

NEW

YORK

\$9.95

SUMMER 2022

Volume 22 | Number 1

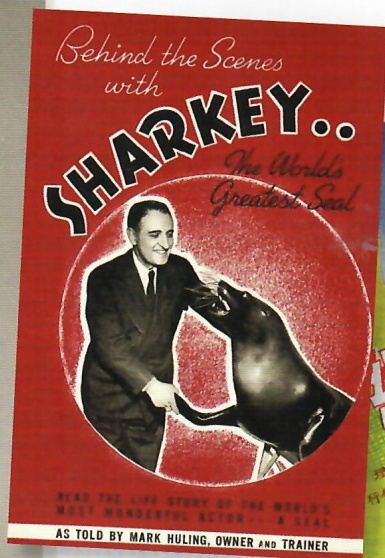
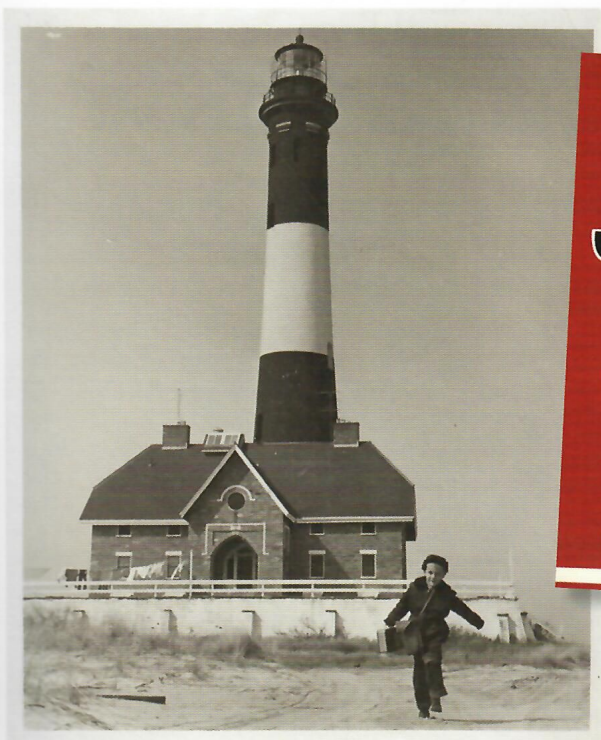
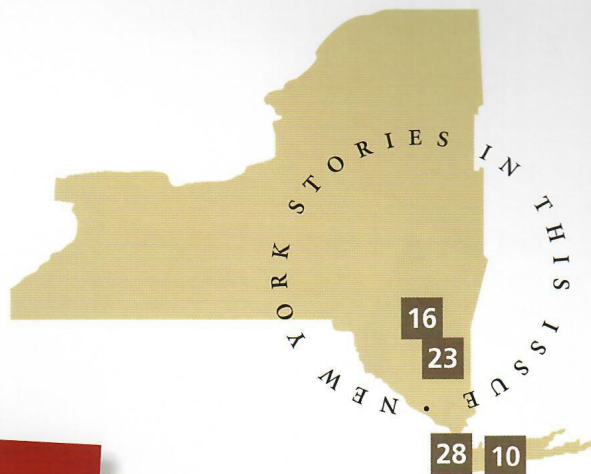
archives



Vital
Lighthouse
Shines On

ALSO INSIDE:
Chinatown Movies
Last Enslaved Person
Sea Lions

contents



FEATURES

10

A Shining Beacon

Bill Bleyer

The Fire Island Lighthouse helped sailors safely navigate the dangerous waters leading to New York Harbor.

16

Sea Lion Stars

Gary Bohan Jr.

The Hulings trained sea lions with kindness, showing the world how talented their protégés could be.

23

"Black Soph"

Jennifer M. Cassidy and Sallie S. Sypher

Historians tell the story of the woman who may have been the last enslaved person in New York, but there are still unanswered questions.

28

Midnight Movies in Chinatown

Kenny Ng

Chinese moviegoers flocked to theaters in the US in the early part of the twentieth century, nostalgic for their homeland.

DEPARTMENTS

- 2 From the State Archivist
- 4 Contributors
- 6 At the Archives Partnership Trust
- 8 At the State Archives
- 36 In Their Own Words
- 38 Marking History
- 40 Parting Shots

ON THE FRONT COVER

Fire Island Lighthouse

contributors



FEATURES

Bill Bleyer was a prize-winning staff writer for *Newsday* for 33 years. Besides *Fire Island Lighthouse: Long Island's Welcoming Beacon*, he is the author of *Sagamore Hill: Theodore Roosevelt's Summer White House*; *Long Island and the Sea: A Maritime History*; and *George Washington's Long Island Spy Ring: A History and Tour Guide*. He is co-author, with Harrison Hunt, of *Long Island and the Civil War*.

