

“If This House Could Talk”
Bike Tour

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Self-Guided Bike Tour of Historic Locations

Welcome, and thank you for taking our self-guided bike tour of thirteen historic locations in Sheffield.

The total length of this route is 23 miles. The tour can easily be split, with the North Loop (10.6 miles) and South Loop (12.4 miles) being done on separate occasions. The North loop has rolling hills and 1.5 miles of a dirt road. The South Loop has a 440 ft. hill at mile 12 (but spectacular views once you reach the top). This tour can also be done by car. The full tour should take between 1.5 to 2 hours.

A few notes:

Using a code scanner app on your smart phone, scan the QR code on each sign to get additional information about that location.

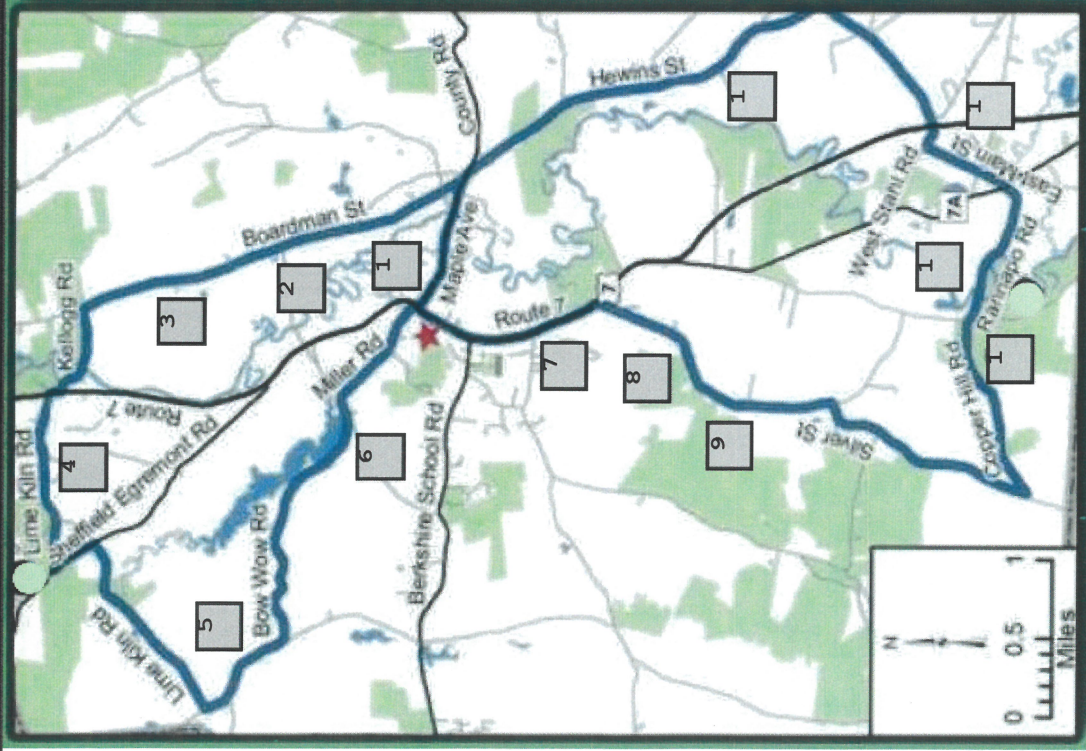


Please don't enter any of the properties—some structures are private h

Please be very careful when crossing Rt. 7. Please observe all COVID guidelines

You assume all risks and responsibilities on this tour

- ★ Start-Old Stone Store
- 1. Second Covered Bridge-near Catholic Church
- 2. Lund Farm-615 Boardman St.
- 3. Stillman House-1025 Boardman St.
- 4. Lime Kiln-334 Lime Kiln Rd.
- 5. Stoddard House-1261 Bow Wow Rd.
- 6. Miller House-110 Miller Ave.
- 7. Captain Stephen Dewey House-245 S. Main St.
- 8. Sheffield Big Elm-Intersection of Silver St. & Rt. 7 South
- 9. Deer Path Farm-1160 Silver St.
- 10. Colonel Ashley House-117 Cooper Hill Rd.
- 11. General Ashley House-795 Ramapo Rd.
- 12. Mary Ashley Laffargue House-1189 E Main St.
- 13. Abraham Burrell House-238 Alum Hill Rd.



For further information:

QR codes-use your phone app , (barcode reader, QR reader etc) to find more info!



1



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12



13

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1. Second covered bridge

This is the site of the second, or lower covered bridge in Sheffield, completed in 1853 and used until its closing 31 July 1952. It was replaced by a new covered bridge at the location where Maple Avenue now crosses the Housatonic River but only after the Army Corps of Engineers straightened the river bed to reduce low land flooding.

