

HISTORY CENTER AT MANHASSET PUBLIC LIBRARY

FALL 2023

History Center Highlights...

The History Center archive and book collection is housed on the Library's Second Floor conference room. The collection is overseen by Archivist Antonia Mattheau whose responsibilities include processing materials, indexing and digitizing our records, researching and responding to requests, assisting visiting researchers, planning exhibits, supporting Librarians and supervising our volunteers and interns.

At present, the History Center collection archive consists of 58 boxes (29 linear feet) of material; 25 maps/drawings documenting all aspects of Manhasset history; and 1,120 books supporting local historic research. Our archive collection accessed through 'finding aids' which are constantly updated to reflect new additions. Our goal is to make these records available to the public in a digital format as a contribution to education and research.

In the fall of 2016, we initiated a digital project using the web-based software ContentDM, a digital collection management software, founded in the 1960s by the OCLC (Online Catalogue Library Consortium.) Many archival repositories, museums, libraries and cultural heritage organizations worldwide use ContentDM to make their collections available online globally. We have digitized and uploaded 334 items out of which 53 are compound (compound items consist of 2-80 pages). From August 2022 through August 2023, our digital collection was viewed 21,720 times.

In This Issue

- Highlights 2023
- Current Exhibit: *New Versailles*
- New Oral History Collection Digitization
- New Film Collection Digitization
- New Genealogical databases and research materials
- About Archives
- New projects



Find the History Center at <https://manhassetlibrary.org/history-center/>

Archivist Antonia Mattheau preparing an exhibit



Original cassette tapes from the Library collection that were digitized

Oral History Collection

The Manhasset Public Library's partnership with Long Island Library Resources Council's (LILRC) *Accessing Archives Program* has resulted in the creation of MPL's Oral History Collection (1953-1988). Using a media restoration grant, LILRC's Robert Anem and Archivist Antonia Mattheau and Maggie Gough have digitized and preserved 22 cassette tapes found in the Library Collection.

The collection contains taped interviews of Manhasset residents that date from 1953 to 1988. The people found on these recordings discuss growing up, in and around Manhasset as well as how the library, businesses, agriculture, transportation, and many other subjects that affected their lives growing up in Manhasset. The interview tapes include transcripts which are posted in their original state.

The collection includes an interview between children and author Charles Strong. Musical performance "Librarius", which is a cantata in praise of books performed by Jeanne Singer on May 5, 1985, as part of the Library's 40th Anniversary celebration.

The MPL Oral History Collection is posted on the New York Heritage site and accessed through our website's History Center page.

Here's the link for the collection: [Manhasset Public Library Oral History Collection \(1953-1988\) | New York Heritage](#)

Historical Context:

Compact audio cassette tapes hit the American consumer market around 1969 and because of that technology, this collection contains oral histories prior to that. It was common throughout the 1970s and into the 1990s to duplicate older audio tapes such as reel to reel tapes onto new audio cassettes in order to preserve those older recordings and make them easier to listen to. The oldest oral histories in this collection were recorded in 1953 and captured experiences of long-time Manhasset residents discussing their life prior to 1900. As of August 2023, this is the oldest recorded oral histories on the New York Heritage platform.

Robert Anem, Project Archivist,
LILRC

Quote on Archives...

"Without archives many stories of real people would be lost, and along with those stories, vital clues that allow us to reflect and interpret our lives today."

Sara Sheridan, Writer

About Archives...

An archive is an accumulation of historical records or materials providing information about a place, institution, or group of people.

The History Center contains the archive collection for the Manhasset Public Library.

Finding Aids: How to use an archive collection

A **Finding Aid** is a document written by archivists to describe an archival collection.

A **Finding Aid** describes the history of a collection and the arrangement of material, to help a user navigate the contents of the collection and identify material relevant to their research.

Each collection in an archive should have a dedicated **Finding Aid**.

Though the **Finding Aid** may be an unfamiliar document at first, most **Finding Aids** followed a regular, shared structure. Once you learn to understand the parts of a **Finding Aid**, you should be able to navigate the collections of most archival institutions.

