



# THE FREEHOLDER

SUMMER 2003 THE OYSTER BAY HISTORICAL SOCIETY FOUNDED 1960

☞ L.I.  
INVENTOR  
PROPOSED  
EAST RIVER  
TUNNEL

☞ TEDDY  
GOES FOR  
A RIDE...  
IN A  
SUBMARINE?

☞ SHORT-  
LIVED TRAIN  
FERRY  
CROSSES THE  
SOUND

☞ SOCIETY'S  
FALL EXHIBIT  
& EVENTS  
FOCUS ON  
O.B.'S 350TH



THE HISTORY MAGAZINE OF THE TOWN OF OYSTER BAY



## Editorial

At first glance, this issue of the *Freeholder* seems quite eclectic. Upon closer inspection however, there is a recurring theme: water! Tunneling under it, being submerged in it, and floating on top of it.

Living on an island, as we do, one is never far from the water. We here in Oyster Bay have been blessed with an abundance of natural and man-made beauty, in terms of the rich

architectural heritage of three and a half centuries.

However, we are only the stewards of this natural beauty and heritage. It is up to each one of us to ensure that it is handed down intact to the generations that follow. So I urge you, the reader, to get involved in the fight for the preservation of the beauty that surrounds us.

You can make a difference... for good or ill!

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*summer program visited the Earle-Wightman House and were given a hands-on tour by Director Tom Kuehhas. They showed their appreciation by sending the Editor a bushel of thank you cards!*

Dear Tom,

Thank you for letting us come and visit your museum. The students of Raynham Hall Museum had an excellent time! It was a great experience for them. Sincerely,

Pam Matzner

Director of Summer Workshops

*One of the thank you cards sent to OBHS Director Tom Kuehhas by the Raynham Hall group is shown at right. Evidently the bed warmer made quite an impression on young Hannah!*



### THE POST RIDER

To the Editor:

Sorry I am so slow in telling you I received the wonderful Spring *Freeholder*! Please congratulate John Hammond on his wonderfully-researched and written article on Oyster Bay's settlement. There are Leveriches in the Floyd-Jones family, by the way. Every good wish,

Arlene Goodenough

*Ed Note: On July 29, a group of young students taking part in Raynham Hall's*

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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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### ABOUT OUR FRONT COVER

Sergeant Ezra Lee is shown exiting the *Turtle* in New York harbor after his failed attempt to sink the British flagship *Eagle* in September 1776, the first submarine attack on an enemy warship. Lee made his trial runs in David Bushnell's invention on Long Island Sound. See page 6 for the story of a submarine "first" even closer to home!



THE FREEHOLDER SUMMER 2003



## JOSEPH DE SENDZIMIR: FORGOTTEN INVENTOR FROM LONG ISLAND

by Slawomir Lotysz

*Slawomir Lotysz is a researcher at the University of Zielona Gora, Poland. The following article is based on articles from the journal Scientific American originally published in the mid 19th century. We thank him for bringing Joseph de Sendzimir's accomplishments to our attention.*

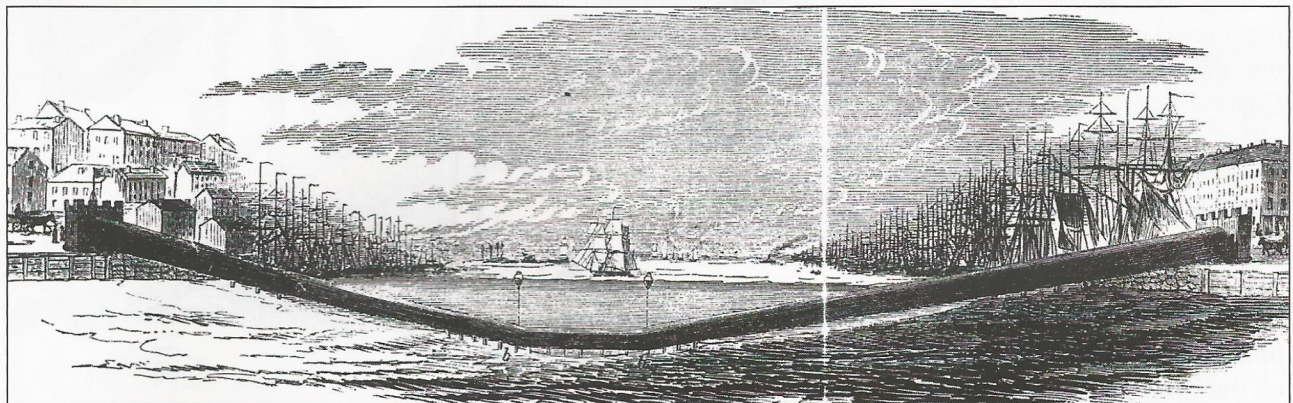
Twelve years before the construction of the Brooklyn Bridge was begun, a Polish emigrant proposed to build a submarine tunnel in the same location. Joseph de Sendzimir designed his iron tunnel to be made of short sections, sunk and joined together on the bottom of the East River. However his attention was not focused only on great engineering schemes; in 1857 he also obtained a patent for a self-regulating wind wheel.

The idea to establish a permanent road connection between New York City and neighboring counties over the East River was raised as early as the beginning of the nineteenth century. Numerous plans of tunnels and bridges have been put forward since Thomas Pope proposed to build his "Flying Bridge" between New York

and Queens in 1811. Contemporary engineers had to overcome a great difficulty: to construct a bridge over the wide river while at the same time allowing the tallest ocean ships to pass under it. A bridge with a roadbed 120 feet over the level of high water required a long approach on each side of the river. In overcrowded Lower Manhattan that meant a large number of demolitions. A tunnel would cause no obstruction for the navigation and would require less demolition, but in the middle of the nineteenth century drilling a submarine passage was still an enterprise of great difficulty, even for skilled engineers.

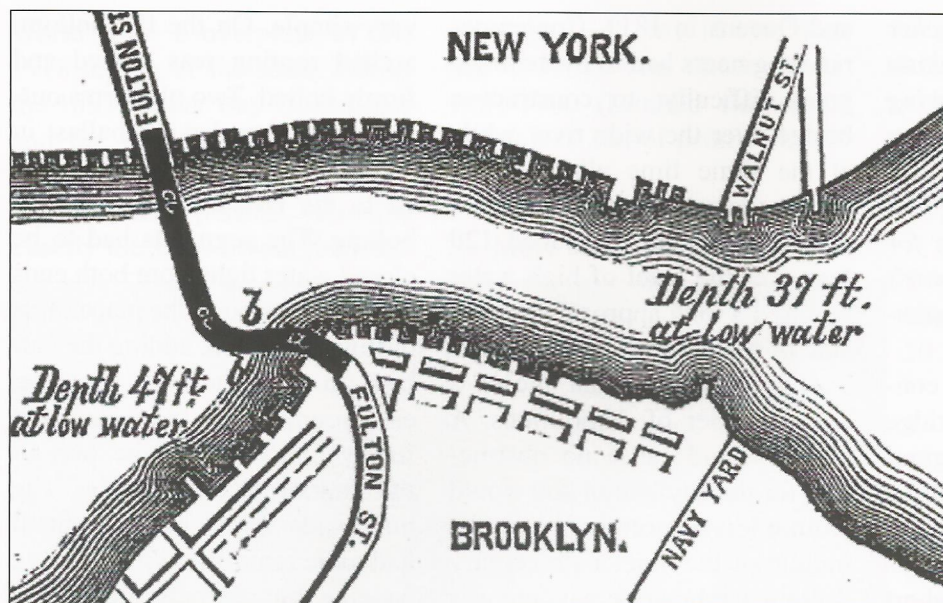
Sendzimir's tunnel, instead of being dug or bored, was to be made as a tube laid down on the bottom of the river. The inventor proposed the route for it in the deepest part of the East River, connecting Fulton Street in Lower Manhattan with the street of the same name in Brooklyn. His tunnel consisted of numerous segments manufactured on ships anchored close to the construction site from sheets of iron usually used for steam boilers. The construction of the segment was

very simple. On the flat bottom, arched roofing was placed and firmly bolted. Two platforms outside were intended for ballast in addition to the tunnel being jointed to the river's bed using iron bolting. The segments had to be closed water tight from both ends and then floated to the place of its destination. Then, adding the ballast on the platforms outside, each segment had to be sunk and firmly connected to the part of the tunnel already made. The bulkheads from each segment had to be removed to make a free passage, but not before completing the entire tunnel, therefore no pumping out of water was necessary. Sendzimir's proposal included a road for horse carriages and two sidewalks for pedestrians in the tunnel, everything being lit by artificial light. The tunnel laid on the river's bed would have the same acclivity as the bottom and the slopes. On the northern side it was no problem, but the slope on the southern side was too sharp. Joseph de Sendzimir proposed to curve the tunnel to make the way easier. In order to prevent any obstruction at all to navigation on the river, Sendz-



*An artist's impression of the tunnel on the river's bed.  
Scientific American, 4th April 1857, Volume XII, number 30.*





*The proposed route of the tunnel.*

*Scientific American.* 4th April 1857, Volume XII, number 30.

imir's tunnel could also be laid in a trench. Sendzimir estimated the cost of the tunnel at 200 dollars per running foot, which added up to approximately \$320,000 for the entire tunnel. It was stated that the cost was one-twelfth of a bridge in the same location. As we know the total cost of the Brooklyn Bridge was about 15 million dollars upon its completion in 1883. According to family tradition Joseph de Sendzimir was involved in the construction of some bridges in New York and Chicago. Supposedly his name is mentioned on a plaque placed on one of the bridges in New York City.

The wind wheel was another invention of Joseph de Sendzimir. He obtained a patent for that item on March 3, 1857. It was a self-regulating apparatus with vanes which had the ability to turn around on its axis depending on the wind's power. When it was too rapid the vanes presented their edges to the wind at a less

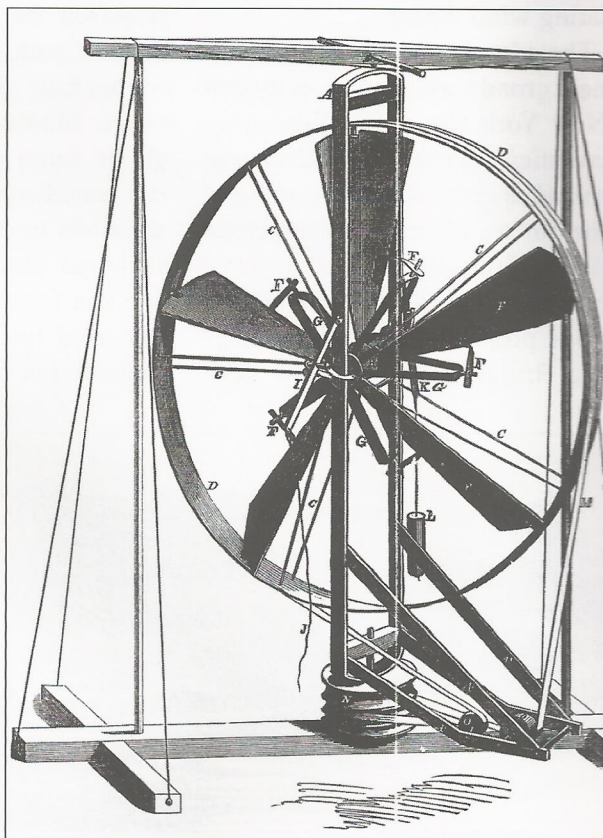
favorable angle, causing the rotation to slow down. The general mode of operation of wheels of that kind was known and already patented by different inventors. Sendzimir's design differed in that it included a frame in which the whole wheel was mounted. In that frame the wheel was always kept in the right position receiving the full effect of the blowing wind.

