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Museum Studies: Exhibit Designs

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Museum Studies

Roger Williams Academic Research Into Historic Musuems in the Local Area.

Academic Partner
School of Architecture, Art and Historic Preservation

Community Partners
Herreshoff Marine Museum, Bristol, RI
Blithewold Mansion, Bristol, RI
Paine House Museum, Coventry, RI

Fall 2012

The Roger Williams University Community Partnerships Center

The Roger Williams University (RWU) Community Partnerships Center (CPC) provides project-based assistance to non-profit organizations, government agencies and low- and moderate-income communities in Rhode Island and Southeastern Massachusetts. Our mission is to undertake and complete projects that will benefit the local community while providing RWU students with experience in real-world projects that deepen their academic experiences.

CPC projects draw upon the skills and experience of students and faculty from RWU programs in areas such as:
- American Studies
- Architecture and Urban Design
- Business
- Community Development
- Education
- Engineering and Construction Management
- Environmental Science and Sustainability
- Finance
- Graphic Design
- Historic Preservation
- History
- Justice Studies
- Law
- Marketing and Communications
- Political Science
- Psychology
- Public Administration
- Public Relations
- Sustainable Studies
- Visual Arts and Digital Media
- Writing Studies

Community partnerships broaden and deepen the academic experiences of RWU students by allowing them to work on real-world projects, through curriculum-based and service-learning opportunities collaborating with non-profit and community leaders as they seek to achieve their missions. The services provided by the CPC would normally not be available to these organizations due to their cost and/or diverse needs.

CPC Project Disclaimer: The reader shall understand the following in regards to this project report:

1. The Project is being undertaken in the public interest.

2. The deliverables generated hereunder are intended to provide conceptual information only to assist design and planning and such are not intended, nor should they be used, for constrution or other project implementation. Furthermore, professional and/or other services may be needed to ultimately implement the desired goals of the public in ownership of the project served.

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Exectutive Summary

Art & Architectural History 530: Museum Studies was a course offered by Roger Williams University's School of Art, Architecture, and Historic Preservation to undergraduate and graduate students during the fall of 2012. This course was a seminar intended to provide the students with an overview of museums and the field of Museology. Apart from the reading and writing assignments, students collaborated with several local partners, such as Blithewold Inc., the Herreshoff Marine Museum, and the Western Rhode Island Civic Historical Society, in a term-long project for which both a written report and a public presentation were produced. This assignment required the students to independently identify the needs of real-world stakeholders, brainstorm ideas and strategize solutions, locate appropriate sources, collect relevant information, and critically analyze the information or data for presentations during the final class.

The course curriculum explored the early history of the formation of museums; the types of museums; collecting and curation; the relationships between nationalism, modernity and museums; various social, economic and intellectual functions of museums; implicit theories of art and of history that structure museums; contemporary musicological discourse; the formation of gendered and ethnic identity in/through museums; colonialism; tourism; the marketing of art; and the relationships of museums to the practice of art and art history. It is important to note that although the course focused on the art museum, the basic principles also apply to other types of museums such as history, science, ethnographic or nature.

For the term-long project, students were paired into small groups, assigned partner organizations with whom they were to collaborate, and worked independently as they engaged their respective stakeholders and formed their own scope of work. As advanced undergraduate and graduate students, these real-world projects required basic research skills and problem solving skills to develop ideas and reach successful conclusions that directly responded to the needs of each stakeholder.

The formal proposals and visual presentations have been collected, organized, and prepared within this document.

Exhibit Concepts for Herreshoff Museum

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Research Conducted By: Nicole Duperre | Brendan Quirk | Margaret Zecher
AAH 530: Museum Studies
Fall 2012

Introduction to the Project

The Herreshoff Marine Museum is dedicated to the public education of the history and innovative work of the Herreshoff Manufacturing Company. Bordering Narragansett Bay, Herreshoff also doubles as a Hall of Fame for the America's Cup, one of the prestigious yacht races in the country. Herreshoff extended an invitation for museum studies students at Roger Williams, through the CPC program, to dialogue with museum coordinators about possible changes the museum could undertake for visitors to feel more immersed in the museum experience. Students have prepared possible strategies along with a design manual that the museum could use for future projects. The following document is a culmination of a semester's worth of work and preparation.

The mission of the Herreshoff museum is to "Educate and inspire the public through presentations of the history and innovative works of the Herreshoff Manufacturing Company and the America's Cup Competition." The museum has collected a range of boats and broadly associated objects since the opening day forty-one years ago. Today the museum is attempting to work with the institution's current collections and displays and present or re-work them in a way that will inspire and engage the community at large, even those who do not have prior knowledge of sailing, the Herreshoff family, or manufacturing company.

"If we lead a tour to a group of long time sailors, that's great, but what about their wives?" How can we engage them?" Michael Rossi, Herreshoff co-exhibit coordinator, asks.

It is apparent that the museum is trying to formulate a way to present their material in a fashion that doesn't put heavy emphasis on the solidarity of their objects, but rather relevance to the community in its presentation. The museum has a very large holding of regionally important materials, but the problem is showing the stories behind them, an issue that many museums are currently facing. A paradigm shift is needed from museums being about something to being for somebody.

As a group, we explained a need for story telling so that the visitor can have a better, more holistic understanding of the subject so they begin to become a part of it. "Becoming part of it" would become our focus. Whatever work we were going to do with the museum would focus heavily on grabbing visitors' attention and connect them with the museum in a personal way. It was decided that due to our time constraints, the end result would not be a finished exhibit piece, but a report of the process, something that could be applicable to future projects in the museum.

General Description:

The museum is looking for ways to improve their visitor experience/ interest in the form of new exhibit formats, media and interactive displays. The museum wants to employ best practices in this area and is interested in acquiring resources for the development and production of the exhibits. HMM looks ahead to understanding what the leading museums use as best practices. In addition, the museum seeks to learn what new techniques are coming from academia and companies that provide supporting services and equipment like audio-visual and interactive software and devises. A key focus of the museum is to be able to go beyond just the presentation of data and to devise means to best convey deeper levels of knowledge for the interest of the visitors. The museum also wants to get a sense of where it should be focusing in its current stage of development and how to move forward.

Potential Task for Students:

Strategy Development

Provide Herreshoff with:

- Insight into best practices and leadership
- An assessment of what might be accomplished over the short-term project
- Recommendations for how new projects might use the proposed strategy
- Practical roadmap to leadership in development and production of exhibits
- Follow-up effort/next step for after the semester is over

Project Outcomes

This project is key to broadening interest in the museum beyond the collection of the yachts to:

- Stories behind the boats
- Human endeavors and the people behind the boats
- Insight into the development of yachting, boat building, and technologies
- Insight into the firm of HMCo

The Project will benefit the museum in these ways:

- Preservation of museum heritage
- Providing deeper understanding/insights for display design to the staff for their usage
- Developing materials for richer exhibit materials
- Develop new media for more exciting visitor experience.
- Expand the museum beyond a collection of boats.
- Provide conceptual ideas toward the development of a nationally recognized educational, cultural and inspirational institution
- A result ending in increased Museum membership, patronage and financial support

Identify Stakeholders:

- Members
- Visitors
- Town
- State
- Regional, National and International boating community

Herreshoff Marine Museum

Revised Scope of Work

Objective:
Develop a process and plan for a new display within the hall of boats area that shows the Active Herreshoff Race Class Boats.

Line of Sight for Display:
The HHM is responsible for educating and inspiring the public at large on the works of the Herreshoff Marine Museum and the company's monumental contributions to the sport of sailing, marine industry and the people of Bristol, the state of Rhode Island and the country. The museum stands to benefit from public engagement in many different ways (new members, profit, recognition, etc). This exhibit is important to the museum's interest and is a subset of the large exhibit on the Hall of Boats.

Overall Framing Question for Project:
How can we present the Herreshoff S-Boat and 12-1/2 One Design racing boats in a new and innovative way to engage and educate the community using materials onhand and new presentation methods.

Stakeholders:
There will be a broad audience. These include:

- Sailors with interest in various aspects of Herreshoff yachts and boats.
- Visitors with a large range of knowledge or interest in maritime matters.
- Museum itself. The museum will benefit from better satisfying its members and also acquiring new members.
- Town of Bristol, Rhode Island and its inhabitants, including the Roger Williams community. They will benefit from learning the heritage and history of the manufacturing and innovative additions of the Herreshoff Manufacturing Co. Furthermore, the state and region can benefit as a destination for travel.

Display and its Elements:
The exhibition will be located in a very important part of the museum, as it is one of the first places that can be viewed upon entrance into the hall of boats. For the casual visitor, the display might be one of the only ones that is visited that has the potential to address many of the important aspects of the museum's mission. The exhibit must:

- Engage and provide key insight quickly
- Attract and stimulate interest through a variety of means
- Act as an "attractor" by being inviting in nature, unintimidating to a novice and at the same time provide insight to the expert visitor.

Options Discussed as a Group:

- Build on the idea of humanistic tendencies towards activity, innovation, sport and use of resources and free time.
- Build off the human desire to compete, create a history of commercial sailing races and its evolution to private sport and specialization towards areas and evolving interests.
- Work with interests in history, culture, heritage in terms of both the company and the evolution of the growth of the town and region in response to the wide success of the company.
- In terms of the final project, consider creating several different examples that reach a variety of levels of engagement. Quick look with a summary of a few key ideas, a broad insightful aspect that conveys a deep knowledge with insight on the specific boats that are displayed.

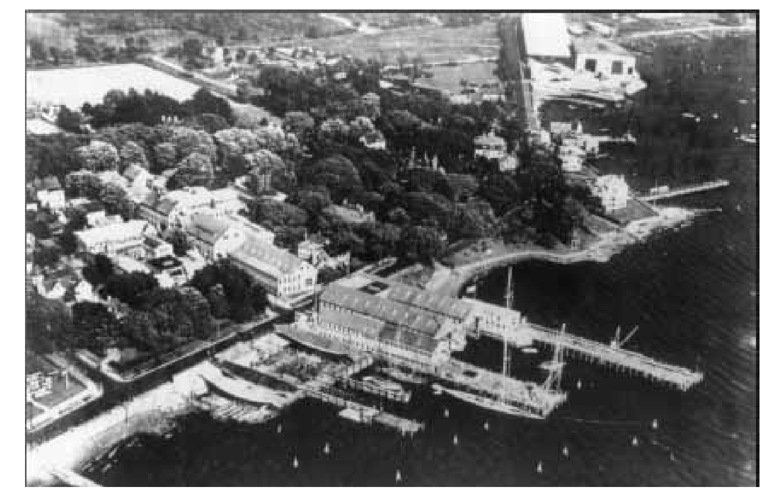
Project Content

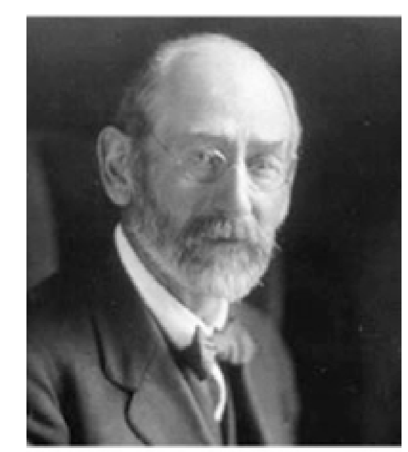
From our first meeting with Larry Lavers (COO of HMM) and Sandy Lee (Reliance Project Manager and CPC Project initiator) it was asked that we provide the team with a process manual that could be used for future projects. We were asked to pick a project that we could begin working on and document our efforts and any communication we had with the curators in hopes that this document would serve this purpose.

With the help of the curators, the group will begin a conceptual design for the exhibition. The final project will be a conceptual model and guide for its emplacement, and it will show the steps that the group took in coming to the design. There will also be an element that will discuss how the museum can further the exhibition design and come to a final decision about how to set up the showcase. There will be three parts to the project:

1) A design manual that can be used for future projects based off of conversations and issues that arose from talking with the curators.
2) A conceptual design for the Active Race Class exhibition that will explain what we have produced.
3) A physical mockup that will allow the museum to visualize and understand our ideas and process.

As requested by the museum, emphasis will not be too heavy on the research but on the actual display. A general knowledge of the subject shall suffice. When the exhibition is in its final stages more research will have been produced and filled in.





Capt. Nathanael G. Herreshoff

Group Project Design Manual

Step One

The first aspect of any exhibition should start with looking at the broad and then focus in by chipping away the layers as time is spent with the material.

Things to consider—broad perspective:

- What is the exhibition presenting? What are the core concepts to convey?
- What do we already know about the subject? What are we missing?

When we decided to work with the Active Race Class exhibit and its subject, we already knew what One-Design boats were: a design of sailing craft that were designed in groups to be the same. The groups or classes would all have the same formula for each of the individual crafts (i.e. all of the vessels will be built the exact same way). The design would be specific to the location of where the craft would be sailing (depth of water, current, weather…) and would essentially all perform the same way. Many of these designs had a single model that was used repeatedly to produce the boats. Therefore, all of the boats were to operate the same way and the winner of the race would be the best sailor.

Step Two

After it is clear what the subject of the exhibit is about, the next step is to go a little deeper into the subject. The exhibit will not just be about the objects so it is necessary to create a more holistic view about them. What is the story behind the subject? What does it represent? Who did it appeal to and why? Some more questions that were specific to our subject involved looking into the social and competitive environment of the time during which the Herreshoff produced One-Design's and why/how were they were successful.

This step will require additional research. The goal is to begin creating a more personal connection with the subject. We suggest that those working on the exhibit take about a week to go and do some research of their own. The group members may want to discuss what kind of information they will each be looking for.

Upon our initial discussions about the Active Race Class display, it was decided that we would focus on the history surrounding this type of vessel, why they were significant to the Herreshoff Manufacturing Co. and sailing/boat building as a sport. Research was split up between the members in the form of any books or articles that we could find about the Herreshoff Manufacturing Company. The research focused on general information regarding the One-Design class, information more specific to Herreshoff One Design classes and even more specific to the S-Boat and the 12-1/2. The group also researched the evolution of sailing as a team sport and the historical events that would have led to an increase in sailing. Our research produced the beginnings of key insights that will be discussed later in the exhibit.

Some works that were taken into account:

- *Boatbuilding Manual* (fifth addition) by Robert M. Steward
- *Boat Strength for Builders, Designers and Owners* by Dave Gerr
- *Herreshoff of Bristol: A Photographic History of America's Greatest Yacht and Boat Builders*/ Maynard Bray
- Google Books: *The Book of Wooden Boats: Volume* II by Benjamin Mendlowitz and Maynard Bray
- Google Books: *Thirty Wooden Boats: A Second Catalog of Building Plans* by Cynthis Curtis, Mike O'Brien and Paul Lazarus
- "History of the Water Wags" from the Dún Loaghaire Harbour Company website
- "The Sailing Boat, A Treatise on Sailing Boats and Small Yachts, Their Varieties of Types, Sails, Rigs etc." by Henry Coleman Folkard
- "Building Wooden Boats: A Lost Chapter in Maritime History" by Bonnie J. Wilkinson
- "Little Ships' The Co-evolution of Technological Capabilities and Industrial Dynamics in Competing and Innovation Networks" by Richard Blundel
- NY30.org

Step Three

After some research, there should be an inventory of what display material is already at the facility or currently in use. This is significant because it will determine what information will be presented.

The two specific One-Designs that are currently on display are the Herreshoff S-Boat and the Buzzards Bay 12-1/2. There is also a trophy case and a full in-house library of pictures from the Manufacturing Company that include a variety of photographs taken of the boats.

Much of the information that we found was regarding the building techniques and innovations of the Herreshoff Manufacturing Co., general information on the composition of the S-Boat and Buzzard Bay 12-1/2, a broad history of the evolution of the One-Design class starting with the Water Wags of Dublin Ireland and a small amount of history regarding the make up of One-Design races.

