The ONEIDA COMMUNITY MANSION HOUSE
A National Historic Landmark

The ONEIDA COMMUNITY MANSION HOUSE (OCMH) was chartered by the New York State Board of Regents as a non-profit museum in 1987. It is the only site to preserve and interpret the history of the Oneida Community, one of the most radical and successful of the 19th century social experiments. OCMH publishes the Oneida Community Journal to inform the public of the cultural and educational activities at the Mansion House and to present articles about social and historical topics of interest within the context of its mission.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS
Letter from the Executive Director .............................................1
Photos ..........................................................................................2
Cemetery News ...........................................................................3
Leaders and Followers .................................................................4
A New “Walks with Grandma” .....................................................8
New Docents ................................................................................9
From the Collection: The Unfinished Violin ...................................9
Visiting the Mansion House in the Mid 1930s .............................13
The World’s Critical Eye ..............................................................15
Andrea Maranville: A Baker in the Mansion House .....................16
Update from the Sales Office ......................................................16
Farewell to Our Silver Maple ....................................................17
The Oneida Community in 1866 .................................................19
Operations Report .....................................................................22
Gifts to the Operating/Annual fund ..........................................22
New and Renewed Members ......................................................24

COVER ILLUSTRATION
The Mansion House Complex about 1875, a view looking over the creek from the southeast. The white building at center right is the Seminary. To its right is the “Old Post Office.” Above them is the 1862 Mansion House and Children’s Wing and, peaking around the back of the latter is the “Woodshed Chamber” (gift of Rhoda and Robin Vanderwall).

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Errata
In the previous issue of Oneida Community Journal (September 2018), in the article “Shirley Freeman’s Mansion House” (p. 22):
In captions belonging to the middle and lowest photos, the phrase “moved to the north” should have read: “moved to the south.”

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Oneida Community Mansion House
LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
Christine Hall O’Neil

WE WELCOME 2019 WITH A STRONG sense of purpose at OCMH. Trustees, staff and volunteer docents are finding new ways to spread the story of the Oneida Community and working hard to maintain the historic structure that housed those stories.

We are grateful to all who have demonstrated support for OCMH. Donations and memberships continue to flow, highlighting the importance of OCMH’s story. Members and donors understand that education and preservation—our most important causes—need intentional support.

The people who live, work at and visit the Mansion House are OCMH’s greatest advocates. At the Annual Meeting in November, the Board of Trustees recommitted themselves to serving on the Board. Officers elected were: Jonathan Pawlika, Chair; Wilber Allen, Vice Chair; Mark Strong, Treasurer; and Jamie Trevvett, Secretary. Jeff Durbin, Robert Fogarty, Jeff Garner, Amy Gebhardt, Greg Owens and Tina Wayland-Smith round out the Board. This spring, Susan Belasco will join their ranks bringing her higher education experience to the organization’s leadership. We are grateful for the Trustees’ dedication and skill in leading the organization forward.

Our docents remain critical to the mission at OCMH, stepping up to present numerous programs, tours and outreach talks this fall and winter. Whether it’s hosting school groups, college classes, cemetery tours, or driving to the Southern Tier, OCMH’s talented docents spread the story of the Oneida Community with great zeal.

This winter, we said good-bye to our business manager, John Raynsford, who is moving on to a new opportunity. John stepped up to help the organization when OCMH needed assistance. John standardized procedures, brought a positive attitude to work daily and was a crucial member of the OCMH team. While John’s daily presence will be missed, he leaves OCMH a better organization for his involvement. We wish John Raynsford the best and appreciate his continued support and encouragement in this transition. We are fortunate to have a docent step up to work in the main office in John’s stead (see “New Docents”).

And, our undying gratitude goes out to Tony Wonderley for masterfully editing the Oneida Community Journal.

Besides the generous support from the Kenwood Benevolent Society, OCMH grants and preservation updates include both new and recently completed projects:

The Howard and Bess Chapman Foundation has made it possible for OCMH to refurbish the lounge floor this winter with a generous gift. The 1914 era hardwood floor has survived over a century of constant use. This project will not only make the space more attractive, but it will protect the exposed wood for another century of gatherings.

Thanks to a generous donation from Tim and Marge Garvey of the Garvey Family Trust, the Library houses a new desktop computer station. The computer sits in the northeast corner of the library. Besides being useful for guests, members, residents and researchers, Oneida Community genealogical information will be entered into the system. When data entry is complete, visitors, researchers and descendants will be able to view and share updates to Oneida Community genealogies.

While a wet fall delayed the project, we expect to commence work this year on an important water mitigation project to protect the building, generously funded by the Oneida Savings Bank Charitable Foundation. More about this project in coming months.

Last winter the Board of Trustees voted to approve replacing the Mansion House boilers. The previous two boilers had originally served the Oneida Limited knife factory before being installed in the Mansion House. This complex project was skillfully completed without any lapse in heat for residents.

We are pleased to report that OCMH completed the last phase of a security project funded by the Central NY Community Foundation. The project, which includes security cameras inside and outside of the building and key-fobbed entrances, helps to protect collections, residents, overnight guests, as well as helping staff monitor a 93,000 sq. ft. building with dozens of entrances. Please come say hello and visit the Mansion House by the front door, which remains open during museum hours Monday-Saturday, 9am-5pm and Sunday 12pm-5pm for all who wish to enjoy the Mansion House and its offerings.

In our ongoing attempt to preserve the National Historic Landmark foundation from water damage, OCMH will assess the impact of plantings around the building. The 2017 Building Envelope Condition Report recommends “removal of overgrown 20th century woody foundation plantings” (Crawford & Stearns, BECR 2017). Although a modern audience has become familiar and even fond of these plantings, historic preservationists warn that the plantings “are inappropriate and contribute significantly to moisture retainage at the building lower levels” (Crawford & Stearns, BECR 2017). The evidence of this water infiltration is visible after most rainy days in the form of puddles and rivulets in the basement. Many ambitious 19th century buildings, like the Mansion House, designed their stone foundations to be exposed and admired. Removing woody plantings close to the building will not only protect the building structure but will reveal the impressive foundations to a new generation of admirers.

We look forward to continuing to elevate the beauty of the Mansion House for current and future generations.
Judy Mumford's yoga class meeting in the Big Hall

Tom Murray's reading company commemorated World War I for a large audience in the Big Hall on November 11

Judy Mumford's yoga class meeting in the Big Hall
A MAGNIFICENT RED OAK TREE on the northwest portion of the Oneida Community Cemetery sustained significant damage in a windstorm during the winter of 2017. It stands on a ridge among several stately trees that possibly pre-date the cemetery itself. Miraculously, the gravestones underneath, for the most part, were spared when huge limbs fell from the oak.

Over the last 18 months, the Cemetery Committee has debated the fate of the Red Oak. We have vacillated between treating the tree and prolonging its life, or having it taken down and removed from the grounds. Steve Blair, from Bartlett Tree Experts, has been our professional consultant throughout the process. Steve is in the business of caring for trees and has offered a proposal to prune the tree and re-install some cabling. He cautions, however, that his plan may extend the life of the tree for perhaps another ten years, but periodic inspections and treatments would come at an additional expense. He did not hesitate to add that, even with preventative measures, a future storm might bring large branches, or the tree itself, down and thereby damage or destroy the gravestones underneath.

We have learned, over the last year and-a-half, that estimates from tree removal companies are slow to come by. Some outfits never responded to our repeated requests. Others came through with estimates so high as to suggest they did not want to tackle the difficult job. Ultimately, we settled on an estimate from a tree removal company in nearby Oriskany Falls. “The Family Tree Service” owner, David Kilts, has access to a “boom truck” and has indicated he can take down the Red Oak and remove it from the premises for a reasonable amount. The boom truck is best suited for the job because it involves a process in which sections that are cut off are lifted away from the tree, posing minimal danger to the gravestones underneath. The traditional method of rigging and roping sections and then lowering them to the ground could potentially cause significant damage to the gravestones in the area.

