

THE FREEHOLDER

WINTER 2007 **THE OYSTER BAY HISTORICAL SOCIETY** FOUNDED 1960

☞ WERE THEY
HEROES OR
THIEVES? THE
STORY OF MAJOR
ANDRE'S CAPTORS

☞ WANT TO
UNCOVER YOUR
HOUSE'S HISTORY?
FIND OUT HOW!

☞ WAY-GOOSE: A
"PRINTED" INVITA-
TION TO A DUTCH
NEXT DOOR FEAST,
PART IV



THE HISTORY MAGAZINE OF THE TOWN OF OYSTER BAY

Editorial

Well, I sent out a clarion call for contributions to your magazine, The Freeholder, and our readers certainly responded in a big way!

It is a pleasure to welcome back Arlene Goodenough to the pages of The Freeholder after too long a hiatus. Her thorough treatment of the capture of Major John André, as well as the subsequent story of his captors,

begins on page 3.

A new contributor, Donna Ottusch Kianka, joins our ranks this issue with a story on how to ferret out your house's history, beginning on page 8.

Elliot Sayward's "Way-goose" odyssey comes to a conclusion in this issue. Read his surprising conclusions on page 20.

I'm sure there are others out there who would like to pen a piece for the magazine, so get out those penknives!

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THE FREEHOLDER

of the

Oyster Bay Historical Society
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Purpose: The Oyster Bay Historical Society was founded in 1960 with the express purpose of preserving the history of the Town of Oyster Bay. The Society maintains a museum and research library in the Town-owned c. 1720 Earle-Wightman House, 20 Summit Street, Oyster Bay
Call (516) 922-5032 for more information.

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Local History Librarian
Jericho Public Library

Dear Betsy,

These two offices were somewhat related. As you surmised, fence viewers inspected people's fences to make sure that they were in good repair and that livestock could not get out to do damage to others' property. The pounder was charged with rounding up stray livestock and impounding them in a pound erected, at public expense, for the purpose. As you can imagine, this was a constant problem in agrarian communities, on Long Island and elsewhere. Perhaps our Uncle Peleg will further elucidate on this topic in a future issue!



THE POST RIDER

To the Editor:

Would you have ANY information on the job titles of "Pounder" and "Fence Viewer" given to Daniel Underhill, about 1815, mentioned in the Oyster Bay Town Records? Possibly the job was to make sure the property boundary fences were solid and correctly placed?

Any information would be greatly appreciated,
Betsey Murphy

ABOUT OUR FRONT COVER

This issue features a 19th century depiction of the capture of the British spy, Major John André, by three ordinary militiamen during the Revolutionary War. André is shown with his boots removed and the incriminating evidence discovered. He offers to bribe the militiamen to let him go, but is sternly rebuffed due to their sense of duty to their country. American opinions as to the nobility of these three men would be sharply divided over the course of the next several decades, with many regarding them as mere thieves. See Arlene Goodenough's story on these three men, who unwittingly altered the course of history, on p. 3.

Collection of the Oyster Bay Historical Society.



RESCUED FROM IMMINENT DANGER

by Arlene Goodenough

Every American should be familiar with the story of the capture of the British spy, Major John André, by three ordinary militiamen during the Revolutionary War. On that fateful day, the American struggle for freedom from England could have become a lost cause. André was carrying vital information regarding the fort at West Point and other forts along the banks of the strategically invaluable Hudson River. He was bound for the head of the British forces in New York City, Sir Henry Clinton. Would anything stop him?

Benedict Arnold, whose name is now a synonym for traitor, had had a brilliant military career with the American Army, but he never felt appreciated or properly rewarded. He was often disliked by his fellow officers. George Washington was one of the few who recognized how talented he was and befriended him. In 1779 he had married the beautiful and socially prominent Peggy Shippen of Philadelphia, whose father, Edward, was a lukewarm patriot at best. When Arnold complained about his treatment by the American military, Peggy listened very sympathetically and, we can only surmise, encouraged him to turn traitor. Arnold managed to contact Sir Henry Clinton in New York City and indicate that for enough money he would betray his country, selling its military secrets. In 1780, he asked his friend, Washington, if he could have command of the fortress at West Point. The unsuspecting commander-in-chief agreed.

Major John André was in charge of Sir Henry's spy operations. He was told to travel up the Hudson by boat and rendezvous with Arnold.

Late on the night of September 21, 1780, André was on the British vessel, the *Vulture*, anchored off of Teller's Point on Haverstraw Bay. He was rowed to the western shore of the Hudson where he was met by Arnold.



Benedict Arnold

Terms were agreed on and the two men talked until almost dawn. Arnold gave him the complete plans of West Point, and the other Hudson Valley forts. He included every detail necessary to win a tremendous victory in the Hudson Valley, and almost certainly capture General Washington. André placed the pieces of paper between his feet and his stockings.

But now, as dawn was breaking,

no one was willing to row André back to the *Vulture*. He planned to wait in the home of Joshua Hett Smith until nightfall, but by this time the *Vulture* had been spotted by the patriots and a four-pound cannon was brought from Verplanck Point to Teller's Point. It was aimed at the *Vulture* and fired. The British ship fired back, but after a couple of hours of shooting back and forth, the *Vulture* retreated to the south.

Arnold advised André to return to the city on land, a fatal error. André was urged to remove his uniform and was given civilian clothes and a horse by Smith.

With Smith as his guide, he took the King's Ferry across to Verplanck Point. Smith stayed with him as they traveled as far as Pines Bridge, where Smith turned back. André continued on alone, taking the Hardscrabble Road toward Tarrytown.

Awaiting him, there were a group of militiamen including John Paulding. John's family had a farm in Tarrytown and during the war years he was left to care for his mother and grandmother while his dad and three uncles went off to fight with the American army.

Tarrytown was in the midst of the dreaded Neutral Ground, the part of the Hudson Valley extending from White Plains, which was held by the British, north to Peekskill, the American lines. It was a no-man's land where looting, burning and killing were the order of the day. The English and the Tories on one side and the patriots on the other, behaved in a brutal, lawless fashion. Groups

of ruffians loyal to the crown were known as the Cowboys. On the American side were bands of immoral riff-raff known as the Skinners. The reason for the name I leave to the imagination of the reader.

Paulding was a teenager when the war broke out and he joined the militia. In 1779, he was captured near White Plains and imprisoned in the notorious Old Sugar House Prison. He managed to escape by skipping out of the Prison Yard one evening when the sentry's back was turned. Making his way back home, he stayed in the militia and earned a commendation from Colonel Philip Van Cortlandt, militia head in Peekskill.

During the summer of 1780, Paulding was a sergeant in the company of Lieutenant Daniel Peacock. Paulding and his men were surprised by a British patrol that outnumbered them five to

one. Back went Paulding to prison in New York City, this time at the Old North Church. Again, he was able to escape from the prison yard, this time when his men created a diversion. It took him a while, but he managed to get back to Tarrytown once more.

Four days later, on September 23, 1780, he and his fellow militiamen, Isaac Van Wart, David Williams, Isaac See, James Romer, John Yerks, and John Dean, were waiting near the Albany Post Road, hoping to capture a band of marauding Cowboys. Paulding, Van Wart and Williams were close to the road, the others on a hilltop about a half mile away.

Williams, a Westchester farmer, was twenty five and had fought in the Siege of Quebec under General Benedict Arnold. Isaac Van Wart, also a farmer, was only twenty one and had been in the

militia for two years.

Isaac was carefully watching the road while Paulding and Williams broke the monotony with a game of cards. They joined Van Wart when he apprised them of André's approach. They all had muskets.

Paulding was wearing a Hessian Army jacket he had come by in New York City a few days before. André, assuming he was on the British side, readily stopped. He showed them the pass Arnold had given him, made out to John Anderson. John Paulding was the only one of the three who knew how to read. At some point André offered his gold watch as a bribe to the men if they would just let him go. This, of course, made them more suspicious. They decided to search him and when his boots and stockings were taken off, there were the six pages of writing giving away all the invaluable plans.

In short order, André was bound and taken to the closest military headquarters, twelve miles away at North Castle.

History does not record when the captors realized the enormity of their deed. They were present at Tappan on the west side of the Hudson where André's trial took place.

Washington was, of course, astounded when he realized how viciously Arnold had acted. "Arnold has betrayed us. Whom can we trust now?" he said to the Marquis de Lafayette. Then with his great strength of character, he sat down with General Knox, Lafayette and their aides to decide what had to be done next.

Arnold escaped. Washington, who knew Peggy Shippen when



A 19th century view of the site of André's capture.



A recent photograph of the Mabie Tavern, where André was held until his execution. It is now a restaurant known as the "Old '76 House."

she was an infant, believed that she was innocent. He sent her and her baby son home to her father in Philadelphia.

Arnold was made a British Brigadier General and fought against the Americans. He was so depraved he actually attacked his old hometown in Connecticut. In December of 1781, joined by Peggy, he sailed to England. He never really prospered anywhere. He fathered eight children, six of whom survived. He died in 1801, bitter and resentful to the end. Peggy died three years later, a loyal and faithful wife to a very difficult, obnoxious man.

At one point, Washington offered to exchange André for Arnold, but Sir Henry Clinton refused.

André was taken to Tappan for his trial on charges of spying. The best men that the American military had to offer were among the judges, as befitted the seriousness of the case.