Step Four
Now that there is a clear concept of the information that could possibly be presented and how it can correlate to what the museum already has, a step should be taken back from the exhibit content and thought should be directed toward the intended audience. What are 'stakeholders'? Stakeholders are who will be visiting and/or profiting from the exhibit.

When deciding who potential stakeholders will be, it is necessary to think of all possible visitors to the museum and to the specific exhibit.

The potential stakeholders:
A) Visitors to the area:
- Cruise Ships/Vacationers
- International Sailors
- Non-sailors
- College student's families

B) Local People:
- Students of RWU
- RWU faculty
- Residents of both Bristol and RI
- Families involved with the company

C) Enthusiasts
D) Current Members
E) The Museum

Step Five
In knowing who the potential stakeholders are, the museum can now determine the various amounts off knowledge that institution will be dealing with. This in turn will allow the weeding down of the specific information that will be presented. It is very important to be able to keep the interest of any possible visitors to the museum and display.

Potential Stakeholders of Group A
Visitors to the Area
This group could possibly entail some people who have various amounts of previous knowledge or interest into the subject. Some cruise ship passengers and vacationers may come to the area looking for museums and places to sightsee. These individuals could include sailors who already have previous knowledge of Herreshoff and One-Design classes. They may be interested in seeing the relationship of U.S. sailing to other locations. Other visitors in this category may be visiting for pleasure and might not have this kind of knowledge. These customers may be looking for some information regarding the history of the institution, the area and of the subject. Therefore the exhibit must be able to contain very detailed information that will still hold the interest of someone who is already experienced in the subject while at the same time also capturing the attention of someone who does not.

College Families
Because there are many schools in the state of Rhode Island, it is valuable to keep in mind that the families of the students may visit the state. There is always a possibility that these families will want to do some sightseeing in the area when they come to see the students. These families, as well, may already have previous knowledge of the subject. Like the vacationers, they may also be interested in Bristol, Rhode Island and possibly even New England history as a whole.

Potential Stakeholders of Group B
Locals
Locals are very important to any museum. They are the most apt to be invested in keeping regional culture alive. They may be the sailors and enthusiasts of the community, or they may have family who worked for the Herreshoff. Locals will be devoted in the potential economic impact that a great regional cultural asset brings.

Potential Stakeholders of Group C
Enthusiasts
This group will involve people that are already knowledgeable of the subject matter and their interests may be very specific. They may be interested in all of the following, but not limited to:
- Sailing
- Boat Design
- Herreshoff Company
- Racing
- Woodwork (wooden ships)
- Engineering

Potential Stakeholders of Group D
Current Members
The museum already has members that have been a part of the experience. These members have a tie to the museum and their loyalty is already in place. They have seen what the museum has in its current collection and displays. To keep these stakeholders happy, it is important that the museum keeps building on its displays and possibly adding on more innovative media. They already know what is in place and will respond positively to growth.

Potential Stakeholders of Group E
The Museum
The institution is one of the most important stakeholders, as they will benefit significantly from the exhibit's success. The museum is always looking for possible volunteers, new members and donations. The museum will benefit from an attractive exhibit that fits into the mission of the institution and engages the whole community.

Herreshoff Marine Museum

Step Six

After assessing the stakeholders and their requirements, attension should return to the exhibit content. What will the line of sight for the display be? Taking into account what has been laid out during the first five steps, it is necessary to understand what the installation will be trying to accomplish.

In terms of our project, our line of site is going to be educating and reaching out to the public in order to convey a depth of knowledge about the objects. Turning back to the introduction, we discussed the evolution of it being about something to being for somebody. Whatever is being presented needs to find a way to resonate with all of these different interests; history, boat design, sailing, racing in a way that would hold every individuals attention. The mission of the museum is to inspire and educate about HMCo and its innovative spirit. This specific exhibit is there to educate the viewers on the racing classes, specifically the One-Design classes and even more specific to the two that are on display. Keeping these concepts in mind, our suggested line of site is to inspire and inform the public about the history of race classes in regards to the One-Design classes that the Herreshoff Produced.

It's not just about the boats; it is about why they affected the past and how they impact in the present.

Also take into account the placement of the exhibit. Is it easily seen upon entrance to a room? If so, the design must be welcoming, friendly and non-intimidating. Is it closer to the back of the room? Should it be a type of wrap up exhibit or a "sending-off" exhibit? If the foot traffic of the rest of the area leads to this ending exhibit, should the information presented be basic and inform those without previous knowledge, or will some knowledge have been acquired through the other installations?

Step Seven

This is when the design concept can be taken into consideration. The first step to the actual conceptual design should be looking at the different aspects of the presentation.

Presentation Considerations

Initial Anchor:

What will tie the audience in? What will introduce the exhibit? It shouldn't be a plaque of information, it should be something that the viewer can look at and have it catch their attention such as a large colorful poster with images, media (video, audio tape etc.), something 3D (such as a model) or even something hands on (building wood that can be touched/smelled/held, tools that can be handled etc.).

Summary Info & Knowledge:

This will include the key attractors. What will the installation be discussing or trying to get across? For this exhibit some of the ideas we suggest are:

- The human aspect of competition
- The history and innovation of building techniques
- Response to new social norms, including an increase in national economy, a larger middle class, and more free time
- Building of the One-Design class, including the size selection, crew needs, the manufacturing, and design process
- Concept of the sport of sailing and how that relates to the One-Design class

Detailed information:

This will be more specific to the physical portion of the exhibit and what objects are on display. For this display the detailed information will be in regards to the trophy case, the 12-1/2 and S-Boat already on display.

© Herreshoff Marine Museum

Step Eight
Now that the different aspects of the content and design have been presented, the layout can begin to take shape. We recommend the following be considered:
- Engagement
- Physical Layout
- Insights (deep engaging knowledge conveyed to stakeholders as might be tested by W.I.I.F.M. 'What's in it for me?').

Engagement:
This is key to any exhibit as it is a way for the visitors to involve themselves into the exhibit and find interest. What kind of things can you put into your exhibit that will reach out personally to your stakeholders to intrigue and educate them? What topics will the museum be concerned with that are both relevant to the exhibit and to the viewer?

An idea already mentioned was to show the human characteristic to be drawn to friendly competition, activities and camaraderie. As human beings we have a need to be social and make friends while fulfilling a certain part of our souls that seeks to have fun and be motivated. Sailing is a great pastime, but it is also a fantastic way to involve oneself with a community of people that are interested in the same things and engage in friendly competition. Sailing is unlike many sports, in that participants are not physically touching each other. Instead they are individually sailing their boats the best that they can. It's a very healthy and social sport.

To show this importance we discussed using digital picture frames depicting boats being built and sailed or using a projection of a One-Design regatta showing how people of different generations can compete together, a hallmark of S and 12-1/2 class events.

Another suggestion is the incorporation of Bristol history. This is important because it will engage those who are interested in the history of the area. This brings a personal connection to locals that have a tie to the Herreshoff Manufacturing Co., or individuals who are interested in the history of Bristol, the State of Rhode Island, and the New England area. We suggest identifying important people who had involvement with the museum, or any Naval connections, It's always interesting to have a "Who's Who" aspect to pull in a potential local resident of note.

Physical layout:
When considering the physical layout it is important to consider:
- The Floor space. It is important to know how much space is available for the display. How can you use your space effectively while still providing room for visitors to move around and look at the installation in comfort? For this space, the approximate area is 14ft wide by 38ft 6" long and 22ft tall.
- What is already on hand and currently on display? How can this be re-incorporated into a new exhibit or design for a previous exhibit? How can this be set up in an interesting way so that it will catch the attention of the visitors walking the room? Will some things need to be removed?
    - Again, for this exhibit, the museum already has the two boats—the S-Boat, which currently sits on the far left of the exhibit, and the 12-1/2 to the right, with a stand so that the visitor may walk up and look into the boat. There is also a pedestal in front of the S-Boat that has a booklet attached to it with information enclosed. These elements will be taken out of the area to make room for new exhibit concepts.
- What else needs to be added to the installation? Will there be media such as videos or projections? If so, will seating be necessary? Will anything need to be built?
- Definition. How can the area be designed to effectively differentiate it from the other exhibits? Will this require the use of entry ropes or something more creative like painting the walls or floors a different color? This could even be as simple as a border on the wall.

Insight:
When thinking about the design of the exhibition, consider the key insights that the visitors will take away from it. This is something that will be physically implemented, rather a feeling that the museum should evoke from the display. What is the significance of this display and what makes it different from others?

Some insights that we believe the exhibition will provide might be the passion for wooden boats. Wooden boats require special care, they are "alive" with sounds, smells, they have a care to balance and are powerful. The 12-1/2 used to be named the "Buzzards Bay Boys Boat" meaning that it was a safe and easy for young kids to learn to sail with and mothers were not worried about letting them do it. The S Boat was made to the Universal Rule, which was a formula .02 times the length of the boat multiplied by the square route of the sail area and all divided by the cubed route for the displacement. This is how the universal rule worked in 1903. This universal rule was completely designed, invented and developed by Nat Herreshoff. This is a significant boat both for the Herreshoff Manufacturing Co., as well as the sailing community in general.

Implementation
At this point, the museum will be ready to begin planning a new exhibit. Of course many drafts will be necessary, but these eight steps will be useful in the initial stages of preparation. Always remember that your museum should touch your visitors in a way that will turn the physical objects from being the most important aspect of the experience to being part of a story that has a purpose. We suggest that the next step be finalizing the information that would be presented in the installation, writing it and determining where it will be within the installation.

Active Race Design Plan

Proposed Design Plan

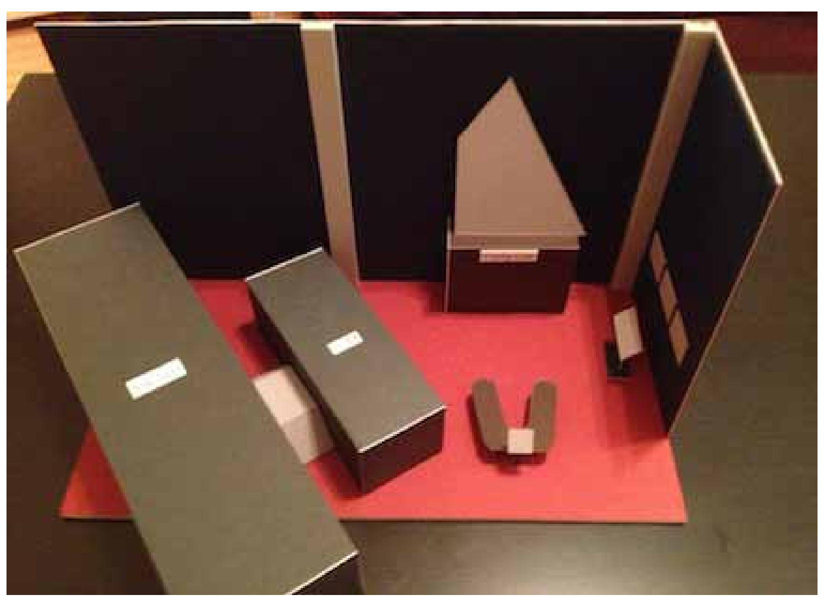
Using the eight-step method described in the Project Description and Manual above, the group was able to design a new model for the Active Race Class exhibit. The area we worked with was in the corner of the room nestled between the bathrooms and the garage door. This installation is important because it is one of the first seen when walking into the hall of boats from the office. The design needs to be welcoming, attractive, and engaging to the visitor.

If the visitor walks the hall of boats from the office and is facing forward, the 12-1/2 is located to the right and the S Boat (Widgeon) is horizontally placed next to the bathroom with the two-part trophy case in between them. In front of the 12-1/2 is a stepladder that allows the viewer to walk up and look down into the boat, and on the front of the stool there is a board with some photos on it. The Widgeon has the pedestal with the booklet as mentioned earlier. This booklet will be taken out of the exhibit and replaced with new elements.

Current Exhibit

Boat Display Organization

For the new plan, the group wanted to push the two boats together and build a new stepladder that would be taller and to allow visitors to look at both boats simultaneously on each side. The thought was to push the Widgeons bow a little further out into the middle of the floor so it wouldn't be on such a horizontal line, though it wouldn't be straight either. The 12-1/2 would be pulled closer to the S-Boat with enough room to place the new step stool in between. Now the visitor could walk up and still look down into the 12-1/2, but also be in front of the S-Boat. This movement would connect the two boats together and attract the visitor to come over to the area.



The stepladder would have plaques on the railing containing information on each one. The first plaque would be very general with a simple drawing of a sailboat labeling the different parts. As the visitor walked up the plaques would begin to detail more specific information relating to each of the One-Designs, with the last plaque detailing a full plan of one of the boats. As the visitor walks through this portion of the display, they would begin to learn about sailboat design. The information should be basic enough for someone to understand who may not have any previous knowledge of sailboat design, but also provide something new to someone who already has knowledge in the area.

With the new placements of the boats, the team considered painting the floor the same red color as the stands holding up the boats. We want to square the area off, starting with the bathroom, going a little further than the edge of the bow, and then back towards the warehouse door. As well as the red on the floor, we wanted to continue the blue color that is already on the wall all the way up, covering the gray and adding a possible yellow boarder along the top of where the blue currently stops. The full blue tile paint would start at the bathroom as well. With the paint being different from the rest of the room and the two boats being grouped together, there would be a "definition" purpose, as discussed in step eight.

With the new location of the boats, it would be necessary to move the trophy case closer to the corner of the two walls closer to the piping. If we move items hanging from the ceiling or high on the wall, then space would be available for a projection or television screen that could show a video of sailboat races. The use of media was something that we wanted to use from the beginning, and from earlier planning we thought about adding digital picture frames throughout the exhibit displaying images of construction and races. However, we were also in search for a way to keep the viewers in the area for a while and not just quickly glancing over the material.

Projection to Stimulate Attention

The use of projection, while not the most advanced in technology, always creates a nostalgic feeling. Keeping the museum's budget in mind, the addition of new or expensive technology may not be practical in terms of finance and overall presentation. The use of a projection, or similar technology, would not distract from the rest of the museum, but be quite practical. There is a projection video that Michael and David talked about using that was of a 12-1/2 class race. Placing this above the trophy case to emphasize the racing aspect of the boats would show how the boats moved in water and also connect the visitor to that human attraction towards competition and activity that we have discussed throughout this paper.

There are two options to showing this projection: one is that it could be shown on the blue wall, but it might be hard to see that way. The other option would be to take a white sail and fold it up above the case and project the video onto that, making it visible. Either way, placing the projection above the trophy case would provoke the visitors to both look up and stay a little longer at the exhibit.

Seating

Having this video would require some seating within the installation area to further create atmosphere and attract the visitor. This could be good for the hall of boats because there are only a few benches for seating. We considered using a cockpit design so that the viewers could actually feel like they were sitting inside one of the boats during the race. Since we are working with a small space, the idea of a complete cockpit design might be a little difficult. However, the cockpit of a sailboat has a very distinct shape similar to an upper case U. It would be fairly easy to build a stool that followed this general shape and then place cushions on it to make it look, and feel, like one was sitting inside of a cockpit. Placed on the back of the seating area would be a sign that would briefly describe what the video was showing and possibly a general overview of what regatta rules and regulations were or how they would have been set up.

