



# MILL NEWS & NOTES

FROM THE

Water Mill Museum

41 Old Mill Road, Water Mill, NY 11976

(Mail to: PO Box 63)

Tel: 631-726-4625

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## An Appeal for your Support

We are very grateful to our new manager, Rachel Verno, who kept the mill running smoothly this summer. Although we had to cancel our Children's Hands On Milling sessions because of COVID restrictions, we were able to host several art shows, our 35th Annual Quilt Show and a modified Empty Bowls fundraiser—sponsored by Clay Arts Guild of the Hamptons. We held our annual Quilt raffle, installed a Colonial Garden and added an audio-video presentation of areas of interest to mill visitors.

There are always repairs and updates needed to keep our buildings preserved and we appeal to you for your support to help us meet those needs. We are GRATEFUL for any donation—large or small—and have enclosed an envelope for your convenience.

On behalf of the board, I wish you a healthy winter. See you in the spring!

Sincerely,

**Jeanne White**  
President

## Attention Artist Members

If you wish to take part in the Members' Art Show next spring, it is essential that we have your contact information. Please be sure that we have your email address.

Questions? Go to our website to register or contact Kathy Odell-Hamilton at [kaoh@optonline.net](mailto:kaoh@optonline.net).

## Members of Water Mill Museum

If you are interested in serving on the board of Water Mill Museum, please notify the board of directors by email through "[director@watermillmuseum.org](mailto:director@watermillmuseum.org)".

We are online at  
[www.watermillmuseum.org](http://www.watermillmuseum.org)  
or find us on Facebook



## Museum Board

(L to R): Eileen Noonan, Anita Bishop, Sandy Raynor, Vivian Corwith, Peggy Helstowski, Ann Lombardo, Faye Andreasen, Sue Taylor, Donna Liehr, Chuck Halsey, Susan McCulley and Jeanne White. Missing from photo is Bob Liehr.

## Colonial Kitchen Garden

We hope you had a chance to see our new Colonial Kitchen Garden this summer. Typically, 17th and 18th century kitchen gardens were not planted for their beautiful flowers, but to provide the family with medicinal, culinary, and household cleaning herbs. Many of the plants were brought from the old world when the colonists arrived in the area.

Our mill gardeners, Jamie Wilson and Meredith White, are working on a brochure telling about the plants they selected for our kitchen garden. We look forward to hearing more from them in our Spring Newsletter.



## New Addition to Media Menu!

We have added a new feature film to our menu. With the support of a Southampton Town Cultural Arts Grant and generous donations from you and our many mill friends, we were able to harness the expertise of Matthew Raynor of Hampton Osprey, LLC to create a ten-minute audio-visual presentation describing our mill's role in the early history of Water Mill. It describes the milling process and touches on the changing needs of the community and the advancement of technology to meet those needs.

This video was created to help share this information with a broad audience, those visiting the mill and as part of a program that can be brought into the classroom. It is intended to help meet the needs of the NYS Social Studies Framework for elementary school students. We will make this video available to neighboring schools, along with a few hands-on tools, and a mill representative to lead a discussion about the importance and evolution of the mill over 300 years. This will dovetail into the learning program of the students.

Last week we had a request from an eighth-grade teacher in Georgia who found us on the internet. They plan to spend a week on the history of water mills in Georgia and one week in their science class creating a water wheel and staging a mini contest to see what innovations to the design best capture the power of the water. So...our video is traveling to Georgia, along with one of the Corwith Windmill. If you were to compare the guts (the wheels and gears) of a wind or water operated mill, you would find MANY similarities. Really!

## IN MEMORIAM



Honorary Life Member Betty Kistler passed away this spring. Betty was involved in numerous aspects of the Water Mill Museum for many years, including as a school tour guide and as a volunteer receptionist in the early years of the museum when there weren't enough funds to keep the doors open. She worked on the book design and layout, playing a big

part in bringing the book *Water Mill Celebrating Community: The History of a Long Island Hamlet, 1644-1994* to life. She created our first website and we relied on her expertise as Webmaster for twenty years to anchor us into the 21st century. As a longtime 4-H leader, and regular volunteer in the Water Mill Community Club, friends would quickly point out that many beyond the Museum shared her good works. Sunny, gracious, talented, and giving: we are happy to have walked along this path with you, dear friend.

