

THANKSGIVING has come and gone and Christmas and its fast approaching and the lights are up around the village, but the grass is still green and nary a snowflake. ¶ Lots of activity this past year, a good bit of it being one event or project after another in celebration of the centennial of the Jaffrey Center Village Improvement Society. My biggest involvement was researching and writing the history of the Society (*Marshal the Willing Force*) and putting the finishing touches on my house and cleaning it up before our very ambitious House Tour. About 500 came through my house, and afterwards it still was miraculously cleaner than it had been a month before. All the events came to a conclusion on August 27th when we celebrated the actual first meeting of the Society. ¶ The year 2006 started off with a bang, literally. At about 1:30 am on New Year's morning an errant motorist pretty much wiped out the granite post and wood rail fence that I had labored on for two years in the park across the road from me. Fortunately the driver's insurance paid for the reconstruction and we took the opportunity to include some improvements. The park was finally dedicated and named Centennial Park on July 22nd. ¶ Another publishing project was the third in the Historical Society's series on local history, this one on Viggo Brandt-Erichsen, a Danish count and accomplished sculptor who lived in Jaffrey for some years. ¶ My only trip this year was a recent excursion to Ireland and the UK. The excuse was a talk I gave in Athy in Co. Kildare at the annual Shackleton gathering. It was a fun three days. I also spent time in London and later in Cambridge at Scott Polar



The Jaffrey Meetinghouse. The frame went up on the day of the Battle of Bunker Hill, June 17, 1775. This woodcut by Robert Hale was commissioned for the VIS Centennial.

HOLIDAY GREETINGS

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Research Institute. Also had a short trip to Buxton in Derbyshire which had long been on my list of places to visit. (My mother's family name is Buxton but sadly no connection.) I stayed in what purportedly is England's oldest inn—the Old Hall Hotel—which I highly recommend. You can see some highlights of the trip at <http://users.adelphia.net/~rstephenson/athy.htm> ¶ I continue along with the usual other civic activities: Cemetery Committee, Meetinghouse Committee, Master Plan Committee, Park Theatre Inc. board, and on and on. I'm hoping this winter will be a little quieter than last and I can finally consolidate a lot of the “stuff” that still seems to fill every corner. ¶ I have two back-to-back houseparties to look forward to in September. The first will be at Gargunnoch House near Stirling in Scotland where a group of us stayed several years ago. This time it will be a four-day 35th reunion of some of the people I travelled with through Africa (London to Nairobi—and even beyond—by Landrover). From there I drive the same day to southwestern Scotland to spend a week with 12 others at Auchinleck House, a grand, very classical house that once was James Boswell's. You can see some more informaton on both at <http://users.adelphia.net/~rstephenson/siafu.htm> and <http://users.adelphia.net/~rstephenson/boswell.htm> If you happen to be in the neighborhood of Auchinleck on Sunday, September 16, 2007, drop by at 4 p.m. for our usual “garden party.” The website will tell you where it is. 🌸🌸🌸

BEST WISHES for 2007!



Here I am

The photos above were taken by Joseph St. Pierre and appeared in an Accent magazine article highlighting the VIS house tour. Shown are my living and dining rooms and my Antarctic room. Believe me, they've never looked better.

To the left, our SIAFU group in 1972 somewhere in the Sahara south of Djanet (35th reunion in September in Scotland).

And on the right, Auchinleck House not far away in southwestern Scotland where 13 of us will spend a week.



Here I am staring into the camera on my new computer.

The entrance gate to Centennial Park just before the dedicaton on July 22.



A family gathering for Aunt Agnes' 95th birthday party in Nashua, NH.

