

## Long Island Traditions

# NEWSLETTER

www.longislandtraditions.org

Vol. 14 No. 4 Fall 2007

### Traditional African American Architecture: A Hands-On Project

October 13

Joseph Lloyd Manor House, Lloyd Neck

On Saturday, October 13<sup>th</sup> at 10 am – 12 pm Long Island Traditions and the Society for the Preservation of Long Island Antiquities ([www.splia.org](http://www.splia.org)) are sponsoring a joint children-adult program on the traditional architecture of Long Island's African Americans. Adults can learn about the archaeological project directed by Hofstra University's Chris Matthews, professor of Anthropology, while their children, ages 8-14 can make a model of a traditional slave cabin or historic church using historic photographs and architectural drawings to guide them. The program is limited to 20 children so register early. The cost is \$10/child. The program will take place at the Joseph Lloyd Manor House, located at Lloyd Lane and Lloyd Harbor Road in Lloyd Neck. For directions and to register call (631) 692-4664. This program is sponsored in part by the Suffolk County Office of Cultural Affairs. ■

### Mangala: The Arts of India

November 4

Long Island Children's Museum

Mangala, the Arts of India is scheduled for Sunday, November 4, 2007 at the Long Island Children's Museum. A children's workshop will take place at 11 am followed by a family program at 1:30 pm. Join us for a full day of performances that explore the dynamic range of Indian traditional arts, including Bharanatyam and Odissi Dance, Carnatic singing, tabla drumming and Rangoli arts, taught by master traditional artists. This event is being cosponsored with the Young Indian Culture Group. Tickets are \$10. For more information call Long Island Traditions at (516) 767-8803 or the Young Indian Culture Group at (516) 739-1575. ■



Satya Pradeep will be featured in the Mangala Program at the LI Children's Museum Nov. 4.

### Deer Park Residency Partnership

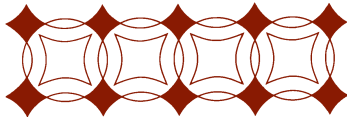
Long Island Traditions welcomes its new partnership with the Deer Park School District. The 4<sup>th</sup> -grade partnership will focus on traditional Trinidadian steelband music and Peruvian songs, led by master musicians Ian Japsi and Steel Sensation, and Theo Torres and Vientos del Sur. The program's goals include breaking down cultural stereotypes of recent immigrants, exploring the contemporary immigrant experience on Long Island, and learning about the traditional music of these accomplished composers and musicians. The Torres residency will begin in October and the Japsi residency will begin in November. Each month-long residency will take place at the school.

Susan Bonner, the new principal at JFK Intermediate School is seeking to infuse arts knowledge and skills into all aspects of the curriculum, thereby creating an integrated and active learning experience for all the students. The program will include the 4<sup>th</sup> grade across all core disciplines including the music department and the art department.

Theo Torres emigrated from Peru in 1984. He resides in Brentwood and is a master teacher for Long Island Traditions. Theo is a true tradition bearer—ensuring that representation and appreciation for his culture is carried on from generation to generation across many schools in our region. Torres will include many of the ethnic musical traditions of his native Peru. Students will learn “El Condor Pasa” a traditional Peruvian song. Torres will also introduce the students to the pan pipe—an instrument indigenous to his culture.

In November Steel Sensation will teach the students about the history and tradition of Trinidadian steel drums and their conversion from utilitarian oil barrels to traditional musical instruments. Students will learn how to play steel drums and produce a podcast.

The program is sponsored in part by funds from the New York State Council on the Arts, the New York State Music Fund, the ASCAP Foundation and the Deer Park School District. For information call Long Island Traditions at (516) 767-8803. ■



## Long Island Traditions Inc.

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

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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, E-mail: litrad@i-2000.com or visit us on the web at: [www.longislandtraditions.org](http://www.longislandtraditions.org)

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# Long Island Traditional Architecture: Places of Worship

## Part 1: English Churches

Places of worship have unique designs that set them apart within a community, a tradition that dates back to ancient times. Many religious texts including the Torah and the Bible describe in detail the design of their sanctuaries, using the numerical terminology of the times. In more recent years the design of sacred spaces are as varied as the types of designs available.

English, Dutch, African and Native American descendants erected their houses of worship in various parts of Long Island. Historic English churches on Long Island include the Caroline Church in Setauket, the Old First Presbyterian Church in Huntington, St. George Episcopal Church in Hempstead and the First Congregational Church in Lake Grove.

Traditional churches built in the 1700 and 1800s by European settlers were usually constructed by master carpenters and joiners, discussing with the congregants what elements were most important to them and what was feasible from an economic point of view. The earliest churches on Long Island were modest in scale, reflecting the amount of money available to build a church, and the congregants' belief that modesty was a virtue.

