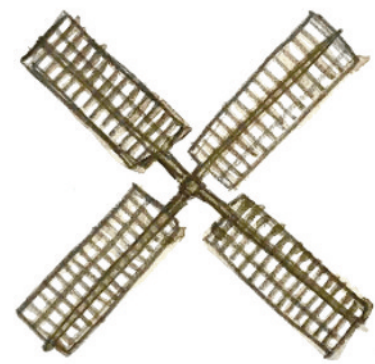


THE VILLAGE PRESERVATION SOCIETY OF EAST HAMPTON

FALL NEWSLETTER
2023



VPSEH

Village Preservation Society
of East Hampton

2023 ANNUAL MEETING AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION AWARD CEREMONY

By Georgia de Havenon, Historic Preservation Committee Chair

On a balmy Saturday afternoon in early September, the Village Preservation Society hosted its Annual Meeting and Historic Preservation Award Ceremony at the Tennis House on Maidstone Ln. While the Society is involved with numerous projects that relate to the well-being of the Village and its inhabitants, the Annual Meeting now showcases our Historic Preservation Award Winners. This was the fifth annual Historic Preservation Award ceremony and we were eager to hear the renowned preservationist Frank E. Sanchis speak about “East Hampton Village and the Importance of Historic District Designation”.

The meeting began with recognition of the past award winners, both in the private and public sectors. Present were several of the owners who had received awards for their homes in the private sector. Also in attendance were officials from both the Town, Supervisor Peter von Soyoc and Deputy Supervisor Kathee Burke-Gonzalez, and the Village, Mayor

Jerry Larsen for the public sector.

Frank Sanchis, presently Chair of the Preservation League of New York State, has over 50 years of experience in the preservation field. His talk focused on East Hampton’s special sense of place. He remarked that the Village’s visual character is made up of attributes such as: its age, it is one of the oldest communities in the United States founded in 1648; its building stock, some of which dates to the early 18th century; its open spaces, including the village green and broad main street (originally for the passage of livestock); its range of building types, and the consistency of their materials.

How to preserve these characteristics was his next focus; he reminded the audience that the power to protect these unique characteristics lies with the local municipal government which has the authority to control privately funded alterations to protected buildings and districts. He complimented the Village of East Hampton for having a Design Review Manual for the Main Street Historic District (written by Robert Hefner and adopted in 1986, revised in 2020) and for preserving specific buildings such as Home Sweet Home in the 1920s and the Dominy House this year. He reminded us that Historic Districts are not static and



*Supervisor Peter VanScoyoc speaking
with Frank Sanchis*

Photo by Caroline Zaleski



Frank Sanchis speaking to the audience

Photo by Kathleen Cunningham

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Dominy Shops, 1773-1798



Photo by Kathleen Cunningham

triumph of restoration undertaken by the Village of East Hampton and presided over by Robert Hefner. Reconstructed in its original location using historic timber frame construction methods, the house is an exhibit of fine craftsmanship in itself. Nathaniel Dominy IV (1737–1812), Nathaniel Dominy V (1770–1852), and Felix Dominy (1800–1869) fashioned clocks, furniture, and other decorative items in the workshops adjoining the home. Having the workshops reunited with their home gives a sense of how the

thoughtful regulation is required to maintain that particular sense of place. That maintenance includes authenticity in new construction (not to be confused with constructing a replica), maintaining scale and materials and avoiding creep – unregulated change that occurs bit by bit. Most importantly, it is essential to maintain scale and material, as mentioned in the guidelines, the statutes of which are regulated by the Village.

Another way in which he feels sense of place can be perpetuated is by the development of preservation trades, perhaps beginning with instructing students in the local high school. Mr. Sanchis ended by suggesting that it is important to keep re-evaluating boundaries throughout the village and to consider additional historic districts and individual building designations. He reminded us that future stewardship lies in the hands of the next generation and we must begin to involve new preservationists.

Following Frank Sanchis' stimulating talk, the Historic Preservation Awards were presented. In the public sector, the unique ensemble of buildings that are the Dominy House and Workshops (1773-98) were honored. This project was a



Photo by Kathleen Cunningham

Hilary Osborn Malecki, East Hampton Historical Society President, John McGuirk, and Mayor Jerry Larsen accepting the award for the Dominy Shops.

Dominy family lived their lives and turned out countless expertly crafted objects. The restoration was made possible through the support of the Village of East Hampton, and a number of generous donors, including Dudley Roberts who donated the two workshops. The Dominy House and Workshops are now being administered by the Historical Society of East Hampton, and the interior has been restored to museum standards with exhibitions planned for in the future. The Dominy House was designated an Historic Landmark by the Village of East Hampton Board in 2013.

