

DAVIS TOWN MEETING HOUSE SOCIETY, INC.



Lester H. Davis House

P.O. Box 4
Coram, NY 11727

MEMBERSHIP FORM

Please print all information legibly:

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Home Phone: _____ Cell: _____ Fax: _____

Office: _____ Email: _____

Membership levels (please check one):

Active: Individual-\$20.00 annual Family-\$25.00 annual

Individual Senior (65+) or Student-\$15.00 annual Family Senior-\$20.00 annual

Lifetime: \$100.00 one-time contribution (Lifetime Membership)

Patron: \$250.00 one-time contribution (Lifetime Membership)

Benefactor: \$500.00 one-time contribution (Lifetime Membership)

*Please make checks payable to **Davis Town Meeting House Society, Inc.** We are recognized by the IRS as a registered 501(c)(3) charitable corporation and registered with the NYS Charities Bureau.*

Would you prefer the Newsletter when published sent via US Mail or via Email?

Committees or special projects that you would like to be considered for:

Signature: _____ Date: ____/____/____

Please complete this form and mail it with your check or money order to:

Davis Town Meeting House Society, Inc.

P.O. Box 4

Coram, NY 11727

www.DavisTownMeetingHouse.org

HISTORIC LESTER H. DAVIS HOUSE

About Us

The Davis Town Meeting House Society, Inc. was formed exclusively for the charitable purpose of maintaining and preserving the **Lester H. Davis House** by working directly with the Town of Brookhaven Department of Parks and Recreation as well as the Town Historian on design, maintenance, and fundraising for the restoration and conservation of this wonderful bastion of antiquity that is listed in the National Register of Historical Places and is a designated Brookhaven Town Landmark. By doing so, the Corporation will lessen the financial burden on the Town as well as bring benefit to the residents of the Town of Brookhaven.



A Certificate of Incorporation was issued by NYS on May 23, 2013 in the name of the Davis Town Meeting House Society, Inc. as a not-for-profit corporation and we are registered with the NYS Charities Bureau as a charitable organization. We are also formally recognized by the IRS as a 501(c)(3) charitable corporation. This permits the **Davis Town Meeting House Society, Inc.** to offer tax-deductible recognition for donations.

The Lester H. Davis House - Excerpted from *Longwood's Journey* (Davis Erhardt)

The village of Coram's halcyon days began in 1790 and ended in 1884. During this period it was the seat of Brookhaven Town government. In 1790, the town decided to move the site of government from Setauket to Coram to provide a more convenient central location for the voters. The mode of government was the annual town meeting held in April. Here office holders were elected, issues of the day voted on. In addition meetings of the official boards of the town met in the Davis house after 1800. Probably the first meetings were in the Coram Baptist Church; around 1800 the tavern-inn of Goldsmith Davis was chosen. The Town Meeting was held at this building some 80 times until 1885 when the Town was divided into election districts.

The original owner of the house was probably Elijah Davis (1727-1802) who kept a tavern-inn. He was succeeded by his son, Goldsmith Davis (1756-1825) who was, it is said, hung upside down in a well during the Revolution by the British for refusing to divulge military information. The inn was a Temperance House in the mid 1800's. By 1890 all commercial use ceased and it became solely a private residence. From 1812 to 1840, the Davis House served as a base for a horse artillery company for the State Militia, which was a mobile force for the defense of Suffolk County. In addition, the house was used for regular meetings of militia officers due to its central location in the county. The host of the inn, Captain Lester H. Davis (1807-1886) was the officer in charge for many years. The Davises have been active participants in local politics, and as was the practice, used their homes as offices. They have held a wide variety of Brookhaven Town positions: Town Board member, and Suffolk County Treasurer.

Remarkably, from the time the house was built in the 1750's until its sale to the Town of Brookhaven, all the owners of the house, with a two-year exception, are direct male descendants of Foulk Davis who came to Southampton, Long Island in 1642. Lester H. Davis III (b. 1926), the seventh and final generation of Davises to own this house, sold the house to the Town of Brookhaven in 1999. Mr. Davis sold the house and 3/4 acres of land to the Town for \$300,000 along with zoning concessions on other land that he owned. The Town later purchased the nearby plot of land that the Davis family cemetery is located on. For a view of the layout of the land that the house is on (two plots) as well as the land the cemetery is on (one plot), go to our website.

There are two wing additions on the house. The first wing is one and a half stories. It was built about 1860. This wing also has "lie on your stomach windows." The second wing is one story and was added in the 1890's.

On April 15, 1986, the Brookhaven Town Board designated the Davis Town Meeting House in Coram as an official town landmark, citing it as one of the town's most historic structures. It was added to the National Register of Historic Places on August 15, 2001.