THE FREEHOLDER

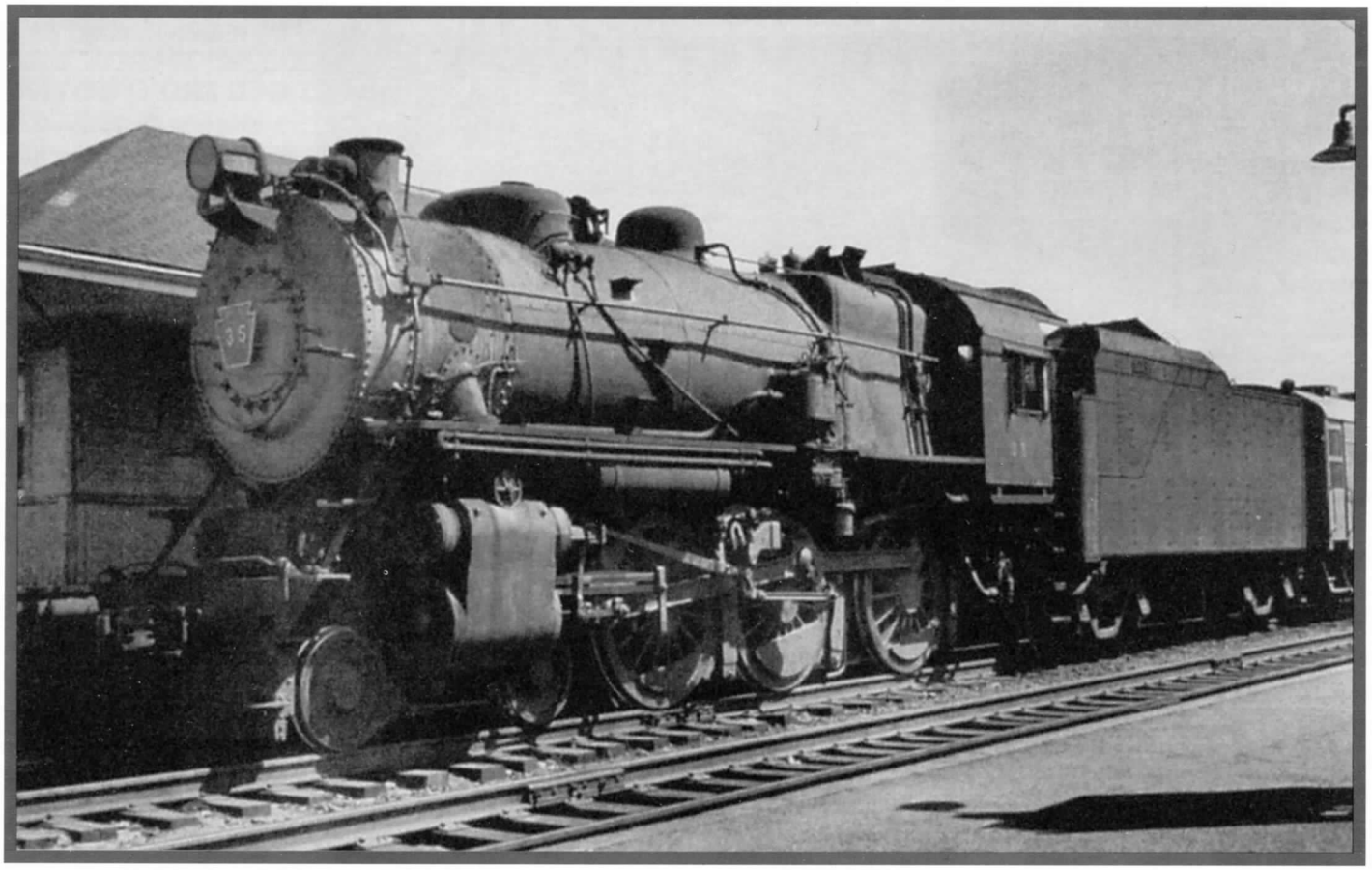
SUMMER 2001 THE OYSTER BAY HISTORICAL SOCIETY FOUNDED 1960

☞17TH CENTURY SARTORIAL SPLENDOR

☞ DID THE CROOKED MAN OWN A CROOKED KNIFE?

☞ STEWART'S "CENTRAL"-IZED RAIL SERVICE

☞ OLD #35 "STEAMS" INTO OYSTER BAY



THE HISTORY MAGAZINE OF THE TOWN OF OYSTER BAY

Editorial

Ten years ago, one man had a dream, which he recounted to anyone who would listen. That dream was to see a certain steam locomotive come up to Oyster Bay so that it could be used as an educational tool to teach children about the Age of Steam, rather than rust away to oblivion.

Well, on August 2, 2001, that dream became reality when Locomotive #35 was ferried to the Oyster Bay yard.

There are a lot of people in the state, county and town governments, the LIRR, non-profit organizations, and private individuals whose contributions to making this dream a reality need to be acknowledged.

But without the dream of that one man to provide the goal that all of those others worked toward, it never would have happened. That man is our curator, Dick Kappeler.

THE FREEHOLDER
of the
Oyster Bay Historical Society
Vol. 6 No. 1 Summer 2001

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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.

CONTENTS

Clothing in the 17th Century, An Age of Opulence.....3
Arlene Goodenough
The Crooked Knife.....7
Elliot Sayward
Uncle Peleg.....10
Currents of the Bay.....11
Ye Olde Schoolhouse.....15
The Gathering Place.....16
Test Your Knowledge.....16
The Central Railroad of Long Island.....20
S. (Sam) Berliner, III
Blocklyn's Books.....22
Aunt Eeek.....23

ABOUT OUR FRONT COVER

Locomotive #35 is shown at the Hicksville station in 1954, the last full year of her working life on the LIRR. Since she was taken out of service in 1955, the engine and tender have been moved three times: to Salisbury Park, then to Mitchel Field, and finally to Oyster Bay. Let's hope that the third time is the charm and that she will remain here!
(Collection of Ron Ziel).

THE POST RIDER

To the Editor:

I immensely enjoyed Edward Magnani's informative article in the most recent Freeholder ("President Theodore Roosevelt: The Centennial of His Inauguration," Spring 2001). Being fascinated with Long-Island-related minutia, I cannot resist mentioning that both the Milburn and Root referred to in Mr. Magnani's article are Long Islanders. Discussing Milburn and Root was not in the scope of the article, hence the author was perfectly justified in not pursuing their identities. However, I do think your readers might be interested in their Long Island connections.

John George Milburn, Sr. (1851-1930), president of the Pan-American Exposition in Buffalo (1901), to whose Buffalo, New York, home his friend President McKinley was taken after the President was shot, eventually moved to Long Island and built a house, c. 1924, which he called *Groombridge*. The house, which is presently owned by the Seventh Day Adventists and easily visible to commuters, is located near New Hyde Park Road on the Long Island Expressway South Service Road in North Hills.

Milburn was a founder and partner in the prestigious Manhattan law firm of Carter, Ledyard and Milburn. He served as a director of American Railway Express Co., Chase National Bank, National Park Bank, American Express Co., and New York Life Insurance Co., and was a trustee of Columbia University, Barnard College, and the New York Public Library. In 1878 he married Patty Stocking, who also died in 1930. The Milburns' son John [Jr.]'s estate *Wychwood* was located on the LIE's South Service Road in North Hills. Their son Devereux [Sr.] was an internationally famous polo player during the 1920s and 1930s. His estate *Sunridge Hill* is located at

continued on p. 19

CLOTHING IN THE 17TH CENTURY, AN AGE OF OPULENCE

by Arlene Goodenough

Clothing in America in the 17th century was totally a reflection of the clothing in Europe and England. Each of the colonies has its own fashion story to tell, but here we will just take Massachusetts and Virginia for examples.

Everyday wear among the well to do on the continent and in Great Britain, was totally outrageous by today's standards. It was very uncomfortable, (especially for females), very costly and definitely not practical. However, it was very beautiful, if over the top.

From 1610 well into the 1700s, the men were the more elaborately dressed. For instance, they wore lavish embroidered stockings, fancy garters and costly boots. (The women's legs were hidden beneath long skirts). The bottom of their breeches, which fit tight under the knee, were adorned with rosettes, ribbons, tassels, and/or braiding. Their big hats of felt or beaver were heavily decorated with gems. Clasps of gold often affixed the huge curling ostrich plume they wore sweeping around the brim. As a result, when being held up by a highwayman, a gentleman's hat was often the first thing stolen. Women's and men's hats were similar from 1620 to the 1670s. The women also wore simple caps.

Pearls were worn on everything. They were even attached close together on collars as an edging.

The men wore a doublet over a fine linen shirt and their breeches. Popular for some years was a really odd looking, (to us), garment called trunk hose. They were very full cut pants, which were actually stuffed with rags, scraps of material or whatever else was handy to make them stand out several inches around the upper leg.

There were humorous aspects to these trunk hose, and 17th century comedy writers described them as holding various household items such as a chicken or filled to the top with grain, which would leak out in polite company. There would be a band below the knee and silk stockings over the gentleman's calf. A well-shaped calf was essential and padding was often used. Men sometimes wore a second pair of hose, which were folded down over their boot tops called boot hose. One style of boots had enormous tops and were called bucket top boots. You have seen these in the movies worn by the Three Musketeers.

The doublets were made of beautiful silks and satins. The ornate sleeves were slashed to show the shirt underneath. A typical gentleman of 1661 might have a red silk doublet with orange trim on the sleeve slashes. His cambric shirt would be topped with a wide lace collar, and he would have wide lace cuffs. His breeches might be of blue silk. A multitude of ribbon

Many of the elements peculiar to 17th century men's fashion are evident in this c. 1630 painting by Flemish artist Theodor Rombouts, entitled "Card-players," including ostrich-plumed hats, be-ribboned and slashed doublet and lace shirt collars and cuffs.

loops attached to his shoulder would flutter as he walked. His cape or cloak would have contrasting lining to complement his ensemble. It was quite usual to have several colors in one outfit. Russet shades were considered suitable for the country. A certain shade of blue was so often used for servants' clothing gentlemen would not wear it. Social gatherings were very gay with color. Perfumed gloves, (gloves were usually perfumed), would have had wide turn back cuffs. A silver headed cane would be carried.

Capes were indispensable from 1630 on, worn under the elaborate lace collar called a falling band. These collars often extended from the neck to the shoulder. Men's hair was worn long and full and curly, being curled with a curling iron. One lock was left longer than the rest, and this was called a lovelock. Mustaches and pointed beards were derigeur.

