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Barbara Keefauver Honored

The 2004 Friends of Florham Gala provided a wonderful occasion to recognize the many contributions of Barbara Keefauver to the College at Florham and Fairleigh Dickinson University. Kenneth Greene, interim campus provost, and J. Michael Adams, president, awarded Keefauver the Founders Community Service Award in recognition of her efforts in raising funds for the preservation and restoration of the Mansion and its grounds. During the last seven years, the Galas have raised an astounding \$200,000 for renovation projects, and this year's Gala was a fitting occasion to recognize the contributions of both Mrs. Keefauver and the Friends of Florham.

When Provost Greene expressed his personal appreciation, he noted that the Italian Gardens — an early project for the Friends of Florham —

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William and Barbara Keefauver at the Gala.

Olmsted Celebration: Exhibit and Lecture



Marta McDowell

The magnificent landscape architecture of Frederick Law Olmsted was center stage October 24, as the Friends and the College at Florham Library presented an exhibit of photographs of the "Frederick Law Olmsted Cut-leaf Maple Garden," and a lecture by Marta McDowell, lecturer and garden consultant, who specializes in historic landscapes. Olmsted, the major landscape architect of the 19th century, designed planned communities, well-known parks such as Central Park (with Calvert Vaux) and Prospect Park in New York; parks in Essex County, N.J.; and lawns, gardens and surrounding areas of stately homes such as "Florham."

The beauty of fall colors dominated both the wonderful photography of Emma Joy Dana, president

of the Friends of Florham, and James Griffio, professor emeritus of biology and former campus provost. Also included in the "celebration" was a dedication of the Cut-leaf Maple Garden by the Friends and a brief tour of the area, located just inside the Danforth Road entrance to the campus.

Olmsted wrote on the original blueprint for the grove, dated August 16, 1892, "Japanese maples predominating," and James Griffio, who spoke briefly on October 24, has referred to the area as "probably the most outstanding 'forest' of Japanese cut-leaf maples in the world." Preservation of the Cut-leaf Maple Garden has been a significant, ongoing project for the Friends. Friends Trustee Richard Simon designed and oversaw construction of a three-section wall to protect the grove and set it apart from the parking lot.

Marta McDowell offered an interesting overview of Olmsted in her presentation, "Frederick Law

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President's Letter

We look forward to the beauty of autumn on the campus of the College at Florham. One of my very favorite places is our lovely “Frederick Law Olmsted Japanese Cut-leaf Maple Garden,” the remaining authentic area on the campus. We almost lost it to a parking lot a few years ago, but thanks to the efforts of President Adams and others, it was preserved. The Friends erected three stonewalls to designate it. We further plan to connect these walls with chain links to set it off and have a plaque to identify these changes as Friends’ contributions. We celebrated the cut leaf maple garden with an exhibition of photographs taken in the fall — when the garden is breathtakingly beautiful. There is an article about the event elsewhere in the newsletter, so please make an effort to see the garden this fall.

Another very exciting project in progress is the replacement of the missing and/or broken balusters surrounding the Mansion Courtyard and the

Italian Garden. Board members, Walter Savage and Richard Simon, discovered that one of our area’s leading surgeons, Dr. Ames Filippone, does stonework “as a hobby.” He was willing to make these for us and made 17 of them. We are so very grateful to Dr. Filippone and his son-in-law who have been working on these this summer.

We have several other projects that we’re working on at this time. One is a new entrance treatment to the Mansion Mall Road. The former barrier was damaged, and there now is a temporary gate. Another is the replacement (either restoration or copies) of the lighting in the Courtyard of the Mansion.

Do join us in our preservation and restoration efforts by becoming a member of the Friends of Florham. (See the back page for the form.)

