



## The Brickyard History Visitor Experience



Community Preservation Act Funds application  
Darci Schofield, Islands Portfolio Director  
The Trustees of Reservations  
860 State Road  
Vineyard Haven, MA 02568  
October 24, 2023



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Carolyn Stoeber  
Community Preservation Committee  
PO Box 119, 401 Middle Road  
Chilmark, MA 02535

RE: CPA Application for Brickyard History Visitor Experience, via email

Dear Ms. Stoeber,

Please accept this application from The Trustees of Reservations (The Trustees) for the proposed Brickyard History Visitor Experience project. This project seeks to bring to life the important history, people, and stories that define the historic remains of the Brickyard and elevate the visitor experience through interpretation and opportunities to rest while enjoying the Brickyard's stunning views. Building off existing research, engagement, and preliminary design recommendations, the project seeks to work with the community to develop an interpretive sign, self-guided tours, and a bench.

The Brickyard is part of the Menemsha Hills Reservation owned and managed by The Trustees. Prior to opening to the public in 2020, The Trustees hired the Public Archaeological Laboratory, Inc. to develop a technical report on the history, archeology, and remaining structures and preliminary recommendations on interpretation activities. This project will build off this initial work, engage with the community on developing the design and content of the sign and tour, and host a public event to reveal the final sign and tour. The project seeks \$39,000 in CPA funds to hire consultants for the design, fabrication, and production of the interpretive sign and self-guided tour. Funds would also support the purchase and installation of a bench. The Trustees will fund all remaining activities including staff and public engagement activities, public meetings, and the final event, contingency and other soft costs.

We thank Chilmark and the Community Preservation Committee for the consideration of our application to enhance the experience at one of Chilmark's most beloved destinations for passive recreation.

Most Sincerely,

Darci Schofield, Islands Portfolio Director

## The Brickyard History Visitor Experience

The Trustees of Reservations  
Darci Schofield, Islands Portfolio Director  
860 State Road  
Vineyard Haven, MA 02568  
[dschofield@thetrustees.org](mailto:dschofield@thetrustees.org)  
508-693-2736

### Project Category

Which of the following CPA fund categories apply to your application and project -- more than one category may apply: Open Space Preservation; Historic Resources Preservation; Community Housing; Open Space-Parks & Recreation. Please explain how your project meets the criteria for the CPA fund categories you are requesting.

The Brickyard History Visitor Experience project seeks to elevate the important story of the Brickyard and its relevance to our community history. Through interpretation and a place to rest, the project also seeks to enhance the visitor experience for the thousands of hikers, boaters, mariners and other recreation enthusiasts to this special place. The project falls within the historic resources, open space-parks and recreation, and open space categories of the Community Preservation Act.

Historic Resources Preservation in the CPA Legislation defines historic uses as a building, structure, vessel real property, document or artifact that is listed on the state register of historic places or has been determined by the local historic preservation commission to be significant in the history, archeology, architecture or culture of a city or town ([CPA Legislation, Section 2](#)). The Brickyard holds the remains of the largest industrial operation in Chilmark and Martha's Vineyard for the 19<sup>th</sup> century. In addition to the over 800,000 bricks produced annually at the peak of its operation in the 1880s, the Brickyard is the physical manifestation of the people and their stories that memorialize Chilmark's history. The project seeks to establish interpretive sign at the site and app-based history self-guided tours to bring to life the voices and historic structures that define this beloved, historical site. The MV Times ([Exploring the brickyard in Chilmark - The Martha's Vineyard Times \(mvtimes.com\)](#)), MV Magazine ([Martha's Vineyard Magazine | What Remains to Be Seen \(mvmagazine.com\)](#)), Buzzards Bay Coalition and more have featured many articles on The Brickyard's history, however, interpretive sign and as elf-guided history tour brings the history to the site in real time for all our visitors. It memorializes Chilmark's commitment to preserving its special, rural character, iconic special places, and the people who defined our history here. See Appendix A: Summary of Findings Report of Brickyard History

Additionally, The Trustees is embarking upon a vegetation management maintenance project in late fall 2023/early spring 2024 to remove invasive species, mow, and clear around the historic structures to improve the viewshed, protect the historic structures from root damage and continue to restore the natural ecological system and habitat at The Brickyard. This project is already funded and underway.

Open Space-Parks and Recreation. The CPA Legislation is defines recreational use as active or passive recreational use including, but not limited to, the use of land for community gardens, trails, and noncommercial youth and adult sports, and the use of land as a park, playground or athletic field. The Brickyard is part of a 273-acre block of protected land open year-round to the public. It is a beloved destination for residents and visitors alike for dog-walking, hiking, birding, and more. It's north shore

location boasts stunning views of Vineyard Sound the sunset, Martha's Vineyard iconic coastal banks and cliffs, Gayhead Light and the Elizabeth Islands along a unique cobble beach. The 211-acre protected hills and forest of Menemsha Hills provides a longer hiking experience with diverse habitats that promote a range of ecosystems making it a popular birding destination as well. The Brickyard itself is a hiking destination for Menemsha Hills and was on Point B Realty's Martha's Vineyard Bucket List: Discovering The Brickyard in June 2021 ([Point B Realty, 2021](#)). It was also featured in Cape Pod Xplore in March 2023 ([Menemsha Hill & The Brickyard | Cape Cod Xplore](#)) promoting its destination for hiking and passive recreation. The interpretive sign and bench will promote a cultural recreation experience as well as provide a place for sitting to enjoy the historic relics amidst the stunning Vineyard Sound views.

Open Space Protection. The CPA Legislation defines Open Space shall include, but not be limited to, land to protect existing and future well fields, aquifers and recharge areas, watershed land, agricultural land, grasslands, fields, forest land, fresh and salt water marshes and other wetlands, ocean, river, stream, lake and pond frontage, beaches, dunes and other coastal lands, lands to protect scenic vistas, land for wildlife or nature preserve and land for recreational use ([CPA Legislation, Section 2](#)). The Brickyard is nestled between 273.5 acres of contiguous protected land including the 28.5-acre Great Rock Bight protected Land Bank and the 211-acre Menemsha Hills, the 20-acre Brickyard, and 14-acre Epstein property Conservation Restriction protected by The Trustees of Reservations. Though not directly an open space protection project, the historic interpretive sign and benches supports the education of protecting this important and delicate ecosystem-coastal banks, Roaring Brook coastal stream, sandplain shrublands, and pitch pine/scrub oak forest. The vegetation management maintenance project during late fall 2023/early spring 2024 will remove invasive plant species from the site and plant native host species to restore the natural ecological system at The Brickyard. This project is already funded and underway.

## Funding Scope

What is the total cost or budget of your project – please provide itemized substantiation for the cost. If this is a large construction project, please provide a detailed professional cost estimate. How much CPA funds are you requesting and how much from each category? Please outline the sources and amounts of all funds for your project—both CPA and non-CPA sources.

The Trustees is seeking \$39,000 in Community Preservation Act Funds to support the Brickyard History Visitor Experience project to fund the design, fabrication, and production of the interpretive sign and self-guided tour. It is also seeking funding for the purchase and installation of a bench at the site. The Trustees seeks to hire a consulting firm to assist in the design and development of the interpretive sign and the self-guided tour. The design and production costs are extrapolated from the Trivium consulting report completed for The Trustees in 2019. The scope of this project is smaller than the original scope of work and costs estimated were adjusted accordingly. The anticipated hard costs for the design, fabrication, production, and bench total approximately \$39,000. The Trustees will seek reimbursement for funds not exceeding this amount.

The Trustees will utilize its design, engagement, marketing staff, stewardship, and programming staff to implement the project. All are highly experienced in the community engagement, design and production of interpretation at historic sites. The Trustees will oversee the community engagement, interviews, story collecting portion of the project as well as the installation and marketing of the self-guided tour. We will host two public meetings and a sign reveal event when the project is complete. The Trustees will fund all other related soft costs such as contingency and overhead with a total contribution of \$14,125.

Task	Approximate Expense
Interviews and Collecting Stories	\$1,500.00
Public Meeting-Interpretive Signage Visioning	\$500.00
Interpretive Sign Design*	\$10,000.00
Development of self-guided tour*	\$8,000.00
Second Public Meeting-Design and Tour Review	\$500.00
Final designs of sign and tour *	\$4,000.00
Sign fabrication and installation*	\$15,000.00
Teak Bench and Installation*	\$2,000.00
Brickyard Public Event-Sign and Tour Reveal	\$1,000.00
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$42,500.00</b>
Contingency (15%)	\$6,375.00
Overhead (10%)	\$4,250.00
<b>Total Project Cost</b>	<b>\$53,125.00</b>
<b>Project Funding</b>	<b>Amount</b>
The Trustees Operations/Staff Time	\$14,125.00
Chilmark Community Preservation Act Funds	\$39,000.00
<b>Total Funds</b>	<b>\$53,125.00</b>

\* Denotes CPA Funds

## Goals

What are the specific objectives of the project? Who will benefit and why? Why are you seeking Chilmark CPA funds?

