



Friends of the Old Croton Aqueduct

Newsletter

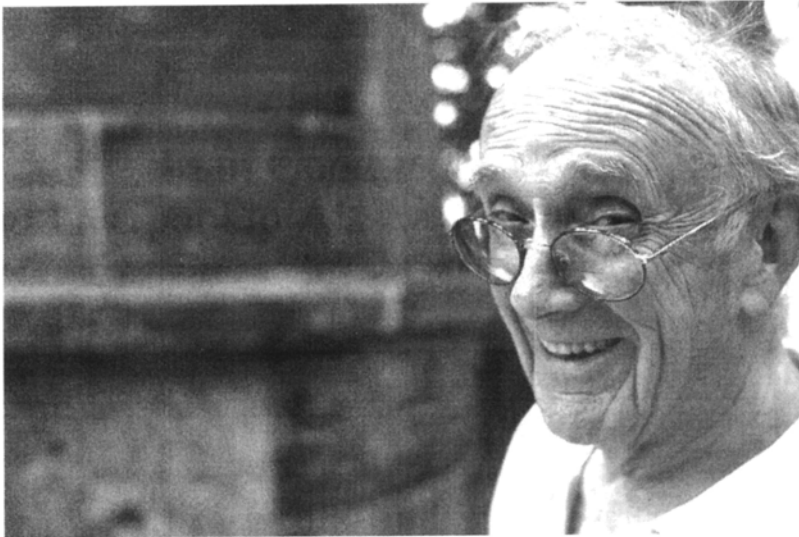
No. 12, July 2002

Brian Goodman to Retire: From Liverpool to Alaska via the Aqueduct Trail

Mavis Cain

Brian Goodman, the multi-faceted and multi-talented Site Manager of Old Croton Aqueduct State Historic Park, this fall is making good his long-time threat to retire. All of us who love the Aqueduct have been remarkably fortunate in having Brian as its first manager. He has been energetic, creative, persistent, diplomatic, and endlessly devoted to the trail and its "patrons" for the last 10 years. For Friends of the Aqueduct he has been a steady source of inspiration and guidance, and we will miss him terribly. For all of us, Brian has become Mr. Aqueduct.

An unconventional path. Brian's path to becoming Aqueduct manager was unusual. He spent his boyhood during World War II in Liverpool. Next stop was the British Army in the Middle East; he then went on to Cambridge University, followed by a fellowship to study



Brian Goodman, Historic Site Manager, Old Croton Aqueduct State Historic Park. (Photo by F. Charles)

in the U.S. at Yale. With two prestigious institutions behind him, Brian returned to England but was soon back in New York as a trade representative for the British government, a job he held for 14 years, until Barclays Bank lured him away. Barclays kept him in the U.S., where he married and raised two sons, Alistair and Nicholas, in New York City and Chappaqua.

After retirement from Barclays, Brian contemplated a third career that would suit his great love of hiking and the outdoors. Fortunately for us, a chance comment during a meeting with State Park officials led to his appointment in 1992 as the state's first Historic Site Manager of the 26-mile Aqueduct in Westchester.

An ardent advocate. Brian, who had never previously set foot on the trail, now knows every inch of it, indeed every tree. Diane Alden of Croton-on-Hudson



Giving a tour of the Ann Street weir in Ossining. (Photo by F. Charles.)

speaks of him as an "ardent advocate" for the trail. He nurtures trail neighbors who help out and is aware of every encroachment or abuse. He has built relationships with the officials of the dozen-plus municipalities the Aqueduct traverses through the county. He has led tours, written persuasive grant applications, and worked hard for more government resources for this well-loved park. He considers the 1999 designation of the Aqueduct as a State Historic Park – one of only four statewide – a highlight of his tenure; it was previously a state railway. Much of this recognition is due to Brian's efforts to make the Aqueduct visible not only as a recreational venue but increasingly as an important educational resource.

Many of his tasks are more hands-on. He is a familiar site on the trail in his green jeep, hopping out to explain a



Designation of the Aqueduct as a state historic park, 1999. Brian Goodman (r.) with Deputy State Parks Commissioner Winthrop Aldrich. (Photo courtesy of The Journal News; Alicia Maxey, photographer.)

tidbit of history to walkers or to check trail conditions with neighbors. He and the trail crew repeatedly cope with the aftermath of storms - hundreds of trees can be down after a bad one - or check out sewer leaks or other emergencies. When the 160-year-old brick water tunnel itself requires inspection, he dons the necessary gear and goes in with the accredited rescue team called for by federal regulations.

