

# ROEBLING CHAPTER

## Society for Industrial Archeology

March 2009

Vol. 18 No. 1

### CHAPTER EVENTS

#### ***WALK THROUGH INDUSTRIAL PASSAIC, NEW JERSEY***

*Sunday, April 5, 2009, 1:00 PM to 4:30 PM.*

*(Rain Date: Saturday, April 11).*

Join us for a walk through “Eastside” Passaic, NJ and adjacent parts of Clifton. Following completion of the Dundee Dam and Canal around 1861, this section of the Passaic River, later incorporated as part of the City of Passaic, developed into a major industrial center focusing on the manufacture of worsted wool and rubber products. Little to none of the historic industrial activities in Eastside Passaic continue to the present day and most of the Dundee Canal has been usurped for highway construction. The district however, as per the Historic American Engineering Record documentation, remains “significant as a surviving, intact, interconnected component of the textile-industry-related landscape that defined Passaic, Clifton, and surrounding communities from the late 19th through the mid-20th centuries.” Much remains to be seen by the interested observer; including the Dundee Dam, many old factory buildings (Botany Worsted Mills, U.S. Rubber, Okonite, and others), neighborhoods built by the mainly Eastern European immigrants who worked in the factories, and here and there a fragment of the Dundee Canal itself.

Chapter member Craig Nunn will lead this walk, which will be around 6.5 miles length, at a relaxed to moderate pace. Meet 1:00 PM in front of the Walgreens at the southeast corner of Main Ave. and Clifton Ave. in Clifton, NJ.

For drivers, there is a free municipal parking lot one block to the west of Main Ave., entered off of 1st Street a half block south of Clifton Ave. Or park on the street (check signs for restrictions). Coordinates of parking lot for GPS units or mapping software are: 40.874645°N, 74.140502°W. Participants from NYC can take NJ Transit 190 bus from Port Authority Bus Terminal. The latest bus you can get leaves PABT at 12:10. When that bus arrives the tour will begin. People may want to meet at the gate at noon and go as a group. Ask the driver for Clifton Ave. stop, or watch for Walgreens from right side of bus. Walk will end in downtown Passaic where frequent buses will return



Photographer: Craig Nunn

#### ***Botany Worsted Mills, Passaic, New Jersey***

drivers to their cars in Clifton or non-drivers to NYC.

Craig will also lead an optional 3.5 mile extension which will visit historically important Acquackanonck Landing and additional industrial sites across the Passaic River in East Rutherford. The extension will also end at a bus stop where participants can catch buses back to cars in Clifton or to NYC.

**Bring water and snacks.** Bad weather may postpone. Phone (551-206-6823) or e-mail [dystopicnj@yahoo.com](mailto:dystopicnj@yahoo.com) leader for additional information. Participants who wish to only visit the Dundee Dam and sites at the north end of the tour without extensive walking should contact the leader (e-mail preferred).

### CHAPTER EVENTS

#### ***2009 ANNUAL MEETING***

We held our 2009 Annual Meeting on January 24 at the Paterson Museum in Paterson, NJ. The business meeting was preceded by a shop tour of United Vacuum located in a historic mill building just a few blocks from the museum. Mark Lazarus, the plant owner, and his staff led us through the process of making a vacuum and the process of making the equipment that makes those vacuums. We send many thanks to Mr. Lazarus for a most interesting tour.

We send many thanks to chapter member Gianfranco Archimede and to Giacomo DeStefano, the museum's Director for once again providing a most appropriate

spot for us to hold our meeting. The business meeting began at 12:45PM.

## 2008 YEAR IN REVIEW

by Lynn Rakos (w/ input from the Board)

### 2008 OFFICERS

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

### MEMBERSHIP

Our membership stands at 452, of whom 158 are paid for 2009, 14 are paid for future years, 160 are paid for 2008, and 81 are only paid through 2007. 35 members have not renewed since 2006 and were dropped; an additional 8 members renewed after getting their final reminders. By comparison, our membership in January 2008 was 458 members, also after the drop for non-renewals, and the year before it was 457, so our numbers are pretty stable. There are 39 "comp" members on the list (we review these name

periodically). They are primarily National and other Chapter SIA officers, as well as organizations that can help us and benefit RCSIA endeavors.

