

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

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

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
Oyster Bay, New York 11771

TRIVIA ANSWER



The ashtray is on the conference table in the North Room.

HISTORY REPEATS ITSELF



Recently, as volunteers were cataloging some files that had multiple items in them, they came across a few newspaper clippings. “The Advance East of Baghdad” read one headline. A second lead read, “Another Tigris Battle – Turks Routed at Tekrit – Brilliant Cavalry Charge.” There were no dates other than Dec. 6 and March 11. Since Kermit Roosevelt was fighting with the British during 1917 & 1918, it is possible that TR clipped these articles. In the actions described, the British used, what at that time could be considered, weapons of mass destruction. Quote, “During the retreat the Turks were attacked by our airplanes with bombs and machine guns at heights from 2,500 feet to under 100 feet. Heavy casualties were inflicted on the enemy.”

NEWS OF VOLUNTEERS

Due to the fragile health of her husband, Bill, *Evelyn Heath* is taking a hiatus from volunteering and she is also stepping down as a member of the *Volunteer Advisory Board*. Evelyn came to the site in January 1994 and was one of the founding members of the *Volunteer Advisory Board*. Our thanks go to Evelyn for her twelve year and thousands of hours of service to Sagamore Hill. We hope that Bill regains his strength and that we will see both of them at this summer’s picnic.



Pleased to report that *Lila Kleinman*, wife of Max, is now in good health following her recent heart surgery. Hope she also will attend the summer picnic.

Roy Fuchs, who has been compiling volunteer hours prior to the *Volunteer Recognition Evening* on Thursday, April 27th, asked that all volunteers round off their hours when entering them in the Volunteer Log. This will make recordkeeping so much easier. We are currently running about 6,000 volunteer hours per year. It is very important to record your hours because the site receives funding for volunteer activities (clothing, trips, etc.) based upon total hours worked by volunteers at the site.

SAFETY COMMITTEE MEETING NEWS

The *Sagamore Hill Safety Committee* met on March 9th, with *Bo Stein, Greg Marshall, Noreen Hancock* and *Mark Koziol* in attendance. *Julie Abbate* was not present.

New topics discussed included the need to update the *Sagamore Hill Security Emergency Response Plan* to include procedures for responding to weekend emergencies when the division chiefs are not here. Also, it was discussed that it would benefit staff to have another walk through of the Old Orchard Museum Heat Vent Air Conditioning system in order to respond to emergencies. Also, it was recommended that a refresher course be offered on how to operate the new park security system recently installed in all the major SAHI buildings.

The committee discussed the strong need to schedule twice a year CPR

and First Aid training for all park staff and volunteers. It is hoped the training can be offered in late May before the hectic summer season begins and in the fall. Details are being worked out by *Noreen* and *Josh*.

The SAHI Safety Program, organized in a three-ring binder, will be updated. This binder contains necessary safety information such as the Role and Function Statement of the Safety Committee, Standard Operating Procedures and other useful information. Eventually, copies will be made available to all staff and volunteers.

The committee did a brainstorming session in order to come up with new safety training topics. Possible future training sessions may include topics such as avoiding ticks and poison ivy exposure while walking through the SAHI woods.

If you have any safety matters, please contact any committee member before the next meeting on April 6.

The Rough Writer

The News of the Volunteers at Sagamore Hill



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Vase with western motif, by Edward Kemeys, in the North Room



Picnic basket with utensils kept on top of icebox in the pantry



Calling-card tray and stand on top of the Herter Brothers cabinet, in the Drawing Room

ELDERHOSTEL COMES TO SAGAMORE HILL NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE

We are looking forward to working with *Elderhostel*, an organization known for high quality programming for older adults. The programs range from one day events to those that cover many weeks. It takes a great deal of work to have a program approved to be part of the *Elderhostel* curriculum. Our thanks go to volunteer *Toby Selda* for all her work in arranging the site’s participation.



Beginning on May 9th, an *Elderhostel* “**Day of Discovery**” program will be taking place at Sagamore Hill. Participating adult seniors will be spending an entire Tuesday on the site learning about *Theodore Roosevelt*, his home and family life. In addition to the usual visits to the TRH and *Old Orchard Museum*, there will be two lectures given on TR. One lecture will be by Curator *Amy Verone* and the second one by *Edward A. Renehan, Jr.*, the Chief Executive Officer of the TRA and the author of the book about TR’s family, “**The Lion’s Pride.**”

For more information on the planned programs which are scheduled for Tuesdays, May 9 & 23 and September 12 & 26, contact *Elderhostel*, 877-426-8056 or www.elderhostel.org, program 14428HY.

