1. NAME OF PROPERTY

Historic Name: Olson House

Other Name/Site Number:

Designated a National Historic Landmark by the Secretary of the Interior June 23, 2011

2. LOCATION

Street & Number: 384 Hathorne Point Road Not for publication:__

City/Town: Cushing Vicinity:__

State: Maine County: Knox Code: 013 Zip Code: 04563

3. CLASSIFICATION

Ownership of Property	Category of Property
Private: X	Building(s):
Public-Local:	District: X
Public-State:	Site:
Public-Federal:	Structure:
	Object:

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing		Noncontributing	
buildings	2	buildings	0
sites	2	sites	0
structures	0	structures	1
objects	0	objects	0
Total	4	Total	1

Number of Contributing Resources Previously Listed in the National Register: 1

Name of Related Multiple Property Listing:

4. STATE/FEDERAL AGENCY CERTIFICATION

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this ____ nomination ____ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property ____ meets ____ does not meet the National Register Criteria.

Signature of Certifying Official Date

State or Federal Agency and Bureau

In my opinion, the property ____ meets ____ does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of Commenting or Other Official Date

State or Federal Agency and Bureau

5. NATIONAL PARK SERVICE CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify that this property is:

___ Entered in the National Register
___ Determined eligible for the National Register
___ Determined not eligible for the National Register
___ Removed from the National Register
___ Other (explain): _____

Signature of Keeper Date of Action

6. FUNCTION OR USE

Historic:	Sub:
Domestic	single dwelling
Agriculture	agricultural outbuilding
Current: Recreation and Culture	Sub: museum

7. DESCRIPTION

Architectural Classification: Greek Revival

Materials:
Foundation: stone (granite)
Walls: wood (weatherboard)
Roof: wood (shingle)
Other:

Describe Present and Historic Physical Appearance.

Summary

"Christina's World," Andrew Wyeth's 1948 tempera painting, is one of the most iconic images in American art. This painting as well as Wyeth's first sold-out New York gallery show in 1937 and the numerous museum exhibitions of his work that broke attendance records all demonstrate that Wyeth has been and remains a painter greatly appreciated by the public. Although his style of realism has been controversial among some art historians, Wyeth's work was a constant during a period that witnessed the emergence of diverse movements such as Abstract Expressionism, Pop Art, Minimal, and Conceptual Art. In the words of one historian, Wyeth's unique style, as graphically illustrated in "Christina's World," provided a "continuity and permanence in the face of instabilities and uncertainties of modern art."

The Olson House

The Olson House is a tall two-and-a-half story, five bay frame dwelling which is covered by a steeply pitched gable roof. It has a recessed one-story, two-part wing projecting from the northeast corner which is composed of the kitchen and wood shed. The house, which is sheathed principally in weatherboards and rests on a granite block foundation, stands on a rise of land near the end of Hathorne Point Road with a view south to Maple Juice Cove and the St. George River.

Facing south, the symmetrically composed front elevation consists of a central entry with a recessed four-panel door flanked by narrow sidelights, the whole of which is framed by a hooded surround. A pair of six-over-six windows with hoods are located on either side of the entry and five are positioned on the second story. The narrow cornice extends to short gable returns. A pair of gabled dormers with two-over-two windows punctuate the roof about a third of the way in from each end. Behind them at the ridge line, two small brick chimneys further enhance the vertical proportions of the house. The kitchen wing, whose diminutive scale is exacerbated by the magnitude of the main block, features two doors widely separated by a single six-over-six window. The door nearest the west end is flanked by sidelights and a hood which matches those on the main block. This hood is also used above the window and the vertical board east door which leads into the woodshed. A brick flue rises through the ridge of the roof. On the south side of the wood shed, which is sheathed entirely in wood shingles except for the west wall, there is a single square window.

The west gable end contains six double-hung windows, two on each story. Those on the first story are asymmetrically placed whereas the others are equally spaced. On the east gable end of the main house there are two equally spaced windows in the gable peak and one each on the first and second levels south of the kitchen wing. A pair of small six-over-six windows are also located on the east end of the wood shed, the wall of which is covered in weatherboards. The building's rear elevation presents a long wall surface interrupted by a variety of window and door openings and the change in siding material on the wood shed. There are six symmetrically placed windows on the main block, three windows and a door in the kitchen wing, and a door, window, and vent in the wood shed.

Like the exterior, the interior of the Olson House is modestly detailed. Its main block is organized around a central hall containing the steep open string stair with its Greek Revival style turned newel post and balusters. Four panel doors open off the hall into a pair of front rooms and a single large room at the rear. Door and window surrounds in the front rooms of the first story have built-up lintels but are otherwise flat. Two doors lead from the rear room, one through a pantry with cupboards and shelves and the other into a narrow hall behind the kitchen door. There are several small rooms on both the second and third story with plaster over lath walls and ceilings, a finish which remains throughout the house with the exception of one replacement wallboard ceiling on the first floor.

The Barn

The two-story barn is located to the west of the house facing Hathorne Point Road. It is believed that the barn was constructed at the same time as the house. It is definitely a nineteenth-century structure. The exterior walls are entirely covered with wood shingles. The roof is covered with asphalt shingles. The front (east facade) has a large sliding double door with a projecting overhang. The south facade has one square window on the first story and one six-over-six window on the second story located under the peak of the gable roof. The north facade has one square window on the first story and a single door located towards the west end of the structure. The back or west facade slopes down and contains a basement level storage area. This facade has three equally spaced six-over-six windows with two vents on the lower level. A low double-sliding door opens to the lower storage area. The interior is open to the roof with the exception of a second-story loft to the right of the entrance. The interior is divided into four bays by wooden beams and rough wood walls for animal and equipment storage.

The Field and Cemetery

The field is open pasture land bordered by Hathorne Point Road to the east and Maple Juice Cove to the west. It consists of 17.5 acres of mainly open hay fields with low bush blueberries on the northern edge. The area immediately bordering the shoreline has tree and shrub growth. There are 2,000 feet of frontage on Maple Juice Cove. The field is maintained as a hay crop and serves as an unfenced pasture for two horses and a small herd of cows. On the south shore a small area has been designated as a potential archaeological site because it contains a shell midden from early native populations.

The cemetery is a small designated area located midway along the shore frontage. It consists of approximately twenty burial sites from the Hathorn, Olson, and Maloney families. An undeveloped road which serves as a right-of-way leads from Hathorn Point Road to the cemetery.

Hathorne Point Road

Running between the house and the barn, Hathorne Point Road is paved as far as the southern edge of the barn. Beyond the edge of the barn it becomes a gravel and dirt road providing access to private property at the south end of Hathorn Point. The establishment of this road postdates the time that Wyeth was painting at the Olson farm and the road is considered a noncontributing structure. Although this road cuts across the open view between the field and the house, the slope of the land makes it unobtrusive from the same perspective as the famous painting of “Christina’s World.”

On January 16, 2009, Andrew Wyeth passed away at his home in Chadds Ford, Pennsylvania. The following Wednesday, January 21, he was buried in the small cemetery located in the field adjacent to the Olson House. Wyeth felt such a strong connection to the site that he requested that his remains find their final resting place near the Olson House in Cushing.

The Olson House and the Farnsworth Museum

The Farnsworth Museum opened the Olson House to the public as an historic house museum in 1992. The house remains virtually empty of furnishings, a deliberate decision on the part of the Farnsworth. Only a few items that add context to the house such as the original wood stove in the kitchen and the egg crock painted by Wyeth in the pantry, are in place. Photographic reproductions of Andrew Wyeth’s work that were completed at the house line the walls. These photo reproductions are placed in the rooms where the actual paintings were done allowing visitors to view the house from the artists’ perspective. Visitors often comment that walking through the Olson House is like walking through a Wyeth painting. The house remains nearly unchanged from renovations done in the early 1970s. Needed repairs were made such as a new shingled roof and the addition of

an indoor bathroom, but the house still retains the atmosphere and structural identity of a nineteenth century saltwater farmhouse on the coast of Maine. When acquired by the Farnsworth, the Olson House received a Conservation Assessment by Ann Beha Associates of Boston, Massachusetts, through the IMLS- CAP program. The Olson House was placed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1995. Also, a National Trust for Historic Preservation Grant was awarded in 1998 for a detailed building survey, performed by John Leeke, a Historic Preservation Consultant.

The house is open seasonally from Memorial Day Weekend until Columbus Day from 11:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. daily. Averages of six thousand people visit the house each season. Museum volunteers, often residents from the town of Cushing, greet the public and collect the admission fee. Dudley Rockwell, Andrew Wyeth's brother-in-law and a longtime neighbor of the Olson family, gave an informal talk every afternoon at the Olson House until his death in 2007 at the age of ninety-three. Rockwell grew up around the Olson farm and married into the Wyeth family. His warmth, first-hand information, and no-nonsense style drew visitors to the house each afternoon. Following Dudley Rockwell's death, a video of his talk was made available to visitors at the house. Since 2007, Victoria Wyeth, Andrew's only grandchild, has filled in during the summer months for Dudley's afternoon talks. Her lively presentation is filled with personal anecdotes about the Wyeth family and in-depth knowledge of her grandfather's painting philosophy.

8. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:
Nationally: X Statewide: __ Locally: __

Applicable National Register Criteria:	A X B X C__ D__
Criteria Considerations (Exceptions):	A__ B__ C__ D__ E__ F__ G X
NHL Criteria:	2
NHL Exceptions:	8
NHL Theme(s):	III. Expressing Cultural Values 2. Visual and Performing Arts
Areas of Significance:	Art
Period(s) of Significance:	1939–1968
Significant Dates:	1948
Significant Person(s):	Wyeth, Andrew
Cultural Affiliation:	N/A
Architect/Builder:	N/A
Historic Contexts:	XXIV. Painting and Sculpture J. World War II to the Present, 1939–

State Significance of Property, and Justify Criteria, Criteria Considerations, and Areas and Periods of Significance Noted Above.

Summary

As the setting of Andrew Wyeth's painting, "Christina's World," the Olson House is a nationally significant site for both historians wishing to explore Andrew Wyeth's work and the general public. Between 1938 and 1968, Wyeth spent thirty summers at this site, documenting and interpreting the lives of Christina and Alvaro Olson and their early nineteenth-century saltwater farm. During this period and at this site, Wyeth developed his mature style of painting, limiting his color palette to subtle earth tones and fixing his painting medium to watercolor and tempera. Wyeth himself viewed the site as highly significant, requesting that his remains be buried here after his death in January 2009.