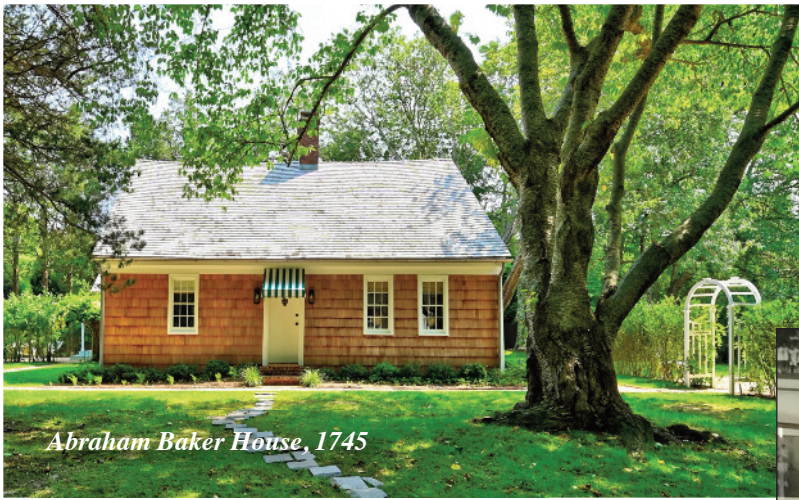
Accepting the Award were Robert Hefner, who supervised the restoration, Hilary Osborn Malecki, Chair of the East Hampton Historical Society, Steven Long, Executive Director of the East Hampton Historical Society, and Jerry Larsen, East Hampton Village Mayor.

Two awards were presented for private projects. The Abraham Baker House, 1745, located at 9 Cross Highway, is often thought of as the Clubhouse of the East Hampton Riding Academy, into which it was transformed in 1924. This was where Jacqueline Kennedy rode as a young girl. Among the founders of the Academy were her father, John Vernou Bouvier III and publishing magnate Robert Appellton. Later it was lived in by the - film star Frank Lovejoy. The Bakers were a large family and certain members lived on Gardiner's Island where they worked for the owners. Abraham Baker's son was named



Photo by Caroline Zaleski

Frank, Georgia, Bob Hefner and Steve Long in front of the Dominy Shops



Abraham Baker House, 1745

Gardiner Baker. The award for this early timber-frame building was accepted by the restored home's current owner, Jacqueline Astier.

The Deacon David Hunting House at 102 Main Street, c. 1760, showcases a handsome proportioned pilastered front door surround, paneled double doors, and, in the interior, a remarkable curving staircase. The dormers, the front porch and the kitchen wing are early 20th century additions. Deacon David Hunting (1815-85) was a Trustee of the nearby Presbyterian Church, Chair of the Village Trustees and Village Clerk in 1870. The Hunting property extended from Main Street to Town Pond and Egypt Lane, this house stood near the road, but was moved to its present site in 1921. Adjacent David's Lane was named for Deacon David Hunting and his nephew, David H. Hunting (1850-85) when it was established in 1923.

Now owned and restored by Frank Morgan and Brent Feigenbaum, who accepted the award, the home is one of the most stately buildings on Main Street.

These descriptions give evidence of the rich history of our Village, a history that we all should be protecting. As Frank Sanchis pointed out, East Hampton will change, but it is our duty to make sure that the sense of place of the Village is not destroyed.

Let us close with a reminder from the past applicable to the future discovered in the East Hampton Library, Long Island Collection. From Deacon David Hunting in an address delivered before the Sunday School of the First Presbyterian Church of the Town of East Hampton; on the fiftieth anniversary of its establishment, May 26th, 1874, as one of the scholars of the First School, he urged his listeners.



Jackie Astier with John McGuirk, accepting award for Abraham Baker House.



The Deacon David Hunting House, 1760



John McGuirk, Frank Morgan, Georgia de Havenon and Brent Feigenbaum accepting award for Hunting House.

"See ye to it that when the mantle of Christian duty and activity falls upon successors, it bears no stain of opportunity lost, of duty neglected; it leaves no impressions, it conveys no thoughts but such as promote an ever advancing, ever ascending progress toward perfection."

EAST HAMPTON AIRPORT UPDATE

By Peter M. Wolf

The Town of East Hampton continues to defend its right to self-determination to manage its publicly owned airport in the best interests of all in the community. In what could be good news for the Town of East Hampton, NY State Supreme Court Judge Paul J. Baisley is retiring this year. This might prove helpful to the Town in any further legal actions that may come before the New York State Supreme Court. Justice Baisley appeared to be biased and ruled against the Town in several cases including the effort to manage the airport and the “Truck Beach” case.

