



# 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

Vol. 49

Fall 2022



## A Message From Our President

It was a great season at Water Mill Museum. We hosted several art shows, the 36th Annual Quilt Show and Sale, and a modified Bowls of Plenty event. Our season long Ice Boating Exhibit was so popular that we decided to extend it through 2023.

Although we are now closed for the season, the Museum Board remains busy planning for next summer, making repairs to our grinding apparatus and updating lighting in two of our buildings.

We appeal to you, our friends and neighbors, to make these repairs possible. We are grateful for any donation, large or small, and have enclosed an envelope for your convenience.

On behalf of the Board, I thank you and look forward to seeing you next season.

Sincerely,  
**Jeanne White**  
President



## Digging the Mecox Seapoose

In 1644, Edward Howell agreed to build a water mill for the Town of Southampton. To keep the mill working smoothly, the water exiting the mill race needed to be kept low. To ensure this, the Town agreed that every man from age 16 to 60 would help to dig out a "Seapoose" or "Little River" through the sand from Mecox Bay to the ocean.

Over many years, Town records showed the difficulty of keeping the Mecox cut open and the bay water low. The volunteers found that their labors took valuable time from their farms and businesses.

Eventually, the Town hired paid labor to keep the cut open and the water mill running smoothly. Both hand and animal labor were used to open the cut.

Now fast forward to 2022. In June, a group of 20 to 30 people volunteered to dig out the cut at Mecox Bay by hand. Just like the early settlers, the volunteers used shovels and plenty of elbow grease. The group worked by hand to avoid disturbing a piping plover nest nearby. They succeeded in getting the cut open and



water flowing, although their trench eventually caved in. Town Trustee Scott Horowitz stated in *The Southampton Press*, "We tried to do it as it was done historically. It was monumental work for a small group of people."

It's interesting that the job of digging the Mecox seapoose came full circle, from the volunteers in the 1600s to the hard-working volunteers of 2022. And those involved agreed: digging out the seapoose by hand is a big, back-breaking job.

—Rosanna Hansen

## 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).

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



## Bees in the Colonies

On a perfect summer evening in August, Simon Bromberg, who lives in Southampton and is the owner of **Ambassador Apiaries and Beekeeping Services**, agreed to speak with us. He delighted us by sharing his knowledge of the busy bees and their life stories and their importance to the food chain as pollinators AND producers of honey. Beyond his presentation, Simon answered dozens of questions from an enthusiastic audience. He willingly spent an hour after the program, chatting and answering additional questions as we enjoyed a variety of refreshments featuring honey.



## Quilt Show 2022

This year's quilt show had record attendance with many new visitors! We had a large selection of beautiful quilts at all price points, and we raised funds to be used for the upkeep of the museum.

Many thanks to Beth and Jeff Gardner and Mr. and Mrs. Warren Frank for their quilt donations that we were able to sell during the show.

We have had many new inquiries from quilters and collectors, so next year should be even better! If you would like to be added to our 2023 mailing list, please call the museum.

This year's raffle quilt created by Anne O'Neill was won by Killian Taylor of Glen Cove, N.Y.

Thank you for your continued support!



## IN MEMORIAM



Honorary Life Member, Artie Muller, passed away in September, just three weeks after his 101st birthday. Art was involved in Water Mill Museum from its beginning—quietly working behind the scenes.

He was a contributor to our book, *Water Mill Celebrating Community*, the oral histories, and the post office exhibit.

For more than six decades he monitored the flow of water through the pipes under the railroad tracks and under Old Mill Road, clearing them of debris, so the water could run freely from Mill Pond to turn the water wheel for the mill.

Art was a founding member of Water Mill Community Club and involved in the restoration of the Corwith Windmill on the Village Green.

He was happiest at home on Mill Pond, sharing with his family and friends, activities on the water in all seasons. The frequent gatherings often ended with a sing-a-long around a camp fire.

Art will be missed by his family, friends and the Water Mill Community, where he served as Postmaster for thirty years.





*The Howell Family photo was provided to us by Jeremy Allen*

## **Edward Howell Family Association Reunion October 12, 2022**

Members of the Edward Howell Family Association (EHFA) were delighted to visit the The Water Mill in October. After two years of virtual reunions during the pandemic, the group finally gathered in person for meetings and a tour of Howell family points of interest on October 12th.

