



the Ken Chronicles

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are published quarterly, on or about the first of the months of February, May, August, and November by Ken Bausert.

As the name implies, it's all about me... my life, travels, opinion and philosophy.

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Number 65 - November, 2022 - PDF Version

Welcome to my latest Chronicles. This was supposed to be released November 1st, but I had it finished early so I'm setting it free in October. It's just as well, since my February issue is usually released early too, due to me flying down to Florida for the winter during the first week in January.

What's new? The pandemic seems to be lightening up and the war in Ukraine rages on. We had a brutally hot and humid summer here on Long Island; our air conditioners got a real workout. Trump is in the news every day, either for the "Classified Papers Caper," his "Foundation's Scamming Escape," or his link to the prosecution of rioters at the Capital on December 6th.

Traffic in the New York Metro area (including Long Island) has been the worst I've ever seen, but not just during rush hour. I believe one of the main reasons is the fact that so many people are working from home (or not working at all) allowing them to be on the roads instead of in the office (or wherever they used to go), causing so many more cars on the roads during non-rush hour times. Getting through the Bronx, to go up to see our son (upstate NY) or our daughter (in CT) has been a real nightmare. The Bronx River and Hutchinson River Parkways, as well as Interstate 95, all have construction projects. Plus, both the Throgs Neck and Whitestone Bridges (from Long Island to the Bronx) have each had a lane closed due to construction for many months.

Okay, enough complaining; on with the show!

— Ken

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The Cover:

FRONT: Lower Manhattan, from the Circle Line. (photo © 2022 by Ken Bausert)

BACK: Window poster at a local Taco Bell location (photo © 2022 by Ken Bausert)

"What the herd hates most
is the one who thinks differently.
It is not so much the opinion itself,
as the audacity of wanting to think for themselves,
something they do not know how to do."

— Arthur Schopenhauer
(German philosopher, 1788–1860)

Input & Feedback

24 May, 2022

Ken,

Thanks for the latest Ken Chronicles!

LOL – the old wooden folding chairs (see tKC #63) remind me of the battle Snoopy has with one of them in the Thanksgiving show!

Here are a couple more from us!

Laura (Trenton Free Public Library)

July 28, 2022 via email

Hi Ken,

I took out the printer head on the machine you gave me and gave it a good cleaning. This improved things a bit, but after 20-30 copies it would start spitting out blank pages again. If I unplugged it I could get 20-30 more copies before blanks started coming out.

Then I took the printer head out of my old machine, thoroughly cleaned that and installed it in your machine. And now it works great! No more blank pages.

So, thank you very much. You saved me a few hundred dollars.

(I had given Steven my old ink jet printer, which wasn't working well for me, figuring he might be able to use it for parts since he has the same model Canon printer. I was right! – Ken)

I figured you'd enjoy hearing how I got the printer to work. Your fix-em-up articles are always some of my favorites. BTW, I really enjoyed the latest issue. I read The Power Broker in March 2020. Boy was that a bad choice. I enjoyed it very much, but it was very depressing, especially at a time when the pandemic was ravaging the city. For every bit of good Robert Moses did he did twice as much damage. Unfortunately I am reminded of this every day as I have to walk under the BQE on my way to work.

Hope your summer is going well.

Kind regards,

Steven Svymbersky, Quimbybookstorenyc@gmail.com

Dog days of summer (they are ruff! ha-hah) 8-2-22

Dear Ken!

Thanks for sending the last 2 issues – I got Covid again & my mail piled up...

Oh, how sad about your dad's guitar! So many good things die in basements; heartbreaking, especially when it comes to old instruments. It was probably worth a fortune and, of course, sentimental

tal value.

(I don't think it was worth very much money but, as you pointed out, the sentimental value was there. I thought about trying to repair it but it was too far gone. – Ken)

I would recommend planting bug repellent plants in your yard, not sure what your zone is – citronella, rosemary, geraniums, all are good for keeping away mosquitoes. Of course, feed a lot of birds who eat them. I rarely get bit anymore in my yard & it is hot and humid here most of the year, so we have our share.

