

ASHFIELD HISTORICAL COMMISSION
MEETING
THURSDAY, DECEMBER 2, 2010

PRESENT:

Steve Gougeon, Mollie Babize, Nancy Garvin, Gerard McGovern

OLD MILLS

Nancy discussed some research she's been doing on old mills in town, including the South Ashfield mill near Bullitt Road on the South River which was a grist mill, saw mill, and turning shop perhaps dating to 1782. It finally collapsed in 1967. Floods in 1878 wiped out mills at Spruce Corner, South Ashfield, Burton Hill.

FUTURE TOURS

Discussion focused on what the draw would be to attract people on tours of various historic sites in Ashfield next summer. Would there be a theme? One thought was to link it to use of stone in town. Bob Drinkwater has researched gravestones, and looked at the Norton Hill and Plain Cemeteries; he is an Amherst resident who might be interested in leading a tour. He speaks of the source of stone as well as the work. The stone bridge could be another stop, with discussion of how it was constructed. Jim Viera, Bug Hill Road, has been researching various stones throughout the woodlands, including structures he believes are quite ancient. Old mill sites could be amplified by images of a working gristmill; Gerard mentioned Wayside Inn and the gristmill operated by Pepperidge Farm. The Plain Schoolhouse could be another site; it is being gifted by Norma Harris to the Historical Society for use as a repository of artifacts and perhaps an education center (and warm workplace). The property connects to the rear of the Historical Society parcel.

Timing of the tours was not finalized: we could sponsor one a week, with a single stop of an hour or so, or perhaps every other week for July and August. To be continued!

MINUTES

...of the October 28, 2010 meeting were approved.

NEXT MEETING

Will be held Thursday, January 27, 2011 at 7:30 pm.

Meeting adjourned at 9:00 pm

Respectfully submitted by Mollie Babize