It boggles the mind to think of the headaches associated with cleaning these materials. Not much was washable. There was a lot of spot cleaning and brushing. The umbrella was introduced in England in 1630, which would protect against water spotting. The sedan chair was used for journeys through the dirty streets.

The 1660s ushered in the wearing of wigs, the practice of which would last over a hundred years. They were very long and curly. The problem of head lice was constant, and with a wig, the head could be shaved and the scalp kept much cleaner. When relaxing at home, just a cap or turban could be worn, but the wigs themselves were very hot and uncomfortable. They were very expensive and were sprinkled with costly powder, which made them very messy. They were made by barbers, the good ones out of human hair, the cheaper ones of goat hair or horsehair. Once a week they had to be sent out to be combed and curled. It could cost ten pounds a year to care for a wig. Often they were stolen, sometimes right off of people's heads! There was quite a trade in second hand wigs.

Women's clothes in the 17th century were lovely to look at but very constricting to wear. Bodices were very tight, worn over whalebone corsets. Until 1620 the farthingale was worn extensively. It had a very stiff and straight bodice laced in tight at the waist and ending in a point. The voluminous skirt was distended with wire or bone hoops and a bolster.

Here is a description of a woman getting dressed in 1607 by a Thomas Tomkis:

> Five hours ago I set twelve maids to attire a nice gentlewoman, but there is such pinning and unpinning etc., etc. that she is scarce dressed to the corset. Seven peddlers shops will scarce furnish her (accessories). A ship is sooner rigged by far, than a gentlewoman made ready.

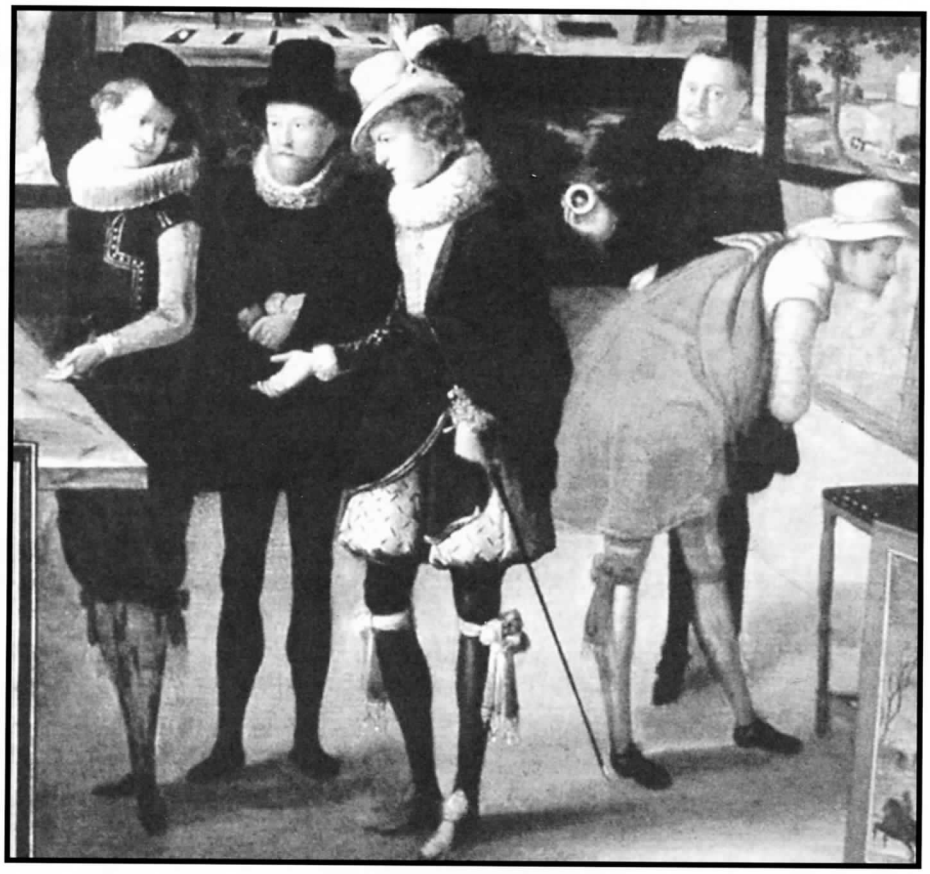
And again, "Being so stuffed and sewed as they can hardly stoupe down, styffe and sturdy they stand."

Eventually the farthingale went out of style and the bodice loosened a bit. Necklines were quite low cut and were square, round

In this work by Abraham Bosse, entitled "The Ball,"fashion of the second quarter of the 17th century is on parade. Note the coat slung over the shoulder, cloak-like, of the man at right.and the [puffed sleeves of both men and women, (Metropolitan Museum of Art.)

or V necked. If very low cut, a narrow frill of lace would be used for modesty. Lavish lace collars were very common. Sometimes a sheer second collar would be added. There was Flemish lace and cutwork, which was like eyelet. English lace was made, often by children, in many small villages in Devon. It was used on almost every article of clothing.

Gorgeous fabrics were available for wealthy people: brocade, moiré, taffeta, damask, silks, embroidered of plain, velvet. There were many different types and weights of linen. Worn out clothes were often used to make cushions. Old clothes were taken apart and used to make new.



The somber colors favored by men in the Low Countries (save for the gentleman at right)are evident in this painting, entitled "Jan Snellinckx's Shop" by Flemish artist Hieronymus Francken II . Trunk hose are worn only by the androgynous figure at center, who paradoxically also appears to be the lone figure with a small sword.

Ladies' long skirts were often divided in front to display a decorative petticoat underneath. There exists in a museum in England a knitted petticoat ten feet in circumference!

Jewels would be pinned in the women's curls. Gold necklaces and chains, bracelets and earrings were worn, as well as rings on every finger and the thumbs. Belt-like girdles were worn and all manner of items were hung from them: fans, (fans were a vital accessory), small mirrors, pomander balls, watches, (which were introduced in the 1670s) and masks. Silk or velvet masks were necessary to protect milady's complexion from the wind and the sun. Freckles were regarded with horror and sunburn was considered disfiguring. Masks were also very handy when a woman did not want to be recognized. Handkerchiefs were held in the hand, the better to display their beautiful embroidery.

After 1670 styles in jewelry changed to a simpler look, with much less gold. The attractive use of a black ribbon around the throat, perhaps with a small cross or locket was in. A necklace of pearls with bracelet to match seems to have been the height of good taste.

Buttons were incredibly varied, painstakingly made one by one. Some were carved out of wood and covered with thread to match the material of a garment, some were covered with narrow braid. There were buttons of pewter, silver, brass, ivory, mother of pearl and boxwood. Often many tiny buttons were used with tiny meticulously stitched buttonholes. Eyestrain must have been an occupational hazard for tailors.

Evening apparel was especially elegant. Candlelight reflected off of shiny satin and silver and gilt lace. Silver spangles gave a shimmering effect when the person moved. Ten pounds of silver thread fashioned a beautiful design on a red silk dress meant to be worn at the royal court. It still exists.

The execution of King Charles the First of England in 1649, ushered in the government of Oliver Cromwell. He advocated subdued and simple dress. He forbade the

wearing of lace, but by all accounts no one paid him much heed. When Charles the Second took the throne in 1660, bright colors and cheerful raiment were the order of the day. They persisted through some difficult times, such as the Great Plague and the Fire of London. The vestments worn by the clergy in Rome today give some idea of the richness of fabrics and trims in those days.

Now we look at the costumes worn in America. The Englishmen who landed at Jamestown, Virginia, in 1610, made little or no effort to suit their new occupations as pioneers. Their broad brimmed hats with the ostrich plume would have given some protection from the hot Virginia sun, and no doubt made a big impression on the Indians. Their fine leather boots would have been good for walking the woods. For the cold weather, their heavy lined cloaks would have been most welcome. The lace cuffs and ruffs worn about the neck must have been pretty useless and gotten awfully dirty. Some might have had leather jerkins, which were worn at this time. A well-made leather jerkin would provide some protection from arrows. They were very durable and were often worn for generations. Their silk stockings would protect them from insects, at least before they wore out.

Virginia soon grew to be a very wealthy colony because of the good grade of tobacco that grew so well there. Virginians copied the English and French styles slavishly. Ladies often wore mantas. This was a full-length loose garment with a train. The costumes were rich and extravagant. The décolletage became more daring and the shoulders barer after 1650. With dresses, bolsters were worn around the hips and the skirt was draped over it. These were also known as bum rolls.

The southern belles loved all the latest accessories and there was much weaving of pearls in the hair and applying of tiny black patches to faces. There was no end of plumes and fans and snuff boxes and ribbons.

Not much flax was planted for linen or many sheep raised for wool, because it was easier to plant tobacco and sell it and import whatever was needed. Every manner of costly and substantial material was sold in the colonies, but ready-made clothing was not sold until after 1750. Garments had to be ordered by the piece from across the sea. Dolls dressed in the latest styles were sent on a regular basis to customers who would choose the ones they preferred. The Governor of Virginia and his retinue would always have the latest things, which would gradually spread through the countryside. Likewise in England and France, the royal courts would set the trends.

By contrast, the Protestant Christian pilgrims who landed at Plymouth did not dwell on worldly things. Their apparel was plain and serviceable. They did have ruffs and warm hooded cloaks but no cosmetics or frills. The women almost always wore caps to cover their hair, which was worn straight and short.

