

The Restoration of THE SHELBURNE UNION CHURCH



Photo circa 1900



The first church in Shelburne was organized in August 1818 with the Rev. Henry Sewall, a missionary, assisting. The original membership consisted of Isaiah Carlton, Fletcher Ingalls, Eliphalet Burbank, Sara Carlton, Anna Griffin and Mary Porter. For the first several years of the Church's existence, services were held at the home of Fletcher Ingalls. This practice continued until a permanent meetinghouse was erected in 1832 near the west end of Village Road.

The next fifty years were a constant struggle for survival, with membership fluctuating from three to thirty-five.

In 1884 the land and building were purchased by W.K. Aston as a site for his summer estate. The building was torn down and rebuilt at its present location in the summer of 1885. The current structure was dedicated in October 1885.

At about this time the church officially organized as the UNION CHURCH ASSOCIATION IN SHELBURNE. The organization was approved and placed on file in Concord, N.J., on July 10, 1877.

Since that time, the church has experienced periods of relative prosperity, followed by years of almost total inactivity. In May 1976, a group of citizens showed interest in restoring and reviving the church. This interest has resulted in the current restoration and reopening of the church for regular summer worship.



173 years after its initial construction this church still stands as a testament to the dedication of the citizens of Shelburne and the congregation that comes together for services. Year after year the members have painstakingly worked to stabilize and restore this simple and elegant house of worship. As we prepare to celebrate the 175th anniversary of this building, there is still much to be done.

We seek the funding necessary to complete the continuing work, including but not limited period lighting and completion of the inside work well under way. Any donation large or small would be appreciated to preserve this bit of American heritage.