Waterfront Heroes Exhibit Comes to Oyster Bay

September 14 – November 3, 2019
Oyster Bay Historical Society

This fall, our Waterfront Heroes exhibit will be traveling to the Oyster Bay Historical Society, located at 20 Summit Street in Oyster Bay. The program pays tribute to the individuals and organizations who help preserve the region’s maritime heritage. Ten heroes are profiled, including the South Shore Bay House Owners Association, the North Oyster Bay Baymen’s Association, the South Shore Waterfowlers, the Sandy Hook Pilots Association, painter Naima Rauam, Adam Green, founder of Rocking the Boat, Waterfront Barge founder David Sharps, and steam whistle collector Conrad Milster. Waterfront Heroes features contemporary and historic photographs, personal narratives, and curated video from a wide variety of tradition bearers, painters and those seeking to preserve maritime culture and traditions. The exhibit launches with an opening reception on Sunday, September 15th at 1pm, and includes three additional public programs:

- **October 6th, 1-3 pm**. Storytelling program with the Oyster Bay Baymen and the LI Commercial Fishing Association.
- **October 13th, 1-3 pm**. Storytelling program with the South Shore Bay House Owners and the South Shore Waterfowlers.
- **November 3rd, 2 pm**. “Salt Water People” play reading by American Lore Theater.

We look forward to having you join the conversation! For more information, call the Oyster Bay Historical Society at (516) 922-5032.

Boatbuilding Demonstration at the Hallockville Museum

October 27, 2019, 1 – 3 pm

For centuries, residents of New York have built watercraft and waterfront facilities to transport people and goods locally, nationally, and internationally. For the settlers of this area, boating was a way of life, providing employment, recreation, and transportation. Dutch and English settlers crossed the Atlantic Ocean to settle in New Amsterdam, travelling up the Hudson River, along Long Island Sound and Long Island’s south shore. Wooden ships and boats dominated the country’s transportation system until the mid-1800s when railroads took on a larger role in transportation. Coastal towns employed shipwrights, marine carpenters, boat captains and other trades people for generations. Boatyards today still house numerous structures ranging from large barns to machine shops, some dating from the 1800s.

Please join us on October 27th from 1 to 3 pm for a Boatbuilding Demonstration and Storytelling at the Hallockville Museum Farm located at 6038 Sound Avenue in Riverhead, NY. Presenters will include master carpenter and boat restorer, Chris Hale; boat builder and owner of Weeks Yacht Yard, Kevin Weeks; and Donn Costanzo, boat builder and owner of Wooden Boat Works. While you are at the museum, visit our exhibit currently on display: From Shore to Shore: Boat Builders and Boatyards of Long Island. The exhibit examines that traditional occupational and recreational culture of boat builders and boatyards in the region. From Shore to Shore includes graphic panels on the history of boat building in the region, profiles of area boatyards and master craftsmen, boat builders’ tools, and an audio-visual installation featuring interviews with master builders, restorers and historic yard owners.
Please join us at the Tobay Beach Boat Show on September 28th from 10 am to 6 pm as we present “At Home on the Water,” exploring Long Island’s recreational fishing and boat building traditions. Our program will provide the opportunity to interact with baymen, fishermen, decoy carvers and boat builders. Presenters will include baymen and fishermen Bill Fetzer, Fred Menges, Flo Sharkey, and Tony Sougstad; boat builder Chris Hale; decoy carver and waterfowl hunter George Rigby; and, master recreational fisherman Reed Riemer of the Atlantic Anglers Club.

The Tobay Boat Show runs Friday, September 27th from 12 pm - 6 pm; Saturday, September 28th from 10 am - 6 pm, and Sunday, September 29th from 10 am - 6 pm. Admission is $15 for adults, $12 for seniors, and $5 for children 6-15. The show is located at Tobay Beach on Ocean Parkway in Massapequa. For more information, call Long Island Traditions at (516) 767-8803 or the NY Marine Trades Association at (631) 691-7050 or visit www.nyboatshows.com/Tobay.

Bay House Documentary and Maritime Film Festival

Filmmakers Greg Blank and Barbara Weber are producing a one-hour documentary about the south shore bay houses in the Town of Hempstead, as a result of a generous grant from the Robert L. Gardiner Foundation. The film’s debut is scheduled for March 15, 2020 at the Cinema Arts Centre in Huntington. Additional screenings will be announced this winter. The documentary will launch our 2nd Maritime Film Festival, funded in part by the National Endowment for the Arts. Stay tuned for details!

