

THE NEW PORTICO

THE HUNTINGTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY • SUMMER 2008

Historical Society Unveils Visitor's Center

The Best of the Huntington Historical Society Collection is now on display in the newly restored Soldiers and Sailors Memorial Building on Main Street. Drop by to view some of the very best artifacts, costumes, documents and paintings in the Historical Society's vast collection including exceptional 19th century Huntington pottery; the chair General George Washington sat on during his trip through Long Island; Civil War artifacts, including the officer's presentation sword of Captain Hewlett Long; a precious Huntington sampler and much, much more. Thank you to **Aboff's Paints**, **James Aliperti** of Alperti & Sons Wood Floor Refinishing, **Electronix Central Alarm Systems** and also the **Huntington Village Business Improvement District** for its \$10,000 donation. We couldn't have done this restoration without your support!



LEFT: Once the home of Huntington's first public library, the Soldiers and Sailors Memorial Building on Main Street again serves as a public gathering place - this time as a Visitor's Center where some of the Society's most treasured artifacts tell the story of Huntington's unique and colorful past.



FROM POTTERY TO WINDMILLS: Pottery from Huntington's Brown Potteries and the folk art eagle which once "flew" atop an unusual West Neck windmill are just a few of the wonderful items now on display at the Soldiers and Sailors Memorial Building. Summer hours are Mon-Thurs. from 12 to 4 pm except on August 14, 18 & 19. Please call (631) 351-3244 to confirm the day and time of your visit.



A SPECIAL EVENING OF WINE UNDER THE STARS

18th Annual Wine Tasting * Saturday, September 13th * 6 to 9 pm
Kissam House Museum, 434 Park Avenue Honored Guest: Dr. Al Sforza

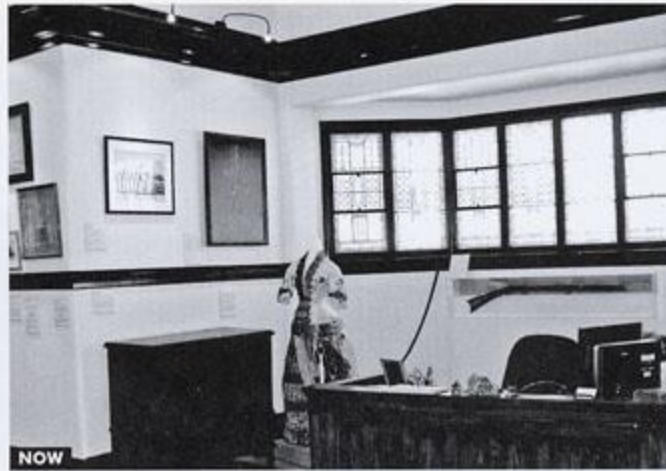
We invite you to enjoy the tasting of select wines and beers, live music, delicious appetizers from our official caterer, Renaissance Gourmet, tours of the Kissam House Museum, raffle drawings, a silent auction and more during our annual autumn fundraiser. Long time HHS Trustee and author, Dr. Al Sforza, will be our Guest of Honor. Tickets are \$50, per person, pre-event, or \$60 at the door. To order, call 631-427-7045, ext. 401

Visit us on the web at: www.huntingtonhistoricalsociety.org

Civil War Memorial: From Town Library to Visitor's Center

Soldiers & Sailors Memorial evolves with the changing needs of our Community

The Huntington Public Library was located in the Soldiers & Sailors Memorial Building on Main Street since 1893. At the time that planning commenced for a memorial to those who died in the Civil War, the Huntington Library Association was also looking for proper quarters. The construction cost was \$8800 and was raised through public subscription, bonds, and generous benefactors including Temple Prime. The library collection expanded over the years, and in 1935 a mezzanine was added. But by 1958 the old building just could not handle the volume of business the booming population required. The library acquired the old New York Telephone building at the other end of Main Street and was ready to move by May. The first step of "Operation Bookshift" was the removal of 2000 duplicate copies and less popular books from the fiction collection into the care of library patrons who stored the books until their extended due date in mid-June, at which time they would then be returned to the new location. In addition, patrons were encouraged to take out two or three extra books per visit also on the extended due date system. From June 16 to June 23, the library closed down to to move the 27,000 books in its collection. Anyone willing to volunteer to move books,



The beautiful leaded glass windows (above) are hidden by roll down shades in this photo of the library from the early 1900's. Today (left) their detailed design is visible for all to appreciate.



Today, as in the past, the fireplace is flanked by two large leaded glass windows featuring circular motifs. However, now, the names of the Huntington men who died during the Civil War are inscribed above the mantel.

or take some books home, was invited to the library that week and besides the Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts and the Huntington Junior Chamber of Commerce, more than 500 library patrons volunteered to carry books in shopping bags and stacks of paper from 228 Main Street to 338 Main Street.

