

The Walt Whitman Birthplace State Historic Site and Interpretive Center offers modern day visitors to Long Island the opportunity to step back in time and ultimately encounter the life and art of the most powerful poet in world literature, America's own Walt Whitman. The historic Birthplace still stands peacefully on the same spot where it was built in West Hills, Huntington, on the North Shore of Long Island.

The Birthplace

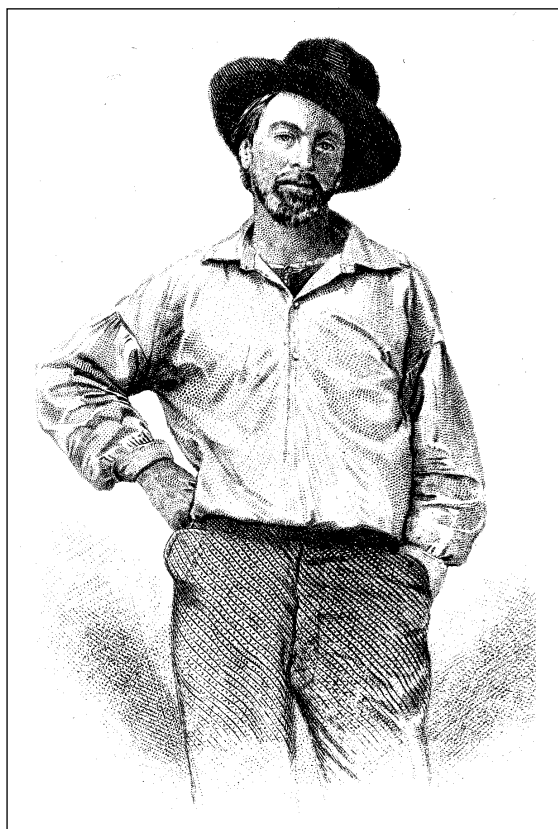
The Walt Whitman Birthplace is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Built circa 1819 by Walter Whitman, the poet's father, the house is a fine example of native Long Island craftsmanship, simple in line and pleasing in proportion.

Constructed of hand-hewn beams that are held together by wooden pegs and laid on whole tree trunks supported by a foundation of small boulders, it is notable for several unusual architectural features. The corbeled chimney and the storage closets in the fireplace walls are innovative for their place and time. The large, twelve-over-eight pane windows provide light, air, and a rare note of elegance in this country farmhouse.

Much of the glass in the windows is original, as are many of the hinges and other hardware. Architectural historians have noted the slanted wainscoting of the staircase walls, and the staircase itself is unusual-topped with a short riser- a feature also found in another of the Whitman houses in the West Hills area.

Features

The **Birthplace** and **Interpretive Center** offer guided tours; museum shop and bookstore; picnic facilities; auto-hiking tours of beautiful and historic West Hills; airconditioned and fully handicapped accessible; concerts, lectures, poetry readings, poetry contests, a Poet-in-Residence program, and special events.



The Poet

Walt Whitman returned to the West Hills region often, and, in his old age, claimed to have "incorporated" Long Island into himself. From this incorporation came a poetry that expressed the values and virtues as well as the desires and hopes of a democratic people. Starting from "fishshaped Paumanok," as Whitman called Long Island using its Native American name, he became the poet of all the people. His *Leaves of Grass* now stands among the masterpieces of world literature and continues to inspire others to the self-realization that was his life-long goal.

