

BOAT BASIN BULLETIN

Issue 15

All the news that floats we'll print

December, 2013

Quandaries (continued)

Ed Bacon
S/Y Prelude

The major quandary for Basin boaters is that no one knows what Parks Marinas management's (Nate and Seth) plans are for the Basin. Will Parks continue to run the Basin? Will an RFP be issued for a concessionaire to run the Basin? Was the Basin's future discussed in Parks portion of the mayoral planning process? Will the Basin boaters, the facility's users, ever be included in the planning process?

The infrastructure quandary: After 37 years of telling the boaters that the disposal of the mud is too expensive, will Parks ever dredge the Basin? Will Parks restore the infrastructure protection – A Dock, the outboard ice breakers and dolphin, the southern ice protection, and the wave wall whalers? What are the plans to retard the weakening and movement of the fixed docks as the marine borers enjoy their fixed feast? Will Parks just allow the infrastructure to deteriorate until sometime in the future a new A Dock public pier overlooks a mud flat with rotting pilings?

Following issues of BULL will continue with more quandaries.

Anyone else with Basin pictures? Articles? News? Problems? E-mail them to allnycyachts@gmail.com and I'll publish them in a future issue.

This newsletter is being distributed to over 350 Basin boaters, Basin waiting list members, Basin alumni, Basin friends and Parks.

The 14 past issues of this newsletter are on iboatnyharbor.com

If you don't want to receive these newsletters, please reply with "Unsubscribe" in the subject line.

-ED-

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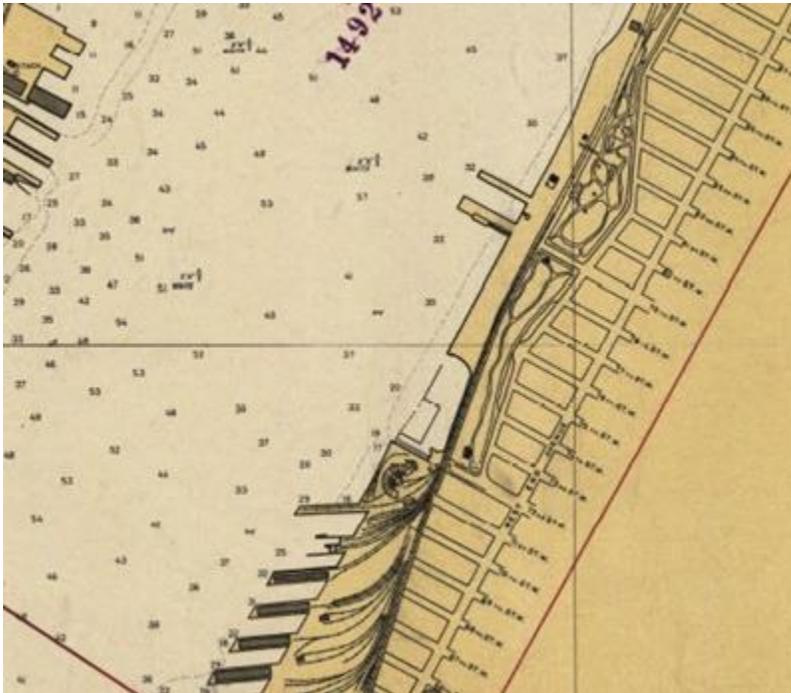
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PAST

The past...is a much better teacher about the properties of the future than the present.

