

PANORAMA



NEWSLETTER

Good resolutions are simply checks that men draw on a bank where they have no account. (Oscar Wilde)

Just as soon as we make a good resolution, we get into a situation which makes its observance unbearable. (William Feather)



VOLUME 10, NO. 4

JANUARY 1983

NEXT MEETING

Wednesday,
January 19, 1983
6:30 p.m.

Holy Trinity Episcopal Church Hall
Brooklyn Avenue & 7th Street
Valley Stream

PROGRAM

A very short business meeting will follow the Covered Dish Supper and then we will be served a generous portion of the world's best relaxer--laughter--by way of three W. C. Fields' films...

"The Pharmacist"
"The Dentist"
"Pool Sharks"

COVERED DISH SUPPER

As we have done for the past few years, we will have a gathering beforehand, featuring delicious "with" and "without" punch bowls and cheese and crackers. And to oblige our members who will be working that day, the Covered Dish Supper will not be served until 7:00 p.m.

Please bring in a generous covered dish (minimum six portions) in accordance with the following assignments:

- | | |
|-------------------------|--|
| Last names from A to G: | "Starchy" type, hot or cold; this might be potatoes, beans, rice noodles, etc. |
| Last names from H to O: | Vegetable content, hot or cold, such as salads, casseroles, etc. |
| Last names from P to Z: | Dairy-type foods (eggs, cheese); gelatins, fruit; fish, hot or cold. |

Casseroles should be brought in hot. We have facilities to keep them warm, but cannot heat them thoroughly if they are brought in frozen or cold. Please do not bring meat or meat-content dishes; the Society will provide this portion of the supper, as well as bread, butter, coffee and tea. Following the meal, a good-will offering will be accepted to defray this expense. Dessert will be provided by cake donations by members of the Executive Board in lieu of covered dishes.



ANNOUNCEMENT

Cocktail Hour
Cash Bar

Early Reservations
Suggested!

VALLEY STREAM HISTORICAL SOCIETY
TENTH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION
Sunday, April 24, 1983
5:00 to 9:00 p.m.
at
The Elk's Club
11 West Jamaica Avenue
Valley Stream

Plenty of free parking;
local transportation
available (within
Valley Stream area).

Buffet Supper
Wine
Celebration Cake

Entertainment Presentations Surprises

I wish to order _____ tickets at \$11.00 each. Amount enclosed \$ _____

Name _____

Address _____

Zip Code _____
Mail this reservation form to the Valley Stream Historical Society,
123 South Central Avenue, Valley Stream, New York 11580.



(This letter was received by Howard Ruehl.)

November 23, 1982

Dear Mr. Ruehl:

Please accept the brief--but nonetheless sincere--note to express my appreciation to you for your fine presentation to our students during South High School's recent History Week.

I have had very positive feedback from students and faculty who felt your participation to be a unique and enjoyable way to learn your heritage. It was truly an enhancement and an invaluable adjunct to our social studies curricula.

Your efforts on our behalf are sincerely appreciated.

Very truly yours,
Lilyan Harty
Department Head,
Social Studies

* * *

(Howard Ruehl sent this letter to VSHS President, Claire McMahon.)

December 15, 1982

Dear Claire:

...In late October South High celebrated a local history week, and displayed about 40 of our photos. In addition, I gave an hour talk to the 8th grade on the history of Valley Stream, which was well received.

When Dr. Stille heard about this, he, too, asked for a similar display, which is being planned for February.

Upon my suggestion, the three primary schools, Nos. 30, 24 and 13 are preparing to use our history of Valley Stream as a text book for all 4th grades. Ten books are being used by all above schools.

The Board of Education has ordered each school plus the high schools to teach local history and our book was suggested as the best book to use as text...

Sincerely,
Howard Ruehl

* * *

REMEMBER WHEN...

The abandoned coal chute on the back of property adjacent to the corner of Rockaway Avenue and Roosevelt burned in April or early May of 1946?

How well I do! We had just moved to Fourth Street, and after supper my mother-in-law and I were in the basement storing things I felt were unnecessary in the upstairs rooms. My husband and his brother were working putting up window shades on the first floor. I looked out of the cellar windows and saw this very orange glow all over the backyard. Quickly, I ran upstairs to see what those men were doing, only to find them on the back porch looking west at the fire and many sparks (looking much like fireworks on the 4th of July) coming from the blaze in the old coal chute.

Of course, the fire department had arrived, but it was a hopeless task to try to do anything but contain the fire. Many were the explosions from accumulated coal dust, and how high those sparks flew!

The next morning there was nothing left but a pile of black ashes, and I learned later that even the Long Island Rail Road could not run while the fire was in progress as the coal chute abutted the tracks.

Another "landmark" had disappeared.

Audrey O'Connor Braun

* * *

AND, ABOUT US... Member Maria Wendel is recuperating nicely from her recent cataract operation. Sincere sympathy to Peg Keller on the death of her brother in Kansas. Audrey and Jim Boerckel and Eleanor Bayardi are beaming over the birth of their mutual granddaughter, Jessica Bayardi. Audrey is organizing a program for the Waldinger Library for March and Bert Keller will be the moderator--"Old Timers Night." Our annual Flea Market will be held in May.

* * *

WORTH REPEATING

"Of all the home remedies, a good wife is the best."

Kin Hubbard

* * *

Valley Stream Historical Society
P A N O R A M A
123 South Central Avenue
Valley Stream, New York 11580

Non-Profit Organization
U. S. POSTAGE
Valley Stream, New York
Permit #924

Mr. William P. Stris
41 Parkwold Drive East
Valley Stream, N.Y. 11580

PANORAMA



NEWSLETTER

People who are not in love fail to understand how an intelligent man can suffer because of a very ordinary woman. This is like being surprised that anyone should be stricken with cholera because of a creature so insignificant as the comma bacillus.
Marcel Proust



VOLUME 10, NO. 5

FEBRUARY 1983

NEXT MEETING

Tuesday,

February 15, 1983
8:00 p.m.

Holy Trinity Episcopal Church Hall
Brooklyn Avenue & 7th Street
Valley Stream

Please note that the February and March meetings will be held on Tuesdays, rather than the usual third Wednesdays due to the Lenten services at Holy Trinity.

For this meeting our program will be the ever-popular "Hobby Night" chaired by Emma Bitowski. It's always so interesting to learn of the variety of hobbies and collections and special interests of our fellow members. Coffee and cake will be served after the program. A pleasant evening is promised for all. (If you'd like to take part in the program, call Emma at VA 5-4002.)

REAR WINDOW... Our Covered Dish Supper was delicious and successful, with over 80 in attendance. President Claire McMahon wishes to express special thanks to the Naefs, Millers, Fares, Bitowskis, Marge Dalton, as well as everyone else whose culinary contributions made for such a pleasant occasion for all.

