A COMPILATION OF AFRICAN
AMERICANS AND HISTORIC SITES
IN THE TOWN OF HUNTINGTON
Volume III

PRESENTED BY

THE AFRICAN AMERICAN
HISTORIC DESIGNATION COUNCIL (AAHDC)

Albert Irvington Foulke (1884–1945) with the Arthurs

TOWN OF HUNTINGTON
NEW YORK

FEBRUARY 2010
AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORIC DESIGNATION COUNCIL (AAHDC)

HUNTINGTON TOWN BOARD

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INFORMATIONAL SHEET

A separate informational sheet has been inserted in this booklet specifically for you to share pictures or any information you have about Huntington’s African American heritage. Your information will allow the Council to compile and preserve pertinent information about the history and contributions of African Americans in the Town and it may appear in future publications such as this one.

Please return the sheet to:
MRS. IRENE MOORE, AAHDC CHAIR
c/o COUNCILWOMAN GLENDAAAA JACOB
TOWN OF HUNTINGTON, 100 MAIN STREET
HUNTINGTON, NEW YORK 11743
Dear Residents,

It has been a tremendous year for the African American Historic Designation Council (AAHDC). Since the last publication of this booklet, the Council has secured a matching fund grant from the National Trust for Historic Preservation’s John E. Streb Preservation Fund for New York. In addition to utilizing the grant to develop a website, a portion of the funds, along with funds from community groups from the Town of Huntington and Nassau and Suffolk Counties, will be used to present an informative and engaging exhibit at the Huntington Train Station. In collaboration with the Long Island Rail Road, the exhibit will include highlights from Huntington’s African American history.

At its inception, AAHDC was charged with the ever-important task of preserving our history in the Town of Huntington, specifically as it pertains to the recognition of prominent African American leaders. The AAHDC has continued to work closely with the Historic Preservation Commission and the Town Historian to create a more through narrative of the legacy of African Americans in Huntington.

It is our hope that with the third edition of this booklet we will help to educate the public about the history of African Americans in the Town and encourage Huntington residents to come forward to share their personal family histories. With your continued assistance, we can bring this goal to life.

The AAHDC has provided an insert in this booklet for your convenience that will allow you to share your family history. Please complete the insert and forward it to the address listed on page three. The Council will contact you if additional information is needed.

On behalf of the Town Board, we would like to thank the African American Historic Designation Council for its diligence in compiling this booklet and sharing it with residents of Huntington and also for their constant commitment to keeping our history alive for future generations.

Sincerely,

FRANK P. PETRONE
Supervisor

GLENDA A. JACKSON
Councilwoman
FOREWORD

The African American Historic Designation Council is proud to present its third booklet highlighting historic African American people and sites in the Town of Huntington. With your assistance, the Council has been very successful in researching and documenting historic African American sites and people, and will attempt in this booklet to highlight some of their contributions to the Town as well as the larger society.

In keeping with the Council’s goals and objectives to educate and increase public awareness of the value and contributions of African Americans in the Town, the Council is sponsoring in collaboration with the Town of Huntington, Friends of Huntington Train Station (FOHTS), and the Long Island Rail Road, an informative and engaging exhibit at the Huntington Train Station. The exhibit will be on display January 2010 through April 2010. This project has been funded in part by a matching grant from the National Trust for Historic Preservation’s John E. Streb Preservation Fund for New York. The Council extends sincere appreciation to the National Trust for Historic Preservation and its exhibit co-sponsors: Evergreen Missionary Baptist Church, Huntington Station Business Improvement District, Bethel A.M.E. Church, National Coalition of 100 Black Women, Long Island Chapter, Inc., The Booker T. Washington Family, Long Island Tuskegee Alumni Association, NAACP Huntington Branch, the National Council of Negro Women, Huntington’s Section, 100 Black Men of Long Island, Inc., Friends of the Coltrane Home in Dix Hills, Friends of the Booker T. Washington House, Friends of Huntington Train Station, the Long Island Rail Road, the Huntington Historical Society, and the Greenlawn-Centerport Historical Association.

To ensure proper recognition of African American contributions to the Town of Huntington, the Council is requesting your continued assistance. Please utilize the enclosed insert and forward copies of your information to the address in this booklet on page 3. The success of this endeavor will depend largely on your support and the support of others like you.

On behalf of the Council, I would also like to thank the Town Board, specifically Councilwoman Glenda Jackson for assisting the Council with its mandate and the publication of this booklet.

Sincerely,

Irene Moore, AAHDC Chair

Members:
Gennifer Ellis
Phyllis Pottinger
Richard Robertson, III
Charla Bolton

Robert C. Hughes, Town Historian
Rex Metcalf, Advisor
AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORIC DESIGNATION COUNCIL
(AAHDC) MANDATE

The African American Historic Designation Council will assist the Town in identifying and researching historic sites having ties to African American heritage in the Town of Huntington and explore the many potential undiscovered noteworthy locations in the Town which deserve to be celebrated and protected. Some of the Town Board’s historic designated landmarks include the John Coltrane House in Dix Hills, where he wrote “A Love Supreme,” and the Booker T. Washington House in Fort Salonga where his family spent a few summers before his death in 1915. The AAHDC will help to further the endeavor of the Town to preserve and celebrate black history.

The African American Historic Designation Council will engage in the significant task of ensuring proper recognition of all sites that hold historical value to African American history in the Town. The Council will locate and research important areas, which have been key to the legacy of African Americans in Huntington, and make recommendations, where appropriate, for landmark designation under the Town Code.

The African American Historic Designation Council is comprised of (5) members. Each Town Board Member, along with the Supervisor, appoints one person to the Council. Such appointees are chosen due to their exemplification of leadership within the Town of Huntington as well as their interest and concern for the African American history that our Town possesses.