Brian is an eloquent and erudite speaker and has lectured on the history of the Aqueduct to groups around the county and in New York City. Information flows in two directions: from his wide travels he has brought ideas to enrich his work here. He has represented the interests of the trail with various councils, including Historic River Towns of Westchester. The organization's Chairman, Ossining Town Supervisor John Chervokas, says "Our Historic River Towns of Westchester appreciate and applaud the Brian "Goodmanagement" that has helped make the Old Croton Aqueduct - and Ossining's Weir Chamber - such popular attractions for so many people."



Chatting with trail patrons. Friends past president Joanne Scebold stands next to Brian.

For the Friends of the Aqueduct he has been a true friend. His input on our 1998 map and guide of the state trailway was invaluable. He has encouraged us in tackling projects as seemingly impossible as the restoration of the Overseer's House. He has linked us to other Friends groups and rallied us when encroachments occur. Most importantly, he has kept in front of us his long-term vision of all that the Aqueduct can become.

Looking ahead. While the Aqueduct has been Brian's overwhelming interest during the last 10 years, he is also active as a trustee of the Royal College of Surgeons Foundation, which sponsors exchanges between young British and American surgeons, and as a board member of the New York-New Jersey Trail Conference and the Considering Alexander SIDS Foundation. He is a member of the Taconic Region Search and Rescue Team, aiding lost or injured hikers.



With grandson Kendall.

And yes, while Brian will remain in this area, he really does intend to spend part of his second retirement in Alaska, a new wilderness area to be explored. He started spending annual holidays there some years ago when one of his sons took up an assignment based in Anchorage. With the added "tug" of a grandson, he paid four visits there in 2001 alone. It has become his new passion. How about a Friends' meeting in Alaska?

Hastings Halts Dumping in Quarry Next to Trail

A responsive village administration voted unanimously on June 4th to halt dumping in Hastings' historic marble quarry, after an initiative undertaken by the Friends of the Aqueduct with vociferous support from quarry neighbors. "Thanks to the Friends," says neighbor activist Chris Lomolino, "a significant first step has been taken. We now have to make sure the site is properly tested and the necessary steps taken to reclaim it."

The 5.5-acre site, near Draper Park and the Jacques Lipchitz studio, adjoins the east side of the Aqueduct for some 900 feet. It is opposite the point where the planned Quarry Trail, following the right-of-way of the now-vanished quarry railroad, will link the Aqueduct with the Hastings waterfront. Governor Pataki came to Hastings last August to present the village with a \$75,000 check for this exciting project, transforming a quarry cleanup into both a pressing and high-profile issue.

The unsightly piles of yard waste mixed with illegally dumped debris, the smells emanating from the mess, and concerns about potential damage to the Aqueduct tunnel itself, as well as the Quarry Trail project, prompted the Friends last fall to request that the Board of Trustees review the situation. Recognizing that the quarry was nearing the end of its useful life as a landfill, the trustees

moved quickly, asking Village Manager Neil Hess for a report (issued in March) and meeting with the Friends and quarry neighbors over the ensuing months.

Like several other villages in the area, Hastings will henceforth bring its yard waste to a Yonkers facility, from where it will eventually be taken away by the county. The Board of Trustees has also asked the village's consulting environmental attorney to review the current legal status of the landfill and report on state-mandated procedures for closure.

The quarry has a long and varied history that was chronicled in detail by the late Mary Allison in the May 1985 issue of *Hastings Historian*. Quarry operations, Hastings' "first industry," started in the early 19th century. In subsequent decades the quarry's white (dolomite) marble was widely used and admired in the New York area and beyond. Perhaps most interesting for present concerns, it was a beautifully landscaped park with a "crystal clear pond" in the late 1930s, thanks to the efforts of Dr. Arthur C. Langmuir. The village has used it as a disposal site for nearly 40 years. If the interest shown in the quarry at the Friends' table during Hastings' recent street fair is any indication, the debate about what should be its next incarnation will be lively indeed. - Ed.



