

The
**INFORMATION
WINDOW**
of the
Wantagh Preservation Society
PO Box 132, Wantagh, New York
11793

May 2009

NEXT MEETING MAY 26

Dated material

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MAY 26 MEETING

The May 26 General Meeting will be held in the Community Room of the Wantagh Public Library, Tuesday, at 8:00 P.M. The meeting topic will be the 175th anniversary of the Long Island Railroad, and some of the history that brought it to its modern status. Our speaker will be David Morrison, a long-time member of the Society, long associated with the Long Island. He will present a Power-Point sequence of the LIRR over the years, perhaps even showing our Wantagh Station in its glory days!

During the refreshment period there will be a chance to ask questions and compare our LIRR adventures. If you'd like to help with refreshments, please call Theresa Donahue at (516) 221-2152.


Following refreshments, there will be a short business meeting for Society members. A major item for discussion is the appointment of a recording secretary for the Society. 


MAILING PROBLEMS

Last month's Information Window was received late by many of our members; we apologize. We're working with the Post Office to correct the problem. You'll notice a cryptic note, like "CR 20," added to your mailing label to let the Post Office know which Carrier Route leads to your address. 

SPRING YARD SALE WENT WELL

We were blessed with great weather for our Spring Yard Sale on Saturday, May 16, with only minor threats of drizzle. We had a "Society Table," with our *Tour of Wantagh's Historical Sites*, as well as 31 vendors, providing all sorts of good things for us guests to look over and buy up.


The lunch concession did well, too, selling out of both chili and hot dogs. As a result, our budget is in the black (a little bit, anyway) and we are well on our way to a successful Summer season. 



Preservation Society Calendar

Tuesday, May 26, 2009: General Membership Meeting in the Community Room of the Wantagh Public Library, 8:00 P.M.

Tuesday, June 16, 2009: Trustees Meeting in the Museum waiting room, 8:00 P.M..

Saturday, July 4, 2009: Independence Day Parade, 10 A.M., north on Wantagh Avenue from Park Avenue to Island Road, then east to Beech Street, then south to the Beech Street School. Look for the Preservation Society flag! 

TO JOIN OR RENEW MEMBERSHIP

Name: _____

Addr: _____

_____ ZIP _____


E-mail: _____

Circle one:	Indiv \$10	Family \$20
	Patron \$50	Fellow \$100


Mail to: Wantagh Preservation Society
P O Box 132, WANTAGH, NY 11793

MEMBERSHIP COSTS

Our Board of Trustees has been concerned lately about the costs of running our Society. A major monthly cost, of course, is the printing and postage required for the Information Window. Each information Window delivered costs approximately 36 cents for printing and postage, so we're planning to drop mailings to members who are seriously behind with their dues. Check for a note, "Last issue until dues are paid" on your mailing label.

The amount of dues that you pay is up to you and your opinion of the needs of the Society. Most folks start with the "Individual" or "Family" membership, and progress to the higher levels over time. 

MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS

Membership Chair Alice Blaustein reported at last week's Trustee Meeting that so far this year 105 members had remembered to pay their dues. She is hopeful that more will be coming in over the next month so that we will have complete membership by the time of the Independence Day Parade on July Fourth. 

The INFORMATION WINDOW

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

It is also available on-line at www.wantagh.li along with the Society's event program and all sorts of good things connected with Wantagh.

You are invited to submit articles on items of local historical interest. The editor is Dick MacMillan, (516) 785-3951. 

All of us know Hempstead Turnpike as the major highway that forms a major east-west link right across Nassau County. It has a remarkable history in the development of Long Island. Here's a little run-down on how it came to be.

Hempstead turnpike – or New York Route 24 – connects Queens County and New York City with Route 110 in Farmingdale, Suffolk County, near Republic Airport. It is called Jamaica Avenue in New York City, Hempstead Turnpike in Nassau County, and Conklin Street in Suffolk County.

Jamaica Avenue had its origins as an ancient trail for tribes from the west in the Ohio Valley and the Great Lakes, coming to trade skins and furs for wampum. Wampum, beads cut from quahog shell, was the major product of Long Island, and was used as common currency by the Indians.

By the eighteenth century it road was called King's Highway and for more than a century, it provided Dutch and English settlers with horse-drawn transportation.

The Jamaica and Hempstead Turnpike Company, incorporated in 1812, turned it into a money-making project. A few years later a road was constructed from the house of Charles McNeill at Grand St. in Jamaica, Queens, along the line of the present Jamaica Avenue and Hempstead Turnpike to the house of Isaac Clowes in Hempstead. This road was about ten miles long.

In the mid 1800s Jamaica Avenue became a plank road, complete with toll gate – a turnpike – and in 1866, tracks were laid for horse cars. Twenty years later it was electrified, becoming the first electric trolley in the state. The road was sold in 1897, to Queens and Nassau County. A trolley line to Belmont Park was built around that time, and this was later extended to Hempstead. Buses have replaced the trolleys over the years.

The first concrete building on Jamaica Avenue, known as "The Richmond" still stands today. Then in the early twentieth century the road was called Fulton Street.

Today Hempstead Turnpike is a landmark address for many institutions. Hofstra University and Nassau University Medical Center, Eisenhower Park, Reckson Plaza across from the Nassau Coliseum Complex, and New Island Hospital in Levittown. 