Let's Take a Walk!
Exploring the Cultural Landscape in Shelburne Village

A Self-Guided Walking Tour

Shelburne, Vermont 05482

How to Complete the Tour:

The tour begins at the Shelburne Village Parade Ground. (#1 on map above.) Public parking is available on Church Street, just adjacent to the green.

The map above outlines the suggested tour route in red. Please exercise caution when crossing busy streets. The route above includes usage of designated crosswalks.

Detailed information about each stopping point is contained in this packet with the number shown on the respective star on map above.

Welcome to Shelburne Village!

Chartered in 1763, Shelburne is an excellent example of an historically intact community that possesses many architecturally significant buildings, but also a series of regionally important and interesting street trees. Together, these elements of the built and natural world make up what is called "the cultural landscape." This walking tour presents a focused glimpse into the cultural landscape right here, in the heart of Shelburne.

The LaPlatte River intersects Shelburne from east to west, and the Rutland Railroad runs from north to south. The Shelburne Village Historic District was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 1990 because it retains much of its original integrity despite rapid development in neighboring areas. The history of Shelburne Village encompasses agriculture and commerce--two themes that remain imperative to broad patterns of history in New England.

Similar to the man-made historic buildings in town, Shelburne's existing street trees add to the value of the community by providing social and economic benefits. Whether or not we realize it, natural resources in the "urban forest" give us a sense of place. The inherent connection between nature and culture makes Shelburne a great place to live, work and play.

We invite you to take a walk through Shelburne and gain a new perspective on your surroundings by learning about historic architecture and various tree species!

1

The Shelburne Parade Ground, Oak, Ash, Maple and Sycamore Trees

Captain Benjamin Harrington, one of Shelburne's original settlers, donated this land to the town in 1807. Today, this greenspace is used for a variety of purposes, but initially it served as a space for military exercises. Note the combination of deciduous and coniferous trees here, namely the young Sugar Maples parallel to Church Street, Oaks in the southwest corner and White Ash trees along the northern edge. Also note the large Sycamore tree in the northeastern corner. These are excellent examples of common New England street trees that possess natural and cultural significance. Ash tree timber in particular has been used to manufacture skis, snowshoes and even building frames.

Right: Sugar maple (*Acer saccharum Marsh)* leaf. The leaves are five-lobed and have moderately deep notches between the lobes. Sugar Maples are one of our most valuable hardwood trees.

2 30 Church Street, *United Methodist Church*

The first of Shelburne's three significant masonry churches, the United Methodist Church was built between 1872-74 by the Reverend Edgerton in the High Victorian Gothic style. The stone used to construct the church came from the Willsboro Quarries in New York State and arrived in Shelburne on sleds that were pulled across the frozen Lake Champlain. The building has a steeply pitched gable-front nave, a three-story bell tower with a spire that overlooks the neighboring Parade Ground and a transept that gives the church a T-shape. The bell tower is the tallest structure in Shelburne Village, and the exterior walls are made of rock-faced grey limestone ashlar arranged in regular courses.

Above: The United Methodist Church at present.

Left: An historic photo (ca. 1900) showing the United Methodist Church. Image courtesy of the UVM Landscape Change program.

3 5420 Shelburne Road, *Shelburne Public School and Northern Red Oak Trees*

This two-story, flat-roofed building was built in 1926 after the previous school in the same location burned in a fire in 1925. The Tudor Arch details above the principal entrance make this an Elizabethan Revival style building. Since the mid-1900s, several modifications have been made to the building (namely the addition visible on the right side from the front). However, it should be noted that this addition is clearly differentiated from the original portion of the school and compatible in terms of scale and design. The public school is used for town offices today, thus making the building an excellent example of *adaptive reuse.* Directly in front of the school, there is a large Northern Red Oak tree. Oak leaves have large, moderately lobed leaves and acorns with flat, saucer-like cups.

Right: The Shelburne Town Hall, at present.
Bottom Right: Crabapple tree, just adjacent to the Town Hall on the right side, in the front.
Below: The leaf of an Eastern Redbud tree, immediately to the right of the entrance to the Pierson Library.

4

5376 Shelburne Road, *Shelburne Town Hall, Eastern Redbud, Crabapple and Cedar Trees*

Electra Havemeyer Webb, founder of Shelburne Museum, built this structure in memory of her parents. It replaced the earlier Town Hall that burned in 1925 and is of Neoclassical Revival style. It features a portico with Doric columns and a weathervane atop the cupola, which reflects Electra's tastes in folk art. Eastern Redbud trees, as seen to the right of the Pierson Library entrance in the rear of the Town Hall, are small trees with heart-shaped leaves and reddish flowers that appear in the springtime. Crabapple trees, also visible on the property, are widely planted for ornament and yield sour-tasting fruits that can be used to make preserves and vinegar. Crabapples contain high amounts of pectin, which is useful in making jams and jellies. You might also notice several Cedar trees in the area here. Cedars commonly grow in lakeside regions, just like Shelburne.

