

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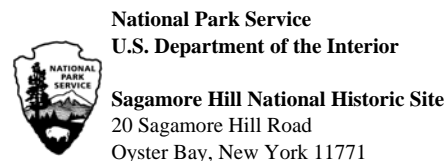
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The National Park Service cares for the special places saved by the American people so that all may experience our heritage.



The Volunteers of Sagamore Hill
20 Sagamore Hill Road
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TRIVIA



ANSWER: This is a Hungarian hunter's flask. It is bejeweled with semi-precious stones.

DID THEODORE ROOSEVELT HELP FOUND THE NCAA?

Strictly speaking, NO. At the beginning of the 1900s, the sport of football had turned into mass mayhem. The following topic was brought to the attention of the editor by *Natalie Naylor*, President of the Nassau County Historical Society, and is based upon an article in the December 26, 2010 New York Times by *Kenneth C. Davis*.

In the early part of the twentieth century, the game of football more resembled rugby than as the game we know today. Cash payments were made to so called, "amateur" athletes. Coaches gave orders to take out rivals on the field. On-field savagery that included late hits, punching, eye-gouging and vicious blows to the windpipe—often proved fatal. In 1905, these abuses and catastrophic injuries were so widespread and public disapproval of them so deep, that the game faced extinction.

Henry Beach Needham, a crusading journalist, brought the controversy to the forefront of national debate. In a two-part article, "**The College Athlete**", in the June and July 1905 issues of *McClure's Magazine*, he exposed the brutality and scandalous practices then engulfing the college game. Citing elite prep schools like Andover and Exeter that had emerged as football factories, producing crop after crop of players for the major colleges powers. "Thanks to the influences of the colleges", Needham wrote, "There is growing up a class of students tainted with commercialism."

The McClure's articles might have blown over, except that Needham was a friend of "the first fan", President *Theodore Roosevelt*. Roosevelt was a staunch promoter of vigorous athletics. Too small to play in college himself, he was still a football enthusiast who believed the sport built character, and his son Ted played for his alma mater, Harvard. Delivering Harvard's 1905 commencement address, TR railed against football's dark side. Roosevelt said he hoped that the schools would address the issues without killing the game, when *Charles Eliot*, the president of Harvard, argued that the sport should be abolished.

In October 1905, TR summoned to the White House six leaders of the college game, including *Walter Camp*, the influential rules-maker who has been called "The Father of American Football." Roosevelt demanded change in the rules, "Change the game or forsake it", he demanded.

In November of 1905, after the death of a player in a Union College vs NYU football game, *Henry MacCracken*, the chancellor of N.Y.U., summoned the leaders of colleges with football teams to a conference to discuss the future of the sport. After voting to reform football rather than abolish it, this group set in motion a series of rules changes that would ultimately transform football. This reform committee became, in 1906, the nucleus of the *Intercollegiate Athletic Association of the United States*, renamed the *National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA)* in 1910. Though Roosevelt can't be credited with forming the NCAA, he is credited with an "assist."

SITE NEWS: PEOPLE

Chief of Maintenance *Eric Witzke* in on TDY (temporary duty) at Delaware Water Gap NRA, where he is serving as Acting Chief of Maintenance. He will be returning on March 13. In his absence, *Bo Stein* will be filling in for him.

Get well wishes to *Dan Arena* who is recovering from heart surgery. Dan is due back shortly.

When the Christmas blizzard hit Columbia, in rural New Jersey, *Kaitlyn Murray* was trapped on her family's horse farm. After three days of no contact with the outside world, Kait hitched up one of the horses to a sleigh and drove into town to do some shopping. As a point of interest, Kait is our resident equine expert and is preparing material on the Roosevelt's horses.

