
LONG ISLAND HISTORICAL JOURNAL



Map by Willem Janszoon Blaeu based upon a 1614 manuscript by Dutch explorer Adriaen Block, the first European to circumnavigate Long Island.



Starting from fish-shape Paumanok where I was born...

Walt Whitman



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THE AUTONOMOUS COMMONWEALTH: SOUTHAMPTON, 1640-1644

John A. Strong

Narrative accounts describing the founding of the Town of Southampton are found in James Truslow Adams' The History of the Town of Southampton and George Rogers Howells' The Early History of Southampton. These accounts, however, are narrowly focused and do not consider the larger historical context in which Southampton's evolution took place. More recent research on the founding of towns in New England by such scholars as John Frederick Martin, Cedric Cowling, Bruce Daniels, Faren Siminoff, and Virginia DeJohn Anderson provide analytical models, which can be applied to the founding of Southampton and other towns on Long Island.¹ John A. Strong wades through the most recent literature and primary documents to shed new light on the origins of this historic east end town.

Although the great historians James Truslow Adams and George Rogers Howell make brief mention of Governor John Winthrop's role in the founding of Southampton and of the imperial conflict with the Dutch, they paid little attention to other important external factors. The most important among these was the role of Indian affairs in the decision to "hive out" from their homes in Lynn, Massachusetts in 1640 and again in their decision to give up their political autonomy by placing themselves under the jurisdiction of Connecticut in 1644. Another factor, which provides insights into the relations between the religious and civil institutions, is the experience of the Southampton town founders with religious dissent in Lynn, Massachusetts prior to the removal to Southampton.

Founding Fathers: The Gentleman and the Adventurer

Lynn, Massachusetts was founded in 1629, a year before the arrival of John Winthrop and the Puritan migration, and is located near Boston, a few miles south of Salem. The families in Lynn shared a number of demographic characteristics with the others who came to Massachusetts Bay in that period. Most were middle class drawn by the attraction of land and the hope of economic advancement.² The rich were content to stay at home and the poor could not afford the trip, unless they came as servants. Virginia DeJohn Anderson, who studied the biographical data on 693 emigrants, found that most traveled in family groups and came from towns and agricultural villages. The average age of the husbands

was thirty-seven years and one-third were farmers. Except for family servants, most were skilled in such crafts as weaving, carpentry, tanning, shoe making, brewing, blacksmithing, and tailoring. John Frederick Martin, in his study of one-hundred men who played leading roles in the founding of New England towns, noted that his sample included groups of individuals with special talents and resources. Some had experience in negotiating and or fighting with Indians; some had solid reputations and financial means, some had organizational and political skills, and others had a range of talents in such vital mundane tasks as carpentry, blacksmithing, and milling.³

Edward Howell and Daniel Howe, the two men who took the lead in organizing the Southampton venture, were quite different from each other in many respects. Howe was born in England in 1604, and though few records exist it appears that the Howes were middle class entrepreneurs. In 1634 Daniel's father, Edward, was fined twenty shillings by the Massachusetts Bay court for selling liquor without a license. Daniel was accepted as a freeman in Boston on May 14, 1634 and probably settled in Lynn soon after.⁴ An experienced mariner with some military experience, he soon established himself as a prominent member of the community. In 1636 the town selected him to aid in the training of the militia and soon after elected him as a representative to the General Court in Boston.

Edward Howell came from a manorial family in Buckinghamshire, England. He was born in 1584, the eldest son of Henry Howell, the owner of Westbury Manor. The social status of the family is difficult to determine because many manorial families in England at that time were not members of the aristocracy, nor were they considered landed gentry. The Howells may have been only slightly better off than the average immigrant families described by Anderson, but Edward's status as a well established farmer undoubtedly made him a welcome member of the Southampton company. The date of his arrival in Lynn is not known, but he was in Boston by 1639.⁵ Howell's background suggests that he was accustomed to playing a leadership role wherever he resided. Howell and Howe, therefore, brought together personal elements which were vitally needed in the establishment of a new community on the frontier.

The Pequot War and the "Great Land Rush"

Very little is known about the meetings and discussions related to the formation of the Southampton company. The historical circumstances which played a role, however, are well known. In the spring of 1637 a combined force from Massachusetts Bay and Connecticut supported by Mohegans and Narragansetts defeated the Pequots and opened up the

lands in the Connecticut River Valley and along both shores of Long Island Sound to English occupation.⁶ Daniel Howe served in the Massachusetts regiment in the war and saw action in the campaign to hunt down the Pequot remnants as they fled westward along the southern coast of Connecticut towards the New Netherland border. Howe and other veterans returned with descriptions of good harbors, fertile planting grounds, and lush meadows in the newly conquered Pequot lands. Captain John Underhill, one of the English officers, wrote in his account of the Pequot War that “the Pequots . . . were drove out of their country and slain by the number of fifteen-hundred souls, in the space of two months and less; so as their country is fully subdued and fallen into the hands of the English.”⁷ The land was not only rich in potential; it was now safe from the threat of Indian attack.

The sachems who had been under the protection of the Pequots now sought to realign themselves in an attempt to make an adjustment to the emergence of the English as the dominant military force in the area. Wyandanch, a young Montaukett sachem from the eastern end of Long Island, came to Lion Gardiner, the commander of the English fort at the mouth of the Connecticut River, and negotiated an alliance with him.⁸ Wyandanch was particularly interested in establishing a trade connection, which would give him control over the access to European goods on eastern Long Island.

The Imperial Scramble for Long Island

The English welcomed Wyandanch’s overtures because they wanted to gain a foothold in the areas where the English and Dutch had conflicting claims. The Dutch claimed all of Long Island, based on the voyages of Henry Hudson in 1609, and the English traced their claims to earlier voyages by John Cabot in 1497.⁹ Captain Israel Stoughton, the commander of the Massachusetts Bay troops, wrote to John Winthrop that “the providence of God guided us to so excellent a country . . . as I am confident we have not the like in English possession,” and added a warning that “probable tis that the Dutch will seize it if the English do not.”¹⁰ Edward Howell and Daniel Howe undoubtedly discussed the advantages offered by the newly conquered lands and the concerns about Dutch imperial interests with John Winthrop. Although there are no records of such discussions, Winthrop did give his endorsement for the project.¹¹ Winthrop was well aware of the economic potential for Long Island. Three years after his arrival in Boston, Winthrop set about exploring the New England coast. He sent a small boat called “the Blessing of the Bay” to visit Long Island, New Netherland and adjacent areas. The explorers reported that the Indians on eastern Long Island produced large quantities of high quality

wampum which could be used to purchase beaver pelts from the Indians who lived inland.¹² Winthrop and Wouter Van Twiller, the director-general of New Netherland, exchanged courteous letters asserting their claims to Long Island and the lands between the Connecticut and the Hudson Rivers, but the rivalry was taken very seriously by both nations.¹³

Religious Turmoil in Boston and Lynn

The second major historical event that made an impression on Howell and Howe was the religious turmoil that threatened the social stability of Massachusetts Bay. Anne Hutchinson, a strong willed woman who challenged the Puritan orthodoxy espoused by John Winthrop and the leaders of the Bay colony, threatened to disrupt the established social and political order. Hutchinson argued that salvation was a gift of grace and could not be earned by good works. She also contended that individuals did not need the guidance of the church elders in such matters. She further stated that she herself had communicated with god directly and had no need of the institutional church or its ministers.¹⁴ Winthrop, alarmed by this threat to the newly established colony, brought her before the court and had her banished from the colony in 1638.

Daniel Howe shared Winthrop's concern and supported him during the controversy. Howe was rewarded for his loyal support as well as for his services in the Pequot War with a leadership position in the militia and revenues from taxes on wine, liquor, and tobacco.¹⁵ Both Howe and Howell were well aware that religious conflicts could threaten the social order because the Lynn community had gone through similar internal disruptions which began about four years before the Hutchinson affair. Lynn had no minister from the time of its founding in 1629 until the arrival of the Reverend Stephen Batchellor (Bachilor) in 1633. Batchellor, his family, and a small group of followers from his parish in England, came to Lynn and established an informal congregation, which was not officially recognized by the Massachusetts Bay church elders. Batchellor was a "familist," a small Protestant sect that followed the teachings of Hendrick Niclaes, a sixteenth-century Dutch mystic.¹⁶

Batchellor, a seventy-one year old man with fiercely independent religious views, began to preach and to baptize children. After a few months people in Lynn complained to the Boston elders of Batchellor's "irregularities in conduct." The Boston General Court prohibited him from preaching because of certain unmentioned scandals and his contempt for authority.¹⁷ Batchellor apparently worked hard to rally support for his ministry because the following year the court rescinded

their prohibition and allowed him to resume his ministry. Nevertheless, the community remained divided, and he lost the support of a majority of residents. In 1636 Batchellor was again brought before the court in Boston, and this time he was ordered to leave Lynn “within three months.”¹⁸ Unfortunately there is no record of the specific nature of his alleged “nonconformity,” but the controversy caused by Anne Hutchinson undoubtedly made Winthrop and the clergy wary of any opposition to their orthodox views.¹⁹ Although Hutchinson, under oath, denied any connection with the familists, Winthrop lumped them together.²⁰ Although this controversy had been resolved before Howell’s arrival, he was undoubtedly well informed about the impact of Batchellor’s ministry on the small community. The problems created in Lynn and Boston by rigid sectarian orthodoxy undoubtedly convinced Howell, Howe and a majority of the Southampton company that they needed to keep religion out of civic affairs.

The Founding of Southampton

It was in the aftermath of these dramatic events that Howell and Howe made their plans, in consultation with Winthrop and the Boston magistrates, for the Southampton enterprise. In his journal Winthrop wrote that their decision to leave Lynn and establish a new town was made because they were “straitened,” a term used at the time to indicate economic hardship or limited possibilities.²¹ It seems clear that the latter meaning was what Winthrop had in mind. The property lists for Lynn indicate that most of the members of the Southampton company owned sixty or more acres of land.²² Edward Howell, with five hundred acres, was one of the four largest land owners in Lynn.

These were not poor farmers looking for a start in life; they were men lured by the opportunity to expand their private estates in the rush to occupy the lands of the Pequots and their tributaries.²³ James Truslow Adams noted that “though various reasons have been assigned for the departure from Lynn in 1640 . . . I do not think that we need to look beyond the economic conditions of the time.”²⁴ William Pelletreau expressed somewhat similar feelings about the contemporary romantic perception of the founders. In his introduction to the town records, he warned his readers that “Those who believe that the settlement was formed entirely of God fearing and virtuous men, will find in these pages much that will fail to support their view.”²⁵

In pursuing their private economic advantage, the founders would also advance English imperial interests by blocking the Dutch designs on the disputed territories. It seems quite likely that the initial discussions for the settlement involved Winthrop and Howell because Howell was the only member of the company who had the wealth and

social status to form such a relationship with Winthrop. In his history of Southampton, George Rogers Howell notes that the agreement on the terms of the plantation founding was in Edward Howell's handwriting.²⁶

The establishment of a new town on the frontier required a man such as Edward Howell, who had the funds and the prestige which would attract investors and settlers, but the plantation enterprise also required a first hand knowledge of the frontier and some military expertise. Howe more than satisfied these needs, but he also was an experienced mariner who knew the coastal waters. He could provide transportation across the sound for the settlers and their supplies.²⁷ The new towns also needed a minister to found a church that would provide social cohesion and legitimize the authority of the civil government. Winthrop recommended the Reverend Abraham Pierson, "a godly learned man and a member of the church of Boston."²⁸

The decision to locate near the Dutch on Long Island may have originated with Winthrop, although many Englishmen shared Israel Stoughton's concern about the Dutch designs on Long Island and western Connecticut. The English had already pushed west along the northern shore of Long Island Sound where they founded Fairfield, Milford, and Stratford. In 1639 Lion Gardiner had purchased a small island in Peconic Bay between the northern and southern forks on the far eastern end of Long Island from a sachem named Youghcoe. Gardiner established a homestead on the island which he named after himself, ignoring the inconvenient fact that his title was not recognized in English law. This inconvenient fact was commonly ignored during this early period of settlement in New England.

The Stirling Patent

Although several groups of settlers had previously "hived" out from Lynn to establish new settlements, none had left the territory covered by the Massachusetts Bay charter. This plan posed a real problem because Winthrop had no authority to establish a settlement on Long Island. He could not simply act in the same arbitrary manner as had Lion Gardiner, because Winthrop did not want to draw the attention of his enemies in England who had plotted against his colonial charter.²⁹ Although there is no record of Winthrop's direct involvement in the planning by the Lynn group, he was certainly aware that William Alexander, the Earl of Stirling, had a patent from the Council of New England for territory which included Long Island, Nantucket and Martha's Vineyard.³⁰

Stirling's grant had come to him from the Council For New England, which James I established in 1621 to supervise and encourage the settlement of lands between 40 degrees to 48 degrees of Northern

latitude. In 1635, under Charles I, the council divided up the remaining territory among its eight members and went out of business. The council grants, however, required the final confirmation and official seal of the king. Although it was probably Charles' intent to confirm Stirling's patent, he never did grant it the official seal.³¹ The legal technicalities involving Stirling's patent and the subsequent land grants by Stirling's agent, James Farrett, were apparently overlooked or ignored in England and in the colonies. Historian John Romeyn Brodhead noted that "neither Farrett's nor Stirling's instruments, as they appear in the London Documents, were transcribed from originals (emphasis Brodhead's) among the Board of Trade in the State Paper Office in London. The originals (if indeed they exist) were not exhibited."³² All of the patents issued by Farrett, therefore, were suspect, and none of the towns on the Connecticut River had crown authorization. It was not until 1662 that John Winthrop Jr. managed to obtain a charter for the colony of Connecticut.

Stirling's patent, however flawed, provided John Winthrop Sr. and the Southampton company with the necessary legal cover. Stirling had tried to recruit and organize settlers from Scotland in an earlier venture for a settlement in New Foundland, but found few who were willing to leave their homes for the uncertainties of life in the new world. He decided to look for settlers in New England who wanted to improve their situation by establishing a new community on the frontier. In 1637 Stirling advised his agent, James Farret, to seek out the advice of John Winthrop regarding a settlement on Long Island.³³ Governor Winthrop welcomed Farrett to Boston in 1639 and was likely the one who put Farrett in touch with Daniel Howe.

The patents which had the king's seal conveyed to their recipients the right to establish civil government in the designated areas of the king's realm. Long Island was, of course, included in England's North American lands claimed by right of John Cabot's voyages of discovery. These specific rights included legislative, judicial, and executive powers with very few limitations. Usually there was stipulation that the laws conform to the basic laws of England. The powers could be passed along to communities or individuals living within the jurisdiction of the patent at the discretion of the patentee. On April 17, 1640, Farrett, acting as Stirling's agent, affirmed the Southampton Company's right to:

enjoy as full and free liberty in all matters that do or may concern them or theirs or that may conduce to the good and comfort of them and theirs both on church order and civil government together with all

easements, conveniences and accommodations whatsoever which the said place doth or may afforde answerable to with other plantations enjoy in Massachusetts Bay.³⁴

The reference to Massachusetts Bay indicates that Winthrop's informal authority played an important role in the attempt to legitimize the questionable legal grounds upon which the Stirling Patent rested.

In May, 1640 Howe led a small advance group of eight men and one woman to establish a settlement on western Long Island close to the Dutch towns. If the Dutch failed to challenge this move, they would, by default, lose the eastern two thirds of Long Island. The English imperial gamble failed. The Dutch sent a troop of men to arrest the English settlers and bring them to New Amsterdam where they were charged with trespass and sent back to New England. The company regrouped and returned to Long Island, but this time they chose a spot on the far eastern end of the island where the Dutch could not easily reach them. They purchased land from the Shinnecock Indians and established a new town.

The Origins of Town Government 1640-44

Although in theory the town government with its patent from Lord Stirling was accountable to the crown, in fact the town was virtually autonomous. King Charles very likely had never even heard of the settlement because Stirling's grant had never come before him for his signature. There was, therefore, no appeal from the decisions made by the General Court. James Truslow Adams in his classic history of Southampton noted that "it would, I think, not be an overstatement to say it could and did do everything which a sovereign power . . . would find it necessary or convenient to do."³⁵

The organizers of the Southampton enterprise began to address the establishment of civil government in March, 1640 when a company of twenty men calling themselves "undertakers" signed "The Disposal of the Vessel" and "A Declaration of the Company."³⁶ Although these agreements do not set down specific rules or governmental procedures, they address crucial questions regarding property, endorse a form of majority rule, and establish a procedure for settling disputes. The undertakers, in consultation with Winthrop, agreed on the amount of money each would contribute and arranged for a vessel to carry them and their goods to Long Island. They also distributed house and planting lots to individuals and agreed to hold the rest of the lands in common. Shares in the common lands were based on the amount each undertaker had invested in the company. The streams and bays were

open to all for “fishing, fowling and navigation.” They also agreed that each lot owner would be responsible for fencing his land. The undertakers accepted new members “by consent of the company” and agreed to resolve disputes between Howe, the owner of the vessel, and the company by having both parties agree to accept the judgment of two men selected jointly by the disputants. This practice became a standard procedure for settling minor disputes over grazing rights to meadow lands.³⁷

The first formal draft of laws was a draconian code which Pelletreau referred to in volume one of the town records, as a “curious code of laws,” that was seldom enforced. The laws were concerned with trespass, liability for property damage, and personal injury.³⁸ These ordinances were followed by a list of crimes which were considered to be serious enough to merit death or banishment. These included blasphemy, idolatry, witchcraft, perjury, profaning the lord’s day, treason, insulting the magistrates, adultery, murder, cursing or striking one’s parents, incest, kidnapping, and bearing false witness. Lesser crimes such as swearing, drunkenness, rape, and fornication were to be punished by flogging. Although Pelletreau dismissed this as a “curious code of laws, [that] were never enforced to their full extent,” they were not so unusual for the time.³⁹ The General Court of Connecticut passed a similar set of laws in 1642 adding bestiality and homosexuality to the list of capital crimes punishable by death.⁴⁰ Pelletreau is certainly correct in noting that the death penalty was never invoked in the early decades of the settlement. Humiliation in the stocks, flogging, imprisonment, and fines were the most common sanctions recorded in the town records.

The basic mechanics of government are never spelled out in a formal constitution, but the general outlines can be gleaned from the town records. The Town Meeting or “General Court” as it is described in the records was the first civic institution to be established. The court, consisting of all the freemen of the town and presided over by elected magistrates, was the primary source of civic authority. It made laws, enforced them, and settled all disputes. There was no separation of powers until much later. Every October the court held elections for the town offices. Although the first recorded civic action took place on April 6, 1641, nearly a year after the settlers arrived, it is likely that the small group of undertakers handled community affairs informally during the first months of the settlement.

The General Court delegated powers to subordinate agencies to handle the day to day operations of town governance. Langdon Wright, in his study of town governments in colonial New York, found that town meetings were important during the early years after the initial

settlement, but became less active as the population increased.⁴¹ Although town meetings became a legendary symbol of grass roots democracy in America, they proved to be time consuming and inefficient. In 1641 the court established a structure of government which included two (sometimes three) magistrates, constables, marshals, a clerk, a militia (training band), and a provision calling for four “quarter courts” each year.⁴² The courts were scheduled to meet in March, June, September, and December. William Pelletreau, in his introduction to volume one of the town records, noted that many of the references to General Court actions were more likely actions of these quarter courts.⁴³ The agendas of the court sessions tended to be limited to one or two issues of major concern. One unfortunate result for historians is that the daily functioning of governance remains obscure.

Church and State in Southampton

The Southampton settlement bore little resemblance to the ideal Puritan community envisioned by John Winthrop. Howell and Howe accepted Pierson, but they did not share his vision of a community of Christian saints in the wilderness, nor did they have any interest in spreading the gospel to the Indians. They wanted a safe, respectable minister who would help to form and maintain social cohesion. They did not want the seeds of rigid orthodoxies such as antinomianism or “familism” planted in their new town. New England churches had two primary means through which they could influence the civic affairs of the community: censure and franchise. Pierson wanted to restrict the vote to church members as was the case in New Haven under Theophilus Eaton and the Reverend John Davenport. Although Pierson’s personal views were never recorded in the Southampton town documents, Benjamin Trumbull in his classic history of Connecticut noted that Davenport and Pierson firmly held that no person “could be a freeman, unless he were a member in full communion with the church.”⁴⁴ The town leaders were not at all sympathetic to such restrictions. Although there is no specific mention in the town records about voting rights, it appears that all of the proprietors could vote whether they were church members or not.⁴⁵

A second source of church influence was the power to censure people who violated or challenged church authority. Those under censure were often prohibited from engaging in any community affairs, including the right to vote or to speak at town meetings. Once again the Southampton General Court made it clear that they would not allow the church to intrude into civic affairs. When Pierson censured Daniel Howe, Howe ignored the sanction and continued to perform his duties as a magistrate. While he was under censure, he got into a dispute with

John Moore, Thomas Halsey and William Wells over matters which unfortunately are not mentioned in the records. All three men verbally attacked Howe in a meeting of the town court. Moore charged that Howe had no authority to serve as magistrate as long as he remained under censure. The court supported Howe, rejecting Moore's position and placing its own censure on Howe's three critics. The three men were humbled and agreed to make a public "acknowledgment" at the next meeting of the court.⁴⁶

Surrendering Autonomy

Given the well known independent mindset of the eastern Long Island settlers, observers might well ask why Southampton would give up its autonomous status and place itself under the jurisdiction, however benign, of Connecticut? The answer to this question brings us back to the impact of the Native American presence on Long island from 1640 until 1644 when the town voted to join Connecticut. Southampton and the small frontier communities such as Southold and Milford felt vulnerable to Indian attacks and often reacted to the frequent rumors describing threats of raiding war parties or larger conspiracies.

William Bradford, in his history of Plymouth Plantation, noted that the fear of Indian attack and captivity was a concern even before the English began arriving in the New World. The pilgrims, he said, would be "in continual danger of the savage people, who are cruel, barbarous and most treacherous." Bradford went on to describe in gruesome detail the tortures attributed to the Indians.⁴⁷ These fears and stereotypes remained on the Atlantic Frontier throughout most of the seventeenth-century. Lion Gardiner, in his account of the Pequot War written in 1660, expressed the fears which were undoubtedly still in the minds of most settlers on the frontier. He warned that Englishmen should ever be on guard because so many Englishmen had their "blood shed, yea, and some flayed alive, others cut into pieces, and some roasted alive . . . I would fain die a natural death or like a soldier in the field, with honor, and not to have a sharp stake set in the ground and thrust into my fundament, and to have my skin flayed off by piecemeal, and cut in pieces and bits, and my flesh roasted and thrust down my throat, as these people have done, and will be done to the chiefest in the country by the hundreds if God should deliver us unto their hands."⁴⁸

These grisly accounts fired suspicions whenever the settlers noticed any activity in the Indian villages which seemed to them to be unusual. Consequently, it is no surprise to find that the first concern in volume one of the Southampton town records was an order on April 6, 1641 prohibiting the giving or lending to Indians "either guns, pistols, or any

other instruments of war such as powder, shot, matches, swords, or any engine of war whatsoever.”⁴⁹

The following spring, news from western Long Island about an alleged Indian conspiracy to attack English and Dutch settlements must have greatly alarmed Southampton. Miantonomo, the Narragansett sachem, came with a party of one-hundred warriors to meet with local sachems.⁵⁰ Reports from Dutch sources told of an attempt to burn down a Dutch arsenal and of a plot to poison Kieft, the Dutch governor. The hysterical rumors even included a fear that a shaman had placed a “diabolical incantation on Kieft in case the poison didn’t work.”⁵¹ Such curses were taken seriously by some Europeans not only because they also believed in witchcraft, but also because they knew that shamans frequently administered a dose of poison to make sure the curse appeared to work.

According to Lion Gardiner, Miantonomo visited the Montauketts as well, bringing them gifts of wampum and eliciting their support in a plan to destroy the English settlements on Long Island. Lion Gardiner, writing nearly two decades later, said that Miantonomo planned to make an alliance with the Mohawk, who would send warriors to join with a war party which included one-hundred Shinnecocks and an equal number of Montauketts. The allied nations would attack the English on “a clear night . . . and kill men, women, and children, but no cows, for they will serve to eat until our deer be increased again.”⁵² As it turned out later, it appears that Miantonomo was seeking support from the Long Island sachems to strengthen his influence over rival sachems, not plotting a war of extermination against the Dutch and English. When John Winthrop, Sr. called Miantonomo to Boston for questioning about the rumors, the sachem convinced him that the Narragansetts bore no hostility towards the English or the Dutch.⁵³ Gardiner, however, maintained in his account that he and Wyandanch foiled the plot and saved the English and Dutch settlements.⁵⁴

The Southampton magistrates were taking no chances. They established a local militia and required all males sixteen and older to show up with their weapons for training or pay a fine. They took precautions to prevent conflicts with their Indian neighbors. Fearing that reprisals for damages committed by Indians on English persons or property might lead to an escalation of violence, the town leaders ordered that such damages be reported to them with verifying evidence. They would make a judgment and, if justified, compensate the aggrieved party.⁵⁵ These measures were less reassuring as news of growing tensions between the Dutch and the Indians around New Amsterdam reached Southampton.

In February, 1643 Governor Kieft launched an ill advised preemptory attack on two Indian villages that took the lives of over one-hundred Indian men, women and children. English settlers living in the Dutch territory on western Long Island followed these attacks with an unauthorized foray against the Indians in Canarsie, killing two men and stealing their winter supply of corn. In response, an alliance of Algonquian tribes from western Long Island, the lower Hudson Valley, and along the northeastern shore of Long Island Sound launched a series of devastating attacks on Dutch and English settlers.⁵⁶ Although they were not organized into a central force, over a thousand warriors took part in raids over a widely dispersed area. The Dutch could only muster a small troop of fifty or sixty men with limited military experience. Two of the Dutch farmers reported that “our people were killed and murdered within a few weeks, at diverse places around the fort (New Amsterdam), by Indians.” They went on to describe piles of ashes from burnt houses and barns and the bones of livestock and reported that nearly fifty “first class” farms had been abandoned.⁵⁷ The raids, which were undoubtedly reported in great detail in Southampton, continued throughout the rest of 1643.

As the war raged on western Long Island, representatives from Connecticut, New Haven, Plymouth, and Massachusetts Bay met in Boston in May, 1643 to ratify an agreement which established the United Colonies. The colonies had begun discussions about a unified approach to the threats posed by Indians and the Dutch soon after the Pequot War in 1637, but conflicts between Massachusetts and Connecticut over their boundaries delayed negotiations.⁵⁸ Although the Dutch and Indians on their western frontier were fighting each other, the English feared that the violence might soon spread into their settlements. Their fears were realized three months later when Anne Hutchinson and her family were killed in Stamford on the western border between Connecticut and New Netherland.

Southampton sent word to the United Colonies Commissioners as soon as the town learned of a new confederation, asking to be included under its protection. In the first meeting of the United Colonies in September, 1643, the commissioners told Southampton that they would have to come in under the jurisdiction of one of the member colonial governments.⁵⁹ The Southampton leaders had to choose between New Haven and Connecticut, creating more tension between Reverend Pierson, who favored the more austere Puritan government of New Haven, and the Southampton magistrates who favored the more pragmatic regime in Connecticut. There is no mention of discussions about these differences in the town records, but the magistrates led by Howell and Howe prevailed.

Peace was finally restored in April, 1644, but alarming news that same month of an Indian uprising in Virginia, which nearly wiped out the colony, reminded New Englanders that settlements along the Atlantic frontier were still vulnerable. Howell led a delegation to negotiate the merger with Governor Edward Hopkins. The Agreement allowed the town to maintain a large measure of local autonomy and guaranteed the military protection the people desired.⁶⁰ Reverend Pierson was most distressed by the decision to join with Connecticut. His attempt to impose a strict Puritan imprint on the town was again thwarted. The reverend had failed to limit the vote to church members in Southampton, and he had not been able to prevent those under church censure from participating in the political affairs of the town. Around 1647 Pierson left Southampton, taking a number of his followers with him to the village of Brantford in New Haven Colony. At the next meeting of the United Colonies in September, 1644, the commissioners officially noted that Southampton was now under the jurisdiction of Connecticut.⁶¹

Although George Rogers Howell and James Truslow Adams carefully mined the original town records for their historical accounts, they did not have the advantage of the growing body of literature on seventeenth-century frontier settlements that is available today. Unfortunately, contemporary scholars have, until recently, paid very little attention to the early records in the archives of the towns on Long Island. This article demonstrates the potential insights which can be gained by applying new research to the seventeenth-century records. There is a rich data base in the local town records which has yet to be gleaned.

NOTE: This article is based on research presented at the International Hungarian American Studies Conference, Veszprem, Hungary, (January 27-29, 2005) and at the Conference on New York State History, Columbia University (June 1-3, 2006).

NOTES

¹ Virginia DeJohn Anderson, *New England's Generation: The Great Migration and the Formation of Society and Culture in the Seventeenth Century* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1991); John Fredrick Martin, *Profits in the Wilderness: Entrepreneurship and the Founding of New England in the Seventeenth Century* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1991); Faren Siminoff, *Crossing the Sound: The Rise of Atlantic American Communities in Seventeenth Century Long Island* (New York: New York University Press, 2004); Cedric B.

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² Martin, 9-11; Anderson, 32.

³ Martin, 9-11

⁴ Thomas Cooper, "Southampton's Founding 1640." *The Suffolk County Historical Society Register*, 1990 Vol. XV (4):99.

⁵ Edward may have arrived in Lynn as early as 1636, but the first record mentioning him is dated March 13, 1639. See David Faris, ed., *Descendents of the Howell Family (1584-1655)* (Baltimore: Gateway Press, 1985), 19; Alonzo Lewis, and James R. Newhall, *History of Lynn, Essex County, Massachusetts* (Boston: John L. Shorey, Publisher, 1865). Reprinted by Heritage Books, Bowie, MD, 1989, 171.

⁶ Alfred Cave, *The Pequot War* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1996); Neal Salisbury *Manitou and Providence, Indians, Europeans, and the Making of New England, 1500-1643* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1982); Francis Jennings, *The Invasion of America: Indians, Colonialism, and the Cant of Conquest* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1976); Alden T. Vaughan, *New England Frontier: Puritans and Indians, 1620-1675* (Boston: Little and Company, 1965).

⁷ John Underhill, "News From America," *The History of the Pequot War*, ed. Charles Orr (New York: AMS Press, 1980), 49-50.

⁸ Lion Gardiner, "Relation of the Pequot Wars," in *The History of the Pequot War*, 137.

⁹ Samuel Eliot Morison, *The European Discovery of America: The Northern Voyages* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1971).

¹⁰ Allyn Forbes, ed., *Winthrop Papers*, vol. 3 (Boston: The Massachusetts Historical Society, 1929-1947), 479; Cooper, 11.

¹¹ RTSH *Records of the Town of Southampton* 8 vols. (Sag Harbor, NY: John H. Hunt, 1874-77) I: 11-12; Richard S. Dunn, and Laetitia Yeandle,

eds., (abridged edition) *The Journal of John Winthrop 1630-1649* (Cambridge: The Belknap Press of Harvard University, 1996), 174-76.

¹² Dunn and Yeandle, 57; John A. Strong, *The Algonquian Peoples of Long Island From Earliest Times to 1700* (Interlakin, N.Y.: 1997, 2000), 150-153; Rasieres, Isaack, de., "Letter to Samuel Blommaert, 1628, in *Narratives of New Netherland, 1609-1664*, ed. J. Franklin Jameson (New York: Charles Scribners. 1909), 103.

¹³ Dunn and Yeandle, 57.

¹⁴ David D. Hall, *The Antinomian Controversy, 1636-1638: A Documentary History* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1990), 441-444.

¹⁵ Cooper, 105.

¹⁶ Lewis and Newhall, 139-140; Siminoff, 98-100; Alistair Hamilton, *The Family of Love* (London: The James Clarke Company, 1981); Christopher Marsh, *Family Love in English Society 1550-1630* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994).

¹⁷ Lewis and Newhall, 140.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 159

¹⁹ Cotton Mather, in his brief biographical account of Bachiler (quoted by Lewis and Newhall, 159-163), does not give any details about the nature of his unconformity but the group was reputed to believe that all property should be held in common and there were rumors that they practiced free love. See Siminoff's account, 98-100.

²⁰ Hall, 362; John Winthrop, *A Short Story of the Rise, Reign, and Ruin of the Antinomians, Familists, and Libertarians That Infected the Church of New England* (London: Ralph Smith, 1644), reprinted by Kessinger Publishers, 2003.

²¹ Dunn and Yeandle, 174

²² Lewis and Newhall, 171-172.

²³ Cooper, 11.

²⁴ James Truslow Adams, *History of the Town of Southampton* (Bridgehampton: Hampton Press, 1918), 45.

²⁵ RTSH, 1: iii.

²⁶ George Rogers Howell, *The Early History of Southampton, Long Island* (Albany: Weed, Parsons and Company, 1887). (Reprinted by Higginson Book Company, Salem, MA.), 300.

²⁷ Cooper argues that Daniel Howe, not Edward Howell was the real founder of the Southampton settlement.

²⁸ Dunn and Yeandle, 175.

²⁹ Calder, 76-77; Dunn and Yeandle 144-145 fn.

³⁰ Calder, 80.

³¹ *Ibid.*, 78-79

³² John Romeyn Brodhead, *History of the State of New York* 2 vols. (New York: Harper Brothers, 1853-71) vol. I: 760.

³³ Stirling's commission to James Farret, RTSH Vol. 5: 1-6; see also Calder 80-81.

³⁴ RTSH, vol. I: 10.

³⁵ Adams 98

³⁶ RTSH I: 1-6.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, I: 2; 28-29.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, I: 18-22.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, I: vi.

⁴⁰ RCC *Records of the Colony of Connecticut*, ed. J. Hammond Trumbull, 15 vols. 1859 (Reprint 1968 New York: AMS Press) Vol. I: 77-78.

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- ⁴¹ Langdon Wright "Local Government in Colonial New York, 1640-1710," Ph.D. dissertation, Cornell University, 1974: 231-232
- ⁴² RTSH I: 23-24. These quarter courts were sometimes referred to as "Magistrates Courts" Howell, 87-88.
- ⁴³ RTSH I: iv, Howell, 88
- ⁴⁴ Benjamin Trumbull, *A Complete History of Connecticut* 2 vols. (New York: Arno Press, 1972); I: 271; see also Howell 100.
- ⁴⁵ David Goddard, concluded that only the proprietors had full franchise. "Town Government" (2006) unpublished manuscript, p. 10-12.
- ⁴⁶ RTSH, I: 27.
- ⁴⁷ William Bradford, *Of Plymouth Plantation, 1620-1647*, (New York: McGraw Hill, 1981): 27.
- ⁴⁸ Gardiner, 139-140.
- ⁴⁹ RTSH I: 22.
- ⁵⁰ E. B. O'Callaghan, *History of New Netherland* 2 vols. (New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1845-48, Reprint 1966), I: 263.
- ⁵¹ Ibid., See also Edward Bailey O'Callaghan and Berthold Fernow (eds.) *Documents Relative to the Colonial History of the State of New York*. 15 vols.(Albany, NY: Weed, Parsons, 1856-1887): 3: 183.
- ⁵² Gardiner, 142-143
- ⁵³ John Kendall Hosmer, ed., *Winthrop's Journal, A History of New England 1630-1649*, 2 vols. (NY: Barnes and Noble, 1946), 2: 76. and John Sainsbury, 1971. "Miantonomo's Death and New England Politics 1630-1645," *Rhode Island History*, 30 (4):117.
- ⁵⁴ Gardiner, 140-143.
- ⁵⁵ RTSH, I: 24; 28.

⁵⁶ O'Callaghan, I: 267-270; Strong, 178-185; Allen Trelease, *Indian Affairs in Colonial New York: the Seventeenth Century* (Lincoln: The University of Nebraska Press, 1997), Ch. 3.

⁵⁷ O'Callaghan and Fernow, I: 205

⁵⁸ Harry Ward, *The United Colonies of New England 1643-1690* (New York: Vantage Press, 1961), 37-38.

⁵⁹ David Pulsifer, ed. *Records of the Colony of New Plymouth*, 10 vols. (New York: AMS Press, 1958), 9: 10

⁶⁰ Adams, Appendix VII "The Combination of Southampton and Connecticut."

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THE GARDEN CITY HOTEL AND THE MODERN AMERICAN PEACE MOVEMENT

Chuck F. Howlett

The history and evolution of the Fellowship of Reconciliation represents an important chapter in American social and political movements. This nonviolent peace organization produced Martin Luther King, Jr. and A. J. Muste, among other luminaries, and started at a meeting at the Garden City Hotel.

The inauguration of the modern peace movement in America, one of the twentieth-century's most important social and political developments, took place on Long Island. It began with a meeting in Garden City in 1915. Gathering at the famed Garden City Hotel a group of religious pacifists and social activists from Great Britain and the United States created the American Branch of the Fellowship of Reconciliation (ABFR). It remains active to the present day.

The Fellowship of Reconciliation was originally established at the start of World War I in England but would achieve its greatest notoriety here in the United States. The ABFR was the first organization to usher in the modern peace movement – a movement which the founders sought to dedicate to peace and justice, and one which envisioned peace as more than just the absence of war. What occurred at Garden City forever changed the course and direction of peace efforts in the United States. What led to this meeting on Long Island began a year earlier with events at Sarajevo in what is now Bosnia-Herzegovina. The assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand in August 1914 plunged the world into total war. As a result, the established peace movement entered into a period of confusion and complete disunity.¹

According to the late Pulitzer Prize-winning historian, Merle Curti, the first organized peace societies may have actually started here in America (peace societies were also established in Great Britain about the same time – shortly after the War of 1812). The Great War of 1914-1918 shook the foundations of the prewar American peace movement. The original peace advocates were sectarian pacifists who were members of the Historic Peace Churches – the Society of Friends, Mennonites, and Church of the Brethren. As the United States grew and prospered nonsectarian peace advocates came to dominate the various peace organizations. Though pacifist, these pioneers for peace moved away from religious arguments against war to more practical, mechanical, and legalistic ways for establishing world peace. Before World War I rattled the European landscape, a practical peace movement, not necessarily

committed to nonviolence, financed by wealthy businessmen came to dominate efforts at international stability.

Recruits to the practical peace movement consisted of academicians, men of “mugwump” (liberal Republican) backgrounds, leaders in the business world, bureaucratic experts befitting progressive reforms, and members of the emerging profession of international law. A majority of these peace advocates were male and most were not pacifists. In their view only the literate gentlemen of the middle and upper classes could better understand and identify with the “civilized” quality of their movement than could the “unenlightened” masses. Not surprisingly, the elitist leaders relied on contacts in government circles for their influence and shunned involvement with immigrant, moderate socialist, or labor groups. Most of them also belonged to endowed peace organizations, such as the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace and the World Peace Foundation, which were funded by wealthy philanthropists like steel magnate Andrew Carnegie and textbook publisher Edward Ginn. Despite the widespread domestic reform efforts of progressives, this movement had not proved particularly appealing to those desirous of more pacifist prescriptions for peace and social justice. Most importantly, the pre-World War I peace movement was not pacifist in nature. Many believed in peace but did not subscribe to complete nonviolence, nor did they consider domestic economic inequalities an issue deserving their attention.

All of that would change in 1914 with the archduke’s assassination. The peace movement in the United States underwent a major transformation. As a result of world war it would now be dramatically restructured between those who supported defeat of the Central Powers and those steadfastly opposed to any form of violence, organized or otherwise. Many of the prewar peace leaders supported the war. American military intervention in World War I in 1917 hastened the change in the peace movement to a more pacifist constituency desirous of implementing a new course for the peace movement.² More and more opponents of war now proved receptive to a socialist analysis of the nature of capitalism’s failings and more radical and nonviolent in their prescriptions for its overhaul and displacement.³ In particular, female, pacifist, and antiwar organizations were established. In the aftermath of the war the most important women’s antiwar organization, the Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF), was established in 1921, as well as the secular pacifist group, the War Resisters League (WRL) in 1924. But it was the pacifist Fellowship of Reconciliation (FOR), founded during the war on Long Island and the only peace group upholding the principle of nonviolence on religious grounds, which instituted the birth of the modern American peace movement. Led by the

FOR branch in the United States the other peace groups in America coalesced to establish the most active antiwar movement in the twentieth-century. Not all members who joined these groups, with the exception of the ABRF, were pacifists, but all were drawn by the conviction that for human progress to advance war must be abolished. Whether it were the religious pacifists in the ABRF, nonreligious pacifists in the War Resisters League, or committed antiwar feminists clinging to maternal instincts in the WILPF, all were determined, through their efforts to oppose war, to build a better society at home and a safer world abroad. "These groups," one noted historian of the American peace movement writes, "attracted not only peace seekers disenchanted with the timidity of the peace societies and endowed organizations but impelled many more pacifist liberals and socialists into the cause for the first time." Many of these antiwar "newcomers . . . boldly linked peace advocacy with social justice causes."⁴

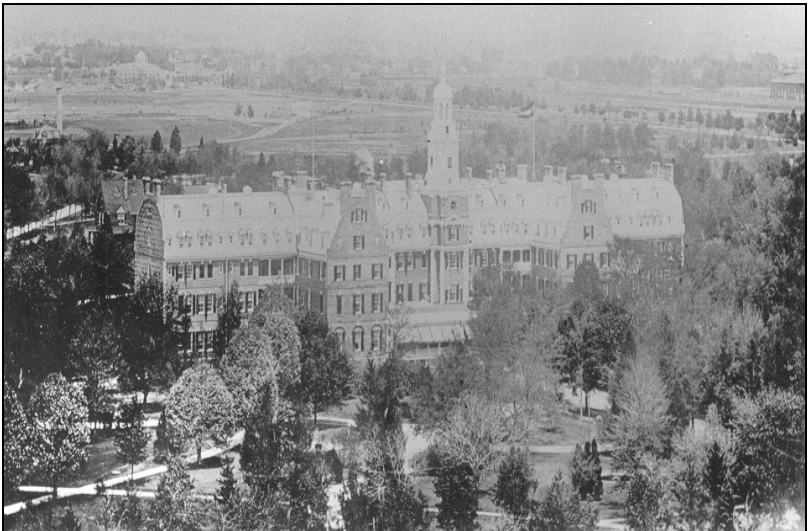
World War I thus became the impetus behind the establishment of the "modern" movement. The modern movement, argued that peace required social reform as well as social order. A more rigorous examination of the socioeconomic forces within the politics of choice making for war distinguished the modern movement from its predecessors. Pacifism, or nonviolence, was the mechanism for achieving global harmony. Those who became members of the ABRF were religious pacifists seeking to "advance peace as a process in human social relationships." Of course, secular pacifists would also join this new movement and establish peace organizations of their own. What is most important to understand is that these pacifists, whether religious or secular understood justice as the amelioration of social wrongs and not simply the adjudication of courts; they viewed nationalism in terms of cultural diversity rather than some form of Anglo-Saxon exclusivity; they saw war as a by product of militarism, nationalism, and imperialism and not merely as an irrational outburst of mass ignorance; they sought a reformed and democratized international system by which responsible policymakers would manage peace through applied social justice and world agencies. The advocates of the modern movement believed "that, for peace to advance in the world, reform must advance at home through the nonviolent extension of justice under order . . . It literally thrived on the success of other reform endeavors, like racial justice and women's rights that aimed to grant each person his or her due."⁵

Beginning with the creation of the American FOR, the peace movement ultimately established "what proved to be the mainstay constituencies of twentieth-century peace activism: church people, organized women, college students, and undifferentiated social reformers."⁶ Organizationally, since World War I, the modern American

peace movement has continuously evolved from the experiences of pacifist opposition to the war and internationalist agreement on the social processes of peace. Tellingly, the postwar movement that began with the ideas and thoughts of those who came to Garden City considered peace as a social process based on individual and group cooperation sustained through common values and institutional and cultural mores. Collectively, it was agreed that opposition to all forms of organized violence was tantamount to the achievement of social justice at home and abroad.⁷

The Garden City Hotel and FOR's Historical Importance

Today, north of Long Island Rail Road station in Garden City, stands one of the most elegant hotels on Long Island. In the late nineteenth-century the Garden City hotel was a frequent destination of many Gilded Age entrepreneurs, who would take the short trip from lower Manhattan to visit Alexander Turney Stewart's "model city on the open fields of Long Island." Garden City was considered the gateway to Long Island for many. Long before the Hamptons became the popular summer vacation spot that it is today, Garden City was the place to visit for society's upper crust. In 1871, Stanford White, one of America's most famous architects, redesigned the hotel, "making it U-Shaped with parallel wings." White's new hotel was reopened in 1895, only to be destroyed by a fire four years later.



Garden City Hotel, 1910-1915.



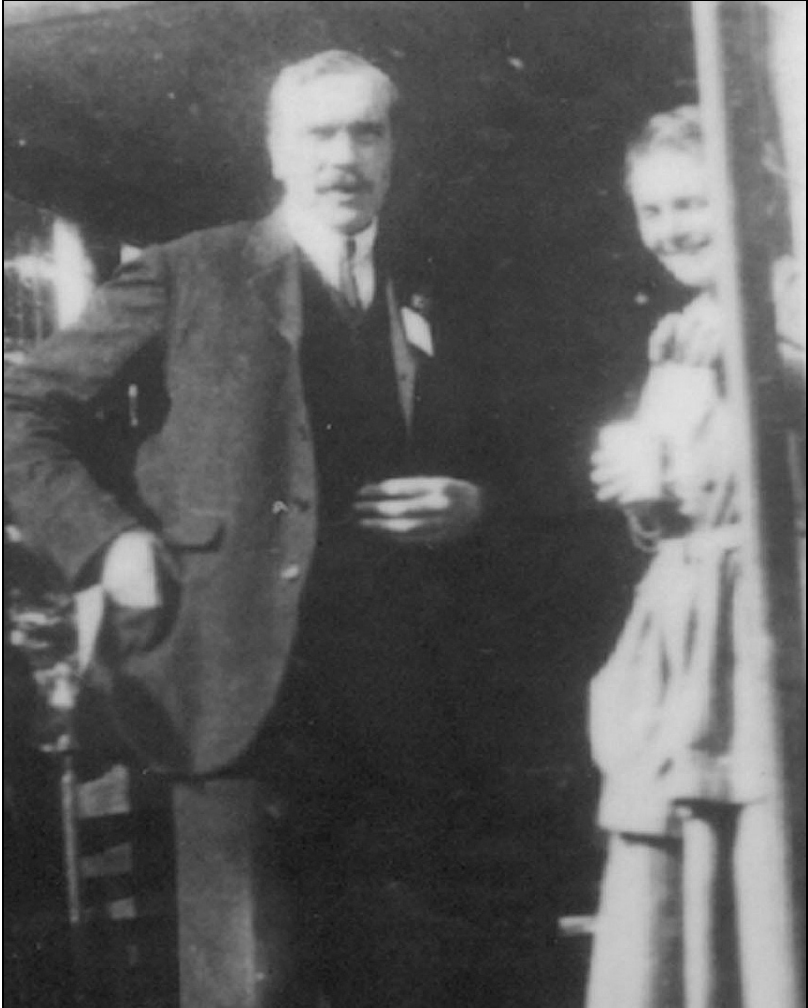
Garden City Hotel, 1910-1915.

Not to be discouraged “White directed the rebuilding, making it larger and grander with a vertical tower adapted from Independence Hall in Philadelphia.” Soon the hotel became “the center of Island society, frequented by Vanderbilts, Morgans, Astors.” Given the nature of its clientele, and the fact the many of the era’s respectable denizens considered peace efforts a worthy cause, it is no wonder the Garden City Hotel offered a convenient place to meet for those who wanted to discuss the impending threat of war preparedness.⁸

Given the growing horrors associated with modern warfare pacifists in the United States were anxious to keep Americans out of the European conflict. Despite President Woodrow Wilson’s assurances that the United States would remain neutral many pacifists recognized the American government’s affinity for Great Britain’s security. Thus, they were more than anxious to listen to their pacifist counterparts from Great Britain and to establish an organization that would promote peace above war.

On November 11th and 12th of 1915 a meeting of sixty-eight men and women took place at the Garden City Hotel “to resolve their dual obligations to their violent world and to their pacific ideals.” The invitation, addressed by British Quaker, Henry T. Hodgkin and one of the founders of the Fellowship of Reconciliation in Europe, was sent on October 20, 1915, asking friends of peace to gather for a meeting to discuss “The desirability, or otherwise, of forming an organization either as a part of the Fellowship or otherwise as may seem best.” Hodgkin, who had made many American friends as a leader in the Student

Christian Movement and the Committee of the World Alliance of the Churches Promoting International Friendship, gathered the support of Frederick Lynch, secretary of the Carnegie-endowed Church Peace Union as well as American Quaker lawyers and businessmen such as Edward W. Evans and Charles J. Rhoades.



The Rev. Henry T. Hodgkin and wife. Hodgkin was co-founder of the Fellowship of Reconciliation.

