A GUIDE TO THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF THE BELLMORES COLLECTION

COLLECTION SUMMARY

Creator: The Historical Society of the Bellmores

Size: 26 linear feet (22 boxes, 5 binders)

Location: Reference Office & Basement

Date Range: 1787-2014

Bulk Dates: 1875-1980

Accession Number: 2015.001; 2019.001


Finding Aid created by: Chryssa Golding, 2019

Copyright: Bellmore Memorial Library
ACCESS & USE

**Acquisition Information:** These materials came to the Bellmore Memorial Library in 2015, donated by William Wood, curator of the Historical Society. An additional two containers of materials were discovered in 2019, at Rock Underground on Bedford, which were brought to the library by Jim Spohrer, the president of the Bellmore Chamber of Commerce at the time.

**Access Restrictions**
The collection is open for research by appointment only.

**Physical Access Restrictions**
Researchers may be asked to wear gloves when handling items in the collection. Some photos, documents and maps are in delicate condition and are restricted from handling.

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**Preferred citation**
[item] folder, box, Historical Society of the Bellmores Collection, Bellmore Memorial Library

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**A Note about copies:** In certain cases, where the location of originals is unknown, our copies are the best representations. We maintain these copies in our collection for their value as information sources for researchers.

**ORGANIZATIONAL HISTORY**

The Historical Society of the Bellmores was established in 1974 in order to collect and maintain artifacts, pictures, documents and memorabilia concerning the Bellmores. Trudi Cowan was the first president, followed by Carl Waswo in 1977, Patricia Barlow in 1979, Trudi Cowan again in 1981 and Ken Foreman in 1988. In the 1970s, they were particularly active in writing historical articles for Bellmore Life, of which Trudi Cowan was the editor in chief. They also preserved the 1890 railroad shelter, moving it to a new site and organized a Tricentennial Parade in 1976. They helped the Eagle Scouts to publish a book of a walking tour of the Bellmores while providing their own tours of landmarks in Bellmore. In the 1980s, the society started collecting artifacts, photos and documents that are included in this collection. (Not everything collected has been passed down to the library). While they were working to obtain a permanent NY state charter, they continued to have talks and quarterly meetings at the Bellmore Memorial Library from the 1990s up until December 2014, when they disbanded. The organization’s newsletters are included in this collection.

*updated 8/4/2021*
SCOPE AND CONTENT

The collection is comprised of a variety of materials relating to the history of Bellmore and North Bellmore dating from 1787 to 2014. It is organized and arranged by material type including ephemera, correspondence, original documents, photographs and postcards, bound volumes and booklets, bulletins, newspapers, yearbooks, artifacts and some original maps of Bellmore and the surrounding vicinity. Topics covered include the Long Island Railroad, Sunrise Village, High Hill Beach, the 1976 Tricentennial of the Bellmores, the Baldwin-Southard Cemetery, Bellmore schools and houses of worship. The collection features the legal documents and Long Island Railroad materials of Thomas D. Smith, a prominent Bellmore resident who was justice of the peace and the Town of Hempstead supervisor in the late 19th century, whose granddaughter, Grace Hickey, donated these items to the Historical Society.

ARRANGEMENT

The collection is organized into 9 series, representing various record types. Within each record group, contents are arranged by subject.

SERIES 1: Bound Volumes
SERIES 2: Ephemera/ Memorabilia
SERIES 3: Correspondence
SERIES 4: Documents
SERIES 5: Maps
SERIES 6: Newsletters
SERIES 7: Periodicals
SERIES 8: Directories
SERIES 9: Photographs/ Postcards
SERIES 10: Objects/ Artifacts
SERIES 11: Scrapbooks

RELATED MATERIALS

Ken Foreman, who served as president in the late 1980s and early 1990s, authored A History of the Bellmores. This book was written in 1994 and provides a brief history of the area as well as some statistical information about the Bellmores at the time of publication.