"The general construction of this wheel is such that it can be made by any farmer or an ordinary mechanic. No castings are required. It is a good invention" -

wrote an editor of *Scientific American* about Sendzimir's design.

Joseph de Sendzimir was an extraordinary inventor. But he was also a great personality. His life was related to the tragic fate of his motherland, Poland. He was born in 1813 in Strzegocin, north of Warsaw, a son of Stanislaw and Antonina Wollowicz. His father was a judge in the Supreme Court of the Kingdom of Poland. As a young man, Joseph joined the November Uprising against Russian occupation in 1830. After its fall,

he had to leave the country, as did all other officers. He moved to France in 1832 hoping to get



*Sendzimir's self-regulating wind wheel. *Scientific American.* 23rd May 1857, Volume XII, number 37.*





*Joseph de Sendzimir is shown above with his second wife, Florentine. According to family tradition she was an Englishwoman, and the cousin of his first wife.*

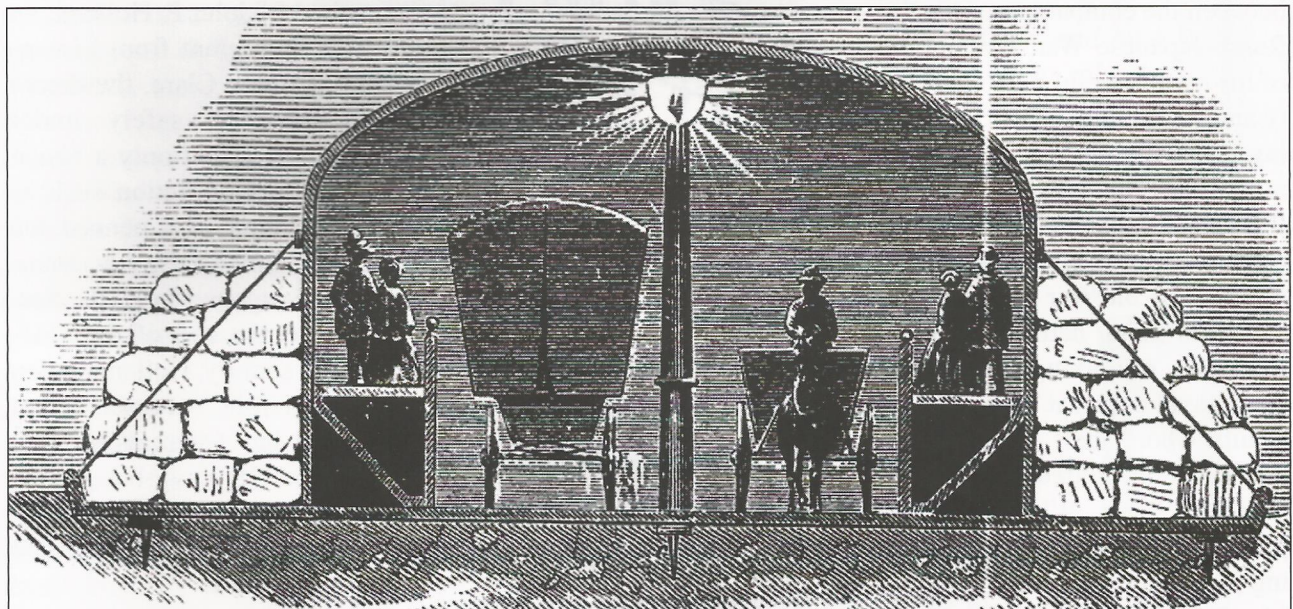
back home soon. But the situation in Poland was still getting worse. "You should not regret that you must not return..." - wrote his father in a letter addressed to him, but Joseph never read his father's words. The letter was intercepted and Russian police arrested his father.

Living in a foreign country was hard for many Polish political immigrants. Joseph was

still trying to find a good job, moving from town to town. Finally he moved to England and in 1841 got married.

It is still uncertain when exactly he came to America, probably after the deaths of his wife and his parents in the old country. In America he settled on Long Island in Amityville and finally it looked like he had found his place on earth. He found another wife; family tradition says that he married Florentine, a cousin of his first wife. Joseph Sendzimir died in 1881, having no will to live after his third wife's death on April 27 of that year. In his last letter to his family he wrote:

When you receive this letter, I will no longer be among the living - I did away with myself, because of my unbearable life... I lost my wife, whom I loved dearly - therefore I lost the object, the matter of my life... I am too old to find a new one - fate was dragging me on for too long to make my living any longer...



*An artist's rendering of how a section of a single segment of de Sendzimir's tunnel would appear. The sketch is taken from the Scientific American issued on 4th April 1857, Volume XII, number 30.*



## TEDDY ROOSEVELT AND THE PLUNGER

by Walter G. Karppi

Oyster Bay's most famous resident, Theodore Roosevelt, our 26th President, was in every way a leader in that he would never ask anyone to do something that he himself would not do. This was well illustrated during the attack on San Juan (or Kettle) Hill in Cuba. Rather than commanding his troops to "Charge!" or ordering "Forward!" he simply said, "Follow me!" Mr. Roosevelt also managed to claim many "firsts" in his adventurous lifetime. He was the first President: to fly in an airplane, to own a car, to have a telephone in his home, to travel outside the country while still in office (he took the battleship *USS Louisiana* to Panama), to entertain an African-American (Booker T. Washington) in the White House, and the first American (and first President) to win the Nobel Peace Prize.

He received the Nobel Prize in recognition for his success in ending the hostilities between the combatants of the Russo-Japanese War. By dint of his own forceful personality and a combination of cajoling and bullying he was able to convince the emissaries of Russia and Japan that it would be in their mutual best interests to end the war. The war had been going badly for the Russians climaxing in the 1905 naval action at Tsushima Straits where their fleet was all but annihilated by the Japanese Navy. While these peace negotiations were taking place, in Portsmouth, NH, Mr. Roosevelt accomplished another first that was lesser known but, at the same time, as

daring as his first flight. This was a three hour submarine cruise taken on August 26, 1905. At that time these vessels were known as submarine torpedo boats but this article will use the modern term submarine.

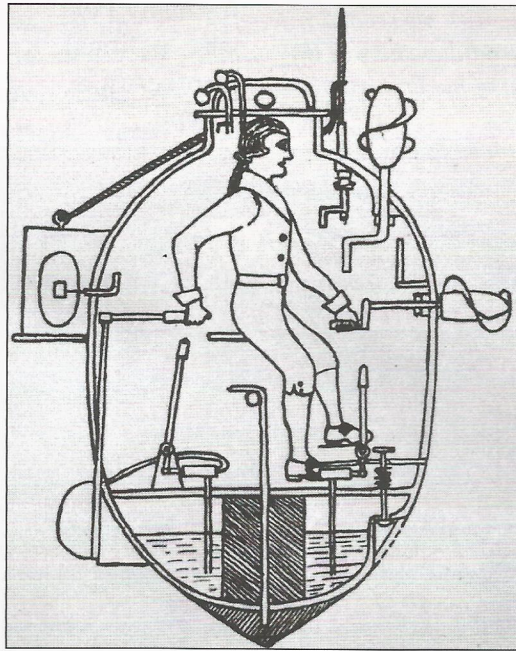
Submarine technology of that day was rather primitive. Methods of propulsion, control of displacement and depth were in their infancy and failures far outnumbered successes in many of the early experimental craft. An early American attempt was David Bushnell's submersible, the one-man operated *Turtle*, built during the American Revolution for the purpose of attaching a mine to a British warship anchored in New York harbor. On the night of September 6, 1776, the *Turtle*, under the control of Sergeant Ezra Lee tried, while submerged, to attach a mine to the hull of Admiral

escape capture, but to him goes the honor of the first submarine war mission in history.

During the Civil War the Confederate submarine, *CSS Hunley*, became the first to perform a successful combat mission. She sank the Union steam sloop *USS Housatonic*, moored in Charleston Harbor, through the use of a spar torpedo. These dangerous devices were nothing more than an explosive charge mounted at the end of a long mast or spar. Once attached to the hull of an enemy's vessel, the submersible would back away to a "safe" distance and detonate the charge. This was successfully accomplished but the *Hunley* was herself mortally damaged, possibly by the resulting explosion, and sank with all eight hands aboard perishing.

Many had experimented with the development of a successful submarine throughout the years with varying degrees of success or failure. Until the arrival of John P. Holland, an Irish immigrant from Liscannor, County Clare, the dream of traveling safely under water remained only a vision of authors of fiction such as Jules Verne who penned the world famous *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea*. Toward the end of the nineteenth century, Holland built a submersible vessel that passed her sea trials so well that the US Navy bought her and contracted for seven additional craft built to the same specifications.

These vessels were known as the *Adder* class, numbered A-1 through A-7. One of the ships



A cutaway drawing of the interior of Bushnell's *Turtle*. Every one of the operator's limbs is involved! N-Y Historical Society.

Lord Howe's flagship, *Eagle*. He failed, and barely managed to



constructed under this contract was the *Plunger*, the second to bear this name. Powered by a 180 horsepower gasoline engine when surfaced, and a 70 horsepower electric motor when submerged, the tiny craft (by today's standards) carried a crew of one officer and six men plus a cage of mice! The latter served the same purpose as the canaries brought into coal mines by the miners and that was to warn the crew of the lack of oxygen and/or the presence of poisonous gasses. When the normally frisky mice became lethargic it was a signal to the crew that it was time to surface for fresh air! This was the vessel that called at Sagamore Hill on that rainy August day on which the indomitable T. R. voyaged into the depths of bay and sound.

