

The Patchogue River is an important part of Patchogue. It was always a very busy place, starting with the fishing and clamming industries in the 1850's. The dredging of the river and the channel in the bay between 1870 and the year 1900 allowed larger boats to enter the river. Boat yards, especially the ones constructing larger boats, which in previous years had to build their boats on the shoreline of the bay, now could open up new yards on the river. Other industries also profited from the dredging, as the shipments of coal and lumber. In the 1920's, when more and more

homes switched to oil heat and the demand for gasoline also rose, the Patchogue River, the only deep water port on the south shore of Long Island, became the ideal place to erect tank farms that could receive shipments of oil from small coastal tankers. These tank farms lost their importance when new, large tank farms sprang up on the North Shore, and the Patchogue facilities were closed down in the 1970's. The Patchogue River is now mainly a port for recreational boating, the home for several boat yards and gateway to Fire Island ferry service.



This view of the Patchogue River was apparently taken from the smokestack in Bailey's lumber mill, looking towards the southwest. Part of Bailey's yard can be seen on the foreground and Gil Smith's Boatyard and shed are located in front of the long dark building.



Another photograph of the river, now looking west. These pictures were taken around 1913. The white building on the left is Week's boatyard, started in 1898 and still going strong today. The large boat on the right is the ferry "Patchogue", which operated on the bay for only a few years before she was sold in 1914.