

Fire House, Hicksville,

**Protecting History for  
Those Who Protect  
Our Community**

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*Volunteering for over 130 years*

# Introduction & Overview

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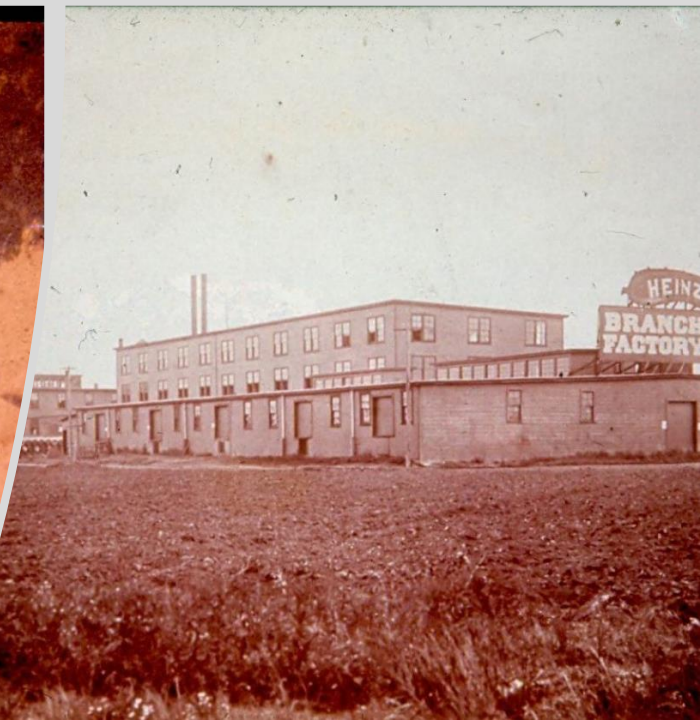
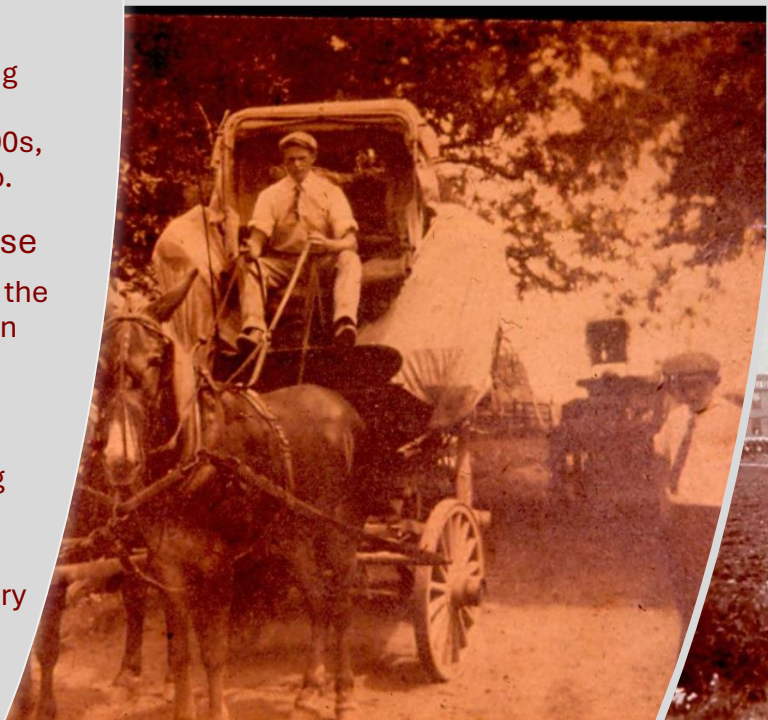
- Julie Ugarte
  - Why a Petition
  - Interest from the Community
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  - Areas of Interest
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# The Hicksville Community

- 1648 Robert Williams
- 1836 Valentine Hicks
  - 2<sup>nd</sup> President of the LIRR
- German Americans
  - John Heitz and Frederick Herzog devoted much of their lives to the development of Hicksville
- Farming
  - Local merchants, including several pickle-works companies built in the 1890s, including the H.J. Heinz Co.
- Nassau County Courthouse
  - As part of Queens County, the building was constructed in 1895 as a village hall.
  - Between 1895 and 1920 it served a variety of governmental and meeting purposes.
  - Hicksville's only historical landmark – Now the Gregory Museum



# Other Hicksville Historical Areas of Interest



Built in 1914...this building served as Hicksville's first movie theater and was located at 21 West Nicholai Street. The building was built in 1914, and the year is displayed on the facade.



