

# George Fowler House

95 Springs Fireplace Road



The Town-owned George Lewis Fowler house is believed to be the only surviving Montaukett home in East Hampton Town. It is an important symbol of Montaukett history.



The Montauketts were living at Indian Field when George Benson purchased 11,500 acres of land from the Town in 1873, (That land is now the County Park in Montauk.) Benson's lawyers arranged for the Montauketts to move from that area to the area between Springs Fireplace Road and Three Mile Harbor Road known as Freetown.



This is the location that the Fowler house was moved to and where it is located today. The connection of this site to the National Register eligible archaeological resources at Montauk County Park (where Indian Fields was located) makes the Fowler house even more significant, and also likely eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places.



MONTAUK INDIANS - 1924

Charles Fowler      John Fowler      Pocahontas Pharoah      Sam Pharoah  
Marguerite Fowler      George Fowler      Maria Pharoah (Banks)

Marguerite and John Fowler are the children of George Fowler

So what do we know about George Fowler? This is George Fowler. He is the man in the middle of the photo.



George L. Fowler, whose house is in Freetown, was gardener and gondolier to the family of the celebrated artist Thomas Moran. Pictured are the artist's wife, Mary Nimmo Moran, and his daughter Ruth.

*The Mariners' Museum, Newport News, Va.*

Here he is with Thomas Moran's wife and daughter. He worked for many years for the artist as a gardener and a gondolier. He also tended the gardens at Home Sweet Home.



When I visited the house I noticed a small rose struggling to grow by the front porch.





There are also two huge Norway spruces in the front yard.



Before we clear out the overgrown vegetation, the Planning Department recommends that you ask someone familiar with old horticultural varieties to inspect the property. George Fowler was a gardener and the land may still contain evidence of his use of that land.

§ 255-7-25. Designation of historic landmarks and historic districts.

- (a) Possesses special character or historic or aesthetic interest or value as part of the cultural, political, economic or social history of the Town;
- (b) Is identified with historic personages;
- (c) Embodies the distinguishing characteristics of an architectural style, building type, period or method of construction;
- (d) Is the work of an architect, designer or builder of local or regional importance; or
- (e) Because of a unique location or singular physical characteristic, represents an established and familiar visual feature of its neighborhood.

§255-7-25 of the Town Code allows the Town Board to designate land and structures within the Town as historic landmarks. .... The George Fowler house qualifies by criteria (a) & (b).

- (b) Is identified with historic personages;

George Fowler was an historic personage who was a Montaukett who lived at Indian Field and was relocated to Freetown and who worked for the artist Thomas Moran and Home Sweet Home. Moran's house, in East Hampton Village is a national historic landmark. As stated by Robert Hefner, "The Fowler house completes the picture of the Moran house and Home Sweet Home. This puts Main Street and Freetown together."

- (a) Possesses special character or historic or aesthetic interest or value as part of the cultural, political, economic or social history of the Town;

The house and its property are a valued part of the cultural, historic, economic & social history of the Town. History tends to record the wealthy and powerful. George Fowler was neither and we have much less information about the ordinary and poor people in our history. Yet the people who lived in Freetown were the workers who supported the wealthier households in East Hampton Village, Gardiner's Island and elsewhere in Town. His house and property have the potential to teach us about the lifeways of the Montauketts after they were dispossessed of their homes in Montauk and detribalized by the NY State government. It is a potential interpretive tool for understanding the history of Freetown which is minimally understood by historians.



In conclusion, we strongly recommend Landmark status for the George Fowler house and property.