Gary Bohan Jr. hails from Kingston, New York, where Sharkey was trained and is the great-grandson of Sharkey's trainer, Mark Huling. Bohan is also the author of *Sharkey: When Sea Lions Were Stars of Show Business (1907–1958)*, published in 2022 by Excelsior Editions, a SUNY Press imprint.

Jennifer M. Cassidy, Putnam County historian, holds an MA from Iona College. She wrote the award-winning play "The Letters: Voices from the Great War" and assisted with research for several books relating to local history, as well as World War I. She also co-produces local history documentaries.

Kenny Ng holds a PhD from Harvard University in East Asian languages and civilizations and currently teaches Chinese-language films and transnational cinema at Hong Kong Baptist University. An engaged media and cultural critic, he has published widely on film censorship, Chinese diasporic cinema and literature, and the politics of visual culture.

Sallie Sypher, a former Putnam County historian, earned a PhD in history from Cornell. Since her retirement in 1996, she has continued to volunteer in the county historian's office. She and her husband, Wylie Sypher, recently authored a book of essays on local history, *Putnam Valley—a Look Back*.

DEPARTMENTS

Jamie Brinkman ("At the State Archives") is an archivist with the New York State Archives.

James D. Folts ("In Their Own Words") is head of researcher services at the New York State Archives.

Susan Hughes ("Marking History") is the historian for The William G. Pomeroy Foundation and director of the American Pomeroy Historic Genealogical Association.

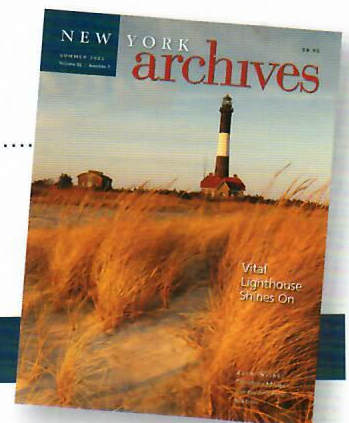
Michael L. Strauss ("Parting Shots") is an accredited genealogist and a research manager and military expert for Ancestry ProGenealogists in Lehi, Utah.

NEW YORK
archives
magazine

Educator
Guides

} Bring *New York Archives*
into your classroom!

<https://considerthesourceny.org/magazine-educator-guides>



Born on the Fourth of July

BY MICHAEL STRAUSS

Joseph King and the United States of America shared the same birthdate: July 4, 1776.

And in this photo, he and the country were celebrating a century.

Whether King was actually born in the US is another matter. Federal and state census listings, between 1850 and 1870, vary with the federal counts saying he was born in Canada and the New York state census listing him in Orange, New York.

But he did serve his country, adopted or otherwise, by enlisting in Captain Lewis Scott's company of New York militia volunteers on September 13, 1814, in Orange, Schuyler County.

He was appointed to the rank of corporal. Scott's company was assigned to the command of Lieutenant-Colonel John Prior which was designated as the 10th New York militia regiment. In the weeks preceding King's enlistment, his regiment was ordered to defend the fortifications surrounding Plattsburgh, New York. King would serve with the regiment until being transferred to Long Island before being discharged on November 5, 1814, in Orange, after having served ninety days.

During his long life, King spent most of his time in upstate New York, where he worked in several trades, including carpentry, wheelwrighting, and masonry before moving to Illinois.

The Buffalo Weekly Courier in 1874 reported on a story originally published in the *Livingston Republican* of Geneseo, New York, on Joseph King, a centurion from Hemlock Lake: "Our country it seems has a delegate to the Philadelphia



COURTESY OF THE AUTHOR

Centennial celebration in the person of Joseph King of Hemlock Lake, who was born on that day of days, July 4th, 1776, and consequently will be just a century old in 1876." It is unclear whether he attended the celebration.

King would go on to live more than a year after the celebration, dying in Chicago on Nov. 22, 1877. His body was sent back to New York, where it now rests in the Hemlock Lake Cemetery in Livingston County.

The image of King was likely taken by Samuel B. Smith at his studio in Honeoye, New York. The photographer worked in the area for a number of years before moving to Tacoma, Washington, in 1889 until his death in 1910. ■