The Odd Fellows Hall on East Barclay Street was a main stay in Hicksville for many years, hosting banquets and weddings. It later became the Drago Dress Factory and now the building is an office building and car wash

Deli that has since been condemned by the Town of Oyster Bay is located on Broadway and Barclay Street. This building was built around 1837 and is the last surviving structure from the Grand Central Hotel and the living quarters of Peter Blydenberg, the hostler for the hotel.



The last of the old twelve hotels that beautified Hicksville, known as the Reinhardt's Hotel now has a different storefront, but the original building built in 1898 as the Hotel can still be seen today.



Built in 1903, Hicksville's 1<sup>st</sup> Bank served the community until it was sold to the Long Island Railroad Workers Credit Union. Recently sold in 2024





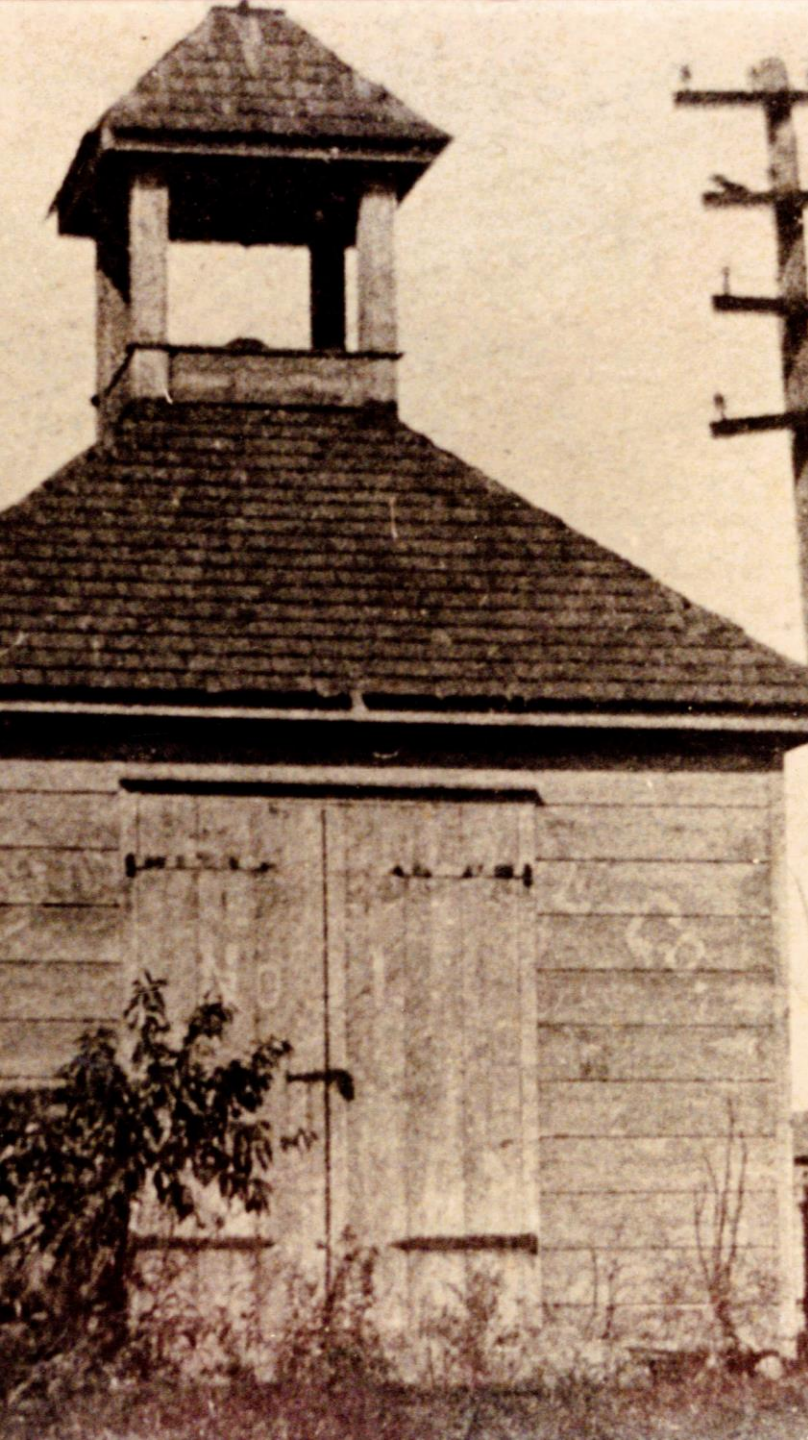
**Dedicated to our Founding Members**

# Meeting the Need of the Community

- In 1904, the property for a new firehouse was purchased from resident Frederick Herzog for \$375.
  - The property was located on Mary Street, next to the Long Island Railroad tracks
- 103 of the 108 Hicksville residents came out and voted. 60 residents voted in favor with 42 voting against the proposition
  - District passed resolution to bond \$6,000 for construction.
- November 30, 1905, the cornerstone was laid by oldest firefighter Ernest Liebke
  - The architect was August H. Bussman, and the builder was Stolz & Porchman
- On Decoration Day, May of 1906, the Fire House opened its doors under the direction of Chief Julius Augustin







# Fire House Design

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- The building was 40 feet square, two stories high, with an extension of 15 feet by 24 feet, that included an occupied janitor's quarters.
  - The ground floor was made of cement and had lockers, toilets, and washroom for the firefighters.
  - The height of the 1<sup>st</sup> floor was 12 feet.
  - The second floor had a large assembly room 40 feet square, 17 feet in height, with a dome in the center. In the center of the room between four dome posts was an oak table, surrounded with 8 leather-backed and 26 polished chairs for the members.
