

SAVE THE DATE:  
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 THIRD ANNUAL  
 "LET'S MAKE HISTORY"  
 FUNDRAISING BICYCLE RIDE  
 FOR THE  
 SUFFOLK COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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SUFFOLK COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
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[www.suffolkcountyhistoricalsociety.org](http://www.suffolkcountyhistoricalsociety.org)  
 Hours:  
 Museum: Tues. through Sat., 12:30 pm – 4:30 pm  
 Library: Wed. through Sat., 12:30 pm – 4:30 pm  
 Membership is open to everyone.  
 Individual yearly dues are \$30  
 and family dues are \$35.

The Suffolk County Historical Society is a private, non-profit organization, and an Authorized Agency of Suffolk County, that receives partial funding from Suffolk County, Steve Levy, County Executive.



The activities and publications of the Suffolk County Historical Society are made possible with public funds from the New York State Council on the Arts, a State Agency.

*New Exhibit: Helen M. Kroeger & Otto J. Kurth: The Anchorage Studio and Peconic Bay Impressionism.*

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*Past, Present, and Future, We Write Them*  
 300 West Main Street  
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 SUFFOLK COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY



Suffolk County Historical Society

# NEWSLETTER of the SUFFOLK COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY



300 WEST MAIN STREET • RIVERHEAD, NEW YORK 11901 • 631.727.2881

SUMMER 2010

## FROM OUR DIRECTOR

One of the many joys of working in a museum is being able to share interesting information, little-known facts and wonderful artifacts with visitors. This spring and summer we have done just that.

The Peconic River inspired this spring's exhibition "Cross Pollination," and the canoe trip that we sponsored as part of the collaboration gave us the opportunity to showcase this quiet river that runs right through downtown Riverhead. The Peconic continues to be important to Riverhead, as well as to Long Island. New York State recognized this when the Peconic was included in the state's Wild and Scenic Rivers Act. Today we appreciate the river for many reasons, and now more than ever it is recognized for its natural beauty and for the habitat that it supports for both flora and fauna.

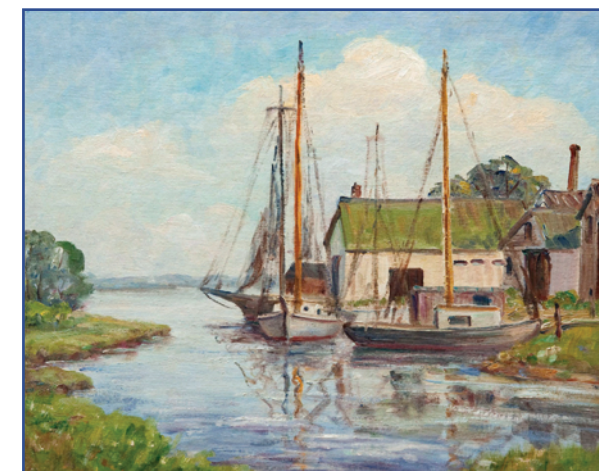
This summer our exhibit galleries are filled with either newly interpreted or rarely seen collections. In the main gallery visitors will be treated to the work of the Peconic Bay Impressionists, Helen Kroeger and Otto Kurth, along with other work produced by some of their colleagues. In the Staas Gallery we are currently showing some of the finest furniture that the society owns along with important paintings from the collection. The newly re-interpreted Staas Gallery looks wonderful, and I hope that you will be able to visit this summer.

– Wallace W. Broege, SCHS Director

## NEW EXHIBIT: HELEN M. KROEGER & OTTO J. KURTH: THE ANCHORAGE STUDIO AND PECONIC BAY IMPRESSIONISM

The Suffolk County Historical Society is pleased to present a new exhibit, "Helen M. Kroeger & Otto J. Kurth: The Anchorage Studio and Peconic Bay Impressionism."

An important exhibition about these two artists and their relationship with the North Fork art community, this new exhibit follows the Society's historic 2007 show, "Caroline M. Bell and the Peconic Bay Impressionists," also curated by Terry Wallace, an authority on American art, specializing in Long Island painters.



*Quiet Inlet, Peconic Bay by Helen M. Kroeger*

The exhibit is accompanied by a hard cover catalogue authored by Mr. Wallace, and is on view through October 30, 2010. The 117 page catalogue features 44 reproductions of paintings by Helen Kroeger and Otto Kurth, along with a number of other images related to the work of the Peconic Bay Impressionists. (Catalogue: \$30, call the SCHS at 631-727-2881, please ask for Diane Perry or Wally Broege for more information.)

Call the Society and visit us online at [www.suffolkcountyhistoricalsociety.org](http://www.suffolkcountyhistoricalsociety.org) for news about special programs associated with this exhibit.

For more information on the artists, and additional images from the exhibit, see page 3.

## In This Issue



New Art Exhibit



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Event Highlights

New Photo Contest:  
 Call for Entries





## ABOUT THE SUFFOLK COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

The Suffolk County Historical Society was founded in 1886 by a group of forward-looking county residents. Since its founding, the purpose of the Suffolk County Historical Society has remained essentially the same: to collect, preserve and interpret the ongoing history of Suffolk County and its people. To fulfill these purposes the Society operates a history museum, a library and archives, and offers educational programs and events for our students and residents. The Society houses a unique, ever-growing collection of artifacts, reflecting more than three centuries of history.



