

# NEWSLETTER

WORKING TO PRESERVE OUR PAST IN ORDER TO PROTECT OUR FUTURE

FALL 2017



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## "And They Are Off!!" Opening Day of Two New QHS Exhibitions



▶ Trainer Sunny Jim Fitzsimmons, NYRA.

The Queens Historical Society opened two exhibitions on October 8th — *The Sport of Kings in Queens: Celebrating 350 Years of Thoroughbred Horse Racing at Kingsland Homestead and Past Performances: Legends of the Queens Turf* at Flushing Town Hall.

Bob Curran, Vice President of the Jockey Club, was the featured speaker. Bob presented exciting films about the champions *California Chrome*, *American Pharoah* and *Always Dreaming* and described the many services of The Jockey Club.

The Jockey Club was founded in 1894 and is renowned throughout the world for its dedication to the improvement of thoroughbred breeding and racing. It is made up of three Divisions:

- (1) The Jockey Club Racing Service Inc.;
- (2) TJC Holdings Inc.; and
- (3) Charitable Organizations.

The Jockey Club Racing Services Inc. consists of Equibase Company LLC and Axcis Information Network. Equibase is the Thoroughbred industry's official database. Through equibase.com and its mobile applications, Equibase engages fans daily in the promotion of the sport with a comprehensive menu of wagering products and free racing information. Axcis Information Network's TrackMaster provides horse racing information to handicappers of every skill level. It provides many enhanced and value-added statistics.

Continued on pg 4 ➔

## Writers



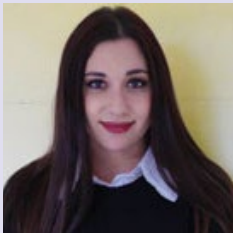
▶ Patricia B. Sherwood  
Image Credit: Anthony O'Reilly



▶ Branka Djuknic  
Image Credit: Frank DiStefano



▶ Richard Hourahan  
Image Credit: Alina Suriel



▶ Daniela Addamo  
Image Credit: QHS website



▶ Dr. Jack Eichenbaum  
Image Credit: Neighborhood Slice



▶ Joseph R. Brostek  
Image Credit: Queens College

## A Letter from the Executive Director

**Branka Duknic**

### Monumental indeed is the year of 2017!

Two pivotal centennials are taking place this year, both signifying the fight for civil liberties: US entering The Great War (WWI) and equally important women of NY state securing their right to vote. This Fall, Kevin Fitzpatrick, a renowned author, has presented his new book, "World War I New York" on our great city's involvement in the war efforts.

Not to be forgotten is the fight for women's right to vote, an event celebrated throughout the state of New York. That is why our 30<sup>th</sup> Annual Holiday Historic House Tour will be featuring significant women, associated with the participating historic house museums. Our visitors will learn more on the ladies who fought hard to break from the conservative notions of femininity and women's roles, regardless of the century they belonged to.

In the special tour at Kingsland Homestead, as part of the Holiday Historic House Tour, a particular emphasis will be placed upon Annie Cornelia Mitchell Murray. The Archives of the Queens Historical Society contain the Mitchell Family Papers. They provide an intimate picture of a nineteenth century family which varies drastically from the stereotype of Victorian family life: Annie was educated as an equal to her brother, her parents treated her as an intelligent human—neither as a male or female (no sewing for Annie!)—from childhood. She spoke and read fluently in several languages. Goethe was her favorite writer. Annie Cornelia also trained as a nurse with Elizabeth Blackwell at Bellevue Hospital for service in the United

## A Message from Queens Historical Society President

**Patricia B. Sherwood**

The "new" season has begun and there is a lot "new" at Kingsland. A heart felt 'thank-you' goes to our Borough President, Melinda Katz for her financial support. The exhibit rooms at QHS have some 'up to arts' technical apparatus, including a ceiling mount projector and wall mounted iPads with information about jockeys and trainers. My sincere appreciation goes to our caretakers, staff, volunteers, and interns, for their design, information, installation, and maintenance.

States Sanitary Commission, the relief agency for sick and wounded Union soldiers during the Civil War.

We hope you tune in and join us for our re-vamped holiday house tour this year. Our sincere gratitude to our caring sponsors, Con Edison of NY, Sheraton La Guardia Hotel, the Kindler Foundation and the support of the Flushing Chamber of Commerce.