  - Off to the north was a sliding pole to the lower story to assist firefighters who were present at meetings.
- In 1925, renovations to the firehouse.
  - The architect was Arthur B Wood, and this would be the first time that the firehouse received extensive renovations
  - It included an addition to the side of the building and movement of the interior staircase to the side of the building.
  - A newly added concrete basement foundation with a hose drying tower.
  - The cost of the renovation was less than \$20,000

# Significant Role Played in Community

- From this small firehouse, Hicksville protected homes and businesses in Jericho, Westbury, Syosset, Central Park and Plainview
- WWI – 28 Men from the Fire Department were sent overseas, and two members would pay the ultimate sacrifice
- First immigrant to serve as Fire Chief on Long Island. Italian immigrant Anthony Manzolillo
- The 1<sup>st</sup> and only Volunteer Fire Department Racing Team from the department won the New York State Firemen's Tournament
- In October of 1908, Hicksville hosted it's first Tournament and Convention when they played host to the 13<sup>th</sup> Annual Southern New York Volunteer Firemen's Association.
- The first on Long Island, reliable fire alarm system, by "Gamewell". The system was hooked up to an air-operated horn on the roof of the firehouse.



# The End of an Era

- After just 27 years, the Department ushered in the motorized era of fire apparatus
  - Gone were horse drawn ladder truck and hand drawn pumpers
  - This created a need for the community to build a new fire house to house the new apparatus
- Appropriations were voted on and approved to construct a new firehouse on the existing property.
- On May 20, 1932, the house movers took a procession and moved the firehouse using rollers and horses. It would sit in the middle of Mary Street overnight until it was lifted onto a concrete pad.
- Chief Puvogel ordered the apparatus moved to the police booth at West John Street and Broadway.



