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The Land of Promises and Misfortune

Stoddartsville's Rise and Demise

Exhibit Layout

A complete exhibit proposal using artifacts from Stoddartsville, a 19th-century grist mill village in Pennsylvania

01

MANSION

02

MILL

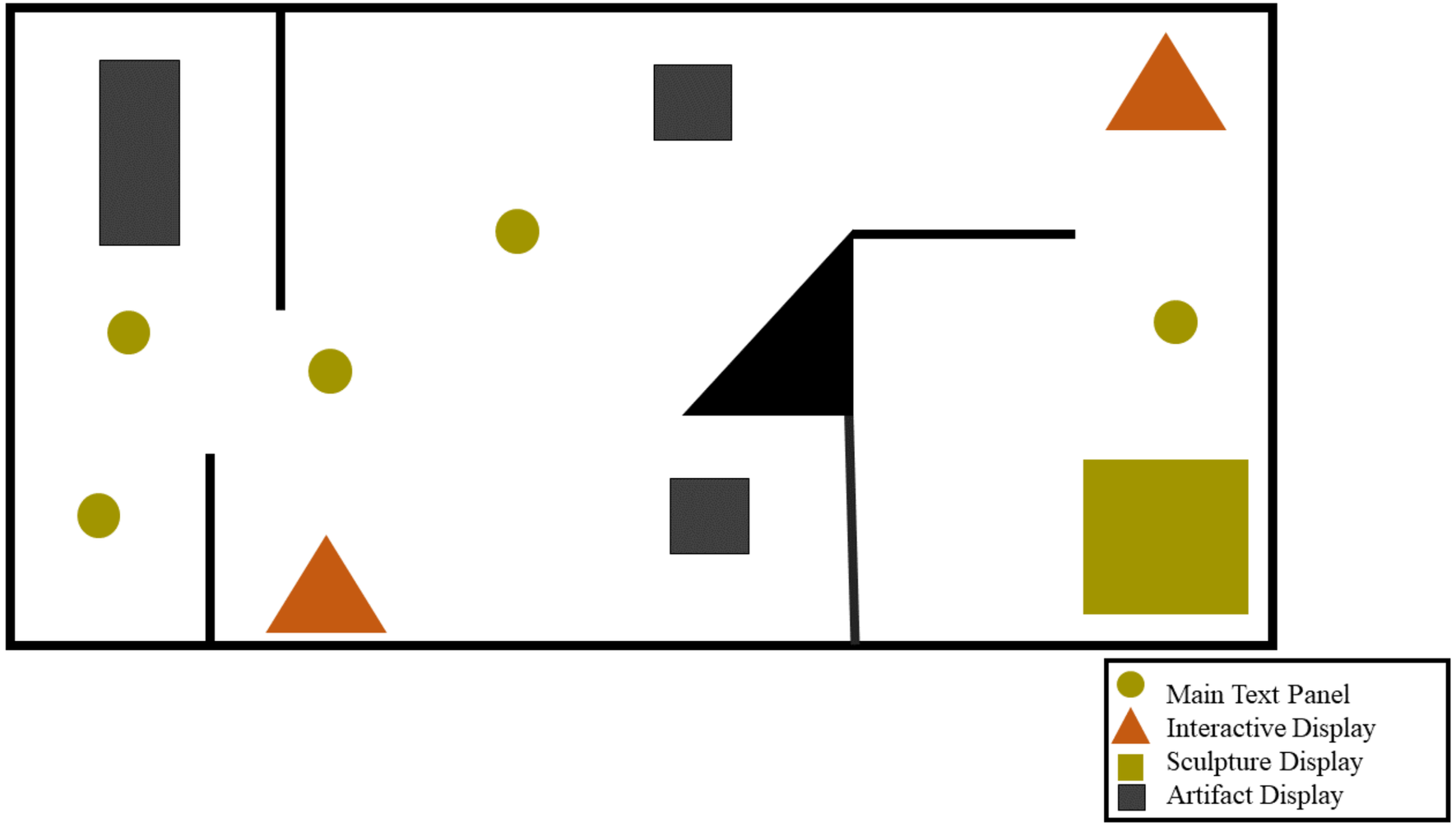
03

MISFORTUNE

04

TODAY

Exhibit Layout



01

MANSION DISPLAYS

Wall Display: Kitchen Necessities

Wall Display: Small Things Forgotten

Table Display: Global Dinnerware

02

MILL DISPLAYS

Wall Display: Millhand Cottages

Pedestal Nail Display

03

MISFORTUNE DISPLAYS

- Wall Display: Melted Dreams
- Poster-sized Newspaper clipping
- Pedestal Display: Raining Glass

04

TODAY DISPLAYS

Wall Display: Archaeology

Sculpture Display: Nature

Interactive Displays

Gristmill Model and "Dig it"

5 Main Text Panels

Stoddartsville

Along the Lehigh River once stood the early 19th-century milling village of Stoddartsville. John Stoddart, a wealthy businessman from Philadelphia, hoped to create an industrial center at Stoddartsville.This village shipped resources produced in northeast Pennsylvania to markets in Philadelphia. In support of his vision, Stoddart built a high-volume grist mill in 1815, followed quickly by a sawmill, general store, inn, church, mansion, and workers' cabins.

Stoddart's grand plan involved buying grain in Wyoming Valley and transporting it via the Easton-Wilkes Barre Turnpike to Stoddartsville. At the grist mill, the workers ground the grain into flour then shipped it to Philadelphia using the Lehigh and Delaware rivers. In hopes of wealth and prosperity, Stoddart took the leap investing in Pennsylvania's western frontier.