Along with these individuals, as well as British clergymen Richard Roberts and Leyton Richards, arrangements were made with the manager of the Garden City Hotel to provide rooms for “\$3.50 per day for persons who will share a room with another; and \$4.00 per day for those desiring separate rooms.” After attending numerous meetings throughout these two days it was decided that an American branch of the Fellowship of Reconciliation would be established. Shortly after its creation the following statement was released:

The reality and extent of interest expressed [based on Dr. Hodgkin’s two month visit to the U.S.] led to a conference at Garden City, Long Island, November 11th and 12th, 1915, to consider the inauguration of the Movement in this country. This conference was attended by some eighty [sic] men and women representative of different social groups and various faiths. Although many were unknown to one another and were not united by previous associations, they were drawn together by a common feeling that the time was ripe for a deeper expression of the Christian message . . . It was, therefore, determined to inaugurate the Fellowship in the United States.⁹

In some ways the American FOR represented an attempt to reclaim the religious basis of pacifism which had been part of the earlier sectarian tradition of nonviolence, a tradition that surrendered to the practical peacemakers with the inception of the urban-industrial age. It would be the first religious pacifist organization in American history and one of the most influential in twentieth-century history. According to one of its more notable members: “few areas of American life have remained unaffected by the Fellowship’s influence From its concern for [antimilitarism, peace, and international reconciliation] have grown such diverse organizations as the National Conference of Christians and Jews, the American Civil Liberties Union . . . the Congress of Racial Equality . . . the Church Peace Mission, and the American Committee on Africa.”¹⁰

The FOR’s membership over the years has consisted of a virtual “who’s who” among social activists in twentieth-century United States history. Among the organization’s members were the following: James Farmer, civil rights activist; John Nevin Sayre, Episcopal Priest, Princeton graduate, brother-in-law to President Woodrow Wilson’s daughter, and for many years the driving force behind the FOR; A. J. Muste, one of twentieth-century America’s most famous peace activists (in 1939 Time magazine labeled him “The Number One U.S. Pacifist”);



A.J. Muste. FOR leader and America's most famous twentieth-century pacifist, as noted by *Time* magazine in 1939.

Jane Addams, co-recipient of the Nobel Peace Prize and one of America's foremost women activists; the eminent Protestant theologian, Reinhold Niebuhr; Norman Thomas, head of the Socialist Party and four time presidential candidate; founder of the American Civil Liberties Union, Roger Baldwin; Oswald Garrison Villard, descendant of abolitionist William Lloyd Garrison; Gandhian disciple and Harvard Law School graduate, Richard Gregg; Jessie Wallace Hughan, one of the first female Columbia University Ph.D.s in economics and one of the founders of the War Resisters League; Mary Stone McDowell, the first Quaker public

school teacher to lose her teaching job because of her pacifism and the first to test religious and academic freedom in the courts; the Catholic priests and brothers Daniel and Philip Berrigan; the inspirational force behind the 1963 March on Washington, Bayard Rustin; former head of the Riverside Church in Manhattan and Yale Divinity School professor, William Sloane Coffin; the nonviolent revolutionary who received acclaim as one of the “Chicago Eight,” David Dellinger; and Martin Luther King, Jr.¹¹

The FOR’s

Although the FOR would achieve its greatest visibility here in the United States beginning with the Garden City meeting, it was actually started in Great Britain. Its origin was in direct response to the dedicated efforts of British Christian pacifists. In 1914, some 150 Christians came together in Switzerland. An international conference was held as a desperate means to hold off the outbreak of military confrontation. The conference failed, but at the Cologne Rail Station, two participants, Henry T. Hodgkin, an Englishman, and Freiderich Seigmund-Schultze, pacifist chaplain to the German Kaiser (arrested twenty-seven times during World War I and later forced to live in exile during the Nazi regime), shook hands vowing that they would continue to push for peace despite the gloomy forecast. Four months later, at Trinity College, Cambridge, and Hodgkin established, along with 128 English members, the Fellowship of Reconciliation. Hodgkin, who belonged to a noted Quaker family and graduate of King’s College, became chairman of the peace group. He immediately enjoined his new organization to assist in the relief work of Friends (Quakers) “among war refugees and civilians in France and Belgium and among enemy aliens stranded in England and Germany.”¹² The British Fellowship also began publishing books stressing global harmony and goodwill, and its members met in small groups to discuss the troubling conflict between “the principles of Christianity and war and . . . the contrast between Christian ideals and many aspects of our social order.”¹³

Garden City Conference

Hodgkin’s activities eventually brought him into contact with many American peace advocates. At this time peace work was not considered a subversive endeavor in the United States. The word “pacifist” would



John Nevin Sayre, Episcopal Priest, Princeton Graduate and brother-in-law to one of Woodrow Wilson's daughters.

change in 1917-1918 under the pressure for patriotic conformity. Initially, before the United States entered the war it had a benign connotation of implying support for international cooperation for peace. But once American military participation ensued it was narrowed to convey the

notion that one would not support even Wilson's plea of a "war to end all wars." Ultimately, pacifists became linked with draft dodgers, Communists, and Socialists. Most prewar peace advocates quickly disavowed any connection to pacifists. The word itself became synonymous with treason. In 1919, when it became respectable once again to be against war the word pacifist was expanded. But for the religious pacifists in the ABFR, they steadfastly clung to the meaning of those not only working for peace but also refusing to sanction any type of warfare. Clearly, this was the important distinction they wanted to make between their nonviolence and those who would support the call to arms in the name of peace.¹⁴

Anxious to secure American support for his venture while peacemaking was still considered a respectable calling, Hodgkin, along with Richard Roberts and Leyton Richards, two clergymen and British FOR leaders, noted previously, sent invitations to approximately 130 Americans involved in religious and social service organizations. The overture was principally directed at those of the Protestant faith, although when the American branch became the backbone of what would be known as the International non-Christians and Catholics were encouraged to join. Today there are some forty branches throughout the world as well as a Catholic Peace Fellowship and a Jewish Peace Fellowship, both appendages of the mother organization. It was suggested that a meeting be set up in the United States to discuss "the complex wartime implications of Christian love" and to secure the signatures of Americans promising "not to sanction war in any form" (after the Garden City meeting over forty attendees signed the FOR pledge). The Fellowship's guiding principles, as noted by Hodgkin in his invitation letter, were: (1) "Evil shall be overcome with good"; (2) "War is morally evil and means the renunciation of the spirit of love"; (3) "The FOR practices the ideal of the good"; (4) "Members of the FOR see themselves as servants in their life, they are loyal to God and to humanity." The word "reconciliation" was selected because the founders "understood peace not as the mere absence of war, but as the 'art to turn an enemy into a friend.'" The basic affirmation of the organization was also spelled out in its general statement of principles for the invitees to examine: "Our loyalty to our country, to humanity, to the Church Universal and to Jesus Christ calls us to a life-service for the enthronement of love in personal, social, commercial and national life."¹⁵

All of this was made possible as a result of the Garden City meeting. The American Fellowship of Reconciliation was guided by the premise that religious faith transcended nation, race, and economic class. In the aftermath of this conference the newly established organization selected its leaders. Gilbert A. Beaver, son of a Pennsylvania governor and who

served as a Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA) worker in South America, was chosen as its first chairman. Edward W. Evans, a Quaker lawyer from Philadelphia, became secretary. Charles W. Rhoades, a banker and son of the founder of Bryn Mawr College, served as treasurer. The American FOR thus became "the central organization of religious pacifists" in the United States.¹⁶

Early membership was drawn mainly from social gospel clergymen, Quakers, and YMCA leaders such as Beaver, David Porter, Fletcher Brockman, Charles D. Hurrey, and John R. Mott. Not yet threatened by the immediate prospects for war, the American Fellowship sought to avoid being a "highly organized or action-oriented group." A memorandum for the organizing conference warned against "over organization, a 'paper membership,' becoming too middle class, and becoming a political organization." The purpose was to establish a "fellowship," not a "league, society, or association." This was certainly within the individualistic nature and inclination of those who were members of the Society of Friends. Significantly, however, the FOR "brought absolute pacifism, the total rejection of war, from its sectarian origins into the new peace movement." Fellowship pacifists would thus constitute "an important and well organized wing of peace advocates" in America who were determined to offset the conservative tendencies within the peace movement in general.¹⁷

Because these discussions were wide-ranging and encompassed numerous positions it raised the specter of disloyalty among more establishment minded peace seekers. Nonviolence was not considered an acceptable alternative in the face of national security concerns and defense of one's homeland. Mainstream churches, including those Protestants advocating Social Gospel views, moreover, were also more receptive to internationalism than pacifism. This gathering was an attempt to move them in the other direction. Thus, the Garden City meeting represented the first time in America that religious leaders and social activists entertained the complete absence of participation in war based on pacifist ideology. In many ways it was a throwback to the position of the Historic Peace Churches and one which the government respected from the time of the American Revolution to the outbreak of the present war.

Such was the focus of discussions at Garden City. There were actually six long discussions during the two day conference. There were morning, afternoon, and evening sessions on both days. According to historian Charles Chatfield, the discussions "herald the fact that they were tossing about ideas considered treasonable by the government and heretical by the church." The sixty-eight people who ventured to the Garden City Hotel represented some of America's most noted reformers

and educators. Members attending the conference were “mostly young men and women,” and of the approximately 130 persons known to have been invited many were prominent leaders in religious and social agencies. Although not prominent in the peace movement before World War I, all that would change as a result of the meeting at Garden City. Among those who attended were Quaker mystic and noted historian, Rufus Jones, John R. Mott, patriarch of the International YMCA, humanitarian and philanthropist, George Foster Peabody, suffragette and socialist, Jessie Wallace Hughan, dean of American social work and later president of the National Federation of Settlements, Mary Simkovich, head of the Carnegie-endowed Church Peace Union, Frederick Lynch, president of Haverford College, Issac Sharpless, first chairman of the National Civil Liberties Bureau (later renamed American Civil Liberties Union) L. Hollingsworth Wood, William I. Hull, Swarthmore College historian and recent author of *The New Peace Movement* (1912), Bryn Mawr graduate and founder of the Chelsea Day Nursery, Tracy Mygatt, and Norman Thomas, whose brother, Evan, would be placed in a federal prison for his refusal to serve in the armed forces after the United States entered World War I.¹⁸

The discussions were intense and spirited. The three sessions held on Thursday encouraged participants to express their views on peace and war and whether or not an American section of the Fellowship should be established. The final three sessions on Friday continued the open discussions and a vote on Robert H. Gardiner’s motion to create an American branch. Gardiner, a close associate of Mott and an attorney and Episcopal layman, had been a major player in both national and international efforts to end divisions among Christians and create one truly universal church during the Progressive Era. He was the logical choice to initiate the motion because of his Social Gospel proclivities and liberal Protestant tendencies. He also had been a close ally of Hodgkin whom he had met at the International Missionary Conference in Edinburgh in 1910. When the vote was tallied in favor of an American branch of the Fellowship of Reconciliation a tentative statement of principles were drawn up with a decision to hold a following meeting in Atlantic City before the end of the year.

The Garden City conference witnessed a variety of positions from support for the League to Enforce Peace, to abolishment of the competitive economic system, and, finally, to the application of uncompromising religious pacifist principles barring participation in war. Hull was particularly outspoken about the desirability for establishing permanent international machinery, including judicial arbitration, for resolving world conflicts and preventing future wars. Jones kept pushing for some form of commitment to field work which would later reach



Jessie Wallace Hughan, noted female peace leader and founder of Anti-Enlistment League during WWI.

fruition with the establishment of the American Friends Service Committee (assisting war victims and refugees in Europe). Simkovich encouraged a broader definition of peace work that included social justice for the underrepresented. While not concerned about the nature of peace work as a subversive endeavor at this point in time, Wood called for constant vigilance in protecting First Amendment rights. Hughan was perhaps the most animated of all. Concerned about prospects of a military draft should the United States enter the war, she informed her fellow

“polite protestors” that more thought should be given to a socialist critique of the causes of war and that it was her intention to explore the dynamics of creating an anti-enlistment league. This was a rather controversial position to take considering the upscale place she chose to make these remarks. Yet her view was strongly supported by Margaret Shearman who “called attention to the mania in this country to make material profit from the war.” At Thursday’s evening session Darwin J. Meserole also “spoke feelingly on the social and commercial wrongs of the day and urged that the social implications be more clearly set forth in the Statement of Principles.” Rallying “the students in the women’s colleges” to the cause was promoted during the first day by Louise Holmquist and Mary Clark. At the end of the meetings, Lynch, for instance, remarked, rather sardonically, that he “never wanted to hear the term ‘the simple gospel’ again.” Earlier, at the opening session, he “emphasized the fact that we must be militant with spiritual weapons.” Generally speaking, these discussions witnessed a unique blending of religious arguments with economic and political observations on the causes of war and what should be done if the United States did become involved. All who attended agreed with Dr. John R. Mott’s comment at the evening session on Thursday that “a new movement was necessary . . . in this country perhaps even more than in Europe.”¹⁹

Interestingly, the creation of an American branch in Garden City witnessed the merging of three distinguishable groups – leaders of the YMCA Quakers, and non-Quaker “social workers, reformers and philanthropists.” Historians like Chatfield and C. Roland Marchand have pointed out that Quakers joining the Fellowship, for example, “sought to find mutual support for a more uncompromising stand on the peace issue than the secular peace organizations were taking . . . more in keeping with traditional Quaker testimony.” YMCA leaders envisioned the FOR as a mechanism for countering the “shallow and inert Christianity of the present churches,” an opportunity “to enter into the fellowship of the sufferings of the world,” and a way to engender a “spiritual awakening.” Social workers, reformers, and philanthropists were “profoundly disturbed by the confused utterance of the Christian Churches concerning the war and other great social questions.” What the establishment of the American FOR offered each of these groups was a golden opportunity to “explore together the religious ethic” and provide a solid moral basis for private affirmations and public action in time of crisis. A consensus was reached that by formally creating the American FOR it would be possible to “deal with the social implications of the Christian ideal of the state.” Seven broad lines of action were thus delineated at the Garden City meeting: “Six of them were: war resistance, mediation, anti-militarism, international organization, civil liberties, and war relief. A seventh was

the more nebulous problem of maintaining group cohesion in the application of a common ideal to all areas of living.” In seeking constructive outlets for their work, those at the Garden City meeting agreed to organize “groups through which they would work after the war, and they broadened their understanding of pacifism.”²⁰

Most tellingly, the Garden City gathering represented the first stage of the reorganized American peace movement. The movement’s rationale, structure, leadership, and concern for social justice which would define peace efforts for well over a generation were initiated by those who assembled that November weekend. This is what was meant by “broadening their understanding of pacifism.” “Where it had been educational and legalistic,” one historian observes, “the peace movement became political as well; where it had been polite it also became aggressive; where it had been conservatively Brahmin, it also acquired a socialist base; where it had assumed progress, it would claim only possibility.” Of course, the movement would be confronted time and again between competing ideas and programs, but the religious pacifists at this conference ultimately provided the necessary leadership and vital focus on social justice concerns. To them, war was the real danger to the very values they had worked so hard to implement. New recruit and noted Unitarian minister from Massachusetts, John Haynes Holmes, said it best regarding the role of the nation state and the legitimate place of the modern peace movement when he observed: “No one is wise enough, no nation is important enough, no human is precious enough, to justify the wholesale destruction and murder which constitute the science of war.”²¹

At the conclusion of the gathering, November 12th, those in attendance agreed to a set of “Principles.” Among these “Principles” were an unwillingness to take part in war, love “as revealed and interpreted in the life and death of Jesus Christ” and the “only power by which evil can be overcome,” and “a quest after an order of society in accordance with the mind of Christ.” Clearly, and this would change shortly, “an aura of traditional Quaker pacifism, although not of an extremely narrow or literal quality, dominated the early statement of the Fellowship,” including its initial one at Garden City.²²

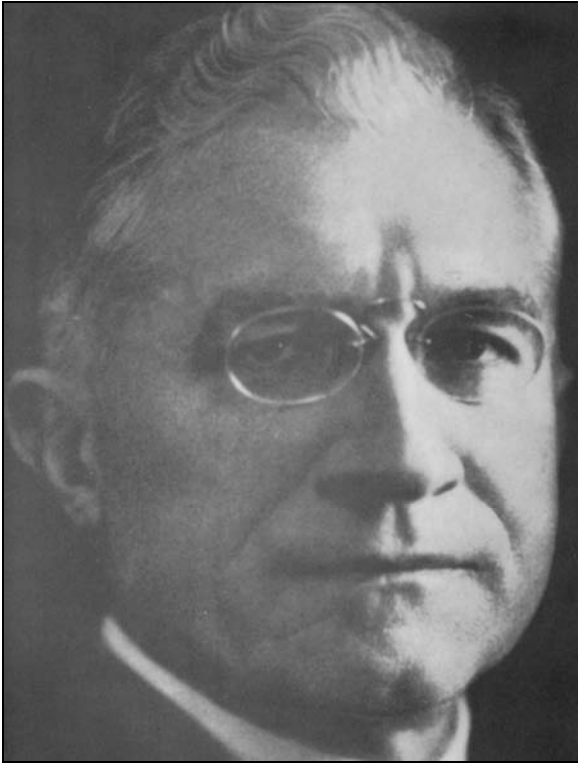
At this juncture, it is only reasonable to ask why the founders chose Garden City to hold its meeting. Why not New York, or, perhaps even more appropriately, Philadelphia, not far from where the largest contingent of Quakers in the United States resided? The selection of the Garden City site may very well have been the brainchild of Charles H. Levermore. In 1924, he was the first recipient of the \$100,000 peace prize for the best brief plan that would involve the United States in “the maintenance of a cooperative international peace.” The prize was sponsored by millionaire Philadelphia publisher and editor of Ladies

Home Journal, Edward M. Bok. As a longtime peace activist and first president of Adelphi University (which relocated from Brooklyn to its present campus in Garden City in 1928), Levermore was familiar with the Garden City social setting. Its pastoral appeal, he believed, would enable those in attendance not to be distracted by the hustle and bustle of the big city. Since this was intended to also be a gathering of Protestants, the Episcopal Cathedral of Incarnation, built as a memorial to Stewart by his wife, was near the hotel to serve as a reminder of their religious convictions. Moreover, it was a short train ride from Manhattan, thus travel was not a problem. But perhaps more importantly, it was a place that would not attract the attention of the press, and was in keeping with the organizers' desire to maintain a low profile. According to the memorandum for the organizing conference, the Garden City meeting sought no publicity and emphasized the point that it was desirable "to avoid formalism." Jones himself reminded members that "the movement is so essentially a thing of the spirit that when the spirit is lost the organization is dead." In fact, the meeting failed to be covered in the newspapers.²³

The historical significance of this gathering, apart from the creation of the American FOR, was that it enabled peace seekers to advocate a "fearless individual thinking and cautious social experiment." The Fellowship's founding members were quick to point out that they viewed war "not as an isolated phenomenon but, as only one out of many unhappy consequences of the spiritual poverty of society."

The Garden City meeting established the course the new peace organization would follow both before, during, and after the Great War. Gradually, but not hesitantly, the American FOR "toward a broader, more radical social gospel position." As early as 1916, for instance, the FOR began discussing issues such as penal reform, race relations, industrial conflict, and education. Peace and justice issues would now be forever intertwined. At the FOR's council meeting on April 15, 1916, held at Ocean Grove, New Jersey, "it was voted that the question of violence in industrial disputes be presented to the Conference with the purpose of seeing whether we can arrive at a conclusion which might be embodied in our statement." At the Executive Committee's May 2, 1916 meeting it was decided that "a Social Implications Committee . . . give special consideration to the application of the Fellowship principles to social and industrial questions." A May 17, 1917 meeting, a month after the U.S. Congress declared war on Germany, continued the discussion of the Fellowship's expanding commitment to peace and justice. It was no longer simply about opposition to the war itself but also how to create a better society that would prevent future wars: "Mention was made of the need of a form of Statement of Principles for use among the working

classes. It was suggested (and later adopted and implemented) that such a statement should be printed with the Union Label."²⁴ Ultimately, American military intervention caused the organization to rethink its "fellowship" collegiality and become an active, politically minded, socially concerned peace organization based on religious principles.



John Haynes Holmes, noted early twentieth-century Unitarian Minister and one of the FOR's earliest members.

Conclusion

The creation of the American Branch of the FOR at Garden City ushered in the modern American peace movement. Not only did this meeting initiate a "root-and-branch" application of the Christian gospel, but also by the war's conclusion the Fellowship finally "rejected any semblance of a role as a peace organization of the established churches." In the opinion of Marchand, the FOR went beyond other peace groups "in envisaging the peace movement as a central expression of what it believed to be the

only eternally moral, valid, and effective means of social reform: the method of nonviolence, which alone employed means that would not distort the end of a peace and reconciled social order.”²⁵

The FOR became the inspiration for other activist peace organizations, including the Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom, American Friends Service Committee, and War Resisters League. Initially, bound by Protestant Christianity and later encompassing pacifists of all religious persuasions, it put meaning into the term “peace action.” So stated the members of the Fellowship’s Executive Committee as they began to carry out their program of peace and justice: “a strong letter should be prepared, addressed to the ministers of the country to enlist their aid and cooperation in a thorough going effort to combat everything that makes for war, and to crystallize the present revulsion against it into a movement which would remove the seeds of war from our whole social order.”²⁶ That program has been a vital part of the Fellowship’s existence since the Great War and continues to this very day.

The ABRF’s efforts for world peace and especially its commitment to nonviolence had been demonstrated in any number of ways throughout the twentieth century. For example, in the late 1920s the Fellowship co-sponsored with the Quaker organization American Friends Service Committee a peace mission to Nicaragua in an effort to stop the bloodshed between American Marines and the rebel nationalist leader, Augusto Sandino. The FOR provided food and assistance to workers during the 1929-31 Piedmont strikes that crippled the textile mills and led to National Guard suppression. In the late 1930s the FOR was a major supporter of the Emergency Peace Campaign and sponsored its own “Embassies of Reconciliation” program in an attempt to prevent World War II. During the Second World War the Fellowship helped establish the Civilian Public Service Camps for conscientious objectors and also provided assistance to Japanese Americans living in internment camps. In 1944, it also published a harrowing account entitled “Massacre by Bombing,” detailing the Allied obliteration bombing campaign of German cities. During this same period, the Fellowship became the first peace organization in American history to help create a civil rights group, the Congress of Racial Equality. In 1947, the FOR sponsored, and its members participated in, the “First Journey of Reconciliation” to desegregate interstate busing in the South. In the early 1950s members of the FOR protested the policy of apartheid in South Africa. During the same decade, moreover, FOR members participated in direct acts of nonviolent civil disobedience aimed at civil defense air raid drills and sailing or walking into forbidden zones where nuclear weapons were stored or tested. FOR member Martin Luther King, Jr., remains the

symbol of the modern civil rights movement. During the Vietnam War the organization sent its own peace delegation to Hanoi in an attempt to broker a peace deal, sponsored three study teams to report on the conduct of the war, organized and participated in numerous antiwar demonstrations, and set up draft counseling centers throughout the country. By the 1980s and 1990s the Fellowship supported the Sanctuary Movement involving displaced refugees from war torn El Salvador and Nicaragua, and instituted the Civilian Casualty Fund to aid Bosnian Muslims and those suffering from ethnic genocide.²⁷

Naturally, the modern American peace movement has had its ups and downs since the conclusion of World War I. For pacifists, in particular, including those in the American Fellowship of Reconciliation, one may not wish to question their moral and religious convictions but rather the effectiveness of their nonviolence creed in the face of oppressive dictatorships and tyrannical governments. During World War II, for instance, the pacifist challenge to fascism fell on deaf ears, as vast majorities of the world's left, not to mention the populations of the advanced democracies took up Hitler's challenge to peace with military force. Clearly nonviolence has been more effective in societies where the foundation for individual rights has been institutionalized than in societies where it has not – thus, the much greater success of the nonviolent civil rights campaigns of both Martin Luther King, Jr. in the United States and of Mahatma Gandhi in colonial India. The real challenge, however, is making peace a pacifist mechanism for social and economic change throughout the world. Pacifists and peace movements, though worthy of historical examination, have never been very popular in the United States. Perhaps no one has offered a more compelling observation about the challenge peace movements and pacifists face than Merle Curti. In the early 1970s when Garland Publishers chose to reprint the world's most important peace classics, Curti wrote a brief introduction to its catalogue in which he stated that those striving for peace must be consistently aware of “the perpetual dilemma of what to do when the values of peace are in apparent conflict with decency, humanity, and justice.” The current war in Iraq may offer the most recent example of this dilemma. The war has at times been both popular and unpopular in the United States, and mostly unpopular worldwide. Yet pacifists who opposed the war and now feel buoyed by public discontent with its conduct, must still wrestle with the fact that Saddam Hussein himself murdered hundreds of thousands – an example of “the perpetual dilemma.”

Pacifists in the ABRF clung to their principle of nonviolence while incorporating secular arguments against war – economic and racial – without giving up their religious objections to mass conflict. As such it

made ABFR an influential voice for the twentieth-century peace movement in America. Although never engaging a large segment of the American public, ABFR has staked out its place as an example of the tradition of political and social dissent in a democracy society.

It is doubtful that the sixty-eight members who came to Garden City that November weekend of 1915 could have foreseen how influential their organization would become within the organized peace movement. Nor could they have anticipated the number of notable social justice activists of the twentieth-century who were Fellowship members. Yet they did envision something special. "The Movement thus launched," the founders noted, "differentiates itself from others occasioned by the war in certain important particulars. It is obviously not simply an addition to the already long list of peace societies . . . [T]he . . . only sufficient basis of society clearly involves for them very much more than the question of war. They view war not as an isolated phenomenon but as only one out of many unhappy consequences of the spiritual poverty of society." This was the meeting that launched the "modern" American peace movement.²⁸

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NOTES

¹ For general histories of the American peace movement consult: Merle Curti, *Peace or War: The American Struggle, 1636-1936* (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1936); Charles DeBenedetti, *The Peace Reform in American History* (Bloomington, IN.: Indiana University Press, 1980); Charles Chatfield, with Robert Kleidman, *The American Peace Movement: Ideals and Activism* (New York: Twayne Publishers, 1992); and the author's works: *The American Peace Movement: References and Resources* (Boston: G.K. Hall & Co., 1991); with Glen Zeitzer, *The American Peace Movement: History and Historiography* (Washington, D.C.: American Historical Association, 1985); Editor, *History of the American Peace Movement, 1890-2000: The Emergence of a New Scholarly Discipline* (Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellen Press, 2005).

² Blanche Wiesen Cook, "Democracy in Wartime: Antimilitarism in England and the United States, 1914-1918" in Charles Chatfield, ed., *Peace Movements in America* (New York: Schocken Books, 1973), 39-56; David S. Patterson, "An Interpretation of the American Peace Movement, 1898-1914," in *Peace Movements in America*, 20-38.

³ Charles DeBenedetti, "Alternative Strategies in the American Peace Movement in the 1920s" in *Peace Movements in America*, 57-58. The term "pacifism" was first coined by Emile Arnaud in the 1890s.

⁴ David S. Patterson, "Citizen Peace Initiatives and American Political Culture, 1865-1920" in Charles Chatfield & Peter van den Dungen, eds., *Peace Movements and Political Cultures* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1988), 200; Robert H. Wiebe, *The Search for Order, 1877-1920* (New York: Hill & Wang, 1967), 260.

⁵ Charles DeBenedetti, ed., *Peace Heroes in Twentieth Century America* (Bloomington, IN.: Indiana University Press, 1986), 5-6.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 9. See also, Charles DeBenedetti, *Origins of the Modern American Peace Movement, 1915-1929* (Millwood, NY: KTO Press, 1978), 227-47.

⁷ Robert H. Ferrell, "The American Peace Movement" in Alexander DeConde, ed., *Isolation and Security* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1957), 82-106.

⁸ Rhoda Amon, "The Architect of Desire," *Long Island: Our Story* (Melville, NY: Newsday, Inc., 1998), 240; Barbara Kraft, *The Peace Ship: Henry's Ford's Pacifist Adventure in the First World War* (New York: Macmillan, 1978); Vincent F. Seyfried, "The Garden City Hotel," *Nassau County Historical Society Journal* 60 (2005): 16-21.

⁹ "The Fellowship of Reconciliation: Some General Considerations," John Nevin Sayre Papers, DG 117, Box 2, Swarthmore College Peace Collection (SCPC), Swarthmore College, PA; Invitation letter by Henry T. Hodgkin, October 20, 1915, Sayre Papers, DG 117, Box 1.

¹⁰ Charles Chatfield, *For Peace and Justice: Pacifism in America, 1914-1941* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1971), 19; Vera Brittain, *The Rebel Passion: A History of Some Pioneer Peacemakers* (Nyack, NY: Fellowship Press, 1964), 99-121; Lawrence S. Wittner, *Rebels Against War: The American Peace Movement, 1933-1983* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 11-14.

¹¹ Charles F. Howlett, "The American Fellowship of Reconciliation," *South of the Mountains* 37 (Jan-Mar. 1993): 3-14.

¹² Chatfield, *For Peace and Justice*, 20; “The Fellowship of Reconciliation: Its Origins and Development,” *Newsletter* (June 1920), Fellowship of Reconciliation Papers, Box 29, SCPC.

¹³ “The Fellowship of Reconciliation: A Statement of Purpose,” ca. 1916, FOR Papers, Boxes 1 & 29, SCPC; Chatfield, *For Peace and Justice*, 20.

¹⁴ “The Fellowship of Reconciliation: A Statement of Purpose,” FOR Papers, Boxes 1 & 29, SCPC; Christa Jungwirth, “The American Fellowship of Reconciliation,” 1989, unpublished paper, photocopy in author’s possession, 7-8; Lillian Stevenson, *Toward a Christian International* (Vienna, Fellowship of Reconciliation, 1929), 77.

¹⁵ Chatfield, *For Peace and Justice*, 19-21.

¹⁶ Jungwirth, “The American Fellowship of Reconciliation,” 8; Alfred Hassler, “Sixty Years: A Personal Reflection on the Fellowship of Reconciliation’s Six-decade Search for Peace,” *Fellowship* 41 (December 1975): 3-4; C. Roland Marchand, *The American Peace Movement and Social Reform, 1898-1918* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1972), 372-74.

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²⁰ Charles Chatfield, “World War I and the Liberal Pacifist in the United States,” *American Historical Review* LXXV (December 1970): 1921-22.

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²² FOR Papers, Box 1, SCPC; Marchand, *The American Peace Movement and Social Reform*, 378-84.

²³ Charles DeBenedetti, "The \$100,000 American Peace Award of 1924," *The Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 98 (April 1974): 224-49; Marchand, *The American Peace Movement and Social Reform*, 373; "Memorandum for Garden City Conference, nd. [1915], FOR Papers, FOR Papers, Box 22, SCPC; "From the Council of the Fellowship of Reconciliation: The Nature of Our Task," n.d., FOR Papers, Box 1, SCPC; Robert A. Scott, "State of the University Address," September 7, 2005 <http://72.14.209.104/search:administration.Adelphi.edu/president> (cited June 30, 2006) Chester L. Barrows, *Fifty Years of Adelphi College* (Garden City, NY: Adelphi College Press, 1945), 14-23.

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²⁶ Charles F. Howlett, "John Nevin Sayre and the American Fellowship of Reconciliation," *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 114 (July 1990): 399-422; Howlett, "John Nevin Sayre and the International Fellowship of Reconciliation," *Peace & Change* 15 (April 1990): 123-149; Marian Mollin, "The Limits of Egalitarianism: Radical Pacifism, Civil Rights, and the Journey of Reconciliation," *Radical History Review* 88 (Winter 2004): 113-38.

²⁷ "The Fellowship of Reconciliation: Some General Considerations," Sayre Papers, Box 1, SCPC.

²⁸ "The Fellowship of Reconciliation: Some General Considerations," Sayre Papers, Box 1, SCPC.

DEEPWELLS: A CROWN JEWEL IN ST. JAMES

Bradley L. Harris

Deepwells is the popular name of an elegant nineteenth-century house built along North Country Road in St. James in 1845. The home's occupants over the years have been as interesting and integral a part of the St. James community as its splendid architecture continues to be.

In 1992, the house today known as Deepwells and thirteen acres of open land surrounding it were purchased by Suffolk County and added to the Suffolk County parks system. Back in 1987, when the purchase of the property was a hotly contested issue in the Suffolk County Legislature, Legislator Steven Englebright suggested that the estate would become “a crown jewel” of Suffolk County’s parks. Deepwells has always been a gem because of its sparkling classic beauty and architectural style. It is a “crown jewel” because of its rich history and the fascinating story of the lives of the people who made Deepwells their home.

Back on September 20, 1987, when the Suffolk County Legislature was debating whether or not to acquire Deepwells, a *New York Times* reporter Laura Herbst wrote an article about the fight that was then being joined over saving the historic estate in St. James. She entitled the article: “Historic Site: ‘Jewel’ or Frill?” In 1987, at a time when the Suffolk County Legislature was struggling to reduce spending, the cost of the purchase of Deepwells was not determined, nor was the cost of restoring it. Estimates for repairing the house ran from \$300,000 to \$500,000. The old mansion seemed like a money pit and there were Legislators who felt that the taxpayers’ dollars should be spent elsewhere. As chairman of the County Legislature’s Parks Committee, Englebright believed that the estate would become “the focal point for the county’s collection of ninety historic buildings.”¹ Ultimately, Englebright and Smithtown Legislator Mike D’Andre managed to convince their fellow legislators that the purchase of Deepwells was not a frill. A final price of \$1.8 million was agreed upon and the County purchased the estate, embarking soon thereafter upon a \$650,000 restoration of the house.²

The restoration of the Deepwells came just in time to save the house, a real architectural gem. Built between 1845 and 1847, the house is a classic example of Greek Revival architecture. The house was built for Joel Louis Griffing Smith, a sixth generation descendant of Richard Smythe, the founder of Smithtown. In 1845, Joel L.G. Smith commissioned the artisan George Curtis to build a house for him. Curtis



Deepwells, the Georgian mansion built by George Curtis in 1845 for Joel L.G. Smith on North Country Road just west of Moriches Road.

“came to Smithtown from New Jersey before 1810, the year he married Elizabeth, a daughter of Charles Smith.” He lived on Three Sisters Road in St. James. By the time Smith commissioned him, Curtis had become a master-builder having built the Presbyterian Church (1823-1825) and the Presbyterian Manse (1835) in Smithtown. According to local tradition, Smith asked that Curtis build a “fancier, more elegant home than his cousin, William Wickham Mills,” built in 1838 at Mills Pond in St. James. That house was designed by a New York City architect named Calvin Pollard and was built on a Georgian, five bay, center hall plan, with Greek revival detailing. At the time it was built in 1838, the Mills Pond House was the grandest house in Smithtown. It was this house that Smith wanted Curtis to emulate.³

Construction of the Smith house that we know today as Deepwells was begun in 1845 on ten acres of land that Smith purchased from Gamaliel Taylor, another descendant of Richard Smythe. The house was built on the north side of North Country Road on the crest of a small hill that makes the house even more imposing. The home that Curtis built for Smith is fancier and more elegant than the Mills Pond House, a fact that is easily seen when the two houses are compared. The differences between the two houses can be found in the finishing



The Mills Pond House, located on the southwest corner of North Country Road and Mills Pond Road in St. James. Built in 1838 for William Wickham Mills.

touches. The Smith house has a one-story veranda that runs completely across the face of the house. The veranda roof is supported by six fluted columns with “carved capitals” that rest on a “granite foundation with flagstone flooring,” while the Mills house has only a portico. The Smith house has a service wing that is set at a right angle to the main block of the house while the Mills house has the wing extending parallel to the main block of the house. The placement of the service wing accentuates the classical Greek lines of the Smith house. The Smith house has “fully enclosed pediments on the end gables,” while the Mills house “has only ‘returns’ suggesting pediments.” The Smith house has a cupola which “crowns the roof” while the Mills house has none. The Smith house has beautifully carved trim or molding throughout. The molded plasterwork throughout the house gives a beauty and elegance not found in the Mills house. “The finished house thus exceeded the grandest house in Smithtown” and Joel L.G. Smith could rightfully claim that he had the finest house in Smithtown.⁴ The restoration work on Deepwells after its purchase succeeded in bringing back the classic beauty and elegance of this fine old house.

What sets Deepwells apart most from other historical sites and makes it “a crown jewel” is its rich history. The people who lived here



A view of a corner of Deepwells showing the intricate hand carved detailing on the Corinthian column and the overhang trim.

and the events that transpired in their lives give this house a fascinating and unique history.

Joel Louis Griffing Smith (1819-1876) was the son of Nathaniel and Sarah (Floyd) Smith, the foster brother and sister who grew up together at Sherrewogue in St. James, fell in love and got married.⁵ They inherited the family home at Sherrewogue and it was here that Joel was born and spent his childhood. As a young man, he studied medicine in New York City while living with an uncle. After his uncle's death, Smith returned to Smithtown to manage his 600 acre estate which produced fruit and other farm products.⁶ This must have been sometime after 1840 when Joel's father Nathaniel died and left him a sizable inheritance. It was then that Joel began to court Anna Willis Lawrence. The Lawrences lived on the west bank of the Nissequogue River and Joel's home was on the east bank. Joel was constantly crossing the river at the "going over" to be with her. (The 'going over' is a shallow spot in the Nissequogue River that was used as a ford at low tide and is located where Moriches Road once ended at the riverbank.) The ebb and flow of the tides must have put a crimp in his wooing but he succeeded in convincing Anna to be his bride.

Joel and Anna were married shortly after Anna's twentieth birthday, in a ceremony that took place in Smithtown on August 5, 1845. It was at this time that Joel commissioned Curtis to build his elegant home.

When the house was finished in 1847 Joel and his beloved Anna moved in, with their new baby girl, Anna Lawrence, born July 12, 1846. But on October 8, 1849, Anna sickened and died suddenly, at the young age of twenty-four. Grief-stricken, Joel turned to members of his family and the Lawrence family for comfort and help in raising his infant daughter. He seems to have found an understanding and sympathetic soul in Anna's younger sister, Sarah Amelia. Joel married Sarah on May 9, 1850; just six months after his wife had passed away. Joel and Sarah lived in the elegant home and were blessed with the birth of a son, Louis Joel Smith on May 25, 1851. But again tragedy struck. After seven years of marriage, Sarah died suddenly on January 24, 1857. She was just twenty-nine.⁷

Shortly after Sarah's death Joel decided to sell the house. Smith had lived in his dream house a total of ten years. Maps made in 1858 indicate that Smith sold the house and property to a man named W. M. Pullis. Sometime before 1873, Milton Haven Smith purchased the property. Not much is known about Milton Smith (1850-1915), but local historian Colonel Rockwell noted in his *Scrapbook* that Milton H. Smith was "of New York," which presumably means New York City.⁸ Smith was an eighth generation descendant of Richard Smythe, who



The service wing at Deepwells containing the dining room and kitchen is hidden behind the main block of the house.

married Carrie L. Newton on January 16, 1872, with whom he had a daughter named Jeanne Amelia. How long Milton H. Smith owned the house, and whether he and his family lived in it, is not known.⁹ It is known that Clinton H. Smith acquired the property from Milton H. Smith and that Clinton was living in the house in 1897. Clinton H. Smith (1861-1913) was a summer resident of St. James at the time, born and raised in New York City. He was educated in city schools and attended Plainfield Academy in Plainfield, New Jersey.

In March of 1879, at the age of eighteen, Clinton accepted a position in the Department of Public Parks in New York City. He was advanced until he was appointed Assistant Secretary. He was married in 1881 to Mary L. Retons who was also a New York City resident. The young couple lived in Harlem. In 1881, Clinton Smith joined the National Guard and in 1887 was elected Lieutenant of the Seventy-First Regiment. He remained active in the National Guard and was steadily promoted, becoming Major in 1892. A *New York Times* article of July 30, 1897 mentions that Major Clinton Smith of St. James was “seriously hurt” in an accident on the Long Island Railroad. Apparently, on July 29th a storm caused a washout of the tracks that led to the derailment of the eastbound train after it left Kings Park. Major Smith and his brother-in-law C.H. Woodhull were on the train and both were hurt. Smith was cut on his neck, broke three ribs, and his legs were “badly cut.”¹⁰ To what extent he was incapacitated by his injuries

and how long it took him to recover is not known, but it does seem that Smith was living in Deepwells at the time of his injuries. Smith recovered sufficiently so that he could join his National Guard unit when it shipped out of New York for Tampa, Florida, where it became part of the expeditionary forces organized to free Cuba.

Clinton Smith served as a Lieutenant Colonel of the “volunteers” from the 71st Regiment and he was present when the American forces stormed the heights of San Juan Hill. He returned to Smithtown as a hero of the Spanish-American War and was welcomed back on October 1, 1898 with one of “the finest patriotic celebrations ever held in town.” County officials and “prominent guests from all parts of town” jammed Academy Hall on Main Street in Smithtown. Speeches, a ceremonial flag-raising, fireworks, and more speeches welcomed Clinton Smith home. The crowning event of the evening was the presentation of a ceremonial sword that had been purchased by local townsfolk and “as the sword was handed to the gallant officer he was greeted with cheers.” The little village of Smithtown Branch had never seen “such a crowd of people before and the greatest enthusiasm was manifested.”¹¹

This celebration may have been just a little premature. A month later Lt. Col. Smith was humiliated by accusations of cowardice during the battle of San Juan Hill. Two Captains from the 71st Regiment who had taken part in the Battle of San Juan Hill openly questioned the conduct of their superior officers during that engagement. Their allegations of cowardice led Governor of New York State Teddy Roosevelt, the leader in the Battle of San Juan Hill, to order a Court of Inquiry to investigate the matter. The Court of Inquiry met and recommended that a court martial be convened to review Lt. Col. Smith’s “moral character, capacity, and general fitness for service in the National Guard as a commissioned officer.” Governor Roosevelt then summoned Lt. Col. Smith to appear before a military tribunal. “This resulted in his being condemned and cashiered. Gov. Roosevelt approved the findings of the commission and on June 6, 1900, Major Smith was dismissed from the service.” Smith believed he had not received a fair trial and took his case into civil courts. Eventually he was exonerated and reinstated in November of 1901, when the Appellate Division of the New York State Supreme Court found that he had not received a fair trial.¹² But Smith was never able to confront his accusers in court, so he was never able to erase the stigma of cowardice. He certainly was never able to return to Smithtown and confront the townsfolk who had made him their hero.

From this point in his life Smith lived in New York City at 50 Cathedral Parkway and decided to rent out his fully furnished home in St. James. Smith worked as an Assistant Secretary of the New York

City Board of Parks Commissioners, which may have been how the well-known New York State Supreme Court judge William Jay Gaynor became aware that the Smith house in St. James was available for rent. Gaynor already had a home at 20 Eighth Avenue in Brooklyn and a modest summer house in Bellmore, but he opted to rent the house and farm in St. James for a couple of summers to see if he liked the north shore of Long Island. Having been raised on a farm in the little upstate New York town of Oriskany, Judge Gaynor had never lost his fondness for country life, and the farm in St. James drew him like a magnet. Gaynor rented the house for three summers before deciding to purchase the property. Apparently the relaxed pace of country life in St. James appealed to him and the large house easily accommodated his family, which had grown to include seven children. It also must have helped that the Judge was elected in 1893 to a fourteen year term on the bench and had a guaranteed annual income of \$17,500. Some issues with his landlord arose, however, when Judge Gaynor moved to purchase the house. Clinton Smith “sued the Judge for breakage of crockery and furniture as well as the rent which Gaynor withheld” when “the carriage horse died before he took possession. Gaynor got even with his landlord by buying the place at a reasonable figure through a dummy” and then purchased the house and farm in 1905.¹³

After purchasing the Smith house and farm, Judge Gaynor began to make some changes gradually transforming the “unimproved farm into a fine estate.”¹⁴ Gaynor extended the service wing off the back of the house, had gas installed throughout the house for lighting, and had a two-car garage built behind the kitchen wing. It was when Gaynor owned the farm that two 125’ deep, hand-dug, brick lined wells were added and water towers were constructed to serve as reservoirs for the well water. There was a well and water tower behind the house and there was another near the barn complex on the south side of the road. It is believed that Gaynor gave the name of Deepwells to the house and property, although he usually just referred to it as “the farm.”¹⁵ A reporter described the estate in 1909:

The farmhouse is a stately, old-fashioned one that fills the eye. Around it is a well-kept lawn of five acres, with pleasant gardens. The barn, the wagon-house, hen house, corn crib, and stables are across the road and 200 yards away. The air that blows from the Sound is brisk and bracing. City-pent men with families of small children must envy the Judge as they fancy the possibilities of that place for the youngsters.¹⁶



New York City Mayor William Jay Gaynor, fitted out in a stove-pipe top hat, shortly after being elected Mayor in 1910.

While Gaynor had plenty of money Deepwells was never a well-groomed estate such as the wealthy neighbors possessed. It was actually farmed and was stocked with a large and varied assortment of farm animals. Gaynor “loved dogs, horses, cows and especially pigs. He would walk miles to inspect a prize porker.” His favorite gambit was to take an unsuspecting reporter on a tour of the farm, bring him to the pig-pen to see one of his award-winning hogs, and then watch the reporter gag and blanch at the unbelievable stench.¹⁷ The same reporter who wrote about his tour of Judge Gaynor’s farm noted: Gaynor “farms because he loves it. Everybody has his favorite recreation and Gaynor’s is farming.” When Gaynor wasn’t showing off the farm, “he would put on his old clothes, join in the farm work, and if things were slack at his own place, he would help ‘Mel’ Smith, his neighbor who ran the livery stable, with his haying – or he would pitch wheat to Dennis Shields who was 88 years old.”¹⁸ Even when public officials came out on invitation to discuss official business the Judge, who became the Mayor of New York City in 1909, would not leave farm duties. If his guests found him pitching hay in a neighbor’s field or on top of a hay wagon, he would tell his guests to sit in the shade under a tree and wait until he had finished his task.¹⁹

Gaynor’s other form of recreation was walking. “Walking . . . was his principal exercise. A common sight around St. James, no matter what the weather, came to be the Judge, with a motley escort of dogs, hiking along, hands clasped behind him, wearing baggy pants, a jacket with bits of straw and hayseed sticking to it” and a golf cap on his head. Gaynor would walk steadily for ten miles, sometimes fifteen, “always ready to stop and chat with a farmer, and he knew them all for miles around, or to compliment a farmer’s wife on her eggs and butter.” Gaynor “liked to walk alone and if he had a companion it was apt to be the village loafer, or drunkard, or some quaint village character.”²⁰ One of Gaynor’s closest companions at St. James was Captain Frank DeMott, a man of education and considerable ability who had become the village good for nothing. When DeMott got into scrapes with the neighbors Gaynor saw the humorous side of it, but when he stole the Gaynor turkeys,” a coolness settled over their friendship.²¹

Gaynor’s “friends at St. James were not wealthy summer residents, whose lawn parties and preoccupation with horsiness set the tone during the season. Gaynor preferred the company of villagers - W. H. Monahan, the blacksmith, and Melville Smith, who ran the livery stable, and a clam digger named James J. Snook. With these the Judge would argue politics and philosophy for hours, sometimes sharing with them a bottle of whiskey that he called ‘White Mule.’” So firmly was he drawn to this country home that during the winter, when the house at

Deepwells was closed," he would come out from his home in Brooklyn to spend the weekends.²² On these occasions, Gaynor would board "with the Wellses, three houses from the station. In the evening he would drop in at Mel Smith's, or at some other farm house, sit in the kitchen, smoke long black cigars, and talk of national questions or of some other philosophical problem, far into the night. Ginger cake and cider would be brought out, and sometimes . . . the 'White Mule'."²³

The presence of such a distinguished personage in the tiny village of St. James drew outside attention to the little community on the north shore. It is possible to imagine the excitement that ran through the village in the fall of 1909 when it was learned that the Democratic Party in New York City had nominated Judge William J. Gaynor for Mayor. Judge Gaynor proved to be a remarkable candidate in many ways. As a Judge, Gaynor had developed a reputation as a reformer who opposed corruption in government and law enforcement, and now, as a mayoral candidate for the Democratic Party, he ran on the Tammany Hall ticket. He was taken to task by the press that roasted him for becoming involved with the corrupt political machine operated by Tammany Hall. But Gaynor stoically responded to this criticism by saying: "I have not asked for the nomination, and it comes to me without even the suggestion of a pledge, understanding, or condition whatever. I know the people of New York and they know me."²⁴

The Judge ran an unusual campaign. He had no campaign manager, made no campaign plans, and refused to accept political contributions. In fact, he steadfastly refused "to spend a dollar to be elected."²⁵ His campaign boiled down to several major speeches, many stump speeches, and a lot of hard street campaigning throughout the city. As election day drew near, the campaign turned vitriolic and mud was slung at Gaynor from every quarter. But the Judge answered these attacks on his character and integrity by stating: "My life has been a beeline on a certain course. I have followed a resolution that I would devote my time and energy and education to the interest of good government. So that is all I am. If that record does not commend me to the citizens of New York for their votes, now that I am unwillingly brought before them as a candidate, then I have nothing else to offer, not a thing, and you will have to vote against me."²⁶

Election Day dramatically showed how much faith the people of New York had come to place in Gaynor. He won handily, receiving forty-three percent of the total vote cast with his nearest opponent running behind with thirty percent of the vote. After winning the election, Gaynor "secluded himself at St. James . . . throughout the rest of November and into December." He said nothing about his intended plans for his administration. St. James residents were treated to the

sight of “prominent politicians” alighting from “the train at St. James station” and scurrying down to Deepwells to confer with the Mayor-elect.²⁷ William J. Gaynor’s election as Mayor put St. James on the map. Soon New York City residents who had never heard of St. James knew of the little country village on Long Island’s north shore where Mayor Gaynor had a farm and spent his summers. Mayor Gaynor made it clear that he intended to continue to spend his summers in St. James even if he had to commute. When asked about working in City Hall, putting in “a hard day’s work,” and then getting out to St. James, Gaynor replied: “It’s only an hour and three-quarters out here,” he said. “I don’t see why I can’t take that ride every day and I intend to.”²⁸ How often the Mayor actually made the commute from City Hall to St. James is not known. Nevertheless, many regard Mayor Gaynor’s administration as one of the best that New York City ever had, and he was long remembered as the “mayor who mastered New York.”²⁹

Although Mayor Gaynor had run as a Democrat on the Tammany Hall ticket, he soon made it clear that he would be running New York and not Tammany Hall. In making appointments to office, Gaynor carefully chose men he felt would be able administrators and honest bureaucrats. He paid little attention to a man’s political affiliations and chose men on the basis of their character, ability, and experience. Gaynor often said that there was little difference between a good Democrat and a good Republican. Of course, this didn’t sit well with Tammany Hall. He instructed all his appointees to seek out corruption and mismanagement and insisted that his administrators not waste taxpayer’s money. He worked to end corruption in the police department, to improve working conditions for policemen, and to improve the character and morale of New York City’s finest. Mayor Gaynor “encouraged every activity looking to the betterment of the city.” And he worked to end the “exploitation of the poor and ignorant, especially recent immigrants,” who often fell prey to “extortionists.” Because of his tireless efforts to reform and improve city government, he won over even his staunchest critics, many of whom began to extol his achievements and praise him as the best mayor New York City had ever had.³⁰

Seven months into his term of office, Mayor Gaynor made plans to sail for Europe on a vacation. On August 9, 1910, as the Mayor prepared to depart for Europe aboard the liner Kaiser Wilhelm der Grosse, James J. Gallagher, a disgruntled discharged New York City Parks Department employee shot the Mayor at point blank range. Gallagher walked up behind the Mayor where he was standing on deck, shouted: “You have taken my bread and butter away from me!” - then thrust his pistol at the back of the Mayor’s neck, and fired. The bullets



Mayor Gaynor feeding one of his award-winning hogs at Deepwells.

penetrated Gaynor's neck just below his right ear, ripped through his throat and smashed into his larynx. Gaynor was rushed to nearby St. Mary's Hospital. At first it looked hopeless, but as the Mayor hung on his prognosis improved. Mrs. Gaynor, who had been in St. James, rushed to St. Mary's Hospital to be with her husband. "It was learned that his speech was much affected, and in fact he could speak . . . only with difficulty." On the sixth day, his physical condition improved and it became clear that the Mayor would survive. The bullet had lodged in the vault of his larynx, and no attempt was made to remove it. Finally after nineteen days in the hospital, he was discharged and allowed to travel to his beloved St. James home to convalesce.³¹

While Gaynor improved throughout September, the Democratic Convention was convened in Rochester. Gaynor was widely touted as the Democrat's leading choice for Governor. But Gaynor squelched this movement by announcing that he would not seek higher office.³² Mayor Gaynor returned to work on Monday, October 3, 1910. Although he looked physically fit and seemed energetic, he was still very weak. The assassin's bullet remained lodged in the back of his throat and "brought on spasms of coughing that left him limp." His tongue was difficult to control because some of the muscle fiber had been damaged by the bullet, making it difficult for him to speak. His voice had been reduced to a "rasping whisper, inaudible a few feet away." For these reasons and to "conserve his strength," Mayor Gaynor "ceased to go out in the evening and declined all invitations to speak."³³ In spite of the constant fatigue, Mayor Gaynor threw himself back into his work and was soon running the city again.

