Temple Town Hall
~ 1842 ~
Temple, NH
**Temple Town Hall**

**History:**
Built in 1842, Temple Town Hall was originally constructed as a Union meeting house by local Universalists, predominantly for their use. Its architecture is emblematic of the provincial Greek revival style so popular in the early 19th century and gives the center of Temple Village its distinctive appearance. The structure’s facade has been altered little throughout the years and exhibits features characteristic to this type of church built during the period from about 1820 to 1850 in New Hampshire. The interior retains its original spatial plan, including the large auditorium and gallery above the entry area.

Union Hall, as it was originally named, was little used during the 1850s - 1860s. In 1875 the remaining members of the Union Society sold the building to Thomas Dugan, a charter member of Miller Grange, for $292.00. In turn, Thomas Dugan sold the building to a stock company formed by grange members. The Grange used the hall for their own gatherings, eventually renting it to the town for their meetings. The Miller Grange flourished in the years immediately following its founding, and appears to have carried out the most significant change to the original structure, i.e. the addition of a rear extension within the main hall, which provided a stage and antechambers for dramatic presentations. Following a decline in membership during the 1880s, the Miller Grange sold Union Hall to the Town of Temple for $1,000 in 1889, to be used as its Town Hall.

The Temple Town Hall was utilized for municipal office space and to hold its Town Meetings until about 1990, when a new Municipal Building was constructed at 423 Route 45. Since then, it has been used primarily to host town forums and a variety of social functions, continuing its long history of serving as the heartbeat of this rural community.

**Rehabilitation Time frame & Cost:**
In 2003, a small but tenacious group formed the Friends of Temple Town Hall, their mission being to restore the Town Hall. The important role that the Town Hall plays in the life of the village was clearly recognized by the townspeople, as demonstrated by their enthusiastic response to the rehabilitation project. With the assistance of grants from HUD, LCHIP, and the NH Conservation License Plate Program, Town funds, proceeds from numerous fundraising events, and the generous donations from many individuals and Town organizations, $720,000 were raised over the course of the next six years. The Temple Town Hall rehabilitation was completed in June 2009.

**Preserving History/Improving Function:**
Construction of the Town Hall Annex, Phase I of the project, was completed in 2007. It houses all the new mechanics for the entire facility, a new kitchen, meeting rooms, and two new restrooms.

Following completion of the Annex, restoration of the historic main hall was painstakingly undertaken. An example of a historically significant feature uncovered and restored during the process is the building’s original wide plank wainscoting, now visible in the main entry and the newly installed handicap-accessible restroom. The original gallery above the main hall, enclosed by partitions during the mid-20th century, was also re-opened and restored. Accessed by its original staircase, the gallery now once again provides additional seating. The hall’s original windows, with their original glass panes, were carefully removed and restored, and the stage facilities were updated to expand their functionality.
Temple's Perspective:
Understanding the crucial role that New England town halls and meeting houses play in the preservation and ongoing revitalization of sustainable small-town communities today, the people of Temple are proud to have preserved their own Town Hall. In joining its lengthy list of preceding stewards, they are pleased to have also contributed to ensuring the Temple Town Hall remains historically preserved and vibrant for future generations.

Temple Town Hall
NH Register of Historic Places: April 30, 2007
National Register of Historic Places: May 02, 2007
Historic Temple Town Hall
~ Built 1842 ~
~ Restoration/Rehabilitation Completed 2009 ~
&
Newer Rear Annex
~ Construction Completed 2007 ~
Front Entrance Vestibule
Doors to Street (Right), to ADA Restroom (Ahead), to Main Hall (Left)

ADA Restroom
Direct Access from Vestibule

Main Hall: Viewed from Vestibule
Doors: To Annex (Left), Stage access (Right), Side Entry/Exit Door to Parking Area (Far Right)

Main Hall & Balcony: Viewed from Stage
Doors: To Balcony (Left), Vestibule & Front Entrance/Exit (Center) Storage Closet (Right)