

Tenth Anniversary Year 2009

Winter Edition

THE MISS MARY E. MARTIN STORY

The Floral Park Historical Society first learned of Miss Mary E. Martin when Walter Gosden, Village Historian, found a seed catalogue on e-Bay dated 1896 with the name Miss Mary E. Martin and the place, Floral Park, printed on it. This news intrigued FPHS's member and director, Jeanne Petta. Soon she was researching the life of the entrepreneur seedswoman and contemporary of the infamous seedsman, John Lewis Childs.

Jeanne's extensive research began at the Queens Library and the Horticultural Museum /Library in Cincinnati, Ohio where she located Mary E. Martin's 1896 and 1897 catalogues.

Turn to page 3 for the rest of the story:

You are Cordially Invited

Victorian Christmas

Luncheon

1:00 p.m., Sunday, December 7, 2008

*Jack Duggan's Restaurant
145 Tulip Avenue*

*Lunch Entrée (three choices)
Dessert, Soft Drinks, Coffee/Tea
\$25 per person*

Reserve before December 4, 2008

*Check payable to: FPHS
Mail to: Ann Corbett, President
113 South Tyson Avenue, Floral Park*

ARE YOU A PROSPECTIVE DOCENT?

Docents are educators who are trained to further the public's understanding of the cultural and historical collections of an institution.

In Floral Park docents are volunteers at the local history museum who function as guides and perform other duties. Their efforts are in concert with the Floral Park Historical Society and the Village Historian. Docents seek to acquire an accurate body of knowledge related to the history of the Floral Park community.

After accumulating enough information, the docents feel comfortable conducting museum tours and giving lectures. Docents keep up-to-date through their involvement in the historical society, the society's museum operation and evolving collection and through educational opportunities, including those provided by the Village Historian.

Docents can be found at many institutions, including local, state and national museums, zoos, historical landmarks and parks.

THE EDITOR'S CORNER

The Docent's Digest, Winter Edition, was published to help usher in the **Tenth Anniversary of the Floral Park Historical Society**. The founding members are especially proud that the organization is recognized as a bona-fide New York State historical society with a charter and 501(c)(3) nonprofit status.

Under the leadership of Walter Gosden, the first president and Floral Park Village Historian, the organization became well established. In 2007, during Peter Fleig's tenure as president, the FPHS Museum was officially opened. After space at Floral Park Centennial Hall, formerly the Masonic Temple, was refurbished and new showcases and displays were installed, the public was invited to visit the modest museum and since then, group tours have been available by appointment. At present the society is readying an area next to the museum for volunteers to do archival/preservation work.

The FPHS has enjoyed unprecedented community support over the past ten years. Mayor Phil Guarnieri, Deputy Mayor Kevin Greene and Trustees Tom Tweedy, Jim Rhatigan, and Mary Grace Tomecki, and the board members when I was mayor, have supported the FPHS activities and the establishment of its museum at Centennial Hall. Many with a passion for history have contributed their time and efforts to serve as FPHS officers and directors and others helped with programs, tours, creating a website and much more. Substantial donations have made the "idea" of a local museum become a reality. I wish I could list all the people and groups who contributed in countless ways to help the FPHS fulfill its mission and stay on a steady path of growth and success.

In 2007 the FPHS decided to sponsor the Floral Park Centennial Gala. After extensive fundraising, the committee that was formed was able to raise substantial funds to keep the cost of the Gala affordable for guests and have \$10,000 plus dollars for a FPHS fund to cover the organization's educational programs, museum projects and archival activities. In appreciation, several hundred community members who contributed \$25 or more in the 2008 fundraisers will be given complimentary "Tenth Anniversary Year Memberships" in the FPHS. These lucky people will not need to renew their memberships or pay dues until May of 2010. If you qualify, the membership card printed in this newsletter will have my personal signature on it.

On behalf of the entire membership, I extend my gratitude for the support extended to the Floral Park Historical Society over the past ten years by friends, neighbors, business owners and government officials who value the rich history of our Village.

