

The Paumanok Driving Club: An Unofficial History

compiled by Jerry and Rita Trapani for the 40th Anniversary of the PDC

On a late summer afternoon in 1983 James Blackwell and Peggy Melville Blackwell asked a few people to their home, 'Wide Water' in Old Field. The purpose of the meeting was to explore the creation of a new club on Long Island to support carriage driving. The attendees were Jamie and Mary O'Rourke, Jerry and Rita Trapani, Bob and Pearl Service, Jerry and Pat Weismann and the Blackwells. James was President of the American Driving Society and Peggy was the daughter of Ward Melville who founded the Museums at Stony Brook. The O'Rourke's owned Rice Farms and were avid competitors in many facets of equestrian sport. The Services also competed along with their daughter Heather. Jerry and Pat had a carriage business and Jerry and Rita were active in many clubs already established on Long Island. After a great meeting the club was formed. Jerry Trapani was asked to be President, Jamie was VP, and Bob and Pearl served as secretary and treasurer. The club grew and in 1985 we were incorporated as the Paumanok Driving Club.

Over the next 40 years many people served the club in various ways. Some served as officers and others offered support and venues. The Presidents of the club were Jerry Trapani, Rita Trapani, Bob Willumson, Stacey Hoffman, Chris Stress, Jerry Weismann, Carol Voellm, Laurie Landeau, Robin Foster, Ken Mott, Maribeth Andresen and currently Ken Wilvert. Vice Presidents were Jamie O'Rourke, Jerry Trapani, Jerry Weismann, Charlie Arciello, Jack Mohlenhoff, Bob Weismann, Scott Carter and Gene Butta. Treasurers were Bob Service, Ted Hubbard and our current and long serving Vicki Giroffi. Secretaries were Pearl Service, Rita Trapani, Sue Goldman, Marylou Mohlenhoff and Gail Butta. Newsletter editors included Laurie Landeau, Rita Trapani, Bernadette Deerkoski and now Cindy Scalzo. The board was always filled with wonderful people over the years including the Weismann family: Jerry, Pat, Bobby and Jimmy, Cathy and Ken Wilvert, Gail and Gene Butta, Ken and Annette Leitch, Dr. John and Maribeth Andresen, Scott and Polly Carter, Rita and Jerry Trapani, Ken and Donna Freeman, Robin Foster, Karen Connolly, Stacey and Jim Hoffman, Chris and Jen Stress, Ted Hubbard, Dr. Norm Shetell, Sue and Rich Goldman, Laurie Landeau, Ken and Linda Mott, Bernadette Deerkoski, Bob and Pearl Service, Vicki Giroffi, Jack and Marylou Mohlenhoff, Charlie Arciello, Cindy and Ray Scalzo, Mope McGuinness, Ann Marie McCauley, and Debbie Neumann. Lou Maggio has been our Webmaster and Salli Maggio has helped sell raffles, Tracey Carpenter Berkey started our Facebook page.

We have lost some great members: most recently Lou Voellm, Ken Mott, Ken Leitch, Jerry and Pat Weismann, Ted Hubbard, Dr. John Andresen, Dr. Norm Shetell and Helen, Kay Raka, Carol Voellm, Jack and Marylou Mohlenhoff, Jim Foote aka Teddy Roosevelt, Bob Willumson, Ken Freeman, Pat Garret, Fred Morello, Rich Goldman, Buster McGill, Mary O'Rourke and James and Peggy Blackwell.

Of course we had the privilege to drive in beautiful venues all over Long Island, Old Bethpage Village, Caumsett, Brookhaven, Rockefeller, Hallockville, Hecksher and Connetquot State Parks, Sandpiper Farm, Southhaven, Muttontown Preserve, Old Westbury Gardens, Old Westbury University, Groton Place Farm, East Hampton, the Hampton Classic, Foxglove Farm, Martha Clara Vineyards, Sue and John Kujawski's farm, Mohlenhoff Nursery, Sagamore Hill, The Museums at Stony Brook, Stony Brook Village, Old Field Farm Sands Point Preserve, and many more. We have worked with the Museums at Stony Brook, Friends of Connetquot, Smithtown Hunt, Meadowbrook Polo Club, Islip Horsemens Assn., Nassau-Suffolk Horsemens Assn., Nassau and Suffolk counties and have been part of the LI Fair for over 30 years to showcase carriage driving to many. We were featured on News 12 a few times. We hosted two CAA conferences. We have supported the Carriage Assn. of America, American Driving Society, Driving for the Disabled, and the LI Museums of Art, History and Carriages. Most recently we adopted a carriage at the Museum, cementing our legacy there. This Long Island cart reflects our logo, designed by Rita Trapani.

Thanks to the generous land owners who opened their properties and homes to us. We are proud chapters of both the CAA and the ADS.

Without the support of all these great folks and many, many more who were members and friends, the PDC survived through good and tough times over our forty years. Today we celebrate all the past and current members and officers and it's been our honor to know and serve with you all. PDC has so much to be proud of, as we are one of the longest running clubs in America.

Respectfully Jerry and Rita Trapani