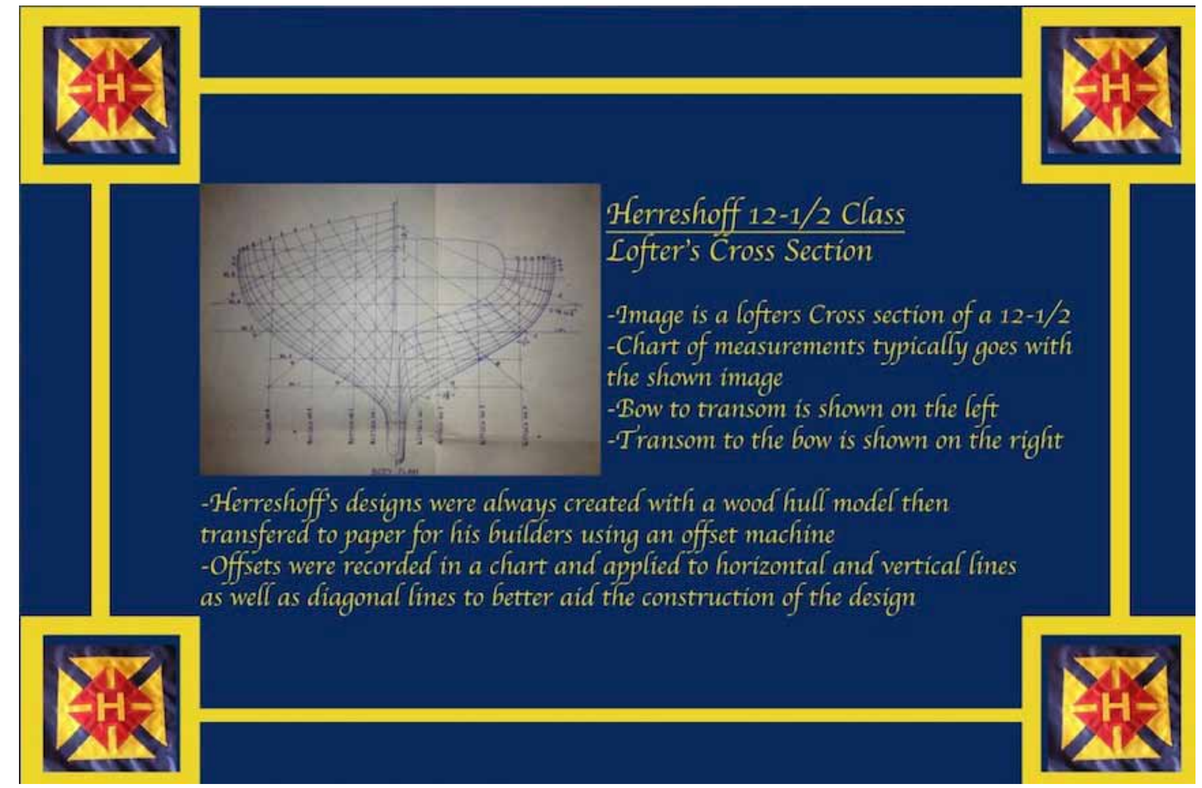
The idea would be to have the cockpit inside the painted red area and have it facing the trophy case far enough away so that the viewers could comfortably look up and watch the projection. The seating could hopefully fit, at minimum, five people.

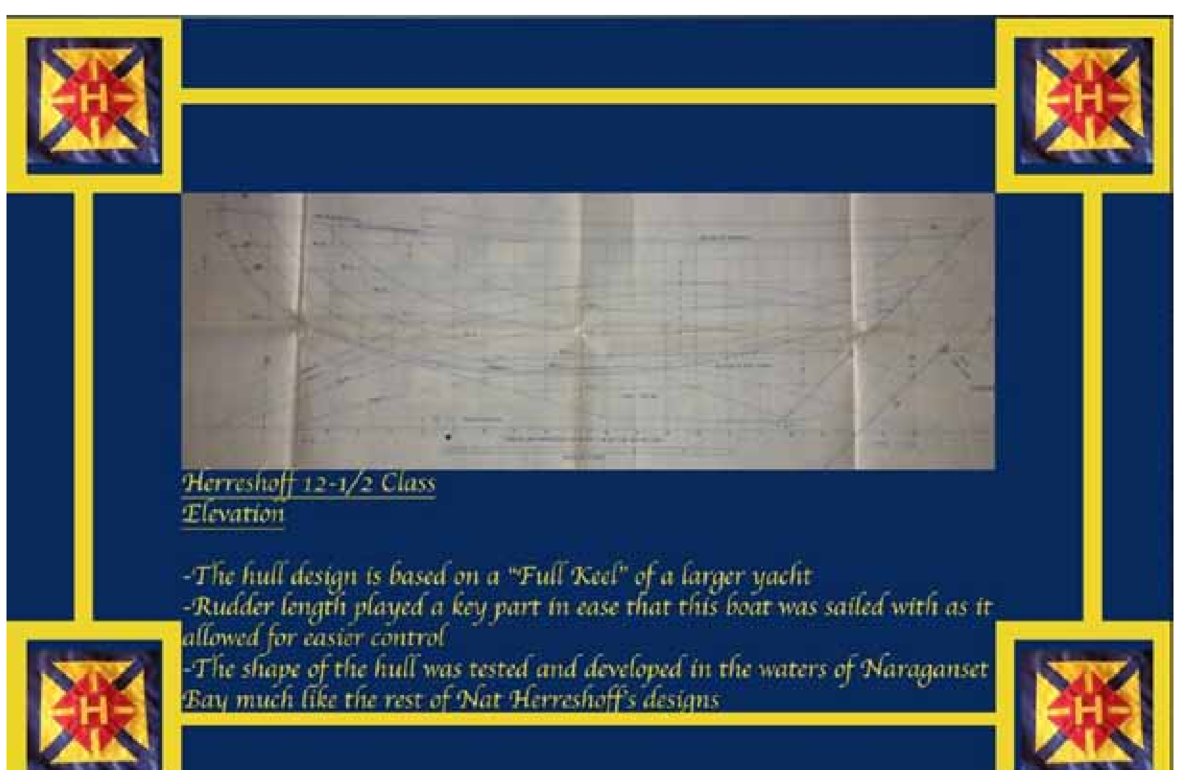
The idea for this projection/seating area is that it could reach everyone. Sailors would connect on a very personal level with this and even those who don't sail will see how the boats would have performed. The crafts would extend the boundaries of the museum and return to their original purpose.

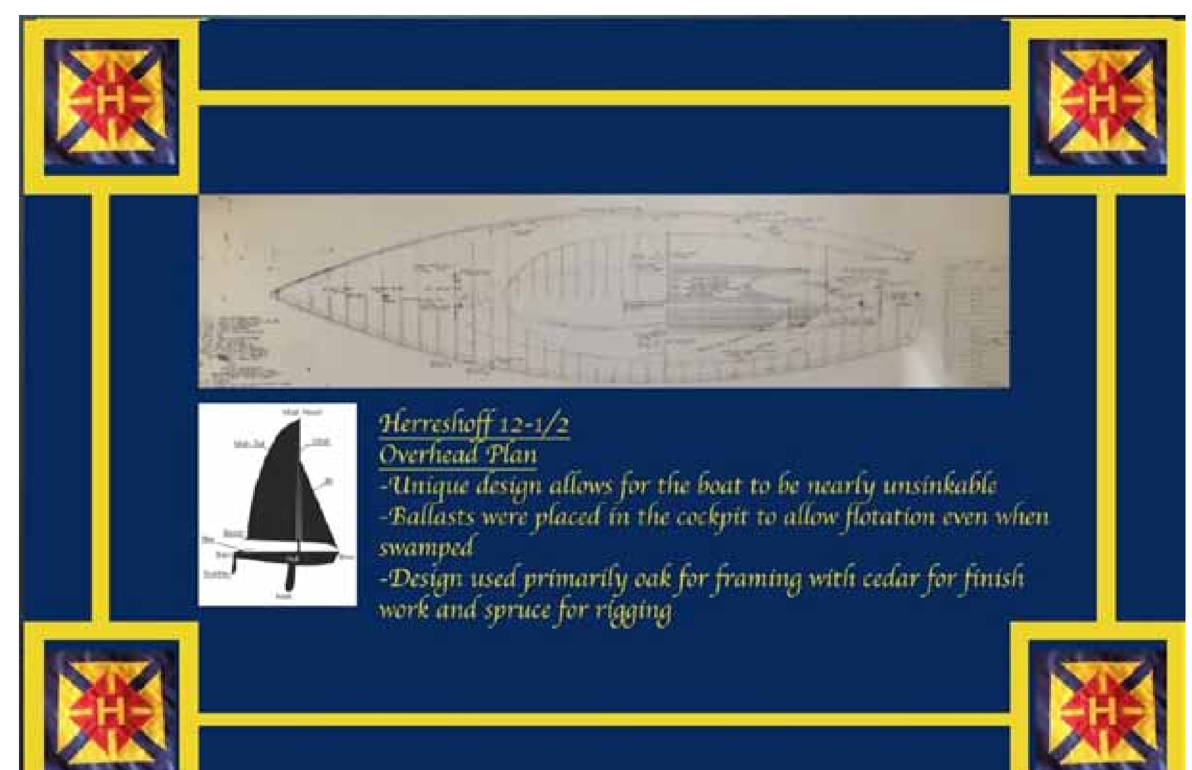
Photos

The last aspect of the exhibit that we are proposing is utilizing the wall with the warehouse door to display photos depicting the building of the boats, showing the workers who took part in the construction and their personal information. The photos would also have plaques that would discuss some of the innovations and techniques of the construction of the boats, including the upside down hull technique and the assembly line method for the One-Design.

Because the area is fairly small and the seating will take up some room, the photos should not be blown up too big or placed too high because they would not be able to be seen comfortably by the visitors. If the plaques do not make sense being on the wall, the museum could always continue using the laminated papers with the explanations of the photos similar to what is being used with the wall of photos at the edge of the America's Cup exhibit behind the office.

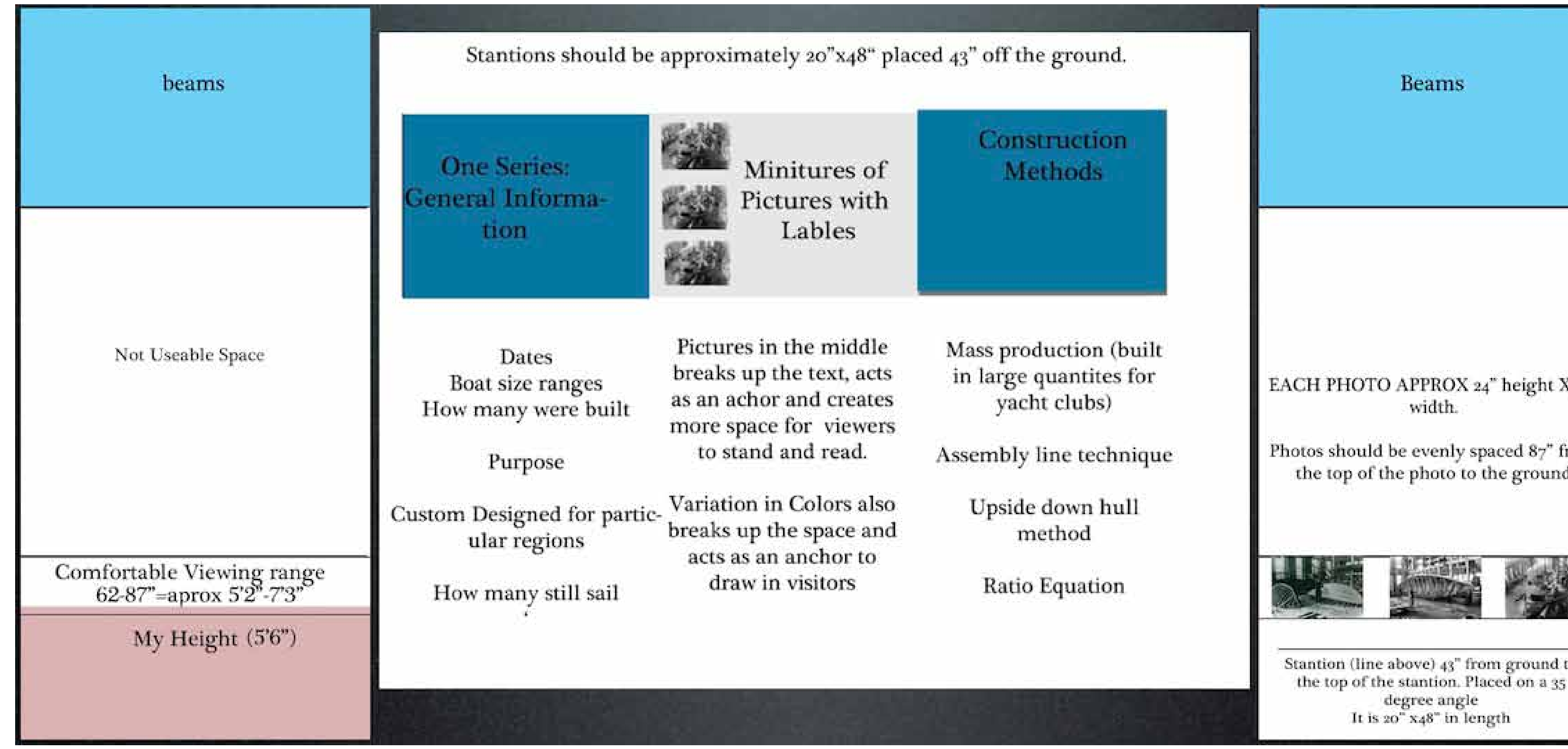


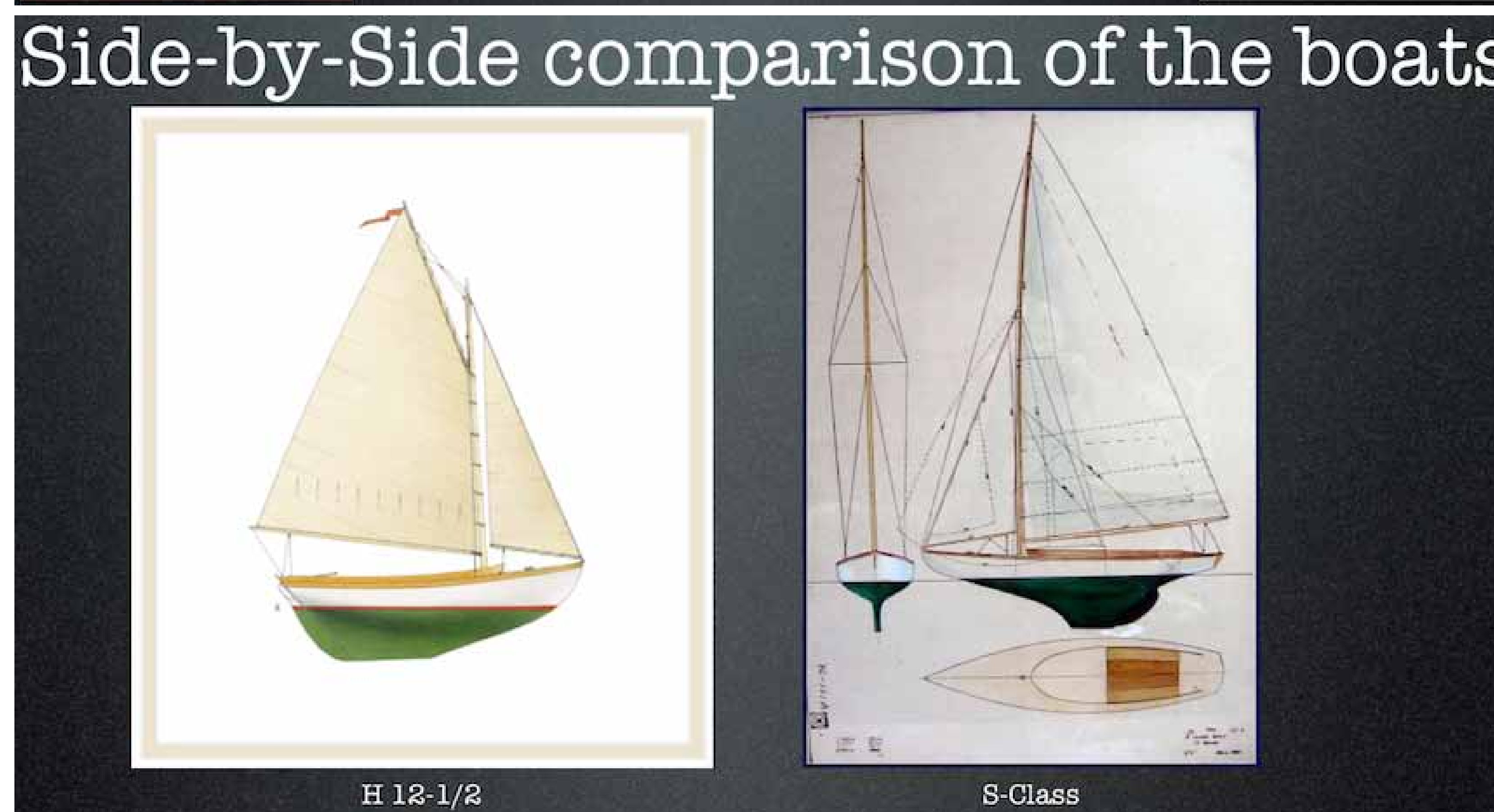




Summary

We hope that it will be helpful for the museum to have the design manual along with our proposal and reasoning for the design we have envisioned. We would be honored if the museum were to take some of the ideas that we have presented towards the new design and use it for their installation of the Active Class Exhibit.





