



THE FREEHOLDER

*Celebrating 40 Years
of Preserving
Our Town's History*

WINTER 2001 THE OYSTER BAY HISTORICAL SOCIETY FOUNDED 1960

☞ GOLD
COAST
SPIES

☞ TORY
CAPTAIN
COUNTS
SHEEP

☞ LOCAL
STUDENTS'
INAUGURAL
FEATURE

☞ UPDATE ON
OYSTERING
VIDEO



THE HISTORY MAGAZINE OF THE TOWN OF OYSTER BAY

Editorial

That groundhog in Pennsylvania seems to have a better handle on his predictions than many of our local weather forecasters! I'm sure many of our readers have had enough of this winter by now. Before spring finally allows us to once again enjoy the great outdoors, stay inside by the fireplace and give this issue a gander!

There is much to enjoy, beginning with Ray Spinzia's article on lesser

known Long Island spies. Ed Mag-nani transports us back to the time of that earlier and more famous Long Island spy ring, while explaining how a rare and unique census of Oyster Bay's residents, both two- and four-legged, came to be taken.

We are especially excited about a new feature in this issue, "Ye Olde Schoolhouse," which will highlight contributions from our young scholars throughout the Town.

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THE POST RIDER

To the Editor:

I received a copy of *The Freeholder* containing the article written by Walter Karppi on the LIRR crashes in 1950. I have vivid recollections (I was 13 at the time) of those tragedies for a number of reasons. My father was a regular passenger at the time on the 6:09 PM train out of Penn Station bound for Hempstead and he often sat in the last car of the train. We lived in Springfield Gardens at the time,

so he would change at Jamaica to the Far Rockaway train which he would take to the Higbie Avenue station in Springfield Gardens.

The reason he was not on the 6:09 that fateful night was that he went to Brooklyn after work that day to purchase our 19" RCA console TV. Through a friend at work, he got a "deal" from this friend's friend who owned an appliance store in Brooklyn (I think it was Flatbush). So it can be said that television saved my father's life!

The other story I wanted to share was the role my cousin, Robert Seta, played in the aftermath of that Thanksgiving Eve tragedy. Imagine my surprise in seeing his name in print in Mr. Karppi's article! Like

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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
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ABOUT OUR FRONT COVER

Winters on Long Island in recent years are a far cry from those of a hundred years ago. This photograph, taken around the turn of the last century, from the middle of East Main Street, just east of South Street, shows just what we mean! A heavy blanket of white covers everything in sight, but life goes on, as evidenced by the carriages & bystanders. Oyster Bay Historical Society Collections.

many family stories, I have since lost track of my cousin, but I have never forgotten the manner in which he and his friend responded to that terrible accident.

Congratulations to Mr. Karppi on a really well written article. I found it to be very educational and informative as well. I had forgotten the detail of the investigations into the three accidents which were covered very well in the article. I was not at all familiar with the signal systems in operation in 1950 and digested with great interest Mr. Karppi's comprehensive coverage of that subject.

continued on p. 9

MICHAEL STRAIGHT AND THE CAMBRIDGE SPY RING

by Raymond E. Spinzia

Since the days of the Revolutionary-era Long Island Spy Ring the Island's North Shore families have had a long and distinguished association both officially and unofficially in diverse aspects of intelligence gathering. With one remarkable exception, this is especially true of the Island's twentieth century espionage agents whose participation in the nation's intelligence organizations can be traced from World War I through the Cold War.¹

During the early 1900s, three boys, August Heckscher II, Michael Straight, and James Lee, who grew up just miles apart in Old Westbury, embarked on a most incredible journey through life wherein their paths would cross again as adults in a bizarre and ironic twist of fate.

August Heckscher II was the son of Gustav Maurice and F. Louise Vanderhoef Heckscher (whose estate "Three Winds" was located in Old Westbury), and the grandson of August and Anna P. Atkins Heckscher [I], who resided at "Wincoma" in Hunt-

ington Bay. In 1936 the younger Heckscher graduated Phi Beta Kappa from Yale. He received his master's degree in political science from Harvard in 1939 and taught political science at Yale from 1939-1941. During World War II he served as an intelligence officer in the Office of the Coordinator of Information (OCI) in Washington, DC, and, later in North Africa, as a member of its successor, the Office of Strategic Services (OSS). After serving as a delegate to the 1945 United Nations Conference in San Francisco, Heckscher became the chief editorial writer for the New York *Herald Tribune*, and a critically-acclaimed author of several books.

From 1957 to 1962 he served as New York City's Commissioner of Cultural Affairs and, as such, came to the attention of President Kennedy, who, in 1962, appointed him Coordinator of Cultural Affairs for the White House and, subsequently, the administration's special consultant on the arts. Heckscher went on to cap his distinguished public career as New

York City's much-beloved Commissioner of Parks from 1967 to 1971. In contrast to the mercurial Thomas Hoving, whom he replaced as commissioner, or the imperial Long Island State Park Commissioner Robert Moses, Heckscher was known as "Good King Augie" because of his kindly and vigorous leadership.²

Michael Straight was also the scion of a prominent North Shore family. His parents Willard Dickerman and Dorothy Payne Whitney Straight, whose estate "Elmhurst" was located in Old Westbury, were co-founders of *The New Republic* magazine.³ His father, who died in 1918 at age thirty-eight, had served his county with distinction as viceconsul general and private secretary to the United States Ambassador to Korea, private secretary to the United States Minister to Cuba, United States Consul General to Mukden, China, and Acting Chief for the State Department's Division of Far Eastern Affairs. His grandfather, William Collins Whitney, also of Old Westbury, was Secretary of the Navy in the Cleveland and Benjamin Harrison administrations.

Straight was a graduate of Dartington School, Devon, England, an extremely unconventional, experimental, preparatory institution founded by his mother and stepfather, Leonard Knight Elmhirst. His enrollment in Trinity College at Cambridge University in 1930, to study economics under John Maynard Keynes, coincided with an intensive campaign by the Communist Party to recruit idealistic members from the university's student body. While at Cambridge, Straight



Willard Dickerman and Dorothy Payne Whitney Straight estate, "Elmhurst," Old Westbury.

was befriended by two Communist agents, Guy Burgess and Anthony Blunt. He joined the Communist Party and was recruited by Blunt to spy for the Soviet Union.

Returning to the United States in 1937, Straight was given a job as an unpaid volunteer in the State Department's Office of Economic Advisor, writing papers on Nazi Germany and its economy. While at the State Department, he was contacted by a Soviet agent wanting access to secret government documents. According to Straight, the only documents he gave to the Soviets were unclassified ones which he himself had written, including one critical of the Nazi-Soviet Pact of Steel. He also claims that he left the State Department to negate his usefulness to the Communist Party and to disassociate himself from Communism. Straight worked in a succession of jobs as FDR's speech writer, Eleanor Roosevelt's assistant, and as the Washington editor of *The New Republic*. During World War II he trained bomber pilots while his former Cambridge associates continued their espionage activities in Great Britain for the Soviets.

Eighteen years would pass before Heckscher, as Kennedy's special consultant on the arts, would play a pivotal role in the life of his Old Westbury contemporary. In May 1963, at August Heckscher's suggestion, Straight was called to the White House for a meeting at which he and Kennedy's special assistant and former OSS member, Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., offered the chairmanship of the Fine Arts Com-

mission to Straight. Because of the possibility that his daughter's arm would have to be amputated, Straight declined the position.

One month later Straight was again summoned to the White House. This time he was offered the chairmanship of the Advisory Council of the Arts and its administration agency, the National Endowment of the Arts.



Anthony Blunt, 1935.

Realizing that the job necessitated an FBI security check, Straight concluded that if he volunteered the information that he had been a Communist, there was still a slim possibility he would be given the chairmanship. He again met with Schlesinger, told him that he had been a Communist, and offered to tell his story to the FBI. Schlesinger immediately telephoned Attorney General Robert Kennedy. Straight subsequently met with William Sullivan, the Deputy Directory of the FBI, who in turn introduced him to the FBI agent who was to take his initial deposition. Straight was mortified; the agent was former Old Westbury resident James Lee, the son of the head gardener

at his mother's Old Westbury estate, to whom as a youth he had given his cast-off clothes.⁴ With Lee's entrance into the room, the saga of the three youths from Old Westbury had come full circle. In subsequent debriefings by other FBI agents, Straight's identification of Burgess and Blunt as Soviet spies eventually revealed the Cambridge spy ring of Burgess, Maclean, Philby, Blunt, and Cairncross.⁵

Their espionage activities for the Soviets disclosed, Burgess, Maclean and, later, Philby defected to the Soviet Union. In 1964, confronted with Straight's testimony, Blunt made a secret confession to British agents. He was neither publicly exposed nor tried as a spy and was allowed to continue in his role as advisor for the Queen's art collection. However, in 1979, Blunt's role as a Soviet spy was revealed in Andrew Boyle's book, *The Fourth Man: The Definitive Account of Kim Philby, Guy Burgess and Donald Maclean and Who Recruited Them to Spy for Russia*. Once his activities became public knowledge, all Blunt's social and academic honors granted to him over the years were stripped from him, including his knighthood. He died in Great Britain at the age of seventy-two in disgrace, but was never indicted.⁶

Authors have long theorized that Straight was the fifth man in Cambridge's notorious spy ring, which was known by the Soviet KGB as the "Magnificent Five." In reality, Blunt in his secret 1964 testimony had named John Cairncross as the fifth man in the ring. During the 1930s, '40s, and '50s, Cairncross had held key positions



Michael Straight testifying before Senate Select Committee on Foundations, 1952.

in the British Foreign Office, Treasury Department, and intelligence service before coming to the United States in 1964 as a member, and shortly thereafter, chairman of the Romance Language Department at Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland.

