

LIGHTS! CAMERA! JAXON!

WINTER 2020

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

Cover: Jay Jaxon image courtesy of the Rachel Fenderson Collection.

**How A Local Queens Designer Achieved
International Stardom. More on page 5.**

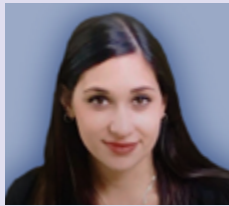
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Photo: Sebastian Halfpap-Ramirez



► Rob MacKay



► Joseph R. Brostek
Photo: Broadway-Flushing Homeowners Association

Letter from the Executive Director

Branka Duknic

“Small cheer and great welcome makes a merry feast.”

These words of William Shakespeare perfectly echo the HollyTour spirit of camaraderie between six historic Flushing venues. Our event sponsor, Sheraton LaGuardia East Hotel, facilitated seamless shuttle service to all the participating locations, and Brooklyn Crafted donated delicious tea and ginger ale beverages to energize our thirsty visitors.

Just like the HollyTour, partnerships are essential for our growth. The Breezy Point Historical Society is happy to share film recordings from a bygone era of one of New York City’s most beloved beach communities, the Rockaway Rivera. From cozy summer beach bungalow getaways to Hurricane Sandy’s

Message from QHS President

Patricia B. Sherwood

It’s almost a new decade!

Continuing from the last newsletter: Our annual meeting, which took place on Sunday, Sept. 22, included the installation of Frank Regan as a Board of Trustees member and the renewal process for me (Patricia Sherwood) as President. Fiscal year 2018-19 was reviewed, and the 2020 budget was presented and accepted. New acquisitions and exhibits were introduced. A special highlight was the unveiling of a recognition plaque denoting Joan Kindler’s continuous contributions to the Queens Historical Society. It’s displayed on a wall in the hallway on the main floor.

Some popular programs: Jack Eichenbaum, the official Queens historian as per a designation from Borough President Melinda Katz, gave a wonderful lecture on Jewish Heritage in Queens. Another scholar, Jason Antos, offered delightful insight into Old Queens after screening the 1925 film “Sally and the Sawdust.” The Fall Fest and It’s Electric activities

devastating blow, the Breezy Point Historical Society aims to protect and share its cultural heritage through lectures, film screenings, and institutional collaborations. On Dec. 14, pioneering preservationists Cathy Murfitt and Kevin Reilly gave a wonderful presentation on the neighborhood’s past and present.

We’re also happy to welcome a renewed friendship with the creators and supervisors of the Queens Memory Project, Natalie Milbrodt and Josselyn Atahualpa. The ongoing effort, which is supported by Queens Public Library and Queens College, CUNY, collects stories, images, and other evidence of life in the borough. Along the way, it empowers residents from diverse backgrounds to document their personal stories. It also captures our past and present with its rich audio/visual recordings.

Stay connected, continue being our friends, and most importantly, enjoy the upcoming holidays no matter which ones you prefer!

led by Jeran Halfpap were exciting as well as the Pride Night Out film screening at the Free Synagogue in Flushing that we offered via a partnership with the Queens World Film Festival.

The main exhibit: “Boro X Design,” chronicles entry designs from the Brooklyn and Queens Chapter of the American Institute of Architecture. It’s on display until the end of December 2019.

At the end of 2019, I will end my tenure as President. I have to express my deep gratitude to all the wonderful people that I have met and worked with over the past years. Their wonderful mix of generosity, humor, knowledge, spirit, and time is much appreciated and will be remembered.

Although we’re still waiting for the roof to be replaced and the porch to be restored, Kingsland Homestead is open to public. Come on over and see us sometime!

A sincere “thank you” goes out to our extra special supporters: Steven Altman; Jean C. Bartelt; Joe Brostek; Connie De Martino; Jack Eichenbaum; Fred Eisinger; Aeda Gonzalez; Julia K. Haupt; Rob MacKay; Jefferson Mao; Theresa Osborne; Frank Regan; and Bill and Jackie Zukowski.

