

NEWSLETTER

WORKING TO PRESERVE OUR PAST IN ORDER TO PROTECT OUR FUTURE

FALL 2018

50th

ANNIVERSARY OF THE QUEENS HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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Cover: *Queensboro Bridge*
"Work in roadway, Blackwell's Island Bridge"
(George Grantham Bain Collection), 1907.

Writers



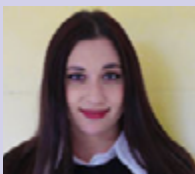
▶ Patricia B. Sherwood
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Queens College



▶ Elizabeth "Liz" Di Giorgio
Image Credit:
"The International Caucus of the
Women's Caucus for Art" Website

Letter from the Executive Director

Branka Duknic

Dear QHS friends and members,

Summer has kept us busy and it's now time to enter into our Fall schedule of book talks, borough-wide exhibitions and film screenings. Our main manifesto has been to understand that NYC and its most diverse borough is noisy. Yes, Queens has noise. With its crowded avenues, religious sites, lively restaurants and its endless charm, it represents balance and mutual respect, history and modernity and we're always here to document its fluctuations, waves of change and constant joie de vivre. This year we're celebrating our 50th birthday of archiving the essence of what Queens has been, is and will be. We have partnered with The Queens Botanical Garden, the location of our Benefit Celebration on November 8th, recognizing philanthropists, devoted members of the community and civic leaders. It's taking place after New York State Elections, so please make sure not to forget to join our Anniversary festivities. Your civil duties continue by joining in the protection of historic buildings of our borough. Help us achieve our mission!

In the next set of pages you will learn more about our Erasures Exhibition revealing the language explorations of poet Rosanna Oh, in December at Kingsland Homestead. Professor Elizabeth Di Giorgio explains her joy of working with talented senior center residents at Catherine Sheridan and Peter Cardella Senior Centers, all in gratitude to the SU CASA initiative funding provided by City Councilmen Daniel Dromm and Robert Holden. Our curator, Richard Hourahan continues to prepare for our Democracy in

Message from Queens Historical Society President

Patricia B. Sherwood

We are still working to preserve the past. . . . Recently, I received a letter from the Town Supervisor of Greenburgh, New York asking for our support in restoring the Odell House, built in 1732. This site was an influential location for G. Washington and his planning of the successful battle of Yorktown.

Mr. Feiner requested our help to raise the importance of this house and its history.

Action: Art and the New Deal in Queens exhibition, in partnership with Jacob Riis Neighborhood Settlement in Long Island City. In addition, Councilman Ulrich has supported a true aviation enthusiasts' exhibition project titled: From Rockaway: First Flight Across the Atlantic featuring the 100th anniversary of the The Navy Curtiss 4 Flight — the only plane that completed the first transcontinental flight (and later to be publicly eclipsed by Whitten-Brown and Alcock flight just two weeks later).

Another community project needs mentioning. With the financial support and encouragement of Councilman Jimmy Van Bramer, our landmarked Moore-Jackson Cemetery continues to be a place of neighborhood spirit and unity for the residents of Woodside and beyond. Our tireless volunteers guided by Samantha Yeung and Elizabeth O'Connor continue to work every Sunday morning, on planting and removing major weeds. At nearby Corona and Elmhurst, plans are in the works together with John Jay College of Criminal Justice to bring the opportunity of presenting The Historical Memory Project, the public humanities program exploring the human rights heritage of immigrant Latino communities in selected community gardens.

We remain true to our diverse present as well as the past; book author James E. Haas will join us on Veterans' Day and reveal the almost forgotten histories of German-Americans of College Point fighting during World War I. The spirit of the holidays gets recaptured again during our Annual Holiday Historic House Tour, and is now being renamed "The Holly Tour", taking place on Sunday, December 9th. I can tell you more if you join us at Richard Panchyk's Hidden History of Queens book talk. Until then, all the best for the Fall start ahead. Thank you for your support! #QHSTurns50

Members, please do whatever you can to support this venture. As you may know, QHS was instrumental in the preservation and protection of the Poppenhusen Institute, Flushing Town Hall, Latimer House and Voelker Orth amongst others in the past.

We are planning a "Look Back in History," a proud recount of our various activities, events, programs and memorabilia for our 50th celebration. Your help would be appreciated, finance an "ad" in our souvenir journal and plan on attending the celebration. If possible, we would like all participants to contribute in making November 8, 2018 a memorable event. This night to remember will be a "trip down memory lane."

