



Item of the Week *from the* Long Island Collection

LONG ISLAND COLLECTION | DIGITAL LONG ISLAND | EAST HAMPTON STAR ARCHIVE



Ball Grounds, East Hampton, L.I.

While the United States doesn't have an official sport, baseball is considered America's favorite pastime, even though football is currently ranked the most popular sport to watch, based on television ratings. The game of baseball itself is said to be derived from various forms of bat-and-ball games played in England dating back to the 15th century. The popularity of baseball in the United States gained momentum in the mid-1800s, when amateur players participated in games utilizing their own rules and equipment. Rules for the sport were eventually formalized and baseball's first governing body, the National Association of Base Ball Players, was established in 1857.

So what makes baseball America's favorite pastime? Perhaps because it was so accessible to a wide variety of people in a multitude of places. One didn't necessarily need a huge baseball diamond or stadium to play in. It could be played in an open field, city, playground, or neighborhood, which is observed in the postcard above, from the [Harvey Ginsberg Postcard Collection](#). In an almost pastoral scene, spectators can be seen lounging in the grass, stands, and in their cars as the batter appears to approach the plate.

This image is said to depict East Hampton's first baseball playing field,

located on the south side of Pantigo Road, post 1905, when the grand stand would have been built on the baseball diamond for the East Hampton Baseball Club. Or perhaps this is Herrick Park, where cars were permitted to park on the field. In 1929, East Hampton High School math teacher W. Chester Gottschall lost an eye when a stray baseball crashed through his windshield (cars were banned after that). In spite of where this particular game was played (Pantigo Ball Fields or Herrick Park), one was also capable of catching a local game on Town Lane, in Freetown, Springs, and Sag Harbor.

Ultimately, shared experiences may be what really connects Americans to baseball. Norton "Bucket" Daniels summed this idea up perfectly in his book *My East Hampton*, "When these fellows were not competing...they were among the nicest people around. They were friendly, loved to laugh, and were just all-around good fellows, but when the starting whistle blew, friendship ceased...I observed that same spirit...extend to the loyal spectators. Watching a...team defeat a visiting team on its home grounds was an education in human behavior and emotions."

EXPLORE MORE

The Digital Long Island Collection is part of New York Heritage Digital Collections. Included are searchable scans of deeds, drawings, etchings, inventories, letters, maps, paintings, pardons, patents, photographs, plans, postcards, prints, sculptures, sketches, textiles, tiles, yearbooks and more to come.

The East Hampton Star Archive is a fully searchable, online digital archive of our local weekly newspaper, that features each complete issue of the paper from 1918-1968, exactly as it appeared in print. Visit the archive online, for a tour of our Town's history that will fascinate both the amateur and professional historian!

The Karl Grossman Research Archive is an extensive collection of materials digitized from the personal archive of Karl Grossman, an investigative reporter, columnist, author, and current professor of journalism at SUNY Old Westbury. The archive brings together a decades long career in reporting and journalism with topics ranging from the economy and pollution to fishing and East Hampton Town. Patrons are capable of searching this 9,500+ item collection by collection name, year, title, or keyword search.

The Local Artist Research Archive is a collection of over 19,000 items digitized from Guild Hall, containing materials including personal letters, photographs, news clippings, and art catalogs concerning artists of the East End. Patrons are capable of searching this archive by collection, title, or keyword search.



Welcome to the Long Island Collection's "Item of the Week."

We are an archive dedicated to the history and people of Long Island, with a special interest in all things East Hampton and East End. Unlike some small local history rooms in other public libraries, we have over 100,000 items including, but not limited to, rare books, maps, photographs, deeds, postcards, letters, newspapers, and whaling logs. We also have a dedicated and hardworking staff ready to help you with any questions you may have. Unable to make it to the library? No problem! We upload images from the collection to [Digital Long Island](#) on a weekly basis, so there's always something new and interesting to behold.

Please visit us at the Library, make use of our extensive online digital resources, or contact us

for assistance. Public hours are: Mon. - Tues. and Thurs. - Sat., 1:00-4:30 p.m.

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Gina Piastuck joined the East Hampton Library in 2007 as a librarian and archivist and has served as the Head of the Long Island Collection since 2009. She's a graduate of LIU Post's Palmer School of Library and Information Science and holds both an M.L.I.S. degree and a Certificate in Archives and Records Management. Her responsibilities managing the Long Island Collection include providing reference and research assistance to patrons on and off site, as well as the acquisition, arrangement, description and conservation of rare and new materials pertaining to the history and people of Long Island.

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