

The Information Window

Change is Good

By Bob Meagher, President

After celebrating our 50th anniversary moving the train station from downtown to its present location last year, we decided that it was time for some updating this year. For years, some of our members were lamenting that our group did not have an area to document and research our village history at our museum complex. True, we did keep some of our records and other items in the basement, and there is a table and some chairs for people to use. But the stairs were outside and dark. The basement, at best was dim and even with a dehumidifier working constantly, dampness was a threat to our projects. We had to do something.

We reached out to our county museum director, Eileen Krieb and the county architect, Rob LaBaw for some guidance. As president, I met in July with them at the museum to discuss our plight.



*New Kitchen Area
at the Museum*

They recommended that we keep both our restrooms and questioned how frequently we used the kitchen. When I told them two or three time a year they were surprised. I speculated that maybe it was used more frequently in the past. The architect then recommended turning the kitchen into an office and utilizing a large foyer area near the restrooms and back door for a kitchen area.

At the next meeting I brought up the proposal to the members for discussion. It was understandable that not all the trustees were keen on demolishing the kitchen that had stood there for fifty some odd years. But we all agreed that we needed an office to begin our next big preservation project. That project would be no less than the digitization of all our photos and written records and then uploading it to the New York State Heritage website.

The majority voted moving forward with the plan. The project took about a month and half to accomplish. First to clear out the old kitchen, then set up a new kitchen in the foyer area and finally building a wall with a pocket door for privacy from the public. Happily, plumbers and electricians and carpenters were available on short notice and no major problems occurred. The preservation project can now proceed. 📖



New Office at the Museum

Membership Drive

By Mary Wagner, Membership Chairman

Our membership year for 2018 begins on January 1 and ends on December 31. The money raised through membership is used for our many restoration projects, most recently the original Wantagh post office and the Jamaica Parlor car. It is also used for our many activities and projects during the year. You are not just joining the society - you become a supporter of history by enabling the society to continue its work to educate residents, especially children, on Wantagh's past. Your continued support will help make this site a real focal point for our community. Last year we celebrated the 50th Anniversary of the train station being moved to the museum grounds. Please join this and future celebrations by paying your dues for 2018. We also invite you to become an active member of the society. 📖



*See page 3 on
becoming a
member!*

Wantagh Preservation Society

1700 Wantagh Avenue (Museum Location)

PO Box 132 (Mailing Address)

Wantagh, Long Island, New York 11793

516.826.8767

museum.wantagh.li

Upcoming Events:

- ◆ Wantagh Museum Open (for the last Sunday until the spring), Sunday, Nov 5, 2-4 PM
- ◆ Trustee Meeting, Nov 7, 7-9 PM; Trustees & invited guests only
- ◆ General Meeting, Tuesday, Nov 15, 7:45 PM featuring lecture by author Monica Randall on "Legendary Women of Long Island". All welcome to this free event at the Wantagh Library, 3285 Park Avenue.
- ◆ Holiday Open House, Dec 10, 2-4 PM. All welcome to this free event at the Wantagh Museum, 1700 Wantagh Avenue.

Wantagh Preservation Society

Elected Officers

President: Bob Meagher
Vice President: Claire Reisert
Recording Secretary: Tom Watson
Treasurer: Wayne Wagner

Appointed Officers

Curator: Carol Poulos
Newsletter Editor: Jim Colotti

Trustees

Bob Cook
Ellen Cook
Mary Wagner
Elaine Yarris

The Information Window is the official newsletter of the Wantagh Preservation Society, and is published approximately six times each year. Please obtain written permission from the individual authors before using material contained in this publication.

We hope you enjoy our newsletter. Your comments, ideas and suggestions are welcome!

wps@wantagh.li



The WPS had a display case at the Wantagh Library in October, with the theme "Wantagh Schools - The Old Days"

*After November 5
the Museum will
not be open every
Sunday*



*More renovations are
underway for next
spring!*

Attention: Professional Photographers

Whether it be spring, summer, fall or winter, the grounds of the Wantagh Museum provide a scenic venue for professional photographers. However, a Photography Permit is required for all professional photographers that use the museum grounds.



The permit fee is only \$50 per hour (an additional fee of \$25 applies for access to the train observation deck). Your fees provide an important source of revenue for our Museum and helps us maintain its beauty that you depend on.

During your photo shoot, the museum grounds remain open to others and there can be no reservations of any particular area. However, residents that visit the museum have always been courteous.



Photography cannot take place before 10 AM or after dusk. Permits are rain or shine.

An approved permit must be presented during the shoot upon request. To apply for a permit, please scan or click the QR code.

Thank you for your support and for helping us maintain the grounds of the Wantagh Museum. 📖

The Town of Hempstead Landmarks in Wantagh

By Tom Watson, Recording Secretary

The Wantagh Preservation Society (WPS) is very active in supporting the landmark designation of Wantagh sites and structures that are important to our local history. Wantagh is home to more Town of Hempstead landmarks than any other town in the Town of Hempstead. The current 12 Town of Hempstead landmarks in Wantagh are the 1644 Robert Jackson homestead, the 1762 Jackson Cemetery, the 1794 Birdsall House (a.k.a. The Mill House), the 1808 Harold Avenue Cemetery (a.k.a. the Black



Jackson Cemetery), the 1827 Quaker Meeting House (second oldest existing religious structure in the Town of Hempstead) and the 1827 Quaker Cemetery, the 1830 Lawrence House, the 1860 Seaman-Venier House, the Dengler Farm House (front portion circa 1860 – back portion much older), the 1856 St. Johns of Jerusalem Chapel, the 1876 Jerusalem School and the 1851 Saint Matthias Cemetery.