The Brickyard History Visitor Experience project seeks to bring to life the important history, people, and stories that define the historic remains of the Brickyard and elevate the visitor experience through interpretation and opportunities to rest while enjoying the Brickyard's stunning views.

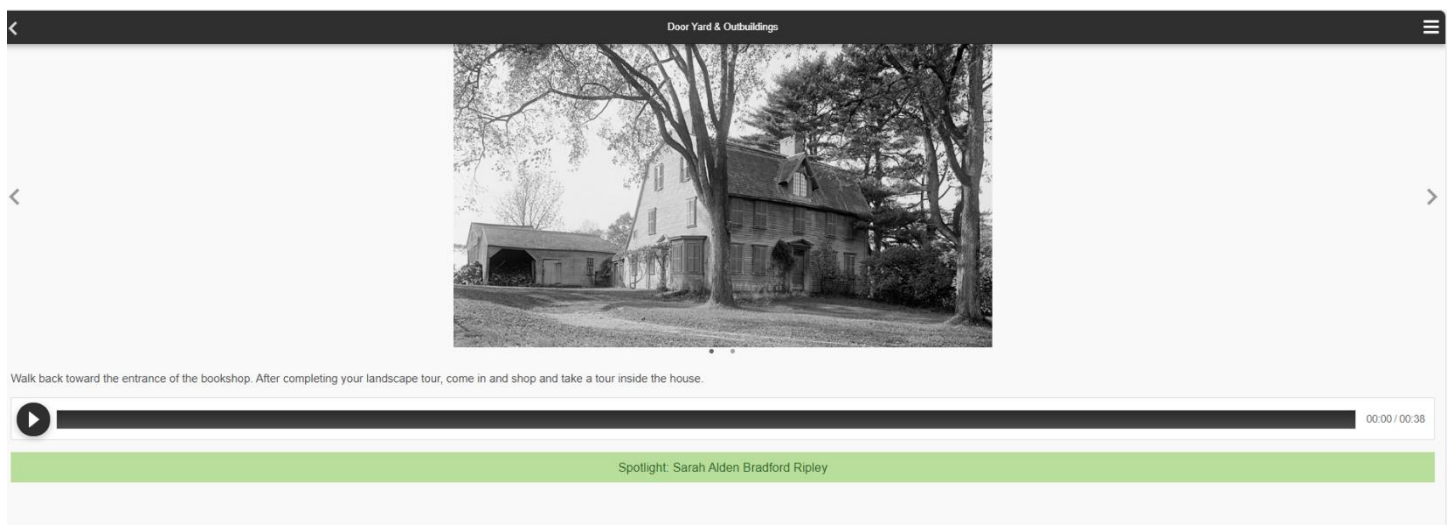
The project outcomes include:

- Three feet by three feet Interpretive Sign of the Brickyard's history guided by the historic research and community voices. (Attachment B: Site Map for proposed sign locations and Appendix E: Preliminary Vision for Interpretation).
- Development of a self-guided narrative tour accessible by phone and webpage on the sign to provide opportunities for the visitor to explore the history and the structures more deeply.
- A bench for resting and enjoying the stunning Brickyard views.

The Brickyard draws thousands of visitors by land and sea for hiking, birdwatching, dog walking, exploring, and quiet, remote nature and history experience. This project is to elevate that visitor experience and directly benefits the Island community and the public at large. The Brickyard historic structures are impressive in themselves, and interpretation provides the education, the culture, and the depth of the structure's importance in Chilmark's and Martha's Vineyard history. The three feet by three feet interpretive will comply with Chilmark's zoning bylaws (Attachment D: Example Interpretive Sign), will be informed by completed research and additional collection of local stories (Attachment C: Preliminary Vision for Historic Interpretation, and guided by the public through two engagement meetings.

For the self-guided tour, The Trustees will seek to provide an effective, accessible and enjoyable option for the self-guided and/or visual tour. The tour will be accessible on The Trustees webpage for The Brickyard likely through a QR Code on the interpretive sign. We will publicize the self-guided tour and encourage visitors to download the tour before they head to the site, as cell phone service can be inconsistent. We will also connect with TrailsMV to communicate the self-guided tour opportunity at The Brickyard.

The Trustees has completed two other self-guided tours for historic places for the [Old Manse \(oncell.com\)](http://oncell.com) and Castle Hill.



The screenshot displays a digital tour interface. At the top, a dark header bar contains a back arrow on the left, the text "Door Yard & Outbuildings" in the center, and a hamburger menu icon on the right. Below the header is a large, square photograph of a two-story, light-colored wooden building with a gabled roof and a chimney, surrounded by trees. The photo is framed by a thin white border with small arrows on the left and right sides. Below the photo is a line of text: "Walk back toward the entrance of the bookshop. After completing your landscape tour, come in and shop and take a tour inside the house." Underneath this text is a video player with a play button icon on the left, a progress bar, and a timestamp "00:00 / 00:38" on the right. At the bottom of the interface is a green horizontal bar with the text "Spotlight: Sarah Alden Bradford Ripley" in white.

Figure 1: Screenshot of the self-guided tour at the Old Manse. The tour is accessible on The Trustees Old Manse webpage and through the TourTrustees cell phone app.

Finally, many visitors have requested a bench at The Brickyard to rest while enjoying the stunning views of Vineyard Sound and the Brickyard structures. The Trustees will purchase a suitable bench that meets the needs of visitors, blends with the surrounding natural features of the area, and withstands the sea spray exposure.

The Trustees is seeking a partnership with the Town of Chilmark Community Preservation to assist in the development and funding of this important educational and historical memorialization of The Brickyard. With Community Preservation Act funds, The Trustees will work with the community on the development of the interpretive sign and the self-guided tour where we work together to collect the stories, build consensus on the design and content of the interpretive sign, and create a local history together for today and future generations. Our partnership solidifies a true community project where the stories of the people from history and today are brought to life in this special place beloved to Chilmark residents, Islanders, and visitors alike.

## Community Need and Support

Why is the project needed? Does it address needs outlined in existing Town or regional plans—such as master plans? What is the nature and level of community support for the project? How have you solicited public input and what public feedback have you received in support of your project?

The 1990 Chilmark Master Plan recommends that historic sites need to be identified, visible, attractive, and accessible to the public with an emphasis on the education of the historic resources (Chilmark Master Plan Supplement 1990-1992, Section 6. P. 222). The plan specifically mentions the Brickyard, located on private property at the time and only had limited access for research. The Trustees opened to the public The Brickyard, on May 1, 2020 after performing community engagement, site preparation, research, and interpretive planning.

“Historic resources are not merely objects of interest to the historian or attractive to passing tourists: they are testimonies of a cultural heritage providing continuity from the past to the present.”  
-Chilmark Master Plan Supplement 1990-1992, Section 6. P. 222

After its acquisition, The Trustees performed numerous important tasks to advance the visitor experience at the Brickyard in preparation for the development of interpretive sign and historic education. These included:

- (i) Cleared the site to expose the historic structures, invasive species management and natural system restoration.
- (ii) Creation of trails that connect to Menemsha Hills, The Brickyard, and the cobble beach.
- (iii) Contracted with Professional Archaeology Labs (PAL) to prepare a three-part comprehensive history report and recommendations.
- (iv) Hosted a series of meetings with Chilmark town officials, including the Chilmark Selectmen and Historic Commission to brief them on the
- (v) Brought in Trivium Interactive, a museum interpretation and visitor experience consultant, to prepare recommendations for visitor circulation and interpretation.
- (vi) Hosted a public open house at the Chilmark Public Library on August 27<sup>th</sup>, 2019, that included members from the PAL archaeological team to present the findings and answer any questions about the site and our plans.

- (vii) Hosted a workshop with APL archaeologists, researchers and the consultants from Trivium Interactive to discuss the evidence, tools and interpretive options best suited for the brickyard site.

During the COVID 19 pandemic, progression of the historic interpretation stymied and since 2022, The Trustees has received numerous requests from neighbors, residents, and members to resurrect the interpretive sign plans at The Brickyard and to provide a bench for to enjoy the scenic vistas and historic structures. Post pandemic, The Trustees is reinvigorating its initial vision for The Brickyard, including vegetation management project in late fall 2023/spring 2024, interpretation (this proposal) in 2024-2025, and restoration of the historic structures in 2025/2026.

