

TALES FROM NEIR'S & FAR

FALL 2019

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**Working to Preserve
Our Past in Order to
Protect our Future**

Cover: The Old Abbey (now
Neir's Tavern) in Woodhaven,
Queens, NYC, 1898.

📞 718.939.0647

🌐 www.queenshistoricalsociety.org

📍 143-35 37th Avenue
Flushing, NY 11354

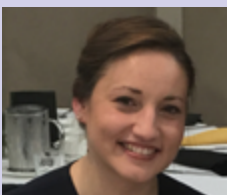
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Mon – Fri: 9:30am to 4:30pm

Museum Hours
(for guided tours only):
Tues, Sat, Sun: 2:30pm to 4:30pm

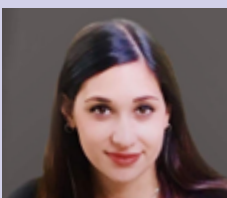
WRITERS



▶ Patricia B. Sherwood
Photo by: Anthony O'Reilly



▶ Branka Duknic
Photo by: QHS



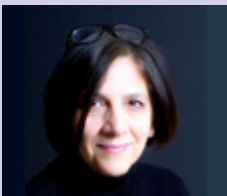
▶ Daniela Addamo
Photo by: QHS



▶ Karl Nicoleau
Photo by: Aliana Prior



▶ Rob MacKay
Photo by: Rob MacKay



▶ Liz Di Giorgio
Photo by: "The International Caucus of the Women's Caucus for Art" Website

Letter from the Executive Director

Branka Duknic

Ah, the end of summer. Subways and buses fill with tired commuters and loud school kids. Interns go back to their campuses (many of them wishing they're living in NYC). Major blackouts are a thing of the past (let's hope). And gentrification hits so hard, there's a bike lane running through my apartment.

All joking aside, the city moves fast, bringing many changes, among them renovations of Kingsland Homestead's roof. The project kicked off mid-summer, thanks to teams from the NYC Department of Design and Construction. In addition, our porch deck will be restored to its former glory by a generous grant from the New York Landmarks Conservancy. Though worry not, we are still operational and open to the public for educational workshops, film screenings, lectures, and guided tours of the house. The roof replacement is expected to be over by mid November this year. Fingers crossed!

Good people make good places, and on that note, I'm happy to announce an edition to our team: Karl Nicoleau, our new Outreach and Education Coordinator. Karl holds a bachelor's degree from University at Albany SUNY and an MA in Urban Sustainability from The City College of New York. Karl is a proud Queens Village native. For years, he has strived to increase community engagement and cultural exploration within his home borough. He believes Queens has the potential to become the cultural, sustainable, and inclusive destination hub of NYC. Welcome Karl!

Message from QHS President

Patricia B. Sherwood

Looking Back and Forth

QHS has been influential in the preservation of local history and historical sites, true to the mission. Some recent achievements include: the restoration and relocation of our home, Kingsland Homestead; the establishment of the Slocum Memorial Committee; the Queens Historic Properties Fund; and the relocation and restoration of the Lewis Latimer House Museum, just to mention a few. We continue to support the preservation of the RKO Keith's Theater and the recognition of the Breezy Point Historical Society. Visit the Moore-Jackson Cemetery in Woodside and enjoy its rebirth, thanks to community involvement.

We're adding another staffer to the fold. However, this time she is a new/old member. Daniela Addamo has been our Education and Outreach Director for the past three years. She's currently completing her MA degree in Art History and Museum Studies at City College. With a keen interest in 19th century British and American painting and experience in various museum collections that contain Victorian, Modern, and Contemporary art and material culture, Daniela is truly excited to begin her new position as the Curator at Queens Historical Society.

We're undergoing massive changes, and not just with capital improvements of the house. King Manor Museum Executive Director Kelsey Brow comes on board to help address our Collection Management needs and conduct a long-awaited and urgent re-organization of our collection. Camaraderie at its best. Thank you, Ms. Brow!

Another round of profound gratitude goes out to our civil servants. Borough President Melinda Katz, NYC Council Speaker Corey Johnson, Council Members Peter Koo and Jimmy Van Bramer, the Women's Caucus, and the Queens Delegation managed to secure more than \$1.6 million in capital funding for our collection storage renovations. After many years in the basement, our priceless collection of artifacts, manuscripts, and maps gathered over more than 250 years from all over Queens will be properly preserved in an insulated, climate-controlled space. We shouldn't forget the generous discretionary and initiative contributions from City Council Members Danny Dromm, Robert Holden, Koo, and Van Bramer.

