

# ***THE BRONX CLUB OF VEGAS VALLEY NEWSLETTER MAY 2012***

[\*The Andrew Freedman Home: Palazzo di Bronx\*](#)



***If you require any information about the Club, know of anyone interested in joining, or have ideas for upcoming events you would like to host, please contact Leslie (me) or Sue at the following website address <http://bronx.xadar.com/contactus.php>. You can also use our website to get any information about the Club and the upcoming events: <http://bronx.xadar.com>***

***I am also the Newsletter Editor. If you have, any articles or pictures about The Bronx that you would like to share and have put in the Newsletter, please forward them to me at the following address: [cochair.bronxclub@xadar.com](mailto:cochair.bronxclub@xadar.com). There will be no July or August Newsletter. I will resume with the September Newsletter.***

### **WEBSITE ADDITION:**

***There is a new link on our website. It is located right under the picture of The Bronx Zoo. It reads, "Send an EZ RSVP response," or just click on the following link <http://bronx.xadar.com/respond.php>***

### **WEBMASTERS' ADDRESS:**

***Any questions about the website contact:  
[webmaster.bronxclub@xadar.com](mailto:webmaster.bronxclub@xadar.com)***

### **UPCOMING EVENTS**

***May 20, 2012- The hosts of this event are Sue Braun and Leslie Schoenberg. Our meeting will be at Mimi's Café, 1121 S. Ft Apache, just south of Charleston Blvd. Please respond by May 15, to <http://mayhost.bronxclub@xadar.com>, or EZ RSVP Response on the website. Our guest speaker is Tim Szymanski, the Public Education and Information Officer for Las Vegas Fire and Rescue. He has held this position for the past 16 years.***

***Tim has worked in every position from firefighter/paramedic to fire chief in the past 41 years of his career. He has worked in Cleveland, Atlanta and Las Vegas. His main duties are to work with the news media and to educate the public about fire and life safety. He holds several state and national fire service credentials. He is currently a Master Fire & Life Safety Educator in the state of Nevada. He has received several awards during his career, the most important being 1986 Georgia State Firefighter of the Year. He has also received Commendation from Georgia Governor Joe Frank Harris in 1987, Meritorious Award for Lifesaving from the city of Winder, Georgia for rescuing a woman trapped in a house fire, Atlanta***

**Public Safety Employee of the Year 1996. City of Las Vegas Employee of the Year 1999, Fire & Life Safety Award from Las Vegas City Council 2007, The National Liberty Mutual Insurance Firemark Award for Community Service in 2008, Nevada Broadcasters Association Community Service Award in 2008, and the Community Association Institute of Nevada 2009 Lifetime Achievement Award. In addition to all the above, Tim has attended over 500 fire schools, is a guest instructor at the National Fire Academy outside Washington, D.C. and writes a monthly article in the leading fire service publication, Firehouse Magazine. He was the fire & emergency PIO for the 1996 Olympics in Atlanta. He is married to Ellen, whom he has been with for the past 43 years, has two sons and three grandchildren.**

**June 10, 2012 – Please note this is the second Sunday not the third Sunday as usual. The third Sunday is Father's Day. Your hosts are Sue Braun and Leslie Schoenberg. Our guest speakers will be Barbara Ciocca and her associate from The Cleveland Clinic in Las Vegas. They will talk about all the programs the Clinic has to offer the public. Please RSVP to <http://junehost.bronxclub@xadar.com> or EZ RSVP Response on our website by June 4. The dinner will be at 6:00 pm, at the Martini, 1205 South Ft. Apache, 89117, 227-8464. We will have separate checks. To view their menu and website, please go to [themartinilv.com](http://themartinilv.com). We can choose from the lunch or dinner menu.**

**There will be no meetings in July and August. We will resume on September 9, with a guest speaker from the USO. October 21, we will have a special speaker for Halloween, details will follow. The Held's and JoAnne Geller are hosting the event. We need a host for November – second Sunday because of Thanksgiving and Saturday, December 15 will be our third Annual Holiday Party. It is on Saturday so it does not conflict with football.**

**The following members are celebrating May birthdays.**

<b>May 21</b>	<b>Sandy Scher</b>	<b>May 24</b>	<b>Ed Ort</b>
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**May anniversaries**

**Idele and Harvey Kaplan on May 27, 34 years**

**Phyllis and David Selman on May 29, 54 years**

## ***Upcoming Events for DeWitt Clinton Alumni***

***DeWitt "C" has had an annual reception/dinner every year since it opened 115 years ago. The 115<sup>th</sup> annual reception will be on Thursday, May 24 at the Marina Del Rey restaurant in Da Bronx. Homecoming is scheduled for Wednesday, May 23 at DWC. The entire RSVP info needed is on the association website, [www.dewittclintonalumni.com](http://www.dewittclintonalumni.com).***

