Oysterponds Historical Society
Collections Care Plan

Prepared for:

Oysterponds Historical Society
1555 Village Lane
Orient, NY 11957

Prepared By:

Jan Hird Pokorny Associates, Inc.
39 West 37th Street, Floor 12A
New York, NY 10018
212-759-6462

Rainey Tisdale
41 Amherst Street
Boston, MA 02131
617-835-0244

May 23, 2019

Table of Contents

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY **2**

INTRODUCTION **5**
Purpose
Background and History of Collections Planning at OHS
Methodology
Location Plan

DEVELOPING A COLLECTIONS PHILOSOPHY FOR OHS **10**

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION & ASSESSMENT **17**
What OHS Is Doing Well
The Campus
Village House
Old Point Schoolhouse
Amanda Brown Schoolhouse
Webb House
Red Barn
Hallock Building
Vail House
The Collections

RECOMMENDATIONS **53**
Recommendations for Care & Preservation
Recommendations for Use
Recommendations by Building

APPENDICES **74**
A. New Collecting Scope
B. Collection Items by Type
C. Datalogger Analysis
D. 50 Year Flood Map
E. Consultant Bios
F. Report Details

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Like many historical societies and museums, the Oysterponds Historical Society faces significant challenges in collections stewardship. These challenges include having adequate space to store collections appropriately while maintaining a balance between programming, interpretive spaces, and staff spaces, and operating within the constraints of finite staff, operating and capital resources. The team of museum collections consultant Rainey Tisdale (Tisdale) and building preservationists Jan Hird Pokorny Associates (JHPA) was retained to examine the society's campus, structures, and collections holistically in an effort to:

1. fully understand the organization's operations and needs focused on collections;
2. examine and re-align, if necessary, the organization's collecting practices;
3. examine the existing buildings, determining suitability of spaces and what improvements would be required to effectively serve the society's current and future needs; and
4. assist the organization in the development of a logical and realistic plan to move forward from here.

OHS first identified the issue of adequate space for collections several years ago. In 2015, supported by a grant from the Robert David Lion Gardiner Foundation, OHS hired the architecture firm Gluckman Tang to create a master plan for the society. This plan recommended building a new, state of the art collections storage facility, including space for staff offices and work space for collections care, preferably offsite in an undetermined location. In 2017 and early 2018, the Society did additional work to understand the differential needs of the collections and buildings. OHS also wanted to explore alternative uses for one of its buildings, Vail House, which had previously served as a residence.

OHS then applied for and received a grant from the Gardiner Foundation for the work of this report. We were asked to apply our expertise in collections planning and building preservation to produce a collections-centric assessment that articulates the specific needs of different parts of the collections as well as the collections' role within the larger organization; articulates a new guiding philosophy for OHS's collections and buildings that reflects the way the museum field has evolved its understanding of organizational and collections sustainability; and assesses OHS in relation to other local historical societies to consider what is an appropriate approach to collections stewardship for an organization of OHS's type and size.

A New Collections Philosophy

A key component of our assessment involved examining OHS's current collecting policies and practices to bring them into alignment with new trends in the museum field and in society at large. The resulting new collections philosophy takes into account that OHS's historic buildings and grounds are part of its collections; that the collection comprises items with varying degrees of meaning and relevancy to the Oysterponds community, requiring varying degrees of resources and care accordingly; and that the collections cannot be housed, preserved, or expanded at the expense of institutional capacity and sustainability. We worked with the Collections Committee to develop a new collecting scope statement and collections tiering system (with five tiers, Tier 1 representing OHS's most treasured items and Tier 5 representing items of little to no community value) to begin translating this new collections philosophy into policy and implementation.

Assessment and Recommendations for Care & Preservation

Overall, OHS is doing reasonably well in comparison to other local historical societies of its size and type; indeed we have seen many local history collections and buildings in much worse shape. Therefore OHS's main challenges are less about reactive measures to halt ongoing deterioration but instead are about proactive measures to minimize risk of future damage from flooding, humidity, or fire and to improve overall management, access, and sustainability.

Our recommendations for care of OHS's buildings and collections are ranked in priority order. OHS's first priority is anything causing active, ongoing deterioration to buildings and collection items or posing a threat to human safety. OHS's second priority is to take care of any high risks of future damage, or areas where an improvement in building or collections would have an outsized effect for OHS's public audiences or for institutional sustainability. Lastly, the third priority is any reasonable additional measures to reduce risk in other areas without adversely burdening institutional capacity.

Assessment and Recommendations for Building Use

Based on our assessment of current conditions, needs, and assets at OHS, we have developed a usage scenario for allocating space among collections, staff, exhibitions, programming, and operations. It seeks to strike a balance among a range of institutional priorities, including improved collections storage, reduced fire risk, stronger financial and operational sustainability, staff offices consolidated in one space with better conditions, additional programming and

exhibition space to increase community relevancy, historical integrity of the OHS campus, and ADA accessibility.

In our usage scenario, we recommend that wherever possible, Tier 1-3 collections items should be stored on the main floors of buildings instead of in basements and attics. The addition of additional moisture control measures, fire suppression, and compact shelving as appropriate and cost effective will further improve collections storage conditions throughout the campus. We then recommend that all staff move to Vail, with the collections manager and archival research on the second floor and the rest of the staff on the first floor. Depending on how much funding is available, OHS could also consider an addition to Vail to increase its capacity to store collections. We recommend that Hallock and Red Barn should serve as storage for Tier 1-3 collections items, with Tier 4 and 5 collections items removed to the basements of Hallock and Vail while awaiting deaccession review, and the main floor of the Red Barn open to the public for viewing the fishing and farming items stored there. Village House should continue to present period boarding house rooms on the first floor with temporary exhibitions and some collections storage on the second floor, and Webb House should be enlivened with more dynamic exhibitions. With staff offices in Vail, The Old Point School House basement would become storage for exhibition cases and furniture and/or a buildings and grounds workshop, with the main floor continuing to serve as either dedicated exhibition or dedicated programming space (or a seasonal combination of both). Amanda Brown could potentially house a small permanent exhibition and/or could be used for smaller programs.

INTRODUCTION

The services of Rainey Tisdale (Tisdale) and Jan Hird Pokorny Associates (JHPA) were obtained by the Oysterponds Historical Society (OHS) to assess the current collections and evaluate site conditions in order to develop a set of recommendations for the OHS collections. The team brings extensive experience in the preservation and conservation practice of both historic buildings and historic collections. Between us we have worked with hundreds of museums and historical societies throughout this region and the US and have a deep understanding of the unique challenges that an organization like OHS faces on a daily basis. Approaching the project with the understanding that the buildings and even the campus are an integral part of the society's collections enables us to recommend a holistic approach in developing a realistic, executable plan to improve collections care and management.

In August 2018, Michael Devonshire and Kurt Hirschberg of JHPA performed the facilities assessment component of the study. From September to November 2018, Tisdale performed an assessment of current collections conditions and management practices. While the project was a collaborative effort, the bulk of the work focused on Tisdale's assessment of the collection; the last OHS collection assessment was performed nearly 30 years ago (in 1991 by Appelbaum and Himmelstein), whereas OHS's buildings have received more recent attention, most notably as part of the 2015-2016 master planning process. In September and November, all team members participated in joint reviews of the preliminary observations and initial recommendations. These investigations, in conjunction with consultations with OHS staff and committee members and layered with current accepted preservation and collections practice, were the basis for the findings and recommendations outlined in this report.

The report and appended supplementary materials can serve as the framework for new priorities and practices at OHS. The report will also enable OHS to decide on next steps and plan and budget for future stages.

Purpose

The principal purpose of this undertaking was to review the current collections and facilities, identify potential deficiencies and active threats, and determine appropriate modifications to building use in order for OHS to develop a comprehensive collections policy and plan that improves operations, collections storage capacity, and environmental conditions.

Background and History of Collections Planning at OHS

OHS identified the issue of adequate space for collections several years ago. But developing a full understanding—beyond the curatorial staff—of the collections themselves and of the priorities for caring for and using them has been a gradual process.

In 2015, under a grant from the Robert David Lion Gardiner Foundation, OHS hired Gluckman Tang to create a master plan for the society. The firm has extensive experience in designing museums and museum storage facilities internationally. They produced an exhaustive report in 2016 that was adopted by the trustees in their April 2016 meeting. It recommended building a new, state of the art collections storage facility, including space for staff offices and work space for collections care, preferably offsite in an undetermined location. They projected that OHS would require a 6,800 square foot building. They also outlined several possibilities for smaller onsite buildings, around 3,000 square feet, in the vicinity of the red barn, which would require a variance from the town of Southold. (A building under 2,000 square feet could be built as of right.) The master plan was based on a study of the space currently used for the existing collections, adding room for improved circulation, plus generous work space for staff and space for visiting researchers, plus room for growth. The scope of this study did not include reviewing the acquisitions or collections policies and practices.

Beginning in the fall of 2016, John Holzapfel and Elspeth Dowd then did further investigation of the issues concerning the collections. Dowd studied additions to the collections for the last five years and determined that some 70% have been paper, including photographs. She also reviewed the number of researchers that have come to OHS on an annual basis. (There was an average of 5.5 over 6 years, ranging from a high of 10 in 2013, and lows of 2 in 2014 and 2016). Dowd also looked more closely at some of the calculations for circulation and cubic footage.

Holzapfel recommended that the Society could utilize some spaces in the existing buildings for collections storage, in addition to which OHS would need to build a 2,500 square foot storage building. Dowd then suggested that by moving only high priority objects to a new facility and using compact storage, OHS would only need an additional 744 sq ft. (These projections did not include space for collections work and offices).

In parallel with their efforts, in 2017 OHS made a robust effort to acquire the Orient Methodist Church. While the goal of this campaign was to preserve the church as a community asset and the focus of efforts were on fundraising not on future uses, OHS was aware that the church building and property could, if acquired, be used for a range of OHS purposes, including potentially the construction of a supplemental structure. This effort was unsuccessful.

The 2016 master plan states that OHS has a collection comprising some 75,000 objects, a figure that has been used commonly by OHS during the last decade. This number was acknowledged at best as a "guesstimate." It also lumps the collections together, so one carriage is the same as one photograph. (And each photograph and document is counted as a single object, which is standard practice.) Since 2016 more of the collection has been cataloged, providing an opportunity to get closer and closer to a precise count of the size of the collection. While additional cataloging and records reconciling is needed before a truly accurate count can be obtained, the current estimate is roughly 30,000 items, significantly less than the 75,000 previously used by OHS. As noted above, this number includes every document and image in the OHS archive in addition to works of art, furniture, household objects, costumes, and vehicles.

The current study builds on all of this previous work. It recognizes that OHS has multiple collections, not one collection, and that these collections have different storage and conservation needs. This study also highlights, for the first time, that within each collection, some objects are essential, some important, some useful, and some unnecessary. At this juncture, OHS has sought an approach centered on the collections themselves, including the campus of buildings as part of the collection.

Therefore one of our assignments was to review the collections storage conditions in the current buildings, and to consider realistic ways to improve upon them and/or increase collections storage space, including a potential new building. In so doing, we were asked to produce an assessment that:

- Is more holistic and more detailed about the collection's role within the organization as a whole, the needs of the entire OHS campus, and how the collections can best serve OHS and the Oysterponds community
- Articulates a guiding philosophy for OHS's collections and buildings that can inform any board decision-making that will flow from this report

- Attends to the storage needs of and risks to specific categories of objects, with a better understanding of size and growth of the collections
- Assesses OHS in relation to other local historical societies to consider what is an appropriate approach to collections stewardship for an organization of OHS's type and size
- Reflects the ways the museum field has evolved its understanding of organizational and collections sustainability
- Asks what is the best use of each OHS building including space for collections, exhibitions, public programming, staff offices, and support functions
- Takes into account Vail House's vacant status and recommends best possible uses for this building in the context of OHS's overall collections and needs

All of the people who have worked on these problems over the last few years have shared the goal of insuring that OHS preserves its collections and serves a vital role in the Oysterponds community for the future. The specific issues are complicated, and there are no easy solutions. We hope that this study will help OHS more fully understand the current state of its collection and campus as well as the steps required to care for them responsibly and realistically, and make wise choices for the future.

Methodology

In conducting this assessment, we reviewed a number of previous OHS planning documents, including the 2016 and 2018 strategic plans and the 2016 master plan, and John Holzapfel and Elsbeth Dowd's previous collections planning materials. We also met with key board members, staff, and members of the Collections Committee and the Buildings and Grounds Committee.

Facilities Assessment:

The on-site assessment included a visual inspection of each of the built resources on the OHS campus. No investigative probes, removals, or monitoring were performed as part of the assessment.

An overall conditions assessment of the site was prepared previously during the 2016 master planning effort. Building conditions noted at that time were revisited but are not noted as part of this report unless they are directly impacting collections, building use, or programming.

Collections Assessment:
Activities included administering a questionnaire about the collection (adapted from the American Alliance of Museums collections assessment program) that was completed jointly by Elsbeth Dowd, Amy Folk, and Bill McNaught; conducting visual inspections of collections storage and exhibition areas with follow-up investigation of any issues of concern; and reviewing the collections database and collections policies.

DEVELOPING A COLLECTIONS PHILOSOPHY FOR OHS

Stewardship of historic buildings and collections is a complicated undertaking that requires juggling competing priorities and adapting best-practice ideals to suit the realities of each institution. Such an undertaking goes much more smoothly if there is an overarching philosophy that can guide decision-making. We have worked with OHS to build consensus around the philosophy outlined below. This philosophy flows from recent changes in how historical societies and museums think about and manage their collections, brought about in part by shifts in society at large and in part by new discussions within the field as to how museums best serve the public and why they collect. Those changes include:

- a greater focus on economic and environmental sustainability
- a trend away from encyclopedic local collections (two of everything ever produced or owned in our community) toward collections of individual objects that are beautiful or powerful or meaningful without needing to be comprehensive
- a trend away from the assumption that every item is of equal importance and worthy of equal care toward an understanding that collections represent a range of value and significance, and therefore can and should be sorted into tiers of significance.
- Focusing on deeply local objects versus national objects that happen to have been owned locally
- collecting *just in time* for a specific planned exhibition project instead of collecting *just in case* a need for that object might arise at some point in the distant future
- increasing recognition of the ongoing cost of holding an object in a collection beyond its initial acquisition cost, including space, climate control, staff time to catalogue, inspect and conserve
- a new understanding of museums' role in relation to hyperconsumerism, as many Americans find themselves drowning in too much stuff and need help developing healthier relationships with their own personal collections of objects

Informed by these new approaches, we have reached a consensus with staff and the Collections Committee on the following collections philosophy for OHS:

The Buildings and Grounds are part of OHS's Collection

The physical campus and buildings at OHS carry the same intrinsic value as individual artifacts in the collection, and define what OHS means to the community as the organization that

preserves the history and culture of Orient and East Marion. The process of collecting built resources to preserve their value to local history is a cornerstone of OHS's history. The overall campus, specifically the open space between the buildings, is also an important part of OHS's historical work as it maintains the overall character, scale, and proportion of the Oysterponds community and historic district. OHS's duty to care for its buildings and landscape goes hand and hand with its duty to care for its collection.

Relevancy to the Community

Historical societies and museums hold their collections in the public trust, and therefore any and every collections stewardship decision must be made with the institution's public audience—in this case residents of Orient and East Marion—in mind. There is no point collecting at all unless the collections are meeting a community need. For OHS, the collections meet a community need when they help everyone in the community root more deeply in this place, understand more clearly what it means to live here, and connect more meaningfully with each other. As we conducted this assessment we spent a lot of time thinking about the ways the organization could do this work even more effectively.

Preservation vs Access

Holding collections in the public trust requires a constant balance between preservation and access. If preservation were the only concern, OHS would put the entire collection in an underground vault and never open the door. If access were the only concern, OHS would invite residents to handle and use the entire collection until it deteriorates beyond repair. Instead of these two extremes, OHS needs approaches that allow for a realistic amount of preservation balanced against a realistic amount of access for both staff and members of the public. Recommendations in this report seek to strike that balance, within the context of existing best practices for local historical societies.

Institutional capacity and sustainability

Throughout this report, we refer to what is realistic for an organization of OHS's size and structure. Established best practices present a raft of ideal scenarios for the care and management of historic collections, but many of these ideals are simply not achievable for an organization of OHS's size and resources. Indeed, we have yet to encounter a local historical society anywhere in the country that is fully meeting standards for collections and building care. Best practices must be adapted for each individual organization: the goals and strategies a major art museum

sets for its collection would not be appropriate at a local historical society, and vice versa. OHS does need to make improvements, but it does not need to be perfect. In this assessment we have worked to address what is appropriate for the OHS collection relative to other collecting institutions of this size and type as well as OHS's other organizational priorities. Whatever collections projects OHS undertakes should leave the institution in a better position for institutional sustainability instead of creating new risks in terms of staffing, financial, and other resources.

