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Salt Hay being harvested in Brookhaven Circa 1906. Photos by Frederick W. Kost.

## ONE HUNDRED YEARS IN THE HAMLET

Frederick W. Kost, an important American Impressionist painter, served as the President of the Brookhaven Village Association for several years and was a good friend of the Post family.

*“After some study in New York, including instruction from the landscape painter George Inness, Frederick W. Kost traveled abroad to complete his training in Munich and Paris. By the time he*

*returned to New York, probably in the mid-1880’s, he had developed a broad sketchy manner of painting and a tonal palette, which he used in painting local scenes near his home on Staten Island. In 1906 he purchased a summer home in Brookhaven, Long Island, near the Great South Bay, and began painting scenes of this area as well. “The country is flat, and fine trees are rare,” reported writer Ernest Ingersoll. “In front of all stretches the broad, olive-green meadows of salt-marsh down to the shore of the still bay, beyond the low black line of the outer beach bounds the horizon.” Poet Walt Whitman referred to the bay as an “inexhaustible sea-mine, full of treasures, that are really worth as much as the mines of California.”*

*By the time Kost reached Brookhaven, these treasures, especially the bay’s shellfish, had been much depleted. One that remained along the shores of the bay was a plentiful supply of salt hay growing in the coastal marshes. This hay was shipped to markets, such as the Bushwick Hay Market in Brooklyn, and sold as packing material, fodder and bedding for cattle, and mulch for crops. Kost’s painting depicts the technique of harvesting this hay from sailing vessels. Like many other artists who were attracted to Long Island, Kost chose to focus on its serene atmosphere and nostalgic traditions. In 1920 he retired to his Brookhaven home and remained there until his death three years later.”*



# THE ELVIRA

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In addition to 2006 being the Centennial of the Brookhaven Village Association, it is the 100th anniversary of the Bellport Yacht Club and the Great South Bay Racing Association. There will be a celebration in Bellport Village on July 15th to commemorate this historic moment hosted by the Bellport/Brookhaven Historical society. There is another 100th birthday to celebrate as well and it is the building of the Elvira by Gil Smith in 1906.

## Elvira Progress Report

**Background:** The 'P' Class sloop *Elvira* was built by the renowned Patchogue boat builder Gil Smith, for Harry A. Walton, and launched June 9, 1906. Walton family members William and John, who were founders of Bellport Bay Yacht Club in that same year, were no doubt pleased on the breezy Saturday of August 4, 1906, to see Harry at the helm as *Elvira* became the first boat to cross the finish line in the yacht club's first race. Unfortunately Harry, probably trying to compensate for the fresh southwest wind, had taken on extra crew **after** the start and was subsequently disqualified. Though Harry and *Elvira* continued to race successfully on Bellport Bay they met increasingly strong competition, particularly starting the following season when brother William (Willy) Walton had Gil Smith build a slightly larger, **and faster** P-class sloop, the *Bee*. This fine vessel was later sold to the venerable Commodore Paul Bigelow who campaigned her successfully through the 1920's. *Elvira* eventually passed to the Starke family who sailed her with much pride and increasing acclaim as over the years she gradually became the 'last of her breed' to survive.



*Elvira* crosses the finish line in the Bellport Bay Festival's Antique Boat Regatta in 1982

*Elvira* has now been laid up for some ten years after suffering an unfortunate collision with the jetty at the mouth of Fireplace Creek. In 1999 owner Bob Starke donated her to the Post – Morrow Foundation with the hope that she would be repaired and put into sailing shape again. While

housing her the Foundation searched for a way to make her seaworthy once again. With the establishment of Carmans River Maritime Center and *Elvira's* impending hundredth anniversary, efforts were renewed to bring her back to life. The *Elvira* 100 Club was established to raise \$100 from 100 persons in honor of her 100th anniversary. Post–Morrow Foundation agreed to match those first 100 club members' donations dollar for dollar. As a result, the Elvira Refurbishment Fund started off with a nest egg of \$20,000, to 'jump start' the work.

