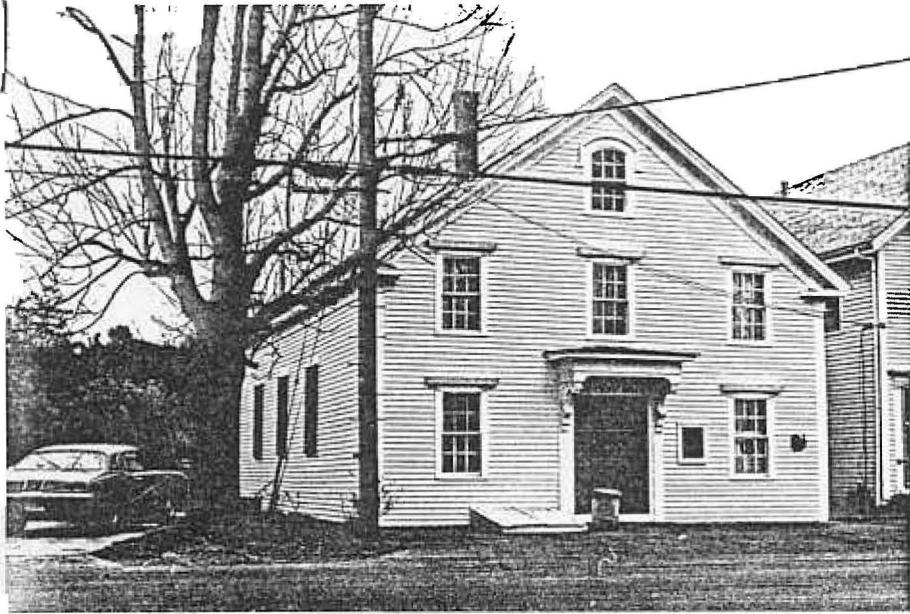


FORM B - BUILDING

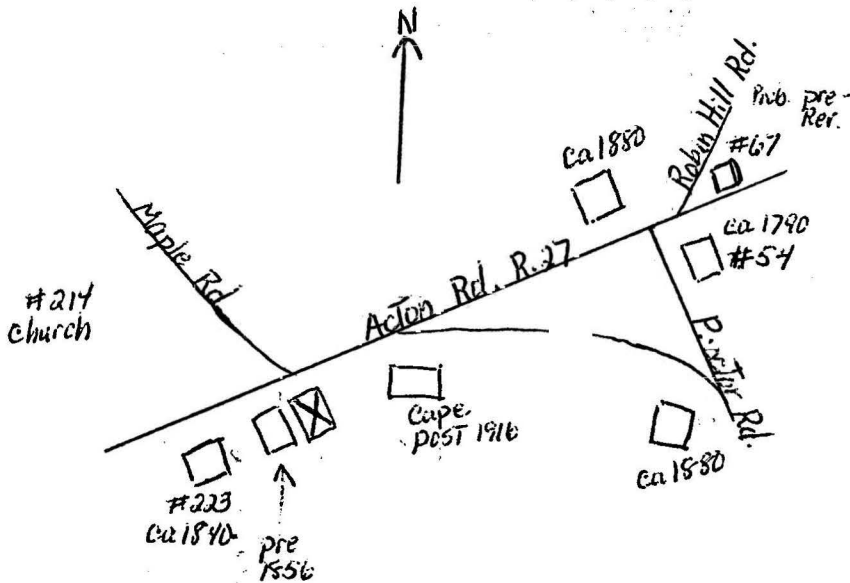
MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
Office of the Secretary, State House, Boston

In Area no. South Chelmsford	Form no. 275
------------------------------------	-----------------



wn Chelmsford
 Address 318 Acton Road
 Name Liberty Hall
 Present use meetings & social events of
Chelmsford V.I.A. & other groups
 Present owner So. Chelmsford V.I.A.
 Description:
 Date 1878
 Source deed, tax lists
 Date

