



PANORAMA

Post Office Box 22, Valley Stream, New York 11582

NEWSLETTER

VOLUME XVI, NO. 4

JANUARY 1989

N E X T M E E T I N G

Wednesday,
January 18, 1989
8:00 p.m.

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

Program

"WATER -- OUR PRECIOUS COMMODITY"

Our January speaker will be Brian Schneider from the Nassau County Department of Public Works. He will provide a slide presentation and talk about our water supply, quality, quantity and conservation measures. This is a subject of vital importance to all Long Islanders who depend upon ground water for their supply.

Our refreshments for this evening will be supplied by Fran Holz, Lois Ward, Jean West, Marge Finkenstadt and Charles Miller. Thank you!

Valley Stream Historical Society
P A N O R A M A
P. O. BOX 22
Valley Stream, New York 11582

Non-Profit Organization
U. S. POSTAGE
P A I D
Valley Stream, New York
Permit No. 924

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

By Al Mayernik

COLUMBIA AIRCRAFT, Part III

In ^{their} dark blue warpaint, Grumman's J2F-5s and Columbia's J2F-6s became welcome sights in almost every war theatre around the world. Some were painted overall black for operations in the South Pacific so that, under cover of darkness, these planes could do scouting and rescue work well within Japanese-held territory.

Not designated as combat aircraft and less "glamorous" than the Navy fighters and bombers, the ungainly "Ducks" never-the-less were "there" when most needed, operating quickly and efficiently in areas inaccessible to any other type of aircraft. Because of its versatility and ability to land and takeoff where the better-known planes could not, the "Duck" won its greatest praise for rescue work. Many a downed flyer found the plane was answer to their prayers when a J2F came to the rescue. Grateful, too, were the home-sick servicemen in isolated areas when the "Duck" brought letters and parcels from home.

Both Grumman and Columbia received hundreds of letters of praise from flyers worldwide for the outstanding service the amphibian performed. Columbia and its individual employees were twice awarded the Army-Navy E for Excellence in War Production.

The end of the war cancelled Columbia's contracts and so ended production of the "Duck."

Following the war, most of the planes were declared surplus. Foreign governments, particularly in South America, purchased quite a large number. An interesting war-surplus "Duck" was one bought for Jungle Aviation and Rescue Service (JAARS) which was

found by several Christian missionary groups to serve their outposts in the rain forests of South America. One such group was the Wycliffe Bible Translators which translate the Scriptures into the hundreds of South American Indian languages. The "Duck" was large enough to carry a really useful load yet compact enough to operate on the smaller tributaries of the Amazon.

Individual flyers also were buyers. The planes found their way into Canada for fish, fowl and forest patrol; to seed forests and to stock streams and lakes with fingerlings. In this country, surplus "Ducks" were used to fight forest fires and to spray agricultural crops with insecticide.

A proof of the "Duck's" rugged build and durability is that some of the planes are still flying today.

(To be continued)

* * *

Please excuse this shortened version of PANORAMA. Ye olde editor has a fractured wrist, but hopes to be flying with both wings by the next issue.



PANORAMA

Post Office Box 22, Valley Stream, New York 11582

NEWSLETTER

VOLUME XVI, NO. 5

FEBRUARY 1989

NEXT MEETING

Wednesday,
February 15, 1989
8:00 p.m.

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

PROGRAM

ABANDONED RAIL ROAD TUNNEL

At this month's meeting we shall welcome Robert S. Diamond of the Brooklyn Historic Railway Association who will talk about the long-abandoned (since 1861) Long Island Rail Road tunnel under Atlantic Avenue. This tunnel was

used in the days when the railroad terminated at the foot of Atlantic Avenue and the East River. A slide presentation will accompany his program and he will discuss plans to develop a Railway Museum associated with a light rail system in the tunnel and possibly elsewhere as a tourist attraction.

Refreshments for this meeting will be supplied by Ruth Anholzer, Madeline Kappeuf, Louise Carducci and Evelyn McQuade. Thank you, ladies!

* * *

For your calendar... Al Mayernik will be presenting his annual program at Waldinger Library on Tuesday, March 7th, starting at 7:30 sharp. His topic will be "Painters of Long Island."

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

BITS OF HISTORY, MOSTLY LONG ISLAND

By Al Mayernik

Columbia Aircraft - Part IV

The XJL-1

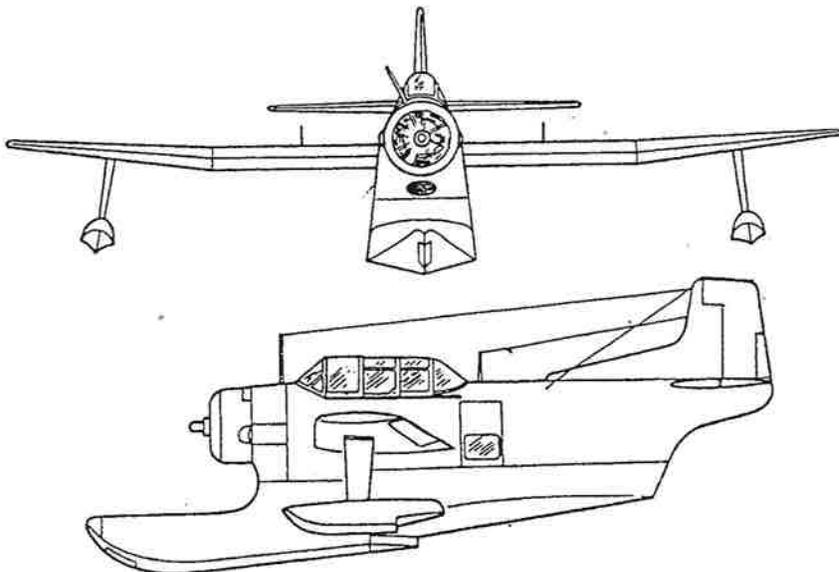
Even before the start of World War II, the J2F "Duck" series was considered obsolescent. As early as 1939, Grumman had begun exploratory work on a replacement for the J2F and assigned design number G-42 to the project.