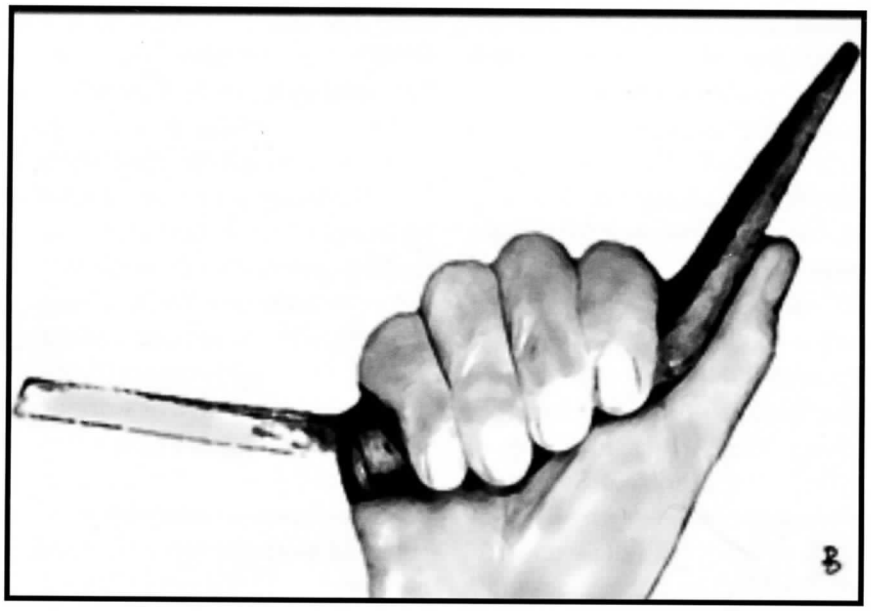
There was more variety in Boston and Salem, but Plymouth was very staid. Surprisingly enough, the Puritans, or those who favored Cromwell, were as well dressed in New England as the Cavaliers, or those who favored the king, were dressed in the South. There was some effort made by clergy and others in authority to discourage fancy dress, (the Sumptuary Laws), but they weren't very successful. Captain George Corwin of Salem had in his inventory a coat trimmed with silver lace, and another of velvet, gold trimmed gloves, a silver hatband and a silver topped cane.

By the late 1670s, the coat was starting to replace the men's doublet. It was slit at the hips and in the back. The sleeves would be turned back at the elbow to show the lining and the ruffled sleeve of the linen shirt. An embroidered vest was essential. A fall of fine lace graced the throat. Breeches more often would be the same material as the coat, and this was called a ditto suit. The pants were gartered at the knee with ribbons. Boots were giving way to square toed shoes, with silver buckles. Coats made from American buffalo skins were being worn. The fancy peacock raiment would slowly decline. There was ever increasing sobriety in mens' dress, eventually evolving into today's dark suit and white shirt.

It can truly be said, that the 1600s had more variety in masculine attire than any other century. Once can only imagine what these beribboned dandies would have made of today's ensembles from the Gap.

THE CROOKED KNIFE

As Uncle Peleg points out in the Winter Issue of 2001, there is not much really known about the crooked knife, although there is ample evidence that it was used both by Native Americans and white backwoodsmen probably from as early as the 17th century. Before that there were knives of Native American manufacture with blades of stone or of animal teeth and handles of wood or bone. Some of these have been called crooked knives by some ethnologists. Let me point out right here that there is a group of students of the crooked knife's development, both professional and amateur, who do not believe the aboriginal knife was the pattern for the crooked knife as we know it today, except that the tasks of the earlier knife form, or forms, are to a considerable extent the same tasks now performed by the newer one. I belong to this group, so you may expect a certain amount of bias in what I have to say.



The handle shaft of the crooked knife is folded between the palm and the closed fingers with the blade protruding from the grasp at the left and the thumb rest at the right. The knife is held in the palm-up position and drawn toward the user who holds the work between his left hand and his body.

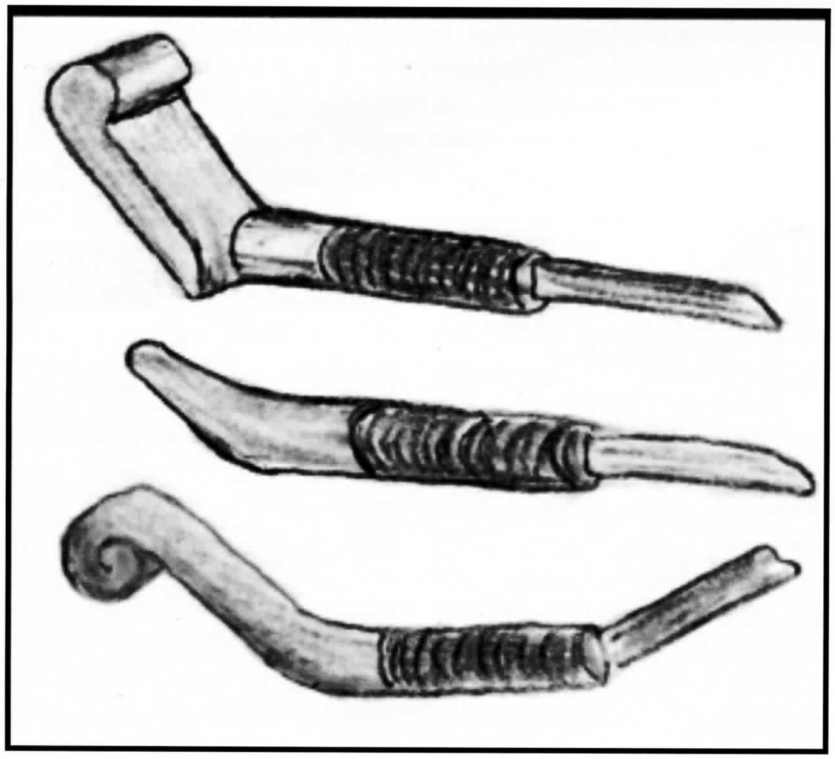
Let's begin by looking at some of the chief functions of the crooked knife that appeared in the 17th century or a little earlier. It was intended to operate as a one-handed draw knife for use in shaping wood in a variety of ways, some of which were determined by the form of blade supplied. With it wood, mostly of small diameter, could be shaved, split, whittled, carved or hollowed in making a variety of gear such as canoes, paddles, snowshoes, toboggans, bowls, baskets and masks. There were a whole range of other cutting chores not really subject to listing except by individual users. For major work the knife was held with the palm up and the blade projecting to the user's left. According to the trappers, lumberjacks, and other backwoodsmen , whether Indian or white, the crooked knife was an effective and convenient tool.

Although a two-handled draw knife would have done many of the tasks quicker or better, it would have been of limited use to men working in the woods. The two-handled knife requires a holding device of some sort for the workpiece ; the crooked knife leaves one hand free to hold the work. It should not be thought that those who went into the woods had any intention of weighing themselves down with heavy clamps, vises or shaving horses. Neither did they intend to build such articles whenever it became necessary to do a little woodwork. The crooked knife suited them fine.

The introduction of the crooked knife is dated to the 17th century or somewhat earlier, because that's when Europeans began to arrive in quantity on the Northeast coast of the American continent. Europeans brought with them trading goods that included tools, knives, knife blades, and the metals for making these. Before this there had been little in the way of metal coming into the hands of the native Indians or Eskimos. Doubtless some iron or even steel floated ashore in wreckage and was made use of without extensive reworking. Perhaps a small amount of native copper, a material unsuitable for woodworking tools, was traded among the tribes. It is difficult to imagine how it could have been employed as knife blades in any important way. There is little evi-

dence of anything more than trifling use of metals on these shores prior to the influx of the European empire builders. It lacks reasonability to imagine that the Europeans coming from an advanced technology landed here, handed the natives a bunch of steel billets, and said,"Go make yourself some crooked knives." Of course not. At first the Indians probably received cheap, straight bladed knives of common appearance. Somebody noticed they were trying to do all sorts of work with the wonderful new tool. Then the blacksmith said,"You want to scoop with that knife? Give it here. For one beaverskin I'll put a curve in it."

You understand that I don't know this happened. But there were blacksmiths with the trading expeditions and in the permanent trading posts, and somebody began to customize knife blades soon after the appearance of the Euros. Eventually users picked up enough knowledge of working metal to begin to make their own knives using whatever material came to hand. In later days, old files and worn out razors seem to have been a chief source of metal.



Some varieties of crooked knife. All three examples have the tangs of their blades mounted in slots in their handles. All three examples have the tangs of their blades mounted in slots in their handles. These are retained by bindings, perhaps of wire, cord, shaved spruce root or thong of animal skin.
Top: Crooked knife with large, broad, offset thumb rest
Center: Crooked knife with short thumb rest that does not diverge greatly from the upper line of the handle
Bottom: Crooked knife with scroll finial carved at the end of its thumb rest. Note the pronounced angling of the blade from the axis of the handle.

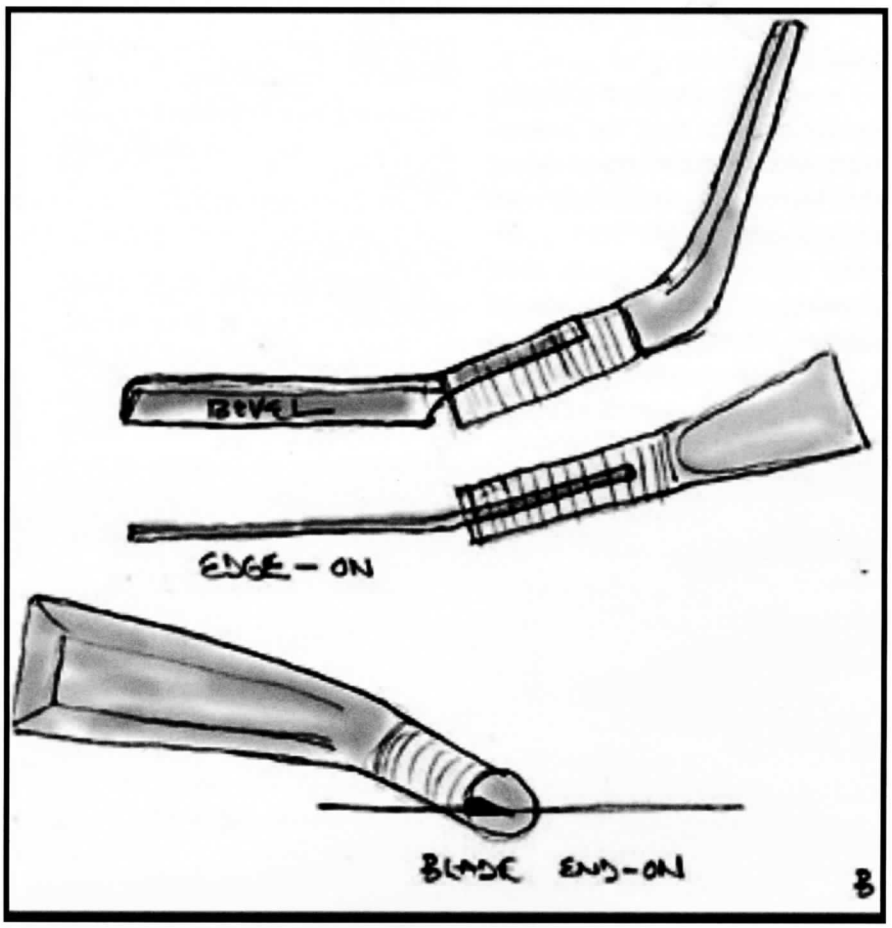
However, it verges on the wildly incredible to suggest that the native population did this for themselves in the beginning. Forging and tempering can be learned, but not in the absence of guidance in a wigwam in the woods by people with no experience and no metalworking tradition. This is not to say that the native workman made no contribution to the new tool. Those crooked knives of modern times that we may examine either in collections or in the tool kits of the small group of woodworkers (not all Indians by any means) who still use them have, as a universal feature, a thumb rest at the end of the handle. Just past the curled fingers of the palm-up grasp, the handle shaft changes direction and angles off, providing a comfortable surface against which the thumb can press for greater control by the workman. This feature may well belong to the Indian user, but such an attribution is hardly definite.

