



The Historian

A Publication of the Three Village Historical Society



Inside this issue:

Calendar of Events	2
President's Message	3
New Exhibit Planned	4
Awards Dinner Photos	5
History of TVHS: The Third Decade	6

The Three Village Historical Society

Governing Board

Peter Paul Ostapow
President
Patricia Yantz
Vice President
Karin Lynch
Treasurer
Patricia Richter
Recording Secretary
Patricia Kunder,
Past President

Trustees:

Maria L. Brown
Fred Bryant
Patricia Cain
Frank Degen
Stephen Healy
Steven Hintze
Ronald LaVita
Michael O'Dwyer
Gregory Perricone
Christine Petrone
Donna Smith
Frank Turano

Staff:

Catherine Abrams
Executive Director
Karen Martin
Archivist
Donna Smith
Director of Education
Betty Domino
Office Manager
Dianne Trautmann
Office Assistant

Volume 47 Issue 1

Spring 2010

Catherine Abrams, Ph.D. appointed Executive Director



Catherine Abrams, Ph.D. takes the helm as the Society's new Executive Director.

After a three month search, the Board of Trustees of the Three Village Historical Society has appointed Catherine Abrams, Ph.D. as the new Executive Director.

"We are extremely pleased to welcome

Catherine to the Three Village Historical Society's staff" said Peter Ostapow, President of the Society. "Her depth of experience with the nonprofit sector, combined with her strong commitment to community service, will help support our efforts to offer more educational programs to the community.

Catherine has been the curator of the Queens Historical Society and the Executive Director of the Voelker Orth Museum, Bird Sanctuary and Victorian Garden, in New York City. She has extensive fundraising experience as a development consultant for New York nonprofit organizations. A NYU alumna, Catherine has a M.A. in Education and a Ph.D. in Art Education and Art Professions (Museum Studies).

Catherine is ready to undertake an ambitious development program that will preserve the archives, expand the educational programs available to the community, broaden the Society's ties with local nonprofits and enhance the services the Three Village Historical Society is offering to the public.

Catherine lives in Great Neck with her husband and her two children.

Cedar Hill Cemetery Celebrates 150 Years



The Three Village Historical Society in cooperation with the Port Jefferson Historical Society will present the Cedar Hill Cemetery Tour on June 12th.

This will be a guided tour through the historic cemetery where "Spirits" from the community will tell their tales from yesteryear.

Tours leave every 15 minutes beginning at 9:00 a.m. The last Tour leaves at

5:45 p.m. Each tour lasts approximately 1 1/2-2 hours.

Join us for a Wine and Cheese Reception and a Photo Exhibit of Cedar Hill Cemetery Thursday, June 10th from 7-10 p.m. at the Port Jefferson Civic Center, 101-A East Broadway, Port Jefferson, NY 11777.

For more information and to order tickets online, please visit: www.cedarhillspirittour.com. Tickets may also be ordered by calling the office at (631) 751-3730 during office hours.

TVHS Calendar of Events

MAY

**Stay connected.
Receive event
reminders and
updates on
volunteering
opportunities.
Send us your
email address!
info@tvhs.org**

Monday, May 17th, 7:00 p.m. Monthly Lecture Series: **April Masten** "*Art Work: Woman Artists and Democracy in Mid-19th Century NY*". Location: Setauket Neighborhood House, 95 Main St. Setauket, NY. 7:00 p.m. reception, 7:30-7:45 p.m. member's meeting/introduction of speaker, 7:45-9:00 p.m. lecture.

Saturday, May 22nd, 1:00 p.m. **Down the Ways Maritime Tour:** with historian Beverly Tyler. Tour starts at the Setauket Dock, Shore Rd, Setauket. Fee: \$3 member/\$5 non-member.

Monday, May 31st, 11:00 a.m. **Memorial Day Parade** in Setauket. Members are invited to march with us. Please report by 10:30 a.m. at the Emma S. Clark Library.

JUNE/JULY

Saturday, June 5th, 9:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m. **Annual Yard Sale.** Vendor space available: 10'x 10' for \$25. (Rain date: June 6th) See website for details/order form.



Thursday, June 10th from 7-10 p.m. **Wine and Cheese Reception** and Celebration of the **150th Anniversary of Cedar Hill Cemetery**, in partnership with the Historical Society of Greater Port Jefferson.

Saturday, June 12th: 150th Anniversary of Cedar Hill Cemetery.: Spirits Tour. See page one for more information or visit : www.cedarhillspirittour.com.