**Scope of the Project:** Professional boat builders Ricardo Vicente and Joshua Herman surveyed *Elvira* in October 2005 and laid out the plan of the work to be done. Ricardo and Josh's recent major project had been leading the restoration of the oystering sloop *Pricilla* for the Long Island Maritime Museum. They concluded that because *Elvira* had been covered with fiberglass cloth and had experienced many modifications and repairs over the years, she was not a candidate for full restoration but could be refurbished to sailing condition, which was Bob Starke's original hope. They estimated that the job would cost about \$40,000. in labor and about \$10,000. in materials. The Carmans River Maritime Center's Board of Trustees voted to have them begin the project which started in November 2005. Ricardo and Josh, as professional boat builders, are fast workers. And in short order they had removed all the damaged frames in the way of the cockpit, many of which were so deteriorated that, as Ricardo said, "We just vacuumed them out of the boat". They then steam bent in new frames of white oak, alternating thick ones and thin ones in the Gil Smith tradition. These were fastened with copper rivets and they went on to use stainless steel screws to refasten all the other frames that were still sound enough to remain in the boat.

Along the way a number of discoveries were made. *Elvira's* planking is generally quite sound and her fiberglass 'skin' (put on with epoxy resin which was very 'high tech' for the 1950's) is still well attached to the planking and thicker and stronger than initially anticipated. On the bad news side the keel was found to be quite deteriorated and had been compromised by a former engine installation. Overcoming this necessitated removal of the centerboard trunk which will need to be replaced with a new one. Ricardo and Josh have begun saturating the keel with penetrating epoxy in preparation for adding an oak 'cap' inside and laying up epoxy and fiberglass 'girders' along the garboards outside to strengthen the keel.

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This will be followed by replacing the bracing between the frames and the deck beams, removing the combing, covering the deck with a new plywood and fiberglass 'skin', building and installing a new centerboard trunk and rudder, replacing the floors, steam bending in a new combing, etc., etc. As you can see, a lot of work has been accomplished and a **lot** of work remains.

People have given generously and we can always use more of that. But what we really need from you now is your labor. We have had a few volunteers who have given of their time but we could use a lot more.

There are many tasks almost any of you could help out with and Ricardo and Josh are experienced in guiding amateur helpers in making significant contributions to a project. So call or stop down and volunteer. We also have moved *Elwira's* spars over to the boat shop and will be using their refurbishment as the centerpiece of a Saturday morning 'course' called Wooden Boat Spars, Their Construction and Maintenance.

- 'Hank' Maust and Norm Nelson, Co-chairpersons *Elwira* 100 Club



*Ricardo Vicente and Joshua Herman pose with their handiwork on Elwira*

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## HAPPY 100TH BIRTHDAY BVA!

The members and board of the Post Morrow Foundation extend our best wishes to the Brookhaven Village Association on its 100th anniversary. We are proud to share with you both our history and the love and dedication you have for our beautiful community and environs and of your accomplishments in helping to keep it such a special place.

The Post and Morrow families' philanthropy is well known. In addition to creating and funding this foundation, they donated the building and grounds for our library, and the land for Oaklawn Cemetery and Squassux Landing. What is little known, however, is their involvement in the early years of the Brookhaven Village Association.

Actually, the Posts commitment to civic duty started in 1775 at the Southaven Church, when James Post was one of the first to sign a document called the "Association" and declare himself a patriot in the American Revolution. Some 130 years later, his great grandson, James Howell Post, became a founding member and the first vice president of the Village Association. He, along with co-founder and trustee Thomas Morrow, helped guide the BVA through its first 30 years from 1906 til

1936. During that period, Mr. Post served as president three times and as Vice President five times, while the elder Mr. Morrow served as its president three times. Both men were board members for those 30 years, remaining actively involved until their deaths.

In 1920, their children Tom Morrow Jr. and Elisabeth Post married and continued their families' commitment to the Village Association, with Tom serving as vice president in 1932 and president in 1933. Both he and his wife served as trustees until 1953, when Elisabeth Post Morrow retired as BVA treasurer.