Almost immediately upon his arrival in the United States, Cairncross was confronted by British intelligence with Blunt's testimony and confessed to being the fifth man. It was not until 1991 that his confession became public. He died in 1995 at the age of eighty-two without ever having been indicted.⁷

In 1969, just six years after confessing his Communist Party affiliation, Straight was appointed by President Nixon to the position of Deputy Chairman of the National Endowment of the

Arts. Like Blunt and Cairncross, his activities on behalf of the Soviets had not been immediately revealed to the public. Indeed, Straight's espionage activities would not become public knowledge until 1981, when the *Daily Telegraph* of London published an article entitled "American Kept Blunt's Secret for Twenty-Six Years."⁸ Like Blunt and Cairncross, Straight was never indicted.

Notes

1. For a more comprehensive discussion of members of North Shore families involved in espionage, see Raymond E. Spinzia, "Society Chameleons: Long Island's Gentlemen Spies." *The Nassau County Historical Society Journal*, Vol. 55 (2000).

2. *Who Was Who in America*, v. 12, p 105.; *The New York Times*, April 7, 1977, section B, p. 9.

3. The original name of the Straight estate was "Elmhurst." It was changed to "Apple Green" after Dorothy Payne Whitney Straight married Leonard Knight Elmhurst. See Jane Brown, *Beatrice: The Gardening Life of Beatrice Jones Farrand, 1872-1952*. (New York: Viking Penguin Books, 1995). p. 213.

4. Michael Straight, *After Long Silence* (New York: W. W. Norton

& Co., 1983), pp. 134-35, 137, 157, 159, 189, 309-14.

5. Ronald Payner and Christopher Dobson, *Who's Who in Espionage* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1984), pp. 165-166.

6. Vincent and Nan Buranelli, *Spy/Counterspy: An Encyclopedia of Espionage* (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1982), pp. 38-40.

7. Tom Mahl, "'Fifth Man' Spy Lived Here." *The Plain Dealer* October 25, 1995, section B, p. 11.

8. Straight, p. 307.

Raymond E. Spinzia is a reference librarian, now retired, who writes separately and jointly with his wife Judith and daughter Kathryn. His article, "Society Chameleons: Long Island's Gentlemen Spies" was published in the most recent issue of The Nassau County Historical Society Journal while "Gatsby: Myths and Realities of Long Island's North Shore Gold Coast," co-authored with his wife Judith, appeared in the Society's 1997 publication. His article "In Her Wake: The Story of Alva Smith Vanderbilt Belmont" was published in The Long Island Historical Journal in 1993. The Spinzias also co-authored, with their daughter Kathryn, Long Island: Guide to New York's Suffolk and Nassau Counties (New York: Hippocrene Books, rev. 1991). Their forthcoming book, Prominent Long Island Families: Their Estates and Country Homes, will document over 1,600 North Shore residents.

CAPTAIN DANIEL YOUNGS AND HIS ORDER BOOK:
LONG ISLAND DURING THE OCCUPATION, 1780-1783

by Edward Magnani

This article originally appeared in the 1997 issue of the Nassau County Historical Society Journal. We are indebted to the Journal's editor, Natalie Naylor, Ph.D., for permission to reprint the article. Those of our readers who may have missed it will surely enjoy reading it here.

Captain Daniel Youngs, the eldest child of Daniel and Hannah Underhill Youngs, was born in 1748 and died in 1809.¹ Captain Daniel and his wife Susanna Kelsey Youngs, lived with his "Uncle Tommy" at the "Old Homestead" in Oyster Bay. Upon the death of his uncle, they inherited the house with the adjacent lands and farm on Cove Neck.²

They had four children, Han-

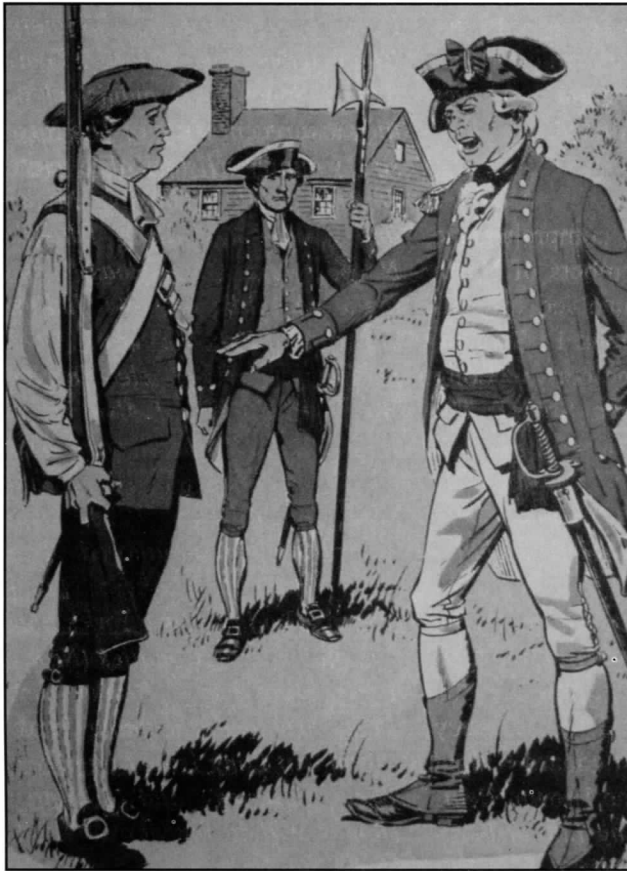
nah, Keziah, Samuel and Daniel. Youngs was a captain of the Royal Militia (or Queens County Militia) during the Revolutionary War. This Loyalist regiment was under the command of Colonel Archibald Hamilton. Youngs' order book, which contains thirty-nine orders and receipts dating from April 19, 1780, to July 29, 1783, is in the Nassau County Museum Collection at the Long Island Studies Institute. During this time he acted mainly as a forager for the British troops stationed on Long Island. (The British occupied Long Island after the Battle of Long Island in Brooklyn in August 1776 until they evacuated their troops in late 1783.)

British requirements for fuel and forage were enormous during this time. A June 28, 1780, order required Queens County to furnish 4550 cords of wood to the New York garrison. This amount of fuel, if stacked end-to-end, would result in a wall of wood four feet high by four feet wide and approximately seven miles long.³ Youngs' quota alone was five hun-

dred cords for the New York garrison. In addition to fuel, the British required livestock. The following order details Governor James Robertson's request for 124 horses. James Robertson, a British Lieutenant General, was a strange choice for Governor. Although in his sixties he acted as if senile and consorted with twelve-year old girls.⁴

*Innerwich 27th April 1780
N.O*

His Excellency Governor Rober[t]son having made a demand upon Queens County for one hundred and twenty four horses for his Majesty's Service to be delivered to the Quarter Master General Department and for which they will receive cash. Col. Hamilton therefore desires that the Capt of each district will without delay raise their quota which is nine horses per company by purchase as they did last spring. The horses to be valued by Col. Hamilton and some principal gentlemen in the neighbor[hood]. The difference if any will be made up formerly by assessment upon each district according to their estates and ability which will scarcely be felt amongst so many. Colo. Hamilton has been long acquainted with the loyalty of Q. County and with their [?] and rendings upon every occasion where his Majesty was concerned. He is convinced that this first request of his excellency our new governor will with pleasure be complied with as it is his Excellency's wish and desire that everything should be carried but moderation and care to the subject, none but good and serviceable horses will be received [not] above ten years old. The



Loyal Queens County Militia, 1780. Youngs' men would probably have been equipped in a similar fashion.. From Military Uniforms in America: The Era of the American Revolution; The Company of Military Historians, 1974.

day and place of delivery will be mentioned in the Next Order.

Arch Hamilton

Colo. Comdt Q.C. Militia

Copy John Kissam Major

Notice the strong hints in the order which indicate that the owners will be paid less than full value for their horses and, in fact, the various captains of militia were not able to meet their quotas. An order by Hamilton on June 30, 1781, notes that the Captains are still short by forty horses.

The North Shore of Long Island was vulnerable to attack from Rebel strongholds across the Sound in Connecticut. A system of signals was in operation to warn of whaleboat raids. However, larger invasions may have been expected as evidenced by the orders which follow:

Cow Neck 19 July 1780

Upon receipt of this you will meet me on Norwich Hill with the Orderly Man on his Majesty's particular and immediate Service.

Arch Hamilton Colo

Colo Hamilton will you be so good as to place a man at the most Convenient height to see Lawrell hill & Morris house, he will observe what signals are made from there.

If there are three guns from Lawrell hill and three fires from there or Morris house, 2 guns & 2 fires, 1 gun and 1 fire, and report the same to the Commander in Chief on Board the Grand Duke at White Stone.

Oliv. Delancey Aide de Camp

These signals are to be observed

by Cpt. Youngs and to be reported from Norwich hill.

Arch Hamilton Colo.

Comdt. QC Militia

Although this large scale invasion never occurred, Colonel Hamilton put the Militia on alert for possible Rebel attack on January 7, 1781.