2. Lund Farm. 615 Boardman Street

Once occupied by Colonel Joseph Willcox who trained Sheffield militia for the Revolution, the house is constructed of bricks made on site from local clay which abounds in the area. It was occupied by Mr. and Mrs. Albert Adams Lund in the 1950's, who published *The Shepherd* a national magazine devoted to sheep raising. Subscribers were in all 50 states plus foreign countries

3. 1025 Boardman Street

The Stillman farm house, scene of a double murder on Thanksgiving night, 1877. Mr. and Mrs. David Stillman were murdered by Mr. John Ten Eyck who was found guilty of the crime on 14 May 1878 and hanged before a large crowd on 16 August at the county seat in Pittsfield. See <https://www.markdeweyresearchcenter.org/john-ten-eyck.html>

4. Lime Kiln

The A. & M. Barnes Lime Company was established in 1903 and by year's end was producing 70 barrels a day for agricultural use and plaster production. By 1929 there were six kilns in operation and 13 houses constructed for workers. In 1930 the company was acquired by U.S. Gypsum of Chicago.

5. 1261 Bow Wow Road

Stoddard-Crippen House. This house was under construction in 1829 when it was sold by Reuben Stoddard to Almon Crippen for \$252 plus "all the brick, jambstone, mantel pieces and lime on s'd premises." Apparently a sick man, Stoddard died the following month and is buried in Pine Grove (a.k.a. Bow Wow and Curtiss) Cemetery.

6. 110 Miller Avenue

Dr. John Leland Miller (1813-1889) moved to Sheffield in 1866 and purchased this house and the 150 acre Mount Barnard Farm. A Williams College professor, by 1879 Dr. Miller was the highest paying taxpayer in Sheffield (\$281.00). His wife Julia Atkins Miller (1834-1906) became a leading figure in the Friendly Union (Dewey Hall) after the death of Mary Dewey.

7. Proper House. 254 South Main Street

Captain Stephen Dewey House.

Dewey (1718 - 1796) built this brick structure ca. 1760 and a wood addition was added ca. 1848. The house served as a tavern (inn) in the 18th and 19th centuries. Dewey was a signer of the Sheffield Declaration of Independence in 1773, was a selectman and served with Colonel John Ashley in the American Revolution. He is buried in Barnard Cemetery across Route 7.

8. Sheffield Elm.

It is estimated that the Sheffield Elm, the town's emblem, was over 200 years old when the area was first settled by Europeans, indicating its start at about 1520. It grew to a height of 82 feet, had a crown of over 100 feet in diameter and measured 20 feet three inches in circumference about three feet from the ground. At one time town meetings were held under its protective cover. It was taken down in 1926, at about 400 years of age, a victim of time.

9. Deer Path Farm

This distinctive 1811 farmhouse has been transformed into a place of shady lawns, bright gardens and great dignity as befits its role as an early Sheffield homestead. It is the birthplace of Frederick Nelson Deland (1843 – 1922) who was awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor for his role at the Battle of Fort Hudson, Louisiana in 1863. In 1866 it was sold, ending the Deland tenure of 58 years.

10. The Colonel Ashley House

Owned by The Trustees of Reservations, this ca. 1735 structure is an outstanding example of residential architecture from the early 18th century. In addition to its architectural detail, both inside and out, two significant events took place here, the signing of the Sheffield Declaration of Independence and the actions leading to a lawsuit by the slave, Elizabeth Freeman (Mum Bet), to win her freedom through judicial proceedings.

11. General John Ashley House

A rare area example of Connecticut Valley “River God” architecture, this noble structure dates from about 1762. Modified over time, it has undergone a faithful restoration to its original 18th century style. In 1786 General Ashley commanded the Home Guard which met and dispersed rebels in the last battle of Shays' Rebellion, his command being “Pour in your fire, boys, and may god have mercy on their souls.”

12. Mary Ashley Laffargue House, 1189 East Main Street, Ashley Falls

This high style Connecticut Valley colonial saltbox dates from about 1750 as indicated by its gunstock corner beams, and huge central chimney fireplace with beehive oven. Originally part of the Ashley family's holdings in what was once known as Ashleyville, it was deeded to Mary Ashley Laffargue in 1816 where she lived with her physician husband and their children. In the 20th century the property hosted a blacksmith shop and antiques business.

13. Abraham Burrell House Hewins

Although passively neglected, this house still remains a fine example of Connecticut Valley colonial architecture, a school with strong local influence. During the French and Indian War it was one of three Sheffield sites, fortified at public expense, where people could take refuge against Indian attacks. In 1745 many residents of Stockbridge did just that, but, as it turned out, only as a precaution.