*(Continued on next page)*



*Photos of the Post-Morrow Foundation by Frank Muller*



Through good times, as well as during wars and depressions, our community has been held together for these 100 years thanks to the dedication of the volunteers of the BVA. We thank you for maintaining the legacy of Squassux Landing and our access to the Carmans River; for overseeing the beach facility we once had on Fire Island; for facilitating the evolution of our Ambulance and Fire Companies; for creating special areas in the Hamlet, such as the war memorial; and especially for your commitment to preserving an environment and quality of life that are the envy of most Long Island communities.

If the Posts and Morrows were here today, they would be very proud to have been part of your wonderful history. Congratulations and Happy Birthday!

*(The above article about the BVA was written with the able assistance of Marty Van Lith who has done extensive research on the BVA and the history of our immediate area. You can look at a website developed by John Deitz with able assistance from Marty Van Lith, that provides more information on Brookhaven. <http://prometheusli.com/hamlet/> Marty will be giving a presentation to the BVA on its history at the annual meeting this coming June 22nd.)*

## YAPHANK HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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Last fall, the Yaphank Historical Society (YHS) received the Robert H. Pelletreau Distinguished Service Award for Historical Preservation award from the Bellport/Brookhaven Historical Society. Brookhaven and Yaphank have long been good neighbors and our histories are very much entwined. Acknowledging that, the Post-Morrow Foundation approved a matching grant to the Yaphank Historical society to promote their efforts.

Two initiatives that the YHS have started include the restoration of the Mary Louise Booth House and the Hawkins House on Yaphank Avenue on the Carmans River. The following was taken from their proposal to increase awareness of the significance of the history of Yaphank.

“Carmans River Nature Trail and Sanctuary.

Entering the Yaphank Historic District at the intersection of Yaphank Avenue and Main Street is the scenic and historic Yaphank Lake on the banks of the Carmans River. The Yaphank Historical Society in its efforts to create a museum complex on this site is developing a nature trail along the River on the south side of the Mary Louise Booth House and Homan Gerard House property in conjunction with Suffolk County Parks Department of Historic Services. A trail will be cleared through the wooded site and marked with signage indicating indigenous plantings, trees, and birds of this area, and volunteers from the Yaphank Historical Society will work on maintaining the trail and leading school groups and other educational tours.

The location has great significance in the history of Yaphank, as the land along the river is where William Weeks in the mid 19th century built the first octagonal house. As an inventor as well as agriculturist who studied at Yale he developed award winning cranberry bogs and watercress harvesting on the river. The pond is still there, as well as the foundations for his home and outbuildings.

Park benches and fencing are needed as well as resources for the signage program. It is our objective to create a nature preserve and bird sanctuary for the enhancement of the site and enjoyment of the community. One of the barns on the Homan House site could be restored for use as an educational center.”



*Hawkins house 1850, owned by Suffolk County and maintained by the Yaphank Historical Society. (National Register for Historic Places)*

# FAITH MCCUTCHEON

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After serving 27 years on the board of directors for the Post Morrow Foundation, the last 13 as our secretary, Faith McCutcheon retired in February.

Faith's association with both the Post and Morrow families goes back to before she was even born. Her grandfather, Malcolm Fraser, together with James Post, Thomas Morrow, and several other prominent men from the community, was among the first directors of the Brookhaven Village Association, with Fraser serving as its first president. Years later, James Post's daughter, Elisabeth, married Thomas Morrow's son, Thomas. Their daughter Betsy and Faith became childhood friends.

If there ever were a poster child for Brookhaven Hamlet it would be Faith. She has been a member of almost every community group and has lived and worked here her entire life.

The children of the South Country School District were the first to benefit from having Faith in their lives. From 1945 to 1948, she taught at the Brookhaven Elementary School, the same school she attended as a child. She left the school to raise her four children, returning to teaching in 1968 and later became the librarian at Hampton Avenue School (now Frank P. Long) until 1983.

