

76 Concord Town Hall

Town of Concord, Essex County, Vermont



At the heart of every New England town sits the community's meeting house, town hall or church. To each community these gathering places hold their memories, heritage and milestones. The Concord Town Hall is one such building, located on Main Street in Concord, Vermont.

Construction of the Concord Town Hall began in 1905, following a fire that destroyed the original Town House in 1859, along with the adjacent Brand Block, the Adams and Bowen Houses, and a barn.

Less than a year after the fire, an indenture was signed by the Trustees of Concordia Lodge of Odd Fellows No. 43 and a Town of Concord representative establishing that the cost of building and maintaining the second floor of the Town Hall would be the responsibility of the Trustees of Concordia Lodge of Odd Fellows. The remaining cost, which included the clock tower, would be paid by the Town of Concord. In the end, the original cost to build the Concord Town Hall was \$3,554.03, with \$2,838.53 the responsibility of the Town, and \$715.50 funded by the Trustees of Concordia Lodge of Odd Fellows. Although the Town Hall appears to be only two stories, it is actually a four story building, with floors built below the "street" level.

Once construction was completed in late January 1906, the first floor was used for social and civic gatherings, including graduations, dances, plays, receptions, basketball games, card parties and Community Christmas tree events. The second floor held meetings for several orders including the Odd Fellows, Red Clover Rebekah Lodge No. 37, Woodbury Post G.A.R., Woodbury Women's Relief Corps. No. 5, Camp No. 10207 Modern Woodmen of America, Concord Grange No. 408 and in recent years, the Concord Boy Scout Troop No. 13. While some meetings and elections still take place at the Concord Town Hall, the new town office has become the primary location for civic meetings.

The second floor of the Concord Town Hall is now home to the Concord Historical Society, established in 1978 by Bernice Payeur and Leah Moyse. The Historical Society's large collection of items are on display, including tools, articles of clothing, furniture, books, and a variety of church, school, business and household pieces, as well as documents, papers, pictures, and family histories.

Each room or area maintained by the Historical Society has a distinctive theme from a country kitchen, to a bedroom, a doctor's office, a school room, a post office and a telephone operator's station. Special rooms are also set up which center on themes such as, local business memorabilia, local Fire Department items, an area honoring Concord veterans in armed conflict over the last 200 years, and an area displaying photos of former students of the Concord High School. The museum is open to the public during their annual Open House held on the last full weekend in September, and by appointment for groups and tours.

The Concord Town Hall is listed as a Vermont Historic Site.

Sources:

Concord Historical Society Information. Direct communication with Secretary of Concord Historical Society, Nancy Rivers. 4 May 2013.

Moyse, Leah C. & the Concord Bicentennial Committee. Town of Concord, Vermont, 1781-1976: Then & Now. The Committee. 1976.

"Town Hall." Utilities & Facilities. Town of Concord, Town Plan. Adopted September 17, 2009.

http://www.concordvt.us/Concord_Town_Plan.final.pdf