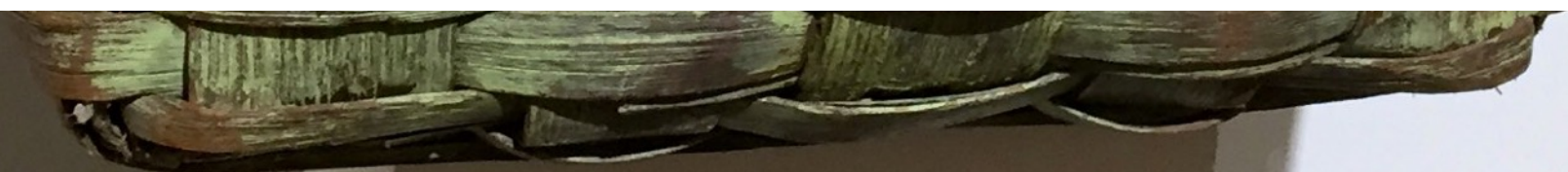




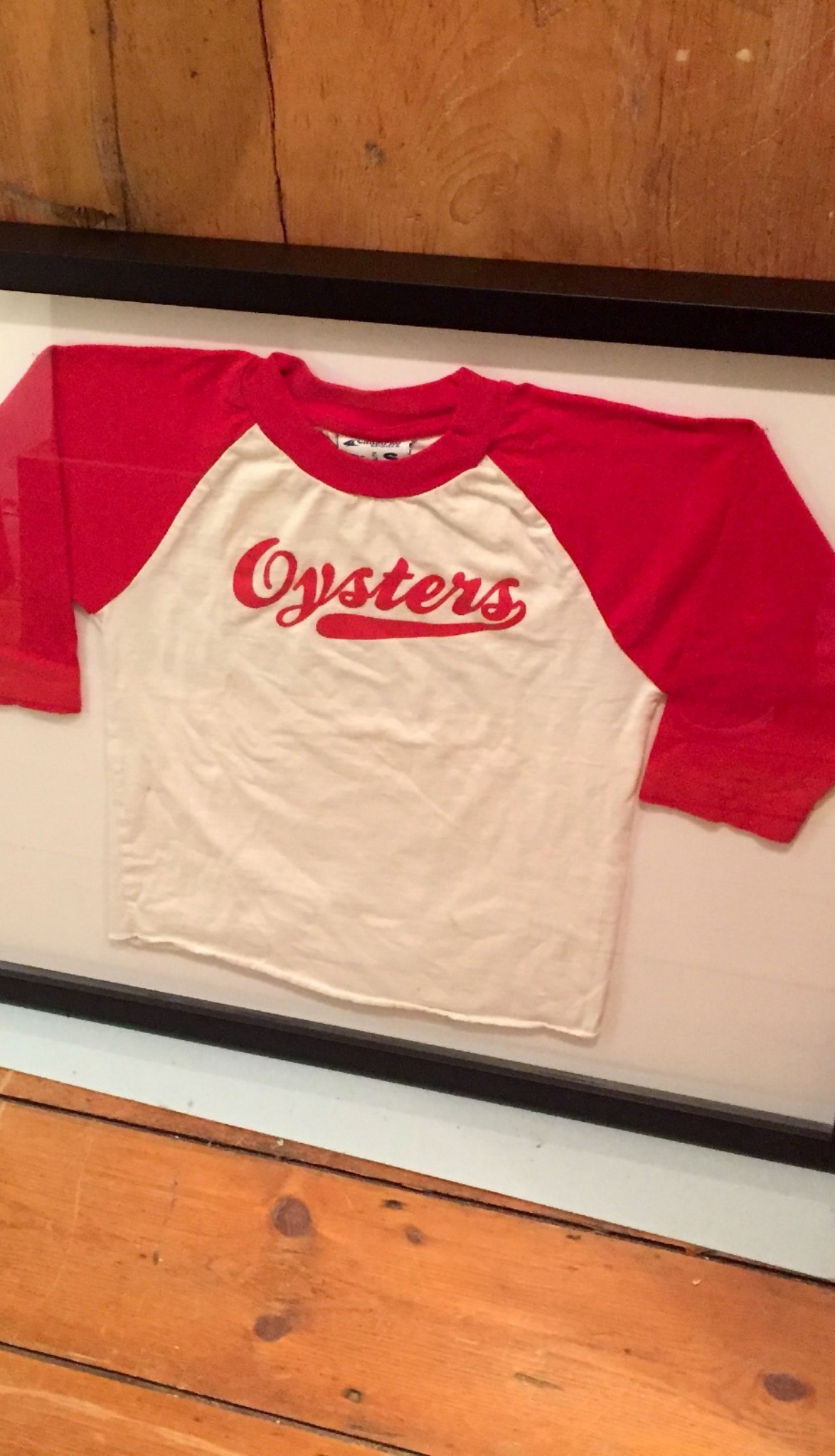
# OYSTERPONDS HISTORICAL SOCIETY COLLECTIONS ASSESSMENT

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Rainey Tisdale, November 2019