With all this in mind, we continue to thank you, dear members and visitors, for your generosity of spirit and for your continued loyalty. Read about our upcoming programs in this newsletter and then bring loved ones to our venue. And please tell us how we can improve in the months to come!

Today, we anxiously await the completion of our roof replacement and porch restoration. It seems the preparation forms, permits, etc. takes on a life and purpose of its own. The next project will focus on the house's interior, including the collection and storage.

This year's Annual Meeting will be on Sunday, Sept. 22. Events will include unveiling a plaque and expressing our appreciation to Joan Kindles for her untiring support of QHS.

We offer special thanks to Nancy H. Lecara, Charles Lecara, Bertha Klin, John Boomer, Meryl Strassner, Louise E. Von Damm, Patricia Sherwood, William Becce, Maria Becce, and Jean Bartelt.

In Memoriam: Catherine Williams 1937 – 2019

Member of the QHS Board of Trustees for 35 years. Our sincere condolences to the family and the community that she loved so much.

Public Programming

Karl Nicoleau, Education & Outreach Coordinator

It was a hot summer, but that didn't keep us from organizing a multitude of events, including lectures, film screenings, workshops, and more.

Guest lecturer Jeffrey Kroessler offered a historical run down of sports in Queens, from the Mets to boxing to horse racing. Our board member, Jason D. Antos, delighted us with a lecture following the screening of the 1925 film "Sally and the Sawdust," where we got to see how Queens used to look, as an extension of the Early Cinema in Queens series. "Dashes and Dots: It's Electric" was our family-friendly workshop on the historical significance of the telegraph, the way it works, and how to decipher messages in Morse code.

We have an eventful and action-packed fall full of diverse programming. QHS kicks things off with a nostalgic and fascinating lecture by official Queens historian Jack Eichenbaum, who is also on our board. He'll discuss Jewish life in Queens on Sept. 8. Visit us for free on Saturday, Sept. 21, during Smithsonian Museum Day and then have fun at our Annual Meeting on Sept. 22. Marie Carter will lead a walking tour, "Haunting Histories and Legends of Astoria," on Sunday, Sept. 29. She'll take participants through the dark and lurid history of the bustling Northwestern Queens neighborhood. On the same day, we'll host the "BOROXDESIGN Exhibit Launch." The Queens and Brooklyn chapters of the American Institute of Architects collaborated to recognize exceptional local architecture. The award-winning projects are in the show.

Thanks to AIA Queens and AIA Brooklyn for sponsoring our first two October programs. The activity-filled workshop "Architecture for KIDS" is on Saturday, Oct. 12. Find out how photographers make buildings and environments look beautiful to entice buyers and visitors during "Architecture Photography: How to Make Buildings Stand Out!," tentatively set for Oct. 13.

Visit Kingsland Homestead for free on Oct. 19 and Oct. 20 during Open House New York! Celebrate autumn the right way at "Fall Fest" on Saturday, Oct. 26. You'll be able to indulge in a number of activities, such as making apple cider, making candied apples, and decorating pumpkins! Marie Carter comes back the next day, Oct. 27, for a spooky in-house lecture entitled "Armchair Ghost Tales from Queens."

Explore the mystery that is static electricity during our next "It's Electric!" Perform a series of mini experiments to learn more about this phenomenon on Nov. 2. It's perfect for families and kids. Join QHS at Free Synagogue of Flushing on Nov. 7 for Pride Night Out, an inclusive movie night centered around LGBTQIA+ youth short films ("BeYoutiful," "Chosen Family," and "Like Glass.") with special thanks to Queens World Film Festival. On Nov. 17, "BQDA 2020 Info Session: Experiences and Lessons Learned" will highlight experiences and lessons learned during the Brooklyn-Queens Design Awards programs from 2016 to 2018. We wanted to give you two "It's Electric" workshops in November so make sure you attend the second one on Nov. 23. Families and kids will get the chance to learn more about sustainable LEDs while creating one-of-a-kind Thanksgiving cards featuring LED lights. Last but not least, we can't forget to mention #HollyTour2019 on Dec. 8! A celebration of seven historical houses jam-packed with tours, activities, refreshments, and more. This is one event that you can't miss!

For more details on Queens Historical Society events, please see page 6. We look forward to seeing you this season. Don't forget to check out our website and follow us on social media to stay in the loop with upcoming events and updates.