*(We actually planted a bunch of mosquito-repelling varieties in the yard, but many of them have the side effect of attracting bees. I know bees are important pollinators but Ro is allergic to their sting so we didn't want anything close to the deck to attract them. I **did** place a couple of large potted mint plants around the gazebo, which are also supposed to repel mosquitoes, and I maintain several bird feeders. – Ken)*

Thanks for alerting me that Davida's new book is out – I will look for a way to order it.

I love the cover of tKC #64. We have a lot of places that look that way where I live (great photo!).

Christopher Robin, P.O. Box 2475, Hutchinson, KS 67504

2-August-2022

Hi, Ken,

Thanks for the newest Chronicles!

I've been noodling around the 1950 census too. Found where my dad lived with his first family. Doesn't really tell me too much though. Oh, well.

Here are a couple more zines from us (and one from our free shelf!)

Laura, Trenton Free Public Library

(Perhaps you might glom additional information if you could find him on the 1940 census which has more data than 1950. – Ken)

5 August 2022

Ken,

Since you mentioned Bill Graham (tKC # 63), do you remember the feud between infamous zinester Bob Block and Bill Graham? It was before my time, but it sounded pretty vicious, judging from the rumors. Or course, much of Block's life could be characterized as vicious.

Take care,

Jason Rodgers, Cobleskill, NY

(I had not heard about Bob Block – or his feud with Graham –

until your mention of him/it. I tried Googling their names together and could not find anything online about their feud. – Ken)

8/3/2022

Ken, the Undertaker,

While you, as the Undertaker, prepared me to ponder about People, Places & Things (that aren't there anymore) you opened with the quote from the fantastic Ruth Gordon that was her line in the Harold & Maude film. Every so often I watch that movie as a refresher course to misbehave. Time to pop some corn and open a box of tissue.

(Harold & Maude is my all-time fave film; I've been planning on rewatching it again in the near future as well. – Ken)

This may be the first time I've had mixed feelings about someone not there anymore. I think I'm aware of and recall Robert Moses from Fred's *Brooklyn!* as well. He constructed some beautiful stuff but what distracts from his work and troubles me as you pointed out, is he also displaced a lot of people in doing so.

It must have been fun musical times to hear your mom and dad play the ukulele and guitar. I once went to a fair specifically to hear a ukulele set. I forget the performer's name but you haven't lived until you've heard the ukulele versions of the Beatles, Beach Boys, Donovan and Every Mother's Son song, *Come Down to My Boat, Baby*. I enjoyed the US Census piece that actually produced a lot of fond memories and hot car photos. You could have taught those guys about adding a little more class to their cars by including a young lady in the photos.

Timely and great piece on *Playing With Fire*. Hopefully, those who read it will take note and get some cleaning done before the cool weather takes them by surprise. Hmm, after viewing the photo of you in your newly constructed gazebo, I suspect you'd look good dressed as a Chimney Sweep and do a promo/advertisement for the company that cleaned your chimney. They'd be booked solid for years. Of course, you'd have to exchange that cool beverage with a broom. Can't have a tipsy chimney sweep scampering on the roof.

Thanks for issue #64, very enjoyable read, historically and informatively.

DB Pedlar, 25727 Cherry Hill Rd., Cambridge Springs, PA 16403

9-1-2022

Ken,

Thanks so much for agreeing to trade. I'm looking forward to
(Continued on page 24)

People, Places & Things (that aren't there anymore)

Amos Hope was the owner of a Flying A gas station and repair shop, on 101st Avenue and 129th Street, back when I was a kid in 1950s Richmond Hill, NY. My father used to always bring his car to Hope's Service Station whenever it needed repairs or maintenance. My mom would drive over to get gas, have the oil checked, or to get air in the tires, with me in tow.

What I was unaware of at the time – and only learned when going through my old neighborhood listings in the 1950 US Census (released this past April) is that Amos lived just around the block from where his shop was located, with Carrie, his wife;



ABOVE: My initiation to the auto repair business: Mr. Hope teaching me how to check the pressures and put air in the tires on mom's '41 Chrysler, in 1952.

they were both 69 at the time. According to the census, Amos was born in Massachusetts, and his wife in New York.