The Cemetery Committee met last July to mull over the fate of this tree. Each member was asked to visit the cemetery and offer an opinion. While no one was enamored with the idea of bringing down a tree 150 years or more old, the consensus of the group was to have it removed. We decided that extending the life of the tree would involve on-going expenses. Further, damage resulting to the gravestones underneath should large branches, or the tree itself, topple over would be catastrophic. A few members noted that there are several large, stately trees in the area that will “fill in the gap” once the Red Oak is gone. If all goes as planned, the tree will be taken down and removed from the cemetery grounds sometime this year.

Several years ago the Cemetery Committee adopted a policy to set aside money in our budget for the preservation and treatment of the largest and oldest trees in the cemetery. While we’ll all miss the Red Oak, the majestic trees that remain have withstood the test of time and probably more than a few dramatic weather events. We treasure those ancient trees and hope that global warming will not stand in the way of their survival for generations to come.
LEADERS AND FOLLOWERS IN THE ONEIDA COMMUNITY

Letters as a Means of Social Control by Maren Lockwood Carden
(author of “Oneida: Utopian Community to Modern Corporation”, 1969)

Abstract
Correspondence between members of the Oneida Community illustrates how the social control mechanism of mutual criticism extended into all aspects of members’ daily lives. This continual, informal criticism administered by the spiritually superior central members was perhaps the major reason why people at Oneida submitted to the extraordinary demands of the Community’s religious and social system.

JOHN HUMPHREY NOYES FOUNDED THE Oneida Community in 1848 to practice his religious teaching that man was not doomed to sin but could instead be perfect. His teachings, explicated in a series of periodicals that he distributed throughout small-town New England, interested a great many people of whom about three hundred joined Oneida to put them into practice. There at Oneida, twenty-five miles from Syracuse, they sought perfection by developing their individual talents and by learning to set the group’s interests above their own. They combined their capital and property and lived together in the Mansion House. Together they studied the Bible and Noyes’s writings, and continued their educations. They shared work in the house, on the farm, and in its animal trap, food canning and other businesses. They also shared marriage partners in a system of “complex marriage” which transformed the individual families that had joined Oneida into a single family. Only through Oneida’s rigorous and ever-present system of social control, “mutual criticism,” could these people focus on group needs and avoid the kinds of individualistic or small group activities that would threaten the community’s stability.

Noyes oversaw criticism in the same general way he oversaw all community activities. He left the details to his loyal, long-term, deeply committed perfectionist followers whom he had ranked in the upper reaches of the spiritual hierarchy into which he arranged all Oneida’s members. These central members oversaw two kinds of criticisms. First, the formal kind. They selected and guided the committees that systematically evaluated a person’s faults (and occasional virtues) and they summarized and wrote up the committee’s assessments. Those criticized accepted the judgments and resolved to do better. But doing better was not only for the next formal criticism; it was for the next day and the next hour. They were, as one of the central members put it, “always more or less under criticism.” (see note 1) And it is these constant criticisms of the minutiae of the daily lives that made mutual criticism so effective.

Community members’ letters were an integral part of criticism. The correspondence I have examined is an adventitious selection of letters opened to the public in 1991 at the Syracuse University’s George Arents Research Library. Many were sent from ordinary members to their superiors and most of these seem to be responses to more or less specific demands for information. (note 2) They include reports of everyday events sent to keep up-to-date people living in the several branch communities at Wallingford, CT, Putney, VT, Brooklyn, NY, as well as Oneida. Others, which were of special interest to me, are members’ responses to formal and informal criticism. A few contain chatty exchanges between spiritual equals. None was sealed; the recipients found their names written on back of the folded paper. They would have been delivered by any of the frequent travelers between Oneida’s branches.

I shall explain first about how members’ letters enhanced the effects of formal criticism. After that, I shall show how the letters underscored the frequent informal criticism which threaded every aspect of a person’s life.

The formal criticisms to which all were invited to contribute, exposed many kinds of large and small weaknesses with brutal candor. Members acknowledged the comments, “confessed” their failings and resolved to improve in written affirmations sent to central members for approval and comment before they were read before the community. A young woman wrote, “I have been tempted to envy, small heartedness and discouragement….I have quite often spoken disparagingly of myself. Yet I have felt it was good to turn about and brag if you please to call it so….I have been tempted to ‘live on the approbation of those around me.’” (note 3) One person expressed submission to those betters whose comments she had perhaps questioned. “It is the desire of my heart to be kept humble and receptive to those above me. I have felt for some time…a spirit of egotism, and a lack of simplicity. I am sorry for it. God being my helper, I hope to be freed from that spirit.” (note 4)

In such letters, members not only sealed an official judgment of their behavior, they also declared their determination to improve. Henry J. Seymour appended such a resolution in a letter describing for the people at Putney recent events at Oneida. I have a “strong ambition to improve in the power of concentrating my whole life just where I will, for my will is to do the will of God. In order to gain this power I will apply myself diligently….To cultivate constancy to the truth I will take hold of some branch of it, study and follow it up as God’s spirit and providence directs me.” (note 5)
Sometimes members actually thanked the community for its wounding comments. John Abbott expressed “gratitude” and “thankfulness to the association for the pains they have taken to cure my faults.” (note 6) Laura Burgess had probably been criticized for objecting to her daughter being sent to the Putney branch community. She responded in what the community considered an appropriate manner. “I feel very thankful that Margaret can go to Putney; she will be a help in the public spirit.” “I feel to thank God for the privilege of being in this beautiful school where I can be criticized and molded over like a lump of clay in the potter’s hand.” (note 7)

A few people even expressed joy at receiving criticism. Candace Bushnell had spent a week at Oneida where her faults had been criticized more than once. Back at Wallingford, she responded: “Every recollection brings delight….I learned many a lesson in that short week which I now apprehend were greatly needed. I was angry at Mr. Cragin for his comments but now--How my heart is drawn out in gratitude and love towards him.” (note 8) Central members would say that such a person “had taken criticism with a beautiful spirit.” (note 9)

The letters or parts of letters in which ordinary members acknowledged official criticisms have a formal air. Mostly without spelling errors or erasures, they are fair copies of carefully composed statements. By confirming those criticisms members sealed their commitment to the community and its rules.

Formal criticism of this kind necessarily took place infrequently. Between times, any kind of behavioral lapse could cause a central member to administer an on-the-spot criticism. Immediately upon receiving such a reprimand, members would admit their failure--we see those that were written down. For example, Theodore L. Pitt discovered after a visit to the Children’s House that he had interfered with the way people there were treating his son. Immediately, he wrote in pencil, on both sides of tiny pieces of paper to apologize:

Dear Bro. Herrick,
I did not get your note the moment of leaving. I am sincerely sorry that the affair occurred, and desire you to make all due apologies to the Children’s Department for me. I certainly had not thought or intention of interfering with them in their control over Ethelbert, nor did I realize, fully, till afterward that what I did was of that nature. I did not know when I stepped forward to where he was standing what the matter was, and thought perhaps he had hurt him in getting down from the table or something of that kind. And when I found that he had been crying for his mother, I supposed it was because he knew she went away in the other room without explaining to him where she was going or when she would be back. She left that for me to do. I was busy at the office in the afternoon and had not told him; and came to supper thinking I would do so as soon as I saw him. My anxiety to do this and prevent his crying after her again made me fail to give due attention to Mrs. Kelly’s suggestion that they thought he had better go in at once. I did not realize that there was so serious an issue of disobedience with him. With anything of that kind I have never, that I am aware of, interfered before, and certainly I shall be careful about doing so in the future. Thanking you for your criticism, I am your affectionate brother for improvement.  T. L. Pitt (note 10)

Theodore Pitt and others must sometimes have felt that they walked on eggshells, never quite knowing when they would offend. The apprehension conveyed in this letter was common as was the effort to head off further disapproving comment. A person sometimes looked ahead and tried to avoid disapproval by denying forbidden feelings. Virtue Conant responded to a woman central member about her move from Oneida to Wallingford. “I have not been homesick much, and I am contented not only in appearance but in reality.” (note 11) Sarah Burnham Campbell denied not feelings but motives. She worried that a central member interpreted her wish to change rooms as a desire for “a nice place” rather than a 56-year-old person’s need for brighter light to work by. After almost thirty years at Oneida she was still vulnerable to criticism, but she knew how to ward it off. “I was not asking for a ‘nice place’ for myself. I have no such wish. In fact, my room is no