Another outstanding feat remains to be applauded: members of the Woodside community getting together to help Queens Historical Society with the clean-up of the historic Moore-Jackson Cemetery. Special thanks go out to the efforts made by the people behind the Moore-Jackson Cemetery Revitalization Project: Assemblyman Brian Barnwell, Elizabeth O'Connor, Samantha Yeung, Bob Piazza, Karen Marder and the Executive Director of Queens Botanical Garden, Susan Lacerte for her professional advice in the field of botany. However, none of this would be possible without our Collections Manager and Curator, Richard Hourahan's dedicated work to preserve and protect this hidden gem of Queens County's past.

Make sure to visit us in December. Many magical things await!

Sibyl Groff will speak about the magic of Christmas time in Midtown Manhattan and talk more on the Rockefeller Plaza. Yes, we do venture out of Queens, once in awhile. But, then we're back with book author Bob Brody and his book "Playing Catch with Strangers" in which he talks about his life and family in Forest Hills.

Let me end my message with a millennial proverb: [#whenindoubt\\_itsinqueens](#)

Last June, at the Historic House Trust Gala, Branka Duknic met Liam Kavanagh, First Deputy Commissioner of NYC Parks Department. During the summer, she contacted him about our driveway. Commissioner Kavanagh visited us and surveyed the area. About three weeks later, we had a site inspection for the removal of the unwanted brush and vegetation around the house. On October 31, 2017 a team of gardeners and chippers came to do an initial clean up.

Commissioner Kavanagh attended the opening of 'The Sport of Kings in Queens' exhibition, curated by Richard Hourahan. We hope to keep him as a friend.

Continued on pg 3 ➔

Continued from pg 2

Incidents happen! On Primary Day, our American Flag was removed from the front of the house! Special thanks to Connie and Lou DeMartino for quickly replacing it before our Annual Meeting.

Year 2018 will be extra special for QHS. It is the 50th Anniversary. Jack Eichenbaum has graciously volunteered to be the chairperson of the celebrations. Jack, the Queens Borough Historian provided a tour for the winners of a silent auction, Jay and Emma Lewis. In their correspondence, they enclosed a donation to the Society for their memorable tour.

## Public Programming

### Daniela Addamo

Pumpkin spiced lattes aren't the only things brewing this season! QHS has some exciting new projects that have been in the works for the past few months. We have officially launched our rebranding project designed by Rich Prior, graphic & web designer. If you haven't already, we encourage you to take a look at our new logo with colors inspired by the train lines that connect all of Queens, and redeveloped website that is now mobile friendly.

Speaking of new projects, QHS has partnered up with members of the Woodside neighborhood to develop the Moore-Jackson Cemetery Revitalization Project. Moore-Jackson (1733), a historic cemetery located in Woodside, is one of the few colonial era cemeteries in NYC designated as a New York City landmark (1997). The project consists of a group of engaged citizens whose mission is to preserve the history and beautify of Moore-Jackson Cemetery.

## Mysteries of the Elmhurst Gas Tanks

### Jack Eichenbaum, Queens Borough Historian

If you were a driver in Queens more than twenty years ago, the twin cylindrical gas tanks in Elmhurst (or Maspeth, depending on your viewpoint) abutting the Long Island Expressway were both structural landmarks and a locus of traffic congestion. "Traffic is backed up from the (Queens Midtown) Tunnel to the (Elmhurst) Tanks," was a common radio report.

Congratulations to Branka and Daniela for applying for and receiving a \$15,000 grant from Achelis & Bodman for operating expenses. We have received a donation for Moore Jackson Cemetery from Mary Keefe and Fred Crecca and an annual donation from George P. Miller.

Another "thanks for giving" goes to the Varons for purchasing a new refrigerator for the Society.

Now! A special recognition to Branka Duknic, she was recently honored by Times Ledger Queens Ambassador Awards this year. Our Executive Director was recognized as a super

Phase 1 of the clean up session has come to completion and we encourage new volunteers to help out during Phase 2. Volunteers who are interested may check our website for updates of these clean up sessions.

Any questions can also be referred to [moorejacksoncemetery@gmail.com](mailto:moorejacksoncemetery@gmail.com).