Of further interest, I checked the 1940 census, and at that time, Amos was living at a different address – a few blocks away from his house in 1950 – but still just a short walk to his shop. Surprisingly, on the 1940 census, Amos' wife's name was Annie, age 56, born in Canada. It was noted that there were three children living at home: Janet, a 28 year-old daughter, and two sons: 24 year-old Ellsworth, and 17 year-old Amos Jr. According to the census, all the children were born in Massachusetts.

So it seems that between 1940 and 1950, Amos' wife Annie must have died (or they divorced), his kids moved out on their own, and he remarried and moved to a different house with Carrie.

Interesting!

Obviously, Amos has been dead for many years by now. Nevertheless, I remember him fondly and find it fascinating to be able to learn so much about the man that I never knew before, just from browsing the census records.

A White Castle once stood at 4353 Broadway, in Manhattan, at the corner of W. 186th Street. I found – and photographed – the picture of it (**right**) hanging on the wall of the White Castle on Sunrise Highway, in Lynbrook, which I visited recently. According to its caption, the Broadway Castle was the very first one in New York City, opened July 26th, 1930.

The Google Maps photo (**below**) shows the current view of that location, with the BP gas station and convenience store which presently occupy that property.



Ironically, there are several online sites that claim a different White Castle, at 550 E. Fordham Rd. (**Left**), in the Bronx, is the oldest Castle in NYC. It reportedly opened August 10th, 1930 – but has since been torn down and replaced by a *new* building (**Lower Left**).

Obviously, if the facts are correct, the Broadway Castle was the *first* in NYC. Irregardless, neither of the original buildings are still standing (although you *can* visit the *new* Bronx White Castle the next time you're in the area).



(Bronx White Castle photos found online)

Back in the 1970s, this 1969 Plymouth Satellite was our family car. I didn't buy it new, although I can't remember *where* I got it from. Working as an auto mechanic then, I often bought cars that were traded in to dealers in my area when they wholesaled them. It was a beautiful car, which my wife still chastises me for selling, but it had some weird problems.

It had a brake pull (car pulled to one side when applying the brakes) which I tried to fix by replacing the brakes and resurfacing the drums, with no success. Eventually, I decided to rebuild the wheel cylinders (part of the hydraulic fluid system that activates the



brakes); it was then that I found one of the wheel cylinders had three rubber cups in it (supposed to only be two). I don't know if it came from the factory that way or a previous owner rebuilt the cylinder wrong, but that caused the brakes on that wheel to not activate properly, causing the car to pull to the other side.

The car also had a faint whining sound from the rear end at about 40 miles per hour; it didn't bother Ro but drove me nuts! It didn't occur on the highway, where you're doing 55 or more, but in local traffic it was annoying. I opened up the rear differential assembly (containing the gears and bearings) and found nothing obviously wrong. I readjusted the backlash and reset the shims for bearing preload, all to no avail.

Finally, when a customer came into the shop where I was working and said he was looking for a used car, I offered him the Satellite. He bought it, never complained about the noise from the rear end, and I was happy to be rid of it.

In retrospect, I wish I still had that car. I love the style, and it had a great engine and transmission. I should have just bought an entire new rear end/differential assembly and I probably would have been rid of that damn whining noise at 40 miles per hour.



DIY Department (Replace a Floor Board)

As mentioned in previous issues of these Chronicles, Ro & I have had our share of termite problems. We currently have a Centricon bait station system installed around the perimeter of our house, garage and spa, so – hopefully – we won't be bothered by those little pests anymore.

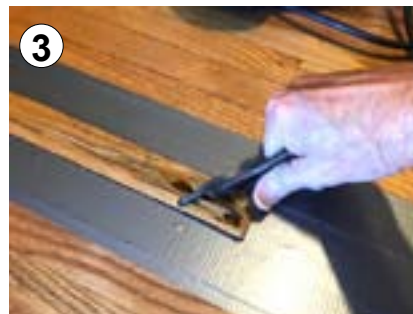
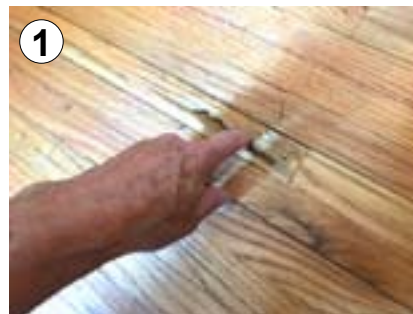
In the meanwhile, I'm still dealing with damage from previous encounters. The center of one of our hardwood floor boards in our living room had been eaten away, leaving only a thin veneer and the polyurethane finish on top. Luckily, it was under my piano so it wasn't easily visible and I had not noticed it for quite a while. I recently decided to replace that board (Fig. 1).

