

3 Houses, 5 Centuries, 1000s of Stories



Cabot House HVAC Project Goes Forward

Sue Goganian, Director

Historic Beverly is making history again. After years of planning and preparation, we are ready to make critical upgrades to our headquarters and flagship building, the 1781 John Cabot House, to help preserve our collections and improve our accessibility.

As stewards of a significant collection that keeps Beverly's history alive, we are committed to the ongoing, critical care of our documents and objects, providing access to our treasures and offering full access to creative programming. To that end, we have been working with architects and preservationists to create a comprehensive and effective plan that includes the installation of a state-of-the-art heating, cooling, and ventilation (HVAC) system that incorporates museum-standard humidity control for our collections storage. In addition to Mt. Vernon Group Architects, we have been working with our Buildings and Grounds Committee to ensure that the installation will respect the historic fabric of both the interior and exterior of the Cabot House. Several energy-efficient measures will be incorporated into the project to mitigate increased costs associated with the new system.

If you've visited the Cabot House in hot, cold, or humid weather, you know that our current heating and cooling system is inadequate to protect our collections and to provide a welcoming and comfortable place for staff, volunteers, and visitors. Once our project is complete in the fall of 2023, we will be able to significantly increase our programming and public access to better share Beverly's history with everyone.

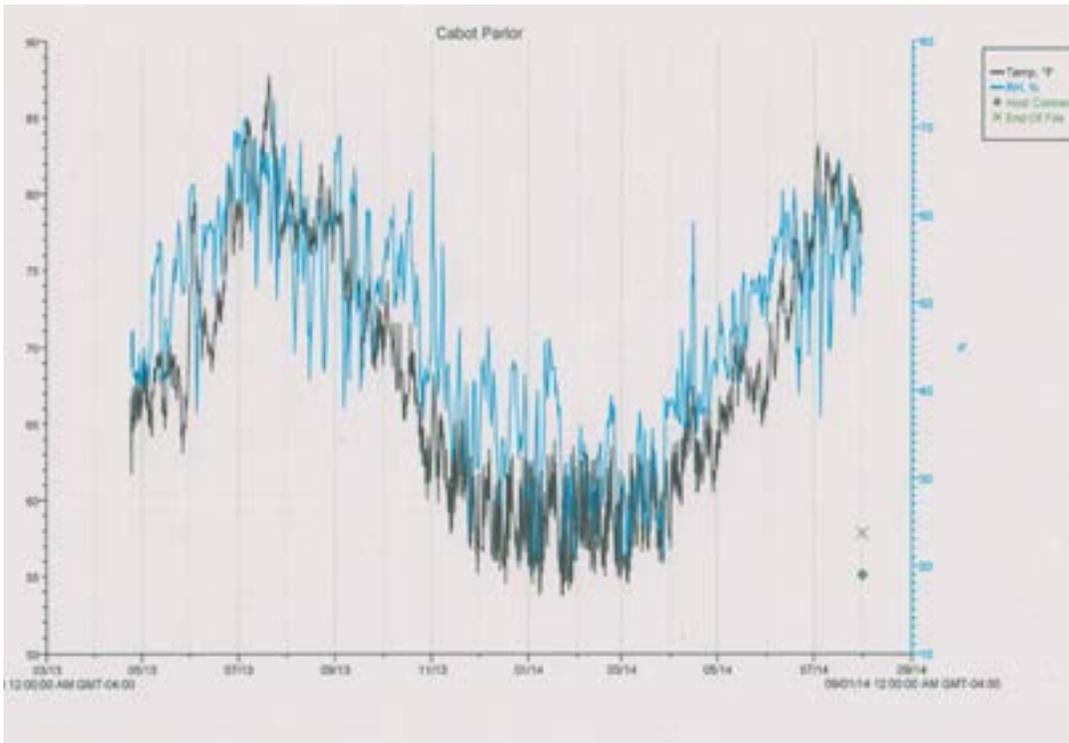
Although we have raised sufficient funds to complete the HVAC project, we still need additional donations to purchase new storage units and to mount new exhibits for the building's reopening. We also had hoped to replace our handicap ramp as part of this project, but price increases mean we have funds only for the HVAC upgrade. Please consider joining hundreds of other supporters with a generous gift.

Historic Beverly has been collecting tangible remnants of Beverly's history for more than 120 years. Our collection tells the stories of daily life in our city, its history of war and peace, slavery, transportation, immigration, women's contributions, entertainment, landscape, and the built environment. Fine art,

personal letters, business and church records, and thousands of other images and objects provide a window into this history and help to inform the future.

The pandemic exposed the risks inherent in a space with little ventilation and created an urgent need to move forward with significant improvements. The lack of reliable heating and air-conditioning makes the Cabot House virtually unusable for several months each year. Programming is suspended during the coldest and hottest months. When possible, researchers postpone their work, and our loyal staff and volunteers suffer through the discomfort.

Proper HVAC will allow us to offer 25% more programming each year, and improve research and working conditions. We will do this in a way that has only a minor impact on the historic fabric of the Cabot House, in some cases merely substituting new units for radiators installed decades ago. The project includes extensive work on the Cabot House windows to make all of them operable. We will also add new flooring in the attic to increase energy efficiency, remove hazardous materials, and install new storage units.



Graph illustrating the fluctuating hot and cold temperatures and humidity that make the Cabot House virtually unusable for many months of the year.

Scenes from the Cabot House HVAC renovation prep below, from left: Small items in the collection wait to be packed and relocated; HB Trustees Barbara Broudo and Beth Bower join Collections Assistant Elise Williams to get their hands dirty; Beth Bower shows us her muscles!



Abby Battis, Associate Director for Collections, has spent the last 18 months organizing our 750,000-item collection in preparation for this work, with assistance from our Collections Committee and other staff and volunteers. As you can imagine, this is an enormous undertaking. Not only do the contractors need space to install equipment; we also must protect our collection from harm, which means

boxing and moving much of it, and protecting the rest in place. Once the project is complete, we will reshelve the collections and in some cases, rearrange the spaces to allow for greater access. An additional benefit to this preparation is that we will be able to substantially increase the percentage of our collection included in our online inventory, accessible to anyone, anywhere.

We'll be posting about our progress frequently via emails, and updates on Facebook and Instagram. Donors will have a chance to see the completed work before we reopen. Donate by check or donate online at HistoricBeverly.net/donate/. Call Sue Goganian, Director, 978-922-1186, x 204, for more information or to make a gift of stock.