The African American Historic Designation Council will serve as a subcommittee of the Huntington Historic Preservation Commission and the Town Historian shall serve as an ex officio non-voting member and as Secretary of the Council.

The members of the Council serve without compensation.

Meeting Procedures:

The Council shall meet as such times as the Chair of the Council or a majority thereof may determine. The Council shall keep minutes of its meetings and proceedings. A Quorum of the Council shall be duly constituted with four of the members present or by proxy.

Powers/Duties. The Council shall:

- Recommend to the Huntington Historic Preservation Commission particular places, sites, structures and buildings, or districts of African American historical significance, for consideration as historic landmarks or historic districts in accordance with the procedures set forth in Article VI of the Town’s Zoning Code.
- Review and issue written reports on all municipal proposals relative to uses or structures affecting African American landmarks or historic districts.
- Make studies and inquiries into federal and state grants and tax incentive programs relative to the preservation or rehabilitation of designated African American historic landmarks and districts.
- Increase public awareness of the value of historic, architectural, and cultural preservation by developing and participating in public information programs.
HISTORY OF COUNCIL

The first official meeting of the African American Historic Designation Council (AAHDC) was hosted by Councilwoman Glenda A. Jackson on Thursday, March 23, 2006 at 6:00 p.m., in room 304 of Town Hall, 100 Main Street, Huntington, New York. Joined by Town Historian Robert Hughes, Councilwoman Jackson discussed the vision and objectives of the AAHDC. Expressing deep appreciation for the history of the Town, Councilwoman Jackson remarked, “This is a vital point in our Town’s legacy, the preservation of our history is essential and needed for all. This Council will reveal untold history and is a safeguard for our children.”

Appointed members were; Irene Moore, John Johnson, Jerry Brown, Sr., Thelma Jackson-Abidally and Gennifer Ellis. Present at the first meeting were Mrs. Gennifer Ellis, Mrs. Thelma Jackson-Abidally, Mr. John Johnson, Ms. Susannah Mrazek, Mrs. Irene Moore, and J. Stewart Moore, Esq. The current members are: Irene Moore, Chair, Gennifer Ellis, Phyllis Pottinger, Richard H. Robertson, III, Charla Bolton, Robert Hughes, Town Historian, and Rex Metcalf, Advisor.

The African American Historic Designation Council (AAHDC) began as a vision of Attorney J. Stewart Moore. Mr. Moore attended a meeting of the Huntington Historic Preservation Commission in 2005 where he was invited to speak. He spoke about the importance of placing a resolution on the agenda for creating an African American Historic Designation Council in the Town of Huntington, and later presented the idea to Councilman Mark Cuthbertson. Councilman Cuthbertson was instrumental in presenting this resolution to the Town Board, and on September 13, 2005, resolution Number 2005-596 to create the African American Historic Designation Council was voted on and passed by the Board.

Goals and Objectives:

- To locate, research, and preserve African American history and culture through collecting and documenting information, and sponsoring programs that will enhance research and promote public interaction.
- To become an outstanding resource for African American historical information.
- To educate and promote an understanding and appreciation of history through collections, exhibitions, and programming.
- To conduct and develop programs using various interdisciplinary initiatives to educate and inform the community.
- To preserve and tell the story of Huntington through informative and engaging exhibits.
Peter J. Newman was appointed District Court Judge by Suffolk County Executive Patrick Halpin in March 1989. Later that year, Newman received bi-partisan support to become the first African American candidate elected District Court Judge town-wide in the 300 year history of the Town of Huntington. Judge Newman retired from that position in 1997. Newman’s reputation for scholarship and fairness as a no-nonsense Judge followed a lifelong career in law enforcement and jurisprudence. He attributes his success to others too numerous to name; however, he states that he would be remiss if he did not mention and give credit to three individuals who assisted in making his judgeship possible, namely, Paul Johnson, Joe DeVincent, and the late William Brazier.

Prior to becoming District Court Judge in Huntington, Peter Newman was a defense attorney in private practice for twenty-six years. While in private practice, Newman challenged the fairness of the Suffolk County’s Jury Selection Process. At the conclusion of an evidentiary hearing, the court concluded that the Office of the Suffolk County Commissioner of Jurors, intentionally, deliberately and illegally discriminated against young African Americans in the selection of jurors. This precedent setting case resulted in the County revamping its procedure in selecting jurors, and in so doing, reduced racial discrimination in jury selection.

Some of Newman’s accomplishments during his tenure as a judge included: winning a precedent setting case that established a new law in Suffolk County that protected homeowners, many of whom are minorities, from inequitable foreclosure proceedings by County Government; and chairing the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Bust Acquisition Committee, which was responsible for placing a seven foot bust of Dr. King in the Suffolk County’s H. Lee Dennison Building in Hauppauge, New York on January 15, 1992.

In 1975, Newman served as Chief of the District Court Bureau, becoming the first African American to serve in the history of the Suffolk County District Attorney’s Office. He served in that capacity until 1978 when he resumed his private practice.
In 1964, Newman received a bit of notoriety when he traveled to Birmingham, Alabama to test the Public Accommodations Clause of the Civil Rights Act and registered in a downtown Birmingham hotel. This was a first for Birmingham and perhaps for Alabama. During the 1960s, in the capacity of attorney for the NAACP, Newman handled a case that led to the Amityville Volunteer Fire Department accepting an African American as a volunteer fireman. This was a first and opened the door for the subsequent integration of African Americans as volunteers in Fire Departments throughout Suffolk County.