Termites are peculiar creatures; they'll eat away an entire piece of a hardwood floor board, leaving the boards on either side – or either end – totally untouched. The board I had to replace was 19-inches long and one end was against a wall, tucked under the base moulding. Because I wanted to put the new board under the base moulding as well, I decided to make the replacement with two pieces instead of one (easier to slide one under the base moulding and butt it up against the other new board). This also allowed me to retain the tongue at the end of the new board, to fit into the groove of the old one it was butting up against.

I had plenty of new hardwood boards (Fig. 2) left over from when we had a tile floor removed in our kitchen some years ago, and also when I built an extension onto our den. I always advise homeowners to save anything that they may have a use for in the future. It beats having to run around trying to locate something and paying more money for it later.

Work began by protecting the boards around where I was working with duct tape, and removing the damaged board. Because so much of it was eaten away, I was able to rip out a good part of what was left using a pair of pliers (Fig. 3). I then set my circular saw to the 3/4-inch depth of the board, and cut a groove (Fig. 4) down the middle of what was left. Using a hammer & chisel, and a screwdriver (Fig. 5), I removed as much as I could of the rest of the board; once I got a substantial amount hacked out, I was able to slide the rest of the board out from under the base moulding (Fig. 6). A few nails also had to be removed (Fig. 7); they were toed into the "tongue" part of each board back when the floor was originally installed.

Because the floor boards are tongue & groove, you can't just lay another board in place of the old one, you have to whittle down or remove completely the "tongue" and the bottom of the "groove" (Fig. 8) on the new board, so it will slip into its place. Our living room floor had been sanded and refinished twice over the past thirty years, so I also had to



belt sand some of the bottom of the new board off as well, so it wouldn't stick up higher than the surrounding boards.



My first piece was 4-inches long; I slipped it into place and back against the wall under the base moulding. I then cut the second piece to fit into the 15-inch void, but 1/4-inch shorter. This allowed me to place it into position and slide it 1/4-inch forward so its tongue fit into the groove of the old board it was butting up to. Then I just slid the 4-inch board 1/4-inch closer to the longer new board to butt up tight. When I was happy with the way everything fit, I removed the two new boards, cleaned and vacuumed the area to remove all dust and grit, and applied some liquid nails to the bottom and sides of the opening (because there's no way to toe nail the new boards in place, the way it's done when new). I then reinstalled the new boards, made sure they

were butted up tightly against each of the other floor boards, and put a heavy gallon can of paint (with extra weights on top) to hold it all down snugly until the adhesive set up (the next day).

The following day, I applied a coat of polyurethane to the new boards; it darkened them just enough that they blended in well with the rest of the floor. I imagine I saved at least a couple hundred dollars by doing the job myself, over hiring someone else to do it... plus it's a very gratifying feeling to accomplish a project like that.



Weekend In The City

Ro and I had been staying close to home during the past two and a half years of covid-19 (aside from spending four winter months in Florida, of course, but that's just a second "home"). So, by the time summer of 2022 rolled around, we were suffering from cabin fever and looking for someplace to go... to get away.

It helped that we drove upstate to see our granddaughter's new house, back in the autumn of 2020. And we had a wedding to attend near Philly, in Pennsylvania, last year; those provided a bit of a respite from the boredom of not traveling. Of course, we occasionally travel upstate to see our son and his family, and to Connecticut to see our daughter's family. But we were still looking for some kind of vacation destination; you know what I mean?

We were excited to learn that the children of an old high school friend of mine were planning a party for their parents' 50th wedding anniversary this past August. That was in Annapolis, Maryland, and – though I wasn't crazy about the 4 1/2-hour drive (my back doesn't take long car drives very well) – it turned out to be a fun long weekend. So, yes, that was like a mini-vacation.

