



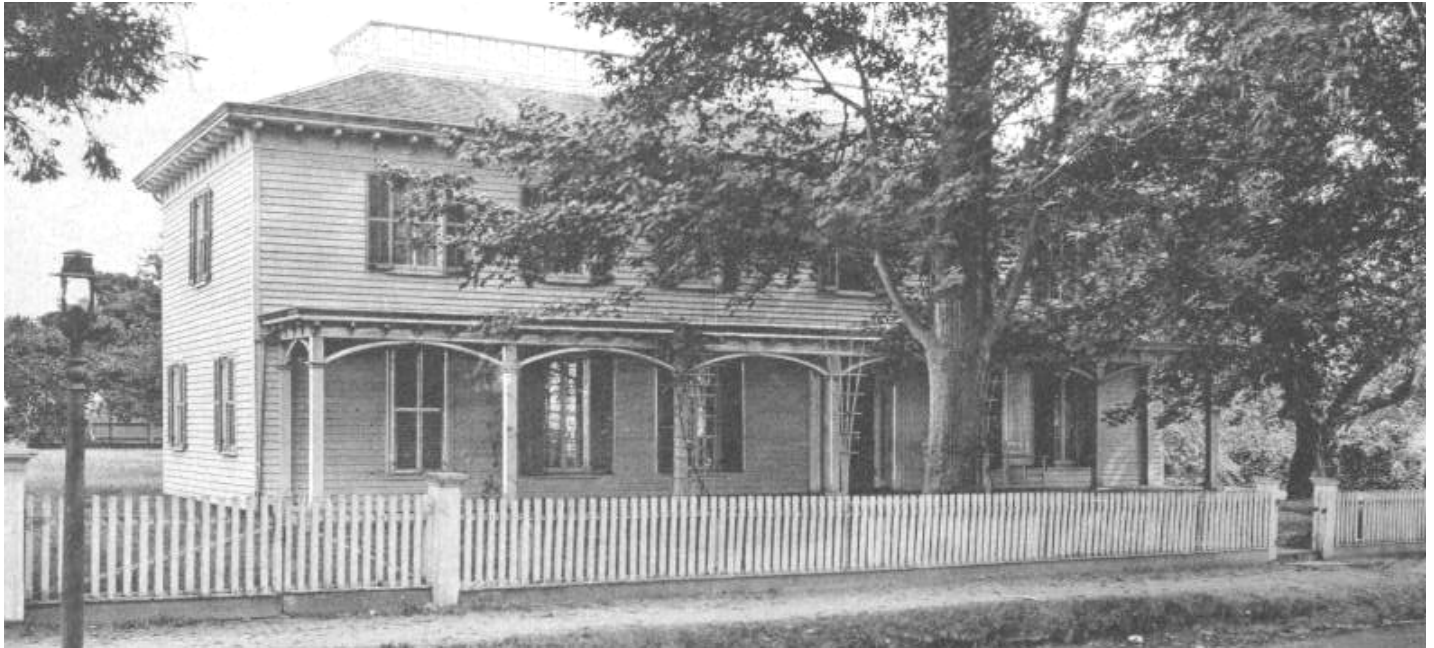
# OYSTERPONDS HISTORICAL SOCIETY

THE MUSEUM of ORIENT  
and EAST MARION HISTORY

Summer 2010

## NEWSLETTER

### Village House Restoration Awarded EPF Grant



A postcard of Village House from the height of its boarding house period in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century.

“August 1798: Bought of Squire Thomas Youngs timber for building me a house on my land....my neighbors with their teams collected and drewed it home for me without fee or reward, for which I tend them my hearty thanks.”

