

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

SCOPE OF COLLECTION STATEMENT

Eugene O'Neill National Historic Site

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Table of Contents

I.	Introduction	2
	A. Executive Summary	2
	B. Legislation and Legal Mandates	3
	C. Interpretive Themes	4
II.	Types of Collections	4
	A. Cultural Collection	4
	B. Natural History Collection	8
III.	Summary of Unassociated Funerary Objects, Sacred Objects, and Objects of Cultural Patrimony	8
IV.	Acquisition	8
	A. Acquisition Purpose and Procedure	8
	B. Undesirable Conditions for Acquisition	9
V.	Use of Collection	10
VI.	Restrictions	10
VII.	Management Actions	11

I. INTRODUCTION

Executive Summary

This Scope of Collection Statement for Eugene O'Neill National Historic Site (EUON) serves as a guide in the acquisition of museum objects which support the park's mission and contribute to the understanding and interpretation of the park's resources and interpretive themes.

Eugene O'Neill NHS preserves Tao House, the home of the noted playwright, Eugene O'Neill, from 1937 to 1944. O'Neill and his wife Carlotta Monterey O'Neill chose this serene landscape in rural California for the peace and quiet it afforded. The house, as well as the surrounding grounds and buildings they custom built, was a personal statement. From the Taoism inspired courtyard to the Oriental theater masks hung above the staircase, Tao House was reminiscent of a stage setting. It was here O'Neill wrote his last five plays, among them his autobiographical masterpieces: *The Iceman Cometh*, *A Long Day's Journey into Night*, and *A Moon for the Misbegotten*. O'Neill's designation as America's foremost playwright is also reflected in his four Pulitzer Prizes and his 1936 honor as the first and only American playwright, to date, to receive the Nobel Prize in Literature.

The restoration of Tao House, its outbuildings and the historic landscape, all contribute to an understanding of the playwright, his work and his place in the history of American theater. The designation of Eugene O'Neill NHS as a performing arts park strives to continue the playwright's legacy by fostering artistic expression through performance, research and education. The National Park Service acquired title to the 13.19 acre site in 1979. That year a cooperative agreement stipulated that the NPS was responsible for restoration and operation of the site and public interpretive programming while the Eugene O'Neill Foundation was granted the responsibility to coordinate artistic programs.

When the National Park Service took possession of Tao House in 1980 there were only a handful of original O'Neill objects onsite. When the O' Neill's sold Tao House in 1944 they also sold most of their furnishings. A significant portion of these were Chinese antiques which were sold back to Gumps in San Francisco.

Unfortunately, all of Gumps' resale records were lost in a fire and the locations of these O'Neill pieces remain unknown. Other O'Neill furnishings were sold to local individuals. The O' Neills took some special furnishings and artifacts with them back to the East Coast and placed them in storage. Of these, some were bequeathed to family members and educational institutions, sold at auction, deteriorated in storage or disappeared.

The museum collection was established in 1980 with the first accession of artifacts collected during an archeological survey of the site. The Eugene O'Neill Foundation, also occupying the site, developed a collection before the NPS to facilitate tours and public drama performances. The Foundation loaned artifacts and documents to the park for study and interpretation before the EUON collection was established. The O'Neill Foundation continues to provide docents and host events through a cooperative agreement with EUON. They maintain a separate collection and library which is stored on-site in the New Barn

A. Legislation and Legal Mandates

On October 18, 1976 Eugene O'Neill National Historic Site was established by P.L. 94-539. Administrative control of the site was assumed by NPS in October, 1979 and title was transferred from the State of California to the U.S. on July 29, 1980. The site was established "...in commemoration of the contributions of Eugene O'Neill to American literature and drama." The purpose of the site, as defined in the legislation, is to serve "...as a memorial to Eugene O'Neill and a park for the performing arts and related educational programs."

The National Park Service authority to acquire and preserve museum property appears in the following laws: *Antiquities Act of 1906* (16 USC 431-433), *Organic Act of 1916* (16 USC 1 et. seq.), *Historic Sites Act of 1935* (16 USC 461-467), *Management of Museum Properties Act of 1955* (16 USC 18f), and *Archeological Resources Protection Act of 1979* (16 USC 470aa-mm). Eugene O'Neill NHS is also regulated by the directives associated with its designation as a National Historic Landmark and placement on the National Register of Historic Places in 1971.

