A February, 2017 inspection of the Orleans Historical Society (OHS) 1834 Meetinghouse by a nationally recognized preservation consultant showed that “most [physical] elements are in excellent condition, particularly the structure of the building.” A similar study of the adjacent Hurd Chapel indicated that, while the exterior shingle siding was in “good repair,” the roof and front door area needed replacement in the near future.

Fred Ecker, founder of Tidewater Preservation, Inc. and a Yarmouth Port resident, was hired to help OHS determine next steps in improving the Meetinghouse and making it more useful and accessible. Funding for the consultant came from the Town through a Community Preservation grant. Ecker noted that the “structure as a whole exhibits a positive state of preservation,” reflecting OHS’ ongoing commitment to maintaining and restoring the Meetinghouse. However, his inspection also highlighted the building’s shortcomings as a multi-use facility.

Considering that the building is on the National Register of Historic Places, the alterations that would be required to create an adequate climate-controlled space for museum artifacts and archives would jeopardize the registration, Ecker said. The most suitable use for the structure is its original design use – a space for presentations and meetings for the general public.

For that purpose he noted improvements that should be made to the Meetinghouse to create a handicap access and bathroom; update the heating ductwork, emergency lighting, fire protection and other mechanical systems; and securing loose floorboards. In addition, he recommended restoration projects such as replacing the front doors with historically accurate reproductions, adding external louvered shutters on windows and replacing the poured concrete platform outside the main entrances with a new slab covered with period stonework.

The Hurd Chapel, built in the Orleans Cemetery in the 1930s and donated to OHS some 40 years later, is a one-story, wood-frame structure where extra exhibit panels, tables/chairs and other items currently are stored. It has minimal electrical service, no plumbing, and lacks proper air circulation that exposes contents to heat and humidity extremes. Ecker suggested that the Chapel could easily be repaired and moved onto a proper foundation with a basement. If adequate mechanical systems were added, it could provide more usable space.

Throughout his 31-year-career, Ecker and his company have worked on more than 300 historic properties specializing in the restoration and preservation of 18th and 19th century house museums, religious structures, and historical public and private residences, among others. Many of these properties are designated as National Historic Landmarks or are listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Past and current projects include The White House in Washington, D.C., Mount Vernon and Monticello in Virginia, and the Edith Wharton Estate in Massachusetts.
Letter from the Board Chair

Spring 2017

Recently a study was completed regarding our reputation in the community and our expansion plans, and I want to share some results — and my initial thoughts about them. The study involved in-depth interviews with a small subset of OHS members/donors by a non-partial consultant. Most of the interviews took place late last Fall, with a few carrying over into early this year. The consultant then summarized the key points made by participants and presented them (anonymously) to us, adding recommendations and conclusions.

I was pleased to learn that participants were very familiar with OHS, and almost all had attended at least one of our programs. They understood our mission to preserve the history and culture of Orleans, saw our value to the community, and were committed to our success and sustainability. In addition, a large majority of participants understood our need for more space and making reasonable improvements to our Meetinghouse and Hurd Chapel (the small building in front of the Meetinghouse on School Street).

The study indicated some areas for improvement, too. While a minority of participants cited concerns about our future direction, membership growth and financial management, all felt OHS could benefit from a stronger image and better awareness of our operations and programs. This is great feedback and, clearly, we need to remember the “basics” that drive our organization before we charge ahead with major expansion efforts. We certainly will work harder to improve in these areas. At the same time, when opportunity knocks I’ve always believed you should at least open the door.

To that point, most of the interviews in this study were done before the owners of The Captain Linnell House approached us in late December about possibly buying the property in 3-5 years. So we don’t know if this development might have affected the results. Still the Board feels strongly that Linnell House could provide much-needed museum and preservation space for us — plus an additional event venue with revenue potential. We have much work to do in determining the feasibility of this purchase, and we should have a clearer picture of our next steps by mid-year.

The OHS Board and I are more excited than ever about the future, and we’ll keep in mind the important points of this study as we move forward. We hope you share our optimism, and look forward to your continued support.

Sincerely,

Mark Carron

Wish List

Are you a woodworker looking for a small project? OHS needs a volunteer to make a couple of small wooden signs to hang on our lamppost saying “concert today,” “speaker today,” and “tour today.”