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Continued from pg 2

We are forever growing and changing. Thank you to the following members who have gifted the Society recently.

Jack Eichenbaum, Jean Bartelt, Gill C. Allen, Claire Bazinet, Maria Becce, John Boomer, Kathy & Al Brand, Joanne Burns, Ann Colgan

Louis & Connie DeMartino, Rachel Donner, Vicki Gawaik, Joe & Marianne Giacalone, Julia K. Haupt, Joan Hellman, Barbara Hull, Bertha Klein, Bettyanne McDonough, Pat McGivern, Robert Miller, Lourdes & Chi Mo, Elizabeth Ophals, Marianne & Brian Percival, Wanda Peri, Edith Pouymari, Lotte Reinhold,

Lynn Silverstein, Mary Sullo, James Trent, Louise Von Damm, Anthony D & Kim Young Yandoli

Again, hoping to see you all at the Queens Botanical Garden on November 8, 2018 at our 50th Celebration.

1968 A Memorable Year

Joseph Brostek, Trustee

Some historians have opined that 1968 was one of the most memorable years in modern American history. It is certainly memorable for QHS because that was the year that the Kingsland Preservation Committee, Inc. (that had been vigorously protecting the Kingsland Homestead) became the Queens Historical Society. It was also the year that the Homestead, then located in what is now called the Murray Hill Shopping Center in Upper Flushing, was threatened by encroaching real estate development. The old Colonial mansion was put on wheels and moved amid great fanfare to its current location one mile away in landmarked Weeping Beech Park.

It was a very turbulent time for the nation. War was raging in Vietnam. Many men burned their draft cards. North Korea seized the USS Pueblo. Two African-American athletes raised their fists in protest at the Summer Olympics. President Lyndon Johnson, who had defeated Barry Goldwater in 1964, announced that he would not run for reelection. The Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr. was shot and killed in Memphis by James Earl Ray. Robert F. Kennedy announced a run for president and was assassinated at the Ambassador Hotel in Los Angeles by Sirhan Sirhan. The nation

watched TV broadcasts of antiwar rioting at the Democratic National Convention in Chicago. Hubert Humphrey won the nomination to run for president and was narrowly beaten by Republican Richard Nixon. Some may recall when Nixon sought to soften his image by appearing on the TV show "Laugh-In" and delivering the memorable line "Sock it to me!"

Some other memories: 60 Minutes debuted on CBS. Boeing rolled out the 747 Jumbo Jet with seats for 490. (At the time it was the biggest passenger plane ever constructed.) Elvis Presley "The King" staged a comeback after a long absence. The world's first word processor and mouse were unveiled. Hair brought sex, drugs, and rock 'n' roll to Broadway.

People loved going to the movies. Did you see any of these? 2001: A Space Odyssey, Planet of the Apes, Yellow Submarine, Rosemary's Baby, The Swimmer, Barbarella, The Graduate, Bonnie and Clyde, The Love Bug, The Producers, The Odd Couple? Can you hum either of these popular songs: Hey Jude by the Beatles or Mrs. Robinson by Simon & Garfunkel?

Some 1968 fun stuff for trivia fans: The Jacuzzi was invented. Lava Lamps were patented. Virginia Slims cigarettes appeared. 911 Emergency Number was created. London Bridge was sold to an American entrepreneur for \$2,460,000. (It is now in Arizona.) The first airbag was activated. McDonald's cooked up the Big Mac at \$.49.

In the world of sports, Forward Pass won the Kentucky Derby. The Detroit Tigers beat the St. Louis Cardinals 4 games to 3 in the World Series. The Green Bay Packers thrashed the Oakland Raiders 33 - 14 in Super Bowl II. The Montreal Canadiens won the hockey Stanley Cup by sweeping the St. Louis Blues 4 games to 0. In basketball the Boston Celtics beat the Los Angeles Lakers 4 games to 2. Lee Trevino won the US Open golf tournament. Ohio State was the college football champion.

Number crunchers might like to know that the US population was 201 million people with a life expectancy of 70.2 years. The Dow Jones industrial average hit 985. An average new home cost \$26,600. Median household income was \$7,743. A first class stamp was six cents. Regular gas was \$.34 a gallon. Milk was \$1.70 a gallon. Eggs were \$.63 a dozen. The minimum wage was \$1.60 an hour.