In 1911, Gaynor continued to vigorously use the power of his office to end corruption and injustice and to bring good government to the city. Confronted by the threat of a garbage strike in the fall of 1911, Mayor Gaynor warned that any striking worker would be fired. When the dumpcart drivers and garbage collectors struck, Gaynor fired them all and the city hired an entire new work force. The violence that erupted was quickly quelled and within six days the strike was over. The strikers were never reinstated. As far as Gaynor was concerned, "such conduct has the character of a mutiny." This was the kind of decisive, forthright action that New Yorkers had come to expect of their Mayor.³⁴

The year 1912 proved to be a year of trial for Mayor Gaynor. In the spring, the New Jersey surgeon who had attended Mayor Gaynor at St. Mary's Hospital when he was shot, sent in an outrageous bill for services rendered that totaled \$9,500. Mayor Gaynor felt that this was a "ridiculous" sum and pointed out that the New York City doctors who had attended him had never billed the city, and "say they never will." These doctors promptly submitted their bills and Mayor Gaynor had to watch in embarrassed silence as the bills were paid on court order.³⁵ In July, a major scandal developed in the police department. It began with the shooting of a gambler in the entrance to the Hotel Metropole. Four gunmen in an automobile mowed down the man in a hail of bullets, all within view of several policemen who did nothing to stop it or catch the culprits. Instead of acting decisively and calling for an investigation of wrongdoing, Gaynor left the matter in the hands of his police commissioner. This infuriated the press because it appeared that Gaynor was attempting to gloss over the murder. The scandal widened when the District Attorney's office revealed police complicity in the murder. It seems that the gambler knew too much about police corruption and was ready to talk to the D.A. when he was silenced. In the end, a full inquiry was made into the shooting. Police graft was uncovered and several men were charged, tried, found guilty and sentenced to death. Mayor Gaynor was exonerated but his judgment was impugned and his popularity slipped.³⁶

As 1913 began, everyone watched to see if Mayor Gaynor would run for a second term. "In three and a half years Gaynor had managed to alienate practically every vestige of organized political support." As a result the Mayor found that no political party was willing to nominate him for a second term, and Gaynor refused to run as an independent, despite having enough signatures. As the summer wore on, Gaynor remained cloistered in Deepwells in St. James. Part of the reason he had retired to his country home was to rest and recuperate from "a violent recurrence of the old coughing and retching" that he

experienced because of the bullet lodged in his throat. One particular spasm of coughing and retching lasted for twelve hours and left him entirely drained and weakened. In spite of his weakened condition, Mayor Gaynor finally resolved to run again for Mayor as an independent.³⁷

On September 3rd, Mayor Gaynor returned to City Hall where he made the formal announcement of his candidacy to a crowd of 5,000 cheering supporters. Soon thereafter, Gaynor and his son Rufus sailed for Europe aboard the White Star liner *Baltic*. Gaynor had decided to take the voyage for a much needed rest and a chance to get away from the stress of being Mayor. On September 12th, as the *Baltic* approached the coast of Ireland, Rufus found his father dead in his deck chair.³⁸

Mrs. Gaynor was at Deepwells with four of her children when she received notification of her husband's death. The townsfolk of St. James were stunned by the news and throughout the town "flags were at half staff and the post office was draped in mourning."³⁹ Mayor Gaynor's body was returned to New York City on September 19th and his coffin was brought to City Hall. Thousands of New Yorkers filed past the Mayor's casket to pay their last respects.⁴⁰

Following Mayor Gaynor's death in 1913, the Gaynor family continued to spend time in St. James. According to Mayor Gaynor's will, Deepwells and its contents became a part of the trust fund that Gaynor established for his surviving children. The house and its surrounding acreage were valued at \$39,000 when the Mayor passed away. In November, the executors of the Gaynor Estate, the Kings County Trust Company, auctioned off the livestock and equipment of the Deepwells farm. By 1914, all farm operations came to an end on the property, but the family continued to use the house. In September of 1914, Helen Gaynor was married to Frederick H. Bedford in the St. James Episcopal Church and a large wedding reception was held at Deepwells. Eventually the executors of the Gaynor estate moved to sell the house and property so they could dissolve the trust fund and give the Gaynor children their inheritance. In 1920, William Winthrop Taylor rented Deepwells from the Gaynor estate. He exercised an option to buy the house in 1924 and paid approximately \$50,000 for the house and acreage. He was to be the last occupant of Deepwells.

Born in Brooklyn in 1884, Taylor attended Cornell University, graduated in 1907 with a law degree, and went to work for a Brooklyn law firm, Cullen and Dykman. He married Helen Pierce, and when she died of a heart attack, Taylor volunteered for service in World War I. He was commissioned as an aerial observer in the signal corps and flew missions from bases in France. Following the war, Winthrop returned to New York and started a law firm with a friend, Gilbert Roberts. In

1924, Taylor was 40, had owned his own law firm for six years, and had the resources to buy Deepwells.⁴¹

Over the next fifty years in which Taylor occupied the house, a number of improvements were made. Ten feet were added on to the north end of the service wing and a dining room and modern kitchen were created. The house and service wing were re-roofed with “tinned metal” and standing seams. French doors were installed to give access to the veranda from the west parlor. Within the west parlor, an interior wall was removed to open up the interior space. The wood porch on the front of the house was replaced with blue stone slabs and, at the same time, the wooden columns were repaired.

Striped awnings were added to the veranda to give shade off the back of the house. To screen the house from the road, a high privet hedge was maintained along North Country Road. Shipmast locusts were planted along the roadway as well. Although some were lost in the 1938 and 1944 hurricanes, many of them remain to this day. A circular driveway of white pebbles that led to the front porch was laid. And on the east side of the house, Taylor created “an attractive, well-maintained formal garden” that contained “mature rhododendrons, box hedges, and many plantings.” The remnants of this garden can still be seen.⁴²

Taylor had a tennis court built in the back yard of Deepwells where “Taylor Tennis” was played at 11:00 a.m. every Saturday and Sunday. Hard fought matches were played on the court and then the participants retreated to the cool shade of the veranda for drinks and conversation. In the 1920’s and 1930’s, Winthrop was a member of the Smithtown Polo Club. He kept his polo ponies in the barns on the south side of North Country Road and practiced on the open fields of his own property.⁴³

For a number of years, Taylor kept a large working dairy farm with a herd of Ayrshire cows. He sold raw milk to local residents who came with their own milk cans. He also housed pigs and chickens in the barn complex he built and maintained on the property. In 1956, the big hay barn caught fire and the barn complex that consisted of a hay barn, farm equipment garage, cow barn, chicken-house, pig pen, corn crib, silos, horse barn, and tack room were all severely damaged. The hay barn was completely destroyed. This fire brought an end to farm operations at Deepwells. All that remains of the barn complex today are the cement foundations that can still be seen in the woods opposite Deepwells.⁴⁴

Taylor was a community minded person and an environmentalist. He was instrumental in helping found the Village of Head-of-the-Harbor in 1928. As an attorney, he helped draft the incorporation papers for the village and then promoted the idea. He persuaded others

to join the village and helped draw up the boundaries. When the Village of Head-of-the-Harbor was incorporated in 1928, Taylor served as one of the original members of the Board of Trustees. He subsequently served as the Village attorney for a number of years.⁴⁵ It is fitting that the modern Village Hall of the incorporated village of Head-of-the-Harbor is to be found in buildings and on land that was previously owned by Taylor.

In 1930 Taylor was retained by “residents of Port Jefferson” to help them in their effort to form an incorporated village. His efforts led to the establishment of the Village of Belle Terre in 1931. As an attorney for the Village of Belle Terre, Taylor led the fight to stop the O’Brien Sand and Gravel Company mining operations at the northeast end of the harbor of Port Jefferson. After a “hotly contested battle,” the Village of Belle Terre prevailed and the mining operations “were permanently halted.”⁴⁶

A similar fight erupted in Stony Brook Harbor where a legal battle pitted residents of the incorporated Villages of Head-of-the-Harbor and Nissequogue against the McCormick Sand and Gravel Company, which sought permits to dredge deposits of sand and gravel in the harbor bottom. Taylor filed his first brief in the matter in 1929, and this fight dragged on for over forty years before the McCormick Sand and Gravel Company gave up in 1971. In other important battles, Winthrop joined neighbors on North Country Road in protesting and fighting the widening of State Route 25A through St. James. In the 1960’s and 1970’s, he again helped organize opposition to the New York State Department of Transportation’s plan to bridge the Nissequogue River and construct a bypass of Smithtown’s center. In all these battles, Taylor sought to stop the desecration of the local landscape and environment in an effort to preserve the quality of life for all the residents in the incorporated Villages of Nissequogue and Head-of-the-Harbor.

Taylor died on December 22, 1975, at the age of 91, in his beloved red room in Deepwells, the house that he called home for fifty-five years. Deepwells passed to Jeremy Taylor, Winthrop’s only offspring by his second wife, Nana Brown. Jeremy Taylor never returned to live there. Instead, after a lengthy court battle over the zoning of the property, a battle that Jeremy Taylor ultimately lost, the property was sold to developers who intended to build residential housing on the remaining acreage. It was at this time that Suffolk County purchased Deepwells and thirteen surrounding acres.⁴⁷ Deepwells stands today restored and cared for by Suffolk County.

NOTES

¹ Laura Herbst, "Historic Site: 'Jewel' or Frill?," *New York Times*, September 20, 1987, 22.

² Diana Shaman, "A Suffolk Project with a Sense of History," *New York Times*, August 9, 1992, 9.

³ Barbara Van Liew, "Deepwells," *Preservation Notes* (Fall/Winter, 1979): 9.

⁴ *Final Environmental Impact Statement For Deepwells*, June 1988, sections on "Design and Construction" and "Historical and Architectural Importance", prepared by Nicholas Langhart, architectural historian, 97-100, 101-102. Long Island Room of the Smithtown Library.

⁵ Charlotte Ganz, ed., *Colonel Rockwell's Scrapbook* (Smithtown, New York: Smithtown Historical Society, 1968), 167.

⁶ Final Environmental Impact Statement For Deepwells, 101.

⁷ Frederick Kinsman Smith, *The Family of Richard Smith of Smithtown, L.I.* (Smithtown, New York: Smithtown Historical Society, 1967), 259.

⁸ Ganz, 167.

⁹ Smith, 535-536.

¹⁰ "Long Island R.R. Wrecks", *New York Times*, July 30, 1897, 3.

¹¹ "A Sword for Colonel Smith," *Brooklyn Eagle*, Oct. 2, 1898, 10.

¹² "Major Clinton H. Smith Dies," *New York Times*, Dec. 25, 1913, 9.

¹³ Louis Heaton Pink, *Gaynor: The Tammany Mayor Who Swallowed The Tiger* (New York: The International Press, 1931), 208.

¹⁴ Ganz, 167.

¹⁵ *The Final Environmental Impact Statement For Deepwells*, 101-102

¹⁶ "New York City's Next Mayor," *New York Times*, Nov. 28, 1909.

¹⁷ Pink, 208-209.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 210-211.

²⁰ Lately Thomas, *The Mayor Who Mastered New York* (New York: William Morrow and Company, 1969), 209-210.

²¹ Thomas, 123-125.

²² *Ibid.*

²³ Pink, 209.

²⁴ Thomas, 158.

²⁵ Thomas, 163.

²⁶ Thomas, 173.

²⁷ Thomas, 194.

²⁸ “New York City’s Next Mayor.”

²⁹ Thomas, 200-201.

³⁰ Thomas, 277-289.

³¹ Thomas, 290-291, 294-295.

³² Thomas, 307.

³³ Thomas, 309, 315.

³⁴ Thomas, 382.

³⁵ Thomas, 395-396.

³⁶ Thomas, 410-453.

³⁷ Thomas, 476-484.

³⁸ Thomas, 489-491.

³⁹ “Widow Prostrated by Sudden Shock,” *New York Times*, Sept. 12, 1913, 2.

⁴⁰ Thomas, 482.

⁴¹ Barbara Van Liew, et. al., *Head-of-the-Harbor, A Journey Through Time* (Laurel, New York: Main Road Books, 2005), 39-40.

⁴² *Ibid.*, 41-42.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, 45-46.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 42.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 43.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 40-41.

**THE DIMON FAMILY:
BRIDGEHAMPTON HISTORIOGRAPHY
AND ITS FOCUS ON ORDINARY PEOPLE**

J. Kirkpatrick Flack

Bridgehampton is (arguably) the oldest settled community on Long Island and has been home to a handful of very fine American historians. One of them, James Truslow Adams, had an international reputation, but also wrote about his own community. J. Kirkpatrick Flack uses Adams' work, together with that of another local historian, an English born mapmaker, and his own analysis of primary documents to tell the story of one late eighteenth-century Bridgehampton family.

The year 2006, when Bridgehampton, New York observed the 350th anniversary of its settlement, also marked the 90th anniversary of a seminal book about that hamlet's history. In 1916 *Memorials of Old Bridgehampton* was published by James Truslow Adams. The author had recently come to Bridgehampton from New York City, giving up his job as a stockbroker so that he could pursue suppressed literary ambitions. As a personal acquaintance recalled, "Adams often said to himself, 'I shall get out of Wall Street as soon as I reach thirty-five or save a hundred thousand dollars, whichever comes first; and then I shall try writing.'" In 1912, with his requisite bank account, the thirty-four year old bachelor built himself a cottage on Job's Lane, opposite the Mecox Cemetery. His garden study, added some years later, afforded "perfect privacy . . . There is a window on each side to catch the breeze from any direction, and to the south I look over the level meadows to the dunes with an occasional glimpse of ocean . . . It is far from the telephone and other intrusions." He wrote in this peaceful setting until 1927, when he married Kathryn Seely of Southampton and moved away, having brought forth three major books including his 1922 Pulitzer Prize winning *The Founding of New England*. From Bridgehampton's fertile loam Adams blossomed into "perhaps the most widely read historian of the United States during the interwar years."¹

Adams' apprentice effort, *Memorials*, was prompted by curiosity about the East End Long Island community that he had made his home. "I have undertaken a new job and am very busy with it," he explained to a longtime friend, "writing the history of Bridgehampton . . . in which the native or summer visitor could find anything which is known. . . . I am at present in the early stage of collecting materials and may never get further . . . In any case going through the town records is giving me new ideas as to American history." Reprinted in 1962 as part

of the Empire State Historical Publications series, it can be considered a landmark for students. "Bridgehampton," extolled the local reviewer, "without a historian of its own, now finds one in Mr. Adams . . . Judge [Henry Parsons] Hedges had written a good deal of excellent local history in unconnected fragments from time to time . . . but not until now has there been a collection and summary of all these historical notes." As the first monograph dealing with Bridgehampton's past, it was based on sources ranging from gravestones to public documents and written as a synthesis. Thus Adams drew together bits and pieces of local information to develop an account of what he called "the village." In doing so, he focused on several fundamental questions: "who the settlers were, what their life was like, what their relations were to the outside world."²



James Truslow Adams, shortly after he published *Memorials of Old Bridgehampton*. From Allan Nevins, *James Truslow Adams: Historian of the American Dream*, 1968.

Adams' inventorying of residents, descriptions of events, and relating the particulars of experience to a general context were

enhanced in 1935 by William D. Halsey's *Sketches from Local History*. Halsey, unlike Adams, came from a family which had been in the area continuously for nearly three-hundred years. But he too had forsaken finance (president of the Sag Harbor Savings Bank) in favor of Clio's nearby call, becoming the Southampton Town historian and vice president of the Suffolk County Historical Society. Following Adams, Halsey also used official documents, private collections, archaeological remains, and anecdotes told by old timers. His original contribution lay in the maps for which he compiled data and that were drawn by Godfrey H. Baldwin. The English born Baldwin emigrated to Bridgehampton by way of India, where his father was an officer in the British Army. Marrying into the deeply rooted Rogers family, and working for the local surveyor (another Halsey), he became a part of the community. Around 1924 Baldwin began producing real estate atlas type drawings in cooperation with Halsey. For *Sketches*, Halsey explained how he had been inspired by Presbyterian minister David Miller's mid-nineteenth-century map making of the Bridgehampton parish. "Upon studying this map I realized that here was a feature of our local history that had never been written or placed on record . . . and led me to undertake the compiling of a series of maps beginning with the year 1900, and going back in 50-year periods to the year 1700, and the last a 30-year period to 1670 . . . locating the residences and naming the residents as of each date as far back as possible."³ The result, placed alongside Adams' *Memorials*, constituted an additional milestone in Bridgehampton historiography.

By presenting information in an undifferentiated manner all the farmsteads and house lots appeared to be on the same plane. Unlike chronicles which tended to feature relatively notable persons, Halsey-Baldwin made everyone seem equally relevant, a true "people's history." Whether or not this was because the Reverend Miller's map epiphany suggested equality in the eyes of God, Halsey-Baldwin did not diminish the high standing of leading families. What their maps implied - perhaps unintentionally - was that comparatively obscure members of the Bridgehampton community could be worthy of historical consideration. As less renowned inhabitants of the landscape the curious historian wonders what role these ordinary folk played in the locality, what were their lives like? How did they interact with the world outside of Bridgehampton, if at all? Inferences can be drawn by probing the story of one such anonymous Bridgehampton family, the Dimons.

During the early months of the American Civil War, Nathan Hedges Dimon and his oldest son, who possessed the same name, enlisted in the 81st Regiment, New York Volunteer Infantry. Both

came from the Mecox area of Bridgehampton (close to Adams' residence a generation later) where their farm family lived, headed by the elder Nathan, his wife Roxanna Ludlow Dimon, and including four boys and four girls, ages eighteen to one. Nathan, Jr. was not quite fifteen and the elder Dimon nearly forty when the two mustered in to begin their three year military commitments. Nathan, Sr.'s tour of duty ended abruptly; he was discharged in Virginia after four months due to a hernia and incapacitating foot problems. The younger Private Dimon fulfilled his obligation, mustering out as a seventeen year-old. During his period of service he grew two and one-half inches taller, earned one hundred dollars, was seriously wounded, and sustained lasting effects which would trouble him throughout the rest of his life.⁴

After initially deploying to Washington, D.C. to help defend Kalorama Heights, young Dimon's regiment was heavily engaged in Virginia from March 1862 until the end of hostilities. At dawn on June 3, 1864 at Cold Harbor, "there rang-out suddenly on the summer air such a crash of artillery and musketry as is seldom heard in war." Company G pushed forward in the futile frontal assault which left 7,000 Union troops killed or wounded. "The time of actual advance was not over eight minutes. In that little period more men fell bleeding . . . than in any other like period of time throughout the war." Soldiers anticipated the slaughter; some "wrote their names on small pieces of paper and pinned them to their coats, in the hope that their bodies would not go unidentified."⁵ Dimon received a bullet across the back of his neck. He was treated at a field hospital, transferred to Camp Parole United States Hospital in Maryland, and discharged six months later.

It might seem that Dimon's adolescence was extraordinarily eventful. A crucial phase of his formative development was spent far from home, for a prolonged duration, under gravely threatening conditions. Yet his rite of passage was not unusual for teenage males in the locality at this time. Between the 1830s and 1870s many Bridgehampton boys sailed on long sea voyages where they faced extreme dangers and grew up quickly. Fifteen or sixteen year-old whaling green hands, comparable to Private Dimon, tested their mettle in ways understandable to their elders. They also exerted their budding manhood by speaking like their superiors, which subtly solidified ties bonding generation to generation. Younger and older males often were connected by language, carry-overs from spoken phrasings at sea, to conversational usages on land. Whaling colloquialisms such as "Sir, I'll set anywhere you say, if you will only tell where to set," sounded back home as idiomatic links between farmers of different age groups.⁶ Regardless of the degree to which Nathan, Jr. shared this vocabulary,

his experience could well have been considered an aspect of continuity in East End Long Island folkways.

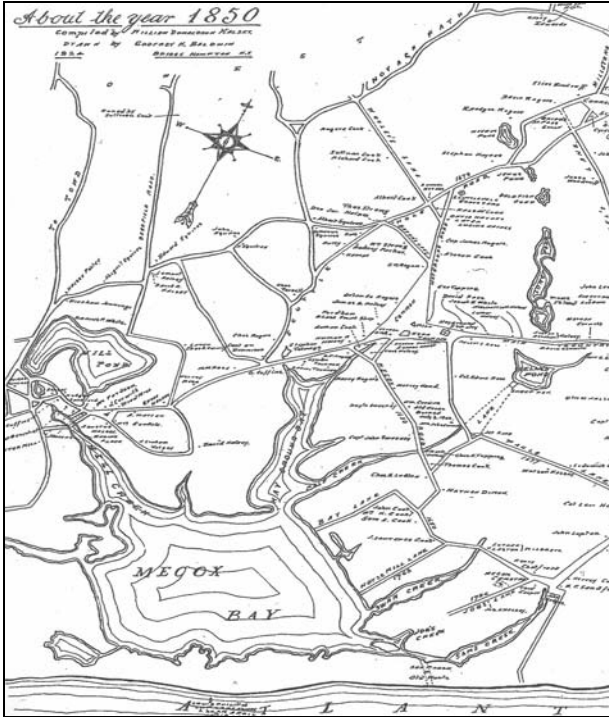


Nathan Hedges Dimon, Jr. Courtesy of the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War, and Nathan H. Dimon, Jr.'s great-grandson, Charles V. Dimon.

Customary ways of conduct and communication were rooted in a cultural landscape that would appear to fit the model of an “open-country neighborhood.”⁷ Rhythms of life in Mecox - without romanticizing or glossing over harsh realities - tended to be monotonous; tides ebbed and flowed endlessly. Techniques of making and mending, hauling and heaving, on water as well as in fields and households, constituted common know how. Sororial and fellowship bonds were reinforced through close knit religious associations. Geographical proximity insured that relationships would, for the most part, remain unbroken. Endogamous marital patterns between young people in the same neighborhood strengthened webs of kinship. The Dimon and Ludlow farms, for example, were less than half a mile apart. Nathan Dimon, Jr. soldiered with John Gough, who enlisted at sixteen as a drummer in the 81st, was at Cold Harbor, then became an apprentice farmer to Charles Doxey a little further up Mecox Road, above Calf Creek. The colonel of their regiment had been Edwin Rose (he did not survive the war) whose farm was on the nearby lane leading to the Haygound Cemetery.⁸ The narrative of local life revealed over and over a weave of intimacy in the Dimons’ proximate neighborhood.

Economic anxieties and incentives to relocate played a large role in the lives of Bridgehampton residents. In 1850, Nathan and Roxanna Dimons’ farm was valued at \$3,000. Ten years later, though the real estate worth was unchanged, Nathan, Jr. and three sisters ages six to eleven attended school, and the household included an Irish born domestic, thus suggesting that their financial circumstances were secure. In 1865, however, the Dimons’ real estate assessment had dropped to \$2,400. Their seventy-five acres must have been comparable to the Doxeys’ seventy-seven acre parcel where Gough worked. Apparently the Dimons harvested slightly more winter wheat and oats, and cut more tons of hay; the Doxeys made more butter while the Dimons made more pork; the Doxeys’ chicken flock was larger whereas the Dimons earned more from their sale of eggs. The telling measurement in this equation was the aggregate cash values of the two farms: \$3,840 for the Dimons to \$4,725 for the Doxeys. Perhaps this difference owed something to the latter buying four times as much fertilizer. Certainly the Dimons’ productivity diminished due to the absences and physical impairments of two of its farmers. Further depletions of the family labor force were evinced by the Mecox Cemetery gravestones of daughters Mary and Elizabeth, who died a year apart in 1863-1864, ages twenty and thirteen.⁹ The Dimons’ postwar worth continued to fall and, by 1868, they were no longer entered on the town tax roll.

It is not known why Nathan, Jr., as material conditions worsened, devoted less time to farming and more to studious pursuits. Did military experiences - mingled with stressful teenage adjustments - turn him in another direction? Private Dimon's rank did not change for three years. Yet presumably he was a different person when he rejoined his parents. Roxanna Ludlow Dimon evidently recognized that he had returned to Mecox, but not necessarily to its farm fields, and encouraged formal education as an appropriate alternative.¹⁰



The Dimons' Bridgehampton locality. From William Donaldson Halsey, *Sketches from Local History*, Yankee Peddler Book Company, 1966).

Dimon attended the Southampton Academy and then Colgate University. The former enrolled local young men and women from the East End as well as “scholars from a distance [who] may obtain board in respectable families.” Both its academic program and religious discipline were rigorous. His mother and father, devout Methodists, must have been pleased by the moral instruction. Pedagogically the Academy provided worthwhile preparation for the pupil in the family,

“Nathan Dimon, A.B. and A.M., Class of 1870 Colgate University,” as he later would sign important correspondence.¹¹

Colgate was an ideal fit for the returning private who was intensely spiritual. “The Seminary,” as it was respectfully referred to, which had grown out of the Baptist Education Society of the State of New York (1817), placed a heavy emphasis on theological training. It admitted applicants from all Christian denominations, most students were church members, and participation in prayer meetings was the norm. Intoxicating drink was strictly banned. Classical subjects taught in the recitation manner typical of higher learning constituted the academic fare. It seems readily apparent that Nathan Dimon completed college firm in his beliefs and capable of standing on his own.¹²

While he was away at school his parents made a momentous decision: they moved to Kansas. The year of his graduation found Nathan, Sr. and Roxanna, with four of their children, in Tonganoxie Township, founded in 1866. Now they were homesteaders, adding to a pace of immigration which gave Kansas the fastest growing population rate in the country between 1865 and 1880. Many new families included Union veterans. Again, Nathan, Sr. showed a proclivity to engage in epochal movements. Previously he had rushed to the colors to “sustain the cause of freedom during the War of the Slaveholders Rebellion.” In 1849, as a Southampton and California Mining and Trading Company stockholder, he joined in the Gold Rush. Once more he threw himself into the westward movement - this time with Roxanna - acquiring 160 acres in Clay County as a timber culture claim, whereby the Dimons were obliged to maintain a portion of the land in trees.¹³

Nathan, Jr. did not arrive until 1878. He had been Upstate, on the Delmarva Peninsula, back to Long Island, and briefly in Manhattan since his 1873 ordination as a Baptist minister. In 1882 he married Priscilla Shaffer Rowland, a Pennsylvania born widow and mother of seven children whose late husband served in an Illinois volunteer regiment. She and Nathan, Jr. had two boys, one of whom became a surgeon at a Three Forks, Montana hospital, and the other a high school teacher southwest of Emporia, Kansas. Their father likewise taught, though his official occupation was farmer.” He also was a preacher, composed sentimental poetry, and conducted evening singing schools. With regard to home life, he and Priscilla “led exemplary lives before their sons . . . Although among drinking people, he often restated that he never had tasted liquor.”¹⁴

Avoiding sin and embracing spirituality may have come to him naturally. Certainly his commitment was congruent with social norms. Nathan, Sr. and Roxanna Ludlow Dimon were reared in a society where eighty percent of Americans were estimated to be churched. When,

fueled mainly by Methodists and Baptists, the United States was “the most devoted evangelical Protestant nation on earth.” As with his religiosity, young Dimon’s adventurous streak could have stemmed from his father, nurtured by a culture in which boys became men through whaling voyages.¹⁵ In coping with adversity, however, he probably owed much to his mother’s strength of character. Roxanna Ludlow Dimon was a paragon of resilience. She had been married less than three years when her husband sailed from Sag Harbor for San Francisco - just before spring planting - leaving her with two-year old Nathan, Jr., and a five month old daughter. She had the consolation of her faith and there were Ludlows, as well as open country neighbors to pitch in with household and farm management. On a more abstract level, Nathan, Sr.’s experience may have given her a sense of participation in the Gold Rush; other Forty-Niners’ wives back home felt vicarious involvement through newspaper stories and serialized novels about the adventures of their men. Nonetheless, there had to be moments of despair, especially when she thought of her brother Lafayette, a sea captain who died in California, a cholera victim. Roughly ten years and five children later, the son whose birthday was exactly nine months after her wedding went off to the Civil War, followed shortly by her husband. Both returned, but each was disabled. Then came the move to Kansas. At the turn of the century four of her eight children were dead. It is not hard to imagine Roxanna Ludlow Dimon as one of those celebrated pioneer women: a gritty, indomitable migrant mother, an expression of composed determination beneath her sunbonnet, persevering and overcoming.¹⁶

On Christmas Day 1907 Roxanna was presented with another calamity. Nathan, Sr. died after a two month illness. They had been married almost sixty-two years and weathered their share of difficulties. Now, looming ominously over her loss, was a financial crisis. With her husband’s death went his Civil War invalid pension of twenty dollars per month, paid quarterly; as his widow she was entitled to only eight dollars. She stood to have some income from the rental of land, but the farm was mortgaged, so payments could amount to perpetually dire circumstances. By any reckoning, this aging prairie heroine from Long Island needed help.¹⁷

It came through old Bridgehampton friends and professional assistance from a Washington, D.C. law firm. John W. Morris & Co., attorneys-at-law, filed fourteen Pension Bureau declarations and affidavits between January and November 1908 for their client, Roxanna L. Dimon. They laid out the claimant’s case: her personal property was appraised at \$108; the quarter section she inherited brought in \$150 annually; taxes and interest on the mortgage, due in

1911, added up to fifty dollars, leaving her no more than \$100 on the positive side of the ledger. She had no other means of support. Within two weeks her monthly benefit was increased to twelve dollars. Then, to complete her application, the attorneys filed sworn statements from Clara Hildreth and Charlotte Sandford, who had attended the Dimons' Bridgehampton wedding, verifying that "Nathan and Roxana [sic] lived together as husband and wife and were not divorced neither one of them." In the fall of 1916 her benefit was raised to twenty dollars per month, effective September 8. She died that fall at age ninety-five.¹⁸

If Roxanna Dimon was made somewhat more comfortable in her waning years as a result of favorable dealings with the Bureau of Pensions, the same could not be said of her Civil War son. He had been pensioned since 1888 when his invalid claim began paying him four dollars per month. This amount doubled in 1892. The original application was filed by Washington, D.C. attorney Isaac D. Porter and the boost in his benefit came in response to an affidavit obtained by Clay Center, Kansas lawyer Edgar North. But he had to wait sixteen years for another increase, until 1908, at the time the Morris firm was effectively advising his mother.¹⁹ Nathan, Jr. apparently chose to follow his own counsel. He repeatedly wrote to the Invalid and Finance Divisions maintaining that his war wound limited his ability to work. Save for periodic notarizing in Clay Center by Sam Maxwell, his "agent," he filled out declarations sections of applications himself, procured supporting statements, and provided medical reports. His tent mate, Henry Hydorn, attested that "on the skirmish line at Cold Harbor, Va., on June 3rd 1864 . . . the bullet went across neck between two vertebrae, leaving my [sic] neck permanently lame and weakened, disabling him from manual labor." A surgeon's certificate affirmed that as a result of the gunshot wound he "can do no manual labor." These efforts were of no avail. In the spring of 1915, a few months after becoming a widower, he was informed that "you are not shown to be unfit for manual labor by reason of your disability of service origin."²⁰ Dimon expressed righteous indignation. "I am not a beggar. I want my dues," Nathan Jr. insisted. This was a demand for basic justice. It was also consistent with the rationale for the pension system: to prevent worthy individuals from going to poorhouses by providing them with earned aid. He had served, paid a price, was now in need, so accordingly deserved necessary compensation. There was no quibble with adverse doctors' findings, but deep resentment over bureaucratic indifference toward how he had performed his duty. "I was around Washington in '62 with McClellan's army a boy of 15 yrs., and I carried a musket three years and was honorably discharged before I was 18 years old."²¹ Dimon's call for fair dealing was written in his own

longhand. The United States Department of the Interior, Bureau of Pensions, Section I, Civil War Division notification was typed on official stationery.

Dimon's letter may have been rather old fashioned in form, but its substance was modern, calling attention to the claimant's service in defense of the nation's capital. By reminding the Pension Commissioner about how he helped safeguard the seat of government he was implicitly claiming partial credit for preserving the place which, by 1915, had emerged as the locus of federal bureaucracy.²²

Ironically, the largest raise in his pension benefit came after he was dead. In the summer of 1928 a letter arrived at the National Military Home near Leavenworth, Kansas which he had entered three years earlier after growing too feeble to remain with a son in Barber County, Kansas. The letter announced an increase to sixty-five dollars per month. The letter was returned to Washington with a notation: "Above named pensioner died January 13, 1928."²³

Toward the end Dimon gained an influential advocate in Kansas Congressman James G. Strong, who chaired the House of Representatives Committee on War Claims, but his health was nearly gone. The gunshot wound had severed neck muscles and damaged vertebra making it difficult to keep his head from falling forward, which, over time, injured his spinal column. The resulting adhesions caused pain and fatigue, and may have contributed to eyesight problems and deafness. Also, he was diagnosed with symptoms which hinted at post-traumatic stress disorder: extreme nervousness; chronic insomnia; trembling fingers; standing and walking slowly with eyes closed. He was not mentally ill. Rather, day-to-day functioning was impaired by emotional problems no doubt lingering from his horrific combat experience.²⁴

"In the eighty-one years allotted him," observed his obituary, "he had wide experiences."²⁵ Indeed he had, and the same held true for his parents. The episodes of their lives linked the Dimons to major components of American history between the mid-nineteenth and early twentieth-centuries. The Civil War, settlement of the plains, agricultural transformations, and the widening scope of the federal government with regard to public care were, of course, principal elements in shaping the modern nation. As evidenced by the Dimons, they could also be intertwined with the localities of those directly involved in larger happenings. Joining the regiment raised by Colonel Rose transported father and son from their open country neighborhood to a national setting where they had experiences which then reverberated in

RECORDED BY THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES
 Clay Center,
 Kansas.
 May 28, 1915.
 The Commissioner of Pensions,
 Washington, D.C.
 Dear Sir,
 entitled to a pension under an
 disability clause of Act May 11, 1912,
 I ask that my case
 be reopened and taken up again,
 I wish to offer additional proof
 and evidence to establish my claim.
 Often country doctors are too hurried,
 unacquainted with the pension laws,
 overlook the main points at issue, and
 fail to express with legal precision
 their conclusions. I would like to be
 examined by Dr. M. C. Porter, late
 of the board of Pension Surgeons, at
 Clay Center, Kans., but now chief
 surgeon of St. Francis Hospital, Topeka,
 Kansas. He does all the operating, also at
 the Clay Center, Kans., Hospital, I was
 around Washington in '62 with McClellan's
 army a boy of 15 yrs., and I carried a musket three
 years and was honorably discharged before I was
 18 years old. I am not a beggar. I want my dues.
 Respectfully,
 Nathan Dimon.

"I am not a beggar. I want my dues" (Courtesy of the National Archives and Records Administration).

Bridgehampton. Local effects of the war had national repercussions when the Dimons took advantage of a new federal land policy and moved west. As Clay County farming became more problematic for the family, a corresponding relationship with the United States Government evolved through disability and old age pensions, and, finally, a federal facility for elderly soldiers.

The Dimons' experiences were reflective of ordinary people on Long Island and in Clay County during years of both profound change and continuity. Their saga of service and struggle comprised a small chapter in a larger story. They related to their times in ways that would have been comprehended by early 1900s Bridgehampton historians.

NOTES

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**THE ORIGINS OF ADELPHI SUFFOLK COLLEGE:
THE SAYVILLE AND SOUTHAMPTON INITIATIVES
1957-1958**

Leroy E. Douglas

In our last issue Leroy Douglas detailed the exciting yet ultimately failed attempt by Adelphi University in Garden City to establish a private, four year liberal arts college in the Setauket-Stony Brook area. Adelphi carried on with its effort to provide higher education facilities in Suffolk county, ultimately succeeding in the south shore enclave of Sayville.

Adelphi College in Garden City established Suffolk County's first liberal arts college in Sayville in September 1959 after offering extension courses in Port Jefferson, Patchogue, Riverhead and Sayville between 1953 and 1958. The College's effort to establish an Adelphi Suffolk branch on property offered by philanthropist Ward Melville in Old Field and Stony Brook in 1956 was not successful. Adelphi searched for a site for its institutional branch in the Sayville-Oakdale area, and in Southampton in 1957-1958 after the State accepted 340 acres from Melville in October 1956 to establish a state university. College administrators continued to believe that thousands of able students in Suffolk County wanted, and badly needed, an accessible, four year liberal arts college program . While searching for a location for a permanent private branch college, Adelphi offered twenty undergraduate extension courses at Port Jefferson High School, and four Graduate extension courses in Education at Riverhead and Patchogue High Schools in the fall of 1957.¹

Dr. Agnes Snyder came out of retirement in September 1957 and was appointed Director of Curriculum Development and Coordinator of "the college's Suffolk County extension center" by Adelphi president Dr. Paul Dawson Eddy. Agnes Snyder was a remarkable educator. Born in 1885 and raised in Baltimore, Maryland, Dr. Snyder attended Baltimore's Eastern Female High School, where after two years of training she was judged qualified to teach in the public schools of Baltimore. While teaching in Baltimore from 1904 to 1918, Dr. Snyder earned bachelors, masters and doctorate degrees from the Johns Hopkins University. While teaching at the Delaware Woman's College (now the University of Delaware) she helped organize the Delaware State Education Association, and assisted Professor George Counts -with the backing of Pierre S. DuPont - in reorganizing and upgrading the public school system of the state of Delaware. Dr. Snyder chaired the Education Department at Towson State Teachers College in Maryland from 1925

until 1932. From 1932 until 1939, Snyder was the chief curriculum developer at Dr. Thomas Alexander's New College - an undergraduate program at Teacher's College, Columbia University. Before coming to Adelphi College in 1949 Dr. Snyder served as a consultant for Alabama's five state teacher's colleges from 1939 until 1942. She also was a consultant at Mills College of Education in Manhattan, and assisted the U.S. Army reconstruct teacher education in occupied Germany from 1946-1949. Dr. Snyder was the chair of Adelphi's teacher education program from 1949 to 1957, when she "semi-retired" until returning full-time to Adelphi in 1959 at the age of seventy-four.² Adelphi's evening Extension centers in Suffolk County were financially successful.³

Suffolk County News Supports Adelphi in Sayville

Just as newspaperman Stuart Gracey was instrumental in directing Dr. Paul Dawson Eddy and Adelphi College to consider establishing a permanent Suffolk branch in the Port Jefferson-Stony Brook area in 1955-56, so another forward looking, community minded journalist, Joseph C. Jahn, the editor of Sayville's *Suffolk County News*, was instrumental in convincing Adelphi to locate afternoon and evening college classes in Sayville in 1958. As Gracey later recalled, "It was through the untiring efforts of the original advisory committee and enthusiastic support of local Sayville officials, particularly a newspaper editor, Joseph Jahn, that the college began to function" in Sayville. Although Joseph Jahn was not the driving force behind the creation of Adelphi Suffolk College, the good humored editor of the *Suffolk County News* was the person most responsible for Adelphi's locating its permanent four year liberal art's college in the Sayville-Oakdale area.⁴

In an important editorial, "Why Not a Night College Here?," the *Suffolk County News* criticized officials in Nassau and Suffolk Counties for lacking "the long-range wisdom" of "investing now in community colleges." Joseph Jahn suggested that Sayville's leaders could "advance the education of our young people" by undertaking "a serious study" so that "a small scale night college be established here in Sayville in the near future." Jahn proposed that the Sayville Board of Education make "a modest start" toward the development of a badly needed community college by allowing an established college to use "the facilities of the new Sayville High School after hours until such time as public funds could be found for a full-scale college." Such a "modest undertaking," Jahn believed would provide a "two-year extension of the present high school course for those students who are finding it impossible to go to college."⁵

In mid-September 1957, as Adelphi College was offering college courses in Port Jefferson, Patchogue and Riverhead, and as New York University's School of Education was offering extension courses in

public schools in Suffolk, Joseph Jahn humorously remarked in his weekly column in the *Suffolk County News*: “There are a number of interesting night courses being offered hereabouts by universities and colleges which have become aware that there are people in Suffolk County with brains left over.” Jahn suggested that the colleges offer courses on local government and its functions because “Knowledge of government, particularly that which is close to home and directly influence the family and the purse, is of vital importance to the adult who casts a vote. Yet there are millions of people who trudge to the polls every year without having the slightest notion why.”⁶

Paul Dawson Eddy Seeks an Adelphi Campus on Suffolk’s South Shore

On January 30, 1958, Paul Dawson Eddy addressed a meeting of Suffolk County School Administrators at the Patchogue Hotel about opening an Adelphi campus in Suffolk in 1959. Dr. Eddy surprised the administrators when he announced that Adelphi College proposed to establish a four year college with “a potential enrollment of 400 undergraduate and as many night extension course students” in either Southampton or East Hampton in eastern Suffolk as early as September 1959. Adelphi officials were hoping to raise \$660,000 to finance its Suffolk division campus on the South Fork. Dr. Eddy’s announcement came in the wake of a request by the South Fork Civic Conference to the Suffolk County Board of Supervisors in Riverhead asking the county to provide a tract of land of at least 100 acres for a college campus in eastern Suffolk County.⁷

Just a week later, on February 6, 1958, it was reported that Adelphi had backtracked and was now insisting that “previous reports indicating a desire (by Adelphi) to locate (a Suffolk branch) in Southampton or East Hampton were incorrect.” In fact, Dr. Eddy stated that Adelphi was mainly interested in locating its Suffolk Division somewhere between East Islip and Patchogue “because of its central location and nearness to populous sections of western Suffolk.”⁸ Sayville’s community development organization, “Operation Bootstrap,” was offering every possible assistance to Adelphi College in finding a location for its proposed Suffolk branch somewhere in this area.” Adelphi was making efforts to “locate temporary quarters in Sayville for the proposed four year liberal art’s college and at least one building available for this purpose is to be inspected today.”⁹ A freshman class of 100-150 students was being projected for September 1959.

Walter Conlon, the general chairman of “Operation Bootstrap,” declared that locating “a major college” in the Sayville area would provide tremendous value to the vicinity “from an educational and business point of view.” Conlon added, “It is difficult to exaggerate what

this would mean to our young people and to future generations of young people to have a State University at Stony Brook and a full fledged liberal art's college here (in Sayville). It would be a tremendous boost for everyone." Acquiring the 100 acres Adelphi needed to establish a satisfactory college campus in the Sayville-Oakdale area either as an outright gift or at a price which Adelphi could afford, was looked upon as a huge stumbling block by Sayville's civic leaders. The civic leaders decided to locate a suitable building in Sayville for temporary use by the college.¹⁰

President Eddy met with the members of the Sayville Board of Education on February 13, 1958 to negotiate "a one year rental of 'Old '88,'" a school district building which Sayville was abandoning in June 1958. Adelphi wanted the seventy year old, twenty classroom wood structure "as a temporary home base in Suffolk until the permanent college is established." After inspecting Old '88 with Richard Clemo, Adelphi's extension program director, and members of Operation Bootstrap, Eddy indicated satisfaction and announced that Adelphi would centralize the evening extension courses it had been giving in Port Jefferson, Riverhead and Patchogue in Sayville starting with the Fall 1958 semester. Eddy would not commit Adelphi to permanently locating its Suffolk division in Sayville since he revealed that "Adelphi has been offered a gift of the large Gardiner estate, including a mansion, in Brightwaters, and is currently negotiating with its owner." This was Sagtikos Manor, Robert David Lion Gardiner's historic estate in West Bay Shore, which George Washington visited on his 1790 presidential tour of Long Island, and which had been in the Gardiner family since 1772. The "mansion" was the forty-two room, 11,000 square foot, two story Sagtikos manor house. The 125 acre estate was much reduced in size from the 1,207 acres Isaac Thompson inherited "as a wedding gift when he married Mary Gardiner in 1772."¹¹

On February 20, 1958, the *Suffolk County News* proudly reported that Adelphi would be opening "its Suffolk branch on a temporary basis in Sayville" in September 1958 in Old'88 on Greene Avenue. The Sayville Board of Education approved renting Old'88 to Adelphi and the college agreed to pay all costs involved with renovating and maintaining the former junior high building.

Dr. Eddy explained that Adelphi-Sayville would be "the beginning of what will eventually be a full four year liberal art's college similar to the institution in Garden City," and would mean the consolidation in



A view of Old '88 from Greene Avenue in Sayville as it was used by Adelphi Suffolk College from 1959 until December 1962.

