

Long Island Traditions

NEWSLETTER

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Landmark on Main Street Concerts

Long Island Traditions and the Landmark on Main Street, Port Washington, are co-sponsoring a series of traditional music concerts this winter. At 8 p.m. on Saturday, January 19th we will be presenting a night of Latino music featuring Luis Cordero y Los Amigos del Amargue and Los Macondos. Luis Cordero plays traditional Dominican merengue and bachata songs with a wide variety of percussive instruments and guitars. Their repertoire includes songs recalling the life of Dominicans living in rural communities, love songs and songs of sorrow. Los Macondos, a group led by Eugenio Ortega, plays the traditional vallenato music of Colombia. Their fast-paced rhythmic melodies evoke the traditional celebrations found in northern Colombia. Both groups reside here on Long Island.

In honor of Black History Month we will be presenting two exciting groups: The Gospel Elders and Little Buster at 8 p.m. on Saturday, February 9th. In this concert the Gospel Elders, based in Freeport & Roosevelt, will perform rousing renditions of "That Little Church on the Hill," "Will the Circle be Unbroken" and other traditional melodies. Joining them will be Little Buster & the Soul Brothers, who never fail to energize their audiences with "Busterized" songs including "Send me Some Lovin'" "How Blue Can You Get" and "Mojo Hand."

Both concerts are \$10; order tickets from the Landmark on Main Street at (516) 767-6444, Monday- Friday, 11 a. m. - 2 p. m. Or go online at www.landmarkonmainstreet.org. ■

Web Site Up and Running

By the time you read this, our official Long Island Traditions Web site, www.longislandtraditions.org should be up and running. Use the site to check out our programs and upcoming events as well as to obtain information about artists and historic preservation. The four most recent issues of the newsletter will also be available online. ■

New Staff Members Welcomed

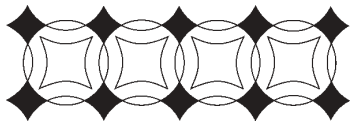
Long Island Traditions has recently hired two new staff members. Barbara LaMonica has joined the staff as administrative and program assistant. Barbara will be assisting in developing our maritime and ethnic folk arts and education programs in the Freeport school district and throughout Long Island. She will also assist in fundraising and grants writing. Barbara is a professional filmmaker who has documented social welfare issues on LI as part of her work.

Ethnomusicologist Sydney Hutchinson will be joining the staff late this month. Sydney will be working full time documenting ethnic cultural traditions focusing on recent immigrants from Asia and Central and South America. She will also be assisting in program development including our annual awards program, Honoring Traditions. Sydney has a master's degree from Indiana University in Bloomington, Ind. and has recently completed an internship with the Center for Traditional Music and Dance in New York City. We welcome both Sydney and Barbara to Long Island Traditions. ■

Photo by Martha Cooper 2000.



Los Macondos will be performing at Landmark on Main Street on Saturday, January 19th at 8pm with Luis Cordero y Los Amigos del Amargue.



Long Island Traditions Inc.

Dedicated to the documentation and preservation of Long Island's living cultural heritage.

Executive Director: Nancy Solomon

Board of Directors: Dorothy Jacobs, Mirna Cortez-Obers, Robert Pachas, Addie Quinn & Wayne Wink

Advisory Board: Paul Bentel, John Eilertsen, Jean Ritchie & Dave Opatow

Program Assistant: Barbara LaMonica

Newsletter Designer: Barbara Koelbel Bange

LI Traditions is a non-profit, tax-exempt organization registered with the NY State Board of Charities.