Risk Management

Collecting institutions have to balance many different kinds of risks, including theft, fire, flood, vandalism, fluctuations and extremes in temperature and humidity, light, pests, damage due to handling, and human error. It is impossible to bring risk to zero in all areas, and in fact it is generally unrealistic for small institutions with limited resources to reduce risk even to minimal levels. Therefore institutions like OHS face hard choices: if you cannot minimize all risks, what should your priorities be in order to best serve your community?

Different Types of Collections

Objects are not created equally, and neither are buildings. They have different needs based on material, condition, age, and method of fabrication. For example,

- glass and ceramic objects hold up quite well in the face of significant temperature, humidity, light, pests, and the oils on human hands but they break very easily and can be heavy; therefore you can store them in spaces without tight climate controls and touch them without gloves, but you must be careful to protect them from unsturdy shelving, knocking against each other, or unnecessary handling.
- Meanwhile textiles are relatively light and would likely survive being dropped, but they are susceptible to humidity, temperature fluctuations, light, pests, the oils on human hands, and creasing, and in general their fragility increases with age. They need to be handled with gloves, checked regularly for pests, and housed in archival-quality boxes with tissue padding out any folds, in a space with climate control—a good thing to store on the second floor, because in their boxes they aren't so hard to carry up and down stairs.
- Meanwhile, a building like Village House has a higher level of historic sensibility than, for example, Hallock, requiring greater sensitivity to its historic fabric and making more extensive modifications to improve collections storage inappropriate.

Therefore allocating various spaces across the OHS campus for both collections needs and other organizational uses must be carefully evaluated against specific attributes and requirements of each building. In this assessment we have taken into account these differences in type and sensitivity wherever possible, advocating for case-by-case strategies instead of a one-size-fits-all approach.

Climate Change

The museum field is in the process of adapting to the realities of climate change and shifting best practices accordingly. This means new attention to rising sea levels for coastal museums (a concern OHS is already well aware of) as well as new choices concerning collections and building preservation. The field is increasingly concerned about the carbon footprint of its best practices: the extra energy required to maintain tight temperature and humidity controls, manufacture special archival materials for housing collections, and build custom exhibitry for displaying collections, as well as the climate burden of ever-increasing collections and buildings as opposed to "big enough" collections and building footprints. Therefore it is important with this assessment to set up OHS for stewardship choices that will contribute not only to organizational sustainability but also to climate sustainability.

Healthy Collections Need Regular Weeding

In the same way that a healthy garden requires weeding in order for plants to thrive, collections require continuous review and judicious deaccessioning in order to ensure their sustainability and relevance. No previous generation of collections stewards—here at OHS or at any other collecting institution—has ever gotten it exactly right in deciding what to acquire. Therefore it is not only appropriate but also necessary for the current generation (which includes staff, board, and volunteers), with the benefit of 20-20 hindsight, to reassess those decisions in light of current community needs and current historical knowledge while being mindful of donor intent, community history, and practical concerns.

Not Every Object is Worth its Preservation Cost

Even when an item is donated, it is not free. Each item in the collection requires an annual allocation of staff time (to research, catalog, inventory, and care for it), as well as an annual allocation of hard costs (for utilities, maintenance of facilities, insurance, shelving, archival boxes) to store it in perpetuity. Just as collection items have different needs based on material, condition, age, and method of fabrication, they also have different levels of historical

significance and community relevance. While some items in OHS's collection are worth the annual cost of their preservation ten times over, at the opposite end of the spectrum there are objects in the collection that simply don't have enough community significance to warrant this allocation. And since local historical societies like OHS have limited resources, the burden of preserving the items of limited significance often detracts from the organization's ability to preserve the items of true value.

Laying a Foundation: Developing Collections Scope and Priorities

During our engagement we took several key steps to translate this new collections philosophy into policy and implementation.

New Collecting Scope Statement

A collecting scope statement is one component of an overall collections management policy and defines what an institution does and does not collect. Like many local historical societies, OHS has been operating with a broad collecting scope that encourages the institution to collect anything and everything with some connection to Oysterponds:

> "The By-Laws of the Oysterponds Historical Society state that 'The Oysterponds Historical Society preserves and interprets the heritage of Orient and East Marion (formerly Oysterponds) by maintaining a museum that collects, preserves, and exhibits artifacts pertaining to Oysterponds history and life; by maintaining a research library of material relevant to Oysterponds history; by providing cultural opportunities through educational and public programs and activities; and by promoting an interest in the history of Oysterponds.' The collections of the Society must, therefore, include artifacts and archival materials that pertain to the history and culture of this area from its earliest settlement to the present time. Objects and materials outside the geographic parameters of the Society's collections may be included for purposes of research, comparison, or as representative examples of styles, types, or forms."

With such a broad collecting scope, it becomes easy to collect indiscriminately and to lose focus on the collection's relevance to the community. Therefore Tisdale worked with OHS to develop a new collecting scope statement to help clarify which objects are most meaningful to the Oysterponds community.

This new collecting statement identifies the themes that matter most to Oysterponders as they seek to connect to this place and to each other, themes like how Oysterponders each found their way here, what it means to live close to the land and the sea, the patterns and rituals of community life, and the ways Oysterponds inspires creativity. The Collections Committee has approved this statement as a working draft and has begun using it in acquisition and deaccession decision-making. See Appendix A for the full text of the new collecting scope statement.

Collections Tiering System

Once a meaningful collecting scope statement has been developed, each item in the collection can be more clearly understood in terms of how well it satisfies the collecting scope. Tiering a collection in relation to the collecting scope makes it easier to understand which items are most directly serving the institution's mission so that time and resources can be apportioned accordingly. Kentucky Historical Society is a leader in this approach and has developed a model for tiering historical collections.

Using this model as a guide, Tisdale worked with OHS to develop a five-tier system for the OHS collection, captured in a one-page chart. Items in Tier 1 have very significant historical value for Oysterponds and strong provenance, can be used to tell multiple powerful stories, and are rare or irreplaceable—in short, they have the highest relevance to the Oysterponds community. Meanwhile Tier 5 objects have limited or no historical value and provenance, and can only be used to play a minor role in telling Oysterponds stories. The Collections Committee has approved the new tiering chart as a working draft, and has begun using it in collections discussions and decision-making. As of March 2019, an item's tier is taken into account when the Collections Committee considers potential acquisitions, and Tier 5 items no longer even make it to committee review. Ideally going forward OHS would assign tiers to each collection item to assist in more effective collections planning, although this is a long-term undertaking that will require several years of gradual implementation. Throughout our assessment, we considered these tiers in making recommendations for collections storage and care. Clearly items in Tiers 1 to 3, whatever their particular qualities, need higher quality storage conditions than items in Tiers 4 and 5, which may eventually be deaccessioned in a thoughtful manner.

Collections Tier Chart

	Tier 1	Tier 2	Tier 3	Tier 4	Tier 5
signficance	Very Significant to Oysterponds; Strong provenance (like a local makers mark)	Significant historical value to Oysterponds; moderate provenance to area (owned by a chain of local people/strong ties)	Historical value to location in Oysterponds; limited provenance (plausible but tenuous tie)	Historical value to other locations - no Oysterponds connection other than donor	Limited or no historical value; limited or no provenance
Use	Tells multiple powerful stories about Oysterponds	Could be used to tell multiple powerful stories about the area	Plays a supporting role in telling stories about the area	May play a supporting role or illustrate a concept, but is not the focus	Plays minor role
uniqueness	No similar items or duplicate in this or other collections	Few similar examples in this or other collections	Similar examples are held in this or other collections	common in this or other collections	Not applicable
replaceable	Rare, likely irreplaceable	Uncommon and difficult to replace	Moderately difficult to replace	Moderate to easy to replace	Not applicable
Example	WSD photograph collection	Dominic DiLorenzo painting	BC Tuthill silver	Civil War Flag	nutmeg grater

Preliminary Discussions about Deaccessioning

With the new tiering system in place, we have started discussions with staff and the Collections Committee regarding the eventual deaccession of any collection items that are identified as Tier 5, as well as eventually some Tier 4 items, particularly duplicates. These preliminary discussions have addressed in broad brush strokes what it would take and how OHS would go about it. Deaccessioning would be a multi-year effort, and OHS would start slowly, with items that staff and collections committee can very easily and quickly reach consensus are Tier 5 and not worth their annual cost of preservation. Then as the staff build shared language and more fine-tuned judgment, the organization would move on to consider items where consensus is a little more difficult, gradually increasing decision-making capacity around deaccessioning. In all cases, following standard best practice in the museum field, the OHS board must approve any Collections Committee recommendations for deaccessioning. As a first test of this process, at the

March 2019 board meeting OHS voted to deaccession several baskets in poor condition with little historical significance. OHS also voted to transfer a dresser with a Greenport family name to the Stirling Historical Society. And the Collections Committee is currently exploring the possibility of deaccessioning a few of the carriages and sleighs with little connection to Oysterponds.

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION & ASSESSMENT

What OHS Is Doing Well

Because this assessment may feel overwhelming in terms of the complexity of collections and buildings needs and the amount of work required to address them, we want to start with some good news. Overall, OHS is doing reasonably well in comparison to other local historical societies of its size and type; indeed we have seen many local history collections and buildings in much worse shape.

OHS's successes include the following:

- A Collections Committee and a Buildings & Grounds Committee meet regularly to provide oversight.
- The Buildings & Grounds Committee has been diligent in maintaining the existing structures and identifying and repairing deficiencies as they arise (in fact they have been very responsive in addressing the issues we uncovered during our site visits in fall 2018, such that we have had to update this report several times to reflect their progress!).
- Repairs and alterations to existing buildings have generally been performed in a very sensitive manner, maintaining the historic value of each structure.
- The staff is dedicated, knowledgeable and professional about collections best practices, and have made significant improvements in collections care and management over the years despite limited time and resources.
- Core policies and documents are in place to manage the collections.
- Key buildings have security systems (Village House, Old Point Schoolhouse, Hallock, Webb) and some degree of climate control (Village House, Old Point Schoolhouse, Hallock, Webb, Vail).

- The staff has investigated common hazards to humans found in collections (loaded firearms, toxic chemicals used in taxidermy) and, except for a minimal issue with cellulose nitrate negatives (discussed further below), has resolved any major risks.
- Many parts of the collections are already housed in archival quality boxes or bags, on archival quality shelving.
- Except for some minor discrepancies, all collections items have unique numbers for tracking.
- A significant portion of the collection has been documented in an electronic collections database using PastPerfect, the industry standard software for local historical societies.
- Back-up copies of the collections database are being stored off-site to prevent the loss of electronic collections information.
- The majority (80%) of the glass-plate negatives have been digitized.

Bravo to all OHS staff and volunteers past and present who have contributed their time and effort to care for the collections through the implementation of these key measures. As OHS prepares to undertake new projects in the next few years, take heart in how much you have already accomplished together.

The Campus

Figure 1: ***Location Plan*** Oysterponds Historical Society Buildings

Physical Description:

The Oysterponds Historical Society campus is located within the Orient Historic District, on Village Lane, the district's main thoroughfare. It is surrounded by historic houses, most dating to the 19th century, within walking distance of the shoreline. OHS's seven buildings, which together make up the OHS campus, are in keeping with the age, scale, and density of Village Lane and provide a quaint, welcoming environment with ample breathing room surrounding the historic resources. Unlike some "museum villages" where visitors can clearly tell that buildings were moved to the site and artificially arranged; the OHS campus conveys the character of an authentic collection of buildings that developed organically over time, much like the rest of Orient Village.

Assessment:
The current campus configuration presents five challenges to the Society. The first is wayfinding. The new visitor is clearly drawn to Village House and the Old Point Schoolhouse, but it is not clear that the other buildings are part of OHS' collection. In fact, only one of those buildings is open to the public, but there is no interpretive signage for the other buildings explaining their historical significance to the community. Signage needs to be carefully designed and integrated to blend with the surrounding environs while still providing important information to visitors.

A second challenge is Webb House. Its location, removed from the campus proper, impacts its visitorship, and in some respects its potential appeal as an exhibition and program space. To the casual visitor it reads as a separate—and remote—entity. While signage and wayfinding can help improve this, ultimately Webb needs a strong exhibition and program presence to draw the public in, while still working within the intent of its original donor.

The third challenge is one that is intrinsically tied into what makes Oysterponds so unique: the surrounding water. High ground water coupled with tidal flooding ensures that any sub-grade constructs may be continually damp if not wet. Unfortunately these are "prime" spaces in many buildings. Improvements to site drainage and installation of commercial dehumidification will greatly help restrain the natural moisture issues plaguing the site, but ultimately this will always present an issue.

Fourth, as with many historical society campuses with older buildings that have been repurposed, ADA access is complicated and limited. While OHS has made progress in increasing accessibility over the years by adding ramps and an alternate video experience for the second floor exhibitions in Village House, a comprehensive ADA accessibility assessment and planning study should be considered for long-term, site-wide ADA improvements.

And lastly, while the buildings each play some role in the day-to-day work of the Society, the outdoor green spaces are not used effectively as part of the society's public programming and present a lost opportunity. The Village House patio and the large "green" to the north of the Old Point Schoolhouse are particularly underutilized.

Village House

Physical Description:
Village House is arguably the "face" of the Oysterponds Historical Society to the general public. Built in 1798 with extensive renovations occurring in the mid-nineteenth century, Village House is original to the site, adding significantly to its historical provenance.

Current Use:
The building is open to the public during the summer season. The first floor of Village House consists primarily of period interpreted rooms supplemented with a gift shop, a room used to show visitors with mobility issues a video of the second floor galleries, and a public restroom (Rooms 12, 8 and 11 respectively). The second floor consists of exhibition galleries (Rooms 3-9) and storage spaces (Rooms 1 and 11-14). The attic space houses HVAC equipment and light storage of non-collections materials.

Photo No. 1: One of the period-interpreted rooms on the first floor of Village House

Photo No. 2: One of the temporary exhibition galleries on the second floor of Village House

First Floor Square Footage: 2,310
Second Floor Square Footage: 1,600
Total Square Footage: 3,960

Current Use First Floor

Current Use Second Floor

Current Use Legend

Unused Spaces
(0 SF)
Office/Administration Spaces
(0 SF)
Collections Workrooms/Curatorial Spaces
(223 SF)
Retail
(82 SF)
Flexible Programming
(0 SF)
Exhibit/Gallery
(926 SF)
Period Rooms
(2,049 SF)
Non-Collections Storage
(172 SF)
Collections Storage
(508 SF)

Village House

Current Conditions:
Village House is in very good overall condition. There are active water infiltration/drainage issues at the southwest corner of the house that are currently in the process of being addressed, but once these are resolved and resultant interior finishes are repaired, remedial efforts can be limited to routine maintenance.

The house features a full climate control system that appears to be in proper functioning condition. In general, during each site visit the climate conditions within the building were the most stable of any building on-site with the exception of Hallock. Village House is fitted with a full alarm system (intrusion, smoke and heat), with central monitoring capability. There is no fire suppression system. The first floor of Village House is ADA accessible but the second floor is not.

Use Assessment:

In general, the first floor programming is appropriate for the house and its historic significance and is well executed, although it could be further distinguished from other area historic houses if its distinctive features as a boarding house were enhanced even further (for example by displaying the trunk collection). Because the second floor is not ADA accessible, a room on the first floor (62 square feet) presents the exhibition galleries in digital format for handicapped visitors. This room is underutilized. In addition, OHS should reevaluate the effectiveness of the first floor gift shop. Currently the amount of annual revenue from its sales is insignificant. The room where it is currently housed (142 square feet) at the back of Village House complicates volunteer docent staffing (currently four docents are required to adequately staff OHS during open hours). Moreover, because this room has a relatively stable climate and is ADA accessible; it could better serve OHS as a space to exhibit additional portions of the collection.

The second floor exhibition galleries are thoughtfully presented and work well. The remainder of the second floor, representing approximately 50% of the floor area, is used for collections storage. While the staff have worked to organize these areas, making improvements in how items are stored, additional reconfiguration could make these areas even more efficient.

The attic space is appropriate for its current non-collections storage usage; it would not be appropriate for collections storage.

Photo No. 3: The gift shop located at the rear addition is out of the circulation path of the house, limiting foot traffic.

Photo No. 4: Some of the storage areas on the second floor could be reorganized for greater efficiency.