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worry to me, only for the light….I do hope my note to you was not circulated.” (note 12)

Even in the occasional letters between equals, we see how people were very cautious about conveying potentially damning information. Happily, a spiritual equal could be asked to conceal a careless comment. Lorinda Lee Burt, who had been at Oneida since it was founded and who, in the late 1870s worked four hours daily in the Turkish bath, commented to another longtime associate about Mrs. Mallory’s “experience in respect to her social [read sexual] character. Lately she seems soft and very much in earnest.” (note 13) Later the same day she wrote again to say that she had said something similar to a central member who visited the bath and been reprimanded for gossiping. She now wrote, “I do not know as I should [have] spoken of Mrs. Mallory’s experience. I did not have any evil in my heart in speaking of it and I trust you will not make bad use of it. I do not want to say anything that will hurt anyone’s feelings or be gossiping about anyone.” (note 14)

But members faced more problems than overcoming their tendency to gossip, their attachments to places, or their desire to be involved in their children’s training. They had to overcome their emotional ties to individuals in favor of emotional ties to all. The bonds they most frequently disavow in letters are those binding them to family members or lovers. One of these people, John Sears, had been moved from Oneida to Wallingford where he missed Beulah Hendee “ever and ever so much but I can also say that I am not unhappy, but am thankful for my circumstances for I know that God arranged them.” (note 15) Three weeks later he wrote, “I do not want you to think I am unhappy all the time, if I did let out a little of it a while ago. Far from it, I am quite happy these days. I feel as though we [in Wallingford] were a kind of outpost placed here for a purpose, and that purpose is to discipline us and make us good soldiers. I do want to be a good soldier and to be loyal and faithful to Christ and Mr. Noyes, and I have an earnest prayer in my heart for any experience that will make me so.” (note 16)

Sears wrote in the 1870s. Twenty years before Annie Hatch at Oneida wrote to a man then living at Putney warning him not to comment about her in his regular news reports to Oneida.

Dear Brother,
I have quite a discussion in my heart to say a few words to you not doubting you will excuse the liberty I take….Mr. B. told me some time ago that he thought much communication as we have had back and forth was not good and had a tendency to somewhat withdraw my interest from other quarters and I am thankful for the hint and believe it true and request that you make no allusions to me in your letter hereafter—I have not time to explain but “a word to the wise” is sufficient….In very much haste I confess myself your ever loving sister. E. H. A. (note 17)

People were not only attached to their lovers; they wanted to be with their children. From the community’s earliest years parent-child bonds were discouraged and members used letters to deny the fault. In 1864 Susan C. Hamilton had been separated from her three-year-old son who very recently had been sent from Oneida to live at the Wallingford branch. Writing to a central member about her subsequent activities, she often mentioned the child. She tried to nip criticism in the bud with a comment: “I hope I shall be excused for saying so much about Harry—just to begin with—you know.” (note 18)

Such disavowals increased during the community’s final decade because there were more children. Under the eugenics program, children were conceived by “superior” parents but, after birth, reared by the community. Before the birth, a pregnant woman might be separated from her mother. When one such daughter announced to her mother that she was expected to be at Wallingford for the second half of her pregnancy and her lying in, her loving mother managed to find the plan good. “I had anticipated considerable pleasure in having
you near me, etc., etc., but when your note was received and I looked the ground all over, I was glad of the decision and I found that quite a load of anxiety was taken from me. There are many reasons why I feel it would be better for you to be there.” (note 19)

After such a child was born and a year later weaned, the new mother and child were separated. We see that the mothers declared as much to themselves as to the central members that separation was easy. Carrie A. Macknet writes that, previous to separation from her son: “With Felix to care for and my book-keeping, I had about all I could do. Since he left, I have felt quite relieved—have a good deal of time to do chores and work on the books. I miss him a good deal, and am sometimes quite hungry to see him, but I am thankful all the time that he is at O. C. and feel no shade of sadness.” (note 20)

Another young mother, Alice Ackley, also denies worrying about her recently-weaned child. “I don’t want you to think that I worry about her for I have not felt the least anxiety about her since I left. It seems almost strange that I can leave so young a baby and feel so little care about her.” (note 21)

Alice was not entirely successful in persuading herself (and us) that mother/child separation was a social good. But she joined everyone else in trying earnestly to do so. Almost everyone at Oneida tried frighteningly earnestly to let go of personal ties—to their children, their lovers, their friends. Their letters show how social control mechanisms of criticism penetrated all aspects of their lives and how they themselves confirmed that control by accepting reprimands, resolving to improve, and by constantly trying to avoid the actions and thoughts through which they might stray from the path of perfection.

Notes
2. Since the letters came from the central members’ own collections, few were sent by central members to ordinary members but there are many exchanged between central members.
3. Harriett Matthews to Harriet N. Olds, no date (?).
4. Charles A. Burt to Tirzah C. Miller, January 3, 1871 (6-7).
5. Henry J. Seymour to Marcus L. Worden, March 6, 1851 (33-34).
7. Laura Burgess to Marcus L. Worden, June 12, 1852 (4).
9. Emily Otis to Beulah Hendee, April 12, 1877 (24).
10. Theodore L. Pitt to James B. Herrick, June 5, 1878 (26).
11. Virtue Conant to Harriet N. Olds, April 20, 1870 (9).
12. Sarah B. Campbell to Tirzah C. Miller, April 16, 1878 (9).
13. Lorinda Lee Burt to Harriet Matthews, March 26, 1877 (7).
14. Lorinda Lee Burt to Harriet Matthews, March 26, 1877, second letter (7-8).
15. John Sears to Beulah Hendee, October 9, 1878 (32).
17. Emily H. Allen to Marcus L. Worden, no date (1857) (22).
19. Candace B. Bushnell to Beulah Hendee, March 27, 1876 (8).
20. Carrie A. Macknet to Tirzah C. Miller, June 14, 1872 (1996, 1).
A NEW “WALKS WITH GRANDMA”
by Pody Vanderwall

JESSIE CATHERINE KINSLEY (“JCK,” 1858-1938) is known to Mansion House visitors for her unique braided tapestries in the JCK exhibit room. Also on display there are her charming, small oil paintings. But, few people have seen her children’s books. There are only a few examples, each of which was uniquely made for a specific child. Originally, OCMH owned six which were gifts to the collection and, until recently, were the only examples believed to exist. Then, in 2018, Rhoda Burnham Molin donated another edition of “Walks with Grandma”—a previously unknown work created for Molin’s father, Chester Burnham.

Made between about 1915 and 1922, the one-of-a-kind “Walks” books with their hand-written text and washed-ink drawings, are fragile. Graphic artist Don Cornue made preservation copies of the six books so they can be enjoyed by contemporary children and visitors. Most recently, Don made a preservation copy of the Burnham edition. Copies of this and other “Walks With Grandma” can be read in the Mansion House by arrangement with the curator. Bring your child!

A Dream Walk
This is a dream that had no beginning, or ending (hardly)— only a middle, and we are in the middle catching things.
Look!
- Rhoda is catching a Robin, because it begins with R;
- Myron is catching the Moon, (M) catching it for a car;
- Betty is catching a Bear, because it begins with B;
- Chester is catching a Cheshire Cat, because it begins with C;
- Albert is catching an Antelope because it begins with A;
- Jane, Joan, and Jessie (Grandma Jessie) chase Jackals because they begin with J;
- Billy is catching a Bronco because it begins with B;
- Virginia is catching a Vicuna because it begins with V;
- Dickey is catching a Duck because it begins with D.
- And Dream (poor Dream, she is way down at the bottom) is catching an Ending—Why? Because ending begins with E.
THE VOLUNTEER STAFF AT THE MANSION House provides invaluable contributions through hands-on and committee work in the museum, programming, gardens and lawns, collections, administration as well as housekeeping. It is hard to imagine the Mansion House functioning as it does without them. Many of our docents and committee members have been offering their time for over a decade!

We have a new class of docents composed of four retirees eager for meaningful engagement. Former professors Tim McLean (Social Science, Herkimer Community College, 2006 recipient of the SUNY Chancellor’s Award for Excellence in Teaching) and Susan Belasco (English, University of Nebraska; co-editor of The Bedford Anthology of American Literature) had been busy pursuing military history and photography respectively.

