



STARTING FROM PAUMANOK...

The Newsletter of the Walt Whitman Birthplace Association

Spring 2014 Volume XXVII No. 1

WWBA Celebrates Fifth Annual Benefit for Literacy Gala

WWBA Honors Three Champions of Literacy at Oheka Castle in Support of its Literacy Programs

Walt Whitman Birthplace Association held its fifth annual *Champions of Literacy Benefit Gala* on October 10, 2013, at Oheka castle and honored Anne Frank as *Literary Achiever*, poet John Barr as *Individual Leader in the Literary Category*, and Deborah Weber as *Individual Leader in the Enterprise Category*.

The *Champions of Literacy Awards* were established to distinguish the best supporters of literacy in America. These champions have demonstrated outstanding leadership in promoting literacy in their field as writers, leaders or businesses.

Over 130 guests gathered for the elegant dinner dance which featured Whitman era piano music by Isabella Johnson and photography by DJ Gaige Simon. Walt Whitman made an appearance courtesy of Whitman Personator Darrel Blaine Ford.

Board President Dr. William Walter gave the opening address and Executive Director Cynthia Shor presented a slideshow depicting the Association's work as a state historic site and literary center.

Board Vice President Tom Wismuller presented the first award honoring the legacy of Anne Frank, author of *The Diary of a Young Girl*, published in 1947. Chairman Emeritus of The Anne Frank Center USA, Jack Polak, and his wife, Ina, both Holocaust survivors, accepted the honor. One diary entry reads: "I still believe, in spite of everything, that people are truly good at heart." Anne's desire for tolerance is the mission of The Anne Frank Center. Anne's diary has transcended its beginnings as a personal memoir to become one of the most praised books for its literacy merits. Mr. Wismuller said, "With 30 million copies in over 60 languages, Anne's diary has become a pathway to literacy for children around the world."

continued on page 6



Board VP Tom Wismuller presenting award to Ina and Jack Polak.



Honoree Deborah Weber addresses the crowd.



John Barr was honored as Champion of Literacy.

Festival Within: Long Island's Only Poetry Festival Comes to the Birthplace

On November 8 and 9, 2013, WWBA sponsored *Festival Within*, created by Trustee Faith Lieberman, Festival Founder and Director. *Festival Within* was a two day celebration of the poets and poetry of Scribner's *Best of the Best American Poetry: 25th Anniversary Edition* and *Best American Poetry 2013*.

continued on page 5



Standing (L-R): Executive Director Cynthia Shor, Trustee Faith Lieberman, Whitman Personator Darrel Ford
Seated (L-R): David Lehman, Denise Duhamel, Kim Addonizio, Stacey Waite, Tom Sleigh, Sally Wen Mao, Major Jackson, Paul Muldoon

Walking with Whitman Season Finale



Ending the 2013 *Walking With Whitman* poetry series on a high note were (L-R) poet Diane Wakoski, series host George Wallace, poet Jane LeCroy and WWBA Executive Director Cynthia Shor. *Read more about this season's successes and what's to come in 2014 on Page 3.*



From the Director's Desk

Dear Members and Friends,

Happy New Year! Appropriately, this Newsletter goes to print in January, the namesake month of Janus, the Roman god depicted with two faces who looks to the past and to the future. Many events described herein originated in prior years and will continue stronger in the year to come. From our annual *Champion of Literacy Benefit* fundraiser to our signature poetry series, *Walking With Whitman*, from our school programs to our Family Day events, we have an exciting roster that gets better every year thanks to your support.

New last year was Long Island's only poetry festival, *Festival Within*, successfully brought to the Birthplace by new Board Member, Faith Lieberman. New this year is an appearance by Edward Hirsch, Chancellor of the Academy of American Poets, during April, Poetry Month. Spring also brings a stimulating Reading & Discussion Program, entitled *Serving*, sponsored by the New York Council for the Humanities.