Ann Latner joins staff as Program Manager

At the start of 2019, we hired a new Program Manager for Long Island Traditions. Ann W. Latner, a former attorney, writer, and Port Washington resident, has taken on the role. In this position, Ann is facilitating LIT’s educational programs which take place in schools across Long Island, and assisting the Executive Director with the day to day duties of running the organization. Welcome Ann!
A Day in the Life of a Bayman

By Fred Menges, North Oyster Bay Baymen’s Association

The life of a bayman is an interesting yet tough way of life. It can also be very rewarding in more ways than just money. We get to witness amazing things that most people don’t get to see such as seals, whales, dolphins, different species of gulls, waterfowl, birds of prey, etc… Some of these animals don’t normally visit this area, but when they do – we get to see them. Even a random white tailed deer swims by from time to time. I love it.

A bayman is always on call to help other boaters in need of assistance. Every year I personally tow in a dozen or so boats that either broke down or hit rocks. Sometimes even just to give them enough fuel to make it back to the dock. Our eyes are ALWAYS open.

THE DAILY ROUTINE

A typical day usually starts the night before staring at the weather channel because the weather plays a large factor in what the next day will bring. Wind, rain, sleet/snow, the temperature and moon phase are all extremely important.

The first thing most of us do when we wake up is put the weather on one last time and make a pot of coffee. When I make my game plan, I gear up and walk down to my dinghy (small row boat used to get to the clam boat) and make my way out. (I’m fortunate enough to be able to keep my boat in front of my house on a mooring while some of the other guys trailer theirs daily). It’s the best work commute ever in my eyes.

Once I get to the clam boat, I start it up, unhook from the mooring, and start my journey. When I arrive at the area I’m going to work, I grab my poles (up to 8 sections of 12 foot long aluminum pipe ranging from 1 to 1 5/8 inches in diameter). I hose clamp the lengths I need for the depth I’m working that day and attach my rake to it.

After I’m set up and digging, I’m constantly paying attention to every move I make while pulling one the rake. One wrong twist or movement can hurt you. We pull the rakes with every ounce of strength we have from the first grab to the last. After 20 years working out there, it’s still amazing to me how much goes into catching these delicious little buggers.

When the first grab is finished and brought into the boat, it gets dumped on a rack that has multiple bars an inch apart to be culled, sorted and counted. The reason they are spaced one inch is so that the baby clam seed can fall back into the water. The basket and teeth on the rake have the same spacing. It’s a rather simple process but very physically demanding.

At the end of the day when everything is counted, sorted, bagged and tagged I start my journey back to the mooring to unload my catch and put the boat away until the next morning when I start the whole process over again.

I love every second of it and the feeling of accomplishment is unparalleled in my eyes. There is something to be said for literally earning every penny made for the day. Even a bad day is a good day because you are out there working as hard as you can and never really come home empty handed.

This article originally appeared on the Website of the North Oyster Bay Baymen’s Association (www.oysterbaymen.com). Meet Fred Menges and other North Oyster Bay Baymen at our Waterfront Heroes opening reception on September 15th at 1 pm, and at the storytelling program on October 6th from 1-3pm, both at the Oyster Bay Historical Society.

Folk Arts of NY Self-Guided Cell Phone Tours

We are pleased to announce that we have received funding from the New York State Council on the Arts to begin development of our new project: self-guided walking and driving cell phone tours, developed by folklorists in NY State, examining sites relating to local traditional culture and folklore in their region. Increasingly tourists are looking for experiences that explore little known aspects of local and regional cultures. NY folklorists possess unique skills and perspectives to develop these tours, based on their efforts to document local traditions. Using cell phone technology, the tours will bring visitors to sites that range from local celebrations, traditional architecture, occupational culture, ethnic stores and food establishments, and festivals that feature traditional music and dance. The visitor will listen to a folklorist-curated illustrated story related to each tour stop, such as a legend, memory, poem, or other oral narrative genres, occupational experience or other stories, as told by a tradition bearer. Sound, photographs and text are included, with built-in maps that can guide visitors to visit local sites. Each tour will feature field-based edited audio narration, professional narrated introductions, photographs, and text that explore the place being featured, curated by the participating folklorists. The tours will be available through a downloadable app by cell phone users. Development of the tours will begin in 2020.
EVENTS OF INTEREST

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.

Don’t forget to visit our web site and our Facebook page for timely information.

September 15th  Opening Reception of the Waterfront Heroes exhibit at the Oyster Bay Historical Society. 1 pm. See article.

September 28th  Tobay Boat Show. Ocean Parkway, Massapequa. Raindate September 29th. See article.

October 6th  Waterfront Heroes program with the Oyster Bay Baymen and LI Commercial Fishermen. 1-3 pm. Oyster Bay Historical Society. See article.

October 13th  Waterfront Heroes program with the South Shore Bay House Owners and the South Shore Waterfowlers. 1-3 pm. Oyster Bay Historical Society. See article.

November 3rd  “Salt Water People” play reading by American Lore Theater. Oyster Bay Historical Society. See article.

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