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History of Post-Morrow

The Post-Morrow Foundation, Inc. is located in the Hamlet of Brookhaven, Suffolk County, New York. Its principal office is at 16 Bay Road, Brookhaven, NY 11719.

Conceived by Thomas and Elisabeth Post Morrow and established in 1969, the Foundation is dedicated to the preservation of the rural countryside character of the Hamlet and the surrounding areas. Through the acquisition of properties, either by gift or purchase, the Foundation seeks to establish a nature preserve and sanctuary for the benefit and enjoyment of the immediate community. The preservation of Beaver Dam Creek, where the Foundation owns over 60 acres, is a priority.

The Post and Morrow families have had a long tradition of philanthropy in the community. James H. Post purchased the land along Carman's River, now known as Squassux Landing, which was later donated to the Brookhaven Village Association for use as a marina. The land upon which the Brookhaven Free Library is situated was another gift. Elisabeth Post Morrow continued the tradition of her father by donating various gifts to community groups, mostly anonymously. It was the hope of the Morrows that this legacy be continued through the establishment of the Post-Morrow Foundation, Inc.

Post-Morrow Foundation NEWSLETTER

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October 1998

PRESERVING OUR HERITAGE

The Hamlet of Brookhaven is blessed with a rich cultural heritage. One of the objectives of the Foundation is to preserve that heritage. In 1985 the Town of Brookhaven designated the Fire Place Historic District in Brookhaven

Hamlet as one of six historic districts in the Town.

We are reprinting here, an essay by Arthur Danto, resident of Brookhaven Hamlet, because it so clearly reflects Mrs Morrow's vision of what she wanted to preserve.

Brookhaven Hamlet as Historical District by Arthur Danto

Brookhaven Hamlet includes an area with so unmistakable a character that, when one has entered it, there is an immediate awareness of being in a place different in feeling from what surrounds it.

Externally, this area is a wedge of land bounded, counterclockwise, by the Great South Bay, the Carman's River, Old Stump Road, South Country Road, and the east end of the Lohmann Farm. It is roughly bisected by the Beaver Dam Road, a gently meandering path going west from Squassux Landing and over the South Country Road.

Internally, the hamlet is marked by woods and waters, marshes and open fields, grand trees, barns, modest churches, and houses which express the spirit of an older, pre-suburban form of life. The houses are too widely spaced to be a village, yet not so distant from one another as to form a rural network. It is, precisely, a hamlet, and as such it retains a quality of existence vanished, or rapidly vanishing, from the Long Island of which it once was typical.

Much of the area where land meets water falls under the protective legislation for marshland and wildlife, so there is a reasonable expectation that our shoreline, otherwise so vulnerable to developers, will retain its integrity indefinitely. Further, by a combination of miracle and community awareness, Brookhaven Hamlet has maintained against the forces of development — the tract housing, the shopping mall, the gentrified resort — an authentic air of tranquil residence our fathers and grandfathers took for granted, but which we today cannot.

It is because our hamlet is one of the few surviving instances of an endangered species that its members are requesting it be recognized as meriting the protective status of an historical district. It is not the desire of the residents of Brookhaven Hamlet to stop time or to turn the clock back. But we recognize that the luck that has enabled the hamlet to survive cannot be counted on to last, and the community must take some responsibility for its maintenance, to have some measure of control over the future, so the natural sort of growth and change which have brought about its cherished atmosphere may continue.



Wild Clematis and Pitch Pine along historic Beaver Dam Road which was first laid out in 1735

THE FIRE PLACE HERITAGE COLLECTION



Postcard from the Dorothy Jones collection showing the St. James Episcopal Church and the old oak tree on Beaver Dam Road ca. 1935.

The Foundation engaged the services of Linnea Anderson, a consulting archivist, to address issues regarding the establishment and operation of the Post-Morrow Foundation archives. A needs assessment has been con-

ducted which presents basic information on all aspects of running archives.

A large collection has been donated by the Fireplace Literary Club (1912-1995). Their gift, made up of club records, historical material and memorabilia, traces the history of the Club which was incorporated in 1913 and has had a significant impact on our community. They were also founders of the Brookhaven Free Library Association and the Brookhaven Free Library.

The Foundation has also embarked upon an oral history project. Under the direction of local resident, Linda Cox, we will be interviewing local residents about their recollections of Brookhaven Hamlet history. Anyone with interest in participating in this project or with suggestions should call the Foundation.

For their gifts to the Fire Place Heritage Collection the Foundation would like to thank:

- *Eileen Green for her gift of a book of postcards of Brookhaven, Bellport and Patchogue
- *Jim Fuchs for his gift of photographs by Wallace Keane from the 1940's
- *Dorothy Hubert Jones for her gift of photos and postcards

LONG MEADOW FARM

The Foundation has purchased Long Meadow Farm on Old Stump Road from Mrs. Patricia Barron through a "bargain sale". This simply means that an appraisal established a fair market value for the property and the owner then sold it to the Foundation at a less than fair market value and was able to realize a charitable gift. Thus, due to the family's generosity, the Foundation was able to purchase the land.

