

The Bowne House Historical Society, Inc.

AUTUMN 2013

BOWNE HOUSE AND ITS MISSION

Bowne House, circa 1661, is the oldest house in Queens and one of the oldest in New York City. The house is an amalgam of Dutch and English traditions of building; continuity of ownership provides a unique view of changing cultural values and increased prosperity over time.

Bowne House was occupied by nine generations of family, but events which took place in its early years secured its place in history. John Bowne is known for his courageous defense of religious liberty; his actions, and those of his fellow residents of Flushing, helped establish this principle in America. In 1662, Bowne defied a ban imposed by Governor Peter Stuyvesant on the practice of religions other than the Dutch Reformed Church by permitting Quakers to worship in his home. Bowne was arrested and deported to Holland, where he successfully pleaded his case before the Dutch West India Company. He returned home in 1664, and the principle of religious freedom was established in the colony.

Bowne House is operated by the Bowne House Historical Society, whose mission includes the preservation of the house, its collections and its grounds for their historical and educational interest, for the significance of the house in the history of New York, and for its role in the establishment of the principle of freedom of conscience in America. Bowne House is owned by the New York City Department of Parks & Recreation and is a member of Historic House Trust of New York.

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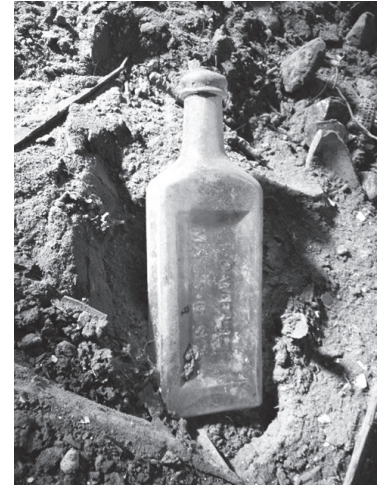
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THE BOWNE HOUSE RESTORATION – PHASE I, EXTERIOR

The exterior restoration of the Bowne House has been underway since April 1. This phase of the work is expected to be completed by May 31, 2014. To date, the following steps have been completed:

1. The required archaeology work has been done by Chrysalis Archaeology, Inc. and a complete report on the findings is due shortly. Explorations in the laundry shed, ca. 1815, located off the kitchen area, discovered a very large cistern under the wooden floor. The cistern is one of the largest seen, measuring approximately 8 feet across and 8 feet deep. A number of interesting artifacts were found in the cistern.



2. Structural work is underway on the west-facing wall of the house, along Bowne Street. The original 17th century wood sill in this area was weakened by damage from an infestation of termites in the 1930's. Remedial work undertaken at that time was inadequate and this is being rectified.

3. Similarly, structural work is underway in the kitchen, cold room and laundry areas on the eastern side of the house. This area, too, suffered from termite damage. The newly-exposed cistern in the laundry will have a hatch door and interior lighting so it can be seen by visitors. A protective concrete barrier will be placed under the wood floor.

4. Windows, shutters and some doors as well as the porch benches were removed and taken for restoration to an offsite location.

5. Wood siding on the exterior of the main portion of the house will be removed and new 32" cedar shingles will be installed. These shingles will be painted in a color consistent with the period of significance selected for the interpretation of the museum.

6. The roof, which was replaced in the 1980's and is failing, will be replaced with new cedar shingles in a size appropriate to an earlier period of the house. Roof work is beginning this month.

7. The chimneys have been re-pointed and a metal sleeve will be installed in one which is linked to the boiler.

8. Finally, a paint analysis was completed for the exterior of the house. This research, performed by Jablonski Building Conservation, examined layers of paint taken from various areas. Bowne House yielded many layers of paint, reflecting changing tastes and styles over a period from the early 1800's through the 1980's. (A similar study for the interior was done by the Bowne House Historical Society in the early 1990's). In accordance with the earliest complete set of paint treatments found, the house will be a medium brown with contrasting trim and shutters. The front door was found to have had an unusual marbled faux finish which will be replicated. This faux finish would have been popular during the 1830 – 1840 periods.

Also planned is improved and historically appropriate exterior lighting. Once the project is nearing completion, windows, doors and shutters which were removed for restoration will be reinstalled.

The next phase, Phase II, is being planned and will include minor restoration to some areas of the interior, along with historically appropriate interior finishes.