The basic "Duck" design was adapted to include features of the new technology: monoplane construction, folding wings and tricycle landing gear. A new hull was designed and tested at the Stevens Institute of Technology.

In 1944 Grumman attempted to give further engineering time to project G-42, but no space was available so the responsibility for the construction of G-42 was given to Columbia Aircraft, Valley Stream, along with the "Duck". G-42 was officially assigned the Columbia designation XJL-1 under Navy contract NOa(s) 8751.

Construction began on two flyable airframes, but work was suspended on VJ-Day. In August 1946, Columbia resumed work on both aircraft. One XJL-1 flew on October 25, 1946 and its sistership flew several weeks later. After further testing at the Naval Air Test Center at Patuxent River, Maryland, certain structural failures were evident. Both planes were salvaged by removal of engines, props, radios, etc., and the airframes were sold.

The plane's power plant was a 1350 h.p. Wright engine; maximum speed 200 m.p.h. at sea level; maximum range 2,070 miles at 119 m.p.h.; armament two racks under wings for bombs. The XJL-1 was classified as a utility amphibian.



Don't forget--Tuesday, March 7, 7:30 sharp, Waldinger Library--Al
Mayernik's program on "Painters of Long Island."



PANORAMA

Post Office Box 22, Valley Stream, New York 11582

NEWSLETTER



COLUMBIA XJL-1



COMMONWEALTH SKYRANGER

VOLUME XVI, NO. 6

MARCH 1989

N E X T M E E T I N G

Wednesday,
March 15, 1989
8:00 p.m.

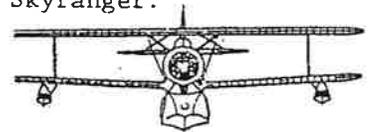
Holy Trinity Episcopal
Church Hall
Brooklyn Avenue at 7th Street
Valley Stream

P R O G R A M

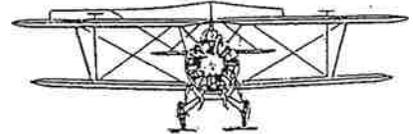
CURTISS FIELD/COLUMBIA AIRCRAFT VALLEY STREAM

Al Mayernik will show slides of
Curtiss Field, Valley Stream, now
the site of Green Acres; famous
flights to Curtiss; the founding
of the Ninety-Nines; and, the
planes manufactured at the Curtiss

hangars: Grumann XFF-1, Columbia
J2F6, Columbia XJL-1 and Common-
wealth Skyranger.



COLUMBIA J2F6



GRUMMAN XFF-1

We thank Happy Hering, Grace Donley,
Louise Carducci, Dorothy O'Regan and
Agnes George for volunteering to pro-
vide the refreshments for this meeting.

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Valley Stream, N. Y. 11580

BITS OF HISTORY, MOSTLY LONG ISLAND

By Al Mayernik

COLUMBIA AIRCRAFT - Part V

Working at Columbia

During World War II, Columbia Aircraft was by far the biggest employer in Valley Stream. In spite of its size, it was a "family" place, both in fact and spirit.

Gabriel Parrish, now a member of the Valley Stream Historical Society, was a leadman in Hangar # 5. He met and married his wife May Schoppe while they worked at Columbia. Gabe's father-in-law was a security guard at the plant. Gabe's sister Mary Claire was secretary to the chief Navy inspector. Another sister Helen was secretary to the Treasurer at Columbia. Brother Jack Parrish was "the best riveter on the wing assembly line," according to Gabe.

Going through the roster of former Columbia employees, family names are repeated over and over: Abadondelo, Abbatiello, Cleaver, Delronimi, Demarco, Dominick, Genova, Hickey, Holmstrom, Kenny, Kimble, Lawandowski, Mikulka, Parrish, Rachel, Schoppe.

Columbia Aircraft was a "big family" corporation in spirit as well. The employees published a newspaper "Columbia Gems" filled with information and gossip from all departments. Poetry contests were held and entrees were published in the paper. One such ditty was:

We're out to win the Navy "E"
But that depends on you and me.
Let's speed the J2Fs from here
So we can win the War this year.

And they did win the Army-Navy "E" -- twice!

Teams and clubs abounded: riding, bowling, softball, basketball, and a band. A welfare fund to help employees "in a pinch" was managed by the employees themselves. Columbians participated in the village bond, Memorial Day poppy and blood drives.

An example of the high spirits at the production line was, when a J2F left the assembly line, a necktie was clipped from some unsuspecting person and pasted on a rafter. The whole parade of ties hanging overhead was a visual means of showing the progress in production the workers had made.

The aforementioned Gabe Parrish put it this way: "Columbia was a congenial place to work but, more important, we felt great pride in making a great plane to help win the War."

(To be continued)

* * *

We extend sincere sympathy to the families of three of our recently deceased members--Mog Wellington, Gladys Shaw and Sarah L. Rasweiler. We are most grateful to the Estate of Margaret Wellington for the donation of a very good Kodak Carousel Projector, 4 carousels, 2 dolls and 4 men's hats, circa the 1920's.



PANORAMA

Post Office Box 22, Valley Stream, New York 11582

NEWSLETTER

VOLUME XVI, NO. 7

APRIL 1989

N E X T M E E T I N G

Wednesday,
April 19, 1989
8:00 p.m.

