

The Village Tricentennial Tree

By William J. Johnston - Village Historian

In 1987, Farmingdale commemorated the 300th anniversary of its settlement by Thomas Powell and his family back in 1687. The yearlong celebration, which was sponsored by 36 community organizations, was called the Tricentennial of Settlement. When it concluded, there was an amount of money remaining. The consensus of the coordinating committee was that this fund the purchase of an evergreen tree, to symbolize continuing growth, progress, and vitality of Farmingdale in its fourth century. A fine Colorado blue spruce was selected, and with permission of the Village Board, planted on the Village Green. A bronze historical marker was placed at the foot of the tree.

Suggestions were soon made that the tree be lighted during the holiday season. The committee agreed to this, with firm guidelines that the spirit of the lighting ceremony be historical, secular and civic, and that the event be inclusive for all. The first lighting took place on November 30, 1989. Numerous historical occasions have been celebrated on the Village Green at the Tricentennial Tree, including Thomas Powell's 350th birthday anniversary (1991), and the 100th anniversary of the village's incorporation (2004).

The tree when planted was of modest size, but over the years grew much taller and wider. In October 2006, it was moved to another location on the Village Green near the gazebo/bandstand, to allow it more adequate growing space.