

Illustration by
Dennis Puleston

Fire Place

BROOKHAVEN VILLAGE ASSOCIATION, INC.

Fall 2013

Organized-1906

Incorporated-1944

Beaver Dam Bridge Work

Well if you live in the hamlet it is impossible not to know our little bridge on Beaver Dam Road has undergone reconstruction. I am very pleased to note that although the bridge was thoroughly rehabilitated its quaint stone walls and general appearance was untouched.

The bridge needed to be rebuilt because it was deteriorating from below. A special thanks to

Bobby Sterling and Ron Kinsella who brought this to the board's attention. Following is an account by hamlet resident Richard Thomas of the original paving of the bridge and the more recent rebuilding process.

Frank Miller
President

The Great Concreting Controversy of 1931

By Richard Thomas

Editor's note: Richard Thomas garnered the information and quotes for this entertaining account of Brookhaven Hamlet's history from articles published in the *Patchogue Advance* (now the *Long Island Advance*) throughout the 1930s. For specifics and links to the original articles, go to <http://brookhavensouthhaven.org/hamletpeople/tng/whatsnew.php>.

At the 2013 BVA annual meeting, steps being taken to address the deteriorating bridge across Beaver Dam Creek were discussed. It was not the first time that this area of Beaver Dam Road has been the focus of denizens of the hamlet.

Local residents have probably noticed that a concrete section of Beaver Dam Road extends east from the intersection with South Country Road across the Beaver Dam Creek Bridge to Fireplace Neck Road.

The concrete section dates from 1931, and it was quite controversial, with local year-round residents being in favor of improving that portion of the

road while summer people wished to maintain the picturesque quality of the little rural road and its bumpy bridge.

In January 1930, a letter was published in the *Patchogue Advance* about the "Bumpy Brookhaven Bridge," and on October 24, 1930, the *Advance* reported that the Brookhaven Town Board approved twelve permanent improvement projects. One of

those projects was the concreting of Beaver Dam Road and the widening of the bridge there at a cost of \$10,000. As state aid had been cut, the board voted to increase the highway tax rate by 14 cents to pay for these improvements.

At the Town Board meeting held at the end of February 1931, the Town Clerk was handed a communication signed by sixty Brookhaven Hamlet

residents calling on the Town to carry through with the project as it had been included in the budget the preceding fall. At the same meeting, Supervisor

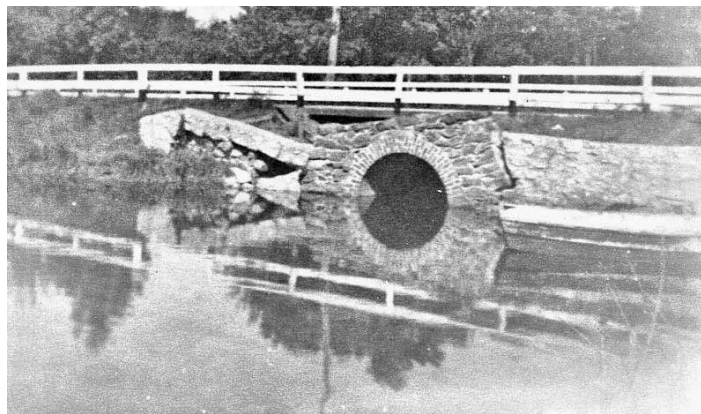


Beaver Dam Road 1905

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Beaver Dam Bridge before July 1931.



Beaver Dam Bridge 1938.

Neville stated that he had received a letter advocating the opposite position, which was backed by some of the summer residents who opposed any change whatever in the road other than the modification of the crown. Their opposition was based on the fact it "would increase taxes, that it was only a local road and would not be of town-wide importance, that it was a winding road and picturesque and any improvement would destroy its beauty." The opposition was further based on the fact it might ultimately lead to concreting the road all the way down to the dock at Carmans river.

Heavens!

The Brookhaven Town Board had not anticipated any opposition and decided to take no action until after a public hearing. In the interim, the residents held a meeting themselves to discuss the paving of Beaver Dam Road from Bay Road to South Country Road. That meeting was held at the school on the night of Saturday, March 7, 1931. John Morton of Bay Road (a house painter, Brookhaven Fire Department Treasurer, and Justice of the Peace) and others who favored the improvements attended, but those who opposed the changes did not. The opponents waited until the public hearing before the Town Board.

A front-page headline in the March 13, 1931, issue of the *Patchogue Advance* announced the results of the public hearing. Norman Nelson was the spokesman for those who opposed the concreting. (This is not the late Norman Nelson many readers knew and deeply

miss, but was instead his grandfather, a 1884 graduate of Columbia University, a real estate broker, and later, a banker.) Mr. Nelson told the Town Board that paving that section of Beaver Dam Road would be a "desecration of the handsomest part of the scenery," and declared "it would make a speedway out of the road." He again raised the specter of, eventually, "a concrete pavement all the way to the river."