For more information call (516) 767-8803, fax (516) 767-8805, write to us at 382 Main St., Port Washington, NY 11050 or E-mail: litrad@i-2000.com



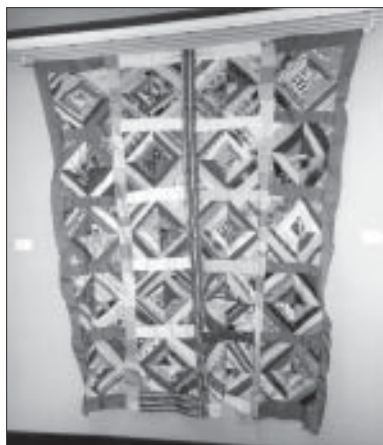
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Passings: Bertha Hall, Quilter

Hempstead resident Bertha Hall, a well-known traditional African American quilter, died in September after a short illness. Recognized by Long Island Traditions in 1996 at our Honoring Traditions program, Hall was a master of traditional strip quilting. In 1997 she was featured in the exhibition "Made in Hempstead: African American Quilting" at Hofstra University. Hall also participated in various programs at the LI Museum of Art and at the Islip Art Museum. Born in Alabama, Hall learned to quilt as a young girl from her mother and grandmother. She moved to New York when she was in her 30s, worked as a domestic and raised two children. She lived in Hempstead from the 1960s onward. Hall taught many quilters at the Hempstead Senior Center and will be missed by many. ■



Bertha Hall was a master teacher of strip quilting at the Hempstead Senior Center and an honoree of Long Island Traditions.



On the Radio

On Friday, Nov. 30 at 2 p.m., our Executive Director, Nancy Solomon, will be the featured guest on Dr. Stella Russell's Cultural Arts Program, "Art in the World," on the Nassau Community College radio station, WHPC-90.3 FM. The show features a discussion of the nature of folk art, how we can preserve folk arts and how we document them. The 30-minute program will also include announcements of upcoming events. ■

Grants Received

As part of the Empire State Partnership program, Long Island Traditions has received funding from the NYS Council on the Arts "Arts in Education" program for our in-school curriculum projects in maritime and ethnic folk arts and traditional architecture. Project highlights include maritime education programs, the documentation of traditional architecture and decorations and the examination of ethnic folk arts on Long Island. Other recent grants include a gift from the Hagedorn Family Foundation for our after-school project at the Shinnecock Indian Education Center, and a \$1,000 grant from the Roslyn Savings Foundation for our arts in education programs in Freeport and other Long Island school districts. We are most grateful for these grants and contributions. ■

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Great Neck Plaza Preservation Meeting

Our next community meeting to discuss preserving Great Neck Plaza's historic sights will be held on Monday, Nov. 12, 2001, at Village Hall, 1 Gussack Plaza, Great Neck Plaza. This informational meeting will begin at 7:30 p.m. and will be led by Long Island Traditions Executive Director Nancy Solomon. For more information and to confirm the meeting call Long Island Traditions at (516) 767-8803. ■

Remember the WTC

By Nancy Solomon, executive director

In Memoriam:
Richard Muldowney Jr., Freeport Fireman

In 1987 I had the experience of meeting “Muldoon,” otherwise known as Richard Muldowney, then owner of the Watson bay house on “Little America” near the Jones Beach inlet. The bay house was originally built in the early 1900s by bayman Andy Watson, who went duck hunting and clamming most of his life. Surrounding Watson, a resident of Freeport, was a group of young firemen and guys from old-time fishing families in Freeport, including Muldoon.

It was on a warm June night in 1987 that I met Muldoon. The bay house was crowded with a motley crew of men, most of whom had grown up in Freeport and were called “bay rats” by some of the local baymen. Muldoon warmly welcomed me, a neophyte among these old salts. As was the custom, I was immediately offered a beer and fresh shucked little neck clams. “I could get used to this,” I thought to myself. However, I quickly realized that there were no other women at the bay house. As a result Muldoon came to protect me the rest of the visit.

That night he taught me about the different kinds of moon and sunlight that shone on the bay, the various kinds of crabs they caught, who told the wildest stories, and whose bay house was the best (theirs of course). He also shared his love of the bay and of his comrades with me, so that it would be recorded. Like other bay house owners, his passion was to save the bay house and the bay.



Photo by Martha Cooper 1989.

The Watson bay house before it was destroyed in 1992.



The Remsen bay house was adopted by Rich Muldowney and others in 1992 after the nor'easter.