Some of Judge Newman’s past affiliations include: member of the NAACP Central Long Island Branch, NAACP Huntington Branch’s Advisor; Suffolk County Criminal Bar Association; Suffolk Black Bar Association (Amistad) and one of its founders; New York State Conference of NAACP Branches; American Legion of Suffolk County; Our Lady of Miraculous Medal Catholic Church; Wyandanch, North and West Babylon Kiwanis Club (played a key role in purchasing and putting into operation the Wyandanch Rescue Ambulance); Congressman Bob Mrazek’s Task Force on Drug Abuse, and Belmont Lake Civic Association. Some of his awards include: Honorary Guardian of the Year, Long Island Guardians; Exemplary Leadership, Suffolk County Black Caucus; Outstanding Achievements as Pro Bono Attorney, Suffolk County Bar Association; Community Achievement, Grace Church; Outstanding Service as Kiwanis Club President and Treasurer; Man of the Year, Chi Rho Chapter, Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, and others too numerous to mention.

Judge Newman graduated from New York University with a B. S. degree in Accounting and from Brooklyn Law School with a L.L.B. He is also a graduate of the U.S. Treasury Law Enforcement Officers Training School in Washington, D.C.

He and his wife Jane Newman, former residents of Dix Hills, New York, relocated to Cape Cod, Massachusetts. They are the proud parents of three children: Debra, a retired Assistant U.S. Attorney, presently teaching special education; Dr. Lisa Newman, Director of the Breast Cancer Clinic at Medical Center at the University of Michigan, and Peter, Jr., employed in the private sector. They have two grandchildren: Anthony, a student at St. Francis College, and Robert, a student in Michigan’s public school system. (1)
Thomas Watkins was born in Aquebogue, New York in 1917. He attended Roanoke Elementary and Riverhead High Schools, and graduated from Riverhead High School with the class of 1936, the last class to graduate from the old school. He is the son of Thomas and Sally Watkins, formerly of Virginia. He is the brother of Howard, Ralph, Dora, and Grace Watkins. He is the stepbrother of Kathleen, Barbara, Adeline, and Jenny.

Thomas was drafted on 10 November 1942 at Camp Upton which is now the site of Brookhaven National Laboratory. He trained at Fort McClellan in Alabama, and Camp Robertson in Arkansas. He was assigned during World War II to the all-black 92nd Infantry (part of the Buffalo Soldiers, a superb group, who fought in the Indian Wars of the American West, the Spanish American War of 1898, WWI, and WWII), and stationed in Italy where 616 black soldiers were killed in action and 2,187 were wounded. Thomas was stationed 40 miles north of Genoa and his Infantry fought at the Arnold River Crossing. He mentioned that the black soldiers were treated poorly in Italy by the Germans and the Italians. One of the highlights of his stay in Italy was being selected to attend the Opera, which he enjoyed. Thomas was honorably discharged in January 1946 after more than three years of service.

Mr. Watkins secured a job at Northport Veterans Affairs Medical Center and the F. A. A. Eastern Region Federal Credit Union in Melville, where he would spend the next forty years of his life serving in several capacities. Initially, he commuted from Riverhead to Northport but moved to Huntington in 1948. After retiring from the Northport V. A., he continued to assist with the Credit Union for many years. He was hired as an evening foreman with the Town of Huntington and retired after twenty years of service, with a total of sixty years of work experience. Thomas, an avid golfer in his leisure time, caddied for Arnold Palmer when he played on Long Island.

Thomas is currently the oldest member at the Bethel A.M.E. Church. He is an honorary trustee, former class leader, and a member of the Lay Organization, and Senior Choir. He received a commendation from President Barack Obama and was recognized at a recent celebration for seniors at Bethel. He is married to Emma Yount Alston Watkins formerly of Lenoir, North Carolina, where she graduated from Freedman High School. Emma, a C.W. Post graduate, retired from Huntington Hospital Laboratory Department after twenty years of service in 2007. She is proud of her position at Bethel A.M.E. Church as President of the Missionary Board for more than eighteen years. She is also President of the Stewardess Board, former Sunday School Teacher, and member of the Tabernacle Choir.

Thomas and Emma, residents of Huntington, New York, are proud of their children: Jesse, Karen, Norman, Robert, and Oscar Ronald, as well as their grandchildren, and great-grandchildren.

“I’m just a Buffalo Soldier in the heart of America, Stolen from Africa, brought to America, Said he was fighting for arrival, fighting for survival; Said he was a Buffalo Soldier, win the war for America.” Bob Marley
HIGHLIGHTS FROM HUNTINGTON’S AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORIC DESIGNATION COUNCIL (AAHDC) 2010 EXHIBIT
HUNTINGTON TRAIN STATION
January 2010 – April 2010
HIGHLIGHTS FROM HUNTINGTON’S AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORIC DESIGNATION COUNCIL 2010 EXHIBIT
HUNTINGTON TRAIN STATION
January 2010 – April 2010

PICTURE OF OLD EVERGREEN

PICTURE OF CURRENT EVERGREEN

PICTURES OF SAMUEL BALLTON AND HIS WIFE ANN REBECCA. ALSO PICTURED IS THE HOUSE HE BUILT, IN WHICH THE COUPLE CELEBRATED THEIR 50TH ANNIVERSARY.
ABRAM ALLEN STOKELY
Early Bethel A.M.E. Church Trustee
By Charla E. Bolton

Abram Allen Stokely was one of five Trustees elected at the second incorporation, on March 13, 1854, of the Bethel A.M.E. Church, Park Avenue, Huntington, then known as the First African Methodist Episcopal Church. The following is a recounting of the life of Abram Allen Stokely as it is presently documented.

Abram Allen Stokely, also known as Allen Stokely, originally called Abram Stockley, was born free on June 7, 1806 in Accomack County, Virginia, located on Virginia’s Eastern Shore. Based on research conducted there by the author, it is most likely that he was born to Lucy Stockley, a slave freed on January 27, 1789, by Kendal Stockley. Kendal Stockley owned a total of 10 slaves, 5 over the age of 16 according to a count contained in the 1787 Census of Virginia.

