

FREEPORT HISTORICAL SOCIETY & MUSEUM

FREEPORT, NEW YORK

Newsletter

Spring 2016



Message from the President

Prohibition in Freeport

On January 2016, the Freeport Historical Society (Regina Feeney and Cynthia Krieg) and the Freeport Memorial Library presented a program on Prohibition at Jeremy's Ale House on Woodcleft Canal. Jeremy blacked out the windows, served prohibition era hors d'oeuvres and cocktails. Many of the standing room only audience dressed in 20s style costumes. Marty Himes came as a policeman in a 20s uniform and parked the police car outside Jeremy's. Jeanne Booth and Denise Rushton helped us set up. A brief synopsis of the presentation follows.

The "Noble Experiment" known as Prohibition was the culmination of an almost two-century long crusade against alcohol. In Freeport, Prohibition was the start of a nearly fourteen year binge of rum running, bootlegging, speakeasies, and liquor-packed road houses. Fishermen and baymen ferried whiskey in from "Rum Row" a flotilla of boats stocked with liquor anchored three miles out to sea. What was not consumed by locals and Nassau County politicians ended up in the City. Nearly one-third of all liquor that found its way into Manhattan came from Long Island. During Prohibition, the Freeport Point Shipyard, located at 405 Woodcleft Avenue, owned by the Scopinch family, built 15 vessels for the Coast Guard and 30 boats for the rum-runners. Notorious gangster Dutch Schultz purchased three 42-foot rum running boats from Freeport Point. These vessels were replete with three Packard Liberator 500 horsepower, air-cooled engines, bulletproof gas tanks, and room for 600 cases of liquor. Though Freeport was a quiet law-abiding community by day, once the sun set, it turned into a bootlegger paradise. Otto St. George's restaurant at the south end of Woodcleft Avenue served drinks to both rum runners and Prohibition agents. Merrick Road, Freeport's main thoroughfare during the 1920s was nicknamed "Bootleggers Boulevard."

The drinking habits of Freeporters are difficult to ascertain. The Historical Society's Pedigrees (arrest records) are being processed currently. Of the one-thousand records that have been analyzed, close to one-third are arrests for Volstead Act violations. After 13 years, 10 months, 19 days, 17 hours and 26 minutes, Americans had enough of Prohibition. Prohibition ended on December 5, 1933. One notable celebration took place in the American Legion Dugout, located on Sunrise Highway, when legionnaires executed "Old Man Prohibition" by firing squad. According to one source, volunteer undertakers buried the 'body' with delight after the execution.

Calendar of events...

April 24, 2016	Museum opens for 2016 season
May 30, 2016	Memorial Day Parade
June 4, 2016	Nautical Fair
September TBA	General Meeting Freeport Junk Yard Buffalo Avenue (near BJs)
November 27, 2016	Museum closes

General Meeting



Don't Know Much About Freeport

Think you know Freeport? This program will test your knowledge of local history. Where were the long disappeared golf courses? Why are fire hydrants painted different colors? How come old maps show Randall Park in the northwest? A tour of the junk yard will conclude the presentation. There will be limited seating so BYOC (bring your own chair).

Date: September TBA

Time: TBA

Location: Freeport Junk Yard, Buffalo Avenue (near BJs)

Refreshments will be served

Thank you!

We would like to send a special thank you to those who have helped keep the museum's curb appeal inviting.

Marty Himes for mowing the lawn and for the general upkeep on the grounds.

Denise Rushton for shoveling the museum out during snow storms and for watering the plants.

Friends of Freeport for the Fall cleanup of the grounds.

Jackie Fustero for the donation of a concrete bench and a finial from the old High School on Pine Street.

Paul Eberst who transported the bench and finial to the Museum.

Roadside Markers

The Freeport Historical Society in collaboration with the Freeport Landmarks Preservation Commission were able to apply for a grant from the Pomeroy Foundation to secure roadside markers. The Pomeroy Foundation "strongly believes that historic markers play an important role in local historic preservation by serving a dual purpose. They educate the public and foster historic tourism, which in turn can provide much needed economic benefits to the towns and villages where the markers are placed."

The foundation had a number of requirements including:

- Written permission from the owner of the property
- The site must be within the time frame of 1740-1915
- All information on the marker must be derived from primary sources

The committee consisted of Regina Feeney, Mary Kane, Cynthia Krieg, and Denise Rushton. Although there are many historic sites in Freeport, the requirements listed above, and a very short time span in which to do the research, limited our choices. The seven markers reflect the wonderful history of Freeport.

