

Queens **Tribune**

VOL. 37 No. 13 MARCH 29-APRIL 4, 2007

**YOU MUST
REMEMBER
THIS...**

2007 ANNIVERSARY EDITION

Front cover of the April 4th, 2007 edition of the Queens Tribune.



Edit Page

In Our Opinion:

It Must Return

For years the Flushing Remonstrance has sat in Albany – 159 miles away – brought back into view here in Flushing only a handful of times.

That is just wrong.

The people of Flushing, before it was even Queens, said that they would not stand to see anybody oppressed because of religious beliefs. That tradition has carried over the last three and a half centuries, with Queens proudly carrying its Green Card welcoming the nearly 50 percent of the borough's residents who were not born in this country.

What the heck does Albany know about the Remonstrance anyway? Who are they to keep our precious document tucked away where nobody has the opportunity to learn from it – not even them?

When putting together this issue, we called the New York State Archives where the document is held. The first person couldn't figure out to whom the call should be switched because she had never heard of the Remonstrance.

"It's just the foundation for religious liberty in the Western Hemisphere," we told her. We got transferred.

"Are you sure we have it?" the next person asked. "I checked our catalog and I don't see it. Maybe the library has it."

"No, we told them. "If you go to your Web site and click on 'New York's Treasures,' it'll be the third oldest document you guys have."

"Oh, there is," the voice on the other side of the line said.

The people who DO know about it treat it tenderly and care for it well, but it is clear that it is not doing anybody any good to have it there in Albany.

Bring it back home. Put it on permanent display in the new and improved Queens Museum of Art, incorporate it into the elementary school education and take our school kids on trips to see a piece of history that they don't have to travel to Philadelphia, Washington or, gulp, Albany for.

Editorial from April 4th, 2007 edition of Queens Tribune.

For expanded and in-depth coverage of the Flushing Remonstrance, click <http://www.queenstribune.com/> for the April 4th, 2007 edition.

THE QUEENS
COURIER

editorials ➤

Return The Remonstrance

We applaud the efforts and diligence of a Queens civic group, the Flushing Meadows-Corona Park World's Fair Association, in its quest to have an historic document returned to the borough where it was born - permanently and not just for a visit.

The 350-year-old document, the Flushing Remonstrance was signed on December 27, 1657 to bring the concept of religious freedom to the area. Other than four visits back to Flushing, the most recent being in 1999, the document has been locked away in a safe in Albany.

Former managing editor of *The Queens Courier* and president of the Flushing Meadows-Corona Park World's Fair Association, David Oates, was the driving force behind the last visit of the Remonstrance. With the help of *The Queens Courier*, Oates made a case at that time to have the document returned and put on display for the Millennium.

"It was a beautiful thing because we really saw the reaction it got and really brought life back to the document," Oates remembered.

According to Queens Museum of Art Executive Director Tom Finkelpearl, both the museum and the Flushing Library have put in a request to the New York State Archives for a temporary loan to bring the Remonstrance back to Queens for the 350th Anniversary.

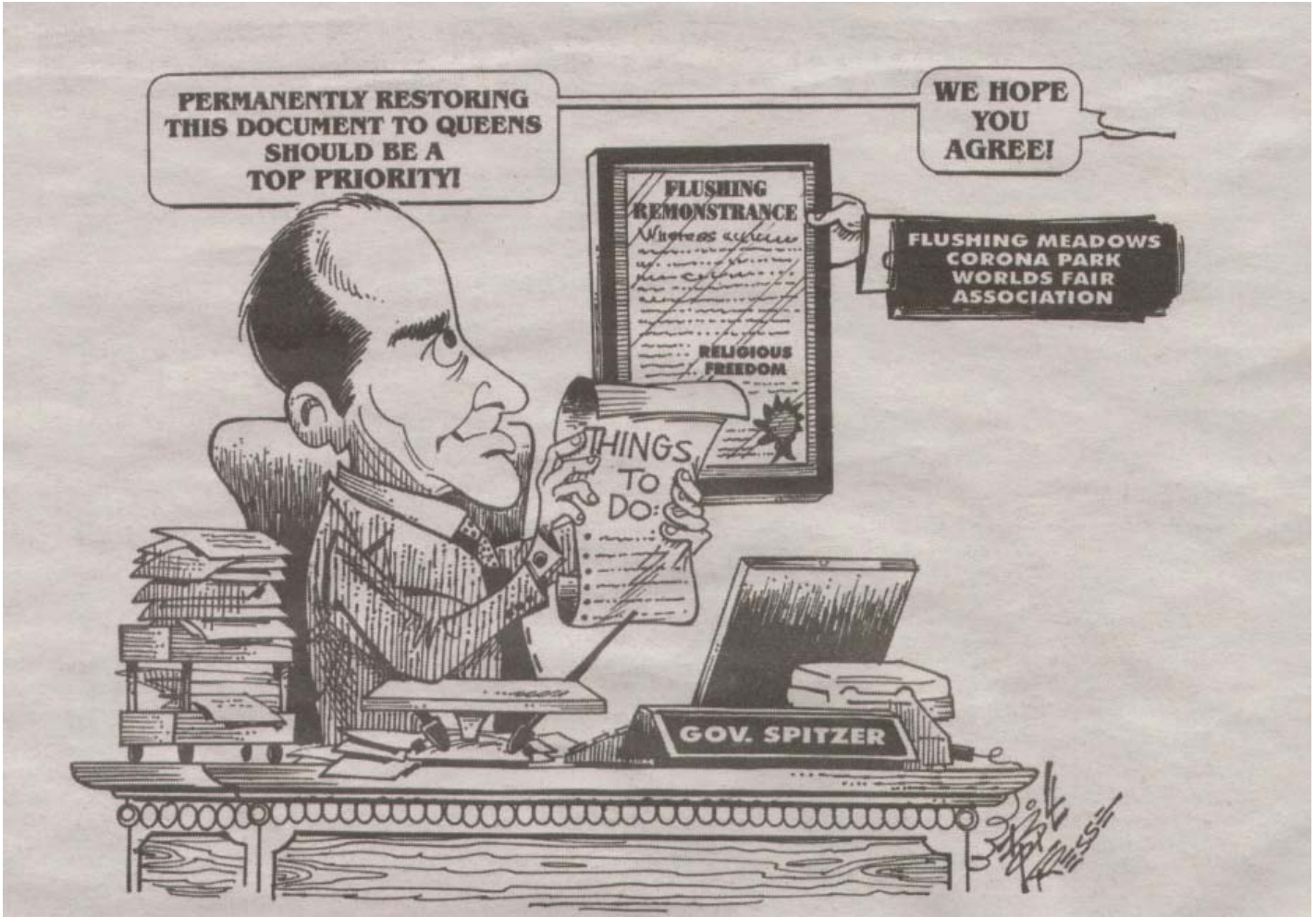
However, since the Queens Museum of Art now has all the facilities to care for such an important historical document, perhaps it is finally time for Queens to become its permanent home.

In such a diverse borough as Queens, with its polyglot religions and numerous languages and cultures, perhaps Governor Eliot Spitzer could take up Oates' cause and intercede with the Archives and make this group's wish come true. Why should such a piece of Queens history be locked away when it could be on display for all to see and learn from?

There is no downside to this deed governor - you can make it happen.

Editorial from January 18th, 2007 edition of The Queens Courier.

THE QUEENS
COURIER



Editorial cartoon from January 18th, 2007 edition of The Queens Courier.