

## Greece History

### The Cupola That Almost Got Away! by Alan Mueller

Our story begins more than sixteen years ago, at 2505 West Ridge Road near Long Pond Rd. A cupola on the ninety-year-old Greece Town Hall was about to be taken down with the rest of the abandoned building. The new Town Hall on Long Pond Road was dedicated with much ceremony in December of 1997. The new building had its own lantern-type cupola and had no reason to reuse the old one.

First, just what is a cupola? Webster's dictionary tells us it is "A small structure built on top of a roof". That description fits the louvered, copper peaked construction atop the old town hall roof. So, back to our story which moves on to April 1999 and the start of demolition of the vacant Ridge Road building. As an interested observer of the operation, Lorraine Beane (then executive director of the Greece Historical Society) saw the cranes and other heavy equipment dive into the brick walls from several directions. She noticed the cupola still untouched on the main roof. A few inquiries around the fellows in the yellow hats led her to one of the proper supervisors with her question, "What is going to happen with the roof cupola?".... "I believe someone has put in a bid to buy it".... replied the worker....!!! Within a flash, Lorraine was on her way to the new Town Hall and spoke with those in charge of the entire Ridge Road "leveling project"! We'll shorten the story a bit.... In the end the cupola would remain in the Greece area with the Greece Historical Society being the permanent custodian. With the co-operation of the Greece D.P.W., other Greece Departments and the Supervisor, the rather formidable "roof-ornament" was now safely moved to the Society's backyard lawn. The next few months were spent raising funds for the rehabilitation and proper foundation for its preservation. The Cupola Project Chairman was **Thomas Schommer**, former president of G.H.S. Other key workers were Society members **Walter Berl**, **Fred Meredith**, **Larry Zarnsdorf**, along with the sign architect, **Richard LaCroix** and the men and equipment of the Greece D.P.W. Many others were involved in achieving our preservation goal.

A final site was chosen on the front lawn of the 595 Long Pond Road Society office and museum. The work proceeded from the Spring of 2001 and the final touches for the rehabilitated Cupola, new brick foundation, wall, decorative fence and lantern were completed in late October of 2001. A proper dedication was held on November 4, 2001 at the new Greece Historical Society sign. President of the society, **Vi White**, introduced **Supervisor John Auberger**, whose remarks included great praise for the preservation of the Cupola and its unique blending into the new museum sign. Moving ahead to 2017, I wonder how many people take note of our own one-of-a-kind Greece Museum sign in front of our museum? The above folk mentioned should not be forgotten for their work and dedication to save, preserve and re-purpose a great piece of Greece History.