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

Program

"A SEAGULL'S VIEW OF NEW YORK HARBOR"

"Our own" Frank Duffy in a repeat performance of his popular slide collection of scenes of New York Harbor. In his capa-

city of Public Relations Director for Moran Towing, Frank has been able to amass a magnificent collection of photographs, as readily attested to by those of us who have attended his programs and seen his book, published a few years ago.

The refreshments will be donated by Marge Dalton, Barbara Ehlinger, Evelyn McQuade and Dot Smith; thank you, ladies!

* * *

2ND ANNUAL MUSEUM BALL - Saturday, April 29 in the Father Carroll K of C Hall, East Lincoln Avenue, V. S. The V. S. Volunteer Fire Department is the honoree this year, celebrating its beginnings 91 years ago. Tickets are \$32.50 each--live music, open bar and catered meal. For reservations, VSHS members should call Agnes Libath at 825-2759. Proceeds to Museum Fund.

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41 Parkwold Drive East
Valley Stream, N. Y. 11580

BITS OF HISTORY, MOSTLY LONG ISLAND

By Al Mayernik

COMMONWEALTH AIRCRAFT CORPORATION - Valley Stream

During World War II, Commonwealth Aircraft Corp. of Kansas City, Kansas, manufactured some 1,500 assault-gliders for the U. S. Army; the contract was priced at \$41,000,000. Commonwealth also made a small number of two different aircraft for personal, rather than military or commercial use. One was the Commonwealth Skyrainger and the other was the Commonwealth Trimmer amphibian.

In 1946, Commonwealth purchased the Columbia Aircraft Corporation of Valley Stream, site of the former Curtiss Field hangars. Commonwealth continued to make the Commonwealth Skyrainger, designed for the sportsman pilot and the businessman who preferred to fly his own craft.

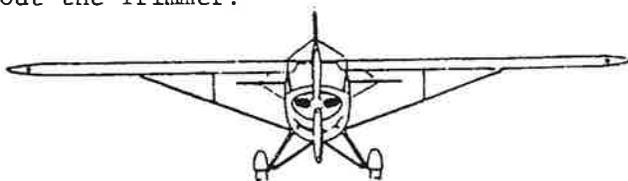
The Commonwealth Skyrainger was a two-passenger plane powered by a Continental 85 h.p. engine with a cruising speed of 103 m.p.h.; land speed of 38 m.p.h. The normal range was 500 miles.

About 275 Skyrangings were built, both at Kansas City and Valley Stream.

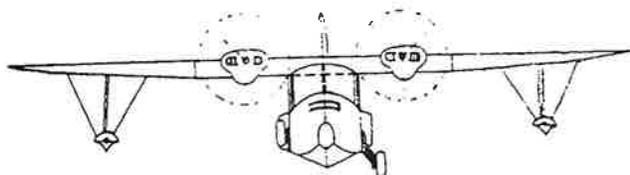
A Commonwealth Skyrainger is on display at the Cradle of Aviation Museum, Mitchel Field.

Also produced at the Valley Stream plant were some twin-engined Commonwealth Trimmer amphibians.

The Historical Society would appreciate receiving photos and information about the Trimmer.



COMMONWEALTH SKYRANGER



COMMONWEALTH TRIMMER AMPHIBIAN

Bits of This 'N' That - Al's program on Columbia Aircraft and Curtiss Field at last month's meeting was wonderful! Many former Columbia employees attended, with Columbia's test pilot, Captain Miller, now of Poughkeepsie, as our guest of honor. A great evening was enjoyed by all...This year's Nominating Committee--Helen Dowdeswell, Adele Hagmann, Al Mayernik and Bob Presbrey--will present their slate at this April meeting, to be acted upon at the May meeting.



PANORAMA

Post Office Box 22, Valley Stream, New York 11582

NEWSLETTER

VOLUME XVI, NO. 8

MAY 1989

NEXT MEETING

Wednesday,
May 17, 1989
7:30 p.m.

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

Program

ACROSS THE ATLANTIC BY OUTBOARD--
A FIRST

with

The Grover Family--
Al, Al, Jr. and Dante

This father-son team completed a record-setting journey by crossing the Atlantic in the smallest outboard powered boat ever! Fighting fierce weather conditions from Hurricane Claudette, the team traveled from Pictou, Nova Scotia to the Azores, and on to their final destination of Lisbon, Portugal. It was 34 days after setting sail in North America that they arrived in Lisbon. In a letter dated September 18, 1985, former President Ronald Reagan wrote, "Your adventure has been a triumph of careful planning over the awesome challenge of the high seas. I admire your courage

and resourcefulness."

We are delighted that Mr. Grover and his sons will be joining us this evening to tell us of their wonderful adventure. And to top off the evening, they will be bringing their boat for members to view before the meeting. (Note the 7:30 time to allow for this. The boat will be in front of the Church Hall.) Don't miss this program!

We thank Anne Boyden, Marge Chvatal and Florence Murphy for volunteering to supply the refreshments for this meeting.

At our business meeting preceding the program, we will vote on the slate presented at the April meeting by the Nominating Committee: Anthony Melillo, President, Claire McMahon, Vice President, Marge Chvatal, Recording Secretary, Kevin Egan, Treasurer, Marge Dalton, Corresponding Secretary; 3-yr. Trustees--Bert Keller, Evelyn McQuade, Anthony Fiero, Agnes Libath; 2-yr. Trustees--Eileen Brennan, Barbara Ehlinger, Lena Savery; 1-yr. Trustees--Edwin Fare, Helen Zang, Frank Koegler, Monica Kerner, Charlotte Facompre.

COMING EVENTS...We have been invited to participate in the Memorial Day Parade on May 29th. We hope to have a good turnout; report to Wheeler Avenue School at 9:00 a.m. Our annual Chinese Auction and Strawberry Festival will be held on June 21st. As usual we will need items for this evening--plants, jewelry, handmade items, bric-a-brac, etc.