Mr. Roosevelt had been a strong advocate of these new vessels since his stint as Assistant Secretary of the Navy during the administration of President William McKinley. During this period, in 1898, Mr. Roosevelt wrote the following note to his boss, Naval Secretary John D. Long, recommending the purchase of these vessels:

10 April 1898

My Dear Mr. Secretary:

I think the Holland submarine boat should be purchased. Evidently she has great possibilities in her for harbor defense. Sometimes she doesn't work perfectly, but often she does, and I don't think in the present emergency we can afford to let her slip. I recommend that you authorize me to enter into negotiations for her, or that you authorize the Bureau of Construction to do so, which would be just as well.

Very sincerely yours,  
T. Roosevelt

The naval high command was against the use of these craft. In spite of his advocacy the Navy turned them down. It was suggested, not entirely in jest, the reason was that they "lacked a deck to strut upon!" It was not until after he had assumed the presidency in 1901 that the Navy began taking possession of their first submarines, with his enthusiastic approval. Even after their acceptance the naval "brass" looked down upon them (no pun intended) to the extent that serving submariners were penalized by being considered as not being on "sea duty!"

The President had summoned the *Plunger* from her Newport station for the purpose of observing her during sea trials. When her commander, Lieutenant Charles F. Nelson, reported at Sagamore Hill, Roosevelt told him "I'm going down in your boat but please don't say anything about it. When it's all over, it'll be time to talk about it."

Shortly before three in the afternoon of the day before the scheduled trials, eluding his Secret Service detail and reporters, he slipped away from the house. Wearing a raincoat, due to the wet and windy weather, he took a carriage to the Waldeck pier where a launch from the Presiden-

tial yacht, *Sylph*, awaited him. His destination was not the *Sylph* but instead the submarine tender *Apache* against whose side lay the *Plunger*.

Lt. Nelson, with the enthusiasm of a pioneer submariner, was delighted to host such a distinguished visitor aboard his command. After boarding the *Apache* the adventurous pair made their way across the rolling deck to the side where the *Plunger* was moored. The President and Lieutenant made their way on board the *Plunger*, climbed up to the conning tower hatch, and down the small ladder which led to the craft's interior. The hatchway, being only two feet in diameter, was barely large enough for the President to squeeze his ample frame through. Once on board he had a first impression of being inside a blunt cigar. The widest portion was at the midsection directly below the conning tower. From there the hull tapered off towards the bow and stern.

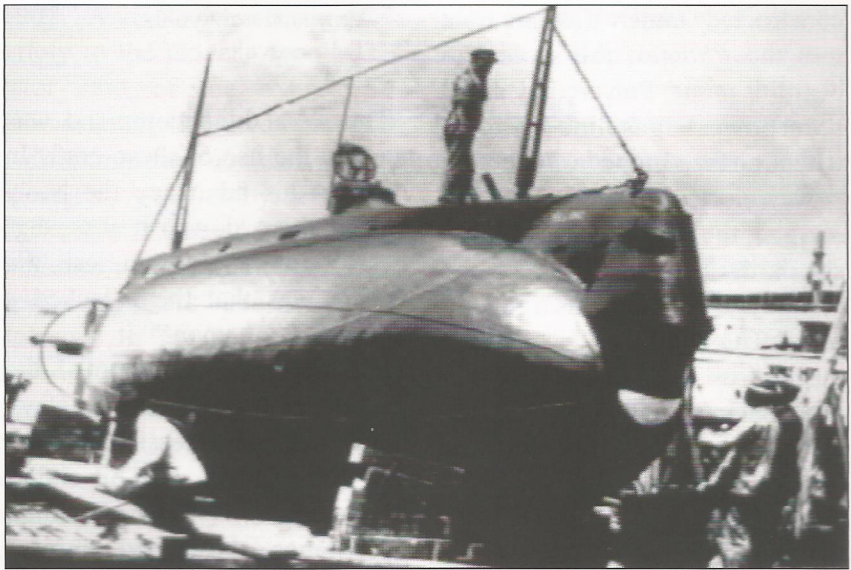


Irish immigrant/inventor John P. Holland is shown in the hatch of one of his submarines.



When Roosevelt climbed down into the *Plunger's* hull on that stormy day the Navy had no more than a few years' experience with this strange new vessel. The *Plunger* was as yet very much an experimental device manned by a crew still awed by the novelty of their submersible contrivance and commanded by a daredevil. In addition to sea cocks that didn't always close, there were other dangers that apparently were ignored or unknown. Certainly the *Plunger's* power plant did not deserve being taken for granted. It was a four cylinder gasoline engine similar to the temperamental source of power that drove Mr. Ford's "Tin Lizzy" and just as noisy. The engine did double duty, propelling *Plunger* along the surface and running a generator to charge the batteries for electric propulsion when submerged. Yet, even with their mechanical genius, John Holland and the Electric Boat Co. could do little to remedy the halitosis of their clever engine. While in operation it exhaled volatile, toxic fumes which polluted the air in the submarine.

*Plunger's* other devices also recall other early submarining dangers as potentially fatal as the toxic and volatile fumes emitted by *Plunger's* gasoline engine. Accurate and constant control of the depth of the submarine as it submerged was of great importance. Apparently, Holland believed that it was not safe enough to rely upon a member of the crew to manually control the diving planes while keeping an eye on a depth gauge, for there was the terrible possibility that through human error the subma-



*A work crew is shown building one of the first seven Holland submarines for the US Navy. The tiny craft carried a crew of one officer and six men.*

rine might be driven into the mud and trapped in the ooze of the ocean floor or taken to a depth beyond the ability of the hull to withstand. To safeguard against this awful fate, the *Plunger* was equipped with a kind of automatic depth regulator. The key to this apparatus was a diaphragm that reacted to the outside water pressure. When a preset depth was reached, the movement of the diaphragm set in motion a linkage to the motor controlling the diving planes and in turn caused the craft to level out.

It was also essential that the submarine be kept on an even keel while submerged. However, the *Plunger* was small enough to be dangerously sensitive to the shifting of weight of its crew as they moved about and one too many at port or starboard, bow or stern could flip the craft out of control. To neutralize the effect of shifting weight, the *Plunger* was equipped with what later generations might have misconstrued as a "Rube Goldberg"

device. When the desired depth was reached, a pendulum like contrivance was linked up to the diving planes. The force of the motion of the pendulum acted as a counter balance to shifting weight within the hull and activated the diving planes in such a way as to keep the ship level.

In retrospect, it would seem that these "automatic" devices in all their delightful "Model T" innocence could well have precipitated the very dangers they were meant to guard against. An undetected salty erosion of the delicate diaphragm in the depth control device could have sent the *Plunger* into a collision with the bottom of Long Island Sound, or some imbalance of the pendulum in the leveling mechanism could have turned the *Plunger* into a spinning steel coffin making the bottom of the sound the muddy eternal resting place of its crew.

Ironically, even relying on modern safety mechanisms could lead to disaster. In May 1939, the sub-



marine *Squalus* sank during a test dive off the New Hampshire coast. Trust in *Squalus*' "Christmas Tree," a euphemism submariners bestowed upon a bank of red and green lights that were supposed to indicate when the ship was watertight, took the lives of some of its crew but a fortunate 33 were rescued by a diving bell developed for that purpose. The "Christmas Tree" signaled all systems go for diving by an authoritative show of green lights. *Squalus* trustingly began to submerge and suddenly was fatally stricken by a flood of water rampaging through her main air induction valve which had failed to close. The automatic devices had not indicated this critical situation, and the green and red monitor lights gave no warning. Then, what hope for *Plunger*'s primitive gadgets?

Another potential danger inherent in the mechanism of the *Plunger* was the battery used to power her electric motor for submerged running. Equipped with a

lead-acid type of storage battery, there was always the danger of escaping hydrogen. This "battery gas" in the confined space of the *Plunger* could have produced a highly volatile situation. If the escaping hydrogen from the *Plunger*'s battery had risen to a mere four percent of its atmosphere while T.R. was aboard, there might well have been an explosion! Indeed, but a few years before the submarine *Fulton* had been torn apart by just such a battery explosion.

Yet another source of danger was the possibility of salt water penetrating *Plunger*'s battery and mating with its sulfuric acid. The result of the wedding of these two chemicals, salt and sulfuric acid, would give birth to chlorine - a very poisonous gas. Considering the "swampability" of those early submarines, the chance that this unholy marriage between salt and sulfuric acid would take place was not remote.

However, in the technological innocence of the day, inventor

and crew had a charming, naive faith in the gadgets to which they entrusted their lives and with abiding faith took their craft beneath the sea in the firm belief that what went down would come up.

Lt. Nelson soon scampered down the hatch and began to explain the layout and working of the submarine. Directing T.R. to the forward part of the boat, Lt. Nelson gravely pointed out the loading end of the torpedo expulsion tube. Then, turning up to the stern, Roosevelt was led into a thicket of machinery. He first saw an air compressor that forced the sea water out of the flooded submerging tanks in order to remain buoyant and return to the surface. The compressor could also be used to supply fresh air to the crew. Taken beyond the compressor Roosevelt came upon the *Plunger*'s "power plant," that noisy, fidgety, foul-breathed, four cylinder gasoline engine. Nearby was the cage of mice that might involuntarily be called upon to suffocate in order that he and the crew be warned to quickly escape before they too were felled by the engine's fumes. Beyond the gasoline engine and its entourage of rodents, T. R. next saw the electric motor for submerged running and a drive shaft to the propeller.

Lt. Nelson may have then explained the "automatic" devices to the President. Led to the starboard side and asked to look up, Roosevelt was shown a diving mechanism fastened to the ceiling with discs the size of dinner plates. The discs were vulnerable diaphragms which, reacting

*continued on p. 16*



*The Plunger (foreground) and the Shark are shown moored together, 1914.*





### ASK UNCLE PELEG

*I recently had a letter from a recruit to the antique-collecting fraternity specializing in the tools used by yesterday's craftsmen. He had a list of archaic tool names that he wanted help in identifying. I thought the tools and the source from which their names came sufficiently interesting to justify devoting the whole of this month's space to their pictures and a short explanation of their use. First, the letter:*

Dear Uncle Peleg:

I have been collecting antique tools for almost two years and am greatly enjoying the search for them. So far, I haven't learned as much as I'd like to about the very old ones and the few books I've acquired haven't offered many answers. I met another collector who seems to know a great deal about them but he won't answer many questions. He says I'll learn more if he asks me the questions. He says nobody ever told him anything and he learned all the better for having to look hard for information.

He gave me a list of five tools which he says were all mentioned in an old book about tools and

crafts and he told me to find out what their uses were. No luck and no progress.