The Rough Writer

The News of the Volunteers at Sagamore Hill



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January 2011



Winter wallops Sagamore Hill over and over and over

SNOW LIMITS VISITATION



Bernie Muller & Julie Nace



Jerry Langman & Bo Stein

The recent series of snow storms has reduced the number of people visiting the *Theodore Roosevelt Home*. Some intrepid souls even arrived at 10:00 ready for a tour but in general visitors count was low, with most arriving later in the day. Fortunately staff welcomed many school groups into the house and that kept them busy. On Thursday, January 13, not one visitor came to the site. We don't know if this was a new record or the tying of a previous one. The following day, the weather wasn't any warmer, but the students returned along with some other hearty people.

Our thanks go to the maintenance staff that had the plows going early and were kept busy with the ever increasing snow accumulation. The roads and most paths were ready when visitors arrived.

FEE FREE DAYS ANNOUNCED

The National Park Service announced fee-free days for 2011. These include the recent **Martin Luther King, Jr.** weekend (Jan. 15-17), **National Park Week** (Apr. 16-24), the **first day of summer** (June 21), **National Public Lands Day** (Sept. 24) and the weekend of **Veteran's Day** (Nov. 11-13).

MORE ON ROOSEVELT CHRISTMAS TREES

Margrethe Randall, in researching information on flowers at Sagamore Hill, was given a transcription of an oral interview between *Robert Gillespie, Jr.* and *Jessica Kraft*, a former curator. Gillespie, whose father was the estate manager from 1914 to 1943, remembers TR visiting his home on the grounds on Christmas Day and receiving presents from TR. Then the whole family would visit the "big house" and gather round the Christmas tree in the "trophy room." If you want to read Gillespie's remarks, Margrethe placed a booklet of the transcriptions in the backroom of the house. Natalie Naylor made these transcriptions.

ROUGH WRITER ON LINE

Anyone who would prefer to receive their copy of the *Rough Writer* electronically, rather than the hard copy now being sent to you, please advise me at miltbarbelis@optimum.net. If you are no longer interested in receiving the newsletter in any format, please e-mail that information to me or write to *Milton Elis*, 1 Jarvis Ave., Syosset, NY 11791 and request deletion from our mailing list. Thanks.



ONLY THE BOW WAS MISSING

Just after the New Year, Old Orchard looked like a beleaguered Christmas present. The front façade was wrapped in plastic on Mondays and Tuesdays so that the painters could work in a "hot air environment." Paint that was being applied to the front entrance-way, thus had a chance to dry. Work on the windows and downspouts will continue when the weather warms-up.

THE STAINED GLASS WINDOW

Theodore Roosevelt passed away on January 6, 1919 and on Sunday, November 2, 1919. A stained glass window was unveiled in his memory. The ceremony took place neither in a Dutch Reformed Church nor in an Episcopal Church. Rather it took place in a Reform Jewish Synagogue in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, *Congregation Keneseth Israel*. Why Philadelphia? For the answer we have to return to the Spanish American War. Five thousand Jewish men served in the military during that war. Fifteen Jewish Rough Riders were killed or wounded in the attack on Kettle Hill and San Juan Heights, Cuba. A service was held there for the deceased soldiers and was led by Rabbi *Joseph Krauskopf*. *Theodore Roosevelt* attended with his troops and spoke with the Rabbi developing a relationship that would continue over the years.

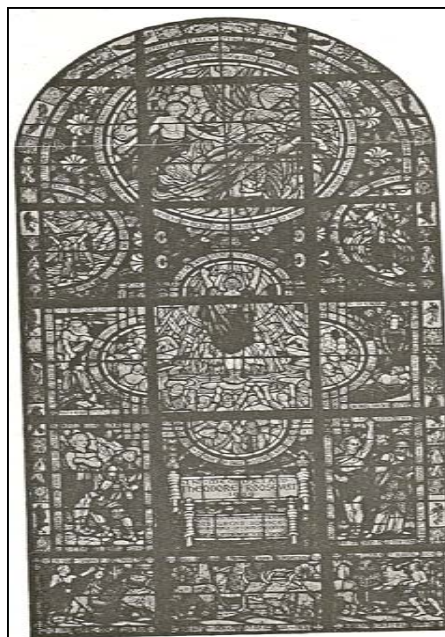
Theodore Roosevelt did many positive things for the Jewish community. When he was President of the New York City Board of Police Commissioners, he opened the ranks of the police to Jews and also to women. He also worked on behalf of the Jews in Czarist Russia. He spoke out forcefully as President in 1905 at the time of the pogroms in Russia and expressed America's displeasure in a meaningful way. When he was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize, he donated ten per cent of the money to Jewish causes.

