

Caithness Grant Proposal

Brookhaven Hamlet was Brookhaven Town's second settlement and the first on the south shore of the Town. A few meadow lots were first purchased here by English settlers in 1657, and, in 1664, all the land that includes today's South Haven, Brookhaven and Bellport was acquired in what is known as the Old Purchase at South.

During the first 250 years, the area that now comprises Brookhaven hamlet, or zip code 11719, contained two separate communities: the eastern portion was named South Haven and the western portion Fire Place. In 1871, the Fire Place community was renamed Brookhaven hamlet. Today, Brookhaven hamlet is the largest Historic District in Brookhaven Town, named the Fire Place Historic District.

Throughout the first two centuries of its history, rarely did more than 50 families live in the South Haven/Fire Place settlement, and those families who chose not use their church's burying grounds had their own family cemeteries on their farms. Historian George Borthwick writes that this area was the "hotbed of the American Revolution on Long Island," with virtually all men living here in the latter 18th century having signed the document called the Association, which proclaimed support for independence, and some 21 men having served in the Revolution. Most of these Patriots, their families and descendants are buried in these small family burying grounds (see attached map).

Some 19 family cemeteries and two church cemeteries existed here until the early 20th century. Today, 14 family cemeteries and the South Haven Presbyterian Church cemetery still remain. Of these, however, only ten cemeteries have 12 or more headstones; in the others, headstones have either been removed or damaged beyond repair, leaving only one or two headstones remaining.

The Fire Place History Club, with support from the Brookhaven Village Association, the Post Morrow Foundation and many members of the community, recently restored the Revolutionary War-era Rose family Cemetery in Brookhaven hamlet on Jared's Path (see attached Long Island Advance article and booklet).

We are eager to continue this effort with seven other historic cemeteries in our area. To make this possible, as a result of a quick survey, we would like to submit a request for \$10,500 to restore the following seven historic cemeteries:

- 1.) South Haven Presbyterian: \$2,500
- 2.) Carmans/Miller: \$1,500
- 3.) David Hawkins: \$2,000
- 4.) Nathaniel Hawkins: \$1,000
- 5.) Barteau/Snow \$2,000
- 6.) Richard Corwin: \$500
- 7.) Azil Hawkins: \$1,000

We propose to hire a professional stonemason, Hollis Warner, proprietor of Peconic Monument Works in Riverhead and who did the repair of the Rose Cemetery. We will submit itemized bills of all work done and, if necessary, return any overage.

Thank you so much for your consideration and I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Martin Van Lith
Brookhaven Village Association Historian
Chair, Fire Place History Club