Recommendations for Improving the Interpretation of Blithewold Mansion

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Research Conducted By: Traci Costa | Cindy Nanton | Kathleen Wilson | Loren White
AAH 530: Museum Studies
Fall 2012

Introduction to the Project

Students of Roger Williams University used knowledge gained from their museum curation class during the fall semester of 2012 in order to directly assist Blithewold Mansion in improving presentational aspects of their museum. Blithewold Mansion was named in Yankee Magazine's 2010 Best Public Gardens in New England. Located on Narragansett Bay Blithewold Mansion is a 33-acre summer estate and is one of the most fully developed and authentic examples of the Country Place era. The mansion is open from April until mid- October, while the garden is accessible year around. Students freshly inculcated in museum preservation were given the opportunity to analyze Blithewold with fresh eyes, preparing a report that was presented at the end of the semester to both classmates and Blithewold representatives that focused on improving the museums layout, while making historic information more accessible for visitors. The following document is a culmination of a semester's worth of work and preparation

Interpreting Historic House Museums: An Overview of Best Practices

Regardless of the type of tour that is being offered, every tour must have a few things in common in order to be effective. Barbara Abramoff Levy's essay "Historic House Tours that Succeed: Choosing the Best Tour Approach" in Interpreting Historic House Museums outlines the key elements that every tour should have in order for the visitor to best understand and experience the site. These elements are as follows:

- Tours "are based on a thorough knowledge of history."
- Tours "are organized around the site's three to five most important themes."
- There is "perceptible evidence at the museum [to] support the themes."
- "The interpretation is tied to the most important biographies."
- The tour includes historical context
- The tours "are part of a carefully thought-out, well planned visitor experience."

These elements are to be incorporated into a tour that has a clear beginning and ending point. The visitor should also be able to fully experience the museum within a reasonable amount of time. It is also vital to the visitor's experience that the staff on duty be well informed, trained, and engaging. If these elements are included into a well-planned tour, the visitor will be able to experience the site to its fullest.

Community Partnerships Center at Roger Williams University

Recommendations

The following recommendations are based off of the list above and other recommendations stated by the author mentioned previously.

The first element is that the tour needs to be based on a thorough knowledge of history. Blithewold's history has been thoroughly documented through archival research. In fact, the knowledge of Blithewold's entire history has recently become public information through curator Margaret Whitehead's book *Blithewold: Legacy of an American Family*. Based on the existence of this book and the amount of information provided to the visitors on the tour Blithewold has met this requirement.

The second element is that the tour is organized around three to five main themes. In order for the visitor to better understand these themes they should be made known and visible throughout the museum. The current information provided to visitors is not laid out in a thematic way. When reorganizing the tour, themes must be decided on. Based on current knowledge of Blithewold, some possible themes include; architecture, biographies, furniture, historic preservation, family history, social history and horticulture. When identifying themes, it is important that they fit within the mission of the museum and within the staff's range of knowledge as well as being of interest to the visitor.

The third element for a successful tour is a sufficient amount of evidence and support for the established theme. Blithewold is lucky to have an intact collection and plenty of evidence to support the themes suggested above.

The fourth element is that the interpretation is tied to the most important biographies. Currently seven people are talked about throughout the site, Augustus Van Wickle, Bessie Van Wickle McKee, Marjorie Van Wickle Lyon, Augustine Van Wickle Jeffries Tolland, George Lyon, William McKee and Estelle Clements. That is a large number of people to talk about in one tour. It may be best that the tour center around the four women who resided in the house the longest and discuss the men as secondary characters since their relationship to the house is not as strong. The main biographies should also be introduced in the introduction of the tour. If this is done, any confusion over the family tree will be eliminated and visitors will clearly understand the property and know what to expect from the tour.

The fifth element is that historical context is included in the tour. This information is something that is missing in the current interpretation of the house. In order to give the visitor a clear sense of the site and the people who once lived in it, a brief introduction of the time period should be discussed. Including information about the Gilded Age in American history will help the visitor better understand the environment in which the house was created in and lived in, helping to connect visitors to the site. It is also important to be clear on dates when discussing specific events so the visitor can become familiar with the history of that time. In order for a visitor to better understand the site and its context a foundation of history must be laid.

The sixth element is that the tour is carefully thought out and well planned so that the visitor can best experience the site. This can be achieved by addressing the first five elements already discussed as well as addressing a few more aspects. One aspect is a clear layout; currently a visitor has no clear starting point or knowledge on where to begin their tour. Having a starting point that summarizes the themes, biographies and history of the site allows the visitor to become oriented and familiar with the basic information of the site before moving on to the rest of the tour. A panel in the main entrance hall at Blithewold, introducing all that information at once, would assist the visitor's understanding of the museum, instead of waiting to learn about the family tree, when in the butler's pantry, or of Estelle Clements when they reach her room upstairs. In addition to a starting point there should be a clear ending point. Since Blithewold is a self-guided tour and there is no clear ending point it is difficult to say where the ending point would go without interrupting the flow of the site. What could be done to inform the visitor is to give them a layout of the house before tours begin. This way they can follow along and know when they have seen all of the rooms that are available for viewing. The tour should take a reasonable amount of time for the visitor to experience the entire house and the grounds. Based on precedent and case studies a tour should take anywhere from a half hour to a whole hour. The time it takes to tour the house should be tested and published for all visitors. In order for the visitor to have a good sense of what to expect from the tour, basic information about the site should be provided as well as the amount of time needed to tour the house and grounds.

Finally, the staff must be well trained and knowledgeable about the site. Blithewold has an abundance of volunteers, including docents, who are well versed and trained in helping visitors. To ensure this knowledge is given to all new volunteers or docents, it is recommended that the volunteers undergo training as well as information to familiarize themselves with the history of the site. This can be achieved by having the new volunteers and docents read Margaret Whitehead's book *Blithewold: Legacy of an American Family*. Based on a current understanding of Blithewold's volunteers and visitor services they should continue their current system of training and educating volunteers.

Exhibit Labels: An Interpretive Approach

In large part, the status of a nation is measured by the strides taken to preserve its cultural identity. Serving as keepers of collective memory, museums play a pivotal role in our understanding of identity and in fostering a sense of belonging to a community for its visitors. Museums are places of shared memory for the communities within which they operate.

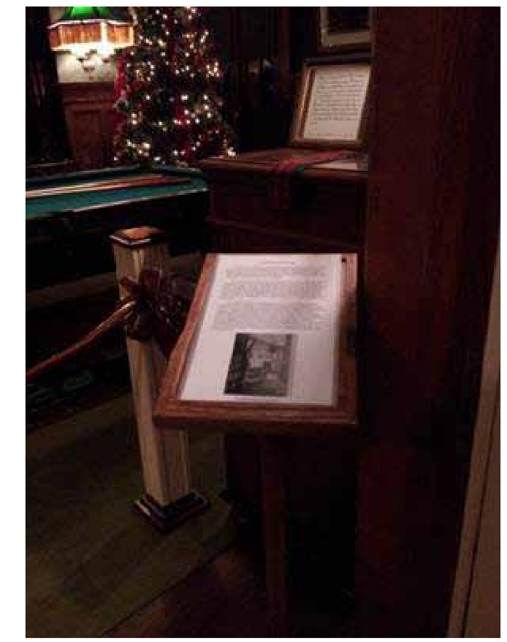
To remain functional museum professionals must remember that museums are businesses like every other enterprise, striving to exchange a good or a service on terms previously bargained for. As such, museums too must understand that branding is the golden rule for success in business. In order to brand itself the museum must echo one unified vision and voice, and that message ought to be made tangible. Museum labels are the heart of each item on display, and must resonate all that the museum hopes to convey about its enterprise.

Exhibitions on display are the things bargained for by the museum visitor, and are also the central feature to the museum as a business enterprise thus they must be highly visible and comprehendible. Museums often arrange exhibitions according to a theme, or sometimes they are built to support the larger educational goal of a symposium. The exhibit label is the most significant communication tool between the museum and the visitor, and it is a powerful marketing tool. To guide the visitor best throughout the exhibition the museum must have a well-defined goal when creating the exhibit label. The exhibitor should adopt an interpretive approach when creating the label, and to do this it must be educationally effective, succinct, the content must be accessible, and the words in the label should flow well with the items on exhibition.

An interpretive approach is a goal that requires planning to the end, always keeping the audience in mind. Interpretive labels will be easier to write and will make more sense overall to visitors if the exhibition has a single focus which unifies all the parts. The best labels are led by a powerful, cohesive exhibition plan – perhaps as a theme or story, which would set the tone and limit the content. To be concise, the best plans start with a "big picture idea" as its blueprint. This "big picture idea" guide could be summarized in a sentence as the thesis for the exhibition, which will serve to communicate what the exhibit is about and in doing so making clear what it is not about. The "big picture idea" would also function to maintain productivity among the exhibition designers; it provides them with an unambiguous focus as it lays out the scope and purpose of the exhibit. Another key element to the plan is knowing just who the audience is, this is best achieved if exhibit planners decide what the important exhibition messages are and communicate them using whatever media is most suited to that message in a way that reaches the broadest possible audience. This plan of course is meant to serve internally, and ought never to be communicated to the visitor.

Once a clear plan is in place, the next phase is to decipher the type of label best suited for each exhibition. The most important type of interpretive label in an exhibition is the title, introduction, group or section labels and caption. The mission of these labels is to help organize the information and present the exhibition's rationale for its display. Title labels identify the name of the exhibition, and the best title would provoke the visitor to look further. There should only be one title and it should be used consistently throughout the museum. In other words, the title should be used on the floor plan, in the guidebook, in press releases, and on the exhibit itself. The introduction label sets up the organization and tone of the exhibition, and this could be done in a summary statement. Section or group labels inform visitors about the reasoning behind a subgrouping of pieces on exhibit. Lastly, captions are specific labels for specific objects; this type of label must be both short and engaging. Regardless of the type, labels should always be kept brief. Good exhibitions tend to utilize and combine several different types of labels in a consistent manner.

Museums have an important role in providing education services to its visitors, so much so that most museums include this within its mission statement. To achieve this goal, the exhibition team employed at the museum must be cognizant of various learning styles, and should become well versed in each. For instance, the four most common learning styles are imaginative, analytical, common sense, and experiential. Imaginative learners learn by listening and sharing ideas and they tend to prefer interpretation that encourages social interaction. Analytical learners prefer interpretation that provides facts and sequential ideas. Common-sense learners like to try out theories and discover things for themselves. Lastly, experiential learners learn by imaginative trial and error. Accommodating different learning styles is beneficial because it makes exhibitions appealing to a broad range of visitors. Appealing to various learning styles is not a goal in itself; instead it is a means to an end for exhibition planners to achieve effective communication. Exhibition planners and other museum personnel must strive to create a wonderful experience for the visitor, thus communicating through a good exhibit label is crucial so all words must be carefully crafted. listening and sharing ideas and they tend to prefer interpretation that encourages social interaction.



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In business, and in museums, consistency is key; and the best way for a museum's exhibition to achieve that goal is to plan, practice, and produce good exhibition labels and to become known for this effective skill. The exhibition label is the voice for the piece on display, and often times it is the only communicated words about the exhibit that the visitor will encounter therefore diligence is paramount. Label writing is an art in itself, which is why an interpretive approach will endure well into the future of museology and development of the visitor's experience.

Principles of Effective Label Design: A Behavioral Approach

An effective exhibit label has a high probability of being read, meets the educational goals of the exhibition and promotes the visitor's overall satisfaction. To accomplish this, an understanding of how visitors interact with labels is essential. This requires knowing your audience, capturing their attention and then holding their attention.
Label designers should strive to create a multi-dimensional experience for visitors consisting of four components: cognitive, affective, sensory-perceptual and behavioral. The cognitive dimension regards intellectual comprehension; affective elements are expressed through excitement, satisfaction, and attitude change; sensory-perceptual elements include the sights sounds and tactile cues from the environment; and the behavioral dimension concerns the visitor's physical interaction with the exhibit. Exhibit labels that address each of these components allow for an array of outcomes and experiences among visitors.

In designing exhibition labels, there are three cognitive limitations to be considered: the comprehension level of the reader, the capacity of human memory and the complications of object satiation, meaning an excess of homogenous objects in a display. To facilitate reading comprehension, label text should be non-technical and organized in a meaningful way. In addition to this, a successful label contains information that is easily encoded into our memories. Memory will improve if information is structured, if mental imagery is utilized, if effortful processing that prompts additional engagement is facilitated, and if the encoding of information requires elaboration, or more extensive processing and consideration. The volume and length of labels should be considered as well when regarding cognitive limitations. Just as an overabundance of like objects can be deterring, distracting, and fatiguing for visitors, excess labels can visually compete with one another and unnecessarily long text can cause visitors to lose interest. Short labels, approximately 75 words in length, appear to require minimal effort on the part of the reader, thus they are more likely to be attended to.

To further increase the probability of readership, label placement should be at eye level within the visitor's natural visual field, under adequate lighting. Placing labels close to the objects that they identify will reduce visitor fatigue, allow for simultaneous observing and reading, and increase the overall likeliness among visitors to acknowledge exhibit labels. Placing labels in this way will also clarify what objects are being identified, minimizing visitor misconceptions or misunderstandings of the material and displays.

An effective label will encourage audience involvement with lively and exciting language. Label content should be directly correlated with the exhibit, offering commentary, feedback and instruction on the objects being viewed. Questions, especially when utilized in the headline of a label, are effective in stimulating interest. Additionally, questions can be used to shape a visitors understanding, prompt a comparison, or direct a visitor's attention within an exhibit.

The physical layout of the exhibit label is equally as important in determining how visitors interact with the content. Three methods of label organization that help to make the content less intimidating are information mapping, information layering, and the use of bulleting to identify major points. Information mapping refers the categorization of information through visual coding such as indentations, flow diagrams, boxes, font style and color. This allows visitors to be selective when seeking out information and offers them a self-guided approach to the exhibition content. Layering is a technique used to divide information into smaller, digestible chunks of text; some methods include the use of font size to differentiate between main and supporting ideas, the use of flip panels to separate major ideas and details, and the providing of flyers and brochures that visitors can take home if they desire more information. Lastly, bulleting is a simple way to identify major points and makes information scanning possible so as to assist visitors in finding the information that they want.

Label Design and Text: ADA Considerations

Ideally, exhibit labels should be succinct, containing only information that is essential to the story being developed. Avoid the use of overly complex wording, jargon, and technical language unless these terms can be explained directly within the text or in supplementary material. Text should be written in the active voice and be kept to short sentences; that is, in a subject-verb-object sentence structure of roughly 25 words in length. Be sure that the length of each line facilitates readership, being mindful not to include too many characters per line. Short introductory paragraphs can provide an overview of lengthy label material, allowing visitors to gather key information without reading all of the provided text.

