Oneida Community OURNAL VOL. 36 NO. 1 SPRING 2022 ONEIDA, NY





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

THE CT CONTENTS	
Letter From the Executive Director	1
Exploration and Discovery	2
Collections: The New York Heritage Digitization Project	3
First Annual Car Show	
Hospitality at the Mansion House	5
Preservation In Action – The Priority Work Area	
Upcoming Music Series	
Visiting School Groups	
The Larches	
The Wise Man Returned	
Community Caring	14
Sharing The Story	
In Memory of John S. Fogarty	
New and Renewed Members and Donors	
Gifts To Operating / Annual Fund	
1 U:	

COVER ILLUSTRATION

In 1864, the Community transferred its trap operation to a factory built about a mile to the north of the Mansion House, near a source of waterpower along what was known as Turkey Street.

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LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Christine Hall O'Neil

hat constitutes community? If you are reading this –YOU are part of the OCMH community. Your interest, support and involvement make you a living part of OCMH's community today. Whether you are a member, donor, volunteer, resident, tourist, life-long-learner, seeker–we all share a common respect for the Mansion House and its mission to preserve and share the legacy of the Oneida Community.

People experience community in many ways—by participating in programs, staying overnight, giving, enjoying the 250+ acres of OCMH's park-like setting, or by reading this Journal! And now virtual offerings allow us to connect people near and far to OCMH and its story.

Today, we have much to celebrate. 2022 marks the 160th Anniversary of the Mansion House. 160 years ago this year, the Oneida Community completed the first portion of their home—the Main House. In this anniversary year, we are repairing and restoring their collective creation, beginning in the Quad. This Phase 1 project has been years in the making—planning, funding and implementing actual repairs. Members and donors joined together as a "Community" to not only give, but to promote and nurture the project.

Another way we celebrate the 160th Anniversary-by planning the next preservation project!

This past winter, OCMH was awarded a 2nd preservation grant –\$500,000 for a Phase 2 project to protect the Mansion House via a grant from the Regional Economic Development Council and NYS Office of Parks, Recreation & Historic Preservation.

Our "Community" of supporters deepened and strengthened: long time friend and generous supporter, the **Gorman Foundation**, **pledged \$250K** for a multi-year grant to preserve the Mansion House.

Kenwood Benevolent Society continued their strong support of OCMH-including additional funds to help complete the current Phase 1 project and generous general support to the organization.

More individuals stepped up to support the Mansion House and gave more generously this past year. Thanks to you, the Year End Annual Campaign to support the museum and its educational offerings exceeded its goal. We thank all of you for making a tangible and meaningful commitment to helping visitors and school groups "experience community".

Cultural and heritage sites have all struggled during the pandemic. But at a time when other sites struggle with existential crises and urgently seek alternate sources of revenue, OCMH was able to move forward implementing the new business plan. Now with 1st floor guest room renovations complete, OCMH has begun renovations to the 2nd floor of the New House, preparing 6 additional guest rooms that will be ready for overnight stays this summer. Despite the pandemic, OCMH's lodging received positive reviews and new visitors. OCMH is fortunate to have diverse revenue streams and to remain vibrant and attractive to visitors.

Thank you to those who shared feedback with us.

We will continue to seek input–from members, donors, researchers and experts–including the expertise of the expanded Finance Committee. We will continue market analysis, reviewing Jeannette Noyes' extensive museum research. Jeannette compiled and analyzed data from other museums to help the Board understand how sites generate sufficient revenue to fulfill their mission and sustain their organizations.

What lasts 160 years? What is worth preserving for 160 years? Certainly the utopian dreams of the OC and their stately communal home that is the Mansion House. You have ensured OCMH made significant strides this past year--preserving the building, enacting the business plan and sharing the story. Thank you for being a part of "OCMH's Community."

EXPLORATION AND DISCOVERY

Tom Guiler

ne of the most exciting things about starting a new job at a new museum is exploring and learning about the collections. Since starting at the Mansion House, I have been eagerly climbing up in the attic, rummaging around in the basement, and opening doors to various storage rooms throughout the building. I have found so many interesting treasures that tell some amazing stories. Some of the highlights include finding a 19th century croquet ball, several binders containing images of people working in the Oneida Limited Factories and Sales Office, a number of stunning reform dresses, more traps and silverware than I could have ever imagined, and even some old film reels that I am really excited to watch some day. With so many things to explore and discover right

here at the Mansion House, I did not have much time to even think about acquiring something brand new to the collection—that is until one day in November.

I got an email from a man named Mike Hegland who told me that he had an old "Oneida Silk and Twist" cabinet in his basement. He had been to the Mansion House some years before and talked about the piece with staff who were interested in purchasing the object for the collection when he was ready to sell. Years went by and Mike finally decided it was time to let others

enjoy the cabinet while he went hunting for more treasures. Knowing the Mansion House was interested, he gave us the first shot at acquiring it. When Mike sent over about a dozen photos and I was able to see it for myself, I knew we had to bring this important piece of Oneida Community History home so that we could show it and interpret it.

But what exactly is it and how did this cabinet, made in Oneida and sent out into the world, find its way back to the Mansion House? I like to think about the lives that objects have led: where they were made, where they were used, what they were used for, who interacted

with them, and how they came to look the way they look. So, what is this curious object? In short, it is a table-top cabinet that was made here in Oneida sometime in the late 19th or early 20th century. It is made of black walnut wood and was constructed to house Oneida Community Limited Silk and Machine Twist thread, in addition to pins, bobbins, and other sewing necessities. At one point, its gleaming mirror and gold trim would have attracted prospective customers to examine high quality OCL products in stores. As indicated by the label, these cabinets were "leased" to stores to explicitly sell Oneida textile products and when the store decided to stop selling these products, storekeepers were instructed to ship the cabinet back to OCL headquarters where it could be deployed to another retail outlet. Obviously, that

> was not the case with this one, and probably a key reason it survived. So where did it come from? Here is what Mike told me.

> I found the cabinet about 7-8 years ago in Enon Valley, Pennsylvania. At the time the owners of the cabinet were Mr. and Mrs. Maxwell. Mr. Maxwell passed away about 5 years ago. He was in his late 80s. They lived on a great Victorian period farm. It still had all of the buildings on the property. The big barn, horse stable, chicken coop, and the summer kitchen. And of course, every building was packed full of treasures they accumulated over 40 years of living on that property. Mr. Maxwell was

a big radio collector and had hundreds of early radios and things of that nature. He even built an addition on his house and put together an early church organ by himself. They were very interesting people. I found the cabinet in the barn and it was buried by radios. I do believe he may have bought it at an auction years ago. I think he actually forgot he even had it. I took it to a local antique appraiser and he told me the cabinet was made of walnut. He found all of the interesting information about the Oneida Community. The two drawers at the bottom used to say brass pins, and the other drawer had a label that said bobbins. Over time the paper has worn away.