### TREASURY REPORT

Balance as of Dec. 31, 2007	\$14,459.46
Balance as of Jan. 24, 2009	\$17,667.25

This year \$2500.00 was returned to the chapter from the Museum of the City of New York. The chapter had donated these funds in 2006 for an exhibition to celebrate the 200th anniversary of John A. Roebling's birth. Our donation was returned as the exhibit did not occur. We also received a \$1000.00 from a donor who asked to remain anonymous. The funds were specifically donated to pay for a lawyer to see us through the process of becoming a 501 (c) 3 organization.

### TOURS AND EVENTS

We held our 2008 Annual Meeting on January 26 at the Paterson Museum in Paterson, NJ. Prior to the meeting, forty-eight of us were treated to a tour of the Paterson Historic District led by chapter member Gianfranco Archimede. Many of us also enjoyed a tour of the museum led by Giacomo DeStefano, the museum's Director.

Following our annual meeting we held 9 more tours and events. Five events took place in NY State (4 in NY City), three were in NJ (including our Drew Symposium) and one was in Pennsylvania.

In April we enjoyed a vigorous walk of Rockland Lake and Hook Mountain in Rockland County, NY. Where we saw the vestiges of the ice harvesting and quarrying industries. The tour was lead by Timothy Englert with the Palisades Interstate Park Commission.

A week later the chapter co-sponsored a tour with the Morris County Park Commission. The tour, "The Industrial Archeology of Split Rock Iron Furnace" in Rockaway Township, NJ was led by chapter members Joe Macasek and Bierce Riley. This walk was a rare opportunity to see Morris County's only standing iron furnace and the village that supported its operation.

On May 3rd a crowd of us took a bus tour to explore the "Industrial History and Cultural Change on the East River in Queens and Brooklyn". The B-61 bus was our chariot through the ever changing neighborhoods on the East River. We began in Long Island City with a tour led by geographer Jack Eichenbaum. A hop on the local bus took us over Newtown Creek and on to DUMBO where Tom Flagg provided insight into the industrial development of that neighborhood. The next stop was Red Hook where Dan Wiley, Community Coordinator for Congresswoman Nydia Velázquez, took us through one of the rehabilitated warehouses and spoke of the area's significant changes. We ended our

## SAVE THE DATE & CALL FOR PRESENTATIONS

### 29<sup>TH</sup> Annual Drew Symposium on Industrial Archeology in the New York-New Jersey Area

The Roebling Chapter of the Society for Industrial Archeology is soliciting illustrated presentations on the industrial heritage of the Roebling Chapter region for the 29th Annual Drew Symposium to be held on Saturday, November 7, 2009 at the Hall of Sciences, Drew University, Madison, NJ from 9:30 AM to 5 PM.

We are seeking presentations that focus on historic industrial resources in the metropolitan New York/New Jersey area, but we are also happy to consider proposals that cover topics beyond the New York City region. Presentations are typically 25 minutes in length and heavily illustrated. If you would like to make a presentation, please contact Tom Flagg or Allison Rachleff, symposium coordinators. Tom's e-mail is [tflagg@sunyo.edu](mailto:tflagg@sunyo.edu) and Allison's is [allison.rachleff@earthlink.net](mailto:allison.rachleff@earthlink.net). Or write to: Thomas Flagg, SUNY College of Optometry, 33 West 42nd Street, New York, NY 10036.

tour at the Waterfront Museum which is housed in the old Lehigh Valley Barge 79.

On Memorial Day weekend we joined with the American Society of Civil Engineers, Metropolitan Section to celebrate the 125th Anniversary of the opening of the Brooklyn Bridge. The events were organized by the Brooklyn Borough President's Office and New York City Mayor's Office. Chapter member Clifford Zink represented RCSIA in a lecture series that was part of the weekend's events. On Friday, Saturday and Sunday RCSIA and ASCE volunteers staffed tables set up at each tower. The goal was to speak to people about the history and construction of the bridge. Many thanks to Bob Bodenstein, Mary Lee Baranger, Ann Schoenfeld, Lenny and Ruth Lowell, and Patrick and David Harshbarger who helped staff the tables.

