



# Society for Industrial Archeology

# ROEBLING CHAPTER

# NEWSLETTER

December 2006

Vol. 15 No. 4

## CHAPTER BUSINESS

### 2007 Annual Meeting

*Drew University Hall of Sciences*

*Sunday, January 28, 2007 – 1:00 to 5:00 P.M.*

In accordance with our bylaws, which require us to hold a business meeting in January of each year, members are hereby notified that the meeting will take place at the time and location given above.

The business portion of the meeting will include annual reports from the President, Secretary, and Treasurer, and election of officers. Plans for the upcoming year will be discussed and proposals are invited. Cookies, coffee and sodas will be available to all members who attend. Please have your lunch before arriving, or bring it with you.

Four of the five members of the chapter's board are elected by the membership. The fifth member is appointed by the elected members. Mary Habstritt has reached her four-term limit as President and is not eligible for re-election. Nominees for elective office for 2007 are:

- Lynn Rakos, President
- Tolga Morawski, Vice President
- Aron Eisenpress, Ssecretary (Incumbent)
- Kevin Pegram, Treasurer (Incumbent)

Tradition dictates that we also provide time for show and tell. If you have IA slides, video, artifacts, or the like which you wish to share with other chapter members, please notify Mary Habstritt at 212-769-4946 or RCSIAprez@aol.com to be placed on the schedule.

Individuals with disabilities who require special assistance should contact Mary no later than January 21, 2007 to ensure appropriate accommodations can be made.

#### **Directions:**

**Via Automobile #1** – From Northwest New Jersey and Northeast Pennsylvania via I-80: Take I-80 East to Exit 43, I-287 South. Proceed to Morristown Exit 35, “Madison Avenue/Route 124”. At top of exit ramp, turn left. Proceed three miles on Route 124 East to Madison. Drew University is on Route 124 (Madison Avenue) on your right.

**Via Automobile #2** – From West New Jersey and Pennsylvania, via I-78: Take I-78 East to I-287 North. Proceed to first Morristown exit (Exit 35 South Street/Route 124”. At end of exit ramp, turn left. Proceed 100 yards ahead and take first right, following signs to Route 124. At the stop sign, turn right (Route 124 East) and proceed three miles on Route 124 East to Madison. Drew University is on Route 124 (Madison Avenue) on your right.

**Via Automobile #3** – From Southern New Jersey via NJ Turnpike: Take NJTP North to Exit 10 and follow I-287 North to first Morristown exit, Exit 35 (South Street, Route 124). At end of exit ramp, turn left. Proceed as above under #2.

**Via Automobile #4** – From New York City (Lincoln and Holland Tunnels): Lincoln Tunnel -Follow the signs to the N.J. Turnpike South. Take exit 14 (Newark Airport). After the toll plaza take I-78 West (either express or local lanes okay) to Exit 48 - Route 24 West. Take exit 7A - Chatham/ Route 124 West. Exit 7A/B splits so watch carefully. Follow Route 124 West through Chatham (Main Street) into Madison (Madison Avenue). Drew is located on Route 124 (Madison Avenue), on your left, just past the center of Madison. Continue as above.

**Via Automobile #5** – From New York City (upper Manhattan/George Washington Bridge): Take I-80 West from bridge to I-287 South (Morristown). Proceed as under #1, above.

**Via Public Transportation** – NJ Transit's Morristown Line train service stops at the station in Madison, approximately one-half mile from the Drew Campus. From the station, proceed to Madison Avenue. Turn left and walk along Madison Avenue until you come to the Drew campus on your left. For train schedules and other information contact NJ Transit: (800) 722-2222 in NJ and (973) 762-5100 in NY.

## 2006 Meeting Report

The 2006 Annual Meeting was held Sunday, January 29, 2006 at Drew University's Hall of Science. It began at 2:00 p.m.

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Mary Habstritt gave the President's Report reviewing chapter activities of the past year. She then asked the members present to approve her appointment of Ulana Zakalak to the Roebling Award Committee. This was approved.

Vice President Lynn Rakos read the Treasurer's Report on behalf of Charles Scott who was unable to attend due to his wife's illness.

Aron Eisenpress, Secretary, gave the Membership Report.

Nominations Chair Tom Flagg then supervised the election of officers. Due to two candidates running for treasurer, a paper ballot was used. Lance Metz assisted in counting the ballots.

New officers were Mary Habstritt, President; Lynn Rakos, Vice President; Kevin Pegram, Treasurer; and Aron Eisenpress, Secretary.