Lil Weaver reminds us that the date of the supper (January 19th) was the anniversary of the birth of Robert E. Lee (in 1807). General Lee was appointed to West Point in 1829--one of 5 full generals of great military genius. He overcame obstacles of enormous odds; right up to Appomatox Court House, he fought a losing battle with undaunted courage. He was a foe without hate, a friend without treachery, a soldier without cruelty, a victim without murmuring. He accepted the presidency of Washington College, now Washington & Lee, serving until his death at Lexington, Virginia. His home, Arlington, is now the site of National Cemetery.

* * * *

VALLEY STREAM HISTORICAL SOCIETY TENTH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

On February 28, 1973, the Society held its Inaugural Meeting and in commemoration, we are planning a buffet supper on Sunday evening, April 24, 1983 at the Valley Stream Elks Club. The Committee has been hard at work in planning for a wonderful evening. The food will be plentiful and delicious and there will be hometown entertainment. The motto for the evening is "little speech-making, much fun." We do hope that all members and their friends are circling this date on their calendars. Oh, yes, if you live within the Valley Stream area and need transportation, please indicate this on your reservation request and we will make arrangements for you. Also, there's free parking galore. The cocktail hour (cash bar) starts at 5:00, followed by the buffet supper (with wine), and entertainment, presentations and surprises. The Elks Club is at 11 West Jamaica Avenue and the evening comes to a close at 9:00 p.m. What better way to spend a Sunday evening than with your friends at this historic occasion?

I wish to order _____ tickets at \$11.00 each. Amount enclosed \$ _____

Name _____

Address _____

Zip Code _____

Mail this reservation form to the Valley Stream Historical Society, 123 South Central Avenue, Valley Stream, New York 11580.

BITS OF HISTORY, MOSTLY LONG ISLAND

By Al Mayernik

Battle of the Swamps

Before the invasion of Long Island in August 1776, the Patriots controlled the Island, and many Islanders, loyal to the Crown, fearing arrest, fled their homes to hide in the mosquito-infested and heavily thicketed Massapequa swamps and those surrounding Hempstead Lake and present-day Hendrickson Pond in Valley Stream. Hundreds of Tories lived in miserable conditions in crude brush huts.

The Patriots feared that the British, anchored off Jamaica Bay, would try to arm the Tories and pose a serious threat to Washington's army in Brooklyn. Warrants were issued to arrest a large number of Crown people, including several justices of Jamaica and Hempstead.

On June 22, 1776, or 23--the date is uncertain--a party of Minute Men from Jamaica arrived at the present-day corner of Merrick Road and Ocean Avenue. They then entered the swamp at the head of Michael DeMott's mill pond nearby. (A dam had been built across a stream flowing through the swamp to form a mill pond, today's Smith Pond, Rockville Centre, near where Peninsula Boulevard and the Southern State Parkway meet.)

A skirmish took place; one Loyalist was wounded and several were captured. On several other occasions, Minute Men entered the swamplands to capture a few more Tories.

Long Island historian, George L. Weeks, Jr., states that part of the action took place in the swampland now known as Valley Stream State Park and Hendrickson Park.

Kenneth Roberts in his novel Oliver Wiswell describes the skirmish in detail. The book is very readable and has an interesting viewpoint: the hero is a Tory and the villains are the Patriots and most British officers.

(to be continued)

* * *

Revolution

Histories of the downfall of kingdoms, and revolutions of empires, are read with great tranquility.

Samuel Johnson

* * *

Valley Stream Historical Society
P A N O R A M A
123 South Central Avenue
Valley Stream, New York 11580

WHITE MOUNTAIN CAKE (from James Beard's American Cookery)

This was also called Colorado cake, and was sometimes baked in graduated cake pans to give a mountain effect. Later the cake was usually baked in a tube pan and heaped with white fluffy icing.

1/2 cup butter 1-1/2 cups sugar
2-1/2 cups sifted cake flour
3 teaspoons baking powder
1/4 teaspoon salt 1 cup milk
1 teaspoon vanilla
4 egg whites, stiffly beaten

Cream butter and cream in sugar until very light and fluffy. Sift flour with other dry ingredients three times to incorporate as much air in mixture as possible. Fold into creamed mixture alternately with milk and vanilla. For this particular cake, it is preferable to do the folding in of flour and milk by hand. Fold in egg whites, which have been beaten until stiff but not dry. Turn into greased and floured tube pan, or, fit a piece of paper into the bottom of the pan and grease this and the sides and tube. Bake in a preheated 350° oven 45 to 60 minutes or until the cake is pulling away from the sides of the pan and the cake springs back when touched lightly with the fingertip. Cool in the pan on a rack 15 to 20 minutes before loosening from the sides and around the tube of the pan. Invert on the rack, and when cool heap with white fluffy icing.

Happy baking!

* * *

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Inspiration

Here is the secret of inspiration. Tell yourself that thousands and tens of thousands of people, not very intelligent and certainly no more intelligent than the rest of us, have mastered problems as difficult as those that now baffle you.

William Feather

Perpetual inspiration is as necessary to the life of goodness, holiness and happiness as perpetual respiration is necessary to animal life.

William Law

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Mr. William P. Stris
41 Parkwold Drive East
Valley Stream, N. Y. 11580

PANORAMA



NEWSLETTER



*• May you have the hindsight to know where you've been,
the foresight to know where you're going
and the insight to know when you're going too far.*

VOLUME 10, NO. 6

MARCH, 1983

NEXT MEETING

Tuesday,
March 15, 1983
8:00 p.m.

Holy Trinity Episcopal Church Hall
Brooklyn Avenue & 7th Street
Valley Stream

Mr. Nicholas A. Meyer of East Williston will enlighten us about the Onderdonk Paper Mill that existed in Roslyn from 1773 to 1891. The present treasurer of the Designers' Showcase, Mr. Meyer has always been a history buff, as shown through his association with organizations as the Friends for Long Island Heritage (member of the Board), Historian for the Village of East Williston and past president of the Nassau County Historical Society. His talk and displays should provide us with a most interesting evening.

Our cake doners for this meeting are:
Agnes George, Marge Finkenstadt and
Agnes Libath. Thank you, ladies.

Village elections are also scheduled for March 15th, so don't forget to vote before coming to the meeting.

On Thursday, March 24th, there will be a old-time recollections program at the Waldinger Library (Children's Room) at 7:30 p.m, jointly sponsored by the Society and the Library. It will be video-taped and members and residents are urged to attend. Audrey Boerckel is coordinating the program for us and Bert Keller will be the m.c. Sounds like fun.

Our annual flea market will take place in Hendrickson Park parking lot on the first Sunday in May, with a rain date of one week later. Vice President Bob Presbry is in charge of the event. Helpers are need for that day, as well as donations for the Society table.

* * *

WELCOME ABOARD to our two new members,
Ralph and Florence Freda of Euclid St.