Archaeological collections, except inalienable and communal property (as defined by the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act of 1990 [25 USC 3001-13]), recovered from within park boundaries through systematic collection are National Park Service property and must be retained in the park's museum collection in accordance with 43 CFR 7.13

36 CFR 2.5(g) states that specimen collection permits issued by the Park Superintendent must contain the following conditions: "(1) Specimens placed in displays or collections will bear official National Park Service museum labels and their catalog numbers will be registered in the National Park Service Catalog, and (2) Specimens and data derived from consumed specimens must be made available to the public and reports, and publications resulting from a research specimen collection permit shall be filed with the superintendent."

Other laws, regulations, directives and conventions pertinent to the acquisition and management of museum collections can be located in the National Park Service *Museum Handbook*, Part 1: Museum Collections, Appendix A: Mandates and Standards for NPS Museum Collections Management, pages A1-A25.

The role of the Eugene O'Neill NHS museum collection is influenced by the following park planning documents: the *Architectural Resources Study Historic* (1979), *Resources Study Draft General* (1979), *Management Plan Historic Furnishings* (1979), *Report Statement for Management* (1982), *Cultural Resources Management Plan Courtyard* (1983), *Landscape Plan* (1985), *Statement for Interpretation* (1987), *Interpretive Prospectus* (1989), *Final Environmental Impact Statement* (1989), *Resources Study* (1991), *Cultural Landscape Report* (2004), *Museum Management Plan* (2007) and *RORI General Management Plan* (2009).

This SOCS has been updated from the original version approved by the Regional Director, Howard H. Chapman on February 25, 1982.

B. Interpretive Themes

The themes laid down in the 1989 Interpretive Prospectus and which have direct bearing upon the Scope of Collections Statement are as follows:

1. Eugene O'Neill's contribution to Literature and Drama
2. Eugene O'Neill's life at Tao House
3. The significance of the site to the mission of the National Park Service

II. TYPES OF COLLECTIONS

The interpretive themes, management goals and objectives and mandates stated in the Introduction Section serve as guidance for acquiring objects for the park's museum collection. The following guidelines are designed to prevent arbitrary and excessive growth of the park's museum collection, while ensuring that the collection remains relevant to the park's mission.

The Park's museum collection consists of both Cultural and Natural History components.

A. Cultural Collection

This collection was created to support the park's mission and compliment the park's interpretive themes. Objects and archival or manuscript collections from the site or directly associated with the life and work of Eugene O'Neill are more desirable than similar objects with no such primary association.

The collection involves three main areas: documenting the life and work of Eugene O'Neill, refurbishing Tao House to its 1937-1944 appearance and documenting the lives of the O'Neills while residing at Tao House. The collection includes historic furnishings, books, personal belongings of the O'Neill's, manuscripts, and photographic materials, among other objects that illustrate the life and work of the O'Neill's. A secondary goal of the Cultural Collection is to document the history of the park including its restoration and administration.

The Cultural Collection is sub-divided into three disciplines: History (including Archives) Archeology, and Art. The following list describes the current representation in each discipline and the park's continuing acquisition goals.

1. History

a. Original Tao House furnishings to recreate the O'Neill period of 1937-1944:

Original furnishings will be sought out and acquired as outlined in the 1983 Historic Furnishings Report which gives a detailed descriptive account of the Tao House furnishings based upon historic photographs, diaries, letters and personal interviews.

- b. *Period or reproduction furnishings which can be substituted for unobtainable original O'Neill pieces:*

A majority of the furnishings on display in Tao House are period pieces. Future room restorations will also be made up primarily of period pieces. Such furnishings must conform to the available research and photographic evidence and/or compliment the general Tao House style as outlined in the 1983 Historic Furnishings Report. Period pieces have preference over reproductions.

- c. *Books to restore Eugene O'Neill's personal library at Tao House:*

Restoration of O'Neill's personal library at Tao House is well underway. Portions of O'Neill's original library are currently housed at the Beinecke Library at Yale University and the C. W. Post Center at Long Island University. The park acquires original books when possible but primarily bases its acquisitions on the Yale University and Long Island University booklists and other bibliographies compiled by O'Neill scholars. Books that are not on the approved lists can be acquired with the approval of the Superintendent if: they are the same title but a different edition, additional titles by the same author or within the same genre as other O'Neill owned books. The books must not post-date 1944, the year that the O'Neills left Tao House. The majority of books acquired will be placed on exhibit in Tao House. Rare books and those with O'Neill inscriptions are placed in museum storage and may be used for future special exhibits.

