



High Hill Beach, Long Island, circa 1910 (above) and surf bathing at High Hill Beach, circa 1915 (below).

# A One-Day Wonder

Name of post office on Long Island became Jones Beach for a single day in 1932

By Charles J. DiComo, PhD  
and Terry Shaw, PhD

Jones Beach, New York today is a popular New York State Park in Nassau County that receives some 6 million visitors a year to its sandy beaches and other attractions.

Its location makes Jones Beach the busiest beach on the East Coast. Just 26 miles from the borough of Queens, or 38 miles to Manhattan's Central Park, Jones Beach's face to the Atlantic Ocean offers a convenient opportunity to escape the sweltering urban areas of Greater New York to relax in the sea air; that's if you can take the crowds.

This is a far cry from 90 years ago when the area off Long Island was more commonly known as High



Hill Beach and had some 80 mostly private cottages along its shores, as can be seen in the postcards shown.

But everything changed in 1939,

though, when urban planner Robert Moses, then chairman of the Long Island State Park Commission, bought this land and created Jones



Staff members pose in front of Savage's Hotel and Casino at High Hill Beach on this picture postcard, circa 1915. The resort community mostly had private summer



Beach.

But let's go back to the early part of the 20th century. The beach did boast Savage's Hotel & Casino, and the area was known for being lax on prohibition laws. But the area remained a mostly hidden gem and with those sleepy summer cottages were enjoyed by a relatively few.

The mostly summertime residents were provided mail service from the High Hill Beach Post Office that opened in 1915. From 1919 to its closure in 1940 the post office was under the charge of Postmaster John Alder Haff, better known as "Jiggie." And then, for some unknown reason, a change was made.

In the May 5, 1932 edition of the Postal Bulletin, notice was given that the name of the High Hill Beach Post Office would be changed to Jones Beach effective June 1, 1932.

Similarly, the Official Postal Guide for 1932 lists Jones Beach as Post Office number 24717, a summer Post Office in Nassau County starting



Ferry boat captain and Postmaster John "Jiggie" Alder Haff (1872-1954). From album of Paula Haff Fraziers Photos

on June 1, 1932. This date was likely the scheduled opening for the sum-

mer seasonal post office as such locations generally operated from June through September.

But not so fast, as again for reasons unknown the June 1, 1932 edition of The Postal Bulletin rescinded this action, reverting the name of the post office back to High Hill Beach. Thus, Jones Beach was the name of the Post Office for one day only -- June 1, 1932.

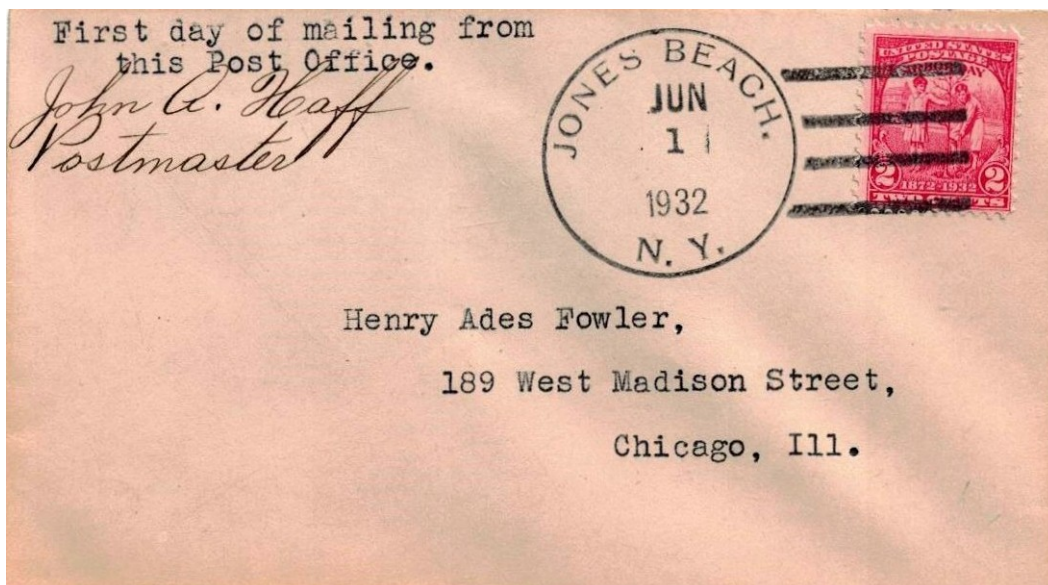
That the post office did provide services that day under its new name is documented by the cover shown at the top of Page 5 that was signed by Postmaster Haff. In his checklist of all known seasonal Post Offices, Smith lists the High Hill Beach Post Office, but not Jones Beach.

