BOERUM HILL TURNS 50!

Did you know that Boerum Hill didn’t exist until 1964?

This area known as “Downtown Brooklyn” or “North Gowanus” was redlined due to the trash strewn streets and the City’s Urban Renewal designation for demolition. Bulldozers were used to make room for high rises.

Instead, a new resident named Helen Buckler saw the possibilities and charm of the old buildings. She moved in during 1962 and started renovating her brownstone - she had affection for fireplaces so she opened four in her home.

She gathered a few neighbors to create a neighborhood association but initially it didn’t have a name. She wanted a name that could conjure the charm of the well established neighborhoods like Brooklyn Heights and Park Slope.

Ms. Buckler considered the name Sycamore Hill until a trip to the Brooklyn Historical Society led her to discover a map from 1775 depicting the 80 acre farm of Simon Boerum. Although there was no hill at all, the name Boerum Hill was adopted for the association in 1964.

It took a while for the name Boerum Hill to take hold but in a few years other renovation-minded homeowners purchased buildings and rolled up their sleeves. For the next decade, these families were tightly bound by trading tips on the best ways to renew these old homes.

Early residents included Robert Snyder and his wife Patricia Stegman (who opened Boerum Hill Realty in an effort to encourage more renovators), Nat Hendricks, Susan Benson and her husband Dennis Holt, Howard Lewis, novelist L.J. Davis, Tom Butson and Heloise Gruneberg.

A 1977 New Yorker article about the “Making of Boerum Hill” describes a down-and-out area with trash, crime and few trees.

Over the past 50 years the renovations that started on Dean Street from Nevins to Smith have spread through all the blocks of Boerum Hill. When you take the biennial House Tour you see the many interpretations of classic and modern Brownstone style.

Beginning later this year, we will start to celebrate our 50-year journey and look for a special 2014 House Tour to continue the festivities.
The BHA continues to balance preservation and progress.

Our recent down-zoning will protect our Brownstone charm as we learn to cope with the additional traffic from the events at the Barclays Center. There is occasional “carmageddon” but it could have been much worse. The coming 20 mph speed limit in the Neighborhood Slow Zone should discourage some of the cut-through traffic we endure. Look for this project to be completed next spring.

The renovation of 16 Sycamores Playground (on Schermerhorn Street, just west of Third Avenue) is complete! While we had hoped to cut a ribbon by the fall we’re still excited to see the upgrades. Enjoy the quiet now as our little park will be joined by a 52-story residential tower just across the street by 2015. While that building is technically in downtown Brooklyn not Boerum Hill, we will welcome the residents when they arrive.

As you can see, nothing stays the same for very long. We want to preserve our low-rise, leafy streets and continue to be a tight-knit, friendly community. Downtown residential construction will bring thousands of residents of the next decade who will dine and shop on Atlantic Avenue and Smith Street. It’s important to keep the charm that first brought us to Boerum Hill.

In 2013 and beyond, let’s remember to live up to our reputation as a friendly place. Frequent the local shops and restaurants, water your street tree, plant flowers and keep the streets clean. Say hello to your neighbors and hang out on your stoop to watch the sunset. Take a moment to enjoy it all.

In community,

Howard Kolins, BHA President

**TREE GIVE-AWAY**

During the warm months, Boerum Hill is a wonderfully green place. Many neighbors plant beautiful flowers in the front yards and have extensive gardens in the rear.

Inspired by this green spirit, the BHA has applied to the New York Restoration Project to receive 100 small trees that will be given away to local residents. Species may include dogwood, sour cherry, serviceberry, witch hazel, persimmon, black walnut, fig and sour cherry.

While it will take many years for them to mature, some can grow as high as 30 feet adding shade and beauty to front or back yards.

We intend to run the give-away on a weekend in late April or early May possibly in conjunction with the Hoyt Street Association Plant Sale (usually the last weekend of April).

Once our request is confirmed we will send out further information about how to acquire a tree. We hope to give all 100 away in Boerum Hill.

**COMMUNITY MEETING**

Thursday, January 17th at 7:00pm

Belarusian Church, Atlantic Avenue and Bond Street

Topics include:

The performance of our local Post Office and Boerum Hill Mohawk history
Our Annual Pot Luck Holiday Party Was a Huge Success

Over 110 people attended this annual tradition that kicks off the holiday season each year. For many years the party was at the beautiful home of Claire and Lewis Okser, the site of the former Cuyler Church. Several years ago, when so many wanted to attend, we realized it was time to give them a break and move to the Belarusian Church.

The BHA purchased roast turkey, roast pork and side dishes from Cobblestone Foods and many neighbors showed off their culinary skills. Terry and John Urban brought a wonderful ham and Jo Anne Simon and Bill Harris brought a second wonderful ham.

New members Jin and Hunter Clark brought Korean bulgogi that was simply terrific and not something easily duplicated!

Local chef Joel Wolfe brought delicious fingerling potatoes (too bad for us he’s retired!). Many others contributed salads, wine, dessert and an abundance of good cheer.

