

# Gala Celebration Azurest Celebrates Fifty Years

by Annette Hinkle

The Azurest Property Owners Association (APOA) celebrated the 50th Anniversary of the African-American resort community with a gala celebration last Saturday, August 23.

Over 250 people attended the celebration, held under a tent at the Azurest Beach from 7 to 11 p.m. In addition to Azurest residents, neighbors from the nearby communities of Sag Harbor Hills and Ninevah were there to join in the celebration, as well as Sag Harbor Mayor Pierce Hance and Village Trustee Brian Gilbride.

According to a chronicle of Azurest's early years, based on oral history and research by the APOA, the community traces its beginnings to the 1930's and early 1940's, when young, middle-class African-Americans, many from Brooklyn, began visiting Sag Harbor during the summer. The visitors had heard of Sag Harbor's Eastville neighborhood, one of the oldest African-American and Indian settlements on Long Island.

One early renter was Maude Kenney Meredith Terry of Brooklyn, born in Lynchburg, Virginia in 1887. She spent her summers in Eastville and often visited the beach by way of a path through the woods. Her walks inspired a vision of homes among the trees.

Mrs. Terry began to search for the owner of the 20 wooded acres between Hampton Street and Gardiner's Bay and found Elsie Gale of Huntington. Mrs. Gale's son, Daniel, had been unsuccessful in his attempts to sell the property. Mrs. Terry approached Daniel Gale with a plan to subdivide the property into lots which she promised to help sell through her network of colleagues and friends. The first survey of approximately one half of the tract was filed on November 13, 1947 and "Azurest" was born. Mrs. Terry selected the name after considering Heavenly Peace, Blue Rest, and Blue Haven.

Mr. Gale gave immediate consideration to prospective buyers who were referred by Mrs. Terry. A second survey was filed for the re-



mainder of the land on December 3, 1948. But Mr. Gale could no longer devote the time needed to sell the lots.

Mrs. Terry, along with James Smith and Dorothy Spaulding formed Azurest, Inc., and the group made an agreement with Mr. Gale that for every lot sold by them on his behalf, they would sell a lot for themselves.

Azurest's streets were named by Mrs. Terry in honor of her family and in commemoration of the heritage of African-Americans and Indians in Sag Harbor.

"In the days when I came out, we didn't envision these as year round homes," says Mrs. Helen Logue Aubry, one of Azurest's founding residents. "We came so our children could have a summer out of New York City. It was close enough for husbands to commute."

"This was really a community of women and children from Monday through Friday," recalls Mrs. Aubry. "Then on Friday the husbands came. We all knew each other from the city. If there was one mother on that beach, we knew that every child regardless of whose family it was, was well taken care of. The women chatted, read and knitted. On Friday night it took on a different atmosphere."

"There were no invitations to parties then, as long as you saw lights and heard music, you knew all were welcome. It was a great time in our



250 people came to celebrate the 50th anniversary of Azurest and pay tribute to some of its founders including (top) Thomasine Smith, Muriel Long, Anna Fultz, Helen Logue Aubry, Irma Hicks and Adele Hairston, who were being lauded by Audrey Gaul at right. In rear are NY City Councilwoman Helen Marshall, and Lynn Hendy, the gala's chairperson. In photo above, Barbara Wilson (l) presents APOA President Andrea Cottman with flowers as Ms. Marshall looks on. denis carr photos

lives," says Mrs. Aubry whose children and grandchildren were here to celebrate with her. "To me it's surpassed only by the serenity and safety I feel here at my age. It's been a very rewarding experience."

## Express to Launch Sag Harbor Online

by Bryan Boyhan

Beginning this weekend, the Sag Harbor Express will launch an electronic Internet publication called Sag Harbor Online. Designed for readers who have access to the World Wide Web, the new publication will feature the week's top news stories as reported in the Sag Harbor Express, as well as offer an expanded calendar of events, links to stories on arts and entertainment, the weekly newspaper's classified advertising section and letters to the editor enabling readers to view the section, or correspond with the paper directly via e-mail.

Designed by staff at the Express after consultation with local residents and business owners, the site is being built by Hamptons Online and will be featured on their website. Created largely for readers who do not have immediate access to a copy of the weekly newspaper, or people who are considering a visit to Sag Harbor and want to learn more about the community, the site will not only have a news section that will feature daily updates to stories, but will provide a wide variety of

resource information.

