



HISTORICAL SOCIETY *of the* NEW YORK COURTS

History of Suffolk County

Bench and Bar



Hon. Peter Fox Cohalan

The Historical Society of the New York Courts Suffolk County Legal History

Peter Fox Cohalan

I. County Origins

- a. General History
- b. Legal Beginnings
- c. The Strong Family
- d. Timeline
- e. Judges and Notable Attorneys of the past, prior to 1950
- f. Notable Judges/Justices
- g. Notable Cases

II. County Courthouses

- a. District Courts
- b. Town and Village Courts

III. The Bench and the Bar

- a. Appellate Division
- b. District Administrative Judges
- c. New York Supreme Court
- d. Supreme Court Justices to 2022
- e. Living Notable Judges/Justices
- f. Surrogates Court
- g. Some County Judges since the American Revolution
- h. Family Court
- i. District Court Original Judges
- j. District Court Judges deceased and those ascended to higher Court
- k. District Court Judges
- l. District Attorneys

IV. Suffolk County Bar Association

- a. Notable families with three generation membership
- b. Past Presidents
- c. Prominent Lawyers of the 20th Century
- d. Notable Women Lawyers
- e. Lawyers elected to U.S. Congress
- f. Some Notable Lawyers
- g. Other Bar Associations

V. Resources

- a. Suffolk County Court Records & Law Libraries
- b. Suffolk County Town Historians
- c. Bibliography

Acknowledgments

With thanks to Hon. Albert Rosenblatt, Judge, New York Court of Appeals (Retired); Hon. Andrew A. Crecca, Suffolk County District Administrative Judge; Hon. Victoria Gumbs-Moore, Family Court Judge; Hon. Philip Goglas, County Court Judge; Valerie Manzo, Esq.; Daniel Driscoll, Esq.; Sarah Jane LaCova, Esq., Executive Director, Suffolk County Bar Association; Gina Piastuck, Suffolk County Archivist.

Special thanks to Georgette Lane Case, Riverhead Town Historian, for her valuable assistance on the history of the Court Houses; Barbara Mills Russell, Brookhaven Town Historian, for her work on the Strong Family; Hon. Pierce Fox Cohalan, District Court Judge; Diane Morrissey-Dabrowski, without her, this document would not have been produced; and most of all my partner, Eileen Montgomery Kremers, whose support is invaluable.

I. County Origins

a. General History

Suffolk County, New York, situated on the Easterly portion of Long Island is one of the original 12 counties of New York, and takes its name from the English Home County of the family of Colonel John Youngs, Colonel of Southold, a delegate to the First Colonial Legislature convened by Sir Thomas Dongan, the Royal Governor of the Province of New York in 1683. This body divided New York into its original 12 counties (L 1683 CH 4).

Today with its population of over 1.5 million people, Suffolk is the most populated County in New York State outside New York City and fourth in all after New York City's Kings (Brooklyn), Queens and New York (Manhattan) Counties. It ranks second in geographical size in the State (U.S. Census 2020).

Besides its traditional maritime and agriculture culture, it today is also a leading New York State scientific and industrial center.

It traces its English roots to the arrival of settlers from Connecticut in 1639/1640 with both Southold and Southampton Towns claiming the distinction of being the first English Town on Long Island.

There is no dispute, however, that in 1639, Lion and Mary Gardiner were the first permanent English settlers on Long Island and New York State when Lion Gardiner bought the 3000-acre Island bearing his family name from local Algonquin Natives. Soon after his purchase, King Charles I of England ratified it making Gardiner, the First Lord of the Manor of Gardiner's Island. It is still in possession of his descendants today.

Lion and Mary's daughter, Elizabeth, was the first English child born in what is now New York State, and one of their descendants, Julia Gardiner of Gardiner Island (1820-1889) was the wife of John Tyler, 10th president of the United States.

When the English settlers arrived at the East End of Long Island, they mistakenly thought that the names of the communities in which the Natives lived were their actual tribal names. However, according to Dr. John Strong, Long Island Historian and Long Island native who is an expert on Long Island Native History, there were no such tribal names. It's a myth... largely provided by outsiders of the original 13 native settlements, 10 were in present day Suffolk County. Most of the names still exist today, e.g., Patchogue, Nissequague, Setauket, Montauket, Shinnecoc, Secatogue, Marsapeague, Corehaug, Manhasset, Martincoc.

By the Treaty of Hartford (1656) Long Island was divided between the Dutch of New Netherlands in the west and the English on the eastern portion of Long Island, with the international boundary near what is today the Nassau-Suffolk Line.

Intermittent quarrels between the English and Dutch settlements led to the outbreak of war in 1660, and in 1664 the English Colonel Sir Richard Nicolls (1624-1672) conquered the territory of New Netherlands. In 1673, the Dutch, for a short time, again took possession of their former territory. The English again exercised their suzerainty in 1674 when the Dutch in the Treaty of Westminster permanently surrendered all their claims to their New York possessions to the English.

In 1683, Sir Thomas Dongan (1634-1715), the Royal Governor of the Province of New York, convened the first colonial legislature. The Legislature divided the Province of New York into 12 counties. Today, Suffolk basically comprises its original boundaries.

During the American Revolution, Suffolk County was the site of a number of skirmishes between the British and the Patriots as the British occupied some of its towns, and in 1778, Suffolk Country was the site of the Culper Spy Ring, George Washington's "eyes and ears" in New York and Connecticut.

In 1790, according to the first U. S. census, Suffolk's population was 16,400.

In 1850, 36,922;

in 1900, 77,582;

in 1940, 197,355;

in 1960, 666,784;

in 1980, 1,284,231;

in 2000, 1,419,369; and

in 2020, 1,525,920 (US decennial census).

b. Legal Beginnings

When in 1683, Sir Thomas Dongan, the Royal Governor of the Province of New York, convened the first Colonial Legislature in New York City he set in motion in a rudimentary form, the beginning of our State legal history as we know it today (L 1683 CH. 4).

It divided the province into 12 counties with Suffolk as one of the original 12, and today it basically retains its original boundaries (L. 1691 CH 12).

The Legislature enacted a Charter of Liberty and Privileges under which people should have a say in the conduct of their local government.

Further, it repealed or amended prior laws concerning Judicial Governance, including the Acts of the Hempstead Convention of 1665, convened by Governor Sir Richard Nicolls, which created on Long Island three judicial districts, i.e., of the 3 Ridings of Yorkshire, with the Towns of what is present day Suffolk County placed in the East Riding of Yorkshire.

Governor Dongan also confirmed the efficacy of Patents for the various Towns on Long Island issued by his predecessors.¹

In 1691 the Supreme Court of Judicature was established and became the New York Supreme Court in 1846. The New York State Constitution of 1777, according to Bailey, basically did not change the established Court.

Where the practice of Law was concerned, according to Frederic White Shepard writing in *Long Island, a History of Two Great Counties Nassau and Suffolk*:

...in the eighteenth century leading practitioners formed a 'Law Society' and provided for the study of law in their offices. Prospective clerks must have two years of college education, must bind themselves for five years and pay a fee of 500 pounds. It was provided that "The sciences necessary for a lawyer are; 1. The English, Latin and French tongues; 2. Writing, Arithmetic, Geometry, Surveying, Merchant's Accounts or Bookkeeping; 3. Chronology, History; 4. Logic and Rhetoric; 5. Divinity; 6. Law of Nature and Nations; 7. Law of England."

However, at least according to the 1804 account of his visit to Riverhead, the Suffolk County seat, New England and New York, the Rev. Timothy Dwight, the Yale college President (1752-1817) observed that the lawyers lot was not happy.

The courthouse, a poor decayed building and a miserable hamlet, containing about ten or twelve houses, stand near the efflux of this river.

The legal business was pretty slow in 1804.

From this account of the Court House you will naturally suspect that the business of lawyers and sheriffs is not here in very great demand, nor in very high reputation. The suspicion is certainly well founded...

¹ Paul Bailey, *A History of Two Great Counties*. Long Island-Nassau and Suffolk, volume 1. Edited by Paul Bailey, Founder and Publisher of the Long Island Forum, Published by Lewis Historical Publishing Company, 1949.

No lawyer, if I am not misinformed, has hitherto been able to get a living in the County of Suffolk (Newsday Long Island History).²

c. Strong Family History



Figure 1 Hon. Selah Brewster Strong, 1792-1872

The illustrious Strong Family of Strong's Neck, Setauket, Town of Brookhaven, Suffolk County, New York, traces its Long Island roots to Selah Strong of Northeastern, Massachusetts (1680-1732) who married Abigail Terry of Southold, Suffolk County in 1702 and settled in Setauket. He was a farmer and the first Justice of the Peace in his family.

His paternal grandfather, Elder John Strong (1605-1699) immigrated from England to Massachusetts in 1630.

Selah Strong's son, Benajah (1715-1772) was the father-in-law of Major General William Floyd (1734-1821), a signer of the Declaration of Independence from Suffolk County.

Another son of Selah Strong I was Thomas Strong (1708-1760), who, as his father, was a farmer and Justice of the Peace in the Town of Brookhaven. He freed his slaves.

Thomas's son, Selah II (1737-1815) was a delegate to the Provincial Congress of May and December 1775, a farmer, Judge of the Court of Common Pleas (County Court) 1783-1793 and New York State Senator 1792-1796.

His son, Thomas Shepard Strong III (1765-1840) was also a Justice of the Peace and the Judge of the County's Court of Common Pleas (1810-1823) and Brookhaven Town Supervisor (1825-1828).

Another son of Thomas Strong III was George Washington Strong (1783-1855), a prominent New York City lawyer.

² Our professional lot has definitely improved since that time—thank goodness. (PFC)

The most prominent member of the Strong family of Attorneys and Judges was Selah Brewster Strong III (1792-1872) who, after studying law in the office of his Uncle George Washington Strong, eventually practiced law in Setauket.

His public offices included Suffolk County District Attorney from 1821-1842 (with a nine-month exception in 1830), U. S Congressman (1843-1845). New York State Supreme Court Justice, 2nd Judicial District and in 1849 and 1859 was ex-officio Judge on the New York Court of Appeals. He was also a delegate to the State Constitutional Convention of 1867.

His sons, Thomas Shepherd Strong IV (1834-1909) and Selah B. Strong IV (1841-1931) were both attorneys practicing law in New York City, and Thomas Shepard Strong's son Selah Brewster Strong V (1873-1945) was Surrogate of Suffolk County (1916-1920) and a New York Supreme Court Justice (1921-1938).

The Strong family possesses a truly remarkable history and lineage, having produced over the course of three centuries, many Suffolk County and New York community leaders and outstanding members of the Bench and Bar, engineers, medical doctors, farmers and businessmen who contributed to the wellbeing of society as good citizens and public servants.

Each generation has left behind a legacy of accomplishment for all to emulate and of which the Strong's can be justly proud.

d. Timeline

- | | |
|-------------|---|
| 1524 | Sailing under the flag of France, Giovanni Verrazzano, an Italian, sailed past Long Island and entered the New York Harbor. |
| 1609 | Henry Hudson, an Englishman employed by the Dutch East India Company, sailed past Long Island and entered New York Harbor. |
| 1639 | Lion and Mary Gardiner became the first permanent English settlers in New York--on Gardiner's Island, a 3000-acre tract, which they bought from the Algonquin Indians. King Charles I later ratified the purchase making Gardiner the first Lord of the Manor of Gardiner's Island. |
| 1657 | The first of two witchcraft charges brought against a woman occurred in East Hampton, Suffolk County. In 1665, the Halls, a husband and wife, of Setauket, Suffolk County, were indicted on charges of witchcraft. |

- 1664** Colonel Sir Richard Nicolls conquered New Netherlands and took possession of what is now New York City and environs.
- 1665** The Hempstead Convention convened by Governor Nicolls divided Long Island into the three Ridings of Yorkshire. Suffolk was placed in the East Riding.
- 1674** After a short time of Dutch repossession, the Dutch lands (which never included Suffolk County) were reconquered by the English and ceded permanently by the Dutch under the Treaty of Westminster.
- 1683** The first Colonial Legislature formed New York into its original 12 counties of which Suffolk was one and abolished the Ridings.
- 1691** New York Supreme Court of Judicature established by the Colonial Legislature.
- 1727/1729** The Colonial Legislature authorized Suffolk County to build a courthouse in Riverhead, and the first court session was held in March 1729.
- 1776** William Floyd of Mastic, Town of Brookhaven, Suffolk County, signed the Declaration of Independence.
- 1777** New York State Constitution made no changes in the Colonial New York Court structure.
- 1778** George Washington's Culper spy ring formed in Suffolk County.
- 1778** New York legislature creates Surrogates Court.
- 1792** Riverhead officially becomes Suffolk County seat.
- 1801** New York State Legislature creates the Office of County District Attorneys.
- 1846** New York State Court of Appeals established as the State's highest Court.
- 1855** Second Suffolk County Court house erected on Griffing Avenue in Riverhead.
- 1870** The New York State Legislature establishes four Appellate Departments of the Supreme Court.
- 1908** Suffolk County Bar Association formed.