Old Point Schoolhouse

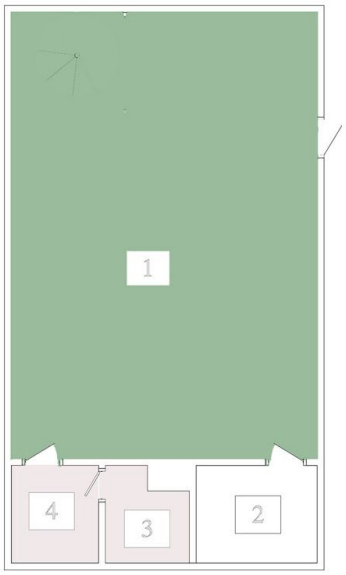
Physical Description:
The Old Point Schoolhouse is the structure with the second-highest visibility to the public and potential visitors. Built in 1873 near Orient Point, the building was in use as a school until 1930. The building was donated to the Society by Edwin King in 1949 and moved to its current location.

Current Use:
The basement of the Old Point Schoolhouse is a large common office space (Room 1) with light storage (Rooms 3-4). The first floor is open to the public during the summer season. The main room is used for exhibitions, educational programming, and the annual holiday gift shop (Room 6) with a public restroom to the south (Room 5). The attic is used for storage of lightweight non-collections material and artifacts.

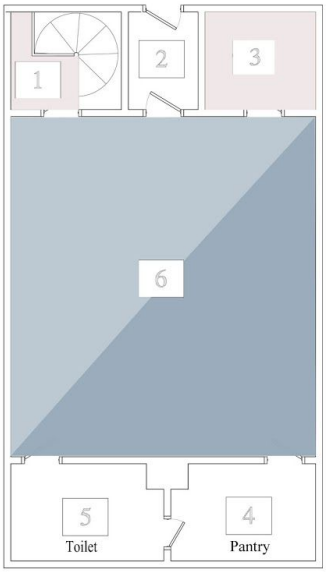
Photo No. 5: The first floor features an open gallery/exhibit space.

Photo No. 6: The attic houses a variety of light storage items.

Square Footage of Each Floor: 965
Total Square Footage: 1,930



Current Use Basement



Current Use First Floor

Current Use Legend

Unused Spaces
(0 SF)
Office/Administration Spaces
(702 SF)
Collections Workrooms/Curatorial Spaces
(0 SF)

Retail
(0 SF)
Flexible Programming
(269 SF)
Exhibit/Gallery
(269 SF)
Period Rooms
(0 SF)

Non-Collections Storage
(164 SF)
Collections Storage
(0 SF)

Old Point Schoolhouse

Current Conditions:
The building itself is in good condition, only requiring routine maintenance. The control of water/moisture, however, is a chronic problem. The basement is damp and has flooded several times. When we conducted our site visits in the fall of 2018, the stair drain appeared to be minimally effective, the rear utility room was wet, and the window wells were not draining properly. In further conversations we have learned that the window wells have been prioritized and addressed, which is good news. Nonetheless the sub-grade drainage system will likely continue to be a problem area that would benefit from reconfiguration to properly direct moisture from the building. Even with modifications, any drainage system is susceptible to tidal waters.

The Old Point Schoolhouse has a central heating system with air conditioning provided by window units. The basement requires a commercial dehumidification system to properly control

moisture levels. The window air conditioners are over-taxed trying to control the excessive humidity, and excessive moisture can result in conditions conducive to mold growth.

The first floor is fitted with heat/smoke detection as well as intrusion. The basement only has intrusion sensors. The alarm system has central monitoring. There is no fire suppression system. For ADA accessibility to the first floor, there is a ramp at the back of the building, but there is not a paved pathway to access the ramp. The basement level is not ADA accessible. With the addition of paving adjacent to the rear ramp, the first floor accessibility would be significantly improved. Given the height change at the basement level, accessibility to this floor is unrealistic.

Use Assessment:
The communal office in the basement does not have a modern office environment and lacks space for private meetings or phone calls. The open floor plan of the first floor makes it suitable for its current use for exhibitions. The first floor space also lends itself to multi-use programming, but it cannot adequately serve both these purposes at the same time, as sometimes happens now when children's programs take place there during an exhibition and both feel crowded. Access to the attic is unsafe and therefore this space should no longer be used for storage of any kind. If access were improved it could be used for storage of non-collections items, but it is unlikely to be worth the cost and effort to do so.

Photo No. 7: The communal office space affords no privacy. The basement space is quite damp.

Photo No. 8: The window wells are a weak spot in water drainage management, despite recent improvements.

Amanda Brown Schoolhouse:

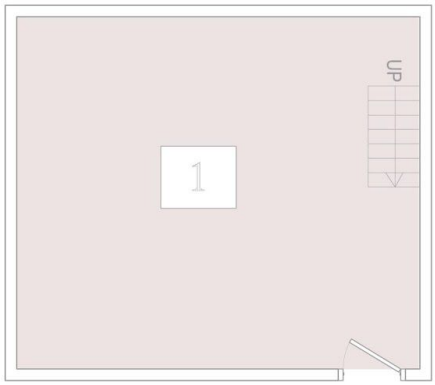
Physical Description:
Once part of a larger residence; this building was used as a private school taught by the Brown sisters in the mid-nineteenth century. The building was moved twice, to the grounds of the Orient Point Inn in 1939 and then to the Oysterponds campus in 1971. The building was fitted with a large cooking hearth in the 1980s. Of all the buildings on the campus, the Amanda Brown Schoolhouse has the least historical integrity, as the interior has undergone extensive renovations from its original detailing.

Current Use:
The original intent for the building when it was moved to the OHS campus was to house cooking demonstrations. During our site visits in fall 2018 the first floor of the schoolhouse was used for mixed storage of artifacts and non-collections materials, but since that time much of the first floor has been cleared out. The attic is used for light storage of non-collections materials. The building is not currently used for public programming or exhibitions.

Photo No. 9: The first floor houses a variety of general storage items, and some collections items.

Photo No. 10: The attic is used primarily for seasonal storage.

First Floor Square Footage: 267
Attic Square Footage: 267
Total Square Footage: 534



Current Use

CurrentUse Legend

Unused Spaces
(0 SF)
Office/Administration Spaces
(0 SF)
Collections Workrooms/Curatorial Spaces
(0 SF)
Retail
(0 SF)
Flexible Programming
(0 SF)
Exhibit/Gallery
(0 SF)
Period Rooms
(0 SF)
Non-Collections Storage
(267 SF)
Collections Storage
(0 SF)

Amanda Brown Schoolhouse

Current Conditions:
The schoolhouse is in good overall condition. The lack of a vapor barrier (beneath the floor, on-grade) has permitted moisture infiltration through the flooring, which will eventually cause rotting. This can be easily remedied by lifting floor boards as necessary to facilitate installation of a sheet plastic vapor barrier below. The entry door lock requires repair to function properly. The attic floor framing is light and any additional loading in the attic should be avoided.

The building has no climate control system, no alarm system, and no fire suppression system. The building is not currently ADA accessible. While a small ramp could improve access into the building, the existing door would need to be widened to permit full ADA compliance.

Use Assessment:
Recently the first floor has been used as an overflow storage space for items in transition throughout the OHS campus: decorations on their way to the holiday shop, some collections items with no other clear place to go, etc. It is easy for this overflow storage to become unorganized and it is a poor utilization of the space available. Because of its size and lack of

climate control, and for security issues, this building is not suitable for collections storage but it could be used as a space for public programs or exhibitions with reproduction photographs (the building does not have adequate climate control for original collections items).

The current use of the attic as non-collections storage works for the space and can continue, as long as the items stored there do not exceed weight load capacity.

Webb House

Physical Description:
Originally built around 1740 in Greenport, Webb House was moved ca. 1810, and then moved again to its current site in 1955. The building features a small garage structure located to the west of the house. The house was transferred to OHS in the 1980s. The deed stipulated:

> "The historical society shall maintain the said house, grounds, and the contents in good condition and open said house and grounds to the public at such times of the year and such days and hours to be designated by the said historical society...The Webb House and its furnishings shall be kept separate and distinct from the OHS museum and its properties."

Also, Webb House has its own maintenance fund, as specified when the building was transferred to OHS:

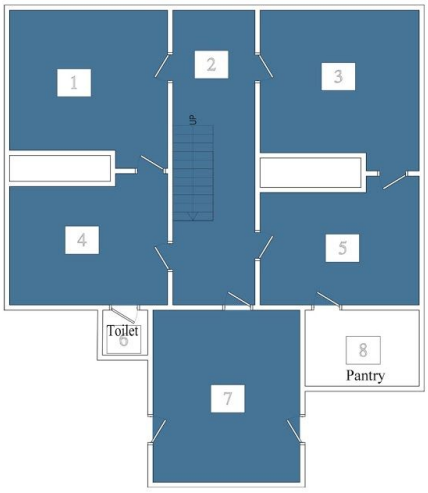
> "The income from this stock [1,000 shares of American Telephone and Telegraph Co.] is to be deposited in a separate checking account entitled "Oysterponds Historical Society, Inc. Webb House Maintenance Fund" and the said income is to be used solely to assist in maintaining and keeping in repair the said Webb House and outbuildings thereon and the furniture and personal possessions contained therein. Also to make whatever additions and/or substitutions to the contents as the Committee[1] of said Society (hereinafter named), in their judgment, may deem appropriate."

Current Use:
The building is open to the public during the summer season. The basement is used solely for HVAC equipment. The first floor consists of six period-interpreted rooms whose furnishings have remained fixed for many years. There is also a public restroom and kitchenette on the first floor. The second floor features three period-interpreted rooms and an additional room that has been functioning as a storage space (although efforts are underway to clear it out). The attic is currently used for storage of some miscellaneous collections items that are probably Tier 5. The

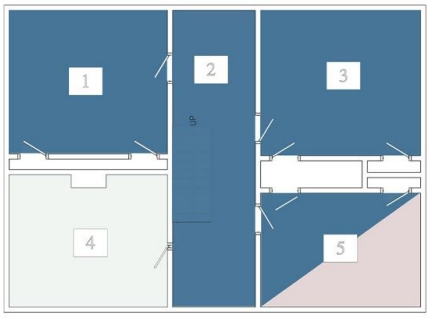
[1] The Webb House Committee referred to above is today folded in with the Collections Committee. It is made up of the President of the Society and three other people, one of whom is knowledgeable about early houses and furnishings.

detached garage structure is used for storage of non-collections materials (shutters, mantle pieces) as well as parts of an ice boat that is in the collection.

Basement Square Footage: 1,445
First Floor Square Footage: 1,490
Second Floor Square Footage: 1,105
Attic Floor Square Footage: 1,000
Total Square Footage: 5,040

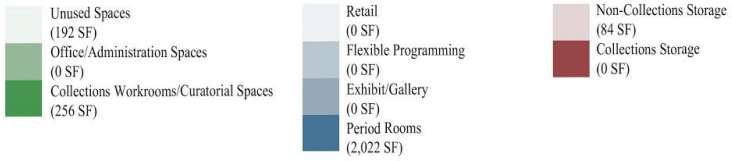


Current Use First Floor



Current Use Second Floor

Current Use Legend



Webb House

Current Conditions:
Webb House is in generally good condition. The roofing, gutters, and fascia all exhibit some level of deterioration and will require remedial repair; the roofing is particularly in poor repair. It is our understanding as of the date of our assessment that these repairs are underway: RFPs have been collected from roofing companies, a bid has been approved by the Buildings & Grounds

Committee and will be submitted for board approval soon. The work is scheduled to be completed in fall 2019.

The high moisture levels in the basement are resulting in active decay of wood elements at the floor above. Vapor transmission through the floors is resulting in condensation and mold on interior finishes throughout the house. Storm windows with no provision for ventilation are further exacerbating moisture issues within the house; modifications to these storm windows to allow some, albeit minimal, air exchange would improve the overall building environment. The basement needs to be fitted with a commercial grade dehumidification system and a vapor barrier installed between the basement and the first floor to control fluctuating moisture levels resulting from tidal-water infiltration. The garage is also very damp.

The second-floor rooms all have some degree of deflection of the floor framing. While this is minor, public occupancy on these floors should be kept to a minimum (less than 5 persons at any time) at the front corner rooms as the current floor framing exhibits moderate deflection.

The house has a central HVAC system, but the system appears to over-cool the interior while struggling to control interior humidity. The lack of adequate separation between the first floor and second floor results in uneven temperature control. Having the system properly balanced will permit better control and uniformity within the interior both with temperature and humidity.

The house is fitted with an intrusion, heat, and smoke detection system wired to a central monitoring station. There is no fire suppression system. The building has a handicap ramp to the front porch but no paved path to the ramp.

Use Assessment:
Excessive moisture and tidal flooding render the basement of the house unusable. The current program of period rooms on the first and second floors has become static and needs a new creative approach to draw more visitors to the house. One room on the second floor has been functioning as a storage space; while this room seems underutilized, holes in the floor make it inappropriate as public space unless the floor is fixed (we understand that work is currently underway to repair the floor). The heat load within the attic renders it unsuitable for storage of historic material. The environment in the Webb garage is inappropriate for collections storage, although it can be used for storage of non-collections items or maintenance equipment. The ice

boat should be removed from the garage and relocated to a designated collections storage area (the Red Barn is the most appropriate place for it).

Photo No. 11: The basement is very wet from condensation, tidal flooding, and general humidity.

Photo No. 12: The period-interpreted rooms are well executed but have gotten stale.

Red Barn

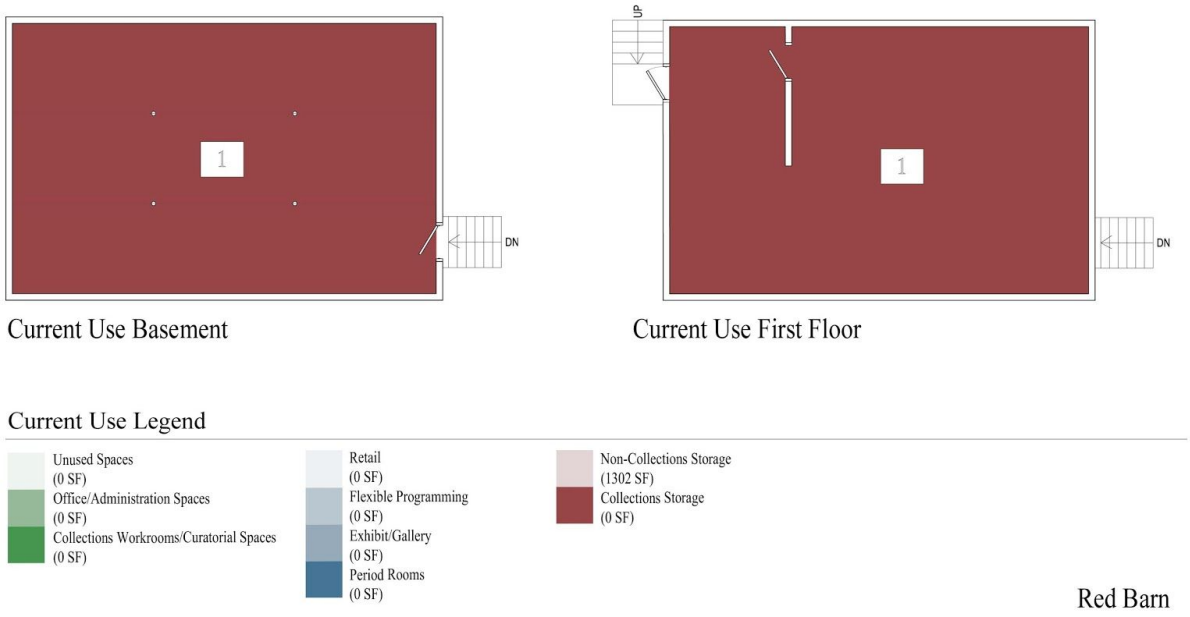
Physical Description:
The Red Barn was built originally as a storage shed located on the Orient wharf. It was moved to its current location by the Youngs family and used as a seine barn. OHS subsequently purchased the barn and the property under it. It then served as a replica general store for many years.

Current Use:
The first floor of the Red Barn is currently used to store large collection items, specifically carriages, wagons, and sleighs, with some additional collection items (scythes and other tools) stored in the rafters. The cellar is used for storage of large artifacts and tools that were originally made for outdoor use.

Photo No. 13: The exterior of the red barn was recently restored and is in good overall condition.

Photo No. 14: The main floor could be made ADA compliant with the addition of a ramp towards the rear of the barn.

Square Footage of Each Floor: 560
Total Square Footage: 1,120



Current Conditions:
The Red Barn is in good overall condition. During our fall 2018 site visits we identified an area of the foundation that requires repointing, and some wood elements around the foundation that were exposed and needed to be painted. The Buildings & Grounds Committee has already followed up on the painting concurrent with the preparation of this study.

