



THE YEOMAN

Farmingdale-
Bethpage
Historical Society

Mildred Johnston, President

James McCullagh, Vice-President



Inside this issue:

William Floyd Program Attracts Sizeable Audience

Historian and author, Gene Horton, spoke on “William Floyd, Signer of the Declaration” at the Society’s February 15 meeting. Mr. Horton spoke in a costumed role as a gentleman farmer in the persona of Floyd, Long Island’s only signer of the Declaration of Independence. Following a full account of Floyd’s life, the speaker led the audience in a review of the Declaration and the names of its 56 signers. As a memento of the program, Mr. Horton provided each attendee with a handsome replica copy of the Declaration.

The February meeting has had topics in recent years dealing with George Washington and his times. As Presidents’ Day is a mid-February holiday, a few years ago the Society’s Executive Board began having a drawing for a cherry pie to honor the first President. This year, the pie was baked by Pierre Lehmuller, Society trustee and an epicurean expert. Gene Horton, our speaker, drew the ticket of Madeline Bondiotti as the winner of the pie.

Hospitality chair, JoAnne Bihary, in order to recognize Abraham Lincoln’s 200th birthday anniversary, held a second drawing for a jar of Lincoln pennies. This prize was won by Muriel Bening. Ms. Bihary also noted the four new designs to be released by the U.S. Mint on the reverse side (“tails”) of the familiar Lincoln penny in commemoration of the Lincoln Bicentennial. She then opened the social period of the meeting, acknowledging the numerous donors of the pastries, many having a Presidents’ Day theme.

Civil War Veterans’ Project Update and Display

Patrick Looney, an Eagle Scout candidate from Troop 261, BSA, will provide a status report on his Civil War Veterans’ project at the Society’s March 8 meeting. This project has included identification of Civil War veterans from the Farmingdale area and locating their places of interment. Patrick and members of his troop have also contributed considerable physical labor toward rehabilitating gravesites of our Civil War veterans.

As Patrick will be graduating from high school in June, he must conclude this significant endeavor in the very near future. In addition to the update at the March 8 meeting, Patrick has prepared an exhibit now on view in the display cases at the Farmingdale Public Library, under advisement from JoAnn Krapp, FBHS trustee and exhibit co-ordinator. Please be sure to stop by to view this collection of materials and artifacts from an important period in our community’s, and nation’s, history!

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**On this day in history...**

- **3/2/1904** - Theodor Geisel, aka Dr. Seuss, is born.
- **3/9/1959** - Barbie debuts at the American Toy Fair in NYC.
- **3/11/1997** - Paul McCartney knighted by Queen Elizabeth II.
- **3/17/1764** - Saint Patrick dies at Saul, Downpatrick, Ireland.
- **3/22/1765** - Stamp Act imposed on American colonies.
- **3/25/1911** - Triangle Shirtwaist Company factory fire in NYC.
- **4/1/1700** - April Fools tradition popularized.
- **4/4/1841** - President Harrison dies after one month in office.
- **4/5/1614** - Pocahontas marries John Rolfe.
- **4/8/1974** - Hank Aaron sets new home run record.
- **4/11/1970** - Apollo 13 launched to moon.
- **4/12/1861** - The Civil War begins.
- **4/14/1912** - RMS *Titanic* hits iceberg and sinks the following day.
- **4/17/1970** - Apollo 13 returns to Earth.
- **4/29/2004** - World War II monument opens in Washington, D.C.

Founders' Day Dinner on Tuesday, April 21 Marks 45th Anniversary

The 45th anniversary of the Farmingdale-Bethpage Historical Society will be celebrated with a dinner on Tuesday, April 21, beginning at 6:00pm at Palmer's American Grille, 115-123 Fulton Street, Farmingdale. Founders' Day commemorates the establishment of the Society at an organizational meeting on Sunday, April 12, 1964 at Powell House, Merritt Road, Farmingdale. For many early years it was a "covered-dish" dinner, but in 1994 it was decided to make it a restaurant event in order to reduce the workload for the committee and the attendees. It thus closes the Society's "indoor schedule" each year, much as the Installation Dinner in October opens it.

A flier accompanies this issue of THE YEOMAN with registration information. Don't miss out on a special evening of good food and pleasant fellowship!

Founders' Day Speaker: Dr. Peter Bales: Historian, Author, and Humorist

Dr. Peter Bales, a member of the faculty at Queensborough Community College, CUNY, will speak following the Founders' Day Dinner on Tuesday, April 21. Dr. Bales enjoys reflecting on the lighter side of American history, and has many humorous anecdotes from years of classroom teaching. He earned his doctorate in history at Stony Brook University, SUNY. In addition to his work at Queensborough, Dr. Bales was a writer/researcher for the History Channel, has hosted his own radio program, and appeared on TV and cable channels. He is author of *HOW COME THEY ALWAYS FOUGHT THE BATTLES IN NATIONAL PARKS?*, a humorous but factually accurate account of American history up to the close of the Civil War.

Don't miss out on a speaker whom you'll long remember! Plan to attend the Founders' Day Dinner!