If you can help, please contact Nancy at 508-240-1329 or admin@orleanshs.org. Thank you!
On July 21, 1918, a German submarine surfaced off Nauset beach and used its deck gun to sink several barges and damage the towboat *Perth Amboy*. Some of the shells landed onshore, making Orleans the only U.S. territory attacked during WWI. Seaplanes dispatched from Chatham Naval Air Station tried, unsuccessfully, to bomb the sub. Members of the U.S. Life Saving Service (Coast Guard) rushed to save some 30 people on the barges and tug during the attack. Crowds, reportedly nearing 1,000, gathered on the bluffs to watch the whole spectacle, experiencing warfare first-hand and realizing just how vulnerable a place Cape Cod was.

Fortunately, there were no deaths and only two injuries resulting from the 90 minutes of shelling. The U-boat left Cape Cod and headed for the Maine coast, where it continued to sink ships before it turned toward home and met its fate striking an underwater mine off the Norway coast. Ironically, the *Perth Amboy* was sold to a British company, repaired, and later participated in the World War II evacuation of troops at Dunkirk.

Now, almost 100 years later, the Orleans Historical Society is preparing an exhibit to commemorate the U-boat attack on Orleans and those Americans who fought back. The exhibit is scheduled to open at the Meetinghouse Museum in time for this summer. Other town-wide events are being planned for next year on the weekend of July 20 - 22.

Today’s Cape League is one of nearly a dozen summer leagues in the country sanctioned by the NCAA (National Collegiate Athletic Association). While all of them are known for generating future big leaguers, none have more former players in the majors than the Cape League.

The Orleans *Firebirds* team is no exception – for example, Baseball Hall of Famer *Carlton Fisk*, catcher for the Boston Red Sox and, later, the Chicago White Sox, got his start right here in town. Yet the origin of organized baseball on the Cape goes back to the late 1800s when many towns, including Orleans, had their own teams with players of various ages (not just college students) competing with each other. The OHS exhibit will explore some of the local history of what is called “America’s favorite pastime.”

If you have archives or artifacts relating to these exhibits that you are willing to lend to OHS, please let us know. Also, volunteers are needed for the planning and assembly of the exhibits and events. Please call the Meetinghouse at 508-240-1329, or email admin@orleanshs.org if you can help.
HONOR ROLL OF OUR ANNUAL APPEAL CONTRIBUTORS

More than 180 Orleans Historical Society members, friends and neighbors responded to our 2017 Annual Appeal letter this spring. THANK YOU to everyone on the list below for their support. Yet we are only part-way to our goal of raising the necessary funds to build new exhibits (see p. 3) and sustain our summer and fall programs serving residents and visitors. Not on the list? It’s not too late to support OHS; contributions may be made online at OrleansHistoricalSociety.org or by check mailed with the form below to P.O. Box 353, Orleans MA, 02653.

David Abel and Mari Porcari
Bette Avery
William Babetsky
Earl Bahler
Mary Katharine & Stephanie Balcke
Mr. and Mrs. Richard Barnes
Joan D. Barnett
Mr. and Mrs. James H. Beall, Jr.
Mr. and Mrs. Robert Berger
Mr. and Mrs. Richard Bills
Catherine W. Binder
David J. Bishop
Mr. and Mrs. Michael Bombich
Gary Bowden and Mark Zia
Dorothy Bowmer
Gary Bowden and Mark Zia
Mr. and Mrs. Robert Plastino
Mr. and Mrs. Bruce Pelto
Mr. and Mrs. Paul Peloquin
Antonio Pastor and Maryanne Leone
Mr. and Mrs. Robert Parry
Walter North and Judy Ryon
Melora B. North
Mr. and Mrs. Edward J.
Audrey Nickerson
Mr. and Mrs. George Neher
Mr. and Mrs. K. George Najarian
Mr. and Mrs. Robert Musik
Mr. and Mrs. K. George Najarian
Mr. and Mrs. George Neher
Barbara E. Neilson
Gertrude Nichols
Audrey Nickerson
Mr. and Mrs. Edward J. Noonan
Melora B. North
Walter North and Judy Ryon
Mr. and Mrs. Robert E. Oleksiak
Mr. and Mrs. Charles S. Parmenter
Mr. and Mrs. Roberterry
Antonio Pastor and Maryanne Leone
Kathleen N. Patten
Mr. and Mrs. Paul Peloquin
Mr. and Mrs. Bruce Pelton
Mr. and Mrs. Michael S. Plastino
Susan E. Porth
Mr. and Mrs. James D. Price
Mr. and Mrs. John B. Proctor
Mr. Robert C. Puckett
Mr. and Mrs. John B. Reed
Mr. and Mrs. Mitchell A. Ring
Mr. and Mrs. Edward Rogers
Mr. and Mrs. Albert A. Rook, Jr.
Mr. and Mrs. Thomas J. Russell, Jr.
Mr. and Mrs. R. Keith Salisbury
Stephen J. Salley
Mr. and Mrs. Kenneth Schopp
Mr. and Mrs. Robert M. Schultz
William C. Secor
Mr. and Mrs. David Shachtman
Vijaya Shastri and Rania Bratberg
Rosemary A. Shaughnessy
Mr. and Mrs. Martin Shealey
Mr. and Mrs. T. David Short
Mr. and Mrs. Raymond Simonds, Jr.
Mary E. Smith
Robert and Elizabeth Snow
Bonnie and Stanley Snow
Mr. and Mrs. Ralph Solley
Mr. and Mrs. Henry Spadaccia
Mr. and Mrs. Warren D Spicka
Mr. and Mrs. William W. Stockert
Jay and Anne Stradal
Mr. and Mrs. Joseph R. Tenney
Mr. and Mrs. Robert Terry
Bobbie Thomsen
Doris T. Toohill
Mr. and Mrs. John Trautwein
Mr. and Mrs. William E. Treene
Jesse W. Tucker
Mary Hunter Utt
Janet Van Tassel and Stephen Park
Mr. and Mrs. Alan Varnum
Steven Ward
Mr. and Mrs. Bob Warnke
Mr. and Mrs. Jeffrey W. Wickeri
Paul Wienczek
David and Kate Wiener
Mr. and Mrs. John T. Williams
Mr. and Mrs. Ronald M. Wolanski
Patricia A. Zeiss

