



AERIAL VIEW OF SANDS POINT Bath and Tennis Club

## Fire At Sands Point Bath Club Destroys East Egg Landmark

By EILEEN BRENNAN

Lying in the sand a few yards away from the burned-out shell of the Sands Point Bath and Racquet Club is an empty bottle of Perrier-Jouet champagne and an up-turned glass, symbol of past parties.

Nostalgia for the gold coast days is a hazard of living on the north shore, but in this place, after a disastrous fire, it is hard to avoid. The ultimate chronicler of East Egg, F. Scott Fitzgerald, painted the scene this way: "The last swimmers have come in now and are dressing; the cars from New York are parked five deep in the drive, and already the halls

and verandas are gaudy with primary colors, and hair shorn in strange new ways, and shawls beyond the dreams of Castille. The bar is in full swing, and floating rounds of cocktails permeate the garden outside, until the air is alive with chatter and laughter, and casual innuendo and introductions forgotten on the spot."

That was written in 1925 but it could have been written in 1945 or 1985, but sadly, not in 1986.

The club is located at the end of Plum Point, a section of Sands Point once known

as Wampage Shores and owned by real estate developer Osgood Pell. In recent years it has changed owners several times. The first clubhouse was destroyed by fire and rebuilt in the 20s. Originally called the Sands Point Bath and Tennis Club, it became the Sands Point Casino and recently the Sands Point Bath and Racquet Club.

In addition to the clubhouse with its dining room, bar and dance floor, the club had a pool, tennis courts, and was flanked by rows of cabanas that face Manhasset Bay. On summer weekends bathers could see the sailboat racers from Knickerbocker, Manhasset Bay and Port Washington Yacht Clubs.

Still in recent years, it was on summer evenings that the old magic reappeared. Music carried on the winds to West Egg across the bay sounded as romantic as it did

when the Dorsey Brothers orchestras were playing at the Sands Point Bath Club, and a dazzled college freshman could turn and see Mickey Rooney dancing near her.

Today, when the members talk about the club and its loss, it is not the roaring 20s that they mourn, but the camaraderie of today. With a small membership of about 90 regular members and 40 dining room members, it is possible for them all to know each other. About 10 percent of the members come from New York City, according to Mr. Al Hagedorn, a member of the club's board of governors, and the rest from Long Island, with the nucleus in Port Washington.

Summer will come in 1986, but for the members of the Sands Point Bath and Racquet Club, it won't be quite the same this year.

### Sands Point Fire

Continued from Page 1

lage clerk Evan Stephens said that the owner of the club is the Sands Point Research Corporation, which in turn is owned by Dunham and Marcus of Manhattan.

The future of the property is in doubt. Although it appears to be a prime piece of real estate, both the Village of Sands Point and the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation require buildings to be built no less than 13 feet above flood level and the club property does not meet that requirement. It is, in fact, a "high tide flood area," according to Mr. William Murphy, vice-president of the club.

Village clerk Stephens said he believes that it might be possible for the club to rebuild

on its old foundation because the building that just burned down was in place long before the 13 feet above flood level requirement.

Mr. Murphy and other board members have discussed the possibility of rebuilding. Another member of the board of governors, Mr. Al Hagedorn of Sands Point, gave a statement to the press that said: "It is too soon for us to have developed concrete plans for the future. However, we are actively exploring various possibilities of rebuilding the clubhouse in the manner that would retain the character and ambience of the former structure while meeting our needs for decades to come."



RUINS OF SANDS POINT Bath Club Pool

(Photo by Mary Donnelly)