



MILL NEWS & NOTES

FROM THE

Water Mill Museum

41 Old Mill Road, Water Mill, NY 11976

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Vol. 53

Fall 2024



A Message From Our President

It was a busy, exciting and productive season at the Water Mill Museum. We hosted 7 art shows, the 38th Annual Quilt Show and Sale, two Children’s Milling Programs, a Treasure Hunt for children and a late Afternoon Celebration of our Colonial Herb Garden.

A grant was received from the Town of Southampton to enhance our **Ice Harvesting Exhibit** with a 6-minute Ice Harvesting Video. It was created and narrated, explaining in detail what the ice harvesting process entailed, using actual photographs on the Mill Pond and additional footage obtained by the museum. Come see for yourself how the ice industry played a part in Water Mill’s history.

As was discovered last fall, and mentioned in our Fall Newsletter in 2023, we discovered that our antiquated, brick septic system failed. With the expertise of the Raynor Group, our applications to replace our failed septic system are wending their

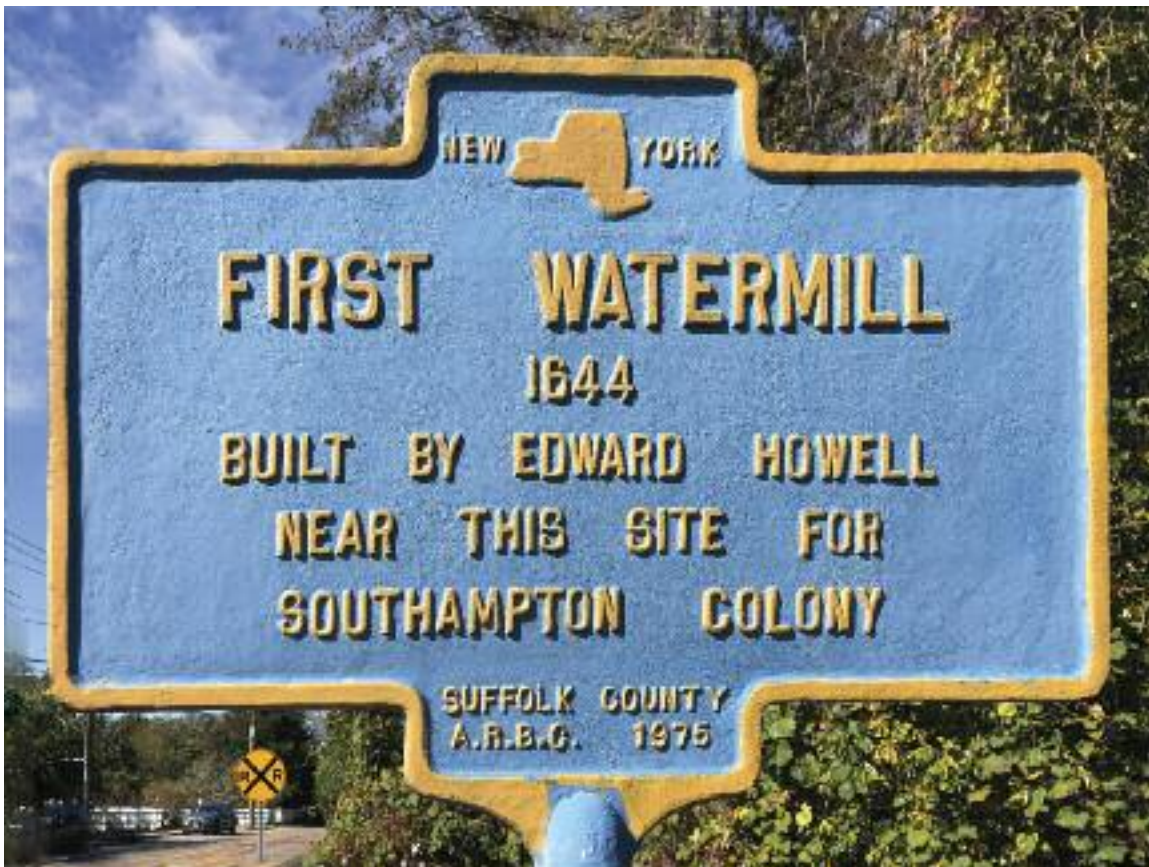
way through the approval process. We require permits on the county and state level, along with several in the Town of Southampton as well. We applied to be considered for 2024 Community Preservation Fund (CPF) Water Quality Improvement Plan Grant Funding at the beginning of the year. On September 5, 2024, I accompanied our engineer to a Southampton Town Board Hearing where a resolution to consider us for funding was held. As soon as all necessary permits are issued and CPF money is available we will start construction.