With the new season comes school season of course! QHS once again has a packed schedule of classes ranging from K – 8. We are also accommodating an increase of Title 1 schools in an effort to bring more history classes to those communities which are underserved.

Once again, we will be celebrating the holiday season through our Annual Holiday Historic House Tour on Sunday, December 10<sup>th</sup> from 1:00 – 5:00pm. What's especially unique about this year's tour is that it's the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary that we have offered this festive event. In addition, this year has marked The Centennial of the Women's Suffrage Movement in NY State! We invite visitors to come and experience these seven houses included in the tour in a new light, through the lens of Women's Suffrage.

While drivers recognized the structures, few understood the innovative technology they employed. An article appearing on page 5 of the Winter, 1993 edition of *Invention and Technology*, published three years before the demolition of the tanks (1996) explains the unusual features of the structures which were constructed about a century ago when the surrounding area was mostly farmland.

Among other features, the gas tanks expanded not as a giant balloon but in sections like a collapsible drinking cup. Each section was sealed off by a ring of water. Until the 1960's

successful arrival in the U.S. Amongst her fellow awardees were other successful businesspersons, medical personnel, and heroes. Congratulations! Thank you for your presentation to the Queens community and introducing the Queens Historical Society to a whole new audience. Yea Branka! Go! Branka, keep up your good work. So great to have you at the helm.

We are all looking forward to a Happy Holiday Season! Happy Thanksgiving Everyone!

We've also added a new feature with a culminating concert at Friends Meeting House included with admission. Please see the list of all events on page 6 for more details on upcoming events.



▼ Volunteers raking and bagging by the tombstones at Moore-Jackson Cemetery. Image courtesy of the Moore-Jackson Cemetery Revitalization Project.

inspection of the interior was via a small row-boat which was propelled around manually so that any leaks could be detected.

You might find the article in one of the larger or more specialized libraries. Emil J. Kochman, a Maspeth native was kind enough to send me a readable image of the article. Anyone interested in receiving this image can email me ([jaconet@aol.com](mailto:jaconet@aol.com)) and I will forward it.



# "And They Are Off!!" Opening Day of Two New QHS Exhibitions

**Richard Hourahan**

Continued from pg 1 / cover

TJC Holdings Inc. consists of  
(1) InCompass Solutions Inc.;  
(2) The Jockey Club Information Systems Inc.;  
(3) The Jockey Club Technology Services Inc.;  
and (4) TJC Media Ventures Inc.

InCompass Solutions is the industry's leading technology solutions and software provider for racetracks and simulcast facilities throughout North America. Some of the most significant offerings are its Condition Book Matrix which provides racing secretaries a retrospective statistical insight into how races with certain conditions have been filled and displays eligible horses likely available to run in the geographic region and Simo-Central.com which provides web access to all North American simulcast programs in seven languages to simulcast sites around the world.

The Jockey Club Information Systems is the leading research and production source of North American Thoroughbred sales catalog pedigrees. TJIS is the majority owner of the prestigious journal *BloodHorse*. It operates equineline.com the international source for Thoroughbred and American Quarter Horse pedigrees, race

records, mare produce records and sire reports as well as the innovative Portfolio Service, Trainer Program, Farm Program and Owner Program management services.

The Jockey Club Technology Services provides technology solutions that encompass software development, technology consulting and hosting and managed services to address organizations' business needs and assist in defining and implementing complex business transformations.

## Grayson-Jockey Club Research Foundation is the nations' leading source of equine research funding and it helps all breeds.

TJC Media Ventures is a commercial subsidiary that oversees the new-fan development activities, primarily under the "America's Best Racing" (ABR brand). The company uses a multi-media strategy that involves traditional

media outlets, television and mobile technologies as well as social and digital media to introduce new and casual fans to the vibrancy of the sport of thoroughbred racing. ABR's national weekly radio show and podcast, "The Winner's Circle," airs in more than 80 national markets every Saturday morning on SBNationRadio.com and the SB Nation Radio app.

The Charitable Organizations Unit consists of two very important organizations:  
(1) The Jockey Club Safety Net Foundation and  
(2) Grayson-Jockey Club Research Foundation.

Jockey Club Safety Net is a charitable trust that provides, on a confidential basis, financial relief and assistance to needy members of the thoroughbred industry and their families. Assistance includes financial aid, medication, surgical and hospital costs, therapeutic equipment, voice-recognition computers for quadriplegics and wheelchair-accessible vans, among other needs.