Sayville “of graduate and night extension courses currently being carried out at Port Jefferson, Riverhead and Patchogue.” Adelphi would offer “a few undergraduate courses in nursing and teacher education from four to 11:00 p.m. on week days,” and on Saturdays in the fall of 1958 at Old'88. Administrators were to use the building in the daytime hours planning Adelphi-Suffolk’s “own college building on its own campus somewhere in this general vicinity.”¹²

Eddy praised “Operation Bootstrap” leaders Walter Conlon, Donald Mates, Samuel K. Munson, and Joseph C. Jahn, for helping Adelphi find a home in Sayville. He called upon community leaders to find a permanent site for the college and raise the funds to “smooth the path” for the September 1958 opening. Adelphi, he reiterated would need local assistance in renovating Old'88, and in acquiring reference books for the college library. Eddy declared that although Adelphi had “not yet decided” on a permanent site for the Suffolk division, it would “prefer to

locate closer to Sayville” and tasked local leaders to locate a suitable one-hundred acre site for a campus in, or near, Sayville.¹³

The *Suffolk County News* lauded Adelphi’s decision to locate its Suffolk Division in Sayville stating: “The best news in years is the report that Adelphi College will open its Suffolk branch, on a temporary basis at least, in Sayville next September” with late afternoon undergraduate and night graduate extension courses attracting more than 300 students “under one roof.” The News concluded: “The hope is, of course, that Adelphi will like Sayville so much that it will be included to stay in this immediate vicinity when it comes to choosing a permanent campus.”¹⁴

Islip town supervisor Thomas J. Harwood welcomed Adelphi to Islip noting that “several Islip communities are vying to find a site for the college either by outright gift or purchase.” Walter Conlon told the press that owners of several large tracts in the Sayville area were being contacted in an effort to obtain a permanent campus. “Operation Bootstrap” officials applied to the Rockefeller, Ford and Carnegie Foundations for grants to help establish Adelphi Suffolk. While no decision by Adelphi regarding its Suffolk campus was expected before the summer of 1958, Walter Conlon cautioned that it would be difficult for Sayville “to match the offer of the large Gardiner estate in Brightwaters.” Conlon told the Sayville leadership, “We need all the help we can get.”¹⁵

On April 3, 1958, Joseph Jahn urged Sayville area residents to attend a “meeting at the Cherry Avenue Elementary School to discuss ways and means of locating a permanent campus in the Sayville area for Adelphi College’s proposed Suffolk branch.” Jahn said Sayville residents “have a golden opportunity” to support locating “a top notch liberal art’s college” which “would be a tremendous boost to our young people for generations to come; provide the community with many cultural advantages it does not now enjoy, and provide many local jobs and be of considerable value to our business people.”¹⁶ Forty-five townspeople attended the informational meeting, but were disappointed when Walter Conlon disclosed that the community leadership had been “unable to get an outright donation of a 100 acre tract for a permanent campus” for Adelphi Suffolk. Sensing that Adelphi might be lured to another South Shore community by a generous land offer, Conlon prodded the townspeople to decisive action. “The time has come,” he said, “for the whole community to act. Those who feel the need for a liberal arts college in the community, who understand what it would mean to us in terms of educating our young people, should step forward and join our ranks.” Conlon suggested immediately instituting a major fundraising drive to pay for a suitable campus.¹⁷ “Operation Bootstrap” leaders quickly met and resolved that the search for a suitable Adelphi Suffolk College

campus “be pressed until one is acquired or all possible efforts are exhausted.” A special committee of twenty men and women reported that “the owners of eight tracts of land considered suitable for college purposes have been or will be approached in the hope of acquiring acreage as a gift or at a price which could be met by funds raised through community efforts.”¹⁸



A rare shot of the interior of Old '88 when used by Adelphi Suffolk College. Students studying in the first floor library. Beanies were worn by students in the early years to distinguish themselves from ordinary town folk.

Adelphi Tries to Establish a College in Southampton

Meanwhile, Dr. Eddy and other Adelphi administrators were looking to Long Island's South Fork for a suitable Suffolk campus. Adelphi successfully petitioned the State Education Department on June 28, 1958 to amend its charter to “conduct institutional branches at Sayville and Southampton in Suffolk County.”¹⁹ A *New York Times* article in May 1958 reported that Dr. Eddy had “finished a tour of Long Island this week in search of a site for the college's proposed Suffolk County branch.” Adelphi was focusing on four sites: the 125 acre Sagtikos Manor in West Bay Shore, a “forty room mansion on a tract that runs from Montauk Highway to the Great South Bay,” an estate in Southampton, which

included a “substantial sum to attract a residence-commuter college in the Hamptons,” as well as “two other sites in Oakdale,” which are “considered geographically favorable for a four-year liberal arts college in Suffolk County.”²⁰

Walter Conlon advocated Sayville as the most favorable site for Adelphi Suffolk College when he addressed a meeting of the Committee on Higher Education in Suffolk County on May 18, 1958 in Bay Shore. Conlon discounted the Sagtikos Manor estate as “too close to Adelphi’s Garden City campus.” Chester R. Blakelock, the secretary of the Long Island State Park Commission, felt that an Adelphi-Suffolk campus in Southampton would be too remote from western Suffolk where most potential students lived. Conlon used maps and population surveys to “show that the Sayville-Oakdale section will soon be in the center of the greatest need as far as higher education is concerned.” The Sayville-Oakdale proponents considered two sites in Oakdale, which they were evaluating for Adelphi. One was thought to be “100 acres of undeveloped property which may be available to the college at no cost.” The other was described as a site “in which Adelphi officials have shown a keen interest independent of local civic groups.”²¹

Adelphi formed a Committee on Higher Education in Suffolk County, chaired by Leon A. (Jake) Swirbul, the president of Grumman Aircraft Engineering Corp. in Bethpage, and an Adelphi trustee, to energize the Suffolk site selection process. Stuart Gracey (Mount Sinai) and George Crouse (Shoreham), the originators of the drive to bring Adelphi to Suffolk, were also members of the committee, as was H.V. Kaltenborn, the famous radio news broadcaster, who lived in Old Field. Several prominent South Fork civic and social leaders, including Angier Biddle Duke (Southampton), Charles Videla (Bridgehampton), president of the South Fork Association, and Southampton mayor Harold Dufrane, also served on this committee. Dr. Eddy stated that “The hour of decision is approaching in connection with the (search) process,” and indicated that Adelphi’s trustees would be choosing a site for its Suffolk division by June 4, 1958.²²

Joseph Jahn, the perceptive editor of the *Suffolk County News*, sensed that Adelphi’s trustees were not going to choose the Sayville-Oakdale area for its permanent campus in Suffolk. Jahn had graduated from Sayville High School in 1931 and had been employed as a sports writer for the *Brooklyn Eagle* before becoming a reporter for the *Suffolk County News* in 1938. He advised Sayville residents that if Adelphi was “lured by Southampton’s pledge of substantial funds” they still should be proud of “finding the liberal arts college temporary quarters in Sayville,” and for having worked hard “for months to locate a permanent campus in this immediate vicinity.” Jahn expressed disappointment that “Too many of

the remaining acres of undeveloped land are in the hands of speculators or housing developers who have no interest in the community beyond their bank accounts.” Jahn urged the Suffolk County Board of Supervisors to speed up their efforts to create a community college because “there still is a crying need for a liberal art’s college in Western Suffolk.” “The money and a fair share of the need may exist in the east end, but the crying need from a population point of view is here.”²³

Those who had worked to establish Adelphi Suffolk College in the Sayville-Oakdale area were dealt a serious setback on June 4, 1958 when James A. Linnen, the publisher of *Time* magazine and the chairman of the Adelphi College Board of Trustees, announced that Adelphi had chosen for its branch college in Suffolk the 100 acre estate of Mrs. Hugh Chisholm, Jr., with its sixty room Georgian-Colonial style manor house, “Montrose.” Adelphi chose Southampton because “the population trend is in the eastern part of Long Island and the residents of Southampton showed the most organized interest in helping to establish the college.”²⁴ William B. Platt spearheaded a citizens’ committee in Southampton, which “agreed to acquire the (Chisholm) property and organize a fund drive during the coming year to start construction of the first buildings by the fall of 1959.” Adelphi said it would erect a classroom building, a gymnasium/auditorium, and a man’s dormitory before full time studies for a freshman class of 100 students started in the fall of 1960. Dr. believed the three story Chisholm Manor house would be used as an administrative building, library and women’s dormitory to create a “similar atmosphere not unlike that proposed by Jefferson” at Monticello. The college forecast that it would have 400 students from all over the United States at its South Fork branch college in Suffolk by the 1964-65 academic year. About 200 Adelphi-Southampton students were expected to live on campus, and another 200 were expected to commute to the campus in Southampton’s Sebonac section. Adelphi’s administrators were confident that the lovely lawns, gardens, tennis courts, swimming pool and “open meadows and heavily wooded areas” of the hilly Chisholm estate overlooking West Neck Harbor, Bullhead Bay, Peconic Bay and the Shinnecock Hills Golf Club would attract many internationally famous East End artists and “enable the college to hold workshops in creative writing, the fine arts and music.”²⁵

Sayville community leaders, perhaps knowing of Adelphi’s experience of elation and disappointment in the Port Jefferson-Stony Brook area, were remarkably restrained and diplomatic in their reactions to Adelphi’s decision. *Suffolk County News* editor Jahn remarked that Adelphi’s decision “is good news for the young people in the sparsely settled reaches of the county but it will do nothing to solve the need for a liberal arts college in heavily populated Western Suffolk.” At a time

when neither the Long Island Expressway, nor the Sunrise Highway extended out to eastern Suffolk County, Jahn correctly observed that "Southampton is too far distant for the vast majority of Suffolk residents to reach as daily commuters," adding that "Young people who live anywhere west of Patchogue will find the Nassau and New York City schools much easier to reach than one some forty miles east of Patchogue." Jahn repeated his request for Suffolk leaders to move quickly to establish a two year Suffolk County Community College in central Suffolk County.²⁶

In June 1958 Adelphi-Garden City announced that its temporary Suffolk branch college would open in Sayville with both undergraduate and graduate courses on September 22. The admission office in Old' 88 opened on August 1st to register students.²⁷ By early July 1958 it was becoming evident that serious problems were developing with Southampton as a long term campus for Adelphi-Suffolk, and that a Sayville-Oakdale site was still being seriously considered. Adelphi was said to be looking to establish "a two year junior college" in Old'88 in Sayville in September 1958. Chiles T. Pollard, the newly elected superintendent of the Sayville school district, informed the Board of Education that "Adelphi is seriously considering the creation of a fully accredited community college in Sayville providing the local board will give assurances that the old junior high school building on Greene Avenue will be available for at least the next several years." Adelphi was considering providing "a general liberal art's curriculum and a school of nursing" in Sayville. Arrangements were made with the Sayville Public Library for Adelphi students to have full use of the Sayville library. Dr. Eddy said that the Sayville Public Library "together with the library planned by the college staff, will offer a wide range of reading and reference material for students."²⁸

Adelphi College offered thirty-three college courses at Old'88 in September 1958 under the direction of the dynamic Dr. Agnes Snyder. Tuition was \$27 per credit. The courses included subjects in: art, biology, business administration, English, education, government, history, nursing, philosophy, psychology, sociology, and speech. Prospective school teachers were offered undergraduate education classes in secondary school curriculum and educational psychology. Graduate education courses for teachers seeking professional advancement included: child guidance, early childhood education, problems of secondary education and number relations in early childhood. Adelphi continued to offer graduate and undergraduate extension courses in Riverhead High School in the fall of 1958 in business administration, English, education, history and speech.²⁹

Dr. Eddy pleasantly surprised Sayville's civic leaders in late July when he informed them that Adelphi's "proposed college in Southampton will require a longer period for development" than expected because Adelphi's Southampton supporters were having the same difficulty raising funds that supporters in the Port Jefferson area had encountered while fruitlessly trying to raise money for an Adelphi-Suffolk campus on Frank Melville's Sunwood estate in Old Field in 1956.³⁰

Dr. Agnes Snyder and Richard F. Clemo, director of Adelphi's Extension Division, interviewed prospective students in Old'88 for four days prior to September 16th to better determine their needs and priorities. Clemo announced in early September that Adelphi's plans for a two year junior college in Sayville "are jelling faster than any other program we have in mind for Suffolk County." This was additional evidence that Adelphi's Southampton initiative was failing. Yet college officials had still not found property large enough for either a permanent senior or junior college in the Sayville-Oakdale area.³¹

Any doubt Adelphi's leadership might have had about the demand for college level studies in Suffolk County were dispelled by the unexpectedly large turn out for Adelphi's Fall 1958 registration at Old '88 in Sayville. No fewer than 828 students registered for evening courses within three hours. The *Suffolk County News* disclosed that "Long lines extended to the sidewalk on Greene Avenue throughout the registration and parking spaces were at a premium for blocks around." One hundred and sixty-three students registered for graduate courses and 676 signed up for undergraduate classes. Richard Clemo hailed the large turn out as "clear evidence of the need for college facilities in Suffolk."³²

Suffolk High School Grads Faced Limited College Opportunities in 1958. The pressing need for post high school educational opportunities for the graduates of high schools in Suffolk County was vividly illustrated in a perceptive study published by the *Suffolk County News*. The study described the percentages of June 1958 graduates of Sayville and Bayport high schools who went on to attend colleges, universities, or "other schools of higher learning." Although Sayville and Bayport were seen as relatively affluent middle class South Shore communities by Long Islanders in the 1950's, only 41 percent of Sayville high school's 131 graduates, and just 33 percent of Bayport's sixty-six graduates, continued their educations in the fall of 1958. Twenty of Sayville's grads were studying on Long Island. Twelve were attending the two year State Agricultural and Technical Institute in East Farmingdale, five were enrolled at Hofstra College in Hempstead, one was studying at the three year old C.W. Post branch of Long Island University in Brookville, and two were at the original campus of what would become the State University at Stony Brook - the State University College at the Coe estate

in Oyster Bay. Ten Sayville graduates were attending State teacher's colleges upstate at Cortland, New Paltz, Oneonta, Plattsburg and Oswego. Twelve others were enrolled off Long Island in nursing schools, a forestry school, a maritime college, and at an agricultural and mechanical college in Texas. Five Sayville grads were attending colleges out of state. Two were attending the University of Maine, one was at the University of Virginia, one was attending Bowling Green State University and another was enrolled at Western Maryland College. The other nineteen were unaccounted for. Three of the Bayport grads were at Farmingdale, six were training for careers as nurses, four were attending State teacher's colleges upstate and "the remainder are attending such diversified schools as Harvard University, Pratt Institute, Ursinus College and Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute etc." The report indicated that many Suffolk County high school graduates wanted to obtain higher educations, but were unable to afford the high costs of residential colleges and were stymied by the fact that Suffolk had no four year institutions of higher learning. The *Suffolk County News* was optimistic that "the percentage of local high school graduates attending college (would) rise sharply next year with the contemplated opening of Adelphi Junior College in Sayville and the possible launching of a two year community college at Sachem." It was believed that the opening of Adelphi-Southampton in 1960, and the State University of New York at Stony Brook in 1962 "would bring the local percentage of high school graduates attending college to a higher figure in the future."³³

Adelphi's fall 1958 evening extension program in Sayville was a great success. Five hundred and thirty-four men and women were studying three evenings a week. Classes started in Old '88 in September with the Sayville junior high students using the building in the daytime and Adelphi students using the classrooms in the late afternoons and evenings. Just after the Thanksgiving break, "both the junior high and the Adelphi classes moved into the new junior high quarters" (adjacent to Old '88 on the west side of Greene Avenue) to permit renovations to Old '88 "for sole occupancy by the college in September 1959." Former Sayville Superintendent of schools, Samuel K. Manson, was chosen to work with Adelphi to facilitate the opening of the junior college in September 1959.³⁴

President Eddy met with Sayville civic groups in December and disclosed that Adelphi was now planning to use Old '88 "for the next five years both for its evening extension, graduate and undergraduate work and for the creation of a permanent two year college by September 1960." Further indicating that the Southampton initiative was dormant, Dr. Eddy revealed that Adelphi "hopes to develop a permanent campus as near as possible to the Sayville area" during the five year Old '88 "is in use." Dr.

Eddy had high praise for the generosity of Sayville's Board of Education for "putting a roof over our head" through the use of the Sayville Junior High School, and the upcoming use of Old '88, saying: "I have never seen a community so interested in acquiring higher educational facilities."³⁵

Adelphi's efforts to extend higher education to Suffolk County received a serious blow in December 1958 when Old '88 was closed by the Sayville School District after Sayville Fire Department inspectors "discovered scores of 'serious violations' that made it 'unsafe for use'" Dr. Eddy feared that "if the hazards required costly changes it might delay plans to open classes in the building." Within two weeks, however, Sayville's fire officials and Dr. Eddy jointly announced that Old '88 "could probably be made fireproof enough to permit the college to use it for classrooms in the spring." Efforts to convert the building were slowed briefly when the structure was damaged on Christmas night 1958 with "one of the worst acts of vandalism in this section in the last five years." Sayville school officials estimated the vandals caused more than \$1,000 in damages.³⁶

Registration for Adelphi's spring 1959 evening extension classes in Sayville took place on January 26th in the Junior High School and classes started on January 28th, 1959. A wide variety of courses were offered including, Accounting, American Government, American History, American Literature, Business Management, Business Law, College Algebra, Comparative Religion, and Creative Art for Teachers. At least 324 students attended Adelphi's evening extension courses at the Sayville Junior High School during the spring of 1959.³⁷

The prospect for a full time day liberal arts college in Sayville was given a tremendous boost on April 1, 1959, when the Adelphi College Board of Trustees "junked plans" to locate a four year liberal arts college in Southampton because a local citizen's committee had failed to purchase the Chisholm estate and was unable to raise the \$1,000,000 in start up funds. Dr. Eddy disclosed that he hadn't "heard from the Southampton group for months." He said Adelphi could not finance the Southampton initiative itself since the college "was now engaged in a two million dollar development program" on the Garden City campus. Adelphi was committed to maintaining its Sayville extension center and would continue to seek a site for a two year junior college in the Sayville-Oakdale area.³⁸

In conclusion, Adelphi College expanded and consolidated its evening extension classes in Sayville in 1958 while continuing to wrestle with the difficulties of locating a suitable site and developing the finances necessary to develop either a two year or four year liberal art's college in Suffolk to provide badly needed higher educational opportunities. Adelphi's efforts to develop a campus in Southampton in 1957 and 1958

failed partly because of fundraising problems, but also because Southampton in 1958 was too far outside the center of Suffolk's population and the corresponding demands for higher education. Just as civic minded individuals in Port Jefferson and Stony Brook encouraged Adelphi to develop college programs there, so civic minded individuals, such as editor Joseph C. Jahn, would see their dream of a full time day liberal art's college in Sayville come true in 1960, when Adelphi Suffolk College began operation as Suffolk's first four year day college.

NOTES

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**BUILDING STUDENT POWER: A HISTORY OF NYPIRG
AT THE STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK AT
STONY BROOK: 1974-1992**

Dan Woulfin

University campuses are often described as incubators for social movements and political ideas. But the history of the New York Public Interest Research Group at Stony Brook University indicates that successful political strategizing on college campuses requires the same coalition building and media campaigns characteristic of the polity at large.

The State University of New York at Stony Brook, informally known during the 1960s as the “Berkeley of the East,” was a relatively new university known for large protests, political radicalism, and a well publicized drug bust.¹ Founded in 1957 on Long Island, New York, SUNY Stony Brook quickly grew into an internationally known research university. But the university’s focus on research and institutional life created a perception that the quality of life for undergraduate students was poor. To improve their conditions Stony Brook student activists banded together through student clubs and organizations. They formed what sociologist Nella van Dyke has called an “activist subculture,” permanent yet fluid social networks that during times of tranquility focus on cultural activities but maintain the potential to organize and stage large scale protests.² One of these organizations at Stony Brook was the nonpartisan, liberal not-for-profit student advocacy and research organization, the New York Public Interest Research Group (NYPIRG). NYPIRG began in 1973, just as many other Public Interest Research Groups (PIRGs) were beginning in other states. The vast majority of these organizations were student directed with Boards of Directors made up of student members from campus chapters and employed a paid staff. The paid staff supervised student project leaders, either volunteers or interns, who worked on PIRG campaigns.

On March 10, 1974, in what turned out to be a defining event in its history, the Student Activities Board of Stony Brook’s Student Polity Association (the Polity) invited Ralph Nader to Stony Brook to give a lecture. Nader had been at the height of his fame and influence as one of the nation’s most powerful consumer advocates, and was heavily involved in promoting the growth of PIRGs. Nader’s message to Stony Brook students was that they should “begin questioning the unquestionable,” and “apply your value systems and skills on a full time

basis, working on major systems of power.” This message apparently resonated with Stony Brook students. Over 1,300 students attended the speech and afterwards 250 students stayed for a meeting with Nader and Donald Ross, the executive director of NYPIRG. Besides the clear interest exhibited by these students, the campus newspaper the *Statesman*, endorsed the formation of a PIRG at Stony Brook.³ The editorial board stated “The establishment of a PIRG unit at Stony Brook could be very effective in accomplishing change on the campus and in our local community.”⁴ With both media and grassroots support, students at Stony Brook quickly began organizing funding from student government to fund a NYPIRG chapter.

Unfortunately, Polity had already reached the SUNY mandated \$70 per student cap for the Student Activity Fee, making a new chapter of NYPIRG difficult to fund. In a meeting with the budding NYPIRG chapter, Ross made it clear that NYPIRG needed \$25,000 to staff an office on Stony Brook campus and begin an official chapter. Ross and 150 student volunteers collected over 4,000 signatures in three days, asking Polity to fund a fully functioning PIRG. Polity then set up a special commission that recommended that Polity support a Stony Brook PIRG (SBPIRG), independent of NYPIRG, by holding a referendum on a \$2 per student check off option that was to be included in every tuition bill and allocate the local chapter \$500 to start an office.⁵ The next step was a campaign for the approval of the check off option. Two editorials, co-written by the student chapter chairperson JoAnne Young, another endorsement by the *Statesman*, and grassroots activism led to the approval of voluntary funding of the PIRG by a vote of 1,522 to 386.⁶

In its first year the chapter accomplished a great deal, including a report on drug prices in different pharmacies and starting regular supermarket surveys comparing food prices in the local area that were published in the *Statesman* (at this time there were no “meal plans” on campus and most students bought food from nearby shops). The next year the chapter organized a Legislative Profile of candidates for the Suffolk County Legislature on issues such as a Farmlands Acquisition Bill and a five cent deposit on glass and plastic bottles. They also advertised for interns and had their first voter registration drive. The PIRG’s active presence over these two years secured an office in the Student Union and a larger budget from Polity. The 1975-1976 Polity budget allocated \$9,000 to SBPIRG.⁷ With this support, SBPIRG changed its name to NYPIRG.

From Outsider to Insider: NYPIRG, Polity and SUNY Central

Now that NYPIRG had some institutional support from Polity, it had to solidify its position at Stony Brook. Despite their successful incarnation, SBPIRG was stopped from fulfilling their original goal to become an official chapter of NYPIRG. The *Statesman* reported in November 1975 that Stony Brook President John Toll had sent a memo to Stony Brook Vice-President for Student Affairs Elizabeth Wadsworth stating "we cannot use student activities fees for the normal PIRG where the control of funds passes from the campus to an outside group which is not directly working on campus concerns." Wadsworth and Lou Bauer, Stony Brook Union Director, impounded the portion of SBPIRG's budget that was earmarked to pay dues to the statewide NYPIRG organization. Dealing with the question of Student Activity Fee dollars going off campus was a problem that NYPIRG faced throughout the state and usually solved by a contract between NYPIRG and the student government.⁸ The chapter would face other challenges as it worked to gain the resources to support an official NYPIRG chapter.

After the 1975-1976 school year the NYPIRG chapter at Stony Brook became less active. Although they continued to receive a budget from Polity, NYPIRG at Stony Brook did not receive much recognition for its projects in the *Statesman*, with the notable exception of a survey of Suffolk County residents' attitudes about nuclear power in 1977, an era marked by the struggle over the Long Island Lighting Company's proposal to operate a nuclear reactor at Shoreham. Rather, their presence in the campus newspaper was mainly limited to advertisements.⁹ It was during this time that NYPIRG activists negotiated with university administration and Polity to hold a referendum. The success of this referendum would allocate the necessary funds from the Student Activity Fee for an official NYPIRG chapter and Project Coordinator on campus.¹⁰

Starting in 1979, NYPIRG at Stony Brook became active on campus again. The organization sponsored Sun Day with the student group Environmental Action, held teach-ins on nuclear energy and alternative power, and participated in the fall semester Student Activities Fair.¹¹ NYPIRG again requested the resources needed for an official chapter in the spring semester of 1979, \$22,404 from Polity's Budget. They received \$5,000. But unlike previous years NYPIRG was able to organize a referendum of the student body that would designate the necessary amount to fund a chapter, \$1.50 from of each student's Student Activity Fee.¹² The referendum occurred on October 16, 1979. Also on the ballot was a referendum allocating \$5.50 to the intercollegiate athletic program and a Student Activity Fee increase of

ten dollars to cover the new budget lines.¹³ The referendum was a success because NYPIRG actively created alliances with other groups on campus and used grassroots tactics to directly appeal to the student body.

NYPIRG's connections to the campus network prior to the referendum were broad in character. The group shared an office with Environmental Action and Volunteers Involved Together in Action and Life. NYPIRG student activists also participated in an event that changed the culture of student life at Stony Brook. On October 3rd 1979 members of NYPIRG, the Gay Student Union, the Stony Brook Women's Center, Black Students United, the Marxist organization the Red Balloon, and discouraged *Statesman* editors and writers participated in a sit in at the *Statesman*'s office. They published a mock newsletter of the *Statesman* called *The Statesperson* and "argued that *Statesman* is both sexist and racist." This event led to the establishment of an alternative newspaper on campus, the *Stony Brook Press*.¹⁴ At least one of the groups involved in the sit in, Black Students United, publicly supported the referendum.¹⁵ In addition, because there were two referendums connected with an increase in the Student Activity Fee, NYPIRG was working parallel with the intercollegiate athletic program.

Besides forming alliances with other clubs on campus, NYPIRG members also sought to garner grassroots support by actively going door to door in the dorms to talk to students about the referendum. Jim Conte and Paul Diamond vocalized NYPIRG's message in a viewpoint in the *Statesman*. In it, these two men gave a history of the organization, emphasized its ties to Ralph Nader, internship opportunities in Albany, and current projects including fighting water pollution and supporting legislation to create a bottle return deposit. Their main argument for students to vote yes was:

NYPIRG develops political skills that no textbook can give you. No book can tell you what to do to convince a legislator that the Truth-in-Testing Bill, which opened up the testing industry to public scrutiny, is an important step forward. What text ever taught you how to organize a major Anti-Nuke rally, along the lines of those held on May 6 and September 23?¹⁶

This focus on NYPIRG as a teacher of political skills closely tracked the arguments put forth by SBPIRG in 1974. While speaking to other

students in the dormitories NYPIRG activists repeated this general call to the student body.

The results of that referendum will never be known. A candidate for the Polity Judiciary, Charlie Jordan, and a member of the Stony Brook Council and Polity Treasurer, Larry Siegel, successfully challenged the legality of the referendum arguing that the ballot was misleading and invalidated the vote. NYPIRG opposed this decision and unsuccessfully tried to appeal. Paul Diamond, the author of the pro-NYPIRG editorial, viewed the judicial action as part of an anti-democratic move by those in power. He stated "People are settling their differences with election night antics. They completely try to invalidate student's views with technicalities and antics." A second NYPIRG and intercollegiate athletic program referendums with a different ballot occurred on November 7th and passed 887 to 326 and 861 to 348, respectively.¹⁷

Even after the victory NYPIRG's budget was again cut. In the 1980 fall semester Siegel withheld \$3,000 dollars from NYPIRG's allotment, claiming that the increase from \$5,000 to \$24,480 was sufficient and that the previous referendum was not binding. The *Statesman* saw this action as a bad precedent, stating "While espousing the virtues of democracy and legal frameworks, the Council, in depriving NYPIRG of its money, has proven itself to be both isolationist and hypocritical in its actions. Rash, thoughtless and unrepresentative decisions have no place in student government or any system, for that matter, which boasts principles."¹⁸ The money was restored, but NYPIRG was denied the free advertising space in the *Statesman* (which they had used for the previous five years) and the *Stony Brook Press* by the Polity Treasurer. He argued that since NYPIRG was under contract with the student government, free advertising was an increase in their budget.¹⁹

These debates over the referendum were representative of the changes in the campus network as Polity and NYPIRG developed an administrative and economic relationship. But an exposé in the *Stony Brook Press* added another element, SUNY Central. Coming out of a statewide meeting of administrators on NYPIRG in Albany, SUNY Central's Associate Counsel Nancy Harrigan wrote a memo on August 20, 1980 that dealt with campuses' relationships with NYPIRG. It offered suggestions that would weaken NYPIRG including writing individual contracts with NYPIRG chapters, student government approval of NYPIRG projects, and discouraging advance payments. This plan would have limited the organization's influence and crippled their ability to work on statewide issues. Since Vice President of Student Affairs Wadsworth attended the statewide administrative

meeting campus administrators were also concerned with NYPIRG's budget.²⁰

By its second referendum in 1981, NYPIRG still faced bureaucratic opposition. During this referendum NYPIRG and the intercollegiate athletics teams ran two referenda that would increase the Student Activity Fee by \$5.50 per student (NYPIRG's increase was \$2.10 and the sports referenda was \$3.40). The *Statesman* officially endorsed NYPIRG and the athletics teams.²¹ This time two students, G. Brian Hutchinson and Mike Kornfeid (who won a commuter seat in the Polity Senate) filed the complaint in Polity Judiciary. Kornfeid stated the complaint was based on how "the voting students were unjustly deprived of their right to have all views expressed regarding the issues involved" because of "the lack of adequate notification of these referenda deprived students of their opportunity to hear both sides of the issue, and made intelligent voting virtually impossible," voiding the referendums. Again, there was a second referendum and both referendums passed. NYPIRG won its referendum 1,683 to 740.²²

This victory solidified NYPIRG's position in the campus network. It was the last public conflict NYPIRG had in Student Judiciary over their referendums. NYPIRG was successful because it had gained the support of the student body, campus government, and media. Also, faith in Polity or the *Statesman's* ability to represent students was fading, leaving a space open for an organization like NYPIRG to enter. Some campus observers viewed Polity as "tyrannical," while some campus groups considered the *Statesman* racist and sexist. Both ignored the increasing power of university administration.²³ This opened a space for other organizations to enter campus politics, including NYPIRG, the *Stony Brook Press*, and the Student Association of the State University (SASU), a New York State-wide student government and lobbying organization, which changed the culture of Stony Brook student life in the 1980s.

On Campus: Constructing a New Kind of Student

NYPIRG depended on their projects to build support among the student body and surrounding community. These projects embedded NYPIRG into the social infrastructure of Stony Brook at the grassroots level. As an organization that sought to empower students on the political stage NYPIRG used many techniques for their campaigns. They held teach-ins, rallies, went door to door in dormitories, and handed out pamphlets on campus. NYPIRG advertised their internships in student newspapers and on the walls of the Stony Brook campus. Finally, they contacted faculty and spoke in their classes to try to get students involved.²⁴ For the general community the chapter also began and staffed the Small

Actions Claims Court Action Center and the Fuel Buyers Cooperative in 1981 and 1982.²⁵

Between 1979 and 1992 NYPIRG supplied the infrastructure for activists to change the way Stony Brook students acted as consumers, as voters, and as inhabitants of the campus. NYPIRG's primary campaign through the 1980s was gaining students the right to register to vote on campus. The chapter also seriously affected the way students at SUNY Stony Brook consumed by working on the passage of the 1981 "Bottle Bill" in Suffolk County, the first five cent refundable bottle deposit law in New York State. Finally, the Stony Brook NYPIRG chapter's environmental campaign played a key role in cleaning up of toxic substances from the Javits Lecture Center after a fire in between 1986-1988. In addition, NYPIRG has also worked on women's issues, peace and nuclear disarmament, student rights, anti-tuition hike campaigns, environmental issues, and banning food irradiation.²⁶

Allowing students to register to vote on campus was not a minor matter. Joel Rosenthal, Distinguished Professor of History at Stony Brook, remembered that "They [Students] were confronted with a series of obstacles reminiscent of the Old South before the Civil Rights movement, and here the issue centered around their identity as local residents."²⁷ The battle began in 1971 when the twenty-sixth Amendment to the Constitution had lowered the voting age to eighteen. Together with Polity, NYPIRG had been heavily involved in voter registration drives to register students from their parents' homes in the 1970s. SUNY Stony Brook students had the potential of changing the course of local, statewide, and national elections if they could register from campus. Because of this potential local residents and elected officials were reported by the *Stony Brook Press* in 1981 as being hostile or extremely cautious in allowing students to be allowed to register from campus.²⁸ NYPIRG worked on this student voting rights campaign during the 1980s with Polity and SASU creating one political unit.

The Stony Brook student voting rights campaign needed to work on both statewide and local fronts. NYPIRG's statewide organization was already involved in the courts. SASU, NYPIRG, and Albany students had filed a suit against the local Board of Elections and won in 1980, gaining students the right to vote from their dorms in Albany County. Unfortunately, this precedent did not allow other suits to be filed in time to register for Election Day in other counties. A suit brought by four Stony Brook students succeeded the next month, the day after Election Day, earning them the right to vote from their dormitories. NYPIRG continued seeking out students denied the right to vote at the polls.²⁹ Literally months after NYPIRG at Stony Brook

gained the resources for an official chapter, a critical right for students in New York State had been won. But the battle was not over. Local election boards had to approve and implement local measures to allow students to vote. In addition, students were in many cases required to fill out a questionnaire before being able to vote from campus, despite the law that stated that someone only had to be living at a residence for thirty days in order to register. NYPIRG and SASU filed suit statewide to gain students across New York State the right to vote in 1981. The suit itself was not rushed, NYPIRG lawyer Lou Oliver stated “We’re not cutting corners. Instead of going for a quick decision we are going to win.”³⁰

As this suit traveled through the courts, NYPIRG sought to register students on campus at their home address. The next year, 1982, NYPIRG and Polity started the Register on Campus campaign, which also included getting SUNY Stony Brook to cancel classes on Election Day so local students could vote. Suffolk County residents, who made up a large number of Stony Brook students, were not allowed absentee ballots because they were still residing in the county. The campaign was a partial success. Stony Brook refused to cancel classes but 1,200 students were registered. The next year NYPIRG continued to register people on campus to vote at their home address.³¹

While this was going on, NYPIRG and several other organizations successfully wrote reports and lobbied the Suffolk County Legislature to pass the Beverage Container Control Law (the Bottle Bill) in 1981. The bill meant that “All carbonated soft drinks, beer, malt beverages, mineral waters and soda waters sold in cans, glass bottles, plastic containers or coated papers” not sold in bars and restaurants required a five cent deposit, claimable when the bottles were returned for recycling. County Executive Peter Cohalan commended NYPIRG, giving Project Coordinator James Leotta the pen he used to sign the bill.³² The bill faced serious opposition but finally went into effect in 1983. On campus vending machine prices rose and campus bars and food cooperatives started serving the beverages covered under the law in cups. Within the next month, the Faculty Student Association and the vending company opened a redemption center in the Student Union. This local victory by Stony Brook students changed the way Suffolk County residents consumed their beverages, encouraged recycling, and reduced litter. It was one of the first steps in a statewide battle to get a five cent deposit on all soft drinks and alcoholic beverages in which NYPIRG activists at Stony Brook were active, staging a Bottle Walk in early 1982.³³

NYPIRG continued its voter registration campaign, registering students in 1984. To coordinate the campaign, NYPIRG organized its

volunteers into five committees, a Community Committee that canvassed low turnout communities, a Public Outreach Committee that went to classrooms and wrote letters, a Dormitory Committee that registered students in the dormitories, a Tabling Committee that registered people in the Student Union, and a National Days Committee that participated in the final days of election registration. NYPIRG also confronted the Suffolk County Board of Elections in their governmental office. The legal battle continued and a federal judge declared the section of the New York State constitution that forced students to go to extra lengths when registering on campus was unconstitutional. Unfortunately, the jurisdiction of this court did not include Suffolk County and therefore did not affect Stony Brook students. The County Board of Elections continued to challenge student registration on campus.³⁴

Meanwhile events on campus brought Stony Brook NYPIRG's environmental project into a conflict with University administration. On Friday, September 26, 1986 a fire was set in a janitor's closet of the Javits Lecture Center. A student working for Public Safety stated "Within ten minutes you could not go into the building without respiratory equipment, because of the smoke."³⁵ Maintenance teams supposedly cleaned up and aired out the building over the weekend and classes were scheduled for the following Monday. But students attending classes during the next week complained of lingering smoke, headaches, nausea and coughing. Even though the Director of Environmental Health and Safety recommended that rooms be closed if students were affected, Robert Francis, the Vice President of Campus Operations refused to close the building, stating "the recommendations had been considered, but were deemed unnecessary."³⁶

Two students, Stephanie Good, an older returning student, and chemistry student David DeLucia, brought their concerns about the safety of Javits to NYPIRG Project coordinator Richard Drury. The next month an open forum consisting of DeLucia, Drury, Dr. Theodore Goldfab of the Chemistry Department, Chris Vestuto, President of the Graduate Student Organization, and Vice President for Student Affairs Robert Francis debated the harmful effects of the fumes. Francis and DeLucia had a long debate about the veracity of the administration's tests. During this debate, Polity President Marc Gunning announced a student boycott on Javits classes.³⁷ This was to be the beginning of a two-year conflict between students and the administration with NYPIRG in the middle.

Two sets of samples set up two different analyses of the toxicity of the fumes and debris of the Javits fire. The administration's tests consistently argued that the lecture center was safe and free from toxic

elements, while tests by NYPIRG and campus Environmental Health and Safety found asbestos and dioxins in the ventilation system. University President John Marburger accused NYPIRG of being “alarmist and highly irresponsible.” He blamed them of fostering hysteria by placing posters and graffiti on the lecture center warning of possible dangers. Because of campus outcry, Marburger set up an ad hoc committee that recommended closing the lecture center. The recommendations were followed and Francis resigned. Javits Lecture Center reopened in the spring semester of 1988 despite the lack of a final report.³⁸ NYPIRG played a key role during this campaign, working with students for a safe learning environment. But, as Stephanie Good, one of the main students concerned with this issue pointed out “this was not a NYPIRG” issue, it was the issue of every person who had to enter the Javits Lecture Center without knowing it was safe.”³⁹

NYPIRG’s voter registration campaign finally saw some real success during the Javits Lecture Center controversy. In the fall semester of 1987, the Suffolk County Board of Elections granted students the right to register from their dormitories as long as they proved they lived there with either a dorm contract, a letter from the Residence Hall Association, or a bill to that address. At least one student was elated, writing in to congratulate and thank NYPIRG on the victory.⁴⁰ A *Statesman* editorial commended the decision stated:

A recent decision by the Suffolk County Board of Elections – spurred by the Stony Brook chapter of the New York Public Interest Research Group (NYPIRG) – opens the way for campus residents to vote in the local district. This will benefit residents in two ways: they now have a means to effect local policy that affects their lives, and they can more easily vote in local elections.⁴¹

But the battle was not over. The Board of Elections changed its mind, denying students the right to vote in a presidential primary and then reversed their decision.⁴² These kinds of tactics, combined with students having to take a bus to an off campus polling place, discouraged and confused student voters.

Despite the incomplete nature of the victory, NYPIRG, as a part of the Student Voter Registration Coalition (SVRC), began registering students for the first time from their dormitory addresses. A massive registration drive began, with the goal of convincing the Board of Elections to have a polling place on campus. The Polity coordinator of

the student voter registration drive was Steven Rosenfeld, future Councilman of the Town of Brookhaven. The SVRC was very successful, registering 1,789 students (approximately one quarter of all resident students and one tenth of all undergraduates). Students were then bussed to the nearest polling place. Stony Brook students' success in gaining the right to vote locally appeared to be a victory. Students from NYPIRG and other organizations were empowered to be a part of the political process.⁴³

NYPIRG continued its voter registration drives, registering over 1,700 students in 1992, and the *Statesman* continued officially supporting their efforts. Despite the 1987 decision by the Board of Elections that allowed students to vote from their dormitories this was not a complete victory. Local poll watchers challenged over one-hundred Stony Brook students' right to vote in the 1992 election. Polity and NYPIRG continued to work to open an on campus voting site, an event that did not occur until 1997.⁴⁴ Student voting rights was only one area that caused controversy. NYPIRG's active support for student rights, consumer and environmental protection and other campaigns and activities caused individuals and organizations in disagreement with NYPIRG positions to attack the organization on and off Stony Brook's campus chapter through the years.

The Culture Wars Come to Stony Brook

NYPIRG's funding from the Student Activity Fee was the basis of the organization's strength and therefore had always been the target of attack by critics both on and off campus. These attacks in the 1980s and early 1990s could have been disastrous for NYPIRG because without that funding staff, including the Project Coordinators that organized NYPIRG campuses, experts on specific issues and even the rent and phone bills, could not be paid. Unfortunately for NYPIRG, it entered SUNY Stony Brook during a period of deepened polarization between an increasingly radical left and a resurgent political right, an era sometimes referred to as the "culture wars."⁴⁵ During the Ronald Reagan and George H. W. Bush presidencies PIRGs and other organizations faced legal attacks and public criticism on both national and local levels by a newly empowered conservative movement around the United States.

On college campuses this attack was focused on the Mandatory Student Activity Fee. This form of funding for political organizations was a controversial topic. Since the 1970s, the mandatory fee system was attacked by students who did not want their money going to causes with which they disagreed.⁴⁶ Ralph Nader, the father figure of the PIRGs, exacerbated the conflict by launching a publicity campaign

against Ronald Reagan, when he became United States President in 1981. At that time Nader labeled the president his “next Corvair,” a reference to the car that Nader exposed as being the most unsafe vehicle in America in 1965.⁴⁷ Because of Nader’s opposition to Reagan and the PIRGs’ anti-corporate focus, those most in opposition to NYPIRG positions, politically conservative individuals and organizations, focused on weakening Nader influenced organizations on campus, including NYPIRG.

This attack was nationally coordinated by two organizations, the Young Americans for Freedom and the College Republicans. The College Republican National Committee sent out a fifty page packet including sample anti-PIRG fliers, lobbying letters and strategy manuals with guidelines to set up a “PIRG-free Zone Program.” A letter signed by Steve Baldwin, the College Republicans’ national projects director says: “It’s time to quit sitting back and watching the Left laugh at us. It’s time to fight back.”⁴⁸ The political battle between the PIRGs and conservative campus organizations was discursively defined on the national stage as a battle between the left and right before it even began.⁴⁹ For NYPIRG this battle took the form of a class action suit. Students at SUNY Albany sued NYPIRG and the SUNY Trustees. The students who brought the lawsuit and their supporters focused on NYPIRG’s issues, labeling them liberal, and its centralization of funds. They argued that Student Activity Fee money should not be going to groups like NYPIRG.⁵⁰ But as the focus became more local, NYPIRG at Stony Brook was able to withstand the changing political environment because they were embedded within the campus political and social network through their campaigns and activities. Critics had not yet entered the campus network.

Those who considered themselves conservative activists at SUNY Stony Brook positioned themselves as outsiders. Structurally they were just entering the campus network, basically in a similar position as NYPIRG had been in the 1970s. But unlike NYPIRG, they chose not to embed themselves into the social network of the campus or seek to build grassroots support. Instead, they defined themselves against what they called the “liberal college student.” The “new conservative” student was going to attempt to redefine student identity. One conservative specifically stated,

A good number of us are Yuppies but let me remind you that Reagan won in almost every category and a good number of us are university students as well. It becomes obvious that the new conservative (much like the old) is not a loud group and rarely do we

express our opinions publicly. In fact I wrote this because I want everyone to know that we are out here, we are strong, and we are tired of professed liberals writing crap viewpoints in the *Statesman*.⁵¹

The condemnation of the *Statesman*, the mainstream newspaper of Stony Brook, as “liberal,” marked a serious separation between the campus network and the new conservatives on campus. As a part of that network, NYPIRG came under fire by members of the College Republicans as “partisan,” along with other clubs like Hands Off Latin America (HOLA).⁵² NYPIRG, however, was not the only target of conservative ire at Stony Brook during the 1980s. The campus saw several student mobilizations during this time period, including an anti-apartheid divestment movement (concentrating on forcing SUNY to sell any investments in South Africa) and an active unionization movement by graduate students, including the very successful and public Tent City protest.

These attacks and conflicts by conservatives did change the campus network of Stony Brook. Although conservatives defined themselves against this network, groups like the College Republicans subtly changed the climate of student politics. In 1990, the *Statesman* editors broke from over two decades of public support and purposely painted NYPIRG in a bad light. The *Statesman*, NYPIRG, the ice hockey club and six other organizations were putting funding referendums to the student body. The *Statesman* editorial attacked both the ice hockey club and NYPIRG. It stated, “For all we know (and the active member count supports this), only a small minority of students fully support NYPIRG’s causes. Again, this is an outrageous amount of money for us students to pay, given that most of us do not use NYPIRG’s services.” This attack elicited five responses by students, NYPIRG staff and alumni (including 1980s student voting rights advocate Steven Rosenfeld) supporting NYPIRG and heavily critical of the *Statesman*. All nine of the referendums passed. NYPIRG won its referendum 2,446 to 589, proving that the majority of the student body did support the organization.⁵³

NYPIRG’s 1992 victory in *Carroll v. Blinken*, the suit brought about by SUNY Albany students, resulted in a new campus crisis.⁵⁴ According to the judge’s decision, NYPIRG could only claim those who wished to be members as members and mandated that allocations collected at SUNY Albany were spent on that campus. This loss provoked Ron Nehring, Polity Senator and President of the College Republicans and Polity Senator Richard Cole to start a debate about NYPIRG’s funding in the Polity Senate. As political conservatives and

commuters, both students had little investment in the campus network. They questioned if NYPIRG spent the money it got from the Student Activity Fee at Stony Brook. NYPIRG and its Executive Director Jay Halfon responded showing that NYPIRG spent more than the allocated budget and that its off campus activities furthered the educational mission of the university.⁵⁵

This local culture war was ultimately decided through an election and a referendum. Cole ran for President of Polity. The *Statesman* description of Cole was not positive and focused on his chosen outsider status in the Stony Brook network and his opposition to NYPIRG and its allies. The *Statesman* editorial stated:

Cole is a loose cannon. He has powerful ideas, but unfortunately does not know which direction he should fire. He repeatedly has alienated students and administrators who have tried to work with him. As president and *the* student spokesman, this quality could prove disastrous.

We are also very much against his plan to cut funding of NYPIRG, SASU, USSA and other lobbying groups. Lobbying groups comprised of millions carry much more weight than a lobbying group of people appointed through Polity, which could not handle those groups workloads.⁵⁶

This position supported NYPIRG's vision of politically empowered students through its endorsement of NYPIRG and other groups as lobbying organizations. In a three person race, Cole lost the election by a large margin. He only garnered 16 percent, or 328 votes, in an election with 2,074 students voting.⁵⁷

NYPIRG also faced two referendums that fall. One was the referendum for the mandatory Student Activity Fee and the other a referendum reaffirming NYPIRG funding. Cole remained vocal with his election as the President of the Commuter Student Association and again actively opposed the mandatory Student Activity Fee stating, "Eighty percent of students aren't involved in clubs. These groups can exist without the fee by charging for membership."⁵⁸ NYPIRG conducted an extremely strong campaign with advertisements announcing thirty-four organizations and fifty-four Stony Brook professors endorsing the organization. The president of Polity and the *Statesman* also endorsed NYPIRG. In the end, NYPIRG won 1,768 to 418 and the mandatory student activity fee was upheld 1,657 to 645.

Cole left student politics soon after.⁵⁹ NYPIRG proved again that the student body supported the organization's role in Stony Brook's student life.

Conclusion: Understanding Student Life at Stony Brook

Student life at Stony Brook can be understood as both a microcosm of broader politics and as a local history of the largest public institution of higher learning on Long Island. NYPIRG's experiences represent shifting alliances formed around student government, student media, and local incarnations of 1960s and 1970s social movements like environmentalism, gay and lesbian rights, peace, and identity politics. The eventual backlash against the new social movements started what James Hunter has labeled the culture wars, when well organized conservative groups challenged activist, left wing groups during the Reagan and first Bush presidencies. On campus, numerically small groups of conservative activists challenged the existing national academic establishment over topics such as racial preferences, South African divestment, and Cold War foreign policy. Changes in the student life at SUNY Stony Brook can serve as a microcosm of the larger culture wars of the 1980s, with active organizations like NYPIRG, Polity, student media, and the College Republicans in the center.⁶⁰

On a local level, NYPIRG's story illuminates the inner workings of student life at Stony Brook. Student life is best understood as a network of clubs, student officials, administrators and other organizations that interact on a constant basis. NYPIRG was able to become a node in this network because it built coalitions with other groups and individuals and reinforced its position with grassroots activism and political successes. When the chapter came under attack, especially by the College Republicans during the 1980s and 1990s, this network protected the campus chapter. At the same time the College Republicans and their spokespeople's refusal to work within a coalition environment doomed them to be marginalized on campus. Social networking was the most important factor in building a successful student movement. Although not everyone at Stony Brook supported or was active in NYPIRG, the continued referendum victories through the years show the student body recognized NYPIRG as a fundamental part of the campus.

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EARLY DISASTER MITIGATION POLICY ON LONG ISLAND'S SOUTH SHORE

Jayme Breschard

Long Island constitutes the largest island contiguous to the continental United States. As such, it faces the constant threat of flooding and coastal zone damage from Atlantic storm events. Jayme Breschard discusses the history of the region's efforts to combat this ominous threat.