It's membership renewal time. Please use the form below.



VALLEY STREAM HISTORICAL SOCIETY
P. O. Box 22
Valley Stream, New York 11582

Date _____
Payment: _____ Check
_____ Cash

1989 MEMBERSHIP FORM
EXPIRES JUNE 1990

Name _____ Renewal _____ New _____

Address _____

Telephone _____

| | |
|------------------------------|--|
| _____ Individual.....\$ 5.00 | _____ Organizational.....\$25.00 (clubs, business org., etc.) |
| _____ Student..... 2.00 | _____ Sustaining (tax exempt gift) 50.00 |
| _____ Contributing..... 7.50 | |

BITS OF HISTORY, MOSTLY LONG ISLAND

By Al Mayernik

CURTISS AIRPORT - Part XII-B

GRUMMAN'S XFF-1

(The information on this Grumman plane was given to me very recently. Chronologically it would fit after the article labeled Curtiss Field - Part XII. My thanks to Craig Hobbs and Lois Lovisololo, both of Grumman.)

After proposing a design for a carrier-based fighter to the Navy on March 10, 1930, Grumman received a contract on March 28, 1931 to supply the Navy with one XFF-1, an experimental two-place fighter, with a 200-day delivery schedule. The price of the contract was \$73,975, no money in advance.

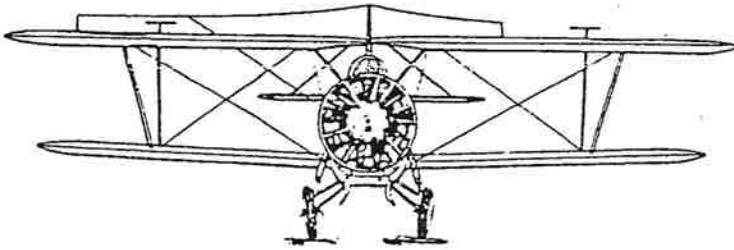
The building of the plane was begun at the Baldwin plant. Grumman now had a contract for two planes: the original XFF-1 and the ESF-1, the scout version of the XFF-1. On November 4, 1931, Grumman moved to an unused Naval Reserve hangar at Curtiss Field, Valley Stream. It was here that XFF-1 was completed.

The XFF-1, called Fi-Fi and Fertile Myrtle, was the first U. S. Navy fighter to be equipped with a retractable landing gear. (Unlike later models, the landing gear was operated manually.) The Grumman plane flew faster than the one-place fighters of the time.

XFF-1 was a two-place, carrier-based biplane with a cruising speed of 120 m.p.h., a service ceiling of 20,500 feet and a range of 570 miles. It was powered by a Wright radial engine of 616/620 h.p. It was armed with two fixed and one movable .30 caliber machine guns and two 100-lb. bombs.

In addition to completing the XFF-1, Grumman's Valley Stream plant made 15 Model B aluminum floats to convert the Vought O3U Corsair biplanes to amphibians.

Once again, Grumman needed more room and it moved in November 1932 to Farmingdale, where 27 FF-1s (the production designation of the XFF-1) were manufactured for the Navy.



GRUMMAN XFF-1

* * *

BITS OF THIS 'N' THAT - New Jersey's gain is Valley Stream's loss. Our dear friends and very active VSHS members, Audrey and Jim Boerckel, will be moving to Washington's Crossing next month. Charter members, they have both held office (Jim a former president and the Chairman of the Board of Trustees for a number of years now), and have been responsible for lining up our splendid programs for many years. They certainly will be a tough act to follow and will also be missed for the fine person each one is. This May meeting will probably be the last one they will be able to attend, so why not plan to drop by to wish them much happiness in their new home.

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Valley Stream, N. Y. 11580



PANORAMA

Post Office Box 22, Valley Stream, New York 11582

NEWSLETTER

VOLUME XVI, NO. 9

June 1989

NEXT MEETING

Wednesday,
June 21, 1989
8:00 p.m.

Holy Trinity Episcopal Church Hall
(Williams Hall)
7th Street off Brooklyn Avenue
Valley Stream

Program

ANNUAL CHINESE AUCTION

AND

STRAWBERRY FESTIVAL

What better way to usher in the first day of Summer than by attending this popular annual event? As customary, there will be a short business meeting and the installation of the officers and trustees elected at last month's meeting.

Admission will be \$3.00 per person and this includes an envelope containing 100 chances for the items on the Auction, as well as for the delicious refreshments. Additional envelopes may be purchased for \$1.00 each.

We welcome all donations--knick-knacks of all kinds, jewelery, games, stationery, plants, wrapped mystery gifts, comic items--anything that will add to the fun of the evening. Please try to have these articles to us by 7:30 as it does take time to set up the tables. In fact, everyone should try to arrive a bit earlier so that we can get started with the meeting as close to 8:00 as possible.

BITS OF THIS 'N' THAT...

Our program last month with the Grover Family was just wonderful. They were so gracious and modest about their awesome adventure of crossing the Atlantic by motor boat. We thank Lena Savery for arranging for their visit to us.

Al Mayernik is trying to write about Valley Stream residents during the World War II period. He will be very appreciative of any information, anecdotes, photographs, etc. that can be supplied to him.

Audrey and Jim Boerckel were honored at the May meeting with a special cake and gift from the Society. They have asked that their thanks be conveyed to all through PANORAMA...."We were deeply touched by the gifts, the refreshments and the words of appreciation directed to us. We shall miss everyone and know it will take a long while to find as wonderful a group. Hope to be back often. Much love to everyone."

Congratulations to outgoing president Ed Fare on his engagement to Ms. Ronni Wiener. We wish them much happiness.

MEMORIAL DAY PARADE...

