

CHAPTER II

CHANGING TIMES

“The mind of man is capable of anything—
because everything is in it, all the past as well
as the future.”

- JOSEPH CONRAD

ROAD NAMES, CHANGED AGAIN

In 1966 a road name study went to a committee that came out with a few changes, mostly for historical value. At the 1994 annual town meeting, an article was brought before the residents of Jaffrey to vote to raise a sum of money “to provide the necessary services to establish a revised and logical house numbering system to be used throughout the town. The revised system will enable the town’s emergency services to respond with a known address, and it will enable the town to meet the recommendations of the Enhanced 911 system....”

Cartographic Associates, Inc., was hired to do the renumbering and make maps of the streets and roads. A committee of citizens was appointed by the board of selectmen to take care of the name changes of streets and roads that had either similar names (example, Oak Street and Oak Hill Drive) or actually required more specific identification (for example, some roads either branched at odd crossroads or crossed state routes or streets and turned into dead ends), or some that were plainly confusing.

Residents of Old Fitzwilliam Road petitioned the selectmen not to change the name of their road, noting historical and other reasons. The board of selectmen voted to let them keep the road name (this was the only exception). In some cases residents provided suggestions for the new names. In all, approximately 20 names of roads and streets were changed. By July 1995 property owners were informed of their new street or road number, name, or both.

Police, fire, and ambulance personnel now have more detailed maps in their vehicles to assist them in finding the locations of emergencies. Response time has been significantly reduced as a result.

When the Town of Jaffrey went on enhanced 911 for emergency telephone calls, all street names that could be confusing to emergency crews were clarified in the interest of safety.

Baldwin Court was renamed Christian Court after Reney D. Christian, a veteran of World War II.



Chamber of Commerce Banner - Welcome to Jaffrey

Bryant Road was broken into three sections. It remains Bryant Road from 124 to the intersection with Proctor Road. From there it becomes Proctor Road to 137. From 137 to the Peterborough town line it is Town Farm Road.

Burrington Court was renamed Libby Court after the original Libby farm.

Contoocook Road became Woodbound Road, which connects with Woodbound Road in Rindge.

East Main Street was renamed Turnpike Road east of the traffic light at Main Street and Peterborough Street.

Frost Road became Fiske Road, named for land originally owned by Asa Fiske.

Gilmore Lane became Sandy Lane—a dirt road that runs along the east side of Gilmore Pond.

Highland Circle and Highland Court were renamed Rowley Circle—historical significance.

Hillcrest Court became Nelson Circle, named after original land-owners.

Jaquith Road South is called Peabody Hill Road because it no longer connects with Jaquith Road. After the 1938 hurricane a flood control project formed Mountain Stream Reservoir, dividing Jaquith Road into two sections. This is the continuation of Peabody Hill Road past the Deacon Mower farm.

Lehtinen Road became Lehtinen Road and Davidson Road (to the east of 202), named after the Davidson sawmill.

Lincolns Corner Road is called North Street and continues to the Jaffrey-Dublin line.

Maple Avenue became Laban Ainsworth Way, named after the first minister of First Church.

Meetinghouse Road has become Meetinghouse Road/Blackberry Lane/First Tavern Road. Meetinghouse Road runs from 124 to the town common in front of the meetinghouse. Blackberry Lane continues from Thorndike Pond Road between the meetinghouse and the horsesheds and down the hill to what is now First Tavern Road, which connects 124 and Dublin Road.

Mountain View is now Monadnock View Drive, the only street in Jaffrey named after Mount Monadnock.

Oak Hill Drive was named Lakewood Drive so as not to be confused with Oak St.

Because Old County Road wandered all over west Jaffrey, it is now broken into four sections. That section of Old County Road that leads off Fitzwilliam Road in a westerly direction is still named Old County Road. At the intersection with Gap Mountain Road the road becomes Class VI and is known as Gap Mountain Road. Gap Mountain Road continues in a northerly direction until it becomes a Class V road known as Bullard Road. Bullard Road ends at the intersection with 124. South of Old Fitzwilliam Road, Old County Road is now named Red Gate Road, which ends at Ingalls Road and is 90 percent Class VI.

Old Dublin Road is now Woodbury Hill Road from Bryant to Thorndike Pond Road. From the Lawrence farm to the juncture with Thorndike Pond Road, it is class VI.

