

# Oneida Community JOURNAL

VOL. 33 NO. 2

SEPTEMBER 2019

ONEIDA, NY



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# 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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### ON THE COVER

Natalie and Josephine Malm and Liza O'Regan, from Worcester, MA and Laurel, MD were here this summer with their parents enjoying the Mansion House grounds. They are the granddaughters of Neal and Kelly Rose. Natalie and Josephine are the daughters of Jessica Rose-Malm; Liza is the daughter of Jennifer Rose and Terrance O'Regan.

Cover Photo: Jessica Rose-Malm

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## FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

*Christine Hall O'Neil*

### *Learning from the Past, Preparing for the Future...*

THIS YEAR WE HAVE BEEN BUSY gathering expert advice on the building and operations of OCMH. The board engaged development consultants, Phil and Meg George, seeking advice to strengthen and sustain the organization for the future. The process included soliciting feedback from some supporters and board members. The Board will explore the ideas that surfaced in the coming months. The entire organization is working to build on the successes of the past.

OCMH has been fortunate to have talented individuals working for the mission. Tony Wonderley completed his retirement and relinquished his role as Editor of the Oneida Community Journal and The New Circular. Pauline Caputi retired this summer as Assistant to the Director. We wish Pauline and Tony all the best in their next adventures and remain grateful for their significant contributions to OCMH. They, and countless others, passionately preserved and disseminated the story of OCMH. We will continue to honor their work while we focus on preserving the building that houses the story they so successfully interpreted. We are lucky to have dedicated people step up into roles at the Mansion House: John Raynsford returned to OCMH as Business Manager and Tracy Walker shifted to the Bookstore to serve as Assistant to the Director. Thank you to Cathy Cornue for stepping forward to help edit and produce this Journal.

This past spring, the Education Search Committee, led by Board Trustee Susan Belasco, assisted by long-time docents Carole and Joe Valesky and OCMH Curator, Abigail Lawton, was hard at work helping select a new museum educator. Happily, we announce that Jarrett Zeman joins the OCMH staff this fall as the Education Coordinator. Jarrett completed his graduate work in Museum Studies at George Washington University and has held various posts in the museum field, most recently at the 1890 House in Cortland, NY. Look for Jarrett to implement engaging programming later this year.

Numerous preservation experts toured the building in recent months, generously sharing advice and assistance. Architect and Board Secretary Jamie Trevvett performed a roof inspection. Julian Adams, Director, Community Preservation Services Bureau of NYSO-PRHP, visited and shared his historic preservation expertise. Cornell professors Michael Tomlan and Jeff Chusid significantly added to our understanding of the building on multiple visits. Scott Lupini, historic preservation masonry expert, and Jerome Durr, historic window expert, advised and performed work for the Mansion House. Historic preservationists, Ted Bartlett, of Crawford and Stearns, and Clinton Brown, advised OCMH on preservation grants.

Each preservation challenge yields fresh insights. We have learned that the biggest issue facing the building today is damage from water that has infiltrated the building and impacted the façade. This problem was exacerbated by the removal of the original water management system—a sophisticated system that included built-in gutters, drains and cisterns. In addition to historic gutters being removed in the mid-20th century, historic lime mortar was replaced with hard mortar. This hard mortar was applied generously across the brick façade over the last several decades. Improper hard mortar repairs applied to soft historic brick facades was a common 20th century error. Now we know that hard mortar traps moisture and damages the historic brick. The north façade of the 1862 building displays historic brick and lime mortar operating as intended. The South Wing west façade in the quad exhibits many areas of improper mortar repointing. The craftsman and architects who built OCMH knew their trade. What else can we learn from their skill and craftsmanship that can help us design and preserve sustainable buildings?

In an effort to share some of what we have learned, Board Chair Jonathan Pawlika led a talk recently with Jamie Trevvett and Mike Colmey on the condition and needs of the building. We reviewed the latest preservation efforts, current conditions and needs, including the 2017 Building Envelope Condition Report implemented by former Executive Director, Pat Hoffman. Since the report, the building has experienced areas of accelerated change (see Abigail Lawton's article). These areas are part of a \$1.4 million proposed project to protect the building and address water management. Generous grants and donations continue to help with immediate work now, but many of the issues are costly and interconnected. We recently re-applied for NYS REDC funding via a CFA grant and will continue to protect the building while we pursue major funding.

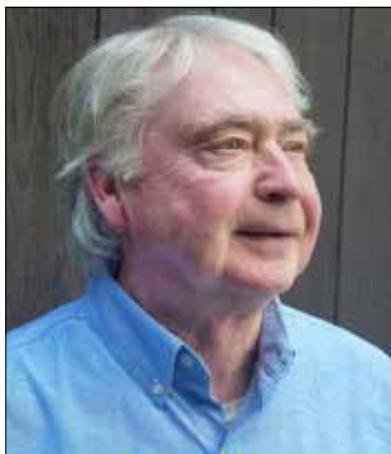
How can you help? Besides becoming a member, share your feedback, volunteer, become informed and advocate for the preservation of the Mansion House.

As we continue to learn, protect and share what we know, one may wonder—why should we work so hard to preserve a building? One response came from a young mason. While protecting the brick on the west quad façade, the young mason noted that the walls were much thicker than he expected. He marveled at the impressive construction and craftsmanship of the 140 year old wall and urged us to please save this building because, as he stated: "They don't make them like this anymore."



## FAREWELLS... AND A WELCOME

I FIRST MET TONY WONDERLY IN 2005 at a Mansion House Library Tea when he was working for the Oneida Nation as its historian. Not long after, he gave me a tour of the land and structures in the area with which he was so familiar and in a short period of time, he and his wife Pauline



and I became friends.

When we needed to hire a Curator shortly thereafter, it just so happened that Tony had recently left his job. So one day when he, Pauline and I were enjoying a warm sunny afternoon at

their house, I asked if he would consider taking the position. As they say, the rest is history.

As Curator, Tony's responsibilities included oversight of the collections, training and coordination of the guides, researching and installing exhibitions, and planning all of the educational programming. For years, Jessie Mayer had successfully served as Editor of the Oneida Community Journal. When she gave this up early in Tony's tenure, an Editorial Committee of Giles and Kate Wayland-Smith, Joe and Carole Valesky, Tony and I, took over this responsibility. In time, Tony became solely responsible for this time-consuming task researching and writing articles, gathering submissions from others, providing photographs from the Mansion House's extensive collection, and with Don Cornue, laying out the final product.