Left: 5288 Shelburne Rd., at present.
Below (right): Photo showing the John Simonds Block in the late 1800s. Image provided by the UVM Landscape Change Program.
Below (left): Grouping of several Spruce Trees.

5 *Grouping of Spruce Trees* and 5288 Shelburne Road, *The John Simonds Block*

As you walk from the Town Hall (#4) to this site, notice the grouping of Spruce Trees planted intentionally in the space between the properties. Spruce trees are often considered a classic "evergreen" species; sometimes they are used in homes as Christmas trees. Spruce pulp is also widely utilized in the production of paper. Sometimes, the sap and tips of Spruce tree branches are boiled and fermented into a variety of different beverages. John Simonds built the large brick and wooden commercial structure on the corner of Route 7 and Harbor Road in 1851 and it served as Shelburne's largest general store for over a century. The building also used to have a large porch extending across the front, as shown in the historic photo above.

6 Harbor Road, *The Rutland Railroad*

The development of the Village of Shelburne as we know it today owes much to the introduction of the Rutland Railroad, located just west of the Village center on Harbor Road. The tracks for the Rutland Railroad were laid in 1849 and thus opened up transportation between Burlington and Rutland, thereby allowing new possibilities for industry, travel and commerce. For example, apples grown at the nearby orchards could be shipped to other cities for business. Many of the homes along Harbor Road were originally built in order to serve as homes for the laborers who worked on the railroad, or for those employed at the neighboring Shelburne Farms (a National Historic Landmark).

Above: Views of the railroad tracks, looking north toward Burlington **(above, left)** and south toward Rutland **(above, right).**

7 102 Harbor Road, *First Episcopal Parsonage*

This modest, Federal style home was built in 1833 and initially served as the Protestant Episcopal Parsonage. The home is two stories with an eaves-front gable roof, cornice returns and a stone foundation. Evidence on the front of the house confirms that a porch once spanned that facade. The home was purchased by Electra Havemeyer Webb in 1946 to serve as a home for her doll collection. Although her dolls never actually made it to the house at 102 Harbor Road, it can be argued that this home represents the first phases of Shelburne Museum.

This home is also surrounded by a variety of deciduous and coniferous trees, namely Spruce and Eastern Redbud.

8 60 Harbor Road, *Harness Shop/Shelburne Craft School and Ginkgo Trees*

The gable-front building facing Harbor Road dates back to 1850; it originally housed a harness shop and wagon painting shop. A meat market also operated here from 1900-1930. A blacksmith shop (now at Shelburne Museum) was once attached to the western side of this building. The additional craft school buildings in the rear date back to 1849; they were constructed to house railroad laborers. The Shelburne Craft School has operated at this location since the 1940s.

Just in front of the Harness Shop is a ginkgo *(Ginkgo biloba)* tree (shown above). The ginkgo tree is native to China and is now considered a "living fossil" because its origins date back 270 million years. The tree itself is a symbol of strength and longevity and also has many traditional uses in medicine and food. Ginkgo trees are relatively shade-intolerant and grow well in areas that are adequately watered and drained. Their leaves are a unique fan-like shape. There are also female and male varieties of the tree--female ginkgos emit a particularly unpleasant odor.

9 5224 Shelburne Road, *Tracy House*

The Tracy House was listed independently on the National Register of Historic Places in 1983, seven years prior to the listing of the Shelburne Village Historic District. The building is an excellent example of Italianate style architecture, but it also has noted Gothic and Romantic qualities. The Reverend Edgerton (who designed the church at Site #2) also designed this home. The Tracy House was constructed in 1878 with bricks from the former Methodist Church, which was located at the present site of St. Catherine of Siena (Site #19). The home is named for Lee Tracy, who was a local wool dealer, farmer and real estate agent. Note details such as the arches, scroll brackets and porch with chamfered posts on chamfered pedestals.

10

5166 Shelburne Road, *B. Harris Maeck House and Birch Trees*

This is a Dutch Colonial Revival home built ca. 1915. The rear ell was later added in 1935. The home features a gambrel roof (common in Dutch Colonial structures), Tuscan columns, long dormers and exposed rafter tails. The home is named for Mr. and Mrs. B. Harris Maeck.

Left: The B. Harris Maeck House.

Below: Neighboring birch tree.

