

FREEPORT HISTORICAL SOCIETY & MUSEUM

FREEPORT, NEW YORK

Newsletter

Fall 2014



Message from the President

The Freeport Historical Society depends on its officers and trustees to make this organization a successful one.

Thanks to:

GARDENING: Ellen Kelly for her transformation of our garden, Herb Jurist for trimming and weeding, Denise Rushton for watering the garden, and Marty Himes for mowing our lawn and keeping it lush and green.

COMMUNICATIONS: Jeanne Booth for maintaining our website, checking our email, posting to Facebook, and making the newsletter happen. Ruth Sandhaas for printing the newsletter. Marianne Endo for printing the labels. Mary Ellen Bolognese and Mary Hessel for helping with the laborious task of getting it ready for the post office.

HOSPITALITY: Lorraine Avitabile for providing refreshments for our general and trustees meetings.

HOSTS: Billy and Gail Nelson for ensuring there are docents for Sundays. All the officers and trustees for acting as docents on Sundays.

FUNDRAISING: Rita Carter for the House Tour. Dave Denenberg for securing funds for the Museum from the Nassau County Hotel/Motel Tax.

HOUSEKEEPING: Jack Holly for arranging for the cleaning of the Museum.

ACCESSIONING: We are putting all our records and photographs in databases. Peter Crisci for working on the 1910-1920 Pedigrees (arrest records.) Denise Rushton for the metadata for Long Island Memories. Regina Feeney for scanning photographs and researching Freeport history.

Calendar of events...

Oct. 5, 2014	House Tour 1 to 4pm
Oct. 23, 2014	Long Island Arts Council Arty Party
Nov. 23, 2014	Museum closes for the season
Dec. 4, 2014	General Meeting - Memories of Bennington Park Freeport Memorial Library, 7 to 9pm

General Meeting

Bennington Park was a real estate development in the Village of Freeport. In 1902, W. Newton Bennington and Charles S. Powell began to sell lots for individual homes in a section of Freeport that they named Bennington Park. The Bennington Realty Company advertised the sale of these lots in New York newspapers like the *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*. Located between the Long Island Railroad and Merrick Road, the lots were advertised as close to the railroad and to the seaside. At that time, Freeport was a resort location.

However, by 1910, a wave of migrants arrived in Freeport and settled in Bennington Park. Many African Americans moved from the South to Freeport in search of better opportunities for work. Southern-born African Americans lived alongside white immigrants of Italian, Irish, Portuguese, and eastern-European ancestry. They sought employment in skilled and unskilled positions, as day laborers, in the hotels, and in the private homes. In 1910, many African American women were employed as house servants and laundresses, and many African American men worked as laborers, chauffeurs, and gardeners. Local businesses in Bennington Park included: Angelo Preziosi's Bennington Market, Frank Constantino's Roosevelt Sales Co. (used tires), Cecile Beauty parlor, Frank Ustica's poultry, and Freeport Glazing Works (still in business).

By 1950, Bennington Park was crowded and deteriorated. Some African Americans owned their homes in Bennington Park, but most rented their homes from landlords who made few improvements to the buildings. The poor living conditions were identified by the New York State Housing Commission and Freeport residents, who sought to redevelop the location.

Redevelopment of Bennington Park began in the 1950s. Most of the homes were demolished and the location was rezoned for commercial use. A few homes are left but most of Bennington Park is made up of warehouses and stores north and south of Sunrise Highway. Staples, Home Depot, and Cablevision are now in their place. There is some low income housing at the Moxey Rigby and Liberty Park apartments.

Former residents of Bennington Park have fond memories of living there. They have developed a bond that transcends ethnicity and love to reminisce about the great times they had living in that diverse community despite some of the problems.

Welcome New Members!

Individual

- Peter Crisci
- Werner Freitag
- Phil Jennette

In memory of...

- Jane Jersic donated by Joan and Gerald Howell
- Jane Jersic donated by Charles J. Zimmerman
- Henry and Cookie Altengarten donated by Mary Ann Hohensee

In memory of...



Jane Jersic was a long time trustee of the Freeport Historical Society as well as a vice president. She was so helpful in heading up the hospitality committee that provided refreshments for all our meetings. We could always depend on her to do what was needed to make the Society successful. She was also an active member of the First Presbyterian Church, SPLASH, and an auxiliary member of the Freeport Chamber of Commerce.



Fred Hager was a life member of the Freeport Historical Society and a chronicler of Freeport history. He donated military artifacts to the Museum as well as an extensive political button collection. He and Isabelle Drach co-authored a book *Freeport: It's a Wonderful Town*. Fred loved to tell stories about Freeport bringing back wonderful memories. He had retired a special assistant to several county executives and served in World War II. He also was a past commander of the William Clinton Story American Legion Post 342.