Emma Joy Dana

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had an especially spectacular display this year. He further commented on the beauty of the Lenfell Hall restorations, the Great Hall and the improvements to the second floor area of the Mansion. He said that it is essential to acknowledge the importance and support of the Friends of Florham to the campus. President Adams acknowledged his appreciation and expressed the gratitude of the University’s Board

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of Trustees. Adams added that the Friends of Florham is the only University organization to have two Founder Community Service Award recipients, with Emma Joy Dana being recognized in 1983. The appreciative gala guests gave Barbara Keefauver and the Friends of Florham a standing ovation.

A Friends board member for 10 years, Keefauver originally oversaw its lecture series for four years before assuming her role with the galas. She worked with her co-chairs, Phyllis Conway and Linda Meister and a large dinner committee for the next six years to ensure the Galas’ success. This year’s co-chairs were Phyllis Conway

and Dawn Dupak. Keefauver always acknowledges that the success of the Gala is due to the efforts of the entire committee and the support of the attendees.

Keefauver’s energy and talents are also evident outside of the University community. The Junior League of Morristown recently honored her with their 2004 Sustaining Star Award for “consistently demonstrating the effectiveness of the trained volunteer through her continued leadership in the community.” Keefauver has been a member of the junior league since 1961 and was recognized in 1964 as the Volunteer of the Year. She was applauded for her contributions as “an active volunteer and a visionary in the community.”

One of Keefauver’s projects for the league ultimately resulted in the establishment of the Arts Council of Morris County. In the early 1970s a series of Spectrum projects identified the need to showcase New Jersey artists and provide venues to make the arts more available. This group eventually evolved into the Arts Council.

Keefauver was the executive director for 18 years and remains an active board member. She continues to support the council’s semiannual fund raiser — April Arts. The Arts in Education programs that she established many years ago currently introduces approximately 200,000 children in the local area to art.

In addition, Keefauver reached out to children
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Friends Gratitude to the Dear Family

On a beautiful spring evening in May, more than 120 guests gathered in the Mansion's Lenfell Hall for the Friends of Florham Gala. Missing this year was friend and benefactor Mrs. Thelma Dear, the perennial guest of honor. Not only did Mrs. Dear give generously to the Friends' many projects but she was also a very valuable member of the Friends Board of Trustees. She attended meetings regularly and generously contributed her thoughts, ideas and reminiscences. She and her husband, "Billy" Dear, had a longtime interest in the University. Before his death, Mr. Dear was on the campus daily. He even had an office. He was considered an "ombudsman," and his door was always open to students, faculty and anyone who had a problem or who just wanted to talk to him about the University or, actually, anything else. Dreyfuss Building and Lenfell Hall, the Mansion were

named to honor the Dreyfuss family and its contributions to the University. Lenfell Hall so the story goes was named after Mrs. Dear's stepfather, Leonard (Len) Dreyfuss, and his home in Essex Fells (Fell), N.J. — Lenfell.

Mrs. Dear died this past year, and the Friends were surprised and most grateful for a lovely gift from her estate, which came at the time of the



Emma Joy Dana, left, presented the Resolution in Thelma Dear's honor to her daughter Mary Alice Amory.

Gala. The Gala was something Mrs. Dear always enjoyed. At the Gala, the Friends of Florham presented a Resolution which had been unanimously adopted by the Board of Trustees on September 8, 2003, to their guest of honor, her daughter, Mary Alice Amory. Her other daughter, Susan Ross, who lives in Florida and was unable to come, was sent the same resolution in the mail.

The resolution states: "Resolved, that the Friends of Florham express their profound sorrow at the death of Thelma Dear and extend to Mrs. Dear's family the deepest sympathy of the board, the organization's members, and Fairleigh Dickinson University, the Friends' partner in the preservation of Florham. Mrs. Dear was a consistently generous supporter of the Friends' programs and purposes. Furthermore, she unfailingly brightened their meetings with her gracious presence and drew upon her rich range of experience to contribute thoughtfully to the board's deliberations."