It was great to see old friends, new members and so many children.

Local artist and children’s book author, Melissa Guion, led the kids in holiday craft making.

Santa dropped in to make sure all of us were staying on the “nice list.” And Brooklyn’s own Santa, Borough Prez Marty Markowitz, dropped by to spread holiday cheer.

We urge you to brush up on your culinary skills and place a hold on the first Saturday of December 2013 for the next party!

Our Annual Pot Luck Holiday Party was a huge success.
WE NEED YOU TO JOIN THE BHA FOR 2013

USE THE FORM ON THE OPPOSITE PAGE TO JOIN OR RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP

OUR 2012 HOUSE TOUR SPONSORS

We want to thank all the people and businesses who contributed to the success of the House Tour. Please support them with your business and thank them for being caring members of our community.

HEROES
Terry Naini, Town Real Estate
Jim Kerby, Prudential Douglas Elliman

PATRONS
Broken English
Jean Austin & Ellen Gottlieb, Brooklyn Bridge Realty, Ltd
Joe Fuer, The Corcoran Group
James Crow & Sue Wolfe, The Corcoran Group
Tracy Makow, Esq. & Howard Brickner, Brickner Makow LLP

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BECOME A MEMBER OF THE 
BOERUM HILL ASSOCIATION

Name(s) ________________________________________________________________
Address __________________________________________ City _________________ State _____ Zip ________
Phone _____________________________ Email ___________________________________

Your contact info will never be shared or sold, and you may opt out of any communications at any time.

Yearly Membership (open to all residents of Boerum Hill)          □ $10 – NEW MEMBERS ONLY
□ $25 – Individual      □ $15 – Individual Senior/Student/Low-income
□ $40 – Family          □ $25 – Family* Senior/Student/Low-income

Business Supporters (listed on BHA website, newsletters, and other publications)
□ $125 – Business Donor  □ $250 – Business Sponsor

Contributions (Not a resident or business owner? Or checked a box above but still want to do more? Contributions of any size are always welcome and help support the important work of the BHA)
□ + $100 “Good Neighbor”  □ + $250 “Neighborhood Hero!”  □ + $_______ Other

The BHA membership year is from January 1 to December 31. Members in good standing as of June 1 may vote in the June board election. All others, including business supporters, may not vote but are welcome at all BHA events and activities.
* Family memberships (2+ adults in the same household), are entitled to two votes. Individual members receive one vote.

Contribute Your Talent and Energy

Join your neighbors who volunteer to work on BHA activities and community priorities. Identify your areas of interest.

□ Atlantic Yards       □ Public Relations and Communication (neighborhood calendar, block associations, press releases, etc.)
□ Block Captain (help distribute BHA notices on your block)      □ Parks and Playgrounds (improving Douglass/Greene Park)
□ Boerum Hill History  □ Quality of Life (public safety, sanitation, recycling, noise)
□ Community Events (meetings, holiday party, house tour)        □ Technology (website, email, online tools)
□ Greening & Neighborhood Beautification                         □ Traffic and Transportation (transit, parking, etc.)
□ Land Use (development, zoning, building noise)                 □ Tutoring (homework help to neighborhood youth)
□ Land marking                                                  □ Other: ___________________________________________________________________
□ Membership (recruitment, member services)
□ Newsletter

Make your check payable to the Boerum Hill Association.

Mail this form and the check to the:
Boerum Hill Association. P.O. Box 020583, Brooklyn, NY 11202
Hollow Nickel
This cozy and friendly bar at 494 Atlantic Avenue is a great place to meet neighbors. They serve small plates of food that include mini-burgers, crisp onion rings, hot wings and more. The beer menu is wonderfully diverse and the prices are extremely reasonable. We’re sorry to lose the Flying Saucer but this is a great replacement. (Go to Wikipedia and search for “Hollow Nickel Case” to read about Brooklyn Newsboy Jimmy Bozart who dropped a strange nickel that lead to Soviet spies).

Krescendo
Another changeover at 364 Atlantic Avenue from Downtown Atlantic to Krescendo...I will miss the cupcakes! Crispy pizzas prepared in a wood burning oven include the classic Margherita and the award winning Finnochio Flower Power topped with rich mozzarella, provolone, chili powder, fennel sausage, braised fennel, fennel fronds and fennel pollen. Imaginative appetizers, salads, pastas and more pizzas, from clams to hummus, are also on the menu. A nice selection of wine, beers and signature cocktails are also available.

“Sorry for Blocking Your Car”
Placards are available on the BHA website. Although double parking for street cleaning is clearly illegal, the Police do look the other way if we behave. The placard is intended for use during alternate side parking periods to balance the competing problems of street sanitation and the shortage of available parking places. You just put your phone number in the windshield and make sure to move your car when called.

Go to www.boerumhillbassociation.org and print out the form.

JOIN THE BHA
Help us be advocates for Boerum Hill by becoming a member. Join us on the web at www.boerumhillbassociation.org