

# THE NEW PORTICO

THE HUNTINGTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY WINTER 2010

## Eagle Scouts Soar at the Conklin House

*Dedicated Scouts Make Major Improvements*



ABOVE LEFT: *John Battistelli* from Troop 309 pauses while working on the retaining wall he built on the south and west sides of the Conklin Barn. ABOVE RIGHT: *Salvatore Spadaro* from Troop 106 replaced the picket fence, posts and gates in front of the Conklin House.

The Historical Society was extremely fortunate that 2009 was a very busy year for local Boy Scouts wishing to fulfill their Eagle Scout requirements. According to Peter Demidovich, who for the past ten years has been the liaison between the HHS and the Eagle Scout projects, three separate projects were completed at the Conklin House during the last few months of 2009 -- making it one of the years in which the Society realized the greatest benefits from Scout projects.

The first project was completed by Charlie Prince from Troop #78 who replaced the ramp in front of the Conklin Barn. The ramp was rotted and too dangerous to use so Charlie replaced it with pressure treated wood and also did some landscaping around it as well. Great job Charlie! John Battistelli from Troop #309 completed the second project by building a retaining wall on the south and west sides of the Conklin

Barn. The wall was built out of railroad ties and John also installed a drainage system to prevent water and leaves from collecting against the side of the barn. He also generously donated the money he had left over from his project to HHS. Job well done and thank you John!!

The third Eagle Scout project was completed by Salvatore Spadaro from Troop #106. Using painted cedar fencing which would have been used during the time the Conklin House was inhabited by David Conklin, Sal replaced the picket fence, posts and gates in the front of the Conklin House on High Street. He also arranged to have the outside lighting on the house replaced by Mister Sparky, a licensed electrician. The fence looks great Sal, you did a fantastic job!!

We'd like to send out a very special thank you to all of our Eagle Scout candidates and also recognize the volunteers who helped them with their Eagle Scout projects. Their hard work is greatly



ABOVE: Eagle Scout *Charlie Prince* from Troop 78 poses proudly on the new ramp he constructed for the Conklin Barn. The old ramp was rotted and had been in place since the barn was reconstructed in 1990.

appreciated and we congratulate Charlie, John and Sal on their achievement of obtaining the rank of Eagle Scout. We wish all of you the best of luck and continued success in your future endeavors!

# Thanks to the Major Contributors of 2009

2009 was a productive year for the Huntington Historical Society and in our first newsletter of 2010 we would like to recognize those individuals, families and businesses that have donated money and/or services, sponsored events and joined the Society's Heritage Circle in 2009. Cumulative contributions are grouped in categories reflecting

amounts given, paired with the 5 centuries in the history of the Town of Huntington. 21st Century donors and sponsors have contributed \$4,000 plus, 20th Century \$2,000-3,999, 19th Century \$1,000-1,999, 18th Century \$500-999, 17th Century \$250-499. Names are listed in alphabetical order.

## DONATIONS

### 21st Century (\$4,000-9,999)

Priscilla & Robert Hughes, John Kean & Family, Mary Alice Meinersman

### 20th Century (\$2,000-3,999)

Robert & Beverly Kissam

### 19th Century (\$1,000-1,999)

Harry & Mary Anne Charlston, Joel H. Cohen Fund, Marie & Dean Failey, Joseph Morrow Quintilian, Katherine Stevens, Rufus Langhans/Thomas Powell/Sally Packard Funds

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Wendy & Loring Andersen, James E. Campbell, David & Joan Clemens, Pat & Tom Ernst, Faye & Mathew Fortunato, William & Theresa Frohlich, Margaret Guardi & Dennis Griffin, Paula Gullo & Ellen Rich, Seymour Hirschfeld Fund, Douglas & Robin Horn, William & Gail Johnson, Lawrence & Mary Kushnick, Lawrence & Carol Leek, Lilian & Nishan Najarian, Mark & Sarah Najarian, Anthony & Elizabeth Piazza, Robert & Sue Quinn, Scott Sammis, Arthur & Irene Sniffin, In Memorium of Mrs. Ida Sutherland

### 17th Century (\$250-499)

Frances & Peter Connell, Carolyn Dilworth, Susanna Fasolino, Valdemar & Virginia Jacobsen, Charlotte & Carl Lawrence, Susan Roche, Steven Smith, Vincent Vinicombe

## SPONSORS

### 20th Century (\$2,000-3,999):

Astoria Federal Savings

### 19th Century: (\$1,000-1,999)

Gary Melius & Oheka Castle, Huntington Jeep, Old Huntington Green Inc.

