



The History of Our Nation is Embedded in These Walls



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## **JIM BERKISE TO SPEAK AT 1pm, OCTOBER 16, 2016: *THE OLD LANDING & THE NEW YORK WHARF***

On October 16, 2016, at 1pm, Jim Berkise, local historian and Marlborough resident, will share findings from his recent investigations into Gomez Mill House owners' land use history, including ferries, turnpikes, and commercial connections with New York City.

In the late 1710s Luis Moses Gomez and his son Mordecai secured underwater rights and were principals in the development of Hunter's Key, an important early wharf adjacent to the Meal Market in lower Manhattan. They transported cargo to it from their local operations which included a grist mill and saw mill. Revolutionary War era Mill House resident Wolvert Ecker operated ferry and packet boat service until 1799. In the 1810s local businessmen bought the ferry, creating the Hampton-Hamburg Ferry Co. in 1830. Mill House resident William Henry Armstrong's younger brothers, D. Maitland and Gouverneur were incorporators of that company in 1867.

Berkise received his Bachelor's in Engineering from RPI, and his Master's in Library Science from Pratt Institute. For over 34 years, he worked as a professional researcher and corporate librarian at prestigious institutions: AT&T Bell Labs, NEC Research Institute, and NERA- a Marsh & McLennan subsidiary.

Since his childhood in Pennsylvania's Wyoming Valley where he observed the mining of coal that the D&H canal carried to the Hudson, Jim has been interested in waterway transportation: its infrastructure, how it evolved, and how it shaped the development of communities. His interest in Gomez Mill House owner Wolvert Ecker's ferry comes from a 1998 book, *When Horses Walked on Water* by Art Cohn of the Lake Champlain Maritime Museum, in which a map shows a horse powered ferry coming out of New Hamburg, NY. Berkise initiated his research by searching for the west shore landing in Marlborough.

*The mission of Gomez Foundation for Mill House is to preserve the 300 year old Gomez Mill House—the oldest standing Jewish dwelling in North America and home to Patriots, Preservationists, Artisans and Social Activists—as a significant regional- and national-ranked museum, and to educate the public about the contributions of its former owners to the multicultural history of the Hudson River Valley*

*The Gomez Mill House and Historic Site is located at 11 Mill House Road off 9W, in Marlboro, NY. General admission to the Museum (includes Gallery admission) is \$10 for adults, \$7 for seniors 55 or older, and \$4 for students with ID and children age 7 to 17; children under 7 are admitted free. Groups of 10 or more receive discounted rates and reservations are required.*

*For more information contact: Gomez Mill House and Historic Site at (845)236-3126 or via Email: [gomezmillhouse@gomez.org](mailto:gomezmillhouse@gomez.org).*