At present, this cover with its

Jones Beach 4-bar cancel is the only mail sent from this Post Office that we have been able to document. Furthermore, we are un-

**Post Office Name Changed**  
(Rescind)  
**NEW YORK**  
High Hill Beach, Nassau County. The order appearing in Bulletin 15899 changing the name of this office to Jones Beach, effective June 1, 1932, has been rescinded.

Excerpt from the June 1, 1932 edition of The Postal Bulletin.



A first day and last day cover with a Jones Beach circular datestamp from June 1, 1932 and a four-bar cancellation tying a 1932 2-cent Arbor Day Issue (Scott 717). A notation at upper left corner states: "First day of mailing from this Post Office." And is signed, "John A. Haff,

aware of any other Post Offices that, other than perhaps for ceremonial purposes, only operated for a single day, although the seasonal Post Office in Tigiwon, Colorado apparently often operated for only a single day each year.

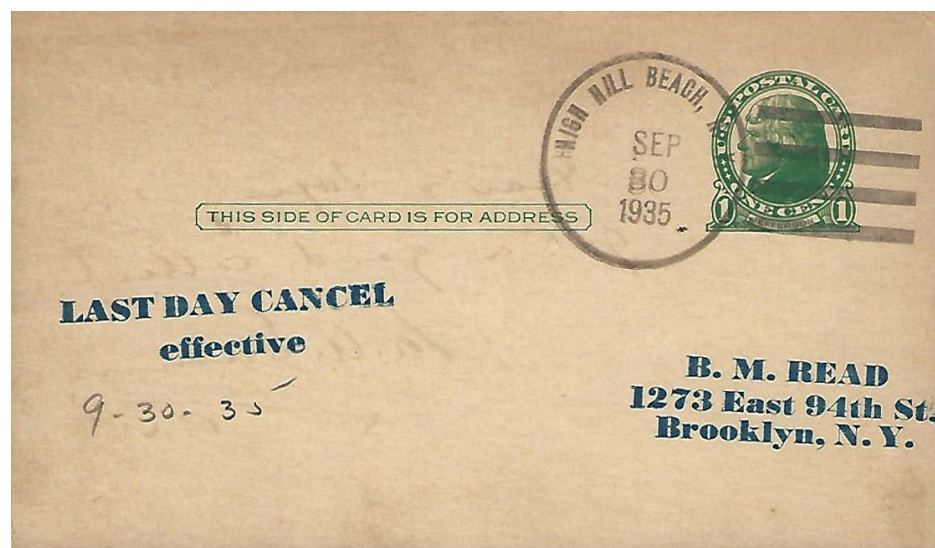
It seems that the recipient of this cover, Henry Ades Fowler, was likely the philatelist who in 1893 edited the first edition of the Canadian Journal of Philately. That he was still living in the 1930s is documented by a notation in the December 1948 edition of the Journal of the British North American Philatelic Society:

A new member of the Society is Henry Ades Fowler of Hartford, Mich. Mr. Fowler is an "old timer" and published the Canadian Journal of Philately and the International Philatelist as long ago as 1893. He is the only living charter member of the Toronto Stamp Collector's Club which was formed in 1892. Mr. Fowler has maintained his interest in stamps over the years and is continually adding to his stamp collection.

Ades Fowler, who was born in Canada, did live in Chicago during this period.

And now for some speculation. Perhaps Mr. Fowler read the May 5, 1932 Postal Bulletin and noticed the change of name for this post office. Wanting a postmark from the new post office, he sent a letter to the listed postmaster with a pre-stamped cover enclosed and asked the postmaster to cancel the cover on the first day of operation for the post office under its new name. Collectors making such requests often asked the postmaster to sign the cover as well to document the first day cancel.