"Christina's World," Wyeth's 1948 tempera painting, is widely viewed as one of the most iconic images in American art. This painting as well as Wyeth's first sold-out New York gallery show in 1937 and the numerous museum exhibitions of his work that broke attendance records, all clearly demonstrate Wyeth's extraordinary popularity among the American public. Among art historians, however, Wyeth has long been a controversial figure. Paul Johnson, for example, saw Wyeth as a seminal figure, describing him as "the only narrative artist of genius during the second half of the twentieth century." Similarly, Elaine de Kooning saw Wyeth as a "master of the magic-realist technique." But other art historians, such as Robert Storr and John Richardson, have been dismissive of Wyeth's work. Storr purposely omitted "Christina's World" from his handbook of the great works in the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA) while Richardson characterized Wyeth's work as "sentimental."[1] While these controversies have split the art world, exhibitions of Wyeth's work have continued to draw huge crowds and reproductions of "Christina's World" have become commonplace throughout the world.

Andrew Wyeth and Maine

Newell Convers, or N. C., Wyeth (1882–1945) was a renowned illustrator of children's books. He made his home in Chadds Ford, Pennsylvania, where he worked and lived with his wife and five children. His youngest son, Andrew, was born in 1917. Andrew suffered ill health as a child and received his schooling at home. He demonstrated a talent for drawing at an early age and under his father's instruction he learned the discipline of painting.

> It was through N. C.'s teaching that Andrew was first introduced to one of the fundamental American Scene ideals: that great American art would come only from artists who entrenched themselves against the fashionable styles of the moment and painted out of a profound identification with their own land and people. N. C. had come to this conviction early in his life, partly due to his thorough immersion in the writings of Thoreau and Whitman, and partly because of (Howard) Pyle's teaching and example. Pyle (N. C.'s instructor and mentor) refused to travel abroad until the very last year of his life, feeling strongly that American artists should stay at home to develop their own traditions....The great rewards of achieving a meaningful, individual expression, he (N. C.) taught, came only to those who worked hard, felt deeply, and painted out of a real intimacy with some region of America.[2]

N. C. first brought his young family to Maine in the summer of 1920 when they rented quarters in a local hotel in Port Clyde. By the early 1930s, he had purchased and completed renovations on a former sea captain's house

[1] Henry Adams, "Wyeth's World," *Smithsonian Magazine*, June 2006.
[2] Wanda M. Corn, *Andrew Wyeth: The Man, His Art, and His Audience*, vols. 1 and 2 (PhD diss., New York University, 1974), 72–73.

in the village of Port Clyde, a home that he named "Eight Bells" after a painting by Winslow Homer. By the time he was seventeen, Andrew had completed his art studies with his father. In 1936, he accepted an illustration job from Little, Brown & Co. Wyeth once commented, "My father must have realized that illustration wasn't my ability. Early in the morning I was conscious of this big figure standing over the bed. It was Pa, and he said, 'Andy, it's ridiculous for you to do that book. Turn it down and go to Maine. I will support you. Go up there and paint like hell.'"[3] Andrew went to Maine and exalted in the freedom to create as he wished. "Wishing that he 'had ten hands to put all this down,' he once ecstatically painted eight pictures in a day and destroyed five. In Maine, watercolor was the medium totally in tune with Andrew's free excitement."[4] In October 1937, Andrew Wyeth had his first one-artist show in the Macbeth Gallery in New York City. The exhibit, consisting of twenty-three of his Maine watercolors, sold the first day, launching Wyeth's career as a fine artist.

In the summer of 1939, the artists Merle James and Roy Mason visited Andrew and his father, N. C., in Port Clyde. Mr. James encouraged Andrew to visit him at his home in Cushing, a town located across the St. George River to the west of Port Clyde. The physical differences in the Port Clyde and Cushing peninsulas are remarkable. "Where Port Clyde was a threshold to the moods and violence of the sea, the inland calm of Cushing, sedate, removed, was another essence of Maine. 'I began to feel the personal side, the inner, introspective side,' Wyeth says, 'I had been trying to feel the bigness of Maine, the swish and swirl of the sea, but that didn't really click."[5]

Andrew went to the James farm where he met the only family member at home, Merle James' seventeen-year-old daughter Betsy. An immediate attraction developed between the two of them and Betsy brought Andrew to meet her friends, Christina and Alvaro Olson, who lived on a saltwater farm on Hathorn Point, three miles from the James farm in Cushing.

History of the Hathorn/Olson House

In 1743, William Hathorn IV, Samuel Hathorn I, and Alexander Hathorn left Salem, Massachusetts to settle on the Maine Coast. Each received a 100-acre land grant on the point of land now known as Hathorn Point in Cushing, and they then built cabins on the site. Hathorn Point is bordered by the St. George River and Maple Juice Cove, and leads out to Muscongus Bay and the Atlantic Ocean. Like many other families in the area, the Hathorns were seafarers and shipmasters.

In the late 1700s, Capt. Samuel Hathorn II, the son of Alexander, replaced one of the cabins with a frame house, creating the original structure of the present Olson House. Samuel II's son, Capt. Aaron Hathorn, occupied the house until 1859. In 1871, Aaron's son, Capt. Samuel Hathorn IV, dramatically altered the original structure. A new steeply pitched roof replaced the former hip roof, enabling several bedrooms to be added to the third floor. From 1872 to the 1890s these rooms were rented to summer visitors and the residence became known locally as a "summer house." The family also established a successful farm.

In 1892, an early freeze on the St. George River forced a young sailor, John Olson, ashore. There he met 34-year-old Kate Hathorn and her recently widowed mother, Tryphene, the last surviving members of the Hathorn family. John Olson and Kate Hathorn were married soon after, and John took over the family farm. In 1929 two of their four children, Christina (1893–1968) and Alvaro (1894–1967), inherited the property. They lived there throughout their lives.

[3] Richard Meryman, *Andrew Wyeth: A Secret Life* (New York: Harper Collins, 1996), 108.
[4] Ibid., 110.
[5] Ibid., 133.

Andrew Wyeth and the Olson House

On the first day that Betsy brought Andrew to the Olson farm in 1939, he sat on the hood of his car and completed his first watercolor of the house. He immediately felt comfortable in Christina and Alvaro Olson's company, as they did with him. The saltwater farm had no electricity. Rainwater from the roof ran into a cistern, and the majority of the Olsons' food and limited income came from the land and the sea that surrounded them. Wanda Corn, an expert on Wyeth, writes:

> He (Andrew) is drawn to people who live on the fringes of modern life, whose circumstances of life have been limited, or who, like himself, may not have traveled far in their lifetime. Without the knowledge that comes from books or wider acquaintances, these people impress Wyeth with their rootedness, individuality and pragmatic wisdom. He also likes their country humor, unpretentious pride, and strangeness. And he likes their toughness in being able to survive.[6]

Christina Olson slowly lost the use of her legs but the cause of her disability was never fully diagnosed. By the time she was in her forties she was unable to walk. Alvaro Olson was a fisherman but as Christina lost her mobility, Alvaro turned to farming to be closer to home in order to assist his sister. According to Jean Brooks, Christina and Alvaro's niece, "The farm consisted of seventy-five acres, and he (Alvaro) plowed and planted, scattering feed for his two hundred hens and for the pigs. Alvaro worked his gardens, planted early peas, potatoes, and turnips. He added blueberry bushes to fill the pastures."[7] Alvaro also cut firewood; thirteen cords were used per year to keep the house heated. Christina kept house and did all of the cooking and canning of their summer vegetables. She sold eggs, vegetables, and milk from their cows to neighbors.

A year after Andrew Wyeth met Betsy James, they married. Beginning in their first year of marriage, they developed a routine of dividing their time between Chadds Ford, Pennsylvania, and Cushing, Maine, spending six months in each location, with the summer season spent in Maine. They continued this practice all of their married lives.

The 1940s marked a turning point. Andrew Wyeth's work matured. In 1945 N. C. Wyeth was killed when his car was struck by a train. N. C. Wyeth had maintained a very strong influence in his son's life. According to Wanda Corn, the relationship between Andrew and N. C. was "made up of so many parts: father to son, teacher to student, illustrator to painter. In many ways they were kindred spirits, holding the same ideas, wedded to the same creative passion, and sharing in critical appraisals of each other's work. Neither of them ever enjoyed a similar relationship with any other painter. Yet they had very different kinds of personalities."[8] Andrew's marriage to Betsy led to her becoming an influence on his work as well. Betsey Wyeth also sought to distance her husband from his father's influence. With the death of N. C., the rivalry of father and daughter-in-law ended, and for the first time in his life, Andrew experienced a very deep, personal loss.

As Wyeth's personal life changed, so, too, did his work. He abandoned the free-flowing brilliantly hued use of watercolor for the more controlled dry-brush technique in watercolor. With this latter technique, the brush holds more pigment than water and is stroked over completely dry paper. This approach often requires that layers of paint be built up slowly. Along with dry brush, Wyeth also found affinity with using egg tempera. In egg tempera the artist mixes egg yolk, dry pigment, and water to create the painting medium. Similar to dry brush

[6] Corn, *Andrew Wyeth*, 113.
[7] Jean Olson Brooks and Deborah Dalfonso, *Christina Olson: Her World Beyond the Canvas* (Camden, ME: Down East Books, 1998), 48.
[8] Corn, *Andrew Wyeth*, 74–75.

watercolor, the image is often built up using many layers of paint. Dry brush watercolor and tempera painting would remain the two mediums used by Wyeth throughout his life.

This mature style was developed using two distinct and different subjects. While in Maine, Wyeth painted the Olsons and the Olson farm. In Pennsylvania, he painted the Kuerner farm as well as its owners, Karl and Anna Kuerner.

Andrew Wyeth's work at the Olson Farm

While summering in Maine, Andrew Wyeth was a frequent visitor to the Olson farm. He wrote, "She (Christina) and Alvaro, too, finally gave me complete liberty to wander over the house as I wanted. I finally used the upstairs room as a permanent studio."[9] Wyeth came to know Christina, Alvaro, and the sixteen-room saltwater farmhouse very well. Commenting on the role the Olsons played in the development of Wyeth's art, scholars Katherine Stoddart Gilbert and Joan K. Holt noted that:

> The Olson household provided the artist with the kind of isolated and incongruous microcosm on which his art feeds. Here was a self-contained New England world where every board and nail spoke of the past and of generations of use. Relics from past occupants were everywhere; the faded clapboards of the house were redolent with decay. Its inhabitants were also growing old and would leave no heirs. In a way, their aging and inevitable death symbolized early New England when, as friend of Christina's wrote, people "expected to struggle, and did so with pride beholden to no one."[10]

Wyeth himself felt no real need to leave the area. As he explained it:

> I feel limited if I travel. I feel freer in surroundings that I don't have to be conscious of. I'll say that I love the object, or I love the hill. But that hill sets me free. I could wander over countless hills. But this one hill becomes thousands of hills to me. In finding this one object, I find the world. I think a great painting is a painting that funnels itself in and then funnels out, spreads out. I enter in a very focused way and then I go through it and way beyond it.[11]

