



Leavitt Barn

Hampton Historical Society



40 Park Avenue
Hampton, NH



www.hamptonhistoricalsociety.org



Story Map

What's Special About This Site

The Leavitt barn is home to the Hampton Historical Society's Tuck Museum and offers much for visitors to see and do. The barn houses special exhibits

and displays on view. The site includes a beautiful 18th Century herb garden that demonstrates gardening techniques popular at that time.

Barn History and Use

The Leavitt Barn was constructed circa 1796 for widow Mary Leavitt and her son. Mary, originally living at the corner of Post Rd and Lafayette Rd, operated a tavern with barn. It was on the tax roll of 1795. Her son moved this Tavern and barn in later years to Lafayette Rd near the corner of Drakeside Rd.

The barn housed cows, horses, and chickens and provided nesting for pigeons thanks to pigeonholes near the barn's top. It also served

as a place to store the family's carriage.

In 2004, the Historical Society reached an agreement with the new owners of the former Sanders & McDermott office building (Taylor/Leavitt house on Lafayette Road) to save the barn from demolition. It was then deconstructed and transported to its current site on the grounds of the Tuck Museum grounds where it was rebuilt between 2005 and 2008.



Photo courtesy of Ryan Cutting

Architectural Features

The Leavitt barn exhibits classic 19th Century "Yankee" style architecture, with a gable front design and drive-through alley going through the center. There are minimal roof overhangs at the

eaves and gable ends. Transom windows sit over large barn doors at both ends. Structural beams were chopped off by previous owners to make room for a boat before it was given to the



Historic photo of house with barn back, courtesy of the Hampton Historical Society

Continued on the next page

Historical Society. New beams have since replaced them. The barn is constructed with English tie joints, gunstock posts, common rafters, major purlins, and cross ties. The siding is made of vertical pine boards covered by clapboards.

The barn was made using the scribe-rule method, meaning the pieces were cut to fit exactly and were not interchangeable, using mortise and tenon construction. The wind braces are made of oak, but everything else is pine. The barn was built with hewn timbers that were finished at a sawmill,

a common method of processing lumber at that time.

The barn is post and beam with horizontal purlins and roof boards running vertically to the barn's peak. There are four bents in this barn. Bents are a cross-section of posts, beams, and rafters. The foundation was made originally from loose field stones. The haylofts would have run down the left and right sides of the barn. Towards the peak of the barn end sits a three-over-three double sash window.



*Interior photo courtesy of
Ryan Cutting*

What You Can Do Here Now

There are several museums and a gift shop on the Hampton Historical Society grounds. Historical exhibits are on display in the Tuck Museum, Fire Museum, and Barn buildings. The Fire Museum has a collection of historic firefighting gear, and exhibits in the Leavitt barn tell the story of Hampton's early

industries. Visitors can also check out two other historic buildings, the Schoolhouse and Beach House. The Hampton Historical Society's archives can be viewed by appointment. Documents in the archive include town genealogies, local annual reports, old photographs, and town histories,

The Hampton Historical Society occasionally hosts special events which are listed on the Society's website. The Tuck Museum and its buildings are open to visitors on Wednesdays, Fridays and Saturdays from 1:00 pm - 4:00 pm from April through November.

For Further Reading

The Leavitt House Barn, <http://hamptonhistoricalsociety.org/barn/htm>, accessed August 2, 2023.

Field Guide to New England Barns and Farm Buildings, by Thomas Durant Visser (University Press of New England, 1997).

Barns: Their History, Preservation, and Restoration, by Charles Klamkin (Bonanza Books, 1979).

Big House, Little House, Back House, Barn: The Connected Farm Buildings of New England, by Thomas C. Hubka (University Press of New England, 1984).

An Age of Barns, by Eric Sloane (Funk and Wagnalls, 1967).

Hampton Historical Society Barn, Peg Locations and Barn Assembly and Photos, Hampton Historical Society unpublished binder.

The Barn Before Disassembly, <http://hamptonhistoricalsociety.org/bnbefore/index.htm>, accessed August 2, 2023.