- d. *Objects associated with Eugene O'Neill during his seven year residence at Tao House:*

The park has some personal O'Neill possessions including clothing and accessories, the majority of which are in storage. Objects from the Tao House site which are directly associated with Eugene O'Neill have preference above similar objects without such an association:

- e. *Objects associated with Carlotta Monterey O'Neill from the time of her Tao House residence and after:*

The park has a small selection of Mrs. O'Neill's personal items such as clothing, jewelry, housewares and books. Objects associated with Mrs. O'Neill will be acquired if they aid in interpreting daily life at Tao House or demonstrate her role in her husband's life and career. This could include objects associated with Mrs. O'Neill during the seventeen years after her husband's death when she helped produce the plays he wrote at Tao House.

- f. *Objects associated with Eugene O'Neill which are descriptive of his life both before and after his residence at Tao House:*

A collection of first edition O'Neill publications and books with inscriptions are in museum storage. Further acquisitions could include objects from his

early life which are expository of the autobiographical plays he wrote at Tao House. Other acquisitions could include objects associated with O'Neill after his Danville residence when he participated in the production of some of the plays he wrote at Tao House.

g. *Objects owned or used by O'Neill servants while living at Tao House:*

The park has a large collection of personal items which belonged to the O'Neills' long time chauffeur, Herbert Freeman. There are also a few objects donated by other O'Neill servants. Additional objects will be accepted as donations if they are deemed appropriate in interpreting daily life at Tao House.

h. *Tao House building material samples used in restoration projects:*

The National Park Service took samples of the original Tao House building materials for use in research and restoration projects. Additional samples may be taken for future restoration projects.

2. Archives

a. *Manuscripts, correspondence and documents:* written to or by Eugene O'Neill and/or Carlotta Monterey O'Neill during their seven year residence at Tao House:

The park has some correspondence written and/or signed by Eugene O'Neill and/or Carlotta Monterey O'Neill. Such correspondence will continue to be sought.

b. *Manuscripts, correspondence and documents* written by Eugene O'Neill and/or Carlotta Monterey O'Neill which are descriptive of their life both before and after their residence at Tao House:

The park has some correspondence by Carlotta Monterey O'Neill from the 1950s when she helped to get her husband's Tao House plays produced. Associated correspondence related to the original production of the Tao House plays will also be sought. The park will continue to search for letters written by or to the O'Neills including personal and business correspondence.

c. *Photographic materials* associated with the O'Neills during their residence at Tao House:

The park has both original and duplicate copies of black and white prints and slides of the O'Neills at Tao House. Copies of a set of 1941 *Life* magazine photographs comprise the majority of the historic visual record. The park also has additional personal O'Neill photographs depicting their lives before, during and after their Tao House residence. Additional appropriate photographic materials will be added to the collection as they are located.

d. *Files related to the administrative history* of Eugene O'Neill National Historic Site:

National Park Service generated documents related to the administration of the park are preserved in museum storage. The Superintendent will determine when such files are considered inactive. At that time, *NPS DO #19, Appendix A, Records Disposition Schedule* will be consulted to determine their historical significance and whether they should be placed in the museum collection archive.

e. *Photographic materials* documenting the administrative history of Eugene O'Neill National Historic Site:

Park staff members have maintained a collection of black and white prints, color prints and color slides which trace the development of the site through it subsequent private ownership and restoration by the National Park Service. The park will continue to document the restoration and evolution of the site through both color and black and white print and slide photography.

3. Archeology

NPS sites are mandated to collect and preserve archeological collections and associated data acquired as a result of systematic investigations within the park's boundary in accordance with 43 CFR 7.13 and *NPS Management Policies* (Dec 2001).

The park preserves archeological materials excavated on the site and related field notes.

a. Significant Periods of Historical Archeology

In 1979, Regional Archeologist Dr. Roger C. Kelly prepared an Archeological Resources study. Though the San Ramon Valley was the territory of the Saklan people, a Bay Miwok group, research at this time does not reveal their presence at the O'Neill site. Dr. Kelly distinguished the periods for historical archeology as follows:

- i. Pre-O'Neill Period (19th century to 1937): This involves the early farming and ranching period including the time this site was part of the Mexican land grant, Rancho San Ramon.
- ii. O'Neill Period (1937 to 1944): The residence of Eugene O'Neill and Carlotta Monterey O'Neill.
- iii. Post-O'Neill Period (1944 to present): The residence of the Carlson family to the present.