- From "Antifragility" by Nassim Taleb

Pre - Basin

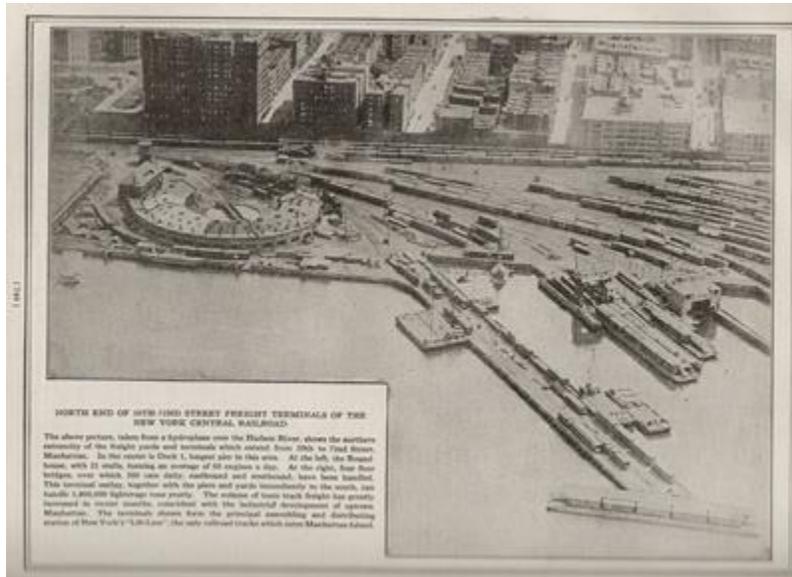


From a 1924 U.S. Coast and Geodetic Survey chart:

The railroad was still exposed. There was no West Side Highway. There was a pier at the end of W. 79th Street and another pier at W. 80th Street.

A shallow bay or marshy area extended in to the railroad tracks from 75th Street to 72nd Street, the current location of the running track and southern baseball field. This area was probably filled when Moses built the West Side Highway over the tracks. See [Issue 1](#).

The freight yards, now Riverside Park South, are shown at the bottom of this chart.



From railroad.net - North End of 59th – 72nd Street Freight Terminals of the New York Central Railroad (now Riverside Park South)

The railroad box cars would not fit through the Hudson River passenger train tunnels. To move box cars across the river into Manhattan, they would have to be tugged across the river on a car float such as the barge shown off the long Dock 1 (now replaced with Pier 1). The gantry (now a landmark) south of Dock 1 would match up the car float tracks to the land tracks at various tides to unload the cars. The docks were built at an angle to the shore to enable the cars to make the turn in a limited space to merge onto the main north/south tracks which are now below the Trump buildings.

Steam engines did not function well in reverse. The roundhouse turntable (currently the soccer field) on the left would turn around the engines.

Boat Basin History:

From the Hudson Harbor Preservation Association (HHPA) files, we find that some things still remain true.....



.... and some do not.



79TH ST MARINA

January 1997

GOALS:

It is the Parks Department's goal to restore and operate the Marina as a functional recreational and residential facility that is revenue producing. It will serve as Manhattan's front door for boaters from all over the world and provide marina services to our neighbors and other New Yorkers. Slips will be available for year-round vessels, summer only vessels, transient boaters, sailing classes, hand powered vessels, tour and educational vessels. We will operate the marina with industry standard rules and permits. All new vessels must be registered, insured and equipped with sewage holding tanks. We will charge rates slightly below the market for new permits. After dredging the rates will increase to market rates.

No existing year round permit holders, who pay their dockage and comply with the terms of the dockage permit, will be forced to leave the marina. We will continue to upgrade the facility to provide amenities for their use including sewage pump out facilities, improved electrical distribution, improved dock lighting, and new security gates. Their rates will increase gradually and eventually reach the market rate when we dredge the marina.

We will continue to improve the marina for recreational and residential use. We have to find the funding to dredge and construct restrooms if we want to operate a first-class marina worthy of the capital of the world. We must dredge the marina to be functional. At low tide boats sit in the mud and cannot be operated except at high tide. The projected cost is \$2.1 million.

Even though the Basin hasn't been dredged in the 17 years since the above goals were announced, we're now paying not only market rates but well above market rates for year round marinas in the area. For example, it would be \$308/foot for a 40 foot boat at the Basin with parking whereas the same boat at Liberty Landing Marina would be \$232/foot with parking and a boatyard short haul included. We're paying at least 33% more.

