

**THE BRONX COUNTY
HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

**3309 BAINBRIDGE AVENUE
THE BRONX, NEW YORK 10467
PHONE: (718) 881- 8900
FAX: (718) 881- 4827**

www.bronxhistoricalsociety.org

Visit us on Facebook, Youtube, and
Twitter.

The Bronx County Historical Society, founded in 1955, is a private, non-profit educational and cultural institution chartered by the New York State Board of Regents. The Society is dedicated to the collection, preservation, documentation and interpretation of the history and heritage of The Bronx and its people from its earliest historical references in the 17th century to the present. The Society disseminates information by utilizing its collections in exhibitions, historical research, production of publications and documentaries, educational and cultural programming, the operation of our research library, The Bronx County Archives and two historic landmark house museums - the c.1812 Edgar Allan Poe Cottage and the c.1758 fieldstone farmhouse Valentine -Varian House/Museum of Bronx History.

This newsletter is published three times a year as a service to members and friends.

The Bronx County Historical Society is partially supported through funds and services provided by the NYC Departments of Cultural Affairs and Parks and Recreation, the Historic House Trust of New York City, The Bronx City Council Delegation, the Office of the President of the Borough of The Bronx, The Bronx Delegations of the NYS Assembly and the NYS Senate, the H.W. Wilson Foundation, the Astor Fund, the Lucius N. Littauer Foundation, The New York Times Foundation, the Verizon Foundation, the New York State Library, the New Yankee Stadium Community Benefits Fund, the Susan Tane Foundation, the New York Public Library, and the New York Community Trust.

THE BRONX HISTORIAN

Newsletter of The Bronx County Historical Society

OCTOBER 2015 – JANUARY 2016

VOLUME 39 NUMBER 1

CELEBRATING 60 YEARS OF SHARING BRONX HISTORY

It all started in September 1955 with a simple question a reader of the “Bronx Bandwagon” column in the *New York Post* Bronx edition posed to the late journalist Burt Gumpert: “Why is there no Bronx Historical Society?” Recognizing a need for such an institution, Gumpert asserted that a historical society will be created by the end of that year. Soon enough, Gumpert, along with another seven individuals, met at the dental office of Dr. Theodore Kazimiroff to begin The Bronx County Historical Society.

The Society began to give public lectures to discuss object collections, local history, and to build up support from fellow Bronxites. So entertaining and informative were these lectures that the audience size began to increase, prompting The Society to seek larger venues. After outgrowing the West Farms branch of the New York Public Library, The Society briefly operated in other libraries and churches, Fordham University and Lehman College. Walking tours became very popular at this time, while an annual journal began with its first printing in 1964, making it one of the premier history periodicals in the tristate region today.

Then, in 1965, the historic 1758 Valentine-Varian House on Bainbridge Avenue was donated to The Society by William C. Beller, thus establishing the first permanent headquarters of The Bronx County Historical Society.

Three years later, The Society opened the house as the Museum of Bronx History, the borough’s very first museum celebrating its historic heritage. The Society continued to expand by taking on other historic sites and facilities. In 1975, The Society began to administer the Edgar Allan Poe Cottage, where the famous American writer spent his last years. Then in 1982, The Society once again expanded into another building on Bainbridge Avenue and opened it as a research library and administrative offices. The Society came into possession of another building just two doors away on Bainbridge Avenue. The latest building was opened as the Bronx County Archives in 2001. Today, The Bronx County Historical Society is considered to be one of the most active historical societies in the state. To learn more about The Society, see page 3 for the opening at the Museum of Bronx History of upcoming exhibitions on The Society’s history.



The founders of The Society pose before Glover’s Rock in Pelham Bay Park, November 1960. Left to right in the front row are Joseph Duffy, Theodore Schliessman, Fred E.J. Kracke, John McNamara, and Bert Gumpert. In the back row are Ronald Schliessman, Theodore Kazimiroff, and Vincent Hunt.

The Bronx County Historical Society Collections.



The historic Valentine-Varian House being moved from one side of Bainbridge Avenue to the other in 1965. The Society took over the house as its first permanent location. Today, the house is open as the Museum of Bronx History.

