



Society for Industrial Archeology ROEBLING CHAPTER NEWSLETTER

April 2004

Vol. 13 No.1

TOURS

College of St. Elizabeth Tour

Morristown, NJ

Friday, April 30, 2004, 2:00 p.m.

Get acquainted with the area you always pass through to get to our events at Drew University! Roebling member Kevin Olsen has organized an Architectural History Tour of nearby College of Saint Elizabeth. On 200 landscaped acres, the spires beacon from the north side of Madison Ave. The college is proud of its architectural history, especially of their Greek Theater, which hosts plays during the New Jersey Shakespeare Festival.

The college was founded in 1899 by the Sisters of Charity. It is the oldest college for women in New Jersey and one of the first Catholic colleges in the United States to award degrees to women. The college has been co-educational since 1976. For more info on the college, see <http://www.cse.edu/aboutcse.htm>.

Meet at the college's front gate on Madison Avenue, next to New Jersey Transit's Convent Station. This tour is hosted by the college's Public Relations Office and the Sisters of Charity. There is no charge to members; \$10 for non-members. Information and registration: Kevin Olsen, 973-655-4076. olsenk@mail.montclair.edu

Directions: Take I-287 South to Exit 35 (Route 124/South Street/Madison Avenue). At end of exit ramp, make a left onto Route 124 East (Madison Avenue). At the fifth traffic light (the Madison Hotel is on your left), turn left onto Convent Road. Entrance to campus is just across the railroad tracks.

Public transportation: New Jersey Transit's Morristown Line stops at the college's front gate.

ROEBLING CHAPTER BUSINESS

Dues Reminder

It is time to pay your 2004 dues! If you have already paid, we thank you. If not, please mail your check, made out to RCSIA, to chapter secretary Aron Eisenpress,

235 West End Av., #14-C, New York NY 10023. If you are not sure, check your mailing label on this newsletter; it always reflects your membership status.

Please add your current phone number to your check if it is not pre-printed. This will allow us to make sure that our records are up-to-date. Many area codes have changed while our membership records have not. Feel free to also include your e-mail address.

Annual Meeting Report

Sunday, January 25, 2004

Drew University

President Mary Habstritt called the meeting to order at 2:15. Approximately 40 members were in attendance. She began by giving a review of the past year's activities

"My personal goal during my first term was to sponsor six tours. We came close to meeting that goal and if Hurricane Isabel had re-scheduled, we'd have made it.

Trenton Industries

Edison's Mines, impromptu though it was 20 turned out [Rail-Marine Operations, canceled due to weather]

High Line

Domino Sugar

West Point Foundry

Since it took a little time to build steam, most of these were scheduled in the fall. Reports of each were published in our newsletter. I will make some general comments: For every tour where the group size was limited, we filled the tour. For the Trenton tour, we had to turn several people away. Do, please, call the tour contact person if you are not going to be able to use your reserved place on a tour. We had two no-shows for Trenton and could have filled the seats.

In addition to planning tours, I have fielded many inquiries and requests for letters of support regarding historic industrial and civil engineering sites in New York and New Jersey. This has always been a duty of the president, but I think it has been rather invisible to members. Because I come to the SIA as an amateur I must rely on chapter members and other contacts to

help me determine which sites are significant and worthy of our taking a stand on. I have sent letters to government officials in support of the Hackensack Water Works in Oradell, NJ; Whitlock Cordage in Jersey City; Anaconda Wire and Cable in Hastings-on-Hudson, NY; the High Line in Manhattan; and going a bit far afield, the Hojack Swing Bridge in Rochester, NY. We also get a number of requests from historical consultants working on cultural resource assessments of sites, asking to be pointed toward appropriate resources. I have to admit to being a little uneven on responding to these – there were a few inquiries that I didn't have a chance to follow up on or on which I didn't have a good enough handle to be sure we should be involved, but the e-mail list I created has helped immensely in obtaining information and getting the word out.