Grayson-Jockey Club Research Foundation is the nations' leading source of equine research funding and it helps all breeds. Since 1983 it has funded 346 projects at 43 universities in North America and overseas.

The audience was spell-bound not only by the thrilling racing footage but by the enormous scope and comprehensiveness of The Jockey Club's services to fans, horses and the thoroughbred industry.

## Suffrage

**Nadia Mushib**

New York has been an established leader in the Women's Suffrage Movement. The Women's Rights Convention of 1848 organized in Seneca Falls, NY resulted in one of the great pieces of feminist literature, the Declaration of Rights and Sentiments. While we tend to place the start of the women's suffrage movement in Upstate New York, our home borough of Queens produced important suffragettes and equal rights activists!

Queens boasts a historic tolerance for those generally disenfranchised. The New York Gazette reported in June 1737 on two elderly widows voting in the Queens County election. Examples of such early practices of equality

can be traced to the influence of the Society of Religious Friends, widely known as Quakers. It was right here in Queens, the first place in colonial America to accept Quakers after some contestation, that Quakers could put their tenets of equality and community into practice through social activism.

The women's suffrage movement benefited from the momentum provided by the Christian minority. The Quakers had demanded equal footing for women since the group's birth in sixteenth century England. Just think about the organizers of the 1848 Convention! Four of the five organizers – Lucretia Mott, Martha Wright, Mary Ann M'Clintock, and Jane Hunt – had Quaker backgrounds. If you were to look at the signatures on the Declaration of Rights and Sentiments, it is clear at least twenty-three Quakers signed the document, making up the largest single group to do so.

On this centennial, let's appreciate the complexity and multi-dimensional aspect of the women's movement, which is so often boxed into a few takeaway images and phrases. Central New York no doubt houses the direct roots of the movement, but Queens can definitely claim some bragging rights!



▼ Youngest parader in New York City suffragist parade, May 4, 1912. (American Press Association / Courtesy of the Library of Congress)

## Hirsch Jacobs: Trainer, Breeder, Owner

Richard Hourahan

In our two current exhibitions — The Sport of Kings in Queens and Past Performance: Legends of the Queens Turf one person stands out for versatility — Hirsch Jacobs. He was a trainer, an owner and a breeder of thoroughbred racehorses.

Born in 1904 to immigrant parents, Jacobs began his training career — training pigeons! According to family lore, young Hirsch could identify 100 individual pigeons at the age of 12.

## A YEAR OF FUN WITH TOYS & GAMES

Joseph Brostek,  
Trustee & Curator

“It was a blast from the past!”  
“Reminded me of great childhood memories.”  
“Wonderful.”  
“Fascinating.”  
“Fun.”  
“Great family treat.”  
“Cool.”

These are just some of the comments left by visitors to Kingsland’s recent year-long exhibit, “Toys & Games from the Attic & Beyond!” In creating the exhibit, I included a Ballot Box so guests could vote for the favorite toys in their lives and also leave comments. Guests ranging from a 3-year-old boy to a 95-year-old woman came from many backgrounds representing almost every continent on the globe. It was fortuitous that many children from our school groups were able to see the exhibit when their classes ended.

A heartfelt thank you to Jennifer Cumberbatch for her kind words.

“Dear Mrs Duknic:

[An Expression of Thanks](#)

I thank you for allowing me the opportunity to come to the Queens Historical Society with my best friend, an intern, Ms Sophia Worrell when I came from Barbados in June this year to attend her graduation.

Your warm and welcoming accommodation of my presence during two of her sessions there was quite profound for me in more ways than one. You took the time to fill me in on details of the Society, the beautiful antique living room, and not to mention, the library with its truly fascinating historical books and pictures of times long gone.

Not only did I feel welcome by you but I also felt as though I was involved in the internship as other persons, staff or members of the Board, made me

Ten years later, he acquired his first thoroughbred racehorse. Two years after that, he trained his first winning racehorse. He was the leading trainer in the United States from 1933 – 1944 with the exception of 1940.

Jacobs was also the leading breeder from 1964 – 1967 and with his wife Ethel was the leading owner in 1936, 1937 and 1943.

