



Artifacts from the William Floyd family will be available for viewing this weekend at the Curator Building, just around the bend from the Old Mastic House (pictured) where tours will be conducted.

Photo by Xiomaro

Inspect William Floyd's sword and other things

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10/8/2015

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Visitors can witness William Floyd's sword, an impressive 1787 artifact, or Richard Floyd II's bible, with personal writing in it from the 1600s, or the original deed that gave the Floyd

family the title to their first Mastic farm, this weekend.

These items will be among the 200 objects on display in a special exhibit at the Curator Building, honoring the 50th anniversary the William Floyd Estate was gifted to the National Parks Service.

"It's where we house our archival collection," explained Fire Island National Seashore (FINS) Park Ranger MaryLaura Lamont. "It's not a tour but a display of specific objects representing why the William Floyd Estate is so special."

The Curator Building is just around the bend from the Old Mastic House.

You'll have to make a reservation for the Oct. 10 and 11 event; viewings are at 10 a.m., noon and 2 p.m. (Call 631-399-2030.) "I'll have specific objects the public has never seen before representing all nine generations of Floyd family members," Lamont said.

For those unaware of the Floyd Estate's historic significance, William Floyd was the only man in Suffolk County to sign the Declaration of Independence in 1776, risking his life and the loss of 4,400 acres of land he owned at that time, not to mention dire risks for his family. In 1965, his descendants donated 613 acres of the property at the William Floyd Estate to the National Park Service. Floyd's house is the only one open to the public of the four New York signers of the document.

"I've assembled a hodgepodge of rare things people would like to see," Lamont said. "The viewing session would last 45 minutes to an hour. People can stay longer if they want and mill about. But I can't take more than seven or eight people at a time."

The deed to the original Floyd farm, not the manor house, is worth the trip. It's signed by Native American Chief Tobaccus.

Lamont said the donation letters from the Floyd family will be on display. In addition to the programs regarding the donation, house tours will be going on concurrently. So once you see the artifacts, you can stroll over to the Old Mastic House for a trip back in time. Lamont said occasionally the Floyd family is in touch. "The cemetery is still active here so they can still be buried on site," she said.

Visitors flocked to the estate's events in record numbers this summer, said FINS officials. "With the creation of the village of Mastic Beach, the mayor and trustees recognize they have a valuable resource," said FINS Superintendent Christopher Soller. "And the whole TriHamlet group sees it as an anchor. As as we try to get our story out with the public about the special place it is, we find a lot of people are interested in it. It's the continuum of a place from 250 years ago and you see a time that doesn't exist anymore."