

**From:** Richard Thomas [mailto:RichardAThomas@optonline.net]

**Sent:** Monday, March 30, 2009 7:08 PM

**To:** Waterman, Ginny

**Cc:** Deitz, John (DeitzJ@OptOnline.net)

**Subject:** The Lecture Room, Chapel House, Presbyterian Chapel, Brookhaven Chapel, the Parish House of the South Haven Presbyterian Church, etc.

*I borrowed the Record Book of the Congregational Church of Fireplace last June (June 2008) from the Bellport-Brookhaven Historical Society and transcribed it. In most cases, the person who made the records had very poor spelling, which I tried to retain in my transcription, along with the unusual alteration of upper- and lower-case letters.*

*I tried to match as closely as possible the actual document, but as I was reading and typing, and my typing is imperfect, I really should have had someone compare my transcription to the original, but we only had the book for a weekend. (John was doing an historical service at the church.)*

*The Lecture Room was originally owned by Richard Corwin Jr. The initial meetings were apparently held at Richard Corwin Jr.'s Lecture Room in 1842. The initial meetings were widely spaced: Nov 1842, Jan 1843, March 1843. Victor Principe in Bellport Village and Brookhaven Hamlet states that the Lecture Room was built "c. 1845," which is inaccurate only if one has a narrow definition of circa. From these records we know the Lecture Room existed before November 19, 1842.*

*John reports that George Perley Morse wrote, "The original was called a Lecture Room or what is called today a Community Center. It first stood on land about 20 ft. by 30 ft. and close to the road. The flooring of the old part of the building is wide 2 in. boards of native pine, nailed to beams that are split of half native pine trees. Today this wood is nearly as hard as glass.*

*In 1842, the Lecture Room would have looked very differently than it appears today.*

*See John's web site for pictures of the Lecture Room/Chapel House:*

*<http://brookhavensouthhaven.org/history/HistoricSitesImages.asp?InventoryCode=Br05C>*

The records of the  
Congregation Church  
Fireplace formed

In accordance to previous  
Request the Rev. Barnet Mathias Nathiel  
Hawkins and Thomas Haris **met at the  
Lecture room in fire place** for the purpose  
Of organizing A congregation church in  
That place, the meeting was opened with  
Prayer by brother Haris, after which he  
Stated the object of the meeting. Brother  
Mathias was called to the charl and Brother  
Haris was appointed scribe, after some  
Consultation it was deemed proper to  
Organize A congregational church on  
That accation the opperetunity was then  
Given to any person to join whose  
mind, were made up on the subject

The following persons presented themselves

Richard Corwin . Patrick Hawkins Ann Jarod who  
Were received on their prefesion of faith in  
Christ & Deidamia Hawkens were  
Received by letter . . . . .

These persons after coventing together  
To walk in church fellowship were bublickly  
Acknowledged as of A christian church and  
Consecrated to God in prayer by Rev.  
Brother Mathias after which the Congregation  
Was dismissed by singing and the announcemnet  
of the apostolick benidiction.

signed Thomas Harris  
Scrib "

The foregoing was transcribed  
into this book by Mrs. Deidamia  
Hawkins.

Church Meeting -- Nov. 19, 1842.

The first regular Church Meeting was held  
in the Lecture Room on Saturday Afternoon, Nov 19, 1842.  
The weather was very unpleasant, in consequence of  
which there were but five persons present. The Rev. N.  
Hawkins preached from the following words: "Let us not  
despise the day of small things, but trust in the  
Lord."

On the following day (Sabbath) the Lord's Sup-  
per was adminster, all the members, five in num-  
ber, partook of the Sacred elements, besides a num-  
ber of others belonging to sister Churches. It was a  
Season of especial interest.

