



Pearsall, Louis. Collection, 1890 – 1980.

Special Collections Department/Long Island Studies Institute

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Louis Pearsall Collection

1890 – 1980

bulk dates 1930 - 1945

2 c.f. (3 linear feet)

The Pearsall Collection at Hofstra University Special Collections contains the collected documents, photographs and diaries of Louis Pearsall. The focus of the collection is local life on Long Island in the early-to-mid-20th century. When Pearsall worked as a carpenter, shipbuilder, and bay man.

Boat building on Long Island is one of the main topics of the collection. There are papers and photographs documenting the construction of boats, which were used by baymen who fished, clammed, crabbed and harvested sedge to make a living. Bay houses were constructed both as year-round dwellings and as outposts during the busy season and as easily accessible shelter in bad weather.

The documents in the collection cover many topics relevant to life on Long Island's south shore including the community garden and high school in Oceanside. There is also a short oral history of Oceanside, as well as materials related to a proposed sewage treatment plan.

The collection also contains an oral history with Oscar Terrell and a short history of the Pearsalls. The Pearsalls' history mentions each of the eight generations of Pearsalls who were baymen on Pearsall's Hassock, an area off the south shore of Long Island. There is also an oral history about Oceanside that mentions "Mister Pearsall's Ice Station."

Louis Pearsall Collection

Biographical Information

Louis Pearsall, also known as Lou, was seventh generation of his family on the bay. His work as a carpenter is documented as is the construction of a house for Sarah Doxsey.

There is also an oral history by Louis Pearsall recalling his work as a Coast Guard life saver during the wreck of the Princess Ann off Long Island's south shore in 1920.

Louis Pearsall's diaries describe the life of a man who was awake shortly after dawn and asleep by 8 PM or 9 PM. He worked in various jobs, most of which were physically demanding.

The collection contains Louis Pearsall's 1931 diary in which he documents his work as a carpenter and boat builder for Zackow (or Zathow) during the winter and spring. He reports catching colds and daily activities such as: "made out order for drugs & etc to Bloomingdales" he also shops fairly regularly at Bohack's and on December 15 went to Rockville Center to bank and shop. Louis Pearsall's diary also mentions the daily activities of his brother Arthur. Friends are mentioned Dave, Frank, Fred, Walter, Jean, Lorena and Lila as well as members of his family including his sister Melissa. He sometimes visits friends and family in the evenings and entertains them in his home at other times.

Louis Pearsall's evenings were also spent working on an album, sketching, smoking cigars and listening to the radio. March 25, 1931 includes the charming entry: "Saw first robin on grape arbor..." and there are other interesting observations like May 24: "Saw airplanes galore during the day." When not working for others, Louis Pearsall records spending much of his time doing household duties like chopping wood, skinning eels, and cleaning the house. During July and August most of his time is spent on the water catching snapper, eel, crab, scallops, oysters and clams. He often records how many eels he caught.

In his 1932 diary, Pearsall mentions various locations he visits such as Cedar Island, Hicks Beach and Sweet Water Bar. He spends time at "shanty," probably a small house near the water that he shares with other bay men. In January of 1932 he describes the winds on various occasions. Through the years chronicled in the 1931 – 1949 diaries, Louis Pearsall's life proceeds scarcely touched by the outside world. On December 7, 1941 he notes at the bottom of his daily entry: "Japan started war today."

There are some materials related to World War II including a clipping about a "twin screw utility power boat" that was produced on Long Island by the Nassau Boat Basin, Inc. of Freeport and the Knutson Shipbuilding Corporation of Halesite. There are also two posters

related to WWII. One poster, from 1943, depicts a telegram (16" x 21 1/2"). The other poster from 1944 depicts a gremlin wreaking havoc on square corners. It implores the production line workers to round their corners because square corners provide a weak spot in mechanical structure (20" x 28"). Both posters were produced by the U.S. department of the Navy.

Louis Pearsall Collection
Box and Folder List

Box 1

<u>Folder 1</u>	<u>Item/topic</u>	<u>Title/event/issue</u>	<u>Format/Source</u>	<u>Cross Ref.</u>
	Boat-building, L.I.	The 'Pilot' Cruising Sloop	Flier, Mill River Boat Works	Sidney Davies
	Boat-building, L.I.	24' Auxiliary Cruising Sloop	Flier, Sidney Davies Yachtbuilder	E. Rockaway
	Boat-building, L.I.	Diary entries of a boat builder	Samuel S. Rhame	
<u>Folder 2</u>	Work assignments, Louis Pearsall	Jones Beach Construction	L.I. State Park Commission	Depression
	Work assignments	Jones Beach Construction	Nassau Cty Emer. Relief Bureau	Louis Pearsall
	Work assignments	Jones Beach Construction	Reassgnmnt slip, WPA	Louis Pearsall
	Work assignments	Jones Beach Construction	Payroll record, WPA	Louis Pearsall
	Work assignments	Jones Beach Construction	Work order, WPA	Louis Pearsall
	Work assignments	Jones Beach Construction	Work order, WPA	Louis Pearsall
	Work assignments	Jones Beach Construction	Work order, WPA	Louis Pearsall
<u>Folder 3</u>	Oceanside	"Interview w/my Great-Grandfather"	Homework, Genealogy	Louis Pearsall
	Pearsall Family	"The Pearsall's"	Family History Pearsalls of L.I.	Oceanside

