

PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Sponsoring Organization: St. James' Episcopal Church, Hyde Park, NY

Contact: Sue DeLorenzo, Volunteer Coordinator for Fireside Chats

Telephone: 845-266-3196 (for your verification only: not to be published)

Email: sddelorenzo@optonline.net

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Frances Perkins, FDR's Secretary of Labor, to be topic of Upcoming Fireside Chats

The Fireside Chats at St. James CHAPEL in Hyde Park will conclude this year with two presentations on Frances Perkins, the first woman to serve in a President's cabinet. Part 1: "Frances Perkins: The Early Years" to be presented on March 30 will focus on her early family life and the importance of her Christian faith. These early influences led her to becoming one of the most socially conscientious individuals of the 20th century. Speaker Linda Bouchey will explain what caused this female advocate to fight so strongly in a man's world for reforming injustices exasperated by the Great Depression. Issues, such as ending child labor or limiting the working day for employees to less than 54 hours, are just two of the changes to be discussed., as well as Perkins' connection to the political world of Franklin Roosevelt.

Al Vinck, retired educator, will continue the discussion on April 6 with Part 2: "The New Deal's First Lady", beginning with a list of demands to which she expected the newly elected President Roosevelt to agree. Only then would Perkins accept his offer to be Secretary of Labor during the Great Depression. She shaped what we know today as FDR's New Deal. Perkins' successes were many, but being a female brought harsh criticism and difficulties for this important social reformer. Although the name of Perkins is nearly forgotten today, she was as well known in the 1930s and 40s as Eleanor Roosevelt. Mr. Vinck will discuss the huge debt Americans owe to Ms. Perkins, as well as the background to many of today's political questions such as the minimum wage, Social Security and universal health care.

Speakers Linda Bouchey and Al Vinck are retired educators from the Hyde Park School district and are now independent Roosevelt researchers. They volunteer in many capacities at the local historic sites, including Wilderstein, Top Cottage, and the FDR Museum and Library.

The Chats will take place at historic St. James' CHAPEL, located at 10 East Market Street in Hyde Park (across from the Post Office) at 7:00 PM on March 30 and April 6. In the event of inclement weather, the chat will be scheduled for the following Thursday. There are no reservations, but seating is limited. A reception will be held following each lecture in the adjacent Rev. Gordon L Kidd Reading Room. All are invited.

For additional information about St. James' Church or the Chapel, please contact 845-229-2820.

CALENDAR LISTING

Fireside “Chat” at St. James’ Chapel

St. James’ Chapel, 10 East Market Street, Hyde Park (across from the Post Office), March 30, 7 pm, Part 1 “Frances Perkins: The Early Years” and April 6, 7 pm, Part 2 “Frances Perkins: The New Deal’s First Lady.” Lectures presented by independent Roosevelt researchers Linda Bouchey and Al Vinck. Reception will follow. 845-229-2820 (In case of inclement weather, the Chat will be re-scheduled for the following Thursday.)