A further development, which may belong to either Euro or Native American, is the mounting angle of many crooked knife blades. Instead of jutting from the handle end in the same direction as the axis of the handle, these blades point to the right about 10 degrees +or- and upward about 20 degrees +or- from the usual blade/handle line of most knives. This seems to be a deliberate adjustment of the angle in which the knife addresses the workpiece. Otherwise, that would be dictated by the angle at which the human palm folds.

As far as I can learn, the expression crooked knife is not an English variation on some primeval

Indian or Eskimo term employed by the earliest inhabitants of this continent. Crooked is a perfectly ordinary English word, the dominant meaning of which is "curved," not "deformed," "bent out of shape," or "crabbed," whatever the nursery rhyme says about the crooked man, the crooked stile and the crooked house. It has been applied to tools to indicate they were curved or hooked as has the word crum, a dialect synonym, from very early times. The Dutch used the latter word to mean the same thing, and called a little brook that ran from New York City's Madison Square down to the East River, the Krom Mesje, the Little Crooked Knife. Krum kniv is found in Scandinavian and crumskeen in Gaelic. The meanings will be found to be the same.For example, in English among other uses crum is part of the name of the cooper's scooped drawknife and indicates that the blade is curved. The French term, at least the one Canadian Museums use to designate the crooked knife, is couteau croche. Croche means bent like a hook. Otis Tufton Mason, Curator of the Division of Ethnology, Smithsonian Institution, one of the first professional ethnologists to write about the knife in the hands of the native American population, was so anxious that his readers not interpret the knife's common name as meaning askew, twisted or misshapen, that he never called it anything but the "curved" knife in his 1898 report to the Smithsonian Trustees. He further made it plain that in his view the aboriginal woodworker did not even begin to do good work until presented with the steel knife.

The pre-Euro aborigines had no curved knife. The material of their knife blades did not allow blades with scoops, hooks or other departures from straightness. Their first such knife was a European-made tool of iron or steel. It seems to follow that the European trader supplied not just knife blades, but curved ones capable of scooping. Such blades gave the tool its name and probably summoned the thumb rest to help with the job. Since then crooked knives have strayed forth in many different blade shapes, but the name has expanded to include all forms. Who developed the thumb rest remains a question that is not answered by wobbly and late sprouting tradition.



A common feature of many crooked knives is the unusual angled protrusion of the blade from the handle shaft. The blade points upward at about 20 degrees and sideways to the right at about 10 degrees on those recorded for this article.

ASK UNCLE PELEG

Dear Uncle Peleg:

I read in a book about early life in the country that the general store was a place of resort where the loafers of the village sat around playing checkers, spinning yarns and spitting their chewing tobacco into a box of sawdust. Storewise, things seem to have improved since then but I am not writing to comment on the unattractive aspects of early day shopping. It is the phrase "spinning yarns" that interests me. I understand that it means telling stories, probably indelicate ones, but how did the phrase originate?

Olive Stevens

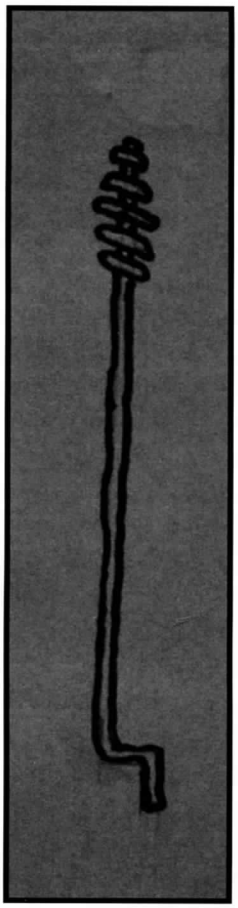
In the days of sailing ships there was much time when most of the sailors were not called upon to take part in "working the ship." It was not thought to be good for morale or discipline for the temporarily unemployed to simply laze about. Many "busy work" tasks were developed to keep the men active and, if possible, productive. One of these was refashioning "the old junk," that is discarded rope into useful forms. Rope was expensive and, while it would have been dangerous to continue to use damaged or worn out rope as rope, the materials of which it was constituted were not all past service. On idle days seamen were put to breaking the old junk back to its fibers and then spinning those into yarns which could be used in a hundred different applications. While the men were making spun yarn they were free to tell jokes and stories and very early the phrase spinning yarns was applied directly to story telling. From the sailors it passed to others as your general store reminiscence shows.

Dear Uncle Peleg:

At dinner the other night someone spoke to me of Blue Points. As I am only recently a Long Islander and have never been fond of shell fish, I didn't really understand what was meant except in a general way. Do the shells of these oysters have blue points?

Carol Marsh

No. Blue Points are oysters from the vicinity of Blue Point, Long Island, a locality on the Great South Bay near Patchogue. They are said to be delicate and delicious but no one in Oyster Bay Village or in the vicinity of our Bay need travel so far to enjoy oysters. That you are not fond of shell fish is obviously the result of your never having tasted our bivalve mollusks.



Dear Uncle Peleg:

To acquire a handsome old cane at a tag sale recently I had to buy a whole umbrella jar (damaged) full of trashy items such as old broom sticks and splintering yard sticks. With them was an old fashioned stove poker with a strange looking "business end." Is it broken? I enclose a sketch.

Elton Hardesty

It isn't broken and it isn't a stove poker, although it could be used for one. It's a towel rod for drying dish cloths and kitchen towels. It hooks into a hole in the top surface of one of the old cast iron stoves and extends outward far enough to hold the article to be dried near the stove's hot wall.

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 COMMITTEES WORKING ON FALL EVENTS

The Oyster Bay Historical Society is running on all cylinders in working on "The Twentieth Century Heritage Series: The Italian Immigrant Experience in Oyster Bay."

Several committees have been formed in order to accomplish the myriad tasks associated with the groundbreaking exhibition and event schedule slated for this fall. Each event has a working committee devoted to it, under the overall guidance of Historical Society Director Tom Kuehhas and co-chair Maureen Monck.

Furthermore, a committee has been formed to handle the compilation of a journal which, in addition to telling the stories of local Italian-American families, will also allow corporate as well as individual sponsors to show their support for this ambitious undertaking. For a listing of sponsorship opportunities, call Tom Kuehhas at 922-5032.

A gala evening, "Il Festival dell'Autunno: Una Celabrazione Musicale e Culinaria Italiana," is planned for Saturday, November 10. An energetic committee, under the able leadership of Mrs. Frederick S. Mortati, is diligently working to ensure that every last detail regarding the decorations, the music, the service, and especially the food, will combine to make "Il Festival" an evening to remember. Reserve your tickets now, because this event is sure to please!

Ever mindful of its educational mission, the Society is joining forces with Dowling College to present a special roundtable discussion on November 30. A panel composed of long-time residents will compare the experience of growing up in Italian-American communities on the North and South Shores of Long Island. Check our calendar of events for more educational offerings.

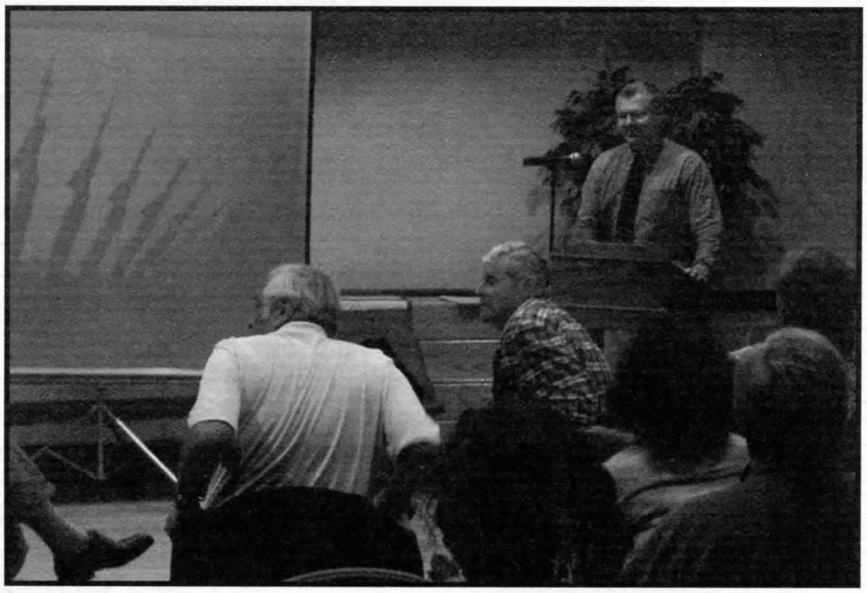
We have conducted interviews with numerous individuals from all over the Town of Oyster Bay, but there are still many more whose stories deserve to be recorded. If you fit in the latter category, or know someone who does, please forward their name and phone number to Director Kuehhas today. Take advantage of this opportunity to keep your Italian heritage alive! The more people we hear from, the more complete the story!

Please see the back cover of ***The Freeholder*** for a full listing of events; look for your invitation to arrive in the mail shortly!

WELCOME BACK TO OYSTER BAY, OLD FRIEND

by Walter G. Karppi

There is an old saying, the gist of which is: "As a door closes behind us another will open in front of us." On Thursday, August 2, 2001, the door to what had been Locomotive #35's home at Mitchel Field closed as the door to its new home in Oyster Bay opened. In the spring of 1956, a year after her last revenue run for the Long Island Rail Road, she was donated to Nassau County



An enthusiastic crowd was on hand at the Oyster Bay Historical Society's June 15th annual meeting. In the course of a copiously-illustrated lecture, historian Don Bender spoke on Cold War-era Nike missile sites, including the Brookville site, and was swamped with the questions and experiences of those in attendance, including "Duck and cover!" reminiscences.

and placed on display at Eisenhower (then called Salisbury) Park. For the next 20 years volunteers cared for her at the park.