BOWNE HOUSE OFFICIAL GROUNDBREAKING CEREMONY HELD

Restoration work has been underway since April, and an official groundbreaking ceremony took place in June. Elected officials Queens Borough President Helen Marshall, Comptroller John Liu, and Councilman Peter Koo were joined by Bowne House trustees, members and staff from NYC Parks and Historic House Trust for the festivities.

Speakers included the borough president, comptroller and councilman and Franklin Vagnone of HHT. Trustee Annette Geddes gave remarks on behalf of president Marty Hylton.

Visitors had the opportunity to tour the site, have a behind the scenes peek at the house, and see the work underway. Parks project manager Steven Foxworth was on hand to explain the restoration process and answer questions.



Borough President Helen Marshall



Council Member Peter Koo



Honoree Donald Friary with Councilman Peter Koo, Deputy Queens Borough President Barry Grodenchik, Steven Foxworth of NYC Parks, and Bowne House trustees

THIRD ANNUAL COCKTAIL PARTY AND AWARD CEREMONY HELD OCTOBER 22ND

The annual Bowne House cocktail party and Award Ceremony took place on Tuesday, October 22nd in New York City. The recipient of this year's historic preservation award was Donald R. Friary, chairman of the Society's Museum Advisory Committee.

Don was associated with Historic Deerfield for forty years; for twenty eight years he served as the museum's Executive Director. After retiring from Deerfield in 2005, Don now serves as President of the Colonial Society of Massachusetts. In addition to chairing the Bowne House Museum Advisory Committee, Don is on the Public Humanity Advisory Board of the John Nicholas Brown Center for the Study of American Civilization at Brown University, serves as a trustee of the New England Historic Genealogical Society, and is a member of the Massachusetts Historical Commission. He is a principal of History for Hire and an independent consultant to museums throughout the United States.

This year's event attracted many members and friends as well as a record number of Bowne descendants. We were thrilled to have so many turn out to honor Don and support our museum. Our speakers included NYC Comptroller John Liu, Councilman Peter Koo, and Deputy Queens Borough President Barry Grodenchik. A brief recap of restoration work underway at the house was presented, and an array of photographs taken over the past few months showed the guests the progress to date.

We were pleased that so many of you were able to join us to celebrate the restoration and to honor Donald Friary for his service to the preservation of America's historic resources.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH AND ACTIVITIES AT THE MUSEUM

While activities at the museum site have been somewhat limited by ongoing construction work, we have continued our outreach efforts, utilizing our gardens and expanding our efforts in the surrounding area of downtown Flushing.

The scholastic year started with students from the agriculture school at John Bowne High School learning team skills moving, stacking and protecting the American elm and Black Cherry lumber that had been salvaged from the historic site's damaged trees. During the year four photography interns worked documenting the historic house and garden pre preservation for our archives.

Our annual summer end-of-school cookout and Volunteer Appreciation Day gathering was held in our garden. Student volunteers were joined by trustees, former docents, visitors and some of our preservation crew.

We hosted six interns during the summer. Two computer science college students worked on IT and computer data / hardware consolidation. One college student focused on horticulture. Two high school age and one graduate student were studying various aspects of American civilization and history. They utilized the database of our extensive collections and tapped into primary sources for their research. Inspection of one of the more important pieces in our collection yielded clues to its origins and usage over time.

From May to September, volunteers from Beautify Historic Flushing weeded, watered and moved 35 cubic yards of mulch to protect the perennial planting beds, tree pits and other portions of the Bowne Farm land outside of the construction demarcated zone. Over 600 hours of public community service was performed. Six major property owners along Bowne Street have followed our practices and improved the horticultural portions of their properties.

We again mobilized groups of local youth and participated in "It's My Park Day", cleaning up and improving heavily used Weeping Beech Park and Daniel Carter Beard Mall in the densely populated urban area.

In October, we again participated in Open House New York, an annual three day weekend tour of New York sites across the five boroughs. Despite a shut-down of the number 7 train which serves downtown Flushing, our brief opening window of one afternoon and only partial access to the site due to construction, we had more than 100 visitors. The opportunity of seeing an actual restoration of a 17th century structure, one of the few surviving in the city, was a big draw.

This month, we have continued our efforts to plant donated daffodil bulbs in various public areas in Flushing. These bulbs flourish and multiply, and appear each spring to brighten the downtown area.

