

BRONXBORO

Official Monthly Magazine of THE BRONX BOARD OF TRADE

(Name registered as a Trade Mark in the United States Patent Office.)

VOLUME VI

NOVEMBER, 1928

NUMBER 7

Gala Ceremonies Mark Completion of Alteration Work on High Bridge

With one of the greatest turnouts of civic and business organizations ever present at a Bronx event, the formal re-opening of reconstructed High Bridge to public use as a pedestrian bridge, and its return to the supervision of the Department of Water Supply, Gas and Electricity as an aqueduct, were observed on Saturday, October 27th, by exercises on the ancient bridge itself, followed by a luncheon at the Concourse Plaza Hotel.

The gala celebration, signaling the opening of the Harlem River to navigation by the largest vessels, through removal of the bridge piers from the channel, was held under the auspices of The Bronx Board of

Trade, in conjunction with the following organizations: The Bronx Rotary Club, The Bronx Lions Club, The Bronx Chamber of Commerce, Harlem Board of Commerce, Washington Heights Chamber of Commerce,



Photo Courtesy of New York "Times"

SOME OF THE THOUSANDS WHO ATTENDED THE HIGH BRIDGE CELEBRATION CEREMONIES



Commissioner Albert Goldman, Aldermanic President Joseph V. McKee, and Commissioner William J. Flynn, Chairman, at High Bridge Celebration.

Fordham Merchants' Association, Real Estate Board of The Bronx, The Bronx Building Industry League, The Bronx Taxpayers' Alliance, New York Tow Boat Exchange, N. Y. State Society of Professional Engineers and Land Surveyors, and N. Y. County Chapter, and Bronx County Chapter of the State Society of Professional Engineers and Land Surveyors.

Enthusiasm evidenced at the bridge ceremonies and at the luncheon fell only slightly short of that which marks a Bronx "Borough Day" celebration.

Speeches by numerous public officials, an impressive marine pageant which passed beneath the bridge, following the ceremonies on the bridge itself, and



Photo Courtesy of New York "Times"

The Fireboat "John Purroy Mitchell" stages an interesting and picturesque demonstration,

moving pictures at the luncheon showing the reconstruction work on the bridge, were only a few of the high lights that contributed towards making the event one that can be properly classed as "highly successful."

By the removal of the river piers of High Bridge, which, with its old Roman style of architecture, built in 1848, had been not only a barrier, but also a menace to navigation of the upper Harlem River, the way was made clear for the dredging work being done by the Federal Government which will give The Bronx a highly important waterway, and will afford a clear passage for commerce to the Hudson River, the Great Lakes and the Middle West.

This point was stressed in an address by Hon. William J. Flynn, Public Works Commissioner of The Bronx, and Chairman of the High Bridge Celebration Committee. In opening the ceremonies at the bridge, Commissioner Flynn said, in part:

"This is a red-letter day for The Bronx and the splendid response made by the many civic organizations of this and other Boroughs, shows that they are fully aware of the importance of the event. The Federal Government, in ordering the dredging of the Harlem River, refused to go ahead with the work unless the High Bridge piers, which had so long been an obstruction to river traffic, were removed.

"With their removal, which we celebrate today, traffic will soon have a clear way up to the Great Lakes and across to the West, and I believe that The Bronx is destined to become a great commercial center."

The Bronx Board of Trade played a most prominent part over a period of many years, in a campaign to have these channel-blocking piers removed. Hence its leadership in promoting the celebration.

The chief speaker at the bridge ceremonies was Aldermanic President Joseph V. McKee, who declared that although the reconstruction of High Bridge had been considered for a long time, "it took Commissioner Goldman to make a reality of the project."

"It is well, upon an occasion like this," said President McKee, "to reflect upon the progress we are

making in our home borough. During the present administration, over \$50,000,000 has been provided for physical improvements, this besides the annual budgetary allowances of nearly \$4,000,000 per year for ordinary expenses of maintenance and upkeep."

Going into detail on the improvements accomplished in The Bronx under the present administration, President McKee stated that since 1925, thirteen new elementary schools and three new high schools have been given to this borough. He also stressed the new bridges and hospitals that have been completed.

Other speakers at the bridge exercises included: Public Works Commissioner Joseph Johnson, of Manhattan, Plant and Structures Commissioner Albert Goldman and Deputy Commissioner of Water Supply, Gas and Electricity Albert H. Liebenau, of The Bronx who represented Commissioner John J. Dietz, whose department was officially presented with the reconstructed viaduct by Commissioner Goldman. Due tribute also was paid to Mr. Patrick T. Cox, contractor on the bridge alteration.

One of the features of the festivities on the bridge was the cutting of a ribbon separating The Bronx from Washington Heights. While sirens and whistles from the boats participating in the river parade shrieked, and the Department of Street Cleaning Band played, Aldermanic President McKee's 7-year-old son, Joseph, was given the honor of cutting the broad white ribbon that barred pedestrians' passage across the bridge.

Members of Boy Scout Troop No. 159 assisted the High Bridge Celebration Committee materially at the bridge exercises by distributing programs and making themselves generally useful in many ways.

