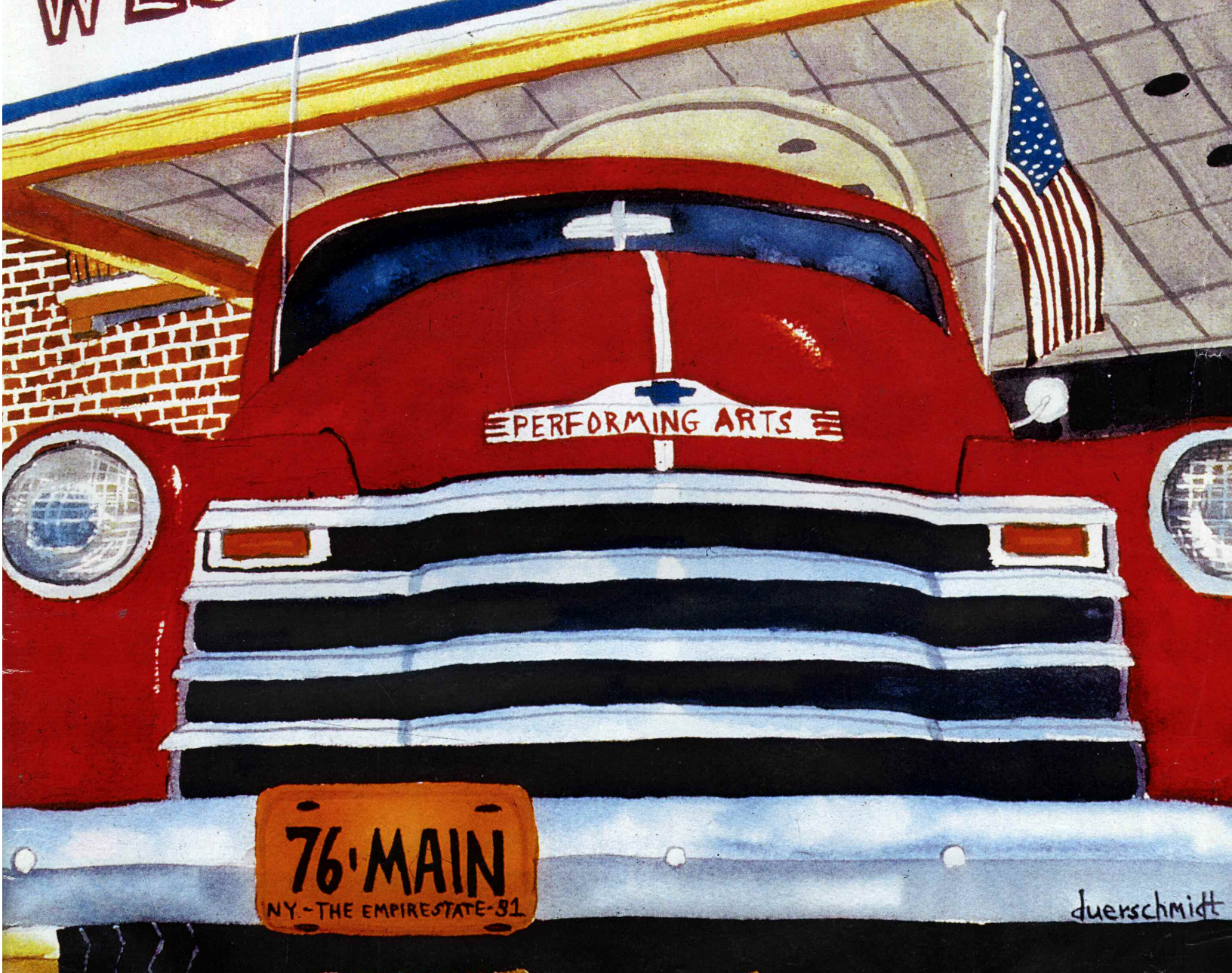


LARGEST WEEKLY CIRCULATION IN THE TRIANGLE • THE SPECIAL MANHATTAN DELIVERY

Dani's Papers

WESTHAMPTON

SPECIAL SECTION: HOLIDAY CATALOGUE/HAMPTON GETAWAYS



duerschmidt

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ART BY LIZ DUERSCHMIDT

Dan's HAMPTON GETAWAYS

The Historic Baker House in East Hampton

Like many people, you may have wondered about the beautiful Elizabethan style building at 181 Main Street, opposite the Village Green, in East Hampton. While this architectural landmark appears to be too large for a private home, there is little on the outside that would indicate that which goes on inside. It turns out that The Baker House 1650 is a small luxury hotel, accommodating a long list of discriminating guests from around the world.