As if that wasn't enough, Tony reinstated The Circular which further brought to light his remarkable talents. It goes without saying that as a nationally recognized Oneida Community expert and scholar, Tony brought a new level of excellence to the two publications.

Thankfully, Tony continued to edit The New Circular and the Oneida Community Journal on a volunteer basis after leaving the organization in 2016. It was with great regret when we received the news that he would no longer continue as Editor after the 2018 year end.

Pat Hoffman  
*Retired Executive Director*

JOIN US IN SAYING GOOD BYE and happy retirement to Pauline Caputi. She joined the Mansion House in August 29, 2012 and joyfully entered the ranks of the retired in June 2019. During her time at the Mansion house Pauline's duties were wide ranging and she performed them all with her signature grace and intelligence.

Pauline's official title was Assistant to the Director, but she wore multiple hats and performed duties that ranged from development, marketing, communications, managing the bookstore, event plan-



ning, scheduling docents and tours and customer service. With her broad knowledge of the Oneida Community, Pauline was enlisted to give the occasional tour.

Conscientious, professional, talented, charming and always helpful, Pauline's daily presence will be missed by residents, members, volunteers and staff. We wish Pauline all the best in her retirement.

JARRETT ZEMAN IS DELIGHTED TO JOIN the Oneida Community Mansion House as the new Education Coordinator. Jarrett comes to Oneida from the 1890 House Museum in Cortland, where he served as the Curator. Jarrett holds a



Master's Degree in Museum Studies from The George Washington University. In 2019, he won the Hunter-Burley Award from the Small Museum Association, for hosting the 1890 House's first YouTube series, and for creating the living history program *Radical Spirits: A Victorian Séance*

*Revealed.* Jarrett has a passion for antebellum moral reform, and he looks forward to working with Oneida's staff, volunteers, and residents to increase awareness of this unique historic site.



## WHY DOES PRESERVATION MATTER?

by Abigail Lawton

THIS QUESTION HAS BEEN COMING UP a lot recently as we at OCMH are having conversations with our visitors, stakeholders, and community members about the needs of the Mansion House and our attempts to fund and execute preservation treatments on this landmark building.

There has been a lot of preservation-related activity here in the past few months. It has come in many forms: inspections and reports by architects, stone masons, glaziers, and other preservation professionals; preventive treatments executed by our Buildings & Grounds staff; and rehabilitation treatments by a group of graduate students from Cornell University who spent a weekend here working on projects that mitigated some of the long-term, everyday wear-and-tear on the building.

All this activity has been driven by the shared, central belief that the Mansion House needs to be, and should be, preserved. But this brings us back to the question of “Why?” And really this is two questions in one. First, there is the general, philosophical question – Why should we preserve historic buildings? Second, there is the more immediate, specific question – Why do we need to take action to preserve the Mansion House, right now?

The answer to that first, philosophical question, was well laid out in a recent article written by former OCMH intern, Rhiannon Martin, and published in the *Oneida Community Journal* in September 2017. This piece opened with a quote



*Jamie Trevvett and Scott Lupini, historic masonry expert and Vice President of Lupini Construction, examining the masonry on the Quad, below the damaged cornice line.*



*Sections of railing in need of repair or replacement were carefully deconstructed so as not to damage any sound historic material.*

by Richard Moe, former President of the National Trust for Historic Preservation, “When you strip away the rhetoric, preservation is simply having the good sense to hold on to things that are well designed, that link us with our past in a meaningful way, and that have plenty of good use left in them.” In that single sentence, Moe summarized some of the social, cultural, and economic reasons to save old buildings. There are the aesthetic reasons to preserve them, such as superior craftsmanship and higher-quality materials, but there is also the cultural benefit we get from preserving these tangible connections to the past, these physical artifacts that tell the story of our nation’s, state’s, and home town’s growth and development. Martin pointed out that just by looking at the design and construction of the Mansion House and the Kenwood neighborhood, an uninformed observer can learn a lot about the area’s inhabitants from the architecture alone.

Then there are the economic advantages to preserving old buildings. The Main Street America program alone has helped “over 2,000 communities across the country bring economic vitality back downtown, while celebrating their historic character, and bringing communities together.”<sup>1</sup> The National Trust advocates for historic preservation as a tool for economic revitalization based on consistent trends that show businesses are drawn to historic buildings, as are people, who prefer to live, work, and spend time in unique, historic locations.<sup>2</sup> And, as architect and current AIA president, Carl Elefante, so famously and succinctly put it, “The greenest building is...one that is already built.”<sup>3</sup>

Martin closed her article with an argument that echoes the last point on the National Trust’s list of reasons to save: regret only goes one way. “The preservation of historic buildings is a one-

*Cont’d. next page*



*In July 2019, rubber sheeting was installed over the damaged areas of the Quad to prevent continued deterioration.*

way street. There is no chance to renovate or to save a historic site once it's gone. And we can never be certain what will be valued in the future. This reality brings to light the importance of locating and saving buildings of historic significance – because once a piece of history is destroyed, it is lost forever.”<sup>4</sup> As Martin put it, “If the Mansion House was gone, it would be hard to imagine [its grandeur] through pictures alone.” It stands “as a testament and living artifact to this Community. If care and proper steps are not taken to preserve this precious artifact, it could fall into the pages of history, becoming only a story instead of the living testament it is now.”<sup>5</sup>

Martin clearly outlined the benefits to preserving historic sites and buildings and why the Mansion House, in particular, is an important piece of history that needs to be saved. But she did not address the more fundamental question “Why do we need to fund and implement preservation treatments to save the Mansion House, right now?” The answer to that is best illustrated by some steps we've taken recently.

Preservation of this building has been a topic of discussion at OCMH for many years. Studies have been done, reports have been written, and workshops have been held. But either the deterioration of the building was not seen as representing an imminent threat to its stability, or its needs were so overwhelming and difficult to plan for, that only limited work has been done in the past few years. Additionally, maintenance of the building used to fall under the aegis of Oneida Ltd., and since that company went bankrupt in the early

2000s funding and resources for the maintenance and repair of this 93,000 sq. ft. structure have been severely limited.