Sunday, June 13th, 2:00 p.m. **Setauket Village Green Walking Tour.** Tour starts at the Setauket Neighborhood House, 95 Main Street, Setauket. Fee: \$3 member/\$5 non-member.

Monday, June 21st, 7:00 p.m. *Volunteer Appreciation & Recruitment Meeting* and Monthly Lecture Series: **Paula Uruburu: American Eye: Birth of the It Girl and the Crime of the Century**". Location: Setauket Neighborhood House, 95 Main St. Setauket, NY. 6:45 p.m. reception, 7:15-7:45 p.m. Volunteer Appreciation, 7:45-9:00 p.m. lecture.

Wednesday, July 14th. 12:30 p.m. *100 Years of Fire Island Cultural History* a presentation by Dr. Frank Turano. Emma S. Clark Memorial Library, 120 Main Street, Setauket, NY. 11733

Saturday, July 17th, 10:30 a.m. **Down the Ways Maritime Tour:** with historian Beverly Tyler. Tour starts at the Setauket Dock, Shore Rd, Setauket. Fee: \$3 member/\$5 non-member.

Sunday, July 18th, 2:00 p.m. **Setauket Village Green Walking Tour.** Tour starts at the Setauket Neighborhood House, 95 Main Street, Setauket. Fee: \$3 member/\$5 non-member.

Volunteers Wanted!

We are looking for volunteers to work in the following areas:

Newsletter Editor
Advertising Specialist
Gift Shop
Yard Sale
Building Cleanup
Membership Chairperson
Database Maintenance
Hospitality Chair for Members Meetings
Summer Camp Coordinator
IT Person

The Historian

Is published quarterly by the Three Village Historical Society.

Suggestions for articles are welcome. Please send all articles, photos, feedback and ideas to: newsletter@tvhs.org In the subject line please include: **The Historian**.

The deadline: for our next issue is **June 11, 2010.**

Acting Editor & Layout:
Dianne Trautmann

©2010, Three Village
Historical Society

President's Message



"The Three Village Historical Society is the window on the past and the bridge to the future".
Peter Paul Ostapow,
President
Photo courtesy of Susan Byrnes

In the last issue I told you that we will begin the process of preparing for the New Year with new ideas, new exhibits and some new surprises. As promised our calendar of events is chock full of wonderful events. Your board is pleased to announce that Catherine Abrams, Ph.D., has accepted our offer to become our Executive Director. Her vast experience will indeed be an asset to our Society and I am confident that with her guidance we will move to the next level.

In June we are co-hosting the 150th Anniversary of Cedar Hill Cemetery with Port Jefferson Historical Society. Please support this fundraiser and celebration by buying tickets to the Cemetery Spirits Tour. Our annual yard sale is scheduled for June. We hope that you will generously donate items for the event and ask all your friends and neighbors to attend. When you come make sure to take notice of the craftsmanship of our new walkway and fence that were generously donated by local stewards.

The definition of steward is one having charge of buildings or grounds; a custodian, keeper, defender, guardian, protector. We are all stewards of history and of our Society which is in need of financial stewards in order to repair, maintain and enhance the Bayles-Swezey house (circa 1700) and property. Every repair put off each year doubles in cost. The roof and fascia need to be replaced, our chimney needs repair and the exterior needs to be repainted. Our electrical wiring needs to be updated in recognition of its current demands. We have been informed that these expenses will be approximately \$60,000 to \$100,000. Our goal is to have the work completed by early fall in anticipation of the grand opening of our newest exhibit on the Culper Spy Ring. We ask for support beyond your membership dues and attendance at our events. Please know that we appreciate your stewardship at any level. Preserving history for future generations is our mission. Someone once told me, "The Three Village Historical Society is the window on the past and the bridge to the future." When you receive your pledge cards please return them as promptly and as generously as possible.

Thank you for your continued support

Peter Paul Ostapow

If you are interested in volunteering for any of our Spring Events help is needed for hospitality at our Monthly Lecture Series and help with our Yard Sale. Contact the office at 751-3730

Welcome New Members

- Susan Capek
- Karen & Richard Carroll
- Henry DeBoer
- Frank & Jane Degen
- Loni Frazita
- Fran & John Gandia
- Christine Gottsch
- Pat J. Ingrassia
- John T. Pilkington
- Jaqueline Rudman
- Helen C. Sells
- Abby & Anthony Smith
- Karen Smith
- Robert W. Thompson
- Katheryne & Christopher Walsh

Good & Welfare

Our sympathies go out to the family and friends of members that have passed away this winter: Barbara Swartz, February 11th; Alice Augustitus, February 21st; John Thomas Clark February 26; Sylvia Glenn on April 14th.