A fairly respectable number of us marched this year, many of us sporting our new blue VSHS shirts. The marchers included Ed Fare, Tony Melillo, Clare McMahon, Bob Presbry, Bert Keller, Kevin Egan, Lillian Weaver, Helen Dowdeswell, Evelyn McQuade, Margie Chvatel, Marion Clinchy, Lena Savery, Henry Krooss and Vera Totten. A 1930 Model A Ford Coupe was driven by Walter Facompre with his wife Charlotte in the front seat and those two lovebirds Jim and Audrey Boerckel in the rumble seat. Hank and Ruth Anholzer were in a 1937 2-Door Ford Coupe, and Joan and Carolyn Gladky, Allan Dowdeswell and Howard Clinchy rode in a 1960 Ford Thunderbird. Al Mayernik photographed.



VALLEY STREAM HISTORICAL SOCIETY
P. O. Box 22
Valley Stream, New York 11582

1989 MEMBERSHIP FORM
EXPIRES JUNE 1990

Date _____

Payment: Check
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Name _____ Renewal New

Address _____

Telephone _____

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Individual.....\$ 5.00 | <input type="checkbox"/> Organizational.....\$25.00 (clubs, business org., etc.) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Student..... 2.00 | <input type="checkbox"/> Sustaining (tax exempt gift).. 50.00 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Contributing..... 7.50 | <input type="checkbox"/> Life (tax exempt gift).....100.00 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Family (4 or more in one family). 12.00 | |

BITS OF HISTORY, MOSTLY LONG ISLAND

By Al Mayernik

CURTISS AIRPORT - XIV

Fay Gillis Wells

Fay Gillis Wells received Private License No. 9497 at Curtiss Field, Valley Stream on October 5, 1929, in time to become a charter member of the Ninety-Nines, the international organization of women pilots.

It was at the initial meeting of the Ninety-Nines at Curtiss that Fay met Amelia Earhart in November, 1929. Fay became "A. E.'s" friend and great admirer as Amelia was the most renowned woman pilot of the time.

Fay, perhaps reluctantly, also made the record books: Only one day after her solo at Curtiss, she became the first woman eligible to be a member of the Caterpillar Club, eligibility given to those who parachuted from their planes in order to save their lives.

Her instructor, "Sunny" Trunk, was asked to perform some acrobatics over Curtiss to test a Curtiss Fledgling as a potential trainer. He asked Fay if she would like to go up with him. Of course, Fay never said "no" to anything connected with airplanes.

They took off, but during the first loop, they noticed the tail fluttered. Then, as she described it in the June, 1982 issue of Smithsonian, "while the plane was inverted, the upper wing broke loose and the engine fell out and so did we."

She groped for the parachute rip cord and tugged. "I'd have probably broken both my legs but for the good luck of coming down into the trees," Fay said, "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."

The instructor had no sooner bailed out then he was hit on the head by a piece of the falling engine. He blanked out, but, fortunately, came to when very close of the ground. He yanked the ripcord and his chute streamed out. It never properly opened, but as he crashed through the branches of a tree, it caught him before he was dashed to the ground. Only a few feet from death or terrible injury, he, too, was eligible for the Caterpillar Club.

Both fliers were rescued from the treetops by the Valley Stream Fire Department.

* * *

LINDBERGH PHOTOS WANTED

It has been said that for about a week prior to his departure on his historic flight, Charles Lindbergh spend a great deal of time around Roosevelt Field and environs and many photographs had been taken of him by local residents. If anyone has any of these photographs, a young man who is writing a book about Mr. Lindbergh would very much appreciate your contacting him. His name is Winthrop D. Perkins and he lives at 71 Blackburn Place, Summit, New Jersey 07901.

HELP WANTED

Ye olde editor of PANORAMA is looking for an assistant editor to take over some of the preparation and mailing, with the possibility of eventually taking over the whole job. Perhaps some members would like to give it a try? It would be a gradual phasing in, so I do hope someone will give it serious thought. Please call me (Evelyn McQuade) at 791-2574. Thank you.

THE GOOD OLD SUMMERTIME

As we will not be meeting again until September, the Officers and Board of Trustees extend best wishes to all for a pleasant summer. [A fun kick-off event would be the 2nd annual HorseFair at Belmont Race Track (June 3 through 11). A few of us went last year and found it delightful, fun and educational. It was like spending a day at some place in Texas. Something of interest for the whole family.] See you in September!

Valley Stream Historical Society

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Valley Stream, N. Y. 11580

PANORAMA



Public School District No. 24, Valley Stream, L. I.,
Brooklyn Avenue School,
where a draft board was
established in 1941.



VOLUME XVII, NO. 1

SEPTEMBER 1989

N E X T M E E T I N G

Wednesday,
September 20, 1989
8:00 p. m.

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

Program

POLICE SELF-SUPPORT GROUP

Just what does happen to policemen who have been wounded in the course of performing their duties and then forced to retire as a result of them? This evening's guest speakers are four members of a group comprised entirely of disabled policemen. They will relate stories of exactly how they became disabled, presenting a graphic description of the perils they faced and how they handled them.

Bert Keller has arranged for this program and said "it will be one of the most astounding we will ever have." We urge all members (and their guests) to make every effort to attend to show support and appreciation for these men and their colleagues who have sacrificed so much for our safety and welfare. We also extend an invitation to representatives of local police departments to attend this program.

Refreshments for this evening will be provided by the Executive Board.

BITS OF THIS 'N' THAT...

We hope everyone enjoyed the summer, in spite of the rain!

As you can see, we have a dues renewal form available again this month for the convenience of those who have not yet taken care of that little matter.

We will be holding our Annual Covered Dish Supper at our October 18 meeting.

Al Mayernik will present another of his slide programs in November; this one will be on the New York World's Fair of 1964/65.