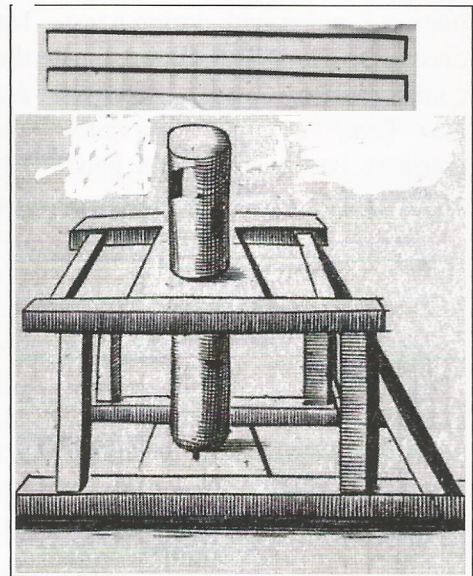
I noticed in back issues of *The Freeholder* you occasionally say something about antique tools and I hoped you might help me get started. Can you tell me anything about the tools on the attached list?

Joe Simone

The Crab  
The Hook Pin  
The Drug  
The Lathing Staff  
The Cleaving-Knife

O.K., Joe. First of all I can probably tell you the source of the tool names on your list. All of them are found in Joseph Moxon's *Mechanick Exercises* published late in the 17th century in London. The first three are used by the carpenter in the work of house building. The fourth is a tool of the lather who prepares walls for plastering. The fifth is used by the lathe turner. As you will have already noticed, this page is illustrated with pictures of the tools from Moxon's book. Between the pictures and the comments you'll have a good start in learning about the tools of more than three hundred years ago.

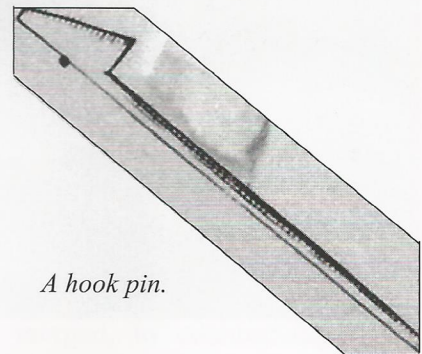
*The Crab.* A sailor would have called this a capstan. He and his mates used it to raise the anchor or perform other shipboard jobs requiring great power. The house carpenter used it, in Moxon's words, "to draw heavy timber to a considerable height." The upright cylinder was a reel on which a strong rope was



*Moxon's rendering of a crab. The levers, above, would be placed in the mortices in the cylinder.*

wound. The rope's end was passed through a pulley block at the height of the progressing building to which a timber was to be raised. Thence it was brought down to ground level and fastened to the timber. Levers were thrust through the mortices in the upper end of the cylinder and four strong-boys from the laboring gang tailed on to them. As they walked the cylinder around, the rope coiled on it and the timber went up.

*The Hook Pin.* In preparing a frame, the skeleton of a building, the carpenter shaped all its



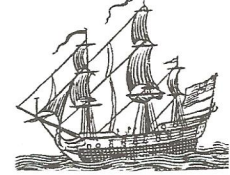
*A hook pin.*

continued on p. 19





## 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**.*

### O B HISTORICAL SOCIETY PROUDLY PRESENTS 350 YEARS OF ART IN OYSTER BAY

(Plus Lectures, Parties, Auctions, Celebrities & More!)

Thanks to the talent and generosity of local artists and notables, the Oyster Bay Historical Society presents the most exciting event of its 43 year history!

More than forty prominent painters, sculptors, lecturers and designers have pooled their talents to create an experience that begins with a lecture by Prof. Jennifer Goldsborough on Sunday, November 16th at 3pm at the Oyster Bay Community Center on Church Street. Cost for this lecture and the reception following is only \$20.

Prof. Goldsborough, former curator of The Maryland Historical Society, will speak on the evolution of house interiors in Oyster Bay spanning four centuries, from the most humble to the most elegant.

After the lecture, the excitement begins at the Society's Headquarters where - with the expertise and assistance of Curator of Art Yvonne Noonan Cifarelli - you'll see an enormous variety of original art that depicts the 350 year history of our amazing town of Oyster Bay!

And these magnificent paintings and sculptures are not just to admire, most of them can be yours - for a price!

The details of our December 6th event are still being ironed out, so stay tuned, but they will



*Nassau County Museum of Art curator Franklin H. Perrell (right) is shown with Society Director Tom Kuehhas and Associate Director of Educational Programs Maureen Monck, Ph.D. Mr. Perrell is one of the many local artists who will donate their work to the Historical Society.*

include a lecture and live auction by John Loring, the celebrated Design Director of Tiffany's, who will speak on the history of that venerable establishment. Following the lecture, cocktails and hors d'oeuvres will be served, and Mr. Loring has graciously consented to act as auctioneer for the live auction which will feature a smaller quantity of extremely important works, so bring your connoisseur's eye and your checkbook!

And, finally, the climax. On January 24th, only fifty very fortunate people will be guests at Banfi Vineyards in Old Brookville. Banfi will be your host for an elegant black-tie evening of superb vintage wines and an incomparable seven course dinner prepared by the Mill River Inn, consistently

named by Zagat as Long Island's premier dining experience. Because of limited capacity, this event must be on a "first come, first served" basis.

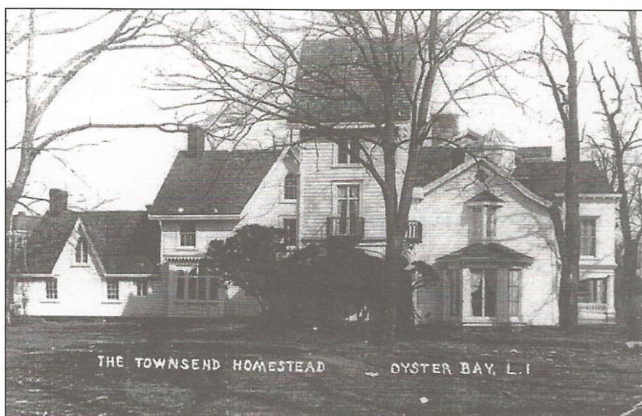
So come and join us for any or all of these memorable days and nights, and know that your contributions are designated exclusively to the building of a desperately needed new home to protect and preserve our historic and priceless collection of Oyster Bay memorabilia.

We'll see you at the exhibit...tell your friends, and long live Oyster Bay!

### RAYNHAM HALL MUSEUM

In 1953, the Friends of Raynham Hall, Inc., first opened the doors of the old Townsend Homestead as a museum. During





*An early 20th c. view of Raynham Hall from the west adorns the Museum's 50th Anniversary exhibit invitation.*

these fifty years, Raynham Hall has served as a place of historical and cultural importance, as well as an educational and community resource. To celebrate this milestone and to show a special debt of gratitude to every person who has had a hand in its success, The Friends of Raynham Hall would like to extend an invitation to attend the opening of its anniversary exhibit, "Views of Raynham Hall: The Townsend Homestead Through Three Centuries," on Saturday and Sunday, September 6th and 7th, 2003, from 12:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m. On view will be images of the home, including paintings, photographs, sketches and postcards depicting the house in various periods and décor.

Many of these images are newly acquired and most have never before been displayed.

In addition, this will be the third and final weekend of the first annual "Passport to Historic Oyster Bay" program. Special events

and a self-guided ghost tour will be offered at Raynham Hall. The home's reputation has attracted many paranormal investigators who have declared Raynham Hall "the most haunted house on Long Island." A brochure has been created that outlines many of the "unexplained" activities, including footsteps, smells, noises and even apparition sightings. Admission is \$3 for adults; \$2 for senior citizens and students; children 6 and under are free and there will be complimentary refreshments under the tent in the Victorian garden.

For those interested, there will be an exclusive sneak preview party for "Views of Raynham

Hall," on Friday, September 5, 2003, from 5:00 - 8:00 p.m. Cocktails and hors d'oeuvres will be served under the tent for this special celebration. Reservations are required for the preview. For further information or to see if tickets are still available for the preview party, please call the museum at 516-922-6808.

**FARMINGDALE-BETHPAGE  
HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
TO BE HONORED BY  
NASSAU COUNTY ON  
SEPTEMBER 7**

The County of Nassau and the Friends for Long Island's Heritage have recently established the Nassau County Heritage Award, an annual award which will recognize exceptional tradition-bearers whose preservation efforts and contributions to our heritage has earned them special recognition. The first award in the historical society category will be to the Farmingdale-Bethpage Historical Society; the award for outstanding preservationist will go to Samuel U. Mitchell, a member of the Society. The awards will be presented Sunday, September 7, at a reception to be held from 4:00-6:00 pm at Old Bethpage Village Restoration.

The fledgling Farmingdale-Bethpage Historical Society, less than a year old in 1965, made a donation to Nassau County and its historical museum support group, now known as the Friends for Long Island's Heritage. The donation, which even today would represent a significant sum, was used to furnish a room at the Joshua Powell house, the only structure at

**OYSTER BAY HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
Categories of Membership**

Individual	\$ 25	Business	\$ 50
Family	\$ 35	Business Sponsor	\$ 100
Contributing	\$ 50	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.



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

**[www.oysterbayhistory.org](http://www.oysterbayhistory.org)**

Old Bethpage Village Restoration on its original site. This long tradition of assistance to historical causes has distinguished the Society over the years on Long island, and has led to this award.

In other news, a new exhibit, "This Old House," has gone on display in the Society's large display cases at the Farmingdale Public Library and continues through October. The exhibit is tied to the library's 80th anniversary and reflects household items and toys that might be found in an average home around 1923.

**HUNTINGTON  
HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

The Society's latest exhibit, "The Tools That Built Huntington," opened on May 2nd with a gala reception in celebration of the town's 350th Anniversary (a birthday which it shares with Oyster Bay, Oyster Bay being the elder by some months!). The display in the Kissam Barn represents the first time the society's vast tool collection has been housed under one roof. In addition to the main exhibit, a leather-working shop has been installed in the Barn. The tools have been donated to the society over the years by local families who were involved in various trades.

**HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
OF THE MASSAPEQUAS**

Readers of the *Freeholder* will be interested to learn that the

Long Island Rail Road reached Farmingdale in 1841 and residents of South Oyster Bay (later Massapequa) journeyed to that village by horse or horse and buggy for rail transportation. It was not until 1867 that the South Side Railroad, a competitor of the LIRR, extended a line through South Oyster Bay to Babylon. Soon after the railroad came, South Oyster Bay became a popular summer resort. The South Side Railroad went bankrupt in 1874 and its successor, the Southern Railroad, suffered the same fate, and yet another owner, the Brooklyn and Montauk Railroad, finally merged with the LIRR in 1889.

