

## LOOKING BACK

by Hague Historical Society Board Members  
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### HAGUE'S LONG QUEST FOR A PROPER MUSEUM

The idea of having a town museum with adequate space to display our town's rich history — through permanent as well as temporary exhibits — has long been on the minds of townspeople and our town government. This month, we take a look back at reports in *The Hague Chronicle* from 50 years ago, when the idea for a town museum was first being discussed.

#### *The Hague Chronicle*, February 1975

##### SITE FOR TOWN LIBRARY OFFERED

Irving Fitzgerald, a life-long resident, has presented a letter to the Town Board offering a parcel of ground as a site for a public library. The offer is being made in recognition of the Bicentennial year during which many towns and villages are undertaking various projects.

The parcel of land is located directly across from the Hague Brook, opposite the Hague Post Office and Hague Supermarket, including a necessary right of way across the brook. Conditions attached to the gift are: If the property, for any reason, ceases to be used as a library, title would revert to the donor; plans for the building will be subject to review and approval of the donor; no motor vehicles will be permitted on the premises (a foot bridge would be constructed over the brook); a majority of the townspeople support the project.

It is anticipated the building would also house a museum, etc., to be maintained by the Historical Society.

Both the Town Board and members of the Historical Society are enthusiastic about the proposal and are hopeful that the support of the townspeople can be obtained.

#### *The Hague Chronicle* excerpts - March 1975

##### THE BI-CENTENNIAL

Interest in the Bi-Centennial was stirred by the offer of a plot of ground on which to construct a town library and historical

museum. At its February meeting the Town Board authorized the supervisor to obtain a sketch of a suitable building with some indication as to costs of construction.

A project of this magnitude is beyond the capacity of the Committee. If it is to be pursued, it will have to be taken over by the Town Board. It would be helpful if you made known your feelings to that body.

##### HISTORICAL SOCIETY

About twenty members and guests attended the meeting of the Hague Historical Society February 19.

Mr. DeLarm was present and had with him a rough sketch of a building designed to house both a town library and historical museum on the property offered to the town by Mr. Fitzgerald. The proposed building measures 71' x 32' or approximately 2200 square feet. The architect estimated that it could be built for about \$35 - \$40 a square foot or about \$80,000 - \$90,000. Furnishings, etc. would bring the cost to approximately \$100,000.

Although many inquiries have been made, Mr. DeLarm has been unsuccessful in finding available revenues under any Federal or State grants. If the town were to finance such a project, it could be done through a 20-year bond — issue which would require a payment on principal of \$5,000 annually, plus interest.

##### IN APRIL 1975:

Supervisor DeLarm announced he would appoint a committee consisting of six members of the community to determine whether there is a need for a library.

##### JUNE 1975:

A proposal to construct a library and historical museum was discussed at considerable length at public hearings. If a referendum is lawful, it could be held election day (Nov.).

##### JULY 1975:

In May a report by the Library Committee was read at the Town Board meeting. A substantial majority was in favor of building a library – museum. The Town Board indicated it would give the matter further study.

##### DECEMBER 1975:

The Library – Museum proposal was tabled. There the matter was left. ■

## THE IDEA OF A PROPER TOWN MUSEUM IS STILL ALIVE AND WELL

by the Board of the Hague Historical Society

At its monthly meeting in February of this year (2025), the Hague Historical Society board discussed the fact that today, 50 years after the idea of a proper museum for Hague was first floated, the need has not diminished.

Residents and visitors alike can learn about Hague's rich history through the stories, photos, and artifacts in the collections.

The current museum room in the community center, however, does not have the space needed to display the vast array of historical objects and photos donated by townspeople over the years. It is also not easy for visitors to find, as it is in the midst of the town offices.

The board discussed the idea of building an addition to the community center off the large community room. In addition to providing space for historical exhibits, it could also serve as a library, stocked with the many books that currently fill the lobby.

As the town looks toward its future and updates the Hague Comprehensive Plan, the idea of a museum/library space could be part of that plan. ■