Ann V. Corbett, Editor/FPHS President

MARY E. MARTIN (Cont. p.1)

1870 Census– Father-John Martin; Irish immigrant; a farm laborer; Mother-Bridget; housekeeper; 4 daughters; owned home; Port Washington post office

1880 Census- Martin family, 5 children; Franklin Square

1910 Census- Sister Margaret head of the household; New Hyde Park;

Mary listed seed house employer; Jericho (Covert and Jericho area)

1920 Census- Margaret head of household; home-no mortgage; Mary- seed store;

Catherine- seed store

1920- Last known copy of Mary E. Martin's seed catalogues;

August 25, 1932- Mary's Last Will and Testament, handwritten and signed by Mary three days before her death; Catherine named executrix; deed for house, 261 Jericho Turnpike, Floral Park (Margaret died March 14, 1923)

1930- Census- Mary head of household; dressmaker; 261 Jericho Turnpike;

house valued at \$10,000, no mortgage

1932- Death Certificate recorded in Floral Park; Mary died August 30; age 66; occupation "seed" life. Picture of gravestone; birth date revealed- February 28, 1866, Lakeville

1946- Catharine died; Will; no obituary

Sisters buried in St. Bridget's Church Cemetery, Westbury; now Holy Rood Cemetery

Mary E. Martin Catalogues

"Trade catalogues of seeds, 1841-1932," University of California, Santa Barbara; Cornell Catalogues- Miss Mary E. Martin (firm) materials, Ethel Z. Bailey, Horticultural Catalogue Collection, 1897-1920; Jamaica Queens Public Library 1896 Martin catalogue

Noteworthy statements and information printed in her catalogues:

"I am in no way whatsoever connected with any other seed or floral establishment doing business in Floral Park," Floral Park, NY, January 1, 1916. These words were in her 1899 catalogue which also states, "My place of business is located one-half mile from the station on Jericho Road." She also mentions traveling to Edinburgh and discovering the pansy-violet. In 1910 catalogue she names a yellow calla lily for Mrs. Theodore Roosevelt...References to the "World famous Cottage Gardens" remains a mystery.

Do you have information to help complete the rest of the story of Mary E. Martin? Please contact the FPHS. A special thank you to Jeanne Petta

LONG ISLAND LIGHTHOUSES

In February 2009 the FPHS will host a program by Robert G. Muller about Long Island's lighthouses. Muller is the author of *Long Island's Lighthouses: Past and Present*, was the founder of the Long Island Chapter of the US Lighthouse Society, and is currently Historian and Preservation Coordinator. He is the creator of the LongIslandLighthouses.com website and a volunteer at several area lighthouses. We are pleased to have him visit our historical society to present interesting facts about Long Island lighthouses and their fascinating history and charm. He has been featured in *Newsday* and *Long Island Boating World*, quoted in the *New York Times* and has appeared on New 12 Long island. The public is invited to attend the free Sunday afternoon program/meeting at Centennial Hall at 2:00 p.m. on February 1.

DATES TO REMEMBER:

Sunday, January 4, 2009

Tour at 1:00 p.m.

Cathedral of the Incarnation

Enjoy the atmosphere of the traditional Christmas - New Year season in this historic church with its festive candles, Poinsettias and wreaths posed to refresh a visitor's spirit as 2009 begins.

Car pool -12:30 p.m. (driver's please)
at Centennial Hall (do not park in lot)

Cathedral Address:

50 Cathedral Ave., Garden City, NY 11530

Reservations Limited

Call: Adele 516 775-8291

Sunday, February 1, 2009

Meeting/Program 2:00 p.m.

"Long Island Lighthouses"

Bob Muller, speaker

Sunday March 1, 2009

Meeting/Program, 2:00 p.m.

"Bill Olivet-Poet and Artist"

Ann Corbett, Speaker

Sunday, April 5, 2009

Tour of Fort Totten

Details to Be Announced

Sunday, May 17, 2009

Annual Meeting/Tour

East Rockaway Grist Mill

Details to Be Announced

***No meeting on 1st Mon. of May**

Monday, June , 2009

Meeting/Program, 7:30 p.m.

Floral Park Trivia/Prizes

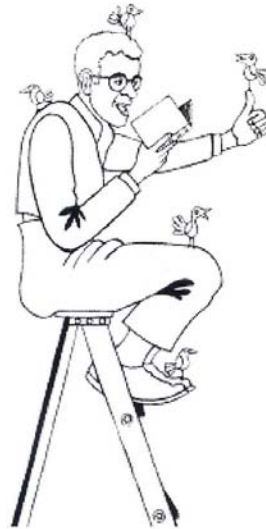
Homespun Stuff

Rhymes and Sketches of
William Meade Olivet

THE JIGGLER

They've asked me why I mostly write,
The humorous kind of stuff,
I think that making people smile,
Is really quite enough.

I like the lusty kind of poem,
That makes most folks giggle.
It's fun to know I brought some laughs,
And made their stomachs jiggle.