The Water Mill is always the highlight of the tour for the group. It amazes us to think that Edward Howell, born in 1584, turned 60 the year he decided to undertake building the mill. He realized the growing community was in need of the stability that a mill grinding flour and cornmeal would provide. As a leader and magistrate for the growing community, Edward was often relied on to plan and make decisions.

Our group of 35 members and spouses arrived early in the afternoon. Volunteers at the mill provided information and tours of the exhibits. Nearly one-third of the group were visiting for the first time. One member who lives in nearby Shirley, NY, called his son who met us there. Despite living locally, the grown son had never toured the mill before. Members travelled from across the country—California, Arizona, Florida, Ohio, Oklahoma, Virginia, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, Connecticut, Massachusetts, New Jersey, and, of course, New York.

As a group, we want to let you know we appreciate your care and stewardship of The Water Mill!

Julie Howell Sarno, EHFA President

### **The Shinnecock and the Seapoose**

Seapoose is the Shinnecock term for “little river.” When the water level in Mecox Bay was high, the Shinnecock dug a trench from the bay through the beach and into the ocean. The trench quickly became a little river, with bay water flowing out into the ocean.

The Shinnecoeks opened the seapoose to keep the salinity of the bay at the right level for shellfish. When the trench was open, low tides allowed the water in the bay to flow out. High tides allowed salt water to enter and maintain the bay’s salinity.

After the new settlers arrived and the water mill was built, the seapoose needed to be kept open occasionally both for the water mill and for the salinity level of the bay. Today, the seapoose is usually cut by machinery. The Town trustees of Southampton determine how and when to dig the seapoose.



Horse drawn scoop used to open the Seapoose

## 2023 Water Mill Museum Board

Director/Manager – Rachael Verno



### Board of Directors

President – Sandy Raynor  
Vice President – Donna Liehr  
Recording Secretary – Cindy Corwith  
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  
Travelling School Tours – Steven Peiffer

Newsletter Layout & Mailings – Susan McCulley  
Archives – Jeanne White, Sue Taylor  
Quilt Show/Facebook – Eileen Noonan  
Quilt Show – Peggy Helstowski  
Webmaster – Ann Lombardo

### Additional Member

Sherrill Adams

## Thank You To Our Volunteers

Thank you to our members, supporters, and volunteers, who along with our board of directors, keep the Water Mill Museum running.

We especially thank Bob Eisenberg of East End Blueprints, Merry and Greg of Long Island East Printers, Dianne Corwith of Dianne's Custom Signs, Marilyn Holstein of Discovery Maps, Marsha Kranes and Rosanna Hansen for their contributions to our newsletters, Lynne Moriarty for her help with the Quilt Show, Ed Hurley for monitoring our security system and for his frequent "check ins" at the mill, Kathy Odell-Hamilton for chairing the Members' Art Show, Meredith White, Jamie Wilson and Alfonso Blas for keeping our gardens going, Lou Puglisi for his artwork contributions and Anthony Lombardo for his hand made fishing lures to be sold in our gift shop, Simon Bromberg for his evening of entertainment and information about bees, Clay Art Guild for hosting a Bowls fundraising event for the benefit of the museum, Tim and Cyndi Maran and Mary Maran for donating artwork, Beth and Jeff Gardner and Warren Frank for donating quilts, Nina Friedberg for all her help as a volunteer at the mill this summer, Ricky Muller for his continued work fixing all things large and small, and Colin Chamberlain for his help with the Potting Shed fence project.

## Water Mill Residents have Fought in America's Causes since the American Revolution

The Museum is in the process of updating our Military Honor Roll. The exhibit honors all the Water Mill residents who left behind their beloved South Fork homes to make their country and world a safer place.

If you know of anyone from Water Mill who has served since the Vietnam War and would like to be listed, please forward their names, service branch, name of conflict or war, and approximate dates of service to [director@watermillmuseum.org](mailto:director@watermillmuseum.org).

The current Honor Roll can be found on our website.

### Honorary Life Members

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



## 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)

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