Preceded by an escort of naval vessels, the river agent left 201st Street, and neared High Bridge just as Master McKee severed the white ribbon.

Leading the pageant was the City Flagship "Macom," in the bow of which the Fire Department Band played stirring airs. Mr. Eugene F. Moran, Chairman of the Pageant Committee, also was aboard the "Macom."

Following the "Macom" were the following vessels: Tug "Thomas E. Moran," Tug "Russell No. 3," Tug "Ethel Dailey," Tug "Bronx No. 4," Tug "Joseph Reichert," Tug "William E. Cleary," Tug "Bronx," Tug "McGuire Bros.," Tug "John D. Schoonmaker," Tug "William J. Dailey," and Launch "Speedway."

The final vessel in line was the Fireboat "John Purroy Mitchell," giving a continuous demonstration of its efficiency by throwing streams of water from bank to bank of the river, and as high as the bridge itself. It made a most beautiful sight, and aroused lusty cheers from the thousands of spectators.

Following the ceremonies on the bridge, and the river pageant, guests attending the luncheon were transported to the Concourse Plaza in buses provided through the courtesy of the Surface Transportation System. The program at the luncheon was opened by Miss Ada Kopf, effectively singing the "Star Spangled Banner." Chairman Flynn also presided at this event.

Although scheduled as the principal speaker at the luncheon, Mayor Walker was detained downtown and sent as his representative, Mr. Edward J. Stanton, his former Secretary.

In response to a big ovation from the assemblage, Commissioner Goldman modestly gave Bronx Borough officials and members of the Board of Estimate full credit for their work in bringing about the reconstruction of the viaduct.



P. & A. Photo, Courtesy of N. Y. "Daily News"

Master Joseph McKee, Jr., son of Aldermanic President Joseph V. McKee, cuts a silk ribbon, symbolizing the re-opening of High Bridge to public use. Grouped about him are the Aldermanic President; Public Works Commissioner Joseph Johnson, of Manhattan; Plant and Structures Commissioner Albert Goldman; President Frederick A. Wurzbach, of The Bronx Board of Trade; Public Works Commissioner William J. Flynn, of The Bronx, Chairman of the High Bridge Celebration Committee; and Executive Secretary Charles E. Reid, of The Bronx Board of Trade.

Touching upon the history of High Bridge, Commissioner Goldman said: "It was a memorable event when High Bridge was first completed and the Croton water brought over it, into the city. In the very early days the region of High Bridge was a recreational point to which outings were made by boat from the lower part of the city by way of the East and Harlem Rivers.

"Later came the beautiful Speedway along the West side of the Harlem River, which for a long time was limited to light horse drawn vehicles. However, with the great increase in the use of automobiles, special enactment of the Legislature was obtained to open the Speedway to passenger motor vehicles.

"I believe that the appearance of the reconstructed bridge, in addition to its use for carrying water and furnishing passageway for pedestrians, has warranted the outlay of funds required for the preservation of the span. In my opinion the work reflects great credit upon the engineers of the Department of Plant

and Structures and upon the contractor who remodeled the bridge."

Mr. Frederick A. Wurzbach, President of The Bronx Board of Trade, made a brief address in which he stated that only by the co-operation of all civic and business organizations in The Bronx can any big improvement be accomplished.

"There is enough work in The Bronx and enough credit for all," Mr. Wurzbach declared. "We have gotten as far as we are today by presenting a united front and if we continue this policy, there is little doubt that our great borough will be the better for it."

Mr. Logan Billingsley, President of The Bronx Chamber of Commerce, complimented all of the public officials through whose efforts the reconstruction of High Bridge was accomplished.

Corporation Counsel George P. Nicholson also made a brief address in which he paid tribute to the importance of The Bronx and the co-operative spirit among its civic organizations.

The invited guests at the luncheon, in addition to the Chairman and those who addressed the gathering, included: Hon. Joseph V. McKee, President, Board of Aldermen; Hon. Henry Bruckner, President, Borough of The Bronx; Hon. Edward A. Byrne, Chief Engineer, Department of Plant and Structures; Hon. Joseph Johnson, Commissioner of Public Works, Borough of Manhattan; Hon. Arthur S. Tuttle, Chief Engineer, Board of Estimate and Apportionment; Hon. Albert H. Liebenau, Deputy Commissioner, Department of Water Supply, Gas & Electricity; Hon. John J. Leich, Assistant Commissioner of Public Works, Queens; Hon. Peter J. McGowan, Secretary, Board of Estimate; Mr. J. Conrad Scheider, President, Washington Heights Chamber of Commerce; Mr. Edward von der Horst Koch, Former President, Harlem Board of Commerce; Mr. Fred. W. Russell, President, Moran Towing Company; Mr. Moe Stein, President, Fordham Merchants' Association; Mr. John Kadel, President, Bronx Rotary Club; Mr. Joseph Coghlan, President, Bronx Lions Club; Mr. Frank W. Kipp, President, Bronx Real Estate Board; Mr. Patrick T. Cox, President, P. T. Cox Contracting Corporation; Mr. Thomas F. Cavanaugh, President, Bronx Taxpayers' Alliance; Mr. Samuel Glass, President, Bronx Building Industry League; Mr. Arthur V. Sheridan, President, N. Y. State Society of Professional Engineers; Mr. William H. Yates, President, N. Y. County Chapter, Society of Professional Engineers; and Mr. Raphael J. Smyth, President, Bronx County Chapter, Society of Professional Engineers.

