

# THE LONG ISLAND HISTORICAL JOURNAL



Captain Nathan Post House, Bridgehampton, c. 1890

Fall 2002/ Spring 2003

Volume 15, Nos. 1-2



*Starting from fish-shape Paumanok where I was born...*

*Walt Whitman*

**STONY  
BROOK**  
STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK

Fall 2002/ Spring 2003  
Volume 15, Numbers 1-2

**Published by the  
Department of History  
Stony Brook University**

Copyright 2003 by the *Long Island Historical Journal*

**ISSN 0898-7084**  
All rights reserved

**Articles appearing in this journal are abstracted and indexed in  
*Historical Abstracts and America: History and Life***

The editors gratefully acknowledge the support of the Office of the Provost and of the Dean of Social and Behavioral Science, USB. We thank the Center for Excellence and Innovation in Education, USB, and the Long Island Studies Council for their generous assistance. We appreciate the unstinting co-operation of Ned C. Landsman, Chair, Department of History, USB, and of past chairpersons Gary J. Marker, Wilbur R. Miller, Joel T. Rosenthal, and Fred Weinstein.

*The Long Island Historical Journal* is published annually in the spring. Annual subscriptions are \$15.00, single copies \$15.00. Address articles, correspondence, books for review, and subscriptions to:

The Editor, LIHJ  
Department of History  
Stony Brook University  
Stony Brook, New York 11794-4348

We publish original studies of any aspect of Long Island history. Submit manuscripts in duplicate on 8 1/2" x 11" paper, double spaced with generous margins and on an IBM-compatible disk. Notes should be numbered consecutively, assembled at the end of the text and modeled on examples in the *Chicago Manual of Style*.

*Stony Brook University is an affirmative  
action/ equal opportunity educator and employer.*

# THE LONG ISLAND HISTORICAL JOURNAL

*Guest Editor:* Marsha Hamilton, USB

*Book Review Editor:* Marilyn Weigold, Pace University

*Associate Editor:* Richard P. Harmond, St. John's University

*Assistant Editor:* Ann M. Becker, USB

*Founding Editor:* Roger Wunderlich

*Editorial Board:* Charles F. Howlett, Amityville Memorial High School; William McAdoo, USB; Gary J. Marker, USB; John W. Pulis, USB; Wilbur R. Miller, USB; Joel T. Rosenthal, USB; Eli Seifman, Center for Excellence and Innovation in Education, USB; Christine McCormick, CEIE, USB; Donald E. Simon, Monroe College; Gaynell Stone, Suffolk County Archaeological Society; John A. Strong, Long Island University, Southampton Campus; Natalie A. Naylor, Hofstra University; Marilyn Weigold, Pace University.

*Advisory Board:* David Yehling Allen, USB Library; Barbara Mazor Bart, Walt Whitman Birthplace Association; Susan L. Battley, USB; Antonia Booth, Southold Town Historian; Wallace W. Broege, Suffolk County Historical Society; Edwin G. Burrows, Brooklyn College; Floris B. Cash, USB; Steven R. Coleman, Columbia University; Robert E. Cray, Jr., Montclair State College; Mildred M. DeRiggi, Nassau County Museum; Judith Estes, Huntington Historical Society; Elizabeth Ewen, SUNY College at Old Westbury; John A. Gable, Theodore Roosevelt Association; John A. Hewlett, Half Hollow Hills School District; Kenneth T. Jackson, Columbia University; Joshua Ruff, Long Island Museum of Art, History and Carriages; Paul E. Kerson, Queens Historical Association; Gerald S. Kessler, Friends for Long Island's Heritage; Jeffrey A. Kroessler, Historian; Ned C. Landsman, USB; Robert B. McKay, Society for the Preservation of Long Island Antiquities; Mary Ann Mrozinski, Rufus King Manor; Philip F. Palmedo, Long Island Research Institute; John W. Pratt, USB; Alice Ross, USB; Peter Rapalje, Cedar Swamp Historical Society; Sr. Joan Ryan, St. Joseph's College; Vincent F. Seyfried, Garden City Historian; Elly Shodell, Port Washington Public Library; Edward J. Smits, Nassau County Historian; R.L. Swanson, Marine Sciences Research Center, USB; Francis J. Turano, USB.

*Cover:* Captain Nathan Post House c. 1890. Courtesy Bridge Hampton Historical Society.



## TABLE OF CONTENTS

RURAL CONNECTIONS: EARLY REPUBLIC BRIDGEHAMPTON  
AND ITS WIDER WORLD, 1790-1805

*By Ann H. Sandford — 1*

ALICIA PATTERSON, "NEWSPAPERMAN"

*By Geri Solomon — 23*

THE LIFE OF TEUNTJE STRAATMANS: A DUTCH WOMAN'S  
TRAVELS IN THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY ATLANTIC WORLD

*By Annette M. Cramer van den Bogaart — 35*

THE LEGACY OF NATHANIEL ROGERS (1787-1844), LONG ISLAND  
ARTIST FROM BRIDGEHAMPTON

*By Natalie A. Naylor — 54*

THE GENESIS OF NEIGHBORHOOD HEALTH CENTERS IN SUFFOLK  
COUNTY: 1965-1968

*By Priscilla Redfield Roe — 72*

A PROUD MEMBER OF THE COMMUNITY OF PORT JEFFERSON  
REMEMBERS HIS CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE LAST GREAT CRUSADE—  
WORLD WAR II

*By Richard Acritelli — 104*

LOST AND FOUND:  
JOHN UNDERHILL, CAPTAIN OF NEW ENGLAND AND NEW  
NETHERLAND

*By John A. Strong — 122*

## SECONDARY SCHOOL ESSAY CONTEST

LONG ISLAND DEFEATS GOLIATH:  
THE CLOSING OF SHOREHAM

*By Jane Forman — 128*

ORIGINS OF THE SUFFOLK COUNTY POLICE DEPARTMENT

*By Brian Johnson — 141*

PRAYER IN PUBLIC SCHOOL:  
ENGEL V. VITALE AND ITS EFFECT ON LONG ISLAND  
COMMUNITIES

*By Andrew Malone — 148*

BOAT BUILDING IN AMITYVILLE

*By Victoria Niemi — 163*

**BOOK REVIEWS**

John Komia Domatob. *African Americans of Eastern Long Island*. Black America Series.

John Komia Domatob. *African Americans of Western Long Island*. Black America Series.

*By Thomas D. Beal — 168*

Jeffrey A. Kroessler. *New York, Year by Year: A Chronology of the Great Metropolis*.

George J. Lankevich. *New York City: A Short History*.

*By Joanne Reitano — 171*

Victor Principe. *Images of America: Bellport Village and Brookhaven Hamlet*.

*By Kathleen L. Scheibel — 173*

Natalie E. Naylor, ed. *Journeys on Old Long Island: Travelers' Accounts, Contemporary Descriptions and Residents' Reminiscences, 1744-1893*.

*By Marilyn Weigold — 174*

Theresa M. Collins. *Otto Kahn: Art, Money, and Modern Time*.

*By Karen Cooper — 176*

James E. Haas. *This Gunner at His Piece: College Point, New York And The Civil War With Biographies of the Men Who Served*.

*By Edward H.L. Smith, III — 177*

## CONTRIBUTORS

**Richard Acritelli** is a history teacher at Rocky Point High School where he also coaches wrestling, baseball and cross country. He is currently pursuing his master's degree in history and education at SUNY Stony Brook.

**Cynthia Barnes, RN, MS** is a maternal-child nurse with training as a mid-wife. She also has a Masters in Adult Health/Critical Care from SUNY Stony Brook School of Nursing with a specialty in chronic illness (end stage renal disease). Currently, she is active in local planning in the Three Village area and how land use decisions affect the health, social and economic well-being of the community.

**Annette M. Cramer van den Bogaart** has a B.A. from SUNY Stony Brook. She is currently a doctoral student in the Department of History at Stony Brook. This is her first published work.

**Natalie A. Naylor** was on the faculty of Hofstra University where she taught Long Island and American social history. She was director of the Long Island Studies Institute at Hofstra from its founding in 1985 until she retired in 2000. Dr. Naylor has edited or co-edited several of the Institute publications, most recently *Journeys on Old Long Island*, reviewed in this issue of the journal.

**Priscilla Redfield Roe, Radcliffe BA'42, MA'43.** Before 1965 she concentrated her "public volunteer" work on League of Women Voters studies related to L.I.'s natural resources, the passage of a N.Y. enabling act for the establishment of town-level environmental agencies, and the passage of the Fire Island National Seashore Act of 1964. After 1965, with the revelations and challenges brought to Suffolk County by the War on Poverty and the role she was asked to take on, she shifted her focus from natural to human resources preservation.

**Ann H. Sandford** is a former associate professor of history at Regis College, Weston, Massachusetts, and computer executive. She resides in Bridgehampton where she continues to research family and local history.

**Geri Solomon** is the Assistant Dean of Special Collections/ University Archivist at Hofstra University and interim director of the Long Island Studies Institute. She holds an M.A. in history and a certificate in Archival Management.



Charles Denson. *Coney Island: Lost and Found.*

Michael Immerso. *Coney Island: The People's Playground.*

Brian J. Cudahy. *How We Got to Coney Island: The Development of Mass  
Transportation in Brooklyn and Kings County.*

*By Garry Wilbur — 180*

Havemeyer, Harry W. *East on the Great South Bay: Sayville and Bayport,  
1860 – 1960.*

*By Sister Joan Ryan — 187*

Steven Gregory. *Black Corona: Race and the Politics of Place in an Urban  
Community.*

*By Thomas D. Beal — 188*

Kristen J. Nyitray and Ann M. Becker. *Stony Brook: State University of  
New York. College History Series.*

*By Joel Rosenthal — 191*

Barbara Shea. *Discover Long Island: Exploring the Great Places from Sea  
to Sound.*

*By Natalie Naylor — 193*

**BOOK NOTES — 195**

**COMMUNICATIONS — 196**

**John A. Strong** is professor emeritus at the Southampton campus of Long Island University. His most recent publication is *The Montaukett Indians of Eastern Long Island*, Syracuse University Press, 2001.

**Joyce Moore Turner**, Hunter College, BA, Columbia University Teachers College, MA, both before and after her retirement as a teacher and administrator in the Brentwood School Systems, held numerous leadership positions in Brookhaven Town and in county, state, and federally supported programs for health systems planning in the Nassau/Suffolk region. Active in civil rights causes, she also chaired the Consortium of New York State Health Systems Agencies and sat on the Governor's Health Advisory Council.

## **SECONDARY SCHOOL ESSAY CONTEST WINNERS**

### **At the time of submission:**

**Jane Forman** was a sophomore at Paul D. Schreiber High School, Port Washington.

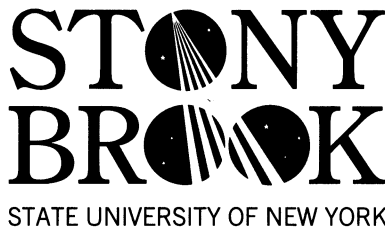
**Brian Johnson** was a junior at Amityville Memorial High School.

**Andrew Malone** was a sophomore at Paul D. Schreiber High School, Port Washington.

**Victoria Niemi** was a junior at Amityville Memorial High School.

The Center for  
Excellence and Innovation  
in Education  
of  
Stony Brook University

Committed to teacher education,  
educational research and development,  
and partnership programs with schools  
in the Long Island region,  
is pleased to support the  
*Long Island Historical Journal*



# Long Island Studies Council

An interdisciplinary membership group of scholars, teachers, librarians, archivists, historians, and others interested in the study of Long Island and its heritage, invites readers of the Long Island Historical Journal to its dinner-lecture meetings and site visits.

For information, contact either of our two co-presidents:  
Natalie A. Naylor  
496 Clarendon Road  
Uniondale, New York 11553  
(516) 538-7679  
Natalie.Naylor@ Hofstra.edu

Or

Richard Stewart  
16 Barteau Avenue  
Blue Point, New York 11715  
(631) 363-2044  
email: cookieshs16@aol.com

# CEDAR SWAMP HISTORICAL SOCIETY

TO RESEARCH, EXPOSE, AND PRESERVE NATIONAL HISTORY AND THE HERITAGE  
OF THE 17th CENTURY SETTLEMENT OF CEDAR SWAMP  
(EAST OF HEMPSTEAD HARBOR)  
CEDAR SWAMP, LONG ISLAND 11548



## MEMBERSHIP

SINGLE .....	-\$18
FAMILY .....	-\$35
PATRIOT .....	-\$55
BENEFACTOR .....	\$100
LIFE .....	\$800

PROTECT  
OUR HISTORY  
AND  
ENVIRONMENT



PLEASE MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO AND MAIL TO:

CEDAR SWAMP HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
CEDAR SWAMP, LONG ISLAND 11548



—ABSOLUTE CHARTER FROM STATE OF NEW YORK DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND BOARD OF REGENTS—

*Subscribe to the Long Island Historical Journal*

\$15.00 per year

Published in the Spring

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL \_\_\_\_\_

TELEPHONE \_\_\_\_\_

Please make checks payable to LIHJ and mail to:

LIHJ  
Department of History  
Stony Brook University  
Stony Brook, NY 11794-4348

**THIS READER-SUPPORTED JOURNAL DEPENDS ON YOU**

**Readers' Comments:**

We welcome comments, proposals for articles or reviews, or offers to help in whatever phase of our work you select.

## EDITORIAL COMMENT

As all of our subscribers are aware, the past few years have been a time of transition for the Long Island Historical Journal. We appreciate your patience and ask for your continued support through yet another period of change. This summer, I will move to Mobile, Alabama, where I have accepted a position in the History Department at the University of South Alabama. A new editor will take over the Journal in July. The History Department at SUNY Stony Brook and the Editorial Board of the Journal are currently working out the details for continuing the journal. We will announce the changes in a letter to subscribers when all of the issues are settled. Until then, you may continue to send letters and email to the Editor, LIHJ, care of the History Department at SUNY Stony Brook.

I appreciate the opportunity that the Editorial Board and History Department gave me when they asked me to take over the Journal, and I thank you for your support over the past two years. I have enjoyed editing the Journal, working with the authors and hearing from subscribers. And although I look forward to the new challenges (and lack of snow!) in Mobile, I will miss Long Island.

We have a wide mix of articles in this issue, ranging from the seventeenth-century Dutch colony of New Netherland to the 1960s. The first article discusses the connections that the East End, specifically Bridgehampton, had with the wider world in the early national period. We then move to Alicia Patterson, the colorful founder of Newsday and trustee of Hofstra University. The third article examines the life of a Dutch woman in the Caribbean and New Netherland during the seventeenth century, and the next focuses on Nathaniel Rogers, a well-respected artist from Bridgehampton in the early nineteenth century. Priscilla Redfield Roe then describes the events surrounding the implementation of community health centers in Suffolk County during the turbulent mid-1960s. Next, we read about Martin Andrews' memories of being a prisoner of war during World War II and, finally, about the activities of a soldier from an earlier era, John Underhill. We also have four student essays, the winners of the Secondary School Essay Contest, and many book reviews. Both of these features illustrate the academic promise of our local high school students and the continuing vitality of the study of Long Island history.

We hope you enjoy this issue of the Journal. **Please watch for our letter explaining the upcoming editorial changes.** Thank you for your continued patience and support.

Marsha Hamilton  
Editor, Long Island Historical Journal

# RURAL CONNECTIONS: EARLY REPUBLIC BRIDGEHAMPTON AND ITS WIDER WORLD, 1790 - 1805

By Ann H. Sandford

Influential travel accounts so misrepresented early republic Bridgehampton that James Truslow Adams, the eminent historian, wrote in 1916 that the Long Island hamlet was still "an isolated little country village" in 1793. Visitors had tended to overlook the literacy of its residents and the commercial activity that accompanied their rural way of life. Images of a tradition-bound and isolated community have continued to color our understanding of the hamlet's history.<sup>1</sup>

Schoolmaster Stephen Burroughs posited that residents were simply "illiterate." Arriving from New Hampshire in 1791, he wrote that they "are the genuine picture of ancient times...." He explained in his *Memoirs* that their "insular situation" on the South Fork of Long Island was the cause.<sup>2</sup> Another New England visitor misleads in what he left unsaid. The president of Yale College and Congregational minister, Timothy Dwight, traveled from East Hampton through Bridgehampton on horseback in May 1804 on a trip from New Haven to record local customs on Long Island. He observed that Bridgehampton's "surface is agreeably undulating; the soil better, or better cultivated, than any tract, of the same extent, on our journey; and the houses are in more instances neat in their appearance."<sup>3</sup>

The flamboyant Burroughs, who taught and organized a subscription-based library in the hamlet in 1793, no doubt chose to exaggerate the ignorance and isolation of its residents in order to enhance the significance of his own civic contributions.<sup>4</sup> Dwight also imposed a partial framework on his observations when he implied that Bridgehampton's houses compared favorably even to those of East Hampton, and ranked its farm fields among the best on Long Island.<sup>5</sup> Like Burroughs' judgments about people, Dwight's visual assessment of material life in the community fits a larger purpose.

He traveled into New York State because lands along its eastern border and on Long Island had been heavily populated by New Englanders during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Dwight wanted to persuade settlers that New England institutions must be replicated on the frontier. As one historian has suggested, he sought in his travels to document the "transformation of the wilderness into a civilized society. ... Christianity and private property were the means through which to transform the 'savage' into 'civilized men.'"<sup>6</sup> Given Dwight's assumptions about wilderness and the cultures of Native Americans and New England settlers,



Bridgehampton's well-tended landscape and dwellings were the achievements of advancing civilization. Commercial activities and ships were not visible from the vantage point of a horseback rider headed west on the "Main Road to East Hampton," today's Montauk Highway.<sup>7</sup>

Many people in the community were, no doubt, cut off from surrounding settlements and places offshore. Lacking access to carts, horses, a scheduled stagecoach service, boats, or regular mail, they never traveled "abroad," that is, outside the hamlet, just as Burroughs contends. Yet, others engaged in the movement of people, goods, and ideas, and built on earlier economic and political connections to the outside world while they created the agricultural landscape that so impressed Dwight. For both observers, comparisons to their experiences in New England served to define their perceptions of literacy, isolation, and mobility in Bridgehampton.

A less subjective assessment of a rural community requires the study of many facets of contemporary experience, preferably in comparison to neighboring towns, villages and hamlets.<sup>8</sup> That task is complicated for Bridgehampton by the lack of modern studies of other rural Long Island communities during the early republic.<sup>9</sup> To begin to address the problem, this paper will sketch a framework for a history of Bridgehampton based on documents from the years 1790 to 1805, that is, after the American Revolution but before the nineteenth century whaling boom. It surveys the hamlet's layout, population size, certain economic activities and transportation routes, the institutions that supported its intellectual life, the religious environment, and aspects of its political culture. In doing so, it explores the material and cultural circumstances that linked residents to outside events and places, and to the processes that were stimulating change.

When Dwight wrote in 1804 that "We saw no village in this parish," his standard for comparison was, no doubt, Sag Harbor, or East Hampton where he had just visited with Lyman Beecher, the local Presbyterian minister. These two villages boasted densely laid out house lots along main streets. Dwight described East Hampton as "compactly built" and estimated that it had "about one hundred dwelling houses." In contrast, Bridgehampton, whose center was known as Bull Head, was spread out. The homesteads noted by Dwight were scattered throughout six distinct settlements and covered about twenty-five square miles.<sup>10</sup> Sagaponack, known as Sagg well into the nineteenth century, and Mecox were communities oriented toward the Atlantic Ocean beach. While the largely forested land in those areas eventually succumbed to clear-cutting and highway construction, the land just north of the dunes provided a cartway for settlers' use in farming and fishing. The lands known as Hayground, Scuttle Hole, and Huntington Hills were each distinguished by a commons.



Only Sagaponack and Bull Head had some clustering of homesteads. The concept of Bridgehampton, in evidence in documents by the start of the eighteenth century, included all six settlements. In 1800 the name was already over one hundred years old. People felt a sense of belonging to both their settlement, such as Sagaponack or Hayground, and to the hamlet of Bridgehampton.<sup>11</sup>

A Triangular Commons anchored the center of the hamlet. In 1700, residents had worshipped at a meeting house located a mile or so to the south of the Commons, closer to the ocean and adjacent to the bridge that connected the Mecox and Sagaponack settlements and gave Bridgehampton its name. A school, built after 1720 near the Commons further north, and a new meeting house reflected confidence in a future oriented toward commerce, as well as agriculture. Mercantile activity was becoming more valuable than ocean fishing and travel along the cartway north of the dunes lessened. Merchants now depended on the deep harbors built on the bays.<sup>12</sup> Trade and communications largely depended on water routes, especially through the Long Island Sound and the Atlantic Ocean. The new center, closer to Sag Harbor, had been cleared of forest during the seventeenth century. It was adjacent to the crossroads of the Main Road to East Hampton, running east-west, and the north-south intersection of "Beach Road" and the "Sag Harbor Road." Militia companies from Bridgehampton, Sag Harbor, Southampton, and East Hampton had trained there prior to the Revolution because it was centrally located on the South Fork. During the 1790s, Bridgehampton could boast that it had a church, school, library, tavern, post office, grist mill and store, all within a half mile radius of its center.<sup>13</sup>

Historically, Bridgehampton's population count has varied according to the placement of boundaries on the particular map consulted, residents' feelings for the community's contours, and the time period under review. While the hamlet experienced some population turnover from the start of the revolution through the British occupation, the absolute figures for Bridgehampton, about 1,220 residents in 1776 and 1,250 in 1800, vary little. Lacking a central governmental jurisdiction, the federal census imbedded the hamlet's population in the record for Southampton Town. In 1800 the town numbered 3,672 "Free" men, women, and children, slaves, and "Others Free." This last category referred primarily to African Americans. But it also included those Native Americans, such as the Stephen Cuffee family of Bridgehampton, who resided outside the land leased in 1703 by the Shinnecock tribe from the Town for a thousand years.<sup>14</sup> The Shinnecoeks who lived on the tribal land were not counted.

This imbedding of the hamlet in the town data applied to all hamlets and villages in the federal census counts of the period, making it difficult to compile a comparative view of places with fewer than 1,500 residents. In

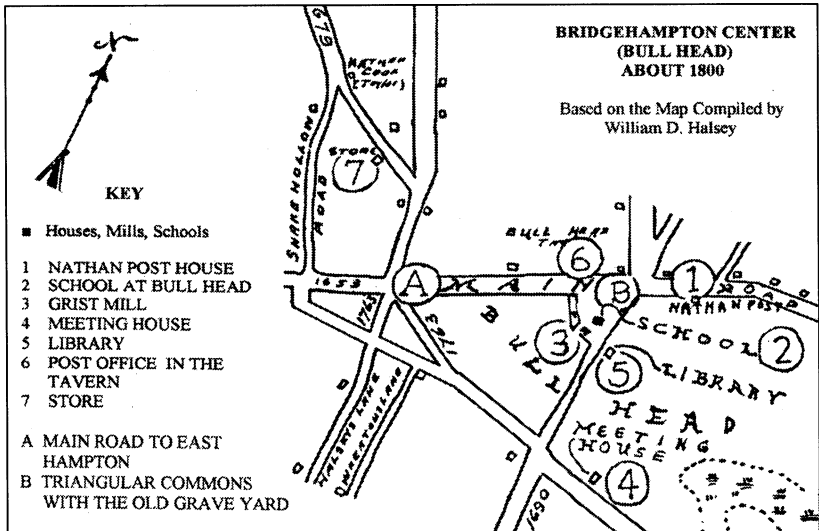


Figure 2: Map of Bridgehampton Center about 1800. Based on William D. Halsey map.

an 1850 analysis of census data from 1790 to 1850 called "Cities, Towns, Counties, &c.," a clearly frustrated government statistician lamented that the census does not identify "all places having an aggregation of over fifty or a hundred persons, with a store, tavern, blacksmith shop or school house and post office, or some or all of these...."<sup>15</sup>

Clearly, Bridgehampton encompassed a large expanse of territory between 1738, the year of the last colonial land divisions to affect the hamlet, and the population growth that accompanied the development of the whaling industry from the 1810s through the 1840s. Based on the work of local historian William D. Halsey in the 1920s and evidence from nineteenth century map-makers, the acknowledged boundaries during the early republic appear to be: on the west, Noyack Path, lower Deerfield Road and the eastern edge of Mecox Bay, today's Town Line Road on the east, separating Bridgehampton from the Town of East Hampton, the ocean on the south, and Huntington Hills on the north.<sup>16</sup> The Hills separated the

hamlet from bustling Sag Harbor and its growing wealth, fueled by maritime trade and whaling, and their spin-off industries, shipbuilding and rope-making. By cross-referencing households recorded in the 1800 census with a historical street map of homeowners from the same year, the population of Bridgehampton in 1800 likely numbered 1,257 and included fifty-two free African Americans and forty-two slaves.<sup>17</sup> Its roughly 235 households averaged 5.3 members. In other words, Bridgehampton was a substantial rural hamlet for its time.<sup>18</sup> Of the surrounding villages, Sag Harbor counted only about 850 residents around 1800 and East Hampton village perhaps 1,400. The Southampton Town center to the west, including some surrounding land with farms, totaled fewer than 1,250 people.<sup>19</sup>

Bridgehampton residents spent most of their time engaged in a household economy. They raised crops, minded horses, cattle, and sheep, hauled grains and lumber, fished, tended crafts, and cared for children, the elderly, and the ill. They often bartered for goods and services locally. By the early nineteenth century, fields, meadows, barnyards, workshops and homesteads had rebounded from the damage and disruptions suffered under British occupation from 1776 to 1783. The transformation is reflected in Dwight's picture of a well-maintained rural landscape, its agriculture made abundant by the flatness of the Bridgehampton terrain, largely covered with rich, rock-free loam, in stark contrast to much of the land in New England. Even Stephen Burroughs' observation, so contrary to Dwight's tone, that the "people are at the lowest ebb in their improvements, [sic] either in agriculture, manufacture, or domestic economy," is partly accurate. While Burroughs had no empirical yardstick for measuring the economy of the 1790s against an earlier time, he does use his knowledge of New England to ground his comparison. Perhaps thinking of the woolen factory at Hartford established during the Revolution, he suggests that "Could useful manufactories be introduced, and three quarters of the inhabitants turn their attention to them," prosperity would follow in the hamlet.<sup>20</sup> Yet the factory at Hartford, like one of the same period in New Haven, had fallen into disrepair by the 1790s. Recent studies show, moreover, that rather than rapid industrial change in late eighteenth century New England, household, not factory, production dominated manufacturing activity. On the South Fork of Long Island, "manufactories" never took hold. Advancements in agricultural techniques, as well, mirrored New England in that they did not begin until after 1810.<sup>21</sup>

A few families, however, benefited from relatively large scale commercial enterprises. They took advantage of the hamlet's location along the Main Road. It provided the means for people to learn about urban life abroad and to travel in the region, all along exchanging information about business opportunities. Roads and paths led north to the harbors of

the Sound, a gateway to New England and the Caribbean. Early in the eighteenth century, merchant Edward Howell, a great-grandson of the wealthiest among the founders of Southampton Town, opened Merchants Path from Poxabogue, an area in the northern part of Sagaponack, through the woods to Northwest Harbor. He and his three partners sought access to the harbor for their "Whale Company." Other settlers from Sagaponack began to keep small ships at "the harbor of Sagg." Merchants sailed from this soon-to-be-called "Sag Harbor" to trade agricultural products, such as beef, corn, and pork, for molasses, rum, and sugar. They sold whale oil and bone, and other products in Boston for cash or in exchange for manufactured goods.<sup>22</sup> Their crews observed port life and the array of exotic goods displayed in shops. In telling their stories, these merchants and mariners, like the soldiers and refugees returning from the Revolutionary War, informed the hamlet's residents about life in other places and broadened their horizons.

Three men of substance who engaged in trade beyond Bridgehampton were clearly market oriented and looked to commerce, as well as agriculture, in their pursuit of wealth. Ebenezer White was the grandson of a 1692 Harvard graduate who had been Bridgehampton's first permanent minister. This grandson was an artisan weaver, a merchant, and a lumberer. He recorded his business transactions in an account book which he kept for over sixty years, until his death in 1802. Now visible only in a faint but clear hand, we learn that he wove cloth to customer order. One customer was Uriah Rogers of Southampton, a major in a Suffolk County regiment who escaped to Connecticut with his family during the Revolutionary War. On 10 October 1786, Rogers purchased "tee Cops" and "1 pound of suger." Glasses and sugar pots frequently appear in White's accounts, indicative of the consumer economy that had taken hold among many local residents.<sup>23</sup>

White probably acquired his goods from traders in Sag Harbor. Other residents went to Sag Harbor to buy these valued imports. A young woman living in Bridgehampton and the anonymous author of a 1805-1806 diary, writes in an entry on 5 September 1805: "this day I have ben to the docters store [in Sag Harbor] and have got some calico." On a Sunday evening six months later she delights in asserting that "I have got a new Calico for a gown and I go to the singing Chol...."<sup>24</sup> Tastes on Long Island's South Fork, like other aspects of life, echoed those of rural New England. Writing in *The Age of Homespun* about the 1790s, Laurel Thatcher Ulrich maintains that

**As agricultural products flowed out of American ports, English manufactures poured in....Country girls wore calico gowns on Sunday and home-woven 'tyers' over home-made gowns during the week.<sup>25</sup>**

When White wove cloth to customer order, no doubt with yarns provided by his customer, and maintained a store, he was participating in a mixed economy of household production, commerce, and agriculture.

Besides selling cups and glasses, as a lumberer in 1769 White supplied "timber for a briganteen," perhaps being built at one of the shipyards near the harbor. In a much later entry, he was paid for the "Carting of bords ... [to] the wharf." In 1801 White's community standing was recognized when he was elected among the four new elders in the evolving Presbyterian organization of Bridgehampton's main church.<sup>26</sup>

Deacon David Hedges also lived in Sagaponack. A large farmer, confirmed by Burroughs as "a man of extensive property," Hedges was made deacon in 1767 and elected elder the same year as Ebenezer White. As a dairyman, Hedges processed large quantities of cheese. He often sold it on the New York market, most likely transporting it there by packet boat on Long Island Sound from Sag Harbor. Unlike White, he owned slaves, three in 1800, down from the four listed in the census a decade earlier. In 1805, the deacon had the birth years of his slaves' youngest children recorded in the Southampton *Town Record* in compliance with a recent New York State law. It required slave-owners to register all slave births that occurred after 4 July 1799: male slaves were to be emancipated at age twenty-eight and females at twenty-five. The *Town Record* shows that Jehu, Voilet, and Kingston were born in 1801, 1803, and 1805, respectively. Their names suggest that their parents came from the French and British West Indies. Like Anthony and William, free blacks listed as heads of household in the Bridgehampton portion of the 1800 federal census, the Southampton town clerk neglected to record the children's surnames.<sup>27</sup>

One task Hedges apparently demanded of his slaves was the digging of ditches in Sagg Swamp. Ditches served to drain the wetland and steer the water into a stream. Helped by a dam, the stream powered a water mill. In 1793 the town Trustees granted Hedges and Moses Howell the right to build either a fulling mill or a grist mill on the body of water called "Sagg Mill pond stream," the same location where the Town Meeting had required a mill owner to "full [,] Tenter & press the towns cloth" nearly fifty years before. Hedges and Howell built a new fulling mill to wash, stretch, and press the woolen fabric brought to them by household weavers and, perhaps, by the owners of the woolen mill at Calf Creek on Mecox Road, not far away.<sup>28</sup> The mill boosted the productivity of household cloth-making and its consequent economic value.

The deacon also gained political prominence. Southampton's Town Meeting elected him Supervisor during some of the same years when he was representing Suffolk County in the New York State Assembly, in the late 1780s and again in the early 1800s.<sup>29</sup> Large landowners and merchants in the eastern part of Southampton Town supported his frequent re-election

as Supervisor. In the Assembly, Hedges could feel assured that he represented a significant jurisdiction on Long Island. Based on the state census, the apportionment of delegates in 1802 assigned three seats each to Suffolk County and to Queens. In contrast, King's County garnered only one seat in the state Assembly.<sup>30</sup> The population was still weighted toward eastern Long Island around 1800.

A third man of means, Captain Nathan Post, also engaged in multiple economic activities, as local magistrate, merchant, and farmer. Like White and Hedges, he took advantage of opportunities in sea transport and business communications to prosper in a world beyond the local. Post was a militia officer and privateer who had fled Bridgehampton for Connecticut early in the British occupation of Long Island. During the 1790s he assumed part ownership in a brig that engaged in the West India trade. The investment resulted in substantial profits for Post who, no doubt, used them to expand his farming activities.<sup>31</sup> These three men, among others, used their knowledge of and their activities in a wider world to inform their lives in the hamlet. They served to reduce feelings of isolation among its residents and to further local interest in consumerism by their example.



Figure 3: Nathan Post House, built c. 1734 and purchased by Post c. 1770. Photo taken 1890s. Courtesy Bridge Hampton Historical Society.



During this period, some of Bridgehampton's most important institutions of education and culture benefited from changing attitudes and had grown along with the community's wealth, especially after Burroughs' arrival. To many families, the future required more education for young people in order to prepare them for business activities, commerce, and citizenship in the new republic. During the school year 1792-93, in addition to the day school where children learned reading, writing, and numbers, Burroughs taught an "evening school" in the circa 1720 schoolhouse on the Triangular Commons at Bull Head. His adult scholars studied "mathematics, geography, and rhetoric." Although Burroughs left Bridgehampton in 1794, his teaching helped expand the reach of basic education in the hamlet.<sup>32</sup>

Three years later, in the same school where Burroughs had taught, parents continued to show the value they placed on literacy. They paid for thirty-nine boys and thirteen girls to attend day school for some portion of the October-January term. Forty-five boys and nine girls attended during the January-March term. Both terms were taught by a William Gibbs. More boys than girls attended this school: twenty-six boys, compared to three girls, studied during two terms, indicating that boys received far more instruction in this settlement than girls.<sup>33</sup>

A total of sixty-four children attended school at Bull Head from ten to 108 days during the year. The pupils shared an elongated single room, with "neither wall nor ceiling," although boys were no doubt separated from girls by a center aisle. Most were probably in the age category that would reach adulthood during the years from 1805 to 1810 when they would utilize their skills more extensively in religious and economic life. In Sagaponack during the same school year, fifty-five boys and forty-six girls attended from two to 141 days. At ninety-three, total attendance in Hayground, which drew scholars from Mecox, was lower than Sagaponack but higher than Bull Head. Boys outnumbered girls, two to one. The number of days attended ranged from four to 140. A much smaller school in the neighborhood of Brick Kilns, on the northern edge of Huntington Hills, enrolled twelve boys and eleven girls.<sup>34</sup> In all, according to these records, 281 scholars, that is, 175 boys and 106 girls, almost 40% more boys than girls, attended a portion of at least one term in the hamlet's schools during the school year 1795-96. When mapped against an estimate of the available youth population in the 1800 federal census, that is, a count taken five years after the subject school year, and perhaps even reflecting a slightly higher population, 83% of children attended school for a portion of one or more terms during the year. In contrast, during the same 1795-96 school year, New York City enrolled only 24.7% of school age children. For the hamlet as a whole, it appears that just about all boys attended and roughly 65% of the girls.<sup>35</sup>

Given that the Bridgehampton had at least one school by 1720, I believe that these rates, adjusted downward somewhat for those children who attended school for very few days, are an accurate reflection of adult literacy within the community by, say, 1805. While the topic requires further research, we may conclude that perhaps 80 to 90% of boys and young men, and 50 to 60% of girls and young women were literate, and the trend was toward greater literacy. These rates are not as high as the recent research on literacy rates in New England concludes. There, based on studies of signatures on wills and deeds, and declarations by men and women regarding their ability to read and write reported in the 1850 census, scholars have concluded that "basic literacy for men was already nearly universal by 1780...." In at least one rural area, Windsor, Vermont, about 80% of female deed makers were literate after 1786.<sup>36</sup>

Not only did Burroughs help improve local education during his stay in Bridgehampton from 1791 to 1794, he spearheaded the most significant event in the hamlet's intellectual life, the founding of its first library, in 1793. Located in a private house on Ocean Road, not far from the school, the library's books reflected the compromise list negotiated between the local minister, the evangelical Aaron Woolworth, and the free-thinking Burroughs. Roughly forty households subscribed to the library, one of 266 subscription, or social, libraries organized in the United States between 1791 and 1800.<sup>37</sup> Burroughs' penchant for secular books, stressing history and geography, and Woolworth's choices, emphasizing ethics, formed the basis for its core holdings. Perhaps this library is where the young woman who so delighted in owning a calico gown found one of Tom Paine's publications. In her 5 April 1805 diary entry, she reveals that "my curiosity led me to read a few lines I think that he gives very good reasons for what he their says about the bible but I don't think that I shall joine with him."<sup>38</sup>

Not surprisingly, travel was well represented. The library's book list included Sparman's *Voyage to the Cape of Good Hope* and Cook's *Travels*. The library also offered religious treatises and novels. In reading fiction, the wealthier, literate locals, like other Americans, were often learning the manners and practice of civility that might improve their social standing. For example, it circulated Samuel Richardson's *Clarissa Harlowe*, a source of helpful social rules and advice.<sup>39</sup>

Readers could also fulfill their desire to remain informed of political and international events. They read *Frothingham's Long Island Herald*, Sag Harbor's weekly newspaper from 1791 to 1798, and the first newspaper published on Long Island.<sup>40</sup> Moreover, the federal government responded to the personal needs of the growing, literate portion of the local population and to the communications requirements of mercantile activity by establishing a post office in Bridgehampton in October 1794. It was located

in the Bull Head Tavern on the northeast corner of the Triangular Commons. The appointment of a permanent postmaster signaled an advance in communications over the less regular schedules of the post riders. They had traveled the length of Long Island, starting in New York and delivering mail to most villages over a post road laid out during the 1760s.<sup>41</sup>

10. This day I and aunt Esther  
have been to Mr. Johnsons and  
all things has been things we had  
a very agreeable afternoon this  
evening I have been to a meeting  
and the girls have been to see  
me a few minutes and now home  
I am all a lone and its at most  
eleven and I think that I  
will go to bed for I shall be  
sleepy in the morning  
11. This day I have not been at  
school I have been reading the book  
the heart has not been dose my  
heart bleed for such people  
how could I sorrow for her  
12. This day I have been to Mr. Johnsons  
I am very content I think I  
dont feel very well I have got  
the head ache  
13. This day I have seen Mr. J.  
Celoyes from Amityville and  
how I made me think I have  
much comfort I have taken at  
see has been the last time that  
I ever shall

Figure 4: Diary of unknown authorship. Entries 10-13 June 1805. Courtesy of the Hampton Library.

Like commerce and intellectual life, religion drew a growing number of participants after the Revolution. An earlier period of religious enthusiasm in the 1730s, perhaps stimulated by the revival in evangelical faith known as the "Great Awakening" which took hold in Connecticut, saw the building of a new meeting house in 1737. It was more than twice the size of the old one and may have accommodated as many as 350 parishioners. It stood within a half mile of the hamlet's first school, built a few years earlier on the Triangular Commons near the Main Road to East Hampton. Until his death

in 1821 Reverend Aaron Woolworth led "Meetings" at this church. A 1784 Yale graduate and former student of Timothy Dwight, Woolworth had been ordained after the Revolutionary War, apparently on Long Island, and in 1787 contracted with "Subscribers" from the "Parish of Bridge Hampton" to serve as minister. By 1790 and for at least a decade, he owned one slave, a domestic servant no doubt, rather than an agricultural worker. He married Mary Buell, daughter of Samuel Buell, another Yale graduate and the influential revivalist minister at the East Hampton Presbyterian Church. In 1792 Buell maintained that his congregation had experienced "four harvest times . . . of the flocking of souls to Christ."<sup>42</sup> During the 1790s Woolworth, like his father-in-law, was leading his congregation into the revival associated with the second "Great Awakening," the movement championed by Dwight and others in New England to bring reborn Christians into the church.

After Buell's death in 1798, young Lyman Beecher, another former student of Dwight at Yale, assumed the ministry in East Hampton. Woolworth and Beecher, like Dwight and Buell, saw conversions as a measure of their success as ministers.<sup>43</sup> Their mutual support encouraged their efforts. The young woman diarist wrote in 1805: "this day I have ben to meeting and Mr beacher preacht Mr wolworth being absent . . ." <sup>44</sup> Another entry captures her evangelical feelings:

[April] 14 Sunday this day I have ben to meeting and Mr Aron [Woolworth] spoke from prover[b] very well. . . . we are quilty of grose sins . . . that we have had set forth before us to day in such a manner as to make the stoutest heart . . . tremble<sup>45</sup>

The diarist attended meeting regularly, enjoying the social occasion. She lamented when she was unable "to go to meeting so I shall not be blest with those that I want to see so much . . ." <sup>46</sup> Years later, Woolworth recalled his congregation's enthusiasm at the revivals that took place in the Meeting House on Sagaponack Road:

when under the influence of the Holy Ghost this house for three successive weeks was every evening crowded with hearers solemn as the grave, and listening as for their lives to the message of Salvation.<sup>47</sup>

The experience of a Yale education, genuine friendship and a mutual interest in revivalism continued to bond church leaders in Bridgehampton and East Hampton. These local ministers of the second Great Awakening aroused the feelings of believers concerned with salvation and a sense of

community. They were connected with New England in a communications network of both the written and spoken word. Like mariners, soldiers, large farmers, merchants, and magistrates, preachers also benefited from a wider world of literacy, trade and contact. The hamlet's political culture gained as well.

From Bridgehampton's earliest settlement in 1656, political authority rested with town government in Southampton. Officers were elected annually at the Town Meeting. They levied property taxes, judged civil and criminal cases, regulated relations with the Shinnecocks, ensured care for the poor, maintained school houses, constructed highways, and defended land boundaries through the annual election of a Fence Viewer, charged with seeing that the fences and hedges that marked property boundaries were not moved.<sup>48</sup>

Occasionally, residents were drawn into expressing their views on national issues. One such event came in 1798. With John Adams as president and John Jay as governor of New York, both Federalists, the United States government was launching preparations for war with France. The French had been attacking American merchant ships in retaliation for the Jay Treaty that favored France's enemy, Great Britain. Local opposition to the government's actions rested on the memory of the harsh British occupation and on merchants' need for trade with the French after Britain closed both its home market and its West Indian colonies to American vessels. Readers of the *Herald* already found arguments to defend Republican positions against the Federalists, who had begun to levy new taxes for the war effort.<sup>49</sup> Moreover, in July 1798, Congress passed the Sedition Act, severely restricting public criticism of the government's policies. Soon Republican opponents of these policies from Bridgehampton and surrounding communities followed the example of other New York Republicans who had raised liberty poles in their towns to protest.<sup>50</sup> With growing support throughout Suffolk County, Republicans organized a political rally to defend "Liberty." It was called for Wednesday, 19 December on the Triangular Commons, a central location in Bridgehampton. The event depended upon the political connections between local leaders, and county and other Republicans.

Hundreds of people converged on the commons for the rally. Aaron Burr, the New York City lawyer, leader of the Republicans in the New York State Assembly, and the next vice president, attended and may even have addressed the rally. Three days later, an account of the events that took place on 19 December was published in Greenleaf's *New York Journal and Patriotic Register*.<sup>51</sup> While warding off the chill from a northwest wind, the rally celebrants raised a seventy-six foot "Liberty Tree," shorn of its branches. A vane on the top read "Liberty" on one side and displayed an eagle, an American flag, and a "Liberty Cap" on the other. Mottoes,

apparently carved into the trunk, read, "No unconstitutional act, no unequal taxes, Liberty of the Press, speech, and sentiment . . . ." <sup>52</sup>

According to the newspaper account, the crowd sang the "celebrated song of the 'Liberty Tree' " and its leaders raised their glasses and delivered "patriotic toasts," perhaps enjoying rum bought at nearby Bull Head Tavern. They toasted "The Tree of Liberty . . . The People of the United States . . . [and] The Constitution . . ." and they honored George Washington and those who had lost their lives in the Revolution. The most cheers were reserved, however, for a toast to

Thomas Jefferson, our worthy Vice-President; may his republican Virtues, bless our Country, by raising him soon to the first office of government and may the tongue and hand of the slanderer who would injure his honest fame be palsied.<sup>53</sup>

The rally thus expressed early support for a Jefferson campaign for President in 1800.

In their toasts, local Republicans also expressed a degree of optimism and engagement uncharacteristic of isolated men. Some may have been troubled by a collective rhetoric or commitment which declared an intent to paralyze the "tongue and hand" of any "slanderer...[of Jefferson's] fame." Surely, this was a rough metaphor to use in a public place in defense of the Vice President's reputation.<sup>54</sup> However, most present were expressing intense national political feelings in their attacks on the Federalists, as their cheers bear witness. On that day, the Triangular Commons was serving as a central meeting ground for jubilant, focused Republicans just as it had for militiamen before 1776 and independence celebrants after 1783. Once again, Bridgehampton was connecting the Hamptons and Sag Harbor in a purpose reflective of its name.

While not a center for any unique intellectual movement, political event or economic development, by 1800 Bridgehampton nonetheless enjoyed growing literacy and an expanding communications and transport infrastructure that kept pace with its residents' changing needs. Contact with Boston, ports on the southern New England shore, the West Indies, Albany and New York City created a web of connections. For many people, the network made an escape from illiteracy and isolation possible. For a few, it led to migration. Nathan Sanford, born in Scuttle Hole, educated at Clinton Academy in East Hampton, and at Yale, began his accomplished political career in 1803 when he was appointed United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York by President Jefferson.<sup>55</sup> Others followed. For most, however, home was in Bridgehampton, the

place where residents' awareness of a wider world was not always obvious to the visitors who observed their everyday rural life.

## NOTES

*The author would like to thank Jerry Korman for his ever-present enthusiasm and support.*

<sup>1</sup> James Truslow Adams, *Memorials of Old Bridgehampton* (1916; reprint, Port Washington, N.Y.: Ira J. Friedman, Inc., 1962), 171. In his unpublished lectures, Mark Ciabattari frequently referred to the historical isolation of the villages from Southampton to Montauk: "The Literary East End," Lecture Series, 2 Oct 2000 - 21 May 2001, delivered at various Hamptons libraries.

<sup>2</sup> Stephen Burroughs, *Memoirs of the Notorious Stephen Burroughs of New Hampshire* (New York: The Dial Press, 1924), 271-72, 279.

<sup>3</sup> Timothy Dwight, *Travels in New England and New York*, ed. Barbara Miller Soloman, 3 vols. (Cambridge: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1969), 3: 222. Dwight's chapter, "Journey to Long Island," is conveniently reprinted in Natalie A. Naylor, ed., *Journeys on Old Long Island* (Interlaken, N.Y.: Empire State Books and Hofstra University, 2002). The Bridgehampton reference is on p. 94.

<sup>4</sup> Burroughs, 255, 276-79. The year is derived from an analysis of the seasons referred to in these pages.

<sup>5</sup> Dwight, 3: 222.

<sup>6</sup> Solomon, "Introduction," in Dwight, 1: x, xxxiii, xxxvii.

<sup>7</sup> "Map extending from Water Mill to Wainscott---About the year 1800," in William Donaldson Halsey, *Sketches from Local History* (1935; reprint, Southampton, N.Y.: The Yankee Peddler Book Company, 1966), n.p.

<sup>8</sup> I have avoided the use of the terms "town" and "village" in regard to Bridgehampton because they denote forms of local government in New York State. Bridgehampton is a non-self governing hamlet within the Town of Southampton.

<sup>9</sup> The most recent documented, interpretive study of Bridgehampton is Adams' *Bridgehampton*, published in 1916. For an early article largely based on original sources, see Henry P. Hedges, "The Story of Bridgehampton, Long Island, 1660 - 1910," in *Tracing the Past, Writings of Henry P. Hedges, 1817 - 1911, Relating to the History of the East End*, ed. Tom Twomey (New York: Newmarket Press, 2000), 335-55. Works on surrounding communities include James Truslow Adams, *History of the Town of Southampton* (Bridgehampton, N.Y.: Hampton Press, 1918) and T. H. Breen, *Imagining the Past: East Hampton Histories* (Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley Publishing Co., Inc., 1989). The latter primarily focuses on 1670-1730. Defining a comparative framework for rural communities is made complicated because hamlet residents are included in the federal census counts for towns and cities, a factor which has led historians to focus more on town studies than rural hamlet studies. The flurry of New England town studies published during the 1970s, although helpful in defining new approaches to community history, address the colonial period, not the early republic. Examples include Philip J. Greven, *Four Generations: Population, Land and Family in Colonial Andover, Massachusetts* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1970); John Demos, *A Little Commonwealth: Family Life in Plymouth Colony* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1970); Bruce Daniels, *The Connecticut Town: Growth and Development, 1635 - 1790* (Middletown: Wesleyan University Press, 1979).

<sup>10</sup> Dwight, 3: 217-18, 222. Lyman Beecher was the minister in East Hampton from 1799 to 1810.

<sup>11</sup> Nathaniel S. Prime defines Bridgehampton as "including Sagg, Mecocks, the Hay Ground and Scuttle Hole" in *A History of Long Island, from Its First Settlement by Europeans, to the Year 1845* (New York: Robert Carter, 1845), 199.

<sup>12</sup> For meeting house and beach travel, see Adams, *Bridgehampton*, 185-86, 190-91. The first known school was built in 1720 and faced the Triangular Commons, close to the Main Road.

<sup>13</sup> See Halsey, 70. By 1800 the Commons was enclosed by the Main Road on the north, Beach Road on the east-southeast, the cemetery, Mill Hill, and the school on the west-southwest. See Halsey, Map, 1700, n.p., Map, 1800, n.p.

<sup>14</sup> Writing in 1910, Henry Hedges estimated the population at 1,220 in 1776, using a local census. For the entire town east of Water Mill, the population was 1,432. See Hedges, "Bridgehampton," 345. "Federal



Census, 1800, Suffolk County, Long Island, New York," *The New York Genealogical and Biographical Record* 56, no. 2 (April 1925): 127-37. For the Shinnecocks, see Adams, *Southampton*, 40; John A. Strong, "We Are Still Here!:" *The Algonquian Peoples of Long Island Today* (Interlaken, N.Y.: Empire State Books, 1998), 17-19, 81-84.

<sup>15</sup> *Statistical View of the United States...Being a Compendium of the Seventh Census....* (Washington: A. O. P. Nicholson, 1854), 192.

<sup>16</sup> See Map, 1800 in Halsey; Halsey, 16. I have excluded Wainscott on the east and the land on Halsey's map that is west of lower Deerfield Road and around the Water Mill Commons. Boundaries are confirmed, although for a somewhat later period, in John Homer French, ed., *Gazetteer of the State of New York* (Syracuse: R. Pearsall Smith, 1860), 638, note 11: Bridgehampton extends "from East Hampton to the W[estern] part of Mecox Bay."

<sup>17</sup> We can assume that, for the most part, the census-taker went door-to-door, recording names of the "heads of families" and noting the number of family members by gender and age category. Using the map of households for 1800 from Halsey and the territorial boundaries suggested, 118 names appear on the street map as neighbors, in roughly the same order as on the census. An additional one hundred family names appear in the census, but not on the map. They are preceded and followed in the census list by the names that appear on the household map. Seventeen additional names are on the map, but not in the census, making a total of 235 households. See Map, 1800 in Halsey.