*(The Diaries of Augustus Griffin, 1792-1852, pg 119)*

Oysterponds' diarest Augustus Griffin built his small half house on Village Lane and noted in his writings that day how vital the support and generosity of his neighbors was. In his lifetime, his home became a community center. He took in boarders and hosted community gatherings like Washington's Birthday dinners. It was a tavern, a polling station for elections, and a stop on the stagecoach route. By 1853 when Griffin sold Village House to Samuel G. Vail, Village House was already a community institution. Vail more than doubled the size of Village House, and transformed it into a proper boarding house as the area became a tourist resort. The boardinghouse era wound to a close with the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and Village House slept like Beauty in the fairy tale.

This remarkable building has been the focus of scholarly study and careful planning to preserve and restore the iconic structure as a document of Long Island history as well as a testament to Oysterponds' community heritage. **The importance of restoring Village House is underscored by the award of a prestigious NY State Environmental Protection Fund Historic Preservation Grant.**

#### The Project

The \$228,000 challenge grant is matched with Capital Campaign funds, staff salaries and monies invested in critical surveys of the structure. The scope of work, intended to take about three years, will stabilize and restore the building's outside envelope. This work is a critical follow-up to the \$60,000 first stage in which a crawlspace was excavated beneath the structure and rotting floor joists replaced. To prevent further destabilization of the building due to moisture, this second phase will include **replacement of roofing, improvements to drainage, sealing leaks in the foundation and the introduction of effects of extreme humidity on the** *(continued on page 2)*

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**Restoration** (*continued from page 1*)  
the building fabric. This stage also includes restoration of exterior architectural features and painting, which will return Village House to its 19<sup>th</sup> century appearance. OHS will need to raise approximately \$100,000 to complete this phase of the project for architects and preservation management consultants who will work with contractors to ensure that the restoration of this precious piece of our heritage is a meticulous, proud and lasting legacy for generations to come.

**Future Plans**

The restoration will fulfill the Society's commitment to the preservation of its most historically significant property and the jewel of the Orient Historic District. **Once the building envelope is stabilized and restored, a furnishings plan will be implemented to interpret the first floor as the Vail boarding house of the last decades of the nineteenth century and the second floor will house multimedia exhibitions that**

**interpret the area's unique heritage.**

The diaries of Augustus Griffin provide valuable insight into the area's early history and development, and will be the basis of community-focused second floor exhibitions. A prototype of this exhibition was on display in OHS' gallery last summer and feedback was gathered from focus groups and written comments in the exhibition booklet. The goal is to restore Village House not only as an iconic structure, but as a community institution with both static and changing exhibitions that reflects what Oysterponds was, is, and can be.

**Be Part of It**

As Augustus Griffin's neighbors helped him draw home the timber to build Village House in 1798, OHS needs the help of its neighbors now to preserve and restore this visual legacy of Oysterponds' community spirit and heritage. If you are able to help raise \$100,000 for this phase of the project over the next three-year span, please contact the OHS offices at 631-323-2480.

## What a Dump!

Of all the modern conveniences for which we are grateful, perhaps the most overlooked is the ease with which we can throw something away.

In years past, every family typically had a pit on their property into which domestic garbage was disposed of. In Orient, larger items were taken to the dump located where the marina is now on Narrow River Road right where Hallock's Creek comes up to the road.

The Orient Dump began as the private dump on Hallock's Farm. Once the farm was no longer operating, the dump became a public dump. No guards stood watch or weighed your trash. It was open for all to use. There are many Oysterponds residents who remember the dump and even of seeing the deteriorating side wheeler there, the *Walter Royal*, which had been manufactured and used by Lucius Hallock for easily getting supplies in and products out of the large farm complex.

After World War II, the Cutchogue Dump



Early 20<sup>th</sup> century painting of the *Walter Royal* by E.A. Brooks in the OHS collection.

The vessel was named for Lucius Hallock's son and was built in Orient.

was created and the Orient Dump fell out of use. Ed King dredged the river and moved buildings from his potato farm down to the site to create a small marina.

Do you have memories of the Orient Dump? Does anyone know where similar dumps may have been located elsewhere in Oysterponds? Please contact us at OHS to share some "trashy" oral history. Many thanks to Anne MacKay and Roxanna Mellinger for sharing their memories!