MINIATURE REPLICAS

Miniature wooden replica collectibles of John Lewis Childs' family home and his Seed Warehouse are now available. John Rossi, a Rockland County, New York, artisan has created the replicas for the FPHS. The first two are of a series of building replicas being created for an Early Floral Park Buildings Collection. Each replica is signed and dated. Each cost \$25 plus \$5 shipping and handling (delivery 3-4 wks.) Replicas can be viewed on the website. Call 516 775-6849 for more details.

VILLAGE HISTORIAN'S MESSAGE

I continue to keep informed of what is going on at the state level by my membership in the Association of Public Historians of New York State. Their next meeting of the Long Island historians is November 15th in Farmingdale. We also continue to know how other museums of all sizes are doing through our membership in the Museum Association of New York.

I completed the taping of "A Walking Tour of Floral Park" in September. James Green who is a member of the FPHS is the manager of 4VS and has a great crew of volunteers. By having the opportunity to work with these professionals and volunteers, I came to appreciate the huge amount of time it takes to complete a show. The editing of the walking tour will take place this winter. By years end the 4VS "100 Images for 100 Years," a collection of photographs will be complete.

I am planning to give a talk about the community's history to the 4th thru 6th grade students at Our Lady of Victory School in April. In October I gave a presentation on the history of Floral Park, Bellerose Village, Bellerose Terrace at a Floral Park - Bellerose Elementary School District staff development day. Staff members were given booklets with illustrations, a time line, and maps of the area for future reference.

Walter Gosden, Floral Park Village Historian

COMMUNITY SUPPORT

Donors Plaque Installed

The FPHS has received monetary donations from individuals, families, businesses and organizations since its founding in 1999. An appropriate Donor's Plaque has been installed at the Floral Park Historical Society Museum in recognition and appreciation of the support and generosity of those who gave substantial donations of over \$1,000. The engraved plates on the plaque read as follows: Peter and Jeanette Fleig, Henry W. Smith and John J. Kilbride Families, Floral Park Police Benevolent Association, The Pfizer Foundation, The Floral Terrace and "A Friend and Family."

New York State Grant

In July members of the FPHS met with N.Y.S. Senator Craig Johnson and thanked him for being instrumental in securing the society a \$3,000 Legislative Initiative Grant to help refurbish an area of Floral Park Centennial Hall adjacent to the museum for use as an archival-workroom for volunteers. N.Y.S. Senator Michael Balboni was instrumental in securing a N.Y.S. Legislative Grant to purchase museum showcases in 2005.

Canon Camera Donation

Through the efforts of Kevin Fogarty, Director of Field Operations at Canon U.S.A., Inc. the FPHS received the generous donation of a first class Canon digital camera. The camera will be used for recording local events, publicity, museum activities, website input and archival work. The society is fortunate to have received the camera and would like to extend a sincere thank you to Kevin. The camera will be an asset to the organization for many years to come. The FPHS was also given a Canon scanner in the summer of 2008.

MUSEUM NOTES

The large glass display case donated by the Floral Park Police Department is now in place in the auxiliary museum room and filled with material from the historical collection that was mostly acquired when FPHS Director Fran Hornberger was Director of the Floral Park Library. Enlarged images and photos that were on display have been remounted. New display boards highlighting John Lewis Childs' properties and the covers of his seed catalogues and those of other early flower growers in the area are vividly shown, including those of Miss Mary E. Martin, seedswoman from 1896 to circa 1920.

George Bowen and Walter Gosden are reviewing options on the air conditioning system for the museum and archival area. The archive area will be located on the same floor as the museum to allow easy access through the rear door of the main museum area. Thank you to the village's public works maintenance crew for patching and painting the walls and removing the old carpet.

ON LOAN AT MUSEUM

A Home Educator, Easel Desk and Blackboard "Made Exclusively for Sears, Roebuck & Co." was sold in the 1920s. This oak furnishing was purchased by parents to help their children learn about flowers, birds, the alphabet, music, government, penmanship and even Boy Scout flag signals. It also served as a writing desk. It has two rollers with paper scrolls and handles to turn the rollers to expose the printed educational information and color pictures of birds, flowers, fruits and vegetables and more. The easel/desk was a find for Ann Corbett at a Stewart Manor church fair, thanks to her sister-in-law Elaine Corbett Peterson, an avid antique collector who spotted the antique. In Elaine's years of collecting, she had only seen one of these chalkboard/desks. Elaine cleaned the oak wood and did some repair work; the scrolls were prepped by Ann for the rollers and the easel was ready for display at the museum.

Elaine, who grew up in Floral park, is lending the museum an antique mechanical toy clown that does fascinating tricks. It is anticipated that these items will serve as "inter-actives" for the school children who visit the museum.

FLORAL PARK HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Website: www.floralparkhistorical.org

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