

# THE EAGLE

THE OFFICIAL WARD MELVILLE HERITAGE ORGANIZATION NEWSLETTER

WINTER EDITION: FEBRUARY 2023



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## A LOOK AHEAD... TO NEW BEGINNINGS IN 2023!

"...We endeavor to mold our own lives, remembering that the prime requisites for success are not found in finance, but in service and happiness, and that to be modest, frank, honest, and useful will make any man, whether he be president or pauper, an honored member of the community in which he dwells."

-Ward Melville

Before we can look forward, we need to acknowledge YOU, our supporters, and remind ourselves of our founders and their mission.

Nothing we do would be possible, let alone successful, without supporters like you.

Thank you for being a part of a community that we are honored to serve. We have accomplished many projects in 2022, but there is always more to do.

Please consider supporting the WMHO as we engage in new projects, programs and events in 2023 to revive, restore, reinvigorate and celebrate our community.

Within this edition of the Ward Melville Heritage Organization (WMHO) newsletter you will find: our 2022 accomplishments; the WMHO's main focus this year: the restoration of our beloved, wing-flapping eagle; the WMHO Spotlight and the schedule of programs and events for much of 2023.

# THE MELVILLE LEGACY



Ward and Dorothy Melville viewing a rendering of Ward Melville High School, part of the Three Village School District that they helped create.

The accidental arrival of the Melville family in Stony Brook was a most serendipitous event. Falling in love with the quirky townspeople, Jennie and Frank Melville quickly became heavily involved in the history and prosperity of the Three Village area.

After they had passed, Ward and his wife Dorothy picked up his parents gauntlet. With their memory in mind, Ward brought his vision to life - a place where people, history and the natural beauty of Long Island could coexist. In 1939, the Stony Brook Community Fund was created with the objectives of preserving and interpreting historic structures and environmentally sensitive resources.

Until their deaths, Ward & Dorothy worked tirelessly to accomplish those objectives. They purchased historic properties such as the Brewster House (c. 1665), the Thompson House (c. 1709), the Stony Brook Grist Mill (c. 1751); created an 88-acre wetlands preserve at West Meadow Creek; and engaged the community with events and programs.

After the passing of both Ward and Dorothy, the Stony Brook Community Fund was renamed the Ward Melville Heritage Organization (WMHO). Today, the WMHO continues the Melville legacy of preserving and interpreting historic and environmentally sensitive properties, and hosting interdisciplinary educational and cultural experiences for all ages.

## 2022 IN 22 SECONDS

\*STATISTICS FROM AUGUST 2022 - JANUARY 2023

Since our last newsletter in the summer, the WMHO has conducted programs, hosted events and engaged with thousands of people.

Here's the breakdown:



OVER  
**59,000**  
ENGAGEMENTS  
IN-PERSON & VIRTUALLY

MORE THAN  
**10,000**  
PUBLIC EVENT ATTENDEES



WELCOMED  
**220**  
VOLUNTEERS

**5**  
PROPERTIES FEATURED  
IN NEW  
PUBLICATIONS & FILMS



Additionally, the WMHO:

~ Completed the Sensory Garden at T. Bayles Minuse Mill Pond & Tranquility Park thanks to PSEG Long Island

~ Restored the legendary Hercules Pavilion including the Hercules Figurehead thanks to Olivia & Harlan Fischer

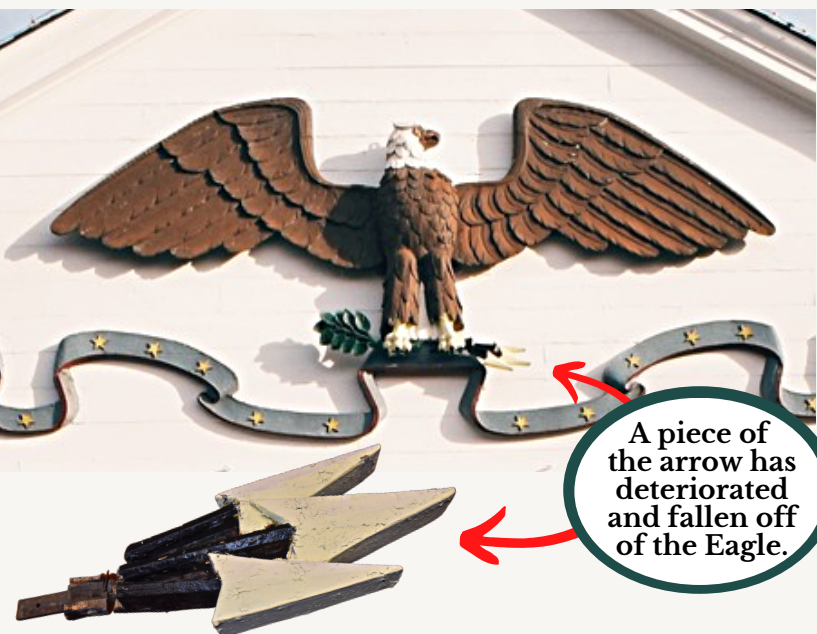
~ Participated in research that has expanded the diverse history & untold stories of our properties



