

**ASHFIELD HISTORICAL COMMISSION
MEETING
THURSDAY, JULY 28, 2011
7:30 PM**

PRESENT:

Steve Gougeon, Mollie Babize, Nancy Garvin, Gerard McGovern, Tristan Romer

MINUTES

...of June 23, 2011 were approved.

**TOURS: ASHFIELD HISTORY WRITTEN IN STONE
WALK WITH JIM VIEIRA JULY 16TH**

All agreed the walk was a stunning success with at least 35 participants. Several mentioned they were interested in a sequel, perhaps in the fall, so Jim could continue to show and speak about other such sites in and around town. Steve will speak with Jim about possible dates. Nancy Hoff suggested having Jim repeat this walk as a fund-raiser for the Local Goods catalog; all agreed it would be best to keep that separate from the Historical Commission educational walks, since ours are free. Other suggestions include having people sign up ahead of time.

STONE BRIDGE WALK JULY 30TH Steve obtained a copy of the 1878 petition by A. D. Flower to establish a new highway from the center of town down to the bottom of Ashfield Mountain, and followed the bearings. He discovered several more granite highway bounds, including one he pulled out of the mud where it had washed away. He ended up at the bridge, which confirms the date it was built. He will speak about how the road has changed from its first layout in 1846, and has reproduced historic maps to document the changes. Parking will be along Smith Road, where there is little traffic. Mollie suggested inviting Chris Skelley of Massachusetts Historical Commission to come along, in the interest of getting the bridge listed.

MILL TOUR AUGUST 13TH Mollie plans to focus her column in the Shelburne Falls/West County Independent on the mills in Ashfield, and highlight both the display at the Historical Society and the walk to the Guilford Mill on August 13th. There was some discussion about not expanding the audience beyond Ashfield residents. Nancy asked Mollie to be sure to give Grace Lesure credit for curating the exhibit. The Commission agreed the walk will start with an introduction to Ashfield's mills at the Historical Society, then have people carpool down to the mill site. Unfortunately, despite Steve's hard work and last minute changes to the notice, the Ashfield News did not include the change in meeting place. This will require additional work to alert people: perhaps signs at the hardware store, library, Neighbors, and on the chalk board at the post office. Mollie will let Lucille Thibeault know cars may be parked along Murray Road; Steve will let the police know, and will place cones along Rt 116 at the site; Mollie will speak with Stuart Harris about poison ivy control and additional details on the mill's deconstruction for her article.

FUTURE IDEAS Since this seems like such a great way to engage Ashfield residents about the history of Ashfield, perhaps a winter tour of historic homes might be of interest. Potential sites mentioned included Peter Corens' on Beldingville, Poppy Doyle's on Steady Lane, and Ashfield Antiques on Cape Street. To be continued!

NEXT MEETING

The next gathering will be the tours on July 30th and August 13th; the next regular meeting will be Thursday, August 25th at 7:30 pm.

Meeting adjourned at 9:10 pm

Respectfully submitted by Mollie Babize