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Queens Library Putting Borough's Past on the Map With Residents' Old Pics



By Jeanmarie Evely (Fwww.dnainfo.com/new-york/about-us/our-team/editorial-team/jeanmarie-evely) on February 5, 2014 9:48am
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QUEENS — A trolley once rolled down Vernon Boulevard, and the hulking building with the red IDCNY sign at 29th Street and 47th Avenue — now part of LaGuardia Community College's campus (http://www.lagcc.cuny.edu/virtual_tour/c-building/) — was once a bakery for Sunshine Biscuits.

These are two slices of Queens' history documented in "Queens: Neighborhood Stories (<http://blog.historypin.com/2014/01/30/queens-neighborhood-stories/>)," a project of the Queens Library and Historypin (<http://www.historypin.com/about-us/>) that uses crowd-sourced photos, videos, recordings and other materials to create an interactive map of the borough's past.

The library is asking Queens residents and community groups to log onto Historypin, a nonprofit website and app, where they can upload their neighborhood materials — say, an old photo of their street 20 years ago.

The materials are tagged and show up as pins on an online map, where users can sort through them and search by specific dates and locations.

One feature even overlays the uploaded images with their current Google street view image, letting users make an historical comparison.

The Queens Library will host an event for the project with the Queens Memory Project (<https://www.facebook.com/queensmemory/>) on Tuesday, Feb. 11, from 1 to 5 p.m. at the Court Square branch in Long Island City (<http://www.queenslibrary.org/event/queens-memory-in-court-square>), where residents are encouraged to bring in their old photos and records for digitization.

"From scanning family photos to locating where photos were taken, we want as many people as possible to share, record and contribute their neighborhood history," the library said in a statement.

The records will all be added to the "Queens: Neighborhood Stories" (<http://blog.historypin.com/2014/01/30/queens-neighborhood-stories/>) map and each participant will get a thumb drive with the digital copies of their items to take home with them.

Queens Library is also planning to work with community and historical groups, like the Bayside Historical Society, to add their archives to the project, and is offering to help local organizations run events in their own neighborhoods.

"Queens Library's digitization staff, equipment, policies and infrastructure can provide access and preservation for cultural heritage materials from all over the borough," Kelvin Watson, Queens Library's vice president of digital services and strategy said in a statement.

The project was funded by the Metropolitan New York Library Council. For more information, visit www.historypin.com/neighborhoodstories (<http://www.historypin.com/neighborhoodstories>).



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