Stairs at the south end of the pond in Quarry Park, created by Dr. Arthur C. Langmuir in the late 1930s. (Courtesy of the Hastings Historical Society)

A Tour of High Bridge Tower: Notes of an Aqueduct Enthusiast

Cornelia Cotton

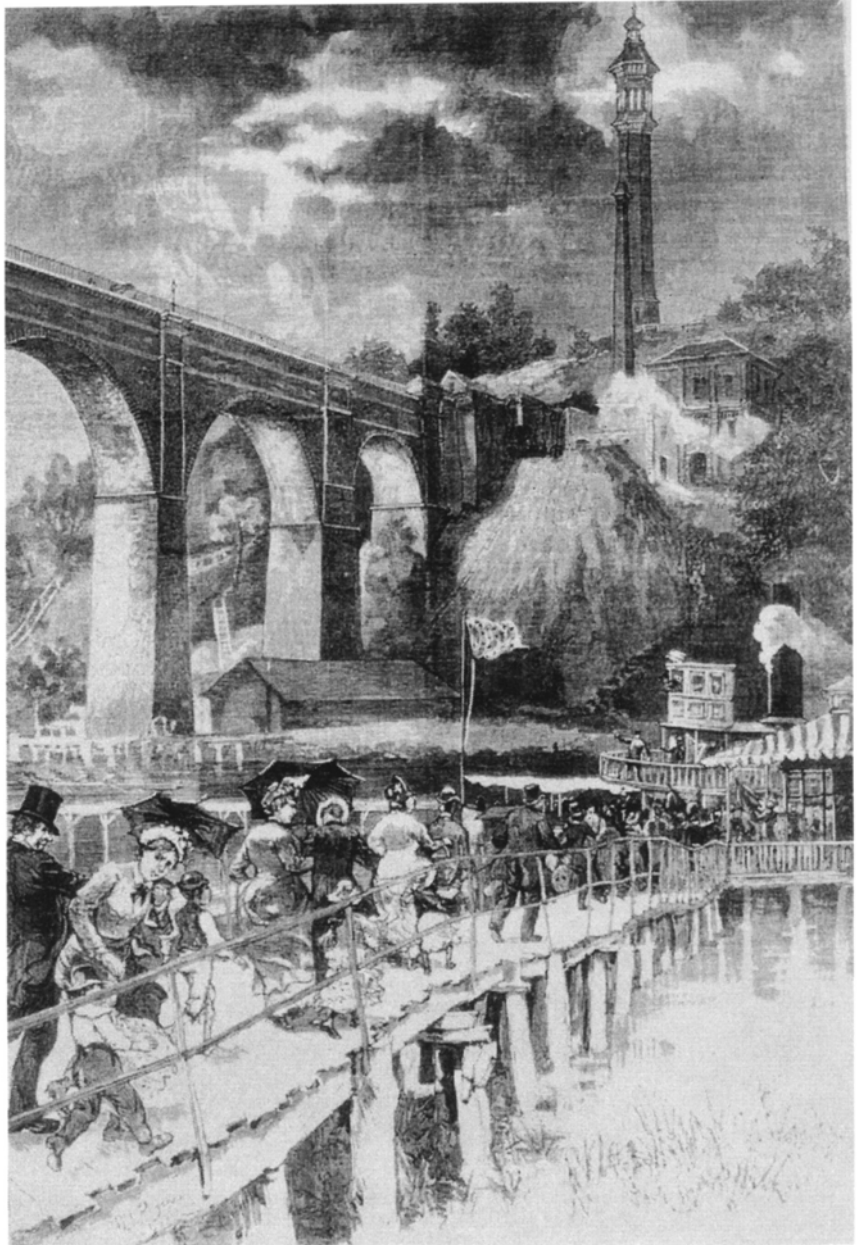
My interest in the Old Croton Aqueduct began when I became fascinated by the history of my village, Croton-on-Hudson, and started collecting old prints, postcards, maps and other antiquarian materials that bore the name "Croton" in their titles. It turned out that almost all such prints had to do with the Old Croton Aqueduct as Croton itself had been a sleepy hamlet in the 19th century, nestled between those well-documented villages Peekskill and Sing Sing, but unlike them, not much of a magnet for the artists of the Hudson River School of painting.