The newsletter is a record of our official business as well as a source of information on events and activities that may be of interest to you. Three issues came out this year, one short of the required four. Since I do most of the writing, all of the editing, as well as running to the copy shop and doing a good bit of the stamping and labeling of over 400 copies, this is a big job. This year I was assisted by Joe Macasek, who as he has for many years, donated his graphics services and laid out the newsletter. Lynn Rakos and Gerry Weinstein have helped with applying stamps, seals, and labels. The labels were prepared by Aron Eisenpress. Four issues per year is mandated in our by-laws, I discovered. I'll work to do better next year.

We have also been busy with outreach efforts, less to drum up membership in the chapter, which is very healthy, than to let people know who we are and what we do. We had a table at the Williamsburg Bridge Centennial street fair where several volunteers helped to tell SIA's story to the steady stream of passersby. We did get enough new chapter memberships to pay our booth fee. Lynn and I recently attended the annual meeting of the Archaeological Society of New Jersey, which this year focused on IA as a tribute to Ed. We chatted with ASNJ members and made our membership materials available. We've looked at having booths at several other upcoming events hosted by local history organizations, and next month I'll be speaking to a seniors' group in Wayne, NJ, with one of the IA students working at the West Point Foundry.

We've also been working to get the chapter's business affairs in better order. I'm making sure that we have our required one board meeting per year, which has not always happened. We are re-examining our insurance policies to make sure we have the right coverage to protect the

chapter and its volunteer officers. We've put a second signer on our bank accounts, in case something dire should happen to Charles. We've established a non-member fee for tours so that as members you are getting a benefit. We finally awarded our first Roebling award this year. We began shopping for a designer for the long awaited chapter website and have been discussing hosting by national SIA.

Correction to announcement of conference proceeds last year. \$10,000 was a preliminary oral report and it turned out had not yet accounted for advances that needed to be repaid. These advances were almost exactly \$10,000, so we actually had nearly a zero balance, with excess proceeds of about \$400.

However, as you'll learn from hearing Charles Scott's report on our finances, we have plenty of money – more by rights than a non-profit should have. Habstritt then read preliminary totals for end of the year finances since Scott was running late. He had submitted them by e-mail and was expected to give details upon his arrival. [Full report submitted later is provided here at the bottom of page three.]

Habstritt then read the membership report submitted by Secretary Aron Eisenpress who was unable to attend. Total membership stands at exactly 450, about the same as last year. Of these, 26 are complimentary memberships for such people as officers of the national SIA, presidents of other SIA chapters, and SHPOs who we want to keep informed of our activities. Geographically, 195 of our members live in New Jersey, 140 in New York City, 42 in New York state outside of the city, 13 in Connecticut, 30 in Pennsylvania and 30 are scattered in other states. There are 76 members who have last renewed in 2002 or earlier and they will be getting "last chance" renewal notices in the near future.

All officers running for office were re-elected.

Roebling Award Committee: President Habstritt indicated that Ed Rutsch was on the awards committee and since he is no longer with us, she would not rotate off as planned but a new third member was needed. [Each year one new member is appointed and approved by the membership.] Habstritt and the other committee member, Mike Raber, recommended last year's recipient, Conrad Milster to serve. All members present approved this recommendation.

Use of Chapter Funds: Habstritt brought up the issue of using chapter funds to benefit IA. She suggested supporting the IA program at Michigan Technological University (MTU) which is facing possible cuts. MTU runs a field school at the West Point Foundry and hosts

for the National SIA hq. The current MTU wish list includes \$2,000 for mapping/surveying software and \$5,000 for a high-powered workstation.

