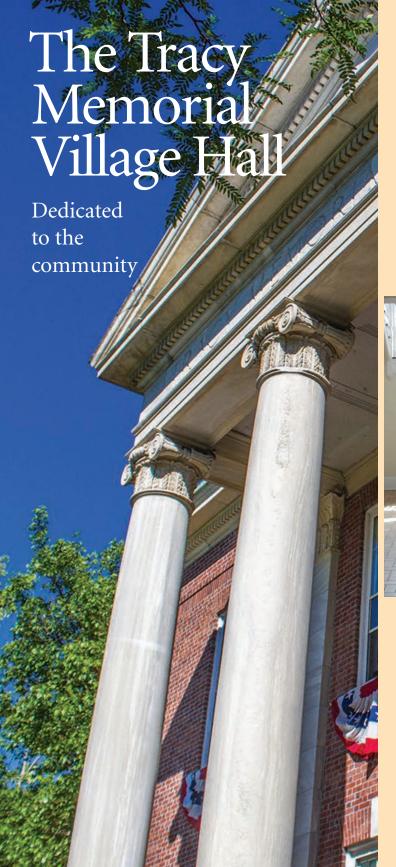


The Friends of the Tracy is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit whose mission is to enhance and preserve the architectural, historical and cultural heritage of the Village of Chatham. Your tax-deductible donation will help us repair and update the Tracy Memorial, which is listed on both the NYS and National Registers of Historic Places.

For further information, or to make a donation, visit www.FriendsoftheTracy.com, or write us at Friends of the Tracy, PO Box 225, Chatham, NY 12037.

This brochure was made possible through the generosity of caring people and the Stewart's Shops Holiday Match Program.













storage room accessed by a door manufactured by the Mosler Safe Company of Ohio. The basement today is also home to the Chatham Food Pantry, as well as a heating plant and additional space for storing Village records.

Architectural details

As you walk through this beautiful, historic building, take note of the many original features that have been carefully preserved over the years. These include the mahogany doors, brass hardware, lighting fixtures, the bronze tablet in the entrance hall, and the aforementioned furniture, as well as a handsome Palladian window on the second floor landing, which provides natural light from the northeast.

 \mathbf{F} ollowing the 1910 death of esteemed Chatham resident Albert E. Tracy, his wife and mother commissioned architect Horace W. Peaslee to design a stately building in Mr. Tracy's honor, to be used by the Village of Chatham as a home for both municipal offices and the community's volunteer firemen. The family also set up a trust in perpetuity for the building's maintenance, and established a Board of Trustees to oversee its upkeep.

The Colonial Revival brick-faced building was constructed in 1912-13 by the Torrington Building Company, which deemed it "the finest building of its kind in the state." It was dedicated on May 23, 1913 during a ceremony at which attorney John C. Dardess represented the Tracy family, with Mayor William B. Daley accepting the generous gift on behalf of the community. "May it serve to foster in all of us a stronger public sentiment, stimulating us to do the best that is in us for others good, to make this village in which we live a pleasanter place to live and the people in it happier," Mr. Dardess stated in his remarks.

The entrance

The Tracy Memorial is entered up a flight of polished pink granite steps that lead to a portico supported by four monumental, grey marble Ionic pillars. Inside is a spacious central lobby around which the first floor meeting rooms and Village offices (including the police station) are arrayed.

An imposing central staircase leads to the second floor,

The fountain

In the spirit of community inspired by the Tracy Memorial, the Chatham Women's Improvement League purchased a drinking fountain for horses in 1914 and had it installed in Central Square. Manufactured by the H.F. Jenks Company, the "Anti Germ Individual Cup Fountain" was designed as an aid to prevent the spread of disease among the animals and was praised in the Hudson Register newspaper, which wrote: "(It) will be a great improvement on the portion of an old steam boiler which has done duty as a watering tub for a number of years."







