



By Hilda M. Morrill

## The Scene Beyond Milton

The Museum of Russian Icons, located at 230 Union St. in Clinton, presents "Opulence Rediscovered: The Romanov Liturgical Silver" from Oct. 19 to Jan. 13.

The extraordinary set of Russian Orthodox liturgical implements was made in 1877 as part of the imperial dowry of Grand Duchess Maria Alexandrovna Romanova (1853-1920), the only surviving daughter of Russian Emperor Alexander II, who married Prince Alfred, Duke of Edinburgh, in 1874. She used the opulent silver set in her private chapel in the Clarence House British Royal Residence in London.

The first public showing in more than 50 years, the upcoming exhibition coincides with the 200th anniversary of the birth of Emperor Alexander II, the 165th anniversary of the birth of his daughter, the Grand Duchess Maria Alexandrovna, and will take place exactly 140 years since the set was installed in London's Clarence House in 1878.

After World War II, the set was acquired by American collector Pavel Fekula (1905-1982), who had it exhibited in the Orthodox Room at the Interchurch Center in New York in the 1960s. After his death, the set was broken up and sold to private collectors in the United States. This will be the first time the set has been reunited since it was dispersed in the 1960s.

Due to the special significance of this exhibition, his Eminence Metropolitan Hilarion, a bishop of the Russian Orthodox Church, will give remarks at the opening reception of the exhibition on Friday, Oct. 19 from 6 to 8 p.m. Guests will enjoy wine and hors d'oeuvres. Tickets for non-members are \$15 and museum members have free admission. Registrations are due by Oct. 15 by calling 978-598-5000, ext. 121.

The museum is the only museum in the United States dedicated to Russian icons and holds the largest



**COSMONAUT ORNAMENT**—This cosmonaut ornament will be on view as part of the "Corncobs to Cosmonauts" exhibition scheduled at the Museum of Russian Icons during the upcoming holidays.

(Photo courtesy of Frank Sciacca)

state emblems, and objects that celebrate the productivity of farms and factories.

In celebration of the exhibition, vintage and modern Russian ornaments and Christmas and holiday décor and gifts will be on sale in the museum shop throughout the holiday season.

On Sunday, Oct. 21 at 2 p.m., the Forest Hills Cemetery and Forest Hills Educational Trust will welcome author Lesley Bannatyne for a lecture, "The Curious History of Halloween," in the historic Forsyth Chapel.

A leading authority on Halloween, Bannatyne traces our onetime children's holiday-turned-adult-carnival from its origins in northwestern Europe through its explosion in popularity in the United States.

We are told that drawing on research from her latest book, "Halloween Nation: Behind the Scenes of America's Fright Night," Bannatyne looks at everything from the holiday's Irish and Scottish origins, its popularity with Victorian Americans, its incarnation as a children's holiday, and its transformation into a holiday for everyone from horror fans to giant pumpkin growers to whole towns to discover what makes Halloween so fascinating for so many people.

One of the country's foremost authorities on Halloween, Bannatyne has shared her knowledge on television specials for The History Channel as well as with *Time* magazine, *Slate*, and *National Geographic*. She contributed the Halloween article to *World Book Encyclopedia*.

Bannatyne has written five books about Halloween, ranging from a children's book, "Witches Night Before Halloween," to her latest book, "Halloween Nation," which was a finalist for a 2011 Bram Stoker Award. Books by the author will be available for purchase.

States dedicated to Russian icons and holds the largest collection of icons outside of Russia. For more information and details about upcoming exhibitions, call 978-598-5000 or visit [www.museumofrussianicons.org](http://www.museumofrussianicons.org).

Incidentally, we are told that starting on Friday, Nov. 9, the museum will be displaying "C...

**(A new source of items donated to the Museum of Russian Icons)**

than 150 Soviet-era ornaments displayed alongside various-sized and decorated "New Year's Trees," together with holiday toys, books, and cards.

The majority of the ornaments have been donated

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Admission is \$10 for advance tickets and \$12 at the door. Forest Hills Cemetery is located at 95 Forest Hills Ave. in Jamaica Plain. For more information, call 617-524-0128 or visit [www.foresthillscemetery.com](http://www.foresthillscemetery.com).