Noted on a partition survey dated December 17, 1807, the land is located west of the present day village of Withams, and slightly northeast of the village of Jenkins Bridge, on the north and south sides of Withams Road. Much of the Stockley plantation is still farmed, although there is no evidence of the original main house or other structures.

According to Kendal Stockley’s (in some documents spelled Stokely) Deed of Manumission, Lucy was 25 when she was freed, and approximately 42 years old when Abram Allen was born. His father thus far has not been conclusively identified, although Isaac Stockley, later freed from the same plantation, and Judd Stockley, listed as Free Negro in the 1800 Federal Census, appear to be possibilities.

No record of Lucy Stockley is found in the Accomack County records until she is enumerated in the 1820 Federal Census, as head of a household of two males under the age of 14, 1 female between 14 and 26 and 1 female 45 plus. One of the 2 males under age 14 is most likely Abram. He would have been close to 14 at the time the census was taken in 1820.

In 1823, Abram Stockley was deposed, as was a James Stockley, possibly Abram’s brother, as well as Lucy Stockley in a murder trial. Mary Stockley is mentioned in Abram’s deposition. All three were witnesses to a murder that took place in and around the Wagram Mill Pond and

Contemporary view Kendal Stockley Plantation
storehouse. (Accomack Court Orders, 1822-1824, 4/10/1823, 187). Wagram was a small village located on the Maryland-Virginia border about a mile west of present day Route 13, and about 3.5 miles from the Kendall Stockley plantation. Photographs of the Wagram Mill (also known as Dennis’ Mill) and storehouse survive in the photographic collection at the Eastern Shore Public Library, in Accomack, Virginia.

It appears that Lucy, James, Abram and Mary were living together as a household in Wagram, and Isaac Stockley was their nearest neighbor based on the order of the 1820 Census enumeration. The mill and storehouse may have supplied some form of employment to sustain their family, but the Census does not detail occupational classifications until 1840, which leaves occupation as well as other details of Abram’s family a mystery. This is the last known record of Abram Allen Stokely in Accomack County.

Between 1823 and 1832 there is no known record of his life. Stokely began working at the Crossman Brickyards in West Neck, Huntington, on April 28, 1832. At that time, he would have been about 26 years old. Also working at the brickyards when he started, were at least two other Accomack free blacks, George and Levin Nedab (also called Medad) and several white men from Accomack County—Harvey Bloxom (also spelled Blocksome), Samuel Riggs, William Brimer, Richard Sparrow and James Crowson. Stokely most likely was “recruited” by Sparrow and Crowson, to whom
Gilbert Crossman Sr. had tendered a Letter of Interest to take to Modest Town, in Accomack County in October 1827. Modest Town, although miniscule by today’s standards, was the third largest town in Accomack County in 1830.

Abram married Louisa E. Mills in or about the year 1835. According to Louisa’s obituary in the *Long Islander*, she was born at Jerusalem (Wantagh/Island Trees), Long Island and came to Huntington as a young child. Louisa was about age 20 when they married. George A. Mills is indicated as the brother of Abram’s wife Louisa. George Mills began working at the brickyard in the spring of 1830. He was also elected a trustee of the Bethel A.M.E. Church at its 2nd incorporation in 1854. Undoubtedly George Mills introduced his sister Louisa to Abram Allen. A number of references in the Crossman Account records indicate that Allen Stokely and George Mills worked together at various labors.

Stokely was not enumerated in the 1840 Census of Huntington. However, the Crossman accounts indicate that he was living at the brickyards. There are entries in the account books regarding the payment of house rent through April 2, 1855, and numerous examples of food, clothing and household items obtained at the company store.

By 1840, there were indications that Stokely was beginning to have a more autonomous life as a laborer at the brickyards. The accounts list such items as “Feb 28- by 1/3 days labor found himself,” “March 12- by 5 days labor 4/ found himself,” and “March 18 by 3 ½ days work (boarding himself).” One interesting item notes “cash for liverwort,” suggesting that Stokely may have been suffering from a liver ailment. Liverwort was traditionally used for treating liver complaints.

An item in *The Long Islander* dated November 26, 1841 highlights the prodigious amount of work done by the men working for Gilbert Crossman:

> A few days since, two colored men in the employ of Mr. Gilbert Crossman, of this Town, named George Mills and Allen Stokely, husked and placed in a wagon, from sun to sun,100 bushels of corn each. This is the greatest day’s work we have heard of…and we doubt if it can be beaten.

This news item corroborates the close working relationship between Allen Stokely and George Mills.

By 1850 Stokely, aged 43, is enumerated in the vicinity of Cold Spring Harbor Village, not only with his own large family consisting of his wife, Louisa, aged 34, and five daughters, but with two other families as well: Clarissa Mills, Louisa’s mother, aged 59, the head of a separate household of three, and Julia Jackson, aged 42, with a household of 11 children. A total of 21 persons are living under the same roof, although possibly in divided quarters. Stokely’s oldest daughter, Mary J., is 14 at the time of the 1850 census, placing her birth when Abram was approximately 29 and his wife, Louisa, about 20.
For most of the 1850s, he continued to work at the brickyards. The last entry in the Crossman Account records mentions that he was paid for shearing sheep on June 7, 1859. Sheep shearing appears to be a job given to older workers, who could no longer do the heavier work involved in brick making, or farm labor.

By 1860, Stokely’s family had grown to include three sons, as well as his wife Louisa E., aged 44, and his five daughters. He had moved to the vicinity of Main Street, Huntington Village, near Ezra Prime’s thimble factory, which was located on the northwest corner of Spring Road and Main Street. Prime’s house was located in what is now Heckscher Park, facing Main Street. Stokely’s occupation is listed as farm laborer, and his wife’s as “washer & ironer.” His age is 54.