During the days of his captivity, he set out to be his most charming. He acted as though he was sure the Americans really would-

n't actually hang him. Polite and friendly to all the American officers, he made a deep impression on Major Benjamin Tallmadge of Setauket, one of Washington's officers. He was with André from the first day of his capture. Tallmadge's infatuation with André would cause a real problem for John Paulding many years later.

General Nathaniel Greene presided. In addition to the

Americans, six generals and eight brigadier-generals, Washington added the Marquis de Lafayette and Baron Von Steuben. Technically it was a Board of Inquiry. It was to decide if André was a spy and if so, what his fate should be. The verdict was, as expected, that he was indeed a spy and should be executed. André asked that he be shot, but the punishment of a spy is hanging. This was carried out the next day, October 2nd, 1780, at Tappan. The place has been preserved as has Mabie's Tavern, where André was held. Paulding, Williams and Van Wart sold the gold watch, the horse, saddle and bridle. They shared the money with the four other men they were connected with on the day of the capture.

Now Washington had time to turn his attention to the three heroes. On the day of André's hanging, he shook their hands. He later told Congress they, "have prevented in all probability our suffering one of the severest strokes that could have been



A self portrait of John André, drawn during his short captivity.

meditated against us.” He went on to say that if the plot had succeeded, victory at Yorktown might have been impossible.

Congress had three silver medals created. On one side was a shield inscribed Fidelity, and on the other, Vincit Amor Patriae, which translates to “Love of Country Conquers.” They also agreed that each year for the rest of their lives, they would receive the sum of \$200 in the current money. The state of New York presented each of them with a good sized farm at the war’s end.

They received the medals in 1782 from the hand of Washington himself. They met at the home of the men who owned the King’s Ferry at Verplanck Point, the Post Hannock House. They

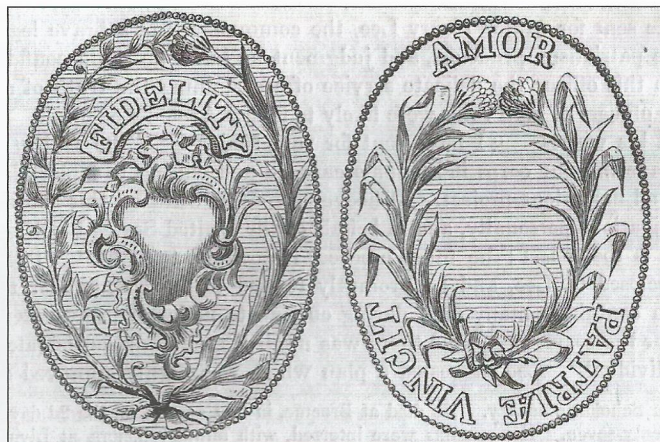
were then invited to dine at Washington’s table. The house still stands; it is a private home. The medal presented to Isaac Van Wart still exists. It is a beautiful

piece of silver, quite heavy. This particular medal, The Fidelity Medal, was never awarded again.

On October 18, 1780, Congress proclaimed that Thursday, December 7, 1780, should be a day of national thanksgiving for,

among other things, “rescuing our Commander-in-Chief and the Army from imminent dangers at the moment when treason was ripened for execution.”

Paulding was given a sixteen acre farm in Crompond and he married Sarah Teed in 1781. But his soldiering days were not over just yet. Although the



Design of the silver medals presented to André’s captors.

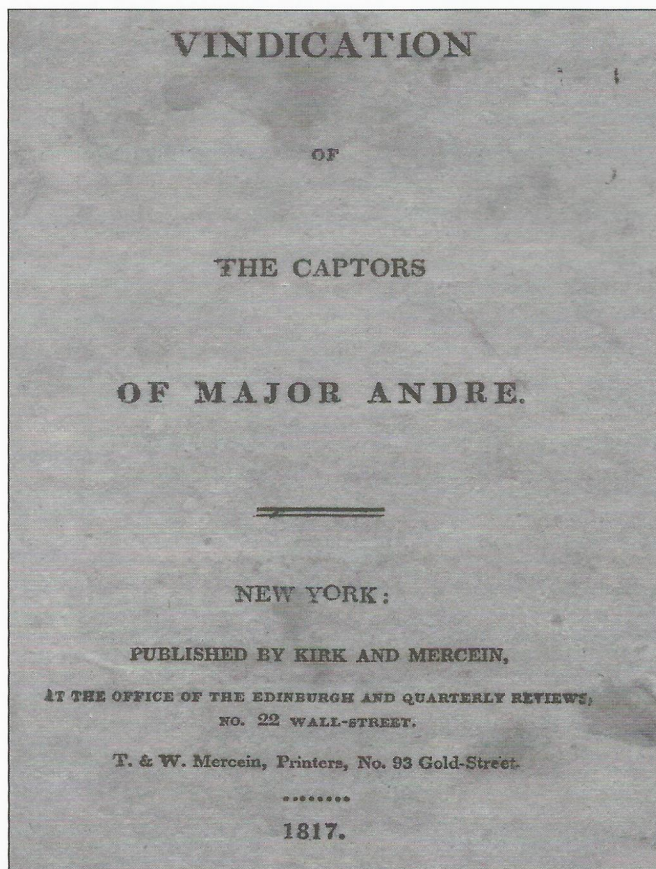
British surrendered at Yorktown, Virginia, in 1781, they were very slow to return to England. The neutral ground was still involved in a skirmish between the Skinners and the Cowboys in January 1783. He was wounded and captured and held in a hospital in New York City until September, when with the peace treaty officially signed, he was free to go home.

Back on his farm, Paulding and his wife had four children, two of whom survived infancy. Sarah died in 1789, still in her early twenties.

Paulding next married Esther Ward, who gave birth to eight children, all of whom lived. She died in 1804. Paulding married again, this time to Hester Denike. She had nine offspring and outlived Paulding. In all, John Paulding fathered twenty one children.

In 1816, Paulding was 58 years old. He, Van Wart, and Williams petitioned Congress for an increase in their pensions. The \$200 they had been awarded in 1780 was now worth more like \$100.

Serving in Congress at the time



Title page of “The Vindication of the Captors of Major André” written in 1817 by Egbert Benson.

was Benjamin Tallmadge. He had been so dazzled by André in those few days he was in his company in 1780, that he now came out against them. André had convinced him that the three militiamen were little more than three thugs, and didn't do anything special in capturing André. Many rushed to defend the men, and in 1817 an Egbert Benson wrote a pamphlet entitled *The Vindication of the Captors of Major André*. The author was a staunch patriot, one time Attorney General of New York State, and an intimate of John Jay, Alexander Hamilton and Richard Varick.

Isaac Van Wart gave an affidavit concerning the capture. Eighteen neighbors and friends swore to the integrity of his character. Paulding gave an affidavit too, mentioning that he had been imprisoned by the British three times. At that particular time, they were not sure exactly where

Williams was, since he had moved to the northern part of the state.

But their efforts were to no avail. The vote for their petition was as follows: ayes, 53; nays, over 80. Congress' reasoning was that though Paulding was "old, had many dependents and is infirm," they didn't want to set a precedent. John Paulding died in 1818. Now Tallmadge completely reversed his position and asked that the pension go to Paulding's widow, but that was defeated too. Thirteen years later, feelings changed again, and when David Williams died, his wife received his full pension.

Mrs. Paulding was left \$600 in her husband's will. Eleven children received \$100 each. One son got ten dollars (there must be a story there). One daughter got a cow. Four grandchildren got five dollars each. A female slave got her freedom, twenty five dollars and a bed.

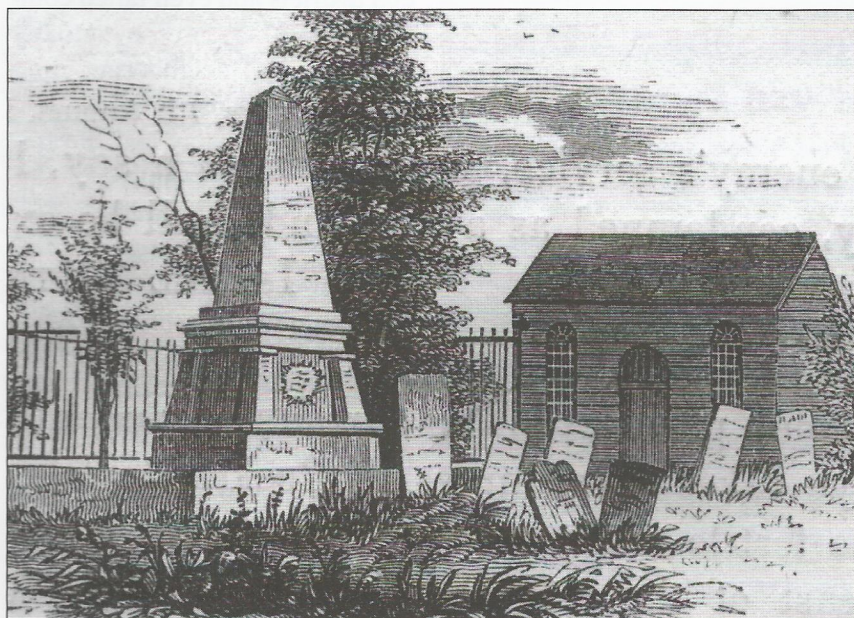
Today, in Peekskill, there is a Paulding Street, and in Ohio there is a Paulding County.