Happy, Healthy, Holidays to all.

Public Programming

Jeran Halfpap, Education & Outreach Coordinator

I’m the new Education and Outreach Coordinator at Queens Historical Society. I’m relatively new to living in Queens, having moved here almost two years ago. The sheer number of interesting things about the borough’s past and present that I’m learning are incredibly fascinating, and I can’t wait to share them with everyone else.

This January 11th, we will be offering a new program for students to get their hands dirty, and learn techniques for Native American pottery. In partnership with the Corona Library, we will be launching this new program in English and Spanish. Students will use archaeological techniques to identify pottery, and learn how the first people of Queens would have made things out of clay.

Also in January, on the 25th, we will be presenting author Jim Cullen, as he talks about All in the Family. This popular TV sitcom that aired from 1971 to 1979 was about a family in Queens, and tackled a wide variety of issues that left a lasting impact on the nation that tuned in. Jim will be analyzing how this TV show managed to bridge generations, and touch on taboo topics in his talk, Those Were the Days: Why All in the Family Still Matters.



► Get your hands dirty and learn techniques for Native American pottery.

Neir’s Tavern 190th Anniversary

Rob MacKay, Trustee

With a bouncy castle, free popcorn, and various guided tours, hundreds of people celebrated the 190th anniversary of Neir’s Tavern on Oct. 5. There was a lot to celebrate as the Woodhaven watering hole is the oldest pub to operate continuously in the same location in the entire United States. As part of the fun, Queens Historical Society board member Rob MacKay donated a commemorative plaque to Neir’s owner Loy Gordon. It reads: A local bar is an important place where friendship, food, good times, and community-building mix. The Queens Historical Society presents this plaque to Neir’s Tavern, a legendary local bar that celebrates a legendary milestone today: 190 years of operation in the same Woodhaven spot. Congratulations and QHS looks forward to the next 190 years.

Hundreds of people celebrated the 190th anniversary of Neir’s Tavern on Oct. 5th. As part of the fun, Queens Historical Society board member Rob MacKay (right) donated a commemorative plaque to Neir’s owner Loy Gordon (left)

Next, is our It’s Electric program! This February 15th, we will be working with magnetism to make a fun craft! Students will get to take home a dancing kinetic sculpture of their creation, while learning about the relationship between magnets and electricity, and the long history of discovery and explanation of this mysterious force.

Starting In the early Spring, lace up your shoes, as we are going to be partnering again with Adrienne Onofri to offer walking tours. This series of 4 walking tours is going to cover 4 historic neighborhoods, Astoria, Jackson Heights, Jamaica, and Ridgewood. We will enjoy the spring weather while learning from a local expert on these active tours!

Also, for those chefs who love sharing, we have the Queens Cuisine Expo coming up and we need your help! We want to collect and share family recipes. If you are interested, and your recipe is selected, you will be given the opportunity to speak to our audiences and your community about the history of your dish. Submit your dish for consideration through our website by April 24th! For those interested in eating, keep an eye out for our Queens Cuisine Expo!



► Join us for our walking tours in the early Spring.



Curatorial and Collections

Daniela Addamo, Curator

We're adding a splash of color to the winter months with "Queens' Green Thumb: The Flushing Garden Club." This exhibition is part of our new series, "Treasures from the Collection," which will present themed displays, rotating once a year, that draw from QHS's collection. "Green Thumb" celebrates the borough's rich horticultural history through the lens of the dedicated women of The Flushing Garden Club, which was founded in 1914. The display will highlight the volunteer group's community contributions, which ranged from preservation efforts to establishing public green spaces such as Kissena Park to presenting large-scale floral shows such as the Gardens on Parade Pavilion at the 1939 – 40 World's Fair.