But a recent Building Envelope Condition Report from 2017, combined with the visible deterioration of the building during the past twelve months, has impressed on all of us the need for immediate action. Examples of this are the west face of the Quad and the north facade of the Library Corridor, where bricks and mortar are breaking down and the walls are bowing. This type of deterioration was explained in the Condition Report: “In areas where roof water has cascaded over the brickwork, there is significant damage to bricks and mortar. At the lower areas where splash back has occurred brick and mortar damage has occurred.”<sup>6</sup> In the Quad, where a single brick fell from a cornice last spring, heavy snowfall and temperature fluctuations during this past winter and spring has caused the inner and outer bricks to break down and turn back to sand, pushing more material out and creating gaping holes in the walls under the roof. Eventually, a “significant amount of brick replacement is necessary in areas of water damage and spalled soft red brick. New brick must match the old in texture, size, color and appearance.”<sup>7</sup> But instead, this August rubber sheeting was installed over both damaged areas. This treatment is only temporary. It is there to prevent further deterioration because the damage to the bricks is a symptom, and not the cause of our problems. The root cause, as mentioned, is water infiltration, and until we can fix this issue, any repairs to these damaged areas will only be undone again.



*After a tutorial in conservation treatment and color-matching, Cornell students get to work in-filling all the areas of damage on the interior woodwork.*

But this problem can be fixed and we know what we need to do. At a public outreach meeting held here in July, Board Chair, Jonathan Pawlika, Board Secretary and Chair of OCMH's Historic Preservation Committee, Jamie Trevvett, Director of Buildings & Grounds, Michael Colmey, and Executive Director, Christine Hall O'Neil, presented



*Old, peeling paint had to be scraped off the columns, railings and porches, before a new coat could be applied. The Mansion House has over a dozen porches, so this was no small feat!*

our issues and plans to local community members. They outlined the moisture problems and deterioration afore mentioned, described our plans to install new gutter systems to redirect water away from the face of the building, and discussed our strategy to fund what will, over time, be a multi-million dollar project.

When confronted with this hefty price tag and a daunting amount of work that will take years to complete, it is easy to become overwhelmed. In an article published in the Oneida Dispatch in July 9, 2019, Director O’Neil again laid out some of the issues we’re facing. For some, reading this article was the first time they’d heard about these threats to the building, and our staff were told that people found the news alarming. And while it is not my intent to alarm, I do hope to impress upon our readers the serious nature of the challenges we face. We know the problem and we know the solution, but getting to that solution is the hard part and the main hindrance is funding.

All that said, I do not want you to despair! All is not lost. The Mansion House is not yet falling down upon our heads, and there are things that you can do to help. Monetary donations are always appreciated, but people can also help by donating their time and expertise. When the students from Cornell University’s City & Regional Planning and Historic Preservation Planning programs came out here in April, they accomplished more in two days than our staff could have managed in two weeks on their own. The students scraped peeling paint off porches, relined our historic walking paths, meticulously deconstructed rotted

porch railings while carefully documenting their construction and condition, painstakingly touched up years of damage to the building’s interior woodwork, and removed cracked panes of glass and cut and fitted new panes to replace them. This kind of work is invaluable because not only does it make a huge impact on the way visitors, residents, and staff experience the building on a daily basis, but this type of regular maintenance and rehabilitation work helps extend the life of the building and its materials.

And you don’t have to be a student to help! OCMH intends to hold community work days to get members of our local community involved and invested in taking ownership of the site by contributing to its preservation and care. Plans are in the works, so keep an eye on our website and social media for more information. And you can volunteer in other ways too! Our gardens and grounds staff can always use an extra pair of hands (or two) to help weed, plant, and generally care for our expansive grounds. We’ve had overnight guests volunteer to sew new curtains, conduct research in collections, lead classes in our summer camp – the possibilities are endless!

So, why does preservation matter? There is an immediate, physical need to preserve the Mansion House and, as Rhiannon put it, “If care and proper steps are not taken to preserve this precious artifact, it could fall into the pages of history, becoming only a story instead of the living testament it is now.” And at a time when our country is more divided than united, we need living testaments such as this one - a monument to the things we can accomplish when we work together. So let’s work together to preserve the Mansion House.

### ***Coming Up in Collections!***

Want to learn more about the Cornell students Work Weekend at the Mansion House? You can! OCMH will be opening an exhibit in the Gorman Gallery this September that goes into detail about the projects the students worked on, the research that went into planning these projects, why each project was important, and what you can do to help continue the work that they started! Keep an eye on our website and social media for more information, or stop by the Mansion House to learn more!

1 Main Street America. About Us. [www.mainstreet.org/about-us](http://www.mainstreet.org/about-us)

2 Rocchi, Julia. “Six Practical Reasons to Save Old Buildings.” National Trust for Historic Preservation. November 10, 2015. <https://savingplaces.org/stories/six-reasons-save-old-buildings#.XW6vby5KiM8>

3 Elefante, Carl. “The Greenest Building Is... One That Is Already Build.” Forum Journal. Summer 2007, Vol. 21, No. 4. National Trust for Historic Preservation: 26-38.

4 Rocchi.

5 Martin, Rhiannon. “Why Preservation Matters.” Oneida Community Journal, vol. 32 no. 2, Sept. 2017, pp. 5-6.

6 Crawford & Stearns. Oneida Community Mansion House Building Envelope Condition Report. 2017. P. 12.

7 Ibid.



## FROM THE DOCENTS

*by Susan Belasco*

THE SPRING AND SUMMER MONTHS have been busy ones for the docents. Our regularly scheduled tours have included visitors from dozens of different states and countries all over the world. We have had a variety of special tours for groups, such the SUPA high school history teachers from Syracuse, an AARP group from Centreville Pennsylvania, a busload of tourists from France, the Cato Citizens Club, and groups of families and friends staying at the House for social events. We also hosted the Ononbago Winnies who, in addition to the Mansion House tour, scheduled their own tour with Sherrill Manufacturing. That tour proved to be an excellent example for us; it went so well that we developed our own factory tour, which has proven to be very popular.

In addition, the docents have been meeting once a month to hear presentations, review recent experiences with tours, and discuss recent research and new ideas to add to our tours. We began in December with a presentation by our curator of collections, Abigail Lawton, about the new architecture exhibit on the second floor adjacent to the sitting room. Abigail provided an overview of the history of the building and showed a number of slides with details of the planning and the construction of the building from 1862 through the several stages of the 1860s and 70s.