As a New York State Park, we personally congratulate former Suffolk Legislator Wayne Horsley on his new appointment as Regional Director for State Parks. Welcome! And thank you, State Parks, for your continued support. We congratulate the Huntington Town Board, new and returning members - Supervisor Frank Petrone, Council Members Susan Berland, Eugene Cook, Mark Cuthbertson, and Tracey Edwards. Thank you for your loyal support for the cultural arts.

We continue to welcome visitors from near and far - from Corrales, New Mexico, to Chandler, Arizona; from Cumana, Venezuela, to Laxenburg, Austria. A June visitor wrote in our guestbook, "Lilacs! By the dooryard!" and Gabe, from Boulder, wrote, "Amazing! Enjoyed every wondrous step back through time. Felt the spirit of Walt!"

The Board and I invite you to visit when the lilacs are in bloom, to step back in time and feel the spirit of Walt. We thank you for your support for the arts and historic preservation through your membership, volunteering, attending our events and sponsoring our programs. We wish you the best for 2014.

Cynthia Shor

WWBA graciously acknowledges the continued support from the following Members at the Patron level and above:

Daniel Allen, George Blednik, Robert & Priscilla Hughes, George Mallis, Joshua & Elizabeth Miller, Peter & Regina Montemurro, Mark Nuccio, Stephen Post, Lauren Kaushansky, Michael Ricca, Robert Savino, Steve Sertell, Julie Sheehan, and Irene White.

*Thank you to all renewed members!
Your support helps us preserve and promote the legacy of Walt Whitman.*

Become a Member Today:
www.waltwhitman.org
or call Diana Alvarez
(631) 427-5240 ext. 114

Young Poets Celebrated



Walt Whitman Personator Darrel Blaine Ford and Assemblyman Chad Lupinacci celebrate winners of WWBA 27th Young Poets Contest featuring Poet in Residence Naomi Shihab Nye. Over 80 winners and 250 family and friends attended the award celebration held on June 2nd, the Sunday closest to Whitman's birthday of May 31, 1819.

For information about this year's Young Poets Contest topic, *A Song of Joys*, visit: www.waltwhitman.org

Starting at Paumanok...

The Newsletter of the
Walt Whitman Birthplace Association

Editors

Cynthia Shor
Kim Plummer

Walking With Whitman Culminates 2013 Season

Interactive Workshops Paired With Dynamic Performances Create a Winning Combination; New Discounts for WWBA Members in 2014

WWBA's signature series, *Walking With Whitman: Poetry in Performance*, completed its third season on Saturday, Dec. 7, with dynamic performances from poets Diane Wakoski and Jane LeCroy.

Founder and host of the series, George Wallace, WWBA Writer in Residence, recruits a diverse roster of esteemed performers to create unique and exciting programs.

Diane Wakoski, WWBA Poet in Residence 1996, returned with her new book, *Bay of Angels*. Jane LeCroy performed lyrical poetry from her book, *Signature Play*. Their Q & A comments enlightened the audience with their perspectives of the poetry scene in the sixties as compared to the contemporary scene.

Since its inception in 2011, this groundbreaking series has featured poets from England, Africa, Scotland and Greece along with nationally known figures. This season's

national poets included Sandra Alcosser, Ray McNiece, Anne Waldman, Pierre Joris, and Mary Jo Bang. Regional poets were Phil Asaph, Dan Giancola, Max Wheat, Robert Gibbons, and Pramila Venkateswaran.

Mr. Wallace says, "Styles have varied widely, but through the entire series, what has remained consistent is the display of exceptionally high quality of word craft and enthusiastic devotion to audience engagement."

Newly integrated into the program this year were afternoon *Writing With Whitman* poetry-writing workshops. Led by the regional poets, the interactive workshops were consistently well attended.

Next season brings new faces and voices to the Whitman stage. Mark your calendar now to attend the *Walking With Whitman* workshops and readings. New next season - member discounts are available. Come prepared for a poetry experience found nowhere else on Long Island.