The basement is overly damp, which will accelerate deterioration of metal and wooden collections items stored within this space. The space should be fitted with a commercial dehumidification system to control the overall environment. The building does not require heat and air conditioning as long as the artifacts stored here continue to be ones that were made for outdoor use (fishing and farming equipment, try pots, etc.).

The first floor space has an automatic exhaust fan for ventilation that should be on continuously during hot weather, whether or not people are in the building. During our August 2018 site visit the exhaust fan was off and the overall conditions in the space were excessively hot, not suitable for the preservation of the vehicles stored in the barn.

There is no climate control system within the building, and it is not currently ADA accessible. Given the floor elevation changes from grade to the first and basement levels, accessibility will be very difficult to achieve without significant regrading and the addition of a substantial ramp.

Use Assessment:
In the basement, collections items are stored with non-collections items; they should be separated to avoid confusion.

The tightness of the current layout on the first floor, which is packed with horsedrawn vehicles, prevents these from being fully visible to the public, a lost opportunity from an exhibition standpoint. (The building is not currently open to the public.) OHS would be better served by deaccessioning two to three of the vehicles with the least historical significance to Oysterponds to create enough circulation space for the first floor to be open to visitors (the Collections Committee is currently exploring this possibility). Several sections of wall on the first floor bear the signatures of former Oysterponders. These signatures add significantly to the sense of place in the Red Barn and should be preserved.

Photo No. 15: The basement storage area is damp.

Photo No. 16: The collection pieces on the first floor are cramped, limiting access for proper display.

Photo No. 17: Objects in the basement would benefit from shelving for better organization.

Photo No. 18: The historic signatures on the wall of Red Barn's main floor should be protected.

Hallock Building

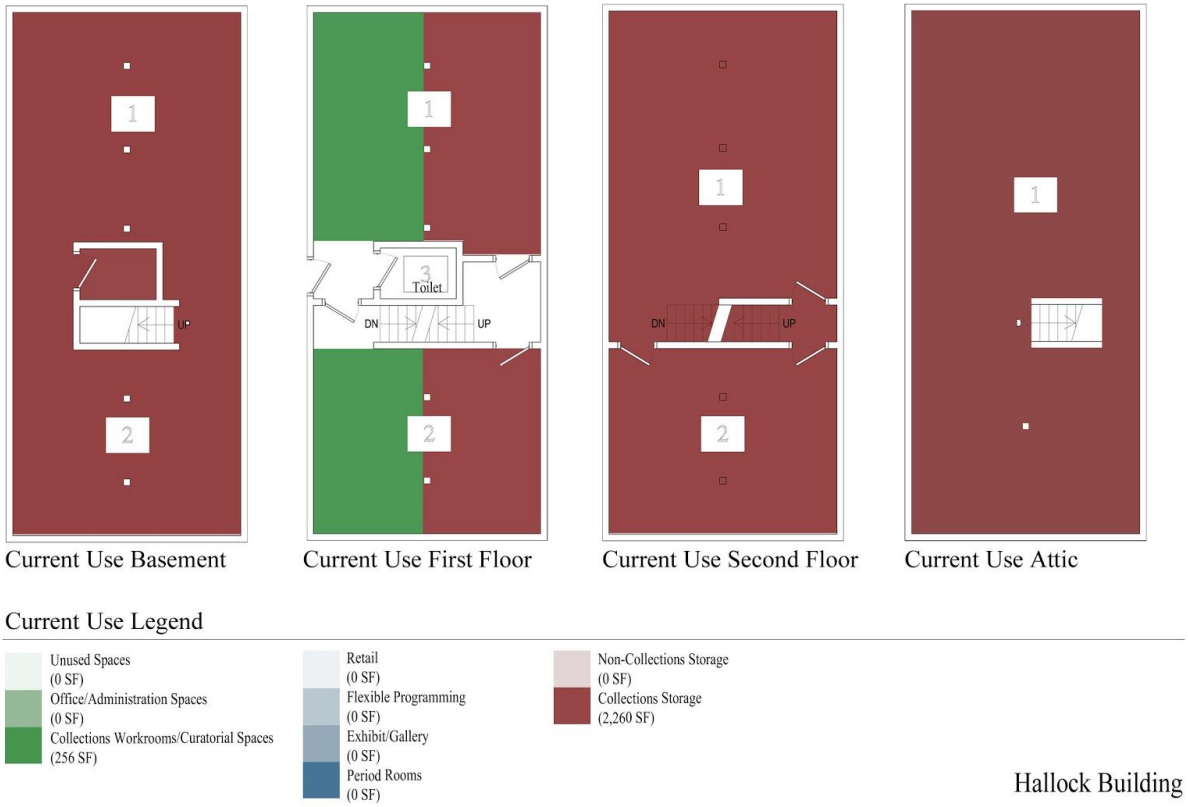
Physical Description:
Constructed in 1891 as a support building for the Hallock Farm, the structure was moved to the OHS campus in 1960 and has undergone several renovations, including extensive re-framing and reinforcements. At one point this building served as OHS exhibition space.

Current Use:
The Hallock Building is used as OHS's primary collections storage facility, with workspaces for OHS's curator and collections manager. The basement is used for collections storage, including ceramics, glass, baskets, and tools. The first floor features the research library, workspaces, a small restroom, and archival storage. The second floor is solely used for collections storage. Storage consists of metal and wood shelving as well as rolling storage units in the corridors. The attic space is also used for storage, largely of wooden artifacts.

Photo No. 19: The first floor houses the research library as well as curatorial offices and storage.

Photo No. 20: The second-floor spaces house a significant portion of the collection.

Square Footage of Each Floor: 750
Total Square Footage: 3,000



Conditions:
The Hallock Building is in good overall condition. The general environment in the basement is more humid than the upper floors, but not to the extreme of other basements on-site. The open sump-pit and the undersized dehumidifier are both contributing to this condition.

The weight loads on the floors should be analyzed by a structural engineer to confirm if the framing can handle the weight. Although the floors have been reinforced, the dead load of the material stored in this building is significant. A structural engineer should look at the weight of the collections and shelving and calculate whether the current structure can safely support this load. The shelving for the archives at the south end of the first floor is of particular concern.

The lighting in the building, both general and task, is poor at best. Some areas are over-lit, while some shelves are dark. If the building is to continue serving as collections storage the lighting

should be re-worked, with upgrades to LED lighting, eliminating the UV component (the first floor has already been converted to LED but the other floors have not).

There is a central HVAC system that appears to be fully functional and capable of maintaining an even environment in most of the building (with the exception of the basement). The dehumidifier in the basement should be replaced with a higher capacity unit, preferably a commercial unit. The building is fitted with an intrusion, smoke, and heat detection system wired to a central monitoring station. There is no fire suppression system in place. The first floor is ADA accessible but the other floors are not.

Use Assessment:
On the first and second floors, collection items are well stored and the space is used as efficiently as possible, although because the wood shelving and rolling storage units add significantly to the dead load on the floor, the weight capacity should be assessed by a structural engineer to determine if modifications are necessary for current storage density to continue. Because of humidity risk and pest issues, the basement is not a good place to store collections items. The attic space is not air conditioned or heated, rendering it unacceptable for collections storage. In addition, the attic floor has not been reinforced to handle the added storage loads. The curatorial work spaces on the first floor of Hallock are isolated from the rest of the OHS staff, limiting communication and cohesion. They are also crowded with collections, making it difficult to work efficiently.

Photo No. 21: The basement storage area is poorly lit, and has some moisture issues.

Photo No. 22: Although artifacts are stored in the attic, the conditions are not suitable.

Vail House

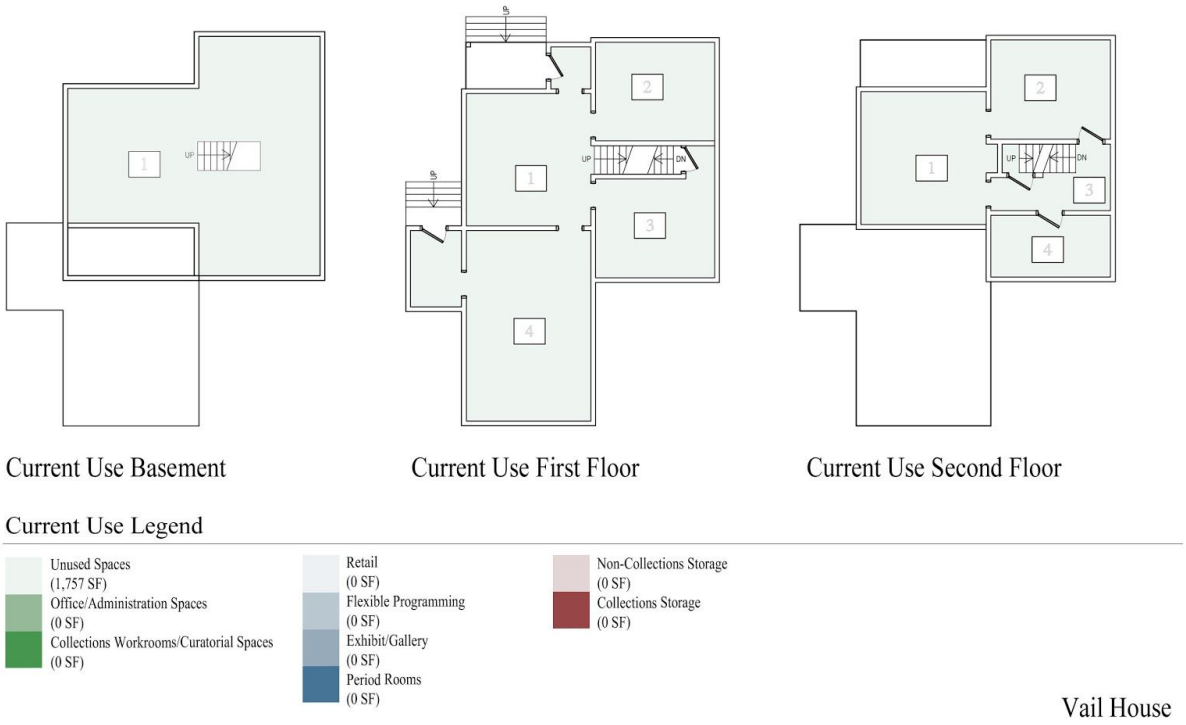
Physical Description:
Vail House is a late nineteenth-century residence that was acquired by the Oysterponds Historical Society in 1972. It was initially used as a consignment antique shop (Shinbone Alley) and more recently as a residence for the Executive Director.

Current Use:
The Vail House is currently vacant. Its most recent use was as a residence for the executive director, with living space on the first and second floors and light storage in the basement and attic.

Photo No. 23: Vail House first floor when it served as the Executive Director's residence.

Photo No. 24: Vail House second floor when it served as the Executive Director's residence.

First Floor Square Footage: 1,108
Second Floor Square Footage: 782
Total Square Footage: 1,890



Conditions:
As with other OHS structures, Vail House is in good overall condition. The exterior requires minor carpentry repairs as well as painting, and the shutters will require either restoration or replacement.

This is one of the few OHS basements that is relatively dry, with only minor water intrusion through the rear access hatch. Repairs, along with the introduction of gasketing in this location, would control this problem. With the introduction of a dehumidifier (a residential grade unit would suffice in this location) the basement could be used for storage of tier 4-5 collections.

The first and second floors only require routine maintenance for any proposed use.

The house is fitted with a central heating system that appears to be in good working order, with air conditioning provided by window units. With an upgrade of the existing mechanical system,

the building climate would be suitable for either office space, Tier 1-3 collections storage, or a combination of both.

There is no fire suppression system or alarm system at Vail House. Currently the building is not ADA accessible but with the addition of a ramp accessibility improvements could be easily implemented.

Use Assessment:
Vail House is the most underutilized resource on the campus. While there are benefits to the organization being able to offer the house as a perk to an executive director in such a tight housing market, residential use absorbs a significant amount of space that might better serve the organization for other purposes. The attic space is only suitable for light storage of non-collections materials.

The Collections

Physical Description

Based on the tallies in the PastPerfect collections database software, OHS owns approximately 32,000 collection items, although a truly accurate count is still difficult due to the ongoing issue of duplicates in collection recordkeeping. (Many local historical societies face this problem; collections manager Amy Folk has been working diligently to reconcile OHS's collections records, but it is a lengthy, complicated process). By type, according to PastPerfect, the largest categories of items OHS owns are archival manuscripts and other paper records, followed by photographic materials, ceramics and glass, metal objects, textiles, toys and dolls, and works on paper. A table outlining approximate numbers of objects by type is included as Appendix C.

Currently OHS is storing the collection in approximately 4,050 square feet spread mainly over four buildings (Hallock, Village House, Webb, and Red Barn), with some of this space overcrowded, some of it underutilized, and some of it having inadequate environmental conditions. This square footage does not include items on permanent exhibit in Village House and Webb House.

In general, the collection is fairly typical for a local historical society, comprising items related to daily life, daily work, people, and events in this particular community. As befitting a coastal farming area, there are significant maritime and agricultural collections, including ship models, ship paintings, and the everyday tools and objects of maritime and agricultural life. In their responses in the collections questionnaire administered at the beginning of the project and in conversations throughout the site visits, OHS staff and Collections Committee members referenced a number of specific collections items of significant relevance to OHS and to the community. These include the William Steeple Davis collection; archival records related to the Oysterponds experience of the American Revolution, the War of 1812, and the Civil War; historical journals and log books, including those of Martha Brown and Captain E. P. Brown, and Frederick Chase; photographs and archival documents chronicling daily life in Oysterponds over time; maritime paintings; an 1881 model train; a redware pot marked and dated Oysterponds 1800; a blue resist quilt and several crazy quilts, a Prohibition-era rum runner's code book, and portraits by local painter Abraham Tuthill. Many of these items are featured in curator Bill McNaught's 2008 publication *Highlights from the Collection*.

The archive of books, manuscripts, and photographic materials is a particular strength of the OHS collection, as it is quite comprehensive for a local historical society. It includes documentation of Oysterponds organizations, clubs, and schools; images of everyday life and beloved local places; journals, logbooks, and letters written by Oysterponders; early newspapers; the community's enlistment roll from the Civil War; and many other records detailing both the changes and continuity of life in Oysterponds over hundreds of years. If other portions of the collection were damaged or destroyed it would of course be a great loss, but Oysterponds would recover. If the archival collection were destroyed, much of the community's recorded history would be irretrievably erased.

To manage the collection, OHS maintains a collections database using PastPerfect, a common and well-respected software for historical societies. People interested in the collection, whether they are scholars or members of the public, can contact the collections manager Amy Folk for a reference request via phone or email, or to make an appointment for in-person research. Based on an analysis conducted by Folk in 2017, OHS receives an annual average of 5.5 in-person researchers and 33 phone or email reference requests. In 2018 there was an increase in requests to 63 although the vast majority were online or by phone, not in person. Currently only a small portion of the collection (80% of the glass plate negatives) has been digitized. OHS acquires new items for the collection each year, mainly by donation from Oysterponds residents. The majority (70%) of these new acquisitions are paper records and photographs for the archives, although OHS acquires some objects and artworks each year as well.

Assessment

Our assessment is ranked in priority order. OHS's first priority is anything causing active, ongoing deterioration to collection items or posing a threat to human safety. Then the second priority is any high risks or areas where an improvement in collections preservation or access would have an outsized effect for OHS's public audiences or for institutional sustainability. Lastly, the third priority is any reasonable additional measures to reduce risk in other areas without adversely burdening institutional capacity.

Priority 1: Active Deterioration of Collections or Significant Threats to Human Safety

Mold and mildew on collections in Webb House. The excessive moisture in Webb House has caused mold or mildew blooms on more than a dozen pieces of wooden furniture on display on the first and second floors. Once moisture is mitigated through the modifications we suggest to

the building itself, these pieces need to be assessed by a conservator to determine how significant the blooms are and how they should be treated (there is no point to consulting a conservator until after the building moisture has been addressed or the mold will just keep returning seasonally). In the meantime, OHS staff are running portable dehumidifiers and fans in Webb and making weekly rounds to monitor these pieces.

Dust. Over time, dust and other particulate pollutants can damage the surface of collection objects. The longer dust stays on objects, the more difficult it is to remove. Currently OHS relies on hand-dusting both objects on long-term display and much of collections storage. But because the collection is quite large, so much dusting on a regular basis becomes unrealistic and is a drain on staff time. OHS needs upgrades to collections storage—more archival boxes, closed storage cases, and dust covers—to protect objects from dust landing on them in the first place.