There are so many questions we are now just digging into about this object. Where in the OCL was this object made? What shops did it sit in? What kinds of people bought silk and thread out of it? Where did it end up for so many years before Mr. Maxwell found it? And most importantly, what stories can it tell visitors today? While we are still working it out, we know one thing for certain: this is a rare object that can help OCMH tell a more expansive story of the Oneida Community in the 19th and 20th centuries. As we plan to update and refresh the story of industry at the Mansion House, this piece can help visitors understand the retail presence and sales strategies the OCL employed at the turn of the twentieth century.

Furthermore, we are looking far more closely at the business operations of the Oneida Community and its successor corporations. As such, this object will bring a real physical presence and bear witness to those innovative and successful retail and marketing practices. Stay tuned as we uncover more information about the life this object has led. Granting the public access to our collection is just as important as acquiring new objects for the collection. The whole reason for having a collection is to share it with the public to better understand the past. Therefore, the Mansion House is proud to announce that, through a grant from the Central New York Resources Council, we are working on a project to make

more of our photographic collection available free online through New York Heritage. A collaborative project managed by the Empire State Library Network, New York Heritage is an online repository of photographs, letters, diaries, directories, maps, books, and other materials from over 350 libraries, museums, archives, and other cultural heritage institutions that aims to tell stories about New York State History from the colonial era to present day.

The Oneida Community Mansion House is proud to bring back former staff member, Emily Dugan, to help with this project. Emily will be working with Mansion House staff and volunteers to add metadata to our already digitized photographic collection so that OCMH can have its own page on New York Heritage where people can discover and see the incredible history and legacy of the Oneida Community. Emily will be starting with a group of photos that document the Mansion House and its inhabitants during the Oneida Community Limited era to better highlight the diverse and long history of the Community. By early this summer the Oneida Community Mansion House page will be live on New York Heritage. With the help of CLRC and our dedicated staff, we hope to add even more images of Oneida Community history in the years to come.

COLLECTIONS: THE NEW YORK HERITAGE DIGITIZATION PROJECT

Emily Dugan

started volunteering at the Mansion House in 2019, and I never anticipated that my experience and work here would turn into something so robust—spanning multiple years, projects and, now, states. As we all know, the Mansion House and its community is built upon connections between generations of families, employees, enterprises, and beliefs. I am excited to not only be a small part in this tapestry, but to share a little bit about my own connection to Oneida Community Mansion House through a new project.

Some may recall that over the past couple of years, my work in the Mansion House was largely centered around caring for and inventorying our



extensive collection in order to safely move the hundreds of objects and archival materials in preparation for the conservation efforts of the building. During my inventory, I came

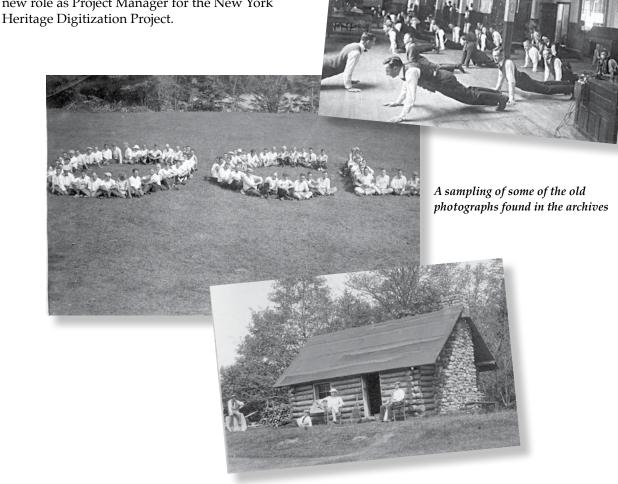
across hundreds of books from Wallingford; small paintings by the hands of Community members; old ledgers from the early Oneida Community days; and even mock ups of advertisements for silverware in the 1920s. Day in and day out, I was able to see just how truly remarkable these objects were, the vastness of materials saved, and the span of time which they covered.

When I would excitedly share my small discoveries—an interesting photograph or a

special edition of a book—it always surprised me not just that we had these objects, but that they were unknown to so many people. I thought, surely, the likely thousands of objects and resources we have stored within the Mansion House walls would be better known, and to an extent they are known to some. But I found that most people interested in Oneida Community history often referred to Syracuse University, who had stored some photographs for us, and didn't know the sheer breadth of physical materials we have within our reach.

After I left the Mansion House, I was able to meet with Tom Guiler, our new Director of Museum Affairs, to talk about the work I did over the course of my time at Oneida. The conversation quickly turned into awe at the amount of resources we have and how they would pose a benefit not just to scholarly research, but to the larger community. This is what brings me to my new role as Project Manager for the New York Heritage Digitization Project

Among the hundreds of objects, archival materials, and other memorabilia in our collection, we have an extensive collection of photographs. Some of these images are ones in the small digital collection at SU, and many haven't been seen by the public eye. In a partnership with the CLRC, or the Central NY Library Research Council, I have been tasked with creating data for one of our photographic collections so that it is accessible online. This is such a vital project because it allows us to bring our collection to a much wider audience—beyond simply a local sphere—and has the potential to garner interest not just in the history we can share, but in drawing people to the building itself and by extension, our larger collection.



FIRST ANNUAL CAR SHOW

Sponsored by the Sherrill Kenwood Classic Car Club

n May 21, 2022, the Oneida Community Mansion House will host its first annual classic car show. Organized by the Sherrill Kenwood Classic Car Club, a new board committee, the show will feature 22 different judged classes in categories such as: Model Ts, Corvettes, Volkswagens, Tractors, and more that span the 20th

century. There will be awards in each class as well

as an overall "Best in Show" winner.

But the event will not just be for automobile enthusiasts. The Mansion House will be running house tours in addition to specialty offerings like cemetery, architecture, and landscape tours to



show guests all the Mansion House has to offer. In addition, we are partnering with local food trucks, DJs, and other vendors to make it a fun day for all attendees.

The show will run from 9:00am to 4:00pm and is free for attendees.

However, if you are interested in showing your car and registering it for an award, there is a \$10 fee until May 7, and \$15 day-of-the-show fee. To

register your car, visit: https://www. oneidacommunity.org/event-details/ car-registration-for-the-1st-annual-oneidacommunity-mansion-house-car-show.

If you are interested in becoming a member of the Sherrill Kenwood Classic Car Club, dues are \$10 per year and you can join by contacting us at: sherrillkenwoodclassiccarclub@ oneidacommunity.org

Start your engines and we hope to see you in May!