Faith has always been a woman of faith, as an active member of the St. James Episcopal Church in Brookhaven. She's been a dedicated volunteer at the Bellport Methodist Church Thrift Shop for the past 16 years, was a board member of the Brookhaven Village Association for nine years, and was director of interpretation for the Post-Crowell House for the Bellport-Brookhaven Historical Society, of which she is a lifetime member. In that capacity, she led visitors through the historic dwelling dressed in one of the period costumes she made for herself and other society volunteers. And, of course we are grateful for her 27 years of service to the Post-Morrow Foundation, whose holdings

## LONG ISLAND FARM BUREAU

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We are pleased to report that Bob Nolan, who operates Deer Run Farm, has been elected as the new President of the Long Island Farm Bureau. Bob took over the farm operation from his uncle Henry Lohmann several years ago and has maintained the farm in tip-top condition.

The Farm Bureau has been helping farmers in Suffolk County since 1911 to meet the many demands there are in the Agriculture industry. It has been a strong advocate in assisting the County to preserve open space and farmland in order to preserve a strong, viable Agriculture industry in the County. The Mission of the Farm Bureau is to "...represent

include two acres of land she donated along the Beaver Dam Creek. Another beneficiary of Faith's efforts is the Wertheim National Wildlife Refuge, where she has been volunteering her services for almost 15 years and has been a board member of Friends of Wertheim since its inception.

In addition to volunteering with community groups in the Brookhaven vicinity, Faith is also the first to show up with home-baked cookies, and to help people out with everything from babysitting to providing rides, to offering a friendly shoulder or ear to someone in need.

Her generosity even extends to the local wildlife; Faith is always repairing some broken wing or adopting another orphaned or injured creature. She is also very modest, doing all of this in the most quiet and unassuming manner.

Faith received the *Long Island Advance's* Woman of the Year award in 2002 for her outstanding contribution to our community. Faith is a great friend of Brookhaven Hamlet and the Post-Morrow Foundation.

Thank you Faith for all you have given to our community.



Picture of Faith and her friend "Charlie"  
Photo by Marty Van Lith.

*the best interests of our members through united action, using the strength of a grassroots organizational structure to protect, preserve and strengthen the agricultural industry."*

The Post-Morrow Foundation is a proud member of the Long Island Farm Bureau.



# LONGMEADOW FARM

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Last year the Foundation received a small grant from the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service.



*Warm season grasses, WHIP project Bridgehampton, photo courtesy of NRCS*

Called a “Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program” (WHIP), it is a program that encourages creation of high quality wildlife habitats that support wildlife populations. The program assists landowners to develop upland, wetland, riparian, and aquatic habitat areas on their property. Species that have profited from WHIP include the grasshopper sparrow, bobwhite quail, swift fox, and short-eared owl. Because of the declining amount of grassland area on Long Island, this project was approved for funding to the Foundation.

The Post-Morrow Foundation received a lot of assistance to implement this project. Our Facilities Manager Kenny Budny completed the project with the consultation and assistance of the NRCS. In addition, our neighbor, Michael Barry of Seven Pines Flower Farms, provided a great deal of technical support and information.

Fletcher Bedell of Bellport and a member of the Antique Power Association used his tractor to cultivate the field. Bill Starke, of the Long Island regional U.S. Fish and Wildlife Refuge complex, brought a tractor and planter in order to plant the five varieties of warm season grasses.

The completion of the Longmeadow Farm project was the result of community effort and will, we hope, provide a new and productive habitat for our meadow friends.



*Fletcher Bedell on his antique Farmall Tractor*

# BEAVER DAM CREEK VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

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We continue to improve the restored wetlands on Beaver Dam Creek at the end of Clover Lane. With the assistance of Ducks Unlimited, U.S. Fish and Wildlife, NOAA, and Sea Grant we will be planting more Spartina this Spring. We are looking for volunteers to assist us in this endeavor. Please call Flo at the Post-Morrow Foundation (286-0686) if you are able to help. We hope to recruit groups of students as well to assist in the project. The project should be implemented during the week of June 15th.

*Volunteers planting Spartina on Beaver Dam Creek*

# DENNIS PULESTON OSPREY FUND 2006

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We are very pleased to announce that the Osprey Webcam is once again up and running.

We would like especially to thank our volunteer group that makes this project work each year.