<sup>18</sup> In comparison, the village of Concord, Massachusetts, founded twenty years earlier than Bridgehampton, numbered roughly 1,570 people when it led the American Revolution. See Richard W. Wilkie and Jack Tager, *Historical Atlas of Massachusetts* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1991), 140.

<sup>19</sup> See Dwight, 3: 216. My estimate of the population of the village portion of East Hampton Town deducts 150 people from the total of 1549 in the 1800 census to account for Amagansett, Montauk and the part of Sag Harbor located in the Town. See the table, "Size and Population of Towns in Suffolk County, 1650 - 1930," *East Hampton Star*, 17 November 1933. Henry Hedges calculated the population of Southampton Town west of Bridgehampton at 1,349 residents. Deducting a conservative one hundred residents for the hamlet of Water Mill leaves, roughly, 1,250 residents in the Southampton village portion of the Town. As late as 1870, the

population of what was then defined as the village center of Southampton was only 943. Hedges, "Bridgehampton," 345.

<sup>20</sup> Burroughs, 271-72.

<sup>21</sup> Laurel Thatcher Ulrich, *The Age of Homespun* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2001), 279-80; see Solomon, in Dwight, 1: xxx, n. 43.

<sup>22</sup> George Rogers Howell, *The Early History of Southampton, New York, with Genealogies* (Albany: Weed, Parsons and Co., 1887), 310; Adams, Southampton, 83, 140-142, 232 note.

<sup>23</sup> For Pastor White, see Hedges, "Bi-Centennial of the Bridgehampton Presbyterian Church," in Twomey, 96-97. For Ebenezer White identified as a farmer, see "List of Persons taking Oath of Allegiance, 1778," Class 5, Vol. 1109, Colonial Office Papers, Public Record Office, London, copy, assigned 7. Rogers appears on a 1783 list owning a ten acre Town Lot worth £500, reproduced in Adams, *Southampton*, 174. For the granting of a pass to Rogers by the Committee of Southampton on 31 August 1776 to evacuate his family, see *The Third Book of Records of the Town of Southampton, Long Island, N.Y. . . .*, transcribed by William S. Pelletreau (Sag Harbor, N.Y.: John H. Hunt, 1878), 409. Ebenezer White's Ledger, MVL 114, Bridge Hampton Historical Society, Bridgehampton, N.Y., 105, 107.

<sup>24</sup> Anonymous Diary, 1805-06, LI Doc 75, Hampton Library, Bridgehampton, N.Y., 5 Sept 1805, 9 Mar 1806.

<sup>25</sup> Ulrich, 281.

<sup>26</sup> Ledger, 47, 105; Hedges, "Church," 103.

<sup>27</sup> Burroughs, 268; Frederic Gregory Mather, *The Refugees of 1776 from Long Island to Connecticut* (Albany: J. B. Lyon Co., 1913), 393; Hedges, "The Settlement of Bridge-Hampton, L. I.," in Twomey, 65; Hedges, "Church," 103. For slaves by household, see *Heads of Families at the First Census of the United States Taken in the Year 1790, New York* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1908), 167; Census, 1800: 135. For the 1799 New York law, see Edgar J. McManus, *Black Bondage in the North* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1973), 177; *Town Records*, 374; Census, 1800: 132-33. Headstones for Jehu Rugg, who died 24 February 1878, and Kingston Rugg, who died 22 February 1880, are in the Old Cemetery, Bridgehampton.

<sup>28</sup> The ditching of Sagg Swamp by slaves is cited in Adams, *Bridgehampton*, 114, from anonymous, oral sources and quoted in Paul H. Curts, ed., *Bridgehampton's Three Hundred Years* (Bridgehampton, N.Y.: The Hampton Press, 1956), 120; Town Records, 112-13, 366.

<sup>29</sup> Burroughs, 268. For ships to New York, see Adams, *Southampton*, 213. For political offices, see Records of Southampton Town Meetings, 4 April 1786, 2 April 1799, 5 April 1803, 3 April 1804, 1 April 1806, 7 April 1807, in *Town Records*, 312, 356, 365-66, 375, 381; Franklin B. Hough, *The New York Civil List from 1777 to 1858* (Albany: Weed Parsons & Co., 1858), 163-65, 177, 179-80.

<sup>30</sup> See Hough, 148.

<sup>31</sup> See Adams, *Bridgehampton*, 137-38. On trade, see Burroughs, 269-70. The British West Indies were partially reopened to American trade in the 1790s. Post's gravestone in Poxabogue Cemetery, Sagaponack, NY, reads in part, "respectable Magistrate...a good Patriot."

<sup>32</sup> Burroughs, 278, 355.

<sup>33</sup> See Halsey, 37.

<sup>34</sup> See the lists of scholars that include the number of days of school attended published in Halsey, 34-35, 37, 39, 41.

<sup>35</sup> Using the Census, 1800: 127-37, the calculated total for the male and female age category, 10-15, among Bridgehampton families, is 199. Assuming that school began at age seven, I have added ninety-seven children to address the ages seven to nine by taking 3/9 of the total, or three years out of nine possible for under ten year olds, and forty-two children to address the age category sixteen to twenty-five by taking 2/10 of the total, for the sixteen and seventeen year olds eligible for school, making a total of 338 available school age children. Dividing the 281 scholars by the available children, or 338, results in 83% school attendance. Comparable numbers for just the boys are 175 and 176 yielding 100% and for the girls, 106 and 162, yielding 65%. The information on New York City is cited in Cathy N. Davidson, *Revolution and the Word: The Rise of the Novel in America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986), 64.

<sup>36</sup> Joel Perlmann and Dennis Shirley, "When Did New England Women Acquire Literacy?," *William and Mary Quarterly* 48, 1 (Jan 1991): 53, 64.

- <sup>37</sup> The subscription price was £1 and the total subscription about £40. See Burroughs, 279-80; Halsey, 115. Numbers of libraries are cited in Davidson, 27.
- <sup>38</sup> Diary, 5 April 1805. That many residents read books is certain from the complaint a few years later that books were disappearing from the library.
- <sup>39</sup> Susanna Ashton., "A Corrupt Medium: Stephen Burroughs and the Bridgehampton Library," unpublished manuscript, 2001: Appendix, n.p. I am grateful to Professor Ashton of Clemson University for granting me access to her paper. For a version of the original 1793 book list, see Halsey, 116-17. The library survived into the early nineteenth century. For a discussion of the dissemination of books on manners and the influence of novels, see Richard L. Bushman, *The Refinement of America: Persons, Houses, Cities* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1992), 29-30, 36.
- <sup>40</sup> For an analysis of the newspaper's contents, see Beatrice Diamond, *An Episode in American Journalism: A History of David Frothingham and His Long Island Herald* (Port Washington: Kennikat Press, 1964), 68-91. Sag Harbor had no newspaper from December 1798 until 1802, when the Herald's publisher, Henry Dering, launched a new paper. See Steven R. Coleman, "Political Journalism in the 1790s: *Frothingham's Long Island Herald*," *Long Island Historical Journal* 4, no. 1 (Fall 1991): 101.
- <sup>41</sup> Ernest S. Clowes, *Wayfarings* (Bridgehampton, N.Y., 1953), 263-4. The Sag Harbor post office dates from 1794. Coleman, 97. The Southampton post office dates from 1804. Adams, *Southampton*, 215. For post roads, see Nancy Hyden Woodward, *East Hampton, A Town and Its People, 1648 - 1994* (East Hampton: Fireplace Press, 1995), 92.
- <sup>42</sup> See Hedges, "Church," 93-95, 98; Adams, *Bridgehampton*, 191-92, 203; Census, 1800: 133; Buell is quoted in Breen, 203.
- <sup>43</sup> For references to revivals in Bridgehampton and East Hampton in 1804, see Dwight, 222; Soloman in Dwight, 1: xviii.
- <sup>44</sup> Diary, 16 June 1805.
- <sup>45</sup> Ibid, 14 April 1805.
- <sup>46</sup> Ibid, 27 April 1805.

<sup>47</sup> Quoted in Hedges, "Church," 111, and referring to events of 1800.

<sup>48</sup> See examples in *Town Records*, 358, 372-73, 376, 406; Adams, *Southampton*, 97-102.

<sup>49</sup> Coleman, 98-100.

<sup>50</sup> Alan Taylor, *William Cooper's Town, Power and Persuasion on the Frontier of the Early American Republic* (New York: Vintage Books, 1996), 263-65.

<sup>51</sup> Henry Dering had ceased printing the *Herald* two days earlier, concerned about the political atmosphere that had developed in response to the Sedition Act. See Coleman, 101.

<sup>52</sup> Quoted in Diamond, 50-51. The Republican-leaning *New York Journal* supported Thomas Jefferson and other opponents of the Federalists.

<sup>53</sup> Quotes are from the *New York Journal*, see Diamond, 50-51. For a discussion of public entertainment devoid of refinement, see Bushman, 49. Bull Head Tavern was also known as Wick's Tavern, after John Wick who established it around 1710. See Adams, *Bridgehampton*, 95.

<sup>54</sup> See Taylor's discussion of "rhetorical violence," 181.

<sup>55</sup> Grover Merle Sanford, *The Sandford/Sanford Families of Long Island* (Baltimore: Gateway Press, Inc., 1975), 27; Nathan Sanford Appointment Letter, 18 Nov 1803, Box 13, RG59, Appointment Records, Administration of Jefferson, 1801-09, National Archives, Washington.

## ALICIA PATTERSON, "NEWSPAPERMAN"

By Geri Solomon

The Board of Trustees of Hofstra College, in unceremonious fashion, voted to accept the nomination of Alicia Patterson as a member on 16 December 1943.<sup>1</sup> No one mentioned that Alicia was the first woman elected to the Board. In subsequent years, the college course catalogs lists Alicia's occupation as an "Editor and Publisher," yet no name is given to the publication that she produced, although by this time, all of Long Island knew of her newspaper, *Newsday*.<sup>2</sup> And so it is typical of Alicia Patterson's accomplishments; they are at once surprising for her time and gender and yet, somehow, expected of her.

Alicia Patterson was born on 15 October 1906 in Chicago, Illinois. Her father, Captain Joseph Medill Patterson, along with her cousin Colonel Robert McCormick, ran the *Chicago Tribune*, the paper her great-grandfather Joseph Medill founded. Her Aunt Eleanor Medill (Cissy) Patterson was the publisher of the *Washington Times-Herald*. In 1919, her father and cousin founded the New York paper *Daily News*. Alicia, herself, worked for her father in 1927, but was fired after a libel suit in which a story she wrote mixed up names in a divorce case. She then wrote for the magazine *Liberty* which was also owned by her family. Alicia claimed "news-papering" was in her blood.

Her formative years were anything but conventional. Her father decided in 1906 that he wanted to be a socialist and left the *Herald-Tribune*. Ironically, he went to his 400-acre estate where he wrote plays and political tracts. He raised Alicia as the son he never had, and he taught her to fish and hunt. She had a particular closeness with her father, which shaped much of her life. She thought he had a remarkable curiosity and insight into human nature, two of the qualities she found necessary in her eventual line of work. Incredibly, though her family was one of wealth and social stature, she was toughened up by some unorthodox parenting techniques. When Alicia was four, her father "shipped her off to Berlin to live with a German family and learn their language. She learned it so well that when he went to retrieve her she could no longer speak English. For a governess she had a Christian Scientist, who taught Alicia to ignore pain."<sup>3</sup> In addition, there were "character building" exercises including repeated dives off of the family swimming pool's diving board.

It is no wonder that she was rebellious in her teen years and was expelled from a variety of boarding schools. Her father sent her on a tour of Europe with her mother and sister, where she nearly drove her mother to distraction with her pranks. At one point, her mother, Alice Higginbotham Patterson,



Figure 1: Alicia Patterson, photo submitted for Hofstra Board of Trustees file, 1944. Hofstra University Archives.

cabled her father for advice. He returned the cable: "Keep Alicia Moving."<sup>4</sup> Alicia eventually graduated from Foxcroft in Middleburg, Virginia. She stuck close to home, in Chicago, for a while, had a coming-out party in 1925, and then went to New York when her father founded the *Daily News*.

Among Alicia's many traits was her enthusiasm for flight. She took to flying when she spent time with her father and they received their pilots licenses on the same day. At his suggestion, in 1931 she became a transport pilot.<sup>5</sup> She not only flew her own airplanes and set records for women flyers, including the 1931 aviation record from New York to Philadelphia, but she also wrote articles about her experiences. For *Vogue* she wrote, "Flying for Fun," and for *Liberty* she wrote "Joy Ride – A Story of Love and Wings."<sup>6</sup> Her second husband, Joseph W. Brooks, effectively "announced" their engagement in 1931 by crashing Alicia's plane into a tree! While she was touring Europe with her parents she had loaned Brooks'

the airplane and a gust of wind had tossed it around. He crashed near Notre Dame and the airplane burst into flames and was destroyed. A variety of newspapers carried the story, and after inquiring who owned the airplane, Brooks admitted that he was engaged to Alicia Patterson.<sup>7</sup>

Alicia's sense of adventure and challenge, however, did not end with flying. In her lifetime, she "went wild-boar hunting in India, fished for salmon in Norway, rode to hounds with some of the best English packs, tracked wild game in Indo-China."<sup>8</sup> It is typical of her personality that she tackled each of these adventures, unaware of just how atypical it was for her gender. One of her editors, Richard Aurelio, remarked that she had a "search for boldness, for mischief, for any idea that was unconventional. I always felt she approached every encounter as if she were on a safari, and that spirit made working with her and for her such a great adventure."<sup>9</sup>

Married and divorced twice while still in her 20s, she married Harry S. Guggenheim in 1939.<sup>10</sup> They lived in Sands Point in a thirty-room mansion. While on their honeymoon in New Mexico, Harry got a telegram that the Linotype machines and press from a recently closed Long Island newspaper were available. Although Alicia had said she wanted to run a paper, she balked at first and Harry insisted that they make the purchase. It was from this inauspicious beginning that the Long Island newspaper, *Newsday*, was born. The masthead bore the motto, "Where there is no vision, the people perish."<sup>11</sup> The paper was produced at a former auto



Figure 2: Alicia with "catch of the day." Patterson Photo Album Collection, Hofstra University Archives.



dealership and garage at 283 Main Street in Hempstead.<sup>12</sup> It was through Alicia's connections with the *Daily News* that she staffed the paper, and while Harry Guggenheim had put up the money for the newspaper, and was a 51% owner, Alicia was the lifeblood of the enterprise. While some viewed the whole operation as a toy for a wealthy woman and expected her to lose interest or thought that Guggenheim was indulging his new bride, (he is said to have remarked, "Everybody ought to have a job.")<sup>13</sup> Alicia viewed it as a chance to provide Long Island with the best possible paper she could.

On 3 September 1940 the first pages of *Newsday* rolled off the press. Although, according to Alicia, "it looked like hell," she was determined to make it better and in the next day's editorial exclaimed, "*Newsday*, we discovered, was just like a child, and as with our favorite youngsters, it refused to be at its best in its first public appearance. So, if you pardon a not-too-good pun, even if we err again, we will not be discouraged, for tomorrow also will be *Newsday*."<sup>14</sup> Her father had admonished her not to try a tabloid style paper on Long Island; he did not think suburbanites, or as he called Long Islanders "country folk," could handle it. Alicia, as always, did what she thought best, not what someone else told her, and *Newsday* was Long Island's first tabloid-style newspaper.<sup>15</sup>

Although Alicia was not originally from Long Island, she developed deep roots in her adopted home. She became involved with Hofstra College, which at that time was a young, commuter institution. She developed an enthusiasm for its goals and provided leadership as a new Trustee. Although she was the first woman on the Board, there were no "passes" given because of her gender. She was asked to be on committees and prove herself in the same ways as everyone else. In 1944, she wrote to the Board, "It is with real trepidation that I find myself a member of the Finance Committee. Frankly, finance is not my strong point...."<sup>16</sup> She asked instead, if she could be put on the Post-War Planning Committee. In that same year, however, she gave a donation to fund the salary of the Professor of Marketing and Management in the Business Division. Perhaps, she felt that although she did not deal well with finance, there should be education available for those who were so inclined!

Alicia had a wonderful relationship with John Cranford Adams, who had been appointed president of Hofstra College in 1944, and wrote him many letters over the years. He enjoyed the sharing of ideas back and forth immensely and they wrote often. He once remarked, "The only growth more extraordinary than Hofstra's these last ten years that I have known Long Island has been *Newsday's*."<sup>17</sup> Adams' asked Alicia for few favors but was effusive in his praise of her gifts to the College as she always remembered to donate money for items large and small. She wrote large checks for scholarships and persuaded Harry to give money as well. But she also gave for periodical subscriptions for the library, including the

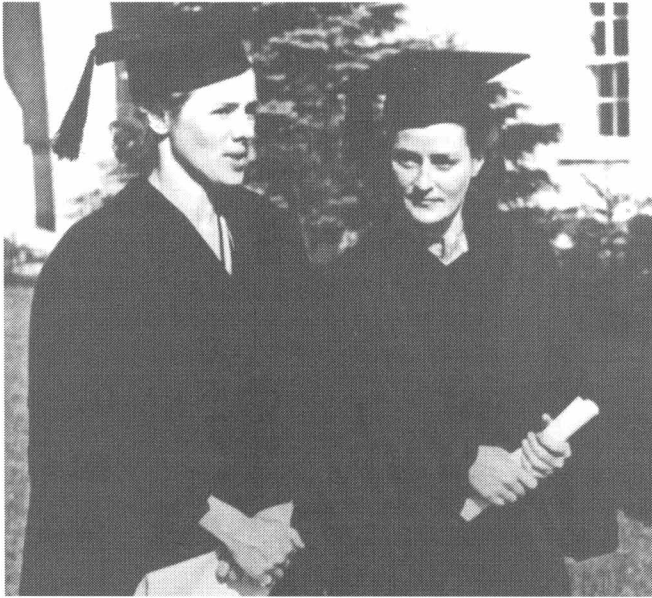


Figure 3: Alicia (right) with student at Hofstra College Commencement, c.1960. Patterson Photo Album Collection, Hofstra University Archives.

*Illustrated London Times*, and to the Trustee Flower Fund (in the 1950s this amounted to \$5.00.)

Her gifts, however, were not always monetary. For instance, John Cranford Adams asked if she would help the College hold an art exhibition in 1949. She told Adams she would write to "Uncle Sol" (Solomon Guggenheim) on behalf of Hofstra to see if they would lend examples of "non-objective art." Baroness Hilla Rebay (Director of the Museum of Non-Objective Art, as the Guggenheim was then known) was setting up the appointment when Solomon Guggenheim died and the exhibit was postponed.<sup>18</sup> Many years later, she helped to bring Adlai Stevenson, her childhood friend, to the campus for a convocation. Arthur Hobson Dean presented Stevenson and the convocation took place on 11 December 1961.<sup>19</sup>

Her most important gift to the College, unquestionably, was her ability to persuade. In 1961, the defense department officially closed the Air Force Base at Mitchell Field. This land lay directly north of the campus, across Fulton Avenue. Many small airplanes had crashed into the surrounding area during the war years, including one that came down at 2:00 a.m. into Barnard Hall, then the Chemistry Building, in 1943. The pilot was killed and the plane was a total loss. Other planes had crashed into the Meadowbrook

Parkway and into houses in the Village of Hempstead. *Newsday* reported on these crashes and included the spectacular photographs along with the stories. By 1961, there were many, Alicia among them, who wished that the old air field would just "go away."

Alicia Patterson went to see President John F. Kennedy, who she had supported during the election, to convince him that the airfield should not be used as an airport. The head of the Federal Aviation Administration, Najeeb Halaby, had considered creating a commercial airport at this location and later wrote, "I mentally consigned this fine lady to whatever purgatory is reserved for those who forget in how many instances airports were there before real-estate developers moved in, thus creating noise problems that never would have arisen if proper zoning had been applied. But I wasn't about to challenge John Kennedy over the issue of keeping a small airport open—especially since it was clearly a losing battle in the community."<sup>20</sup> After talking with Kennedy, and a subsequent presentation by John Cranford Adams to the General Services Administration, Hofstra received 110-acres of the property and Alicia Patterson was generally credited with the founding of the North Campus.

When *Newsday* was ten years old, Alicia and Harry celebrated with a party at Falaise, their home in Sands Point. Ralph Hausrath, a former editor, points out that among the guests who were *Newsday* founding staff members, there were only two women: Alicia, and Sally Strong who edited the society pages.<sup>21</sup> By that date, the newspaper had both a Nassau and Suffolk edition and total circulation of about 125,000. The Suffolk edition was started in 1945 and was largely experimental. Although geographically larger than Nassau, at that time the Suffolk landscape included much more undeveloped territory. And while the population of the county was approximately 272,000, staff for the Suffolk edition included only two photographers and a single reporter for all of the town of Brookhaven.

Typical *Newsday* stories included their share of what Alicia referred to as "Dogs! Cats! Murders!" The paper featured one of its most amusing but "creepy" headlines in 1949 to describe the Deer Park saga of the black widow spiders. The headlines read: "Spiders Crawl on, Cameras Grind, Experts Debate." Apparently, in August 1949, workers who had been adding onto the Deer Park School disturbed deadly black widow spiders that had been living in woodpiles. Robert MacCormack, a reporter for the *Newsday* Suffolk edition who happened to live in the town, covered the story. The school board president of the time, Bernard Rumpel hired professional exterminators to kill the spiders. Unfortunately, some of the spiders lived despite being doused with chemicals. Television crews were sent out to film the spiders. Meanwhile, Rumpel had declared that since the extermination, the workers were to re-start their construction. For several weeks after the extermination, vials of live spiders were sent to the State

Police Barracks in Brightwaters, the *Newsday* office in Bay Shore, and to the Babylon Town Supervisor's office.<sup>22</sup> Obviously, the local residents wanted to dispute the notion that the spiders had been disposed of and sending "live" spiders to those in charge certainly sent a clear message.

The news of Long Island was reported with the local citizenry in mind, exclusively, in the early years, but eventually *Newsday* began covering stories of national and international importance as well. In some cases, the owner Harry Guggenheim and the publisher Alicia Patterson had different sides of the stories to tell. In these instances there might be a "President's note," as well as an editorial page, where Harry explained that the views of the editorial page were not necessarily his own. This happened, for instance, when *Newsday* supported Adlai Stevenson in the election and Harry Guggenheim supported General Eisenhower.

The 1950s were great years for the Patterson-Guggenheim household. It was in 1953 that Harry's horse Dark Star won the Kentucky Derby. In 1954, *Newsday* covered the story that would eventually win them the Pulitzer Prize, "for the most meritorious service by an American newspaper—the DeKoning expose."<sup>23</sup> The story was, for Alicia and her managing editor Alan Hathway, an odyssey that they had followed for eight years and which finally ended in William C. DeKoning's indictment on extortion charges.<sup>24</sup> DeKoning, the first major labor organizer on Long Island, ran the construction industry for over twenty years and was notorious for strong arm tactics and threats in his management of the labor union. *Newsday* had covered many different aspects of William De Koning's labor union activities. In addition to the many illegal and often violent threats against union members, they claimed that the labor boss had used Roosevelt Raceway employees as a way to line his own pockets. His eventual indictment vindicated both Hathway and Patterson for pursuing the story with such vigor.

Under Alicia's watchful eye, *Newsday* matured as a newspaper. It won awards and citations from a variety of different agencies including a Pulitzer, four Polk Awards for community service, several Ayer Awards for typographical excellence and more than thirty other citations.<sup>25</sup> In addition, Alicia received many individual awards, including the B'nai B'rith "Citizen of the Year" award in October of 1954. She was featured on the cover of *Time* magazine in September that year. *Newsday* had achieved a level of respectability that many (including Alicia's father) did not think was possible.<sup>26</sup> Alicia's accomplishments were being remarked upon in many different places. In regards to Hofstra, where she continued to be on the Board of Trustees, Alicia was asked to be the Chair of the Nominating Committee of the Board in 1958, a post she accepted. She went on to bring in newer members such as Moses Hornstein, President of Horn



Figure 4: Alicia (2nd row from bottom of photo, with white floral hat) and Harry S. Guggenheim (to her left) and Robert Moses (to her right) at Belmont Racetrack, c. 1960. Patterson Photo Album Collection, Hofstra University Archives.

Construction Company, and John J. Tuohy, President of the Long Island Lighting Company.

Alicia helped to shape Long Island by her involvement in its politics and culture and with the influence of her newspaper. Robert Moses, the New York State Park's Commissioner and another Board of Trustee member at Hofstra, wanted to construct a paved road the length of Fire Island. At first, *Newsday*, with a push from editor Alan Hathway, supported the Moses plan. But after meeting with the Secretary of the Interior, Stewart Udall, Alicia was persuaded that the environmental consequences were far too high to risk the plan. Instead, environmentalists wanted to create a National Seashore, which eventually did occur.<sup>27</sup> She also advocated for low-cost college tuition at Nassau and Suffolk Counties (community colleges) and she helped in the fund raising efforts to purchase the Walt Whitman home in Huntington to be used as a memorial.<sup>28</sup>

Although she concentrated her efforts on building a better paper, she also wrote for other venues. In 1960 she wrote a story for *Woman's Day* magazine, "What can women do for peace?"<sup>29</sup> She later wrote a piece for

*Harper's* magazine entitled, "The Mommie Gap," which stated that American women did not lead constructive lives because they were far too busy being "mommies." She went on to say that the need for constant mothering was an American fiction that we could do without. She was certainly a determined and gritty woman herself and although she might have been the exception to the rule of her times, did not seem to understand that she was doing something that other women might not. Joseph Yauch, *Newsday's* first circulation manager, described a typical Alicia Patterson story: "In the late 1940s she flew the Berlin airlift. Sitting with the crew, she spoke over the plane's radio. Someone on the same wavelength inquired: 'Was that a goddamn woman?' Yes. That was the goddamnedest woman ever!"<sup>30</sup>

Although Alicia found time to write and gave speeches and interviews, her most significant achievement remained *Newsday*. On 15 July 1953, in a speech made at Fordham University, Alicia declared:

We look upon *Newsday* as a Long Island metropolitan paper – a combination of general and local news treated in the big-city fashion . . . We realize we cannot cover every village and township in our circulation area, and so we concentrate on the news that has a common denominator – pieces which interest most of the people most of the time. We insist that so far as possible, the important news shall be interesting – which means that it shall be clear, and that the interesting news shall have a certain importance – which means that it shall not be purely, or impurely, sensational. Our function as I see it is to supply information as well as entertainment.<sup>31</sup>

She gave her time, her efforts, and her full attention to the paper that saw its circulation grow from 15,000 in 1940 to 375,000 in 1963. With Alicia's guidance and adherence to a variety of tenets (such as Walt Whitman's "Be radical! Be radical! Be not too damn radical!") as well as her admonition not to get too full of oneself, the newspaper kept getting better, not only bigger. She explained, "We want to keep our ideals always shined up and our courage high. And we want to remember that even the best mousetrap can be improved."<sup>32</sup>

In 1963, Alicia went into the hospital with pains from a stomach ulcer. She died on 2 July, much to the surprise of everyone who knew her. She was only fifty-six years old. Nearly 1,000 people attended Alicia Patterson's funeral service. She once remarked that, "Much that I learned I learned from my father... Nothing was too insignificant for him to notice... This trait helped him to understand why people do as they do... He was geared with invisible antennae that alerted him to the shifting moods of the

times."<sup>33</sup> Alicia had this gift as well. She "knew" what Long Island needed in a newspaper, she "knew" what Hofstra needed in a trustee: she "knew" and she made it happen. John Cranford Adams, her friend and President of Hofstra remarked, "Like all who knew Alicia Patterson I am stunned and grieved at this news of her untimely death. She was undoubtedly one of the colorful, courageous and imaginative leaders in America. Her vitality was unquenchable...with a genius for bringing people together and drawing out of them both their convictions and their visions."<sup>34</sup>

The stories of Alicia's practical jokes, demeanor, and often-quoted rules to live by, were gathered together at the time of her death and run in a special tribute section to the editor of *Newsday*. Aware of people's customary shortcomings, including their inability to laugh at themselves, Alicia laughed often and heartily. Jack Alshtul recalls, "On the night she died, Alicia Patterson said, 'I had a bad day today, but I'll be back fighting tomorrow.' She didn't get the opportunity and all of us are the losers for it. Alicia Patterson was a great and wonderful woman. More important, she was a hell of a newspaperman."<sup>35</sup>

## NOTES

1 Hofstra University Archives, Board Of Trustee Minutes, (hereafter BOT) 16 December 1943, 126.

2 Hofstra College *Bulletin*, March 1944, 8.

3 "Alicia in Wonderland," *Time*, (13 September 1954): 32-37

4 *Ibid.*

5 *Ibid.*

6 "Patterson, Alicia," *Current Biography*, (New York, 1955), 475.

7 Nassau Daily Review, 29 October 1931.

8 "Alicia in Wonderland," 32-27.

9 "As Her Staff Knew Her," *Newsday* (Memorial issue), 22 April 1975.

10 "Alicia in Wonderland," 32-27. Alicia was married, first, to James Simpson, Jr. who was handpicked by her father. She consented to stay married for one year. After the year was up, she left. Her second marriage,

in 1931, was to Joseph W. Brooks, an All-American football player at Colgate, and a captain in the Rainbow Division in World War I. That marriage lasted eight years.

<sup>11</sup> Ralph Hausrath, "Winning a Pulitzer and the Kentucky Derby," *Long Island Forum* (August/September, 1987), 173.

<sup>12</sup> Robert Keeler, "The Little Paper that Could," in *Long Island Our Story*, eds. Newsday staff (Melville, NY, 1998), 312. See also the online version of *Long Island Our Story* at [www.lihistory.com](http://www.lihistory.com).

<sup>13</sup> "Alicia in Wonderland," 32-27.

<sup>14</sup> Keeler, "The Little Paper that Could," 312.

<sup>15</sup> Alicia's father, Joseph Patterson had started the *Illustrated Daily News* in 1919. It was a tabloid-style newspaper, and he was in fact considered the father of tabloid journalism in America. Tabloids had a more condensed version of the news and more photographic content, as well as a smaller page size than more conventional newspapers.

<sup>16</sup> BOT Correspondence, Alicia Patterson folder, 8 March 1944.

<sup>17</sup> BOT Correspondence, Alicia Patterson folder, 21 September 1954.

<sup>18</sup> BOT Correspondence, Alicia Patterson folder, 18 October 1949.

<sup>19</sup> BOT Correspondence, Alicia Patterson folder, October 1961.

<sup>20</sup> Najeeb E. Halaby, *Cross-Winds: An Airman's Memoir* (New York, 1978), 156-57.

<sup>21</sup> Ralph Hausrath, "A Birthday Party at Falaise," *Long Island Forum* 50 (June 1987), 120.

<sup>22</sup> Ralph Hausrath, "When Newsday Came to Suffolk," *Long Island Forum* (April 1987), 73-74.

<sup>23</sup> Hausrath, "Winning a Pulitzer and the Kentucky Derby," 177.

<sup>24</sup> William DeKoning was the first leader of Long Island's building trade unions. He had union workers build the Labor Lyceum in Uniondale in 1947. There he "encouraged" union members to eat dinner and have



drinks. Those who did not indulge soon lost their jobs. He went to prison in 1953 after Patterson and Hathaway exposed his many illegal practices. He served eighteen months in prison although he was indicted on 116 counts of grand larceny, extortion, coercion and conspiracy. He died two years after his release from jail. See Ken Moritsugu, "Long Island Influentials: Politics & Government," *Newsday* 19 December 1999, G27

<sup>25</sup> Alicia Patterson obituary, *Long Island Press*, 3 July 1963.

<sup>26</sup> Her father is quoted as saying about Alicia: "She's got a little paper out in Hempstead, but it isn't going anywhere." Keeler, "The Little Paper that Could," 312.

<sup>27</sup> Robert F. Keeler, "Alicia Patterson and the Shape of Long Island," *Long Island Women: Activists and Innovators*, ed. Natalie A. Naylor and Maureen O. Murphy, (Interlaken, NY, 1998), 272.

<sup>28</sup> *Current Biography*, 475.

<sup>29</sup> Alicia chose Hofstra to receive the honorarium she earned from this article.

<sup>30</sup> "As Her Staff Knew Her," *Newsday*.

<sup>31</sup> "The Trials and Tribulations of a Publisher," speech given by Alicia Patterson at the 15 July 1953 Communication Arts Symposium at Fordham University. Text in Info-file, Alicia Patterson, Hofstra University Archives.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid.

<sup>33</sup> Hofstra University Archives, Office of the President, letter from John Cranford Adams, 3 July 1963.

<sup>34</sup> Jack Altshul, "A Great and Wonderful Woman," *Newsday*, 5 July 1963.

# THE LIFE OF TEUNTJE STRAATMANS: A DUTCH WOMAN'S TRAVELS IN THE SEVENTEENTH-CENTURY ATLANTIC WORLD

*By Annette M. Cramer van den Bogaart*

On a Wednesday in October 1662 in the small village of Brooklyn, a woman was about to die. Worried about the fate of her soon-to-be orphaned children, she called her trusted pastor and an elder of her church to her bedside. As she felt her strength waning, she asked them to please care for her two young children. On 19 October 1662, Teuntje Straatmans died.<sup>1</sup>

We know of Teuntje's existence because of her Dutch Reformed pastor, dominee Henricus Selijns.<sup>2</sup> Selijns, who took his task as caretaker of his congregation very seriously, carefully recorded the events in the life of his church in a book that is preserved at the Brooklyn Historical Society.<sup>3</sup> From this book and from various other colonial records it is possible to piece together some of Teuntje's life.

Teuntje led a remarkable life for a seventeenth-century woman. This era was a key period during which Europeans spread out all over the world, displacing or destroying indigenous peoples and establishing communities in areas where to this day their languages are spoken and their religions are practiced. As a traveler through the Atlantic world, Teuntje took part in this European colonial expansion. She moved from the Netherlands, where she was born, to the Dutch colony of New Holland in northeast Brazil. After continuous fighting with the Portuguese drove many to leave, Teuntje traveled north, through the Caribbean, to start anew with her children in the colony named New Netherland.

Her story provides insight into the colonial migration experience from a female point of view. Although much has been written about the various colonizing projects in the Atlantic world during this time, we know little about the experience of Dutch women in this context. Many more men than women went overseas to take part in colonizing endeavors and those women who did migrate are often difficult to trace in the records. Historian C.R. Boxer and others have written about Iberian and English women colonists, but scholars have yet to study women from the Netherlands and their lives in the colonies of the Dutch West India Company. What emerges from Teuntje's story is the image of a self-sufficient woman who was surprisingly mobile in a male-dominated world.

Clearly, her life was different from the lives of those contemporaries who stayed in the Netherlands. What may not be immediately recognized, however, is that Teuntje's life also differed from the lives of her English

counterparts in the North American colonies where she spent her final years. In the area now called New York, she lived in close proximity to English women. Important distinctions can be made between the two cultures, particularly regarding female legal status. While English women lived their lives under the guardianship of their husbands or fathers, Dutch women were considered equal to men in legal terms, unless they voluntarily gave up their rights. When Teuntje arrived in New Amsterdam, the English were slowly encroaching onto territory the Dutch considered theirs. In 1664, two years after her death, the English took over the colony and with the introduction of their common law system, the rights of women slowly eroded.

In order to understand Teuntje's life in the Atlantic world we need to take a brief look at the economic and political situation of the Netherlands at the time of her birth.<sup>4</sup> During the second half of the sixteenth century, the Netherlands came under Spanish rule. The Dutch fight for liberty would last eighty long years (1568-1648). In 1581, the United Provinces of the Netherlands proclaimed their independence from Spain but the fighting that ensued took a heavy toll on both countries. By the early part of the seventeenth century, neither Spain nor the Netherlands was able or willing to spend the necessary money to continue warfare. In 1607, the two countries signed a twelve-year truce, recognized within Europe only. Treaties frequently did not extend "beyond the line" which meant that in territories outside of Europe the battles continued between the Spanish and the Dutch. During the truce, in 1616, a baby girl was born, probably in Culemborg, situated south of the city of Utrecht. Her parents called her Teuntje. Her life would become closely tied to a company that was formed in 1621, when Teuntje was about five years old.

That year, the West India Company (WIC) received a charter from the States General in the Netherlands. It was given a monopoly on trade in the Americas, including the right of colonizing and of maintaining armed forces. While merchants initially formed the West India Company to bring home profits from the lucrative trade in West Africa and the Americas, the States General also recognized the company's potential as a weapon against Spain. Using the West India Company to counter Spanish power had several advantages for the Republic. The country's struggle against Spain would be fought on foreign soil, not in the Netherlands itself. Moreover, the company could undermine the domination of the Spanish while greatly increasing the wealth of the Republic. For these reasons, the States General generously supported the initiative.<sup>5</sup>

The first goal of the Heren XIX, as the directors of the WIC were called, was to conquer existing colonies from Spain and Portugal. After an earlier failed attempt to take Bahia, Brazil, the gentlemen set their sights on Pernambuco in the northeast, but they first had to recruit soldiers and sailors

for their intended operations. The company started to enlist men who were willing to undertake the arduous trip to Africa and the Americas. In spite of the fact that the Netherlands were in what many describe as their "Golden Age," various groups of workers were extremely poor. What historians term a "price revolution" made food and housing too expensive for the lower classes. There was a marked contrast between the wealthy merchants in the cities and the masses of poor, ill-fed people. It is no wonder that many of the unemployed looked to the large trading companies for work as seamen or soldiers.

In 1629, the WIC gathered a fleet of sixty-seven ships, manned by seven thousand men under the command of Dutch Admiral Hendrik Cornelisz Loncq. In February 1630, Loncq took Pernambuco and the neighboring area of Olinda. The Dutch came to Pernambuco because they were well aware of the riches of the sugar plantations. In order to deny the Dutch the spoils of victory, the Portuguese burned down their own villages and crops. They fled to a nearby area where they established bases for a continued guerrilla war against the Dutch invaders. The Dutch managed to hold on to Recife but had to give up the other areas. The States General supplied the West India Company with reinforcements by financing another fleet with two thousand soldiers, which arrived around 1631. Thanks to the additional forces, the Dutch were able to break out of Recife and expand their power in the area.

A young Teuntje, and possibly her first husband, were among those who embarked on these ships of the West India Company heading for Brazil. Teuntje must have been one of the few females who traveled to Brazil during these tumultuous years because most women were reluctant to undertake the boat trip. The conditions on board the vessels left much to be desired, making every journey a perilous one. In general, the sailors were a rough lot known for "cursing, swearing, whoring, debauchery, and even murder." Mutiny was a common occurrence. To keep profits high, the company paid its employees poorly, and the rations on board its ships were often inadequate. In addition to the inadequate food supply, lack of hygiene contributed to the outbreak of contagious diseases such as typhus and dysentery. The living quarters on board were cold, ill-ventilated spaces between decks where people slept in hammocks. Under these circumstances, the sick could not be separated from the well. Unable to use the necessities on deck, the sick often relieved themselves in a corner of their living quarters thus exacerbating the unsanitary conditions.<sup>6</sup>

In addition to the deterrent of the trip, many western Europeans believed that white women could simply not become acclimated to the tropics. The women who did make the journey to the tropics were allegedly not the most refined ladies of society. As is the case with women in early Virginia, some historians have portrayed these women as adventurers and women of "ill

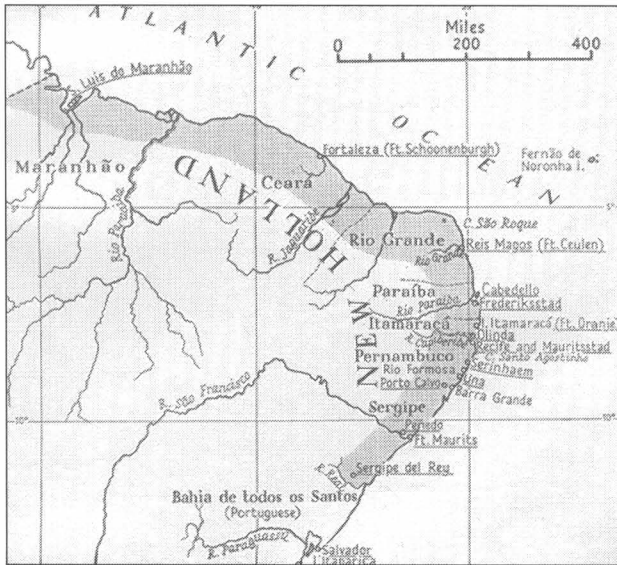
repute." Boxer writes, "Just as the bulk of the two Companies' employees were apt to be men who had no other resource, so many of the women who went to the tropics were apt to be more conspicuous for their adventurousness than for their morals."<sup>7</sup> Many, however, were poor and had no opportunities in their country of origin; they were not necessarily women with "loose morals."

It is impossible to trace exactly when Teuntje left for the tropics. Nor do we know her motives for leaving. She and her first husband Jan Meijring may have been among the agricultural peasants who were recruited as settlers by the WIC. Van Wyck writes that the company used "boers" (farmers) from the "up-river farming hinterland drained by the lower Rhine, the Zuiderzee and the IJssel River valleys," adding that, "they were back country people."<sup>8</sup> Teuntje was indeed from one such area. Another, perhaps even more plausible, possibility is that Jan was one of the many soldiers of the WIC, since emigration of agriculturists was not encouraged on a large scale until after Johan Maurits became governor in 1637.<sup>9</sup>

With her husband Jan, Teuntje eventually settled in the coastal fort at Cabadelo, which was surrendered by the Portuguese just before Christmas 1634.<sup>10</sup> The fort was situated in northeast Brazil in the Paraiba region. The climate in this equatorial region was very different from the Dutch one with its cold winters. Teuntje may have been unpleasantly surprised by the heat and humidity in Brazil.

Soon after their arrival in Cabadelo, Teuntje gave birth to her first daughter, Margariet. Teuntje's husband died some time after his daughter's birth but the exact date of death is not known. He may have died as late as the mid-1640s, after some ten years in Brazil. It is likely that combat or disease caused his early demise for the Dutch casualty rate in Brazil was high. Klooster writes, "a French observer noted that the health of the Netherlanders was ruined. He saw only weak, skinny men, 'not cut out to be soldiers,' dying in hospitals or falling down on the streets, victims of scurvy, dysentery, and worms."<sup>11</sup> Moreover, the Dutch were not trained to fight a guerrilla war in the tropical rain forest.<sup>12</sup>

After the death of her husband, Teuntje remarried. Since there were many more men than women in Dutch Brazil, it must have been fairly easy for her to find a spouse. She married Georg Haff with whom she had a son named Laurens around the year 1649. Haff was a German from Augsburg, Bavaria, a field-trumpeter in the service of the Republic. He was one of the many foreigners recruited by the West India Company. The WIC found it difficult to recruit sufficiently large numbers of workers to emigrate to overseas



**Figure 1: Map of Brazil in 1643.** Reprinted from C.R. Boxer, *The Dutch in Brazil* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1957).

possessions.<sup>13</sup> For this reason, they looked to foreigners to operate their vessels and serve as soldiers. Many foreigners had already come to the Netherlands in search of work. Germans and Scandinavians were well represented among the sailors, while the number of foreigners was even higher among soldiers. The proportion of Dutchmen was greater in the officer corps than in the lower ranks but there were also Germans, French, Swiss, English, and Scottish officers. The rivalry among the different nationalities was strong. Only the strict discipline on board the ships and in army units prevented fighting among the various groups although it could not always be avoided.<sup>14</sup>

It is likely that Teuntje married Georg in the second half of the 1640s since Haff was dismissed from service in 1649.<sup>15</sup> Soldiers and army men like Haff were usually hired for three years which means he probably started his service around 1646 and met Teuntje in Brazil. The WIC withheld a portion of the men's pay as a security deposit against desertion and bad behavior. At the end of the contracted number of years they were supposed to receive the remainder of their pay. In reality, the company charged the soldiers an arbitrary rate for clothing and other necessary items so that at the end of his

service, the soldier received little or nothing. Some went back to Europe, but others saw no choice but to remain in South America. The company encouraged discharged soldiers to stay as settlers since they had difficulty attracting people from the Netherlands and because it saved them the return passage.<sup>16</sup>

It is not clear exactly when Teuntje left Brazil or with whom. Most likely, she left during the early 1650s when it became apparent that the Dutch would not be able to hold on to their possessions in Brazil. The colony was lost to the Portuguese in 1654. In addition to the deteriorating situation in Brazil, Teuntje suffered the loss of yet another husband. The circumstances of Georg Haff's death are unknown but Teuntje married again. She may have married her third husband, Tieneman Jacobsen, in Brazil and left with him to go north, or she may have met him en route and married him in Guadeloupe or some other location in the Caribbean. Jacobsen and Straatmans had a daughter together named Anna. She was born around 1654 at a location unknown to us.

At this point, the Brooklyn church records indicate that Teuntje was on the island of Guadeloupe with her third husband and her three children. When it came time to move on, however, Teuntje left the island without Jacobsen. Dominee Selijns wrote that Jacobsen stayed behind on the island due to the "hurried departure of Stuyvesant."<sup>17</sup> The implication of this statement is that Teuntje and her children boarded a ship bound for New Amsterdam under the command of Pieter Stuyvesant. Skirmishes between several nationalities took place quite frequently in the Caribbean and it is possible that the Dutch on the ship carrying Teuntje got involved in such fighting. This would explain their sudden, hurried departure. Selijns' records are inconsistent with the historical record, however. Stuyvesant was not in the Caribbean at that time. Perhaps Selijns made a mistake when he wrote his account, or maybe he wrote down the account based on the stories of others, not Teuntje. At the time of his writing Teuntje had died and thus could not give Selijns pertinent information about her own life. In any event, Teuntje and her children left for New Amsterdam, leaving her husband Tieneman Jacobsen behind in Guadeloupe.

When she arrived in New Amsterdam, she found a colony that was fairly well established and far more politically stable than its Brazilian counterpart. Moreover, she may have been pleasantly surprised to find the climate in New Netherland was similar to that of Holland. The town itself was reminiscent of a Dutch town with much of the architecture copied from the fatherland. As in Brazil, the West India Company was central to life in the colony. After Henry Hudson's 1609 exploration of the region we now call New York, some small outposts were founded mainly for the trading of fur (beaver) with

Native Americans. The rights to these trading posts were taken over by the West India Company in its charter of 1621.

Some individual patroons, or landholders, were relatively successful in establishing farming communities in the area, but the company did not fare as well. Partly to blame was the precarious financial situation of the company. However, mismanagement by the first directors-general appointed by the WIC, Wouter van Twiller (1633-1637) and Willem Kieft (1637-1645), also contributed to the company's problems. They were responsible for the ever-worsening relations with the surrounding Native Americans, which led to a war in 1643, lasting four years. The result of Kieft's eight years as director-general was the massacre of a thousand Native Americans and settlers.<sup>18</sup>

The States General in the Netherlands recognized the problems and demanded the West India Company do something about the deteriorating situation in North America. The company responded by appointing Peter Stuyvesant as the new director-general. Stuyvesant was dictatorial and unpopular, but he did manage to stabilize the situation. He reorganized affairs in the colony and put a new council in place. Stuyvesant also entered into negotiations with the English who had been slowly encroaching on territory that the Dutch considered theirs. In 1650, just before Teuntje arrived in New Amsterdam, they formally established a border between New

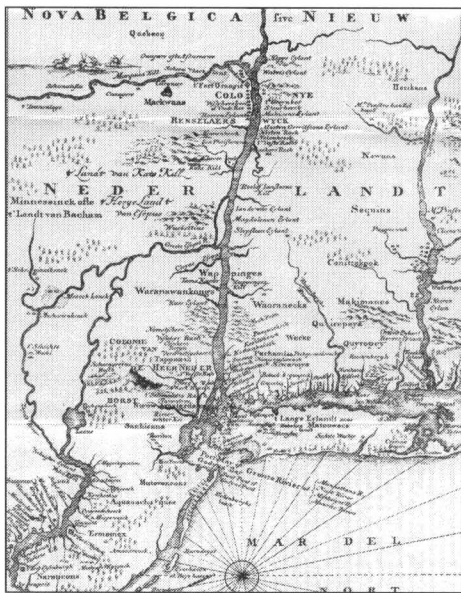


Figure 2: Jansson-Visscher Map of New Netherland, 1655.



England and New Netherland. The Connecticut river valley and the east end of Long Island were ceded to the English.

Upon arrival in New Netherland, Teuntje was, for all intents and purposes, a single woman, for she most likely did not know what had become of her husband in the Caribbean. She came to New Amsterdam with a teenage daughter, a small boy, and an infant daughter. At first, Teuntje may have had some hope Jacobsen would be able to get on a ship heading for New Amsterdam. Eventually though, she must have tired of waiting for her husband because she had him officially declared dead, presumably so she could remarry.

On 15 June 1657 Teuntje married Gabriel Corbesij in the church on Manhattan Island. In the church records it is noted that the groom was from Leuven, a town northeast of Brussels in modern day Belgium, and that the bride was a widow.<sup>19</sup> Gabriel had been a soldier under Stuyvesant. From a December 1658 court appearance we know that he became a watchman after he took the oath of fidelity.<sup>20</sup>

Before she married, Teuntje had a choice as to what kind of marriage she desired. Dutch law was a combination of Roman law and Germanic custom, which gave women a choice between two types of marriage: *manus* or *usus*. The former meant that a wife was subject to her husband, but the latter was far more common in the Netherlands and denied the husband legal power over the wife. If a woman chose *manus*, she would acquire the rank of her husband and his family, but she would also be known as a minor under the guardianship of her husband. In addition, she would have no legal standing in court and thus could not enter into a contract with anyone without her husband's permission. If a woman chose *usus*, the couple made an ante-nuptial agreement and the wife could retain all the freedoms she had as a single woman (which were the same as those of a man). *Usus* also avoided community of property and prevented the husband from exercising marital power.<sup>21</sup> Teuntje seems to have used an ante-nuptial agreement for her marriage to Gabriel Corbesij. Several facts support this point. Teuntje showed up in court by herself on several occasions, and at her death the executor of her will was the dominee, not her husband.

In addition to these legal protections for married women, another significant sign of women's independence was the fact that they retained their own family's surname. In the records Teuntje is referred to as "Teuntie Straetmans, wife of ...." Similarly, inscriptions on grave stones most often had the wife's own surname inscribed on them with the addition "wife of" or "widow of."

Historians have emphasized a contrast between the Dutch housewife and the English goodwife. It appears that Dutch women enjoyed a better legal

status than English women, at least according to contemporary American standards. Under the common law system, the English "femme covert" had no legal standing and lived under the guardianship of her husband as soon as she got married. Only as a single person or widow did the English woman have any legal rights as an adult. Dutch women—not bound by such restrictions—were able to act independently, even within marriage. They could keep control over the possessions they brought into the union. Thus, English women found their independence outside of marriage, while for Dutch women it was possible to find this within marriage.

It is no surprise, then, that to foreigners, and in particular the English, the Dutch woman was too independent and forward. Moryson, an early seventeenth century English traveler in the Netherlands wrote, "I may boldly say, that the women of these parts, are above all other truly taxed with this unnatural domineering over their husbands."<sup>22</sup> Moryson believed that this attitude started in childhood when he noticed girls calling their brothers names and in general showing a lack of respect towards men.

