



# ROEBLING CHAPTER

## Society for Industrial Archeology

December 2008

Vol. 17 No. 4

### CHAPTER BUSINESS

#### 2009 ANNUAL MEETING AND SHOP TOUR

*Paterson Museum, 2 Market Street, Paterson, NJ; Saturday January 24, 2009. Shop Tour: 10:30. Business Meeting: 12:30 – 3:00. RSVP for shop tour (917) 515-4154 or RCSIAPrez@aol.com.*

In accordance with our by-laws, 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.

Our annual meeting will be preceded by a private tour of United Vacuum Corp. which is just a short walk from our meeting location at the Paterson Museum. United Vacuum was incorporated in 1996 and sells and services vacuum pumps used in the manufacturing process of many different products. Vacuum annealing, vacuum brazing, thin film coating, automotive, transformer manufacturing, bulk gas delivery systems are some of the industries served. The business has evolved from a small service company to a manufacturer with a facility in Mysore India. At the Paterson facility pumps received from India are assembled and tested. On our tour we will be able to see the assembly process and learn about the different vacuum pump technologies available today.

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 invited. Feel free to bring your lunch. Beverages and light snacks will be provided.

As per RCSIA by-laws, four of the five members of the board are elected by the membership. The fifth member is appointed by the elected members. All current board members are eligible to run again:

**Lynn Rakos** – President

**Tolga Morawski** – Vice President

**Kevin Pegram** – Treasurer

**Aron Eisenpress** – Secretary

However, Tolga has decided not to run this year due to other obligations. **Many thanks to Tolga for his two years of service as VP of the Roebbling Chapter!** The

Nominations Committee, consisting of Tom Flagg as Chair, Bierce Riley and Beryl Goldberg, put forth Jim Mackin as a candidate for Vice President. His bio appears below. Candidates may also be nominated from the floor prior to the election and must be members in good standing of the National SIA and RCSIA. To vote for RCSIA officers, the voter must be a member in good standing of both the National SIA and RCSIA as per the by-laws of both organizations.

Tradition dictates that we will provide time for show and tell. If you plan to present please let Lynn know in advance. You are encouraged to share with the chapter your current IA research.

Tours and meeting begin at the Paterson Museum. Their website has a link for directions: <http://www.thepatersonmuseum.com>. The museum is some distance from the Paterson train station but taxis are available. There are also buses from NYC. Those who are car-less should try to find a buddy with wheels. Call Lynn for help with car-pooling (she will try her best!) or directions at the phone number above.

#### VP CANDIDATE BIOGRAPHY:

Jim Mackin has been a member of the Roebbling Chapter and the SIA since 2005. He is a retired financial executive who began his professional career as a CPA after obtaining a BA in Economics at Fordham University and an MBA in Accounting at New York University. He has a broad-based knowledge of industrial business, which is combined with a serious interest in art, architecture, history, and literature. Every Wednesday as part of his **weekdaywalks** project, he conducts off-beat trips through the lesser-appreciated areas of New York City. He also volunteers for the Big Apple Greeter program and the New-York Historical Society. Jim and his wife, Janet, who is also an SIA member, live on the Upper Westside of Manhattan.

#### 28TH ANNUAL DREW SYMPOSIUM

*By Allison S. Rachleff & Thomas R. Flagg,  
Drew Symposium Co-Coordinator, with input  
from Symposium Presenters*

The 28th Annual Drew Symposium was held at the Drew University Hall of Sciences in Madison, New

Jersey on Sunday, October 26, 2008. Like its predecessors, it proved to be an intellectually stimulating day. The symposium featured eight presentations on varied topics ranging from urban waste disposal and historic bridges, to parks and power stations. The John Augustus Roebling Award for Contributions to Industrial Archeology was also presented at the symposium (please see piece below).

The morning session of the symposium opened with a short industrial film from the Bethlehem Steel Archives presented by Lance Metz, Historian at the National Canal Museum in Easton, Pennsylvania. The film, entitled “Vacuum Pourings for Better Forgings” was produced by Bethlehem Steel in the 1960s to showcase its abilities to fabricate these heavy-duty objects largely used by producers of atomic energy.