Early churches like the Caroline Church were wooden frame structures made from local trees cut by the master builders and hewn with axes so that the beams were smooth. The exterior was commonly sheathed in wood shingles or clapboards painted white. Most traditional churches were topped by a steeple. Churches almost uniformly had gable roofs with the entrance on the gable. The pointed gable roof and steeple symbolized reaching upwards towards heaven. Churches frequently sported traditional 6/9 double-sash windows with clear panes. The Greek Revival style was very popular during the late 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> century. As a result there was usually a full pediment on the front, resembling a triangle, along with cornice returns. Other decorative features included a small bell tower or cupola. These features are common even today.



Photo by Nancy Solomon

**The Caroline Church is in East Setauket**

In the 18<sup>th</sup> - and 19<sup>th</sup> - centuries there were distinct features used in church design that reflected the cultural history of the community and settlement patterns. English Episcopal churches frequently have red doors, a characteristic often found in the churches of England. The sanctuary typically had an open floor plan, allowing for the free movement among men and women. Some churches had an elevated platform for the pastor or religious leader that ranged in height from a few inches to several feet. Other sanctuaries had elaborate railings and banisters. Carpeting was extremely rare until after the Civil War in the 1860's. Wooden benches were the most common form of seating for the congregants, while the church rector or leader might have a formal chair. If there were slave owners in the community, there was usually an upstairs slave galley overlooking the sanctuary. The galley was generally small and cramped, accessible only through a small narrow staircase.

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The Caroline Church in Setauket is the 2<sup>nd</sup> oldest Episcopal Church in continuous use in the United States. The church was originally formed as an Anglican church by local townspeople of modest means. When it was completed in 1728, under the direction of local builder John Sears, one of the local parishioners. The church was named after Queen Wilhelmina Karoline, the wife of King George II of England. The worship space was an impressive 30 x 46-foot clapboard shingle building that stood 42- feet high, and cost 1400 pounds. Heavy oak timbers were used to build the church. The steeple is 25-feet high, 15-feet shorter than the original spire. Like other early 18<sup>th</sup> -century Long Island communities, local residents bought slaves from Africa and the West Indies who worked on their farms and in their businesses, ranging from shipbuilding to commercial fishing and whaling. Soon it was necessary to add a balcony to the church so that owners could watch their slaves while they worshipped. This galley remains today.

During the revolutionary war the church became a battleground, with British forces occupying the church. Although many of the church members were loyal to the crown, this did not protect the church from being damaged in local battles. After the British lost the war, these members had to leave, moving to Canada and Nova Scotia which were under British rule. The church declined rapidly as a result.

In the aftermath a new religious movement began in the United States called the “Protestant Episcopal Church” which had its first formal meeting in 1785. The Caroline Church joined this movement. The church requested funds to repair the damage resulting from the war, which was granted. Using oil lamps and kerosene, the church was the symbol of “new” modern 19<sup>th</sup>-century technology.

In the late 1800s the congregation began adding various wings and structures to accommodate its growing numbers and increased wealth. These included a c. 1878 carriage shed for horses and carriages, a c. 1893 carriage barn, and a c. 1905 parish hall and a dressing room. In addition the congregation installed stained glass windows in 1890 that remain today. The most dramatic changes to the church came in 1937 when architect Richard Haviland Smythe, with the help of patron Ward Melville of Stony Brook, attempted to restore the church using materials and styles that they believed were common in the early 1800s. A new foundation was added, while traditional heavy timber framing members



Photo by Nancy Solomon.

**The balcony of the Caroline Church was used to seat slaves prior to emancipation.**

were restored and remain visible today. Other changes included the replacement of a plaster ceiling with a wooden barrel vault ceiling, new woodwork on the church pews and walls, and the addition of an arched passageway for easy access to the church cemetery. The historic lamps were also electrified. The cemetery is a well preserved example of one of the oldest cemeteries on Long Island. Buried in the cemetery is Emma Clark for whom the local library is named, along with members of the Hawkins, Seabury and Bayles families who lived and worked in Setauket. There are approximately 900 children and adults buried in the cemetery.

In the next issue we will examine the history of Dutch, Quaker and African American churches on Long Island.

