

QHS MARKS THE SPOT

SPRING 2020

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KING OF QUEENS

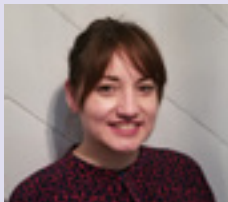
Working to Preserve Our Past in
Order to Protect our Future

Cover: Friend's Tavern by Rob MacKay.

WRITERS



▶ Jason Antos



▶ Branka Duknic



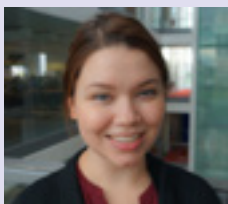
▶ Daniela Addamo



▶ Jeran Halfpap



▶ Rob MacKay



▶ Abby Geluso

Letter from the Executive Director

Branka Duknic

Happy Spring!

I truly hope our lectures, walking tours, screenings, and workshops entice you to venture out of the mass anxiety of virus outbreaks. We remain committed to our visitors and we're eagerly awaiting your participation in upcoming QHS events, along with additional ones during the warmer months that are arriving soon.

QHS has again been truly lucky to have great incoming staffers and board members. Our newly appointed Board President, Jason Antos, has officially ascended, while our former leader, Patricia B. Sherwood, continues to contribute as the Vice President of Operations. More on Patricia's engagement and tenure can be read in a nearby article.

Our newest addition to the board is a fearless advocate for historic preservation and an expert in her field: Anne Jennings.

The Whitestone resident is currently working as the Architectural Historian/Cultural Resource Specialist at the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy in Kings Point, Long Island. Her former engagements include Historic House Trust of NY, an affiliate of the

Message from QHS President Jason D. Antos

The first spring of the new decade is upon us and with a new season comes change.

I am honored to have been named Queens Historical Society President. This year, 2020, marks my 15th year of affiliation with QHS, and it has been a wonderful part of my life to work with and know so many interesting, kind, and passionate people who all share a common goal: preserving the amazing history of Queens County.

Patricia B. Sherwood has done a remarkable job as QHS President, and the society has benefited greatly under her leadership. I have some pretty big shoes to fill and I am especially grateful to her for this opportunity.

Recently, author Jim Cullen lectured on "All in the Family." He read from his book, "Those Were the Days: Why All in the Family Still Matters" and discussed the social and cultural impact of the sitcom about a family from Queens. The show ran from 1971 until 1979 and introduced Archie Bunker, Edith, Gloria, and Mike to the world. The event had a tremendous turnout, and guests were treated to a famous episode, "Sammy's Visit," which aired on Feb. 19, 1972, with guest star Sammy Davis Jr.

NYC Parks Department, where she was the Senior Architectural Conservator, as well as the New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission. Anne hopes to apply her expertise in historic architectural management to Kingsland Homestead and provide valuable input in all of QHS's landmarks preservation efforts.

As for new staff members, Yuwen Huyan hails from NYU's Museum Studies MA program. She is currently working as our Museum Research & Administration Assistant with an eagerness to form a strategic plan to expand outreach to Asian-American communities. Welcome aboard, Yuwen!

For American literature enthusiasts, Abby Geluso has written a piece on a beloved novelist from Ozone Park. Read our former intern's story on Jack Kerouac in this newsletter.

Now on to even more good news. With City Council Member Danny Dromm's generous support, QHS will host more youth workshops in Jackson Heights centered around influential and talented LGBTQIA+ people from Queens. In addition, we're pleased to announce the awarding of a Queensmarking plaque to a significant cultural landmark: Friend's Tavern. (More in this newsletter.) Join Council Member Dromm and us for an early summer celebratory event. More details to follow.

Please tune in, and continue following our progress. QHS is here to serve you, dear neighbors and friends!

Our current exhibit, "Jay Jaxon: 40 Years of Fashion Design Brilliance," celebrates a Queens native. The haute couture and costume designer is being recognized for his genius with an impressive display of artifacts and objects from his personal design archives as well as primary sources from the research of fashion scholar and guest curator Rachel Fender-son. The Jaxon display has been met with great praise from those who have visited.