Rust. Metal objects require a dry climate in order to prevent rust and other forms of corrosion. OHS's coastal location means that its metal collection is particularly vulnerable in this regard. Many of the metal objects in the collection show signs of rust. While this rust may be very old damage in a lot of cases, there is no doubt that ongoing humidity issues in several OHS storage areas presents a significant risk, and potentially is causing ongoing deterioration. The susceptibility of metal objects to rust underscores the need for OHS to install more robust dehumidification systems in multiple buildings.

Photo No. 25: An example of mold/mildew on artifacts in Webb House.

Photo No. 26: The maritime conservation fund will pay for cases to protect these ship models from dust.

Priority 2: High Potential Risks or Areas of Significant Institutional Impact

Lack of adequate fire protection. The OHS board and staff are already aware that the collection is vulnerable to fire. Currently none of OHS's buildings have fire suppression systems, only fire detection. Ideally any building storing collections and any building with strong historical significance would have a fire suppression system, but installing such systems in historic buildings can be complicated and cost-prohibitive. While every local historical society would like to house the most valuable objects from their collections in a purpose-built, fireproof storage facility with state-of-the-art climate control, very few have managed such capital projects, and most, like OHS, are storing their collections in historic buildings with varying degrees of fire protection. OHS definitely needs to invest in greater fire protection. However, the board will need to carefully weigh risk and cost, assessing each of its buildings—their significance, use, and difficulty of installation—on a case-by-case basis. In so doing, the most important materials to protect from fire are OHS's archival holdings: they have the greatest historical value to the community and are highly flammable.

Excessive moisture. Humidity and flooding are major ongoing threats to the OHS collection: this is the price for living in such a beautiful place close to the sea, and a risk that must be addressed continually through close attention and problem-solving. Collection items that are particularly susceptible to excess moisture include paper materials, textiles, organic materials, metals, and wood. OHS's existing measures to mitigate humidity, measures like HVAC systems, fans to increase air circulation in the summer, and dataloggers to monitor climate throughout the campus, have only partially addressed the moisture risks to the collection. While the mold on furnishings in Webb House is the only confirmed active moisture damage to the collection, the lack of adequate dehumidification systems in the basements of Hallock, Webb, Red Barn, and Old Point Schoolhouse are putting collections at risk of damage with every storm and humid summer season.

Collections Database and Loss of Knowledge. OHS uses PastPerfect as its database software. PastPerfect is a well-respected, widely used system among local historical societies, one that is capable of meeting OHS's cataloging requirements—there is no need to consider switching to a different platform. Collections Manager Amy Folk estimates that 90% of the objects, 40% of the photographs, 20% of the archives, and 20% of the library collection has been cataloged in the collections database. In reviewing the database, Tisdale found that basic information (title, maker, inscriptions, physical location, donor, dimensions, and snapshot photographs) is entered

consistently. While this is an excellent start, greater depth of information should be captured—particularly for Tier 1-3 items—in order for the database to reach its full potential to help OHS document and more effectively use its collection. Right now the database works really well if you need to locate an item in collections storage but it is less useful if you are looking for meaningful local stories to share with local residents. In particular, historical significance, significance to Oysterponds, and relationships between objects and local people or objects and other objects need to be more fully captured.

A related issue is that OHS holds a wealth of institutional and collections knowledge, currently residing in the heads of people like Bill McNaught, Amy Folk, John Holzapfel, and Freddie Wachsberger. And a generation of longtime Oysterponds residents, many of whom are now elderly, hold knowledge about material culture and everyday life throughout the 20th century. OHS needs to ensure that their knowledge is captured in the database so that it can be retrieved and used easily in future generations. Often what makes an object Tier 1 instead of Tier 3 is the amount of detailed stories that can be told about its use and meaning, and those stories come from people. Therefore the risk of this loss of knowledge is just as significant as the risk of flood or fire. OHS has conducted oral histories over the years, but a more systematic effort to collect meaningful information and capture it in the database is needed. Such oral histories should be considered as an integrated part of the collections knowledge, not a stand-alone project.

Collections Size

From what we have observed during site visits and compared to other local historical society collections throughout the country, OHS has exceeded its physical and organizational capacity in terms of the size of the collection. This is evident in the collections overflow occupying aisles and work surfaces, the migration of collections items into non-collections storage areas, and the backlog of collections projects. OHS has previously considered the strategy of building a large facility to house all existing and potential future collections. In our opinion, OHS would be better served in terms of organizational sustainability and collections access if it were to weed out Tier 5 and also some Tier 4 items, reducing the size but not the quality of the collection. Doing so would allow OHS to maintain its reputation as the strongest local-history collection on Long Island—a reputation that is based on quality and depth, not size—while setting it up to better care for and make accessible its rich and varied Tier 1-3 collections. It is worth investing in better collections storage spaces if it is necessary to preserve Tier 1-3 items, but it is not worth

doing so in order to continue to store Tier 4-5 items. Thoughtful weeding of the collection to a more sustainable size will make every other issue on this list easier to address.

Pest infestations. We noticed mouse droppings in the basement of the Hallock building, and the OHS collections manager confirms that mice take up residence in the Hallock basement every fall. While some items stored in the basement are pest-resistant, other items, like the basket collection, could be at risk. In general, the ongoing humidity issues throughout the OHS campus create the ideal environment for multiple types of pests. While the mice in Hallock are the only known current infestation, there have been other pest issues in recent years: powderpost beetles (also moisture-loving) in Webb House, mice in Webb House, and squirrels in the Red Barn. The risk of pests is another reason collections items should be moved out of basements and attics wherever possible: these are the most likely places for pests to enter buildings and to take up residence unnoticed. OHS is in the process of contracting with an exterminator so that the collection can receive ongoing integrated pest management.

Updating the Disaster plan. OHS is to be commended for having a disaster plan. The current version of the plan, however, dates to 2011 and focuses mainly on water damage as opposed to a range of potential disasters. Also, OHS doesn't currently have a cache of disaster recovery supplies (things like protective clothing, contractor trash bags, blotting materials, the American Institute for Conservation's Emergency Response and Salvage Wheel) on hand, which could be a problem considering how far Orient is from stores where such supplies are sold.

Collections Digitization. OHS's responsibility to preserve the collection must be balanced with its responsibility to provide public access to the collection. Digitizing collections is a major component of what public access means in the 21st century. Eighty percent of OHS's glass plate negatives have been scanned; this is the only portion of the OHS collection that has been digitized so far. In the early years of digitization only large museums had the resources and wherewithal to scan their collections, but as technology and processes have been streamlined and costs have stabilized, more and more local historical societies are embarking on digitization projects (through the PastPerfect digital portal alone, hundreds of local societies are offering online access to their collections). Digitizing OHS's archives collection—not just the glass plate negatives but all Tier 1-3 photographic materials, manuscripts, and other paper records—would provide three significant benefits to OHS. First, it would create a database of reproductions that would prove invaluable should anything happen to the precious originals through fire, water, or any other collections risk. And second, it would make these collections available online so that

members of the community and public could easily access photographs and other documents to help them more fully connect with their local place and with each other. Finally, digitizing enables OHS to explore the option of moving the originals offsite to a fireproof, secure facility.

Security. Hallock, Webb House, Village House, and Old Point Schoolhouse have alarm systems. If the security alarm is triggered, it rings at the alarm company, which then calls the three people who live close to OHS and are designated to respond: Mike Bogden (a retired maintenance worker), Jake Bogden (a police officer), and longtime OHS volunteer Dick Gillooly. This seems to be a reasonable system given OHS's capacity and physical setup. One potential security risk that surfaced during our site visits was that a number of people in the community (former board members and volunteers) have keys to various OHS buildings because they have been given out so liberally over the years without adequate record keeping.

Collections overflow. Collections materials encroach into walkways and workspaces in multiple collections storage areas. This creates situations where OHS staff must move items out of the way in order to get to other parts of the collection. The most concerning instance is the collections items in front of the side exit door on the first floor of Hallock, but even in less extreme cases there is a risk that people could hurt themselves or collections materials as they maneuver in tight spaces. The cramped conditions also make it difficult to pull out collection materials and work with them: there is little available tabletop space to sort, examine, pack, and process the collection, which also increases risk of damage when handling objects.

Cellulose nitrate. This material has been known to spontaneously combust as it degrades, causing toxic fires. Light, heat, and humidity speed the degradation process, while sealed and densely packed containers contribute to the buildup of gasses that cause combustion. There is one known cellulose nitrate concern in the OHS collection: a set of negatives of William Steeple Davis's European vacations. Collections Manager Amy Folk examines them periodically for signs of degradation and reports that they are currently stable.

Priority 3: Other Collections Issues

Light Damage. Light gives off ultraviolet and infrared radiation as well as heat, all of which can cause permanent damage to museum collections. Especially light-sensitive materials include textiles, paper, photographs, paintings, and organic objects like leather or botanical specimens. Unfiltered daylight is of particular concern, but OHS makes good use of window shades

wherever possible and has installed storm windows with UV protection at Village House, Hallock, and Webb House. As long as staff and volunteers diligently turn off lighting when rooms are not in use, the majority of the collection lives in darkness. Temporary exhibitions are of a short duration (one season) and then objects are returned to darkness. The only concern would be items on permanent display in Village House and Webb House and in other areas of the OHS campus, like staff offices. In general, current museum lighting best practices now favor LED lighting because it is both more energy efficient for climate sustainability, less damaging to light sensitive collections objects, and cheaper to operate.

Native American Graves Protection & Repatriation Act (NAGPRA). The federal government has a legal process in place for returning Native American materials to the tribes of origin. Because OHS has not applied for any federal grants, it is in compliance with the letter of NAGPRA but not the spirit of NAGPRA.

Inefficient Storage. In three current collections storage areas, artifacts could be better consolidated to increase density and efficiency, especially if Tier 5 objects are extracted from these areas before further organizing them. These include Rooms 2.1 (architectural fragments and furniture) and 2.13 (rugs and furniture) on the second floor of Village House (a structural engineer could assess just how full these rooms can get before exceeding load capacity), and the basement of the Red Barn.

Scattered Collections. We found instances of collections items scattered wherever they would fit, instead of in designated collections storage areas with appropriate environmental controls. In other cases collections items and non-collections items are being stored together in the same place, which leads to confusion, like the recent mixup as to whether certain baskets were part of the collection or props for the winter bazaar. These instances included the Webb garage (ice boat), the Webb shed (miscellaneous collection items), a closet off the back porch of Webb House (Rosie Heitzman painted panels), and Amanda Brown Schoolhouse (miscellaneous collection items). In addition, non-collections exhibition furniture is currently stored in two collections storage areas: on the second floor of Village House and the Red Barn basement. There should be designated spaces for collections and non-collections, without mixing the two.

Conservation Program. As with most small historical societies, OHS currently has no annual budget line for collections items that need treatment by professional conservators. Ideally the

organization would have an ongoing conservation program, where funding is set aside each year to treat high-priority objects when a) an object is actively deteriorating and requires treatment to stabilize it, or b) the object is going on exhibition and it requires attention to enhance its suitability for display. At the moment, we know that high priority conservation projects are the objects in Webb House with signs of mold/mildew, the maritime objects for which funds were raised in 2018, and the parlor set in Village House that needs attention to its upholstery.

Storage Furniture. For the most part, the OHS shelving and cabinetry in collections storage is of adequate quality compared to other local historical societies. Several minor upgrades are outlined in the recommendations section. Every floor where collections are housed should have at least one dedicated open work table to process or examine objects; Hallock first and second floors have such work spaces but other storage areas—Hallock basement and attic, Red Barn, Webb House—do not. If they continue to be used actively for collections, tables should be added.

"Found in Collections" materials. According to Collections Manager Amy Folk, OHS did not begin executing deeds of gift for collections donations until the 1970s. Therefore many items are considered "Found in Collection," meaning OHS cannot demonstrate legal ownership of them. This is typical of many small historical societies. While it is by no means an urgent problem, it does complicate some collections processes like loans and deaccessions.

Photo No. 27: Artifacts overflowing in aisles of collections storage in Hallock basement.

Photo No. 28: Parts of the ice boat currently stored in the Webb House garage.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CARE & PRESERVATION

Priority 1: Active Deterioration of Collections or Buildings, Threats to Human Safety, and Quick Stopgap Measures

- Webb House: mitigate moisture causing mold/mildew on collection items and interior finishes by installing a vapor barrier at the basement ceiling, installing a commercial grade dehumidification system in the basement, and balancing and adjusting the HVAC system to ensure proper cooling and dehumidification.
- Clear collections items in front of Hallock side exit door.
- After the humidity in Webb House is addressed, contract with a professional conservator to assess and recommend treatment for the collections items with mold or mildew in Webb House (Greater Hudson Heritage Network funds conservation treatment projects like this, although they do not fund the conservator's initial site visit to provide an estimate).
- Review and update as necessary all portable dehumidifiers and fans in collections areas as a stop-gap measure for mitigating excessive moisture while more substantial moisture mitigation is being planned and funded. This equipment should be regularly monitored as part of OHS's overall maintenance plan.
- Address dust on collections with either dust covers on shelving, collections-grade storage cabinets, or boxing more objects to slow the buildup of dust. Dust is particularly a concern for intricate items with a lot of decorative detail like ship models. (We were pleased to hear that a portion of OHS's new maritime conservation fund will cover new cases for ship models that are being conserved.)
- After collecting datalogger information for spring and summer 2019, assess any additional significant humidity issues in collection storage areas that the dataloggers reveal.
- Stop using the attic of Old Point Schoolhouse for storage of any kind due to safety issues.

Priority 2: High Potential Risks or Areas of Significant Institutional Impact

- Update the OHS Collections Policy to include the new Collecting Scope Statement (Appendix A) and to more effectively reflect the evolution of OHS's collections philosophy. Updating the policy will help ensure that everyday collections work is aligned with the new collecting philosophy and all that it implies, including:
  - Tiering practices

  - Separating collections items from non-collections items, and clearly designating each storage area throughout the campus as either non-collections or collections
  - Deaccessioning of Tier 5 items.

  The full board should review, discuss, and approve the updated policy to make it the official OHS policy going forward.
- Further reduce fire risk to collections through a combination of strategies, including:
  - Continuing to ensure that all fire extinguishers are checked annually
  - Consider purchasing fireproof safes or cabinets for some particularly vulnerable Tier 1 objects
  - Establishing a stronger relationship with the Orient Fire Department, including regular facilities tours for fire department members, so they have a more detailed understanding of what is inside each building, and specific collections vulnerabilities, if they are ever called to a fire at OHS
- Upgrade water and dehumidification control measures in additional buildings:
  - Hallock: install a higher capacity or commercial grade dehumidification system.
  - Red Barn: install commercial grade dehumidification system in the basement and provide alternate means to control power disconnects to allow the ventilation fan to remain powered at all times during hot months.
  - Old Point Schoolhouse: Reconfigure existing sub-grade drainage system to improve water control and install a commercial grade dehumidification system.
  - Vail House: install a residential grade dehumidifier and gasketing on the rear basement access door. Also install climate monitoring equipment in any areas where collections storage may be introduced to catch any unknown environmental issues in this building.
  - Amanda Brown Schoolhouse: Install a vapor barrier at grade to control moisture transfer through the floor to prevent the structure from rotting.
- Consult with a structural engineer who can make building-by-building assessments of weight load capacity to identify any immediate structural issues and also to help OHS plan for any changes in collections storage allocation. In particular the engineer should assess the load impact of dense collection storage on the first and second floors of Hallock, the second floor of Vail, and the second floor of Village House.
- Engage a fire suppression consultant who can make building-by-building recommendations on construction, use, and cost of installing fire suppression systems throughout the OHS campus, with priority given to protecting the archives collection, buildings with the greatest historical significance, and buildings that house significant portions of the collection. Based

on the consultant's recommendations and estimates, OHS can then decide where and how to install fire suppression, by building, and also look at the pros and cons of adding fire suppression to protect the archives or, after digitizing them, to store them off site and incur facility rental costs for fireproof storage.

- Capture more institutional and community knowledge about the collection:
  - Consider setting up an oral history station or program where residents can record their knowledge about the collections and the community. An ongoing series of questions could be rotated through this station to prompt the capture of specific kinds of information (for example, "What do you remember about ice sailing? Have you ever used farming equipment like this—how does it work?).
  - Capture the collections knowledge of Bill McNaught and Amy Folk in the collections database. One idea is that they could walk around the exhibitions or collections storage with a tape recorder, downloading what they know about specific objects (with reference to their object numbers) to be transcribed into the collections database at a later date.
  - Since Past Perfect (the collections database software) has an online module, OHS's collections records could be brought online with a one-time set-up fee of less than $300 and a data hosting cost of $500-1,000 per year, depending on the number of records. Then members of the community could use the online collections platform to share—with OHS and each other—what they know and remember about specific objects or images in the collection, further adding to collections knowledge and building community relevancy.
- Focus on increasing the *quality* of the collection but not the *size*. This means limiting new acquisitions to Tier 1 and 2 items with deep meaning to the Oysterponds community while weeding out Tier 4 and 5 objects of lesser relevance so that the overall quantity either stays the same or decreases even as new acquisitions are made. The one exception to this approach is the archival materials. The archival collection should continue to grow judiciously in order to extend its continuous documentation of life in Oysterponds.
- Begin segregating Tier 4-5 collections items from Tier 1-3 collections items, either object type by object type or storage area by storage area. Consolidate the Tier 4-5 collections items in the basements of Hallock and/or Vail. This will ease congestion in storage areas and ensure that the best storage conditions are reserved for the highest priority collection items.
- As extracting Tier 4-5 items frees up storage space, begin moving as many remaining Tier 1-3 collections as possible out of basements and attics to protect them from excessive moisture and/or heat. Glass and ceramics can stay in basements or attics if necessary.