Walking with Whitman

2014 SCHEDULE

Saturday, March 8

Ron Padgett with Hala Alyan*

Saturday, April 5

Ellen Bass with Michelle Whittaker*

Saturday, May 3

Dimitris Lyacos with George Wallace*

Saturday, October 4

Mario Susko* with special guest

Saturday, November 1

Nathan Brown with Jeanann Verlee*

Saturday, December 6

Urayoán Noel with Ngoma Hill*

Each Date Features:

Writing Workshop 2-4 pm \$20**

Refreshments

Evening Reading 5-7 pm \$10

Meet the Poets Reception & Book Signings

Become a Series Holder!

Prepay for all 6 workshops and readings at discounted rates:

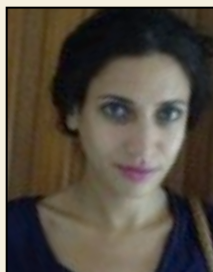
\$90 per person | \$70 per WWBA Member

*Workshop Leader

**Workshop fee includes admission to evening reading



Ron Padgett
March 8th



Hala Alyan
March 8th



Ellen Bass
April 5th



Dimitris Lyacos
May 3rd



Nathan Brown
November 1st



Urayoán Noel
December 6th

WWBA Welcomes Trustee Faith Lieberman

Walt Whitman Birthplace Association announces the addition of its newest Trustee, Faith Lieberman. Ms. Lieberman resides in Huntington and Wellington, Florida and has focused on creating literary programs throughout the metro area and Florida.

Faith Lieberman began as a theater major, branched into speech pathology and then received her MA at NYU in Education of the Deaf. She has been an interior designer, art consultant and sculptor. Ms. Lieberman is dedicated to combining all aspects of the arts in exhibition and performance.

Ms. Lieberman combined her diverse experiences with her passion for the arts when creating her non-profit organization, Teenspeak, founded in 1997. Teenspeak aims to bring

renowned poets into schools to address teenagers' need for self-expression and support through artistic mentorship. She has also served two-terms as a NYSCA Literature Panelist.

Faith Lieberman originated Long Island's only poetry festival, *Festival Within*, staged in Huntington village in 1997, 1999 and 2001. The festivals were sponsored by Huntington YMCA Writer's Voice, the National Writer's Voice and the Town of Huntington.

As a WWBA Board Member, she continued the festival this year at the Walt Whitman Birthplace. With sponsorship from the Birthplace Association, Ms. Lieberman, as Festival Director, produced *Festival Within: Best of the Best American Poetry*. The festival celebrated Scribner's *Best American Poetry, 25th*



Faith Lieberman joins the Board of Trustees.

Anniversary Edition and brought its world-class poets to the Birthplace.

Ms. Lieberman encourages members to introduce themselves at events and gatherings taking place at the Whitman Birthplace. She says, "I am always receptive to new and creative programming suggestions and I look forward to working with WWBA for continued community outreach."

Fran Castan Named Long Island Poet of the Year



(L-R) WWBA President Dr. William Walter, Exec. Director Cynthia Shor, LI Poet of the Year Fran Castan, and WWBA Vice President Tom Wysmuller

Walt Whitman Birthplace Association proudly announced Fran Castan as 2013 Long Island Poet of the Year. Starting from her Brooklyn birthplace and expanding to her home in the Hamptons, Fran Castan has always been a promoter of literacy throughout the Long Island region as both a poet and a teacher.

The Long Island Poet of the Year is an annual award given by WWBA to honor a notable poet on Long Island who is nationally known and well-respected. The honorees should not only champion poetry through their writing, but also through their teaching and support of the Long Island community of poets.

It wasn't until age 40 that Fran Castan began writing poetry. Earning her M.A. in

Creative Writing from New York University, Ms. Castan was awarded a teaching fellowship to the MacDowell Colony, a prize given by the Academy of American Poets and NYU.

For 25 years, Ms. Castan taught writing and literature at The School of Visual Arts, strengthening and cultivating a regional community of writers. She continues to enrich the Long Island community through her local appearances and readings at bookstores, libraries and colleges.

