

On Shearer Cottage

Thomas Dresser <thomasdresser@gmail.com>

Tue 10/12/2021 1:36 PM

To: Alex Elvin <elvin@mvcommission.org>;

Good Day, Mr. Elvin:

I am writing in support of the proprietors of Shearer Cottage in their effort to upgrade and update their facility.

Shearer Cottage has a long and storied impact in the history of the Highlands, of Oak Bluffs and on Martha's Vineyard. We are very proud of the service provided by the Shearer family and their descendants over the years. By operating a welcoming inn for people of all races, they have improved the quality of life for the entire community.

In my 2010 book, *African Americans of Martha's Vineyard*, I researched the background of Charles Shearer, as well as the prominent people who stayed there, from Adam Clayton Powell and Harry Burleigh, to Paul Robeson and Lionel Ritchie. Think of the many couples who met their partners at Shearer, and those locals, like Olive Tomlinson, who waited tables there as children.

Whatever Lee Van Allen and the Shearer family propose to improve the facilities at Shearer Cottage to maintain its integrity and viability in the future, I urge the Commission to support.

I wish them all the very best,

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