Wyeth expressively documented life on the isolated, saltwater Olson farm in many of his works. Christina Olson, her brother Alvaro, and the house itself occupied the artist, becoming the focus of his work over a twenty-nine-year period, 1939 through 1968. During that time he completed nearly three-hundred drawings, watercolors, and tempera paintings related to the Olsons. Some of his most noted and well-known works were done at the Olson House, including *Oil Lamp* (1945); *Christina Olson* (1947); *Wind from the Sea* (1948); *Miss Olson* (1952); *Hay Ledge* (1957); *Woodstove* (1962); *Weatherside* (1966); *End of Olsons* (1969); and *Christina's World* (1948). For Wyeth, "[i]n the portraits of that house, the windows are eyes or pieces of the soul almost. To me, each window is a different part of Christina's life."[12]

Christina's World

Wyeth's most famous and far reaching work is unquestionably *Christina's World,* a tempera painting he completed in 1948. This painting features Christina Olson in a pink dress lying in the field facing the Olson House on the distant hillside. Because of her disability, she actually preferred to move around the property by

[9] Katherine Stoddert Gilbert and Joan K. Holt, *Two Worlds of Andrew Wyeth: Kuerners and Olsons* (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1976), 126.
[10] Corn, *Andrew Wyeth*, 118.
[11] Gilbert and Holt, Two Worlds of Andrew Wyeth, 24.
[12] Ibid., 153.

crawling. Describing the work, Wyeth said, "*Christina's World* is more than just her portrait. It really was her whole life and that is what she liked in it. I saw her in the field...She was out getting vegetables and she was pulling herself slowly back toward the house... I worked on that picture from eight o'clock until five thirty every day for weeks. I had that room upstairs, and I'd move the tempera panel around... I know I was getting pretty close to putting Christina in the position I wanted, the arms and everything… where it showed the tragedy as well as the joyfulness of her life."[13]

But after finishing the painting, Wyeth became ambivalent, describing the painting to his wife as a "complete flat tire." Despite this criticism, the painting was sent to the Macbeth Gallery in New York City in October 1948. Within days of its arrival in New York the painting which was exhibited in a one-man show had initiated a storm within the art world. Within weeks, the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA) had bought the painting for $1,800. With the release of *Christina's World,* Andrew Wyeth received significant acclaim—although he was only thirty-one-years old.

Richard Meryman, Wyeth's biographer, has written that "*Christina's World* became one of America's foremost indelible images—along with Grant Wood's *American Gothic*, Gilbert Stuart's portrait of George Washington, and *Study in Grey and Black* (Whistler's Mother) by James McNeill Whistler."[14] Christopher Crosman, Director of the Farnsworth Museum calls *Christina's World* "one of art history's most eloquent and sustained soliloquies on the human spirit."

The seminal nature of this piece has led to its being highlighted in general surveys of American art. In his survey textbook, Wayne Craven, an art historian at the University of Delaware, explored the painting as well as the complexities inherent in its execution in some detail:

> The picture is painted in tempera, a quick drying pigment which allows almost instant overpainting. It is Wyeth's favorite medium, for it permits the artist to build up one layer over another, while letting the colors underneath show through. It also lends itself to the exact detailing that Wyeth desires.
>
> Wyeth's execution of details, however, should not obscure the strong abstract element in his work. No small part of the greatness of his art is due to his extraordinary powers of selection and rejection—that is, of selecting only that which is quintessential to his scene and his story, and rejecting all other detail as extraneous.
>
> In the broadest sense, the abstract qualities are perceived in his reduction of the scene to basic components: The invalid, the field, the silhouetted structures, and the sky. This reduction to the point of starkness is, of course, an essential means for the drama he wished to evoke. While we feel the raspiness of the dry grasses of the field, those grasses are rendered in a most abstract way, with the entire expanse of the field treated as a mass rather than as studies of individual blades. Only by treating that broad area as an abstract mass could Wyeth concentrate our attention on the dynamic tension that is sensed between the girl and the distant house.
>
> In the work of Andrew Wyeth we have a confluence of two mainstreams of American art—the longstanding, one can say indigenous, naturalism of American art, and the more recently developed aesthetic appreciation for abstract art.[15]

[13] Ibid., 131.
[14] Meryman, *Andrew Wyeth*, 6.
[15] Wayne Craven, *American Art History and Culture* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1994), 582.

The painting has had a powerful and long-lasting impact on the American public at large. Andrew Wyeth himself once remarked on the painting's appeal saying, "It's very interesting that *Christina's World* has such a wide appeal. People seem to put themselves into it. I get literally hundreds of letters a year from people saying that it's a portrait of themselves. And then they describe their own life."[16] Since the Olson House opened to the public in 1992, the guest book there has been filled each year with comments from people who grew up with a print of *Christina's World.* They explain how much the image has meant to them. One visitor, Gayle of Strasburg, Virginia, wrote in 1993, "When I was a child and discovered art for the first time in my life, I cried when I gazed upon *Christina's World*. I was so moved by this painting, and I never loved any painting as much." Sandra of Middletown, Connecticut, wrote in 1995, "A copy of *Christina's World* hangs in my living room where it will remain as an encouragement and symbol of strength and courage." Similar comments have been written repeatedly each year in the guest book.

Although the general public has embraced Wyeth, some critics have remained hostile to his work. As recently as 2005, Robert Storr, a former curator at MoMA , condemned Wyeth's work as "a very contrived version of what is true about simple Americans." For Storr, Wyeth's limited palate resulted in works which lack "real air—the breath of nature." The art critic Dave Hickey agreed, describing Wyeth's work as "dead as a board."

Criticism of Wyeth may have stemmed from broader divisions within the art world. In the 1960s, as the "battle lines between realism and abstraction were [rigidly drawn]," Wyeth was "increasingly castigated as old-fashioned, rural, reactionary and sentimental." Kathleen Foster, the Robert L. McNeil, Jr., Curator of American Art and Director of the Center for American Art at the Philadelphia Museum of Art, dismisses this criticism of Wyeth, noting simply that the "writers who were defending abstraction needed someone to attack."[17] Wyeth, who was wildly popular with the general public, made an easy target.

While many art critics debated the quality of his work, the sale of Wyeth's works set records. In 1959, the Philadelphia Museum paid $31,000 for *Groundhog Day*, the highest sum ever paid by a museum for a work by a living artist. Three years later, in 1963, Wyeth broke his own record when the Dallas Museum of Art paid $58,000 for *That Gentleman*.

Olsons and Kuerners

Wyeth's other subjects at this time were the husband and wife Karl and Anna Kuerner and their farm in Pennsylvania. The Kuerners were recent immigrants to this country. Karl fought in the German army during WWI, and Anna's grasp of the English language was limited. While the Olson farm exhibited the decline of a New England family home throughout many generations, the Kuerner farm was neat and orderly. Wanda Corn has pointed out the stark differences between the two properties:

> At Wyeth's southern painting spot, the Kuerners' farm at Chadds Ford, the circumstances are very different. Here there are no relics, no New England ghosts, no weathered clapboards; pails are never battered, nor paint peeling. Quite the contrary. The Kuerner farm is tidy and orderly, run with the clockwork efficiency according to a fixed seasonal schedule. By all signs, this German farmer has achieved the modest success he came to seek in America after WWI.[18]

Andrew Wyeth himself saw the Kuerners as the opposite of the Olsons. He once said,

[16] Gilbert and Holt, *Two Worlds of Andrew Wyeth*, 134.
[17] Henry Adams, "Wyeth's World," *Smithsonian Magazine*, 2006.
[18] Corn, *Andrew Wyeth*, 119.

> Through the Olsons I really began to see New England as it really was. It was just the opposite to the Kuerners. The difference between Anna Kuerner and Christina Olson is quite great. Anna Christina is a direct Maine type of Yankee, New England, whereas the other is foreign and yes, small and quiet but underneath, of course, tremendously pugnacious. Quite a difference there. Difference, of course, is something that interests me very much.[19]

The former Director of the Whitney Museum, John Baur, has seen the differences between the two farms as central to Wyeth's work.

> These two places, where virtually all of Wyeth's life has been cast, are important to his work. Not only have they provided the subjects for his pictures but they have deeply colored his outlook, giving him something of their spare simplicity, an understanding of weather-beaten things, of sun and air and of the underlying tragedy in hard and lonely times. The microscopically realist style which Wyeth has mastered in his tempera paintings has been a direct response to his love of these places and their people. It is never used to dazzle nor for the sheer joy of imitation. It is a tool for mirroring, as flawlessly as possible, the subtle moods and restrained drama of his chosen themes. His pictures are often symbolic in feeling but the symbolism is essentially pictorial, not literary and seldom explicit.[20]

Wyeth's focus on these two regions of America and their inhabitants also serves as a lesson for other artists. The two farms and these four people, the Olsons and the Kuerners, were the inspiration for years of subject matter and countless paintings.

Work at the Olson Farm Ends

By November 1967, Alvaro was no longer able to manage and maintain the large house and farm on a daily basis. In December of that year he died of cancer. Christina, who had gone to live with her niece, died shortly afterward in January 1968. The house was empty for the first time since it had been built. Andrew Wyeth attended the funeral and returned to the empty house during the spring of 1968 to complete four paintings, *Christina's Teapot*, *Alvaro and Christina*, *The Pantry* and *End of Olsons*. Having documented the deterioration of the Olson House as well as the lives and deaths of Christina and Alvaro, Wyeth then turned to a fifteen year old model from Cushing, Siri Erickson. Wyeth said of his paintings of Siri, "Then you get suddenly this change of such an invigorating, zestful, powerful phenomenon. Here was something bursting forth, like spring coming through the ground. In a way this was not a figure, but more of a burst of life."[21] His work at the Olson farm was completed.

In July 1968, the remaining contents of the Olson House were sold at auction by the two surviving Olson brothers, Sam and Fred. One year later in 1969, the Hollywood producer, Joseph E. Levine, purchased the house. Levine was a collector of Wyeth's work, particularly the work that Wyeth painted at the Olson House. Hiring a skilled local carpenter and working closely with Betsy Wyeth, Andrew's wife, the house was repaired but not altered. Levine opened a museum at the Olson House highlighting his Wyeth collection. The museum was opened to the public for only two summers in 1971 and 1972. Levine then placed the house on the real estate market.

---

[19] Gilbert and Holt, *Two Worlds of Andrew Wyeth*, 158.
[20] John I. H. Baur, *New Art in America: 50 Painters of the 20th Century* (New York: New York Graphic Society, 1957), 278.
[21] Gilbert and Holt, *Two Worlds of Andrew Wyeth*, 185.

In 1986, John and Lee Adams Sculley purchased the house. The Sculleys kept the house closed and unoccupied for several years. In 1991, they donated the site to the Farnsworth Museum.

Wyeth's Place in American Art

As America entered the twentieth century, artists turned away from depictions of the genteel lifestyle of the upper classes to celebrate the life of the common man. This new and more accessible art often promoted ideals such as hard physical labor, the rituals of everyday life and the beauty of the natural world.

