



Society for Industrial Archeology ROEBLING CHAPTER NEWSLETTER

July 2004

Vol. 13 No. 2

TOURS

Three Tugs Tour

*Pier 63, Manhattan, 9:30 a.m.
or Garner's Yard, Staten Island, 12:30 p.m.
Sunday, July 25, 2004*

The *John J. Harvey* is hosting a tour to visit three historic tugboats – *Pegasus* (our favorite tug and host of past RCSIA harbor cruises), *Bertha* and *New York Central 13* (formerly the *Hay-De*) – at Garner's yard in Tottenville, Staten Island. All three are undergoing rebuilding or repairs and this is a chance to see and hear about the restoration efforts. The tour includes a ride through the Kills, the best bit of the harbor for many of us.

Twenty-five one-way spots are being held for Roebling members, that is, space for 50 in all. Either meet the *Harvey* at pier 63 at 9:30 for the trip to Tottenville and return by public transportation, or join us at Garner's yard after the *Harvey's* 12:00 arrival and return via the *Harvey* when it departs at 3:30, reaching Pier 63 at about 6:00 p.m. Lunch will be available at the yard at about 1:00 for both groups. Quantities of roast pig and grilled fish are on the menu.

SOUTHBOUND VIA HARVEY:

- Depart on *Harvey* from Pier 63 at 9:30; arrive Garner's yard at noon.
- Tour the tugboats and have lunch.
- Return on trains leaving at 9 minutes and 39 minutes after the hour from Atlantic station for 40-minute trip to Saint George terminal. Ferries depart St. George every half hour on the half hour from noon to 7:30 p.m.

NORTHBOUND VIA HARVEY:

- From Manhattan, ferries depart Whitehall terminal at 10:30, 11:30, 12:00, 12:30, 13:00, 13:30 and 14:00. Trains leave Saint George Ferry Terminal every half hour at 1 minute and 31 minutes after the hour for the 40-minute trip to Atlantic.
- Tour the tugboats and have lunch.
- Depart on *Harvey* at about 3:30, arriving Pier 63 about 6:00.

Staten Island Rapid Transit's (SIRT) Atlantic stop is just across from Garner's yard and is the second-to-last stop on the line. The St. George stop is in the basement of the Staten Island ferry terminal.

For complete SIRT schedule and system map:

<http://www.mta.nyc.ny.us/nyct/sir/>

Ferry information is available at:

<http://www.nyc.gov/html/dot/html/masstran/ferries/statferry.html#info>

Registration is required for this tour. To ensure a one-way seat on the *Harvey*, register by July 15th by sending an e-mail to trips@fireboat.org or call Mary Habstritt at 212-769-4946 and she will forward your registration. Be sure to mention that you are an SIA member in your request and be sure to specify which direction you wish to go.

It is recommended that you check the *Harvey* website at www.fireboat.org, or call Mary (cell: 917-709-5291) before leaving home on the 25th to be sure that mechanical problems have not caused cancellation – the *Harvey's* an old boat.

The tour is free, but donations are appropriate and appreciated to help cover the cost of lunch and fuel. Donations can be made on site the day of the tour.

Manhattanville Works

McDonald's, 125th & Broadway

Thursday, July 29, 11:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

In 1890 the *New York Times* noted that "the brick, lumber, and building material trade for the entire west side of the city up town is beginning to concentrate in Manhattanville." Eric K. Washington, author of *Manhattanville: Old Heart of West Harlem*, a pictorial history from Arcadia Press, leads a tour of some of the hardscrabble industrial and manufacturing highlights of this enclave around Broadway and 125th St., now the focus of Columbia University's expansion plans. The tour will include visits to the former sites of Yuengling's New York brewery, a trolley barn now used to store Metropolitan Opera scenery, and the iconic Riverside Drive and Broadway IRT subway viaducts.

Directions: Take the 1/9 subway line to 125th Street station and meet at the McDonald's at the southwest corner of 125th and Broadway.

Cost: \$10 for members and \$20 for non-members. Reservations are required. Please call or e-mail Mary Habstritt at 212-769-4946 or RCSIAprez@aol.com.

OTHER EVENTS

To the best of our ability, this information was accurate at press time. Please check with the listed sponsor for up-to-date information.

