There are several events coming up related to South Asian and Indian heritage. First, you won’t want to miss an exceptional opportunity to learn and listen to the traditional Indian drums, the *tablas*, from some of Long Island’s master tradition bearers. On Sunday, November 8th come join us at the East Meadow Library where you will see a master performance by the Tope family of Miller Place. Achyut and Tejas Tope play this traditional percussion instrument, one of the oldest percussion instruments still practiced today. Joining Achyut and Tope will be Priyanka Tope who has formally studied and performs Hindustani vocal music. Although it is customarily played by men, there are now women who play and teach the tabla. One of the only female tabla players active in the United States is Sejal Kukadia of New Hyde Park, who will lead a workshop for those interested in learning to play following the performance by the Topes. The program begins at 2pm and is free.

See South Asian Heritage on page 4

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**Diversity in Suburbia**

Hofstra University is hosting a 3-day conference on October 22-24 that explores the culture, economics and settlement of Long Island by immigrant groups, past and present. As part of the conference there will be presentations on historic preservation and cultural pressures, in a session led by director Nancy Solomon. On Friday, October 23rd at 6:30 p.m., there will be a performance by Luis Cordero y Los Amigos del Amargue in the Student Center Theatre. For schedule information call (516) 463-9939 or visit [http://www.hofstra.edu](http://www.hofstra.edu).

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**Maritime Mini Festival at LI Children’s Museum**

Save the date – January 10th! Join Long Island Traditions at the Long Island Children’s Museum for an afternoon of hands on activities with local baymen, fishermen, boat builders, clam shell artists and other maritime folk artists where children and adults can learn about the area’s marine ecosystem and maritime heritage through hands-on projects and storytelling. Bayman Cory Weyant will have his smoker along with some of his delicious smoked fish, and there will be plenty of clams and fish caught in Long Island waters to see and touch. The event is free with museum admission. For more information call the LI Children’s Museum at (516) 224-5800.
Elly Shodell, director of the oral history program at the Port Washington Library, is the author of the recently released book Port Washington, the newest addition in the images of America series from Arcadia Publishing.

Port Washington was once known as the “shellfish garden” of New York City, it is known for its bounteous bays, yachting and boatbuilding, celebrity residents, and pioneering aviation activities. Immigration, technology, economic changes, and geographical forces shaped Port Washington over the years.

Elly hopes this work will bring back memories for residents of Port Washington, inspire the telling of more stories, and lead to the contribution of photographs and archival collections to benefit the Local History Center. Shodell regards the book as a reminder of the importance of preserving the written word and original photographs in this exciting new age of digital information. Shodell is the recipient of the 1999 Forrest C. Pogue Award in Oral History. Since 1892, the Port Washington Public Library has been following and documenting the town’s transformations through its collection of more than 30,000 photographic prints, negatives, and slides.

Highlights of Port Washington:
- Includes Port Washington’s sand mining industry and the making of the subways, sidewalks and skyscrapers of the metropolis
- Features famous politicians, public figures, actors, writers, performers and entrepreneurs
- Explains ethnic diversity and architectural extremes
- Shows early planes, trains and automobiles on Long Island

The publication is available at area bookstores, independent retailers, and on-line retailers, or through Arcadia Publishing at (888)-313-2665 or www.arcadiapublishing.com. There will also be a book signing on November 18th at 7:30 pm at the library. Proceeds will benefit the Port Washington Library.
Fishers in Troubled Waters

By Nancy Solomon, Executive Director
Reprinted with permission from Newsday July 9, 2009

This past spring, the New York Ocean and Great Lakes Ecosystem Conservation Council called for the creation of a preserve on Long Island to protect offshore aquatic ecosystems. Fire Island National Seashore ended its policy of allowing baymen to harvest horseshoe crabs, which baymen use to harvest killies, conch and eels as part of their livelihood. And the Nature Conservancy now prohibits commercial fishing in the former underwater lands controlled by the Bluepoints Co.

Meanwhile, the National Marine Fisheries Service has eliminated the commercial harvesting of summer and winter flounder by New York fishers, yet allows out-of-state fishers to harvest these same fish - in our waters.

Then there are the minuscule quotas for recreational and commercial fishers established in 1996, numerous state permits required for working fishers, and the imposition of a state recreational fishing license whose proceeds will maintain existing government expenses but will not directly assist the beleaguered recreational fishing industry.

All these factors point the way to the imminent extinction of Long Island’s commercial and recreational fishing industry. Yet there is scientific evidence that stocks are rebounding more than during the past 10 years, when the first sirens rang of depleting fish stocks. So why is this happening and where is it going?