In addition to his foraging and military duties, Youngs was required to act as an agent of the police, which had headquarters in Jamaica. He sometimes arrested and delivered people for trial. The police was set up by the British Army of Occupation to lessen the need for court-martial of civilians.

The British selected Andrew Elliot, a popular and moderate man, as Superintendent General of Police. The British, however, grew critical of Elliot since he was too cautious for their tastes and referred many disputes to the military. More to their liking was the behavior of George D. Ludlow, Long Island Police Superintendent. Judge Ludlow freely bent the law "as he pleased" and was known as the "King of the Island" or the "little tyrant of the Island."⁶ In his domain he kept track of every inhabitant and their possessions, as illustrated by the following order to Youngs:

Office of Police, Jamaica

January 31, 1781

His Excellency Lieut. General Robertson has directed us to pro-



Hesse-Cassel Field Jaeger Corps, 1776-1783.

It was with troops such as these that Youngs had his tussle over the cider they stole from him.

vide a regular return of the Number of Inhabitants on the Island Consisting with the Men, Women and Children and of the Horses Stock Carts and Waggons and Hay and Grain thereon.

You will therefore make a return at this office of your Best Conformable to the above order on the 1 of March.

Geo. D. Ludlow

Supr.

To Capt Youngs

Based on these orders, Youngs issued orders to his sergeants to make the count. The detailed results, by household, are given and discussed in an article by Professor Oscar G. Darlington of Hofstra. The orders issued by Youngs and portions of the survey are held by the Nassau Coun-

ty Museum Collection at the Long Island Studies Institute. The area covered was probably the portion of the Town of Oyster Bay situated north of Jericho Turnpike, ranging from Lattingtown, Brookville and Muttontown eastward to Oyster Bay Cove Road. A total of 691 white men, women and children and 114 blacks (which may include Indians) were counted. The residents owned 248 horses, 826 head of cattle, 538 sheep, 426 hogs, 25 carts and 43 wagons. Different types of hay were grown on 153 acres, while 2126 acres were devoted to grain and corn. Six hundred eighty-four acres of timberland were also enumerated.⁷

Oyster Bay residents were plagued by the presence of the Hessians who lived in their homes and did their own unauthorized foraging. Powerfully endowed, physically, Youngs was a terror to the Hessian soldiers after their first attempt to steal juice from his cider press.⁸ He must have felt some embarrassment when ordered by Ludlow on April 16, 1781, to bring in his neighbor, George Townsend for assaulting a Hessian Yager of Col. Von Wurmb's Corps.

During the Revolution, most Tories did not imagine that the colonists could possibly defeat the King's forces and were not

worried when the American Congress passed the Act of Attainder on Oct. 22, 1779. This declared a group of active Loyalists, including George D. Ludlow, guilty of felony.⁹ Their estates were forfeited and if found they were condemned to death without benefit of clergy. After the war these persons had no other choice but to leave the country. Others who preferred British rule or feared retaliation chose to leave. But what of the loyalists like Youngs that stayed?

Youngs' fate immediately after the war is not known. It is known that, during the war, Long Island was almost completely stripped

longer. But as seasons progressed, fresh grass began to cover the scars on the earth, livestock was renewed, and forests began to regenerate. The wounds of the spirit also began to heal. Daniel Youngs, a farmer, a former leader, and a man probably similar to most of his neighbors, became more and more influential in local affairs.¹⁰ After the war, the back of his order book was used to record local business transactions.

President George Washington, during his inspection tour of Long Island, was entertained in Youngs' home for one night and left before 6 a.m. the next morn-

ing. In his diary, he referred to Mr. Youngs' house as "private and very neat and decent." The historical marker, erected by New York State in the 1930s at the corner of Route 25A and Oyster Bay Cove Road states: "Y o u n g s

Home. George Washington rested here in April 23-24, 1790, while on his Long Island Tour." The marker is silent on Youngs' activities during the Revolutionary War. The Youngs' house still stands in Oyster Bay.¹¹

Notes:

1. Thompson, Benjamin F., *History of Long Island*, 1918. 3d ed.



The home of Captain Daniel Youngs and site of Washington's sojourn in Oyster Bay, 1790. Oyster Bay Historical Society Collections.

of its forests. For the previous seven years, the fires of the British were kept burning with Long Island oak and walnut, fence rails and even public buildings. New fence rails were not immediately required since most of the fields and livestock had been decimated. It was now time for rebuilding the land. Erasing bitter memories would take

Reprint, Port Washington: Ira J. Friedman, 1962) 3: 371.

2. Christopher Yonges and John Youngs, *Thomas Youngs of Oyster Bay and his Descendants* (Oyster Bay, 1890), p. 63.

3. A cord of wood is 4 feet high by 4 feet wide by 8 feet long.

4. Henry Ranlet, *The New York Loyalists* (Ph.D. thesis, Columbia University, 1983), pp. 104-5. William Smith who was appointed Chief Justice by the British describes Robertson, "He is a Dotard and abandoned to Frivolity."

5. Marshall, *Colonial Hempstead*, 1937 (Reprint Port Washington LI: 1962, Ira J. Friedman, 1962) p. 330, A lucrative black market known as the "London Trade" was prevalent during the times. Goods were sold to Long Island Tories and resold to New England Rebels across the Sound. Anyone shipping goods was required to have a permit setting forth his loyalty and his intention to supply goods only to Long Island. Governor Robertson managed to get the right to grant these permits out of the hands of the honest Oliver DeLancey and into the hands of Judge Ludlow, who made a good thing of it.

6. Ranlet, *The New York Loyalist*, pp.102-3.

7. Oscar Darlington, "Long Island Census of 1781," in *Long Island- A History of Two Great Counties- Nassau and Suffolk*, edited by Paul Bailey, (New York: Lewis Publishing, 1949), 2:313-30. The orders issued by Youngs and portions of the survey are in the Nassau County Museum Collection at the Long Island Studies Institute.

8. Yonges and Youngs, *Thomas*

Youngs, 63.

9. Marshall, *Colonial Hempstead*, 346-347.

10. Yonges and Youngs, *Thomas Youngs*, 63.

11. George Washington, *Diaries of George Washington*, edited by Donald Jackson (Charlottesville, University Press of Virginia, 1979), April 23, 1790, 6: 66.

The Post Rider

continued from p. 2

To the Editor,

Your request for one sailor's experience on the *Oyster Bay* follows:

To start from scratch I turned 17 on October 8, 1943, and signed up for the Navy on November 9, 1943. I was sent to boot camp at Sampson, N. Y., and from there to Signalman School at Great Lakes. I subsequently went to Shoemaker in California from whence I was shipped overseas to Milne Bay in New Guinea. It was there I was assigned to the *Oyster Bay* P.T. Boat Tender. I had never seen a P.T. Boat before but the *Oyster Bay* sure was a good place to learn.

From New Guinea we went to war! First stop was at Dreger Harbor as a radar guard for merchant ships and mine sweepers. It was there we had our first taste of Japanese planes overhead. We then left for the Admiralty Islands with our 15 PT.'s to set up at Pitylou Island to help the Army with our 5", 40mm, & 20mm guns. From there to Hollandia and to Wakde, New Guinea. All of this time we were doing our job of being a P.T. Boat Tender. From there we went to Brisbane, Australia for repairs and supplies.

Once that was accomplished we headed back to Milne Bay, Dreger Harbor, Mios Woedi and Morotai and all the while doing our servicing of the P.T. boats.

Our next port of call was Leyte Gulf in the Philippines Islands at D- 1, anchored in San Pedro Bay. It was there the Japanese started their Kamikaze attacks. In one attack five of our men were wounded. Our Wardroom became a hospital. We now spent more time at battle stations, leaving only to go the head and then we were on the run. We heard the gunfire and flashes as the Japs tried but failed in their two attacks on Leyte Gulf. Thank goodness they failed as a result of the fine work of our PT boats. It was there we went through our first typhoon. Getting underway we had waves forty feet high going over the bridge. It was then back to PT duty at Leyte. Once again Japanese Kamikaze attacks. This time we were hit, but not too severe an attack and not much damage.

Christmas of 1944 was spent at Leyte Gulf. [*Menu on p. 20*] From there to Koesol, Pahau, Zamboanga, Mindanao. Basilan Island and Tawi-tawi for tender duties. Our route then took us to Guiuan, Manica for dry dock cleaning of barnacles. I never want to see another one of them. It was at this time that the atomic bombs were dropped on Japanese territory and in my opinion we should have dropped more than we did.

The war was essentially over and we were soon on our way home by way of Pearl Harbor and then on to San Francisco Bay. It

continued on p. 20



ASK UNCLE PELEG

Dear Uncle Peleg:

In a book about lumberjacks I came on the expression, "crooked knife." What is a crooked knife?

Edgar Palcanis

Well, Ed, the easy answer is: One that's been in the disposal machine in your sink, but that's a cop-out. There's more than a little confusion and argument on this "some say" subject. Basically the crooked knife was a tool used by the Indians and backwoodsmen in the northern United States chiefly in the nineteenth century and earlier. That's where the first argument erupts. Some say the Indians invented it. Some say it was introduced here by Europeans. Why is it called crooked? A no-answer question. There are opinions. Some say it is because many crooked knives have crooked han-

dles that change direction about halfway from blade insertion to handle-end. Others say it's because the blades of some crooked knives jut out at an angle from the handle plane. Still others say it's because some blades are scooped for hollowing, as in making bowls.