FINDING FLUSHING IN FURNITURE: A WINTERTHUR FELLOW'S SUMMER AT THE BOWNE HOUSE

By Lauren Brin

Diving into the collections and archives at the Bowne House, I dove into the history of early colonial Flushing. I spent this summer researching for my master's thesis as a Fellow in the Winterthur Program in American Material Culture at the University of Delaware. As students of material culture, we spend our time looking at things – the things we use and live with every single second of every single day. Our worlds are populated with lots and lots of “stuff”. We choose to live with things that are aesthetically pleasing to us, help us accomplish tasks, or reflect our beliefs and values. Objects are personal and they are powerful. Material culture orders our lives, dictating how we use and live in our homes. I was attracted to the Bowne House for its wonderful collection of artifacts that date to Flushing's earliest period. As a material culture historian, I interrogate objects from the past to understand how people lived every day hundreds of years ago. The mundane aspects of daily life are often the things people don't write about; they are the details that don't get preserved in text and passed down from generation to generation. Objects help tell the stories that history often forgets.



This summer I had the fortunate opportunity to closely analyze the Bowne Family high chest. Probably made locally during the first quarter of the eighteenth-century, this piece reflects the fact that skilled craftsmen were active in Flushing during this early period on a level that rivaled lower Manhattan. In the Bowne household, the high chest would have served the important function of storing textiles, some of the family's most valuable possessions. A 1680 probate inventory (an itemized valuation of the estate of an individual upon death) in the Bowne House's collection for fellow Quaker and merchant William Lawrence reveals that Flushing residents had easy access to international goods. Textiles from various locales in Europe were available to the Bowne Family and could have been stored in the high chest's many drawers.

During the seventeenth century, simple chests (among other forms) were popular for the storage of textiles. By the early eighteenth century, the high chest of drawers – a new form from England – emerged. This altered the way people stored, arranged, and accessed textiles. People owned more of them, and they could be arranged by size and by type. It is possible that at one point the Bowne high chest lived en suite with a dressing table, like Flushing's Samuel Clement high chest and dressing table currently in the collection of the Winterthur Museum. As furniture became increasingly specialized, households newly contained sets of furniture solely dedicated to the purpose of self-fashioning. For a predominantly Quaker agricultural town located out on Long Island, Flushing was well-connected to the latest goods and trends of the Atlantic World.

Surviving for almost 300 hundred years, the Bowne high chest has acquired some stories along the way. It is said that the piece was given to Hannah Bowne upon her marriage to Benjamin Field by William Penn's daughter. Though unlikely, we have no way of knowing the truth. It is evident that the piece was cherished and valued by family members throughout its life. By the 1760s, the piece would have been outdated. Instead of acquiring a new fashionable high chest, the piece was upgraded by removing the old brass pulls and applying new more stylish Chippendale ones. Possibly around the 1840s, it was altered once again. During this time, dining rooms were newly popular and the sideboard was a common piece of furniture in many households. Instead of purchasing this newer form, the then owners of the Bowne high chest added compartments into one of the drawers to hold silverware. In effect, the Bowne high chest was transformed into a sideboard.

For a town whose records no longer survive, stories of everyday life in Flushing come to life through the study of the things that people owned and used. In my thesis *John Bowne's Flushing: Cultural Convergence and Material Culture in a New Netherland Borderland* I hope to complicate our understanding of cultural interactions and daily life in this fascinating town during the early colonial period. Stay tuned!

For several years Bowne House has participated in a program sponsored by the Manhattan Borough Historian. Interns from local high schools partner with organizations to learn about areas of history which are of particular interest to them. This summer, we hosted two interns, one from Stuyvesant High School in Manhattan and another from Townsend Harris High School in Queens. Both focused on aspects of literacy in America; one on women and literacy; the other on Bowne & Co. and literacy.

Utilizing primary resources and tapping into our collections database, both interns developed papers examining literacy from two vantage points, male and female – one focusing on samplers as an aide to teaching reading and writing; the other focusing on the printing industry and its contributions to increased rates of literacy in the general population.

Due to space constraints, we have included one of these papers; the second one will be published at a future date.