# Through The Years

- Fire House
  - 1906 through 1933
- Jean & Joe's Firehouse Inn
  - 1940 through 1960s
- Cowell's Firehouse Inn
  - 1960's through 1970's
- Uncle Alberts
  - 1970's
- Wind Whistle Pub
  - 1977 through 1983
- Peppercorns Restaurant
  - 1983 through 2024





# What's the Goal of Preservation

- Everyday, hundreds of important historic structures are lost to neglect or demolition. Short sighted development plans and a lack of understanding about a community is contributing to their disappearance.
  - Many of these buildings often can be saved simply by thinking creatively about how we choose to reuse them.
  - Historic preservation is an important way for a community to understand the past and teach the future generations. Our community's history has many facets, and historic preservation helps tell these stories
  - The goal is to save the structure from future alterations that would make the building unrecognizable
  - The bones are still present, and framework can still be adjusted or reverted to a fire station.
- Other suggestions could be a community museum and educational center
  - Utilize the first floor for antique apparatus and firefighting equipment that tells the volunteer story.
  - Utilize the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor to tell the story of our community. Farming, Long Island Railroad, Our brave veterans, local organizations, schools and so much more.
  - And not to mention some of our well known musicians, athletes, actors and other celebrities;
  - Billy Joel, Al Pitrelli, Denny Dias, Theresa Caputo, Jackie Martling, Larry Eisenhower from the Boston Patriots (AFL) Lorraine Bracco and of course our two local politicians, New York State Assemblyman, Rob Walker and a Nassau County Legislator, Rose Marie Walker.



