



The Bedford Village Inn History

The Bedford Village Inn & Restaurant was built around a farmhouse that dates from Bedford's agricultural heyday. The building's fine condition attests to years of gentle use, but this site has quite a history.

"The Gordon Farm", as the Village Inn grounds are called in early town records, was originally part of a large parcel granted to one John McLaughlin, the first Town Clerk of Bedford.

A savvy and well-placed speculator, McLaughlin subdivided his parcel, selling a fifty-acre corner to neighbor Samuel Gordon, whose younger brother John Gordon cleared the land in 1774 and subsequently begot most of his fourteen children here.

Eldest son, Josiah, joined the Continental Army at the start of the Revolutionary War, wearing a linen shirt made by his mother from flax grown and woven on the farm. Upon his triumphant return, Josiah became a gentleman farmer and businessman - and built the present Federal farmhouse in 1810.

Incidentally, another of McLaughlin's subdivisions - The Beard Farm next door- supported a tenant of note during the early 1800's. Mr. Zaccheus Greeley, father of Horace Greeley who attended the #1 school - located near the corner of Bedford Center Road and Chandler Road at the time.

In 1832, a "granddaughter of John Gordon" married Dr. Peter P. Woodbury, MD, who practiced in Bedford for many years and helped write an early history of the town in 1850. The Gordon Farm was passed between the Gordon's and Woodbury's until 1940, when Judge Peter Woodbury sold the place to Henry and Olga Wheeler. The Wheelers raised prized Shetland ponies here until the construction of Route 101 in 1953 cut the pasturage off from the farmhouse. The State built a pony-sized underpass beneath the highway, but it proved inconvenient for the Wheelers and their herd, who moved west to Jaffery, New Hampshire the following year.

The Wheelers left both halves of the spread to "Gentleman Farmers" Ralph and Sybil Fletcher, who subsequently sold the old pasturage on the opposite side of Route 101.

During all of this time, the original farm had grown from 50 to almost 350 acres. With the decline in farming and the increased activity in residential and infrastructure development the original farm estate was preserved at 5 1/2 acres by 1980.



In 1981, the “farm” was purchased with the intention of renovating the house as a Restaurant and the old livestock barn as the Inn.

Over the next three years, the owners worked with the Committee to save Fletcher Farm - a coalition of like-minded citizens and Bedford Planning Board members - to rezone the property for use as a “Class A Inn and Restaurant.” Two years of delicate preservation work and substantial new construction began in the summer of 1984 with the result that the Restaurant opened in August 1985 and the Inn opened in October 1986.

Pastures were relandscaped, seeded anew and fenced for the small herd of French Charlais beef cattle that lend the quiet rural charm that makes this setting such a real place.

The Bedford Village Inn and Restaurant stands on the entry to Bedford as testimony of what can be accomplished from joining the commitment of many townspeople, the high standards of a skilled architect and builder and the constant attention to detail of a talented staff.

The wedding of old and new adds grace with function and defines the special appeal of the Bedford Village Inn and Restaurant. Semi-private rooms in the Restaurant feature the main house’s original working fireplaces. The barn has been transformed into three floors of entertainment and lodging space for the Inn. Featuring original post and beam construction, the original milking room has become a lounge area for the Inn guests.

Original and reproduction antiques, woodwork, and wallpaper round out the existing structures, making the Inn and Restaurant a fine approximation of Federal Era splendor - with all the modern conveniences.

Jack, Andrea and Jon Carnevale are the proud owners of The Bedford Village Inn. Throughout their ownership, the couple has succeeded in attracting local and national recognition for the quaintness of the facility and the world- class cuisine served in their Award Winning Restaurant.

The Bedford Village Inn holds the prestigious Four Diamond Rating for its Inn and Restaurant, The DIRONA Award, and Wine Spectator Award of Excellence.

- Research by Doris Peck Spurway
Bedford Historical Society