After its brief life as Jones Beach, this post office reverted back to High Hill Beach and continued to operate under this name until 1940, closing for good soon after creation of the Jones Beach State Park.



A last-day-of-use postcard from the High Hill Beach Post Office, dated September 30, 1935. (Courtesy of Frank Braithwaite.)



## A Little Holiday Cheer

By Jeff Stage

One of my way-too-many areas I collect is Christmas. So here is a little holiday cheer from our own New York state, dated 90 years apart.

The first is a piece of regular mail postmarked Christmas Day 1863 from Buffalo.

Back then, Christmas was not a national holiday. I have read that postmasters had the option to be open. Obviously, the Buffalo postmaster thought it was important to open, thus we have this 5 ¼ inch by 2 ¾ inch envelope heading off to a woman in Brooklyn.

The other item is from the North Pole; not the real one, but the one near Lake Placid in the Adirondacks. The holiday theme park opened in 1949 and in 1953 was granted its status



**A pair of Christmas covers 90 years apart: At top, a first-time event cover from North Pole, N.Y. in 1953; and some regular mail postmarked Christmas Day 1863.**

The final image shows a postcard that sent from the High Hill Beach Post Office on September 30, 1935. The “Last Day” auxiliary marking on the postcard reflects the seasonal closure of this summertime only post office.

If others have more information regarding the Jones Beach Post Office, please let us know.

### Page 6: Authors’ bios, acknowledgements, references.

#### Jones Beach Acknowledgements:

Members of the Empire State Postal History Society, especially Frank Braithwaite, Diane DeBlois, Tom Mazza, Gene DeSalvo, David Williams, Joel Harrington and John Schorn, who after Charles reached out via email with a “request for more information” on the Jones Beach cover, each supplied details which added color to the story.

#### About the Authors

**Charles J. DiComo, PhD**, is a lifelong philatelist, postal historian and award-winning author. He enjoys researching,

restoring, writing, publishing, and presenting on a broad array of philatelic and postal history topics. He is president of the Empire State Postal History Society; president of the Philatelic Society of Lancaster County (Pennsylvania); a life member of the U.S. Philatelic Classics Society and editor-in-chief of its newsletter, The Chairman’s Chatter; on the board of the Pennsylvania Postal History Society and a 30-year-plus member of the American Philatelic Society. A native New Yorker, he currently resides in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, with his wife of 25 years, Kathleen, and their daughters, McKenna and Mia.

**Terry Shaw, PhD**, is a longtime member, past president and auction manager for the Alaska Collectors Club, a group that specializes in the postal history of the state. He is also a past president of the Gastineau Philatelic Society in Juneau, Alaska and a 25-year-plus member of the American Philatelic Society. Now retired and living in central Oregon he is a charter member of the Central Oregon Postal Collective. In retirement, Terry enjoys selling stamps and covers on eBay, where is known as “AKPHL.”

#### Resources

The Postal Bulletin, May 5, 1932, Vol. 53, Issue 15899, denoting the Post Office Name Change of High Hill Beach, Nassau County, NY to Jones Beach, NY, effective June 1, 1932 (last viewed April 19, 2022) [http://www.uspostalbulletins.com/PDF/Vol53\\_Issue15899\\_19320505.pdf#search=%2215899%22](http://www.uspostalbulletins.com/PDF/Vol53_Issue15899_19320505.pdf#search=%2215899%22).

The Postal Bulletin, June 1, 1932, Vol. 53, Issue 15921, denoting the Post Office Name Change of High Hill Beach, Nassau County, NY to Jones Beach, NY being rescinded on June 1, 1932 (last viewed April 19, 2022) [http://www.uspostalbulletins.com/PDF/Vol53\\_Issue15921\\_19320601.pdf#search=%22Jones%20beach%22](http://www.uspostalbulletins.com/PDF/Vol53_Issue15921_19320601.pdf#search=%22Jones%20beach%22).

“New York Postal History: The Post Offices and First Postmasters from 1775 to 1980,” by John L. Kay and Chester M. Smith, Jr., The APS Handbook Series, Published by American Philatelic Society, 1982.