Robin Nagle, PhD, a professor of anthropology at New York University and the New York City Department of Sanitation’s Anthropologist-in-Residence, presented a paper entitled “Gotham and It’s Garbage: Beginnings of the New York City Department of Sanitation” based on her soon-to-be-published book, *Picking Up*. Ms. Nagle’s presentation focused on the transformation of the New York City Department of Street Cleaning (DSC), precursor to the present-day Department of Sanitation (DOS), under George Waring, Jr., who was appointed DSC Commissioner in 1895. Professor Nagle described the state of New York City before Waring was appointed, and the specific steps he took to transform the city. Within mere months of his appointment, the DSC was radically reorganized. Strict performance expectations and rules of accountability turned a ragtag workforce into a disciplined army of sweepers, carters, foremen, and superintendents. Snow storms were met with a tightly organized response. Waring renovated the DSC’s physical stock, overhauled systems of land-based and marine transportation, and instituted innovations like the nation’s first-ever curbside recycling program. In a remarkably short time, these measures made New York City one of the cleanest in the world, while the city’s street cleaners were celebrated as heroes. Waring’s impact was long-lived: the structure of today’s DOS

reflects the organizational reforms that he put in place more than one hundred years ago.

Kevin Olsen, PhD candidate in environmental management at Montclair State University in Montclair, New Jersey, presented a paper entitled “Jamaica Bay As New York City’s Conflicted Backyard: Recreation and Refuse, Transportation and Trash, Wetlands and Wastelands.” During symposium breaks, Olsen also sold his recently published book, *A Great Conveniency, a Maritime History of the Passaic River, Hackensack River, and Newark Bay*.

Olsen’s presentation described the role of Jamaica Bay in Queens from the 1840s-1930s, as it transformed from salt hay farming to an essential part of New York City’s waste disposal and recycling network. In response to a cholera outbreak, it was decided to move all putrescible waste processing operations out of the city, and in 1849 Barren Island at the east end of Jamaica Bay, became the site of a plant that would turn the city’s garbage into grease and fertilizer. The paper also described the emergence of Jamaica Bay as a resort destination during the late-19th and early-20th centuries, facilitated by the construction of multiple railroad lines. Robert Moses is often credited with saving Jamaica Bay as open space through the construction of the Belt Parkway in the 1930s, and development of parkland along the shore. As part of this effort, the last of the waste processing plants were removed from Barren Island, and the site was re-developed as Floyd Bennett Field. After the World War II, much of the land filling was done with dredge spoils. The refuse, instead of being used as fill, was sent to the Fresh Kills Landfill on Staten Island. Several large landfills continued to be operated along the shores of the bay, the last of these, Edgemere Landfill, was closed in the 1990s. Since 1972, much of Jamaica Bay has been managed by the National Park Service (NPS) as part of the Gateway National Recreation Area.

Gianfranco Archimede, Executive Director of the Paterson, New Jersey Historic Preservation Commission, presented a paper entitled “Where’s the Grit? – Old City, New Century: Complexities of Redefining the Historic Urban Industrial Landscape at the Great Falls State Park in Paterson, New Jersey.” The paper indicated that the Great Falls of Paterson were placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1971, designated a National Historic Landmark in 1976, and named a state park in 2004. In 2006, the New York City-based landscape architecture firm, Field Operations, won the competition to design the park’s master plan. Mr. Archimede shared Field Operations concept for the state park and selected reactions to it. Many citizens have expressed concern that the plan de-emphasizes Paterson’s industrial past in favor of a new urbanism that emphasizes the natural over the built environment. Mr. Archimede raised thoughtful questions about the role of industrial

## 2009 Dues

It is time again for chapter dues to be paid. Regretfully, at this time of financial hardship for many, our dues have gone up to \$20.00 having been half that amount for nearly a decade. Please send your check, made out to “Roebling Chapter, SIA”, to our secretary, Aron Eisenpress or give him a check at the annual meeting. Aron’s address is on the back of this newsletter.

preservation in the 21st century.

Margaret Hickey, Historic Preservation Specialist at HJGA Consulting in Montclair, New Jersey, opened the afternoon session of the symposium with a paper entitled “Brielle Road Bridge, Manasquan, New Jersey: Last Remaining Belidor-Type Bascule Bridge in New Jersey.” The Brielle Road Bridge over the Glimmer Glass in Manasquan Borough, Monmouth County is a bascule-type movable bridge which is a representative example of a technology first developed in the early 1700s in France, and later used in the United States in the late-19th and early-20th centuries. A group of citizens from Brielle and Manasquan joined together in 2006 to fight Monmouth County’s efforts to demolish the bridge; install a wider and higher moveable bridge; and replace the existing timber approach spans with concrete approach spans. These actions would remove a historic landmark and permanently alter the landscape. The citizens’ first objective, achieved in January 2008, was to place the bridge on the New Jersey Register of Historic Places. The second was to make Monmouth County aware of the significance of bridge and the desire of the community to save it through advocacy and public awareness campaigns. The presentation discussed the importance and significance of the bridge and its technology, as well as the efforts of local preservationists and environmentalists to counter Monmouth County’s plan to demolish the bridge.