- 1913, 1919** Lucy J. Liedke and Syrena Stackpole, first women members of the Suffolk County Bar.
- 1929** Dedication of third Courthouse on Griffing Avenue, Riverhead after 1927 fire destroyed the second Griffing Avenue Courthouse.
- 1958** The Suffolk County Charter approved by the voters establishing the Office of County Executive with the Board of Supervisors as the legislature (L. 1958 Ch. 278).
- 1962** The 10th Judicial District of New York State, established by the legislature, effective January 1, 1963, covering Nassau and Suffolk Counties (L. 1962 Ch. 692).
- 1962** Court Annex added extending Griffing Avenue County Courthouse in Riverhead.
- 1962** Family Courts established statewide by New York State Legislature.
- 1962** Voters approved the establishment of the Suffolk County District Court within the five western Towns of Suffolk County. The five eastern Towns continued Justices of the Peace system.
- 1965** Suffolk County Criminal Bar Association formed, Edward LaFreniere, first President.
- 1969** Hon. Marquette Floyd, first African American Judge elected to District Court in Suffolk County.
- 1969** The Suffolk County Legislature was established replacing the Board of Supervisor after a lawsuit won by Richard C. Cahn, Esq., on basis of “one man, one vote.”
- 1974** Anne F. Mead of Sayville became the first woman elected or appointed to a Suffolk County Court of Record when she joined the Suffolk County District Court.
- 1974** Suffolk County Criminal Courts Building dedicated, later renamed the Hon. Arthur M. Cromarty Criminal Court Building.

- 1981** Usha Srivastava, Esq., became the first Asian Indian in Suffolk County admitted to the New York Bar.
- 1982** Hon. Catherine England, first female Supreme Court Justice in Suffolk County.
- 1983** Hon. Catherine England becomes the first female President of the Suffolk County Bar Association. Her two children, Donna England and Louis England, were also Presidents of the Suffolk County Bar Association.
- 1984** Suffolk County Women's Bar Association formed with Valerie S Manzo, Esq., as first President.
- 1989** Hon. Marquette Floyd, first African American elected to New York State Supreme Court from Suffolk County.
- 1992** Hon. John P. Cohalan, Jr. Court Complex, Central Islip completed.
- 1994** Hon. A. Gail Prudenti elected Surrogate--first women to hold that position.
- 1996** Amistead Long Island, Black Bar Association, formed, first President, Hon. Derrick J. Robinson.
- 2001** Suffolk County Hispanic Bar Association formed, first President, Hon. Philip Goglas.
- 2011** Hon. A. Gail Prudenti appointed New York Chief Administrative Judge, the first woman to hold that position.
- 2020** Hon. Victoria Gumbs-Moore, first elected African American woman to the Suffolk County Family Court.

e. Judges and Notable Attorneys of the past, prior to 1950

Matthias Nicoll (1626-1693)

Lawyer, born Islip Northamptonshire England--was a member of a famous founding family in Suffolk County whose family name lives on in place names in the County. A graduate of Cambridge University. Practiced law in England before coming to New York when he was appointed Mayor of New York City in 1672-1673 by Governor Richard Nicolls. He was also a

Secretary of the Province of New York and served as Speaker of the 1st and 2nd Sessions of the New York Colonial Assembly in 1683. He also was a Judge of the Court of Assizes of the Province.

William Nicoll II (1657-1732)

Islip attorney, Patentee

Attorney General of New York 1687

In 1684-1695, sent by the New York Colonial Assembly to King William to report on the State of the Province.

In 1701, represented Suffolk County in the Colonial Assembly

In 1702, Speaker of the Colonial Assembly--served until 1718 but stayed in the Assembly until his death in 1732

William Nicoll III (1715-1768)

Islip Patentee

1750-1780, Suffolk County Clerk, Inherited estate from his uncle William II; member Colonial Assembly

Ezra L'Hommedieu (1734-1811)

Born Southold, Suffolk County, New York where he practiced law after graduating from Yale.

Delegate from New York to the Continental Congress 1779-1783 and 1788

New York State Assembly 1777-1782

State Senate 1784-1792 and 1794-1809

Chose the Montauk Point Lighthouse site and designed it in 1796

Member of the State Constitutional Convention in 1801 and Regent of the University of the State of New York

Isaac Thompson (1742-1816)

Born Bay Shore, Suffolk County, New York

40-year Magistrate, Town of Islip Justice of the Peace, nearly hanged at his home by British troops in 1779. Member of New York State Assembly

Abraham Woodhull (1750-1826)

Born in Setauket, Suffolk County, New York

Suffolk County Magistrate Judge after the American Revolution; member of George

Washington's Culper spy ring; during the revolution used the pseudonym, Samuel Culper, Sr.

Silas Wood (1769-1847)

Born West Hills, Suffolk County, New York

After graduating from Princeton, he practiced law in Huntington

Suffolk County District Attorney (1818 and 1821)
Member of the United States Congress (1819-1829)
As an author and historian, invented myth of the 13 original Indian tribes on Long Island

John Wood (1819-1886)

Islip Town Justice of Peace. Responsible for naming Sayville
Sayville schoolteacher, Sayville postmaster (1847-1862). Islip Town Supervisor (1873-1881);
during his tenure as supervisor settled the dispute over the ownership of the Great South Bay
bottomlands

Delancey Nicoll (1854-1931)

Attorney

Born on Shelter Island, Suffolk County, New York Graduated from Princeton (1874) and
Columbia Law School (1876); prominent lawyer; District Attorney of New York County (1891-
1893); Vice Chairman Democrat National Committee

Scion of the Nicoll Family who founded two of the ten towns in Suffolk County, one of
Suffolk's original English founding families and founder of the Town of Islip and Shelter Island
of Suffolk Counties ten towns

Selah Brewster Strong (1792-1872) (see Strong Family History)

Henry Parsons Hedges (1817-1911)

Attorney, NY State Assemblyman, a Founder of National Republican Party (1856); Suffolk
County District Attorney (1861-1865). Elected County Judge and Surrogate (1865-1869), re-
elected (1873-1879)

At the age of 80 (1897) published *A History of the Town of East Hampton*

f. Notable Judges/Justices

Selah B. Strong III (1792-1872): Justice New York Court of Appeals (see Strong Family
History)

James Tuthill (1826-1894): Surrogate of Suffolk County (1880-1892); District Attorney (1867-
1875)

Nathan Petty (1842-1917): District Attorney (1878-1884); Surrogate of Suffolk (1892-1903)

Timothy Griffing (1842-1924): a Founder of Suffolk County Bar Association (1908), one of
original three Directors; County Court Judge (1906-1910)

Wilmot Smith (1852-1906): District Attorney; County Court Judge (1891-1995); Supreme Court Justice (1895-1906)

Walter Husted Jaycox (1863-1927): Suffolk County District Attorney (1893-1899); County Court Judge (1902-1906); NYS Supreme Court (1906-1927); Appellate Division (1922-1927)

John R. Vunk (1874-1946): Supreme Court Justice (1932); Suffolk County Court (1912-1918); District Attorney (1937); Democratic leader Suffolk County (1940-1942)

Selah B. Strong V (1873-1945): See Strong Family History

L. Barron Hill (1896-1985): Suffolk County District Attorney (1932-1937); Suffolk County Court (1937-1945); NYS Supreme Court (1946-1966); Appellate Division (1962-1966)

Fred J. Munder (1902-1982): Suffolk County District Attorney (1937-1946); County Court Judge (1947-1957); NYS Supreme Court (1958-1975); Appellate Division (1966-1975)

John P. Cohalan, Jr. (1907-1988): Suffolk County District Attorney (1956-1961); NYS County Court Judge (1962); NYS Supreme Court (1963-1983); Appellate Division (1974-1982); Author of *The Saga of Aaron Burr, the Man who Shot Hamilton* (1985)

Leon Lazer (1921-2018): Legal Scholar, NYS Supreme Court Justice (1972-1986); Appellate Division (1978-1986); Chairman for 35 years of the Pattern Jury Instruction Committee, NYS Courts; Faculty, Touro Law School

Thomas Collier Platt (1925-2017): First Federal District Court Judge from Suffolk County (1974); US District, Eastern District of New York; Chief Judge (1988-1995)

Catherine England (1915-2013): First Woman Supreme Court Justice from Suffolk County (1983); First Woman Family Court Judge (1982); First Woman President of Suffolk Bar Association (1983)

Anne Mead (1926-2010): First Woman to be elected or appointed as New York Court of Record in Suffolk County, District Court (1974); Appointed Member of NYS Public Service Commission (1976-1981)

David Glickman (1902-1997): NYS Supreme Court Justice (1962-1978); District Administrative Judge (1969-1973)

Arthur M. Cromarty (1920-2014): Suffolk County Republican Chairman (1959-1966); NYS Supreme Court Justice (1966-1993); District Administrative Judge (1974-1991)

John G. McCarthy (1924-2001): NYS Supreme Court Justice (1974-1991); major sponsor of NYS No-Fault Insurance Law; NYS Assemblyman

Lawrence J. Bracken (1931-2016): NYS Supreme Court Justice (1973-2008); Appellate Division (1981-2001); Presiding Justice (2001)

Marquette Floyd (1928-2020): first African American Jurist in Suffolk County when elected in 1969 to the County District Court as a Republican; NYS Supreme Court Justice (1989-2004)

Robert Doyle (1935-2022): County Court Judge (1977-1981); Supreme Court Justice (1982-2011); Associate Justice, Appellate Term (2000-2003); Presiding Justice (2003-2004)

Thomas Stark (1924-2014): County Court Judge (1962-1968); Supreme Court Justice (1968-2000); Appellate Term Associate Justice (1985-1998)

Patrick Henry (1929-2018): Suffolk County District Attorney (1977-1989); Supreme Court Justice (1990-2015)

g. Notable Cases

Witchcraft Trials

According to known history, what is now Suffolk County in New York State, was the scene of the only two witchcraft charges leveled in the Province of New York in the 17th century.

The first occurred as a result of the death in February 1657 of Elizabeth Gardiner Howells, the daughter of Lion and Mary Gardiner, the first permanent English residents in the County of Suffolk and New York. Elizabeth was the first English child born in the province. The 16-year-old Elizabeth had been nursing her newborn daughter when she became deliriously ill in the presence of others. She cried out “a witch--a witch”. After her death a few days later the charge of witchcraft was leveled against Goody³ Elizabeth Garlick of Easthampton because Goody Simons informed local officials that Elizabeth Howells had named her as a witch. Three of the local official justices held three weeks of hearings where 13 witnesses’ affidavits were

³ Goody was a shortened version of good wife referred to a married woman.

considered on the charge, but because the judges could not agree on a verdict, they referenced the case to the Hartford, Connecticut Court presided by Governor John Winthrop.⁴

The other witchcraft trial, in October 1665 was the only one ever completely held in what is now New York State. The indictment of Ralph and Mary Hall on charges of witchcraft arose from the death of George Wood, an innkeeper in December 1664.

Their Trial occurred in New York City in the Court of Assizes--the predecessor of today's Supreme Court. The Court of Assizes was comprised of the provincial Governor and his Council.

They pleaded not guilty.