In his formative years Andrew Wyeth was drawn to the paintings of two American artists, Winslow Homer (1836–1910) and Thomas Eakins (1844–1916). Homer's watercolors and paintings record an immediate experience drawn directly from nature. His paintings often depict fisherman and school teachers engaged in their daily labors. He was also impressed with the awesome power and beauty of nature, painting the turbulent seas off the Maine coast and the wild forests of the Adirondack Mountains. Like Homer, Thomas Eakins was an outdoorsman who worked directly and uncompromisingly from nature. Eakin's portraits depict an honesty and depth of character that was new to portrait painting at that time. His palette is often limited and the dramatic lighting on his subjects typically reflects a somber mood. In his *History of American Art*, Daniel Mendelowitz writes, "Like Homer and Eakins, Wyeth loves both nature and man with a gloomy intensity, and his sharp-focus, precise technique is admirably adapted to communicate both objectivity of vision and depth of feeling."

Between the two World Wars, American artists created and defined a uniquely American style of art.[22] This new art was referred to as American Scene Painting. Edward Hopper (1882–1967) was at the forefront of this new style. Hopper painted American landscapes and cityscapes with a jarring sense of realism and powerful psychological impact. Andrew Wyeth admired Hopper's work and the two artists corresponded throughout the latter years of Hopper's life. Both artists found poetry in the commonplace and depicted people in an unidealized manner. Hopper and Wyeth's people are often solitary figures who express the loneliness inherent in modern life. Both artists often highlight a strong underlying abstract structure in the composition of the work.

During the Depression, Regionalist artists, such as Thomas Hart Benton (1889–1975) and Grant Wood (1892–1941), saw the true expression of American art in the simple life of the Midwestern farmer. They rejected European influences, preferring to develop a truly American art form. Grant Wood's painting, *American Gothic* (1930), is the best known icon of the movement.

According to Wayne Craven, "[t]he history of American painting during the first four decades of the twentieth century consists of two parallel traditions—realism and abstraction. The former seemed to arise naturally out of America itself, while the latter followed the lead of the dynamic European experiments in visual, imagery."

Craven sees Wyeth as central to one of the older and longer traditions: "In Andrew Wyeth we have the continuation of that enduring naturists tradition that has extended throughout more than 300 years of American painting."

Andrew Wyeth's work is included in the field of Realism but, unlike the Photo-Realists of the 1960s, his work contains both many abstract compositional elements and a strong emotional component. As Beth Venn, Curator of the Whitney Museum of Art, notes, "Certain artists resurface by gently insisting that they be reckoned with

[22] Some American artists turned to Europe for their inspiration and role models. Beginning in the mid-1900s, Cubism and Abstraction were styles of painting being explored by artists living in Europe, such as Pablo Picasso (1881–1973) and Wassily Kandinsky (1866–1944). Contemporary European movements included Fauvism, Dadaism-Surrealism, Futurism, and Expressionism.

on their own terms-that their art be contextualized by nothing other than its own parochial history." Assessing Wyeth's career, she notes:

> The great realist painter Andrew Wyeth is nearly by any measure considered an American icon. He is also a prime example of the artist working happily and comfortably outside of mainstream critical and curatorial circles. At eighty years of age, drawing and painting all day, every day, Wyeth works in the splendid isolation afforded by his studios in the hills of rural Chadds Ford, Pennsylvania, or the craggy shore of Port Clyde, Maine. This physical isolation is a reflection of Wyeth's aesthetic sensibility, an extension of his flinty determination to be unmoved by a century that has changed every other thing around him.[23]

> Andrew Wyeth's status as one of America's more popular artists is demonstrated by the fact that four of the nation's top museums held major retrospectives of Wyeth's work in 1966 and 1967.

> At the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts in Philadelphia, the attendance of 173,000 was a record. The Art Institute of Chicago attracted 253,727 and had the largest per diem of the four participating museums. At New York's Whitney Museum of American Art, lines of patient admirers stretched along Madison Avenue and halfway along Seventy-fifth Street. Inside was a hushed air of reverent concentration. The show was extended by a week, to fifty-five days, and the attendance of 263,302 was a record.[24]

> "Say what we will about art; Wyeth can take your breath away," a catalogue of Wyeth's work enthused.

Conclusion

> One art historian has called this ramshackle structure (the Olson House) America's Parthenon. America's Lourdes might be more apt.... Before they leave, the pilgrims hover over the guest book to pour out their feelings to the man who transformed Christina Olson, crippled daughter of a Swedish sailor, into a symbol of pain and longing; "This is like visiting Assisi and touching the stones that Francis touched." "You have been part of my life for over thirty years." "Thank you for being America's painter." In an age when many people would be hard-pressed to name one other living American artist, Andrew Wyeth is so well known that he has achieved mythic, indeed beatified, stature. The characters in his paintings have become icons, and the places where they were painted have become secular shines.[25]

"I want to show Americans what America is like," Andrew Wyeth once said. Preservation of the Olson House and its association with Andrew Wyeth's work enables multiple generations to witness a specific time and place in American history, a time when people lived off the land, and generations of a family inhabited the same house. Wyeth's paintings of that time are neither sentimental nor idealized. Depictions of Christina Olson's face in paintings such as *Anna Christina* (1967) as well as the backbreaking labor of the blueberry rakers in the Olson field in *Blueberry Rake* (1954) provide insight into the hardships in Olson's life and the day-to-day struggles on the Olson farm. Wyeth's work has also tapped universal feelings in his audience—feelings of struggle and loneliness, balanced by the knowledge that incredible beauty can be found in everyday life and objects. Summarizing Wyeth's extraordinary work, Wanda Corn notes, "Wyeth's exploration of interior

[23] Beth Venn and Adam Weinberg, *Unknown Terrain: The Landscapes of Andrew Wyeth* (New York: Whitney Museum of Art, 1998), 8.
[24] Meryman, *Andrew Wyeth*, 398.
[25] George Howe Colt, "Andrew Wyeth at 80: The Inner World of America's Painter," *Life*, March 1997, 76.

feelings, his desire to create an art of contemplation and mood, and his understanding of human existence as one of aloneness and privacy of experience, are some of the same existential ideas explored by the Abstract Expressionists. It is these modern qualities which make Wyeth, for most of his large audience, a spokesman of our times."[26]

[26] Corn, *Andrew Wyeth*, 170.

Andrew Wyeth/ Honors and Awards

1940 Elected for membership of ***American Watercolor Society***. At age 23, he was the youngest member ever to be chosen.

1945 Received citation from ***U.S. Treasury Department***, Washington, D.C. "for patriotic cooperation rendered" on behalf of the War Finance Program.

1947 Received Award of Merit from the ***American Academy of Arts and Letters***, and the ***National Institute of Arts and Letters***, New York

1950 Elected to the ***National Institute of Arts and Letters***

1954 Honorary Doctorate Degree from ***Colby College***, Waterville, Maine

1955 Elected to membership of the American Academy of Arts and Letters and the ***National Institute of Arts and Letters***, New York

1956 Honorary *Doctor of Fine Arts* degree from ***Harvard University***, Cambridge, MA

1957 Awarded George-Walter-Dawson Memorial Medal by the ***Philadelphia Watercolor Club***

1958 Awarded the Mellon Gold Medal of Achievement by the ***Pennsylvania Arts Exhibit***

Given Citation by the ***Philadelphia Museum School of Art*** "for distinction brought to his profession"

Received Honorary Doctor of Fine Arts degree from ***Swarthmore College***, PA

Received Honorary *Doctor of Art* degree from ***Dickinson College***, Carlisle, PA

1959 Awarded the *Arts Festival Award* by the ***Philadelphia Museum of Art*** and given citation "for bringing dignity to American art"

1960 Awarded the Percy M. Owen Award by the ***Fellowship of the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts***

Elected to membership of the ***American Academy of Arts and Sciences***, Cambridge, MA.

1962 Awarded the Certificate of Merit by the ***American Watercolor Society***, New York, NY

Elected to honorary membership of the ***Buffalo Fine Arts Academy***, Buffalo, NY

1963 Received the ***Presidential Medal of Freedom*** from President John F. Kennedy

Given honorary citizenship to the State of Maine

Given award by the periodical ***Art in America*** for Outstanding Contribution to American Art-1963

Given award and medal by the ***Philadelphia Watercolor Club*** "for advancement of watercolor art"

Received Honorary *Doctor of Fine Arts* from ***Nasson College***, Springvale, ME

Received Honorary *Doctor of Humane Letters* degree from ***Tufts University***, Medford, MA

1964 Received Honorary *Doctor of Fine Arts* degree from ***University of Maryland***, College Park, MD

Received Honorary Doctor of Fine Arts degree from ***Northeastern University***, Boston, MA

Received Honorary Doctor of Humane Letters degree from the ***University of Delaware***, Newark, DE

Received Honorary *Doctor of Fine Arts* degree from ***Temple University***, Philadelphia, PA

Inducted into the ***Hall of Fame for Great Americans*** at New York University

1965 Received Gold Medal "for preeminence in painting" from the ***American Academy of Arts and Letters*** and the ***National Institute of Arts and Letters***, NY

Received Honorary *Doctor of Fine Arts* degree from ***Princeton University***, Princeton, NJ

Received Honorary Doctor of Humane Letters degree from ***Franklin and Marshall College***, Lancaster, PA

Received award at *Honors Convocation*, ***LaSalle College***, Philadelphia, PA "Andrew Wyeth-American Artist"

1966 Given the Gold Medal of Honor by the ***Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts***

Received Honorary Doctor of Letters degree from ***Lincoln University***, PA

1967 Given by ***Albert Einstein College of Medicine of Yeshiva University*** the Award for "Exemplary career as a creative artist"

Elected as member of the ***Smithsonian Art Commission***, Washington, DC

Received Honorary Doctor of Humane Letters degree from ***Amherst College***, MA

1968 Elected to Board of Directors of the ***Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts***

1969 Elected to honorary membership of the ***American Watercolor Society***, New York

1970 Held a one-man show in the White House, first solo exhibition of art shown there

Received Honorary *Doctor of Fine Arts* degree from ***Bowdoin College***, Brunswick, ME

1972 Received Honorary Doctor of Fine Arts degree from ***University of Pennsylvania***

1973 ***Maine State Award*** given to Andrew and Betsy Wyeth by the State of Maine

1976 Received Appreciation Award from the Bicentennial Commission of Pennsylvania Award for Excellence given by ***Washington College***, Chestertown MD

1977 Elected Associate Member to the Institute de France Academie des Beaux Arts, Paris, France

1978 Elected to membership of the ***Soviet Academy of the Arts***, Leningrad, USSR

Awarded ***Gold Medal of the National Arts Club***

1980 First exhibition by a living American artist held at the ***Royal Academy of Arts***, London, England

1984 Given "***The Order of the Palmetto***" award by the State of South Carolina

Given Honorary Doctor of Humane Letters degree by ***West Chester University***, PA

Given Honorary Doctor of Fine Arts degree by ***Dartmouth College***, NH

1985 ***United Nations Postal Administration*** issued two stamps with Andrew Wyeth paintings on the occasion of the Administration's 40th Anniversary