HOSPITALITY AT THE MANSION HOUSE

Chelsea Scheuerman

he Mansion House has had visitors since 1853. According to an 1878 Oneida Community document, "They will furnish refreshments, a variety of vocal and instrumental music, some theatrical performances, opportunity for dancing with suitable dance music, etc, etc." The Oneida Community was known for its hospitality and quality that guests were given during the duration of their stay. Much like today, curious guests would visit to understand the Community, to view the grand building, and enjoy the grounds.

The tourism goals of the early OC were not much different than our motivation now. In our freshly remodeled overnight guest-rooms we aim to offer guests high quality rooms with modern comforts, as well as an immersive experience with the building and Community history. With access to common spaces like the library or lounge, guests are welcome to reconnect with friends and family, or simply relax. Museum spaces and the general architecture of the building give guests a peek into the history of the building and the way that Community members lived. The gardens, grounds, and

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trails give a fresh reprieve from the everyday hustle and bustle.

The past two years have been a challenging time for travel. Thankfully OCMH is starting to see more museum and overnight guests! It is such a pleasure to see folks enjoying the building again. For interested members who are unable to make in-person visits, the OCMH team is creating more virtual options to connect with the OC story and stay upto-date with current OCMH news. In January we hosted a unique webinar that launched the series "From the Mansion House to Your

House". This series is hosted by Tom, Mike, and me and the topic will vary with each webinar. We were ecstatic to have had over a hundred attendees and hope to grow our virtual attendance by continuing this series, providing informative OCTV videos, and other offerings in the future! Subscribe to our enewsletter and follow us on Facebook/Instagram/YouTube! Come visit this summer!

PRESERVATION IN ACTION - THE PRIORITY WORK AREA

Michael Colmey

s you may recollect in the fall 2021 O.C. Journal, my article titled "Hammer Time" described how we would be embarking on our phase 1 exterior façade work. I am happy to share with all of you that the work has indeed begun and is well underway. Specifically, the priority work area, located on the west wall of the south wing, in the quadrangle, is near completion. Let's look at how we began, and what we've accomplished thus far.

Now, I know that most of you reading this will be completely amazed when I tell you what the first step was in this project. As a matter of fact, it had absolutely nothing to do with the actual restoration and preservation of the façade, yet if done incorrectly, surely would have put an end to the project before it even started. Mobilization is normally the contractors first step on the job site. This would include the moving and setup of scaffolding, specialty rigging, and staging of materials, all of which would require the use of heavy equipment. The priority work area is located inside the quadrangle, and the only access for mobilization requires entering on the lawn between the South Wing and the Tontine.



Structural engineering firm Ryan Biggs Clarke Davis was brought in to design this specialty access bridge, which would need to include a weight capacity rating able to handle up to 30,000 pounds

Underground, between these two buildings lies an arched tunnel. Although not original to the South Wing or the Tontine, its construction dates to 1869, and is still in use today. It measures fiftyeight feet in length, six feet in width at its outer edges, and inside, it measures just shy of six feet in height. It is constructed of local rubble limestone laid up with a soft lime mortar. Not only does it still serve its intended purpose of connecting the two buildings underground, but it also incorporates mechanical runs such as a steam main, condensate main, as well as electrical and plumbing supply lines. The top of the tunnel itself lies less

than one foot under the ground. The mobilization and moving of equipment over that tunnel would certainly lead to its demise. Hence, step one, build a bridge.

We had finally arrived at the point where the demo could begin. In accordance with the New York State Department of Labor, as well as the United States Environmental Protection Agency laws, licensed abatement contractors would need to perform some of the demo work. A team from Midlantic Environmental Company were brought in to do the slate removals along with any affiliated roofing materials that were previously identified as asbestos-containing materials (ACM) in our ACM roof survey. For example, tar paper vapor barriers, caulking compounds applied to flashings, as well as roof tars. All of this was overseen by an asbestos abatement project monitor from Energy & Environment, LLC. After that, Pulver Roofing came in and began demo work on deteriorated wood framing, sheathing, and cornice trim, including facia boards, decorative moldings, and corbels. Samples of moldings were taken so knives could be made to match the profiles, assuring replacement trim made back in the shop would be identical to the existing trim.

With the deteriorated cornice now removed,



not only were we able to evaluate the interior wood framing structure, but we also got our first look at just how much masonry damage had been occurring, and there was plenty! A structural Engineer was brought in for an assessment.

It was then determined that the best course of correc-

tive action would be to replace not only the entire length of wooden cornice and its deteriorated framing, but also the entire top section of brick wall measuring four feet in height, fifty-six feet in length, and four wythes deep, resulting in a combined rework of some five thousand bricks. Due to the load bearing capacity of the upper mansard roof framing which rested on this wall, and its compromised structural integrity, the demo and replacement would need to be done in six-foot sections. All of this would lead into quite a significant change order, requiring added time, materials and of course, more money!

Now, before all this added work was discovered, the project had already been facing some challenges, many of which were related to the pandemic and the new covid variant. For instance, construction companies, like many other industries, were dealing with quite a stressed labor pool. Remember the old adage that good help is hard to find? That had transposed into any help is hard to find. So, as major contracting firms go, if you were getting behind on one project due to the



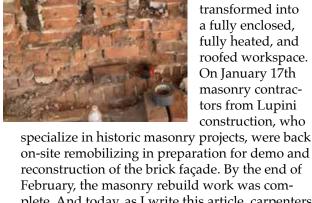
After the construction of the bridge was complete, mobilization would soon be underway, and four stories of scaffolding were

brought in and erected

fluctuations which are all too often trending higher. Ironically, like trying to overcome the pandemic itself, we all needed to do our part, we all needed to realize that it's not business as usual and it may not be for a very long time. We needed to act now. That being said, the change order was approved, and the work commenced.