The trial was held in New York City in the Court Assizes--with no public testimony. The jury rendered its non-guilty verdict stating, "we find that there are some suspicions by the evidence of what the woman is charged with, but nothing of value to take away, but with reference to the man, we find nothing considerable to charge him with".⁵

Murderers

The Hanging Tree⁶

Even before the town of Riverhead existed, a horse thief was hanged. The date was September 4, 1786, and the thief's name was John Slocum. Next to be executed was William Erskine for rape on October 5, 1791.

The old gallows was stored in the dark cellar of the Suffolk County Court House at Riverhead. The timbers were hewn from native oak in 1834 in anticipation of the execution of January 16, 1835, of a "worthless fellow" called William Enoch who assaulted and murdered a woman near Old Field in Smithtown. Some reports said that the woman was actually his wife. There is some confusion as to where Enoch was actually hanged, as some newspapers reported it was across the river in Brooklyn, or Riverside, or in the courtyard back of the "Jug". Prior to his execution, Enoch attended *his* funeral that was conducted in front of the courthouse. Usually, people are deceased before funerals are held.

Sir you are Respectfully invited to attend the Execution at Riverhead with me on the 16th of this Month [January] in full uniform if it is Convenient at 10 O'Clock

⁴ The indictment against Goody Garlick were dismissed by the Hartford Court.

⁵ George DeWan- Newsday Long Island-Our story, Pg. 50. New York State archives-1666-1676- series number A O 271. Peter R. and Florence A. Christof, New York State Historical manuscripts. English records of the Court of Assizes for the Colony of New York 1665-1682. Baltimore Genealogical Publishing Co. [1982].

⁶ Compliled courtesy Georgette Lane Case, Riverhead Town Historian.

in the morning. Please to invite Capt. Parsens to Attend with us. I Expect All of my Staff Officers on the side to attend in full uniform With me. This is the Request from our Sheriff. We Expect two Companies of illegible two Companies of Artil[l]ary, one Company of Infantry With the band of illegible to attend. General David Williamson.⁷

The next took place on July 2, 1836. The murderer, a man by the name of Hallock, was captured by Sheriff John Clark, tried at Riverhead and hanged. This murder produced the greatest sensation that was ever created on Long Island, at least up to that time. The execution was reported as far away as Maryland and Rhode Island.

In July 1840, Sheriff Davis and Mr. Brush, presumably he was the hangman, publicly executed Sam Johnson, who murdered his wife. The gallows stood in Brooklyn, near the county seat and the farmers flocked to the scene in holiday attire. Dr. Joseph H. Roy, of Huntington, a lifelong friend of Walt Whitman, appeared as an official witness to the execution.

Three years later Austin Geisler, who also went by the name Krou, murdered Alexander Smith and his wife, an aged couple. Mr. Smith was sitting before the huge open fireplace with his feet on his cane. When the murderer approached from behind and dealt the unsuspecting man a blow on the head with a sledgehammer. Mrs. Smith was murdered after a terrible struggle. The older man was murdered for the money he had received that very day from the sale of a pair of oxen. Geisler left without any money, but a short time later was captured at Mt. Sinai. Geisler was executed by Sheriff Henry T. Penny, June 7, 1844.

In 1852 the scaffold was again erected, this time for the hanging of Charles “Black Chas.” Scudder, who murdered a Commack woman for her money. He was arrested by Stephen J. Wilson and executed October 29, 1852.

Nicholas Behan paid his death penalty on the old gallows December 15, 1854. He was convicted of the murder of James Wickham and wife of Cutchogue. Behan was a “hardened wretch.” When sentenced by Judge Selah B. Strong, he replied in an insulting manner: “Thank yer, Jedge. When I’m dead you can have my hair for a wig.” Sheriff Phillips and Stephen J. Wilson of Babylon carried out the execution.

Since 1854 the old scaffold has been undisturbed. Not because there have been no murders in Suffolk County, but because, of the inactivity of people’s attorneys or a disposition to cry down capital punishment, offenders have been allowed to go ‘unwhipped of justice.’ The old scaffold is as sound as ever.

⁷ *The Winterthur Library, Delaware, Joseph Downs Collection of Manuscripts and Printed Ephemera Henry Francis DuPont, Winterthue Museum.*

The Hawkins Case

The last hanging to take place in Suffolk County was in the 1880s. The scene was the fenced-in backyard of the County Jail at Riverhead. Sheriff Robert S. Petty did not actually spring the trap, a member of that family informed the public. Who the official hangman was, no one was able to determine Francis Asbury Hawkins, a resident of Islip town, was the person sentenced to death.

Hawkins was employed in his uncle's store and lived with his mother, a wealthy widow, whose rather large home was on the outskirts of Bay Shore.

When Hawkins began keeping company with a young woman, much to his mother's annoyance! Relations between them became strained. Although the young man's attentions to his young maid continued, he made peace with his mother. To bind this new-found peace, he took his mother out driving in the carriage on the evening of October 1, 1887.

What his mother didn't know was that before starting out supposedly for an enjoyable ride her son had placed a gun in the carriage. Somewhere along the road he deliberately shot his mother. He hid the body and returned home where he retired for the night. His subsequent strange actions and the unaccountable absence of his mother quickly placed suspicion upon him.

The District Attorney had no difficulty proving the case against Hawkins. The attorney's defense strategy was to claim insanity. What the public saw was a man who testified about the murder of his mother without emotion. The death sentence was passed, and Sheriff Petty was instructed to set up the county gallows. Since the gallows hadn't been used in a number of years it wasn't in sturdy condition, so a gallows was borrowed from the Tombs in New York to perform Suffolk County's last legal hanging.

Lack of interest described what the crowd saw as Hawkins walked to the gallows. The execution of Francis Asbury Hawkins was not the end of the story, but will not be retold here. If your curiosity has been piqued, the local papers' report of the autopsy makes for *sensational* reading.

Burials

No factual proof has been found to substantiate that indigent prisoners were buried in Potter's Field on what is now the southeast corner of Griffing Avenue and Railroad Avenue. However, a newspaper article indicated the remains of a body had been found while Yetter and Moore were digging on the land to put in a basement for their bottling works around 1895. The

body was identified as Enoch by several elderly residents, who remembered the leather boots on the corpse. Henry Griffin, proprietor of the Griffin house, regaled the news reporters anew with the details of the hanging.

Yannacone v. Dennison (285 NYS 2D 476 [Supreme Suffolk], 1966)

Carol Meyer Yannacone, the Plaintiff, is the wife of the prominent Patchogue Attorney Victor John Yannacone, a leader and ultimately successful litigator in the effort to outlaw the use of DDT. He is a pioneer in the field of Environmental Law, a term he coined.⁸

Carol Yannacone's lawsuit arose from her own childhood interest in protecting her local environment in Yaphank, Suffolk County, New York. As an adult in the 1960s, she observed the effect of DDT on her "beloved" local lake which was evident from the Suffolk County Mosquito Control Commission employees dumping two tank loads of DDT into the lake.⁹

While the lawsuit was at first not successful, it led to the eventual ban on the use of DDT nationwide.

Bianchi v. Griffing

After the U.S. Supreme Court decision *Baker v. Carr* 369 U.S. 186 requiring States to reapportion their Legislatures and Federal Congressional Districts to have equal representation for elected State and Federal House of Representative Districts, on the basis of "one man one vote," Richard C. Cahn, a brilliant Suffolk County lawyer, brought the first lawsuit in the nation to require the application of *Baker v. Carr* to the local level.

The Suffolk County Board of Supervisors had governed the affairs of the County since the 18th century. The Board was comprised of the County's ten Town Supervisors each with one vote, i.e., the Supervisor of the Town of Islip, with over 170,000 residents had the same vote as the Supervisor of the Town of Shelter Island with 1,300 residents, as per the US Census 1960.

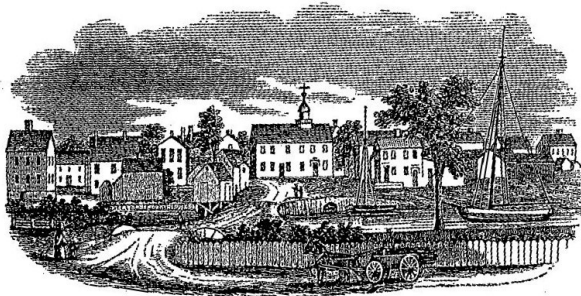
⁸ Yannacone interview with Karl Grossman in the Shelter Island Reporter, January 2, 2022.

⁹ Unpublished book by Francis "Hank" Hilton S.J. PhD., August 24, 2004.

As a result of Mr. Cahn's outstanding efforts, the Suffolk County Legislature with 18 members, each with one equal vote, replaced the Board of Supervisors as of 1970, thereby becoming the first local government to do so.

II. County Courthouses

a. District Courts



View of Riverhead, approaching from the South, published in 1842. The central building, with Cupola, is the Court House erected 1727-1729.

Figure 2 First Courthouse, built 1727-1729

Suffolk County has had a number of Courthouses, according to the excellent and all-encompassing research of Georgette Lane Case, the Riverhead Town Historian. The first one dates from 1727 when the Colonial Legislature on November 25 authorized the erection of a courthouse and jail in Riverhead. This first courthouse building cost 400 English pounds and was erected in 1728 at the head of Bridge Street (now Peconic Avenue).

The first court session was held in the new courthouse.

By 1807, the court's business had so increased, the County Board of Supervisors voted to enlarge the courthouse, completed in 1819. One reason supposedly given for this action was to separate criminals from the debtor prisoners.

In 1854, the State Legislature authorized the County to sell the 1727 building and erect a new one made of brick and stone, at a cost of \$17,800.00 at the southeast corner of Griffing Avenue and Court Street, Riverhead, New York.

In the July 20, 1855 issue of the *Huntington Long Islander*, page 2., citing an



Figure 3 Second Courthouse, built 1855

article in the *New York Times*- it was written:

The New courthouse is a handsome building and well adapted to the intended purpose.¹⁰

On April 21, 1927, the second courthouse burned down after 72 years use and a third



Figure 4 Third Courthouse, built 1927-1929 and currently serves at the Supreme Court

¹⁰ Paul Bailey, *History of Two Great Counties*.

courthouse replaced it at the same site at a 1928 cost of \$650,000.00.¹¹ It was dedicated, August 25, 1929.

In 1962, the Court Annex was erected on Griffing Avenue, next door to the courthouse.



Figure 5 Arthur M. Cromarty Court Complex

In 1972, work began on a fourth courthouse, an impressive edifice in Riverside, Town of Southampton across the Peconic River from Riverhead. It was officially dedicated on October 22, 1975,¹² originally named the Suffolk Criminal Court Building, years later it was renamed the Hon. Arthur M. Cromarty Court Complex in honor of the District Administrative Judge from 1974-1991, which includes the Surrogate's Court at 320 Center Drive, Riverhead, New York and the Superior Criminal Court as well.

The John P. Cohalan, Jr. Court Complex, is an eight-story structure located at 400 Carleton Avenue, Central Islip, New York. Construction began in 1989 and was completed in 1992. It houses the District Administrative Office, the Supreme Court, County Court, Family Court and a District Court for criminal matters.



Figure 6 John P. Cohalan, Jr. Court Complex

The Suffolk County District Court covering the five Western Towns of Suffolk County started functioning on January 1, 1964. District Courthouses are as follows:

First District, Criminal
John P. Cohalan, Jr Court Complex
400 Carleton Avenue
Central Islip, New York 11722

First District, Civil Department
3105 Veterans Memorial Highway
Ronkonkoma, New York 11779

¹¹ Riverhead News Review.

¹² Long Island Advance.