We appeal to you, our friends and neighbors, to help us to make this environmentally sensitive improvement possible, along with the smaller repairs that keep cropping up in an old building. We are grateful for your 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,

Sandy Raynor
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 manager@watermillmuseum.org

Mining, Magnets, and Magic (scientific magic)



A group of enthusiastic kids answered the call to embark on an adventure. Starting at Flying Point Beach, they learned how to mine the sand for iron and then brought their treasure back to the Water Mill Museum. Under the guidance of board member, Steve Peiffer, they were treated to demonstrations of the basic principles of magnetism. The kids were then cut loose to try their hands using these ideas in experiments of their choosing. To the casual eye, this scene may have seemed a little chaotic. Or, you could have envisioned a group of budding scientists “on fire” with passion as they employed new concepts with their head, hands, every-day items and a magnet. The latter thought gets my vote.

— Sandy Raynor

Late Afternoon Celebration of The Colonial Herb Garden

On a pleasant afternoon in August, Rick Bogusch, garden director at the Peconic Land Trust’s Bridge Gardens and Jamie Wilson, garden coordinator for the Water Mill Museum, led us in a conversation utilizing our Colonial Herb Garden as a picturesque back drop. Rick and Jamie’s presentation had an enviable balance of sharing knowledge in a comfortable way, highlighting our

Colonial Garden and their personal experiences. The enthusiastic audience asked lots of questions and were treated to answers that felt like a joyful conversation among friends. Even approaching the dinner hour, the crowd lingered, truly enjoying herb infused teas, cookies and conversation.



Our Newest Life Member

Gay Colina served on our Board for many years in different capacities and as our President for six years until 2006. This was during our “West Wall Saga”, one of many projects that our board members have undertaken over the years to preserve our 1644 mill. Her programmatic support included working with the community to embrace the ceramics programs as well as to forge the ongoing community favorites, such as the quilt exhibition. After moving to Pennington, NJ, Gay, at 85, has become an avid golfer, a Bridge and Bocci enthusiast, volunteers at her church and continues her outings with her wonderful college friends. As you can see, Gay is the same giving and joyful person who is making her new community stronger.



2024 Quilt Show

We hope you were able to enjoy the beauty of this year’s Quilt Show! It was a great success, and all profits benefit the Museum and its upkeep.

For 2½ weeks the museum was decorated with quilts from the 1800s to present day. More than 12 quilters and exhibitors submitted over 250 pieces of unique and colorful quilts and other handmade items.

This year’s Quilt raffle was drawn at our October business meeting. Congratulations to Suzanne Flanagan of Water Mill who won the grandmother’s flower garden quilt!

If you or someone you know would like to submit items for next year’s show, please contact Eileen Noonan 516-848-7500 or Peggy Helstowski 516-443-6692.

Other Stirrings at the Mill

It seems that in the eighteenth century, like in the twenty-first, there were concerns about noise and traffic. Consider this entry from March, 1793, in the records of the Southampton Town Trustees:

"...whereas great complaints have been made at the mill dam...at the place called the Water Mill...rendered dangerous for travelers by reason of the noise of the fulling mill which frightens many horses & exposes the rider[s]..."

What is a fulling mill? Why, apparently, is it so noisy? And what had happened to the gently turning, water-wheel-powered grist mill?

Starting in 1644, Edward Howell, the original builder, owner, and operator of the mill, *was* in the business of grinding grain, providing a vital source of food for the first settlers and their livestock. However, by the mid 1700's, among the subsequent mill proprietors were weavers and cloth merchants, and their needs were different.

A fulling stock was one of their essential machines. This consisted of a series of wooden arms that, powered by the water wheel, would rise and fall into a tub of liquid into which raw woven cloth (particularly wool) was placed to be tumbled and cleaned.

This process accomplished three things: it helped remove animal oils, dirt, and other impurities from the cloth; it shrank it by friction and pressure; and it encouraged the fibers of the cloth to condense and mat together.

Unfortunately, the wooden hammers of the fulling apparatus were noisy. It has been said that, at one time in Medieval Britain, there were few places where the sound of fulling mills could not be heard. By 1810 there were 1,682 fulling mills in America.