Discussion from the membership ensued and the following issues and suggestions were brought up:

1. Perhaps the chapter should fund something in our area, such as aid in the preservation or stabilization of a structure or site.
2. We should revisit other ideas that have been considered over the years; a subsequent question asked what such ideas included and it was said that publishing or reprinting IA publications was once being considered; a committee once existed to pursue this.
3. Support was voiced for providing funds to MTU stressing that they remain the only academic program in the country training students in IA and their support to the National SIA is important to us as a chapter.
4. Maybe we could provide some funds to MTU and some to a local cause.
5. Fund something more directly beneficial as the equipment MTU requested will be obsolete in a few years
6. MTU is more concerned with the National SIA than our local chapter
7. Maybe we should issue a challenge grant to MTU; we'll match what they raise up to a certain amount
8. Maybe we could support a piece of MTU work directly related to the West Point Foundry as

opposed to providing equipment/software, something such as artifact conservation, site stabilization or publication

9. We should flesh out these ideas and present them to the rest of the membership
10. We should form a budget committee to look at the amount of money the chapter can dispose of and also look at the proposed uses for that money

Budget Committee: Bill Wilkie motioned to have a budget committee established. "Move that the Roebling Chapter create a Budget Committee to establish a budget for the Chapter. The Proposed Budget will be submitted to the Officers of the Chapter within two months. The Proposed Budget will include a line item for special projects that the Chapter may choose to fund each year or from time to time. The special projects can include contributions to local industrial archeological work in progress, conservation and restoration of threatened local sites or objects and any other worthy projects that the Chapter may decide." David Noyes seconded the motion. A vote was taken and the membership in attendance unanimously voted to establish a budget committee. Wilkie, Bob Bodenstien, and Charles Scott to serve.

Habstritt informed the membership that Domino Sugar is permitting a HAER documentation of the plant that will soon be closing in Williamsburg, Brooklyn. This is the plant that the chapter toured last year. Roebling chapter members are volunteering time to assist with the

January 1, 2003 (balance from bank statement)		\$17,965.19
Income		
Membership Dues and Donations	3,381.00	
Symposium Registration	2,040.00	
Tour Income	1,355.00	
Interest	144.20	
Returned Deposit	100.00	
Sub-total, income		7,020.20
Expenses		
Annual Meeting	461.00	
Donation / Prize	500.00	
General Operations	167.35	
Insurance (2003 and 2004)	935.00	
Newsletter (Print / Postage)	826.04	
Symposium	3,047.28	(includes both 2002 & 2003 food and postage)
Tour Expenses	1,053.62	
Sub-total, expenses		(6,990.29)
January 1, 2004 balance		\$17,995.10

recording, however, money will be needed to support NPS staff with this effort. The decision to support this work was deferred to the budget committee.

Habstritt also brought suggestions made during the year by members:

- Publish a directory of chapter members
- Videotape the annual symposium
- Both were referred to the Budget Committee

Lance Metz spoke in support of funding the HAER project at Domino Sugar stressing the quality of HAER products and the great need for this type of recordation.

Habstritt requested suggestions for tours (new as well as places people would like to revisit). Suggestions received were:

1. The High Line, NYC
2. John J. Harvey
3. Bannerman's Island
4. John Noble Collection
5. Caddell Ship Yard
6. Transit Museum
7. Governor's Island
8. Ogdensburg Mine (the non-public areas)
9. 2nd Ave. Subway Tunnel
10. Phillipsburg, NJ
11. WTC site
12. Light Rail (Trenton – Camden)
13. Roebling (Trenton & Roebling, NJ)
14. Holland Tunnel ventilation
15. Victory Bridge
16. Steinway Piano
17. High Bridge, NYC

Announcements of events sponsored by other organizations and individuals followed.

The business meeting was adjourned at 3:30PM and was followed by entertainment.

RCSIA on Web

Although we still plan to design our own website, some basic documents are being posted on the SIA's national website to help us get started. You (and potential members) can now access a chapter membership form in pdf format (so you need Adobe Acrobat Reader) by going to <http://www.siahq.org/chapters/roebbling/roebbling.pdf> and the last issue of the newsletter is posted at <http://www.sia-web.org/chapters/roebbling/newsletters.html>

Budget Committee

As noted in the report of the annual meeting, a committee has been formed to analyze proposals for expenditure of chapter funds. If you have suggestions for ways we can pursue our mission through wise use of

our funds, please contact Bill Wilkie at 201-543-2258 or wilkie@worldnet.att.net by May 15, 2004.