When long-time East Hampton and Manhattan residents Bob and Antonella Bertello-Rosen went to see the property two years ago, they were intrigued by its architecture but had no idea that inside it was a thriving business, despite having driven past it for more than twenty years. They walked in, fell in love with the place, and became hoteliers. Starting with a spectacular property, they embarked on a program to raise the accommodations to an even higher than before.

After purchasing the property, they became intrigued by its history, and spent a considerable amount of time going through old documents and photographs, some of which were passed on with the property, and others that were found in the historic archives of the East Hampton Library. Among other things, they discovered that the original building, parts of which remain intact, was Baker's Tavern, one of the first structures built in East Hampton in 1648. Thomas Baker was one of the earliest East Hampton settlers, and the building served as a public meetinghouse and the place of worship in addition to its primary function as a tav-



ern.

After passing through many hands, as would be expected in a 350-year-old property, the house was dramatically enlarged into its current form in 1911 by Joseph Greenleaf Thorp, a prominent architect and adherent to the Arts and Crafts movement. At that time, the property was owned by J. Harper Poor, a financier, and was known for many years as the J. Harper Poor Cottage. The Poor family themselves referred to the house by the name "As You Like It," after the Shakespeare play. When J. Harper Poor lost his fortune during the First World War, the house was among the last of his possessions he gave up.

The house received a major renovation from Gary and Rita Reiswi (the couple who sold the property to the Bertello-Rosens), who preserved the original character and detail of the house while bringing it

up to modern standards. In addition, the Reiswis created a spectacular spa on the lower level, incorporating a swimming pool, sauna, steam showers, and massage facilities.

When Antonella and Bob Rosen took over the property, they were careful to maintain the Arts and Crafts Style of the 1911 Thorp renovation. In addition to updated décor and furnishings, new amenities include a beautifully landscaped outdoor pool in the English gardens, flat screen televisions with DVD players, an extensive DVD library, Bose stereos and CD players, full mini-bars, and complete telecommunications capabilities, including wireless internet access. Every room is different, but most of the rooms have wood-burning fireplaces and whirlpools, with soaps and shampoos supplied by L'Occitane, the French luxury purveyor. Other new services include in-room continental breakfast and expanded spa services. The elaborate full breakfast continues to be served downstairs in the garden-side breakfast room.

Guests of the inn are provided with coveted East Hampton Village beach passes, beach chairs, towels and umbrellas. The inn is located across from the Village Green, Town Pond, and one of the historic windmills, and is walking distance to the village's shops, restaurants, and the Hampton Jitney stop. The Baker House is open year-round, allowing guests to take advantage of the fireplaces and cozy furnishings in what used to be referred to by the locals as the "off-season." There is ample off-street

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parking as well as airport, train, and Jitney pick-up and drop-off. Speaking of the airport, the hotel has its own helicopter which can be booked for the 40-minute trip to and from Manhattan, as well as a vintage 1937 Stinson Gullwing aircraft for flights over the Hampton's beaches and estates. A new 40-

foot Chris Craft Corsair speedboat is kept at nearby Three Mile Harbor and can be booked for trips to Shelter Island, Sag Harbor, the North Fork, or just a picnic on the water.

It has always seemed contradictory that a world-class destination such as the Hamptons had so few

nice places to stay. While the owners have a strict policy of not disclosing guests' names, major figures from the worlds of business, film, sports, and politics have found their way to The Baker House. Unless you have friends with a major estate who don't mind houseguests, this is the place to stay.