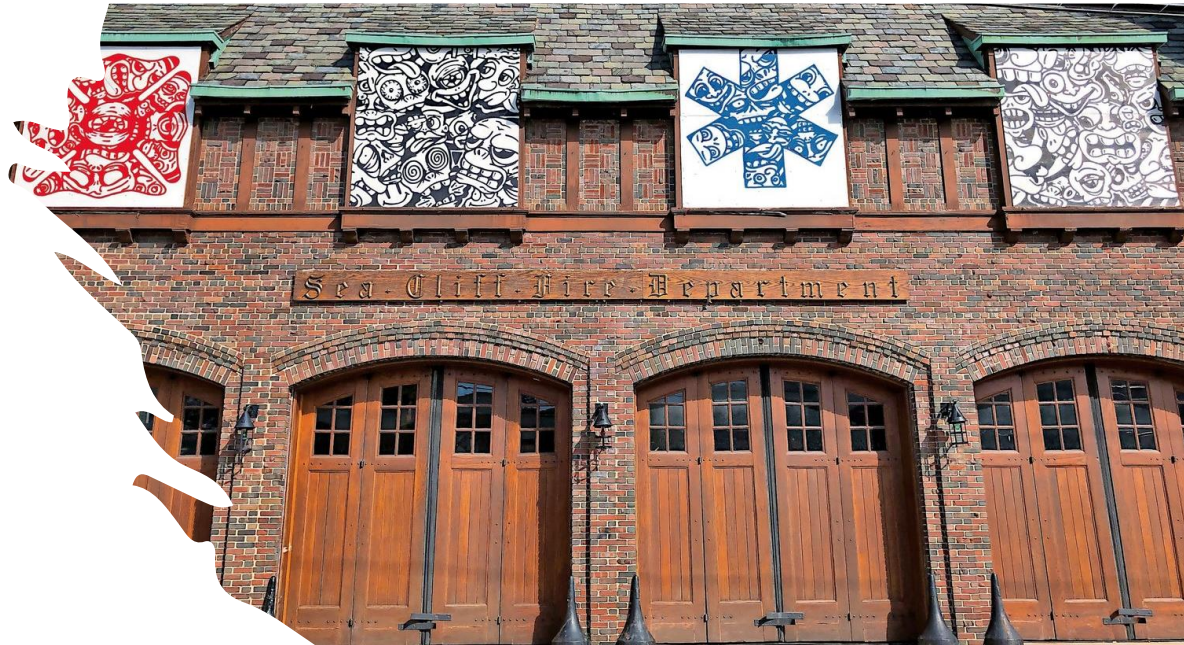
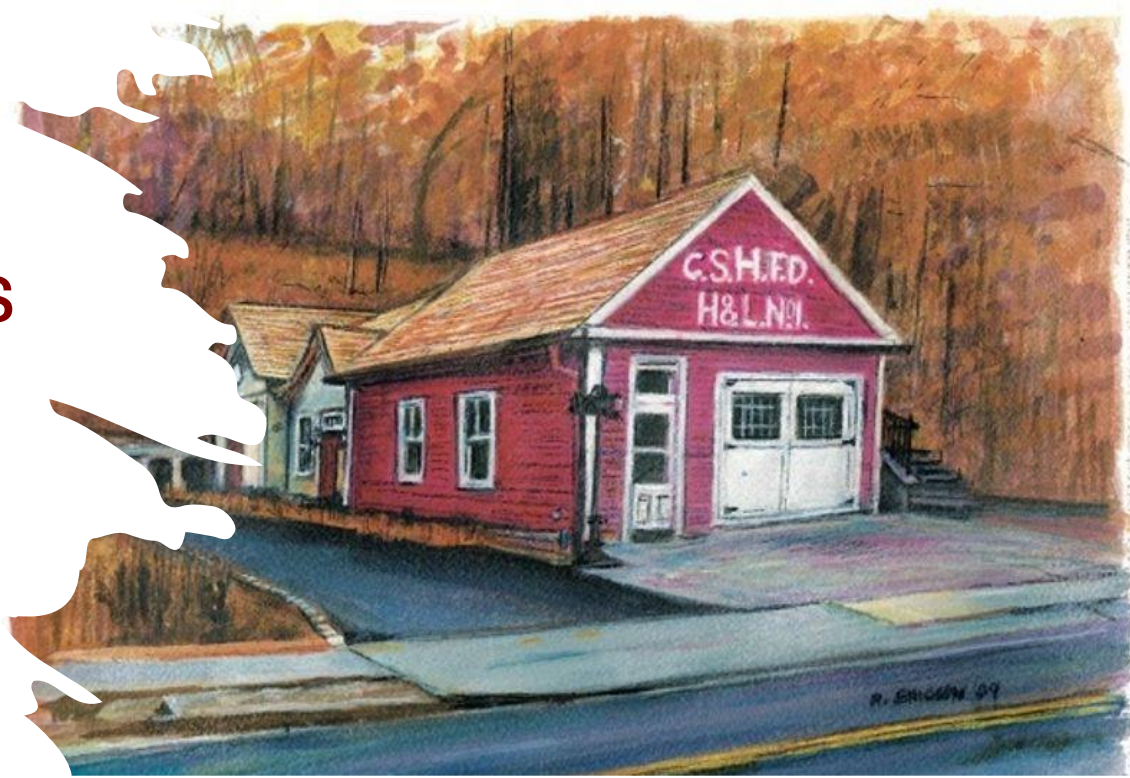
## Long Island Fire House Landmarks

- A firehouse in St. James that was built in 1925 was one of 16 properties statewide nominated as both state and national historic landmarks.
- Gov. Kathy Hochul announced the New York State Board for Historic Preservation recommended adding the St. James Firehouse and 15 other properties to the State and National Registers of Historic Places.
- The firehouse was the only Long Island location among the nominees, selected for their architectural and historic importance



# Sea Cliff & Cold Spring Fire Houses

- The Village of Sea Cliff still maintains their century old fire house and therefore not part of the Landmark Preservation on Long Island. The building has stood on Roslyn Avenue in downtown Sea Cliff for over 100 years
- The 1896 Cold Spring Fire House was saved from demolition in 2007. A handful of concerned citizens rallied to save the community's first Fire House, by acquiring, relocating, restoring and preserving it for future generations. A decision was made to make Application to the New York State Board of Regents to establish a museum to celebrate the history of the Cold Spring Harbor Volunteer Fire Department and the community it serves.





# Fire Museums

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Thank You

Questions?