The devastating storm surges of Hurricane Katrina and the ongoing recovery costs that have stretched into billions of dollars has demonstrated very clearly the dangers of living in vulnerable coastal areas, especially to the 2.75 million residents that call Long Island "home."¹ Nearly seventy years ago, the last category 3 hurricane struck Long Island. Hurricane Katrina, which struck several southern states along the Gulf of Mexico in August 2005, has triggered a comparison of coastal hazard mitigation policy on the South Shore of Long Island to that of New Orleans, one of the largest metropolitan regions along the Gulf Coast.

Katrina occurred at a very precarious time in the United States' handling of disasters. The South East Asia tsunami of December 26, 2004 and the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks combined to strengthen the idea of coordinated responses to disasters both natural and manmade. This is at odds with the history of disaster mitigation in the United States. The United States government had not actively participated in disaster mitigation or management until the last half of the twentieth-century. In its early years, the Federal Government's outlook upon natural disasters was shaped by two doctrines: fatalism and *laissez-faire*. Disasters were viewed as unavoidable events, a "manifestation of nature which proceed from natural causes:" their prevention surpassed the power of government.²

Later, assistance was generally authorized by Congress in direct response to a particular storm or series of storms, having little impact beyond the immediate disaster recovery efforts. Not until the Federal Disaster Relief Act of 1950, the nation's first general disaster assistance law, did the Federal Government assume responsibility - albeit vastly limited.

Hurricane Katrina demonstrated the Federal Government's initial role in national disaster policy: chiefly, hard engineering or the "structural response." The City of New Orleans seemed to escape the heavy wind and rain of Hurricane Katrina as the eye of the storm passed within ten to fifteen miles of its coast on the morning of August 29th ,

2005. However, the storm surge from Katrina caused catastrophic damage when levees along three canals were breached.³ As much as 80 percent of the city flooded, with water reaching a depth of 25 feet (7.6 meters) in the hardest hit areas of the Saint Bernard Parish and New Orleans East.⁴

It is important to note that much of the city of New Orleans is located below sea level between the Mississippi River and Lake Pontchartrain. Historically, construction was largely limited to the higher ground along old natural river levees and bayous as a majority of the land was swampy and subject to frequent flooding. A pumping system was introduced early in the twentieth-century, which utilized a series of canals lined by levees and dikes to drain rainwater out of the city and into Lake Pontchartrain. As a result, the lowest areas of the city are also the areas developed more recently. Although the construction of levees along the Mississippi River began soon after the city was founded, the more extensive river levees were built as the city grew. The levees overtopped by Hurricane Katrina's storm surge were constructed in the 1960s.⁵

The structural projects that were developed in the early era of limited Federal disaster assistance made possible the development, and even more intensive, use of disaster prone areas. In the absence of local laws and regulations, residents of "protected areas" have and continue to ignore the potential hazards of the environments in which they choose to build their homes.

There is an undeniable relationship between the failing of the New Orleans levee system and the potential problems posed by the structural projects that line the oceanfront of Long Island's South Shore. Both were designed for purposes of navigation and flood control, yet have caused a false sense of security by creating neighborhoods out of flood prone areas. Today, there are approximately 350,000 residents in Nassau County and 460,000 residents in Suffolk County living in the 100-year floodplain - an area where homes are at the heaviest risk of being damaged or destroyed by flooding from a Category 3 hurricane.⁶

Structural Projects on Long Island's South Shore

The first and still dominant approach to coastal disaster mitigation in the United States has been structural, and Long Island has pursued many of these kinds of projects. Beginning in the 1920s and lasting until the 1960s a hodgepodge of public and flood control works were planned and constructed through federal, state, and local partnerships. The projects sought to stabilize the shorelines and to shield people and the built environment from harm. Most proved to be impracticable, economically unfeasible, and environmentally and socially unsound.

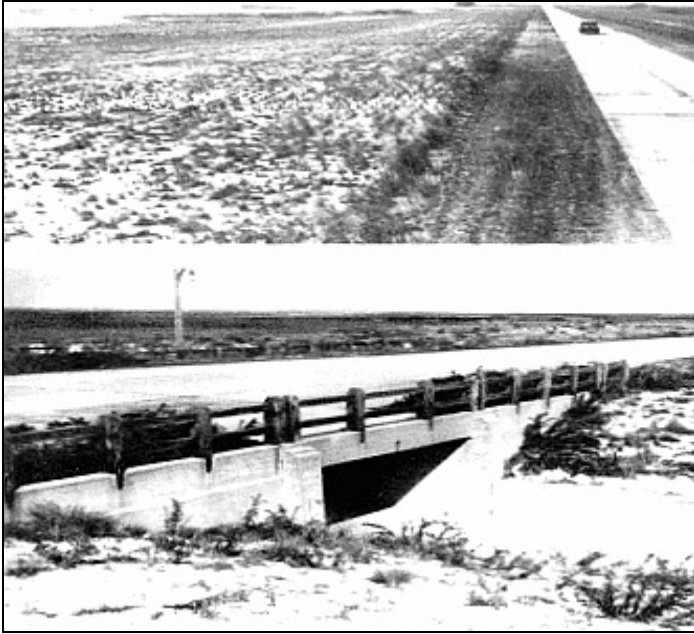
The presence of strong barrier islands has generally been accepted as protection from coastal flooding for Long Island's South Shore businesses, property owners, and government infrastructure. Solutions for reducing flooding on the barrier islands themselves or for when breaches in the islands occurs have been evolving, beginning with the extensive use of seawalls, revetments, groins, jetties, and offshore breakwaters through substantial federal government subsidy. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (COE) has led the way in advocating and implementing "hard" structural solutions, and are the nation's coastal protection experts since the 1930s.⁷

New York State has also long been involved with the structural stabilization and protection of Long Island's South Shore through erosion control activities and park and parkway construction. Long Island State Park Commissioner Robert Moses was the dominant force in the planning and construction of public works on Long Island and in New York City between the 1920s and the 1960s. Moses embarked on the building of the Oceanview Highway, an ocean parkway that began in Jones Beach and continued east along the shore to Fire Island. The mainland was then connected to Robert Moses State Park on the western end of Fire Island via the Robert Moses Causeway. Although parkway construction ceased at this point, Moses continually advocated a road which would traverse the length of each South Shore barrier beach, connecting Staten Island in New York City to Montauk at the eastern tip of Long Island.⁸

In 1927, title to 3.5 miles of the barrier island between Jones and Fire Island Inlets was conveyed to the Long Island State Park Commission. In 1932, an additional 2.2 miles was similarly ceded to create the Jones Beach State Park. Nearly \$15 million had been expended for the improvements of the oceanfront park since 1927. Only about one-quarter of the area of Jones Beach State Park had been improved by the time of the 1940 report, *Improvement of Jones Inlet*. It noted "room for expansion of the recreational facilities when the need arises."⁹

After the New England Hurricane of 1938 a continuation of the Oceanview Highway was proposed as a storm mitigation measure in a Long Island State Park Commission report to Suffolk County entitled the *Restoration and Protection of Fire Island*. At the time of landfall, the New England Hurricane held the all time record for property damage in the United States - and the world as well.¹⁰ The highly developed residential and commercial land and infrastructure which had begun to take root in the region by the early twentieth-century was the reason that the New England Hurricane had such costly and memorable affects. Settlement patterns changed from low residential and open space to high density residential and commercial development. Increased development

activities and patterns on adjacent and nearby properties during the twentieth-century made the region more vulnerable.¹¹



Oceanview Parkway, Jones Beach Barrier Island, 1938.

Another reason the 1938 Hurricane caused so much damage was, Brookhaven Town Historian Osborn Shaw pointed out, that “people of a few generations ago did not live on the beaches except a very few, who probably resided there only during the fishing or whaling seasons or when engaged in other enterprises.”¹² This statement reflects upon the earlier discussion of New Orleans, as the French Quarter was one of the neighborhoods to remain substantially dry. Like most other parts of the city developed before the late nineteenth-century, the French Quarter was built on natural high ground that predated New Orleans’ levee systems - sitting 5 feet above sea level.¹³ The technical capacity to modify river channels and coastlines has made possible the development of low lying coastal areas possible and attractive.



Air view of Jones Beach State Park, 1940.

Nevertheless, Moses' plan to extend the Oceanview parkway cited the use of hydraulic fill as structural protection to restore, widen, and protect the Fire Island barrier beach. The pumped fill would also serve as a base for a parkway and provide a continuous boat channel from Fire Island Inlet to Southampton. According to New York State Park Commission President Moses, the project was, "bold, comprehensive, large scale planning with the use of natural material" and constituted, "the only successful bulwark against storm and erosion."¹⁴

The cost of the project was estimated at \$9.25 million, with a grant application to the Federal Public Works Administration for \$3.5 million, leaving \$5.75 million to be borne by Suffolk County government. The new parkway on the outer reef would connect with the New York City Parkway system and join the Connecticut and Westchester Parkway systems and the modern highway system of New Jersey so that motorists would be able to conveniently travel "without a traffic light."¹⁵



Example of the hydraulic fill along Oceanview Parkway, Jones Beach Barrier Island, 1938.

In the September 1938 issue of the *Long Island Forum*, Moses' plan "to restore, beautify, and perpetuate Suffolk's ocean front" was quoted in the serial's "The Month in Review" section. The permanent record notes that the "ocean boulevard" would extend from its present position at Oak Beach another forty-three miles east to Southampton, creating three State parks and permanent barriers in the process. The estimated cost, "to be shared by county, state and nation," was \$15 million.¹⁶

Moses' plan was not favored by many local municipalities in Suffolk County. The Southampton Village Board opposed the \$15 million plan, favoring reclamation by the "ancient method of burying tree branches against which the ocean may form its own sand barrier." This plan had a smaller price tag - about \$1 million.¹⁷ A meeting of the Board of the Town of Babylon held October 29, 1938 was called by the Supervisor to discuss the report made by Engineer Andrews to protect Suffolk County ocean beaches. With the issue arising at the Board of Supervisors meeting earlier in the month, the Babylon Town Supervisor wished to have the sentiment of the members of the Town Board. While the majority of the people of the Town of Babylon fully realized the necessity of providing adequate protection for the outer beaches of Suffolk County, they opposed "any plan of parkways, bridges and parks on the beaches."

It was resolved that the Supervisor, “oppose any plan other than one that will provide protection for the outer beaches, without bridges, roads, parkways or parks.”¹⁸



Fire Island Restoration and Protection Project, shown as an important link in the metropolitan parkway system. Source: W. Earle Andrews, *Restoration and Protection of Fire Island*.

Other reports addressed the recent “expensive and elaborate” plan submitted to the Suffolk County Board of Supervisors, declaring it “very doubtful if any work of man, such as the proposed roadway along the Great South Beach, could withstand the destructive force of a raging, pounding sea and storm wave occurring at the same time, without being wholly or partial destroyed.” Some supported the appropriation of a reasonable sum of money to strengthen the beach. With reference to the obliteration of a concrete highway along a three mile strip of land along the coast of Rhode Island by the recent September storm, the County’s plan would “undoubtedly hasten the work of Nature and be as effective in restoring damage done by the hurricane of last September . . . following, in a more thorough way, the example set by the Legislature over a century ago.”¹⁹ These projects assisted “Nature in restoring the damage done to the beach” and “to build up the beach by encouraging blowing sand to collect and build up around snow fences, brush, grass, etc.”²⁰ Referred to as “soft” engineering practices, the beach and other shoreline areas were used as “buffers” between tidal surges and populated areas and are nowadays generally thought to be more effective in blunting and redirecting the force.²¹

Ironically, Robert Moses asserted in his 1938 plan that “the silly temporary, makeshift, haphazard brush and fence work now being done with relief and other forces, where the dunes were wiped out along the ocean front on Fire Island, will not survive the inevitable early spring storms and will indeed, in many cases, be wiped out long before then.”²² Furthermore, he declared that “the County, towns and villages of Suffolk County stand to lose an immense amount of assessed valuation of Fire Island Beach and on the bays and the mainland north of it,” if Ocean Parkway was not extended.²³

Many visitors are likely to form the habit of going elsewhere in summer. Local business people are going to lose an immense amount of trade if the storm damage is not repaired promptly and if a repetition is not prevented. The effect on unemployment will be considerable. The economic structure of the entire County is threatened and the townships on the North Shore will find very soon that they are inextricably involved in the problems of the South Shore. This is no time for sectional bickering.²⁴

Only three months after the proposal was issued, the December 1938 issue of *Long Island Forum* announced that Suffolk County’s Supervisors had voted down the plan (by this time, reduced to \$10 million) in spite of “Uncle Sam” replacing four Coast Guard stations that were destroyed by the hurricane. But the plan was again revived when the “Ash Wednesday Northeaster” struck Fire Island in March 1962. A State-sponsored committee was formed to make suggestions on storm hazard mitigation. Committee member Robert Moses, turning a deaf ear to nonstructural approaches to reducing flood hazards, again offered up his proposal for the Fire Island road (now increased to four lanes).

The Fire Island Erosion Control Commission, a property owner organization established in 1955 after the Fire Island barrier was damaged by a series of coastal storms, led local opposition to the plan. Support for the road was further weakened when research demonstrated that other barrier island roads had been undermined by erosion. When the Fire Island National Seashore was established in June 1963, created partly by reaction to the road, Robert Moses’ building plans along the coastal barrier were put to an end.²⁵

Other structural projects along Long Island’s coastline were more successful. In 1940, a plan for the improvement of Jones Inlet was jointly sponsored by the County of Nassau, the Town of Hempstead, and the State of New York through the Long Island State Park Commission. The

plan provided for a breakwater on the east side of Jones Inlet, a sea wall and jetty on the west side of the inlet, and a twelve foot channel from the Atlantic Ocean.

Stated in the report was the commitment by local interest groups not to exceed \$350,000, or about 50 percent of the cost for the first stage of the work. Initial construction to develop the inlet properly under the plan submitted was estimated to cost approximately \$700,000.

The east jetty at Jones Inlet, which was completed in 1959, was constructed by the Federal government to stabilize the inlet and reduce shoaling in its entrance. Prior to construction of the jetty, the inlet was migrating to the west and was variable in width.

Another shoreline project set out to eliminate the cutting action of the swift tides to the Fire Island Inlet with the construction of two coastal structures at its entrance. The report *Restoration and Protection of Fire Island* pointed out that a new jetty was about to be constructed to stabilize Fire Island Inlet. In his "Letter of Introduction" to Warren Greenhalgh, Chairman of the Board of Supervisors of Suffolk County, Robert Moses said that the present position of the Fire Island Inlet would be fixed by "a long ocean breakwater to be constructed immediately by the Federal government with State and County cooperation."²⁶ The plan to build a jetty was declared to be "pleasant news for all Long Island" when construction costs for the 5,000 foot jetty at Fire Island Inlet were being estimated.²⁷

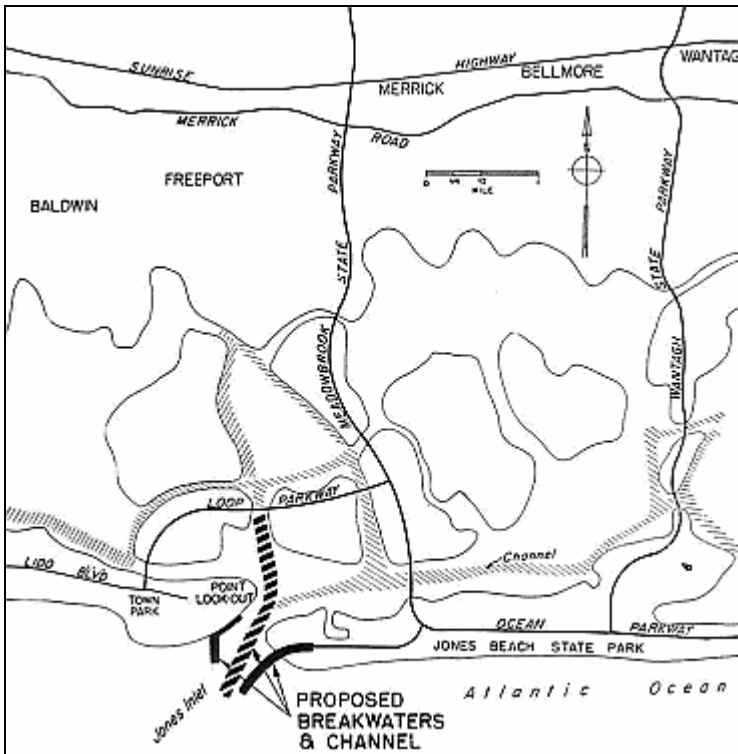
The jetty was eventually constructed at Democrat Point by the COE for \$759,000. Construction of the rubble mound jetty began on May 23, 1939 and was completed on April 15, 1941. The jetty was designed to improve navigation through the Great South Bay, as the September 1938 hurricane "washed the sand dunes of the South Shore into the bay" and had "demonstrated without question that the success of the navigable passage through the Great South Bay easterly to Shinnecock is as fully dependent upon the control of the dunes as it is upon the construction of breakwaters."²⁸



Brush acting as a natural buffer.

Regional Preparedness Programs

Like flood policy, coastal management of the 1960s and early 1970s shifted away from exclusive reliance on shore hardening to “softer” approaches. Floodplain owners and occupants began to assume the costs of coastal hazards and tidal flooding instead of depending upon Federal disaster relief and structural measures. Due in part to the rash of hurricanes in the mid-1960s, Congress passed the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968. The act called for a unified national program for floodplain management and the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP), administered by Department of Housing and Urban Development. Based on voluntary community participation and state enabling legislation, the policy requires flood proofing through local building codes and elevated structures in return for Federally subsidized flood insurance.²⁹

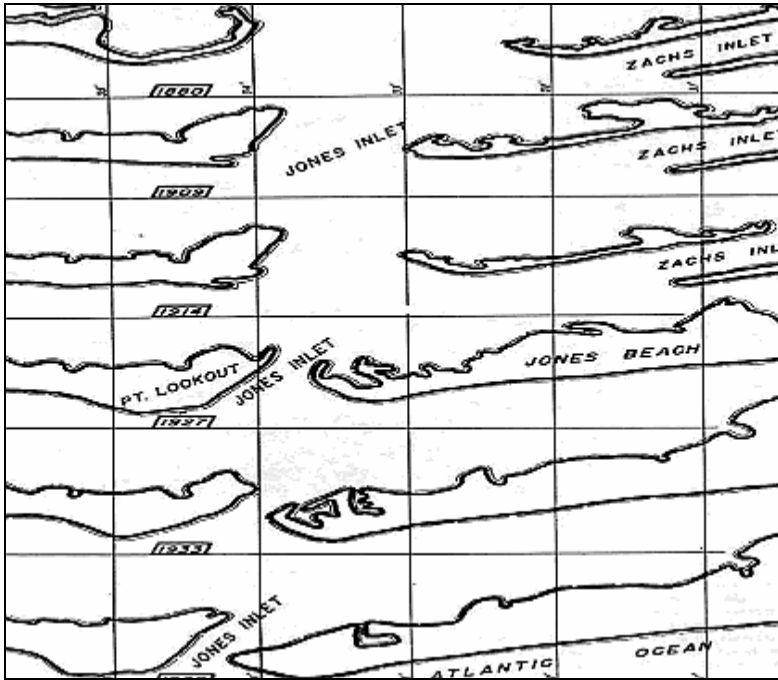


Jones Inlet Project Map. Source: County of Nassau, Town of Hempstead, and Long Island State Park Commission, *Improvement of Jones Inlet*.

Beginning in 1983, with the efforts of the Long Island (formerly Nassau-Suffolk) Regional Planning Board, a quasi-governmental agency established following guidelines set in the Planning and Zoning Laws of New York State (Article 12-B), and the COE, hurricane preparedness was integrated into coastal land use planning. The causes of persistent storm damage to Long Island's South Shore was addressed in three publications: *Hurricane Damage Mitigation Plan for the South Shore of Nassau and Suffolk Counties, New York* (1984), *Proposed Long Island South Shore Hazard Management Plan* (1989), and *Design of a Long Island South Shore Erosion Monitoring Program* (1991).³⁰

In particular, the *Hurricane Damage Mitigation Plan for the South Shore of Nassau and Suffolk Counties*, based upon the concept originally developed by the Nassau-Suffolk Regional Marine Resources Council report, *Guidelines for Long Island Coastal Management*, published in 1973. This report was in turn part of the Council's effort to address recommendations contained in *The Status and Potential of the Marine Environment*, submitted in 1966 by the Nassau-Suffolk Regional Planning Board's Oceanographic Committee. Based on a research program funded by Nassau and Suffolk Counties and by the National Sea Grant program, the report advised that "if Long Island was to maintain its desirability and attractiveness as a place in which to work and live, the trend of estuarine and shoreline deterioration had to be reversed." The *Guidelines for Long Island Coastal Management* was an assessment of the existing knowledge base and outlined research requirements in four major areas of concern: coast stabilization and protection; dredging and dredging spoil disposal; integrated water supply and wastewater disposal; and wetlands management.³¹ The 1984 report, *Hurricane Damage Mitigation Plan for the South Shore of Nassau and Suffolk Counties, New York*, was published to update the former report's guidelines, as necessitated by changes in technology and in development patterns, and to fill identified knowledge gaps. It also arrived on the heels of the March 1984 Northeaster.³² The document served more aptly as a post-disaster report rather than a mitigation plan. It was a timely case study of the current erosion and flood control measures, land use and development patterns, environmental regulations, coordination of Federal policies and evacuation, warning, and public education.³³

The Long Island Regional Planning Board's *Hurricane Damage Mitigation Plan* was broadly based on development and post-storm development within the South Shore's tidal floodplain and emphasized the techniques of floodplain management and strategies to reduce erosion and flood related damage. Less than a year after the report, the South Shore was hit by Hurricane Gloria on September 27, 1985. An estimated



Sixty years of change at the Jones Inlet.

\$530 million in wind and coastal damages occurred in Nassau and Suffolk Counties. Although the plan had yet to be fully implemented, recommendations included phasing out the V-zones (high coastal risk) in the NFIP and amending the NFIP floodplain management criteria to require communities to impose building moratoria in instances of large scale storm damage.³⁴ When Hurricane Hugo slammed into Charleston, South Carolina on September 21, 1989, rendering \$5 billion in damages to shoreline resort development, suburban and urban areas and natural resources, the need for more exclusive management of Long Island's shoreline was clearly evident.³⁵

The need for a coordinated response to protect the thousands of lives and approximately \$10 billion worth of property along Long Island's South Shore to flooding and erosion problems was addressed in 1989 by the *Proposed Long Island South Shore Hazard Management Plan*. The recommendations set forth in the document addressed the long term concerns associated with shoreline stability and flooding problems driven by land use and hazard planning policies. Both this report and the *Design of a Long Island South Shore Erosion Monitoring Program* limit the geographic intent and scope to the South Shore barrier islands and spit

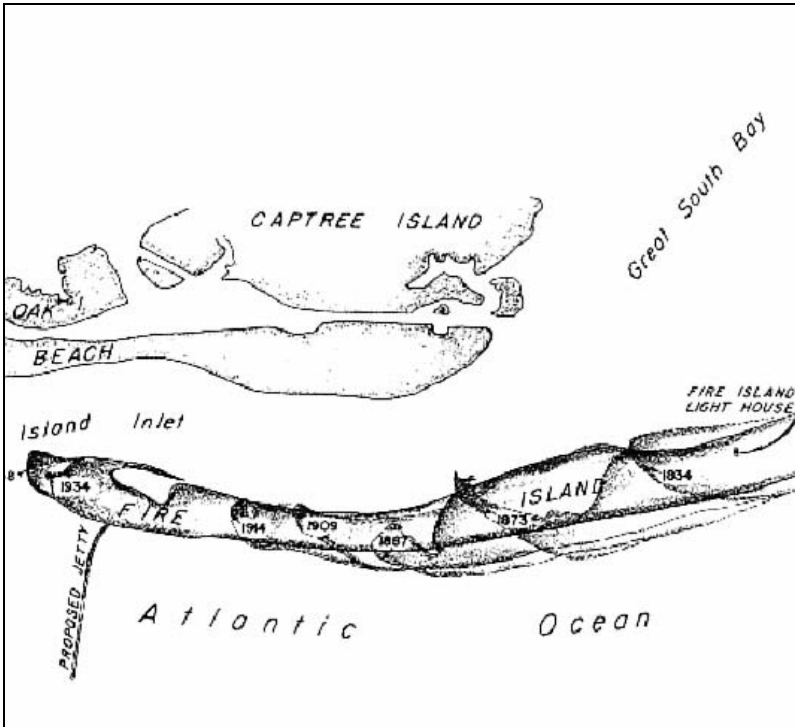
within the six previously mentioned townships in Nassau and Suffolk Counties, in addition to the Atlantic Ocean shoreline; inland to the nearest road, along the headlands section in the Towns of Southampton and East Hampton. “Hard-structural” coastal erosion mitigation measures, to be regulated by government agencies based on a better understanding of coastal processes and shoreline responses, were suggested in the reports as well as a coordinated regional response by Federal, state, and local level interests with funds provided under the Federal Coastal Zone Management Program.³⁶

In the shadow of Hurricane Katrina, Long Island has the potential to become the site of the nation’s costliest natural disaster as a result of development pressure. Coastal areas have been developed unwisely and many low lying coastal areas are now subject to inundation. The shift in population toward coastal areas has exacerbated flooding and erosion conditions by removing wetlands, hardening the shoreline, changing drainage, and altering the natural environment in other ways. Infill development built too close to other structures and the siting of raw development along the shorelines, under the assumption that barrier islands or other land masses afford wave protection, has increased Long Island’s vulnerability to coastal hazards.

The legal and political system has responded erratically in the past. Laws and other actions, such as the authority to build structural projects, came out of post-disaster evaluations, congressional studies, and reports. As a result, Federal disaster assistance at first concentrated on the immediate disaster recovery efforts and only provided limited disaster relief through structural measures such as the breakwaters, groins, and jetties used in the Jones and Fire Island Inlets.

More recently, increasing attention and importance has been given to land use planning and regulation, land acquisition, flood prediction and warning, and flood insurance. *Guidelines for Long Island Coastal Management* was the first regional attempt to lessen the need for coast stabilization measures. This report came just after the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968, the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, and the Flood Disaster Protection Act of 1973. Once national policy recognized the need for nonstructural floodplain management, other measures of regulatory hazard mitigation trickled down to the local level.

There is great similarity between the failure of the artificial levees of New Orleans and the structures constructed on the Atlantic coast of Long Island. One can argue whether these projects have directly, or indirectly, caused a false sense of security and have led to little interest in managing



Proposed jetty at Fire Island Inlet. Source: W. Earle Andrews, *Restoration and Protection of Fire Island*.

flood-prone areas. However, there can be no dispute that the number of residents living along the U.S. Gulf and Atlantic coasts is increasing.³⁷ And as crowding continues to intensify throughout Long Island, preparedness is the principal means for reducing the vulnerability to this region's natural disasters.³⁸

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²⁶ Andrews, 8.

²⁷ "The Month in Review," 4.

²⁸ "Towboat Men Ask Fire Island Study," *The New York Times*, Oct. 1, 1938, 35.

²⁹ Waugh, Jr. and Hy, 85.

³⁰ Platt, 184-186.

³¹ Regional Marine Resources Council, *Guidelines for Long Island Coastal Management* (Hauppauge, New York, 1973), 1.

³² Platt, 175.

³³ Long Island Regional Planning Board, *Hurricane Damage Mitigation Plan for the South Shore of Nassau and Suffolk Counties, New York*, (Hauppauge, New York: Long Island Regional Planning Board), Preface.

³⁴ Forman.

³⁵ Long Island Regional Planning Board, *Proposed Long Island South Shore Management Program* (Hauppauge, New York: Long Island Regional Planning Board, 1989), Preface.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 1-1.

³⁷ James B. Elsner and A. Birol Kara, *Hurricanes of the North Atlantic: Climate and Society* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 379.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, 455.

HUBBARD LATHAM FORDHAM: KEEPING AN EYE ON SAG HARBOR

Stephen Longmire

Recent discoveries shed light on the life of portraitist Hubbard Latham Fordham, and the Long Island village that was the subject of his work.

An unusual painting by Hubbard Latham Fordham (1794-1872) hangs in the kitchen of Joy Lewis, a collector of Sag Harbor art and antiques. The painting is emblematic of Fordham's work, capturing as he so often did the essence of Sag Harbor, the once thriving whaling community of Sag Harbor. The nineteenth-century still life shows a table strewn with shellfish beneath an open window. Just visible in the distance, across a body of water outside the window, is a skyline that remains familiar, though it's long gone. Even in the background, the tall, white wedding cake steeple of the Old Whalers' (First Presbyterian) Church is easily recognizable. Minard Lafever's towering concoction of 1844, nearly 150 feet tall, is said to have been visible to returning mariners rounding Montauk Point, twenty miles away. A lantern that burned up top at night made the church a lighthouse - and made Sag Harbor feel like a cathedral town. The steeple went up like a captain's spyglass, each section pulled up through the one below, so visibility was built into the design. In the painting in Lewis's kitchen, the terra cotta roof of the Methodist church, with its handsome Italianate campanile, is on its right, dating the view to after 1864, when that church was moved to its current location on Madison Street, close to the village center. (Previously, it occupied one of the most visible spots in the village, atop High Street, until it was dwarfed by the Whalers' Church.)

Both church towers toppled in the devastating hurricane of 1938, yet both remain essential to the self-image of this former whaling port, which has been reinvented, first by watchmakers, and now by weekenders, and which celebrates its 300th birthday in 2007.¹ After the storm the Methodists capped their bell tower with a boxy new top, no match for the one they had lost. Efforts to replace Lafever's steeple, Sag Harbor's crown, have ebbed and flowed with local fortunes since it fell. Randolph Croxton, a parishioner and the architect of the ongoing restoration of the Whalers' Church, vows that, someday, they will.

Hubbard Latham Fordham (1794-1872) was Sag Harbor's most famous portrait painter in his lifetime, with studios and commissions in New York City and New England at points in his long career. He is not remembered as a painter of still life or landscapes, except for those in the backgrounds of his portraits of ship captains and other Long Island

gentry. Whales sport outside the windows in his portraits of Captains Mercator Cooper (who made memorable early visits to Japan and Antarctica in the 1840s and '50s) and Henry Green, on display, respectively, at the New Bedford Whaling Museum in Massachusetts and the Suffolk County Historical Society in Riverhead - the latter a recent bequest. Several Fordham portraits can be seen at both the Sag Harbor Whaling and Historical Museum and the village's early Custom House. Another of his ship captains, Jeremiah Hedges, watches over the check out counter at the East Hampton Library, and Fordham's portraits of the Sag Harbor and Brooklyn publisher Alden Spooner and his wife, Mary Ann Wetmore Spooner, occupy proud positions in the library of the Brooklyn Historical Society (formerly the Long Island Historical Society) in Brooklyn Heights. Descriptions of a few historical scenes Fordham painted late in life - with memorable titles like "Triumph for Virtue" and "Toilet of Death" - survive, but, so far, the canvases haven't surfaced. To keep latter day researchers on their toes, the artist seldom signed his work.

The only reason it is known that the painting hanging in Ms. Lewis's kitchen is a Fordham is because James Abbe, from whom Lewis and her late husband Robert bought the painting, told them it was. Mr. Abbe, who ran antique shops in East Hampton and Oyster Bay, was an authority on early Long Island art, but he died in 1999. Good visual records of Sag Harbor from its early days are surprisingly scarce, given the community's wealth in its boom years of whaling, in the 1830s and '40s. The more modest century that followed preserved much of the port's architecture while its populace tended their new factories. But no archive existed in the years when it's whaling captains and capitalists were dying off, so many of its records were scattered. I had been on the lookout for several years, searching out early views to pair up with my own contemporary photographs in a visual history of the village I've prepared for its 300th anniversary, *Keeping Time in Sag Harbor*.² Finding a view by Fordham would be important, but it seemed too good to be true.

The Fordham painting in Ms. Lewis's kitchen could only be conceived from one vantage point, if it is a realistic depiction of Sag Harbor, and the carefully depicted steeples suggest that it is. Judging by the lay of the land and water - the two humps of Shelter Island's Mashomack Point in the middle distance, with a steamboat visible between them, set off against the distant North Haven shore - the view must be from the Cedar Point lighthouse. Given the shape of the shoreline, there could be no other window anywhere nearby. It was Cedar Island, not Cedar Point, before the 1938 hurricane connected the



Cedar Island Lighthouse, Sag Harbor, 1869, Hubbard Latham Fordham. Original in color. Courtesy of Joy Lewis.

shoals that still warns ships off to the mainland of Northwest Harbor. (Before Sag Harbor developed, Northwest was East Hampton's launching point for trade goods, whale oil chief among them. So the water route into Sag Harbor takes one through the early history of the area.) These shallows must have been good shellfishing when the painting was made, as they remain - to a lesser degree - today, the impeccably described clams, crab, mussels, oysters, scallop and whelk strewn across the table attest.

The painting is a wry joke about the self-sufficient lighthouse keeper's diet. Stranded on his tiny island, of course he relied on the surrounding shoals for sustenance. The lobster may have been a gift from a passing bayman, unless the keeper kept a pot within rowing distance. In a further touch of painterly wit, the shellfish feed his eyes as well as his stomach. All of these creatures have prominent eyes, or else they look like eyes themselves. The blue crab and lobster fix us with their bug-like stares. The shy central scallop hides its eyes, like tiny pearls, in the ridges of its shell. Some of the clams and oysters are open. There are no pearls to be seen, only eye shaped markings inside their shells and in the muscles of their flesh. In an even more surreal touch, the whelk has deposited a globular drop of water, the world's most basic lens, on the table at its tip. It retains its perfect shape, a map

of a world covered by water. Together, these creatures help the lonely lighthouse keeper keep an eye on the water at this historic gatehouse to Sag Harbor, the principal port of the East End's South Fork.



Detail Cedar Island Lighthouse, 1866, by Hubbard Latham Fordham. Original in color. Courtesy of Joy Lewis.

Clearly this was a sophisticated painter's view of the port, as seen from the Cedar Island lighthouse sometime after 1864. But I had only James Abbe's word that it was Fordham's view, and the rest of the painter's known works to cast doubt on this theory. In the summer of 2005, however, I was amazed to find Hubbard L. Fordham listed as the lighthouse keeper at Cedar Island in 1849 and 1850, and again from 1862-1869, in Robert Muller's recent history of Long Island lighthouses.³ Although the fact was known (I've since found it on Sag Harbor business directories of the period), it had not made it into any of the few published accounts of the painter's career. Some of these suggest that he stopped painting in his last years because of eye trouble - after a childhood accident, Fordham only had one working eye himself.⁴ Later that summer, Jean Held, who has been reading nineteenth-century copies of Sag Harbor newspapers for her own research, came across mentions of Fordham's time at the lighthouse. Just as storms can release old treasures from the ocean's dunes, time's shifting tides can turn up facts in the historical record, and they often surface all at once.

This places Fordham on Cedar Island during the construction of the current granite lighthouse (which the Long Island Chapter of the U.S. Lighthouse Society is fundraising to restore), in 1868-1869. But Lewis's painting shows the view from the prior wooden lighthouse of 1839, the one Fordham tended. The new lighthouse had four-over-four windows, before they were boarded over (the interior was gutted by arson some years ago). The window in the painting is six-over-six panes, an earlier design.

I had gone to see another painting in Lewis's collection, this one by Fordham's grandson, William Wallace Tooker (1848-1917), who once owned her house. Better known for his research on local Indian culture

than for his youthful artistic efforts, Tooker was studying with his grandfather in 1869, considering an artist's career. Deeming it too uncertain, he went on to run Sag Harbor's pharmacy, in the same Main Street location where it stands today.⁵ Tooker's book, *The Indian Place-Names on Long Island*, appeared in 1911 and remains an essential resource for Long Island historians (in part because it recorded language from colonial deeds later destroyed by fire).

An album of drawings that Tooker made in and around Sag Harbor the year he studied with his grandfather surfaced not long ago in a local attic with family ties to his business partner at the pharmacy. The new lighthouse appears in several views. Clearly it was an important landmark to the young antiquarian.⁶ One drawing, titled "Cedar Island Light House in 1869," shows the new stone structure, still ringed by scaffolding - no windows yet installed - alongside its wooden predecessor, a barn-like building with a large round lamp on top. (According to Muller, the problem with such early lighthouses was that the wooden roofs could not support the heavy lantern towers for long.) It may be the only image of the two structures side by side, since the old one was removed within the year.

Fordham retired from his lighthouse duties in April 1869, returning to his Hampton Street house and studio.⁷ Presumably, Tooker attended his lessons in the village, though he may have rowed out to the lighthouse for the first of them. Fordham evidently went back and forth with some regularity while posted there.

Thanks to Tooker's drawing, it was clear which window the painting in Lewis's kitchen showed. And Muller's research indicates that, for much of the 1860s, this was Fordham's view. Still, one doubt about the painting's attribution lingered in my mind. Clearly, Fordham was at the lighthouse around the time it was made. But, if he was giving lessons to his grandson, could this be the work of another student? Later in 2005, in another private collection in Sag Harbor, I saw a handsome still life of a fish laid out on a table, with this penciled notation on the back of its frame: "painted by Hubbard Fordham, S.H."

There is no window and no view, and none of the symbolic storytelling that makes the painting in Lewis's kitchen so rewarding. There is only the pink scales of the slender, freshly caught fish, still glistening with water. But the brown wooden table or shelf on which it is laid out matches the one under the shellfish in Lewis's still life, as does the palate, and it was clearly painted by the same practiced hand. It seems the portrait painter turned lighthouse keeper enjoyed all his best meals twice!

Another year later, 140 years after it was written, Held found this notice in *The Sag Harbor Express* of June 28, 1866:

Mr. Hubbard L. Fordham has just finished a painting of the village of Sag Harbor as seen from Cedar Island, together with the surroundings and on the shore of the Island a choice specimen of lobsters, crabs, oysters, clams, "scolops," etc. represented. It is a fine painting and does credit to the artist.



Cedar Lighthouse, 1869, by William Wallace Tooker.
Courtesy of Nancy Carlson.

Despite the omission of the window and the suggestion of more than one crab and lobster - easily explained by the failures of a reporter's memory on a walk back to the office - it seems likely that this is the same painting, confirming not only the artist, but the date. The *Express* mentions frequent visits to Fordham's studio in the 1860s, often listing the paintings on display. He was considered a local treasure, and perhaps he lacked commissions, hence his night job across the harbor.

Tooker wondered why his grandfather refused to take credit by signing his work, a deliberate decision. In retrospect, it seems he threw some of his best fish back, so they might be caught again. But how many others have been lost?

Having been Sag Harbor's portraitist in its prime, Fordham was, quite literally, watching over the village in a period of decline. Now that it's a boom town all over again, we're fortunate to have access to his point of view. If the painting in Lewis's kitchen turns shellfish into a wry account of vision, the still life's other compelling visual metaphor is surely the affinity of water and time. The tide licks the shore,

threatening to sink ships, while steeples go up and come down and men gain and lose their sight. Across the shoals of change and time, well-crafted images can serve as beacons. They remind us how communities define themselves over time, and how their landmarks shape our own self-images.

NOTES

¹ The first known usage of the name Sag Harbor appears in the Southampton Town records of 1707. Although the port probably did not have a year-round settlement until the 1730s, it was clearly the strategic center of eastern Long Island by the time of the American Revolution, when it was occupied by the British.

² *Keeping Time in Sag Harbor* will be published in the summer of 2007 by the Center for American Places and distributed by the University of Chicago Press. The Sag Harbor Whaling and Historical Museum, a sponsor of the project, will mount a parallel photographic exhibition throughout the summer of 2007.

³ Robert G. Muller, *Long Island's Lighthouses: Past and Present* (Patchogue, New York: Long Island Chapter, U.S. Lighthouse Society, 2004).

⁴ See the profile of "Hubbard Latham Fordham, Artist" in Dorothy Ingersoll Zaykowski, *Sag Harbor: The Story of an American Beauty* (Sag Harbor, New York: Sag Harbor Historical Society, 1991), 204-05.

⁵ See John C. Huden, "William Wallace Tooker, Algonkinist," *Long Island Forum* (August 1955): 145.

⁶ With the advent of the dry-plate in the 1880s, Tooker became a photographer; he also continued painting sporadically, strictly as an amateur. Several of his photographs of early Sag Harbor buildings appear in my book, cited above, often alongside my contemporary views of the same structures.

⁷ Fordham's house is still on Hampton Street, but across the street from its original location.

THE POSTSUBURBAN DEVELOPMENT OF RIVERHEAD, LONG ISLAND: 1970 - 2000

Eric Fauss

The Nassau-Suffolk region is often referred to as an “old-line suburb,” characterized by dependency on a nearby city, an aging population and infrastructure, and a high cost of living. Few have stopped to consider, however, that parts of Suffolk county, particularly its east end, share many of the same characteristics of newer, faster growing “exurban” regions: housing is cheaper, the economy does not rely heavily on a central business district, and jobs tend to be in the service sector. Eric Fauss explores the Town of Riverhead’s recent growth in terms of its similarities and differences from the rest of the region.

In the years after World War Two, thousands upon thousands of new residents flocked to the mass-produced houses of Levittown and other neighborhoods, transforming Nassau and western Suffolk Counties into one of the most populous postwar suburbs. The rapid development that characterized the postwar years failed to reach the East End until the 1970s, when a new type of development scholars have identified as “post suburbia” began to impact the region.

Out of all East End towns, few have changed more in the last thirty years than Riverhead. While still one of the most important agricultural centers in the state, the town now boasts one of the largest outlet malls in the entire country as well. From 1970-2000 the town of Riverhead became more and more integrated into Suffolk County through its increasing linkages in terms of jobs and tourism. These connections resulted in a dramatic reconfiguration of space within the town and a noticeable change in the perceived character of the community.

For years historians have relied upon a model of suburban development describing them as places apart from cities where “affluent and middle-class Americans live . . . that are far from their work places, in homes that they own, and in the center of yards that by urban standards everywhere are enormous.”¹ Recently, a number of scholars have argued that this old framework fails to describe the developments that have occurred since 1970, and have instead opted for new definitions of space. The 1991 work *Post suburban California: The Transformation of Orange County since World War II* examines the processes that led to the development of an entirely new spatial form –post suburbia. In one of its essays, “The Multinucleated Metropolitan Region,” the authors argue that this new arrangement emerged from the transformation of the traditional low-density residential suburb into a “fully urbanized and independent

space that [is] not dominated by any central city . . . [and] provides the full array of functions and services associated with the concentrated cities of the past.”² As opposed to the cities of the past there is no clear center, but many distinct “nuclei” consisting of job and commercial cores, among other types of loci. The authors provide Orange County, California, and Suffolk County, Long Island, as examples of this new type of space.

Another important and more recent work dealing with this concept can be found with Edward W. Soja’s *Postmetropolis: Critical Studies of Cities and Regions* (2000). Like the authors of *Post suburban California*, Soja utilizes the concept of an independent regional entity - something he refers to as the “exopolis” - but goes far beyond analyzing the physical and economic structures of the form. He notes that there has been “a deep restructuring of the meanings, cultural symbolism, and prevailing discourses attached to what I have been calling the spatial specificity of urbanism . . . the ways we think about cities and urban life.”³ This concept of a changing meaning of space provides valuable insight into an aspect of the process of post suburbanization ignored by many scholars: the transformation of a town’s character.

The other important concept introduced by Soja is that of the “postfordist industrial metropolis.” According to Soja, “fordism” represented the dominant economic system for roughly the first half of the twentieth century. It was a large scale, fixed, spatially centralized, vertically integrated system of production facilitated by cooperation between unions, management, and the state. During the early 1970s, this changed to “postfordism:” a flexible system with an emphasis on consumption as opposed to production, dominated by service and information industries, and the tendency to be dispersed throughout a region.⁴

These two volumes, *Post suburban California* and *Postmetropolis* both provide valuable insight into the nature of space where previous definitions have fallen short. One of the major problems with the old definition of suburbia emerges when attempting to establish the classic urban/suburban dyad for Riverhead. During the 1980s the town became a bedroom community for many employees of western Suffolk County - essentially a suburb of a suburb. In many ways this definition fits well, but it ultimately fails to accurately capture the nature of the relationship between the two spaces and the interdependence that has developed.

The Development of Nassau and Western Suffolk Counties

To understand the development of Riverhead, one must first understand what transpired in western Long Island. Growth on Long Island has been greatly influenced by its geography. The island - approximately twenty

miles wide at its thickest point - stretches roughly 118 miles from New York City at its western terminus to Montauk Point on the South Fork.⁵ Apart from ferries, the island has no connections to the mainland save for roads and railways through New York City. A number of highways stretch from west to east, the most important being the Long Island Expressway (I-495 - the LIE). Few mass transit options exist, with the Long Island Rail Road serving as the primary alternative to the LIE for commuters. Consequently, most development experienced by Long Island after World War II proceeded in a clearly discernable west-to-east pattern due to geographic containment. At first new growth emanated from New York City, although in later years development on Long Island would be increasingly independent of the city.

Before World War II western Long Island developed as a bedroom community of New York City, with the east consisting primarily of farmland. Of a number of transportation advances that made commuting to jobs in the city possible, none proved more important than the automobile, resulting in a population boom during the 1920s.⁶ The growth of commuter suburbs, spurred on by new roads such as the Southern State Parkway and the Long Island Motor Parkway, contributed to a doubling of Nassau County's population during the 1920s to 303,053. Suffolk County saw slightly slower growth, with the overall population increasing by 46 percent, to 161,055 by 1930. During the 1930s, population growth would slow in both Nassau and Suffolk due to the Great Depression, but would pick up again during the 1940s and would continue to intensify during the next couple of decades.⁷

During the decades after World War Two, Long Island experienced an explosion of growth following the west-east pattern. Aided by government agencies such as the Federal Housing Administration and the Veterans Administration, returning soldiers and others looking for the suburban lifestyle flocked to the mass-produced housing developments of Nassau County.⁸ During the 1950s Nassau's population grew 33 percent, to 1,300,171. Suffolk County also saw impressive growth during this decade, increasing by 141 percent, to 666,784.⁹ In later decades, Nassau's growth rate leveled off - actually turning negative during the 1970s and 1980s - and only rebounded during the economic expansion of the 1990s. Following a similar pattern, Suffolk County's growth leveled off later, expanding at 69 percent during the 1960s, slowing down significantly in the 1980s, then slightly increasing during the 1990s.¹⁰

The development of western Suffolk County proceeded in a similar fashion. Huntington and Babylon experienced massive growth during the 1950s, slower growth during the 1960s, and a leveling off in later decades. Islip and Smithtown also experienced this pattern, although the slowing during the 1960s was less pronounced due to its location further

east. Out of all towns west of Riverhead, only Brookhaven would continue to grow at a rapid pace during the 1970s, at 49 percent. Growth would drop off in all towns in the 1980s, and increase modestly during the 1990s.¹¹

Along with people came businesses: as many scholars have noted, one of the most important trends of suburbanization has been the movement of jobs from city to suburb. Western Suffolk County experienced a major expansion of industry starting in the late 1970s, more or less following the same west-east pattern as population growth. A 1986 *New York Times* article detailed the progression, noting how development started near "Route 110, near the Nassau County border . . . and then the action move[d] eastward to Hauppauge. As those areas reached their saturation points, developers have moved eastward again." The article then noted how "commercial expansion in western Suffolk County added more than twelve million square feet to the county's space for high technology, research and development, and light industry in the late 1970s and early 1980s."¹² Additionally, the total amount of available office space more than doubled during the decade to 11.93 million square feet by 1990 - a trend that would continue in the 1990s.¹³

During the late 1970s and 1980s Western Suffolk County developed into a post suburban entity akin to Orange County, California. The shift to a postfordist economy played a large part in facilitating the development of the new spatial arrangement. Industrial sites like Hauppauge and Route 110 became job centers, or "nuclei," as described in "The Multinucleated Metropolitan Region." A 1989 *New York Times* article discussed how the expansion of industry on Long Island in the 1980s resulted in large part from the expansion of defense spending - a factor noted as playing an important role in Orange County.¹⁴ The article noted that a significant part of this growth came in the form of "high technology," which Gottdiener and Kephart argue were "closely linked to large federal outlays for defense and for research and development."¹⁵ It must be stated that defense industries played a major role in Long Island's economy before this time as well, but those present before the boom of the 1980s like Grumman aircraft - for many years the largest employer on Long Island - represented more of a fordist economic model, with their vertical integration and large scale of operation.

With the recession in the late 1980s and the drop in military spending at end of the Cold War, Long Island experienced another major shift in its economy, moving it even closer towards the information economy of services and high-tech jobs. Growth picked up with the economic expansion of the late 1990s in a diversity of information based industries like computer technology, retailing, and business services like law and accounting, primarily among smaller companies.¹⁶ The continued

construction of office space provides evidence of this growth: Suffolk added another 10.7 million square feet during the decade.¹⁷

The forces of change sweeping across the island would eventually make their presence felt in Riverhead. As western Suffolk County fully developed beginning in the late 1970s, Riverhead became increasingly noticed. Due to the explosive population growth and development in previous decades, the price of land in western Suffolk towns such as Islip and Smithtown became prohibitively expensive, causing people working in the west and business owners to look east. Riverhead would soon become the next center of development - and one of the last on Long Island.

