

Report from the Town Office for 2013

There have been big changes going on inside the Town Hall. As promised in last year's Town report, the downstairs has been re-arranged. For a number of years, residents and the Selectboard have been talking about how to solve space, heat and efficiency issues in the Town Hall. Eventually the cheapest option was chosen— putting the office area on the larger north side of the building and the meeting and voting room on the south side. There are many advantages to this arrangement and almost no minuses. There is room for a lister desk and a more user-friendly area for records research. The excess heat on the north side is no longer wasted. Now we keep the thermostat at 65° instead of 72+°. Even at 72° Michele and I used to wear an extra layer and turn on a foot warmer. Also, the north side is cooler in the summer, so that will save on use of the air conditioner.

Now the whole downstairs is being used. People enter the same door as usual, and step into a large pleasant room with many places to sit and lots of stuff to look at. Tea and water are available; maybe coffee if people want it. This room is where the Selectboard now meets and where we will vote. There is a new door and a big window opening into the office area. The Isle La Motte black marble from the old counter has been re-installed in the window, and is now low enough to write on comfortably. Our shorter residents no longer have to stand on tip-toe.

The closet on the south side has been removed and a new closet created under the stairs, which is larger and more accessible. Removing the old closet became quite a project because of the tangle of hidden, sub-standard electrical wiring that had morphed over the years. Also the ceiling in that room is two different heights, with the closet in the middle. Throughout the project we uncovered unexpected challenges and curious constructions. Does anyone in town have old pictures of the Town Hall? An old photo might explain some of the things we found.

A lot of people have made the transformation happen. Most of the work has been done by ILM resident and Town Handyman Frank Sesera who is very handy indeed, and has most of the tools needed to do the job. DC Energy and K. Houghlin Electric took care of the wiring. Overhead door made the pull-down door over the counter. Art Larvey crafted some brackets to help support the marble counter top. A significant number of material donations helped to keep down the cost. Frank contributed cove molding and vinyl tile. St. Anne's Shrine contributed bead board for the entryway. The folks at Lakehurst accepted the construction debris in their dumpster, Selby Turner had a special tool that Frank needed, and Pete Murray made and installed a metal extension for the heating ductwork. Moving the four heavy safes took a lot of volunteer hands: Rusty and Debby Spaulding, Jan Spaulding, Josh Berg, Bill Howland, Selby Turner, and even three people from Sherman Network Solutions who were there to move the computers. Many thanks to everyone who contributed.

We hope everyone who hasn't come to the Town Hall recently will stop in to see the changes. Also we have all the usual reasons to come- dog licenses, tax bills for income tax returns, copies of deeds and vital records, notary services, posted minutes, The Islander, etc. Of course the voters will be coming through for voting on March 4, but the room will be set up for voting and won't have the full impact of the everyday arrangement of furniture. One way or another we hope to see many of you soon.

Betsy Howland, Town Clerk and Treasurer