On Route 9 in Tarrytown, Patriot's Park stands on roughly the site of the historic encounter. Right on the edge of the road, there is a notable monument. It is inscribed with a description of the fateful meeting, and has a life size bronze statue of a young John Paulding. There is also a fine bas relief. The monument was first placed here in 1880 and is passed every day by many young people on their way to and from school. The statue was first unveiled exactly 100 years after the incident.

John Paulding had a first cousin, William Paulding, Jr., who was a successful lawyer and politician. In 1826, he was the Mayor of New York City. During his tenure, the City Government voted to place a monument in the Van Cortlandtville Cemetery where John was buried. This is now St. Peter's Episcopal Cemetery. Made of white marble from Westchester, it is a simple pedestal topped by a triangle thirteen feet high. It's surrounded by an iron fence. It is quite visible from the road. On the day of the dedication, November 22, 1827, the New York City contingent came up the Hudson by boat landing in Peekskill.

A procession was formed. There were politicians, aged veterans of the Revolutionary War, many local residents, and a group of cadets from West Point Military Academy. This was the first time that cadets participated in such an event. At the site, Mayor Paulding gave a long

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A 19th century view of the monument to John Paulding in the Van Cortlandtville Cemetery, erected by the city of New York in 1827.

THE GENEALOGY OF YOUR HOUSE

by Donna I. Ottusch Kianka

More than Just Genealogy

Tracing one's genealogy or family roots is a popular and enticing pursuit for many people today. The house you live in also has a history and you can discover the "genealogy" or the history of the house and the people who conducted their day to day affairs, lived and died and all the while added and subtracted architectural elements and additions. It is always interesting to speculate about the people who built and/or changed your home. Often I have heard people say, "If these walls could talk." The good news is that while plaster cannot speak, you can piece together information and learn about the historical changes of your home as well as the people who lived out their days where you are now living

out yours.

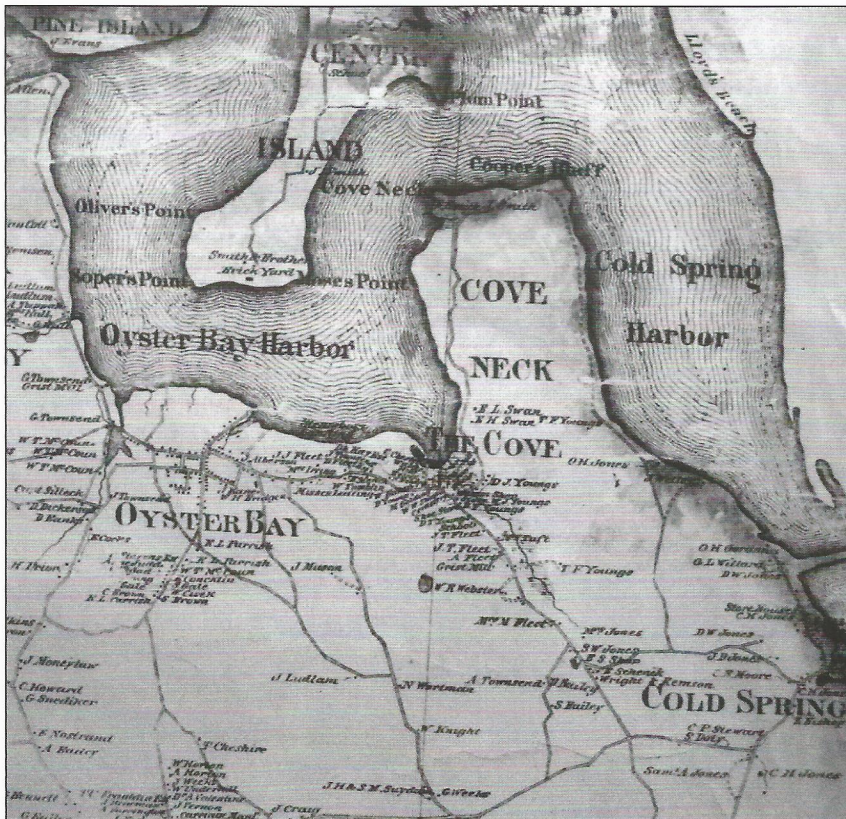
Curiosity is not the only reason to consider researching your home. If your home is a potential local or state historic landmark, the application requires a full historical accounting of the property. This research also aids in not only immediate documentation and preservation of your home but often may contribute to the overall community history. In order for this to be fully accomplished, a copy is always appreciated in a local library, historical society or other repository.

A community is morally mandated to research the history of its older homes and plot a strategy for preservation. Appreciation alone is not sufficient. The built environment creates the character and fabric of a community. When

these structures are gone, often the character of the community irrevocably changes. This change may be incremental and often is, but the most significant changes begin slowly and evolve until the original fabric is completely changed or lost. Eventually the communities, which were so desirable, become much different than the community originally sought as an attractive and charming place to live.

The utilization of deeds provides another venue that permits the overall history and evolution of a community to unfold. Recreating the history of a single house is also a microcosm of what has happened in a community. As your parcel begins to move from large land grants to farming and then again to suburbia, you can see the overall changes which are affecting the community at large. Combined with maps you will begin to see the evolution of a community, find failed commercial districts and even failed communities that are eventually swept up into neighboring communities and those original identities are completely lost and forgotten. A prime example of this phenomenon is the western section of Cold Spring Harbor, which at one time housed a fledgling commercial area (Bungtown) with a separate identity during the first half of the 19th Century. This community failed to thrive and eventually was incorporated into both Laurel Hollow and the present day Cold Spring Harbor.

The combination of deeds and maps allows you to identify early land use and trends. One of the earliest maps for Long Island is



A small section of the 1859 Walling map. This map shows property owners as well as topographical features. This also shows churches, shops and industrial sites such as mills.

the USGS Coast Survey map from circa 1838. Prior to that map, private surveys and deeds provide the most detailed information on specific land ownership.

This is valuable in not only assisting in the research of extant buildings, but also allows the identification of former house sites and commercial buildings. While the specific location is not often noted on a deed, it will provide an approximate location that can give clues to the researcher. In addition, early deeds can provide information on flora, early house colors and sometimes even topography. One literally bumps into the evolution and history of a community with every house history reconstructed.

This is also an excellent methodology to grasp some of that elusive early history of some poorly documented areas of the Island. The majority of the Brookvilles of Nassau County have not been serviced directly by a historical society. Consequently, much of the history was never clearly documented and deeds are one method of reconstructing the histories of these communities.

Piecing together the history of a house or parcel includes looking at not only the deeds but also maps, census records, tax records, newspaper accounts, genealogies and the overall history of a community. It is by analyzing these records and putting together the pieces that one can reconstruct the history of a parcel, as it existed through time and within the context of its village.

The most obvious reason to conduct this type of research is of

course for the house genealogy. It is simply of incredible interest to know who lived in your house. If the census records are used in conjunction with deeds and maps then the characters can be fleshed out and a developed understanding of what a house has witnessed can be constructed. This not only makes for a great story, but can also permit interpretive power over what architectural changes can be identified. Sometimes one of the more important uses of historical house documentation is that it can provide clues or information as to the previous use. This may be important under specific circumstances. Of course, plain simple curiosity may be reason enough.

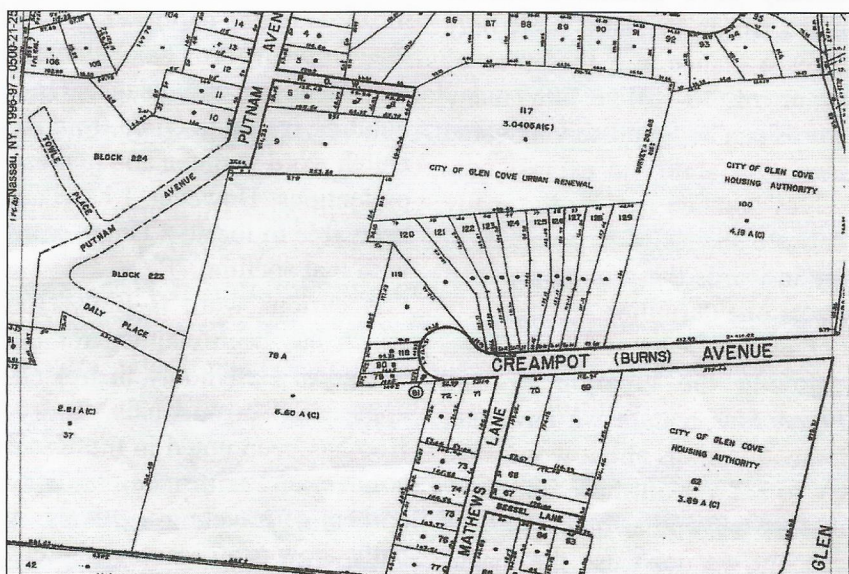
An example is the house I currently occupy. There are two front doors leading to essentially the same portion of the house. Based on the floor layout this home was never a two family. The census records provided the information that the first occu-

pant of the house was an accountant. He apparently needed a place of operation and with this goal in mind extended a window and created a second entrance, which led to a small room, which he cultivated as an office. An analysis of the architectural features revealed he made this modification early on and probably within two years of purchase (circa 1917).

So with a little speculation and some logical thinking it is possible to figure out why a house is configured the way it is. All houses have a history that can be at least partly shaken out using deeds, census, photographs, and architectural data and maps. Oral history is also a critical tool in constructing the history of a house.