CONTENTS LISTING

SERIES 1: Bound Volumes
Includes various booklets and bound volumes pertaining to the Long Island Railroad such as receipts, Thomas D. Smith’s Engineer Handbook, Bellmore Board of Trade ledger, and the minutes for the Bellmore chapter of the Needlework Guild.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Folder Title</th>
<th>Box #</th>
<th>Folder #</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>[(4) Sunrise Trail Promotional Booklets 1921-1931]</td>
<td>[7]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[Long Island Railroad Receipts 1890-1891]</td>
<td>[7]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[South Side Railroad Ledger]</td>
<td>[7]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*updated 8/4/2021
[Bellmore Board of Trade booklet/journal, includes member names and dues 1916-1918] [7]

(5) Needwork Guild books of minutes [12]

[Mitzpah/ Daughters of America books of minutes 1939-1959] [16]

[1886 Railroad Freight Book (oversized)] Basement Shelf
[Long Island Book. 1939] [7]

SERIES 2: Ephemera/ Memorabilia
This series contains ephemera (everyday objects not originally intended for preservation) from the community such as a WWII fuel coupon from 1944 and an 1895 LIRR monthly ticket. In addition, records include memorabilia from the Tricentennial Celebration in 1976 and a Sunrise Bavarian Village paper mug from 1936.

Folder Title Box # Folder #
[Business/ Commercial] [1] [1]
[Historical Society of the Bellmores Ephemera] [1] [2]
[Long Island Railroad Ephemera, 1895-1992] [1] [3]
[Calendars, 1974-2012] [1] [4]
[Tricentennial Celebration] [1] [5]

SERIES 3: Correspondence
Within this slim series are various letters to Trudi Cowan, the editor of Bellmore Life, regarding the Baldwin Southard Cemetery, administrative correspondence of the Historical Society of the Bellmores and a few letters from Paul J. Roche, who was a developer in Bellmore in the 1940s responsible for building Stephen Manor, the area between Newbridge Road and Kenneth Avenue.

Folder Title Box # Folder #
[Bellmore Life] [1] [6]
[Business/ Commercial, 1889-1941] [1] [7]
[Historical Society of the Bellmores, 1974-2003] [1] [8]

SERIES 4: Documents
The largest portion of the collection including deeds, checks, contracts, school documents and other legal documents belonging to Thomas D. Smith. Of particular interest are the Thomas D. Smith documents relating to various businesses in the area such as the Rest Inn, and a few wills of Bellmore residents from the early 1900s. Also included in this series are notes and bylaws from the Historical Society of the Bellmores and school programs from the elementary and high schools.

Folder Title Box # Folder #
[Baldwin, Southard Cemetery] [1] [9]
[Bellmore Boys Band] [1] [10]
[Benjamin Birdsall] [1] [11]
[Entertainment, 1890] [1] [12]
[Financial/ Commercial, 1878-1988] [1] [13]
[Fire Departments, 1929-1964] [1] [14]

*updated 8/4/2021
SERIES 5: Maps
Includes some originals and copies of maps of Bellmore, North Bellmore and the surrounding area. Original maps date back to 1927 and copies exist of maps dating as far back as 1725. Of particular interest are copies of property maps from 1873, 1906 and 1914. Original 1927, 1938 and 1941 maps of the “Village” of Bellmore and a 1932 election map of Bellmore are also of interest.

**Folder Title** | Box # | Folder #
--- | --- | ---
[Maps] | [2] | [11]
[Oversized Maps] | [20] | [1, [2]
[Nassau County Atlas, 1939] | | [Basement Shelf]

SERIES 6: Bulletins, Newsletters

*updated 8/4/2021*
This series includes the newsletter of the Historical Society, which was titled *The Observer.*

**Folder Title**  
[The Observer, 2001-2014]  
[The Newbridge Chronicle]  

**Folder #**  
[2]  
[2]

**Folder #**  
[12]  
[12]

**SERIES 7: Periodicals**  
Newspapers, magazines, and clippings are all part of this series. *The Bellmore Advocate* (1934), bound copies of *Trade Secrets* (Mepham’s underground newspaper from 1940-1941) and *Scuttlebutt* (1981-2016).