## 35th Annual Water Mill Museum Quilt Show

This year, our 35th Annual Water Mill Museum Quilt Show brightened the museum for 2½ weeks with a vibrant and colorful display of quilts. There were quilts from the 1800s to present day. It was a stunning collection of old and new handiwork, and we had many visitors to the show. Once again, each visitor received a free ticket for the quilt raffle in exchange for their \$5.00 admission fee. This year the raffle quilt is a beautiful embroidered postage stamp quilt in cream with blue accents. All proceeds from the Quilt show and raffle help to maintain the Museum.

We are reaching out to our members and friends in search of anyone interested in making and selling quilts of any size for sale at our show. All sorts are needed, from table runners to quilts from baby size to king. If you are a quilter or collector who is interested in participating in next year's show, please contact us to get on our mailing list.

Many thanks to the volunteers that helped Peggy Helstowski and I get the quilts checked in, sorted, and hung in plenty of time to open the show. It was a group effort with volunteers Anita, Jeanne, Faye, Donna, Sue, Rachel, Cindy Corwith, Marie Greene, and quilter Lynne Moriarty sorting and displaying all of the beautiful quilts and accessories.



This year's winner, Judith Verno.

## Meet Our New Mill Manager

Rachel Verno was born and raised in NYC, spending summers and weekends in Sagaponack. She moved to Water Mill permanently after her parents purchased a Historic Landmark home right down the road from the mill. She "jumped in with both feet," quickly volunteering to serve on local community organizations. Rachel's education in architectural preservation, keen interest in history, along with her endless energy and friendly nature, have made her a perfect fit for the job.



>Welcome aboard, Rachel.



## Farm Wives Protest Potato Prices, Picket at Home and in Washington

If you turn the clock back 65 years to September 1956, when potatoes were the predominant East End crop, the traffic tie-ups in Water Mill and Bridgehampton were caused by enraged placard-bearing farm wives demanding that their husbands be paid a decent price for their spuds.

The women marched, almost 100 strong, outside eight potato dealers' warehouses in the two communities, chanting and waving homemade picket signs. Their message—"We prefer a Picket Line to a Bread Line." They claimed that the \$1 per hundredweight of potatoes being paid by the dealers wasn't enough; that it didn't amount to a break-even return on their investment. And they pointed out that their potatoes were being sold for about \$8 per hundredweight by retailers.

The protest, led by Jen Borkoski and Harriet Zaluski of Water Mill and Helen Grzybowski of Bridgehampton, "brought an abrupt end to spud production on more than 100 South Fork farms" when "farmers drove their spud-laden trucks to the dealers' warehouses but would not cross the picket lines," according to the *New York Daily News*.

The women stopped picketing a few days later after the dealers agreed to pay \$2 per hundredweight of potatoes. But it was

a short-lived agreement—the protest resumed two weeks later after the dealers reneged, citing poor market conditions. The renewed protest, this time with an estimated 250 housewives participating, was suspended after three days amid complaints that the women were being roughed up by truck drivers and that the police refused to arrest them.

In one instance in Water Mill an angry trucker reportedly assaulted a state police captain after being blocked by picketers

from getting his load of potatoes out of a warehouse onto Montauk Highway. According to the protestors, the trucker was released by police and then helped to get his truck onto the highway after he apologized and explained that he thought the captain was a farmer.

That didn't stop the farm wives. Traveling in three chartered buses, a delegation of 120 moved their protest to Washington, D.C., to picket and present their case in person to Agriculture Department officials. They proposed that the U.S. pay their husbands \$2 per hundredweight for potatoes, and then send the potatoes off as foreign aid. "We need the money. Send the potatoes overseas," urged Helen Grzybowski. But once again they were rebuffed and they returned home without any promise of relief.

In the years since then the economy of the East End has changed dramatically. Farmers have diversified; potatoes have become a minor crop. And houses have sprouted all around us.



Sandy Raynor with her daughters Jill & Emily.

### Mashed Potato Donuts

In an attempt to entice people to eat more potatoes, a 24-page cookbook was printed by I M Young and Company of Riverhead, N.Y., the second largest potato processing concern in the East.

Titled "*Enjoy Taste Tempting Long Island Potatoes*", the booklet included many recipes showing the diversity of the potato. My family's favorite was Mashed Potato Donuts frequently made by my mother, Irene Corwith Muller. Sixty-five years later I am still making this recipe in honor of my mother and to the delight of my children and grandchildren. Try it! Yum!