The observance of the 60th Anniversary of our dear old Valley Stream Central High School will be by way of a gala Reunion sponsored by the Alumni Association on Saturday, October 14th at the Grand Royal Hotel in Hempstead. Between 800 and 1,000 people are expected to attend. So far, Alumni are coming from 31 of the 50 states, as well as the Virgin Islands and France!

ON THE LIGHTER SIDE...

I came across the world oxymoron in our paper. Since I didn't know what it meant, I looked it up and found this definition in my American Heritage Dictionary: "A rhetorical figure in which an epigrammatic effect is created by the conjunction of incongruous or contradictory terms."

After reading the meaning to my son, he commented, "Well, that clears that up!"
(Gretchen Fritz,
Reader's Digest)



VALLEY STREAM HISTORICAL SOCIETY
P. O. Box 22
Valley Stream, New York 11582

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1989 MEMBERSHIP FORM
EXPIRES JUNE 1990

Name _____ Renewal _____ New _____

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| _____ Individual.....\$ 5.00 | _____ Organizational.....\$25.00 (clubs, business org., etc.) |
| _____ Student..... 2.00 | _____ Sustaining (tax exempt gift).. 50.00 |
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BITS OF HISTORY, MOSTLY LONG ISLAND

By Al Mayernik

VALLEY STREAM IN WORLD WAR II - Part I

Coming of the War

For the perceptive, the signs of coming of war could be noted several years before America's direct entry on December 7, 1941.

Japan had already invaded Manchuria and China in 1931 and 1932 and sunk the American gunboat "Panay" in December 1937.

Hitler's forces invaded Austria in March 1938. At Munich, in September, Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain of Great Britain and France's Daladier agreed to the cession of Czechoslovakia's Sudetenland to the Nazis. Hitler occupied Bohemia and Moravia in March 1939 and created the "independent" Republic of Slovakia. Poland was invaded in September by Germany and the Soviet Union; Britain and France declared war on Germany on September 3, 1939.

America's first reaction was to recall that an ocean 3,000 miles wide separated the nation from Europe and to affirm that European problems were not ours.

1940 was a terrible year for Europe. After the "phony war" of the winter of 1939-40, the blitzkrieg forces of the Third Reich invaded the Netherlands, Belgium and Luxembourg. Thousands of fleeing civilians were machine-gunned from the air by the invading Germans. The enemy easily circumvented the Maginot Line; France fell in May/June 1940. Then, in the summer of 1940 began the horror of the bombings of the Battle of Britain.

Alarmed, Congress passed the first peacetime conscription law in the United States in September 1940.

If the editorials of the Valley Stream Mail and Gibson Herald truly reflected the mood of the Village and, perhaps, of the nation, we Americans had moved far from our position of isolation of the late '30's and early '40's.

The January 2, 1941 issue carried these war stories on the front page:

Britain's Douglas Bader, legless war ace, downed more than 10 German planes.

The new aircraft carrier "Hornet" was launched.

The Queen visited children in the London Underground air shelters.

The Committee to Defend America by Aiding the Allies met in Lynbrook.

The Valley Stream Mail's editorial for that week read in part:

"...War talk, nothing but war talk. The papers are full of it. Acquaintances who meet on the streets stop to talk of the latest bombings (in Britain) and to speculate upon the probability of the United States engaging in it..."

(To be continued)

* * *

FIFTY YEARS AGO - 1939... Pan American initiated commercial overseas air travel from a base on Manhasset Bay; The New York World's Fair opened on April 30 in Flushing Meadow; NBC started off its first regular TV broadcasts with the opening of the World's Fair; Fiorello LaGuardia was mayor of New York City; "The Jack Benny Show" was voted the most popular radio show; Joe Louis was heavyweight champion; bestselling books were "The Grapes of Wrath," "Rebecca," and "The Yearling"...favorite movies included "Goodbye, Mr. Chips," "Gone With the Wind" and "The Wizard of Oz"...popular songs were "Beer Barrel Polka," "Over the Rainbow" and "Jeepers Creepers"...two of the most popular movie stars were Tyrone Power and Jeanette McDonald...the Yankees beat the Reds in the World Series; the Green Bay Packers were the top professional football team.

Valley Stream Historical Society

P A N O R A M A

P. O. Box 22

Valley Stream, New York 11582

Non-Profit Organization

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P A I D

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

PANORAMA



NEWSLETTER



Former Municipal Building, Rockaway Avenue at Jamaica Avenue; home of Village government 1936-1955; purchased by Village Board on January 29, 1940 for \$70,000.

VOLUME XVII, No. 2

OCTOBER 1989

NEXT MEETING

Wednesday,
October 18, 1989
6:30 p.m.

Holy Trinity Episcopal
Church Hall

Brooklyn Avenue & 7th Street
Valley Stream

COVERED DISH SUPPER

The door opens at 6:15 and members and guests are invited to start off the evening with a wine and cheese social. (Non-alcoholic beverage will also be available.) Supper will follow at 7:00 p.m. and your covered dishes should be according to the alphabetical assignments below:

- A - G - "Starchy"-type, hot or cold. This might be potatoes, beans, rice, pasta, etc.
- H - O - Vegetable content, such as salads, casseroles, etc.
- P - Z - Dairy-type foods (eggs, cheese); gelatins, fruit; fish, hot or cold.

As kitchen facilities are limited, hot foods should be fully cooked and hot.

DO NOT BRING MEAT OR MEAT-CONTENT DISHES. The Society will provide these items, as well as bread, butter, tea and coffee. The Executive Board will provide cakes for dessert in lieu of covered dishes.

A minimum donation of \$2.00 per person will be collected at the door.

Guests are welcome; however, they will be expected to adhere to the foregoing requirements, unless you undertake to do this for them.

A short business meeting and musical program will follow the supper.

