

**Robert Hawkins House**  
 P.O. Box 111  
 Yaphank, NY 11980-0111  
[www.yaphankhistorical.org](http://www.yaphankhistorical.org)

631-924-4803 -Swezey-Avey House  
 Main Office

Meetings: Third Thursday of the  
 Month; 7:30pm, Swezey-Avey House.

**Newsletter Editor: Peggy Judd**

**Inside this issue:**

<b>President's Message</b>	... 2
<b>Town Park at Willow Lake</b>	... 3
<b>General Meeting Programs</b>	...4
<b>Upcoming Events</b>	... 5

**Board of Directors**

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 Suzanne Johnson

**YAPHANK HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER**  
*Historic Yaphank - Where the Past Greet's the Present*  
 MAY – JUNE, 2018

PLEASE JOIN US IN CELEBRATING  
*The Weeks Family Legacy*  
 &  
 The Return of Wm. Sidney Mount's  
 Miriam Weeks Portrait to Yaphank



**Sunday Afternoon, June 24, 2018**

- 12:30pm St. Andrew's Church Open House
- 1:30pm Tour of the Weeks Legacy Exhibition & Archives
- 2:30pm The Weeks Story Presentation by Karen Mouzakes
- 3:30–5:00pm Afternoon Tea with the Weeks Family

**\$35/person. RSVP 631-924-4803 or [webmaster@yaphankhistorical.org](mailto:webmaster@yaphankhistorical.org)**

**Proceeds go to the St. Andrew's Church Restoration Fund**



**Spring Community Yard Sale at the Hawkins House**

**Saturday, May 19<sup>th</sup>, 9:00am–4:00pm**

(rain date, Sunday, May 20<sup>th</sup>)

Please join us--- Donation: \$10 per vendor.

## Letter from the President

Progress at the Homan house continues to move along at a very good pace. Both interior and exterior work have been addressed. Much has been completed; much is scheduled to do. An update follows.

The interior trim, base and mantels are all painted and finished. All of the interior doors are painted and ready to be hung. There are several doors that have to be constructed and this will happen in the next few weeks. The new staircase has been installed and we are now waiting for the newel post and the railings. The exterior window trim and sills still have to be restored and finished. The exterior windows have to be flashed and permanently installed in place. Only a few of the original shutters for the house remain; the rest will have to be fabricated.

The plasterer has started work and is making good progress. The third floor is finished; the second floor will have the balance of the finish coat put on this week. The plaster on the first floor has also been started and will continue. Thankfully we have had heat in the house which allowed the plaster work to start right away instead of having to wait for warmer weather.

We have finished the brick work in the basement and we are now ready to take out all of the support posts that were put in place to allow us to work on the chimney safely. I want to thank Dawn House Movers and especially Stan Kazel who graciously donated his time and resources so that we could do this project without taking the entire chimney structure down. We still have to build the chimney above the roof. This should happen soon.

This summer we will be painting the exterior and the interior of the house. This project will be done by the Yaphank Historical Society volunteers. Our volunteers will also be doing all of the grading and landscaping around the house. We have to remove the chain link construction fence, grade the entire property, build window wells, put in large stone steps at the doors and install a handicap walkway at the rear of the house. We are also going to have to build stone steps into the basement and refinish the basement floor.

As you can see from the above, we have come a long way from when we first started the project. We do, however, still have a long way to go and our volunteers will play a big part in getting this project done. We all look forward to when the Homan House will be finished and opened for visitors as part of our Yaphank Historic District.

Special thanks goes to the Sherriff's work program for all of their hard work in helping us get this project done.

I would also like to thank the Robert Lion Gardiner Foundation and the Gerry Charitable Trust for their generous support of this project. We could not have gotten as far as we have without their support.