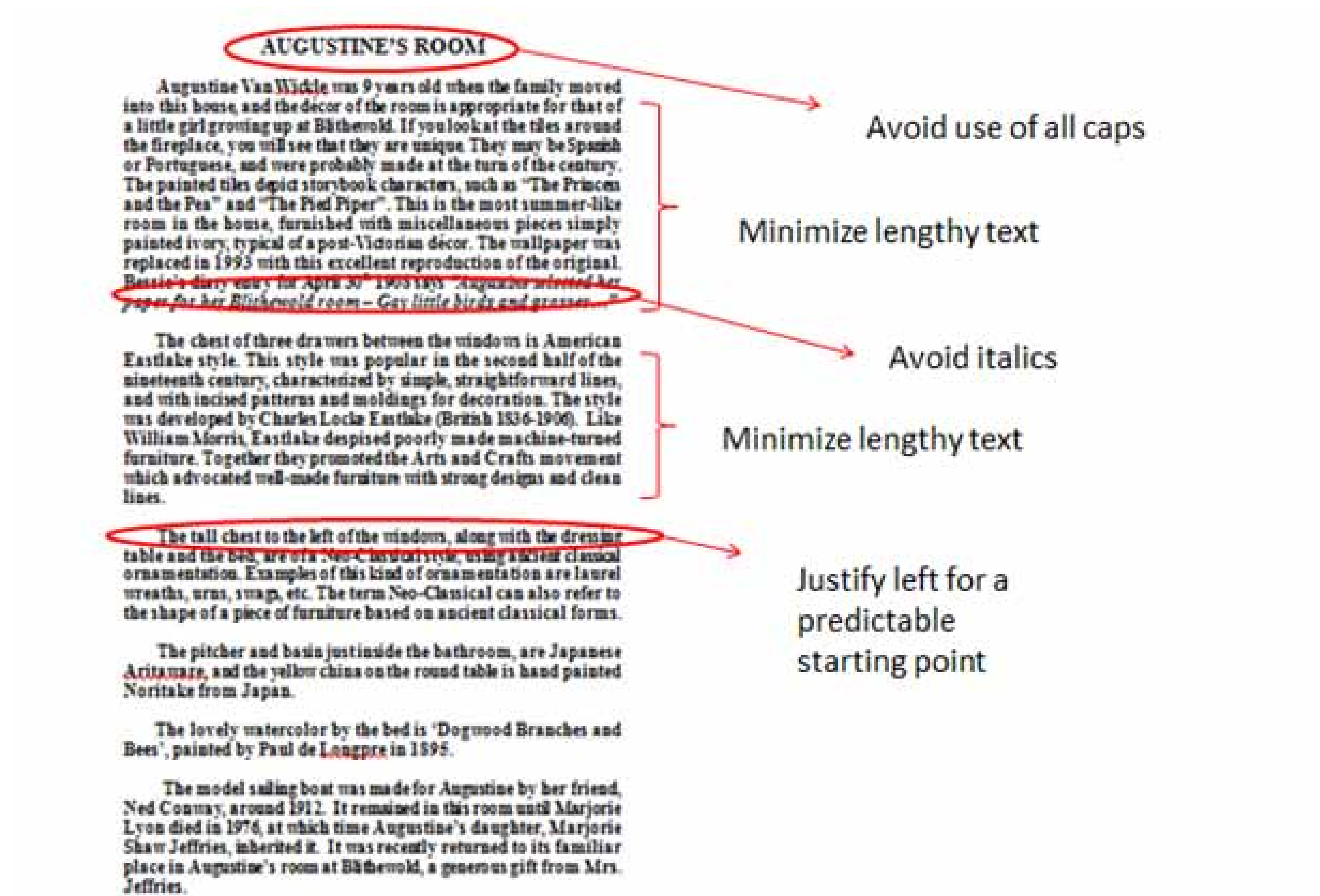
Clear typeface is essential for legibility. Characteristics of fonts that are difficult to read are as follows: "condensed, extended, or relatively light typefaces, wide variations in stroke width, thin strokes that fade, break or disappear, and letters or numbers that closely resemble each other." Some accessible texts include Times New Roman (11,69,105), New Century Schoolbook (13,71,103), Sans Serif, Helvetica(12,72.5,89), Univers 55 (14,70,93), and Futura (12,62,77). When possible avoid the use of script, italics and text in all caps, these can be inaccessible and difficult to read for those with low vision. Letter and word spacing should remain consistent throughout the label; be sure that no two characters touch. Text should be justified to the left with a ragged right margin; this offers the reader a predictable beginning point and consistency in reading. Reducing the strain on a visitor's eyes will lessen fatigue, encouraging them to read more of the provided labels.

High contrast between label text and backgrounds is essential for visitors with low vision. Label text should be printed on a solid background with minimal glare and texture; ideal surfaces include eggshell and matte. Label placement is also an important consideration in soliciting readership. Labels must be easily distinguishable in an exhibit, hung so that they are easy to view and un-obstructed by their surroundings. Visitors with low vision typically need to get within three feet of a label to read it; given this fact, labels should be placed in an accessible location where there are no barriers, stairs, or swinging doors to prevent them from approaching the text closely. Considering a visitor's natural line of sight is useful in placing exhibition labels. Wall labels should be mounted at a height that is comfortably accessible for those standing or seated. This would be at a mounting height of 48 to 67 inches, though the ideal measurement is 54 inches from the centerline of the label to the floor. Labels placed on railings should be low enough for seated visitors yet high enough for those with low vision, mounted so that the top of the label is approximately 40 inches from the floor. Consistency in label mounting can assist visitors in identifying them, thus a uniform hanging arrangement is essential. The use of color and branding can also aid visitors in locating this content with ease. In addition to placement and design, sufficient lighting of labels will increase their readership and legibility.

Blithewold Mansion

Recommendations

The current presentation of text at Blithewold can be dense and intimidating. In respect to accessibility and visitor engagement, the content in these labels should be minimized to include only essential information. Extraneous information can be daunting for visitors and deter them from reading the text. Currently the location of this material throughout the museum is varied and consists only of laminated sheets of paper on pedestals or tabletop stanchions. These are not easily identifiable and can cause visitor fatigue, as they must stand in one place longer to read the material due to the density and length of the provided texts. This placement does not encourage the simultaneous act of reading and viewing and can lead to a disjointed experience. Also, the lamination of these sheets presents a separate issue, as this enhances glare making the text illegible to those with low vision. For the purpose of exhibit labels, these would operate best if relocated from pedestals or stanchions to labels mounted on the walls or railings. These labels should be printed on low-gloss material with a solid background, using high contrast between text and background. These should be placed outside of rooms that visitors are unable to enter and along the railings of those that can be, in the interest of complying with ADA standards. Additionally, breaking up the labels with photos will help to identify the labels themselves, break up information into digestible parts, and utilize the museums extensive archival collection. Given the wealth of objects within the home, these photographs can help visitors get close to objects that are not in close proximity. The following is a current Blithewold exhibit label, analyzed according to the guidelines established in this document:



AUGUSTINE'S ROOM

Augustine Van Wickle was 9 years old when the family moved into this house, and the decor of the room is appropriate for that of a little girl growing up at Blithewold. If you look at the tiles around the fireplace, you will see that they are unique. They may be Spanish or Portuguese, and were probably made at the turn of the century. The painted tiles depict storybook characters, such as "The Princess and the Pea" and "The Pied Piper". This is the most summer-like room in the house, furnished with miscellaneous pieces simply painted ivory, typical of a post-Victorian décor. The wallpaper was replaced in 1993 with this excellent reproduction of the original. *Bessie's diary entry for April 30th 1905 says "Augustine selected her paper for her Blithewold room – Gay little birds and grasses…"*

The chest of three drawers between the windows is American Eastlake style. This style was popular in the second half of the nineteenth century, characterized by simple, straightforward lines, and with incised patterns and moldings for decoration. The style was developed by Charles Locke Eastlake (British 1836-1906). Like William Morris, Eastlake despised poorly made machine-turned furniture. Together they promoted the Arts and Crafts movement which advocated well-made furniture with strong designs and clean lines.

The tall chest to the left of the windows, along with the dressing table and the bed, are of a Neo-Classical style, using ancient classical ornamentation. Examples of this kind of ornamentation are laurel wreaths, urns, swags, etc. The term Neo-Classical can also refer to the shape of a piece of furniture based on ancient classical forms.

The pitcher and basin just inside the bathroom, are Japanese Aritaware, and the yellow china on the round table is hand painted Noritake from Japan.

The lovely watercolor by the bed is 'Dogwood Branches and Bees', painted by Paul de Longpre in 1895.

The model sailing boat was made for Augustine by her friend, Ned Conway, around 1912. It remained in this room until Marjorie Lyon died in 1976, at which time Augustine's daughter, Marjorie Shaw Jeffries, inherited it. It was recently returned to its familiar place in Augustine's room at Blithewold, a generous gift from Mrs. Jeffries.

Fig.1.Current Blithewold Museum Label, "Augustine's Room".

Looking at the description of "Augustine's Room" (fig. 1), one can see there is room for improvement. In order to increase accessibility and readership, this text should be displayed along the railing inside of the bedroom that it describes; this text should be mounted at no more than 40 inches from the floor. This material can be broken up into seven separate parts: an introduction to the room and individual notable objects. Dividing the content in this manner will help to spread the information throughout the exhibit and allow multiple visitors to read material at once. This will also allow visitors to be selective in their reading. In addition to increased physical accessibility through this display, the layering of text will make the content more intellectually accessible, promote reading comprehension and draw clear connections between text and objects. To improve the overall design of the label, the incorporation of logos or the application of color can help to brand the material and make it easier for guests to identify labels throughout the museum. The following are three examples of altered labels that reflect these changes:

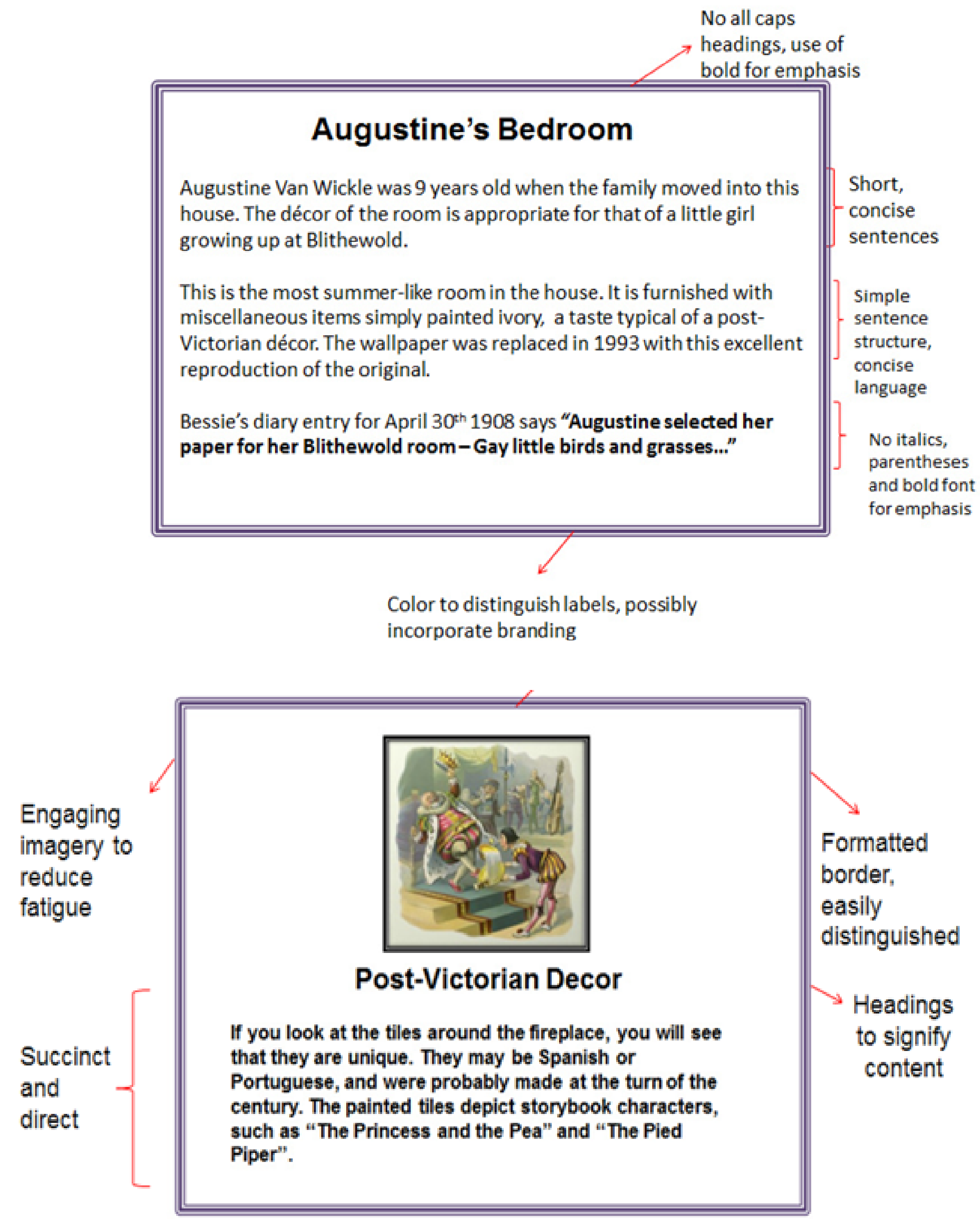


Fig.2. Label Design Recommendation for Blithewold Mansion, "Augustine's Room".

In following these guidelines for best practices in label design, Blithewold will be able to make their content accessible to a wide audience, attract and hold visitor interest, effectively impart accurate historical information about the site's history and reduce visitor fatigue within exhibits. This will improve the overall visitor experience and ideally widen the visitor demographic. Through effectively designed and mounted labels, Blithewold will strengthen their connection to its visitors as well as the visitor's connection to their site. Information about the sites significance will be communicated more effectively if presented in this way and help Bliethwold to further realize its mission to teach and inspire visitors.

It is our belief that these recommendations will complement the accessibility initiatives outlined in the Blithewold Master Plan and can be easily implemented within a short time frame at low cost to the facility. The principles outlined by these suggestions are versatile and can be applied to Blithewold's pre-existing interpretive content, allowing them to maintain the integrity of their curatorial approach.

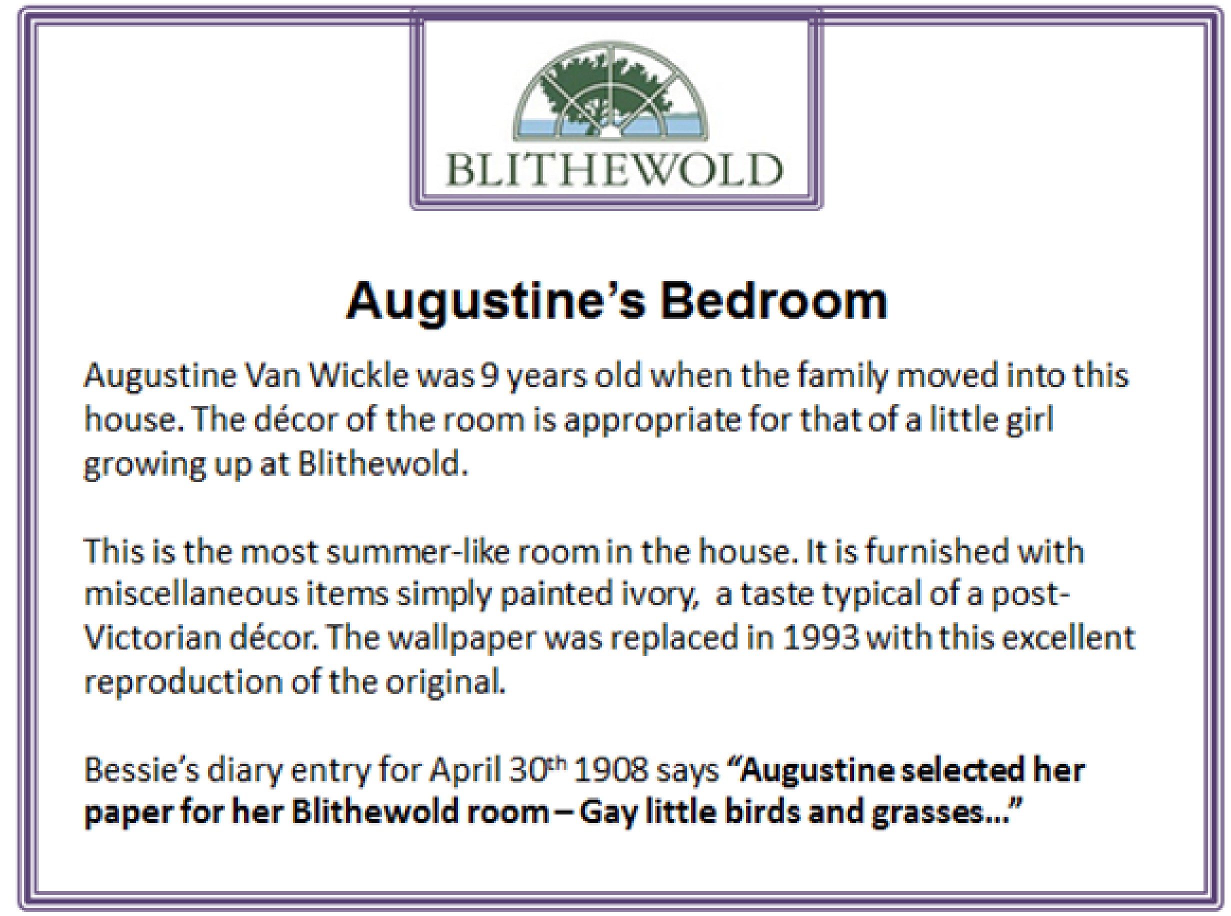


Fig.3. Label Design Recommendation for Blithewold Mansion, "Augustine's Room".