During the winter months, the docents did not meet regularly but began again in the spring with a meeting in May. At this meeting, Tim McLean gave a presentation, "Seances and Spiritualism." While the members of the Oneida Community believed strongly in the importance of the spiritual, which they defined as aspiring to the highest moral qualities, the movement of spiritualism in the nineteenth century was something of a social phenomenon. Beginning in 1848 in Hydesville, New York, the Fox sisters produced knocking sounds in a "séance," which they determined to be messages from a spirit. The movement gained in popularity during the Civil War when many families found solace in trying to communicate with dead soldiers—their brothers, sons, and husbands. Community members were interested in spiritualism although John Humphrey Noyes was initially skeptical. But in later years when he feared that

the Community was becoming secularized, he encouraged his son Theodore to explore spiritualism as a way of recovering his religious sensibility. Tim's presentation helped us understand the popularity of the movement in the mid-nineteenth century.

In June, the docents met to discuss recent "Behind the Scenes" and "Factory" tours. Cathy Cornue and Tracy Walker led the discussion, and we agreed that the development of the "Factory" tours is an important way to extend the history of the Community and of the Mansion House into the 20th and 21st century. In July, Pody Vanderwall gave an illustrated presentation about the Jessie Catherine Kinsley silk braidings collection at the Mansion House. Beginning in the Great Hall, Pody discussed Kinsley's life and work as well as ongoing interest in the collection. Following the lively presentation, we moved to the sitting room to examine the two large braidings, *Things Not of Man's Devising* and *The Tree of Life*. The unique braidings underscore the importance of decorative arts at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries and offer a way to show visitors another dimension of life in the Mansion House after the formal end of the Community in 1881.

At the August meeting, the docents enjoyed hearing Linda Evans talk about her visit with 5th grade students at McAllister Elementary School, an outreach activity for the schools. She shared with us some of the letters that she received from the students, as well as their questions. A popular one was how to play croquet, which Linda demonstrated during a return visit. Linda also told us that the students loved seeing the pictures of the behind the scenes tour that she took with her. At the August meeting, the docents also discussed illustrations in the Mansion House and how to use them as effectively as possible. We also talked about some recent research that can provide more context for the breakup of the Community in the 1870s, specifically about the era of repressive moral reform following the Civil War.

Upcoming meets will include a presentation by Geoff Noyes, as well as conversations with Jarrett Zeman, the new Education Coordinator.





*Docent Cathy Cornue leads a group of visitors on our Behind the Scenes Tour. (above) Curator of Collections, Abigail Lawton, teaches color-matching. (right) Our annual BTS tour takes visitors into parts of the Mansion that are normally off-limits, or, at least, off the beaten path. This year, we opened up the South Tower, Rare Books Storage, the Sun Porch (seen above), the basement, kitchen, and more!*

*Our Curator of Collections, Abigail Lawton, also showed participants how Community members "grain-painted" the interior woodwork to look like expensive hardwoods, and taught them how to in-fill the damaged sections and create a color-match. No one took her up on her offer to let them paint the walls, but maybe next year!*

## CREATING NEW MEMORIES

*by Kelly Rose*

IT'S BOTH GRATIFYING AND FUN to rediscover some of my own childhood experiences of living in Kenwood through the eyes of my granddaughters. I recently introduced our little girls to the joys of playing on the South Lawn swings, tumbling down the South Hill and running along the paths in the South Garden during their visit to the area this summer. We made stops at the Summer House, the North Lawn garden and came upon other outdoor treasures along the way. I took them into the Big Hall where they danced on stage and begged for a trip to the balcony and then to the Children's Library where I was delighted to find that the Nancy Drew collection is still intact. We wound up in the Lounge where we discovered a few other children playing board games in front of the fireplace. I explained to the youngsters that the man in the portrait over the fireplace was my great uncle (thus my granddaughters' great great great uncle) and that he was raised in the Mansion, became the first leader of the silver business and put the city of Sherrill on the map. The next time my grandkids visit perhaps we'll make our way to the Mansion House basement or climb up to the balcony as I have promised.

I invite other Oneida Community descendants and their friends to share the joys of growing up in the shadow of the Mansion House with younger generations. It's great fun and very rewarding to rediscover the past and to create new memories along the way.



*Some of the granddaughters of Neal and Kelly Rose. The kids had a wonderful time exploring the best of Central New York in the summer: skateboarding around The Vineyard, swinging on the Mansion House swings, running around the Oneida Community lawns and Golf Course, and spending hours at the Sherrill pool.*



## NEW TOURS BRING NEW INTEREST

*by Tracy Walker*



TOURS OF THE ONEIDA COMMUNITY Mansion House have been going on almost since the beginning of the Community. The original members of the OC encouraged outside visitors, even going so far as to offer them a full meal with their tour, or maybe just their renowned strawberry shortcake. The OC used these visits as a way of showing outsiders their beautiful home and their particular way of life. Their hope being, that people would see their lifestyle choice as a valid one. That living communally was a way to produce a better society, one filled with happy and productive citizens. Perhaps they might even inspire others to make the choice to live communally and share everything equally with their fellow man.

Current tours of the Mansion House continue this tradition. Whether self-guided or docent led, the tours focus on the Oneida Community, their beginnings, their fairly long existence as a Utopian Community and their many ventures into manufacturing. The tours have always included the story of the beginning of the joint stock company known as Oneida Community Limited, which eventually became Oneida Ltd.

But what about the rest of the story, many tour goers in the past have asked, what became of the company and the rather large factory space they occupied? Now, thanks to a collaborative effort with Sherrill Manufacturing, we can tell the rest of the story. Starting in June of this year, we began offering a special two-part tour. It commenced at the Mansion House, where visitors were given the standard Mansion House tour. After a short lunch break, they then reconvened at the factory for a tour of that space.

This part of the tour has been given by Greg Owens, CEO of Liberty Tabletop. Owens along with Mathew Roberts, both former officials with Oneida Limited, formed Sherrill manufacturing in 2005. Subsequently, they launched their own brand of flatware under the name Liberty Tabletop. They are currently using some of the former Oneida Ltd. factory space to manufacture stainless steel flatware. During this part of the tour, Owens tells the story of the dissolution of Oneida Ltd, the factors involved and the decisions that were made. He then segues into the story of the development of Liberty Tabletop, currently the only American manufacturer of flatware.