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[Recorded at back of book:]

November the 19 1842  
The following are the names of the persons  
belonging to the congretional church in fire  
place Names Names  
Richard Corwin Patience Hawkins  
Samuel Miles Ann Jerard  
Abiather Miles Deceased Deidamia Hawkins by letter  
Calvin Miles Sally Bartow - deceased  
John Miles Jr Nancy Jerard  
Nathan C. Bartow Deliverance Corwin Deceased  
Stephen Satley, Deceased Eliza Smith By letter  
Jacob B. Smith Charity Miles  
John W. Swezey Emelia Swezey  
Wm E. Swezey Jane A Lane [or Zane]  
Rev N Hawkins by letter Fanny A. Corwin  
Moses Swezey Elmira Sanders

Stephen Bartow Deceased H Maria Hawkins Deceased  
Phebe Hawkins  
Mary A Bartow  
Lane E Swezey

=====

Church Meeting. January 17 [1843]  
The second regular Church meeting  
Was in the Lecture room January 17  
A large number present & Two Ministers  
present from whom we were Exorted  
To love each other, the following day  
the Lords Supper was administered.

Church Meeting March 11 . 1843  
Our third regular Church  
meeting was held in the lecture room  
on Saturday the 11th About 20 present  
two Individuals united with the  
Church on profession of their  
faith in Our Lord and saviour  
Jesus Christ, Some remarks to  
The Church by N Hawkins from  
The passage in first of John fourth Ch  
Seventh verse . . Closed with prayer  
March 12 once more we have been  
Permitted to Com around the table  
Of our Lord and saviour Jesus Christ  
And to renew our Covenant engage in  
And show forth his Death untill  
He Come. Oh, that we all by  
His grace /? be faithful unto the end  
And at last have an abundant  
entrance into that rest which  
remains for the people of God.

**On March 27, 1848, the Lecture Room was purchased from Richard Corwin Jr. for use as the Congregational house of worship for \$150. It was to be a "free Congregational meeting house."**

I think "free" may mean that the cost was not supported by selling pews, which was the custom.

(When pews were sold to raise money to erect a meeting house, they could be purchased for the lifetime of the purchaser, or forever, for a higher fee. You could also purchase just half a pew, if you had a small family. Hereditary ownership of pews became a problem in the South Haven meeting house, and it was finally resolved to buy them back and make them free.)

The **service of dedication** was on **May 7, 1848**, using Leviticus 19:3: "Each of you must respect his mother and his father, and you must keep my Sabbaths. I am the Lord your God." and I Kings 8. (In Chapter 8 of I Kings, Solomon moves the Ark of the Covenant from the Tabernacle, the portable dwelling place of the Ark, into the Temple and dedicates the Temple.)

The Lecture Room was still in use by the Congregationalists in 1874, since that is when a new roof was put on the structure.

March 27 1848

The Congregational Church in Fireplace made an effort to purchase the lecture room of Richard Corwin Jun for their house of worship (he consenting to let us have it with the land for one hundred and fifty dollars) which we obtained by subscription, and according to the subscription it was deeded to the Congregation Church and the subscribers for A free Congregational meeting house the names of the subscribers are as follows

		D Nathiel Miller	\$5
Nathiel Hawkins	\$25	M. Titeas	5
James Rider	10	T & E Elison	5
Deidamia Hawkens	10	Mr. Ireland	5
Mr. Osborn	10	Stephen Bartow	10
Elizabeth Rider	5	John Miles	5
George Tomlinson	5	Calvin Miles	10
Nathan Bartow	5	Milly Wells [?]	5
Nancy Jarard	1	Harmon Hawken	1
Ann Jarard	1	Henry Hulse	1
W Snow	3	Jane Hulse	1
Buel[?] Bartow	3	Frances Bartow	1.50
Nathiel Reves	1	Nelson Jarad	1
Rebecca Bell	1	Thomas Hulse	1
Susan Glover	2	Prudence Hawkin	1
Zopher Tucker	1		
Silas Homan	1		
Philotha Corwin	1		
Isaac Ketcham	3		
Nancy Ketcham	1		
Timothy Ketcham	1		

from the Sewing Society of the Congregational Church in fireplace 0.50

Cash 2.00

May the 7 1848

The free Congregational House of Worship was dedicated, and the opening

prayer was made by the revernd Thomas,  
the sermon was preacd by the  
Rev. T Harris from Leviticus 19 Chapter 3 verse  
the 8 Chapter of the 1 Book of Kings  
was red by W Harris.

