The Beebe Windmill, located on the corner of Hildreth Avenue and Ocean Road, Bridgehampton, is one of only eleven remaining on Long Island and was originally constructed in Sag Harbor in 1820. It is an example of a “smock mill” with a stone foundation and four-story tower which is exceptionally large for a windmill. The gristmill (a building in which grain is ground into flour) is considered one of Long Island’s more recent mills. Its cast-iron gears, fantail (the first on Long Island) and combination of wood and iron shafting and cog-work make the Beebe Windmill unique as it is the only surviving mill with that combination of characteristics.

The Beebe Windmill is named after its first owner whose last name was sometimes spelled as Beebee. It may be coincidence that the carved cap on top of the windmill, called an ogee, resembles a bee hive. The windmill was originally constructed in Sag Harbor in 1820 by Pardon Tabor, a local woodworker, and Samuel Schellinger, a local millwright, for Capt. Lester Beebe, a retired whaler and shipbuilder. When completed it was the tallest structure in Sag Harbor.

Following Beebe’s death, the windmill was sold in 1836 to Judge Abraham T. Rose and Richard Gelston and was moved to Mill Hill, just south of Hull Lane on the west side of Ocean Road. Over the next forty-five years the mill was sold and relocated several more times.

In 1882 John A Sandford purchased it and relocated it near the Bridgehampton railroad station. There he installed a steam engine enabling the mill to operate even if the wind was not strong enough. Next the mill was purchased by the NYC Park Commissioner with the intention of moving it to Prospect Park in Brooklyn. However, he was unable to transport the mill by train, as was his intention, because of the many bridges along the railroad line. In 1899 the mill was purchased by Oliver Osborne who moved it to the north side of the tracks, near the present Agway on Snake Hollow Road.

In 1914 the windmill was purchased by the Reverend Robert Davis, and then in 1915 by John Berwind who moved it to his property “Minden.” In 1935 John Berwind’s widow had the windmill moved to its final spot, where it now stands. Not long after that, the property and windmill were willed by the Berwind estate to the Town of Southampton in memory of John E. Berwind. In 1978 it was listed on the National Register of Historic Places, and subsequently received landmark status by the Town of Southampton.

The Bridgehampton Museum serves as the “Keeper of the Keys” of the Beebe Windmill. The windmill is owned by the Town of Southampton and recently has undergone restoration to its sails. BHHS makes the windmill available for self-guided tours several times during the summer and by special appointment throughout the year.