We're also excited to introduce Theresa Condon as our new Collections Assistant. Theresa is currently enrolled in a Library Science and History dual program at Queens College for a Master in Library Science / Master of Arts degree. She's taking courses that focus on the preservation of

An Update on QueensWay

Rob MacKay, Trustee

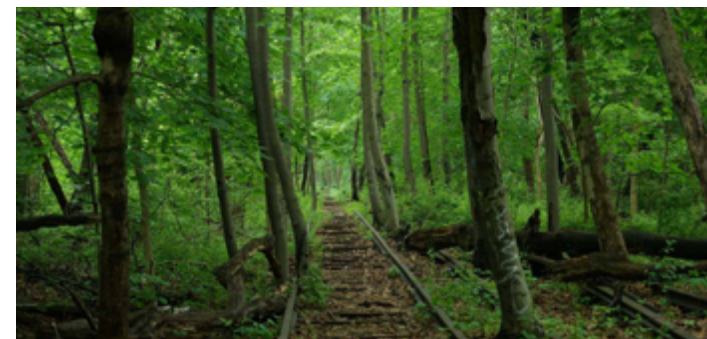
QueensWay supporters are smiling these days, after an MTA study discouraged an alternate use for the property.

Great, but what is QueensWay?

It's a venture to transform a 3.5-mile, 47-acre stretch of abandoned railway in Central Queens into a park and cultural greenway.

Consider it an outerborough cousin of the Highline in Manhattan.

In 2011, the recently formed Friends of QueensWay partnered with The Trust for Public Land to advocate for turning the LIRR Rockaway Beach Branch into a nature-heavy public space for everybody from bikers to joggers to tourists. The railway runs from Rego Park south via Ozone Park and across Jamaica Bay into the Rockaways. Abandoned since 1962, it currently features rusting tracks, decaying ties, garbage, and graffiti.



► Abandoned railway in Central Queens.

heritage materials, the preservation of digital materials, and archival practices and theory. She's hoping to complete her capstone project for the library science portion of the Master's program next semester. Theresa started as an intern at QHS in July 2019, and then continued on as a volunteer. She has worked at museums over the past five years, usually as an educator or docent, and she's looking forward to working more with the collection.



► Gardens on Parade hand-painted postcard.

FQW and TTPL face a few roadblocks. Some city officials want to revamp the train line. Some local residents are afraid QueensWay will attract crime. And of course, there is a large maze of laws and bureaucracy.

However, one roadblock was removed in October, when the MTA released a study that discouraged reactivating the railway. Potential drawbacks include noise, shuttering the Forest Hills Little League facility, road closures, and the rebuilding of nine bridges. (MTA studies from 1996 and 2001 also concluded that the rail plan is costly, infeasible, and not worth doing.)

On the other side, the shovel-ready QueensWay project would not disrupt existing infrastructure. The State Regional Economic Development Council, Assemblyman Andrew Hevesi, and private donors have already offered money to design a plan. However, the Mayor's Office hasn't agreed to allocate funds yet.

Learn more about QueensWay at www.thequeensway.org.



► "The QueensWay is a connector." - QueensWay Online

Miracle Mets Make History!

Joseph R. Brostek, Trustee

Editor's note: The Washington Nationals beat the Houston Astros in an exciting, seven-game World Series this October. Great sports drama, but it was missing something special: New York teams. This article recalls a time when Queens ruled baseball, and all was right on planet earth.

The smell of hot dogs was in the air and so was the smell of victory. It was Thursday, Oct. 16, 1969, at Shea Stadium. I was there with my wife Carol and 57,395 other fans. The Mets had lost the opening game of the World Series to the Baltimore Orioles, but they had come back to win the next three. They needed just one more victory to become champions.

After trailing early, the Mets took the lead and entered the top of the ninth inning with a 5-3 advantage. Jerry Koosman was pitching for the home team when Davey Johnson came up to bat. With two outs and the tying runs on base, the Orioles second baseman hit a fly ball almost to the wall in left field. Cleon Jones raced back and caught it, sending the crowd into a wild frenzy!

In those days, there were no horses or police to keep the crowds off the field, and fans quickly scaled the barriers. In no time, Shea Stadium's infield looked like Times Square with revelers jumping up and down, cheering and ripping up the turf.