A recent ruling by Judge Baisley, however, went uncharacteristically in the Town’s favor. Litigants, East End Hangars and Hampton Hangars, Inc., brought a motion requesting the Town return legal fees paid from the Town’s Airport Fund after May 16, 2022, when the court charged the Town to pay the litigants legal fees. Aviation interests have pushed a rigorous public relations campaign, running full page ads in the local papers, claiming that the Town is using taxpayer money to fund the legal challenges aviation interests have

brought. This is patently untrue. The courts have found, more than once now, that the Town can defend itself against lawsuits brought by aviation interests using airport funds. Counterintuitively, these funds are collected by the Town to fund operations and maintenance projects at the airport. They are sourced from landing fees, hangar rents, and a fuel flow surcharge on aviation fuel sold there and the fund is well resourced. Peculiarly, aviation interests seem intent on draining this pool of money in one fashion or another.

The Town’s appeals of the court’s injunction preventing our community from converting this municipally owned and operated airport to a Prior Permission Required or PPR facility and also from closing the airport are still pending before the Appellate Division.

Aircraft noise continues unabated. Complaint numbers count. Please continue to report aircraft noise disturbances at: www.planenoise.com/khto/, or www.airnoisereport.com/complaints/new, or by calling 1-800-376-4817.

IN MEMORIAM



Averill Dayton Geus

June 29, 1934 – August 1, 2023

By Kathleen Cunningham

Our community lost one of its historic anchors this past summer with the passing of Averill Geus, a frequent contributor to the VPS newsletter and revered local historian. Averill’s deep roots and personal connection to East Hampton coupled

with her ability to tell a lively story, often tying these two aspects of her life together, made for compelling reading. She authored a number of histories of East Hampton, was once a curator of the Home Sweet Home Museum and served for a time as the Town of East Hampton Historian. She was a valuable member of the VPS Board and an active advocate for historic preservation. A casual visit to Mrs. Geus’s home would always include a tour of her extensive collections of East Hampton memorabilia: buttons, photos, records of meetings, maps, posters, the list was endless. For this writer, it was always a treat to be ushered into her office stacked floor to ceiling with artifacts and records. Exacting, she was fun and her passion for her work was contagious. She will be sorely missed.

Ethelyn Atha Chase

November 30, 1923 – September 6, 2023

By Kathleen Cunningham

The Society has learned of the passing of one of its founding members and long-time Trustee Emeritus, Ethelyn Atha Chase. Mrs. Chase had a long, distinguished career in literature and the arts. She served on many influential Boards, ensuring the longevity and financial health of institutions including the New York Society Library, American Composers Orchestra, Glimmerglass Opera and the New York Botanical Garden. Best known as President of the Academy of American Poets and founder of the American Poets’ Corner at the Cathedral of St. John the Divine, she passed away at the age of 99 years. Mrs. Chase was also very active in the social welfare arena and served on the Citizens Advisory Board to the Department of Social Service for three different Mayors of New York City. Mrs. Chase was instrumental in launching the Village Preservation Society in 1982, when it was founded in response to a proposal by Village government to demolish the Gardiner Brown House and turn it into a parking lot. Our entire community is indebted to her efforts and those of the other founders of our organization.

That vision shaped this community and must be acknowledged for that contribution to preserving not only that historic structure, but neighborhood character and quality of life.

WELCOME OUR NEW TRUSTEES!

By Kathleen Cunningham

Lalitte C. Smith

Mrs. Smith is a long-time member of the Village Preservation Society. She was born in Washington, D C and moved to New York City, where she raised her family for 35 years. She moved to East Hampton about 25 years ago. She has been an active member of the Garden Club and gardening plays a big role in her life. She has assisted in maintaining the Mimi Meehan Native Plant Garden, a past VPS Grants Awardee. Learning to propagate plants, playing golf, volunteer work and running a calligraphy business are a few of her interests. Mrs. Smith is serving on the Historic Preservation Committee of the VPS and will use her expertise in helping the committee with its program and future focus on landscape preservation and restoration. She loves East Hampton's uniqueness, and wishes to help it remain that way. We are delighted to welcome Mrs. Smith to our Board of Trustees.



Bruce A.T. Siska

Mr. Siska is a local architect, descended from one of East Hampton's founding families. He attended architecture school abroad and is presently the owner of Bruce A.T. Siska Architect, PLLC, operating from an office downtown at North Main St. He is married to Dr. Lara DeSanti-Siska with whom he has two sons. Mr. Siska served on the Village Design Review Board and the now defunct Village Planning and Zoning Committee. Presently, he is an active member of the Boards of the East Hampton Historical Society and Peconic Chapter, AIA, among other civic groups. We anticipate his past public participation and deep roots in East Hampton Village will be a great asset to the VPS and our initiatives and are delighted to also welcome Mr. Siska to our Board of Trustees.