After their marriage, Teuntje and Gabriel apparently prospered, for in 1660 a house is listed on a map of New Amsterdam as "a double house owned by Teuntje Straetsmans and her husband Gabriel Carpesy."<sup>23</sup> The house was situated on Manhattan island near the town's wall (now Wall Street). In the records left after her death, the proceeds ("sixty guilders in sewan") of the sale of a house in Manhattan are noted.<sup>24</sup> The fact that the proceeds of the sale of the house are mentioned in the inventory of her possessions, in addition to the listing "owned by Teuntje Straetsmans and her husband," indicates that she had at least an equal share in the house and that the money from that sale was hers, not her husband's.

In January 1662, Gabriel obtained a land grant for a parcel in Breuckelen (Brooklyn) with two small houses that were rented. Although we do not know when they moved to Long Island, apparently the couple decided it was time to make a fresh start elsewhere. A piece of land to farm on Long Island would give them the opportunity to do well for themselves. Teuntje and Gabriel eventually settled in the community we now call Brooklyn, at the Gowanus. The inventory taken by church officials after her death suggests they had a small farm.

Teuntje and her family probably lived in a house much like the Wyckoff house, built around 1652, which is still standing in Brooklyn today. The Dutch in America did not build exact replicas of homes in the Netherlands, although the influence of Dutch architectural forms was strong during the seventeenth century. They used wood and fieldstone instead of the brick used in Holland, even though brick and roof tile companies were present in Brooklyn from an early date.<sup>25</sup> Most houses consisted of one room in which eating, cooking, and sleeping all took place. The large hearth was used for

heat and cooking during the day while at night the family took out large bags filled with straw to sleep on. On a cold night they probably all crowded around the fire to keep warm. A simple wooden table and chairs or stools provided a place to sit, eat, and talk.

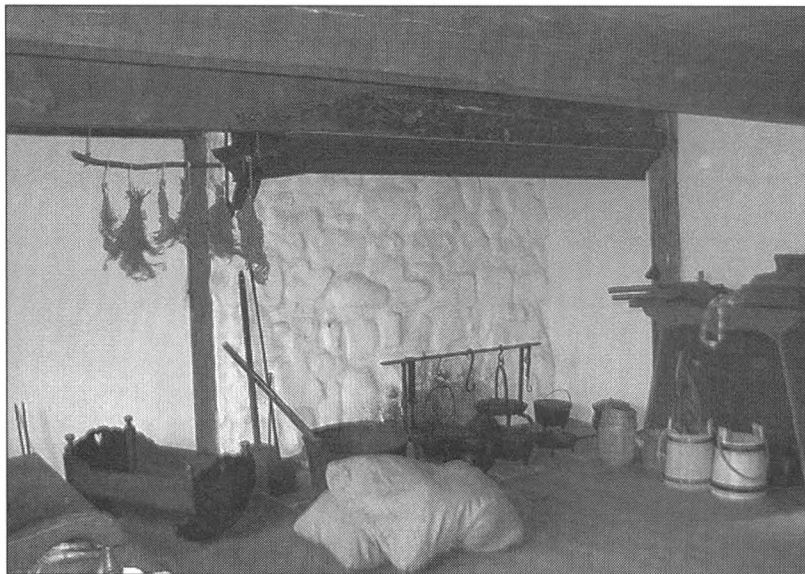


Figure 3: Interior view of the Pieter Claesen Wyckoff House, Brooklyn, New York. Photograph by the author. Used with permission. Wyckoff Farmhouse Museum.

To provide for her family Teuntje most likely did what the other women in her community did to survive. At this time before the industrial revolution, women were considered a vital part of the household economy. Michael Kammen writes that "...women would roast a haunch of venison, tender, fat, and spicy; or a dry but flavorful wild turkey; or a fatty wild goose."<sup>26</sup> In the fall, women and children gathered peaches and apples and made cider. Since Teuntje lived on Long Island, close to the sea, she probably also gathered oysters which she could pickle for export or use for her own family. Women also made jelly and cultivated melons.

The image of the Dutch woman that has emerged thus far is one of worldliness and materialism. However, just as in the lives of English women, religion played an important role. As Joyce Goodfriend writes of Dutch women, "from the time of her baptism, through the years of parental

religious instruction and formal catechism classes, to the date of her becoming a communicant of a congregation, she absorbed the essentials of her faith, practiced its rituals, and cemented ties with its adherents."<sup>27</sup>

On Sundays, Teuntje probably went to church with her children to hear dominee Selijns preach. At first, the Breuckelen church where Teuntje attended services shared a dominee with Midwout (Flatbush) and Nieuw Amersfoort (Flatlands). The situation was not satisfactory for the residents in Breuckelen and, since they contributed financially, they sought a return on their investment. In 1659, they petitioned for a minister of their own. The classis in Amsterdam, the governing body of the Dutch Reformed Church, agreed to send Dominee Henricus Selijns, a 23-year-old graduate from Leiden University. According to Oliver Rink, he was perhaps the only well-qualified, learned dominee New Netherland ever had.<sup>28</sup>

In addition to Sunday services, worship in the home was essential to Calvinism. A parent's job was to instruct the children with scriptural teachings. Goodfriend contends that most women in New York were probably familiar with the content of the Bible. Moreover, she writes, "the majority of Dutch colonial women, in all likelihood, were sufficiently literate to read the Bible."<sup>29</sup> Most girls were taught to read but not necessarily to write. Many families had a Dutch Bible. In Teuntje's case we do not know whether she could read or write since she did not leave any written material and her signature does not appear anywhere. The inventory of her possessions would surely have listed a Bible if the family possessed one since these were generally passed down from generation to generation. For those who could not read, visual representations of biblical themes played an instructional role. Scenes were printed on Delft tiles, sometimes installed around the fireplace as in the Wyckoff house in Brooklyn, or on furniture and household items.

Girls joined the church in formal membership at an early age since it was seen as the attainment of maturity. Thus, women were church members before they became brides. This is a strong contrast to the Puritan tradition, where most women were older when they were admitted to the church. Formal membership for the New Englanders came after marriage, and often after parenthood, because young people were not seen as sufficiently mature to join the church as members.<sup>30</sup>

Women probably found comfort in the sense of community that belonging to a church brought them. There they interacted with other women and heard the latest news or gossip about their fellow townsmen. In such a small community where everyone was on familiar terms, one's reputation was extremely important. Since it was not easy for people to move away, a constant battle was being waged to uphold one's personal reputation. As Norman Rosenberg writes, "derogatory tags could remain fastened to one's

name for years."<sup>31</sup> Because of the importance of reputation, defamation cases were quite common in both New England and New Netherland.

Teuntje was involved in a number of disputes over reputation, for she appeared in court several times. The colonial legal system, based on the Amsterdam court system, encouraged the use of formal institutions to resolve conflicts over reputation. The court system at that time was open and accessible to ordinary citizens. Because of the flexible procedures with simple rules of conduct, people did not need a law degree to plead their cases. Moreover, a decision in favor of the plaintiff was likely because of the need for conformity in a small community. Most often defendants did indeed confess and promised to change their behavior.<sup>32</sup>

Teuntje's first recorded court appearance was in 1658, when she defended herself in a case brought by plaintiff Pieter Jansen. He accused Teuntje of insult and abuse involving name calling and a threat with a knife.<sup>33</sup> In 1660, Teuntje again had to defend herself in court. This time she was accused of having struck a woman named Styntie, "...so that the blood followed."<sup>34</sup> Teuntje admitted to having done this stating that Styntie had provoked her by publicly calling her a whore. Unfortunately, she could not deliver proof of the alleged provocation and thus she was convicted and fined twenty-five guilders. It is interesting to note that the alleged assault itself was not punished, and that it apparently was considered in some way justifiable if Teuntje could have delivered proof of provocation.

Also in 1660, Teuntje's husband Gabriel Corbesij appeared as the plaintiff in a case against Lauwerens Caustersen, a soldier who was in default of payment. Apparently, Teuntje was called on to represent her husband in this matter for she was the one who actually appeared in court. She was told that the court was not the proper place for this matter as the defendant was a soldier and that she should "summon him before his proper judges."<sup>35</sup>

The 1660 incidents were the last ones in the New Amsterdam records relating to Teuntje and her husband. With her new farm doing well, and her children healthy, all must have seemed well to Teuntje. However, when she finally settled down in the fall of 1662 she fell ill. She must have been in her mid-forties when on 19 October, Teuntje Straatmans died.

Dominee Selijns and Teunis Jansen, minister and deacon at the Brooklyn church, made the arrangements for her funeral. It was a simple service. Carel de Beauvois, the schoolmaster gave a "funeral oration" when she was buried in a plain wooden coffin.<sup>36</sup> Since Teuntje died intestate, but had asked Selijns and Jansen to be executors of her estate, they went to her house at the Gowanus to take inventory of her possessions. Most likely they also discussed with Gabriel what to do with the two youngest children Laurens and Anna who were about eleven and eight years old.

A child became an orphan if either one or both parents died, according to Dutch law. In New Netherland it was customary for parents to appoint a guardian for their children, which was a result of measures taken by the legal institutions on behalf of orphans. David Evan Narrett writes that, "as early as 1640, the WIC instructed the Director-General and Council to take cognizance of all matters pertaining to the affairs of widows and orphans."<sup>37</sup> At first, the supervision of this responsibility was given to the deacons of the Reformed Church but in 1653 it was taken over by the burgomaster and schepens. In 1655, a Court of Orphanmasters was established to take on the duties of overseeing the affairs of orphans. The jurisdiction of the Orphanmasters extended to all unmarried children under the age of twenty-five who had lost one or both parents.

Narrett writes, "orphanmasters acted upon the principles that a widowed parent should not be entrusted with administering the inheritance of orphaned children."<sup>38</sup> In Teuntje's case, the surviving parent, Corbesij, was not even the natural father of the children and it is no surprise, then, that the church in Brooklyn, in the same capacity as the Orphanmasters, took control of the children's inheritance. Moreover, Selijns himself wrote that Teuntje "on her deathbed had urgently requested that Henricus Selijns and Teunis Janssen, minister and deacon, take care of and look after her orphans left behind...."<sup>39</sup> It was customary for the orphanmasters to consult with the orphan's nearest relatives, however, and likely Selijns discussed the children's situation with Gabriel and perhaps their older half-sister Margariet.

As Lauren's and Anna's guardian, Selijns first had to make sure the children received their "just due" from their mother's estate. Parents in New Netherland were concerned with the well-being of both male and female offspring. Both received marriage dowers and both inherited from their parents. Girls could even be made executors of wills, although it was more common for a son to fulfill that role. If a couple or a person left a will this document would determine how the estate would be divided, but if a person died intestate the "law of intestate succession" stipulated that the estate would be divided according to certain fixed proportions. The property was divided into two equal shares: one part went to the surviving parent, while the other part was divided equally among the children regardless of their gender.<sup>40</sup> In the inventory of Teuntje's belongings, there are some illustrations of this division of property. She left two small pieces of linen measuring thirty-five els (actually twenty-four meters). Selijns writes, "which was divided in two: one half for Gabriel Corbesij and the other half for the children; [this latter half] will be subdivided in three: for Margariet, Laurens, and Anna."<sup>41</sup> After the English takeover in 1664 a slow transition took place

to favor the rule of primogeniture, marking the erosion of economic and legal rights of women in New York.

Teuntje's elder daughter, Margariet, was married to her second husband at the time of her mother's death. She received some items from her mother's estate, but Teuntje's death did not affect her as much as it did Laurens and Anna who were sent out to service with two different families. Laurens was placed with Dominee Selijns for a contract period of six years. After nineteen months, however, Selijns left Brooklyn for the Netherlands leaving Laurens with Willem Gerritsen van Couwenhooven, deacon and schepen in Breuckelen. He was to serve there for three years after which he was to be released from custody in the same "material circumstances" that he came in. A list of his possessions was given with the contract along with a copy of a declaration of Jan Laurensse Bogaert's in which he promised to take care of a pig and its offspring given to Laurens Haff.

Eight-year-old Anna was placed with the family of farmer Gerrit Cornelissen (from Niekerk in the Netherlands) who lived at the Secretary's farm in Midwout. The contract states he was to clothe and feed her and send her to school on winter evenings. She was to stay with this family for six years.

The custody contracts for both Laurens and Anna clearly stipulated that they were to go to school in winter or, if this was not possible, that the father of the household should teach them himself. Both children appear on a list of students who took confirmation classes at the church in November 1662.<sup>42</sup> Young girls received formal religious instruction together with boys and, if we are to believe Dominee Selijns, did even better than boys when it came to reciting the Psalms and hymns.<sup>43</sup> For older girls there were catechism classes that were run by either the dominee or the schoolmaster.

The Brooklyn congregation apparently took good care of Teuntje's children. Susan Elizabeth Shaw, however, points out that not all orphans were as fortunate.<sup>44</sup> Anna and Laurens were well cared for because their mother had been part of a supportive, active church that did not have many other children to support. Some children did not have the benefit of this support. Those who were not members of the Reformed Church could not count on its help. Selijns would not baptize Africans, for instance, so they were excluded from this community that provided much needed support for those who were often cut off from their families abroad.

Just when the children's lives must have regained some sense of normalcy, the church leadership received shocking news. Almost one-and-a-half years after Teuntje's death, on 17 February 1664, a traveling Englishman, David Hopkims, informed dominee Selijns that Tieleman Jacobsen, Teuntje's third husband, was still alive living as a tailor on the island of Jamaica. The church leadership decided to write a letter to Jacobsen to inform him of his wife's

death. From Hopkins' stories they were convinced that Jacobsen was a decent man and they thought that he might want to send for his daughter or send her something as a "token of paternal affection."<sup>45</sup> Dominee Samuel Drisius, a minister on Manhattan island, was asked to co-sign the letter since he knew Teuntje and had traveled with her on the ship from Guadeloupe.

Selijns wrote a copy of the letter in his book of records, from which it becomes clear that Jacobsen had wanted to go to New Netherland but did not once he learned that his wife was there and had remarried. The church leadership made sure that he knew she was told repeatedly that he had died and that eventually, with Peter Stuyvesant's consent, she married Gabriel Corbesij, one of his soldiers. He was also told that what Teuntje left behind was of little importance but that she had several children. They wrote that his daughter Anna was sent out to service with Gerrit Cornelissen van Niekerck in Midwout where she was "getting plump and fat, an indication that she is thriving better there than she did at home." Jacobsen was assured that the Cornelissen family treated Anna very well since they "like your daughter as much as their own children."<sup>46</sup> In the letter they told him that Anna was not a burden to anyone but that, since he was her closest living relative, he could come and get her or send for her. They suggested he could get a warrant with "proper procuration and a certain statement" from his governor or a magistrate so that they would know for sure he is alive and well and whether it was his wish to have Anna sent to him, the "risen father."<sup>47</sup>

It seems that Jacobsen did indeed come to New Netherland after the death of his wife. In the "Rate List of New Utrecht" of 28 September 1683 there is a mention of one Tylman Jacobsen who had one cow to his name.<sup>48</sup> Anna seems to have disappeared from the records.

From Teuntje's story, it becomes clear that she was not really a "colonist" in the sense of what most of us think that term means today. Instead of a settler, she was a highly mobile migrant in the Atlantic world. What also becomes apparent is that when we speak of "Dutch colonies" we cannot speak of culturally and linguistically homogeneous groups. In fact, quite a bit of inter-colonial migration took place that did not proceed along national lines. Especially in the Caribbean, many different groups of people came in contact with each other.

Teuntje's tale gives us a glimpse into the life of a European woman in this environment. She was one of the unfortunate women who lost several husbands because the death rate among colonial migrants was high. Without a spouse, she had to fend for herself and her children in foreign, sometimes even hostile, lands. Yet, perhaps this is exactly why she was able to do relatively well. Life in the Atlantic world, removed from kinship networks, was difficult but each new marriage and each new location provided her with fresh choices and opportunities. Geographic mobility could provide social



and economic mobility as well, even though Teuntje did not die a rich woman. Because the laws in the Netherlands were more favorable to women than in England, the fact that she was Dutch, rather than English, may have played a part in her independence when compared to her English peers. However, her mobility and the fact that she lost several husbands may have contributed to a freedom to make choices for herself that her stationary sisters in the Netherlands did not have.

## NOTES

*This article was originally written as a senior honors thesis under the direction of Drs. Ned Landsman and Nancy Tomes at SUNY Stony Brook. I would like to thank them for their wisdom, encouragement, and support in the development of this thesis.*

<sup>1</sup>In the seventeenth century the spelling of names was not consistent and people were often known by several names, some Anglicized in the 1660s. For Teuntje I am using the modern spelling of her name but in the records she is found as follows: Teuntie Straetsmans, Teuntie Straetmans, Tryntie Straetsman, Teuntje Straitmans.

<sup>2</sup>Dominee is the Dutch word for pastor or minister. I am using the modern spelling, although in various sources the word is spelled "domine."

<sup>3</sup>A.P.G. Jos van der Linde, ed. and trans., *Old First Dutch Reformed Church of Brooklyn, New York: First Book of Records, 1660-1752* (Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Co., Inc., 1983).

<sup>4</sup>For general information on Dutch history see: Han van der Horst, *Nederland: De Vaderlandse Geschiedenis van de Prehistory tot Nu* (Amsterdam, Prometheus, 2000).

<sup>5</sup>For information on the history of the West India Company see: Henk den Heijer, *De Geschiedenis van de WIC* (Zutphen: De Walburg Pers, 1994).

<sup>6</sup>For a description on the life of "seafaring folk" see: C.R. Boxer, *The Dutch Seaborne Empire: 1600-1800* (New York: Alfred A Knopf, 1965).

<sup>7</sup>Boxer, *The Dutch Seaborne Empire*, 216.

<sup>8</sup>Philip van Wyck, "Johannes Theodorus Polhemius," *Halve Maen* 55, No. 2 (1980): 11.

<sup>9</sup>Den Heijer, 45.

<sup>10</sup>After Count Johan Maurits of Nassau became governor, it was renamed Fort Margaret according to Caspar van Baerle, *História dos feitos recentemente praticados durante oito anos no Brasil* (Rio de Janeiro: Imprensa Nacional, 1940), 76.

<sup>11</sup>Wim Klooster, *The Dutch in the Americas: 1600-1800* (Providence, RI: John Carter Brown Library, 1997), 25-26.

<sup>12</sup>Klooster, 26.

<sup>13</sup>Boxer, *The Dutch Seaborne Empire*, 59.

<sup>14</sup>Boxer, *The Dutch Seaborne Empire*, 72.

<sup>15</sup>Van der Linde, ed., mention of "proper notice of dismissal dated June 23, 1649," 195.

<sup>16</sup>C.R. Boxer, *The Dutch in Brazil: 1624-1654* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1957), 128.

<sup>17</sup>Van der Linde, ed., 197.

<sup>18</sup>For early New York see: Michael Kammen, *Colonial New York: A History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1975).

<sup>19</sup>As is the case with Teuntje, Gabriel Corbesij is also known under several names among which: Carpesij, Corbegier, Carbosie, Carpesy. *Records of the Reformed Dutch Church in New Amsterdam - Marriages* (New York Genealogical and Biographical Record, 1890 and 1940), available from <http://olivetreegenealogy.com/nn/church/rdcmarr1639.shtml>.

<sup>20</sup>Berthold Fernow, ed., "Minutes of the Court of Burgomasters and Schepens, Sept. 3, 1658 to Dec. 30, 1661" *The Records of New Amsterdam from 1653 to 1674* vol. 3 (New York: Knickerbocker Press, 1897), 171. While in New Amsterdam, Teuntje and Gabriel had a son for on 28 March 1659 a baby boy was baptized at the Reformed Church of New Amsterdam by the name of David Corbesij, and Teuntje and Gabriel are listed as the

parents. At the time of her death there was no mention of this boy, so he probably died in infancy. (*Baptisms of the Reformed Church of New Amsterdam, 1659*, available from <http://www.sepwww.stanford.edu/sep/jon/family/baptism.txt>.)

<sup>21</sup> Linda Briggs Biemer, *Women and Property in Colonial New York: The Transition from Dutch to English Law 1643-1727* (Ann Arbor, MI: UMI Research Press, 1983), 1-6.

<sup>22</sup> Quoted in A.Th. van Deursen, *Het Kopergeld van de Gouden Eeuw: Volkskultuur* (Amsterdam: Van Gorcum Assen, 1978), 12.

<sup>23</sup> *The Virtual New Amsterdam Project*, Map based on the Castello Plan of ca. 1660, available from <http://www.teachout.org/vna/map.html>.

<sup>24</sup> Van der Linde, 51.

<sup>25</sup> Nooter, "Colonial Dutch Architecture" *Halve Maen* 59, no. 1 (1985): 1-6.

<sup>26</sup> Kammen, 94.

<sup>27</sup> Joyce D. Goodfriend, "Recovering the Religious History of Dutch Reformed Women in Colonial New York" *Halve Maen* 64, no. 4 (1991): 53-59.

<sup>28</sup> Oliver A. Rink, *Holland on the Hudson: An Economic and Social History of Dutch New York* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1986), 229.

<sup>29</sup> Goodfriend, 55.

<sup>30</sup> Goodfriend, 55.

<sup>31</sup> Norman L. Rosenberg, *Protecting the Best Men: an Interpretive History of the Law of Libel* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1985), 22.

<sup>32</sup> Rosenberg, *Protecting the Best Men*.

<sup>33</sup> Fernow, *The Records of New Amsterdam*, 2:427.

<sup>34</sup> Fernow, *The Records of New Amsterdam*, 3:208.

- <sup>35</sup> Fernow, *Records of New Amsterdam*, 3:171.
- <sup>36</sup> Van der Linde, 77.
- <sup>37</sup> David Evan Narrett, "Patterns of Inheritance in Colonial New York City, 1664-1775: A Study in the History of the Family" (Ph.D. diss., Cornell University 1981), 184.
- <sup>38</sup> Narrett, 184.
- <sup>39</sup> Van der Linde, 51.
- <sup>40</sup> Narrett, chapter 4.
- <sup>41</sup> Van der Linde, 51.
- <sup>42</sup> Van der Linde, 55.
- <sup>43</sup> William Heard Kilpatrick, *The Dutch Schools of New Netherland and Colonial New York* (New York: Arno Press and the New York Times, 1969), 149.
- <sup>44</sup> Susan Elizabeth Shaw, "Building New Netherland: Gender and Family Ties in a Frontier Society" (Ph.D. diss., Cornell University 2000), 371.
- <sup>45</sup> Van der Linde, 81.
- <sup>46</sup> Van der Linde, 81.
- <sup>47</sup> Van der Linde, 81.
- <sup>48</sup> E.B. O'Callaghan, *List of Inhabitants of Colonial New York Excerpted from the Documentary History of the State of New York* (Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Company, 1989).

# THE LEGACY OF NATHANIEL ROGERS (1787-1844) LONG ISLAND ARTIST FROM BRIDGEHAMPTON

*By Natalie A. Naylor*

Nathaniel Rogers gained his fame painting miniature portraits in New York City, but had well-established roots on eastern Long Island. He was born in Bridgehampton on 1 August 1787, the son of John T. Rogers, a farmer, and Sarah Brown, the eldest daughter of the second Presbyterian minister in Bridgehampton, James Brown. Within the family he was called Nathan, but he always used his full first name, Nathaniel, as an artist.<sup>1</sup>

Rogers was well known in his day. Benjamin Thompson, writing between the late 1830s and 1849, has the most extensive treatment of him in Long Island histories.<sup>2</sup> Bridgehampton historians have included him in their local histories, but he has been overlooked by twentieth-century Long Island historians.<sup>3</sup> Of course, some might question whether Rogers should be considered a Long Island artist. Although he grew up in Bridgehampton, summered, and retired there, he did most of his painting in New York City. His roots on eastern Long Island are deep, however, and that is where he began painting. Furthermore, his legacy in the architecture of his home in Bridgehampton remains with us today.

Art historians do recognize Nathaniel Rogers as one of the leading American miniaturists in the early nineteenth century. The Heckscher Museum of Art in Huntington had a series of exhibitions in the 1970s featuring "Artists of Suffolk County." They exhibited four of Rogers' miniatures, two in 1970 and two different ones in 1976. Currently, the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City has seven of Rogers' miniatures in a display of thirty miniature portraits. An exhibition at the Metropolitan Museum in 1990-91, "Tokens of Affection: The Portrait Miniature in America," included fourteen of his miniatures. That exhibition and the accompanying catalog had a total of 311 miniatures by 109 identified artists. Nearly half of the artists (52) were represented by only one miniature, twenty-two artists had two, and fifteen had three miniatures. Only eleven artists had six or more miniatures in the exhibit—and the fourteen by Rogers was second only to James Peale's nineteen (the artist with the next highest number had nine)—so clearly Rogers' miniatures have been deemed worthy of collecting. His miniatures sell for several thousand dollars today.<sup>4</sup>

### **Early Life and Family**

Nathan Rogers had a sister and three brothers. Only one of the four sons could inherit the family farmland, and John Rogers, as the eldest, probably had first choice on the farm. Two of the brothers chose to become merchants. After attending the local district school, Nathan was apprenticed at fifteen to a ship builder in Hudson, New York, which is about thirty miles south of Albany. His duties, as he later recounted, were "to keep the accounts, pay off the workmen, and serve out the grog." He also did drafting and constructed ship models.<sup>5</sup>

Rogers became a miniaturist painter literally by accident. His apprenticeship as a ship carpenter ended after a year when he accidentally cut his knee — "the most *fortunate cut* he ever made," his friends said later. At the time, however, he suffered considerable pain, and there were fears that his leg might need to be amputated. Rogers probably walked with a limp later, since a contemporary account states that his "knee was never perfectly restored to action." Rogers returned home to Bridgehampton and, while recovering under the care of Dr. Samuel H. Rose, pursued his interest in drawing. He read books and copied prints. Dr. Rose gave him a box of watercolors, some pencils and instructions in their use. ("Pencils" were the small, but full-bodied artist brushes, which were used for painting miniatures; they had a sharp point made of sable or camel's hair.) Rogers copied miniatures and painted portraits of some of his friends. His first miniatures were done on paper or cardboard. He began painting and selling his miniatures on ivory on a visit to Saybrook, Connecticut. He credited Capt. Danford Clark in Saybrook for giving him his start as a painter. Rogers may have met Anson Dickinson while he was in Connecticut; his early portraits are said to show similarities to Dickinson's work. (Dickinson was a miniaturist who worked in New Haven until he moved to New York City in 1804.)<sup>6</sup>

Rogers went to New York City and studied with miniaturists Uriah Brown and P. Howell (a native of Long Island), from about 1806-1808. He taught school briefly (probably in the Bridgehampton area), but as a contemporary, William Dunlap, observed, "his mind was more occupied by the children of his fancy, than by those of the rustic yeomanry intrusted to his care; and he soon relinquished a task which his youth and extremely mild disposition, made him...very unfit for." Rogers' father was willing to educate him for one of the learned professions (namely, law, medicine, or the ministry), and he spent a brief time in school in preparation, but art was now of greater interest to him.<sup>7</sup>

Rogers returned to New York City and in 1811 was being instructed by Joseph Wood, a miniature portrait painter. He "progressed rapidly," and soon opened his own studio. He is first listed in New York City directories

as a "miniature painter" in 1811, by which time he was 24 years old. The next year Wood moved to Philadelphia, leaving the miniature field in New York City open to Rogers who prospered. Rogers moved almost every year in his first decade in New York City, which was not uncommon. (May 1st was traditionally moving day in New York.) He probably painted in the rooms where he lived. The first year that the city directories list him as having a different address for his home and business was 1827. His studio was located at 1 Courtlandt Street from 1827-1839, and he lived at 197 East Broadway from 1830-1839. (These locations today are in lower Manhattan. New York City, of course, at that time, had not expanded very far north.)<sup>8</sup>

Rogers first exhibited at the American Academy of Fine Arts in 1817, and showed one to five or more miniatures at the Academy every year to 1824 (with the exception of 1821). He was elected to the American Academy in 1825. Rogers was a founder of the National Academy of Art and Design, and exhibited his miniatures regularly there from 1826 to 1830.<sup>9</sup>

Rogers probably maintained his Bridgehampton ties during the years he pursued his career in New York City. When he married in 1817 at the age of thirty, his wife was sixteen-year-old Caroline Matilda Denison, daughter of Captain and Mrs. Samuel Denison from nearby Sag Harbor.<sup>10</sup>

Caroline and Nathan Rogers had six children, two daughters and four sons. One daughter, Sarah Matilda, died when she was only four years old. Their eldest son, Samuel Denison, became an Episcopal minister, but died at thirty-one. The second son, Edmund, died at sea two days out of Sag Harbor while a passenger on the steamship *Champion* in 1861. He was only thirty-six years old. Their son George went to California in the gold rush when he was twenty-two; he died in New York City in 1862 at the age of thirty-five. Daughter Helen married Henry Manning who later owned a steam mill in Madison, Wisconsin. When she died in 1883 at the age of forty-nine, the Mannings were living in New York City. The Rogers' youngest son, James, went to Williams College and became a physician who practiced in Sag Harbor. Born in 1829, he died in Bridgehampton in 1901, and was the only one of the children who had a long life. In his later years, Dr. Rogers spent time in Florida and summers in East Hampton where he had a home. It is interesting that though four of the Rogers' children died in New York City years after their parents had moved to Bridgehampton, at least three of them were buried in Bridgehampton. It attests to the importance of Bridgehampton to the family. When Nathan died in Bridgehampton in 1844, four of his five surviving children were under twenty-one. His widow, Caroline, died in Wisconsin in 1857, while visiting her daughter, but she too is buried in Bridgehampton. The Rogers' plot in the Old Cemetery by the Presbyterian Church also includes a monument to the daughter who died at four and mentions the son Edmund who died at sea.<sup>11</sup>

### **Portrait Miniatures**

Portrait miniatures are not something that most of us are familiar with today. Even a contemporary art historian refers to them as "a little-understood art form."<sup>12</sup> Miniature portraits on ivory were very popular in the late eighteenth century and the first half of the nineteenth century. Some of the most eminent artists of the day painted miniatures, including John Singleton Copley, Thomas Sully, James and Charles Peale, as well as artists whose names are not as well known today, such as Edward Malbone, Walter Robinson, and, yes, Nathaniel Rogers.

A little background will enable us to better appreciate Rogers' artistic work. The ivory had to be prepared—degreased, bleached, and smoothed. Then it was attached to a card or paper. Most miniaturists used watercolors which took advantage of the luminosity of the ivory, though oil paints were sometimes used. A gum arabic or other binder was added to enable the paint to adhere to the ivory. Without getting too technical, the painting techniques usually were either stippling (small dots), hatching (parallel brush strokes), or a combination of the two, together with an "even wash" of wet color. The finished portrait was covered by a convex glass cover and put in a locket or other case. Oval shapes predominated initially. In the early 1800s, larger, rectangular portraits became popular, which were designed to be displayed rather than worn as pendants.<sup>13</sup>

Typically, the small paintings were commissioned to be given as mementoes. Miniature portraits were often exchanged when couples became engaged or married, or if someone were leaving home or had died. Obviously miniatures were very portable. They were designed to be worn in lockets or brooches or kept in a pocket. Many full-sized portraits of the period show women wearing or holding miniatures. Some had locks of hair of the person braided on the reverse side, and others used chopped hair of the subject in the paint. (Hair pieces were also popular in the nineteenth century; we have a remnant today in keeping locks of hair in baby books.) Miniatures could take several sittings to paint and could command prices comparable to those paid for head-size oil portraits.<sup>14</sup>

Miniatures went out of fashion with the development of photography, beginning with daguerreotypes in the 1840s. Photography in the 1850s provided negatives, which permitted multiple copies and that was the final blow. Some artists continued painting miniatures in the late nineteenth century, though it was usually not done professionally.

### **Rogers' Portraits**

Rogers became very successful and soon was painting "most of the 'fashionables' of his day."<sup>15</sup> He painted miniatures of some of the most



eminent people of his day, including Philip Livingston, Mrs. Stephen (Cornelia Patterson) Van Rensselaer, and Chancellor Robert Livingston. He painted a few full-size portraits, but his miniatures were more popular. One of his most charming paintings is his own miniature self-portrait. (See Fig. 1.) Jaunty, with a cigar angled firmly in his mouth, Rogers' blue eyes are the most striking feature of the portrait. The National Academy of Design in New York City owns that portrait and a miniature he painted of his wife Caroline. Rogers also painted miniatures and portraits of his daughter, Helen, and other members of his family.



Figure 1: Nathaniel Rogers, *Self-Portrait*. Water color on ivory, 3-1/8" x 1-3/4". National Academy of Design, New York. Gift of Mrs. Place, granddaughter of the artist, 1922.

Many miniatures have been passed down in families and are privately owned, but some, including many of Rogers' miniatures, now can be found in museum collections. His miniatures are in the collections of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, Museum of the City of New York, New-York Historical Society, Yale University, Worcester Art Museum, Cleveland Museum of Art, and other museums. The Suffolk County Historical Society in Riverhead owns three miniatures by Rogers. They are of Miss Hetty Cook (see Fig. 2), and (in one frame) Nathan Topping Cook (1762-1822), and

Mary Howell Cook (1774-1860). The Society for the Preservation of Long Island Antiquities (SPLIA), owns a Rogers' portrait of Matthew Hildreth. The full-size (29" x 36") oil painting is on display in their Custom House museum in Sag Harbor.<sup>16</sup>



Figure 2: *Miss Hetty Cook* (1793-1878). Portrait miniature by Nathaniel Rogers. Courtesy Suffolk County Historical Society.

More than one hundred portraits by Nathaniel Rogers have been identified by the author, forty percent of which are in museums. These paintings are only a small percentage of his total work, since he was actively painting for nearly three decades. Of these, two-thirds are men and the identity of one in five subjects is now unknown. A few (mainly family members) are full-size bust portraits (oils on canvas) rather than miniatures. Rogers usually painted his miniatures in watercolor, sometimes in oil, on oval-shaped or later (after the mid-1820s), rectangular ivory. The sizes range from two and one-half to nearly four inches in height and usually are between two and three inches in width.<sup>17</sup> He signed some of his miniatures on the side and other on the paper backing; some are unsigned. Most of his miniatures are in "plain gold locket" with a ring at the top and inner beaded rims on the front and back.<sup>18</sup>

Rogers was the most sought after miniature painter in New York City from about 1815 through the 1830s. William Dunlap, himself a miniature artist, stated in 1834 that Rogers "has long been of the first in rank among American miniature painters." Of art critics since that time, only one has criticized Rogers' miniatures. Writing in 1927, Harry B. Wehle, assistant curator of paintings at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, criticized Rogers for his drawing, flesh colors, and what he described as the "nearly expressionless" faces of his sitters. Frederick Sherman, however, six years later, in an article in *Art in America*, maintained that "the individuality of each and every sitter is unmistakably portrayed by a painstaking fidelity in the drawing of heads and features and the modelling of the faces." Sherman noted, "It was presumably because of his success in picturing personality in this way without the further aid of attractive though unsubstantial and often elusive elements in portraiture that he won and held until he voluntarily retired from practice an enviable position in a city where his work held its own with the best." Sherman praised Rogers' color, flesh tones, and particularly his "rendering of hair." In Sherman's judgment, Rogers' technique was "the equal of any but the greatest of our native workers on ivory."<sup>19</sup>

Phyllis Braff, an art critic and curator, reviewed an exhibition of Suffolk County artists at the Heckscher Museum for the *East Hampton Star* in 1970. She focused on two miniatures by Rogers of Mr. and Mrs. John Schermerhorn Bussing owned by the Museum of the City of New York. Braff indicated that they "effectively combined overly rouged cheeks and clear blue touches in the clothing with the silvery translucency of the ivory."<sup>20</sup>

Dale T. Johnson, who curated the exhibition of miniature portraits from the Manney Collection at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in 1991, judges Rogers to be "one of New York City's leading miniaturists of the early nineteenth century." She notes that he "employed a palette of clear, lively color" and he early produced "delicate and sophisticated" work. She further observes, "The subjects of his highly individualized portraits are presented in a direct and appealing manner. . . . He painted faces with a delicate stipple, often modeling the shadows in tones of red and emphasizing the eyes. When representing women he tended to make the heads disproportionately large and the bodies small. Details of dress are sharply defined with gum arabic." Rogers is described as one of "America's best artists of the 1820's and 1830's" in an article which Johnson jointly authored with Robin Bolton-Smith (of the Smithsonian's National Museum of American Art in Washington, D.C.) in *Antiques* in 1990.<sup>21</sup>

**Legacy in Bridgehampton**

Nathaniel Rogers became wealthy as a miniaturist, though his father initially had been apprehensive as to whether he would be able to support himself and a family as an artist. (Soon after establishing himself in New York City, he sent "a handsome sum in bank-notes" to his father to invest for him, which relieved his anxiety.) William Dunlap, in a contemporary biographical account, wrote that Rogers "has continued prosperously to maintain a large family honourably, educate his children to his wish, and accumulate property." He also aided his former teacher, Joseph Wood and his family, when they came on hard times. Although we do not have details, Rogers is reported to have served as "a trustee of the public schools and of several charitable and moral institutions" in New York City. Dunlap concluded his biographical account of Rogers by stating, "the life, conduct, and prosperity of this gentleman, are lessons for our younger artists."<sup>22</sup>

Rogers contracted tuberculosis in 1825, and thereafter he spent more time in Bridgehampton. Dunlap observed in 1834, "by hard riding, and relaxing from business" that Rogers "has long been restored to health." Dunlap also noted that Rogers had only painted in New York City, "now is independent, and contemplates relinquishing painting as a profession, though he never can as an amusement."<sup>23</sup> As mentioned earlier, Rogers did not exhibit his paintings in New York after 1830, though he retained a home and studio in New York City until 1839, when he fully retired to Bridgehampton. His membership in the National Academy was shifted to Honorary because of non-residence. Rogers had become wealthy and was able to retire in his early fifties, at a time when most people could not afford to retire from working. Geoffrey Fleming has pointed out that he was the third wealthiest man in the Town of Southampton, based on his property in Bridgehampton.<sup>24</sup>

Bridgehampton at this time was described by Benjamin Thompson as "a most desirable place of habitation." It was relatively small, but nearby Sag Harbor was booming, thanks in large measure to the "whale fishery." Thompson described Sag Harbor, with its 3,000 inhabitants and four churches, as "the most populous, wealthy, and commercial place in the county, and may therefore not improperly be considered the emporium of Suffolk."<sup>25</sup>

When in Bridgehampton in earlier years, Nathan Rogers may have stayed in the family home on Hayground Road just north of today's Montauk Highway. About the time he retired to Bridgehampton, Rogers purchased a house from Judge Abraham T. Rose, the son of his former doctor who had presented him with his first set of brushes and watercolors. After his father died in 1832, Judge Rose inherited his house across the street and sold his own home on the south side of the road to Rogers. There are no pictures of what that house looked like when Rogers purchased it.

It is Nathan Rogers who expanded and remodeled the house in the 1830s in the then-fashionable Greek Revival style. (See Fig. 3.) This house still stands across from the monument, at the southeast corner of Ocean Avenue and Main Street (Montauk Highway or Route 27). Rogers may have designed it himself, drawing on pattern books, perhaps, as Sherrill Foster has suggested, Minard Lafever's *Modern Builder's Guide*.<sup>26</sup>

Rogers served on the building committee for the Bridgehampton Presbyterian Church in 1842. Joseph P. Lamb of Sag Harbor, was the builder; he had probably built many Greek Revival houses in Sag Harbor. The church has Ionic capitals on its pilasters, just as Rogers' own house has Ionic columns. In 1845, Long Island historian Nathaniel Prime wrote of the church, "for simple beauty, chaste neatness, just proportions and absolute convenience, it is not exceeded by any church in the county." James Truslow Adams, a Bridgehampton resident who was to become an eminent American historian, stated in 1916, "This Church and the Hampton House are, architecturally, the two best buildings in the village, and it is noteworthy that the artist, Nathan Rogers, who has already been spoken of, should have built the one and been on the building committee for the other."<sup>27</sup>



Figure 3: Hampton House, c. 1910. Courtesy of the Bridge Hampton Historical Society, Bridgehampton, New York.

Unfortunately, Rogers lived in his new Bridgehampton home for only a few years. He died on 6 December 1844 at the age of fifty-seven. The estate inventory of property in Bridgehampton, where he owned twenty-five acres of land, included a cow, farm implements, two horses, two ponies, chickens, and several wagons. Their house must have been lavishly furnished. They had several Brussels carpets, sixty-seven (!) chairs, four sofas, four clocks, five bird cages, a silver tankard, trays, pitcher, and teaspoons. The inventory goes on and on. They had a "piano forte" and an organ, which was the most highly valued single item at \$300. Nathan Rogers' estate inventory indicates he owned considerable property in New York City or mortgages, bonds, and notes on New York City property, making him one of the wealthiest men in Suffolk County.<sup>28</sup>

Caroline Rogers, his widow, lived in the remodeled Bridgehampton house until she died in 1857. It was purchased by Capt. James Hunting who lived there until the early 1870s. The owners in the next two decades were DeBost, to 1881, and a Mr. Storms in the late 1880s (he had a bar and hotel which he called Hampton House, but it did not flourish). In 1894, the house was purchased and renovated by Capt. John Hedges and his son-in-law, Frank Hopping, who operated it as a "first class hotel and boarding house." Hopping's wife, Caroline Augusta Hopping, operated Hampton House as a summer boarding house into the late 1940s. In 1956, Paul Curts wrote of this house, "The passing of time has brought changes and decay. . . The handsome old fence that surrounded the grounds is gone. Another fine landmark is on its way to oblivion."<sup>29</sup>

In 2000, the house was endangered by a proposed shopping plaza on the property. The Town of Southampton purchased the house and its remaining six acres of property from a member of the Hopping family in 2003 (for something over 3 million dollars) with \$550,000 raised from private funds for the house itself.

The house has architectural significance today. In 1936, the Hampton House was one of twenty-three structures in Suffolk County selected to be included in the Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS). New York State's *Long Island Landmarks* in 1969, stated "Hampton House, facing onto Montauk Highway, is one of the best Greek Revival structures in the state, with two-story Ionic columns across its front center. The local pride typified by a recent repainting holds out a bright future for the area."<sup>30</sup>

In 1992, the *AIA Architectural Guide* by the Long Island Chapter of the American Institute of Architects and the Society for the Preservation of Long Island Antiquities, included Rogers' house with this description:

Its five-bay, two-story center block preserves a full-facade porch supported on four Ionic columns, a form more

commonly associated with the Greek Revival style of the Southeastern states. The impressive columns are echoed by pilasters at the corners of the block and two flanking wings; a roofline balustrade that at one time graced the main house was destroyed by the hurricane of 1938. Also lacking its decorative rooftop cupola as a result of that catastrophe, the house retains other features that are characteristic of the Greek Revival idiom, such as its front-door surround made up of pilasters topped with a frieze and cornice with Ionic columns framing the inset entryway.

More recently, SPLIA referred to the Greek Revival House as "architecturally significant," and one of the two most important surviving Greek Revival structures on Long Island.<sup>31</sup>

### **Conclusion**

Nathaniel Rogers was a gifted and prolific artist in his day, very successful both artistically and financially. Miniature portraits are not prized as much today as they were in his time since we rely on photographs. Nor is it easy to mount an exhibit of miniatures. Hence, Rogers' reputation has not been widely sustained, except in the specialized field of portrait miniatures.

Nathan Rogers remodeled his home into an elegant Greek Revival-style house. It might be appropriate to recognize his architectural legacy by including his name in the designation, as the Rogers-Hampton House.<sup>32</sup> Regardless of what the house is called, I hope someday we will be able to see it returned to its earlier splendor. That would enable people to remember this Bridgehampton native son who became an eminent artist in New York City, and returned to his home community where he enhanced Main Street with his remodeled home.

### **NOTES**

*I appreciate the assistance of Geoffrey Fleming, the Bridge Hampton Historical Society, and Ann Sandford in my research. Dale T. Johnson was very helpful when I first began to research Nathaniel Rogers some years ago. This article originated in a presentation at the East Hampton Library lecture series, 10 April 2003, under the title "Nathan Rogers of Bridgehampton: Portrait Painter and Amateur Architect."*

<sup>1</sup> Rogers' maternal grandfather, the Reverend James Brown (1723-1787), graduated from Yale (1747), and was ordained in Bridgehampton in 1748, where he served until he resigned in 1775 (dissension in the congregation had led some members to withdraw and build another church). Dale T. Johnson erroneously identifies the mother of Nathan Rogers as "Caroline Matilda Brown," rather than Sarah Brown. (Nathan married Caroline Matilda Denison, as Johnson herself indicates.) Dale T. Johnson, *American Portrait Miniatures in the Manney Collection* (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1990), 187-88.

Nathan is the name which is on his gravestone monument in the Bridgehampton Presbyterian Church cemetery. This article uses "Nathan" when discussing his personal life and "Nathaniel" in reference to his artistic career.

<sup>2</sup> Benjamin F. Thompson, *History of Long Island*, 1849, 3d. ed., 3 vols., revised with additions by Charles J. Werner (New York: Robert H. Dodd, 1918), 2:199-201 (Reprint; Port Washington: Ira J. Friedman, 1962). Thompson prepared this third edition of his history, but died in 1849 before he could publish it. Basically the same information is in his 1st edition (1839), 230-33; and 2d edition (1843), 1:358-59n, though these two earlier editions have a wrong year for the date of Rogers' birth as a result of transposing the last two digits (1778 rather than 1787). All subsequent citations to Thompson's *History* are to the more accessible 3d edition, unless otherwise specified.

<sup>3</sup> James Truslow Adams includes him in the histories he wrote of Bridgehampton and Southampton in 1916 and 1918, and Geoffrey Fleming recently published an article on him and his family in the Bridge Hampton Historical Society's journal. See James Truslow Adams, *Memorials of Old Bridgehampton*, 1916 (Reprint; Port Washington: Ira J. Friedman, 1962), 168-69, 200-201; James Truslow Adams, *History of the Town of Southampton*, 1918 (Reprint; Port Washington: Ira J. Friedman, 1962), 224-25; and Geoffrey Fleming, "The Rogers of Bridgehampton: Descendents of a Premier Early Artist," *The Bridge* (Bridge Hampton Historical Society), 2001-2002, 13.

Rogers is not mentioned in the chapter on "Long Island Poets and Painters" in Paul Bailey's 1949 *Long Island* history, nor in any of the three general Long Island histories published in the last two decades. See James G. Murray, "Long Island Poets and Painters," in *Long Island: A History of Two Great Counties, Nassau and Suffolk*, edited by Paul Bailey (New York: Lewis Historical Publishing, 1949), 2:381-95; Bernie Bookbinder, *Long Island: People and Places, Past and Present*, 1983; updated 2d ed. (New



York: Harry N. Abrams, 1998); and Robert B. MacKay and Richard F. Welch, eds. *Long Island: An Illustrated History* (Sun Valley, CA: American Historical Press, 2000), originally published under the title *Between Ocean and Empire: An Illustrated History of Long Island* (1985), edited by Robert B. MacKay, Geoffrey L. Rossano, Carol A. Traynor; and Newsday, *Long Island: Our Story* (Melville: Newsday, 1998).

<sup>4</sup> Rogers' portrait miniatures are on exhibit in the Henry R. Luce Center of the Metropolitan. The catalog of the 1990-91 exhibition reproduces the fourteen miniatures by Rogers. See Johnson, *American Portrait Miniatures*, 187-93. The Rogers' miniatures at the Heckscher exhibits were borrowed from the Museum of the City of New York. The miniatures of John Schermerhorn Bussing and his wife, Anna Van Ness Bussing, were pictured in the exhibition catalog, Heckscher Museum of Art [Ruth Solomon], *Artists of Suffolk County, Part I* (1970), 10. The exhibition, *Artists of Suffolk County, Part X, Records of History* (1976), included Rogers' miniatures of Sidney Augustus Holly and Edwin Gardiner Thompson, but they are not reproduced in the exhibit catalog. Information on current prices of miniatures from Geoffrey Fleming, Director of the Southold Historical Society (former Director of the Bridge Hampton Historical Society), conversation with the author, March 2003.

The most extensive discussions of Nathaniel Rogers by art historians are by Dale T. Johnson in *American Portrait Miniatures*, 187-93; William Dunlap, *History of the Rise and Progress of the Arts of Design in the United States*, 1834 (Reprint; 3 vols., edited by William P. Campbell, New York: Benjamin Blom, 1965), 3:15-18 (in the 1834 edition, 2:251-53; subsequent page references to Dunlap's work are to the more accessible 1965 edition); and Frederick Sherman, "Nathaniel Rogers and His Miniatures," *Art in America* 25 (October 1935): 158-62.

Rogers is included in many dictionaries of American painters with brief notices, e.g. George C. Groce and David H. Wallace, *The New-York Historical Society's Dictionary of Artists in America, 1564-1860* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1957), 544-45; Glen B. Opitz, ed., *Mantle Fielding's Dictionary of American Painters, Sculptors, and Engravers*, rev. and enlarged edition (Poughkeepsie: Apollo Book, 1983), 795; and Ralph Clifton Smith, *A Biographical Index of American Artists* (Baltimore: Williams and Wilkinson, 1930), 79.

Long Island art historian Helen Harrison does not mention Rogers in her recent account of South Fork artists. See Helen A. Harrison and Constance Ayers Denne, *Hamptons Bohemia: Two Centuries of Artists and Writers on the Beach* (San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 2002).

<sup>5</sup> Thompson, *History of Long Island*, 2:199. For information on Bridgehampton at this time, see Ann H. Sandford's article in this issue, "Rural Connections: Early Republic Bridgehampton and Its Wider World."

<sup>6</sup> Thompson, *History of Long Island*, 2:199-200; Dunlap, *History* 3:16; Carol Aiken, "Materials and Techniques of the American Portrait Miniaturist," in Johnson, *American Portrait Miniatures*, 29; and Johnson, *American Portrait Miniatures*, 188.

<sup>7</sup> Thompson, *History of Long Island*, 2:200-201; Dunlap, *History*, 3:16. Dunlap indicates that a miniature painter from England (whom he calls "Mysterious Brown") taught Rogers in New York City (Dunlap, *History*, 3:17, 19); this may have been Uriah Brown (Groce and Wallace, *New-York Historical Society's Dictionary of Artists*, 88).

<sup>8</sup> Dunlap, *History*, 3:17; and Johnson, *American Portrait Miniatures*, 188. Rogers' earlier locations included 55 Maiden Lane (1811), 15 Liberty Street (1812), 1 Wall Street (1813-1816), 154 Broadway (1817), 174 Fulton (1818), 86 Broadway at the corner of Wall Street (1819-1820), 104 Liberty Street, (1821-1826), and 454 Greenwich (home 1827-1829). Locations are from New York City directories, *Longworth's American Almanac: New-York Register and City Directory*, various years (from copies in the collections of the New-York Historical Society; title may vary).

<sup>9</sup> New-York Historical Society, *National Academy of Design Exhibition Record*, 1826-1860, 2 vols. (New York: New-York Historical Society, 1943), 2:100; Mary Bartlett Cowdrey, *American Academy of Fine Arts and American Art-Union Exhibition Record*, 1816-1852 (New York: New-York Historical Society, 1953), 309-10. The address of Rogers' studio is given in these sources as well as those cited in note 8 above.