When the opportunity arose to become guides, however, they jumped at the chance to link up with the Mansion House. Tracy Walker had always been an avid reader and student of history and now has even joined the fulltime staff replacing John Raynsford as Business Manager. Cathy Cornue had lived in the Mansion House as a young teacher and has lived in Sherrill, since 1971, across the street from McAllister Elementary where she taught. All four happily accepted an invitation to train from Molly Jessup, former curator of education here. They participated in three rather formal but very interesting training sessions with Molly who also assigned readings from a wide range of primary and secondary source material. The four express a great appreciation for the training they received. All continue to absorb more details and perspectives about the Community, the complexity of Mansion House design, challenges to this magnificent structure, and the limitless ways tours can be fun, surprising, and satisfying. We welcome these four new volunteers and, as is true of all our volunteers, thank them wholeheartedly for their enthusiasm, knowledge, and commitment.

New docents (left to right) Susan Belasco, Tim McLean, Cathy Cornue, and Tracy Walker

FROM THE COLLECTION: THE UNFINISHED VIOLIN

by Abigail Lawton, Curator of Collections

ONE OF THE MOST DISTINCTIVE ARTIFACTS in the Mansion House collection is an unfinished violin. Its documentation is sparse, but a label found with it identifies this piece as “the first violin made by hand at the Oneida Community.”

The Community’s carpentry shop began making violins early on to supply the family’s musicians. In July 1914, the Mansion House publication, “The Quadrangle”, published the article “Instrumental Music in the Community, 1848-1881” which described the role of music in Community life and how this experiment in violin making began:

When the first Mansion House was finished in 1849 and the Community family began our evening gatherings in what was called the “Parlor,” we found as a family that we were fairly well equipped in the line of vocal music. Under such leaders as Henry W. Burnham and E. L. Hatch, with Mrs. Hatch, Sarah Burnham, Mrs. Cragin and the Baker girls, our home choir supported by most of the family gave us vocal music of unusual excellence.

But with instrumental music we made a poor showing; mainly because we didn’t have any instruments, baring a few cheap violins, one old basswood violoncello, a cracked flute with one key, and a slide trombone that nobody could play.

For our dance music, and we began dancing very soon after getting settled in our new home, we relied upon E. L. Hatch and his son George as violinists, with E. H. Hamilton as bass on the basswood cello and Henry Seymour or Seymour Nash on the flute. It often happened that a dancing class or even a family dance could get but one lone violin for its music, and thankful enough for that. J. H. Noyes and his brother, George W., would sometimes play violin duets, but not in public.

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As we had no money to spend upon new instruments, we depended upon our carpenter shop for additional violins. With E. L. Hatch and John Leonard, both skillful cabinet-makers, we began making violins at an early date, and considering the fact that neither of them had had the slightest practice in this difficult art, they turned out some fairly decent violins. At least one could play upon them, and also considering that the tops or bellies, the most important part of the violin, were made of basswood, a totally unfit wood for this purpose, they actually gave a muffled tone that was not half bad. In private practice with these home-made affairs it was hardly necessary to close your door to avoid annoying your neighbors. (Note 1)

In 2001, then-OCMH curator, Kerry Keser, was approached by a local violin maker who had seen this instrument on display and was interested in examining it to learn more about its construction and history. One of the first results of this examination was a re-identification of the piece as a viola and not, in fact, a violin. This identification is somewhat complicated by the fact that specific dimensions for violas were not then standardized as they were for violins. Overall, however, its measurements correspond more closely to those of a small viola rather than a violin. Chisel marks were found on the neck of the instrument, clearly indicating that it was made by hand. The analysis also identified the types of wood used in its construction—the top, or belly, of the piece is made of spruce (a softwood, like basswood), the sides, back and neck are maple, and the pegs and fingerboard are ebony.

So why was this instrument left in its unfinished state? The 2001 examination concluded that it was finished enough to have been played “in the white” (i.e. unvarnished). Today, the bridge is missing, but discoloration on the belly clearly shows that one was originally there. The instrument, therefore, could have been strung and played. It is common practice to set up an instrument at this stage, before varnishing, in order to determine what sort of tone can be expected from the finished product. It may be that this violin/viola was tested, found to have an unpleasant sound, and so left unfinished. Perhaps the maker concluded that spruce, unlike basswood, was not a good alternative to the hardwoods usually preferred for string instruments.

But regardless of whether this instrument was the first of its kind or not, or whether it is technically a violin or a viola, this piece is a testament to the importance of music in Community life. Many photographs in our collection show the various musical groups and individual musicians in the Community. Music was an integral part of their daily lives. Musicians entertained the tourists who flocked to the Mansion House in summer; they played informally for family dances and to
entertain members as they worked together in bees; they were the first to christen the new Assembly Hall in the 1862 Mansion House before the plasterers had even finished painting it; and, no July 4th or High-Tide-of-the-Spirit celebration was complete without a musical performance.

It is not surprising that music was a prominent part of Community life. Leisure activities in the 19th century were less varied than they are today. In order to listen or dance to music, people had to go to concerts or make it for themselves. As the American ethnomusicologist, Thomas Turino, put it in his book, “Music as Social Life,” in the 19th century sheet music was the “software” of the music industry (the song to be played) and musical instruments were the “hardware” used to play it. These products were “often sold through catalogs to be played in the home after dinner or during times of leisure. [They] were the basis of active participation in music making among average people.” (Note 2) Given that music was an important part of many members’ lives before joining, it is not surprising that these individual singers and musicians quickly combined their talents to form the Community’s first choirs and musical ensembles.

But within the Oneida Community, music was not just a pleasant activity to entertain them during down time. Turino argues that music and performance play an essential role in establishing our sense of identity. He states:

Music, dance, festivals, and other public expressive cultural practices are a primary way that people articulate the collective identities that are fundamental to forming and sustaining social groups, which are, in turn, basic to survival. The performing arts are frequently fulcrums of identity, allowing people to intimately feel themselves part of the community through the realization of shared cultural knowledge and style and through the very act of participating together in performance. Music and dance are key to identity formation because they are often public presentations of the deepest feelings and qualities that make a group unique. (Note 3)

Within the Oneida Community, not only did the act of playing and dancing to music offer a shared experience that emotionally bonded members to one another, the temperament and discipline required for ensemble performances reinforced specific Perfectionist principles, such as cooperation and selflessness. In dancing, singing, and musical performances, members had to suppress their desire to excel or standout and instead perform at a level that created harmony with their fellows. In essence, they had to embody the Community spirit, putting the needs of the Community ahead of their individual interests and ambition.

Perhaps the Community was aware, consciously or subconsciously, of music’s ability to strengthen social bonds, because, in their final year, as social dynamics were breaking down, the younger adults attempted their most ambitious musical endeavor to date—a production of Gilbert and Sullivan’s comic operetta, “H.M.S. Pinafore.”

This musical received unanimous praise and much of the commentary remarked upon the Community spirit elicited by the performance. Harriet Skinner wrote on Feb. 8, 1880, “I don’t know which is most to be praised, but there is the glory of communism shining in it all—and affectionate freedom that only a Community troupe could feel or act. There is not a villain in it. Nothing evil; but a great deal of fun and sweetness. Alfred said in a meeting last night in his dry way, that it was almost as good as a religious meeting. It has been a most profitable and wholesome diversion to the Community during the
political strain of the winter.” (Note 4) After a few more weeks of performances, the Journal reported that the show wore well and “promotes love and fellowship in our family circle and so proves a good medium of communism.” (Note 5)

We will never know whether the success of this show could have helped permanently stabilize the family’s social life and re-instill a sense of communality because the production was disrupted by casting changes in early spring 1880. A few of the key actors left Oneida and were replaced by new cast members which altered the dynamic entirely.

As Harriet Skinner wrote to JHN, “some changes in the cast of performers have made it almost equal to beginning again. Lily…and others were telling their troubles when Theodore said, ‘We must confess the true Pinafore spirit.’ There was a beautiful flow of inspiration and harmony in it last winter and I suppose [Theodore] wants to get that again.” (Note 6)

This “flow of inspiration and harmony” sounds notably similar to the process of “syncing” as described by Turino, who observes that “through moving and sounding together in synchrony, people can experience a feeling of oneness with others.” (Note 7) He goes on to describe how musical performance induces this feeling of oneness:

Judging from Mrs. Skinner’s comments to JHN, it seems as through the original cast had achieved this synchrony and feeling of oneness and it is unsurprising that, once attained, Theodore and others would want to get it back.

