

PROJECT APPLICATION FORM

Applicant: Truro Historical Society

Submission Date: 11/1/2024

Address: Truro Historical Society

Purpose: (Select all that apply)

PO Box 486

☐ Open Space

Truro MA 02666

☐ Community Housing

Telephone: (718) 624 - 4776

☒ **Historic Preservation**

E-mail: mcnash@comcast.net

☐ Outdoor Recreation

Town Committee: (if applicable): N/A

Project Name: Media and Digitization Outreach

Project Location/Address:

Highland House Museum – 6 Highland Light Road / Cobb Archive – 13 Truro Center Road

Amount Requested: \$20,000

Project Summary: In the space below, provide a brief summary of the project.

The Truro Historical Society seeks to improve its outreach to the Truro Community and beyond through two distinct projects: creating a video about two important industries that supported the town during the Depression; and making advances in its digitization project. Please see attached document for more information.

Estimated Date for Commencement of Project: July 2025

Estimated Date for Completion of Project: July 2028

APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS AND REQUIRED ATTACHMENTS

Submit 1 hard copy of application (including all attachments) to Truro Town Hall – Attention Community Preservation Committee

E-mail 1 electronic copy to Noelle Scoullar: NScoullar@truro-ma.gov copy Ntudor@truro-ma.gov

NARRATIVE/PROJECT SCOPE SECTION

Project Name:
Media and Digitization Outreach
Highland House Museum and Cobb Archive

PROJECT SUMMARY

The Truro Historical Society is seeking to enhance its outreach to the Truro community and beyond through two distinct initiatives: the production of a video highlighting two significant industries that supported the town during the Great Depression, and advancements in its digitization project.

The film, directed by Jan Worthington, will blend interviews, photographs, and documents to effectively present this crucial era in Truro's history to the public. The digitization efforts will facilitate the ongoing process of digitizing the Highland House Museum's collection, allowing for an initial selection of historic materials, including audio and video to be made accessible online internally, as well as at the Highland House Museum and the Cobb Archive.

PROJECT NARRATIVE

Grantee Organization

The Truro Historical Society is a non-profit 501 (c) (3) established in the State of Massachusetts and operating the Highland House Museum and the Cobb Archive. Its mission is "to inspire all people to explore and experience the rich heritage of Truro and the Outer Cape from valued artifacts, living history exhibits, and ongoing community interactions that emphasize their influence on society today."

Who will be served by the project

As an "ongoing community interaction" designed for our more visual and online age, the film and digitization project will serve the people of Truro and the general public.

How does it meet specific CPC goals?

This outreach by the THS will primarily serve as an educational purpose for adults and children. As noted in the definition of eligibility, it rehabilitates and restores otherwise neglected aspects of Truro history by making this history accessible in visual and online form to a wide public, thus addressing the need of a healthy community to know itself. This knowledge is a historic resource that needs to be preserved and disseminated.

VIDEO OF THE COLD STORAGE PLANT AND THE FISHNET INDUSTRIES

The proposed Truro Historical Society video will be a lasting visual record of a significant time in our history. As the population ages, there are fewer residents who are aware of the importance of the Cold Storage Plant and the Fishnet Industries, a rich history that needs to be preserved.

We will interview people who worked in the Cold Storage Plant and the Fishnet Shop or have relatives who did. The Cobb Archive houses a valuable collection of photographs that we will utilize in the video. Additionally, we will incorporate business documents from John

and Tiny, which are maintained at the Schlesinger Library at Harvard. These documents include detailed records of both businesses, along with letters and other vital materials.

The Narrative:

In 1893 a freezer plant was built in North Truro between Pilgrim Pond and the Cape Cod Bay. The fish were transported from the weir boats to horse-drawn wagons at the edge of the shore. In July of 1873 the Cape Cod Railroad opened between Boston and Provincetown making it easy to load frozen fish from the cold storages onto the train for the trip to Boston.

In 1932, with not enough business to sustain it, the plant closed, and many residents were out of work. John C. Worthington, who had spent summers in Truro as a child, returned to the Cape in 1932 with his wife Ada Elizabeth Worthington and their young family. As a boy, John had gone out to the weirs with the local fishermen; an experience he had never forgotten. A group of fishermen from the Cold Storage plant approached him and asked him for help getting the business back up and running. John found investors and became the Chief Engineer. He operated the plant for three decades, employing hundreds of Truro men and women during the lean winter months and through the Depression, personally covering financial shortfalls.