► Free Synagogue of Flushing. Image Credit: nycago.org



► Marie Carter leading a walking tour. Image Credit: Marie Carter.



► Chosen Family by Neha Gautam Image Credit: Queens World Film Festival.

Curatorial and Collections

Daniela Addamo, Curator

There have been some exciting changes over the summer in QHS's Curatorial and Collections departments. We'd like to welcome Kelsey Brow, Executive Director of King Manor as our interim Collections Manager at QHS. We are grateful for her dedication in consulting on our collection as it undergoes an extensive consolidation process.

We are happy to announce some new acquisitions that have been accessioned into the collection at QHS. The first is a nineteenth century kerosene lamp that has been acquired in part by a gracious donation from the Margot Gayle Fund, Victorian Society of America. Kerosene lamps were introduced around 1860, which provided brighter, longer-lasting, and safer illumination compared to whale oil. Affordability made owning kerosene lamps achievable for many middle-class families like the King family. Our newly acquired kerosene lamp currently lives in the Parlor room, and is reflective of the changing nature of technology during the Victorian period. This particular lamp with a brass urn base was manufactured by Plume & Atwood circa 1870. Plume & Atwood manufactured their lamps locally, operating out of the northeast in states like New York, Massachusetts, and Connecticut from 1869 – 1912. This kerosene lamp has been post-converted and operates today using electricity. Conversion of older technologies into modern ones is not a new idea. With the increasing demand for kerosene lamps, many updated their older, out-dated, and less-luminous lamps into more efficient kerosene lamps throughout the mid to late 1800s.

We also recently purchased a nineteenth century tea caddy for the collection. Tea caddies were designed to store tea leaves. They were first produced in the mid-18th century in Britain where tea was imported from China since the 17th century. During this time, the British government maintained a steady trade with China as administered by the British East India Company. As a result, concepts of social ritual and ceremony were encouraged and led to the production of tea accessories like teapots and tea caddies. These were originally made from materials such as

porcelain, tortoiseshell, brass, and silver. Tea caddies made later were produced using wood like mahogany and walnut. This tea caddy is a mahogany wood sarcophagus shaped box containing three metal canisters. Two of these were typically lined with lead to keep the tea fresh and had removable lids. Having multiple canisters promoted variety so that owners could separate and choose between black or green tea. A third compartment in the center holds a glass bowl which is assumed to have either functioned as a mixing bowl for mixing tea leaves or for holding sugar or condensed milk before the invention of the refrigerator.

As part of our educational programming, we include tours of the Victorian Parlor room to contextualize topics such as trade, production, agriculture, industrialization, developments in technology and domestic life during the nineteenth century. During these discussions, various objects within the room are vital to the educators as visual touch stones to expand on the significance of material culture. This helps students to analyze not only how these nineteenth century objects looked, but how they functioned, who used them, and how they affected living patterns.



► Kerosene Lamp, Plume & Atwood, American, c. 1870, Brass, Glass. Courtesy of the Margot Gayle Fund, Victorian Society of America. Queens Historical Society. 2019.1.



► Tea Caddy, British, c. 1860, Mahogany wood, metal, glass. Queens Historical Society. 2019.2.

#HollyTour2019 Holiday Historic House Tour Sunday December 8, 2019

Celebrate the holiday season with six Queens historic sites and learn about their unique histories!

Set your own pace and visit as many sites as you choose. One ticket is good for all six sites. Each historic house offers tours, sponsors activities, and provides refreshments. Many of the houses will have musical performances throughout the day, holiday crafts to make and take, and historically - themed seasonal displays and decorations. In addition, join us for a culminating performance at Friends Meeting House at 5pm.

All six sites are within walking distance. Shuttle stops will be provided at selected historic house sites. Shuttle routes and schedule handouts will be provided to visitors on the day of the event.

Share the event on social media using [#HollyTour2019](#)

*All houses are handicap accessible (in compliance with ADA standards).

For more information, contact the Queens Historical Society at 718-939-0647 ext. 14 or via email at: info@queenshistoricalsociety.org

Ticketing information is available online at: www.queenshistoricalsociety.org.

General Admission:

\$20 Advanced

\$25 at Door

FREE Children under 12 (limited to 2 children per family)

Return Form with Checks made payable to: [Queens Historical Society](#)

Mail Form and Checks to:

[Kingsland Homestead](#)

143-35 37th Avenue

Flushing, NY 11354

Tickets can also be ordered online at bit.ly/32bJv8x by credit card.