The firehouse

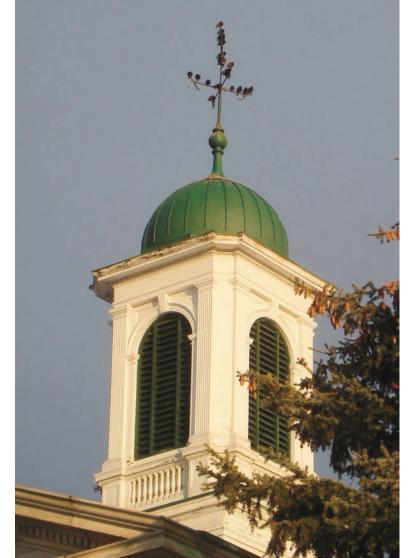
In 1925, Village of Chatham voters approved (on the fourth try) the expenditure to purchase land and construct a firehouse behind the Tracy, whose heating plant would provide heat to the new building via underground pipes. The total cost of the new fire station – including both siren and equipment – was \$14,000. Today, this building looks much the same as it did in 1925, though the original doors have been replaced with overhead ones, and the Village's police department now uses the structure for storage.

Tracy facts

Albert E. Tracy was born in Chatham and attended local schools. When Bright's Disease and its attending complications prevented him from attending college, he instead devoted himself to his family and farm on the Kline Kill Road, where he raised horses. His obituary in the Columbia Republican paper, read in part: "Albert E. Tracy died...in the 44th year of his life (which), especially for the last eight or 10 years, had been one of ease, with his trotting horses and automobiles. He lived on one of the best farms in Columbia County, about two miles from Chatham, and in the town of Kinderhook, and bred trotters. He bought the first automobile to be kept in that part of the county. Mr. Tracy was the son of the late Albert S. Tracy, from whom he inherited mines in Missouri. The son realized considerable money from the sale of these."

Horace Peaslee, the architect who designed the Tracy Memorial Village Hall, was born in Malden Bridge in 1884. He was educated at Chatham High School, Cooper Union, and the Cornell University School of Architecture, where he studied with landscape architect George Burnap, and developed a particular interest in landscape design. Peaslee's commission to design the Tracy Memorial marked the launching of his private practice in Washington, DC, where he had lived since 1911. He initially worked as an assistant to Burnap in Washington and ultimately replaced him as Primary Architect at the Office of Public Buildings and Grounds. During his career, Horace Peaslee served as Primary Architect for Meridian Hill Park from 1917-35, and oversaw federal government construction projects in the nation's capital, including creation of the National Mall.





Architectural description

In 1913, a brief photographic essay in *The American Architect* described the Tracy Memorial thusly: "This building is of hollow tile construction, faced with repressed Colonial brick of small size showing a considerable variation in color with dark reds predominating. Marble is from Vermont, columns monolithic, base stone is granite. Interior trim is poplar, painted white, with doors of birch stained in imitation of mahogany. Stair treads and rail of cherry. The large assembly hall has been featured in the door and window trim, paneled wainscoting, plaster cornice and coved ceiling. A special feature of the work is the landscape development by Mr. Burnap which determined the location of the building, and in the planting the future effect, rather than the immediate present, is considered. The building is the first prominent feature belonging to a proposed village center at present projected."

During the 1913 acceptance ceremony of the Tracy Memorial from Mr. Tracy's wife and mother, then-Mayor William B. Daley said, "May it stand from generation to generation to fulfill the purpose of its erection, and may it be an inspiration to the proud and the humble, the rich and the poor, and to those who stand ever ready to devote their time and attention."

At the same ceremony, Senator Sanford W. Smith expressed the thanks of the volunteer firemen of Ocean 1, of which he was a member, saying: "He best serves God and all mankind who serves his fellow men." Senator Smith also noted that the generous gift would provide a suitable home for Village government, the firemen, and for the men of the Grand Army of the Republic.