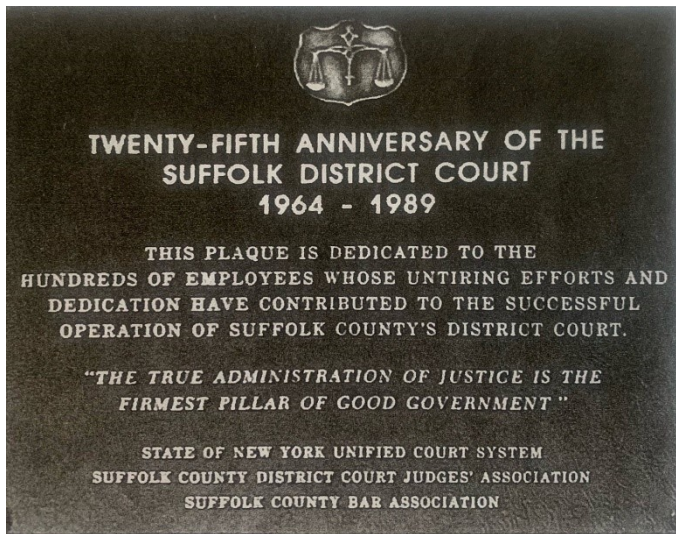


Figure 7 Plaque celebrating the 25th anniversary of the Suffolk District Court

Second District, Town of Babylon
30 East Hoffman Avenue
Lindenhurst, New York 11757
Third District, Town of Huntington
850 New York Avenue
Huntington Station, New York 11746

Fourth District, Town of Smithtown
North County Complex
Veterans Memorial Highway, Bldg C-158
Hauppauge, New York 11788

b. Town and Village Justice Courts

Town of East Hampton
159 Pantigo Road
East Hampton, NY 11937
631-324-4134

Town of Southampton
32 Jackson Avenue
Hampton Bays, NY 11946
631-702-2990

Town of Riverhead
210 Howell Avenue
Riverhead, NY 11901
631-757-3200

Town of Southold
53095 Main Road, (Rt. 25)
P.O. Box 1179
Southold, NY 11971
631-765-1582

Town of Shelter Island
46 North Ferry Road
P.O. Box 1632
Shelter Island, NY 11964
631-749-8989

Village Justices¹³

Village of Amityville
21 Ireland Place
Amityville, NY 11701
631-691-3303

Village of Asharoken
1 Asharoken Avenue
Northport, NY 11768
631-261-8677

¹³ Addresses include physical addresses and also mailing addresses (P.O. Boxes).

Village of Babylon
153 West Main Street
Babylon, NY 11702
631-669-1771

Village of Belle Terre
55 Cliff Road
Belle Terre, NY 11777
631-473-5105

Village of Bellport
29 Bellport Lane
Bellport, NY 11713
631-286-0327

Village of Brightwaters
40 Seneca Drive
Brightwaters, NY 11718
631-665-1281

Village of Head of the Harbor
500 North Country Road
St. James, NY 11780
631-584-2034

Village of Huntington Bay
244 Vineyard Road
P.O. Box 2184
Huntington, New York 11743
631-427-2843

Village of Islandia
1100 Old Nichols Road
Islandia, NY 11749
631-348-1133

Village of Lake Grove
980 Hawkins Avenue
P.O. Box 1234
Lake Grove, NY 11755
631-585-2008

Village of Lindenhurst
430 South Wellwood Ave
Lindenhurst, NY 11757
631-957-7508

Village of Lloyd Harbor
380 West Neck Road
Huntington, NY 11743
631-549-8896

Village of Nissequogue
631 Moriches Road
St. James, NY 11780
631-862-8576

Village of Northport
224 Main Street
Northport, NY 11768
631-757-0935

Village of Ocean Beach
P.O. Box 433
Ocean Beach, NY 11770
631-583-0104

Village of Old Field
P.O. Box 2724
Setauket, NY 11733
631-941-9416

Village of Patchogue
14 Baker Street
P.O. Box 719
Patchogue, NY 11772
631-475-2753

Village of Poquott
45 Birchwood Avenue
Poquott, NY 11733
631-476-4043

Village of Port Jefferson
121 West Broadway
Port Jefferson, NY 11777
631-473-8287

Village of Quogue
123 Jessup Avenue
P.O. Box 926
Quogue, NY 11959
631-653-9400

Village of Sag Harbor
55 Main Street
Sag Harbor, NY 11963
631-702-2990

Village of Saltaire
P.O. Box 5551
Bay Shore, New York 11706
631-583-5566

Village of Shoreham
(Not Active)
(Not Active)

Village of Southampton
151 Windmill Lane
Southampton, NY 11968
631-204-2140

Village of the Branch
40 Route 111
P.O. Box 725
Smithtown, NY 11787
631-265-3315

Village of Westhampton Beach
165 Mill Road
Westhampton Beach, NY 11978
631-288-3980

Village of Westhamton Dunes
165 Mill Road,
P.O. Box 306
Westhampton Beach, NY 11978
631-466-1632

III. The Bench and the Bar

a. Appellate Division of the Supreme Court, Second Judicial Department from Suffolk County

Walter Husted Jaycox (1863-1927)
Associate Justice, 1922-1927

L. Barron Hill (1896-1985)
Associate Justice, 1962-1966

Fred J. Munder (1902-1982)
Associate Justice, 1966-1975

John P. Cohalan, Jr. (1907-1988)
Associate Justice, 1974-1982

Leon D. Lazer (1921-2018)
Associate Justice, 1979-1986

Lawrence J. Bracken (1931-2016)
Associate Justice, 1981-2001
Presiding Justice, 2001

John Copertino (1928-2018)
Associate Justice, 1991-1998

January, 2023

Daniel F. Luciano (1931-2011)
Associate Justice, 1996-2006

Sandra Sgroi (1952-)
Associate Justice, 2001-2009

A. Gail Prudenti (1953-)
Associate Justice, 2001-2015
Presiding Justice, 2002-2011

Robert A. Lifson (1949-)
Associate Justice, 2004-2008

Hector D. LaSalle (1968-)
Associate Justice, 2014-2020
Presiding Justice, 2021-

William G. Ford ()
Associate Justice, 2022-

James M. Catterson (1958-)
Associate Justice, First Department, 2004-
2012

b. District Administrative Judges

The District Administrative Judges for Suffolk County have been:



David Glickman	1969-1973
John P. Cohalan, Jr.	1973-1974
Arthur M. Cromarty	1974-1991
James A. Gowan	1992-1993
Mary M. Werner	1994-1998
A. Gail Prudenti	1999-2001
Alan D. Oshrin	2001-2003
H. Patrick Leis III	2003-2011
C. Randall Hinrichs	2011-2020
Andrew A. Crecca	2020-

Figure 8 District Administrative Judge Andrew A. Crecca.



Figure 9 Suffolk County judges in 1964.

c. New York Supreme Court

The Supreme Court of the State of New York is the trial-level court of general jurisdiction in the New York State Unified Court System. (Its Appellate Division is also the highest intermediate appellate court.) It is vested with unlimited civil and criminal jurisdiction, although in many counties outside New York City it acts primarily as a court of civil jurisdiction, with most criminal matters handled in County Court.

The New York Supreme Court is the oldest Supreme Court with general original jurisdiction. It was established as the Supreme Court of Judicature by the Province of New York on May 6, 1691. That court was continued by the State of New York after independence was declared in 1776. It became the New York Supreme Court under the New York Constitutional Convention of 1846.

d. Supreme Court Justices of the State of New York, Suffolk County¹⁴

Selah Brewster Strong	1847-1860	Arthur M. Cromarty	1966-1993
Wilmot M. Smith	1895-1906	William R. Geiler	1966-1993
Walter H. Jaycox	1906-1927	George F. X. McInerney	1968-1993
Selah Brewster Strong V	1920-1938	Joseph P. Pfingst	1968-1972
George H. Furman	1931-1938	Thomas M. Stark	1968-1998
John R. Vunk	1932-	Charles R. Thom	1968-1989
L. Barron Hill	1946-1966	Angelo Marceri	1970-
D. Ormonde Ritchie	1952-1971	Frank P. Deluca	1970-1984
Fred J. Munder	1958-1975	Leon D. Lazer	1972-1986
Henry M. Zaleski	1960-1966	William L. Underwood, Jr.	1972-2004
John P. Cohalan, Jr.	1963-1983	George J. Aspland	1973-1982
David L. Glickman	1962-1978	Lawrence J. Bracken	1973-2008
Jack Stanislaw	1962-	Gordon M. Lipetz	1973-1979
Henry Tasker	1962-1976	Victor J. Orgera	1973-1987

¹⁴ To September 1, 2022.

John G. McCarthy	1974-1991	W. Bromley Hall, Jr.	1993-2002
Paul J. Baisley	1976-1994	H. Patrick Leis III	1994-
Lester E. Gerard	1977-2004	Robert Lifson	1994-2008
Robert W. Doyle	1981-2011	Elizabeth H. Emerson	1994-
John J. J. Jones	1977-1991	Donald R. Blydenburgh	1996-2010
Jack A. Cannavo	1982-1999	Ralph F. Costello	1996-2010
Alfred M. Lama	1982-1996	Paul J. Baisley, Jr.	1997-
Daniel F. Luciano	1982-2006	Robert Webster Oliver	1997-2004
Melvyn Tanenbaum	1982-2009	John T. Dunn	1998-2012
Harry Richard Brown	1984-1993	James M. Catterson	1998-2012 ¹⁶
Peter Fox Cohalan	1987-2012	Denise F. Molia	1998-2012
John Copertino	1987-1998	John J. J. Jones, Jr.,	1999-2013
Vincent J. Hand	1987-1996	William J. Kent III	1999-2014
Kenneth K. Rohl	1987-1996	Daniel J. Loughlin	1999-2007
Marquette L. Floyd	1989-2004	Arthur E. Pitts	1999-2013
Patrick Henry	1990-2005	Sandra L. Sgroi	2000-2009
Alan D. Oshrin	1990-2003	Thomas F. Whelan	2000-
Mary Margaret Werner	1990-2004	John C. Bivona	2001-2011
Kenneth Rohl	1991-1996	Emily Pines	2001-2015
Howard Berler	1991-2006	William B. Rebolini	2003-2020
Lawrence Newmark	1991-2005	Marion T. McNulty	2004-2013
A. Gail Prudenti	1994-2015 ¹⁵	Peter H. Mayer	2005-2019
Gerard D' Emilio	1993-2000	William J. Condon	2008-2022

¹⁵ Except 1995-2000.

¹⁶ 1st Department.

Hector D. LaSalle	2008-	William G. Ford	2015-
C. Randall Hinrichs	2009-2022	Michael J. Gajdos, Jr.	2018-
W. Gerard Asher	2010-2019	Robert F. Quinlan	2015-
Andrew A. Crecca	2010-	Linda J. Kevins	2015-
John B. Collins	2011-	George Nolan	2018-
James F. X. Doyle	2011-	Deborah Poulus	2018-
Joseph C. Pastorelli	2011-	Marian R. Tinari	2018-
Joseph A. Santorelli	2011-	Kathy G. Bergmann	2020-
Richard Ambro	2012-	Valerie M. Cartwright	2020-
John J. Leo	2012-	Timothy P. Mazzei	2020-
David T. Reilly	2013-	Derrick J. Robinson	2020-2022
Patricia M. Filiberto	2015-	Betsy Heckman Torres	2021-
Howard Heckman	2015-2021		

e. Living Notable Judges/Justices

A. Gail Prudenti (1953-)

Is the Dean of Hofstra University Law School since 2017 and has been associated with the Law School since 2015. Prior to 2015-she had a distinguished judicial career with a number of firsts.

In 199, she was elected a Justice of the New York State Supreme Court, and in 1994, she was elected Surrogate of Suffolk County, the first women to hold that position.

While Surrogate, she simultaneously was the Suffolk County District Administrative Judge (the first and only Surrogate to hold that position

In 2000, she was once more elected to the Supreme Court and in 2001, Governor George Pataki appointed her to the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court, the first woman jurist from Suffolk County to hold the position.

In 2002, the Governor made her the Presiding Justice of the Appellate Division, Second Department. (Again, the first woman to hold the position). She served there until 2011 when New York State Chief Justice Jonathan Lippman appointed her as Chief Administrative Judge of the New York State Courts; another first for a woman.

Denis Reagan Hurley (1937-) @1966

J. D. Fordham University School of Law- 1966

Appointed by President George H. W. Bush as a Federal Judge, Eastern District of New York in 1991. Took senior Status 2004

Suffolk County Family Judge 1983-1987

County Court Judge 1988-1991

Frederic Block (1934-) @1959

LLB Cornell Law School 1959

Appointed by President Clinton as a Federal Judge-Eastern District of New York in 1994.