### 18th Century: (\$500-999)

Applebee's, Bank of Smithtown, Besito Restaurant, Charles Schwab, Flynn Aire, Fuoco Group, Huntington Arts Council, Huntington Marine Services, Inc., Image Arts, Kissam Family Association, Lawrence & Lawrence, North Shore Kitchen, Signature Properties

### 17th Century: (\$250-499)

Aboff's, Advantage Title, Borg & Borg Insurance, Centerport Antiques, Coach Real Estate, Epoch 5 Marketing Inc., Fidelity Investments, Green River Gallery, Historic Construction Management Corporation, JW Hirschfeld, Lawrence Hill Service, M. A. Connell Funeral Home, Meenan Oil, Society for the Preservation of Long Island's Antiquities, South Bay Antiques, St. Johnland Nursing Center

## HERITAGE CIRCLE MEMBERS

**Heritage Leader:** Douglas C. & Robin K. Horn, Robert & Beverly Kissam

**Heritage Associate:** Pat & Tom Ernst, Carl & Charlotte Lawrence

**Heritage Friend:** Marie & Dean Failey, Faye & Mathew Fortunato, Margaret Guardi & Dennis Griffin, Lilian & Nishan Najarian, Brian & Virginia Stair

## GOVERNMENT SUPPORT

**Town of Huntington:** Supervisor Petrone and Council Members; Berland, Besen, Cuthbertson, Jackson; **State of New York:** Assemblymen Raia and Conte **Suffolk County:** Legislator Cooper.

## IN-KIND DONATIONS

Abel Conklin's, A & R Party Tent Rental, A Rise Above, Ahern's Landscaping Design Center, Appliance World, Architectural Audio Video, Arctic Glacier, Ariana, Bachmann Company, Banfi Vineyards, Bartlett Tree Experts, Black & Blue Seafood Chophouse, Boeing Brothers, Bon Bons Chocolatier, Bridge Brands Sales Inc., Castello Banfi, Christopher's, Cold Spring Country Club, Concord Limousine Service Inc., Copenhagen Bakery, Crew Kitchen and Bar, Cupcake Gourmet, Peter Demidovich, Fashion In Flowers, Finnegan's, Flower Petaler, Gaia's Essence, Grasso's, Hartmann Landscaping Inc., Head Quarters, Iavarone Brothers, Valdemar & Virginia Jacobsen, Joanina Restaurant, John W. Engeman Theatre, Juice Box, Mark Staudinger, Mascali, Mediavilla Orchards, Quetzalcoatl, Red Restaurant, Reinwald's Bakery, Richter's Orchards, Rookie's Sports Club, San Giuseppe Wines, Shoreline Beverages, Smoking Sloe's, Starbucks, Times Beacon Record Newspapers, Toast, Village Connection and Wine Wave.

*The Huntington Historical Society thanks all of our members, sponsors, donors, staff and volunteers for their contributions in 2009. We hope we can count on your continued support and contributions in 2010!*



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

## Great Weather Compliments Holiday House Tour

Taking advantage of a beautiful Sunday afternoon in early December, a record number of people attended the Society's annual house tour that included five historic homes as well as a tour of the Kissam House & barn. This year's tour, titled "From Farm Houses to Country Living: Huntington Transitions 1750-1925," featured houses that were built by members of the earliest families to settle in Huntington. Houses from the 18th thru the 20th century, whose original owners were Scudder, Conklin, Sammis and Jones, comprised a tour that included the smallest of early settlement residents to large and elegant homes, each surviving into the 21st century, beautifully decorated for the holidays.