Upon TR's death, the *Reform Congregation Keneseth Israel*, under the leadership of Rabbi *Joseph Krauskopf*, elected to memorialize him with a magnificent stained glass window. The Rabbi's reason for this decision was that Roosevelt and the Prophet *Elijah* had a very similar lifestyle and he envisioned that this would create a spellbinding window. The Congregation commissioned the artist *Edith Emerson*, a well-read Bible enthusiast, who envisioned many scenes in the stained glass window of feats of *Elijah* similar to those of Roosevelt's life.

In her own words, *Edith Emerson* was quoted as to why she selected several aspects of *Elijah* in the Bible, "*Elijah* was chosen as the subject of the Roosevelt Memorial window because of the many qualities possessed in common by the great prophet of Israel and this great leader of the American president; among them a clear-decisive mind which does not 'halt between two opinions;' the ability to inspire his followers and the younger generation with an equal zeal and fervor; tenderness towards the suffering and oppressed; obedience to the 'still, small voice,' which alone gives the ability to command others; active, vigorous, effective service in every cause which seemed right and good."

Speakers at the dedication ceremony included *George Wharton Pepper*, the Republican Senator from Pennsylvania, a former law professor, who was from an upper-class family of Pennsylvania Dutch ancestry. Following Pepper, was *Oscar S. Straus*, Secretary of Commerce and Labor in TR's cabinet. Straus was the first Jewish Cabinet Secretary. Rabbi *Joseph Krauskopf* D.D., of the host synagogue, spoke on similarities between TR and the Prophet *Elijah*. The last speaker was Captain *Kermit Roosevelt* representing his mother and his two brothers.

The original synagogue relocated twice and is now in Elkins Park, a suburb of Philadelphia. The stained glass window was removed from a building damaged by fire and improperly installed at its current location and no color picture is available. The black and white photo accompanying this story is from the original consecration book distributed at the ceremony and now located in the Gun Room of the *Theodore Roosevelt* House. We thank *Rita Rosen Poley*, Director/Curator of *The Temple Judea Museum* at *Keneseth Israel* for the background information she supplied.



TRIVIA



This item sits on the mantelpiece in the Library, to the left of the Ting Tang clock.

QUESTION: What is this bejeweled item?

THE MAN WHO CAPTURED NATIVE AMERICANS

Edward Sheriff Curtis did more than most to capture and preserve the images of Native Americans before they became westernized. Between 1890 and 1927, Curtis traveled extensively, photographing the everyday lives of the lofty and the lowly of our indigenous people. His twenty volume set of *The North American Indian* was completed in 1930. Curtis had collected 40,000 photographs; some 10,000 wax cylinders sound recordings of Indian speech and music; and made at least 125 trips by train back and forth across the country. Having completed thirty years of exhausting and unending field work, Curtis had a nervous breakdown in 1930.

Sagamore Hill has all twenty volumes of Curtis's series and many individual folios of his prints. Shown is volunteer *Elizabeth Kolligs* cataloguing some of the photographs.



THEODORE ROOSEVELT IN THE E-BOOK WORLD by Mark Koziol

Would *Theodore Roosevelt*, a connoisseur of reading and writing books, approve of the modern day invention and use of *electronic book* readers? While I can not possibly answer that question for President Roosevelt, I can say that eBook technology has advanced to the point where the consumer can purchase and store dozens of TR's books in one highly portable electronic device and take it with them anywhere they go.



