

DIX HILLS

MAP QUEST

Library's new exhibit showcases the cartographical evolution of LI

BY DEBORAH S. MORRIS

deborah.morris@newsday.com

A new library exhibit in Dix Hills will showcase the evolution of maps of Long Island and lead visitors who want to go on a trip down memory lane to as far back as the 17th century.

The range of maps to be featured at the Half Hollow Hills Community Library will include road and railroad maps and even some maps that were used to create a board game or department store advertisement.

The exhibit, called "The Iconic Fish: Early Maps of Long Island" also offers visitors a peek at who owned their land long ago — with atlas maps from 1873, 1909 and 1917 that show property lines and their owners.

The exhibit, which opened Sunday, will include maps from the 17th through 20th centuries that are split into three categories: overall maps of the Island, atlas maps and specialty and souvenir maps.

The library and Huntington Historical Society collaborated to create the exhibit, which was named for the shape of Long Island.

"You can see things that you recognize from your day-to-day life," said Emily Werner, collections manager and curator for the Huntington Historical Society. "Most people think of Google maps today and are 'How do I get from A to B?'"

But Werner said these maps "are almost like art pieces."

Helen Crosson, the library's executive director, said the exhibit coincides with New York State curriculums for fourth-grade students to learn about local history. She said several elementary school classes already have scheduled visits to view the exhibit as part of their



Huntington Historical Society members Bill Frohlich and his wife, Janet, help position one of the pieces featured in a new historic map exhibit at the Half Hollow Hills Community Library.

learning experience.

Crosson said the library has created a scavenger hunt connected to the exhibit so that school-age children can better connect with what they are seeing.

"Young children will be able to get an understanding of where they live and what it looks like, what it did look like and get a sense of their environment and history," the library director added.

The exhibit also will include loans from personal map collections, including some belonging to Toby Kissam, a Huntington Historical Society trustee, and his wife, Beverly.

Using maps of Long Island Rail Road tracks as a reference

If you want to go

"The Iconic Fish: Early Maps of Long Island" is featured at the Half Hollow Hills Community Library at 55 Vanderbilt Pkwy. in Dix Hills. The exhibit, which includes loans from personal collections, will be open until March.

point will give visitors a window into how the Island developed, Toby Kissam said.

"They'll see how important the railroad was to the development of Long Island in a strange and curious way. The

original purpose of building the railroad from Brooklyn to Greenport was to create the fastest route from New York City to Boston in the 1830s," he added.

Wheatley Heights residents Bill and Janet Frohlich also lent personal maps to the exhibit.

The idea for the exhibit was born when Toby Kissam and Bill Frohlich, both map enthusiasts, thought others might share their curiosity for learning about history as traced through maps.

"It's interesting to see how something looked in the past and to see how it looks today, how things have changed on Long Island," Bill Frohlich said.

RICK KOPSTEIN