***For DeWitt "C" alums planning to be in NYC the week of May 20, a DeWitt "C" Night at Yankee Stadium has been planned. The Yankees are at home against Kansas City. Steve Margaritov '57 has volunteered to be point-person for this event. His contact info phone # 914 771-5550. Please call him as soon as possible so we can give the ticket office people a reliable number of seats we will need.***

***12<sup>Th</sup> Annual Bronx Reunion Picnic: For all NV Bronxites, planning to be in the Los Angeles area on Sunday, July 22, the 12<sup>th</sup> annual reunion picnic is scheduled at Burton Chace Park in Marina Del Rey from 10:30-3pm. If you plan to attend, please send Doris Perlmutter some info so she can list you on the roster. Doris would like your name, spouse's name (include maiden), your neighborhood in the Bronx, grade and high school and graduate year from high school. Send it to [dlpdoris@hotmail.com](mailto:dlpdoris@hotmail.com).***

***TOPIC OF THE MONTH –THE ANDREW FREEDMAN HOUSE***



***Andrew Freedman***



***Andrew Freedman home front facade***



***Rear façade-facing north***



***Close up of rear façade***



***The homes south facade***



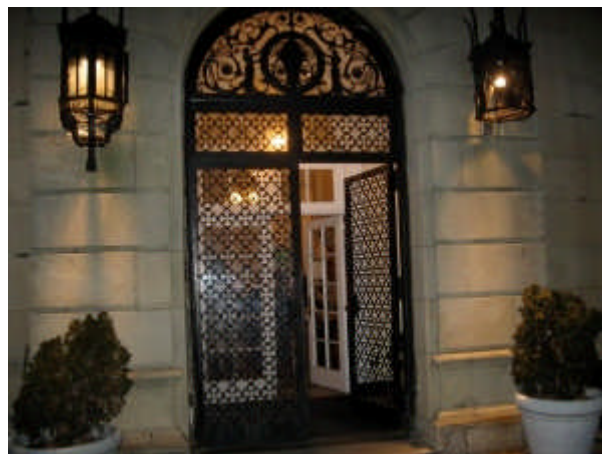
***Rear façade, northwest corner***



***Home rear façade,  
looking south***



***Lamps at front entrance***



***Front door***

***The Andrew Freedman Home has an unusual history as a "poorhouse for old rich folk". The architecture is elegant.***

## ***Andrew Freedman: The Man***

***Andrew Freedman was a self-made millionaire.***

***A New Yorker, born in Manhattan in 1860. He remained a bachelor.***

***He attended elementary school on 13th Street and was a CUNY graduate.***

***He invested in real estate and Shubert theatres.***

***He was a bondsman for city contractors and a Tammanyite — at one time, the head of that organizations finance committee.***

***His closest and life long friends were city politicians and leaders in the Tammany Hall Democratic machine.***

***He was fiercely loyal to them, and could not be moved.***

***At the close of a Kansas City convention, he barred a certain local reporter from interviewing Tammany big boss Richard Croker.***

***Those that wrote unfavorably about Freedman in the papers did not go unchecked. He told the newspaperman, "You cannot come in here; you are nothing but a dirty bum." A few hours later, he would be arrested for punching the man.***

***Freedman left his set of \$500 pearl shirt buttons to his good friend Croker when he died. Croker would live out his golden years at his "baronial estate" and stud farm, Glen cairn, back home in Ireland.***

***However, Freedman never ran for office himself. He was a connector, a builder. The original IRT subway line was constructed because he financed it. Or rather, he and a few other wealthy men, two he had introduced, formed the Interborough Rapid Transit (IRT) Corporation.***

***Today that route would run from City Hall along the 4-5-6 line to Grand Central, then cut over to Times Square following the 1-2-3 line along Broadway to 145th Street.***

***At 34, he became owner of the New York Giants baseball club.***

***"Why did I go into baseball?" he said, "...because I am fond of outdoor life and outdoor sports...I like the game."***

***Under his eight-year tenure, the club had 23 managers.***

***Only reporters writing glittering stories were allowed to see the games. He docked the pay of his star pitcher, Amos Rusie, for not trying hard enough. Rusie responded by sitting on the bench for one full season.***

***Tower Hill in Red Bank, New Jersey was Freedman's place in the country. His ice yacht, "Haze", took the first class prize in a North Shrewsbury pennant race there.***

***He drove Miss Elsie Rothschild to Tower Hill, in his "high powered machine," a Mercedes, and proposed to her. She answered "yes" by the time they were back in New York. He was 45. However, their wedding never took place.***

***Apart from his spot in Red Bank, he owned parcels of land in New Hampshire and in the Bronx (at 149th Street and Southern Boulevard), well before the area was settled.***

