

## 2004 REPORT OF THE MEETINGHOUSE COMMITTEE



THE MEETINGHOUSE COMMITTEE advises the Town on matters pertaining to the use and maintenance of Jaffrey's historic Meetinghouse.

The Meetinghouse served as a venue for many events between May and October: Amos Fortune Forum (seven free lectures), Monadnock Music (two free concerts), Downtown Concerts (three relocations due to rain), Conant High School's 12<sup>th</sup> annual Shakespeare Festival, the 88<sup>th</sup> annual First Church Fair and eight weddings. The following Town boards and committees met in the Meetinghouse one or more times: Jaffrey Board of Selectmen, Planning Board, Board of Adjustment, Cemetery Committee and the Historic District Commission. A free line dance was held in August, sponsored by the Village Improvement Society. In September the Jaffrey Chamber of Commerce began its monthly "After Hours" at the Meetinghouse. On June 17<sup>th</sup>—the anniversary of the raising of the Meetinghouse frame in 1775—a Meetinghouse Birthday Party was held with some historical recollections, music and appropriate refreshments. The Meetinghouse was the scene of numerous other meetings, school group visits, Elderhostel tours, and such throughout the year. The Committee along with the Jaffrey Historical Society, the VIS and the Historic District Commission cosponsored the 4<sup>th</sup> annual reading of the *Declaration of Independence* on the 4<sup>th</sup> of July. The Meetinghouse was again full and the 38 volunteer readers did a marvelous job. All are invited to attend and participate. The Town of Jaffrey was honored to host on August 18<sup>th</sup> the regular meeting of the Governor and Executive Council. The Meetinghouse was active for most of the day with many local citizens attending as spectators of New Hampshire government.

The Committee made thorough inspections of the Meetinghouse on May 24<sup>th</sup> and October 18<sup>th</sup>. Between the two dates a variety of projects were undertaken, sometimes by members of the Committee and at other times by volunteers or contractors: Inspection and servicing of the Town clock (largely done by Charles Marvin); recharging of fire extinguishers; repair of Exit lights; installation of a new rear screen door; and the usual touch-up interior painting. The east façade was scraped and painted by Sunshine Painting of Jaffrey. The largest project by far has been the ongoing restoration of the Meetinghouse's 50 windows. Three batches were removed, transported off-site, repaired and restored and reinstalled. The final 14 will be removed momentarily and are due to be reinstalled in May. The Town is fortunate to have had more than \$40,000 of the project funded by grants from or through the NH Division of Historical Resources.

During the year additional donations were received to pay for bench cushions, bringing the total raised to \$1,575. These are being made from recycled stage curtains. By next season 23 cushions will be in place.

For some years there has been a desire to have a piano in the Meetinghouse for use at events. This wish became a reality with the donation to the Town of an antique Henry F. Miller Square Grand Piano. Its arrival on June 17<sup>th</sup> coincided with the Meetinghouse Birthday Party, its first use being to accompany the singing of "Happy Birthday." The Committee thanks Eugene Roe for his generous donation.

For major projects next season the Committee has recommended additional exterior painting specifically the upper tower which has not been painted since 1992. The north façade may also be included. A new water heater may be necessary and some minor electrical work is called for.

The calendar for next season is beginning to fill. Other than the usual events, two weddings have already been booked. These and other private gatherings benefit the Town through rental fees.

Respectfully submitted,  
Janet S. Grant  
G. Clay Hollister  
Robert B. Stephenson

For front matter of Town Report:

MEETINGHOUSE COMMITTEE

Janet S. Grant	Historic District Commission Representative
Robert B. Stephenson	Village Improvement Society Representative
G. Clay Hollister	Selectmen's Representative