Woodcleft Canal

The marker is located on the Esplanade and reads: Dredged ca. 1897 by firm of Randall & Miller. John J. Randall was the father of Freeport & William G. Miller was a president. Note: William G. Miller was the second president (mayor) of Freeport, but we couldn't find a primary resource that said that. Researched by Cynthia Krieg.



Roadside Markers...

Freeport Bank

This marker is located on South Main Street at 23 South Main Street and reads: Building erected in 1905. President was John J. Randall and builder William G. Miller. Bank was organized in 1891. Note: The building is owned by Steve Civardi and he has decorated the walls with pictures of historic Freeport. Researched by Denise Rushton.



Trubia Rifle

This marker is located on the triangle between South Main Street and Church Street just north of Sunrise Highway and reads: Trophy gun obtained from the U.S. Navy Department was unveiled on July 4, 1902 by the DBP Mott Post of the Grand Army of the Republic. Researched by Mary Kane.

Kelby House

This marker is located on the north west corner of Lena Avenue and Wallace Street and reads: Home of Robert H. Kelby ca. 1902. Librarian of the New York Historical Society from 1898 to 1920. Son Charles was a NYS Judge. Researched by Regina Feeney.



Roadside Markers...

Seaman Avenue School

This marker is located on the corner of North Ocean Avenue and Lincoln Place and is the current Administration Building. It reads: Opened in 1908 to relieve crowding at Grove St. School. Attended by residents from northern section of Village. Researched by Cynthia Krieg.



Archer Street School

This marker is located on Archer Street between Miller Avenue and South Long Beach Avenue and reads: Opened in 1910 to serve students in south Freeport. This was an architectural duplicate of the Seaman Avenue School. Researched by Cynthia Krieg.

Columbus Avenue School

This marker is located on Columbus Avenue and reads: Built 1914, first school in Freeport with a gymnasium. John W. Dodd served as a principal here. Charles Hart was the architect. Note: Although we know John W. Dodd was the second principal we could not find this information in a primary source. Researched by Regina Feeney.



Calling on Volunteers!

We need your help for the **Memorial Day** parade to either march or ride in the car. We would love to have you join us.

Also, this year the **Nautical Fair** is on June 4th. The historical society has a table for the event. If you can spare an hour or two to sit, it would be greatly appreciated. The fair is usually well attended and it is fun to sit and people watch.

Please call the museum (516) 623-9632 and leave a message if you would like to volunteer for either event.

It's that time of year again...

Please take a moment and note if your membership is up for renewal. The Freeport Historical Society is a non-profit organization solely supported by memberships and contributions. In addition to the regular memberships, the Society has established a LIFE MEMBERSHIP FUND and a MEMORIAL FUND for receiving gifts. Remember your dues are tax deductible.

Please continue your support of the Museum's operation.

Thank you.

Officers and Trustees

President and Curator Cynthia Krieg

1st Vice President Marty Himes

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Mary Hessel	Camilla Wier
Tom Hessel	Frank Young

On the Web

We can be found on the web at:

www.freeporthistorymuseum.org. There you will find our current events and latest news! Don't forget to check out the longislandmemories.org site! We have over 5,000 photos loaded there.

Follow us on **Twitter!** Our handle is @FrptHisSoc

Join our group on **Facebook!**

Read our blog **freeportlihistory.blogspot.com**

Contact us at **freeporthistoricalsociety@yahoo.com**

Visit us at our **Second Life** office (pictured below)



MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS!

2016-2017 memberships are up for renewal. Check the mailing label for your expiration date. Please continue your support of the Museum's operation. Your dues are tax deductible. If you want a membership card, pick it up at the Museum or at the meeting.

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Please make check payable to "The Freeport Historical Society", P.O. Box 323, Freeport, NY 11520

- INDIVIDUAL (\$10 annually) FAMILY (\$15 annually) SUSTAINING (\$25 annually)
- ORGANIZATIONS/CORPORATIONS (\$50 annually)
- LIFE MEMBER (Single Donor \$150) LIFE MEMBER (Organizations/Corporations \$250)
- MEMORIAL FUND (In memory of) _____ \$ _____

Name _____

Address _____ Phone _____

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Please circle any area of interest as the Society NEEDS your participation and help.

Host/Hostess at the Museum Digital accessioning Newsletter Filing Research Gardening
Photography Cleaning Hospitality Committee (baking) Membership Mailings Graphic Arts