Although many visitors had already been through the Society's Kissam House, they were dazzled by the holiday decorations and the exhibit of 'party' dresses, all from the Society's collection, dating from the 19th century that were on display throughout the house. Another special exhibit this year included two 'historic' doll houses in the collection, both models of existing houses on the Village Green, that were set up in the barn. Visitors could also enjoy refreshments and the newly produced DVD, the "Huntington Winter Carnival 1907-1920."

The Society wishes to express its



Homes featured during this year's tour were built and lived in by some of the earliest families to settle in Huntington. The home above was believed to have been originally built for Thomas Scudder in the mid-1700's.

gratitude to our major 20th century sponsor, Astoria Federal Savings, our 18th century sponsors, Old Huntington Green, Inc, Signature Properties and Scott T. Sammis, our 17th century sponsors, Bank of Smithtown and Coach Realtors and our sponsoring friends, Flower Petaler, Main Street Florist, Red Restaurant, The Fabric Mill, Nathan Hale Garden Club, Starbucks and The Park Avenue Deli for their support. A special thank you to Al and Sheila Kachic and the homeowners: Grace and Bruce Stillman,

home owners: Alice and Chris Swanson, Emily and Bob Rogan, and Susan and Paul Anzalone.

The annual tour would not have been possible without Pat Ernst and her legion of volunteers who provided our visitors with the fascinating stories behind each of these historic houses. From our sponsors, to the home owners and countless volunteers, thank you all for making this year's tour such a special and unique event. Mark your calendars for next year's tour, December 5, 2010!

## "Gratitude Gala" held to say "Thank You"

On Saturday, January 23rd, the Society hosted a special "Gratitude Gala" to thank all who were involved in the very successful Holiday Historic House Tour. The "Gala" was held at the Soldiers and Sailors Memorial Building on Huntington's Main Street, where tasty refreshments and a wonderful exhibit of historic treasures were enjoyed as the multitudes met and mingled. Home owners, sponsors, staff, Trustees, volunteers (docents, greeters, parking, tickets, raffles, refreshment providers

and refreshment servers) were all invited to share in a glass of cheer and toast the success of the tour.

"Our volunteers are the backbone of this organization," said Trustee Lilian Najarian, "and we simply couldn't do what we do without them...We hope this reception lets them know how much we value their time and dedication. It would be inconceivable to even think about holding this House Tour without their priceless contributions of time, smiles and hard work."



Society Trustee, Pat Ernst, chats with Elizabeth Sigona, bank manager at the Bank of Smithtown and her husband, Anthony, who holds their daughter.

# Our Winter Line-Up

See what the Huntington Historical Society has planned in the upcoming months!

## Conklin House Lecture Series

For reservations to all lectures, please call (631) 427-7045, ext. 403 and leave your name, phone number and the number of reservations you are requesting.

All lectures are held in the Conklin Barn, 2 High Street, Huntington Village.

Free to members; \$5 for the general public. Refreshments are offered at 1:30 pm, lectures begin at 2.

Natalie Naylor presents:  
**"U.S. PRESIDENTS AND FIRST LADIES: THE LONG ISLAND CONNECTION"**  
**Thursday, March 18th**  
**Refreshments 1:30, Lecture: 2 pm**



Edith Carow Roosevelt

President Theodore Roosevelt is well-known as a Long Islander, but a number of other presidents or their wives also had some connections with Long Island, sometimes before or after their presidency. The Society is pleased to present this special lecture in recognition of Women's History Month.

Dr. Kathleen Velsor presents:  
**"THE WOMEN AND MEN OF THE UNDERGROUND RAILROAD ON LONG ISLAND"**  
**Thursday, April 15th:**  
**Refreshments 1:30, Lecture: 2 pm**

Based on her book *"The Road to Freedom: the Underground Railroad, New York and Beyond"*, Dr. Velsor will speak about the rich history of anti-slavery activity on Long Island which started at least two decades before 1775. A book signing will follow.

