



The Rough Writer

The News of the Volunteers at Sagamore Hill

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This newsletter is produced by Milton Elis and the Volunteer Advisory Board for the volunteers and staff of the Sagamore Hill National Historic Site.

Superintendent
Gay Vietzke

Editor
Milton Elis

Layout/Design
Mónica Chirot

Contributors
Mark Koziol
Toby Selda

Comments?
Milton Elis
1 Jarvis Avenue
Syosset NY 11791
516 921-3414

Phone
516 922-4788
922-4271 x33 Visitor Center direct line

The National Park Service cares for the special places saved by the American people so that all may experience our heritage.

NEWS FROM THE COAL BIN *By Mark Koziol*

Federal Hall, on Wall Street, closed to the public in December 2004, will be undergoing extensive repairs and renovation. Cracks in the foundation, sustained in the September 11, 2001 collapse of the *World Trade Center*, will require repairs that will take from 12-18 months. The Sagamore Hill curatorial staff traveled to NYC on March 2 & 3 to assist in moving artifacts off the site.

Led by Curator *Amy Verone*, *Sue Sarna* and *Mark Koziol* spent their time carefully packaging plaster statues, boxing Civil War regimental flags, crating pastel and oil paintings and wrapping furniture. The artifacts will be moved to temporary storage at *Fort Wadsworth* in Staten Island and to the *Theodore Roosevelt Birthplace*.

Roosevelt and Tolstoy



The *New York Sun*, on September 25, 1942, ran the following story. "That history repeats itself in incidents as well as in its major aspects is illustrated by the fact that President (*Franklin*) *Roosevelt* has just sent a message to Russia by *Wendell L. Willkie*, twenty-five years after another *Roosevelt* (*Theodore*) sent a similar message from this country by *Count Ilya Tolstoy*, son of the great *Leon Tolstoy*.

Bernard Sandler, attorney with offices at 270 Broadway, recalled the Tolstoy-Roosevelt message. Mr. Sandler was connected with the Count during his unofficial goodwill lecture tour here in 1917, the former President, then Col. Roosevelt, sent the following letter back to Russia with Count Tolstoy.

"My Dear Count Tolstoy:

Through you I send my most hearty congratulations and good wishes to the men who have lead the Russian people in the great movement for democratic freedom. I speak to them as a fellow democrat and a fellow radical, when I urge them, for the sake of the ultimate welfare of the mass of the people of Russia, to see that their striking victory is used with such moderation and wisdom as to prevent all possibility of reaction. I have the keenest sympathy with your program for religious, political, and industrial freedom for all. It is not a very easy thing to carry through such a program; and in any such great movement as yours, the danger, at the point you have reached, comes almost as much from well meaning, unbalanced extremists who favor the revolution, as from the revolutionaries themselves. As you have put it, the torch of enlightenment fired the revolt; see that the light of the torch is not dimmed by any unwise and extreme action, and above all not by any of those sinister and dreadful deeds which a century and a quarter ago in France produced the Red Terror, and then by reaction, the White Terror. All of us who love liberty, who believe political and social and industrial democracy, are now looking with eager hope to Russia; and not for your sakes, but for our own sakes, we beg you, especially as by courage and disinterestedness you have forced through the revolution, to by wisdom and self control to secure for your country the permanent benefits of the revolution.

Very faithfully yours,

Theodore Roosevelt"

Editor's note: TR was referring to the March 1917 revolution led by Aleksandr Kerensky, that overthrew the Czar, not the revolution of November 1917, led by Lenin, that ousted the Kerensky government.



The Oryx in the Foyer



Drawing Room

REMINDER

Volunteer Recognition Night is Thursday, April 21 at 6:00 p.m. Buffet dinner will be followed by awards ceremony. Come to the picnic area behind the Visitors Center. In case of rain, everything will be at Old Orchard.

SITE NEWS: PEOPLE

Get well to *Bob Wulforth*, of Administration, on his recent surgery. Hope to see him back on the site very soon!

Good luck to *Kendell Sarna*, Sue's daughter, for surgery to repair her damaged elbow, injured when she was thrown from her horse.

SITE NEWS: EVENTS

The long standing volunteer request for new foreign language site brochures has turned into a reality. Superintendent *Gay Vietzke* announced that translations in Russian and Japanese are going to the printer shortly and that other language translations are in the works.

Puppets invaded the TRH on Monday and Tuesday, March 21 and 22. Students from the *New York University Film School* were on site to shoot a television program aimed at very young children. Using hand puppets, the students are making a series of films to showcase famous homes and sites. *Sue Sarna* and *Mark Koziol*, shepherded the young filmmakers around the house and the site. Now all the students have to do is sell the program.