The park will continue to collect such archeological materials as they relate to approved on-site research and restoration projects. Visitors and park staff are discouraged from removing surface archeological artifacts. It is preferred that surface artifacts be left when they are found, their location documented and that information

forwarded to authorized museum collection staff.

b. Associated Records

All original records associated with archeological collections must be retained as part of the museum collection. These records may include field notes and catalogs, daily journals, drawings and maps, photographs and negatives, slides, sound recordings, raw data sheets, instrument charts, remote sensing materials, collection inventories, analytical study data, conservation treatment records, and computer documentation and data, as well as any other documents generated through archeological activity. Such documents, subject to *DO-#19, Records Disposition Schedule* regulations, shall be certified to the Archivist of the United States as necessary for ongoing business.

B. Natural History Collection

The purpose of the natural history collection is to document specimens discovered on site that inform about the site's role in the context of the surrounding natural area. Natural history specimens are not actively being collected.

There are a limited number of specimens under the Natural History classifications. These include a core sample from a non-historic tree and a fossil. The park expects that there will be limited collection in this area. Sufficient research of the local natural history has been conducted in the surrounding East Bay Regional Park District Las Trampas Wilderness Area (See the 1973 publication *The Story of Las Trampas* by Walter Knight). However, should research be conducted under permit, natural history collection procedures outlined in 36 CFR 2.5. apply.

Researchers interested in collecting specimens in the park submit their proposal to the site Permit coordinator and must receive approval of their research proposal from the Superintendent.

III. SUMMARY OF UNASSOCIATED FUNERARY OBJECTS, SACRED OBJECTS, AND OBJECTS OF CULTURAL PATRIMONY

The park's museum collection does not include unassociated funerary objects, sacred objects, or objects of cultural patrimony as defined by the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act of 1990, P.L. 101-601 (NAGPRA). Acquisition of such objects by the park is not anticipated.

IV. ACQUISITIONS

Additions to the museum collection are made through gift, transfer, exchange, loan, purchase and field collection. National Park Service guidelines and procedures governing each of these transactions are outlined in the NPS *Museum Handbook Part II Museum Records* (1984). Accession and catalog records are maintained for museum acquisitions as outlined in the handbook.

Acquisition of museum objects is governed by the park's ability to manage and preserve them according to NPS *Management Policies*, (Dec. 1988), Chapter 5, the standards for managing

museum objects in NPS-28, *Cultural Resources Management Guideline, A Manager's Guide* (Chapter 3), *Special Directive 80-1* (Existing Revision), and the *NPS Museum Handbook, Part I*. It shall be the policy of Eugene O'Neill National Historic Site that all objects acquired for the collection should be obtained free and clear, without restrictions as to use or future disposition. If objects are accepted with restrictions or limitations, the conditions must be stated clearly in a "Deed of Gift", made part of the Accession records for the objects, and observed by the park as required by federal government property regulations. Loans may be accepted only when permanent acquisition is impossible and the objects involved are deemed to be of major importance to the site's collections or would form an integral part of a short term exhibit. Current incoming loan forms (10-98) will be maintained for all items on loan to the National Park Service. All loans must receive approval from the Superintendent before they are accessioned as part of the collection. Loaned objects will be acquired for only specific time periods.

Acquisition of firearms included on the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms (ATF) list of prohibited and restricted weapons requires concurrent review prior to acceptance by the regional/SO curator and regional/SO law enforcement.

All permanent acquisitions must receive formal approval from the Park Superintendent or the Designated Receiving Officer before they can be accessioned into the museum collection. Upon receipt, all newly acquired objects and documentation must be turned over to the Park Curator. The Park Curator prepares, for the Superintendents signature, all instruments of conveyance and letters of thanks, acceptance, or rejection and transmits these, as appropriate, to the donor, vendor, or other source of acquisition.

The Superintendent, by delegation, represents the Secretary of the Interior in accepting title to and responsibility for museum objects. The Superintendent carries the responsibility for the preservation, maintenance and protection of the collection, as well as the responsibility for limiting the size of the collection to that which can be adequately cared for. The Superintendent has delegated the daily care of the collection to the Museum Curator. All permanent acquisitions must receive formal approval from the Park Superintendent. The site will not accept objects for which it cannot provide storage and protection in accordance with *NPS Management Policies* (Dec. 1988), NPS-28, and *Special Directive 80-1* (revised 1986).

