A Historical Overview:

The Richard H. Handley Collection of Long Island Americana at The Smithtown Library

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Abstract

This research explores the history of the Richard H. Handley Collection of Long Island Americana located at the Smithtown Library in Smithtown, New York. This special local archival collection is often referred to as the Long Island Room. Its main goal is the preservation of Long Island history. The point of the research is to provide a historical overview of the collection with an emphasis on points that showcase its value to the community. A generous portion of the research focuses on Richard H. Handley, the development of his private collection and the decision to donate it to the Smithtown Library. There is also research on the operation of the archive since its donation, information services and what the future holds. Research on the Town of Smithtown and the Smithtown Library was completed to provide context for the history of the collection. Primary sources were obtained from the Richard H. Handley Collection of Long Island Americana with the assistance of a librarian. Additional information was obtained from interviews and online resources. Permission was granted to use the images in this document. A special thank you is given to Ms. Caren Zatyk, head of the Long Island Room, whose assistance with archival materials and interviews greatly added to the research.
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Introduction

The Richard H. Handley Collection of Long Island Americana is one of the most important special local history archives in its area. It is part of the Smithtown Library located in Smithtown, New York and is largely referred to as the Long Island Room. It began with the donation of Richard H. Handley’s private collection, bequeathed to the library by his family following his death. The original donation made for an excellent beginning to what would become a well-preserved and valuable collection comprised of rare books, archival and manuscript materials, and secondary research resources.

The library has several significant pieces; however, its value does not solely lie with its contents. The collection allows the community to build a relationship with history and that is equally as important. The donation from Richard H. Handley’s family continues to encourage others to donate their own personal papers. Caren Zatyk, Long Island Room librarian says, “What makes the collection special is its connection to the community. People trust the library with their most prized documents and that says a lot about what the collection has become” (personal communication, November 17, 2015).

A historical overview of the Long Island Room showcases how valuable the collection has become to the community. A brief history of the Town of Smithtown as well as the Smithtown Library provides a context for understanding the archive’s past. Of course, a history of the Richard H. Handley Collection of Long Island Americana must include a discussion of the man who made it possible. His personal life experiences helped build the original collection and continue to influence its development. A focus on the decision to donate the collection,
how it has been managed throughout the years and what the future holds is also important and explored. All of these pieces of the Long Island Room’s history have helped create the valuable institution that it is today.

A Brief History of the Town of Smithtown

The Town of Smithtown is located on the north shore of Suffolk County, New York. It began with Richard Smythe, who first came to America from England in October of 1635 (Harris, n.d., para. 1). John Lawrence Smith (1883), in his history of Smithtown wrote that Richard Smythe and his descendants are referred to as the “Bull-Rider” and the “Bull Smiths” because he purchased as much land from the Native Americans as he could ride around on his pet bull, named Whisper, in one day’s time (as cited in Harris, 2014, para. 2). This tale is very exciting; however, it is said to be legend. What historians are sure of is that Richard Smythe did claim land in the Nesaquake area and his possession of that land was confirmed on March 3, 1665, when he was granted a patent by Royal Governor of the Colony of New York, Sir Richard Nicolls (Harris, n.d., para. 2). He was required to settle ten families on the land within three years, thus creating Smythe’s Town or Smithtown (Harris, n.d., para. 2).

In Travels in New-England and New-York written by Timothy Dwight (1823), the author describes Smithtown as 10 to 12 miles in length from east to west (p. 272). He says, in 1790 the town had a population of 1,022, in 1800 a population of 1,413 and in 1810 a population of 1,592 (Dwight, 1823, p. 272). A railroad station was built in Smithtown in 1872 which encouraged cultural development in the area, increased the population, brought in new business and expanded the roadways (Wait, 2013). Eventually, part of that expansion would include the need for a library, and the growing population would require additional branches and expansions. Since then, the town has significantly increased with a reported population of
A Brief History of The Smithtown Library

The Smithtown Library opened on November 30, 1907 in the law office of Judge Lawrence Smith (The Smithtown Library, n.d., para. 1). The library received a great deal of interest and was forced to move several times due to space issues. This included a stint in the wing of a local community member’s home and later, the Eptentus Smith Tavern (Turrell, 1952, p. 56). Community interest made it clear that the library needed a permanent home and in 1912, the library was moved to its own building (C. Zatyk, personal communication, November 17, 2015). Dr. Guy Turrell, original board of trustees member and former library president, recorded much of the library’s history. In his article, *The Evolution of a Library* he said, “In 1907, the collection started with 603 books and by 1950 had 24,000 in its collection” (Turrell, 1952, p. 56). Again, the library required a larger space. In 1950, the board of trustees commissioned a new wing to be built in the location across the street from the library. This would become the current location when on November 15, 1950 the original building was moved across the street, connected with the new wing and reopened for business on April 20, 1951 (Turrell, 1952, p. 56).