**CENTRAL PARK  
HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

The society, with the help and cooperation of Nassau County and Legislator Ed Mangano, has installed its second historical marker. This new marker acknowledges the coming of the Grumman Corporation to Bethpage in October 1936. It was placed at the corner of Central Avenue and Grumman Road East, near the Sunnyside Senior Housing complex. This was at one time the entrance to Grumman Plant No. 1, as well as the runway where Grumman planes flew in and out of the area. The famous World War II Navy fighter plane F4F-3 Wildcat was produced in Plant No. 1, as was the last Grumman fighter, the F-14 Tomcat.

In keeping with the 100th anniversary of the Wright brothers' first powered flight, the Society is pleased to report that Lois Lovisolo is preparing a program

on the Grumman corporation that will take place on October 22nd. For more information, contact Lenny Mulqueen at 935-2674 or Ann Albertson at 933-1795.

**NEW BOOK ON LI RAIL  
ROAD STATIONS NOW  
AVAILABLE**

*Long Island Rail Road Stations* by David D. Morrison & Valerie Pakaluk.

Commentary by Steven Torborg, President, Friends of Locomotive #35 Inc.

Dave Morrison, Board member of the Friends of Locomotive #35 Inc. recently released his newest book, *Long Island Rail Road Stations*. A book signing was held on Saturday, August 9th at the Hicksville Gregory Museum. My wife Cathy and I had the privilege of attending where we were able to purchase our autographed books from Dave as well as mingle with Jim Foote (Theodore Roosevelt impersonator), to whom the book is dedicated. Recently, over a period of several hours, I was able to review the entire book.

*Long Island Rail Road Stations*, co-authored by Valerie Pakaluk, is a compilation of early 20th century postcard photographs that depict the vast majority of the Long Island Rail Road's sta-

**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 (\$7.50). Shipping is additional.**

tions in their prime. A caption accompanies each photo explaining not only the history of the station, but in most cases its current status as well. It is filled with information that keeps your interest whether you are specifically interested in a particular station or in the history of the railroad as a whole. Dave and Valerie missed nothing in this soft cover book. Whether it be the rise and fall of Pennsylvania Station, "Mile-a-Minute Murphy's" famous bicycle ride or even Roxy the Long Island Rail Road mascot dog, every major facet of the LIRR's history is covered.

Of particular interest is the section dealing with Theodore Roosevelt and his extensive use of the LIRR. Several post card views of Roosevelt utilizing the LIRR and other railroads depict TR's affection for the trains and the crews who ran them. Certainly Jim Foote's dedication as a TR impersonator helps to keep this vivid

*Long Island Rail Road Stations* author Dave Morrison (left) is shown with Friends of Locomotive #35 President Steve Torborg, Teddy Roosevelt (Jim Foote), and a young rail fan at the Aug. 9th book signing. (Photo courtesy of Stephanie Davy and the *Oyster Bay Guardian*.)

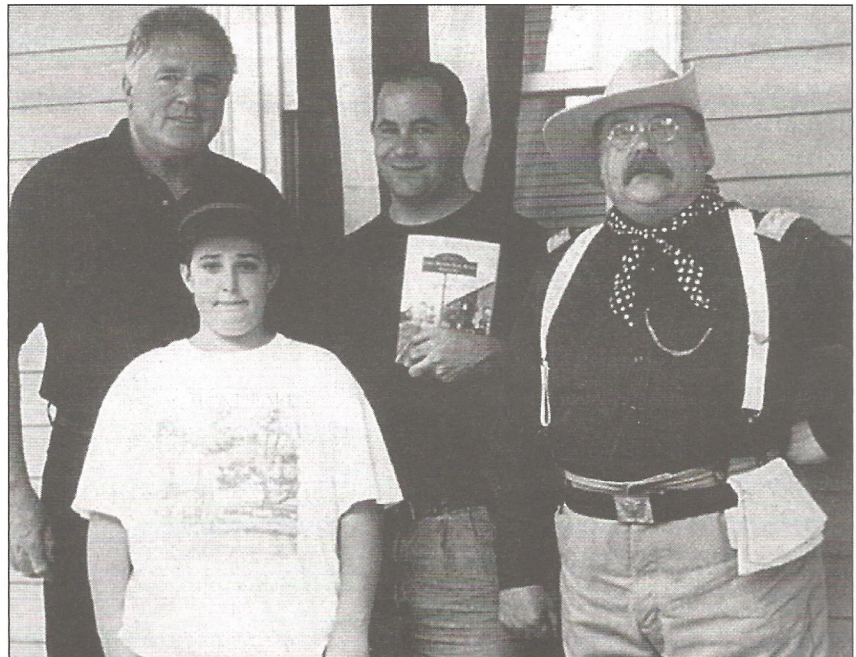
part of our history etched in the minds of Long Islanders today, much as TR himself did almost 100 years ago. The respect and admiration felt for Mr. Foote's efforts are plainly obvious in the dedication portion of the book.

However, the most admirable part of the book is the chapter entitled "Railroad Museums on Long Island." This chapter is evidence of Dave's unending dedication to the preservation of the LIRR's extensive history. In this chapter, Dave details the efforts of the four major railroad museums on Long Island and their dedication to the preservation of LIRR stations, structures and rolling stock. The Wantagh Preservation Society, Lindenhurst Historical Society, Railroad Museum of Long Island and the Friends of Locomotive #35 Inc. are all endorsed in pictures and text. Dave also mentions the efforts of the Friends of Locomotive #35 and Oyster Bay Station Committee to preserve and restore the Oyster Bay station as

a part of the Oyster Bay Railroad Museum.

Dave's dedication to rail preservation on Long Island goes unmatched by anyone and is an example that we can all learn from. He shows this in *Long Island Rail Road Stations* much as he did many years ago in *Steam Locomotive Pictorial*, a book about the LIRR roster of steam locomotives. In that book he mentions the efforts of the Long Island Sunrise Trail NRHS to preserve and restore steam locomotive #35. In fact, that book is dedicated to Bob Michele who spearheaded the project for over 25 years.

I would encourage anyone interested in the history of the Long Island Rail Road to pick up a copy of the book. It will certainly become a cherished keepsake that you will want to read time and again. If you would like an autographed copy of *Long Island Railroad Stations*, contact Dave at 516-935-3145 or e-mail him at [daverail@optonline.net](mailto:daverail@optonline.net).







## TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE



In this test we offer you ten movie titles from days long gone. We also offer you two of the leading players and one supporting actor in each movie. It will be your test to assign two leads and one supporting actor to the movies in which they appeared. In the answers columns, each title is designated by a Roman numeral. Each actor is designated by either a letter or number. The actors are scrambled in their columns and do not necessarily appear opposite the movies in which they played. One actor appears twice. Accept our assignment of Lead or Support status; fill in the answer columns with the letter or number symbols next to the actors' names.

### TITLES

*Down Argentine Way*  
*The Whole Town's Talking*  
*The Maltese Falcon*  
*Seven Sinners*  
*Holiday Inn*  
*Private Lives of Elizabeth and Essex*  
*Show Boat*  
*San Francisco*  
*The Wizard of Oz*  
*Reckless*

#### Lead

1. William Powell
2. Mary Astor
3. Irene Dunne
4. Clark Gable
5. Jean Arthur
6. Marlene Dietrich
7. Judy Garland
8. Bing Crosby
9. Bette Davis
10. Don Ameche

#### Lead

- a. Fred Astaire
- b. Edward G. Robinson
- c. Jean Harlow
- d. Allan Jones
- e. Ray Bolger
- f. Spencer Tracy
- g. Humphrey Bogart
- h. Betty Grable
- i. John Wayne
- j. Erroll Flynn

#### Support

- A. Marjorie Reynolds
- B. Broderick Crawford
- C. Leo G. Carroll
- D. Edward G. Robinson
- E. Sydney Greenstreet
- F. Franchot Tone
- G. Carroll Naish
- H. Paul Robeson
- I. Jeannette Macdonald
- J. Margaret Hamilton

Edward G. Robinson played two roles  
in *The Whole Town's Talking*. I think  
this is it but am I right?

Check the answers on p. 24!





## 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

This installment of "The Dutch Next Door" is devoted to accumulated odds and ends of vocabulary with a maritime flavor.

First, let's look at a bit of sailor lingo. Vessels, especially smaller ones, are sometimes unintentionally designed so narrow that they must be heavily ballasted. Otherwise, when they tip too far to either side, they cannot recover equilibrium and so capsize. This condition is called "crank" which was defined by an early writer as "a disposition to overset." Its name is derived from the early Dutch and Frisian word, "krengd" used to describe a ship lying over on its side.

Here's one you may have bumped into in news stories about the machinations of Congress. It has a bit of nautical flavor to it but has moved to a different venue in our language. The Dutch word, *vrijbouter* meant a seeker after booty, generally in a piratical way. The English liked the word and adopted it but spelt it according to their understanding of its sound, *freebooter*. Even today someone who wants to add color to a piece of writing makes use of *freebooter* but in that form it is really obsolete. However, the Dutch word was also adopted into French and Spanish as *filibustere* and *filibustero*. It got a lot of use to describe Europeans or Americans trying to take over some of South America's "Banana Republics" in the 19th

century. But from there it was readopted into American English as *filibuster* and used to name the effort of plotting Congressmen to obstruct the progress of legislation.

The famous Arctic Ocean whirlpool called the Maelstrom, although off the coast of Norway, was apparently named by the Dutch. *Mael* derives from *malen*, (today rendered *molen*) to mill, grind, or spin as a millstone. *Strom*, meaning stream, is spelt *stroom* in modern Dutch. The two Dutch words, of course, explain what the Maelstrom's action is, a stream of water spinning round.

The bumboat, in the days of sailing ships, was the first of the harbor craft to reach new arrivals. It brought fresh fruit and vegetables for sale and took away the accumulated trash that could not legally be thrown overboard. Bumboat is said to derive from the Dutch *boomboot*, a craft with a boom to its sail, that could work its way through the anchorage without fouling cables or scraping the sides of the moored vessels.

Nobody who writes about words and their etymology seems to have much scoop on the word *bamboozle* which, as currently defined, means to trick or hoax. It came into use at the end of the 17th century or a bit earlier and is still to be heard occasionally. None of the commentary, not extensive, that I have found gives any real hint of where it came

from. Occasional speculation like: "From English cant?" is all you are likely to get. Strangely, no one points out that the first two syllables form the word, *bamboo*. This does not get us very far forward but it's barely possible that it offers a clue. The source of our word, *bamboo* was the Dutch word, *bamboes* (with other forms through the Dutch, *bam -bus, -bous, -bouse*). No one knows where the "s" in the Dutch form comes from. It is gone in modern Dutch. One must wonder if the sibilant in *bamboozle* is not its child. Of course, the Dutch form came from some language in the lands where bamboo grows, as Java, Sumatra, etc. leaving us with a mystery of the East. At least we have another example of the Dutch as the middlemen of language.