A small model of the fulling apparatus has been acquired for display at the water mill. This facsimile also illustrates a past solution to the problem of the build-up of winter ice in the mill pond. Instead of the water being brought to the outside mill wheel, it was channeled into the interior of the

IN MEMORIAM



Janet Lavinio, an Honorary Life Member of the Water Mill Museum, passed away on June 25th, 2024. In 1963 Janet and her husband, Francis, settled into the house that he had built on Upper Seven Ponds Road. There, they raised their daughters, Marie and Nancy. Janet, a registered nurse, worked at the hospital for many years and as a nurse at Southampton High School.

She was the Museum's corresponding secretary for many years. Her very special notes were much appreciated by those who received them. She stepped down as secretary in 2003 but remained on the board giving wisdom and support.

Her help and smiling face will be missed.



Bill Petty, an honorary Life Member of the Water Mill Museum, passed away on August 4th, 2024 at the age of 86. Bill is descended from Elias Petty a weaver, who purchased the Mill in 1748. Bill was born in Southampton Hospital and lived in East Hampton until he was 12. In 1958, he and his father started Petty Plumbing and Heating.

While raising his children with his wife, Muriel, Bill was involved in Water Mill through the Community Club. He coached Little League Babe Ruth and soccer.

Bill assisted his wife when she joined the Museum Board in the late eighties and came on board himself when he retired. He supplied the Museum gift shop with many hand-made wooden whirligigs and support on many projects.

Thank you Bill.

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building where it was directed onto the vanes of a rotating shaft which was enclosed in a tub. Remnants of this tub turbine are still observable in the basement of the present mill.

School tours of the Mill



2025 Water Mill Museum Board

Director/Manager – Rachel Verno

Board of Directors

President – Sandy Raynor
Recording Secretary – Cindy Corwith
Treasurer – Charles Halsey
Vice President – Donna Liehr
Corresponding Secretary – Anita Bishop

Committees:

Membership – Donna & Bob Liehr	Archives – Jeanne White, Sue Taylor
Hospitality – Faye Andreasen, Donna Liehr	Quilt Show/Facebook – Eileen Noonan
Buildings & Grounds – Bob Liehr	Quilt Show – Peggy Helstowski
Gift Shop – Sherrill Adams	Website – Ann Lombardo
Traveling School Tours – Steven Peiffer	Newsletter Layout & Mailings – Susan McCulley, Rosanna Hansen
Investments – Vivian Corwith	

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

- Catherine Cassidy, Rebecca Maida and Joseph Mezzacappa for donating their time to work with archivist Wendy Ambrozewicz
- Board member Sue Taylor for transcribing hundreds of handwritten pages from our archives
- Daniel Seagraves for his expertise on upgrading our various video displays-Faith Duggal for volunteering at the museum this season
- Carla Casper, Charles Halsey and Sandy Raynor for their quilt donations
- Gary Sapiane for the great ads on WLNG for the quilt show
- Ed Hurley, Danny McKeever and Ray Wellen for keeping a watchful eye on the mill.
- Alfonso Blas, Jamie Wilson and Meredith White for our gardens
- Merry and Greg Bellafore of Long Island East Printers for our always beautiful newsletter
- Bob Eisenberg of East End Blueprint
- Board member Steve Peiffer for expanding our educational programs that attracted so many new visitors to our museum this season
- Bridge Gardens' Ray Bogusch and Jamie Wilson for spearheading our special event program "a colonial herb garden"
- The Express News Group for always covering our events
- Lou Puglisi for the hand painted artwork and ornaments that he generously donates to the museum year after year
- Marilyn Holstein of Discovery Maps
- Strong Oil for their donation to the Members' Art Show
- Kathy Odell-Hamilton for beautifully curating the Members' Art Show
- Ricky Muller for his continued work fixing all things, large and small
- John Degan of Liberty Iron Works
- The families of Bill Petty and Janet Lavinio
- Nicole Menchise of the Long Island Library Resource Center (LILRC) for all the expert advice navigating our archiving project
- Kaitlin Ketchum, archivist at the Shelter Island Historical Society
- Vincent Gaudiello, The Raynor Group

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

Honorary Life Members

Marlene Haresign	Lucille Berrill Paulsen
Mary Maran	Muriel Petty
R. Timothy Maran	Gay Colina

Please scan and sign up to receive emails about our news and events.

We appreciate your support!
Thank you



Online at www.watermillmuseum.org
or find us on Facebook

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

