



The Information Window

WWI Memorial Update

By Tom Watson, President

Wantagh's original WWI memorial is in the process of being made by the Great South Bay Sign Company of Sayville, Long Island. The Wantagh Preservation Society will be working closely with the Wantagh American Legion on the dedication ceremony for this reconstructed memorial. The dedication ceremony will be held this coming Veterans Day on November 11. Veterans Day was once referred to as Armistice Day. In 1918 November 11 the armistice was signed for the cessation of hostilities on the Western Front of World War I. A formal peace agreement was later reached when the Treaty of Versailles was signed the following year.



Original WWI Memorial located near the original location of the Wantagh Train Station

Please watch out for more detailed information about the dedication ceremony as we approach Veteran's Day. The memorial will be erected on the small triangular park near the present day Wantagh Railroad Station. This is a fitting location since the original memorial once stood near the 1885 Wantagh Railroad Station. As you all know, the old Wantagh Railroad Station was moved in the 1960s, restored and is now home to the Wantagh Museum. 📖

Flags at the Wantagh Museum

If you passed the Wantagh Museum recently, you probably noticed the many flags on display. In honor of Memorial Day, the Wantagh Preservation Society and the Wantagh 6-12 Association are sponsoring the fifth annual Field of Honor on the grounds of the Wantagh Museum. To recognize and honor the courageous veterans who have dedicated their lives to protecting our freedom, the field of American flags were installed the morning of May 27 during a ceremony that was attended by local officials and members of the community. The flags will remain until July 7.

2019 Field of Honor on the grounds of the Wantagh Museum



See page 3 on becoming a WPS member!

For a donation is \$10, you may honor a member of the military (past, present, living or deceased) with a ribbon displayed on a flag. For a donation of \$20, you can display the ribbon and receive a new flag. Ribbons and flags will be distributed to donors after the event. Please contact Vivian Fitzgerald 314-1408 or Julie Argueta 446-0320 before July 7th if you are interested in a ribbon or flag. 📖

Wantagh Preservation Society

1700 Wantagh Avenue (Museum Location)
 PO Box 132 (Mailing Address)
 Wantagh, Long Island, New York 11793

516.826.8767

museum.wantagh.li

Upcoming Events:

- ◆ General Meeting, October 22, 7:00 PM at Wantagh Library, All are Welcome, Program: "Theodore Roosevelt, the First of the Modern Day Presidents"
- ◆ General Meeting, November 26, 7:00 PM at Wantagh Library, All are Welcome, Program: "History of an 18th century Wantagh House"

Wantagh Preservation Society

Elected Officers

President: Tom Watson
Vice President: Bob Meagher
Recording Secretary: Open
Treasurer: Wayne Wagner

Appointed Officers

Curator: Carol Poulos
Newsletter Editor: Jim Colotti

Trustees

Bob Cook
Ellen Cook
Mary Corrigan
Gary Hammond
Fred Parola
Claire Reisert
Barry Rivadue
Paul Sigler
Matt Susco
Mary Wagner
Elaine Yarris

The Information Window is the official newsletter of the Wantagh Preservation Society, and is published approximately six times each year. Please obtain written permission from the individual authors before using material contained in this publication.

We hope you enjoy our newsletter. Your comments, ideas and suggestions are welcome!

wps@wantagh.li



WPS trustees Mary Corrigan, Matt Susco and Carol Poulos (left to right) participated in the Wantagh Memorial Day Parade last month

*Museum is now
open Sundays
from
2 to 4 PM*



*More renovations are
underway!*

Noteworthy June Meeting

Last month's general meeting was a little atypical in that it took place at the Wantagh Museum with a guest presentation by WPS member Harold Ball about finding historical items with a metal detector. As an extra treat, a live demonstration was done on the museum grounds highlighting the various types of detectors and how to distinguish between different metal types.



Of course the Wantagh Museum was open for guests to view as well as the always-popular Parlor train car where visitors can get a glimpse into how the wealthy traveled 100 years ago. 📖



Wantagh Life sans Snapchat

by Jim Colotti, Editor

Attention history buffs and curiosity seekers! Feel free to immerse yourself in the past and see first-hand what life was like in Wantagh long before Cell Phones, Snapchat and Instagram. All are invited to visit the Wantagh Museum and take a journey back in time. We're open from late April to early November on Sundays from 2 to 4 PM. While you're there, checkout all the new exhibits and be sure to view the 1958 phone directory - perhaps you may recognize some of the names.