## Timing

Please provide a detailed project timeline from start to finish. When will you need Chilmark CPA funds? Please understand if your project is recommended to voters and approved, the Committee prefers to reimburse paid project expenses with proof of payment before releasing the CPA public funds.

The Trustees seeks to work in partnership with the community of Chilmark, Brickyard stakeholders, Islanders and neighbors through a collaborative public process that memorializes the history and stories of The Brickyard through this project. Overall, The Trustees will utilize its design, engagement, marketing staff, stewardship, and programming staff to oversee the project. All are highly experienced in the development and installation of interpretation at historic sites. The project will hire a consulting firm to assist in the design and development of the interpretive sign and the self-guided tour. The Trustees will oversee the community engagement, interviews, story collecting portion of the project as well as the public meetings and final event.

Task	Approximate Time Frame
Interviews and Collecting Stories	July-October 2024
Public Meeting-Interpretive Sign Visioning	September 2024
Interpretive Sign Design	October-January 2024
Development of five-to-eight-minute self-guided tour	October-January 2024
Second Public Meeting-Design and Tour Review	February 2025
Finalize Design and Sign Production	February-April 2025
Order Bench	February 2025
Sign and Bench Installation	May 2025
Brickyard Public Event-Sign and Tour Reveal	June 2025

To launch the project, The Trustees will host a visioning meeting with the Town and public to understand priorities, stories, and interests for the outcomes of this project. This feedback combined with the PAL's technical report provide the framework for the self-guided tour and interpretive sign. Once the first drafts of are complete, The Trustees will host a second public meeting for final public feedback. We anticipate finalizing the designs in early winter then producing the signs and self-guided tour in spring 2025. The Trustees will install the signs in May and host a community event in June 2025 to reveal the new sign and self-guided tours.



## Other Information

Please provide any additional information such as sketches, renderings, plans, photos, designs, feasibility reports.

The following lists the Attachments providing supplemental, background, and visionary information for the project.

1. Attachment A: Summary of Findings of The Public Archaeology Laboratory, Inc. Technical Report, "Historic Research and Archaeological investigations Brickyard Ruins Site, Menemsha Hills Reservation". This is an executive summary of the 220 technical report which provides a comprehensive history
2. Attachment B: Site Map for Interpretive Sign and Bench. Based on preliminary feedback, this provides our anticipated site location for the interpretive sign.
3. Attachment C: Preliminary Vision for Interpretation: From Research and Engagement toward Interpretation. This document created by provides Trustees experts in cultural resources and interpretation, provides the roadmap for interpretation based on PAL Technical report and public feedback.
4. Attachment D: Example Interpretive Sign. This attachment provides examples of interpretive signs completed by The Trustees at other places.

## Permits

Please provide evidence that the project does not violate any Town bylaws. Is approval required from the Martha's Vineyard Commission?

The Brickyard parcel is located within Chilmark Zoning 2A3 and is not included in the Martha's Vineyard Commission historic inventory. The Interpretive sign and bench will comply with all applicable Town and County laws. Zoning regulations include Chilmark Zoning Law Article 5, the Martha's Vineyard Commission's Coastal District of Critical Planning Concern, and the Chilmark Coastal Zone district overlay.

Chilmark Article 5.1 of the Chilmark Zoning Bylaws permits one sign per lot which shall not exceed a total area of three-square feet for identification of the property or place or the nature of any accessory use of a dwelling or accessory building. Section 5.1 also permits no more than one sign for directional purposes that shall not exceed a total of three-square feet. The design of the interpretive sign will also conform with Section 5.3 of Chilmark Zoning Bylaws with no illumination, located less than 10 feet above the ground, and only be appurtenant to the premises to which the sign directs attention. The interpretive sign will comply with zoning bylaw.

The parcel is located within the Martha's Vineyard Commission's Coastal District of Critical Planning Concern and the Town of Chilmark's Coastal District. The proposed interpretive sign would occur within the Inland Zone of the Coastal District, outside of the 100 feet from the crest of the coastal bank and is consistent with the allowable uses in the Coastal District. The Shore zone includes the area less than 100 feet from the crest of the coastal bank. Section 11.6.D.2.c. of the Shore Zone of the Coastal Districts allows uses which are consistent with the fragile nature of the area, such as outdoor recreation, conservation purposes, agricultural and aquacultural and fishing purposes; docks, landings and boathouses associated with the purposes. Section

11.6.D.2.d. of the Shore Zone allows non-habitable minor accessory structures permitted that all applications for regular permits are submitted to the usual permit-ranting authorities for certification as to compliance with the allowable uses under this bylaw.

## Attachment A: Summary of Findings Report of Brickyard History

### **Chilmark Brickyard Site** **2019 Archaeological Investigations, Public Archaeology Lab**

The Trustees contracted with Public Archaeology Lab to prepare a three-part report and recommendations: First, the firm conducted intensive historical research which included a detailed site history, historic context and assemblage of primary source deeds, documents, maps and photographs that will be used for site interpretation and stabilization. Second, the firm conducted on-site archaeological investigations to better assess the significance of the site and to interpret the above ground remains of the Harris Brickyard ruins. Finally, the firm contracted with Trivium Interactive, a museum interpretation and visitor experience consultant, to prepare recommendations for visitor circulation and interpretation.

The Brickyard ruins are also known as the Nathaniel Harris Brickyard, located on both sides of Roaring Brook in Chilmark. The Harris family retains ownership of the ruins on the east side of Roaring Brook; The Trustees received a conservation restriction for the ruins on the west side of the brook in 1990 and subsequently received the property as a bequest from the estate of Flora Harris Epstein. The brickyard ruins are located on an approximately 5.5-acre site within an 18-acre parcel that is now part of the Menemsha Hills reservation. The Harris family bequest encouraged the preservation and interpretation of the industrial ruins to reservation visitors.

The earliest mention of making bricks at Roaring Brook from local clay found within the surrounding hills is found in a 1681 deed, with no specific indication of the exact location of the brickmaking operation. This early use was part of a mixed farming operation and not part of an active commercial brickmaking company. Before 1728 a grist mill and dam were built on Roaring Brook immediately north of the Harris Brickyard site. In 1837 William Mitchell began a small commercial brickyard in the vicinity of the ruins. Other mills along Roaring Brook included an 1849-50 paint mill, where local clays were ground and dried to create pigments for paints. In 1846 Charles Smith and James Barrows began the first large-scale commercial brick-making operation on the current brickyard site. Their brickyard included a large brickyard, wharf, boardinghouse and the first overshot water wheel that powered the industrial site.

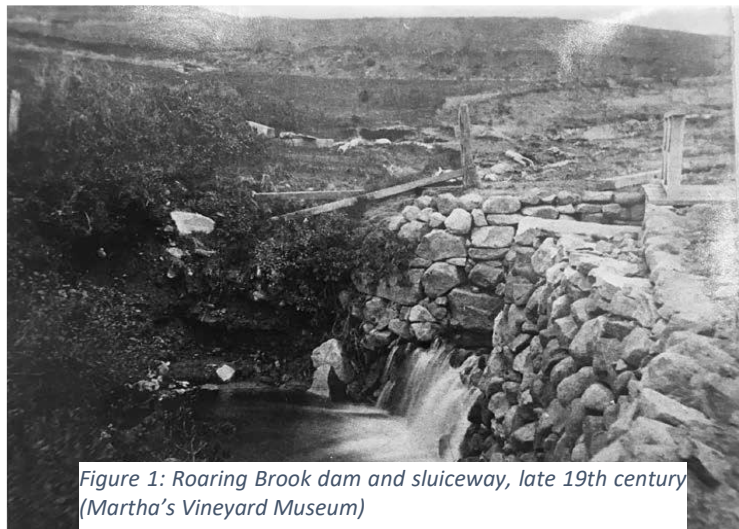


Figure 1: Roaring Brook dam and sluiceway, late 19th century  
(Martha's Vineyard Museum)

In 1850 their brickyard was producing 600,000 bricks valued at \$2,400 – a substantial seasonal industry for the period. In 1854 Albert F. Chandler became a part owner and in 1856 the brickyard was enlarged. Between March of 1858 and December 1859 other investors buy interests in the operation and the brickyard changes its name to owners Mudgett & Andrews, who advertise bricks for sale on ‘favorable terms.’ The 1860 the brickyard was still