Dr. Frank Turano presents:  
**A HUNDRED YEARS ON FIRE ISLAND 1850-1950**  
**Thursday, May 20:**  
**Refreshments 1:30, Lecture: 2 pm**

Just in time for summer, join us as Dr. Turano's program focuses on the development and evolution of Fire Island. The lecture will feature fascinating archival photographs and documents to help illustrate the depth and variety of life that is still present in the cultural history of the island.



A true Huntington Entrepreneur...  
**SPECIAL BOOK SIGNING AND 90TH BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION**  
**Sunday, February 28th: 1 to 4 pm**  
**Conklin House Barn, 2 High Street**

The Society joins with the Weisberg family to host a Book Signing and Birthday Celebration for Seymour Weisberg, owner of one of the Town's most popular stores, Peggy's Fabric Store. Mr. Weisberg's, *"My Extraordinary Life,"* chronicles his childhood in Poland, to his immigration to the U.S. at 18 and his experience as a decorated WWII soldier and successful businessman. Seymour notes, "people in Huntington used to say, if you can't find it in Peggy's, you can't find it anywhere." This is also the last chance to view the exhibit, "Huntington Entrepreneurs," before it closes. Please call 427-7045, ext. 401 to reserve.



Special Afternoon for Children  
**TEA WITH DOLLY AND ME**  
**Thursday, February 18th: 1 to 3 pm**

Conklin House Barn  
 2 High Street, Huntington Village  
 \$10 per child, must be accompanied by an adult (free for adults)

Join us for a delightful afternoon in the Conklin Barn as children share stories about their own dolls, create yarn dolls, do simple embroidery and discover the history behind some very special antique dolls. Children should bring their favorite doll and a tea cup. Refreshments will be served. Recommended for children 6 to 11 only, please. To reserve, call: (631) 427-7045, ext. 401 or 404.

## Save the dates...

**SHEEP TO SHAWL FESTIVAL**  
**Sunday, May 2: 12 to 4 pm**  
**Kissam House Museum, 434 Park Ave.**

**HERITAGE ANTIQUES SHOW AT HUNTINGTON**  
**Sunday, May 22: 10 am to 5 pm**  
**Sunday, May 23: 11 am to 5 pm**  
**Huntington High School**

**ANNUAL MEETING**  
**Sunday, June 6: 3 pm**  
**Kissam House Museum, 434 Park Ave.**

**HERITAGE CRAFT FAIR**  
**Saturday, August 21**  
**Kissam House Museum, 434 Park Ave.**

**WINE TASTING**  
**Friday, September 10**  
**Kissam House Museum, 434 Park Ave.**

## Society Receives Conservation Bookshelf

Treasured objects and artifacts held by the Huntington Historical Society will now be preserved for future generations with help from the *IMLS Connecting to Collections Bookshelf*, a core set of conservation books and online resources donated by the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS). The Huntington Historical Society received this essential set of resources covering such topics as the philosophy and ethics of collecting, collections management, emergency preparedness, and conservation issues. The *Bookshelf* is a crucial component of *Connecting to Collections: A Call to Action*, an initiative

launched by the Institute in 2006 spotlighting the needs of America's collections, especially those held by smaller institutions, which often lack the human and financial resources to adequately care for their collections. IMLS has awarded 3,000 free sets of the *Bookshelf*, in cooperation with the American Association for State and Local History (AASLH).

The *Bookshelf* contains materials of interest to family historians or collectors as well, such as guidelines for the preservation and storage of treasured possessions in their care. Contact the Society's archives for more information on this invaluable resource: 427-7045 ext. 406.