Condolences to TVHS Trustee Patricia Richter and her family for the loss of her father on Feb. 27th and TVHS Treasure Karin Lynch and her family for the loss of her father, Harold J. Lynch on May 5th.

In Memoriam



In recognition of the contributions of members wishing to remember loved ones that have passed away:

Dr. R. Sherman Mills
Barbara & Bruce McNaughton

Spies! New Exhibit will focus on Gen. Washington's L.I. Spy Ring



General George Washington, by Charles Wilson Peale.

Thanks to a \$20,000 matching grant from N.Y. Council for the Humanities, the Three Village Historical Society is creating an exciting exhibit for children and

adults at our Setauket headquarters. The new exhibit, *Spies!*, will bring to life, through interactive software, colorful large wall maps and story boards, and hands-on activities, the work of General George Washington's Long Island spy ring that was centered in Setauket during the years 1778 - 1781.

Referred to by historians as the Culper Spy Ring, the spies gathered and transmitted essential information to General George

Washington about British troop movements in and around enemy-occupied New York and Long Island. Five of the six spies had been born in Setauket, and three still called it home during the Revolution. The spies operated in complete secrecy to help Washington win the war of independence from the British crown. Even Washington was unaware of the identity of the members of the spy ring.



Abraham Woodhull and Caleb Brewster, two key members of the Culper Spy Ring, as depicted in the Vance Locke mural at the Setauket Elementary School.

Elizabeth Kahn Kaplan, project leader for the *Spies!* exhibit, says that children and their parents are the primary audience that the exhibit designers hope to attract. "We hope to bring to new

generations within the community knowledge of - and pride in - Long Island's rich history."

The Three Village Historical Society has contracted with Long Island-based ProtoZone, Inc. to build the exhibit. ProtoZone is the firm that designed interactive software for the Children's Maritime Museum in Port Jefferson.

This is a matching grant. The New York Council for the Humanities will give us \$20,000 on condition that we match their generosity with another \$20,000 from our membership and the community. To contribute to, and feel a part of, this new resource -- that will bring to children and the community an understanding of the significant role played by the American Revolution's best-organized, successful spy ring right here in our own back yards - you are encouraged to send your tax-deductible contribution to the Three Village Historical Society, 93 North Country Road, Setauket, NY 11733.



*Be a part of the Three Village Historical Society's
Culper Spy Ring Project
Make your donation today!*



I congratulate TVHS on receiving this matching grant of \$20,000 from the New York Council for the Humanities. I am happy to do my share in meeting the matching grant. Enclosed is my tax-deductible contribution of (please check one):

- \$10
 \$25
 \$50
 \$100
 \$200
 \$500
 \$1000
 \$5000
 Other \$ _____

Name _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____

Email: _____

Check enclosed or Credit card information, below: (Master Card/Visa only!)

Card # _____ Exp. Date: _____

Name on Card _____

33rd Annual Awards Dinner



Irish step dancers from An Rince Mor entertained the attendees at the 33rd Annual Awards Dinner held at the Stony Brook Yacht Club on March 16, 2010. Awards were presented in six categories with a special presentation by Town of Brookhaven Historian Barbara Russell of the newly named *R. Sherman Mills "Young Historian" Award* in memory of her father. Suffolk County Legislator Vivian Viloria-Fisher presented all of our honorees with Proclamations from the county.



(L-R) Barbara Russell presents the *R. Sherman Mills Young Historian Award* to Caroline Cain who contributed over 32 hours of volunteer service at various Society events in 2009.



(L-R) Society President, Peter Ostapow presents *Community Award Certificates* to Dave Fortuna of Swan Cove Landscaping, Christopher Graf of Stone Gate Landscaping Construction and Joseph Troffa of Jos. M. Troffa Landscape and Mason Supply.



The Setauket Fire Department and the Stony Brook Fire Department accept a Proclamation from Suffolk County Legislator Vivian Viloria-Fisher. Both fire departments received the Society's *Kate Wheeler Strong Award* for their significant contribution to local history for their 100th Anniversary Programs in 2009. (L-R): Chief Peter Leonard, Stony Brook F.D., Vivian Fisher, Chief Brendan Brown of the Setauket F.D., and Stony Brook F.D. President Rich D'Agostino.



(L-R) Jason and Casey Ellin receive a *Community Award* from Trustee Michael O'Dwyer for house restoration work on their Stony Brook home.