The American Academy (originally New-York Academy of Art) was organized in 1805 "to cultivate an interest in the Arts," but did not include any artists. Professional artists organized the National Academy of Art and Design in 1826, which accounts for Rogers' shift in exhibiting. Rogers was among the fifteen artists elected by the first fifteen members. See Eliot Clark, *History of the National Academy of Design, 1825-1953* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1954), 13-14, 268. Clark lists Rogers as a National Academician (N.A.) and Associate of the National Academy (A.N.A.).

<sup>10</sup> They were married in Sag Harbor on Wednesday, 1 October 1817, by John Gardiner, the minister of the Sag Harbor Presbyterian Church.

Although many accounts erroneously give the year of their marriage as 1818 (and one even 1825), the Sag Harbor Presbyterian Church records and the Sag Harbor *Suffolk County Recorder* (4 October 1817), attest to the year 1817. Caroline's younger sister, Frances, later married Nathan's youngest brother, Jeremiah. His brother John married Phebe Corwith, and brother James married Mary "Abbie" Rose. His sister Mary married David Halsey. The spouses of Rogers' siblings are all from Bridgehampton and Sag Harbor families. See [Geoffrey Fleming], "Descendants of John Rogers of Bridgehampton," typescript (Bridge Hampton Historical Society, 2001).

<sup>11</sup> Samuel, James, Helen, and perhaps George are buried in the "Old Cemetery" next to the Bridgehampton Presbyterian Church. Inscriptions also can be found in Adams, *Memorials of Old Bridgehampton*, 373. Sarah's birth and death dates are unknown, but the dates for the other children are: Samuel, 1822-1853; Edmund, 1826-1861; George 1827-1862; James, 1829-1901; Helen, 1834-1883. See also Fleming, "Descendants of John Rogers"; and Fleming, "The Rogers of Bridgehampton," 13.

<sup>12</sup> Robin Jaffee Frank, *Love and Loss: American Portrait and Mourning Miniatures* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000), ix.

<sup>13</sup> Aiken, "Materials and Techniques of the American Portrait Miniaturist," 27-37; Johnson, *American Portrait Miniatures*, 13-26; Robin Bolton-Smith and Dale T. Johnson, "The Miniature in America," *Antiques* (November 1990): 1,042-55; Frank, *Love and Loss*, 5-10.

<sup>14</sup> We do not know what Rogers charged for his miniatures, but Charles Wilson Peale charged £5.5 for miniatures and life-size heads, and £22 for full-length portraits; Malbone charged \$50 for miniatures in 1801; Raphaelle Peale charged \$30 in 1804; James Peale advertised miniatures at 3 guineas; and William Dunlap sold his miniatures for \$20-\$25 in 1806. At a later period (c. 1845-50); William Russell Birch charged \$30-\$100; while John Henry Brown charged \$50-\$250. See Frank, *Love and Loss*, 57, 107, 172, 204, 297, 311 n. 24; and Bolton-Smith and Johnson, "Miniature in America," 1,048.

<sup>15</sup> Thomas S. Cummings, *Historic Annals of the National Academy of Design*, 1865 (Reprint; New York: Kennedy Galleries and Da Capo Press, 1971), 185.

<sup>16</sup> The Cooks were probably relatives of Nathan Rogers, since his paternal grandmother was a Topping and his wife's mother was also a Topping. The

house of "Nathan Cook (tailor)" is located on Mitchell's Lane on William Donaldson Halsey's c. 1800 map of "Bridge Hampton Center." See Fleming, "Descendants of John Rogers," 1; and Halsey, *Sketches from Local History*, 1935 (Reprinted; Southampton, 1966), unpaginated (at back of book). The Matthew Hildreth portrait was painted in 1825 before he left to go "over sea" (SPLIA accession records, based on information from Hildreth's great-granddaughter, Mrs. Niles, who had owned the painting). The portrait is probably the Matthew Hildreth (1798-1882) who is buried (together with his family) in the Old Cemetery in Bridgehampton, next to the Presbyterian Church.

<sup>17</sup> A "Checklist of Portraits by Nathaniel Rogers," has been compiled by the author as part of her research. This list has been deposited in the Bridge Hampton Historical Society, the East Hampton Library, the Suffolk County Historical Society, and the Long Island Studies Institute at Hofstra University. The Smithsonian's National Museum of Art lists fifty-nine portraits by Rogers in their Research Information System Inventory of American Paintings (in Art Inventories Catalog, <<http://www.siris.si.edu>>); another four paintings are attributed to Rogers. Portraiture was the main genre of art in America into the early nineteenth century. Whether Rogers did any landscapes or other types of easel art is unknown; none have been located.

<sup>18</sup> Sherman, "Nathaniel Rogers and His Miniatures," 161.

<sup>19</sup> Dunlap, *History*, 3:15; Harry B. Wehle, *American Miniatures, 1730-1850, One Hundred and Seventy-three Portraits Selected with a Descriptive Account* (Garden City, NY: Metropolitan Museum of Art/Doubleday, Page & Company, 1927), 61; Sherman, "Nathaniel Rogers and His Miniatures," 160-61. Frederick Sherman (1874-1940) was an art critic and collector who edited and published the quarterly, *Art in America* (1913-1940), and wrote several books on American painters. Edward Malbone (1777-1807) is generally regarded as the technically most proficient American miniaturist (Wehle, *American Miniatures*, 36-40; Johnson, *American Portrait Miniatures*, 21, 23; and Bolton-Smith and Johnson, "Miniature in America," 1,046).

<sup>20</sup> Phyllis Braff, "From the Studio" in *East Hampton Star*, 5 March 1970. Braff was curator of art for the Nassau County Division of Museum Services and, more recently, as art critic for the Long Island section of the *New York Times*. The Bussing miniatures are reproduced in her article and in the exhibition catalog, *Artists of Suffolk County*, Part I, 10.

<sup>21</sup> Johnson, *American Portrait Miniatures*, 187-88; Bolton-Smith and Johnson, "Miniature in America," 1,050. See also Dale T. Johnson, "Unidentified Gentleman by Nathaniel Rogers," *Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin* 50 (Fall 1992): 52.

<sup>22</sup> Dunlap, *History*, 3:17-18; Thompson, *History of Long Island*, 200-201.

<sup>23</sup> Many miniaturists and other artists had to travel to secure sufficient work. Dunlap, *History*, 3:17-18.

<sup>24</sup> Only the "owners of the two major Southampton cooperages (barrel makers) had higher assessments of real and personal property" in the mid-1840s. Fleming, "The Rogers of Bridgehampton," 13, based on records in the Southampton archives.

<sup>25</sup> Thompson, *History of Long Island*, 1st ed. (1839), 216.

<sup>26</sup> Adams, *Memorials of Old Bridgehampton*, 168; Paul H. Curts, *Bridgehampton's Three Hundred Years* (Bridgehampton: Hampton Press, 1956), 48-49; Leonard Davenport, with Geoffrey Fleming, Dot Zaykowski, and Sherrill Foster, "The 19th Century in The Hampton House: Prominent Owners Left Their Mark on the Hamlet," *The Bridge* (Bridge Hampton Historical Society), 2000-2001, 32-32; and Sherrill Foster, "Nathaniel Roger's Chairmanship" (of Presbyterian Church Building Committee), typescript. See also [Geoffrey Fleming], "A Brief History of Hampton House," typescript, Bridge Hampton Historical Society.

<sup>27</sup> Curts, *Bridgehampton's Three Hundred Years*, 20; Nathaniel S. Prime, *A History of Long Island from its First Settlement by Europeans to the Year 1845, with Special Reference to its Ecclesiastical Concerns* (New York: Robert Carter, 1845), 200; and Adams, *Memorials of Old Bridgehampton*, 200.

<sup>28</sup> Petition of Caroline M. Rogers, estate inventory, no. 3,488, Suffolk County Clerk's Office, Riverhead. Geoffrey Fleming kindly provided a copy of the Rogers' estate inventory of property. The Bridge Hampton Historical Society owns a silver nameplate, "N. Rogers," which he probably had on the front door of his house in New York City and Bridgehampton.

It is interesting also to note the articles "set off to Caroline M. Rogers, widow of the deceased, to which she is Entitled by Law." They included "three Stoves kept for use of family; Family Bible, family pictures, School

books and Library not exceeding value of \$50; Necessary wearing apparel; Bedstead & Bedding; necessary cooking utensils; - clothing of the family - one table, 6 chairs - 6 knives & forks - 6 plates - 6 teacups & saucers - one large dish - one milkpot - one teapot & 6 spoons - one cow - 2 Swine."

<sup>29</sup> Curts, *Bridgehampton's Three Hundred Years*, 300.

<sup>30</sup> HABS photographed the house, but apparently did not do measured drawings, which they did for many of the sites. *Historic American Buildings Survey Catalog of the Measured Drawings and Photographs of the Survey in the Library of Congress, March 1, 1941* (National Park Service), 259; and Metropolitan New York Office of the Office of Planning Coordination, Edward J. Smits, consultant, *Long Island Landmarks*, 1970 (Reprint; Setauket: Society for the Preservation of Long Island Antiquities, 1971), 71-72.

<sup>31</sup> Kitt Barrett, "Hampton House," in *AIA Architectural Guide to Nassau and Suffolk Counties, Long Island*, by The American Institute of Architects [AIA], Long Island Chapter, and the Society for the Preservation of Long Island Antiquities [SPLIA], (New York: Dover Publications, 1992), 80; "Endangered," *Preservation Notes* 37 (Fall 2001), 6; and "New Initiatives to Preserve Historic Environments," *Preservation Notes* 38 (Fall 2002), 2.

<sup>32</sup> If one wanted to acknowledge all the owners, it would be the Rogers-Hunting-DeBost-Storms-Hedges-Hopping House, but that surely is too cumbersome a name. Many long-time residents still remember it as the Hampton House, which is the name most often used today.

# THE GENESIS OF NEIGHBORHOOD HEALTH CENTERS IN SUFFOLK COUNTY: 1965-1968

By Priscilla Redfield Roe

With the research and editorial assistance of my colleague, Joyce Turner, and my daughter, Cynthia Redfield Barnes

## Preface

Over the years since the 1970s I have been asked repeatedly by friends and former colleagues to record my recollections as a participant in the historical events and influences leading to the opening of the Martin Luther King Community Health Center in Wyandanch in July 1968. One of the last such requests came in 1999 from Dr. Walter O'Connor, the first Medical Director of the Martin Luther King Community Health Center (MLK Center), who had retired in 1984 but continued to serve on its advisory board, as he still does. This was a request I could not ignore.

As I addressed the task of outlining a complex series of events, involving many participants, that took place during the three years preceding the MLK Center's opening I knew I should not be satisfied to toss off a bundle of hastily resurrected memories. These would need confirmation by a review of my own records and those of others, involving many telephone calls, interviews and other research. Now, after many interruptions but with the recent encouragement of the Stony Brook University Department of History, I am completing a review of those critical, almost forgotten three years, 1965-1968. In fact, it has been inspiring to help revive the story of how a remarkable confluence of circumstances and the interactions of many individuals, agencies and institutions, both in Washington, D.C. and in Suffolk County, New York, made it possible for the very first County-supported family health center to open its doors for service to its surrounding neighborhood.

The deep significance of this event is reflected not only in the thousands of patient visits recorded at the MLK Center during the last thirty-five or so years, but also in the fact that the MLK Center itself became the *prototype* for seven more such centers established in Suffolk County by 1979 with a ninth added in South Huntington as recently as 1995 -- *all* still in operation today. The result has been an astonishing achievement in *institutional change* on all sides. Communities had been empowered to articulate their needs and take part effectively in designing solutions. And the County, its Health Department, and a handful of voluntary hospitals plus Stony Brook University Hospital have over time stretched and enlarged their traditional

missions to provide urgently needed but previously ignored primary health care to large segments of less advantaged populations in the County.

In the summer of 1998, I returned to Long Island from New Hampshire to attend the grand 30th Anniversary event celebrating the July 1968 opening of the MLK Center.<sup>1</sup> I was thrilled to hear accounts about the endurance—indeed the flourishing—of this great and essential human service, begun so modestly in three small converted stores in a new shopping mall in the Wyandanch village center. I say "endurance" because there have been hard times. Each year there is a struggle for adequate budgets and occasionally there have been challenges to the very existence of all County-supported health centers. The worst of these challenges was the one that led to the creation of the Suffolk County Blue Ribbon Health Panel,<sup>2</sup> the public hearings it held during 1996/97, and its final report fully endorsing the County's support of the neighborhood health center network. Almost thirty-five years after the opening of the MLK Center, I am keenly aware of how few of us are still alive who played a role in the unfolding of the story, beginning three years before 1968 and who still remember what had to happen before those doors could open for the MLK Center's Dedication on that steaming hot but happy day in July so long ago.

### **Two Pivotal Administrative Actions by Suffolk County**

During the three-year period from 1965 to 1968, two actions taken by the incumbent Suffolk County Executive, H. Lee Dennison, played a pivotal role in our history. First, in 1965 he established what was to become the Suffolk County Economic Opportunity Council (EOC) in response to the 1964 federal enabling legislation inspired by President Lyndon Johnson and soon to be known as the "War on Poverty." Almost immediately thereafter, Mr. Dennison solicited a study and report from the New York State-appointed Long Island Health and Hospital Planning Council (LIHPC) on the question: *Should Suffolk County build and operate a county hospital as Nassau County had done...to meet the health service needs of its residents?*

The LIHPC reply, delivered in December 1966, was emphatically in the negative, but was elaborated with urgent recommendations for alternative actions, including the immediate establishment of a committee to plan for those alternative actions at the county level. Thus it was, in response to the latter advice, that Mr. Dennison took the second pivotal action relevant to our story: he named his own Suffolk County Task Force on Hospitals and Related Services in the spring of 1967.

I hope to explain in what follows the significance of these two actions, their relation to each other and the very positive consequences for Wyandanch and other communities. Mr. Dennison's responsiveness in both cases should never be forgotten.



**Suffolk County Enlists in the War on Poverty**

Let us step back in time to recall that the War on Poverty was part of a groundswell of social, economic and political events in the 1960s that included the civil rights movement, widespread migrations of displaced farm workers from south to north, general unrest and inner city misery, the "dumping" of state mental hospital patients plus rising unemployment and welfare rolls. In this setting "poverty had become a major public issue nationally for the first time since the 1930s."<sup>3</sup> Mr. Dennison's call to arms had brought the issue into new focus in Suffolk County. Today almost no one remembers the full scope of what the Economic Opportunity Council (EOC) was about, much less what its seminal relationship was to the network of county health centers still in operation today and to the first, precedent-setting one in Wyandanch. The EOC was in fact the catalyst from which a stream of great changes in thinking and action began to flow.

The new federal Act of 1964 setting up the Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO) in Washington, D.C. was not "just another welfare program." It was issuing an invitation, with generous funding provided, encouraging local initiatives all over the United States designed to intervene in "root causes of poverty" as identified by people in each local area.

When Suffolk County was accepted by the OEO in Washington, D.C. as a local planning and action region, eligible to receive funding under the terms of the OEO Act, the first order of business, after the Board of Supervisors passed the necessary legislation, was for Mr. Dennison to appoint a new county-wide agency to plan, launch and oversee any programs that might be approved and funded by OEO. This he did in 1965. The second order of business was for this county-wide agency, working with the relevant county departments, to identify what became known as "poverty target areas," based on socioeconomic and demographic criteria.

A prime requirement of the new federal law was that in all needs assessments, program planning and implementation, the "maximum participation of those to be served" must be assured. In order to mobilize and coordinate existing local resources to count for more in reaching neglected areas, new departures were to be sought that might produce "lasting institutional change," in the words of the OEO Act of 1964. Not surprisingly the choices eligible for funding from the OEO were in the areas of community organization, job and manpower development, education, legal aid, housing and health.

**Target Communities Empowered**

The EOC, as we always called it, went through three stages in order to achieve active participation of the groups to be served. First, in 1964, Mr. Denison and the Board of Supervisors established a Bureau of Economic Opportunity under the Department of Labor with an advisory council

comprised of six county officials and nineteen representatives of various agencies and organizations that met initially on 7 January 1965. The second stage was when they established a Department of Economic Opportunity, with a Commission as the decision-making body to conform to directives from OEO, Washington, giving the stronger role to community membership. Many of the players were the same but there were fundamental differences when the Commission met in November. Seven County government members were considered ex-officio and a representative of the poor was to be named by each of the ten town supervisors. The Commission was also granted the power to hire its own executive director (with the approval of the County Executive), elect its chairperson and select its committee chairmen.

Throughout this period the agency was busy identifying as many as twelve "poverty target areas" where it would help local people organize and incorporate what became known as Community Action Programs (CAPs) each with its own Opportunity Center. With staff, office space and technical assistance funded by EOC with grants from OEO, these local organizations were to be the key features of the whole EOC exercise in the County, empowering local people to choose their own priorities, to voice these in places where they would be heard and to elect representatives to an expanding county-wide governing body. This body would eventually be required to have at least one-third representation from "those to be served," the other two-thirds being divided among governmental officials, voluntary agencies, and civic organizations.

Finally, autonomy of the agency was assured by a transition to an independent not-for-profit organization, the Economic Opportunity Council of Suffolk, Incorporated, on 2 May 1967. I had been appointed to the original advisory council as a representative of the League of Women Voters in January 1965 and was asked almost at once to serve on its Health Committee. When the Commission was established I was appointed chairman of the Health Committee by Joyce Turner, who served as the first elected chairperson of EOC.

### **EOC Health Committee Agenda**

Of the various innovations EOC was instrumental in bringing to Suffolk County, three were items on the agenda of the Council's Health Committee: 1. Family Planning, 2. Head Start, and 3. Neighborhood Health Centers. The first two were introduced as pilot projects through initiatives taken by people in the Town of Brookhaven but were very soon copied in other target communities, including Wyandanch in the Town of Babylon.

From the outset, after passage of the 1964 OEO Act, it was known that federal funds for family planning and early childhood head start programs

were already earmarked for distribution to qualified agencies interested in submitting proposals.

**1. Family Planning:** We owe it to an alert Brookhaven Town resident that the first steps were taken to make sure that a share of the family planning funds would reach our county as soon as possible. Mrs. Phyllis Vineyard of Bellport, founder of the eastern-most Long Island branch of Planned Parenthood in Patchogue, started the ball rolling – even before Mr. Dennison had called to order his newly appointed EOC members for their first meeting in Riverhead on 7 January 1965. Mrs. Vineyard was a person whose organizational and leadership skills were repeatedly called upon to help establish or chair various health service or planning entities on Long Island. Several years later she served as president of the New York State Planned Parenthood with a role in Washington, D.C. where she was also a member of the Population Institute. Fundraising was always a major concern for the Patchogue Planned Parenthood program and its board (of which I was a member), especially since our mission was to serve without fees low income and very poor women as well as to serve those who could afford to pay.

At this moment, it was also to Mrs. Vineyard that I owe the fact that I became a member of the Health Committee of the new EOC. This move changed the focus of my life for the next twenty-six years! She herself, not being a member of the Council, urged me to do what I could at its first meeting to have a family planning grant application placed on the agenda for immediate consideration. That meant that I had much to learn quickly to be able to hold my own in any argument that might come up on a topic that was then much more controversial than it is today. I filled two large index cards with reasons and statistics provided by Mrs. Vineyard. But then I also realized how important it would be to know in advance whether we would have the support of the Commissioner of Health, Dr. George Leone, who, along with the Labor and Social Welfare Commissioners, would each have a seat on the Council. Accordingly, I arranged a meeting with Dr. Leone for Mrs. Vineyard and myself that took place at his suggestion in a quiet corner of a cafeteria on the Stony Brook University campus.

We were much relieved to find him very favorably disposed to our mission, with certain caveats about how best he could be helpful. He would give his solid support to requests he could agree with, but we might find it counter productive for him "to go out on a limb alone," he said, "without grass-roots support to back me up." He had found he could accomplish more in dealing with officialdom, for instance, when he was representing the expressed needs or demands of the public. We could not be more pleased to hear this. He would not initiate our topic at the coming Council meeting, but he would give me strong support when I did so. We would have no trouble providing the necessary grassroots then or later.

That first amusing and prophetic meeting gave us our *modus operandi* for the future. For me it was the beginning of a long, inspiring working relationship with Dr. Leone and a friendship to cherish for the rest of my life. Dr. Leone was no ordinary man or doctor. He had served many years in the United States Army and had a Public Health degree before transferring into civilian life. He looked a bit like Old King Cole and he was a jolly old soul with a great sense of humor and a large heart. The empowering resources offered us by the OEO could never have born such rich results in Suffolk County without the progressive idealism, responsiveness and wisdom of that good man.

Later, as we organized to get down to business, Dr. Leone asked me to serve as Vice-Chairman of the Health Committee, which he was to Chair. We immediately asked Phyllis Vineyard to serve as consultant to the Committee and to work with Dr. Edith Forsyth, the member of Dr. Leone's staff for maternal and child health concerns. Dr. Forsyth was a brilliant, British-trained physician who had come to Long Island from the Canadian Health Service when her husband, a physicist, had taken a position at the Brookhaven National Laboratory. With Dr. Forsyth and Mrs. Vineyard we could not have had a better team of experts to draft the proposals for the family planning programs EOC had authorized be submitted to OEO.

**2. Head Start:** As to the first Head Start grant received in Suffolk County, it so happened that Brookhaven Town Supervisor Charles Dominy already had an early childhood development proposal in hand. That proposal had been drafted by Victor Yannacone, a Patchogue attorney and a member of Mr. Dominy's Long-Range Study Committee, an advisory group to which I also belonged. The proposal was based on a program in operation in Maryland that Mr. Yannacone was familiar with. It had almost all the features required for funding from Washington, D.C. The whole Long-Range Study Committee warmly endorsed the proposal, as did Supervisor Dominy. Losing no time, Mr. Dominy came to the first meeting of the Council after its move from Commack to its new offices on Main Street in Patchogue. Waving Mr. Yannacone's document in the air, he said he thought the Council might be interested in considering it! The Council was indeed delighted to have a proposal already so well suited to become a 'head start' for the EOC as well as for the children for whom it was intended. At this time, the EOC turned to the Board of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES) of the Second District (in which Patchogue lay) as the appropriate delegate agency at hand to prepare the proposal for submission to Washington. It was, according to Mr. Yannacone, the first early childhood program in Suffolk County to receive earmarked Head Start funding.

The grant supported the Brookhaven Town Pre-Kindergarten program as a pilot project located in a section of Patchogue where it could have been of

benefit to the children of a sizeable Puerto Rican community. It was first housed in the Methodist Church and later moved into the River Avenue Elementary School. Meanwhile, the EOC was pleased to have this project so expeditiously in place as a model for a series of Head Starts, for both school year and summer sessions, that would ultimately be installed in all twelve of the identified target poverty areas where incorporated Community Action Programs (CAPs) were getting underway. By 1968, the budget for all twelve school-year Head Start programs was \$1,823,597 and \$198,894 for the twelve summer programs.

Through the energetic, house-to-house petitioning of a small group of Gordon Heights' residents, one of the first of these Head Starts opened in that section of the central Brookhaven hamlet of Coram, soon to be identified as an EOC 'target area.' One of those Gordon Heights' leaders was Mrs. Elsie Owens who eventually focused her efforts for over ten long years on winning a neighborhood health center for Coram, opened at last in 1978 through a County contract with Stony Brook University Hospital. The tireless and dedicated Mrs. Owens never gave up and is still serving on the Advisory Board of that center, which in 1998, on occasion of its 20th Anniversary was renamed in her honor: The Elsie Owens North Brookhaven County Health Center at Coram.<sup>4</sup>

The Head Start programs were the concern of two EOC working committees: Education and Health. The concept of early childhood development embraced the physical health of children as well as their ability to learn and be able to take full advantage of formal schooling in years ahead. Great emphasis was also placed on the involvement of families, especially mothers, to improve the reciprocal health and learning conditions for the children and their families.

OEO guidelines required a nurse on staff at each program and an experienced supervising nurse to visit and oversee each in turn.<sup>5</sup> A medical advisor was also required. This led to my first meeting with Dr. Walter O'Connor when Dr. Leone suggested I call on him at St. Charles Hospital in Port Jefferson where he conducted pediatric specialty clinics, as he did also at Good Samaritan Hospital in West Islip. Though he was very busy, he was so interested in the Head Start goals and possibilities that he agreed to consider taking part in this opportunity.

**3. Neighborhood Health Centers:** When the pilot programs for Family Planning and Head Start were up and running, our chief preoccupation turned to the much broader and more difficult problem of how to bring comprehensive primary health care to the residents in all our target areas. Without fail the community surveys conducted by the Opportunity Centers were showing that a lack of affordable services near home resulted in the inappropriate dependence on hospital emergency rooms for basic medical care. This was a complaint coming from all sides, including hospitals.

Neglect was often the alternative with even minor illnesses growing unnecessarily more serious and costly in every way. The fragmentary approaches to family health care available through our two new programs for women and children, as good as they might be, were only a beginning in meeting the urgent needs for general health care for whole families.

### **Introduction of the "Neighborhood Health Center" Concept**

*Today with so much taken for granted in what the County health centers have provided us in the last 30 or more years, we may find it hard to remember that the very concept "neighborhood health center" had not entered our vocabulary in Suffolk County nor into our thinking as a way to improve conditions in our poorer communities, until it was suggested as a weapon in the War on Poverty. Back then our hopes rose when we heard that OEO was entertaining proposals for what they called "neighborhood health center demonstrations."* The very first two of these to be approved and funded in the United States were for a huge low-income housing project at Columbia Point in Boston and another for Mound Bayou in the Mississippi Delta. Both of these proposals, submitted together by Tufts University Medical School, were designed according to an original model developed by Dr. Jack Geiger of the Medical School's Department of Community Medicine.<sup>6</sup>

Our EOC Executive Director, Alan Gartner, inquired at the OEO about application requirements for these demonstration grants. We learned that in order to organize an ambulatory care center, EOC would have to engage an existing health service agency experienced in medical care management and have the participation of a back-up hospital. As it then stood in Suffolk County, ambulatory primary care was the exclusive domain of physicians in private practice; hospitals had acute care beds and emergency rooms; the Health Department had not, until the advent of EOC, offered any patient care services except for a tuberculosis control program and the well-baby clinics run by public health nurses. We had a problem!

When we learned early in 1966 that the OEO-funded project at Columbia Point had opened in December 1965, I requested a copy of the Tufts Medical School grant proposal and studied it with intense interest, as did other members of the EOC Health Committee to whom I circulated it. These included County Health Department members Dr. George Leone, Commissioner, Dr. Edith Forsyth, Director of Maternal and Child Health, and Mary O'Connell, Social Worker.<sup>7</sup> Dr. Leone, as one of the government members of the EOC, remained as *ex officio* member of the Health Committee after serving initially as chairman while he trained me to succeed him in that position. He was indeed my mentor for many years thereafter.<sup>8</sup>

The Tufts proposal was designed to provide so much more than the clinics many poor people were familiar with in city hospitals. During 1966 I visited Columbia Point and another OEO-funded center starting up in the Bronx under the auspices of Montefiori Hospital but following the Tufts model. Shortly after reporting on what I had seen, I arranged another visit to the Bronx, this time with Dr. O'Connor, Ms. O'Connell and others who could not spare the time to go to Boston.

All were impressed that the Tufts proposal and the centers we visited were designed:

1. To offer comprehensive, family-centered, preventive as well as primary medical care with an interdisciplinary team approach conveniently organized under one roof—but also connecting with a variety of related resources such as mental health, nutrition education, sanitation, legal aid, private voluntary and public social services, school health and Head Start programs,
2. To be located in the heart of places where the people lived that needed them,
3. To make connections with other programs meant to loosen the grip of poverty and provide career development opportunities for some local people to be hired for administrative, outreach and other health care positions,
4. To provide community participation to the "maximum feasible extent" through a local advisory council to help monitor the operations, engage the community in working for their success and be another link between the center's professional personnel and the people served, and
5. To have the strong back-up commitment of a sponsoring hospital.

During 1966 and 1967 as each of our twelve Opportunity Centers was coming on line, we knew that each of them would need and want such a neighborhood health center of its own. The OEO in Washington was funding or planning to fund a cluster of very large health centers for inner city neighborhoods as well as some rural ones across the United States. We, on the other hand, had twelve much smaller communities, some quite rural, scattered over a county two-thirds the 120-mile length of Long Island. The problem of mobilizing sponsoring hospitals for so many locations was a tall order. The EOC Health Committee had discovered an impressive

model and philosophy for the delivery of community-based, family-oriented ambulatory primary care. We were eager to bring this model to Suffolk and a very sympathetic County Health Department shared our enthusiasm. However, we did not yet qualify for OEO funding and lacked the wherewithal. The solution was going to emerge through the second pivotal action mentioned earlier that we owe to our County Executive, H. Lee Dennison: namely, that when early in 1966 he posed the question to the LIHPC concerning a county hospital, he responded so positively to the urgent recommendations for alternative actions that the LIHPC reply contained.

### **The Long Island Health & Hospital Planning Council Report**

Traditionally a public hospital must be able to care for any resident regardless of income or ability to pay. Mr. Dennison, an engineer and builder by profession and a man of action by temperament, may have been enticed by the idea of building a county hospital as a way of addressing the pressure of Suffolk County's rapid population growth as well as the clamor of his most needy constituents for more accessible health services.<sup>9</sup> But he also knew, from the experience of neighboring Nassau County, that a county hospital would not only require an enormous capital outlay for construction but be a very high on-going expense for years to come. He wanted the best advice he could get in this matter.

The LIHPC answer to Mr. Dennison's question about whether or not to build a county hospital came on 27 December 1966, and was a thoroughly researched in-depth report prepared by its Director, Donald Herd. It concluded with three carefully considered recommendations with reasons, quoted or summarized below:

- 1. The County Executive and Board of Supervisors should not undertake the planning, construction and operation of a county general hospital.*

"Not only is the establishment of a hospital . . . operated by local government an outdated concept,<sup>10</sup> but the problem of a suitable location for such a facility in Suffolk County also makes it impracticable . . ." Given the size and geography of the County, aggravated by the lack of accessible and affordable public transportation, no single location for a monolithic public hospital would well serve "the pockets of indigency scattered throughout the County." Moreover, the limited number of welfare patients who might be able to reach such a single location "raises further questions of cost-effectiveness." The impact of the 500-bed university hospital soon to be built at Stony Brook was also a major factor being discussed.

For all the above reasons, the Report concluded "a major capital outlay for the construction of a county hospital which could amount to as much as



\$20 million, and up to half that amount in annual operating expenses, would not be a wise expenditure of public funds."

*2. The County's policies should be directed to the strengthening and expansion of the existing hospital system. In this connection...officials should explore possible ways of encouraging and even providing financial assistance, if necessary, to those voluntary institutions with demonstrated ability and willingness to offer broad community service programs in areas where additional facilities and services are required.*

In view of the County's past and continuing rapid population growth, "sound planning on both an institutional and areawide basis is essential if health resources (facilities, manpower and funds) are to be used effectively and economically." The goal of Suffolk County "must be a coordinated network of hospitals in which each hospital serves all elements of the population" in its service area. Additional beds and other services should be achieved through expansion of existing facilities whenever necessary.

Furthermore, "a community's need for health services cannot be met adequately if hospitals continue to limit their activities to the definitive medical treatment of bed patients... [T]hey must increasingly encompass a comprehensive pattern of care, including prevention, early detection and diagnosis of physical and mental illness, the rehabilitation of the disabled... and care of the chronically ill." In addition to "emergency and other ambulatory services" as needed by the community, "if existing acute hospital facilities...are to be used more effectively, alternate programs of care such as ambulatory and home care, and extended care...should be expanded."

This brings us to the third recommendation of the Report:

*3. There is a need to provide organized ambulatory care service in carefully selected areas of the County, and a committee should be established as quickly as possible to plan and develop such services.*

The Report goes on to observe that while "the large majority of Suffolk residents will continue to receive their medical care in [a] private physician's office, ...it is also apparent that organized ambulatory care of high quality including preventive as well as emergency and clinical care, must be developed in economically depressed areas" which "tend to have a low physician to population ratio."

In conclusion, the Report suggests that planning for implementation of this third recommendation should be undertaken cooperatively by representatives of the LIHHC itself, the Nassau-Suffolk Hospital Council,

the County Health and Welfare Departments, Suffolk County Medical Society, and other knowledgeable persons in the field of ambulatory care, always "taking into consideration the special problems relating to the delivery of medical service to indigent residents of both rural and more urbanized areas of the County."

Clearly the last two recommendations of this Report were as if made to order as an endorsement of the agenda the EOC and the Health Department were already working on together. Furthermore, by implication it foreshadowed that if County funds were not spent on a hospital, funds should be available for the more appropriate alternatives being called for in the LIHH-PC Report. This Report from Mr. Herd without a doubt precipitated Mr. Dennison's next move.

### **The Suffolk County Task Force on Hospitals & Related Services**

By May 1967 Mr. Dennison had appointed his Task Force on Hospitals & Related Services, including his Deputy, Anne Mead. Most appointees were from health care provider organizations like the LIHHPC, Suffolk County Medical Society, Nassau/Suffolk Hospital Association, New York State Department of Mental Hygiene, Yaphank Nursing Home, State University of New York Health Sciences Center, Hospital Affairs Office of the Archdiocese of Rockville Center, Suffolk Community Council, and the County Commissioners of Social Welfare and Health. As a modest counterbalance to all this weight, Joyce Turner<sup>11</sup> as Chairman of the EOC and I as Chairman of the EOC Health Committee were appointed "to represent the consumer."<sup>12</sup>

At its first meeting in June 1967 the Task Force agreed that each member should report on their agency's service role and the problems they were encountering that might affect others. It was the first time anyone could remember that a group like this had been convened on a regular basis around the same table to share current and changing concerns. We met monthly eleven to twelve times a year for five years! Some members had much on their minds that had nothing to do with ambulatory care such as perceived shortages of skilled manpower and acute care and nursing home beds. Some were undoubtedly hoping that financial help from the County would be forthcoming. Realizing the diversity of interests around the table and fearing any delay in moving our own EOC agenda, Joyce Turner and I urged the Task Force to take up the final and key recommendation of the LIHHPC Report as the first order of business by inviting Dr. Leone to give the first report at the July meeting.<sup>13</sup> This was agreed.

Although ambulatory primary care was a priority in all EOC target communities, we needed to choose where and how to begin. As he always did in these matters of common concern, Dr. Leone had already discussed with us at the EOC the idea of proposing two pilot projects, one for a

hospital-based program in Riverhead where care for seasonal farm laborers was a chronic problem and one for a free-standing center in Wyandanch. The latter target area had the second largest EOC-funded program and by then had an energetic, vocal Community Action Program (CAP) with whom we were working, and whose officers included the distinguished and dedicated civic leader, Mrs. Dorothea Cumberbach, as well as Clareth Ward, a very articulate 'consumer' leader.<sup>14</sup>

On 5 July 1967 the Task Force voted to endorse Dr. Leone's suggestion that pilot projects be formulated for both Riverhead and Wyandanch. Then in September Dr. Forsyth, representing Dr. Leone, brought us more facts and figures revealing the health status of the Wyandanch population. Compared to the figures for the whole Town of Babylon, to which Wyandanch belonged, they were bleak indeed and reinforced the need for action. By 4 October the Task Force voted to recommend that the Suffolk County Board of Supervisors<sup>15</sup> and the County Executive focus "their attention to the great unmet needs for community health services in Wyandanch which could be met in significant ways by the establishment of a County Health Department Center and increased service programs,"<sup>16</sup> in which we asked for immediate practical consideration of ways and means to accomplish this. On 27 October Babylon Town Supervisor and then Chairman of the Board of Supervisors, Gilbert Hanse, replied to our Chairman, John White<sup>17</sup> "I have recommended that the county proceed immediately to install a Suffolk County Department of Health clinic in Wyandanch. I believe the County Executive has instructed Buildings and Grounds to proceed immediately."<sup>18</sup>

The next order of business, however, was not to find a building but to forge a firm alliance with a back-up hospital.

After waiting half a year for our turn, Joyce Turner and I were invited to give our formal report to the Task Force on 7 February 1968. Joyce first gave an overview of the purposes of the EOC and the variety of programs already in operation in our twelve target communities. Then I gave the report for the EOC Health Committee. Referring to both the 1966 LIHH-PC Report to Mr. Dennison and to Dr. Leone's remarks at the Task Force meeting in July 1967, I said it was time to take their advice that health centers be set up instead of a county hospital. I emphasized that we should move forthwith to determine the best locations for these and, in the planning, always keep in mind the guidelines listed above from the Tufts/Geiger model. I described the contributions EOC could offer to pool resources and said that "the EOC Health Committee [was] interested in developing a working group to consider each poverty target area in turn, what might be feasible to do in each one and how to proceed with practical planning."<sup>19</sup> Dr. Leone's comment when I had finished was: "You have given us a blueprint for the next 20 years!"

**Temporary Setback from an Unexpected Source**

Several days after I gave that report, a surgeon I knew who was practicing in the Port Jefferson hospitals called to tell me he had received a special delivery letter from the Medical Society President expressing his anxiety over the EOC report. He was concerned that a special meeting of the Task Force scheduled for 21 February would result in the endorsement of the report. Therefore, he was urgently calling for volunteers to help combat this possibility. It was after this that a group of Huntington physicians approached the Executive Director of the Wyandanch Opportunity Center with their offer to hold *pro bono* evening office hours in Wyandanch. The staff and president of the CAP board must have felt this was an offer they could not refuse. A room was found and some evening office hours may have been scheduled.

Dr. Leone had already moved on the Task Force's endorsement of his 5 July 1967 report and negotiations were underway to form a partnership with Good Samaritan Hospital in whose service area Wyandanch lay. Thus it was that Dr. Leone enlisted the help of Dr. Walter O'Connor, a physician well known to him who was on staff at Good Samaritan Hospital in charge of pediatric specialty services. As mentioned earlier, the EOC had already recruited Dr. O'Connor to serve as Medical Advisor to the EOC Head Start programs. Dr. O'Connor was asked to begin discussions with Edward Peterson, Chief Executive Officer of Good Samaritan Hospital, whose support would be indispensable for any cooperative alliance between the hospital and the Health Department. Mr. Peterson stated in his recollections that despite some initial reservations he was impressed with plans brought to him by Dr. Leone and Dr. Forsyth and with the importance of the new role his hospital might play in bringing health care to the poor in its service area.<sup>20</sup> He promised to discuss the proposal with his staff and the hospital Trustees.

After some months the Trustees agreed to implement the plans under certain conditions which gave the hospital an even closer relationship to the proposed center than the term "back-up" implied. The hospital would directly staff and operate the center under a budget prepared by the hospital for approval and funding by the County. The medical director would be in charge of operations and be responsible to both the hospital and the County. Locating and equipping the facility would be a joint effort.

Final stages of agreement were approaching when, according to Mr. Peterson, "our pleased excitement was shattered by a telephone call from the Suffolk County Medical Society, inviting me to a meeting at their headquarters."<sup>21</sup> Not knowing the purpose of the meeting, Mr. Peterson took Dr. O'Connor along to learn that the Medical Society had heard of the joint planning of Good Samaritan Hospital and the County and had called Mr. Peterson to request that any further discussions be discontinued. The

reason they gave was that "they had developed their own program to serve Wyandanch" with a list of physicians willing to volunteer their services. Mr. Peterson offered his hospital's cooperation but was rebuffed. The Medical Society representative reiterated that "the hospital might have problems with the medical staff if joint planning with the County continued." After much discussion, Good Samaritan Hospital's Trustees agreed to follow Mr. Peterson's response to this challenge by remaining firm. "To do otherwise," Mr. Peterson said, "would show weakness and we would fail in our endeavors to help the poor."<sup>22</sup> When he visited Wyandanch later with Dr. O'Connor he found the volunteer physicians from Huntington had a "one room facility and very little else."

When it became clear that the physicians' offer was to be considered the alternative to a County-supported health center, a troublesome quandary faced the CAP board. Some members stood with the Executive Director in favor of the physicians' plan. Others like Dorothea Cumberbach and Clareth Ward, key leaders of the local health committee, were not about to give up the full-fledged health center they were hoping for "with our own doctors," as they put it. They knew from me that discussions with Good Samaritan Hospital were well underway. They were reassured when I was able to tell them the good news from Dr. Leone and Dr. Forsyth that the hospital Trustees remained firmly behind Mr. Peterson, despite the rumbling threats of trouble from some of the medical staff. At this point, in line with EOC policy that the community would always be consulted on any important policy and planning issue, it was agreed that a community-wide meeting should be held instead of just having a CAP board meeting. To prepare for this, I suggested to Mrs. Ward that we arrange for a delegation from the community to visit first with a group of the volunteer physicians and then with Good Samaritan Hospital and County Health Department representatives for a question and answer session with each. She agreed wholeheartedly and assembled several people to serve with us as a delegation while I made the arrangements for these meetings.

Four years ago in 1995 I interviewed Clareth Ward in her retirement home in Richmond, Virginia for an oral history project. Looking back she thought the doctors were sincere and well meaning but did not seem at all clear as to how their volunteer hours would be sustained over time. Nor did they have any practical ideas about financing costs other than volunteering their own services nor how they might handle cases needing hospital care. "In the end," she said, "I think they frankly were quite relieved to be taken off the hook."

The second meeting was at the hospital with Dr. Forsyth, Mr. Peterson, Dr. O'Connor and others who included Father Hendel, a very supportive Task Force member and the Director of Hospital Affairs for the Catholic

Archdiocese to which Good Samaritan Hospital belongs. This was an inspiring meeting, where the community delegation could witness first hand the solidarity of what was being offered by the County Health Department/Good Samaritan Hospital alliance as well as the personal dedication of the human beings involved in the leadership of both sides.

The next phase was up to Claretha Ward to use all her outstanding community organization skills: to knock on doors, mobilize her committee to pass on the word, explain the issues at stake and be sure of a good turnout for the scheduled community meeting. Joyce Turner and I remember being at that meeting—and what a crowded, lively, vocal one it was! Claretha explained why she and the delegation could not recommend the volunteer physicians' plan as a reliable long-term solution to the community's needs, contrasted with what they had learned when they interviewed the hospital and County officials. The vote at the end of that evening, needless to say, was overwhelmingly in favor of the County Health Department/Good Samaritan Hospital plan.

But now we still had to get the vote of the Board of Supervisors which Deputy County Executive, Anne Mead, reminds us was not so easy a hurdle as it should have been. You can be sure that Anne Mead, Dr. Leone and Babylon Town Supervisor Hanse did their best to persuade the doubters among the Board of Supervisors before the hearing and the final vote.

However, a tragic event acted as a catalyst. The assassination of Martin Luther King, Jr., on 4 April 1968 was followed by an eruption of grief and anger in the community. Mr. Dennison, some of his aides and W. Burghardt Turner of the NAACP met with residents in Wyandanch to try to quell the disturbance. Mr. Dennison listened to complaints regarding long-standing neglect by government and explained the distinction between services such as education over which he had no jurisdiction and those like public health that were his responsibility as County Executive. He assured the community that health services would be established promptly. Community pressure and Mr. Dennison's commitment accelerated the final legislative action needed to bring to fruition three years of persistent work by the EOC and the Task Force.

When the Board of Supervisors met, I went to that hearing in Riverhead to do my bit and hear Claretha and a crowd of others speak eloquently for their health center. Without the slightest temerity Claretha asked the Supervisors not to postpone their decision until the evening as scheduled since she had "four little boys at home and a sick husband with no babysitter after 1 o'clock." The new Chairman, Smithtown Supervisor John Klein, conferred with the others and moved the item so the community could witness the vote, which was affirmative. When asked whether the Wyandanch delegation had a wish for its name, the answer was: "Martin Luther King, Jr. Community Health Center."

**Conclusion**

The rest of the story takes us from the Board of Supervisors' vote authorizing the health center to the day of its opening. Funding had to be found for the first half-year's operation, space located and converted for clinical use and final contracts drawn up according to the preliminary agreements between Good Samaritan Hospital and the Health Department. Deputy County Executive Anne Mead had a definitive and indispensable role in finding unused funds at midyear from the budgets of the Health Department and the County Executive's office, instructing Buildings and Grounds to carry out the necessary building conversions and drawing up the contracts between the hospital and the County. Anne Mead, our faithful friend in government, was our consistently available conduit to County Executive Dennison, who relied on her in all matters of policy and planning related to the health and well being of the people of Suffolk County. How lucky we also were to have such a superbly qualified physician in Dr. Walter O'Connor, already on staff at Good Samaritan Hospital, thoroughly committed to the "neighborhood health center concept" we had adopted and ready to accept the call to serve as medical director of the prototype soon to be in operation in Suffolk County. Reverend David Swanson of the Lutheran Church in Wyandanch offered space in his parish house as interim quarters for Dr. O'Connor to start pediatric services beyond what was already provided at that site by the public health nurses' well-baby clinics. By 1 July 1968 the new Martin Luther King, Jr. Community Health Center on Straight Path was ready to open its doors on schedule. Patients had already been coming to the Center for three weeks when the Dedication took place on 21 July in the crowded parking lot facing the large sign over the front door. The place was alive! No one could doubt anymore that the dream had become a reality.

**EPILOGUE: Looking Back, Thirty-five Years Later**

As exhilarating as it was to witness the launch of the first "neighborhood health center" in Suffolk County, the Task Force could not lie back on its oars. There were still eleven target areas whose now organized Community Action Programs (CAPs) were demanding attention.

At its August and September 1968 meetings, the Task Force reviewed its progress and for the first time established certain working committees. It also asked for some particular reports from individual members including Deputy County Executive Anne Mead, who was asked to bring in information on sources of state, federal and other types of financial assistance that might be available to strengthen the existing hospital system. Joyce Turner was asked to chair a committee on public health and to review how the County budget currently was allocated for all public health functions, whether existing within the purview of the Department of Health

or within some other jurisdictions, such as the doctors and nurses serving in the school systems. I was asked to chair a Committee on Health Center Development to continue implementing Donald Herd's third recommendation in his LIHHPC Report to County Executive Dennison.

Members of the existing EOC Health Committee were of course on hand to help. Others could be recruited as members or consultants, including some members of the Task Force itself. One of the latter, Dr Peter Rogatz, the Director pro-tem of the University Hospital still in the planning stages, had regularly represented Dr. Edmund Pellegrino, Head of the Health Science Center (HSC) at Stony Brook University. Both men had been very supportive of the health center agenda. Another member on Dr. Pellegrino's staff, responsible for HSC Community Relations, was Edmond Ross, whom Dr. Pellegrino began to send to Task Force meetings. The skills in diplomacy of Mr. Ross and his previous experience in community organization in New York City where he had worked in various social service agencies were to become especially pertinent and valuable as we planned to make contact with the leadership of each of the CAP groups in our target areas. In fact, our policy as a Task Force committee was to encourage or if need be facilitate the development of local health committees in each Opportunity Center to play the sort of creative role so successful in the Wyandanch setting. Of course we had a model-in-the-making in the MLK Center to watch as it steadily grew in strength and comprehensiveness in the services it was able to provide under the direction of Dr. O'Connor and the recommendations of the local Health Committee.

Already straining at the leash was an especially vigorous group in Amityville with William Larregui, leader of the Tri-Community CAP (based in Amityville and embracing Amityville, Copiague, and East Farmingville) and Mrs. Evelyn Miller, the driving force of its health committee. After three years of unrelenting effort, the go-ahead for the Tri-Community Health Center was given in 1971. I do not think Mrs. Miller and I will ever forget the many late meetings with her committee at the Amityville Opportunity Center and the long phone calls discussing strategies on how to move ahead in face of one obstacle after another. One of these was having to give up a collaboration between the County Department of Health and a very willing nearby Brunswick Hospital. We had learned, late in the day, that the State of New York would not allow a contract between the County and a proprietary hospital. The result was that Tri-Community was the first of two centers that would have to be operated directly by the County Health Department. The other was at Riverhead, where the medical staff at Central Suffolk Hospital had failed to agree to a partnership with the County Health Department for a hospital-based health center. This was despite the possibility of a grant from the recently established, federally funded Nassau/Suffolk Regional Medical Programs



(N/S RMP) to underwrite a "community medicine department" at the hospital. This would have provided on-site administrative resources to oversee the ambulatory primary care health center being proposed, besides other in-hospital advantages such a department could generate.

Never mind—leadership at another hospital to the west of Riverhead, Brookhaven Memorial Hospital, would shortly rise to the challenge and opportunity rejected by Central Suffolk Hospital.

Before this, when Dr. Milton Rosenberg, a ranking medical staff member at Brookhaven had been named President of the Suffolk County Medical Society, he automatically succeeded to the Medical Society's seat on the Task Force on Hospitals & Related Services. I remember a conversation with Dr. Rosenberg at the end of the Task Force meeting following the news of the Riverhead hospital's negative decision, in which he expressed his interest in a role for his own hospital in providing some form of ambulatory care within its quite extensive service area. To the east, the very small, private and uneconomic Bayview Hospital in Mastic Beach was being closed, leaving the EOC Bay Area target community without any easily accessible services of even an emergency nature.

Much encouraged by Dr. Rosenberg's interest, I went on to learn from Glen Hastings, Executive Director of the N/S RMP, that he would be able to adapt the proposal prepared for Riverhead to suit the conditions for a community medicine department at Brookhaven for submission to the N/S RMP. We conferred with a very pleased Dr. Rosenberg, who, in turn, consulted the medical staff and trustees at Brookhaven, and it was done. The upshot was total success: first, a two-year grant from 1972-1974 "for the development of a department of community medicine in a small community hospital," and then a continuation grant from 1974-1977 "to support the role of a small community hospital for ambulatory care planning and implementation," in the language of the grant.

Then, in a wonderfully fortuitous happenstance, Dr. Dorothy Lane had only recently (in 1971) joined the Department of Community Medicine at Stony Brook University Medical School, invited by none other than its then Chairman, Dr. Jack Geiger. Dr. Lane was the perfect candidate to fill the chair of the new department at Brookhaven in 1972. There she flourished for the next fourteen years until called in 1986 to return to Stony Brook to run the Department of Continuing Medical Education, with some duties also in the Preventive Medicine Department.

At Brookhaven, with a support staff of three funded by the RMP grant, Dr. Lane would be responsible for certain hospital-based programs in research and in staff and patient education among others. But her immediate task was to negotiate the contract between Brookhaven Hospital and the County Health Department for the first of what would ultimately be two health centers run by Brookhaven. This first one was opened with

remarkable speed in the old Bayview Hospital building in Mastic Beach and would serve the eagerly waiting Bay Area target community. In later years, as services were added, the old building was outgrown and the health center moved into a new building in Shirley, still serving Mastic but embracing a larger service area. In the year 2000, this one was renamed the Marilyn Shellabarger Family Health Center, South Brookhaven East.

In 1975, the second South Brookhaven center opened in Patchogue, serving a more densely settled, mixed income community, which however, included the EOC North Bellport target area.

To complete the list of health centers, their sponsorship and opening dates, we have Brentwood and Bayshore contracted for with Southside Hospital in 1972 and 1979, through the enlightened leadership of its President, Theodore Jospe, the Elsie Owens North Brookhaven Community Health Center in Coram, under contract with Stony Brook University Hospital since 1978, and the Dolan Health Center in South Huntington, owned and operated by Huntington Hospital, opened in 1995, following the same conceptual guidelines as all the others and partially supported by the County. In addition, four satellite clinics were opened: Southampton in 1982, Greenport, 1988, Amagansett, 1988, and Central Islip, 1995.

