preserve its heritage in the modern world.

The Historical Society has been very active in hosting numerous school groups, showing them the burial grounds, the Little Red Schoolhouse, and the Civic Center displays. In conjunction with the Civic Center, Hester (Mrs. Forrest) Ames, in full costume, has portrayed herself as Hannah Davis and told students of her life and the manufacture of the bandboxes. The children have had the opportunity to create the hatboxes and to see the

originals.

During the bicentennial years the society held many events to commemorate the 200th anniversary of the founding of the United States of America. A fashion show of yesteryear was organized by Louise Belletete, assisted by Elizabeth Shea, while Dr. and Mrs. Robert MacCready formed a committee to do an architectural survey of all the old houses and buildings in Jaffrey. Member Anne B. Gordon served on the New Hampshire Bicentennial Commission and at the federal level on the Original Thirteen Colonies Commission, so the society was very much aware of the plans for the nation.

In 1995 the society did an assessment of all its collections and buildings and is in the process of organizing and refurbishing many of them.

The officers and directors from 1973 include the names of many of Jaffrey's most prominent citizens. Former presidents were Betty Jane Balentine, Mark Bean, Louise and Homer Belletete, William Driscoll, J. August Duval, Henry Gallup, Anne Gordon, Owen Houghton, Daniel Johnson, Robert and Molly MacCready, Elizabeth Sawyer, and John Wozmak.

Vice Presidents: Hester Ames, Betty Jane Balentine, Mark Bean, Homer Belletete, George Bradley, Ronald Despres, William Driscoll, Esther Engvall, Homer Forcier, Henry Gallup, Wilma Jewell, Daniel Johnson, Molly MacCready, Claire Moore, Priscilla Gordon Palmer, Evelyn Ruffle, Elizabeth Sawyer, and Robert Stephenson.

Secretaries: Betty Jane Balentine, Richard Boutwell, Lucy Carpenter, William Driscoll, Eleanor Eaves, Anne Gordon, Owen Houghton, Jacqueline Johnson, Lucy Leach, Jane Sawyer-Perry, Travis Shattuck, Elizabeth Shea, and Hope West.

Treasurers: James Balentine, Mark Bean, and Lucy Leach. *Directors:* Hester Ames, Bertha Bacon, Betty Jane Balentine, James Balentine, Homer Belletete, Levida Boutwell, Richard Boutwell, George Bradley, Lucy Carpenter, Randy! Cournoyer, John Crawford, Mildred Cutter, J. August Duval, Esther Engvall, Diana Gallup, Henry Gallup, Grace Gourd, Nancy Griswold, Myrtle Hazelton, Wilma Jewell, Daniel Johnson, Jacqueline Johnson, Marion Mack Johnson, David Kemp, Mary Kidd, Paul Kidder, Helen Krause, Lucy Leach, Alice Lehtinen, Amanda Lessard, Douglas Lowe, Molly MacCready, Wheeler Merriam, Claire Moore, Elinor Moore, Daniel Nelson, Priscilla Gordon Palmer, Mary Payson, Edith Peard, Carolyn Reed, Richard Rettig, Hunter Reiseberg, Kathleen Robinson, Kent Royce, Evelyn Ruffle, Elizabeth Sawyer, Harvey Sawyer, Lee S. Sawyer, Catherine Seiberling, Daniel Shattuck, Jr., Marjorie Shattuck, Elizabeth Shea, Virginia Warfield, Hazel Wellington, Hope West, William West, and John Wozmak.

THE LITTLE RED SCHOOLHOUSE

The town of Jaffrey in 1959 authorized the Jaffrey Historical Society to move and restore the Little Red Schoolhouse as long as there was no cost to the town. The right of maintenance and administration was conveyed to the society, and the Little Red Schoolhouse now stands on the common by the meetinghouse in Jaffrey Center. The original cost of the building in 1822 was about \$200, and the cost of relocating and restoring it over the

years 1959-1967 amounted to \$2,700. From 1967 to 1995 the cost of maintenance has run about \$11,000. It has been faithfully restored to appear as it did in the 1800s with many slates, books, and maps of the period.

The building is opened for special events and on the weekends throughout the summer months. When children of the area are studying the history of New Hampshire, the schools make arrangements to have them see the Little Red Schoolhouse, Amos Fortune's gravesite, and the meetinghouse. Occasionally Homer Belletete will appear as one of the early schoolmasters, Samuel Litch. Jacqueline Johnson and Jennifer Sawyer have been instrumental in providing the volunteers for the Little Red Schoolhouse.

MONADNOCK NUMBER 4

Monadnock Number 4 was the old firehouse for Jaffrey Center, located on Main Street across from the Monadnock Inn. The building was not originally at this site but was moved there from the south side of the street. It was used as a fire station until 1953.

The building has no great historical significance because it is one of those typical New Hampshire buildings that had been enlarged several times over the years.

The Jaffrey Historical Society acquired the fire station in 1969, but it was not deeded to them until 1971. Over the years there have been improvements to the building such as the addition of electricity, a new roof, and repair of the grounds.

In the early 1970s the building was used as a small museum displaying the Firefly, an 1848 engine called Contoocook Number 2, and a 1932 Seagrave fire truck, referred to as the Emory truck because it was donated by George E. Emory. It was Jaffrey's first motorized truck. The building also holds two of the town's horsedrawn hearses.

Presently the building is used as storage for many of the artifacts that the society has acquired over the years that are too large for the Civic Center. It is hoped that the building can be used as a small museum to display the fire equipment adequately. At this time there are plans underway to display the hearses at the Cournoyer Funeral Home.

Source: Volume IV of the Jaffrey Town History