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[On a separate sheet inserted in the book.]

The following remarks and additions made to the  
records of this Book by the Rev. J Gibbs July 4 . 1861  
[double underline]

- 1st This Book does not contain record of the date of the  
organization of the Church, but from other meetings  
recorded must have been near the close of 1842:  
the first Church meeting being held on the 19 Nov in  
that year.
- 2d Omission of record [phrase underlined] and doings of the  
Church from  
October 1843 to April 1850.
- 3d Church Building & Society incorporated . 1860  
Trustees.
- 4th The Rev. N Hawkins the Pastor of the Church  
departed about the 30 of July 1860.
- 5th A suspension of pubic services from the first  
of November 1860 to February 1861 in order to rebuild  
the House of Worship. The first service held  
in the house after its rebuilding was the 4th of Feb '1  
Funeral of Mrs Amelia Sweezy. Sermon by  
the Rev J Gibbs from 2 Cor 51. The House  
crowded.

**The Revd[d superscripted] J Gibbs having occasionally assisted the Rev  
N Hawkins in the ministry, and he becoming very infirm,  
requested Mr Gibbs to give a more direct and regular  
assistance to the Church about the beginning of 1859.  
From that period to the end of 1860 Mr G preached  
about 40 Times and adminstered the Communion  
10 times.**

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1866 [In left column]  
August 11

Remarks made by the Pastor this day.  
The Pastor having occasion to read over the  
pages of this Church record, in which he  
discoverd that no record of any transaction  
or meeting of the Church or Sacramental occasion  
has been recorded, nor mention made of the

Funeral of the Revd<sup>d</sup> N Hawkins. & others.  
From the 3d<sup>d</sup> of March 1861 to this day Aug 11 66  
there is a perfect blank. \_\_During this in  
terval of 5 years The ordinances of the Church  
including meetings for worship on the  
Sabbath and the Preaching of the Gospel on  
alternate Sabbaths by the Pastor & others also  
communion Seasons regularly.,  
Several Funeral services have been  
attended. Several special seasons of  
a reviving character have been realized  
for weeks together, and it is hoped that  
several persons have passed from death to  
a spiritual & Holy Life. Very few Church  
meetings have been attended and / Church  
member received, but no record made

(over)

The present attendance on the ministrations  
of the Gospel and the Communion services  
have been observed regularly with a few  
omissions arising from unforeseen events  
which prevented. The attendance on the  
Sabbath is usually good. and we believe  
the presence of God is realised.  
In this review the Pastor calls upon  
his brethren with him to deplore this  
want of Church order . and from henceforth  
to adopt a more efficient system to promote  
and establish the Bond of Church Union.

As the result of a review of the Order and  
doings of this Church it appears that  
the following persons are new members  
of the same.

John W. Sweezy . Deacon  
Richard Corwin  
William Egbert Sweezy  
Baldwin Smith  
Samuel Miles A colored Preacher  
Charles G. Booth  
Mary Barteau  
Diadema Hawkins  
Fanny Corwin  
Nancy Jarard Senior  
Ann Jarard  
Eliza Smith

These names selected by  
John Gibbs -- acting & nomind Pastor  
of the Church February 23 1869

[February is marked out in pencil  
and January written above it]

Notice and remark made on the 23 Feb', 1869  
As from the commencement of this Congre-

[23 Feb', 1869 marked out in pencil

gation Society The House in which they  
worship is much frequented with members  
of other Churches several Miles distant and  
who live near their House of worship, known  
as the Lecture Room at Fire Place, there being  
no other House of worship near except a Methodist  
meeting House. The inhabitants around  
and down The Neck assemble in this House of  
Prayer on the Sabbath for worship and in the  
Summer Season a Sabbath School is held & the  
House is thus generally well attended.