A photographic tribute to Percy Loomis Sperr and Frederick J. Weber is coming soon. During a career which spanned many decades during the early part of the 20th century, Sperr and Weber photographed thousands of streetscapes all over Queens. Sperr was the official photographer for the City of New York and Weber was hired in the same capacity for the Long Island Rail Road and the Queens County Rail Way trolley line. The exhibit, which I will co-curate with QHS Curator Daniela Addamo, will include many never-before-seen images and will serve as the first major exhibit of its kind dedicated to these two historic professional photographers.

On behalf of QHS, I offer a special "thank you" to the following special supporters: Jean Bartelt; Joseph Brostek; Ellissa Sherwood Fazio & James J. Fazio; Robert Feder; Carl Harbart; Paul Halvatzis; Darcy Hector; David M. Kelley; Bertha Klein; Patricia A. McGivern; Robert A. Miller; Theresa J. Osborne; Alfred Rankins; Pamela E. Reid; Patricia B. Sherwood; Lynn Silverstein; Allan B. Smith; Eleanor Stocks; James A. Trent; and Florence Zeman.

Public Programming

Jeran Halfpap, Education & Outreach Coordinator

One of the best parts about teaching is all the things a teacher learns. And boy is there a lot to learn about Queens history!

Let's begin with "Census 2020, Beyond and Backwards." In this brand new program, students will use historical Census info to track populations and see how they change over time. We also plan to update the Underground Railroad Program to better reflect the journey away from enslavement.

Third-, fourth-, and fifth-graders can participate in our Annual Art and History Contest. They'll fill out a form, choose a local landmark, draw a picture of it, and write an essay about its history and impact. Prizes will be given out in our Galley Ceremony on May 16 at 2:30pm. The submission deadline is April 11.

We're happy to partner with Adrienne Onofri, who wrote "Walking Queens" to offer four walking tours. We'll head to Astoria on March 29. Then it's off to Jackson Heights on April 19, Ridgewood on May 17, and Jamaica on May 31. All tours will run from 2:30pm to 4:30pm rain or shine.

Back at Kingsland Homestead, we'll screen the HBO documentary "True Justice" on April 4 at 2:30pm. This documentary follows public interest attorney Bryan Stevenson as he fights racism in Alabama's criminal justice system. This film is rated TV-MA and is 1h 41m long.

Weeping Beech Park and Margaret Carman Green will host "Shared Dialog, Shared Space" on April 18 and 19 (Rain dates: April 25 and 26). These interactive installations will explore immigrant experiences in queens, and will be provided with Chinese and Korean translations. An artists' talk will happen in Kingsland Homestead on April 25 at 2:30pm, and will also be available in Chinese or Korean.

Lastly, just in time for Mother's Day, Marion Duckworth-Smith will lecture about her residence, The Lent-Riker-Smith Homestead in East Elmhurst, on May 9 in 2:30pm. Built in about 1656, this cozy, romantic home is the oldest continually used private dwelling in NYC. It has a beautiful garden and a cemetery with 132 marked graves, mostly with the last names Riker and Lent. Jack Eichenbaum, a QHS board member and the official Queens historian as per the Borough President, will offer his annual Sacred Sites tour on May 17 at noon. Jack will take walkers to various religious institutions in Flushing and discuss their histories.

Changing of the Guard

Just like in all great democracies, QHS has just experienced a bloodless exchange of power. Jason Antos took over as Board President last month, replacing Patricia B. Sherwood, who had held the position since 2011. Luckily for QHS, Sherwood will continue serving on the board, but in a more limited role.

A former art teacher and guidance counselor, Sherwood leaves a legacy that includes increasing the number of trustees and recruiting trustees from outside of Flushing for the first time in QHS history. The Parkway Village resident also spearheaded efforts to install learning strips for the visually impaired and window shades in the exhibition spaces.

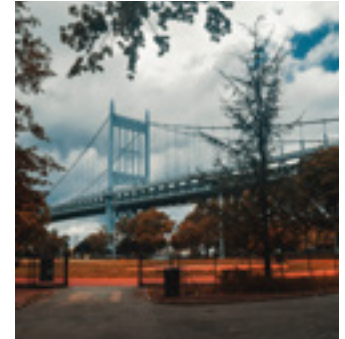
Antos, who lives in Whitestone, is natural fit for his new title. The frequent lecturer and tour guide has written six books on Queens history and looks to produce a few more. He recently began work as an



► 22nd Annual Art & History Contest Award Ceremony



► The Hindu Temple Society of North America by Branka Duknic.