Fran Castan was published in the 2009 poetry anthology *Long Island Sounds* which features poets who live, work, and play on Long Island and who write about Long Island. Ms. Castan's most recent book of poetry is *Venice: City That Paints Itself*.

WWBA honored Fran Castan during an induction ceremony at Walt Whitman Birthplace on September 29. Executive Director Cynthia Shor presented Ms. Castan with a plaque recognizing her achievements and her name was inscribed on a permanent wall plaque. Ms. Castan delivered a moving poetry reading which was followed by a book signing and reception.

2014 Poet in Residence: Li-Young Lee

From Blossoms

by Li-Young Lee

From blossoms comes
this brown paper bag of peaches
we bought from the boy
at the bend in the road where we turned toward
signs painted *Peaches*.

From laden boughs, from hands,
from sweet fellowship in the bins,
comes nectar at the roadside, succulent
peaches we devour, dusty skin and all,
comes the familiar dust of summer, dust we eat.

O, to take what we love inside,
to carry within us an orchard, to eat
not only the skin, but the shade,
not only the sugar, but the days, to hold
the fruit in our hands, adore it, then bite into
the round jubilation of peach.

There are days we live
as if death were nowhere
in the background; from joy
to joy to joy, from wing to wing,
from blossom to blossom to
impossible blossom, to sweet impossible blossom.

WWBA announces Li-Young Lee as 2014 Poet in Residence. Mr. Lee is the author of four critically acclaimed books of poetry, his most recent being *Behind My Eyes* (W.W. Norton, 2008). His earlier collections are: *Book of My Nights* (2001); *Rose* (1986), winner of the Delmore Schwartz Memorial Award from New York University; and *The City in Which I Love You* (1991), the 1990 Lamont Poetry Selection. His memoir, entitled *The Winged Seed: A Remembrance* (1995), received an American Book Award from the Before Columbus Foundation and was reissued by BOA Editions in 2012.

Mr. Lee's honors include fellowships from the National Endowment for the Arts, The Lannan Foundation, and the John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation.

Through the observation and translation of often unassuming and silent moments, the poetry of Li-Young Lee gives clear voice to the solemn and extraordinary beauty found within humanity. By employing hauntingly lyrical skill and astute poetic awareness, Mr. Lee allows silence, sound, form, and spirit to emerge brilliantly onto the page. His poetry reveals a dialogue between the eternal and the temporal, and accentuates the joys and sorrows of family, home, loss, exile, and love.

Li-Young Lee will hold a Master Class in Poetry on Saturday, May 31, 2014, from 1-4 pm, and will perform at the Evening Reading that night at 5:00 pm. Mr. Lee will officiate the next day, June 1, at the annual Whitman Birthday Celebration which recognizes the winners of the Young Poets Poetry Contest. Events are open to the public, all are invited to attend.



Li-Young Lee
2014 Poet in Residence

Poet in Residence Events

Saturday, May 31, 2014

Master Class
1:00 - 4:00 PM
25 Participants / \$65 each
20 Auditors / \$25 each
\$5 WWBA Member Discount

Evening Reading
5:00 PM
Reception & Reading
\$15 per ticket
Reading Included with Master
Class Purchases

Space Limited
Register Early

www.waltwhitman.org
or (631) 427-5240 ext 115

Festival Within: LI's Only Poetry Festival

continued from page 1

The event featured David Lehman, Series Editor and Founder, and Denise Duhamel, 2013 Guest Editor. They were joined by Pulitzer Prize winning poet Paul Muldoon, Kim Addonizio, Major Jackson, Lawrence Joseph, Sally Wen Mao, Tom Sleigh, and Stacey Waite. Special guests included Kathleen Masterson of NYS Council for the Arts and Bonnie Rose Marcus of Poets & Writers who offered grant workshops.

Ms. Lieberman said the *Festival Within* was created to foster creativity and diversity in the arts and established the festival mission, "soaring through self expression."

Held at three iconic locations in Huntington, Huntington Book Revue, the Birthplace, and Walt Whitman Shops, the Festival offered participants interactive seminars, discussion panels, round-robin readings, workshops and musical performances. Guitarist Mike Soloway provided musical interludes throughout the festival.