The Foundation has cleared several areas of the land. We wish to keep some of it in open meadow in order to attract certain wildlife and birds. We are establishing a buffer around the edges of the property especially on Old Stump Road and the northern boundary. There is a walking path which is already established around the periphery which is open to our neighbors for their enjoyment.

We have established some bluebird houses to attract them to a nesting site. We would like to thank Ann Meinhold for her assistance in placing some nesting boxes in the field. While it takes some time to establish bluebird nests we are encouraged that they have been sighted on the property. We are pleased to be a part of the New York State effort to support the return of bluebirds to our area.

In the area cleared in the western section of the property we are considering

growing some crops. (This is just north of the area used by the Hamlet Organic Garden). The Foundation is working closely with the Hamlet Organic Garden and has installed an irrigation pump which is being used to supply water for the Organic Garden.

The walking path around the perimeter of Long Meadow Farm is open to our neighbors. We ask for your cooperation in keeping this property free from litter and debris. You can call us at 286-0686 if you notice some disturbance.



A view of Long Meadow Farm looking east along the farm road. The Goldenrod provides a beautiful sea of golden open meadow.

SAVE THE BAY - MAYDAY MAY 3, 1998

For the second year the Foundation co-sponsored a conference on the South Shore Estuary with SEQ students from Bellport High School. For the 1998 SAVE THE BAY MAYDAY project, Bellport High School Students for Environmental Quality (SEQ) focussed the 1998 High School South Shore Estuary Conference (April 4, 1998, at Bellport High School) on the stream corridors which feed into the South Shore Estuary. The Estuary extends for over 50 miles from the Atlantic Bay Bridge in Nassau County to Shinnecock Bay in Suffolk County. Reynolds Channel, Middle Bay, East Bay, South Oyster Bay, Great South Bay, Moriches Bay and Shinnecock Bay are part of this natural system.

The many streams and creeks which flow into these bays are critical to its environmental health and the enjoyment of all who live, work and play within the South Shore Estuary.

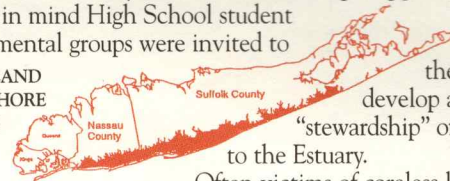
But according to a report of the South Shore Estuary Reserve Council (2/98) many of our creeks are in trouble. "While many Long Islanders serve as active stewards of the estuary and take advantage of numerous educational opportunities, many more are unaware of the extraordinary value of the estuary ecosystem. Much more needs to be

(South Shore Estuary Reserve: Interim Report pg. 27). With this thought in mind High School student environmental groups were invited to

the conference to develop an action plan for "stewardship" of the tributaries to the Estuary.

Often victims of careless litter and garbage, these streams then become the means to contribute to the pollution of the Estuary. Runoff from roads and developed areas around these waterways also add to the pollution of the Estuary. Many people travel over these creeks and streams not knowing that they lead into the Bays of the South Shore. Because of intensive development they are sometimes not even noticed. However, here in Brookhaven, Beaver Dam Creek and Carman's River are treasured and protected waterways thanks to local residents and groups like the SEQ.

SAVE THE BAY MAYDAY project hopes to bring attention to the importance of our creeks and streams in several ways including the development of a map of all the creeks and streams in the South Shore Estuary and encourage each school to adopt a creek and perform a cleanup project or celebration of the creek for the MAYDAY project. "If all of the schools in the South Shore Estuary would do these activities on SAVE THE BAY MAYDAY it is our feeling that we could bring a great deal of attention to our troubled creeks and streams", reported Bridgid O'Connor, the President of SEQ. On May 3 1998 SEQ and friends launched canoes from Foundation property and spent the day cleaning Beaver Dam Creek and improving a significant tributary to the South Shore Estuary.



Students for Environmental Quality honor their faculty advisor of the last three years, Marvin Loewen. Mr. Loewen retired this Spring from Bellport High School after 34 years of teaching chemistry and science. The Foundation herb garden and lawn on Bay Road provided the setting for this pleasant occasion.

COMMUNITY MEMORY

History is *alive* in every community. The history of Brookhaven Hamlet is no exception. It is the story of its people, its places, and its things. It is the story, too, not just of generations of long ago: it is as much about Brookhaven as it is today as it was about yesterday.

Some of the hamlet's history is gathered and reported in books and other publications. Other elements are found in original documents and in one-of-a-kind objects and important artifacts, which are also known as archival or historical resources. Historical resources serve a unique function as a *community's memory*. They are used to reconstruct events from the past and to help plan for the future.

Because of the nature of these materials, archival resources are often found in museums, historical societies, or libraries where they receive special care. Unfortunately, many treasures from our more recent past are at risk of being neglected and lost forever. Materials—primarily from the second half of the twentieth century—are felt by many to be too contemporary and, thus, *non historical*. Archival resources, however, are made historic not by their age, but rather on the fact that they contain *information of value to the community*.