Admittedly, it is unlikely that music alone could have held the Community together at the end. Too many other disruptive forces were at work, both internally and externally, for the organization to survive in its communist socio-economic state. But the “Community Spirit” lived on long after the dissolution of the Oneida Community. It was kept alive by the former members, both young and old, who spent years living and working together, and playing, listening, and dancing to music together. Although the Perfectionists never achieved their utopia, they did successfully form their own community and cement those social bonds through shared experiences that established a unique collective identity. That collective identity was passed down through the generations, though its bonds have weakened as descendants have moved away or lost connection to the shared experiences and heritage that defined their social group. But history can be rediscovered and relationships reformed, and sometimes all it takes to open the door to the past is a single story or object, like a photo in a scrapbook, an article in an old newsletter, or an unfinished violin.

Notes
3. Turino, Music as Social Life, 2.
5. Robertson, The Breakup, 229.
7. Turino, Music as Social Life, 2.
8. Turino, Music as Social Life, 18.
VISITING THE MANSION HOUSE IN THE MID 1930s

by Carl Carmer

This writer described his meeting with Oneida Community descendants in a two-part article (“Children of the Kingdom”) published in The New Yorker magazine (March 21 and 28, 1936). The excerpt following is taken from the version of that account which appeared as a chapter in Carmer’s book, Listen for a Distant Drum: A York State Chronicle (also 1936). --AW

[WHEN I FIRST MET Pierrepont B. Noyes, I felt] the impact of an extraordinary man. He is tall and walks with the sure movement of an athletic body. In spite of his white hair and rugged, strong-lined face, he has an engaging openness that is both eager and youthful. He told me that the rest of the children of The Family, the old community’s name for itself, would be along shortly...

I was enchanted by these people. Most of them are big—I sensed the physical vitality in them; all of them are intelligent; and many of them are blessed with understanding sensitivity. Living in Kenwood, off the main lines of communications, traveling little, they yet succeed in being sophisticated in the best sense of the word. They are people of taste, poised and articulate. All this they will seriously deny, belittling their virtues. They love to apply the psycho-analytical yardstick to themselves and to their parents.

Strong in their amused admiration for the combination of religious fanaticism and Yankee initiative which brought them into the world, they point out that they themselves have only a certain New England shrewdness left. Few of them belong to churches. Most of them relax in a comfortable agnosticism. None of them has the religious power and drive which made the Oneida Community.

I found that they were not telling the whole truth when they spoke of their heritage being chiefly competence in running the silver-plate business. This they undoubtedly have, and the fact that they have fitted a doctor into the job of head of the advertising department, a man without artistic education into the job of head designer, a scholar trained in the classics into an efficiency expert, is an interesting and iconoclastic comment on modern business methods. A member of The Family is shifted around in the business until his superiors believe he suits his job. He is promoted as he shows ability. But there can be no selection of the “best-trained man for the job” here. The man must adapt himself to his work after he gets it. Meanwhile, the business goes on being thoroughly successful.

The Family have turned the evangelist fervor of their parents into other channels. The Yankee penchant for dreaming has found varied outlets among them. There is not one of them in whom the creative urge lies dormant. For example, P. B. Noyes himself, successful executive and president of the silver company, is a novelist. His daughter is a novelist. A shy little woman who sat near me writes verse that appears chiefly in the Atlantic Monthly. Edith Kinsley is a painter. Her mother, at the age of seventy-six, had taken up painting and, being dissatisfied with it as a medium of artistic expression for herself, had invented the braiding of picture-tapestries. With the mystic verses of Spenser, Coleridge, de la Mare as her inspiration, she has braided such loveliness of color and form into her work that collectors have begged her for it. The advertising man, who reminded me of the days when Community Plate was advertised by Coles Phillips’ posters and asked me if I thought a similar campaign advisable now, is a gifted sculp-

Pierrepont Noyes and son Pete.

“They have fitted a doctor into the job of head of the advertising department”: Burton “Doc” Dunn.

Cont’d. next page
tor in his spare time. And a sweet, white-haired lady who joked them all with charming aplomb said “we creative artists of Kenwood” with just enough amused edge to get me to ask her the inevitable “And what do you do?” so that she might reply, “I write for True Confessions.”

“One of the chief ways in which we differ from other middle-class groups of people of our circumstances,” said a tall blond woman, “is that there is no gallantry in Kenwood. After the Break-Up, when the eugenic and communist experiment was at an end, the value of extreme respectability was high. Even today an occasional idiot leers at one of us and says, ‘And what goes on at the Community now?’ The result of our desire to conform was that the pendulum swung as far as it could away from sex. There’s no flirting at Kenwood. At our parties the men go off in a corner and talk shop or sport—the women amuse themselves as best they can. We have comradeship, intellectual companionship from our men, but not an admiring glance. No one even bows us through doors. Fifty years ago the people of Kenwood acted that way because they were afraid of public opinion. Now it’s a habit.”

P. B. Noyes laughed. “We don’t see as many new faces as we should, I guess. Kenwood wakes up only once a year—for agents’ week.”...”I’ve told him [Carmer] we’ll give him everything except the diaries,” said P. B. “You know there are still a few of the grandchildren who look on their parents’ origins as not quite respectable. So we’re delaying the publication of the diaries until the great-grandchildren are adults. By that time they’ll be proud of their ancestors. This is more fun for us than it is for you, I guess. We’d rather talk about the Community than eat.”
THE CLERGYMAN HUBBARD EASTMAN raged in 1849 that Oneida Perfectionism was nothing more than “perfection in sin,” nothing less than “the worst of spiritual maladies with which man’s moral nature was ever infected.” John Noyes, thundered the New York Observer in 1852, proclaims that “unbridled licentiousness is the law of heaven,” and that “promiscuous intercourse” is “the highest state of holiness on earth.” His followers, the paper sputtered on, are a foul body living in concubinage, a “disgusting order of united adulterers” practicing “unrestrained indulgence of the human passions.” A quarter of a century later, Professor John Mears of the clergymen’s crusade against the Community, lambasted Oneida as an outgrowth of vile passion, a hotbed of harlotry, and a pernicious institution based on “a system of organized fanaticism and lust.”

The Oneida Community was regarded by a large portion of Victorian America as a scandalous affront to family values. --AW
ANDREA MARANVILLE: A BAKER IN THE MANSION HOUSE

by Pauline Caputi

STAYING IN ONE OF the charming guest rooms at the Mansion House has long included a complimentary breakfast. The tradition now continues as a “breakfast bar” in the rear of the house. Cloth tablecloths, fresh flowers, and freshly brewed coffee provide a setting that encourages conviviality among the guests. A healthy and delicious spread, available from 7:30 to 11 am, has been enjoyed by all.

We have been most fortunate to have the fresh muffins, danish, bagels, cinnamon buns, and other items prepared by local celebrity baker Andrea Maranville who competed—and won through as a finalist—in the Great American Baking Show. An offshoot of the Great British Baking Show, the American version is a popular internationally televised reality show. It brings together amateur bakers to show off their talents by doing their thing competitively. The suspense builds as contestants are steadily eliminated leaving only the best. Andrea was among the victors on an episode that aired in December.

Andrea lives in Sherrill with her husband and four children. She is self-taught and passionate about quality and aesthetics in what she produces. And her craft goes well beyond first-rate baked goods. The experience of the baking show has proved to be life-changing. She has turned the corner as a professional baker and already has several local restaurant accounts. She will continue to supply the breakfast bar at the Mansion House but now will be using our own kitchen as home base for expanding her own business—the Silver City Baking Company. Andrea invites you to stop in and say hi.

