

*Historical Society of East Rockaway & Lynbrook*

## DID YOU KNOW?

*Yaphank is in  
the middle of  
Long Island? :*

- "It's not what you know, it's what you do with what you know."

Thomas Friedman  
New York Times  
NPR

## YOUR INPUT

*More Membership*

*Scintillating Ideas*

*Interesting  
Programs*

*Exciting Adventures*

*Networking*

*Circa Signs*

Visit us on the WEB

[www.HSERL.com](http://www.HSERL.com)

## SHALL WE PARE



This is harvest time. Watch for the Harvest Moon.

Before you know it, we will run out of peelers and vegetables to peel. No, this is not an agrarian paper.

September begins our year. So the first item of business should be membership renewal.

There is a form at the end of the paper. Please renew to keep us working. There is a lot of news yet to be.

**THE LIBRARY OF  
CONGRESS HAS EVERY  
TWITTER EVER  
WRITTEN...**

**HUH?**

## MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

### COST

- \$15 Individual
- \$35 Family
- \$100 Supporting

Send to Box 351  
East Rockaway, NY  
11518-0351

Include **E-MAIL**

**WHY?**

**YOU'RE SMART**

- You want to be part of the Historic Society.
- You'll have a chance to do something different
- You'll share your creativity
- You can be part of the Retrospective
- You can get first dibs on the Winter Tea
- And you'll know all the wonderful things you can do.

**What do you know  
about Social Media?**

**Ask a teenager.**

**OF COURSE!**

## What Have We Been Up To?

### **DATES of EVENTS**

**September 17<sup>th</sup> HSERL**  
*Meeting East Rockaway Senior Center 7:15 p.m.*

**September 19<sup>th</sup> Our Garage**  
*Sale Treasure Trove 10- 4 p.m.*

**September 20<sup>th</sup>**  
*10 – 1p.m.*  
592 Scranton Avenue  
Lynbrook. Donate:  
599-4466 Nancy Wolfsohn  
887- 9094 Bob Sympson

**October 15<sup>th</sup> HSERL**  
*Meeting – Ditto above Meeting time and place*

**October 21<sup>st</sup> Art Mattson**  
*The Battle of Plattsburgh Lynbrook Library 7:15 p.m.*

**October 28<sup>th</sup> Hon. Carolyn McCarthy, I Was There, Epic Events & Impressions, Lynbrook Library 7:15 p.m.**

**November 7<sup>th</sup>**  
*Levittown Historical Society Abby Road School 700 p.m*

**November 22<sup>nd</sup>**  
*The Bristol Mexico Remembrance Rockville Cemetery 12 Noon*

Madeline received an e-mail from Jessica Betsworth of the New York State Preservation. She informed us that the Denton House at 60 Denton Avenue East Rockaway was being considered for preservation. Ellen Morrison, who had said that this was the dream house for her, had made the initial inquiry.



**The Delamater Denton House, a number of years ago**

### **A FOLLOW UP OCCURS...**

Bob Sympson in our eternal quest for a **Location** sought direction from Alexandra Wolfe, Director of the Society for the Preservation of Long Island Antiquities. Bob had done this previously, too.

But this wonderful event hurried us along. We arranged a meeting at the Community Church of Douglaston with Alexandra and Jason Crowley, Preservation Director. You remember, he addressed us at our Annual Meeting.

Well, let us get to the point. We met and had a vigorous discussion on not only the Denton House but also plans for our future. This will be exciting and we will need all of you.

First we did send a letter of support to Jessica Betsworth for the Denton House and we also asked Mayor Francis Lenahan to put in a word for this effort. Previously when we had worked on the Haviland Davison Grist Mill and its placement on the National Register we needed support from our local officials.

See page 6 for further information.

### **AND THEN...**

It's still a small world. At our meeting with Alexandra and Jason, we learned that both Alexandra and Bob Sympson had attended an opening of the newly restored Swezey Avey House in Yaphank, NY on Saturday, August 20<sup>th</sup> sponsored by the Yaphank Historical Society which is 40 years old.

It was an opportunity to tour the Swezey house which is pre-Revolutionary War.

The Yaphank Historical Society leases its properties from the Town of Brookhaven or from Suffolk County. The society is responsible for the work inside of the buildings.

Olive Archer told of how the first floor was in terrible condition. The floor from the attic of the building was removed and laid on the first floor. The wide planks fit the area perfectly.

The house was minimalist. The Historical Society had its office on the second floor. Most likely it held meetings in the dining room on the first floor. Proprietorship of a building has many responsibilities. Indeed any building has to be put to use for other activities to make it sustainable. This idea will be a work in progress. Remember, we have moved forward over 20 years and we will continue to do so with your help and inspiration.



**Bob Simpson is looking at a Map of Yaphank Then and Now.**

We had another chance to see something which turned out to have been a fund raiser. Kathy Schmidt talked about a **Signature Quilt**. The society had sold 6"x6" squares. People wrote a message on them or signed them. Then members embroidered each square and ultimately sewn them together. The quilt had been placed on a bed for a number of years. Then when the Swezey House came into their hands, the Quilt was hung on a wall. Stunning.

## **WE ALSO ATTEND SOME INTERESTING CONFERENCES**

**You can too.**

The Historical Society holds membership in a number of organizations. This membership affords us the chance to attend various conferences. LILRC held one at the Farmingdale Library on the use of social media. It may be difficult to ponder but that is the wave of the future. It will be used to preserve and document historic events, materials and activities. Just go to a restaurant and see how many patrons are viewing their phones rather than engaging in conversation. Of course, it may be possible that the restaurant is too noisy so eyes glued to a screen become a lame excuse. It is difficult to fathom the scope of this in 10 years. The Library of Congress has on file every Twitter.