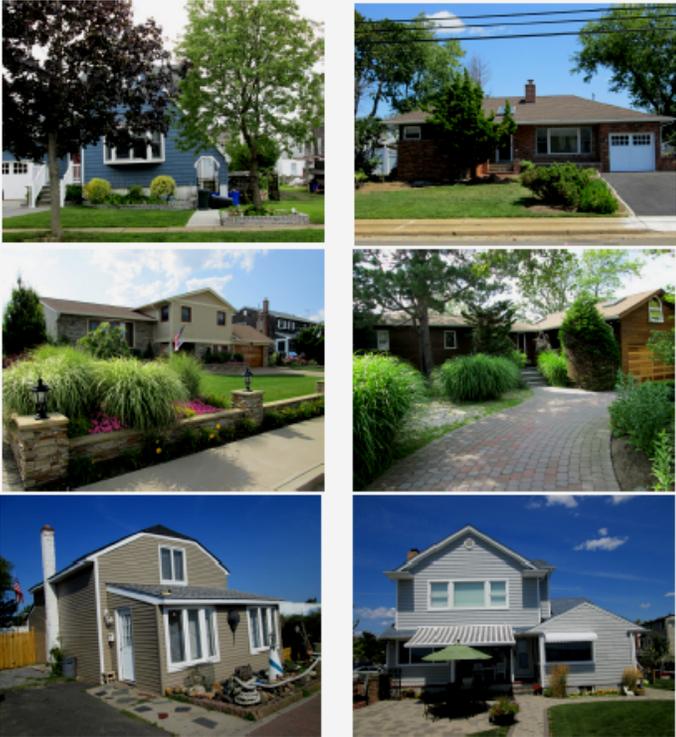
Freeport House Tour

The Freeport Historical Society is pleased to announce that we are again presenting the House Tour on October 5th. This year we are featuring houses that were affected by Superstorm Sandy and have been restored. Many of the homeowners have taken the opportunity to make spectacular improvements. From Freeport Bay Estates (off South Main Street) to Meister Beach, the tour of six houses encompasses small, medium sized and large homes located in south Freeport. One home was flooded with four feet of water, while another resident is just getting back into her house. Come hear their stories and revel in the resiliency of Freeporters. All the proceeds will go to maintain the Freeport Historical Society and Museum.

Freeport Historical Society Presents

Freeport House Tour

Sunday, October 5, 1 to 4 p.m.



Donation: \$20 members, \$25 nonmembers
For more information and tickets, please contact:
Historical Society Tel.: (516) 623-9632

Roadside Markers

Regina Feeney, Mary Kane, Denise Rushton, and Cynthia Krieg submitted a grant to the Pomeroy Foundation for seven roadside markers.

The Pomeroy Foundation was founded by Bill Pomeroy and one of its goals is to promote historic research, preservation, and historic tourism. They have funded almost 100 historic markers throughout New York State. This year, only historic sites from before 1914 were considered and we had to submit primary sources and obtain permission from the owners to place markers on their property. Each marker costs about \$1100. Thanks to the Foundation for accepting our proposals.

The seven markers will be placed at:

- the Columbus Avenue School,
- the Seaman Avenue School (Administration building),
- Archer Street School,
- Woodcleft Canal
- Trubia (cannon on Main Street and Church Street),
- the Freeport Bank, and
- Kelby House (corner on Lena Avenue and Wallace Street).



Example of roadside marker



Arty Party

Regina Feeney and Cynthia Krieg will be honored by the Long Island Arts Council at their Arty Party on October 23rd. They will be given the Literary Award for their book on Freeport and other historical articles. If you can, we would appreciate your attending the Arty Party in support of Regina and Cynthia.



CAKELESS BAKE SALE

No trouble, No cooking, No fuss! Just mail a donation to us! THANK YOU
This is our major fund raiser to help pay for the upkeep of the Museum. All contributions are tax deductible.

Name _____

Address _____

Contribution \$ _____

Please make check payable to "Freeport Historical Society

Mail to Ruth Sandhaas, 20 Arizona Ave., Rockville Centre, 11570

Officers and Trustees

President and Curator Cynthia Krieg
1st Vice President Marty Himes
Treasurer Ruth Sandhaas
Corresponding Secretary Marianne Endo
Recording Secretary Jeanne Booth
Director of Extension Services Robert J. Raynor
Archivist Regina G. Feeney
Genealogist Carol Poulos

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Miguel Bermudez	William Nelson
Rita Carter	Helen Razzano
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Paul Eberst	Denise Rushton
Regina Feeney	Camilla Wier
Mary Hessel	Steven Williams
Jack Holly	Frank Young

On the Web

We can be found on the web at:
www.freeporthistorymuseum.org. There you will find our current events and latest news! Don't forget to check out the longislandmemories.org site. We have over 5,000 photos loaded there.

Follow us on **Twitter!** Our handle is @FrptHisSoc

Join our group on **Facebook!**

Read our blog **freeportlihistory.blogspot.com**

Contact us at **freeporthistoricalsociety@yahoo.com**

Visit us at our **Second Life** office (pictured below)



MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS!

2014-2015 memberships are up for renewal. Check the mailing label for your expiration date. Our fiscal year is April 2014 to March 2015. Please continue your support of the Museum's operation. Your dues are tax deductible. If you want a membership card, pick it up at the Museum or at the meeting.

Freeport Historical Society is a non-profit organization solely supported by memberships and contributions. In addition to the regular memberships, the Society has established a LIFE MEMBERSHIP FUND and a MEMORIAL FUND for receiving gifts.

Please make check payable to "The Freeport Historical Society", P.O. Box 323, Freeport, NY 11520

- INDIVIDUAL (\$10 annually) FAMILY (\$15 annually) SUSTAINING (\$25 annually)
- ORGANIZATIONS/CORPORATIONS (\$50 annually)
- LIFE MEMBER (Single Donor \$150) LIFE MEMBER (Organizations/Corporations \$250)
- MEMORIAL FUND (In memory of) _____ \$ _____

Name _____

Address _____ Phone _____

Email _____

Please circle any area of interest as the Society NEEDS your participation and help.

Host/Hostess at the Museum Digital accessioning Newsletter Filing Research Gardening
 Photography Cleaning Hospitality Committee (baking) Membership Mailings Graphic Arts