Yes - 1968 was quite interesting on planet earth. Meanwhile on Christmas Eve, Apollo 8 was the first manned spacecraft to orbit the moon. Aboard were Jim Lovell, Bill Anders and Frank Borman. Each astronaut read a brief passage from the Book of Genesis concerning the creation of earth. It was televised live to what was the largest audience in history. Borman ended the transmission saying "And from the crew of Apollo 8, we close with good night, good luck, a Merry Christmas, and God bless all of you - all of you on the good earth."

Trustee Honored By Queens College

Joseph Brostek, Trustee

QHS Trustee Joseph Brostek, was saluted by his alma mater Queens College at its 2018 Baccalaureate Ceremony. A scholarship for a graduating senior was named in Joseph's honor to recognize many years of service to the College and the community..



▼ Joseph Brostek

Public Programming

Daniela Addamo

With the hot summer weather, it's hard to believe the fall season is quickly approaching. Back to school means back to popular educational programs at Queens Historical Society! Once again, we are offering many educational workshops focusing on local and national history, including the It's Electric! program that has been refined and broken down to a selection of six programs, each featuring a specific focus within STEM. We are also looking forward to welcoming our new fall interns with various specializations within their field of study such as education, public programming, graphic design, history, and museum administration. This is going to be a season packed with learning and diversified events!

QHS and "Quilting Nature: Echoes of a Changing World"

Liz Di Giorgio

The community art project "Quilting Nature: Echoes of a Changing World" was proposed by the Queens Historical Society and funded by the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs and the Department for the Ageing. It brought a vibrant cultural experience to the clients of the Catherine Sheridan Center of Jackson Heights. City Councilmember Daniel Dromm selected the project for District 25, which includes Elmhurst and Jackson Heights, as part of the Su Casa art program.

Debra Hoffer, Acting Program Manager and Jorge Quinones, Recreation Coordinator, ensured that all ran smoothly. The participants each worked on a 12 -inch square panel, and spent weeks painting a background pattern of squares and rectangles in soft, coordinated pastel colors. Each participant also reserved some squares or rectangles for the application of gold and silver leaf, a delicate process that was also fun to learn. Each participant was then encouraged to paint a nature image or image that they remembered from the past. These individual memory images were painted in bold colors that stood out against the soft pastel and the shimmering gold and silver background. While each participant worked on her individual painting for many weeks

Queens Historical Society is beyond excited to officially invite our members to our 50th Anniversary Benefit on November 8th from 5:00 – 8:00pm — at the Queens Botanical Garden. In addition to dinner and entertainment, we will be providing a selection of items to be raffled. For any inquiries on how to purchase tickets, sponsorship levels, and/or ads for our Benefit Journal please visit our website.

In addition to our 50th Anniversary Benefit, we have a substantial number of events this fall ranging from film screenings, book talks, lectures, and holiday related crafts. Whether you are a history buff, film enthusiast, or someone seeking a fun workshop to do with the family we have great opportunities that meet everyone's interests! Just a few highlights are: we are continuing to implement our initiative for more family activities on the weekends. Kids from ages six and up can participate in our Jack-O-Lantern Pumpkin Decorating on Saturday, October 6th, for a fun

and was happy with the individual results, everyone was truly astonished to see the impact that all the canvases made when assembled together to form the painted "quilt." The shimmer of the gold and silver leaf sent reflected light into the room, making the painting all the more engaging.

At the opening on June 28, 2018, Branka Duknic, Executive Director of the Queens Historical Society, asked each of the participants to explain why they chose the particular image contributed to the painted "quilt."

Judy described the blue jay as her favorite bird and a frequent visitor to her backyard.

Violetta explained that she originally chose to paint a rose, thinking that it would be easy, but found out that it was quite difficult. Because she began work on the rose a few days before Mother's Day, she decided to dedicate the painting to her mom. Her big bold red rose was painted within a large pink heart, centered in the middle of the canvas. Just below the large heart were a few smaller hearts surrounding the words, "Forever my Mom."

Luz spoke about the bright red-orange oak leaf painted by her friend Rosaria, who wished to paint something simple and bold. Luz then spoke about her own contribution to the quilt. She noted that she had never painted or made art before. She chose to paint a large robin red breast because she appreciated it as a much loved harbinger of spring, especially after what had been a long winter. After her success

way to get into the Halloween spirit. The event will also feature some fun old fashioned sweets and a chance for kids to make candied apples! And, for those interested in history, check out our events such as Archipelago New York, Hidden History of Queens, Between Neighborhoods and more! (For more details on events, please check page 6 – 7 .)



