

ROEBLING CHAPTER

Society for Industrial Archeology

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GREAT FALLS SYMPOSIUM

BY ALISON GREENBERG

The Great Falls Symposium took place on the warm and sunny Sunday of October 17, 2010. It was the thirtieth annual symposium and the first time that it was held in “the cradle of American industry”, known as Paterson, NJ. The Roebling Chapter attendees were welcomed by the Paterson Youth Corps into the city’s brand new International High School. In addition to citing archeological work done in Great Falls area, the event recognized the legacy of the legendary Roebling force of nature, Ed Rutsch. Ed passed away in 2003, but his connection with Paterson lives on in the spirit of the newly designated Great Falls national park.

The program began with an extensively researched presentation by Mark Zdepski, CPG, JMZ Geology. He rendered THE BALBACH SMELTING & REFINING COMPANY’S EVOLUTION and DEATH, a Newark-based business that operated the first electrolytic tank-house operation in the US, in business from 1859 to 1927.

Next, Kevin Bone, Professor, Cooper Union for Advancement of Science and Art offered a fascinating story with magnificently detailed images entitled NEW YORK CITY WATER: AN OVERVIEW OF THE FIRST SYSTEM AND THE FOLLOWING UPGRADE.

As if to relax in the nostalgia that Roebling members live for, Tom Flagg presented views entitled

NEWARK BAY AND THE KVK: THE WATERFRONT SEEN FROM THE WORKING BOAT. In addition to being the annual symposium’s mastermind, Tom is known for rendering perceptively interesting commentary on the New York – New Jersey waterfront.

In a somewhat similar vein, Mitch Dakelman showed a HISTORIC FILM “VIA PORT OF NY” - made by the Port Authority in 1953. Anyone fortunate to have had a side-discussion with Mitch – as this reporter did – realized how engrossing is the world of industrial films and how extensive is Mitch’s collection.

After lunch, the Paterson Youth Corps was introduced. They made a slide-type presentation of their

ROEBLING CHAPTER ANNUAL MEETING

Paterson Museum

2 Market Street

Paterson, New Jersey

Saturday, January 29, 2011

Business Meeting: 12:30 – 3:30

For directions visit the museum web site at

www.thepatersonmuseum.com

The museum is some distance from the Paterson train station but taxis are available. There are also buses from NYC.

LES METALLIER CHAMPENOIS TOUR

77 Second Avenue, Paterson, NJ

In keeping the new tradition of holding our Annual meeting at Paterson, a morning tour is being offered of a Paterson-based industry. The location is on Paterson’s north side which is not walking distance from the Museum this year. A Paterson Trolley will be available to

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CHAPTER EVENT

Transit Museum Tour

Friday, January 21, 2011

Bring Lunch at 12:45 Begin Tour at 1:30

Located at the corner of Boerum Place and Schermerhorn Street, Brooklyn Heights. You can reach the museum via public transportation: #s 2, 3, 4 and 5 Subways to Borough Hall, M and R to Court Street, A, C and G to Hoyt-Schermerhorn, and A, C and F to Jay Street/Borough Hall. ■

FOR THE LATEST ON UPCOMING EVENTS

WATCH THE ROEBLING CHAPTER WEB SITE FOR DETAILS

roblingsia.org

activities around the Great Falls national park, including a trip to another great national industrial-related park in Lowell, Massachusetts. Their efforts bode well for what the Great Falls national park will become.

Bill Bolger, National Park Service and Gianfranco Archimede, Executive Director, Paterson Historic Preservation Commission, presented PATERSON'S INDUSTRIAL HISTORY and NPS PARK PLANS.

Patrick Harshbarger, Principal Historian, Hunter Research Corp. spoke on FACTORIES BELOW THE FALLS: Paterson's Allied Textile Printing (ATP), the Site in Historical Perspective.

George Cress, Senior Archaeologist, URS Corp. & Jim Lee, Principal Investigator, Hunter Research delved into their topic entitled RACEWAYS, FLUMES, AND THE TEXTILE MILLS of PATERSON, Results of 2010 Archeological Investigations at the ATP site.