NEWS OF THE FRIENDS OF SAGAMORE HILL



Co-Presidents Joni Foote and Linda Shookster

The first of the *Dr. John A. Gable Lecture Series*, *The Big Stick at Sea: Theodore Roosevelt's Navy*, was a resounding success. Over fifty people heard author *Edward J. Renehan, Jr.*'s presentation at *Christ Church Great Hall* in Oyster Bay. The next free lecture will be on Tuesday, April 19. The topic will be *Raising the Roof: The Expansion of the Roosevelt Home in 1905*. Curator *Amy Verone* will be making the presentation at 7:30 p.m., also at the Great Hall.

A reminder, that the Friend's Gala will commemorate the 100th anniversary of the Treaty of Portsmouth, ending the Russo-Japanese War and will be held on August 16 at a location to be determined.

Oyster Bay Historian, *John Hammond*, announced the casting order has been place for the equestrian statue of TR to be erected in Oyster Bay.

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior
Sagamore Hill National Historic Site
20 Sagamore Hill Road
Oyster Bay, New York 11771

The Volunteers of Sagamore Hill
20 Sagamore Hill Road
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TRIVIA ANSWER



TR's grand-father, *Cornelius Van Schaack Roosevelt*, bought the clock in 1826 in *Scheffield, England*.

KERMIT ROOSEVELT MAKES THE PAPERS



The real estate section of *The New York Times* on Sunday February 27 had a story about the *River Club*. The caption with the picture states, "the East River landing of the *River Club*, in

River House, between 52nd and 53rd Streets in 1928. The landing fell victim to the construction of the *East River Drive*, now the *Franklin D. Roosevelt Drive*, in the 1930s."

The article states that the president of the *River Club* was *Kermit Roosevelt*, a writer, steamship executive and son of President *Theodore Roosevelt*. "It is not clear if the younger Roosevelt was particularly interested in boats, but many other *River Club* members were. One, *Harold S. Vanderbilt*, was a leading yachtsman. In 1930, his boat the *Enterprise* defeated the English boat *Shamrock* in four straight races to win the *America's Cup*."

The article continues to say, "That in 1933 *Kermit Roosevelt* would be a guest on *Nourmahal*, the yacht of *Vincent Astor*, another club member, along with Roosevelt's cousin *Franklin D. Roosevelt*, who had recently been elected president. *The Times* described their meeting as an important rapprochement between the two Roosevelt families; they had been estranged for a decade, and Kermit's mother, Edith, had supported *Herbert Hoover* in the 1932 election."



BO SAYS THANK YOU

I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who has helped the Sagamore Hill maintenance staff this winter. Everyone knows that that it has been a long snowy winter and that there are only a few people on the maintenance staff. So it was a great pleasure to find that people like Mark, Scott and Charles helping out. And to those that we didn't see, who picked up a shovel and put their back into the job, our sincerest thanks. Thanks also to those who acted before maintenance could arrive and put sand down on the steps of Old Orchard and elsewhere and helped avoid possible staff injuries.

We hope that this cooperation continues into the spring (which is supposedly here) and also for the rest of the year.



Bo Stein, Acting Chief of Maintenance

VOLUNTEERS ADVISORY BOARD SEEKS ADDITIONAL MEMBERS

The Nominating Committee, of *Roy Fuchs* and *Wayne Wagner*, have presented a slate of four individuals to fill the four positions on the Board that come up for election this year. Current Board members *Milton Elis* and *Rita Onorato* are re-nominated. *Adrian Bogart* and *Nancy Hall* received the other two nominations. If you are interested in being considered for a position on the Board, please contact Roy or Wayne by April 22. Their phone numbers are in the back room, the Visitors Center and at Old Orchard. Elections will be held at the *Volunteer Advisory Board* meeting on Wednesday, May 2 at 3:30 p.m. in the conference room at Old Orchard.

TR DURING MARCH AND APRIL 1905

- 3/17 Attended the wedding, in New York City, of *Eleanor Roosevelt* and *Franklin D. Roosevelt*
- 3/23 Evening meeting with *Booker T. Washington*
- 4/3 Morning departure for the Southwest
- 4/4 Speech at Louisville, KY. Stops in Kentucky, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Missouri
- 4/5 Speeches at Parsons, KS, Muskogee, South McAlister and Durant, Indian Territory. Speech at Dallas, TX
- 4/7 Rough Rider reunion in San Antonio, TX
- 4/8-12 Hunting trip near Fredrick, OK
- 4/15-30 Hunting at Camp Roosevelt near

NEWS OF VOLUNTEERS



Richard Althaus is being honored by the *Hicksville Community Council* at a dinner on April 7th at Antun's Restaurant in Hicksville. Rich is being recognized for his tireless efforts as a volunteer at the Gregory Museum and with the Boy Scouts of America. In

addition to his activities in Hicksville, Rich is the Treasurer of the *Friends of Sagamore Hill* and volunteers in curatorial at the site.