It’s exciting to have her thinking about the myriad ways the kitchen could be used to benefit the Mansion House. Classes, pop-up bistro, meals-to-go, tastings—there are many possibilities. The staff is already enjoying the aromas wafting through the corridors. Andrea has a clear affection and personal connection to the Mansion House. Her great-grandmother (Lillian [Smith] Downey) worked at Oneida, Ltd and her great-grandfather (James Downey) was Pierrepoint Noyes’s driver as well as a security guard at OL. Welcome Andrea!

UPDATE FROM THE SALES OFFICE

by Jody S. Hicks

CONSTRUCTION OF THE NEW apartments is coming along slowly. We are still confident, however, that they will be available this spring. Fortunately, we have had a lot of interest in them and they are currently filled. We anticipate we will begin a second phase of apartment construction in the finance wing next year.

The renovations of the Madison County Court House are going well and the courts anticipate moving back to their space in Wampsville at the end of May.

This means that we have plenty of room for new tenants, from single offices to businesses needing up to 24,000 square feet. The space is newly renovated and looks great.

We will continue to renovate and restore the building both inside and out. We are excited for this new phase in the history of the building. If you have any questions or concerns please let me know. You can access my contact information at our website: www.kenwoodcp.com.

The Sales Office of Oneida Ltd.
JUST BEHIND THE South Garden and a stone’s throw from Kenwood Avenue—there stood our gigantic Silver Maple tree. It spoke of longevity and history; it provided shade and beauty; and it was home to birds and bees and squirrels and other critters. (Fig. 1) We said our last good-byes to this magnificent tree on December 27, 2018.

No one I have spoken with knows exactly when this tree was planted, but we do know it was very big. After the Black Walnut and the Tulip trees were officially recognized as New York State Big Tree Champions, the Silver Maple was submitted for similar honors. At that time in 2009, the tree stood 128 feet tall (taller than the Tulip tree) and its trunk was over 20 feet (241 inches) in circumference (larger than the Black Walnut tree). More to the point, it was larger than the reigning state champion. Unfortunately, due to state budget and staffing shortages resulting from the financial recession of 2008, the NYS Big Tree Register was not a priority for the state and our tree was never officially measured and recognized as the largest in the state.

Like many of our older and larger trees, the Silver Maple had several cables installed in its upper limbs to hold the tree together. In June 2010, one of the bolts holding one of these cables pulled away from the tree (the trunk had been slowly rotting away from the inside) and the upper third of the trunk crashed to the ground. (Fig. 2) Bees swarmed everywhere and a beekeeper was called to remove them. He found that there were actually two hives in the fallen section of the trunk and a third hive in the hollow at the top of the still intact section. He was able to successfully remove all the bees, noting at the time that they were “gentle” bees.

Steve Blair and Bartlett Tree Experts were hired in August of that year to remove the remaining section of the damaged trunk. The photos show the broken trunk still standing and portions of it after it was removed indicating the extent of rot in the trunk. (Fig. 3) Concern began to mount about the structural viability of the tree.

Fast forward to 2018. Concern for safety issues and the viability of the tree came to the fore again in August when a major lateral limb crashed to the ground. For many years before this limb fell, a pair of turkey vultures returned to the Silver Maple each spring to lay their eggs and raise a pair of baby birds in the hollow created by a previously felled lateral limb just beside this now fallen limb. (The fallen limb and this nesting hole can be seen in the August 2018 photograph shown here as Fig. 4.) Each year, for several weeks before the baby birds left the nest for good, they were seen walking along or perched on the now fallen limb which they used as their launching pad when they began to practice flying. Interestingly, the spring before the branch collapsed, the adult birds returned to the tree for a few days and were observed hanging out in the upper branches of the tree. This time, however, they did not stay to lay and raise their young. One can only speculate that they realized it was no longer a safe home.

With the mounting evidence that the tree was imperiled and in order to forestall a major catastrophe of the tree falling across the road, the decision was made to remove it entirely, the bid for removal going to Mike Helmer and his crew from Complete Tree Services. On their first day, as the crew worked 80 feet in the air, they encountered another beehive. Those bees were far from “gentle” and chased after many of the crew members, the result being that several sustained multiple bee stings. Work was postponed until colder weather when the bees would be dormant.

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That day arrived on December 27, 2018. Helmer’s crew returned with a bucket truck, a boom truck (essentially a crane), several pickup trucks with trailers, a wood chipper, a bobcat, several chain saws and other tools of their trade. The first December photo shows one of the crew members being lifted to the upper horizontal limb in order to attach ropes to enable the crane to lower the limb to the ground (see Fig. 5). The crew proceeded throughout the day to cut and lower sections of the remaining two trunks to the ground and haul them away. In one of the remaining trunks, the crew discovered a raccoon in its nest and, later, they sawed through a baseball bat when removing another section! Half of the bat was ceremoniously stuck in the center of the stump before they left.

Seeing one of the crew’s trucks leaving the site with the gigantic lower section of the trunk, PodyVanderwall followed it to their dumping site in Munnsville in order to take the picture which shows the point at which the main trunk split into three vertical trunks. (Fig. 6) We are hoping to be able to count the rings of the stump when spring returns.
Oneida Community—Its Origin

February 1, 1848, is regarded as the birthday of the Oneida Community, as on that day the first practical steps were taken by John H. Noyes and Jonathan Burt towards forming the present organization, on the premises of the latter, in the town of Lenox, Madison County, New York.

On the 1st of January, 1849, the number of persons connected with the Community was eighty-seven; on the 20th of February, 1850, one hundred and seventy-two; one year later the whole number was two hundred and five. Since then there has been no great increase of numbers, mainly on account of the inability of the Community to accommodate applicants; but some fifty persons who have been members of the Community at Oneida now reside at its two branches, in Wallingford, Conn., and New York City. The present total at Oneida is two hundred and nine, viz.: men over twenty-one years of age, seventy-nine; women over twenty-one years, seventy-eight; persons of both sexes under twenty-one years, fifty-two.

The members were born in New England, one hundred-fourteen; New York, sixty-five; New Jersey, eight; Maryland, Virginia, Wisconsin, Iowa, Missouri, Michigan, one each; Ohio, two; Illinois, four; Canada, two; England, six; Scotland, and the Island of Ceylon, one. The persons who have joined the Community represent nearly all the ordinary trades and professions; they have been clergymen, lawyers, editors, school-teachers, reporters, printers, architects, carpenters, machinists, millwrights, inventors, blacksmiths, farmers, gardeners, etc.

Capital

At the outset of its career the Oneida Community found itself the possessor of an ordinary unpainted wood dwelling-house, an Indian log-hut, an old Indian saw-mill, a fair water power, and forty-seven acres of land, the whole encumbered by obligations to the amount of two thousand dollars or more. Owing to many causes, such as the want of well-organized businesses, inexperience of members in the new form of society, maintenance of a free paper, extortion of seceders [sic] and outside enemies, the Community was not financially self-supporting for at least the first eight years. During this period, however, capital was transferred to it by its original members and brought in by new ones; so that the net value of its property January 1st, 1857, was $41,740.

Its net capital January 1, 1866, (including property at the agency in New York) was $237,055.99, showing an increase in nine years of $15,315.99. Of this amount $33,378.12 has been partly brought in by new members, and partly received from sources outside of the Community; and the balance, viz., $161,937.87, may be regarded as the net earnings of the Oneida Community in nine years...The present capital of the Oneida Community and its branches, as indicated by the last annual inventory, is $267,681.71.

Industries

Most of the ordinary employments are now carried on at the Community; as farming, gardening, blacksmithing, carpentry, wagon-repairing, dentistry, printing, &c. It also has a large machine-shop and foundry, and a saw-mill; and manufactures somewhat extensively for sale traveling-bags, steel-traps, preserved fruits, mop-sticks, &c. A small store is kept for the convenience of its members, its employees and its neighbors. The selling of Community productions and other manufactured goods gives employment to several traveling
agents. The manufacture of steel-traps (of which eight sizes are made, suitable for catching and holding any animal from the house-rat to the grizzly bear of California and the Rocky Mountains) employs more labor and capital than any other branch of Community industry. For this business a large brick factory has recently been erected. The number of traps made in a single year has exceeded two hundred thousand.

The making of traveling-bags also employs considerable labor and capital. Previous to 1862 the annual sales of this department of Community industry did not exceed three thousand dollars; last year they were over fifty thousand.