Took Senior Status 2008

Author of *Disrobed: An Inside Look at the Work of a Federal Trial Judge*

Jerry Garguilo (1980-)

Supreme Court Justice 2009- ; presiding Justice Appellate Term 2014-

Melvin Tanenbaum (see Three Generation Family list)

James C. Hudson (1959-) @1985

County Court Judge

Arlene Lindsay (1946-) @1975

U. S. Magistrate, Eastern District, New York

Elizabeth Hazlett Emerson (1957-) @1983

New York State Supreme Court Justice

G. Randall Hinrichs (1956-) @1982

Supreme Court Justice; Administrative Judge 2011-2020

Andrew C. Crecca (1984-) @1998

Supreme Court Justice; Administrative Judge 2020- ; member of Suffolk County Legislature.

f. Surrogates Court

Suffolk County has had its Surrogates Court since 1787, established under the authority of Chapter 38 of the Laws of 1787.¹⁷

Thomas Tredwell	1787	Nathan D. Petty	1892-1903
Nicoll Floyd	1792-1822	Joseph M. Belford	1904-1909
Ebenezer W. Case	1823	William G. Nicoll	1910-1915
Hugh Halsey	1827	Selah B. Strong	1916-1920
George Miller	1840	George M. Furman	1921
Charles A. Floyd	1844	Robert S. Pelletreau	1921-1937
Abraham T. Rose	1847-1857	Richard Hawkins	1937-1950
George Miller	1857-1861	Edgar F. Hazleton	1951-1959
J. Lawrence Smith	1862-1865	Pierson R. Hildreth	1960-1975
Henry P. Hedges	1866-1869	Ernest L. Signorelli	1976-1994
John R. Reid	1870-1873	A. Gail Prudenti	1995-2000
Henry P. Hedges	1874-1879	John M. Czygier, Jr.	2001-2018
James H. Tuthill	1880-1891	Theresa Whelan	2019-2022

g. Some County Judges Since the American Revolution

Presently the Suffolk County Court has a jurisdiction over felonies and civil lawsuits with a cap of \$25,000.00.

Selah Strong	1783-1793	Joshua Smith	1823-1828
Ebenezer Platt	1793-1799	Jonathan S. Conklin	1828-1833
Abraham Woodhull	1799-1810	Hugh Halsey	1833-1847
Thomas S. Strong	1810-1823	Abraham T. Rose	1847-1852

¹⁷ Prior to 1880, in some cases the Surrogate Judge also served as the County Judge.

William P. Buffett	1852-1856	Ernest Signorelli	1969-1975
Abraham T. Rose	1856-1857	Alfred Tisch	1971-1995
George Miller	1857-	Oscar Mirov	1973-1980
J. Lawrence Smith	1858-1866	Melvyn Tannenbaum	1974-1983
Henry P. Hedges	1866-1870	Frank Gates	1975-1985
John R. Reid	1870-1874	Robert Doyle	1977-1981
Henry P. Hedges	1874-1880	John Vaughn	1978-1998
Thomas Young	1880-1882	Morton Weissman	1978-1998
Wilmot M. Smith	1889-1895	Kenneth K. Rohl	1983-1990
Walter Husted Jaycox	1902-1906	Charles Cacciabauda	1983-2003
Timothy Griffing	1906-1912	Harry Seidel	1990-2000
John R. Vunk	1912-1918	John J. J. Jones, Jr.	1992-1999
George H. Furman	1918-1931	Anthony R. Corso	1992-
L. Barron Hill	1937-1946	Gary Weber	1993-2012
Fred J. Munder	1952-1958	Louis Ohlig	1993-
Henry Tasker	1958-1962	Arthur Pitts	1993-1999
John P. Cohalan Jr.	1962	Joel Lefkowitz	1993-2000
D. Ormonde Ritchie	1947-1952	Richard Klein	1995-
Royden Klein	1961-	Madeline Fitzgibbons	1998-2012
Thomas M. Stark	1962-1968	Stephen Braslow	2001-
George F. X. McInerney	1962-1968	James C. Hudson	2001-
Joseph Stabile	1969-	Pierre Lundbergh	
Gordon Lipetz	1969-1973	Caren Loguercio	2010-

Denise F. Molia	2012-	Anthony S. Senft	2016-
John H. Rouse	2012-2022	Martha Luft	2016-
Timothy Mazzei	2015-2020	Frank A. Tantone	2016
George Harkin	2015-	Steven A. Pilewski	2020-
Matthew Hughes	2015-		

h. Family Court

The Suffolk County Family Court is located at the John P. Cohalan, Jr. Courthouse in Central Islip, New York and maintains a facility in Riverhead, New York. Case assignment is dependent on the geographical location of the parties. The Family Court was established in 1962 in each County of the State, as a successor of the Children's Court.

Caren Loguercio, Presiding Judge

i. District Court Original Judges

The Suffolk County District Court became operational in January 1964. The original judges were:

1. Lincoln G. Schmidt- Presiding Judge, First District Court (Town of Babylon, Brookhaven, Huntington, Islip, and Smithtown)
2. Ernest L. Signorelli- Second District Court (Town of Babylon)
3. Frank P. DeLuca- Third District Court (Town of Huntington)
4. Floyd Sarisohn- Fourth District Court (Town of Smithtown)
5. Victor J. Orgera- Fifth District Court (Town of Islip)
6. Morton Weissman- Sixth District Court (Town of Brookhaven)

j. District Court Judges Deceased and Those Ascended to Higher Court

District Court Judges Deceased

Lincoln Schmidt

Angelo Mauceri
 Peter Nucci*
 Michael Bizzell
 William Munro*
 Alexander W. Kramer
 Francis Caldeira*
 Thomas Klei*
 Rockwell Colaneri
 Edward U. Green, Jr.*
 Toni Bean
 William M. Perry
 Wilbur Schneider
 Anne F. Mead

Rudolf Mazzei
 Benedict P. Vuturo
 Joseph Klein*
 James Malloy*
 William Bennett*
 Sidney Mitchell
 Ira P. Block
 Mark D. Zuckerman*
 John M. Duffy*
 Edward J. Sperzel*
 William J. Burke, III
 *denotes a plaque

District Court Judges Ascended to Higher Court

Ernest Signorelli	Surrogate	Kenneth Rohl	County Court and Supreme Court
Morton Weissmann	County Clerk	Harry Richard Brown	Supreme Court
Frank DeLuca	Supreme Court	Joel L. Lefkowitz	County Court
Oscar Murov	County Court	Ralph Costello	Supreme Court
Gerard D'Emilio	Supreme Court	Robert Webster Oliver	Supreme Court
Harvey Sherman	County Court	John V. Vaughn	County Court

k. District Court Judges

Oscar Murov	01/01/66	Peter Nucci	11/01/66
		Alexander W. Kramer	01/01/66

		Gioanna LaCarrube	03/04/74
William L. Underwood	01/01/66		
Angelo Mauceri	11/14/67	Stuart Namm	01/01/76
John Copertino	01/01/69	Louis J. Ohlig	12/07/76
Edward U. Green	01/01/69	Anthony Corso	01/01/76
William M. Perry	01/01/69	Charles Tomasello	03/15/77
John V. Vaughn	01/01/69	Charles Cacciabauda	03/02/78
Thomas J. Klei	01/01/70	Harvey Sherman	01/01/78
Marquette Floyd	01/01/70	Rockwell Colaneri	01/05/79
William D. Munro	02/11/71	Wilbur Schneider	01/05/79
Lawrence Newmark	05/06/71	Peter G. Dounias	12/08/79
Howard Berler	01/01/72	Donald Kitson	12/01/80
Harry E. Seidell	01/01/72	Kenneth Rohl	01/01/80
Donald L. Auferin	01/01/72	Francis Caldeira	01/01/80
John J.J. Jones	01/01/72	Armand Araujo	01/01/81
Alfred C. Tisch	01/01/72	John A. Carroll	01/04/82
Alfred Lama	01/01/72	Joel L. Lefkowitz	01/21/83
Thomas Mallon	05/08/72	Joseph Klein	01/21/83
Gerard D'Emilio	01/01/74	James Malloy	01/21/83
Joseph O' Donnell	01/01/74	Edward J. Kiley	01/21/83
Anne F. Mead	01/01/74	Benedict P. Vuturo	01/27/83
Paul Creditor	01/01/74	Wallace Boyle	02/23/83
Harry Richard Brown	01/01/74	William J. Kent, III	01/01/84
Rudolph Mazzei	01/01/74	William R. Bennett	01/01/84

Martin J. Kerins	01/01/84	Barbara Kahn	01/03/96
Sidney Mitchell	01/01/84	Dudley Lehman	01/01/96
John N. Mullin	02/16/84	Stephen L. Braslow	01/06/97
Ira P. Block	01/01/85	Joseph Farneti	01/06/97
W. Bromley Hall	04/03/85	Sandra Sgroi	01/06/97
Maurice McElligott	04/10/89	Stephen Behar	06/02/97
Peter Newman	04/12/89	Joan M. Genchi	01/05/98
Kevin J. Crowley	01/01/90	Sonia Veras	01/05/98
Patrick J. Barton	01/01/90	Carol McKenzie	01/05/98
Hertha C. Trotto	01/01/91	Patrick A. Sweeney	01/05/98
Daniel J. Loughlin	01/01/91	John M. Duffy	01/05/98
Francel Trotter Bellinger	02/27/91	Patricia Filiberto	01/05/98
Ralph Costello	01/01/92	Joseph A. Santorelli	01/05/98
Mark D. Zuckerman	01/01/92	Jeffrey A. Spinner	01/05/98
Steven Lotto	01/01/92	Anthony Tafuri	01/01/99
Lawrence Donohue	01/01/92	Emily Pines	01/01/99
Richard M. Klein	04/01/92	Gary Brunjes	03/06/00
Salvatore A. Alamia	01/01/93	John Kelly	01/01/01
Robert W. Oliver	01/11/93	William J. Burke	01/01/01
Ralph Gazzillo	03/01/93	Gaetan Lozito	01/01/01
William B. Rebolini	05/17/93	Edward Sperzel	01/01/01
Madeleine A. Fitzgibbon	01/28/94	Steve Hackeling	03/01/02
Paul J. Baisley	01/03/95	Howard Bergson	05/06/02

Paul M. Hensley	07/05/02	Richard T. Dunne	01/01/13
Georgia Tschember	07/16/02	Carl J. Copertino	07/01/13
John J. Toomey	01/01/03	Karen M. Wilutis	01/01/14
James P. Flanagan	01/01/03	Pierce Fox Cohalan	01/01/15
Glenn A. Murphy	05/22/03	Patricia Grant Flynn	01/01/15
Toni A. Bean	01/01/04	Linda Kevins	01/01/15
G. Ann Spelman	01/01/06	James F. Matthews	01/01/15
John Iliou	01/01/06	Marian Rose Tinari	03/03/15
Richard I. Horowitz	01/01/07	Robert L. Cicale	01/01/16
Dennis M. Cohen	01/01/08	Anthony S. Senft	01/01/16
Chris A. Kelley	01/01/08	John P. Schettino	01/01/16
William G. Ford	01/01/09	Stephen L. Okeiley	01/01/16
Jennifer A. Henry	01/01/09	Alfred C. Graf	01/01/18
Stephen L. Ukeiley	01/01/09	James W. Malone	01/01/18
Philip Goglas	01/01/11	John J. Andrews	01/01/19
John Andrew Kay	01/01/11	Paul E. Hennings	01/01/19
David A. Morris	01/01/12	Eric Sachs	01/01/19
Vincent J. Martorana	01/01/12	James A. Saladino	01/01/19
James A. McDonaugh	02/09/12	Garrett W. Swenson	01/01/19
Derrick J. Robinson	02/09/12	Cheryl M. Helfer	01/01/20
Adam S. Halpern	09/04/12	Edward J. Hennessey	01/01/20
Karen Kerr	09/04/12	John Kelly	01/01/20
Janine A. Barbera-Dalli	01/01/13	Rosann O. Orlando	01/01/20

Alonzo G. Jacobs	01/01/21
Jonathan R. Bloom	01/01/22
F. Scott Carrigan	01/01/22

Bernard C. Cheng	01/01/22
Karen M. Wilutis	01/01/22

I. District Attorneys

Silas Wood	1818-1821
Selah Brewster Strong	1821-1830
Charles A. Floyd	1830
Selah Brewster Strong	1830-1847
William Wickham	1847-1856
J. Lawrence Smith	1856-1858
George Miller	1858-1861
Henry B. Hedges	1861-1866
Samuel A. Smith	1866
James H. Tuthill	1866-1875
William Wickham	1875-1878
Nathan D. Petty	1878-1884
Wilmot M. Smith	1884-1890
Benjamin H. Reeve	1890-1893
Walter H. Jaycox	1893-1899
Livingston Smith	1899-1905
George H. Furman	1905-1911
Ralph C. Greene	1911-1917
Leroy M. Young	1917-1923

George W. Hildreth	1923-1929
Alexander G. Blue	1929-1932
L. Barron Hill	1932-1937
John R. Vunk	1937
Fred J. Munder	1937-1946
Lindsey R. Henry	1946-1952
Harry D. Brenner	1952-1956
George W. Percy	1956
John P. Cohalan, Jr.	1956-1962
Bernard C. Smith	1962-1965
George J. Aspland	1965-1974
Henry G. Wenzel III	1974
Henry F. O'Brien	1974-1977
Patrick Henry	1977-1989
James M. Catterson	1989-2001
Thomas J. Spota	2001-2017
Timothy D. Sini	2017-2021
Raymond Tierney	2021

IV. Suffolk County Bar Association



Figure 10 Suffolk County Bar Association logo.