Parts of a Finding Aid:

A **Finding Aid** can be divided into two sections:

Front Matter - includes summary information that describes the entire collection as a whole

Inventory - provides an outline that identifies the series, boxes, folders, and items within the collection

Film Digitization Project

This Fall, the History Center will be digitizing of 21 reels of 16 mm BW film dating back to the 1920's. These films were left in the archive without much descriptive materials. We know that some of the titles on the boxes are familiar local names and we are hoping to find some unique local historic images. Once digitized, the films will be uploaded to the NY Heritage site and accessed through our History Center webpage.



Original 16 mm film to be converted to a digitized format.

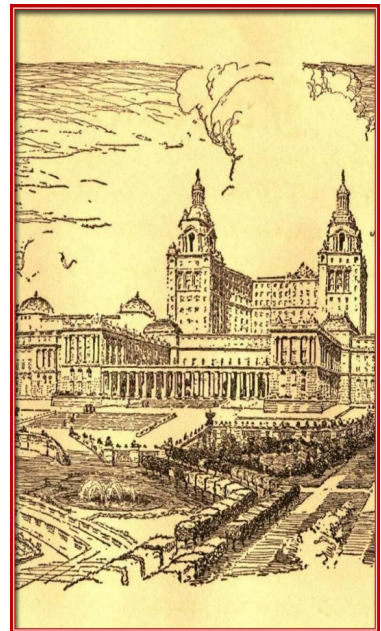
Current Exhibit: New Versailles on Manhasset

In 1916 a group of prominent, rich individuals formed a corporation, called "Dominion of Versailles", with the purpose of building a unique "home colony", about 1,000 yards from the shore of Manhasset Bay, and within forty-five minutes from Manhattan.

This colony was to be a "country residence with all the conveniences of city life overlooking the most beautiful Bay on Long Island."

Utilizing items from our archives, the intriguing story of a early 20th century view of what Manhasset

could be was imagined by a few extremely wealth individuals. Our exhibit provides details on the people, the classic architecture, landscaped gardens, pools, clubhouses, harbor side yacht club and dreams of luxurious living that never came to pass.



See the lobby display and the online version at <https://manhassetlibrary.org/history-center/>

New Genealogical databases and research materials

This September MPL became a FamilySearch affiliated library. FamilySearch is a nonprofit organization sponsored by The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. There are only a few hundred affiliate libraries in the country. The designation means our library patrons will now have convenient access to the wealth of genealogical resources available through FamilySearch. The popular web service has over 6 billion searchable names and 2 billion images of historical genealogical records. It has amassed billions of birth, marriage, death, census, land and court records from more than 130 countries to help our patrons discover and make family connections. There will be a dedicated computer for genealogical research set up on the second floor and we will add supporting programming, books and informational materials.

Contact Us...

**The History Center
is opened on
Saturdays
9am-5pm**

Please request an appointment to use the archive .

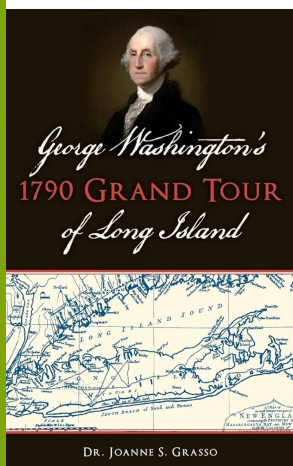
Give us a call at 516-627-2300 ex.223 or ex.201

Email us at historycenter@manhassetlibrary.org

Visit us on the web at manhassetlibrary.org

Maggie Gough, Director

Antonia Mattheau, Archivist



Projects for 2024-2025 : Revisiting George Washington's Grand Tour

In April 1790 the newly elected first President of the United States, George Washington returned to Long Island on a Grand Tour. The last time George Washington had been on Long Island was during the infamous retreat and loss of the patriot cause resulting from defeat in the August 1776 Battle of Long Island. By 1790, Long Island was redefining itself after the war and the destruction from fourteen years of occupation. George Washington's presidential tour would signal a new era of rebuilding, growth, and establishment of the democratic republic. Now 233 years later, our project *Revisiting George Washington's 1790 Grand Tour* attempts to touch upon the legacy of the man who in a time of transition, tremendous economic hardship and social upheaval, provided inspiration and a guide for leadership. Washington did visit the Manhasset area and, in the year ahead, we plan to commemorate this experience with lectures, author events, mapping activities and musical performances. *Anticipated programs for April 2024.*