1986 Inducted as Honorary Member into the ***Royal Society of Painters and Watercolours***, London, England

1987 Given Honorary *Doctor of Fine Arts* degree ***Bates College***, Lewiston, ME

Given "an act to request ***Presidential Award*** of a gold medal, signed by speaker of the House and approved and signed by Ronald Reagan, President." By the 100th Congress of the United States of America

Given Honorary Doctor of Humane Letters degree by ***University of Vermont***

1989 Presented the Award for Distinguished Achievement by the ***Philadelphia Art Alliance***

1990 Awarded the ***Congressional Gold Medal*** by President Bush, the first artist to receive that honor

1994 Awarded the Dolphin Medal by the ***American Watercolor Society***, New York

1995 Awarded highest honor of the ***Lotus Club*** of New York in recognition of outstanding achievements

1996 Received American Heritage Award from the ***Columbus Quincentennial Foundation***

2001 Given Lifetime Achievement Award by the American Society of Portrait Artists

2002 Received Doctor of Fine Arts from ***Wheaton College***, MA.

Received Doctor of Fine Arts from ***Thomas Jefferson University*****,** PA

2004 Received Avata Award for Artistic Excellence from the Philadelphia Arts & Business Council

2005 Given Arts Honor Award for Achievement as a Visual artist by Maine College of Art, Portland, Maine

2007 Received Maine in American Award from the Farnsworth Art Museum, Rockland, Maine

Received NEA National Medal of Arts from President George W. Bush

2009 Receive posthumous honor from the Farnsworth Art Museum Board of Directors

Museum Collections that Include the Work of Andrew Wyeth

Brandywine River Museum, Pennsylvania
Greenville County Museum of Art, South Carolina
Delaware Art Museum, Delaware
The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York
Palm Springs Desert Museum, California
Milwaukee Art Museum, Wisconsin

Cincinnati Art Museum, Ohio
The National Museum of Contemporary Art, Norway
The Wichita Art Museum, Kansas
The Farnsworth Art Museum, Maine
Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington, D.C.
Kato Modern Art Museum, Japan
Achenbach Foundation for Graphic Arts, California
Bowdoin College Museum of Art, Maine
Hunter Museum of Art, Tennessee
Rahr-West Museum, Wisconsin
Tacoma Museum, Washington
The Phoenix Art Museum, Arizona
Reynola House Museum of American Art, North Carolina
The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, Missouri
The Fine Arts Museum of San Francisco, California
Elvehjem Museum of Art, Wisconsin
The New Britain Museum of American Art, Connecticut
Lyman Allyn Museum, Connecticut
Portland Museum of Art, Maine
National Museum of Art, Washington, D.C.
McNay Art Museum, Texas
Dallas Museum of Art, Texas
Smithsonian American Art Museum, Washington, D.C.
Colby College Museum of Art, Maine
Museum of Modern Art, New York
Los Angeles County Museum of Art, California
Philadelphia Museum of Art, Pennsylvania
Worcester Art Museum, Massachusetts
Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, Virginia
Herbert F. Johnson Museum of Art, Cornell University, New York
Columbus Museum of Art, Ohio
Mint Museum of Art, North Carolina
Fryre Art Museum, Washington
Mead Art Museum, Massachusetts
Armand Hammer Museum of Art and Cultural Center, California
St. Louis Museum of Fine Arts, Missouri
San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, California
Takuji Kato Modern Art Museum, Japan
The Modern Art Museum of Fort Worth, Texas
Albrecht Art Museum, Texas
Seattle Art Museum, Washington
Middlebury College Museum of Art, Vermont
Peabody Museum, Massachusetts
Indianapolis Museum of Art, Indiana
Hood Museum of Art, New Hampshire
Whitney Museum of American Art, New York
North Carolina Museum of Art, North Carolina
Winterthur Museum, Delaware
Montclair Art Museum, New Jersey

Roswell Museum of Art, New Mexico
Joslyn Memorial Art Museum, Nebraska
San Antonio Museum Association, Texas
Everson Museum of Art, New York
Diamond M. Museum of Art, Texas
University of Pennsylvania, Pennsylvania
Georgia Museum of Art, Georgia
Mitchell Museum, Illinois
Museum of the Rhode Island School of Design, Rhode Island
Allentown Art Museum, Pennsylvania
Huntington Museum of Art, West Virginia
Terra Museum of American Art, Illinois
Christian C. Sanderson Museum, Pennsylvania
Fogg Art Museum, Harvard University, Massachusetts
Shelburne Museum, Vermont
Auckland Art Museum, New Zealand
The Westmoreland County Museum, Pennsylvania
The Hyde Collection Art Museum, New York
Montgomery Museum of Art, Alabama
Reading Public Museum and Art Gallery, Pennsylvania
McNay Art Museum, Texas
High Museum, Georgia
Fukushima Prefectural Museum of Art, Japan
Princeton University Art Museum, New Jersey
The Columbus Museum of Art, Georgia
New Orleans Museum of Art, Louisiana
San Diego Museum of Art, California
University of Arizona Museum of Art, Arizona
Milwaukee Art Museum, Wisconsin
Nagaoka Contemporary Art Museum, Japan
El Paso Museum of Art, Texas
Smith College Art Museum, Massachusetts
Illinois State Museum, Illinois
Georgia Museum of Art, Georgia
Maier Museum of Art, Virginia
The Chrysler Art Museum, Virginia

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

"Andy's World," *Time*. December 27, 1963.

Baur, John I. H. *New Art in America: 50 Painters of the 20th Century*. New York: New York Graphic Society, 1957.

Belanger, Pamela. Maine in America: American Art at the Farnsworth Art Museum. University Press of

New England, 2000.

Brooks, Jean Olson, and Deborah Dalfonso. *Christina Olson: Her World Beyond the Canvas*. Camden, ME: Down East Books, 1998.

Colt, George Howe. "Andrew Wyeth at 80: The Inner World of America's Painter." *Life*. March 1997.

Corn, Wanda M. *Andrew Wyeth: The Man, His Art, and His Audience*. 2 vols. PhD diss., New York University, 1974.

Craven, Wayne. *American Art History and Culture*. New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1994.

Crosman, Christopher. *Andrew Wyeth at the Olson House: Spirit of a Place*. Rockland, ME: Farnsworth Art Museum, 1995.

Gilbert, Katharine Stoddert, and Joan K. Holt. *Two Worlds of Andrew Wyeth: Kuerners and Olsons*. New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1976.

Knutson, Anne, et al. *Andrew Wyeth: Memory & Magic*. New York: Rizzoli, 2005.

Mendelwitz, Daniel. *A History of American Art*. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1970.

Meryman, Richard. *Andrew Wyeth: A Secret Life*. New York: Harper Collins, 1996.

Severens, Martha. Andrew Wyeth in Maine: Selections from the Holly and Arthur Magill Collection. Portland: Portland Museum of Art, 1989.

Strickler, Susan. *Andrew Wyeth: Early Watercolors.* Providence, RI: Currier Museum of Art, 2004.

Venn, Beth, and Adam Weinberg. *Unknown Terrain: The Landscapes of Andrew Wyeth*. New York: Whitney Museum of Art, 1998.

Wyeth, Betsy. *Christina's World*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1982.

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

__ Preliminary Determination of Individual Listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.
X Previously Listed in the National Register. NR# 93001114, August 31, 1995
__ Previously Determined Eligible by the National Register.
__ Designated a National Historic Landmark.
__ Recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey: #
__ Recorded by Historic American Engineering Record: #

Primary Location of Additional Data:

__ State Historic Preservation Office
__ Other State Agency
__ Federal Agency
__ Local Government
__ University
X Other (Specify Repository): Farnsworth Art Museum, Rockland, Maine

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

Acreage of Property: 19.5 acres

UTM References:	Zone	Easting	Northing
A	19	478210	4869760
B	19	478594	4869720
C	19	478140	4869250
D	19	477755	4869505

Verbal Boundary Description:

The Olson House occupies the Town of Cushing tax map 5, lots 45, 45A, and 46.

Boundary Justification:

The boundary embraces 19.5 acres that were historically associated with the Olson farm and that have been recently "reunited" with the Olson House. When initially listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1995, the property consisted of only a two-acre parcel surrounding the house itself. At that time, the field and barn that are so famously depicted in "Christina's World" (and that retain a high degree of integrity from the period of significance) were under separate ownership and had been visually and physically separated from the house by way of a fence. Since then, the two parcels of land (lots 45A and 46) occupied by the barn and field, respectively, have been acquired by an organization for the purposes of preserving these two resources as part of the Olson House's setting. This action has also reconnected the family cemetery (which does not have a separate lot designation) which is surrounded on three sides by the field on lot 46 to the house's setting.

11. FORM PREPARED BY

Name/Title: Janice Kasper, Curator of Historic Sites

Address: Farnsworth Art Museum
16 Museum Street
Rockland, ME 04841

Telephone: (207) 596-6457, ext. 113

Date: April 10, 2003

Edited by: Carolyn Pitts and Patty Henry (2004)
National Park Service
National Historic Landmarks Program
1849 C St. NW, Mail Stop 7228
Washington, DC 20240

Alexandra Lord and Patty Henry (2009)
National Park Service
National Historic Landmarks Program
1849 C St. NW, Mail Stop 7228
Washington, DC 20240

Telephone: (202) 354-2216

DESIGNATED A NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK
June 23, 2011



South façade of main house. Bob Brooks, photographer, 2009.



South façade with view of barn. Bob Brooks, photographer, 2009.



