



WEYMOUTH HISTORICAL COMMISSION

WEYMOUTH, MASSACHUSETTS

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE WEYMOUTH TOWN HALLS

by David B. Wight, Chairman

Weymouth Historical Commission

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The First Weymouth Town Hall, better known as the Town House, was built in 1852 near the corner of Middle and Washington Streets, the geographical center of the Town of Weymouth.

In 1906 this building was moved to the site of the present Police Station and remodeled. This move was made so that it would be closer to the center of the population of the Town at that time. This building was used mainly for meetings as the Town Offices were located on the second floor of the Savings Bank in East Weymouth.

On the evening of May 27, 1914, a destructive conflagration occurred in East Weymouth, the fire starting in the building of the Art Leather Company and extending to the Town Hall and Bicknell's garage, all of which were burned to the ground.

Town Meetings after that time were held either in the Fogg Opera House in South Weymouth or the Odd Fellows Opera House in East Weymouth until the early 1920's when they were held in the High School Auditorium on the site of the present East Junior High School.

In 1919 a committee was appointed to prepare plans for a Town House to be in the nature of a memorial building to commemorate the men from Weymouth who have served in the several wars in which this country has been engaged. Plans were presented to the Annual Town Meeting in 1920 and voted to be deferred to the Annual Town Meeting of 1921. No action was taken on these plans until a new committee was appointed in 1926. This Committee, chaired by Colonel Gilbert Bauer, presented plans for a new Town Office Building which was not to include a large meeting hall as Weymouth had adopted a limited town meeting and was already better provided with public auditoriums than any other town in the commonwealth. This committee studied 15 sites before settling for the present one.

On Memorial Day, May 30, 1928, 60 years ago today, the cornerstone was laid to this magnificent edifice built as an exact replica, though larger in scale, to the Historic Old State House in Boston. Now, 60 years later, we have completed an extensive renovation program which should fulfill the needs for this Town for many future generations.

It is interesting to note that this Town Hall was built between May 30, 1928 and February 22, 1929, when it was formally dedicated, for a total construction period of nine months at a total cost to the Town of Weymouth of \$156,772.30.