

*The tour starts at the Rail Trail/Municipal Parking Lot on Main Street, in what was known as the “Mid Way,” between the village’s Eastern and Western Bridges over the Mascoma River. Please note that all the structures listed here are private property, with the exception of the Public Library building.*

The township of Enfield was chartered on July 4, 1761. Attracted by rich farmland, plentiful timber and waterpower, the first settlers arrived 1765-72. Villages sprang up at East Enfield (now Lockhaven) on Crystal Lake, Enfield Center on the 4th New Hampshire Turnpike (Rt. 4A) and here in North Enfield, at the edge of Mascoma Lake.

In the 1780s some local farmers were converted to Shakerism--a radical sect that danced as a form of worship, practiced celibacy and believed in a male/female godhead, equality of the races, direct communication with spirits and the spiritual value of hard work. The history of Enfield Village is unique in the way that the Shakers influenced the town’s economic development and growth.

The Shakers settled communally on the western side of Mascoma Lake in 1793 and over the next 40 years acquired land and water rights around the lake, building mills along the Mascoma River and in North Enfield. Since direct contact with the “World’s People” was avoided, the Shakers set up mill managers who hired local labor.

*Proceed halfway across the **Eastern Main Street Bridge** adjoining the parking lot, first constructed over the Mascoma River c. 1847. At the bump-out look to your left:*

**47 Main Street - Shaker Woolen Mill**

On this site a gristmill and dam were built c. 1770 by the first settlers, with woolen carding and fulling mills added around 1800-20. The mills were sold to the Enfield Shakers in the 1830s, and they contracted a company to weave Shaker wool into flannel that would be sewn into undergarments by the Shaker Sisters and sold commercially. By 1860 the mill was Enfield’s largest employer, and for the next 140 years textile mills would remain Enfield’s main industry.

In 1863, after the murder of Caleb Dyer--the Shaker elder who managed their business affairs--



the mill was sold. The false claim by mill operators that the Shakers owed them thousands of dollars contributed to the eventual decline of the Enfield Shaker Community. The mill continued to make “Shaker flannel” until 1884 when it was abandoned, then finally torn down in the late 1890s.

*Look to your right at the prominent granite foundation stones, all that remains of the **Shaker Grist-mill** built in 1855.* Although owned by the Shakers, it too was leased to outside operators until it closed in 1901, finally destroyed by fire in 1968. At its peak, 600 bushels of corn and wheat were ground a day.

*Return to the parking lot:*

**Depot Square**

Known as Depot Square for the Northern Railroad passenger and freight station built in 1847 on land donated by the Shakers. The train tracks ran from Concord, NH, to White River Junction, VT, as part of the Boston and Maine Railroad. In 1848-50, the Shakers constructed a log bridge across Mascoma Lake to connect the railroad with the turnpike. The tiny village of North Enfield soon became the heart of Enfield Township, shipping textiles to distant markets by road and rail. Shops, stores, churches and new homes quickly sprang up to serve the growing population.

*Proceed to the flagpole and look across the street at the row of mercantile stores:*

**60 Main Street – F. B. Williams Store, 62 Main Street – Clough Dry Goods, Boot & Shoe Store, 64 Main Street – Fogg’s Hardware Store**

Built c.1865-70 on land bought from the Shakers. In 1904 the Williams Store with its new glass windows was advertised as, “One of the largest department stores in New Hampshire,” with stock that “would

do credit to any city store.”