The interest in this tour has been fantastic. It has been offered on the third Friday of the month since June and, after repeated requests, will be offered one Saturday in September. It has been a sell out each time. Remarkably, we are finding that it is bringing in a diverse group of people, some of whom have never been to the Mansion House before. Their interest in this tour comes from a connection with Oneida Limited, sometimes through their past employment, or that of a relative. Many of them had no knowledge of the original Oneida Community, how they chose to live and how they became manufacturers of silverware. It has been such a treat for the docents to be able to share the OC's story with a whole new group of visitors. We here at the Mansion House have been thrilled with the response to this tour and hope to develop even more innovative tours that can connect new visitors to the story of the Oneida Community and their grand experiment.



## WHAT'S THE BUZZ?

by Michael Colmy

FOR AS LONG AS I CAN REMEMBER, there has been one specific thing which remains unchanged here at the Oneida Community Mansion House. It is what keeps humans alive by simply doing what it was put here to do. It comes in waves of tens of thousands strong. Sometimes you can hear it but not see it. Other times it stops you right in your tracks as you become mesmerized by the mere size of the beard or cluster you are witnessing. Yes, it is the all incredible honeybee.

This tiny little insect is responsible for pollinating one third of the world's food supply. Its non-existence would prove detrimental to humanity. With all the year's buzz about the declining honeybee population, I am here to assure you that this is not the case on the Mansion House grounds. Here we have remained very fortunate in the ability to naturally attract this almighty creature. In fact, we have gained quite a positive reputation with the local Central New York bee keepers. Year after year, we continue to call on them for support to come out and move a hive, beard or cluster.



I remember my first massive honeybee experience here at the Mansion. It was the summer of 2007, and a cluster of what was determined to be about thirty thousand honeybees had taken up residence inside one of the columns on the sun porch. The column had to be cut apart for the beekeeper to remove them. He then literally scooped, by hand, all the honeybees he could get into his boxes and then proceeded to load them into the back of his pick-up truck. I can still recall the sight of all the uncaptured honeybees following our man's truck out of our driveway like a dust storm.

From that year and every one following to date, we have had beekeepers here removing on average, fifty to a hundred thousand honeybees annually. This year alone we have had three separate beards which local beekeepers came and removed. These were estimated to contain thirty to forty thousand bees each.

With so many challenges to the existence of the honeybees, we are proud to play a part in supporting their role as nature's pollinators.



## PRICE INCREASES FOR OUR TOURS

by Tracy Walker

ECONOMIC THEORY STATES THAT what you charge for a product has a direct effect on how much of it you can sell. Historically, it was thought that the more you raised your prices, the less you would sell. This was based on the belief that people spent their money rationally. Newer economic theory posits that is not always the case. The Veblen effect states that people will buy more of a product that has a higher price because they perceive it to be of a higher quality. The other side of this effect is that you risk devaluing your brand by keeping your prices too low.

So what does this have to do with the Oneida Community Mansion House you ask? We have been assessing museum admission prices. Currently, admission to the museum with a docent led tour costs \$5 for adults. Comparable house museums in the region charge \$8- \$15 for adult admission. Look for the Mansion House to increase admission prices in the near future. These increases will aid in the preservation and operation of the 93,000 sq ft National Historic Landmark.



## GROWING THE INN EXPERIENCE

*by Maria Skinner*

OCMH GUEST SERVICES is seeing a boost in its overnight stays as visitors are taking a liking to an alternative experience served with a little history. The new year brought us a change in how travelers and tourists make their reservations for overnight stays. With a new booking software program in place our guest services more than doubled its occupancy and has seen a significant increase in revenue.

One of the biggest contributors to this success is due to opting into online travel agencies, or OTAs for short. Examples of some of the most famous OTAs include Booking.com, Expedia.com, Orbitz.com, Hotels.com and Priceline.com. The role of an OTA has become increasingly important within the hotel industry, because they provide a convenient way for customers to compare hotels and to book them over the internet, from the comfort of their own home, or on the go. OTAs serve as both a marketing and a distribution channel. They function as a kind of 'one stop shop', allowing customers to easily search for hotels, read reviews and compare prices. OTAs can provide a form of advertising, making users aware of hotels offered on their platform, as well as allowing users to book direct through the hotel website.

As our busy season became busier I noticed two things: travelers (often out of state) passing through the area are now finding us because they are intrigued by the history of the Oneida Community and they are looking for a unique experience apart from the cookie cutter hotel stay. With that being said, it often comes down to what we offer that sets us apart from the rest. An overnight stay includes a guided or self-guided tour of our museum, use of designated common areas, beautiful grounds, gardens and trails. Each morning guests may dine in our breakfast bar. Here they are able to eat with other guests and house residents, communally, while enjoying a self-serve, lite breakfast of warm baked goods, homemade granola, yogurt, fruit, fresh brewed coffee and juice. All baked goods are provided by our in-house baker, Andrea Maranville, finalist from ABC's Great American Bake off and owner of Silver City Baking Company.

Last but not least, visitors also get to enjoy our personalized service from our dedicated staff, without them none of this would be possible. With our push to online travel agencies, we have been able to see a significant increase in room revenue and visitor stays. This greatly contributes to our mission of evolving the visitor experience and capturing new and untapped markets for expanding OCMH's reach.