The Museum is usually hosted by a trustee, but members are welcome to help host, like longtime WPS colleague Clara Sugar did last month. If interested, give us a call at 826-8767 or write us a good old-fashioned email: wps@wantagh.li ... Thanks! 📖



Clara Sugar (center) who co-hosted last month, discusses Wantagh landmarks with visitors from Farmingdale



Become a WPS member
- scan or click the QR
code or mail in the
coupon below - and
thanks!

Are You a Member?

By Mary Wagner, Membership Chairman

Our membership drive for 2019 begins on January 1 and ends on December 31. The money raised through membership is used for maintenance of our museum and grounds, as well as the post office and Jamaica parlor car restoration projects. Our latest project is recreating the World War I memorial at the Long Island Railroad Station where it originally stood. You are not just joining the society - you become a supporter of history by enabling the society to continue its work to educate residents, especially children, on Wantagh's past.

Please join us by paying your dues for 2019. We also invite you to become an active member of the society. Please also let us know if you have any old Wantagh photos, old Wantagh newspapers, or any other historical Wantagh artifacts. Thanks! 📖

We Need You! Join or Renew Your Membership in 2019!

Name: _____
 Street: _____
 Town: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____
 Phone: _____ New Renew
 Email: _____

I'd like to help with:

- | | | | |
|---|---|---|--------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Gardening & Planting | <input type="checkbox"/> General Meeting Planning | <input type="checkbox"/> Construction | <input type="checkbox"/> Publicity |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hosting museum on a Sunday | <input type="checkbox"/> Special Event Planning | <input type="checkbox"/> Publication & Newsletter | <input type="checkbox"/> Restoration |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ | | | |

Check Membership Level: Individual \$15 Family \$25 Friend \$35 Patron \$50 Fellow \$100

Please Make Checks Payable To: Wantagh Preservation Society PO Box 132 Wantagh, NY 11793

"Preservation with a Purpose."

110th Anniversary of the Lumber Yard Fire

By Carol Poulos

At 8:30 on the evening of 1909 July 9, a fire broke out at the Young Brothers lumber yards, located on Beech Street and Railroad Avenue, next to the railroad tracks. Alerted by the whistle of an engineer working on a city pipe line, who discovered the fire, firemen and citizens came out. They formed bucket brigades to fight the flames and placed burlap bags over the eyes of terrified horses as they led them out of the area to safety. There was a stiff breeze, which caused the fire to spread rapidly among the buildings, lumber piles, and across the tracks, melting telephone and telegraph wires and blocking traffic. The sky was illuminated for miles, bringing spectators, many of whom joined the bucket brigades. The Bellmore, Seaford and Amityville fire companies were called and arrived to assist.

In 1909, Wantagh did not have a water system and depended on wells. Due to the long dry weather spell, the water supply was inadequate and firemen were forced to open a manhole and tap into an old Brooklyn Water Works pipeline. Bellmore firemen got their hose into the pipe and were able to get a stream on the fire, as others tried to prevent the spread of flames. At 1 AM, the Freeport Fire Dept. arrived to relieve the firemen who had worked more than 4 hours in the intense heat.

The night of the fire, owners of the lumber yard, Frank C. and Harrison J. Young, were vacationing at High Hill Beach (please see description below) and had witnessed the bright sky. They had gone to bed, unaware that it was their business that was burning. The Fussell brothers, proprietors of the general store, crossed the bay during the night to inform them.

The fire caused \$25,000 in damage (approximately \$703,550 in today's dollars). It destroyed three quarters of the yards but the Young Brothers had insurance, which helped cover the losses and the business carried on. None of the firemen were hurt. As a result of this devastating event, the Wantagh Fire Department saw the need for motor driven fire apparatus which would be far superior to the hand pumper, and it was built the following year by fireman and local blacksmith, George Box. 📖



Young Brothers lumber yards circa 1910

Where was High Hill Beach?

High Hill Beach was located on the crescent-shaped eastern rim of Zach's Bay among the dunes toward the surf. It existed from 1900 until 1939 when it was razed by Robert Moses to make way for Jones Beach State Park.

In its early days, High Hill Beach consisted of a couple of dozen cottages that were built on leased land. As the Beach became more popular, the number of cottages grew to 98, and the community included a boarding house, a hotel-casino, a life-saving station and a post office. 📖



Cottages at High Hill Beach facing the Ocean, east of the Main Boardwalk

Employees at Savage's Hotel and Casino of High Hill Beach in 1915. The hotel was open from May to October and featured a large dance hall, baseball field and 40 rooms facing the ocean.