BOWNE WOMEN AND THEIR ROLES IN POPULARIZING EDUCATION

By Angelina

The Bownes were a prominent Quaker family who resided in Flushing in the 17th century. Some of the most renowned Bownes include John Bowne, a proponent of religious freedom, and Robert Bowne, the founder of the printing company Bowne & Co.¹ However, despite their lack of public recognition compared to the Bowne men, the Bowne women were also of historical significance for their numerous contributions to society. Many Bowne women took part in educational and civic efforts. In earlier decades, they were active abolitionists fighting against slavery. It is even rumored that Mary Bowne Parsons helped shelter runaway slaves in the Underground Railroad. Later Bowne descendants kept the Quaker spirit alive by working against discrimination and social injustice by providing educational opportunities to the less fortunate, colored and non-colored children alike.

This paper will explore the progression of education in earlier centuries, specifically how female literacy trailed behind male literacy, with a focus on the civil service of the Bowne women and how they helped lessen the gender gap in schooling. It will also delve into the history and background of the Bowne family as a means to explain why they were so involved in academic efforts, while telling the story of the typical female education in Colonial America with the use of several samplers.

Back in the early 17th century, schools were almost exclusively geared towards the children of the elite. The quality of one's education was dependent on the wealth of one's family and because public schools did not exist back then, only certain families could afford to send their children away to the best schools. These institutions typically catered to the rich, their valued customers, teaching their students activities associated with the wealthy, such as instruction in the arts and lessons in athletic pursuits. Although at first attending school was restricted to those who had the money to cover the tuition expenses, acquiring an education became more universally available and more common within the century.

One major achievement in the quest for literacy took place in the mid-1600s, when Puritans in Massachusetts established several education reforms. They first passed a law in 1642 that established that children must be taught both reading and writing. This may not have had a major impact on boys, who had already been learning both subjects, but it introduced girls to writing for the first time. The Puritans then passed a law in 1647 requiring every town with either 50+ families or 250+ citizens to maintain a local public school.² This had no immediate effect on society as most towns had yet to meet that benchmark in population, but it gradually helped foment the expansion of public education. The law also indirectly created the foundation of the modern-day public school system. By collecting extra tax money from the town's citizens, there was an increase in tax revenue that was used to fund the local institution. Everyone would contribute a minimal amount and the schools would be essentially free to attend. Suddenly, literacy rates began to rise as many previously unschooled children began to receive edification on a daily basis.

At this point in time, education was still in a primitive stage. After receiving a basic education, girls would generally shift their focus to preparing for their future roles in society as proper housewives. Knowledge was kept to a minimum-- young ladies only needed to be literate enough to be able to converse with others and only needed to know basic arithmetic so that they could aid their future husbands. In the 18th century, "it was not thought necessary or proper to educate girls, even the daughters of the gentry, to a level on par with their brothers." (Rowe) They would instead zero in on etiquette and were taught domestic skills, such as sewing, that would be an important part of maintaining a household.

Meanwhile, boys would continue to focus on their academics. While girls had to be introduced to the very basics when they first went to school, boys had some amount of prior knowledge that they had learnt from

their fathers. Society seemed to believe an education had one purpose; as William Penn once stated, school was a place to “prepare children for future life.” As demonstrated by the double standards between female education and male education, females were pigeonholed into becoming housewives, nurses, or teachers while men were allowed to explore different professions, whether it be politics or trade.³

One trend that continued to appear in history was that the progression of female literacy always tended to trail behind the progression of male literacy, a phenomenon that Kenneth A. Lockridge explored in his book, *Literacy in Colonial New England*.⁴ In an analysis in his book, he uses full signatures (vs. marked signatures) as a measure of literacy, assuming that there is a correlation between educated people and the tendency to use complete signatures. He later supports this assumption in a footnote with a reference to François Furet’s 1973 paper. Lockridge based his hypothesis on evidence extracted from American and English studies, and Furet contributed additional proof that the same has occurred in France. By looking at the number of people who signed official documents using real signatures, Lockridge found that by the end of the 18th century, the majority of men in Colonial America were literate at 90 percent, whereas less than 50 percent of women were literate.