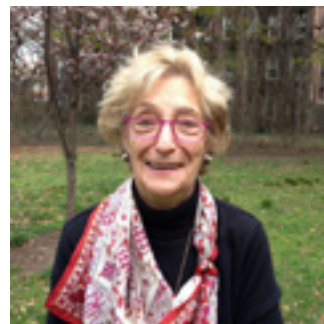
► Astoria, NY.



► Lent-Riker-Smith Homestead. Photo courtesy of Marion Duckworth Smith.

associate editor at the Queens Chronicle after a decade-long stint at the Queens Gazette and a job with Assemblyman Edward C. Braunstein.

So it looks like a positive shuffle. When asked about Antos, Sherwood smiled and said: "He will rise to the occasion."



► Patricia B. Sherwood. Photo by Ellissa Fazio.

Curatorial and Collections

Daniela Addamo, Curator

This Spring we have four exciting new acquisitions on display and some great ongoing shows. “Jay Jaxon: 40 Years of Fashion Design Brilliance” is on view as of February. The exhibition features artifacts, ephemera, and research that celebrate the life of an American fashion, haute couture, and costume designer from Southeast Queens.

I'd like to highlight a 1950 Floral Scrapbook from “Queens’ Greens Thumb: The Flushing Garden Club,” which is on the second floor. Created by Garden Club Member Miss Mary McClood, it features an assortment of florals, leaves, drawings, and photographs.

Botanical scrapbooks were popular in the 19th century, as men and women collected and preserved plants for scientific or aesthetic and sentimental reasons. A scrapbook's arrangements would depend on the collector's purpose for the book. An amateur hobbyist, such as Miss McClood, would typically press flowers between the pages of a book and accompany the images with notes, poems, and memorabilia. It usually served as a memento of an event, place, or person. The scientific collector would include a taxonomic description (family, genus, and species) and physical description of the plant, date, and location where it was found. Such a scrapbook would have been used as a tool for botanical study as a hobby or scientific investigation.

Last but certainly not least, the extremely generous Shari Segel Goldberg donated four postcards from the 1939 World's Fair. They depict stunning images of a large mural from the General Motors building. (Entitled “Strength and Safety,” it was painted by artist Dean Cornwell.) The postcards are extremely rare items that hold historical significance since the mural was destroyed after the World's Fair. Plus, they have brilliant, glossy, silver-and-gold pigments which are beautifully reflective.

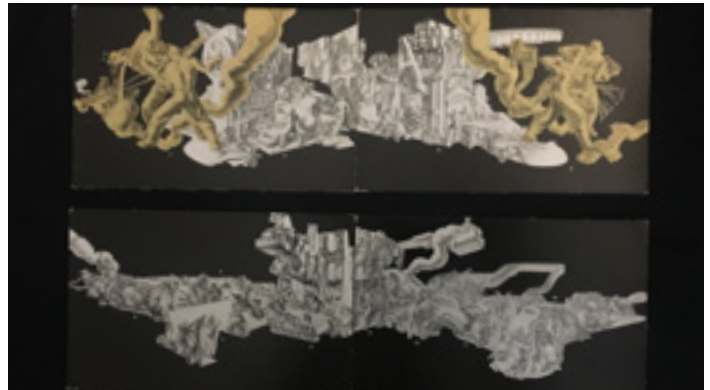
A Home Fit for a Governor, Senator, and Mayor

Rob MacKay, Trustee

History is alive in Maspeth! A roadside marker was installed near the former site of DeWitt Clinton's summer home near 56th Terrace and 58th Street recently. Clinton (1769-1828) was a Senator, Governor, and Mayor who's most famous for spearheading the Erie Canal's construction. He and his wife Maria inherited the Maspeth property from his father-in-law, Walter Franklin. It had a two-story wood-frame mansion with porches on both levels that was converted into tenements in the 1920s before burning down in 1933. In the photo, Juniper Park Civic Association President Tony Nunziato and Newtown Historical Society President Christina Wilkinson stand in front of the new blue-and-yellow sign. Special thanks to NHS, JPCA, State Senator Joseph P. Addabbo Jr., City Council Member Robert Holden, and the NYC Department of Transportation.