John Gibbs

and "Date wrong" in pencil written above  
the date]

In 1873, Mr. Gibbs became too old and sick to preach, and the congregation ceased to have a regular preacher.

1872

Had a Sabath Scholl small atandence  
But had a good school  
D Hawkins Suprentend

1873d had a Sabbath School

quite a good attendance and  
good school

Mr Temothy Ketcham Supt

Mrs Deidamia Hawkins. Ast. Supt

**have no Regular preacher**

**Mr. J Gibbs not able to preach  
on acount of age to sickness**

**have pray meetings and preaching  
occationally by other Ministers.**

had a Chrystmass tree on Dec 25. Evngs [or Every?] Dec for the  
Sabbath Schooll.

**Brook Haven. Formely Fireplace 1874  
put a new Roof on the Lectur room.**

The bills for the new roof were paid on March 26 and 27, 1874.

At some point **after March 27, 1874**, the South Haven Presbyterians received the Lecture Room.

Borthwick, p. 218, reports that the minutes of the South Haven Church indicate that the Congregational Church of Brookhaven had become "extinct" **by 1875**, and that in that year three of the former members asked to join the South Haven congregation. The South Haven Sunday School and the young people's group were already meeting at the Lecture Room, and Mr. Booth, being the only Congregationalist left in Brookhaven, gave the deed to the land and building to the South Haven Presbyterians. (Borthwick isn't specific about whether this transfer took place in the year 1875 or soon afterward.)

**The first name change occurred in 1899**, when *Mr. Augustus Floyd, a Trustee of the South Haven congregation* who lived in Mastic, had the Lecture Room enlarged and remodeled as a memorial to his mother. After this, the Lecture Room was to be known as "The Presbyterian **Chapel**."

In **1904**, James Post donated more land to the church (he and his wife having already donated land for the manse in 1902) to allow the Chapel House to be moved. This move probably took place in the year 1904, but it might have taken place anytime between the Annual Meeting of 1903 and June 25, 1904.

At the Annual Parish Meeting held on Saturday June 25 th 1904 Mr. Augustus Floyd was chosen chairman.

Treasurer's report read and excepted [*sic*].

Mr. Augustus Hawkins & **Mr. James H. Post** were elected Trustees to hold Office until the last Sat in June 1907.

Mr. Augustus Floyd was elected President of the Board of Trustees for 1 yr. But declining to serve, owing to so much personal business, and Mr. Augustus Hawkins was elected in his place.

George Miller was elected Clerk and Treasurer for 1 yr.

Henry Ghoday, Mr. Emmett Hawkins were elected returning officers.

**A vote of thanks was given to Mr. James H. Post for his generosity in giving more land, and, moving the Chapel at Brookhaven.**

The Chapel was used for church services when weather made the use of the South Haven Church less desirable.

Some say that Mr. Post had the steeple added to the Chapel when it was moved, but I don't know whether this is the case or whether the changes in the structure in 1899 have been muddled with the move of the Chapel building about five years later.

Borthwick states that in about 1908, an addition was added to the rear of the building.

The Chapel also served as a community meeting place for the Red Cross, clubs, and for other activities.

On July 1, 1934, in accordance with the call of the moderator, the Session met at the Church before the morning service.

Permission was granted for the use of the chapel for a daily vacation school to be held during the summer under the joint auspices of this church and the Brookhaven Methodist Church.

**The proposed plan of Union service with the Methodist Church for six weeks beginning August 12th was approved.**

(Each year, pastors took vacations, and I think it was during these periods that the two congregations held union services.)

On July 18, 1935, the Session of the South Haven Church voted to permit the **Brookhaven Village Association** to use the Chapel House for one week for an art exhibit for the benefit of the library.

Between July 1936 and July 1937, (that is, in the period between the Annual Meetings of the South Haven Congregation), new chairs were purchased for the Chapel. The electric light bill for the Chapel for that year was \$12.00.

