

110 East Second Street

A 'site file' exists for this property. It contains additional information such as correspondence, newspaper clippings, or historical information. It is a public record and may be viewed in person at the State Historical Society, Division of Historic Preservation. The Marshfield City Hall (now called Tower Hall) is constructed of locally kilned Marshfield Brick. The main entry of the City Hall portion of the building fronts East Second Street, the original library entrance fronts onto Maple Street.

The City Hall exhibits many styles, but the predominant style is Romanesque, showing aspects of Victorian, Richardsonian and Revival. The building is two stories tall with a full attic. Gables with concrete coping and finials protrude from the hip roof, as do two towers. The towers frame the main (north) elevation. The fire tower (west) has a pyramidal roof. The clock tower has a polygonal roof intersected by decorative semicircular hoodmolds surrounding each of four clocks. The corners of the roof are supported by brick piers and a pair of fluted columns with thick turned balustrades. Both towers have pairs of recessed arched windows. The original City Hall entrance was flanked by four massive stone columns, removed in the 1930s, the entry is now enclosed in brick and glass block.

The rear (south) elevation has received substantial fenestration alterations. Overhead garage doors now penetrate the section originally designed as the horse stables. Some of the windows along the west elevation have been substituted with glass-block.

The firm of Van Ryn and de Gelleke designed the Marshfield City Hall in 1900. The firm was headquartered in Milwaukee, but had commissions throughout Wisconsin, including the Antigo City Hall, also of 1900; the Lincoln County Courthouse in Merrill, designed in 1901; and Nelson Hall at the University of Wisconsin, Stevens Point, designed in 1915.



Marshfield City Hall and Library, 1900's.



Marshfield City Hall and Library, 1960's.



Tower Hall, 1990's.

The firm was comprised of Henry J. Van Ryn and Gerrit J. De Gelleke. Van Ryn was the son of Dutch immigrants who studied architecture with C.A. Gombert at age seventeen. He began work as a draftsman with the architectural offices of James Douglas and E.T. Mix. In 1888 he opened his own business. De Gelleke worked in Van Ryn's office before attending architecture school at the University of Pennsylvania. When he returned in 1897, De Gelleke and Van Ryn joined in partnership under the firm name of Van Ryn and De Gelleke.



Tower Hall, 1990's.

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE:

This property is a contributing member of the Marshfield Central Avenue Historic District under Criterion C of the National Register of Historic Places. It is representative of the Architecture Theme of the Wisconsin Cultural Resource Management Plan as an example of Romanesque architecture with an eclectic mix of details. The building's architectural integrity is high, although some significant changes have been made.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND:

In April, 1900 the City Council recognized the need for a new building in which to house city government. Among the requirements for the building were that it be made of brick and that it contain a Library and Fire House. By September, 1900, the City Council was meeting at Baumann Hall (101 North Central [WO11/18]), indicating the meeting space at the moved school house was not satisfactory, even for temporary purposes.

The design plans by the Milwaukee architectural firm of Van Ryn and De Gelleke were selected by the Marshfield city council on June 26, 1900, from a total of eight proposals. On August 13, 1900, the council passed an ordinance (#151) bonding the city for the construction of the new "City Hall, Hose House, and Library." Library was housed here until 1960.

Construction began October 20, 1900. The building was accepted by the Common Council on May 28, 1901. Total cost of construction was \$18,000.

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE:

This property is a contributing member of the Marshfield Central Avenue Historic District under Criterion A of the National Register of Historic Places. It is representative of the Government Theme of the Wisconsin Cultural Resource Management Plan as an example of a City Hall as the focal point of Local Government.

Bibliographic References: (A) Building inscription. (B) Sanborn Insurance Maps: Marshfield, Wisconsin - 1884, 1887, 1891, 1898, 1904, 1912, 1925, 1946. (C) Marshfield, Wisconsin, Highlights of History, 1872-1972, Marshfield, Wisconsin, 1972. (D) Dr. Stanley Custer, interview with author, 15 November, 1990, Marshfield, Wisconsin. (E) Marshfield City Directories. (F) Marshfield News-Herald 5/11/1994. Take a Walk on Main Street: Historic Walking Tours in Wisconsin's Main Street Communities, Wisconsin Main Street Program, 1998. Marshfield Walking Tour Brochure, 2000.



Tower Hall, 2000's.

Wisconsin Historical Society, Wisconsin Architecture and History Inventory, "Marshfield City Hall", "Marshfield", "Wood County", "Wisconsin", "Reference Number 28177".

The City Hall property was sold in 1989 to Green Roof Building Center Inc. who started the remodeling of the building into a Low Income Housing complex. The property has changed hands several times since then, but is currently owned as of October 2015 by Charles A. & Marilyn J. Perry 'Trustees'.

Also see these QR Code related stories:

Old Marshfield Public Library



Tower Hall, 2014.

If you have any additional information (including pictures) regarding this business or location, we would really appreciate you contacting us and sharing. We will add information whenever possible.

For questions, or for sharing additional information, please contact us at schnitzler.vickie@charter.net. Please include what story the information relates to. Attach your text information in the form of a word document, please no PDF's. Photos should preferably be in jpeg format.

For additional stories on the historical sights and businesses of Marshfield, visit our website at: <http://www.marshfieldgenealogy.com/QR-Codes-of-Historical-Marshfield.html>.