**Please fill out, cut along the line and mail to THE VILLAGE PRESERVATION SOCIETY
P.O. Box 2015, East Hampton, NY 11937 • 631-324-3524 • www.villagepreservationsociety.org**

Please enroll me as a member of The Village Preservation Society of East Hampton
for the Membership Year from January 1, 2024 - December 31, 2024.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ Email address _____

Number of Members in this Membership _____

For year round Newsletters and information, please print winter address

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____

Contributors of:

\$ 25,000.00 will be listed as **Chairman's Circle**

\$ 10,000.00 will be listed as **Visionary**

\$ 2,500.00 will be listed as **Advocate**

\$ 500.00 will be listed as **Patron**

\$ 100.00 will be listed as **Friend**

\$ 15,000.00 will be listed as **President's Circle**

\$ 5,000.00 will be listed as **Champion**

\$ 1,000.00 will be listed as **Benefactor**

\$ 250.00 will be listed as **Supporting Member**

Regular Membership (\$50) _____

The Membership Year runs from January 1, 2024 through December 31, 2024.

I would like to be active. My special interests are: _____

I (We) support VPS principles but do not wish to be listed as a member.

Enclosed is a contribution of \$ _____

THE VILLAGE PRESERVATION SOCIETY

P.O. Box 2015

East Hampton, NY 11937

www.villagepreservationsociety.org

THE STATE OF OUR PONDS

By Kathleen Cunningham

Reports at the Friends of Georgica Pond Annual Meeting on August 28th indicated notable progress in mitigating the impacts of blue-green algae growth and the critical environmental impacts those algal blooms have on the health and welfare of people and wildlife.

Dr. Christopher Gobler, science advisor for the FOGP, and Chair of Coastal Ecology and Conservation at the School of Marine and Atmospheric Sciences at Stony Brook University, gave a presentation revealing 10 years of data collection that demonstrated improvement in the environment supporting blue green algal growth. This progress appears to be a direct result of the harvesting of pond weed, which proliferates in brackish water bodies that are fed a consistent diet of nitrogen from septic system infusion, among other conditions that are prevalent in the Pond.

Blue-green algae, even in small amounts, carry neurotoxins that kill fish, eels, birds and dogs. These toxins carry through the food chain and can kill larger animals or birds of prey that feed on the smaller creatures infected with these neurotoxins. The removal of pond weed, over 72,000 pounds during the summer of 2022, has helped a great deal to mitigate the conditions that support blue-green algal blooms. Graphs depicted the data and there was a dramatic reduction during years that pond weed was harvested, compared to years when it was not.

However, even this remarkable effort isn't enough to stem the growth of this toxic algae. The only real remedy is for residents to install low-nitrogen septic systems, and there are many more options available now than ever before. Rebates are still available and everyone, particularly property owners along the shorelines of any of our surface water bodies should install these systems. For information on this process please visit: <https://ehamptonny.gov/588/Suffolk-County-New-York-State-Grants>.

In related news, the Town of East Hampton is preparing to adopt legislation that offers more serious consequences for out-of-Town actors shell-fishing and removing crabs from Georgica Pond and Napeague Harbor. Reports of an "organized crab crime ring", so stated by Supervisor Peter VanScoyoc, propelled the Board and the Town Trustees, which govern these water bodies, to review past practices and create stiffer penalties for poachers removing these valuable shellfishes from our waters. Apart from the illegality of fishing without the proper permits, these violators are also removing shellfish that are undersized and are meant to spawn the next year's stock, as well as exceeding permitted quantities. All these controls are in place to support the local shell-fishing industry, which has been so devastated by recent algal blooms, red tides and a variety of other environmental challenges that repress this critical piece of our economy, not to mention the historic nature of this industry. The current proposal makes it an arrestable offense, which enables Marine Patrol officers to take offenders into custody when they do encounter these criminals.

In other news, FOGP Executive Director, Sara Davison, is retiring from her position after eight years of extraordinary leadership during extraordinary times. Ms. Davison was responsible for shepherding the Friends during their initial years of formation; enabling and supporting the relationship with Dr. Gobler, ensuring that science informed the Friends initiatives; working with local governments and other organizations to educate the public about the necessity of transitioning our septic systems to the new, low-nitrogen systems to save our surface water bodies and water quality in general. The VPS has partnered with the Friends on many occasions, including opposing the Wainscott Commercial Center and outreach and education for our community to begin the essential process of keeping nitrogen out of our water. We will miss Sara, her energy, her professionalism and her good will. We wish her well in her next endeavor.