ASCCHS Spring Meeting to be Held in Southampton

The Southampton Historical Museum will be hosting the spring meeting of the Association of Suffolk County Historical Societies (ASCCHS), of which the FBHS is a member, on Saturday, April 25, 2009. Any FBHS member is welcome to attend the ASCCHS meeting. If you are interested in attending, please contact Mildred Johnston at 516-249-3099 for additional information.

Executive Board Meeting Schedule

The next meeting of the officers and trustees of the Society will be on Thursday, April 2, 2009 at 7pm at the Farmingdale Public Library. Members are reminded that they are always welcome to sit in on meetings of the executive board and, with prior arrangement with the president, to address the Board on matters of concern. Subsequent meetings will be held on the traditional first, non-holiday Thursday of the month: May 7, and June 4, 2009.

Source:

- www.history.com



Website Gains Increasing Attention

Have you visited the website of the Farmingdale-Bethpage Historical Society since it was launched several weeks ago? It's located at www.fbhsli.org. Just remember the Society's initials and add the "li" for Long Island! Once you locate it, "bookmark" it so that you may return to it frequently. You'll find many good reasons to do so!

There are continuing major historical topics relating to the Farmingdale-Bethpage area, including Thomas Powell's Bethpage Purchase of 1695, Bethpage State Park, Farmingdale State College, the Long Island Rail Road, the Quaker Meeting House, and the local aircraft industry. Other historical topics are featured on a limited-time basis in order to encourage frequent visits to the site.

One of the most popular features is "Then and Now." Look at a vintage photo and then see how well you can identify its location today from a current photo! The website also carries the current and recent issues of the Society newsletter, THE YEOMAN, upcoming Society events, a list of the officers and trustees, membership information, and links to other area historical websites.

Let your friends and family members know about this rich source of historical information. Out-of-town individuals often enjoy perusing such sites for photos and facts about the "old hometown." encourage them to make use of it and also to consider membership in the Society so that they have a continuing relationship with their home community.

Catch us on the web at www.fbhsli.org!



Special Events for FBHS Members During May

In addition to participation in the traditional Memorial Day Parade on Monday, May 25, sponsored for over a century by the Farmingdale Fire Department, two special events will mark the calendar this May for members of the Farmingdale-Bethpage Historical Society. Additional details and registration information will follow in a separate mailing. Please watch for it in your mailbox!

- * Sunday, May 3—Tour of Dominican Heritage Center, Amityville, 2:00pm

Since 1876, the Dominican Sisters of Amityville have been serving Long Island. They came to Farmingdale in 1900 to staff the new Nazareth Trade School, an orphanage for boys, and its counterpart for girls, St. Rose Industrial School. In 1926, the Dominicans opened the new elementary school of St. Kilian Parish, serving as faculty members until 1985. The Dominican connection to the Farmingdale area is of long standing.

You are urged to take advantage of this special invitation to visit the Dominican Heritage Center, and learn more about the Dominicans' role in Farmingdale history. There is no fee, but pre-registration will be necessary.

- * Sunday, May 17—Bus Tour of Civil War Veterans' Gravesites

The graves of most of the twenty or so Farmingdale veterans of the Civil War are located in present-day Farmingdale, Bethpage, and Melville. Learn more about these men who served in the Civil War and where they now rest. Patrick Looney, Eagle Scout candidate, and Serena Brochu, FBHS trustee, conducted the extensive research for this project and will lead the tour. What more appropriate way is there to prepare for Memorial Day than by visiting the grave of the soldiers in whose memory the holiday was founded? There will be a donation requested to defray the cost of the bus charter for this special afternoon event.

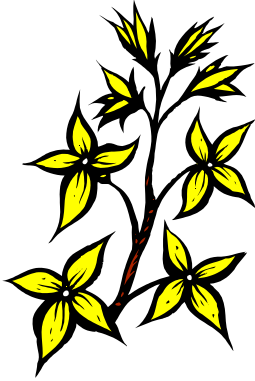




Forsythia: The Official Village Flower

Local residents have asked recently if Farmingdale had ever adopted an official Village flower. The answer is yes, the forsythia, and the story behind the adoption takes us back 85 years, to the spring of 1924.

The key players in this were Jesse Merritt, founding publisher of the FARMINGDALE POST, and the Women's Club of Farmingdale, in addition to the Village Board. Mr. Merritt, who began the POST just four years earlier, had successfully lobbied in 1923 for the founding of a public library for Farmingdale, with the Women's Club playing a most significant role. In the adoption of the village flower, Mr. Merritt first conducted a poll of readers, with the forsythia, or golden bell, prevailing. He again approached the Women's Club, whose members officially endorsed it, and subsequently lobbied the Village Board successfully for adoption.



The April 5, 1924 issue of THE POST carried a proclamation issued by the Village Board asking that on Arbor Day (April 11, 1924) each Farmingdale resident plant in his or her yard or garden a forsythia (golden bell) bush. The April 12 issue tells of a ceremony at Village Hall on Arbor Day in which Leonard Barron, president of the National Garden Association, and Mrs. M.K. Peters, botanist at the State Institute (now Farmingdale State College) planted forsythia on opposite sides of the entrance walk. Village President Clarence H. Terry related the story behind the official adoption of the forsythia. At the office of the FARMINGDALE POST a similar event followed, with Miss Abigail Leonard, president of the Women's Club of Farmingdale, and Edward Hale Brush, editor of LONG ISLAND LIFE, doing the ceremonial planting.

