



ORLEANS HISTORICAL SOCIETY AND MUSEUM

OrleansHistoricalSociety.org
3 River Road, P.O. Box 353, Orleans, MA 02653
508-240-1329

By bringing history and culture to life, the Orleans Historical Society will inspire a shared sense of community and pride in the rich heritage of the Town of Orleans.

WINTER 2019

BUILDING A FUTURE TO PRESERVE THE PAST

Haven't heard much from us lately? The Orleans Historical Society (OHS) has been quietly raising funds to improve our "home" 1834 Meetinghouse, acquire the Captain Linnell House, make the Hurd Chapel a more functional space and increase our endowment for the long-term care of our buildings, collections, programs, and CG36500 lifeboat.

So far, of our \$3 million goal, we have raised more than \$550,000 in grants and individual donations/pledges, with another \$550,000 pending. We will be taking a more "public" approach to our campaign shortly, during which you will be hearing much more about our plans and how you can help with donations and volunteer times.

Here's what we have accomplished to-date:

Protecting the Meetinghouse

After months of careful planning, important improvements were made in 2018 thanks to a significant Community Preservation Act grant from the Town of Orleans and generous donations from OHS members and friends. The work, largely unseen, was completed under-budget and on-schedule.

The Meetinghouse is a 185-year-old wooden structure that had no fire abatement system. It does now, along with enhanced fire and burglary alarms. The original floor, with

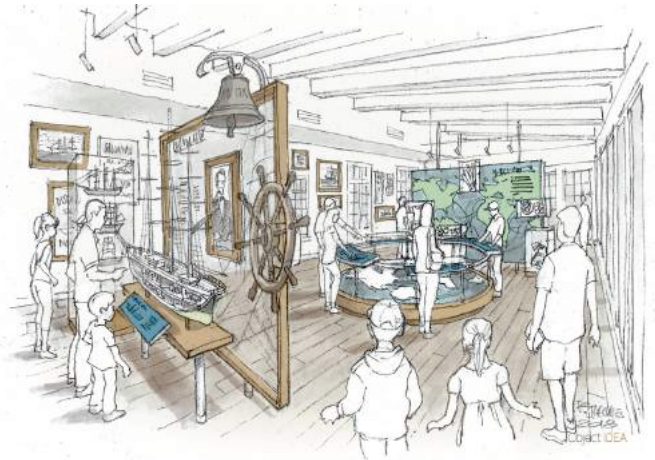
2018 Renovations at the Meetinghouse:

- New Hot Water Heater Installed
- Floor Repaired & Painted
- HVAC Updated
- Alarm System Modernized
- Side Exhibit Space Partitions Removed
- Fire Suppression System Installed
- 1st Floor Walls Painted
- External Wall Cornices Repaired
- Structure Reinforced Under Building
- New Rear Door Installed



Thank You!

Made Possible by Donations from OHS Members
and a Community Preservation Committee Grant
from the citizens of Orleans



Artist's sketch of future interactive exhibits at the Linnell House Museum, which will focus on the Cape's historic relationship with the sea.

its 12-inch planks, was repaired and painted. The 20th century dividing walls in the alcoves were removed, providing more flexible exhibit areas and bringing the main floor back to its original design. These are just a few of the improvements we have made (see list left).

But we are not done. Later in 2019, we will start work to make the Meetinghouse compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act, including accessible front entrances and a restroom. Also among the projects will be updated lighting, a more functional food serving area, new chairs, and better exhibit design and development. With these enhancements, the Meetinghouse will be preserved as a more functional and accessible landmark for generations to come. Stay tuned.

Acquiring the Linnell House

The acquisition of the Captain Linnell House in January 2020 is a unique preservation opportunity with tremendous potential for Orleans and OHS. Both the Meetinghouse and Linnell would serve as cultural centers where residents and visitors can gather for concerts, stage productions, history presentations, youth summer programs and many other frequent activities.

Meeting and event spaces at the two locations, including the nearly 1,600 square-foot function room and two licensed kitchens at Linnell, (cont. page 3)

Board Chair Letter

Winter 2019

Board of Directors 2019

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Many in the community think that the Orleans Historical Society is part of, or owned by the Town. Others believe that OHS operating costs are funded, wholly or in part, by taxpayers. Neither is true.

OHS, established in 1959, is a not-for-profit membership organization having no financial affiliation with the Town. All income is essentially self-generated, and derives from a few sources.

These include annual membership dues, donations and grants from individuals, businesses and foundations, and income from programs like Walks with Bonnie Snow, the lecture series, concerts, the annual Antiques Show, CG36500 lifeboat tours, etc. Some income is also generated annually from our modest endowment.

Our operating expenses include wages for our small staff, utilities, repairs and maintenance, grounds-keeping and cleaning services, insurance, office expenses and more, primarily related to the Meetinghouse and lifeboat.

In recent years we have increased our grant-writing activities. Some grants are available to fund operations, but most are limited to specific projects and programs, repairs to the CG36500, and improvements to the Meetinghouse.

The Orleans Community Preservation Committee (CPC) and the voters at Annual Town Meetings have provided support over the years for many of our projects. This money comes from a local-option surcharge on property tax bills and a state match of those surcharges. OHS must compete for this funding and it is not guaranteed.

The generosity of all these sources—members, donors, business sponsors, foundations, and the CPC—is critical for our future success! We thank you for your past contributions, and ask for your continued support as we move ahead.