Mr. Lehman moderated each event with wit and congeniality. The Festival Kickoff began Friday night at Book Revue where the poets held readings and book signings. Saturday began with a video address from former U. S. Poet Laureate Robert Pinsky, 25th Anniversary Guest Editor, and readings by Fran Castan (WWBA 2013 Poet of the Year), George Wallace (WWBA Writer in Residence), Jack Coulehan, Richard Bronson, and Faith Lieberman. Mr. Pinsky sent best wishes from Eugene, Oregon, and shared his poem, *Samurai Song*.

After participants attended a seminar of their choice, they observed a roundtable discussion by the poets entitled, "What Makes a Poem Great?" in which Ms. Masterson joined Mr. Lehman as moderator.

Saturday afternoon featured the "Local Poets Invitational" with readings by Lorraine Conlin, Peter Dugan, Russ Green, Gladys Henderson, Nancy Keating, Suzanne Loevner, Barbara Reiher-Meyers, Terri Muuss, Matt Pasca, Robert Savino, Alan Semerdjian, James Wagner (Ishwa), and Ginger Williams.

The Festival concluded with an evening Grand Finale at Walt Whitman Shops Center Court featuring all the poets and concluding with the poetry of Paul Muldoon and musical performances by his band, *The Wayside Shrines*. An Italian Dessert Table was provided by Legal Sea Foods, LLC.

Major sponsors included Book Revue, La Spada Italian Restaurant, Legal Sea Foods, LLC, Melville Marriott, Poets & Writers, Scribner and Walt Whitman Shops. Generous donations from the Babylon Village Arts Council, Inc. and Lauren Kaushansky sponsored attendance for five high school students from, respectively, Babylon Senior High School and Herricks High School.

David Lehman said of the Festival, "It was for an excellent and important cause, and the poetry that we read and shared during the weekend was as inspiring for the presenters as for the audience."

Participant Robert Savino said, "Most of us local poets wait for the Dodge Festival in New Jersey, every two years. The *Festival Within* gave Long Island...the same program Dodge offers...[plus] a Local L. I. Poets reading." Mr. Savino said it was "a completely all-encompassing day."



photo by Susie Byrnes

Poets (L-R) Paul Muldoon, Major Jackson, Kim Addonizio, David Lehman, Denise Duhamel and Tom Sleigh.



photo by Bruce Johnson

Participants enjoy the Round Robin Reading.



photo by Bruce Johnson

Paul Muldoon and *The Wayside Shrines* perform at Center Court at the Walt Whitman Shops.

Intern Impact

In 2013, WWBA had a record number of nine college and five high school interns who assisted our capacity building through activities centered on historical and marketing research, data collection, exhibit development, and website design.

We partnered with the Adelphi Community Fellows Program and Legislator Doc Spencer's "Lead by Example" program to mentor students on non-profit organizations.

WWBA gratefully acknowledges the help of our interns David Brosnan (Adelphi Community Fellow), Katelyn Dooley (Fordham), Nicholas Fallah (Syosset HS), Colin Groundwater (Yale), Elise Helmers (Adelphi Community Fellow), Evan Lahtinen (Adelphi Community Fellow), Faria Rahman (Deer Park HS), Farzana Rahman (Deer Park HS), Jacqueline Ryan (Harborfields HS, sponsored by Spencer), Nicole Scott (Fordham), Kaitlyn Seigneuray (Adelphi), Josh Sitek (C.W. Post), William Stieglitz (Ward Melville HS), and Theodore Yurevitch (Vanderbilt). Thank you, Interns!



