



Jaffrey Center
 Sites of Interest
 Ashby, Royalston &
 Hancock
 Visit

October 16, 2005

Welcome to Jaffrey!

Fall Outing of the Ashby, Royalston & Hancock Historical Societies

You will be visiting the following sites, all within walking distance. Go in any order you wish. There will be guides at each stop. Consult the map on the other side. Refreshments afterwards at the Jaffrey Civic Center, 40 Main Street, Downtown.



THE MEETINGHOUSE – The frame of the Meetinghouse was raised on June 17, 1775, the day of the Battle of Bunker Hill, the sounds of the cannon being heard by those toiling on the Common. In 1822, the bell tower was added. The Meetinghouse served both as church and as a site for Town Meetings. With the building of the nearby Brick Church and other churches, the Meetinghouse was seldom put to use for other than Town Meetings until after the Civil War when, in 1870, the interior was totally rebuilt to provide town offices and schoolrooms. The tower clock was added about 1906. The present layout, appearance and use of the Meetinghouse dates from a major remodeling undertaken in 1922 by the Village Improvement Society in cooperation with the Town.

OLD BURYING GROUND & HORSESHEDS – A committee laid out the **Old Burying Ground** in 1784. Some of the interesting graves: LABAN AINSWORTH, first permanent minister of the Town. His Jaffrey ministry spanned nearly seventy-seven years and he died in his 101st year. AMOS FORTUNE, freed African slave, tanner and respected Jaffrey citizen. HANNAH DAVIS, who devised and manufactured wooden band boxes, the colorful but sturdy satchel of days gone by. WILLA CATHER, author of *O Pioneers!* and *My Antonia*, extoller of western prairie values and sometime Jaffrey resident. **The Horsesheds** were built in 1810 and restored between 1949 and 1954. There were originally twelve stalls, now nine. On the west end there is a guide to the Old Burying Ground.



LITTLE RED SCHOOLHOUSE – Built as Schoolhouse No. 11 around 1822, it was moved from its earlier location on Dublin Road to the present site in 1960 and restored to its likely appearance as a one-room schoolhouse. It is open free-of-charge from June through August on weekends usually between 2 and 4 o'clock. Owned by the Town, it is maintained and managed by the Jaffrey Historical Society.

MELVILLE ACADEMY– Built in 1833 the Academy was named for Jonas Melville, one of the backers. It flourished for a while, but after the depression of 1857 it expired for lack of support. In 1863 the Town took possession and transferred old School District No. 7 to it. It was used as a public school until around World War I. In 1919, the Village Improvement Society was given permission by the Town to care for the building and use it as a local history museum. Ownership transferred to the VIS in 1960. It has a large collection of local artifacts and furnishings and a restored schoolroom on the second floor. Installed a few years ago was the old Jaffrey Center Post Office postal window and boxes. Also noteworthy is the large collection of Hannah Davis band-boxes.



MONADNOCK 4 (OLD FIRE STATION) – Monadnock 4 it is owned and maintained by the Jaffrey Historical Society and contains a collection of historic firefighting apparatus. It is being developed as a firefighting museum. The building dates to the early part of the 20th century; previously the station was on the opposite side of the street.

Included in the collection are three of the original engines delivered to Jaffrey: the Cooper Phelps Campbell Rotary Hand Tub (1827), the ca. 1833 Thayer Engine acquired officially in 1848, and the 1931 Seagrave “Suburban”—the first mechanized fire engine in town service.

BRICK CHURCH (FIRST CHURCH) – The Brick Church was built in 1831 by Aaron P. Howland of Walpole, a prolific Cheshire County architect and builder. Its proportions have been widely praised by architectural historians. The Gothic Revival tower, a detail also employed in Melville Academy, sits atop a base which has as its focal point an elegant Palladian window. The cost of the new building was \$2,680.23, paid for by the selling of pews. The church interior was extensively remodelled in 1896, and in 1969 the parsonage barn was adapted as a parish hall and linked to the main church building.

First Church is a member of the United Church of Christ, whose heritage is rooted in congregationalism. The congregation includes members from a wide variety of church backgrounds, contributing an ecumenical flavor that brings unique strengths to its faith community. Deborah Hill is the Pastor of First Church. Gene Faxon is the Minister of Music.