*This table is believed to have been used by the then General, George Washington, aka the "Big Man," when he dined on Long Island on April 21, 1790. We believe that it is imperative that antiquities such as these are properly preserved for future generations to experience and enjoy.*

## PEOPLE IN THE NEWS

Last August, **Sue Davenport**, who as a girl lived in the Kissam House when it was rented by her family in 1942, was welcomed back to the Kissam House by the Society's **Toby Kissam** and **Cathi Horowitz**. Known then as Sue Ferguson, Sue walked all through the house and reflected upon some of her favorite childhood experiences: skating on a pond on Park Avenue, playing in the original barn and never having been in the attic because her parents didn't allow the children to go up there. In her mind's eye, she clearly remembered sharing a bedroom with her sister in what is now the Genealogy Room and family meals in the dining room. After recalling some of her fondest memories, Sue then topped the afternoon off with a look in the forbidden childhood attic! For



*The Sloane family of Dix Hills won the raffle for this special Bicentennial quilt. Seen here are Father Neal, daughter Emily with the family dog Maisy, Mother Beth and son, Matthew.*

Toby and Cathi, the day made thoughts of living in the Kissam House very real and they feel fortunate that they were able to share these special memories with Sue. The Society takes great pleasure in congratulating long time volunteer and past Board member, **Alice Link**, on the birth of her eighth great grandchild. Cheers to Alice and her family on this delightful news! The **Sloane Family** of Dix Hills were the lucky recipients of the Bicentennial Quilt which was raffled off during the Holiday House Tour in December. The Sloanes are members of the Society and their son Matthew has worked for the Passport to the Past program and has also volunteered at the Sheep to Shawl and Apple Festivals. We can't think of a nicer family to win this special and unique prize!

## Renew, Rejoin, or Join us for the First Time

*"The foundation of an organization is the support it receives from the community"*

The above statement was true in 1903 when descendants of the founding families of Huntington: Sammis, Scudder, Conklin, Brush and Baylis, just to name a few, founded the Huntington Historical Society. It was true throughout the 20th

century when Upjohns (pharmaceutical), Brown (Coindre Hall), Ferguson (Ferguson Castle), Field (Caumsett) and others lent their names and resources to the Huntington Historical Society. It remains true at the beginning of the 21st century as the Society

continues to run an acclaimed education program, open its library and archives to researchers and genealogists from all over the world, offer historic exhibits and programs through the year and maintain four properties on the National Historic Register

with seven historic structures. We invite you to join this list of esteemed supporters by renewing your membership or joining for the first time. To find out how, call (631) 427-7045, ext. 401 or visit us on the web at: [www.huntingtonhistoricalsociety.org](http://www.huntingtonhistoricalsociety.org)

# A Wonderful Way to Contribute

*Consider Donating to a Tax-Deferred Giving Account to Assist the Society*

**H**ow can you help the Huntington Historical Society while realizing the maximum tax advantage for yourself and also keeping track of your donations throughout the year? Consider the advantages of creating a Donor-Advised Fund that works like a Foundation.

You begin by making an irrevocable contribution of \$5,000 or more to the Gift Fund to establish your Giving Account. One of the more popular models is the Fidelity Charitable Gift Fund Giving Account which gives you the benefit of an immediate, maximum tax deduction. The Fund allows your donation to grow in value through a variety of investments. You control how your money is being invested online or through a company representative. From this single account you can donate money to multiple charitable causes at any time over a multiple year period.

One of the many advantages is that you can transfer funds from an IRA, or individual stocks, without incurring taxable income or capital gains. In addition, you can continue to donate to your Gift Fund as often as you wish to do so. Individuals who have IRA or retirement accounts must begin taking minimal required withdrawals at 70 1/2 years of age. Since these withdrawals are taxable income, you should consider creating a Donor-Advised Gift Fund to which you can contribute some of your required withdrawals to reduce your taxable income and give financial help to The Huntington Historical Society or other charitable organizations.

The Huntington Historical Society is an approved association with Fidelity Investment's Gift Fund called "The Giving Account." Fidelity has generously offered to sit down and review the

individual benefits of these plans with the Huntington Historical Society's donors, as we know that you are the lifeblood of this organization. Any estate planning questions or discussions about how to maximize your donations can be discussed with their very savvy advisors who would be more than happy to assist you with any of your concerns.

**For further information contact:**

Robert "Toby" Kissam at  
(631) 427-7045, ext. 405

— or —

Dianne Zdan at Fidelity:  
(631) 424-5342, ext. 50908

*Thanks to Trustees Sean Bickoff and Marie Failey for contributing this article to the newsletter.*



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