

The Hall

The search for a hall or suitable piece of property on which to build a hall began in the 1960s and culminated in 1976.

In 1965 serious consideration was given to the Clinton Hall but was rejected by the membership because of the poor state of the building and the high cost of the property.

The Hastings Auditorium was considered in 1967 and again in 1974, however no action was taken. Swedish Park was a serious contender in 1968 but was narrowly rejected in a secret vote by the members.

Following more than a year and a half of discussions, in 1971 a piece of property was purchased on Dollarton Avenue in North Vancouver, with the intention of building a hall. Because the Society had no collateral, it was not possible to obtain bank funding. The members lent the money to the Famèe Furlane, who in return, provided promissory notes including a 7% rate of interest. A committee was struck to begin drawings for the new hall, but for various reasons the hall was never built and in early 1973 the property was sold.

Also in 1973 an offer was made for property on Canada Way, subject to rezoning plans. The offer was withdrawn because of Burnaby rezoning plans.

The Clinton Hall again was considered and rejected by the members in 1974.

Later that year, property with three rented duplexes was purchased on Commercial and Franklin in Vancouver, again with the intent of building a hall. Preliminary drawings for the hall were rejected by Vancouver City Hall due to lack of parking spaces. This property was sold in 1976 and later that year the Clinton Hall was purchased for \$218,974.61 including some legal expenses. Money from previous property sales provided the down payment.

The hall was badly in need of repairs, so members volunteered their services to initially address the more important work, including cosmetic work which was done on the upstairs hall, corridors and kitchen. In 1978, the members were asked if they would be willing to invest more money, as well as leave the accrued interest, until the bank loan could be retired. In January 1979, new promissory notes were issued with an increased rate of interest to 10%. Later, continuing with the improvements, new kitchen cupboards were installed, the small hall was improved and the bathrooms were updated. In 1982 complete upgrading was done to the library/office. As time went on, major renovations included kitchen upgrades, new windows, painting and updating of the inside of the hall, as well as new exterior stucco. Curtains in both the small and upper halls have twice been replaced. The front

entrance and outside of the hall were painted and updated in 1998 and 1999. A new sign and lights were added to the outside in 2004. Major outside renovations were done again in 2008 to repair age and water damage. As with any property, maintenance is ongoing and more upgrades will eventually be done, based on existing funds. During the years of ownership of the hall, more than \$500,000 has been spent within existing revenues.

Banquets, New Years Eve parties, weddings, and numerous other special events have been enjoyed at the hall. As well, rentals of the small and large halls for events and special occasions provided additional revenue. In the beginning, although open catering was allowed, in- house catering by some ladies and men of the Famèe Furlane gradually became exclusive for all events, thus increasing our revenues. Thanks to their hard work, our society has become well known for its excellent catering services.

When the hall was paid in full members received their money plus the interest, as had been agreed upon. Some members opted to decline the interest payment and left the money in the society. In appreciation for the generosity of the members, who donated \$500 or more of the interest payments they were entitled to receive, the Board of Directors bestowed Lifetime memberships.

Without the enthusiasm, dedication and hard work of the members, from the first property purchase to the present time, none of this would have been possible. Indeed, the members and their families can proudly enjoy the hall which has truly become the home of the Famèe Furlane of Vancouver.