## Spring & Summer Calendar

- June 19**     **Fine Art & Antiques Auction**  
 Peconic Landing Auditorium, 11 am  
 Preview June 18 at Brecknock Hall at Peconic Landing, Noon – 8:00 pm, wine & cheese beginning at 5:00 pm. Additional viewing 9:00 – 10:30 am on June 19.  
 Fine art, antiques and contemporary works by Richard Serra, Elizabeth Peyton, Marianne Weil and others.
- June 19**     **North Fork Fresh**  
 Poquatuck Park, 5 pm  
 Come start the season by sampling local wines, seafood and farm fresh fare while renewing friendships from past summers. Along the way you will support Orient and East Marion's greatest treasure, the Oysterponds Historical Society. Attendance is limited, so please call 323-2480 to secure your tickets early!
- June 26**     **Exhibition Opening: A Stitch in Time: What We Wore, 1776 - 1976**  
 2:00 – 5:00 pm and Thursdays, Saturdays & Sundays to September 26. Free.  
 Member's only preview June 25 from 6:00 – 8:00 pm at the Old Point School House
- July 4**     **Independence Day Celebration**  
 Noon at the Old Point School House. Free.  
 Join your friends and neighbors in the community who will read the Declaration of Independence and celebrate our nation's founding. Lemonade and refreshments. Picnics welcome!
- August 7**     **Summer Benefit**  
 It is the best party of the summer season and a source of critical operating funds for the Historical Society. This year's auction will include a live auction of clocks made and adorned by North Fork artists. Please call 323-2480 for tickets and sponsorship opportunities.
- August 21**     **Vintage Base Ball Game**  
 1 pm at Poquatuck Park. Free.  
 Bring your chairs or blankets and enjoy a game of vintage Base Ball played by game's 1864 rules.  
*Programs and Exhibitions made possible through funding from the New York Council on the Arts and by Suffolk County under the auspices of the Office of Cultural Affairs, Steve Levy, County Executive.*

## OHS Kids:

**Exciting summer workshops for kids to discover history & create something wonderful!**

**Outrageous Outfitters!**                      **Saturday, July 17**                      **10:00 – 12:00, Village House**

Kids will tour the OHS summer exhibition, *A Stitch in Time: What We Wore, 1776 – 1976* and learn about clothing design by creating a model outfit for their next great adventure

**Color Magic!**                                      **Saturday, August 14**                      **10:00 – 12:00, Village House**

Discover how fabrics were colored in the past using organic vegetable dyes and tie-dye a t-shirt  
 (please bring a white cotton t-shirt)

**Workshops are for children ages 7-12 – parents welcome. \$2 per child per workshop for materials.  
 Reservations guarantee a spot is available for your child - call 631-323-2480**

**For more information, call (631) 323-2480 or visit our website:  
[www.oysterpondshistoricalsociety.org](http://www.oysterpondshistoricalsociety.org)**

## Give the Gift of Membership

If you have already sent in your membership renewal for 2010-2011 — thank you! If you are not yet a member, or have forgotten to renew, please consider doing so. **Your membership dues are a critical part of our operations** here at OHS. The benefits of membership include unlimited free admission to the museums, discounts to special events and programs and a discount on all purchases at the Beach Plum Gift Shop. Most importantly, you will experience the satisfaction of helping to preserve the heritage of Orient and East Marion for the benefit of every generation!

\_\_\_ Individual \$30 \_\_\_ Family \$50 \_\_\_ Associate \$100 \_\_\_ Sponsor \$250 \_\_\_ Patron \$500 \_\_\_ Benefactor \$1000

**Renew by check:** Please fill out info below and mail form & payment and to: OHS, PO Box 70, Orient, NY 11957.

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[www.oysterpondshistoricalsociety.org](http://www.oysterpondshistoricalsociety.org)

Oysterponds Historical Society - Preserving the Past for Every Generation



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