A CPR First Aid class will be offered on **Monday, May 22, 2006** at 9:00 am. There is a limited amount of space for volunteers. If you are interested in attending, contact *Josh Reyes* or *Noreen Hancock*. Don’t wait. There will be space for only about five volunteers.

SITE NEWS: PEOPLE

Jim Cocks, of maintenance, weekends at the site. At one time, Jim had been the manager of the bookstore.



Hooked rug made by the Long Island Guild of Rug-Crafting Artists

TRIVIA QUESTION



Although TR did not smoke, the TRH contains two ash trays. One ash tray is in the Gun Room on the writing table. Where in the house would you find this ash tray and matchbox holder?

Answer on Page 4

SPOTLIGHT ON VOLUNTEERS



Del De Montreux, 61, of Oyster Bay, became a volunteer at the end of 2005. He volunteers for Curatorial on Wednesdays and Thursdays at Old Orchard where he has been entering the historic 1919 Roosevelt probate inventory into a Microsoft Excel program. A native of Maspeth, Queens, Del attended the *College of Steubenville* (Ohio) where he majored in communications. He and his wife Nancy have lived in Oyster Bay for thirty years and have visited our site many times. Del was a radio DJ for thirty-four years and in 1999 he became the stadium announcer for the New York Mets baseball team. He served in that position for five years until a health problem forced his early retirement.

Del is enjoying his retirement and is now in charge of the De Montreux (the X is silent) household. His wife Nancy works for *Catholic Charities* and encouraged Del, who has an interest in history, to fulfill his ambition of being a volunteer at Sagamore Hill.

NEWS FROM THE VOLUNTEER ADVISORY BOARD



Roy Fuchs, Leslie Handler and Max Kleinman

At the VAB meeting of March 1, the Chairman reported that a request went to the *Friends of Sagamore Hill* for funds to assist the volunteers finance a number of events during this year. **Volunteer Recognition Night** was set for Thursday, April 27th at 6:00 pm in the conference room at Old Orchard. *Ginny Perrell* advised that the **Holiday Party** has been scheduled for Thursday, December 7 at the Swan Club.

Charles Markis advised that volunteers will be receiving a copy of their hours from 10/04 through 9/05 and should advise him of any errors. *Roy Fuchs* asked that all volunteers round off their hours to a whole number to expedite recordkeeping. *Toby Selda*, advised that the **Elderhostel** program for the site has been finalized (see article elsewhere in the *Rough Writer*). Charles updated the Board on the status of the **Junior Ranger** Program.

NEWS FROM THE FRIENDS OF SAGAMORE HILL

By Virginia Uhlinger

The 2006 *Dr. John A. Gable Lecture Series* got off with a bang on March 7th. The talk was given by *John Hammond*, Oyster Bay Town Historian and Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the *Friends of Sagamore Hill*. He spoke on "1906, *An Exciting Year in Oyster Bay*."

John took the audience back to the year 1906 through the medium of slides. It was a time of no downtown traffic jams, when nearly all the vehicles were horse drawn carriages. At the turn of the last century, in New York City, horses outnumbered people 3 to 1 and the consumption of oysters helped to make Oyster Bay a successful economic port. 1906 was also the year that TR brought the United States Navy's *Great White Fleet* to Oyster Bay harbor...and the year *Typhoid Mary* was discovered ...living here in Oyster Bay.

Fifty-five guests made short work of the free, sumptuous "St. Patrick's Day buffet." As always, we enjoyed the hospitality of *Christ Church's Parish Hall*, newly redecorated in pleasant sage green with colorful banners hanging from the rafters. The lecture felt more like a gathering in someone's living room.

We would like to see more of you on Tuesday, April 25th when *Phil Roosevelt*, a cousin of TR's will speak on "*Oyster Bay Pioneers: the Intriguing Tale of the Youngs Family and the Little Cemetery they share with TR*."