The presentations concluded with ED RUTSCH WORKING IN PATERSON consisting of photos found and shown by Ingrid Wuebber, Historian, URS

On behalf of the Roebing Award Committee, Ingrid Wuebber conducted the PRESENTATION OF THE 8TH ANNUAL JOHN AUGUSTUS ROEBLING AWARD FOR CONTRIBUTIONS TO INDUSTRIAL ARCHEOLOGY. The Committee consisted of Chairman Clifford Zink, Ingrid and Anne Jennings. Because Clifford had done some fine work, including a great film, for the winning nominee, he recused himself from voting on the nominee. Jim Mackin substituted in this regard. The Roebing Award was presented to The Roebing Museum, Roebing, NJ. Executive Director, Patricia Millen, accepted the award and its \$250 cash

stipend. (Note: Jim and Janet Mackin delivered the award to Patricia Millen when they visited the Roebing Museum on Sunday, October 24th. An added treat was seeing a production of "Emily" about Emily Roebing and her role in building the Brooklyn Bridge). ■

ADMIRAL'S ROW

Admiral's Row consists of ten historic mansions within the Brooklyn Navy Yard that were used by naval officers from the 1840's through the 1960's, and a timber shed dating back to 1838. The mansions and the timber shed have been deemed eligible for listing on the State and National Registers of Historic Places. The timber shed was deemed a contributing building as the last industrial building of its kind in the United States. Unfortunately, they now face demolition to make way for a supermarket and other development. Recently, the National Guard Bureau declared some of the historic buildings and the timber shed to be in such poor condition that they might not be salvageable. That finding is subject to further debate and inquiry.

The buildings have been described as a "small piece of beauty amidst a bustling industrial neighborhood." According to SHPO, the timber shed dates back to 1838 and maintains its pre-Civil War brick masonry, with a gable roof and clerestory (a wall with a clear bank of windows at the top) constituting "a rare surviving example of its type that tells the story of the former shipbuilding activities at the Brooklyn Navy Yard." SHPO opined in 2008 that the timber shed should be on the State and National Registers as contributing resources within the Brooklyn Navy Yard. The timber shed is an important remnant of industrial activity in the area from the late 1830's through the 1960's.

SHPO archeologist Douglas Mackey reported in 2008 the following details of interest from an industrial perspective:

- Historic maps suggesting that the Seasoning Bay boundaries changed over time. There may have been a walled structure but the 1848 map shows that the Old Mill Pond area had natural appearing boundaries.



The Great Falls of the Passaic River at Paterson.



- The SHPO archeologist also wanted to determine the boundaries of the Seasoning Bay for potential Revolutionary War period shoreline data.
- Another area of interest to SHPO was to determine when public water and sewer access was provided to the area, replacing privy and cistern systems.

Sometime in 2008, the National Guard Bureau determined that Admiral's Row was eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places as a "National Register-eligible historic district with a period of significance that spans the earliest construction of the 1840's through the Cold War Period." A contributing element was Building 198, a historic shower house. However, NGB determined that demolition of Building 198 was required to comply with federal toxic clean-up regulations. NGB asked SHPO to sign a memorandum of agreement permitting the demolition with recommended mitigation measures.

Groups such as Brooklyn's Other Museum of Brooklyn ("BOMB") continue to advocate for legal protection, such as federal landmarking, to preserve and protect Admiral's Row. Scott Witter, the curator of BOMB's Admiral's Row museum, offered history and insight. ■

LES METALLIER CHAMPENOIS TOUR

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transport 25 of us from the Museum to the location and back in time for lunch and the meeting, and others can make their way by following the trolley by car. Please park and meet at the museum as usual in advance of the 9:30 kick off time.

Les Métalliers Champenois (LMC Corp.) is a fully US owned and operated atelier, continuing in America the ancient European and American tradition of fine ornamental metalwork. In addition to handling such landmark restoration with projects like the Chateau de Versailles and the ornate gates on the Place Stanislas in Nancy, LMC recreated of the Torch and Flame for the Statue of Liberty, which now stands with A. Bar-

tholdi's original vision of a gilt torch that had never been realized. The LMC atelier is equipped with modern machinery, old age hand tools, hot forging gas and coal furnaces and anvils. The atelier of repousse works – one of the few still existing in the world – produces the delicate – and time-consuming – rosettes, water and acanthus leaves that constitutes the trademarks of outstanding metalwork. See their website at: <http://www.l-m-c.com/>.

If you plan to go on the tour please RSVP by calling or leaving a message with Gianfranco Archimede at 973-357-1911. ■

UPCOMING EVENTS – 2011

- JANUARY 29** Roebing Chapter Annual Meeting
Paterson, New Jersey
- June, 2 – 5** National SIA Annual Meeting
Seattle, Washington
- October 13 – 26** National SIA Fall Tour
Northern Connecticut

Roebing Chapter SIA Officers

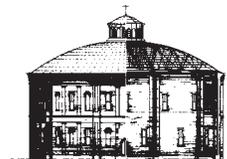
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You can contact the Roebing Chapter by E-mail at:
RCSIAprez@aol.com

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.

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