

Westhampton Beach Historical Society

Serving the
Communities of
Westhampton Beach,
Westhampton Dunes,
Westhampton, Quiogue,
Remsenburg, Speonk
and Eastport



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Newsletter

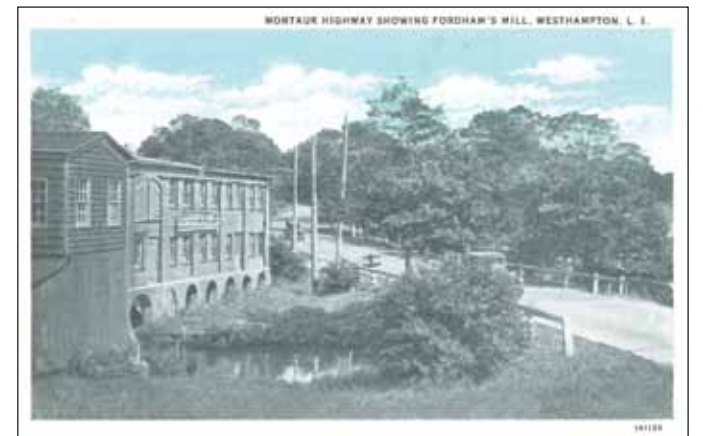
Early Spring 2019

Our First-Ever Historic Preservation Award!

Over the past two years you may have noticed significant renovation activities at the Tuttle-Fordham Mill, a Town of Southampton Landmark on Montauk Highway in Speonk. The work was undertaken by the John and Elaine Kanas Family Foundation, which purchased the property in March 2017 and conducted the renovations, thus saving the historic Mill and returning the property to productive use as offices for the Foundation and other tenants. The Foundation's efforts were noted and deeply appreciated by the Westhampton Beach Historical Society, whose service area includes the Mill property. Out of this appreciation, the So-

ciety decided to start an Historic Preservation Award, with the inaugural award given to the Foundation in November 2018!

The Mill property includes a brick sawmill building constructed in 1859 by Daniel Wells Tuttle, a carriage-maker who had purchased the property, which already included a sawmill, from Jonathan and Enoch Jagger in 1844. The Tuttle sawmill was powered by the Speonk River, which had been dammed just above the mill. Daniel's two sons, Lewis and Elias Tuttle, purchased the sawmill from their father in 1871 and continued operations through the late 1800s. The Tuttle brothers leased the sawmill to Everett O. Fordham in 1895, and in 1911 Mr. Fordham bought the sawmill and converted it to electric



Early 1900s postcard showing the 1859 brick sawmill and an older wooden sawmill (far left, no longer present).

power. In 1946, long-time Fordham employee Wilbur Benjamin bought the mill, which he continued operating for some years. In more recent years a large addition was made to the western end of the original brick mill building and a second building was constructed on the property. The buildings became vacant in the 1990s and began to deteriorate. By the early 2000s it was recognized that a significant effort would be required to repair the buildings and restore them to use.

In an interview with the Southampton Press, Mr. John Kanas noted "Like most people, I've been looking at that building for many years, trying to figure out what could be done

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Attendees at the Historic Preservation Award Ceremony (left to right): Historical Society President Jon Stanat, honorees John and Elaine Kanas, New York Assemblyman Fred Thiele, and Brookhave Town Supervisor Edward P. Romaine.

Westhampton Beach, NY 11978
P.O. Box 686
Westhampton Beach Historical Society



Westhampton Beach Historical Society 2019 Calendar of Events

As we make our way through 2019 we hope you can join us at some or all of the following scheduled events. Some of the dates are not yet settled and we will be sending out notices of many of these events, so watch your snail mail and email for further announcements!

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| May 17 and 18..... Scrap Metal Drive | July 13 to Aug. 3..... Craft Demonstrations
at the Foster Meeker Heritage Center
(Saturdays 10 AM to 1 PM) |
| May 22..... "Senior Social" for local Seniors | August 10 and 11.... Revolutionary War Living History Event
on the Great Lawn |
| June 14..... Season Opening Cocktail Party
at Starr Boggs Restaurant | August 18 Westhampton Beach Fire Department Exhibit |
| June 29 to Sept. 7... Summer Museum Exhibit:
"Remembering WWII on the 75th Anniversary of D-Day" | September Westhampton Cemetery Walk |
| | October 20 Pot Luck Supper |
| | December 8..... Holiday Party |



* Westhampton Beach Historical Society Museum • 101 Mill Road • Westhampton Beach

Our First-Ever Historic Preservation Award!

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with it and how to restore it". In 2017 the Kanas Foundation took the step of acquiring the property and embarked on the effort to restore and re-purpose the historic Mill and associated buildings. As the property is a Town of Southampton landmark, the Landmarks and Historic Districts Board reviewed and approved restoration plans as the project progressed.