The library's new building was purchased for \$295,000 and \$65,000 was spent on renovations. The larger

building featured an improved children's section, black walnut shelves, cypress floors and furniture, a spacious reading room, an enlarged reference section, and a then innovative young adults section. At the opening ceremony, held on July 6, 1958, the Town Supervisor Ernest Johnson said, "This is a progressive library for a progressive town." These words certainly captured the spirit of 1958.

Today the Memorial

Building and once Library is home to the Town Historian's office and some of the HHS's most treasured possessions. In its new life as a Visitor's Center, we are sure that it will quickly become an ideal starting point for those seeking to learn more about the Town's many historic buildings, people and places.

Thank you to Claudia Fortunato, Assistant to the Town Historian, for contributing this article to our newsletter.

Our Volunteers of the Year

We are proud to recognize the *Volunteers of the Year* who were honored during this year's Annual Meeting in June.

Janet Kushnick has been a constant presence in the Society for well over twenty years during which time her contributions have become too numerous to measure. As an extremely valuable colleague in the Education Department, Janet has participated in countless fund raisers, festivals and events -- and always with a smile on her face. As a volunteer for education programs at both the Conklin and Kissam Houses, Janet's knowledge of our school programs and local history, combined with her wonderfully interactive style, make her an invaluable member of our education team. The Huntington Historical Society takes great pleasure in honoring Janet Kushnick as a Volunteer of the Year for 2008.

Joel Snodgrass is a former Trustee and President of the Board whose knowledge of historic construction and regard for preservation make him a valuable asset on all of our construction projects. Joel has planned, supervised and/or helped implement several projects including the construction of a new kitchen at the Museum Shop and the 1840 Kissam kitchen restoration where



OUR HONOREES (from left to right): *Janet Kushnick for Education, Joel Snodgrass for Buildings and Grounds and Irene Sniffin, Library and Genealogy. We're fortunate to have such a talented and dedicated group of volunteers among our members.*

he helped interpret the construction and use of materials for the kitchen, as well as make historic color choices. Joel also helped correct water/drainage problems at both the Kissam property and the Trade School and he assisted with the roof replacement and handicap accessible restroom during the restoration of the Soldiers and Sailors Memorial Building. We are very fortunate to have someone with Joel's knowledge and expertise assisting us with all of our diverse building projects.

Irene Sniffin started working as a volunteer in the Society's library in 1975. After the HHS received a grant which

provided funding for people to learn how to index, Irene took the training and her first project was indexing the local newspaper, *The Long Islander*. Her work in four volumes covering 1839-1862 has sustained people's research over the years. As a volunteer she also prepared the newsletter of the Society's Genealogy Workshop for many years. In 1992, Irene, her husband Artie and Jim Reilly took their first group of eager

researchers to the Family History Library in Salt Lake City and guided them through the library. To this day, Irene (and Art), annually lead a group to Salt Lake City, instructing and aiding them in locating the records necessary to find their ancestors. One day a week Irene still continues to volunteer in the Library and her knowledge of its contents is extensive. For the past several months she has been working to transfer information from the library's card catalogue into our computer's PastPerfect database. Irene continues to attend Archives workshops, seminars and conferences to learn the latest research techniques and she can also be found volunteering at many of our events. In her quiet manner, Irene is a resource treasure of the HHS and has earned the respect of many people. She is most deserving of this prestigious award as a Volunteer of the Year.

Sheep to Shawl Festival Draws Crowds and Supporters

Thank you to the volunteers, businesses and other individuals who so generously supported our annual spring event: the *Sheep to Shawl Festival*. During the colonial era the coming of spring heralded the start of the sheep shearing season. Today,



Festival attendees are able to see first hand how sheep are actually sheared and then witness the wool being carded, spun and eventually woven into textiles. Games,

The petting zoo was a popular stop for children during our annual Sheep to Shawl Festival in May.

traditional music and other historical crafts make the Festival one of the Society's most

popular events. We'd like to thank the following businesses for their support: **J.W. Hirschfeld Insurance; Copenhagen Bakery; Darrin Berger, Attorney;**

Advantage Title; Abel Conklin's Restaurant; Main Street Nursery; Knitting on the Lamb; Shoreline Beverage; Starbucks Coffee Co. of Northport; Bachman Co. and Bon Bons

Chocolatier. The music for the festival was made possible, in part, with public funds from the **New York State Council on the Arts**, which in Suffolk County is administered by The **Huntington Arts Council, Inc.**, in partnership with the **Suffolk Consortium of Arts.**

Fall Brings A Flurry of Activity

Save the date for these fun and informative programs and events!

