

## COMMEMORATING "THE ANNE HUTCHINSON YEAR"

### Anne Marbury Hutchinson (1591-1643)

Anne was born in Elizabethan England in 1591. From her mother, Bridget Dryden, she learned the skills she would use all her life, midwifery, healing and herbalism. From her minister father, Francis Marbury, she received a solid theological education as well as an understanding of the meaning of religious dissent.

In 1612, she and William Hutchinson, a prosperous merchant from their Alford hometown, married. Throughout their marriage, he continually supported her religious and community activities. She managed their household, including the care of over a dozen children, and continued her interest in theology and the church. She studied scripture and followed the sermons of John Cotton, a Protestant minister and early Puritan leader. In 1634, the family followed him to the Puritan colony in Boston, Massachusetts.

While in Boston, in addition to household duties, Anne cared for her sick and child-bearing neighbors. When she was criticized for not attending a local women's teaching group, she started one in her own home, which grew in size to as many as 80 members, including men. Concerns about fair business practices and religious intolerance were sometimes discussed. In time, her neighbor, Governor John Winthrop, called her meetings "a thing not tolerable nor comely in the sight of God, nor fitting for your sex."

Her views and her popularity were too much of a threat to the colony's leaders. Charged as a heretic, 46 years old and pregnant, she was brought before the Massachusetts General Court in November, 1637. For 2 days she defended herself skillfully, matching biblical references and wits with Winthrop and other accusers. Winthrop cited her in his diary as "an American Jezebel who had gone a-whoring from God." She might have been freed for lack of just cause and conflicting testimony, except that she insisted she was the recipient of direct revelations from God. The civil court ordered her banished, after which she was excommunicated by the church at a second trial.

Hutchinson, along with some of her family and a small number of followers, travelled to the religiously tolerant colony of Rhode Island, where they founded a settlement in present-day Portsmouth. After William's death in 1642, Anne and a party of 16 moved again, settling in the northeast section of present-day Bronx/Lower Westchester, where the parkway and river that bear her name are located.

Her death was the result of conflicting land claims between the Dutch under Governor Kieft and the local Siwanoys. Because of his brutality to the Natives, she--who practiced racial tolerance and refused to keep firearms--and all but one daughter were brutally murdered in a retaliatory attack in August, 1643.

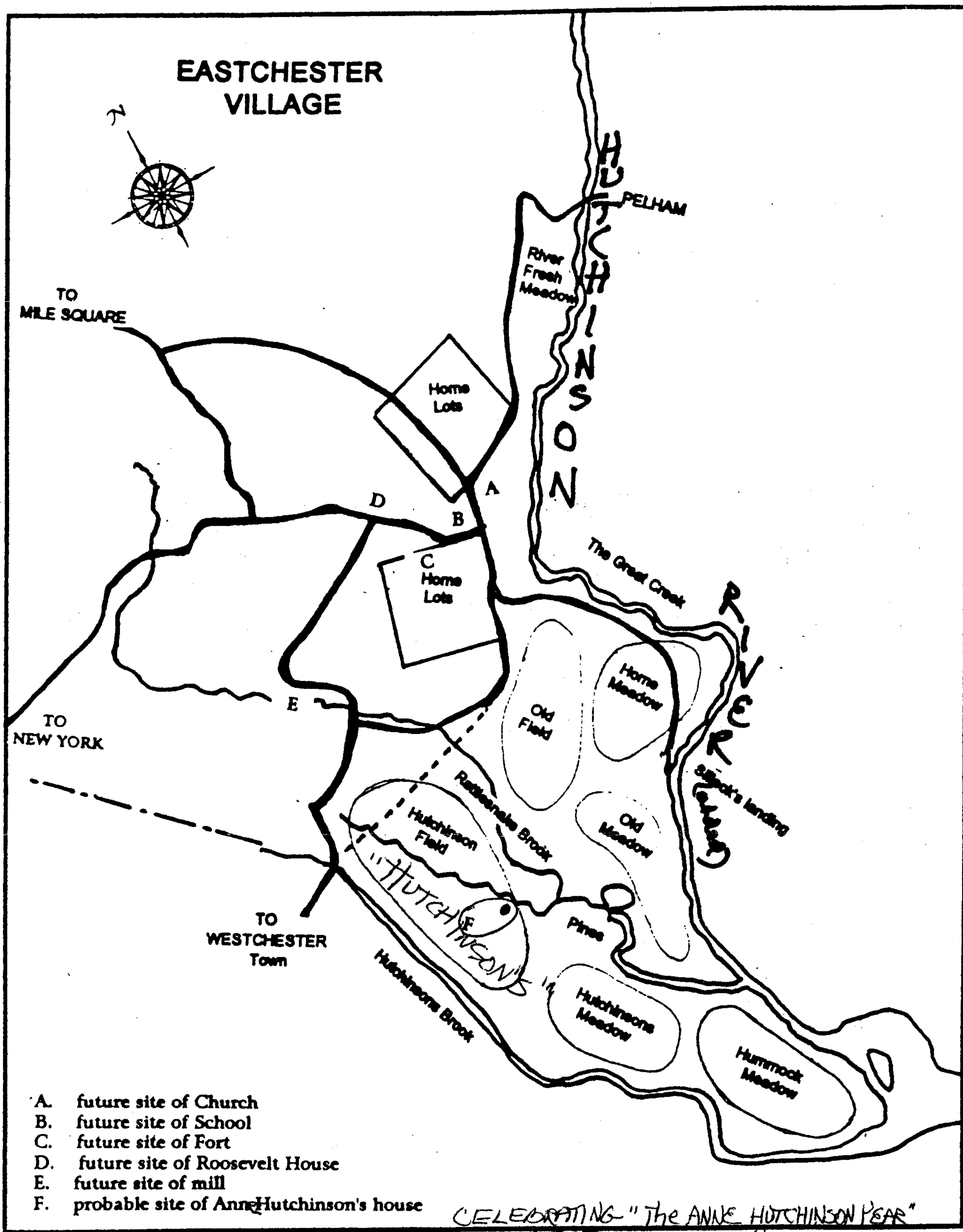
**She has made her place in history/herstory, standing for religious freedom, religious tolerance, separation of religion and government, the right to dissent, freedom of assembly, free speech, women's rights, and for the courage to stand up for her beliefs, even when personal consequences were drastic. Indeed, many consider her America's first feminist.**

Adapted from papers by Sharon Mills, Eleanor Rae and Toby Z. Liederman

To become involved, and for more information about "The Anne Hutchinson Year", please contact  
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# INITIAL LAND DIVISION

1666



- A. future site of Church
- B. future site of School
- C. future site of Fort
- D. future site of Roosevelt House
- E. future site of mill
- F. probable site of Anne Hutchinson's house

## CELEBRATING "The ANNIE HUTCHINSON YEAR"

**CONTACT**

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Rec'd from The Eastchester Historical Society