Community Partnerships Center at Roger Williams University

Looking to the Future: Audiovisual Aids

In an effort to enhance the presentation and quality of information, the following electronic aids are recommended: self-guided tours and slide-tape programs. Enhancements of this kind made to the Cleveland Museum in Ohio some years ago provide a noteworthy example and an accurate look at the system in its entirety.

The Cleveland Museum of Art in 1978 published an invaluable resource, a book titled *The Art Museum as Educator*. At the time, they were acting for the Council on Museums and Education in the Visual Arts, and so it was appropriate to include some findings about the value of slide-tape programs. Probably most important was the museum's acknowledgement of the reality that expensive audiovisual equipment might incite contradictory feelings among educators. Some are skeptical of the technology and the skills required to properly maintain the equipment, while others are eager to try it and keep up with the times.

Fortunately, keeping up with the times means that more engineers and installing companies are more aware of and experienced with the new technology. After all, the success and credibility of the technology is in large part due to the individuals who have labored to install the equipment. The Cleveland museum staff had a spectacular meeting with engineers when the museum's staff, recognizing some technical issues with the audiovisual programs, asked an independent engineering company to come and evaluate their equipment. What they found was a cheap speaker system that was not compatible with the high quality tapes and recording equipment. From this example, one can see that the goal is quality for a reasonable price.

Living in the twenty-first century is advantageous in that the best-yet technology is available. We can make use of this depressed economy as well as companies are selling their products for less money, while retaining the quality. Some companies even do free installment as part of their package.

An important consideration relevant to the desired ambience is that most of the slide-tapes use text rather than music as background for the slides. In this way, the inadequacies of the equipment have seemed not so significant to most staff or visitors interviewed at random at the Cleveland Museum. At Blithewold Mansion it seems unnecessary and even disruptive to have a musical accompaniment to the slide tapes. This is keeping in mind the lovely piano room at the far right section of the house, where music is played. When the house was lived in, the family would go into the piano room to enjoy music. It seems that other musical accompaniment would destroy the ambience already created by what is now in place at Blithewold.

The visual aspect of the slide-tape is by far a more consistent approach to telling information, as far as art museums go. At the Cleveland museum, the photographer for the department, very knowledgeable and practiced in his field, makes slides for all the slide-tapes, always making the most faithful reproduction of the art works.

In choosing slide-tapes over film or video as audiovisual aids, the Cleveland Museum's director and staff considered not only the cost (as slides are cheaper than any other), but their purpose. Good color slides provide a concentrated study of the artwork or piece of furniture in exceptional detail. In a house museum such as Blithewold, the appropriate conservation regiment calls for a no-touch policy. The reality is that people want to get close, and so this slide-tape system will allow them to get close enough to see the intricate and fascinating detail that physically they may not be able to see. This way, the context is not lost; the rooms are as they would have been when lived in.
This is part of the beauty of the house museum.
These aids suggested are supposed to direct the viewer's attention to the object behind the dividing chain, and to ease the transition. We don't want to overwhelm the viewer, but enable them to imbibe more of the glory that Blithewold Mansion is and has to offer.

The Paine House Museum:
An Anthology of Best Practices

Table of Contents

Research Conducted By: Derek J. Dandurand | Zachary Tatti | Christopher Usler
AAH 530: Museum Studies
Fall 2012

Introduction to the Project

The Paine House located in Coventry, Rhode Island, gathers and preserves historical materials relating to western Rhode Island, while promoting social and cultural life of the area. Paine House is owned and operated by the Western Rhode Island Civic Historical Society. Once a colonial home and inn, the building has been restored and furnished in the period style. The museum studies class at Roger Williams through the CPC, constructed a best practices for basic museum and collection management based on what the students had been learning over the course of the Fall 2012 semester. This work will hopefully help stakeholders of Paine House create a more cohesive space for instructing and displaying its contents. The following document is a culmination of a semester's worth of work and preparation.

This project provides the Western Rhode Island Civic Historical Society and the Paine House Museum with a compilation of best practices for basic museum and collection management, as well as exhibition design, installation, and the creation of a positive visitor experience. The information and recommendations provided have been informed through research and prioritization of various sources in a way that relates to the Paine House Museum. These sources have been provided below each respective topic discussed for further reference by the Paine House.

After meeting with the staff of the Paine House and consulting the potential scope of work outlined in their application, this anthology seemed the most appropriate in terms of suiting the capacity of the students involved, the time limitations of the semester, and meeting the needs of the stakeholders. This work does not intend for its contents to be prescriptive. It is a compendium of annotated resources, which expounds upon essential museum guidelines and practices considered to be most pertinent for the future success of the Paine House Museum. It is hoped that the following work will provide its board members and staff with an easily accessible resource which complements the on-going efforts of museum and collections management, facilitates a heightened ability of articulation and contributes to the successful stewardship of the museum.

Beginning with an analysis of the organizational hierarchy, the importance of establishing a distinct mission statement, organizational bylaws, museum and collection policies, and standard operating procedures are emphasized in the first section of this work. Further, the adoption of these measures is recommended through explanations of their importance in structuring an institutional identity and vision.

The second section outlines some basic ways of caring for and preserving the integrity of a collection. The Paine House Museum has a tremendous and fascinating collection at its disposal. The topics chosen for discussion in this section were based on experiencing and assessing the state of the collection and its current representation at the Paine House.

The third section provides a collection of practices that were considered to be potentially insightful to help the Paine House Museum best represent its varied and prodigious collection.

The final section concludes the project with a list of recommended resources to help inform the continued stewardship of the Paine House Museum.

Part 1: Museum Management

Organizational Structure and Mission Statement

The Paine House Museum is currently the only resource owned and/or operated by the Western Rhode Island Civic Historical Society. However, the Paine House Museum also seems to be synonymous with its owner organization. The question of what exactly the relationship is between these two entities thus becomes important to clarify for each to perform its job efficiently, as well as for the Paine House Museum to establish its own identity.

The Paine House Museum is owned and operated by:

Western Rhode Island Civic Historical Society (WRICHS)

- Mission Statement

  The purpose of this Society shall be the "gathering and preserving early and present day historical materials relating to the western area of Rhode Island; providing for the accessibility of such materials as far as may be feasible to teachers, school pupils and the public cooperating with churches, granges, patriotic organizations and schools, and promoting the social and cultural life of the area."

  (http://www.westernrihistory.org/)

Recommendations:

It is strongly recommended that the museum have its own mission statement. The Paine House website proclaims the mission statement provided above, which clearly belongs to the Western RI Civic Historical Society. A mission statement for the Paine House Museum should not be the same as the society, as they are different entities.

For Example:

The Surratt House Museum is owned and operated by the Surratt Society. According to its website, "the Surratt Society is a volunteer organization dedicated to the preservation and interpretation of historic Surratt House. The Society encourages on-going research into the role that this historic site played in the drama surrounding the assassination of Abraham Lincoln and the way of life in mid-19th century Southern Maryland"
(http://www.surratt.org/su_scty.html.)

On the same website, under the link Location, Hours, Admission, the House Museum provides its own mission statement. It reads:

"Surratt House Museum is dedicated to fostering an appreciation for the history and culture of 19th-century Maryland and Prince George's County with special emphasis on the crucial years from 1840 to 1865. It will seek to interpret the impact of this period on our national history as well as on the family of John and Mary Surratt who became entangled in the web of conspiracy surrounding the assassination of President Abraham Lincoln. Continuing research in the field will be encouraged, and the museum will serve as an educational bridge between scholars, staff (both professional and volunteer) and guests as we seek to understand the times and the people of this era."
(http://www.surratt.org/su_part.html.)

Note the distinction between the House Museum and its owner/operating society. A specialized mission statement helps establish the institutional image and purpose, while giving it direction to go in.

Purpose and Importance

The following information is taken from and provided by American Alliance of Museums

All museums are expected to have a formally stated and approved mission that states what the museum does, for whom and why. A museum's mission statement is the primary benchmark against which to evaluate the museum's performance. One of the two core questions underlying any assessment of compliance with national standards is: How well does the museum achieve its stated mission and goals? This emphasis acknowledges an effective and replicable practice: Museums that use clearly delineated mission statements to guide their activities and decisions are more likely to function effectively.

A clearly delineated mission statement guides museum activities and decisions by describing the purpose of a museum—its reason for existence. It defines the museum's unique identity and purpose, and provides a distinct focus for the institution. A mission statement articulates the museum's understanding of its role and responsibility to the public and its collections, and reflects the environment in which it exists. Activities of the museum should support, directly or indirectly, the mission.

References:

Surratt Society. "Location, Hours, Admission." Welcome to the Surratt House Museum. Web. (http://www.surratt.org/su_part.html)

Relatable Sources:

"The Role of Museums and the Professional Code of Ethics" Running a Museum: A Practical Handbook Lewis, Geoffrey Available online from: UNESCO.org http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0014/001410/141067e.pdf

American Alliance of Museums.

"Mission and Institutional Planning: Standards Regarding Institutional Mission Statements." Museum Standards and Best Practices - Mission and Planning. http://www.aam-us.org/resources/ethics-standards-and-best-practices/characteristics-of-excellence-for-u-s-museums/mission-and-planning.

"Mission Statements and Vision Statements" MindTools.com. Available online from: MindTools.com
(http://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/newLDR_90.htm)

Bylaws and Governing Documents

The following bulleted text under the section entitled "What are nonprofit bylaws" is taken fromgrantspace.org

- What are nonprofit bylaws?
- Bylaws are your organization's operating manual. They define:
    - Size of the board and how it will function
    - Roles and duties of directors and officers
    - Rules and procedures for holding meetings, electing directors, and appointing officers
    - Conflict of interest policies and procedures
    - How grant monies will be distributed
    - Other essential corporate governance matters

State nonprofit laws usually address nonprofit governance matters. However, you can choose different rules, as long as they don't violate state law and are included in your bylaws. If you choose to follow state law, restating them in your bylaws will ensure that all your operating rules are in one document.

Bylaws are not public documents, but making them readily available increases your accountability and transparency and encourages your board to pay closer attention to them. Your board should review them regularly and amend them accordingly as your organization evolves.

Please note that bylaws are very specific for each organization, so you will want to change them to meet your own nonprofit's needs.

Recommendations:

The Paine House Website states, "The society was incorporated under the laws of the State of Rhode Island as stated in the articles of association for the purpose of gathering and preserving historical materials relating to western Rhode Island and also to promote the social and cultural life of the area"
(http://www.westernrihistory.org/about-us.html)

However, upon further research, the following information, posted September 1st, 2012, was found stating that, "A priority that has emerged from the most recent WRICHS meetings and work on the collection policy for Paine House Museum...is finding all the records having to do with the Society itself. So much 'institutional history' took place before any of the present members and volunteers became active that, until those papers are reorganized and gone through, the WRICHS has little sense of its 'institutional self' -- we have little idea of what 'we' did before we got there, if that makes any sense". (Gardner 2012; see Mark Gardner in "References" below).

Regardless of where the WRICHS stands, it is advised that, aside from a mission statement the Paine House Museum should begin to formulate its own institutional bylaws and governing documents before starting any other project.

References:

Mark Gardner. "Adventures in Archiving: A Letter From Gull Rock." A History Garden (web log), September 1, 2012. http://ahistorygarden.blogspot.com/.

Relatable Sources:

The Foundation Center. "Nonprofit Bylaws." Grant Space: A Service of the Foundation Center. http://www.grantspace.org/Tools/Knowledge-Base/Nonprofit-Management/Establishment/Nonprofit-bylaws

Samples of Bylaws from other House Museums

http://www.tatehouse.org/storage/pdfs/bylaws08.pdf
http://www.stephenvillemuseum.org/BylawsStephenvilleHistoricalHouseMuseumMay2012.pdf

Paine House Museum

Board of Trustess

The following bulleted text under Responsibilities is taken from the North Star Museum of Boy Scouting and Girl Scouting's "Board of Directors: Responsibility and Composition"

Responsibilities:

The Board is a governance body responsible for ensuring that capable, dedicated leadership, related technical expertise, and adequate financing is provided in order to enable the corporation to carry out its mission. In order to effectively carry out these responsibilities, the Board must represent its constituency and should be able to:

- Provide direction and oversight
- Connect community resources to Museum needs
- Provide support and guidance to the Museum Director
- Establish and consider on a continuing basis policies consistent with the mission of the organization for:
  - Acquisition, disposal, restoration, preservation, and display
  - Codes and ethics
  - Financial development
  - Fiscal management
  - Membership development
  - Property
  - Public Relations
- Establish bylaws, rules of procedure and terms and conditions for Board membership consistent with the mission of the organization
- Make reasonable judgments for issues brought before the Board
- Hire, supervise, and evaluate the Museum's Director
- Be legally and ethically responsible for the [institution's] activities

Examples from Other Museums

The Museum of History and Industry
http://www.mohai.org/about_mohai/board_of_trustees.php
The MOHAI Board of Trustees is dedicated to helping the museum sustain an outstanding history museum while representing our diverse community. As the governing body of MOHAI, the Board establishes the museum's strategic direction and oversees financial stewardship. Board members provide expertise for every aspect of the museum's affairs, and they generously give their time, experience and financial support.

Rietz Home Museum
http://www.reitzhome.com/the-museum
Members of the Board of Trustees set the policies of The Reitz Home Preservation Society and protect the assets of the Reitz Home Museum.

Policies include:

- *Promoting the Reitz Home and acting as an advocate and ambassador*
- *Accepting financial responsibility and signing the Board Commitment Policy*
- *Participating in major fundraising campaigns*
- *Agreeing to and signing the Annual Conflict of Interest*

Recommendations:

It is recommended that the Paine House Museum evaluate the status, responsibilities, and capacity of its current board, with reference to the practices stated above, as well as further insight taken from other institutions.

References:

North Star Scouting Memorabilia Inc."North Star Museum of Boy Scouting and Girl Scouting" Board of Directors: Responsibility and Composition http://www.nssm.org/visitor_info/documents/Board%20of%20Directors-Responsibilities.pdf

Relatable Sources:

History House Association, Inc., Board of Trustees 2009 - 2014 Goals
http://www.skowheganhistoryhouse.org/pdf/goalsfeb11.pdf

Charity Commission. "The Essential Trustee: What You Need to Know." CharityCommission.gov.uk. March 2012.
http://www.charitycommission.gov.uk/publications/cc3.aspx.