Mary then offered goals for the coming year (incorporated into her report below).

The Show and Tell at the conclusion of business featured Gianfranco Archimede, Executive Director, City of Paterson Historic Preservation Commission, on plans for the Paterson heritage park. Tom Flagg brought slides of Welsh Canals and the former Erie main line.

## 2005 IN REVIEW

### Events

**D**ue to being consumed with planning the SIA's national conference in Milwaukee with very few volunteers, and then greater involvement with local preservation advocacy this year, I had little time to plan Roebling tours. The two we did have piggybacked on efforts of other groups.

The Roosevelt Island Infrastructure Tour in June made use of the tour guide skills of Judy Berdy of the Roosevelt Island Historical Society. The Harvey Cruise in August involved sharing the boat with the Suffield County Historical Society and sharing arrangements for food and drink with them.

The Corn Roast in September was very well-attended this year and we actually had steam engines running this time, boding well for future steam-ups.

### Advocacy & Advice

**I**'ve been making an effort to get the chapter better known by speaking as President in various forums and encouraging members' participation in IA-related exhibits and speaking opportunities.

This year, I spoke on the west side's industrial waterfront and its relation to the High Line at Pier 63, and was

part of a panel at the Municipal Art Society on re-use of industrial structures. Several Roebling members contributed to two exhibits on the East River at MAS this year. And Conrad Milster appeared in the lecture series at the General Society of Mechanics and Tradesmen Library at my recommendation. I want us to be the go-to organization on the industrial heritage of our area.

This year we even got some international attention. Tom Flagg and I were part of a tour of New York by the Catalonian Society for Industrial Archaeology, showing them around Red Hook with Carolina Salguero of Portside New York and David Sharps of the Waterfront Museum. As part of the national SIA's study tour to Bologna, I was asked to make a presentation on chapter activities to industrial archeologists at an afternoon symposium at the Museo del Patrimonio Industriale. I described the SIA and its relationship to the IA program at Michigan Tech and went on to compare local activities of a chapter and gave specific examples of Roebling efforts to study and preserve sites in New York and New Jersey with photos of the High Line and Nabisco, Austin, Nichols, and Graving Dock No. 1. They wanted to be able to compare experiences in documentation, preservation, and education efforts between our two countries. Bob Stewart, also a Roebling member, gave a presentation on historic documentation from a practitioner's standpoint.

A major amount of time was spent this year on attempting to landmark the Austin, Nichols & Co. Warehouse in Williamsburg, Brooklyn. Thanks to those of you who signed postcards & petitions, made phone calls, and wrote letters and special thanks to Estelle Haferling who came to the final city council vote. Sadly, even though the city's Landmarks Preservation Commission voted to landmark the building, the City Council voted against the decision, even overturning a mayoral veto of their original vote against it. This is only 5th time the council has rejected a landmarking decision of the commission. This effort has spurred the creation of a new group, the Waterfront Preservation Alliance to work preemptively on saving other industrial sites in Greenpoint/Williamsburg, including the Greenpoint Terminal Market and Eberhard Faber factory.

The fight to save the graving docks and other structures at the former Todd Shipyard in Red Hook, Brooklyn is ongoing. IKEA's plan for its new store includes demolition of all the buildings and filling Graving Dock No. 1, which dates from 1929 and was still being used a year ago. The Roebling Chapter is part of a coalition, Save the Graving Dock Committee, which includes the Municipal Art Society, the Waterfront Museum, the Preservation League of New York State, and others. The New York State Historic Preservation Office

recently passed a resolution allowing the general plan to go forward, but adding some protection for the archeological resources at the site, namely the buried 1867 centrifugal pumps and the filled Graving Dock No. 2. This is certainly a response to some of our concerns, but we are still trying to keep Graving Dock No. 1 open. The Army Corps of Engineers which must grant a permit to IKEA for dredging and bulkhead repair recently determined that most of the site is not within their jurisdiction, including Graving Dock No. 1 since the construction of a retaining wall to support the fill will be done while the dock is dry. We are now looking for legal remedies with the assistance of the National Trust for Historic Preservation.

Our attempt to save the Long Island City Power House failed because we began too late. As we worked neighborhood residents and a former researcher from the Landmarks Preservation Commission to compile evidence that it was a McKim, Mead and White building—LPC had decided that it was not, so we felt it was a vital aspect of a landmarking campaign—a demolition permit was applied for. In spite of our postcard campaign, and my 11th hour faxes and phone calls to LPC, we watched those four amazing stacks go down.