The legal and ultimate responsibility for furnishing appraisals of value to governmental tax agencies rests with the donor. John Muir National Historic Site will not provide appraisals.

Library materials are not managed as part of the site's museum collections. Policy and procedures for library collections are outlined in *NPS Management Policies* (Dec 2001), Chapter 5 and NPS-28, *Cultural Resources Management Guidelines*.

A multi-disciplinary Museum Collections Acquisition Committee comprised of Museum, Interpretation staff and other expertise may be formed. The Committee's purpose is to review the acceptance of selected donations and to make recommendations on the merits of potential acquisitions weighed against the Scope of Collections for compliance, exhibitions, education, and research purposes.

V. USE OF COLLECTION

Desired and acceptable use of the park's museum collection includes exhibits, interpretive programs, research and publications (See Section VI Restrictions).

Researchers and other specialists may examine objects and archival materials under the conditions and procedures outlined in the *Cultural Resource Management Guideline* (NPS-28) and in the Eugene O'Neill NHS Access Policy located in the park's Standard Operating Procedures. Objects will only be available for scholarly research purposes that are consistent with the park's long-range preservation mandate for the museum collection. Conservation will be a primary consideration when approving a request for use. Researchers must receive approval for their research proposals from the Curator.

The consumptive use of museum objects is counter to the park's mission of preservation. Such action is discouraged and allowed only in exceptional cases with advanced authorization as outlined in the *Interpretation and Visitor Services Guideline*, (NPS-6). Destructive analysis and tests must comply with the regulations and procedures outlined in NPS-28.

Objects may be loaned out to qualified institutions for approved purposes. Institutions must meet minimal museum standards for security, handling and exhibition of NPS museum objects. Sensitive materials may require additional conditions prior to a loan commitment. Expenses related to the loans of museum objects, including shipping and insurance, will normally be assumed by the borrower.

Access to the museum collection is allowed only with the approval of the Curator or his/her designee.

VI. RESTRICTIONS

According to the *NPS Management Policies*, (Dec 2001), Chapter 5, "Information regarding the location, nature and character of archeology, historic and ethnographic resources may be exempted from public disclosure."

The disposition or uses of the museum collection must adhere to the *NPS Management Policies*, (Dec 2001), Chapter 5, "Acquisition, Management, and Disposition of Museum Objects." As outlined in NPS-28, *Cultural Management Resource Guidelines*, Chapter 10, the NPS will keep confidential the identities of community consultants and information about sacred and other culturally sensitive places and practices.

The park may place restrictions on the publication of images or manuscripts in the museum collection if these materials are subject to copyright, and this right has not been signed over to the NPS.

All endangered, threatened, or rare plants and vertebrate and invertebrate animals will be collected only when accidentally killed or when dead from natural causes. The collection of threatened, endangered, or rare plant and animal species will comply with *NPS Management*

Policies (Dec 2000) and will be in accordance with the provisions of the *Endangered Species Act of 1973* (as amended), and will be strictly limited according to the applicable rules of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Final disposition of type specimens will be determined at the Servicewide level and will adhere to recognized conventions established for specific disciplines.

Museum management staff should consult with Tribal governments, Native Hawaiian organizations, Alaskan Native corporations, and traditional religious leaders about the terms and conditions for management of collections from Federal lands that have significance for these groups; and should consult with other indigenous and immigrant ethnic, social, and religious groups that have aboriginal or historic ties with the museum collection or lands of origin, and/or traditionally have used the museum collection. Objects in the museum collection shall be made available to persons for use in religious rituals or spiritual activities in accordance with 36 CFR Part 79, "Curation of Federally-owned and Administered Archeological Collections" and other bureau policies.

VII. MANAGEMENT ACTIONS

This Scope of Collections Statement must be reviewed every two years and approved by the Superintendent. If no revisions are necessary then a memorandum to that effect should be forwarded. When necessary the Scope of Collections Statement should be revised to remain supportive of and consistent with any changes in the park's mission.

The Regional Strategy outlined in the *National Park Service Museum Collection Curatorial Facility Plan* (2006), the *Museum Management Plan* (2007) and the RORI GMP recommends the co-location of the EUON collections with three other collections to be managed by the Museum staff. The three other collections are from John Muir NHS, Rosie the Riveter/World War II Home Front NHP, and Port Chicago Naval Magazine NMS. Plans for location of an appropriate facility are in development.