



New Canaan Thrift Shop

Funding Patient Care Since 1930

2 LOCUST AVENUE & NEW CANAAN THRIFT SHOP – HISTORY 1840 TO 2022

Number 2 Locust Avenue has been home to the New Canaan Thrift Shop since the mid 1950's, but it's had a great deal of rich history for over 180 years.

The two-story building is vernacular Greek Revival with porch columns and the end gable trimmed as a pediment. It has charming proportions on a highly visible site that helps anchor New Canaan's historic character.

1840

The building was constructed on the Northeast corner of Main and Locust in 1840 by prohibitionist Joseph Scofield. He wanted the building so he could lease it to the Young Men's Total Abstinence Society which later became The Sons of Temperance, to combat the threat of what they called "Demon Rum". As it happened, the movement didn't get very far, and the building was then used for storage by Seymour Comstock, a nearby shop owner.

1856

By around 1856, Scofield sold the building to Russell L. Hall who sold furniture and coffins and also used the building as a morgue. The building has been known in town for many years as "The Old Morgue" and it was used as such until around the end of the 19th century. For the first quarter of the 20th century the building was mostly vacant and showed the worst signs of a derelict building. Local children were known to break in and run upstairs. Then hearing noises, perhaps a rat or two, they would run out screaming that the building was haunted.

1928

In 1928 the building was sold to the Veterans Club for the VFW. They managed to raise enough funds to restore the building after years of neglect. Once again the building was used in numerous ways, apart from the VFW, it was used by the League of Women Voters, the New Canaan Red Men (who kept their robes and tomahawks there for the annual parade), the Jewish congregation of New Canaan held services there on high holidays, and there was even a hair dresser in the back of the building called "Miss Helen's".



1931-1954

In 1930, The Visiting Nurse Association volunteer run Thrift Shop was founded to raise funds to support charitable mission of the organization by selling used clothing. Before moving to Locust Avenue the Shop relocated from 149 Main Street to 6 South Avenue (1931), then to 90 Main Street in 1936, 112 Main Street in 1942 and 15 Forest Street in 1952 and expanded to sell the wide range of items now sold.



2021

In 2021, Visiting Nurse & Hospice of Fairfield County became part of the Waveny LifeCare Network, together providing a full continuum of healthcare services. As in the past, all profits from the New Canaan Thrift Shop benefits the Visiting Nurse & Hospice of Fairfield County Patient Care Fund providing comfort and care to those we serve.

Visiting Nurse & Hospice of Fairfield County and now Waveny LifeCare Network has constantly kept up with all kinds of maintenance work from roof and window repairs to painting - under their watch the historic and endearing building will never return to the “ghost house” it once was.



2022

In May, Waveny was honored to accept the New Canaan Preservation Alliance 2022 President’s Award for the continued preservation of 2 Locust Avenue building, historically known as “The Old Morgue”.



In addition to raising funds to support our valuable mission, The Thrift Shop continues to evolve, serving the community by selling low cost, quality goods and having a positive impact on the environment by encouraging sustainability. We are grateful for all who have played a part in our rich history by volunteering, donating or purchasing from our Thrift Shop.

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