On **October 25, 1937**, Rev. Borthwick reported at a Session meeting that the Ladies Aid Society of the church had requested that "the name of the *Brookhaven Chapel* be changed to the '*Parish House of the South Haven Presbyterian Church.*' This change, they felt, was for the best as the building was no longer used for church purposes, but for parish activities. After considerable discussion, it was moved, seconded, and passed that the name of the Brookhaven Chapel should henceforth be the '**Parish House of the South Haven Presbyterian Church.**' "

On September 25, 1944, a new heater was installed in the Chapel.

On April 8, 1945, the Session met at the South Haven Church and voted to call a special meeting of the congregation on May 7th at noon to consider sale of Chapel and Post property and to consider accepting the Methodist property on Beaver Dam Rd.

On April 30, 1945, the Session voted that Sunday Evening Services will be held, as community responds, in the former M. E. Church on Beaver Dam Road Brookhaven. Sunday School will be held in the former M. E. Church, 9:45 am each Sunday.

On May 6, 1945, a Special Congregation meeting of the South Haven Presbyterian Church was held. "Business on hand to discuss receiving the property of the Methodist Church in Brookhaven. 21 present. The following Resolution was presented by the Joint boards.

That we will receive the Methodist Church in Brookhaven located on Beaver Dam Road.

That Presbytery will empower the South Haven Church to settle sale of Present Chapel property, the proceeds to go into the South Haven Church General Funds.

Also conduct Sunday Evening Services as Community responds.

A Committee was appointed with power to accept the property if it met with their approval.

Victor Principe, in *Bellport Village and Brookhaven Hamlet*, p. 100, states that the Chapel House was sold in 1945 to George Perley Morse, **but this date can not be correct.**

The Chapel property had still not been sold in April 1947, since at the South Haven Congregational Meeting held on April 10, 1947, the following item was on the agenda: The Board of Trustees recommend that the congregation pay Mr. Chas. Robinson the sum of \$1,200.00 for repairs and re-roofing the South Haven Church when the Church realizes this sum from the sale of the Chapel property.

The sale of the property continued to drag on throughout 1947:

8/25/47 Meeting of the Session of the South Haven Church, Monday evening.

Letter from Long Island Presbytery in appreciation of the use of Paul Robinson's car and the pastor's release to go to the National Assembly of Westminster Fellowship in Grinnell, Iowa.

**Letters from Hamlin and Michne were received and read in regards to the Chapel property.**

**Moved that Douglas Brown, lawyer, be counsel for the church.**

The death of Elder Mrs. Sophie Walton (retired) noted and voted that a letter be sent to her son William and Presbytery be notified of the same.

Voted that Communion Service be held in Brookhaven Church this quarter and in the South Haven Church the next quarter.

Motion made seconded and carried that the Church accept a new fence around the Cemetery at South Haven if funds are available from Brookhaven Town.

11/24/47 Joint Meeting of the Session and the Trustees of the South Haven Presbyterian Church held at the Manse at 8 pm.

Session meeting adjourned and continue with the Trustees Meeting. **The matter of the Chapel property was brought up and it was voted that the Moderator be delegated as the agent of the Church to seek advice, and action from the Presbytery and Synod in the case of the sale of the Chapel property.**

On January 4, 1948, the Session voted that the Trustees were to make a complete report on the Chapel to the congregation at the Congregational Meeting to be held on January 16.

The Congregational Meeting was followed by a Session meeting, which was itself followed by a Trustees meeting.

The actual sale is recorded in the Minutes of the meeting of the Trustees of the South Haven Presbyterian Church on **January 16, 1948:**

Letter from Douglas Brown completing the sale of the **Parish House**, to **Mr. George Morse** and enclosing a check for \$2030.51. This completes the total sale of **\$2,500.00**. Bill presented by Mr. Brown for services of \$25.00 and \$2.75 for Internal Revenue Stamps. Motion was made seconded and carried to pay this bill.

