



February
2024

www.concordcoach.org

1905 Stables Update

Check out the link below to see what the 1905 Stables look like today. Now use your imagination and imagine various rooms with coaches, wagons and interactive displays set up. Join us as we make that vision a reality.

<https://my.matterport.com/show/?m=YNhtrk4iVGh>

ADHS Meetings

Meetings are held in the Lobby of the Audi beginning at 5:30pm.

There is also a ZOOM link available.

Next Meeting

Tuesday, March 5th 5:30pm

We will be discussing updates on the 1905 Stables and upcoming spring and summer events.

Fun Facts and Did You Know ?



Lewis Downing was a **wheelwright**. A wheelwright is a craftsman who makes wooden wheels and the undercarriages for wagons.

J Stephens Abbot was a **coach body craftsman**. The oval shape of the coach body made them strong, sturdy and very light weight.

The coaches were **top heavy** and would often tip over. When that happened, everyone would get off the coaches and help tip the coach back up. Then everyone got back on the coach and the trip continued.

Employees of the **Abbot Downing Company** had a six day work week. They worked from 7:00am - 6:00pm.

The Abbot Downing Historical Society works with many other groups to keep the history of the Concord Coach and the Abbot Downing Co alive for future generations.

Invite a friend to join us.



February 2024
www.concordcoach.org
page 2

Coach #V111 - L. Downing & Sons - 1852
Abbot-Downing Historical Society



Each month we will highlight one of the coaches that you will find at the future ADHS 1905 Museum. Come take a Sneak Peek.

Coach number VIII in Roman numerals was the second Concord Coach to be acquired by the Abbot-Downing Historical Society. It is a L Downing & Sons coach from 1852 and again, the number VII is probably a shop identification number rather than a true serial number. It is a nine passenger Hotel style coach with folding French windows where a mail coach would have had roll down curtains. This was possible because it traveled a relatively smooth route. In addition to the nine passengers inside, it could seat seven more, one beside the driver, three sitting on the roof behind the driver, and three on the seat attached to the rear wall of the coach. We received this coach as a donation from the Hood Museum at Dartmouth College in 2012. The coach was in service until about 1910 transporting students and other passengers to and from the railroad station in Norwich, Vermont to Hanover, New Hampshire. After it was taken out of service, it almost became victim to a student rally bonfire, but was saved by the college administration and put in storage until about 1927 when the curators at the museum started a complete restoration project that even included having the interior fabric duplicated. It was then put on display at the Hanover Inn under a semi open portico with one side exposed to the weather. That side shows more severe weathering than the non-exposed side. After a number of years it was again put in storage until 2012 when the museum realized that it really should be on display somewhere, but they did not have a place and decided to offer it to the New London Historical Society, who also had no space but contacted us and we immediately contacted the Hood Museum and they agreed to deed it over to us. We went up to Lebanon to the storage facility where it was being stored and brought it back to the barn at the Hopkinton Fairgrounds. The coach had set so long the grease in the wheels had stiffened and they were extremely hard to turn. After we took the wheels off and cleaned out the old grease and put some nice new grease in, it rolls easily.

Written by Peter James