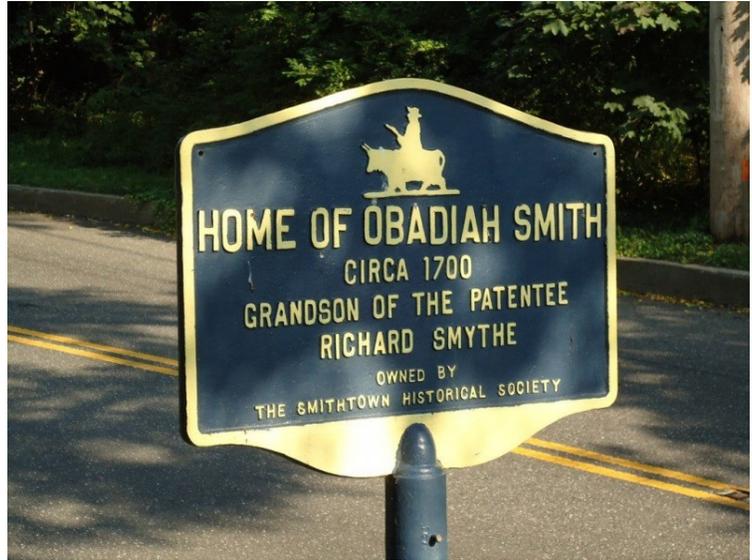


Obadiah Smith House

Believed to be constructed in 1708, the Obadiah Smith House is one of the oldest structures in Kings Park. Tucked away on St. Johnland Road near the San Remo border and just west of Harrison Pond Park, the house is owned by the Smithtown Historical Society and is included in the National Register of Historic places.

Built by Obadiah Smith, grandson of Smithtown founder Richard "Bull" Smith, the house features a mix of Dutch and English-style construction, a heavy timber frame and bridges in the back that connect to a hill, which protected the house from strong wind.

"It gives us a great example of how houses at that time were built," Gail Hessel, a Kings Park resident since 1967, said. "One of its most unique features is the stone west end wall with its projecting beehive oven." Hessel, who is on the Board of the Smithtown Historical Society and the Kings Park Heritage Museum, is completing a booklet on the full history of the house.



For most of its existence the house was owned by the Smith family, with various incarnations of members residing there for 232 years, through 1940. Finally, in 1960, the house became property of the Smithtown Historical Society. Restoration on the Smith House continued through the 1960s and 70s. Today, more work is needed.

"Without repairs, such as the roof, paint, shingles and some shoring up of the basement, the house could be in danger," Hessel said. "This house is a gem. Not only is the building unique, old and sturdy but it has a long history, especially for Kings Parkers."

A Kings Park organization is willing to lend a hand.

"In the future, the Kings Park Heritage Museum is interested in working with the Smithtown Historical Society to restore the Obadiah Smith House," said Steve Weber, media director for the museum.

"[This would make] the facilities accessible to those with disabilities and [allow for] regular tours of the property, complete with nature hikes along the Harrison waterway."



Due to its current condition, going inside the Smith House--which pre-dates, the Kings Park Psychiatric Center--is restricted.

"I would love to see school children, especially Kings Park school children, visit the house and learn about their local history, which is rich," Hessel said. "I don't think that many Kings Parkers know as much as they should about Kings Park before the hospital. We have a very valuable piece of history in our midst."

Cost: Free

Note: Call Smithtown Historical Society (265-6768) or Kings Park Heritage Museum (269-3305) for more information.