Until the last 2 years or so, portable eBook readers were still too heavy to carry around town all day with ease, backlit viewing screens were unusable in direct sunlight and few desired book titles were available for purchase. The early generations of eBook readers weighed 12 to 16 ounces, now the weight is 8 to 10 ounces without a carrying case. The old backlit viewscreens have been replaced with new, high-contrast E Ink screen technology, screens which allow the viewer to read their favorite book with minimal eyestrain, even in direct sunlight. There are more books available for purchase than ever. Barnes and Noble offer over one million titles for their Nook eBook reader and Amazon.com offers 800,000 titles for their Kindle device. Recently, I received a Kindle3 eBook reader for Christmas. The viewing screen measures 6 inches diagonally (a larger kindle device has a 9 inch screen) and weighs only 8 ounces. This is an ultra lightweight device with incredible power and can hold up to 3,500 books in its memory. Besides reading books on the Kindle, one can subscribe to newspapers, magazines and blogs, with each issue downloaded to the Kindle account the day before it hits the newsstand.

The eBook reader has multiple features to choose from to make reading easier than ever. For example, there are 8 different font (letter) sizes to choose from. For someone with vision difficulty, they can make the words bigger for easier reading. Three typefaces to choose from include regular, condensed and sans serif for variety.

A recent search of Theodore Roosevelt books in the Kindle format from Amazon.com yielded 261 results of fictional, non-fiction and children's books. Of course, the well known TR biographers like Edmund Morris, David McCullough and Kathleen Dalton are well represented. Many books published before 1923 have become copyright-free and available free-of-charge digitally. Interestingly, not all of TR's works are free of charge as one would suspect.

You have to pay money to buy as a Kindle book the *TR Autobiography*, *Hunting Trips of a Ranchman*, *Wilderness Hunter* and *The Strenuous Life*. The free TR books available in Kindle format include *The Rough Riders*, *Through the Brazilian Wilderness*, *The Winning of the West* and *Naval War of 1812*. For a person doing extensive traveling through Africa and South America, carrying hundreds of books in an eBook reader would be preferable to lugging around the weight of dozens of hard-cover books.

Note: TR would probably have loved the Kindle for traveling but where in the bush could he have recharged the battery?

JUSTUS TO ALL NEWS FROM THE CHIEF OF INTERPRETATION

The park's Presidents Day observance this year will feature an appearance by *Edmund Morris*, author of the acclaimed *Theodore Roosevelt* trilogy, the third volume of which, **Colonel Roosevelt** was recently published. Mr. Morris will read from his TR works, conduct a question and answer session, and sign his books at the Parish Hall of Christ Church in Oyster Bay. Sagamore Hill NHS is sponsoring this appearance and the Friends of Sagamore Hill are paying for the refreshments. This free event will be held on Saturday, February 19 at 1:30 pm in the afternoon and is sure to draw a large turnout.



It is attic-cleaning time at Old Orchard and a quantity of 150th Anniversary shirts have been found. There are both short and long sleeved shirts in various sizes. See *Josh Reyes* if you are interested in getting one.

A reminder, that we will be holding a dynamic curriculum-based education training event on February 8 and 9, in the conference room at Old Orchard. Experts from the Tsongas history Center at Lowell National Park will be the presenters. This training will come in handy for anyone who is planning to do school outreach with our new **Traveling Trunk-Powerpoint** program. While the house is closed we will try to have as many school presentations as possible. The training begins at 9:00 am on February 8 and everyone is welcome to attend. *Noreen Hancock* has more details should you require them.

PRE-CLOSING PACKING PACE PICKS-UP

In preparation for the closing of the house late in 2011, packing of "behind the scenes" items is moving ahead. Currently, on Mondays and Tuesdays, when the house is closed, Curatorial staff and volunteers are busy packing books and artifacts from closets, drawers and locked rooms and then moving some of those boxes to the attic at Old Orchard. While the packing goes on, every item in each room is being identified. Looking for the catalogue number on everything, *Brittany Juul-Nielson* has uncovered a number of items not previously catalogued. *Sue Sarna* is assigning catalogue numbers and entering everything in our data base. Sue estimates that we will require over five hundred carton for the removal of books. How long will the house be closed to visitors? Estimates range from eighteen months to at least three years. *Nostradamus* would have difficulty making a prediction. And the packing continues.