But why was there such a drastic difference between females and males in terms of their proficiency in reading and writing? Lockridge blames our patriarchal ways of the past. “In its deliberate discrimination against women, New England proclaimed its allegiance to tradition,” he explained. While he delves no farther into his personal interpretation, he seems to suggest that boys were given a priority over girls when it comes to education. Lockridge was definitely on the right track with his claim; as evidenced by gender favoring wills in Linda Rowe’s “Women and Education in Eighteenth-Century Virginia,” there was definitely some bias in favor of boys.⁵

There were several references to wills that revealed that fathers had higher educational expectations for their sons than that of those for their daughters. In one instance, Matthew Hubbard of Yorktown left provisions in his 1745 will to pay for his 3 sons to attend school until they were of 16 years of age. He left no money aside for his daughters to be educated, however. In another will written in 1762, Charles Carter of Cleves allocated funds for his sons to learn “languages, Mathematicks, Phylosophy, dancing and fencing” to “be put with a practicing attorney until they arrive at the age of twenty-one years and nine months.” Carter also left a significantly smaller amount of money for his daughters, although he stated that they only were to be “maintained with great frugality and taught to dance.” Rowe also hits upon the topic of tutoring, noting that boys were encouraged to tackle more advanced subjects like Greek and Latin, while girls were not given the same learning opportunities. In

general, society saw no reason to instruct girls in the same subjects of which boys learned because it was thought that domestic skills would be more beneficial for them. The mentality of society can be summed up in this quote from Lucy Turpen’s 1815 sampler, as seen in Betty Ring’s *Girlhood Embroidery: American Samplers and Pictorial Needlework (1650-1850)*:⁶ “A girl should be taught to sew and not to read, unless one wishes to make a nun of her.”

This way of thinking may have been instigated by the public’s mimicking the wealthy. Before public schools were established in the mid-1800s, sending children to private schools was fairly costly. The aforementioned gender gap was typical among most children in Colonial America, depending on how much their parents valued quality instruction, but there were a number of exceptions among wealthier families, including the Bownes. Those families could afford to send their children to the best institutions, while the majority of people could not. However, the types of schools young ladies attended in the 18th and 19th centuries were not like the schools young ladies attend today.

“In reviewing the historical picture of women’s educational experiences in the United States, it appears that expectations for girls in school have been different than expectations for boys. Historically, girls have been raised to assume specific and limited roles in society such as secretarial, nursing, or teaching school.” (Madigan 13)⁷ Back then, “schools” usually focused on teaching girls ornamental skills rather than literary skills. Girls were often pressured into developing talents instead, such as playing the piano, to meet society’s standards.

It was a different case with the Bowne family. As Quakers, the Bownes had certain beliefs and standards by which they lived. One particular tenet of Quakerism that they espoused was that receiving an education was a number one priority. Quakers believed that one needed to be taught the fundamentals for practical reasons; learning would give children the skills they would need as working adults, thus opening the doors to future success.⁸ Quakers also considered all people to be equal in God’s eyes, whether rich or poor, male or female, and regardless of race.⁹ Both of these principles were somewhat related and could be integrated into the general idea that every person is entitled to an education, a concept that would later fuel the communal efforts of Bowne women.

The Bowne family took these beliefs to heart, and ensured that all of their children received a thorough schooling focused on actual scholarship. They shipped off their children, as young as 6 or 7 years old, to numerous boarding schools. Although there are no definitive and complete schooling records of the Bowne children, some information contained on Bowne samplers has been preserved through the years.

In the colonial era, girls would exercise their sewing abilities by stitching decorations onto pieces of embroidery called samplers.¹⁰ Jane Bostocke made the earliest surviving sampler, at least of those uncovered thus far, in 1598. Like the others in this time period, Jane's sampler was fairly simple. It most likely contained several designs in stitching surrounded by a plain border. It was not until the 17th century that young ladies began to create more elaborate patterns in their embroideries.¹¹ While samplers were originally meant for practicing needlework, they later assumed an important role in the education of girls.

Samplers were first introduced into school curriculums as a learning tool in the 16th century. Where they had previously contained random motifs, they now chiefly comprised of sets of alphabets and numerals. Although every young lady who attended school in the 18th century created a sampler sometime in her life, samplers were not as common in their inception in the 16th century and were exclusively popular among young ladies from wealthier families. Later on when they became more common, samplers were thought to carry a significant social value as opposed to an actual monetary value because of their previous reputation as symbols of wealth. They were treated almost as if they were prized possessions; whenever a girl brought an intricate sampler with beautiful embroideries home, it would be mounted and hung on the wall for all to see.¹²

Nowadays, samplers are more treasured for their historic value as written records. The most common types of samplers, ones that were used by girls in school, tell the stories of the young ladies who created them. Outside of the school setting, samplers were also used to document data. Some were used to record family genealogies by listing names of family members while others were used to write down meaningful quotes.