### TR and the Plunger

*continued from p. 9*

to the outside water pressure would hopefully set in motion springs attached from them to the diving rudders. These, in turn, would level out the dive and keep the submarine from nosing into the muddy ocean bottom.

While looking at that amazing contraption on the ceiling, Roosevelt must have caught, out of the corner of his eye, the glimmer of a swinging metal radius. It was the pendulum upon whose delicate and exact balance he and the crew were to depend, while submerged, to counterbalance the shifting weight of their moving



about and keep the vessel from flipping out of control. Lt. Nelson might have next explained to T.R. the working of various floor levers in the area of the pendulum. These levers controlled the filling or emptying of the ballast tanks. He then, possibly, turned the president's attention to the pumps, ventilating apparatus and the storage tank valves which released fresh air to the crew.

At last all turned to the supreme purpose of the journey that stormy day from Sagamore Hill to the waters of Oyster Bay - the dive of the *Plunger*! Lt. Nelson ordered the submarine to take leave of its tender and head out to the depths of the sound. The *Plunger* quivered to life as its tinlizzy engine sputtered and clickety-clacked the propeller into action. As the *Plunger* churned its way through the gale lashed waves, Teddy Roosevelt immersed himself in every detail as he moved about the craft. And it was reported that, "He behaved

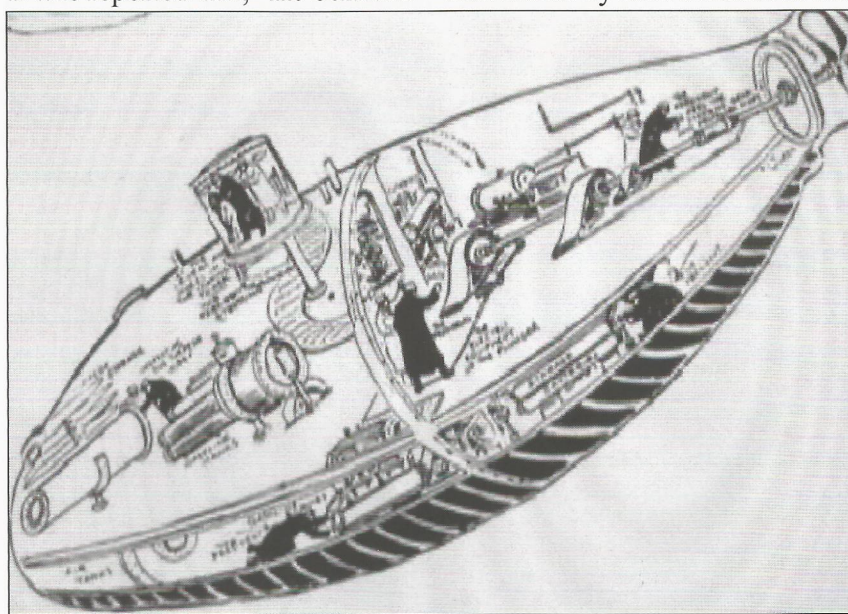
like a delighted school boy over everything he saw."

When the *Plunger* reached its destination in the midst of the Sound, Lt. Nelson gave the order to dive. The gasoline engine came to a stop and the sub was suddenly quiet. A crewman was dispatched to check the condition of the mice and reported back to Lt. Nelson that they were alive. Thus reassured that the toxic exhaust of the gasoline engine was within tolerable levels, he ordered the electric motor started for submerged running. As the motor hummed to life the lieutenant beckoned to the President to join him at the diving levers and invited T.R. to operate them. Roosevelt eagerly eased the levers into position. The sea rushed into the void of the empty tanks and *Plunger* went under.

The depth gauge diaphragm began to collapse under the strain of increasing water pressure. A faint metallic creak might have been heard by the President as the

movement of the diaphragm activated the springs linking it to the diving rudders. In sixteen seconds *Plunger* was at a preset depth of 40 feet and held there by that contraption of diaphragm and springs struggling to hold the rudder on an even plane against the pressure of the sea in a mechanical tug-of-war. Moments after reaching the desired depth of 40 feet, Roosevelt heard Lt. Nelson order the pendulum device linked to the diving planes to hold the submarine on an even keel as its passengers moved about. And for the next half hour *Plunger* placidly cruised beneath the sound at 40 feet undisturbed by the storm raging on the surface. All the while T.R. returned again to inspect the machinery and perhaps under the direction of Lieutenant Nelson turned the crank of an air valve to release a swish of stored air to refresh the stale, fume-saturated atmosphere in the submerged submarine.

Then the *Plunger* was ready to amuse the President with some aquatic stunts. Perhaps startling T.R. for a moment, the "Ka-puk," "Ka-puk," of the compressor echoed through the steel hull as it pressed air into the submerging tanks, forcing out the water and allowing the *Plunger* to surface. As the *Plunger* came up, Lt. Nelson suggested that the President might want to find a secure footing as they were about to begin "porpoise diving." Nelson explained that although the *Plunger* was equipped with a periscope, it only had a field of view of 15 degrees, making such a maneuver necessary to sight the target of a torpedo attack. Therefore, the submarine would run a



This artist's impression of TR's ride in the *Plunger* appeared in the Sept. 4, 1977, edition of the *Hartford Courant Magazine*. It accompanied the article by Rabbi Marc Brownstein entitled, "TR takes bully dip in a sub."



short distance submerged and then come to the surface for a moment, as he peered through small windows in the conning tower to see the way to go - and immediately dive again. By such a process of bobbing up and down or "porpoising" the sub would make its way to the target, fire its torpedo and then disappear beneath the water. Thus having explained its purpose, Nelson commenced the maneuver. Indeed, it may have been that T.R. dispatched himself to the conning tower to peer through the windows and guide the imaginary attack himself.

The strain of "porpoising" on the quaint machinery of the submarine must have been considerable. For example, the air compressor must have worked itself into a paroxysm of panic as it strained to blow out enough air to empty the submerging tanks before they were quickly opened again to be filled for the next dive in that roller-coaster dash through the Sound. After the "porpoise" maneuver the *Plunger* was put into a 45-degree angle dive. Suddenly, at a depth of 20 feet, the electric motor was reversed and the submarine shot backwards to the surface! Following this, the *Plunger* went down again to make a rapid underwater U-turn. Finally, Nelson ordered the vessel to a depth of 20 feet, extinguished the lights and demonstrated to the President the crew's ability to control the craft in total darkness.

Fortunately, the *Plunger* did all that was asked of her when she was entrusted with the life of the President of the United States on that stormy Long Island day in

1905. And Roosevelt returned safely to the tender, *Apache*. He later said of the experience, "Never in my life have I had such a diverting day, nor can I recall having so much enjoyment in so few hours as today."

Nevertheless, when the President's advisers heard of the episode on his return to Sagamore Hill, they rushed to take precautions against the public learning of the President's death-defying trip on the *Plunger*. But unable to cover up the affair, official statements were issued denying that the President of the United States had intended to risk his life in a submarine! And the following day Roosevelt himself made the excuse that although he had at first thought better of going down in the *Plunger*, he changed his mind because he did not wish to deeply disappoint Lt. Nelson and his crew by declining their invitation to submerge with them.

The fact of the matter, of course, was that Roosevelt had been aching to go down in a submarine. And the temptation to do so may have become unbearable after his daughter Alice, with his enthusiastic permission, had two years before submerged in the submarine *Moccasin* at Newport. But now he had a greater tale to tell, for she had only been down for 10 minutes and the *Moccasin* never moved from its mooring, having been tied to the dock for the shallow six foot submerging. Perhaps it was his excitement to tell of his adventure in the *Plunger* that caused him to blow the cover story in an exasperated reply to someone who said that the chief of the nation had no right to take the risk of going down in a submarine. To this Roosevelt angrily replied, "I am the Commander-in-Chief of the Navy and I have the right to go where I wish to so as to see where I am ordering our men to go!"



*The Plunger is shown in a busy harbor, which may be Elizabethport, NJ, where she was built at the Crescent Shipyard in 1901.*



But, Roosevelt's solicitous advisors need not have been so concerned for his reputation. For the news of his submarine adventure on the Sound was enthusiastically received by Teddy's adoring public. And the next day the *New York Times* reported that, "The President's experience on board the *Plunger* will usher in a new era of this important branch of the Navy which up to this time is said to have received rather step-motherly treatment at the hands of naval authorities." His lasting legacy, however, is that, impressed by their courage, skill and professionalism under hazardous conditions, he ordered extra compensation paid to submariners. This was implemented and today, two years short of a century later, that policy still prevails. T.R. also ordered the Navy Department to give submariners an immediate raise in pay and to look generously to their promotion.

And what of that valiant little submarine and her daredevil commander? Both went on to serve many more years. In 1922, seventeen years after her Long Island Sound adventure with Teddy Roosevelt, rusting and obsolete, *Plunger* was cast away and sold for scrap. Lt. Nelson continued to serve until 1933, when he retired at the rank of rear admiral.

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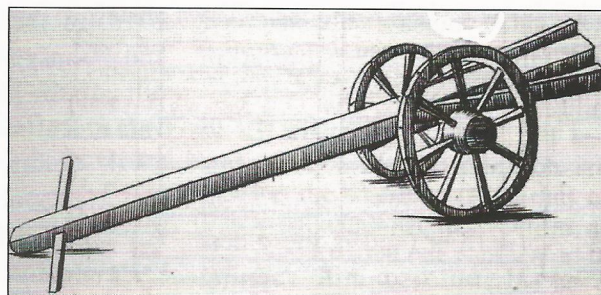
History Channel Video. *100 Years of the Silent Service*.