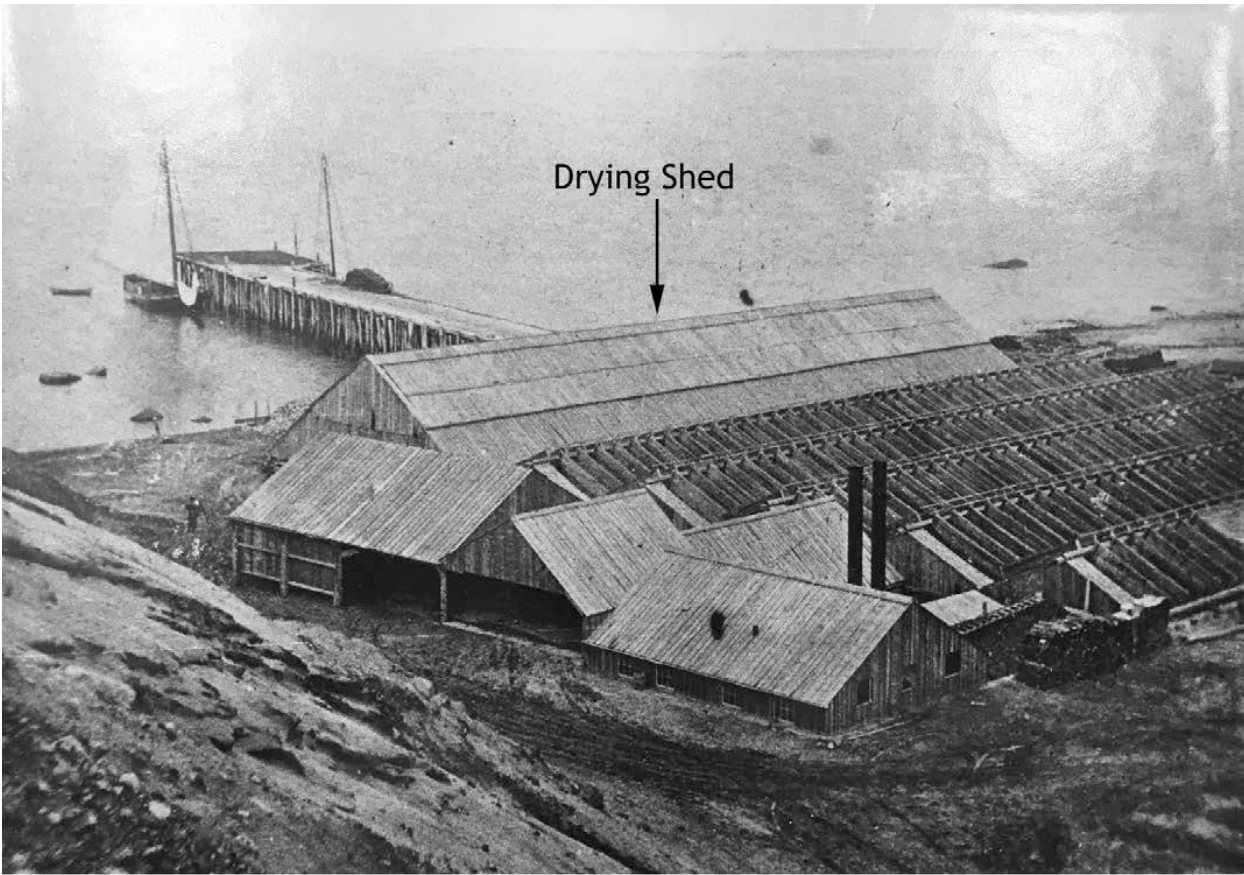


Figure 2: Ca. 1860 Smith and Barrows Brickyard (Martha's Vineyard Museum)

producing over 600,000 bricks per year. Between 1864 and 1866 William Durgin was acting as agent for Boston-based investors, purchasing mineral and water rights across the island to supply raw materials for the

brickyard which was operated as a subsidiary of James Edmond & Co, a company based on Liberty Square and Federal Street in Boston, selling pig iron, coal, sewer pipe, fire clay goods, fire brick, chimney cans, vases, clay, moulding and fire sand, and kaolin.

**JAMES EDMOND & CO.,**  
 13 LIBERTY SQUARE, }  
 394 FEDERAL STREET, } **BOSTON.**  
 IMPORTERS OF BEST QUALITY

**Drain and Sewer Pipe, Fire Brick,**  
**STOURBRIDGE CLAY,**  
 Scotch Pig Iron, Coal, Chimney Cans, Vases, &c.  
 DEALERS IN  
**AMERICAN FIRE BRICK,**  
 Tile, Drain Pipe, Fire and Pipe Clay,  
 MOULDING, AND FIRE SAND, KAOLIN, &c.  
 JAMES EDMOND. GEO. K. BIRD.

Figure 3: 1872 business advertisement

19<sup>th</sup> century brickmaking in Chilmark involved five main processes. First the clay was mined from the island's shoreline, cliffs and in deep hand-dug pits that followed the clay deposits until they were too deep to be useful. Second, the clay was tempered by grinding, filtering, soaking and mixing the clay and water mix until it reached an even consistency. Then the clay was molded into wooden or iron-clad molds that were coated with sand to make brick removal easy once the bricks had begun to dry. When ready, the bricks were flipped out of the molds and laid in the drying yard for 2-3 weeks to remove moisture.

Finally, the bricks were finished in a wood-fired kiln and processed for shipping or sale.

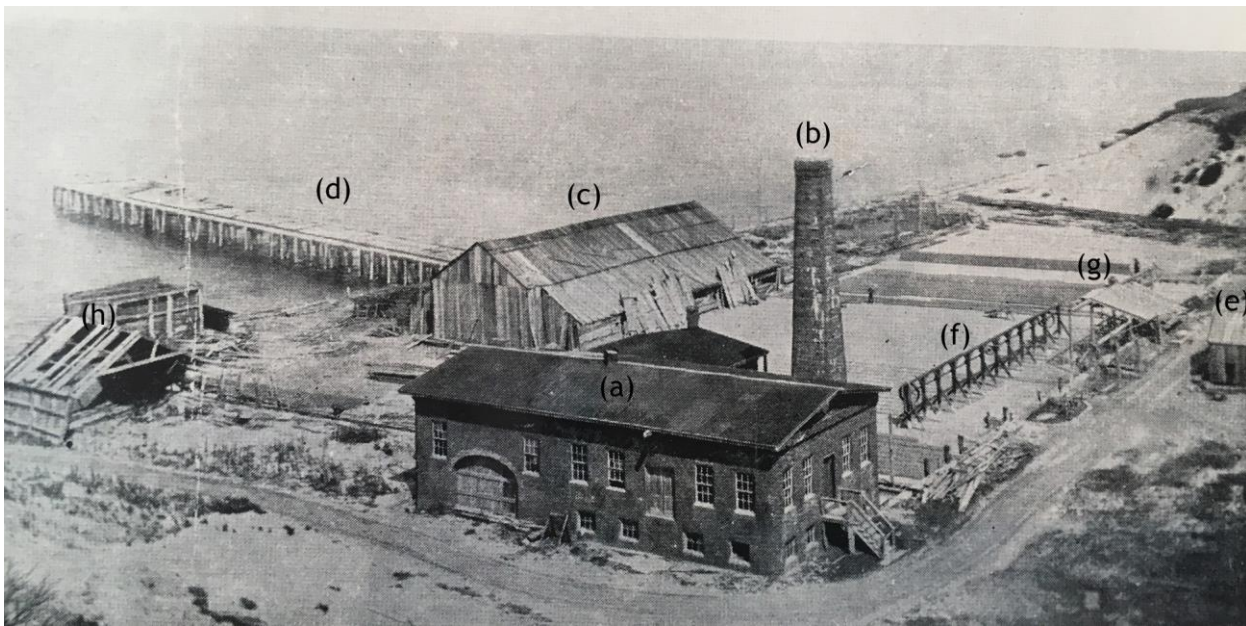


Figure 4: Harris Brickyard c. 1880. Labeled buildings are a) engine house; b) chimney stack; c) drying shed; d) wharf; e) water wheel house; f) line shaft for machinery; g) machine shed; and h) unknown structures (Trustees Archives & Research Center)

In 1866 Nathaniel Harris, a Boston area

banker, became owner of the brickyard, presumably to rescue a failing bank loan or investment. The company was called the Vineyard Brick & Tile Works, but was equally well known as the Harris Brickyard on the island. Harris invested a great deal of money into the brickyard operation, paying for upgrades that might make the company more financially viable. Harris replaced the



Figure 6: Henry Martin vertical brick machine, 1866 catalog



Figure 5: Brick machine name plate found on site 2018

overshot water wheel with a new brick engine house and wood fired steam engine that powered a horizontal line shaft and two state of the art brick machines that could increase production. When the supply of wood became scarce on-island and shipping wood for the furnace was too costly, he built a new overshot water wheel in 1884 and connected it to the other end of the line shaft to power the brick machines. These two brick machines, though seemingly small in illustration, weighed 7,000 pounds each. Clay was poured into the top of the machine where it was tempered by a series of horizontal knives and then pressed into molds at the bottom of the machine. One operator was required to insert the empty molds and remove the completed bricks. Thanks to the careful clearing of the brickyard site, a discovered name plate from the machine was cleaned and led to this company catalog image.