Riverhead: 1970-80

During the 1970s Riverhead would experience little growth, although perhaps the most important factor in its future transformation appeared - the Long Island Expressway (completed in 1972). Small businesses and agriculture provided the majority of the employment for the town's residents, although the fordist style Grumman aircraft manufacturing and testing facility at Calverton was also an important job site. The spatial arrangement of the town more or less reflected presuburbia, due to the clustering of job and population centers in the village, with no nearby urban or post suburban cores exerting their influence. Planners hoped Riverhead would grow like sites to the west: that industrial parks would develop along the LIE to fuel future population and commercial growth.

Riverhead was, according to one writer, like "a county seat in the Midwest farm belt, surrounded by dusty potato fields."¹⁸ Such an account was by no means hyperbole; in 1968 Riverhead had 19,550 acres of land used for agriculture - 45 percent of all land in the town. This total comprised 29.4 percent of Suffolk County's agricultural land, and the most in any Long Island town.¹⁹ By measure of gross agricultural income, Suffolk County led New York State, illustrating the importance of agriculture in Riverhead.²⁰ During the 1970's the town's population stood at 18,909 residents, a 30.2 percent increase from 1960, but thanks to the economic doldrums of the decade population only grew by 7.1 percent to 20,243 persons by 1980.²¹

In addition to agriculture, aircraft manufacturing played a critical role in Riverhead's economy. In 1969, Grumman Aircraft employed three thousand workers at its Calverton facility.²² Although only 683 town residents worked in manufacturing, Grumman represented one of the most important employers in the town and surrounding areas and contributed significantly to Riverhead's tax base.²³ As mentioned above, Grumman reflects the fordist economy - a large scale manufacturing facility tightly integrated with government.

Apart from aircraft manufacturing and agriculture, Riverhead's economy consisted of the typical small businesses that support small towns, and government jobs due to its position as the county seat of Suffolk (although many jobs were being relocated to Hauppauge at this time), with little industry and manufacturing apart from Grumman. A 1964 planning document contrasts the town's resident workers with New York State and Suffolk, noting Riverhead's high percentage of clerical and kindred workers - 11.5 percent of the total employed as opposed to 6.1 percent on average statewide - and low number of manufacturing jobs - 13.2 percent of those employed as opposed to 39.3 percent countywide.²⁴

The economy of Riverhead influenced the spatial arrangement of the town, which remained more or less unchanged during the 1970s. It reflected a presuburban arrangement, with the most important population and economic centers in the village of Riverhead. The most important economic sites consisted of the central business district and government complex within the village, and Grumman a short distance away in the hamlet of Calverton.²⁵

In the retail sector of the economy, the 1970s saw the development of shopping centers along Route 58, primarily due to the nationwide trend of increasing automobile use.²⁶ Route 58 was originally built as a bypass for Route 25A that ran through the downtown. But due to its location along the northern fringe of the village, it would increasingly become a site for commercial development. Before 1970, 157,000 square feet of commercial space opened, the vast majority along the Route 58 corridor during the 1950s and 1960s. The 1970s saw the addition of 228,000 more square feet of retail space in three large new shopping centers along Route 58, although these were concentrated on the eastern side of the corridor near already developed sites.²⁷ The building of the Long Island Expressway would intensify this trend, usurping the prominence of the downtown and altering both the spatial arrangement and character of the town.

In 1972, construction of the Long Island Expressway to Riverhead was completed, ending the decades long project. Construction of the highway started in 1955. The road was designed to meet Long Island's growing transportation needs. The existing Northern and Southern State Parkways served only noncommercial motorists, but the LIE was intended to provide the chief commercial link between Long Island and New York City.²⁸ When completed, the road stretched all the way from the city to Route 58 - a fact that did not escape government officials eager to lure growth to Riverhead. Planning documents like the 1970 *Comprehensive Development Plan* by the Nassau-Suffolk Regional Planning board envisioned the LIE as the industrial backbone of Long

Island, and encouraged industrial development at points along the road.²⁹ These schemes for industrial development worked well for Nassau and Western Suffolk County, yet ultimately Riverhead failed to grow in the ways envisioned.

Riverhead's planners hoped to capitalize on the newly constructed Long Island Expressway. A 1973 planning document noted the influence of the highway on their and other government officials' thinking: "one principle clearly evident . . . is the decision to emphasize industrial locations in the Calverton Area [near Grumman]. This recognizes the Long Island Expressway access."³⁰ In addition to Calverton, the lands along Route 58 - which lies at the last exit for the LIE - were selected as prime industrial and commercial sites.³¹ In the planners' minds, the highway would bring to Riverhead the types of businesses that made western Suffolk County prosper, freeing their community from the limitations of its agricultural economy. According to the 1964 *Surveys and Evaluations*: "It is apparent that neither the farm economy nor the county government and general trade economy will support any substantial increase in population. The real basis for Riverhead's future population must come from industrial development, which in turn will generate residential and retail growth."³²

While on the one hand planners hoped to attract industrial development, on the other they wanted to protect the rural character of their community from its ills. A 1969 booster document provides insight into their thinking:

Riverhead will prosper as a country style community in growing Suffolk County. A central greenbelt devoted to farming, recreational facilities and open residential development, will be bounded by residential communities and light industrial districts. . . . Agriculture will be encouraged not only as a major economic activity but also as a part of the fundamental character of the town.³³

Ultimately these visions for Riverhead proved unnecessary, at least for the rest of the 1970s. Space dedicated to industrial use apart from Grumman actually dropped from 715 acres in 1964 to 611.3 by 1979 - but with the boom in future decades the character of the town would become more and more of a concern for both residents and government officials.³⁴

During the 1970s Riverhead saw little change in population, economy, or spatial arrangement, yet the construction of the LIE had not yet made its full impact upon the town. Only with the development of western Suffolk County would the LIE come into play as employees of

western Suffolk looked to Riverhead for affordable homes, and developers eyed the advantages of Riverhead as a new retail center. These developments would move Riverhead away from its largely self-contained economy, linking it in increasing ways to the larger Suffolk region.

1980-1990

During the 1980s, Riverhead underwent the beginnings of a dramatic transformation. Population expanded 13.7 percent in the town, to 23,011 by 1990. This increase in population emerged because of the development of Western Suffolk County as a job center during the decade. Shopping centers continued to be constructed along Route 58, resulting in continuing competitive pressure on the downtown. With all these changes, Riverhead's residents began to perceive a change in the character of their town as it began to change from a small rural town into another one of post suburban Suffolk County's nuclei. All of these trends reflected Riverhead's growing linkages with the larger region - trends that would begin to alter the spatial arrangement and character of the community as they intensified in the 1990s.

As stated above, starting in the late 1970s Western Suffolk County developed into a major employment center, with sites such as Hauppague providing many new jobs - especially during the defense-spending boom of the 1980s. With massive population growth in surrounding areas causing the price of land to skyrocket, people started to seek more affordable housing in less developed areas further east. This is demonstrated by the fact that no Suffolk towns other than Riverhead experienced an increase in the percentage of population growth during the 1980s.³⁵ In a 1986 *Newsday* article Long Island Regional Planning Board Executive Director Lee Koppelman discussed how "in Smithtown today you are looking at \$100,000 an acre for land. But in Brookhaven and nearby areas land is going for about \$35,000 an acre."³⁶

Journey-to-work data provides additional insight into this progression. In 1980 the average commuting time for residents of Riverhead town was 19 minutes, and 15.7 minutes for the village. In 1990, the time had risen to 22.1 minutes for town residents, and 16.7 for the village, indicating a growing number of residents working in points outside of town.³⁷ These increases may appear small, but they indicate a trend that would continue in the 1990s.

As western Suffolk developed economically, Riverhead officials continued to hope that the growth would reach their town. Planners selected the areas along the Long Island Expressway in Calverton near Grumman and along Route 58 as the prime sites for new growth. Despite the plans Riverhead failed to develop industry in any major way during

the 1980s.³⁸ Despite the lack of industrial growth, the building of shopping centers continued in the 1980s, contributing to the already mounting pressure on downtown Riverhead. As before, much of this development took place along Route 58. Out of the seven shopping centers constructed in the town of Riverhead during the 1980s, three were located along it, and one of the previously constructed centers saw an expansion. As many feared, the decentralized locations of these new commercial centers drew customers away from the downtown. The downtown vacancy rate rose from 10.8 percent in 1978 to 22.6 percent in 1989 - a figure that would only be exceeded in the 1990s as the first waves of regional shopping centers and modern big box stores began to appear.³⁹

Not everybody wanted development in Riverhead. With growth picking up residents began to consider its consequences for their town. A 1984 *New York Times* article described residents voicing their opposition to the changes underway.

Like Suffolk towns to its west, Riverhead has been trying to attract new development for years to boost its economy. But until recently, despite local zoning that could transform the still rural town into a sprawling industrial and commercial exurb, the pace of change has been slow. Now the kind of development that has transformed Long Island since World War II finally appears to have arrived in Riverhead, and many people find that they don't like the changes it is bringing.⁴⁰

The rest of the article noted an incident in which residents voiced their opposition to a local couple's plans to build a beverage distribution center. According to the Riverhead Planning Board chairman, "People are becoming more aware of the changes that are and can take place around them, and they are much more willing to speak up." Another *Times* article from 1989 expressed similar concerns. Entitled "Rural North Fork is fading quickly," it concluded that "For many people who live on or visit the North Fork, it is a moment to savor the look of farm fields and green and rustic open spaces. Soon . . . much of this may be gone."⁴¹

The 1980s saw the beginning of trends that would dramatically alter Riverhead as they intensified in the 1990s. More and more residents working in points east were moving into Riverhead, building new homes on former farmland. Eventually, businesses such as the Tanger Mall Outlets would follow as entrepreneurs started to recognize the enormous customer base to which the LIE enabled access.

1990-2000

During the 1990s the trends already underway began to make their full impact upon the town of Riverhead. With people continuing to take jobs in Western Suffolk County, the population of Riverhead swelled to 27,680 in 2000 - a 20.3 percent increase, only 1.5 percent less than the fastest growing town at the time, East Hampton.⁴² New residents meant new houses being constructed, but at a rate faster than any previous time in history, continuing to diminish open space in the town. Although business parks and industrial centers never came, the 1990s saw the construction of large, regional attractions. As one of the largest employers in Riverhead, Grumman Aircraft, announced the closing of its Calverton facility, the Tanger Outlet Mall opened along Route 58. Tanger would eventually employ more people than Grumman had in 1994, yet the majority of jobs would be part-time, as opposed to the better paying full-time jobs at Grumman. People from all over the larger region traveled to visit the outlets, as well as a newly constructed aquarium, a brand new water park, and additional new shopping centers. As many feared, the new retail sites developed at the expense of the downtown, although by the end of the decade some improvement was seen with the merchants reorienting their focus to customers within the larger region as opposed to merely within their community. With the continuing transformation of their town, Riverhead residents began to experience what can best be described as an identity crisis - a reevaluation of the character of their community as opposed to simple concerns over development. Riverhead was now a part of the larger region, for better or worse.

Suffolk County continued to grow economically in the 1990s. Journey to work data indicates that in 2000 the average commute in Riverhead had risen to 27.4 minutes from 22.1, and to 22.4 from 16.7 for residents of the village of Riverhead.⁴³ These statistics indicate a substantial number of residents taking jobs further away in areas like Hauppauge - approximately thirty minutes away from Riverhead by car - as well as the influx of new residents employed at sites further west. These statistics indicate Riverhead's growing regional links.

The influx of population meant the construction of new houses, with developers and farmers alike cashing in on the growth. From January 1990 through March 2000, 2,724 new houses were constructed in the town - the most ever constructed in one decade - the vast majority consisting of single family detached dwellings.⁴⁴ The role of agriculture in Riverhead's economy had been diminishing due to a number of factors, the most important being the difficulty of competing with the economies of scale achieved by massive industrial farms. Consequently, many farmers sold their land, which was more valuable than their business. By 2000, the amount of land utilized for agriculture had diminished to

13,540 from 19,216 acres in 1981. During the same period the space utilized for residences increased from 2,982 acres to 7,796.⁴⁵ As with other locations, this resulted in a dramatic alteration of the character of the town.

The 1990s saw a major restructuring of employment centers in Riverhead. In 1994, Grumman Aircraft announced the closing of its manufacturing facility in Calverton, a hamlet within the town of Riverhead. Although some jobs remained, the vast majority ended up transferred elsewhere. Grumman had been one of the most important employers for the region, employing over 23,000 people island-wide in 1987. At the Calverton facility, the number of employees stood at 1,500 in 1994, although this number had already decreased by at least half since 1970.⁴⁶

With the closing of Grumman the town government of Riverhead faced a major financial crisis, with \$1.2 million in taxes lost as a result of the facility's closing.⁴⁷ Fortunately for the town, the year Grumman announced the closing of its Calverton facility, Long Island's largest retail outlet mall opened its doors on the very spot officials had hoped to attract an industrial park. In 1994 the Tanger Outlet Mall started with an initial thirty-four stores and 180,000 square feet of retail space. By 1995, the mall had become the nation's fifth largest, expanding to 780,000 square feet with 168 stores, and employing 2,500 during the peak periods of the summer and the holidays. Additionally, the mall brought in \$3.8 million per year for the town in taxes. According to Riverhead councilman Victor Prusinowski, "if we did not have this project, Riverhead would face a tax increase of twenty to thirty percent. The school district alone would lose \$800,000 from that payment."⁴⁸



Juxtaposition of residential development with agricultural land. Sunken Pond Estates and sod field, 2006. Photo by Stephanie Thompson.



Tanger Outlets at Riverhead, 2006. Photo by Stephanie Thompson.

From the beginning, Tanger had a regional focus. Steven Tanger, Executive Vice President of the Tanger Factory Outlet Centers Inc., noted how “there’s no other part of the country . . . with these millions of people, with this high an average income, with one major interstate right through the middle of it where we could find property.” Mr. Tanger was correct. A 1997 survey described how “12 percent of its [Tanger’s] shoppers are local East End residents, whereas 43 percent reside in western Suffolk and Nassau Counties, and 22 percent live in Manhattan and Queens.”⁴⁹

In 1997, a second major retail center with a regional focus opened entitled Riverhead Centre. Big box stores such as Home Depot, Circuit City, and Staples formed the anchors of the new 431,000 square-foot complex. According to Richard Hanley, planning director of Riverhead, “what we were finding was that the catchment area of potential customers along Route 58 went well beyond Riverhead’s borders.” Consequently, the town invented a new type of zoning, entitled “destination planned commercial.” Hanley noted that “bringing in destination type stores would further the town’s goal of attracting “development that will generate taxes and new jobs to central Riverhead, while preserving the rural areas of the town for planning.”⁵⁰ Hanley’s comments reflect a growing awareness of the importance of regional interconnectedness.

Additional projects were completed in the 1990s with a regional focus. The Splash Splash Water Park opened in 1991, allowing Riverhead to boast having Long Island’s only water fun park. This attraction was located along Route 25, close to the LIE on the outskirts of town. The Atlantis Aquarium opened up in the year 2000, with the unique feature of being built downtown. With Tanger, Riverhead Center, Splash Splash, and Atlantis Riverhead was quickly becoming a regional tourist

destination. Atlantis brought in 3,000 visitors a day according to an aquarium spokesperson, and the Tanger Malls reported between five and six million visits per year.⁵¹ Though many felt that the influx of tourists would only bring more business to the downtown, this assertion proved to be overly optimistic.



Juxtaposition of residential development with agricultural land. The Highlands at Aquebogue, 2006. Photo by Stephanie Thompson.

As the new attractions and stores brought in visitors to Riverhead from all over Long Island, the downtown continued to suffer. Yet by the end of the decade improvement was seen. When Tanger opened in 1994 many critics feared that the center would kill the downtown.⁵² These concerns were not unfounded, for by 1996 the downtown vacancy rate had risen to 27.1 percent, the highest level recorded between 1970 and 2000. Despite these losses, something positive had happened to Riverhead, with visitors registering different opinions of the town than in years past. In 2000, one visitor would tell the *New York Times* “I don’t think I would have wanted to walk around here a few years ago. The atmosphere seems relaxed and comfortable now.” Another declared that “I was here years ago, and it didn’t look good . . . now there’s such a difference. It’s like a plant that’s sprouted.” In terms of the health of the downtown, those observations were correct: in 2000, the vacancy rate had precipitously dropped to 13.7 percent. The most important factor contributing to this rejuvenation was merchants changing their focus from the local area to the greater region: according to Riverhead planning director Richard Hanley “every downtown that has succeeded in combating that [the pressures of strip malls and other modern retail forms] has reoriented itself in terms of what it does. . . [they] don’t just deliver goods and services to the local population any more.”⁵³

The new economy of Riverhead reflects linkages to the greater region, making it part of the post suburban entity of Suffolk County, but still retaining connections to the agricultural past. Out of all the changes, the closing of a manufacturing facility and the opening of an outlet mall best reflects this economic metamorphosis: the change from production to consumerism. Most new employment consisted of service jobs, many of which were seasonal or part-time, and significantly lower paying than those at Grumman.⁵⁴ With its retail space and visitors traveling from all over Long Island and beyond, Riverhead could be described as another nucleus in the multi-nucleated Suffolk County region.⁵⁵

The many changes of the last thirty years had a major influence on the spatial arrangement of Riverhead, increasing its similarity to western Suffolk County. By 2000, most land along Route 58 had been developed, making it significantly different than in 1970, when numerous fields bordered the highway. Throughout the town, subdivisions lay scattered among what once were fields. Nevertheless, Riverhead still retained the largest percentage of agricultural land in Suffolk County. With the Pine Barrens nature preserve and its farmland, Riverhead remained both physically and psychically joined to the bucolic North Fork, and has been able to exploit this connection in its attempts to attract residents and tourists.⁵⁶

Riverhead's dichotomous identity leaves many residents confused as to what type of community the town has become. "With plenty of room to grow but no single vision of what it wants to be, Riverhead is perhaps the last blank slate on Long Island," wrote one *Newsday* columnist. "Is it a country town? Is it the county center of a major U.S. county with a population of 1.5 million? Exactly what the hell is it?" exclaimed Phil Cardinale, a town councilman. Some felt that they could have the best of both worlds: "Because Riverhead is so big, we can keep the rural feel and the rural look but still have an attraction, but classy enough and tasteful enough so that it is not a cheesy place," said resident Jan McKenna.⁵⁷ Others disagreed. Planning Director Richard Hanley explained that "the reason people come here is there's a sense that Riverhead is the last real agricultural community."⁵⁸ Although these are but single voices in a town exceeding twenty thousand residents, they nevertheless reflect anxiety over explosive growth, and the transition from being a rural community to a part of the greater entity of post suburban Suffolk County.

NOTES

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REFLECTIONS

THE PECONIC RIVER

Richard P. Harmond

Our Editor at Large describes the history and beauty of Long Island's longest "river."

Long Island – or more accurately Suffolk County – has four rivers: the Carmans, the Connetquot, the Nissequogue, and the Peconic. Geologically speaking, these are not rivers in the strict sense. That is, they do not derive from runoff from mountainous or hilly topography. Rather, they are exposed groundwater. And though the Peconic is the island's longest river – at twenty or more miles in length – and can probably best be described as a large stream. The Peconic is the island's only river that flows west to east: that is, laterally, across the island, emptying into Great Peconic Bay. The name Peconic is derived from a Native American word meaning “not trees.” Presumably, at some past time the Peconic was, in part at least, lined with nut trees.¹

For the most part the Peconic is neither ecologically, nor historically distinct from the island's other rivers. Basically, the four rivers are fed by the upper most (or glacial) aquifer. The area occupied by the Peconic was shaped by material from the most recent (Wisconsin) glacial progression. The headwaters of the river commence near the Brookhaven National Laboratory, and the hamlet of Ridge, in the core of the central Pine Barrens – giving this sector of the Peconic an imagined wilderness quality. Here an observant canoeist – in actuality the Peconic is not accessible by canoe for miles yet – would notice that the stream is lined by marshland where such species of flora as bluejoint grass, tussock edge, as well as red maple, prevail. As the canoeist rows down the Peconic, he might catch sight of turtles, muskrats and various species of birds.²

Similar to Long Island's other rivers, the Peconic underwent changes by early colonists. They constructed dams to furnish power for a variety of industries, including gristmills and iron forges. Moreover, the settlers dropped the Peconics level as they drained off water to irrigate crops.

Traveling east, the Peconic widens. This part of the river, which boasts historic sites, was dammed in the past at three points to allow cranberry cultivation. A historic marker pronounces this as the location of the Farmer Brown Cranberry Bog. Once past the dam, the canoeist

might observe swans – which nest and find nourishment along the river – as well as geese and ducks.

Passage of the Peconic becomes possible after Connecticut Avenue in Riverhead, some twelve miles before the Peconic empties into Peconic Bay. Paddling about a mile more, the canoeist reaches a dam. Here the Pine Barren woodlands stretch south along the shore. A little further on, the water bound traveler attains Forge Road, so called because of its link with the iron industry. At the beginning of English settlement, colonists found iron ore in marshy areas along the Peconic and on the beds of adjacent ponds. In the 1640s, Scottish prisoners seized by soldiers under Oliver Cromwell (the future – 1653-1658 – “Lord Protector of English, Scotland and Ireland,” and Britain’s only non-royal dictator), were sent to Long Island to establish a furnace to shape the iron into bars, labeled iron “pigs.” Then, in the mid-eighteenth-century, iron master Jeremiah Petty constructed an iron forge on land adjoining the river. The forge relied on waterpower for its operation.

In the late eighteenth-century iron maven Solomon Townsend acquired land that contained the forge (still to be operated by water power). Townsend came from a clan of outstanding professional iron makers. His uncle, for instance, had a forge near Sterling Forest in Tuxedo, New York, and had fabricated the famous and formidable chain strung across the Hudson River, near West Point, to block access to British war ships during the American Revolution. Townsend concentrated on anchors and chains for the navy and merchant ships in America’s burgeoning shipbuilding industry. His forge fashioned anchors of more than 3,000 pounds. But when coal powered steam engines replaced water power, the old Peconic river industries waned (though not before providing “bog” iron to assist in encasing the Navy’s first ironclad ship, the “Monitor”, in 1962).

After this brief digression into the Peconic’s history, we return to the hypothetical canoeist and his journey. The area of the river near Manorville is wild. In fact, the Peconic remains the most untainted of the four rivers. Here the branches of trees over hang the river, enclosing much of the water in shade. This stretch of the Peconic is full of birds, including ruby throated humming birds and other fauna.

Finally, as the canoeist arrives at Sweezy Pond (made by damming the little Peconic River) located in Cranberry Bog County Park in Riverhead, he must be struck by the variety of life in the pond. Fifteen species of fish have been noted, as have at least six species of turtles, including the mud and rare musk turtles. Sweezy Pond is circled by red maples, sour gums and other flora that thrive in a wet habitat. Especially striking is the swamp honeysuckle because of its strong

fragrance. It attains a height of three to nine feet, blooming during June and July.

Traversing the river, our canoeist would not, under ordinary circumstances, be aware of the Peconic's history of pollution. In the past, it has been tainted by effusions from the Brookhaven National Laboratory (BNL). Chemical risks to wildlife have included heavy metals and PCB's (polychlorinated biphenyls). The most important chemical dangers to the Peconic's fish have stemmed from the presence of copper, mercury and silver in the rivers's sediment. Still, pollution levels in areas tainted by the BNL have been judged well below those that pose a threat to wildlife. Although the BNL still has work to do (especially dismantling and removing the extremely radioactive core of the lab's graphite research reactor), by early 2005 the lab had successfully completed a \$12 million cleanup. As Richard Amper, the executive director of the Pine Barrens Society, as well as a member of the BNL's community advisory panel, has observed: "Blame the lab for years of neglect and irresponsibility to the environment. But give them credit for learning from their mistakes and cleaning up their mess."³

On the other hand, the Peconic and other East End waterways have been fouled by nitrogen from herbicides and pesticides. Most of this stems from over development along these waterways. But the towns – primarily Riverhead, Brookhaven and Southampton – have rebuffed calls by environmentalists for a moratorium on development. How this problem will be resolved remains to be seen.

NOTES

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FEATURE: LONG ISLAND PLACE NAMES

SHELTER ISLAND: AN ISLAND SHELTERED BY ISLANDS

Patricia and Edward Shillenburg

The Manhanset Indians called their home Manhansak Aha Quash Awamock, "an island sheltered by islands." James Farrett, the Earl of Sterling's agent in the New World, accepted both this island and Robbin's Island as part of his commission and from 1637 it was known as Mr. Farrett's Island. In 1641 he sold it to Stephen Goodyear of New Haven, and it became known as Mr. Goodyear's Island. Only in 1651, when four merchants - Nathaniel Sylvester, his brother Constant, Thomas Middleton, and Thomas Rouse - purchased the islands, did this island become known as Shelter Island.

Of the four men, only Nathaniel settled here. He arrived with slaves from his brother's plantations in Barbados to organize a northern plantation to provision his family sugar enterprises. Their first assignments were to clear land and build a dwelling. Nathaniel, an Englishman born and raised in Amsterdam, who had visited not only Barbados but also Virginia, knew that traditional English "wattle and dob" construction was a formula for disaster in those climates. The remains of his house, found by the archaeological dig presently being conducted by the University of Massachusetts - show an inordinate amount of brick for typical New England construction of that period. The house was situated near a protected creek off one of the island's major harbors. There was also a natural fresh water spring nearby. Although well silted now because of a bridge constructed at the mouth of the creek in the early 20th Century, in the 1600's the creek was navigable for ocean going vessels.

Research being conducted by Mac Griswold in conjunction with the dig also suggests island legend - that Nathaniel met his future wife in England and brought her here with a stop in Barbados - is fiction. Grissell was the daughter of Thomas Brinley, an auditor for Charles I, and sister of Ann Brinley, second wife of Governor William Coddington of Rhode Island, who was married in England in 1651. It is probable that the sixteen-year-old Grissell came to Newport as her older sister's companion and met Nathaniel there. Although civil records were destroyed by the British during the Revolution, from other records it can be surmised that Grissell and Nathaniel were married in Newport in the late summer of 1653. Their ship, the *Swallow*, encountered a terrible storm, possibly a

squall, and crashed on the rocks at Conanicut Island, destroying most of their goods.

Grissell and Nathaniel had eleven children. Those who lived to maturity were Giles, Nathaniel, Constant, Peter, Benjamin, Patience, and Grissell.

In his will of March 19, 1680 Nathaniel Sylvester lists his twenty-four slaves - a large number for any enterprise on Long Island - by name and family groups. This is extraordinary good fortune for those studying the European settlement of Shelter Island in 1652. By knowing the names of the slaves we can see them as human beings with skills, aptitudes and cultural backgrounds. Also in his will, Nathaniel described his estate - the buildings and the cultivated acreage - so we also know the activities in which the settlers and their slaves were engaged.

The will lists seven men, five women as "wife," and eleven children (at least seven of whom are girls). An inventory completed on September 8, 1680 following his death, lists six men, five women, six girls and three boys. The slaves named in the will and their family groups are as follows: Tamer, his wife Oyou and their four children, three of whom were possibly boys; Black John and his daughter Prescilla; Negro Jo and his wife Marie; Negro Jenkin; Jaquero, his wife Hannah, and their daughters Hope and Isabell; Tony, his wife Nannie, and their four daughters Hester, Abby, Grace, and Semnie; and Japhet and his wife Semnie. The inventory values the slaves: "To three negro men 60.00.00; To three negro women 45.00.00; To five negro girles 40.00.00; Here follows what is in partnership viz one halfe: To two negro women L30.00.00; To three negro menn 45.00.00; To three negro boys 30.00.00; To one negro girle 8.00.00."

Mac Griswold, archivist at Sylvester Manor, thinks it ironic that Nathaniel lists the slaves in family groups as a preface to breaking up those families by bequeathing them and their children separately to his wife or to his own children on their majority or marriage.

By 1680, the island community in its first European based form had been in existence for thirty-eight years, more than a generation. The overall patterns for the plantation complex - whether originally English or Dutch or a blend of both - would have evolved into something very different from the originals of 1652, inflected by climatic demands and by specific provisioning and trade needs of the plantation. What we do know from Nathaniel's will is that there were cultivated areas such as fields, orchards and gardens, and structures such as dwelling houses "with all the additions thereunto belonging," mill and millhouse, cider mill and press, barn and warehouse.

The 8,000 acre island to which the enslaved workers had been transported, probably from the Caribbean, and where some of their

children were doubtless born, had been occupied for centuries by Native Americans. Entries in account books and correspondence reveal that Native Americans were impressed in various capacities to serve the new patterns imposed on both their land and their culture. Indentured Europeans may also have been employed. Though much of the labor carried out fulfilled European requirements, how it was done would doubtless also have reflected Native American, African and African-Caribbean cultural attitudes and traditional skills.

In his will Nathaniel lists a total of sixty-five acres of plowed land: "the planting feeld behind the Orchard Containeing about fourtie akers and the planting feeld called Mannanduck [the Menantic area] Containing about twentie five akers." Through various other documents from the period one can conjecture that Nathaniel's sixty-five acres yielded anywhere between 975 bushels to 2,166 bushels of wheat per year.

In addition, he also describes the manor buildings and cultivated farm areas adjacent to them:

that my Indeared Wife Grizzell Sylvester, shall have the absolute Use and enjoy the dwelling houses with all the additions there unto belonging according as she Judge meet Convenient with the Garden Orchards Sider Mill and press . . . that is to say so much of the now planted orchard as together with the Gardens and sight of the houses and Meddows abutting as shall Containe fourtie Akers statute Measure, to be Limited with the kreek or salt Water, on the West, with a Gully and spring of Meadow laying to the North of the Orchard on the North and so up to that gully so farr as a straight line runs South and North may take in all houses, Gardens and sight of the same and Containe the said fourtie akers, with all ways and previledges to the same premisses keepin the same in Repairs, together with Convenient dyet for her.

The September 22, 1680 inventory lists livestock as follows: 427 sheep, 40 horses, 200 cattle, and 120 swine. That same inventory values the entire estate of both Shelter Island and what was then known as "Roberts Island" (Robins Island) as 1,559 pounds sterling.

The period of the first family plantation ended in 1693 when Nathaniel's eldest son Giles entered a lease agreement with Edward Downing for the Shelter Island plantation. This agreement also gives texture to activities.

Everyone labored from dawn to dusk in dozens of occupations. To build up such an extensive plantation over thirty-eight years. There was no time for idle hands.

Just dealing with the livestock required skills in herding and tending, breeding, training oxen to plough and horses to halter, hay making for winter fodder of fresh meadow and salt marsh hay, sheep shearing, wool washing, carding, spinning and weaving, butchering, smoking, salting and packing up beef and pork, rendering of tallow, candle making and soap making.

To build and maintain the buildings suggested skills in felling and sawing of timber, shaping shingles and other wood products for domestic use or for sale, construction of buildings, carts, and general carpentry.

In the fields, skills included clearing land not already cleared by the Indians, making and planting, harrowing, hoeing, and weeding of crops, harvesting, threshing, winnowing, carting, cleaning, milling, and storage of grains which included wheat, winter wheat, oats and Indian corn. They had to make lanes for oxen teams.

They made fence railings and fences. They stocked the warehouse and loaded and unloaded vessels. They made bricks and laid them.

The garden, orchard, and cider mill meant digging, manuring, sowing, weeding, harvesting, hoeing, sowing, gathering, cleaning and storage. Also planting, pruning and harvesting fruit, making cider and casks for storage. Skills were required for fishing and fowling. The salt marshes required the drying of salt.

The kitchen and household demanded cooking, gathering of vegetables and eggs, butchering, plucking and hanging poultry, making pillows and featherbeds, desalting brined foods, grinding corn for bread, baking and yeast preservation, pickling, preserving and drying, preparation of medicines, laundry and ironing, sewing and mending.

In the areas of the lifecycle, skills were required in child birthing procedures and childcare, not only for the slaves themselves but also for the Sylvesters' eleven children, nursing the ill, preparations for burials and the burials themselves.

Firewood was chopped, hauled, and stacked. Ashes were saved for lye and dyeing. Roads, walls, and foundations were built with stone which needed to be broken and hauled. The landing which is mentioned in the Downing lease required sinking of piles and building the stone foundation.

In a letter in August 1653 to John Winthrop, Jr. of Connecticut, Nathaniel notes building a three-ton boat. East Hampton records show N. Sylvester pasturing horses on the common. For transportation of livestock, they built boats.

Economically, the slaves were essential to the success of the Sylvester plantation and indeed to the survival of the Sylvester family. In his will, Nathaniel claims to have cleared twenty-five acres and to have built the warehouse himself "for want of Negros or other servants to perform." Clearly, he did not have enough help.

The two sons who were still alive in 1690 were Giles, who owned four-fifths of the island and Nathaniel who owned one-fifth. In 1695, Giles Sylvester sold to William Nicoll, patentee of Islip, one-quarter of the island, which was known as Sachem's Neck. In 1706, Giles bequeathed additional acreage to William as executor of his estate "to dispose of as he thinks best for the payments of debt," including the manor property, areas of West Neck (including The Prospect) and the Menantic. However, Brinley Sylvester, the settler's grandson, sued William Nicolls, and although the case was settled in Mr. Nicoll's favor, a gentleman's agreement must have been reached. By 1726 Brinley was living in the old house and had lands extending to Hay Beach and the Ram islands.

In March 1700, son Nathaniel conveyed about 1,000 acres in the middle of the island to George Havens.

By 1730, the largest landowner on the island was William Nicoll, followed by Brinley Sylvester and the descendants of George Havens. Others had purchased much smaller farms, and together they joined to separate from Southold and formed the Town of Shelter Island. Their names were William Nicoll (second son of the Islip patentee), John, George, Edward, Jonathan, Joseph and Henry Havens, Samuel Hudson, Elisha Payne, Joel and John Bowditch, Abraham Parker, Samuel Vail, Thomas Conkling, Edward Gilman, Noah Tuthill, Sylvester L'Hommendieu, Samuel Hopkins, and Daniel Brown. William Nicoll was the first Supervisor, followed by Brinley Sylvester. He held a town office every year from 1732 until he death in 1752.

Brinley Sylvester was the last man with the last name Sylvester to live on Shelter Island; however Sylvester descendants, through daughters, nieces and nephews, still own about 250 acres of the island and reside in Sylvester Manor, the second Sylvester house, built by Brinley Sylvester in 1734.

PRIMARY SOURCE

CONFERENCE ON THE FUTURE OF NASSAU AND WESTERN SUFFOLK AT HOFSTRA UNIVERSITY, 1955: INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

Robert Moses

Master builder Robert Moses' remarks to a conference at Hofstra University in 1955 puts today's regional problems in perspective. While affordable housing and economic growth advocates call for greater housing density, the high density, small lot developments in Nassau concerned Moses, who called for larger lots to protect the region's groundwater and suburban character.

Excepting the Indians, Migrants and the immigrants have populated the great metropolis now known as New York. Wave after wave they landed here. There have always been too many for us to absorb, and we have always absorbed them. And now they are breaking the barriers and flooding into the suburbs and the farm lands. Here too they must and shall be accommodated.

And still they come in greater and greater numbers in the march from cliff dweller to bayman, from the tenements, where Aunt Matilda's unmentionables meet Mr. Bacigalupo's overalls, halfway across the backyard clothesline to the windswept sands and matted meadows of Nassau. Better the South Bay than Hell's Kitchen.

A word first to the wiseacres who have just discovered the suburbs. I have made surveys myself in distant parts, but have always insisted I was merely a diagnostician who performs no surgery and did not displace the home practitioner. No one can do anything lasting for Long Island who has not lived there, who does not know and love its geology, topography, its waters and its people, who is unacquainted with its history as well its immediate past. Except as to purely technical, scientific and professional matters it is given to no outsider to expertise - as the barbarous word goes - at Long Island's expense. You belong, or your advice is suspect and therefore largely worthless.

Close on the heels of experts come demagogues thirsting for an issue and full of slogans, reformers casting about for a new subject to bedevil and beat hell out of, secretaries of civic, commercial, real estate and other boards seeking publicity before the yearly passing of the hat, eager beavers of uplift and reform, and finally the scribblers and pundits who are authorities on everything.

One set of prophets plunk for decentralization and dispersion of cities. Urbanism, they say, is our greatest curse. Another group mutters

darkly that we already have one continuous city from Augusta, Maine to Virginia Beach. Frank Lloyd Wright followers shout for Usonia, others for the Highway City where one can dwell by the roadside and be the friend of man. Meanwhile the mute inglorious Savonarolas of the suburbs snore, forgetting that it is O.K. to sleep at a circus, but not at a town meeting. O, for a Hogarth to do full justice to these times and their mores.

I am no ancient but, boys, the things I have seen. I remember Henry Hicks, the great Quaker nurseryman, chronicler of Long Island before the Great Subdivision. Henry knew Malverne when it was Skunk's Misery and Bethpage when it was the Biblical halfway house between Jericho and Jerusalem. Henry was a resourceful man. He expanded with the country. He could adapt himself to new fashions as landscaping shifted from Versailles vistas to garlic and geraniums, and from pale hands beside the Shalimar to green thumbs of transplanted Neapolitans.

Those were the days of fabulous local political leaders, men like my friend Tom McWhinney. Tom rose, if that is the word, from assemblyman to membership in our Long Island state park commission. His methods were sometimes, shall I say, informal. He was never pious. For instance, in pushing legislation for the Sunrise Highway he counted a quorum in the Assembly when the unpracticed eye could discern only thirty out of some one hundred and fifty members in their seats. The Clerk, a friend of Tom's, and a devotee of progress, read the title of the bill in Choctaw and it went to third reading without objection. By such devices - unknown to textbooks on civics - are great causes advanced and democracy is made to triumph over its enemies.

The introductory speaker has a great advantage at a forum. He can embarrass those who follow without fear of punishment. I intend therefore to use up my remaining time in putting the experts on the spot. I am going to question them before they have spoken. It's a mean trick, but a price experts must pay for their expertness. I want particularly to hear the County Executive of Nassau, Holly Patterson, who, succeeding my old friend Russel Sprague, has been a keen student of the growth of Long Island and a leader in progressive government in many fields. He will, I am sure, be alert to adopt practical ideas advanced in this Forum.

I have no use for the statisticians. Professional prognosticators and pollsters who believe in nothing but the infallibility of figures, or for those who can see only decibels and decimals and overlook experience, imagination and judgment. If we must have guesses at population growth, I prefer utility figures to any others. The boys who install electric lights, telephones, gas ranges and ice boxes, washing machines and television and radio sets, have a much clearer view of the future than the census takers. But even the utility experts and their bosses must not put too much trust in coordinates and graphs.

And as for the foolish prophets of overpopulation, who can reconcile their conclusions? Planned parenthood is the only answer, says one camp, another avers that old Dr. Malthus, riding high with the Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse, was right. A third shouts that plankton, growing in profusion around Davy Jones' locker, will save the world with or without sugar, berries and cream.

Nor do I agree with those local soothsayers who prophesy on the basis of statistics alone that Nassau will soon be full of families of low income, living temporarily and precariously in rapidly deteriorating houses, people who can't pay their bills. Certainly it need not be so and I think enough public spirit can be aroused to create durable, permanent homes in well planned communities for people of moderate means who intend to get their roots down, bring up their children here and do their part as good citizens.

The suburbs grow not only because people want space to bring up their families. Middle income families move to the suburbs from New York because out of five boroughs in the city there is no vacant land in one of them, Manhattan, Staten Island is still somewhat inaccessible, Brooklyn and Queens seem to want no more tax exempt housing, and the Bronx is filled up except on the east which is being rapidly subdivided.

There are other causes, high among them the estate owner who is surrounded, can't pay higher taxes and has lost interest in his home and the community, the truck farmer who wants to retire or head east to cheaper open land, the speculator who aims to cut up real estate into as many postage stamp lots as weak zoning resolutions and weaker officials will permit. These uncertain and variable human factors hold the real key to the future.

If intelligent forethought had forced larger lots and higher restrictions in recent subdivisions, the future overpopulation would have been controlled and most of the evils which flew out of that Pandora box would have been kept tightly under cover. I mean the evils of shortages in schools, water supply, sewage and garbage disposal plants, highways, drainage, recreation, safety, health, hospitals, not to speak of a score of other devils hatched by congestion. Think of what it would have meant if instead of 17,000 single family homes with 15,000 or more cesspools accommodating 61,000 people in Levittown there had been half as many. And don't forget that drinking water today is drawn from the same ground, though at a lower level.

Let the builder boys fill up the natural swales, shave the contours, line the porous earth and sand with concrete, and the rain water goes crazy. The wind bloweth where it listeth, but here on Long Island greed with official connivance deliberately makes floods where they could easily be anticipated.

It is just plain hokum to say that the additional cost of larger plots and more effective regulations would have raised the cost of homes above the income of prospective tenants. If that philosophy, so busily and persuasively peddled by realtors, is adopted, Nassau will go the way of old, overcrowded places, and the opportunity for controlled suburbs which retain their suburban character will grow dim.

If lying or exaggerated real estate advertisements mean more to you than decent standards, if your surviving country squires continue to sell to developers for the most they can get and leave to jackals what they claimed to prize, if the small owner is so stupid that he permits cheap promoters to repeat the mistakes of the city, you are going to have suburban slums as sure as God made little apples. We may, incidentally, be thankful for one thing in Nassau subdivisions. The Nassau County Planning Commission, unlike the Suffolk officials, has insisted on permanent pavement of streets and Nassau will therefore not face staggering bills for street repairs.



Seventy-five percent of these homes near the Southern State Parkway toll booths in Elmont were built between 1945 and 1955.

As to the great field of utilities, you must have water to live, and this will necessitate a County Water Authority, possibly responsible also for drainage, sewage and pollution. Your local water districts and private water companies must go, because their resources must be pooled. It will be tough on the clubhouse boys, sad indeed, very, very sad. You will

have to negotiate with the City of New York for the Old Brooklyn Water Works, just as soon as the Delaware supply is available to the City.

Natural drainage does not follow political lines. Before very long you will have to talk to Suffolk about tapping some of their westerly supply, which is another reason why western Suffolk should not be overpopulated. In this process there will be agonized shrieks from Suffolk that Nassau proposes to slake its thirst at Suffolk waters. There, will be weeping, wailing and gnashing of teeth by the waters of Babylon. Politics will rear its ugly head. More demagogues will be bred to save Suffolk from the heathen at the gates. It's going to be a swell ball game and I hope to be around for at least the early innings. Between Major Huie and Dick Gould you will get the water picture sharply defined, without distortion and without political overtones.

With respect not only to water supply, but to every other phase of physical planning, the five Western townships of Suffolk are for all practical purposes in the same category as Eastern Nassau. They have the same problems, and share the same future. The sooner they join Nassau in plan and performance, the more they ignore artificial political lines, meaningless in meeting geological and geographical problems, the better off Long Island will be. This calls for statesmanship, a commodity for which these townships have not hitherto been famous. It is noteworthy that when twenty-five years ago we obtained legislation at Albany to protect the Great South Bay and Jones Beach in Nassau against pollution, the five westerly townships of Suffolk refused to join in the program.

Two pending state constitutional amendments to be voted on this fall will, if endorsed by the people, greatly facilitate cooperation of districts and counties in financing sewer and drainage improvements. There should be enthusiastic support of these amendments on Long Island.

Nassau has a pretty good charter even though it needs amendment. It has a county executive and many centralized services. Suffolk has ten towns, a leaderless board of supervisors and a widening cleavage between the five western and the five eastern townships. This is government by compromise, logrolling and back scratching. Suffolk needs a central administration with an executive with a broad view of county and larger needs under a modern charter adopted pursuant to the provisions of the existing State Constitution providing for new forms of government.

As to parks, the City and State have taken care of the South Shore with most generous local cooperation. The oceanfront and bays of Long Island are now largely in public ownership from Coney Island to First Island Park. Their future is secure, come fair weather or foul. Suffolk some years ago passed up the opportunity for a genuine State park and parkway system on Fire Island east of the Lighthouse and extending to the Hamptons. Now they are worried about erosion which will never be

cured by palliatives such as artificial dunes, brush barriers, small jetties and political inlets, like Moriches, which won't stay open save at prohibitive cost. These things require unselfish enthusiasm, vision, courage and sacrifice. They cannot be accomplished by those who sell the years to serve the hour.

I spoke of foul weather. Actually we have no such thing on Long Island. True, the sun does not always shine. It gets damp occasionally and rain driven by the east wind troubles the waters and the shore. The fog drifts in. Mists settle in the hollows. And so nature teaches man his place. No matter how he may multiply, he will never really possess the South Shore of Long Island. He keeps at most a watch in the night. That is the great advantage of living on a shelf of sand extending from the ancient glacial terminal moraines to the broad Atlantic.

As the distinguished editor of that excellent sheet, the *Vineyard Gazette* of Martha's Vineyard, Massachusetts, recently remarked, "This is the country from which the quawk comes as ambassador, a country where spotted sandpipers teeter and red-winged blackbirds scold, where the smell of tide drifts inland, and salt water, brackish water, ' and land consider the terms on which they will get along together."

On the North Shore of Nassau and Western Suffolk, excepting Sunken Meadow, there are almost no parks worthy of the name, and the hour is late for acquisition. As the Rabbit said in Alice in Wonderland: "Oh, my ears and whiskers, how late it's getting!" The North Shore town beaches are a joke in the light of future demand and usage. Real estate developers have got away with murder in ignoring playgrounds and park needs. They have walked off leaving the problem to complacent public officials and to new arrivals who never heard of such matters before and can't afford big assessments. It is high time that the demon suburban realtors are forced to pay in advance the cost of the basic municipal services which are an integral part of any honest development. The damage they have already done is incalculable.

Sir George Stapledon, distinguished Welsh professor of agricultural botany, made a statement not long ago which is as applicable to Long Island as to the British Isles: "the first thing to be decided is the priority of the innumerable claims that a modern state makes on its land surface. When a country is vast and the population small, the question of the priority of claims hardly arises; but in these small islands the matter is of extreme urgency. If we take any long view of the case there is obviously not an inch of land to spare, and it is an outrage on posterity to misuse a single yard of land - the outrage has been more than sufficiently perpetrated already."

Real Estate is supposed to be a profession. It is licensed by the state. The federal government guarantees loans by banks. But neither the state

nor the federal government seems to have been able to anticipate the unpaid and often uncollectible bills which these characters have left behind as they move gaily from one subdivision to another. Few would begrudge them a few windfalls if they did their work properly.

If I may paraphrase Omar: "The Moving Realtor strikes, and, having hit, Moves on: nor all your Piety nor Wit Shall lure him back to cancel half a Line, Nor all your tears wash out a Word of it."

Some of the remaining big North Shore estates should be acquired now. The golf, fishing and gun clubs are well located, landscaped and therefore natural future parks. I would buy up several of them at fair prices and let the clubs stay for twenty years at frozen taxes or no taxes at all. If they won't sell I would have the county or town condemn them and rent them back to the present operators or to others. That's not socialism. It's just common sense.

As to planning and zoning, Major Clarke, Mr. Norton and Mr. Pomeroy will give you their slants on this phase of suburban growth. It is the duty of the introductory speaker to stimulate the experts who in turn are expected to shock the audience. I shall therefore give them a cold needle shower just to get them in good shape. There has been too much chatter about overall planning by a central commission of seagreen incorruptible floating above ordinary government. This bilge contemplates what my old chum Rexford Tugwell called "The Fourth Power" or "The Directive," a Russian expedient not destined for long and healthy life in this climate. The important thing in this and every other governmental context is men rather than measures, men elected to the governing bodies with sufficient humility to select first class assistants and with enough courage to support their recommendations.

Our zoning laws and court decisions are extremely narrow, unimaginative and in many cases obsolete. This is due not only to judges fearful of the liberal use of the police power, but to the forerunners who introduced the planning and zoning idea to hidebound skeptics. These forerunners, like so many other reformers, as they grew older came to regard their early hard won triumphs as the last and final word. They were the authorities and wisdom was going to die with them. In the end they became more conservative than the original skeptics, blocked progress and established dogmatic rules and interpretations completely at variance with the times. This is often the pattern of reform.

The precise charter provisions governing planning are not all important. May I suggest in all honesty that the row earlier this year over Nassau planning legislation was a very minor tempest in a very dubious teapot, that it should now be forgotten and that attention should be focused on a workable act this fall, well in advance of the 1956 legislative session? The bill disapproved by the Governor was hastily improvised.

The companion bill which he signed merely chopped off a few existing planning commissioners, leaving a smaller board with no impressive record to attempt to function under obsolete conditions.

Nassau must begin by deciding whether to keep township and village home rule, including planning and zoning. As a practical matter, little home rule can be surrendered to the Board of Supervisors and County Planning Commission under the present State Constitution and an amendment will not be easy to obtain. Meanwhile it must be decided whether a statutory County Planning Commission should be an advisory, rulemaking, quasi judicial body or an administrative agency. I don't think it will ever work as an administrative agency. The elected officials are bound to be the administrators.

Don't listen to the siren voices which beguile you with promises of one grand overall blueprint for the future. You must still progress by slow steps to limited objectives and the grand plan must still be the aggregate of maps covering well established fields of public administration. Let me add that no planning and zoning system will be effective unless you revise your building codes upward, and see that they are enforced by honest, as well as competent, building inspectors.