The crew of the Steamship *Lilac* welcomed us on board on August 23. Our host, RCSIA member and President of the *Lilac* Preservation Project, Gerry Weinstein greeted us all on deck with an overview of the ship's history and of the project's great efforts to bring the *Lilac* to NY. At 75 years of age, the *Lilac* is in the process of being restored by the *Lilac* Preservation Project.

In September we held the roast in conjunction with a tour of Roebling Aqueduct at Lackawaxen, PA. Walter South and his wife generously invited us to hold the picnic at their house that overlooks the aqueduct. Walter and Pat were not even chapter members but they are now as we gave them an annual membership as a thank you. John A. Roebling's 1847 Aqueduct is the oldest existing wire suspension bridge in the country. We were given a great pre-picnic tour of the aqueduct by chapter member Patrick Harshbarger.

Quite a lot of us had a great afternoon visiting the Lake Solitude Dam, Union Forge Ironworks, The TISCO Complex, and Solitude House Museum in High Bridge, NJ on October 11th. The Lake Solitude Dam was built a century ago to provide water power for the Taylor-Wharton Iron and Steel Company. The company history has roots in the American Revolution and operated through the Korean War. We saw the massive Lake Solitude Dam which is an example of highly innovative engineering in its use of a steel framework core. We met at the Solitude House which was built in 1725 and became the centerpiece of the Union Forge Iron Works. The tour of the dam was led by historian and RCSIA member, Mary Delaney Krugman. Karen Larsen, VP of Operations of the Union Forge Heritage Association, William Honachefsky, VP of Public Relations and their President, Michael Gronsky all participated in leading us on the tour. They gave us cookies and refreshments too!

Our tour of "Willet's Point" – The Iron Triangle of Queens on November 23rd, drew some looks from the

busy folks in the auto repair business when a small crowd of us wandered through their neighborhood on a Sunday morning. Geographer Jack Eichenbaum walked us through a NYC neighborhood that had but one resident at the last census.

Our events have been drawing on average about 20 people which is a fairly decent turn out. The chapter now has a portable voice amplifier to help when the group is large and the neighborhood noisy.

### DREW SYMPOSIUM

This year our symposium was again very ably co-chaired by Tom Flagg and Allison Rachleff. As is usually the case over 100 people attended the event, including our speakers. The event, held on October 26th was our 28th symposium. The morning started with a short industrial film from the Bethlehem Steel Archives followed by talk on NYC's garbage and the history of the NYC Department of Sanitation. A talk on Jamaica Bay carried on the theme of trash in NYC. Paterson's historic industrial landscape was a topic of another talk. Bridges, power plants and a DVD on an historic highway clover leaf rounded out the afternoon. We had three authors sign two newly published books at the symposium breaks.

### ROEBLING AWARD

This year's John Augustus Roebling Award for Contributions to Industrial Archeology went to our own Gerry Weinstein (see citation below). This was our 6th award. Ulana Zakalak, was this year's chair. She served her three years which is gratefully acknowledged. Sandy Malter becomes the Chair for 09 and Clifford Zink continues to serve on the board. Ulana rotating off the committee left us in need of a third committee member.

Ingrid Wuebber has agreed to serve on the Award committee. Ingrid is an historian with the Archaeology & Historical Architecture Group in the Burlington, NJ office of the URS Corporation. She has worked in the field of Cultural Resource management for three decades. Ingrid has been a member of the Roebling Chapter since 1984 and joined the National SIA soon thereafter. Ingrid brings to the committee a great deal of knowledge on the IA of our region and on the people working in local IA. Together, with Sandy Malter and Clifford Zink we have a very thoughtful committee.

### NEWSLETTERS AND MAILINGS

We got out the four newsletters this year, as required by our by-laws. We have established a schedule and now have issues in March, June, September and December. Thanks to Joe Macasek who continues to donate his design services. We have talked about

providing an electronic newsletter and are willing to consider the option and pursue it further.