The Bronx County Historical Society Collections.

PURE GOLD

Schools, businesses, institutions, and associations in The Bronx are noted.

Castle Hill Funeral Directors Inc.
1528 Castle Hill Avenue
Est. 1925

The Cookie Factory
1844 Givan Avenue
Est. 1954

Mario's Restaurant
2342 Arthur Avenue
Est. 1919

Vacuum World
5902 Riverdale Avenue
Est. 1938

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS
(PARTIAL LIST)

Hector Lopez Ballestros

Brandon Berkowski

Marie Bingham

Barbara Blasucci

George A. Bradley

Leonard Bronfeld

Cindy Cacciola

Sandra Cardinali

Dara Caponigro

Alison Castaneda

Kevin Clyne

Dr. Burton D. Cohen

Nathan Dallas

Daniel Diaz

Elizabeth Dougherty

John C. Dougherty

June Fait

Joshua Fogel

Lovin George

Meghan Gonoude

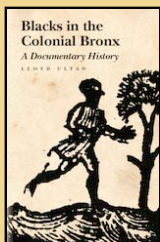
Betty Guman

Roslyn Harling

Liang Heng

Susan Holland

SOCIETY PUBLICATIONS:
Autographed copy, add \$10



Blacks in the Colonial Bronx: A Documentary History
\$18.00



The Bronx: Then & Now
\$21.99

COLLECTIONS DONATIONS

The Society's research library, object, and archival collections are a great resource. We thank those who recently made the following donations (partial list):

Michael Alfultis – Maritime College commemorative medallion for its 140 years of maritime heritage (1874-2014).

Anonymous – P.S. 31 autograph album (1937).

Dan Eisenstein – Box of history books.

Denise Ferrari – "Freedomland U.S.A." official long-playing record, with its dust jacket (1960).

Naomi Freistadt – P.S. 60 class photograph of Kate Schlossberg (1925).

David Malatzky – Materials related to the Boy Scouts of America in the Borough of The Bronx (1915 – present).

Seth Marvin – Three autographed baseballs (Mariano Rivera, Lou Pinella, Paul O'Neill), seven New York Yankees yearbooks (1987-2011) and a Yankees Magazine (2006).

Lois Parker – Theodore Roosevelt High School diploma (1928).

Frank Uzzo, M.S. 180 – Bronx African American life-themed quilt, created by the students of M.S. 180, under the guidance of former teacher, Janet Norquist-Gonzalez.

FINANCIAL DONATIONS

Cash donations help The Society fund programming, publications, equipment purchases, and build endowments. To double your donation, check with your employer for any available matching gift programs. We are grateful for the following contributions (partial list):

\$10 - \$99

- Ruth Anderberg
- Joseph A. Barone
- William A. Brady
- Sara S. Berlan
- MC Cox & Co.
- Nestor Danyluk
- Wallis Doerge
- Marjorie Dovman
- Lottie Esteban
- Shaurain Farber
- EarthShare NYC Gives
- Mark Glander
- The Meredith Group
- Neil Harrow
- William Howze
- Helen Klebanoff
- Gary Makufka

\$10 - \$99 (continued)

- Vivian J. Mall
- Kathy McArdle
- Edward McLoughlin
- Catherine Miele
- Howard A. Nenner
- Lilly Pappas
- Harry A. Parsons
- Anne Payne
- Joan Pendergast
- Donald Petersen
- Russell F. Ryer
- Annette Sambolin
- Roy Silverfarb
- Irving Skorka
- Marion Swerdlow
- Karl Stricker

\$10 - \$99 (continued)

- Nina Wohl
- Ira & Diane Zuckerman

\$100 - \$999

- Larry Barazzotto
- Hutch Metro Center
- The Shakespeare Club

\$1,000 - \$4,999

- Fordham University

\$5,000 - and over

- The Lucius N. Littauer Foundation
- Roberta Knight
- Lloyd Ultan

SUBMISSIONS FOR THE BRONX COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY ANNUAL JOURNAL

Since 1964, the BCHS *Journal* has been one of the premier history journals in the tri-state region. The *Journal's* articles, written with clarity and scholarly substance, are of interest to all who enjoy accounts of people, business events, mercantile gain, defending the nation's interest, or the love of The Bronx. As an ongoing tradition for Bronxites to share their personal experiences, The Society is accepting articles for its *Journal*. Do you have a Bronx story to share? Kindly send in your article in Microsoft Word format along with 2-4 images or illustrations at 300dpi as email attachments to administration@bronxhistoricalsociety.org. Make sure you include your contact information.