Interns (L-R): Scotto, Dooley, Ryan, Yurevitch, and Helmers

Special Thanks

Staff

Richard Ryan	Curator
Carolyn Diglio	Education Coordinator
Bonnie Lowe	Bookkeeper
Diana Alvarez	Administrator
Kim Plummer	Media and Events Director
Adam Germaine	Caretaker
Julianne Jimenez	Caretaker

Tour Guides

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Sue Anne Dennehy
Arlene Farrell
Toni Fleig
Diane Gisonny
Margaret Guardi
Beverly Pokornoy
Cameron Williams

Poetry Teachers

Ginger Williams
Barabara Southard
Linda Opyr

Volunteers

Susie Byrnes
Ra'chelle Chambers
Anna Holtzman
Harold LaWare (RSVP)
Chris Liotta
Charles Lipp
Patty McDonnell

Benefit for Literacy Gala at Oheka Castle

continued from page 1

John Barr, Champion of Literacy as *Individual Leader in the Literary Category*, received his award presented by Board Member Faith Lieberman. Ms. Lieberman said, "John works as he lives. His is a quest to discover what is human. He is honest and unapologetic." Mr. Barr has published nine collections of poetry which include *The Hundred Fathom Curve: New & Collected Poems*, *Grace*, and *The War Zone* (about the Naval War in Vietnam). Mr. Barr served on the Boards of The Poetry Society, Bennington College, and Yaddo. He has also taught poetry writing at Sarah Lawrence College.

Accepting his award, Mr. Barr said, "Literacy, and its double gift, the skills to read and write, are like Prometheus and his gift of fire. Once given to man, the gifts lead to the knowledge of the gods. The wholesale embrace of language becomes our way of mastering the world."

In 2004 John Barr became the first president of The Poetry Foundation, established with a major gift from heiress Ruth Lilly. The Foundation created the largest global poetry website to serve 30 million people annually. He also managed the notable architectural design of a new building for the Foundation in Chicago.

Mr. Barr signed and donated 50 copies of his recent publication, *The Adventures of Ibn Opcit*. Mr. Barr was accompanied by his wife, Penny, who has created award winning children's programming for The Poetry Foundation.

Deborah Weber, Champion of Literacy as *Individual Leader in the Enterprise Category*, is the General Manager of Walt Whitman Shops with the Simon Property Group. Board President, Dr. William Walter, presented her an award saying: "The Walt Whitman Birthplace Association deeply appreciates Debby Weber's personal effort to incorporate Walt Whitman into the new design of the Walt Whitman Shops."

As General Manager of the Whitman Shops, Ms. Weber successfully supervised its two-year renovation. She hung banners showcasing Whitman quotes and secured an 8' bronze statue of Whitman by sculptor John Giannotti which stands at the Shops' Main Entrance. Another Whitman bronze statue by Giannotti stands on the Whitman Birthplace historic site.



Trustee Jeffrey Gould and wife, Lenore Gould.



Board Secretary Jack Coulehan, MD and Board President William Walter, PhD.



Huntington Town Supervisor Frank Petrone and The Long-Islander Newspaper Publisher Jim Kelly.



Museum docent Cameron Williams and Councilwoman Tracey Edwards.

Ms. Weber is a leader in both business and literacy promotion. She served on the Board of Education for Freeport Public Schools. Her work with the Simon Youth Foundation helped over 1,000 underserved students graduate with degrees in higher education. In the past two years, she has successfully chaired the WWBA *Benefit for Literacy Gala*. Dr. Walter concluded by saying to Ms. Weber, "Tonight the Board of Trustees recognizes and commends your dedication."

Nancy Gilbert, Director of Marketing and Business Development for Walt Whitman Shops, was quintessential as Chair in her gala planning and fundraising efforts. She secured raffle prizes by the Walt Whitman Shops and many community businesses.

Board Members in attendance were: Treasurer Mike Schenkler and wife, Jillian; Secretary Dr. Jack Coulehan and wife, Anne; Dr.

Richard Bronson; Jeffrey Gould and wife, Lenore; President William Walter and wife, Susan; Faith Lieberman and husband, Dr. Lester Lieberman.

Guests included: Town Supervisor and former honoree Frank Petrone; Town Council Members Susan Berland, Mark Cuthbertson, and former honoree Tracey Edwards; Assemblyman Chad Lupinacci; NY State Regent Roger Tilles; Anne Frank Center Executive Director Yvonne Simons; and *The Long-Islander Newspaper* Publisher Jim Kelly and Associate Publisher Peter Sloggett.