► “Floral Scrapbook,” 1950, Mary McClood, 1999.110.194, Gift of Carmen Pitaro, Queens Historical Society Collection, NY.



► “Strength and Safety Postcards,” 1939, 2019.8.1-4, Gift of Dean Cornwell, Queens Historical Society Collection, NY.



► Photo courtesy of Steve Garza/NHS

QHS Marks the Spot

Rob MacKay, Trustee

The Queens Historical Society voted unanimously to award a Queensmark to Friend's Tavern during January's board meeting. Established in 1989, the Jackson Heights establishment is the oldest active gay bar in the entire borough. It's also a hot spot for many immigrant members of the LGBT community, some of whom come from countries where homosexuality is prohibited by law and/or shunned by popular culture.

Located at 78-11 Roosevelt Ave., Friend's has also played a large role in the gay rights movement, hosting block parties related to the annual Queens Pride Parade and candlelight vigils after homophobic attacks such as the one at the Pulse nightclub in Orlando, Florida, in 2016.

A Queensmark Refresher

Created by now-deceased Stanly Cogan in 1996 when he was president of QHS, Queensmarks honor structures and venues that have outstanding architectural, cultural, and historical significance, but lack city, state or federal landmark status. The circular, bronze plaques do not enforce any legal restrictions; they aim to instill pride and promote heritage. The program, which was dormant until the Friend's action, honors such diverse entities as entire neighborhood stretches (Richmond Hill's Victorian homes), private residences (The Tudor Revival at 13-03 144th Place), houses of worship (St. Nicholas Orthodox Church, Tifereth Israel Temple), libraries (the Poppenhusen branch on Queens Library), museums (New York Hall of Science), food purveyors (Lemon Ice King of Corona) and even former factories (Tiffany's stained glass studios).



► Established in 1989, the Jackson Heights establishment is the oldest active gay bar in the entire borough.



► The circular, bronze Queensmark plaques were created by now-deceased Stanly Cogan in 1996 when he was president of QHS.

Kerouac in Queens

Abby Geluso

It's spring 1946, and the sun has begun to set. The neighborhood quiets to a soft bustle as cars on the main road become sparse and shopkeepers close up to head home for the evening. Gauzy white drapes flutter through an open window along with the soft jazz notes that waft down in the wind from a second floor apartment in Ozone Park. Jack Kerouac and his mother are home. She's just back from work at the shoe factory, while he's about to start a long night at the kitchen table, writing what would become his debut novel, "The Town and the City (1950)."

The young author, born Jean-Louis Lebris de K  rouac, moved to New York from Lowell, Massachusetts, in 1940 to attend Columbia University. There, he met like-minded young men who would go on to travel, write, and etch their place in American literature, the beginnings of what would become known as the "Beat Generation."

Recruited to play football, Kerouac broke a leg in his first year. He was benched and shortly dropped out of school altogether. He enlisted briefly in the U.S. Navy, but was honorably discharged after less than a year, following several months spent in a naval psychiatric hospital.

His parents, Leo-Alcide and Gabri  lle-Ange K  rouac, had moved to Queens in 1943 in search of work. After his successive dropping out of Columbia and discharge from the Navy, Jack moved with them into a small, second-floor apartment at 133-01 Cross Bay Blvd.

The apartment was situated above a pharmacy where the author once worked as a soda jerk and across the street from McNulty's Tavern, where he often drank with friends and fellow beatnik trailblazers Neal Cassady and Lucien Carr. The bar still stands, now as Glen Patrick's Pub.

After his father's passing in 1946, Kerouac reportedly became reclusive, focusing heavily on writing. His favored atmosphere for writing consisted of an empty kitchen in a silent apartment after dark, surrounded by smoke from his joint. He would work for long stretches of time — a practice he called "automatic writing." During this time, he wrote "The Town and the City (1950)" and began early outlines of his most esteemed novel, "On the Road (1957)."