### BUSINESS AFFAIRS

- We have retained an attorney to help us through the process of becoming a 501 (c) 3 organization. We received an anonymous donation from a member to use for our legal fees. We are certainly grateful for this donation and are very sorry that we are not yet there. The attorney retained to for our 501 (c) 3 is going to investigate our need for D&O insurance.
- Our website is no further along although National still supports a link with Roebling info and newsletters.
- Adding new trustees, one from NJ, one from NY was okayed by the attendees at last year's meeting and approved by the board at our meeting in May. We are now looking for those trustees.
- Changing the date of the annual meeting to a time of better weather would have required amending the by-laws. After hearing from all in attendance last year and hearing nothing back from the rest of the membership, the board voted to keep the date in January.
- The board voted to increase the dues to \$20.00 from \$10.00. This increase will keep us solvent and allow us to pay for 4 newsletters and our insurance.
- Public outreach and consultation - We continue to be contacted by the NJ Historic Preservation Office and by consulting firms soliciting our comments or guidance on matters related to our region's historic industrial resources.

### HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMITTEE REPORT

*by Mary Habstritt, Chair*

**W**e wrote a letter to the Borough of High Bridge supporting repair of the Lake Solitude Dam for electric power generation.

We worked to negotiate documentation and retrieval of artifacts from the Gansevoort Pumping Station of the High Pressure Fire Service in Manhattan. So far, access has not been arranged and demolition of adjoining buildings has begun.

Habtritt spoke to Columbia University preservation students about the industrial landscape along the Gowanus Canal and discussed whether it would constitute a historic district. Their subsequent research into buildings identified as needing further investigation has informed efforts of local preservation groups. Since then, Habstritt testified before the City Planning Commission and the Brooklyn Borough President that a proposed residential development by Toll Bros. endangers the uniquely historic Carroll St. Bridge, one of a four retractile bridges in the country, and that the needed re-zoning for this

site should not go forward without taking into account the impacts of the entire canal corridor re-zoning also in the works.

Habsritt testified against an addition to the land-marked refinery buildings at the former Domino Sugar site in Brooklyn. Only three buildings at the site were landmarked and the developer immediately applied to alter them. Opposition from many preservation groups resulted in a modifications to the plan and the proposed rooftop additions is smaller than the developer originally proposed.

When ConEd began demolition of the former BRT Powerhouse in Williamsburg, Brooklyn, we worked with several people in the neighborhood seeking preservation and were able to obtain a determination of eligibility for the National Register of Historic Places. Some press coverage provided mild embarrassment but it went down anyway.

The West Chelsea Historic District was designated in July and it looks like chapter testimony in support was instrumental. Two property owners were fighting the designation, saying their buildings were not significant – they were small in one case of a former industrial stable and ordinary and hard to re-use in the case of the Central Terminal Stores. However, we argued that the variety was part of the importance of the industrial landscape that includes the B&O Warehouse and the Starrett-Lehigh.

There was also good news on the Austin, Nichols & Co. Warehouse, although we had little to do with it. After city landmark designation was voted down by the New York City Council, the owners happened to get new partners who were interested in federal preservation tax credits. What has resulted is a sensitive restoration rather than the radical re-do that was originally proposed and which would have destroyed Cass Gilbert's design for this massive warehouse and processing plant of what was once the world's largest grocery wholesaler.

In August Habstritt attended a meeting at Picatinny Arsenal in New Jersey to discuss procedures for consultation on historic properties there. As the Army continues to consolidate operations under BRAC (Base Realignment and Closure), older buildings are being dismantled as new ones for other purposes go up. RCSIA is among a number of local preservation and history groups being consulted regarding historic significance of structures and archeological remains that may be affected. This meeting kicked off what will be a long-term process.

On the other hand, in the irony department, the Economic Development Corporation release a study of maritime support services, which it had commissioned from SUNY Maritime College, that said that more graving docks were needed on New York Harbor. By this

time, of course, Graving Dock No. 1 in Red Hook had been filled for IKEA's parking lot.

Habstritt testified before the Landmarks Preservation Commission in September asking that a full archeological investigation be conducted of the courtyard at Riverside Apartments in the Brooklyn Heights Historic District. This model tenement, built for working people near the waterfront where they labored, was built on the site of factories that from 1802 to 1890 made gin, candles and sugar. Since the courtyard had been virtually undisturbed since the apartments went up in 1890, there was a chance for significant industrial remains. The plan to build an underground garage was approved by LPC but the jury is still out on how extensively the underground remains will be investigated.