Thus by 1979, we had eight centers, with the ninth a laggard but welcome Dolan Center sixteen years later. All were designed according to the "neighborhood health center" guidelines laid out by the Tufts/Geiger model as first implemented in our Wyandanch prototype. The satellites, though not comprehensive, are each extensions of the nearest full center and do much to fill some geographic gaps. On the whole, all participants—the County, the hospitals, the communities (rank-and-file and leaders), donors and volunteers—can be proud of the results.

### **The Role and Influence of the Advisory Boards**

More needs to be said here about the many volunteers who have served over the last thirty-five years on the separate advisory boards at each health center, chiefly concerned with scope of services, quality of care and adequacy of annual budgets. The value of the interface they represent between the "communities to be served" and the funders, sponsors and operators of the centers cannot be over-estimated. Especially is this so since 1982 when a central coordinating committee representing all the advisory boards began to meet, chaired by Marilyn Shellabarger of the South Brookhaven Advisory Board. This group has brought the power of solidarity to bear, particularly in reviewing budgets when they have been endangered, or in one case, when a center was even on the brink of being closed. The County Legislature, which approves the budgets proposed by the Health Department in conjunction with the contracting hospital, has learned to respect the professionalism of the Coordinating Council members

as they present their requests and advice, supporting facts and reasoning. Furthermore, these advocates and those they represent are also constituents of the Legislators, a not unimportant consideration.

The hospital administrators I have been able to interview clearly appreciate the usefulness of the advisory groups, including their coordinating committee, because they provide two-way sounding boards for each to learn from the others – sometimes through problems raised and illustrated with real-life cases, sometimes through candid discussions arriving at satisfactory solutions together. I like to recall from a recent conversation about the advisory groups with President Jospe of Southside Hospital his firm conclusion: "I consider it my sacred duty to attend those meetings."

Ever since she began serving as a volunteer in 1977 on the South Brookhaven Advisory Board of both the East and West Centers, Marilyn Shellabarger has displayed the most extraordinary fidelity and staying power, as well as intelligence and effectiveness defending the interests of the Centers and those who need them. It was altogether appropriate that she should be appointed in September 1996 to the twenty-four member Blue Ribbon Health Panel when County Executive Robert Gaffney charged this group to undertake a thorough study and evaluation of the whole community health center network and the role the County should play in supporting it. It was also a grateful community in the year 2000 that acknowledged her long years of dedicated advocacy by naming the South Brookhaven Center East in her honor.

### **The Principle of Proximity**

*There is no level of government with historical responsibilities for safeguarding the health of our population that is closer to the people than is the County level (Italics added).*<sup>23</sup>

The principle of proximity has worked well for the locating, effectiveness, and continued survival of the County health center network. First, of course, was the principle that health services for the poor and uninsured "should be located in the heart of those places where the people lived who needed them."<sup>24</sup> Secondly, we have seen the value of the Advisory Boards drawn from the communities associated with each Center in creating communication links between the professional personnel and the people served. More importantly, these Boards provide a powerful voice when they have joined forces in advocating for the needs of each center before the County Health Department and the County Legislature when adequate budgets are at stake.

Thirdly, and unexpectedly impressive, has been the value of the principle of proximity in connection with the Blue Ribbon Health Panel Report issued in October 1997. This was an evaluation produced only after a *full*

year of careful study, site visits, interviews and three public hearings. The local knowledge, time and thoroughness provided by the Panel members in the process of evaluating the health center network simply could not have been duplicated in Washington. It is doubtful, in any case, that the continuing financial support for these centers could have been sustained over such a long span of time as thirty years or more had the centers been dependent on grants from OEO, whose health programs were gradually being shifted to the Department of Health, Education and Welfare (DHEW), later the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS).

### **The Blue Ribbon Health Panel's Findings and Conclusions**

Because of the positive effect of their verdict in 1997 and also because of their timeless significance, I include here a selection of direct quotations from the findings and conclusions of the Blue Ribbon Health Panel's final report.<sup>25</sup>

As a result of its deliberations, the Panel reached agreement on the following broad areas:

1. The decision in the 1960s to build Health centers was the right one; in fact, it was a farsighted decision. Defining the Health Centers' central role as primarily prevention and coordinated care, as well as establishing the Health Centers in the communities where the need was greatest, Suffolk County was on the leading edge of the future trends in health care. Today, prevention, coordinated care and local community services are recommended by respected public health experts as key components of a responsive, efficient and appropriate health care system.
2. The Health Centers are a major asset for the people of Suffolk County, and they enjoy overwhelming support from the people they serve. This fact was clearly evident from the volumes of testimony presented at the public hearings. Witness after witness recounted the important role the clinics play in their lives: indeed, for some the Health Centers are more than just a place to go for health services. The Health Centers' staff provides a reliable, caring sanctuary for individuals and families; for others, the Health Centers are an indispensable part of their overall support system; and for some, the Health Centers constitute their entire support system.
3. The Health Centers are an indispensable part of the social and health care safety net in Suffolk County. The Panel agrees that the County should continue to provide

this safety net for those who are most in need of the services. This [is] a fundamental role of responsive, compassionate, good governments, and now is not the time for drastic change or for relinquishing this responsibility.

4. The health care system is undergoing major change as a result of deregulation and the growth of managed care. This change is resulting in a power struggle among providers to those who are fortunate enough to have health coverage. However, a critical issue which is not being addressed is the matter of how to provide access to care for the uninsured. It is ironic that in the midst of all of this "reform," the sheer numbers of uninsured is increasing. It is clear that Health Centers provide an essential service for the uninsured and underserved. It is the Panel's view that the market reforms now underway do not, and will not, by themselves provide the necessary services to these populations, and therefore public support is more important than ever.

.....

Based on the agreed upon conclusions...the Panel recommends that the County continue to maintain the Health Centers to fulfill the important role of providing quality care for those who need it. The Health Centers are an important asset to the County and can operate only if they have the full support of Suffolk County government.

### **Last Thoughts**

We must now hope that the eloquence and above all the validity of the endorsements so powerfully expressed in the quoted paragraphs will be remembered and transmitted in useful places by those who are now reading them. Thus, already seven years old, the Panel's conclusions might be kept alive to help support the institutional phenomena of these Suffolk County Health Centers well into the future. This would be good, even if, or perhaps especially if, universal health insurance and a necessarily diverse health care delivery system to supply the demand should become accepted as social obligations just as are the public education systems across the nation.

While expressing such thoughts, however, let us not forget the initial catalytic challenges—with largesse of funding attached—which came so long ago from Washington, D.C. through the Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO), known as the War on Poverty. The responses to these challenges and the incentive funding offered by OEO produced not only

"lasting institutional change" in our County but also upward economic and social changes affecting a great many individuals and families who found new pathways to education and careers, health and fulfillment.<sup>26</sup>

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> The MLK Center opened on 1 July 1968, but the dedication was held on 21 July 1968.

<sup>2</sup> During 1996 some members of the County Legislature seriously challenged the appropriateness of County expenditures in support of the existing family health centers and their satellites. In response, the Suffolk County Executive, Robert J. Gaffney, on August 1996 established the "Blue Ribbon Health Panel," chaired by Michael Dowling, Senior Vice President, North Shore Hospital Systems. The panel, with twenty-four members representing a broad spectrum of those involved in Long Island's health care system, was charged to examine and make recommendations concerning the health centers (and two other topics, the County Infirmery and the new Medicaid Managed Care Plan, not covered in this article). They met regularly from September 1996 to September 1997, carefully studied reports supplied by the County Health Department, the sponsoring hospitals and local leaders, conducted site visits, interviewed clients and providers at the centers and held three heavily attended public hearings. Of the many that wished to speak, only 140 could be scheduled and heard. Their names and affiliations were listed in the final report of the Blue Ribbon Health Panel issued in October 1997.

The upshot of their detailed conclusions was that the Health Centers were an important asset to the County and should continue to be maintained by the County. Direct quotations from the Panel's Report will appear at the end of this article.

<sup>3</sup> S.A. Levitau, *The Great Society's Poor Law: A New Approach to Poverty* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1969), 94.

<sup>4</sup> The term "neighborhood health center" has been replaced with "community health center" or "family health center" (the latter losing the importance of location from the concept).

<sup>5</sup> Barbara Treadwell, R.N., who had been working for the Planned Parenthood center in Patchogue, was recruited to serve as this supervising nurse. She remained in this position for twelve years.

<sup>6</sup> Only in a recent conversation with Dr. Geiger did I learn of his extraordinary journey to South Africa in 1957 as a medical student with a Rockefeller Foundation Fellowship to visit and study the original "neighborhood health center" model that would later inspire and guide us in Suffolk County. Because of the dramatic and far-reaching influence this model was to have throughout the United States and in other countries, the story of how it took its place in the OEO's War on Poverty through Dr. Geiger and Tufts University is outlined in the Appendix.

<sup>7</sup> In the first budget for the MLK Center, funds were included for the first team of "Health Guides" as outreach workers for the Center. Miss O'Connell was assigned to organize, train, and supervise this prototype outreach team. This was in accordance with the Tufts guideline, Item 3.

<sup>8</sup> I was appointed to EOC as a member of the League of Women Voters (LWV). The LWV had (and still has) a reputation for careful fact-finding and deliberations before taking consensus on a position to advocate before any agency at any level of government. My experience in the Suffolk LWV in addressing the Suffolk County Board of Supervisors now and then had been entirely focused on environmental issues, such as how best to preserve our water table, our wetlands, and notably the Fire Island seashore. Now I had many new issues to learn about relating to the functions of County and New York State Health Departments, their interrelationship, and the personalities and politics involved, as well as what our opportunities might be to make things better for the poor in our County.

Both Dr. Forsyth and Dr. Leone were always accessible to help me and we became close working allies as well as friends. I particularly like to recall the many "after hours" between five and six o'clock in the afternoon when Dr. Leone had time to relax and talk with me on the telephone (often with feet up on his desk, I was told by one of his staff!).

<sup>9</sup> E.g., there were "disturbances" in Wyandanch during the "long hot summer of 1966."

<sup>10</sup> With the advent of Medicare and Medicaid, the need for "charity hospitals" diminished.

<sup>11</sup> I should like to say what a joy it has been all these years to work with my colleague, Joyce Turner, and to point out that her election to the Chairmanship of the EOC Board at that critical time, and by so widely diverse a membership, is just one example of the high value everyone has repeatedly placed on her wise, levelheaded, and exceptionally skillful leadership.

<sup>12</sup> This was the era of mandated 'consumer involvement' in all such federal, state and local organizations and councils.

<sup>13</sup> I had prepared a memorandum to this effect with a copy for each task force member which I distributed at our first meeting.

<sup>14</sup> Claretha Ward liked to say the community was divided among the 'tax-payers' and the 'welfare recipients' and that she was trusted by the latter to speak for them because she was one of them!

As the mother of two little boys enrolled in the Wyandanch Head Start, Claretha had been recruited as an aide. "With this job," she told a co-worker, "I got my head start." She became one of our prime examples of a person who knew how to seize an opportunity when she saw it. After serving on the local CAP board, she was elected to the EOC itself, fulfilling part of the segment of "those to be served" required on this Council. Later, Council members encouraged her through the process of getting first her Bachelor's Degree (she chose English as her major because she wanted "to learn to speak well"), and then a Masters in Social Work. This enabled her to obtain a job in the Bay Shore school system where she excelled in working with troubled families, as only she knew how. Among the many accolades she received at her gala retirement party years later; "We could have used five of her," said her Superintendent.

<sup>15</sup> The Board of Supervisors consisted of the ten Town Supervisors and was the precursor of the County Legislature now numbering eighteen, elected according to the principle of one man, one vote.

<sup>16</sup> From the minutes of the Task Force's 4 October 1967 meeting quoting a letter from John White, Chairman of the Task Force, to Babylon Supervisor Gilbert Hanse, also Chairman of the Board of Supervisors at that time.

<sup>17</sup> As well as being Chairman of our Task Force, John White was the Chairman, Board of Trustees, Brookhaven Memorial Hospital.

<sup>18</sup> The letter dated 27 October 1967 from Gilbert Hanse to John White.

<sup>19</sup> Quoted from my written report of 7 February 1967.

<sup>20</sup> Report submitted in 1999 by Edward Peterson, the former President and CEO of Good Samaritan Hospital, for the MLK Center privately published anniversary booklet edited by Dr. O'Connor.



<sup>21</sup> Ibid.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid. This report is also the source of description of the Medical Society's attempt to stop the Good Samaritan Hospital's negotiation with the County Health Dept. as experienced by Mr. Peterson and that Hospital.

<sup>23</sup> From my written testimony to the Suffolk County Blue Ribbon Health Panel's public hearing on 29 April 1997. The quoted sentence from my testimony is followed by:

This country has long since recognized the public interest in and public responsibility for the education of our children; but the best of education is of no avail unless we begin with healthy children, nurtured in healthy families, who in turn create healthy communities. The strength of our communities (and it follows, of our nation) lies in our people – above all other resources we are given to care for. In the strength and vitality, of body, mind and spirit, of all our people – not just some of them – is to be found the first line of defense of our nation, our economy and our social fabric.

<sup>24</sup> See the Tufts/ Geiger guidelines, Number 2, listed on p. 80.

<sup>25</sup> Suffolk County Blue Ribbon Health Panel, *Report to the County Executive*, 1 October 1997.

<sup>26</sup> Please refer to Endnote 14. The story of Clarethia Ward is just one good example, among others known to me personally, illustrating the influence on individual lives and families of economic and social changes initially made possible by OEO/EOC funded programs.

**Tables Illustrating the Cost-Efficiencies of the Neighborhood Health Center Model**

Year	Total Visits	Medicaid FFS %	Suffolk HP %	Medicare %	Insurance %	Self-Pay %	Free %
1993	220,241	38.6	0.0	9.4	10.6	33.5	8.0
1994	244,526	37.2	0.0	8.7	10.2	33.4	8.5
1995	255,987	34.5	3.2	8.8	9.2	33.7	10.5
1996	272,579	28.9	7.9	8.7	9.1	35.2	10.3
1997	75,400	26.8	8.9	8.6	9.0	37.3	9.3

**Table 1. Health Center Visits Percentage by each Revenue Source.** From the *Suffolk County Blue Ribbon Health Panel, Report to the County Executive* on 1 October 1997, Table 4, on page 15. Only partial statistics were available for 1997.

Year	Expenditures	Patient Revenues	State Aid	Net Cost
1991	\$27,041,518	\$16,214,785	\$4,410,693	\$6,416,040
1992	29,247,048	18,498,330	4,049,055	6,699,663
1993	30,750,744	22,402,029	3,000,877	5,347,838
1994	33,464,434	23,753,090	3,369,552	6,341,792
1995	37,163,020	26,358,092	3,889,774	6,915,154
1996 <sup>1</sup>	43,864,527	23,528,052	7,321,131	13,015,344

**Table 2. Net Cost of Health Centers.** Ibid. Table 9 on page 20.

Having established the principle that it is Suffolk County's role to provide a social safety net by providing for the health of the population, it is also important to achieve this by using resources carefully, effectively, and efficiently. A comprehensive primary care delivery system, organized under one roof at each center, is a model ideally suited to coordinate a deficit-financing system like the one achieved by Suffolk County in managing the health center network of nine such centers.

**Tables 1 and 2**, above, show that in the year 1996 (the last year statistics were available to the Panel) total County expenditures of \$43,864,537 for all nine Centers were offset by patient revenues and State aid so that the net cost to the County was reduced to \$13,015,344 or just under 30% of the total. The not-yet-collected revenues would have reduced the net cost to just under 25% of the total.

<sup>1</sup> Bad debt and charity money and 1996 appeal of Medicaid funds of about \$3 million was received in 1997 and has not been included in revenues for 1996. With this revenue, the net cost for 1996 should have been about \$10,015,344.

## APPENDIX

## **The Odyssey of Dr. H. Jack Geiger: Bringing the "Neighborhood Health Center" to the U.S.A.**

**Preface:** In 1957, before his last year at Western Reserve Medical School, Cleveland, Ohio, Jack Geiger received a Rockefeller Foundation study grant to go to South Africa for five months. There he was to learn at first hand about an innovative health service model described in a report sent to him by Dr. Warren Weaver, Vice President of the Rockefeller Foundation, who had learned of Geiger's interest in community health and epidemiology. This report described a program in South Africa to which the Foundation had recently awarded a grant in support of the pioneering work of Dr. Sidney Kark of the Institute of Family and Community Health (IFCH) at the University of Durban

**1938** As a young clinical medical officer on assignment to the South African Minister of Health, Dr. Sidney Kark conducted a year long survey of the health and nutritional condition of South African children. The Minister, Dr. Eustace Cluver, formerly one of Sidney Kark's medical school professors, had inspired Kark with the importance of public health issues and epidemiology, especially in connection with the poverty and deprivation of native African populations.

**1940** The survey led to Kark's appointment by the Minister of Health to develop what the Ministry intended should be a new model for a network of health centers to serve deprived areas throughout South Africa. Kark, his wife, Dr. Emily Kark, and their colleagues worked for six years developing such a model health service in the desperately poor Pholela district of the Zulu Tribal Reserve, Natal Province, where modern medical care and public health programs were totally absent.

Here it was that Kark developed in practice the concepts and methods of applied social medicine now known worldwide as Community-Oriented Primary Care (COPC). The essential principle demonstrated at Pholela was how the social, economic and physical conditions of their environment were the overwhelming determinants of the health status of the population living there. And, as essential as it was, general primary care, *per se*, clearly could have little lasting effect unless the harmful environmental problems were addressed. In addition to careful

ongoing consultation with the people themselves to understand their own perceived needs, education<sup>1</sup> of the population became a major enterprise with the focus on training local people as health assistants to teach the essentials of infectious diseases, sanitation, nutrition, food production, maternal-child health, and all sorts of related subjects. This would lead, in Kark's words, to "a very closely integrated curative, preventive, and promotional health service."<sup>2</sup>

- 1946** In 1946, the Karks were recalled to Durban where Dr. Sidney Kark was to direct the new IFCH set up to train personnel for the large network of health centers being projected. Pholela and six more centers closer to Durban served as clinical teaching sites. One was in a municipal housing project, the others in various slums and "shanty towns."
- 1951** A medical school admitting only "black, Indian and colored students" was created in Durban – in various ways an ominous sign of the changes occurring in the national government. By the end of the 1950s, the apartheid portcullis had cut off funding to the IFCH. The program was rescued by the Durban Medical School, which integrated the Institute into its clinical curriculum with the support of the Rockefeller grant mentioned earlier.
- 1957** Jack Geiger, fourth-year medical student, received a Rockefeller Foundation grant to go to South Africa to study Kark's health service model.  
Upon his return to the U.S.A., Jack Geiger incorporated the concepts he had seen implemented by Kark in South Africa in his senior thesis for medical school in the form of a proposal for a medical school-sponsored health center.
- 1958** Geiger received his M.D. from Western Reserve School of Medicine.
- 1960** Geiger received his MS in epidemiology from Harvard University's School of Public Health, while interning at Boston City Hospital.
- 1964** During the summer, Geiger was in Greenville, MS, as part of the civil rights movement in charge of a Medical Committee for Human Rights. On 11 December 1964, he attended a civil rights workers convocation in Greenville, where, in a conversation with

Dr. Count Gibson of Tufts University, Geiger suggested that a good northern medical school should introduce the sort of health service he had seen in South Africa to this deprived area in Mississippi – to which Gibson replied: "Tufts could do that, if only it had the money."

That same year, "just in time," the U.S. Congress had passed the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964.

**1965**

Geiger joins Tufts University Medical School in the Department of Preventive Medicine, which at this time, was renamed the Department of Community Health and Social Medicine.

With the keen interest and help of Gibson, the Department Chairman, Geiger enlarged upon his senior thesis to outline a proposal for two centers, one rural and one urban, to be sponsored and operated by Tufts University Medical School. The proposed rural site was at Mound Bayou in the Mississippi Delta to serve an extended 400-square-mile area, and the proposed urban site was at Columbia Point in Boston to serve a very large low-income housing project.

On 25 January 1965, Geiger met with Dr. Sanford Kravitz, Associate Director of Research, Demonstrations and Training at OEO, in Washington, D.C., to ask for an initial grant of \$35,000 to prepare a complete proposal following OEO guidelines. Kravitz listened intently for nearly two hours to what Geiger had to say about his experiences and observations in South Africa, in the Mississippi Delta and in Boston. After a silence, Kravitz said: "I can't just give you \$35,000. . . . (pause) . . . You are going to take \$350,000 and get cracking!"

Thus, OEO funded the very first two OEO "neighborhood health centers" in record speed. Recently, Geiger told me "We actually were given \$1.2 million in the first grant --- on 11 June 1965, exactly six months to the day from [the] meeting in Greenville, Mississippi -- and we opened the Columbia Point center on 11 December 1965, exactly one year to the day from [the] Greenville meeting."

Columbia Point was first because it was nearest to professional resources and to the Tufts-affiliated New England Medical Center (the required back-up hospital) and there was a building. Start-up logistics in the Delta area were more complex and would take longer.

**1966** Congress passed an amendment to the 1964 OEO Act, authorizing the creation of an Office of Health Affairs within the OEO, with \$50 million earmarked for the increase of neighborhood health center programs throughout the country. Geiger had a role in drafting the amendment and Senator Edward Kennedy had a role in sponsoring it.

"Thirty-three new centers were rapidly established followed by additional centers funded in succeeding years by OEO and later by the Public Health Service, as responsibility for the centers was shifted in the early 1970s from OEO to DHEW." In 1988, when Lisbeth Schorr was writing, "there were nearly 800 centers – now known as community health centers – providing comprehensive primary health care to nearly six million poor and previously underserved Americans in fifty states."<sup>3</sup>

Postscript: Meanwhile, due to the onset of apartheid, the Karks and many of their colleagues left South Africa in a kind of diaspora to carry the COPC concept to other parts of the world, such as, to name a few, the United Kingdom, North Carolina and Israel where Kark established and directed the Department of Social Medicine at Hebrew University Medical School in Jerusalem until his retirement in 1980.

Readers interested in the development and replication of the COPC concept will find a wealth of articles in the November 2002 issue of the *American Journal of Public Health* (Vol. 92, No. 11) including references to very informative books by the Karks and others.

<sup>1</sup> Education could have a lasting influence as was evident from the aspirations and accomplishments of a number of pre-apartheid Pholela residents even after, under apartheid, funding for these centers had ceased. Years later, for example, a boy who had been a patient at the Pholela center grew up to become a physician, a leader in the African National Congress in exile, and, eventually Nelson Mandela's first Minister of Health (J. H. Geiger, "Community-Oriented Primary Care: A Path to Community Development," *American Journal of Public Health* 92:11 (2002), 1713.

<sup>2</sup> T. Brown and E. Fee, "Pholela Health Centre: A Progress Report," *American Journal of Public Health* 92:11 (2002), 1743.

<sup>3</sup> Lisbeth B. Schorr, *Within Our Reach*. (New York: Doubleday, 1988), 132.

# **A PROUD MEMBER OF THE COMMUNITY OF PORT JEFFERSON REMEMBERS HIS CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE LAST GREAT CRUSADE – WORLD WAR II**

*By Richard Acritelli*

"During World War II, American bomber crewmen in Europe suffered a higher rate of casualties than any other branch of the United States Armed Forces. On deep-penetration raids into the Third Reich, airmen represented the cutting edge of U.S. power, but fell by the thousands to swarming enemy fighters and flak. In the early stages of the strategic air campaign the landscape of Europe was littered with the smoking wreckage of Flying Fortresses and Liberators, their ten-man crews dead or consigned to Nazi prison camps."<sup>1</sup>

Today as the United States enters into the twenty-first century, we face many challenges that will continue to have an impact on future generations. Historians have always believed that it is important to learn from the problems and solutions of the past to solve those of the present. As we embark on new endeavors that we hope will bring peace and security to the United States, it is important to remember the last great crusade of World War II. All Americans throughout the country were united to defeat the fascist powers that were bent on world domination. Like the Americans of today that are pressed to fight and win the war on terrorism, our citizens of yesterday accomplished the great task of saving freedom.

Mr. Martin Andrews of Port Jefferson is a member of America's greatest generation and he played a significant role in helping the United States win the last crusade of World War II. On 8 November 2002 he spoke of his war experience to the senior students of Rocky Point High School. He made a lasting impression on not only the students but also the faculty of this North Shore school. As the nation was ready to honor the veterans that had served in our Armed Forces, Rocky Point High School had the privilege and honor of hearing a heroic story from a local citizen and veteran.

Mr. Andrews began his speech by describing the current air doctrine of today and how it has changed since his experiences during World War II. He spoke about the war in Afghanistan and analyzed how the nation used its new technology to wage this air war. It was interesting to note that Andrews was making relevant examples to the students so that they can understand how different the fighting capability was for the Army Air Force during World War II than that of today.

After the 7 December 1941 Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor and the declaration of war by Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy, the United States was engulfed in a global war against three totalitarian powers. Like millions of





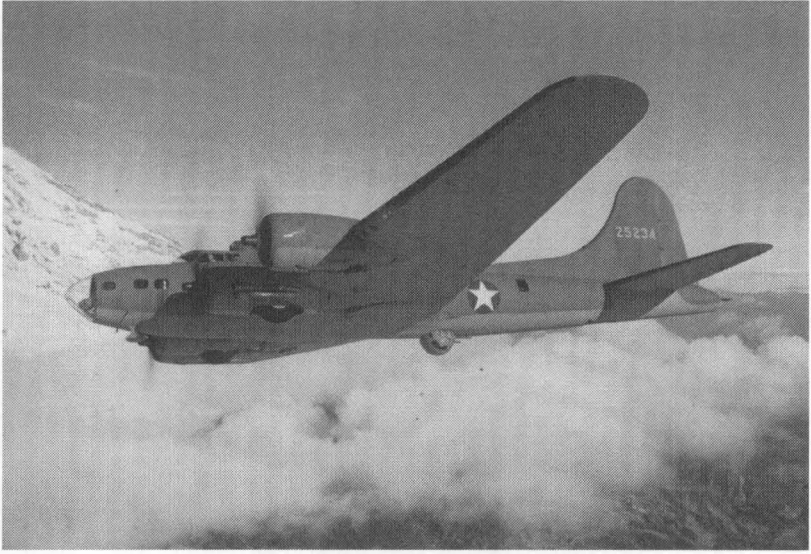


Figure 2: B-17 Bomber. Photo courtesy Martin Andrews.

On 6 September 1943, Andrews and his B-17 crew embarked on an important bombing mission over Nazi-occupied Europe to bomb war production factories in Stuttgart, Germany. Andrews recalled the briefing of the mission:

It was always important to eat a good breakfast before missions because you would be going for many hours without eating; and flying at high altitudes as we did, in open, unpressurized planes, this increased one's hunger. At the briefing room that morning we learned that our target for the day was Stuttgart. I seem to recall that our specific goal was the Bosch Magneto Works. At least the word "Bosch" has stuck in my mind. Stuttgart meant a long penetration of Germany, a matter of some concern to us in those days because our American heavy bombers did not have the extra fuel capacity that they would all have later in the war. Sometimes, when our group flew low into the interior of Germany, we would run so low on

gasoline that we would have to cut our outboard engines and make a power glide to get us back to England.<sup>2</sup>

It was the theory of the American Army Air Force that daytime bombing was the most accurate and precise way to destroy the military and industrial might of Nazi Germany. Although this type of bombing brought about greater accuracy it also created more losses of Allied aircraft. Andrews spoke about the range of American and British fighter planes could only cover the distance to the coast of France and then they had to turn back because they had limited fuel reserves and could not fly the whole distance to Germany. This meant greater attacks by the superior might of the German Luftwaffe's Messerschmitt 109s and Focke-Wulf 190s. This combat mission, Andrews' thirteenth, began with a terrible accident. Andrews recalled:

Our Engineer and Top Turret Gunner, Leo Liewer and our Ball Turret Gunner Kenneth Rood, were thrown from a Jeep on their way to the plane and were seriously injured. Since both men were extremely well liked and since both had to be replaced at the last moment, it cast an ominous gloom on the occasion. Several of us still had the blood on our flight clothes from caring for our crewmates before the ambulance came.<sup>3</sup>

The prospects for the success of this mission did not start of well for Andrews and the crew of the *Est Nulla Via In Via Virtuti*. A long mission over occupied territory, a limited amount of fuel and Allied air cover, and a constant enemy fighter threat loomed ahead of them. As many Americans made sacrifices and took astounding risks, Lieutenant Andrews and his courageous crew were no different. Andrews piloted his B-17 bomber in the 'high box formation,' a flying pattern used to defend against Luftwaffe attacks. Andrews also believed that the Germans attacked more from the right because it kept the sun to their backs so that they could concentrate their attack because they were faster and could move in and out of range of American guns.

As Andrews and his crew flew towards their objective of Stuttgart, the German defenses were continuously mobilized to defend against these tenacious Allied attacks. Andrews recalls the aggressiveness of the German defenders:

The German fighter pilots whom we encountered were well trained and courageous, although I sometimes wondered if some of them, on occasion, were as scared as

we were. Frequently they flew close enough for us to see their faces. On one of our earlier missions, the plane flying off my wing hand had to move out so that the on-coming German fighter, whose pilot may have been dead by that time, could fly between us. As we flew to Stuttgart that day the Luftwaffe came up to greet us, as usual. I do not recall the number of attacks they made but, during one of them, a ME-109 knocked out our number two engine, the inboard engine on the left side. A bullet had punctured an oil line, dropping the oil pressure to zero and forcing me to stop the engine and to feather the propeller to keep it from spinning out of control.<sup>4</sup>

This mission, which witnessed tragedy from the beginning, had little prospect of returning successfully to Great Britain. The Stuttgart mission of the 306<sup>th</sup> Bomber Group of the Eighth Army Air Force had over forty-five bomber losses, including that of the Andrews plane *Est Nulla Via In Via Virtuti*. Andrews and his crew were able to deliver their bombs on the industrial targets at Stuttgart under the strain of losing engines, the harassment of enemy fighter planes, and enemy smoke screens to shield targets. The likelihood of making it back to relative safety was always a tremendous task for the Army Air Force. The Germans held far more Army Air Force crews prisoner than that of the American infantry as many of those thousands of bomber crew that risked flights over Nazi-occupied Europe before the Battle of the Bulge in December 1944 were lost or captured.<sup>5</sup> This dangerous mission over Stuttgart had crippled Andrews' plane and it was uncertain if they would make it safely back to England.

Andrews and his crew knew how difficult it would be to try for England. They understood that with the loss of fuel, engines, and the continued attacks of the enemy, they had no chance to make it anywhere near the English Channel. In a vivid and a descriptive account Andrews told the students of Rocky Point how his plane was able to escape Hitler's Third Reich:

Even before our bombardier, Huisinga, dropped our bombs on our target of opportunity, crewmember Rich and I were aware that we could no longer get home. We did not have enough gasoline left to reach the coast of France, much less the coast of England. With high RPM's to stay up with the load of bombs, we had gone way over estimated fuel consumption. Now, with no chance of getting home, we had two options. One was to keep flying until we ran completely out of gas. There was

no longer any thought of diving down to treetop level because one could not parachute so low to the ground. But we believed that we could get as far as France where we could bail out with some hope of escape. The other option was to go to Switzerland that lay a half-hour's flight away. Yet, because that seemed like quitting, I decided not to go to Switzerland.<sup>6</sup>

As Andrews and his crew discussed where and when to land, the decision was made for them when they lost their second engine. Switzerland now seemed to be the only logical choice. As the plane continued its perilous flight, however, it was not clear if Andrews and his crew were heading in the right direction. During his talk to the students, Andrews stressed that planes of the 1940s did not have the technology of today and that they had to guess at the location of the Swiss border. Andrews described how his crew eventually made it to Switzerland:

We began rapidly to lose altitude flying south and approached the area of Friedrichshafen at about 10,000 feet. We carried no maps of Switzerland, but navigator Bowers had found a substitute. Each member of the crew had a little escape kit in the pocket of his flight suit. It contained a knife, a small compass, some concentrated chocolate, a handkerchief, and some foreign currency. On the contents of the handkerchief was printed a small map of Europe. Since it included all of Europe, Switzerland made up only a small part of it. Still, this was something, and all that Bowers had to go by. Looking down past Friedrichshafen I could see what I presumed was the Lake of Constance and remembering my grade school geography, I figured Switzerland lay on its south shore. However, as we passed over the Friedrichshafen region, the Germans pumped up a mess of flak. Although the anti-aircraft fire did not worry us as much as the German fighters did, the numerous explosions going on around us started me thinking, 'What if some pocket south of that lake is part of Germany?'<sup>7</sup>

The lack of technology and familiarity with the location of Switzerland caused much distress because Andrews and his crew were not sure if they were heading in the right direction or if they were going to land in Nazi Germany or occupied France. As the bomber flew over the Alps, some of the crewmembers asked Andrews if they should prepare to bail out.

Andrews' response to this was, "There's no need to jump. You could kill yourselves trying to parachute into those mountains; but do not worry about this airplane. We still have got two good engines and we should be landing somewhere very soon."<sup>8</sup>

For Andrews and his crew, the risk of flying south towards Switzerland had been successful. Although the plane had made it out of Germany, the crew had only limited military information on the regulations for destroying the plane if they were captured or landed in a neutral nation such as Switzerland or Sweden. They did not know what was waiting for them and how they would be handled in Switzerland. It was unclear what their status would be in this nation, that of a prisoner, detainee, or guest.

Once over Switzerland Andrews landed the bomber on a grass landing strip at Magadino. As the plane made it safely to the ground, many heavily armed Swiss soldiers were waiting to detain the crew. Andrews describes this encounter with the Swiss soldiers:

It seems strange in retrospect, but we had been told that, if we ever landed in Switzerland or Sweden, we should try to destroy the airplane. For that purpose we had with us four incendiary bombs. Filled with thermite, they were about the same size and shape of a soft-drink can. When you struck a cap at one end, the contents would start burning fiercely after a time delay of a few seconds. They'd been made for the Royal Air Force and I had seen one demonstrated. I told navigator Bowers to set one of these off in the nose compartment of the plane after we had landed, radio-operator Scott to set one off just behind the bomb-bay and co-pilot Rich to set one off in the cockpit. I intended to set the fourth one off myself. From the pilot's side window, as soon as I stopped the plane, I could crawl out of the fuselage and make my way back to the wing. There I would set the bomb just above one of the empty gas tanks. Once the thermite burned through the wing's aluminum skin and got to the tank, the plane would surely blow up.<sup>9</sup>

Andrews and his men were taken into Swiss custody and the thermite bombs never detonated. They were all duds. The Swiss held the plane and the crew. It later turned out that the Army Air Force had changed the regulations, ordering all aircraft to be left intact when landed in any neutral nations. Andrews cautioned his crew to follow orders and not to speak about their mission over Stuttgart. When he was first questioned about the bombing run over Germany, Andrews replied that he could only speak to an

American military attaché in Switzerland and that he and his crew were calling themselves "tourists."

That night Andrews and his crew were taken away from the Magadino airfield under guard to the town of Bellinzona, where they spent the night on third floor of an empty school. The next morning a train took them to the military airport at Dubendorf, near Zurich. There, Andrews was interrogated by Swiss pilots. They were friendly and respected his reluctance to talk about his experiences with the Eighth Army Air Force. The following morning three Swiss flying officers escorted Andrews out to the tarmac where an undamaged B-17 was standing. They had Andrews go inside the plane and wanted him to show the Swiss pilots how to start it. Andrews refused, but felt a little ridiculous when they were able to start the plane without any assistance.

Andrews was often separated from his crew because the Swiss wanted access to the American military intelligence that he possessed. He repeatedly pointed out that he was treated well by his captors; he understood the circumstances that Switzerland faced and that the information was needed because the survival of their nation was at stake. Andrews describes one of his meetings with a high ranking Swiss intelligence officer:

The only untoward incident that I experienced during my first days in Switzerland occurred when we were taken from Zurich to Berne. There, in one of the government buildings, I was taken into the office of a Swiss Army colonel who headed, I was informed, their office of military intelligence. I do not remember his name but I do remember he was exceptionally tall and very austere. He said nothing to me when I entered his office. Then, motioning me to a chair in front of his desk, he asked me to describe my mission over Stuttgart. Once more I began my demurral, 'I am sorry, sir, but until I meet an American officer here in Switzerland, I can tell you nothing about my mission.' At this he surprised me by flying into a rage. Picking up a sheaf of Swiss newspapers from his desk, he shouted at me, 'What do you mean you cannot tell our Swiss military intelligence anything about your mission?' Gesturing with the newspapers, he went on, 'It seems your people are perfectly willing to talk to all of our journalists!'<sup>10</sup>

Andrews was told that four other B-17 bombers that flew the same Stuttgart mission shared the same fate as the *Est Nulla Via In Via Virtuti*.

Some of these crews were very willing to speak about their missions to either Swiss pilots or intelligence officers. But Andrews describes how he adhered to his orders about the secrecy of his mission, "I am very sorry Colonel, but I cannot answer for the actions of those Americans. I can only tell you that I am not yet at the liberty to say anything connected with the United States military matters."<sup>11</sup> At the end of this meeting Andrews apologized about his unwillingness to answer the colonel's questions. These apologies did not go over well and the colonel expressed anger towards Andrews by saying, "I advise you and your crew not to try to escape from Switzerland. Our soldiers all have guns and they are very good shots."<sup>12</sup> Escape attempts were important to the Swiss, since soldiers were forced to leave their guard posts at the German border to detain these prisoners of war.

The Swiss were in a difficult position in 1943. The Germans controlled Europe and could employ overwhelming military force against Switzerland. Although the Swiss were neutral, they were prepared to defend themselves against both the Axis and Allied powers. They had two threats to contend with, the first being the growing strength of the Allies in Europe. The Swiss had witnessed the strength of the Allies air power within their own territory. This was of great concern to them. By 1943 they were advancing on all fronts and bombing Germany's resources for waging war. One such attack occurred on 1 April 1943 over the Swiss city of Schaffhausen, which was devastated by the Liberators of the 44<sup>th</sup> and 392<sup>nd</sup> Bomber Groups. Forty civilians were killed; the rain of 598 incendiary bombs and 180 hundred-pound explosives made over one hundred wounded and nearly 450 homeless.<sup>13</sup> This attack occurred because the planes had flown over one hundred miles off course and they had mistakenly wandered into Swiss territory.

The second threat came from Nazi Germany. Although the Germans were fighting against the Russians, Americans, and British, the Swiss intelligence services feared that the Germans were planning to attack Switzerland. To Germany it was still not clear if the Swiss would defend their nation in the rugged mountains of the Alps or if they would capitulate and accept German rule like many other European nations. During high-level meetings between German and Swiss diplomatic leaders, Germany wanted to know how far Switzerland would go to defend itself if it was attacked by an outside power. The Swiss responded:

Whoever invades our country is self-evidently our enemy. The united army of the greatest strength and a nation imbued with a single accord will confront him. At such a time there exists only one militant Switzerland inspired by one will. Because of the

topography of our country we are able to defend above all our Alpine front. Whatever may come to pass this assurance is immovable and unalterable. No doubt can arise about that either now or in the future.<sup>14</sup>

Andrews told the Rocky Point students that he understood this warning and even sympathized with the Swiss. He believed that Switzerland was willing to defend itself against any attack, but knew that they were in a terrible bind because Switzerland was not self-sufficient in food and ammunition production. Although they would fight if necessary, they did not want to antagonize the Germans into attacking them or cutting Switzerland off economically from the rest of the world. He explained that the Swiss authorities were strict toward internees and did not show favoritism for either the Axis or Allied powers.

Andrews was frequently interrogated because of his rank and responsibilities. When he left the Swiss office at Mybeline, Andrews and his crew traveled by train from Bellizona to Zurich. In addition to Swiss interrogations, an American agent wanted to know about his last mission. Allen Dulles was a middle-aged American, who introduced himself as the head operating intelligence official of the American Office of Strategic Services in Switzerland. Refusing to discuss his mission, Andrews told him, "Look Mr. Dulles, I am sure that you are for real, and I have heard of your brother, [John Foster Dulles was already well known as a U.S. foreign policy advisor] but I cannot tell you anything about military matters. I am perfectly willing to talk about my boyhood in Wisconsin or about my days in college, but about what I did yesterday, nothing."<sup>15</sup>

As head of the Office of Strategic Services in Switzerland, Dulles had a tremendous amount of power. Andrews believed that the OSS Chief respected him for not releasing the information and showing credibility by following his exact orders. Dulles even shared with Andrews the story of a clandestine mission that he had just completed in Locarno, Switzerland.

Dulles was in Switzerland to gain as much intelligence as possible. He established the OSS in Switzerland to get information from agents inside Nazi Germany and occupied Europe, and sent this information to Washington D.C. to be analyzed. Dulles provided valuable information and contacts. He notified Washington of the French orders to scuttle their fleet at Toulon, made contacts with the Swiss government to get intelligence, recruited French agents who had fled Vichy France, and made connections with the German conspirators that had tried to assassinate Hitler.<sup>16</sup> Dulles, as Andrews would later experience, was able to use interned American pilots for intelligence gathering activities in Switzerland by granting overnight passes.



The United States was one of the last industrialized nations to create an intelligence-gathering network. Though this nation always had the ability to wage war and unite the population for these efforts, the intelligence community of the United States was inept in the early days of World War II. General William "Wild Bill" Donovan, the powerful head of the Office of Strategic Services, stressed the importance of placing an American intelligence delegation in Switzerland to President Franklin D. Roosevelt. He believed

Switzerland is now, as it was in the last war, the one most advantageous place for the obtaining of information concerning the European Axis powers. Analysis of the telegrams reaching the State Department from various posts in Europe in which we still have representatives shows that information from Switzerland is far more important than any other post.<sup>17</sup>

For Andrews, the cloak and dagger missions of the OSS did not affect him until he was prepared to leave Switzerland in 1944. Up to that time, he was detained by the Swiss and had little freedom. Andrews explained to the students that his incarceration was not that bad and that he even believed that the Swiss tried to do the best they could with limited food supplies. As a detained, college-educated officer, Andrews was asked to establish a school at the camp to educate other detainees. Although the Swiss government allowed the school, pilots were not allowed to leave the camps because they were always expected to maintain the discipline of their crews.

Andrews also described how the men passed time by playing hockey against local Swiss teams. At first they were overmatched and overwhelmed by the superior play of the Swiss. As the war deteriorated for the Germans and Italians, however, it became easier for Allied prisoners of war to escape from camps in Italy. The Swiss interned some of these POWs, many from Canada. These men not only represented Allied victories because of their escape, and they improved the Swiss camps' hockey team as well.

In February 1944, Dulles summoned Andrews to Berne, where he told him that he would take part in a most unusual wartime occurrence. He was to be exchanged, along with six other American officers, for seven Germans, also interned in Switzerland. Andrews described to the students why Dulles exchanged him:

He [Dulles] wanted me to contact certain people in Washington, and I spent a week in his office memorizing information. When I got back to the

United States I was taken to OSS headquarters near Washington where I regurgitated all I had memorized. This was three months before D-Day in Europe. Of the seven American officers figuring in the exchange, six were pilots and one was a navigator. Although neither of us knew it at the time, that navigator also memorized secret information and, since interrogators spoke to him and me separately, they could check our accounts for accuracy.<sup>18</sup>

As Andrews described his mission to the students, they listened with amazement to every word of his story. It was interesting to hear how Andrews had to memorize military intelligence about German gun emplacements in France, their troop movements, details of fortifications, and information on international spies that worked both for and against the Allies. With this intelligence, Andrews had to leave Switzerland and journey under the control of the Gestapo and German Army through Germany, and occupied France. Andrews explained:

It was Dulles who initiated that exchange and got the Swiss Government to approach the German Government to sound them out about a man-for-man deal. Switzerland had detained three Luftwaffe pilots and four student pilots and the Swiss were eager to get rid of extra wartime mouths to feed. The Germans would later agree to this exchange. They made just one small stipulation that they demanded that all American officers wear civilian clothes while passing through Germany and occupied countries. They may have done this to forestall any troubles with the French underground because we were under close and constant German military guard.

My departure from Switzerland turned out to be as tense and as dramatic as my arrival. The railroad station in Basel, from which we left on 3 March 1944, lay half in Switzerland and half in Germany. The Germans had festooned the walls of their side of this vast chamber with big banners and swastikas. It gave one of the feelings of really coming up close and face-to-face with the Nazi enemy. As the two Swiss diplomats walked us across the room to hand us over to the Germans, I remember having strong feelings of uneasiness.

What heightened our concern was the fact that the particular officer to whom the Swiss were handing us

over wore the black uniform of Himmler's sinister SS. I thought to myself, 'We are at war with these people, especially with evil looking people like him. What if these Germans change their minds about an exchanging when they get us in their hands? What then could prevent them from accusing us, in our Swiss civilian clothing, of being spies? What if some of these SS people found out that I had memorized so many things about their armed forces, including information about certain treasonable people in their midst?'<sup>19</sup>

As Andrews made his way from the safe confines of Switzerland into the territory of the enemy that he and millions of other Americans were fighting, time was of the essence. By March 1944 the war had become a German fight for survival. Andrews witnessed the great lengths to which Dulles had gone to gather intelligence for D-Day—an invasion that would involve 1.5 million Americans, 600 warships, 4,000 transport ships and landing crafts, and 12,000 military aircraft.<sup>20</sup>

At this time Field Marshal Erwin Rommel was preparing to strengthen the Atlantic Wall to foil any attempted Allied invasion of France. The Germans had to plan for a two-front war in Europe. They had to send troops, tanks, and equipment into France while fighting the advancing forces of the Soviets in the east. They also needed to reinforce the nations of Hungary and Italy with more German troops because of their unwillingness to continue being part of the Axis alliance. Andrews carried vital information in the face of great danger.

Andrews' trip continued through Nazi Germany with several stops along the Rhine valley. Andrews spoke of how his group was always guarded by a strong German presence. The train ride took a long time because many German soldiers were either traveling home for leaves or being deployed to France. At one stop Andrews saw a German Red Cross girl pleading for donations. It was here, even while engaged in fighting the Germans, that Andrews showed sympathy and gave away his last Swiss ten-franc coin to the German girl. Many of the students asked Andrews why he had given money to an enemy organization. Andrews commented that he had no ill will against many of the people that he was fighting. He understood that the whole German population was not part of the Nazi party. Andrews also believed that many of these people were innocent, that they were caught in a war that a lot of them did not ask for or desire.

This humanitarian encounter with the girl allowed Andrews to differentiate between those who had supported the war and those who did not want it. He spoke of his encounters with diehard Nazi officers, soldiers, and SS that believed in Hitler even when Germany was being defeated on

all fronts. Andrew told of an encounter with many curious German soldiers on his trip:

Word got around of our existence on the train and many German officers aboard learned whom we were. Some of them arranged to talk with us. One of them a lieutenant told me he served with a German panzer regiment, he told me that he had gone to Western Reserve University in Cleveland, Ohio.

A Luftwaffe fighter pilot also accosted me. He was a major and highly decorated with a Knight's Cross around his neck, but he was not very pleasant. He told me that he had considered American bomber crews to be terrorists and barbarians and added, gratuitously, that the German people did not like our President Roosevelt. When I replied that was nothing compared to how much Americans hated Adolf Hitler, he simply shrugged and walked away.

The most interesting conversation that I had was with an infantry colonel and thought of him often after the Allied invasion of Europe began because he was very likely commanding a German unit along the Normandy coast. While giving nothing away about what he was doing or where he was going, he kept assuring me that German defenses in France were impregnable. Moreover, he mirrored the thinking of the attitudes of a lot of other German officers around us. 'Look', he told me, 'we Germans cannot defeat you. But neither can you Americans defeat us. Why don't we get together and fight the Russians?'<sup>21</sup>

As Andrews and the other officers made their way from Germany into France, he recalled many German soldiers asking for cigarettes. The trip was dangerous for Andrews and the other prisoners because they always feared that the Nazis would renege on the exchange deal. They also feared of the powerful threat of the Allied air forces. Andrews explained to the students that it was nearly impossible for the Allied planes to know when and where they were traveling. Fighter planes and bombers attacked trains in Germany and France because they were considered targets. In one bombing mission alone, the Eighth Air Force flew more than 3,300 sorties, the Fifteenth Air Force flew 500, and the Royal Air Force flew 2,351 in a February 1944 bombing mission that was called the "Big Week."<sup>22</sup> The aim

of this mission was to aggressively attack every aspect of the German military machine.

This prisoner exchange trip took the men into Paris, France. Andrews and the others, under constant guard, were driven through sections of Paris. Andrews saw the complete control that the Germans had over the city, with swastikas and banners posted throughout Paris.

Andrews and his fellow prisoners finally made it through France and to the Spanish border at Hendaye. As they were entering Spain and being handed over to the waiting Swiss escorts who would accompany them to the U.S. Embassy in Madrid, members of the Spanish military "Blue Division" entered France. Andrews described to the students that this Spanish unit fought with the Germans on the eastern front in Russia and were anti-American. Members of the "Blue Division" screamed and yelled at them as they passed.

The trip that had started with uncertainty on the Swiss-German border ended safely when Andrews, with vital American intelligence and in fear of being double-crossed by the Nazis, finally made it to Madrid. Andrews described to the students that even in Spain Gestapo agents followed the prisoners until their release to the American delegation. The trip to America that started in Switzerland saw Andrews and the others travel through Germany, France, Spain, to English Gibraltar, Casablanca, and finally ended with a flight to New York.

Andrews explained his debriefing in Washington D.C. to the students. He gave the Office of Strategic Services officers the information that Allen Dulles had made him memorize. This intelligence helped the Allied cause in the D-Day invasion of France, only a few short months away. Andrews was then assigned as a pilot in the Air Transport Command where he flew military aircraft and moved supplies in the western part of the United States. As for flying in Europe, the Army Air Force would not permit this because if he was shot down again or had to crash land it was possible that Andrews could be shot by the Germans as a spy.

After the war Andrews settled in Huntington, Long Island where he bought a house in 1956. He lived there until 1996, when he moved to Port Jefferson. His chosen career after the war was that of a filmmaker. Andrews directed, produced, and wrote the scripts for films, documentaries, and informative stories. As during the war, Andrews' excellent character and his determination allowed him to be very successful in his chosen field. He was a writer and director for documentaries at Paramount News, one of the five major newsreels in America. These newsreels brought Andrews work throughout the nation because the country in the 1940s and 1950s relied heavily on the information provided by these newsreels.

Andrews showed his hard work and determination by making several films that were not only known in the United States but throughout the

world. One of these was a documentary on the Hungarian uprising against the communists in 1956 for the U.S. Information Agency. This film was shown in eighty languages and dialects. Andrews was also nominated for an Academy Award for his work on *Sport Parachuting*. He was one of three nominees and Andrews credits *Sports Illustrated* and Paramount for supporting and sponsoring this work. It is also interesting to note that Andrews had a dynamic role in the election of President Harry S. Truman. He created a newsreel that helped the President win a difficult re-election bid in 1948.

He also established a production company, Andrews Films, which has roots on Long Island. Andrews was head of motion picture productions of the 1964 Worlds Fair, and made several films about the environment of Long Island. *Father Island-Mother Bay* was written, directed, and produced by Andrews. Many thousands of Long Island students in science classes watched this documentary on our wetlands. Andrews also made films on the nineteenth-century arts and crafts on Long Island. He worked with Assemblyman Steven Englebright who was able to garner support from the former Long Island Lighting Company (LILCO) to make nature films about our Pine Barrens. Andrews credits the LILCO with supporting many of his films about Long Island.