Explore Stoddartsville, from the land of promises to its ultimate demise beginning with Stoddart's financial ruin and the forest fire of 1875.

PROMISE

The Maples

Built in 1815, the mansion served as a residence for John Stoddart's son Isaac. Nicknamed "The Maples," it was a colonial-style, two-story house consisting of four large rooms surrounding a central stair and hall. The Works Progress Administration (WPA) in the 1930s recognized the mansion as a significant piece of American architecture.

"The Maples" changed ownership several times and came into Lewis Stull's possession in the 1840s. During the forest fire of 1875, the Stull family placed wet carpet over the roof to save the mansion. The Stull family opened the mansion to paying summer guests starting in 1900 inspired the later development of Stoddartsville as a location for summer cottages. His unmarried children lived in the mansion until a second fire destroyed it in the 1950s. Stone foundation ruins and cellar holes are all that remain visible of "The Maples" today.

MANSION

Stoddartsville Millhands

Stoddart's grist mill was one of the most ambitious structures on the Lehigh River. The mill, built on a bedrock ledge with massive stone walls, was five stories tall. This expensive structure, not only in size but technology, may have been the most expensive improvement in the county at the time. The patented Oliver Evans automation design used a waterwheel to turn gears inside the mill grinding the grain into flour.

Stoddart intended the mill for mass production and employed many of Stoddartsville's villagers as millhands. Workers lived in a row of small stone cottages near the stone sawmill downstream. Based on the archaeological record, most information on the mill comes from the millhand cottage remains.

MILL

Stoddartsville's Demise

Unfortunately, Stoddart's plan for the village failed. The Lehigh Navigation and Coal Company fell through on their promises to add canal locks to the Lehigh River. Rising shipping costs from the Wyoming Valley to Philadelphia without the use of the Lehigh River forced Stoddart to sell his land in the 1820s.

In 1835, Stoddartsville experienced a reawakening sparked by the coal industry's need for cheap lumber. To meet this demand, residents and investors quickly constructed a sawmill. Unfortunately, a devastating forest fire in 1875 destroyed the town, leaving only the mansion.

MISFORTUNE

Stoddartsville Archaeology

In the years following the fire, Stoddartsville became a popular retreat from city life. Today, Stoddartsville remains a quiet summer getaway. Although Stoddart's vision for his village failed, this isolated area holds an undisturbed archaeological record for future generations to uncover.

Through the archaeological record, Kutztown University of Pennsylvania's Anthropology and Sociology students engage with the historical community of Stoddartsville. The university partners with the Kerrick family and the Stoddartsville Preservation Society in a continued effort to preserve Stoddartsville's past.

TODAY

The Maples
Open May 1st to December 1st
Stoddartsville, Pa.

A Rare Old Colonial Mansion, overlooking the Lehigh River and Falls. An ideal spot for discriminating motorists who desire excellent service and real hospitality. For full information write L. R. STULL. Prop.

A WOMAN PERISHES IN THE FLAMES.

At Stoddartsville the raging element has in addition to the destruction of property been attended by a sad calamity, namely the death of Mrs. Coxe of that place, who perished in the flames.

The villages of Stoddartsville and Evergreen are almost entirely reduced to ashes. The residences of Messrs. Stull, Kinney and Hoffman are the only ones that escaped the ravages of the fire, all the

8 Secondary Displays

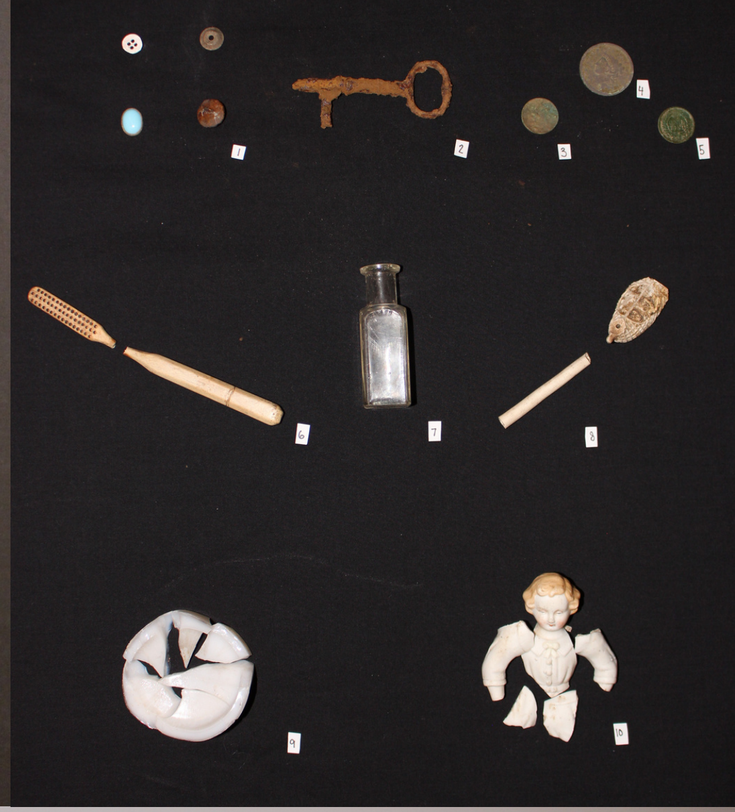
Artifact Displays

01 Mansion
2 Wall Displays & 1 Table Display

02 Mill
1 Wall Displays & 1 Pedestal Display

03 Misfortune
2 Wall Displays & 1 Pedestal Display

04 Today
1 Wall Display and 1 Sculpture Display



Reference Materials

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A History of Monroe County, Pennsylvania by Robert B. Keller

Artifacts

And More...

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Thank you!