How will Brookhaven Hamlet be remembered decades from now? Will there be adequate information available about the people who live here now and the contributions they make? Will the information accurately represent how life was like in the hamlet at the end of the millennium? Will this information be saved and made available to those who seek it?

The Post-Morrow Foundation is committed to keeping this history alive. The Foundation is looking to build upon its existing collections, so that the next generation can witness for themselves the history that is Brookhaven Hamlet today. The Post-Morrow Foundation would like to form a partnership with the community to preserve archival materials which document modern times in the hamlet. Often, these materials are still held in our family albums, our office files, and in the organizational records of cultural and civic groups to which we all belong. Archival materials may include many items, or photographs, maps, blueprints, and drawings. They may also take on many physical forms—paper, film, cassette, videotape, or even computer disk.

For more information on transferring historical materials to the Post-Morrow Foundation, please call 516-286-0686.

(This article was written by Susana Tejada, Regional Archivist for the Documentary Heritage Program of the Long Island Library Resources Council. For general questions on archival resources and community history, contact the Documentary Heritage Program by telephone (616-632-6652) or e-mail (dhp@litrc.org).

PRESERVING OUR HERITAGE

continued from page 1

This atmosphere surrounds a community that is an intersection of distinct but harmonizing cultures: It is agricultural without being a farming community. There is a life of the bay without its being a fishing village. There is a population of scientists from Brookhaven National Laboratory without it being an intellectual enclave. There are artists and writers without it being an artists' colony. Nor is it a dormitory town of a resort. It is a unified society precious for its variousness.

Beaver Dam Road epitomizes the quality of the hamlet in that it is, in one sense, a country road, without sidewalks or streetlights; while, at the same time, it is a genuine working thoroughfare, with a steady flow of cars and trucks, school buses and boat trailers. Finally, it has the air of a parkway, with heavy trees and gracious vistas — a road for tourists who are struck by the beauty of its short length. And, at its end, historical Squassux Landing is also an active place — a center for the community, a docking area for clammers and fishermen, a shelter for

THE BROOK STORE

The Foundation recently completed renovations on the Brook Store and is pleased to let the community know that it is again open for business. Currently Linda Majowka operates her antiques store (Treasure Island Antiques) there. The building was restored to its ca. 1930's appearance with the assistance of architect Geoffrey Weber of Bellport and builder Fred Varney of Brookhaven. The new (1960) second story addition over the old post office with its louvered porch has been renovated to reflect a 1930's style addition.



This photo shows the Brook Store on Memorial Day, 1998 after the renovations were completed. The Foundation served lemonade to marchers and spectators who attended the traditional Memorial Day parade and service in Memorial Park in Brookhaven.



This photo shows the Brook Store as it was around 1907 before it was moved from across the road to its present location. Shown in the picture are Forrest Reeve, the postmaster, and several members of the Nelson family.

pleasure boats, and a place to watch the marshlife. Just beside Squassux is a boatworks which conveys the sense of another century, while from its rickety docks one sees out across water and grass as it must have looked to Indians.

In sum, ours is an authentic American hamlet, where nature and human comfort exist side by side, where the realities of time and change are accommodated without shock, and where the beauties of ordinary life can be enjoyed without artifice or fear. As a hamlet, it has as much right to its continued identity as an historical building or shrine, a place of natural beauty of a threatened species. It is like a memory which is not merely of the past, but part of the experience of the present, which deserves to be saved for the future.

(Arthur Danto was Professor and Chairman of the Philosophy department at Columbia University when he wrote this essay. The article was included in the Hamlet's petition to the Town of Brookhaven for Historic District status. The petition was well supported by the community and became effective in 1985. The district is designated as the Fireplace Historic District and is the largest such district in the Town of Brookhaven)



Post-Morrow Foundation, Inc.

16 Bay Road, P.O. Box 204
Brookhaven, New York 11719-0204

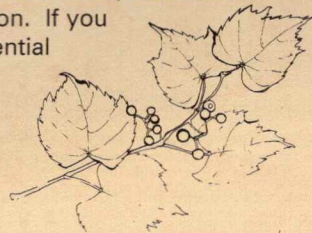
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POSTAL PATRON

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Bequest

If you would like to extend your support of the work of the Foundation to preserve our heritage, you may include in your will a bequest of cash, securities or property to the Foundation. If you would like to discuss a potential bequest, please call Bruce Wallace, President at 286-0686.



Thank you for your support

Your contribution is important to us in showing community support and allowing us to preserve the Hamlet. Please return the form below, along with your gift, to: The Post-Morrow Foundation, Inc. We will mail you an acknowledgement for tax purposes.

Other ways to support the Foundation include:

Matching gifts - if your employer has a matching gifts program, your gift to the Foundation can be doubled or tripled. Please check with your employee benefits office.

Memorial gifts- A gift in memory of a loved one or friend is a special tribute to someone who loved Brookhaven Hamlet. We would be happy to notify the family of your charitable gift.

Gifts of land and/or historic material- as described in this newsletter, we welcome gifts which reflect the heritage of our community.

Illustration by Rebecca Sack

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