(L-R) Anne Strong presents Dianne and Michael Fitzpatrick with a *Community Award* for the landscaping for their property in Setauket.



Treasurer Karin Lynch with Vice President Patty Yantz. presents Shelley and John Broven with the *Gayle Becher Award*, (L-R) Karin Lynch, Shelley and John Broven, Patty Yantz.



(L-R) Setauket Fire Chief Brendan Brown presents the Fire Department's 100th Anniversary Yearbook to President Peter Ostapow for the Society's archives.

If you haven't renewed your membership please do so as soon as possible. We look forward to seeing everyone at our upcoming events. Thank you for your continued support!

The Three Village Historical Society 1984 to 1993 - The Third Decade

by Beverly C. Tyler

The Three Village Historical Society was founded on October 30, 1964 by a group of men and women who believed that the history of the Setauket/Stony Brook area needed to be brought to the attention of every resident and visitor. The Three Villages was, they understood, not only the original settlement in the Town of Brookhaven, but the home of many ordinary people who did extraordinary things. These ordinary people were hard-working settlers, patriots and Revolutionary War spies, farmers and sea captains, shipbuilders and leaders of industry, poets and painters, Native Americans and immigrants.

As 1993 began, Franklin Neal had just completed his first year as Society president and Michele Morrisson had just completed her first year as Society director. 1993 was not only the end of the Society's second decade, it was the conclusion of a decade of planning and implementation that resulted in the next decade being the Society's greatest as an educational institution.

Our headquarters on the second floor of the Setauket Neighborhood House was improved with new shelving and other amenities constructed by various members. However, the office was filled to capacity. Our Captain Edward R. Rhodes Memorial Collection of Local History was also bursting at the seams in temporary space in the balcony of the 1892 Emma S. Clark Memorial Library.

We began the year receiving \$700 from Suffolk County Office of Cultural Affairs for our 1992 youth program

Artistic Explorations. From the New York State Council on the Arts we were awarded \$5,000 for the planning phase for a joint exhibition between the Cold Spring Harbor Whaling Museum and the Three Village Historical Society on "Women at Sea," and \$2,000 for our 1993 programs for families. The New York State Library Conservation and Preservation Program also awarded us funds for a "conservation survey" of our most important collection, the Rhodes Collection.



1993: Bill Minuse and Betty Voss in the Setauket Neighborhood House second floor space used by the Society before the current Headquarters building was acquired at 93 North Country Rd.

Over the following year, the Society and the Whaling Museum had to write the script for the "Women at Sea" exhibition and choose the artifacts for the exhibition and catalog. All of this effort was coordinated by Society Director Michele Morrisson. Michele was able to get a large cadre of Society members involved including researchers, transcribers, registrars and photographers. More than 100 letters were sent to historical organizations seeking materials for the exhibition. Diaries and letters were transcribed from private collections and our Rhodes Collection.

In a stroke of timely good fortune, director Morrisson met New Zealand author Joan Druett at a lecture at the Oysterponds Historical Society. At the time Druett, author of *She Was a Sister Sailor* and *Petticoat Whalers*, and her husband, maritime artist Ron Druett, were on a tour of maritime museums in the eastern United States sponsored by the New Bedford Whaling Museum. Joan Druett then was the foremost authority on women who went to sea with their whaling husbands. Joan agreed to work with the Society on the "Women at Sea" exhibition and together with Ina Katz, curator of the Cold Spring Harbor Whaling Museum, uncovered five additional women who sailed from Long Island with their whaling husbands.

The Society began a long-range plan study in 1993, a plan for the next decade. One of the keys to the plan was the survey of the membership, the community and the trustees done under the guidance of the Museum Assessment Program (MAP1) of the American Association of Museums, and the two surveys of the Rhodes Collection by professionals appointed by the American Association of Museums and the Northeast Document Conservation Center. Five challenges were outlined by the Museum Assessment Report (MAP1): The current and future role of the director and the director's impact on the board, committees and volunteers; the acquisition of a building and its impact on budget, staffing and

The Three Village Historical Society 1984 to 1993 - The Third Decade

program; given the transitional state of the organization and its desire to grow and expand, a written long-range plan is a necessity; greater financial management that emphasizes future needs and the importance of building an endowment; cultivating new audiences through innovative programming and promotion/publicity.

