



THE YEOMAN

Farmingdale-
Bethpage
Historical Society
www.fbhsli.org

Mildred Johnston, President

James McCullagh, Vice-President

“Nine First Ladies of New York State”, February 27 Program

Of the 46 women who have served as America's First Lady, nine of them, or almost 20%, were born in New York State. On Sunday, February 27, historian Elizabeth Kahn Kaplan will introduce the audience to these nine different women at a meeting of the Farmingdale-Bethpage Historical Society to take place at Farmingdale Village Hall, 361 Main Street, Farmingdale.

Each one of these women has a fascinating story which will be told. Four recent First Ladies from New York are familiar to most of us today: Eleanor Roosevelt, Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis, Nancy Reagan, and Barbara Bush. Others, less well known, also have stories to be heard. One was the daughter of a New York City gentleman who avoided taking part in the American Revolution. Nonetheless, she married a Founding Father. Before her husband became President, she played a dramatic part in saving the wife of Marquis de Lafayette from the guillotine.

Those attending the program will also enjoy learning answers to questions such as these: Which wife spoke only Dutch to her husband? Who was known as "The Rose of Long Island" before marrying a President 30 years her senior? Which First Lady gave birth to a daughter whose name was affixed to a candy bar?

This entertaining yet informative talk, co-sponsored by the New York Council on the Humanities, provides insight into the social, political, and economic differences among the nine intriguing First Ladies born in New York State. The program is free and open to all. Come to Farmingdale Village Hall, 361 Main Street, on Sunday, February 27 at 2:00 p.m. for this exciting presentation. Further information on the Farmingdale-Bethpage Historical Society, or this program, is available at www.fbhsli.org or by calling 516-249-3099.

“Harbor Seals”

Winter water watchers are sometimes rewarded with a glimpse of Long Island harbor seals. They almost always return to Long Island waters. The seals generally wander south in winter from large herds in New England. In effect, they choose our south shore as a winter resort, where they can feed on flounders. This migration is not new. The harbor seals were here, in fact, long before the white man. Many a Shinnecock is said to have made his principal winter garment from the seal's pelt. And the harbor seal was known in legend, as well. An Algonquin legend has a sorcerer named Missou asking the seals to help restore the world after the great flood -- this, by gathering earth from the waters. The harbor seal ... a traditional cold weather Long Island visitor.

Ray Adell
"About Long Island"



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Elizabeth Kahn Kaplan, Speaker on Sunday, February 27

Elizabeth Kahn Kaplan, the speaker at the FBHS meeting on Sunday, February 27, is a writer and lecturer on art and history. She has written curriculum guides for the New-York Historical Society, a teachers' guide for Stony Brook University on George Washington's spy ring, and has co-edited a book on the artist William Sidney Mount for the Three Village Historical Society.

As a volunteer docent at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City, she offers tours of the museum as well as off-site lectures on specific highlights of the collection. For the past nine years, Liz Kaplan has been a Speaker in the Humanities for the New York Council for the Humanities. She offers four programs under NYCH sponsorship. The Farmingdale-Bethpage Historical Society has qualified for funding for all of these programs over the last several years, of which the upcoming February 27th program is the latest. The other programs in this series were: "Political Puns and Social Satire in the Genre Paintings of William Sidney Mount", "Washington Crossing the Delaware: The Story Behind the Painting", and "George Washington's Long Island Spy Ring".

Be sure to save the afternoon of Sunday, February 27 to attend Liz Kaplan's new program on "America's Nine First Ladies from New York State"!

"Long Island Carriage Collection" Opens Winter Lecture Series

Joshua Ruff, Curator of the Carriage and History Collection at the Long Island Museum, spoke at the Society's first meeting of 2011 on Sunday, January 23 on the topic "A National Treasure in Your Backyard: The Carriage Collection of the Long Island Museum." The meeting was held at Farmingdale's historic Village Hall, and Deputy Mayor Patricia Christiansen served as the official host.

Mr. Ruff surveyed the history of carriages in the United States, the story behind the development of the more than 200 horse-drawn vehicles in the collection, and recent changes to the museum at Stony Brook.. His presentation opened the Society's Winter Lecture Series.

Trustees Joseph Carosella Sr. and Eric Goldschrafe assisted Mr. Ruff with setting up the projection arrangements for the illustrated program. JoAnne Bihary chaired the abundant and attractive hospitality time following the presentation, assisted by Robert Deignan. Trustee Goldschrafe also spoke on the continuing Civil War Memorial Fund, which will provide a permanent historical tribute to those men from the Farmingdale area who served in the conflict of 1861-1865.

Although the attendance was undoubtedly reduced by the most frigid temperatures of the winter to date, members and guests traveled from as far as Stony Brook and East Williston to attend the program.

Penn Station Centennial Program Presented in Seaford

Rail historians David Morrison and Pierre Lehmuller presented the program "The 100th Anniversary of Penn Station" to the Seaford Historical Society at the SHS Museum on February 3, 2011. Mr. Morrison has long worked with the FBHS on commemorating LIRR events, and Mr. Lehmuller is a Society Trustee. They created this presentation for the FBHS last year, and premiered it on March 21, 2010 for the conclusion of last year's Winter Lecture Series.