**Folder Title**  
[Bellmore Advocate, 1934 (incomplete)]  
[Trade Secrets 2/15/1940- 1/30/1941]

**Folder #**  
[6]  
[2]

**SERIES 8: Directories**  
Only a couple of directories are in this series, including a 1963 Yellowbook Directory from Wantagh, Bellmore, N. Bellmore, and East Meadow.

**Folder Title**  
[Directories, 1963-1974]

**Folder #**  
[7]

**SERIES 9: Photographs/ Postcards**  
Original photos and postcards and copies of photos documenting the history of Bellmore and North Bellmore from the 1880s to the early 2000s. They are arranged by subject.

**Contents**  
[Photos/Postcards]  
[American Legion/ Military Organizations, Buildings, Businesses]  
[Fire Department, Houses of Worship, Long Island Railroad, Miscellaneous, Parades, People, Postcards]  
[Schools, Streets, Tricentennial, Waterfront]  
[Original photo with backing of Mr. & Mrs. Daniel Waring]

**Container #**  
[Binders 1, 2, 3]

**Folder #**  
[Binder 1]  
[Binder 2]  
[Binder 3]  
[Box 14]

**Contents**  
[Negatives]  
[American Legion]  
[Buildings and Streets]  
[Fister Car Crash]  
[Hofstra, 1941-1942]  
[McQuade]

**Container #**  
[Box 3]

**Folder #**  
[1]  
[2]  
[3]  
[4]  
[5]

*updated 8/4/2021*
SERIES 10: Objects/Artifacts/Textiles
There are a handful of objects or artifacts in this part of the collection including a band cap from the Bellmore Boys Band, a glass milk bottle, a loving cup awarded to the Bellmore Merrymakers and two desk bells belonging to Thomas D. Smith.

Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objects/Artifacts/Textiles</th>
<th>Box #</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>[LIRR Uniform]</td>
<td>[18]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[Baptismal Gown of Henrietta Elise Wittemann]</td>
<td>[18]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[Wedding Dress of Henrietta Jensen Wittemann]</td>
<td>[18]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[Autograph Book of Mary Hunt (c.1878-1888)]</td>
<td>[7]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[Thomas D. Smith’s LIRR Engineer Book]</td>
<td>[7]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[Bellmore Boys Band Cap]</td>
<td>[8]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[(2) Desk Bells belonging to Thomas D. Smith]</td>
<td>[8]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[(1) Milk Bottle]</td>
<td>[9]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[(2) Commemorative Plates from the Methodist Church]</td>
<td>[9]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[Commemorative Plate from Bellmore Fire Department]</td>
<td>[9]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[LIRR Lantern]</td>
<td>[10]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[Soap Dispenser made by Edwin J. Eccleston]</td>
<td>[11]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[Old Bellmore Little League parade films]</td>
<td>[13]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[Assorted parade flags and sashes]</td>
<td>[13]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[crown from a parade?]</td>
<td>[14]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[Merrymaker’s Loving Cup]</td>
<td>[21]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[3 plaques awarded to Trudi Cowan]</td>
<td>[22]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SERIES 11: Scrapbooks

Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scrapbooks</th>
<th>Box #</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>[(3) Needlework Guild Scrapbooks 1955-1966]</td>
<td>[12]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[Scrapbook of owner of Madalay Lakeview House Al. Edom and wife Edith Streese]</td>
<td>[15]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[Nassau Daily Review Photo Contest Scrapbook]</td>
<td>[Binder 5]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[(6) Historical Society Scrapbooks- Buildings, People, Buildings &amp; Places, Bellmore Life]</td>
<td>[17]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[(2) Tricentennial- 2nd Place NYPA The Bellmores Many Years Ago]</td>
<td>[17]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note:
Binders 1-5 and Boxes 1-17 are located in the closet in the Reference Office. Boxes 18-22 are kept in upper shelves of basement since they are oversized.

*updated 8/4/2021