The business of fruit-preserving is very popular with the Community, and is likely to grow into large proportions. It gives pleasant employment, during the summer months, to all classes in the Community, and to many of its neighbors. The fruits and vegetables put up are mostly raised by the Community, and are said to be preserved in the best condition. The demand for their fruit is constantly increasing. The amount sold the past year was somewhat over twenty thousand dollars. The products of this department a few years since were valued at less than two thousand dollars.

Farms, Orchards, etc.

The domain comprises 561 acres, most of which is under cultivation. The orchards, vine-yards and gardens cover about 50 acres. There are estimated to be on the place a thousand apple trees, nearly the same number of pear trees, two hundred plum trees, &c. Four hundred bushels of strawberries have been harvested in a single season. The grape crop of the past year was over eight tons. The farm proper is mostly occupied with the dairy, which includes some fine specimens of native and imported stock, and numbers 87 cows. There are 36 head of oxen, yearlings and calves, 20 horses, 2 colts.

Outside Helpers

Until about four years ago the Community industry was almost entirely confined to the labor of its own members. Since then the demand for its productions has induced them to employ outside helpers, until quite a regiment of workmen and workwomen find more or less steady employment at the Community. The fruit-preserving department at one time in the past season had in its service twenty-three hired laborers; the bag department had twenty-four males and twenty-six females at work for wages. Much of the work in the trap factory is now performed by other than Community men; and the same is true of other departments. At one time during the past year there were over one hundred persons on the pay-roll of the Community. It has erected comfortable houses for some of its hired workmen, and expects to furnish pleasant houses for many others in due time.

It is proper to remark in this connection, that while the Community employs many persons for wages, it does not wholly approve of the hireling system, but regards it as one of the temporary institutions which will in time be displaced by the associative principle; but so long as men choose to work for wages the Community will do what it can towards furnishing them with remunerative employments.

Labor in the Community

is voluntary. There are, to be sure, regular work hours, and all are expected to cultivate industrious habits; still there is no compulsion exercised. The general aim is to make labor attractive and a means of improvement. The members are accustomed to alternate between the different branches of industry, and many a person who understood not a single trade when he joined the Community, now understands several trades equally well. No one feels that he must labor a lifetime in one vocation, irrespective of taste and adaptation. The sexes freely mingle together in different branches of industry; and women, relieved from household drudgery, are found not only helpmates to men in labor, but capable of skillfully
managing even complicated businesses.

**Education**

has always been a leading object with the Community. All are encouraged to seek a liberal education, and the necessary time and facilities are freely accorded for this purpose. The term education has a broad signification in the Community, being applied to all kinds of culture, especially to that of the heart and social character, as of primary importance; still, much attention is given to books. Age is considered no barrier to study, and the oldest are seen cultivating their minds with the same enthusiasm as the young. "Never too old to learn" is a good old proverb fully realized here. Persons of threescore years are found in classes side by side with those of a single score and younger....

The educational advantages afforded by the Community are apparent. With a common library likely to attract the best books and periodicals, with opportunities to select teachers best adapted to instruct in different branches, with time and facilities given to all for improvement, with a spirit of encouragement stimulating all to develop their minds and hearts, the best results may be anticipated.

**Freedom from Care**

is one of the most important results secured by unitary life. Each individual in the Community has some responsibility, but he is not burdened with a multiplicity of care, as is often the case in ordinary society.

Here one person acts as steward, another has charge of the fuel, another of the laundry, another of the dairy, another of the farm, another of the garden, another of the finances, and so on; and in consequence of this distribution of responsibilities, and of the alternations in places of labor and trust, no one need be corroded with care, or oppressed with burdens and anxieties; and yet greater prosperity attends the general business than would be possible if each one had to look after several departments. In comparison with this state of things contrast the responsibilities of the head of an ordinary family, or of his wife, who, perchance, is the mother of three or four children, and who has to perform a large share of the kitchen, dairy and laundry work of the household.

**Cost of Living and Health**

It should be understood that the Community, while favoring simplicity in all things, is also in favor of having its members well fed and well clothed. The tendency of the Community has been, in respect to all such matters, to rise above the common standard. Those who fared best before coming hither, in the above particulars, have now no cause of complaint, while those who were less fortunate have certainly occasion for contentment, as there is no partiality exercised in the distribution of the comforts and luxuries of life.

The average cost of food per week for each individual in the Community, during the past year of high prices (estimating the productions raised by the Community for their own use at the market value, but not including the labor of persons in cooking and preparing them) was one dollar and forty-two cents per week. In 1857 it was only sixty-three cents per week. The average cost of clothing in 1865 (including wages paid to hired laborers, but not including labor performed in this department by the Community), was $38.62, or a trifle over seventy-four cents per week. In 1858, the cost of clothing material for each individual was $16.98 for the whole year.

As proof of the general good health of the Community, let two facts be recorded: First, there is at the present time no sick person in their midst; and, second, no death has occurred in the Oneida Community, or any of its branches, for more than fifteen months.
OPERATIONS REPORT

by Maria Skinner

SINCE TAKING ON THE ROLE AS Director of Operations I have had the welcome challenge of seeing, first hand, what it takes to work within the day to day operations of a 93,000 square foot historic building. Working together this past year with Executive Director Christine O’Neil, OCMH Department Heads and staff has been a most rewarding experience. We witnessed a new interest and audience of people visit our organization for various musical performances in the Big Hall, resident social gatherings, outside organization meetings and private parties held in the Lounge, Oneida Room and dining rooms.

The following are just a few improvements and additions I have worked on collaboratively with staff to add to our visitor and residential experience:

♦ Included in their overnight stay, guests can now enjoy fresh coffee and baked goods for breakfast in the old resident’s dining room, (fondly referred to as “The Coffee Bar”). Residents are also invited (via $1 donations) to take part in the coffee bar experience. A wonderful way for guests and residents to socialize, share the community experience or just begin their day!
♦ Weddings are also returning to the Mansion House. Having added a wedding landing page and leads form to our website now allows potential brides to instantly connect with us for venue pricing policies and availability. This has proved to be a very successful tool in following up with leads to then book special events and private parties.

♦ Also new to OCMH, Mellow Flow Yoga with yoga instructor, Judy Mumford-Sullivan. Since December the Big Hall has been the perfect “zen” space for hosting the Candlelight Mellow Flow Yoga Series every Thursday from 6 p.m. to 7:15 p.m. The perfect blend of beginner and intermediate postures makes this class open to the new and practiced yoga enthusiasts. Be sure to check our website for details as well as upcoming weekend yoga retreats or go to “Mellow Flow Yoga” on Facebook.

♦ Last but not least, we are proud to announce a new kitchen lessee (see “Andrea Maranville: A Baker in the Mansion House”). We are very excited about the possibilities this partnership will bring to the Mansion House and surrounding communities. For more information about Andrea please visit andreamaranville.com.

Looking forward to seeing what the next year will bring!

GIFTS TO THE OPERATING/ANNUAL FUND

August 1, 2018 - January 31, 2019

$10,000
Kenwood Benevolent Society

$1,000 to $9,999
Anonymous
Anonymous
Howard & Bess Chapman Charitable Corporation (To the Lounge Floor)
Katherine Garner (Capital Fund)
Kenwood Benevolent Society (To the Cemetery Fund)
Karla Zounek McLaughlin (Bequest from the estate of Zane W. Zounek)

$500-$999
Hugh & Kim Bradford
Robert Fogarty (To the Exhibitions Fund)
Barry & Sally Mandel
Timothy McLean
Alan & Josi Noyes (With Fond Memories of Johnny & Ruth Noyes)
James D. Trevvett (for Data Loggers)

Rhoda Vanderwall (To the Cemetery, Lawns & Gardens, and Braiding of Jessie Catherine Kinsley Funds; In Memory of Hope Ackley Owen, Joe Wayland-Smith, and Gwen Smith Trew; In Appreciation of the Staff, Guides and Patricia Hoffman and with Christmas Wishes to Lang Hatcher and Paul & Judy Noyes)