Kathleen McNeil

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COME VOLUNTEER!

We're looking for new volunteers to help us out for a day, the summer, or year-round! Are you or someone you know looking for ways to be an important part of our Town and inspire others to learn about its wonderful history? Are you a high school or college student, perhaps with computer tech or history interests, looking for a summer internship? For more information, please email admin@OrleansHS.org, call 508-240-1329 or visit the Volunteer Page on our website at OrleansHistoricalSociety.org.

We need:

- Docents from May-October at the Meetinghouse and the CG36500
- Office volunteers to help with administrative work or collections
- Event volunteers to staff lectures and other special events
- Current/future educators to help with children's programming

Building a Future (cont. from page 1)

would be available for rent by public, non-profit and private groups with food and other services provided by caterers and specialty suppliers. These spaces are unmatched in the area and would provide sustainable income to offset operating costs (see article below).

We are committed to having top-notch, interactive and evolving history exhibits at Linnell so that they stay relevant for visitors of all ages and interests. With the help of a Boston-area firm that specializes in museum design, we are developing a theme that likely will reflect Orleans' and the Cape's timeless relationship with the sea – from Native American culture to modern fishing and recreation.

The Hurd Chapel is Moving

The 1929 Hurd Chapel, a single-level wooden structure below the Meetinghouse facing School Street, contains a small chapel area and two side rooms. It was donated and moved to the OHS property in 1979. Sitting on a temporary foundation, it has no heating or air circulation, no plumbing and only minimal lighting. It is currently used for storage.

Our plans call for moving the Hurd Chapel further up the hill, turning it 90 degrees and placing it on a permanent foundation with a walk-out basement underneath. This will better integrate it with the Meetinghouse. Modern lighting, HVAC systems and two restrooms will greatly increase our ability to preserve and exhibit artifacts, host smaller events



The Hurd Chapel will be relocated nearer the Meetinghouse to make it more functional year-round for exhibits, meetings and workspace, with storage underneath.

and meetings, and provide more work space for staff and volunteers. Negotiations are nearly completed for obtaining a tiny piece of adjoining property from the Town to meet proper setbacks for the move.

All of these projects together are a lot to take on, but with the continued support of the OHS Board, our members and friends, and the community at large we are committed to building a future that will better serve the community and bring the Town's rich heritage to life for generations of residents and visitors to enjoy.

From Restaurant to Community Gathering Space and Museum

Once the acquisition of the Captain Linnell House (CLH) is completed in January, 2020, the Orleans Historical Society (OHS) will transform the restaurant areas into museum spaces dedicated to Orleans area's maritime heritage. The existing large function room will continue to be available for weddings, anniversaries, birthdays, memorials and corporate and community events.

This change in business model, without an "a la carte" restaurant, will enable OHS to generate ongoing revenue by renting the Linnell facility and kitchens—along with the Meetinghouse—on an expanded schedule to include daytime and weekday evening events. Nothing like these spaces currently exists in Orleans.

To provide food service, two different approaches are being considered that rely on caterers. One approach involves OHS hiring its own experienced event planner/manager who would be responsible for the event rental business. A preferred list of caterers and suppliers would be prepared from which event renters could choose. In the second approach, OHS would exclusively contract with a highly respected, Cape-based caterer to manage all aspects of the event rental business. The caterer would provide the food and beverage service, as well as handle marketing, sales and communications with prospective event renters.

CLH has a 30-year history of hosting events and generating revenue, a proven business to build upon. By knowing the number of events previously held at CLH over several years, understanding what competitors are currently charging for rental fees, and negotiating with caterers/suppliers for the best possible contracts, OHS can minimize risk and maximize its rental profit, ensuring self-sustainability.

Want more information about our financial model? Call us at 508-240-1329.



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 Get more information.
 See envelope inside.



Upcoming Events at the OHS Meetinghouse

Sunday, March 10, 3pm - *Genealogy: The Good, the Bad and the Ugly*, with Marie Wells. Come learn about genealogy research and what to expect during the process.

Saturday, March 16, 4pm - Performance by *Celtic Roots*, a young Celtic band based on Cape Cod, featuring Gavin Rice, Jonathan Ford, Bailey Ford, Lili Hay and Fern Tamagini-O'Donnell.

May - The Meetinghouse re-opens with the must-see exhibit *Models of Maritime Courage and Adventure* and related special programming. Watch for more information.

Saturday, June 1, 7pm - *Music at the Museum: "Cabaret Evening"* featuring Sandy and Richard Riccardi. Enjoy original comedy songs with progressive political parody.

Saturday, June 15, 9am - 4pm (rain or shine) - *7th Annual Antiques Show*. Some 30 quality dealers help make this one of the premier events on the Cape—and a key OHS fundraiser.



Honoring a Hero

A Coast Guard detail from Chatham Station gathered with lifeboat volunteers and OHS members to pay respects to EN2 Andrew Fitzgerald, the sole surviving CG36500 crew member of the February, 1952 *Pendleton* rescue. A wreath was placed over the engine compartment where Fitzgerald valiantly struggled to restart the boat's gasoline engine during the mission. He died in mid-November, 2018, in Aurora, Colorado, at the age of 86.

(Photo courtesy of Goodwin Studios)

We thank our community partners: Cape Cod Embroidery, Coastal Engineering Co., Dan Davis Custom Building & Remodeling LLC., Jewelry by S&R, Lower Cape Dental Associates, Nauset Disposal, Nauset Marine, The Cove Motel.