Now I think I've told you nearly everything I know about the Lecture Room/Brookhaven Chapel/Parish House.

Richard Thomas

P. S. In reviewing the South Haven minutes, the sentence "Mr. Post offered to have the history of the church printed if it were written." appeared in the minutes of the Annual Congregational Meeting, held at South Haven on July 19, 1936.

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**From:** Richard Thomas [mailto:RichardAThomas@optonline.net]  
**Sent:** Monday, March 30, 2009 9:45 PM  
**To:** Waterman, Ginny  
**Cc:** Deitz, John (DeitzJ@OptOnline.net)  
**Subject:** A Few More Items Regarding the Brookhaven Chapel, etc.

Hi Ginny,

I guess I didn't tell you *absolutely everything* I know about the Brookhaven Chapel after all. I ran across these five items that I did not include in the previous email.

1. Session minute showing that Chapel was used instead of the church at South Haven in cold weather. (The church was unused from December 10, 1916, until April 1, 1917.)

**Also, at this April 1, 1917, Session meeting, the pastor proposed holding alternate Sunday evening services with the Brookhaven Methodists, but the Elders serving on Session *rejected* his proposal.**

4/01/1917 At the call of the Moderator, Session met at the parsonage at one o'clock. The services at the church, South Haven, were resumed at the church this morning having been conducted at the chapel since December 10, 1916. "The Lord's Supper" being celebrated at this time.

Elder Samuel R. Glover was chosen to represent this Church in Presbytery at its Spring Meeting at Cutchogue April 17-18 1917. He is to ask permission of Presbytery for this Session to supply the pulpit for the ensuing six months. Approved.

*The Moderator stated to the Session that a proposition had been brought to his notice by the pastor of the Methodist Episcopal Church at Brookhaven to unite in holding the Sabbath evening service of his church with the Presbyterian Chapel service held at the same hour. To close the Methodist Church and the Presbyterian Chapel on alternate Sabbath evenings.*

*The plan was talked over by this Session and concluded by those present **not** to enter into the change of service. Approved.*

Session closed with prayer by Elder Samuel R. Glover.

Samuel R. Glover. Clerk.

2. The use of the Chapel included having baptisms performed there. In 1921, this occurred on November 21, so perhaps use of the church at South Haven was being discontinued even earlier in the season in 1921 than in 1917.

Miss Frances Terwillger received the ordinance of baptism in Brookhaven Chapel in the presence of the Congregation Sabbath morning November 27<sup>th</sup> 1921.

Attest F. E. Allen Clerk

3. In 1927, the South Haven church was used through Jan 2, 1927, apparently at the displeasure of some of The Members of the Congregation.

1 / 2/ 1927 Southaven, N. Y.

Communion Service was administered today in connection with the regular worship conducted by our Stated Supply, the Rev. Geo. F. Baker.

Announcement was made by request of The Members of the Congregation and with the concurrence of Session that the Sabbath School and Church Services would be held in the Brookhaven Chapel beginning Sunday Jan. 9. And continuing until the church could be more comfortably heated.

4. Indication that the Parish House had an **organ**, which, by October 1944, didn't get much use. The Poosepatuck Church was a mission church of the Presbytery and was under the care of the South Haven church. The South Haven church was never successful in getting many of the Poosepatucks to attend, and the idea was finally abandoned.

10/1/1944 Motion made by Mrs. Mattie Hawkins, Elder, that the unused Organ in the Parish House of Brookhaven, be loaned to Poosapatuck Church, Seconded by Geo. Last. Motion carried. Organ was brought to Poosapatuck Church. Meeting closed with Prayer.

5. The American Red Cross made use of the Parish House, and transfer of the deed of the Methodist church to the South Haven Trustees. (Note that nothing is said about transferring a deed for the Bellport Presbyterian Church to the Methodists, giving further support for my belief that the deed for that property went to the Presbytery of Long Island after the Bellport Presbyterian congregation became extinct.)