In late December of 2021, and into early January of 2022, our large fourstory exterior metal tubu-

labor shortage, you were more than likely getting behind on many projects. Another covid related issue that was happening were covid exposures within the working labor force. That is, crews that were on job sites working, often ended up in quarantine due to being exposed by others, such as other family members. And if that wasn't enough, production of construction materials themselves had already been an issue, and once again, was only getting worse. In relevance to our project, Revere Copper right out of Rome N.Y. had sent out a memo about certain materials that it would not or could not produce for an undetermined time. Some of these materials were already specced for our project, such as 20 oz. freedom gray copper for the cornice shelf, as well as specialty gutter brackets, which the design for installation needs to be determined before building the new cornice. All these things led to valuable time delays this past fall. However, we were not going to be defeated. After lengthy discussions within our Building Committee, as well as with our contractors, a change order was formulated for review. Probably the biggest thing we needed to grasp now, was the concept that in order to get this priority work area completed, we would need to enclose the scaffolding and heat it throughout part of the winter so the new lime mortar would not freeze.







lar structure was transformed into a fully enclosed, fully heated, and roofed workspace. On January 17th masonry contractors from Lupini construction, who

on-site remobilizing in preparation for demo and reconstruction of the brick façade. By the end of February, the masonry rebuild work was com-Now, you may be asking yourself, why not plete. And today, as I write this article, carpenters wait until spring? Well, we asked ourselves the from Kestrel construction are on site finishing the same thing. The truth is there were many factors rebuild of the underside of the wooden cornice why we couldn't wait. For one, the condition and all its affiliated trim. After that, Pulver Roofof the wall itself presented a risk of additional ing will be back on site installing the prefabricated failure, which we could not allow to happen. Two, gutter hangers we talked about earlier, in prepawe were already behind due to previous reasons I ration for the brand-new freedom gray copper had mentioned, and we had a schedule of work to covering that will cover the top of the cornice. begin in the Spring as it was. Delaying would have From there, new flashings, ice and water barrier put us behind even further. And three, materials. fabric, and slates will be installed, as well as new When it comes to purchasing them, they are in replacement trim and metal roofs on the deterioa complete state of disarray, volatility, and price rated dormers. New gutters will soon follow, thus

Page 8



Contractors prepping for demo on the mansard roof for work to commence



Enclosing the scaffolding

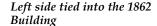
finishing up the "Priority Work Area."

As of now, we are on track to roll right into the rest of this \$1.5 million dollar phase one roof rehabilitation project which includes multiple buildings, and many areas of restoration. And although we never had an official project kickoff as we were avoiding large gatherings at the Mansion House during the peak times of the pandemic, I invite you to come in today and see for yourself, the preservation in action. We have a large display of panels in the lounge which describes all the work being done in this first phase. I would be happy to walk you through it and answer any questions.









UPCOMING MUSIC SERIES

he Oneida Community Mansion House successfully managed pandemic limitations to host one concert in the Fall of 2021. Mike Powell and his musical companion, John Hanus, brought a commanding



Livingston Taylor

performance to the Big Hall stage, beautifully blending original music with storytelling. It was amazing to see the Big Hall rejuvenated with live music, continuing the tradition of entertainment in the Big Hall that began in the 19th century.

As we look to the Spring, we are looking forward to starting the Music Series back up again with three amazing performers who will bring their unique sound to the Mansion House.

April 3, 2022 The Jim O'Mahony Trio 3:00 p.m. May 1, 2022 Livingston Taylor with opening act Rachel Sumner 3:00 p.m.

Experience community gatherings with family and friends and stay connected with the sound of music.

A special **THANK YOU** to our Music Series sponsors:

- Cazenovia Equipment
- Liberty Tabletop
- John Froass & Sons
- Planned Results, Inc.
- Campanie & Wayland-Smith, PLLC
- CNY Arts

Visit https://www.oneidacommunity.org/event to purchase show tickets. Hope to see you all in the Big Hall this Spring!

VISITING SCHOOL GROUPS

espite pandemic challenges, OCMH was lucky enough to be visited by a number of school groups ranging from elementary school students to students in master's programs. In November, students from the Winterthur Program in American Material Culture/University of Delaware stayed overnight at the Mansion House and were given a behind-the-scenes tour of the entire facility. Director of Museum Affairs, Tom Guiler, even hosted a guided "object study session" where students could closely examine Oneida Community artifacts that are only brought out for special occasions.

Fifth Graders from North Broad Street School in Oneida were treated to a two-part field trip with our guiding staff that included Tim Cumings, Gary

Onyan, Carol Bandlow, and Linda Evans. Linda visited the school the week before to set the stage for the tour and then the following week they arrived. After a great presentation in the Big Hall, students toured the Mansion House before coming back to the Big Hall for a napkin folding "bee."

Students in Watervile High School's AP US History class also visited the Mansion House this Fall. They were given a special tour by Tom Guiler which helped the students contextualize the region they call home and highlight how the OC fit with the diverse tapestry of reform that blanketed the area in the 19th century. They also learned about how museums operate and how museum staff members use objects to tell stories.













THE LARCHES

John Raynsford

his past fall the Oneida Community Golf Course maintenance crew repaired a portion of the trail in the Larches thanks to local community families who generously donated for this project. About 100 yards in from the entrance to the Larches from the 11th hole the path was eroded due to the small running stream. The erosion made it difficult to navigate so the golf course crew went to work.

They first had to dig out a larger area with a rented backhoe to remove the broken pipe that was there from many years ago. Once the area was properly excavated they laid a culvert pipe to allow a large enough opening for the stream to flow and prevent future erosion. They then back filled sand, dirt and gravel to smooth out the path. They will take another look at their work this spring to see if additional patchwork is needed. They are assuming the ground will settle throughout the winter where another layer of covering may be needed. In any event the path is now much easier to maneuver thanks to both the generous donation and the work of the golf course crew.

I have often found the Larches to be an interesting trail to walk but was never sure of its history so I started asking a few people what they knew about these woods. Everyone was helpful but they also directed me to Geoff Noyes. They felt he was our local historian of the Larches and so I asked Geoff -- they were right – he does possess great knowledge of the Larches. I received most of the following information from Geoff and greatly appreciate his help.

The Larches got its name because the majority of the trees are Larch trees. They are a deciduous tree with broad flat leaves that catch an abundance of light and require a great amount of water. If you walk these woods you will see that they reach towering heights of 30 to 40 feet and grow very straight. Although I don't know the exact size of this area but would assume 60 to 70 acres is a fairly good guess.

I mentioned the Larch trees require a great amount of water which adds credence to what we believe that the Larches was the water supply for the early Oneida Community members living at the Mansion House. I first found this surprising but remembering back to my youth where we enjoyed the refreshingly cold spring fed fountains at the golf course. It makes sense that this area was their water supply.

On the East side, adjacent to the old O&W tracks, was and is filled with pure water. The Larches are actually higher in elevation than the Mansion House so the early resourceful OC



members found a way to pipe the water to the Mansion. Geoff believes the pipes were made from hollowed-out tree trunks and were placed underground. That wouldn't surprise me knowing the ingenuity of the early members -- engineering problems was a strong point of theirs.

Not only did the Larches serve as a basic need but it was also a recreational place for the community. It was a nice walk back then as it is today. It was a playground for the children. Geoff remembers his grandfather telling him that the kids did extensive exploring in the woods and played games such as hide-n-seek. The youths of the day, who were Boy Scouts, built a cabin. It was located just left of the path where you would enter the Larches from 11th hole, beneath the other log cabin that rest near the tee. The next time I am there I am going to search for remnants of this cabin.