Users - - there are a few who still use them in woods-craft work--don't care. They say it is a very effective tool for wood-work like canoe building, paddle carving, snow-shoe making and other woodland tasks. The knife is held in a palm-up grip with the blade extending to the left and is drawn toward the wielder's diaphragm.

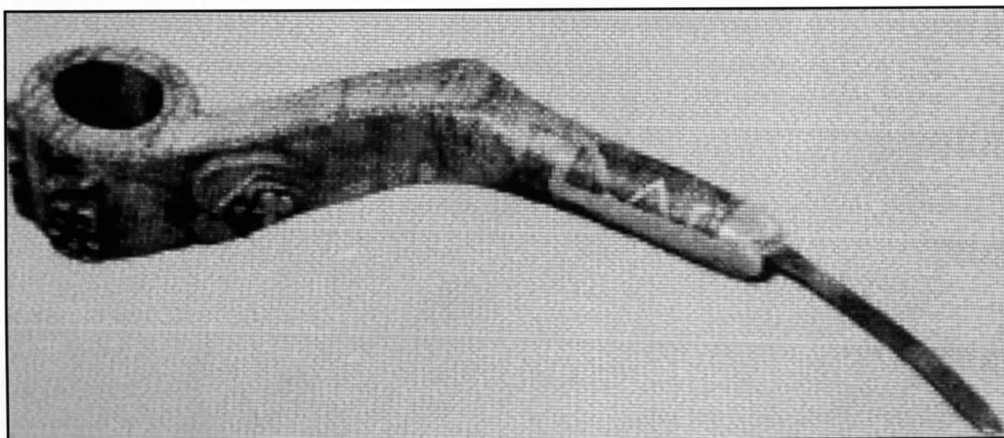
Dear Uncle Peleg:

I recently read that the brass rack on which cannon balls were stowed at each gun position in early fighting ships was called a "monkey." It was further said that in very cold weather the rack became distorted, causing the cannon balls to fall off. This gave rise to the deplorable expression, "Cold enough to freeze the balls

off a brass monkey." Do you accept this explanation?

Larry Kavanaugh

Tch, tch! Even if you had included information about the work in which you read that bit of creative explanation I still wouldn't believe either that or your question. However I looked in a number of sources of information about naval gunnery. No help. The Oxford English Dictionary told me that in 1650 certain cannon were called "monkeys" and that there were both brass and iron ones. Close, but no cigar. I suspect that he who dreamed up this fable took his excuse for claiming that brass racks were used from the fact that non-sparking metals are desirable in environments where explosive or highly inflammable materials are also to be found. Even so I find the explanation unbelievable. If any reader knows better I'd like to be corrected. By the way, the English lexicographer, Eric Partridge, says your "brass monkey" saying was chiefly Australian, no naval origin suggested.



An example of a crooked knife found on the [www,antiquetool.com](http://www.antiquetool.com) website.



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**.*

SOCIETY CONTINUES WORK ON OYSTERING VIDEO

After some false starts, the Society has once again picked up the thread of the video history of the local oystering industry that was begun last year. Executive producer Fritz Coudert and Society director Tom Kuehhas have put together a crack team of professionals who have already made significant strides towards the project's completion.

Chris and Ned Daily of The Daily Video and director Craig Cooper have spent two entire days interviewing oyster boat captains, former owners, and others who have played a large part in the industry. Much remains to be done before the raw footage becomes a finished product, but real progress has been made and the Society is confident that this team will produce a video that we can all be proud of.

TIFFANY BUS TOUR A SUCCESS!

The Society's Bus Tour to the Metropolitan Museum, the Middle Collegiate Church, and Venturella Studios, took place on February 18 after a raging snowstorm on the original January 21 date forced its postponement.

By all accounts, the tour was well worth the wait! Many who took part commented that it was the best tour that they had ever been on. Kudos to tour organizer Doris Amos and tour guide Tom Venturella, who personally guided the participants on the tour



The members of the oystering video production team (along with David Relyea of Frank M. Flower & Sons at far right), after a mid-winter's jaunt out on the bay to capture some action footage for the video.

and enthralled them with the breadth of his knowledge on Tiffany's creations.

HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEEDS HELP WITH FALL EXHIBIT, EVENTS

Building on the success of last year's Fall exhibit on Louis C. Tiffany's Laurel Hollow estates, this year the Society intends to go in a slightly different direction.

Though Oyster Bay's history goes back to the mid-seventeenth century, relatively few of its current residents can trace their lineage back to Oyster Bay's founding. The great majority are the children and grandchildren of immigrants to these shores. One of the most important of these immigrant groups were the Ital-

ians. The Historical Society would like to chronicle the experience of these Italian immigrants: what their employment opportunities were, where they lived, how they were treated, the role the Church played in their lives, how families were connected.

To do so, we would like to interview the remaining sons and daughters of the original immigrants, copy the extant photographs that may illustrate different aspects of their lives, and exhibit any artifacts that would contribute to presenting as full a picture of the Italian immigrant experience as we are able to almost one hundred years after the fact.

The Society is currently putting

together a committee to work on the various aspects that will be covered as well as a schedule of events to complement the exhibition.

The Society would like to make this exhibition as all-encompassing as possible. If any of our readers know of people who should be contacted for their input on this project, or have materials they would be willing to lend for exhibit, please contact Director Tom Kuehhas at 922-5032.

SOCIETY KICKS OFF ELEVENTH ANNUAL 20/20 LECTURE SERIES

For the eleventh consecutive year, the Historical Society, in cooperation with the Friends of Raynham Hall, will host three free lectures as part of the 20/20 Lecture Series.

The series will kick off on Tuesday evening, March 20, at 8 p.m. with renowned author and lecturer Monica Randall, whose presentation will intrigue and delight those with an interest in the fascinating story of Long Island's Gold Coast mansions.

Included in the program are little-known details and photos of

the Woodward murder case, the haunted Woolworth mansion in Glen Cove with its network of secret passageways and underground tunnels, accounts of gangland shootings aboard luxury yachts during the wild rum-running days of Prohibition, and the mysterious story of a colossal Spanish castle built atop a cliff in Huntington, its floors paved with ancient tombstones.

The second lecture in the series will take place on Tuesday, April 24, and will feature actor Frank Hendricks' portrayal of Herman Melville in celebration of the 150th anniversary of *Moby Dick's* publication.

Entitled "Call Me Ishmael," the centerpiece of the program is a dramatic reading from *Moby Dick*, preceded by "Melville" recounting his personal history, including events which influenced and formed the basis of his writing.

The final lecture in the series, scheduled for Tuesday, May 15, will feature "Captain" Ronald Puza, commander of a unique Revolutionary War reenactment group, "Von Heer's Provost Corps." Von Heer's, also known as the "Marechausee," functioned

Visit the Oyster Bay Historical Society's website!

<http://members.aol.com/OBHistory>

as America's first military police. Ron and his unit were recently featured on the History Channel's "The Enforcers" series. Come and learn how these early MP's functioned as Light Dragoons, protecting Washington and capturing deserters from the Continental Army.

All lectures will take place at the Masonic Lodge, 14 West Main Street, Oyster Bay, and will begin promptly at 8 p.m. Admission is free and refreshments will be served following each lecture.

CENTRAL PARK HISTORICAL SOCIETY

The Society's February meeting focused on the Central Park Historical Society Encyclopedia, which is an effort to document the history of the area. They are asking residents to write down their reminiscences about people, places, and events that were notable in Central Park/Bethpage. The March 28th meeting, at 8 p.m. at the Bethpage Library, will feature Mr. Dick Rodes' slide show on how Bethpage celebrated the Bicentennial.

The Society will continue to meet at 8 p.m. at the Bethpage Library on Powell Avenue on the fourth Wednesday of each month.

FARMINGDALE-BETHPAGE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

The Society's "Memories of Main Street School" program,

OYSTER BAY HISTORICAL SOCIETY Categories of Membership

Individual	\$ 20	Business	\$ 50
Family	\$ 30	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.

originally scheduled for January 21, has now been re-scheduled for March 18 at 2 p.m. at the Farmingdale Public Library.

The Founders' Day Dinner, which will mark the 37th anniversary of the Society, will be held at the Imperial Manor, Bethpage, on Wednesday evening, April 25. Dr. Natalie A. Naylor, recently retired director of the Long Island Studies Institute, will be the featured speaker.

The Yeoman, newsletter of the FBHS, celebrated its 35th Anniversary in February. The late Alonzo Gibbs was the founding editor. Since 1976 it has been written and edited by former president Bill Johnston.

HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF THE MASSAPEQUAS

The latest issue of the Society's bimonthly newsletter includes a number of interesting articles on a variety of topics, including Britain's 1752 switch from the old Julian calendar to the more accurate Gregorian style, Massapequa and the Revolution, and the many uses of Maytag washing machine motors.

The Society has a new website which gives an overview of the Society, the history of the Massapequas, a calendar of upcoming events. The address is <http://www.massapequahistory.org>.

Also reported in the newsletter was the proposed new cemetery expansion on the part of the Society's landlords, Grace Episcopal Church. Should the proposed expansion take place, the Society's space on which to run its popular Strawberry Festival and other fundraisers will be severely

curtailed. If you feel (as we do) that the cemetery expansion should not extend south of the front facade of Old Grace Church, please let Grace Episcopal Church know (799-1122).