Significant points in the library’s past include becoming a chartered municipal library in 1952 and being made an independent library by resident votes in 2001 (The Smithtown Library, n.d., para. 2). The library continues to be governed by a board of trustees. The Smithtown Library system consists of the Smithtown building, and three other locations in Kings Park (1948), Commack (1960) and Nesconset (1975), New York (MacGowan, 2012, How the Smithtown Library has Grown section). All buildings underwent major renovations in 2011 and 2012 including the Smithtown building where the Long Island Room is located. The Smithtown
Richard Hockman Handley was born on December 23, 1848 in New York City, but grew up in his family home located on Long Island in Hauppauge, New York (Harris, 2012, para. 2). The family had a large estate that Richard Handley inherited upon his father’s death in 1857 (Harris, 2012, para. 2). He was only nine years old at the time. As a child, Richard was home schooled and loved history, English literature and music, something that would shape his desire to collect historical materials throughout his life (Harris, 2012, para. 2).

Despite his family inheritance, Mr. Handley was able to become successful in his own right. He was involved with many real estate dealings along with his mother, who inherited money from her family and was also interested in trading stocks and bonds (Harris, 2012, para. 3). All of this made him a wealthy man. Mr. Handley lived with his mother in the family estate until her death in 1887 and when he married his wife three years later, Mary Lavina Osborn from California, they remained in the home (Harris, 2012, para. 4). The couple had four children, a son named Robert and three daughters named Mary Elizabeth (“Zabeth”), Nada and
Hildegarde. When the daughters married, their names became Mary Elizabeth Woodard, Nada Seaman and Hildegarde Hold.

Richard Handley was well-respected by both his family and his associates. In a letter dated August 19, 1964, his youngest daughter, Hildegarde Hold, described him as:

…a devoted husband and father; a most serious man with a sense of responsibility and honesty in all his dealings, within the community or elsewhere where he dealt in
business or private affairs. He was highly thought of by contemporaries, and business men from far and wide sought his advice and opinions. (as cited in Leonard, 1965, p. 11)

In addition to his business dealings, Mr. Handley had many interests and hobbies. He had a passion for Long Island history, was an avid hunter and cyclist, was interested in religion and loved photography (C. Zatyk, personal communication, November 24, 2015). His love of cycling was so great that he built his own bicycle path to ensure that he and his family had a safe trail to ride. That path still exists today, allowing riders to go from the south to the north shore of Long Island (Harris, 2012, para. 6). Mr. Handley also had an interest in botany. There is an old photo in the collection of Mr. Handley tending to grapevines in his backyard. The back of the photo reads, “Mr. Handley was known as a botanist who spent much time trying new plants” (“Photograph of Richard Handley tending grapevines,” n.d.). He personally took many photographs that featured local community members and scenery, some of which ended up in the collection. These images add a depth to the collection that is invaluable when researching how people lived in the past.