—Submitted by Sandy Muller Raynor

SEE BACK PAGE FOR RECIPE

Farmers' wives organized an auxiliary of the Farmer's Institute in 1957 to promote Long Island potatoes and raise the price paid to potato farmers.

They sponsored an annual Potato Blossom Ball, raffled a tractor to raise money for Long Island potato advertising, and publicized potatoes at state and county fairs, restaurant and hotel expositions and supermarkets.

Sometimes they took time off from serious work to enjoy themselves and even had a Potato Hat Party at Bowden Square.

Photographs and newspaper clipping were lent to the museum by Leo and Jen Borkoski family of Old Mill Road, Water Mill. Jen Borkoski was an active member of the auxiliary.

## 2022 Water Mill Museum Board

### Board of Directors

President – Jeanne White  
Vice President – Donna Liehr  
Recording Secretary – Sandy Raynor  
Corresponding Secretary – Anita Bishop  
Treasurer – Charles Halsey



### Committees:

Investments – Vivian Corwith  
Membership – Donna and Bob Liehr  
Hospitality – Faye Andreasen, Donna Liehr  
Buildings & Grounds – Bob Liehr  
Gift Shop – Sandy Raynor

Newsletter Layout – Susan McCulley  
Newsletter Mailings – Sue Taylor  
Quilt Show/Facebook – Eileen Noonan  
Quilt Show – Peggy Helstowski  
Webmaster – Ann Lombardo

### Mashed Potato Donuts

2 cups sugar	½ tsp. baking soda
½ cup shortening	1 tsp. salt
4 eggs	4 tsp. baking powder
1 cup milk	6 cups flour
1½ cup mashed potatoes	2 tsp. vanilla
3 pound tin of shortening	

Cream sugar and shortening. Add beaten eggs with mashed potatoes and milk. Combine with sugar mixture. In a separate bowl mix the flour, baking powder, baking soda and salt. Add to the wet mixture. Finally, add the vanilla. Roll or pat out the dough to about ½ inch on a surface sprinkled with flour. Sprinkle the top of the dough lightly with flour too. Cut with a regular donut cutter or with a small circle cutter. Throw scraps back in the bowl of dough. Reroll dough using as little flour as possible

Hint: Dip the cutter in flour often to keep the dough from sticking. After cutting out the donut, give the cutter a firm tap in your palm to release the dough more easily. Flip it back and forth in your palms to knock off the excess flour before placing it gently into the deep fat to avoid hot grease splashes.

Fry in deep fat (Crisco) at 375 degrees about 1½ minutes on each side. I use an electric frying pan. It has more surface area so I can fry more at a time.

**Makes 5 dozen.**

My mother drained the donuts on brown paper bags and stored them in a double lined brown paper bag. Add confectioners sugar before serving. These donuts are more like a cruller with a little crunch on the outside.

If the thought of frying anything in Crisco is a turnoff for you, I can't disagree. However, I try to choose my foods and calories wisely, and many years ago I also chose to treat myself to the joyous memories of my Mom with a batch of Mashed Potato Donuts on her birthday—once a year.

—Sandy Raynor

### Thank You To Our Volunteers

We acknowledge, and give thanks to our members, supporters and volunteers who keep the museum going. For their time, labor and dedication we thank our board members who work tirelessly to ensure the success of Water Mill Museum.

We also thank Dianne Corwith of Dianne's Custom Signs, Bob Eisenberg of East End Blueprints, Merry and Greg of Long Island East Printing, Marilyn Holstein of Discovery Maps, Ed Hurley for monitoring our security system and for his frequent "stop ins" to check on the mill, Marsha Kranes for her contributions to the newsletters, Lynne Moriarty for her help with the Quilt Show, Rick Muller for his expertise and willingness to do countless (big and small) jobs for the mill, Kathy Odell-Hamilton for chairing the Members' Art Show, and Meredith White and and Jamie Wilson for our beautiful outdoor planters and our new Colonial Garden.

### Honorary Life Members

Marilyn Corwith	R. Timothy Maran
Marlene Haresign	Arthur Muller
Janet Lavinio	Lucille Berrill Paulsen
Mary Maran	Muriel & Bill Petty



To write us: Water Mill Museum  
PO Box 63  
Water Mill, NY 11976  
To phone us: 631-726-4625