If you would like to contact the Society, write to them at P.O. Box 211, Massapequa, NY 11758, or call 516-799-2023.

HUNTINGTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY

The Society announced that it has plans to once again begin publishing *The Quarterly*, a journal with articles on the history, decorative arts, genealogy and folklore of Huntington and Long Island. Begun in 1961, *The Quarterly* had ceased publication in 1986.

AMITYVILLE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

The following was reported in the Society's quarterly, *The Dispatch*: Joseph Guidice was installed as the Society's sixteenth president, having served in a number of capacities, including trustee and first vice president. He replaces Jacqueline Herzog.

The process of moving houses along dirt roads is detailed in a multi-part article entitled "A Look Back In Time" by William T. Lauder. As Mr. Lauder mentions, moving a house prior to the days of electrical service, central heating, and indoor plumbing "wasn't such a big job." There are plenty of instances of this having been done locally as well.

SAGAMORE HILL NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE National Park Service (NPS)

Northeast Regional Director Marie Rust has tapped Lorenza M. Fong as the new superintendent of Sagamore Hill National Historic Site, the Cove Neck home of former President Theodore Roosevelt.

Ms. Fong, who until recently served as chief of interpretation (and education) at Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area (CA), succeeds Vidal Martinez, who became superintendent of George Washington Birthplace National Monument (VA) and Thomas Stone National Historic Site (MD) last July.

On making the announcement, regional director Rust said, "Lorenza Fong brings to Sagamore Hill a wealth of expertise in education and park management. We are so fortunate to have attracted her extraordinary talent back to the Northeast. On the eve of the Centennial of Theodore Roosevelt's Presidency, she is the perfect choice to help raise the American public's awareness of TR's legacy." In addition to planning and supervising the educational programs for some 600,000 visitors, Ms. Fong led a program of some 1600 volunteers and coordinated park activities with 30 helpful partnership groups. As an international edu-

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!



New Sagamore Hill National Historic Site Superintendent Lorenza Fong.

cation specialist for the NPS, she has worked frequently in South America and China.

On hearing of the announcement, Ms. Fong said, "Working at Sagamore Hill represents a lifelong dream to educate the public and to share my passion about the importance of conservation of natural and cultural places."

Born in Havana, Cuba, and raised in New York City, Ms. Fong began her NPS career in 1978 at Fire Island National Seashore as a seasonal park ranger for two seasons while she attended New York City College.

In January 1980, she began her full time career at Carlsbad Caverns National Park (NM). For the next nine years, her career led her to increasingly responsible posts in parks such as the Home of Franklin D. Roosevelt and

Eleanor Roosevelt National Historic Sites (NY), Cabrillo National Monument (CA) and Biscayne National Park (FLA). In 1990, she accepted a position as a designer at the NPS Harpers Ferry Design Center (WV). From 1990-1993, she designed and produced numerous educational and informational publications for national parks. In 1992 she began her international work in Brazil where she was part of a seven-member international team that planned, wrote and designed an educational kit to enhance a traveling exhibit on tropical rain forests. A year later she was assigned to a project in Argentina where she instructed park rangers in skills and techniques for developing educational programs. In 1994, she left Harpers Ferry for the Santa Monica post. Santa

Monica National Recreation Area is the largest urban national park in the National Park System, and its Mediterranean ecosystem is one of the most threatened resources worldwide. In March 1996, she returned to Argentina as a consultant to evaluate and recommend improvements to educational operations at Iguazu National Park. She traveled to China in 1997 to develop educational exhibits for a park at the Great Wall of China. In 1998 NPS Director Robert Stanton selected her to participate in an official delegation to China that recommended future technical exchange and cooperation between the two nations.

Ms. Fong holds a Bachelor of Science in Biology from New York City College. She enjoys traveling to other countries to collaborate in environmental projects as a way to protect and conserve world resources.

The beautiful 83-acre estate which is now Sagamore Hill National Historic Site was home to Theodore Roosevelt from 1886 until the death of the 26th President in 1919.

Information on the park is available at WWW.NPS.GOV/SAHL.

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.

YE OLDE SCHOOLHOUSE

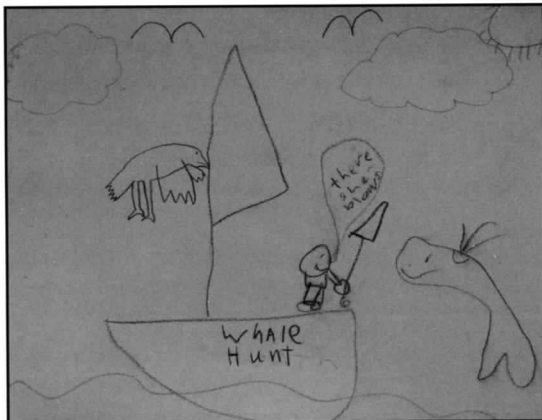
We are introducing a new feature this issue which will consist of the submissions of students from schools throughout the Town of Oyster Bay. If you would like your school's students to participate, please contact the Editor of **The Freeholder** for guidance as to subject matter and deadlines for future issues.

Major Thomas Jones
by Sarah Figalora
and Christine Ginley

Major Thomas Jones was the first non-Indian settler to live in what is now called Massapequa. He came from Co. Antrim, Ireland. He lived in Rhode Island before he came to Long Island.



He married Freelove Townsend. She was the daughter of John Townsend. The Townsends were a prominent Long Island family. Thomas and Freelove were given a lot of land as a wedding present. They were married in 1695 and had eight children. Their land,



today known as Massapequa, was called Fort Neck or South Oyster Bay. They owned 6,000 acres. They built the first European style house in Massapequa. It was made out of brick and was very stylish. It was called "The Brick House." Major Jones lived there until he died in 1713.

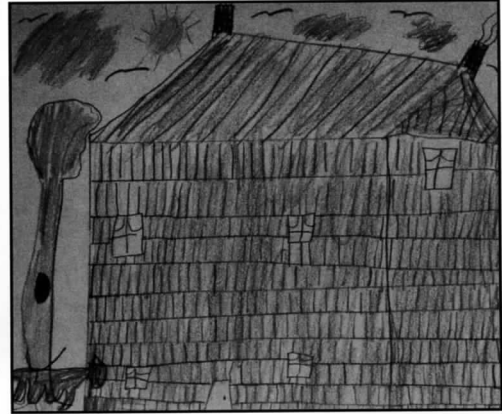
They had to walk, ride a horse, or use a horse and carriage to get around. There were no cars. They also used boats to get around.

One way they earned money was to hunt whales. Another way was farming, just like other early American settlers-the Pilgrims. The Jones family sold the crops that they grew on their farm in markets in Manhattan.

They shipped their goods by boat. It was easier to get to Manhattan by boat since there were no good roads to travel that far.

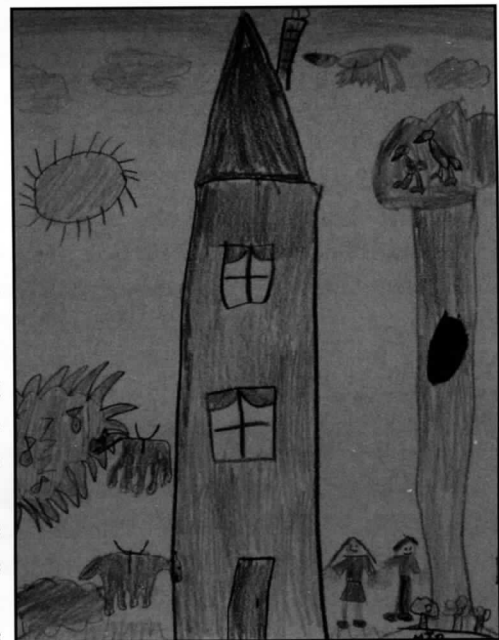
The Brick House became empty after the Major died. There were

rumors that the house was haunted. There was a window that would not close. They tried to board it up, nail it up and even brick it up. When they tried to brick it up the bricks flew out of the



window. Spooky! As a result no one wanted to live there. It was torn down in 1836.

The Editor would like to thank the third grade students at McKenna Elementary School, Massapequa Park, as well as their teacher, Mary



Elizabeth Delaney, for their efforts on this inaugural feature. Thanks to young authors Christine Ginley and Sarah Figalora for this informative piece on the famous Major Thomas Jones. Thanks also to budding artist Michael Roach for his work on the illustrations which accompany the article.



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

As late as 1844, Stephens, an Englishman writing in his *Book of the Farm* about the harvesting and preparation of flax and hemp said, "I use the Dutch method." Though by this time the era of Dutch influence on all things English was waning, the era had lasted several hundred years. Not only were the English the beneficiaries of Dutch teaching, but those immigrants to the New World, English and others, who were soon to be Americans, should be aware of a debt of gratitude to John Cheese.