Open House, West Point Foundry

Cold Spring, New York

Saturday, July 31, and Sunday, Aug. 1

10:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Free tours of the archeological work at Scenic Hudson's West Point Foundry Preserve in Cold Spring will be led by students and faculty of Michigan Technological University's graduate program in Industrial Archeology on Saturday, July 31, and Sunday, Aug. 1, on the hour from 10 a.m. - 3 p.m. (rain or shine).

MTU teams have been investigating this National Register site for the past three years. The tour will bring visitors to newly excavated portions of the boring mill, blast furnace and the casting house. A remotely-operated vehicle will be sent down the tailrace on Sat.

Directions: From the traffic light at Route 9D and Main Street (Route 301) in Cold Spring, take third left onto Rock Street and continue to the end. Turn right on Kemble Ave. At end turn left through gate. Also, the site is a short walk from the Cold Spring train station (follow ramp and path from northbound platform).

For more information, see www.westpointfoundry.org or contact Rita Shaheen, park planner, Scenic Hudson, (845) 473-4440, ext. 230.

TOUR REPORTS

College of St. Elizabeth Tour

Ten members got a closer look at the lovely Victorian campus of the College Of St. Elizabeth on April 30. This architectural gem is just down the road from Drew University, site of our annual symposium.

Sister Agnes Vincent Rueshoff, a professor of philosophy and a gardener, led the historic portion of the tour, telling the story that began with the Sisters of Charity, founded by St. Elizabeth Ann Seton. After opening Seton Hall University in 1856, the sisters moved their Motherhouse to Morristown in 1880. The central wing of the current administration building is from the original 1880 structure designed by Patrick Kiely, an architect specializing in ecclesiastical buildings. The Holy Family Chapel replaced

an earlier chapel in 1909. Although the "new" chapel has lost its murals, it is still a charming example of neo-Gothic architecture. Sister Agnes Vincent glowed with special pride when she took us to the 1911 greenhouse and its adjacent Shakespeare garden.

Student Ambassador Meredith Beebe took us by the modern buildings on campus and the 1932 open-air Greek Theatre, ending the tour at the 1907 Santa Rita Hall where Valerie Martin of the Communications and Marketing Department introduced us to Jeanine Hirsch from Institutional Advancement and a lovely array of refreshments. We sat down with our nibbles to hear a presentation on the New College Center from its architect. The center will provide a much-needed auditorium and space for the fine arts.

Thanks to RCSIA member Kevin Olsen for making arrangements.

CHAPTER BUSINESS

Call for Nominations

ROEBLING AWARD

The second annual John Augustus Roebling Award for Contributions to Industrial Archeology will be awarded at the 2004 Drew Symposium on Sunday, October 24. The Award committee seeks your nominations.

The award recognizes an individual, group, or organization that has made an outstanding contribution to documenting or preserving the industrial heritage of the greater New York-New Jersey area. The honoree will receive a cash award of \$250 and a certificate.

Nominees must have displayed an extraordinary effort to save or preserve a site of industrial or engineering interest, or created unique or outstanding documentation through archeological research, photography, written history, or other means that provides a record of such a site. Nominees are not required to be Roebling Chapter members. Individuals who are nominated must be living.

Send your nominations by Aug 15 to one of the Award committee members: Mike Raber, MSRaber@aol.com, 860-633-9026; Conrad Milster, 718-857-9524; or Mary Habstritt, RCSIAprez@aol.com, 212-769-4946.

Call for Papers

24 on 24!: 24th Annual Drew Symposium on Industrial Archeology in the New York – New Jersey Area

Illustrated presentations on the industrial heritage of our region are being sought for the 24th Annual

Drew Symposium, to be held Sunday, October 24th at the Hall of Sciences, Drew University, Madison, NJ. This all-day symposium runs from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Presentations are typically 25 min. in length and illustrated with 35mm slides or other media.

To submit a proposal or get more information, contact Thomas Flagg, Symposium Coordinator, at 212-780-5155 (daytime), tflagg@sunyo.edu.

SITE NEWS

John J. Harvey

In a (pleasant) surprise announcement May 13 at Pier 40, North River, Bernadette Castro, New York State Commissioner of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation announced a \$320,000 historic preservation matching grant to Save Our Ships New York for the ongoing restoration of retired New York City fireboat *John J. Harvey*. (For more on the restoration project, see <http://www.fireboat.org/restoration/index.asp>.) The Pataki administration has shown unprecedented support for the cause of historic vessels, having made a similar grant of \$150,000 last year to the historic Tug Pegasus.