Editor's Note: The Friends Board meeting heard Superintendent *Greg Marshall* discuss the sites "Year in Review" and Greg urged the Friends to develop their own **strategic plan** with goals patterned after those of the site. *Milton Elis* described the *Elderhostel* program to be held on site in May and September and to invite them to the **Volunteer Recognition Night** on April 27th. The Friends annual **Gala Fund Raising Event** is scheduled for Saturday, August 26th.



John Hammond, Marie Sasso, Milton Ellis and Joni Foote

NEWS FROM EASTERN NATIONAL

By Debbie Bulck



February was a big month for Eastern National site managers. We all attended the *International Gift Expo* at the Javits Center in New York City. This show is an opportunity to meet vendors and get a peek at what's new in the retail world. I was fortunate to explore the

museum shop exhibit and found some exciting new items to feature at Sagamore Hill. Watch our shop for an art cube featuring TR, his family and Sagamore Hill. We will also have a new soft sculpture TR doll and a hand-carved cribbage set. There will be two new children's books, *Theodore* by *Frank Keating* and a spectacular pop-up book, *America the Beautiful*. Both books are now available for your viewing pleasure. As always, volunteers receive a 15% discount on all purchases. Hope to see you soon – Happy Spring.

TR DURING MARCH 1906

TR was busy trying to arrange passage of the *Hepburn Bill* (railroad regulation) in the Senate and was at odds with twenty-four Republican Senators, including his old friend *Henry Cabot Lodge* and his former Attorney General *Philander Knox*. TR was also trying to encourage *Kaiser Wilhelm* to take a more conciliatory stance in dealing with France over access to Moroccan ports.

On March 17, TR addressed the *Gridiron Club* dinner in Washington, DC and quoted a passage from *Pilgrim's Progress*. "...the Man with the Muckrake, the man who could look no way but downward with the muckrake in his hand; who was offered a celestial crown for his muckrake but who would neither look up nor regard the crown he was offered but continued to rake to himself the filth of the floor." This represented TR's then current opinion of investigative journalists.

Looking for a caption!



We are having a contest to come up with a caption for this picture of TR and family. There will a prize for the best submission. Write your suggestion on a piece of paper and put your name on the reverse side. Mail or give your suggestion to Scott Gurney. Hopefully he won't steal your idea. Judging will be done by an individual who is definitely partial.

TR AND THE FUNERAL OF KING EDWARD VII

In December 1954, in its first edition as a general public magazine, *American Heritage* magazine featured *Theodore Roosevelt's* account of some of his experiences related to the funeral of Britain's *King Edward VII*. President *William Howard Taft* appointed TR as this country's special representative to the funeral. This was one of the last great gatherings of Europe's royalty before World War I toppled many of the monarchs from their thrones.

On October 5, 1911, TR wrote to his friend *David Gray*, with strict instructions that the letter not be made public until the main characters in his account, were no longer alive. This letter and two others were published in a volume titled *Cowboys and Kings*.

Most of the time TR was in England, he stayed at the home of his friend *Arthur Lee*, at Lee's home, *Chequers Court*. In his letter, he told Gray that he did not accept a dollar either directly or indirectly for his services and didn't take advantage of having his belongings enter England, free of duty. "This did not make any difference, however as far as Congress and the public were concerned; for at intervals since then the Congress has at times proposed to investigate me to find out how much of the public money I spent, and to this day I am occasionally reproached with having taken my belongings in free- you doubtless remember *Lounsbury's* remark, of which I am so fond, about 'the infinite capacity of the human brain to withstand the introduction of knowledge.'"

TR went on to express his dislike of *Lord Horatio Kitchener*, who told TR that the Panama Canal should have been built as a sea-level canal. When TR replied that his engineers felt that there were too many difficulties and few advantages to building a sea-level canal in Panama. Kitchener replied, "I never regard difficulties, or pay heed to protests like that; all I would do in such a case would be to say 'I order that a sea-level canal be dug, and I wish to hear nothing more about it.'" TR went on to express to Gray, his dislike of *Winston Churchill* and his refusal to meet with him.

TR also told Gray about his arrival at Cambridge to receive an honorary degree. The students formed two long and winding columns. As TR turned at the last bend of the lines, in the path was a *Teddy Bear* sitting on the pavement with its paw outstretched to greet him.



TR and family in front of Chequers Court