"Be it further resolved that by this resolution the members of the Friends of Florham board publicly and permanently acknowledge their deep sense of loss at her departure and make a collective pledge to pay tribute to her memory by rededicating themselves to the sort of unselfish community-minded goals to which Thelma Dear's life and deeds were so faithfully devoted."

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of all ages with her Marionette Players — a volunteer troupe of exceptional dedication and abilities — which create annual productions of classic children's stories performed at the Morris Museum. The 2004 performances of "Alice in Wonderland" contributed \$13,000 for the Morris Museum.

Those who know Barbara Keefauver realize that the enthusiastic backing of her husband, Bill, a

former intellectual property attorney for AT&T, enabled her to maintain her commitments and make her visions reality. The Keefauvers have two children, Betsy and Bruce, and two grandchildren, Caroline and Beth. They are ardent supporters of opera, the ballet and theater. The Friends of Florham and the Morris County area are fortunate to have citizens like Bill and Barbara Keefauver who help to make the community a better place to live.

Florham Contingent Visits Vanderbilt Estate in Hyde Park

The College at Florham of Fairleigh Dickinson University and the Friends of Florham have begun to develop a special relationship with the National Park Service at the Hyde Park sites. Last summer, National Park Service staff who were eager to learn more about Florham visited the campus at the invitation of the campus Provost's Office. They appreciated learning about Florham's history and renovation from Friends of Florham members Richard Simon and Barbara Keefauver. They toured the mansion, viewed the archives at the College at Florham Library and shared lunch.

In response, they invited College at Florham employees and the Friends of Florham to a special tour of the Hyde Park sites. The Provost's Office sponsored the trip.

When the bus carrying College at Florham faculty and staff arrived at the Frederick William Vanderbilt Estate in Hyde Park, N.Y., on September 25, the landscaped grounds reminded them of the grounds at the College at Florham. Since Frederick Law Olmsted designed the landscape for the estate and the architectural firm of McKim, Mead, and White designed the F.W. Vanderbilt Mansion, the University group felt quite at home when touring the Hyde Park estate.

First they visited the Pavilion built in 1895, now serving as the National Park Visitor Center at the site. The Pavilion was meant to serve as temporary quarters for the family while the earlier Langdon mansion was renovated, but eventually the architects decided that building was unsalvageable. They convinced the Vanderbilts to

build a new mansion in the Italian Renaissance style. Smaller in scale than Florham, the F.W. Vanderbilt mansion was just as lavishly adorned with European art and antiques, with many features used in decorating the interior coming from Napolean's former chateau of Malmaison. Since the F.W. Vanderbilt Estate was donated to the National Park Service in 1940 with all of its contents intact, visitors can easily imagine the lifestyle of an American millionaire at the turn of the century.

They toured the first and second floors, inspecting each room branching off the round reception hall. National Park staff provided a lecture at each level and answered any questions the group posed after viewing the rooms. They learned that Louise Vanderbilt always decorated her rooms in the French style, including her bedroom, which was an exact replica of Marie Antoinette's bedroom at Versailles. Her husband preferred Victorian and Medieval styles and found the inspiration for his bedroom in the chambers of a Spanish king. Before leaving the house to view the grounds, the group also toured the basement where the kitchen and three wine cellars were located.

They all appreciated the beauty of the estate's setting on the Hudson River as they walked a short distance to the restored Italian Gardens on that fine fall day.

The National Park Service was an excellent host and would like to collaborate actively with the University and the Friends of Florham on sharing information about the Vanderbilts and their era.

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Olmsted: Estates, Parks, Campuses and Communities: A brief survey of the life, work, and influence of the man who invented the practice of landscape architecture in the United States." She is a resident of Chatham, N.J., teaches landscape history at the New York Botanical Garden and Drew University, Madison, N.J., and works in the restored gardens at the Reeves Reed Arboretum in Summit, N.J. Her articles have appeared in *Fine Gardening*, *The New York Times*, *New Jersey Monthly*, *Woman's Day*, and *Hortus*. McDowell's book, *Emily Dickinson's Gardens*, will be published by McGraw Hill in November 2004.