The older engravings, mostly of valley crossings, featured the magnificent structures John B. Jervis built to span the various brooks, rivers and valleys along the line of the aqueduct. In later prints, the imposing tower on the Manhattan side of the High Bridge makes its appearance, sometimes in the background of a bustling crowd of sightseers who throng the bridge or hurry to get on the steam excursion boat that will take them back to Lower Manhattan. Today, the High Bridge is closed, and Highbridge Park, built in the 19th century, is no longer a popular destination, although efforts are being made to rehabilitate the bridge and to reclaim the park.

On May 7th, a group of aqueduct enthusiasts was gathered in an unprepossessing neighborhood of Spanish Harlem, at 173rd Street and Amsterdam Avenue, at the High Bridge Recreation Center where our guide, Professor Sidney Horenstein, was engaged in lively discussions as a prelude to the tour proper.

Setting off at a brisk clip toward the tower, we climbed a fairly steep grassy slope adjoining a ballfield. Some of the boys and young men, curious about our errand into their neighborhood, left their bats behind and joined the group. At intervals, Professor Horenstein would stop and give a brief talk. Witty, erudite and

enthusiastic, he introduced himself as a person who works at the American Museum of Natural History during the day and roams the city's parks at night. His expositions on engineering, industrial archeology, history and art history were frequently interrupted by digressions on Manhattan's foundations, as he gave inspired mini-lectures on schist, gneiss and other rocks most laymen would hesitate to pronounce. Whenever



"At High Bridge, Harlem River - 'All Aboard!'" from Harper's Weekly, July 24, 1880. Note conical slag heap to the right of the bridge, below the powerhouse. (Courtesy of R. Kornfeld, Jr.)

we passed a boulder or outcropping, he would touch them with almost loving reverence. Primarily a geologist, he has an encyclopedic knowledge of all things relating to the city.

From the plaza at the foot of the tower, we had a magnificent view across the High Bridge toward the Bronx. It was only now that I learned the true function of this marvelous edifice, built 30 years after the aqueduct's opening in 1842. It is a water tower into which the water from the aqueduct, flowing across the High Bridge, was pumped, lifting it to serve the apartment buildings rising on the heights of northern Manhattan. A large brick structure adjoining the tower, part of the same project, was the High Bridge Reservoir. The reservoir was rebuilt in 1934 as a community swimming pool.

As we climbed the spiral staircase of the tower, we could admire the two massive pipes in the center, the larger one for water being pumped to the top, the other for the downflow. We also noticed the beautiful brickwork, the charming little windows, the lacy ironwork of the staircase, and the solid overall construction.

The lookout floor at the top, lit by tall windows around the perimeter, provides one of the most interesting 360-degree views of the city - unusual, as this is a rare overview of Manhattan's north end with which few of us were familiar. Bridges abound. The George Washington Bridge, with Pier Luigi Nervi's striking bus terminal at the Manhattan end, is nearby. So are the Alexander Hamilton Bridge and the Washington Bridge across the Harlem River to the immediate north. And, of course, the High Bridge, the oldest bridge connecting Manhattan with the mainland.

Some of the more adventurous among the group climbed even higher to explore a windowless chamber at the very top. The tower's huge wooden water tank is long gone. Vandalism and fire have done their work, and the graceful, slender tower no longer has its original crown; the cupola was reconstructed 12 years ago. The doors of the tower are now kept locked.



Photograph, c.1884-85, of bridge walkway and High Bridge Reservoir and Tower. Below them, to the right, are the powerhouse and its smokestack, also seen in the illustration on p. 4 (Collection of NYC Municipal Archives; courtesy of C. Fahn)