As illustrated above, searching the history of a house can be undertaken for a wide variety of reasons. One of the most motivat-

continued on p. 17



An example of a current tax map. What is extremely interesting is this map will often provide the original names. Creampot Avenue is now Burns Avenue in Glen Cove. Creampot Avenue carries the name of the original farm and hill in this locale.



ASK UNCLE PELEG

As you have no doubt noticed the various vocabularies which serve the people of the world tend to add new words and phrases and drop others with the passage of time. It is not just because new things and processes appear and have to be given words that allow us to talk and write about them. Some new language bits come about because individuals want a more colorful or telling way to give voice to an idea that may already have generated one or more words to serve it. It only takes a glance at a thesaurus of synonyms to realize how many words can be found serving some idea. Our ability to express ourselves is made rich by the many delicate shades of meaning there are in words that can be grouped under one definition.

Over the years we have been enjoying the creation of this *Freeholder* feature we have had many questions about words. We try to answer all these questions that we can and as quickly as we can but we don't use the magazine to convey the answers if it can be done personally unless several arrive together. We take note of them however and when

the files build up to the point where an issue can be devoted to a lot of them we lump a bunch together and hope you will find them engaging. Here is a group of rather full blown words we acquired from different sources. The three questions remind us that New Yorkers should never disregard our Dutch heritage which in many ways is still with us. They ask about the source of three rather strange words or phrases: Bumpkin, High Cockalorum and High Faluting.

All of these may be of Dutch origin. Bumpkin certainly is and it meant: a tree, a post, a balk of timber or suchlike in the land of windmills. In English it can be found on sailing vessels meaning a boom for securing a backstay. It was also used in a pejorative sense to designate a country cousin or hick. High Cockalorum designated a person with an exaggerated feeling of self-importance. Cockalorum alone often meant bragging or crowing, as in the Dutch word Koekeloerem that inspired the usage. High Faluting is said to come from the Dutch word verluten and to mean pretentious. However, I have not been able to locate a Dutch word with that spelling.

A curious word is Bally-Hoo which has been claimed for the village of Ballyhooly in Ireland, apparently erroneously. Bally-Hoo has been noted in the US in connection with the midway barkers of traveling carnivals. A bally show is a carnival or circus side show. A bally stand is the platform of the barker who conducts the introduction of a sideshow displaying a short sam-

ple of the act that is about to perform. The sample is called the ballyhoo. A later use terms sensational advertising, Bally-Hoo. The latter use has been noted in the 1920s. A humorous magazine called *Bally Hoo* was published around the end of the twenties and the beginning of the thirties. Earliest datings are still to be discovered.

Blatherskite, (also bletherskite), is apparently Scottish in origin, although blather seems to have been Old Norse originally. Skate means a person, a fellow, as in good skate and a blatherskite is a fellow that blathers or talks too much.

Beer Street. This is British slang for the throat. A mug of ale is destined to a passage down Beer Street.

Balderdash seems to have originally meant a combination of milk and ale or any other mixture of liquids resulting in an unappetizing non-beverage. It now means nonsense.



A Barker



CURRENTS OF THE BAY



*This section focuses on the doings of local historical societies, museums, and communities in the Town of Oyster Bay and its neighbors. Upcoming special events, exhibits, lectures and tours are featured, so send your submissions to the Editor if you would like to see your events covered in **The Freeholder**.*

HISTORICAL SOCIETY LAUDS RESTORATION OF HISTORIC BROOKVILLE POLICE BOOTH.

The snow snowed, and the champagne flowed, as the Oyster Bay Historical Society paid tribute to Mayor Lenice Hertweck and the Village of Upper Brookville on January 18th. In 2004, Mayor Hertweck was able to rescue the original police booth which once stood at the corner of Wheatley Road and Rt. 25A. In 1950, the booth was moved to private property and, in 2004, the 18th century main house was razed, despite the efforts of the village to save it. But the village was able to convince the owners to donate the police booth as a part of Upper Brookville's history.

The mayor managed to have the village-owned property at the corner of Wolver Hollow Road and Chicken Valley Road dedicated as a village park, and the police booth was moved to that spot. The moving and restoration was a cooperative effort involving Deputy Mayor Terry Thielen, Road Commissioner Sam Vergata, Building Inspector Matthew Moed, Village Clerk Barbara Miller, and Builder and Restorer, Bill Worrell. Vincent Simeone, Director of Planting Fields, assisted with the landscaping effort.

Oyster Bay Historical Society President, Maureen Monck praised the efforts of the Village and commented that this was precisely the kind of initiative the



New York State Senator Carl Marcellino, Town of Oyster Bay Receiver of Taxes, James J. Stefanich, Upper Brookville Mayor Lenice Hertweck, Society President Maureen Monck, and Society Director Tom Kuehhas pose with the certificate of recognition which Kuehhas presented to Mayor Hertweck on the Society's behalf.

Society was encouraging the entire area to undertake. "So many of our historic structures have been destroyed or renovated beyond recognition over the years. Part of our mission at the Historical Society is to educate owners as to the irreplaceable loss we all suffer when these historic buildings are razed," she commented.

Society Director Tom Kuehhas, upon presenting an official certificate of recognition to Mayor Hertweck, echoed Dr. Monck's sentiments when he stated: "One of the functions of the Society is to encourage historic preservation, Town-wide. The Village of Upper Brookville has set a won-

derful example in preserving this historic police booth, and it's my great pleasure to recognize their efforts with this certificate which I present to you, Mayor Hertweck, on behalf of the Historical Society's Board of Trustees."

Senator Carl Marcellino and Town of Oyster Bay Receiver of Taxes, James J. Stefanich also congratulated Mayor Hertweck, and presented additional citations on behalf of the State and the Town.

Also present at the celebration were the Mayors of Brookville and Old Brookville, Richard P. Goodwin and Robert Whiting; Old Brookville Police Chief, Maurice Sullivan; officials of the



**HOOD AME ZION CHURCH TEAMS WITH
O.B. HISTORICAL SOCIETY FOR HOLIDAY GALA!**

The tiny Hood AME Zion Church of Oyster Bay was packed with members of the Oyster Bay Historical Society on December 9 for a concert that resonated all along South Street! Society members sang and clapped along with the Hood Choir for a moving and memorable hour of classic Christmas hymns and glorious gospel singing. But the little church was silent and still as Society Trustee, Pastor Kenneth Nelson, (above) sang solo in his magnificent baritone. Organist and Choir Director Anthony Teets moved from organ to piano to accompany Reverend Nelson and the wonderfully talented five-member choir. Society President Maureen Monck thanked Pastor Nelson and the choir for their talent and hospitality and, leaving the church, Society members were heard to say "Wasn't that wonderful? We should do it every year!" After the concert, everyone walked across Summit Street for the Society's annual Holiday Gala to enjoy champagne, cheeses, hors d'oeuvres and delicious sandwiches and cookies made by the members.

The historic Earle- Wightman House was filled to capacity, and much of the conversation centered around the Society's plan to build a new archival center behind the Earle-Wightman House. Society Director Tom Kuehhas explained the vital need for this new building, as well as the need for funding to make it a reality.

OYSTER BAY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Categories of Membership

Individual	\$ 35	Business	\$ 75
Family	\$ 45	Business Sponsor	\$ 100
Contributing	\$ 75	Business Friend	\$ 300
Sponsor	\$ 100	Business Patron	\$ 500+
Sustaining	\$ 250	Benefactor	\$ 1000+
Patron	\$ 500		

Member Benefits: Quarterly Magazine, Members' Party, Invitations to Exhibition Previews and Special Events, 10% Discount on Publications and Workshops. Call (516) 922-5032 for more information on joining the Society.

Village of Upper Brookville as mentioned above; Town Board Members Rose Marie Walker and Elizabeth A. Faughnan; John Hammond, Town Historian, and Trustees of the Oyster Bay Historical Society.

The Oyster Bay Historical Society, whose mission is – "Preserving Our Past...Protecting Our Future" – encourages you and your family, especially your children, to view the newly restored police booth at the corner of Wolver Hollow Road and Chicken Valley Road in the incorporated Village of Upper Brookville.

**17th ANNUAL 20/20
LECTURE SERIES
IN OYSTER BAY**

The annual 20/20 lecture series began on Tuesday, March 13, with master teaching artist Michelle Temares' presentation entitled, "The Untold Story: WWI and WWII Poster Art." Ms. Temares is the author of two best-selling art instruction books and over 40 illustrated articles. She is a juried and elected member of the Society of Illustrators and the National Art League who feels passionately about the positive impact of visual arts on the lives of both children and adults.

The second lecture in the series will take place on Tuesday, April 17th, at 7:15 PM when Professor Emerita Natalie Naylor will present "General Rosalie Gardiner Jones: Suffragist from Oyster Bay." Naylor served as Director of the Long Island Studies Institute and Professor in Hofstra University's New College, where she taught courses in American social his-

**Visit the Oyster Bay
Historical Society's
NEW website!**

www.oysterbayhistory.org

tory, including Long Island history. She has edited or co-edited several of the Institute's conference volumes and has published many articles on educational history and Long Island history.