As was suggested last year, perhaps everyone could label their dishes so we'll know the answer to 'what was in that marvelous casserole, salad, etc.'

BITS OF THIS 'N' THAT...

We thank Bert Keller and the gentlemen from the Police Self-Support Group for their sharing of their extraordinary experiences--very touching and informative.

Our sincere sympathy to Al Mayerlik and his family on the sudden passing of their brother, Vincent.

Speaking of Al, he would welcome all items of interest pertaining to Valley Stream during the World War II era. Any photographs, anecdotes, personal experiences, etc., should be sent to Al through our post office box address shown on the other side of this page.

We will soon be dropping all delinquent members from the PANORAMA mailing list and do we hate to do that! If you haven't yet paid your dues, you can do so at the Covered Dish Supper or by mail to the post office box. The membership categories are: Individual - \$5.00; Student - \$2.00; Contributing - \$7.50; Family (4 or more in one family) - \$12.00; Organizational (clubs, business org., etc.) - \$25.00; Sustaining (tax exempt gift) - \$50.00; Life (tax exempt gift) - \$100.00. Checks should be made payable to the Valley Stream Historical Society.

ON THE LIGHTER SIDE...

The following epitaphs were spotted by some ghosts while making their rounds last Halloween:

IN
MEMORY OF
LIDIA
WIFE OF
SIMEON PALMER

IN
MEMORY OF
ELIZABETH
WHO SHOULD
HAVE BEEN THE
WIFE OF
SIMEON PALMER
(Little Compton, Rhode Island)

HERE LIES THE BODY OF JOHN MOUND
LOST AT SEA AND NEVER FOUND
(Winslow, Maine)

HE CALLED
BILL SMITH
A LIAR
(Tombstone, Arizona)

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

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Valley Stream Historical Society
P. A. N. O. R. A. M. A.
P. O. Box 22
Valley Stream, New York 11582

BITS OF HISTORY, MOSTLY LONG ISLAND

By Al Mayernik

VALLEY STREAM IN WORLD WAR II - Part II

Coming of War (cont'd)

The first peacetime conscription in United States history was authorized by Congress when it passed the Selective Training and Service Act in September 1940. Men between the ages of 21 and 35 were required to register for one year of service. (The term of service was extended to 18 months in August 1941.)

Selective Service Board 723 met in the Brooklyn Avenue School. Every two weeks or so, the Valley Stream Mail and Gibson Herald published a list of inductees and volunteers who were to report to the Jamaica induction center for acceptance or rejection by the Army. From Jamaica, the newly-sworn "Government Guests" were usually sent to Camp Upton, Long Island.

In President Franklin Roosevelt's message to Congress on January 6, 1941, he proposed lend-lease legislation which gave the President the power to sell, transfer, lend or lease necessary war supplies whose defense was vital to the defense of the United States. In effect, aid to Britain. In this speech, he stated that the Four Freedoms should prevail everywhere in the world:

freedom of speech and expression
freedom of worship
freedom from want, and
freedom from fear.

In the January 9, 1941 issue of the Valley Stream Mail, the editorial approved the President's speech and closed with the paragraph:

We want a decent world in which to live. We want a world in which brute force does not dominate. We want a world where truth and honor exist among nations. We want a world in which no race of people is discriminated against and persecuted. We want a world in which we can worship God according to the dictates of our conscience.

On January 28, 1941, at a rally at the crowded meeting room of the Andrew Fatscher Post 854, American Legion, endorsed supporting the Committee to Defend America by Aiding the Allies and urged the passage of lend-lease.

* * *

WILL OAKLAND, AFTER VALLEY STREAM...

Just prior to entering the armed forces at the outbreak of WWII, I happened to be playing the piano in a band one Saturday evening at a place called "Cawley's" in the Cypress Hills section.

It never occurred to me that I would be accompanying on the piano a well-known entertainer. During the floor show, a handsome gentleman with white hair came out and introduced himself to me saying, "I'm Will Oakland. Would you accompany me in the key of B-flat to a medley of songs and finishing with my sign-off, 'Let's Grow Old Together?'"

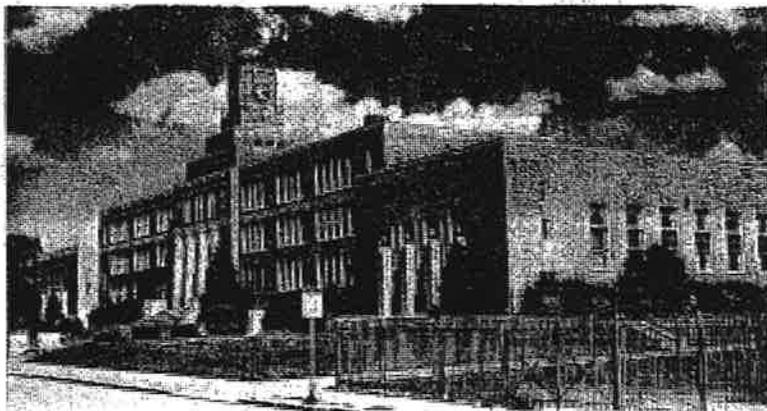
I was elated to play for the Irish tenor. Later, I had the distinct pleasure of tuning in to WOR in the evening and until the wee hours of the morning listening to and singing along whenever they played the popular song, "Let's Grow Old Together."

(This remembrance of Junius J. Morra of Richmond Hill appeared in the New York Daily News a few years ago.)

PANORAMA



NEWSLETTER



Valley Stream Central High School

VOLUME XVII, No. 3

NOVEMBER, 1989

NEXT MEETING

Wednesday,
November 15, 1989
8:00 p.m.
Holy Trinity Episcopal
Church Hall
Brooklyn Avenue & 7th Street
Valley Stream

Program

NEW YORK WORLD'S FAIR - 1964-65
"Peace Through Understanding"

Al Mayernik is favoring us with another of his wonderful slide shows, this one commemorating the 25th anniversary of the last world's fair held in New York City. Many people seem to remember the 1939 Fair better than this one, so it will be fun to have our memories refreshed by Al's commentary and pictures.