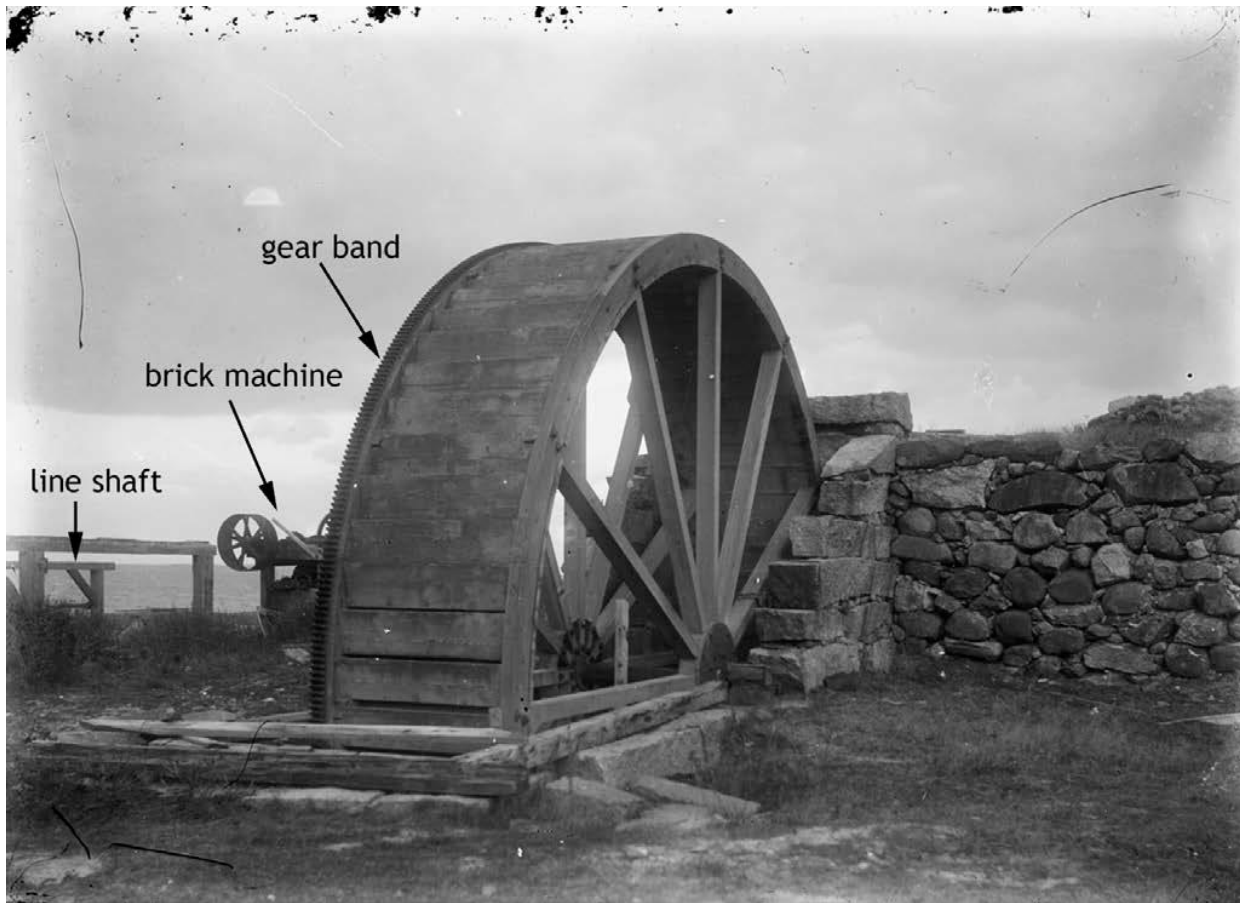


Figure 7: 1884 overshoot water wheel, brick machine, and line shaft remains c. 1900 (Martha's Vineyard Museum)

After Nathaniel Harris died in 1880 his sons took over management of the brickyard which ceased operation in 1888. In 1895 his two sons, Charles and Sidney Harris, incorporated the Chilmark China Clay Corporation and repurposed the brickyard flume and water wheel to power the mining of kaolin clay in the cliffs immediately west of the former brickyard. They shipped “china clay” to mainland ports as far north as Portland Maine. This fine white clay was used to crate fine china that was often hand painted and then fired for use. It was also used as an additive in confectionaries when sugar was short during World War I, and is the active ingredient in Kaopectate, a digestive medicine.



By  
1915  
the  
clay

Figure 8: Chilmark China Clay Corporation, c. 1895-1915 (Harris family archives/Trustees Archives & Research Center)

operation was defunct and the industrial remains of both operations were left to storms and tidal surges. The 1938 hurricane, with its associated high tides and massive storm damage was the most devastating storm to ruin both operations. There is almost no evidence left of the clay works, which were largely wooden buildings and flumes. The brickyard, however, with its 19<sup>th</sup> century stone, brick and metal construction, retains many more visible ruins.

In 2019 the Public Archaeology Lab researchers and archaeologists investigated the brick yard remains and developed a very thorough technical report and National Register nomination for the brickyard site. Tribal Historic Preservation Officers from the Wampanoag/Aquinnah nation worked closely with the archaeology team but given the extensive reworking of the site between 1846 and 1895 there were little to no tribal remains discovered during the site investigation. Traditional tribal uses of the area's natural resources, including the iron, clay and kaolin deposits are documented as part of the technical report and it is likely that some tribal members worked the seasonal brickyard along with French Canadian laborers. Because of the seasonal nature of the work, these communities are not documented in census records but are captured in Harris family oral histories, company records and in Wampanoag/Aquinnah oral histories.

Though the technical report details all findings from the 2019 season, the results can be summarized as follows:

1. The team divided the site into five activity areas: The Manager's Office/Headquarters area, the Upper Yard, Upper Yard East, Lower Yard and Shoreline Beach Area.
2. The c. 1866 Manager's Office & Headquarters foundation remains clear above ground. The building was a two-story square building with a small ell attached to its eastern end with a porch that ran across the front of the ell addition. Domestic shards found in this area documented its office/residential purposes, including bits of Victorian etched lamp shade glass, pipe stems and painted dinnerware, and date the building to the Harris era of operations. This building sat at the southwestern edge of the brickyard overlooking the entire manufacturing operation.

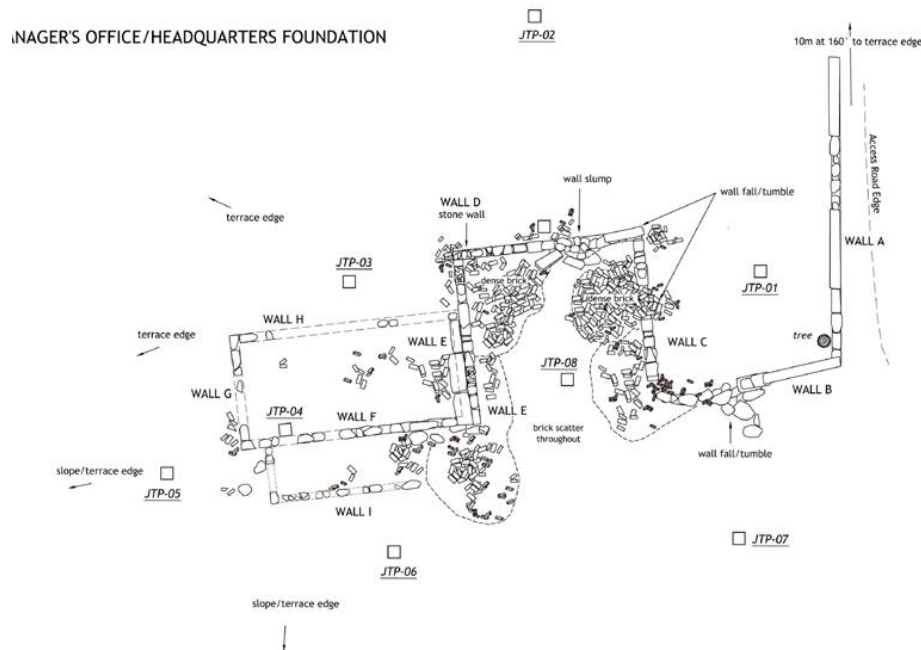


Figure 9: Managers Office/ Headquarters Foundation PAL sketch

3. The Upper Yard is a large, flat open yard approximately 260 feet x 220 feet across. It is enclosed by dry-laid stone and granite block retaining walls and is believed to be the location for delivery and storage of the raw clay used to make the bricks. The 1884-wheel pit remains for the overshot water wheel sit in the northeast corner of the yard, at or near the probable location of the earlier water wheel. There remains significant evidence of the 24-foot diameter, 5-foot wide wheel and its gears in the 12-foot deep pit. Archaeologists also found the wheel shaft that connected the wheel to the line shaft in the lower yard. Their technical report outlines the details for the entire power system from flume to wheel to line shaft to brick-making machines.