Robert Jackson Homestead, one of the many Wantagh landmarks

Early this year the WPS submitted to the Town of Hempstead Landmark Commission an application to landmark the Cornelius Ryerson Family Burial plot on Bunker Avenue. Cornelius Ryerson was born in 1752 and died in 1826. As a young man while living in the Valley Stream area it is recorded in 1775 militia records that he once owned slaves. He was a British supporter during the American Revolution, and served in a loyalist regiment during the war. Following the defeat of the British, Cornelius Ryerson fled with other colonials loyal to the King of England, to Digby, Nova Scotia, Canada. He later returned to the United States and married Catherine Van Cott at St. George's church in Hempstead. The couple settled in Wantagh and had a homestead and farm near present day Bunker Avenue. Cornelius and his wife Catherine were of Dutch decent. They had 5 sons and 15 grandchildren who were born in Wantagh (formerly named Jerusalem).

The Cornelius Ryerson Family Burial plot and other existing old cemeteries in Wantagh are testament to Wantagh's early history. The other old cemeteries in Wantagh are the 1856 St. Johns of Jerusalem Cemetery, the 1827 Quaker Cemetery (originally the Seaman family Cemetery), the 1762 Jackson Family Cemetery, the 1851 Saint Matthias Cemetery, the 1808 Harold Avenue Cemetery and the 1817 Baldwin-Southard cemetery. History is all around us here in Wantagh. 📖

We Need You! Join or Renew Your Membership in 2018!

Name: _____
 Street: _____
 Town: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____
 Phone: _____ New Renew
 Email: _____

I'd like to help with:

- | | | | |
|---|---|---|--------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Gardening & Planting | <input type="checkbox"/> General Meeting Planning | <input type="checkbox"/> Construction | <input type="checkbox"/> Publicity |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hosting museum on a Sunday | <input type="checkbox"/> Special Event Planning | <input type="checkbox"/> Publication & Newsletter | <input type="checkbox"/> Restoration |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ | | | |

Check Membership Level: Individual \$15 Family \$25 Friend \$35 Patron \$50 Fellow \$100

Please Make Checks Payable To: Wantagh Preservation Society PO Box 132 Wantagh, NY 11793

"Preservation with a Purpose."

Donations

By Carol Poulos, Curator

Bill Stafford, Wantagh High School, Class of 1959 donated a box filled with editions of the Wantagh Warrior, basketball & football schedules, concert programs, dramatics club programs, sports awards programs, a sports night program, some black & white track & field photos, commencement programs, and two editions of the Wantagh Citizen.

The collection spans the years from 1954 to 1959. Opening the box is like looking inside a time capsule. It is a treasure. Thank you Bill!

Alfred Kaiser made a donation of LIRR ephemera. Among the items were a lantern, crew sheets, time tables and a music sheet with a song written by "The Singing Conductors". Thank you Mr. Kaiser! 📖



Some of the historical items donated by Bill Stafford to the Wantagh Museum

What Was Happening Last Century in Wantagh

By Carol Poulos, Curator

120 Years Ago, November and December 1897:

Townsend Smith and his assistants were busy doing a preliminary survey of Wantagh Avenue, in preparation of work macadamizing the thoroughfare to the Town of Oyster Bay line. A grand ball was held at Jonas' Hall on Wednesday evening, December 1. (Note: Jonas' Hall later Ultsch's Hotel, became the Wantagh Hotel, now the location of the McDonalds at 1946 Wantagh Avenue.)

Active operations at the pickle factory were almost over for the season. A hundred or more barrels of sauerkraut were ready for shipment to New York. (Note: There was a sauerkraut factory south of the railroad tracks, east of Beech St. and the lumberyard, on Seaford Avenue.)

110 Years Ago, November and December 1907:

In November, the Brooklyn Eagle reported "Postmaster Jonathan Fussell, of Wantagh, had a miraculous escape from death at the Seymour Avenue (now Beech Street) crossing of the Long Island Railroad at Wantagh. About noon Monday the Amagansett express bore down on him, the freight house obstructing his view. It struck his wagon and smashed it to kindling wood. The man was buried beneath the debris, and after burrowing out found that he had escaped with some bad bruises and a rude shaking up. The horse ran away when the train struck the wagon."

In December of that year, Wantagh Avenue above the track was fixed for better drainage. Surveyors were at work on a proposed trolley line.

100 Years Ago, December 1917:

Some of the local boys from Camp Upton were home for Thanksgiving. The Red Cross Auxiliary gave a community dinner on Thanksgiving afternoon to 28 soldiers from Idaho, at Red Cross rooms in Firemen's Hall, which was draped with American flags. The tables were prettily and tastefully arranged with all the good things that make up a Thanksgiving dinner. After dinner, there was singing and dancing in which all joined until 10 o'clock when the boys were driven back to camp. 📖