While we were at the anniversary party, Ken S. Jr. (my high school friend, Ken S. Sr.'s oldest son) and his wife, Jocelyn, were talking with Ro and me. We were telling them that we had been looking for a place to get away but that hotel rates had risen so much during the pandemic that it was crazy expensive to go anywhere. We were thinking of the Jersey Shore, or a place on a lake in Maine; but, with our own wedding anniversary on August 28th fast approaching, we actually thought we might just spend a day in Manhattan; we hadn't gone into the city since July of 2021.

Ken and Jocelyn live in Manhattan, on the upper east side. Jocelyn suddenly said, "Hey! We're going to be away for more than a week starting on August 26th; why don't you and Ro come over and stay at our place while we're gone? Stay for the week if you want. You can even park your car in our assigned space in the garage under the building."

Well, this was quite a surprise! Ro and I looked at each other and I asked, "What do you think?"

Ro was a bit apprehensive; she feels kind of weird going to someone's house and staying there when they're not present. In the end, I convinced her to go and we took Jocelyn up on her offer.

We drove into Manhattan Saturday morning, August 27th. Ken and Jocelyn's condo is on 90th Street, between 2nd and 3rd Avenues. They had arranged for us to use their parking space but it seemed the ga-

rage attendant hadn't gotten the memo. After the confusion subsided, we were able to grab our bags, leave our car there, and go to the main desk to get the "extra" key (condo associations always keep a key to your place in a lock box, in case they need to get into your unit during an emergency). Once we got inside the 3rd floor condo, we got a key that Ken and Jocelyn had left for us, and brought the "extra" key back to the



desk.

We wasted no time getting out and exploring the city; we had never spent much time in the Yorkville section so it was a new experience for us. It's



primarily a residential area, but there weren't many people around since lots of residents leave the city on weekends. It was a beautiful day, with the sun occasionally hiding behind some clouds.

We walked four blocks west and entered Central Park. We were

in the area near the southeast end of the reservoir so we walked south along the perimeter trail, with a view across the water to the buildings on the opposite side. The park was crowded with walkers, bicyclists (on the streets within the park dedicated for them), and sun bathers on all the grassy areas. We've walked around the reservoir during past visits but decided to stick to the mostly shaded walkways on this hot and humid day, working our way south, down the eastern part of the park.

There were several musicians playing at various points along our walk – a sax player here, a guitarist over there. Another group of four were set up in a shady area so we sat on a bench listening to them play before leaving a couple dollars in their tip jar and continuing on our way.



We were planning on having lunch at Wo Hop's, in Chinatown, but it was way too far to walk on this particular day. We got out of the park at 68th Street and walked a few blocks east to catch the #6 subway down to Canal Street.

Chinatown was certainly crowded, although I've heard that the area – especially the restaurants – have suffered from a lack of business during the pandemic. Indeed, Wo Hop has cut its hours accordingly; they used to be open 24 hours a day. They're now open from 10:30 AM until 10 PM. We were happy to see some of the familiar waiters we've known for many years, and the food was as awesome as ever!

A stop at the Chinatown Ice Cream Factory was next, before walking up through Little Italy. We eventually caught the Q subway train back up north so

Above, top to bottom: spare ribs; Roast Pork Chow Fun (wide rice noodles with pieces of pork and some veggies, especially bean sprouts); & Chow Gei Kew (breaded chicken with assorted Chinese veggies in a brown sauce that we ask to have made "hot & spicy").



Above: Map showing the new Q subway line.

Below: Entrance to the 86th Street Q subway station.



I could finally check out the newly built Second Avenue Subway line, opened in 2017. North of Canal Street the Q train runs on the same tracks as the N, R, & W trains, but at 57th Street, the N, R, & W turn east toward Queens and the Q splits, goes north and curves to the east under Central Park before turning north again under 2nd Avenue. This is actually the closest train to Ken & Jocelyn's place so I was excited to ride a part of the subway system I had never been on before.

The next day, our friends Bob and Doris came into the city; we had planned to meet them for a cruise on the legendary Circle Line, which offers several different options. We booked the complete tour around Manhattan Island which takes 2 1/2-hours. Although Ro and I have cruised the Circle Line several times previously, it had been ten years since our last one and the city continues to change. Afterward, we had reservations for one of our favorite restaurants in the midtown area.

