

STATE AND NATIONAL REGISTERS PROGRAM
Applicant Form

NAME AND STREET LOCATION OF PROPOSAL (e.g. "John Smith House", "Main Street Historic District"):

TAYLOR'S ISLAND

47K South Ferry Road, Shelter Island, NY 11964

TYPE OF NOMINATION

- Building (e.g. single house) Structure (e.g. bridge or dam) District (multiple buildings) Site (historic landscape; archaeological property)
- Multiple Property nomination (involving one or more categories of historic properties components above)

APPLICANT:

Name: TOWN OF SHELTER ISLAND

Address: 38 North Ferry Road, PO Box 970
Shelter Island, NY 11964

Phone #: Day (631) 749-0291 Evening

E-mail: WEBSITE: www.shelterislandtown.us

OWNER (if different from applicant - Does owner support nomination? yes no):

Name: n/a

Address:

Phone #:

E-mail:

PRESERVATION CONSULTANT OR OTHER CONTACT (IF ANY):

Name: P.A.T. Hunt, Co-Chair

Address: PO Box 28,
Shelter Island Heights, NY 11965-0028

Phone #: (631) 749-1603

E-mail: pat@taylorsisland.org

(please also complete the reverse side)

STATEMENT OF OWNER SUPPORT

Before an individual nomination proposal will be reviewed or nominated, the owner(s) of record must sign and date the following statement:

I, TOWN OF SHELTER ISLAND, am the owner of the property at
(print or type owner name)

47K South Ferry Road, Shelter Island, New York 11964
(street number and name, city, village or town, state of nominated property)

I support its consideration and inclusion in the State and National Registers of Historic Places.

Alfred J. Kilb, Jr. 3-30-06
(signature and date) ALFRED J. KILB, JR.
Supervisor

38 North Ferry Road, PO Box 970

Shelter Island, New York, 11964

(mailing address)



HISTORIC RESOURCE INVENTORY FORM

NYS OFFICE OF PARKS, RECREATION
& HISTORIC PRESERVATION
P.O. BOX 189, WATERFORD, NY 12188
(518) 237-8643

OFFICE USE ONLY
USN: _____

IDENTIFICATION

Property name(if any) Taylor's Island
Address or Street Location 47K South Ferry Road
County Suffolk Town/City Shelter Island Village/Hamlet: _____
Owner Town of Shelter Island Address 38 North Ferry Rd., PO Box 970, Shelter Is., NY 11964
Original use Personal home Current use unoccupied
Architect/Builder, if known _____ Date of construction, if known early 1900's
Taylor construction: 1930's

DESCRIPTION

Materials - please check those materials that are visible

Exterior Walls:	<input type="checkbox"/> wood clapboard	<input type="checkbox"/> wood shingle	<input type="checkbox"/> vertical boards	<input type="checkbox"/> plywood	
	<input type="checkbox"/> stone	<input type="checkbox"/> brick	<input type="checkbox"/> poured concrete	<input type="checkbox"/> concrete block	
	<input type="checkbox"/> vinyl siding	<input type="checkbox"/> aluminum siding	<input type="checkbox"/> cement-asbestos	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other: <u>cedar logs</u>	
Roof:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> asphalt, shingle	<input type="checkbox"/> asphalt, roll	<input type="checkbox"/> wood shingle	<input type="checkbox"/> metal	<input type="checkbox"/> slate
Foundation:	<input type="checkbox"/> stone	<input type="checkbox"/> brick	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> poured concrete	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> concrete block	

Other materials and their location: Stone fireplace

Alterations, if known: _____ Date: _____

Condition: excellent good fair deteriorated

Photos On Website: taylorisland.org

Provide several clear, original photographs of the property proposed for nomination. Submitted views should represent the property as a whole. For buildings or structures, this includes exterior and interior views, general setting, outbuildings and landscape features. Color prints are acceptable for initial submissions.