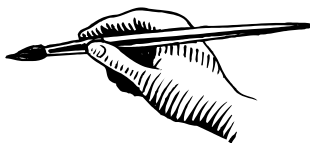
So when you next see the tiny golden bells of a forsythia in bloom in Farmingdale, you'll know another springtime has officially begun!

* * * * *

A couple of historical notes on the story:

- * The Village Hall in the above story refers to a frame building purchased from the Town of Oyster Bay after incorporation. The present Village Hall was dedicated in 1932.
- * From the incorporation in 1904 to 1927, the chief executive of the Village was known as president, hence that title for Clarence H. Terry in 1924. Rudolph H. Weber, Mr. Terry's successor, had the distinction of being the last president and first mayor of the Village.

Local Artist to Display Work in Celebration of LIRR 175th Anniversary



Throughout the month of April, local artist, Lou Mallard of Syosset, will have his work displayed in the Community Room at the Hicksville Public Library in celebration of the LIRR's 175th anniversary. The artist has been painting and drawing Long Island Railroad equipment and scenery for over 30 years. On Saturday, April 4, 2009, a special reception will be held at the Hicksville Public Library from 1-4pm to officially open the exhibit. For additional details and directions, please visit the website of the Long Island Sunrise Trail Chapter of the National Railway Historical Society at www.nrhs-list.org, or the Hicksville Public Library at www.nassaulibrary.org/hicksv/index.html.



FARMINGDALE-BETHPAGE HISTORICAL SOCIETY
45th ANNUAL FOUNDERS' DAY DINNER
TUESDAY, APRIL 21, 2009

You are invited to be part of the 45th Annual Founders' Day Dinner of the Farmingdale-Bethpage Historical Society, which will be held Tuesday, April 21, 2009, at Palmer's American Grille, 115-123 Fulton Street, Farmingdale, at 6:00pm.

Dr. Peter Bales, a member of the faculty at Queensborough Community College, CUNY, will reflect on the lighter side of American history by sharing some of his many anecdotes from years of classroom teaching.

Nancy White, a Society trustee, is chairing the dinner. She requests that she receive your registration on or before Friday, April 10, 2009. Please be sure to indicate your choice of entrée on the registration form.

The dinner, for a total of \$45 (forty-five dollars) per person, will include crudités, salad, a choice of four entrées, dessert, coffee and tea. Also included are soda and juice on the tables; cash bar for wine and mixed drinks.

Please join us for an evening of fine food and good fellowship as we celebrate the founding of the Society.

Again, please select an entrée for each person in your party, and return the form below to Nancy White by Friday, April 10, 2009.

Nancy White
 315 Conklin Street
 Farmingdale, NY 11735

Enclosed is a check for _____ persons at \$45. each for a total of \$_____ payable to the Farmingdale-Bethpage Historical Society for the 45th Annual Founders' Day Dinner at Palmer's American Grille, 115-123 Fulton Street, Farmingdale, on Tuesday, April 21, 2009, at 6:00pm.

Please indicate entrée selections:

- Chicken Palmer (chicken with prosciutto, spinach, fresh mozzarella with a merlot demiglace), roasted potatoes and mixed vegetables
- Penne a la Vodka
- Grilled Honey Herb Atlantic Salmon, roasted potatoes and mixed vegetables
- Marinated Skirt Steak, roasted potatoes and mixed vegetables

 Your Name

 Telephone Number

 Street Address

 Others in Party

 Town, State, Zip

I/We would prefer to sit with: _____



**Farmingdale-Bethpage
Historical Society**

Box 500
Farmingdale, New York 11735
www.fdale.com

“We hold fast to the elements that
are dear to us.”
- Jesse Merritt

The Farmingdale-Bethpage Historical Society was founded at a meeting in historic Powell House, Merritt Road, Farmingdale, on April 12, 1964. It is chartered as an incorporated non-profit educational and cultural organization by the University of the State of New York.

Executive Board

- Mildred Johnston —President; Membership
- James McCullagh—Vice President
- Gail Goldschrafe—Recording Secretary
- Jeanne M. Buck—Corresponding Secretary
- Frank Bondietti—Treasurer; Collections Committee
- JoAnne Bihary—Trustee; Hospitality; Collections Committee
- Serena Brochu—Trustee; Newsletter Editor; Collections Committee
- Nancy Cinque—Trustee
- Eric Goldschrafe—Trustee
- William J. Johnston—Trustee
- JoAnn Krapp—Trustee; Exhibits Coordinator
- Pierre Lehmuller—Trustee
- Dolores McAfee—Trustee
- Seymour Weinstein—Trustee; Website
- Nancy White—Trustee
- Maria Zito—Trustee
- Lawrence R. Jorgensen —Ex-Officio Immediate Past President

**Farmingdale-Bethpage Historical
Society**
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