Louis Pearsall Collection

Box and Folder List (cont'd)

<u>Folder 4</u>	<u>Item/topic</u>	<u>Title/event/issue</u>	<u>Format/Source</u>	<u>Cross Ref.</u>
	Community Garden	Invitation to Join	Correspondence	
	Community Garden	Rules/Regulations	Correspondence	
<u>Folder 5</u>	Boat-building, L.I.	Skeleton of Framed Hull	Photo	Sidney Davies, Mill River Boat Works
	Boat-building, L.I.	Eight men in a hoisted hull	Photo	Sidney Davies, Mill River Boat Works
	Boat-building, L.I.	Workers outside boat shop	Photo	Sidney Davies, Mill River Boat Works
	Boat-building, L.I.	Plywood hull of Small boat	Photo	Sidney Davies, Mill River Boat Works
	Boat-building, L.I.	Finished boat on RR flatcar	Photo	Sidney Davies, Mill River Boat Works
	Boat-building, L.I.	Boat with awning, Long Beach	Photo	Sidney Davies, Mill River Boat Works
	Boat-building, L.I.	Boat with awning, Long Beach	Photo	Sidney Davies, Mill River Boat Works
	Boat-building, L.I.	Boat with awning, Long Beach	Photo	Sidney Davies, Mill River Boat Works
	Boat-building, L.I.	Boat shop, boats in stages	Photo	Sidney Davies, Mill River Boat Works
	Boat-building, L.I.	Twin screw utility power boat with smaller vessel	Photo	Sidney Davies, Mill
	Boat-building, L.I.	Twin screw utility power Boat with smaller vessel	Photo	Sidney Davies, Mill
	Boat-building, L.I.	Two men shaping boat bracings	Photo	

Box and Folder List (cont'd)

<u>Folder 6</u>	<u>Item/topic</u>	<u>Title/event/issue</u>	<u>Format/Source</u>	<u>Cross Ref.</u>
	Public Announcement	Proposed New high school	Oceanside Board of Ed. Pamphlet	Oceanside
<u>Folder 7</u>	Bay houses	Waterways of East Rockaway	<i>Newsday</i> clipping 11/30/45	East Rockaway
<u>Folder 8</u>	Oceanside	"I Remember" by Grace Humes	Memoir of Oceanside	Pearsall family
	(See separation sheet- item in Map Case 1-1) Beers, Comstock	Pearsalls	Map-photocopy of Page 106	Atlas 1873
	(See separation sheet-item in Map Case 1-1) Beers, Comstock	Rockville Centre	Map-photocopy of Page 109	Atlas 1873
<u>Folder 9</u>	(See separation sheet) Song sheet	"My Long Island Home"	Sheet music 9" by 12"	John Howard Payne
	(See separation sheet) "Along the Coast"	Rockaway Station Crew, Arthur W. Pearsall	News clipping	LifeSaving Service
	(See: separation sheet) Bay houses	Great South Bay	Photos in news clip	Construction
	(See separation sheet) Bay houses	Pearsall's Hassock Lease	Town of Hemp. indenture	Louis Pearsall
	High Hills Beach	"Ferries to High Hill Beach"	<i>LI Forum</i>	Louis Pearsall
	(See separation sheet-item in Map Case 1-1) Bay houses	Pearsall's Hassock	Map 8, blueprint	

Louis Pearsall Collection

Box and Folder List (cont'd)

(See separation sheet-item in Map Case 1-1)
 Bay houses Pearsall's Hassock

Map 9, blueprint

Folder 10

<u>Item/topic</u>	<u>Title/event/issue</u>	<u>Format/Source</u>	<u>Cross Ref.</u>
Boat-building, LI	Twin Screw utility Power boat	WWII news clipping: boat in Rhine crossing Nassau Boat basin	
World War II	Thank you to workers On the home front (Separated to Map Case 2-11)	"Telegram" poster	United States Navy
World War II	Worker motivation AV aid (Separated to Map Case 2-11)	"Gremlin" poster	

Folder 11

Oceanside	Sarah Doxsey House	receipt	
Oceanside	Sarah Doxsey House	receipt	
Oceanside	Sarah Doxsey House	photo	
Oceanside	Sarah Doxsey House	contract	

Folder 12

Dredging site	Sewer treatment plant	photo	Oceanside
Sewer treatment plant	"To all Residents of Oceanside."	Typescript flier	Oceanside
Sewer treatment plant	Open letter to Oceansiders	Newspaper advertisement	Oceanside
Refuse Dump Opposition	Letter to Oceansiders	Typescript	Oceanside

Folder 13

Lifesaving Service/ Coast Guard	"Wreck of the Princess Anne"	News clip, <i>Babylon Town Leader</i> (article Dtd 5/20/60)	Louis Pearsall
Lifesaving Service/ Coast Guard	"Wreck of the Princess Anne"	Article, <i>LI Forum</i>	Louis Pearsall

Box 2 – Oversized Materials

Diaries of Louis Pearsall - (phase-boxed on shelves)

Diary, 1931

Diary, 1932

Diary, 1933

Arthur Pearsall Collection

Box and Folder List (cont'd)

Diary, 1934-1935

Diary, 1936

Diary, 1937

Diary, 1938

Diary, 1939

Diary, 1940

Diary, 1941

Diary, 1942

Diary, 1943

Diary, 1944

Diary, 1945

Diary, 1946

Diary, 1947

Diary, 1948

Diary, 1949