A long-time resident of Forest Hills, Hirsch Jacobs died in February, 1970. His son John succeeded him as the trainer of the family’s stable of horses — winning the 1970 Preakness with Personality and the 1970 Belmont Stakes with High Echelon. John’s mother, Ethel, was his boss; she owned both of these horses.

Borough President Melinda Katz rang a 150-year-old school bell donated by a QHS member to open the show on July 30, 2016. The exhibit was set up like an art gallery with cases filled with toys and games donated or loaned by members. Dozens of gold framed panels lined the walls with explanations of the origins and histories of many of the attractions - Lionel Trains, Hess Trucks, Legos, Mr. Machine, Star Wars, Barbie, Matchbox Cars, Frisbees and many more.

There was much delightful trivia posted. Visitors were challenged with questions about why some toys were so popular and why some disappeared. Everyone received a copy of the National Toy Hall of Fame Registry. People were encouraged to take selfies in front of a Kingsland sign. Videos of 50-year-old toy commercials ran throughout the show.

In addition to Borough President Katz, legislative visitors included Congresswoman Grace Meng (who lent her popular Cabbage Patch Kid Doll for the show), NYS Senator Tony Avella, and NYC Councilmen Daniel Drumm and Peter Koo. A number of organizations made trips to Kingsland and received

feel very much at ‘home’. I was allowed to take part in the quilt exercise and tidying up afterwards and, I must say, it was the first time I had ever heard about or seen those authentic symbols that were used to lead the slaves to freedom.

I will also add that my time spent there helped me to relive my primary school days which I consider was one of the best times of my life. On leaving there that day, I promised myself that when I returned home I would begin to do the various arts and crafts I once loved to do. And I have done just that. Mrs Duknic, I will always treasure the few moments you allowed me to be there.

May the Queens Historical Society always be preserved. May it continue to experience growth and the funding it so well deserves. It is indeed a place of education and enlightenment.

Sincerely,

Jennifer A. Cumberbatch 🍷”



▼ Trainer Hirsch Jacobs and wife Ethel in backyard of their home in Forest Hills, NYRA.

special tours. The exhibit proved to be a hit with the media. There were 15 articles in 10 publications. There were about 35 photos – some on front pages. QHS also received very nice TV coverage on NY1, and on social media and many organizational websites. Queens Poet Laureate Maria Lisella visited and later sent a message complimenting QHS on the extensive media coverage it had received.

And oh yes – the winning toys and games. There were 645 votes cast. Dolls of all kinds led the pack: Barbie, Beanie Babies, Raggedy Ann. There were many votes for trains, trucks and building toys like Lincoln Logs and Erector sets. It was amazing to see how many people mentioned that they still had their favorite toys. Favorite game comments came from a woman who loved Yahtzee and described herself as a “Math Nerd” and a 10-year-old boy who said he “LOVED to shout out BINGO!!”

I chose toys and games for the exhibit because at a time when there is so much stress and turmoil in our lives, I wanted visitors to be able to have a pleasant nostalgic look back at the past. I think it worked.



# Exhibitions Now on View at Queens Historical Society

Off-street parking available in municipal lot at 37th Ave & Union St.

**Days & Times for All Exhibitions:**  
Tuesday, Saturday & Sunday from 2:30 – 4:30 pm

**Museum Admission:**  
\$5 General,  
\$3 Seniors/Students,  
QHS Members are FREE  
Exhibitions Now on View at QHS

All programs and exhibits are held at the Kingsland Homestead unless otherwise noted.



## Kingsland: Past to Present

In our main hallway is a refurbished exhibit on the history of the Kingsland Homestead and the family that made it their home for over 100 years.



## Aunt Mary's Landing

Mary King Murray was affectionately referred to as "Aunt Mary" by her family. Aunt Mary resided at Kingsland from 1847 until the 1920s. She is the linchpin in the history of Kingsland and its owners from its construction in 1785 until its sale during the Depression of the 1930s. Aunt Mary saved numerous mementos from her great grandparents, grandparents, and her parents.

Displayed on Aunt Mary's Landing are these handed down memories along with other personal items that were part of her everyday life from childhood to adulthood.



## The Sport of Kings in Queens Celebrating 350 Years of Thoroughbred Horse Racing

On view October 8, 2017 – June 30, 2018

Queens has been a major center of thoroughbred horse racing since 1667 when King Charles II of England established here the first race course in his North American Possessions.