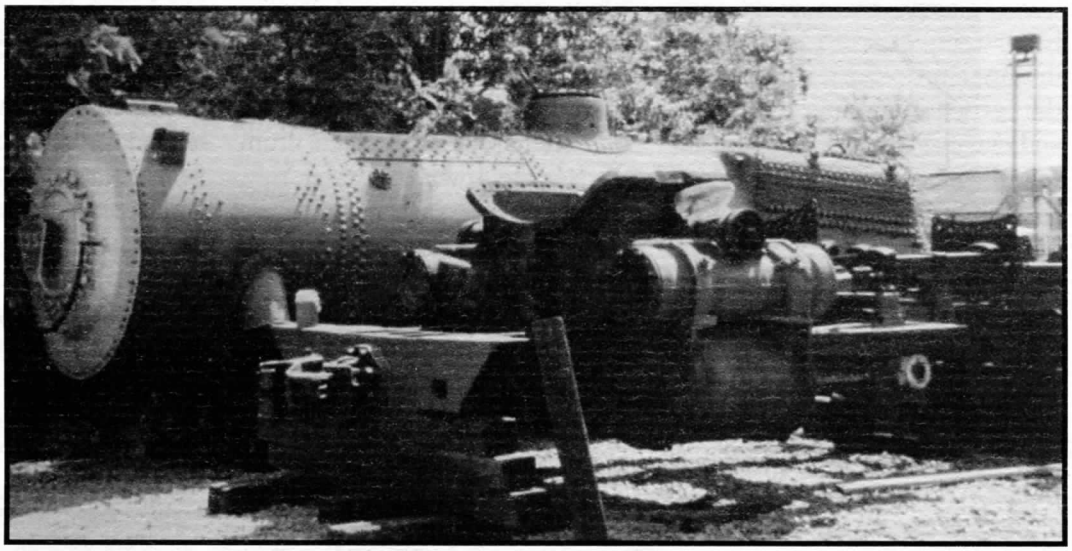
In 1976 she was moved to Mitchel Field by members of the Long Island Sunrise Trail (LIST) chapter of the National Railway Historical Society (NRHS). After several false starts in restoration were made, without bearing any results, the engine faced scrapping once more. October 1990, saw the formation of "The Locomotive #35 Restoration Committee," predecessor of today's "Friends of Locomotive #35, Inc.," dedicated to the restoration and preservation of this historic artifact.

In 1996 negotiations began between the Town of Oyster Bay, the Long Island Rail Road and Nassau County to transfer title to the locomotive and move her to Oyster Bay. It will then be incorporated, along with the abandoned turntable and station, into a railroad museum operated by the Locomotive #35 group under the auspices of the Oyster Bay Historical Society.

At 5:00 A.M., on August 2, 2001, volunteers from the group assembled at Mitchel Field to assist and observe men and equipment from the Bay Crane Company of Hicksville perform the herculean task of moving an engine and tender, weighing several hundred tons, with the confidence and ease that comes from years of experience. Anticipating the move the equipment had already been disassembled into their component parts. Those of the engine were: boiler, cab, frame and drivers; the tender's consisted of body, frame and trucks.

After loading five flatbed tractor trailer trucks the convoy proceeded to Oyster Bay escorted by a detachment from the Nassau County Police Department and a group of volunteers. The trip was uneventful and traveled at a speed of 35 miles per hour until reaching the hamlet of Oyster Bay. At that point the police cars turned on their flashing lights and sirens while the accompanying volunteers sounded their horns.

Since this was around midday there were a good number of villagers, attracted by the procession, who watched and cheered as the parade wended its way to its destination just off Bay



The boiler of Locomotive #35, surrounded by many of #35's other components, rests near the turntable, a Town of Oyster Bay landmark, after the trek from its former home at Mitchel Field. Photo by Walter Karppi.

Visit the Oyster Bay Historical Society's NEW website! www.oysterbayhistory.org

Avenue. Here the men and equipment of Bay Crane carefully unloaded the components brought from Mitchel Field.

These parts are now in a fenced-in area adjacent to the turntable resting on wooden railroad ties. This was done to prevent the parts from sinking into the soft ground and to prevent rusting. The area and equipment are off limits, for now, until the legalities of transferring the property to the Town are accomplished. The engine and tender are visible behind the cyclone fence and all interested are welcome to look.

Everything came up roses for Society member Elisabeth Christ as she receives her winning raffle prize at the Oyster Bay Historical Society's garden party and lecture. The June 27th event, held at Frances Storrs' home in Oyster Bay Cove, was well-attended and a good time was had by all. By the way, Elisabeth's prize was...what else? A rose bush!

HICKSVILLE GREGORY MUSEUM

The Hicksville Gregory Museum, located in the Heitz Place Courthouse, recently announced that they will be hosting a special event entitled "From Dolls to Dinosaurs," on Saturday, September 15 from 1 to 5 p.m.

Highlighting their dual role as a museum of both science and history, the Gregory Museum will be exhibiting the latest fossil addition to their collection, a flying dinosaur, as well as their exhibit "The Doll as a Cultural Icon."

The exhibit will focus on the development of the doll-makers' art through the past 160 years. Hundreds of dolls will be on display and dolls and doll furniture will be for sale.

The admission charge for this special fundraising event will be $5 per adult, $3 per child age 14 and under. The admission price includes general admission to the museum and one doll identification or a 10% Gift Shop discount.

For more information and hours of operation call (516) 822-7505.

CENTRAL PARK HISTORICAL SOCIETY

The Society is once again planning to erect historic markers. They hope to install several markers acknowledging the Grumman Corporation's contributions to the nation and the local community. Plans for the erection of three markers are currently being formulated. The Society would appreciate input on this project in terms of significant buildings and/or areas in Bethpage. You can write to the Society at P.O. Box 178, Bethpage, NY 11714 or email them at lemdesigns.@aol for a quicker response.

FARMINGDALE-BETHPAGE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Dr. Benjamin J. Giminaro was re-elected to a third term as President of the Society at the annual meeting on June 10th. Their project of rehabilitating Bethpage Cemetery continues. Considerable work was accomplished this

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!

past spring, especially in clearing stumps and trees, but more must be done. They are also planning a trip to historic Farmington, Connecticut, on Saturday, Sept. 22nd. Farmington was founded in 1640 and is considered "a jewel of New England" because of its beauty. Three historic houses are on the itinerary and the Society is hopeful of a good turnout.

HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF THE MASSAPEQUAS

The Society is justly proud of their headquarters, Old Grace (Episcopal) Church on the north side of Merrick Road. It is the oldest structure in Massapequa and was erected in the period from 1844 to 1848. Many early settlers as well as past parish priests and other prominent members of the parish are interred in the Floyd-Jones burial grounds to the rear of the church building, which is now deconsecrated. The name of the community has changed over the years from Fort Neck to South Oyster Bay to Massapequa. The latter name became widely accepted in 1890-92 and it has been known as Massapequa ever since.

AMITYVILLE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

The Society's Annual Heritage Fair took place on Saturday, June 2nd on the grounds of the historic Park Avenue School (circa 1894), plus a section of Park Avenue and the grounds of the Society's museum. Among the guests was Theodore Roosevelt (James Foote), 26th President of the United States. Mr. Foote, a longtime admirer of "T.R.," has turned his resemblance to T.R. and his extensive knowledge of the late President into a twenty-year career for commemorative events, lectures and television performances.

Students from Manor Oaks School in New Hyde Park work at deciphering the writing in some of the documents from the Oyster Bay Historical Society's collection during a special program held on Saturday, June 2. The special pilot program, developed by the Society's librarian Kate Riley and Director Tom Kuehhas, focused on techniques of learning from primary sources. The New York State fourth grade Social Studies curriculum has emphasized the use of primary sources, such as original documents, photographs, and artifacts in the teaching of history and the Society was happy to oblige by utilizing the gold mine of such sources available in its archives.

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 ($7.50). Shipping is additional.

HUNTINGTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY

The Huntington Town Board has appointed a committee to begin planning for Huntington's 350th Anniversary in 2003. Back in 1903 the 250th celebration included a speech by President Theodore Roosevelt and also resulted in the creation of the Huntington Historical Society. A reminder that the Museum Shop at the Daniel W. Kissam House, 434 Park Ave., Huntington, sells antiques and collectibles on a consignment basis. It is open Tuesday through Friday and on Sunday from 1 to 4 P.M. For more information call Bernice Berger at (631) 427-7045.

YE OLDE SCHOOLHOUSE

This feature consists of the submissions of students from schools throughout the Town of Oyster Bay. If you would like your school's students to participate, please contact the Editor of ***The Freeholder*** *for guidance as to subject matter and deadlines for future issues.*

The Editor would like to thank the fourth grade students of Ms Betty Anne Natke's class at McKenna Elementary School, Massapequa Park. Thanks to Alyssa Wittenberg, Matthew Jovic, Megan Molfetta and Erin Serkes for their work on these two articles. Thanks also to Alyssa for her work on the illustration which accompanies the first article.

How the Teddy Bear Got Its Name

by Alyssa Wittenberg & Matthew Jovic

Do you know how the teddy bear got its name? Was it named after a man named Teddy? Yes, it was- Theodore "Teddy" Roosevelt, the 26th President of the United States.

It all started way back in 1903. Holt Collier, the best hunter in the south, received a note telling him the President was coming for a visit. Holt was asked to find the president a bear to shoot while hunting. He promised the president a bear even if he had to lasso it and tie it to a tree.

They camped out in the woods that night and the next morning they all set out to find the President a bear to shoot - Major Helm, Mr. Foote, Holt and President Roosevelt. Holt thought to himself, "Gee it's hot out. Now where would I find a bear on a hot day like this? I know! Coon Bayou, the watering hole."

He rode as fast as he could on his horse to the watering hole, and there was what he hoped for: an old tired bear taking a drink from the water. Jocko, Holt's dog, ran and jumped on the bear. The bear got a hold of Jocko and held on to him. Holt was screaming,"LET GO OF MY DOG!"

Holt grabbed his rifle and hit the bear on its head. The bear fell unconscious and dropped Jocko. Holt remembered what he had told the President, that he would get a bear even if he had to lasso it and tie it to a tree. So he did just that.

Holt blew three whistles to show he had found a bear. However, Holt felt bad for the bear so when Teddy came he told him not to shoot the bear. Teddy said he did not intend to even though everyone else told him to. Teddy said he was proud to be a hunter, but he would not be proud of himself if he shot an old tired bear tied to a tree! A cartoonist was with Teddy at the time, so in 1907 the Teddy Bear was introduced in honor of Teddy Roosevelt.