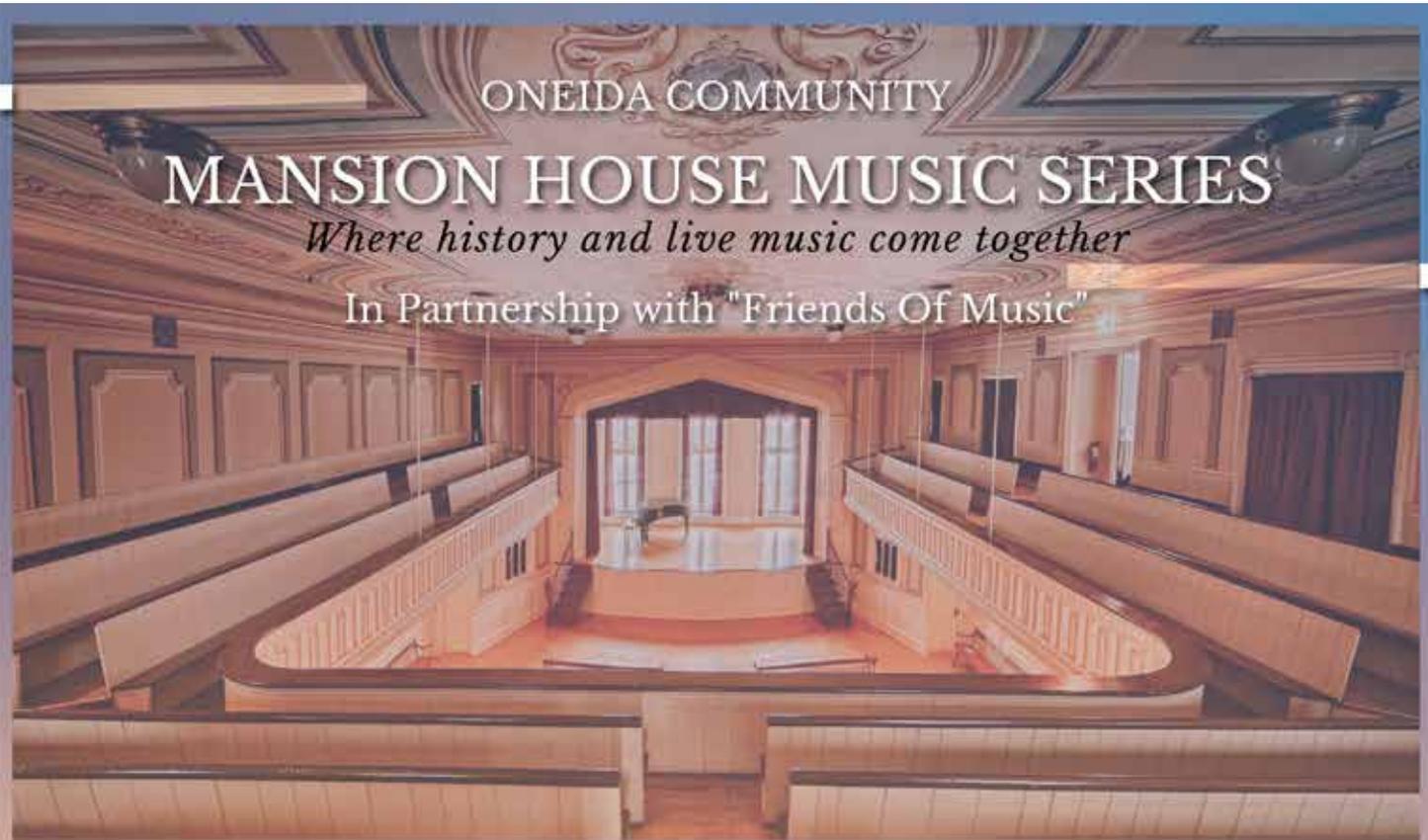


*View of the breakfast bar where overnight guests and residents can enjoy coffee & baked goods!*



*Lite breakfast set up for overnight guests*





ONEIDA COMMUNITY  
**MANSION HOUSE MUSIC SERIES**

*Where history and live music come together*

In Partnership with "Friends Of Music"

**SUNDAY PERFORMANCE SCHEDULE**

*All Shows 3:00pm, Doors Open at 2:00pm*

**JOE CROOKSTON - OCTOBER 27, 2019 - \$20 IN ADVANCE, \$25 DOOR**  
**LOREN BARRIGAR - NOVEMBER 10, 2019 - \$12 ADVANCE, \$15 DOOR**  
**MELISSA GARDINER & MG3 - DECEMBER 15, 2019 - \$12 ADVANCE, \$15 DR**  
**CHUCK LAMB QUARTET - JANUARY 12, 2020 - \$12 ADVANCE, \$15 DOOR**  
**MIKE POWELL - FEBRUARY 9, 2020 - \$12 ADVANCE, \$15 DOOR**  
**JIM O'MAHONY TRIO - MARCH 15, 2020 - \$12 ADVANCE, \$15 DOOR**

Tickets can be purchased on Eventbrite

For further details please go to [www.oneidacommunity.org](http://www.oneidacommunity.org)

This project is made possible with funds from the Decentralization Program, a regrant program of the New York State Council on the Arts with the support of Governor Andrew Cuomo and the New York State Legislature and administered by CNY Arts.

The Oneida Community Mansion House  
170 Kenwood Ave., Oneida NY, 13421

## BITS & PIECES

Nash Bradley Noyes, son of Spencer and Natasha Noyes, was born on May 5, 2019. His grandparents are Geoff and Kristi Noyes.

We welcome two new families in the neighborhood and look forward to getting to know them! Nick and Heather de la Riva, and their daughters, Vivienne and Gabriella are happy to settle into their new home on Kenwood Avenue.

Destrie and Francis Dieteman are enjoying their new home, also on Kenwood Avenue, along with their children, Mary Sue, Andrew, Matthew and Calvin.

## IN MEMORY OF



### **Eliot S. "Cot" Orton**

Passed away on February 17, 2019 in New Mexico. He was born September 5, 1933 in Sherrill and grew up in the Orchard adjacent to the Oneida Community Mansion House, where many of his extended family lived. His mother, Tirzah Noyes was a direct descendent of Community founder

John Humphrey Noyes. He was a leader, teacher and lifelong learner and with a PhD from Cornell, he taught labor economics and economics history at NMSU from 1970 until his retirement. He is survived by his children, Stephen and Sara (Sally), their spouses, Valerie and David, granddaughters Bex and Katie, and his beloved wife of 58 years, Sara.



### **Bruce R. "Bruno" Wayland-Smith**

Passed away on March 25, 2019. Bruno was born June 21, 1941 to Gerard and Leonora Crook Wayland-Smith. He was employed by Oneida Ltd. for 43 years as a mechanic. From a young age through last year, he could

be found at the Oneida Community Golf Course as a caddy, the winner of the club's golf championship, and an expert on repairing golf carts. A loyal friend, he was also a captivating storyteller. Surviving are his wife of 55 years, Patricia, their daughter and son-in-law, Tina Wayland-Smith and Greg Perkins of Oneida, one sister and brother-in-law, Carol and Jeff Webb of Camden and many nieces and nephews. He was predeceased by a brother and sister-in-law, Gerard and Carol Wayland-Smith, Jr.