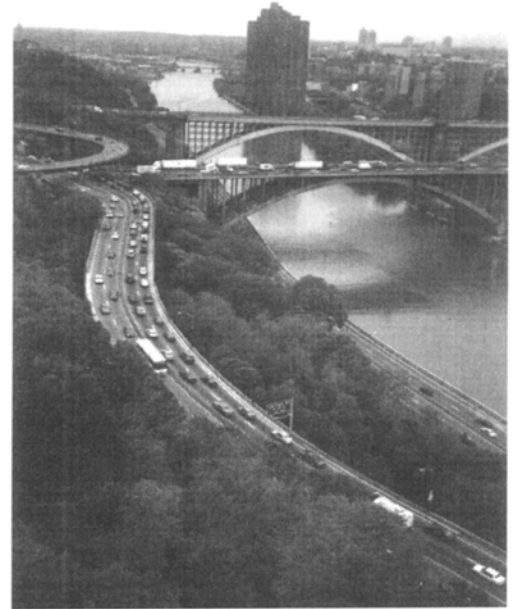
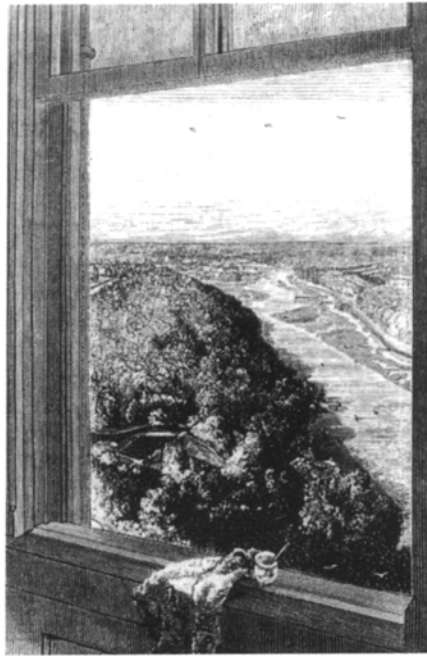
Other changes can be seen by comparing the tower's appearance today with late 19th century engravings. The High Service Works at the Manhattan end of the High Bridge encompassed not only the tower and reservoir but also a large powerhouse for pumping the water into them. The artists show black coal plumes and fumes belching forth from a tall chimney, and a monumental slag heap at the side of the powerhouse that sends slag cascading into the Harlem River - an environmentalist's nightmare. We later walked past the electrical pumping station on Amsterdam Avenue serving the New Croton Aqueduct. It emits a reassuring modern hum.

The tour concluded with a walk through the original Highbridge Park on the steep slopes toward the river. Designed with care and artistry by Calvert Vaux and Samuel Parsons, Jr., and built with the craftsmanship of an earlier age, it boasts stone paths, stairs, terraces, arches and grottoes, bordered by lovely iron fences. Although the plantings have disappeared and wild

vegetation has taken over, and much of the masonry is defaced or in ruins, one can still derive a bittersweet pleasure from this monument to civic amenities of the past. Professor Horenstein spoke movingly about the vanished glory of this place. Many in our crowd wondered how many New Yorkers had ever visited here, or even know that it exists.

My love for the romance of the Croton Water has increased even more as a result of the tour. I do think of the Old Croton Aqueduct as the single greatest public achievement that made possible the growth of modern New York City. But I also learned that long ago, during the last ice age, New York City was at the glacier's edge, an end moraine. Ice advancing south embedded with pebbles carved rills on the bedrock surface, and left behind boulders, pushed from New Jersey, as it retreated.

The city's site thus was formed by huge forces of nature, but human imagination, ingenuity, intellect, and labor shaped and built and struggled and succeeded in



Left: View of the Harlem River from High Bridge Tower, from Scribner's Monthly, Vol. 14, 1877. Right: The view today. (Photo by D. Ramsey)

creating a water system to support a civilized habitat for millions of people. The High Bridge Tower stands as a proud reminder of that accomplishment. As one of my friends from the Friends of the Old Croton Aqueduct suggested, it should have a beautiful banner flying from the top. Any ideas for a design?

Note: For the tower's hours of opening this summer, see p. 7.



Landmark Anniversary

Ten years ago, on the 150th anniversary of its opening, the Old Croton Aqueduct became a National Historic Landmark, the highest landmark designation possible in the US. Laurie Beckelman, then-chair of the New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission, presided at the designation ceremony, which took place at the Hudson River Museum in Yonkers. The museum used the occasion to open a major exhibit, "The Old Croton Aqueduct: Rural Resources Meet Urban Needs." The plaque pictured here is displayed at the Ossining Heritage Area Visitor Center. July 4th, 2002, marks the 160th anniversary of the start of a week of grand festivities held in New York City to celebrate the glory of Croton water at last entering the city. (Photo by C. Fahn)

High Bridge Tower Open for Visits



High Bridge Tower, located in Highbridge Park at 173rd St. and Amsterdam Ave. in Manhattan, will be open **every Sunday from 10 am to noon during July and August**. From the tower one can also view the surface of the High Bridge. Urban Park Rangers will be on hand to tell about the role of the tower and bridge in New York City history and about efforts to restore and reopen the bridge to pedestrians. 212-795-1388.