The sameness, conformity, mass production and monotony of suburban developments can be relieved in only three ways: first, by larger plots, less coverage, better design and construction, more planting and the touches which give small homes and garden apartments character and individuality; second, by ample, well spaced parks and open public or semi-public places, including cemeteries and airports; third, by public or semi-public buildings of genuine distinction on ample plots, such as churches, schools, post offices, hospitals, village and town halls, museums and similar structures. Even shopping centers can be made attractive. Most mid village main streets with their chromium fronts on former cottages, and their hideous show windows, are doomed as far as anything approaching either beauty or distinction is concerned. Some of them are far less interesting and attractive than the worn shops and stores of old cities.

Intelligent planning of course includes industry. Suburban industry among other things will reduce the number of commuters in serge and seersucker who spend nights and weekends with families they hardly know. Nassau and Western Suffolk will never be great industrial centers, but they need more industry properly located. They offer a good nearby labor market. They need more business. The big city stores are establishing suburban branches which will soon be more important than their parents. The suburbs will be self-contained units, tied in many ways to the Big City, but in other respects completely independent. This is as should be.

If anyone can emit sparks about industry it is that fabulous exemplar of the stuff that dreams are made on, Bill Zeckendorf, popularly known as the Round Man. We bought the right-of-way for our Meadowbrook Parkway extension through Roosevelt Field from him in record time. No one knows yet who got the best of the bargain. In the paper he has written, he will no doubt explain that on his part it was the greatest sacrifice since Biblical times.

As to rail transportation, I got my fingers burned in one of those Long Island Railroad rescue expeditions and want no more of them. The Pennsylvania Railroad directors have got the road back. They are aided by partial tax exemption. Maybe they can make a go of it. There is no sense, however, in their quarrelling with the road builders. In any open competition on Long Island, rubber is bound to prevail over rails, but there is room for both and no reason for rivalry.

When I think of this remote dependency of the Pennsylvania and of those commuters who have not yet taken to the car pools, I recall a song of that loose limbed, lugubrious comedian Bert Williams, in one of the Follies, which went something like this: *"When ah was in dat railroad wreck And folks was dyin' bah the peck, Who took dat injine off my neck? Nobody!"* If Mr. Goodfellow can take the "injin" off our necks, we are indeed face to face with genius.

As to highways and parkways, I hope we can get going on all stages of main arteries, that is final plans, land acquisition, tenant removal and construction, without petty local political pressure, demagoguery, selfish opposition and misrepresentation. When I speak of misrepresentation I mean picturing the highway builders as incompetent, sadistic rippers who chuckle as they toss the small new home owner's family into the street and tear down his house. Most of these houses can be moved to larger and better plots with a small profit to the owners. Admitting this, however, does not reelect local politicians. What is needed is more of the spirit of cooperation which led Nassau to donate lands for parkways and parks, and New York City to make available the surface of the City reservoir lands in Nassau, now the backbone of the State system. On this subject you will hear from those who have had bed rock and earthy everyday experience.

In the domain of health, hospitals and welfare in this overcrowded community you must depend in the future on a happier and more fruitful partnership and public and private enterprise. There must be larger public aid but, it is to be hoped, without regimented and socialized government. The prominent physicians who have been serving on advisory boards should be able to tell you what they have figured out, what legislation is required and how the bills are to be paid.

A word finally about schools your greatest problem. In Nassau today there is a hodgepodge of little red and big modern schoolhouses populated by pupils some of whom are studying Mutt and Jeff, Hopalong Cassidy and Davy Crockett, while others are becoming proficient in quaternions, nuclear science and the Venerable Bede. Members of school boards are almost as numerous as members of the French Legion of Honor, the Elks and the Christmas Clubs. Lewis Wilson, for years State Commissioner of Education, and George Hubbell, Jr., Regent from Long Island, are admirably equipped to discuss this subject.

You have in my opinion too many districts of widely varying sizes and efficiency. Some are poor, others are not. The rates are scandalously unequal. I see no ultimate solution but a County School Budget Board, preparing estimates for the entire county, collecting one countywide tax and distributing the receipts to local districts which should be gradually consolidated, still leaving administrative local autonomy. This will promote uniformly high standards but still preserve home rule.

Then there is the current debate over a Long Island secondary college or State teacher's college. There seemed for awhile to be some hope of consolidating the State Nautical School at Fort Schuyler in the Bronx with the Federal Merchant Marine Academy across the Sound at Kings Point and adding college or teacher training facilities, but this would go by the board if the Marine Academy is put on a permanent federal basis. From what I hear, there seems no solid home sentiment for a secondary state college in Nassau or Suffolk for which the county would have to pay half, nor does there seem much of an argument for another Teachers Training School. There remains the suggestion that the Farmingdale State Agricultural and Technical Institute be expanded to include more liberal arts facilities, eventually graduating into a four-year college course. This makes a lot of sense to me, the private Long Island colleges, Hofstra and Adelphi, certainly would not object.

My time is up. Credit me with frankness if nothing else. Yes, with one thing more - with an abiding affection for Long Island, my home more than half of the year, my stamping ground the year round. As Walt Whitman said in *Starting from Paumanok*, "none has begun to think - how certain the future is."

There is no sense in accepting grudgingly the troublesome, fascinating, revolutionary future of Long Island beyond the city line. March forth boldly and proudly to meet your destiny. It is only in that sign that you can conquer. Above grumblings of ancients, the mutterings of unreconstituted natives, the tittle tattle of wives of fading country quires, the barriers of sound are broken and the atmosphere is cleared not by jet planes, but by the echoes of Homeric laughter. The joke is on the pessimist.

BOOKS AND CULTURE: REVIEWS

Ann Sandford. *Grandfather Lived Here: The Transformation of Bridgehampton, New York 1870-1970*. Sagaponack, New York: Poxabogue Publishing, 2006. Pp.212. \$25.00.

Ann Sandford's book is a delight from beginning to end. In her well-researched book Sandford devotes an entire chapter to the sea, concentrating on whaling, shipwrecks and the life saving service comprised of fishermen-farmers who, day and night, in the period before ship-to-shore radio communication, were on the lookout for vessels in distress. Relying, as she does throughout the book, on her own interviews and earlier oral histories, a number of which she transcribed for the Bridgehampton Historical Society, Sandford makes very effective use of the recollections of Harry Squires, a recognized expert on Long Island shipwrecks. Squires' own father, Captain William Squires, perished in the waters off the south shore during an icy gale in 1895.

Recounting the impact of the hurricane of 1938, Sandford incorporates the observations of a number of eyewitnesses and here, as elsewhere in this delightful book, she includes the experiences of her own family. We learn that in her grandfather's apple orchard one lone tree, covered with salt spray, survived the hurricane. Her grandfather's horse, Molly, died of colic after consuming hay which had been thoroughly soaked by salt water. In various chapters the author talks about other family members, including her mother, Flo, and her brother, David. The siblings enjoyed playing in the family's colonial barn where they dove from the rafters into piles of hay. Life was not all fun and games, however. There was always lots of work to do on a farm and Sandford's mother, like other children in the community, was assigned chores. More demanding tasks were performed by adults, including hired hands. Polish immigrants and African American migrants from Virginia were important contributors to Bridgehampton's agrarian economy but not everyone welcomed them.

In both her introduction, which is a succinct and nicely balanced overview of Bridgehampton history from the colonial period through the early 1970s, as well as later in the book, Sandford provides details of Ku Klux Klan activity aimed at immigrants and African Americans. The author does not sugarcoat anything, whether she is discussing cross burnings in the farm fields or the fire which claimed the lives of migrant workers' children dwelling in an unsafe, overcrowded former chicken coop.

Given the importance of agriculture as a component of the local economy, it is not surprising that Sandford devotes considerable space to

this topic. Indeed, farming is one of the threads which weaves the various parts of the book together. An entire chapter deals with dairy and poultry farming. Potatoes are covered in a separate chapter. The potato was really a latecomer, assuming the dominant position in local agriculture in the early years of the twentieth-century. In the meantime milk from cows tested to ensure they were not infected with tuberculosis was a source of local pride and revenue. Pasteurization changed the nature of the business making it less expensive to process milk in large plants. Innovation, in the form of mechanization, altered potato farming, as did World War II. Sandford points out that federally imposed ceiling and floor prices, plus government incentives aimed at controlling production, had a huge impact upon potato farmers and she quotes a local grower who lamented the elimination of incentives in the postwar period.

Although agriculture underwent change, there was one constant in the lives of Bridgehampton residents throughout the period covered in *Grandfather Lived Here: the beach*. In "Magical Summers," a segment of one of the chapters in the community section of the book, Sandford talks about boys camping out on the beach, sometimes for days at a time, and the planning that went into local families' annual picnics at the beach. This segment includes a picture of the author and her siblings on the sand and like dozens of other well chosen illustrations scattered throughout the volume, this shot is charming because of its informality. There are a few formal pictures in the book, including one of Carl Yastrzemski, who played baseball for Bridgehampton High School before going on to become a major league star. These pictures enhance the book. The very substantial text, supplemented by a bibliography and index, stands on its own, and whether one chooses to read the work straight through or dip into it selectively, the experience will be uniformly positive. This is a great book to curl up with, in front of the fireplace on a wintry day, or on a gorgeous beach on a summer afternoon.

MARILYN E. WEIGOLD
Pace University

Newsday Inc. *Newsday's Guide to Long Island's Natural World*. Guilford, Connecticut: Falcon Guide Press, 2005. Color Photographs, Illustrations. Pp. 144. \$16.95.

For more than three years a team of *Newsday* researchers, reporters and photographers trekked along Long Island's shores and through its woods and marshes, to reveal in words, color photographs and illustrations the diverse and fascinating natural environment of our local communities. In addition to their own field work, the team interviewed a diverse array of

biologists, scientists, birders and other naturalists with expertise on Long Island's natural world. The culmination of their efforts first appeared as an award winning newspaper series that was printed in thirteen monthly sections of *Newsday* in 2003-2004. The series was compiled in 2005 into a book titled *Newsday's Guide to Long Island's Natural World*. Both the *Newsday* articles (which were accompanied by a comprehensive website) and the softcover compilation were written to help readers take a closer look at our natural environs and make their own discoveries in the woods and waters that are distinctively Long Island.

Part natural history and part guidebook, *Long Island's Natural World* is divided into five sections focusing on the sky, the woods, the sea, sound and shore, rivers and bays, and our own backyards. Throughout the book, brief profiles highlight some of the birds, trees and plants, marine life and animals that surround us. Also included are maps and general descriptions of the often hidden preserves, woodlands, salt marshes and grasslands that lie far beyond the parkways, multiplexes and strip malls of everyday suburban Long Island.

Although epigrammatic, less than 150 pages cover to cover, *Long Island's Natural World* provides interesting insights on the island's diverse wildlife and their habitats. Although no one knows precisely how many species live on Long Island, the region is home to a multitude of creatures including cold blooded salamanders, carnivorous plants, red foxes, feral cats, butterflies and bluebirds. The gray wolves and black bears that once roamed freely here, however, are long gone. There are approximately 25,000 species of insects alone. These include the fastest flying insects – dragonflies clocked at thirty-five miles an hour (mph) and hawk moths over thirty-three mph. Humans are but one of the sixty-one species of mammals here. Among the other "warm-blooded" residents are the 20,000 deer that roam the woods and farms scattered from Lloyd's Neck to the East End. The most common deer are the white tailed variety, which have adapted very well to suburban living and regularly forage off gardens and other developed landscapes. These swift, primarily nocturnal herbivores can run thirty mph, jump more than eight feet high and leap forward to lengths of thirty feet or more. Due to their remarkable swimming ability, deer have become abundant on Fire Island, where they are commonly seen at many parts of the National Seashore. According to the National Park Service, the number of deer on some parts of Fire Island is at an unhealthy density which puts pressure on other animal and plant populations there.

Because Long Island is an avian hub on the Atlantic flyway (the corridor birds follow from the Southern hemisphere to the Northern hemisphere during migration), the list of birds that occur on the island is extensive. There are over 350 species and tens of thousands of individual

birds that call Long Island home for at least some part of each year. Among these are black-throated wabblers, double crested cormorants, great horned owls, wild turkeys and a host of others. Some birds such as Ospreys (whose wingspan can reach up to six feet) and peregrine falcons (who are the fastest creatures on earth, flying at speeds of up to 180-200 miles an hour) once faced extinction due to pesticides but were saved by a group of Long Island environmentalists. Now the island is a major breeding ground for Ospreys and two falcons have been nesting at Nassau University Medical Center in East Meadow, having produced at least twenty hatchlings since 1997.

Long Island's Eastern tiger salamander found nowhere else in New York State is but one of the many species of reptiles and amphibians (salamanders, frogs, turtles and snakes) found here. The Italian Wall Lizard is the island's only lizard species. According to the researchers of *Long Island's Natural World*, this lizard made its debut in the late 1960s when a batch escaped from a busted crate behind a pet store in Garden City. Since then the grass green, narrow, slender lizards have adapted wonderfully and are multiplying by the thousands across Nassau County.

One of the books best offerings is its discussion of Long Island's ecological communities where rare plants such as insect eating carnivorous Pitcher plants, found along the boardwalk at the Quogue Wildlife refuge, flourish. Of the 166 communities currently recognized by the New York Natural Heritage, which maintains the state's most comprehensive database on the status and location of rare species and ecosystems, thirty-four (20 percent) of these communities occur exclusively on Long Island. One of the most prominent of these is the 100,000 acre stretch of land in Suffolk County known as the Pine Barrens, the largest contiguous undeveloped area of pinelands on Long Island and home to the greatest diversity of plant and animal species anywhere in New York State, including the universally rare dwarf pitch pine tree.

It is the island's sea and shore, however, which comprise our last true wilderness. Marine life common to our waters includes at least 340 species of fish representing 114 families (freshwater fishes of Long Island include forty-one species divided into sixteen families). Among these are fluke, bluefish, sea bass and mackerel. Some of the larger marine life found here include sea turtles, seals, whales and twenty-five species of sharks that migrate to Long Island's waters from as far away as South America. In addition to these, a diverse array of invertebrates such as mollusks (snails, clams and squid), scallops and mussels are found along our 1,180 miles of shoreline.

Although serious students of Long Island's natural environment will have to refer to more comprehensive works such as John Turner's

Exploring the Other Island: A Seasonal Guide to Nature on Long Island or Robert Villani's *Long Island: A Natural History*, *Newsday's Guide to Long Island's Natural World* provides readers with an excellent introduction to the wilds – the woods and waters – of our mostly suburban communities. Clearly, the most enjoyable feature of the book are the marvelous close up color photographs by *Newsday* photographer Bill Davis, who often had to endure scores of ticks and hordes of mosquitoes to capture his subjects in their natural setting. Overall, the book is a welcomed edition to a field that has unfortunately not been given the attention it warrants and deserves.

JOHN STAUDT
Hofstra University

Leonard Benardo and Jennifer Weiss. *Brooklyn By Name: How the Neighborhoods, Streets, Parks, Bridges, and More Got Their Names*. New York: New York University Press, 2006. Illustrations, bibliography, notes, index. Pp. xii, 209. \$17.95.

In the mid-nineteenth-century, legend has it that Lady Middagh of Brooklyn strongly opposed the practice egotistical landowners had of naming streets after themselves. She decided to remove the street signs, putting up in their stead new ones, with names more to her liking. And so came into existence what we know today as Orange, Cranberry and Pineapple streets.

Brooklyn's rich and textured past of which the above anecdote samples, is chronicled in Leonard Benardo and Jennifer Weiss's *Brooklyn By Name*. Skillfully blending history, trivia and folklore, the authors write of the many military heroes, sports greats, people of the arts, industrialists, patriots, religious figures, inventors and others whose names are commemorated in the borough's streets, parks, structures and establishments.

Benardo and Weiss lay the groundwork for understanding the 'toponymy' (study of place names) of the borough by opening with a modern map of Brooklyn showing the location of its various neighborhoods, followed by a short narrative history. The evolution of Brooklyn's names started with those given by the original Native American inhabitants. Unlike other parts of Long Island, the European population's significant impact and enduring influence in Kings County resulted in the failure of many original American Indian place names to survive through the years. The first European settlers, the Dutch, frequently used their own family names to designate lands owned. With the British takeover, many Dutch names became Anglicized. The county

itself was named after King Charles II of England. The American Revolution, the War of 1812 and the Civil War all produced a new source of names for Brooklyn's streets as military heroes and patriots were honored. A rebirth of Anglophilia in the late nineteenth-century led to the usage of Victorian era names such as "court," "place," and "drive," which served in some neighborhoods as a substitute for "street" or "avenue." The First World War created a climate that led to the removal of many of the German street names as a show of patriotism. In the aftermath of WWII, streets were named for veterans, public servants and community leaders. The creation of new street names has continued through current times; the tragedy of 9/11 resulted in the memorializing of victims killed in that terrorist attack.

Among the many interesting facts related by the authors are the following: the surprising number of landowning slaveholders among the early European settlers; the story behind the renaming of Malbone street to Empire Boulevard after a deadly subway crash; the change to Lincoln Place from the previously known DeGraw Street after a horrendous murder there; the Bush-Clinton playground whose name has nothing at all to do with the candidates who competed in the 1992 Presidential election; Meucci Square, established to honor the rightful inventor of the telephone; Quentin Road, previously known as Avenue Q., named in memory of Teddy Roosevelt's son killed in battle during WWI; Greenpoint, christened by seventeenth-century sailors for an unusually grassy piece of shoreline; Williamsburg, named after the grand nephew of Ben Franklin who had surveyed the land; Bleeker Street, corrupted from an early Dutch family surname meaning "bleachers of the cloth"; Bogart Street, also corrupted from an early Dutch family name and whose descendents included actor Humphrey; and Gerry Street, named after an American patriot who while Governor saw his political party begin the controversial practice of redistricting for political gain, forever to be known as "gerrymandering." On a personal note, I finally found out about the person whose name graced the playground I played in as a youngster, Kelly Park. Much to my surprise it was named for President Woodrow Wilson's appointee to the position of Kings County Postmaster, William E. Kelly.

Brooklyn By Name consists of eight chapters representing different geographic sections of the borough. Each section begins with a few vintage photos, a detailed modern street map and a narrative overview. What follows is an alphabetical listing of that particular area's place names, with a corresponding explanatory passage. Interspersed through every chapter are occasional photos, illustrations and highlighted inserts featuring a selected few of the more significant or unusual stories behind the names. The authors make clear early on that the scope of the book is

limited to primary streets. This work is not meant to be exhaustive, since many derivations of place names have been lost by historians through time. The reader who seeks more information is encouraged to do more research as Benardo and Weiss state, to help," fill in the blanks."

There was one error. Under the entry for Calhoun Street. John C. Calhoun is referred to as the only Vice President to resign his office. But Spiro Agnew also resigned the office of Vice President nearly 141 years later. That aside, *Brooklyn By Name* is a thoroughly enlightening, accessible and entertainingly written volume, fun to read and consult frequently. It would make a worthy companion on any walking tour of the borough's neighborhoods.

GARRY WILBUR
New Hyde Park, N.Y.

Robert Moses and the Modern City: The Transformation of New York, edited by Hilary Ballon and Kenneth T. Jackson. New York: W. W. Norton, 2007. Illustrations, bibliography, notes, index. Pp. 336. \$50.

Hilary Ballon, professor of architectural and urban history at Columbia University, was the curator of concurrent exhibitions on Robert Moses and New York City at the Museum of the City of New York, Queens Museum of Art, and the Wallach Art Gallery at Columbia University. Ballon and her Columbia colleague, Kenneth T. Jackson, co-edited this volume, produced in conjunction with the spring 2007 exhibits (reviewed below). While acknowledging that the book does not "mirror their organization or content" of the exhibits, it certainly does amplify them, and provides a permanent record of the extensive research conducted for them (p. 65).

Photographer Andrew Moore was commissioned to take photographs for the exhibitions; more than fifty of his stunning color photos appear in a "Portfolio of Robert Moses Projects" (pp. 7-63). Following an introduction by the co-editors is Jackson's "Robert Moses and the Rise of New York." Six essays by other contributors discuss recreation, highways, urban renewal (by Ballon), race, city planning, and critics of Moses.

More than half of the oversize book is devoted to a "Catalog of Built Work and Projects in New York City, 1934-1968" (pp. 134-323), organized by category (e.g. pools, roads, neighborhood playgrounds and parks). It includes more than 160 photographs and plans, with detailed entries covering the "physical character of the structures, site planning, engineering, architectural design, landscape, materials, and construction history" (p. 134). The section on housing focuses on Title I cooperative

private-public ventures such as Stuyvesant Town, rather than on public housing, where Moses had less influence.

The focus throughout the book is New York City, including its outer boroughs. Among Moses' many projects in Brooklyn and Queens were the Astoria pool, New York Aquarium, Rockaway Improvement, Flushing Meadows-Corona Park, Grand Central and Belt Parkways, Cadman Plaza Title 1, and Rochdale Village, as well as bridges connecting Long Island to the Bronx and Staten Island. Long Island parkways in Nassau County are briefly mentioned in two of the essays (pp. 86-88, 122). Jones Beach is cited in several essays and (in an entry on the Long Island State Parks Commission), is included in the Catalog, as is the unbuilt Rye-Oyster Bay Bridge.

This revisionist volume assesses Master Builder Moses in a broader national context than Robert Caro's *The Power Broker: Robert Moses and the Fall of New York*. Written in the perspective of the renaissance that has transformed New York City in the last three decades, *Robert Moses and the Modern City* focuses on what Moses built. With the aid of architect Aymar Embury II, landscape architect Gilmore Clarke, engineer Othmar Ammann, and other able staff, Moses set a high standard of design quality for well built public works which have survived and thrived. While not ignoring his shortcomings, this book is an indispensable documentation of the legacy of Robert Moses and an important correction to the negative assessment of Moses in Caro's 1976 biography.

NATALIE A. NAYLOR
Hofstra University, Emerita

Living the American Dream: Levittown and the Suburban Boom, Long Island Museum, Stony Brook, New York (runs Feb. 10 – Jul. 8, 2007).

Timed to coincide with the sixtieth anniversary of Levittown, the Long Island Museum's exhibit, "Living the American Dream; Levittown and the Suburban Boom" focuses primarily on that community and its history. It also contains several references to the "Preurbia" that was Long Island, and a few more to the future of Long Island as a suburban bedroom. Kayla, a bright, attractive 'tween from Commack, summed up this exhibit in a few words: "It was cool; you could see how things have changed. Cool." No doubt the two middle-aged couples enjoying a postvisit tailgate party in the museum parking lot had more to say, but from all appearances "cool" seemed to sum up their experience as well.

The exhibit, which appears to be aimed at Long Islanders familiar with the Levittown experience, combines nostalgia and history, with a

strong emphasis on the former. This aspect directs the exhibit toward an older audience: those for whom the Levittown experience was a major part of their coming of age. However, certain items have additional captions with discussion questions. These are indicated by the inclusion of a small line drawing of a house at the eye level of a fourth or fifth grade child. The questions can be thought provoking for adult viewers as well. Following these, a teacher or docent can move from question to question and maintain a running dialogue with student visitors, leading them to think more critically about the artifacts in the exhibition.

Three aerial views of Levittown, taken before, during, and after construction of the subdivision (1945; 1948; 1951) greet the visitor. These serve to reinforce the exhibit title's concept of the "suburban boom," as farmland gave way to the stereotypical "rows of ticky-tack," portrayed by the early critics of postwar suburbia.

Paintings of Long Island's rural and prewar suburban pasts are interspersed with images of the postwar housing boom so that visitors can see how the Serviceman's Readjustment Act (GI Bill) changed the Long Island landscape within a relatively short period of time. A small collection of wooden hand tools and a tradesman's blank book serve as reminders of a time when construction was a more personal activity, before the introduction of mass production techniques.

The postwar housing that dotted the Island from the Queens border to western Suffolk within a decade of the end of World War II began the process of changing Long Island from a bedroom community for Manhattan and Brooklyn to an independent suburban environment. Included in this portion of the exhibit are ads for prewar developments in Hicksville Terrace, 1924, and Rockville Centre, 1925, which were built for a commuting clientele with economic roots in Manhattan. Little is made of the fact that both the rural and the prewar houses were – unlike the early Levittown houses – designed for an upper middle-class, landowning, clientele. Since the shift to housing for middle and lower-income residents was a key element in the postwar suburban boom, this omission is unfortunate.

Set apart in its own display case, a sixteen millimeter movie projector, serves as a reminder that for the postwar generation of homeowners, taking photos and movies was as natural as the use of cell phone cameras and camcorders is today. This tendency provided material for many of the displays, which contain the home movies and photos of the earliest Levittown residents, many of whom followed the progress of their houses as they were being built. These films, many of which are in black and white, enhance the exhibit's storytelling and enliven the Levittown past.

The visual link between Levittown and World War II is also made with a life sized collection of mannequins wearing 1940s era uniforms: Red Cross, Grumman, and Military, posed in front of a large photo in which two Rosie the Riveters are building a plane.

General Electric's mid-war ads championed the promise of homes to veterans in 1943. The ad ran about the same time that the GI Bill was passed, and may have been an attempt to introduce the idea of affordable housing and link it to the sacrifices of the veterans. Since GE was gearing up for postwar production, the promise of affordable housing and the market it would generate was one it could readily support. A smooth demobilization would depend on the combination of reward for service and full employment. Affordable housing would be the cornerstone. Then, as now, however, the prospect of affordable housing was not universally accepted.

The centerpiece of the exhibit is a scaled down reproduction of the Levittown ranch living room and kitchen, complete with period furniture and a collection of various "Objets d Art," displayed on the innovative revolving book shelf that alternately closed off, and opened up, the kitchen and living rooms of the houses.

A sign invites visitors to make themselves at home by sitting down and glancing through the magazines on the coffee table, and several took advantage of the offer. The décor leans toward formal French Provincial, rather than the casual Colonial American that is more in keeping with the stereotype of a Levittown filled with small children.

The period television set, inserted under the stairs as was the original, plays 1950s programs. The "Lucy" show, with Lucille Ball and Desi Arnaz, caught the attention of one teenager, who laughed unabashedly at the antics on the screen as she sat on the floor in front of the television.

The ubiquitous black asphalt floor tiles used extensively in the original Levitt houses evoked some mixed emotions from a former homeowner who remembered the transfer of the black pigment to her children's socks and knees as the finish wore off the tiles. The exhibit also includes samples of the art of suburban culture – not all of which originated in suburbia - which includes some work from Brooklyn, and Queens.

A separate section on the Artists of Levittown includes the work of Bill Griffith in a "Zippy" cartoon sheet which reveals a downside to the Levittown story: the teenagers' discontent with a development designed for young marrieds and small children.

Stan Kaplan's black and white images focus on domesticity and the myths of suburban life – such as housewifery and laundry – while Paul Cadmus' painting, "Golf" – not an image usually associated with Levittown in the popular culture – serves to dispel some of the myth.

Photographic images include a little league team, and the tenth anniversary celebration staged in the parking lot of May's department store.

The nostalgia ends rather harshly with a small, but powerful finale – a critique of suburban sprawl. Barbara Griffith's painting the "New Pioneers" is a play on the early Levittowners, who saw themselves as a new generation of pioneers, moving eastward rather than west. Griffith's painting satirizes the leisure and economics of the new Long Islanders, with an assortment of architectural mixed metaphors – Greek and Roman pillars, Victorian turrets and porches, china vases and commodes, still under construction. In the foreground, the homeowners lounge under a latticework arbor, complete with a swing and a pet lobster.

Images of suburban growth, with traffic and stores as far east as Port Jefferson, are linked to photos of the new, upscale housing that has rapidly replaced the more modest homes of Levittown.

The contrast in size and scale are coupled with a fact sheet that breaks down the shift in housing to income ratios of today's market compared with that of early Levittown. Whereas in 1950, the median house price was roughly double the median income, today the median house costs four times the median income.

The exhibit concludes with the question, "What would you do?" and a basket of 4"x6" paper asking viewers for their ideas on solving today's housing problem. Located just below the fact sheet and images of today's housing, the request appears to have attracted a number of suggestions, some of which may form the basis of a future exhibit on Long Island and its housing.

BARBARA KELLY
Hofstra University

Robert Moses and the Modern City: The Road to Recreation. Queens Museum, Queens, New York (ran February 4- March 27, 2007).

The centrality of Robert Moses to the development of New York City, Long Island and substantial parts of the state is well documented. With a few exceptions and modifications we still travel, transport, commute, and seek recreation in the network of parkways, highways, expressways, and parks which he created during his career from 1929 to 1974. Certainly, it is difficult to imagine the development of Nassau and Suffolk without the Moses infrastructure. Commencing with Robert Caro's *The Power Broker* (1974), Moses' reputation, largely positive previously, came under increasing attack as the negative side of his work - the gutting of viable neighborhoods, near contempt for the politically and economically

weak, alleged racism, over reliance on automobiles and the consequent choking of the traffic arteries he himself created - began to eclipse his real achievement of creating a modern transportation grid on three islands and a sliver of mainland. In recent years the pendulum has begun to swing back, as the overarching benefits of Moses' tenure - imperious as it was - has come back into focus. One sign of this reappraisal is the opening of three exhibits examining Moses' career and work. These recently ran at Columbia University, the Museum of the City of New York, and the Queens Museum which is the subject of this review.

"Robert Moses and the Modern City. The Road to Recreation" emphasizes the recreational connection with Moses' transportation projects. It explains the original concept of the "parkway" as a well-landscaped artery originally intended to convey motorists to an entirely new generation of state parks. Not only was commercial traffic prohibited from parkways, but billboards, which Moses' loathed, were banned as well. The link between the road and the park was broken partly by the advent of the Interstate Highway System, which became the major source of funding for such work. The Interstate system mandated specified widths for the roadways and made no provision for aesthetics. Additionally, the growth of suburbs, especially post 1945, rendered the parkways more important for commuting than playing, and they themselves were widened, and straightened, with new bridges and ramps designed for economy and ease of construction with no consideration of aesthetic merit.

The parks themselves, especially the revolutionary Jones Beach project, were and remain public jewels and masterpieces of design and execution. Small wonder that urban/state planners around the nation arrived in droves to observe Moses' operations. But as the exhibit makes clear, it is easy to be blinded by such mammoth undertakings and miss the totality of Moses' work with parks and recreation. Moses created scores of smaller parks on Long Island, especially in Kings and Queens, as well as Manhattan. A number of these, on the south shore of Brooklyn and Queens, such as Jacob Riis Park, are substantial in their own right. Again, Moses built the bridges and roadways necessary to access them. Likewise Moses constructed a large number of municipal swimming pools. Some, like the Astoria pool in the shadow of the Hellgate Bridge, major undertakings. Moreover, wherever he found small bits of property under his control, Moses was likely to create a small neighborhood park. All told, he created 725 municipal parks ranging from vest pocket size to major recreational spaces. If there was any doubt as to his contribution to uplifting the social amenities of the five boroughs, this exhibit will surely dispel them. The concluding part of the exhibit features Moses' later

works, especially his bridges and the development of the two World's Fairs.

One of the more serious charges hurled at Moses in recent years is that his planning and projects were racially biased. One section of the exhibit asks the question "Did Moses Neglect Harlem?" This display includes a newspaper article containing criticism made by a Harlem religious leader that Moses essentially ignored New York City's largest black neighborhood. This is challenged by Moses' rebuttal, listing all his Harlem projects. The exhibit designers refrain from making their own assessments, but allow visitors to reach their own conclusions on the basis of the differing statements.

Those who think of Long Island as co-terminus with Nassau and Suffolk will be surprised by the relative lack of space devoted to effects of Moses' enterprises on the island's two eastern counties. But the exhibit does a superior job in restoring Moses to his position as a regional developer. Moreover, the exhibit graphically demonstrates how profoundly Moses' projects - highways, parkways, bridges, tunnels, pools, playgrounds and parks - affected Queens and Kings, and how his work there complimented or paralleled his activities further east and upstate. If nothing else, the displays implicitly emphasize the reality that Long Island does indeed begin at the East River.

This is an extensive exhibit filling three major halls and a few subsidiary galleries. Displays include both historical and contemporary photographs of Moses' projects, some of which have endured very well, some showing signs of neglect. (To see startling examples of neglect the visitor need do no more than stand outside the museum and view the derelict New York State Towers, pathetic remnants of the 1964-65 Worlds Fair.). These are complimented by original posters, opening day programs, maps, architect's drawings, and models. A large television screen in the main hall loops vintage film of some of Moses' major projects from Jones Beach to city swimming pools. Smaller television monitors with similar material are scattered throughout the exhibit space.

All in all, "Robert Moses and the Modern City" is a valuable, informative, and timely investigation and presentation of this dynamic, controversial and transformative figure whose legacy remains a key ingredient in the lives of New Yorkers to this day.

RICHARD F. WELCH
LIHJ Ed. Brd.

Harry W. Havemeyer. *Fire Island's Surf Hotel and other Hostelries on Fire Island's Beaches in the Nineteenth-Century*. Mattituck, New York:

Amereon House, 2006. Illustrations, maps, bibliography, and index. Pp. 178. \$22.95.

With *Fire Island's Surf Hotel*, Harry Havemeyer adds to his two books about resorts on Long Island's South Shore. Despite its title, however, the book covers a good deal more than the Fire Island resorts. Full of interesting details about the people and places in one of Long Island's most famous playgrounds, the book will delight readers familiar with the basic outlines of South Shore history.

Part I of the book begins with the story of Felix and Phebe Doiny, keepers of the Fire Island Lighthouse from 1835 to 1844. It then moves to the geology and environment of the barrier beach before returning to the story of the earliest hotels and finally to the Surf Hotel. After tracing the story of the Surf Hotel to 1892, the author then backtracks to discuss other activities on the barrier beach, such as the fish factories and life saving stations, before ending this section with the demise of the Surf Hotel and its proprietor, David S.S. Sammis.

Part II relates the story of other resorts on and around Fire Island, concentrating on the islands near Fire Island inlet and in Great South Bay. The author also discusses the more important resorts on Fire Island, such as Point O' Woods and Cherry Grove. The epilogue briefly carries the story of Fire Island resorts into the twentieth-century, ending with the development of the Fire Island National Seashore in 1964.

Little of the information in the book is new and much of it has been discussed in greater depth in books such as Madeleine Johnson's *Fire Island 1650s - 1980s* and in articles published in the *Long Island Historical Journal*. In addition, several of the chapters seem to be out of place; Chapters Eight and Nine, for example, on the fish factories and life saving stations, do not seem to have any real connection to the story of the Surf Hotel. Some minor reorganization of the material would have been helpful.

Yet Havemeyer pulls together information that has been difficult to find elsewhere. His discussion of the partition of Fire Island in 1878 presents the salient facts about this event clearly and concisely. The long and complicated court battles over ownership of the barrier beach is a confusing story at best and one that is little understood, yet the outcome of the partition shaped the development of Fire Island until 1964. Likewise, Chapter Ten on the cholera scare of 1892 provides detail to the rather sketchy outlines that are usually given for this story. The opposition in Babylon to the use of the Surf Hotel as a quarantine station exposes many issues at the turn of the twentieth-century - fear of epidemic disease, of environmental contamination, and most of all, of immigrants. In the early twentieth-century, Suffolk County had a large

and active Ku Klux Klan membership, built largely around fears of Catholic immigrants.

Much of the information about resorts on the smaller islands, such as Cedar Island, Muncie Island and West Island, is also difficult to come by in other sources. Havemeyer's discussion shows that resorts and summer homes were not simply for the wealthy. A wide range of accommodations and communities existed for people with more modest incomes. The illustrations in the book complement the text nicely.

Fire Island's Surf Hotel is an easily readable book, filled with details and stories that bring the nineteenth-century resort culture to life. It will be a fine addition to Long Island history collections.

MARSHA HAMILTON
University of South Alabama

Stephen L. Meyers, *Lost Trolleys of Queens and Long Island*, Charleston Publishing: 2006, maps and photographs. Pp. 127. \$19.99.

David Keller and Steven Lynch, *Revisiting the Long Island Rail Road, 1925-1975*, Charleston, South Carolina: Arcadia Publishing, 2005, maps and photographs. Pp. 128. \$19.99.

Arcadia Publishing has created a niche as a leading publisher of local history in the United States. The publisher proudly states its purpose is to chronicle "the history of communities and celebrating America's hidden stories, bringing to life the people, places, and events of the past." The combination of low price and high quality reproduction of photographs make Arcadia's products valuable additions for the scholar and casual reader alike. The "Images of Rail" series contains an array of books covering subjects across the nation.

Revisiting the Long Island Railroad, 1925-1975 and *Lost Trolleys of Queens and Long Island* are complementary; they chronicle important periods when rail transportation gave definition to Long Island. *Revisiting the Long Island Railroad, 1925-1975* is a companion volume to *The Long Island Railroad, 1925-1975* (2004) that explores topics not covered in the initial book.

The impact of rail transportation is lost on modern society. Although many still rely on commuter railroads and subways, and nearly forty percent of American freight is hauled by train, the age of the automobile shaped modern society. With highways providing links to all parts of the nation, few recognize that until the development of the railroads in the 1820's, the speed at which people traveled had not changed in thousands of years. People walked, rode horses (or other animals), or traveled on

wagons pulled by animals. And although many animals can sprint at considerable speed, for the long haul, the pace was little faster than the rate at which people walk.

The terrible condition of roads – usually little more than earth pathways, that became seas of mud in wet weather – made travel an adventure at best. It was not uncommon for rural residents to live their entire lives within an area of a few miles. Imagine, therefore, the transformation that resulted from the construction of railroad and trolley lines into these rural districts.

Electric trolley lines were cheap and fast to build. The cars were lighter than railroad coaches and since they were self-propelled, there were no heavy locomotives. This meant trolley lines could be built to much simpler standards and there was no need for the major support facilities needed to service steam locomotives.

Trolleys linked small towns, too small to warrant steam railroad service, but providing people a freedom that had never before existed. Indeed, in but a few months a line could be graded, tracks and ties installed, and the electrical system activated. Once in operation, the trolley cars were able to race across the countryside at speeds of between twenty-five to sixty miles per hour – depending on the condition of the right-of-way. Travel between communities became easy and enjoyable. The lines also transported freight on specially built cars. Another benefit of the coming of the trolley was that generating plants built to supply power to the streetcars also provided electricity for street and household illumination, making dramatic changes in the quality of life experienced by rural residents.

The age of the trolley transformed living and social patterns. People began to travel. Trolley routes often linked remote communities with steam railroad stations, making access to large cities convenient.

Stephen L. Meyers has produced a fascinating story of the incredible array of trolley lines that at one time existed in Queens, Nassau, and Suffolk counties. His *Lost Trolleys of Queens and Long Island* covers the period from the 1880's when streetcar lines first began to appear to the 1930's, when competition from autos, trucks, and buses, and the financial problems of the Depression led to the abandonment of the last remnants of the system. The less than sixty-year trolley era gave rise to a framework for the rural landscape that was confirmed and made permanent with the coming of autos.

The book's strength is its many fine maps, photographs, and clear captions. There is little actual text. Each of the ten chapters has introductory material of one or two pages. That sets the stage for the illustrations that follow. They are well chosen to tell the story. In a few instances a complete trip from beginning to end is captured in images.

The reader will spend considerable time examining pictures full of period details. The proud expressions on the faces of motormen and conductors, the delight on the faces of riders enjoying the cool breezes in an open car, and the celebration with which communities greeted the arrival of the first trolley car are just some of the events captured in this splendid volume.

At the same time as trolleys were awakening the smallest rural communities, steam railroads were being built across the nation linking consumers with suppliers changing the economy of America. By the mid-1920's, America's industrial and agrarian preeminence were well established. The products of American industry and farms moved by train. This was also the age in which trains were the only effective means of travel.

On Long Island, the nearly century old Long Island Rail Road, by then owned by the mighty Pennsylvania Railroad, was carrying growing numbers of commuters and travelers, and tremendous amounts of freight, principally farm goods grown on the island and transported for consumption in Brooklyn and New York. As a subsidiary of the Pennsylvania Railroad, the Long Island benefited by having direct access to Pennsylvania Station in the heart of Manhattan. The alternative would have been ferry service from Queens across the East River. The decline of many New Jersey rail lines in the 1950's and 1960's has been attributed to the absence of direct access to New York – something that has recently been corrected by New Jersey Transit.

The Long Island Rail Road suffered from many of the problems that beset the railroad industry in the period 1925-1975. After the flush days of the 1920's, the system decayed in the days of the depression and World War II (when despite vast utilization, there were no resources for repair and improvements). Thus, in the post-war era, the railroad was unable to modernize its operations as needed (although the entire steam locomotive fleet was replaced by diesel engines in about ten years). Its being a step-child of Pennsylvania Railroad limited available capital resources.

This story is told by David Keller and Steven Lynch in *Revisiting the Long Island Rail Road – 1925-1975*, their second volume about the Long Island Rail Road during this important period. This volume enhances the earlier book, covering many topics not included in that work such as the electrified service necessitated by the opening of service to Penn Station, the heritage of steam and later diesel locomotives, information regarding both freight and passenger business on the line, a chapter devoted to the famous and effective Morris Park Shops, and ending with a survey of service buildings.

As with *Lost Trolleys of Queens and Long Island*, the value of this volume is its photographs. Text is limited to a brief introduction of each topic. Captions are complete and clear. But it is the quality of the photographs that make the volume such a pleasure. One can truly feel the bark of the exhaust and smell the coal smoke from a steam engine easing a string of passenger cars out of a station. The scenes are full of detail. Each deserves careful study.

The volume brings the story of the LIRR to the mid-1970's. By that time conditions had continued to deteriorate – including two catastrophic wrecks in 1950 – to the point where in the early 1970's the LIRR was purchased by New York State with the promise by Governor Nelson Rockefeller that it would become the best commuter railroad in the nation. It might not have met that goal, but many improvements have been realized – including plans to reduce truck traffic by improving rail freight service. The LIRR continues as a major component of the New York City transportation matrix.

These two volumes capture in photographs distinct aspects of Long Island history. Arcadia Publishers is to be commended for supporting these local histories. The format chosen, relying on quality photographs to tell the story, simplifies the publication process. Let's hope that other authors with access to significant collections of photographs will come forward so other volumes on local history will become available.

DONALD E. SIMON
Monroe College

Joshua Stoff. *Long Island Airports*. Charlestown, South Carolina: Arcadia Publishing, 2004. Photographs. Pp. 128. \$13.59.

Perhaps most Long Islanders know that Charles Lindberg's 1927 historic nonstop flight to Paris originated at Roosevelt Field. I distinctly remember that the beginning of the movie, "Spirit of St. Louis" starring Jimmy Stewart, was filmed at Zahn's Airport in Amityville. However, I would suspect that most Long Islanders are unfamiliar with the fact that in 1833 Charles F. Durant landed a balloon at Union Race Course in Jamaica thereby becoming the first person to set foot on Long Island from the air. Or that in 1909 Glen Curtiss, Long Island's first flier, captured the Scientific American Trophy for the longest flight by an American -- 28 miles in 58 minutes. Clearly, long before air travel would make its mark on America, Long Island had already established itself as the center of aviation.

Certainly the period between the two world wars was considered the golden age of aviation. The many airfields dotting Long Island's

landscape, beginning in 1909, have been remarkably captured in photographs by Joshua Stoff, curator of the Cradle of Aviation. In this book the author has compiled some 196 photographs of seventy of the eighty-two airports known to have existed on the island. Of course, it would have been an added bonus if Stoff had identified the other twelve not included in this photographic exhibit. Nevertheless, his book has made an important contribution regarding Long Island's contribution to aviation history. His photographs reinforce two very important points. First, "Long Island helped transform aviation from a dangerous sport to a viable means of transportation" while producing "a large portion of the nation's aerial arsenal in times of war" (p. 7). Second, the island's geography was suited as a natural airfield and became a hub for many transatlantic and transcontinental flights. The photographs range from a former military airfield to seaplane bases to commercial airports. In terms of similar geographic proportions, the island had more airports than any other place in the United States.

A particular emphasis is devoted to Hempstead Plains, which became the focal point "of intense aviation activity for 50 years" (p. 8). Stoff's photographs demonstrate that by the 1930s Roosevelt Field had become the "largest and busiest civilian air field in America, with over 150 aviation businesses and manufacturers and over 450 planes based there" (p. 8). At the same time, Mitchel field, adjacent to Roosevelt Field, became the "U.S. Army's premier airfield, boasting the finest facilities and housing, the newest type of fighter, bomber, and observation aircraft"(p. 8). In particular, Stoff's photographs have ably captured the spirit of military aviation and its importance to Long Island's pre-Cold War history. Most importantly, during the first twenty-five years or so of the Cold War local defense industries provided a major boost to the island's economy. Indeed, the ebb and flow of Cold War tensions became a constant to the life of the island, as both Grumman and Republic built numerous fighter aircraft for the Navy and Air Force. There are many photographs of the airstrips in Bethpage, Calverton, and Farmingdale reinforcing this point.

Naturally, as the title suggests, Stoff's focus is on airports, not the different types of aircraft. The book contains five chapters dealing with the original dirt runways, seaplane bases, military bases, small general aviation airports, and large commercial airports such as John F. Kennedy International and LaGuardia. Stoff provides accurate annotations for each picture. All photos are identified by time period despite the book's topical, rather than chronological, approach. Some of the more interesting photographs include the 1910 picture of a Curtiss Aircraft in front of McLaughlin's Hotel in Mineola, a favorite watering hole for pilots, the 1918 fatal crash of a Curtiss JN-4 at Brindley field, an aerial view of

Mitchell Field in 1955, an aerial view of Curtiss Wright Field in Valley Stream around the time of World War II, an interwar shot of Holmes Airport in Queens, a 1935 aerial view of Mitchel field, and a 1965 photo of Zahn's Airport. Not only are these photos, as well as many others included in the book, interesting to look at, they are also quite telling about the transition Long Island underwent in the post-World War II period. Almost all these airports have disappeared in favor of housing developments and shopping malls.

Stoff's illustrated work is aimed for general audiences, not scholars. Yet there is a spirit to this book that makes it suitable for scholars. Stoff has succeeded in recapturing a visual reminder of the important role aviation played on the island in the first half of the twentieth-century. However, it could have been more complete. Most of the pictures cover the period from 1909 to the very early 1960s. The role of commercial aviation could have been expanded to include more photos of the expansion and development of airports like John F. Kennedy, LaGuardia, and now MacArthur. I think it would have been more fitting for Stoff to place his photos of the 106th Rescue Wing, located at Gabreski Airport, in the chapter on Military Airports. In addition, he could have included airport photos of the 106th's HH-60 Pavhawk helicopter and the HC-130 hercules, aircraft that have played a crucial role in saving some 294 lives in the last 25 years. Lastly, and perhaps more importantly, Stoff should have provided a brief introductory essay to each chapter thus offering a chronological overview as to how the airport photos fit in to the history of Long Island. It might also have been helpful to include some current photographs of the various locations where these airports once existed to show the impact of modern urbanization.

Yet these are minor quibbles and due little to detract from the book's overall contribution to the island's aviation history. Stoff has done a superb job selecting and annotating the historical evolution of Long Island's airports to the 1960s from birth to maturity and now, in most instances, to their disappearance from our visual radar.

CHARLES F. HOWLETT
Molloy College

Terry Wallace. *Caroline M. Bell (1874-1970) and The Peconic Bay Impressionists*. East Hampton: M. T. Fine Arts/Wallace Gallery, 2006. Notes, bibliography, illustrations. Pp. 174. \$35.

This catalog accompanied the exhibition of the same name held at Wallace's Gallery in East Hampton in fall 2006 and at the Suffolk County Historical Society from December through April 2007. Wallace

distinguishes the "Peconic Bay Impressionists" from the "Peconic School" of artists, which included Irving Wiles, Henry and Edith Mitchell Prellwitz, and other better-known artists.

Most of the artists of the Peconic School trained at the National Academy in New York City and moved from the city to the area of Indian Neck in Peconic on the North Fork. Most of the Peconic Bay Impressionists, on the other hand, were natives of eastern Long Island, and a majority were women. Led by Carolyn ("Dolly") Bell who taught many of the other Peconic Bay Impressionists, they often painted as a group en plein air.

Nearly half of the book is devoted to Bell. Following a six-page biography are fifty-six full color reproductions of her paintings. Bell had a prolific career in painting, exhibiting in New York City from 1919 into the early 1940s. Her paintings were also exhibited regionally on Long Island and in Woodstock, Gloucester, and Rockport. In the late 1940s when she was in her seventies, she limited her participation to various Long Island exhibitions, primarily the Members Exhibitions at Guild Hall in East Hampton, the Long Island Artists Award Exhibition at the Suffolk Museum in Stony Brook (now the Long Island Museum), and the Annual Art Festival at the Parrish Art Museum in Southampton. Bell's paintings were featured in a one-woman show at the Old Town Arts and Crafts Guild in Cutchogue in 1963. The library in her hometown of Mattituck held retrospective exhibits of her work in 1970 and 1976, and her paintings were included in a few Long Island exhibitions in the 1990s.