### **Ruth Burnham Zounek**

Died on August 8, 2019 at the Lutheran Home in Clinton. Born in Brooklyn, NY on November 29, 1943, Ruth was the daughter of the late Chester and Julia (Noyes) Burnham. A long time resident of Oneida, she studied at the Utica School of Practical Nursing and worked at Oneida Healthcare for many years. She married Zane W. Zounek at the Mansion House on June 8, 1968 and shared that union until Zane's death on October 3, 2018. Surviving are her daughters, Karla McLaughlin and Carolyn Leeson and their families.



## UPCOMING EVENTS AT THE ONEIDA COMMUNITY MANSION HOUSE

Saturday September 28, 2019 Two-part Mansion House/Factory Tour.  
Starts at the Oneida Community Mansion House at 10:00 am.

Thursday October 10, 2019 Devin Landers, NYSD Historian talks about the  
Millbrook Commune at 7:00 pm.

Saturday October 19, 2019 Oneida Community Cemetery Tour at 12:00 pm.

A series of music programs partnering with Friends of Music and Jim O'Mahoney:

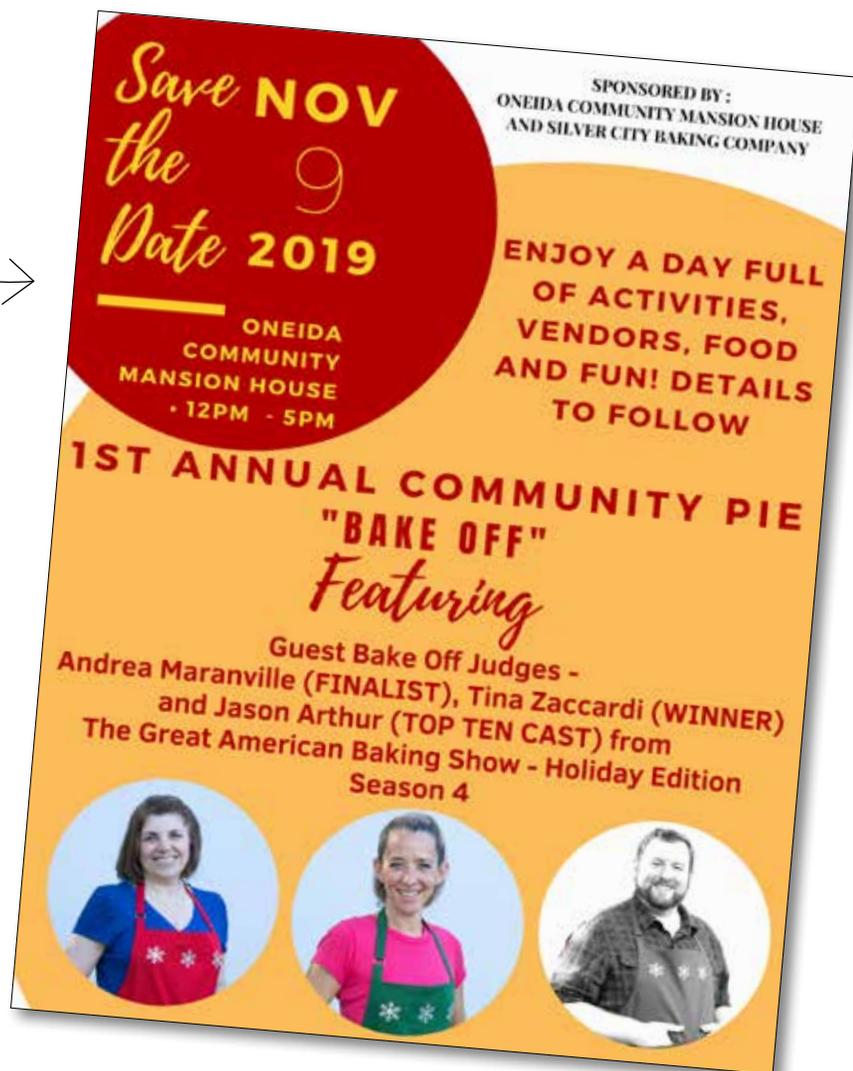
Oct 27 – Joe Crookston

Nov 10 – Loren Barrigar

Dec 15 – Melissa Gardiner

Keep watching our website ([www.oneidacommunity.org](http://www.oneidacommunity.org)) and Facebook group  
(Oneida Community Mansion House) for more details about times and ticket prices.

- Saturday November 9 First Annual Community Pie Bake Off featuring a pop-up bakery, juried pie bake off, music and much more
- Saturday December 7 Holiday Event featuring a large scale gingerbread house display, build your own gingerbread house, music and much more



Keep watching our website ([www.oneidacommunity.org](http://www.oneidacommunity.org)) and Facebook group  
(Oneida Community Mansion House) for more details as these events get closer.

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## GIFTS TO THE OPERATING/ANNUAL FUND

February 1 – September 1, 2019

### **\$10,000 to \$24,999**

Kenwood Benevolent Society

### **\$1,000 to \$9,999**

Sara (Sally) Orton (*In Memory of Eliot Orton*)  
Sherrill-Kenwood Community Chest  
Eric E Stickels & Deborah S Stickels

### **\$500-\$999**

Alan & Josephine Noyes

### **\$250-\$499**

W. Robert Mayer (*To the Cemetery Fund in Memory of Jessie Mayer*)

### **\$100-\$249**

Ellen Bolland (*In appreciation of Pody Vanderwall*)  
Mary Burdick (*In honor of Pody Vanderwall's birthday*)  
Linda Evans (*To the Building Fund*)  
Ernest Giraud  
William Hicks  
Gary & Rebecca Onyan

### **Up to \$99**

Arthur Baer & Judith M. Whiting  
Christine Bishop (*To the Building Fund in Memory of Gwen Smith Trew*)

Cornelia Brewster (*To the Education Fund in Memory of Giles Wayland-Smith*)  
Kristin DeSalvio for the Sherrill Book Club  
Shirley Drummond  
Jo English  
John & Susan Kuterka (*in honor of Pody Vanderwall*)  
Marie Magliocca  
Danielle Mellon (*In memory of Leonard Strauss*)  
National Grid (*Matching Gift of Colleen Keane*)  
Martha Straub  
Judith & Stuart Talbot (*To Buildings & Grounds*)  
Kate Wayland-Smith (*In Memory of Eliot Orton*)  
John & Karen Wellman  
Claudia Wiley (*To Lawns & Gardens in Honor of Kathy Garner*)  
Claudia Wiley (*To Lawn & Gardens in Memory of Rosamund Benatti*)