Old Peterborough Road is named Nutting Road/Dean Farm Road/Town Farm Road. Nutting Road runs from North Street to Amos Fortune Corner. Dean Farm Road continues to the juncture

with Town Farm Road, which runs in an easterly direction to the Peterborough town line.

Peabody Hill Road was renamed Peabody Hill Road/Mower Road. Old Rindge Road has been eliminated. That portion of Peabody Hill Road after Deacon Mower farm is a class VI road. It is named Mower Road, and continues in a southerly direction to the Rindge town line.

Pierce Crossing Road is now Pierce Crossing Road/Nutting Road. It is Nutting Road from Amos Fortune Corner in an easterly direction to the juncture with Peterborough Street/202. Pierce Crossing Road runs to the east of this juncture for the short distance down to the bridge.

Pine Court was renamed Poplar Court so as not to be confused with Pine Street.

Red Gate Lane is now Red Gate Road. Red Gate Lane became a part of Red Gate Road.

Rindge Road has become River Street. River Street runs from the traffic light on Main Street in a southerly direction to the Rindge town line.

Slade Road is now Thorndike Pond Road. Thorndike Pond Road now runs all the way from Jaffrey Center along the east side of Thorndike Pond to the Dublin town line.

South Hill Road is now Gilmore Pond Road. Gilmore Pond Road now runs from River Street in Jaffrey to Main Street in Jaffrey Center at the flashing light.

South Shore Drive was changed to Shore Drive. This is a new road off Michigan Road.

Spruce Street, Brook Street, Birch Street, and Linden Street are new street names clarifying locations in KK Village between Turnpike Road and Webster Street.

Stratton Court is now Conant Way, which leads to Conant High School, off Stratton Road.

Tyler Brook Road has become Crestview Drive, running from North Street to Town Farm Road.

Woodbury Hill Road has become Woodbury Hill Road and Thorndike Pond Road. Woodbury Hill Road runs from Bryant Road to the juncture with Thorndike Pond Road.

TRAFFIC LIGHTS AND UNDERGROUND UTILITIES

TRAFFIC LIGHTS

In the late 1950s the issue of safety and adequate highway capacity through downtown Jaffrey became a priority with the State of New Hampshire's Department of Transportation (NHDOT). A project was proposed and approved by the state for reconstruction of Route 202. The NHDOT planned this project to begin in 1992 and to be completed in 1993. The project included widening Peterborough Street, Main Street, and River Street, and the installation of Jaffrey's first traffic lights. The lights were deemed necessary to avoid congestion and confusion at both intersections.

The lights were installed at the latter end of the project and became operational in the fall of 1993. The reaction from the populace was mixed at first as people adjusted to new traffic signals. There were some complaints about how the lights operated and how difficult they were to see from certain angles. The NHDOT addressed these concerns and took corrective action. People quickly became accustomed to the lights, and many commented on how traveling through Jaffrey had improved dramatically with operational traffic signals.

UNDERGROUND UTILITIES

As part of the State of New Hampshire's reconstruction of Main Street/Route 202, the town planned to make improvements to the downtown at the same time. These town-planned and -funded improvements included: replacement of old water and sewer lines under Main Street, River Street, and North Street; installation of new ornamental street lights in the central downtown area; construction of a "pocket park" at the corner of Peterborough and Main streets. This park was named Alderman Park in honor of resident architect Bissell Alderman, who designed this one and others in Jaffrey on his own time and without charge to the town. Finally the town decided to bury all utility lines in the central downtown area. With the completion of the project in the fall of 1993, the central downtown area became more attractive and inviting to residents and visitors both day and night.

MEMORIAL DAY

The observance of Memorial Day in Jaffrey has not diminished over the years. To the contrary, the town and its co-sponsoring veterans organizations, John Humiston American Legion Post #11 and the Veterans of Foreign War Memorial Post #5613, have insured that the holiday remains a meaningful one for all of its citizenry. Memorial Day, which was originally observed on May 30 of each year, is now observed on the fourth Monday in May in conformance with most other states.

At the 1991 Town Meeting, article 14 stated: "Are you in favor of changing the Town's observance of Memorial Day from the state's date of May 30th to the Federal observance being the last Monday in May. This is a nonbinding resolution. By Selectmen." Passed ballot vote: Yes 193, No 67.