We again took the Q train, this time to the 42nd Street stop, then



walked west to the Circle Line pier at 43rd Street on the Hudson River. It was another hot and humid day, with full sun, so I had made sure to use some #50 sunblock

in preparation of sitting outside on the upper deck. We could have actually sat inside, where it's air conditioned, but the view is not nearly as good. We bought some cold drinks at the snack bar on the boat and enjoyed the very animated tour guide who knew a ton of stuff about New York City.

As we passed by the financial district around Wall Street, the guide pointed out that there has been only a 38% occupancy rate in those buildings, including the new Freedom Tower built after the twin towers fell in 2021. So, fully 62% of those buildings have been empty, partially as the result of many companies and people working from home since the Pandemic began.

Of course there are lots of photos I took while circling around the city but rather than fill up the rest of the pages in this issue with them, I'll save some for future issues.



After leaving the boat at the end of the cruise, the four of us walked over to 47th Street, between 7th and 8th Avenues, for a fabulous dinner at Trattoria Trecolori. We had enjoyed this restaurant on other visits to the city, usually before or after a Broadway show, and I was happy to see that it was still there, and still serving great food at reasonable

prices – especially for NYC!

After dinner, we ambled over to Times Square and stood amongst the multitude of tourists and local hustlers, gawking at the wildly animated and colorful multi-story ad-displays on the sides of the surrounding buildings. These are very similar to those new displays that all the ball parks have now, with computer generated graphics; I would love to know how all that is created!



By Monday morning, Ro and I were contemplating staying for another day or two or leaving for home. The weather was still projected to be very hot and humid, and we were still kind of apprehensive about getting tickets and sitting in a crowded theater to see a Broadway show. Our feet/legs were sore from all the walking we had done – we walked seven miles on Saturday alone! We were also sorry we didn't bring our better walking shoes or sneakers (I wore my FILA because they look "cool," but my New Balance would have given me better support.) We had bagel sandwiches from a local shop for breakfast and decided to go home afterward.

We bought a gift certificate for a nearby Sushi place that Ken & Jocelyn frequent, left it on their dining room table with a thank you note, packed up our things, and retrieved our car from the parking garage.

All in all, an awesome and memorable long weekend in the city.



Back to Brooklyn

They say you can never go back.

Of course you can *always* go back; just don't expect it to be as you remember it.... things change.

Our friend, Herb, was born and raised in Brooklyn, spent the first seven years of his life at 821 Halsey Street, back in the 1940s & '50s – in the Bushwick section. Oddly enough, my mom lived about four blocks away while she was growing up in the early 1900s. And I dated a few girls who lived in Bushwick; one (Jane) actually lived around the corner in 1960 from where my mom lived in 1920.

So, although Herb and I never knew each other when we were kids, we remembered a lot of the same things from our times in Bushwick, like the White Castle on the corner of Atlantic Avenue and Highland Place, and St. Michael's all-girls high school a few blocks away, south of Atlantic. I actually drove a few of my friends (who were in a singing group), there for a gig once – the headliner for that show was none other than Johnny Mathis! (I know, my younger readers are, like, "Johnny WHO?"). But when Herb told me he hadn't been back to see his old house in 60 years, I shouted, "ROAD TRIP!"

There were a few other places I wanted to show Herb when we went to Brooklyn this past summer, on a Saturday (to avoid rush hour traffic in the morning or evening on a week day). After exiting the Interboro Parkway (now called the Jackie Robinson Parkway) at Cypress Hills Street, I took him into Cypress Hills Cemetery. Strange place to bring your friend, right?

Well, most people (including Herb) are not aware that one of the highest points in Brooklyn is within the cemetery – appropriately on High Mountain Road. From that location in section 14 Herb was amazed that he could see all the way across Brooklyn to Jamaica Bay, the Rockaway Peninsula, and the Atlantic Ocean, some nine miles to the south.

A similar view can be had from Forest Park, a mile or two to the east; it's all due to the high ground that stretches from Brooklyn to eastern Long Island, part of a glacial moraine left over from the last ice age some 20,000 years ago. I stumbled upon this fact when I first started doing my genealogy research and found that several of my ancestors are buried in Cypress Hills. There are actually higher elevations in the northern sections of the cemetery but the views are not as good.