Richard H. Handley’s Private Collection

Mr. Handley created a dynamic and extensive collection of Long Island history that largely reflected his daily life and hobbies. His private collection consisted of items from his life like personal projects, photographs and scrapbooks. The scrapbooks were mainly filled with newspaper clippings of articles about the community and surrounding area that he found interesting, such as an article on historic trees in Hauppauge, New York (R.H. Handley, n.d.). In addition, his success in business provided him with well-connected contacts and the funding to purchase valuable items that he desired.
Mr. Handley had a procedure for procuring items. He employed various associates and worked with several dealers to locate and bid on items of interest as well as field inquiries from sellers. He was interested in items related to Long Island and New York and also had an interest in religious materials. Mr. Handley would browse auction booklets, book catalogs, bulletins and brochures and notify his associates of what he was interested in purchasing and for what price (C. Zatyk, personal communication, November 17, 2015). This was mostly done in New York City. One such bulletin, from Oscar Wegelin, Book and Print Seller (1901), shows check marks next to several items of interest. It is hard to discern whether Mr. Handley or one of his associates made the check marks, however; one item did make it into the collection.
Seasonable Thoughts on the State of Religion in New England, written by Charles Chauncy (1743) was one of the checked items that made it to the collection and remains there today. The bulletin from Oscar Wegelin, Book and Print Seller (1901) shows the publication date as 1745, and it is not known whether this is a misprint in the catalog or if Mr. Handley simply acquired a different copy (C. Zatyk, personal communication, November 24, 2015). Nonetheless, the check marks indicate the types of items that Mr. Handley desired for his private collection and also represent his interest in religion and religious texts.
In notes gathered by Hildegarde Hold (n.d.), she quotes a passage from Mr. Handley’s diaries, kept from 1864-1898, that give a further indication of his interests and collection style:

My amusement outside of bicycling has been and is the Collection of Books relating to Long Island, and I have been very successful in finding some very rare volumes… it will be a pretty good thing to hand down to the children and if they should take any interest in the matter they will probably find they have a more extensive collection than anyone else. (as cited in Leonard, 1965, p. 13)

Also based on her father’s diaries was a letter written by Mrs. Hold on August 19, 1964. This passage was found on page three of the letter:

The collection was kept in the library of our home; some, out in the open on rotating book-cases, others were enclosed behind glass doors, but the most valuable books were kept on shelves in a locked closet in the same room; underneath some of these shelves, there was a large safe, which was also used for this purpose. (as cited in Leonard, 1965, p. 13)

Many of the rare pieces in the collection were rebound as a means of preservation. This is true for one of the oldest and most valuable items, A Brief Description of New York: Formerly New Netherlands written by Daniel Denton (1670). The book describes the geographic and topographic features of the New York area, from Albany to Long Island. A letter from Oscar Wegelin (1903), says that the book was purchased in 1903 for $625 (p. 1). This was a large sum of money for that time, and it was a valuable and rare find. To add perspective, the famous Christie’s (2010), at their auction house in London, sold a first edition of this book in 2010 for the equivalent of $77,864. Mr. Handley truly had a gift for recognizing and preserving what were or would become significant historical pieces. This particular volume
is ornately bound with gold gilding on the paper edges, beautiful green binding and added pages to the front and back for protection. The conservation choices were meant to match the importance of the book (C. Zatyk, personal communication, November 24, 2015). As a result of these choices, the item is extremely well-preserved. Unfortunately, it seems as though the bottoms of the pages were removed during the process, removing some of the printing information. However, the original letter and envelope for that letter, discussing the sale and purchase of the book authenticate the piece. Mr. Handley continued to add to his private collection until his death in 1914.

(Denton, 1670)
The Death of Richard H. Handley

Richard H. Handley died on July 14, 1914 at the age of 65. His obituary in The New York Times paid tribute to his life. The tagline read, “Thrown from Factious Polo Pony He was Trying to Subdue” (“R.H. Handley dies,” 1914). It was reported that he died in his country place in New York from injuries that he sustained two days prior to his death when he was thrown from one of his favorite polo ponies (“R.H. Handley dies,” 1914). Polo was another favorite pastime of his. The obituary also states that he was not a businessman at the time of his death but still held many investments (“R.H. Handley dies,” 1914). This included many of the valuable pieces in his private collection.

Donation to The Smithtown Library

Richard H. Handley and his wife were both heavily involved in the community and supporters of the Smithtown Library. Both are listed in the Library Association’s (1908) First Annual Report as annual members (p. 6). It is likely that their early involvement influenced the decision to move his private collection to the Smithtown Library. Mr. Handley expressed his love for his collection and his wish to pass it down to his children. It may be safe to speculate, due to the value of the collection, that his family felt that the best way to honor Mr. Handley’s wishes was to donate his prized collection to an institution that they trusted. It is clear the Smithtown Library played a part in the Handley family’s life and above all else, it was an excellent way to honor the life of Richard H. Handley.
HISTORY OF THE HANDLEY COLLECTION

First Annual Report

September, 1907, to June 30, 1908

The Library Association of Smithtown

First Annual Report

The first annual report of the Trustees of the Library Association of Smithtown comes to you with a record of successful achievement and with grateful acknowledgment of hearty support by the public. It gives the trustees pleasure to submit a brief statement of the work which has been done, of the present condition of the library, and of its needs.