Today Andrews lives in Port Jefferson where he frequently rides the ferry and visits his daughter in Connecticut. He plays an active role as a volunteer in the Veterans Administration Medical Center in Northport. He is the commander of the Long Island Chapter of the American Ex- Prisoners

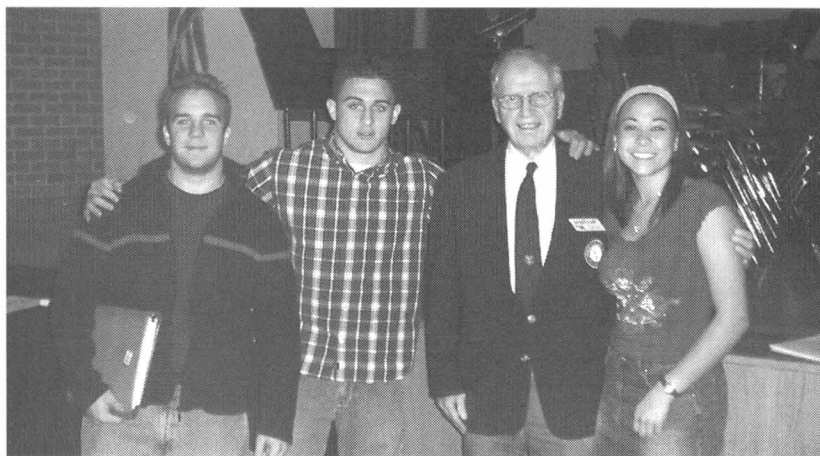


Figure 3: Martin Andrews and several students from Rocky Point High School, 8 November 2002. Photo by the author.

of War, which holds its monthly meetings at the hospital, and has recorded the phone directory service at the hospital. It should be added that this clear, concise, and direct voice that has a strong resemblance to the long time New York Yankees announcer Bob Shepherd has helped thousands of Long Island Veterans at the VA in Northport.

Martin Andrews provided a wealth of information to the students of Rocky Point High School. At every point of sharing his World War II memoirs, he held the undivided attention of the students in the auditorium. After he spoke to the classes, Andrews answered several questions about the war and took pictures with the students. It was not only an honor but also a pleasure to hear the story of one of Long Island's greatest generation.

## NOTES

*Rocky Point Senior Todd Baker, who helped interview Andrews with many informative questions, made many contributions and gave much assistance in telling this story.*

<sup>1</sup> Stephen Tanner, *Refuge From The Reich: American Airmen and Switzerland During World War II* (New York: Sarpedon, 2000), book jacket.

<sup>2</sup> Martin Andrews, "Memoirs of his thirteenth combat mission over Stuttgart, Germany," unpublished manuscript, 1; Martin Andrews, personal interview, 8 Nov. 2002.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., 2.

<sup>5</sup> Stephen Ambrose, *The Wild Blue: The Men and Boys Who Flew the B-24s Over Germany* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2001), 145.

<sup>6</sup> Andrews manuscript, 3; Andrews, personal interview, 8 Nov. 2002.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid, 4.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid., 6.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., 7.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

<sup>13</sup> Tanner, 126.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid., 109

<sup>15</sup> Andrews manuscript, 8; Andrews, personal interview, 8 Nov. 2002.

<sup>16</sup> James Srodes, *Allen Dulles: Master of Spies* (Washington D.C.: Regnery Publishing, 1999), 239.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid., 214.

<sup>18</sup> Andrews manuscript, 9; Andrews, personal interview, 8 Nov. 2002.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

<sup>20</sup> Michael Lyons, *World War II: A Short History* (New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1999), 256.

<sup>21</sup> Andrews manuscript, 11; Andrews, personal interview, 8 Nov. 2002.

<sup>22</sup> Charles B. McDonald, *The Mighty Endeavor: The American War in Europe* (New York: Da Capo Press, 1969), 267.



## LOST AND FOUND

*John Underhill, Captain of New England and New Netherland* by Henry C. Shelley. 1932. New York: D. Appleton and Company.

By John A. Strong

### Introduction

Although Shelley's well researched biography of John Underhill is long out of print, it is available in the Hofstra and SUNY Stony Brook University libraries or through the interlibrary loan system in most local libraries. Underhill (1597-1672) was involved in several major historical events of the seventeenth century in New England and Long Island and had close personal relationships with such figures as John Winthrop, John Winthrop, Jr., Anne Hutchinson, Tackapousha, Lion Gardiner, Willem Kieft, Peter Stuyvesant, and Richard Nicolls. Underhill, a professional soldier trained in Holland, served as an officer in the Massachusetts militia under John Winthrop, and later for the Dutch under Willem Kieft, governor of New Netherland (1638-1647). Largely as a result of his successful military campaigns, he was awarded lands on Long Island and public offices under the Dutch and the English colonial governments. Governor Kieft appointed Underhill Sheriff of Flushing, an office he held until he alienated Governor Peter Stuyvesant (1647-1664) and was forced to flee to eastern Long Island where he lived for a decade. When the English captured Long Island in 1664, Underhill returned west to settle in Oyster Bay where he lived until his death in 1672. Governor Richard Nicolls appointed him as a delegate to the first representative assembly at Hempstead, and later made him "high constable and undersheriff of the North Riding" on Long Island.

Biographers who study their subjects in great depth for considerable lengths of time can be forgiven if, on occasion, they stress the positive accomplishments and find sympathetic explanations for flaws in character and behavior. Shelley, however, often acts like a court room lawyer, defending or ignoring Underhill's many personal flaws. He defends Underhill against all criticism and lavishes unrestrained praise on some of Underhill's rather minor accomplishments. When, for example, Underhill signs a petition supporting Anne Hutchinson, Shelley compares him to Martin Luther (254). Later, when Underhill submitted a petition calling for Stuyvesant's impeachment, Shelley credits him with anticipating the Declaration of Independence by more than 120 years (382-83).

Underhill is admittedly a challenge to any biographer. He was an enigmatic figure in colonial history who led two highly successful military campaigns, but whose personal life was often in turmoil. He befriended and

then alienated Governor John Winthrop of Massachusetts Bay and Governor Peter Stuyvesant of New Netherland. Both governors finally banished Underhill from their colonies for actions they deemed to be treasonous challenges to their authority. Although Underhill's marriage to Helen de Hooch in 1628 lasted until her death in 1659, he was involved in two highly publicized cases of adultery that were tried before the court in Massachusetts Bay.

Shelley pays very little attention to these interesting inconsistencies. Rather than probing into areas that might reveal more insights into this complex individual, he spends far too much time on superficialities. The first one hundred pages of the 461-page book are spent tracing John Underhill's English ancestors, whose modest accomplishments are discussed in far too much detail. We learn, for example, that John's father and grandfather served as stewards in country manors owned by Queen Elizabeth and the Earl of Leicester. Shelley then describes in tedious detail the "idyllic landscape" and the valuable possessions entrusted to the stewards.

In addition, Shelley too casually dismisses the sexual scandals involving Underhill when he was in Massachusetts Bay as unjust persecution by Governor John Winthrop. Shelley argues that Winthrop harassed Underhill because he gave his support to Anne Hutchinson's Antinomian movement. Winthrop's detailed accounts of Underhill's acts of adultery with the wives of Joseph Farber and Robert Holmes are dismissed by Shelley as biased. Other scholars have noted that Winthrop sometimes slanted his accounts of events in his journal, but they also argue that Winthrop never lied or reported events that did not happen. Shelley's approach, therefore, misses an opportunity to explore the darker side of Underhill's character.

### **Savior of New England?**

Underhill is best known in colonial history for his role in the Pequot War (1637). His first-hand account of the war, *News From America*, published in 1638, is particularly important because the accounts by the other two participants, Lion Gardiner and John Mason, were not written down until over twenty years later. Mason and Underhill led a troop of ninety Englishmen and 500 Mohegan and Narragansett allies in a surprise attack on a Pequot village near what is now Mystic, Connecticut. The successful strategy caught the Indians off guard. The English encircled the village and placed their Indian allies in an outer circle to cut down any Pequots who managed to get through the English lines. The English opened fire on the village and then stormed the gates. When the terrified Indians retreated into their wigwams, Mason gave the order to set them on fire. Over 600 men, women and children died in the attack (Orr, 1897:47-92).

The English victory brought considerable economic and political advantages to them. They seized all of the Pequot lands and opened up the Connecticut Valley to English expansion. The valley was also a major link in the fur trade with the Indians in the north. Wampum, made from Atlantic coast seashells, was highly valued by the Indians living in the northern interior where the beaver were prolific. There is no doubt about the importance of the English victory for the rapid expansion of the English settlements, but Shelley presents the war as a pre-emptive strike in a defensive conflict. Economic gain, says Shelley, was not the cause of the war, rather it was to defend themselves against the threat of annihilation by "savages." Following the lead of nineteenth century historians John Fiske and Francis Parkman, Shelley proclaims Underhill to be 'the savior of New England.' Fiske and Parkman argue that the Pequots were a military threat capable of destroying the English settlements. Modern historians, however, have challenged this assessment.

Alfred Cave in *The Pequot War* (1996), has demonstrated that the Pequot War was not "waged in response to tangible acts of aggression. It cannot be understood as a rational response to English security." Francis Jennings in *The Invasion of America* (1976) and Neal Salisbury in *Manitou and Providence* (1982) came to similar conclusions. They conclude that the English were motivated by a desire for Pequot lands and for control over the lucrative trade routes up the Connecticut River. There was, therefore, nothing at all noble about the war. New England was never in any great danger from the Pequots.

Some modern scholars have directed their criticisms at Underhill himself. Richard Drinnon, in *Facing West: The Metaphysics of Indian Hating and Empire Building* (1980), cites Underhill's words in his *News From America* that portray the Pequot massacre as an act sanctioned by God to defeat the "infidel agents of the devil" and prepare the way for the expansion of Christian civilization (43). Drinnon sees the "ghost of Underhill in United States imperial policies in the Philippines, Cuba, and Vietnam (458). Salisbury also comments on this theme from Underhill's account. "Having located the devil in the Pequot camp," said Salisbury, "the English forces could proceed without restraint" (221). Richard Slotkin, in *Regeneration Through Violence: The Mythology of the American Frontier*, however, points out that Underhill was no "blind hater" of Indians noting that Underhill praised the courage of the Pequots (73-74). Slotkin's assessment of Underhill's character is also supported by an incident that took place immediately after the massacre. The Narragansett allies, who had deserted the English troops before the fighting began, were attacked by the Pequots as they retreated. When they called for help, Mason refused because they had deserted the English cause. Underhill returned with a small force to rescue the Narragansetts.

**The Antinomian Controversy**

When Underhill returned to Boston there was no hero's welcome for the victorious commander. On 9 March 1637 just before his departure for the Pequot campaign, John Underhill had signed a petition supporting Anne Hutchinson, the outspoken leader of the Antinomian movement. She challenged the emphasis on good works arguing that true grace came from an internal connection with God. She argued that no one knew from external appearances who was saved. The truly saved, she said, would do good works because they were saved, but sinners might do good works to hide an evil heart. Although Winthrop and the Puritan leaders also believed in the covenant of grace, they feared that Hutchinson's radical interpretation opened the door to forces that might threaten the social order. John Winthrop, whose concerns were shared by a majority of the Massachusetts court, feared that Hutchinson's shift away from community sanctions to individual intuition would undermine the role of religion as a force for social control.

Winthrop influenced the Massachusetts court to disarm, disenfranchise and banish Underhill. Before he left, however, the colonial court charged him with adultery. Underhill's defense must have raised some Puritan eyebrows. He claimed that he visited Joseph Farber's "young and beautiful wife" in her cottage several times to guide her in prayer. On the occasion when he was found in her cottage with the door locked from the inside Underhill claimed that "they were in private prayer together,...she being in trouble of mind," and he was trying to comfort her. It not surprising that the court dismissed his defense. Shelley makes no mention of this incident in his account of the events surrounding Underhill's banishment from the colony. To Winthrop, Underhill's behavior provided a clear example of the dangers inherent in the Antinomian movement.

**Savior of New Netherland?**

In 1644 Underhill played an important role in a second major Indian conflict, this time involving the Dutch colony of New Netherland. Once again a question about the nature of the war can be raised. The causes of Governor Kieft's War (1643-45), however, are not in dispute. Kieft launched a pre-emptive strike against two Indian settlements, Pavonia on the western bank of the Hudson River and Corlear's Hook on the eastern edge of Manhattan. The Indians were caught by surprise and brutally massacred. In response, the Long Island sachems organized raids on farmsteads, killing settlers and burning buildings throughout what is now Brooklyn and Queens. The war soon spread to the north as the tribes in the lower Hudson valley joined the conflict. In desperation Kieft called upon John Underhill to take command of the Dutch troops. In February 1644, Underhill led a troop of 120 men in a campaign against the Long Island

Indians. The campaign is not well documented, but it appears that at least two successful raids were made on Indian settlements near what is now Hempstead. The Dutch reported killing over one hundred Indians while suffering only one casualty (NYCD 1:179-88; Trelease, 79).

Following this success, Underhill led a second campaign against a large Indian settlement near what is now Pound Ridge in Westchester County. Repeating the strategy he used against the Pequots, Underhill surrounded the village after dark and opened fire on the unsuspecting villagers. Within a short time over 180 men, women and children lay dead. The rest retreated to their wigwams, firing arrows through small openings. Apparently few of the warriors had guns. At this point Underhill set fire to the village, forcing the occupants out in the open where the Dutch shot them at close range or cut them down with their swords. The death toll is not known, but estimates range from five to seven hundred.

Underhill returned to New Amsterdam in triumph. Governor Kieft held a public feast in his honor and gave him some land. Shortly afterwards, however, Kieft's Indian policies were questioned by local citizens who charged the war had been a result of Kieft's blunders. They argued that the conflict could have been avoided if Kieft had been a more effective leader. The authorities in the Netherlands agreed and Kieft was removed from his position. On his trip back to Amsterdam to face charges, his ship sank, taking Kieft and all of the documents he planned to use to defend his policies to a watery grave. Once again Underhill was the victorious commander in a war that need not have been fought. Shelly's conclusion that Underhill was, as John Fiske asserted, "the savior of New Netherland," is open to serious question.

Long Island historians Myron Luke (*Nassau County Historical Society Journal*, 1964, reprinted in 1998, vol. 53:25-33) and Richard Welch (*Long Island Forum*, (Jan., Feb.) 1982:11-17; 28-32), presented more balanced characterizations in brief articles. More recently Laurence Hauptman, who has written extensively about Native American history, focused on Underhill's participation in the Pequot and Kieft Wars. He took an innovative approach in an article entitled "John Underhill: A Psychological Portrait of an Indian Fighter" (*The Hudson Valley Review* September, 1992: 101-111). Hauptman analyzed Underhill using the standard diagnostic criteria established by the American Psychiatric Association as his model. He concluded that Underhill, "was a seriously disturbed individual who suffered from an antisocial personality disorder." The extreme contrast between this modern assessment and Shelley's view underscores the challenge for any scholar interested in understanding Underhill in the context of his times.

Shelley's biography, in spite of its many limitations, is based on very thorough research. In his footnotes, the author cites most of the relevant

sources on Underhill. The time has come for some ambitious scholar to revisit and probe beyond the rich data base set by Shelley. A definitive biography of Underhill would be a very important contribution to our understanding of the late seventeenth century in New England and Long Island. Whoever undertakes such a challenging project would be well advised to keep Shelley's book at his or her elbow.

## **BIBLIOGRAPHY**

- Cave, Alfred A. 1996. *The Pequot War*. Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press.
- Drinnon, Richard. 1990. *Facing West: The Metaphysics of Indian Hating and Empire Building*. New York, Schlocken Books.
- Jennings, Francis. 1976. *The Invasion of America: Indians, Colonialism, and the Cant of Conquest*. New York: W.W. Norton.
- NYCD, 1856-87. *Documents Relative to the Colonial History of the State Of New York*. Ed. Edmund Bailey O'Callaghan and Berthold Fernow. 15 vols. Albany: Weed, Parsons.
- Orr, Charles. 1897. *A History of the Pequot Wars*. Reprinted by AMS Press. This edition includes the original accounts of the Pequot Wars by Lion Gardiner, John Underhill and John Mason.
- Salisbury, Neal. 1984. *Manitou and Providence: Indians, Europeans and the Making of New England, 1500-1643*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Slotkin, Richard. 1973. *Regeneration Through Violence: The Mythology of the American Frontier, 1600-1860*. Middleton, CT: Wesleyan University Press.
- Trelease, Allen. 1960 (1997). *Indian Affairs in Colonial New York: The Seventeenth Century*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press.

## SECONDARY SCHOOL ESSAY CONTEST

We are pleased to present the following four winning essays in our Secondary School Essay Contest, a yearly event co-sponsored with the USB Center for Excellence and Innovation in Education, Dr. Eli Seifman, director emeritus. These papers illustrate the high quality of secondary education on Long Island. We encourage social studies teachers to submit papers by their students exploring any aspect of Long Island history. The papers are presented in alphabetical order of the authors.

### LONG ISLAND DEFEATS GOLIATH: THE CLOSING OF SHOREHAM

*By Jane Forman*

*Paul D. Schreiber High School, Port Washington*

In 1966, with the Long Island Lighting Company's (LILCO) decision to purchase a 455-acre parcel of land overlooking Long Island Sound in Brookhaven, the company had no idea as to the magnitude of problems it would face in the future. Shoreham would soon become the site of one of the most controversial, wasteful, and expensive nuclear plants in United States history. Many obstacles such as regulatory standards, the New York State legislature, and the media interfered with LILCO's construction of Shoreham. It has been said by many, however, that it was the public resistance of the Long Island community and its officials that ultimately led to the demise of Shoreham.

As construction began, and the public learned about the possible dangers of Shoreham, the initial optimism that surrounded nuclear power plants turned to antagonism and opposition. Peter Maniscalco, a resident of Stony Brook and coordinator of the Stop Shoreham Campaign, expressed the new opinion of the public when he said, "Shoreham has to die. That's the highest priority. It's important for the United States and the world to see that average citizens can come together in opposing a nuclear plant and actually end its existence. The nuclear industry really doesn't want that message to get out."<sup>1</sup> As the debate over the activation of Shoreham came to an end, the hopes of Peter Maniscalco and the community were realized. Shoreham indeed did close, and people throughout the country saw this and came to understand the huge impact of the efforts of the Long Island public.

To understand just how significant this battle was, one needs to review how popular the idea of nuclear power was at the outset. On 2 December 1942, Enrico Fermi demonstrated that uranium fission could generate heat in an easily controlled manner, which became the basis for the nuclear

power industry today.<sup>2</sup> Enrico Fermi discovered that when atoms of uranium are split, or fissioned, a tremendous amount of heat is released. When compared to the energy source in coal, one uranium atom produces millions of times more energy than the burning of one carbon atom, making uranium, the element behind nuclear power, a more efficient form of energy. After the dawn of the nuclear age at Hiroshima, scientists and the industry quickly went to work to develop the potential benefits of nuclear power. As early as December 1945, J. Robert Oppenheimer, also known as the father of the atomic bomb, predicted that nuclear power would soon produce clean, cheap and perpetual electric power.<sup>3</sup> The support for nuclear power initially increased with great anticipation that a new and superior source of energy had been found. Many looked to nuclear power as a source of energy that was less expensive and more efficient than coal, oil, or gas. Everyone hoped that nuclear power would be the answer to the energy problem scientists felt the world would eventually suffer from as a result of expanding industry and population. By the late seventies, nuclear power was being used substantially across the globe. In Japan, the percent of nuclear power was around 40% of total usage, as well as in France. In Sweden and Belgium, more than 20% of their total electricity was coming from nuclear power, and by 1979 even in the United States, nuclear power was contributing 12% to its total power.<sup>4</sup>

But in the late seventies, as the concerns about the dangers of nuclear power plants were argued, support slowly turned into opposition. As public opinion shifted against nuclear power, even with the likelihood of a power shortage, the public agreed that the risks outweighed the benefits. The public was concerned about several issues including cancer risks and the genetic dangers of radiation. Public opinion was only intensified by the "growing concern over fallout from atmospheric tests of nuclear weapons during the second half of the 1950's, which eventually led to the atmospheric test ban of 1962."<sup>5</sup> The test ban prohibited further trials of nuclear explosions or weapons in the environment. Serious nuclear power disasters that occurred at Three Mile Island in 1979 and at Chernobyl in 1986 scared the public and heightened their senses to the dangers of nuclear power. Ultimately, and perhaps most significantly, concerns and arguments against nuclear power were raised over the issue of the large amounts of radioactive nuclear waste that would be produced each year and that would continue to threaten the environment for at least ten thousand years.

Before the public became sensitized to all these issues, many electric companies began to explore the field of nuclear power and built several nuclear power plants across the country. LILCO was not immune to the lure of nuclear power and decided to venture into the field as well. LILCO planned to build a few of its own plants in the sixties. Author Kenneth McCallion noted that "LILCO embarked on a program to build nuclear



power plants. Specifically, in the villages of Shoreham and Jamesport, both located in Suffolk County on Long Island."<sup>6</sup> In 1964, New York State proposed the construction of a nuclear-powered water purification plant on the William Floyd Estate in Mastic. This location was met with opposition from such people as Robert Cushman Murphy, a naturalist and conservationist, who saw the "Floyd plantation [as a] rare and outstanding sanctuary of plant and animal life."<sup>7</sup> LILCO also looked at Lloyd Harbor as a good location for construction of one of its plants. The harbor provided the huge number of gallons of water needed for power. From the start, however, LILCO was faced with opposition. The resistance of the affluent and influential residents of Lloyd Harbor and the Lloyd Harbor Study Group, a local anti-nuclear group, forced LILCO to drop the plan to build there. The group's success was a small sample of the public opposition LILCO would soon become accustomed to facing.

"Cheap, safe, and reliable."<sup>8</sup> These were the words LILCO used to describe nuclear power on 21 April 1965, when it announced its decision to build a 500-megawatt nuclear plant in Suffolk County, which covers roughly the eastern third of Long Island. As Frank Jones, former deputy county executive of Suffolk County, stated "the proposal would ensure large amounts of cheap electricity for Suffolk."<sup>9</sup> In 1966 LILCO firmed up its plans by purchasing the 455-acre site in the Town of Brookhaven, located between Shoreham and Wading River.<sup>10</sup> LILCO had high expectations for Shoreham. LILCO also had the community's cooperation and support during preliminary discussions and planning. Gordon Danby, president of the Wading River Civic Association, wrote to LILCO's Board Chairman John Tuohy: "having [an atomic plant] as a neighbor... has produced a most favorable reaction in our community."<sup>11</sup> The public anxiously anticipated the arrival of nuclear power, but most of this was blind optimism.

The first stages of LILCO's planning called for construction of the Shoreham nuclear plant to begin in late 1969 and to be in operation by 1973, with the cost ranging from \$60 to 75 million. Long before the completion of Shoreham, it was obvious that both the projected cost and completion date were way off, and this greatly increased the controversy between LILCO and the public.

On 24 May 1968 LILCO filed an application with the Atomic Energy Commission (AEC) to begin construction.<sup>12</sup> After filing its application, LILCO decided that its original plans were too small, and a bigger plant was needed to fulfill the increasing demands for energy. LILCO increased Shoreham from 540 megawatts to 829. This caused a year's delay in the planning stage and postponed the filing of the Shoreham application for a construction permit until May 1969. The changes increased the estimated cost of the plant from \$70 million to \$217 million, the first of many such

cost increases over the next fifteen years.<sup>13</sup> The decision also led to design difficulties and delayed the start of hearings on the construction permit, a delay that happened to "put LILCO directly in the path of newly arising requirements under the National Environmental Policy Act and the Federal Water Quality Improvement Act."<sup>14</sup> The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) required that all Federal agencies prepare detailed environmental impact statements for every recommendation or report on proposals for legislation and other major Federal actions significantly affecting the quality of the human environment. The Federal Water Quality Improvement Act did the same regarding water. The redesign also increased LILCO's burden of responding to AEC regulatory changes.

As time slipped away, opposition to Shoreham continued to rise as projected costs increased and the public's concern over nuclear power grew. Although few of these problems could have been seen at the beginning, many people associated with the Shoreham project believe it was a "disastrous decision" to stop and redesign the construction plans. Without the delay, Shoreham would have met less opposition and stayed out of the environmental controversy. "It would have been easily licensed... fine just fine... Everyone would have loved it because it would have been there during the oil crisis."<sup>15</sup> With time, LILCO would only face more bad luck from all sides.

Opposition and obstacles confronted LILCO from many difficult groups and individuals. After contributing to the successful cancellation of the construction of a nuclear plant at Lloyd Harbor, the Lloyd Harbor Study Group's (LHSG) new target was LILCO's proposed Shoreham nuclear power plant. The two Lloyd Harbor residents that organized the LHSG were Ann and William Carl, community activists and environmentalists. Ann Carl, who had been the first woman test pilot, was a biologist and writer on environmental issues. William Carl was an engineer at Grumman Aircraft Corporation, the largest private employer on Long Island. Irving Like, an attorney specializing in environmental law, was hired to represent the group. Under Like's direction, the Shoreham opponents put up an intensely powerful fight before the AEC in opposition to LILCO's application for a permit to build the Shoreham plant. The opponents' primary argument against Shoreham was that it would produce 400 to 500 pounds of radioactive nuclear waste each year, with potentially dangerous consequences for at least ten thousand years. Some environmentalists projected that the waste would remain a danger for five times longer.<sup>16</sup> LHSG was also very concerned about the location of Shoreham, as it was situated near the paths of airplanes landing at the MacArthur Airport on Long Island and the New Haven, Connecticut airport. Even more important, it was to be built in an area that the U.S. Air force had designated as "high hazard," because at a mere four and a half miles from the Shoreham plant

site was the Grumman Corporation aircraft runway, where military fighter planes were tested. "It was certainly not unreasonable to believe, as the LHSO did, that a plane could indeed crash into the plant."<sup>17</sup> LHSO was a profound group that contributed and joined the efficient and successful anti-nuclear groups opposing Shoreham. Shoreham's location also created an evacuation problem in the event of an accident.

Experts on traffic planning, sociology, and the impact of nuclear plant accidents concluded that there could be no safe evacuation in the wake of a major mishap; it would take many hours for people to flee what the NRC termed an Emergency Planning Zone, a ten-mile ring around Shoreham.<sup>18</sup>

A safe and speedy evacuation plan seemed an impossibility and the anti-nuclear plant activists understood the importance of this issue.

Another powerful group that played a large role in the dismantling of Shoreham was the Shoreham Opponents Coalition (SOC). Several concerned community activists soon filled the leadership roles of the public opposition. Nora Bredes was one such lady who led the SOC and actually met her husband at a meeting of anti-Shoreham activists. In 1992 Bredes was elected to the Suffolk County legislature and served for three terms.<sup>19</sup> The SOC mounted a comprehensive campaign of lobbying, demonstrations, legal action, public meetings and advertising to win support for their conviction that the plant posed too much danger to operate.

Then suddenly on 28 March 1979, everything started to go downhill for LILCO when the Three Mile Island Nuclear power plant accident occurred and forever changed the public's attitude toward nuclear power and plants. It was the most severe accident in United States nuclear power plant history. Three Mile Island led to major changes in Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) requirements and practices and had a profound impact on the licensing of the Shoreham plant, particularly with respect to planning for emergencies. Before 1970, the AEC had given little attention to emergency planning at nuclear power plants or to the involvement of state and local governments in the emergency planning process. After the incident at Three Mile Island, requirements became harder to meet, which in turn, once again, created a serious setback in the construction of Shoreham and its estimated cost. More importantly, the emergency planning became a turning point as to whether Shoreham could actually be built. Emergency planning had been a disputed topic for years, but it took on a new importance after the Three Mile Island accident. This new concern over the evacuation plan provided another area the public could attack, and they certainly did. The Shoreham Opposition Coalition (SOC) actively opposed the licensing of Shoreham

because they believed LILCO lacked an adequate and legal evacuation plan. Steve Latham, attorney for the SOC, voiced the group's concerns about the evacuation plans:

It should come as no surprise to the Legislature that the county's consultations have identified a number of severe problems in evacuating the affected portions of Suffolk County – problems which we believe are insurmountable and which should lead to the rejection of the emergency plan. [A] heavy population concentration, combined with a relatively poor road network, the dramatic increase in the summer population on the East End (from 100,000 to 250,000 during the months of June through September, according to the Nassau-Suffolk Regional Planning Board) and the fact that Shoreham is sited on a 'dead end', requiring that vast segments of the fleeing population must pass through the Emergency Planning Zone to escape – all lead to the conclusion that the Shoreham site is indeed unique and that in our opinion poses insurmountable problems in developing acceptable levels of protection for the public.<sup>20</sup>

The SOC vigorously opposed the proposed LILCO evacuation plan, which it felt was insufficient and did not include an adequately sized radius. In accordance with NRC requirements, which require the safety of personnel, students, and the public during operations involving ionizing radiation sources and x-ray producing equipment, the LILCO plan envisioned a fairly simple and straight forward emergency plan that included evacuation from an EPZ (evacuation planning zone) ten miles in radius. The plan estimated that evacuation would be an "orderly process" and, depending on wind direction and the seriousness of the accident, would be completed in about six hours.<sup>21</sup> In contrast, the Suffolk plan for evacuation, designed by the Suffolk legislature, was detailed, elaborate, and pessimistic. It called for an EPZ for airborne exposures twice as large as that called for by NRC regulations. Due to the peculiar geography of Long Island, Shoreham did not fit the generic concept that the NRC had created based on symmetrical geography. Half of any circular EPZ centered at the plant would be out in Long Island Sound. Because of Long Island's size and shape, its seasonal increase in population, and its congested road system, the county concluded that evacuation planning could not be limited to areas within ten miles of Shoreham.<sup>22</sup> In the county's view, a planning zone of less than twenty miles radius around the Shoreham plant for airborne exposures would be inadequate to protect the health, safety, and welfare of its residents. The

Suffolk EPZ would take between fourteen and thirty hours to evacuate, depending upon weather and the size of the release.<sup>23</sup> The issue was vital to the future of the plant because an emergency evacuation plan had to be approved by the state's Disaster Preparedness Commission and forwarded to the Federal Emergency Management Agency before LILCO could begin operating the Shoreham plant. Interestingly, the evacuation plan approval was not needed to obtain the operating license from the NRC. Therefore, it was theoretically possible that the utility could obtain the operating license but lack an approved evacuation plan. The accident at Three Mile Island opened the eyes of the public, the NRC, and the state and federal government, to the clear and present dangers of all nuclear power plants, and only spurred on the public's opposition to Shoreham.

With the new regulatory standards, increased rates for LILCO's customers, problems with the evacuation plan, and plant dangers exposed, the SOC took on a renewed charge going boldly forward to stop LILCO and its construction of Shoreham. An important outlet used to create public support and participation was newspapers. The SOC produced advertisements revealing the facts about Shoreham to the public, with the hope to gain more support, which in turn could help their movement. *Newsday* was the primary media source used to advertise these anti-nuclear messages from the SOC and other groups. *Newsday* played an important role in shaping public opinion on Long Island. It questioned LILCO's competence, reliability, and honesty. And in the sixties and seventies, Shoreham became the principle target for the newspaper's investigative reporters. *Newsday*, as well as the *New York Times*, provided a crucial medium for the SOC and other smaller groups to successfully get their message to the masses and significantly contributed to the support that helped lead to the closing of Shoreham.

The SOC also used more drastic and sometimes hostile measures to spread their message to close Shoreham. At certain points in their fight, the SOC and the other organizations felt that it was necessary to protest or stand vigil outside Shoreham, to physically demonstrate their level of opposition and disgust for this plant. The first demonstration was held in 1978 at Shoreham, organized by a Smithtown resident named Ester Pank. Forty people went over the security fence at Shoreham. The success of this first demonstration prompted the SOC to hold many more with far-reaching and dramatic impact.

The SOC and other Long Island anti-nuclear organizations joined in a third organization, known as the Stop Shoreham Campaign. The campaign, which described itself as "a coalition of Long Island and metropolitan New York citizen action groups," began a twenty-four hour vigil near the Shoreham plant on 26 February 1983. Two staff members, Murray Rosenblith and Nancy Greenfield, directed the vigil from campaign

headquarters in a trailer behind the Smithtown print shop of Roland Bostrom.<sup>24</sup> The members of these anti-nuclear organizations were very optimistic about their success after the vigil and as Richard Lercarl said, "I've never been more hopeful than I have been in the last few weeks."<sup>25</sup> The public was also extremely happy to see that Suffolk County had taken the position that it was against Shoreham as well. And the activists' work was helped further when the New York State Supreme Court ruled in Suffolk County to uphold the right to distribute political leaflets in privately owned shopping centers, on the basis that such activity is protected by the New York State Constitution. This ruling allowed the anti-nuclear activists to continue to give out literature protesting the construction of the Shoreham nuclear power plant. Justice Underwood's ruling marked the first time that a New York court had addressed the conflicting free-speech rights of protesters and the private property rights of the owners of shopping centers.<sup>26</sup> Another situation that confirmed the public's intense desire to stop Shoreham occurred on 5 June 1983, when a total of 138 anti-nuclear demonstrators were arrested at the Shoreham nuclear power plant after they refused police orders to end a three-hour sit-in at the gates leading to the nearly completed plant.<sup>27</sup>

Suffolk County policemen tied demonstrators' hands with plastic bands, lifted them up and put them in rented school buses and drove them to police headquarters in Yaphank. There, police officials said, all but seventeen were charged with disorderly conduct for failing to heed officers' instructions to clear public thoroughfares. The seventeen protestors were charged with trespassing on property owned by the Long Island Lighting Company.<sup>28</sup>

The posters of the demonstrators read, "Don't Reduce Long Island to a 3 Mile Island," and during the hours before the officers moved in, the demonstrators read poems by Carl Sandburg and sang, "we shall shut it down" to the tune of "We Shall Overcome."<sup>29</sup> The demonstrators' belief was that the Shoreham plant should be abandoned because evacuation would be impossible in case of an accident. Many other protests and demonstrations occurred, which ended in arrests and sometimes fights. In 1979, 571 people were arrested in a demonstration against the plant and at a protest in 1980 nearly 300 were arrested.<sup>30</sup> The SOC and other organizations went to great efforts to successfully stop the construction and activation of Shoreham.

The public's unrelenting resistance and opposition to Shoreham along with the support of the state government finally lead to a plan between the state and LILCO to close Shoreham. This could not have been

accomplished without the tireless work of one man, Governor Mario Cuomo. Mario Cuomo was elected to office in 1982 and served for twelve years as governor of New York. His was one of the longest and most celebrated governorships in New York history. The path to the approval of the final agreement would not be easily negotiated, however.

On 26 May 1988, two months after LILCO rebuffed a \$7.45 billion takeover offer by the Long Island Power Authority (LIPA), Gov. Cuomo and the utility announced an agreement in principle to close Shoreham and help LILCO regain financial health. This was a great accomplishment for the state, but as W. Henson Moore stated, "This agreement has a long way to go before this is a decommissioning of this power plant."<sup>31</sup> But then on 1 December 1988, after months of debate, the Legislature failed to endorse the settlement, declaring it "too expensive for LILCO customers. Lawmakers insist they are being forced to ratify the agreement just so the Governor can share political responsibility." Gov. Cuomo declared the deal to be dead and another one had to be designed. As the debate of a final settlement was taking place, a court case under Judge Weinstein was also moving to its end. The case was brought under the Racketeering Influenced and Corrupt Organization Act (RICO) in *Suffolk County v. LILCO*. RICO, passed by Congress in 1970, was primarily a means of prosecuting individuals involved in organized crime; however, it had also proven to be a useful tool in cases of corporate wrongdoing.<sup>32</sup> And on 5 December 1988, a Federal jury found that LILCO did lie to state regulators to obtain rate increases and awarded Suffolk \$22.9 million in damages, a success for Suffolk County. Suffolk's joy soon turned, when, on 11 February 1989, Judge Weinstein dismissed the racketeering case, ruling that Suffolk's contention that LILCO had lied to obtain rate increases should have never been tried under Federal law.

Even with this setback for Suffolk County, Gov. Cuomo and the public were determined to go forward and come to a settlement with LILCO. And finally, on 28 February 1989, the day came. Gov. Cuomo signed a new agreement with LILCO to close the \$5.5 billion Shoreham nuclear power plant without the approval of the State Legislature, but with an overwhelming approval of LILCO's shareholders. The settlement was virtually identical to Cuomo's original plan to close the plant, but it had two crucial differences. The Legislature was not involved, and LILCO was not guaranteed any specific rate increases. Future increases were to be determined by the State Public Service Commission.<sup>33</sup> Under the agreed plan LILCO would sell the plant for \$1 to the state, which would decommission and dismantle it. Ironically, one week after the plan was agreed to, the NRC issued Shoreham a full-power license, in one final attempt to get Shoreham started. It had no impact, however, because LILCO's board of directors had agreed to sell the plant for \$1 to LIPA,

which planned to dismantle it, and decommissioning was finally accomplished. Gov. Cuomo shared his thoughts after the plan was accepted by LILCO. "It is time to end this matter once and for all and turn our energies to new, productive measures for Long Island and the state."<sup>34</sup>

Shoreham had been closed, sold, and was ready to be dismantled. The tireless efforts of the public were finally paying off, and their goals were being accomplished. Public opposition had stopped Shoreham from fully operating. The plant had operated at only 5% for a short time. The success of the SOC, other anti-nuclear organizations, and the public, was truly impressive. They accomplished something that will be noted and remembered in United States history. They had taken on Goliath and won. The will of the people had prevailed over the power of the "almighty dollar." LILCO had a rough road to drive and was blocked by many obstacles including increasingly tougher regulatory standards, the New York State legislature, and the negative media campaign spearheaded by *Newsday*. But, by no means, were these obstacles as tough as the public opposition LILCO faced during the construction of Shoreham. The public had many concerns regarding the construction of Shoreham. Of course, the public was worried about the health risks associated with nuclear power, especially after the disastrous accident at Three Mile Island. But the public's negative reaction to Shoreham must be largely attributed to LILCO itself. From the beginning, LILCO handled its communications with the community very poorly. Facts came out late and often not with the whole truth. This ineffective communication created a poor relationship between the public and LILCO, the exact opposite of what was needed for a successful completion of Shoreham. The public was also extremely upset with the never-ending increases in ratepayers' bills to cover the increasing costs of construction. But the primary concern of the public was the lack of a good evacuation plan. LILCO and the state differed on the importance of the evacuation plan. LILCO felt that it was not an important issue, while the state and the public considered it a serious concern. LILCO's position on this matter was another major mistake, and it contributed significantly to Shoreham's demise. A compilation of LILCO's mistakes including poor judgment and management, faulty planning and supervision, rising costs, inadequate attention to customer needs, and, most importantly, public opposition, formed too thick a wall for LILCO to break through.

The impact of the anti-nuclear movement had a profound effect on Long Island. "The Island's anti-nuclear movement, one of the most sustained in the United States, played a major part in making the future of the Long Island Lighting Company's plant the pre-eminent issue of the Island today."<sup>35</sup> The endless protests, vigils, and efforts of the Long Island public demonstrated the level of power a committed community can wield. "The fight against Shoreham was probably the best-organized, most adamant



attack against a nuclear power plant that the AEC had seen up until that time."<sup>36</sup> LILCO had hoped to leave a lasting positive legacy with the completion of Shoreham. With the help of massive public resistance, LILCO's hopes were crushed, and the only legacy it left Long Island with was the highest electric rates in the nation.<sup>37</sup>

*Editor's Note: The Special Collections Department at Stony Brook University houses two manuscript collections which document the history of the Shoreham Nuclear Power Station. The **Shoreham Opponents Coalition** was a citizen-led group that halted the licensing and operation of the Shoreham plant. This collection includes over 50 cubic feet of drafts, correspondence, subject files and legal files, from 1975 to 1988. **Vance Lewis Sailor** (1920-1998) was a supporter of the Shoreham Nuclear Power Station, a senior physicist at Brookhaven National Laboratory and among the founders of the Suffolk Scientists for Cleaner Power and Safer Environment. This collection includes official documents, personal correspondence, speeches and press clippings. For more information regarding these collections, please contact Kristen J. Nyitray at (631) 632-7119 or visit <http://www.stonybrook.edu/library/lidspec.htm>.*

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> *New York Times*, 1 Jan. 1989.

<sup>2</sup> Geoffrey Greenhalgh, *The Necessity for Nuclear Power* (London: Graham & Trotman, 1980), 10.

<sup>3</sup> Kenneth F. McCallion, *Shoreham and the Rise and Fall of the Nuclear Power Industry* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 1995), 1-2.

<sup>4</sup> Greenhalgh, 68.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, 222.

<sup>6</sup> McCallion, xix.

<sup>7</sup> Richard P. Harmond, "Robert Cushman Murphy," *Long Island Historical Journal* (Fall 1995): 80.

<sup>8</sup> Joan Aron, *Licensed to Kill? The Nuclear Regulatory Commission and the Shoreham Power Plant* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1997), 15.

<sup>9</sup> *New York Times*, 22 Apr. 1965.

<sup>10</sup> Aron, 15-16.

<sup>11</sup> McCallion, 4.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, 18.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, 19.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, 21.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, 21.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, 7.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, 9.

<sup>18</sup> Karl Grossman, "The Rise and Fall of LILCO's Nuclear Power Program," *Long Island Historical Journal* (Fall 1992):14.

<sup>19</sup> *Newsday*, 15 May 1988.

<sup>20</sup> *New York Times*, 30 Jan. 1983.

<sup>21</sup> *Newsday*, 2 Jan. 1983.

<sup>22</sup> Aron, 53.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, 54.

<sup>24</sup> *New York Times*, 27 Feb. 1983.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, 27 Feb. 1983.

<sup>26</sup> *New York Times*, 20 Mar. 1983.

<sup>27</sup> *New York Times*, 6 June 1983.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>30</sup> Ibid.

<sup>31</sup> *New York Times*, 29 Jun. 1983.

<sup>32</sup> McCallion, 46.

<sup>33</sup> *New York Times*, 1 Mar. 1983.

<sup>34</sup> *New York Times*, 1 Mar. 1989.

<sup>35</sup> *New York Times*, 13 Mar. 1983.

<sup>36</sup> McCallion, 7.

<sup>37</sup> Aron, 112.

# ORIGINS OF THE SUFFOLK COUNTY POLICE DEPARTMENT

*By Brian Johnson  
Amityville Memorial High School*

"It shall be the duty of the [County] Police Department to preserve the public peace, prevent crime, detect and arrest offenders, protect the rights of persons and property and enforce all laws and ordinances applicable to the county."<sup>1</sup> This statement, as expressed in the Suffolk County Charter illustrates the ideals that the Suffolk County Police Department has stood for in the past few decades. However, prior to the police department's establishment in 1960, it was the duty of a male sheriff, who mostly worked independently, to uphold those principles mentioned above which were based on a moral, rather than a legal, sense of justice at the time. So how did the police of Suffolk County evolve from that type of individual occupation to a unified agency? That is the question which this paper seeks to answer through a documentation of police history within Suffolk County.

The first signs of policing action can be traced as far back as the seventeenth century, during the time in which the Dutch settlement of New Amsterdam became property of England. During the early 1680s, James, Duke of York, ordered that the now renamed New York Province be separated into twelve counties. He accomplished this task by drawing up the document known as the Charter of Liberties and Privileges, which was adopted by the New York Province in 1683. This charter not only called for separate counties, but also identified the need for an elected assembly, and established the first collection of basic laws in New York. In addition, it was here that "the principles of freedom and the demands for [a] representative government (which included a regulation of justice) in the province were first espoused."<sup>2</sup> However, policing actions were already taking place in the future area of Suffolk, thirteen years prior to the formation of the charter. The first sheriff, Eden Salsberry, was already regulating the justice across the entire county of Suffolk in 1670, aided only with the few tools he owned. This was a job that he took on personally, with his actions only ruled by his own personal morals of what was good and reasonable. It was all that was available at the time, since there was no elected assembly and no governing documents to tell what was acceptable or not in society at the time, with the exception of the Bible. However, the responsibility he took on with his position as sheriff was a start; it was the first step in a long tradition of Suffolk County sheriffs.

As time progressed from the late 1660s through the late 1800s, similarities and differences were becoming apparent with the passage of

each police generation. "While only a few simple laws were necessary at the time of establishment of the county [and country], subsequent growth [had] created a need for more laws in greater detail for the proper function and government of the county."<sup>3</sup> What this means is that more laws had to be created to compensate for varied changes from the "time of establishment," such as population growth, changes in moral and political attitudes, and a developing government between the states. County sheriffs were still utilizing the same methods that Salsberry had set and used to enforce the law centuries earlier, such as taking on the job of policing individually. However, at the same time, his methods were either being abandoned or adapted to the changing times (including the acknowledgment of rights and laws from the U.S. Constitution), which is noted by responsibilities that the sheriff began to gain (or lose) during the early nineteenth century.

One such example of a past responsibility of the sheriff included the authority over strict punishments for intense crimes. Sheriffs were allowed to impose punishments like the death penalty because there were no laws restricting it, and all people in the community supported it. At the time, capital punishment was considered a worthy type of punishment towards all types of moral crimes, such as adultery, murder, or even theft. In addition, Ted Burrows, a history professor at Brooklyn College, said "The idea of punishment was not only to punish wrongdoing, but it was also intended to set an example to others [future offenders]. There was really nothing standing between the community and lawlessness than its ability to inflict those kinds of exemplary punishments."<sup>4</sup>

"Available records indicate that from 1791 to 1854 capital punishment was meted out to at least six persons convicted of offences ranging from horse stealing to murder."<sup>5</sup> For over twenty years, death sentences were carried out through the use of a scaffold and an ax, which was constructed, "...in 1830 in anticipation of the execution of a worthless fellow called 'Enoch' who assaulted and murdered a woman."<sup>6</sup> After 1830, several executions were held publicly, all administered by sheriffs such as David Brush, Stephen J. Wilson, and Samuel Phillips. But in 1854, this responsibility of the sheriff, as well as the scaffold, was laid to rest, "...not because there [had] been no murders in Suffolk County, but because through unactivity of people's attorneys or a disposition to cry down capital punishment...."<sup>7</sup>

Looking back at the early history of the Suffolk County police reveals that the sheriff had a very important role in law enforcement. But one man cannot do such a large job alone. Increased population within the ten towns of Suffolk County made many inhabitants realize the need for a more efficient enforcement of the law. To satisfy this need, several towns of Suffolk, including those of Babylon, Islip, Huntington, Smithtown, and

Brookhaven, established a variety of police forces around the turn of the twentieth century. These forces were usually comprised of a single individual known as a constable (an early police officer, as they were known at the time). Unfortunately, because these constables only upheld the justice for the towns and communities they lived in, these forces were created independently of one another, with their jurisdiction limited to the boundaries of their respective towns. Though this problem would be addressed during the decade of the fifties, it proved to be a system that worked well in its youth.

The constables of the newly established police forces were usually "appointed by members of the community, [though] they lacked formal training."<sup>8</sup> Despite being appointed to their position, most constables of Suffolk County had other jobs than to serve and protect, as constable wages were low. Their salaries were mostly determined by the number of arrests, warrants, and prisoner transports they made. In addition, a constable was required to work a minimum twelve-hour shift. To aid in this time consuming job, the wives of these men would also carry some of the burden by accepting messages to be delivered to their husbands. This type of system marked the first sign of female involvement within the Suffolk County Police Department, as indirect as it was.

In addition to the long hours and low wages, constables of the early twentieth century also had to provide their own tools for their job, just like Eden Salsberry had to do over 200 years earlier. Not only did this include home-made uniforms and badges, but also weapons, and, later on, automobiles. For the time being, nightsticks were the only types of weapons carried by officers. Officers never used their own pistols or other firearms until the twenties or thirties.

Technological innovations introduced from 1900 to 1930 also had profound effects on the he police at the time. These innovations included the invention of the automobile, which proved superior to walking, even though the first patrol cars were the private property of the officer himself. They allowed officers to carry more equipment than possible on foot, and made criminal transport easier than having to call on the aid of another officer for help with the arrest.<sup>9</sup> Another invention that proved useful was the one-way radio, first installed in cars in 1935, "... with a large box-like receiver secured in the trunk and a tuner strapped to the steering wheel..."<sup>10</sup> Though "...the equipment was highly sensitive to humidity...",<sup>11</sup> which caused the radio to malfunction often, it was still much more preferred over the old conventional way of passing and receiving messages, as explained in this passage:

There was no communication equipment in police vehicles or motorcycles then, so the gas stations were

used as substations, said [Ed] Johntry. There was a bathroom, telephone, and coffee to drink. If an officer had a relationship with the gas station owner, the people of the town would call the station if they needed [the officer] and the [owner] would hoist up an old tire over their sign on a rope. The officer would be driving by, see the tire and pull in and they would tell him to 'go see Mrs. Jones on Holmes Street.' Of course that wasn't like 911; the officer might not pass that gas station for several hours, but it was the best they had at the time.<sup>12</sup>

As things improved, the two-way radio eventually became the standard type of communication, which offered improved interaction between police officers and dispatchers.

However, troubles did arise within Long Island's system of policing, as implied earlier in this paper. By 1950, Suffolk was littered with over two dozen police agencies, all still independent from one another. This directly affected the efficiency of law enforcement within the county. For example, town police were restricted by the boundaries of their own town. This proved to be an advantage to criminals, who would only need to cross the town line to escape police jurisdiction and thereby dodge punishment. The lack of communication between town police forces contributed to this by keeping officers of different towns unaware of criminals operating outside (or for that matter, inside) their jurisdiction. Furthermore, forces trying to catch law-breakers that crossed boundaries wasted much manpower and time. On a larger scale, town-wide police agencies were too diverse (in standard procedure and teamwork) and spread out to allow for the complete investigation of murder cases.<sup>13</sup>

When Suffolk residents began to notice these problems in law enforcement, they felt that something had to be done about it. Residents realized that their own safety was at stake if the police could not do their job properly because of town limits. Likewise, the amount of time and effort wasted because of so many independent police forces was also costing residents in high taxes. They felt it best if the police of each town cooperated more in their duties. The best way for this to happen was if all independent police units became one united agency. Unfortunately, it was a vision that held a high risk of failure to carry out. New York State had attempted to unite all individual police bureaus into a single force back in 1917, but it failed due to insufficient numbers of police sent by the state. Furthermore, many people were used to the current system of separate law enforcement agencies, a system that managed for over half a century. To change the system now could prove harmful to towns that would not be able to adapt.

Despite possible failure, it was a risk that was to be taken. During the mid- to late-1950s, a referendum was set up for the voters of Suffolk County, one which would not only decide the fate of a county police department, but also the creation of a county government and a county charter. Soon after the referendum was drawn up, an election was held in 1958. And of the ten towns that existed in Suffolk County, the six towns of Huntington, Babylon, Islip, Smithtown, Brookhaven, and Southold approved, while the four towns of Riverhead, South Hampton, East Hampton, and Shelter Island voted against the referendum.

Though the vote for a unified agency had passed, the formation of the department was not a reality yet. According to the charter, "If three or more contiguous towns, by a majority vote cast in each such town, elect to transfer their police functions to the county ... a County Police District shall thereupon be created effective on the first day of January of the second year following such election ... [and] the election of any such town or village shall be irrevocable."<sup>14</sup> The "transfer" mentioned not only meant police functions, but also of the officers and the property pertaining to each unit. Fortunately, all of the western towns of Suffolk agreed to contribute to the new county police department.

