

# Carmans River Nature Trail & Sanctuary Map

1. Homan-Gerard House
2. Octagon Foundation
3. Weeks Pond
4. Gerard Mill Site
5. Mary Louise Booth House



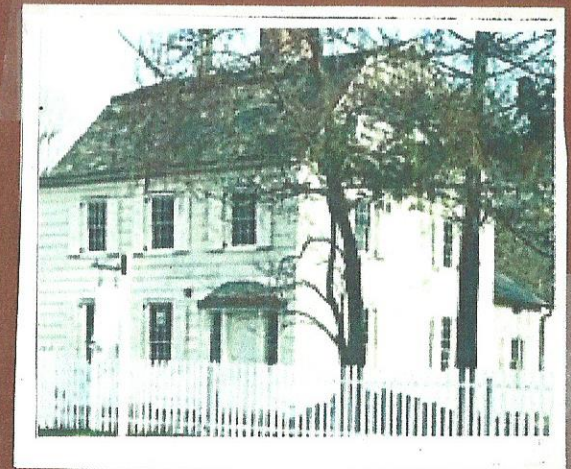
The Carmans River Nature Trail & Sanctuary  
is the joint effort of Suffolk County Historic Services  
& The Yaphank Historical Society.

For additional information:  
Yaphank Historical Society 631 924-3401  
[www.yaphankhistorical.org](http://www.yaphankhistorical.org)

# Carmans River Nature Trail & Sanctuary

4 Yaphank Avenue, Yaphank, New York

John Homan, with the permission of Brookhaven Town in 1762, dammed the Carmans River to construct a saw mill. In 1771, Daniel Homan added a grist mill and a bolting mill. The Homan family lived in this house while operating the mills. Daniel Homan sold the mills to Robert Hawkins in 1821. During these years, the village was known as Millville. The name was changed to Yaphank in 1845.

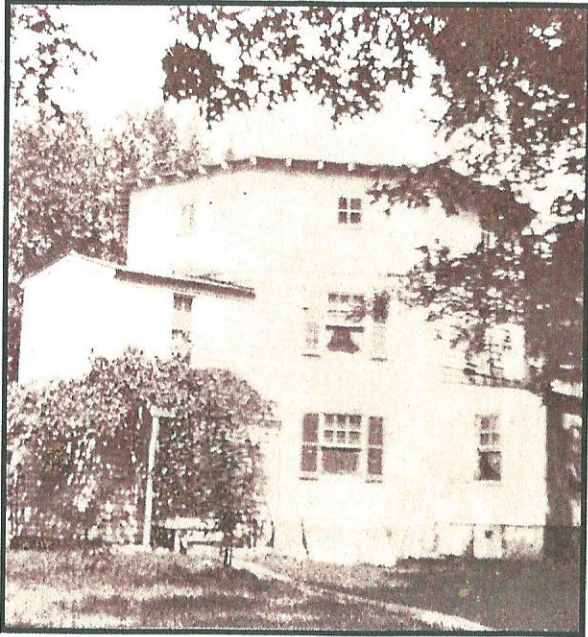


SITE 1 • Homan-Gerard House (circa 1790) today

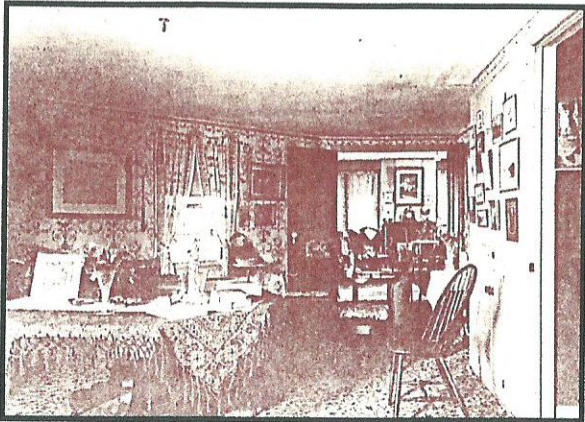


## The Octagon Foundation

William Jones Weeks built an octagon house in 1848. Only the stone foundation of the house remains today. Proponents of octagon houses claimed that they were cheap to build and easy to heat.



SITE 2 • Weeks Octagon House

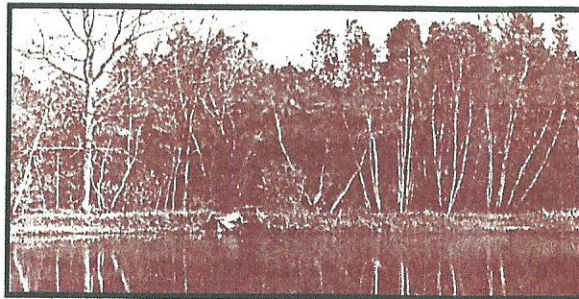


Sitting Room of the Octagon House

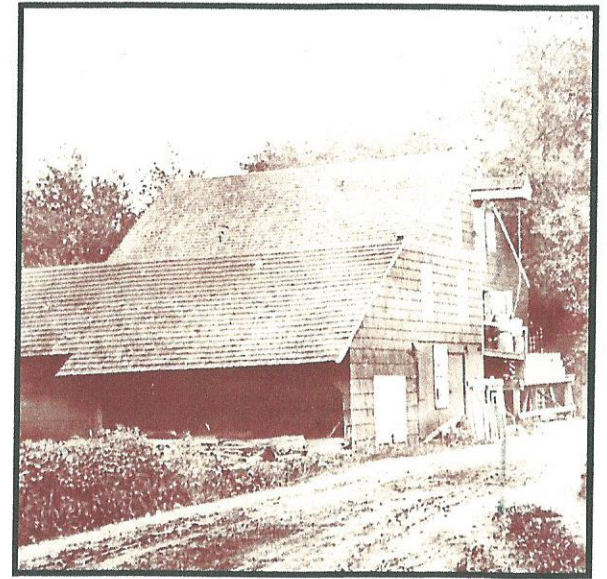


William Jones Weeks, Naturalist

William Jones Weeks had great interest in natural history and taxidermy. He gathered and preserved specimens of the native wildlife. Beekeeping was another of his hobbies. His paper on the hexagonal cells of bees was published in the *Scientific American* (May 1860). He cultivated cranberries in a bog at Weeks Pond and was treasurer of the Suffolk County Agricultural Society.



SITE 3 • Weeks Cranberry Bog circa 1880



SITE 4 • Gerard Mill circa 1915

In 1821, the Homan family sold their mills to Robert Hawkins. The old mill was torn down and replaced with a larger saw mill. Robert Hawkins taught his nephew, R.H. Gerard, the trade and soon Gerard took over his uncle's mill and went into partnership with William Sidney Smith in 1836. They built a woolen factory south of the saw mill. The woolen factory was never successful and in 1884, Gerard bought out Smith's interest in the mills. E.L. Gerard operated the mills until his death in 1899. His wife Agnes ran the mills until the grist mill burned in 1919.



Along the Mill Pond