I next brought Herb to section 6 for a stop at the grave of Jackie Robinson, one of New York's adopted sons, and legendary Brooklyn Dodgers infielder, who broke baseball's color barrier back in 1947. He's buried only a stone's throw from the roadway that now bears his name.



ABOVE: The view, looking south across Brooklyn with a telephoto lens on my camera, from High Mountain Road, in Cypress Hills Cemetery. **BELOW:** The apartment towers in Rockaway as seen in a Google Maps screen shot from the actual location.



From the cemetery, we drove over to Halsey Street and – shockingly – I was able to find a parking space only a few doors away from the houses Herb spent the first ten years of his life in. Even more surprisingly, they were still standing and hadn't changed a bit since he lived there.

After having lunch at the Highland Place White Castle (previously mentioned), we stopped by some other places Herb remembered, or lived in after getting married and moving to Queens, not far from where I grew up. He was happy to see that all of the places he fondly remembered have been kept in great condition by subsequent owners. In that regard he was lucky; most people try to "go back" and are disappointed with what they find.



TOP: Google maps screen shot of Herb's childhood home (the family lived on one floor).



Left: Herb, at his old front door.



Above: Herb's second home, on the corner of Halsey Street & Howard Avenue.



Left: Visiting Jackie Robinson's grave in Cypress Hills Cemetery.



What I've Been _____ Lately:

READING (Zines; a sample):

I received *Shards of Glass in Your Eye* #17 (June, 2022) from Kari Tervo recently, a quirky assortment of material as usual. Kari delights in throwing all manner of odd subject matter at you: "A Meditation on Goat Cheese," "Construction Words That Sound Dirty," or "Problems of the Upper Middle Class" ("I don't remember the name of the restaurant where I just had the best seaweed garnish"), for examples. But I found her essay, "Love And Bowling Balls" in this issue to be extremely interesting and entertaining. I'm not sure if it really happened or if it was all in Kari's mind, but it was certainly well written and a fun read.

Available for \$3 cash (or possible trade – inquire) from Kari at: POB 7831, Beverly Hills, CA 90212.

Fred Argoff is a very busy guy, with any one of three zines being produced at any given time; *Watch The Closing Doors* #100 (! a milestone if there ever was one) arrived in the mail recently. This is another special theme issue, concentrating on "Blasts From The Past," things or places related to rail systems that no longer exist, or remnants of the past that hint of what used to be.

Subway mosaic tiles at one station don't seem to make sense to current riders because they're the initials of what that station was called before a name change many years ago; wooden subway cars that operated for over 100 years; and tracks that end abruptly, hinting of where the trains used to go, are just some of the subjects mentioned this time around. Lots of photos add to the enjoyment of an always fascinating collection of vignettes.

Subscriptions are still only \$10 cash for 4 issues; available from Fred at Penthouse L, 1170 Ocean Parkway, Brooklyn, NY 11230.

Billy McCall is another very busy guy, balancing any number of projects on his shoulders at any given time. He produces a monthly newsletter and a perzine called *Proof I Exist*; is collecting all his *Last Night At The Casino* zine issues into a bound volume; has just started a zine distro; and recently released *Behind The Zines* #14 to the market.

With contributions from an additional dozen writers or artists, this issue is packed with articles on the creative muse, photo zines, making zines on a budget, and long arm staplers, to cite just a few. If you'd like to submit something for a future issue, get in touch with him at IKnowBilly@gmail.com.

Use that same email to order this issue from Billy for \$3.

My son gave me **Stories of High Falls, Annual, Vol. V, 2019**, published by the High Falls Conservancy, a very zine-like booklet that I read recently. He thought I'd appreciate the numerous tales about people and the history of this small town, upstate New York, not too far from New Paltz. He was right!

In this issue, we read about Dick Davenport, an old-timer who was born and raised in High Falls, worked on his uncle's farm and in his family's grain & feed store, and how he met his wife, served in the army, and raised a family there. There's Sue Ellen Sheeley, who moved from New York City with her husband, Garin, to High Falls and eventually opened a Bed & Breakfast in the town. Otto Scherrieble is a retired tool & die maker, former Fireman for High Falls, and tells of all the antics he and his friends carried out as kids in the area.

