

FINs News & Updates



SPOTLIGHT ON WILLIAM FLOYD ESTATE

By Kathy Krause

Summer is in full swing and Independence Day is fast approaching. A great place to celebrate the holiday weekend is the William Floyd Estate, the ancestral home of General William Floyd, an American revolutionary and New York's first and youngest signer of the Declaration of Independence.

Eight generations of the Floyds resided on the Estate over a 250-year period, during which time the Estate transitioned from a northern colonial plantation to a working farm, to a summer estate and hunting preserve. In 1976, William Floyd's great-great granddaughter, Cornelia Floyd Nichols, and her family donated the Estate to the National Park Service (NPS). The NPS works to preserve and interpret the continuum of Floyd family life.

William Floyd Estate through the lens of artist photographer Xiomaro. Photo by Xiomara.com



Today, you can enjoy free guided tours of the 25-room Old Mastic House and explore the Estate's sprawling 613 acres of forest, fields, marsh, and trails. The Estate provides a lens into the nation's social, economic, and political evolution during the family's occupancy there as reflected in the varied architecture, furniture styles, artifacts, and land use patterns.

In addition to the regularly scheduled house tours, special programming is on tap for the holiday weekend. On July 4, you can participate in "He Dared to Sign," a talk on the life and times of William Floyd. The following day, enjoy "The Summer Gunner: The Art and Lore of Traditional Decoy Carving," an exploration into the history of decoy carving, the rich tradition of local carvers, and waterfowl hunting in our local bays. Participants on house tours will be treated to the new exhibit of artwork by Floyd family members and guests to the Estate from 1847 to 1975, providing glimpses of the way of life there.

The Independence Day celebration does not stop there. Another new exhibit, "The William Floyd Estate Comes to Patchogue," opens on July 4 at the Patchogue Watch Hill Ferry Terminal located on West Avenue in Patchogue. Along with select artifacts from the Estate, this exhibit features the work of Long Island artist Xiomaro. Xio presents a collection of photographs entitled "William Floyd's House of Revolution." The photos, commissioned by the National Park Service, offer unique perspectives of William Floyd through his personal items, the Old Mastic House as the Floyd family legacy, and a peek at some of the key rooms. The exhibit runs through August 17. Visit www.xiomaro.com for more information and for a free download of Xio's special William Floyd Estate eBook.

To learn more about the William Floyd Estate, as well as other places you can visit and things to see and do at Fire Island National Seashore this holiday weekend and throughout the summer, visit www.nps.gov/fiis/planyourvisit/events.

PRESERVING THREE CENTURIES OF CHANGE

By Chris Olijnyk

The William Floyd Estate, a unit of Fire Island National Seashore located on Long Island in the Village of Mastic Beach, is the ancestral home of Declaration of Independence signer William Floyd. The Estate was annexed to the Seashore in 1965 and is managed to preserve "The Continuum," a history of

changes to the house and grounds made by the family over their 250-years occupancy. Efforts currently underway to preserve the history of this unique site include ongoing construction, routine maintenance, public programs, and thematic exhibits.

In February, installation of a new cedar shake shingle roof began on the Old Mastic House. Though this work may sound fairly straightforward, the quality and size of the eastern red cedar (*Juniperus virginiana*) shingle used for this project can be hard to find in stores today. This is because of the overall lack of large-diameter red cedar trees required to make shingles of this length. After consultation with historic architects, Alaska yellow cedar (*Chamaecyparis nootkatensis*) from the Pacific Northwest was selected as a substitute. An alternate common name for this type of cedar is "stinking cypress," and the Alaska yellow cedar lives up to this moniker, adding its particular aroma to the familiar old house smell.

The structural stabilization of the Old Mastic House is also underway. All houses settle, but after 290 years, some areas settle more than others. The Seashore has engaged the services of GWWO Architects, an engineering firm that is investigating the underlying causes of the issue and providing options for future repair.

A highlight of this year is a new exhibit of selected pieces from the Seashore's museum collection. On display throughout the Old Mastic House, these exhibits generally run for two to three years and reflect upon life at the William Floyd Estate. National Park Service staff selected and installed the current exhibit, "Land, Sea and Sky: Artwork of Old Mastic." Each piece was created on the Estate and range from pen and ink drawings to oil-on-board paintings, decoys, and guest books with humorous doodles. This is the first time that many of these pieces have been on public display and special tours to view and discuss the work will be given on July 12, August 9, September 13, and October 4.

The William Floyd Estate is open Friday to Sunday and federal holidays from May 23 to November 11. The grounds are open 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Old Mastic House tours last one hour and are given every half hour from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. For further information about the Estate and programs, please call 631-399-2030. ■

Fire Island Tide Newspaper, Inc.

Publisher	Kate Heissenbuttel
Editor	Kristin Thieling-Di Rico
Art Director	Mihai Margineanu
Sales	Greg Bodkin
Community Column Editor	Dusty Grant
Circulation & Operations	Skip Henry
Illustrators	Richard Stubler, Scott Munson
Staff photographers	Jim Kelly-Evans, Lorraine Michels
Contributors	Linda Cahill, Robert Wilson, Russell Bouthiller, Dan Evans, Robbie Harris-Byrnes, Shoshanna McCollum, Dr. Cynthia Paulis, Al Lorenzetti, Leeann Brandt, S. Mark Rhodes, Karl Grossman, Charles Scott, Elizabeth Rogers, Bob Spencer, Kit Price, Jeff Kassner, Tom McDonald, D.P. Ridge, Titus Kana, Jon Wilner, Bruce-Michael Gelbert, Joanne Guerin Padovano, Kathy Krause, James Dunphy, Jennifer Stout



Founded in 1977, Published Bi-Weekly For Business, Editorial & Advertising:

631-567-7470

www.fireislandtide.net

P.O. Box 8, Davis Park, NY 11772

Office location:

144 South Country Road, Bellport, NY 11713

The Fire Island Tide Newspaper is a registered trademark. All rights reserved.

Fire Island Tide Newspaper Inc. welcomes letters to the Editor.

Please e-mail them to elaine@fireislandtide.net or mail them ATTN: Editor at the address above.