Madeline and Pat McGivern will be attending A STEM conference on September 20<sup>th</sup> at Hofstra.. This will be in conjunction with the RETRO and the Common Core curriculum.

Ed. Patricia C. Sympson, PhD  
[psympson@optonline.net](mailto:psympson@optonline.net)

# Heritage Scholar

We have been successful with young people. It's a fact. Our Retrospective is quite an accomplishment.

One of the suggestions of our members was to reach out to the Social Studies teachers and the History clubs of both school districts. Great Idea! We will do that Today, while this is being written, is the first day of school. It would be discreet to wait until the youngsters get their feet wet. It is on our calendar to contact the appropriate people in both schools.

But that doesn't let our current members off the hook. Maybe you know a

young person who is interested in history. Maybe you know someone who is interested in special projects.

Is it possible that an Eagle Scout could combine his project with a history bent and actually expand his project to include work for Scholar Project? Gold Awards are given to Girl Scouts. Could that same scenario be possible for a young lady to combine her work so as to include an aspect of history and be able to work with us on a project?

You know young people

they are in all our lives. Make an inquiry, See if they might be interested. They may just want to become a member.

We are seriously working to expand our horizons. You are part of that. Let's see what we can do. Wouldn't it be exciting to pique the interest of young people? We can't wean them from their interest in social media but maybe they can bring us along and grab our interest.

Let's pare that potato so we don't have to peel the onion and pull the weeds.

PLEASE  
SEND US YOUR  
MEMBERSHIP  
&  
GIVE  
US  
YOUR  
E-MAIL,  
THANK YOU

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## THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF EAST ROCKAWAY & LYNBR00K

### MEMBERSHIP FORM

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Address

\_\_\_\_\_  
Phone /Cell phone

\_\_\_\_\_  
Village

\_\_\_\_\_  
e-mail

I am interested in \_\_\_\_\_

I am especially good at \_\_\_\_\_

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ enclosed

Box 351

Thank you for your support!

East Rockaway, NY 11518-0351

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## STORIES OF SPECIAL INTEREST

By Art Mattson. Lynbrook Village Historian

### Lynbrook Train Schedules in 1923 and Today

In 1923, typical commuting time from Lynbrook to Penn Station was 31 minutes on the express train. Moreover, you could depend on it. Today's timetable has most trains taking 35 to 40 minutes. But few of these trains run on time. Isn't it amazing what modern technology can do?

### Streets of Shells in 1912

"Lynbrook Trustee Doxsey was authorized to purchase 1500 bushels of oyster shells at four cents per bushel, to be used on the village streets." --- South Side Observer Dec 5, 1912.

The shells were purchased and promptly laid down on the streets. One can only imagine how the entire village smelled that summer. Then again, baths weren't in vogue in 1912, so maybe there was a beneficial "masking" effect.

### Lynbrook's 1876 Race Track

Lynbrook had a popular racetrack from 1876 to at least 1907. It was called the Driving Park. The track was located in Lynbrook's Northeast Quadrant between today's Driving Park Avenue and Peninsula Boulevard (then called, "The Pipeline" and "The Brooklyn City Aqueduct"). Horse races – both flats and trotters – and bicycle races were run there.

### A Sad End in 1859

In 1859, shortly after a Fourth of July celebratory cannon blew him up, Anthony Pearsall's epitaph was written on his tombstone in the Old Sand Hole Cemetery:

*In memory of that eventful time  
When our forefathers did the Declaration sign  
I fired the cannon and thought it just  
In memory of their sacred trust.*

*Though in this act I lost my life,  
I do rejoice there's an end to strife.  
And freedom's flag is now unfurled  
And I have gained another world.*



By Madeline Pearson, Executive Director HSERL

## **60 DENTON AVENUE, EAST ROCKAWAY**

HSERL was recently notified that 60 Denton Avenue in East Rockaway is being considered by the NYS Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation to be nominated to the National and State Registers of Historic Places.

Local histories indicate that the Denton Homestead was originally built on Main Street by ca. 1795 to serve as a tavern. It was well situated to serve sailors and travelers coming through the East Rockaway port. With a deep, natural channel the industries of the grist mill, oystering, fishing and lumbering increased commerce and the population. Oliver Denton (1773-1846), a descendent of Rev. Richard Denton, moved to Near Rockaway (now East Rockaway) and purchased the tavern and surrounding land in 1808. Oliver remodeled the tavern to better accommodate his family. Oliver and his son Oliver S. Denton (1809-1884) made a living farming this significant amount of land. Over the course of four generations, the Denton family shaped the development of significant acreage in East Rockaway and frequently participated in the civic and political life of the community.

In 1900, the homestead was moved slightly west to accommodate the construction of Denton Avenue. Then in 1924, the home and a ca. 1900 carriage house were moved a second time further north on Denton Avenue, to its present location, allowing for the extension of Atlantic Ave. After the move the home was expanded and enhanced to appear more impressive to potential buyers. This also helped set the tone for new construction along Denton Avenue. By 1951, Denton Avenue was filled with new homes.

HSERL wrote a letter in support of the nomination for the State Review Board's September 11<sup>th</sup> meeting. It is hoped that HSERL will be able to celebrate state and national registry of 60 Denton Avenue, along with its owner and the rest of East Rockaway. This property is currently for sale; however, the owner wished the home and former Denton family to be recognized and acknowledged for the contributions to our community's history.

Madeline Pearson, adapted from Registration Form prepared by Jennifer Betsworth, New York State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO)

**Don't miss our display at the Lynbrook Railroad Station!**





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**COMPANY NAME**

Street Address 1

Address 2

City, ST 78269



**COMPANY NAME**  
**STREET ADDRESS**  
**CITY, ST 22134**