Deaths

Lew Wood



From utsandiego.com

Lew, formerly of C, D and E Docks, died of kidney failure in California in August.

See [Issue 2](#), [Issue 7](#) and http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lew_Wood

The [NY Times obituary](#) commented on Lew's reporting of the John F. Kennedy assassination. According to the book "Cronkite" by Douglas Brinkley, Lew and his crew also filmed three key segments:

1. Dan Rather sent them to film the bloody surgery room where JFK had been taken.
2. After Lee Harvey Oswald was taken into custody, Lew interviewed and filmed Oswald's landlady at the boarding house.
3. Lew borrowed a pawn shop rifle similar to Oswald's rifle, fit it with a four-power telescopic sight, entered the book depository with his crew and from the same window (which was still open and accessible!), showed how easy it would have been for Oswald. As Lew said:

Some have questioned how Oswald could have fired three shots in such a few seconds. Remember, one round was already in the chamber of the bolt-action rifle. Once he squeezed off the first shot, he only had to bolt twice more. Take my word for it. It was an easy shot.

Walter Cronkite decided not to show the segments in respect for the Kennedy family.

Bill Tobin

From <http://brainstorminonline.com>

Bill, formerly of the Queen Mary and Britten on D Dock, died on December 7 in Marco Island, FL after a long bout with ALS, Lou Gehrig's disease. He was always on the water in his boats and would have had a difficult time in the current Basin waiting for a high tide to get his boat in and out of the slip.

Bill was an extraordinary entrepreneur and was named "Entrepreneur of the Year" by Inc. Magazine. In 2011 he published "*Confessions of a Compulsive Entrepreneur and Inventor: How I Secured Fifteen Patents, Started Ten Companies, and Became a Pioneer on the Internet*". The book is available on Amazon. For more information on his amazing career, see http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/William_J._Tobin and <http://www.williamjtobin.com/>

Bill is survived by his ex-wife Britt, daughter Kristina, son Brian and wife Maria.

Past Basin Celebrities

[Mario Puzo](#), [Rocky Graziano](#), and [Hugh Downs](#) kept their boats at the Basin in the 70's.

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PRESENT

The present is a rope stretched over the past. The secret to walking it is, you never look down.

– Sean Stewart

Quarterly Meetings - Quandary

It's been over 17 months since the last Parks Marinas / Basin Boaters "quarterly" meeting on July 19, 2012. One boater suggested that Parks Marinas management didn't mean four times a year but meant four times a century. Just in case that boater is right, let's start discussing the requests made by the boaters:

Fire safety

We said that fire safety had not been addressed by Parks Marinas management in recent years. No fire procedure had been posted or distributed since Greg Smith was the dockmaster. The last fire drill was over 15 years ago. Some dock fire extinguishers are missing. Few know how to run the portable pump. Chief Dockmaster Seth Goodwin was assigned to create a current fire procedure by Nate at the meeting. If this issue is not resolved soon, maybe our volunteer fire department should be reborn - a Phoenix rising from the ashes. [Sorry, couldn't resist it – Ed.]

Future issues of BULL will address the other issues and requests made in the first quarter century meeting.

Caroling

On Sunday, December 15, the Not Ready for Prime Time Carolers serenaded the Basin boats with holiday classics. Luckily, no one taped us.

The post-caroling party of boaters and Basin alumni was graciously hosted by Jan and Kazumi on their Alicia with her beautiful new teak and holly cabin soles installed by Colvin. Great potluck, great drinks and great company.

Security - Quandary

In the beginning of December, an intruder boarded a boat on D Dock in broad daylight. The boater was on board and told the intruder to get off the boat. When the intruder hung around D Dock, the boater called the dock office and one of the staff escorted the intruder out of the Basin. You may want to ensure your boat doors are locked when you're not on board.