Collections Stewardship / Policy

The following information is taken from and provided by American Alliance of Museums (http://www.aam-us.org/resources/ethics-standards-and-best-practices/characteristics-of-excellence-for-u-s-museums/collections-stewardship)

Standards Regarding Collections Stewardship

The Museum:

- Owns, exhibits or uses collections that are appropriate to its mission.
- Legally, ethically and effectively manages, documents, cares for and uses the collections.
- Conducts collections-related research according to appropriate scholarly standards.
- Strategically plans for the use and development of its collections.
- Guided by its mission, provides public access to its collections while ensuring their preservation.
- Allocates its space and uses its facilities to meet the needs of the collections, audience and staff.
- Have appropriate measures in place to ensure the safety and security of people, its collections and/or objects, and the facilities it owns or uses.
- Takes appropriate measures to protect itself against potential risk and loss.

How Does A Museum Assess Whether Its Collections Are Appropriate for Its Mission?

This is determined by comparing the institution's mission — how it formally defines its unique identity and purpose, and its understanding of its role and responsibility to the public — to two things:

- The collections used by the institution; and
- Its policies, procedures and practices regarding the development and use of collections (see also the Standards Regarding Institutional Mission Statements).

A review of a museum's collections stewardship practices examines:

- Whether the mission statement or collections documents (e.g., collections management policy, collections plan, etc.) are clear enough to guide collections stewardship decisions; whether the collections owned by the museum, and objects loaned and exhibited at the museum, fall within the scope of the stated mission and collections documents; and whether the mission and other collections stewardship-related documents are in alignment and guide the museum's practices.
- The Following is taken from Ladkin, Nicola and Boylan, Patrick J. "Collections Management." In Running a Museum a Practical Handbook. Paris: International Council of Museums (ICOM), 2004.

Before you begin to develop a collection management policy statement, several factors should be addressed and incorporated. Developing and drafting the policy is an opportunity to review and set down the museum's goals and how they are achieved if this has not already been done, and all staff members should be invited to contribute at this stage. The policy must be clearly written so it can be a useful guide to staff and the public. It must address the needs of the collections in relation to the overall goals of the museum. Also, it should include provisions for periodic review and updating. The collections management policy may address a wide range of collections management subjects that can be chosen and written specifically to fit the needs of your museum.

The Three Key Inter-related Elements of Collections Management:

1. Registration of collections provides baseline institutional accountability for the many and various objects, artifacts, specimens, samples, and documents that the museum holds in trust for current and future generations of humanity.
2. Preservation of collections is an important, active aspect of collections management that underlies all other museum activities.
3. Providing controlled access to collections through exhibit or research fulfils the museum's mission to educate and interpret while protecting collections at the same time.

Recommendations:

It is strongly recommended the Paine House Museum consider the sources of which this information was taken from, in order to fully comprehend the scope of collections stewardship and policy. Whereas the American Alliance of Museums resource provides an example of collection stewardship guidelines, *Running a Museum a Practical Handbook* by Patrick J. Boylan, and the chapter "Collections Management", written by Nicola Ladkin, would prove to be extremely useful when trying to draft a collections policy.

References:

American Alliance of Museums. "Collections Stewardship"
Museum Standards and Best Practices - Collections Stewardship http://www.aam-us.org/resources/ethics-standards-and-best-practices/characteristics-of-excellence-for-u-s-museums/collections-stewardship

Nicola Ladkin and Patrick J. Boylan"Collections Management." In Running a Museum a Practical Handbook. Paris: International Council of Museums ICOM), 2004.

National Park Service
"Museums Collection Use"http://www.nps.gov/museum/publications/mhiii/mhiii.pdf

CPC Community Partnerships Center at Roger Williams University

Part 2: Collections Stewardship

Collection Management

The Paine House Museum's collection consists entirely of historical and social artifacts, the majority of which are textiles, militaria, and household items from varying periods. The current interpretive methodology attempts to organize the hoarded collection by designating individual rooms within the house for the display of specific topics, such as a military room. This methodology does not seem to be reinforced or informed by any institutional philosophy on collections management, and the result has evinced the need to provide relatable sources that will inform the Paine House to implement a more effective collections management policy.

Three interrelated elements that make an effective collections management procedure are registration, preservation, and controlled access of the collection. Registration of the collections is the documentation of the items in the collection. The preservation of the collections is the storage environment, humidity and temperature levels of the environment, storage and boxing materials, and housekeeping. The controlled access of the collection through exhibit or research will fulfill the mission of the Paine House Museum while protecting the resources that the museum manages.

Recommendation:
It is recommended that the Paine House Museum staff examine the provided references in order to implement and create a collections management procedure for the future preservation of the museums collection.

Reasons for Recommendation:
The Paine House Museum is in need of a collections management procedure to effectively document, preserve and manage their extensive collection. Currently there is no documented procedural process for the acquisition, documentation, or preservation of their collection (Figure 1, Figure 2). Part two of this anthology is to inform the Paine House Museum on how to achieve the best practices of collections management.

References:
National Park Service Museum Handbook Part III Museum Collections Use http://www.nps.gov/museum/publications/mhiii/mhiii.pdf

Running a Museum: A Practical Handbook, International Council of Museums http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0014/001410/141067e.pdf

Interpretive Methodology:http://www.tenement.org/docs/interpmeth.pdf

Ownership

It is the purpose of this section to provide the Paine House Museum with the correct documentation in order to successfully document the collections history and ownership history.

Recommendation:
The Paine House Museum shall examine each item of their collection to document the ownership history and acquisition to fully establish the Paine House Museums legal ownership of their extensive collection. The following is the proper documentation to establish the ownership of the Paine House Museums collection.

- Temporary Receipt: Issued when an item has been brought into a museum for consideration to become accessioned. It is a document that has two functions.
    - It informs the museum who brought what into the museum for consideration.
    - It is a paper-trail item, forcing the museum to DO something with the item. This avoids an item from becoming "shelved" and/or misplaced for a long time.
- Deed of Gift: This form is issued when the item has been officially accepted into the museum. It is a legal document that transfers ownership of the material from the donor to the museum. This document must be signed and dated by both the owner or legal representative and a museum official.

Reasons for Recommendation:
The Paine House Museum collection is extensive and the purpose of this section is to provide the museum staff with a procedure to evaluate collection items that are acquired. Ownership documentation of collections is an important step in the management of a museums collection. The purpose of documenting the artifacts history and ownership history is to provide the museum with a detailed history of a collection to identify the legal ownership of an item. The lack of a detailed ownership of a collection in most cases will not protect the museum organization ownership of an item. Someone or an organization can protest the museums ownership and with lack of documentation of the ownership the museum may face losing part of their collection.

References:
The Field Guide for Museums Pages 10-21
http://www.iowahistory.org/education/assets/the_field_guide_for_museums.pdf

Documentation

The Paine House Museum is currently documenting their collection, which is the right step for the staff of the museum to catalog and inventory each item of their collection. The purpose of this section is to enable the museum staff to learn what type of documentation is needed to catalog and inventory their extensive collection.

Recommendation:

It is recommended that the Paine House Museum staff recognize the best practice for documenting, cataloging, and inventorying their collection to further their mission. The use of database software during the inventory process will enable the Paine House Museum to have a complete inventory digitized and available for the public online. Database software such as Primasoft Collectibles Organizer Plus is an easy to use software available at a low purchase price to organize and inventory the Paine House Museum's collection. Although computer software is the best way to organize the inventory of a collection, it should not be the only source of an inventory for a collection. A physical copy of the inventory shall be made. The following physical documentation is needed for fulfill the requirements for a complete inventory of their collection.

Acquisition File:

- A copy of the temporary receipt
- A deed of gift
- A photograph of the artifact
- Biography or history about/of the donor
- History of the object
- The object worksheet
- An 8283 form (If necessary, an IRS document which the donor completes)
- Condition report or conservation records

Object Catalogue Card:

- Accession number in the trinomial system.
  For example: 1999.001.1
    1999 = Year of Donation from the Deed of Gift
    .001 = Chronological order of donations received that year
    .1 = object number
- Nomenclature (object name) classification (or other system of identification)
- Date of acquisition, taken from the Temporary Receipt
- Date of transfer, (legal title): taken from the Deed of Gift
- The object's complete three dimensional measurements
- Description of the object. Written with enough detail that the artifact can be visualized (i.e.: color, material, function, etc.)
- Markings: The maker of the object, etc.
- Donor provenance: The story behind the object
- Photograph Documentation
- Location: Where the object is stored or on display. Should have initials of the person who moved it there

Accession Log - a book, binder or other bound item that is a record of day-to-day accession happenings. It would include the following information:

- Accession Number
- Log in date
- What the item is
- Who gave it.

When the accession log is full, it shall be sent to the museum's archives as a permanent record of museum activities.

Physical Catalog Numbering of Collection:

- Every artifact must have a physical marking on it. There are different methods for different artifacts. Always place the number or tag in an unobtrusive area.

Reasons for Recommendation:

The Paine House Museums collection is currently in the process of being inventoried, but as stated before, it is important for the following documentation to be included. Upon an assessment of the organization of the represented inventoried collection, this section was considered pertinent. In the process of inventory currently underway, it is believed that providing a "best practice" of documentation will serve a useful aid.

References:

Northern States Conservation Center, Numbering Museum Collections
http://www.collectioncare.org/cci/ccin.html

Running a Museum: A Practical Handbook, International Council of Museums, Inventories and Documentation 31 - 50.
http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0014/001410/141067e.pdf

Storage Environment

The storage environment of a museum collection is one of the essential needs of a museum in order to protect and store their collection while items are not being exhibited. The Paine House Museum currently does not have an adequate storage environment for their collections on site. A storage environment, that is not controlled is a main cause of deterioration to a museums collection.

Recommendation:

It is recommended that the Paine House Museum staff prepare an adequate storage environment for their collections on site. The climate-controlled room shall serve the purpose of a temporary storage for collections that are not being exhibited, but will eventually be exhibited in the future. The attic space of the Paine House Museum will best suit the needs for a temporary storage room for the museums collection. The following shall serve as recommendations for the Paine House Museum to investigate.

- Temperature
- Humidity
- Light
- Air Pollution

Reasons for Recommendation:

Currently, there is not adequate temporary or permanent storage for the Paine House Museum's collection on site. Upon an assessment of the storage environment of the Paine House Museum's collection, this section was deemed pertinent for the Paine House Museum to utilize.

Reference:

National Park Service Publication, Museum Collection Environment
http://www.nps.gov/museum/publications/MHI/CHAPTER4.pdf

National Park Service Publication, Museum Collection Storage
http://www.nps.gov/museum/publications/MHI/CHAP7.pdf

Humidity and Temperature Levels

The control of humidity and temperature levels in a storage environment are crucial to the preservation of a museums collection. A climate-controlled environment suitable for collections storage is important for the future of the Paine House Museum.

Recommendation:

It is recommended that the Paine House Museum consult with a conservator and HVAC engineer with experience in museum environments in order to establish an optimum condition pertaining to the needs of the organization. The following are useful facts for a museum storage environment pertaining to the control of humidity and temperature levels.

- Extreme changes in temperature or humidity must be avoided at all times.
- Any changes in temperature or humidity should be gradual.
- As a general rule, temperatures should be kept near room temperature: 65 to 75 F. Storage areas can be low as 65 to 70F.
- Generally, a safe humidity level is 45 - 60%

Reason for Recommendation:

Currently there is no climate control for the Paine House Museums collection storage. Upon an assessment of the museum's storage environment of the Paine House Museum collection, this section was deemed pertinent. The control of the temperature and humidity can determine the fate of a collection, whether or not the collection will deteriorate and be lost forever, and it is the reason for this recommendation that urges the Paine House Museum organization look into climate control to protect their collections for future generations.

Reference:

Historic New England, White Papers, Controlling Relative Humidity
http://www.historicnewengland.org/preservation/preserving-historic-sites/property-care-white-papers/controlling-relative-humidity

Historic New England, White Papers, Environmental Conditions Monitoring Temperature and RH
http://www.historicnewengland.org/preservation/preserving-historic-sites/property-care-white-papers/environmental-conditions/pc-environmental-data-monitoring-20100621.pdf

Historic New England, White Papers, Environmental Conditions in Historic House Museums
http://www.historicnewengland.org/preservation/preserving-historic-sites/property-care-white-papers/environmental-conditions-in-historic-house-museums

Shelving Material

The proper shelving material is important for the storage of a museum's collection, and will allow a museum to organize and maintain the collection as if it were a library. This section details the proper storage shelving material used by museums in order store their collections.

Recommendation:
It is recommended that the Paine House Museum seek readymade stable storage shelving to house their collections while they are not being exhibited in the museum. The Paine House Museum should determine what type of shelving storage is necessary for their collections storage environment. The use of the provided references is recommended for the Paine House Museum to examine and determine what shelving material will best fit their needs.

Reason for Recommendation:
Upon the examination of the Paine House Museum's storage environment it was evident that proper storage shelving for the museums collection was absent. Due to the assessment of their storage materials this section was deemed pertinent to the anthology of best practices for the Paine House Museum.

References:
National Park Service, Conserve O Gram, Museum Storage Cabinets, July 1993.
http://www.nps.gov/history/museum/publications/conserveogram/04-01.pdf

National Park Service, Preservation Tech Notes, Museum Collection Storage
http://www.nps.gov/tps/how-to-preserve/tech-notes/Tech-Notes-Museum01.pdf

Boxing Material

The proper boxing material for a museum's collection is essential for the storage of items. This section details the proper adequate boxing material need for the protection of a museum collection.

Recommendation:
It is recommended that upon the creation of an adequate storage environment that the Paine House Museum evaluate the amount of boxing material for the storage of their collections. The Paine House Museum should examine the provided resources for best practices on boxing materials used in the storage of their extensive collection.

- All boxes should be made of acid-free, archival material which may be found at several suppliers such as:
  - Gaylord
  - University Supply
  - Talas
  - Light Impressions
- Textiles that are stored in boxes should have as few folds as possible.
- Choose a box size appropriate to the artifact. Do not "stuff" the artifact into a box that will harm the item in the long run.
- Line the box with acid-free tissue and pad any folds in textiles with acid-free tissue.
- Label the exterior of the box with its contents.
- Avoid layering garments in the box when possible. If unavoidable, place the most fragile objects on top.

Reason for Recommendation:
Upon the examination of the Paine House Museum's collection boxing material by Mark Gardner, it was evident that proper boxing material for the museums collection was absent. Due to our assessment as well as Mark Gardner's assessment of their storage boxing materials, this section was deemed pertinent to the anthology of best practices for the Paine House Museum.

References:
National Park Service, Conserve O Gram, Packing a two dimensional object, 2009.
http://www.nps.gov/museum/publications/conserveogram/17-06.pdf

Archival Boxing Material Products
http://www.archivalmethods.com/category.cfm?categoryid=1

Mark Gardner's Assessment of the Paine House Museum Collections
http://webcache.googleusercontent.com/search?q=cache:GJR1Srko5pgJ:ahistorygarden.blogspot.com/+The+Paine+House+Museum+Articles+

Housekeeping

Housekeeping is an essential part of the maintenance of a historic house museum. The general maintenance of the interior and site of a historic house museum is proven to defer the deterioration of a historic house museum and it is the purpose of this section to elaborate on best practices for housekeeping.

Recommendation:

It is recommended that the Paine House Museum create a housekeeping plan to defer the deterioration of the historic building and museum space. The Paine House Museum should refer to the provided references to examine best practices of general maintenance and housekeeping and apply a plan that illustrates the need for their environment. The following illustrates what the Paine House Museum staff must recognize.

- Understand the importance of housekeeping
- Identify the elements of housekeeping
- Who is in charge of housekeeping?
- Write a Housekeeping Plan
- Identify additional sources of information

The following illustrates a sample of best practices for the Paine House Museum.