Legal Advice

The chapter is seeking an attorney admitted to the NJ bar, preferably with non-profit experience, to provide occasional advice to the board. If any member is an attorney, or can recommend one, please contact Mary Habstritt at 212-769-4946 or RCSIAprez@aol.com

ANNOUNCEMENTS

New Books

The Water Works Conservancy, Inc. recently announced the publication of ***The Hackensack Water Works*** by Clifford W. Zink, a history of the Hackensack Water Works and the development of pure water treatment and delivery. It is partially funded through grants from the New Jersey Historical Commission.

The first half of the book tells the water works story from 1882 to World War II, using documents, letters, and historic archives. The second half covers World War II to the present through the fascinating oral histories of the people who managed and operated the site's pumping station and filtration plant, monitored the quality of the water, or lived and grew up around the site.

Printed in landscape format, the 265-page hardcover book includes a 16-page four-color insert of photographs of the site and over 203 black and white visuals - drawings, maps, and both historic and modern photographs. WWC also printed 100 copies of a Signed and Numbered Limited Edition, which comes in its own case with a sewn-in silk ribbon place marker and a special vellum page with a drawing of the Allis Chalmers Old Number 7.

The book's author is an architectural historian with a master's degree in Historic Preservation from Columbia University. He grew up in Westwood, NJ and graduated from Bergen Catholic High School. Mr. Zink is currently director of the New Jersey Dutch Buildings Research Project, funded by a 2001 Historical Commission grant.

Price is \$29.95 plus shipping and handling fees of \$6.00 per book, NJ residents need to also add \$1.80 sales tax. The limited edition is \$100.00, shipping of \$8.00 per book, NJ sales tax of \$6.00 (check on availability before ordering). Make check payable to The Water Works Conservancy and send to PO Box 714, Oradell, NJ 07649-0714. For more info, call 201-967-0133.

Thomas R. Winpenny's ***Manhattan Bridge: The***

Troubled Story of a New York Monument was published in late December by the Canal History and Technology Press, a division of the National Canal Museum in Easton, PA. The book provides accounts of the engineering and political challenges faced by the builders of the bridge as well as the many controversies surrounding keeping the bridge open to traffic throughout the 20th c. The Manhattan Bridge was the first to be built using deflection theory.

The 112-page book is illustrated with black and white photos from such archives as the Smithsonian, Hagley Museum and Library, The New-York Historical Society, and the Museum of the City of New York. You'll even find a couple illustrations came from Tom Flagg's private collection. The forward is by Eric Delony, recently retired from the Historic American Engineering Record.

Winpenny is a professor of history at Elizabethtown College in PA and an avowed bridge fan. In researching the business dealings of the Phoenix Bridge Co., he discovered little had been written on the Manhattan Bridge.

The book is available from Book Sales, National Canal Museum, 30 Centre Square, Easton PA 18042-7743, for \$19.95 plus \$5.00 shipping. It can also be purchased online at www.canals.org.

TOUR REPORTS

Whitlock Cordage Tour

On Feb. 22 we were offered a last-minute chance to visit the Whitlock Cordage site in Jersey City as demolition of some buildings was completed and an archeological dig began. A note went out by e-mail to members and about 15 people were able to attend. John Gomez and Leon Yost of Jersey City Landmarks led the tour.

The former rope-making plant is one of the earliest extant industrial sites on the historic Morris Canal. At least one of the structures was built in 1870 for Passaic Zinc, which occupied the site before the rope works. Whitlock Cordage, which made rope for maritime uses, began in 1815 in Elizabethport and moved to the Jersey City site in 1905. Although virtually all equipment is gone, and the site has been inhabited by squatters, there were many interesting aspects. The hemp warehouse, for instance, was notable for its radiators (who heats a warehouse?) and sloped floors with drainage holes to eliminate humidity that might rot the stored material. The warehouse is slated to become a parking garage.