Stokely died on May 1, 1864, at the age of 57 years, 10 months and 24 days. His headstone inscription reads, “Happy Soul! The dawn ended.” His wife, Louisa, about 18 years after his death, married William Edward Taylor. She and two daughters, and a son are also buried in the A.M.E. Cemetery. A single marker includes all of their names. The marker indicates that Louisa was born on October 16, 1816, and died on Feb. 25, 1896. His daughter, Mary J. Stokeley, born Sept. 24, 1835, died on Feb. 11, 1897; his daughter, Catherine L. Stokeley, was born Nov. 8, 1849, and died Dec. 28, 1899. His son, Isaac A. Stokeley, born Dec 24, 1855, died September 26, 1894. The children’s grave marker spells the name Stokeley rather than Stokely as on Abram Allen’s marker. The headstone inscription is “Jesus Doeth All Things Well.” These burials, long after the death of Abram Allen, suggest the family’s continued involvement with the A.M.E. Church. (6)
THE OLD BURYING GROUND CLEAN-UP CREW—October 31, 2009
SPONSORED BY COUNCILWOMAN SUSAN BERLAND

HIGHLIGHTS FROM VILLAGE GREEN HISTORIC DISTRICT
TOWN OF HUNTINGTON
AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY TOURS

SPONSORED BY
THE TOWN OF HUNTINGTON AFRICAN AMERICAN
HISTORIC DESIGNATION COUNCIL

THE OLD BURYING GROUND
(RAIN OR SHINE)
SATURDAY, MAY 8, 2010 AND
SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 19, 2010
WALKING TOUR STARTS AT 2:00 PM AND LASTS ABOUT
ONE HOUR

ASSEMBLE AT THE SOLDIERS AND SAILORS MEMORIAL BUILDING
228 MAIN STREET, HUNTINGTON, NEW YORK

HUNDREDS OF AFRICAN AMERICANS ARE BURIED HERE AMONG HUNTINGTON’S EARLY RESIDENTS. THEY INCLUDE THE FIRST RECORDED AFRICAN AMERICAN, WHO ARRIVED HERE IN 1657, A REVOLUTIONARY CELEBRITY CALLED “THE MAN WITH THE BULLET PROOF HEAD” AND A CHURCH FOUNDER, WHO WAS THE LAST AFRICAN AMERICAN TO BE INTERRED HERE. THESE EARLY RESIDENTS ARE PART OF A SIGNIFICANT ASPECT OF THE HISTORY OF HUNTINGTON.

TOUR GUIDE, REX METCALF

THE VILLAGE GREEN
(RAIN OR SHINE)
SUNDAY, MAY 16, 2010 AND
SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 25, 2010
WALKING TOUR STARTS AT 2:00 PM AND LASTS ABOUT
TWO HOURS

ASSEMBLE AT THE HUNTINGTON TOWN HALL PARKING LOT, 100 MAIN STREET

ONE QUARTER OF THE EARLY AFRICAN AMERICAN POPULATION OF HUNTINGTON LIVED HERE AT THE “TOWN SPOT”, WHICH SERVED AS THE CENTER OF COMMUNITY LIFE FOR TWO CENTURIES. MANY AFRICAN AMERICAN LANDMARKS AND SITES ARE LOCATED IN THIS HISTORIC DISTRICT AND THEY REFLECT THE AFRICAN AMERICAN PRESENCE AND EXPERIENCE IN HUNTINGTON FROM THE EARLY SETTLEMENT TO THE PRESENT DAY.

TOUR GUIDE, REX METCALF
ALBERT IRVINGTON Foulke AND
LOTTIE MAE SMITH-FOULKE
By Irene Moore

Albert Irvington Foulke, patriarch of the Foulke family was born in Smithtown, New York on May 10, 1884. Albert is the son of James H. Foulke formerly of Virginia and Emma Floyd of Smithtown, LI. He had two sisters, Edith and Daisy Foulke; and one brother, John. According to the 1900 Census, Daisy Folk (Foulke) was born in 1886 in Smithtown, New York. She lived with Ethelbert Arthur, a local merchant, and his wife Ellen and their children: Ethel, May, and Lawrence. Her occupation was listed as attending school. In the 1920 Census, she was enumerated as a member of Edwin and Mary B. Rowley's household and her occupation was listed as a servant for a private family. It is not clear where Ethel and John were living at that time.

Emma Floyd was enumerated under Free Inhabitants in the town of Smithtown 1860 census at age ten with her parents Silas Floyd, age 50, Lydia Floyd, age 45, and her sister Isabella Floyd, age 12. (7) Silas Floyd was also enumerated in the township of Smithtown 1840 census under free colored persons with a total of 4 in his household, 2 males under ten, one male between twenty-four and thirty-six, and one female between ten and twenty-four. (8)

Lottie, matriarch of the family was born in Northport, New York in 1890. She is the daughter of Eliott Randolph Smith and Dolly Anne Newins-Smith of Smithtown. (9) Albert was united in marriage to Lottie Mae Smith on June 3, 1909 in Northport, New York. Reverend Chas. E. Cragg officiated at their wedding. Albert and Lottie had ten children: Lillian M., Bessie E., Albert I. Jr., James Harold, Mildred M., Elinora (Eleanor), Arthur, Charles, Richard Edward, and Marjorie. Albert filed a World War I Draft Registration Card on September 15, 1918 at the age of thirty-four. He and Lottie were proficient in reading and writing. (10)