Queens Bar Passes the Test of Time

Rob MacKay, Trustee

In 1829, Andrew Jackson succeeded John Quincy Adams as president of the United States, Greece received autonomy from the Ottoman Empire, William Austin Burt obtained the first patent for a typewriter, and Apache leader Geronimo was born.

In the same year, Neir's Tavern opened at 87-48 78th St. in Woodhaven.

The non-pretentious, neighborhood-oriented joint hasn't moved or closed since, making it the oldest pub to operate continuously in the same location in the United States.

Other time-honored establishments — Manhattan's Fraunces Tavern and McSorley's Old Ale House and White Horse Tavern in Newport, Rhode Island, for example — moved and/or closed down temporarily.

Not Neir's. It's Queens strong.

To mark its 190th anniversary, owner Loy Gordon will host a one-block street fair in front of Neir's on Saturday, Oct. 5, from noon to 6pm. The Queens Historical Society will join the fun by presenting Gordon with a commemorative plaque.

Returning to 1829, the saloon opened as the Old Blue Pump House when the Union Course Race Track was literally across the street. It had a few other names before Louis Neir bought it in 1898. He expanded the footprint, adding a ballroom, bowling alley, and second floor hotel. He also ran the place as a speakeasy during Prohibition. (Thanks, Louis!)

His descendants kept the watering hole until 1967. It then changed owners and names for a few generations until 2019, when Gordon and some friends purchased it a few months before it was to go out of business. (Thanks, Loy!)

It was an act of love. Gordon, an immigrant from Jamaica who is an FDNY lieutenant, simply adores the place. He's currently involved in efforts to get special historic status from the NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission for Neir's.

Those who attend the Oct. 5 celebration will step under a striped black-and-white front awning that's basically the same as the one that was there at the beginning. Inside, they'll find a restored mahogany bar that was installed when Ulysses S. Grant was president. And they'll drink keg beer that's pumped through an ice-covered coil system that predates commercial refrigeration.

Smart money says they'll also marvel at photos depicting scenes from the films "Goodfellas" and "Tower Heist" that were shot there. And they'll sneak a few peaks at images of Mae West, a local who allegedly made her first professional appearances there in the 1920s.

Su Casa Project "Echoes of Wonder"

Liz Di Giorgio, Artist-in-Residency

The 2019 Su Casa Artist Residency at the Catherine Sheridan Center was entitled "Quilting Memories: Echoes of Wonder." The focus this year was on activities, places or things that we enjoy or have enjoyed in the past. The result was a range of nature imagery from flowers to horses. If one could identify a common theme, it might have been the idea of freedom. Images such as a child running with a kite and three separate images of horses seemed to suggest running free in wide open spaces.

The theme of freedom was especially apparent in the depiction of a type of sailboat known as a pirogue that one participant recalled from her time living in Madagascar. Together these images formed a collection of memories treasured by the many participants in this project. What is most apparent is that the participants had grown in skill and artistic confidence since the inception of the project.

We express our heartfelt thanks to Queens Historical Society President Patricia B. Sherwood, Executive Director Branka Duknic, and Curator Daniela Addamo for conceiving of this project. We thank Marianna Ortiz and Jorgé Quinones for graciously accommodating the project at the Sheridan Center, and, most of all, we thank Councilperson Daniel Dromm for making this project possible. The project was a joyful experience for all involved.



► Liz Di Giorgio, top middle (above Julia), with her students.



► Liz Di Giorgio, second from the right, with some of her students.



► Julia painted the lotus flower.



► Olive painted a white horse.



► Judy painted two swans.

NEWS YOU COULD USE

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

Days & Times for All Exhibitions:
Tue., Sat. & Sun. from 2:30 – 4:30pm

Museum Admission:
\$5 General, **\$3** for Students, Seniors, Veterans and Visitors With Disabilities (Care Partner **FREE** of Charge), **FREE** for Members and Children Under 12

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



BORO x DESIGN Exhibition American Institute of Architecture Queens & Brooklyn Chapter

Opening September 20, 2019
On view until January 10, 2020

An exhibition of the projects recognized for outstanding architectural design for 'BQDA', a program of the American Institute of Architects. Inspired by the memories of celebrating Brooklyn-Queens Day as a kid, and AIA values today, this exhibit celebrates the power of architecture and design throughout the Borough of Queens and beyond.

