



PRESERVATION LONG ISLAND

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Preservation Long Island Convenes Virtual Public Roundtables to Explore the Legacy of Enslavement on Long Island

This initiative will engage the public in developing new interpretive programming at the historic Joseph Lloyd Manor, where Jupiter Hammon, one of the earliest published African American writers in the United States, lived, wrote, and was enslaved.



Image caption: Joseph Lloyd Manor, Courtesy of Preservation Long Island

Cold Spring Harbor, NY— Preservation Long Island, a regional preservation advocacy nonprofit, announces a series of public roundtable events to be convened virtually as part of [The Jupiter Hammon Project](#). This multi-year initiative aims to expand interpretive and educational

programming at the [Joseph Lloyd Manor](#), an 18th-century manor house in Lloyd Harbor, and a site of Black enslavement that is owned and operated by Preservation Long Island.

The goal of the project is to engage the site more fully to reflect the multiple events, perspectives, and people that shaped the house's history including [Jupiter Hammon](#) (1711–ca.1806), one of the earliest published African American authors who composed his most well-known works while enslaved at the house.

“We came to the conclusion that it was time to rethink the refurnishing of the house, the stories we told, and how we were engaging visitors. From the beginning, we recognized that Jupiter Hammon is a nationally significant individual in history and not many people know about him. We acknowledge that is due in part to us not doing enough as an organization to elevate his history and voice,” said Lauren Brincat, Curator at Preservation Long Island.

Jupiter Hammon's life and writings offer an exceptionally nuanced view of slavery and freedom on Long Island before and after the American Revolution. His works are especially significant because most literature and historical documents from the eighteenth century were not written from an enslaved person's point of view.

“As one of the significant early examples of African American literature before the republic, Jupiter Hammon's work is a masterful ethical critique on slavery, religion, and humane relationship,” said Dr. Georgette Grier-Key, Executive Director and Chief Curator of Eastville Community Historical Society and a member of the Jupiter Hammon Project Advisory Council.

The core component and first phase of the Jupiter Hammon Project begins with a series of three facilitated public forums with a panel of national experts to discuss the legacy of enslavement on Long Island, Jupiter Hammon's life and work in that context, and how these ideas can be interpreted at a historic house museum. The moderated discussions will be followed by a series of virtual break-out sessions, allowing project stakeholders to reflect on and respond to the conversation.

“Working with our community was important and it is a large part of this initiative,” said Brincat.

Cordell Reaves, Historic Preservation and Interpretation Analyst for the NY State Department of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation will serve as moderator for the project's three roundtable panel discussions. “Curatorial or education departments cannot develop a project like this in their own silos and expect the public to show up at the end and totally support it. I think that the staff of Preservation Long Island have been very mindful of involving the public and giving the public the chance to give immediate feedback throughout the project,” said Reaves.

“Content from these sessions will ultimately inform a new interpretive plan for Joseph Lloyd Manor”, said Alexandra Wolfe, Preservation Long Island's Executive Director.

Through this multi-year project Preservation Long Island will foster collaborative relationships with community stakeholders so that their voices continue to shape Preservation Long Island's mission of stewardship, advocacy, and education.

The three public roundtables are scheduled for the late summer and fall of 2020 (links to event details provided below).

Each of the roundtable events will include supplemental content provided by regional partner organization co-hosts: [Weeksville Heritage Center, Brooklyn](#); [Suffolk County Historical Society, Riverhead](#) and [Lloyd Harbor Historical Society, Huntington](#).

Following the roundtables, participants will have the opportunity to participate in “Office Hours” programs with each expert panelist for individual Q&A’s and a deeper discussion about the topics presented during the roundtable.

“One of the advantages of a virtual platform is that we will be able to accommodate a lot more attendees. We will also have a lot more recorded documentary material that can be translated into educational content”, said Wolfe.

“I think that the level of dialogue with this project is definitely something that can and should be replicated at other projects, regardless of the subject matter,” said Reaves.

Preservation Long Island hopes the Jupiter Hammon Project can serve as a case-study model for other sites of enslavement in the region to learn from as they transform their own interpretive narratives and programming.

In the lead up to the public roundtables, Preservation Long Island has created a comprehensive [Jupiter Hammon Resources](#) page that provides links to original historic documents, including digital access to some of Hammon’s original handwritten works as well as a selection of interactive databases, websites and academic resources.

Video clips exploring the history surrounding Jupiter Hammon's legacy, featuring Preservation Long Island staff and moderated interviews with historians, researchers, and other experts, are available on Preservation Long Island’s [Vimeo channel](#) dedicated to the Jupiter Hammon Project. New episodes will be updated regularly leading up to the Roundtable events.