A Rose By Any Other Name

I became aware of a more recent bit of Dutch influence the other day in the grocery store where I had succumbed to the temptation to do a bit of impulse shopping. I had picked up a small can bearing across its bottom edge the motto, "The Nuttiest Gourmet Popcorn." Reading the name of the product, I concluded that it represented the nuttiest bit of marketing since Parker claimed to be a painless dentist. Why? Because the product name was "Poppycock." In English, that means bosh, balderdash, bunk, baloney and bushwah. But wait a minute. It gets worse. The English adopted this

expression from the Dutch, who owned a compound noun, "pappekak." That meant "soft (porridge-like) dung." The Dutch were very likely using pappekak metaphorically to mean "non-sense" when English speakers adopted the word. It probably crossed the Channel early with the rougher element and only became acceptable in polite speech because relatively few people spoke Dutch and most heard merely a ludicrous expression of disparagement. Our own similar expression (the b-word I left out of the alliterative list above) had trouble getting out of the barn and succeeded only

TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE

Words having to do with measuring things are essential to our culture and there have been many of them over the years. New ones continue to appear while many of the old ones become limited in their use and fall out of the vocabularies of many people. Not a few have, since their introduction, had new meanings attached to them, sometimes making interpretation difficult. The words we offer you were in use when Oyster Bay was settled. Some of them still are. Some of them have more than one meaning. Your task is to find a definition in the second list that matches each of the nouns in the first list. Then check your answers against the list on page 23.

- | | |
|-------------------|---|
| 1. firkin | a. one quarter of a liquid pint |
| 2. coomb | b. a patch of ground containing 1/4 acre |
| 3. cwt | c. a unit of weight equal to 112 pounds. |
| 4. hundred weight | d. a staved container with the capacity of 1/4 of a barrel |
| 5. fathom | e. a unit of measure of 4 inches used when determining the height of a horse |
| 6. knot | at the shoulder |
| 7. hand | f. a unit of 6 feet used when measuring the depth of water |
| 8. gill | g. a measure of capacity equal to 4 bushels |
| 9. rod | h. a unit of distance equal to 220 yards |
| 10. furlong | i. a staved container equal in capacity to 2 barrels |
| 11. stone | j. a unit equal to 16.5 feet used in measuring land |
| 12. rood | k. a unit of weight equal to 14 pounds |
| | l. a unit of measure of a ship's speed equivalent to one nautical mile (6080 feet) per hour |

when the coarse second element was dropped and only "bull" was retained.

The Dutch are a wonderful people but they speak a tough language. That is really fortunate for the folks who gave a horrid name to a rather good popcorn.

*What the Flemish
Put in Your Pocket*

Edward H. Knight in his wonderful *Mechanical Dictionary*, in the article labeled "Knife," notes the following: "Clasp or spring knives came to England from Flanders and were common in 1650." The clasp knife is one in which the blade folds into the handle. When the blade is opened it is held in that position by a spring catch. If you carry a pocket knife you should feel a little wave of gratitude to the cutlers of the Low Countries. Sheffield in England incidentally was a knife making town at least as early as the time of Geoffrey Chaucer but it didn't hit the big time until it received an immigration of Low Country cutlers, perhaps a hundred and fifty years later. While we are talking about knives and Low Country cutlers, did you know that the expression "jackleg knife" is believed to refer to one of their number, Jacques de Liege? It is thought by some that this is the origin of "jack knife." Perhaps, but Jack also has the connotation of worker, employee as in lumberjack, Jack Tar. Jack knife may be a figurative usage deriving from that sense.



*The original stable at Sagamore Hill.
Courtesy of Sagamore Hill National Historic Site.*

Hot Air

Writers whose subject is Scotland tend to claim all good things for that country. They will tell you that "doodlesack," a word used in Scotland to mean "bagpipe" is a Scottish invention and was taught by them to the Dutch. Do not believe it. "Dudelsak" was used by the Dutch before the Scots ever heard of it.

**Recycling Foundations:
Preserving the Legacy of the
Stable and Lodge at
Sagamore Hill.**

by Alexis D'Elia

Sagamore Hill, the home of our 26th President Theodore Roosevelt, still retains the foundation of what was once a stable and lodge building. Often overlooked, and located several hundred feet to the northeast of the hill is the buried foundation of the first building that Theodore Roosevelt

had constructed on the property in 1883. The architects Lamb and Rich were commissioned to build the stable and lodge to provide "shelter for the cows and horses as well as provide storage for hay and grain." Its permanent resident, aside from the livestock, was Noah Seaman, the caretaker.

Noah Seaman was the original superintendent and caretaker of the farm. [Ed. note: See the Winter 1998 issue of *The Freeholder* for Franklin R. McElwain's article "The Search for Noah Seaman: TR's Superintendent and Friend."] He was regarded by the president as a "fine man" and was held in high esteem. Noah was considered an excellent farmer and a very pleasant individual. He was treated by Theodore Roosevelt "exceptionally, both in public and private," as if he were a member of the

family. Noah's job was to take care of the farm, maintaining the grounds and livestock. Although pressures such as the continuous kinetic energy of the Roosevelt family surrounded him, Noah was a hard worker and did his job successfully. He remained an integral part of the proper functioning of the Roosevelt household until his death in 1911. When Noah Seaman passed away he was sorely missed by the Roosevelt family and Theodore in particular.

The original "stable and farm house," as Ethel Roosevelt Derby referred to it, originally consisted of "a carriage room, stalls for five horses, a storage closet and a harness room." The stable basement originally housed six cows and two horses, as well as grain and hay. A brick firewall separated the lodge area from the stable, however the interior layout of the lodge area was never known. The stable and lodge burned in an accidental fire in the year 1947, just one year prior to Mrs. Roosevelt's death. A new caretaker, Valenty Mazur, was occupying the building at the time. The

home was constructed primarily of wood and burned rapidly. Loss of this building to a fiery blaze caused \$30,000 worth of damage, and the combined forces of the Oyster Bay, Huntington, Cold Spring Harbor, and East Norwich Fire Departments to extinguish the inferno. The foundation remained intact and was later filled with soil. Since then, the stable and lodge area has remained unaltered.

There is currently long range planning by Sagamore Hill National Historic Site to reconstruct the stable and lodge building. This would create a Visitor Center, bookstore, and audiovisual area for the public on the first floor, as well as offices and storage on the second floor for curatorial staff. The stable and lodge would be reconstructed on its original foundation. The expansion of a Visitor Center and audiovisual area would provide the general public with additional space and the ability to obtain information while they wait for tours of the Roosevelt home, which are extremely popular during the summer months and on

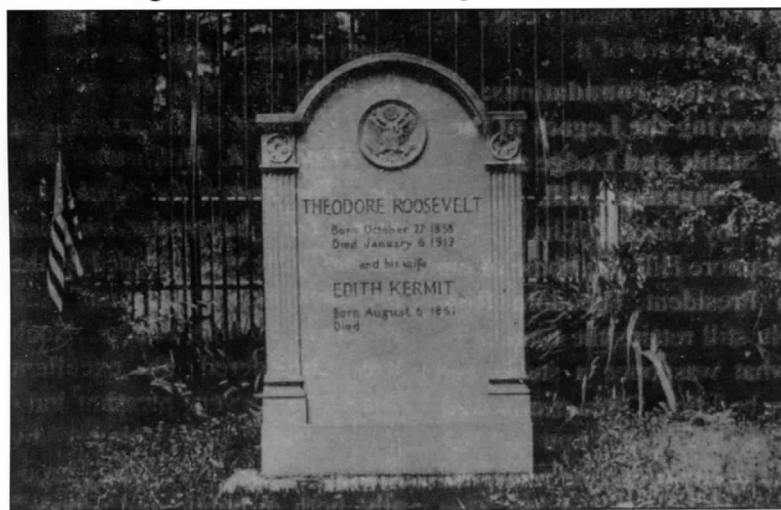
weekends. Rebuilding this structure would assist the National Park Service in telling some of the hidden stories of the "Roosevelts of Sagamore Hill," contribute to providing a complete history of the site, and highlight the significance of the stable and lodge to the site. By providing the public with this option, the National Park Service would be able to further inform visitors about Theodore Roosevelt and his home at Sagamore Hill.

For more information on Sagamore Hill National Historic Site please call 516-922-4788.

Alexis D'Elia, a graduate of Friends Academy and fifteen-year resident of Laurel Hollow with an interest in local history, worked as a seasonal ranger at Sagamore Hill this past summer.

[Ed. note: *The following is an excerpt from the New York Walk Book, 1923, submitted by Philip Blocklyn.*]

Some of the back roads south from Oyster Bay are not too sophisticated, and some farm and wood paths are accessible. There is also a system of bridle paths between Oyster Bay and Syosset through the oak woods which are mostly open to walkers. The Wheatley Hills are pretty and not altogether spoiled for the walker by great country houses. Old Westbury and the section about Westbury Pond retain a little flavor of the Long Island of the days before the automobile. They may be reached from Roslyn or Wheatley station on the Oyster Bay branch or from Westbury on the Wading River branch. There are fine views from the Whitney



Grave of Theodore Roosevelt at Youngs' Memorial Cemetery

estate on the summit of the moraine, north of Westbury, and pleasant paths through the woods toward Harbor Hill, one of the highest eminences on the island, where the home of Clarence W. Mackay stands. Permission to enter the grounds is granted to courteous and responsible applicants.

Most walks about Oyster Bay should include a pilgrimage to the modest but much visited grave of Theodore Roosevelt, with its simple stone, at the top of the hill in the little Young's (sic) Memorial Cemetery, a mile east of the town on the road to Cold Spring Harbor. All trampers should make this pilgrimage as a tribute to a great lover of the outdoors.