If you continue north on the main trail and bear to the right towards the track you may see a skeleton of an old Model T automobile to the right of the path. If there is anything remaining it is probably some type of iron frame but that is another item I plan to search for with my next visit. I am not sure how they drove a car to this area but I'm sure that was a great story that was shared by many.

In the 1870's, the O&W railroad passed near the Mansion House, Kenwood Station, and then by Sunset Lake which was to its right. This was Cragin meadow at the time. The tracks continued south crossing Oneida Creek by the old Knife Plant (the mason trestle buttresses are still there today). Originally, this whole section of the line from Kenwood Station on up was built on a trestle constructed on 12" x 12" large wooden beams. Eventually the O&W decided the half mile of wooden trestle wasn't sturdy enough, so they decided to fill it in.

To fill-in this area was a herculean task. The sand came from huge deposits of sand in Quiet Valley. Quiet Valley is the steep sloped ravine at the far north-end of the Larches.

As a side note the area east and west of the Middle road, including Johnson's Farm and Johnson's hill, is the current sand pit. This pit was formed by a terminal glacial moraine. A terminal glacial moraine is formed at the very edge of a glacier where the debris is scooped up and pushed to the front of the glacier depositing large clumps of rocks, soil, sediment and sand.

This terminal glacial moraine was an extremely convenient source of sand for the O&W to use to fill-in the trestle. To transport the sand the O&W built a small side track 90 degrees west from the main line to Quiet Valley. Digging the sand was all done by hand - a huge undertaking, mostly done by Italian immigrants, as Marie Magliocca, a long-time employee of Oneida Ltd., informed Geoff a few vears back.

The sand was transported by small dump cars by way of the small track onto the O&W line and then to a wooden trestle near Sunset. The dump cars dumped the sand over trestle and then returned to Quiet Valley for another load. If you walk into the entrance of Sunset you will see the embankment that was formed by the Italian workers, which is on both sides of the two buttresses. They continued digging the north end of the Larches until the required amount of fill completed the task. As sand was taken it also formed Quiet Valley as we now know it today.

Another use of the larches was for trapping. Charlie Scheible ('Shy-blee'), an expert trapper in the 1940's and 50's, trapped in the woods quite often. According to Charlie there were valuable minks roaming these woods. When the trap business was vibrant at the Oneida Community I'm sure the wooded area was another source of income for their members.

I want to thank Geoff for sharing his wealth of knowledge regarding the Larches. I found his information extremely fascinating and gave us additional insight of the resourcefulness of the early Oneida Community members.

THE WISE MAN RETURNED

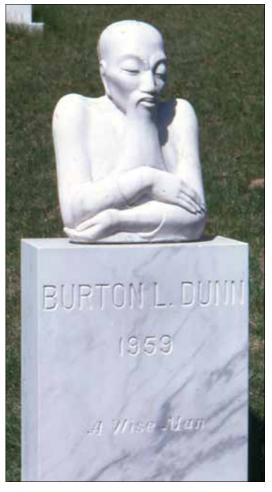
Contributed by Kelly Rose

nineteen year mystery has been solved thanks to the keen eye of an Oneida Community descendant and solid investigative work by a Pennsylvania detective.

The story began on Thanksgiving Day 2002. Several descendants, on their traditional morning walk to the Log Cabin, noticed the Wise Man statue was missing from the Oneida Community Cemetery. While the gravestone was intact, the statue itself was gone. It had been sculpted by Lillian Dunn in 1959, bolted to her husband "Doc Dunn's" gravestone for more than forty years, and was a familiar sight to generations of visitors to the cemetery. Those who discovered the missing statue were both shocked and disturbed by its disappearance. They took a quick look in the area and along the borders, thinking perhaps vandals had dumped it over the edge. For years cemetery visitors would occasionally take a few moments to search the area and

wooded hillsides, hoping to find a trace. Over time, most everyone had given up hope of ever recovering the Wise Man.

After consulting with the Oneida Community Cemetery Committee members, Chairman Kelly Rose filed a police report with Officer John Little, currently Chief of Police for the City of Oneida, in early December 2002. A month later she sent Oneida's police department a follow-up letter and enclosed a photo of the statue. She also alerted Oneida Limited Security, who "owned" the cemetery property at that time. In the spring of 2003 Kelly submitted an article and accompanying photos about the statue's disappearance to the Oneida Daily Dispatch. Lang Hatcher wrote a separate entry about Doc Dunn himself and his contributions to Oneida Limited. Kelly also wrote an article for the June 2003 edition of Oneida Community Journal about the Wise Man's disappearance and submitted a statement to the City of Sherrill for its newsletter and to the widely circulated Oneida Press. Anthony Wonderley, OCMH curator at the



time, registered the sculpture as stolen property on Interpol (an international police blotter) and the Art Loss Register. Other OCMH administrators over the years since 2002 were aware of the missing statue and were likely involved in the search as well. According to Kelly's records, however, not much action was taken between 2009 and 2019.

This is where the story gets interesting. Robin Vanderwall set the ball into motion in August of 2019, ten years after most people had given up hope of ever seeing the Wise Man again. As Robin put it, "One evening my husbanad Dan and I sat down to watch a DVD of a feature film that had come out a couple of years earlier. Dan had borrowed it from the library. Much of the film is set in a posh,

art-filled Manhattan apartment. A few minutes into the film, I was astonished to see, in the scene's background, a sculpture that looked like Lillian Dunn's Wise Man. It was on the screen only for a moment, and the idea that it really WAS the sculpture was preposterous, so I didn't say anything to Dan, but nevertheless I kept my eye out for another glimpse. When it appeared in a scene later in the film, I hopped up, crying, "Dan, Dan, stop the film!" The view wasn't as good, and from this angle it looked less like the Wise Man than it had earlier. But I took a photo of the TV monitor anyway, just in case. We finished the film without further incident.

So now I looked at the grainy image on my phone. I was doubtful. The shock I'd felt when I saw it in the earlier scene had worn off. It couldn't really be it, could it? After all these years, on the TV screen? But here was the photo. I might as well at least send it to Mother (Pody Vanderwall). I wrote a quick email asking for her opinion, attached the photo, and sent it off to Pody. It was 10:00 at night. I expected that would be the end of it."

As it turned out Robin's keen observation, that she assumed would lead to nothing, set into motion the path to the discovery and eventual recovery of the Wise Man! Shortly after Pody received the image from Robin, she asked Kelly to come to her house immediately. Pody ushered Kelly in to to show her the email photo that Robin sent and asked, "Doesn't that look like the Wise Man in this picture?" We immediately agreed that the image of the "prop" in this Hollywood movie scene did indeed bear a striking resemblance to Lillian Dunn's sculpture!