* * *

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VALLEY STREAM HISTORICAL SOCIETY TENTH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION - APRIL 24, 1983

Again we remind you of this special event that has been in the planning stage for some time now. The Committee has been working hard to make this a very lovely evening for all. It is being held at The Elks Club, 11 West Jamaica Avenue, and there is parking on the street as well as in a lot opposite the clubhouse and a few doors up the street. For those who do not have cars and live in the Valley Stream area, indicate on your reservation form that you will need transportation and we will make arrangements for you. We do hope that all members are planning to come and will also bring family members and friends so that this will be an all-out team effort for a successful observance of our anniversary. ("One man can make a difference, and every man should try." President John F. Kennedy.)

Remember the schedule: the cocktail hour (cash bar) starts at 5:00 p.m., followed by the buffet supper (with wine), and entertainment, presentations and surprises. Why not send in your reservation now while you have this in hand?

I wish to order _____ tickets at \$11.00 each. Amount enclosed: \$ _____

Name _____

Address _____

Zip Code _____

Mail this reservation form to the Valley Stream Historical Society, 123 South Central Avenue, Valley Stream, New York.

BITS OF HISTORY, MOSTLY LONG ISLAND

by Al Mayernik

After the repeal of the Stamp Act in 1766, one year after its passage, confrontation followed confrontation as Britain passed new taxes and the colonists organized resistance to the taxes. Meeting in Philadelphia, the Second Continental Congress declared the colonies independent from Great Britain on July 4, 1776.

Two of the signers of the Declaration of Independence were Long Islanders. William Floyd (1734-1831) was born in Brookhaven, Long Island. He was a major general in the Suffolk County Regiment of the New York Militia. He attended the Continental Congress from 1774 to 1783, and was the first New York delegate to sign the Declaration. His Long Island estate suffered ruin at the hands of the British occupying army. In 1784 he purchased a tract of land in the western part of the state on the headwaters of the Mohawk River. He was a member of the first U. S. House of Representatives in 1789, but was defeated for re-election in 1790. In 1803, at the age of 69, he moved to his new lands as a pioneer farmer. He represented this district in the New York State Senate.

Francis Lewis (1713-1812), a New York merchant, was born in Llandaff, Wales, and came to America in 1738. He was captured by the French at Fort Oswego in 1757. In 1765 he attended the Stamp Act Congress and was age 63 when he signed the Declaration of Independence. After the battle of Long Island, August 1776, the British exacted revenge on Lewis and other prominent Patriots. They burned his home in Whitestone and seized his property. His wife died as a result of mistreatment by the British soldiers. He helped form a new government for the newly-independent state of New York.

A signer from New York, a part-time Long Islander, was Philip Livingstone, who maintained a summer home in Brooklyn.

When a copy of the Declaration of Independence was received in New York in July, 500 copies were printed as handbills and distributed to the counties of the State. It was read at the head of each militia in Queens County (then holding Nassau) and at the head of each brigade of the army stationed in New York City.

(To be continued)

Valley Stream Historical Society
P A N O R A M A
123 South Central Avenue
Valley Stream, New York 11580

NOSTALGIA - by Howard Ruehl

When my wife and I applied for our passports and submitted what we thought were birth certificates, we were informed that they were birth announcements and that we had to apply for Certificates of Birth from the Department of Health in Albany.

Surprisingly, it took only one month, almost to the day, for the certificate to arrive.

It was nothing more than a dirty photostatic copy, handwritten, signed with a raised seal.

Here is the nostalgia--it was signed by J. Mansfield Foster, physician.

* * *

WORTH A TRY(?)

IRISH POTATOES WITH PEANUT BUTTER

Bake 6 large Irish potatoes. Cut in halves and remove the insides, being careful not to break the skins. Mash and season with one-half teaspoonful of salt, one-half teaspoonful of white pepper, a dash of cayenne, a heaping tablespoonful of butter, one cup of sweet milk, and 1/2 cup of peanut butter, or to taste. Put back into the skins, and bake potatoes to a light brown.

Gulf City Cookbook, 1878

* * *

REAR WINDOW

There was a smaller than usual attendance at our February meeting due to the blizzard the previous weekend. But those 30 stalwarts thoroughly enjoyed the Hobby Night displays of Howard Ruehl (Civil War literature), Agnes George (crocheted articles from the 1920's), Al Mayernik's topical stamp collection which is used in our elementary school presentations, and Emma Bitowski's collection of cats as well as her collection of Peddlar Dolls, some of which she made herself. Since a number of exhibitors could not make the meeting, Jim Boerckel gave a slide show of Mystery Hill in North Salem, New Hampshire, which President Claire McMahon said made her feel like "hopping in the car and driving right up there!"

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Mr. William P. Stris
41 Parkwold Drive East
Valley Stream, N. Y. 11580

PANORAMA



NEWSLETTER



Wishing you joy at Passover and Easter and happiness all spring!

VOLUME 10, NO. 7

APRIL, 1983

NEXT MEETING

Wednesday,
April 20, 1983
8:00 p.m.

Holy Trinity Episcopal Church Hall
Brooklyn Avenue & 7th Street
Valley Stream

Program

QUEENS COUNTY FARM MUSEUM

Another interesting and informative program is in store for us for this meeting. Mr. James Trent of the Queens County Farm Museum will tell us all about this delightful spot that is not too many miles away--in Floral Park. We will also see a film produced by Mr. Bert Herbert, who will probably accompany Mr. Trent. Those of us who have visited this museum can attest to its enjoyable atmosphere.

That's the good news...now the bad news. We do not have any cake doners for this meeting and will have to have just coffee, unless some members would like to come to the rescue???

* * *

LAST CALL!



Cocktail Hour,
Cash Bar

Reservation Deadline:
April 15th.

VALLEY STREAM HISTORICAL SOCIETY TENTH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

Sunday, April 24, 1983
5:00 to 9:00 p.m.

at

The Elk's Club
11 West Jamaica Avenue
Valley Stream

Entertainment

Presentations

Surprises

* * *

Plenty of free parking;
local transportation
available (within
Valley Stream area).

Buffet Supper
Wine
Celebration Cake

I wish to order _____ tickets at \$11.00 each.

Amount enclosed \$ _____

Name _____

Address _____

Zip Code _____

Mail this reservation form to the Valley Stream Historical Society,
123 South Central Avenue, Valley Stream, New York 11580.

BITS OF HISTORY, MOSTLY LONG ISLAND

by Al Mayernik

The Battle of Long Island, August 1776



The stamp from the island of Jersey in the English Channel commemorates the beginning of the battle for Long Island. The British had a two-fold purpose in taking the Island: to split the colonies in two, separating troublesome New England from the rest of the colonies, and Long Island was to be the "bread-basket" to supply the British army with grain, cattle and horses.

