

Donation to
Ashawagh Hall

2007



The former one-room schoolhouse in the heart of Springs will have its foundation shored up.

Morgan McGovern

ASHAWAGH HALL

Body Work for 162-Year-Old

BY JOANNE PILGRIM

Repairs to Ashawagh Hall, the 1844 building that serves as a meeting place, exhibit hall, and all-around community center for Springs, are set to begin in early December. The hall is expected to be closed until late March so that its foundation can be shored up, floor joists and flooring replaced, and plumbing and wiring updated.

Before that happens, however, two events will be held there. Tomorrow at 7:30 p.m., the Springs Improvement Society, which owns the hall, and the Springs Historical Society will present "Ashawagh Hall: Past, Present, and Future." The program will feature slides from the historical society's collection as well as a discussion of the condition of Ashawagh Hall and planned repairs.

On Sunday at 5 p.m., the annual Lights of Love tree lighting and holiday celebration will take place.

The hall was built in 1844 as a one-room schoolhouse, and was used occasionally for worship services. It cost \$418 to build. In 1885 a second room was added for \$160.

When the Springs School was built on School Street in 1909, the building on the green became Ashawagh Hall, and the Springs Improvement Society was created to maintain it.

In 1910, the kitchen and an upstairs room were added. Electricity was installed in 1925. Stucco was applied to the exterior in 1930, and bathrooms installed in 1948. An addition creating storage space was added to the north side in 1970, the front entryway was built in 1982, and the portico on the

south side was constructed in 1984.

The east side of the building retains the original brick foundation, which has been disintegrating. The foundation is shallow, and a lack of gutters on the building, allowing rain to seep into the bricks, has hastened the deterioration.

In consultation with an architect, Rossetti Perchik of Springs, members of the improvement society decided against jacking up the entire building to make repairs, which could pose risks to the structure and prove expensive. Instead, a cellar will be dug out underneath the building and concrete block walls created close to the original foundation.

The construction work could cost as much as \$75,000, with the plumbing and electrical work additional. At a meeting on Nov. 20, the improvement society's board discussed installing new kitchen cabinets and equipment as well.

The East Hampton Town Board set aside \$25,000 in its 2006 budget to help with the repairs, and has \$15,000 in the budget for 2007.

The Springs Improvement Society has been soliciting private donations, and almost \$100,000 has been collected, according to Ed Michels, the group's president.

After reading earlier this year about the building's state of disrepair, Tony Ganga of East Coast Gutters made his donation: the installation of new gutters to prevent further damage from rain runoff.

Donations can be sent to the Springs Improvement Society, P.O. Box 537, East Hampton 11937.

Health & Wellness

of Lights, featuring
trees and a tree lighting