## Welcome Robin Grosswirth

Long Island Traditions' Education Director

**R**obin Grosswirth, Education Director of Long Island Traditions, joined us in July, replacing Alice Melzer. Robin holds a B.A. degree in English from Stony Brook University, an M.A. degree in Early Childhood and Elementary Education from Adelphi University and Ph.D. credits toward a candidacy in K-12 Leadership and Administration. Robin is a NYS teacher certified in early childhood and elementary education and in secondary English. She has taught at area public and private schools and was a literacy coach in the city school system. Robin is also part of the Long Island poetry community and has used her creativity to actively engage her own students in hands-on and minds-on projects that fostered academic achievement. As an educator, she feels that the best way to motivate children to learn and to also increase their academic success is to provide children with a rich curriculum — integrating the arts into every classroom. Robin is already hard at work making a major contribution to our arts-in-ed programs. Please stop by our office so you can meet her personally. Her enthusiasm is truly contagious! ■

## Folk and Traditional Artists Workshop

September 24

Long Island Traditions offices, Port Washington

**O**n Monday, September 24<sup>th</sup> join the New York Folklore Society and Long Island Traditions for a traditional artists' workshop, examining how to develop contracts and secure affordable health insurance, and receive a professional photograph of yourself. Registration fee is \$15.00. The program begins at 2 pm. For more information call the New York Folklore Society at (518) 346-7008. ■

## Rockaway Bungalows: Tides of Change

**O**n November 13 at 6:30 pm, the Museum of the City of New York will host an evening on the Rockaways and the bungalows found there. Thousands of bungalows once covered the southeastern edge of New York City, and the Rockaways, originally considered part of Long Island, were a beloved summertime colony. Today approximately 400 bungalows remain in an increasingly multi-ethnic enclave, amid condo encroachment that has set off preservation battles. What happened? This event will feature clips from a documentary-in-progress, “The Bungalows of Rockaway,” plus reflections on the Rockaways from New York City Council Speaker Christine Quinn, Anthony King, author of “The Bungalow: The Production of a Global Culture”; Jill Eisenstadt, author of the novel “From Rockaway”; and architectural historian Andrew Dolkart, in a discussion moderated by journalist Eve Kahn (program is subject to change). Reservations are required for this event. Call (212) 534-1672, ext 3395. ■



## Duck Hunting & Decoy Carving

November 11  
East Meadow Library

Join us at the East Meadow Library for a family program about Long Island's hunting and carving heritage. Learn how decoys for hunting and decoration are made by master traditional carvers, and how waterfowlers continue this centuries old tradition. Guest presenters will be bayman and carver George Rigby, decorative carver Tom Stewart, duck boat builder and carver Ray Milek, and bayman and hunter Cory Weyant. This free program begins at 2 pm on Sunday, November 11th. For directions and information contact the East Meadow Library at (516) 794-2570. ■

## Native American Culture

November 14  
Suffolk Community College

Ina McNeil will be featured at Suffolk County Community College's Ammerman campus in Selden in a 1-hour lecture demonstration program. She will be displaying her traditional quilts and dolls, demonstrating how they are made according to the Lakota Sioux tradition that has been passed down in her family. Ina is a direct descendant of Chief Sitting Bull, residing in Hempstead since the 1970s. The free program will take place at 11am – 12:30 pm. For more information call (631) 451-4816. ■

### 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 1st of June, September, December and March.

- September 18:** "Exploring a Lost Tribe: The B'nai Menashe of India." Presentation by Rahel Musleah. Free admission. East Meadow Public Library, 1886 Front St., East Meadow. For information call (516) 794-2570.
- September 24:** Folk and Traditional Artists Workshop (see accompanying article). Long Island Traditions, 382 Main Street, Port Washington. 2 – 7 pm. \$15. Pre-registration required. For more information call the New York Folklore Society at (518) 346-7008.
- October 6:** Westhampton Beach historical society fair. 1-4 PM at the Farmers Market on Mill Road. For information call (631) 288-1183.
- October 13:** Traditional African American Architecture: A Hands-On Project (see accompanying article). Joseph Lloyd Manor House, Lloyd Neck. For directions and to register call (631) 692-4664.
- October 13:** "How to Write Poetry About Long Island History," workshop by poet Max Wheat. Fee is \$40 for adults, \$35 for students and seniors. Unitarian-Universalist Society of South Suffolk, 28 Brentwood Rd., Bay Shore. For information and reservations call 631-581-2214. Checks payable to The Live Poets Society, Box 391, Islip, New York 11751. Bring brown bag lunch. Refreshments served.
- November 4:** Mangala – the Arts of India (see accompanying article). 11am workshop, 1:30 pm performance. Long Island Children's Museum. \$10. For more information call Long Island Traditions at (516) 767-8803 or the Young Indian Culture Group at (516) 739-1575.
- November 11:** Duck Hunting & Decoy Carving (see accompanying article). East Meadow Library. For directions and information contact the East Meadow Library at (516) 794-2570.
- November 13:** Far Rockaway bungalows (see accompanying article). 6:30 pm. Museum of the City of New York. For information call (212) 534-1672.

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