Pody's daughter, Trine Vanderwall, is a museum registrar in Philadelphia. After seeing the photo Trine consulted with her friend John Simkiss. John enhanced the grainy photo into an unmistakable photo of the Wise Man. The refined photo revealed that uniquely identifying nicks and losses on the sculpture in the film were identical to the losses visible in the old photographs of the Wise Man. We now held proof the Wise Man had been found!

In a case of remarkable coincidence, John traced the film's production to a film studio outside of Philadelphia. Trine sat down with Detective Merritt Harman at the Town of Chester (PA) Police Department in October 2019. Putting decades of museum experience to work, Trine carefully presented nearly twenty years of documentation on the loss of the Wise Man including newspaper articles, old photographs, the Interpol case number and the indisputable new photo of the sculpture in the film. Trine had grown up visiting the Wise Man every week on walks with her grandmother Jane Rich and she was determined to advocate resoundingly on behalf of the Wise Man. Detective Harman reviewed the entire file and called in a passing officer originally from Binghamton to ask him about his familiarity with Oneida. Detective Harman visited the film studio later that same afternoon and quickly traced what he suspected was our Wise Man to an auction house in New England. The auction house leases props to film production companies. Kelly called Detective Harman, who gave her the auction house's contact information. Kelly phoned the business and then turned the matter over to Christine O'Neil, Executive Director of OCMH, and Chairman of the Board Jonathan Pawlika, because the statue was stolen from OCMH property. Law enforcement removed themselves from the case because statutes of limitations had long passed. Christine located the auction house and sent the business several photos of the Wise Man. At that point the company agreed to donate the sculpture to a representative of OCMH.

COVID stood in the way of progress for well over a year. By late in the summer of 2021 Kelly and her husband Neal agreed to drive to the auction house in New England to pick up the statue. Per Christine's instruction, they promised to properly identify the Wise Man first and then exercise discretion by not revealing the location or name of the business. Kelly and Neal spotted the Wise Man as soon as they entered the shop and asked that the statue be safely placed in the trunk of their car. Once back in Kenwood, an OCMH staff member moved it to a secure location within the Mansion House. Kelly immediately called Donna Reed, whose late husband was a direct descendant of Doc Dunn, with the good news. Donna and her sons Owen and Alex were both surprised and overjoyed that the Wise Man had found its way home after its nineteen year disappearance. Kelly then convened the Cemetery Committee members, along with the Reeds and a few others, in a Zoom meeting to convey the happy news.

This is not the end of the story. While the Wise Man will NOT be returned to the cemetery, the OCMH administrators and immediate family members of Doc Dun have yet to decide how to properly display the statue in the Mansion House.

Robin Vanderwall is unquestionably the star of this fascinating saga, thanks to her "eagle eye" that initially spotted the statue in the film. As her sister Trine remarked, "If Robin hadn't put two and two together the Wise Man would not be resting comfortably back in the Mansion House!"

Credit must also be given to Pody and Trine Vanderwall for actively pursuing the case and to John Simkiss for providing proof that the nicks and scratches on the sculpture in the film matched old photos of the Wise Man like fingerprints. We owe gratitude to Detective Merritt Harman for welcoming Trine and her expansive OCMH file and then immediately tracing the Wise Man to a New England auction house in record speed. Christine O'Neil and the OCMH staff must be recognized for orchestrating its recovery as well as Kelly and Neal Rose for safely escorting the statue from New England back to Kenwood.

We all wish that the Wise Man could tell us about the places he went, the sights he saw, and the famous people he met along his nineteen year odyssey from the Oneida Community Cemetery, through a couple of states, and back to his proper home in the Mansion House.

COMMUNITY CARING An example of OL attitudes amongst the various worker statuses

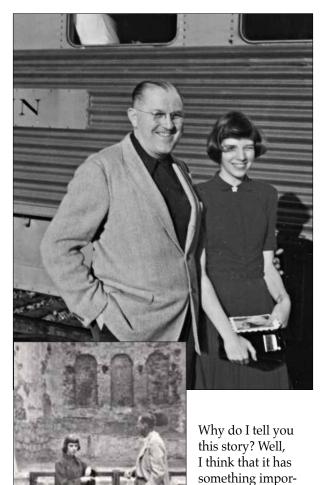
Pody Vanderwall

n January 1950 my Mother, Jane Kinsley Rich, worked in the big room in the Sales Office.
Fying? Orders? That sort of thing. Her mother, my grandmother, Carlotta Cragin Kinsley was living in Palm Springs, California. She was living in a small trailer, hoping that her crippling rheumatoid arthritis would respond to the hot desert climate. But she was homesick, too. My Mother couldn't leave work to visit her (I had a younger brother at home) so she sent me. And here is where Oneida Limited comes in.

In those days, air travel was not common. The train was the common carrier. Two Sales Managers, Dud Sanderson and Harold Schubert were scheduled to take a month-long swing down the West Coast, visiting their "Agents". Agents came "home" to Oneida in the summer—and probably got a winter visit from their Manager for oversight of their assigned duties. (I'm guessing here.) At any rate, Dud and Schube had this trip planned and my mother prevailed upon them to take me along as far as Los Angeles where I would stay with O.L. Agent Chuck Noyes and his wife Ida-Kate Burnham Noyes before heading to Palm Springs.

On a freezing cold night in January my mother, father and I went to the Dud Sanderson house on Genesee Street in Oneida Castle where it seemed like half Oneida (and that included all the city Bigwigs) had gathered to have a big party to see Dud and Schube off. I didn't know a soul and was glad when we headed to Syracuse to await the midnight train. I had a roomette across the corridor from Dud and Schube's double bedroom. By that time I was so nervous I threw up in the Syracuse railway station restroom. (I was 14.) The next day we had a lay-over in Chicago of 8 hours and OL Agent's wife Charlotte Earl Kast took me on for the afternoon and for dinner. At 8 o'clock we met up with Dud and Schube and boarded the "Super Chief" heading to LA. Again, I had a roomette across the corridor from my shepherds. I remember looking out the train window hoping to see the Mississippi River before falling asleep.