Bell began to teach at her studio in Mattituck in the 1920s, and some of the artists she taught traveled with her to Gloucester and Rockport in Massachusetts. Her students and associates became known as "Dolly's Crowd." Wallace includes paintings by thirty members of this group. The section on these artists contains brief biographical information on each and one of the artist's paintings on the facing page. As with Bell's paintings, each is on a single page and is reproduced in full color. They are arranged chronologically by the year of the artist's birth, which span the years from 1866 to 1937. Ten of the artists are represented by between two and four paintings. The book also includes a number of photographs (most in black and white) of the artists or their studios.

Most of the paintings are landscapes or seascapes. They are primarily of the North Fork, with a few from the South Fork and a number from Gloucester, Rockport, and the Catskills. There are three portraits: self-portraits by Bell and Agnes J. Mothersele, and a portrait of Gertrude Stein by Virginia Hargraves Wood Goddard. Bell and the other artists painted primarily in oil on boards, canvas, or canvas on boards.

Following the convention in exhibition catalogues, there is no index or table of contents, though the latter would have been helpful. The

checklist of paintings in the back of the book is the most convenient alternative for locating the artists in Dolly's Crowd.

Terry Wallace is to be commended for bringing attention to Bell and the other Peconic Bay Impressionists in this attractive volume featuring more than one-hundred of their paintings. The depictions of Long Island's landscape preserved in this book are worthy additions to the mid-twentieth-century artistic record of eastern Long Island, as well as a testimony to our island's natural beauty.

NATALIE A. NAYLOR
Hofstra University, Emerita

Robert G. Müller, *Long Island's Lighthouses, Past and Present*. Patchogue, New York: Long Island Chapter of the U.S. Lighthouse Society, 2004. Maps, index, illustrations. Pp. 379. \$25.

Lighthouses have been a traditional icon of Long Island thanks to the more than twenty lighthouses on or near our shores. Indeed, with fifteen of the twenty-six built here still extant, Suffolk County has more lighthouses than any other county in the country. While fulfilling their historic mission of safely guiding ships to port, the Fire Island, Horton Point, and Montauk Lighthouses are also museums which can be easily visited. The Huntington Lighthouse Preservation Society periodically conducts tours to its light in Huntington (Lloyd) Harbor. The Cedar Point Lighthouse is also accessible, though not as readily because of its location (it is a forty-five minute walk each way). However, you can visit all Long Island Lighthouses, past and present, in this book which recounts their history and current status.

The author, Robert G. Müller, was the founding president of the Long Island Chapter of the U.S. Lighthouse Society and created the Society's web site. A past president of the East Islip Historical Society, he received the U.S. Lighthouse Services President's Award in 2005 for his "outstanding contributions to lighthouse preservation," and in 2006 published *New York State Lighthouses* in the Arcadia series.

Müller begins with an "Introduction to Long Island's Lighthouse Heritage," which briefly traces the history of America's aids to navigation and the development of the lighthouse service, which puts the Long Island lights in context. He categorizes Long Island lighthouses by type of construction (stone, wood, granite, brick, cast iron, or reinforced concrete); shape (octagonal pyramidal towers, round or truncated cones, and square towers); land-based or offshore; and the location of the keepers' quarters.

The book groups lighthouses in different regions - North Shore, North Fork, Fisher's Island, South Fork, South Shore - with each section preceded by silhouettes of the lighthouses in the region. It is surprising to realize that there are twice as many lighthouses serving Long Island Sound (including Fisher's Island), as on the Atlantic Ocean (along the South Fork and South Shore). Each lighthouse is the subject of a separate chapter, proceeding clockwise from Stepping Stones Lighthouse east of the Throngs Neck Bridge to Montauk Point and then west to the Coney Island Lighthouse. The longest chapter (twenty-nine pages) is devoted to the Fire Island Light (where Müller has been a volunteer); the others are accorded ten to fifteen pages. The history of each lighthouse, including predecessors, is traced with basic information on construction (including year and dimensions), the keepers and their families, and current preservation efforts. Also mentioned are lighthouse ships, breakwater lights, and other "minor aids to navigation." Lavishly illustrated, the many well reproduced black and white photographs are from various archival and contemporary sources. Sources for the narrative text include official government records, logs, and diaries as well as books, magazine, and newspaper articles.

Müller realizes "there is much folklore surrounding lighthouses" (p. 11) and has conscientiously endeavored to separate fact from fiction. Thus, when recounting often told legends about Execution Rocks Lighthouse being named for chaining prisoners to the rock at low tide, he carefully notes the lack of evidence and concludes that the damage the shallow rocks inflicted on vessels is a more reasonable derivation of the name.

Most lighthouses are now automated and technological innovations in navigation have rendered some obsolete. Hence the United States government has been divesting itself of responsibility for lighthouse buildings. Skeleton towers may be efficient replacements, but surely do not have the appeal of traditional lighthouses. The Long Beach Bar (Bug) Lighthouse, deaccessioned by the government in 1948 and replaced by a lighted buoy, was sold in 1956 to the Orient Marine Historical Association, but burned by arsonists in 1963. In 1990, the East End Seaport Museum and Marine Foundation in Greenport built a replica on the original site. It is the only lighthouse on Long Island which currently permits overnight stays. Not many people may know that when the Cold Spring Harbor Lighthouse (erected in 1890) was to be replaced by a skeleton tower in 1965, the wooden tower was purchased for \$1 and brought to private property on Centre Island.

The attractive full color cover depicting a painting of the Shinnecock Bay (Ponquogue) Lighthouse, which was demolished in 1948 and replaced by a skeleton tower, is a reminder of the need to preserve

existing lighthouses. The final chapter, “The Future of Long Island’s Lighthouses,” indicates threats to the lighthouses, particularly the current Coast Guard policy of transferring maintenance of lighthouses to other groups. It is unfortunate that the watercolor painting of the Plum Island Lighthouse on the back cover was not reproduced in color.

Aiming at the “general reader” and for “ease of reading,” Müller does not include notes, a lack that he acknowledges “historians may bemoan” (p. 11). Fortunately, he does often include internal textual references to his sources and provides an extensive (eleven-page) bibliography. The bibliography is supplemented with a more selective “Suggested Reading” of fifteen books, most of which are recent titles with a broader focus than simply Long Island. Müller has deposited his collection of Long Island Lighthouse material in the East Islip Public Library, which has opened a Local History Room in cooperation with the East Islip Historical Society. This provides access to Müller’s research materials.

Other useful aspects of the book include an extensive index (thirteen pages), glossary, and list of lighthouse societies and museums (with telephone numbers, postal and e-mail addresses, and websites). The list of “Additional Historical Societies and Museums on Long Island” is incomplete. The Valley Stream Historical Society is the only one in Nassau County included and some of the largest museums are missing, as well as the whaling museums in Cold Spring Harbor and Sag Harbor and the Marine Museum in Amagansett. However, since many such museums are tangential to the focus of the book, these omissions are not crucial.

With the publication of this attractive and very readable book (the first to include all of Long Island’s lighthouses, including those no longer extant), the all-volunteer Lighthouse Society has furthered its mission “to preserve and promote the lighthouse heritage of Long Island.” All proceeds from sales go to the Society, which has undertaken preservation of the Cedar Point Lighthouse. The book is available at lighthouse museum shops and from the Long Island Lighthouse Society, which sponsors lighthouse cruises and other events. Müller also has his own web site which provides extensive information on Long Island and New York State lighthouses (www.LongIslandLighthouses.com).

Lighthouse aficionados (isn’t everyone?) will be delighted with the wealth of information in *Long Island Lighthouses, Past and Present*. It is by far the best book on Long Island lighthouses and an important contribution to Long Island local history.

NATALIE A. NAYLOR
Hofstra University, Emerita

Three Village Historical Society. *The Setaukets, Old Field, and Poquott*. Charlestown, South Carolina: Arcadia Publishing, 2005. Photographs. 128 pp. (softcover) \$19.99.

Very early in the twentieth-century Sag Harbor pharmacist, William Wallace Tooker, attempted to restore to Long Island its Native American identity. In 1911, he published *Indian Place Names of Long Island*, a collection consisting of well over five hundred names and other “Indian” words. One of those names, of course, was Setauket. Hooker claimed the name Setauket was translated from Algonquian and meant “land at the mouth of the river.” Other physical descriptions have been provided such as the 1744 observation by Dr. Alexander Hamilton who, during his travels, remarked that Setauket is “a small scattered village standing upon barren rocky land near the sea” (p.7). Certainly, during the American Revolution Setauket is best remembered for the origins of George Washington’s most famous spy ring, whose members included Benjamin Tallmadge, Caleb Brewster, Robert Townsend, and Abraham Woodhull, among others.

In keeping with the editorial guidelines of the “Images of America” series, the present work consists of seven chapters and numerous images depicting scenes from Setauket, and the neighboring residential communities of Old Field and Poquott; the latter two were established in the early twentieth-century. The work represents the combined efforts of many members of the Three Village Historical Society. Each chapter contains a brief historical introduction followed by photos and reproduced postcards capturing the region’s early agrarian way of life and social evolution to the mid-twentieth century. There are attempts, for example, to portray the story in a topical fashion with chapters on community organizations and sea life. Noticeably missing, however, is any attempt to discuss political matters or figures who resided there. Basically, the photographic history comes to closure at the start of World War II, thus representing the demarcation line between the rural Long Island we once knew and the postwar expansion of suburbanization we now know. That theme readily stands out. There are ample images of old homes and farms, stores, roads, mills and factories, historical churches, ponds, beach life during the summer, and, most notably, mansions such as St. George’s Manor, the Kenyon House, Old Field Manor, Widewater, and Sunwood. The images reflect a gentrified way of life. The two best chapters are “On the Water,” which examines the essence of the Long Island Sound’s economic and social impact, and “People of Setauket,” a rather interesting attempt to highlight the community’s economic and cultural diversity. This chapter does contain images of some of the noted Native Americans who lived in the community such as Jerry Cuffy and

Dr. Levi Phillips, Sr. (it should be pointed out that the correct spelling of King Philip is with one “l,” not two – see p. 114). There are also a number of images supporting the community’s patriotism, especially during the World War I period. All of the images in this work highlight the area’s cultural richness.

The inherent structural weakness of this work is its lack of a chronological framework. First, rather than separating the three distinct communities into separate geographical spheres, it would have been far more beneficial to combine them. A chronological/topical format covering all three as one could then have been established. In this way, a more panoramic setting could be provided thus breaking it down by topics beginning with the earliest roadways, businesses, notable families, lesser families, Native Americans, churches, bridges, mansions, schools, etc. In this fashion one could see the evolution of the communities over time. For example, images showing some of the early dirt roads could be juxtaposed showing how they were then transformed or replaced by the automobile and modern roadways of twentieth-century modernization. This could also apply to the farms and mansions that were later replaced by housing communities. Second, and this is a critical issue, the placement of photos lacks chronological sequence. For instance, in the first chapter alone we see on page eleven the photo of the Brewster House circa 1910 and right below is the Underhill House circa 1750. On page twelve we find a circa 1730 photo of the Old Manse and one from circa 1920 of the Grand Union Tea Company Sales Wagon – what’s the connection between the house and the horse wagon? Again, on page fifty-six there is a circa 1750 photo of the Brewster-Howell House and directly below one of Pfeiffer’s Corner circa 1910 followed at the top of the next page with the Griffin House circa 1750. While the lateral connection can be discerned, it can also be confusing at times to the reader. It would have been helpful to create a chapter showing the images of the old homes for the entire region beginning in colonial times onward – group them by time periods rather than mixing ones from the 1750s and early 1900’s. This problem permeates the entire work. Third, the book could have been arranged in historical fashion to cover periods such as the Native-Americans, Colonial-Revolutionary, Antebellum, Post-Civil War, Pre-World War I, and Post-World War I and the Great Depression. Such an arrangement might have enhanced its historical viability as opposed to just being a picture book. Last, and most importantly, readers could benefit from the inclusion of more recent images depicting the impact of suburbanization (there is one photo from 1961 which does not really highlight this point). This is especially important for residents who wish to capture the realities of “then and now.”

The strength of this work are the descriptions provided for each image and the ample photographs describing the life and times of the community. Its aim, quite naturally, is for general audiences rather than serious scholars. Again, its strength is the narrative descriptions provided for each photo. The authors have done an excellent job providing the necessary historical information for each image. It highlights the care and thought the authors devoted to their project. The *Setaukets, Old Field, and Poquott* stands as a testimony to the importance of the work undertaken by the Three Village Historical Society. It is a contribution to preserving the images of one region's past in Long Island's history.

CHARLES F. HOWLETT
Molloy College

William J. Switala. *Underground Railroad in New York and New Jersey*. Mechanicsburg, Pennsylvania: Stackpole Books, 2006. Pp. 182, \$19.95.

William J. Switala provides a penetrating story of the operations, important figures, and specific history of the Underground Railroad in New York and New Jersey. The term Underground Railroad refers to the historic phenomenon of slaves escaping from bondage in the South by fleeing to the North before the Civil War. It operated in the United States from the late eighteenth-century until the early years of the Civil War and embodies a whole range of activities from escape methods to the people who helped the freedom seekers. The account of self-emancipation by John Henry Hill provides primary evidence of the presence of the Underground Railroad. The author recognizes the multicultural humanitarianism of individuals who risked fines and imprisonment to aid fugitives in obtaining their goal.

The third in an Underground Railroad series, this slim volume builds on the earlier works of William Still and Wilbur Siebert and a modern study of the Underground Railroad by Charles Blockson. Like Blockson, Switala highlights the role of free African Americans in the process. Other books have appeared since Blockson's, but no comprehensive work covers the treatment of the Underground Railroad by illustrating the systems of escapes that freedom seekers used as they traversed New Jersey and New York.

Switala begins his analysis of the Underground Railroad in New Jersey and New York with a discussion of the demographics of each state, the legislative efforts to end slavery, abolitionists, and the Underground Railroad. The author demonstrates that both New Jersey and New York were part of the three major systems of escape routes to convey slaves to Canada: the western, central, and eastern routes. The

western route proceeded up the Mississippi River Valley; fugitive slaves fled through Michigan to Canada. The central route originated in Kentucky, Western Virginia, and western Maryland to Ohio, Indiana, Pennsylvania, and western New York. Each state had an Underground Railroad system that guided the slaves to Canada. The eastern route ran through Maryland, Delaware, and Virginia to Pennsylvania and New Jersey and continued through New York and New England to Canada.

Using newspaper accounts, Switala demonstrated that runaway slaves were a common phenomenon in New Jersey prior to the 1800s. Monmouth County was the first area in New Jersey where slaves were used as a source of labor. By 1820, Monmouth County had one of the largest concentrations of slaves in New Jersey, with 1,248 (p. 69). The Underground Railroad network in New Jersey consisted of numerous individual escape routes that led fugitive slaves to New York. The network involved many persons, black and white, who aided the self-emancipators in their journey to freedom.

Switala presents the record of the Underground Railroad by relating stories that convey the power and persistence of racism. The first slaves appeared in New York in 1626. By 1629, the Dutch West India Company was bringing slaves from Angola, Africa on a regular basis to the colony of New Amsterdam. Slaves helped build roads, houses, forts, and other infrastructure features of the colony. By the end of the decade, there were 2,170 black people in the colony and most were slaves (p. 72). A slave conspiracy in 1712 and an incident in 1741 that identified blacks as perpetrators of robbery and arson produced mass hysteria in the city. Simultaneously, the New York Assembly enacted a law regulating the manumission of slaves. The legislation that led to the abolition of slavery in New York evolved gradually over a period of years. In 1827 slavery was completely abolished in New York State.

Switala outlines the three major networks in New York that Underground Railroad agents used to convey runaways to freedom via the Underground Railroad. The Eastern Network along the Hudson River valley, the Central Network receiving freedom seekers from northeastern and north-central Pennsylvania, and the Western Network operating through the western part of the state. The several escape paths conveying runaways toward freedom in Canada included the rail system and waterways. One system took fugitives north to Albany and another sent the freedom seekers to Canada via Long Island, Connecticut, Massachusetts, or Rhode Island.

Long Island, until the late nineteenth-century, included Kings, Queens, and Suffolk Counties. As Switala discusses crucial links to the Underground Railroad puzzle, he demonstrates that some escape routes

took fugitives from New York City over the Long Island Sound to destinations in New Haven, Providence, New Bedford, and Boston.

It is no surprise that an Underground Railroad route ran through Long Island. Several factors necessary for a successful escape were present, such as a large population of free blacks by 1850; a strong presence of Quakers living in the western portion of the island; waterway transportation along the coast bordering Long Island Sound; the existence of a network that aided runaways in their journey northward to freedom. The Quakers, as Switala notes, were extremely active in abolishing slavery on Long Island. In 1775-76, the Westbury Friends Meeting manumitted eighty-five slaves and appointed Elias Hicks and Gideon Seaman to promote the freeing of slaves by all Long Island Quaker families. The Underground network on Long Island was dominated by several families, including the Hicks and Jackson families and the families of Thomas Willis and Samuel Parson.

Although Switala mentions the presence of black communities scattered throughout Long Island, he assumes that most were near the Quaker settlements of Westbury, Jericho, Flushing, and North Bellmore. He does not mention black settlements in either Kings County or Suffolk County. An interesting factor that Switala mentions but does not explore is the presence of the African Methodist Episcopal (A.M.E.) Church on Long Island, particularly its abolitionist sentiment and its role in the Underground Railroad activities. Switala asserts that as early as 1811 the Macedonia A.M.E. Church was founded at Flushing, Long Island, but does not cite other A.M.E. and A.M.E. Zion churches on Long Island, some of which according to oral history played a role in the Underground Railroad.

William Switala book fills a gap and sheds light on the memory of the Underground Railroad. It is particularly important in analyzing the informal network in New York and in the neighboring state of New Jersey. Yet the book is not a definitive history of the informal freedom networks in these states. A major shortcoming of the book lies in the author's brief discussion of the system on Long Island. Nevertheless, in telling the story of the Underground Railroad in New York and New Jersey, the author reveals that a generation of Americans, black and white, worked together for the cause of freedom.

FLORIS BARNETT CASH
Stony Brook University

Raymond E. and Judith A. Spinzia. *Long Island's Prominent North Shore Families: Their Estates and Their Country Homes*. 2 vols. College

Station, Texas: VirtualBookworm, 2006. Illus., maps. Pp. 1,197. (softcover) \$24.99.

This long awaited two-volume reference book by husband and wife team Ray and Judy Spinzia delivers its promised goal. No other sourcebook provides such well researched and detailed information about the people and the estates that populated the North Shore of Long Island from the early 1900's through the mid 1940s. Begun more than a decade ago, the Spinzia's, authors of *Long Island: A Guide to New York's Suffolk and Nassau Counties*, and former Long Island residents, consulted books, maps, social registers, periodicals, newspapers as well as historical records, to compile their extensive listings.

Easy to access, the main portion of the volumes is an alphabetical surname index. Each entry is designed to include name of estate owner, occupation, marriage partner, name and location of estate, architect and type of architecture, landscape architect, date of construction, map sources and social register listings, when known. Entries also include helpful historical notes regarding the person or the house. Photographs accompany most of the entries.

In addition, the Spinzia's have used their research gathering skills wisely. Taking information gathered from their surname entries, they have compiled a number of useful and unique appendices. Arranged alphabetically, there is an architects list, an estate name list, a landscape architect list and a location list of estates (and their owners) by town or village. All of these listings can be used by researchers to then return to the surname entries which provide the more detailed information. Researchers owe a special thanks to the Spinzia's for including a maiden name list. Women are often difficult to trace, but using this list, readers can find women listed by their maiden names, paired to the names of the men they married. Often readers will, again, be able find out more by returning to the surname entries.

Among the many appendices, there is also a section arranged by occupation. It is interesting to note, that while there were many educators, writers and attorneys, the categories of capitalists, industrialists and financiers seem to carry the day. There is a separate alphabetical list featuring statesmen and diplomats who lived on Long Island, but it is not clear why this category was singled out for special attention. It is informative, but perhaps data could have been compiled for other occupations as well. There is also an alphabetical list of movies made on Long Island and the estates where the filming was done. This is of interest, but unfortunately, might be missed.

Also of note are the two comprehensive bibliographies. One provides sources for research on individuals and the other is a compilation of more

general Long Island resources. Filling a longstanding gap in the study of Long Island history, and with a wide range of access points, this book is suitable for both the serious researcher and the general reader curious about “the rich and famous” who once lived on the North Shore of Long Island.

MYRNA SLOAM

The Bryant Library, Roslyn, N.Y.

Mary Cummings. *Hurricane in the Hamptons, 1938*. Charleston, South Carolina: Arcadia Publishing, 2006. Pp. 128. \$19.99.

Residents of Long Island’s South Fork were given no warning of the encroaching storm that was traveling at 60 miles per hour up the Atlantic coast during the morning of September 21, 1938. When it struck, it first pounded the shores of the small village of Westhampton Beach. The winds there soon exceeded 100 miles per hour and waves were observed up to fifty feet high. The hurricane changed the contours of the coast, creating an entirely new ocean inlet at Shinnecock Bay. But during the morning of that Wednesday, residents in the area went about their daily routines.

Hurricane in the Hamptons, 1938 is a book with 150 or so photographs and a fine descriptive text by its editor, Mary Cummings, a freelance writer and the archivist at the Southampton Historical Museum. It recounts the events of that day and their aftermath and is organized into three main sections, the “Battered Beachfront,” “Ravaged Villages,” and the activities of “Rubbernecking and Rebuilding” (p. 5). About a quarter of the photos portray Southampton, the largest number devoted to a single place, probably because the pictorial archive for that community is so rich. Snapshots of Westhampton Beach, where the hurricane hit land at 3:00 p.m. take up about thirty pages, even though twenty-nine of the fifty-two deaths in Southampton and East Hampton townships occurred there. Photos also depict Bridgehampton, East Hampton, and Montauk, the other coastal communities. The approach is coupled with a fast paced and gripping overview of the course, immediate impact, and consequences of the hurricane in each location.

Hamptons history and heroes are captured within this framework. The captions give details on the historical and social contexts of the photos’ subjects, often with the help of personal, even survivors,’ stories. Sometimes these lengthy descriptions trace the earlier tranquil times of a house, institution, or monument, like the one that describes White Cap, “boldly sited atop a dune” in 1886 and the only “cottage” designed by McKim, Mead and White in Southampton in the shingle style (p. 40). But the facing page shows its scattered remains after the storm. Since so

much beachfront and other devastation is presented in this book, the “before” photos in the volume provide needed respite for the reader. In another caption, the reader feels transported to the actual moment of the photo, a bulkhead stripped of houses. Cummings comments, “When daylight faded, the Hamptons faced the darkest night the area had known since earliest days with all electricity cut off and lamps and candles in short supply” (p. 53); and, of course, it had many fewer buildings still standing along the coast. More long lasting in its impact on communities than the loss of structures was the destruction of the ocean dunes. We still feel that today. “Rampaging seawater, weighing roughly 1,700 pounds per cubic yard and carrying tons of debris, devastated everything in its path” (p. 9). Cummings notes that a Suffolk County report estimated that shore dunes were diminished, on average, by 90 per cent in their size.

But it’s the examples of personal generosity and heroism that stand out in this balanced and sensitively written narrative. For example, three Southampton firemen, Cummings tells us, “taking advantage of the brief, eerie calm that occurs when the eye of a hurricane is overhead,” rescued a group of boys in a house by tying them together and leading them to safety through “chest-deep” water (p. 7). Two sisters from the Shinnecock Reservation were not so lucky. They drowned near Southampton’s private Bathing Corporation but not before lifeguard Dan Ferry attempted to save Della Johnson, who he saw swept up in the waves. Sadly, she went out to sea. In Ferry’s case, a wave “swept him into the lake where he battled for an hour and a half before finally reaching shore” (p. 29). Hotels helped out the best they could. The “swank” Henry Perkins in Riverhead took in refugees and offered free food (p. 22) while Montauk Manor was opened to accommodate residents whose homes in the fishing village neighborhood had been washed out to sea (p. 125). And Cummings does not shirk from including documents about death, such as that published in *The Hampton Chronicle* on September 30 entitled, “LIST KNOWN DEAD, Westhampton Beach” (p. 23) and a photograph of a victim lying under gigantic tree branches (p. 103).

It is unfortunate that the many dramatic stories and background pieces give the impression of being encased by Arcadia Publishing’s goal to “celebrate” local history and its requirement of writers to hone to a specified format. Without the constrictions, one might have asked, for example, would the press have so widely and for so long have reported the devastation of large homes if they had not been owned by the socially prominent? Outside of Montauk, how severe were the property losses to residents of modest means? In the case of Windbreak, built by Josiah Thaw in 1911, the “summer palace” (p. 117) suffered severe damage.

But as newsworthy as the damage may have been, readers may have been still recalling the celebrity event that Josiah's brother, Harry K. Thaw, had "irreparably tainted the family name in 1906, when he gunned down architect Stanford White," as Cummings reports (p. 48).

Since it was a new experience for South Fork residents to acknowledge dependency on units of government above the town and county, another interpretive issue to address revolves about the recruitment of state and federal resources to help and often lead the disaster recovery effort. How did the generally conservative attitudes of South Fork residents adjust and lead them to acknowledge the need for outside help from, for example, the Works Progress Administration (pp. 103-04, 109), and what were the implications of those changed attitudes for the future? Cummings skillfully points out that "there was some grumbling about importing workers" (p. 104) but the broader issue would require analysis of the impact of the crisis on attitudinal change. A limiting factor in using this work for ready reference is the lack of an index, especially for the general reader knowledgeable of particular locations. An index by place name and people would have been helpful.

Yet this outstanding work engages us with a unique historical drama presented in pictorial form. It is about one of the defining events in Long Island's twentieth-century history and proves again that weather can rule events and humans have little influence over them. It is well researched and includes two useful maps (pp. 4, 58-59).

ANN H. SANDFORD
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Alexander Rose. *Washington's Spies. The Story of America's First Spy Ring*. New York: Bantam Books, 2006. Pp. 384. \$26.00.

Espionage is as old as human history. While practiced in peacetime, especially among rivals, it assumes even greater importance in war. During the War of Independence (1775-1783) both the revolutionary army and the British government forces deployed spies and intelligence gathering operations to secure an advantage over their enemy. Focusing on the operations devised by George Washington, Alexander Rose examines and analyzes American intelligence operations during the nation's critical conflict.

Appropriately, Rose begins with an exploration of the most famous American spy mission of the war - the doomed project which cost Nathan Hale his life. Landing on Long Island before the Battle of Brooklyn, Hale, a young Connecticut school teacher with little military and no espionage experience, was instructed to reconnoiter the British lines and

report back to Washington's headquarters. Rose cites recently discovered evidence that Hale was unmasked by Robert Rogers, the legendary leader of "Rogers Rangers" during the French and Indian War, who was then attempting to restart a career which had gone bad. Rogers first tracked, then met, and finally arrested Hale, who was sent to the gallows. In an interesting and lengthy footnote, Rose traces the transformation of this intelligence fiasco into one of the most enduring patriotic legends of the Revolution. He also states the Hale did indeed land at Huntington just as local folklore has long maintained. Rufus Langhans, the energetic Huntington Town Historian of the 1970s and 80s, became convinced that Hale landed elsewhere and had the inscription on the Hale monument which stands before the Town Historian's office altered from "landed on the shores of Huntington" to "shores of Long Island." If Rose is correct, the original wording needs to be restored.

But Washington learned from the Hale experience, and Rose credits him with outclassing the British in intelligence matters. While the British utilized spies in a desultory and ad hoc fashion, they tended to rely on scouting operations for much of their knowledge. While the Revolutionary army did likewise, Washington came to believe that a cell of permanent spies behind the British lines could give him the operational information he needed to discern British intentions. He began setting up his secret service while the British were in Philadelphia in 1777 when he "ran" spies inside British lines. But it was after the main British army returned to New York in early 1778 that he organized the most important and successful espionage network of the war.

Though Manhattan served as Britain's military headquarters from 1778 to 1783, Long Island, also occupied from September 1776, was almost as important since it supplied much of the sustenance necessary for the British war effort. While Kings and Queens County held large numbers of Tories, Suffolk residents tended to support the Revolution. It was there that Washington established his spy organization. Specifically, the intelligence network Washington established on Long Island and Manhattan was Setauket centered. The ring was run by Col. Benjamin Tallmadge, classmate of Nathan Hale and a colonel of the Second Continental Dragoons, who had grown up in the village. Caleb Brewster, another Setauket resident, may have prompted Washington to create the network when he volunteered to secure intelligence on Long Island for the Continental Army. Brewster was an early and active participant in "Whaleboat Warfare," the raids and counter raids conducted by revolutionary whaleboat crews from Connecticut and their Tory counterparts on Long Island. Brewster's knowledge of the Sound and Long Island coastline made him the prime conduit of information across the waterway. Abraham Woodhull, a local farmer-merchant, soon became

the pivotal figure in the ring. His business activities caused him to travel from Setauket to Manhattan every few weeks, a dangerous undertaking which took him through British checkpoints and patrols, not to mention the outright bandits and robbers who preyed on supporters of both sides. Nevertheless, his travels presented ample opportunity for observing and collecting information about British dispositions and troop movements. During the periods when Woodhull remained in the city for a period of time, his reports were carried to Setauket by a number of couriers including Austin Roe and Jonas Hawkins, local men from Setauket and its environs. Indeed, the members of the network evinced a strong disinclination to work with anyone they did not know.

Tallmadge, Woodhull, Brewster and their lesser colleagues were attendees at the Setauket Presbyterian Church, a denomination which was sympathetic to the patriot cause. Rose points out that several of them had personal reasons for undertaking the dangerous spy business. Tallmadge was a friend of Hale's and his eldest brother, captured after the defeat at Brooklyn, died on a British prison ship. Woodhull may have been inspired by the death of his kinsman, Nathaniel Woodhull, after the Battle of Brooklyn. Personal experience may also have influenced the participation of the ring's most anomalous member, Robert Townsend of Oyster Bay. Townsend, of Quaker-Anglican background, was recruited by Woodhull, who was fearful that his repeated journeys from the city to Suffolk were arousing British suspicions. Rose hypothesizes that Townsend, who had a thriving business in the city, might have been influenced by lapsed Quaker Tom Paine's *Common Sense*, but concedes a more likely cause was the increasingly heavy handed British occupation. British exactions and behavior become increasingly callous, corrupt, and brutal, as the war went on. British conduct grew so harsh that even the generally loyalist population of Queens County turned against their tormentors and the Royal cause. The conduct of Col. Simcoe's troops in Oyster Bay may have pushed Townsend over the line. In any event, Townsend's presence in the city allowed Woodhull to spend most of his time in Setauket where he acted as clearinghouse of information collected by Townsend, and conveyed to Setauket by courier. Woodhull would then contact Brewster who ferried the reports across the Sound to Tallmadge in Connecticut who forwarded them to Washington.

As a security measure, Tallmadge devised a system of aliases for its members. He himself took the *nom de guerre* "John Bolton," Woodhull became "Samuel Culper," and Townsend "Samuel Culper, Jr." the latter two pseudonyms leading to the term "Culper Ring" for the Long Island spy network. Tallmadge also created a "dictionary" of 710 words and fifty three numbers expanded when necessary - which were used in all of the cell's communications. Culper's letters to Tallmadge and Washington

were written in “sympathetic stain,” an invisible ink which was developed by John Jay’s elder brother, Sir James Jay. The writing turned black once “the agent,” another chemical, was applied to the paper.

The Culper Ring was at its height of activity between 1778 and 1781. During this time it not only kept Washington informed about British troop levels, order of battle, fortifications and movements, they supplied evidence that the crown was also counterfeiting Continental currency as a measure of undermining its already shaky value. The Culper Ring had no direct role in the unmasking of Benedict Arnold’s treason, but Arnold’s defection threw a scare into both Townsend and Woodhull since the traitorous general knew that Washington had agents operating on the island, though he did not know their real identities. Nevertheless, Townsend and Woodhull became increasingly fearful of detection and arrest. Certainly the British, beginning to connect the dots, seemed to be closing in. British patrols and checkpoints became more numerous and active on the island, while the Sound became the scene of more frequent fighting between rival whaleboat warriors. As a result, while the war reached its climax at Yorktown, Townsend went “dark” – silent – and Woodhull temporarily ceased activities. A little later, however, Woodhull obtained word that a peace based on independence was in the works, information he sent to Washington, who had not yet received official notice of the ensuing treaty. Through late 1782 and into 1783, Washington reactivated the Culper Ring when it seemed the British were dragging their feet in evacuating New York. Woodhull’s last report of British activities and troop levels on Manhattan and Long Island was dated February 21, 1783. With the war satisfactorily concluded, the members of the Culper Ring resumed their normal civilian lives. They never mentioned their wartime activities publicly, and their clandestine service was revealed through the researchers of a later generation of historians.

Rose lets the readers draw their own conclusion about the importance of the Culper Ring to the Revolutionary cause. Minimally, the espionage network provided Washington with a flow of reliable information which allowed him to make effective and appropriate decisions regarding his own operations. Moreover, Washington demonstrated that he appreciated the value of a sound intelligence network when he set up a budget for espionage to counter the efforts of French and Spanish agents during his presidency.

Washington’s Spies is both well written and thoroughly researched, drawing heavily on original sources, especially the correspondence between Tallmadge and Washington. At times, Rose’s immersion in the period leads to lengthy sections which, depending on the reader’s interests and inclinations, might be considered either unnecessary

digressions or useful and enlightening extensions. Such passages include introductory material on Robert Rogers, the Revolution on Long Island before the creation of the Culper Ring, and a tour of British occupied Manhattan whose "Holy Ground" - the red light district - receives detailed consideration. The same might be said of Rose's rendition of whaleboat warfare and Tallmadge's raid on Fort St. George at Mastic. None of these are directly involved with Washington's espionage network, but all are interesting in themselves. Perhaps more questionable is the author's use of modern espionage terms such as "moles," "surveil" as a verb, which are certainly anachronistic. A few minor factual errors mar the narrative. Rose locates Brookhaven "on the northeast side of Long Island." If he means the hamlet it is on the south shore. If he means the Town the designation is useless, since Brookhaven stretches from Sound to Ocean. Referring to the United States immediately after the Revolution he states "Washington's government was weak," whereas Washington had no government until 1789. These small lapses do not detract from an excellent, accurate presentation of a significant aspect of the American effort in the War of Independence, one which holds special resonance for Long Islanders.

RICHARD F. WELCH
LIHJ Ed. Brd.

Pascal James Imperato. *Tudor Village, The History of a Unique Community in Queens County*. Manhasset, New York: Kilima House Publishers, 2004. Maps and photographs. . Pp. xiii 111. \$7.92.

Dixon Ryan Fox, a preeminent historian writing during the first half of the twentieth-century, lamented in his 1938 foreword to Ralph Foster Weld's *Brooklyn Village* that most local histories lack the "human value of their materials." Fox who served as president of the New York State Historical Association and president of Union College observed that "local history is national history locally exemplified" and is the better subject of study because "the student of civilization can make little out of looking at nations because he cannot see individuals."

Fox's endorsement of local history as a means of understanding society is an appropriate introduction to *Tudor Village* written by Pascal James Imperato, M.D. The object of his study is a small community in southwestern Queens County, from its founding when it was surrounded by dairy farms to the present day. Dr. Imperato has written a comprehensive and charming history of the community where he spent his early years. He writes with wit, warmth, and respect about the community, its inhabitants, and its context within the larger story of the

urbanization of Queens County and New York City. The volume has numerous high quality photographs that enhance the text in telling the story of this community.

The saga began in the 1920's when optimism, the stock market's continuing rise, and demand for housing for New York City's growing population combined to stimulate land development in previously rural areas. As noted, Tudor Village was "at the high end of the housing market for [that] area of Queens County." The homes were brick with Tudor architectural elements. Streets were planted with shade trees and the one major thoroughfare, 133rd Avenue, was embellished with a planted center mall. Occupying thirty-five acres (approximately nine city blocks) the development was built between 1927 and 1935.

What becomes apparent from this study is the close knit community that emerged. The author is to be commended for populating the village of his book with people who come alive for the reader. The story of Tudor Village is the story of families that were among the first to occupy the newly built homes as well as those who were attracted to the community over its eighty years of existence. The community was well served by the nearby Fulton Street elevated line (and the subway that replaced the western portion) that made commutation to downtown Brooklyn and Manhattan relatively convenient.

In its early years, because of its location, the site of Tudor Village benefited during the summer from cooling breezes from Jamaica Bay and the Atlantic Ocean. Neighboring open space, be it farms, cemeteries, or the tidal marshes of the bay, gave the community a remote and tranquil appearance. A challenge to the developers was the need to build their communities within the limitations posed by the existing streets and yet conform to the official street map and land elevations adopted by the City of New York. As a result, many of the streets within Tudor Village were not accessible to vehicles, rendering these spaces essentially extensions of the already generous front lawns and gardens provided by the developer, where children could play and adults could be confident in their safety.

Tudor Village was an oasis within a sea of transformational change. Built near the aqueduct or conduit that brought fresh water to the City of Brooklyn (long before the 1898 consolidation absorbed Brooklyn and Queens into the city of New York), the community was almost always experiencing or preparing for major civil engineering projects in and around its precincts. The development of Conduit Boulevard (following the route of the water aqueduct), the Belt Parkway, what is today's John F. Kennedy International Airport, and conversion of open space buildings literally transformed the community from a setting valued for its remoteness to one of the myriad of housing developments that existed by the post-World War II era.

Yet the author provides ample evidence that the community continues to thrive, partly because of its tradition of civic involvement on the part of its inhabitants as well as both its proximity to and yet remoteness from the business precincts of Manhattan and Brooklyn. Tudor Village, although urban in form, served as a suburban enclave where residents could leave behind the pressures and chaos of the city in favor of a quieter existence.

Dr. Imperato introduces the reader to numerous community families and residents and follows their progress into the twenty-first-century. The reader shares the joys and sorrows experienced by residents. The means by which the community adapted to changing circumstances demonstrates a process by which people maintain their values and dreams while accommodating to the transformation that is so much a part of urban life.

The author concludes his excellent narrative noting “Tudor Village today rests in a larger landscape much changed from when it was originally built.” Yet, he reminds the reader, “A legacy of older values mixes with newer ones, and customs past and present come together to create an enduring future for this unique community.”

Dixon Ryan Fox would have been delighted with Tudor Village!

DONALD E. SIMON
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James Driscoll. *Flushing: 1880-1935*. Charleston, South Carolina: Arcadia Press, 2005. Photographs. Pp. 128. \$13.59.

Arcadia Press inspires wonder and awe. They have created a winning formula to capitalize on the public’s appetite for local history and civic pride. By contracting with historical societies and individuals, they can be relatively certain that the resulting book will be accurate; at the same time the publisher has no responsibility for content and style. Everywhere one travels, from the Sebago Lake region in Maine to Long Beach, California, one finds an Arcadia book in local bookstores. I wish I’d thought of it. The truth, of course, is that the quality varies widely. Some volumes offer well-researched, well-written text while others provide little more than captions meaningful only to knowledgeable locals.

James Driscoll, historian for the Queens Historical Society and a staff member of the Long Island Division of the Queens Borough Public Library, wrote *Flushing: 1880-1935* for the Voelker Orth Museum, Bird Sanctuary, and Victorian Garden. The museum, open for less than a decade, occupies an historic house in Flushing (p. 83-84), one of an ever-shrinking number of nineteenth and twentieth-century suburban homes

dwarfed by undistinguished apartment towers of recent vintage. Driscoll has more than ably presented an accessible history of Flushing, covering the major episodes in the town's story from its founding in 1645 to the late twentieth century. The dates in the title refer to the images, not the scope of the book's content; and despite the series title, not all the images are postcards.

The beauty of Flushing is that the place has a history worth writing about. With some Arcadia titles it is obvious that the authors have strained mightily to locate the historical significance of the images they present. Sometimes there is nothing more to say except, "It used to look like this." That may be enough for a book aiming for nostalgia. For a work with higher ambitions it is not. What is largely missing from Arcadia publications is the deeper analysis historians require, the links to broader themes. But that is not what we expect from this series.

To a large degree Driscoll has minimized the nostalgic tendencies and adequately summarizes Flushing's story, particularly the struggles over religious freedom between the English Quakers and Peter Stuyvesant, the governor of New Amsterdam. Fortunately, several of the actual sites connected with the history of the Quakers in Flushing remain – the Bowne House, the Meeting House, and the granite monument marking the spot where George Fox preached – and the book contains several images of each. Driscoll rightly notes that the Flushing Remonstrance of 1657 is "one of the first public statements defending freedom of religion in American history" (p.9). He also provides a good summary of the horticultural heritage of Flushing, the town's religious and educational institutions, and the arrival of the IRT subway in the 1920s. The book is most useful for its images of the fine suburban neighborhoods of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

By stopping in 1935, Driscoll avoids asking difficult questions about the present. By this I do not mean the influx of Asians in recent decades, but the physical changes to this mature suburb. Too often a caption states that the building was lost in the 1920s or the 1950s, and in each case the reader logically wants to know what went up in its place. Throughout Driscoll hints at the challenges but never addresses them head on. Why are the handsome wood frame homes in Murray Hill, Broadway, and other areas of Flushing disappearing? How are residents today reacting to such changes? The section on Waldheim (p. 93-100) describes how this suburban enclave was built, and includes an image of a house that was demolished in the 1980s. Absent from the text is mention that residents had applied to the Landmarks Preservation Commission for protection as a historic district but were rebuffed. The evisceration of this neighborhood is not the result of natural causes, but municipal policy.

In the same way, he avoids the scandalous history of RKO Keith's Theatre, except to mention the "current plan" for "a new commercial and residential structure that will incorporate the theater's old ticket lobby and grand foyer, which are a city landmark" (p.120). The Keith's owner refused to acknowledge its designation as a city landmark and began demolition. As a result, it remained an empty shell for twenty years. And not long ago, the congregation of the Bowne Street Community Church, originally the First Reformed Church, made noises about selling the handsome church with its Tiffany windows as a development site. Unless the story of Waldheim, RKO Keith's, and other such sites is brought forward, it remains incomplete, and most readers would not even know the questions to ask.

Flushing: 1880-1935 is better than most volumes in this series, but shares their limitations. Each volume seeks to fulfill the expectations of its intended audience, presenting comfortable images of a vanished past and a generally upbeat story. This is a valuable collection of images, but the book leaves too many questions unasked.

JEFFREY A. KROESSLER
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Toby Selda. *Simply "Father": Life with Theodore Roosevelt as Seen Through the Eyes of His Children*. Fort Washington, Pennsylvania: Eastern National, 2007. Illustrations, notes, bibliography. Pp. 28.

Theodore Roosevelt wrote in his Autobiography, "I think there ought to be children's books . . . I do not believe a child's book is really good unless grown-ups get something out of it" (quoted on the back cover). By that criterion, this is a "really good" children's book from which even adults knowledgeable about TR will benefit. The author, Toby Selda, is a retired elementary school teacher who has long been fascinated by Theodore Roosevelt and has been a volunteer at Sagamore Hill for many years.

The title aptly describes the book, in which TR and his family at Sagamore Hill are presented through the collective voice of his children. Each page focuses on a different theme, e.g. "Our Family," "Sagamore Hill," "The Pillow Fight," and "Fun and Games." The book is attractively designed in an 8-1/2" x 11" horizontal format with the photos in sepia to resemble a family album. The abundant illustrations include archival photographs and facsimiles of period cartoons and TR's picture letters to his children. Although it is described as "historical fiction," the work comes closer to being a family autobiography, drawing on documented sources for anecdotes that will appeal to younger readers (ages 9 and up).

Unfortunately, many biographies for children contain factual errors or take considerable liberties with the historical record. *Simply "Father"* is historically accurate, with sources for quotations, a bibliography of twenty adult titles, and a webliography. The staff at Sagamore Hill reviewed the text and assisted with the photographs and with editing. The book is published by Eastern National which distributes and sells books for the National Park Service. All aficionados of Theodore Roosevelt will want to purchase a copy of this book at the Sagamore Hill Visitor Center in Oyster Bay so they and younger generations can be delighted by TR and his family.

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BOOK NOTES

Prepared by Kristen J. Nyitray

W. D. Akin. *Montauk is: A Collection of Haiku and Short Poetry*. New York: Harbor Electronic Publishing, 2005. \$12.95. Pp. 101.

Amityville Historical Society. *Amityville*. Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishing, 2006. \$19.95. Pp. 128.

Hilary Ballon and Kenneth Jackson, eds. *Robert Moses and the Modern City: The Transformation of New York*. New York: W. W. Norton, 2007. \$50. Pp. 304.

Donna Barron. *Long Island Indians and Their New England Ancestors: Narragansett, Mohegan, Pequot and Wampanoag Tribes*. Bloomington: Authorhouse, 2006. \$11.99. Pp. 172.

Keriann Flanagan Brosky. *Ghosts of Long Island: Stories of the Paranormal*. Huntington, NY: Maple Hill Press, 2006. \$24.95. Pp.176.

John M. Burns. *Thunder at Sunrise: A History of the Vanderbilt Cup, the Grand Prize and the Indianapolis 500, 1904-1916*. Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Company, 2006. \$55. Pp. 279.

Maryann Calendrille, ed. *Sag Harbor is: A Literary Celebration*. New York: Harbor Electronic Publishing, 2006. \$17.95. Pp. 192.

Martin R. Cantor. *Long Island, The Global Economy and Race: The Aging of America's First Suburb*. Bethpage, NY: Long Island Development Corporation/Greater New York Development Company, 2006. \$16. Pp. 116.

Nancy Cataldi and Carl Ballenas. *Maple Grove Cemetery*. Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishing, 2006. \$19.95. Pp. 128.

Alice Cooney Frelinghuysen. *Louis Comfort Tiffany and Laurelton Hall: An Artist's Country Estate*. New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2006. \$65. Pp. 262.

Ruth Crocker. *Mrs. Russell Sage: Activism and Philanthropy in Gilded Age and Progressive Era America*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2006. \$49.95. Pp. 526.

Stan Fischler. *Long Island Rail Road (MBI Railroad History)*. St. Paul: MBI, 2007. \$36.95. Pp.160.

Geoffrey K. Fleming. *Lemuel Maynard Wiles: American Painter*. Southold, NY: Southold Historical Society, 2005. \$10. Pp. 39.

Geoffrey K. Fleming. *St. James*. Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishing, 2006. \$19.95. Pp. 128.

David Nathaniel Gellman. *Emancipating New York: The Politics of Slavery and Freedom, 1777-1827*. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2006. \$45. Pp. 344.

Ben Gibberd. *New York Waters: Profiles from the Edge*. Guilford, CT: Globe Pequot, 2007. \$24.95. Pp. 160.

Judith S. Goldstein. *Inventing Great Neck: Jewish Identity and the American Dream*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2006. \$24.95. Pp. 205.

Sara S. Gronim. *Everyday Nature: Knowledge of the Natural World in Colonial New York*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2007. \$49.95. Pp. 261.

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IN MEMORIAM

David A. Overton (1925-2005)

David Arthur Overton, a resident of Lake Grove, New York and former Town of Brookhaven Historian died on October 11, 2005. He was born on September 18, 1925 in Brentwood, New York. His family later moved to Lake Grove, where he resided until his death. A graduate of Smithtown High School, Mr. Overton then served in the United States Army Air Corps from 1943 to 1946. Returning to Lake Grove, he worked for the Long Island Rail Road before starting his own real estate and insurance business. In 1957 David married the former Doris Sorenson, also of Lake Grove. They were married forty-four years when she died in 2001. As a resident of Lake Grove, he was a charter member of the Lake Grove Lions Club, Vice Chairman of the committee for Incorporation of the Village of Lake Grove; served as the Village Clerk from October 30, 1969 to August 2, 1970 and on the Zoning Board of Appeals for twenty years, as well as a Trustee of the Lake Grove Civic Association.

David started his long relationship with the Town of Brookhaven when he was elected a Town Trustee, serving from 1956 to 1960. He was appointed Town Historian in February 1971, serving until his retirement in April 2005. In his thirty-four years as Town Historian, he oversaw the acquisition and renovation of the Longwood Estate in Ridge and the New Village Congregational Church in Lake Grove. He fully supported the establishment of Historic Districts in the Town and saw fourteen of them be recognized, as well as many properties designated as landmarks. As Town Historian, Mr. Overton instituted and chaired the Bicentennial Committee in 1976, culminating in the Longwood Fair, which remains an annual event sponsored by the Town of Brookhaven.

A pet project of David's, which grew from one of the publications of the Bicentennial Committee's work, was to identify the burial plots of veterans of the American Revolution. Where necessary, David applied to the Office of Veterans Affairs for replacement stones. He was immensely proud of serving on the Town of Brookhaven's 325th Anniversary Committee in 1980 and again on the 350th Anniversary Committee in 2005.

David Overton's interest in local history and his dedication to public service reached outside of Brookhaven. A longtime member of the Suffolk County Historical Society, he served as President in 1986 and 1987, and on the Suffolk County Tercentennial Committee. His affiliation with the Association of Suffolk County Historical Societies, and the Association of Public Historians in New York State has included

active roles within both groups. In 1996, the Municipal Historians of New York State honored David as an “Outstanding Historian.”

David A. Overton will long be remembered as an outstanding historian in the Town of Brookhaven, where he advocated and shared his love of local history and his dedication to preserving it.

Barbara M. Russell, for the editors

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