On August 22, 1776 about 4,000 troops from transports anchored off Staten Island were landed near present-day Fort Hamilton. During the day more British and Hessian troops were landed until there were about 15,000 on the Island by noon. (Dauvergne depicted on the stamp later became a British admiral.)

The Americans were outmatched by the British. The British and Hessians continually advanced as the Americans fell back. The enemy discovered an unguarded pass in the Jamaica Road which enabled them to swing around the rear of the American army. Howe, afraid of another "blood bath" like he suffered at Bunker Hill, did not follow up.

Washington, realizing he was badly beaten, decided to retreat from Brooklyn to New York. A company of Marblehead fishermen rowed the American army through the mists of the East River to the temporary safety of Manhattan Island.

(To be continued)

* * *

LATIN - The Romans would never have found time to conquer the world if they had been obliged first to learn Latin.

Heinrich Heine

Valley Stream Historical Society
P A N O R A M A
123 South Central Avenue
Valley Stream, New York 11580

ANNUAL FLEA MARKET - Vice President Bob Presbrey is hard at work in planning this annual spring event. This is a means of raising funds for the Society, so it would be greatly appreciated if as many members as possible would donate items for our sales table, in addition to those of us who will be having our own tables.

THE VALLEY STREAM HISTORICAL SOCIETY
FLEA MARKET

Date: May 1, 1983
(Rain date: May 8, 1983)

Time: 10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Place: Hendrickson Park Parking Lot, Merrick Road on North Franklin Avenue

Free Admission and Free Parking

Vendors call:

825-1526 (bet. 2 p.m. & 6 p.m.)

825-4199 (bet. 9 a.m. & 8 p.m.)



* * *

COMING EVENTS - Audrey and Jim Boerckel have lined up the following programs to conclude our season:

May 18 - Film - L. I. Pine Barrens
June 15 - Chinese Auction and Strawberry Festival

* * *

EXERCISE

As for exercise, if you have to take it, take it and put up with it. But as long as you have the price of a hack and can hire other people to play baseball for you and run races and do gymnastics when you sit in the shade and smoke and watch them--great heavens, what more do you want?

Stephen Leacock

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Mr. William P. Stris
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Valley Stream, N. Y. 11580

PANORAMA



NEWSLETTER

VOLUME 10, NUMBER 8

This Day in Sports



MAY 25, 1935... **BABE RUTH** HIT HIS LAST HOME RUN, #714, AS HE CONNECTED FOR THREE AT PITTSBURGH FOR THE BRAVES.



Brooklyn Bridge
MAY 1983
USA 20c
One-Hundredth Anniversary
(Opened on May 24, 1883 by President Chester A. Arthur)

MAY, 1983

NEXT MEETING

Wednesday,
May 18, 1983
8:00 p.m.

Holy Trinity Episcopal Church Hall
Brooklyn Avenue & 7th Street
Valley Stream

PROGRAM

LONG ISLAND'S WILDERNESS...

THE PINE BARRENS

Jim and Audrey Boerckel have lined up another LILCO film program about Long Island--always timely and informative.

Preceding the program will be our usual business meeting at which time the election of officers and trustees will take place. The slate submitted by the Nominating Committee last month is as follows:

President.....Anthony Fiero
Vice President.....Robert Presbrey
Recording Sec'y.....Helen Dowdeswell
Treasurer.....Mildred Zulch
Corresponding Sec'y.....Margaret Dalton
3-Year Trustees: Allan Dowdeswell, Wilbur Fare, Claire McMahon
2-Year Trustees: Audrey Boerckel, Evelyn McQuade, Bert Keller
1-Year Trustees: Adele Hagemann, Henry Kroos, Howard Clinchy, Ted Libath
(Nominations will be accepted from the floor.)

SINCERE SYMPATHY to Joan Chambers on the sudden passing of her husband, Ray. We have enjoyed so many of Ray's programs, courtesy of the New York Telephone Company. Our deepest regrets to Joan and her family for their irreparable loss.

MANY THANKS to the Home Federal Savings and Loan Association on Rockaway Avenue for displaying and selling our Long Island towels. Really good neighbors!

The MEMORIAL DAY PARADE will take place on Monday, May 30th. We are to meet at 9:00 a.m. at Wheeler Avenue School. Our poor old flag, dating back to the 1860's, needs a good repair job (even as you and I!) and will not be used in the parade this year--so we'll need more marchers to fill the gap.

REAR WINDOW...Our program on the Queens Farm Museum was just wonderful! Mr. James Trent was very impressed with the turnout of members for this meeting and his audience was equally impressed with his presentation and the film of the Museum. When their many wonderful restoration projects are completed, this should be one of the most interesting and charming tourist attractions in this area.

Thanks to the generosity of a number of members, our larder is now very well stocked with cakes!! Very much appreciated, ladies.

MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS: Yes, it's that time again. Please fill out the renewal form below and return with your check to the address shown on the form, or, better still, take care of it at the May or June meetings.

- Individual.....\$ 3.00
- Student..... 1.00
- Contributing..... 7.50
- Family..... 10.00
(four or more members of one family)
- Organizational..... 15.00
(clubs, business organizations, etc.)
- Sustaining..... 50.00
(tax exempt gift)
- Life..... 100.00
(tax exempt gift)

Membership paid by Cash Check

Date _____



VALLEY STREAM HISTORICAL SOCIETY
123 South Central Avenue
Valley Stream, New York 11580

1983 Membership Form
Expires June 1984

I have marked my category below. Please send my

New Renewal

TO: Name _____
Address _____
Telephone _____
Introduced by _____
Hobbies and/or special interests _____

AH, 'T WAS A GRAND NIGHT...our Tenth Anniversary Celebration on April 24th, with old friends greeting one another amid a patriotic red, white and blue atmosphere of festive balloons, flowers, celebration cake and souvenir programs.

Over 200 members and guests were assigned to "street sign" tables, with many of the signs (made by Flo Gear) bearing names secured from an 1883 map of Valley Stream. (A great conversation-piece idea of Anniversary Chairman and VSHS President, Claire McMahon.)

And how nice it was that in attendance were 10 of the 12 people who first expressed interest in the establishment of an historical society in the Village over 10 years ago.

The Master of Ceremonies for the evening was our multi-talented Bert Keller, whose sterling performance included everything from leading the Pledge of Allegiance, delivering a lovely invocation and introducing guests, to lending piano accompaniment for "America the Beautiful."

Mention was made of talks at schools by various members in line with the Board of Education directive concerning local history, and the use of Howard Ruehl's book, "The History of Valley Stream" as an official text book.

The Society was honored with presentations from distinguished guests, as follows (in order received):

Congressman Ray McGrath--a flag that has flown over the Capitol Building in Washington; Hempstead Town Supervisor Thomas Gulotta--a citation;

Senator Carol Berman--a certificate of merit and a donation;

Assemblyman Greg Becker--a resolution from 150 members of the New York State Assembly.