There followed the rest of the 36-hour ride. I spent most of my time in the Dome car watching the scenery, managing to meet up with Dud and Schube for meals. Two highlights stand out all these years later: A big sign that I awaited with excitement: *The Continental Divide*, and a stop in New Mexico where there were Indians on the platform (selling goods to the tourists, I imagine.) When I wasn't in the Dome car, I read in my roomette or visited with Dud and Schube in their newspaper-filled, smokey, drinks-always-on-hand, card-game-in-progress room. They were very kind to this tag-along kid. We arrived in LA, had lunch in the station, and West Coast CoAgent Chuck Noyes took over.



factory (engineering department) and Dud and Schube were on the executive floor in the Sales Office. Despite this, and the inconvenience it must have been to be responsible for a young teenage girl heading across the country, they took it on with good grace. I can't think that that would ever have happened in another national corporation. I acknowledge that one of my end targets (IdaKate Noyes) was my Mother's good friend, and there again, Agent Chuck Noyes and IdaKate drove me to my final destination, Palm Springs and settled me with my Grandmother.

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SHARING THE STORY

Compiled by Mary Jo Astrachan

leven current Oneida Community Mansion House volunteers recently shared some of their experiences as docents in response to the following questions:

What/Who interested you in becoming a docent?

OC descendant Geoff Noyes referred to Thanksgiving 1987, when plans for the museum began to materialize; he remembers being one of the earliest guides "back then."

Kelly Rose, a great granddaughter of John Humphrey Noyes, said her love of the "Big House" as the center of her life was her inspiration. She believes her tours to be "nostalgic," like the ones her mother also used to give.

Lifelong Sherrill residents Linda Evans and Gary Onyan were motivated to learn more about the OC history in their own backyard, especially as a volunteer opportunity in retirement.

Tim Cumings grew up in Kenwood with the MH as his playhouse. His inspiration was the personal connection he felt when his mother was a resident for over 25 years.

Linda Cochran's friendship and "very long talks" with Jane Rich brought her to the tour guide position.

Carol Bandlow was recruited by veteran guides Carole Valesky and Linda Evans, who gave a tour for her Delta Kappa Gamma Society;

Mary Jo Astrachan had the good fortune to hear about the need for new guides after a presentation by Pody Vanderwall.

Cathy Cornue had lived in the "Dorm" as a new teacher in the area. Her husband's 36 years of work for Oneida Ltd. and her reading of Journal issues also influenced her when volunteer training was posted by Molly Jessup.

Susan Belasco, whose academic field is 19th century American literature and culture, had studied the OC previous to her retirement from the University of Nebraska and subsequent move to Hamilton. She also heard about openings from Molly Jessup and followed through on her curiosity.

Tim McClean, another professor and recruit of Molly's, became interested through his research for a lecture on variations in marriage structure for his sociology course at Herkimer Community College. Have you ever led a tour for a scholar or an author?

Geoff, Linda C., Tim M. and Kelly all remembered giving tours to scholars. Linda E. recently had a professor from Albany so interested in Charles Fourier's connection to the OC that he sent her an additional article on the topic.

Susan shared her experience: When the free-lance videographer Maria Badia came to the Mansion House in the fall of 2020 to create a short film for BBC Reels, I took her on a private tour. She was very well-informed and extremely curious. In many ways, this tour was among the most challenging I have given. She asked such good questions, many about the lives of the women community members. It was a pleasure to show her around the house. Her completed film appeared on BBC Reels: https://www.bbc.com/reel/video/p08sbbn2/onei-da-the-free-love-utopia-that-chased immortality

Mary Jo led a 2+ hour tour for Christopher Jennings two years before his book Paradise Now was published, in which he focuses on five 19th century utopian ventures, including the OC.

What is your favorite stop on your tour circuit?

There was quite a range of responses to this question. Several selected the Big Hall but for different reasons. Carol called it "the Oneida Community's

most significant gathering place" and said the size of the room is a surprise to most people. Susan enjoys discussing the organization of the OC: "Being in the Hall itself generates so many good questions from visitors about the daily lives that the original community members led, their religious beliefs, and their system of shared governance." Tim M. likes to discuss "the odd things that were the target of mutual criticism." Kelly



Carol Bandlaw shown here giving a tour in the lounge

explained, "I call this the 'WOW ROOM' as 'wow' is the usual response when tourists first see the massive hall."

Linda E., a retired art teacher, chose the three large quilts and the Jessie Kinsley exhibit. "Since they are all art based, I like expanding the process and the stories in each quilt."

Tim C. prefers the Industries Exhibit since he used to work for OL.

Cathy selected the same room for a different reason: "I am fascinated by the ingenuity and business sense of both the Oneida Community and Oneida Ltd., from carpet bags and traps to silk thread and silverware— and everything in between."

Geoff's favorite is the traps exhibit, where he enjoys giving his "metal-benders" speech while Linda C.'s is the Upper Sitting Room.

Mary Jo explained that she likes to take her groups into the old library early in her tours so she can stress the intellectual focus of the Bible Communists before discussing the more controversial Complex Marriage issues.

What is the farthest distance someone in your tour has traveled to the MH?

Some docents reported that tourists had traveled from across the United States: from Oregon, California, and Florida. Mary Jo recounted that she gave a tour to a man who was biking across the country, having started on the West Coast. She also remembered a touree from Canada who told her, "I've been waiting thirty years to come here."

Other docents gave tours to international travelers. Japan, Ireland, England, Nigeria, Germany, Austria, and Eastern Europe were mentioned. Linda C. recollected a university student from Germany who was studying utopian societies and had selected the OC as her first priority. And three docents had visitors from Australia!

What is the most unusual tour you have done?

Tim M. cited the time he gave a tour to a person writing a play about the OC. "She knew more about the community than me!"

Geoff conducted a tour for Spencer Klaw, author of Without Sin, in the 1980s. "He started out with the pronouncement, 'I'm here to do John Humphrey Noyes right! Show me this place."

Cathy C. led a tour for a busload of French students who spoke no English. A translator facilitated with very brief summaries of Cathy's longer explanations. "At the end of the tour, they all thanked me and the interpreter said it was very interesting. But I sure would like to have been a French-speaking mouse in the corner of that bus!"

Linda E. once gave a tour to young adults from a group home. She met the communication challenge by asking the group questions to keep them engaged. Kelly once found herself in the position of having to wake a touree who had fallen asleep in the Big Hall when the group was moving on to the Upper Sitting Room.

Mary Jo was once beginning a tour for friends in the front hall when two bats came swooping down the staircase and over their heads.

What are you most proud of in your docent role? What do you enjoy most?

Tim C. commented, "I enjoy telling the story of the Oneida Community. Most people don't know anything about it."

Linda E., calling herself "a local," enjoys answering questions, telling a good story, and talking about other Sherrill history when guests are interested.

Susan added, "Serving as a docent has been a deeply satisfying experience for me because I so enjoy meeting new people, and I love learning about and sharing the complex story of the Oneida Community."

Gary and Tim C. echoed her remarks about interacting with visitors.