Figure 11: Upper Yard (PAL photo)



Figure 12: Water wheel pit and gears (PAL photo)



Figure 10: Pinion gear, shaft and bearing to power line shaft in Lower Yard (PAL photo)

4. A high dry-laid granite block retaining wall separates the Upper Yard East from the Upper Yard. The wall starts at the water wheel pit and runs south before fading into the hillside. This area contained evidence of an unexpected earlier cellar hole and buried brick wall that sat on the rise overlooking the wall. It is suspected that these remains are for an earlier brickyard manager's house or office that pre-dates the Harris-era office and may be associated with the Smith and Barrows Brick Works (1846-1859), the Mudgett and Andrews Brick Works (1859-1864), and/or an earlier brickmaking operation. There is little evidence of this building above ground except a depression in the site topography. Shards found in these test pits including early to mid- 19<sup>th</sup> century domestic ware. This yard also includes a series of cantilevered granite blocks that extend out over the wall that separates this yard from the Lower Yard. These long stones are the remains of the flume base that supported the wooden flume which diverted water from the dam above the brickyard to the overshot water wheel.





Figure 13: Cantilevered granite blocks indicating former support of flume (PAL photo)

5. The Lower Yard was the heart of the industrial operations. Remains in this area include the c. 1866 horizontal line shaft and its gears and pulley system, the top gear remains of the two brick making machines, the foundation remains of the 1866 brick steam engine house, the pulley assembly that drove the line shaft from the steam engine and later from the overshot water wheel (after 1884), the 55' tall remains of the 1866 chimney stack that vented the steam engine fires, and the barely visible remains of the 1866 brick kiln, identified by its cast iron doors and framing which allowed bricks to be added and removed from the kiln. This area contained the massive wooden roofing systems for the drying yard, none of which remain extant today.

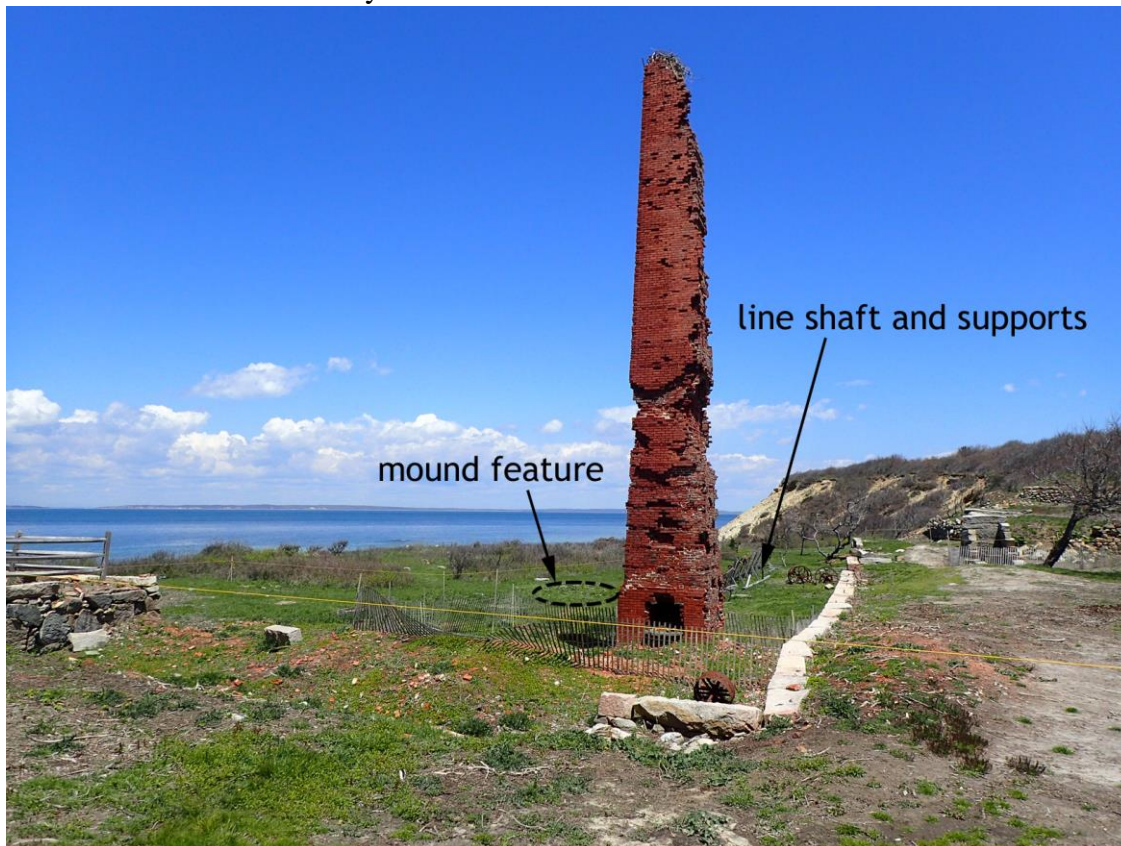


Figure 14: Lower yard (PAL photo)

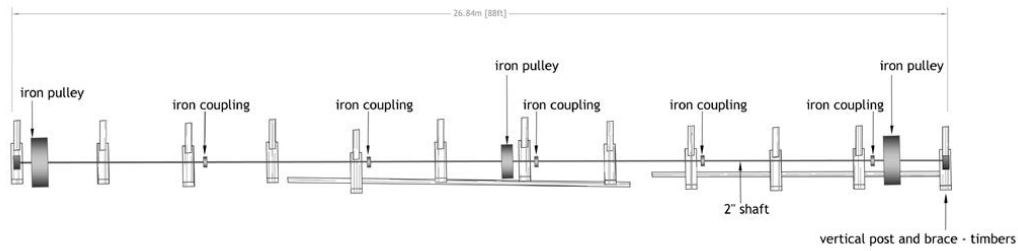


Figure 15: PAL sketch, horizontal line shaft



Figure 17: West pulley and line shaft (PAL photo)



Figure 16: East pulley on line shaft (PAL photo)

6. The Shoreline Beach Area holds the remains of the c. 1867 massive shipping pier that extended out into the water from the brickyard. Mostly notably the high concentration of granite blocks and stone rubble are the remains of the wharf bulkhead. One wooden pylon from the wharf remains, as does the collapsed brick drain outlet from the water wheel tail race – the outlet for water from the water wheel pit, though no underground drain or suspected alignment for the tailrace could be found during the investigation.



*Figure 18: Granite block remains of wharf bulkhead (PAL photo)*

The brickyard remains that exist on Trustees land are the c 1866-1888 industrial core of the brickyard. The east side of Roaring Brook, which remains in private Harris family hands, contains the remains of the residential buildings and the tram and cart paths that led to and from the brickyard. This brickyard was a seasonal operation and supplied dormitory-style housing for workers coming from off-island. At its height in the 1880s the brickyard reportedly employed 75 seasonal workers, including the teamsters that hauled the clay from town clay pits to the yard. The brickyard produced 60 bricks per minute, the equivalent of 30,000 bricks per day or 800,000 bricks per year. The brickyard and the nearby paint mill and grist mill on Roaring Brook formed a small but important industrial community that employed a combined total of 100 seasonal workers producing brick, paint products and flour used on the island and exported via schooner to ports throughout the Northeast.

The archaeologists have recommended the brickyard as nationally significant under National Register of Historic Places Criterion A (contributions to our understanding of industry and brick-making at Roaring Brook and in Eastern Massachusetts) and the socioeconomic development of Chilmark and Martha's Vineyard as the largest 19<sup>th</sup> century industrial operation on the island. The brickyard is also nationally significant under National Register of Historic Places Criterion D for its potential to yield additional research information. It also holds local and statewide significance under Criterion C in the areas of industry and engineering.