# PROJECT GOALS:

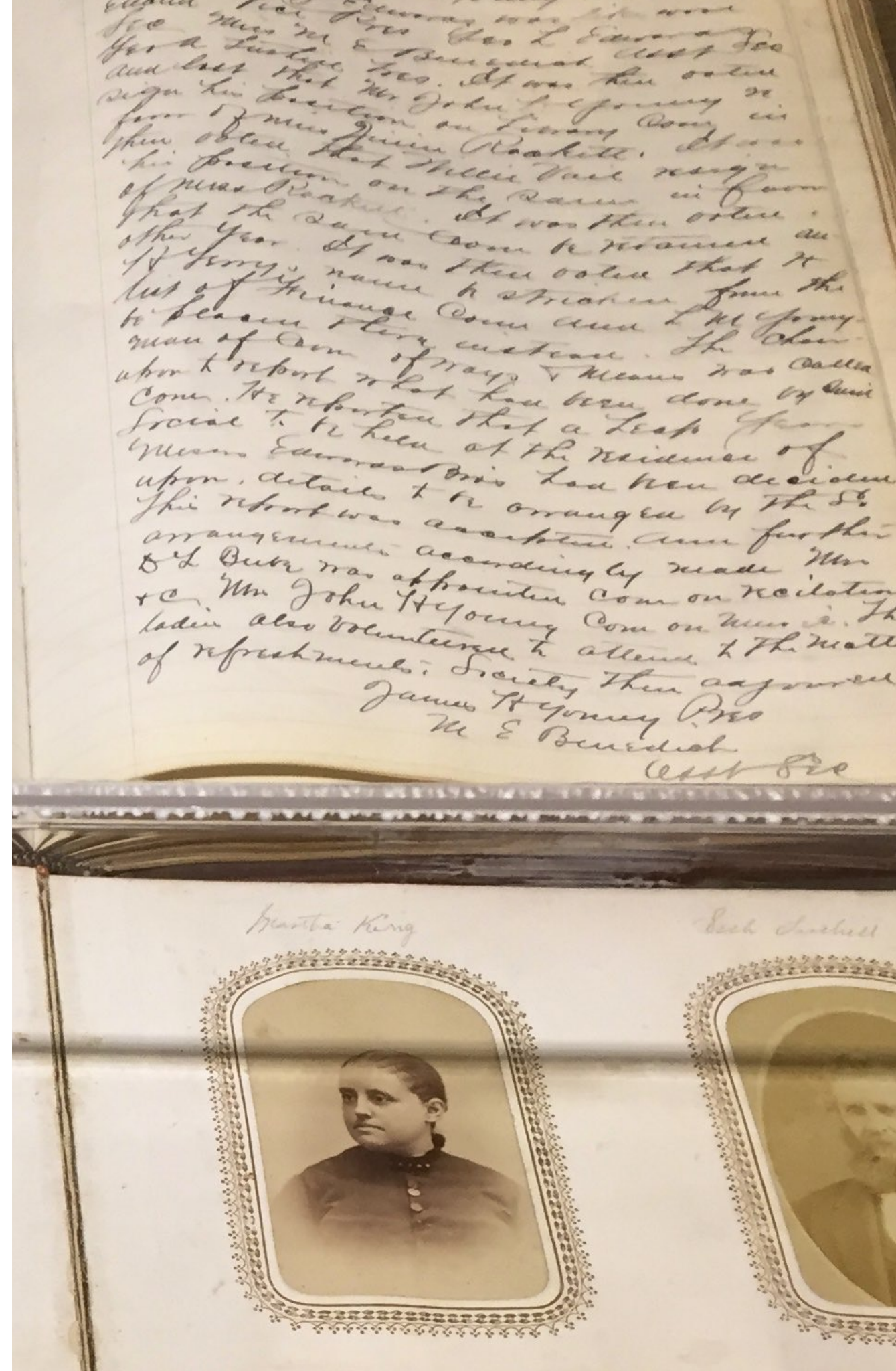
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- Bring a collections-centered approach to OHS's planning efforts
- Assess condition of collection
- Ensure OHS collections practices are in line with those of other local historical societies as well as new trends in collections management
- Assess how OHS buildings are serving the collections and what kind of improvements might be needed
- Make realistic and executable recommendations for moving forward



