

The Information Window

Wantagh Preservation Society Takes Action to Save the Historic 1909 Beech St School

By Tom Watson, Trustee

On April 6th the Wantagh Preservation Society (WPS) submitted a landmark application to the Town of Hempstead (ToH) Landmark Commission. The historic 117-year old 1909 Beech Street School deserves to be landmarked. This is the year of the Country's 250th anniversary - the 1909 Beech School standing for almost half that time.

Facts regarding the building of the 1909 Beech Street School:

- ◆ School Board members in 1909 were:
 - Edgar J. Seaman, President
 - William C. Doncaster
 - John H. Davis
 - William F. Dean
 - George Box
- ◆ Built in 1909 for the sum of \$12,000
- ◆ Architects were Inglee and Hart, Amityville, NY
- ◆ Two floors consisting of 4 classrooms, library, office and teachers' room
- ◆ Dedication ceremony was on Columbus Day in 1910

The design of the 1909 Beech Street School incorporated classical architectural elements that conveyed the importance of the building, such as:

- ◆ Bilateral Symmetry – left and right halves of the building are mirror images
- ◆ Doric Columns
- ◆ Front door pediment

The 1909 Beech Street School is in good condition and still maintains these classical architectural elements. The architects Lewis Inglee and Charles Hart designed many important buildings on Long Island. Inglee and Hart were in partnership from 1905 to 1912; with Inglee concentrating on the designing of public buildings and Hart on residential buildings. After the partnership dissolved each formed their own architecture firms. Town of Babylon Historian, Mary Cascone, has done extensive research on this important architecture firm and these architects; she has compiled a list of 61 known building projects for which Inglee designed. These buildings include schools, banks, theatres, hospitals, municipal buildings and residences. One of the buildings listed is the Wantagh School (aka 1909 Beech Street School).

According to the South Side Signal newspaper article of May 20, 1914, the Wantagh School that Inglee designed is an excellent specimen of his school house architectural designs. It is interesting to note that Inglee was only 24 years old when he designed the 1909 Beech Street School.

The 1909 Beech Street School is an important part of Wantagh's educational history; especially given it is still standing. The 1909 Beech Street School was built at a time (early 1900s) when school buildings on Long Island were transitioning from smaller school buildings (such as the one room schoolhouses) to larger school buildings.

This transition from one room schoolhouses to larger school buildings was necessitated not only by the growing population but also due to the improvements being made in public education. The larger school buildings with multiple rooms enabled students to be taught according to their grade level. The larger buildings had larger windows which provided light and air into the classrooms. The larger schools would have had larger properties that provided space for the student's outdoor exercise; during the early 1900s a new focus of the educational movement was student health.

The 1909 Beech Street School is an important part of Wantagh's educational history and should be preserved. 📖



*The 1909 Beech Street School,
Circa mid 1950s*



*Scan or click
the QR code
to learn
more about
Lewis
Inglee!*

Wantagh Preservation Society

1700 Wantagh Avenue (Museum Location)

PO Box 132 (Mailing Address)

Wantagh, Long Island, New York 11793

516.783.2519

www.wantagh.li/museum

**Wantagh
Fun Fact!**

Did you know that
Wantagh's first
historical marker
application was made in
1935? Click or scan the
QR code to learn more!



Wantagh Preservation Society

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Recording Secretary: Heather Famiglietti
Treasurer: Paul Sigler

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The Information Window is the official newsletter of the Wantagh Preservation Society, and is published approximately three 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

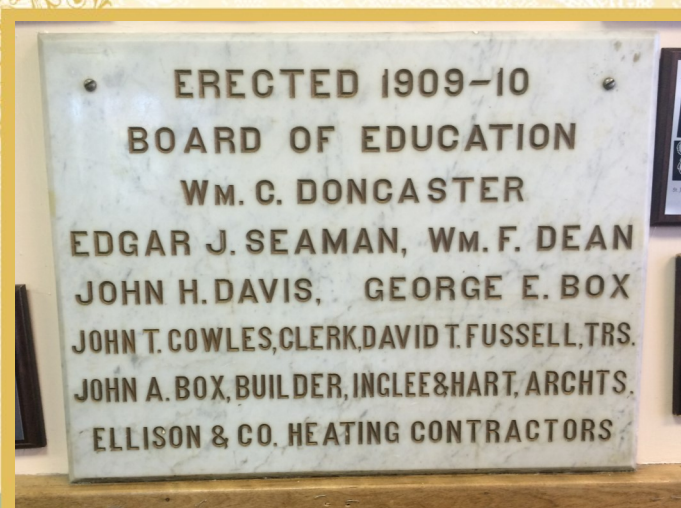


Photo of the Dedication Plaque Inside the 1909 Beech Street School Featured on Page 1

*The Wantagh Museum
is open on Sundays, Noon
to 2 PM until mid-November*



*Please stop in and see
our new displays of
local artifacts!*

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. 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 a volunteer may be present during the photography time. However, residents that visit the museum have always been courteous.

Photography cannot take place before dawn 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. If you have any questions, email wantaghmuseum@gmail.com.