Albert (Fluke) Foulke, his Wife Lottie, and their daughter Lillian are listed in the 1910 Census as residents of Northport Village. Albert's occupation is listed as a chauffeur (as indicated in the picture on the cover page) for a private family, and his wife Lottie, a housewife. They lived with Lottie's parents and her brother Royal Smith. Lottie's father's occupation was also listed as a chauffeur and her brother's occupation was listed as a laborer. In the 1920 census, Albert and Lottie are listed as residents of Huntington Village with their children: Lillian M., Bessie E., Albert I. Jr., James Harold, and Mildred M. His occupation is also listed as a chauffeur for a private family. (11) In the 1930 census, Albert and Lottie are listed as residents in the Village of Northport with their children: Bessie E., Albert I. Jr., James Harold, Mildred M., Elinora (Eleanor), Arthur, Charles and Richard Edwards. Albert's occupation is listed as a chauffeur for a lumber yard. Their daughter Lillian M. is listed with
Albert Irvington Foulke and Lottie Mae Smith-Foulke (continued)

Her husband James L. Green formerly of Virginia, and their son Lloyd (Loyd) Albert. James occupation is listed as a herdsman for a cattle farm. William Carlson (age 42) formerly of Virginia is listed with the family as a boarder and his occupation is listed as a laborer for a private estate. (12)

Arthur Foulke, Albert and Lottie's son stated that in addition to working as a chauffeur for many years, his father was a truck driver for the Brush Lumber Company and drove a school bus for the Northport School District until his death in 1945. Lottie died in 1976. Arthur, a World War II veteran, served in England, France and Germany. He is retired and lives with his wife Mary Ellen in Amityville, New York. (13)

In an interview with Michele Foulke-Edwards and Gloria H. Green, Albert and Lottie's granddaughters, they stated that for many years the Foulke Family lived along the waterfront of Northport Village at 168 Bayview Avenue, a rental property owned by the Brush Family who also lived on Bayview Avenue. After the death of Albert I. Sr., the family moved to 806 Fort Salonga Road in 1946. They also said their grandparents, Albert and Lottie; aunts, Lillian Green, and Bessie Hendrickson; uncle, Ben Hendrickson; older sister, Barbara (Foulke) Wilson; cousins, Gloria H. Green, Benjamin Green, Edward Green and Betty Ann Green attended Allen A.M.E. Church located on Church Street, now a private residence. Some of their family members attended the local elementary school and graduated from Northport High School formerly located at 158 Laurel Avenue, the current location of the William J. Bronsan School which houses the Northport School District Central Administration Office. Northport High School is currently located on Laurel Hill Road. (14)

Their grandparents Albert I. and Lottie along with an aunt, and uncle are buried in the Genola Cemetery located at 140 Laurel Avenue in East Northport. They are currently researching the family records and believe that there may be other unidentified family members buried there without grave markers in the open space near the family site.

Michele states that at a recent family reunion at Belmont State Park, more than one hundred and fifty family members attended from the Towns of Huntington, Babylon, various other locations throughout New York State, Virginia, Georgia and Florida. She attributes her family perseverance, and survival oftentimes against the odds to the love that was always prevalent when you walked through the doors of her Grandparents' home. In closing she said: "We cherish our resilience, honor our grandparents, parents, aunts, and uncles too numerous to name and find comfort within the embrace of our family where love, acceptance, and strength give us a renewed sense of purpose." (15)
Jean Roland Esquerre, Jr. and his wife Maria lived in Huntington for thirty-three years prior to moving to Florida in 1993. Jean served in the 477th Bomber Group as a Radio Operator-Gunner during World War II. He was discharged on March 4, 1946. Jean was affiliated with the Tuskegee Airman, Inc., a foundation dedicated to preserving the history of America’s first black military airmen.

Jean continued his career in aviation on Long Island at Republic Aviation Corporation as a designer draftsman in 1953. He was hired to work on aircraft systems. His coursework in fluid mechanics and flight line work on airplanes during World War II gave him hands-on experience. Other assignments during his tenure at Republic as a principal design engineer included design work in the Hydraulics Group on the original F-105’s, Republic’s newest Air Force fighter, working on fluid systems for rocket engines for the Aviation programs in the Missile Division, the Swallow drone, the pinch plasma engine, and supersonic aircraft systems. Additionally Jean worked as a job shopper for the Atlantic Design Company at AMF Corporation in Connecticut.

Jean was approached by Grumman Aircraft Engineering Corporation through Oswald Williams, a former neighbor, who with Douglas Watson, both African Americans, had designed the P-47D during World War II. Grumman at that time had just gotten the contract to build Lunar Modules and was in need of experienced engineering and technical staff with supersonic and space experience. Jean’s prior experience for the Atlantic Design Company at AMF on the Minuteman and Atlas Missiles and his extensive experience as a principal design engineer at Republic made him an excellent candidate for the job. Grumman hired Mr. Esquerre as a Fluid Power Design Engineer, first in the ground support area; then Ozzie Williams facilitated his transfer to the Reaction Control System Department that he was managing. Jean became Assistant Test Director, then Test Director of the LEM-4 space vehicle, the first lunar module to circle the moon; ultimately becoming the Cognizant Systems Engineer for all the LEM vehicles. After his supervisor Mr. Williams moved on to marketing, he replaced him as supervisor of Reaction Control Subsystems Design and Installation.

During that time Grumman had committed to having an Equal Employment Affirmative Action Program to ensure compliance with the Federal Government regulations’ for contractors. Jean was asked to assist with developing the program which was accepted by the company.
EXCERPTS FROM THE JEAN ROLAND ESQUERRE STORY (Continued)

He was then asked to run it with a staff of whom he credited with making it succeed, especially Bill Voorhesh. Jean stated that immediately after, the company began to see the benefits of the programs both to the employees and to the company. Jean served on the Board of Directors at Grumman and later on several other Grumman Corporation subsidiaries until his retirement in 1987.