The series will conclude on Tuesday, May 15th, when professor, historian and comedian Peter Bales presents "A Lighthearted View of American History." Mr. Bales has appeared as a stand-up comedian at countless comedy clubs, corporate functions and colleges across the country and has appeared on a variety of television networks including FOX, A&E, Comedy Central, Lifetime, MTV, VH-1 and, most recently, "The New Rascals Comedy Hour" podcast for XM Satellite Radio. He studied at Chicago's famous "Second City" and in the eighties directed The Laughter Company, an improvisational comedy group that helped launch the careers of Rosie O'Donnell and Bob Nelson. Bales will base his talk on his recent book entitled "How Come They Always Had Battles in National Parks?"

This series is sponsored by The Oyster Bay Historical Society, Raynham Hall Museum and the Planting Fields Foundation. All lectures are free and open to the public. They will take place at the Oyster Bay/East Norwich Public Library from 7:15 pm to 8:15 pm. No reservations are required; light refreshments will be served.

**SAGAMORE HILL
NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE**

In the 1890s the proprietor of Conklin's Drug Store, Andrew Snouder, was responsible for having telephone service brought to Oyster Bay to a switchboard located in his store. Sagamore Hill did not have a telephone until Theodore Roosevelt was elected president. Until 1901 phoned messages were hand delivered by the druggist's son, Arthur Snouder, for which he was paid fifty cents per message delivered.

Thanks to all the volunteers and the Swan Club for making our Holiday Party the success that it was. TR's stolen gun is now back on display next to the sword he carried up Kettle Hill and San Juan Heights.

Coming Dr. John A. Gable Lecture Series events are all on Thursdays and begin at 7:30pm (doors open at 7) at the Parish Hall of Christ Church on East Main Street, Oyster Bay. Remaining dates and topics are: April 26 "The Role of a Lifetime" actor/historian Jim Foote's 30 years of portraying TR; May 24 "The Roosevelt Women" historian, biographer and author Betty Boyd Caroli tells of sights and revelations of the ladies. Admission is free and refreshments will be served.

**FARMINGDALE-BETHPAGE
HISTORICAL
SOCIETY**

The Society's first meeting of 2007 had the theme of "Farmingdale in the 1930s" and was held at 2:00 PM, Sunday, January 21, at the Farmingdale Public

Library. A panel discussion was chaired by Marion Petre Forde and past president Dr. Benjamin Giminaro reprised his "Minute of History." A sizeable audience attended this presentation.

February's meeting drew an even larger audience that wanted to enjoy the "Tuskegee Airmen" program. Colonel Ed Monroe represented this historic Army Air Corps Wing noting that, at one point, they flew Republic P-47 "Thunderbolts," made in this same area.

**OYSTER BAY
RAILROAD MUSEUM**

In July 2006, the New York Department of Education consolidated the assets and liabilities of the Friends of Locomotive #35, Inc. and issued a provisional charter for its new name the Oyster Bay Railroad Museum (OBRM). They are now on a path to achieve full museum status in the next five years but now have the right to identify themselves as one.

The current Board of Directors are now Trustees and the officers are on temporary status until new elections can be held. The positions of Secretary and Treasurer will continue throughout the process. For members all rights and privileges will remain the

Many thanks to Harry L. Dickran of Levon Graphics Corp., Route 109, East Farmingdale, for printing *The Freeholder* for the Society.

His generosity allows the magazine to reach a much wider audience than was heretofore possible. Please patronize our sponsors!

The Society now has available a "1900 View of Oyster Bay," which shows every building in existence at that time and includes a list of businesses and prominent residences. Eminently suitable for framing, this print is a great bargain at \$20 plus shipping. Contact the Society at (516) 922-5032 to order yours today!

Also available are an 1833 map of Oyster Bay (\$5) and a map of Gold Coast estates c. 1920 (\$12.50). Shipping is additional.

same.

THE CENTRAL PARK HISTORICAL SOCIETY

At their December meeting Lois Lovisollo related the story of long-time resident, author and hardware merchant Leo Schottland and the joy he has given, and received, while performing as Santa Claus on the Nassau County Museum "circuit." This includes Old Bethpage Village Restoration, Tackapausha, Garvies Point and Eisenhower Park.

SUPERVISOR VENDITTO UNVEILS NEW GUIDE ENTITLED

HISTORIC CEMETERIES OF OYSTER BAY

Oyster Bay Town Supervisor John Venditto announced that the Town now has available a guide for genealogists entitled *Historic Cemeteries of Oyster Bay*. "When Town Historian John Hammond approached me with his idea to create a guide to historic cemeteries in the Town of Oyster Bay, I was enthusiastic," Supervisor Venditto stated. "Whether it's to provide children with a sense of who their ancestors were, to compile a medical

history or simply to satisfy a curiosity about oneself, people are trying to get in touch with their roots, and this guide to historic cemeteries in our Town is a genealogist's dream tool.

Cemeteries are an important resource for many people delving into genealogy, and John has done the leg work by documenting every known pre-1920 cemetery in the Town."

The Supervisor went on to say that this is a tool for the serious genealogist. It includes a listing of 121 cemeteries, some of which no longer exist and some of which are still active, and where transcription records can be found. The listing is done first by present day locality and then alphabetically by the most com-

monly known name. The guide goes on to list, in alphabetical order, several thousand names of those interred in the cemeteries.

"Genealogy is a rewarding, but challenging avocation," Supervisor Venditto stated. "It can take a genealogist years to find one specific piece of information. Because of the importance cemeteries play in piecing together a family history, the information contained in the pages of this comprehensive guide will prove invaluable to genealogists who trace their family history to Oyster Bay."

To obtain a copy of *Historic Cemeteries of Oyster Bay*, contact Town Historian John Hammond at 624-6359.

Historic Cemeteries of Oyster Bay

A Guide to Their Locations and Sources of Transcription Information



Fort Hill Cemetery contains the graves of John Townsend, died 1668, and George Washington's Spy Robert Townsend (Culper Junior).



John Venditto
Oyster Bay Town Supervisor

John E. Hammond
Oyster Bay Town Historian



TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE



That's Entertainment!

Do you remember that Arthur Lake and Penny Singleton played Dagwood and Blondie in the movies and that Zane Grey was the author of a shelf-full of Western novels? If you do, you may find this test to be fairly easy. All you have to do is identify the fictional or real life name that we ask about. Just fill in the appropriate name at the end of each question.

1. Name the two characters who ran the Jot-Em-Down Store on the radio. _____
2. What character was played by Art Carney in "The Honeymooners" on TV? _____
3. In the comic strip "Blondie" what did the Bumsteads call their first-born? _____
4. What American novelist wrote "Dodsworth and Arrowsmith?" _____
5. A successful Hollywood actor switched to television to appear in the program "Seahunt." Who was he? _____
6. What screen actress and radio player had the title role in "Our Miss Brooks?" _____
7. "I give you now Professor Twist, a conscientious scientist." If memory serves, these are the first two lines of a witty piece by an American poet known for his comic verses. Name him. _____
8. Casting the part of Scarlet O'Hara in Margaret Mitchell's "Gone With The Wind" was so difficult that eventually a British actress was chosen to play this fiery Southern belle. Who was she? _____
9. H T Webster drew a character for the funny papers under the title "The Timid Soul." What was his name? _____
10. Established by her performance in "Victoria Regina" as an actress of the first rank, this lady had successful careers on the stage and in the movies. She married the playwright, Charles MacArthur in 1928. Her professional name was? _____
11. In the TV shoot-em-up, "Have Gun, Will Travel," a quick-draw artist played by Richard Boone left a trail of toes-up bad guys all over the American West. What was this shootist's name? _____
12. What pair of radio comedians lived at 79 Wistful Vista? _____
13. In the 1941 movie, "The Maltese Falcon" one of the characters was played by Ward Bond. Was it: Kasper Gutman, Det. Tom Polhouse or Lt. Dundy? _____
14. The TV variety program, "Your Show of Shows" was famous for its many superb qualities. Its staff of writers, which has been called "the comedy equivalent of the 1927 Yankees" did not include one of these men: Buffalo Bob Smith, Mel Brooks, or Neil Simon. Which one? _____
15. He wrote "My Bill" one of the hit tunes in "Show Boat" although he was not one of the authors, but an English novelist. He preferred to call himself a lyrist rather than a lyricist when doing such work. Who was he? _____

Answers will be found on p. 21.

Imminent Danger

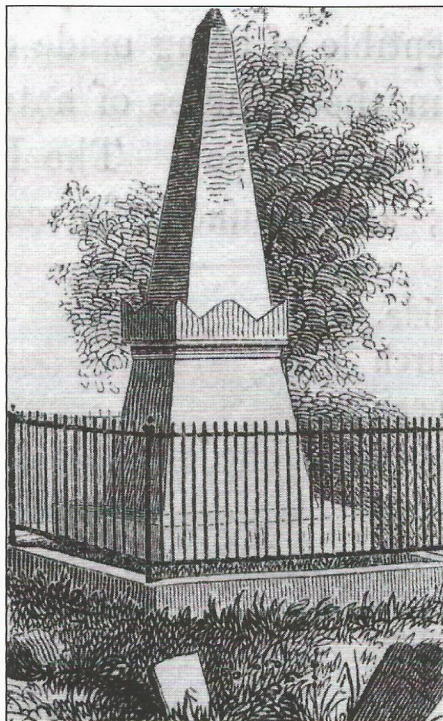
continued from p. 7

address, praising his cousin's patriotism. The Cadets fired a three-volley salute.

Paulding's most famous descendent was Hiram Paulding, who rose through the ranks of the U.S. Navy to the position of Rear Admiral. During the Civil War, he commanded the Brooklyn Navy Yard.