Volunteers were given a special overview of the current status of the General Management Plan (GMP) for Sagamore Hill. *Gay Vietzke* and *Ellen Carlson* briefed those who at-



Max Kleiman and Susan Sarna

tended the March 10th meeting on the four possible scenarios for the future of the site. A community briefing will be held on Wednesday, April 13 at the *Doubleday-Babcock Senior Center* on Main Street in Oyster Bay. Volunteers who are interested in learning about the current status of the GMP should plan to attend this meeting.

Revisions to the Volunteer Handbook have been completed and it will be printed shortly. This will be a great tool for new volunteers and a resource for current volunteers.

The request for suggestions from volunteers, put forward by the Superintendent late last year, has brought responses

EVERYONE LOVES TR

The most recent edition of the *Michigan State University Alumni Magazine* highlighted the university's 150th anniversary. The school celebrated its Semi-Centennial in 1907, (it was founded in 1855 but the first classes were held in 1857). The school's President scored a coup when he arranged for President *Theodore Roosevelt* to be the commencement speaker. The ceremony was moved from mid-May to May 31, to insure better weather. Following a luncheon, TR planted an elm tree on campus and then spoke to a crowd of more than 20,000. Roosevelt declared, "The 50th anniversary of the founding of this college is an event of national significance, for Michigan was the first state in the union to found this, the first agricultural college in America." He also emphasized the need to improve the life of rural America. Out of this came Roosevelt's *Country Life Commission* and the founding of the Extension Service. President Roosevelt handed out diploma to the graduates, including MSU's first African-American graduate, *Myrtle Craig*.

The Semi-Centennial attracted national attention, including a front page story in the *New York Times* the next day.



from *Frank Konop*, *Rita Onorato* and *Ginny Perrell*. The essence of their suggestions, are as follows:

1. Fire safety at the house needs to be addressed; evacuation procedures, especially for the basement, need to be practiced, or at least demonstrated, for volunteers and probably staff.
2. There should be a defibrillator on site and volunteers who were trained in 2003 should be retrained.
3. Climate control for the house should be a priority; people and artifacts are at risk.
4. Lighting in several rooms needs to be enhanced e.g. Alice's room.
5. Increase awareness of the Museum in Old Orchard by:
 - a. clear signs directing people to OOM
 - b. use the bulletin board outside the Visitors' Center to attract attention to the Museum upgrade the map currently given to visitors to show more details.
6. Have an architectural model of the lodge and stables displayed near the "footprint" so that visitors get a better perspective of what buildings had been on the site during TR's lifetime.

TRIVIA QUESTION



Who bought the tall case clock that is in the foyer? Where and when was it purchased?
(Answer on Page 4)

ELDERHOSTEL AT TR'S NEPHEW'S PLACE

This past October, six of us, volunteers *Toby Selda* and *Kathy McLeavy* along with four friends, traveled upstate to Hyde Park to take part in a five-day Elderhostel experience.



Kathy McLeavy and Toby Selda

The topic of the program dealt with the partnership of Eleanor and Franklin Roosevelt. This incredible program included speakers from several universities, park rangers, the head archivist from the *FDR Presidential Library*, *Val-Kill* administrators, a woman who grew up on the estate, local musicians, an author on a recent book on the Roosevelts and even a psychic.

Though the majority of the program took place on the grounds of

Eleanor's, *Val-Kill*, side trips to the Roosevelt home, the Presidential Library and *Top Cottage* were also included. During our limited free time we took additional trips to the nearby family church and gravesite, the *Vanderbilt Estate* and the *Culinary Institute*.

Everyone enjoyed the experience so much that the same six people will be attending another program this September at *Roosevelt Park Conference Center* on Campobello Island. The topic of the program is "**Franklin and Eleanor: Island Influences and Inspirations.**" We'll tell you more about our experience at a latter date.

Although there are hundreds of *Elderhostel* program, at present there are none listed for Nassau or Suffolk Counties. Wouldn't it be great to have one on TR? Perhaps visitors could stay at *Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory*. One ranger suggested calling the potential program "**Whaling, TR and DNA**" Someone else suggested tying the event in with the TR Audubon Bird Sanctuary. We are sure TR would think this is a *bully* idea.