- The Paine House Museum should have a routine schedule of basic cleaning that includes sweeping, vacuuming and eliminating clutter and trash. Particular attention to frequently used visitor areas, such as restrooms or lobbies, will enhance the museum experience for the visitor.
- A schedule should be kept for cleaning the artifacts and exhibit cases. Due to the sensitive nature of many artifacts, museum staff should consult with a conservator for correct cleaning methods appropriate for particular artifacts.

Due to the importance of housekeeping for a historic house museum it is recommended that the Paine House Museum staff enforce a housekeeping plan to protect the tangible collection.

Reason for Recommendation:

This section recommendation is important for the Paine House Museum to utilize due to the nature of the current condition the museum is exhibited. Particular to historic house museums, a general housekeeping plan is imperative for the care of the exhibitions and the building itself. Upon the assessment of the organizations use of the exhibited space during events and house tours, this section deemed to be pertinent to the anthology of best practices for the Paine House Museum.

References:

Housekeeping Manual, Historic Structures Interiors, Collection Storage Areas, Historic Objects, Exhibit Furniture
http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/collections/HousekeepingManual.pdf

National Park Service Publication, Museum Housekeeping
http://www.nps.gov/history/museum/publications/MHI/CHAP13.pdf

Emergency Planning

An emergency plan for the protection of a museum's collection is a critical tool for a historic house museum to establish.

Recommendation:

It is recommended that the Paine House Museum create and establish an emergency disaster plan to detail the process of protecting the museum's collection during an emergency. It is imperative for the Paine House to consult the Getty Institute for an informative guide on how to create an emergency plan. dPlan, (link provided below) is a free online template that is recommended for the Paine House Museum to utilize in creating an emergency plan that is customized to the necessities of the organization.

Reason for Recommendation:

Disaster planning is an essential component of preserving an institution's collections. With a written disaster plan, a historic house museum can reduce the risk of disaster and minimize losses. With such a large and varied collection, an emergency plan is a vital issue that the Paine House Museum should consider as soon as possible.

Reference:

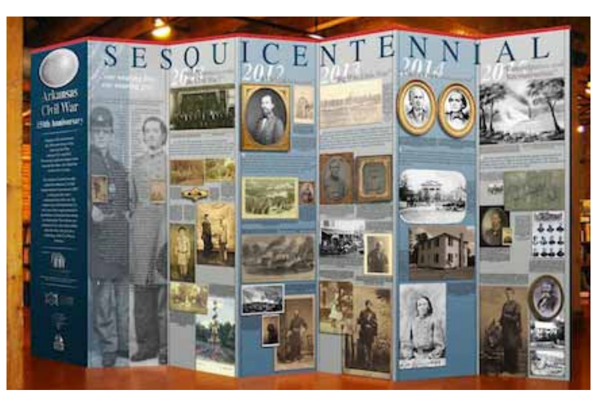
Getty Institute, Building an Emergency Plan: a guide for museums and other cultural institutions.
http://www.getty.edu/conservation/publications_resources/pdf_publications/emergency_plan.pdf

dPlan, The Online Disaster Planning Tool for Cultural and Civic Institutions
http://www.dplan.org/

Part 3: Exhibition Design, Environment, and Installation

Display Methods/Design Elements

Exhibitions are the heart of any museum practice. The exhibitions are three-dimensional experiences designed to engage, inspire, and communicate with diverse groups of visitors. To this, professionals who plan, design and execute museum exhibitions must be diverse in their thinking and skill set. The elements of design are ruled by color theory, education, space, etc in order to enhance a visitor's connection with the presented artifacts.



Recommendation:

There are countless factors that must be considered when designing a final exhibition space. For the purpose of this document, the following will consist of the most pertinent phases of design relating to The Paine House.

Concept Development: This provides a 'road map' for The Paine House. This should be greatly informed by the mission statement, helping to define where the institution is going, and how they shall arrive there.

- Project Charter- Outlining all of the components of the project
- Motivate Visitors- Target an audience
- Initial Budget- Wealth/Money management
- Look and Feel- What is portrayed to visitors

Schematic Design: This phase aims to establish a unified idea and theme of the institution's individual exhibitions. It enables all parties involved to "confirm themes, interpretation goals and to review spatial arrangements, appearance, artifact use, materials and cost" (Museum Exhibition Design). At the conclusion of this phase, a set of written notes and documents will outline:

- Visitors Experience Narrative- Museum provided information (labels)
- Rough Plan View- Specific spatial relationships within exhibitions
- Content Relationships- Exhibit location.
- Schedule- Fabrication and installation timetable
- Traffic Flow Diagrams

Design Development: Section and elevation drawings of exhibit space with specified artifacts labeled and located. This produces a set of both written and visual final documents that will accurately portray how the finished space will look and feel.

- Final Outline- Revision of instillation and fabrication timetables
- Initial Image and Object List
- CAD Drawings- Plan w/ content, elevations and sections, preliminary electric plan, mechanical plan, lighting plan, etc
- Visuals - Interactive sketches, prototyping of interactive exhibits

Final Design: a number of documents that illustrates the full exhibition design, how it will be built, where each component is located and how each works within the larger space.

- Exhibition Identification
- Exhibition Descriptions
- Database of Exhibit Components
- Measured CAD Plans- Signed by appropriate contracted parties
- Required Permit Documents- Architect, Mechanic, Engineer, Electrician, etc
- Contract Documents - a complete package of all pertinent documents that allows for the physical designing phase to begin

References:

"Museum Exhibition Planning and Design." The University of the Arts. N.p., n.d. Web. 04 Dec. 2012. <http://www.uarts.edu>. http://www.uarts.edu/academics/camd-cross-college-programs/mfa-museum-exhibition-planning-and-design

"Museum Exhibition Design." Museum Planning. Web. 04 Dec. 2012. http://museumplanner.org

How to Display Textiles

Recommendation:
There are a number of methods of storage for textiles and costumes; each designed to accommodate specific sizes, weights, types, and conditions of textiles.

Reason for Recommendation:
Although at times some of these recommendations for storage may seem overdone, without the proper care, textiles can drastically fade in color, condition, and value (historical). The first step in this process is to survey the material, condition, and previous exposure to environmental factors of the collection. In some cases, the cost of a conservator's services may greatly exceed the monetary value of the piece. When professional repair services are unavailable or impractical, preservation should be the focus as "the first and safest line of defense against all the causes and some of the effects of deterioration."

References:
Bittner, Elizabeth. Basic Textile Care: Structure, Storage, and Display. Introduction to the Structure and Technology of Records Materials. School of Information, University of Texas at Austin, 2004. Web. 4 Dec. 2012. http://webspace.utexas.edu/ecb82/textile_care.doc

Norton, Ruth E. "Practical Manual for the Storage and Display of Textiles (for Museums in South-east Asia)". Studies and Documents on the Cultural Heritage. Vol. 8. Canberra, Australia: Regional Conservation Centre, 1984. Accessed December 4, 2012.
http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0006/000668/066870eb.pdf

The Textile Museum. "Guidelines for the Care of Textiles." Guidelines for the Care of Textiles. N.p., 2001. Web. 4 Dec. 2012.
http://www.textilemuseum.org/care/brochures/guidelines.htm

Proper Mounting Styles

Recommendation:
The Paine House can benefit from the creation and use of mounts to enhance their exhibitions. In order to construct mounts, one must be familiar with basic hand tools and how to use them. This does not mean you have to be a craftsman of machinists, but requires a basic competency.

Reason for Recommendation:
A good display mount is functional and as unobtrusive as possible. Mounts should not take aesthetic value away from the artifact it is protecting or displaying. An observer's eye should acknowledge the mount but does not concentrate on it. To insure this stage of the design process is done correctly, a number of mounting materials and styles must be considered. Along with this consideration, barrier materials may also be used to separate objects form potential damage.

Mount Design: Guidelines
Taken from web: Northern States Conservation Center, 2006.
http://www.collectioncare.org/cci/cciexm.html

- No object can be altered or repaired to accommodate exhibit mounting
- Mounts should provide adequate support to prevent physical stress or unbalanced weight distribution on the object. The object and mount center of gravity should be considered.
- No mount should be permanently attached to any object and easy access to the object should be afforded for curatorial maintenance and emergency removal.
- The fastening system must be based on a mechanical design and not adhesives or sticky substance. Also the supports must be attached without using the objects weight or distinctive features to do so.
- Mount design must anticipate for organic alterations in the artifact; droop, sag, or experience dimensional changes.
- Vibration and abrasions should be minimized by the nature of the mount's design and material selected for construction.
- Fragile objects, including all textiles, should be supported over a great an area as practical.
- The mount must secure objects that are displayed in the open to be reasonably safe from theft.
- Design an external pattern that does not directly conflict with the aesthetics of the artifact.

References:
Northern States Conservation Center. "NSCC Museum Collection Care - Exhibiting - Mounts." NSCC Museum Collection Care - Exhibiting - Mounts. N.p., 2006. Web. 05 Mar. 2013. http://www.collectioncare.org/cci/cciexm.html

ADA: American Disabilities Act

Recommendation:
Although The Paine House is not required to insure all of the following guidelines are met, a number of them should be accommodated within the exhibit spaces.

Reason for Recommendation:
The following is taken from The Association of Science-Technology Centers. http://www.astc.org/resource/access/obligations.htm

This is a federal civil rights law that prohibits exclusion of people with disabilities from everyday activities including leisure activities. The act encompasses accessibility provisions for both public and private establishments. The ADA guarantees equal opportunity for individuals with disabilities in employment, public accommodations, transportation, state and local government services, and telecommunications by business of all sizes.

There are a set of guidelines that assist individuals and entities with rights or duties under Title II and Title III of the ADA.

> **Title II of The ADA: State and Local Government Activities** - "requires state and local governments to give people with disabilities an equal opportunity to benefit from their facilities and programs including museums operated by state or local governments. State and local governments are required to follow specific architectural standards in the new construction and alteration of their buildings. They also must relocate programs or otherwise provide access in inaccessible buildings and furnish auxiliary aids when necessary to ensure effective communication with people with disabilities."

> **Title III of The ADA: Public Accommodations** - "has requirements similar to those of Title II, except that it applies to privately operated businesses, including nonprofits such as privately operated museums. It requires private entities who own, lease, lease to, or operate facilities to make reasonable modifications in order to ensure that their facilities, goods, and services are accessible to people with disabilities."

References:
The Association of Science-Technology Centers. "Museums' Legal Obligations." ASTC - Resource Center. Association of Science - Technology Centers Incorporated, 2007. Web. 4 Dec. 2012. http://www.astc.org/resource/access/obligations.htm

Resources Recommended for Further Reading

Books:

Ambrose, Tim, & Paine, Crispin. Museum Basics. (2012) Routledge. Abingdon, Oxon.

Catlin-Legutko, Cinnamon, & Klingler, Stacy. The Small Museum Toolkit. (2012) AltaMira Press.
Lanham, MD.

Lord, Barry, & Lord, Gail Dexter. The Manual of Museum Management. (1997) Stationery Office.
London.

Online Resources:

Brown, III, James M. (Autumn, 1949). "A Small Art Museum's First Year" College Art Journal,
Vol. 9, No. 1 pages 25-29. Retrieved from http://www.jstor.org/stable/773079

Carson, Cary. (Fall 2008). "The End of History Museums: What's Plan B?" The Public Historian, Vol.
30, No. 4 pp. 9-27. Retrieved from http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.1525/tph.2008.30.4.9

Duhl, Leonard. (Dec., 1999). "Finding Identity in a Virtual World". Journal of Epidemiology and
Community Health (1979-), Vol. 53, No. 12 pp. 746-747 Retrieved from http://www.jstor.org/stable/25569094

Griffin, Des. (WINTER 2003). "Leaders in Museums: Entrepreneurs or Role Models?" International
Journal of Arts Management, Vol. 5, No. 2 pp. 4-14. Retrieved from http://www.jstor.org/stable/41064783

Hsu, Greta and Michael T. Hannan. (Sep. - Oct., 2005). "Identities, Genres, and Organizational Forms"
Organization Science, Vol. 16, No. 5, Frontiers of Organization Science, Part 2 of 2 pp. 474-490.
Retrieved from http://www.jstor.org/stable/25145987

Levy, Janet E. (Mar., 2006). "Prehistory, Identity, and Archaeological Representation in Nordic
Museums". American Anthropologist. New Series, Vol. 108, No. 1 pp. 135-147. Retrieved from
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Munley, Mary Ellen and Randy Roberts. (Spring, 2006). "Are Museum Educators Still Necessary?" The
Journal of Museum Education. Vol. 31, No. 1, Museums and Relevancy pp. 29-39. Retrieved
from http://www.jstor.org/stable/40283904

Paswan, Audhesh K. and Lisa C. Troy. (Spring, 2004). "Non-Profit Organization and Membership
Motivation: An Exploration in the Museum Industry". Journal of Marketing Theory and Practice,
Vol. 12, No. 2, The Business of Non-Profits pp. 1-15. Retrieved from http://www.jstor.org/stable/40470133

Pratt, Michael G. and Peter O. Foreman. (Jan., 2000). "Classifying Managerial Responses to Multiple
Organizational Identities" The Academy of Management Review, Vol. 25, No. 1 pp. 18-42. Retrieved from http://www.jstor.org/stable/259261

Review by: Serena Nanda. (Jun., 2004), Robben Island Museum; District Six Museum; Kwa Muhle
Museum. "South African Museums and the Creation of a New National Identity" American
Anthropologist, NewSeries, Vol. 106, No. 2 pp. 379-385. Retrieved from
http://www.jstor.org/stable/3566975.

Ronquillo, Wilfredo P. (December 1992). "COMMUNITY MUSEUMS IN THE PHILIPPINES: THEIR
POTENTIAL IN ENHANCING THE NATURAL AND CULTURAL HERITAGE OF
THE COUNTRY". Philippine Quarterly of Culture and Society, Vol. 20, No. 4
pp. 317-323. Retrieved from http://www.jstor.org/stable/29792103

Wilson, Patrick C. (Jan., 2003). "Ethnographic Museums and Cultural Commodification: Indigenous
Organizations, NGOs, and Culture as a Resource in Amazonian Ecuador". Latin American Perspectives, Vol. 30, No. 1, Indigenous Transformational Movements in Contemporary Latin America pp. 162-180. Retrieved from http://www.jstor.org/stable/3184970

Voss, Zannie Giraud, Cable, Daniel M. and Glenn B. Voss. (Nov. - Dec., 2006). "Organizational Identity
and Firm Performance: What Happens When Leaders Disagree about "'Who We Are?'"
Organization Science, Vol. 17, No. 6 pp. 741-755. Retrieved from http://www.jstor.org/stable/25146074

Wilson, Patrick C. "Ethnographic Museums and Cultural Com modification: Indigenous Organizations, NGOs, and
Culture as a Resource in Amazonian Ecuador". Latin
American Perspectives, Vol. 30, No. 1, Indigenous
Transformational Movements in Contemporary Orga
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741-755.Published by: INFORMS Article Stable URL:
http://www.jstor.org/stable/25146074

Websites

INTERCOM: International Committee on Management
http://www.intercom.museum/resources.html

Mandate

INTERCOM focuses on ideas, issues and practices relating to the management of museums, within an international context. The principle actions in management are to plan, resource, implement, evaluate and adjust, based on an identified vision.

INTERCOM's interests include, but are not limited to: governance; management practice in a theoretical framework; international law as it relates to museums; human and financial resource management; and the financing of museums.

INTERCOM provides four main vehicles for the exploration and exchange of ideas and practice: a yearly meeting for its members; regular information updates via email and a web site. The fourth vehicle, while more informal, is the development of a network of professionals who are actively involved in the management of museums and related institutions in order to exchange and compare information informally.

National Park Service
NPS Museum Handbook
http://www.nps.gov/museum/publications/handbook.html

UNESCO: United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization
http://www.unesco.org/new/en/

ICOMOS: International Council on Monuments and Sites
http://www.icomos.org/en/