*Cross Main Street and continue past George’s AG:*



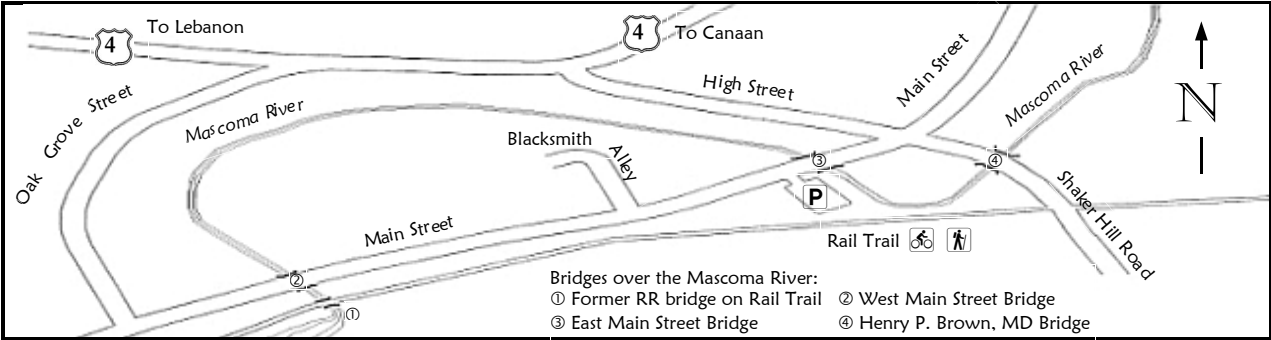
Formerly the site of a large hotel and livery stable, in 1891 the **Webster House** rented rooms for \$1.50 a night.

**Look across the street at 67 Main Street – Wells & Flanders Mill & Grain Elevator/Hill Feed**

A new gristmill and grain elevator were built here in 1901 when the Shaker gristmill shut down. The elevator was later converted into a feed store as the faint sign on the left side still shows.

*Continuing down Main Street:*

Several fine homes were built here c. 1850 in the boom that followed the railroad. Note **76 Main Street – The G. W. Clark House**, constructed in the Greek Revival style that reflected interest in the Classical Greek ideals of democracy, beauty and simplicity, with its fluted columns and triangular temple-front pediment.



**78 Main Street – Leviston House & Tannery**

This property was donated to the Enfield Shakers in 1846, who then sold it for development. The tannery was built two years later to take advantage of the river’s waterpower, and other nearby manufacturing – including a machine shop, carriage shop and flannel mill – soon followed. The tannery was abandoned in 1888 but reopened as a bobbin factory c. 1910-20 before it was finally destroyed by fire in 1939.

The adjacent house served as home to various tannery owners, including the Leviston Brothers from 1868-88. Restoration of the **Leviston House** is a project of the Enfield Village Association, dedicated to revitalizing Enfield’s historic Main Street.



The tannery site is accessible by a scenic trail starting at the parking lot.

*Continue down Main Street across the **Western Main Street Bridge**,* originally a covered wooden bridge built c. 1849.

*As you cross Oak Grove Street, look up to the right to see the **Oak Grove Cemetery**,* a private burial ground established in 1850 and beyond it, the



small **Paddleford Cemetery**, the village’s oldest graveyard.

**96 Main St - Community Lutheran Church**  
The oldest church in the village, built in 1852 in the Greek Revival Style as the First Universalist Meeting House, with the columned portico and memorial windows added in 1898.

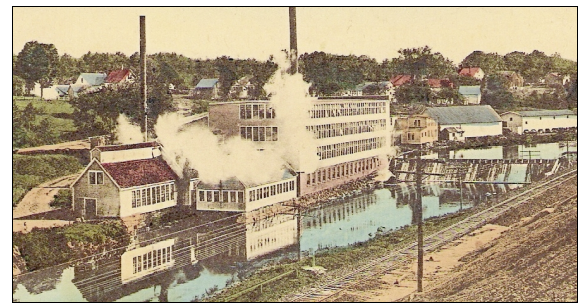
*Proceed down Main Street to see more historic homes, including the c. 1858 Gothic revival-style **Conant House - 106 Main Street**, or double back here, returning up Main Street past the mercantile stores.*

*As you cross **Blacksmith Alley**, note that the first blacksmith shop, owned by the Enfield Shakers, opened here in 1840. Others followed, including shops for wagons and sleds to order and carriage repair, along with horse stables.*

**56 Main St. - Copeland Block**  
Widely known as one of the finest buildings in Enfield--with its brick façade and granite trim—this three-story wooden structure was built in 1897 by Ira Copeland at a cost of \$10,000. Over the years it was home to the post office, a drugstore and soda fountain, doctors’ offices, a poolroom and barbershop. The “I.O.O.F.” reflects the 99-year lease granted to the International Order of Odd Fellows for the top floor.