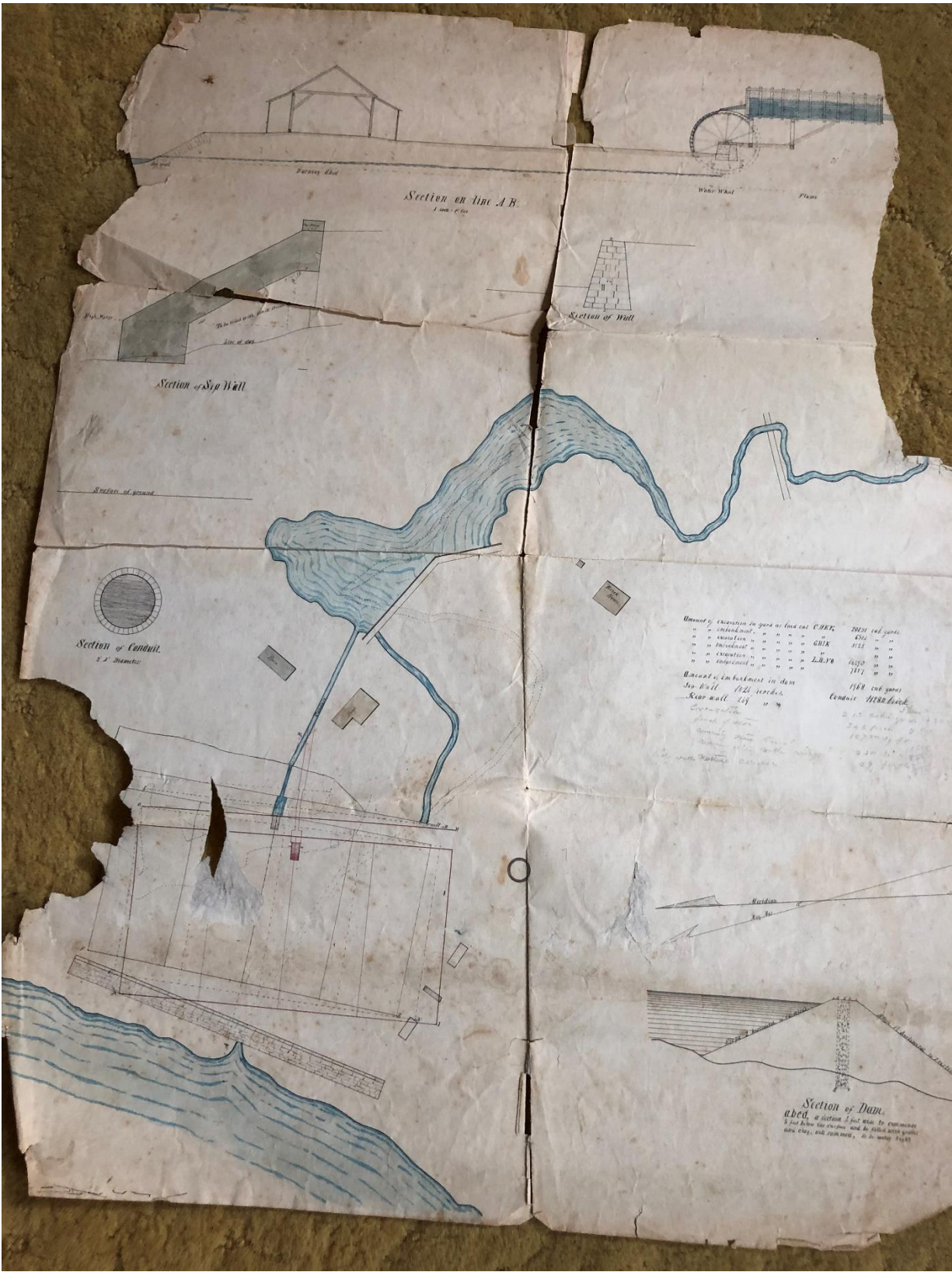


Figure 19: Undated engineering plan for Harris brickyard c. 1866 showing flume, overshot water wheel, and water power (Vida Poole)

# Attachment B: Site Map for Interpretive Sign



## Attachment C: Preliminary Vision for Interpretation

### From Engagement and Research Toward Interpretation

The Trustees staff held a workshop with project archaeologists, researchers and their consultants from Trivium Interactive to discuss the evidence, tools and interpretive options best suited for the brickyard site. Based on the conclusions from that workshop and subsequent meetings with Trustees staff, the following elements will be vital to correctly interpreting the site (please see attached trail map):

1. Uniqueness: The brickyard site holds the remains of the largest industrial operation in Chilmark and on Martha's Vineyard for the 19<sup>th</sup> century. When coupled with the other industries on Roaring Brook (the paint mill and grist mill), this small but powerful stream fueled the largest center for industrial activity on Martha's Vineyard in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.
2. By the numbers:
  - a. 800,000 bricks per year at its peak operation in the 1880s, significantly more efficient than the 600,000 bricks produced per year under previous owners between 1846 and 1866.
  - b. 75 seasonal workers employed each year at the brickyard – primarily French-Canadian workers who were boarded in dormitory style housing on the east side of the brook.
  - c. When combined with the labor force at the flour and paint mills, more than 100 seasonal workers were supported by Roaring Brook operations.
3. Voices that can tell a story here:
  - a. Harris family papers, photographs, diaries and accounts reveal stories of brickyard management and brickyard workers in addition to the Chilmark Clay Corporation that followed brickyard operations.
  - b. Irvin R. Strickland scrapbook and *Vineyard Gazette* interviews/articles. Strickland worked as a boy at the brickyard and revisited the site in 1913 when most of the 1866-1888 brickyard structures were still in place. His interview and the photographs in his scrapbook, on file with the Martha's Vineyard Museum recall work life and industry during the last days of its operation.
  - c. French Canadian workers jobs and life at the Brickyard – includes images of these workers at their dormitory and at work. May require more research into where they came from and how they arrived on island.
  - d. Wampanoag/Aquinnah workers at the yard and at Gay Head – oral stories told through Bettina Washington about her family and traditional uses of Chilmark clay and kaolin.
4. Products, industry and innovation:
  - a. Using the detailed drawings and photographs in the technical report, interpret the brick machine, line shaft, water wheel, chimney stack and kiln remains.
  - b. Products include brick, kaolin clay for china, confectionaries, etc. Includes discussion of available natural resources to fuel mills and supply raw materials for production
  - c. Innovation and power – overshot water wheels, steam engines, necessity to drive mill based on availability of wood, water and natural resources. Introduction of new brick-making machine in 1866 and other new technologies to drive production
  - d. Transition to kaolin clay production powered by same water wheel and Roaring Brook waterpower
5. Loss and Ruin:
  - a. Closing of the brickyard
  - b. 1938 hurricane and later storms reclaiming the brickyard site
  - c. Ruins and the stories they can tell

6. Interpretation Methods:

- a. Introduce story of natural resources, geology, ecology of Menemsha Hills and Roaring Brook
- b. Use established trail around ruins to key stops with interpretive panels (maybe lucite or clear panels that show ruins with etched images of original buildings)
- c. App tour – Use QR Code on Interpretive Sign to connect to historic site tour via cell phone and more information on Historic structures.
- d. Interactive models – either on site or online (or both) illustrating the workings of the water wheel, line shaft and powering of brick machine
- e. Guided tours with specialists (ongoing)

7. Site stabilization next steps:

- a. Evaluate chimney stack and stabilization methods (Planned 2024-2025)
- b. Determine trail route and add split rail fences where necessary to guide visitors through site. (Completed)
- c. Treat invasives and revegetate site with native plants and grasses per (Currently underway-Fall 2023-Spring 2024).

# Attachment D: Example Interpretive Sign

## Farm, Field, and Forest



### Bryant Homestead Barn

The barn that stands before you today represents generations of additions built to accommodate different agricultural needs. Welcome Tillson, who purchased the homestead from the Bryant family in 1835, built the original structure in the 1840s to house his dairy and livestock operation. Later in 1865, William Cullen Bryant purchased back the property from Tillson, adding a south ell to store the fruit produced from his orchards, as well as a cupola for decoration. After Bryant's death in 1878, a north ell was added for apple storage.



In 1932, Bryant's great-grandson, Conrad Goddard, made the last renovation to the existing barn and added a garage for motorcars, box stalls for horses, and a dairy that met the regulatory and scientific standards of that time. The dairy operated until the 1950s.

Today, the barn is a patchwork of the people who worked this land.