John's wife Ada, known as Tiny, who was so named by British soldiers in WW I who knew her as an ambulance driver and admired her guts and her height of nearly six feet; began visiting John and the other fishermen in the shacks next to the plant where the men mended the nets by hand. Attracted to the feel and look of the cotton nets, she took some home and hung it around a window as a valance. She began making curtains, turbans, bags, tablecloths, dresses, and shawls out of fishnet dyed in colors that reminded her of the various hues she saw in the beaches and hills of Truro.

Tiny hired the wives and mothers of fishermen to cut and sew her designs, which were sold in luxury retail stores such as Macy's, Bonwit Teller, and Bergdorf's. The Duchess of Kent was photographed wearing one of her turbans. Tiny created a storefront on the corner of Pond Road and Shore Road and created a shop full of her fishnet designs. Soon, she had as many as fifty employees cutting and sewing the net into everything from clothing to fishnet dolls.

During the Great Depression these two businesses were the economic engine that kept many families in Truro afloat. John and Tiny displayed creativity and perseverance during a time of great hardship in our town, and we will tell their story.

DIGITIZATION OF THE THS COLLECTION

A FY2025 CPC grant of \$15,000 enabled the THS to hire a consultant for digitizing. As of the end of October 2024, a consultant photographed, organized, and digitized over 700 items in the Highland House Museum collection, identified and regularized thousands of names, investigated the use of Google metadata, and participated in meetings with the Massachusetts State Historical Records Advisory Board (SHRAB) archivist to discuss the future of digitization.

Thus far, \$7,250 has been used, with \$7,750 of the grant remaining available. The remaining funding will be used for a consultant to help organize the digital records into searchable metadata objects, allowing the eventual production of a searchable public database. We

are requesting an additional sum of \$6,000 to expand the scope of the project to include paper and audio files currently housed at the museum and Cobb Archive.

The use of digitization equipment, along with the ongoing support of a consultant, will facilitate the digitization of numerous records, thereby enhancing our outreach to the community by making these records easily accessible to the public. Additionally, digitization serves to preserve information in the event of loss. Contemporary museum practices encourage expanding online access to the museum's collection of art, artifacts, archival documents, audio, and video materials through digitization, while simultaneously enriching the visitor experience with readily available digital information.

Among the materials for planned digitization are the copious (and frequently consulted) records of the US Lifesaving and Coast Guard service, the US Air Force Station at the Highlands, oral records of 1950s Town Meetings and Truro citizens from the Highland House Museum's Living Legacy exhibits, and videos, including one of the Highlands. Please refer to '*Supporting Materials*' section for more information on approach.

Maintenance

It is not expected that substantial maintenance expenses would affect either aspect of this grant.

CPC BUDGET FORM

Organization Name - Truro Historical Society

Project Name - Video documentation of Pond Village Cold Storage & Fishnet

Industry/digitization of Society's collection

ITEM	Total Cost	\$ Requested from CPC	\$ from Other Sources	Description
Video Project				
research for video	\$ 2,000.00	\$ -	\$ 2,000.00	consultant researching history of Cold Storage & fishnet industry
Producer/Director	\$ 5,000.00	\$ -	\$ 5,000.00	Jan Worthington will produce and direct the video as a volunteer
Video shoot crew	\$ 6,050.00	\$ 6,050.00	\$ -	Camera, Lights, Sound. - \$550 for the 1st hour and \$250 for every hour after estimated at 22 hours
Editing	\$ 6,500.00	\$ 6,500.00	\$ -	Video editing at \$80/hr.
Drone operator	\$ 450.00	\$ 450.00	\$ -	\$150/hr. for 3 hours
Contingency	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,000.00		7% contingency
Subtotal	\$ 21,000.00	\$ 14,000.00	\$ 7,000.00	
Digitization Project				
Data Files - Collection and analysis	\$ 5,000.00	\$ -	\$ 5,000.00	Research, review and prioritization tasks. Metadata tagging classification design. Conducted by Janice Pelosi and volunteers.
DSLR Camera	\$ 379.00	\$ 379.00	\$ -	Dedicated camera to photograph papers. Camera will be mounted on an imaging capturing set.
Memory Cards	\$ 70.00	\$ 70.00	\$ -	2 Removable digital drives
External Hard Drive	\$ 314.00	\$ 314.00	\$ -	
Copy Stand	\$ 1,838.00	\$ 1,838.00	\$ -	Mount for digital camera expressly used for photographing books, papers, photos
Photo Editing software	\$ 30.00	\$ 30.00	\$ -	Software for adjustments
Consultant	\$ 3,000.00	\$ 3,000.00	\$ -	assist organizing data to internal cloud, add descriptive file info and assign metadata tags
Table for Copy stand	\$ 80.00	\$ 80.00	\$ -	Digitization workstation
Contingency	\$ 289.00	\$ 289.00	\$ -	allowance for price fluctuations
Subtotal	\$ 11,000.00	\$ 6,000.00	\$ 5,000.00	
Totals	\$ 43,000.00	\$ 20,000.00	\$ 12,000.00	