President Claire McMahon presented a \$100 check to Waldinger Memorial Library Director, Marshall Botwinick, for the purchase of books on Long Island and Valley Stream for the Library. Mr. Botwinick spoke graciously of the joint programs, Al Mayernik's bulletin board displays,

other exhibitions, and the cordial relationship between the Society and the Library staff, many of whom were present.

Village officials who attended were Trustees William Hammond, Rosanna Clavin and Harold Igoe. There were representatives from such Village firms and organizations as The Bank of New York, Hendrickson Brothers, Kiwanis, Elks, Lions and Rotary Clubs.

A male choral group from Valley Stream Central High School, "Some of the Boys," under the direction of Edward Douglas Fidler, entertained with a most enjoyable choice of selections.

The supper was catered by Matthew Zincone, assisted by young men and women from "Friends of Bridge," who really outdid themselves in the amount of time and work performed for us. In addition to serving a delicious supper, Matty also donated his own time to us.

This is but a brief summary of an evening that was the result of months of committee meetings conducted by Claire McMahon, who is certainly deserving of all the kudos bestowed upon her for pulling together this most successful anniversary party.

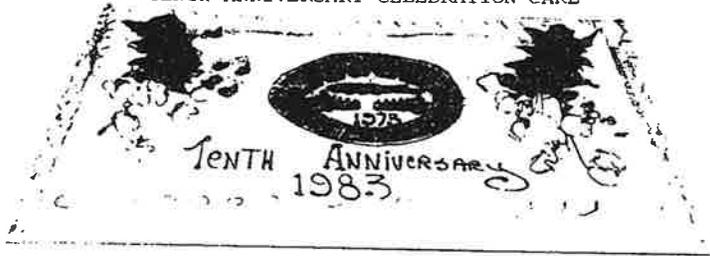
A final note of commendation...to the hard-working present and former officers and committee members, and to the whole membership of the Society itself for their interest, support and cooperation throughout these past ten years, without which we could not have made it!

Evelyn McQuade
Editor

(Any corrections or additions will appear next month.)

FLEA MARKET...Vice President Bob Presbrey, who chaired the flea market this year, wishes to thank all vendors for their participation, as well as members and guests for their support and Mother Nature for a sunny day!

TENTH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION CAKE



Valley Stream Historical Society
P A N O R A M A
123 South Central Avenue
Valley Stream, New York 11580

Non-Profit Organization
U. S. POSTAGE
Valley Stream, New York
Permit #924

Mr. William P. Stris
41 Parkwold Drive East
Valley Stream, N. Y. 11580

PANORAMA



NEWSLETTER

VOLUME 10, NUMBER 9

JUNE, 1983

NEXT MEETING

Wednesday,
June 15, 1983
8:00 p.m.

Holy Trinity Episcopal Church Hall
Seventh Street & Brooklyn Avenue
Valley Stream

P R O G R A M

Installation of Officers
Chinese Auction
Strawberry Festival

Our usual format for a June meeting--following a short meeting, the officers and trustees elected last month will be installed by Trustee Harold Igoe. Then a Chinese Auction, topped off by another institution, our strawberry festival.

Articles for the Chinese Auction can be dropped at Audrey and Jim Boerckel's, 127 East Carpenter Street (561-7138), or brought to the meeting. Suggested items: "white elephants" in good condition, costume jewelry, scarves, toiletries, plants, baked goods, wrapped mystery or gag gifts, etc. The more prizes, the more fun for all.

Simple cakes or cookies for the strawberries and ice cream will be donated by: Dorothy Smith, Jane Simon, Rose Bouffier, Al Mayernik, Howard Ruehl, Adele Hagmann, Agnes George, Margaret Warrell and Happy Hering. What a fine group!

This is our last meeting until September, so why not plan to come and enjoy a few laughs with our congenial group.



In America there are two classes of travel--first class, and with children.

Robert Benchley

REAR WINDOW - Despite the overcast sky, we had a respectable representation in the Village Memorial Day Parade on May 30: Allan and Helen Dowdeswell, Henry Krooss, Tony Fiero, Marion Clinchy, Andy Pfeiffer, Louise Carducci, Audrey and Jim Boerckel, Jane Simon, Peggy Luca and Claire McMahon and her contingent--son, Andy, son-in-law, Tommy Lloyd and grandson, Christopher Ford (4 years old). On the sidelines, but going every step of the way, was Al Mayernik with his trusty camera.

An omission in the write-up last month about the Tenth Anniversary Celebration was the awarding of golden honorary life membership cards to Anthony Fiero and Howard Ruehl. So well deserved for all their contributions to the Society and to the Village.

Also--many thanks for the oh-so-nice compliments on the souvenir program that was my assignment for that occasion. Audrey Boerckel had passed on to me the "Memory Lane" items. Do keep her in mind the next time you are reminiscing as she is always in need of articles for the MAILleader. In addition, they make fun reading and are definitely a part of the Village history.

.....
 * 6 RMS, RV VU...We know we can't
 * have this, but we do have a very
 * desperate need for modest office
 * space to fit a desk and files.
 * Any ideas? If you have a sug-
 * gestion for us, please contact
 * incoming President, Anthony
 * Fiero - 561-2090.

MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS: Yes, it's that time again. Please fill out the renewal form below and return with your check to the address shown on the form, or, better still, take care of it at the June meeting.

- Individual.....\$ 3.00
- Student..... 1.00
- Contributing..... 7.50
- Family..... 10.00
(four or more members of one family)
- Organizational..... 15.00
(clubs, business organizations, etc.)
- Sustaining..... 50.00
(tax exempt gift)
- Life..... 100.00
(tax exempt gift)

Membership paid by Cash Check
 Date.....



VALLEY STREAM HISTORICAL SOCIETY
123 South Central Avenue
Valley Stream, New York 11590

1983 Membership Form
Expires June 1984

I have marked my category below. Please send my

New Renewal

TO: Name.....

Address.....

Telephone.....

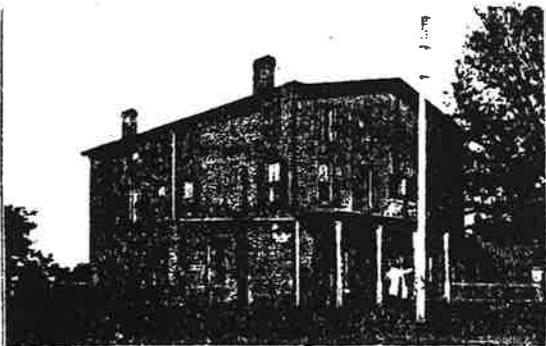
Mobile and/or other telephone.....

.....

These are reduced copies of postcards belonging to member Ruth Schmidt Joseph, native-born Villager, daughter of Fannie and John P. ("J.P.") Schmidt.