4. Map. Draw sketch of building location in relation to nearest cross streets and other buildings. Indicate north.



Architect _____
 Exterior wall fabric butted clapboard
 Outbuildings (describe) none
 Other features "tear-drip" around front
gable window; relatively wide, plain
cornerboards with simple entablature;
fieldstone foundation at rear

Altered _____ Date _____
 Moved no Date _____

5. Lot size
 One acre or less _____ Over one acre 2.4
 Approximate frontage 34.5 feet
 Approximate distance of building from street
ca 9 feet

6. Recorded by Jane B. Drury
 Organization Chelmsford Hist. Commission
 Date Sept. 26, 1982

DO NOT WRITE IN THIS SPACE
 USGS Quadrant _____
 MHC Photo no. _____

(over)

7. Original owner (if known) South Chelmsford Hall Association

Original use meetings, social events

Subsequent uses (if any) and dates _____

8. Themes (check as many as applicable)

- | | | |
|-----------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------|
| Aboriginal | Conservation | Recreation |
| Agricultural | Education | Religion |
| Architectural | Exploration/
settlement | Science/
Invention |
| The Arts | Industry | Social/
humanitarian |
| Commerce | Military | Transportation |
| Communication | Political | |
| Community development | <u>X</u> | |

9. Historical significance (include explanation of themes checked above)

During the 1870s a group of 39 residents of So. Chelmsford organized themselves under the name of the South Chelmsford Hall Association for the purpose of erecting a hall, its location, size & cost to be agreed upon by a committee. In Jan. 1878 1/8 acre was purchased, and the building was erected that spring

Liberty Hall has been the home of the South Chelmsford Village Improvement Association since its organization. The S.C.V.I.A. is now the oldest active civic association in Chelmsford. Its constitution & by-laws adopted in April 1881 still express its aims - "Whereas the people of South Chelmsford, being an enterprising, ambitious people and desirous of making a mark in life, whereby they may be remembered by the rising generation, they deem it highly proper that they take upon themselves the project of improving, beautifying and ornamenting their village and suburbs." However, the vigilance committee, whose duty "it shall be to look after all improved works, also to investigate and persecute, if necessary, any person or persons found guilty of damaging any work carried on by the society," no longer exists. Although social events were held in the hall, until 1900 the annual business meetings were held in members' homes.

From the very beginning, a "Work Day" was held each spring, when trees were planted and other improvements made. In 1882 fifty-nine trees were purchased for \$22.05. 1900: the common graded & seeded; 1913: a committee was chosen to see that electric lights on Acton Rd. were kept in better condition. 1923: \$25 given toward a fire whistle. Boy & Girl Scouts often used the hall.

The building currently needs quite a bit of work done on it, although it is basically sound. The S.C.V.I.A. plans either to renovate it, or sell and erect a new building on the Heart Pond property.

Maintenance of the common, planting of trees, shrubs & flowers, over-seeing of the beach area on Heart Pond are among 1982 S.C.V.I.A. concerns.

10. Bibliography and/or references (such as local histories, deeds, assessor's records, early maps, etc.)

- M.N.D. Reg. Deeds: B.127,p.349(1878); B.132,p.425(1879); Pl.B. M, plan 77(1916)
- Chelmsford tax records
- S.C. Village Improvement Association records
- Beers 1875 Atlas; 1889 Atlas.

Mrs. Alice Dryden, long-time member & officer of S.C.V.I.A

INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
Office of the Secretary, Boston

Community:

Chelmsford

Form No:

275

Property Name: Liberty Hall

Indicate each item on inventory form which is being continued below

4. Altered After 1940

1. Toilets added: 2nd floor
2. Balcony over big main room removed and ceiling over main room lowered
3. The dirt cellar, which is under the front part of the building only, may have been enlarged when the boiler was installed. However, the bulkhead, which is located just to the left of the entrance to the building, was there prior to 1940. Crawl space is under the large main room.

Staple to Inventory form at bottom

Village group looks to future

By BOB JELTSCH
Sun Staff

CHELMSFORD — South Chelmsford Village Improvement Association was founded in 1881 for purpose of caring for South Chelmsford Common.