One of the highlights of Jean’s career was assisting with developing, and providing oversight for the Equal Employment Affirmative Action Program at Grumman. It helped him to realize that in spite of racism and the inhuman treatments he experienced in the military from those he was fighting with and for, that there was still hope in America. Another project he took pride in was his affiliations with the national and local chapters of the Tuskegee Airmen, Inc. He was also President of the Suncoast Chapter of the Grumman Retiree Club.

Jean was active in the Huntington community. He served on the Huntington Hospital Board of Directors, and on the NAACP Huntington Branch’s Executive Committee. He reached out to youth council members and made presentations on the role that black airmen played in the history of Aviation. He continued to do community service after his retirement and was also active in the Tampa community. He did volunteer work for Village Presbyterian Church and served on several committees including: Promise Keepers; Mission of Evangelist Men of the Church; Veterans Relief Fund; Urban League Task Force; the Seminole Heights Community Center; and the Chappie James Chapter of the Tuskegee Airmen, Inc. As indicated in the picture below presenting former President Ronald Reagan with a Tuskegee Airman’s jacket, Jean was recognized by Reagan for his commitment to making the world a better place to live in for all. A synopsis of his life was included in the obituaries section of Newsday, on July 4, 2009.

Mr. Esquerre was born in Yonkers, New York in December 1923. He is the son of Jean and Marie Esquerre. He graduated from P.S. 31, Clark Junior High and Morris High Schools in the Bronx. Jean is also a graduate of Empire State College. He and his wife Maria have two children, Johanna and Malin Elisabeth. Jean died at age 85 of Alzheimer’s disease on June 27, 2009, at Sun City Center Hospice in Ruskin, Florida. (16)
The following summary is based on information taken from the 1880 U.S. Census along with a telephone interview conducted in the spring of 2008 by Irene Moore with Richard H. Robertson, III, the great grandnephew of Charles and Bertha Ballton, and research conducted at the Suffolk County Clerks’ office, as well as data taken from *The Long Islander* by Robert Hughes, Huntington Town Historian.

Located in Huntington Station less than one mile from the Long Island Rail Road train station on the right of New York Avenue; sits Brothers Barber Shop formerly known as Odd Fellows Hall, and later named Ballton Hall after former owners Charles H. and Bertha I. Ballton. Charles is the second son of Samuel and Ann Rebecca Ballton formerly of Westmoreland County, Virginia. Samuel Ballton, a prominent farmer, builder, and entrepreneur was called the “Pickle King” of Greenlawn because of the enormous amount of pickles he harvested in one season, said to be over 1.5 million. As indicated in the 1880 Census, Charles was born in approximately 1868, and Bertha was born in 1873. Charles was known as one of the wealthiest African American businessmen in the Town of Huntington. In addition to owning Odd Fellows-Ballton Hall, he and his wife Bertha owned Rosetta Hall on Church Street and property on Spring Road. Rosetta Hall housed at different times a dance hall, restaurant, barber shop, and a pool room with apartments on the top floors. He also owned a moving and trucking company along with a sand, gravel, and refuse removal business.

Ideally located in the heart of Huntington Station, Odd Fellows-Ballton Hall served as the meeting place and center for social activities for African Americans in the Town. The trolley car traveling from Halesite to Amityville, with a stop in front of Ballton Hall, was the major source of transportation for African Americans. The hall was used as a meeting place for fraternity and sorority organizations including the Masons, and the Elks. It was also used for church gatherings, Boy Scout meetings, Odd Fellows meetings, as well as social groups. The Boy Scouts, an all black group known as unit #106 was headed by McKinley Jones, Scout Leader. Richard H. Robertson, III, the first African American policeman in the town of Huntington was a member of that unit. Currently the building houses a barber shop with apartments in the rear of the building and on the second floor. (17)

On October 12, 1906, Louis M. Brush filed a map with the Suffolk County Clerk for a large tract of land on the east side of New York Avenue south of Olive Street. The subdivision of 337 lots was known as Highland Park. The subject property, 1006 New York Avenue, is comprised of lots 31 and 32 of the subdivision. On August 23, 1909, Brush conveyed lots 31 and 32 to Charles W. Fox (Liber 708. page 563). Shortly thereafter, on September 4, 1909, Fox conveyed the property to Emma Paulding pending payment of a $2,000 loan due on September 4, 1912 at
an interest rate of 6%. Under the term of the transaction, Fox was obligated to insure the buildings on the property, indicating that buildings existed in 1909. Although the 1909 atlas does not show any buildings on the property, an item in *The Long Islander* October 2, 1909 edition indicates that Mr. and Mrs. Jurgensmaier had broken ground on a new residence in Highland Park. The 1917 atlas identifies the owner of the property to the south of the subject property as Jurgensmaier. Neither structure is shown on the 1909 atlas, but both appear on the 1917 atlas. The reference in the mortgage and the development of the adjoining property point to a construction date of about 1909 for the subject premises…the same date as the new Huntington train station built a few blocks to the south. (18)

Over the next decade, the property changed hands several times among the children of builder George W. Fox. (19) Charles Fox sold the property to Elizabeth B. Gardiner. (20) Elizabeth then sold the property to Oscar W. Fox (21), who transferred it back to her. (22) Finally, she transferred it back to Oscar W. Fox one last time. (23) The property left the family in 1917 when Oscar Fox sold it to Cecelia Kehoe. (24) Apparently, George Fox had given the purchasers a loan to purchase the property and they defaulted ending in foreclosure and sale of the property. (25) However, it appears that the original mortgage from Emma Paulding had never been satisfied. An action between Emma Paulding and members of the Fox family resulted in a judgment for Paulding in the amount of $2,532.36 and the transfer of ownership of the property to George Fox (Liber 965, page 477).