Interpretive Center

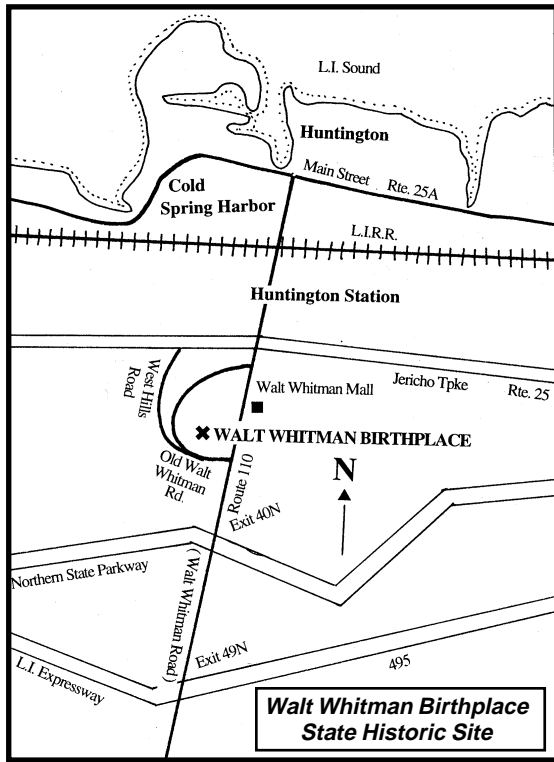
At the Interpretive Center, visitors can delve deeply into Whitman's life and poetry through a series of engaging exhibits that trace the poet's development from his boyhood on Long Island to his international prominence as one of our country's greatest visionaries. The exhibits incorporate over 130 portraits of Walt Whitman, as well as original letters, manuscripts, and artifacts. Among the exhibit's most important artifacts are a writing desk used by Whitman as a young schoolteacher on Long Island, and a first edition of his epic book of poetry, *Leaves of Grass* and of his autobiographical work, *Specimen Days*. The Interpretive Center also houses a museum shop and bookstore, a multimedia area including a video and Whitman's voice on tape, and a large meeting room with kitchen.

Group Tour Reservations

Group tours available year round:
Call two weeks in advance.

Monday - Sunday
10:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

For reservations, prices and sample itineraries please call (631) 427-5240 for *personalized* service for your group or FAX (631) 427-5247



Directions

Long Island Expressway to exit 49N, north 1.8 miles, left on Old Walt Whitman Road; or Northern State Parkway to exit 40N, north 1 mile, left on Old Walt Whitman Road; or Jericho Turnpike to Route 110 south, proceed 1 mile, bear right onto Old Walt Whitman Road. Centrally located 30 miles from New York City.

Hours

June 15-Labor Day: Open Monday - Friday, 11-4,
Saturday - Sunday, 12-5.
(Closed major holidays)

Winter hours: Open Wednesday - Friday, 1-4,
Saturday - Sunday, 11-4.
(Closed major holidays) Handicapped accessible.

Group Tours Available

Mon. - Sun., 10 a.m. - 5 p.m. by appointment.
Call two weeks in advance.

Walt Whitman Birthplace State Historic Site
246 Old Walt Whitman Road
South Huntington, New York 11746-4148

Phone: (631) 427-5240
FAX: (631) 427-5247
www.nysparks.com

Special Services

Golden Park Program

Senior Citizens who are New York State residents and 62 years of age or older can have unlimited weekday and non-holiday access to all state parks and discounts on certain fees by showing their N.Y.S. driver's license or N.Y.S. non-driver identification.

Access Pass

The Access Pass is available to New York State residents with qualifying disabilities. The pass provides free entry and use of state parks, recreation areas and their facilities. Not included are services, facilities provided by concessionaires and utilities for camping. Applications are available by mail from Access Pass, State Parks, Albany, New York 12238.

Empire Passport

The Empire Passport provides unlimited vehicle entry to most state park and recreation areas during the fiscal year, April 1 - March 31. The pass does not cover activity fees. Purchase can be made in person at certain parks (please call (631) 669-1000 ext.223 for listing) or by mail from Passport, New York State Parks, Albany, New York 12238.

Camping Reservations

The Long Island Region has camping at Heckscher, Wildwood and Hither Hills State Parks. Camping/Cabin reservations may be made for other New York State Parks and Environmental Conservation campgrounds that provide camping facilities. Reservations may be made by calling 1-800-456-CAMP.



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Bernadette Castro, Commissioner

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John Norbeck, Regional Director

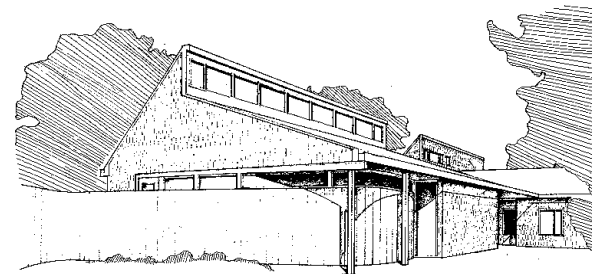
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State Historic Site



and Interpretive Center



LONG ISLAND STATE PARK REGION