Please staple one photograph providing a complete view of the structure or property to the front of this sheet. Additional views should be submitted in a separate envelope or stapled to a continuation sheet.

Maps

Attach a printed or drawn locational map indicating the location of the property in relationship to streets, intersections or other widely recognized features so that the property can be accurately positioned. Show a north arrow. Include a scale or estimate distances where possible.

Prepared by: Barbara L. Clark address 47L So. Ferry Rd., PO Box 205, Shelter Island, NY 11964

Telephone: (631) 749-1193 email _____ Date 3-06-06

STATE AND NATIONAL REGISTERS PROGRAM

Nomination Proposal Form cont'd

Please check the Nomination Priorities goals that are relevant to your proposal. Please provide a brief explanation of any goal checked below and/or add any additional comments you would care to make at the bottom of the page or on additional sheets.

Nomination Proposals that Promote Economic Revitalization

Goals

- Federal investment tax credit projects
- Main Street projects
- Public and not-for-profit grant projects
- Heritage tourism and recreation enhancement projects
- Projects that will use historic preservation as a marketing tool

Nomination Proposals that Generate Broad Public Support

Goals

- Projects sponsored by certified local governments (CLGs)
- Projects sponsored by other municipalities
- Projects sponsored by community organizations
- ? Projects benefitting from widespread citizen participation - POSSIBLE

Nomination Proposals that Contribute to Planning and Education

Goals

- Multiple property nominations that result from comprehensive surveys
- Historic district nominations that result from surveys
- Projects that provide recognition to properties that are currently under-represented in the State and National Registers
- Projects that foster pride in community history
- Projects that foster awareness of historic properties
- Projects that can be incorporated into local school curricula

Other Reasons/Goals:

PLEASE PROVIDE THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION

IF YOU ARE PREPARING A NATIONAL REGISTER NOMINATION, PLEASE REFER TO THE ATTACHED INSTRUCTIONS

Narrative Description of Property: Briefly describe the property and its setting. Include a verbal description of the location (e.g., north side of NY 17, west of Jones Road); a general description of the building, structure or feature including such items as architectural style (if known), number of stories, type and shape of roof (flat, gabled, mansard, shed or other), materials and landscape features. Identify and describe any associated buildings, structures or features on the property, such as garages, silos, privies, pools, gravesites. Identify any known exterior and interior alterations such as additions, replacement windows, aluminum or vinyl siding or changes in plan. Include dates of construction and alteration, if known. Attach additional sheets as needed.

Taylor's Island is situate off the north side of The Nature Conservancy's Mashomack Preserve, in Coecles Harbor. PleaSe refer to Shelter Island Chamber of Commerce map, herewith; Surveyor's sketch and Water Trail brochure, herewith.

On Taylor's Island is a log cabin built in the early 1900's, and added to by Mr. Taylor in the 1930's.

Narrative Description of Significance: Briefly describe those characteristics by which this property may be considered historically significant. Significance may include, but is not limited to, a structure being an intact representative of an architectural or engineering type or style (e.g., Gothic Revival style cottage, Pratt through-truss bridge); association with historic events or broad patterns of local, state or national history (e.g., a cotton mill from a period of growth in local industry, a seaside cottage representing a locale's history as a resort community, a structure associated with activities of the "underground railroad."); or by association with persons or organizations significant at a local, state or national level. Simply put, why is this property important to you and the community. Attach additional sheets as needed.

Taylor's Island nestled inside Coecles Harbor is a living example of open space preservation. The island and an adjacent lot on the 'mainland' was gifted to the Town of Shelter Island by Mr. S. Gregory Taylor in 1998 for the purpose of preservation and use as a public park.

The close to two acre parcel, once known as Cedar Island, was crowned at the turn of the century (1900) with a pine and cedar log cabin built by the family of Francis Marion Smith of '20 Mule Team Borax' fame. The island has provided a respite for picnics, canoeing, and kayaking ever since gifted to the Town. For generations, the Taylor home stands as a charmed landmark for those leaving and entering Coecles Harbor.