Benefit invitations and evening programs were designed courtesy of Digho Image Marketing. Major sponsors were 3E Fund and Blackhawk, Inc. All proceeds from the Benefit support WWBA literacy programs which aim to create a passion for reading and writing for children and adults.



I Love My Park Day

Thirty-two volunteers joined Cynthia Shor and caretakers Julianne Jimenez and Adam Germaine to celebrate "I Love My Park Day." Parks & Trails New York, in partnership with the NYS Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation, coordinates "I Love My Park Day" at the statewide level, with cleanup, improvement and beautification projects organized by Friends groups and park staff. Stony Brook volunteers wore matching red shirts. Volunteers filled 60 trash bags and received refreshments and free tours.

Join us this year on May 3rd from 10am-1pm.

WWBA Obtains Artifact Depicting the Home as it Looked Over a Century Ago

by William Stieglitz & Elise Helmers

Walt Whitman Birthplace Association recently obtained an Ivorex plaque donated from the collection of Marsha Manns of New York City. The Ivorex plaque depicts the Whitman Birthplace and was made by British sculptor Arthur Osborne circa 1914, in Kent, England. The Birthplace Ivorex plaque was based on a 1903 Ben Conklin photograph of the Birthplace. Collector Marsha Manns purchased the Ivorex plaque approximately 30 years ago in a London antique store and with her donation she said, "This shows Whitman's impact on British readers."



A photo of the Ivorex plaque donated by Marsha Manns in May 2013.

Mr. Osborne (1855-1943) originated the "Ivorex" technique in 1898. Mr. Osborne created one highly detailed master plaque in clay using postcards or photographs from locations all over the world as his reference. The master clay plaque was used to create a production line of gelatine molds into which fine plaster was poured.

Once formed, the plaster was removed, dried, painted, dipped in paraffin wax and buffed. The paraffin wax gave the plaster forms their ivory like appearance and hence, the name, Ivorex plaques. Many plaster plaques with the same image were produced and shipped to retailers near and far. Ms. Manns said, "These were sold at fairgrounds and exhibitions as affordable art for the working classes."

WWBA had a previous Ivorex plaque which was made in New York and copyrighted 1914. The image is the same with the only noticeable difference being the darker shading of the New York plaque. Both pictures portray the house as it looked before the kitchen (the smallest structure on the right) disappeared. Both plaques are 6½ in. by 4½ in. They each have a height of only half an inch, which means all the detail shown through depth was done within that limited space.

According to Curator Richard Ryan "The plaques illustrate the growing awareness of the Whitman Birthplace as an important historical landmark a mere 22 years after Walt's death."

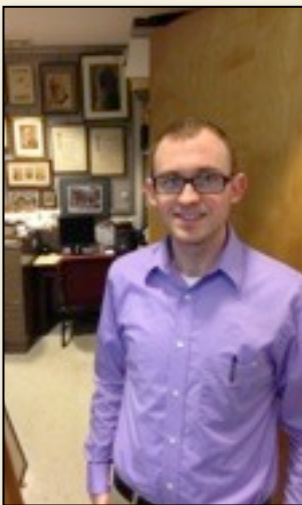
"WWBA expresses gratitude to Marcia Manns," says Cynthia Shor, Executive Director. "We urge anyone with Whitman related artifacts to consider us as caretakers and guardians of their treasures for the world to see for generations to come."

Josh Sitek: From the WWBA Archives

The WWBA recently bid farewell to long-term intern, Josh Sitek. Mr. Sitek spent the past year working with our Curator in the WWBA Archives. During his time with the WWBA, Mr. Sitek cataloged nearly 6,000 items—including 3,400 letters and 400 published articles about Whitman and the WWBA—and sorted them into numerous tabulated spreadsheets to better facilitate their search and retrieval from the Archives.