George Fox then sold the property to Charles H. Ballton on April 19, 1920 (Liber 997, page 366). The deed refers to a $2,000 mortgage, but the earlier mortgage had been discharged and no record of a mortgage given by Charles Ballton was found in the County Court records. Less than two years later Ballton conveyed the property to John H. Plummer, George Allen and Charles H. Ballton as trustees of the Crispus Attucks Lodge No. 9055 of the Grand United Order of Odd Fellows on December 31, 1921 for $3,200 (Liber 1033, page 595). The Grand United Order of Odd Fellows was a fraternal organization first chartered in this country in 1843 when a lodge in Philadelphia was established with a charter from the Grand Lodge in Manchester, England. In this country African Americans generally were members of the Grand United Order of Odd Fellows and whites were members of the Independent Order of Odd Fellows. Crispus Attucks, for whom the Huntington lodge was named, was one of the five people killed in the Boston Massacre in 1770. (26)

On January 17, 1945, the trustees of the Lodge (Charles Ballton, President; John Plummer, Secretary; and George Allen) conveyed the property to Max and Clara Herman for $3,875 (Liber 2419, page 139). Following Max Herman’s death in February 1965, Sam Raskin, as executor of the estate sold the property to Brun-Wal Corp. of 780 New York Avenue (Liber 5764, page 1574). The corporation than conveyed the property to James F. Straub on December 22, 1970 (Liber 6860, page 301). Straub conveyed the property to the current owner, Rehab Investors, on May 25, 1979 (Liber 8670, page). (27)
SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY AND ARTICLES

(1) Excerpts taken from documents submitted by former Judge Peter J. Newman.


(4) Interview with Thomas and Emma Watkins on October 29, 2009.

(5) www.last.fm/music/bob+marley Excerpts from Bob Marley & The Wailers – Buffalo Soldier from Legend.

(6) For space reasons a list of sources is not included, but is available from the author upon request through the Huntington Town Historian’s Office, 228 Main Street, Huntington, New York, 631-351-3244.

(7) 1860 Census. Ancestry.com

(8) 1840 Census. Ancestry.com

(9) Inset from the Town of Huntington: Marriages – Volume 1908 – 1922.


(11) 1920 Census. Ancestry.com

(12) 1930 Census. Ancestry.com

(13) Interview with Arthur Foulke, Albert and Lottie’s son.

(14) Interview with Michele Foulke-Edwards and Gloria H. Green, Albert and Lottie’s granddaughters.

(15) Interview with Michele Foulke-Edwards, Albert and Lottie’s granddaughter.


(17) 1880 U.S. Census and excerpts from interview during spring 2008 with Richard H. Robertson, III, by Irene Moore.

(18) Research conducted at the Suffolk County’s Clerk Office by Robert Hughes, Town Historian on July 7, 2008.

(19) George W. Fox had six children, Chauncey, Harry, Charles, Oscar, Lillian and Elizabeth. (The Long Islander, October 31, 1924, page 8). Elizabeth is identified as Elizabeth Romano in an item in The Long Islander, November 30, 1923, page 8, and a year later as Elizabeth Gardiner, The Long Islander, December 5, 1924, page 18.

(20 – 27) For space reason, a list of sources is not included; however, sources are available in the Town of Huntington’s Historian Office.
PHOTOGRAPH CAPTIONS AND CREDITS

Front Cover  Albert I. Foulke, chauffeur for the Arthurs. Picture taken on Main Street in Huntington Village in front of the Soldiers and Sailors Memorial Building. Courtesy of the Foulke Family.

Page 11 - top r  Bethel A.M.E. Church Historic Marker. Photograph by Irene Moore.
Page 11 - top l  Bethel A.M.E. Church. Photograph by Robert Hughes.
Page 11 - bottom r  The Coltrane Home Historic Marker. Photograph by Robert Hughes.
Page 11 - bottom l  The Coltrane Home. Photograph by Robert Hughes.
Page 12 - top c  Old Evergreen Missionary Baptist Church. Photograph by Irene Moore.
Page 12 - center c  Evergreen Missionary Baptist Church. Photograph by Irene Moore.
Page 12 - bottom  Samuel and Ann Rebecca Ballton with house they celebrated their 50th anniversary in. Courtesy of the Greenlawn-Centerport Historical Association.
Page 17 - top l  Old Burying Ground Clean-up Crew. Courtesy of Irene Moore.
Page 17 - bottom l  Bethel A.M.E. Church. Photograph by Robert Hughes.
Page 17 - bottom c  Rex Metcalf’s house. Photograph by Rex Metcalf.
Page 17 - bottom r  First Presbyterian Church: Photograph extracted from www.oldfirstchurchhuntington.org
Page 18 - center  Former Evergreen Baptist Church, currently Christian Charities Church. Photograph by Irene Moore.
Page 20 - top l  Albert I. and Lottie Foulke’s house, 168 Bayview Avenue, Northport, N.Y. From lt.to rt.: Marjorie Foulke, Lloyd Green, Barbara Foulke, Gloria H. Green, and Betty Ann Green.. Courtesy of Gloria H. Green.
Page 20 - center l  Albert I. Jr. and Lottie Foulke’s House, 806 Fort Salonga Road, Northport, N.Y. Courtesy of Gloria H. Green..
Page 21 - center l  Jean Esquerre in uniform. Courtesy of Jean Esquerre Family.
Page 22 - bottom l  Jean Esquerre with former President Ronald Reagan. Courtesy of Jean Esquerre Family.
Page 23 - top l  Odd Fellows – Ballton Hall. Photograph by Irene Moore.
Page 27 - top c  AAHDC Members. Photograph by Stephen Jimenez.
PHOTO OF AAHDC MEMBERS

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Image Artist, Michele Foulke-Edwards
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