The Suffolk County Charter gave a maximum of two years to citizens of the county to prepare for the upcoming police department. To make ample use of this brief time, the county contacted Charles R. Thom, the chief assistant Suffolk District Attorney at the time, and appointed him as the first Suffolk County Police Commissioner in 1959. As the first commissioner, he was given the extensive task of "[uniting] each of the five western Suffolk town police districts into one countywide police force..."<sup>15</sup> "From ordering the phone system and patrol cars to designing the official police report forms...",<sup>16</sup> (even making sure that the .38 caliber Police Special pistol became standard issue), Thom was successful in creating a unified police district. On 1 January 1960, "County Executive H. Lee Dennison and [Thom] cut the ribbon on the first Suffolk County Police Department headquarters building," then located in Hauppauge.<sup>17</sup>

Despite this major accomplishment of unification, the department was still far from being perfect. A number of reforms were instituted to improve conditions for employees. For instance, during the first few years of operation, women who were interested in law enforcement were only assigned to occupations considered safe from actual danger, such as secretaries and child matrons. In the later sixties, only those women with skill and luck were able to obtain positions that allowed them to contribute their skills and services to investigations, such as detective work. This system remained in place until the women's rights movement during the sixties and seventies, which in the end provided women with the same type of occupations and responsibilities as male police officers. This was not the



case for minorities, though. Though there were only a few officers at the formation of the police department, more minorities have begun to become police officers over the past few decades. In 1960, however, the majority of minority officers available were located around the town of Babylon.<sup>18</sup>

Many other additions have been made to the Suffolk County Police Department over the past few decades. In 1960, Bernard Newman established the Suffolk County Police Laboratory. In 1977, this lab became part of the State Health Department, and for this reason, was renamed the Suffolk County Crime Laboratory. Forest Rangers were also set up in Suffolk County slightly before to the county police department's formation. Forest Rangers were usually assigned to protect parks within Suffolk County, where their jurisdiction were established. During the late 1980s and early 1990s, New York State passed a bill that ordered Suffolk County to make forest rangers actual police officers, with the same responsibilities and benefits as all other officers who patrol the county.

From its simple beginnings in 1670, the Suffolk County Police Department has come a long way in enforcing justice and peace among inhabitants of Suffolk County. Traditions and ideals set in pre-colonial America are being practiced today by hundreds of men and women devoted to helping citizens understand and obey the law. And although the actions and decisions of these officers are guided by government documents in conjunction with a legal sense of justice, these people are also influenced by personal morals, in the same way that influenced Eden Salsberry was when he took up the duty of sheriff. That type of law enforcement is what makes the Suffolk County Police Department special and unique, along with its extensive history. Even if morals were the only weapon they had against crime, it would still make them some of the finest officers that this country has to offer. As Thom once said in 1959, "Since we are limited in manpower... we've got to make the best use of what we've got. It's a real challenge, but a job worth doing."<sup>19</sup>

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Suffolk County Charter, Article XIII, Section C 13-6, Suffolk County Center, Riverhead, NY.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Ellen Yan, "Crime and Punishment," *Long Island: Our Story* (Melville, NY: Newsday). <http://www.lihistory.com/3/hs341>

<sup>5</sup> W. C. McCollom, "Annual Report: Sheriff of Suffolk County" (New York: 1936).

<sup>6</sup> *Suffolk Times*, 1886.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>8</sup> *Suffolk Life*, 8 Nov. 2000.

<sup>9</sup> R. Boden, personal interview, 24 April 2002.

<sup>10</sup> *Suffolk Life*, 8 Nov. 2000.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>13</sup> R. Boden, personal interview, 24 April 2002.

<sup>14</sup> Suffolk County Charter, Article XIII, Section C 13-5 A.

<sup>15</sup> *Newsday*, 29 Nov. 1995.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>17</sup> *Suffolk Life*, 8 Nov. 2000.

<sup>18</sup> R. B. Boden, personal interview, 24 April 2002.

<sup>19</sup> *Newsday*, 29 Nov. 1995.

# PRAYER IN PUBLIC SCHOOL: ENGEL V. VITALE AND ITS EFFECT ON LONG ISLAND COMMUNITIES

By Andrew Malone  
*Paul D. Schreiber High School, Port Washington*

"Almighty God, we acknowledge our dependence upon Thee, and we beg Thy blessings upon us, our parents, our teachers and our country."

Every morning in New Hyde Park, New York, children in public schools were given the opportunity to recite this prayer as a part of their daily activities. The prayer had been developed in 1951, when the New York State Board of Regents recommended that schools statewide adopt an act of reverence. John F. Brosnan, Chancellor of the Regents at the time of the prayer's conception, said: "We didn't have the slightest idea the prayer we wrote would prove so controversial...at one time, one rabbi said he didn't see how anybody could take offense."<sup>1</sup> A small group of Long Island parents, however, found both the prayer and the policy offensive enough to ask the United States court system to examine this issue within the context of the separation clause of the First Amendment. The parents who brought the suit argued that because the prayer was state-written and mandated it violated the establishment clause, as the state government was instilling a religious prayer throughout New York schools. The core issues of this case went far beyond a simple school prayer in New Hyde Park they struck at the very sensitive issue of the separation of church and state in America.

The 1962 Supreme Court decision *Engel v. Vitale*, the result of the Long Island parents' legal battle against the school district's prayer, was centered on these key issues. In its decision, the court ruled, "...by using its public school system to encourage recitation of the Regents' prayer, the State of New York had adopted a practice wholly inconsistent with the Establishment Clause."<sup>2</sup> The decision ignited political and religious conflicts with the issues of school prayer, and more broadly on the separation of church and state. Both sides of the controversy found supporters in government officials, religious leaders, and the media. Local communities on Long Island were torn by this decision. Despite the overwhelming amount of protest and action taken the Supreme Court's ruling, their decision has held and truly become "the law of the land." Although a majority of its citizens (81% in 1980)<sup>3</sup> may not agree with it, most are willing to abide by it.

Since their conception in 1789, the religion clauses of the first amendment have long been a source of controversy in the United States. James Madison is credited with much of the work that led to the adoption of the religion clauses during the debates over the Bill of Rights.<sup>4</sup> While Madison had succeeded in incorporating his beliefs about religious establishment and toleration in the Bill of Rights, despite a probable general consensus among members in Congress that an established religion was favorable in principle, the religion clauses did not prevent Christianity from becoming the most widely accepted religion of the new nation. Throughout the nineteenth century, even the Supreme Court affirmed the notion of America as a Christian nation. In 1833, John Marshall wrote that "The American population is entirely Christian," and Justice Joseph Story maintained, "government can not long exist without an alliance with religion; and that Christianity is indispensable." One of the clearest examples of this sentiment is in the Court's opinion of the 1899 case *Church of the Holy Trinity v. United States*, in which Justice David Brewer wrote ". . .the case assumes that we are a Christian people, and the morality of the country is deeply ingrafted upon Christianity, and not upon the doctrines or worship of those imposters." Despite the original intent of Madison and other Founding Fathers to prevent the union of government and religion, nineteenth-century America found Christianity becoming the predominant religion, even if an unofficial one, of the new country.<sup>5</sup>

Before 1947, the Supreme Court did not face many significant cases dealing with the religion clauses of the First Amendment. Beginning with the case *Everson v. Board of Education* in 1947, a string of cases reached the Supreme Court between then and 1963 that raised questions dealing with religion in the public schools. The first case that caused a significant public response was *McCullum v. Board of Education* of 1948, in which the Court ruled that religious groups could not use classrooms to teach religion during school hours. Theologians wrote columns protesting the decision, and many states either ignored the ruling or found ways around it, usually by teaching religion after school hours. Still, the reaction was not very serious. The president at the time of the *McCullum* decision, Harry Truman, zealously supported religion as a part of federal government, and his successor, Dwight D. Eisenhower, held similar beliefs. The notion of God and Christianity as an integral part of democracy and education was slowly becoming imprinted in society.<sup>6</sup>

In 1962, however, the Supreme Court upset this notion with its landmark decision in *Engel v. Vitale*. This case challenged a voluntary prayer promoted by the New York State Board of Regents that was said daily in the public schools of New York. The conflict began in 1958 when the New Hyde Park school board adopted the prayer and faced immediate opposition to its decision by Lawrence Roth, whose two sons attended schools in the

district. "We believe religious training," said Roth, "is the prerogative of the parent...and not the duty of the government." The school board maintained its position that the prayer was inoffensive because children were allowed to be excused from the room or remain silent while their classmates prayed. When the president of the school board was confronted with some parents' protestations about the prayer, he reportedly replied, "the board has voted on this. If we say it's in, it's in." Parental reluctance to fight the prayer through legal action proved troublesome for Roth and the New York Civil Liberties Union, which took on the case. Of the fifty parents who originally agreed to take on the case, only five remained by the trial date in January 1959.<sup>7</sup>

A trial judge struck down the plaintiff's request for a writ of mandamus, which would prohibit the use of the prayer in the school system. At the New York State Court of Appeals the ruling of the lower court was affirmed.<sup>8</sup> At the United States Supreme Court, however, the parents found victory in their suit by a vote of six to one. (Justice Frankfurter was hospitalized at the time and Justice White joined the court after arguments in the case were heard.)<sup>9</sup> Writing for the majority, Justice Hugo Black contended "In this country, it is no part of the business of government to compose official prayers for any group of the American people to recite...the prayer of each man must be his and his alone. That is the genius of the *First Amendment*."<sup>10</sup> The court found that instituting a school prayer, even if voluntary, violated the establishment clause of the first amendment. Rejecting the argument that children had the option of remaining silent or leaving the room during the prayer, Justice Black countered that "placing the power, prestige, and financial support of a government behind a particular form or religious observance does tend to coerce religious minorities to conform."<sup>11</sup> With this decision, the court struck a responsive chord in American society. The day after the decision was handed down, *The New York Times* wrote in an editorial:

the impact of the decision goes far beyond the New York prayer. The clear implication of the ruling was that any religious ceremony promoted by the state in public schools would be suspect...Thus, today's decision would have a major and controversial impact on public school practices across the country. And beyond that, it might indicate a stricter attitude in the Supreme Court toward breaches of what it has called the 'wall of separation' between church and state.<sup>12</sup>

As the *Times* predicted, the decision did have a "major and controversial" impact on America. Both on national and local levels, politicians expressed

either their condemnation or support for the Supreme Court's decision, urging the American public to respond accordingly. Twenty states, a significant number of them in the South, filed briefs of *amicus curiae* with the court to uphold school prayer and protect their state policies of school religion.<sup>13</sup> Prior to the decision, 30% of American public schools had been using a morning devotional prayer, and 40% to 50% practiced Bible reading regularly.<sup>14</sup> The decision challenged such a common part of the American school system and so clearly defined the court's attitudes toward the separation of church and state that three former presidents of the United States, as well as the incumbent President Kennedy, came forth with their views on the controversial issue. Harry Truman, while he had encouraged religion as an important part of his presidency, supported the ruling: "The Supreme Court, of course, is the interpreter of the Constitution."<sup>15</sup> Herbert Hoover sharply disagreed with Truman: "The Congress should at once submit an amendment to the Constitution which establishes the right to religious devotion in all governmental agencies—national, state, or local...[the decision] is a disintegration of a sacred American heritage."<sup>16</sup> Dwight D. Eisenhower's commented obliquely on the decision: "I always thought this nation was essentially a religious one...I realize, of course, that the Declaration of Independence antedates the Constitution...it specifically asserts that we as individuals possess certain rights as an endowment from our common creator—a religious concept."<sup>17</sup>

After observing the extreme amount of social unrest that accompanied the *Engel v. Vitale* decision, President Kennedy made an effort to "calm the storm" in a press conference held two days after the decision was handed down. The president encouraged the public to support the decision regardless of their personal feelings about the issue, emphasizing the importance of the Supreme Court as the interpreter of the Constitution. He further encouraged discontented individuals to make the issue a personal, and not political one. "We have in this case a very easy remedy, and that is to pray ourselves. And I would think that it would be a welcome reminder to every American family that...we can make the true meaning of prayer much more important in the lives of all our children. That power is very much open to us."<sup>18</sup>

Not only did the decision warrant reactions from national political figures, but a multitude of local New York politicians as well. New York representatives and senators became involved in the conflict because there was the possibility of a congressional amendment to the Constitution to overturn the Court's ruling. Representative Frank J. Becker (R-NY) was one of the strongest opponents of the decision, calling it "The most tragic decision in the history of the United States."<sup>19</sup> Equally critical of the decision was Rep. John J. Rooney (D-NY) who claimed that denying children the right to pray would place American schools on the same level

as Russian schools, where mentioning a supreme being was not permitted.<sup>20</sup> Assemblyman John Kingston of the Third Assembly District, which included the Herricks school district, expressed his intention to push a constitutional amendment in Congress that would undermine the court's ruling. Kingston observed that the most questions he had ever received throughout his service were on the issue of school prayer, and that it was thus the single issue that most outraged citizens.<sup>21</sup> Congressman Steve Derounian of Manhasset took action towards an amendment in Congress, proposing an amendment that read, "Any state may permit the following prayer to be offered in any public school or other public place within such state...."<sup>22</sup> It went on to cite the exact prayer of the New Hyde Park School District in *Engel*. Derounian was convinced that Congress would pass the amendment with an "overwhelming majority," and went on to say, "The Supreme Court decision...has raised the more profound question of whether the people of this Nation may lawfully be permitted to recognize God. I believe it to be urgent...that the meaning of the constitution not be further distorted."<sup>23</sup>

Other local leaders expressed their beliefs about the case and the steps they would take to either preserve or destroy the ruling. Mayor Milton A. Gibbons of Tuckahoe, New York, felt so strongly against the decision that he urged the impeachment of the Supreme Court justices who ruled in favor of the plaintiffs. His efforts resulted in a petition with 2,500 signatures of local citizens for a Constitutional amendment legalizing school prayer.<sup>24</sup> North Hempstead Town Supervisor Clinton G. Martin encouraged Congressmen Derounian and Kingston to pass legislation "correcting constitutional defects" created by the case. Martin cited the many public protests in relation to the case as evidence of how necessary it was to overturn the ruling. "There isn't any question that corrective measures are called for. It is quite apparent that the people generally are deeply upset and disturbed by the Supreme Court's decision...the prevailing sentiment is that the court decided erroneously. [It] obviously has confused the definition of prayer and religion...Ours is a government of laws and not men, and it is also a government of majority rule, but respecting the rights of all."<sup>25</sup> New York Governor Nelson Rockefeller (R-NY) also made statements that hoped "adjustments" could be made to the decision so that the important concept of "the brotherhood of man and the fatherhood of God" could be taught to young people.<sup>26</sup>

Political organizations also played a key role in the widespread debate and protest of the decision. In September 1962, the Nassau County American Legion distributed 100,000 copies of a prayer and suggested that students recite it voluntarily at the beginning of each school day. The organization claimed to support the decision, but it felt that denying the rights of students to recite voluntary prayer was equally unconstitutional. It

urged parents to agree on a voluntary prayer, which, according to the Legion, would not violate the decision.<sup>27</sup> The Manhasset Republican Club, headed by Albert Groh, recorded an "immediate and unfavorable" reaction from most of its 500 members. Groh argued in a written statement "The Supreme Court decision banning the non-denominational Regents prayer is a shocking affront to God-fearing, dedicated Americans. It is a triumph for godless communism...this is an example of why sound thinking people must organize and make themselves heard."<sup>28</sup> On 28 June 1962, a 1,285-member meeting of the General Federation of Women's Clubs voted to work for a Constitutional amendment permitting religious observances that were voluntary and non-denominational in public schools. The meeting recorded only a few dissenting votes.<sup>29</sup> The Conservative Party of New York showed a willingness to put political differences aside to fight the Supreme Court's decision when it proposed a joint declaration with New York Democratic, Liberal, and Republican parties asking for a Constitutional amendment. The proposition was sent to Governor Rockefeller, as well as Republican and Democratic state chairmen and New York senators.<sup>30</sup>

On the opposing side of the issue was the American Civil Liberties Union, which chartered a local office in Nassau County as a result of the decision. Reflecting on his experience as a plaintiff in the case, Steven Engel said, "...I really wish it could have been resolved with the board of education. I'm proud of one thing: the Nassau Chapter of the American Civil Liberties Union evolved out of this case."<sup>31</sup>

While representatives, senators, local New York officials, and political organizations were debating and criticizing the decision, the religious community also became involved in the uproar. In the religious community, however, the reaction proved to be much more ambiguous, with strong supporters of both sides of the issue rather than the overwhelming negative attitude towards the decision from political officials. Roman Catholic leaders were, for the most part, opposed to the ruling. Francis Cardinal Spellman of the Diocese of New York announced, "I am shocked and frightened that the Supreme Court has declared unconstitutional a simple and voluntary declaration of belief in God by public school children. The decision strikes at the very heart of the Godly tradition in which America's children have for so long been raised."<sup>32</sup> James Francis Cardinal McIntyre of Los Angeles said "In denying the privilege of prayer to God, under the law, the court is biting the hand that feeds it. This, because all law comes from God...This decision puts shame on our faces..."<sup>33</sup> However, Catholic opposition to the case was not universal and faced some internal disagreements, specifically between Jesuits and other Roman Catholics. A week after the decision, the Jesuit newspaper *America* published an article "To Our Jewish Friends," which at



one part asserts "What will have been accomplished if our Jewish friends win all the legal immunities they seek, but thereby paint themselves into a corner of social and cultural alienation?...[they must decide] what bargain they are willing to strike as one of the minorities in a pluralistic society." The American Jewish Congress was appalled by the article, and its president, Joachim Prinz spoke out against it. Leo Pfeffer, the Congress's general counsel, argued, "In the guise of predicting anti-Semitism, they are in fact encouraging it." In response to the controversy, the Roman Catholic weekly paper *The Commonweal* wrote in favor of Pfeffer's argument, warning Catholics that "It does little good—as Catholics ought to know—to be told, much less warned, by others whether to press one's claims or not...If the result of the prayer decision is to break down community relations, the fault of this breakdown will lie with those Americans who single out particular groups to blame for the decision."<sup>34</sup>

Protestant sentiments about the ruling varied. Reverend Arthur L. Kinsolver, president of the Protestant Council of New York, expressed disappointment in the decision and felt that "Ultimately we will have to review the decision and find some way back to the religious foundations of this country."<sup>35</sup> Thirteen Unitarian ministers made a statement that "[the decision] is not only sound in the respect to the principle of the First Amendment to the Constitution but that it is in the interest of religion."<sup>36</sup> Episcopalian Reverend Robert E. Hood spoke out passionately against individuals who tried to "circumvent" the decision in *Engel v. Vitale*. He specifically criticized James A. Pike, a California Episcopal bishop who supported revision of the First Amendment, skeptical of his attempt "to establish a clever circumvention of the Court's authority...the Supreme Court did not attack our religious faith; it attacked governmentally sponsored religion cloaked under a nebulous, farcical title of 'moral and spiritual values.'<sup>37</sup> The Lutheran Church of America took a most unique position, claiming that the decision had no value because prayer in general lacked value: "When the positive content of faith has been bleached out of prayer, I am not too concerned about retaining what is left."<sup>38</sup> Thus, the Protestant community lacked any united position on the decision, as individuals and separate denominations disagreed as to the importance of taking action against the decision and its religious value.

The local religious community on Long Island also became involved in the issue. Local rabbis expressed great satisfaction with the decision. Ario S. Hymans of Roslyn Heights praised the decision as legally and morally correct. Alyan D. Rubin of Temple Sinai, Roslyn Heights, said, "It is with great satisfaction that I greeted the Supreme Court decision upholding the traditional American concept of the separation of church and state. It must be realized that in this action by the highest court in our land, that it was not the validity of prayer that was questioned but government mandated

prayer."<sup>39</sup> Edward Egan, Jr., pastor of the Roslyn Methodist Church, argued that "Infringement upon the freedom of any one person or group is at least infringement upon the freedom of all...if man is to be free, the institutions of religion and the agencies of government must be kept separate. This is for the safety of both religion and government...In this decision, the Supreme Court has struck a mighty blow on behalf of religious freedom."<sup>40</sup> The Roman Catholic Diocese in Rockville Center, however, took a different standpoint. Walter Kellenberg of the diocese said, "This apparent misunderstanding on the part of our judges about the 'establishment of religion' (a state church) and the virtue of religion is most disturbing. Our founding fathers placed the no-establishment cause in the Constitution to guarantee freedom of religion and religious practice."<sup>41</sup> A spokesman for the Church of Manhasset felt that the decision was "weak" and "watered down," and had little effect on students' faith. However, he did note that "A further serious problem of democracy is raised: does the protection of the minority mean no protection for the majority? One wonders if the majority any longer has validity."<sup>42</sup> Both on the local and national level, religious reaction to the decision proved to be much more equally divided than the mostly anti-decision reactions of politicians. Individual priests and rabbis held different opinions on the decision, even if they came from the same religious sect, and even within religious sects there were decisive disagreements.

*Engel v. Vitale* naturally had a vast effect on school districts across the nation, and New York was no exception. New York State Commissioner of Education, James E. Allen, immediately ordered that all New York schools discontinue the use of any prayer, although he did not personally give an opinion on the decision. Allen maintained that the Board of Regents had never forced the prayer upon schools or even encouraged its use: "We never asked school systems whether they were using the prayer because we thought to do so might be interpreted as pressure in its favor." Had the prayer been thought to be a religious service "[the board of regents] would have ruled against it."<sup>43</sup>

At the local level, however, education officials were not as ready to accept the Court's decision. It is not hard to see why. Prayer in public schools had become, for many regions, an integral part in education. Nationally, 30% of schools used a morning devotional prayer and 40% to 50% practiced Bible reading. Eastern school districts had much higher rates than Western districts, with 68% of Eastern districts having some form of prayer compared to 2% of Western schools.<sup>44</sup> On Long Island, forty-six of the fifty-one school districts practiced a form of daily prayer. In response to the decision, eighteen said that they would comply immediately, eight would immediately resist the ruling, and twenty would wait for a school board meeting before taking action.<sup>45</sup> William Bruno, a trustee of the

Hicksville school board, condemned the decision and promised that if nothing was done in the form of an amendment, he would prepare an alternate prayer for his school district that would mention God, defiantly proclaiming, "Let's see what the Supreme Court will do about that."<sup>46</sup> Robert S. Hoshino, president of the Levittown School Board (the largest district on Long Island), coined the decision as a victory for communism, and promised "Levittown will not vote out the Regents' prayer."<sup>47</sup>

However, simply talking about the decision accomplished nothing for the school districts, and soon practical efforts were made to circumvent the court's ruling. Hicksville instituted a "National Anthem Alternative." On 29 June 1962, the Hicksville School District unanimously voted to substitute the Regent's prayer with the fourth verse of the National Anthem. Robert Eaton, the school board president, felt that the Court had only banned the Regents prayer and that substituting the National Anthem for it would be constitutional. Students would need special permission to be excused from the prayer.<sup>48</sup> In immediate opposition to this course of action, petitions were circulated by Hicksville resident Howard Van Allen to open the issue to a referendum, however only 450 signatures were obtained of the 6,000 necessary to make a referendum mandatory, and at school board meetings the majority of spectators were recorded to be in favor of the substitution.<sup>49</sup> The plan, however, was challenged by local citizens Alfred and Miriam Rubenstein and struck down by Commissioner of Education James Allen. Allen wrote that implementing the lines of the Star Spangled Banner as an "official prayer" clearly violated the Supreme Court's decision. He also added that he was not preventing the singing or reciting of the National Anthem in schools and implied that moments of silence for voluntary prayer would not violate the ruling. Further, the Commissioner explained that it was equally important for students to understand religion and its place in civilization and that the idea of separation of church and state was not meant to suppress religion, but suppress the favoring of certain religions over others.<sup>50</sup>

The defeat of the "National Anthem Alternative" led Long Island school districts to develop other plans of action. Baldwin, East Meadow, and Malverne school districts voted to provide periods of silent meditation in place of the Regent's prayer. The Levittown School district ordered a mandatory reading of the Pledge of Allegiance and a voluntary period of recitation from the Bible, "America the Beautiful," or the Declaration of Independence. Nine parents, led by Mrs. Alfred Rubenstein of Oyster Bay, would go on to challenge these opening exercises.<sup>51</sup> The New York State Education Department clarified its strict position on the issue of school prayer when many schools disregarded the court's decision after opening in September 1962. The department ordered that no prayer of any kind was to be read in public schools, and that if a teacher permitted a student to recite a

prayer, it became an official one. Dr. Charles Brind, the department's chief authority, said that students reciting voluntary prayer and the mandatory recitation of the Star Spangled Banner violated the Court's decision. However, he did mention that there was no objection to moments provided for silent meditation.<sup>52</sup> Despite educational protests and creative methods for working around the Court's ruling, the message had become clear that in no instances would school prayer be accepted.

The vociferous reaction of the media to the decision, especially through newspapers, illustrates the controversy and public debate that accompanied the Court's ruling. Supporters of the decision included the *Herald Tribune*, which wrote in an editorial that "If we accept the ruling with respect, and calm, we will not stumble to the conclusion that a serious blow has been struck to the very core of religious teaching...The Court's intent—and eventually, we trust, its great achievement—is to strengthen the foundation of religious heritage by limiting secular intrusions that could become a mischievous and enervating force."<sup>53</sup> *The New York Times* encouraged Americans to respect the rights of minorities by supporting the Court's decision.

Other papers observed the public reaction to the case as a key indicator of the Court's failures. *The Long Island Press* observed, "The decision runs sharply counter to the thinking of most Americans. From the Declaration of Independence through all of its history, the United States has consistently allowed 'firm reliance on the protection of Divine Providence.'" The *Journal American* urged "immediate use of the recourse provided by the Constitution—formal amendment—to insure that the letter of the law is not again used to negate the intent of the Founding Fathers who wrote it." *Newsday* warned "The ruling was a bad one, but the headlong rush to amend the Constitution is equally bad... We must accept the decision while seeking other means to preserve the principle of a Supreme Being for our children."<sup>54</sup>

While politicians, religious leaders, and educators were battling over the fundamental issues of church and state, the individual plaintiffs of *Engel v. Vitale* were facing community pressures of their own. Since the filing of the case in 1959, the five families who brought the suit reported menacing phone calls and telegrams. All five plaintiffs received a postcard that read "you damn Jews with your liberal viewpoint are ruining a wonderful country" (only two of the plaintiffs were actually Jewish). Lawrence Roth of Roslyn Heights reported threats of kidnapping and vandalism, and many anti-Semitic postcards. Burning gasoline-soaked rags in the shape of a cross were thrown upon Roth's driveway.<sup>55</sup> However, he also received numerous letters thanking him for his efforts and supporting his cause. Said Engel, "When we won the case, all hell broke loose." Monroe Lerner of Roslyn shared that "There were neighbors who stopped talking to us. But

they've gotten over it...We had to take our phone off the hook...terrible things were said to us. We got letters, with the words cut of papers. This is how intense the feelings were."<sup>56</sup>

As Lerner said, feelings were intense when it came to the issues brought up by *Engel v. Vitale*. Since the ruling, the issue of school prayer and the separation of church and state remains a prominent religious and social issue. In 1980, 10% of all schools were still ignoring the Court's 1962 ruling (only one percent of Eastern districts still contained some prayer), and 81% of the public supported prayer in school.<sup>57</sup> In 1984, an election year, there was a noticeable renewal of the controversy when President Ronald Reagan publicly announced that he supported school prayer and there was a possibility of a constitutional amendment passing in the Republican-controlled Senate. The ACLU and National Council of Churches led the opposition to the new efforts for a Constitutional Amendment, which eventually failed.<sup>58</sup> And as recently as September 2001, the Supreme Court has been petitioned with cases dealing with school prayer and moments of silence, although in the most recent instance it has refused to hear arguments in a case which challenged a moment of silence policy in a Virginia school.<sup>59</sup>

The controversy has not ended on Long Island. In 1994, a West Hempstead parent wrote to the school challenging the legality of their daily moment of silence.<sup>60</sup> In 1995, the Roslyn High School Christian Club brought suit against the school because the club wanted to appoint only sworn Christian officers to head the club. The Court eventually ruled in favor of the student's right to establish the criteria for acting officers to be Christian.<sup>61</sup>

The heated issue of prayer in public schools was challenged in 1962 by five Long Island parents in the case *Engel v. Vitale*. The Supreme Court's decision outlawing a non-denominational prayer in a New Hyde Park school had an impact so great that it sparked in Americans the historical debate about how far the establishment clause of the First Amendment can be used before it infringes upon other liberties. Despite impassioned protests and action taken on the political front, reaction to the issue from the religious community, and efforts made to circumvent the decision in school districts across the country, the decision stood as the "law of the land." Divisions within factions fighting to overturn the ruling prevented unified action that may have been more successful. Perhaps it is the case that in American society, we have come to accept that protecting the rights of the minority, no matter how much they may infringe upon the opinions of the majority, is what insures true liberty for all of us. In whatever case, as Steven Engel said when reflecting on his experiences, "I think it's written in stone, *Engel v. Vitale*. Every year since then there's been an attempt to introduce a constitutional amendment to overrule the case. That has never

happened. It can't ... for that to happen, they'd have to monkey around with the First Amendment. They can't do that." And when asked if he would go through the process again, Engel responded that "Knowing what happened ... somebody had to do it. If religious freedom was going to have any meaning in America, somebody had to do it."<sup>62</sup>

**NOTES**

- 1 "The Court Decision—and The School Prayer Furor," *Newsweek* (9 July 1962): 43.
- 2 Hugo Black, majority opinion of *Engel v. Vitale*, 370 U.S. 421: (25 June 1962): 2.
- 3 *The New York Times*, 20 Apr 1980.
- 4 Robert S. Alley, *School Prayer: The Court, Congress, and the First Amendment* (Buffalo: Prometheus Books, 1994), 30.
- 5 *Ibid.*, 64-65.
- 6 *Ibid.*, 95-98.
- 7 "The Court Decision—and The School Prayer Furor," 43.
- 8 "Engel v. Vitale" from *Government in America* (Houghton Mifflin Company) 49.
- 9 *New York Times*, 26 June 1962.
- 10 Black, 3.
- 11 *The New York Times*, 26 June 1962.
- 12 *Ibid.*
- 13 *Ibid.*
- 14 *Ibid.*
- 15 *Ibid.*

<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

<sup>18</sup> *The New York Times*, 27 June 1962.

<sup>19</sup> "While Most Believe in God," *Newsweek* (9 July 1962): 11

<sup>20</sup> *The New York Times*, 26 June 1962.

<sup>21</sup> *The Roslyn News*, 4 July 1962.

<sup>22</sup> *The Manhasset Press*, 26 July 1962.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid.

<sup>24</sup> *The New York Times*, 26 July 1962.

<sup>25</sup> *The Roslyn News*, 4 July 1962.

<sup>26</sup> *The New York Times*, 26 June 1962.

<sup>27</sup> *The New York Times*, 2 Sept. 1962.

<sup>28</sup> *Manhasset Mail*, 28 June 1962.

<sup>29</sup> *The New York Times*, 29 June 1962.

<sup>30</sup> *The New York Times*, 29 July 1962.

<sup>31</sup> *The New York Times*, 9 June 1998.

<sup>32</sup> *The New York Times*, 26 June 1962.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid.

<sup>34</sup> "A Clash of Views: Has the School Prayer Issue brought on a wave of Anti-Semitism?," *Newsweek* (10 Sept 1962): 69.

<sup>35</sup> *The New York Times*, 26 June 1962.

<sup>36</sup> *The New York Times*, 28 June 1962.

<sup>37</sup> *The New York Times*, 3 Sept 1962.

<sup>38</sup> "The Court Decision—and The School Prayer Furor." *Newsweek* (9 July 1962): 43.

<sup>39</sup> *The Roslyn News*, 27 June 1962.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid.

<sup>41</sup> *The New York Times*, 26 June 1962.

<sup>42</sup> *Manhasset Mail*, 28 June 1962.

<sup>43</sup> *The New York Times*, 26 June 1962.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid.

<sup>48</sup> *The New York Times*, 30 June 1962.

<sup>49</sup> *The New York Times*, 29 July 1962.

<sup>50</sup> *The New York Times*, 30 Aug 1962.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid.

<sup>52</sup> *The New York Times*, 26 Sept 1962.

<sup>53</sup> *The New York Times*, 28 June 1962.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid.

<sup>55</sup> *The New York Times*, 9 June 1998.

<sup>56</sup> Ibid.

<sup>57</sup> *The New York Times*, 20 Apr 1980.



<sup>58</sup> "Strongest Attempt Yet For Prayer in Schools" *Unknown*. (8 March 1984).

<sup>59</sup> "Court Refuses to Review Silence law" *Reuters* (29 Oct 2001).

<sup>60</sup> Letter of correspondence between Martin Slater and Harold Silvers, 26 Oct 1994.

<sup>61</sup> *Newsday*, 18 Oct 1995.

<sup>62</sup> *The New York Times*, 9 June 1998.

# BOAT BUILDING IN AMITYVILLE

*By Victoria Niemi  
Amityville Memorial High School*

Amityville, the friendly bay village, is defined by the picturesque waterways that run through it. It is these waterways, such as the Amityville River, that have been the home to many boat-builders. It is here where such memorable boats as the Narrasketuck and the Seaford skiff were born. The beautiful landscape of this village by the bay made for a perfect boat-building community.

The early settlers of Amityville established a farming and fishing community in the 1600s. The bay was used to supply food and transportation. Local farmers and fisherman built their own craft. The most commonly built boats were catboats. A catboat is a boat traditionally fitted with a gaff-rigged sail on a single mast set up in the "eyes" of the boat. Catboats usually range in overall length from sixteen to twenty feet.<sup>1</sup> These boats were not only used for gathering food, but also as a means of recreation and trade.

As time went on, boat building became a well-known trade in Amityville. Each man wanted to be a better builder than the next. Some residents built boats for recreation, while others made it their line of work. The earliest best-known builder from Amityville was Frank Wicks. Wicks shared his trade with his two sons William and Oliver. The Wicks were considered "professional" boat builders, meaning they did this work for a living.<sup>2</sup> Their yard was located on the west side of the Amityville River. Wicks built the most noteworthy bay ferryboats, such as the "Atlantic" and the "Columbia."

"Out of their yard came some of the most lovely, sea kindly yachts ever seen."<sup>3</sup> Wicks built a fifty-four foot sloop "Commodore," a famous south shore boat. William Conley captained them along with Wicks' sons. In that time, there were no channels, and very few citizens owned boats of their own. The ferryboats ran on a schedule and would transport citizens to and from the beaches. They could also be chartered, or rented for a day of pleasure riding. There were also packets, steamboats used to carry, freight, mail, and passengers, that were used to take parties out on the water.

William Conley also built boats of his own. The "Atlantic," a sixty-five foot side-wheeler, was one of his first and best known ferryboats. The "Atlantic" was a very busy and popular ferryboat, so William needed a second boat. He took an already existing sloop that he owned, cut it in half and added twenty feet, a superstructure, and a propeller, and named it the "W. L. V."<sup>4</sup> It was operated on the regular everyday ferryboat runs to

Hemlock Beach, along with the "Star Lea" which also made regular runs to Hemlock Beach.<sup>5</sup> Both ferries ran until the late 1930s, when Conley sold them. The "Atlantic" was sent to Patchogue, and traveled from Patchogue to Jones Beach regularly until after World War II.

The Ketcham Brothers were also well-known Amityville boat builders. Wilbur and Paul Ketcham each designed and built their own sailboats. Wilbur designed and built the "Narrasketuck" one-design in 1934. He built two models, which were then reproduced to more than one hundred and fifty.<sup>6</sup> "With their large main sails and blade jibs, they are a beautiful sight to see sailing. A high-performance boat, they are a challenge on planning reaches and runs."<sup>7</sup> His design was used all along the South Shore of Long Island. The popularity of the design called for them to form an association, the Narrasketuck Yacht Club, located in Amityville.<sup>8</sup> These well-known sailboats are still raced today. No other boat has won the Queen of the Bay Race more times than the Narrasketuck.<sup>9</sup>

Wilbur's brother, Paul Ketcham, designed and built the fourteen-foot Seaford Skiff. Roy Van Nostrand described it as a round-bottomed boat, with a wineglass stern, and a double twist.<sup>10</sup> The design was based on an old skiff Paul saw in Seaford, hence the name Seaford Skiff. He copied it for about five or six Amityville people for use by their children.<sup>11</sup> Another classic one-design, there were seventy of these skiffs built in the village of Amityville.

John K. Heinley, a local coal hopper, was another boat builder. He built boats to carry his coal. Heinley built the "Elizabeth Bedell," a thirty-seven-foot boat used for transporting coal. He also built the fifty two foot "Bay Queen." The schooner "John K. Heinley" and another like it the "J. Clark Curtain" were general merchandise carriers owned and operated by Captain E. Ruckman Wicks.<sup>12</sup>

Wicks would go back and forth from Perth Amboy. Many times the boats, overloaded with coal, could not make it through the Inlet. Since there were no channels, it was easy for an overloaded coal barge to get off track and get stuck. Although Heinley built mostly for himself, he also let others keep their boats on his yard. In fact, the boat yard, known today as the Yacht Service located on Ocean Avenue, was once the property of all three boat yards of Wicks, Heinley and Ketcham.

Another well-known boat building family was the Erlwines. Their yard was located at the intersection of County Line Road and Merrick Road. The family built a lap strake skiff at their yard in Amityville. Lap strake means that the sides of the skiff are shingled rather than laid side to side, and smoothed. Erlwines skiff was well known on the bay.

Building boats was not just for those concerned with a business. Many people built boats for their own pleasure. Some built for larger companies, recreation, or for use in another family business outside of boat-making.

The Carmen River Boatworks was located at the head of Carmens Road. It was owned by partners, Clarence Watts and Cal Bastress. They specialized in skiffs and other pleasure boats. They often worked with men repairing their motor boats. Harry Kegriss, known for being an expert with motors, especially boat motors, also built boats of his own. He also helped build experimental sea planes for the Fairchild Aircraft Company.<sup>13</sup>

Among others who built boats for pleasure was Solomon Wenzer. Once an Amityville village trustee, farmer, and blacksmith, Wenzer built small boats for his own pleasure. The Browns, another boat building family in Amityville, had a boatyard located on the west side of the river and south of the extension to Coles Avenue, or Dock Street. They built small boats there.

The Ireland family, well-known Amityville citizens, are noted for giving Amityville its name. Samuel Ireland suggested the town be named after his schooner, "Amity."<sup>14</sup> The Irelands had two mills in the village, a grist mill and a lumber mill. When they needed a way to transfer their goods from port to port, they built their own boat, "Amity."

Motorized boats came later in Amityville history. The first powered packet was the side wheeler "Adele." This boat was known to vibrate vigorously. It was built differently than most, as it was cross planked, which means that it had boards running up and down, instead of lengthwise. The "Adele" vibrated so much that a trip on this boat to Hemlock Beach was a very uncomfortable experience.<sup>15</sup> Harry Kegriss, a specialist in the motor field, built his own speed boat as well. It was not common in his time to have a powered boat. A local fishing boat, the "Anita," owned by Solomon Ketcham, was one of the first commercial power boats in Amityville.<sup>16</sup> The story is that Ketcham spent a day drifting in the bay, once he returned home, he marched straight to Wicks yard to install a power engine.<sup>17</sup>

All of these boat-builders all had their own boat yards. They would build their boats and keep them there, and let others keep their boats there also. Today those boat yards are important Amityville landmarks.

The three boat yards of Ketcham, Wicks and Heinley, combined all make up what is now the Yacht Service, currently the business of Amityville resident Steve Brice.<sup>18</sup> Wilbur Ketcham worked on island number two as well, which is now called Wilbur's Island in his honor, and still has a dilapidated boat house on it. Paul Ketcham's yard located on New Point Place is still standing, and his son Paul Jr. is in charge. The Carmen River Boat works is now an office building. The Erlwine boatyard is owned by the village and is intended to be a park.

Amityville has a history of talented boat-builders. Through the years we have seen that many boats built here came became well-known all over the world. Having such notable boats as the Seaford Skiff and the Narrasketuck built in the village is a huge honor. The unique location of Amityville and

its proximity to the islands in the Great South Bay made for a lucrative boat business, for this friendly village by the bay.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> [www.catboats.org](http://www.catboats.org)

<sup>2</sup> William Lauder, personal interview, 10 May 2002. William Lauder is a local historian, for whom the Amityville Historical Society museum is named. I chose to interview him because he is the most knowledgeable man on Amityville history. I interviewed him at the Lauder Museum in Amityville, on 10 May 2002.

<sup>3</sup> William T. Lauder, *Amityville History Revisited* (Amityville, NY: Amityville Historical Society, 1992), 30.

<sup>4</sup> William Lauder, personal interview, 10 May 2002.

<sup>5</sup> Elodie Dibbins, Seth Purdy, and Cecil Ruggles, eds. *A Backward Glance* (Amityville, NY: Amityville Historical Society, 1980).

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, 64.

<sup>7</sup> [www.members.tripod.com/NarrasketuckYC/fleet](http://www.members.tripod.com/NarrasketuckYC/fleet).

<sup>8</sup> Dibbins, *A Backward Glance*.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, 64.

<sup>10</sup> Roy Van Nostrand, personal interview, 22 May 2002. Roy Van Nostrand is a lifelong resident of Amityville, and the attorney for the Amityville school district and the Suffolk County Water Authority. I chose to interview him because he is one of the most knowledgeable men on Amityville history. I interviewed him by phone on 22 May 2002.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>12</sup> Dibbins, *A Backward Glance*.

<sup>13</sup> William Lauder, personal interview, 10 May 2002.

<sup>14</sup> Janet Parrin and Charles F. Howlett, *A Walk Through History: A Community Named Amityville* (Interlaken, NY: Heart of the Lakes Publishing, 1993).

<sup>15</sup> Dibbins, *A Backward Glance*.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, 11.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, 11.

<sup>18</sup> William Lauder, personal interview, 10 May 2002.

## BOOK REVIEWS

John Komia Domatob. *African Americans of Eastern Long Island*. Black America Series. Charleston, SC: Arcadia, 2001. Illustrations. Pp. 128. \$19.99 (paper).

John Komia Domatob. *African Americans of Western Long Island*. Black America Series. Charleston, SC: Arcadia, 2002. Illustrations. Pp. 128. \$19.99 (paper).

Although until recently overlooked, African Americans played an important role in Long Island's history. In the seventeenth century, free and enslaved blacks carved agricultural hamlets out of the Island's wooded landscape. Some blacks, who were brought to New Netherland by the Dutch West India Company, obtained their freedom and participated in the settlement of new towns, like Bushwyck, New Utrecht and Brooklyn. By the early eighteenth century, the largest population of urban blacks in the North lived nearby in New York City. In Queens County there were few free black residents but some forty-four percent of the county's white families owned slaves. Over the course of the nineteenth century, natural increase and movement out of New York City contributed to the growth of new African American communities in Kings, Queens and Suffolk Counties. Recently, historians like Graham R. Hodges, Shane White, Joyce Goodfriend and Leslie M. Harris have examined aspects of these communities in the New York City region. With the publication of two works that explore Long Island in the twentieth century, Jerry Komia Domatob has made a valuable contribution to our understanding of African American life.

In the introductions to both of these well-illustrated surveys of African American life on Long Island, Domatob asserts that his goal is to sponsor discussion, debate and most importantly an interest in historical research and scholarship. These introductions present a general overview of the contributions African Americans made to Long Island, and they provide an analytic framework for the chapters that follow. Each chapter explores the experiences of African Americans in a single town; this geographical organization furnishes Domatob with a means of interpreting the past, the present and the future of each community. Domatob has gathered and reproduced a compelling collection of black and white photographs, which document the challenges faced and the achievements made by a number of African American Long Islanders. The discussion that accompanies each image provides readers with a concise interpretation and a thought provoking discussion. There is little doubt that piecing together this

patchwork portrait of the Island's population was a challenge. To the author's credit, the volumes are accessible starting points for further research into the history of African Americans on Long Island.

In the "Preface" to *African Americans of Western Long Island*, Reverend Charles A. Coverdale, pastor of the First Baptist Church of Riverhead, asserts that "this little yet giant book" should renew interest in the history of the Island's African American residents (p.7). Domatob opens this volume with an examination of Hempstead and Roosevelt. In the late nineteenth century, these towns had substantial populations of African Americans; many were the sons and daughters of one-time slaves. But, in the twentieth century new residents made their way to the town; many had fled the Jim Crow laws of the segregated South. Throughout the United States, the in-migration of African Americans created racial tension. Hempstead and Roosevelt are stark reminders of this part of our collective past. For instance, as the African American population increased in Roosevelt, the town became a center of Ku Klux Klan activity. Although the group had disappeared by 1940, it left behind racial tension, which led whites to begin to leave the town—a suburban version of "white flight"—or to actively segregate their communities. The result was a town divided along racial lines. According to Domatob, by 1963, Theodore Roosevelt School was ninety-eight percent non-white, while the Centennial School was ninety-eight percent white. For African Americans, Hempstead and Roosevelt promised the "American dream of nice houses, clean and neat yards, and suburban schools," but delivered much less (p. 29).

The history of other western Long Island towns like Freeport, Wyandanch, Amityville and North Babylon was shaped more by the process of suburbanization than by the in-migration of southern blacks. After World War II, African Americans sought refuge in suburban communities. It is clear that in the 1940s, many affluent blacks moved to Amityville "to raise their families away from New York City" (p.61). These new residents had a shared desire to participate in their communities and, in so doing, carve out a better future for their children. Domatob asserts that recently the long struggles of civil rights leaders have born fruit in Wyandanch, Amityville and Babylon. Not only is there an emerging population of professionals, but also there have been important inroads made in the public sector. For instance, in 1999 Janice Tinsley-Colbert was elected Babylon's town clerk, while in the 1990s, Joan Johnson was elected Central Islip's town clerk. Domatob is exceeding optimistic about the future of these western Long Island towns. However, from a historical perspective, we should recognize that much of this evidence is troubling; after all, the first African Americans settled in Central Islip in the early 1700s and it was not until nearly 300 years later that Joan Johnson was elected town clerk. The future of African American communities and institutions in western



Long Island may be bright, but there is little doubt that the twenty-first century will present residents with new challenges to overcome.

The volume *African Americans of Eastern Long Island* also makes a valuable contribution to the study of African American life. The volume opens with two rare, early twentieth-century photographs of an African American trooper on horseback in Montauk. Both illustrate how little we know about the thousands who passed through or made their homes in this section of Long Island. Compared to the communities of western Long Island, the story of African American life on the East End is very different. In addition to attracting vacationers and the affluent, after World War II this section of Long Island attracted large numbers of African Americans from South Carolina, North Carolina and Virginia. Most first came to the area as migrant workers. Beginning in the 1940s, they worked as seasonal laborers on dairy, on potato farms and on fishing vessels. At the end of the summer season, many decided to stay. Soon Bridgehampton, Riverhead and East Hampton became their permanent home. In the 1960s, their sons and daughters found employment as firemen, police officers, ministers, teachers, doctors, lawyers, independent entrepreneurs, and public servants. However, in the twenty-first century, African American youth face new challenges; many residents find that few economic opportunities have led their sons and daughters to move elsewhere. There is little doubt that this process will continue, and it creates a significant challenge to the stability of East End communities.

In both western and eastern Long Island, African Americans, when faced with social, cultural or economic challenges, have depended on a number of community-building organizations. According to Domatob, any interpretation of everyday life must address the contributions and achievements of these organizations. His works include images and discussions of Hempstead's 100 Black Men, the Frederick Douglass Club, the Amistad Black Bar Association, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, the Long Island Black Artists Association, the African American Museum of Nassau County and the African Atlantic Genealogical Society. Along with a number of religious institutions, these organizations are vital to each community. In particular, Domatob sheds light on several unique African American communities, like Gordon Heights. Near Middle Island, Gordon Heights was founded in 1927 by Louis Fife, who encouraged residents of Harlem, Brooklyn and the Bronx to settle on one-hundred acre plots. But as Domatob recognizes, such communities need heroes. He tells the poignant story of Garfield Langhorn. Langhorn served the US Army as a radio operator during the Vietnam War, and he heroically saved the lives of many of his fellow soldiers by throwing himself on an enemy grenade. There are other military heroes, like Robert Thomas and Lee Hays (a Tuskegee Airman) who served in World War II.

Domatob selects a number of men and women who made valuable contributions, including James A. Garner who in 1989 became the mayor of Hempstead and the first African American mayor on Long Island, the Honorable Renaire Frierson who is the African American female elected in the village of Freeport, Marguette L. Floyd who is the first elected to Suffolk County District Court, and Bridgehampton's JoAnn Armstrong who is one of the Island's first African American postmasters. As these volumes demonstrate, there is a need for a comprehensive history of the thousands of anonymous Long Islanders, who make valuable contributions to their community.

With these two works, Jerry Komia Domatob has opened a number of new avenues for those who want to research the everyday lives of African Americans. But readers of these volumes will realize that they offer only a starting point for research. There are a number of vital topics which the works do not cover. For instance, there should be more of a discussion of the late nineteenth century, and the history of African Americans who were once slaves, in New York City or elsewhere, is overlooked. Along these lines, Domatob reprints two William Sidney Mount (1807-1868) paintings of African Americans, but he does not attempt to place them in historical context. Several other historians have not overlooked the significance of these works. Most recently, the historian Shane White provided a compelling analysis of Mount's paintings, which demonstrates how these paintings capture the significant contributions, through dance and music, free and enslaved blacks made to nineteenth century American culture. Both of Domatob's books touch on but do not explore how gender roles have changed in the African American family. However, general readers, students and teachers will find Domatob's surveys of the everyday life of African Americans on Long Island both compelling and useful.

THOMAS D. BEAL

*Assistant Professor*

*State University of New York, Oneonta*

Jeffrey A. Kroessler. *New York, Year by Year: A Chronology of the Great Metropolis*. New York: New York University Press, 2002. Illustrations. Pp. 400. \$19.95 (paper).

George J. Lankevich. *New York City: A Short History*. New York: New York University Press, 1998, reprint with new introduction and conclusion, 2002. Pp. 288. \$17.95 (paper).

Insatiable Gothamites will relish Jeffrey A. Kroessler's *New York, Year by Year: A Chronology of the Great Metropolis* and the latest edition of George J. Lankevich's *New York City: A Short History*. Together these books will long nourish urbanists by providing healthy servings of both the detail and the overview on which all meaningful history depends. Indeed, the authors cover more material than can be fully digested in any single sitting. Accordingly, their works must be savored often.

Kroessler's chronology is not a mere list. Rather, it provides an interesting cross-section of entries about a variety of topics including standard political and economic benchmarks complemented by less standard events relating to urban growth, labor struggles, race, gender, ethnicity, the arts, and sports. People and places are enriched by salient quotes and curious anecdotes. All five boroughs are represented and the attractive format is studded with interesting visuals, many from the Queens Borough Public Library.

