

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 2015: Amos Fortune Forum (seven lectures), Monadnock Music and Electric Earth concerts, a dance performance, Conant High School's 23rd annual Shakespeare Festival, NH Historical Resources Council meeting, 99th annual First Church Fair, presentation on the Meetinghouse Documentation project and four weddings. Several Town boards and committees met in the Meetinghouse one or more times.

The Meetinghouse was also the scene of numerous other meetings, school group visits, and gatherings throughout the year. The Committee, along with the Jaffrey Historical Society, the Village Improvement Society and the Historic District Commission, co-sponsored the 15th annual reading of *The Declaration of Independence* on the Fourth of July. The Meetinghouse was again full and the 38 volunteer readers did a marvelous job. All are invited to attend and participate.

The Committee made thorough inspections of the Meetinghouse in June and November. Between these inspections a variety of projects were undertaken, sometimes by members of the Committee and at other times by volunteers, contractors or Town staff (primarily Glenn Ruschioni): Inspection and servicing of the Town clock (overseen by Kevin Sterling and Dick Boutwell and with the professional involvement of D'Avanza Clock Repair of Goffstown); annual testing of the fire alarm system by Monadnock Security and the fire extinguishers by Guyette Fire Protection; the usual touch-up painting (Dennis Wright); minor plumbing (Devlin & Sons) and such tasks as oiling of exterior exposed wood. A rotted finial from Tower was found on the ground by Kevin Sterling, restored by Rob Stephenson and replaced by Dennis Wright. The informational sign on the west façade beside the entrance ramp to the Tower was restored and painted by Dennis Wright and reinstalled in the Spring.

There were no major projects in 2015: Dennis Wright and his crew undertook some touch-up painting on the lower levels of the exterior. The South facade was not painted as scheduled but will be done at a later time after the building is re-roofed, probably in 2017. (A new roof will be a major and expensive undertaking and a variety of grants will be pursued during 2016 to help offset the costs.) Wright Painting did spend some time in the Tower painting much of the wood surfaces at the bell level.

In 2016 first floor windows showing deterioration will be removed, prepared, re-glazed and painted by Dennis Wright.

The balance of the Meetinghouse Trust Fund at the start of the year was \$13,494.89. During 2015 rental fees for the use of the Meetinghouse totaled \$2,680 and income earned was \$36.65. At last year's Town Meeting, \$3,000 was added to the fund. Expenditures from the trust fund totaled \$648.40 and management fees were \$117.53. At the end of the year the balance of the Meetinghouse Trust Fund was \$18,445.61.

For the tenth year a Christmas tree was installed on the Common and a lighting ceremony with caroling was held on December 6th. As always, candles are set in the south windows of the Meetinghouse for the holiday season and remain lighted well into January.

The Meetinghouse has its own webpage, hosted on the Town's website at <http://townofjaffrey.com>. Go to > Boards & Committees > Meetinghouse Committee. Here you will find, among other things, historical and financial information, photographs, the current and past schedules of events, and the application and guidelines for use.

The Town was fortunate to receive a grant of nearly \$20,000 from the NH Division of Historical Resources to undertake a detailed documentation of the Meetinghouse. This was completed in September and includes an historical narrative, large-format film photographs and measured architectural drawings. A final presentation of the project was held at the Meetinghouse on September 13th. Full information on the project may be found at <http://www.rs41.org/CLG/clg.htm>.

The calendar for next season is beginning to fill. Most events benefit the Town through rental fees.

Respectfully submitted,
Janet S. Grant
James Moore

Robert B. Stephenson

For front matter of Town Report:

MEETINGHOUSE COMMITTEE

Janet S. Grant
James Moore
Robert B. Stephenson

Historic District Commission Representative
Selectmen's Representative
Village Improvement Society Representative