Preservation Long Island’s [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#) pages are an additional resource for updated content and news about the Jupiter Hammon Project.
#jupiterhammonproject

Jupiter Hammon Project Virtual Public Roundtable Dates, Regional Co-hosts and Expert Panelists:

Roundtable Moderator:

Cordell Reaves, Historic Preservation and Interpretation Analyst, NY State Department of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation

Roundtable #1: [Long Island in the Black Atlantic World](#) (August 15, 2020)

Why did Long Island have one of the largest enslaved populations in the North during the 17th and 18th centuries?

Co-Host: Weeksville Heritage Center, Brooklyn

Panelists:

- Jennifer Anderson, PhD, Associate Professor of History, Stony Brook University
- Nicole Maskiell, PhD, Assistant Professor of History at the University of South Carolina
- Craig Wilder, PhD, Barton L. Weller Professor of History, Massachusetts Institute of Technology

Roundtable #2: [The Voice of Jupiter Hammon](#) (September 19, 2020)

What do Jupiter Hammon's writings tell us about him as an educated individual surviving within the structure of enslavement?

Co-Host: Suffolk County Historical Society, Riverhead

Panelists:

- Jesse Erickson, PhD, Assistant Professor and Senior Assistant Librarian, University of Delaware.
- Malik Work, NYC based actor-teacher-writer-emcee, founding member of the jazz/hip hop conglomerate: The Real Live Show
- Phillip M. Richards, PhD, Professor of English (emeritus), Colgate University

Roundtable #3: [Confronting Slavery at Joseph Lloyd Manor](#) (October 24, 2020)

How can Preservation Long Island best engage Joseph Lloyd Manor visitors with Jupiter Hammon's story, the region's history of enslavement, and segregation on Long Island today?

Co-Host: Lloyd Harbor Historical Society, Huntington

Panelists:

- Dina Bailey, CEO, Mountaintop Vision
- Jessa Krick, Associate Director of Collections, Historic Hudson Valley
- Joseph McGill, Founder, Slave Dwelling Project

Jupiter Hammon Project Advisory Council:

- Irene Moore, Chairperson, Huntington African American Historic Designation Council
- Melisa Rousseau, Trustee, Huntington Historical Society and Center for Social Justice & Human Understanding
- Denice Evans-Sheppard, Executive Director, Oyster Bay Historical Society
- Zenzelé Cooper, Program Manager, Weeksville Heritage Center
- Dr. Georgette Grier-Key, Executive Director, Eastville Community Historical Society
- Charleen Francis, Education Chair, NAACP Huntington Branch
- Dr. David Byer-Tyre, Director of Community Development, Hofstra University
- Edward Dugger, Director of College Counselling, Friends Academy
- Julia Keiser, Resource Center Manager, Weeksville Heritage Center
- Joan McGee, Preservation Long Island Chief Educator

The Jupiter Hammon Project is supported by the following sponsors:

DeLaCour Family Foundation
Lloyd Harbor Historical Society
Rauch Foundation
Weeksville Heritage Center
New York State Council on the Arts
Humanities New York
Suffolk County Historical Society

[About Preservation Long Island](#)

Preservation Long Island is a not-for-profit organization that is dedicated to celebrating and preserving Long Island's diverse cultural and architectural heritage through advocacy, education, and the stewardship of historic sites and collections.

<http://preservationlongisland.org>

Preservation Long Island maintains and interprets historic sites and collections that embody various aspects of Long Island's history including:

Joseph Lloyd Manor, Lloyd Harbor <http://preservationlongisland.org/joseph-lloyd-manor/>
Custom House, Sag Harbor <http://preservationlongisland.org/custom-house/>
Sherwood-Jayne Farm, Setauket <http://preservationlongisland.org/sherwood-jayne-farm/>
Old Methodist Church and Exhibition Gallery
<http://preservationlongisland.org/methodist-church/>

[About Joseph Lloyd Manor](#), Lloyd Harbor, New York

Completed in 1767 for Joseph Lloyd, the third lord of the Manor of Queens Village, the Joseph Lloyd Manor House was the seat of a 3,000-acre agricultural estate. The British occupied it during the Revolutionary War and it is where Jupiter Hammon, an enslaved man, and the first published African American author, lived and wrote.

[About Weeksville Heritage Center](#), Brooklyn, New York

Weeksville is a multidisciplinary museum dedicated to preserving the history of the 19th-century African American community of Weeksville, Brooklyn—one of America's many free black communities.

<https://www.weeksvillesociety.org/>

[About Suffolk County Historical Society](#), Riverhead, New York

Founded in 1886, the mission of The Suffolk County Historical Society is to collect, preserve and interpret the ongoing history of Suffolk County, NY and its people.

<http://suffolkcountyhistoricalsociety.org/>

[About Lloyd Harbor Historical Society](#), Huntington, New York

Founded in 1974, the Lloyd Harbor Historical Society is dedicated to preserving the 1711 Henry Lloyd Manor House, the birthplace of Jupiter Hammon; the George Weir Barn; and the surrounding gardens and grounds.

<http://www.lloydharborhistoricalsociety.org/>

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Additional images available.

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