A life mask of Paulding exists. It is in the Fenimore Art Museum, Cooperstown, New York.

And what was Isaac Van Wart's life like in later years? He was the youngest of the three, born in 1760. He was given a large farm in Dutchess County, but exchanged it for one in Westchester known as the Young's Farm. He was a successful farmer and raised prize winning cattle. The farm remained in the Van Wart family until 1868. Van Wart is buried in the Dutch Reform



Van Wart monument



Monument to Major John André erected on the site of his execution. His remains were originally buried on the site. In 1821 they were disinterred by a British delegation and subsequently reburied in Westminster Abbey.

Churchyard in Elmsford, a tiny cemetery hemmed in by the road. His burial and the unveiling of the monument was just as elaborate as Paulding's had been.

David Williams lived to see the fiftieth anniversary of his big moment in history. He was made much of at parades, plays and other festive occasions. He died in 1831, and was respectfully buried in Livingstonville, New York. When the centennial of the Declaration of Independence came around in 1876, his remains were reinterred at the Old Stone Fort in Schoharie County, east of Albany. A tremendous crowd turned out

at the dedication of the large monument erected to mark the spot.

Perhaps Alexander Hamilton summed up the feelings of his fellow countrymen best when he said, "While Arnold is handed down with execration to future times, posterity will repeat with reverence the names of Paulding, Van Wart and Williams."

When Thomas Kuehhas, Director of the Oyster Bay Historical Society, was asked what he thought might have happened if Arnold's plot had succeeded and Washington was captured and West Point lost, he said "I shudder to think what might have happened. Even without the plot working, 1780 was the lowest



Memorial to Major John André in Westminster Abbey.

point of the Revolution, what with losing two armies in the south, at Charleston and Camden, the currency spiraling out of control, the troops under Washington himself in mutiny... Now imagine if the plot had worked, West Point and Washington captured. The only logical conclusion would be that the Revolution would have collapsed.”

John Curran, Historian for the City of Peekskill, stated that “the actual events that happened were extremely dramatic in themselves. If the whole British plan succeeded, the situation would have been even more dramatic for both sides. Therefore, one of the uses of history is the consideration of these questions.”

In Westminster Abbey, London,

where the English bury or honor all of their greatest people, there is a modest memorial to Major John André. It is perhaps 200 feet or so from one of the front doors of the Abbey, mounted on a wall. Close to the door on the wall to your left is a marble plaque thanking Franklin Delano Roosevelt and the American people for their help when Great Britain was threatened with annihilation by Nazi Germany.

How ironic is that?

Genealogy of Your House

continued from p. 9

ing reasons for some individuals is to research their house’s past for medical reasons. It has often been speculated that those areas, which were farmed throughout the '40s and perhaps up until the '50s, might have residual pesticides. Now there is no guarantee that any site is free of pesticides as the previous individual residential homeowner may have chosen to liberally sprinkle DDT, Chlordane etc. about in order to control termites, weeds and other threats to a suburban existence. However, the use of the house and land may be teased out by looking at the deeds, census and

the newspapers. Land uses could include farming in the 1940s or even a dumpsite.

In Baldwin, just south of the Southern State Parkway and west of Brookside Avenue, there is a cluster of homes built on a former dumpsite. Unfortunately, the developer was not terribly attentive in filling in the site correctly for residential building purposes and there were two results; one being that any child could be an archaeologist in their yard by finding dumped debris (which included old paint cans), and second the houses sank and had required propping and support. Of course the necessary questions beg to be answered as to what else was dumped there besides construction debris. While the dumpsite may not have a direct medical consequence, the stress from your house sinking might contribute to the overall health of an occupant.

This may be helpful in evaluating any current or potential health issues. It might even be prudent to conduct this type of investigation before the actual purchase of a property. The prior use of a site for a gas station would probably not be disclosed until an elderly neighbor accidentally divulges this information during a block party, providing it is even within recent memory.

Researching through deeds can assist not only in making a fully informed real estate decision but also can provide clues as to the potential health hazards one might be facing. The history of a property always affects the current occupants. It has been speculated that the use of pesticides from mid 20th Century farms

may have left some residual effects in the land and may be a contributor to such diseases as cancer. Unfortunately, the widespread use of chemicals in the past may have contributed or created some of the health problems of today.

Another reason to undertake the task would be for religious/superstitious reasons. Some people prefer not to live on former cemeteries. It is not all that uncommon for cemeteries to be reused for building purposes. On Long Island, land is scarce and that puts forgotten burying grounds within the scope of a developer's crane. Some were small family cemeteries, which failed to develop into larger community cemeteries and have been consequently plowed under for development purposes. Other cemeteries were simply forgotten about due to size; the cemeteries failed to develop into anything significant. In Glen Cove there is a cluster of

homes which were built on a cemetery. The bodies were, however relocated. Nevertheless, this might be an issue for some.

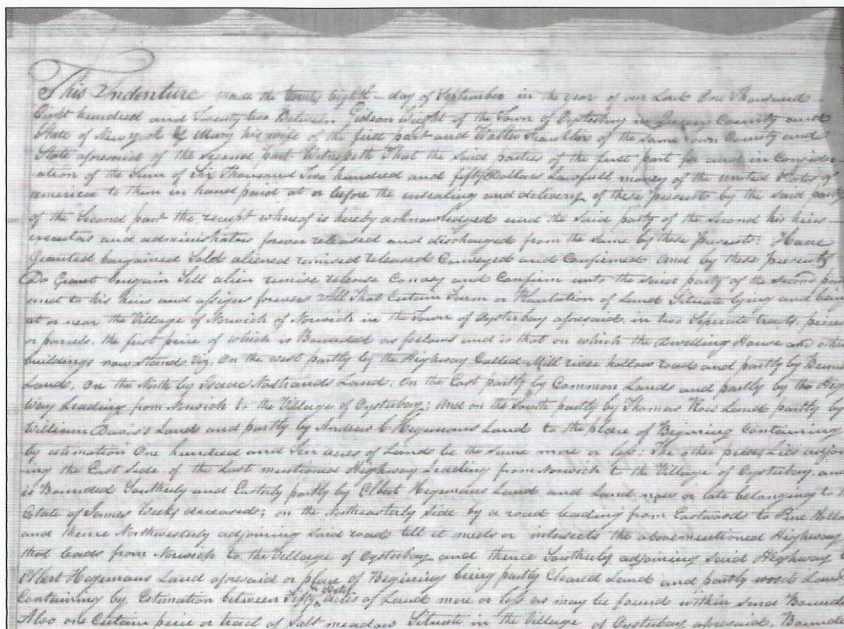
Deeds will often note the boundaries or an inclusion of an old burying ground. Cemeteries were often used as boundaries and points of measurement in defining the size of a lot to be transferred. Deeds can often be used as part of the analysis when attempting to date a cemetery. However, most cemeteries started as an extended family burying ground that began to accept neighbors, then fellow church members and then the community. At one point the cemetery will be transferred from the owner or owners to the actual cemetery itself. Most cemeteries by that time have become mature and have developed a steady customer base over the years.

However, not all cemeteries are carefully recorded in deeds. Very small family cemeteries may be

completely forgotten, except for an occasional tombstone or a notation on an early map.

Some cemeteries were larger historically but were whittled down to a small fragment of their former size. The Carpenter family cemetery on the North Shore was designed to occupy an acre and is probably a quarter of its former size today. This may be something the occupants of the surrounding homes may wish to know. Cemeteries do not always survive as planned and used, and this may be information that is important to the occupants of a nearby home or to the local researcher thinking about the historical development of a community.

In summary, there are diverse reasons to undertake reconstructing the history of your home and even land. This can range from curiosity, preservation, and superstition to medical reasons. Of course I undertook the genealogy of my house for the best reason I know of...fun.



An example of a deed from 1822 detailing the seller and buyer as well as the purchase amount.

The Tools of the Trade

The use of deeds and wills in genealogy is considered to be a critical tool. Wills provide a plethora of information including the names of relatives and children, addresses (as specific as the particular time period allows), and an inventory of their personal assets as well as the real estate. If for example, the deceased was not a direct descendant and the death occurred after the NYS genealogical period (1953 approximately), then some of the answers may be in the probate proceeding documents. This will include the taxable assets.

The information provided by deeds and liens is essentially a financial snapshot of the parties. Also referencing assessor department records dating back as far as the 1930s will show any record of alterations. In order to undertake additions, pools and other big construction projects, the occu-

[illegible]

Another source is village or town building department records. It is very revealing to see a conversion from a one family to a two during the 1930s in order to generate income, as people struggled to survive the Great Depression. I have seen notations on boarded houses during the '30s as well as numerous foreclosure actions in Roslyn during the same time period. It was relatively rare to see foreclosures and boarded houses on former farmhouses. It appears that the com-

**TO BE CONTINUED
IN THE NEXT ISSUE OF
THE FREEHOLDER**

Donna Ottusch Kianka lives with her husband Peter and two children, Emily and Miranda, in a 1916 Craftsman on the North Shore of Nassau County, New York. She has a M.A. from New York University in anthropological archaeology and is a house historian.

WHENCE WANDERED WAY-GOOSE?