WINE TASTING AT THE KISSAM HOUSE

Saturday, September 13th 6 to 9 pm
Kissam House Museum
434 Park Avenue

Popular fund raising event featuring fine wines from Long Island, music and culinary delights from Renaissance Gourmet. Our Guest of Honor is Dr. Al Sforza who has served on the HHS Board for more than twelve years and has written three books covering the fascinating history of the Huntington Station area. Please join us as we toast Dr. Sforza's many contributions to the Huntington community.

Conklin House Lecture Series

All lectures are held at the Conklin House and Barn, 2 High Street, Huntington Village
 Refreshments: 1:30 pm Lectures: 2pm
 HHS Members: Free. Public: \$5.

"WEST EGG" AND THE "SLENDER RIOTOUS ISLAND"

Thursday, September 11th: 2 pm

When F. Scott Fitzgerald wrote *The Great Gatsby* in Great Neck, ("West Egg" in the novel) his description of what Nick Carraway called "that slender riotous island" became the literary image of Long Island. What, however, was the historical reality of Long Island in the "roaring twenties?" Dr. Natalie Naylor will discuss this fascinating topic.

"GHOSTS OF LONG ISLAND, STORIES OF THE PARANORMAL II"

Saturday, October 25: 7:30 pm

Special lecture in the "spooky" Conklin Barn by local author Kerriann Flanagan Brosky and Joe Giaquinto (refreshments at 7:00). Long Island is home to many haunted places and Ms. Brosky and Mr. Giaquinto, a paranormal investigator, will provide eerie details about some of the most fascinating tales. For ages 12 and up. Free for members, \$10 for non-members. Registration required. Reserve at 631-427-7045, ext. 403



APPLE FESTIVAL

Sunday, October 19; 12 to 4 pm
Kissam House Museum
434 Park Avenue

Celebrate the apple harvest and autumn's rich bounty with family fun on the grounds of the Kissam House. Games, colonial music and more. Free!

HHS HOSTS THE ASSOCIATION OF SUFFOLK COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETIES

Saturday, October 25 8:30 am

The Historical Society, in conjunction

with the Town Clerk, Jo-Ann Raia and Robert Hughes, the Town Historian, will host the Association of Suffolk County Historical Societies' quarterly luncheon meeting. Tours of the Society's historic properties, the Town Archives and other Huntington landmarks will be offered. Registration is required. Please call 631-427-7045, ext. 401 for more details.

HOLIDAY HOUSE TOUR

Saturday, December 7; 12 to 4 pm

Our annual Holiday House Tour is quickly becoming one of Long Island's most popular! Mark your calendars now for this fabulous event. Tickets are \$30. Call 631-427-7045, ext. 401 to order.

New Exhibit

WOOD FAMILY "GENERAL STORE" OPENS AGAIN IN HUNTINGTON

The gallery space in the Conklin House Museum at 2 High Street has been transformed into a General Store designed to look like the one which originally opened in 1749 at the corner of Main and West Neck. "The store" is stocked with items which would have been available to buy in 1826 including the 1826 account book, one of a continuous series of ledgers kept by the entrepreneurial Wood family. Free to members. Non-members: \$5 adults/\$3 children and seniors. Call for docent availability: 631-427-7045, ext. 401.



Calling All Business Owners Are you a local business owner past or present? Did your relatives own a store here? The Society's Archives staff and volunteers are in the process of researching and designing an upcoming exhibit on local businesses and we could use your help. We are looking for items which may be tucked away in the family attic or any memories you may have to share. The exhibit will highlight items from the Society's vast archival holdings including photographs, business records, and other family treasures. We invite you to step back in time to 19th and 20th century Huntington and learn the stories behind the store fronts and the families who established them. If you have information to share or items to contribute, please call Karen at 631-427-7045 ext. 406 or email kmartin@huntingtonhistoricalsociety.org

The **Huntington Homemakers** recently presented a beautiful, "crazy" patchwork quilt, designed by **Laurel Colton** and **Margaret Wuestman**, to the Huntington Historical Society. This one-of-a-kind quilt will be raffled off during December's Historic House Tour. Until then, raffle tickets will be on sale during all Huntington Historical Society events and ongoing at these Historical Society buildings: The Trade School, 209 Main Street; The Museum Shop, 434 Park Ave.; the Conklin House, 2 High Street and at the newly restored Soldiers and Sailors Memorial Building on Main Street. Tickets will be \$5 or \$20 for five. For more information, or to make a purchase, call (631) 427-7045, ext. 401. Our thanks to **Kim Thompson** and the **Nathan Hale Garden Club** for their continued maintenance, care and planting of herbs, vegetables and flowers in our historic Kissam House garden. We hear there may even be talk of a grape arbor in the garden's future! Thank you to **Mr. Arlin Joge** who recently joined



This "crazy" quilt (left) was lovingly crafted by Marie Baum, Mary Brennan, Gayle Euchner, Gertrude Finn, Aline Haggert, Teri Nielson, Jean Oderwald, June Ritchey and Beryl Russell of the Huntington Homemakers. It will be raffled off during the Society's Holiday House Tour on December 7th.

the Society at the Heritage Benefactor level. We are grateful to have Mr. Joge recognize the importance of the HHS mission through this generous contribution. The Society wishes our long time volunteer and friend, **Terry Frohlich**, all the best in her new endeavors and says, "thank you for everything you've done!"