#### Uncle Peleg

continued from p. 10

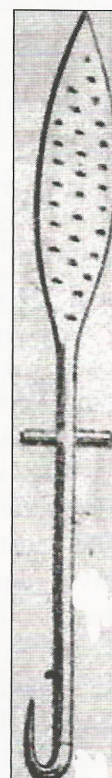
*pieces to their proper dimensions, made all the joints by which they would be held together and bored the holes for the final fastenings. They then made a trial assembly to check that everything had been done correctly. Moxon said, "They have many of these Hook Pins (usually of iron for temporary fastening). These [they] drive into the Pinholes." If all were in order they drove them out again. When the frame had been reassembled in place, "they pin it up with wooden Pins."*

*The Drug. "[The Drug] is made somewhat like a low, narrow*



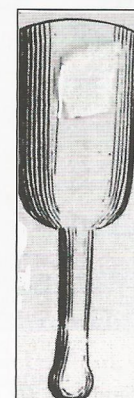
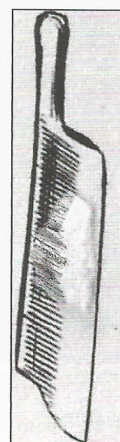
*Carr. It is used for the carriage of Timber and is drawn by the handle by two or more Men, according as the weight of the Timber may require."*

*The Lathing Staff. "The Lathing Staff of Iron [is] in the form of a Cross, to stay the cross Laths while they are nailed to the long Laths, and also to clinch the nails."*



*The Cleaving-knife. Mr. Moxon says, "The Cleaving-knife needs no other Description than the figure." I think one necessary. It is a form of frow used by a lathe-turner to split the wood he uses into handy sizes for his work. He places the stick of wood to be cleft on his chopping block, holds the edge of*

continued on p. 23





## BEFORE THE BRIDGE: OYSTER BAY, INTERSTATE TRANSPORTATION HUB

by S. Berliner, III

"What?" you say! "Oyster Bay; an Interstate Transportation Hub?" you say! "Ayuh!" says I.

The progressive little Long Island Rail Road was noted for its many firsts<sup>1</sup>; it was chartered on 24 April 1834 (and is the oldest Class 1 railroad still running under its original name and charter) to run from the Long Island City ferries across from Manhattan to Orient Point, some 120 miles east on the North Fork of Long Island where it would connect by ferry with the Old Colony Railroad at Stonington, Connecticut, and so on to Boston. This was a great idea until the New York, New Haven, and Hartford Railroad bridged all the rivers and bays and inlets along the Connecticut coast ca. 1850 and provided direct rail service from New York City to Beantown.

The Long Island Rail Road, having ignored all the towns along the Island and been built on the most barren (and inexpensive) land on Long Island, now had no "raison d'être" and had to scurry to build or buy branches to the population centers on Long Island. The LIRR finally connected directly with Manhattan on the completion in September

1910, of the East River tunnels and Pennsylvania Station and it fell into the hands of the Pennsylvania Railroad from 1928 to 1949, before becoming part of the Metropolitan Transportation Authority in 1965.

Having lost the Boston run, the LIRR was thus reduced to just a commuter run (although the world's biggest). However, in Vincent F. Seyfried's *The Long Island Rail Road - A Comprehensive History*<sup>2</sup>, in Part 6: The Golden Age: 1881-1900, Chapter 11, "The Oyster Bay Sound Ferry and the Boston Service," he details a cross-Sound car ferry<sup>3</sup> car float operation, for passengers and freight, from Oyster Bay

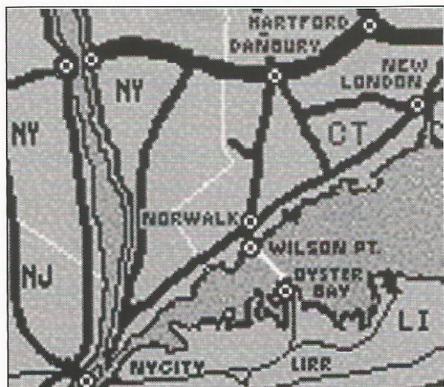
to Wilson's Point in the Norwalk area of Connecticut that only ran from 12 Sept. 1891 to 13 July 1892. It is well covered, with old photographs, on Arthur Huneke's *A R R t ' s a R R c h i v e s*<sup>4</sup> Website.

According to our old friend, Oyster Bay historian John Hammond, the service was so poorly patronized that the LIRR resorted to putting cardboard cut-outs of people in the windows to disguise the fact that there were almost no passengers!<sup>5</sup>

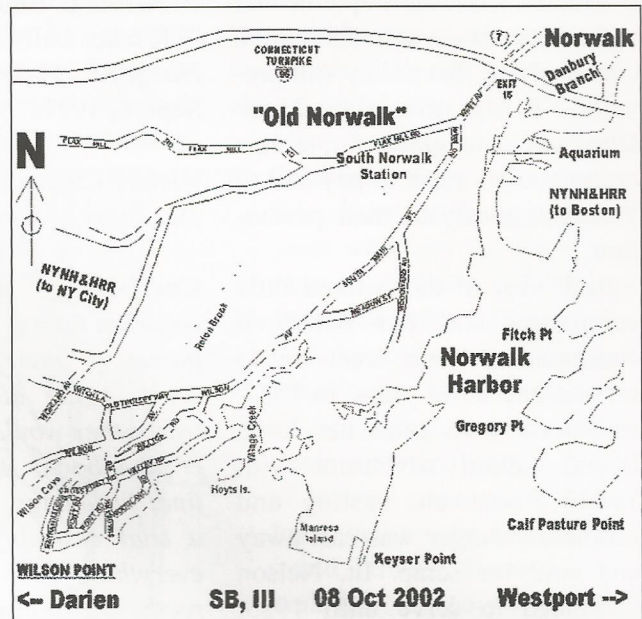
Art's site shows a rough map

(redrawn excerpt at lower left - that's New Haven at the far right, with Hartford above it), where it appears to be a southward extension of the Danbury Branch, but just try and find Wilson's Point in any atlas or gazetteer!

I finally located it on a Hagstrom's map for Norwalk, Connecticut (redrawn excerpt based on that, below). The exacting street detail I showed on my drawing was lost in the translation but you can see the dotted lines for the New York, New Haven & Hartford Railroad from New York City to Boston with the Danbury Branch splitting off in downtown "old Norwalk" and, sure enough, there is even a spur



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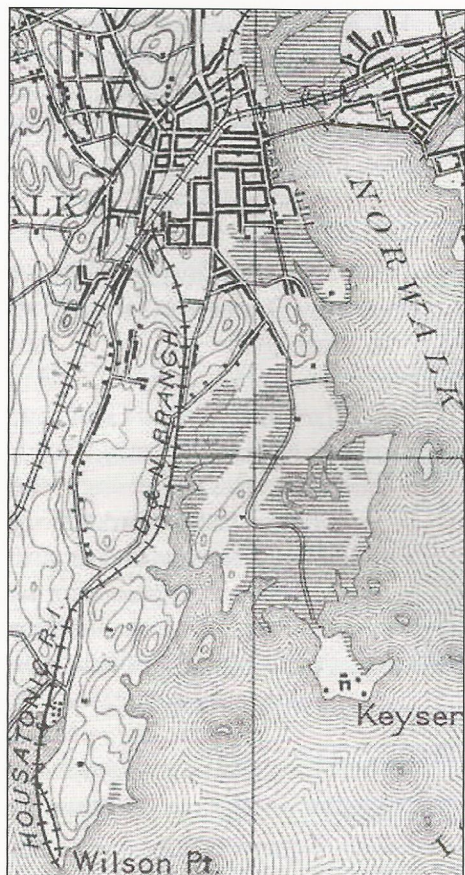


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heading directly down towards Wilson ('s) Point (between Roton Brook and Village Creek).

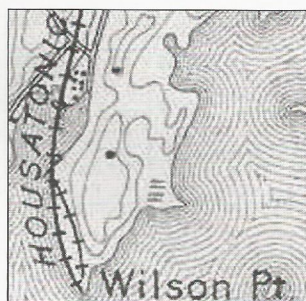
I wondered just where the right of way ran and where the dock was but had to wonder no longer when Dan Moraseske, a budding





*The view at left is taken from the 1895 Norwalk topographical map surveyed 1889-90. The view at bottom left is taken from the 1947 Norwalk topographical map.*

*The detail below, taken from the 1895 Norwalk map, clearly shows the Danbury & Norwalk Branch of the Housatonic Railroad leading to Wilson Point.*

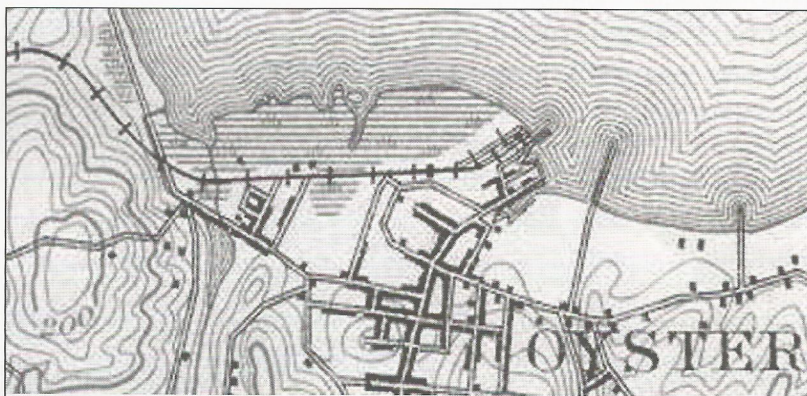
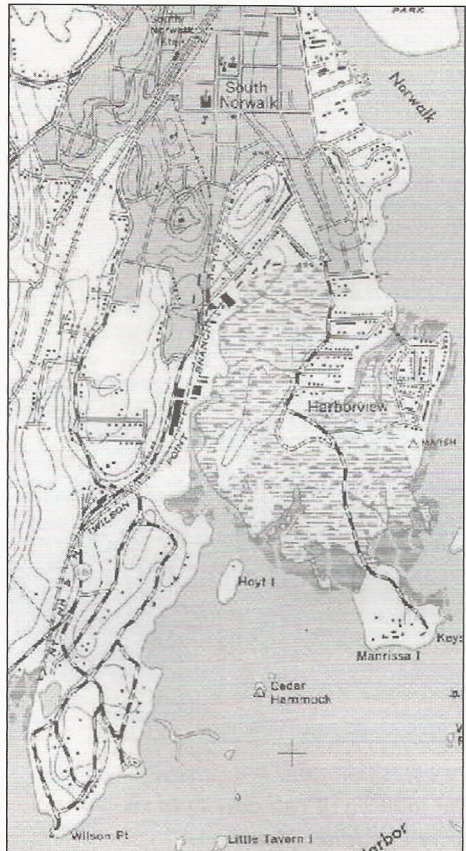


historian writing about the Long Island Motor Parkway<sup>6</sup>, sent me the website addresses of a bunch of old United States Coast & Geodetic Survey topographical maps<sup>7</sup> in the collec-

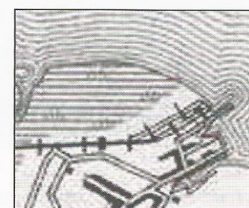
tions of the University of New Hampshire and I started exploring and, sure enough, there was Oyster Bay in 1900 and Wilson (no "s") Point in 1897 and 1947, locking down rather well where everything was.

