

Yaphank Historical Society conducts seasonal tours of this home, as it does with the Homan House.

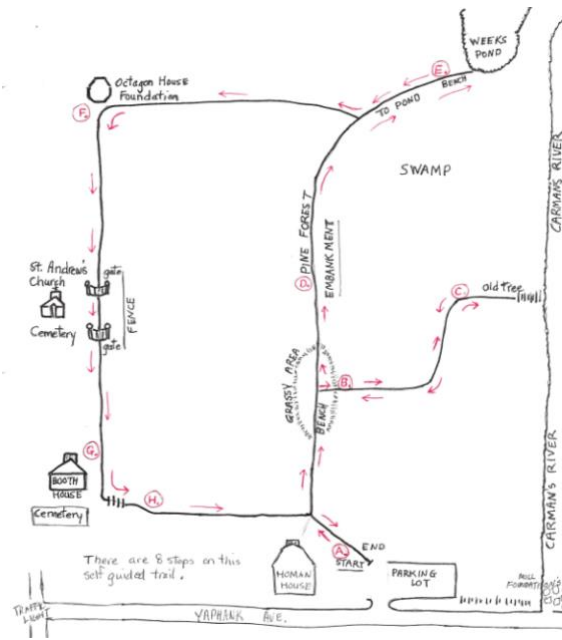


The c.1829 Booth House

H. The path from the Booth House will take you right back to where you started near the parking area. There are several unique trees found on the path. Naturally growing sugar maples are very uncommon on Long Island, but this colder temperature pocket of Long Island enables them to hold on, as they prefer colder temperatures. The river corridor has been home to many people through the centuries. Native Americans used the river for transport, food, fresh water, hunting and fishing. Europeans, as farmers, did the same but they also harnessed the river power to work their mills grinding grain, sawing wood and fulling wool. This trail has taken you through uplands and swampy woodlands bordering an ancient river. People altered the landscape through the centuries to adapt to what they needed—a mill dam, a farm, embankments etc. Nature though is now reclaiming some of its own, reverting it back. Birds that inhabit the wooded/shrubby spots are osprey, Carolina wrens, American redstarts, yellow warblers,

Baltimore orioles, robins, song sparrows, red-winged blackbirds, catbirds, and hummingbirds to name a few. Even bald eagles have returned to nest on the river!

Painted and snapping turtles, garter snakes, and various frogs all make this area their home, as do mammals like deer, muskrat, fox, chipmunks and squirrels. In the days of old you could also find otter, bear, beaver, skunk, bobcat and wolves! Fish, such as yellow and white perch, large-mouth bass, and the beautiful but declining native brook trout are found in the river's waters. The State stocks brown and rainbow trout for anglers. We hope you have enjoyed this beautiful spot. It is maintained by Suffolk County Dept. of Parks and the Yaphank Historical Society, and this guide was made in celebration of the Historical Society's 50th Anniversary in 2024.



Text, photos by MaryLaura Lamont for YHS

Carman's River Cultural Landscape Walking Trail

Celebrating the Yaphank Historical Society's 50th Anniversary!

This half mile trail parallels the Carman's River, pointing out a natural landscape that in some locations has been altered by people through time to meet their needs. Evidence of those cultural man-made changes still exist along the path.



The Homan/Gerard House c. 1820

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A. At the parking lot is the old Homan House, constructed as you see it now in c.1820 but originally built much earlier. The Homans received permission to build a water powered sawmill on the river just south of the first house in 1762. They later added a grist and fulling mill. Foundations of the early mills still exist- you can see them if you walk over to the river. The mill dam created Lily Lake (lower lake) across the street. The mills burned in 1919. Some old gears from the mills are propped up on a tree on the northside of Homan House.



Foundation of the old mills

Go down the main trail and turn right on the path. Just after the bench, turn right again.

B. The forest is lush and moist since it is the flood plain of the river. The trees are black walnut, red maple, tupelo, white and black oak. Spicebush is abundant in the moist earth too.

This path will bring you to the all-important river. Fresh water seeps and springs arise from its banks. The clean shallow river flows south all the way to Great South Bay, and it arises from freshwater pools near Middle Country Road. This is the longest river on Long Island at 10 miles long. Eight miles are fresh water, and 2 mix with salt.

C. The huge red maple tree on the left bank is the largest of its kind in this area and is very old.



The old red maple tree on the river
Head back to the main trail from the river, turn right again and continue on.

D. The path leads into a white pine forest. Some trees were planted here, others grew naturally, and as you walk on the needles it quiets your footsteps. On your right you can see the remains of an old soil embankment, built by William Weeks in about 1870. It kept the river water from flooding higher and he also maintained cranberry bogs nearby, by flooding them with river water at certain times. In the spring the lower area contains much skunk cabbage that carpets the ground green.



E. Continue on and bearing right, you find Week's Pond, named for the man who built it to maintain

his cranberry growing operation. It is pristine and always full. You can still find naturally growing cranberries along the shores of this lovely pond, and other plants such as water lilies and tall shrubs called sweet pepperbush. Its fragrant flowers appear in July and scent the summer woods.



Back track after viewing the pond to the main trail you came on then turn right at the sign. Follow it to **F.** The foundation of Mr. Weeks family's Octagon House, an unusual architectural remnant of a house with 8 walls! Built by him in 1848, it burned down in the 20th century. The foundation was built of boulders from Long Island's north shore. The trail now starts heading back to where you first started. It will take you to St. Andrews Church and cemetery, still active and holding services today and built in 1851. Cross straight through the gate of the Church parking lot, across the cemetery to another gate. The path picks up towards another historic house.

G. The quaint c. 1829 Booth House is the birthplace of MaryLouise Booth, a dynamic woman ahead of her time who was the founding editor of Harper's Bazaar. She also wrote books, spoke 7 languages, was an ardent abolitionist and a suffragette too! Yaphank Historical Society, along with Suffolk County Parks Dept., maintains these old homes.