Also, see attached Shelter Island Historical Society newsletter.

The



SHELTER ISLAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Newsletter

Summer 1998

On the 30th day of March, 1998, K. William Kolbe, acting as Successor Trustee under paragraphs seven and eight of the last will and testament of **S. Gregory Taylor**, granted and released to the Town of Shelter Island forever, an island situated in Coecle's Harbor and a lot adjacent to the island situated in Mashomack. Mr. Taylor stipulated in his last will and testament of January 29, 1944, that the land be used as a public park, to be known as "**Taylor's Island Park**" for the use and enjoyment of the general public subject to reasonable regulations and restrictions which may be established by the Township of Shelter Island. Mr. Taylor also established a Trust so that the island, its buildings, furnishings, equipment and appurtenances would always be properly maintained, cared for and kept in good repair and condition. The trust was to be known as the "**Taylor Island Trust**" and the principal was conveyed, assigned, transferred and delivered to the Township of Shelter Island as well.

The island is situated on the south side of Coecle's Harbor. At the present time, there is one building which consists of the original New England pine log cabin (built around the turn of the century), two additional wings containing bedrooms, baths and small kitchen, and a second story observation tower with a narrow balcony. There is a large, rustic stone fireplace and chimney in the original cabin and the north wall has been modified by the placement of two large window-seats that could easily hold a twin bed each. There are many interesting architectural details such as: log rafters, leaded glass in some of the windows, and unique custom-made doors with saplings placed in patterns. Originally, the one-room cabin had a porch that surrounded the entire structure. There were trees purposely growing right through the porch roof which is evident in the photo below. The porch was modified and removed from the south side of the building to make room for the additions. All of the porch posts and beams are cedar. The building at present appears sound, but in need of stain, paint, caulking and weather protection. According to Alfred Kilb, one-time caretaker of the property, a new roof was put on all but the bedroom wing of the building during the 1980's.

Once part of the Nicolls' estate, the island was part of a parcel sold to Herman Deselding circa 1900, who then sold it to **Francis Marion Smith** of "**20 Mule Team Borax**" fame. It was then known as **Cedar Island** and the Smith family built the cabin, using it as a getaway for picnics and clam bakes. Eventually, Otto Kahn.....cont. on pg.4

Taylor's Island



Log Cabin at Cedar Island (Taylor's Island) circa 1905

SIHS photo

began to buy up the divided parcels and reunited them into one property approximating what we think of as Mashomack today, including Cedar Island. During this time Albertus and Isabelle Clark were the caretakers. Their children Ed, Alice, Albertus Jr. "Toots", Helen and Robert "Bucky" used the island for picnics and camping. Toots remembers "beaverboard" (a homosote-like material) partitions in the one-room cabin that did not reach the ceiling allowing for only limited privacy. The Schwartzman family used it often during this time. They would come every year and go duck hunting.

The Gerard family then bought part of the estate with ideas of developing the property excepting the 420 acre parcel at Bass Creek that included the Manor House. Bigelow bought the upper section that included the Smith property. Frederick Leeston-Smith, President of Shelter Island Developments, Inc., gained development rights at this time. While hoping to develop much of estate, hard economic times made this impossible.

During the early part of this century the island supported a number of trees, mostly oak and large cedars indicating the presence of significant amounts of fresh water. The Clark children were hired to plant more maple and oak trees on the island. The owners wanted to freshen the water in a pond on the west end of the island, so they

pumped the water out of the existing pond. This succeeded in drawing salt water into the void created by the pumping, ruining the pond area and killing the recently planted trees.