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

Wantagh Preservation Society

America 250

By Paul Sigler, Co-Curator

In honor of the 250th anniversary of our country's independence, the Wantagh Preservation Society is raising funds to replace the iconic blue and yellow New York State historical markers that have gone missing since their installation in Wantagh in 1935. In fact, only three of the original nine remain. If funds are available, we would create markers for additional historic buildings. The missing markers include:

- ◆ "Cherrywood" home of Captain John Seaman pioneer settler of Jerusalem built near this site 1644 patentee to 300 acre tract of Hempstead purchase.
- ◆ Meeting house built in 1827 by religious society of friends. First meeting held in Jerusalem held at home of Benjamin Seaman, 1699.
- ◆ Grist mill site Colonel John Jackson granted whole liberty and privilege Jerusalem river 1704: also cornbury patent 1708 from Queen Anne (now Jones beach).
- ◆ North Jerusalem Avenue very old route from Hempstead to Jerusalem settled 1644.
- ◆ Richard Jackson captain, Jerusalem company, Queens company, Militia 1776, lived here: daughter Jane M. Lieutenant John Althause on British evacuation 1783.
- ◆ 1666 Jackson-Jones 1935 home of Colonel John Jackson Brigadier General Jacob S Jackson Samuel Jackson Jones (1923) and their descendants for ten generations.



Meeting House, One Example of the Many Wantagh Landmarks

The cost of each marker is approximately \$1700 so we need everyone's help! A "Go Fund Me" account has been set up (scan or click the QR code). As of this writing it has generated approximately \$4,000. Thanks to all who have contributed so far! For those that wish, you can also make a donation by check to the address below. (Please write "Wantagh's missing markers" on the check note in the lower left corner.)

Wantagh Preservation Society
PO Box 132
Wantagh, NY 11973

Scan or click for the "Go Fund Me" page to help with Wantagh's Historical Markers



Every dollar helps! Thank you for helping honor our Wantagh, and our country's history during this 2026 year, the semiquincentennial "America 250"! 📖

We Need You! Join or Renew Your Membership in 2026!

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 11973

“Preservation with a Purpose.”

Exploring Wantagh’s Historical Landmarks

By Frank Jurs, Trustee

In celebration of the United States’ semiquincentennial - the 250th anniversary of our independence, I invite you to explore the places that shaped Wantagh’s early history. From the colonial era through the years of the American Revolution (1644–1794), Wantagh - once known as Jerusalem - holds a remarkable collection of historic sites that bring this past to life.

Your journey begins in northern Wantagh, where Jerusalem Village first took root. As you travel east along North and Old Jerusalem Roads, you’re following a historic colonial route that connected Hempstead Village to Jerusalem Village as early as 1644. Many believe President Washington traveled this route in his 1790 tour of Long Island. Turning south onto Wantagh Avenue, you’ll encounter layers of history at every turn.

On the east side at #1051 stands the Jones-Dengler House, a large home whose original structure dates back to the 1700s and still endures today. Continuing south on Wantagh Avenue, the Cherrywood Shopping Center on the west side takes its name from the estate “Cherrywood,” established by Captain John Seaman, a founding settler of the area in 1644.

A short distance further, next to St. Frances Church on the east side of Wantagh Avenue, lies the Jackson Cemetery, established in 1762. This sacred ground is the resting place of early settlers, American patriots, and veterans whose lives predate the nation itself.

Nearby, close to Homestead Avenue, stood the home of Robert Jackson, one of Jerusalem’s pioneer settlers in the 1640s. As you continue south, at the southeast corner of Silverton Avenue, you’ll find the historic home of Colonel John Jackson (1673–1743), built between 1690 and 1710. This house bears witness to a dramatic past, including the violent murder and robbery of Parmenus Jackson which involved British militia during the Revolutionary period.

Further along Wantagh Avenue, near Island Road on the west side, sits the site of the 1644 Robert Jackson homestead - also home to Richard Jackson, captain of the Jerusalem Company militia in Queens County during the years leading up to the Revolution.

From there, take Wantagh Avenue to Park Avenue and head west to Jones Avenue North. Across from the Wantagh Public Library stands the recently landmarked Thomas and Elizabeth Jackson House, an 18th-century home belonging to Thomas Jackson (1754–1842) and his wife Elizabeth (1762–1828). Both are buried in the nearby Jackson Cemetery.



Robert Jackson Homestead

Your historical tour continues near Riverside Drive and Merrick Road, where two significant sites tell the story of generations of the Jackson and Jones families. Just east of Mill Pond once stood the Jackson-Jones homestead, home to descendants who lived there for ten generations. Nearby is the site of the original grist mill, tied to Colonel John Jackson, who was granted rights to the Jerusalem River in 1704, along with the Conbury Patent of 1708 issued by Queen Anne - land that would eventually become part of Jones Beach.

Finally, travel to Old Mill Road to visit the Birdsall House (1794), also known as the Mill House. This enduring structure is not only a rare surviving example of 18th-century architecture, but also a property connected to the American Revolution and the Battle of Long Island.

Together, these sites form a living timeline - one that tells the story of Wantagh’s earliest settlers, its role in the birth of a nation, and the legacy that continues to shape the community today. 📖



*Birdsall - Mill House,
as it Stands Today*