# HELP OUR EAGLE SOAR

## OUR MAIN FOCUS IN 2023

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In 2023, the WMHO will take on one of the most complicated and intricate restorations in its history. Since it was first unveiled in 1941, the Eagle of the Stony Brook Post Office has welcomed visitors from around the world. For over 80 years, the Eagle has awed audiences by flapping its wings every hour (8am - 8pm).

It is the only Post Office Eagle that performs this mechanical show in the world.

## Now the Eagle needs our help:

The wooden pediment behind the Eagle has begun to rot and needs to be replaced.

Likewise, the Eagle itself needs to be restored. Just recently, the arrow the Eagle carries in its talons has fallen off.

Please consider helping us save this local and national treasure by donating today.

## WMHO SPOTLIGHT:

### RENATO POLVER RESTORES BRIG DAISY MODEL SHIP

Ward Melville was close friends with naturalist and ornithologist Robert Cushman Murphy. Murphy voyaged around the world to study wildlife. One of his voyages was aboard the Brig Daisy, which sailed to the island of South Georgia. The restoration of the model ship of the Brig Daisy was generously sponsored by Lessing's Hospitality Group.

The WMHO's model of the Brig Daisy was in need of repair. Renato Polver, also known as "Tito the Handyman" was retained to restore the model ship. Renato has been passionate about model ship building his entire life, from making tree bark boats in Italy during his childhood, to creating model ships in glass bottles during his work as a photographer on cruise ships and as a cook on tankers.



The captain of one of the tankers had a plaque created for Renato's cabin door that read "Part-time cook, Full-time ship builder."

Renato with the restored model ship of the Brig Daisy



Throughout the year, WMHO hosts thousands of visitors for festivals, concerts, programs and more. Many of the programs take place at the Stony Brook Post Office, under the watchful eye of our beloved Stony Brook Eagle.

Did you know: Stony Brook Village Center, where the Stony Brook Eagle is located, is considered the very first planned business community in the United States?

# A PEAK AT THE NEXT SIX MONTHS

## NEW EVENTS, PROGRAMS & MORE!

### SPRING



Learn more about Dorothy Melville and the other women who helped develop the Three village area and played a role in Long Island history in *Against the Grain* on March 16

#### **MARCH 16 - AGAINST THE GRAIN: WOMEN'S HISTORY WALKING TOUR**

Celebrating Stony Brook Village women over the span of thousands of years through the stories of their lives. More information available soon!

#### **APRIL 16 - STONY BROOK GRIST MILL OPENS FOR THE 2023 SEASON!**

The Stony Brook Grist Mill (c. 1751) is Long Island's most fully operational mill. Learn the inner mechanics of the mill as a miller grinds grain into flour and more!

#### **APRIL 16 - SPRING APPRECIATION DAY!**

Celebrate Spring with the WMHO and Stony Brook Village Center! Bring the family for fun activities, a car show, live animals and more!

#### **APRIL 22 - WETLAND LEGACIES: AN EARTH DAY CELEBRATION \*\*NEW PROGRAM\*\***

Explore and interact with the ecology and history of the WMHO's 88-acre wetlands preserve at West Meadow Creek in this hands-on family friendly one-day program! Learn about Robert Cushman Murphy, the naturalist and ornithologist who worked with Ward Melville and Dr. Erwin Ernst to make this preserve possible. More information available soon!

### SUMMER

#### **THIS JUNE - THE DISCOVERY WETLANDS CRUISE LAUNCHES!**

All aboard the 27 passenger pontoon boat for an adventure through West Meadow Creek!

#### **THIS JUNE - LONG ISLAND SOUND CONNECTIONS SUMMIT**

This student-led program empowers students on the Long Island Sound to become life-long ambassadors of our ecosystems, and work collectively to report real data at the annual summit!

#### **JUNE 15 - SECRETS OF STONY BROOK VILLAGE WALKING TOUR**

Stroll through Stony Brook Village with a guide who will share the inside scoop on how Stony Brook Village came to be and the quirky people and landmarks that call it home!