Naturally, they will have to work hard to raise the matching funds, but the result will be that the *Harvey*, having served her city and state since 1931, will continue to do so for decades to come.

If you would like to contribute to the matching funds, your tax-deductible donation may be sent to the non-profit Save Our Ships New York, Pier 63, North River, New York NY 10011. For more info on SOSNY, go to www.sosny.org.

Tug Pegasus

The Tug Pegasus Preservation Project was formed as a non-profit to restore the former S.O. Co. No. 16 built for the Standard Oil Co. in 1907. The Police Athletic League's Maritime Adventure Program has worked onboard with the preservation project to teach young people about ship restoration and navigation. Future plans are to run educational tours of the harbor. The Pegasus was awarded a New York state matching grant of \$150,000 in late 2002 and fundraising is underway.

Built in the Skinner shipyard in Baltimore, the tug started life docking ships, moving lighter barges, and serving as an auxiliary fireboat at Standard Oil terminals and waterside refineries. Originally powered by steam, the tug was converted to diesel in the 1950s. For the last years of its working life, Pamela Hepburn of Hepburn Marine, operated the tug doing general harbor towing and often moving carfloats for the New York Cross Harbor Railroad. Pegasus is now laid up in

Garner's yard in Staten Island for extensive hull repairs.

For more information see www.tugpegasus.org. Tax-deductible donations may be sent to Tug Pegasus Preservation Project, 83 Murray Street, New York, NY 10007.

ADVOCACY

Austin, Nichols & Co. Warehouse

Just north of Domino Sugar on the East River waterfront in Brooklyn's Williamsburg neighborhood stands the former Austin, Nichols & Co. warehouse. It was designed by Cass Gilbert and built in 1913/14 by Turner Construction. This partnership between Gilbert and Turner led to their collaboration on the U.S. Army Marine Ocean Terminal, or Brooklyn Army Terminal as most of us know it. BAT is on the National Register of Historic Places, as is Gilbert's Woolworth Building in Lower Manhattan, completed just before the warehouse. The warehouse is remarkably modern in appearance with a slightly Egyptian feel due to its coved cornice. Battered walls increase the sense of monumentality.

Austin, Nichols & Co. was one of the world's largest grocery wholesalers founded in Manhattan in 1855. It employed 200 salesmen and 700 staff by 1905. Shortly thereafter, the firm decided to escape the clogged streets of New York and build a modern terminal facility in Brooklyn. The Havemeyer family not only operated a sugar refinery on the Williamsburg waterfront, but ran several subsidiary companies including Brooklyn Cooperage, to make sugar barrels, and the Brooklyn Eastern District Terminal Co., which installed rail along the city-owned docks to serve waterfront factories. Havemeyers and Elder entered into a contract with Austin, Nichols to build a state-of-the-art customized factory warehouse, which Austin, Nichols would lease. Reinforced concrete was used for its loadbearing and fireproof qualities.

The warehouse's first floor was able to accommodate railcars coming directly into the building from carfloats. Bulk goods were moved through the building via an elaborate conveyor system to various processing stations. Austin, Nichols held several brand names, including Sunbeam, and processed foodstuffs from raw materials, as well as importing fancy groceries from Europe and elsewhere. In addition to food, such sundries as cigars, soaps, wooden utensils, and twine were manufactured. Processed goods were shipped out by truck and rail.

After the repeal of Prohibition, Austin, Nichols chose to focus on liquor distribution and by the 1960s the company was no longer listed in Brooklyn. The warehouse was used by several manufacturing concerns and is now a

mixed-use building with small manufacturers, artists' studios, and residential units.

The current owner is proposing the addition of several floors and a conversion to luxury lofts. RCSIA has joined a coalition of preservationists and tenants in fighting to prevent this. Since the property is currently zoned for manufacturing, a variance must be approved prior to obtaining a building permit. Mary Habstritt spoke in opposition to the variance at a public hearing before the New York City Board of Standards and Appeals on June 15th. She has also written to the Landmarks

Preservation Commission requesting that the building be reviewed for possible designation as a city landmark.

For more information, contact Mary at 212-769-4946 or RCSIAprez@aol.com.

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.

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UPCOMING EVENTS

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| July 25 | Tugboats Tour
Staten Island, NY |
| July 29 | Manhattanville Tour
Manhattan, NY |
| Oct. 13-17 | SIA National Fall Tour
Wilmington DE |
| Oct. 24 | Annual Drew Symposium
Madison, NJ |

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