Jay Jaxon: 40 Years of Fashion Design Brilliance

Exhibition at QHS

Jay Jason Jaxon was born on August 30, 1941, in Queens, New York. Jaxon would grow up to become a fashion designer, making historical imprints on the concrete streets of New York City, as well as the cobblestoned roads of Paris, and on the Hollywood walk of fame in Los Angeles. Jaxon is the youngest of four, born to Ethel Rena-Jackson and Sidney Jackson. Jaxon established a brand heralding his newly recommended and officially changed name of "Jay Jason Jaxon", prior to his leave for Paris in 1968. When Jay Jaxon moved to France, the beginning of his career in Paris would commence a few months prior to the assassination of Civil Rights Leader Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. in America as well as the May 1968 massive student-led protest in Paris.

Jaxon gained a wealth of design knowledge by working for these couture Maisons: Jean-Louis Scherrer, Yves Saint Laurent, and Marc Bohan for Christian Dior as an Assistant Designer. In the mid-70s, Jaxon returned to New York City and once again created his own collections, while designing for Pierre Cardin, Jay Jaxon for Benson & Partners, Jou-Jou, Jay Jaxon for Muney, John Kloss, and Jay Jaxon for The New Pliers. Next, Jaxon moved out to California at the persuasion of his "play cousin" Lester Wilson, the renowned choreographer. While in Los Angeles, Jaxon designed for Jill Richards, created theatrical costumes for celebrities such as Thelma Houston, Diahann Carroll, Sammy Davis Jr., and Luther Vandross. For television shows, he designed costumes for The Division, Angel, Ally McBeal, and Sabrina: The Teenage Witch. In film, Jaxon created costumes on behalf of Mr. & Mrs. Smith, The Men's Club, and in stage for: Ailey Celebrates Ellington and The Colors of Christmas.

I had field level seats near first base. A piece of turf flew near me. Of course, I grabbed it. I took it to my home in Flushing and planted it in my front lawn. When kids in the neighborhood heard about it, they would come to my house and rub their baseball gloves on "Mr. Brostek's lucky lawn."

Davey Johnson went on to manage the Mets from 1984 to 1990. He was the skipper when the Flushing Nine won its second-ever World Series in 1986. We moved to a bigger house in 1972, but left the old lawn behind.



► Fans rushed onto the Shea Stadium field after the Mets beat the Orioles and won the World Series. (Photo: Associated Press)

About the Guest Curator Rachel Fenderson

Rachel Fenderson was born and raised in Queens, New York, to Jamaican parents. During her youth, she worked hard as a student all the while being drawn to fabrics, design, and creation. In 2002, Fenderson pursued a Bachelor's degree in English Literature at Hofstra University. Next, Fenderson attended Parsons The New School for Design and completed a Fashion Studies, Applied Associates Science degree of Fashion Design in 2008. On January 1, 2011, Rachel Fenderson and her sister Marsha Fenderson, founded a womenswear company monikered: Pepper Jacques. By 2016, Fenderson furthered her education at Parsons Paris: The New School for Design in Paris, France. In May 2018, Fenderson completed her Master's thesis *JAY JAXON: A Biographical Study and Media Discourse Analysis Reinstating A Designer Into Fashion History*. Pursuing this degree gave her the opportunity to write the first biographical thesis study on the designer Jay Jaxon.



► Jay Jaxon exhibition at the Queens Public Library in Queens, NY.

NEWS YOU COULD USE

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

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



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.



Queens' Green Thumb: The Flushing Garden Club Exhibition December 2019 – November 2020

The Queens' Green Thumb exhibition is part of our new series, "Treasures from the Collection," which will present themed displays, rotating once a year, that draw from QHS's collection. "Green Thumb" celebrates the borough's rich horticultural history through the lens of the dedicated women of The Flushing Garden Club, which was founded in 1914.

The display will highlight the volunteer group's community contributions, which ranged from preservation efforts to establishing such public green spaces as Kissena Park to presenting large-scale floral shows such as the Gardens on Parade Pavilion at the 1939 – 40 World's Fair.