The first appeal for books and funds was made in September, and the library was opened on November 30, 1907. Since that date the library has been open for three hours in the afternoon every Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday.

The library contains 1,506 volumes. The works of fiction number 68; the remainder are standard works of Travel, History, and Biography, Natural Science, Art, and General Literature. The number of persons borrowing books in July 1, 1908, was 60. The circulation for the last seven months may be summarized by months as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Adults</th>
<th>Fiction</th>
<th>Juveniles</th>
<th>Total</th>
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<tr>
<td>Nov, 1907</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>55</td>
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<tr>
<td>December</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>264</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>362</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January, 1908</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>243</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>377</td>
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<tr>
<td>February</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>278</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>329</td>
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<td>March</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>351</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>480</td>
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<td>April</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>339</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>447</td>
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<td>May</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>245</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>494</td>
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<tr>
<td>June</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>226</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>355</td>
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Dividing the total number of books borrowed by ninety-two, the number of days that the library was open, we find a daily
When the private collection was first given to the library, it was on loan. In November of 1921, Mrs. Handley, along with her son, wrote a letter to the trustees explaining her intentions:

To the Trustees of the Smithtown Library:

   My son Robert Handley and I are very glad to make an indefinite loan to the Library of our collection of Long Island books and pamphlets. On account of their importance as a collection, and their financial value – we request that none of the books – pamphlets – or paper be taken from the Library and that access to them be given by the Librarian.

Mary L. Handley
Robert K. Handley

(M.L. Handley & R.K. Handley, 1921, p. 1)

The collection was later bequeathed to the library in a letter written by Mrs. Handley:

To the Trustees’ of the Smithtown Library:

   We have decided to give to the Smithtown Library, the collection of Americana, as a fitting memorial to Richard H. Handley.

   Very truly,

   Mary L. Handley

Consent of-

Mary E. Woodard
Robert Handley
Nada H. Seaman
Hildegarde H. Hold

(M.L. Handley, n.d., p. 1)
Mrs. Handley made a special request for the collection in a letter to the trustees, dated April 2, 1926:

To the Board of Trustees of the Smithtown Library:

I desire to have a guarantee from your board that the Library of Americana presented to the Smithtown Library, will be held always as a memorial to Richard H. Handley.

I have left in my will the sum of twenty-five hundred dollars. The Interest of which, I think, will take care of the necessary expenses.

Very truly yours,

Mary L. Handley

(M.L. Handley, 1926, p. 1)

These letters permanently donated the collection to the library at the request of Mrs. Handley with the consent of her children. On April 17, 1926, the board, by unanimous vote, directed their secretary to write a letter to Mrs. Handley where they promised to keep the Long Island Collection of Americana intact as a memorial and as soon as possible move it to a fireproof vault (Turrell, 1952, p. 55). There were 800 books and 1200 manuscripts in the collection at the time of its donation (Harris, 2012, para. 2).
The Handley Collection at The Smithtown Library

Mission

Today (2015), the Long Island Room has approximately 8,400 books, 200 boxes of archival and manuscript materials, 750 maps and also includes atlases, photographs, paintings, postcards, posters, scrapbooks, account books and microfilm. (The Long Island Room, n.d., General Information: Scope section, para. 1). The collection and the Long Island Room reading room are located on the lower level of the Smithtown Library building. The reading room houses some of the collection’s secondary resources, has a locked display case for small exhibits and is available for collection research. The continued commitment to the preservation of Richard H. Handley’s legacy is best described in its mission:

The Long Island Room is committed to identifying, collecting, managing, preserving and making accessible materials of enduring value that relate to the settlement, history and culture of Long Island, with a special emphasis on Smithtown and the surrounding region. Collection areas encompass history, geography, biography, genealogy, art, literature, the environment, science and religion. Since the Long Island Room is a paper-based archives the collection's main focus is on materials such as primary
documents, local family and business records, scrapbooks, manuscripts, rare books, maps, atlases, photographs, postcards, newspapers, posters and the like. These materials, as well as a variety of secondary sources are available to the patrons of the Smithtown Library and outside researchers. In addition, the Long Island Room strives to heighten the local community's awareness of its resources through a broad range of outreach efforts that include exhibits, programs, digitization projects, oral history recordings and coordinated research projects with other local institutions. (The Long Island Room, n.d., General Information: Mission section)

The collection remains a memorial to Richard H. Handley. In addition, the request for a non-circulating collection viewed under librarian supervision is still maintained.