2017 ORLEANS HISTORICAL SOCIETY ANNUAL APPEAL

Here is my gift of: $500 $250 $100 $50 $25 Other

Name

Address, City, State, Zip

Phone E-Mail (We won’t share/sell it)

PS. Does your employer match your donations to non-profit organizations? You can double your impact by using your employer’s donation matching program.
Upcoming Events: Summer 2017

Talks and Tours

*Summer History Talk Series* has something for everyone!

Mark your calendars now to attend the series of history presentations on Wednesday evenings this summer at the OHS Meetinghouse Museum. Learn about different aspects of Cape Cod history in air-conditioned comfort. All events begin at 7 p.m.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Speaker</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>June 28</td>
<td><em>Women in the Civil War</em></td>
<td>Brenda Collins</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 12</td>
<td><em>Cape Cod Coast Guardsmen in 1937 Flood Relief</em></td>
<td>Dick Ryder</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 26</td>
<td><em>Wreck of the Whydah</em></td>
<td>Chris Macort</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 9</td>
<td><em>Fatal Decision: Edith Covell WWI Nurse</em></td>
<td>Terri Arthur, RN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 23</td>
<td><em>Cape Cod’s Role in WWII</em></td>
<td>Joe Yuka and Jerry Ellis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sept 6</td>
<td><em>Rails to Trails: History of Railroads on Cape Cod</em></td>
<td>Jay Stradal</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Also, Bonnie Snow’s popular series of historic **Cemetery Walks and Main St. Walks** return on the following Fridays from 10 a.m.– noon (start at OHS Meetinghouse):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>July 7</td>
<td>Cemetery Walk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 12</td>
<td>Main St. Walk - OHS to Methodist Church</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 4</td>
<td>Cemetery Walk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 18</td>
<td>Main St. Walk - OHS to Methodist Church</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sept 8</td>
<td>Cemetery Walk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sept 22</td>
<td>Main St. Walk - OHS to Methodist Church</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**OHS BOOTH BACK AT ROCK HARBOR**

Along with the CG36500 lifeboat, the OHS souvenir and information booth will be back at Rock Harbor this summer, staffed by Pattie Hamilton (daughter of Bernie Webber who was coxswain of the boat during the Pendleton rescue). The booth will be open June through August; check the OHS website for specific hours. Visitors may buy T-shirts, burgees, books and other items related to the CG36500 and the Pendleton rescue, and can obtain additional information about the lifeboat’s history and “Talk & Tour” schedule.

[orleanshistoricalsociety.org](http://orleanshistoricalsociety.org)

Check the Events Calendar on our website for details and other events
Postal Patron

Antiques Galore!

On Saturday, June 17, OHS is holding its 5th annual Antiques Show on the front lawn of Nauset Middle School. The more than 30 quality dealers from near and far help make this one of the premier antique shows on the Cape. Featured will be nautical items, scrimshaw, country furniture and smalls, stoneware, antique and pre-loved books, vintage glassware and pottery, early lamps, paintings and much more. The show will run from 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., rain or shine, and admission is $5 with coupon (right). All proceeds benefit the non-profit Orleans Historical Society. See you there!

If you would like to volunteer to help with the show, half- or full-day, please contact Beverly Fuller, 508-221-5489.