Justice John Morton and Forrest Reeve spoke in favor of improving the bridge and concreting the road. Reeve (Assistant Postmaster of the hamlet from 1881 until 1933) said "a good road was needed

for people living at the west end to get to church and for children living there to get to school." Mr. Nelson said "they could go the long way round."

The Town pointed out that it was not being proposed that the road be straightened, and the bridge would not be changed much. The work was completed that summer by a large number of men who used a very large houseboat anchored in the Carmans river as living quarters during the construction.

The Town Board upheld the original plan to put down concrete from South Country Road to Bay Road but they actually went all the way to the school road, so perhaps the summer residents were justified in thinking that once the Town had concreted to Bay Road, it might just keep right on going. Time has also proven the opponents correct in predicting that even a little bit of concrete at the west end of Beaver Dam

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Brookhaven to Get a Concrete Road, Wanted or Not

Board Puzzled at Beaver Dam Argument

Lively Dispute at Meeting—Utility
vs. Beauty and Accessibility vs.
Privacy Are Involved

A front-page headline in the March 13, 1931, issue of the *Patchogue Advance*.

A Message From the President

It is my sad duty to relay the news that Kathleen Lacey has stepped down for personal reasons as President of the BVA, effective September 11th. I believe I speak for the entire Brookhaven community when I say she will be truly missed.

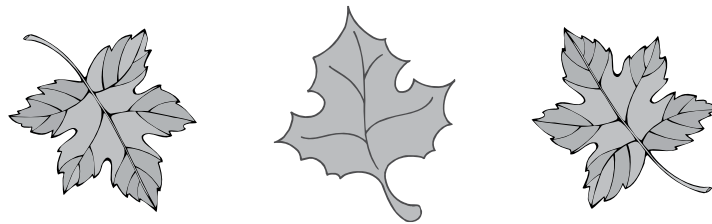
Kathleen has done a great job of leading the BVA and I think she is owed a real debt of gratitude for her efforts as a member of the executive board of the Brookhaven Community Coalition (BCC). In case any of you are not familiar with the BCC, it is a coalition of community groups that joined together to stop the Town of Brookhaven from accepting sludge at the landfill. As many of you can smell, this effort was successful. The group realized that public officials take notice when community groups speak as one. The BCC has successfully opposed the Town's request for increasing the height of the landfill and was instrumental in bringing about the coming positive changes at Long Island

Compost. The BCC is continuing the fight to finally get a firm closing date for the landfill. I know Kathleen, along with the other members, have devoted a lot of their time, including making multiple trips to Albany. Once again I know I speak for the community when I express our gratitude to not only Kathleen but to all the members of the BCC!

As Vice President I have assumed the duties of President until our annual board meeting in June. I will do my best to lead the BVA in its normal activities and will strive to make sure the BVA has a voice in all the issues that affect us as a community.

In closing I would once again like to express our gratitude for Kathleen's service and wish her only the best in all future endeavors.

Frank Miller
BVA President



The Great Concreting...(continued from page 2)

Road might eventually lead to a few treating the road as if it were a speedway.

The Brookhaven Village Association rewarded Forrest Reeve by making him the Chairman of its Highways, Walks, and Docks Committee, where he upheld the policy of having no roads named streets, boulevards, or broadways. The committee preserved the names Fireplace Neck Road and Mott Lane over the proposed Schoolhouse Road and Ocean Boulevard, although it did allow Eelpot Alley to become Newey Lane.

In 1936, storm water sewers were added to Beaver Dam Road at the cost of \$5,000. The *Advance* doesn't record anyone getting very upset over that project. The bridge improvements themselves were short-

lived, as they did not survive the Great Hurricane of September 21, 1938. On September 30, 1938, the *Patchogue Advance* reported that the "bridge over Beaver Dam Creek has been undermined by the water and has rendered this section of Beaver Dam Road impassable."

Just two months later, federal Public Works Administration funds were directed toward reconstruction of the bridge. The "Brookhaven" column in the *Advance* announced that the reconstructed Beaver Dam Bridge was again opened to traffic on March 28, 1939. Michael Kalinowski (who lived on Old Stump Road with his parents, Anton and Josephine, and his younger brothers, Stanley and Walter) was the first to drive across the bridge.

Squassux Chairman's Report

This was my first season as Squassux Chairman and in what seemed to be a blink of an eye, it's time to start thinking about putting your boat to bed for the winter. I say, "start thinking" because September and October can be two of the best months of the season. Cooler and less humid weather along with less crowded waterways is always welcome. Not to mention the fall fish runs that can keep you busy for hours. This year we should all cross our fingers and hope that we don't get any spiral visitors from the south and that we do get a short and mild winter.

This is also the time of the year when we promise to use our boats more the following season and hope to keep that promise as spring comes along.

All in all I would have to say that this has been a very good season. I would like to thank Andy Reuben for making my job easier and I would also like to remind all the boaters that "your" slip is actually the "BVA's slip" which will make Andy's job a little easier.