Laura Dabrowski, one of our dedicated student volunteers, recently received the Good Citizenship award from the DAR (Daughters of the American Revolution). This award recognizes excellence in academics, dependability, respect, compassion and service to the community. Laura will be attending Wellesley College in the fall.



Lilian Najarian, Regent of the Ketewamoke Chapter of the DAR (Huntington and its surrounding area) and Co-Treasurer of the HHS, congratulates Laura on her award along with Robert Hughes, Historian for the Town of Huntington.

New "Conklin Prize for Poetry"

Winning Poem, 1964, inspired by the Society's "Dolls, Trains and Other Toys" Exhibit

1964

She came with a name I can't remember
don't know why I called her Sylvia
an extension of my right hand
everywhere I went
her hard plastic body, arms and legs
joined her molded head with sand
permed curls usually tangled

as was mine
my mother would brush our hair stroke
for stroke
Sylvia's sleepy eyes closing as our heads
nestled for a nap
her closed mouth a defiant pout refusing
lunch of cookies
or milk colored with food dye
the ritual of our diaper and dress
changes
tiny apparel in powdered laundry loads.

Sylvia secreted my wishes, agreed with
me, my brother was a jerk, mom could
be stern and dad was mostly perfect
her leg broke when my brother roughed
it from her body
my father surgeoned her back to me, her
lace collar
collected my tears, transformed them
into laughter
my brother pecked her cheek

in contrition and we hugged away the
years
as Sylvia sat on my bed, then a book
shelf
watching as I struggled through math
homework
then relegated to a corner of my closet
where she kept company with tap shoes
and rollerskates, tennis racket and jump
rope

and I left her for a circle of new friends.

I can still feel her in my arms
the raised line of her seamed body
the crease on her temple where her head
dented
carried upside down up and down porch
steps
in the formative years of our
togetherness.
Sylvia, wishing I could pull you from the
closet
I have so many secrets to tell you

— J R TUREK

The Conklin Prize for Poetry was initiated in 2006 to give local poets a chance to write poetry based on the Society's exhibits at its Conklin House Museum. George Wallace, Suffolk County's Poet Laureate from 2003-05, helped pick this year's winning entry.

Thank You to Our Community Contributors

It takes the support and involvement of many individuals, businesses and government agencies to help keep the many properties, departments and projects of the Huntington Historical Society up and running. In light of this, we would like to recognize several of the businesses which recently contributed to the success of our Heritage Antiques Show in late May:

- THE HUNTINGTON ANTIQUES CENTER IN COLD SPRING HARBOR
- ANTIQUES AT NORTHPORT
- NORTH SHORE KITCHENS, INC.
- SIGNATURE PROPERTIES OF HUNTINGTON
- DaNu RESTAURANT
- RENAISSANCE GOURMET

We would also like to thank **Marty** and **Janet Kushnick** for organizing the donation of lap-top computers and a scanner for our Education and Collections departments. Through Marty's affiliation with **Senior Net**, a small group of Senior Net volunteers refurbished used computers donated by **National Grid**. Thanks to Marty's diligence, National Grid also agreed to donate a scanner to the HHS. The Society heartily thanks Senior Net and National Grid for their generous donations and recognizes Marty and Janet Kushnick for their continued support of the Society!



The Community National Bank recently gave the Historical Society a \$250 donation to celebrate their presence in the Huntington community. Pictured are, from left to right, Donna Frasco, First Vice President, Retail Division; Susan Palmer, Branch Manager, Huntington; Stuart H. Lubow, Chairman, President and CEO; Carol A. Maguire, Executive Director, HHS; Pat Ernst, Co-Treasurer, HHS and Greg Vlahakis, Asst. Branch Manager, Woodbury.

If you are a business owner or corporation interested in becoming involved with the Huntington Historical Society, please call our Executive Director, Carol A. Maguire, at 631-427-7045, ext. 405 to find out how you can partner with the Society.



THE HUNTINGTON
HISTORICAL
SOCIETY

209 Main Street
Huntington, NY 11743-6993

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The Huntington Historical Society gratefully acknowledges the Town of Huntington for its financial support.