COLD SPRING HARBOR, SAGAMORE HILL, OYSTER BAY

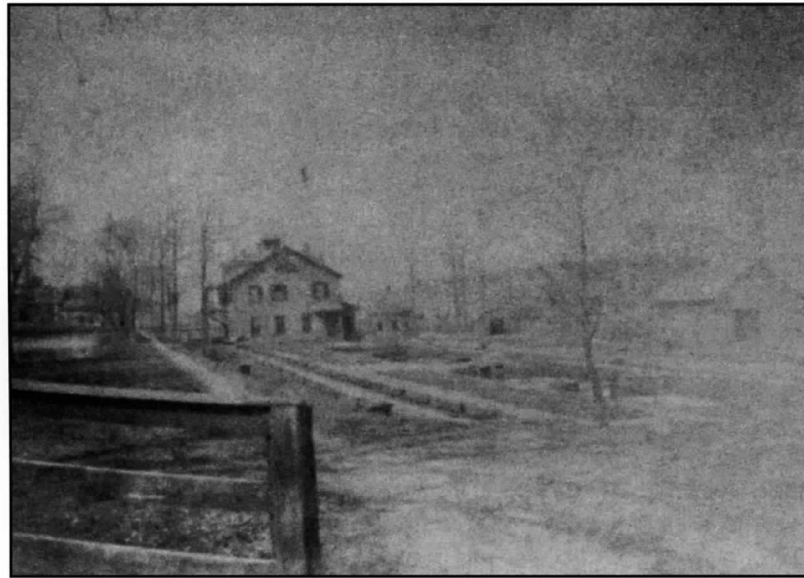
Access by Long Island Railroad from Pennsylvania Station or Flatbush Avenue station to Cold Spring Harbor in 1 to 1 ½ hours (total cost of trip \$2.50). Route by wood roads, sandy and rocky beach, main roads, with no climbing, through pleasant woods, then along two of the deep indented bays of the Sound where trees overhang the beach, past handsome estates, including the former home of President Roosevelt.

When planning this walk be sure to avoid high tide, which blocks the beach and is 1 ½ hours later than at Governors Island - an hour found in every morning paper under Marine News. Go down the station road to the concrete highway and on this to the right to a big field; cross and fol-

low the edge of the woods northerly until this hillside veers west, then continue in the previous direction across fence and bridle path up a sandy slope to an abandoned railroad bed. On this shaded way go north past the ponds; cross a private road (1 mile), pass a bridge (1 ½ miles), and go on to a church. Here turn into the grounds of the Fish Hatchery and inspect the ponds (drinking water at tank). Cross the motor road to the grounds of the Station for Experimental Evolution of the Carnegie Foundation (2 miles). (The Eugenics Records Office is one mile away.) Admission is for those really interested in studying the principles of evolution of plants and animals; there are laboratories with mice and dogs and a cave with color-

right fork to cross a grassy space to the beach just north of a long sand bar which reaches nearly across the bay. On these beaches care in the matter of fires, rubbish, etc., is required. Follow the beach about 2 miles. Within the first half mile good water spouts from a pipe near the shady bank, suggesting luncheon. The unusual buildings of the Louis C. Tiffany place, with stately cedar and hanging gardens, are in view from the beach. The grounds are open to the public, on application to the caretaker, the last Saturday of each month.

Further on we circle inland around a conspicuous stone boat-house, cross a marsh, and follow along the bayside of the woods as far as a little wharf. The path from this strikes into the woods



Cold Spring Harbor Fish Hatchery, c. 1900.

Courtesy of Gloria Tucker.

less, blind denizens.

Cross the grounds northwest past the summer school of biology of the Brooklyn Institute to a dirt road; follow this north along the harbor to the private roads at the fork (2 ¾ miles). Take the

northwest then west, and in a few minutes comes out on the fields of the Roosevelt farm, in sight of the house. One is allowed to pass this close on the south side. Thence follow down the entrance road, southwest. This unpreten-

tious residence with its wide porches was the home of a lad so delicate that he was not expected to reach maturity, until he was turned loose with rod and gun to tramp this countryside. Where the private road debouches on the highway one may cross to a pump in the field opposite.

Following the road one mile south past a fine entrance and close to the water one comes to Young's (sic) Cemetery where Colonel Roosevelt's simple and dignified stone stands within a railing on a small hill. Next start west (stopping at a drinking fountain) and follow the side path 2 miles to the station; or a jitney may be taken. The tall locusts for which the North Shore is famous line part of this avenue. Some maples show trunks of 4 feet and over. The bay is visible across the lawns. At the band stand in the village turn to the right to the station; a stretch of waste land along the shore is to be made into the Roosevelt Memorial Park. As an alternate route from the cemetery, one may go 4 or 5 miles further through gently rolling farm country to Syosset on the main line of the railroad.

The Post Rider

continued from p. 9

was night time as we anchored at Tiburon Bay.

The *Oyster Bay* was decommissioned on 3/26/46 and taken off the Navy Register on 4/12/46. She was then redesignated back to the Navy as AVP28 on 3/16/49. She served in the Pacific Fleet until 1957, then was given to the Italian Navy as the Pietro Cavazzolo, A5301.

Where she is now, who knows?

I last served aboard her in March of 1946, and left the Navy April 19, 1946.

I hope this helps in your quest of the *Oyster Bay*. She carried 90,000 gallons H I gasoline and thousands of rounds of 20 and 40 mm ammunition plus all PT supplies and torpedoes.

Sincerely,

Ernest J. Wendell

The "Do You Know" segment in the last issue (re. the "Bogardus Glass Ball") elicited a flurry of responses via US Mail, email, telephone, and even visits to the Editor! Several people knew right away what it was, while others had other plausible answers. Here we print a sampling of the responses:

Vincent Bellissimo, Jr. was the first to respond, via letter, "In response to "Do You Know?"... I knew immediately what it was. Bogardus glass balls were used as trap and rifle targets well into the 20th Century. Initially they were used in trap competitions, much the same as clay pigeons, but I

Christmas Dinner 1944

*Turkey Consomme with Saltines
Shrimp Cocktail *
Assorted Olives Sweet Pickles
Roast Young Turkey
Giblet Gravy Oyster Dressing
Plum Pudding
Cranberry Sauce
Mashed Sweet Potatoes
Buttered Asparagus
Carrot and Raisin Salad
Sweet Mayonnaise Dressing
Fruit Cake Assorted Ice Cream
Parker House Rolls & Butter
Iced Orange Juice
Mixed Nuts Hard Candy
Cigars and Cigarettes*

**Officers only*

have read accounts of them being used as stationary, long-range rifle targets.

I enclose a paragraph on them from a printed history of shooting sports."

George Buhr, via email, wrote, "In the 1830s, small glass balls replaced live birds for trapshooting, and were in turn replaced by clay pigeons in the 1880s. The ball in question was introduced by Captain A.H. Bogardus (one of the outstanding live-bird shots of his time) for use in a trap which he had popularized. Colored glass was used to increase visibility and the rough exterior was meant to minimize the chance of shot being deflected."

In a more recent letter, Donald G. Fisher wrote, "I enjoyed your articles on the LIRR and the Nike Missile bases very much. A fine newsletter. Regarding the "Bogardus Glass Ball," I thought it might have been a primitive fire extinguisher filled with carbon tetrachloride - imagine my surprise to find it is a target for marksmanship!!"

Several of the phone calls we received from others echoed Mr. Fisher's first inclination, that it was an early type of fire extinguisher. Still others guessed that it was an early Christmas ornament.

*The Editor wishes to thank the owners of the "Bogardus Glass Ball" for bringing it to my attention and for agreeing to loan it to the Society for inclusion in **The Freeholder**. He would also like to thank all those who took the time to respond.*

THE NOT SO GOOD OLD DAYS

by Arlene Goodenough

A strange aspect of human nature is the strong longing many of us feel for life in an earlier time. We sentimentally view family life as almost always comfortable and pleasant, with happy mothers in lovely long dresses dispensing cold lemonade on the porch in summer, and hot cocoa in the kitchen in the winter. Behind these soothing illusions lie the hard facts. Until very recently in the history of mankind, women entered marriage realizing that there was a strong possibility of their dying in childbirth, and that it was almost inevitable that not every child they bore would live to see maturity.

Our forebears, men and women, must have been very brave to persevere in the face of such depressing circumstances.

The very best of families had no way of knowing about germs and bacteria. A random walk through the Floyd-Jones cemetery in Massapequa tells the sad story on its tombstones. On one side of the path lie the graves of the children of David Richard and Mary L. Floyd-Jones. In February 1848, they lost a son, Stanton, aged one year, eight months and six days. Six years later, also in February, they lost a little boy aged five years, one month and twenty days. Then, four years later, their son, also named Thomas, Thomas Langley, died when he was only one year,

ten months, and twenty-three days old. And so it continues through the cemetery.

Every summer little ones were carried off by what was known as "summer complaint," or diarrhea. Milk was sold in bulk; often it was uncovered and exposed to flies. When a proposal was made in 1863 to eradicate flies, it was considered very radical. Keeping milk cool in the summer was of

children in New York City tenements suffered much from lack of adequate ventilation and sunless, overcrowded rooms.

Living conditions for the poor were very unhealthy in 1901 when New York City named its first female health inspector, Sara Josephine Baker. Hundreds of children were dying every week. Miss Baker and a small staff personally visited the tenements and

made tremendous efforts to educate the mothers regarding ventilation, the need for cleanliness, and giving the babies proper nutrition. Miss Baker was instrumental in promoting the first baby formula using canned milk and seeing that midwives were licensed.