A WEEKEND OF CELEBRATIONS AT THE MUSEUM



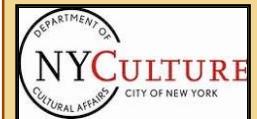
The weekend of October 17th and 18th will be festive at the historic Museum of Bronx History/Valentine-Varian House. The museum will not only celebrate its 13th year participating in the annual openhousenewyork citywide program, when city museums, including our two historic house museums, offer free admission, but will also celebrate The Society's 60th anniversary, New York Archives Week, and National Hispanic Heritage Month.

The Society will showcase items from its fine archives collection that highlight certain periods of Bronx Latino history. There will also be an information section where guides and bibliographies of The Society's research library and archives can be perused. It is the perfect opportunity to learn about The Bronx County Historical Society and Latino history in The Bronx – for free! The Edgar Allan Poe Cottage will also offer free admissions for the weekend, so visit us.



Edgar Allan Poe
Cottage
Poe Park
Grand Concourse &
East Kingsbridge
Road

Owned by the New York City Department of Parks, it is operated by The Bronx County Historical Society. The house is a member of the Historic House Trust.



Museum of Bronx
History/Valentine-
Varian House
3266 Bainbridge
Avenue
& East 208th Street

Owned by The Bronx County Historical Society, the house is a member of the Historic House Trust. Its operation is made possible in part by public funds provided through the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs.

EXHIBITIONS AT THE MUSEUM OF BRONX HISTORY

3266 BAINBRIDGE AVENUE
& EAST 208TH STREET, THE BRONX, NEW YORK 10467
(718) 881-8900

MUSEUM HOURS: SAT 10AM - 4PM / SUN 1PM - 5PM
(GROUP TOURS MON.-FRI. BY APPOINTMENT)

IN CELEBRATION OF THE 60TH ANNIVERSARY OF
THE BRONX COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY, PLEASE JOIN
US AT THE OPENING RECEPTION FOR ITS TWO NEW
EXHIBITIONS

CELEBRATING BRONX HISTORY
60 YEARS & COUNTING

AND

CURATOR'S CHOICE
SELECTIONS FROM THE COLLECTIONS

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 7, 2015
4:30 PM – 7:00 PM

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION, AND TO RSVP,
PLEASE CONTACT THE SOCIETY
(718) 881-8900
ADMINISTRATION@BRONXHISTORICALSOCIETY.ORG

BE A PART OF BRONX HISTORY

Buy a Poe Paver to Support the Edgar Allan Poe Cottage!
To learn more about it, please call (718) 881-8900 or visit
<http://www.bronxhistoricalsociety.org/poecottagepaver>



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FACILITIES:

Research Library
3309 Bainbridge Avenue
By Appointment

The Bronx County Archives
3313 Bainbridge Avenue
By Appointment

**Museum of Bronx History/
Valentine-Varian House**
3266 Bainbridge Avenue
and East 208th Street
Museum hours:
Saturdays 10AM-4PM and
Sundays 1PM-5PM.

Edgar Allan Poe Cottage
Poe Park
2640 Grand Concourse and
East Kingsbridge Road
Museum hours:
Thursdays and Fridays
10AM-3PM
Saturdays 10AM-4PM and
Sundays 1PM-5PM.

Call The Society to arrange
group tours during the week.

ENDOWED FUNDS

The Bronx County Historical Society encourages the establishment of named endowment funds. Funds may be created to support many Society programs, or may be established for restricted use. The funds appear permanently on the financial records of The Society in recognition of their ongoing support of its work.

