

HISTORIC PRESERVATION FUND

Final Report

Project Name: Fenestration: North Pacific Hall, Sheldon Jackson Campus

HPF Grant #12563

Project activities done with grant funds:

Summary: We freed up, inventoried, and stabilized the windows in North Pacific Hall, a 1911 building on the Sheldon Jackson School National Historic Landmark. We did extensive research on repair methods, and built and used a steam box for stripping window sash. Several sash were completely restored. Two spare sash were restored to use to fill in where we removed a window for repair. We conducted a workshop on wood window repair, which was well attended. We got interior storm windows, and wood for replacing rotted window trim on the exterior. We produced a brochure on the significance of the Sheldon Jackson School National Historic Landmark.

All work conformed to the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties*, Standards for Restoration. Windows, hardware and trim were all restored, or parts replaced in kind if missing. Damaged pieces were repaired to match the original. All work was done in order to restore the integrity of the windows and walls while retaining original appearance.

The interior storm windows are an addition, but are completely and easily reversible. They save energy, which makes it feasible to heat and use the building in the winter, contributing to its maintenance.

Personnel included Rebecca Poulson, who set up and advertised the workshop, and created the brochure, and did the grant reports and administration, and did some window work; Eric Dow did the bulk of the actual window work; other volunteers were John Little, Janson Marshall, Megan Pasternak, James Poulson, Pete Wieland, Shannon Haugland, and Steve Homer, who led the workshop and created the handout. All are highly skilled in historic carpentry.

Work was done on site, and in the campus wood shop.

Project Activities:

The windows were all accurately measured and inventoried in a spreadsheet, and interior storm windows ordered. Measurements, including racking, had to be accurate and double checked in the order.

Interior trim was scraped and repainted, and some windows were scraped and repainted in place. All windows were freed up so they could open, though much of the sash cord was broken or missing; so temporary blocks were installed to hold up the upper sash. The front windows above the porch had the interior trim repaired, and some missing trim replaced, as part of removing plywood paneling and a drop ceiling in the room. Old window blinds and other hardware were removed.

All of the windows were assessed for condition, inside and outside, and documented on a spreadsheet, noting broken panes, missing or broken sash locks, sash lifts, sash cord and other issues.

We did extensive research into what works best in window repair and in materials to use.

A request for concurrence on a finding of no adverse impact per Section 106 was submitted and approved.

A workshop on repairing historic windows was planned and promoted, and conducted on March 17th 2013. This workshop was very successful, with attendance by 16 members of the public, Sheldon Jackson volunteers, and a volunteer with the Sitka Summer Music Festival (which owns the Stevenson Building, part of the historic Sheldon Jackson quadrangle). It was led by professional historic preservation carpenter Steve Homer, of Massachusetts, assisted by SFAC volunteers Eric Dow and James Poulson, who set it up. Steve created a hand out, Window Restoration 101, which is included with this report along with poster, agenda, participants, and news clippings.

As a result of our research, we bought plans and a steamer and built a steambox for window repair. We used it not only to remove glazing and paint from our windows, but to get glass for replacement panes from throw-away windows.

We had quite a bit of breakage as we were learning. One lesson is to regularly replace glass cutters; breakage taking out and putting in the panes to some extent can't be avoided when using old glass, especially our recycled panes. But you also break less with experience.

Because the white paint was assumed to contain lead (though we did not find any in tests, there is a high probability it's there amongst the layers) we also bought a HEPA filtered vacuum to use with the sander, and to clean the rooms where we were working, which were occupied as dormitory rooms.

The sash we repaired were steamed and the glass and paint removed. Most had rot on the bottom rail, and some had part of the profile missing on some of the muntins, so this damage was repaired using liquid and putty epoxy.

Next they were primed with oil-base primer, then when that dried, glass was replaced, using Dual-Glaze brand putty. When that skinned, windows were lightly sanded and painted with self-priming exterior paint, and re-installed, with new hardware, trim repairs, sash cord etc. as needed.

We also repaired a pair of sash, that came out of another building that had been remodeled, and glazed them, so that they can be used in place of a window out for repair. This was a big project because we had to cut glass for all 24 panes. Many panes had to be cut for the place they were to go, because the opening was not square any more.

We expanded the project to include replacing rotten trim on the exterior, which is letting water into the building wall. Actual replacement will be done after the period of the grant. We requested and received approval, per the Historic Preservation Act Section 106, for this work from the SHPO.

We had some difficulty finding a source for wood, with the mill that had given us a quote not being able to get the wood from their supplier; then were surprised and delighted to find it at Sitka's Spenard Builders Supply, exactly what we needed – tight-knot red cedar, 5/4 by 6 and 5/4 x 8, the dimensions of the original trim. The original material was Douglas fir, which was abundant in that era but now costs a fortune. Red cedar is somewhat softer, but more rot-resistant than Douglas fir.

This wood has been stacked and stickered and a cover of metal roofing put over it, to keep it in good condition for use.

