Third Floor Galleries

This floor holds the museum’s permanent art collection and was once the community space for fairs, dances, concerts, a youth center and even the public library. Today, community events, concerts, social gatherings, lectures and openings are still held bringing the community together.

FUN FACTS:

- The Rockwell permanent collection is on exhibit; each gallery with a specific theme and color

- Gallery wall colors are inspired by the painting, Along the Rio Grande by Walter Ulle (pictured right)

- The Bierstadt painting, Mt. Whitney, has a new frame. Our generous community of friends and members made it possible.

Outdoor Space

The terrace, built on the roof of the former police department, overlooks the City and in warm weather you will see the community enjoying music, educational and performance gatherings here. Don’t miss the holiday lights in December.

LOOK FOR THE:

- Alley Art projects on view on Connor’s and the Corning store alley walls. A Partnership of the Rockwell Education Dept. and the High School Learning Center

- Buechner Park across Denison Pkwy has a bronze, Jack Knife, by Ed Mell, installed in 2013

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The Museum was established in 1976 and opened at this location in 1982. This building was Corning City Hall from 1893 until 1974 and has been at the heart of Corning for over 120 years. Investigate some of the special architectural features.

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Ground Floor

From 1893 to 1974 what you see as the Museum Store and Orientation Gallery was the Corning Fire Station. The horse-drawn fire engines were first, followed later by the gas-powered trucks. The 3 large windows on the front of the building were once the fire wagon/truck doors. The horses were stabled in the back and were well-trained firefighters.

LOOK FOR THE:

- Original tin ceiling.
- Circular shape in the front corner of the lobby that was once the location of a fire pole.
- Pyrex Indian head created by Frederick Carder (1929).
- Entrance rotunda with buffalo logo medallion, chandelier, Kerouac quote, grand mahogany staircase.

First & Second Floor

The first floor had been the main entrance level from the outside stairs. Housed here were the City Clerk, City Court, Police Department and Jail Cells. By 1896 the Police Department was built as a two-story addition at the back of the building with a separate entrance.

- Women’s jail cell door is still here by the restrooms. Museum staff offices are in some of the former men’s cells.
- Works by Andy Warhol, Ansel Adams, Tammy Garcia and other prominent artists have all hung in this gallery.

The second floor was, and still is, alive with people and activity. The Mayor’s office was front and center at the top of the stairs. The beautiful Remington & Russell Lodge had been the firemen’s living quarters. City Council Chambers, Public Health Dept. and dentist offices were all on this floor until 1974.

Architectural History

Designed by Rochester architect, AJ Warner and built by Corning contractor, Thomas Bradley, this grand building is Richardson Romanesque, a distinctly American style. Building costs were $28,579 in 1893!

LOOK FOR THE:

- Rounded arches above the 144 windows.
- Massive pillars at the entrance.
- Polychromatic design with local brick & rusticated limestone quarried in Corning.
- 1898 geocache benchmark disk at the entrance.
- The Bell Tower, a fire bell rumored to be a “Paul Revere bell” held 20 weights of 50 lbs. each and is now at the City’s current Fire Station.
- Artemus - “Art is a must”; named by Corning residents and created by Corning artist, Tom Gardner in 1999. Hope you saw his scarf this winter, knit by area residents.

From first panel (left to right): 1923: Firemen’s Convention, Artemus, Fire Bell at Corning Fire Station, Firemen 1907. From the second panel (left to right): City Hall 1914, Fire Equipment 1974, Orientation Gallery 2014

From the Top (left to right): City Hall First Floor 1970s, Andy Warhol Exhibition 2011, Volunteer reading in Lodge 2013, Dentist Office