

HOLIDAY GREETINGS

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BEING the Christmas season it would have been nice to have a few inches of snow to give things a holiday look. What we got instead was ice and lots of it. It came on Thursday the 11th and I got my power back on the 14th (internet still out). I was lucky; much of the region is still dark. The devastation is widespread—trees down everywhere. ¶ My Aunt Agnes and I spent an enjoyable Thanksgiving with the Buxton side of the family at cousin Donna's house in Bolton, Connecticut. ¶ My Christmas card last year featured a “before” photo of the weathervane on the Post Office. (It used to be atop the Baptist Church which was demolished in 1968.) I took it down last November and after lots of work, mostly by Walt Hautanen, our local signpainter, the weathervane went up again on June 27th, all restored and glistening with new gold leaf. ¶ This past year saw a lot of my time devoted to developing a website focusing on Jaffrey history. A state grant allowed us to hire some consulting expertise, but so far most of the work has been done by myself and Sean Driscoll, a friend up the road, I've been concentrating on the content and have spent hours scanning and typing. The site is now being evaluated and tuned-up. In a few months I'll be at it again, adding ever more content. Have a look at www.jaffreyhistory.org ¶ I enjoyed two trips and an excursion last year: The first to the UK for things mostly Antarctic—The Captain Scott 140th birthday celebration in Plymouth. There was a gala dinner at the yacht club. Some of us stayed at Crownhill Fort, a 19th century fort on the outskirts of the city that is now a Landmark Trust property.



THE BIG NEWS this past year was my purchase of a condo in downtown Jaffrey. (I may have been the only one buying property in November!) This is not to downsize to but, rather, to locate my Antarctic library and collections. It will become a working library where I'll spend a lot of time but to which writers and researchers can come and work. It's about 600 square feet in the Jaffrey Mills, a former cotton textile mill in the center of downtown that is on the National Register of Historic Places and has been completely renovated. At the moment I'm finishing things off by doing the painting. I have a full bath and a wall kitchen so one can stay overnight if need be. I should start moving the books in not long after returning from the Antarctic in mid-February. (and making a final trip to IKEA). [For more have a look at <http://home.comcast.net/~rs41/mill.htm>] ❄️

What a setting! Later I was in Cardiff for the annual Captain Scott Society dinner held on the same date (June 13) and in the same venue (Royal Hotel) as Scott's farewell dinner from Britain. [Photos and commentary may be seen at <http://home.comcast.net/~rs41/uk08.htm>] The second trip: What's turning out to be an annual pilgrimage to Athy in Ireland for the 'Ernest Shackleton Autumn School' one of the most enjoyable and social events of the Antarctic calendar. As in the past Jonathan Shackleton and I stayed with his brother Arthur and his wife, Carol, at their lovely *Fruitlawn* outside Abbeyleix. After the Athy long-weekend, I relaxed for the rest of the week at Jonathan and Daphne's farm in Mullagh. One day was spent in the north visiting Banbridge and Enniskillen, both of which have Antarctic connections. [Have a look at <http://home.comcast.net/~rs41/athy3.htm>] My one excursion: A several-day visit to Port Clyde, Maine, including a run out to Monhegan Island. Why Port Clyde? Hard to believe but this was a gathering of perhaps 100 Antarcticans! ¶ Likely trips in 2009: Next month, January, I head to the Antarctic leading a trip for Harvard's Museum of Natural History [see www.hmn.harvard.edu/travel/t_polar_antarctica_09.htm]. And I hope to once again be at Athy in October and, if the economy allows, over to England for the James Caird Society dinner and a visit to Scott Polar Research Institute. But much of my attention in 2009 will be on getting my new library in place and squared away. ❄️❄️❄️

BEST WISHES for 2009!



Thanksgiving at the Munroe's in Connecticut. *Left to right, first row:* Debbie Goldberg, Donna Munroe, Katie Munroe, Agnes Barker, Arlene Munroe. *Back row:* Brynne Goldberg, Jon Goldberg, Mara Buxton, Levi Buxton, Robert Buxton, Mark Buxton, Elisabette's friend, Elisabette Andreu-Goldberg, Eleanore Buxton, Bob Munroe, Rob Stephenson and Robbie Munroe.

The weathervane from the former Baptist Church, now atop the Jaffrey Post Office. Below, how it appeared a year ago. Newly restored, it went back up in June. Yet another project that seemed simple at the start, then got more and more complex. It was worth it, though.



Here I am with Regina Daly at *O'Briens*, the unofficial headquarters of the annual Shackleton Autumn School in Athy, Co. Kildare. This is the homiest and friendliest pub you'll find anywhere.

Lakeview House in Mullagh, Co. Cavan, Jonathan and Daphne Shackleton's farm. Snow in October in Ireland! Hard to believe.



The officers' quarters at *Crownhill Fort*, now a Landmark Trust property that accommodates eight. These properties in the UK provide an unforgettable and very affordable alternative to staying in hotels.



Some of the damage from the Great Ice Storm of December 11-12. My power came back on on the 14th. Many people still are in darkness.



The annual Captain Scott Society dinner at the *Royal Hotel*, Cardiff. In this very room Scott and his fellow expeditioners had their farewell dinner on June 13, 1910, before leaving for the Antarctic.