A Visit To Sagamore Hill

by Megan Molfetta & Erin Serkes

Sagamore Hill was Teddy Roosevelt's home. It was the "Summer White House" while he was president. Teddy began constructing the house in I884 soon after his wife died. Sagamore Hill is in Oyster Bay. This house is now a museum.

His house is very large with small rooms. The house is three stories high. The whole house is dark inside. On the first floor there is a kitchen, a bathroom, a living room, and a library. On the second floor there are two maids' rooms, a laundry room, his daughter's room, and one son's room. On the stairs going up to the third floor there are many pictures of his family. When you get off the stairs on the third floor, there are some of his other children's rooms, storage rooms, and

continued on p. 18

THE GATHERING PLACE

"The Gathering Place" is the department of the magazine housing contributions of an historical slant but of short length that might otherwise be lost among the longer pieces. To our members who are not ready to attempt long or deeply researched articles, this is the place for your notions and comments, however brief.

The Dutch Next Door

by Lee Myles

Long ago the Dutch developed a coat for those who worked outdoors in cold weather which became especially popular with Dutch seamen. It was made of coarse but thick and heavy, weatherproof cloth and it had abbreviated skirts that only reached below the hip so as not to interfere with movement. The Dutch called it a "pijjekker" or "pijjakker," the "jakker" meaning jacket. Seeing its advantages English sailors adopted it and called it a peajacket . English and American sailors and not a few landsmen have been wearing peajackets ever since. The makers of the Oxford English Dictionary looked into the archives of Dutch New Jersey when they were putting together their definition of peajacket and found it recorded many times. I believe they would have found the same thing on Long Island.Surely the fishermen and seamen who sailed out of Oyster Bay must have blessed the comfort of the peajackets on cold, wet, blustery nights on the water.

TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE

Who was "The Forgotten Man?" Our experience suggests that the phrase applies to quite a number of people, perhaps most tellingly to those who once were Vice President of the United States. Perhaps you can prove us wrong by matching some of the former Presidents of our country listed in the lefthand column with their Vice Presidents on the right. Some of our presidents had more than one vice president; that does not affect the test. There are a dozen of each listed and each president has only one match in the Veep list. But ...before you begin, answer this question. Who was the Veep?

1. Franklin Pierce	A. John C. Calhoun
2. Herbert Hoover	B. Charles Dawes
3. Martin Van Buren	C. John Tyler
4. Harry S. Truman	D. Richard M. Johnson
5. James Madison	E. Nelson Rockefeller
6. Calvin Coolidge	F. Schuyler Colfax
7. Ulysses S. Grant	G. Elbridge Gerry
8. Gerald Ford	H. Alban Barkley
9. William Henry Harrison	I. Hannibal Hamlin
10. John Quincy Adams	J .Charles Curtis
11. Abraham Lincoln	K. Levi P. Morton
12. Benjamin Harrison\	L. William King

Answers will be found on p. 23.

We are pleased to print the article below highlighting the accomplishments of just one among many prominent members of Oyster Bay's Italian-American community.

Oyster Bay's Tom Capozolli Has Vivid Sports Memories

by Rick Robinson

"When I was coaching football at St. Dominic High School, I would tell my players at the beginning of every season: 'Work hard and do all the things you know you should do, because you will create memories that you will take with you all the years of your life.'" So wrote Tom Capozolli a few years ago as he recalled his own athletic career, both as a player and a coach.

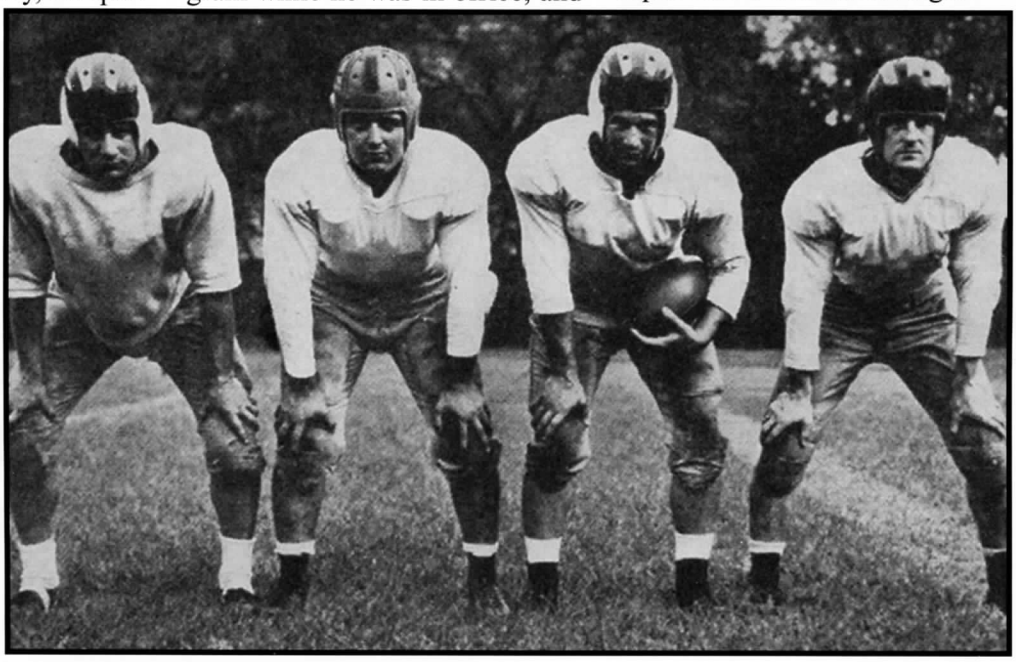
A retired Grumman employee and longtime resident of Oyster Bay, where he is a past president and current member of the local school board, Capozolli also coached varsity football at St. Dominic's [in Oyster Bay] for sixteen years. In the autumn of 1975, his final season, St. Dom's compiled a perfect 9-0 record and was also recognized as the highest scoring team in the state of New York. Incidentally, the quarterback of that undefeated squad was the coach's multi-talented son, Tony Capozolli.

Looking back on his own high school athletic career, Tom recalls: "In my senior year at Flushing High, we won the New York City baseball title. I was the third baseman, batted fourth, and had the good fortune to go four for four in the championship game against Curtis High of Staten Island. Paul Kritchell, legendary scout for the Yankees, was at the game and invited me to play in the Stadium the following week. In that all-star game I hit a home run and a double against the same pitcher who faced us from Curtis High. Two weeks later I was playing for Wellsville in the Pony League of the Yankee farm system. What a thrill that was for a 17-year-old!"

Tom Capozolli later played third base for New York University, then located at University Heights in uptown Manhattan. "We had great teams at NYU," he observes, "as our three-season record of 65 wins and 13 losses demonstrates. We went to the NCAA playoffs at Yale University, where, after beating Illinois in the semi-final, we lost to Yale in the final. The first baseman for the winners was George Bush, the former president. Years later I sent him a copy of the game program while he was in office, and he sent me a nice note saying: "I remember the game well. You guys were the favorites and we got lucky to beat you!"

Tom continues: "That summer I went to play minor league baseball in Springfield, Illinois, and roomed with Don Larsen, who, as most fans know, pitched a perfect no-hitter for the Yanks in the 1956 World Series. I was at that game and went to the Yankee club house afterwards to congratulate Don. Amidst all the excitement, he had me escorted in and gave me a big hug for old-time's sake."

Reviewing his undergraduate football days, Tom Capozolli vividly remembers a "close encounter" with a notable All-American halfback. "While I was at NYU," he says, "we once scrimmaged against Army at West Point. I was playing linebacker on defense and Doc Blanchard ran right through me -- an experience I will never forget!



Tom Capozolli was a triple-threat during his college days at New York University. He could run, pass or kick. Tom (second from left) is shown with his backfield mates on the 1946 squad: Dave Millman, Joe Bonacorsa, and Vinnie Finn.

But the following spring I got even by hitting a home run over the head of Blanchard's backfield teammate, Glen Davis [another football All-American], who played center field for Army.

"Blanchard sought me out after the game to tell me I was the only batter to ever hit a home run over Davis in the outfield because Glen had such outstanding speed and would usually play shallow to cut off any line-drive singles. Of course, there was no fence around the field and my hit just rolled on and on behind Davis."

Prior to World War II, NYU had often been a nationally-recognized football power, and one of their metropolitan rivals was Fordham University in The Bronx. Tom Capozolli played quarterback whenever the Violets were on offense and one contest against the Fordham Rams sticks out in his memory. "I played in only one game against our arch-rivals, Fordham," he recalls. "The annual showdown took place in Yankee Stadium on Saturday, November 16th, 1946, and I kicked off to start the game. Unfortunately, Fordham's star player, Joe Andrecho, caught the ball on his five-yard line and ran it back 95 yards for a touchdown!"

Tom adds: "I threw two touchdown passes that day to Irv Mondschein, who was also the national decathlon champion, and the game went back and forth with the lead changing hands several times until we scored with just a minute to play to go ahead again. When I lined up to place-kick the extra point, the snap from center was so high I had to jump up in the air to catch it!

"Thinking fast, I decided to drop-kick the ball, a forgotten skill even in those days. To my amazement the ball 'split the uprights' for the final point in a 33-28 victory for NYU. I feel certain that I'm the last person to drop-kick a football in Yankee Stadium -- or perhaps anywhere. That was my final college game, although I played a few years of semi-pro football afterwards."

Tom earned his degree in just three years from the NYU School of Education and, as mentioned earlier, enjoyed successful careers with the Grumman Corporation in Bethpage and at St. Dominic High School in Oyster Bay. As he sums it up, "I never made it to the top in either baseball or football, but I had some great things happen along the way. All these memories -- although a bit magnified with the passage of time -- will stay with me forever. I hope that many of my former teammates and players feel the same way."

Ye Olde Schoolhouse

continued from p. 15

a gun room.

