

Restoration Project

In May of 2004 the Old Allenstown Meeting House Steering Committee was established under the Town of Allenstown to assist with the restoration project. In 2006, sill repairs were done and a new roof installed. In 2007 new windows were installed, 15 new shutters made, snow fence installed. In 2008 we began opening to visitors, painted the entire building, and installed conduits for power and phone. In 2009 section of floor was replaced and electric power was brought to building. Interior wiring was completed. Phone line installed for future alarm. Open to visitors during summer. In 2010 clapboards were replaced and new paint. Open to visitors. Next phase is to repair plaster and replicate pews in Northwest corner destroyed during the 1985 fire.

Building Usage

Once restored to its former glory the Allenstown Meeting House will become a contributing educational and public resource in close proximity to all other historic and cultural facilities in the area. The building will be used as a teaching tool in a variety of capacities and for public gatherings or meetings.

We Need Your Help!

Your participation and stewardship is necessary to preserve and restore the Old Allenstown Meeting House! We are inviting you to be part of this very exciting and rewarding project! We need donations, services and volunteers to make this happen!

Please forward your tax exempt contribution to:

Allenstown Historical Society- OAMH Friends
P.O. Box 94, Allenstown, NH 03275

For additional information contact:

Armand Verville , President
Allenstown Historical Society
(603) 485-4437

Carol A. Martel, Chairman
Old Allenstown Meeting House
Steering Committee
(603)485-8170

THE OLD ALLENSTOWN MEETING HOUSE



The Old Allenstown Meeting House is listed on the *State and National Register of Historic Places*. The structure is located on Deerfield Road, in Allenstown, N.H., across from The Civilian Conservation Corp Camp. State and National Register of Historic Districts.

“From a historical and cultural standpoint the Allenstown Meeting House is of intrinsic value to Allenstown and the State of New Hampshire. It is a place where all elements of history converge, community, state, federal and natural history”

Allenstown Meeting House History

The church of Christ was established in Allenstown, New Hampshire in July of 1807. Histories of this sect trace the origins to Portsmouth in 1803. In 1807, Elder Hall Burgin donated the land for the building of the Allenstown Meeting House. Through a joint effort between church members and Allenstown residents money was raised to build the meeting house by selling box pews and issuing deeds to each owner. Preparation for the building of the structure began in 1815 and the building was completed in 1821. The Allenstown meeting house functioned in two capacities. It was used by the town for meetings and elections and by the church for religious services. From 1830 until 1886 the annual Strafford Christian Conference of Christian Churches was held at the meeting house and extended to the Burgin/Ela Grove located on the west side of Catamount Pond. At times as many as four thousand people attend this event.

By 1876, the Industrial Revolution had arrived. Many textile mills were built in the western portion of Allenstown and Pembroke (Suncook area).

The majority of Allenstown residents lived in close proximity to these mills. The location of the Allenstown meeting house was no longer considered convenient for meetings or voting purposes. In November of 1876, it was voted to discontinue community use of the old meeting house. In 1908 Article 10 transferred possession of the meeting house to the Buntin Chapter Daughters of the American Revolution. The building was restored under their supervision and a rededication was held August 22, 1909. In 1910 the Buntin Chapter Daughters of the American Revolution obtained title to the meeting house burial ground across the road. In 1991 the Buntin Chapter D.A.R. voted to offer the property to the State of New Hampshire. The property was accepted by the Governor and Council in 1991. The New Hampshire Division of Parks administered the property until the recent transfer of owner to Allenstown. This was deemed by the State of New Hampshire to be in the best interest of the property. On March 9, 2004 the Allenstown Meeting House ownership was transferred to the Town of Allenstown.



THE DAMAGE AFTER THE JULY 1985 FIRE.

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE

The Allenstown Meeting House is constructed with a heavy frame of hewn pine. The building is highly unusual for its one-story design. Only a few one-story, meeting houses had been built in New Hampshire by 1815. Most of these constructed by church organizations for their own use; they were not shared with town government, as in Allenstown. The structure is also unusual for its sloping floors toward the center of the building similar to early schoolhouses, which sometimes had similar floors. Other significant features include the simple interior detail of the structure and the fact that the original pew holder's names have been preserved.