



Campton Historical Society



This informational brochure was produced by the Campton Historical Society, founded in 1991 to preserve the community's heritage, and to recognize and protect significant historic structures and sites.

The Society's headquarters is the 1855 town House, located one mile north of Blair Road and Route 175.

For further information, write to us at PO. Box 160, Campton, NH 03223, or visit our web site at www.CamptonHistorical.org



Town of Campton, New Hampshire
HISTORIC SITE SERIES
Site #10

Blair Chapel and Woodlands



Located on Route 3, just south of the intersection with Blair Road, at exit 27 of Route 93.

This brochure is underwritten by:

Blair Chapel and Woodlands

This building was originally built as Blair Chapel, on land donated by Lucy G. Davis. It was done in stages, having a grand opening in 1889. Services were conducted here until 1911. At times, there were visiting ministers, and also services conducted by young men studying for the ministry at New Hampton Literary Institute. This is now the New Hampton School. While in existence, the chapel was under the Free Will Baptist denomination. Noted naturalist, author, and illustrator, F. Schuyler Mathews donated 2 stained glass windows for the chapel, which are now installed in the Ellsworth Chapel.

After 1911, no more regular services were held, and the building served as a community gathering place, as well as for parties. At least two weddings occurred here, and in 1922, a Christmas Party drew over 80 people. The last party was held in 1923.

The building was purchased in 1929 by Mrs. Maude Gray. She and her husband Dr. Frederick Gray, a veterinarian, re-modeled it into a home with rooms for tourists. Dr. Gray treated the logging horses of Parker Young Company and cattle from the surrounding farms. They lived across the street while renovations were going on. Since it was the custom in the church to purchase family pews, some of them were returned to their owners during this reconstruction. Mrs. Gray drew up the plans to convert the building into a home and inn. Before the construction was done, the first guests seeking lodging were given blankets by Mrs. Gray, and slept on the pews. By 1932, the construction was completed.

The first name suggested for this inn was Chapel Inn. Sounding too “churchy”, it was decided to name it Woodland Rooms and Cabins. The sign was painted by Maude, and is preserved here today. Tourism was in, and a guest could stay in this popular area for \$1 per person per night. There was a full bath upstairs (an unusual feature), and a half bath down. In addition, two cabins were constructed for guests. Dr. Gray died in 1935, and Maude went to Plymouth Normal School (now Plymouth State University) for her teaching certificate. She taught at Livermore Falls School (Campton Historic Site # S14) for many years. The inn ran until 1982, at which time the room rate had increased to \$10 per night. The inn was not used in winter, and Maude and her daughter lived in an apartment in Plymouth. The chapel is now the summer home of her daughter, Leah.

The land they owned across the street was a garden area. During the construction of Route 3, road workers used the area for camping. This section was given to the town of Campton by Leah to be preserved as a natural area under the Campton Conservation Commission. Trails have been established, with maps and signs identifying some of the native plants and trees. It is known as the Blair Woodlands Natural Area, a name well suited to this historic site.



Leah Gray, second from right - 2006