This exhibition details the history of this amazing sport in Queens from those early days 350 years ago to the present and its concomitant cultural, social and economic dimensions and impact. It relates stories of the sport's legends—horses, jockeys, trainers, and iconic races.



## Victorian Parlor

The Kingsland Victorian Room has been modeled to appear as it would have in the year 1870. This year was chosen because it represents a traditional period for the Murray family.



## Weeping Beech Park

Come enjoy nature at work and watch as the buds on the Landmark Weeping Beech tree in America continue to grow and have their own daughters. While here, don't forget to look for the progress of our recently planted New-Town-Pippen apple tree.

# UPCOMING EVENTS FALL 2017

**Saturdays,  
December 2 / 9 / 16  
9:00 – 12:00 PM**

Moore-Jackson Cemetery Revitalization Phase 2

Location: Moore-Jackson Cemetery  
Sign Up Form: <https://goo.gl/p3D4GP>

**Sunday, December 3  
2:30 – 4:30 PM**

A New York Christmas

Sibyl Groff, Writer & Tour Guide

**Sunday, December 10  
1:00 – 5:00 PM**

30<sup>th</sup> Annual Holiday Historic House Tour

Honoring the Fight for Women's Rights

Tickets: [hhht2017.eventbrite.com/](http://hhht2017.eventbrite.com/)

**Sunday, December 16  
2:30 – 4:30 PM**

"Playing Catch With Strangers"

Book Talk by Bob Brody

Presented by QHS

Further events will be announced through our social media.

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## QUEENS HISTORICAL SOCIETY SITE RENTAL

**Did you know, you can rent space at the Kingsland Homestead?**

Both the Kingsland Homestead and surrounding Weeping Beech Park are available for weddings, business meetings, bridal showers, children's parties and other private events.

If you are interested in finding out more information on site rentals at the Kingsland Homestead, please contact us at:

718.939.0647

 [www.queenshistoricalsociety.org](http://www.queenshistoricalsociety.org)

## BECOME A MEMBER!

Enjoy the benefits!

- ▶ Free museum admission
- ▶ Discounted admission to our programs
- ▶ Invitations to our special events and Exhibition Openings
- ▶ Copy of our quarterly newsletter
- ▶ 10% discount on all publications in our gift shop

See the following page for instructions on how to become a member of the Queens Historical Society.

## DONATE

**Tax-deductible!**

Donations are tax deductible & can be made to support any of our programs or for general operating purposes.

### Fall 2017 Issue Errata

**Pg 3 (bottom right caption - \$2 window picture)**

- 1) Two asterisks (\*\*s);
- 2) A "W" in front of the word "Unlike,";
- 3) A blank line next to the word "or."

**Pg 5 (top left 2nd para)**

The number "1" in front of the word "Indie"; (bottom left, 2nd para of caption - picture of the couple singing)

The number "1" appears in two places.

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## ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED



# MEMBERSHIP FORM

YES, I would like to become a member of the Queens Historical Society or give a gift of membership. My contribution will help preserve the Kingsland Homestead and the history of the Borough of Queens.

Individual (annually) \$30 \_\_\_\_\_

Senior (annually) \$20 \_\_\_\_\_

Student (annually) \$15 \_\_\_\_\_

Family (annually) \$50 \_\_\_\_\_

Business (annually) \$300 \_\_\_\_\_

Life \$500 \_\_\_\_\_

Benefactor \$1000 \_\_\_\_\_

Gift Membership \_\_\_\_\_

Donation (tax deductible) \_\_\_\_\_

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## APPLICATION

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Your donation could easily double (or triple) at no extra cost to you. Many firms have generous "MATCHING GIFT" programs which they encourage their employees to use. Ask if your company has such a program.

Membership in the Queens Historical Society begins in May and ends in April of the following year. Please make checks payable to the Queens Historical Society at 143-35 37th Avenue, Flushing, NY 11354.

\_\_\_\_\_ I am interested in becoming a Volunteer or Docent at the Queens Historical Society. Please contact me at the above phone number.

If you would like to share information with readers about Queens history or your life in Queens, please send it to us at: 143-35 37th Ave Flushing NY 11354 Attn: Newsletter or Email: info@queenshistoricalsociety.org