- Consider an object's tier when making decisions about acquisition, storage quality, conservation, cataloging, and any other allocation of time or resources. This will insure that OHS is spending its resources on the highest priority collection items.
- Update and expand the disaster plan and review it annually. Purchase basic disaster recovery supplies to be stored onsite (we can recommend resources for creating a supply kit).
- Investigate the costs and benefits to digitizing the archival collection, both to increase access and to mitigate fire risk to OHS's most precious historical asset. If this collection is digitized, the originals could be stored offsite in a museum-quality storage facility with a high-quality fire suppression system, which might be more cost effective than adding a fire suppression system to multiple OHS buildings (detailed estimates are needed in order to effectively assess this). Archival items, because they are two-dimensional, are easier to digitize (through scanning) than the society's three-dimensional collections, and the digital version of an archival document or photograph will suffice more often than it would for a three-dimensional object. The majority of the book collection would probably need to remain onsite for reference use. There would be costs to digitizing the archival collection and renting storage space each year. And the offsite storage cannot be so far away as to make it difficult to travel back and forth (at least once a year) to monitor the collection and retrieve items as needed.
- Implement tighter controls on OHS building keys by changing the locks and issuing new keys only to those who need them. OHS should also create a clearer policy and a log system regarding who needs and has which keys, with annual review to determine whether any should be returned.
- Repair the existing entry door lock to Amanda Brown Schoolhouse
- Continue to regularly monitor the cellulose nitrate negatives and consider either storing them in a frost-free freezer until they can be copied onto a more stable film, or deaccessioning and disposing of them as hazardous waste.

Priority 3: Other Issues in Need of Eventual Attention

- Develop an effective wayfinding program for the OHS campus.
- Develop a comprehensive ADA accessibility assessment and planning study for long-term site-wide ADA improvements. The study should include an overall ADA philosophy, addressing issues such as public access vs. staff access. The following specific ADA issues should be included in this study:

  - Vail House: Installing a ramp to make the first floor ADA accessible.
  - Old Point Schoolhouse: Providing paving adjacent to rear access ramp to improve ADA accessibility.
  - Amanda Brown Schoolhouse: Installing a ramp and widening the existing door to make the first floor ADA accessible if used for exhibition or programming.
  - Webb House: Adding pavers (can be geo-pavers that allow grass to grow through) at the ADA ramp to improve accessibility.
- Continue the process of converting all collections areas to LED to further limit UV exposure (Hallock first floor, Village House temporary exhibition galleries, and the Red Barn have received LED so far). Reconfigure lighting in Hallock to improve work and storage areas.
- Install a central monitoring alarm system in Vail House if it is going to be used for collections storage.
- If the Red Barn is to be opened to the public, protect the historic signatures on the first floor wall by attaching an acrylic panel to the studs, leaving several inches of air circulation between the signatures and the acrylic.
- Carry out a NAGPRA project, reviewing Native American materials in the collection and developing a plan to ensure that these objects are offered back to their groups of origin wherever possible, following the process outlined in the Native American Graves Protection & Repatriation Act.
- Institute an ongoing conservation program. As items are handled in the course of routine collections work, OHS staff should be on the lookout for high priority objects i.e., Tier 1-3 objects that are either actively deteriorating or going on exhibition. Based on the success of conservation fundraising at the 2018 summer benefit, OHS might consider creating a budget line for conservation of Tier 1 objects and raise funds accordingly.
- Upgrade collections shelving:
  - Optimize storage in underutilized areas—particularly the Red Barn basement and Village House Room 2.13—with the purchase of additional shelving to consolidate and better organize collection items.
  - The shelving system for framed two-dimensional paintings and prints in Hallock needs upgrading to prevent damage to the frames and make it easier to search and sort, but first these items should be reviewed in relation to the new collections tiering system.
  - Some of the shelving in the Hallock basement is missing its stabilizing end caps; this should be attended to whenever the items are moved to another location.

    - If OHS does decide to relocate significant portions of the collections, it would be worth considering new compact shelving to reduce the overall square footage that is needed.
- Resolve Found in Collections ownership. The State of New York has a process for this, involving placing notices in the local newspaper and listing the items in the state's online Unclaimed Funds Registry, after first proving that the items have been in the organization's physical possession for at least ten years. Collections manager Amy Folk has already been starting the ten-year clock on these items whenever she encounters them, to lay the groundwork for claiming full ownership following the method outlined by state law.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR BUILDING USE

As noted in the beginning of our report, our assignment was to identify strategies to better care for the collections and to recommend the most appropriate uses for the buildings, both to improve collections storage and optimize OHS's overall role as cultural hub for the community. Understanding that the buildings are part of OHS's collection, our focus has been on adaptive reuse of existing buildings but included consideration of the need for potential new additions or structures on the campus.

Based on our assessment of current conditions, needs, and assets at OHS, we have developed the following scenario for allocating space between collections, staff, exhibitions, programming, and operations. It seeks to strike a balance among the following institutional priorities:

- Better quality collections storage
- Reduced fire risk
- Stronger financial and operational sustainability for the organization
- Staff offices consolidated in one space with better conditions
- Additional programming space to increase community relevancy
- Additional exhibition space to increase community relevancy
- Historical integrity of the OHS campus
- ADA accessibility for visitors in exhibition and programming spaces
- ADA accessibility for staff

Bear in mind that all space calculations are approximate and should be verified by a space planning specialist.

COLLECTIONS

We recommend that:

- Collections are pared down by extracting Tier 5 and some Tier 4 (especially duplicates). These items are separated from the rest of the collection and stored in the basements of Hallock and Vail while awaiting deaccession review.
- The archival collection is digitized for improved access and preservation.
- A fire suppression system and compact shelving is installed in Hallock, and the building's weight load issues are resolved. Textiles, tools, baskets, small objects, and framed 2D items remain in Hallock but are consolidated on the first and second floors with better climate control.
- Less flammable objects (particularly ceramics and glass) move to the second floor of Village House to make room for as much as possible of the wooden furniture and architectural fragments currently stored there to move to Hallock.
- Carriages, farming, and other outdoor objects remain in Red Barn, but Tier 5 items are removed. The ice boat is relocated to the Red Barn. The first floor is opened for display during the summer season.
- Collections items currently scattered in multiple locations are moved to core collections storage either in Hallock or the second floor of Village House.
- Total square feet of collections storage space needed goes from 4,050 to 2,600 due to extracting Tier 5 and some Tier 4 objects, additional items on exhibition, and compact shelving

Variations

In addition to the above collections storage improvements, we recommend that OHS consider the following optional collections storage modifications:

- Option A: Vail is upgraded with a fire suppression system and the archives collection is stored onsite on the second floor of Vail.
- Option B: Once the archives are digitized, most of it (except books) moves to high-quality offsite storage with fire suppression. The space savings from moving archives offsite is negligible (150 sq ft), but Vail would no longer require fire suppression, which may or may not be more cost effective (a cost-benefit analysis is needed).
- Option C: Vail receives not only a fire suppression system but also an addition that increases its size. Any collections items currently stored in Village House are moved there for greater protection and consolidation of collections storage.

STAFF

We recommend that:

- All staff move to Vail, with collections manager Amy Folk and archival research on the second floor and everyone else on the first floor. An ADA ramp is added to Vail. The weight load capacity of the second floor needs to be assessed by a structural engineer (and may need to be reinforced) before archival research can be moved there.

EXHIBITIONS

We recommend that:

- Temporary exhibitions remain on the second floor of Village House
- The main floor of the Red Barn becomes open storage for carriages, farming, and other outdoor objects with explanatory text as appropriate
- Webb House is enlivened with more dynamic exhibitions
- Collections are displayed in the rooms on the first floor of Village House that are currently used for AV and the gift shop
- Amanda Brown could potentially house a small permanent exhibition (with reproductions only; no collections artifacts)
- Old Point School House first floor is either dedicated exhibition or dedicated programming space (or a seasonal combination of both)

PUBLIC PROGRAMS

- Old Point School House first floor is either dedicated exhibition or dedicated programs space (or a seasonal combination of both).
- Amanda Brown could house programs with a maximum capacity of 38 people.

OTHER

- Old Point School House basement becomes storage for exhibition cases and furniture and/or a buildings and grounds workshop
- Amanda Brown could potentially house the gift shop, although it would require additional docent staffing and security measures.

SIGNIFICANT COSTS

- Fire suppression and structural reinforcement in Hallock and potentially also in Vail and Village House, depending on uses for these buildings and recommendations by fire suppression expert and structural engineer
- Upgraded dehumidification in Webb House, Hallock, Vail, and Red Barn; and vapor barrier in Webb House and Amanda Brown
- Staff time and resources to sort and move the collection
- Construction of an ADA ramp for Vail
- Additional shelving for collections storage, some of it compact
- Archives digitization, potentially with ongoing offsite storage rental
- Potentially an addition that increases the size of Vail House

USE RECOMMENDATIONS BY BUILDING

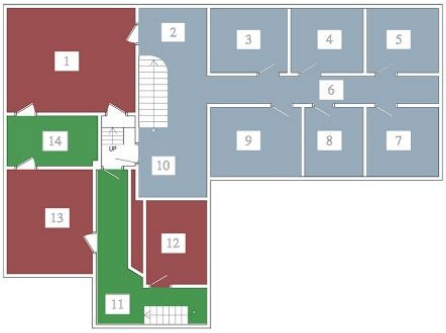
Village House Use Recommendations:

- Further organization to second-floor collections storage rooms to accommodate more efficient storage of artifacts.
- Consider relocation or discontinuation of the gift shop (142 square feet) (moving sales online) in order to take advantage of this room's climate stability and ADA accessibility to display more of the collection.
- Rely on mobile experience on an IPad (already in place) rather than dedicated AV space so that the room currently serving this purpose (62 square feet) can be used to display more of the collection.
- Introduce public programing on the patio during summer months, potentially with a tent or sailcloth to provide protection from sun and rain.

Current Use First Floor

Current Use Second Floor

Proposed Use First Floor



Proposed Use Second Floor

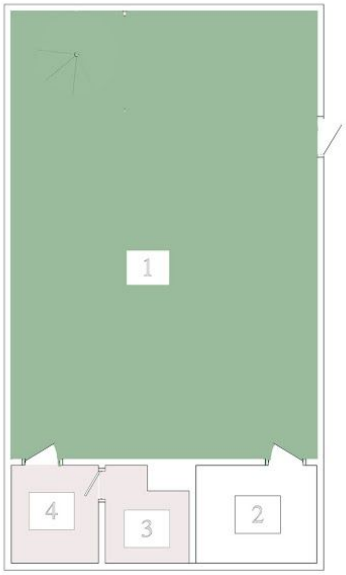
Proposed Use Legend

- Unused/Underused Spaces (50 SF)
- Office/Administration Spaces (0 SF)
- Collections Workrooms/Curatorial Spaces (223 SF)
- Retail (0 SF)
- Flexible Programming (0 SF)
- Exhibit/Gallery (1,058 SF)
- Museum/Interpreted Spaces (2,049 SF)
- Non-Collections Storage (172 SF)
- Tier 4-5 Collections Storage (0 SF)
- Tier 1-3 Collections Storage (508 SF)

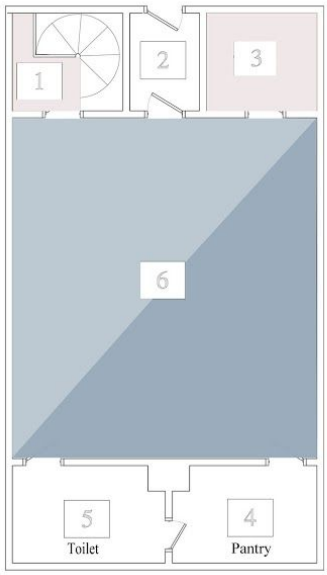
Village House

Old Point Schoolhouse Use Recommendations:

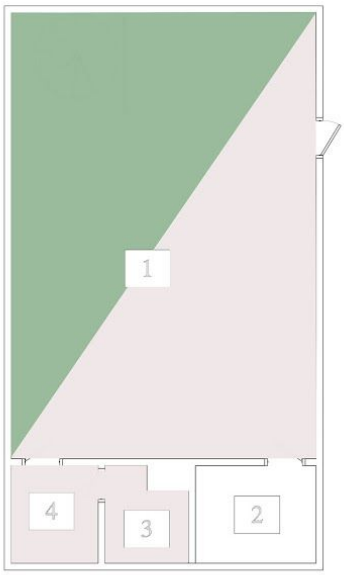
- Relocate staff offices to Vail House.
- Use the basement for storage of exhibition cases and furniture and/or a buildings and grounds workshop.
- Introduce family-friendly public programming on the porch and the green space to the north during the summer season.



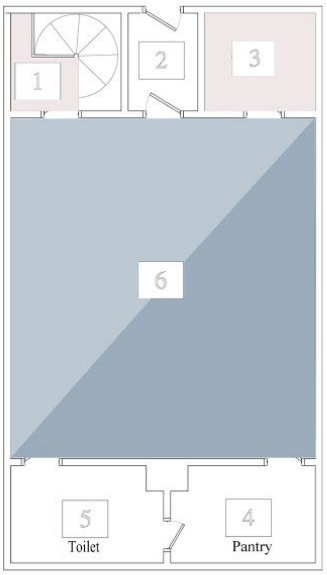
Current Use Basement



Current Use First Floor



Proposed Use Basement



Proposed Use First Floor

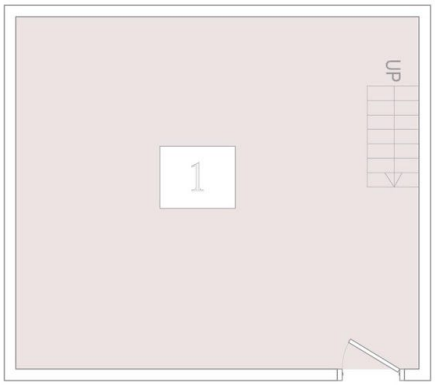
Proposed Use Legend

- Unused/Underused Spaces (0 SF)
- Office/Administration Spaces (351 SF)
- Collections Workrooms/Curatorial Spaces (0 SF)
- Retail (0 SF)
- Flexible Programming (269 SF)
- Exhibit/Gallery (269 SF)
- Museum/Interpreted Spaces (0 SF)
- Non-Collections Storage (432 SF)
- Tier 4-5 Collections Storage (0 SF)
- Tier 1-3 Collections Storage (0 SF)

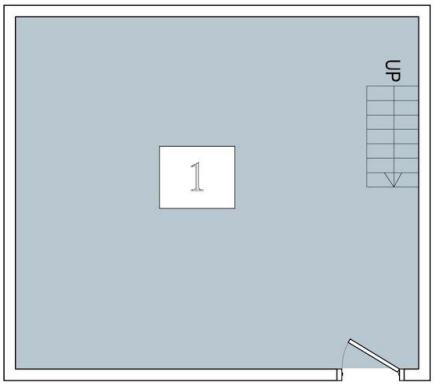
Old Point Schoolhouse

Amanda Brown Schoolhouse Use Recommendations:

- Consider introduction of a public programming space focussed on families and children. Based on the square footage code, the main floor will accommodate up to 45 persons standing, and 38 persons seated in removable chairs. The capacity should be limited to no more than 38 persons max. [Note: code refers to adults not children in terms of capacity.]
- Consider installing a pocket exhibition (no original collections items; just reproduction images and text panels) on the walls of the first floor (with or without the removal of the cooking hearth).