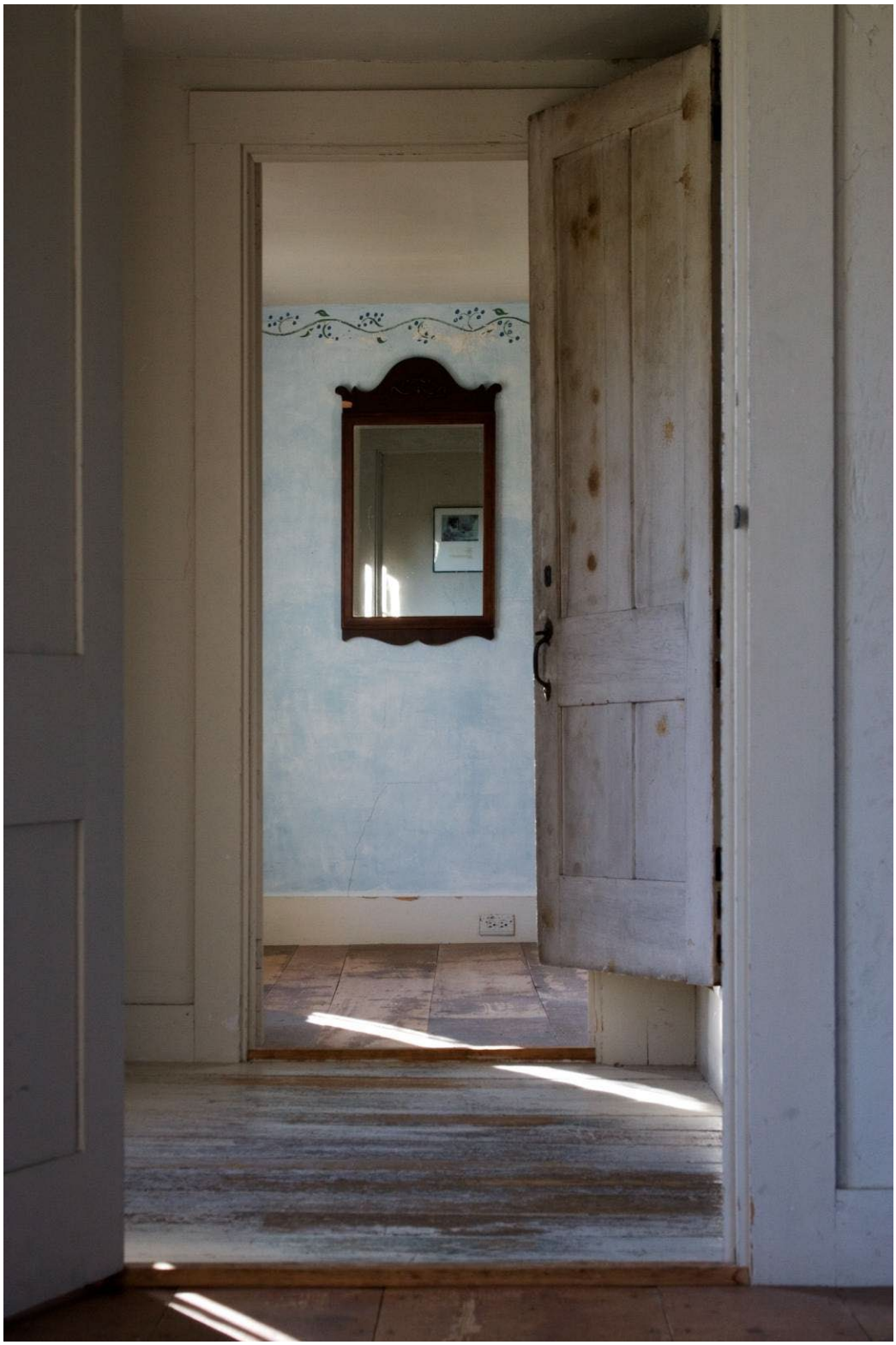
View of north and west façades. Bob Brooks, photographer, 2009.



View of house and barn from field entrance. Bob Brooks, photographer, 2009.



View of house and barn from cemetery. The field was dramatically cut in the fall of 2009 to clear the view and restore the field to its appearance during Olson's lifetime. Bob Brooks, photographer, 2009.



Interior of second floor bedroom from second floor hall. View is represented in Andrew Wyeth's 1949 tempera *The Revenant*. Bob Brooks, photographer, 2009.



View of the Olson family cemetery with Andrew Wyeth's gravesite in the foreground. Bob Brooks, photographer, 2009.



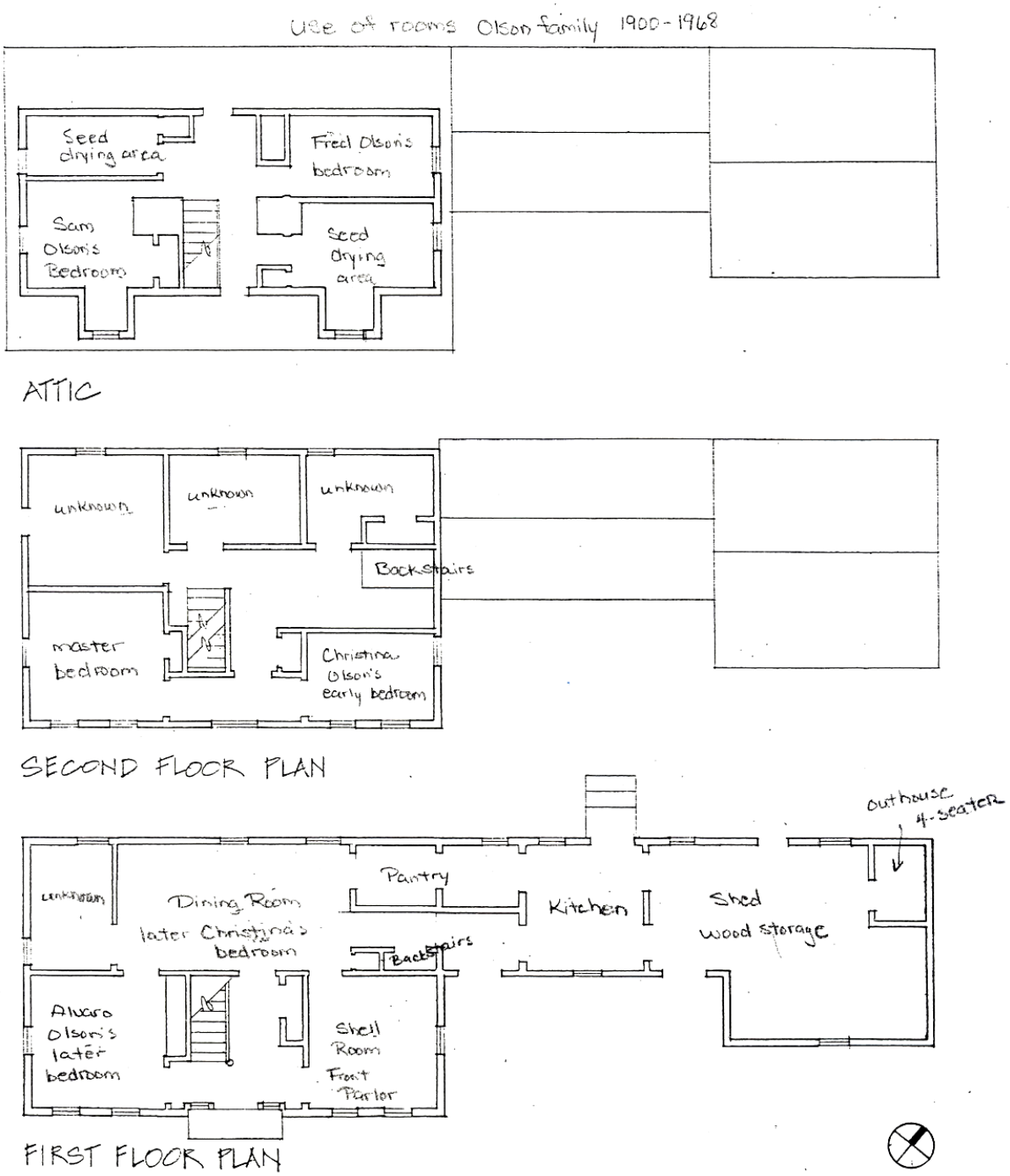
View from shed looking into kitchen, pantry, and dining room. Represented in Andrew Wyeth's 1967 watercolor *Room After Room*. Bob Brooks, photographer, 2009.



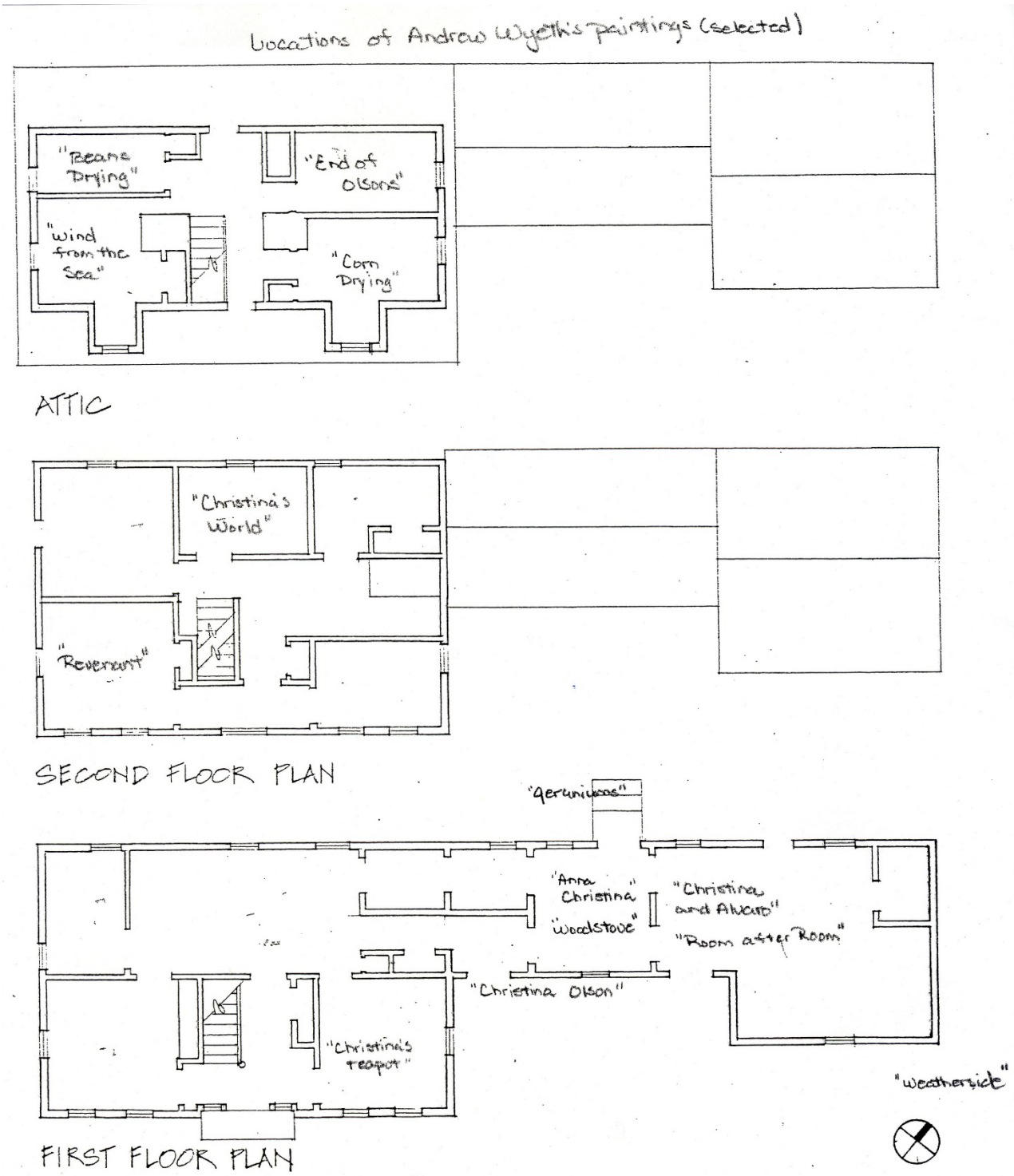
Kitchen window with geraniums facing south. Represented in 1960 Wyeth watercolor *Geraniums.* Stove is the original Glenwood K cook stove donated by the Olson family. Represented in Andrew Wyeth's 1962 dry brush watercolor *Woodstove.* Bob Brooks, photographer, 2009.