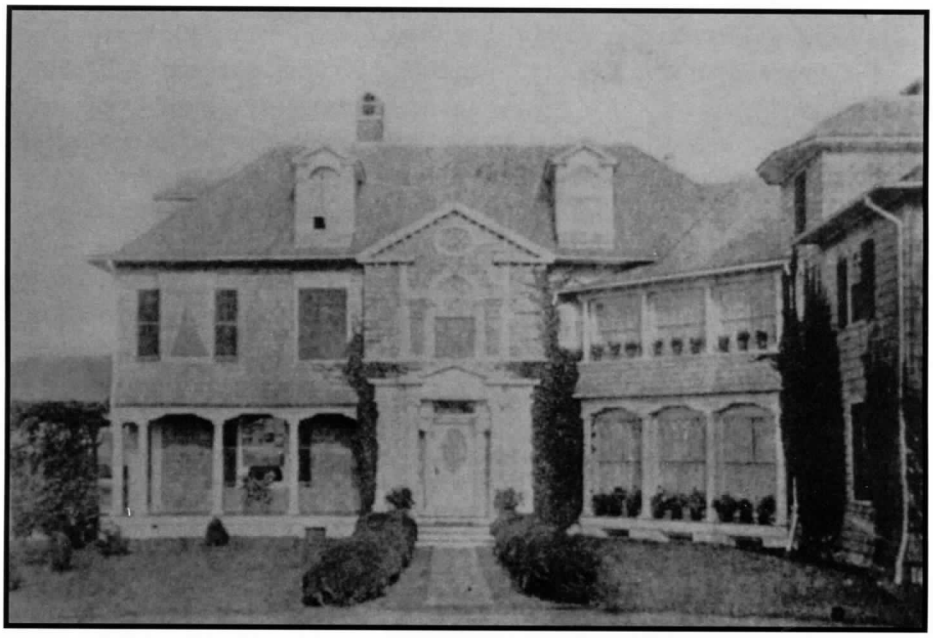
This house has a lot of pottery, animals skins, animal heads, and gifts from around the world. There is a large bell that the servants rang ten minutes before dinner. The library was full of books that Teddy wrote, but not all of them were written by him. He also wrote magazine articles, biographies, editorials, and more than 150,000 letters. Teddy once described himself as a "literary fellow." Reading was important in his house. Both Theodore and Edith, Theodore's wife, read constantly to their children and themselves.

Teddy also liked to hunt. When he was twelve he got his first gun, a shotgun. Ever since he got his first shotgun he loved to hunt animals. He shot a lot of animals and

Christine Ginley, Michael Roach, and Sarah Figalora, third-graders in Mary Elizabeth Delaney's class at McKenna E.S., contributed to the inaugural installment of "Ye Olde Schoolhouse" in the Winter 2001 ***Freeholder****.*

used them for decoration in his house.

That concludes our tour of Sagamore Hill. We hope you have enjoyed reading this article. You may want to go with your family and friends to see Theodore Roosevelt's home.



The Southampton estate of Elihu Root, Sr. as it appeared circa 1896.

The Post Rider

continued from p. 2

203 Store Hill Road (LIE North Service Road) in Old Westbury. Both of the Milburn sons were partners in the firm founded by their father, James Coolidge Carter, and Lewis Cass Ledyard, Sr.

Incidentally, Lewis Cass Ledyard, Jr. (1879-1936) was also a partner in the law firm. The younger Ledyard built his house Westwood in about 1914 at the corner of Route 25A and Berry Hill Road in Oyster Bay Cove. The house is presently owned by the Orthodox Church in America.

Other North Shore members of Carter, Ledyard and Milburn were: Henry Hill Anderson II (Cove Neck and Roslyn Estates); Charles Tracy Barnes (Manhasset); Grenville Clark, Sr. (Albertson - now, Clark Garden of the Brooklyn Botanic Garden); Harold L. Fates, Sr. (Cold Spring Harbor and Laurel Hollow); Lewis Cass Ledyard III (Oyster Bay Cove); Robert LeRoy (Old Brookville); Devereux Milburn, Jr. (Old Westbury); John Teele Pratt, Sr. (Glen Cove); Roland Livingston Redmond (Oyster Bay Cove); Kermit Roosevelt, Jr. (Cove Neck); and William Adams Walker Stewart II (Cold Spring Harbor).

Elihu Root, Sr. (1845-1937), to whom Edward Magnani makes reference as the vice-presidential running mate preferred by President McKinley, was one of the eleven United States Secretaries of State that resided on Long Island. While Root, whose summer residence was in Southampton, never did become a member of the McKinley ticket, he served his country and indeed the world with distinction as united States Secretary of War, 1899-1904; United States Secretary of State, 1905-1909; United States Senator from New York, 1909-1915; and as a respected internationalist. His efforts to establish world peace were recognized when, in 1912, he was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for his services as president of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace.

Ever the internationalist, Root was an ardent advocate for United States entry into the League of Nations. As a member of the 1920-1921 committee for jurists at The Hague, he helped devise the Permanent Court of International Justice. In 1929, as a member of the commission to revise the World Court, he created a formula to facilitate the entry of the United States into the court.

He was referred to by Great Britain's Lord Bruce as "the ablest Secretary of State in the history of the American nation...the ablest man that has appeared in the public life of any country in my time."

After retiring from public life, Root practiced law as a partner in the firm of Root, Clark, Buckner and Ballantine. Other Long Island members of the firm and its predecessor Root, Clark and

continued on p. 21

THE CENTRAL RAILROAD OF LONG ISLAND: A. T. STEWART BUILDS/CUTS THROUGH OYSTER BAY TOWN

by S. (Sam) Berliner, III

Another Famous Right-of-Way through the Town of Oyster Bay.

Once upon a time, though I can't remember exactly when -- oops! That's not how one writes history. But the history of the Central Railroad of Long Island is not much more than a fairy tale or bedtime story.

With the blessing of Vincent Seyfried, renowned historian of Queens and Garden City, and only incidentally author of the definitive seven-volume series, *The Long Island Rail Road - A Comprehensive History*, I shall give a little background into the rise and fall of this strange remnant of railroad history on our island and in our town.

The Central Railroad of Long Island was conceived in the mind of that fabulous New York City "merchant prince," A(lexander). T(urney). Stewart in 1869, just four years after the end of the Civil War. Stewart amassed an incredible fortune for his time, one and a half million dollars by 1833 and twenty million dollars by 1860! A bon vivant and patron of the arts, he got the idea of building a controlled city, elegant and refined in every way, of the finest materials money could buy. Stewart offered an unheard of $55 per acre to the Town of Hempstead on July 17, 1869; for the then-unheard of sum of $394,350, Stewart obtained 7,170 acres of relatively worthless land and bought an additional 1,500 acres from private parties. This tract encompassed all the land from New Hyde Park Road on the west to the western border of Farmingdale and from Old Country Road south to the northern boundary of the Village of Hempstead. All told, Stewart had acquired a demesne some ten miles long by two miles deep. He laid out some 500 miles of roads and house plots of at least an acre. The next step in Stewart's empire-building was to lay out and build a private railroad to serve his new city. It also had to serve a new brickworks he had constructed in Central Park (now Bethpage) to supply the materials for his houses. Starting at the East River ferries, the "Stewart Road" was to take residents directly to their residences in Garden City. Owning the entire Hempstead Plains, Stewart had no trouble building in what was later to become Nassau County, but the Long Island Rail Road and the Flushing & North Side RR each controlled the approaches to Manhattan.

Conrad Poppenhusen and Elizur Hinsdale of the F&NS made a deal with Stewart and the Stewart Road, double tracked, was put into work from Farmingdale to New Hyde Park Road, with an extension northward to Mineola being started in October 1870. At least fifteen trains were to run each way each day and Hempstead expresses were to make the run in thirty minutes!

Many iron bridges were erected to avoid crossing public roads at grade. One still exists to this day, flush with the ground, in the southeastern cloverleaf where Stewart Avenue crosses the Meadowbrook Parkway; this one was built for a private spur to the Meadow Brook Country Club (the remains of the station are still standing off Post/Merrick Avenue). LIRR steam locomotive #35 (just moved to Oyster Bay on August 2) used to sit opposite this spot in Salisbury/Eisenhower Park.

In late 1871/early 1872, Stewart and Poppenhusen determined to extend the road beyond Farmingdale to Babylon and the Fire Island ferries. The brickworks were in full swing and the line was finished to the LIRR main line just west of Merritt's Road in Farmingdale; bricks were shipped over the road the very next day after the line was opened across the LIRR. The line was opened eastward to Bethpage Junction on May 26, 1873, and Friday, August 1, 1873, saw the first train early in the morning and full service from Hunters Point to Babylon commenced that very afternoon.

The major competitor of the LIRR was the South Side RR of LI; it got in trouble in late 1873 and Poppenhusen bought it out on September 25, 1874. Innovations included the use of refrigerator cars to bring fresh fish into New York City from the Babylon docks and a railroad mail car (1874), with mail being sorted en route and delivered mornings and evenings (ah, what luxury!).

By 1873, Charlick and his LIRR started competing in earnest and the Poppenhusen empire began to crumble. Rates fell far below break-even and the Poppenhusen family finally gave in and the Long Island Rail Road acquired the Central, along with its South Side subsidiary. Things continued to head downhill and in 1876, the whole LIRR was put in receivership.

The Central Road was abandoned between Garden City and

Babylon, and elsewhere. Only the stretch from Floral Park to Garden City and the branch to Hempstead continued in use. Today, only the eastern end of the Central, from the junction at Farmingdale to Babylon is still (or, more correctly, again) in use. The old right of way from Garden City eastward to where it is cut by the Meadowbrook Parkway is still used occasionally by freights of the New York & Atlantic (lessor of the LIRR freight service) and by the Ringling Brothers-Barnum & Bailey trains when the "Greatest Show on Earth" plays the Nassau Coliseum.

The right of way from Eisenhower Park eastward to the LIRR main line in the vicinity of Bethpage State Parkway is readily seen from the air or from any north-south street crossing it; it runs almost arrow-straight along the line between Salisbury Park Drive/Meridian Street on the north side and Old Farm Road/Hickory Lane/Mallard Road on the south. It abuts the right of way of the old Long Island Motor Parkway [*Ed. note: see Mr. Berliner's article on the Motor Parkway in the Winter 2000 issue of* ***The Freeholder***] along most of this stretch, where it runs immediately south of the Parkway and is often mistaken for that old road. The crossing of the Central and the LIRR, halfway between Bethpage State Parkway and Merritt's Road and Central Avenue and Hempstead Turnpike (NYS Route 24) is still the junction of the LIRR main line from Hicksville to Montauk and the Central Branch to the Montauk Division at Babylon.

Among other Central RR remnants are an old brick arch bridge located in the woods on the westerly side of the Bethpage State Parkway directly under the LIPA high tension lines in Bethpage. That bridge once carried the tracks over Massatayun Creek, long since filled in at that location. Much of the bridge is still intact but it is mostly filled in and hidden in some dense brush in which your author became so entangled he never found the bridge. The bridge's location is very close to B Tower (Bethpage Junction) which is just east of the BSP. This was the junction created when the remains of the Central RR were connected to the LIRR main line there. There is also supposedly an old brick turntable pit in that vicinity, just off the Seaford-Oyster Bay Expressway, but, alas and again, your author has yet to find it.