On the 21st day of April, 1937, for the sum of one dollar and other good and valuable considerations lawful money of the United States, S. Gregory Taylor took ownership of the small island, with its one-story log cabin, sea wall and

Cedar Island circa 1905 SIHS Photo

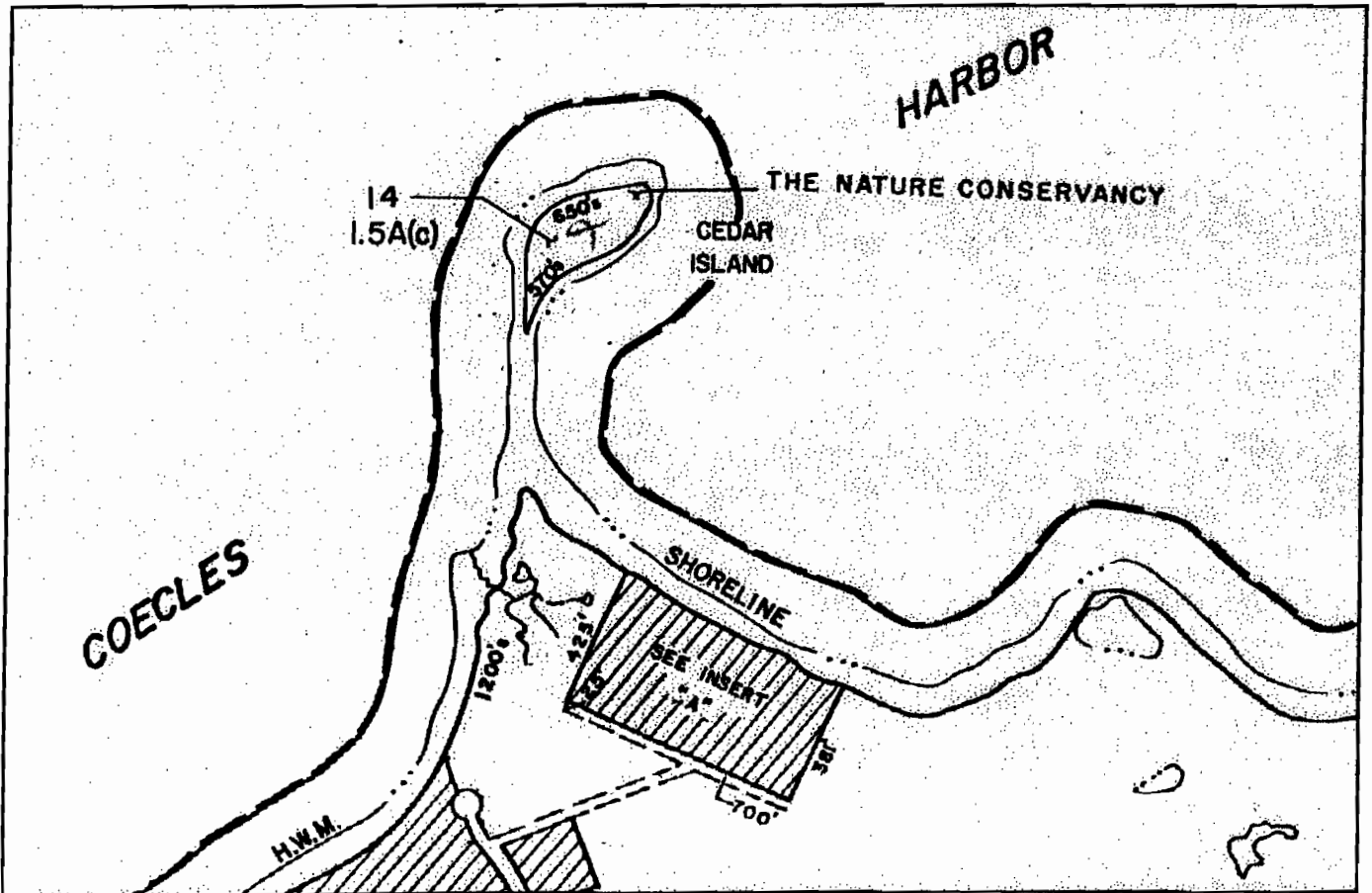
stone well, and the parcel of land on Mashomack that abutted the island. The deed was signed by F.M. (Frederick) Leeston-Smith, President of The Shelter Island Developments Corporation whose principal place of business was No. 17, West 56th Street, Manhattan, NY.

