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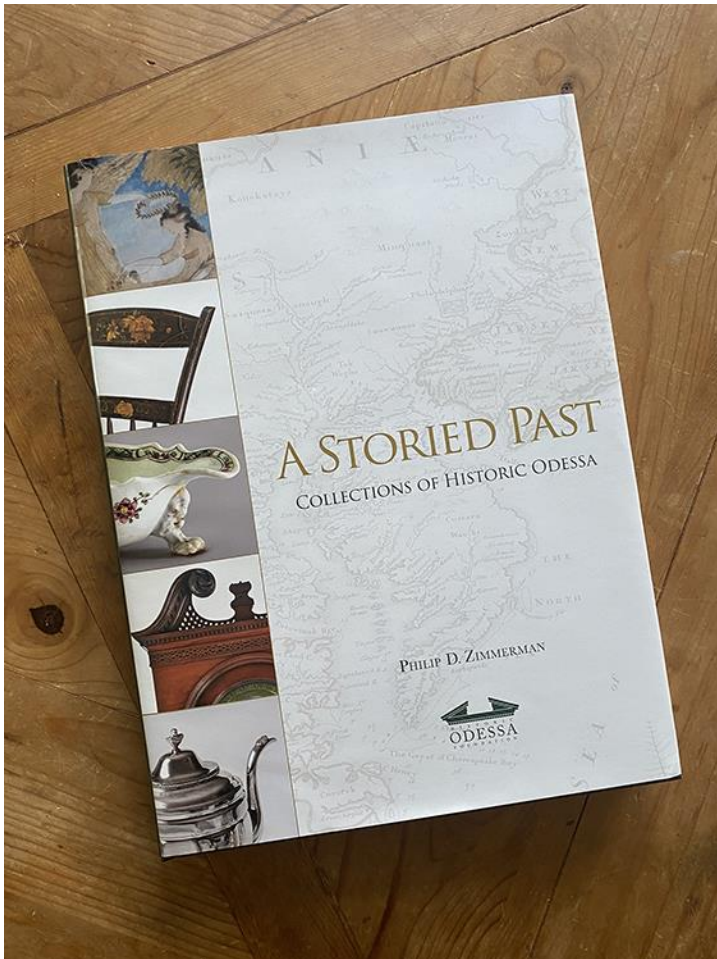
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### **Book Highlighting Historic Odessa Collections Now Available**

***A Storied Past: Collections of the Historic Odessa* brings to light for the first time an extraordinary array of 100 decorative and fine arts from the Foundation's collections**



**ODESSA, Del. – June 21, 2023 –**

Using rich archival and genealogical sources, author Philip D. Zimmerman, Ph.D., a noted independent scholar, brings to light for the first time an extraordinary array of 100 decorative and fine arts from the Historic Odessa Foundation's collections.

***A Storied Past: Collections of the Historic Odessa* captures the historical character and significance of two important late-18<sup>th</sup>-century houses, each of which retains a high percentage of original furnishings and locally made objects. Four chapters introduce the place, the families, important craftsmen, and why so many objects were preserved.**

The richly illustrated book includes more than 200 photographs, including many details and historic images, along with careful physical descriptions and historical documentation.

Meticulously researched and elegantly written, *A Storied Past* illuminates a wealth of furnishings, works of art, and artifacts with common provenances and interlocking histories and places them into the artistic, social, and historical contexts of their time.

Over the past several years, the collections at Historic Odessa have undergone careful examination and interpretation. Relatively few historic sites have received this level of investigative treatment. Additionally, several of the hitherto-unpublished objects relate to others already in the decorative and fine arts lexicon.

### **Corbit and Wilson Family Collections Shed Light on History of Odessa**

This well-documented group of family objects provides an intimate glimpse into the daily lives of members of the Corbit and Wilson families in the late 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> centuries and sheds light on the history of Odessa, Delaware, and the larger region.

Particularly strong holdings of furniture made by noted Odessa cabinetmaker John Janvier and his talented sons and nephew allow informative contrasts with products made in Delaware, Philadelphia, and elsewhere.

Needlework and other textiles made by Corbit and Wilson women characterize their handiwork. Other objects tell other stories. Some, labeled by their 19<sup>th</sup> century owners for posterity, document evolving trends in early collecting and historic preservation.

### **Corbit-Sharp and Wilson-Warner Homes Maintained by Historic Odessa Foundation**

The collections documented here furnish the Corbit-Sharp (1774) and Wilson-Warner (1769) houses, built on adjoining lots by a tanner and a merchant and now maintained by the Historic Odessa Foundation. Subsequent generations valued and preserved the two houses and many furnishings.

The Wilson house opened in 1923 as the first historic house museum in Delaware. The Corbit house remained in family hands until H. Rodney Sharp bought it in 1938 to preserve it. Furniture owned in the family of John Janvier was added in the 1970s, and the Foundation has continued to acquire Corbit and Wilson family furnishings as well as locally made furniture in the years since.

### **Book Available online and at Historic Odessa Foundation**

*A Storied Past: Collections of the Historic Odessa* is available for \$75 online at [Amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com). Orders can also be placed through the Historic Odessa Foundation by calling 302.378.4119 or by emailing [jennifer.cabell@historicodessa.org](mailto:jennifer.cabell@historicodessa.org). Books can be picked up at the Foundation, or shipped for a nominal fee. Members of Historic Odessa Foundation will receive a 20% discount on purchases.

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**About Historic Odessa Foundation**

Established in 2005, Historic Odessa, owned and operated by the Historic Odessa Foundation, is a 72-acre enclave of 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century structures located in the town of Odessa, two miles from DE 1 and just off U.S. Route 13 in southern New Castle County, Del. The historic museum properties and gardens along with a well-documented collection of more than 7000 objects and furnishings offer a unique picture of Delaware's colonial period in a rural village that played a vital part in America's commercial history. The town of Odessa, originally known as Cantwell's Bridge, has retained much of its 18<sup>th</sup> century charm and is listed on the National Register of Historic Places and home to a National Historic Landmark, and two National Park Service Network to Freedom sites. [www.historicodessa.org](http://www.historicodessa.org)

**About Author Phillip D. Zimmerman Ph.D.**

Philip D. Zimmerman Ph.D. is a museum and decorative arts consultant based in Lancaster, Pennsylvania. A prolific author, teacher, and lecturer, Zimmerman is a nationally recognized authority on early American furniture. Publications include *Harmony in Wood: Furniture of the Harmony Society, Delaware Clocks, American Federal Furniture and Decorative Arts from the Watson Collection*, and numerous essays and articles in books and periodicals such as *American Furniture, The Magazine Antiques, and Winterthur Portfolio*. He holds a doctorate in American and New England Studies from Boston University and a master's degree from the Winterthur Program in Early American Culture / University of Delaware.