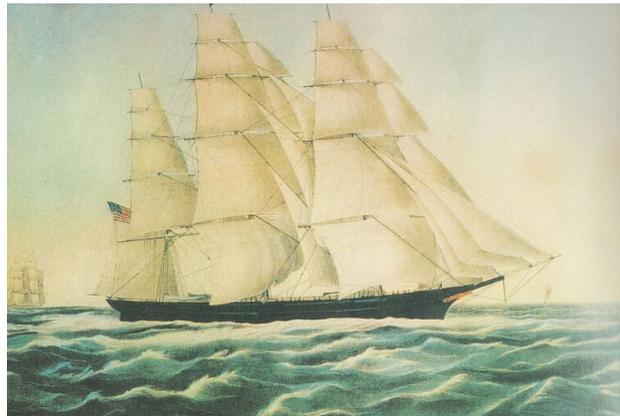




Dickerson Creek is so named for the Dickerson family that had a farm along the Creek. The Dickerson ferry was used to transport livestock and equipment back and forth between the farmlands. Elliott Dickerson, born in 1905, lived most of his life on Shelter Island and farmed the family's land. In 1986, as a participant in the Shelter Island Historical Society's Oral History project, he said that the Creek was originally called Tuthill, but the federal government came along to do some charting of the waterways and decided too many properties bore the Tuthill name and changed it.



Elliott Dickerson's ancestor was Captain Nathan Peter Dickerson born in 1830. The Captain at 14 joined a whaling vessel and later entered the merchant marine service. At the young age of 19 he became a second mate on the ship Hudson. This vessel sank off Newfoundland, but Dickerson and the rest of the crew were rescued. At 21 he was first mate of the celebrated clipper, Flying Cloud. On its maiden voyage in 1851 from New York to San Francisco, it exceeded the world's record by 24 hours. On its 4th voyage it reduced its time to 89 days 8 hours, a record never to be beaten. It was a treacherous journey that included going around Cape Horn and for this reason the Flying Cloud made headlines. As to Captain Nathan Peter Dickerson, he left his seafaring days behind him in 1858. He subsequently became the Island's Highway

Commissioner for many years and Overseer of the Poor. Dickerson Road (now known as Midway Road) was laid out in 1886 while he was Highway Commissioner.

In *The Menantic Dickersons — A Narrative History* (December 30, 2003), compiled by John (Jack) Dickerson, he relates that two of the sons, “Albert Sr. and Fred farmed most of the land on Menantic Road which is the north-south route from the Heights area to West Neck Bay.” He goes on, “The area at the southern end of Menantic Road is now known as Montclair Colony and served for many years as a summer community of vacation homes for wealthy residents of Montclair, New Jersey.”

Stories

A more modern story of the area tells of John Snyder’s purchase of property near Dickerson Creek. He built a spectacular house designed by famed Architect Bertrand Goldberg in 1952 by using prefabricated components that were delivered to the site. John Snyder was the Chief Executive of the Pressed Steel Car Company which manufactured Goldberg’s Unicell freight cars and Unishelter homes. He used this experience in utilizing prefabricated components from the Unishelter program to create the concept of using prefabricated units, complete with bathroom, kitchen, plumbing and HVAC. “The sections were fabricated in Chicago, shipped by rail, then by boat, and finally assembled on Shelter Island. The prefabricated elements were built of naturally finished mahogany plywood, which gave the exterior a dramatic sheen. The interior of the main house featured a massive stone fireplace and flagstone floors. The natural materials provided a dramatic contrast to the glass and steel exterior of the main living space. The focal point of the house was a dramatic cantilever, composed of the prefabricated units, which juttred out over Long Island Sound. A man-made beach became a landing area for amphibious airplanes used to transport onlookers between New York City and the ‘demonstration house.’” (BertrandGoldberg.org)

The house is no longer here, but what a spectacular sight this monolith must have made as you came out of the Creek and into West Neck Harbor in 1952.



View of Snyder house extending out over the water, 1952



SHELTER ISLAND REPORTER - 06.25.2021 - FEATURED STORY Dickerson Creek preserve opened to public: Ribbon cutting celebrates state, county, local partnership

- By Julie Lane



“Long after we’re gone, people are going to say, “Wow!”

That’s how Community Preservation Fund Advisory Board Chairman Gordon Gooding described sites around the Island that have been saved from development and opened to the public.

Sunny skies attended the ribbon cutting at the Dickerson Creek property on June 23 that brought state, county and local officials along with a host of others to the site at Tarkettle Road and Grace’s Lane.

The site was acquired in 2006 before the current CPF Advisory Board was assigned, according to former supervisor and CPF member Jim Dougherty. He thanked the current CPF Advisory Board for their ongoing stewardship of the preservation program.

“It’s what makes Shelter Island a unique and wonderful place to be,” the former supervisor said.

Mr. Gooding credited Mr. Dougherty with the purchase along with Suffolk County officials for a 50-50 purchase of the site.

The current CPF Advisory Board members worked to shepherd through the steps needed for a new bulkhead and establish what is now a serene picnic area overlooking Dickerson Creek. Mr. Gooding noted that just across the water the County had provided matching funds for the acquisition of the Turkem’s Rest Preserve.

Assemblyman Fred Thiele Jr. (I-Sag Harbor) and County Legislator Bridget Fleming (D-Noyac) praised the cooperation among state, county and town officials that has made land preservation possible.

Ms. Fleming said the land preservation effort on the East End is unparalleled, noting colleagues in the western part of Suffolk County have no programs of this kind.

Ms. Fleming had the honor of wielding the golden scissors to cut the ribbon at the ceremony.

Mr. Thiele told the local officials, including the Town Board and CPF Advisory Board, what a pleasure it always was to partner with them on so many projects. It's with great appreciation, he said, that he refers to the town as "the independent nation of Shelter Island."

He noted that since the CPF program began in 1999, \$1.7 billion has come to East End town coffers, which has resulted in preserving more than 10,000 acres of land.

Julie Lane has been a reporter for Times Review Media Group since 2000 and has covered Shelter Island since 2011. She holds an undergraduate degree in journalism and political science from the University of Rhode Island and an MBA from Long Island University.