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Contact: Daniela Addamo  
718.939.0647, extension 14

# Visit Seven Historic Houses in One Day During #HollyTour2018

## *See How Different Cultures Celebrated Christmas*

(Flushing/Corona, NY) — Seven Queens landmarks will open their doors to the public during #HollyTour2018 (which is the new name for the Holiday Historic House Tour) on Sunday, Dec. 9, from 1 pm to 5 pm. The 31st annual extravaganza will feature time-honored, family-friendly activities, live performances, history lessons, and refreshments. Tickets are \$15 in advance, but \$20 at the door. Children under age 12 can attend for \$5. At 5pm, visitors have the option to attend a calumniating performance as the end of the event, located at Friends Meeting House. One ticket is good for all the sites.

Visitors will walk at their own pace and/or take a dedicated shuttle to the different venues between Flushing and Corona. Most of the participating sites — Louis Armstrong House Museum; Bowne House; Flushing Town Hall; Quaker Meeting House; Kingsland Homestead; Lewis H. Latimer House Museum; and Voelker Orth House — will be decorated as they were during their first holiday seasons. Descriptions of the sites and their plans for #HollyTour2018 follow.

Louis Armstrong and his wife, Lucille, lived in what is now the **Louis Armstrong House Museum** (34-56 107th St., Corona) from 1943 through Satchmo's death in 1971 and until Lucille's death in 1983. The inside of this landmarked residence remains unchanged; a timeless snap shot of their life in the neighborhood that inspired the classic song "What a Wonderful World."

To honor the jazz trumpeter's legacy and his international influence, the Armstrong House will present "Holidays around the World," which will highlight the couple's travels during the holiday seasons and Louis's intimate relationships with friends of the Jewish faith. Visitors will hear rare audio clips from Satchmo's personal recordings and the trumpeter's magical voice reading "'Twas the Night Before Christmas" and other seasonal recordings. The house will be brilliantly decorated for the season.

English-born religious freedom advocate John Bowne built the **Bowne House** (37-01 Bowne St., Flushing) in 1661. It's the borough's oldest domicile and has city, state, and federal landmark status. Nine generations of the Bowne and Parsons families lived there until 1945, when it became a museum. The structure has a unique blend of Dutch and English construction techniques.

On Dec. 9, the house will present an exhibition on the history of Christmas, highlighting "home for the holidays." It will also offer live demonstrations of food preservation and quilting in the kitchen area. Bowne personnel will also unveil the new "Legends and Lore of the Bowne House" display and insert noted family legends throughout the tour.

Built in 1862, **Flushing Town Hall** (137-35 Northern Blvd., Flushing) was the cultural and political focal point of the village in the late 19th century. The Romanesque Revival building hosted swearing-in ceremonies for Union soldiers before the Civil War and later served as an opera house, a courthouse, a jail, and a bank branch. It is now a dynamic cultural venue presenting “Global Arts for a Global Community.” During #HollyTour2018, visitors will be able to attend “From Ecuador to the World,” a concert featuring maestro Manuel Campos and the Ecuadorian youth orchestra Orquesta Sinfónica Juvenil de la Prefectura del Guayas, at 2 pm. (\$10/Free for members, students, and teens), and shop at the annual Holiday Market (2 pm to 5 pm) for everything from handmade clothing and jewelry to paintings, posters, figurines, and ceramics.

When the **Quaker Meeting House** (137-16 Northern Blvd., Flushing) was constructed in 1694, it was the first house of worship in a town that was then called “Vlissengen.” Now it’s New York’s oldest structure in continuous use for religious purposes. The tour will end there with live performances, folk singing, and hot apple cider. Visitors will be able to walk around the grounds and view the historic cemetery.

Built between 1774 and 1785, Kingsland Homestead is one of the earliest surviving examples of houses common throughout Long Island, specifically Queens, in the late 18th and 19th centuries. The estate became **Kingsland Homestead** (143-35 37th Ave., Flushing) when prominent Quaker and British sea captain - Joseph King, bought the house in 1801. Five generations of distinguished Quakers - the King/Murray family, lived there until the 1930s. In 1968, the dwelling was moved from its original Flushing site to its current location, where it serves as the Queens Historical Society’s headquarters.

A poetry exhibition, Victorian-era period room, a musical interlude, and winter-themed refreshments await you at Kingsland during the #HollyTour2018 program.

**Lewis Howard Latimer** lived in a 19th century Victorian house (34-41 137th St., Flushing) from 1902 until his death in 1928. The African-American son of fugitive slaves was vital in developing the telephone and the incandescent light bulb, and was also a poet, painter, and musician.

The Dec. 9 guided tour will introduce his story along with his original lamps and art works, the Tinker Lab, Interactive Poetry Installation, and a video interview of his granddaughter, Winifred Latimer Norman, who fought to save the historical house and raise awareness of her grandfather’s contributions to science. Traditional holiday refreshments will be offered throughout the afternoon.

**Voelker Orth House** (149-19 38th Ave., Flushing) dates to 1891 and provided shelter to three generations of a family with German roots. The Voelker granddaughter, Elisabeth “Betty” Orth (1926-1995) bequeathed her estate to establish the museum, preserving a view of Flushing’s past. The garden contains many popular plants and berry bushes of the late 19th century. They are maintained with time-honored gardening techniques (no pesticides) for birds, butterflies and honey bees to feast upon and pollinate.

For the tour, the Victorian abode will be dressed in a traditional German-American style much the way the Voelker and Orth women would have transformed their home to welcome friends and family during the holidays. Guests can enjoy a seasonal installation of miniatures and peruse a gift-and-plant sale. They can also join a sing-along with David Caldwell and enjoy *pfeffernüsse* (tiny spice cookies), other sweets, and hot mulled cider. Storybooks and coloring for youngsters, too.

*More information is at [www.queenshistoricalsociety.org](http://www.queenshistoricalsociety.org) or contact Daniela Addamo at 718.939.0647, extension 14, or [daddamo@queenshistoricalsociety.org](mailto:daddamo@queenshistoricalsociety.org).*

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