### **IN KIND**

Laura Noyes Engels – “Bold & Brave: Ten Heroes Who Won Women the Right to Vote” by Kirsten Gillibrand  
Pat Hoffman – Sewing Bird  
Eric Noyes and Mimi Gendreau – Tea Service and framed etching by Kenneth Hayes Miller  
Ann Raynsford and John Swift – Portable Radiator

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## NEW & RENEWED MEMBERS AND DONORS

February 1 – September 1, 2019

### **BENEFACTOR**

Sara Orton

### **CONTRIBUTOR**

Ellie & Nigel Bolland  
James & Sarah Dam  
Geoffrey & Lois Ezell  
Betsy & Scott Gayner  
Jane Hanlon  
Dave Hannum  
Billie & Dave Hill  
Annette Noyes  
Geoffrey & Kristi Noyes  
Pamela Parker  
Marie Perry

### **CONTRIBUTING BUSINESS PARTNER**

Gustafson & Wargo

### **ASSOCIATE**

Judy & Wilber Allen  
Howard & Mary Jo Astrachan  
Whitman Bolles  
Tanya Beshgetoor Weiss  
Nola DeSimone  
Christine & Wilber N. Earl  
Linda Evans  
Russell Fox & Family  
Barbara Friske Fisch  
Natalie Gustafson  
Christine Hall O'Neil  
William Hicks  
Cheryl & James Jacobson  
Elizabeth Hill Munroe  
Patricia Hoffman  
Bobbie & H. Ernest Hemphill  
Jonathan Katz & Norah Wylie  
Timothy McLean

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 David & Joyce Newhouse  
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 Greyson Pannill & Peter Siersma  
 Janet & William Pasnau  
 James & Nancy Pawlika  
 Deirdre Stam  
 Joann & Ralph Stevens  
 Karen & Lance Stronk  
 Carole & Joseph Valesky  
 Dan Strobel & Robin Vanderwall  
 Michael Whiteacre  
 Herb Wilkinson

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Joan & Richard Applebaum  
 Barbara Busch  
 Shirley Drummond  
 Gene and Judy Durso  
 Graham Egertin & Anne Redfern  
 Jeffrey Fischbeck  
 Elizabeth & Stephen Fleury  
 Art Foley & Donna Rich  
 Dean Gyorgy & Family (Gift of Cindy Gyorgy)  
 Mark Gyorgy (Gift of Cindy Gyorgy)  
 Geraldine L. Haskell  
 Emily Herrick  
 Michael V. Joslin  
 Colleen Keane  
 Eileen Kinsella & Dennis Sands  
 Mr & Mrs John F King  
 Meredith Leonard & Edward Pitts  
 James Lesch  
 Mr & Mrs Donald McIntosh  
 Mary Belle & Paul Minton  
 Alan & Josephine Noyes  
 Nancy & Robert Pickels  
 Jeffrey & Nancy Prowda  
 Barbara Rivette  
 Mark Strong  
 Judith & Stuart Talbot  
 Michael Tomlan  
 Ellen Wayland-Smith

John & Karen Wellman  
 Barry & Elizabeth Zebley  
 Art & Shirley Zimmer

**INDIVIDUAL**

Leslie Alvarez  
 Bruce Burke  
 Linda Cochran  
 Linda Colvin  
 Christine Dascher  
 John T. DuChene  
 Skip "Ed" Evans  
 Jocelyn Godwin  
 Wanda J. Herrick  
 Esther Kanipe  
 Edward Knobloch  
 Gerald Lyons  
 Mary Mero  
 Patricia Milnes  
 Sheila Moore  
 Michael Newhouse  
 Eric Noyes  
 Greg Noyes  
 Sara Noyes  
 Tom Noyes  
 Shirl Oatman  
 Alan Parkurst  
 Theresa Phillips  
 Sarah Spitzer  
 Margaret P. Stevens  
 Betty Ann Stewart  
 Martha Straub  
 Scott R. Swayze  
 Terry Tubbs  
 William Vartorella  
 Michelle Weismantle

FROM THE PAST



*Back row: Jerry Wayland-Smith, Dick Noyes, Bob Wayland-Smith, Ham Allen, Dick Bloom, Prue Wayland-Smith, Wells Rich*

*Middle Row: Helen Prowda, Phyllis Noyes, Dink Allen, Dottie Ackley, Sylvia Paquette, Fred Hartwick (behind Flossie Allen, Ruth Inslee, Betty Wayland-Smith, Jane Rich*

*Front Row: Harriett Hartwick, Ida-Kate Noyes, Bill Inslee, Margie Ballard, Albert Ackley, Chuck Noyes, Pete Noyes*

*Paul Paquette may have taken this photo – 1948*



## OCMH Survey ~ A Time of Transition

As a new editorial team for the Journal forms, we would like your input for suggested topics about OCMH and the legacy of the Oneida Community. Choose as many as you like. We appreciate additional thoughts as well.

### The Mansion House as a Museum

- Restoration of the building, both interior and exterior
- Curating materials of historical significance
- New Displays
- Gardens/Grounds
- Tours
- Bookstore/Gift Shop
- Upcoming programs/calendar
- Educational opportunities/articles
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

### The Mansion House as a Community Resource

- Speaker Presentations
- Guest Rooms
- Meeting/Activity Rooms
- Group Occasions (weddings, showers, family reunions, etc.)
- Special Events (concerts, recitals, theatrical productions)
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

### The Mansion House as a Home

- Apartments: history of the changes throughout the years
- Kenwood - extended OCMH community; history of the homes/families
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

### The Mansion House as a "Family"

- Articles about the 1848-1881 members
- Descendents: from the past to the present; deaths, weddings, births, current connections
- Current Members and why they support the OCMH
- Current Staff, Board, Docents
- Oneida Ltd. connections
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

If you are willing, please share your email below to receive occasional updates.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Please detach this survey and drop off at the OCMH bookstore or office or send by mail to OCMH, 170 Kenwood Avenue, Oneida, NY 13421. Thank you!

Oneida Community  
**MANSION**  
**HOUSE**

A National Historic Landmark

170 Kenwood Avenue

Oneida, NY 13421

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Sherrill, NY  
13461

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