Allen Ginsburg, a fellow traveler and Beat Generation author, dubbed Kerouac: "The Wizard of Ozone Park," in letters to his friend. However, Kerouac moved to Richmond Hill with his mother in 1950.

During his time in Queens, Kerouac frequented local bars, played basketball at Phil Rizutto Park, dubbed the Atlantic Avenue overpass of the Van Wyck Expressway, "A bowling alley for cars," and even planned his monumental "On the Road" journey at a children's library on 101st Avenue which is now a church.

Kerouac's footprints are scattered across the borough just as they are across the United States. Local Kerouac historian Patrick Fenton spent much of his life researching the author's time in Queens. In 1996, he was instrumental in the placement of a plaque at Kerouac's Ozone Park residence. Unfortunately, the plaque was torn from the house in 2009 and has yet to be replaced.

While Kerouac famously traveled the United States, Queens was his homebase for almost 15 years. It was from the second floor corner apartment above a pharmacy in Ozone Park that Kerouac disembarked on his cross-country journey. It was the elevated train at Liberty Avenue and Rockaway Boulevard that carried him away.

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.



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.

 **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.



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.

Erratum

Summer 2019, p.3, Moon Mission Memory. The module successfully landed on Tranquility Base; at 10:56 p.m. on July 20, Neil Armstrong..."

SPRING 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, March 14
2:30pm – 4:30pm**

"The Cave" Documentary
Screening provided by National Geographic

Rating: PG-13 (war-related)

Location: Kingsland Homestead
Price: FREE!

*Space is limited to 30 people!
First come first serve basis!

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

Queens Walking Tours
with Adrienne Onofri

Locations: Astoria, Jackson Heights, Ridgewood, and Jamaica
Price: \$25

Link (Astoria): bit.ly/3aAi8sW
More Info: QHS Website

*Space is limited to 25 people!
First come first serve basis!

**Saturday, April 4
2:30pm – 4:30pm**

"True Justice" Film Screening
Provided by HBO

Rating: TV-MA

Location: Kingsland Homestead
Price: FREE!

*Space is limited to 30 people!
First come first serve basis!

**Saturday, April 11
2:30pm – 4:00pm**

23rd Annual Kids

Art & History Contest

Location: Kingsland Homestead
Grades: 3 – 5 in Queens Borough
Processing Fee: \$1

More Info: QHS Website

Reception will be held @ QHS at
2:30pm on Saturday, May 16, 2020

Saturday & Sunday, April 18 & 19

Shared Dialog, Shared Space
Installation Art in Margaret I.
Carman Green Park.

Rain Dates: Wednesday April 25
and Thursday April 26

Artists' Talk: Saturday April 25

Location: Kingsland Homestead

Friday, April 24

Queens Cuisine Expo: Calling
all Cooks, Chefs, and Cuisiniers!
Submit Family Recipes

Submission: Friday, April 24, 2020

Locations: Weeping Beech Park

Potluck: Saturday June 13, 2020

Saturday, May 9

2:30pm – 4:30pm

Lent-Riker-Smith Homestead
Lecture by Marion Duckworth
Smith

Location: Kingsland Homestead

Price: \$5 Individual, \$3 Students
& Seniors, Free QHS Members

Link: <https://squ.re/2PQ1Owi>

*Space is limited to 30 people!

First come first serve basis!



► QHS board and staff meeting with Congresswoman Grace Meng on March 2, 2020. From left to right: QHS board member Joseph Brostek, V.P. of Operations Patricia B. Sherwood, Congresswoman Grace Meng, Executive Director Branka Duknic and QHS board member Maria Becce. Congresswoman Meng expressed her enthusiasm in the following quote: "It was a pleasure to once again meet with the Queens Historical Society, and I thank the organization for the great work it does. It is critical that we preserve and promote our local history, and that future generations know about our borough's past, and the role it has played in contributing to our nation. I look forward to continuing to work with the historical society's members, and future collaborations with the group."

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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.

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Office Hours (by appointment):

Mon – Fri: 9:30am to 4:30pm

Museum Hours (for guided tours only):

Tues, Sat, Sun: 2:30pm to 4:30pm

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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) _____

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TOTAL _____

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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