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



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.



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.



Jay Jaxon Exhibition January 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.

RENTAL & DONATION

Queens Historical Society Site Rental

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.

Donate

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

Follow us on:

WINTER 2020 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.

**Saturday, January 11
10:30am – 12:00pm**

American Indian Pottery Techniques
Starting Location: Queens Library at Corona, 38-23 104 St, Corona, NY 11368
Price: FREE!
*Space is limited to 30 people! First come first serve basis!

**Saturday, January 25
2:30pm – 4:00pm**

Why All in the Family Still Matters Lecture by author Jim Cullen
Location: Kingsland Homestead
Price: \$5 for Adults, \$3 for Members and Students

**Saturday, February 15
2:30pm – 4:00pm**

It's Electric! Workshop: Magnets
Location: Kingsland Homestead
Price: \$10 per child (FREE for Adults w/ Children)

**Sundays, March 29, April 19, May 3, May 17
2:30pm – 4:00pm**

Queens Walking Tours with Adrienne Onofri
Locations: Astoria, Jackson Heights, Jamaica, and Ridgewood
Price: \$25
*Space is limited to 25 people! First come first serve basis!

ADVERTISE YOUR BUSINESS OR PROFESSION HERE!

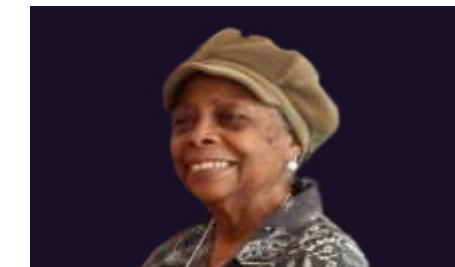
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YOU COULD REACH HUNDREDS OF READERS! LET US HELP YOU!



Eulogy Catherine Williams



Catherine Williams — a teacher, secretary, tireless community activist, and 35-year member of the Queens Historical Society's board — died on Sunday, Aug. 18, 2019.

Born as Catherine Halyard in South Carolina in 1937, she moved to Queens at an early age and attended P.S. 20, Newtown High School, and Queensborough Community College. Her professional career began as an assistant teacher at the Macedonia African Methodist Episcopal Church's Cradle Roll Class in Flushing. She later became a full teacher and a secretary there while also helping with the Union Street church's basketball team, hand bell choir, drama club, usher board, fellowship club, and other groups.

With the philosophy "working for the Lord, the pay isn't much, but the rewards are out of this world," she dedicated her life to the service of others. Her resume includes founding board member of the Macedonia Child Development Center, secretary of the 109th Precinct Community Council, board memberships with QHS,

Queens Botanical Garden, the Lewis Latimer House Museum, and the Long Island Federation of Women's Clubs. Add work with the NAACP, the Police Athletic League, the FBI Citizens Academy, and the Paul Quinn Federal Credit Union, among other agencies.

At other times, Catherine was a charter member of the Achievers Club of International Training in Communication and Metro Chapter 63 of the American Institute of Parliamentarians. She organized the Commission on Beautification, which installed the first chair lift at Macedonia, where she was supervisor of the Food Pantry and Soup Kitchen for 25 years.

There was also time for fun. Catherine will be remembered for her love of frogs, which is related to the acronym "Fully Relying On God." She also cherished travelling and made trips to London, Paris, Rome, Venice, Munich, South Africa, Haiti, Cuba, and Bamberg (Germany, in addition to her similarly named birthplace.)

Catherine was married to the late William Tinson for 25 years, and they had two daughters, Cynthia and Bobbi Ann. Her second marriage to Jay Williams lasted for 36 years and produced a son, Ricky. She is survived by her children and daughter-in-law Marianne Williams. She also leaves behind a sister, Vivian F. Halyard, a brother, Daniel Halyard, six sisters-in-law, two brothers-in-law, six grandchildren, and countless cousins, nieces, nephews, and friends.

Scripture reads: "And let us not be weary in well doing for in due season we shall reap."

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Office Hours (by appointment):

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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