

JYVÄSKYLÄ CITY HALL



A NEW CITY HALL FOR A YOUNG TOWN

When the town of Jyväskylä was established in 1837, architect Carl Ludvig Engel included a city hall in the town plan, next to the central square. However, the city hall was not constructed until sixty years later. Over the decades, Jyväskylä had developed into a significant centre of education and culture. It was home to the first Finnish-language schools in the country: a secondary school, a girls' school and a teacher training college. Their impact was evident in many ways: several publishing houses emerged in Jyväskylä, a national song festival was launched and the Finnish Lifelong Learning Foundation was established. At the end of the nineteenth century, Jyväskylä had fewer than 3,000 residents, compared to



more than 134,000 in 2013. The City Hall was designed by Karl Viktor Reinius, the County Architect of Vaasa, in 1896. The building had facilities for the city court, councillors, city treasury, police station, auction house, societies and associations as well as the city library and reading room.

In addition, the building provided facilities for the Bank of Finland, which helped finance the extensive project.



Completed in 1899, the City Hall was a prominent building in a town of wooden houses. Until that time, the City Church and the brick buildings of the teacher training college had been the only major public buildings in Jyväskylä. The field between the Church and the City Hall served as a marketplace until 1931, when the marketplace was transferred to its present location by the Jyväskylän Lyseon upper secondary school.



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The City Hall became a service centre for local residents. Over the decades, a great number of public events, parades and public meetings have been held in front of the building. In the picture at the top left, representatives of the police station are showing off their new uniforms, which were purchased with the proceeds of the municipal alcohol retailing monopoly in 1906. On the bottom right, the Jyväskylä Amateur Orchestra, Sirkat Men's Chorus and Vaput Women's Chorus, directed by Seminar Lecturer P.J. Hannikainen, are preparing for a performance of *The Captive Queen* by Jean Sibelius in 1912. The top right picture is of the city council hall, which was converted into a Russian military hospital in 1915–1917. The Finnish Broadcasting Company had a studio in the building in the 1920s.



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City administration constituted the core of City Hall operations. Gradually, the library, the reading room and the Bank of Finland moved out and were replaced by administration and officials of the growing town. The City Council and City Board held their meetings at the City Hall. In 1928, the Great

Hall was refurbished with chairs and tables designed by Kerttu Tamminen, an architect born in Jyväskylä. Pictured here are city councillors at a special meeting to celebrate Jyväskylä's 100th anniversary in 1937. Two years later, the Great Hall was reserved almost entirely for meetings.



Part of the original ceiling mural. RM



RM



A detail of the Great Hall. MH



The ceiling mural over the main staircase. MH

Over its history of more than 110 years, the City Hall has seen many renovations. The first were made to create more offices by adding interior walls. In the process, decorative murals by Emil Sanmark, an artist based in Jyväskylä, were painted over. Beginning in 1939, all ceiling murals were covered and the walls were painted white as part of the renovation of the Great Hall. The most important reception facilities – the entrance hall, the main staircase, the Great Hall and the City Board meeting room – were returned to their original condition during the first extensive renovation of the City Hall, from 1979 to 1981.



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The City Hall was renovated between 2010 and 2012 because of traffic vibration damage and indoor air problems. In addition to the original decorative murals, the demolition work revealed extensive damage to the foundations and intermediate floors. Samples of the ceiling murals and structures before renovation were taken for the collections of the Museum of Central Finland. Most of the ceiling murals were restored in accordance with their original models, and the murals revealed during the previous renovation were cleaned. The ceiling mural in the Women's Hall was well preserved and left in its original condition.

The original room layout, colours, gypsum cornices, decorative murals and wooden panel doors were restored as part of the renovation, as were the old massive-wood furniture and valuable lighting fixtures.

The offices have new furniture and lighting fixtures that represent the twenty-first century with their modern, strong shapes and metallic colours.



The City Treasury in the 1940s. KSM



The information desk at the City Hall. MH



The entrance hall. MH



The Mayor's office. MH



The Gentlemen's Hall. MH



The Women's Hall. MH

The artwork in the City Hall is themed around the scenery of Jyväskylä and Central Finland at different times, expressed through various techniques. The Women's Hall and the Gentlemen's Hall have nine paintings from the 1880s and 1890s, the Golden Era of Finnish art, which the Museum of Central Finland received on long-term loan from Pekka Salojärvi.

The City Hall has offices for about thirty people. The facilities on the first floor include the Mayor's office, the City Board meeting room, the Registry Office, the City Office, Legal Services and the information desk. The City Council continues to meet in the Great Hall on the second floor, with the adjacent halls being reserved for receptions and other special events. The balcony has not been in public use since the renovation. The other end of the building houses offices for communications and international relations staff.



MH

In addition to committee meeting rooms, the underground floor has reception and cafeteria facilities with vaulted ceilings as well as a distribution kitchen with auxiliary facilities, staff facilities and technology rooms. The names of conference facilities – such as Chief, Baton and Cell – reflect the history of the building.

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