THE YEOMAN Celebrates Its Forty-Fifth Anniversary

In February 1966 the late Alonzo Gibbs (1915-1992) of the Farmingdale-Bethpage Historical Society founded a newsletter for the new organization, then only 22 months old. In the first issue, "Vol 1, No. 1", he proposed the name THE YEOMAN. Mr. Gibbs explained: "The word "yeoman" is late Middle English and can mean "a man owning or cultivating a small estate; a freeholder under the rank of gentleman; or loosely, a countryman of respectable standing."

"Any of these definitions would fit Thomas Powell or Thomas Whitson, and their sons who settled and farmed the Bethpage Purchase. We therefore believe that THE YEOMAN might be a suitable name for our society's newsletter and we hope that the name and format will meet with your approval at the next regular business meeting."

Forty-five years later THE YEOMAN proudly continues as the newsletter of the Farmingdale-Bethpage Historical Society.

Executive Board Meetings

The next meeting of the officers and trustees of the Society will be on Thursday, March 3 at 7pm, location to be determined. The meetings will follow the traditional first, non-holiday Thursday of the month schedule. Subsequent meeting dates will be: April 7 and May 5, 2011 (location to be announced). 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.

Northside School 50th Anniversary Program on Friday, June 10

Northside Elementary School in Farmingdale reaches its 50th anniversary on Valentine's Day, February 14, 2011. In addition to the annual "Northside Birthday Party" held by the faculty and PTA for current students in mid-February, this year a special program and reception will take place for adult alumni and former faculty and staff in late spring.

At 4 PM on Friday, June 10, following student dismissal, the program will be held in Northside's All-Purpose Room. Self-guided tours of the building, which has been enlarged in 1994 and 2003, will follow.

An evening reception at Stuart Thomas Manor will be held for Northside alumni who were graduated from high school by the year 2000 as well as present and former faculty members. Admission to this event will be by prepaid ticket.

Two FBHS Trustees are also serving on the Northside 50th Anniversary Committee, JoAnn Krapp and Bill Johnston.

Relatives and friends of Northside alumni are asked to alert them of the event. Further information will be released in the near future.



“A New Elementary School For Farmingdale”

Tuesday, February 14, 1961 was not an ideal day weather-wise for opening a new school, especially an elementary school. But Northside School opened for the first time to students on that cold, snowy Valentine's Day.

Situated on the northern border of the Village of Farmingdale, adjacent to Bethpage State Park, Northside was to be the last public elementary school erected in the Farmingdale school district following the surge of young families to eastern Nassau County in the post-World War II years. Woodward Parkway School and the original East Memorial School on East Carmans Road had opened in September 1955, followed by Albany Avenue and Parkway Oaks in September 1957. Back in September 1950 there had been 2,068 K-12 students, all attending Main Street School, then the district's only building. In September 1960 that had grown to 10,422 students served by six schools, including Howitt High School, which opened in 1953. Thus the new elementary school still under construction, Northside, was sorely needed, as were Mill Lane; being built as a junior high school, and the new senior high school in South Farmingdale. All three of these were officially dedicated on the same day, November 4, 1962.

In 1960, the original 1912 portion of Main Street School, sometimes referred to as the “South Wing,” was found to be structurally deficient, resulting in its closing. This added to the pressures on a rapidly growing school population.

Northside's founding principal, the late Marion P. Waite, had served as principal previously at East Memorial School. The first assistant principal was Mary Forbes. Some years later Mrs. Waite reflected on that memorable “Opening Day.” There were 1,461 K-5 students assigned to Northside for “Opening Day,” many of them reassigned from neighboring Main Street School. Grades K through 4 were on double sessions, morning and afternoon, two classes per classroom. Only Grade Five students were on a full-day single session.

The only new furniture for the fifty-two teachers was their desks and filing cabinets. Students' desks were transported from their previous school.

The gymnasium was not yet finished by the building contractor, so physical education classes were not conducted in the early days. The kitchen also was not completed, so the lunch program did not begin immediately.

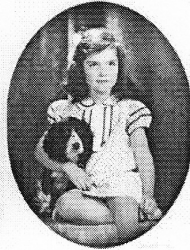
Adding to the difficulties of that first day, the district's contract bus company reduced the planned number of routes from eight to seven, so students had to be reassigned buses on short notice.

The first day at Northside included walking tours of the new school for all classes. So that the excitement of the day did not cause children to forget that February 14 is Valentine's Day, all classroom teachers provided decorated boxes so that their students could exchange greetings.

Over the years the children, faculty, and PTA of Northside have observed Valentine's Day as its “birthday,” recalling that Opening Day in 1961. In 2011, a special program for alumni, as well as present and past faculty and staff, will also be held, marking Northside's fiftieth anniversary. This special celebration will be held on Friday, June 10.



**FARMINGDALE-BETHPAGE HISTORICAL SOCIETY
PRESENTS
"AMERICA'S NINE FIRST LADIES
FROM NEW YORK STATE"**



A Presentation By
ELIZABETH KAHN KAPLAN

**SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 27th AT 2:00 PM
FARMINGDALE VILLAGE HALL, 361 MAIN STREET**

Co-Sponsored by the New York Council for the Humanities

A free program open to all!

For more information call (516) 249-3099 or go to www.fbhsli.org



**Farmingdale-Bethpage
Historical Society**

Box 500
Farmingdale, New York 11735
www.fbhsli.org

"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.

**Farmingdale-Bethpage Historical
Society**
Box 500
Farmingdale, New York 11735

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