Photo by Nancy Solomon, 2000.

While many left the bay, Muldoon and his friends offered to fix up and take care of the Remsen’s bay house, the site of our annual bay house tour. Diligently they fixed the dock, repaired the roof and rear outhouse, painted it shiny sky-blue and hoisted its flag. Today the Remsens and the crowd share the bay house, raising another generation of “bay rats.”

Firemen are among the most dedicated individuals I have ever met, next to fishermen and officers of all kinds. It should not surprise anyone that Muldoon was among those lost in the tragedy of September 11. Officially listed as missing, Muldoon will be remembered as a loyal soul. We hope that his spirit is “on the bay” enjoying clams and beer. Please make a contribution in his honor to the Freeport Fire Dept., PO Box 290, Freeport, NY 11520. Please write on the check in the memo area “WTC Memorial Fund.”

The Freelance Life — and the WTC Tragedy

By Jim Merritt

Like many Long Islanders, I was working at home on the morning the World Trade Center was destroyed, shattering lives, prosperity and — for a while at least — our national sense of well being.

I am a freelance writer — working mostly for the Sunday paper — and I was sitting in front of my home computer, racing to meet a deadline, when the news of the second plane crashing into the WTC came over the radio. Naturally, I ran to the television and became a part of the great national audience watching the tragedy unfold.

At first, my thoughts went to the clerks who worked at Windows on the World, who had served me coffee and sold me souvenirs on a visit to the observation deck last October.

Then I recalled that my brother, Dan, works as an elevator mechanic in the city. The World Trade Center, he once told me, required a round-the-clock staff of elevator mechanics to keep all the lifts running properly. Was he working there that day, I wondered, reaching to call his wife

And there was my friend Peter, member of an airline flight crew, and the firemen, policemen and rescue workers I had grown up with in Levittown and not seen for many years.

In the end, the tragedy touched just one person in my immediate circumference. A firefighter whom I’d known as a boy, whose mom was a close friend of my mom’s, had been on the 36th floor when the WTC fell. I visited his dad and mom during the uneasy time between denial and acceptance of his death, and tried not to talk about him in the past tense.

Meanwhile, I wondered if I’d be drafted to cover the story, but the call never came from my editor to get to the city. And perhaps that is well. I may never win a Pulitzer, but in a way I am glad that there is still room in newspapers for the human interest features known as evergreens. No matter how hard terrorists try to “strike at the heart of America,” that laid-back lifestyle that brought us to the suburbs still goes on as before, and some of it even makes the Sunday papers.



EVENTS OF INTEREST

PLEASE NOTE: If you have a Long Island concert or program that focuses on some aspect of traditional culture, drop us a line and we'll put it in our "Events of Interest" column. The deadline is the 7th of October, January and April.

- Saturday, Nov. 10** Big Grey Concerts presents Freefall, the popular midwest Celtic band, in its New York debut. The concert will be held at the Searing-Roslyn United Methodist Church, 134 I.U. Willets Road, Albertson. Tickets: \$12 general admission, \$10 seniors, \$4 children 12 and under. Call 631-321-1582 for information.
- Monday, Nov. 12** Community meeting to discuss preserving Great Neck Plaza's historic sights 7:30 p.m., Village Hall, 1 Gussack Plaza, Great Neck Plaza. Led by Long Island Traditions Executive Director Nancy Solomon.
- Thursday, Nov. 29** "Love Stories from India." Literary selections going back to the ancient times to the present, plus a short video musical segment, 7:30 p.m. Presenter: Dr. Rohini B. Ramanathan Oceanside (free admission); Phone: 516-766-2360
- Saturday, Jan. 19** Long Island Traditions and the Landmark on Main Street, Port Washington, present a night of Latino music featuring Luis Cordero y Los Amigos del Amargue and Los Macondos. Get tickets (\$10 each) from the Landmark on Main Street at (516) 767-6444, Monday- Friday, 11am - 2pm. Or go online at www.landmarkonmainstreet.org
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