In addition to these major efforts, I have written letters urging preservation or documentation of the National Cold Storage plant slated to be demolished as part of Brooklyn Bridge Park, the Sixth Street Embankment (aka Harsimus Stem Embankment) in Jersey City, and the Glenwood Power Station in Yonkers.

## ***Business Affairs***

**T**hrough our work on the Austin, Nichols & Co. Warehouse, I met a graphic designer who is enthusiastic about creating a chapter logo and is working to do that in time for Roebbling's 200th anniversary this coming June.

Little has been done regarding our own website, except to make sure that all newsletters are posted in a timely fashion on the national SIA's webpage for our chapter. We will be updated the chapter description and the membership form there shortly.

The Special Projects Committee has finally been formed. At last year's meeting this committee was proposed with the ability to fund projects up to \$500. Since our bylaws give the president the ability to approve expenditures up to \$1000, and I have, I asked the board to increase this to \$5000, which they approved. Allison Rachleff, a historian with the engineering firm Earthtech, and Gianfranco Archimede, executive director of City of Paterson's Historic Preservation Commission, have agreed to serve. This gives us representatives from New York and New Jersey. We will be meeting today for the

first time to establish guidelines and procedures for moving ahead. The plan is to use the money to respond swiftly to assist with documentation and preservation efforts when needed so the application process will be minimal.

## ***Newsletters and Mailings***

**F**our newsletters were issued this year, clustered in the latter half of the year due to my conference responsibilities. They were so much easier to get out now that we are using the mailing services of a print shop to handle labeling and stamping. These functions are being supervised by Joe Macasek who continues to donate his services to design the newsletter. Thanks to Joe!

We split responsibilities for some other mailings with organizations that were hosting events of interest to our members or assisting in a preservation effort. For instance, notices of the lectures at GMST and the East River programs at MAS were printed by our partner and mailed by us, and the Historic Districts Council helped stuff and mail postcard on the Austin, Nichols & Co. Warehouse and Long Island City Power House. Thanks to Cathe Giffuni, Alice Lundoff and Gerry Weinstein who helped me with labeling and stamping.

## ***Looking Ahead***

**F**in the coming year, we look forward to the celebration of the 200th anniversary of John Roebbling. ASCE has a symposium and tour planned and, although we are staying in touch on their plans, events of our own seem to be a must. What?

Tom Flagg will be leading a tour in May of the 60th St. Yard of the NY Central which the chapter is co-sponsoring with Riverside Park South.

Pamela Hepburn is eager for us to take a cruise on the Tug Pegasus. You may remember this former Standard Oil tugboat from chapter cruises in years gone by or from the Three Tugs Tour last year to Staten Island when it was in the yard for extensive repairs. Most of those are done – she is floating with engines running – but windows and a few other necessary items still need to be completed. Expect a cruise this summer.

I have contacted the owner of Ko-Rec-Type and hope to arrange a tour of this Greenpoint factory which makes typewriter and printer ribbons, and, yes, even carbon paper, in a former meatpacking plant.

We will attempt to sponsor six tours again as we did in 2005.

We will get 501(c)(3) tax-exempt status this year!

We will have a new logo!

Volunteers needed! Write a story, nominate a Roebbling

awardee, hand someone an SIA membership form.

## Award Committee

Ulana Zakalak has agreed to serve on the Roebling Award Committee. A dedicated architectural historian, Ulana has her own consulting business based in Red Bank, NJ and is very busy with historic building documentation and preservation in the region, including identifying significant historic sites for The Newark Preservation & Landmarks Committee, a non-profit citizens' group. She has been away from Roebling activities for a while but I look forward to her re-joining the fold

and helping us identify good candidates for this award in years to come. I ask for your approval of her appointment.

### Roebling Chapter SIA Officers

President	Mary Habstritt
Vice President	Lynn Rakos
Treasurer	Kevin Pegram
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.

A downloadable chapter membership form and general information about the SIA are available at [www.siahq.org](http://www.siahq.org).

Design: Joe Macasek, MacGraphics

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## UPCOMING EVENTS

### 2007

Jan. 28	Annual Chapter Meeting Drew University, Madison NJ
June 7-10	SIA National Conference Philadelphia

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**ROEBLING CHAPTER NEWSLETTER** is published four times per year 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](mailto:RCSIAprez@aol.com).

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