We wish to thank Marion Raeder, Eileen Brennan, Marion Clinchy and Dot Smith, who will be supplying the refreshments for tonight's meeting.

LAST CALL for members who have not yet paid their dues. We will be revising the PANORAMA mailing list after the November meeting and deleting the names of all who have not renewed their memberships. Believe me, we hate to do this!

The membership categories are:
Individual.....\$ 5.00
Student..... 2.00
Contributing..... 7.50
Family (4 or more in one
family)... 12.00
Organizational (clubs,
business org., etc.)... 5.00
Sustaining (tax exempt
gift).....50.00
Life (tax exempt gift)..100.00

Checks should be made payable to the Valley Stream Historical Society.

Claire McMahon and Lena Savery of the Membership Committee have reported that several members sent in Contributing category dues and we wish to thank them.

BITS OF THIS 'N' THAT...

Last month's Covered Dish Supper was a delightful evening, although not as well attended due to the inclement weather. As always, the food was delicious. Our Recording Secretary, Margie Chvatal, brought in a delectable cake with the intriguing name of "Watergate Cake." She has promised our President Anthony Melillo that she will research the reason for the name and report back to us at the November meeting! To top off the evening, Bert Keller led us all in a delightful Sing-a-Long, supplying us with song sheets and accompanying us on the piano.

During the short business meeting, former President Ed Fare presented our hard-working Alphonse Mayernik with a Life Membership--so well deserved for his impossible-to-measure contributions to the betterment of the Society. (And, a nice guy, to boot!) Ed also presented service awards to officers and committee persons with whom he had worked during his administration.

Eileen Brennan will have some holiday items for sale at the Country Store for the November meeting.

The October 14th celebration of the 60th anniversary of Central High School was a huge success, with about 850 alumni and guests in attendance at the Grand Royal Hotel in Hempstead. The day started off with a tour of the School in the morning, followed by a march to Firemen's Field for a football game. And then, as Helen Zang described the evening in last week's MAILleader, "The hugging and the kissing, the backslapping and handshaking and the 'I love you's' and the 'I'll never forgets' and the love and loyalty and the lump in the throat singing, "Onward, Central, onward Central, we are proud of you, with your colors gaily flying, we will e'er be true"--meaning every word as we did years ago was one of the many highlights of a beautiful evening."

We do not meet during December, nor is PANORAMA published. Our next meeting will be on January 17, 1990 and the program will be a return visit by member Frank Melillo speaking on astronomy.

'Til then, the Officers and Trustees wish everyone a happy holiday season.

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

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BITS OF HISTORY, MOSTLY LONG ISLAND

By Al Mayernik

VALLEY STREAM IN WORLD WAR II - Part III

Coming of War (cont'd)

During the darkening days of the autumn of 1941, the placid pace of small-town living apparently continued in Valley Stream. An important news item in the Valley Stream Mail and Gibson Herald was "No jump in school taxes for 1941." The big sports news was the signing of Dick Poillon, former Central High football star, with Valley Stream's own, the Long Island Indians.

The Long Island Indians were a professional football team whose home field was Firemen's Field, Valley Stream. At the November 2nd game of the Indians vs. the Wilmington Clippers, singer Kate Smith, coach Frank Leahy of Notre Dame and coach Jim Crowley of Fordham attended. Once again, Dick Poillon was the hero of the game.

But for many months, awareness of the war in Europe and Asia was noted in the Village. A scrap drive for aluminum, needed for national defense, was held during the summer. Aluminum was then expensive and Valley Stream set a collection goal of 5 tons of this metal which was needed in the aircraft industry. Assisting in the drive were the Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, the Police and the Mothers' Club. A special children's show was given at the Valley Stream Theatre on July 2nd. Admission was by giving any discarded aluminum kettle, pot, frying pan, etc. In the drive, 2,200 pounds of the valuable metal were collected.

In October, the air raid practice organized by the local Defense Council and the Valley Stream Fire Department was declared a success. Air raid wardens were appointed. Exactly 167 planes were reported from the listening post at Central High School in an 18-hour period.

A very active organization was Bundles for Britain. Headquartered in Lynbrook to include the surrounding villages, its aim was to collect and send new and used clothing, food and other items to the British, who were then heroically resisting the bombings of the Luftwaffe.

The Valley Stream Red Cross put out a call for 35 women to knit sweaters for our service men.

A big block party was held on Rockaway Avenue between Hawthorne Avenue and Valley Stream Boulevard to raise money for the USO. Two orchestras played alternately and it was estimated that 3,000 attended.

Both veterans' organizations, the Andrew Fatscher Post No. 854 of the American Legion and Post No. 1790 of the Veterans of Foreign Wars, declared they were prepared to donate blood should the emergency arise, and to serve the Village whenever needed.

However, the pro-defense (or pro-Allied) feeling was not unanimous. A very strong America First Committee had its offices at 428 Rockaway Avenue. Its sole purpose was to keep America out of the war. The committee claimed a membership of ten million in the United States.

(To be continued)

* * *

BERT KELLER remembers well his days as an air raid warden during the 1940's. They were stationed on the roof of Central High School and worked in teams of four. On bitter cold nights they took turns thawing out in a little room in the bell tower of the school. This was very serious work, but Bert does laughingly recall those occasions when their sightings of possible enemy planes turned out to be birds in flight.

Perhaps some of our readers would like to share their recollections of World War II. If so, please do drop Al Mayernik a line (address at top of this page).