Part IV

By Elliot Sayward

A Special Feature of The Dutch Next Door

The Return of the Waygoose

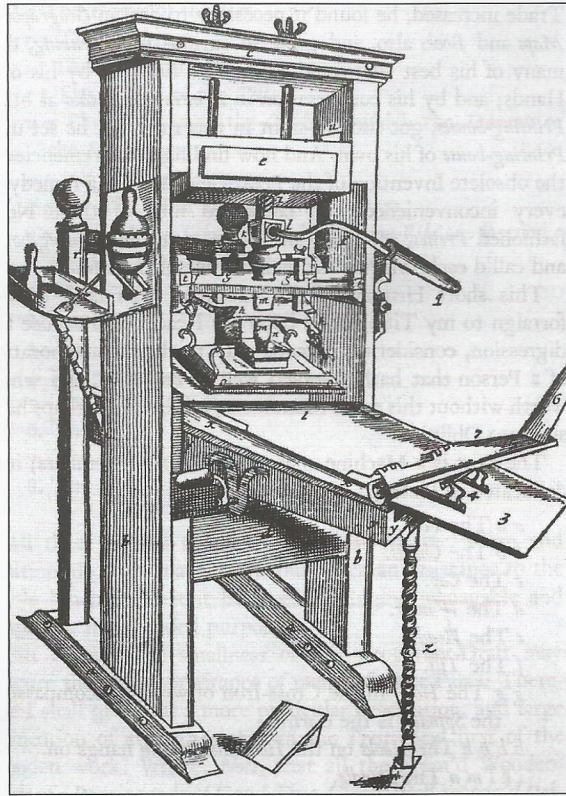
The problem of the origin of the word "Waygoose" has led us over the last three issues to consider a number of other locutions that have offered interest of an instructive, though sometimes confusing nature. Having been examined by etymologists, philologists, dictionary makers, historians and other professionals concerned with language, there is not a little information about how many of the curious words we use arrived at their current form and meaning and perhaps suggests to us ideas about their early lives.

Actually, however, they don't offer a great deal of help in tracking the Waygoose to its lair except to make it plain that a word in our present vocabulary can have altered its original meaning, spelling or pronunciation or all three of these, perhaps several times. In many of these word alterations intermediate steps are discernable but Waygoose exhibits only one form, that which Joseph Moxon presented to us. We started with Waygoose and we are ending with Waygoose and we have been unable to point with assurance at hypothetical roots.

Have we got anything? Not much. Waygoose sounds like the combination of two common English words.

The combination doesn't seem

to have said anything to anybody. The few wild guesses that have been offered have come to naught. What about a foreign word or words? Any possibilities there? Investigators have looked at the accounts of printing histo-



The Dutch Blaeu press championed by Moxon in his Mechanick Exercises.

ry from its beginning in Europe and in China as well. Nothing like Waygoose appears. There are words that have to do with the anniversary celebrations of printers but none of them exhibit any relationship to Waygoose. The possibility numbers seem to be growing thin. OK, let's look at something that we know to be so. The first person that we know of who made use of the word Waygoose was Joe Moxon, we know that. But... did he make it up?

Why would he have done a stupid thing like that?

He spent immeasurable time and care in writing the first really complete manual of printing and then he added a stupid little bit of nonsense? G'wan. But he did give us the word. Did he get it out of his own head? I think only after some workman in a printing house put it there.

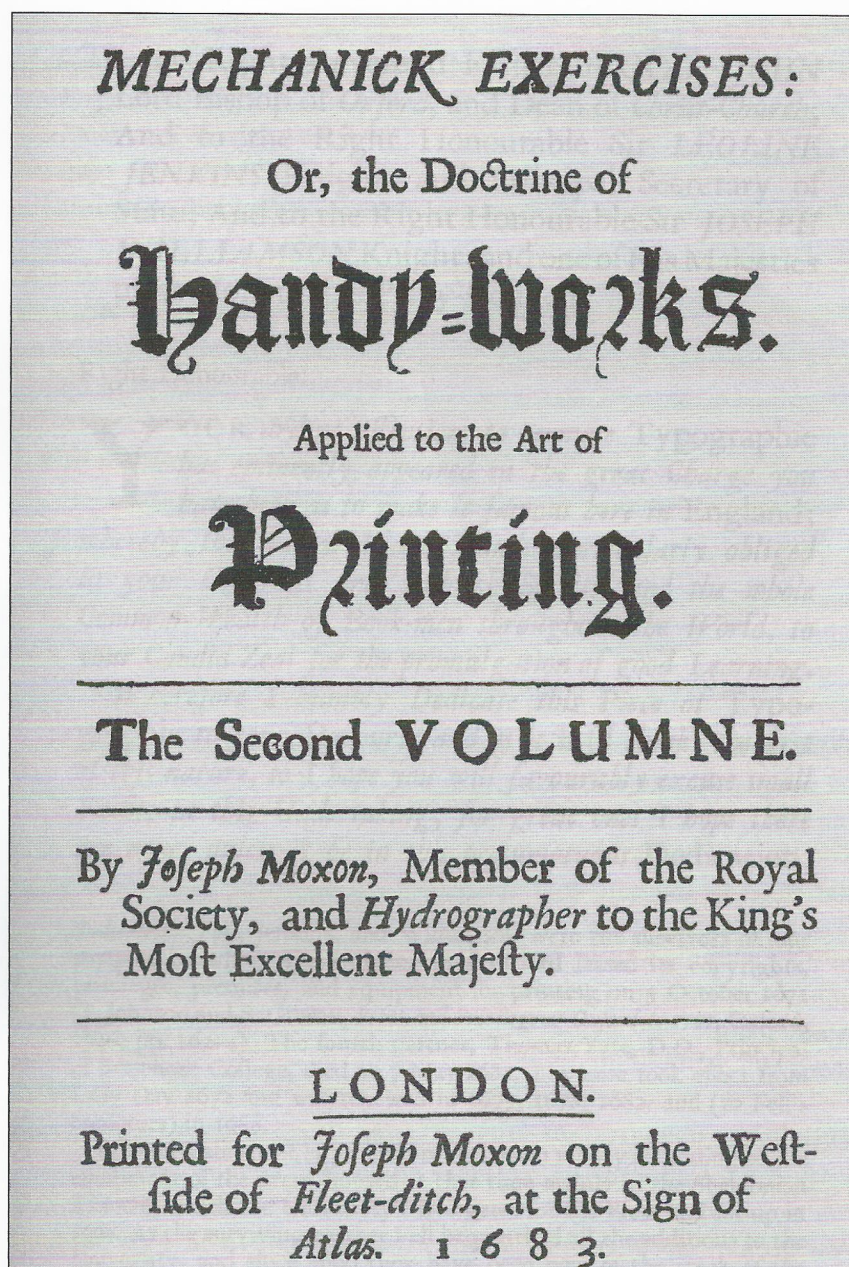
Despite Moxon's long association with the printing trade, beginning in his father's printery in Holland when he was a boy, he had always worked off and on in a variety of projects. To be sure he was setting down an accurate account, he probably talked at length with many printers, verifying details, examining various presses, learning of new practices.

Let us conjecture a little bit. If Moxon had learned the printing trade as his father's helper or apprentice in a shop in Holland where Dutch journeymen also worked, he doubtless

learned two printers' vocabularies, an English one from his father and a Dutch one from the Dutch journeymen. Since the anniversary parties, if held at that time, were for the benefit of the Dutch pressmen, they would have had a Dutch "naam" and Moxon would have known them by that. So, when he had returned to England and time had come to write his masterwork, he very likely had to learn the English name of the pressmen's annual

party. What he got sounded like Waygoose to him. What he asked for was what the English called the annual observance of a feast for the pressmen of the printing house. The word house did not have as its exclusive meaning in those days a structure in which someone dwelt, but quite usually was a combined working and dwelling place. The word house came to mean, with a modifier, like charnel house, public house, slaughterhouse or ware house, the business conducted therein. House also meant the workforce employed there and much more. If, in connection with a particular house you said best wishes to the house, you were speaking of all or most of the people there. Watch out. We're sneaking up on Waygoose.

In England at this time it was customary to hold an anniversary celebration for the village church. The celebrating event was called a wake. Perhaps we can ask if the word was adopted by the printers. Perhaps we can even ask if the boss printer didn't "wake the house." We're getting close to what might have been the origin of Waygoose. Try Wakehouse. The sound of the final syllable isn't right, you say. Well, the Dutch say "Huis" the Scots say "Hoose." The ancient English said "huse." Take your pick as to whom it was who assembled wake and house, if that indeed happened. Someone is saying, "What about the spelling changes?" Piffle. K slides into G easily enough and Wakehoose becomes Waygoose with hardly a tongue twist. Maybe the Waygoose question has been answered. Now proof either way



Title page of Moxon's original 1683 edition of the Mechanick Exercise of the Whole Art of Printing.

becomes something to find.

Answers to Test Your Knowledge, from p.15

- | | |
|-------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. Lum & Abner | 7. Ogden Nash |
| 2. Ed Norton | 8. Vivian Leigh |
| 3. Baby Dumpling | 9. Casper Milquetoast |
| 4. Sinclair Lewis | 10. Helen Hayes |
| 5. Lloyd Bridges | 11. Paladen |
| 6. Eve Arden | 12. Fibber McGee and Molly |
| | 13. Det. Tom Polhouse |
| | 14. Buffalo Bob Smith |
| | 15. PG Wodehouse |



HIRAM CHEEPE

Dear Hiram,

I bought this cut glass kerosene lamp at a tag sale and was hoping you could identify its origin. The gal running the sale told me it was a "wedding lamp." The base is about 12 inches to the brass connector, without the burner.