At the dedication of the Cut-leaf Maple Garden are, from left, Friends Trustee William Simon, Friends President Emma Joy Dana, Eleanor Friedl, reference librarian, College at Florham Library, and James Griffio, professor emeritus of biology and former campus provost.

Photo by Judi Whiting

Life in the Mansions of the Gilded Age

The Twombly-Vanderbilt mansion at the College at Florham is a stunning example of the design of houses in the “Gilded Age.” Days in the “Gilded Age” were filled with incessant pleasure seeking and whatever luxury one’s income permitted. Women of social stature found themselves closely scrutinized by the public and subject to many claims by the social and philanthropic structure of the day.

What is a woman of great wealth and social stature to do in order to maintain an impeccable household — while upholding her social status? A housekeeper is essential in a large and elaborate home if any level of propriety is sought. A competent and efficient housekeeper relieves the lady of the house of the day-to-day details of home management, freeing her to pursue social obligations, favorite pastimes or travel plans.

The housekeeper becomes the “chief operating officer” managing the day-to-day operation of this domestic organization. The ideal housekeeper is an experienced and competent woman of good breeding who is thorough and conscientious regarding her duties, so the house runs with no apparent effort, invisibly.

The daily mail received by a woman of wealth is another area requiring great care and attention. Some individuals employed a personal secretary to assist or relieve them of this duty. Again, the level of day-to-day involvement in her own house determines the need for or degree of duties of the personal secretary.

Handsome engraved personal stationery for Mrs. or Miss as the case may be is abundantly available to write a brief note of reply to the endless stream of letters asking for charitable aid or donations, requests for interviews and invitations to any and all manner of social functions.

This leads to the social calendar. Every hostess in good social standing holds an “at home” on “her” day each week during the “gay season.” The hostess is obliged to receive guests in her home on that day regardless of other functions no matter how tempting they might be. From 3 until 6 p.m. on “her day,” a succession of callers of “her set” will arrive as each society woman’s day is well known. For example, if her address is on Fifth Avenue she and others on that avenue will receive guests on Tuesday. On Madison Avenue it is on Thursday. At the end of the afternoon, the hostess receives a stack of calling cards from her butler from which she sends out her notes thanking her guests for their visit. Careful attention to these details is paramount for anyone who wishes to be successful in society.



Vintage photo of the College at Florham Mansion.

Let us now turn attention to the hostess’s wardrobe, the major accoutrement to her lifestyle. Twice a year her trunks arrive from Paris. If possible, all plans for the day are cancelled as the arrival of those trunks takes priority. When the trunk lids are raised all she can see is tissue paper and tape tacked in crisscross — each garment is protected and held in place. Each waist has been stuffed with tissue paper. All sleeves, bows and other parts have been carefully shaped. Attached to every gown is a piece of the gown’s fabric from which matching slippers or shoes can be made by the shoemaker.

A gown room designed exclusively for storing the society lady’s gowns is filled with garments of every description. Every article has an assigned place, and the entire room is kept as dust free as possible. Few persons may realize that wearing garments does not ruin their freshness as quickly as careless treatment of them when not in use. Individual wardrobes with shelves hold nightgowns, lingerie and silk stockings in every hue to match the endless array of gowns. Hats and bonnets are stored in yet another wardrobe. Her personal maid, who has no small responsibility keeping her mistress looking her very, very best, tends to the lady’s wardrobe.

This brief glimpse into the life of a lady in the Gilded Age of social stature demonstrates that it was no small task to meet the demands of the day. That life was complicated by the rules and protocols that placed demands on the ladies of the time. Great care and attention to any and all details both social and domestic created responsibilities for the society woman and her staff. It could be said that it took a great deal of work to be a lady of leisure. — Elaine Earlywine



Old photo of the Mansion’s Grand Hall.

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The Library
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