Collection Development

From the beginning, collection development has occurred mainly through donation. (C. Zatyk, personal communication, November 17, 2015). A formal collection development policy was recently drafted and is currently being reviewed. In the meantime, certain restraint is practiced in accepting donations. Particularly, the Long Island Room does not usually accept multiple copies of items, looks for items in good condition, considers space issues and makes sure the item supports its mission (C. Zatyk, personal communication, November 17, 2015).

One recent addition is a collection of materials related to the history of Blue Jay Market. Blue Jay Market was a grocery store founded in Smithtown that later expanded into multiple stores throughout Suffolk County, New York and was eventually purchased by the prominent King Kullen chain (C. Zatyk, personal communication, November 24, 2015). The collection was donated by the founder’s daughter and son-in-law in May of 2012 (C. Zatyk, personal communication, November 24, 2015). This is an important piece in the archive
because it shows that community members value the collection and trust it to preserve their precious family history.

(“Photograph of first Blue Jay Market store located in Smithtown, New York,” 1929)

Cataloging and Organization

The original cataloging of the collection was completed while it was still in the Handley home. Around 1920, Smithtown Library librarian, Cornelia Peek, cataloged the collection by hand, classifying it by subject, creating guides and then shelving the items using the Dewey Decimal system (Leonard, 1965, p. 43). In 1956, the collection was re-cataloged, again using the Dewey Decimal system along with subject cards that depicted title, author, subject and object description (Leonard, 1965, p. 43-44). Eventually, the catalog of books was moved online, still using the Dewey Decimal system. Mrs. Zatyk says that the book collection is well-cataloged; however, the cataloging for other archival materials in the collection, done by series and subject, is an ongoing project (personal communication, November 24, 2015). The current organization makes it difficult to find items and the labeling of boxes and files is inconsistent. Some items are left loose and do not have series, box or file assignments. Part of the challenge with cataloging the collection is that it is made up of rare and unique items, all of which require
Lack of organization has been an ongoing issue with the collection. Miss Hyle, now former library director, said in an interview done in 1965 that the cataloging could be more thorough and she hoped to accomplish that when time allowed (Leonard, 1965, p. 44). It seems that time did not allow for reorganization, and in the 1990s, the collection fell into a state of deterioration. This was largely due to the rapid growth of the collection. Vera Toman, now former Long Island Room librarian, said they were out of space and had been since the 1970s (Paquette, 1994, para. 6). Rare and valuable materials were kept in boxes on the floor, or jammed tight on shelves and historical files were piled high on top of each other (Paquette, 1994, para. 5). All of this caused a severe safety concern for the documents leaving them subject to potential fire and other damage. The fact that the collection continued to grow, even in these poor conditions and that community members cared enough to draw attention to it, enough to warrant an article in *The New York Times*, is a testament to how much it meant to the community.

The renovation in 2011-2012 is an example of how the handling of the collection has improved since 1994. Before the renovation, every single item was removed from the special local history archive and every single item was handled and carefully packed in order to protect its contents and ensure future use (C. Zatyk, personal communication, November 24, 2015). It took several months to unpack and organize and since completed, it is stored in a climate-controlled vault with file storage. The Long Island Room held a grand reopening in June of 2013, and the Smithtown Library (2013) advertised the event in the *Kings Park Patch* stating the evening would include an overview of the collection’s history, an opportunity to view the collection’s most remarkable pieces and an opportunity to listen to featured speaker, Smithtown
Town Historian, Brad Harris (para. 1). The event had a great turnout, with an estimate of over 100 attendees, who all came to support the collection.