The Suffolk County Bar Association was incorporated on January 8, 1908, with its purpose “to retain the honor and dignity of the professions of the Law and to aid the administration of Justice”.

The Incorporators were Hon. Joseph M. Belford, Robert W. Dwall, Hon. George H. Furman, Ralph J. Hawkins, Percy L. Heusel, Joseph T. Losee, Hon. Nathan O. Petty, George F. Stackpole and Joseph Wood. At its first annual meeting, Hon. Walter H. Jaycox, Hon. Joseph M. Belford and Timothy M. Griffing were named as its first directors.

Unfortunately, no names or meetings of membership lists exist until 1946. The records for those years were destroyed in a fire.

Its membership

- in 1946 through 1948 was 206 members
- in 1958 was 499 members
- in 1973 was 1100 members
- in 2021 was 2194 members of which 767 were women and 1427 were men.

a. Notable Families with Three Generation Membership

Since its founding in 1908, the Suffolk County Bar Association has had among its many members, three generation of several families.

Among them:

- The Fishels’ of Babylon:
 - Eugene Fishel (1859-1907)
 - Leo Fishel (1877-1960)
 - Harry Paul Fishel (1889-1982), @1912
 - Gustave Fishel II (1930-), @1958-1959, President of the Bar Association in 1982-1983
- The Davidow Family of Patchogue and Islandia has had 4 members in the Association:
 - Harry Davidow (1890-1954), @1913
 - Sanford Davidow (1919-2009), @1948
 - Wallace Davidow (1923-2008), @1952

- Lawrence Eric Davidow (1961-), @1987
- The Siben Family has practiced law since 1945 in Bay Shore and has had 6 members of the Bar Association:
 - Sidney Siben (1911-2004), @1934
 - Walter Siben (1915-2003), @1940
 - Stephen G. Siben (1938-), @1965
 - Jacqueline Siben (1949-), @1994
 - Andrew B. Siben (1954-), @1985
 - Mark A. Rudner, (1962-), @1990
- The Corwin Family has had 3 members:
 - Hilary Earl Corwin (1889-1963), @1916
 - Robert L. Corwin (1924-2017), @1951
 - Nathaniel Lawrence Corwin (1960-), @1987
- The Furmans of Patchogue has had 3 members:
 - Hon. George H. Furman (1868-1941), @1893
 - George C. Furman (1910-1998), @1935
 - Joel Furman (1948-), @1983
- The Cahn Family of Melville has had 3 members:
 - Irving Cahn (1902-1965), @1928
 - Richard C. Cahn (1932-), @1956
 - Daniel Cahn (1970-), @2012
- The Henrys of Babylon has had 5 members:
 - Hon. Lindsey Henry (1900-1959), @1925
 - Hon. Patrick Henry (1929-2018), @1960
 - Hon. Jennifer Henry (1965-), @1994
 - Lindsey P. Henry (1963-), @1998
 - Emma Henry (1996-), @2020
- The Glickman-Tanenbaum Family of Huntington has had 3 members:
 - Hon. David Glickman (1902-1997), @1924, President of the Bar Association in 1957-1958
 - Hon. Melvin Tanenbaum (1935-), @1958
 - Evan Tanenbaum (1965-), @1991
- The Cohalan/Rettaliatas of Sayville have had 5 members:
 - Hon. John P. Cohalan, Jr. (1907-1988), @1935
 - Hon. Peter Fox Cohalan (1938-), @1964
 - Hon. Pierce Fox Cohalan (1967-), @1996
 - Donald A. Rettaliata (1936-), @1966
 - Donald A. Rettaliata, Jr. (1965-), @1993
 - Thomas A. Rettaliata (1968-), @1993

Another Lawyer in the family (non-Member)

- The Gilmartins of Southampton has had 4 members:
 - David Henderson Gilmartin (1908-1985), @1932, President of Bar Association in 1956-1957
 - David J. Gilmartin (1937-), @1963
 - Martin Gilmartin (1945-), @1970
 - Timothy M. Gilmartin (1973-), @2000

Four Families have two generations of Supreme Court Justices in Suffolk County:

- The Baisleys: Paul Baisley, Sr., and Paul Baisley, Jr.
- The Jones: John J.J. Jones, and John J.J. Jones, Jr.
- The Heckmans: Howard Heckman and Betsy Heckman Torres
- The Cohalans: John P. Cohalan, Jr. and Peter Fox Cohalan

In 2023, Justice Marian R. Tinari of the Supreme Court will be joined on the Supreme Court bench by her husband, Frank A. Tinari, elected to the bench in 2022.

Another Judicial family of note is the Whelans of Wading River: Thomas A. Whelan and his wife Theresa Whelan, recently retired Suffolk County Surrogate.

Another illustrious family deserving of recognition is the England family who has produced three presidents of the Suffolk County Bar Association, starting with Catherine England, the first woman President of the Suffolk County Bar Association in 1983-1984 and her two children, Louis England, President in 1998-1999 and Donna England, President in 2015-2016.

Also the Pachmans of Smithtown, were Presidents of the Suffolk County Bar Association: father and son: Howard Pachman (1987-1988) and Matthew Pachman (2011-2012).

b. Past Presidents

Charles B. Partridge	1943-1944	Hon. Franklin T. Voelker	1948-1949
Robert P. Griffing	1944-1945	George C. Terry	1949-1950
Ralph J. Hawkins	1945-1946	John A. O’Keefe	1950-1951
Isaac R. Swezey	1946-1947	Hon. Pierson R. Hildreth	1951-1952
George W. Percy	1947-1948	William G. Bushell	1952-1953

Robert H. Pelletreau	1953-1954	Lester B. Lipkind	1976-1977
Isadore Scheinberg	1954-1955	William V. Maggipinto	1977-1978
John C. Toaz	1955-1956	Eugene L. Wishod	1978-1979
David H. Gilmartin	1956-1957	Frederic Block	1979-1980
Hon. David L. Glickman	1957-1958	Vincent J. Hand	1980-1981
Louis H. Buck	1958-1959	Richard C. Cahn	1981-1982
Hon. Gordon M. Lipetz	1959-1960	Gustave Fishel III	1982-1983
Joseph P. O'Brien	1960-1961	Catherine T. England	1983-1984
Charles P. Underwood	1961-1962	John P. Bracken	1984-1985
Hon. George J. Aspland	1962-1963	Joshua M. Pruzansky	1985-1986
Reginald C. Smith	1963-1964	Peter D. Rubinton	1986-1987
Kenneth W. Anderson	1964-1965	Howard E. Pachman	1987-1988
Bartholomew J. O'Rourke	1965-1966	Barry L. Warren	1988-1989
H. Alan Zwissler	1966-1967	Edward V. Esteve	1989-1990
Hon. Henry G. Wenzel III	1967-1968	Paul L. Lamb	1990-1991
Harold P. Perkal	1968-1969	David H. Besso	1991-1992
Bernard J. Reilly	1969-1970	Thomas J. Spellman, Jr.	1992-1993
Leroy Van Nostrand, Jr.	1970-1971	Harvey B. Besunder	1993-1994
John J. McInerney	1971-1972	John H. Gross	1994-1995
Bernard K. Meyer	1972-1973	A. Craig Purcell	1995-1996
James V. Fallon	1973-1974	John L. Juliano	1996-1997
Herman Schechter	1974-1975	Vincent A. Malito	1997-1998
John J. Hart, Jr.	1975-1976	Louis C. England	1998-1999

James T. Reynolds	1999-2000	Matthew E. Pachman	2011-2012
Eugene J. O'Brien	2000-2001	Arthur E. Shulman	2012-2013
George L. Roach	2001-2002	Dennis R. Chase	2013-2014
Lynne Adair Kramer	2002-2003	William T. Ferris, III	2014-2015
Douglas J. Lerosé	2003-2004	Donna England	2015-2016
Scott M. Karson	2004-2005	John R. Calcagni	2016-2017
Robert F. Quinlan	2005-2006	Patricia M. Meisenheimer	2017-2018
John L. Buonora	2006-2007	Justin M. Block	2018-2019
Barry M. Smolowitz	2007-2008	Lynn Poster-Zimmerman	2019-2020
James R. Winkler	2008-2009	Hon. Derrick J. Robinson	2020-2021
Ilene S. Cooper	2009-2010	Daniel J. Tambasco	2021-2022
Sheryl L. Randazzo	2010-2011	Vincent Messina	2022-2023

c. Prominent Lawyers of the 20th Century

Irving Like (1924-2018) @1950

Major environmental lawyer, key in preventing the Shoreham Nuclear power plant from generating

John J. Hart, Jr. (1930-2017) @1955

President, Suffolk County Bar Association, 1975-1976; active community leader and corporate attorney

Bernard J. Reilly (1924-1992) @1950

President, Suffolk County Bar Association, 1969-1970; President, New York Bar Association

Sidney Siben (1911-2004) @1925

Leading Plaintiff's Trial Lawyer.

Isidore Schoenberg (1900-1985) @1926

President, Suffolk County Bar Association, 1954-55; leading Real Property Attorney

Robert S. Pelletreau (1868-1943) @1896

Suffolk County Surrogate, 1921-1937

Robert H. Pelletreau (1908-1999) @ 1935
President, Suffolk County Bar Association

Guy O. Walser (1888-1958)
Leading Trial and Appellate lawyer

John J. McInerney (1912-2012)
President, Suffolk County Bar Association, 1971-1972; expert in bottom-lands ownership of Great South Bay, Long Island

Reginald Condon Smith (1897-1983)
President, Suffolk County Bar Association, 1963-1964

Allen Mowbray Smith (1943-2020)
Leading Municipal Law expert; Chief Assistant Suffolk County Attorney, 1980-1987; for many years Justice of the Peace, Town of Riverhead

Francis E. Zaklukiewicz (1931-2002)
Prominent Trial Lawyer, Insurance Companies defense counsel

J. Stewart McLaughlin (1938-2020)
Distinguished attorney, expert in Hospital Administration and Law; Chairman of Board, Southside Hospital, Bay Shore, New York; President and Receiver Brunswick Hospital, Amityville, New York; Community leader

John V. N. Klein (1930-2021)
Second elected Suffolk County Executive, 1972-1979

Syrena Stackpole (1888-1983)
One of the first women members of The Suffolk County Bar Association, 1919; first woman in Suffolk County to establish own legal practice, 1929; first woman elected Justice of the Peace, Riverhead, Suffolk County, 1931

David Henderson Gilmartin (1908-1985) @1932
Prominent attorney with expertise in Suffolk County East End Wetlands ownership, author of *Wetlands: At What Cost*

d. Lawyers from Suffolk County Elected to Congress in the 20th Century

Townsend Scudder (1865-1960) Dem.
U.S. Congress, Suffolk County 1st District, 1899-01, 1903-05; Justice of NY Supreme Court, 1907-1920; 1927-36

Joseph M. Belford (1853-1917) Rep.