Beginning in the 19th century, most towns on Long Island restricted harvesting to residents, acknowledging that fishers shared the opportunity and the responsibility for sustaining the industry and the fish. While some private companies overharvested area waters, small family businesses took the responsibility seriously, throwing back smaller fish and shellfish so that they could grow and reproduce. These traditions continued until the 1950s and ‘60s. With the invention of motor boats and large government-financed trawler boats, thousands of part- and full-time fishers over-harvested the area’s resources. Eventually most fishers left the industry while a handful struggled to survive. At the same time, the waters suffered as pesticides and pollutants flowed freely.

During the 1990s, in an effort to rectify what many perceived as a uniform assault on the region’s fish populations, environmental organizations and government agencies blamed the few survivors of these changes. They excluded traditional fishers from meaningful dialogue about changes in the ecosystem that the fishers witnessed firsthand. Some environmentalists celebrate our fishing heritage, while simultaneously pronouncing that local fishers are the enemy. Unable to change the root causes of species depletion, some activists and fisheries managers regulate the fishers - perhaps because it is easier than attacking the large-scale changes in our ecosystem, such as pollution, coastal development and global warming.

Long Islanders now face a situation where few people will be allowed to fish or to eat locally caught fish. Ironically, local fishers partnered with environmentalists, trusting them to fix the problems and support their right to carry on sustainable fishing, as was their legacy. If these practices continue, we will soon have a model ecosystem where no one is allowed to fish.

The answer? The government and environmentalists must address pollution, excess runoff, species predator increase and non-indigenous species invasion, to name a few root causes. We also need to acknowledge that fishers are not the problem, and stop blaming the victims. We should work in partnership with local baymen and fishers, who have expertise and respect for marine life, on which their livelihood depends.

Our waters must remain in the public trust, instead of becoming marine museums and laboratories. Only then can we continue to consider Long Island a model for a responsible marine-dependent economy.

Cory Weyant Named South Shore Estuary Steward

The South Shore Estuary Reserve Council (SSER) has named master fisher and educator Cory Weyant as its 2009 Steward. In recognition of his outstanding dedication to educating the next generation about the ecology and heritage of the south shore, Weyant has received this recognition along with bayman Bill Hamilton and boat builder Charlie Balsamo. The South Shore Estuary Reserve Council is a regional planning and advisory group based in Freeport. For more information about the SSER call (516) 470-BAYS or visit them online at http://www.estuary.cog.ny.us/
PLEASE NOTE: If you have a Long Island concert or program that focuses on some aspect of traditional culture, drop us a line and we'll put it in our “Events of Interest” column. The deadline is the 1st of June, September, December and March.


November 8: Tabla Drumming Performance and Class (see accompanying article). 2 pm. East Meadow Public Library, 1886 Front Street, East Meadow, NY. Free admission. For information call (516) 794-2570.

November 14: Taalim School of Indian Music student recital. 2- 4 pm. Shelter Rock Public Library, 165 Searingtown Road, Albertson, NY. Free admission. For more information call the library at (516) 248-7363 or visit Taalim School of Indian Music at www.taalim.com.

January 10: Children’s Maritime festival. LI Children’s Museum. 11 Davis Avenue, Garden City, NY. For more information call (516) 224-5800.

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South Asian Heritage continued from page 1

During October 13, 2009 – December 18, 2009 in Hofstra University Museum’s Emily Lowe Gallery will be an exhibition of contemporary Indian art from the Collections of Virginia & Ravi Akhoury and Shelley & Donald Rubin. The exhibit highlights a dynamic period of Indian art, beginning with the creation of India in 1947. For more information on this exhibit and associated public programs call (516) 463-5672 or visit the Hofstra University website at www.hofstra.edu/museum.

On January 10, join Satya Pradeep and her dance students for a Classical Indian dance performance at the Hicksville Public Library at 2pm. The library is located at 169 Jerusalem Avenue. For more information go to www.satyaapradeep.com or call the Pradeep school at (516) 681-2048.

Stimulus Funding

Long Island Traditions was one of the many arts organizations around the country who received stimulus funding from the National Endowment for the Arts. As a result of the $25,000 grant LI Traditions will be able to maintain its highly regarded folk arts and maritime culture programs in the Freeport School District. Due to funding cutbacks to school districts these funds will support our work in Freeport’s elementary schools, including residencies by Native American artist Ina McNeil, African American artist Joan Hodges and Peruvian composer Theo Torres. In addition our maritime program featuring bayman Cory Weyant and lifeguard Reggie Jones, along with clamshell artists Harry Saarinen and Ken Swaine, fishermen Bill Hamilton, Flo Sharkey, John Remsen, John Buczak, decoy carver George Rigby and others will be brought to hundreds of Freeport’s 4th-grade students during the 2009-10 school year.