Linda C. returned to her opening comments, "I like sharing the history of such a unique place. Passing the story on was so important to Jane [Rich] when she convinced me to become a guide... and I totally enjoy doing just that."

Cathy added, "There is so much to know and I realize that I can only present a brief overview, but it's enough to whet people's appetite and perhaps lead them to the books in the gift shop, where they might find the answers to their questions. The other thing I enjoy is being part of this incredible community of docents and the amazing staff that bring the OC to life!"

Mary Jo finds that almost always at the end of a tour, visitors will acknowledge being impressed by the many progressive policies of the OC, especially where women's roles and options were concerned. As Tim C. said, "They are usually quite surprised about how radical and yet successful it was."

Additional comments about your docent experience?

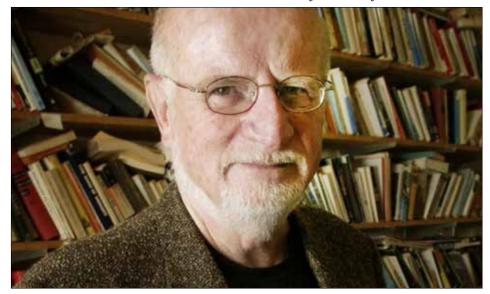
Linda C. stated, "I have been a docent for 27 years and have enjoyed every tour given."

Geoff added, "I am most uplifted by the docents we have assembled for the "Mansch". It's especially heart-warming to me that many are not descendants."

And an appropriate last word from Kelly: "As an Oneida Community descendant, I am proud to guide visitors through my childhood "playhouse." It was occupied by my ancestors, my widowed mother, and now myself and my husband. Both of my daughters chose to be married in the house, as did my husband and I almost five decades ago. While I've lived in many houses over the decades, the Mansion House will always be my true "home."

IN MEMORY OF JOHN S. FOGARTY 1938 - 2021

Anthony Wonderley



after, he forged strong bonds with the Mansion House organization as a member of the descendant-organized Historical Committee. He was present at the creation of the Oneida Community Mansion House as a notfor-profit museum in 1988. Subsequently, he served on the Board of Trustees for many years. Bob played a major role in the annual meetings—three of them—of the Communal Studies Association hosted by

Then and for years

his past August, the Mansion House lost a long-term friend and chronicler in the passing of Robert Fogarty, editor of the prestigious literary journal, Antioch Review and Professor of American History at Antioch College in Ohio. The scholarly world knew him best as a student of American communitarianism, author of such encyclopedic works as the Dictionary of American Communal and Utopian History (1980) and All Things New: Communal and Utopian Movements, 1865-1914 (1990).

Fogarty first visited the MH in the early 1960s in the course of conducting doctoral research into the Oneida Community. In the dissertation that resulted, he wondered why the Oneida Community was so successful as a utopia. His answer was that the Perfectionists who got Oneida off the ground were youthful, in possession of practical skills, and highly motivated in their convictions. The blend of business and spirituality they promoted was effective enough to help Oneida retain its religious enthusiasm over many years. Together, followers and leaders endorsed the same familial model of social life and shared the same inclination for flexibility and practicality. Oneida was closely linked with secular communitarian developments, but to get at the larger perspective, Fogarty cautioned, one would have to move beyond Noves and sex. Fogarty summarized this in a landmark 1973 article ("Oneida: A Utopian Search for Religious Society," Labor History 14, Spring). In so doing, he (along with sociologist Maren Lockwood Carden) pioneered academic study of the Community and moved it beyond a focus on sex and Noyes.

the Mansion House.

Not the least of his accomplishments was editing and publishing two autobiographies by Oneida Community members: *Special Love/ Special Sex: An Oneida Community Diary* (1994), and *Desire and Duty at Oneida: Tirzah Miller's Intimate Memoir* (2000). Bob never ceased to ponder the significance of the Community and, in his last article on the subject (2008), emphasized that OC Perfectionism was notable for being an original American invention ("*Religious Inventions in Nineteenth Century America*," OAS Magazine of History 22 [January]).

When I started out as curator in 2007, I literally ran into Fogarty wandering the halls. I button-holed him (scarcely believing my good fortune) and we burbled happily on about Oneida for several hours. A wonderful experience for me but it cost Bob: he missed his flight home.

In the proceedings of a symposium held at the Mansion House in 1993, Fogarty expressed his abiding fascination with Oneida in this fashion:

"The Oneida Community has remained for me a constant source of wonder and interest — wonder because it succeeded in such a bold manner for so long, and because it was able to transform itself on several occasions; interest because of its many facets: it played an important role in our culture's intellectual history and an inspirational role in the history of social settlements. It contained both believers and skeptics; it was both a conservative system and a radical one. The contradictions it embraced continue to fascinate historians of religion, sociologists of small groups, and political scientists of democratic institutions."

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September 27, 2021 – March 8, 2022

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Paul and Karen Solenick For exterior maintenance and repairs (e.g. roof, windows)

James Trevvett For the building project

Edward Vanderwall In honor of my sister Tina Vanderwall's 80th (2020) and 81st (2021) birthdays

Robert and Linda Wayland-Smith In memory of Robert and Prudence Wayland-Smith

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\$500 to \$999

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Crawford M. Herrick, Jr. for the

Christmas season

Wanda Herrick On behalf of Mr. and Mrs. Glen Kimball in memory of Crawford M. Herrick, Jr. for the Christmas season Lisa Herrick On behalf of Ms. Leslie Herrick in memory of Crawford M. Herrick, Jr. for the Christmas season Gregory and Paula Iannello John and Elizabeth Kelly Glenn Kimball and Laura L. Herrick Kimball On behalf of Wanda Herrick in memory of Crawford M. Herrick Jr. Nairn Kucharik In memory of Beal Marks John R. and Susan J. Kuterka Save the Roof Campaign In memory of Amy Sanderson Eleanor Licht John Loosmann M. E. I. D., LLC Const. Christopher Malone Charlotte Mayer-Florian *In memory* of Jessie L. Mayer Network for Good Shirl Oatman Sara Orton *In memory of "Cot" Orton* Marc Pollicove John and Kim Raynsford Joseph Raynsford Zachary Raynsford Eileen Kinsella and Dennis Sands David Seelman Kevin Stilwell Joe and Heather Tallman Rhoda Vanderwall For the lawn and gardens Rhoda Vanderwall Remembering Robert Fogarty Kate Wayland-Smith In memory of Mr. George Allen Norman and Carolyn Whittaker Janet Silano William Pasnau Elaine Wojciechowski Lisa Wood In memory of Lang and Nini Hatcher

In Kind Items / Services

Patty Baldwin Books and a painting of the Mansion House Paul and Judy Wayland-Smith Removal of a fallen tree from East Park

FROM THE PAST

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