There are firsts such as the opening of the Five Points Mission in 1853 and lasts such as the closing of Bushwick's Rheingold Brewery in 1976. There are short notations of a smallpox outbreak in 1746 and a strike by 300 women at the Astoria silk works in 1894 plus many mid-sized items on such topics as the Astor Place Riot of 1849 and the 1966 transit strike. Longer entries explain key events such as Flushing's contribution to religious freedom in 1662 and the downfall of Boss Tweed in 1871. Lou Gehrig warrants an extensive obituary for 1939 while Nathan Strauss gets due credit for making milk available to the poor at minimal cost in 1893.

Kroessler's book can fulfill several functions. First and foremost, it is a reference work which provides a useful chronology of New York City history from 1524 to 2001. However, its comprehensive index also enables the reader to focus on specific subjects across time periods. At 350 pages, it is big enough to be substantive, but not so huge as to be daunting. Most importantly, it is engaging reading for those who never cease to be fascinated by the complexity that is New York.

George Lankevich has written a new introduction and conclusion for his short history of New York City which was first published in 1998 and still holds up well as a solid, brief overview of Gotham's history. Inspired by his own fascination with the city, Lankevich depicts its "indomitable character, strength and vitality" over time. Especially after 9/11, he is determined to demonstrate how New York City "has epitomized both the promise and the spirit of America."

The book moves efficiently from the city's Dutch origins to the election of Michael Bloomberg by emphasizing political and economic history but also chronicling social change and civic development. He manages to cover not only every mayor and every major economic player but also nativism, housing, education, the arts, fires and even the "ever present pigs." His

sections on nineteenth-century bossism, the Consolidation of 1898, Fiorello La Guardia and the 1970s fiscal crisis are especially strong. His discussion of volatile contemporary politics is admirably well balanced.

Each chapter is carefully structured with a clear introduction and summation that elucidate the city's major accomplishments during that era. The body of each chapter provides a chronological sweep of key events and changes punctuated by interesting detail. For example, we learn that the Board of Education created a popular adult lecture series in 1888 and are introduced to an Italian immigrant responsible for organizing the men who built the subway system. Mayor "Red Mike" Hylan is plucked from obscurity and the ironies of Robert Wagner's three terms are fully analyzed.

Throughout the book, Lankevich provides useful statistics that concretely capture New York City's economic growth. It is striking to note how fast the city grew—from ten bakeries and several windmills in the 1660s to a port that "handled almost half the country's imports and a third of its exports" in 1825 to a city with 4,375 factories in 1860. In fact, the overarching theme of the book is New York City's phenomenal development and ability to recover from its setbacks. His evidence strengthens Lankevich's conclusion that "With all of its contradictions and woes, it would be foolish to think that the challenges of a new millenium will defeat this amazing city."

JOANNE REITANO

*Professor of History*

*La Guardia Community College*

Victor Principe. *Images of America: Bellport Village and Brookhaven Hamlet*. Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishing Inc., 2002. Illustrations. Pp. 128. \$19.99 (paper).

Victor Principe first came to Bellport to work at the Gateway Playhouse. Now a year-round resident, he is a member of the Bellport-Brookhaven Historical Society and the National Trust for Historic Preservation. In his book *Bellport Village and Brookhaven Hamlet* he has used more than 200 historical photographs, each accompanied by a descriptive paragraph, to create a photo-history of these neighboring South Shore communities.

The introduction gives a condensed history of the two villages as they came to be settled by men who had originally inhabited Setauket. First drawn to the area by an abundance of salt hay on the meadows by the bay, the land was purchased from the Unkechaug Indians on 10 June 1664, and was known as Old Purchase at the South. In addition to the hay, easy access to the ocean through an inlet in the barrier beach for whaling and commerce

made the area attractive to the English settlers. The Carman's river provided access into the interior of the settlement, and it is believed that Brookhaven was first called Fire Place because of the fires lit along its banks to guide ships home through the inlet.

Bellport was first known as Occumbomuk (or Occumbomock) then Bellville, then Bellport after 1861. Thomas and John Bell, for whom the village was named, first saw the potential for a commercial seaport, but the closing of the inlet in 1837 made the village more attractive for recreation than for commerce. Still, the area prospered with shipbuilding, farming, fishing, shell-fishing, and hunting. Eventually boat and shipyards were replaced by resort hotels, and the village became a magnet for artists, actors, and writers, many of whom lived there year-round or during the summer.

Principe's book includes photographs of the area as it appeared after the inlet closed and up through the first half of the twentieth century. Following the introduction, the book is comprised of eight chapters entitled: The Old Hotels of Bellport; The Bellport Scene; Recreation; The Arts, Culture, and Invention; Houses on the Lane and other Historic Homes; Churches and Schools; The Brookhaven Hamlet Scene; and, Historic Houses of Brookhaven Hamlet. As the titles indicate, the book includes rather more of Bellport's history than of Brookhaven's, but it is nonetheless an interesting and informative illustration of how the hamlet and the village have evolved.

This book is by no means a definitive history, but is sure to have broad appeal among its readers. To life-long residents of the area it serves as both a nostalgic look back at what once was, and proof of what has been preserved. For visitors and newcomers it can be used as a walking or driving guide. Bellport Village and Brookhaven Hamlet are fortunate to have escaped the blight of suburbanization that has plagued other areas. They remain, as the book illustrates, remarkably unchanged.

KATHLEEN L. SCHEIBEL

*Librarian*

*South Country Library*

Natalie E. Naylor, ed. *Journeys on Old Long Island: Travelers' Accounts, Contemporary Descriptions and Residents' Reminiscences, 1744-1893*. Interlaken, NY: Empire State Books, 2002. Illustrations, footnotes, index. Pp. viii, 344. \$22.50 (paper).

This delightful volume contains twenty accounts of Long Island written, between the mid-eighteenth century and the end of the nineteenth century, by both visitors and natives. Some of the narratives were penned by such

celebrated figures as Walt Whitman. A Long Islander through and through, who was born in South Huntington, founded the *Long Islander* newspaper in Huntington, taught school in various communities on the island, and spent many years in Brooklyn, which Natalie Naylor, the skilled editor of this thoroughly enchanting book, reminds us is part of the island, Whitman wrote highly descriptive impressions of the Long Island landscape. Naylor has wisely chosen to include a representative sampling of Whitman's commentary on locales ranging from Coney Island to Montauk. This segment is further enhanced by the poetry which is interspersed with Whitman's prose accounts of his experience on the island. Although familiar, the poetry is a welcome addition to the book. As with other portions of the work, for example, Yale President Timothy Dwight's accounts of his visits to the island, the Whitman material has appeared in print previously. Yet having all of these wonderful descriptions of Long Island available in one handsome volume is a real plus.

Naylor's judicious selection of eyewitness accounts of the island's changing landscape over a period of a century and a half includes not only the observations of such foreigners as the Venezuelan Francisco de Miranda, Scotsmen James Stuart and Dr. Alexander Hamilton and Englishman Joseph John Gurney but excerpts from the writings of nineteenth century historians Nathaniel Prime and Daniel Tredwell whose books Naylor points out in her superb introductory essay are not available in every library on the island. Portions of commercial travel guides produced by Samuel Latham Mitchell and by the Long Island Rail Road are also included. "Out on the Island," a promotional booklet published by the railroad, contains interesting text and very attractive illustrations which are nicely reproduced. By including these engravings, Naylor makes them available to a much wider audience.

The same holds true for her decision to incorporate the accounts of three women: Femmetie Hegeman Lefferts, whose description of Brooklyn at the time of the Battle of Long Island in 1776 is both detailed and poignant, Elizabeth Howell Blanchard who journeyed from Illinois to Long Island in 1844, and Laura Hawkins, who was raised on Long Island but lived in Connecticut following her marriage. In 1893, sixty-nine year old Hawkins and her sister toured Long Island. Their journey included an overnight trip by steamboat from New Haven to New York and a trip on the Long Island Rail Road which left the travelers weary but happy to be on Long Island. At her grandmother's former home Hawkins declared: "The very ground we stood on seemed sweet. We felt like Columbus when he landed in America." Come to think of it, that is how some folks still feel when they come home to Walt Whitman's blessed Paumanock and if they chose to bring along *Journeys on Old Long Island* to read, either from cover to cover, or to dip into selectively, perhaps while basking in the sunshine on a

Long Island beach, they will be amply rewarded. This book is not only a work of great scholarship but, from start to finish, it is a good read.

MARILYN E. WEIGOLD  
*Professor of History*  
*Pace University*

Theresa M. Collins. *Otto Kahn: Art, Money, and Modern Time*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2002. Illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. Pp. 383. \$34.95 (hardcover).

Otto Hermann Kahn (1867-1934) was famous as a financier and patron of the arts in the last century. The fourth of eight children, he was born in Mannheim, Germany on 12 February 1867 to affluent Jewish parents who were very involved in music and opera. At age eleven Otto was taken to his first opera. His grandparents had a featherbedding firm which prospered so well that Otto's father was able to marry socially upward, thus allowing him to establish a banking house six months after Otto's birth. Although Otto's family background was in banking, it was his marriage in America that led to his own good fortune.

Kuhn, Loeb and Company was co-founded in 1867 by Abraham Kuhn and Solomon Loeb. In 1875 Abraham Wolff, the father of Otto Kahn's wife Addie, became a new partner. It was Wolff who invited Otto to join the firm in 1896. Through this famous international financial house, Otto was able to play a leading role in Wall Street and in development of the country's railway system.

Otto Kahn was renowned in the cultural history of America. In 1908 he became the President and Chairman of the newly reorganized Metropolitan Opera Company. He was also a great benefactor of artists, poets, authors, and musicians, financially helping Paul Robeson, Ezra Pound, Hart Crane, and Bel Geddes, among others. "In 1919 he was a key influence in bringing Wall Street to finance Hollywood, and members of his banking house were board members at Paramount Pictures for many years after." (p. 2)

The subtitle of this biography of Otto Kahn is *Art, Money and Modern Time*. It is these aspects of Kahn's life that are primarily emphasized. Very little information in comparison is given of his personality, his marriage to Addie Wolff, his children, his many homes, and his interests outside of business and the arts. Indeed, most of the book provides a detailed analysis of the business investments of Kuhn, Loeb and Company starting with the history of the firm, continuing with its dealings with the U.S. railway system, and its major role in attracting Americans to foreign financial markets. Much is also made of the rivalry between Kuhn, Loeb and

Company and the J.P. Morgan Company, another great private banking institution.

One chapter in Collins' study of Otto Kahn is devoted to his appearance before the Senate Committee on Banking and Currency, which was investigating stock exchange practices in January 1933. Otto Kahn was the lead witness for his firm. As Collins states, "This was the greatest performance of his financial career. It made Otto Kahn an unforgettable headliner in financial history." (p. 293)

Theresa M. Collins is a member of the research faculty at Rutgers University where she teaches international history and also serves as associate editor of the Thomas A. Edison Papers. In *Otto Kahn: Art, Money, and Modern Time*, she has authored a scholarly biography of Kahn and his times. The vast amount of notes contained from pages 311-342, as well as the extensive twenty-three page bibliography, which includes many primary sources, are indications of the research that has been done for this work, which is based on the author's Ph.D. thesis. In 1988 John Kobler published a full-length biography of Otto Kahn entitled *Otto the Magnificent: The Life of Otto Kahn*, which was written in a more popular style and has a chapter entitled Oheka, the name of the 127-room chateau that Kahn built on a 443-acre tract that he had acquired in Cold Spring Harbor in 1914. Kobler's book and an earlier 1963 biography by Mary Jane Matz, *The Many Lives of Otto Kahn*, are complements to Theresa Collins' excellent academic study.

KAREN COOPER  
*Librarian, Retired*  
*Syosset Public Library*

James E. Haas. *This Gunner at His Piece: College Point, New York And The Civil War With Biographies of the Men Who Served*. Baltimore: Gateway Press, Inc., 2002. Illustrations, index. Pp. xviii, 272. \$19.95 (paper).

This work is the product of long research devoted to learning about the men associated with the community of College Point who fought, or at least served, in the Civil War. This includes not only those who lived there prior to enlisting, but also veterans who moved there subsequent to the war. In some cases it even includes men who never resided there, but whose sons moved there and joined the local post of the Sons of Union Veterans. A wide range of sources—print, microformat, and online—were brought together to uncover the lives of these men.

Although there is no bibliography as such, Haas lists and describes his sources in an introductory section. Military service records, pension



records, census data, contemporary newspaper articles, records of the Adam Wirth Post of the Grand Army of the Republic, and letters are among the record types searched. This comprehensive range of sources can serve as a useful guide for novice researchers hoping to learn about a Civil War participant for family history or historical reenactment purposes. It is truly regrettable that the 1865 New York State Census has apparently not survived for Queens County. That enumeration gathered information on officers and enlisted men still in service in June of 1865, those who had formerly served at any time since the beginning of the war, and those who had died in service. Its existence would have provided much additional detail, and perhaps answered some of the unresolved questions regarding certain of the men's participation.

The author, a College Point native and descendant of serviceman Joseph Dockendorf, presents a brief description of the community as it was in 1860. A relatively isolated area of the Town of Flushing, it was just beginning to undergo transformation into an Industrial Age center. The population had grown to more than 2,000, of whom over half were foreign born. Of these, a substantial majority were of German origin. This can be attributed no doubt partly to the presence of Conrad Poppenhusen—businessman, manufacturer, philanthropist and civic benefactor. Among his contributions to College Point was the Poppenhusen Institute, still in existence, and the source of many documents used in the preparation of this book. Poppenhusen recruited and employed many of the German immigrants who settled in the area. The contributions in turn of this, and other immigrant communities in College Point, to their new nation are readily apparent from the military service records gathered here. Haas quotes an 1862 article from the *Flushing Journal* which stated that in the College Point election district over one third of its legal voters had gone to the war.

In 1884 many of the veterans residing in College Point formed Adam Wirth Post, No. 451, Grand Army of the Republic, named in honor of the community's first fatality, who died from wounds received in the battle of Second Bull Run. A short history of the Post is included, along with a brief account of David Schultze Post, No. 29, Sons of Union Veterans. A reproduction of the roster of original members of Adam Wirth Post is presented. Following this section are short histories of some of the units in which large numbers of College Point men served, ranging from those which were in the thick of the action, to a state militia unit whose service consisted only of thirty days spent stationed on Staten Island. Still, even that unit suffered one death during its call-up.

The bulk of the book consists of the two sections following these histories; forty-nine pages of summary tables for 226 servicemen outlining the service record and census data found for each man and 173 pages of

short biographies on the men. It is noted that for a small number of them the identification of the man named in the service record with the man of the same name on the census is based on assumption only. These two sections clearly illustrate the dedication and extensive efforts which have gone into producing this book. The results not only will be of good use to genealogists interested in any of the families involved, to those interested in immigrant involvement in the War, or local history buffs, but will also serve as an inspiration and guidepost to those who may consider similar projects for other communities.

Photos of some of the men at various points in their lives, and of some of the documents cited, are included. An index linking each serviceman with the unit in which he served is also included.

Only a few minor points were noted which might benefit from revision. Some of the uncertainties cited in the biography on Christian Brill, Sr. could be resolved if one considers the possibility that the reported year of birth, 1846, was actually a clerical error for 1836. In the biography of Theodore Gunzert, First Bull Run should read *Second* Bull Run. In many of the biographies military service data are presented in the past tense, while census data are presented in the present tense. Some may find that slightly discordant.

Finally, those interested in works of this nature may wish to view a comparable project for the Suffolk County areas of Coram, Middle Island, Ridge, and Yaphank in the Town of Brookhaven, available online at *Longwood's Journey: A History of the Longwood Community- Coram, Middle Island, and Yaphank* (<http://www.longwood.k12.ny.us/history>). Clicking on the Civil War link will bring up biographies of those who served from those hamlets. In many ways, this work, compiled by students of the Longwood School District, under the guidance of Paul Infranco, does for Longwood what Haas has done for College Point, and reviewing the web pages will give the prospective reader a sense of what the book provides.

EDWARD H. L. SMITH, III  
*Suffolk County Historical Society*

Charles Denson. *Coney Island: Lost and Found*. Berkeley: Ten Speed Press, 2002. Illustrations, bibliography, index. Pp. x, 294. \$29.95 (paper with flaps).

Michael Immerso. *Coney Island: The People's Playground*. New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2002. Illustrations, notes, index. Pp. viii, 200. \$29.95 (cloth).

Brian J. Cudahy. *How We Got to Coney Island: The Development of Mass Transportation in Brooklyn and Kings County*. New York: Fordham University Press, 2002. Illustrations, bibliography, notes, index. Pp. xviii, 346. \$25.00 (paper), \$45.00 (cloth).

While growing up in Coney Island, Charles Denson, author of *Coney Island: Lost and Found*, developed a passionate interest in its history. His first publication on the subject, *Coney Island Walking Tour*, was published in 1998. The author's latest project is a vividly-told popular history of Coney Island, from its geological origins to present times.

As Coney Island's shape changed from the effects of tides and storms over time, the Canarsie Indians that inhabited the surrounding land fished, hunted, farmed and gathered wampum shells by the shore. Yet soon after the seventeenth-century arrival of the Dutch and English (at nearby Gravesend), problems began over the differing claims to land ownership. Denson examines the origins of these disputes as well as the confusion and discord that followed. Conflicts between private and public interests over property rights, use, and access to the shore would continue to plague generations to come.

Largely uninhabited until the 1820s, the author traces the evolution of Coney Island as an amusement and recreation area from its primitive beginnings in the mid-nineteenth century. By late century, Coney Island ceased to be an actual island, as local roads connecting the island to the mainland were established. Race tracks were opened, large grand hotels and bungalows built, and railroad lines were extended connecting Coney Island to the rest of the borough and city. Restaurants and small recreational enterprises proliferated. Major amusement parks, such as Steeplechase, Luna Park and Dreamland, became extremely popular.

By the first decade of the new century, all the ingredients were in place for the start of a golden era. In 1923, government takeover and the resulting construction of a boardwalk allowed for easier access to the beach. Cleared away was the unsightly 'mining camp' look created by existing private bath houses that had cluttered up the shorefront. Old buildings were razed, obstructions cleared, existing streets widened and new streets created. The 1920s saw a construction boom as Coney's popularity peaked. Seagate on the west end and Manhattan Beach on the east end became residential. (The former would have been the summer home to Governor Al Smith had he won the 1928 presidential election). Like Atlantic City, Coney was a place offering summertime relief and year round amusements for the hard working masses. Unfortunately, this golden age would come to an end with the advent of the 1930s. Although still popular with the public for the beach and surf, the Depression badly hurt Coney's economy. What destructive

fires and the ban on horse racing failed to do earlier in the century, the Depression achieved, causing great and prolonged economic distress.

Denson holds nothing back in his criticism of those individuals who caused significant harm to the amusement area through the years. John McKane, the corrupt political boss of Gravesend in the latter 1800s, was the first great villain. Through land fraud, bribery, kickbacks and intimidation, McKane and the powerful railroad barons and land developers he befriended, bought up vast amounts of land at a pittance of its real value. McKane was also adept at fixing elections. He ignored those who engaged in criminal activities, even granting licenses to those who ran houses of prostitution and gambling. McKane's reign ended in 1894 when he was convicted and jailed for his illegal acts.

Denson's next major target is the dictatorial Commissioner of the New York City Parks Department, Robert Moses. Moses did not like the ballyhoo and carnival character of the area, and did all he could to marginalize Coney from the 1930s on. He sought to proscribe loudspeakers and freak shows and imposed strict rules prohibiting certain behavior he deemed to be unfit on the beach. The point is made that Moses' goal was to convert Coney Island into a new Jones Beach. Denson argues that Moses favored retrenchment rather than expansion and demolition of old buildings rather than their renovation. Owners were thereby dissuaded from investing in and maintaining their property. Like McKane, Moses' allies profited greatly from such policies. As analyzed by Denson, Moses' tactics resembled a type of military maneuver. It was a scorched earth Shermanesque march across the island, obliterating areas for housing developments. What was only briefly touched upon in Robert Caro's biography *The Power Broker*, is discussed in greater detail by Denson, that being Moses' animus toward Coney Island. His apparent determination and commitment to destroy old Coney Island and its surrounding neighborhoods, was consistent with the Parks Commissioner's policies in other neighborhoods of the city. Against opposition, Moses still managed to somewhat succeed in his efforts.

The mid-1960s saw a new crisis to Coney's existence. In the wake of the closing of Steeplechase Park, builder Fred Trump purchased the property yet was frustrated in his efforts to change the zoning laws and build high-rise apartment buildings. At one point, he threw a party at the site and encouraged invited guests to heave bricks through the still standing storied glass façade. Zoning was never changed and Steeplechase was demolished. A decade later, Trump, including son Donald, was instrumental in preventing the establishment of casino gambling. As Denson points out, they wanted to protect their gambling interests in Atlantic City from competition.

The author criticizes Mayor John Lindsay's housing policy of urban renewal which sent Coney reeling in the late 1960s. Private properties, especially old apartment houses, were being bought up only to be sold to the city for a profit after condemnation. Lindsay's idea was to have mixed income development, but this turned out to be a failure. The area declined and crime increased. Gangs emerged as did increased incidents of arson and prostitution. The housing police force was reduced. Slumlords and block-buster developers were the ones who gained. Urban renewal along the lines Lindsay's administration had fostered was stopped before the whole area was overwhelmed.

Treated by Denson in a more ambivalent way is former mayor Rudy Guiliani. He was a key figure in the establishment of a new minor league baseball team and the building of a stadium on the old Steeplechase lot. Although given credit for his role in revitalizing the area, the author discusses how controversy enveloped the inception of the team. Opposition existed, some of which resulting from Guiliani's heavy-handed methods in forcing through the project.

*Coney Island: Lost and Found* is replete with excellent historical photos as well as those that were actually taken by the author himself. Interpolated within the narrative are photo inserts bringing to life in anecdotal fashion such landmarks as the Elephant Hotel, Nathan's, Feltman's, the Cyclone, Paul Boynton's Sea Lion Park (the first self-contained park), the Parachute Jump, carousels, Half Moon Hotel, the Thunderbolt Coaster, the Wonder Wheel, the Bowery, Astroland, and the 1990s renaissance in performance arts. The pages come alive with abundant color illustrations of ephemera such as business cards, ads, signs, tickets, postcards, and portraits. The reader finds an array of maps of Coney in its various incarnations, including those that highlight exact locations of amusement parks, rides, hotels and residential areas. Resources include personal reminiscences, periodicals, diaries, chamber of commerce reports and contemporary newspaper items of the day.

A short autobiographical segment in which the author discusses his childhood and somewhat troubled relationship with his father might have been better left for another book. It does however add a personal touch and helps the reader appreciate the affection Denson has for Coney Island.

A native of New Jersey, Michael Immerso is a cultural historian and social activist. This unique background informs the narrative of his book, *Coney Island: The People's Playground*. An overview of the history of the amusement area is documented, covering much of the same ground, although with less detail and fervor, as Denson. The author, however, makes many insightful points regarding the cultural and sociological aspects of Coney Island's history.

Culturally, Coney Island served as a prototype for other amusement facilities yet to be built. Immerso writes that the golden era of Coney was the product of a unique period in history, rather than the natural birth of the amusement industry. To many arriving immigrants, Coney's lights were the first sight as they arrived. The author develops the theme of how important European immigrants were in helping to build and design the parks and its rides. This European imprint was key in the development of carousels and roller coasters (scenic and rail) which were rides that originated in Europe. The skill of those who created the amusements reflected a mastery of electricity, light, sound and mechanical effects. The architecture of the buildings was influenced as well by European concepts of design. The cultural landscape of the times spawned other forms of entertainment made popular at Coney, such as vaudeville, ragtime, syncopated music, nickelodeons and dance. Even foods like hot dogs, custard, ice cream confections, taffy and pizza—if not actually invented there—gained widespread appeal among the hungry beach- and ride-going masses. Immerso also suggests that the illusions and multimedia character of the amusements anticipated the virtual reality games of the late 20th century. In discussing the trends that led to the decline of Coney as an amusement center, the author states that increased automobile usage and travel, as well as the increasing popularity of motion pictures, were among the contributing factors.

Sociologically, America's cultural evolution was helped along by the desire of immigrants and urban residents to invent their own form of leisure. Although the upper-class east end had hotels that discriminated against Jews and African Americans, the rest of Coney, catering to the middle and lower economic classes, was not exclusionary. Men and women, representing various ethnic groups, all frolicked together in casual contact. The motion of the waves was liberating. As the author states, all were equal in the ocean. It was a diversion that was inherently democratic. A "Populist pleasure zone" where an individual could "play as hard as one worked." The rides were symbolic of the human body in action, causing pleasurable sensory thrills. The men, who were masters of their machines on the job had a natural affinity for things mechanical. The rides were fast, immediate, galloping, sexually charged sensual diversions. It was as Immerso reflects, "human nature with the brakes off." No wonder that the most popular locale and theme of early moving pictures was Coney Island with all its franticness. Reformers were frustrated in their goal to introduce more refined pleasures to the masses. The people who came to Coney wanted an outlet for purposes of enjoyment. If Coney was not refined or sophisticated, neither were the majority of those who visited there!

Immerso's acknowledgements in most cases justifiably credit many earlier books. One of the observations made, that of Coney being the "anti-

Disneyland," was expressed often in the 1999 published *Coney Island* by Professor Solomon (Baltimore: Top Hat Press). Among Immerso's strong points are the descriptions of the scenic spectacles, disaster reenactments, biblically themed illusions, and historical shows that were prevalent during the heyday of the great amusement parks. Although credited by Immerso, this information, in great depth, has been available for many years on Jeffrey Stanton's website. And unlike Denson, Immerso allots just one chapter to the post-1965 era.

*The People's Playground* contains many archival photographs and an eight-page color section of golden era ephemera. The quality of most of the black and white photos however, suffers when compared to those in *Lost and Found*. Immerso makes use of literary and poetic references, which sprinkled throughout the text enhances the narrative. As in *Lost and Found*, there are sidebars with anecdotal information. Included at the end of the book is a detailed section of notes with specific page references.

An expert of New York City's subway history, Brian J. Cudahy had previously authored *Under the Sidewalks of New York* (Fordham University press: 1995). As he writes in his latest, *How We Got to Coney Island*, "...before one can enjoy Coney Island one must first get there...." And how people got there over the last 150 years is answered definitively in Cudahy's new book.

After an overview of Coney's early history, the author discusses the earliest forms of transportation that linked Coney to the mainland. Horse car rail service provided the first conveyance to Coney in 1862. This began an approximate twenty-year period of transportation where horse driven rail, coach and trolley service predominated. Horses were eventually supplanted by steam powered vehicles around 1880. There even was an experimental short lived, monorail constructed called the Boynton Bicycle Monorail Railroad, connecting Gravesend to Brighton Beach. Intra-borough steam powered rail traffic lasted until the turn of the century. As Cudahy points out, steam-engine excursion railways would eventually evolve into the modern subway system.

Accompanying rail service from the mid-nineteenth century, up through the early decades of the twentieth, was the water transit provided by iron steamboat paddle wheelers. Visitors from other parts of Brooklyn and Manhattan would travel to and from Coney via this method. Connections from steamboats were made available with rail lines on their way to Coney. In the early years these trips by steamboat were much shorter in time than that of overland means of travel. Electric power superseded steam by 1890. Elevated excursion railways and overhead power lines for trolleys were electrified. Equipment was modified and rail lines connected. The Brooklyn Rapid Transit Company, chartered in 1896, unified public transit by the early part of the new century. The Dual Contracts agreement of 1913

allowed for massive expenditures of public and private funds to increase the size, expand, and upgrade the burgeoning system. Modernization and new standards for subway cars followed. Platforms and stations were made more accessible and convenient. On the other hand, the early 1920s saw the decline of steamboat service which was phased out by the early 1930s. In a reversal from earlier times, travel to Coney by subway had become cheaper and quicker. As Cudahy states, Coney had changed from a seasonal to a year-round place to go, a summer excursion trip to a basic mass transportation venue. For a nickel, riders could travel directly to Coney by subway. Thus the "nickel empire" was established.

The boardwalk built in the 1920s made intra-island pedestrian traffic easier. It also augmented the size of the beach itself with the pumping in of extra sand. Car travel to Coney was increased in the 1930s with the construction of the Belt Parkway. Beginning as a two lane highway, it was increased to three lanes after World War II. Also during the post-war years, an equestrian horse path that was part of Ocean Parkway, a main thoroughfare to Coney, was paved over. No longer would it be possible to easily travel by horseback to Coney. In the late 1940s, trolleys were phased out and in its place bus service was made more extensive. The last major link which aided travel to Coney as well as to other parts of Brooklyn was the opening of the Verrazano Narrows bridge in 1964. By then however, Coney's golden era had long passed.

Cudahy discusses other issues involving Coney Island, such as the close relationship between Austin Corbin and the railroad interests. Corbin was especially eager to have guests from the upper classes of Manhattan frequent his hotel. In fact, Manhattan Beach got its name based on this desire. His working relationship with the Long Island Railroad helped business by providing transportation to the hotel. The ban on horseracing in 1909 however, which closed the three race tracks in the area, was a critical factor in the demise of all the grand hotels, including Corbin's.

The author stands apart from Immerso and Denton in his assessment of the role Robert Moses played. According to Cudahy, Moses' policies were, "...at worst benign, perhaps even a bit constructive." Believing that Moses did not seek to destroy all of the amusement area, he defends Moses' attempt to modernize Coney by reducing its run down amusement sites. Cudahy puts forth the argument that had Moses' redevelopment plans for the creation of parks and recreation areas been fully implemented, it would have helped to sustain the area rather than destroy it. He gives credit to Moses for building the Belt Parkway which brought more visitors to Coney by making it, "...more accessible than ever before." Regarding the post-war years, it appears that the growing use of cars can be argued as either a reason for growth (Cudahy) or decline (Immerso) of Coney, depending on whether people were coming or going.



A good part of *How We Got to Coney Island* covers the history of New York's transit network. Its evolution from many competing subway and rail lines to a unified system that ultimately would be under the aegis of the Transit Authority is chronicled. Discussed by Cudahy at length are the complex negotiations, delays and maneuverings that took place over the years. Rights-of-way problems with property owners over placement of overhead electrical trolley lines and above-ground subway embankment construction was common. Subway construction methods and a description of equipment used are detailed. The trolley strikes of 1889 and 1895 are examined, as are the effects of the consolidation of New York City in 1898 on transportation. Cudahy also gives accounts of ideas and plans that never came to fruition. One such plan, envisioned by railroad interests around the turn of the century, was to make Brooklyn the major eastern terminal for inter-city railroads. This would have involved the construction of a tunnel under the Narrows. Such a tunnel would have expanded subway service to and from Staten Island producing far reaching changes for the future of Coney Island and Brooklyn.

Two short segments of *How We Got to Brooklyn* are excerpts from two of the author's prior books, *Around Manhattan Island and Other Maritime Tales of New York* and *The Malbone Street Wreck*. There are two twelve-page sections of black and white photos and illustrations. Much reference material is in the form of charts and tables, some difficult to read, and containing seemingly obscure facts. Among those are BRT and BMT rail and passenger cars 1900-1940, rail and steamboat schedules for the summer of 1880, Kings County street railways of 1890, excursion railways and routes for 1862-1892, and elevated railway coverage for 1890. Statistics for one way passenger service per hour circa 1883-1890, track mileage, trolley and subway car acquisition, designations and routes, steamboat tonnage and dimensions are also provided. Additionally, and more useful, are subway maps representing different time periods. A chapter-by-chapter note section with extra information is included expanding upon the corresponding footnoted portions of the text.

The history and significance of Coney are given a lively, personal touch by Charles Denson in *Coney Island: Lost and Found*. Coney's social and cultural significance is explored by Michael Immerso in *Coney Island: The People's Playground*. The way people traveled there to be part of all the fun and excitement is amply investigated in Brian Cudahy's *How We Got to Coney Island*. Within a three month period these three books on Coney Island were published. Each has something different to offer those interested in the subject. All are definitely worth reading.

GARRY WILBUR  
*New Hyde Park*

Havemeyer, Harry W. *East on the Great South Bay: Sayville and Bayport, 1860–1960*. Mattituck, NY: Amereon House, 2001. Illustrations, index, bibliography. Pp. xii, 303. \$29.95 (Hardcover).

Harry W. Havemeyer's rich and detailed history of Sayville and Bayport, 1860 – 1960, is a gracious 'thank you' to the communities that border the Great South Bay; these areas have given him over sixty-six summers of relaxation and joy as he grew up along its beaches. In return, Havemeyer has combed the newspapers and magazines, the reference works and year-books, the atlases and maps, the secondary works and the oral history to give us a story of these hundred years and to make us wish that we, too, had grown up in Sayville and Bayport. This volume and Havemeyer's earlier publication, *Along the Great South Bay: the Story of a Summer Spa—From Oakdale to Babylon* (1998), give clear evidence that all history is local history; what was happening in Sayville and Bayport was a microcosm of what was happening on the national and international scenes. Local history of this sort makes global movements understandable because we see them unfolding in our towns and on our beaches.

The rich and famous of these years were enjoying the prosperity of fortunes made in trade, banking and real estate. The waters and the beaches of the Great South Bay were ideal playgrounds for businessmen like John R. Suydam and Robert B. Roosevelt, for Frank Smith Jones, founder of the Grand Union supermarket chain, for Julius Liebmann of Liebmann Breweries, for William H. Todd of the Todd Shipyards Corporation. When the roaring twenties was followed by the depression of the 1930s and World War II, large land owners sold pieces of their property to middle class Americans who could afford only small houses. The movement to suburbia from crowded cities thus began.

Havemeyer tells the story of Sayville and Bayport, 1860–1960, well. He includes photos and drawings of mansions and millionaires. He traces with skill the genealogies of wealthy families and relates family histories as fascinating page-turners. One thing I wish he had included is detailed smaller maps of Sayville and Bayport during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. These maps would make it easier to follow as I retrace the paths he has made come alive.

SISTER JOAN RYAN  
*St. Joseph's College*

Steven Gregory. *Black Corona: Race and the Politics of Place in an Urban Community*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1998. Illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. Pp. 282. \$19.95 (paper).

For many Long Islanders, Corona is only a neighborhood they passed through on their daily commute to Manhattan Island. Although now Corona is crossed by the Horace Harding Expressway and is wedged between Flushing Meadow and LaGuardia Airport, it was once a thriving farming village. In the early twentieth century with the construction of single family homes and later apartment buildings, it became a distant suburb of Manhattan Island. Similar to other parts of New York City's borough of Queens, Corona's suburbanization took off in 1917 after it was connected to Manhattan Island by the Long Island Railroad and the New York City Rapid Transit System. In the following decades, Corona's bucolic landscape of forests and farms gave way to an urbanized landscape of single family homes and apartment buildings surrounded by a grid of streets. Gradually, the racial composition of the neighborhood changed. By 1960, fifty percent of the population was African American, a fact that did not go unnoticed by long-time residents. One African American claimed that this in-migration led many whites to label Corona a "black ghetto"(p. 66). Neither historians of urban America nor Long Island have given enough attention to New York City's urban fringe; however, in this new study of Corona, Stephen Gregory demonstrates that a careful analysis of one neighborhood can shed light on some of the twentieth century's most significant historical transformations.

In this survey of Corona's history, Steven Gregory makes a valuable contribution to our understanding of Long Island, race, political activism and the process of urbanization. Gregory urges readers to set aside much about what they know, or think they know, about neighborhoods like Corona and the superficial topics which dominate the mass media: crime, teenage pregnancy, and street gangs. This is significant, because throughout the 1980s any attention scholars gave to similar neighborhoods focused on what were described as "urban problems" or the "failures of the welfare state." Moreover, while ignoring the realities of "racialized forms of inequality" conservative politicians used negative images to garner support for ideologically driven "budget-cutting attacks on the social welfare system and massive increases in public expenditures for law enforcement and prison construction."(p. 6) Such blatant attacks gave birth to a powerful set of labels, like "inner-city," which although simplistic and dependent on stereotypes, were popularized by the mass media. For Gregory, these are powerful tropes that marginalize urban residents and obscure structural problems. In this study he aims "to restore both history and politics to discussions of contemporary black urban life through an analysis of

community activists in Black Corona" while exploring community organizations social activism to better understand the "shifting interrelation of race, class, and power in American society" (p. 5). Indeed, the residents of Corona that float in and out of Gregory's study have a good deal of agency and, as social activists, they are constantly battling to better or defend their community.

Gregory divides his study of Corona into three parts. The work's opening chapters present a concise overview of Corona's history from the late nineteenth to the mid-twentieth century. They open a window onto the role race played in the process of urbanization. Many of Corona's early African American residents worked as domestic servants, day laborers, and factory workers. Between 1900 and 1920, an influx of African Americans from the South and new transportation connections led to an increase in the area's total population. By 1930, many residents of New York City came to define Corona as a suburb of Harlem. This was a bright moment in the neighborhood's history; around thirty percent of its homes were owned by African Americans, the highest rate of black home ownership of any borough. The population growth brought a new activism. Black residents organized committees to carve out a better future for their children. However, the dreams of black home ownership and better schools were soon under attack. For instance, Robert Moses's use of the Federal Housing Act of 1949 displaced thousands of New Yorkers; many removed to Corona. This led to a severe housing shortage and tension with the neighborhood's white residents, who began to invent ways to restrict black home ownership and to fight against the racial integration of schools. Among African Americans, these actions sponsored a more cohesive community, since organizers used economic restrictions and social barriers as evidence of the need for mobilization.

Many of Corona's political committees, like the Independent Citizens Committee, were modeled after and adopted the strategies of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference. But, as Gregory argues in the second part of this work, the leadership of those committees became vulnerable to being co-opted by newly established government agencies. For instance, he contends that the 1960s War on Poverty created a new political environment. Rather than encouraging residents and neighborhoods to mobilize and protest, social activists were encouraged to throw their energies into and their organizations behind new government programs. As the War marched on without their participation, residents began to feel disempowered and disconnected. This did not change until the 1970s. According to Gregory, the Lefrak City housing development is an important example of the rejuvenation of neighborhood activism. After 1972, when the US Justice Department filed a discrimination suit against the owners of Lefrak City, the African American population living in these multistoried

buildings increased. Soon, Lefrak City's African American residents were organizing and calling for better access to public funds for community projects. In one of the most nuanced discussions in the book, Gregory demonstrates how, learning from the 1960s, Lefrak City's social activists were careful to distance their organizations from political parties. Autonomy allowed community organizations to work toward change without their leaders or ideas being co-opted by political parties. Gregory charges that most of these organizations or "oppositional forms of collective action and identity" have gone unnoticed by historians since they were not attached to a political party (p. 138).

Gregory concludes this work with a thought-provoking examination of how, throughout the 1990s, Corona's residents battled the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey. Corona's residents had a long standing mistrust of the Port Authority, and conflict between the two emerged over the proposed extension of LaGuardia Airport's Runway 13-31. Residents claimed that the extension would restrict the circulation of water in Flushing Bay and create a water pollution problem. Neighborhood activists called for environmental studies to examine the runway's environmental impact. As residents organized, Mayor Rudolph Giuliani expedited the planning process, demonstrating that he was more interested in the runway than the residents. While Giuliani prevailed, the feeling that their voices were overlooked created a new context for community activism in Corona. They formed alliances with other neighborhood groups throughout Queens. The second time residents of Corona confronted the Port Authority it was over the building of "a people mover" to connect Manhattan Island to John F. Kennedy and LaGuardia Airports. While the Port Authority viewed the elevated monorail as a means to promote the City's economic growth, Corona's residents, led by African American home owners, questioned the rail's impact on the environment and everyday life. In the end, it was not their inability to articulate a valid challenge to the rail line, but the Port Authority's carefully planned attempts to disrupt the alliances that had formed between neighborhoods that ultimately led to the building of the rail line. For instance the Port Authority and the Federal Aviation Administration held public forums. But as one Administration official informed the crowd at one gathering "[o]ur format does not permit responses to questions or comments during the hearing"(p. 219). The absurdity of such a *public forum* was not lost on the activist, who shouted "I thought we were here for a public hearing, not for a presentation"(p. 219). In this way, Gregory asserts that a number of government agencies worked to find, and sometimes invent, subtle ways to undermine the expression of public opinion and the hard work of social activists.

All Long Islanders with an interest in community action and public policy should read Stephen Gregory's history of Corona. Although the work

focuses on one Queens neighborhood, it outlines a historical process which may be replayed in Nassau and Suffolk counties. In the future, Long Island's population will continue to grow and its landscape will become increasingly suburbanized. There is little doubt that this growth will place new burdens on the Long Island Rail Road, the Long Island Expressway, and MacArthur Airport. Consequently, communities across the Island might find themselves fighting plans for transportation lines created, without their input, by distant government agencies. Gregory's book is also significant because it provides a unique perspective on New York City's urban fringe. Most importantly, Gregory's work is rich with interviews of African American social activists and community organizers. Through these interviews Gregory demonstrates that beneath the stereotypical images of urban America and the "black ghetto" propagated by politicians and the mass media there are urban neighborhoods, like Corona, where residents organize, protest and struggle to empower their communities.

THOMAS D. BEAL

*Assistant Professor*

*State University of New York, Oneonta*

Kristen J. Nyitray and Ann M. Becker, *Stony Brook, State University of New York*. College History Series. Charleston, SC: Arcadia Press, 2002. Illustrations. Pp. 128. \$19.99 (paper).

This attractive volume is a photo-history of what is now the State University of New York at Stony Brook. The coverage, by way of a short introduction and then 209 black and white photos, takes us from the pre-Stony Brook days through recent developments and events.

Before there was a Stony Brook (SUNY Stony Brook: 1962), there was a four-year preliminary (or pre-historic) existence, that of the State University College on Long Island. This early life was lived on the scenic, photo-op Oyster Bay estate that Frank and Mai Coe donated to the state, to be used by the new state college until the Melville gift-lands were ready for the University. Pages 4-45 introduce us to this Arcadian life: Mr. Coe (receiving an honorary degree from Wyoming!), the main mansion that basically held the college, students (drinking coffee, playing volley ball, protesting, looking at books, marching at the first graduation), administrators, labs and early days of music, geodesic domes, the Melville family, and then Nelson Rockefeller in the limo on his way to turn the first shovel of sacred, if sandy, soil at Stony Brook.

From Oyster Bay we move to the rough-and-ready campus, early Stony Brook (from p. 45 onward): dorms, teams, labs, physical construction, students, academic personnel. On p. 55 John Toll, president from 1965-78, makes his first appearance: the Toll years have begun. Between pp. 45 and 76 (first picture of John H. Marburger, president, 1980-94) we get glimpses of construction (both the "bridge to nowhere" and the looming Health Science Center), students engaged in protest, sports, recreation, and cultural events, visiting dignitaries and eminent faculty, and a medley of those touches that fill more of life than highlight-film moments (such as the painting of the "zebra path" or a shot of a suspiciously neat dorm room). With Marburger and then with Shirley Kenny (president, 1994—; depicted first on p. 106 and frequently thereafter) we get a comparable mix of the noteworthy (seven U.S. senators at a conference in honor of Jacob K. Javits) and the ordinary (Ed O'Connell in front of a sign indicating "Tabler Quad"). The last pages cover very recent events, such as the opening of an ambulatory surgery center and the establishment of a Stony Brook base in Manhattan, both billed as accomplishments of 2002.

This is all very pleasant material, an appeal to nostalgia (for those of us who lived through it, in some portion or other), and quick edification for those who wondered where and how it all came to be in such a short span. The building of Stony Brook in a mere three or four decades is a tribute to the public's one-time commitment to higher education and to the vision and drive of administrators and faculty who turned Albany mandates and Albany (and federal) money into the red-brick reality of classrooms, labs, dorms, student-oriented buildings, and libraries. The photos that Nyitray and Becker have chosen give a feeling of the range and number of people and forces that had to come together to set the University up and to get it working. We see the high and mighty, and those of little fame but who also posed for a moment as they waited in line or chatted with friends. The high purposes of higher education are illuminated; so are reminders that college is mostly "about" young people, mixing lives of study, sociability, organized activities, and goofing off.

A few comments. In some photos those posing in neat rows for their moment before the shutter are named; in others they are not. The editorial notes that accompany each picture are informative and set each picture into a comprehensible context. They all tend to be of an up-beat nature, and in some cases they may veer toward buying into some of the University's self-generating publicity (such as references to national rankings). The racial and ethnic diversity that is now such an encouraging aspect of Stony Brook is a very recent phenomenon: the pictures bear this out, but one only notes the prevailing white-ness of the scene if one is attuned to look for it. Nor are there many shots of the blue-collar staff (nor of construction workers) — those on whose underpaid labors the University is able to run on a daily

basis. And, as a survivor of the early decades, I kept looking for a comment on how stark and ugly the original campus was – and remained for some years. But these are criticisms of the University, much more than they are of Nyitray and Becker, who have accomplished their task by presenting us with an attractive, user-friendly volume that helps drive home the idea that "we are part of history."

JOEL T. ROSENTHAL  
*History Department*  
*SUNY Stony Brook*

Barbara Shea. *Discover Long Island: Exploring the Great Places from Sea to Sound*. Melville, N.Y.: Newsday, 2002. Illustrations. Pp. viii, 320. \$19.95 (paper).

Newsday has become a major publisher of Long Island history, initially in 1985, with Bernie Bookbinder's, *Long Island: People and Places, Past and Present* (2d ed., 1998), and more recently with *Long Island: Our Story* (1998), *Hometown, Long Island* (1999), and *Takeoff! How Long Island Inspired America to Fly* (2000). Like these latter three publications, *Discover Long Island* originated in feature articles in the daily newspaper, but was reformatted into a convenient 6"x9" paperback.

Barbara Shea, a travel writer for *Newsday*, spent nearly a year turning her "traveler's eye on the nearby world." She reports that even for the places she knew well, she was "continually amazed at all that was new" and that she had "previously missed." Like many Long Islanders, however, Shea had not thoroughly explored attractions in the region, and she acknowledges that she was "truly bowled over by all there is to discover close at hand" (vii, viii).

Forty "major destinations" focus on individual attractions, arranged alphabetically from Atlantis Marine World and Belmont Park, to the United States Merchant Marine Academy and William Floyd Estate. A number of the entries focus on communities, including not only the expected Southampton, East Hampton, and Sag Harbor, but also Freeport and Long Beach, as well as Sea Cliff, Huntington, Stony Brook, Port Jefferson, and Greenport. The John P. Humes Japanese Stroll Garden in Mill Neck and the Pine Barrens in Manorville are among the featured parks and preserves. Each of the six to eight-page major entries includes historical background information as well as descriptions of the sites and several attractive full color photographs. The "At a Glance" sections for each entry provide basic information: location, hours, fees, brief travel directions, a map of the location showing major roads, phone numbers, web sites, a notation



regarding wheelchair accessibility, and whether "child appropriate." Shea also gives brief attention to other nearby attractions ("While You're There"). She implicitly defines Long Island as Nassau and Suffolk Counties and does not include sites in Queens and Brooklyn.

Some cross references within the main entries would be helpful. The entry on Gold Coast Mansions, for example, should mention other major entries which focus on Sands Point Preserve, Old Westbury Gardens, Coe Hall, and Vanderbilt's Eagle's Nest, which are only briefly listed here.

Discover Long Island includes ten pages of restaurants organized by location with mini reviews by Newsday's dining critics. In addition to an entry devoted to "North Fork Wine Country," there is a listing of Long Island wineries at the end, with basic information and special events for each. Three pages of "More Destinations" briefly list smaller parks, preserves, and museums not mentioned earlier in the book. The thorough index is helpful in locating information in the book, and a concluding three pages of maps indicating sites is useful.

How does this compare to other guidebooks? *Where to Go and What to Do on Long Island* by SCOPE (the Suffolk County Organization for the Promotion of Education) is in its 3d edition (2002; 223 pages, Dover paperback, \$5.95). Its descriptions are quite brief (most ranging from six to ten lines). Since it was originally planned primarily for teachers and others taking groups, it includes some locations which are not easily accessible to individuals or families (e.g. tours of a hospital and radio stations) and some commercial sites (e.g. Adventureland and Sky dive Long Island). The SCOPE guide provides information on tours, appropriate grade levels, eating facilities, and other basic information (location, hours, fees) in a uniform format. Attractively priced, it includes some black and white photographs. One of its indexes is by category, and a second is alphabetical.

The revised edition of *Long Island: A Guide to New York's Suffolk and Nassau Counties* (1991), by Raymond E. Spinzia, Judith A. Spinzia, and Karthryn E. Sprinzia, has been out of print for a decade, but is still a useful reference, particularly for its more extensive historical information, descriptions of Tiffany and other stained glass windows, extensive cross references, and very detailed driving directions. Moreover, the Spinzias include in their 464-page book historic churches and cemeteries, list of sites on the National Register of Historic Places, and such landmarks as the Beebe windmill in Bridgehampton and the Smithtown Bull, which are not mentioned in the other guidebooks.

Newsday's *Fun Book* is distributed annually to subscribers in the late spring and is available in some bookstores. In a 9"x12" format on newsprint, it includes sites in Queens (but not Brooklyn) as well as Nassau and Suffolk. It has a broader coverage, with museums and parks as in the other guidebooks, but also arts, entertainment, recreation, and sports

activities. Although most entries are brief, it provides basic information, and on the internet ([www.newsday.com/funbook](http://www.newsday.com/funbook)), it is updated and searchable. Thus, each of these alternative guides has some unique features.

Overall, however, *Discover Long Island* has clear advantages over the other available guidebooks. Within its defined scope, it is comprehensive, as well as exceptionally readable and attractive—a most useful and welcome guidebook. Even those quite familiar with Long Island's attractions will find new places to explore in this book and enjoy reading about their favorite sites. This deserves a place on your bookshelf; I recommend it highly.

NATALIE A. NAYLOR  
*Professor Emerita*  
*Hofstra University*

## BOOK NOTES

Kestler, Frances Roe. *Shelter Island's First Lady of Romance: Faith Baldwin*. Flushing, NY: Francis Roe Kestler, 2002. Illustrations. Pp. 37. Paper. Celebrates the life of prolific romance novelist and Shelter Island native Faith Baldwin in an easy-to-read style that will delight fans of Baldwin and Shelter Island.

Murray, Sylvie. *The Progressive Housewife: Community Activism in Suburban Queens, 1945-1965*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2003. Bibliography, index, maps, tables, notes. Pp. 248. Cloth, \$35.00. To be reviewed in the next issue of the Journal.

## COMMUNICATIONS

23 May 2003

To the Editor:

I appreciate Christopher Densmore's well-informed review of "*The People Called Quakers*": *Records of Long Island Friends, 1671-1703* in the *Long Island Historical Journal* 14 (Fall 2001/ Spring 2002): 160-162. I would like to make your readers aware that the book is available in a hardcover, cloth edition (\$28.00) as well as the paperback (\$18.00) that was mentioned. Scholars may be interested in a companion, literal, line-by-line transcription, which I also edited, *Long Island Quaker Minutes, 1671-1703* (Hempstead: Hofstra University, 2001). This spiral bound, 131-page paperback is available from the Long Island Studies Institute, Hofstra University, 619 Fulton Avenue, Hempstead, NY 11549, (516) 463-6411.

Sincerely,

Natalie A. Naylor  
Professor Emerita  
Hofstra University

**Long Island Historical Journal**

**Department of History**

Stony Brook University

Stony Brook, New York 11794-4348

Non-Profit Org.

U.S. Postage

PAID

Permit No. 65

Stony Brook, NY

11790

**Main Library 14**

**Special Collections**

**SUNY Stony Brook**

**Stony Brook, NY 11794-3323**