*Information Services*

Over the years, the Long Island Room has advertised various hours of operation, when patrons could visit and obtain information services. For example, in a letter written to Miss Peek on September 8, 1922 by A.J. Wall, it says that the collection was open three days a week (p. 1). Visitation hours between the mid-1920s and the mid-1950s are unknown, but were likely by appointment. In 1957 the room operated on Saturdays from 9 am - 5 pm (Leonard, 1965, p. 21). As demand for the collection increased, so did the hours of operation. A handwritten note from a Long Island Room librarian says that in 1969, the Long Island Room opened for 35 hours per week (as cited in Leonard, 1965, p. 21). The hours changed again in 1988 where a flyer shows operating hours as being Tuesday, 1 - 5 pm and 6 - 9 pm, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday from 10 am - 1pm and 2 - 6 pm and on Saturday from 9 am - 1 pm and 2 - 5 pm (The Smithtown Library, 1988, p. 1). In 2015, the reading room operates on the same schedule as the main library. However, due to staffing, appointments are strongly recommended to view rare materials. This makes it more efficient for both the librarian and researcher. Information services begin at the time the appointment is made, when the Long Island Room librarian will inquire about the type of research being conducted and pull related materials from the collection prior to the appointment. Further discussion and document retrieval occurs during each appointment.

Traditionally, a librarian has been designated to the Long Island Room to manage the collection and provide information services. Often times, the Long Island Room librarian managed the collection in addition to being required to assist with the main library
duties. Cornelia Peek, head of the library, managed the collection in addition to her regular duties “until July 1, 1944 when she retired to become Library Emeritus in charge of the Long Island collection” (Turrel, 1952, p. 47). Other notable heads of the Long Island Room include Mr. Rufus Langhans, appointed in 1957, and Ellis Barnes, appointed in 1969, who both increased access through increasing operating hours (handwritten note, as cited in Leonard, 1965, p. 21). Mr. Curtis Garrison, head of the Long Island Room in the 1970s, improved the arrangement of the vertical files (Diamondstein, 1977, p. 1). In 2015, The Long Island Room has two dedicated librarians. Caren Zatyk is the head of the Long Island Room, a post she took over from her predecessor in 2015. She receives assistance from a newly hired librarian and a part-time clerk. In addition to collection duties, the librarians are required to serve a certain amount of time on the general reference desk (C. Zatyk, personal communication, November 24, 2015).

The Long Island Room “is recognized as one of the most important local history collections on Long Island and its staff regularly welcomes researchers of all kinds” (The Long Island Room, General Information: History section para. 3). For many years, the information services were done in-person or through letter correspondence. If a person was interested in visiting the special archival collection, they would write a letter to the head librarian and arrange a time to visit. The same was done for reference inquiries. The librarian would then begin a correspondence with the researcher. The Long Island Room remains a popular destination for genealogical research as well as academic pursuits with reference questions that come from all over the world. Interestingly, some recent reference requests have come from women trying to prove their heritage in order to join the Daughters of the American Revolution (C. Zatyk, personal communication, November 17, 2015).
Perhaps how the collection has been utilized since its donation was best described by Curtis Garrison in an interview published in *Whisper’s Tale*, the former library newsletter, when he was head of the Long Island Room. He said that users “learn what individuals, families, and villages of eastern Long Island were like one or two centuries ago, or in recent times” (Diamondstein, 1977, p. 2). People “come to check references or to see if their house is historic; others to search elusive ancestry; and there are frequent researches carried on by students into such topics as the whaling industry, the Island’s geology, the origin of its decorative arts, shellfishing, Washington’s spy system, and scores of other subjects” (Diamondstein, 1977, p. 2).

Various technologies have improved information services over the years. A simple phone call or email can be sent to schedule an appointment with the Long Island Room librarian. Questions can also be asked by phone or email. More importantly, information about the collection, like how to make an appointment, basic historical data, photos of Mr. Handley and his estate, the mission and online catalog can all be found on the Long Island Room’s website. Photocopying and digital photography are permitted for many of the items and allows users to continue their research at home or conduct research from a remote location. The librarian will also scan items that are not too fragile upon request. Time is limited in the Long Island Room, and these electronic services allow more time for improving the collection and make research more efficient. Even though copies are permitted for personal research and reference, permission is required for publication.