Noreen Hancock hoping that Spring will finally get here.

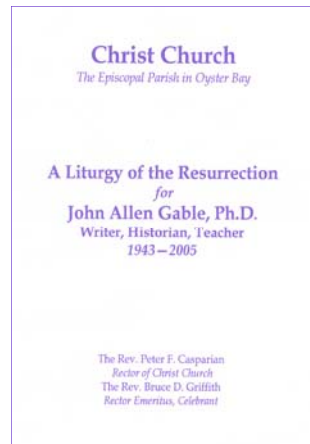
(Don't get your hopes up too high, Noreen!)

JOHN GABLE WOULD HAVE LOVED IT

The memorial service for *John Gable*, held on February 25 at Christ Church in Oyster Bay, had John's fingerprints all over it. He chose the liturgy, the speakers and even the ham salad sandwiches served after the service, were John's choice. Eulogists included *Theodore Roosevelt IV*, *Edmund Morris*, former Ambassador *William Vanden Heuvel* and *Gary Clinton*.

Author Edward Renahan, Jr. introduced the speakers.

Staff and volunteers were well represented and *Sandy Walter* represented the Regional Office. *Gay Vietzke*, *Charles Markis* (who sang with the choir), *Amy Verrone*, and *Mark Koziol* were joined by *Richard Althaus*, *Adrian Bogart*, *Milton Elis*, *Walter Fish*, *James Foote*, *Barbara LaMotta*, and *GINNY PERRELL*. It is possible that others were there but were not seen by this writer. When I heard that ham salad sandwiches were on the menu, I took off for a local deli.



HELP! WE NEED YOUR HELP

In order to communicate good and bad news rapidly, especially to volunteers, we need your e-mail address. A telephone chain works when there is time to get our message out, but when there is a small window of opportunity, an e-mail works very well. Many of you either do not have an e-mail address or never read e-mail that you do get.

Current e-mail addresses in the system belong to: *Adrian Bogart*, *the Caseys*, *Betsy Davison*, *Milton Elis*, *Frank Konop*, *Nataha Price*, *GINNY PERRELL*, *Toby Selda*, *Rod Smith*, *Wayne Wagner* and *Rose White*. Please send those addresses to *Milton Elis* at MILTBARB@MSN.COM. If you would rather be contacted by phone, please drop a note to *Charles Markis* at the site or to *Milton Elis* at the address on the last page of this newsletter. If you don't want a phone call, we will contact you by mail. Everyone's cooperation is appreciated.



The unique andirons in the foyer fireplace. They are made of artillery shells and cannon balls.

TR IN THE NEWS

The following appeared in the New York Times on March 20, 2005

Teddy, the Man's Man

"Nearly a century after he left office, *Theodore Roosevelt* retains a grip on the nation's political imagination, with admirers on both side of the aisle. But none seem quite comfortable with the core of T.R.'s identity, his "manliness," according to *Harvey Mansfield*, writing in the March issue of *The New Criterion*.

TR appeals to some conservatives today for his espousal of big government and national greatness, and all conservatives rather relish his political incorrectness. As a reforming progressive, he used to appeal to liberals, but nowadays liberals are put off by their political incorrectness that conservatives rather sneakily enjoy.

Nothing was more obvious than Roosevelt's manliness, because he made such a point of it, not only in his own case but also as necessary for human progress. It was being a progressive that made him so eager to be manly. Here is gristle to chew for both

liberals and conservatives, both of whom—except for the feminists—have abandoned manliness mostly out of policy rather than abhorrence.

Will-power manliness can also appear to have an air of desperation, or can be said to be desperate underneath, despite an air of confidence on the surface. Some would interpret T.R.'s manliness as too emphatic to be true, because true manliness has more quiet in its confidence, less stridency in its assertiveness. Yet if all we know is based on social construction, meaning that all we know is contingently based on how society is now- and so manliness is impermanent and will pass away in our gender-neutral society- then it is reasonable to feel anxiety instead of confidence."



TR in his rowing outfit

Editor's note: He lost me on that last paragraph.

MAIN STREET COMMUNITY MEETING



July 4th Celebration at Sagamore Hill National Historic Site

Come hear **Gay Vietzke, Superintendent of Sagamore Hill** speak about the future of the park with an open discussion on the General Management Plan for this National Historic Site.

Wednesday, April 13, 2005

7 PM doors open at 6:45 pm

Doubleday Babcock Senior Center

45 East Main St., Oyster Bay



**"Celebrating the Past,
Looking to the Future"**

With Special Guest
New York State Commissioner
Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation
Honorable Bernadette Castro