Susie Karl

Susie of Maybelle of D Dock is stage manager for the new Broadway hit "A Gentleman's Guide to Love and Murder" at the Walter Kerr Theater. See <http://www.agentlemansguidebroadway.com/reviews.php> for the great reviews. Susie is listed as Susie Cordon on the Cast and Culprits page.

Tonia's circumnavigation

Tonia Lovejoy, who frequently crews on Jane Clegg's schooner J.F.S. Salignac of D Dock, is preparing for a circumnavigation on the 43' sailing vessel Makulu (Big Mama in Zulu). They will be running the [Beautiful Nations](#) online education project that will interface with over a million students. They could use some financial assistance and they have a backer who will match contributions dollar for dollar. See their *online fundraising campaign for the Beautiful Nation Project*. (<http://www.indiegogo.com/projects/beautiful-nation-project>)

Henry Terry's lawsuit

Henry Terry filed a lawsuit against the Boat Basin in United States District Court Southern District of Florida. The lawsuit addresses issues important to the Basin boaters and waiting list members: the Chief Dockmaster's judging seaworthiness and maneuverability of a vessel, transient slip rights vs permit holders rights, outlawing of houseboats and mooring and anchoring in the Hudson. For more details, see [Henry Terry Lawsuit](#)

Steve Knee's memorial service

On September 29, the service for Steve, formerly of C Dock and B Dock, was held on the charter yacht Eastern Star. Basin boaters, location scouts, school classmates and other friends joined his widow Susie in celebrating Steve's life. Thanks to Nick and Laurie of the Eastern Star and to Parks Marinas for accommodating the Eastern Star.

Legal fees - Quandary

One of the quandaries of communicating with Parks Marinas management when new rules and rates are announced from behind the Wizard of Oz curtain to us munchkins is that Parks has a contingent of lawyers available to them at no cost. We have to pay for our lawyer.

When we challenged the last Parks rules changes and rates increases last year, there was general agreement that we needed legal representation. Norman Siegel was hired and represented us through the confrontation with Parks.

Several requests for donations for the legal fees have been made to the Basin boaters and alumni. Twenty-nine of your boater neighbors responded with donations. The average donation was \$255. At this time, we still owe \$550 in legal fees. You should contribute. You benefited by your neighbors going to bat for you. See [Issues 11, 12 and 14](#).

You can either pay by check made out to "Ed Bacon" or if you need a legal name for a tax deduction, make out the check to "Siegel, Teitelbaum and Evans". The check may be hand delivered to the Prelude on C Dock or mailed to:

Ed Bacon
W. 79th St Boat Basin - #55
NYC 10024

Thank you to all the boaters, Basin alumni and Basin friends for your past support.

Recent Basin Celebrities

[Pete Seeger](#), [Henry Kissinger](#), [Happy Rockefeller](#), [Bill Evans](#)

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PFUTURE

Times and conditions change so rapidly that we must keep our aim constantly focused on the future. – Walt Disney

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Restoration of services announced

As the New York Post reported in its August 5, 2012 issue:

Nate Grove, senior manager of the Parks Department's marinas, claims the rent hike is necessary to maintain and repair the piers.

Now that the Basin has become the most expensive year-round marina in the metropolitan area at \$308/foot for a 40 foot boat with a parking space, Nate Grove, Senior Manager of Marinas and Seth Goodwin, Chief Dockmaster, have agreed to restore the services that boaters had before the rate increases:

- Ice machine
- Clothes dryer
- Garbage dumpster and recycling bin
- Adequate dock repair supplies, e.g., cleats
- Non-skid strips for ramps
- Debris-free slips and fairways
- An A Dock replacement (start date of June, 2013 was announced and missed)
- The wave wall whalers or beams that were stowed on the head of C Dock for over a year and were then swept away by Superstorm Sandy.
- A contract to install the whalers before a Black Swan ice flow rips out the wave wall facing planks.
- Salting of docks before the first snowflakes.

Parting proverb

Winter is nature's way of saying, "Up yours."
- Robert Byrne

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