In an effort to introduce the village to those who have never been here before, included will be a walking tour with photographs showing the community and links to information about the village's museums. Plus, there will be a section on recreational opportunities, with links to stories on golf, hiking and swimming in and around Sag Harbor.

The newspaper's seasonal magazines, including Summer Expressions, will be available through the website as well as feature stories on local residents and organizations.

And for those who may have missed a back issue, or are researching a particular topic, the past two years of Sag Harbor Expresses are available through the website's library and are searchable by word. You will also be able to subscribe to the Sag Harbor Express via the Internet.

Recognizing that people's habits are changing, as are the means by which they get information to plan trips and vacations, Sag Harbor Online also offers sections listing hotels and accom-

modations in the area, restaurants and other businesses, and will be able to link to other sites operated by local businesses and institutions.

In the immediate future, the site

### Sag Harbor HistoricFest returns

continued from page 1

demonstration of one of the community's oldest crafts, carving scrimshaw.

But the rest of the weekend will be filled with events that have become popular over the years. Starting off the Fest will be a benefit clam bake on the grounds of the Sag Harbor Whaling Museum on Friday night.

Saturday will see the elimination rounds of the annual whaleboat races. Finals will be on Sunday afternoon. Contestants should call The Sag Harbor Express to enter. Also on Saturday the Community Band will play on the green at Long Wharf and the Sag Harbor Fire Department will host a benefit cocktail party for their museum at the Main Fire House.

The Eastville Community Historical

will offer expanded information of the Sag Harbor HistoricFest planned for September 19-20.

The site will be available at [www.sagharboronline.com](http://www.sagharboronline.com).

Society will lead a pair of walking tours through one of Long Island's oldest African and Native American communities, at 10 a.m. and 3 p.m. which will be preceded by a lecture and exhibit at St. David's A.M.E. Zion Church. And the Historic Committee of the First Presbyterian Church will sponsor a walking tour of some of the village's most important historical sites.

Also on Sunday will be pony rides, face painting and a juggler on the lawn of the Custom House, courtesy of the Sag Harbor Youth Committee, and the annual clam shucking contest to determine "Shucker of the Year." Contact Bayview Marine to register.

Ongoing events include tours of a U.S. Coast Guard ship, and a food sale by local Scouts, and tours of the Whaling Museum, Custom House, Fire Museum and Old Jail House.

## Town denies benefit at winery

continued from page 3

hold such an event, especially at a time when the town is purchasing the property for the purpose of preserving open space. She also pointed out that changes in the traffic patterns on the Turnpike demand a strong police presence, but Halsey said he had been informed that a private security firm would be patrolling the area for this event. That, contended Ferguson, is not enough.

"It is a very heavily traveled [road], and we are a neighborhood that has a lot of kids out at dusk, and my feeling is that were there to be any consideration of this special event permit that it should not be allowed unless there were a Southampton Town Police presence," she said. "The addition of 400 to 500 cars on the pike in a concentrated period of time in a night time activity in my opinion constitutes a

danger to the public safety."

Ferguson also questioned the prospect of the Moebias Syndrome Foundation's plans to go forward with their event when they have not even been issued a special event permit. Under the town's special events law, a permit must be applied for at least 30 days prior to the event. In the case of the Moebias Syndrome Foundation, their application came to town 15 days before the scheduled event.

"The very idea that an event of this scale would be considered for organization without there being in existence in their hands a permit that allows them to use the space they were anticipating for a 1,000-person event, I find astonishing," said Ferguson. Halsey concurred with this statement and vowed that no longer will any special event permits be accepted if applied for less than 30 days in advance.

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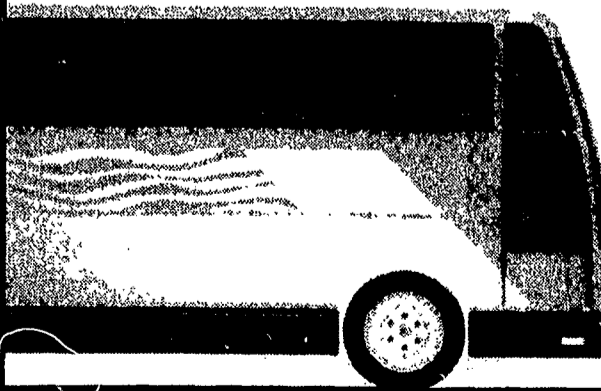
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