"They used to meet once a year on April 19 for clean-up day," says Mrs. Lillian Marchand, a long-time member. The officers "Called up the men to clean the common and the ladies would serve supper," which was cooked upstairs in Liberty Hall, the association's meeting place since 1902.

"There was no water up there back then, so they had to lug it all the way up."

Another thing the SCVIA did in the old days was hold monthly suppers. "Mostly it was the campers (around Baptist Pond) that came," Mrs. Marchand said. "It was something for them because most of them were from the city and this was real town stuff."

They also planted trees up and down Acton Road years ago.

But through the years, the organization has served two interrelated purposes. One, of course, is stated in the name: village improvement. But to a greater extent it is, and has been, a social organization. However, the two often go hand-in-hand.

SCVIA's original purpose was diminished some years after it was founded when the town took over the maintenance of the common.

SINCE THEN, the group has had two major ongoing functions. One is the VIA beach, which the VIA (short for SCVIA) maintains. A full-time life guard is on duty during the summer and 300 membership stickers are sold to anyone who wants one, including people from other towns. In the past, things like water skiing lessons have been given there. Also maintained near the beach is a playground.

SCVIA also contributes to town-wide events such as candidates nights.

The group's major function,



Sun staff photo by Dick Oliver

A mouthful

Kids take as big a mouthful as they can in the pie eating contest at the annual fair of the South Chelmsford Village Improvement Association.

troops and the cub scout pack. The Baptist Church in the village uses the hall for Sunday school classes.

Liberty Hall is also used by the association, naturally, for all its social events and meetings.

puts on an annual fair on the common with food square dancing, and games, which include the usual carnival attractions to raise money, as well as sack races, three-legged races and pie-eating contests.

"Each year has a different motif," said this year's fair chairman,

"Last year, so we had that as a theme." This year's fair, held last Saturday, had, not surprisingly, a Bicentennial theme. Past fairs have had western themes, circus themes — one year it was a farming theme. People dress accordingly.

BUT, SAYS McCarthy, "they stay pretty much the same each year under the costumes."

Although it's a money maker, the fair is also a social event. And the people who belong to the association seem to have a knack for combining enjoyment with

and some sort of show or speaker.

Of course, some activities held at Liberty Hall are purely social. For instance, an annual homecoming is held there so members and past members who have moved away can get back together.

make put and b couches an carpet make the p seem ho Mrs. Marchand sa

vite hono Anybody that lived here in the past is inv l. One woman came every ar till she was 93 years c It's a social gathering.

tle cake, everybody an Sometime plays and beauty contes have be on and one year they hired a dance teac r "an member of the VIA could take lessons."

"We try to keep up the old traditions," Mrs. Marchand said.

Recent years, however, have been marked by declining membership, both in actual numbers, and the percentage of the South Chelmsford population.

— "There are 10 times as

many people living in South Chelmsford, but 10 times fewer people interested," McCarthy said.

IN THE Marchand's neighborhood, "everybody used to belong. Now we (she and her husband) are the only ones that still come."

the wide diversity of other activities that exist today that didn't the past.

But now, because th and Little League as TV, people have interests. "Kids are everywhere in autos," said McCarthy, and simply don't have join something like

But the group in recent years has opened membership up to people outside of South Chelmsford, and acts in many ways as a newcomer's club. The members don't see the organization ever dying. In the words of the current president, Mary Ellen Flemming, "There will always be someone to carry on."