This was a difficult change for many veterans to accept, especially those who had served in World War II, but the logistics of the day's events and the lack of availability of participants on May 30 caused the Memorial Day Committee to accede to the modern way of doing things. The observances begin at 7:30 A.M. with honor guards from the Legion and VFW visiting each of the town cemeteries as follows: Phillips-Heil Cemetery on Fitzwilliam Road; the Old Burying Ground behind the Old Meetinghouse in Jaffrey Center; Cutter Cemetery on Harkness Road; St. Patrick Cemetery on Hillcrest Road; the Baptist Cemetery on Turnpike Road; Humiston Field Memorial Park and Conant Cemetery. Each ceremony con-



Memorial Day parade - 1996

sists of a prayer read by a clergyman, the laying of a wreath, and a rifle salute. Wreaths are also laid at Soldiers' Rock on Route 124 and the Smallpox Cemetery behind the Deschenes farm on Fitch Road. At 11:00 A.M. veterans gather at the John Humiston Post on Webster Street and the parade begins, led by the Conant High School Band. The route is south on Peterborough Street to the Civil War Memorial in front of the library, where appropriate ceremonies are held, then south on School Street and north up River Street to the Korea-Vietnam Memorial Park. In addition to the traditional ceremonies, wreaths are cast upon the waters of the Contoocook River in memory of those who gave their lives in service of the country at sea. The parade then proceeds to the common where wreaths are laid at the Gold Star Mothers' Memorial as well as the World War I Buddy Monument. Ceremonies here include a speaker, the raising of the colors at noon, another rifle salute, and playing of the "Star Spangled Banner" by the Conant band. The parade then returns to the American Legion where refreshments are supplied for all participants by the American Legion. Parade participants include active duty personnel on leave, veterans, members of the Sons of the American Legion and the Auxiliary from the American Legion, the Auxiliary from the VFW, Junior Auxiliaries from both, the Jaffrey-Rindge Middle School band, Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, Cub Scouts, Brownies, and dignitaries from the town and sponsoring organizations. Parade marshals since 1970 have been Rene Forcier, Alden Bacon, Gerard "Buggo" Grenier (present), and honorary parade marshal George Hart. In order to ensure that the observance of Memorial Day be solemnized, an article was introduced and passed at the 1988 town meeting that banned hawking, peddling, and vending between the hours of 7:00 A.M. and 1:00 P.M. on observed Memorial Day.

THE BANDSTAND

According to Homer J. Belletete, Jaffrey's oldest historian, the Bandstand was built around the 1880s. Every Tuesday and Saturday during the summer and in the summers to follow, a local band would play for the townspeople. In the late 1930s and early 1940s the Rindge band played in the Bandstand on the common in Jaffrey. Dominick Arceci, Frederick Towne, William Naramore, Bertrand Wheeler, and Ruck Charlonne, to name a few, played in the band.

During World War I and II the Bandstand remained idle. It wasn't until the early 1950s that Frederick Bernier moved it to his property on West Main Street. Bernier rented the structure to Chester Abercrombie who operated the Richfield gas station and a very small store. When the business folded, the building was rented to Elliot Antognoni of Winchendon, Massachusetts, who operated a fry shop and sold tasty Italian grinders. A few years later William Shearer leased the building across from Boutwell's garage and it became the Hexagon Shop where William's son, Jonathan, sold furniture from Paine's Furniture Store in Boston and some gift items. The store was in operation for two years during the summer months. After that the building was used as a storage house. A few years elapsed before the Bandstand was on the move again. This time the building was moved by David Kemp just across the street to Richard Stratton's property. The sides of the building were boarded up, and it was used as a small barn for children to play in and housed pigs at a later date. In July 1986 the Bandstand finally returned home when Norman Peard donated the flatbed and Andrew Webber and Wayne Cooke moved it back to the common on Main Street. Andrew Webber restored it in two months, and to this day he continues to restore the woodwork. The building remained unused until a few years ago when the Monadnock Bank, now Bank of New Hampshire, decided to sponsor band concerts once again in our lovely Bandstand. Different bands from around the region play every other Wednesday night during the summer to delight the young at heart.

What has gone around has finally come around.



Main Street Common Bandstand