SUPPORTING MATERIALS SECTION

THS Digitization Project Proposed Equipment Listing and Approach

Please see below for a listing of equipment to digitize THS's paper archives. This equipment list assumes in-house digitization by staff and volunteers. The workflow involved would be to photograph the items using a digital camera, then transferring the images to an external drive for permanent storage.

The images will then be ready to upload to our Phase I cloud-based solution (currently Google Drive).

Research from museum sites suggests using a digital SLR camera to photograph items, adding descriptive information and possibly metadata, and storing them both on a hard drive and a cloud platform for accessibility. This approach is preferred due to the time-consuming nature of flatbed scanning and potential damage to bound documents:

Sample response on digitizing archival records from museum professional forums:

*"Direct capture using a digital camera and lights on a copy stand setup is by far the most flexible and efficient workflow for digitization work. This method is also conservation friendly in that there is no direct contact with the material compared to the way flatbed scanning systems works. The speed of a camera based system and the high quality that can be achieved is top notch. Cameras allow for Raw processing workflows w/ color management as an option. As mentioned by someone else **FADGI is a great place to start when considering equipment, workflows, filetypes, and beyond. It would also be super helpful to visit a few local Cultural Heritage organizations that have experience on this area..."*

**** FADGI** – Federal Agencies Digital Guidelines Initiative. Organized in 2007 as a set of technical guidelines for digitizing and preserving historical, cultural, and archival content.

Note that final purchase decisions may be of equivalent features and prices are also subject to change.

Hardware:

DSLR Camera:

Dedicated camera to photograph papers. Camera will be mounted on an imaging capturing set. We could also ask for donated cameras.

Option – (click on Link below)

[Cannon EOS](#) Current Price \$379.00

Memory Card(s):

Removable digital drives used in a digital SLR camera to temporarily store content.

Option – (click on link below)

[SanDisk 256GB Extreme PRO UHS-I SDXC Memory Card](#) --Current Unit Price: \$34.99

SSD External Hard Drive:

Stand-alone drive with the capacity to store up to 4 terabytes of data.. The external drive will be the permanent physical storage location for digital archives. The drive will be portable and can be connected to any computer and the drive needs to have the capacity to interface with WiFi.

Option – (click on link below)

[Samsung 4TB T7 Shield Portable SSD](#)–Current Unit Price: \$314.07

Image Capturing Set:

Mount for digital camera expressly used for photographing books, papers, photos, and small objects.

Option – (click on link below)

[Kaiser R2N CP Image Capturing Set](#) Current Unit Price: \$1,838.00

This kit is often mentioned in museum professional forums as a good unit and includes lighting and can also provide images up to 24” square.

Table for Workstation:

Portable sturdy table to be set up at Cobb Archive for a digitization workspace.

Option – (click on link below)

[Staples 4' x 24" Wooden Heavy Duty Folding Table, Walnut \(58365\)](#) Current Price: \$79.99

Software:

Photo Tuning and Adjusting

Software to adjust lighting, crop imagery and overall tune image.

Option: [Adobe Photoshop Elements](#) Retail price: \$99, however we can receive a non-profit discount to about \$30 from TechSoup

**This glacial rock is donated
in loving memory of**

JOHN C. AND ADA "TINY" WORTHINGTON

**whose Pond Village Cold Storage and
Cape Cod Flaknet Industries
helped support the community for decades**

From their Grandchildren - May 1998