## 2010 EVENT HIGHLIGHTS



At our May 12th Peconic River "Tea & Talk," Karen Ferb and SCHS programs coordinator Kathy Curran flank raffle prize winner Paula Murphy.



Our May 15th Peconic River Paddle – an 8-mile guided tour with author Mark Gehrke, and naturalist and local historian George Bartunek – was a wonderful accompaniment to our "Interpretive Flora" exhibit.



Workshop participants show off their beautiful work at the May 8th Pressed Flower Candle class taught by Gayle Wagner at the SCHS.



SCHS President Bob Barauskas, Kathy Curran, Terry Wallace and SCHS Director Wally Broege at the Kroeger/Kurth opening reception, June 25th.

## CALL FOR ENTRIES • 3RD ANNUAL JURIED PHOTOGRAPHY EXHIBITION "MAIN STREET, SUFFOLK COUNTY"

The Suffolk County Historical Society is pleased to announce a call for entries for our 3rd Annual Photography contest! This year's theme is "Main Street, Suffolk County." Contest entries will be displayed at the Society in November, in a new exhibit that will also feature historical photographs from the SCHS collection that depict scenes of Main Street, Suffolk County themes. This competition is open to all artists. For complete contest details and requirements, please contact the SCHS at (631) 727-2881, or email: curranschs@optonline.net

## ABOUT THE ARTISTS: HELEN M. KROEGER & OTTO J. KURTH



Helen M. Kroeger (1892-1986) was born in Mt. Vernon, NY. By profession, she was a New York City schoolteacher. Kroeger also attended the Grand Central School of Art and studied at the Art Students League of New York with Frank Vincent DuMond. Sometime in the 1930s, she made the acquaintance of Caroline M. Bell (1874-1970). Bell was a first-rate plein-air painter and the leader of a group of women artists living on the North Fork of Long Island. These artists are now known as The Peconic Bay Impressionists.

In the early 1940s Helen M. Kroeger met Otto J. Kurth (1883-1965), a well-known commercial illustrator of newspapers, periodicals, maps and books. While he was a skilled painter of marine subjects, he had little experience painting out-of-doors. Kurth and Kroeger shared a love of nature. They embarked on a career of rendering barnyards, meadows, shorelines, harbors and fish shacks. Under the tutelage of Kroeger, Kurth became an accomplished plein-air painter.



Kurth traveled with Kroeger from Queens to Mattituck. Here he established a warm friendship with Caroline M. Bell and the other women. With Kroeger, he eventually opened the Anchorage Studio on Marlene Lane in Mattituck.

The Anchorage Studio became a focal point in the artistic community of the North Fork. Both Kroeger and Kurth made a living by selling their paintings from the Studio to local residents and summer visitors. It was also an important destination for the numerous students Kroeger taught. Using painting techniques she had learned from Caroline M. Bell, Emile Gruppe and Anthony Thieme, Kroeger often instructed her students in the field at New Suffolk and at the Indian Museum in Southold.

Images, top to bottom: Farm on the Sound, Southold by Otto J. Kurth; Mattituck Creek by Helen M. Kroeger

## THE STAAS GALLERY: A REINTERPRETATION



The Suffolk County Historical Society's **Staas Gallery** now houses a re-interpreted decorative arts exhibition. The objects on display are from the collection of the Society, and each tells a specific story of Suffolk County's past. Moments of local and national significance are brought to life while viewing the actual objects and images that reflect the stories of their day. New display items include oil lamps, milk glass and Silverbrook Art Glass (see photos below).

## NEW BROWN BAG LUNCH "HISTORY BREAK" SERIES • FIRST WEDNESDAY OF EVERY MONTH

The SCHS will host a new **Brown Bag Lunch "History Break"** series in the Staas Gallery, on the first Wednesday of every month at 1pm, beginning Wednesday, August 4th. Each month, the History Break will feature a short talk by Museum staff, focusing on specific items on display in the Staas Gallery. Those attending may bring a bag lunch; and the Society will supply beverages. A donation is requested.

Some of the topics for the series will include: *Who Sat Here? Thomas Ustick Walters and the Congressional Desks; Legends of Horse Racing: Lady Suffolk and Dexter; Names and Places: William (Point Billy) and Hannah Carmen Smith; Paintings as Primary Sources: William Floyd by Ralph Earl; David Gelston: Politician and Statesman; The Conklin Family of Greenport; The Amistad and Captain Henry Green; The Tragic Wreck of the Louis V Place; Painted Fancy Furniture; School Girl Arts; Rarely Seen Collections: Night Lights, Milk Glass and The Silverbrook Studio.*



Large image, upper left, features mahogany secretary of Augustus Floyd, c.1770-1820.

Image at right: Book case used by General Richard Delafield (1798-1873) while he was the superintendent of the U.S. Military Academy at West Point