Many thanks,
Rona W.

Dear Rona,

My condolences for falling victim to salesmanship and misrepresentation on 2 counts! Your wonderful lamp is not cut glass but mid-19th century pressed glass of the type generically known as Sandwich Glass, after the Boston & Sandwich Glass Co., who produced many of this type in all colors and styles. Although other firms followed suit with similar designs, your pattern looks indeed genuine Sandwich. To rid ourselves of other inaccuracies it is not a wedding lamp, although Hiram could well imagine it illuminat-

ing many midnight embraces, nor is it kerosene, but properly a whale oil font which dates from the early 1850s. You have a circa 1870 kerosene replacement burner and chimney that "retrofitted" the original whale oil burner, which was a simple threaded brass cap with 2 tapered, diagonal spouts about an inch long. These were simple wick holding tubes, generally, but not always equipped with 2 wick cover caps secured by small chain, and were not used with a glass shade. Try a Google image search on whale oil lamps to get a better understanding on why the whaling industry grew by leaps and bounds during the middle years of the 19th Century. Until the introduction of refined petroleum products in the post-Civil War era, practically every household had a whale oil lamp of some form.

You are also fortunate in having a very large sized example; the smaller ones are much more common. Now, how would you determine if it is indeed original and not a 20th century reproduction? Originals, such as I conclude your example to be, were made of "flint" glass which, by the 19th century had a high lead content. Such glass has a grayish tinge as opposed to soda glass, which would be greenish/blue.

Pick it up by the font and tap the base with a fingernail; a resonant ring shall also indicate originality. Also carefully look for any imperfections, especially bubbles and trapped grains of sand with other tiny detritus. I can guarantee you will find some. Finally go to your public library if you

would like to learn more. If you desire (and Ol' Hiram strongly encourages this) to restore it to its period whale oil glory with the 2 spout burner mentioned, there are many resources on the web where you can obtain either a good original or a well made, period correct reproduction, though I would prefer the former. Best of luck,

Ol' Hiram

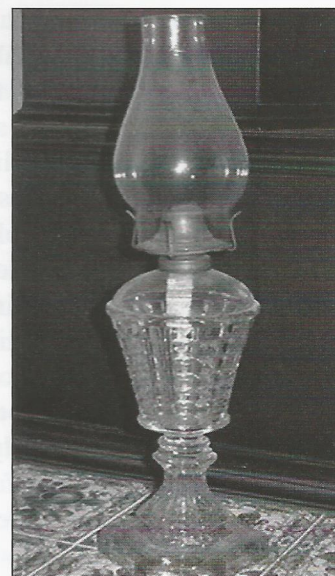
Dear Mr.Cheepe,

Nobody has been able to successfully identify this old French pillar clock due to some peculiarities I have not seen in any other example; I hope you can help.

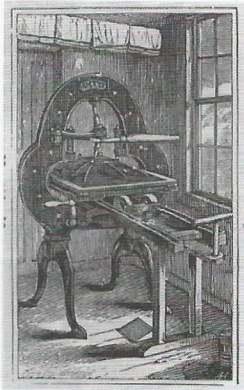
It stands approximately 18 inches high, the entire case and columns are made of wood with some brass and mother of pearl decorations and the movement is very small, only 3.5 inches square and runs for just 2 days. There are also some indecipherable German markings on the back of the works. What do I have here?

Gary S.

continued on p. 24



Blocklyn's Books



Book Reviews by Philip Blocklyn

The Great Hurricane: 1938. By Cherie Burns. New York, Atlantic Monthly Press, 2005. 230 pp. B&W photography and maps, notes, and index. \$24.

Everyone cites Chekhov's famous quote that "any idiot can face a crisis; it is this day-to-day living that wears you out." All the same, we have plenty of trouble dealing with crises, as the hurricane season of 2005 proved. Hurricanes in their cruelty expose human character for what it is, for its maddening mix of bravery, cowardice, ingenuity, selfishness, and outright stupidity. The unnamed Great Hurricane of 1938 was particularly cruel, sweeping across 700 ocean miles in just twelve hours to overwhelm eastern Long Island and southern New England and leave the land and people who lived there changed forever.

Cherie Jones interviews what survivors are left from that September storm to give us a picture of how unprepared they were for such a disaster. Catherine Moore of Napatree Point, Rhode Island, reassured her daughter on the morning of the storm that "hurri-

canes don't come to New England." George Burghard of Westhampton "considered the idea of a hurricane on Long Island to be ridiculous." He was annoyed that the morning's rain and rising winds had forced cancellation of Wednesday's tennis matches at Forest Hills. Later that day, with the North Atlantic ripping through his dune cottage, he made a point, before abandoning his home, of slipping Thursday's tickets into his pocket. But he missed Thursday, too.

Oyster Bay played a small role in the story. On Wednesday morning, resident Adams Nickerson was chauffeured to Grand Central Station for the trip back to his prep school, St Mark's of Southborough, Massachusetts. Dressed in a brown three-piece suit and carrying a tennis racket, camera, and fifty dollars from his father's secretary "for the trip," he worried mostly about keeping his new clothes dry. Watching the storm from the cars as he whipped through Connecticut, he saw a pond disappear before him, blown out by wind and surf. No one else seemed to notice. By Stonington, everyone noticed. A forty-foot schooner lay across the tracks, which were beginning to wash out from under the cars. Leaving his racket and camera behind, he made his way forward to the front car, from which he was able to step out onto solid ground and make his way into Stonington, where he was given a cup of coffee, his first ever. His new suit, meanwhile, stayed dry.

The storm's aftermath was grim, grim everywhere. In Westerly, Rhode Island, the town's five undertakers ran out of embalm-

ing fluid and found themselves doubling up on funerals by burying parent and child in one coffin. Of the 179 houses along the beach from Shinnecock Bay to Moriches Inlet, 25 remained. The entire settlement of Napatree disappeared. In Providence, where a fifty-foot surge of water brought whitecaps to the city's downtown streets, chaos was the rule. Looters, swimming from store to store, holding their flashlights out of the water, outnumbered the police. A quarter-square mile of New London's central district burned to the basements. In all, the loss of life and property exceeded that of the Chicago Fire of 1871 and the San Francisco Earthquake of 1906.

Ernest Clowes, Bridgehampton meteorologist, made a point of laying blame in a scathing letter to C.L. Mitchell of the Forecast Division of the U.S. Weather Bureau in Washington. Clowes berated the Bureau for its hopelessly inadequate warnings, which at any rate came too late to do any good at all. Can there be any surprise regarding Mr Mitchell's response?

I believe, and most others at the Central Office apparently share my belief, that this office handled the storm situation at least fairly well under the circumstances.

Further reading:

Allen. *A Wind To Shake the World*

Clowes. *The Hurricane of 1938*

Scotti. *Sudden Sea: The Great Hurricane of 1938.*

Hiram Cheepe

continued from p. 22

Dear Gary,

Your confusion regarding the origin of your clock is quite plausible in view of the fact it is Austrian, not French. Wall-mounted Vienna regulators were not the only clocks to come from Austria. Many finely-crafted mantel and bracket clocks were produced there as well.

Now for the fun part....the style can be called Biedermeier, a predominantly middle class, neoclassical design period in Austria circa 1815-1830, and I would assign a probable date of 1830-35 for your example. The case is made from black-stained pearwood; a strong, easily carved wood preferred by Germanic clockmakers, rather than the bronze and marble used by their Gallic rivals. The use of mother of

MARK YOUR CALENDAR FOR THESE UPCOMING EVENTS!

APRIL

Tues., April 17, 7:15pm

20/20 Lecture

O B-E N Public Library

Professor Emerita Natalie Naylor will present "General Rosalie Gardiner Jones: Suffragist from Oyster Bay."

Admission is free and refreshments will be served following the lecture.

Professor, historian and comedian Peter Bales presents "A Lighthearted View of American History."

Admission is free and refreshments will be served following the lecture.

MAY

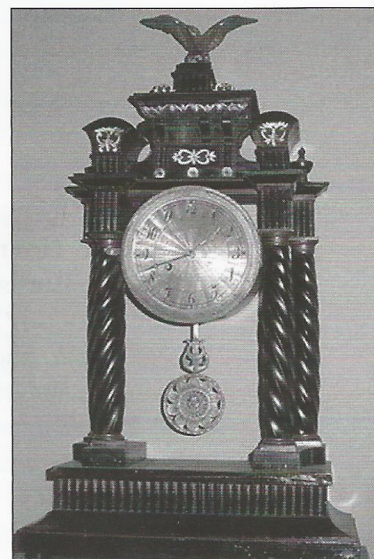
Tues., May 15, 7:15 pm

20/20 Lecture

O B-E N Public Library

pearl ornaments is likewise indicative of its origin, as is the tiny, watch-like movement, many of which indeed, on the less expensive clocks and timepieces only ran for 2-4 days.

The really fancy, complex examples generally had Grand Sonnerie 1/4 hour striking, in which the hours were repeated every 15 minutes with 1 to 3 additional gongs which marked the quarters. Your clock is a much plainer one however, but still much scarcer than its French counterpart; the fact that the wood case has survived in such shape is truly remarkable. Feel free to contact the Historical Society and I will be glad to forward you more info on how to properly care for this delicate treasure, as clocks are one of Hiram's abiding passions.



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