



Incorporated: 1771

Franklin County

The Town of Whately was named for a friend of Governor Hutchinson, Thomas Whately. Established in 1771, the town's economy was completely agricultural but an abundance of water power allowed the development of industries beginning with the building of grist and saw mills. These industries expanded and textiles became one of the products of the town. Woolen mills functioned side-by-side with chair and coffin factories, while the discovery of bog iron ore led to the development of iron works. In the meanwhile, tobacco became a cash crop and leaf drying barns built in the 19th and early 20th century to prepare the product for cigar and cigarette making, still dot the countryside. Clay found in Whately was also used to manufacture pottery. The modern history of the town has shown a shift in its economy toward recreational uses with agriculture, especially the production of maple sugar products, as one of the major remaining businesses. Servicing campers is a seasonal business for townspeople, there are bed and breakfast operators and there is potential for developing winter vacation homes close to area ski areas. Whately is the home of the Smith College Observatory, which is located at the summit of Poplar Hill. The observatory is used by the students of the Five College Program which involves distinguished colleges and universities in the western part of the state. Presently, Whately has become the home of a number of artists and crafts men who value its beauty and small town character. The town is proud of its local history exhibits at the S. White Dickinson Library and its monthly displays of the artworks and crafts of local artists. (Narrative based on information provided by the Massachusetts Historical Commission)

Population: 1573 (2000 census)

Government: Selectmen

School Superintendent: 665-1155

Public Schools: Whately Elementary K-6 & Frontier Regional High School 7-12

Shopping: local convenience stores, restaurants; 15 minutes to Northampton; 15 minutes to Green-field; minutes to World Famous "Yankee Candle"

Recreational Facilities: Tri-Town Beach; Whately Historical Museum

Child Care Providers: 413-582-4218

Child Care Focus

56 Vernon Street

Northampton, MA 01060

--provides a list of licensed childcare facilities

Total Area: 20.66 square miles +/-

Tax Rate: \$14.49 (2009)

Colleges and Universities: none

Private Schools: none

Libraries: S. White Dickinson Library 665-2170

Utilities: Cable: AT&T Broadband 888-633-4266

Electric: Western Mass Electric Co. 800-286-2000

Gas: Berkshire Gas Company 586-3677

Telephone: Verizon 800-870-9999

For More Information:

Town hall: 665-0054

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