U.S. Congress, Suffolk County 1st District, 1897-1899; Surrogate of Suffolk County, 1904-1910;
Chairman of Suffolk County Republican Committee, co-Founder of SCBA in 1908

Stuyvesant Wainwright (1921-2010) Rep.

U.S. Congress, Suffolk County 1st District, 1953-1961

Otis Grey Pike (1921-2014) Dem.

U.S. Congress, Suffolk County 1st District, 1961-1979; Riverhead Town Justice of the Peace

James R. Grover (1919-2012) Rep.

U.S. Congress, Suffolk County 2nd. District, 1963-1975; NY State Assembly, 1957-1962

Thomas J. Downey (1949-) Dem.

U.S. Congress, Suffolk County 2nd. District, 1975-1993; NY State Assembly, 1957-1962

Rick Lazio (1958-) Rep.

U.S. Congress, Suffolk County 2nd. District, 1993-2001

Lee Zeldin (1980-) Rep.

U.S. Congress, Suffolk County 1st. District, 2015-2023; NY State Senator

Andrew Garbarino (1984-) Rep.

U.S. Congress, Suffolk County 2nd. District, 2020-2021, re-elected 2022; NY State
Assemblyman, 2013-2020

e. Some Notable Attorneys

Stephen R. Angel (1948-) @1975

Specialist in commercial litigation, real property and municipal/land use

Joseph R. Attonito (1941-) @1966

Prominent trust and estate attorney and real estate attorney

Richard C. Cahn (1932-) @1956

Brilliant legal counsel involved in numerous and many landmark cases

Jeanmarie P. Costello (1956-) @1982

Prominent attorney in field of family and matrimonial law

Eugene L. DeNicola (1938-) @1963

Leading real property, land use and municipal zoning law attorney

Brian T. Egan (1974-) @2000

January, 2023

Municipal law expert, represents many villages

James F. Geswaldi (1962-) @1989

A leader in working to advance rights of animals

John H. Gross (1947-) @ 1972

President Suffolk Bar Association, 1994-1995; Prominent School District attorney

John J. Halleran III (1938-) @1963

Prominent Trust Estates and Corporate Law attorney

Frederick C. Johs (1954-) @1991

Superior outstanding trial lawyer, excellent litigator, leading medical malpractice defense counsel

Scott M. Karson (1950-) @1976

Leader in field of appellate practice; President, Suffolk County Bar Association, 2004-2005; President, New York State Bar Association, 2021-2022

William Lewis (1947-) @1972

Like his law partner, Frederic C. Johs, a distinguished and very effective defense counsel

Daniel J. Murphy (1947-) @1973

Assistant DA; Supreme Court Law Secretary; National Judge Advocate and Parliamentarian of the Purple Heart Association

David Lazer (1954-) @1984

Top business and commercial law expert

Valerie Manzo (1951-) @1980

First president of Suffolk County Women's Bar Association, 1984; Leading Elder Care Attorney; President of the Colombian Lawyers of Suffolk County

Marvin Salenger (1937-) @1966

A top-notch trial lawyer, excellent litigator in representing plaintiffs in civil cases

Joel Sikowitz (1934-) @1962

Expert in the field of municipal law, Babylon Village attorney for 28 years until recent retirement, a polymath with many interests and a wonderful musician

Shepard Scheinberg (1937-) @1962

Expert in the field of Real Estate, Riverhead Town Attorney, President of Riverhead Rotary and Chamber of Commerce

Victor John Yannacone (1935-) @1959

A major figure in the field of Environmental Law “who coined the term” was successful in banning the use of DDT, first in Suffolk County leading to its eventual ban in the United States. Also had a leading role in the early stages of the Agent Orange cases.

Jean Marie Hazelton (1958-) @1982

Leading plaintiff’s medical malpractice attorney

David J. Gilmartain (1937-) @1963

Attorney of Village of Southampton, Southampton Town Attorney, County Attorney of Suffolk County

f. Columbian Lawyer’s Association

Established in 1965, the Colombian Lawyers Association is comprised of like-minded lawyers of Italian American descent who enjoy celebrating their joint heritage. They have monthly dinner meetings with guest speakers, and an annual dinner at which they honor a notable Judge, Justice or lawyer who shares their background.

g. Suffolk County Criminal Bar Association¹⁸

The SCCBA began in 1965. The first President was Edward LaFreniere, Esq., who was followed by Leonard D. Wexler, later U. S. Federal District Court Judge. In addition to Judge Wexler, other Presidents went on to become Judges including Kenneth K. Rohl, Robert Quinlan, Martin Efman and Salvatore A. Alamia

The SCCBA is comprised of a 22-member Board of Directors, and a 5-member Executive Board comprised of a President, 1st Vice President, 2nd Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer. The immediate past president is also on the Board and can vote.

The organization meets once a month, usually on the last Thursday of each month.

The purpose of the SCCBA is mainly to keep our membership between 100 and 120 lawyers, informed and educated not only on the current state of the Law but also on Trial techniques. Also we have leaders and Elected Officials speak to us on what is going on in their Administrations including The Suffolk County District Attorney, Police Commissioner and Sheriff.

¹⁸ By Daniel Driscoll
January, 2023

It often gives CLE credit for its events. The organization also lends support to worthy causes. For example, the Suffolk County Court Employees Association, and many others.

It has yearly dues for its membership, and often raises money through Journal Ads at its main events such as Practitioner of the Year. Its final event in June is the Suffolk County Judge of the Year dinner.

The unique aspect about the organization is that it is not just comprised of defense Attorneys but also Assistant District Attorneys and Judges.

h. Amistad Long Island Black Bar Association¹⁹

Amistad Long Island Black Bar Association is a professional legal organization. Amistad enhances the development of attorneys who are descendants of African heritage and have reached the Americas as a consequence of the institution of African slavery or the expansion of the African Diaspora.

The Association's name "Amistad" (meaning "Friendship") is in recognition of African in the case of *United States vs. Cinque et. Al.*, which involved domestic and international significance placing the issue of slavery and Africans as property front and center of the American legal establishment. This case arose from an incident that arose in eastern Suffolk County, Long Island.

During the summer of 1839, the *Amistad*, a cargo ship, anchored near the shore of Sag Harbor, Long Island. The *Amistad* was a 150-ton schooner. Upon its decks and as part of its cargo was humankind. There were thirty-nine (39) surviving persons of African origin and officers on board when the ship was intercepted by U. S. Authorities. The issue arose as to whether or not the Africans were kidnapped, free persons or property. The *Amistad* case compelled the U. S. Supreme Court to recognize the personal liberty of these men, women, and children at a time when a great many people of African descent were still in bondage in much of the Americas.

Through the courage and initiative of the *Amistad* Africans together with the collective efforts of abolitionists, philanthropists, and a former President of the United States, John Quincy Adams, the Africans who were imprisoned on the *Amistad* reclaimed their freedom. Similarly, the members of the Amistad Association embrace the concept that the achievement of justice and equality must prevail from the collective effort of all Americans.

Thus, in the fall of 1996, a law school graduate, J. Stewart Moore and a law student Victoria Gumbs discussed with the Hon. Peter J. Newman, Judge of the Suffolk County District Court and the Hon. Marquette Floyd, Justice of the New York State Supreme Court, the need and

¹⁹ By Victoria Gumbs, Moore, Esq.
January, 2023

the potential for an association of African attorneys in Suffolk County. Resulting from this meeting, the formation of the Amistad Suffolk County Black Bar Association was put into motion.

Under the stewardship of the Hon. Marquette Floyd and the support of lawyers from Nassau and Suffolk County, Touro law students, Prof. Beverly McQueary Smith of Touro Law School, Amistad Suffolk County Black Bar Association was formed. Attorney Jerry Mims, Jillian Guthman, Desmond Jordon, Ronald Travis, Kevin Satterfield, the Hon, Antonio L. Brandveen, Glen Vickers and Jocelyn LeCorps were among the original members. The first election of officers was held in December 1999, with the inauguration took place on February 25, 2000, at the John P. Cohalan, Jr. Court Complex.

Since the first meeting in 1996, the organization has grown to more than 200 members. Amistad is an affiliate of the National Bar Association, the oldest and largest organization of African American Attorneys in the United States. Amistad is represented on the Executive Boards of the Suffolk County Bar Association and Bar Associations of Nassau County. Amistad developed a mock trial competition for high school students in celebration of Black History Month and co-sponsored events with the Women's Bar Association, New York State Bar Association, Touro Law Center, and the Suffolk County Bar Association. In addition, Amistad publishes and hosts CLE programs for our members. Two of our early members, Hon. Michele M. Woodard and Hon. Toni A. Bean ascended to the bench in 2000 and 2004 respectively.

In 2005, under the leadership of President Victoria Gumbs Moore, Esq., the Amistad Suffolk County Black Bar Association merged with the inactive Nassau County African American and Hispanic attorneys organization, forming the Amistad Long Island Black Bar Association.

The number of African American judges in both counties has increased since the formation of Amistad. The number of African American partners in local law firms has increased and there is greater diversity in the courts and the county law departments. There remains much more work to realize parity. There are 19 African American Judges sitting in Nassau and Suffolk County. Prominent members include:

- First African American Suffolk County Family Court Judge, Hon. Victoria Gumbs Moore
- Civil Right Attorney, Frederick K. Brewington
- Founder/ Executive Director of the Amistad Black Bar Association, J. Stewart Moore
- Past President of the Suffolk Criminal Bar Association, Larry Flowers
- Former Nassau County Family Court Supervising Judge, Hon. Carnell T. Foskey
- Former Village of Hempstead Attorney, Cherice P. Vanderhall

- Brookhaven Councilwoman and present Supreme Court Justice, Hon. Valerie M. Cartwright
- Rivkin & Radler's first African American partner, Tamika Hardy, Esq.
- Suffolk County Human Rights Commission Executive Director, Dawn A. Lott
- Past President of the Nassau County Bar Association, Lance Clarke, Esq.
- Past President of the Suffolk County Bar Association, Hon. Derrick J. Robinson

i. Long Island Hispanic Bar Association

In 2001, former Family Court Hearing Examiner and current Suffolk County Court Judge Phillip Goglas and a handful of Hispanic attorneys met to discuss the formation of the Suffolk County Hispanic Bar Association. At that meeting, the attorneys agreed that the time had come for Hispanic attorneys in Suffolk to integrate and form an association that would dedicate itself to the science of jurisprudence, and to the protection of civil and political rights of the Hispanic community in the county, as well as the community at large.

Today it is known as the Long Island Hispanic Bar Association and it continues to provide assistance to attorneys, law students and as a result of a 2004 name change to include lawyers in the Hispanic community. There are over 100 members.

Its first President was the Hon. Philip Goglas.

j. Brehon Society of Suffolk County

The Brehon Society of Suffolk County was founded in 1991. It is comprised of lawyers of Irish or partial Irish descent and celebrates the Celtic/Gaelic heritage. The members meet regularly, and they annually honor an American of Irish descent of note on Long Island.

k. Suffolk County Women's Bar Association²⁰

²⁰ By Valerie Manzo, Esq., Founding President; Hon. Hertha Trotto, Archivist; Margery Weinrtoh, Est; and Heidi Levine-Sorkin, Esq., Suffolk County Women's Bar President (2022-2023)

Like many good New York stories, the birth of the Suffolk County Women's Bar Association began in the early 1980's with countless conversations and thoughtful planning by the founding mothers meeting in their living rooms, local diners and restaurants. The Nassau-Suffolk Women's Bar Association was the only Women's Bar Association on Long Island prior to 1983. At that time, there were no women judges in Suffolk County and women were not invited to participate on the Judicial Screening Committee of the County Bar. It became essential to form a women's bar association in Suffolk County to create a laser-sharp focus on two significant issues: encouragement of judicial nominations of women in Suffolk County by local political parties and the advancement of women lawyers on Bar Association Committees and in the workplace.