S. Gregory Taylor was born on the island of Marmara, Turkey in 1888. He immigrated to the United States and found work in the restaurant/hotel business in New York City. A self-made man, he eventually owned the **St. Moritz Hotel** and held controlling shares in **The St. Regis** and **The Essex House**, the three largest hotels on **Central Park South**. Mr. Taylor used the island mostly during the summer months as it was accessible by land only at low tide. He had the pond site filled in by Ed and Toots Clark and friends. They carted soil from Mashomack onto the island using a single wheel, Model A Ford that was less likely to get stuck in the sand than a larger dual-wheel vehicle. Ed Clark and friends were also hired to build a cement sea wall around the island. Taylor would get stuck from time to time on the sand spit and over the years of his ownership many members of the Clark family were called upon to dig him out. Electricity was brought to the island in the form of a **Kohler Generating Plant**. This gasoline powered plant automatically turned on when any electrical demands were made.

Mr. Taylor would have big parties and all the Island would come. Islanders had the novel experience of eating the entire scallop on the halfshell with toothpicks, supposedly having a molasses-like flavor. Toots recalls one party, "I went with a whole bunch of Shelter Islanders. We were out partying and we were going to end up there so we bought up all the balloons in Greenport, young guys in John Negus's boat, (son of a famous compass

adjustor). He had a 32 ft. Richardson and all of us guys and girls blew up balloons. We had balloons probably as big as this room and dragging it behind the boat. All the guys were getting conscripted then and going in the service, so everybody was having a big time. It was a Sunday afternoon and we really lit the harbor up when we came up the bay with all those damn balloons dragging all the way from Dering Harbor and Greenport.” Bucky Clark remembers going to New York to visit Mr. Taylor at the St. Moritz. It was 3 o’clock in the morning when Bucky arrived in uniform in the lobby, and although the receptionist was hard to convince, she eventually awakened Mr. Taylor who gladly gave Bucky a royal welcome.

Many Islanders worked for Mr. Taylor, Joe Avona, Hap Bowditch, and Bill Schweinsburg to name a few.

