

## Boro Sawmill & Timber Celebrates 85 Years of being Ahead of the Curve



*The façade of the yard in New Hyde Park, N.Y., circa 1944.*



*The yard at 127 Concord Street, Brooklyn, N.Y., circa 1935.*



**B**oro Sawmill & Timber Co. was established in 1925 as the Boro Hall Lumber Co. located on Jay St., and later Concord St., in the Boro Hall section of Brooklyn, N.Y. At the time of Boro's founding, lumber for the New York market was unloaded off ships at the Jay St. Terminal docks on the East River, so their location was ideal for a fledgling lumber company like Boro Hall.

The company was started by John G. Sussek with \$1,500, which was lent to him by his future wife, who said she'd marry him if he was successful. One year later, they married in a church only a few blocks from the lumber yard.

The primary market for Boro Hall Lumber Co. was the burgeoning industrial trade that was so active then along the Brooklyn waterfront. Crating companies, tool and die makers, and sign manufacturer's were only a few of the thousands of different industries that needed lumber. Industry was the economic engine that drove New York City in the 1920s, and from Greenpoint to the Brooklyn Navy Yard to Bush Terminal in South Brooklyn, Boro Hall Lumber grew and prospered along with the city.

The Great Depression slowed things down quite a bit, but founder John Sussek was proud to say that "he made money" during the Depression years, in large part due to the building of the 1939 World's Fair, which injected much needed business into the local economy. In fact, the World's Fair was built almost entirely out of temporary wood structures, the lion's share of which Boro Hall Lumber supplied due to a sharp sales force.

For Boro Hall Lumber, the World's Fair was the beginning

of the boom years. Their sales grew along with the industrial business, as well as new markets in set design for Broadway theaters and store window displays for 5th Ave. department stores.

World War II broke out in 1941 and Boro Hall Lumber, already supplying industrial giants Sperry Gyroscope, Grumman Aircraft, and Fairchild Republic to name a few, became one of the country's leading defense contractors supplying the United States' war effort.

As a result of the increased demand due to the war, Sperry Gyroscope built a state-of-the-art production facility in Lake Success, N.Y., and in 1942 Boro Hall Lumber, at Sperry Gyroscope's request, built a state-of-the-art lumberyard just down the road in New Hyde Park to better supply the company's now number one customer. Soon, practically all of the Brooklyn-based defense industry had moved to newer and larger facilities on Long Island, and Boro Hall Lumber was in a key position to service them, just as they had done in Brooklyn.

After the war and into the 1950s, home building boomed on Long Island, and by 1965 nearby Levittown had become the largest building development in the United States. Also in 1965, John Sussek's son, John, Jr., joined the firm and developed the export market for Boro Hall Lumber, adding a new facet to the business. Sales to Africa and the Middle East soon equaled the company's local business and the "go-go" years of the 1960s was felt keenly by Boro Hall Lumber Co.

By then, John, Jr. had taken over the business, becoming its president, and in 1968 he changed the name of the company to Boro Lumber, reflecting not only the growth of the company, but the fact that it was no longer just a "local" lumberyard. Boro Lumber was now international. In addition to changing the name, the company closed its Brooklyn yard and moved to brand new and much larger facilities in Maspeth, N.Y., in nearby Queens.

# ASSOCIATE MEMBER PROFILE

MILLING ABOUT

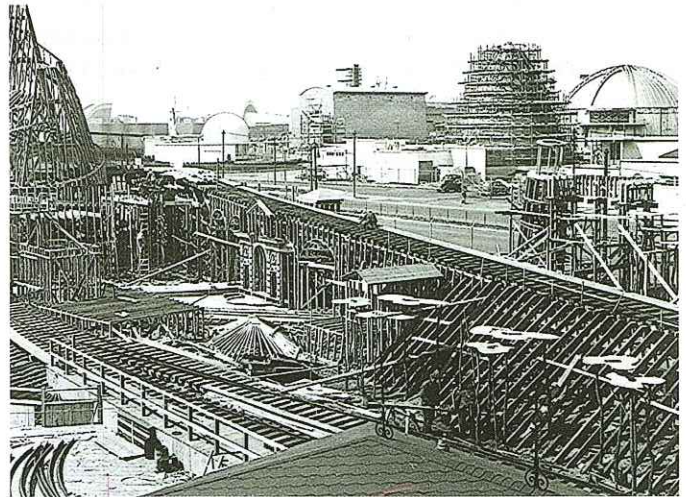
In 1975, its 50th year in business, Boro Lumber Co. opened a yard in Deer Park, N.Y., to better meet the needs of the growing market on the east end of Long Island. In addition to the business growth due to geographic expansion, the outdoor advertising industry, municipal contracts, and big growth in the export markets fueled Boro Lumber's success. By the late 1970s, two of John, Jr.'s sons, Jack (John III) and Greg, both of whom spent time in lumber mills in Oregon and Washington, had joined the company. Jack had also worked as a trader at a wholesale lumber company in Portland, Ore., for two years before joining Boro Lumber Co.

With their mill experience already in hand, Jack and Greg joined their father in building a modern remanufacturing facility, in essence an urban lumber mill, in Maspeth. When once there were a number of lumber remanufacturing plants in the New York metropolitan area, by 1985 there were none, and the Susseks had a hunch that there was hidden demand for remanufactured wood. By the mid 1990s, that need was fully realized. Boro Lumber Co. sold off its "retail" business along with its yards on Long Island to fully realize the potential and growth of the "sawmill."

By the late 1990s, the company's name was changed to Boro Sawmill & Timber Co. Today it remanufactures, grades, and packages specialty and custom lumber and timber prod-

ucts, servicing retail lumberyards from Maine to North Carolina in both common and clear grades.

Specializing in Douglas Fir, Western Red Cedar, Southern Yellow Pine, Red and White Oak, and assorted hardwoods, Boro Sawmill & Timber Co. is well established in the Northeastern market. In 2010 it celebrates its 85th year in the lumber business. ■



1939 New York World's Fair showing wood structures, circa 1938.

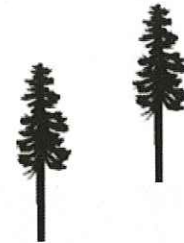
## The Lumber Yard's - Lumberyard



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