**LEGEND**

- Trustees Property
- Forest
- Wetland
- Trail
- 10 ft. Elevation Contour
- Parking
- Building
- Point of Interest

0 1000 2000 Feet

### Years change thee not ... Upon yon hill ... The tall old maples, verdant still

*What plant we in this apple-tree!  
Fruits that shall swell in sunny June,  
And redden in the August noon,  
And drop, when gentle airs come by,  
That fan the blue September sky,  
While children come, with cries of glee,  
And seek them where the fragrant grass  
Betrays their bed to those who pass,  
At the foot of the apple-tree.*

— William Cullen Bryant, *The Planting of the Apple-Tree*



### A Walk Among Giants: The Rivulet Forest

When Bryant returned to the homestead later in his life, he also purchased the parcel of land that contained the forest where he played as a child. It was this forest's trees, rivulet, and wildlife that inspired Bryant's early nature poetry and his strong interest in the preservation of the undeveloped American landscape. Today, the Rivulet Forest contains a large black cherry tree, one of the tallest stands of eastern white pine in the northeast, and an old growth forest featuring ancient specimens of hemlock. Visitors can access the Pine Loop in the Rivulet Forest to behold these incredible giants.



### The Rivulet Trail

This gentle trail winds through the historic old growth forest and alongside the trickling stream immortalized by Bryant's 1823 poem, *The Rivulet* (quoted in purple bar above). Find maps of the Rivulet Trail at the trailhead kiosk or at the house.





### Shifting Shorelines

Martha's Vineyard residents and visitors understand that oceanfront landscapes are among the most dynamic—changing with winds, seasons, storms, and tides. Today, these enduring and beloved places face the intensifying and accelerating impacts of climate change: ocean warming and acidification, increased flooding from sea level rise, and stronger storms and wave energy.

These are unprecedented threats to all that exist near the shore, and they make clear that we need to make smart choices today about how to respond.

#### Historic Erosion of Norton Point and Wasque Beaches



- Coastal beach in 1897
- Coastal beach in 1994
- Coastal beach in 2009
- Coastal beach in 2016

Beaches change and grow naturally but we are seeing higher rates of erosion due to climate change. Wasque has eroded 500 feet in 100 years. Norton Point has eroded 100 feet in 100 years. The erosion of Norton Point has increased 55 feet since 1994. In 2009, the erosion of Norton Point has increased 100 feet since 1994. The erosion of Wasque Beach has increased 500 feet since 1994. The erosion of Norton Point has increased 100 feet since 1994.

### How does climate change affect our beaches?

- Public Access**  
Beach erosion and higher water levels are likely to make public beach access more challenging, hurting communities that rely on summer visitors and tourism.
- Weakened Storm Protection**  
Barrier beaches, dunes, and salt marshes protect the community behind them from storms and flooding. Loss of these natural areas due to climate change puts built infrastructure at risk.
- Increased Pollution**  
When it floods, groundwater can seep inside beach dunes.
- Loss of Wildlife Habitat**  
Increased beach erosion from storms and salt marsh loss due to rising seas means habitat for animals like fish, shellfish, and migratory birds are at risk.



**Want to help?**  
We want to continue to live, work, and play on the shoreline. For some people it may feel like climate change is too massive to control, and responses to respond to sea rise seem too slow, but awareness is an important first step.

Learn more about how to help on the coast and what we can do. Visit [thetrustees.org/coast](http://thetrustees.org/coast)

1.03 Overlook Reader Rail



### Adapting to Change

At Wasque, the beach is changing rapidly as the bank erodes and sands redeposit on the beach below. This is a natural process that is likely happening faster due to higher intensity and more frequent storms.

The Trustees is acting to not only monitor these changes but also proactively adapt to protect both habitats and public access. Managing this balance means making careful, data-driven decisions.



Here, a wooden structure that provided access to the beach was damaged during a storm in 2002. The Trustees explored if it was possible to restore the structure and adapt to changing beach conditions. Plans for the structure were approved in 2012, but that structure was never built because of the high cost and the risk of losing the structure to future storms.



**How do we monitor the effects of climate change?**  
Sea level rise, an effect of climate change, increases the erosion of our shorelines. Trustees staff, with the help of citizen science volunteers, uses monitoring devices to monitor the contour and slope of the shore, we and dunes in a process known as "beach profiles." Repeated measurements over time allow us to observe trends and better predict when they happen in the future. We use the public data to assess where we need to take action, and plans to let nature take its course. This helps us decide how to protect public access, infrastructure as well as infrastructure such as parking lots, buildings, and roads.

**Want to help?**  
Change is here, but there are ways you can help. Trustees protect the coastline, natural resources. The way, by taking in the damaged trees and creating a new, you allow beach vegetation to do its job. Vegetation helps sand to place, slowing erosion. Only by acting together can we prepare for change and ensure the future of these beautiful and scenic places.



Learn more about the beach profile project. Visit [thetrustees.org/coast](http://thetrustees.org/coast)

2.01 Beach Erosion Reader Rail



### Thriving on Extremes: Sandplain Heathland and Grassland

Acidic, sandy soil, cold winters and hot summers, blasts of wind and water, salt spray, periodic droughts and fires: a rare habitat thrives on these harsh conditions, the sandplain.



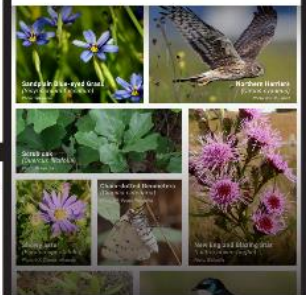
The salt-marsh sandplain and heathland habitat is protected and managed through various measures, including the installation of non-invasive invasive plants and monitoring of the habitat's health.

### A Habitat that Rises from Ashes

Before European settlement, natural fires set by lightning strikes of controlled burns kept the forest tree cover down and allowed these open grasslands and heathlands and the rare species within them to thrive. Now, scientists estimate that over 90% of this special habitat has been lost in the last 100 years. These landscapes are at risk of returning to forest or becoming lost to human development.

### Species Spotlight!

As you walk the trails at Wasque, keep an eye (and an ear) out for these sandplain residents.

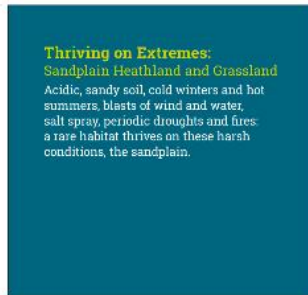


### Become a Citizen Scientist with iNaturalist and eBird!

You can help the Trustees keep track of the species found at Wasque by logging your observations.

iNaturalist is one of the world's most popular apps for identifying species and recording citizen science observations. Download the app on your phone or check out the web site ([inaturalist.org](http://inaturalist.org)) to start observing.

eBird is a project of the Cornell Lab of Ornithology. You can help contribute to hundreds of conservation decisions and peer-reviewed papers. Thousands of volunteer species and bird status and research worldwide. Learn more at [ebird.org](http://ebird.org).



10

# A Beach in Balance with Our Values

The beautiful beaches of Martha's Vineyard provide a space for Islanders and visitors alike to have fun, escape the heat, and enjoy each season. These beloved places are also critical habitats for many species, including beach nesting birds. Most of the shorebirds that can be found on Trustees beaches are experiencing large-scale global declines. The Trustees manages our properties to protect public access and preserve the delicate beach systems and the species that inhabit them.



**Least Tern**  
Just like human beachgoers, our protected shorebird species prefer to spend their time on wide sandy beaches with gently sloping dunes.



**American Oystercatcher**  
Together, Martha's Vineyard and Nantucket support almost half of the state's American oystercatcher population (45%).



**Piping Plover**  
Plovers lay their extremely camouflaged eggs in shallow divots in the sand (called "scrapes"), sometimes decorated with pebbles or small shell fragments.



**Black Skimmer**  
Black Skimmer chicks hatch covered in down feathers and can walk a few hours after hatching.

## Threats and Challenges

While it is important to celebrate successes, we must also acknowledge the growing mountain of challenges these imperiled birds face.

- Increased coastal development brings more visitors and limits undisturbed habitat necessary for nesting and successfully rearing their young.
- More humans also mean more garbage. Trash attracts shorebird nest predators like raccoons and skunks and can boost predator populations by providing a reliable food source.
- Climate change brings rising seas, more frequent storm surges, and greater coastal erosion, leading to an increase in overwash events and loss of habitat due to the steepening and narrowing of beaches.



**Want to help? Be a Trustees Coastal Champion!**  
Trustees beaches can help provide these birds with a safe space to rest, reproduce, and thrive. They face many obstacles, but your actions can help them succeed.

- Respect symbolically fenced areas
- Follow the property's dog policies
- Properly dispose of trash (leave no trace)
- Maintain a safe distance from all wildlife including protected shorebirds
- Discover more about the journey and lives of these species

**Thank you!**  
With your help, we can protect these important species into the future.



For more information about how and why we protect and monitor shorebirds on our beaches, visit: <https://thetrustees.org/shorebirds>