Content Curated by Partnership between:
AIA Queens, AIA Brooklyn, AIA Bronx,
AIA Staten Island



Jay Jaxon Exhibition February 2020 – December 2020.

The Jay Jaxon exhibition will celebrate the life of Queens native, Jay Jaxon as an American Fashion Designer, an Haute Couture Designer, and Costume Designer. Further, it restores the history of Jaxon by displaying artifacts and objects from his personal design archive as well as primary sources from the research of fashion scholar and guest curator Rachel Fenderson.

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.

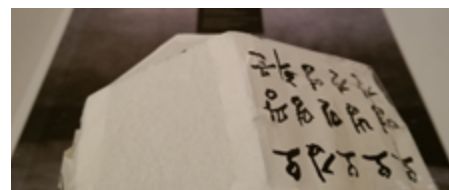
Displayed on Aunt Mary's Landing are these handed down memories along with other personal items that were part of her everyday life from childhood to adulthood.

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.



ERASURES Exhibition

On view until September 9, 2019

Queens is one of the most ethnically diverse urban areas in the world and is comprised of multi-generational immigrant families.

Erasures exhibition is a collaboration between Pushcart Prize nominee poet Rosanna Oh and graphic artist and filmmaker Loide Marwanga. Both artists spent their childhoods in immigrant communities. The exhibition visually and verbally encompasses the expressive, notional, communicative, and formal aspects of language through poetry informed by the works of Walt Whitman, US Poet Laureates Robert Hayden and Louise Glück.

FALL 2019 EVENTS

*Unless otherwise noted events are held at Queens Historical Society and regular admission prices apply. More Information for each event can be found on the QHS website.

Sunday, September 8
2:30pm – 4:30pm

Jewish Heritage History in Queens
with Jack Eichenbaum

Friday, September 20
BORO x DESIGN Exhibition
Opening Reception

Saturday, September 21 –
Saturday, October 26
3:00pm / 7:30pm

Frights and Phantoms of Flushing
with Marie Carter

Starting Location:

Flushing Quaker Meeting House

Duration: 2 hours

Price: \$25

Link: <https://bit.ly/2OUWWbi>

Saturday, September 21
2:30pm – 4:30pm

Smithsonian Museum Day Live
Open House

Price: FREE

Sunday, September 22
2:30pm – 4:30pm

Annual Meeting

Sunday, September 29
7:00pm – 9:00pm

Haunting Histories and Legends of
Astoria (Part I) with Marie Carter

Starting Location: 37th Street b/w
35th & 34th Avenue in Astoria

Limited Tickets: 20

Ages: 12+

Price: \$25

Link: <https://bit.ly/2MLtO4v>

Saturday & Sunday,
October 19 – October 20
2:30pm – 4:30pm

Open House New York (OHNY)

Price: FREE

Sunday, October 27

2:30pm – 4:30pm

Armchair Ghost Tales from
Queens with Marie Carter

Saturday, November 2

10:30am – 11:30am

Static Electricity : It's Electric!
Limited Tickets: 10 children
Price: \$10 per child

Thursday, November 7

6:30pm – 8:30pm

Pride Night Out — 3 Short Films
featuring LGBTQ+ community
Location: The Free Synagogue
of Flushing

Saturday, November 9

2:30pm – 4:30pm

Fall Fest Activities

Saturday, November 23

11:00am – 12:00pm

LED Thanksgiving Cards :
It's Electric! Workshop
Limited Tickets: 10 children
Price: \$10 per child

Sunday, December 8

1:00pm – 5:00pm

#HollyTour2019

Holiday Historic House Tour

Tickets: \$20 Advanced | \$25 at
Door | FREE Children under 12
(limited to 2 children per family)

Link: <https://bit.ly/32bjv8x>

TBA (February 2020)

Jay Jaxon Exhibition
Opening Reception

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

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

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 newsletter
- ▶ 10% discount on all publications in our gift shop

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

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made to support any of our programs
or for general operating purposes.

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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) \$35
- Senior (annually) \$25
- Student (annually) \$15
- Family (annually) \$60
- Business (annually) \$300
- Life \$500
- Benefactor \$1000
- Gift Membership
- Donation (tax deductible) _____
- Company Matching Gift Program

TOTAL _____

APPLICATION

First Time Member Renewal Gift Membership

Name: _____

E-mail: _____

Telephone: _____

Address: _____

State: _____ ZIP: _____

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