You can see how the Danbury & Norwalk Branch of the Housatonic Railroad (successor to the New York & New England) splits off southerly from the NYNH&HRR just west of the turnout for the northerly Danbury branch on the west side of the Norwalk River and heads due south to the Point. On the Long Island side, you can see how the LIRR's Oyster Bay yard used to extend all the way to the water's edge.

Now, all I needed was an 1891-92 topographical map of Oyster Bay to (hopefully) show the actual dock layout! Bingo (well, not quite)! A Long Island Motor Parkway enthusiast sent me the 1918 Camp Mills Quadrangle, a



*In the section above (and detail, right) taken from the Oct 1900 Oyster Bay topographical map (as reprinted 1935), you can see how the LIRR's Oyster Bay yard used to extend all the way to the water's edge.*





World War I overprint of the 1918 reprint of the south half of the 1897 Oyster Bay Quadrangle and the north half of the 1897 Hempstead Quadrangle; here's the pertinent portion, showing exactly the same layout [below].



I still need to find the actual dock trackage, known on the LIRR as the "Dock Track"; it certainly appears to be the one still in the street past the bend in Bay Avenue, where Bay, Bayview, and Harborview Avenues intersect just east of Theodore Roosevelt Park, and it appears to have run along the west side of the site for the new Oyster Bay Railroad Museum (how appropriate).

1 - LIRR firsts are listed in the LIRR bibliography on the author's LIRR (<http://home.att.net/~Berliner-Ultrasonics/lirretc2.html>) and LIRR Historical Society (<http://home.att.net/~Berliner-Ultrasonics/lirrhs.html>) Webpages.

2 - *History of the Long Island Rail Road - A Comprehensive*

*History*, LoC #61-17477, Part Six {1975}, The Golden Age: 1881-1900 (Limited Edition of 750 copies, out-of-print), Vincent F. Seyfried.

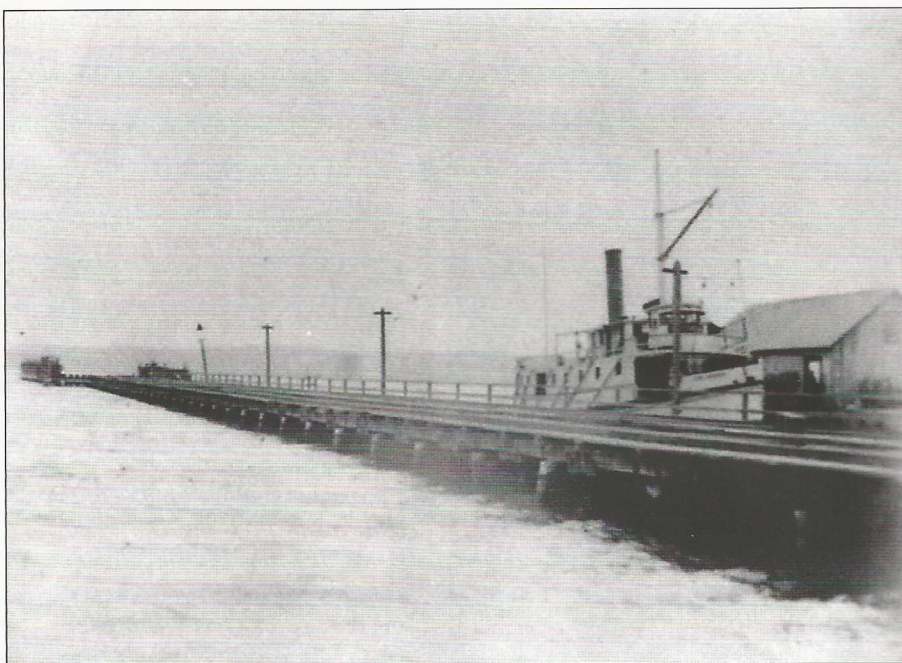
3 - More about car ferries on the

4 - Arthur Huneke's Website is aRRt's aRRchives (<http://arrrts-arrchives.com>) and the specific page is his Oyster Bay Part 3 (<http://arrrts-arrchives.com/obay3.html>).

5 - John Hammond, "Village Views," *Oyster Bay Guardian*, 20 June 1997.

6 - The author is the Convenor of the Motor Parkway Panel, dedicated to preserving the Long Island Motor Parkway in minds, in museums, and in situ; more on the Parkway can be found at the Panel's Website <http://www.motorparkway.com>, and on those linked thereon.

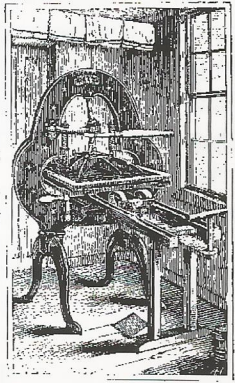
7 - The full 1918 topographical map is posted on the author's Long Island page 2 (<http://home.att.net/~Berliner-Ultrasonics/longis-2.html#1918topo>).



*The Long Island Rail Road's 1000 foot extension onto the commercial dock was built in 1891 to accommodate the loading of rail cars onto the ferry Cape Charles. Photo courtesy of John Hammond.*



## Blocklyn's Books



Book Reviews by Philip Blocklyn

**Men Of Steel.- The Story Of The Family That Built The World Trade Center. By Karl Koch III. With Richard Firstman. Crown, 2002. 402 pp. B&W photography, notes, and index. \$25.**

Some houses, as our author's grandmother liked to say, just have an aura of disaster about them. This must be why *Men Of Steel* opens on a winter morning in 1908, when Mr Koch's grandfather, an ironworker on the Manhattan Bridge, falls from an uncompleted tower into the East River. Fished out and carried off to a couple of private hospitals (where he is naturally refused treatment), he is at last admitted to Bellevue, which, like family, is still where you go when no one else will take you in.

Aura of disaster or not, the Koch family had a lot of success. In 1922, Karls I and II founded the Karl Koch Erecting Company, going on to erect the steel for many notable buildings, among them the Biltmore Hotel of Coral Gables, the Hotel Pierre in Manhattan, and the Graphite Reactor at Oak Ridge National Laborato-

ries. They joined a business, as Koch describes it, in which danger was surreally routine, as much a part of the job as annoying phone calls and paperwork. Early labor disputes in New York were traditionally settled not by the promise of improved wage scales or safety conditions but by assurances that the dead would be buried. After a fatality at the Williamsburgh Bridge site, workers returned to the job only after the Pennsylvania Steel Company provided boats to recover the next bodies.

It was a business, too, that greedy cost-cutters and corporate monsters like United States Steel and Bethlehem Steel came to dominate. In this regard, the family-operated Koch Company's considerable success against such competitors is certainly cheering. It is almost quaint, given our current state of corporate predation, that Karl I considered the virtue of his company as an actual asset worth maintaining. By 1966, it was "the business tactics of the big steel companies-- the sort of big-footed, heavy handed domination of the industry" that gave Koch Erecting Company the World Trade Center contract: the largest steel-erection job in the history of the world.

The Trade Center contract provided not just the aura of disaster but disaster itself. The job, to start with, was underbid by 20 million dollars. The fancy Australian cranes purchased for the construction operated with cutting-edge (ie. prototypical and proven to fail in the field) pumps that spewed oil over the work site. Low-tech kitty litter, spread over the oil, at least kept workers

on their feet. When the wind blew, kitty litter wafted across Lower Manhattan. Then labor troubles arose. During a tugboat strike, a Sikorsky Skyhorse helicopter was hired to haul seven-ton steel floor-panel sections across the Upper Harbor. No, this didn't work, as the first panel had to be jettisoned just as it passed beyond the Bayonne Bridge.

The job ultimately broke the Koch family apart, alienating brother from brother, uncle from nephew, in a struggle that would fit comfortably onto the stage of an Elizabethan revenge drama. There is no wonder at all why, after the work was done, Karl III averted his eyes from Lower Manhattan's transformed skyline. He couldn't bear to look.

In fact, after topping out the South Tower in May 1971, Karl III did not appear in a photograph with the World Trade Center for thirty years. By then, he had long ago cut his unhappy ties to Koch Erecting, selling out to his uncles and beginning a second career in consulting. In 2001 he was working on the expansion of the AT&T Building on Sixth Avenue, just up the road a piece from the Trade Center, when the project engineer persuaded Karl to stand for his photograph on the AT&T roof. It was a late August day full of late summer sun. Karl struck a three-quarters pose against the roof's railing, his hardhat in hand, the towers and pretty skies behind him.

**Uncle Peleg**, cont'd. from p. 19  
*his cleaving-knife against the top of the stick where he wants to open it and hits the back of the knife a whack with his maul.*



## MARK YOUR CALENDAR FOR THESE UPCOMING EVENTS!

### NOVEMBER

Sunday, Nov. 16, 3 p.m.

#### Lecture and Exhibit Opening

Oyster Bay Community Center &  
Earle-Wightman House Museum  
20 Summit Street, Oyster Bay

Prof. Jennifer Goldsborough, former curator of The Maryland Historical Society, will speak on the evolution of house interiors in Oyster Bay spanning four centuries, from the most humble to the

most elegant.

The lecture will be followed by a reception and the opening of the exhibition entitled "350 Years of Oyster Bay History in Art," including an opportunity to purchase many of the works featured in the exhibition.

### DECEMBER

Saturday, Dec. 6

#### Lecture and live auction

John Loring, the celebrated Design Director of Tiffany's, will speak on the history of that venerable establishment. Following the lecture, cocktails and hors d'oeuvres will be served, and Mr. Loring has graciously consented to act as auctioneer for the live auction which will feature a number of extremely important works.

Please come out and show your support for the Historical Society!

### Answers to Test Your Knowledge

continued from p. 15

#### LEADS

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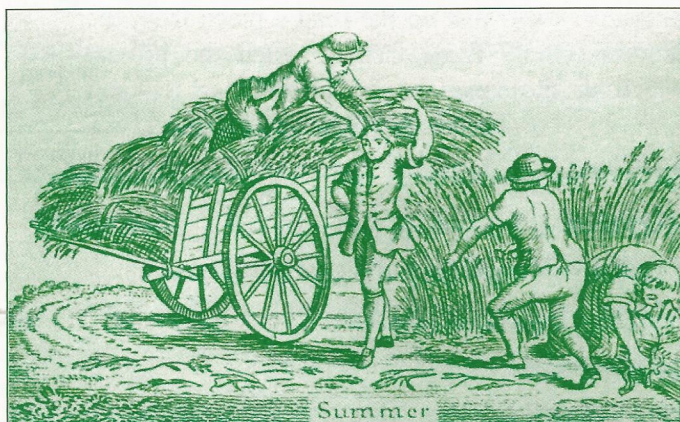
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#### TITLES

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