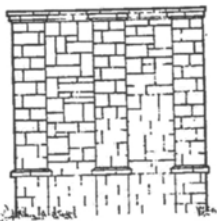
Guides to Aqueduct Walks

Tarrytown to Ossining: Dan Chazin of the New York-New Jersey Trail Conference has written a detailed guide to a walk on the Aqueduct from Franklin St. in Tarrytown to the Double Arch Bridge and Ossining Heritage Area Visitor Center in Ossining. The walk is the featured "Hike of the Week" in the May 30th issue of *The Record* (Bergen Co., NJ). For a copy, send a self-addressed, stamped envelope to Friends of the Old Croton Aqueduct or try via the newspaper's web site: northjersey.com - go to the Health section, then scroll down to Fitness. (Note: the Visitor Center is closed on Sundays.)

Croton Dam to Ossining: This is hike no. 5, pp. 45-49, in *50 Hikes In the Lower Hudson Valley: Hikes and Walks from Westchester County to Albany*, by Stella Green and H. Neil Zimmerman (Backcountry Guides, Woodstock, VT, 2002, ISBN 0-88150-557-9, \$16.95).

Weir Tour, July 27

Visit the Ossining gatehouse and a segment of the tunnel of the Old Croton Aqueduct on a tour led by Historic Site Manager Brian Goodman and sponsored by the Beczak Environmental Education Center of Yonkers. The tour is Saturday, July 27, at 10 am. Stay on to see the exhibits in the Ossining Heritage Area Visitor Center about the building of the Aqueduct. Either meet at the Beczak, 35 Alexander St., at 9 am to carpool, or call the Beczak at 914-377-1900 for driving directions. Free.



Turkey Walk!

It's not too soon to mark **Friday, November 29**, for the day-after-Thanksgiving **Turkey Walk** (rain date: Saturday, November 30). True to tradition, a hardy band will start from the New Croton Dam at 8 am. Walkers may meet (and leave) the group at various points along the way. Lunch is at Remi's Cafe in Irvington. For rendezvous times or other information call Jocko Lloyd, 914-693-5094.



Map Orders

To order the Friends' full-color, award-winning map/guide by mail, send a check for \$5.25 (includes shipping and handling) to Friends of the Old Croton Aqueduct, Overseer's House, 15 Walnut Street, Dobbs Ferry, NY 10522. For the name of the retailer nearest you, call 914-693-4117.

MEMBERSHIP COUPON BE A FRIEND!!

Your tax-deductible contribution helps to protect and preserve the trail.

- | | |
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Please make check payable to Friends of the Old Croton Aqueduct. Send it with this coupon and your name, address, and day and evening telephone numbers to the Friends at Overseer's House, 15 Walnut St., Dobbs Ferry, NY 10522-2109.

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Please let us know if you would like to volunteer.

**For information about the trail and
Old Croton Aqueduct State Historic Park,**
call the Historic Site Manager, Brian Goodman,
at 914-693-5259.



Looking out while climbing the stairs of High Bridge Tower. See p. 4. (Photo by D. Ramsey)

Newsletter: Charlotte Fahn, *Editor*. News items, reminiscences, and comments welcome: 914-478-3961 or czfahn@yahoo.com or by mail c/o the Friends.

Friends of the Old Croton Aqueduct
Overseer's House
15 Walnut Street
Dobbs Ferry, NY 10522

Friends of the Old Croton Aqueduct is a private, non-profit, volunteer organization formed to protect and preserve the Old Croton Aqueduct. The Friends work to raise public awareness of the Aqueduct and trail, and to secure the resources that will enable this historic greenway to remain unspoiled in perpetuity. *Address:* Overseer's House, 15 Walnut Street, Dobbs Ferry, NY 10522-2109; *telephone* 914-693-4117.

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