$250-$499
S. John & Susan Campanie
Russell Fox & Family
Amy & Paul Gebhardt (For Second Floor Laundry)
Patricia Hoffman (To Support the Jim O’Mahony Trio Concert)
Timothy McLean
Rhoda Molin
Geoff & Kristi Noyes
Jeannette Noyes
Edward Vanderwall (In Memory of Nick Vanderwall)
Linda & Robert Wayland-Smith
$100-$249
George & Nancy Allen
Mary & Robert Burdick (To Lawns & Gardens in Appreciation of Pody Vanderwall)
James & Sarah Dam
Wilber Noyes Earl, Jr. (In Memory of Wilber Noyes Earl)
Ramsey El-Assal & Sarah Wayland-Smith (In Memory of Giles Wayland-Smith)
Geoffrey & Lois Ezell
Tim & Marge Garvey
Natalie W. Gustafson
Jane D. Hanlon
Jane D. Hanlon (In Memory of Robert & Greg Drummond)
Denise & Kevin Hanlon
Denise & Kevin Hanlon (In Memory of Greg Drummond)
Dave Hannum
Laura W. & Thomas Hatch (To the Building Fund in Memory of Dard & Carol Wayland-Smith)
Joseph Hatcher (In Memory of Nini Hatcher on her Birthday)
John L. Hatcher (In Memory of Jerome and Joseph Wayland-Smith)
John M. Hatcher
Wanda Herrick (In Memory of Crawford M. Herrick, Jr.)
Karen & Michael Kallet
John & Sue Kuterka (To JCK Braidings with Christmas Wishes to the Vanderwall Family)
Donald & Patricia Lake
Jacquelyn & John LaRaia (To the Education Fund)
James Mackin
John & Kathleen Miller
Donna & Kenneth G. Moulton (In Honor of Cynthia Gyorgy)
Annette Noyes (To Lawns and Gardens in Memory of David Noyes)
Becky & Gary Onyan
Eliot & Sara Orton
Kelly & Neal Rose
David & Deirdre Stam
Mark Strong
Judith & Stuart Talbot
Judy & Paul Wayland-Smith
Linda & Robert Wayland-Smith (In Memory of Joseph Wayland-Smith)

Nola DeSimone (In Memory of Peter Gebhardt)
Graham Egerton & Anne B. Redfern
Edward “Skip” Evans
Susan Fischbeck & Patrick Hurley
Dawn Franits (In Memory of Sean Johnson)
Laura W. & Thomas Hatch (To the Building Fund In Memory of Joseph Wayland-Smith)
Leslie Herrick (In Memory of Crawford M. Herrick, Jr.)
Patricia Hoffman (In Memory of Flora Rafte)
Elizabeth & John Kelly
Glenn & Laura Herrick Kimball (In Memory of Crawford M. Herrick, Jr.)
Barbara J. Kinsella
John & Sue Kuterka (In Honor of Pody Vanderwall’s Birthday)
Gerald Lyons (To Lawns and Gardens in Memory of Virginia Sanderson Lyons)
M.E.I.D. Construction
Wesley Miga (In Memory of Doris Miga)
Susanne Miller
Lynne & Paul Milnes
Paul Minton
Joan & John Nicholson
Judith & Paul Noyes
Noelle Noyes
Shirl Oatman (In memory of Fayette Reed)
Ann Raynsford & John Swift
John & Kim Raynsford
Jeffrey Stone (In Memory of Imogene Noyes Stone)
Jay G. Williams
Lisa C. Wood (In Honor of Lang Hatcher)

GRANTS
Howard and Bess Chapman Charitable Corporation
Garvey Family Trust Fund
Verizon Foundation

IN KIND
Bradford & Mary Pat Adams – pool table
Marie Perry – custom-made cover for Steinway piano
Kelly & Neal Rose – office furniture
White’s Farm Supply

Up to $99
Elizabeth & Jeffrey Barnard
Bruce Burke
Brian & Nancy Carroll
Cathy & Don Cornue (In Memory of Gwen Trew)
Maria Curley (In Memory of Robert W. Curley)
Penny L. Cutler-Serra

Nola DeSimone (In Memory of Peter Gebhardt)
Graham Egerton & Anne B. Redfern
Edward “Skip” Evans
Susan Fischbeck & Patrick Hurley
Dawn Franits (In Memory of Sean Johnson)
Laura W. & Thomas Hatch (To the Building Fund In Memory of Joseph Wayland-Smith)
Leslie Herrick (In Memory of Crawford M. Herrick, Jr.)
Patricia Hoffman (In Memory of Flora Rafte)
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Lisa C. Wood (In Honor of Lang Hatcher)
NEW & RENEWED MEMBERS

BENEFACTOR
Mimi Gendreau & Eric Noyes
Barry & Sally Mandel
Family of Giles Wayland-Smith
Carol & David White

DONOR
Jane Noyes
Jeannette Noyes

CONTRIBUTOR
Deborah Austin
Susan Belasco & Linck C. Johnson
Heleene Brewer
Carol B. Davenport
Amy & Paul Gebhardt
John M. Hatcher
Duane R. Munger (In Memory of Sherry Munger)
Edward Vanderwall
Rhoda Vanderwall
Priscilla Wood

ASSOCIATE
William Boomer & Sally Fischbeck
Mary & Robert Burdick
Barbara & John Bowen
Nancy Cammann
Tim Cumings
Faye Dudden
Kevin & Laura Noyes Engel
Richard Fenner
Katherine Garner
Dave Hannum
Laura W. & Thomas Hatch
Jackie & John LaRaia
Cleve and Mary MacKenzie
John & Kathleen Miller
Donna & Kenneth G. Moulton
Holly & Jonathan Pawlika
Judy & Paul Wayland-Smith
Barbara & James Yonai

FAMILY/HOUSEHOLD
Peter K. Austin
Elizabeth & Jeffrey Barnard
Pauline Caputi & Anthony Wonderley
Brian & Nancy Carroll
Jaqueline & Thomas Chambers
Cathy & Don Cornue
Polly Darnell
Susan Fischbeck & Patrick Hurley
Ken & Mary Gilkes
Juliette & Matt Gorman

N. Gordon Gray
Mary L. Hastings
Jeff Hudson
Elizabeth & John Kelly
Richard Kinsella & Dawn Krupiarz
John & Sue Kuterka
Lynne & Paul Milnes
Rhoda Molin
James & Janine Nogawa
Alan & Josi Noyes
Eliot & Sara Orton
Nancy & Robert Pickels
Jim & Patsy Pierce
Ann Raynsford & John Swift
John & Kim Raynsford
Betsey & Michael Ready
Kelly & Neal Rose
Dana Spiotta
Charles & Gretchen Sprock
Terry Tubbs
Claudia Wiley
Dirk Vanderwall & Allison Willoughby (Gift of Rhoda Vanderwall)

INDIVIDUAL
Kim Allen
Barbara Forsstrom
Emilie Gould
Cynthia H. Gyorgy
Dawn Franitz
Morgan Harrington (Gift of Richard & Sandra Harrington)
Alan B. Hayes
Barbara J. Kinsella
Edward Knobloch
Peter MacInerney
Susanne Miller
Eric Noyes (Gift of Alan & Josi Noyes)
Greg Noyes (Gift of Alan & Josi Noyes)
Meryl Noyes (Gift of Geoff & Kristi Noyes)
Noelle Noyes (Gift of Geoff & Kristi Noyes)
Sara Noyes (Gift of Alan & Josi Noyes)
Spencer Noyes (Gift of Geoff & Kristi Noyes)
Carol Salerno
Barbara Sanderson
Tina Vanderwall
Tracy Walker
Preservation is a crapshoot. Take, for example, the World War I period of Oneida’s story. World War I-related activity in Sherrill and Kenwood included bond rallies and, as Jessie Kinsley put it, “great bees for Red Cross work at the Club-House on Tuesday and Wednesday evenings... Sometimes there are 400 women in white aprons.” The topic of World War I on the home front is addressed and preserved in art and photos on display in the Mansion House exhibit, “The Braidings of Jessie Catherine Kinsley.” World War I military production at Oneida Community, Ltd. included surgical instruments, trench knives, and lead-coated artillery shells. A sample of that is displayed and preserved in the exhibit, “Oneida Industries.” However, much more of that history was, for many years, on display in the CAC (see photos). When did these cases disappear? Where did they go? --AW
Forwarding Service Requested