The High Bridge Celebration Committee, which arranged for the event, was headed by the following Officers:

Hon. William J. Flynn, Chairman; Mr. Frederick A. Wurzbach, Vice-Chairman, Mr. Charles E. Reid, Secretary, and Mr. John M. Haffen, Treasurer.

Officers of sub-committees included the following:

Reception Committee.—J. Conrad Scheider, Chairman, Albert Behning, Vice-Chairman; Luncheon Committee.—Moe P. Stein, Chairman; Publicity Committee.—Harry Goodwin, Chairman; Boat Parade Committee.—Eugene F. Moran, Chairman; Committee on Decorations.—Arthur V. Sheridan, Chairman; Committee on Grandstand and Band.—Hon. Joseph P. Hennessy, Chairman; and Committee on Police Arrangements.—Hon. Felix A. Muldoon, Chairman.

BORO PRESIDENT BRUCKNER TO SEEK \$6,000,000 FOR NEW BOROUGH HALL

In the recent past, The Bronx Board of Trade suggested to Borough President Henry Bruckner that prompt action be taken to obtain an appropriation to construct a new Bronx Borough Hall on the site of the present "Victory Garden", in the rear of the existing Borough headquarters.

This would permit of the razing of the present Borough Hall, a non-fireproof building entirely inadequate and out-of-keeping with the size and importance of our Borough, and the leveling and proper development of the Third Avenue frontage of Crotona Park, from East 175th Street to Tremont Avenue.

It was later reported in the "Evening Journal" that Borough President Bruckner plans going before the Legislature in January to ask for the exemption from the City debt limit of an appropriation of \$6,000,000, to cover the cost of construction of a new Borough Hall on the "Victory Garden" site.

BOARD'S THANKSGIVING LUNCHEON A NOTABLE GATHERING

Approximately five hundred members of The Bronx Board of Trade and their friends, and delegations from co-operating organizations, attended the Thanksgiving Luncheon of the Board, held at the Concourse Plaza Hotel on Thursday, November 22nd.

Former President John M. Haffen was the presiding officer and the guest-speaker of the occasion was Rev. Donald H. Tippet, Pastor of the M. E. Church of All Nations, on lower Second Avenue, Manhattan.

Guests of the occasion included Rev. David R. Wylie, Pastor of Bethany Presbyterian Church, who delivered the invocation; Rev. Irving Reichert, Rabbi of Congregation Gates of Mercy; Rev. De Witt L. Pelton, Pastor of St. James' P. E. Church; Rev. Julius J. Price, Rabbi of Sinai Congregation; Rev. William H. Kephart, D.D., Pastor of the North New York Congregational Church; and Rev. A. Hamilton Nesbitt, Pastor of the Mott Avenue M. E. Church.

Dr. Tippet's address was one of the most inspiring that has ever been made before a Board of Trade gathering, and at its conclusion he was greeted with a tremendous ovation that was exceedingly well deserved.

He enumerated six outstanding reasons why we have cause for Thanksgiving at this time, developing each point at length as he made it.

These six reasons for thanksgiving, he said, were:

- (1) An approach to a better understanding between all the peoples of the earth;
- (2) Our national ideal of liberty,—freedom of speech and religious beliefs;
- (3) Tolerance of the beliefs and rights of others;
- (4) A nearer approach to a universal brotherhood of mankind;
- (5) A keener realization of the duties of citizenship; and
- (6) An increased spirit of co-operation.

Immediately following the termination of the guest-speaker's fine address, Mr. Roderick Stephens, of the Luncheon Committee, assisted by Dr. Nesbitt, selected nine of those present at the gathering to receive gifts of turkeys, geese, and chickens.

The turkeys were awarded to Messrs Peter Ebert, Edwin C. Steckler, and John Collins; the geese went to Messrs Frank A. Pecci, Charles Witzel, and Charles Pickel; and the chickens to Messrs Louis Bernfus, Charles H. Steers, and William J. Schloemer.

Whole table reservations at the luncheon were made by the following:

American Exchange Irving Trust Co.; Bronx County Trust Co.; Bronx Building Industry League; Central Bronx Garage Owners' Association; Fordham Merchants' Association; Anthony C. La Rocca; New York Telephone Co.; New York Edison Co.; Park Department, The Bronx; Stephens Fuel Co.; South Bronx Garage Owners' Association; Lions Club (2); Bronx Buick Co.; Bronx Gas & Electric Co.; Central Union Gas Co.; Dollar Savings Bank; Hub Business Mens' Association (2); Amos B. Miller; Northern Union Gas Co.; Louis Padua; Real Estate Board of The Bronx; State Bank & Trust Co.; William E. Thompson; and Rotary Club (5).