Also in September, we spearheaded nomination of the lighthouse tender *Lilac* to the Seven to Save list of the Preservation League of New York State. It was nominated as a poster child for the historic ships of New York Harbor, all of which are threatened by waterfront development that does not take ships into account. This year the League specifically requested nominations related to the Quadricentennial celebrating the achievements of Henry Hudson, Robert Fulton, and Samuel de Champlain. As the only historic steamship in New York, *Lilac* was an obvious candidate. Habstritt also advised on the nomination of South Street Seaport. The League will be announcing nominees for the 2009 list in the coming months.

In early December, Habstritt represented the Roebling Chapter at an open house to view archeological remains of the Jewell flour mill at Pier 1 near Fulton Ferry Landing in Brooklyn Bridge Park. Two mysterious tunnels running out into the East River were a lively topic of speculation. Since they ended at the outside wall, it did not seem they provided condensing water to the boilers or a route for waste material. The remains have been covered and will be partially destroyed as plans for the park go forward.

We recently wrote a letter of support to LPC urging landmarking of Westbeth, the former Bell Labs/Western Electric building in Manhattan's West Village. The Greenwich Village Society for Historic Preservation has been working to obtain city landmark status for some time.

Thanks to Craig Nunn who has been monitoring preservation and history news in New Jersey to alert Habstritt to sites and issues of interest to the chapter.

### SPECIAL PROJECT COMMITTEE REPORT

**W**e solicited input from the membership as to what direction the special projects should take. The general sense was that at this point, smaller amounts of money raised through donations would be acceptable and welcomed. Raising the dues to include an amount

specifically for Special Projects was also considered acceptable. We developed draft guidelines for people to use when seeking a grant from the chapter that will be finalized. Allison Rachleff served on the committee but had to resign due to other commitments. Gianfranco Archimede remains the chair.

### ELECTION FOR 2009 OFFICERS

**T**om Flagg supervised the election. All board members were eligible to run again. Tolga Morawski, our VP declined to run again due to other pursuits. Jim Mackin was nominated by the committee to run for VP. Jim's bio appeared in the December 2008 newsletter. No nominees were received from the floor. The chapter officers for 2009 are Lynn Rakos, President; Jim Mackin, Vice President; Kevin Pegram, Treasurer and Aron Eisenpress, Secretary. Many thanks to Tolga for his years serving on the board.

The business meeting was adjourned at 2:30 and was followed by show & tell. Carol Johnson spoke on the research and writing of her new book about Lukens Steel entitled *The Language of Work: Technical Communication at Lukens Steel, 1810 to 1925*, Tom Flagg spoke about his collection of "bird's eye views" of the NY/NJ area and Bierce Riley and Joe Macasek talked about various archaeological sites with which they have been recently involved.

### 2008 JOHN A. ROEBLING AWARD

**E**ach year, a committee comprised of three members who rotate through the process over a three-year period, consider nominees for the John Augustus Roebling Award for Contributions to Industrial Archeology. Award nominees are considered for their efforts to preserve the industrial heritage of the New York-New Jersey metropolitan area, within the Roebling Chapter's boundaries. The award consists of a certificate and \$250 check. The 2008 award was presented to long-time RCSIA and national SIA member and great proponent of industrial archeology, Gerry Weinstein.

What follows was prepared by Mike Raber and Tom Flagg.

Gerald Weinstein has a life-long interest in the history of steampower, electrical generation and transmission, and the design and use of a wide range of vessels once common along our shores. With a unique combination of photographic skills, knowledge of steam and electrical power, and dedicated preservation service including funding of many important projects, he has documented and helped preserve some of the most important and complex historic industrial resources in the Greater New York region. For his decades of service and outstanding, often pro bono efforts, we are

nominating Gerry for the John Augustus Roebling Award for Contributions to Industrial Archeology.

Gerry's interest in photography and vessels began at an early age, and he is one of the very few second-generation large-format photographers working today. Childhood fascination with ocean liners and working vessels in New York Harbor took him down many paths, including a rare understanding of marine propulsion technologies, and a broader interest in all the pre-digital, pre-solid-state power systems which ran so much of our vanishing industrial infrastructure. On his own, he began an unprecedented effort in 1984 to photograph the interiors of the New York City subway system substations, and to record the traditional mode of mechanical voltage conversion, using motor-generators, as the system was converting over to solid-state methods.