SOUTH CHELMSFORD VILLAGE IMPROVEMENT ASSOCIATION

BOX 9

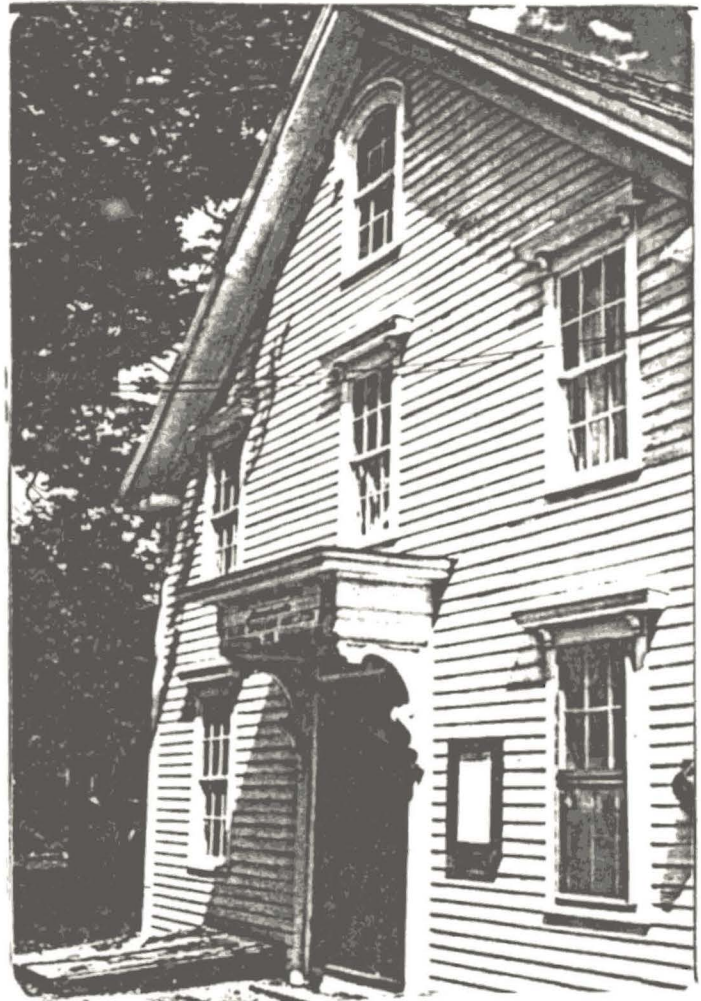
SOUTH CHELMSFORD, MASSACHUSETTS 01824



LIBERTY HALL, SOUTH CHELMSFORD, MASSACHUSETTS

AN ATTRACTIVE, SPACIOUS VILLAGE HALL IN 2.4 ACRES
OF LAND IN A HISTORICAL MASSACHUSETTS VILLAGE SETTING.

- SITUATION :** Conveniently situated in the center of the village of South Chelmsford, 3 miles from Chelmsford Center, 1½ miles west of Route 110, on Route 27, connecting Chelmsford with Route 2A.
- FEATURES :** This property dates from 1881 and has been in continual use for meetings, dinners, bazaars, and many other social activities. It has stone foundation, wood frame construction, and tar-tile roof.
- ACCOMMODATION :** Entrance hall, main hall, storage or cloak room, storage closet and kitchen on first floor. Large storage area, smaller storage or cloak room, ladies' room, mens room on second level. Sundry closets.



