Organizing A Museum
Swan’s Island Lobster & Marine Museum

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Swan’s Island Lobster & Marine Museum
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Swan’s Island Lobster & Marine Museum
The Project

• Hired as an Island Institute Fellow

• Original Goals:
  • Inventory the museum
  • Recruit volunteers
  • Work on advertising to draw in more visitors

• Actual Goals:
  • Inventory the museum
  • Redesign museum layout
  • Improve educational value of museum
  • Get the school more involved in the development/usage of museum

All of this means the goal of the museum was organization
Why Organize?

- Cluttered rooms
- Little to no educational value
- Difficult to navigate without docent
- Contents of the museum a mystery
- Museum over-due for an update
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Collection</th>
<th>Collection Type</th>
<th>Inventory #</th>
<th>Object Name</th>
<th>Object Alternative (Common Name)</th>
<th>Primary Location (Room #)</th>
<th>Secondary Location (Wall/Shell)</th>
<th>Brief Description (color, size [H cm x W cm x D cm], shape, distinguishing features, number of pieces in group and what those pieces are if applicable)</th>
<th>Condition</th>
<th>Photo ID #</th>
<th>Provience Notes</th>
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**Inventory 2017-2018**

- Richard's Archaeological Material
- Collection Types (select/deselect)
- Condition Type (select/deselect)
- Primary Location (select/deselect)
Gift Agreements, Accessioning, & Deaccessioning

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• Building the inventory showed the gaps in the museums records

• Lack of records made it difficult to:
  • Thank donors
  • Understand the history of the item
  • Determine the relevance of the item
  • Know if the item(s) had been donated or loaned
  • Know the terms of the museum’s agreement when the item was accumulated

• Occasionally hinders (but does not stop) donations because:
  • The Gift Agreement is forgotten
  • The item is dropped off outside of museum hours
  • The item is dropped off by someone on behalf of the owner
Moving the Museum Forward

- System for inventorying and storing items
- System for taking in new items
- Involved the Swan’s Island School in projects
  - Grade 3-5: Swan’s Island Fishermen book
  - Grade 6-8: Museum tags

Getting these things started made it easier to apply for grants because we knew our strengths and weaknesses and where we could get community support.

Swan’s Island 3-5th grade class
A Glimpse At Swan's Island Lobstermen

Interviewed by: Mia Davis in 2017-2018 School Year

Name: Richard "Richie" Davis
Boat name: Daddy's Helpers
Buoy color: red and green
Taught by: Big Kenny
First memory of lobstering: Hauling traps in a punt
Number of years lobstering: 40 years
Favorite part of lobstering: Being his own boss

Interviewed by: Gabriella Joy during the 2017-2018 School Year

Name: Adam Joy
Boat name: Revelation
Buoy color: green and white
Taught by: Paul Joy and Spencer Joyce
Number of years spent lobstering: 34 years
Favorite part of being a lobsterman: Freedom and the scenery
Dory Rescue Compass

A Dory Rescue Compass was used in the 1900’s on dories. While men and women went fishing they would have these on their boats just in case there was foggy, stormy weather. The Dory Compass would help them find their way back to land if they got lost in a storm.

Written by
Hailey May

The Quarry Pond

Early 1900s

One of the many early industries of South Island was mining gravel. While it was being mined, South Quarry would fill up with rainwater and had to be regularly drained.

After the owner, Marshale Paine & Constraining Co. of New York, shut down the quarry around 1910, it filled up again and became a popular swimming hole for the islanders.

Written by
Ziemerah Lettmeier
Grant from the Hancock County Fund of the Maine Community Foundation

- Display table
- Display Frame
- Acrylic Boxes
- Label Mounts

- Artifact Mounts
- Acid-free archival storage boxes & dividers
The Future

- Website development & digital exhibit building
- Plan for changing out exhibits on main floor of museum
- Yearly projects with school/high schoolers looking for community service credits
- Developing a large, in-depth exhibit around boat building on Swan’s Island and rehabilitating the Betsy L., one of the island’s last hand-made wooden lobster boats