Just beyond the B. Harris Maeck home (near the TD Bank exit) is a healthy Birch (*Betula)* tree. Birch trees are easily identified by their papery white bark that peels off the tree trunks. Birch leaves are relatively egg-shaped. Traditionally, birch lumber has been useful in cabinetmaking and interior finishing. The bark has also been used to make canoes. Fermented birch sap also appears in various beverages.

11

5059 Shelburne Road, *Harrington House and Silver Maple Trees*

This house is named for Benjamin Harrington of the Parade Ground (Site #1) and the Shelburne Inn (Site #13) and was built ca. 1800. The house is Federal in style but has several Greek Revival details, such as the main entrance which contains sidelights, pilasters and a cornice cap. These details were presumably added in the mid-1800s. There is also a carriage barn associated with the house.

Along Shelburne Road just adjacent to the Harrington House is a series of Silver Maple (*Acer saccharinum L.)* trees; see example at right. Silver maples have deeply-lobed leaves with U-shaped sinuses. These trees were widely planted post-WWII as quickly growing, ornamental street trees.

Above: Trinity Episcopal Church, at present. Note the tall Norway Spruce trees to the left of the building.

Below: Historic photo showing Trinity Episcopal church and a young Norway Spruce tree in 1908. Image provided by Shelburne Museum (all rights reserved).

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5171 Shelburne Road, *Trinity Episcopal Church and Norway Spruce Trees*

The second of Shelburne's important masonry churches, Trinity Episcopal Church was built in phases in the late 1800s. The first phase occurred in 1886 when William Appleton Potter, a prominent New York architect, designed the nave. In 1890, William Seward Webb financed more work on the church, thus providing a new and larger chancel, transept and tower. The interior of the church and the stained glass windows are by Louis Comfort Tiffany. The walls are made of locally quarried rock-faced redstone ashlar, limestone and slate. The large Norway Spruce trees (*Picea abies L.)* in front of the church are excellent examples of this European coniferous species. Norway spruce are easily identifiable by their "drooping" twigs and branchlets.

Top Left: 5247 Shelburne Road, at present.
Above: A Norway Maple tree, to the left of the Inn (on Shelburne Road).
Left: Historic photo showing the Inn in 1908. Image provided by Shelburne Museum (all rights reserved).

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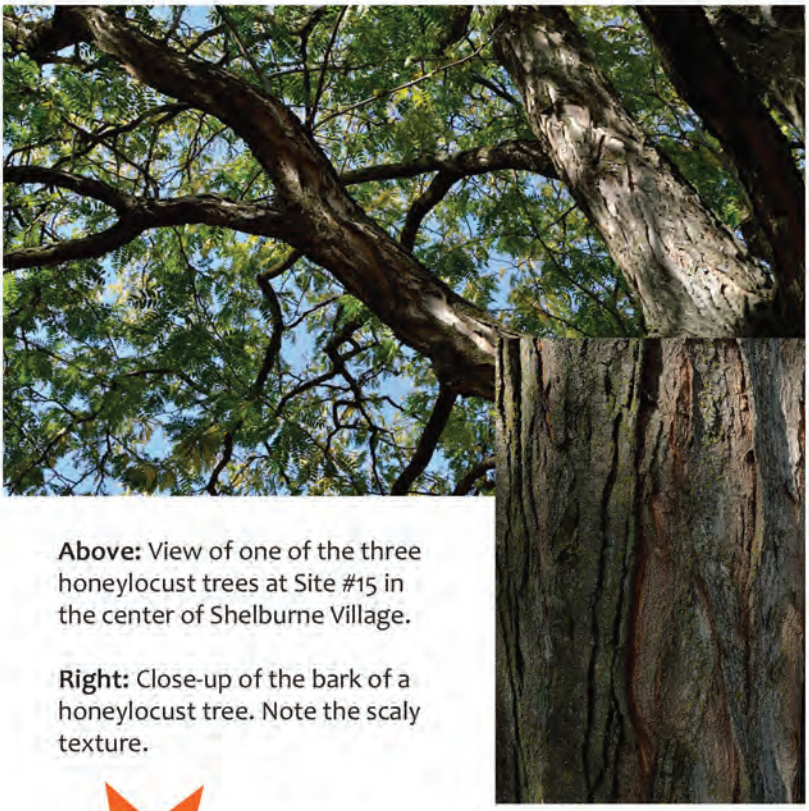
5247 Shelburne Road, *The Shelburne Inn and Norway Maple Trees*

This is Shelburne's oldest building--it was built in 1796 by Captain Benjamin Harrington (of Sites #1 and #11). The Inn is Federal in style and features a gable-peaked roof, porch and simple entablature. Just behind the Inn is a large Norway Maple *(Acer platinoides L.)* tree. Norway Maples are highly invasive and were introduced in the U.S. in 1796 because they tended to grow rapidly and healthily in adverse weather conditions. Norway Maples threaten native plants by creating a thick canopy, which prevents light from reaching smaller understory plants. Red Maples and Sugar Maples are good, native alternatives to Norway Maples.