# WHAT OHS IS DOING WELL:

- Collections and Buildings & Grounds committees
- B & G committee has been diligent about building care
- Professional collections staff
- Core collections policies and documents in place
- Human safety addressed
- Archival boxes & shelving
- Collection is numbered and documented in database
- 80% of glass plate negatives digitized



# 5 COLLECTIONS TIERS



## TIER 1

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- very significant to Oysterponds
- tells multiple Oysterponds stories
- well documented
- rare or irreplaceable
- example: William Steeple Davis Photographs



## TIER 5

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- limited or no historical value
- limited or no documentation
- plays very minor role in Oysterponds story
- example: nutmeg grater from Oysterponds family

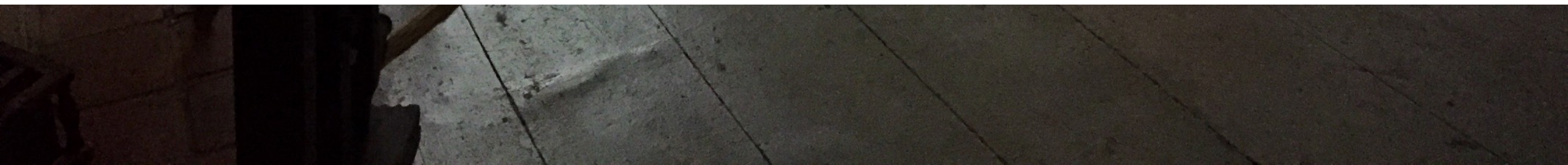




## OLD OHS COLLECTING SCOPE:

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- anything related to Oysterponds
- items from outside the Oysterponds geographic area if they are useful for research or comparison



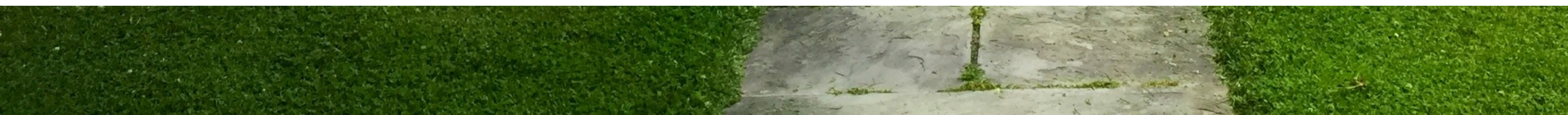




## NEW OHS COLLECTING SCOPE:

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- Belonging: how we claimed “this secluded place,” and how it in turn claimed us
- What it means to live close to the land and the sea
- The patterns and rituals of our community
- Our families: the old families, the new families, “families of choice”
- Institutions and activities that are the social glue of our community
- Our special places
- Community inflection points: change and resistance to change, efforts to protect Oysterponds
- Our creative spirit, whether professional or amateur
- Our stories: accounts that show a distinctively Oysterponds perspective on the world







## OHS DOES NOT COLLECT:

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- Objects that represent regional or national histories but have no specific tie to Oysterponds
- Objects with no documentation and/or no local story
- Duplicates of existing collections items







# GUIDING PRINCIPLES:

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- OHS has different types of collections with different needs and levels of importance.
  - The buildings & grounds are part of OHS's collection.
  - The collections must be relevant to Oysterponds residents or there's no point.
  - OHS needs a healthy balance of preservation and access.
  - Risk can't be eliminated but it can be managed.
  - The collections can't come at the expense of organizational capacity & sustainability.
  - Healthy collections need regular weeding.
  - Not every object is worth its preservation cost.
  - Collections planning must account for climate change.
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# WHAT DOES OHS NEED TO DO?

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1. Address any active deterioration of buildings and collection items
2. Address any high risks of future damage or improvements that would have an outsized effect on Oysterponds community or organizational sustainability
3. Any reasonable additional measures to reduce risk without burdening organizational capacity





## KEY PRIORITIES:

- Protect the collection from moisture
- Put the archives collection (photographs, manuscripts, and other paper records) first in line for preservation and resources
- Weed out collections items that have little to no meaning for residents





## OTHER MEASURES:

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- Keep collections (particularly Tiers 1-3) out of basements and attics wherever possible
- Pursue fire suppression & compact shelving as appropriate
- Move staff to Vail House
- Consider an addition on Vail House for collections storage



7 floor  
Combs  
Tans  
Sewing equipment

left to right

Loose  
Beads  
Table covers

## QUESTIONS?

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Sashes  
Ribbons Edgings

Edison records  
7 towels & garlands