Exhibits and programs are a large part of providing information services for the Richard H. Handley Collection of Long Island Americana. Items are displayed by theme in locked glass cases in and around the reading room. Programs and displays increase traffic and allow the
public to view items without making an appointment, advertise the collection and help patrons feel connected to the community and library. One of the more recent exhibits celebrated the 350th anniversary of the Town of Smithtown. A documentary film screening about the Manor of Smithtown was held on December 10, 2015 as a supplement to the year-long exhibit (The Long Island Room, General Information: Programs section, para. 2).

*Looking to the Future*

Future goals of the Long Island Room include developing policies, creating an online library, organization and collection growth. Recently, a collection policy was written but is still being reviewed by the board of trustees (C. Zatyk, personal communication, November 17, 2015). Once the policy is approved, the hope is to create more detailed finding aids, improve organization of the archival material in the collection and invent a cataloging scheme for those items. The Long Island Room is looking at electronic databases, specific to archives and museums that will help with cataloging these types of materials (C. Zatyk, personal communication, December 4, 2015). As it is now, it is sometimes difficult to find certain items. A new cataloging system will help with this issue. Another hope is to digitize the collection, scanning items to make them viewable on the Long Island Room website (C. Zatyk, personal communication, December 4, 2015). This will hopefully improve remote access, basic reference services for the collection and allow more time for improvements. Exhibits and programs will continue and a maritime exhibit has already been planned for 2016 (C. Zatyk, personal communication, November 24, 2015). It seems the overall goal for the future of the Richard H. Handley Collection of Long Island Americana is to improve accessibility.

*Conclusion*

Special archives like the Richard H. Handley Collection of Long Island Americana play
an important role in the community. It not only allows researchers to trace their heritage, complete special projects or conduct academic research, but perhaps it inspires them to take time to take a photo or make a scrapbook of their own. Maybe one day those items will be added to the Long Island Room. The archive remains true to Richard H. Handley’s legacy and his love of Long Island by sharing his knowledge, pride and sense of belonging to others in the Smithtown community and beyond. The dedication to the improvement of the collection and the continual receipt of donations shows that this collection is valued and respected and will continue to honor the Handley family for years to come.
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[Photograph of Richard H. Handley and family]. (ca. 1905). Richard H. Handley...
Collection of Long Island Americana, The Smithtown Library, Smithtown, NY.


Works Consulted


Harris, B. [S Weber]. (1986). Smithtown history with Brad Harris [Video file]. Retrieved from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R0GRFH_CnFk
On Friday, May 24, 2019, Ms. Caren Zatyk, head of the Long Island Room, kindly provided an update on The Richard H. Handley Collection of Long Island Americana during an in-person interview. The interview revealed the many goals that have been achieved since this paper was originally written in 2015 and are detailed here.

The Long Island Room recently implemented PastPerfect Museum Software, allowing the library to simultaneously catalog and digitize archival materials, improving accessibility for both library staff and patrons. This ongoing work has led to improvements on the Long Island Room website which now provides an archival catalog, finding aids and images of archival materials. The goal is to encourage users to visit the Long Island Room by providing a sample of what they can find in the physical collection and exhibits.

A collection development policy was approved on November 17, 2015 by the library’s board of trustees and has been instrumental in maintaining the rules and guidelines of the Long Island Room. The streamlining of internal forms has also proved effective and a formal system is now in place for researchers requesting to use images of archival materials in their published work.

In addition, staffing has expanded and Ms. Zatyk now works with two full-time librarians and a part-time clerk. The Long Island Room librarians worked hard on the 2019 Long Island Room Program Series, *Long Island Innovators and Inventors*, and, impressively, were loaned items from the Tesla Science Center for the coordinating exhibit. They are also working on an ongoing veterans oral history project, beginning with WWII, and interviews and photographs can be found on the Long Island Room website.

In readying this paper for publication certain adjustments were made. This includes the
addition of photographs provided by Ms. Caren Zatyk and the Long Island Room to visually
enhance the reading experience. In addition, the piece published in 2015 referred to the library
system as The Smithtown Special Library District, as it was known at the time. However, it is
now known as The Smithtown Library and the paper has been updated to reflect its current
status.

The Richard H. Handley Collection of Long Island Americana at the Smithtown Library
continues to evolve and remains an integral piece to the preservation of the history of Long
Island, New York.