The Central RR of LI is covered in far more depth in "The Long Island Rail Road - A Comprehensive History," Vincent F. Seyfried, Part 2: The Flushing, North Shore & Central Railroad, 1963, LoC No. 61-17477, and on the author's web site, "http://home.att.net/~Berliner-Ultrasonics/lirr2etc.html#central-rr".

The Post Rider

continued from p.19

Bird were: Arthur Atwood Ballantine, Sr. (Oyster Bay); Grenville Clark, Sr. (Albertson), who was also a member of the law firm of Carter, Ledyard and Milburn; Taylor Pearsons Plimpton, Sr. (West Hills); and Henry Lewis Stimson (West Hills).

Most sincerely,

Raymond E. Spinzia

Thanks, Ray for sharing that fascinating morsel of Long Island trivia. No doubt it was gleaned in the midst of the exhaustive research conducted in preparation for your eagerly-awaited volume, Prominent Long Island Families: Their Estates and Country Homes.

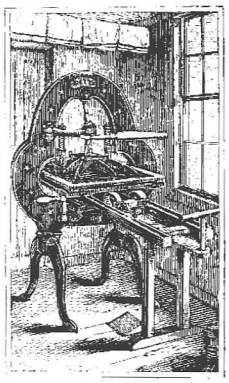
To the Editor:

I just thought that I would let you all have the latest news concerning the ongoing saga of the Locust Valley Historical Society

continued on p. 23

The precarious situation of the historic Weeks House is highlighted above.

Blocklyn's Books



Book Reviews by Philip Blocklyn

Tales of Old Lloyd Harbor: Historical Accounts of a Long Island Village in Archive, Legend and Personal Recollection. By George P. Hunt and the Lloyd Harbor Village Book Committee. Edited by Rosemary Byrne, David Fuchs and Terry Walton. Village of Lloyd Harbor, 2001. 104pp. B&W illustration. Appendices and Bibliography. $18.

The authors of *Tales of Old Lloyd Harbor* seem more than happy with their incorporated Long Island village, and no wonder, as it is a spot most favored by fortune. As recently as 1976, a village historian recalled Lloyd Harbor as "a place of quiet and rural charm," and it remains so today, even after twenty-five more years of relentless commercial and residential development have swept by. But that, as the authors say, happened in "the world out there." For Lloyd Harbor is a village set apart, a place set apart, a place from long ago and far away.

But history always has its way, and the world out there always intrudes. Take, for instance, the American Revolution, which treated Lloyd Neck harshly enough. By the outbreak of hostilities in 1775, Henry Lloyd II was urging his brother Joseph to sell his farm out to the British while he had the chance. His reasoning?

> The Compactness of the Neck, its situation, agreeable prospects, the Quality of the Land, The Quantity and Quality of the Timber, the great Variety it affords from both Sea & Land, The goodness of the Harbors & the short distance from the Metropolis both by Water & Land may render it an object of some Gentleman of Fortune & Taste.

But Joseph's response is telling:

> I am not willing to Sell at scarce any price. If I once turn it into money [I] am not Capable of any kind of business to keep it good. According to the common course of things it is but a short time before I must leave all things here. Therefore I choose to continue as I am.
>
> It's no Small matter to put one's self out of a living at near Sixty and have new ways to Seeke in sitiwation of life.

It did not turn out well for Joseph Lloyd, his land despoiled by British axes and Patriot poachers. He died in 1780, exiled at Hartford, an apparent suicide.

Not all tales of old Lloyd Harbor are so tragic. In fact, the tone is mostly light and much or the reader's pleasure lies in observing everyday village life, as mostly rich villagers lead their mostly sumptuous lives. And no days were led more sumptuously than those of Wilton Lloyd-Smith. In 1925 he received as a wedding gift a Gothic-Tudor mansion on 100 wooded Lloyd Neck acres. He called his estate *Kenjockety*, a Matinecock word meaning, apparently and fittingly, "away from the multitudes." Lloyd-Smith remains one of the few New York City attorneys ever to have built a showboat expressly for a fancy dress ball. The Cotton Blossom serenely steamed afloat his property's smallish lake amid rowboats bearing his distinguished guests, who delighted in a show of fireworks and a rendition of Showboat tunes by Paul Robeson. It was a Lloyd Harbor moment.

But that moment passed, as "aristocratic America stepped reluctantly but irrevocably into the Age of the White Elephant." As alluring as the Gold Coast era can be for us, it is the natural wealth of Lloyd Harbor that stands, and really always stood, as its truest attraction. And so it is meet and right that the authors leave their readers with this image:

> Its wooded hills, bluff, meadowland, marsh and beach - all outlined by the variegated waters of harbor, inlet and sound - combine to create an area of great natural beauty.
>
> The rolling terrain is enhanced by extensive stands of native shrubs and trees.
>
> Freshwater streams and ponds, salt marsh and tidal wetland, each support distinctive plant and wildlife. And on all sides there are the sweeping water views.

AUNT EEEK

Olde Things:Advice on the Care & Feeding of Antiques

Dear Aunt Eeek,

I recently found an old fly fishing rod in my mother's attic. My brother and I used to sword fight with this rod when I was a pup. I have become an avid fly fisherman in my adult years and shudder to think of our childhood antics with this beautiful old bamboo rod. I would love to use this rod again but know little or nothing about how to put her back in shape. Thank you for your help in advance and keep up the good work.

Paul Connors

Dear Paul,

My Uncle Bill and I used to fish quite often up state near the town of Roscoe N Y.

In the old days, "cane" fly rods were pretty much all we had. It's been a long time since I cast a fly on a stream but my nephew Paul is an avid fisherman and like his Aunt Eeek is a collector. Recently I had the occasion to see a beautiful old rod he restored and uses to fish with.

These old rods were made of split bamboo pieces glued together and varnished. The rod my nephew restored was in good shape but like yours the old varnish had failed and had become a sticky mess from years of storage in a hot attic. The restoration began by first removing the old varnish with lacquer thinner on a rag, slowly and in small areas so as not to disturb the glue, until the whole rod was stripped bare. If a makers label survives stay away with the thinners and work gently past the old varnish with 000 steel wool till the label looks clear.

I think he only had to re-wrap a couple of the snake guides with silk thread which is available from a fishing supply shop. The rod was then re-varnished with high quality marine Spar varnish using three coats undiluted with a good quality varnish brush. The project came out beautifully and he fishes with it all the time. He claims that the rod has a different feel from the modern graphite rods, but has an additional beauty about it and a spirit of summers long past that the modern ones just don't have.

Like any other antique object, some rods are rare or were built by famous builders of old and have great monetary and historic value. These might be best left untouched or stabilized for display or stored in a cool area that is environmentally stable. We wish you many happy hours with your fishing rod once lost to time and hopefully soon to fly again in all of its former glory.

Answers to Test Your Knowledge, p.16

1 L
2 J
3 D
4 H (Barkley was the Veep.)
5 G
6 B
7 F
8 E
9 C
10 A
11 I
12 K

The Post Rider

continued from page 21

versus the [insert developer's name here] Destruction Company!

We will be working with Town of Oyster Bay Clerk Martha Offerman to increase the fines leveled against owners of historic buildings[who fail to preserve their integrity].

We will present this before the Town Board on 21 August. It may not help us to save the circa 1698 Jos. Weeks Jr. home, but it will throw the spotlight on a huge problem that we have in Locust Valley - developers who tear down old history-laden structures to in turn place four, six, or even eight homes on these properties.

The Locust Valley Civic Association is attempting to have all of Buckram-Oyster Bay Road in Locust Valley declared an Historic District to defend us from the [developer's] onslaught.

Warmest regards,

Mrs. Helen B. Casey, Vice-Pres.
Locust Valley Historical Society

MARK YOUR CALENDER FOR THESE UPCOMING EVENTS!

OCTOBER

Sunday, October 7, 4 - 6 p.m.
Cocktail Party
Home of Mrs. Robert Pittis, Cove Neck
(Directions provided to registrants.)
Meet noted Italian scholars and taste a variety of authentic Italian hors d'ouevres and wines as we begin the Fall schedule of events at this beautiful waterfront residence.

Sunday, October 21, 2 p.m.
Roundtable Discussion and Exhibit Opening
Oyster Bay Community Center (Church Street) & Earle-Wightman House
20 Summit Street, Oyster Bay
Senator Carl Marcellino, Dr. Salvatore LaGumina, and the Hon. Lewis Yevoli will focus on "The Rise of the Italian-American Politician." The discussion will be followed by the opening of the multimedia exhibition entitled "The Italian-American Experience in Oyster Bay" and a reception featuring a sampling of Italian antipasti and sparkling wines.

Wednesday, October 31, 11 a.m.- 3 p.m.
House and Garden Tour
Banfi Estate, Old Brookville
(Directions provided to registrants.)
A guided walk through the manor house and the gardens on the grounds of the Gold Coast-era estate headquarters of Banfi wineries in Old Brookville will be followed by an Italian gourmet luncheon and wine-tasting with a Banfi executive.

NOVEMBER

Saturday, November 10, 6 - 11 p.m.
Festival del'Autunno:
Una Celebrazione Musicale e Culinaria Italiana
Planting Fields Arboretum
Planting Fields Rd., Oyster Bay
Join us for an elegant evening to experience regional variations of Italian cuisine and celebrate that country's rich musical tradition, both popular and operatic, during the after-dinner concert. Guaranteed to be an event you won't want to miss!

Sunday, November 18, 2 p.m.
Roundtable Discussion
St. Dominic Church
Anstice Street, Oyster Bay
Moderated by Monsignor Charles Ribaudo, a panel including Salvatore Primeggi, Ph.D., Mary Brown, Ph.D., and Father Tom Costa will discuss the role of the Roman Catholic Church in the settlement of early Italian immigrants, the influence of the Church on the Italian-American family structure, and the role of mysticism in traditional Italian culture. The discussion will be followed by a reception in the Silveri Center featuring Italian desserts.

Friday, November 30, 4 p.m.
Roundtable Discussion
Dowling College,Oakdale
Co-sponsored by Dowling College and the Oyster Bay Historical Society, a panel composed of long-time residents will compare the experience of growing up in Italian-American communities on the North and South Shores of L.I.

THE OYSTER BAY HISTORICAL SOCIETY
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