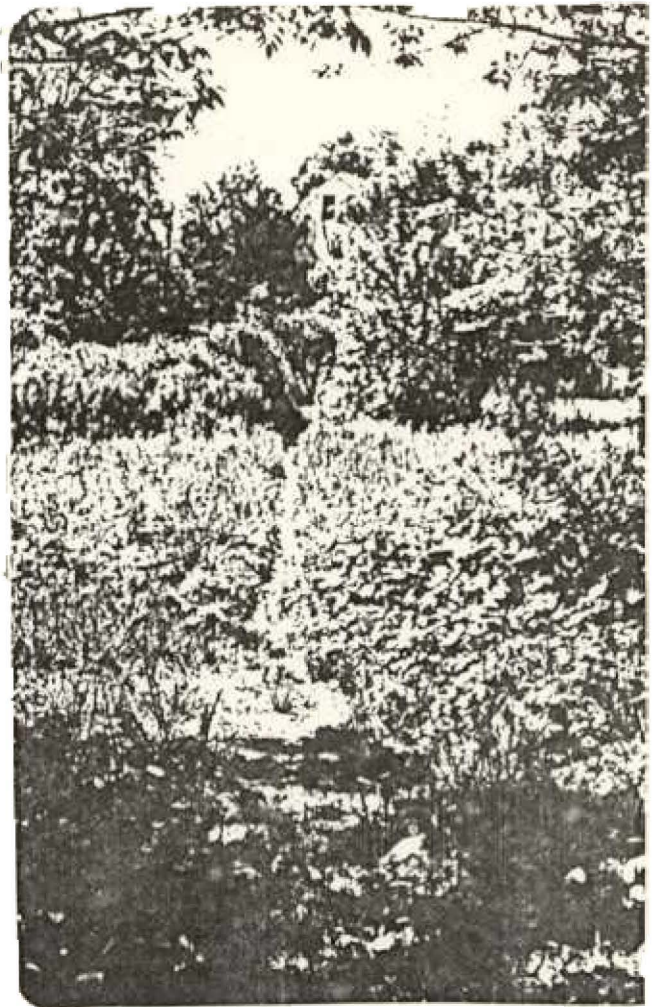
HISTORICAL NOTES

The South Chelmsford Village Association is the oldest active civic organization in Chelmsford. The charter was established and the by-laws adopted in 1879, and Liberty Hall was built in 1881. Since its inception, the Association has dedicated itself to the improvement of the village of South Chelmsford, location of the original Byam Match Factory on Lucifer Road, where the first matches in the United States were made. Maintenance of the Common, planting of trees, shrubs and flowers, and environmental concern, culminated in the acquisition of the beach area on Heart Pond, now a thriving and well-maintained recreation facility, serving not only residents of South Chelmsford, but also those from a wide surrounding region. Liberty Hall has for the past century been the focal point for many social activities, ranging from meetings to dinners, bazaars and dances. It represents a unique and attractive resource, perfectly situated, widely known and greatly admired.

MAIN HALL : 37.0 × 28.5 feet, with small corner storage closet.
ENTRANCE HALL : 10.5 × 7.25 feet.
STORAGE/CLOAK ROOM : 10.5 × 6.8 feet, with stairs to upper level.
KITCHEN : 14.4 × 10.5 feet; fully equipped, with ample cabinet space. Restaurant-type stove, refrigerator, sink, etc.
UPPER LEVEL : Huge storage area, 22 × 28 feet.
Smaller storage/cloak room, 21 × 15 feet.
LADIES ROOM : 7.75 × 6.42 feet.
MENS ROOM : 7.75 × 6.42 feet.
OVERALL OUTSIDE DIMENSIONS : 49.8 × 30.3 feet.
HEATING : Gas fired.
CONNECTIONS : Electricity; septic tank sewerage; telephone outlet
DESCRIPTION : This attractive and valuable property, standing on 2.4 acres of scenic land which is one of its most desirable features, is available and suitable for immediate use. It would be ideal for a meeting hall, apartments, or as a single family dwelling. The land is appropriate for development as access is convenient on two adjacent roads.
PRICE : \$ 55,900.-
TAXES : \$ 632.50 PER ANNUM.
VIEWING : Exclusively by appointment with
Mrs. Elizabeth Dickinson,
2 Carriage Drive,
South Chelmsford,
Massachusetts 01824.
Tel.: (617) 256 0291,
from whom further details are available.



VIEW FROM HALL TOWARD CHELMSFORD



VIEW OF SOME OF THE 2.4-ACRE LAND



VIEW OF MAPLE ROAD FROM FRONT OF LIBERTY HALL

Post Office and Square at South Chelmsford, Mass.



South Chelmsford Square and Liberty Hall Prior to 1922



LIBERTY HALL

320



LIBERTY HALL

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH
of
CHELMSFORD
Office: 256-3484 - Church: 256-8630

Pastor
Rev. Francis L. Costello, Jr.

Sunday School 9:45 a.m.
Worship 11:00 a.m.