



Bay Shore Historical Society

Gibson-Mack-Holt House c.1820

22 Maple Avenue Bay Shore, NY 11706 (631) 665-1707
www.bayshorehistoricalsociety.org e-mail bayshohissoc@optonline.net

October 19, 2017

Meeting Notes

Barry called the meeting to order at 7:30 PM and all stood to recite the Pledge of Allegiance. Priscilla provided an update on community events including (1) Haunted Halloween on Main Street on October 21 (2) the Pumpkin People displays around town including the Library, Sterling Bank and the Historical Society (3) a clothing drive going on until November 3rd with a drop-off at Sterling Bank (4) the Long Island Maritime Museum boat burning on October 27. Joann reported there are 3 new members bringing the total membership to 318. Joe reported income was \$1,120 and expenses were \$1,368. A video camera was purchased to record the meetings. Kelly read the minutes of the September 21 meeting. The speaker for the evening was Ed Mooney. Ed spoke about 'The History of the Fire Island Ferries'.

Ferry service to Fire Island started on May 1, 1948 when Captain Patterson won the bid to ferry passengers to Ocean Beach. In the early 1950's houses on Fire Island were being built like crazy. This expansion drove the need for bigger and faster boats. Many of the boats were built with the hull and the engine purchased separately. Ferry fares were low, but the engines didn't last and Sunday afternoons became a struggle. Ed started working on the ferries two months after ferry service got its start. Captain Patterson expanded ferry service to include Saltaire and Kismet. From 1948 to 1953 ferries left from Maple Avenue dock. Captain Patterson then bought land to build the terminals and dredge the canal to accommodate the larger boats. The first weekend the terminal was open for business the parking lot was full. That Sunday it rained and cars got stuck in the mud. Captain Patterson faced opposition from the neighbors when he expanded the parking lot. In 1971 Captain Patterson sold the ferry service. Ed bought a third of the business with an option to purchase the terminal. The ferry service to Fair Harbor was bought. Then the Zline Ferry Corporation was bought. This ferry service went to Seaview. The Barbash family, who built Dunewood, also had a ferry service that was bought out. Finally, the water taxi service was bought by the Fire Island Ferry company.

The mission of the *Bay Shore Historical Society* is to collect, preserve and share the rich history of our community and to maintain the c. 1820 Gibson-Mack-Holt House which is located at 22 Maple Ave, Bay Shore, NY. The Society's collection of photographs, memorabilia, and historic documents is open to the public free of charge on Tuesdays and Saturdays from 1pm to 4pm. For further information contact 631-665-1707 or visit the Society's website > www.bayshorehistoricalsociety.org. The *Bay Shore Historical Society* is an all-volunteer, tax exempt not-for-profit corporation as described in section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.



Bay Shore Historical Society

Gibson-Mack-Holt House c.1820

22 Maple Avenue Bay Shore, NY 11706 (631) 665-1707
www.bayshorehistoricalsociety.org e-mail bayshohissoc@optonline.net

Ed then answered a few questions from the audience. The Fire Island ferries follow all of the regulations set by the Coast Guard. Ed felt he was more successful than other ferry companies because he worked harder and reinvested. Fares remained low until a proposal was put together to increase the fare to \$1.00. This increase allowed for a new boat, better salaries for the crew and the ability to build an office. When Ed first started working on the ferries there were approximately 300,000 passengers in a season. Now there are approximately a million passengers per season. Before the Robert Moses Causeway was built there were approximately 600 kids per day that would ride the ferry to Atlantique. After the Causeway was built that number dropped to 100 kids per day in the best weather. Atlantique was the only spot on Fire Island affected by the bridge.

Barry thanked Ed for his presentation and invited everyone for refreshments.

Respectfully submitted by Kelly Zebro

The mission of the *Bay Shore Historical Society* is to collect, preserve and share the rich history of our community and to maintain the c. 1820 Gibson-Mack-Holt House which is located at 22 Maple Ave, Bay Shore, NY. The Society's collection of photographs, memorabilia, and historic documents is open to the public free of charge on Tuesdays and Saturdays from 1pm to 4pm. For further information contact 631-665-1707 or visit the Society's website > www.bayshorehistoricalsociety.org. The *Bay Shore Historical Society* is an all-volunteer, tax exempt not-for-profit corporation as described in section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.