*Robert Kessler*

### Welcome New Members

- James Shiminski, East Yaphank, NY
- Janice North, Blue Point, NY
- Gretchen Specht, Miller Place, NY
- Lynn and Mark Rhodes, Brookhaven, NY

**Funds for this newsletter were provided by  
the Suffolk County Legislature,  
3rd Legislative District. Thank You !**

## Brookhaven Town Park at Yaphank's Willow Lake

Willow (Upper Yaphank) Lake was formed when Capt. Robert Robinson dammed the Carmans River to build a sawmill in 1739. Further south along the Carmans River, John Homan built a saw and grist mill, damming the river to form a mill pond that became known as Lily Lake. Although both ponds were created to serve our milling industry, Yaphank residents took advantage of these lakes, both to enjoy their beauty, the wildlife that made their homes there, and for recreational purposes.

Various owners kept these mills active over the next 150 years and Yaphank continued to grow and prosper. Over time water-powered mills became obsolete. Eventually both Yaphank mill complexes burned in the early 1900s. However, the lakes remained and continued to be a draw for our residents and for visitors from the City who wanted to escape the heat and fast pace of city life. A booming tourist business replaced the milling industry. Both the city visitors and our own community members enjoyed the summer breezes, and also the swimming, fishing and boating afforded by Willow and Lily Lakes. Yaphank today still offers scenic views and summer breezes. Our Lakes still provide recreation for our families and visitors just as they did two hundred years ago.



**New boardwalk from Swezey-Avey House to spillway under construction**



**Mini-library kiosks at entrance to playground**



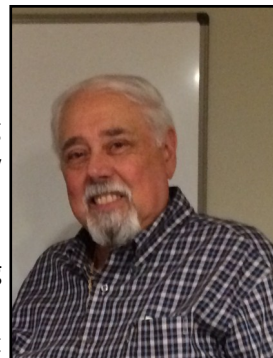
**Happy kayakers on Willow Lake**

Collaborative efforts between the Town of Brookhaven, the Yaphank Historical Society and the Coalition to Save the Yaphank Lakes have resulted in major improvements to the Town Park fronting the Willow Lake. A boardwalk is under construction to link the Park, the Swezey-Avey House, headquarters of the Historical Society, and the lake-front access area for fishing. The Lake was recently dredged to eliminate much of the invasive aquatic plant material which was choking good fishing beds, and several kayak launching areas have been improved. A new spillway has been built and a fish ladder incorporated into the design. New playground equipment and picnic tables have been installed in the Park, as well as fencing and landscaping. Two lending libraries and a bulletin board greet visitors. And a small sandy beach serves swimmers.

It is wonderful to see a full parking lot on weekends, with families enjoying the playground and picnic spots. There are usually quite a few visitors on weekdays as well. On hot summer days, the sounds of happy swimmers cooling off fills the air.

## In Memoriam and Loving Memory

We note with sadness the recent passing of Tony Germano. Tony was a valued Historical Society Board Member for the past four years and dear friend of many of us. Both he and his wife were Life Members of the Society, joining in 2012. Tony was a man of many talents, many interests and many friends. Among his favorite interests, history ranked high, along with metal detecting, woodworking, tropical fish, and photography. Evidence of his carpentry skills and furniture refinishing is found throughout the Hawkins House. Many of us also have one of his beautifully crafted wooden pens. Tony's tables at our community yard sales always drew big crowds. And he always played a part in our various events—welcoming visitors, selling tickets, helping set up the new library and even helping with the spring and fall cleaning chores. Tony was also a speaker at two general meeting programs, telling us about the technology of metal detecting, and featuring exhibits of the treasures pulled from the ground and sea—jewelry, fossils, sharks teeth, and historic coins and artifacts.



Tony's life was a life well lived. He was loved by many and he will be dearly missed.

Donations to honor his life can be made to Hope House Ministries, P.O. Box 358, Port Jefferson, NY 11777.

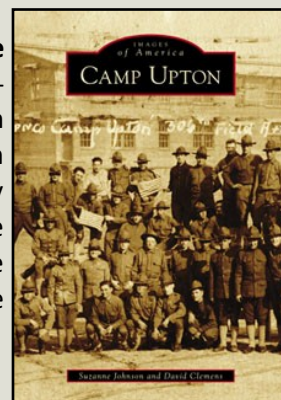
## General Meeting Programs

### Images of America—Camp Upton

**A presentation by Suzanne Johnson and David Clemens**

**May 17, 2018**

Please join us at our May General Meeting to be held on **Thursday, May 17<sup>th</sup>, at 7:30pm, at the Swezey-Avey House**. Our guest speakers will be Suzanne Johnson and David Clemens, co-authors of the book, *Images of America—Camp Upton*. Camp Upton (now Brookhaven National Laboratory) was one of 16 cantonments built quickly by our government to train soldiers for duty in World War I in 1917. The program will discuss the creation of this military camp, how our soldiers were trained, and their living conditions while at camp. Books will be available for purchase (*Images of America—Camp Upton*, \$22). **Paul Infranco**, author of the recently published book, *History of Camp Upton*, will join us for refreshments after the program.