The site was saved at the 11th hour after a U.S. Bankruptcy Court ordered the site leveled for optimum redevelopment,

but JC Landmarks helped convince the court to hear a plan from Housing Trust of America to re-use selected buildings for low-income housing.

OTHER EVENTS

Hidden Harbor Tours

Sat. & Sun., May 22 & 23

11:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Working Watercraft of New York Harbor and the North River Historic Ship Society are sponsoring this day of boat tours and waterfront exhibits. Tours include On the Brooklyn Waterfront covering the Navy Yard and Atlantic and Erie Basins; Cruise the Kills which will visit the Arthur Kill, Kill van Kull, and Staten Island tugboat yards; Up the Creeks will go up Newtown Creek, Gowanus Creek and the Morris Canal; and Water Rails will cover the Greenville rail yards, car floats, and ferry terminals. Working boats and ships will also be open for tours via free water taxi. Meet at Pier 63, foot of Houston St, west side of Manhattan on Sat.; Pier 11, foot of Wall St., on Sun. \$5 single ride or \$10 all day pass. For more info see http://www.photoships.com/HiddenHarbor2004_Home.htm

SITE NEWS

Bannerman's Castle

Neil Caplan, President of The Bannerman Castle Trust, recently sent an update on progress at this site on Pollepel Island in the Hudson River. Francis Bannerman VI began building his "castle" here in 1900 as a depot for his military surplus business. The property belongs to the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation and The Bannerman Castle Trust is a non-profit dedicated to preserving the remaining structures. The chapter toured the site in 2002.

The Trust is raising funds for stabilization. The total cost to preserve the castle is estimated to be \$10 million. They recently received a matching grant from the Dutchess County Industrial Development Agency for \$25,000 and a grant for \$5,000 from Assemblyman Patrick Manning. This money will be used for such improvements as bathroom facilities, safety railings on a new landing platform, and rain shelters to provide safe access for tours, which they plan to begin to offer this spring.

Donations may be sent to The Bannerman Castle Trust, Inc., P.O. Box 843, Glenham, NY 12527-0843 or call 845-831-6346.

H & M Powerhouse

The New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection has agreed to reconsider the Hudson & Manhattan Powerhouse in Jersey City for the New Jersey Register of Historic Places. This property was listed on the National Register for Historic Places on November 23, 2001, but at that time the Commissioner of DEP declined to list it on the state register. The site's owners and local government have been given a period to comment on the re-opening of the matter. Jersey City Landmarks has spearheaded this effort and a letter of

support from the chapter was submitted to the State Historic Preservation Officer. For updates see www.jclandmarks.org.

Roebling Chapter SIA Officers

President	Mary Habstritt
Vice President	Lynn Rakos
Treasurer	Charles Scott
Secretary	Aron Eisenpress

The Roebling Chapter official telephone number is the residence number of the President: (212) 769-4946. Please leave a brief message on the answering machine.

Membership is \$10.00 per year, payable to RCSIA, c/o Aron Eisenpress, 235 West End Avenue, Apt. 14-C, New York, NY 10023

For those who want to keep abreast of IA matters at the national level, the national SIA may be reached at either of the following web addresses: www.siahq.org or www.sia-web.org.

Design: Joe Macasek, MacGraphics

UPCOMING EVENTS

- | | |
|-------------------|--|
| April 30 | St. Elizabeth tour
Morristown, NJ |
| May 22-23 | Hidden Harbor events, Manhattan |
| June 10-13 | SIA National Conference
Providence RI |
| Oct. 13-17 | SIA National Fall Tour
Wilmington DE |

ROEBLING CHAPTER NEWSLETTER is published at irregular intervals by the Roebling Chapter, Society for Industrial Archeology, c/o Mary Habstritt, 40 W 77th Street, 17-B, New York, NY 10024. e-mail: RCSIAprez@aol.com.

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