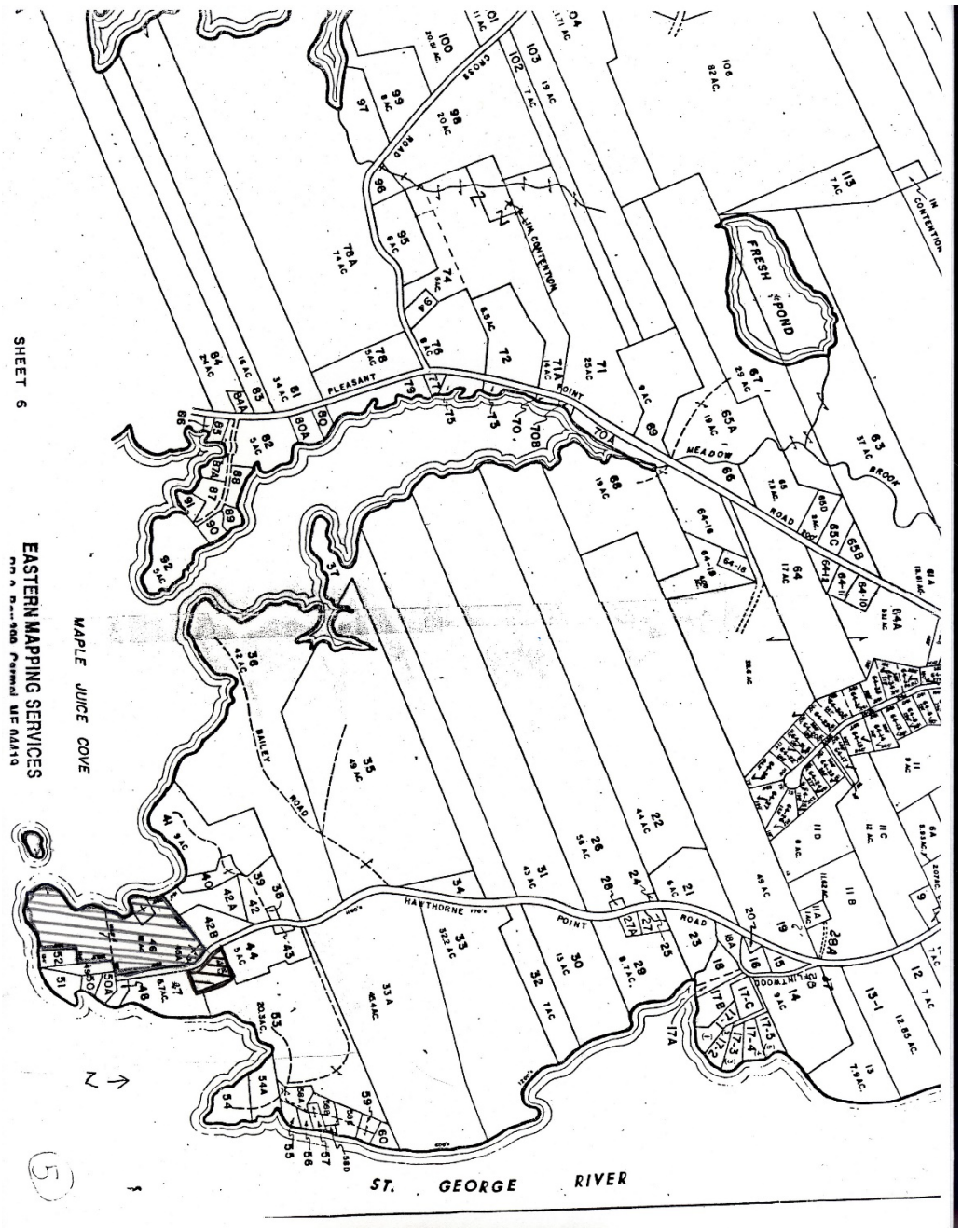
ca. 1973 aerial view of Olson House and the end of Hathorn Point. Maple Juice Cove is located to the right, and the St. George River to the left leading out to Muscongus Bay. The small building in the upper left corner near the additions to the house is no longer standing. Ben Magro, photographer.

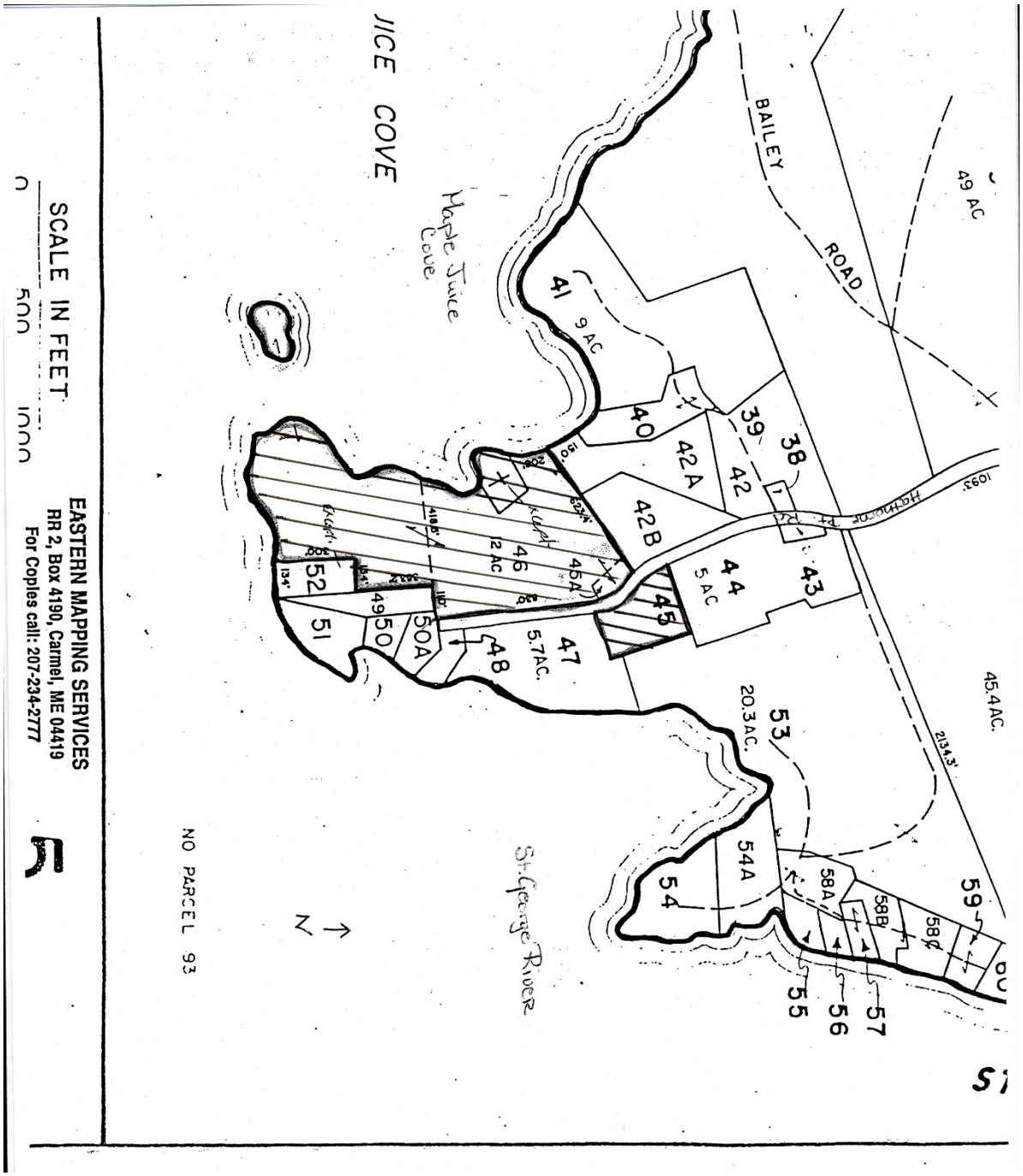


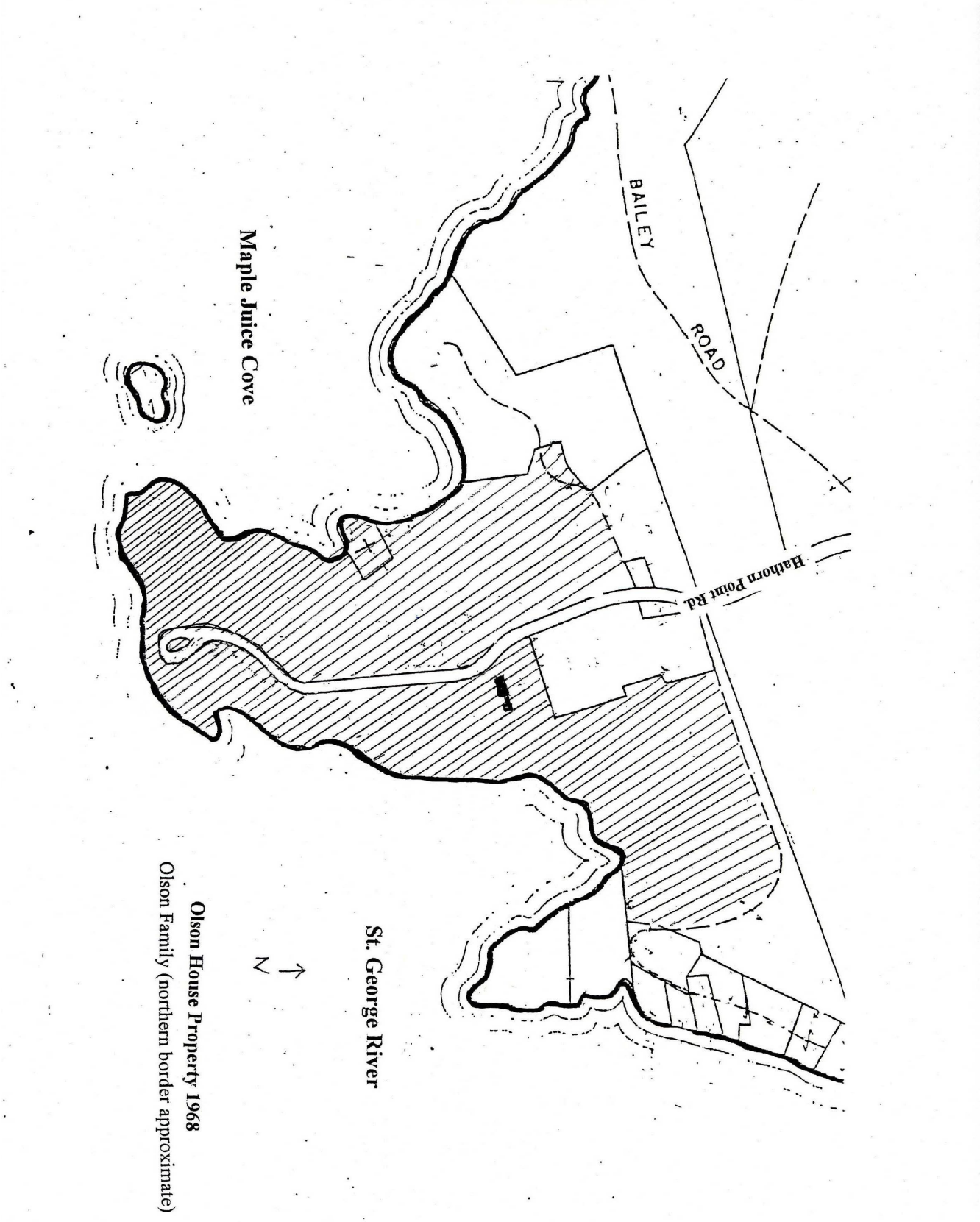
Ann Beha Associates *Architecture, Planning & Historic Preservation* 33 Kingston St., Boston, MA 02111 (617)338-3000	OLSON FARM HOUSE
	07 AUGUST 1992