*Dave Shore, Will Throwe, Tom Throwe, Tom Ludlam, and Rick Mohlman. We are pleased to give special thanks to Will Throwe who has worked endlessly on this project sorting out various problems with the camera and the computers. He will be graduating this year from Ward Melville High School and attending either MIT or Harvard. We wish him good fortune.*



We are especially grateful to the Gesso Foundation of New York City for their continued support of our web cam site. Their assistance has enabled us to keep the camera up to date and supported by the appropriate software. The artist Frank Moore whose work dealt with AIDS and the environment started the Gesso Foundation.

## OSPREY CAM GOES LIVE FOR ITS FOURTH SEASON

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For many Eastern Long Islanders, the unmistakable screech of a circling osprey has become a familiar springtime event. For the past three years, thanks to the Dennis Puleston Osprey Cam, classrooms and home computer users throughout the world have been able to watch on live video, via the internet, the intimate details of the daily lives of a local osprey pair as they court, mate, lay and incubate their eggs, and raise their young.

A few decades ago ospreys were fast becoming a rarity on Long Island. The fact that this magnificent fish hawk is now often seen flying above the waters and shores of Long Island can be attributed to the work of Dennis Puleston, a renowned naturalist and artist who, along with a group of scientists and local activists that would later found the Environmental Defense Fund, showed that the osprey decline was due to the environmental effects of DDT, then widely used for insect control. Their efforts ultimately led to a nationwide ban on DDT by the EPA.

Upon his death in 2002, friends and family of Dennis established the Dennis Puleston Osprey Fund, to memorialize his lifelong work and to bring attention to the osprey as a symbol of the environmental health of Long Island. This fund, administered by the Post-Morrow Foundation, initiated a project to mount a video camera on an active osprey-nesting platform in the Wertheim National Wildlife Refuge, near Dennis' long-time home in Brookhaven Hamlet. Using technological advances that are still unique among wildlife monitoring projects, this osprey cam provides live streaming video and audio coverage of the activity at the nest, around the clock, on the Internet.

Ospreys return to the nest each spring in mid-March. For each of the past three years viewers from as far away as England, Australia, China, and Cuba have watched as the osprey pair laid their eggs near Easter time, saw the eggs hatch in mid-May, watched the subsequent daily struggle for survival of the young birds, the comic drama of their first attempts to fly, and finally witnessed their departure in late summer as young adults, ending an annual cycle that has played out for thousands of years.

This year, as the Osprey Cam crew installed the camera on March 17, ospreys arriving to check out the nest site were already circling above, as seen in the accompanying picture. The birds have now settled in, and their activity can be viewed on the web by following the links at [www.postmorrow.org](http://www.postmorrow.org). The crew maintains the camera and the website throughout the season. The website includes a database in which viewers are encouraged to record their observations of the birds' behavior over the course of the season. With a large community of dedicated viewers, this database provides an almost hourly record of events, including the exact times when eggs appear, when the eggs hatch, when the young first fly, etc. During May, June, and July of last year the site saw over 1000 "hits" per day. The site is widely used in classrooms across the country, and archived video files are available for students and researchers upon request.

The costs of maintaining the camera and website are supported by continued contributions from viewers, and from supporters of Dennis Puleston's vision and the mission of the Osprey Fund: To encourage research about ospreys on Long Island, improve their nesting opportunities and educate the public about them. The Fund recognizes that for ospreys to be successful they must have a viable and healthy habitat in which to live, an objective that Dennis clearly understood and supported.



*Rick Mohlman installing the web cam and our Osprey friend observing from above.*



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***The Post-Morrow Foundation Newsletter is printed on recycled paper.***

Designed and printed by Searles Graphics, Inc. • 56 Old Dock Road, Yaphank, NY 11980

## GIFTS TO THE POST-MORROW FOUNDATION

We are grateful to the many individuals who have contributed to the efforts of the Foundation to preserve the unique beauty of our community. Gifts to the Foundation are tax deductible.

Ways to help 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 loves the area. We would be happy to notify the family of your charitable gift.

Gifts of land and/or historic material: We welcome gifts that reflect the heritage of our community.

Bequests: 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.