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 tri-state 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.
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).


Dan Eisenstein – Box of history books.


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

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


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 (continued)
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
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Marion Swerdlow
Karl Stricker
Nina Wohl
Ira & Diane Zuckerman
Larry Barazzotto
Hutch Metro Center
The Shakespeare Club
Fordham University
The Lucius N. Littauer Foundation
Robert Knight
Lloyd Ulan

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.

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/poeccottagewayer
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.

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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 Hermlyn 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.