#### **THURSDAY JUNE 22**

#### **THE WMHO'S SUMMER SOIRÉE**

The WMHO's annual fundraising event is back and better than ever! Join us for an exciting evening and help us raise funds for the Eagle, plants at T. Bayles Minuse Mill Pond Park, Education Programs and more! More details to be announced shortly.

#### **SELECT WEEKS IN JULY & AUGUST SUMMER OF SCIENCE (SOS)**

With three programs divided by age, SOS is back and better than ever! Students aged 6 - 17 will participate in hands-on learning at the Erwin Ernst Marine Conservation Center in West Meadow Creek. Registration is available at [wmho.org](http://wmho.org). For more information call the WMHO at (631) 751-2244.

#### **POP-UP SATURDAYS ARE BACK!**

Pop-Up Saturdays are back this summer, from July 8 - August 19! Featuring a variety of talent acts sure to bring fun for the whole family!

#### **NEW WALKING TOUR COMING THIS JULY!**

More information to be released soon!

#### **SUMMER CONCERTS ON THE VILLAGE GREEN RETURN!**

Returning Sundays from 7-9pm on the Stony Brook Village Green!

July 9 "Just Sixties"

July 16 "Country Rhythms"

July 23 "Gene Casey & the Loan Sharks"

July 30 "The Rustlers"

August 6 "Bob & Tony Band"

August 13 "The Equity Brass Band"

August 20 "Long Island Sound Symphony"

Our programs are not possible without the generosity of our donors and sponsors. To learn about sponsorship opportunities, call the WMHO at (631) 751-2244!



The Ward Melville Heritage Organization is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit corporation founded in 1939 by businessman and philanthropist Ward Melville.

The organization owns and manages properties deeded to it by Ward Melville and creates interdisciplinary educational and cultural experiences that integrate history, art, theater, music, science, and technology for all ages.

Inspired by his legacy to preserve historic and environmentally sensitive properties, the WMHO continues to protect and interpret Long Island treasures. This includes leasing space at a \$1.00 a year to like-minded organizations such as The Long Island Music and Entertainment Hall of Fame, The Jazz Loft, The Long Island Museum and The Three Village Lending Aids for the Sick.

Board of Trustees: Dr. Richard Rugen, Graham Scaife, James Murdocco, Mary Van Tuyl, Kathleen Mich, Laura Huang-Ernst, Daniel Rowe, Charles Napoli, Andrew Skitmore  
Edward J. Gutleber, Esq., Anna M. Kerekes, Christopher Richey, Chuck Lohmann  
President: Gloria Rocchio

The Ward Melville Heritage Organization Properties

The Brewster House, c. 1665    The Erwin J. Ernst Marine Conservation Center  
The Stony Brook Grist Mill, c. 1751    The Thompson House, c. 1709    The Hercules Pavilion  
T. Bayles Minuse Mill Pond Park (also known as Tranquility Park)  
West Meadow Creek    The Upper Pond    The Jennie Melville Village Green

**The Ward Melville Heritage Organization**

P.O. Box 572  
Stony Brook, NY 11790  
(631) 751-2244  
[www.wmho.org](http://www.wmho.org)

**DONATE TODAY**

Name\_\_\_\_\_

Address\_\_\_\_\_

City\_\_\_\_\_ State\_\_\_\_\_

Zip\_\_\_\_\_ Phone\_\_\_\_\_

Please make checks payable to:

WMHO

P.O. Box 572 - Stony Brook, NY 11790

Credit Card #\_\_\_\_\_

CVC\_\_\_\_\_ EXP\_\_\_\_\_

Billing Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Signature\_\_\_\_\_

**SPECIFY WHERE YOU'D LIKE YOUR  
DONATION TO GO:**

Youth Corps \$\_\_\_\_\_

Ernst Marine Conservation Center \$\_\_\_\_\_

General Donation \$\_\_\_\_\_

Stony Brook Grist Mill (c. 1751) \$\_\_\_\_\_

Thompson House (c. 1709) \$\_\_\_\_\_

Brewster House (c. 1665) \$\_\_\_\_\_

Charter Society \$\_\_\_\_\_

The Eagle \$\_\_\_\_\_

T. Bayles Minuse Mill Pond Park \$\_\_\_\_\_

Education Programs \$\_\_\_\_\_

The WMHO is a 501(c)3 not-for-profit organization. Your donation is tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law.

Accepted Credit Cards:

American Express, Visa, Mastercard, Discover