

## Vernon Historical Society Capital Campaign

In 1966, Vernon citizens, determined to preserve the historical character of their northcentral Connecticut town as it underwent a rapid increase in the size of its population and vast changes to its economic base, established the Vernon Historical Society. The Society and its museum are housed in the Vernon Grange Hall, built in 1927 and used primarily by the Grange until 1986 when the Vernon Historical Society took ownership. The Society uses the lower level of the Grange building for the museum, collection storage and exhibit space. The upstairs meeting hall hosts lectures and programs as well as Grange meetings and is the location of various fund raisers such as the Society's Holiday Craft Fair and Annual Book Sale.

The Society was entrusted with the responsibility of maintaining this historic building and the museum artifacts that paint a picture of Vernon's past as a center of agricultural productivity and a manufacturing hub of vibrant mills producing rich woolen fabrics. The infrastructure of this aging Grange building is deteriorating. The Vernon Historical Society is concerned that this deterioration will greatly impact the internal environment of the building making it uncomfortable for membership gatherings, lectures and programs and rendering it unsuitable for the storage and display of important historic artifacts. To that effect, we have included four major projects in our Capital Improvement Plan. They are outlined in the following paragraphs.

- **HVAC System** – Using financial resources garnered from past fund-raising efforts, the Society replaced one of two aging heating and air conditioning (HVAC) systems in 2018. The remaining HVAC system for the upper level meeting and activity hall was installed in 1996 and is nearing the end of its useful life. The Society wants to install a new energy efficient HVAC system within the next two or three years before the older one breaks down.
- **Window Restoration** – The windows on both floors are the original windows. They are not sealed allowing the influx of outside air and moisture. The Society intends to restore or replace these original windows in a historically appropriate manner while improving their energy efficiency. After restoration, the Society will install new interior storm windows to achieve this energy efficiency. This work will be performed within three to five years.
- **Restoration of the Hardwood Floor in the upper Level Meeting Hall** – The floor in the upper level meeting hall is the original Maple floor. The artistic placement of the original floor boards in a unique geometric pattern make this floor one that must be replicated. After 90+ years of enthusiastic use for so many events, with several refinishing efforts, the floor has worn beyond refinishing. The Society wants to replace the meeting hall floor within five to ten years.
- **Exterior Restoration of the Grange Hall** – In an effort to limit the cost of exterior maintenance, the Grange installed aluminum siding prior to 1970. The Society has painted this aging aluminum siding twice during its thirty-two year stewardship. Removing this oversiding and restoring the original wood clapboards enhance the historic character of the building. This work will be performed within five to ten years.

The Vernon Historical Society is determined to care for Vernon's Grange Hall, entrusted to us so that we can honor and preserve our historical heritage for current and future generations.