9/10/1945 Session meeting at the Presbyterian Manse.

Motion made to hold a special meeting to accept transfer of deed of M. E. Church to Trustees of So. Haven Presbyterian Church. The Committee: Rev. Ralph B. Gamewell, Chas. Robinson, George Last, Frank Corwin, John H. Morton.

Permission given to the Amer. Red Cross to use the Parish House for a work room.

The reluctance of the South Haven Church regarding taking on the responsibility of the Brookhaven Methodist building is further indicated at the Session meeting of October 1, 1945, where approval to allow the pastor to hold services there was initially given for only one month.

10/1/1945 Regular monthly Session meeting at the manse.

Voted that Rev. Howard V. Yergin (Exec.) be invited to represent us at the transfer service in Bellport in Nov.

Voted to elect three deacons and trustees to the present board of trustees in South Haven Church to look after interests of Brookhaven Church.

Voted to conduct communion service at Poosapatuck Mission, 10/7/45 at 3:30 pm. Chas. Robinson appointed to assist.

Voted to empower Rev. R. B. Gamewell to put on Services in Brookhaven Church **for one month** beginning Oct. 18, 1945 at 7:30 pm with the Offering Fund contributions to pay expenses.

At the next Session meeting, the Session doesn't put any time limit on allowing their pastor to hold services in the newly acquired building. They also get rid of the altar rail.

11/26/1945 Regular monthly meeting of the session at the Manse.

Voted to conduct a Candle Light Service Dec. 24, 1945, at South Haven Church at 7:30 pm and a Watch Night Service at Brookhaven Church Dec. 31, 1945.

Voted that the altar rail be given to Methodist Church in Bellport.

Voted to empower the pastor to continue services in Brookhaven Church.

They began to like the Brookhaven Church better when they discovered that it had a kitchen in the basement where they could hold church suppers, and they purchased a new electric stove for the kitchen in April 1946.

For a number of years, the offering income from services in the Brookhaven Church was always recorded separately from the offerings received at the Southaven Church.

The Session seemed to think of the South Haven congregation as distinct from the Presbyterians that met at the Brookhaven Church, since in 1948, it seemed important to note that the Elders to be elected would be “officers of both churches.”

Cong 1/16/1948 at 6:45 p.m. at the Brookhaven Church.

Recommendation of the Session that four new deacons be elected as agreed when Brookhaven Church was opened. **These Deacons to be officers of both churches.**

The Congregation approved the recommendation.

Deacons: Mrs. Floris Swezey for a 3 year term.

Mr. Frank Husson for a 2 year term.

Ralph Robinson for a 2 year term.

Mr. John Winters for a 1 year term.

Deacons to be ordained Sunday January 18th, 1948, at the Brookhaven Church at 8 pm.

The minutes reveal a continuing hostility toward the church-goers of Bellport as late as 1952. The Session and Trustees also appear to have felt financially burdened by all the buildings they were now responsible for maintaining:

4/1/1952 Regular meeting of the Joint Boards held at the Manse

**Voted that the Pastor should not preach at the Sunrise Service at Bellport, Easter Sunday morning.**

Voted that a Committee of five be appointed to look into centralization of Church buildings in the community.

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Here's an excerpt from a study I did of the South Haven Church Minutes in August 2006:

I've been trying to find out when the South Haven Church was no longer used much at all in the 1950s; that is, when nearly all the services began to be held at the former Methodist building in Brookhaven.

I had always heard that it had something to do with the Robinson duck farm (making it too smelly to use in the summer) or with the heating (making it too cold to use in the winter), but that isn't supported by the minutes. It seems to have more to do with Rev. Gamewell's "ill health."

The renovations of the South Haven Church in the late 1930s apparently made it a tad more comfortable in the winter. There are references in the Session Minutes about using only the Chapel in cold weather, then returning to the South Haven church in the spring when “the church could be *more comfortably heated*.” This practice of holding services only in the Chapel in winter is reported in the period before 1928.

