NEW LIBRARIAN AND ARCHIVIST

Dr. Steven Payne began as Librarian and Archivist at The Bronx County Historical Society in January 2020. Since then he has had the immense pleasure of making the acquaintance of some of the Society’s members, and he looks forward to meeting, speaking with, and assisting many more members in the upcoming year. In spite of the upheaval and turmoil from the pandemic, which broke out in New York a mere two months after he began, Dr. Payne has been busily at work in the Bronx County Historical Society Research Library and the Bronx County Archives. Below he provides some highlights from his work for our members.

In the Research Library, he has devoted a sizable portion of time to digitizing the full run of The Bronx County Historical Society Journal, a steadily growing number of photographs from the Research Library’s Photograph Collection, and books and periodicals on The Bronx that are out of print, brittle, or otherwise difficult for researchers to access. These efforts were significantly enhanced by a generous grant from New York Community Trust, which Dr. Payne successfully secured for the Society in July 2020. He is currently developing an online searchable database that will eventually allow the Society’s members to access this wealth of newly digitized material from the collections from the comfort of home.

In the Bronx County Archives, Dr. Payne has focused his efforts on cataloguing a backlog of unprocessed archival collections. To date, he has created new findings aids—i.e., inventory records for archival collections—for 52 of the Society’s 119 archival collections and has updated existing finding aids for 10 additional collections. Researchers and other interested parties will now be able to make more abundant use of the Society’s extensive archival holdings, which richly document many aspects of Bronx life and culture from the nineteenth century until the present.

Dr. Payne has also been seeking out new archival material and has already acquired multiple new collections. Highlights from these recent acquisitions include the Henry B. Dawson Papers, which are comprised of two nineteenth-century diaries of the historian and long-time Morrisania resident, Henry B. Dawon (1821–1889); the Domenick DiPasquale Papers, which document Italian-American life in the Immaculate Conception Church and the surrounding Williamsbridge community during the 1930s–1970s; the Alexandra Vozick Hans Papers, which include research on early life at the Amalgamated Housing Co-operative; and the Paul “Pete” Rosenblum Papers, which contain documents and photographs from the United Workers Housing Cooperative (“the Coops” or “Allerton Coops”), off Bronx Park East.
Dr. Payne has been able to assist an ever-increasing number of researchers—including students, teachers, artists, activists, scholars, cinematographers, municipal workers, and other interested parties—since he began in January 2020. Additionally, he has started to offer virtual programs to help offset the temporary loss of physical access to the Society’s library and archival resources due to covid-19. He has conducted multiple virtual tours of the Research Library and the Bronx County Archives for such entities as Fordham History Makers, a liberal arts summer program hosted by Fordham University for Bronx high school students; the Yiddish Book Center, a non-profit committed to preserving and revitalizing Yiddish culture; and Eta Omega Omega Bronx Chapter of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc, the oldest Greek-letter organization established by African American college-trained women.

Finally, Dr. Payne has been engaged in various research projects. He is in the midst of producing a short history and discography of Century Record Co., a small record label on Fox Street that reissued bootleg early jazz classics and released new recordings of rising bebop stars in the late 1940s. He is also conducting more extensive research into the experiences of residents of the early housing co-operatives in The Bronx. This research has led him to focus for now on the lives of two remarkable women, Dr. Angie Dickerson and Audley Moore (better known as “Queen Mother Moore,” an honorary title given to her by the Ashanti people in Ghana), who both lived at the Allerton Coops off Bronx Park East. Both, indeed, were veritable giants in twentieth-century African American freedom movements, and the Society looks forward to sharing their stories and much more in the near future.

**From the Archives**

**Above left:** Digital image of first page of edition of *The Listener*, a Black newspaper published in The Bronx in the 1930s and early 1940s. The Bronx County Archives houses a substantial collection of this rare newspaper, which sheds unique light on the early experiences of the African American community in Morrisania. This is one of the archival collections that Dr. Payne has worked on since he began at the Society in January 2020.

**Above right:** Digitized photograph of Bronxite and famous dancer Jackie Dee (Danois) with Tandelayo participating in a mambo contest at The Palladium, c. 1950, from the David M. Carp Papers on Latin Jazz. In addition to organizing and cataloging archival collections, Dr. Payne is digitizing select documents and photographs for members eventually to access online.
**THE BRONX COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY SHOP:**
**PERFECT FOR GIFTS!**

*On left:* The Museum of Bronx History/Valentine-Varian House gift shop

Books, Bronx Afghans, mugs, ornaments, and more are available in-store at the Museum of Bronx History and Poe Cottage as well as online at [https://shop.bronxhistoricalsociety.org](https://shop.bronxhistoricalsociety.org).