The report from Suzanne Etherington, a professional consulting archivist, described our Rhodes Collection of local documents and photographs as "tremendous." This, combined with the challenges outlined by MAP1 indicated to the Society that its collections should form the basis for future programming, exhibitions, and publications. As a result, the Society put "Women at Sea" into high gear. The plan for the exhibition and publication got its initial energy and start from the paintings of Captain Benjamin Jones and his wife Mary Swift Jones. However, as the project moved from initial plan to

implementation, it became obvious that "Women at Sea" would be largely based on the extensive collection of diaries, journals, log books, paintings, photographs and artifacts that were a part of the Society's "tremendous" Rhodes Collection. This, combined with a wealth of material that became available within our historic community, let "Women at Sea" set a high standard for future exhibitions and publication.

The Society also undertook a number of community programs in 1993, including a commitment to providing a financial award to a worthy graduating Ward Melville senior each year and a number of family activities including "The Great Setauket Spy Adventure"- a bicycle and walking tour. The in-school and field trip programs were evaluated by museum educational specialists who recommended changes and improvements. The community told the Society that they wanted more family history

programs and both the community and the membership told the Society that we needed to establish a headquarters of our own. A number of sites for a headquarters were considered, but nothing concrete resulted immediately. The best was yet to come.

The Society's Annual Dinner in October honored Past President William B. Minuse for his lifetime achievements in local history. One of the Society's founding members, Bill Minuse also became the first member of the newly-established Three Village Historical Society's Founders Club. The establishment of a Founders Club was part of the Society's financial management efforts and a founders plaque, with the names of each member contributing as a Founder, was displayed at the dinner. The Society's first annual fund-raising campaign in 1993 was also an unqualified success with 107 members contributing. *(to be continued in our next issue.)*

Virginia A. O'Dwyer Honored by TVHS



Virginia A. O'Dwyer Real Estate is the recipient of this year's Annual Business of the Year Award. The

Society honored Virginia O'Dwyer with this award on May 7th at the Second Annual Business Award Dinner held at the Setauket Neighborhood House, 95 Main Street, Setauket.

Virginia opened her real estate office in 1975 in Stony Brook, making it the oldest established independent agency in the Three Village community. A Long Island native and long time resident of the

community, Virginia has five grown children, fourteen grandchildren and two great grandchildren. Her son Michael, her daughter-in-law Bessie O'Dwyer and grandson Sean Riley all work for the family business.

Proclamations were presented to Virginia by Senator John Flannigan; Assemblyman Steven Englebright; Legislator Vivian Vilorio-Fisher and Councilman Steve Fiore-Rosenfeld during the event.

Entertainment for the evening was provided by the P.J. Gelinis Junior High School String Quartet conducted by Mr. Philip Gelfer.

Special thanks to Event Chair Steve Hintze for all of his hard work to make the evening a success.

Annual Yard Sale June 5th

(Rain date June 6th)

We will be taking donations of household items, books, antiques, etc. on June 3rd from 10 a.m.—3:00 p.m.

Vendor Space Available!

10'x10' spaces

\$20 for members

\$25 for non-members

Call 751-3730 to reserve your spot or visit our website for more information and a reservation form:

www.tvhs.org

We are also looking for volunteers to work that day. Call the office you can help: 751-3730

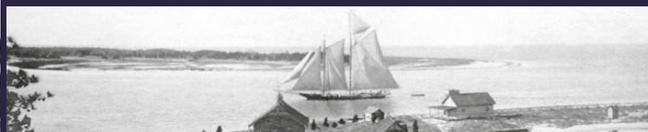
Three Village Historical Society
P.O. Box 76
East Setauket, NY 11733-0076

Non-Profit Org
U.S. Postage Paid
E. Setauket, NY
Permit No. 88

Return Service Requested



Renew your membership today!



10% Discount on all Gift Shop Purchases
Subscription to The Historian newsletter
Nine Monthly Member Meetings
Discount and Advance purchase on all
of the Society's programs

Suggested Membership Levels:

- Individual: \$30.00
- Dual/Family: \$50.00
- Patron: \$100.00
- Benefactor: \$250.00
- Helmsman: \$500.00
- Midshipman: \$1000.00

**Rates Reflect Annual Dues,
Renewable January of Each Year**

All members are entitled to basic benefits. For a complete list of benefits for each level of membership please visit our website:

<http://www.tvhs.org/support.html>

The Three Village Historical Society Membership Application/Renewal

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Payment:

Check payable to: **Three Village Historical Society**

or

Credit Card: MasterCard or Visa:

Name on Card: _____ Exp. _____

Account Number: _____

Mail application to:
The Three Village Historical Society
93 North Country Rd.
Setauket, NY 11733