14 15 Falls Road, *Queen Anne Style House*

This modest Queen Anne style house was constructed ca. 1890-95 and displays a variety of features typical of Queen Anne architecture in a vernacular context. Although the building is relatively simple, it shows decorative brackets, turned vertical posts, clapboard siding and fishscale shingles directly beneath the front gable peak. This building was originally constructed as a residence; there is evidence suggesting that it belonged to Prosper Bacon of the *Prosper Bacon House* just next door (Site #16). The building was converted to commercial use in the 1980s and today houses the business *Chez Bohéme.*



Above: View of one of the three honeylocust trees at Site #15 in the center of Shelburne Village.

Right: Close-up of the bark of a honeylocust tree. Note the scaly texture.

15 Intersection of Falls Road and Route 7, *Grouping of 3 Honeylocust Trees*

Just across from the Shelburne Country Store (directly in front of the parking spaces, on the central greenspace) is a group of three Honeylocust *(Gleditsia triacanthos L.)* trees. Honeylocust trees are tall with feather-compound leaves. The bark is dark and scaly. There are varieties of Honeylocust that are *thorned,* but the examples here are *thornless.* Thornless Honeylocusts are widely planted as street trees. The wood is heavy and durable; traditionally it has been used for railroad ties, fence posts and agricultural tools. At one time, there were more Honeylocust trees in this greenspace but they were removed to further enhance and open the viewshed.

16 29 Falls Road, *Prosper Bacon House /The Shelburne Country Store*

The Prosper Bacon House, now easily recognized and loved as "The Shelburne Country Store," was built ca. 1835 as a shoe and carpenter's shop. Later, the structure was used as a dwelling for its owner, Prosper Bacon. The structure was converted to a general store in 1886 and has remained in that function ever since. The Shelburne Country Store, as it is known today, has existed at this location for the past sixty years. At present, visitors and residents alike can visit the Shelburne Country Store for everything from candy and greeting cards to shipping packages.

Above: 54 Falls Road at present.

Right: View of 54 Falls Road and surrounding landscape, captured in 1911. Image provided by Shelburne Museum (all rights reserved).

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54 Falls Road, *Former Pierson Library*

This building was constructed ca. 1816 and originally operated as a store. Later, the building served as the Methodist Parsonage from ca. 1837-1883 and then as the private home of Cyrus Van Vliet until 1911. That year, the building was purchased from Van Vliet and converted to the Pierson Library, which functioned at the site until 2001. (At present, the Pierson Library is located in the rear of Site #4). The front portico, which features Tuscan columns, was added to the structure in 1911. The side wings were added later, in 1925. Today, the building houses the popular children's toy store *Jamie Two Coats.*

18 77 Falls Road, *James Kinney House*

This is an excellent example of an older brick structure in Shelburne Vilage. Built ca. 1815, the James Kinney House is actually one of Shelburne's oldest residential buildings. The home is a two-story eaves-front home with a gable-peaked roof, constructred in the Federal Style. The brick bonds that make up the exterior bearing walls are classified as Flemish bonds because the bricks are laid in alternating patterns. There are also molded cornice returns at the gable ends. Although some changes were made to the structure in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, the home still retains many of its original character-defining features.

Did you know? A *cornice return* is an architectural detail where the cornice of a building connects to the rake of a gable. The James Kinney House has two cornice returns visible on each gable end. Cornice returns appear on many Federal Style buildings.

Above: St. Catherine of Siena church, today.

Right: St. Catherine of Siena in 1908. Image provided by Shelburne Museum (all rights reserved).

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92 Church Street, *St. Catherine of Siena*

The last of Shelburne's three notable masonry churches, St. Catherine of Siena was built in 1895. The exterior of the structure is a brick veneer with a three story tower and a hipped roof bell loft. Originally, the church had a tall spire topped by a large cross (as shown in the historic photo above). The foundation is made of rock-faced redstone ashlar with a blue marble water table. Note also the Parish Hall behind the church and the Rectory to the right of the church (shown in the historic photo above).

Acknowledgements

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All photos taken and provided by Frances Gubler (unless otherwise specified).

Norway Spruce
(Picea abies L.)

Honeylocust
(Gleditsia triacanthos L.)

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