Many of you have seen Gerry's large-format photographs over the years, at exhibitions and at talks given at previous Roebling symposia. The amount of work involved in these projects may surprise those used to making snapshots with little digital cameras: a large format camera with accessories and tripod and a set of lenses and sheet film holders, sometimes with lighting equipment, must be hauled through abandoned buildings with no working elevators, using hand carts. Each view can take about a half hour. Over the past twenty-five years, Gerry has become a nationally-recognized practitioner of this art, whether working as a consultant with Tom Flagg as Photo Recording Associates, for Raber or Zakalak Associates and several engineering firms, or alone, often as a pro bono recorder. In all of these projects, Gerry has always been demonically thorough and painstaking, with a wonderful ability to find the best choice of subjects and the best angle of view, an ability greatly enhanced by his deep knowledge of historical steam and electrical equipment.

While he often has the sheet film negatives developed by a commercial lab, he makes contact prints from those negatives in his own darkroom, using a special contact printing-machine his father used during World War II. His work has preserved the design and appearance of many, many pieces of machinery as well as industrial structures, ranging from the driving mechanisms of significant drawbridges such as the Macombs Dam Bridge over the Harlem River to the structural details of the now-vanished Colgate factory in Jersey City. One of his most recent projects was the large-format photographic recording of the West Side Elevated Freight Line (the so-called "High Line") as it was just before the current renovation began. Once again, this was done pro bono, charging the Friends of the High Line only for the costs of materials and lab work. He has made historic construction photos from his person-

al collection available to them at no charge for promotion of the project. Most of the photographs taken for these documentation projects are now in the HABS/HAER collection of the Library of Congress, and many of them have been scanned and are now posted on the Library of Congress website.

Gerry's knowledge of historic wooden harbor craft has contributed to documentations of dozens of abandoned vessels, often made possible by his skills as the pilot of a small inflatable boat on expeditions with Tom Flagg, Norman Brouwer, and Mike Raber. Gerry and Tom also took many large-format photographs from this boat, *Wilt*, which finally succumbed to the perils of sharp iron objects sticking out of old piles and hulls. Moving *Wilt* around with oars and a small motor, Gerry could approach and board hazardous wrecks with skills Errol Flynn only pretended to have. As a researcher, Gerry has combined his knowledge and his large personal library of technical and scientific publications to provide invaluable interpretation of many power plants, ranging from the water powered turbine-generators at Trenton Falls in upstate New York to the Connecticut Yankee nuclear plant.

Gerry has made many other contributions to IA, including long-time service on the boards of the Hudson River Maritime Museum and the New England Museum of Wireless and Steam, as the 1988-1991 president of the Roebling Chapter, and as a Director of the national SIA. He has donated the use of his studio on Walker Street in Manhattan for Roebling Chapter screenings of IA films, and for meetings of the New York Ship Lore and Model Club. His establishment of the SIA's General Tools Award, through his family's Abraham and Lillian Rosenberg Foundation, is a well-known example of his generosity, and inspired the award he is receiving today.

But his premier preservation contributions, aside from his documentation efforts, have been made as rescuer and restorer of many otherwise doomed pieces of our industrial heritage. These projects have included engines in institutional power plants, rescued at his own cost. He also rescued engines from a scrapped crane barge that once worked in New York Harbor. He loaned one of the barge's engines to the Hudson River Maritime Museum (and delights in running it during the museum's annual Steamboat Days), and saved another for his private collection on his family's property in Croton-on-Hudson. For many years these and other engines remained under tarps in the woods near the house, but then Gerry built a power house for them with classic, scaled-down powerhouse architecture in a structure he named the Engineerium. This project took much time and money, and once the engines were

housed in it he devoted still more time and his great skill in restoring the steam engines to work again, using compressed air instead of steam to power them. Our members get to see these at least once every year when he and his wife Mary Habstritt generously host the annual Roebling Chapter Corn Roast at the Engineerium in Croton.