One of her biggest contributions to the welfare of New York's infants was simple but

very important. Miss Baker noticed that the baby clothes of the day were very tight, restrictive, and binding. The poor babies could hardly breathe. She fashioned a brand new style of baby clothes that fastened down the front. The Metropolitan Insurance Company was so impressed with the health benefits of the new style that they gave away 200,000 patterns for the outfits to their policy holders. It certainly was to their advantage to see the insured babies live. When Miss Baker retired in 1923, the weekly death rate was less than a quarter of what it had been.

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Sixteenth century woodcut showing a Caesarean section, a life-threatening operation for the mother.

course a big problem, and it was often sour. Once diarrhea started, the importance of drinking plenty of fluids was not understood and death from dehydration was common.

A host of diseases killed children, most of which do not trouble us today. They included smallpox (even though vaccination was available from George Washington's time, not everyone was able or willing to take advantage of it), influenza, typhoid fever, scarlet fever, whooping cough, and measles.

In rural Massapequa there was plenty of sunshine and fresh air from the Great South Bay, but

Blocklyn's Books



Book Reviews by Philip Blocklyn

Picture Windows: How The Suburbs Happened. By Rosalyn Baxandall and Elizabeth Ewen. Basic Books, 2000. 298 pp. illustrated. Notes and index. \$27.50

Now that Long Island has become Suburbia, USA, we may be happy about it, or we may not. But the better story might be in telling how we got this way. The truth is that suburban Long Island is a complex place, more than its stereotype of a cultural wasteland overrun by robotic consumers milling brainlessly through endless traffic jams-- but less, too, than its once-vaunted potential as the American Dream realized. How it all happened is the story that Ms. Baxandall and Ms. Ewen, professors of American Studies at SUNY-Old Westbury, set out to tell us.

After the first World War, the demand for middle- and lower-income housing grew rapidly, sparking a heated debate over whether government or private industry could better meet the needs of people who had never before owned homes. The quarrel's lines were clearly drawn. The

aim of public housing, especially in those far-off dreamy days of the New Deal, was to provide planned, income-diverse communities with cultural and commercial amenities, managed ultimately by community involvement. The private housing industry, while grateful for the stimulus that government programs like FHA provided, saw public housing itself as the spectre of Communism haunting the land. By the beginning of the Cold War, Joseph McCarthy, in touring Queens, felt moved to pronounce the Rego Park Veterans Housing Project "a breeding ground for Communists." Advocates of public housing were reduced to defending Washington "not as some foreign power but as a part of our democracy."

The triumph of private home-building over public housing is personified on Long Island by William Levitt of Levitt & Sons, a man of some complexity and talent, "the Henry Ford of housing," as the authors assert. Love him or not, his innovative (you could say visionary) construction of low-cost mass-produced homes met a need for middle-class housing that thirty years of bickering between public and private interests could never manage to fill. Unfortunately, Levitt's vision did not extend to matters of race. If not invented there, the real estate practices of blockbusting and steering were perfected in Levittown and other Nassau County developments. It is encouraging to read that such methods were often resisted, and resisted fiercely. Still, that the authors devote nearly the final third of their book to such matters

testifies to the enduring legacy of exclusion, here and everywhere in suburban America.

The Better Angel: Walt Whitman In The Civil War. By Roy Morris, Jr. Oxford University-Press, 2000. 270 pp. Illustrated. Bibliography, notes, and index. \$25.00.

Walt Whitman, at the start of the Civil War, found himself "becalmed in his own horrible sloughs." He had lost his job, his lover, and his publisher. He was living in Brooklyn with his family, an unhappy family of Tolstoyan proportions. He spent his days tagging along with New York's stagecoach drivers and his nights drinking at Pfaff's beer cellar with the city's self-proclaimed bohemian wise guys. None of this, six years after the publication of *Leaves Of Grass*, promised much.

Whitman's life changed when his brother George was wounded at Fredericksburg. Moving first to Fredericksburg and then to Washington, he became nurse to the "Great Army of the Sick." A man who hated good-byes, he watched a lot of men, and boys less than half his age, die of grisly wounds and dreadful infections. Most difficult of all must have been the letters he wrote to surviving kin, who were utter strangers to Whitman. One -- the letter to the mother of Frank Irwin, dead of pyemia-- is particularly painful to read.

His effort in the Washington hospitals eventually cost him his health, although he regretted nothing. "I only gave myself," he

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AUNT EEK

Olde Things: Advice on the
Care & Feeding of Antiques

Dear Aunt Eeek,

I was digging in my backyard and I found the carcass of an old-time motorcycle, which looks more like a bicycle with a gas engine and tank than what I know to be a traditional motorcycle configuration.

Family legend has it that my grandfather bought a Harley Davidson motorcycle sometime about 1903, and that it was stored in the barn until used as backfill when the yard was regraded about 1938. The motorcycle was buried near the site of our old outhouse and was principally near the surface in sand. I cannot imagine that this machine could be restored but could you help me to identify the vintage and condition from the enclosed photos? The engine appears to be complete and everything is still in one piece, although rusted. I have rinsed off the dirt and loose rust and put the piece in the barn, back where it was in Grandpa Albert's day. What's next, the junkyard?

Phil Love

Dear Phil,

Well now my day is complete. Your reality is my dream. If, (and this is a big if) you really have found Grandpa Albert's circa 1903 Harley motorcycle buried in your backyard you really have hit paydirt. Your photos confirm in my mind that there is a good possibility that this is indeed the real McCoy. [Ed. note: The photos did not reproduce well enough for inclusion here.] Motorbikes of this era are as rare as uncapped teeth in Aunt Eeek's jaw...even more rare!

First : Do not call the junkyard. Second: Do nothing else to your treasure; any action at all can be devastating to your piece. Third: Invite Aunt Eeek to your house for tea and a good firsthand look at your backyard treasure. If this is the real thing it certainly is a wonderment and we will hope and pray for you that the gods have smiled on you as we dream of them smiling on us.

P.S. Any pictures in the family album of Albert on his bike or documentation of purchase would be marvelous. Hope to hear from you real soon; we can't wait!

Answers to Test Your Knowledge, p.16

- 1 - d
- 2 - g
- 3 - c
- 4 - i
- 5 - f
- 6 - l
- 7 - e
- 8 - a
- 9 - j
- 10 - h
- 11 - k
- 12 - b

Blocklyn's Books

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said. "I got the boys." He also found a renewed creative energy that produced the poems of *Drum-Taps*, a collection in Whitman's own mind superior to *Leaves Of Grass*. *Drum-Taps* was finally issued in October 1865, with a twenty-four page insert containing "When Lilacs Last in the Dooryard Bloom'd," which remains, 136 years later, the truest poem in the American language.

The Not So Good Old Days

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A terrible hardship was created for very poor babies when their mothers took jobs with wealthy families as wet nurses. The new mother would breastfeed the infant child of her employer, leaving her own child in very precarious circumstances. It would be left in the charge of another poor person who would have to buy milk for the baby with what little pittance the mother could spare. In 1875, the going rate for a wet nurse was room and board and ten dollars per month. Often these women were trying to save themselves from a life of prostitution. Many, many of these babies died, often from an overdose of laudanum, a drug given to keep them quiet.

But even a city baby with a family and a home had many dangers to overcome. A shocking number of American mothers died in childbirth every year. Surprisingly enough, women who use a midwife were often better off than those who had

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MARCH

Tues, Mar. 20, 8 p.m.

20/20 Lecture

The series kicks off with renowned author and lecturer Monica Randall, whose presentation will intrigue and delight those with an interest in the fascinating story of Long Island's Gold Coast mansions. [See related story on p. 12.]

All lectures will take place at the Masonic Lodge, 14 West Main Street, Oyster Bay, and will begin promptly at 8 p.m. Admission is free and refreshments will be served following each lecture.

The Not So Good Old Days

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physicians. This was because the physician, being ignorant of the need to wash his hands thoroughly, would often spread germs from his sick patients. The midwives only delivered babies.

Doctors received surprisingly little training in obstetrics. It was mostly "learn as you go." As of 1853 there was no such thing as the study of pediatrics in America. Abraham Jacobi, a doctor from Ger-

APRIL

Sunday, Apr. 22, 1:30 p.m.

By popular demand, the guided walk on the grounds of the former Tiffany estate, Laurelton Hall, will be reprised. Call (516) 922-5032 for more information.

Tues., Apr. 24, 8 p.m.

20/20 Lecture

Our second lecture in the series will feature actor Frank Hendricks' portrayal of Herman Melville in celebration of the 150th anniversary of *Moby Dick's* publication, including a dramatic reading from this classic work.

many, was the first professor of diseases of children at the New York Medical College. Up until then, children were treated like adults, albeit with smaller doses.

So let us rejoice in living in the year 2001, and look forward to the day when modern day ills like Sudden Infant Death Syndrome are a thing of the past. Let us be grateful for the fortitude and courage of our ancestors.

Thanks are due to Diane Batemarco of

MAY

Tues., May 15, 8 p.m.

20/20 Lecture

"Captain" Ronald Puza, commander of a unique Revolutionary War reenactment group, "Von Heer's Provost Corps," will discuss their role as America's first military police.

Come and learn how these early MP's functioned as Light Dragoons, protecting Washington as his first life guard and capturing deserters from the Continental Army.

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