In my research, I've studied the collection of samplers from the Bowne House Historical Society. Most of these tend to be the kind that were used solely for the purpose of practicing basic skills, although there are a few dedicated to either recordkeeping or embroidering. Two of these samplers have particularly interested me—Eliza Bowne's 1800 sampler and Mary Parsons' 1821 sampler.

Eliza Bowne's 1800 sampler reflects on the religious beliefs deeply rooted in her character. Quakers believed in simplicity- too much of anything was a distraction from God- and Eliza's handiwork was the epitome of this doctrine. The color scheme of her work was nothing like the overly adorned samplers of the time period. Instead of comprising of different colored strings, it consisted only of a dark brown silk yarn on open-weave. The piece would give the illusion that the maker was quite a mature, elegant lady if it were not for the several series of alphabets and numbers that remind us that a young woman created it in school. According to the stitching, Eliza was 12 years old at the time and was then

attending the Nine Partners Boarding School. Eliza left all elaborate embroideries out of her sampler, and opted for a "rule to mark napkins." She even selected a pious verse to go along with it, that reads: Blest solitude! How sweet thy peaceful scene! Where contemplations vot'ries love to stray; where in her sapient dress religion reigns and shines more splendid than the noontide ray.

It may have been that Eliza's surroundings influenced the overall feel of the work. After all, the Nine Partners Boarding School was a co-ed school in Dutchess County that was run by Quakers.¹³ Perhaps she had no say in the colors she could use or the embroideries she could incorporate into her sampler. The only aspect of her work we can infer was not her choice was the rule to mark napkins. Several other samplers that originate from the Nine Partners Boarding School also include the same exact rule and pictures, implying that the inclusion of this portion was a requisite for the stitching of these pieces.

Strangely enough, Mary Parsons' sampler that was produced only 2 decades later does not boast similar characteristics. Compared to Eliza's sampler, Mary's piece is more ornamental as embroidery in blue, pink, lavender, and gold silk yarns on a plain weave ground. Her work, like that of Eliza's, features multiple sets of alphabets, including a cursive script alphabet. Mary primarily used cross-stitch and eyelet stitch lines in her composition. The contrast between Eliza's sampler and Mary's sampler speaks volumes about the evolution of Quakerism through the decades. While I could be wrong, I see that where Quakers were once strictly devout, they gradually eased out of the stringency of their faith. As the times changed, they seemed to have held on to their core values but allowed themselves to adapt to their environment.

Similarly, the samplers show us how the Bowne women have "evolved." Both Eliza and Mary clearly share a desire to learn, as they had meticulously practiced their alphabets and their needlework on their samplers. Only Eliza had remained more traditional in her behavior, while Mary had thought outside of the box.

What makes the Bowne women particularly interesting subjects to study is not exactly the way they have such an interest in education, but more of the way they used their knowledge to strengthen their community. Unlike their male relatives, they did not fight for religious freedom (John Bowne) or start a printing company (Robert Bowne), but they made these contributions to society that were small in scale, but certainly not in impact.

In the accomplishments of the Bowne women, religion is seen as a driving force. Their faith had instilled core values in them, namely the belief that people are all equal and the belief that children should be educated, that led them to take action. Some of the Bowne women were

involved with the Flushing Female Association, FFA for short. It was founded in 1814 by a group of prominent Quaker ladies who came together in order to provide "the Relief of the Sick Poor" in New York City. Among the women in the original FFA committee were Ann Bowne and Catherine Bowne, who helped open several schools that would present the poor with the opportunity to learn elementary knowledge, as well as other skills.¹⁴ Beginning in 1862, these schools also welcomed 'these schools also welcomed Native American and African American children into the classrooms.

The goals of the FFA, like the earlier Puritan reforms, essentially brought society one-step closer to establishing the modern-day public school system. The wealthy women each donated 2 dollars annually to the association's funds, which were in turn spent to operate the schoolhouses. Every person also had to dedicate time and labor to the society's projects, taking turns serving as educators until they found and appointed a full-time teacher. In addition to running the schools, the FFA ladies handpicked deserving students to bestow scholarships upon; they agreed to send 2 girls through boarding school so that the girls could later become teachers at the FFA school and they for 1 boy to attend the Hampton Institute.

Although the Flushing Female Association was a group effort, it would not have been successful if it were not for individual benefactions. Aside from the original founding committee, many other Quaker women decided to help out in various ways. Mary Bowne Parsons and Eliza R. Bowne were included in the group of people who also partook in the association's philanthropic ventures. The FFA continued to operate until 1967.

