

Platty Kill Creek 'still in Bayonne

By John Hurley
How many residents of Bayonne have ever heard of Platty Kill Creek?

by the sampling of reaction the Jersey Journal received when it asked, "Where is Platty Kill Creek?"

Public Safety Director Eugene O'Neil said he never heard of it. Neither did Assistant City Engineer Edward Gotko. Director of Public Works Edward Sweeney was baffled by the question and school board president Joseph Dorja could only guess at the creek's location.

the creek is located on the creek by name, although the hockey stick-shaped body of water is there in the Constable Hook section of the city.

Platty Kill Creek was named by the Dutch in 1646, according to Dr. Walter F. Robinson, Bayonne's leading historian.

Dr. Robinson said that at that time Constable Hook was separated from the rest of Bayonne by marshland. "Platty Kill Creek was a body of water that flowed through the marsh, widening as it approached the Kill Van Kull," he said.

As the marshland was filled in, a good portion of the creek was also lost but a remnant of it remains today, Dr. Robinson said. "There is still a couple of hundred feet of water," he said.

The creek is now nestled in an industrial area and borders the Exxon Plant and Bayonne Industries in the Hook. Deputy Fire Chief William

Folger knows where the creek is and remembers a few years ago when the creek had more water than it has now.

Five or six years ago the creek was filled with oil and other pollutants from nearby industries. It has since been cleaned up, he said, and industry no longer uses the Platty Kill as a dumping ground.

Mayor Dennis Collins recalled Platty Kill Creek when we asked him the question that stumped so many others. He said that as a young man he worked as a laborer laying pipelines in the Hook area. He recalled doing work near the Platty Kill Creek.

The Creek today is very small and is dwarfed by giant industrial plants. It doesn't offer much to the city's residents except a taste of their heritage and a little bit of nature that has survived modern technology.