Patrick Harshbarger, Senior Historian at TransSystems/Lichtenstein in Langhorne, Pennsylvania, presented a paper entitled “Climbing the Heights: Hoboken’s 14th Street Viaduct.” The paper discussed the history of one of the region’s lesser-known historic bridges. The viaduct was built in 1910, after much delay, to provide an improved connection between Hoboken and West Hoboken (renamed Union City in 1924). The 14th Street Viaduct was in no way aesthetic and in every way utilitarian and economical. The bridge was a very site-specific design that would have been difficult to mistake for anywhere else with its slanting vertical profile, overall length of nearly 1/4 mile, and asymmetry resulting in the use of different bridge types and tower configurations to cross five city streets, two railroads, and twice crossing the Old Hillside Trolley horseshoe curve, before terminating about 70 feet up the side of the Bergen Heights. The impact of the viaduct on local transportation patterns and development was almost immediate, soon making 14th Street and the intersecting streets busy thoroughfares, and contributing to a decline in trolley service. The area around the viaduct became a service area for automobiles and buses, as well as some industries. The survey and research were completed as part of a project to study rehabilitation or replacement alternatives for the viaduct. It has been determined that

the viaduct will be replaced in the near future.

Tom Rinaldi, graduate student in historic preservation at Columbia University and employee at Thorton Tomasetti, a structural engineering firm in New York City, and Rob Yasinsac, a museum associate at Historic Hudson Valley, jointly presented “Yonkers Power Station: Monumental Ruin on the Hudson.” Messrs. Rinaldi and Yasinsac are co-authors of *Hudson Valley Ruins: Forgotten Landmarks of an American Landscape* which was sold during breaks at the symposium. The presentation discussed the past, present and future of the Yonkers Power Station, built between 1902-06 for the New York Central Railroad and Hudson River Railroad as part of their electrification. It has been abandoned since 1963. The presentation considered the Yonkers Power Station in the evolutionary context of the architecture of electric power in the New York City region. It also addressed the building as a prime example of an important building type whose great significance remains largely unrecognized, and which is currently at risk of disappearing if action isn't taken to protect it. With the help of RCSIA and efforts of Mr. Yasinsac, the Yonkers Power Station was included the Preservation League of New York State’s 2008 “Seven to Save Most Endangered Properties” list.

Damon Tvaryanas, historian at Hunter Research, Inc., a cultural resources management consulting firm in Trenton, New Jersey, presented a DVD that Hunter Research conceived with Sica Productions for the New Jersey Department of Transportation (NJDOT). Entitled “The Woodbridge Cloverleaf: On Ramps to Innovation,” the DVD was produced to mitigate the adverse impact of removing the National Register-eligible Woodbridge Cloverleaf in accordance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. The Woodbridge Cloverleaf was built along Route 25 and Route 4 (now US Route 1/9 and Route 35) in Woodbridge Township, New Jersey. It was the first safety-engineered super-highway intersection in the United States. It opened in 1929, and was designed by the Rudolph & Delano of Philadelphia. It was modeled after a plan from Buenos Aires, Argentina. The cloverleaf was demolished by NJDOT in 2006, and the interchange is under reconstruction. The DVD is an excellent example of mitigating adverse effects of publicly funded projects on historically significant resources in a creative manner.

**The Roebling Chapter thanks Allison and Tom for all their work arranging and running another great symposium. Thank you also to our speakers for making the day so interesting. As always, we give big thanks to Nanci Bachelor for organizing the food. Thanks to all else who helped make the day run smoothly – you know who you are!**

## 2008 JOHN AUGUSTUS ROEBLING AWARD FOR CONTRIBUTIONS TO INDUSTRIAL ARCHEOLOGY

The 2008 John Augustus Roebling Award was presented by the committee chair, Ulana Zakalak, to long-time RCSIA and SIA member Gerald Weinstein in recognition of his decades of commitment to IA. Gerry has dedicated his time, personal resources and great talents to preserve and document many complex historic industrial resources in our region. The full nomination which details many of Gerry's accomplishments will be published in the next newsletter.

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## UPCOMING EVENTS

**January 24** RCSIA Annual Meeting - Paterson, NJ

### Roebling Chapter SIA Officers

President	Lynn Rakos
Vice President	Tolga Morawski
Treasurer	Kevin Pegram
Secretary	Aron Eisenpress

The Roebling Chapter official telephone number is the cell phone of the President: (917) 515-4154, or contact the Roebling Chapter by E-mail: [RCSIAprez@aol.com](mailto:RCSIAprez@aol.com).

Membership is \$20.00 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).

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**AN OFFICIAL CHAPTER OF THE  
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