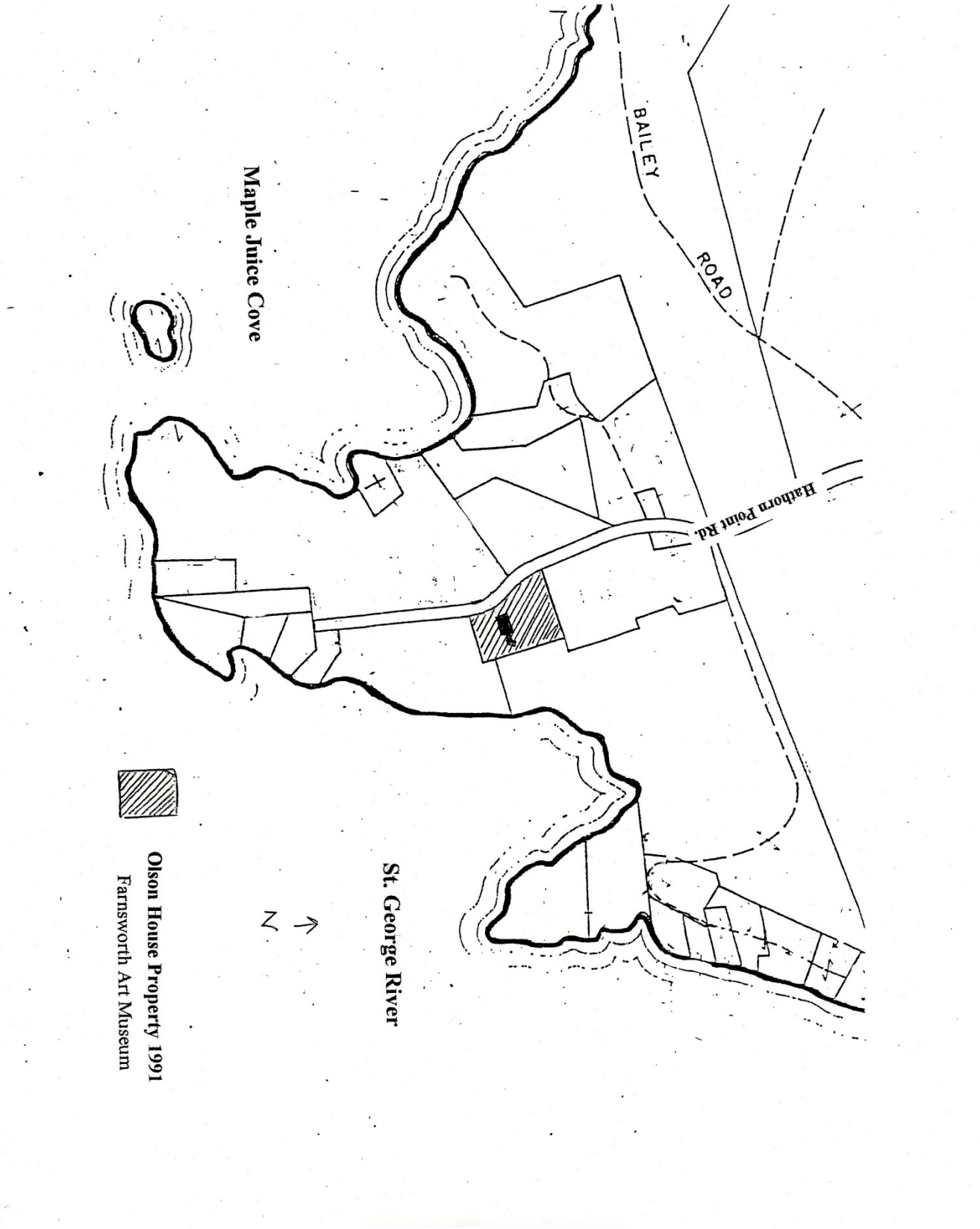
Ann Beha Associates *Architecture, Planning & Historic Preservation* 33 Kingston St., Boston, MA 02111 (617)338-3000	OLSON FARM HOUSE
	07 AUGUST 1992

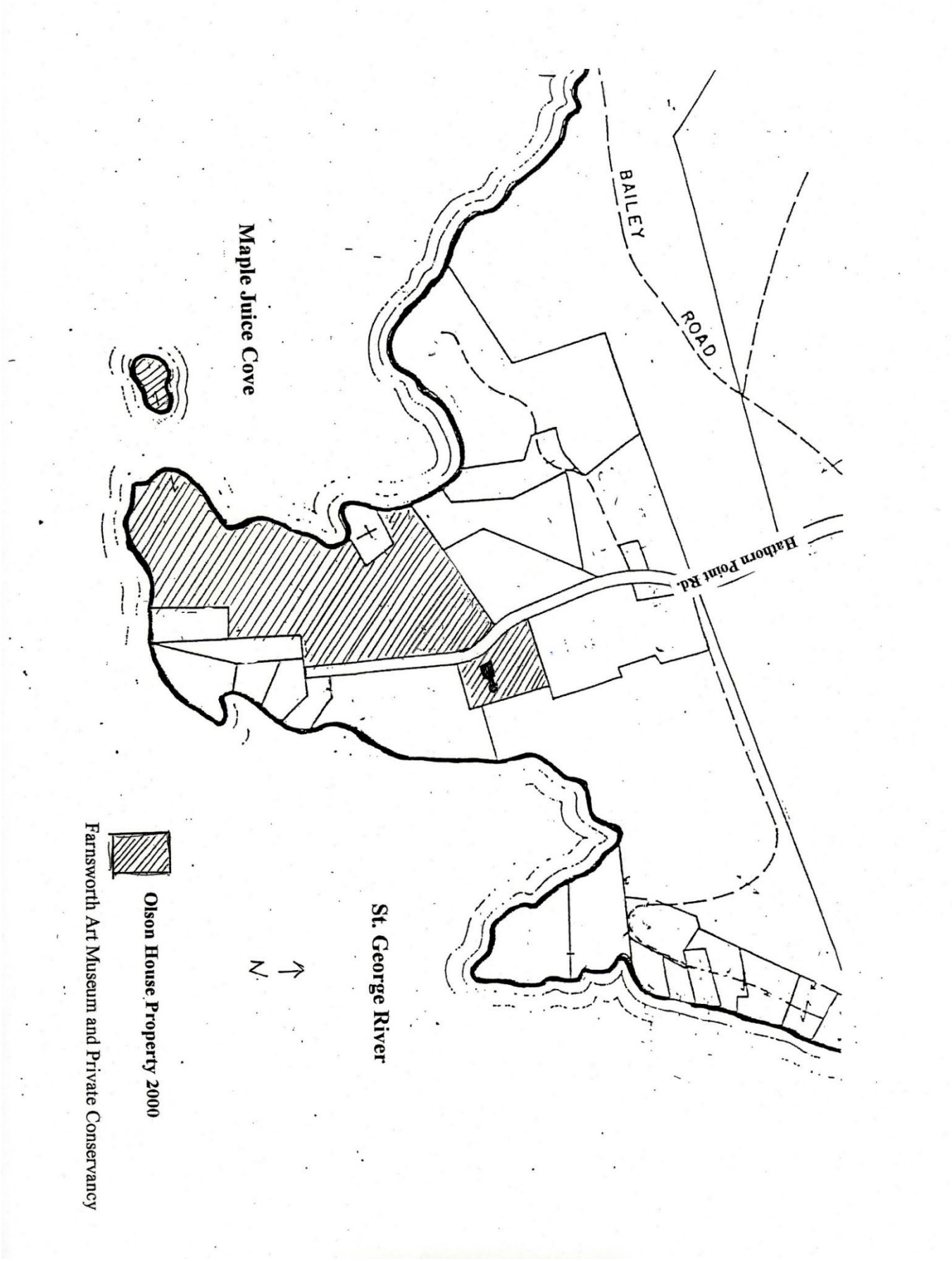

SHEET 6
EASTERN MAPPING SERVICES
MAPLE JUICE COVE
ST. GEORGE RIVER
FRESH POND
PLEASANT POINT ROAD
HAWTHORNE POINT ROAD
BAILEY ROAD
MEADOW ROAD
BROOK
IN CONTENTION


JICE COVE
Hope Juice Cove
BAILEY ROAD
49 AC
41
9 AC
40
42A
39
42
38
42B
44
5 AC
43
45
45A
46
12 AC
47
5.7AC.
48
50A
50
49
51
52
53
20.3AC.
54A
54
58A
58B
58C
59
55
56
57
45.4AC.
St. George River
NO PARCEL 93
SCALE IN FEET
0 500 1000
EASTERN MAPPING SERVICES
RR 2, Box 4190, Carmel, ME 04419
For Copies call: 207-234-2777



Olson House Property 1968
Olson Family (northern border approximate)


BAILEY
ROAD
Harborn Point Rd.
Maple Juice Cove
St. George River
N
Olson House Property 1991
Farnsworth Art Museum


BAILEY
ROAD
Hathorn Point Rd.
Maple Juice Cove
St. George River
N
Olson House Property 2000
Farnsworth Art Museum and Private Conservancy


FRIENDSHIP QUADRANGLE
MAINE
7.5 MINUTE SERIES (TOPOGRAPHIC)
NE/4 MONHEGAN 15' QUADRANGLE
CUSHING 2 MI.
300 000 FEET (EAST)
69°15'
44°00'
(THOMASTON)
60 000 FEET (EAST)
Borrow Pits
Wiley Cove
uth Cushing
Spire
Mud
Hathorne Pt
Narrows
OLSON HOUSE
CUSHING Vic., ME
A: 19/478210/4869760
B: 19/478594/4869720
C: 19/478140/4869250
D: 19/477755/4869505
Cem
Bird Pt
Burton Pt
Maple Juice Cove
RIVER
Stone Pt
Teel Cove
Mud
Chimney
TENANTS HARBOR 2.6 MI.
LONG COVE 4.5 MI.
Turkey Pt
Turkey Cove
Gravel
57'30"

USGS Map