The restoration process, although lengthy, has been meticulous, including retaining as much of the original Mill building materials as possible, using salvaged materials where the originals could not be re-used, and incorporating new period-appropriate restoration materials. The exterior walls, roof framing, and remaining mill works were retained, with a new interior structure built to support the walls and hide insulation and utilities. The result is a beautiful restored sawmill building that will remind us of our community's history for years to come. The Society deeply appreciated the "saving" of our historic Mill and was very pleased to recognize the Foundation for its extraordinary efforts. The next time you are in Speonk, please pause as you drive by the Mill and admire the wonderful restoration by the John and Elaine Kanas Family Foundation!



View of the now-restored Mill. The historic 1859 building is at left and the 1960 building (attached) is at right.

Will There Be a 2019 Historic Preservation Award?

The Westhampton Beach Historical Society was so deeply impressed by the restoration of the historic Tuttle-Fordham Mill by the John and Elaine Kanas Family Foundation that it inaugurated an Historic Preservation Award in 2018 to recognize the Foundation's preservation efforts. The Society would like to encourage more historic preservation projects in the communities that we serve (Eastport to Quiogue and south to the Village of Westhampton Dunes) by continuing this award on an annual basis.

Do you know of a local historic restoration project that may be worthy of recognition? Is there a historic building in our area that someone chose to save rather than demolish? If so, please let us know! We would love to have to opportunity to recognize and honor these efforts and encourage more preservation of our community's historic resources. If you would like to make a recommendation for the 2019 Historic Preservation Award, please give us a call at (631) 288-1139, or send us an email at whbhistorical@optonline.net. Your input is greatly appreciated!

New Summer Exhibit:

Remembering WWII on the 75th Anniversary of D-Day

Our next exhibit is currently in preparation and will focus on local World War II history. Although our artifact collection includes some WW II materials, we are reaching out to our community for loans and donations of additional WW II memorabilia and artifacts for inclusion in the exhibit. Please call the Society at (631) 288-1139 and leave a message if you have items for our consideration. Our Collections Manager, Jaime Karbowski, will return your call.

We anticipate that the exhibit will be open to the public at the Society's Museum at 101 Mill Road, Westhampton Beach, on Saturdays from 10 AM through 1 PM from June 29 to September 7, 2019. Please watch for more details and plan a Museum visit this summer!



1938 Hurricane 80th Anniversary Gathering

On September 21, 2018, exactly 80 years after the 1938 Hurricane struck Long Island, the Westhampton Beach Historical Society hosted a gathering of hurricane survivors who shared their stories and memories of that fateful day. The survivors included Jackie Parlato Bennett, Otis Bradley, Lois Davis, Ruth Duvall, Joyce Warner Kelley, Anne Kirsch, Marian Phillips, Jean Wilcox Tuttle, and Betty Warner, all of whom spoke of their '38 Hurricane experiences and recalled the larger picture of the devastation and subsequent cleanup in our communities.



1938 Hurricane survivors met on the 80th anniversary to share their stories.

The survivors' stories were recorded by the Society and are now preserved in our archives. Photos of this event can be found on our website: whbhistorical.org. Newsday was also present and reported on the event, including a beautiful article with embedded video recordings. This article can be accessed here: <https://www.newsday.com/long-island/long-island-express-hurricane-anniversary-1.21125777> We are very fortunate to have these survivors share their stories with us; they are a reminder of the continued vulnerability of our coastal community to hurricanes and other coastal storms.

Scrap Metal Drive Coming!

Bring out your dead...metal, that is! The Society will be holding a scrap metal drive on Friday, May 17 and Saturday, May 18. Please bring your scrap metal to the collection area in the parking lot behind the Museum on either day and we will happily accept it! If you have large metal items (appliances, etc.), we may be able to transport these items for you – please check with the folks in

the collection area or leave a message on our phone at (631) 288-1139. Please take advantage of this wonderful opportunity to clean out your garage, basement, or other areas where junk accumulates and help us raise funds at the same time! Thanks in advance for your help with this effort!

2019 Membership Drive Under Way

Our 2019 membership drive is underway; please watch for the mailing and renew your membership in the Society! Your membership dollars help us to fulfill our mission, including:

- Collecting and preserving materials pertaining to Eastern Long Island, focusing on the Greater Westhampton area, including Eastport, Speonk, Remsenburg, Westhampton, Westhampton Beach, Westhampton Dunes, and Quiogue;
- Interpreting the history of the area through exhibitions, educational programs, and publications;
- Advocating for the preservation of historic structures and sites; and
- Facilitating historic research.

Our activities reflect our mission and in 2018 included a winter lecture series open to the public, a Civil War re-enactment, local school programs and historic craft demonstrations, an event commemorating the 1938 Hurricane, presentation of our first historic preservation award, and embarking on a collection digitization project. Our 2019 activities are already underway and your support is needed. Please return your 2019 membership renewal so our Society can continue to provide historic preservation support, education, and research for the greater Westhampton area!