

# White's vision was true blue

By Gail T. Boatman  
Special to To Do

**P**art visionary, part astute businesswoman, Elizabeth White would have been right at home in today's world.

Feminists can salute her for breaking the glass ceiling long before the term had been invented and everyone of us can be grateful to her when we dig into a bowl of luscious New Jersey blueberries this summer.

In the view of the members of the Whitesbog Preservation Trust, White, who lived from 1871 to 1954, is a woman who deserves to be better known and March, Women's History Month, is an appropriate time to spread the word. Tomorrow at 4 p.m., she will be the subject of a lecture in the meeting room of the general store in Whitesbog, which is located southeast of Browns Mills in Pemberton Township.

The lecture, which will be delivered by historian William Bolger of the National Park Service, will be followed by a rare opportunity to tour Suningive, White's home in Whitesbog, which is normally only open during the Blueberry Festival in June and for private tours.

There will be a \$5 charge and reservations are required.

**IF YOU GO**

**Elizabeth White Lived Here, Lecture and Tour**  
**When:** Tomorrow at 4 p.m.  
**Where:** The Meeting Room in the General Store at Whitesbog, Route 530, southeast of Browns Mills, Pemberton Township  
**Admission:** \$5  
**Information:** 609-893-4646

Whitesbog was White's home and her laboratory. The daughter of a cranberry farmer, she observed the wild blueberry bushes that bloomed between the cranberry bogs and was the first to understand that because they ripen earlier than cranberries, the two crops could complement each other.

"They both thrive in the same acidic soil," said Theresa Earley, executive director of the Whitesbog Preservation Trust.

There was, however, a big obstacle. It was believed that blueberries could not be cultivated. That was a concept White refused to accept. She read about a scientist who had



**Elizabeth White will be the subject** of a lecture tomorrow afternoon at the General Store in Whitesbog.

researched blueberry cultivation and invited him to Whitesbog.

Eventually, the two produced a cultivated berry and it was marketed for the first time in 1916. Throughout her life, White worked side by side with the laborers who toiled in the fields, even nursing them when they fell ill.

According to Earley, she was a humanitarian and a dedicated and hard-working woman who cared deeply about her work. "It

is said that she spent so much time in the fields that her feet were blue," Earley said.

White also organized the New Jersey Blueberry Co-op, Earley said. "She was a woman you could model your life after." The trust plans to continue its efforts to educate the public about White's accomplishments.

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