There are plenty more tales that read just like a good perzine, and I like how, when mentioning a house or particular building from the past, they always mention where and what that building is today.

I enjoyed the booklet so much that on a recent visit upstate to see our son's family, Ro and I took our grandson, Baxter, and drove over to see the town of High Falls. I must admit, there's not too much to see as an outsider, but we *did* manage to visit the falls that give the town its name, just off Route 213 on the Rondout Creek.



Ed Kemp runs The Word zine distro out of his home in Jersey City but recently released three zines of his own focused on travel called, **Touring America**. The first chronicles his and NG's trip to the New England area to take in the fall foliage that draws visitors from far and wide.

The second was a highly entertaining story about visiting Punxsutawney, Pennsylvania, for the Groundhog Day festivities there. Ed writes about standing in the freezing cold before getting to see the big reveal: "5 AM -6 AM was probably the coldest and darkest hour of my life."

His recent trip to the Pacific Northwest, one of my personal favorite regions of our country, is covered in his third issue.

Visit theworddistribution.com for ordering info and prices.

(More of my zine reviews appear in each issue of Xerography Debt; for more information, contact Davida@leekinginc.com - Ken).



Updates, Oddities & Random Thoughts



During our visit to see our son's family, upstate NY, back in June, I found this tiny tree frog (about the size of my thumb) hiding under a folded over beach umbrella by the side of their deck. I moved one part of the umbrella just enough to get a few photos with my iPhone. Thankfully, he didn't get spooked and jump away.



On one of my morning walks during our time in Florida, I found this crow (*Left*) perched on top of a tree by a pond. Luckily, I had my camera with me that day.

Our son and daughter-in-law had a garage sale while we were visiting in June. We arrived to help and had brought along some things that we wanted to get rid of as well. One of the items they were selling was an iRobot.

Sherri had ordered her dad a large digital photo frame from Amazon awhile back - you know, one of those things that you upload photos to, and it displays them on a rotating basis. Instead, she received an iRobot (one of those vacuums that travel around your house, cleaning the floor). She never even got around to opening the box or calling the company to report the error, figuring that the iRobot was worth more than the picture frame anyway.

Neither her dad nor Sherri wanted an iRobot, however, so she put the thing out at the Garage Sale for \$50 - and though many people looked at the box, no one bought it that day. When the sale was over, Sherri told us to take it if we wanted it so we did.

After getting home, I figured I'd give the vacuum a try and proceeded to open the box to take it out. Imagine my surprise to find... a large digital photo frame packed inside of an iRobot box.



(Continued from page 4)

a new issue of TKC. Enclosed also is my sweetheart's first zine. Like a proud parent, I'm putting it in all my packages. Her contact info is in there if you want to reach out to her.

Ed Kemp (*Ed runs the Word Distro; contact him at 347 8th Street, Apt. 4, Jersey City, NJ 07302. My reviews of Ed's zines are on p 22. – Ken*)

(In keeping with my theme in the last issue of Things that are STILL there... Fred Argoff sent in the following. – Ken)

9-2-2022

Hi, Ken,

This is certainly an old postcard—one cent for domestic and two cents for foreign postage! Who ever heard of such a thing? But the detail that interests me the most is at the left side of the image.



Just about everyone takes that little columned structure to be a part of Prospect Park's design. But it's not. It wasn't there when Frederick Law Olmsted created the park. What is it? A trolley shelter (these days, so long after the trolleys in Brooklyn stopped running, we'd call it a bus stop). Certainly the fanciest one you may ever have seen, but a trolley shelter nonetheless. All of the ones around the perimeter of the park were designed this way.

They're all still here, too, except that nobody uses them as bus stops.

Fred Argoff, 1170 Ocean Pkway, Brooklyn, NY Penthouse L

E N D

Ken's Facts Of Life

When Anais Bordier saw a YouTube video of South Korean actress Samantha Futerman, who looked exactly like her,



she Facebook messaged Samantha and discovered they were both born on the same day. It turns out they were identical twins, separated at birth, and found each other through happenstance and social media.

— *weird-facts.org*