The Suffolk County Women's Bar Association (SCWBA) was formally established in 1984 and became a Chapter of the Women's Bar Association of the State of New York (WBASNY) in 1987. The first President of the SCWBA, Valerie Manzo, and her Board were sworn in during the spring of 1984. Five (5) brave men stepped forward as founding members, including the Hon. Al Tisch and Ed Brown, both married to Founding Board Members: Sherri Ann Levy and Dee Brown, respectively. The need for women in the judiciary in Suffolk County was clear when Hon. Marie Santagata was asked by President-elect Valerie Manzo to drive from Nassau County to install the Officers and Board at the SCWBA's first installation dinner.

The stated goals of the SCWBA, set out in its WBASNY charter, are to: (i) cooperate with, aid and support those causes and organizations that advance the status and progress of women in the practice of law, women before the courts and women in society; (ii) encourage and facilitate the continuing education of attorneys, particularly women attorneys; (iii) enhance the mission of women attorneys, of women of the bar, bench and the general public in the administration of justice; (iv) promote the improvement and administration of justice; and (v) join in and reach consensus with other chapters of WBASNY on issues of statewide, national and international significance affecting women.

One of the SCWBA's initial goals of representation in the judiciary was finally reached with the election of Hon. Marion T. McNulty in 1988 to the Family Court, followed by Hon.

Hertha C. Trotto in 1990 to the District Court and the subsequent election of Hon. Mary Werner and Hon. A. Gail Prudenti to New York State Supreme Court. The latter two made history by reaching the position of District Administrative Judge of Suffolk County. Justice Prudenti later served as Suffolk Surrogate Judge, was elevated to the Appellate Division, Second Department, appointed as Chief Administrative Judge of New York State and now serves as Dean of the Maurice A. Deane School of Law at Hofstra University and the Executive Director of the Center for Children, Families and the Law. Hon. Sandra L. Sgroi, a longtime member, was also elevated to the New York State Appellate Division, Second Department, in 2009, where she served with distinction until her retirement in 2019. In addition, Hon. Maureen Liccione has ascended to Court of Claims and Victoria Gumbs-Moore has been elected to the Family Court of Suffolk County.

Many SCWBA members have now joined the judiciary, hearing examiner and magistrate ranks. Some have served as Supervising Judges of the District and Family Court of Suffolk County, including the Hon. Theresa B. Whelan, who supervised the Family Court and then became the Surrogate until her recent retirement. Hon. Georgia Tschember (deceased) was a well-known trailblazing homicide prosecutor before joining the District Court. One of our longstanding members and trailblazers, the Honorable Anne F. Meade (deceased), served by appointment on the District Court and was named as Chairperson of the New York State Public Service Commission (1987).

Our members have also served WBASNY with distinction as Presidents and been recognized for their contributions to the legal profession and their communities. Carolyn Levy (SCWBA President 1991-1992, WBASNY President 1996-1997) served on the NYS Judiciary Committee on Women in the Courts, which released the 2020 Gender Survey. Dawn Lott (SCWBA President 2017-2018) is the current President-elect of WBASNY (2022-2023). SCWBA Members who have received recognition by WBASNY for their service to the legal profession and their role in advocacy for women include: Honorable Marion T. McNulty, Honorable Theresa B. Whelan, Valerie Manzo, Hon. Anne F. Mead, Hon. A. Gail Prudenti, Linda Morrone, Margery Weinroth, Hon. Hertha Trotto, Debra Lobel, Hon. Sondra Pardes, Hon.

Joan E. McNichol, Robin S. Abramowitz, Caroline Levy, Janessa M. Trotto, Jeannie Costello, Hon. Barbara Lynaugh, Hon. Sandra J. Feuerstein, Janice M. Noto and Nicole J. Zuvich.

The SCWBA has always been cognizant that we are here to serve and support the needs of our surrounding communities and those who enter the Suffolk County Court System. We do so through our advocacy and annual initiatives, including the following:

- One of the SCWBA's proudest accomplishments occurred when our then-President, Hon. Hertha Trotto, Cheryl Zimmer (SCWBA President 1989-90), Hon. Mary Werner and a dedicated team passionately advocated for a childcare center to be housed within the John P. Cohalan Complex, which was under construction at the time. Their insistence resulted in a fully supervised and beautifully run child-care center in the John P. Cohalan Courthouse, serving families forced to bring their children to court appearances. The SCWBA and SCBA host a successful fundraising event each year, called COHALAN CARES FOR KIDS to benefit this facility;
- School Supply donation drives held at the SCWBA's annual Membership Cocktail Party with the supplies distributed to needy students through local school districts and organizations;
- An October Domestic Violence Program/CLE presented in a partnership with the SCBA, which serves as a forum to collect donations for domestic violence organizations. In partnership with the SCBA, one of our founding members, Hon. Hertha Trotto, was the chairperson and coordinator on the first countywide conference on this subject;
- October Breast Cancer education initiatives, which include programs and lectures with the Maurer Foundation for Breast Health Education, participation in the Susan G. Komen Walk to End Breast Cancer, in-person distribution of breast cancer awareness material at courthouses and an annual breast cancer awareness breakfast/lecture;
- Winter Holiday Dinner fundraisers for local nonprofits, such as New Hour (supporting formerly incarcerated women, children and their families) and Every

Child's Dream, Inc. (founded by two Suffolk County Attorneys, the late Ken Mangan, Esq. and his wife, Karen McGuire, Esq.);

- A Committee co-chaired by Margery Weinroth and Valeria Manzo to participate with "Read Across America," a national program in support of childhood literacy held each March on Dr. Seuss' birthday. The SCWBA representatives arrive for in-person readings and book donations at a chosen Day Care Center and we hope to continue our participation in 2023.

Women's History Month celebrations in March/April have been a forum for many signature leadership events, including:

- "Ready, Set, Lead: Empowering Women in the Political Process," bringing together leaders of four political parties in Suffolk County, to dedicate themselves to promoting women running for elective office;
- Our combined SCWBA 30th Anniversary and Women's History function featuring entrepreneur and former Parks Commissioner of the State of New York Bernadette Castro, with 200 plus guests in attendance;
- "Debunking the Myth of Gender Equality: Why Gender Equality Matters to Everyone;" and
- A planned 100th Anniversary of Women's Suffrage Event, originally scheduled to take place in March 2020, which was put on hold due to the COVID-19 pandemic. This event is being rescheduled for March 2023 and will be a coordinated effort by the SCWBA, the SCBA, Touro Law Center, the Amistad L.I. Black Bar Association, the Suffolk County Criminal Bar Association, the Suffolk County Columbian Lawyers' Association, the L.I. Hispanic Bar Association and the Brehon Law Society of Suffolk County.

The SCWBA is a resilient organization, with dedicated, hardworking, accomplished members, which has endured through growing pains, economic downturns, 9/11, Hurricane Sandy and a worldwide COVID pandemic. We will continue to meet every challenge with persistence, professionalism, and a belief in ourselves and each other, which has sustained us throughout our history. In addition to the professional advancement and empowerment of women

in the law, one of the greatest legacies of the organization is the lifelong friendships and generous support we provide to one another, through all our triumphs and personal hardships.

V. Resources

a. Court Records & Law Libraries

Court records are maintained by the Suffolk County Clerk. The Clerk's historical collection contains: naturalizations, 1852-1990; court actions, 1758-1900; vessel liens, 1875-1968; records or certificates of conviction; coroners inquests; oaths of office, 1700s-; deeds, 1600s-; mortgages, 1755-; almhouse, 1870-; orphanage; county jail, 1932-1975; marriage, 1926-1936; index of clerk's minutes, 1724-; lis pendens; board of inspectors of elections, 1803-1898. Additionally, more recent records, including Supreme Court Minutes and mortgages, are available by online search.

Law Library/ Central Islip
John P. Cohalan, Jr. Courthouse
400 Carleton Avenue, 4th Floor
Central Islip, New York 11722

Law Library/Riverhead
Arthur M. Cromarty Court Complex
210 Center Drive, 1st Floor
Riverhead, New York 11901

NYS Archives/New York State Education
Department
Cultural Education Center
Albany, New York 12230

Suffolk County Clerks' Office
Gina Piastuck-County Archivist
310 Center Drive
Riverhead, New York 11901

Suffolk County Historical Society
Wendy Polhemus-Annibell, M.S.
Head Librarian
Research Library & Archives
300 West Main Street
Riverhead, New York 11901

New York Historical Manuscripts
Peter R. & Florence A. Christoph
English records on the Court of Assizes for
the Colony of New York 1665-1682
(Baltimore Genealogical Publishing Co
1982) and English Books of General Entruet
of the Colony of New York 1664-1673 (Ibid
1983)

b. Town Historians

Town of Babylon
Mary Cascone
47 W. Main Street, Suite 2
Babylon, New York 11702

Town of Riverhead
Georgette L. Case
200 Howell Avenue
Riverhead, New York 11901

Town of Brookhaven
Babara M. Russell
One Independence Hill
Farmingville, New York 11738

Town of Shelter Island
William Clark III
P.O. Box 103
Shelter Island, New York 11964

Town of East Hampton
Hugh King
86 Main Street
East Hampton, New York 11937

Town of Southampton
Julie Green
116 Hampton Road
Southampton, New York 11968

Town of Smithtown
Bradley Harris
268 5th Street
Saint James, New York 11780

Town of Islip
George Munkenbeck
655 Main Street
Islip, New York 11751

Town of Huntington
Robert C. Hughes
228 Main Street
Huntington, New York 11743

Town of Southold
Amy Folk
P.O. Box 1179
Southold, New York 11971

c. Bibliography

Paul Bailey, *Long Island: A History of the Great Counties, Volume 1 & 2.* by Paul Bailey, Founder and publisher Long Island Forum, published by Lewis Historical Publishing Co. Inc New York (1949).

W. W. Munsell & Co., *History of Suffolk County, New York (1683-1882)*; published 1883.

“Newsday”, *Long Island-Our Story* Published September 28, 1997 to June 30, 1998.

William Wallace Tooker, *The Indian Place Name on Long Island*; Published for John Jermain Memorial Library, G. P. Putnam’s Sons, New York 1911.

Tom Twomey, Editor, *Awakening to the Past-The East Hampton 350th Anniversary Lecture Series* (1968), Published (1969)

William Pelletreau, *History of Long Island: from its earliest settlement to the present time.* Vol. 2, Lewis Publishing Group (1903)

Morton Pennypacker, *General Washington’s Spies on Long Island and in New York*; 2 vols. Brooklyn: The Long Island Historical Society, East Hampton, New York: East Hampton Free Library, 1939, 1948

John A. Strong, *The Algonquian Peoples of Long Island from Earliest Times to 1700*; Interlaken, New York: Empire State Books, 1997.

Benjamin F. Thompson, *History of Long Island from its Discovery and Settlement to the Present Time.* Third Edition, New York: Robert H. Dodd, 1918.

Family Papers of John (Jack) Strong (1932-) of Strong's Neck, Setauket, Long Island, New York.

Wikipedia: Photos of Courts and some biographical information gleaned from Wikipedia.

VI. Biography

Hon. Peter Fox Cohalan was born in 1938, and graduated from Fordham University School of Law in 1963. He was admitted to the Bar in 1964, and practiced law in Sayville, New York. In 1971, he was elected Islip Town Supervisor and served until 1979. He was elected Suffolk County Executive in 1979 and served until 1986 when he was elected to the NYS Supreme Court. He served on the Court until his retirement in 2012. Judge Cohalan was appointed Suffolk County Historian in 2011, and he also serves as a Trustee of the Robert David Lion Gardiner Foundation. Judge Cohalan's family has the distinction of producing four generations of New York State Justices/Judges of Courts of Record, including a Surrogate of the NY County, four Supreme Court Justices, and presently his son serves as a Suffolk County District Court Judge.