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May, 2004

MAY MEETING

The Society's May Meeting is planned for Tuesday, May 25 at 8:00 P.M. The speaker for the evening will be our own Joshua Soren, who has a reputation as our local Wantagh historian. He will tell us the story of High Hill Beach, the settlement that was where Jones Beach is today. Since he now works at Jones Beach, he has been able to add interesting new details to the record of that old-time beach resort.

Refreshments following the meeting will be provided by our Hospitality Committee. If you'd like to help with refreshments, call Theresa Donahue at (516) 221-2151.



COMMUNITY GARAGE SALE

The Society's Annual Spring "Community Garage Sale" was held on Saturday, May 1 and, as predicted, everyone had a grand time. We thank Chris Marzigliano, who organized everything. All told, there were 52 vendors, who were highly pleased with the turnout."

MARGARET AIKEN

We are saddened to report the death of Margaret Aiken.

Margaret was the driving force in the formation of the Wantagh Preservation Society. She organized it around the project of "saving" the old railroad station when the tracks were elevated in the 1960's, and was a Trustee and our first President.

Although she moved to Florida in 1971, the society she founded is still active in Wantagh affairs.

NEW YORK STATE AIDS US

Through the efforts of State Senator Charles Fuschillo, we have received a grant of \$10,000 for maintenance of our Museum, Wantagh's original railroad station. The building has suffered from weather damage over the years, and needs roof repairs, new gutters and refreshment of its paint.

The Board of Trustees is particularly grateful for this grant because it will improve the appearance of the building in ways that neither Nassau County or the Preservation Society could ordinarily afford. We look forward to a newer, neater Museum in the heart of



Preservation Society Calendar

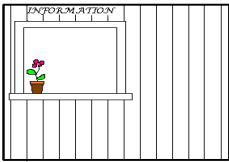
Tuesday, May 25: Membership Meeting in General Purpose Room of the Wantagh Library, 8:00 P.M. Learn from Josh Soren about High Hill Beach, the settlement that was where Jones Beach is today.

Tuesday, June 15: Trustees meeting in the Museum waiting room, 8:00 P.M.

Saturday, July 3: Independence Day parade steps off at 10:00 A.M. from the parking lot behind the 5 & 10, takes Park Avenue west, Wantagh Avenue north to Island Road, then south on Beech Street to the Beech Street School.

Tuesday, August 24: Children's Magic Show at the Wantagh Museum, 10:00 A.M.

Tuesday, August 24: Outdoor Movie Meeting



THE INFORMATION WINDOW

OF THE WANTAGH PRESERVATION SOCIETY

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May, 2004

TO JOIN OR RENEW MEMBERSHIP

Name _____

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Circle one: Indiv. \$6 Family \$12

Send to: Wantagh Preservation Society

MUSEUM OPEN FOR SUMMER

The Wantagh Museum has resumed its summer schedule, and will be open from 2:00 to 4:00 on Sunday afternoons.

There is a need for volunteers to man the museum, though. Our hosts get to meet the interested visitors and chat with them about Wantagh's history, and about what is likely to happen next. It makes for a pleasant Sunday afternoon.


If you would like to volunteer as a host, call Gregg Hammond at (516) 826-8874, and he will be glad to pencil you into the schedule. 

INTERNET

The Wantagh Preservation Society is on the Web at www.wantagh.li, which covers Wantagh stuff in general. Check it out for weather, tide tables, and other local resources, as well as the Preservation Society news. To find the Preservation Society page, click on "Activities," then "Wantagh Museum." There is even a membership form for those who would like to join or renew their

THE INFORMATION WINDOW

The *Information Window* is a publication of the Wantagh Preservation Society, and is published preceding its monthly Membership Meetings.

The Editor of the *Information Window* is Dick MacMillan, at (516) 785-3951. Articles and notices are invited on subjects of local interest. 

BIRDSALL JAMES

An old Wantagh hand, Birdsall James (6-26-1886 to 2-17-1973) wrote a short recollection of his life in Wantagh, and it provides a glimpse of life in the olden days. Here is a sample, selected because it mentions Zach's Bay, the subject of the talk at this month's meeting.

"When I was married a while I worked for a baker in Wantagh and had to get there at 3:30 A.M. to feed horses and load my wagon for the baker route. The place was where the drug store is now, just north of the Long Island Rail Road.

"My father worked on the Long Island Rail Road when it was first built many years ago. He was born in 1850. The name for Zachs Bay was derived from Zachariah James of Seaford, who was my great grandfather. Six billion cubic yards of sand had to be excavated from the area which was a maze of shoals and bars, in order to make it into the deep water boating and bathing bay of today.

"My great grandfather, Zachariah James, had a store at High Hill Beach. He got washed off the beach when a new inlet broke through and wrecked everything. He was a man about the size of Abraham Lincoln and looked like him. After he got washed off the beach he moved back to Seaford on Washington Avenue on a small farm and my brother George worked for him.

"I left the house on Garners Avenue when I was about 13 years old and we moved down on Seamans Neck Road. We had about 35 acres there on the corner of Clark Street and Seamans Neck Road. It was the farm of Jack and Will Seaman. We were there seven years. We had four or five horses, pigs, chickens, ducks, cows, etc.

"When my wife and I were first married we lived with my father and stepmother on the farm.

"My mother died when I was about 14 years old. There was one pickle factory right to the east of Nassau and Suffolk Lumber Yard. One Chinese Laundry and Wallace Verity Barber Shop. The barber shop sold ice cream and bicycles. You could get a large plate of Ice Cream for 10 cents and a shave and a haircut for 25