▼ One image, from hundreds, of Thomas Halaczinsky's 3000 nautical mile long sailing journey images for the series "Archipelago New York". It was one of 15 to be awarded an honorable mention at the 2016 International Tokyo Photo Award.

in painting the robin, Luz chose to paint the beloved coqui frog from her home island of Puerto Rico. She described how one could hear the coqui singing at night and on rainy days. She noted that although they are tiny, the sound of the coqui singing together filled the night air.

Margrit explained her decision to paint a historic seventeenth century chapel from her childhood hometown of Erlinsbach, Switzerland. Margrit explained that it was built during the tumult of the Reformation when a statue of St. Lawrence was recovered after having been tossed into the river. The chapel was named St. Laurentius. Margrit explained that she and other children had the job of pulling the rope that rang the bell in the chapel's belfry. Margrit's tribute to that childhood memory was painted with great care and detail and included a fountain that she remembered fondly.

Martha described being inspired by the beauty of the orchids found in her native Colombia. Her depiction of an orchid was large, colorful and celebratory. It seems important to note that our opening occurred on the day that Colombia had won a crucial game that would keep the team in the running for the World Cup. The room would soon erupt into cheering and festivities that would continue onto the street as I left the Sheridan Center that day. The sight of the bright Colombian jerseys, cars adorned with waving flags, and the sound of joyous honking seemed to be a fitting way to end our successful opening.

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Continued from pg 4

As the artist-in-residence, I am especially grateful for the support of the Queens Historical Society, including President Patricia B. Sherwood, Executive Director Branka Duknic, Director of Education and Outreach Daniela Adamo and Assistant Dana He. We are all especially grateful to Councilmember Daniel Dromm for selecting our project for the Catherine Sheridan Center of Jackson Heights. It was a privilege to work with the residents of Jackson Heights, a truly wonderful neighborhood that remains a model to the world of multiculturalism at its very best.



▼ Judy L. with her paintings (top 2 on the right).



▼ Judy L.'s painting of a Blue Jay.

Rosanna Oh Exhibition

Richard Hourahan,
Collections Manager

On Sunday, December 2, 2018 the exhibition *Erasures* will open at Kingsland. At its core is the poetry of Rosanna Oh.

Ms. Oh is a resident of Astoria. She earned a B.A. in English Literature / Writing Concentration from Yale where her thesis supervisor was the renowned poet Louise Gluck, former Poet Laureate of the United States. She received an M.F.A. in Poetry from Johns Hopkins University.

Rosanna's writing has appeared in *Best New Poets*, *32 Poems*, *Unsplendid*, *The Hopkins Review*, and *Verse Daily*. Ms. Oh also has received scholarships and awards from the *Sewanee Writers Conference*, the *New York State Summer Writers Institute*, and the *Academy of American Poets*.

The exhibition visually and verbally encompasses the expressive, notional, communicative, and formal aspects of language through poetry. These are some of Ms. Oh's personal experiences of and reflections on language:

My parents spoke Korean exclusively at home and sent my brothers and me to Korean school on Saturdays when we were children. In fact, Korean was my first language; I was sent to ESL classes until I was in the third grade. Oddly enough, now my English is way better than my Korean. I can read, write, and speak Korean, but only on a basic level. I can watch most Korean dramas without difficulty, if that means anything.

To me, English has a larger vocabulary than Korean, but Korean is much more subtle in how it conveys meaning. Listening to Korean taught me the potential that words have to move people. Koreans are emotional people, even

though we may not seem to be on the surface. So Korean for me is a powerful language because of this tension between emotion and restraint. Everything has to do with tone and context. Even though I consider myself a Korean American rather than a Korean national, and even though I can't speak Korean as fluently as some of my peers, I still identify with Korean virtues, like filial piety. Whenever I hear Korean, I think of the entire culture from which it arose, and of my parents who speak it.

I fell in love with the English language because of Greek mythology. Its simple storytelling, its gravitas, and imaginativeness all appealed to me. Looking back, I think I was obsessed with myths partially because of their universality, too — especially the family tropes — which in turn helped me to reconcile my Korean and American identities. One of the earliest poems I remember writing was about the changing seasons.