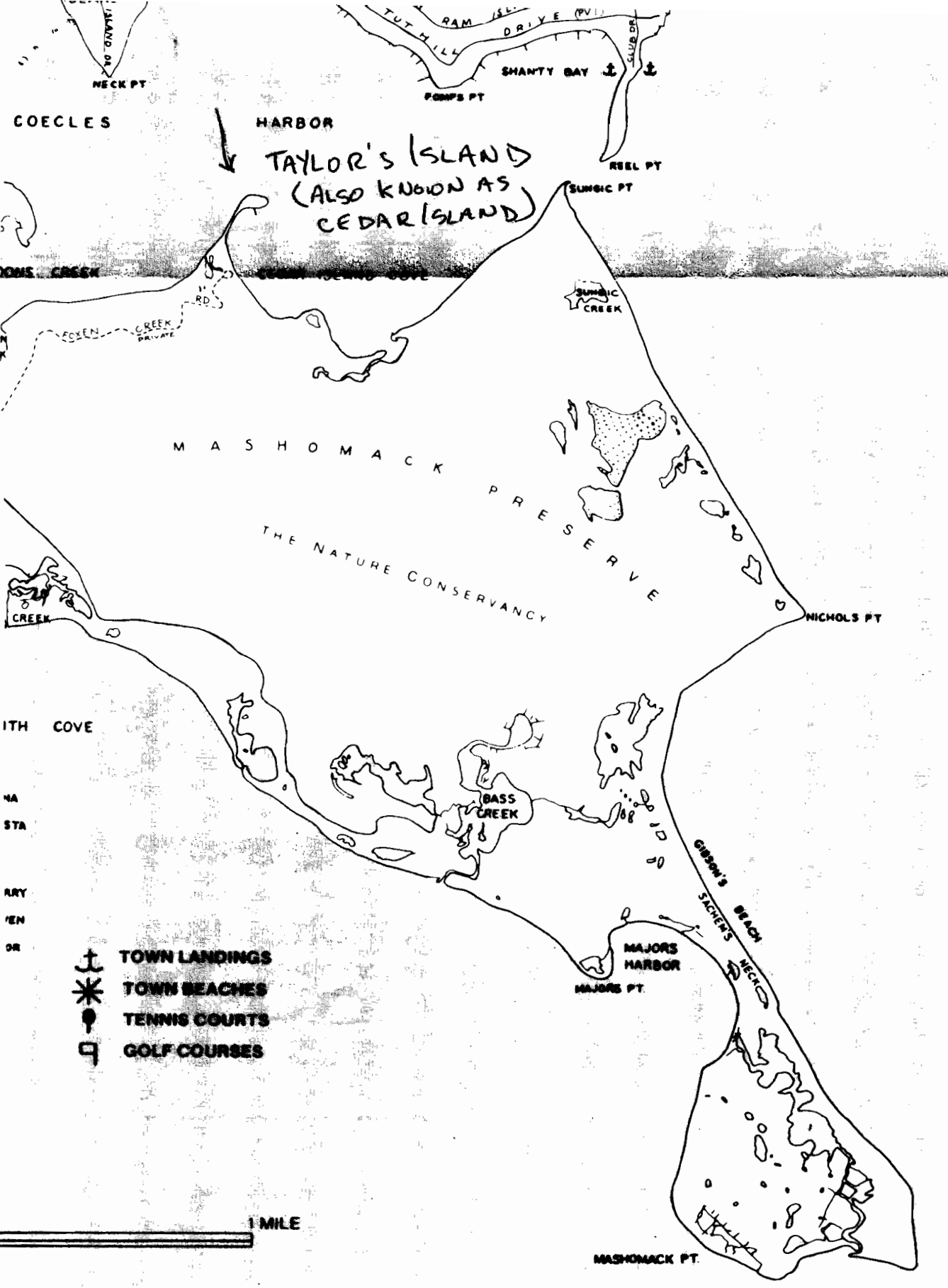


Tax map on file at The Shelter Island Town Hall

Willie Schewinzski was his right-hand man according to Toots Clark. On the day of Taylor’s funeral and burial on the island in 1948, Hap and Bill had to use bulldozers to scrape the snow away and dynamite to dig the hole for his grave. There were funeral directors from New York who had ideas of their own, and in the attempt to get the coffin across the ice, Willie Schewinzski ended up going through. It became a major news story and was carried in the New York papers.

Upon Mr. Taylor’s death, the island went to his nephew, Stephen Stephano. Information about the island during this period is sketchy. It seems the Gerard family had holdings in AEON Realty Corporation and in 1982 the Corporation deeded the property to The Nature Conservancy. In 1993 The Conservancy’s name was removed from the deed and corrected to The Estate of S. Gregory Taylor. Over the years from the late 1940’s to the present, both Bobby Clark and Sonny Edwards worked on the island. Eventually, Alfred Kilb became caretaker. He remembers that Andrew Arkin leased the island and used it as a location for photo shoots.

At the time of this writing, the island is now owned by the Town of Shelter Island. While represented by our existing Town Board and Supervisor, it behooves all the citizens of the Town of Shelter Island to learn more about the property and give long and serious consideration to the future use of this unique place. Alfred Kilb stated, “It is a microcosm of Shelter Island and the Town has an obligation to care for it”.



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