

Town Hall Report

The year 2024 was a particularly busy year for the Plainfield Village Town Hall Committee. Through a combination of grants, donations, and town-appropriated funds, the Committee successfully completed the following key projects:

- **Stone Foundation Repair and Stabilization:** The stone foundation on the north and south sides of the Town Hall was repaired, repointed, and stabilized. A rubber membrane was installed next to the foundation, followed by a layer of hard pack that drains water away from the building. Stonework was completed by Hideaway Restoration, and grading on the north and south sides was handled by MacLeay Construction. This work was funded by a Land & Community Heritage Investment Program (LCHIP) grant with matching funds from the Town Hall Fund.
- **Chimney Repairs and Furnace Maintenance:** A new chimney liner was installed, and the brick chimney repointed and repaired. A new chimney cap was added and the furnace cleaned and recalibrated. This work was completed by Tom Cady Chimney Sweeps and funded by an LCHIP grant with matching funds from the Town Hall Fund.
- **Stage Curtain Replacement:** The proscenium stage curtain, side drape, and teaser curtain were replaced with new fire-retardant drapes. An easy-close track system was installed. This project was funded by a grant from the NH Council for the Arts (Moose Plate grant).
- **Electrical Upgrades:** The electrical panel was replaced with one featuring arc-fault protection, and some wiring was updated. Stage circuit boards were replaced, additional outlets were installed, and work lights were added for use during rehearsals (to avoid using stage lighting). A new rack system for dimmer switches was added. Upgrades were funded by a Moose Plate grant.
- **Stage Set Repositioning:** The Stage Set was repositioned to match the likeness of a 1917 photograph from the reference *The Little Theatre in the United States*. This work was funded by the Maxfield Parrish Stage Set Fund of the Plainfield Historical Society.
- **Dressing Room Roof Replacement:** The 25+ year-old shingled roof of the dressing room was replaced. The Town Hall Repair Fund funded this project.

Other repairs done included rekeying the front door, locating and pumping the septic tank after a backup, designating handicapped parking, installing lights on the signboard, removing brush and ferns around the building,

The Committee has been actively monitoring the Town Hall's humidity levels. Consultant Rick Kerschner, preservation director emeritus of Shelburne Museum, advises that humidity levels over 60% will add to the Stage Set's mold and long term destroy it. Williamstown Art Conservation Laboratory, who performed remedial Stage Set restoration in the mid 1990's and again in 2021, has provided a current estimate for mold remediation and further restoration of \$40,000. But first, the mold-causing high humidity must be resolved. Encapsulation of the dirt basement, including the installation of a dehumidifier and sump pump, has been estimated at between \$20,000 and \$32,000 to reduce the humidity levels.

In 2024, the Plainfield Village Town Hall Committee sponsored with the following:

- Presentation by Nick Artim, internationally recognized fire detection and prevention authority
- Sugar River Region Pop Up Reception
- Flannel Friday concert with Brooks Hubbard funded by the Tasker Bridge Fund
- St. Gaudens National Park Ranger Education
- New Hampshire Preservation Alliance's 2024 Upper Valley Visit
- Maxfield Parrish Show and Sale
- 4th of July Art Show and Sale

Assisted with the following:

- 4th of July Celebration with retired Supreme Court Justice Stephen Breyer
- Two Plainfield Historical Society Programs
- Library Programs
- Plainfield School Auction Night to fund 8th Grade trip.
- Plainfield School's spectacular and sold-out productions of Twelfth Night
- Three out-of-town play groups
- One dance recital
- Several private events, celebrations, and memorials

Commitment to Preservation

The Committee remains deeply committed to the preservation and restoration of the Plainfield Village Town Hall. We are grateful for the incredible interest and support that Plainfield's hidden treasure, the one-of-a-kind Maxfield Parrish Stage Set and historic Town Hall continues to receive.

A special thanks goes to the team at the New Hampshire Preservation Alliance (NHPA), whose expertise guided the approval of our **Seven to Save** nomination in New Hampshire. NHPA has also awarded us a grant for a Building Assessment, which will serve as a roadmap for future repairs and budgeting, capital fundraising efforts, grant applications, and promotional activities.

We also extend our gratitude to the New Hampshire Council on the Arts for their generous support through three rounds of Moose Plate grants, as well as to the New Hampshire Land and Community Heritage Investment Program for their investment in the Town Hall. Additionally, we appreciate the support of the Tasker Bridge Fund, which has sponsored projects such as the speaker system and event sponsorships, and Claremont Savings Bank for their donation toward the stage curtain.

Gratitude goes to all the members of the Plainfield Village Town Hall Committee. Their unwavering dedication and enthusiasm have been the driving forces behind the success of our preservation efforts this year. Each member contributed their unique skills, time, and energy, often going above and beyond. Their commitment to the project has been truly inspiring and instrumental in preserving our beloved Town Hall for future generations. We specifically recognize and thank Clint Swift, who due to moving out-of-town, resigned as a voting member of the Committee, but will stay on as one of the Committee's trusted advisors.

Finally, we are most grateful to the Plainfield community for their unwavering support—whether through donations, volunteering time, offering words of encouragement, attending events, renting the venue, or purchasing items from the Parrish collection.

We are always looking for volunteers who have specific skills to assist with this project. We need your expertise and suggestions for things such as publicity and promotion, grant writing, historic presentations to groups, video production, preservation, art conservation, theater, sound and lighting within our parameters, and basic building maintenance.

We invite you to come to visit the Town Hall and enjoy the captivating 1916 lighting of the Parrish Stage Set as they transform the stage from the memorable Parrish blue winter sunsets to the soft crimson red skies in the mornings. It reminds us of our home—Plainfield!

Donations are accepted to match incoming grants and to continue the work. Tax deductible donations to the extent allowed by law may be made to the Plainfield Historical Society Stage Set Fund, PO Box 107, Plainfield, NH 03781.

Thank you to everyone who has contributed to the ongoing preservation of this local treasure!

Volunteer Hours	1550 hrs.
Consultants donated Hours	320 hrs.
Grants Received to date	\$86,896
Donations and Fundraising Income	\$5039
In-kind Donations (poster, printing, merchandise, mileage, equipment)	\$5,300
Anonymous Donation (to educate and promote the historical and artistic significance of the Plainfield Town Hall and the Maxfield Parrish Stage to Plainfield residents and the public at large)	\$12,000

- Beverly Widger, Chair
- Shawn Dixon
- Bruce Elder
- Rob Gattie
- George Grabe (Partial Year)
- David Grobe
- Diane MacDonald
- Nancy Norwalk
- Ralph Patalano
- Diane Rogers
- Erika Smith
- Hillary Sundell
- Clint Swift (Partial Year)