

Operation Democracy's Painting for Peace Exhibit, Locust Valley Honored in Normandy on D-Day

At 6:00 PM on Thursday, May 24, the public is invited to enjoy the gallery, above the Basil Leaf Café in Locust Valley, to join Operation Democracy in their second annual Painting for Peace art exhibit. Beautiful and creative works of student art will be on display, courtesy of the many talented students of Locust Valley High School.

Last year, the students put their hearts and souls into their masterpieces for this event by submitting paintings with the theme of 'Painting for Peace' with images displaying peacefulness, charity, and humanitarianism. Kay Weninger, who is spearheading the revival of Operation Democracy, believes the concepts of freedom, peace and democracy through friendship and education is a way to achieve the goal of educating students about humanitarianism by creating educational, cultural and community

events and exchanges between schools.

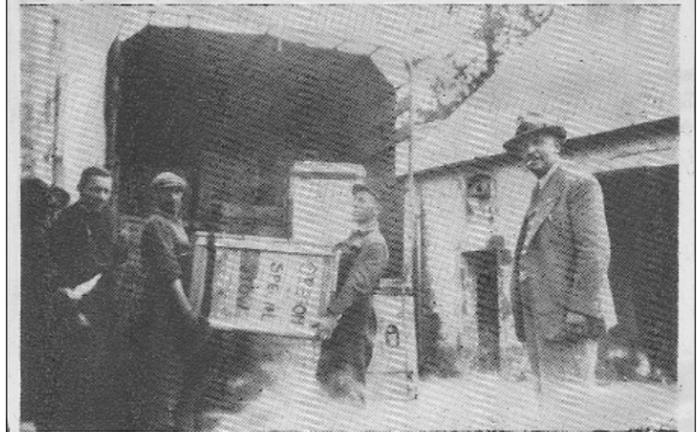
Operation Democracy was originally started in 1947 by the Locust Valley Women's Club to help the city of Ste. Mere Eglise, France since it was the first village liberated (1944) during World War II. Mrs. Charles Breasted agreed to chair the committee starting with a clothing drive that shipped goods to 450 families, quickly followed by a Thanksgiving food drive and Mrs. E. M. Ward headed a sewing group which hoped to have a dozen layettes ready to be shipped over by Easter. What was started in Locust Valley with one sister city grew and by mid 1948 there were a total of 84 American cities with sister cities in Europe with the full approval and assistance of the State Department. Mrs. King (who visited Ste. Mere Eglise) served on the National Operation Democracy Committee and reported that Locust

Valley residents could not possibly realize the impact they had and how much it was appreciated. Kaye Weninger was honored by Ste. Mere Eglise last year when she visited and thanked for keeping the 'sisterhood' going strong.

Weninger, creator of this art exhibit, is using it as a way to remind students of the importance of remembering

September 23, 1948

Mrs. King Describes Distribution Of Clothing In Ste. Mere Eglise



A snapshot showing the clothing from Locust Valley when it arrived in Ste. Mere Eglise.

A photo, taken from the The Leader archives, showing the arrival of clothes to St. Mere Eglise.

Memorial Day and what it stands for by giving the students an opportunity to express, through art, their interpretation of peace, and to honor those whose service should never be forgotten. "We need to continue to encourage our young students to express themselves through art. "This is a fantastic opportunity to spread a positive message about peace through our next generation" states Weninger. She has been in contact with the community of Sainte Mere Eglise, who loved the idea, and on D-Day, June 6, they too will be hosting a student art exhibit in the same venue and displaying Locust Valley student art as well.

Mayor Marc LeFevre of Ste. Mere Eglise will also be placing new signs in his village stating Locust Valley is their sister city and plans are being worked on to place a rock similar to one on Forest Avenue, with the story of Operation Democracy, which honors the founders, Mrs. Martha Breasted and Col. Augustin Hart. It acknowledges the unique bond between these two villages, that, although separated by an ocean, were united in the hearts of their citizens in 1947. Now, 65 years later, the next chapter will be written by the next generation through friendship and art.

The Operation Democracy story resurfaced in 2005, starting in 2006 several projects were undertaken, such as the refurbishing of the WWII monument, whose history was documented through the Historical Society and featured in a film, which premiered here in Locust Valley. This year marks the third annual Music for Peace concert, the second annual Painting for Peace and the first anniversary of the 9/11 Memorial Garden. Operation Democracy is a staunch supporter of veterans whose mission is to educate the next generation to *Never Forget* and to participate in Memorial Day and Veterans Day programs.

The exhibit will be open to the public on Friday, May 25, 12-5 pm and Saturday, May 26, 11-5pm. Any students in the surrounding area, who would like to display their artwork about peace, are encouraged to call Kaye at 516.637.8496 or visit www.operationdemocracy.com. The village of Locust Valley owes a debt of thanks to Kaye Weninger for her dedication and idealism.

<h1>PAINTING FOR PEACE</h1>	
<p>Featuring Art Work from the Students Of Locust Valley High School</p> <p>Memorial Day Weekend May 24-26th, 2012</p> <p>OPEN TO PUBLIC</p> <p>Thursday Opening Reception 6pm to 8 pm Friday 12pm 5pm Saturday 11-5pm.</p> <p>Hosted by Locust Valley Shoppes 7 The Plaza Gallery above the Basil Leaf Café</p> <p>Memorial Day is a day of remembrance for those who have died in our nation's service.</p> <p>Please join our local students as they display their art in honor of those whose service should never be forgotten.</p>	
<p>Sponsored by Operation Democracy For more information: www.operationdemocracy.com or call 637-8496</p>	