This picture was taken on the day Ruth was born. That is Doc Foster's car out front. The address is 94 North Corona Avenue and is now the home of Congressman Ray McGrath.



This is a picture of the general store of Joseph F. Felton, Ruth's maternal grandfather, located at the corner of Merrick Road and Central Avenue. It is now the site of Rivoili TV.



Mr. Felton built this house in 1903 at the corner of Merrick Road and Franklin Avenue, now the site of Vine's Animal Hospital.

AH, YES, I REMEMBER IT WELL... This letter appeared in Smithsonian Magazine and was sent to us by Adele Hagmann. It was addressed to the Editor of that publication.

Dear Sir: Fay Gillis Wells' account of parachuting from a falling plane in 1929 brought back a vivid memory. I was only four years old when I must have seen that very plane falling out of the sky and into the Valley Stream woods near our home. It took confirmation by the neighbors before my parents would believe I hadn't imagined it. Then they took me to the woods, and I remember seeing a man and a woman being rescued from the treetops by firemen with long ladders.

Following this incident, I would dash into the house whenever a plane flew over-- fortunately, in 1929 there were not too many--terrified that one would fall onto my head. My wise father devised a clever way to rid me of my phobia. At the breakfast table he picked up the newspaper and read aloud an imaginary article stating that a new type of parachute would open and prevent a troubled plan from falling. Of course, I believed it.

Marjorie C. Sagman
Longboat Key, Florida

(It was indeed Fay Gillis and pilot "Sunny" Trunk whom four-year old Marjorie Rothschild saw being rescued from the treetops. "I'd have probably broken both my legs but for the great good luck of coming down into the trees," Fay Gillis Wells says, "because I had no idea how to land with a parachute. Both of us wound up in the same cluster of trees right at the end of the airport.")
(Smithsonian) Ed.

Another letter from Smithsonian: Dear Sir: I enjoyed Mr. Park's article on Amelia Earhart, but would like to enter a couple of corrections: the western part of Roosevelt Field is now a large, modern shopping center. Roosevelt Raceway occupies the eastern part. And the first meeting of the Ninety-Nines took place at Curtiss Field, Valley Stream, Long Island, 12 miles from Roosevelt Field.

William K. Kaiser, Curator
Cradle of Aviation Museum
Garden City, New York

* * *

On behalf of the Officers and Trustees, I extend best wishes to all for a happy summer. See you in September.

Evelyn McQuade, Editor

Valley Stream Historical Society
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PANORAMA



NEWSLETTER

CARNIVAL

AT

VALLEY STREAM

Afternoon and Evening.

Sat., Sept. 17th, 1910,

Children's Parade, Crowning of Prince & Princess
MONSTER TORCHLIGHT PARADE.

Crowning of King and Queen.

Minstrel Show, Circus, Vaudeville.

Grand Ball at Firemen's Hall in the Evening.

VOLUME 11, NUMBER 1

SEPTEMBER, 1983

NEXT MEETING

Wednesday,
September 21, 1983
8:00 p.m.

Holy Trinity Episcopal Church Hall
Brooklyn Avenue & 7th Street
Valley Stream

P R O G R A M

GINGERBREAD HOUSES ON LONG ISLAND

We are just delighted that Mrs. Joan Chambers has decided to carry on with her husband's tradition and will be presenting our kickoff program for this new season. Joan and her late husband, Ray, have been longtime friends of the Society and have provided us with many interesting and informative slide programs. Welcome, Joan and family!

Refreshments for this evening will be provided by the Trustees.

* * *

HELP, HELP!

At this writing, we are still desperately in need of volunteers to help with the following: Membership, Publicity, Country Store and Hospitality. Any one of these duties would be a wonderful way to really get involved in the "behind the scenes" work that keeps the Society going. All interested members can call our new President, Anthony Fiero at 561-2090. (He'd love to hear from you!)

* * *

THANK YOU to the Home Federal Savings & Loan Association and Manager Mrs. Russell for selling our towels and the history book by Howard Ruehl. A nice bit of hometown spirit!

* * *

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

I wish to express my thanks and appreciation to those members who volunteered their time and/or donated books, baked goods or other saleable items for our tent at the July 4th Picnic on the Village Green. It is this generosity of self that has been the hallmark of the Society over the past ten years and has enabled each successful endeavor. The picnic workers were: Helen and Alan Dowdeswell, Dagmar Ficken, Audrey and Jim Boerckel, Marion and Howard Clinchy, Rachel Dann, Louise Carducci, Irma and Anthony Fiero, Bert and Peg Keller, Margaret and John Larson, Claire McMahon, Evelyn McQuade, Bob Presbrey, Jane and Bob Sutter, Vera Totten, Lillian Weaver, Mildred Zulch. Also, Holy Trinity Church, Henry Waldinger Memorial Library, Grace Methodist Church and Monica Village all donated books, for which we are most grateful. Another working member was Emma Bitowski, and I would be remiss if I did not mention the colorful handmade hot plate holders that Lillian Weaver had made for sale.

Anthony Fiero

* * *

REAR WINDOW... Member Vincent Donahue (Claire McMahon's father) underwent a quadruple bypass at St. Francis Hospital during the summer and is home and doing well. (Can't keep a good man down!)

Village Trustee and VSHS member, Robert Kerner had a most unfortunate accident of falling off a neighbor's roof during the Labor Day weekend and is Franklin General Hospital. We certainly do wish him a speedy recovery and relief from this painful period.

We also extend get well wishes to Jean Naef, who with her husband Fred had handled the hospitality table this past season.

Mr. William P. Stris
41 Parkwood Drive East
Valley Stream, N. Y. 11580

Valley Stream Historical Society
P A N O R A M A
123 South Central Avenue
Valley Stream, New York 11580

Non-Profit Organization
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SCHOOL DAYS...First came settlements with a number of families; then came schools. About 250 years ago, families were often isolated. Children were workers then, right along with their parents. In the fight for survival, there was not time for schooling, assuming someone could teach.

Informal education centered in the family. Children learned about religion, moral values and farm work. Parents who couldn't read or write sometimes sent their children to a neighbor's house to be taught. In exchange for a small fee, a housewife gave lessons in the kitchen as she went about her chores. This was called a "dame" school.

As communities formed, various church groups ran schools. Ministers taught in the mid-1700's. Families sent their children to the church or the minister's home to learn reading, writing and religion.

There weren't many schoolhouses until after the Revolutionary War. A community's first school was not public or free. Generally, a group of parents got together to build a school for their children. It was a cooperative venture where everyone contributed land, building materials and labor.

Uniform standards for teachers were virtually nonexistent. Teachers' ages ranged from 17 to 70.

Most teachers were men, although Quakers employed women more than other religious groups. Single men were often sought because they required less money. Community leaders sometimes wanted a married teacher, assuming a married man would be more serious about teaching and would stay put longer. Parents paid the teacher about \$1.65 in cash or goods (firewood, potatoes, cloth) for three months schooling for each child.