On a smaller scale, Gerry has preserved working models of marine steam engines, many created by workers in the industries served by the full-sized versions of the same equipment. To promote understanding of how these things worked, and just to have fun, he often takes these working models to steam-ups at regional museums such as the New England Museum of Wireless and Steam. He has also saved many wood patterns once used to cast large metal objects, objects with sculptural as well as historical quality which would have been lost if not for his interest and his somewhat fearless indifference to the challenges of collecting rather large things.

Gerry's support of historic water craft preservation projects, especially steam-powered working vessels, has been critical to the success of several projects. His personal steam launch, *Hestia*, is powered by an 1898 Navy G steam engine and has been kept at the Hudson River Maritime Museum to educate visitors. To restore the tugboat *Pegasus*, he served on the board of a preservation group established for that purpose, and helped fund the great amount of work that has gone into that tug. His current marine preservation project is the Coast Guard vessel *Lilac*, once used to maintain buoys along the Delaware River and its estuary, but more recently abandoned in the James River. *Lilac* was in seaworthy for towing to New York, and has since spent countless hours working on her with a goal of returning steam to the Hudson. For all these efforts, he has easily earned the Roebling Award.

Congratulations Gerry! The chapter thanks Ulana Zakalak, Chair, Sandy Malter and Clifford Zink for their work on the Award Committee and their service to RCSIA.

## LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Received via email on 18 Nov. 2008

According to the "Historic Preservation Committee News: Dam Preservation" article starting on page 2 of the September 2008 RCSIA Newsletter, "The Dam



Photographer: Sandy Needham

*Gerry Weinstein, 2008 John Augustus Roebling Award recipient, is presented with a plaque and check by Ulana Zakalak, Chair of the 2008 award committee.*

Safety Section of the NJ Dept. of Environmental Protection has classified Lake Solitude Dam as a 'high hazard dam' due to deterioration...."

It is a common misconception that a dam's hazard level is related to its condition. Actually, the hazard level is defined by the consequences of a dam's failure, independent of its current condition. You could have a high hazard dam that is maintained in excellent condition by owners that are aware of their responsibility to protect densely populated areas downstream. On the other hand, you could have a low hazard dam in terrible condition, perhaps because it's in an unpopulated area and regulators haven't pressed the owners due to the relatively minor consequences of failure.

According to New Jersey Administrative Code 7:20-1.8(a), "The Department will ... classify dams according to hazard." There is no mention of condition in this section. "Class I - High Hazard Potential ... includes those dams, the failure of which may cause the probable loss of life or extensive property damage." The regulations then spell out safety and inspection requirements that are more stringent for higher hazard classifications. The Lake Solitude Dam falls into Class I, or "high hazard," due to settled areas downstream. This classification then requires more frequent inspections, which found unsafe conditions at the Lake Solitude Dam. Regulators may have ordered repair or replacement due to a combination of deterioration and hazard classification, but the latter does not stem from the former.

This distinction may seem trivial, but when attempting to save an elegant and significant structure such as this one, the viewpoint of SIA members could carry more weight with regulators if grounded in an understanding of the rules that are being applied to threaten the structure. Although its deteriorated condition may have generated the repair-or-replace order, and the high hazard potential may have made that order a priority for enforcement, it seems like the main threat to the Lake Solitude Dam may be a lack of consensus and/or funding to repair it.

Justin M. Spivey, Oakland, CA

## Roebling Chapter SIA Officers

President	Lynn Rakos
Vice President	Jim Mackin
Treasurer	Kevin Pegram
Secretary	Aron Eisenpress

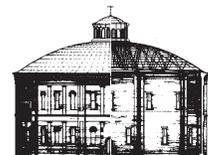
The Roebling Chapter official telephone number is the cell phone of the President: (917) 515-4154, or contact the Roebling Chapter by E-mail: [RCSIAprez@aol.com](mailto:RCSIAprez@aol.com).

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).

Design: Joe Macasek, MacGraphics

**AN OFFICIAL CHAPTER OF THE  
SOCIETY FOR INDUSTRIAL  
ARCHEOLOGY**



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## UPCOMING EVENTS

- April 5** Passaic, NJ (Rain date April 11)  
**May 28 - 31** National SIA Conference, Pittsburgh, PA  
**November 7** RCSIA Annual Drew Symposium on Industrial Archeology

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