Some change must have been made to the heating system of the South Haven Church between 1928 and October 25, 1937, since the Session Minutes record that on October 25, 1937, the Ladies Aid Society asked that the name of the Brookhaven Chapel be officially changed *since the building is “no longer used for church purposes,”* but is used instead for *parish activities*. The Session, *after considerable discussion*, endorses their

suggestion and changes the name to the name suggested by the Ladies Aid, the "Parish House of the South Haven Presbyterian Church."

From the minutes for the period after 1945, it is clear that the heating wasn't all that good in *either* the South Haven or the Brookhaven building, but both did have heat.

For the first four years, 1946 to 1950, both buildings were used the same amount.

The minutes from October 18, 1945, -- when the Presbyterians held their first service at the Brookhaven building --- through at least 1950 **always refer to the Methodist structure as the *Brookhaven Church***. After 1950, it is called **the *Brookhaven building***.

For the period 1946 to 1950, the Brookhaven Church seems to have been thought of as a separate and independent entity, but with representation on the joint governing body.

Through 1949, Sunday School was held at the Brookhaven Church at 9:45 am, services were held at the South Haven church at 11:00 am, and evening service was held at the Brookhaven Church at 7:30 pm.

The only exception was the month of June 1949, when the Bible Study class asked that the morning service be at Brookhaven and the evening service at South Haven for that month. Despite what we've heard about the South Haven Church not being used much after the Brookhaven Church was received, this is not the case for the first four years. Average attendance at the two services was about the same. (1948, S.H. 21, BH 27; and in the year 1949 exactly the same, S.H. 21.8, BH 21.8.)

One reason for having the evening service in the Brookhaven Church was that covered dish suppers were usually held there, since it had a kitchen "in the cellar." So they would have a covered dish supper and then the service.

In 1949, even the income for the two churches was listed separately: Receipts: South Haven \$930.61; Brookhaven \$785.42; Special Gifts \$960.17. Total receipts for 1949, \$2676.20. *But that changes in 1950 where the income is listed as Church Collections. Also, the minutes begin to refer to the Brookhaven church as the Brookhaven building.* So it appears that the Brookhaven church is no longer being thought of as a separate church, but instead as a different building of one church.

[I may be reading much more into the minutes than is actually there. The changes may be due merely to different styles of different Clerks of Session.]

In December 1949, they vote to switch for the winter months, and have morning services at Brookhaven and evening services at South Haven. For the four years before this change, income was greater from South Haven, but the monthly Treasurer's reports indicate that this goes the other way after the switch. They don't switch back after winter.

Then in June 1950, Rev. Gamewell asks to take his month of vacation during the month of August, but he also requests that he be granted a leave of absence for the month of

September. In July 1950, the Joint Boards vote to have Sunday morning services at Brookhaven, but to *do away entirely with evening services at South Haven for the rest of the summer*. Services resume with a communion service at South Haven on the evening of October 2, 1950.

This becomes the new pattern, morning services at Brookhaven and evening services at South Haven, but no services at all in South Haven when the pastor is on vacation. (This lends no support at all to the "too cold" theory. It doesn't give much support to the "too smelly" theory either, since, initially, services are discontinued only when Rev. Gamewell is on vacation or when he is on a leave of absence.)

For the year 1951, this reduces attendance at South Haven to an average of 13.1, while the attendance at Brookhaven only slightly increases, to 27.2. So from a combined attendance of 43.6 when the morning service was at South Haven, the combined attendance falls to 40.3 when the service times are switched. The number of active members, however, continues to grow.

Then during Lent into 1952, the evening service at South Haven is changed to a Prayer Service, and in May 1952, it is voted that evening services be *discontinued at South Haven for the month of May and "study and song" services be held in the evenings at Brookhaven instead*. Rev. Gamewell is on vacation and leave of absence for June and July, so there are no services at South Haven. When he returns, Rev. Gamewell no longer participates in the evening service at South Haven, and those services are turned over to the congregation's New Life committee.

Richard