Most schoolhouses built in the late 1700's and early 1800's had one room with a fireplace, some windows and a row of double desks accommodating about 15 children.

Families provided wood for the fireplace. The children were expected to carry the wood, bring in the

water, sweep the floors and wash windows.

Books were at a premium. There was usually one spelling book, for example, that contained every word a child was expected to learn. Students took turns reciting while the rest studied at their desks.

By the end of the school day, some children had learned their own work and, by listening, had learned everyone else's too.

* * *

WORTH REPEATING

"For men and women are not only themselves; they are also the region in which they were born, the city apartment or the farm in which they learnt to walk, the games they played as children, the old wife's tales they overheard, the food they ate, the schools they attended, the sports they followed, the poets they read, and the God they believed in."

W. Somerset Maugham
The Razor's Edge

* * *

WHALE OF A TALE...With all the discussion about whales, their abilities, feats, habits and the possibility of their becoming extinct, it seems suitable to include a few words from a well-remembered 18th Century patriot, by name one Benjamin Franklin. Apparently, having grown tired of the British looking down their noses at the American colonists, he penned a short, but tall story, and sent it off to the editor of a London newspaper in 1765. "The grand leap," he wrote, "of the whale up the Fall of Niagara is esteemed, by all who have seen it, as one of the finest spectacles in nature."

* * *

GARDEN

Should a garden look as if the gardener worked on his knees? I ask you.

Lincoln Steffens

PANORAMA



NEWSLETTER

VOLUME 11, NUMBER 2

OCTOBER, 1983

NEXT MEETING

Wednesday,
October 19, 1983
8:00 p.m.

Holy Trinity Episcopal Church Hall
Brooklyn Avenue & 7th Street
Valley Stream

PROGRAM

FOURTH GRADE CURRICULUM

Al Mayernik

Tonight we'll have the opportunity to see all the slides that were donated to the schools, and Al will also read the script which the Committee has prepared to accompany the slides. This worthwhile project has been well-received by students and faculty alike. Now is our chance to enjoy it.

The following gracious ladies will be bringing cakes for this meeting: Dorothy Smith, Mog Wellington, Rose L. Bouffier, Agnes George and Winifred Luthy.

* * *

MEMBERSHIP

To our out-of-town members who have sent in their renewals: our new Membership Chairman, Howard Ruehl, will be sending out your new membership cards shortly.

Unfortunately, any member whose dues are not paid by the end of November will be dropped from the PANORAMA mailing list.

To refresh your memory, the fees are: Individual - \$3.00; Student - \$1.00; Contributing - \$7.50; Family (four or more members of one family) - \$10.00; Organizational (clubs, business organizations, etc.) - \$15.00; Sustaining (tax exempt gift) - \$50.00; Life (tax exempt gift) - \$100.00.

Checks should be made payable to the Valley Stream Historical Society and mailed to 123 South Central Avenue, Valley Stream, New York 11580.

HISTORY

Not to know what has been transacted in former times is to continue always a child.
Cicero

The best thing we get from history is the enthusiasm it rouses.
Goethe

I'd like to have been around in the times the historical novelists write about—but I wouldn't like to be in the life insurance business.

Finley Peter Dunne

REAR WINDOW

A very interesting meeting, indeed, our September gathering. We were sorry that illness prevented Joan Chambers from presenting the program on the "Gingerbread Houses of Long Island" herself, but her daughter Terry and son Bob carried on splendidly in the Chambers' tradition.

Village Trustee Harold Igoe told of the recent designation of the Pagan House by the National Register of Historic Sites. He said that the new architect in charge of the restoration is eminently qualified for the job, and that they have already found that a part of the house is older than previously thought, probably before 1800. In addition to his interest in the proposed museum, he is seeking money from fresh water wetlands restoration funds for the lake in Hendrickson Park.

Andy Pfeiffer reported that 5 cartons of books left over from the sale at the Village Picnic were donated to Franklin General Hospital and another 3 cartons to Friends of Bridge.

Al Mayernik explained about the 4th Grade Curriculum on local history mandated by the State and how his Committee had prepared three sets of slides with narrative for this purpose. In the name of the Society, he presented a carousel of slides and the accompanying text to representatives of the elementary schools of Valley Stream as follows:

Blessed Sacrament - Miss Severino
Holy Name of Mary - Marian Raeder
District #24 - Mr. Freund
District #13 - Dr. Lee
District #30 (to be delivered to Mr. DeMarco)

Mog Wellington asked the Society to raise funds to help save the Statue of Liberty, which will be 100 years old in 1986. Money is being collected to restore it and Ellis Island before 10/28/86. President Anthony Fiero appointed Mog to a committee to contact individual members at the appropriate time. (Her French ancestors would have been so proud of her inspiring plea, accompanied by copies of an article outlining the plight of our beautiful lady in the harbor.)

Mr. William P. Stris
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BITS OF HISTORY, MOSTLY LONG ISLAND - by Al Mayernik



The Culper Spy Ring

In 1776, Washington's army was driven from Manhattan and the British completed their occupation of Long Island. Upstate New York, Connecticut and New England were still controlled by the Patriots.

Washington needed to be informed of British military and naval activity in New York. In 1778 the Culper Sky Ring was formed. The leader of the project was Major Benjamin Tallmadge. Recruited for the Ring were Robert Townsend of Oyster Bay, Austin Roe, a tavern keeper and merchant from Setauket, Abraham Woodhull, a Setauket farmer, and Caleb Brewster, a Setauket whaler turned whaleboat raider.

Robert Townsend gathered the information from British officers in the City. Austin Roe brought his merchandise and information from Manhattan across the Brooklyn ferry, then across Long Island to Setauket. Anna Strong of Setauket used her clothesline to signal information to the courier. If she hung up a black petticoat, it meant that whaleboats were hiding in the vicinity. The number of handkerchiefs on the line gave the location of the inlet where the whaleboats were waiting. Caleb Brewster's whaleboats then took the information to Black Rock (Fairfield), where it was passed on to Washington's headquarters.

Bruce Lancaster's historical novel, "The Secret Road" is based on this spy ring.

(To be continued)

* * *

KNOW THYSELF

Know thyself. A Yale undergraduate left on his door a placard for the janitor on which was written, "Call me at 7 o'clock; it is absolutely necessary that I get up at seven. Make no mistake. Keep knocking until I answer." Under this he had written: "Try again at ten."

William Lyon Phelps

* * *

McQ.

PANORAMA



NEWSLETTER

VOLUME XI, NUMBER 3

NOVEMBER/DECEMBER, 1983

O beautiful for pilgrim feet,
Whose stern, impassioned stress
A thoroughfare for freedom bears
Across the wilderness!
America! America!
God mend thine every flaw,
Confirm thy soul in self-control,
Thy liberty in law!