Quakers, firm believers of racial equality, often served to protect and aid African-Americans. Many Bownes were active abolitionists, along with their fellow Quaker Friends in Flushing. While it is known that the Quakers of Flushing were definitely involved in the Underground Railroad, there are rumors of Mary Bowne Parsons having served as a conductor, sheltering runaway slaves in her home.¹⁵ The speculation has never been fully proven to be true, although it seems very likely that she would have been a part of these efforts. Mary Bowne Parsons continued to dabble in educational efforts aside from her involvement in the Flushing Female Association. She founded the Flushing Institute for Young Women, aspiring to teach girls the skills they need to become independent.

While it is easy to commend these remarkable Bowne women on their magnanimous endeavors in their service to their community, they should also be recognized for their more abstract achievements. They made the most out of their education although it was not expected of young ladies to have such scholarship, and, as demonstrated by the quote on Lucy Turpen's sampler, was sometimes looked down upon. The Bowne

women defied those gender expectations. They broke free of society's standards that ladies are meant to be housewives, and shared their impressive intelligence with the world, making education more accessible to those who had a desire to learn. It can be said of other women that they have a great capacity for knowledge or that they had contributed wonderful things to their community, but only few could be praised for possessing both qualities. This is why the Bowne women were truly remarkable people.

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UPCOMING EVENTS AT THE BOWNE HOUSE

Please join us for these upcoming events:

Sunday, December 8th 2013 - The parlor at Bowne House will once again be decorated for the holidays and open to visitors for the 26th annual Holiday Historic House Tour. Beginning at 1:30 pm, listen to a talk on traditional holiday customs and get an update on our ongoing restoration.

Other local sites on the tour will be open from 1-5. They are: Kingsland Homestead, the Voelker Orth Museum, Lewis H. Latimer House, Friends Meeting House, Flushing Town Hall, and the Louis Armstrong House Museum.

Tickets at the door are \$12, \$10 if preordered. Children under 12 are free if accompanied by an adult. They may be ordered online at: HolidayHouseTour2013.eventbrite.com, or by check to the Queens Historical Society, Kingsland Homestead, 143-35 37th Avenue, Flushing, NY 11354.

Spring, 2014 – Bowne House will host a lecture program on horticulture. Please check our website for details.

October 10, 2015 – Bowne House will mark the 50th anniversary celebration of New York City's landmark law with a ceremony rededicating the house as a symbol of freedom of religion in America. As a member of the Landmarks50 Committee, Bowne House is participating in the series of special events taking place throughout the city to commemorate the inception of New York City's landmark law. October 10, 2015 will also mark the 70th anniversary of the original dedication of the museum in 1945. October 10th is the date of the original charter of the Town of Flushing, granted in 1645.

Landmarks50 is "compromised of individuals and organizations committed to informing and educating the public about historic preservation in New York City." "The goal of the project is to broaden the appreciation of and commitment to New York city's admired architecture, and to develop a new audience and a new generation of future preservationists, who will take responsibility for protecting the continuity of the New York cityscape." For information and events, see www.nylandmarks50.com



BOWNE HOUSE AT THE NYBG

The New York Botanical Garden Holiday Train Show is just around the corner. The show is returning November 16 at the Garden's Enid Haupt Conservatory. The show features large scale model trains traveling among historic landmarks of New York, which are replicated completely from delicate plant materials. This event runs through January 12, 2014.

2013 - 2014 MEMBERSHIP DUES RENEWAL

THE BOWNE HOUSE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

37-01 Bowne Street, Flushing, NY 11354
789-359-0528

Individual	\$25.
Student (non-voting)	\$15.
Family	\$50.
Sustaining Membership	\$100.
Corporate Membership	\$500.
Life Membership (one time payment)	\$1,000.

In addition to my dues, I would like to make a contribution in the amount of \$ _____

Signature _____

- * Life Members may receive, if they wish, a complimentary framed hand painted Life Member Certificate, personalized with calligraphy. Please list your name as you wish to have it appear on the certificate.
- Please print your name and address below as you would like them to appear on our mailing list, as well as email, fax and phone so that we can better communicate with you.
- _____
- _____

Referral names and contact information: We welcome your suggestions of friends and family who like to hear about the Society. Please list names and contact information on the reverse of this page.

The Bowne House
37-01 Bowne Street
Flushing, NY 11354

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