To me, English has a larger vocabulary than Korean, but Korean is much more subtle in how it conveys meaning. (This goes back to what I said about tone and context.) I wrote poems exclusively in English until my last year at Johns Hopkins. I began to include some Korean words (Romanized) without translating them in the text. Korean and English can enrich each other. The best example of this dynamic that I can think of now is Cathy Park Hong's *Dance Dance Revolution*, which plays with Korean, English, and other languages to form a sort of pidgin language.

On one hand, what we understand to be a cliché immigrant narrative — i.e., the journey from the old country to the new one, assimilation, etc. — is necessary because it will never go out of style. Immigrant narratives all ponder the question of what it means to be an American. It's a question that fascinates me. That said, since the immigrant narrative is so prevalent and recognizable, there's a danger that it imposes unfair expectations on a work. If someone reads

my last name "Oh" and immediately expects my poem to be about my Korean or immigrant identity, that would destroy the integrity of the poem for that reader. It's also just plain disrespectful. I am more than an immigrant or Korean or Korean American for that matter, so why can't my poems be? We need to be wary of the cliché immigrant narrative but also recognize that it offers a framework that can challenge a writer to make something new.

I volunteered as a poetry instructor at Oakhill Correctional Institute in Wisconsin, and currently I volunteer at Rikers Island. I grew up as one of the few Asians in a Long Island public school, and — let's be real — there aren't a lot of Asian Americans studying and teaching English literature these days, so I understand to some extent what it means to be an outsider. But ultimately, I volunteer at prisons because poetry matters to my students. You can literally see a change when they get excited about an idea or their own work. My students at Oakhill and Rikers have all taught me something. I love teaching them. Also, reading and writing are a universal way to exercise the imagination — no matter who you are, you have to be able to empathize in order to appreciate a character, story, etc. So when it comes to other American minority experiences, maybe being Korean American doesn't matter so much as being a good reader and listener, and having an open mind.



▼ Installation piece from upcoming "Erasures" Exhibition.

50TH ANNIVERSARY BENEFIT

The Queens Historical Society cordially invites you to our 50th Anniversary celebration recognizing long time historic preservationist Joan Kindler and New York City Councilman Peter Koo.

Date: Thursday, November 8, 2018

Time: 5:00pm – 8:00pm

Location: Queens Botanical Garden

Price: \$50 members / \$68 non-members

RSVP by Wednesday, October 10, 2018

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4 Tickets

Half page Ad in 50th Anniversary Journal.

Fall 2018 Events

*Unless otherwise noted regular admission prices apply.

Saturday, September 15 2:30pm – 4:30pm

Hidden History of Queens

Presented by QHS &

Author Richard Panchyk

Sunday, September 30 2:30pm – 4:30pm

History and Commerce in the Old and New Netherlands: Revisited

Presented by Queens Borough

Historian Jack Eichenbaum, PhD

Saturday, October 6 2:30pm – 4:30pm

Jack-O-Lantern

Pumpkin Decorating

Ages: 6+

Info: Games Included

Price: \$5 Adults

\$6 per child (FREE - under 2)

Saturday & Sunday, October 13 – 14

2:30pm – 4:30pm

Open House New York

Presented by QHS

Location: Kingsland Homestead

143-35 37th Ave, Flushing, NY

Price: Free

Saturday, October 13 2:30pm – 4:30pm

Archipelago New York

Info: Photography Book Talk

Thursday, November 8 5:00pm – 8:00pm

**Queens Historical Society's
50th Anniversary Celebration**

at the Queens Botanical Garden

Presented by QHS

Advertising Info: QHS Website

Location: Queens Botanical Garden

Price: \$50 for members

(\$68 non-members)

Sunday, November 11 2:30pm – 4:30pm

To Honor Fallen Heroes

Author James E. Haas

Info: College Point German-Americans during WWI.

Saturday, November 17

2:30pm – 4:30pm

Between Neighborhoods
Presented by QHS &
Filmmaker Seth Fein

Monday, November 26

11:00pm

HHHT Press Conference
Presented by 7 Historic House
Museum Representatives.

Sunday, December 9

1:00pm – 5:00pm

Annual Holiday Historic House Tour
Presented by Selected Historic
Houses in Queens, NY.
#TheHollyTour2018

Sunday, December 2

1:00pm – 5:00pm

“Erasures” Exhibition @ Kingsland
Rosanna Oh & Loide Marwanga

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

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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.

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