Current Use



Proposed Use

Proposed Use Legend

Unused Spaces
(0 SF)
Office/Administration Spaces
(0 SF)
Collections Workrooms/Curatorial Spaces
(0 SF)

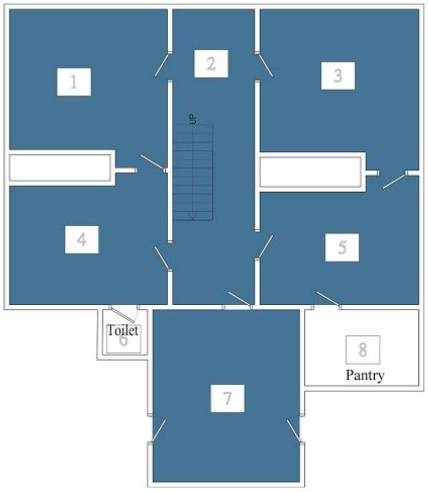
Retail
(0 SF)
Flexible Programming
(267 SF)
Exhibit/Gallery
(0 SF)
Period Rooms
(0 SF)

Non-Collections Storage
(0 SF)
Tier 4-5 Collections Storage
(0 SF)
Tier 1-3 Collections Storage
(0 SF)

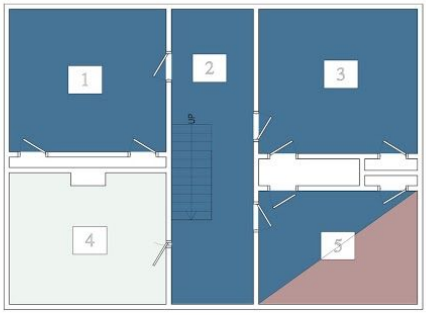
Amanda Brown Schoolhouse

Webb House Use Recommendations:

- Refresh the period rooms with a more dynamic approach to bring new energy and visitors to the house.
- Finish repairing the floor in the collections storage room on the second floor, and consider relocating the items stored there so it can become an additional exhibition space.



Current Use First Floor



Current Use Second Floor

Proposed Use First Floor

Proposed Use Second Floor

Proposed Use Legend

Unused/Underused Spaces
(0 SF)
Office/Administration Spaces
(0 SF)
Collections Workrooms/Curatorial Spaces
(0 SF)

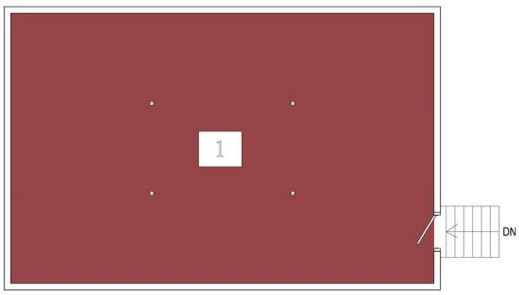
Retail
(0 SF)
Flexible Programming
(0 SF)
Exhibit/Gallery
(1,245 SF)
Museum/Interpreted Spaces
(1,092 SF)

Non-Collections Storage
(0 SF)
Tier 4-5 Collections Storage
(0 SF)
Tier 1-3 Collections Storage
(0 SF)

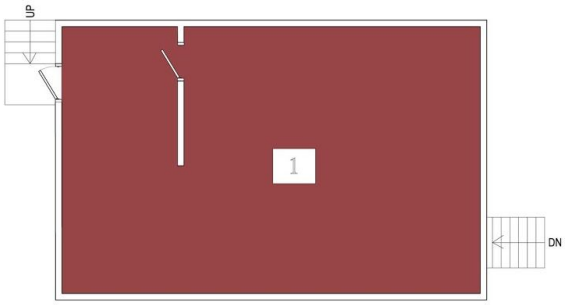
Webb House

Red Barn Use Recommendations:

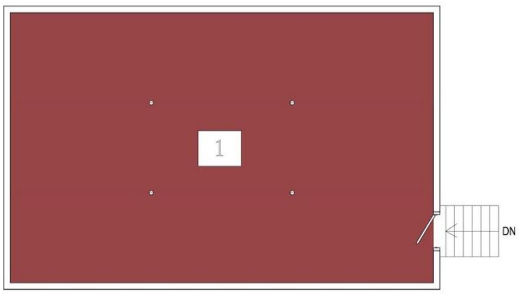
- Deaccession two or three vehicles with limited historical significance to Oysterponds to create space for visitor flow so the first floor can be open to the public during the summer season.



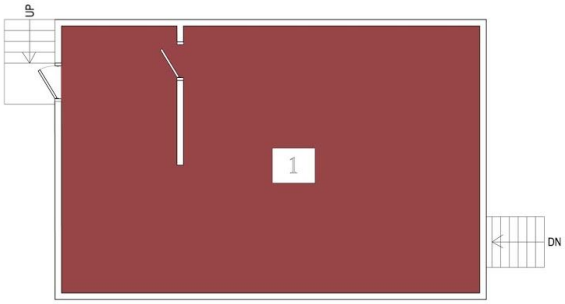
Current Use Basement



Current Use First Floor

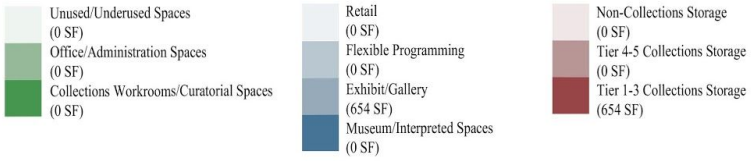


Proposed Use Basement



Proposed Use First Floor

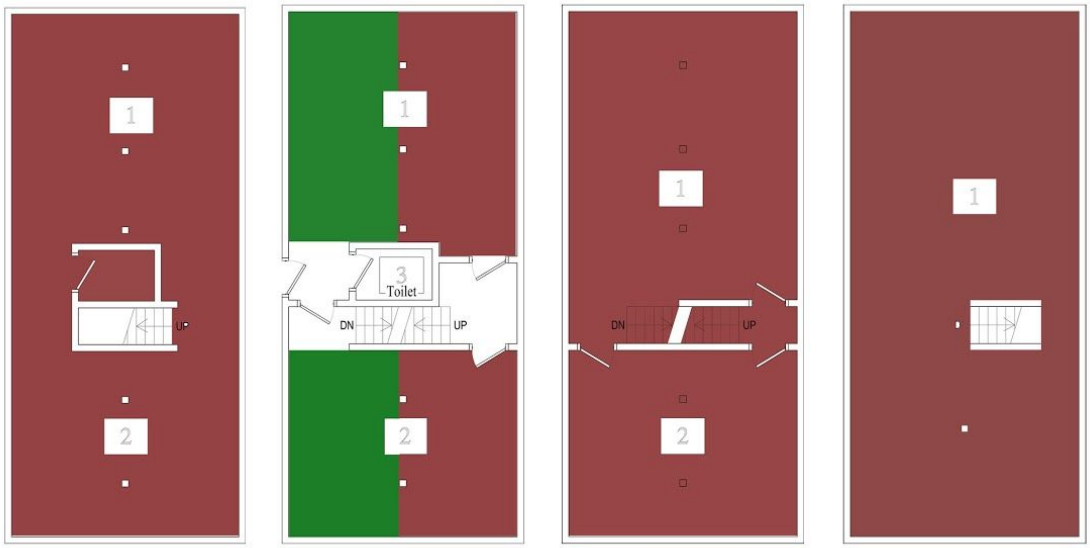
Proposed Use Legend



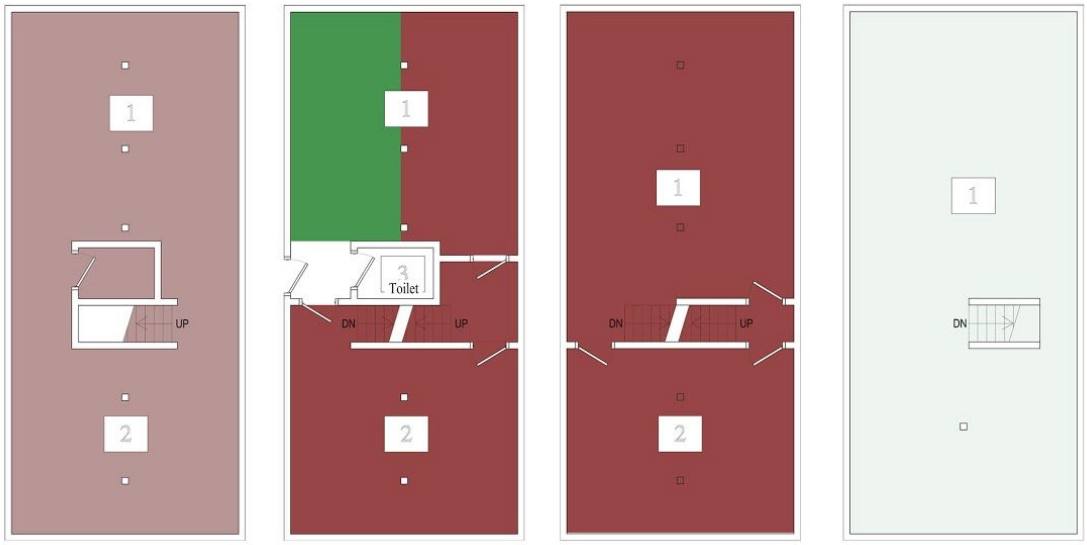
Red Barn

Hallock Building Use Recommendations:

- Continue using the first and second floor of this building for collections storage.
- Retain a secondary work station with a computer and ample open table space on the first floor of Hallock for staff to use when they are working with the collection in this building.



Current Use Basement | Current Use First Floor | Current Use Second Floor | Current Use Attic



Proposed Use Basement | Proposed Use First Floor | Proposed Use Second Floor | Proposed Use Attic

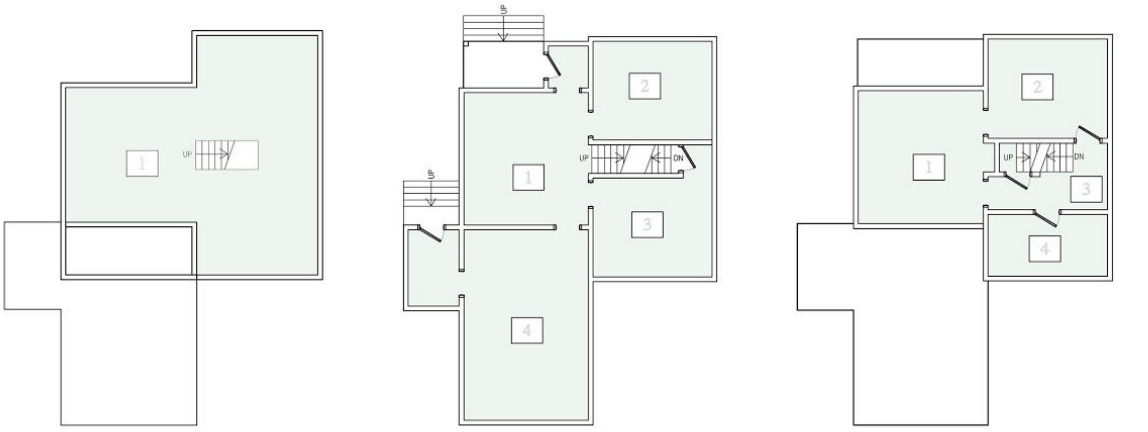
Proposed Use Legend

- Unused Spaces (663 SF)
- Office/Administration Spaces (0 SF)
- Collections Workrooms/Curatorial Spaces (142 SF)
- Retail (0 SF)
- Flexible Programming (0 SF)
- Exhibit/Gallery (0 SF)
- Museum/Interpreted Spaces (0 SF)
- Non-Collections Storage (0 SF)
- Tier 4-5 Collections Storage (663 SF)
- Tier 1-3 Collections Storage (1,108 SF)

Hallock Building

Vail House Use Recommendations:

- Reconfigure first floor as office and meeting space for staff
- Use second floor for collections (likely archives) storage (after consulting with structural engineer about weight load)
- Introduce non-collections storage at the basement



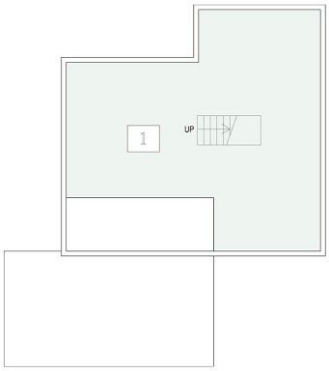
Current Use Basement | Current Use First Floor | Current Use Second Floor

Proposed Use Basement | Proposed Use First Floor | Proposed Use Second Floor

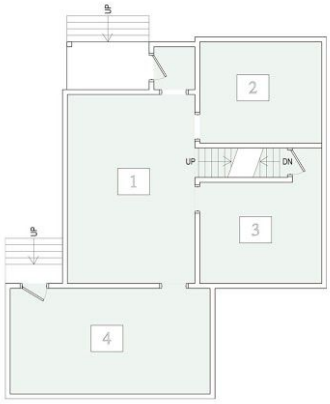
Proposed Use Legend

- Unused/Underused Spaces (0 SF)
- Office/Administration Spaces (797 SF)
- Collections Workrooms/Curatorial Spaces (0 SF)
- Retail (0 SF)
- Flexible Programming (0 SF)
- Exhibit/Gallery (0 SF)
- Museum/Interpreted Spaces (0 SF)
- Non-Collections Storage (487 SF)
- Tier 4-5 Collections Storage (0 SF)
- Tier 1-3 Collections Storage (1,103 SF)

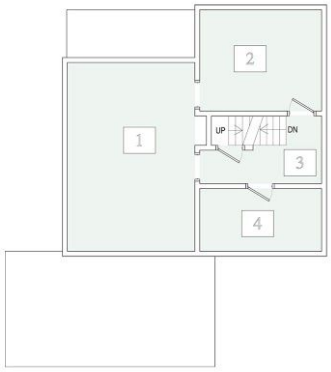
Vail House



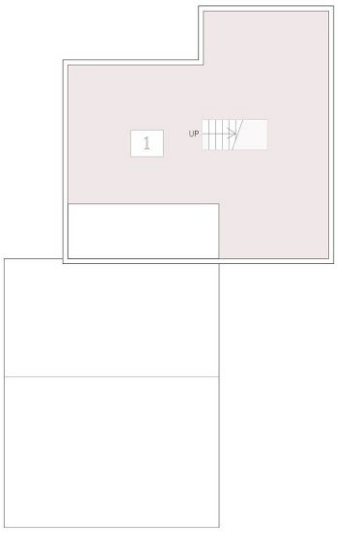
Current Use Basement



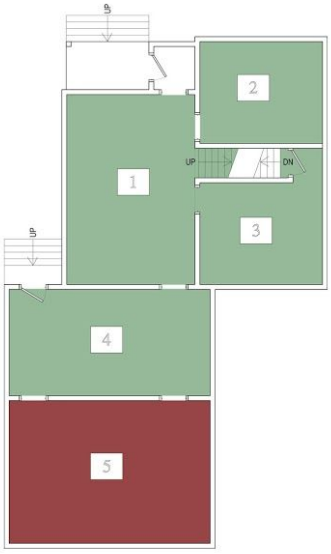
Current Use First Floor



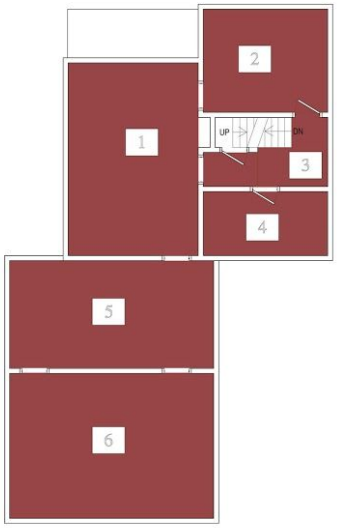
Current Use Second Floor



Proposed Use Basement



Proposed Use First Floor



Proposed Use Second Floor

Proposed Use Legend

- Unused/Underused Spaces (0 SF)
- Office/Administration Spaces (797 SF)
- Collections Workrooms/Curatorial Spaces (0 SF)
- Retail (0 SF)
- Flexible Programming (0 SF)
- Exhibit/Gallery (0 SF)
- Museum/Interpreted Spaces (0 SF)
- Non-Collections Storage (487 SF)
- Tier 4-5 Collections Storage (0 SF)
- Tier 1-3 Collections Storage (1,103 SF)

Vail House

APPENDIX A: New OHS Collecting Scope
Approved as a working draft by the Collections Committee in November 2018

We collect objects that help residents see their place in a long continuum of people who, for hundreds of years, have found this place special. Collecting themes include:

Belonging: how we claimed "this secluded place," and how it in turn claimed us
Examples include:

- Records documenting the ways families stay rooted in Oysterponds for generations
- Oral histories of how individual residents found Oysterponds
- Records documenting the common pattern of first renting and then eventually buying a home here

Living close to the land and the sea: the fields, the marshes, the stone beaches and the bay, the weather, the views, the light, the smells, potatoes and vegetable farming, oysters, clams, scallops, fishing, cooking
Examples include:

- Objects that represent the work of farming and fishing (tide charts, tools and implements, gathering baskets, Dominick di Lorenzo's painting "The Root Harvest")
- Records, models, and portraits of ships with local ties
- Outdoor recreation artifacts (swim suits, cross-country skis, the ice boat)
- Local recipes

The patterns and rituals of our community: the four seasons and their derivatives (fishing season, the return of the ospreys), the Memorial Day parade, the ferry, annual events
Examples include:

- Photographs and archival documentation of these longstanding community patterns
- Ferry schedules

Our families: the founding families, the new families, "families of choice," the ways families experience this place and commit to it, Oysterponds' family tree
Examples include:

- Genealogies

- Family photographs and letters
- Special objects passed down in Oysterponds families through generations

Institutions and activities that are the social glue of our community: Oysterponds School, Poquatuck Hall, the Orient and East Marion Fire Departments, the yacht club, our community associations, churches, OHS
Examples include:

- Organizational documents and photographs (Orient Literary Society minutes book)
- The Oysters baseball shirt
- Records of the events held each year in Poquatuck Hall

Our special places: the causeway, Orient Point, the hamlet post offices, Marion Lake, Village Lane, beloved local businesses
Examples include:

- Maps and images of these places showing how they have changed over time
- Architectural fragments and artifacts (the retired PO boxes from the Orient post office)

Community inflection points: moments of both change and resistance to change, efforts to protect Oysterponds
Examples include:

- Materials from local political and social campaigns (temperance banner, buttons and bumper stickers)
- Artifacts and records documenting contentious local issues (dispute over Cross Sound ferry expansion, suit against water authority, Oki-Do oyster factory)

Our creative spirit, whether professional or amateur: artists, writers, musicians, scientists, thinkers, tinkerers.
Examples include:

- Creative output (artwork, poetry, literature, music), with special emphasis on items that depict Oysterponds (William Steeple Davis's photographs of local scenes, Jonathan Galassi's *New Yorker* poem "Orient Epithalamion," Hilda Mollineaux's *Orient 1900* quilt)
- Records documenting the density of creative people living here

Our stories: accounts that show a distinctively Oysterponds perspective on the world.