*Cross the Eastern Bridge and continue up Main Street:*

Enfield prospered until the nationwide financial Panic of 1873 brought local industry to a standstill. Then in 1886 a new woolen yarn mill was built upstream on Baltic Street, and by the mid-1890s the mills and all of Enfield were once again flourishing, with large, fashionable Victorian homes on



North Main Street and South Street (Shaker Hill Road) for mill owners and managers, along with tenements for the more than 300 workers.

In 1899 the Baltic mills were sold to the American Woolen Company, the largest wool producer in the United States. The mill buildings, rebuilt after an 1899 fire, have been idle since 1971 but are still visible from the Rail Trail, which can be joined at Depot Square.

*At the first intersection, Main Street and High Street/Shaker Hill Road, you can see the Henry Brown, M.D. Bridge, originally a covered wooden bridge first built perhaps as early as 1798.*

*Continue up Main Street, passing several **Italianate-style houses** dating c. 1860-75, distinguished by their flat roofs, decorative brackets and projecting window bays, as well as **Queen Anne-style houses**, with their turrets, towers, gables and porches--built c. 1900.*

*Look across Main Street:*

**25 Main St. – Davis Block**  
Originally a lock factory, this building was moved here from Fishmarket, a small hamlet near Enfield Center, c. 1900 and finished into tenement dwellings for mill workers.

**23 Main St. - Public Library & Memorial Building, Whitney Hall**  
The Enfield Public Library began with an offer of \$1,200 from Henry Cumings, a former Shaker elder. Erected in 1900-01 in the Queen Anne style, it also held selectmen's rooms and offices of the Grand Army of the Republic, with the main stained glass window on the second floor a memorial to Civil War veterans.

The second floor, known as Whitney Hall, served as a public hall and theater. Mill operator George Whitney donated \$1,000 for its construction and also built the village’s first electric plant, making Enfield one of the first towns to have electricity for its homes and streetlights.

During World War II the top of the tower was enclosed to spot for enemy aircraft. In 1976 the building underwent major renovation and now also contains the Enfield town offices.

*Reverse direction and return down Main Street. At the intersection of High Street/Shaker Hill Road, look*

*across the street at the small red house:*

**3 Shaker Hill Road – Greely House**  
One of the oldest houses in Enfield, built in the early 1800s and sold to the Shakers c. 1860 as a home for the gristmill manager. In the early 20th century, the building served as Enfield’s telegraph and telephone exchange.

*Cross High Street and look across Main Street to your left:*

**45 Main Street - The Enfield Advocate**  
Erected in 1900 to house the village’s first local weekly newspaper. Souvenir books and postcards of Enfield and Mascoma Lake were also printed and sold as a growing number of summer residents built cottages around the lake and tourists came to visit.

**47 Main Street - Wilmot Block**  
Built in 1900 on the site of the old Shaker Woolen Mill to house William A. Wilmot’s undertaking business, dry goods and harness shop, which also sold local postcards and souvenirs along with furniture, crockery and wallpaper.

*Continue back down to Depot Square:*

In 1904 a new passenger station was constructed, still standing .1 mile to the east on the Rail Trail, and a new **freight shed**, still standing, was erected here at **59 Main Street**.



Thank you for visiting Historic Downtown Enfield Village. You may also want to explore other side streets, particularly High and School Streets and Shaker Hill Road, with their many interesting historic homes and churches, as well as the Enfield Historical Society Museum in Enfield Center, the Lockhaven School Museum on Lockhaven Road and the Enfield Shaker Museum on Route 4A.

For more information contact:  
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# Historic Enfield Village

“Tangled Skeins:  
Enfield Village & the Shakers”



Enfield Library & Memorial Building  
Whitney Hall

Main Street  
Walking Tour