We also did some research on the original window trim, which was altered some time after the mid-1950s. The four main buildings (not Allen) all had wood panels beneath the windows, with the window trim extending all the way to the drip edge at the bottom of the shingles. The panels are still in place in the porches, so we can make the replacements identical. There is also abundant photographic documentation of the panels. It is possible we will even find this construction detail in some of the original blueprints. We are *very* excited about this restoration.

The other major activity was a brochure, on the significance of Sheldon Jackson School National Historic Landmark. A draft went to the SHPO and to the Sitka Historic Preservation Commission, as well as to the National Park Service Senior Historical Architect and to a professional designer, and others involved in historic preservation. A summary of comments is included with this report, as well as copies of the brochure itself. The brochure will be printed (it is designed to be easily reproduced on a computer printer or copier) and distributed around campus, and will be on the AASE website, www.fineartscamp.org. At some point I'll also make a PDF version for the website that can be printed on letter-size paper.

Perhaps most importantly, we are set up with methods and supplies for volunteers to easily continue work on the hundreds of windows needing attention on campus, which will be ongoing for the coming years.

HISTORIC PRESERVATION FUND

Final Report

Project Name: Fenestration: North Pacific Hall, Sheldon Jackson Campus

HPF Grant #12563

Workshop Agenda and Participants:

The window restoration workshop on March 17th began at North Pacific Hall, with how to take out a window sash, and showing an example of interior storm windows and a discussion of historic windows and their parts.

The second part of the workshop was a hands-on glazing workshop, in the campus wood shop. All participants received a handout of general tips and websites for supplies, and “Windows 101,” step-by-step reglazing instructions by Steve Homer.

We can't find the workshop sign up sheet, which was at the second part of the workshop; but participants included Megan Pasternak, Thad Poulson, Kristen Homer, Pat Hughes, Lesley Warren, Stef Steffen (who is on the board of the Sitka Summer Music Festival, owner of another 1911 campus building next door), Aleeda Bauder, Mike Wild, Craig Warren, Don Surgeon, Marcie Homer, Lucy Poulson, and a man and a woman we don't recognize, but who are in photos of the workshop.

Summary of comments on brochure drafts:

The Sitka Historic Preservation Commission noted the need for photo credits, but their only other comment was that they felt one of the buildings should not be included as part of the Landmark because it has been so much altered.

The State Office of History and Archaeology comments were to: vary headings; make sure text is legible; add dates to the photos of 1911 buildings; to edit the text so that it works together; and edit one building out of a photo. Handwritten comments on the draft made the text more concise and accurate.

Sentinel Wed March 13th
2013



FREE WORKSHOP – Micah Maxwell works on windows at Allen Hall on the SJ Campus recently. The free hands-on workshop “This Old Window,” will run 1-3 p.m. March 17 at North Pacific Hall on the SJ Campus, the building just west of Allen Hall. Participants should wear warm clothing and take gloves to learn the latest in cost-effective methods and products for energy efficiency and integrity of old windows, followed by hands-on window repair with restoration carpenter Steve Homer. Call Eric, 747-3448, for more information. (Sentinel Photo)



OLD WINDOW WORKSHOP – Restoration carpenter Steve Homer, from Hamilton Mass., right, demonstrates window glazing techniques on one of the 100-year-old windows on the SJ Campus Sunday. The two-hour workshop on making old windows weather tight and more energy efficient was hosted by the Sitka Fine Arts Camp. Local carpenter Eric Dow, who also taught at the workshop, demonstrated how interior storm windows cut down on heat loss and noise and don't affect the appearance of historic buildings. The workshop was made possible by a Certified Local Government grant. (Sentinel Photo)

THIS OLD WINDOW

A Free Workshop

*Did you know that replacing windows is one of the **least** cost effective ways to save energy? Studies show it can take a **hundred years or more** to get back in energy savings what it costs to replace windows.*

Get the latest research and info on economic, energy efficiency, aesthetic and building integrity considerations when deciding to replace or repair your old windows. It will include samples of products and demonstration of cost-effective ways to improve energy efficiency.

*Followed by **hands-on workshop** on repairing wooden windows, led by preservation carpenter Steve Homer, who's restored dozens of windows for the Peabody Essex Museum Architectural Collection and other historic buildings in northeast Massachusetts.*

North Pacific Hall on the Sitka Fine Arts Sheldon Jackson Campus North Pacific Hall is the building just west of Allen Auditorium

1-3 p.m. Sunday, March 17th

Participants should dress in warm work clothes for the hands-on portion. For more information, call Eric at 747-3448

Sponsored by Alaska Arts Southeast with a grant through the Alaska State Historic Preservation Office

North Pacific Hall Windows before



Photos by Rebecca Poulson



Inspecting all the windows



Taking out one of the windows, the lower rail on the upper sash was a bit loose



Photos by Rebecca Poulson



Detail of a window sash before repair, with typical past repairs and failing glazing compound

Photos by Rebecca Poulson



A repair session. Lower left is a photo of the steam box. The steamer is not hooked up, it is out of the photo on the left.

Photos by Rebecca Poulson





Windows reinstalled. Lower left photo shows repaired window on left, and one still to do on the right. The window in the picture upper right still has blocks but those can come out.

Photos by Rebecca Poulson