Examples include:

- Records that document the effect of national or international events on Oysterponds (British Captain Charles Paget's letter to Joseph Terry during the War of 1812 about the burning of the smack *Jupiter*, Roy Latham's letter to Pearl Bugbee about the flu pandemic of 1918)
- Artifacts related to local residents who served during wartime (John Henry Young's Civil War diary, Marcus Duvall's WWII flight jacket)

Time Period:

We collect artifacts and archival materials representing the entire span of Oysterponds history, from evidence of its first inhabitants 10,000 years ago up to present day.

OHS does not collect:

- Objects that represent regional or national histories but have no specific tie to Oysterponds. Such objects may be acquired to serve as exhibit props or for an education collection, but they should not be formally accessioned.
- Objects with no provenance and/or no local story

APPENDIX B: OHS Collections Items by Type

	1-10	11 - 100	101 - 1,000	1,001 - 10,000
Books/documents/archival materials				x
Ceramics and glass				x
Metal objects				x
Textiles and costume				x
Toys and dolls				x
Works on paper				x
Photographic materials				x
Audiovisual media			x	
Archaeological/paleontological artifacts			x	
Armor/weapons/military			x	
Furniture			x	
Leather/animal hides			x	
Maritime, historic ships			x	
Numismatics (money)			x	
Paintings			x	
Plastic objects			x	
Stone objects			x	
Tools			x	
Wooden objects			x	
Horological (clocks)		x		
Industrial/agricultural tools, equipment		x		
Medical, dental, health, pharmacological		x		
Musical instruments		x		
Science/technology/medicinal artifacts		x		
Botany (herbaria)	x			
Ethnographic artifacts	x			
Geology/mineralogy	x			
Philatelic (stamps)	x			
Sculpture	x			
Taxidermy	x			
Transportation vehicles	x			

APPENDIX C: Datalogger Analysis

Background
Maintaining stable temperature and humidity in spaces where collections items are stored or exhibited is a fundamental part of collections care for historical societies and museums. Fluctuations in temperature and humidity can cause objects to deteriorate or crack as they repeatedly expand and contract; excessive humidity can lead to mold blooms, rust, and pest infestations; and too little humidity, while better than too much humidity, can cause some materials to become dry and brittle. Different collections materials have different requirements for temperature and humidity, but for many years the accepted standard for mixed collections (where paper, textiles, leather, wood, metal, glass, and film are housed together) has been to maintain a temperature between 68° and 72° and relative humidity between 45% and 55%, with only minor, gradual fluctuations within the course of a 24 hour period. However, very few institutions of OHS's size are able to achieve such stringent guidelines, and the imperative of climate change is forcing museums and historical societies of every size to rethink their HVAC settings in the interest of reduced fossil fuel consumption. Therefore it is reasonable for OHS to aim for temperature between 60° and 75° and relative humidity between 35% and 65% with no severe spikes within a 24 hour period.

In June 2018 OHS purchased a set of dataloggers, digital devices that continuously measure temperature and humidity, in order to have a better understanding of climate conditions in collections spaces throughout the campus and to more quickly spot and address climate control problems before they adversely affect collections health. Below is a summary of what these dataloggers tell us about day-to-day conditions for the OHS collections. Getting the dataloggers up and running was complicated, so we do not have a full run of data for every location. Also, because the temperature and humidity *outside* significantly affects the climate *inside*, OHS needs to collect a full year of data before we can have a full understanding of how collections conditions change with the seasons. Nonetheless, the data we have collected so far is already helping us learn important information about which spaces are most stable for collections and which buildings require HVAC upgrades.

Village House, September 25, 2018 to April 11, 2019
For the months captured by the dataloggers, this building has the most stable climate of any on the OHS campus. Temperatures are consistently within the target range of 60°-75° with a lot less

daily fluctuation than other buildings. And except for a single day in early November, humidity remained below 65%, also with less fluctuation than other buildings.

Old Point Schoolhouse First Floor, June 24, 2018 to April 11, 2019
During the hot months (July to early October), the window air conditioning units generally kept the temperature below 75° (except for September, when the temperature spiked above 75° on 20 separate days) but they struggled to control humidity: this space hovered between 70% and 85% RH from August through early October. This is why we recommend a commercial grade dehumidifier for the basement of this building; the window units alone are not able to effectively control the climate during the months when collections items are exhibited here. From mid October through April temperatures were stable, ranging from 58° to 68°. Humidity was stable in the fall but was quite dry in the winter, going as low as 15%-20% on many days.

Amanda Brown Schoolhouse
October 16, 2018 to April 11, 2019
It should come as no surprise that because this building has no climate control, the indoor air mirrors the outdoor weather. During the cold months captured by the dataloggers, it reached temperatures as low as 20° and humidity as high as 90%.

Webb House
October 11, 2018 to April 11, 2019
Dataloggers weren't installed in Webb House until mid-October, so unfortunately we do not yet have data to help us understand just how humid the building gets during the hot summer months, a particular concern due to the mold/mildew found on collections items and interior finishes in Webb during our site visit in October 2018. Over the fall and winter the climate was relatively stable. The temperature generally stayed within an acceptable window, although a week above 75° in early February and a few other spikes in March raise a question of whether the heat should be set slightly lower during the winter months. Meanwhile humidity ranged from 15% to 65%, with a few isolated spikes to 70% in the summer and winter kitchens.

Red Barn, October 16, 2018 to April 11, 2019
As with Amanda Brown Schoolhouse, because this building has no climate control, the indoor air mirrors the outdoor weather. During the cold months captured by the dataloggers, it reached

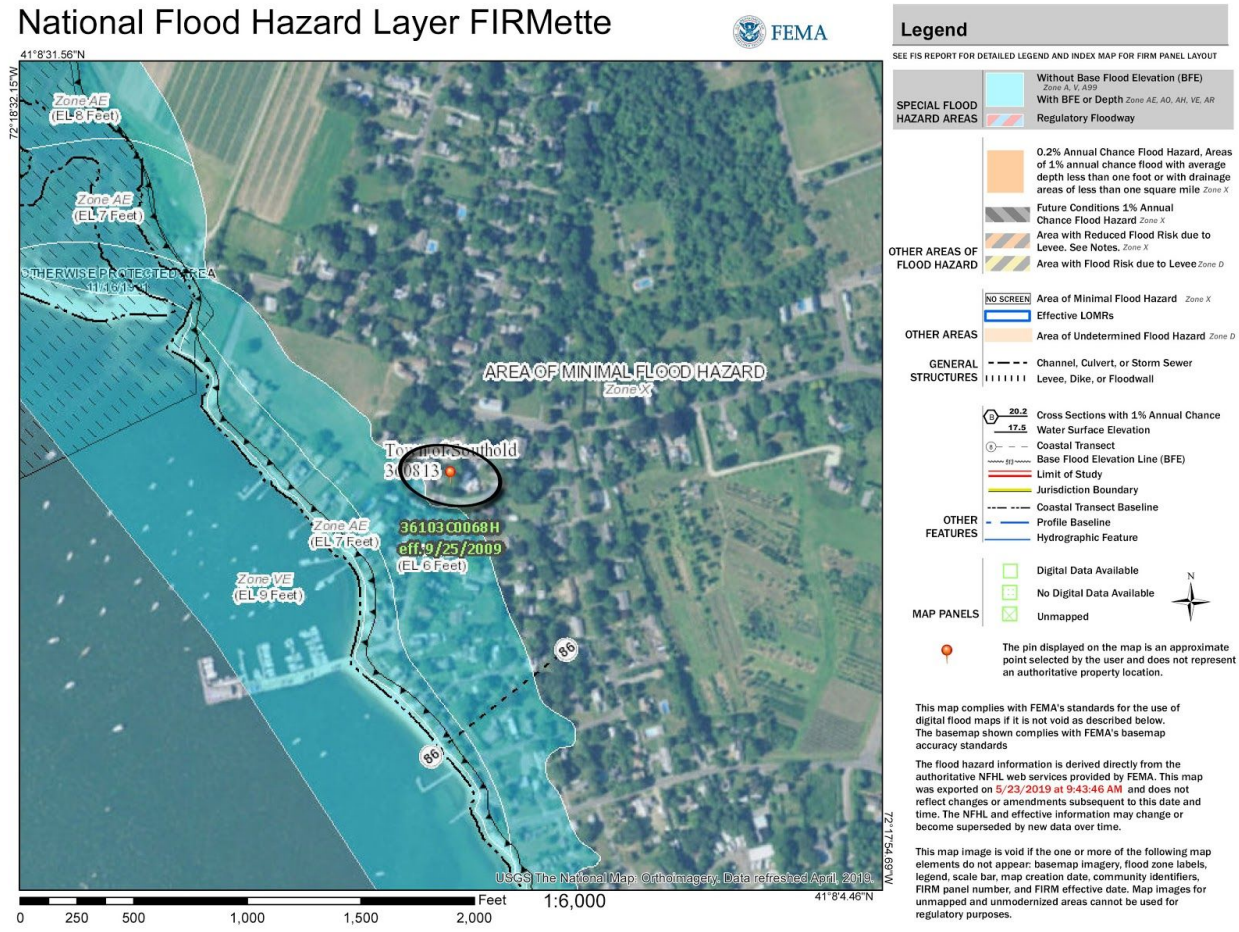
temperatures as low as 10° and humidity as high as 90%. This is why we recommend installing dehumidification in the basement and only storing objects meant for outdoor use in this building.

Hallock Building, June 24, 2018 to April 11, 2019
According to the dataloggers, this is the second most stable building on the OHS campus, second to Village House. On the first floor, temperatures stayed within an acceptable range of 60° to 75° throughout the nine months of data, with the exception of one day in mid January where something must have happened to the heating system. Humidity also stayed below 65% on the first floor during this period. The basement is relatively stable for a basement, at least in colder months (data collection began for this floor of Hallock in October), with temperatures generally in the 60s and humidity ranging from 20% to 65%. Meanwhile the second floor is a little too hot, perhaps because heat is rising from the first floor; there were 36 days during the data collection period when the temperature was above 75° on the second floor. There were also humidity issues on the second floor in July through September: RH regularly exceeded 65% during those months. This is why we recommend installing a dehumidification system in the basement.

Vail House
So far no dataloggers have been installed in Vail House.

APPENDIX D: FEMA 50 Year Flood Map

This map, generated by FEMA, helps us better understand the risk to the OHS campus from a catastrophic flood.



APPENDIX E: Consultant Bios

Michael Devonshire, Project Coordinator, JHPA
Michael Devonshire has over forty years' experience in the field of historic preservation. He is skilled in materials analysis, conditions assessment, and project management. His knowledge of building documentation and technology is comprehensive. He began his career as a restoration coordinator of the NYS Bureau of Historic Sites' office at the Schermerhorn Row Block in New York City. From 1981 to 1985 he served as a conservator for the Center for Building Conservation (CBC), where he directed various projects including the Old Westbury Gardens Palmhouse on Long Island. As Director of Conservation at JHPA, Mr. Devonshire has overseen projects that include Dragon Rock, the Russel Wright Home and Studio (1959-61), in Garrison, New York; the Italian Trade Commission (the former Hugh Auchencloss Mansion (1903), in NYC; the Merchant's House Museum (1832), in NYC; 361 Broadway, a cast iron edifice constructed as the James White Building (1882). He has also directed restoration work at the Nathaniel Rogers House (1834) in Bridgehampton, NY. He has completed condition assessment reports for the Keeler Tavern (1725) in Ridgefield, CT, the Beaux Arts NYC Fire Museum (1904), the Montclair Historical Society buildings (1796-1896) in Montclair, NJ and the Maria Mitchell Museum buildings (1720-1908) on Nantucket. He serves on the New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission, and the New York State Historic Preservation Board.

Kurt Hirschberg, Project Manager, JHPA
Kurt Hirschberg has over twenty years' experience in architectural research, documentation, materials conservation, preservation planning, construction oversight, and project management. Since joining JHPA, he has produced schematic, design development, and construction documents for the Brooklyn Historical Society, The National Lighthouse Center and Museum, The Plainfield Railroad Station, The Merchant's House Museum, and Church of the Ascension. He also oversaw the restoration of the Kathryn W. Davis Riverwalk Center, The Holland Activity Center, the Huber Woods Environmental Center, Rockefeller University and Locust Grove, the Samuel FB Morse Historic Site as well as the stabilization of the extant structures on Bannerman's Island. He is a local preservationist active with several historical societies, dealing with museum preservation and management of historic facilities. He has served on the Board of Trustees of Historic Speedwell, and a founding board member of the Friends of Historic Speedwell in Morristown New Jersey, the birthplace of the electromagnetic telegraph. He has

served as commissioner with the Hanover Township Landmark Commission and is currently on the Board of Directors of the northeast chapter of the Association for Preservation Technology.

Rainey Tisdale, Collections Consultant
Rainey Tisdale has over twenty five years' experience in museum collections management and care. She is co-founder of the Boston Area Collections Coalition as well as the national Active Collections movement, which seeks to develop new, more sustainable and audience-centered approaches to museum collections stewardship. Her essays "Do History Museums Still Need Objects?" (History News, 2011) and "Objects or People?" (Active Collections, 2017) are required reading for museum collections professionals across the country, and she regularly leads workshops on collections stewardship and interpretation for museum professionals. She held curatorial positions at The American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations Museum, the US Office of the Senate Curator, and The Bostonian Society, before opening her own museum consulting practice in 2010. In her role as a museum consultant she specializes on place-based interpretation, collections stewardship, and museum strategy. She was a Fulbright Scholar in Helsinki, Finland, a community fellow at Brown University's John Nicholas Brown Center for Public Humanities and Cultural Heritage, and she has taught both Collections Management and Material Culture in the Museum Studies Program at Tufts University.

APPENDIX F: Report Details

Format

The written report, photographs, drawings, and related appendices are intended to complement and, where applicable, reference each other to produce a comprehensive assessment of the Oysterponds campus.

Use and Reproduction

The services represented by this report are for the exclusive use and benefit of the Oysterponds Historical Society, and such services, data, recommendations, proposals, reports, documentation and similar information produced and provided by the consultants are not to be used or relied upon by other parties without written permission from the consultants.

Acknowledgments

The assessment team wishes to sincerely thank Priscilla Bull, Doug Constant, Charles Dean, Elsbeth Dowd, Ann ffolliott, Amy Folk, John Holzapfel, Marianne Howard, Leslie Koch, Janet Markarian, Bill McNaught, Esther Rotella, Kathy Smith, Diana Whitsit, and Ellen Zimmerman for their cooperation and assistance during the process of developing this report.

This report was funded by a grant from the Robert David Lion Gardiner Foundation.