Mike Rizzo
Squassux Chair

Dockmaster's Report

Squassux had a fire on July 29th which resulted in the loss of two powerboats and a severely damaged dock. Luckily, no one was injured and the fire did not spread further. I happened to be at my boat on the main canal when the fire began with an explosion. I raced to the smoke plume and was horrified by the speed of the conflagration and the resulting damage. The fiberglass boats burned like gasoline. One lesson is obvious from this incident. Gas powered boats with engines under the deck (inboards) or in a cowl (I/Os) are especially prone to accumulation of gas or explosive fumes. Make sure the blowers work, and for added insurance, open your engine hatch, look for signs of a gas leak, and sniff for gas fumes. I shudder to think of the consequences had a family been aboard either boat.

A second consideration from this fire regards insurance. Neither boat was insured, so both boaters suffered total hull losses. At this time, Squassux boaters are not required to carry insurance policies on their boats. That is an option each member must explore individually. Even a resulting fuel leak could result in a huge DEC fine. At the very least, inquire into a liability protection that could even be added to an existing homeowners policy. This could help protect you in a potential lawsuit should your boat be involved in any sort of mishap which results in an injury or property loss. Additionally, everyone should update their fire extinguishers, inspect their fuel lines, and all inboards with a carburetor should have a flame arrester in place.

As the 2013 boating season draws to a close, please keep in mind that all boats must be out of the

main and west canal by November 15th so that the ice eaters can be installed. If you are contemplating a larger or smaller boat, or thinking of retiring from boating, please contact me as soon as you can so I can act upon your needs. Also, if your dock has any unreported damage, let me know immediately. Once dock repairs are completed in the spring, later repairs to your dock may not be possible.

In closing, I have a few miscellaneous observations. Remember that Squassux has no garbage service. Boaters must carry out all refuse. (A blue plastic tub left in the main dock parking area filled up with all sorts of waste). Another item I must stress is dock usage. Boaters in Squassux do not "own" their slip, but rather lease it from the BVA each season. The dockmaster and Squassux Chairperson attempt to float as many residents as possible during the season. Because there is such a range of slip sizes, it sometimes becomes necessary to move boats to accommodate other boaters, especially if a member acquires a new (bigger) boat. Last season a dock must have shifted and a boater discovered his boat did not fit into the slip from the previous season. Finally, if you discover a boat in your slip, please contact me. Sometimes it is necessary for me to reassign someone's slip temporarily for a number of reasons. Once in a while, a boater moors at the wrong slip, or simply takes a slip for his own reasons. Always call me at 521-4411 first, and I will find a solution.

Andy Rubin
Dockmaster

Virginia Brown Scholarships

Each year the Brookhaven Village Association Remy is attending SUNY Geneseo, beginning this awards two scholarships to graduating senior fall. You can read their winning essays on the BVA high school students. High school seniors who website. Congratulations to Julia and Remy! We wish plan to attend college are eligible to apply for the you well as you start your college careers. scholarships. Julia Bellante, who will attend SUNY Potsdam this fall, was awarded the \$1000 scholarship. Remy Rizzo was awarded the \$500 scholarship.

Ellen Clyne
Editor

Looking for Local Photographs

Please visit the BVA website brookhavenvillageassociation.org to learn more about what we do. You will find links to local organizations as well as information about the Virginia Brown Scholarships. We are always looking for photos of the hamlet to put up on the website. Do you have a picture (old or new) that captures a Brookhaven moment? Please send it to us via the website and we'll post them for everyone to enjoy.

Ellen Clyne
Editor

Reminder Boat Owners

Ice Eaters will be installed for the winter. All boats must be out of the main and west canals by November 15th.

Brookhaven Hamlet's Fall Clean-up

*Please Come Out
and
Lend a Hand*

Saturday, October 19th

10:00 AM

**Meet at the
Brookhaven
Firehouse**



BVA BOARD MEMBERS

PRESIDENT:

Frank Miller

SECRETARY:

Ellen Clyne

TREASURER:

Janet Quirk

DIRECTORS:

John Curiale	Deb Love Sack	Lenny DaConto
John Knapp	Jeffrey Jensen	Michael Rizzo
Carol Capaldo	Jeremiah McGiff	Chris Marshall

DOCKMASTER:

Andy Rubin

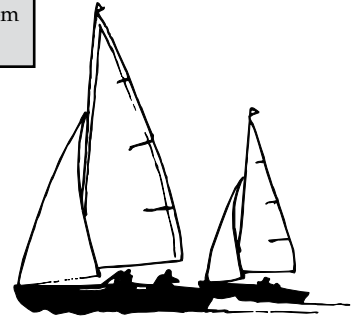
HISTORIAN:

Marty Van Lith

FIRE PLACE EDITORS:

Ellen Clyne
Chris Marshall

The BVA Board meets on the second Wednesday of each month at 7:30 pm at the Post Morrow Annex, 16 Bay Rd. Meetings are open to the public.



Fire Place

A Community Newsletter from the
Brookhaven Village Association
PO Box 167
Brookhaven, New York 11719

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