For further details, contact:
Mr. Joel Podgor, CPA
Treasurer (718) 881-8900

Taking A Walk Through History **BRONX WALKING TOURS**

Each tour costs \$10 for BCHS members, \$20 for non-members. Contact The Society at (718) 881-8900 to reserve your spot. The tours generally run about 2 hours.

The Bronx County Historical Society Campus **Sunday, October 25, 2015 at 11:00AM**

As The Society's operation and collections began to grow, there was a need for a permanent home. In 1965, the historic Valentine-Varian House was donated to The Society and moved from its original location to parkland across the street. Since then, The Society has expanded its operation and acquired two more buildings on Bainbridge Avenue: one for a research library and administrative offices in 1982 and another just two doors away and opened as The Bronx County Archives in 2001. BCHS educator Angel Hernandez will lead a tour of the campus of The Bronx County Historical Society in the Norwood section of The Bronx. The tour will begin in front of The Society's research library at 3309 Bainbridge Avenue. Take the #4 train to Mosholu Parkway or the D train to the last stop at Bainbridge Avenue/205th Street. You can also take Bronx buses #10, #16, #28, #30, #34, #38 and BxM #4 from Manhattan.

In the Footsteps of Edgar Allan Poe: A Walk from Poe Cottage to High Bridge **Saturday, November 21, 2015 at 11:00 AM**

When Edgar Allan Poe lived in the Village of Fordham (now in The Bronx,) one of his favorite pastimes was taking strolls throughout the area. One of his more enjoyable locations was the newly-constructed High Bridge. Although Poe has been gone for many years now, his cottage and the High Bridge continue to serve as remnants of his beloved walks. Join BCHS educator Angel Hernandez on a 3-mile walk from Poe Cottage to High Bridge via Aqueduct Avenue. The tour will meet at the Edgar Allan Poe Cottage in Poe Park on the Grand Concourse and E. Kingsbridge Road. If you wish to take a tour of the cottage before the walk tour, feel free to arrive there at 10AM. Take the D or #4 train to Kingsbridge Road or take Bronx buses #1, #2, #9, #22, #28, #34, and MTA express bus BxM #4 from Manhattan.

Parkchester

Saturday, December 19, 2015 at 10:00 AM

The residential community of Parkchester in the East Bronx is a prime example of a self-sustained development that still holds prime Art Deco and Art Moderne examples from the 1930s. The name "Parkchester" was chosen by the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company sometime before 1938. The word "Park" has always been a favorite one with real estate operators to conjure up a mental picture of trees and lawns. The "chester" preserves part of the name of the ancient town of Westchester, in which the real estate development is situated. BCHS tour guide Nestor Danyluk will lead a historic tour of Parkchester, enriched with local history and lore. This tour will meet in front of Zaro's Bakery at 29 Hugh L. Grant Circle. Take the #6 train to Parkchester or Bronx buses #4, #4A, #22, #39, Q44, and the BxM6.

AUTHORS LECTURE SERIES

The following two free lectures will be held at the Museum of Bronx History, located at 3266 Bainbridge Avenue, The Bronx, New York 10467. Authors will have extra copies of their books for purchase and signing. For directions, please call (718) 881- 8900 or visit www.bronxhistoricalsociety.org/museumofbronxhistory.

BRONX RIVER NORTH

Saturday, October 24, 2015 - 1:00 PM

Join Bronx author John Dolgetta as he talks about his experience growing up in The Bronx and moving to the suburbs. He will share excerpts from his new book *Bronx River North*.

BRONX BOOKS AND THE SOCIETY

Saturday, December 12, 2015 - 1:00 PM

In celebration of The Bronx County Historical Society's 60th anniversary, The Bronx Borough Historian Lloyd Ultan will discuss the history of the organization and its publications.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY EDGAR!

Saturday, January 23, 2016 - 11:00 AM

Come celebrate Edgar Allan Poe's birthday with The Society's CEO and noted Bronx author Doc Hermalyn as he speaks about the poet's experience in The Bronx. This free lecture will be held at the Poe Park Visitor Center located at 2640 Grand Concourse. Please call (718) 365-5516 for directions.