### The Swezey-Avey Family and Home

**A presentation by Karen Mouzakes**

**June 21, 2018**

Please join us at our June General Meeting to be held on **Thursday, June 21<sup>st</sup> at 7:30pm, at the Swezey-Avey House**. Our guest speaker will be **Karen Mouzakes**, Society Historian Emeritus. Karen's program will cover the history of the Swezey-Avey Homestead which began in the late 1700s as a small structure on a stone foundation on the east bank of the Carmans River. That building stayed in the Swezey family until 1963, changing over the years in size and form and function. Karen will also discuss the various family members that lived in the homestead and their contributions to the Yaphank community. Today the Swezey-Avey House has once again been "restored" and serves as the headquarters of the Yaphank Historical Society.



## YAPHANK HISTORICAL SOCIETY

### MAY–JUNE 2018 UPCOMING EVENTS

**May General Meeting**

**Thursday, May 17<sup>th</sup>, 7:30pm**, Swezey-Avey House

Guest Speakers will be **Suzanne Johnson**  
and **David Clemens**

**Program:** *“Images of America-- Camp Upton”*

Both authors will be available  
to answer questions and sign books.  
Books available for purchase: \$22.  
Refreshments will follow the program.

**Spring Community Yard Sale**

**Saturday, May 19<sup>th</sup>, 9:00am—4:00pm**  
**(rain date Sunday, May 20<sup>th</sup>)**

Donation: \$10 per vendor  
Set up on the Hawkins House lawns.  
Call 631-924-4803 with questions.

**Mother & Daughter Tea**

**Saturday, May 19<sup>th</sup>, 1:00—3:00pm**

St. Andrew’s Episcopal Church  
244 East Main Street, Yaphank

**Tickets:** \$10.00 per person

Pre Order Only

**Ticket Info:** Sherrilee @ 631-522-5128  
Proceeds go to The Mission & Ministry

**June General Meeting**

**Thursday, June 21<sup>st</sup>, 7:30pm**, Swezey-Avey House

Guest speaker will be **Karen Mouzakes**,  
Society Historian Emeritus.

**Program:** *“The Swezey-Avey Family and Home”*

Refreshments will follow the program.

**Weeks Family Legacy Tea, Tour, and Talk**

**Sunday, June 24<sup>th</sup>, 12:30—5:00pm**

Donation: \$35 per person  
See detailed schedule on page 1.  
RSVP 631.924.4803 or  
webmaster@yaphankhistorical.org

**Bank of the River Gift Shop at the Hawkins House**

**Hours:** Thursdays from 12 noon to 4:00pm  
**(weather permitting)**  
**Phone:** 631-924-3401

**Keep current with all our events and projects.**  
**Visit our website—www.yaphankhistorical.org**

**Yaphank Historical Society**  
**P.O. Box 111**  
**Yaphank, New York 11980-0111**

Please enroll me as:

- |                                |  |
|--------------------------------|--|
| <b>( ) Active Member</b>       | <b>\$20.00/person - \$17.50/Senior Citizen (62+)</b> |
|                                | <b>\$25.00/couple - \$22.50/Senior Couple (62+)</b>  |
| <b>( ) Contributing Member</b> | <b>\$50.00</b>                                       |
| <b>( ) Life Member</b>         | <b>\$100.00/person - \$75.00/Senior (62+)</b>        |
| <b>( ) Patron Member</b>       | <b>\$300.00</b>                                      |
| <b>( ) Benefactor Member</b>   | <b>\$500.00</b>                                      |

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone # \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ E-Mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Town \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