"Working with the manuscripts was great," Mr. Sitek said. "I was surprised to see that we have a few items which date back to the 19th century. However, my favorite part of this project was reading the correspondence between Cleveland Rodgers (co-founder and first President of the WWBA) and the Association's early supporters. Rodgers' efforts to raise awareness and secure funding for the preservation of the Birthplace are documented in his letters to and from such interesting and influential people as Helen Keller, Robert Underwood Johnson, and Ulysses S. Grant, III."

Mr. Sitek, standing in front of the curator's office in the above photo, looks forward to returning from time to time to assist with special projects in the Archives.



The Face of Poetry



A portrait of Poet William Everest in the exhibit by Robert Turney.

Robert Turney's interest in portraiture began in the early 1980's. As he traveled with his wife, writer Diane Wakoski (WWBA Poet in Residence, 1996), he began to work on a photography portfolio of writers.

Robert Turney exhibited 22 of these portrait photos, entitled *The Face of Poetry*, from September 15 – December 7, 2013 in the Gathering House.

Some of the poets featured include Allen Ginsberg (WWBA Poet in Residence, 1991), Maya Angelou, William Stafford (WWBA Poet in Residence, 1990), and his wife, Diane.

Robert Turney currently resides with his wife in East Lansing, Michigan, on a half-acre farm.

The Gathering House will next feature *The Gospel of Beauty Revisited*, a photography exhibition by George Mallis opening on March 9th, 2014.

Arbor Day Donation by Melville Lions Club

In the spring, Melville Lions Club generously donated a pear tree, two dogwood saplings, two maples, two forsythias and a hydrangea bush. Thank you, Melville Lions!



Gathered around flowering pear tree (R-L): Lion Art Pushkin, Cynthia Shor, Roy DeBenedittis, Lion Karen Granville, Lion Brian Freier, President Pat Freier, Jay DeBenedittis, Lion Paul Rubenstein, and Adam Germaine.

2014 Calendar of Events

- March 1** **Irish Family Day**
- March 8** *Walking with Whitman*
Ron Padgett & Hala Alyan
- March 9** **George Mallis: *The Gospel of Beauty Revisted***
Photography exhibition at The Gathering House
- April 5** *Walking with Whitman*
Ellen Bass & Michelle Whittaker
- April 27** **Edward Hirsch: *The True Voice of Feeling***
Reading with conversation and workshop
- May 3** **I Love My Park Day**
- May 3** *Walking with Whitman*
Dimitris Lyacos & George Wallace
- May 31** **Poet in Residence: Li Young Lee**
Master Class & Evening Reading
- June 1** **Young Poets Awards**
- June 7** **Syosset High School Art Show**
- July 12** **Geraldine Green Writing Workshop**
- Oct. 4** *Walking with Whitman*
Mario Susko & Special Guest
- Nov. 1** *Walking with Whitman*
Nathan Brown & Jeanann Verlee
- Dec. 6** *Walking with Whitman*
Urayoan Noel & Ngoma Hill

Walt Whitman Birthplace Association

The Walt Whitman Birthplace Association preserves and operates the Walt Whitman Birthplace, a state-owned Historic Site, in cooperation with the Long Island Region of the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation. The Walt Whitman Birthplace is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Open year round

Rentals Available

Scout Programs • Tea Parties

www.waltwhitman.org

School and group tours by appointment
(631) 427-5240 x 113



New York Council for the Humanities Reading & Discussion Program

Join us for this six-part series, Sundays from 2-4 pm at the Birthplace. Facilitated by Tammy Nuzzo-Morgan, poet, professor and founder of North Sea Poetry Group.

TOPIC: *SERVING*

Why and how do we choose to serve others? What is the nature of the relationship between those who serve and those who are served? If we serve, what sustains and renews us?

Dates

March 2, 9, 16, 23, 30, April 6

Registration fee: \$10 per person
All reading materials provided



STARTING FROM PAUMANOK...

246 OLD WALT WHITMAN ROAD
HUNTINGTON STATION, NY 11746-4148

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Walt Whitman Birthplace Association

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