(From *America the Beautiful*,
by Katharine Lee Bates)



NEXT MEETING

Wednesday,
November 16, 1983
8:00 p.m.

Holy Trinity Episcopal Church Hall
Brooklyn Avenue & 7th Street
Valley Stream

PROGRAM

"LONG ISLAND, CIRCA 1855"

"The Way We Were"

We're pleased to announce that Mr. Tim O'Brien, editor of the *LONG ISLAND HERITAGE* (a journal of the Island's history, antiques, arts and crafts), will be presenting a musical slide show, highlighting the people, the industry and the leisuretime activities of mid-19th Century Long Island. The music of the day is played on circa 1850 instruments. (The program is about one hour in length.)

Our refreshments for this evening are provided through the good graces (and busy ovens) of Caroline Young, Shirley Siegl, Florence Gunther, Chris Van Buskirk and Barbara Ehlinger.

Speaking of ovens; here's a recipe to try out in yours:

CARROT COOKIES

1-3/4 cups flour 1/2 teaspoon salt
2 teaspoons baking powder 1 egg
1/2 teaspoon salt 1 cup shortening
1/2 cup granulated sugar
1 can (16 ounces) sliced carrots,
drained and pureed (1 cup)
1 teaspoon vanilla
Confectioners' sugar

Stir together flour, baking powder, salt; set aside. Cream shortening and granulated sugar until light and fluffy. Stir in carrots, egg and vanilla, then reserved dry ingredients until well mixed. Drop by teaspoonfuls about 2 inches apart on greased baking sheets. Bake in pre-



heated 350 degrees over 15 to 20 minutes or until lightly browned around the edges. Remove to racks to cool. Sprinkle with confectioners' sugar. Makes 72.

BITS OF THIS AND THAT... Both the Museum and restoration of the lake in Hendrickson Park have been receiving considerable publicity in *NEWSDAY*, as well as through Bert Keller's fine speech at the Village Board Meeting and Howard Ruehl's appearance on behalf of the Fairchild House on Channel 24 *NEWSDAY*. This was all included in Trustee Igoe's report at our October meeting... Adele Hagmann has agreed to be our Publicity Chairman... Jim Boerckel has been appointed Chairman of the Board of Trustees... We are still in need of someone to chair the Hospitality Committee and our little "Country Store" table... Mr. and Mrs. Robert Sutter certainly worked hard in loading up the books for Franklin General Hospital... Did you know that The New York Public Library has such treasures as Dickens' own copy of *A Christmas Carol*, the first sheet-music edition of "The Star Spangled Banner," the first Gutenberg Bible to come to America, 6 copies of Shakespeare's First Folio and the first printing in the western world of Homer's *The Iliad*, and *The Odyssey* (1488) and a first printing of Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales* (1491)?... Al Mayernik and everyone else who worked on the 4th grade program of local history that is presented at the local schools should be proud of the excellent product they have produced. Everyone who saw last month's program had nothing but the highest praise for it... At the November meeting we will "pass the hat" for the Statue of Liberty Restoration Fund. What better way to start off the Christmas season? (In effect, it's really a gift to ourselves...)... If you still haven't sent it your dues renewal, Membership Chairman Howard Ruehl would be glad to hear from you and take care of this painless procedure. Howard has sent out membership cards to all out-of-town members and local members who did not pick theirs up at a meeting. Contact him if yours has not arrived.

Mr. William P. Striss
41 Parkwood Drive East
Valley Stream, N. Y. 11580

Valley Stream Historical Society
P. A. N. O. R. A. M. A.
123 South Central Avenue
Valley Stream, New York 11580

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BITS OF HISTORY, MOSTLY LONG ISLAND

by Al Mayernik

The Hell Ship "Jersey"

The inhumane treatment of prisoners in wartime was and still is common, and it was true in the American Revolution as well.

The most notorious prison kept by the Americans for their Tory prisoners was a disused copper mine at Simsbury (now East Granby), Connecticut. The cells were more than 70 feet below the surface. The food was bad; the air was foul and damp; the ceilings dripped constantly and the prisoners lived in almost darkness. Political prisoners were kept in the same area as murderers, thieves and other criminals. The prison was dubbed "Newgate," after the infamous British prison. Though supposedly escape-proof, about half the prisoners managed to escape, much to the embarrassment of the Connecticut legislature.

Far, far worse were the dozen or so British prison ships in Wallabout Bay, Brooklyn, to which American prisoners were sent. To the Americans kept in these hulks, it was usually a sentence of death. The ship which had the worst reputation was the "Jersey," a former ship-of-the-line in His Majesty's Navy.

How many Americans died on the "Jersey" is not known, but some historians estimate as high as 7,000, or nearly 2/3 of all who died in all the British prisons in the New York area. Since the ship's portholes had been battened, very little light or air could reach the prisoners below. According to one prisoner, "we were more walking skeletons...and overrun with lice from head to foot."

The food was served in short ration and the biscuits were often moldy and worm-infested. The meat was usually bad, often eaten raw; the flour and oatmeal sour; oil substituted for butter was rancid. The water for drinking and cooking was polluted. There were no cots or hammocks for the prisoners.

Death came not only because of disease, but also from boredom, lack of exercise, brutality of the guards, suffocation in summer and freezing in winter. The

average number of deaths on the "Jersey" each day was five and each morning came the brutal order: "Up on deck and bring up your dead!" The dead were buried in mass graves on shore.

In 1908 the Prison Ship Martyrs' Monument was dedicated in Fort Greene Park to the 11,000 men who died on the prison ships in Wallabout Bay.



(to be continued)

* * *

CALENDAR NOTE... In honor of the Long Island Tricentennial, Al Mayernik will give a slide-talk on the history of Long Island, illustrated with slides of First Day Covers and other cachet-covers at the National Postage Stamp Show '83, Madison Square Garden Exposition Rotunda, November 18, 1983, 12:00 noon. Eighty slides will cover events and people such as Verrazano, Hudson, the American Revolution, Civil War, Teddy Roosevelt, World War I, Lindbergh, W. C. Fields, John McInroe, and many more. There is an admission charge. (While Al's presentation is only on November 18th, the stamp show itself is at the Garden from November 17th to the 20th.)

* * *

No meeting in December, but the first item for your 1984 calendar should certainly be a notation of our Covered Dish Supper on January 18th. Lil Weaver is chairing it and will have full details about it in the January issue of PANORAMA.

* * *

ON BEING MERRY... Our loving Lord God wills that we eat, drink and be merry, making use of his creatures, for therefore He created them. (Martin Luther)

I never have a merry thought without being vexed at having to keep it to myself, with nobody to share it. (Montaigne)

Sooo, the merriest of holiday seasons to all from the Officers and Trustees of the Valley Stream Historical Society.

