

CHAPTER XIII

JAFFREY POST OFFICES

“Tell him there’s a post come from my master,
with his horn full of good news.”

- SHAKESPEARE

The first post office was established in Jaffrey in 1810 in what today is Jaffrey Center. Its location changed as frequently as postmasters changed, its services usually being offered from the home of the current appointee. By 1845 Factory Village (later East Jaffrey) had become the business center of the town, and business people lobbied for the post office to be moved there. The result was that on April 1, 1846, the Jaffrey Center office was closed and a new one was opened in the village.

This action was not well received by Jaffrey Center residents, who managed to persuade officials to reestablish their office by November 6, 1846, a mere seven months after it was closed. Thus it happened that the town came to have two post offices. The situation remained so until November 1990 when the Jaffrey Center office was closed.

UNITED STATES POST OFFICE, JAFFREY

In January 1969 the United States Post Office moved from Blake Street (the building that is presently the Pizza Barn) to Charity Square, between East Main and Ellison streets where the Baptist Church once stood. Today the location is known as 30 Turnpike Road.

Joseph O. Morgan served as acting postmaster from October 1969 until his appointment as postmaster in April 1971, a position he held until his retirement in January 1978. Brent E. Phillips became acting postmaster until the appointment of David R. Elder in October 1978. Elder served until retiring in July 1988, when Willard W. Oja became officer in charge until Stephen G. Staples was appointed postmaster in August 1988. Staples remained until he was promoted to postmaster in Londonderry in November 1991. In March 1992 Sherman J. O’Brien was named postmaster and remains in that position to date (1998).



United States Post Office - Jaffrey

The Jaffrey Post Office currently employs four rural carriers, three city carriers, and five clerks. It serves 2,856 delivery addresses. The late 1980s and early 1990s saw the retirement of some of Jaffrey's longest-serving postal employees when James Baird and Robert Austin left their city carrier positions. Arthur and Wilfred "Fid" Lambert also retired from service as postal clerks, each having served for over 35 years.

JAFFREY CENTER POST OFFICE

Charles and Alice Meyers operated the Jaffrey Center Post Office for many years from their general store next door to Monadnock Inn. When Charles died, his wife carried on both the post office and store until her retirement, at least temporarily, in 1962. The post office was relocated for about two years to the Isherwood property on Mountain Road (now owned by Patricia Wheeler). From there it was moved to the Oribe Tea Barn in the center of town, where it was run by Elizabeth Doane. Alice Meyers then obtained a permit to reopen the post office and used it as a substation to the Jaffrey office. In 1990 the post office was permanently closed. Jaffrey Center residents were given the choice of collecting their mail at the Jaffrey office or receiving home delivery.

Quite a number of people either worked in or ran the post office during the remainder of its history. Changes occurred so rapidly that specific dates are not clear. We do know that Mary and Wilfred Cournoyer worked there during the time it was located at the Oribe.

Alice Meyers again took charge when the office returned to her property and hired Rosamond Sullivan for three or four years. When the building was sold to Virginia Jennings, she continued to keep the office open.

The next few years saw a series of changes. The property was sold to Michael and Norma Benjamin, who later sold it to Ellen Clarke, who sold it to Neil and Candace Holzman. All of these owners continued to keep the post office open. Next the Holzmans sold to Robert and Alice Beletsky, who ran the post office and art gallery featuring Robert Bateman prints. During the Beletsky ownership, Kathleen and Lloyd Robinson kept the office open until its final closing in November 1990, at which time the property was sold to Sandi and Richard Lambert, friends of the Beletskys. The Lamberts had plans to use the post office building as their retirement home, but sold it to Anne Scarbrough. Since the summer of 1994 the building has been the office of the rental and property management company Hampsey & Grenier.