---

**HOT OFF THE PRESS**

The Society’s CEO, Dr. G. Hermaly, in conjunction with the late renowned urban geologist, Sidney Horenstein, brings you *Hudson’s River*, a concise, pictorially rich treatment of the river that has so dramatically shaped not only The Bronx and Greater New York City but New York State as well.

On sale for $20. Available by phone, mail, or online at [https://shop.bronxhistoricalsociety.org](https://shop.bronxhistoricalsociety.org).

---

Check out Volume 56 (2019) of *The Bronx County Historical Society Journal*, the oldest continuously published historical periodical in the New York metropolitan area. Contributors include Professor Lloyd Ulatan (on the Battle of Pell’s Point), Sandra Eaton (on 284 Alexander Avenue), the Hon. Patrick J. T. Curran (on Walton High School), and the late Phil Berle.

On sale for $20. Available by phone, mail, or online at [https://shop.bronxhistoricalsociety.org](https://shop.bronxhistoricalsociety.org).

---

**FINANCIAL DONATIONS**

The Bronx County Historical Society is facing significant loss of funding due to the recent pandemic.

Please consider making a donation to help support us through this difficult time. To make a donation visit our website or call us directly at (718) 881-8900. Thank you.
DONATIONS TO THE COLLECTIONS

The Society’s Museum Collection, Research Library Collections, and The Bronx County Archives provide invaluable insight into the history of The Bronx. Below is a partial list of those who have recently made donations of material and thus helped preserved our borough’s history:

Willie Estrada (February 2020): 1 copy of *The Dancing Gangsters of the South Bronx* (2nd ed., 2016)


John Heliker (February 2020): 17 photographs of scenes around New York City, including Poe Cottage, and 4 postcards of Poe Cottage, c. 1916.


Ruth L. Brodsky (June 2020): 1 copy of the *Annual* from Morris High School, dated 1919, in honor of her father, Milton Brodsky.

Alexandra Vozick Hans (June 2020): 0.5 cubic feet of archival material on the Amalgamated Housing Cooperative comprising The Alexandra Vozick Hans Papers in The Bronx County Archives.

Domenick DiPasquale (July 2020): 0.5 cubic feet of archival material on the Williamsbridge neighborhood and its Italian community, including Immaculate Conception Church. This material makes up the Domenick DiPasquale Papers in The Bronx County Archives.

Paul Rosenblum (July 2020): 0.5 cubic feet of archival material on the United Workers Cooperative Colony (“the Coops”), located at 2700 Bronx Park East, comprising the Paul “Pete” Rosenblum Papers in The Bronx County Archives.


Thomas X. Casey (July 2020): 186 slides of early Bronx County Historical Society events, 1958–1966, taken by Ron Schliessman and subsequently passed on by Warren Schliessman. These are now included in the Ron Schliessman Photographic Slide Collection in The Bronx County Archives.


SUBMISSIONS FOR THE BRONX COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY ANNUAL JOURNAL

Since 1964, the *Bronx County Historical Society Journal* has been one of the premier history journals in the tri-state region. The journal’s articles are of interest to all who enjoy scholarly studies and personal accounts of individuals, events, cultures, struggles, and triumphs in The Bronx. Kindly submit prospective articles in Microsoft Word format along with 2–4 images at 300dpi (if relevant) as email attachments to spayne@bronxhistoricalsociety.org. Be sure to include your contact information and a short biography. Publication of submissions is not guaranteed.

BEQUESTS

You can support The Society's work by means of a bequest. The following paragraph is suggested for your convenience, for insertion in your will: “I give and devise and bequeath, to The Bronx County Historical Society, located at 3309 Bainbridge Avenue, The Bronx, New York 10467, incorporated with the New York State Board of Regents, [insert the amount of money or describe the personal property or real estate] to be used for the general purposes of The Society.”

FOLLOW US

Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/bronxhistory1639
Instagram: @Bronxhistorian
Twitter: @Bronxhistory
Online: http://bronxhistoricalsociety.org

Look out for a slate of new virtual programming in the Fall!