### ***Andrew Freedman, the Home***

***The Andrew Freedman Home grand opening was delayed. First, the war, then the posh applicants were simply, not posh enough. Membership was open to all regardless of race, faith and gender. Though all races were welcome, it is not clear if the membership showed any variety.***

***Husband and wife were allowed to come as a couple. A major coup — as many benevolent institutions of the time separated them (That married couples must remain paired was stated clearly in Mr. Freedman's will.)***

***Potential members did not have to be American. They did not have to be from New York. Nevertheless, they had to be at least sixty but not past eighty. The Home finally opened in 1924 with 17 members, and an interior filled with the stuff Ralph Lauren ads are made of.***

***Overstuffed sofas and thick pile carpets.***

***Arched windows and high ceilings.***

***A log fireplace in the main lounge.***

***A billiard room. A card room with movable walls to "ensure privacy."***

***A library with bookshelves against oak paneled walls.***

***Red and black dining room chairs in the Chinoiserie style.***

***An oil painting of at least one of the Freedman family is in every room.***

***Marble showers.***

***The wait staff had been plucked from Cunard liners and from the finest yacht clubs and private clubs. So too had the chef and the pastry chef. The staff of fifty, including three nurses, an in-house infirmary, elevator operators and a dietitian, gave them more care and attention than they could have anywhere.***

***For all of this the members would pay nothing. It was a deal and they knew it. Some tried to buy their way in.***

***They could show up for dinner in a suit jacket and tie or an evening gown. Nasty behavior toward the staff was strictly forbidden, as was tipping. At its peak, the Home was home to 130 members.***

***For the most part, they were not the filthy rich, but "professionals" – doctors, lawyers, a nurse, a teacher, businesspersons, engineers, journalists, as well as some creative types – actors and an opera singer, a former Russian czarist general. French born and Belgian bred, Jules Buoy, designer of the Home's interior decor, was a member there.***

***They were a social lot—with parties, weekly dancing and monthly movie screenings of new releases from Columbia pictures on the calendar. Even a Christmas party, to shower gifts on orphaned children.***

***They had to maintain a moneyed appearance. Single members were not allowed to marry an "outside" woman or man, so as not to attract gold diggers.***

***They were in charge of the expenses for their cigars, bridge lessons, clothing and vacation travel. They had to have enough to pay for their own funerals.***

***Even with this entire splendor, some members still suffered. One 84-year-old widow, a former Brooklyn society figure and animal rights activist (against cruelty to horses), was eager to meet her death and inhaled chloroform fumes. She wrote of her chronic arthritis in a note left to a fellow member: "I am glad to end it all, this miserable annoyance, forever. If I am successful in my efforts, goodbye all."***

***By the mid 1980's, the Andrew Freedman Foundation money had run out and the home was closed. In 1983, it was bought and is still owned by the Mid Bronx Senior Citizens Council.***

***The millionaire requirement is long gone and the current residents represent a much broader range of situations.***

***The Mid Bronx Council family support programs, are housed on the main floor of the building with the residents occupying rooms on the upper floors.***

## **Andrew Freedman: The Architecture**

***If the flavor of architecture on the Grand Concourse is Art Deco and Art Modern, the Andrew Freedman Home is striking because it is not.***

***It is not curvy with rounded corners.***

***It does not have a zigzag facade, but a clean and simple one.***

***Its cool elegance is rectangular and symmetrical.***

***Meant to give an air of "repose and stability." It does.***

***The Home occupies an entire square block.***

***The Grand Concourse is on the front side. McClellan and East 166th Streets on the north and south ends respectively. Walton Street is at the rear.***

***The land underneath the building slopes downward from the front to back. A stonewall support runs along the south end and the rear.***

***One of the most striking features of the building is the great and deep lawn that separates the front from the street. No other building sits like this along the Grand Concourse. On the Concourse side, the building is three stories high and on the rear side, it is four stories high. The building is of yellow limestone.***

***Construction took two phases. The original building, designed by architects Joseph Henry Freedlander and Harry Allan Jacobs went up in 1924. Four years later, wings were added expanding the Home to its current size and layout. Architect David Levy designed them. Construction was completed in 1931***

***The architects, Freedlander and Jacobs, were native New Yorkers and attended the Ecole des Beaux Arts in Paris. They knew European architecture, had visited, studied many classic monuments abroad, and brought those details to the Andrew Freedman project. The building has many features characteristic of Italian Renaissance design. The architects were surely influenced by many structures with this style. Overall, the Freedman Home recalls the Palazzo della Cancelleria in Rome. Windows of the Home have an interesting detail — the pediments over each alternate from triangular to arch. This detail is seen in the Palazzo Farnase in Rome. The patterns of limestone arching over other windows resemble the same detail on the Palazzo Gondi in Rome.***

***The front facade bears the simple inscription "The Andrew Freedman Home" (see front page). The back facade is impressive with triple arches over a recessed terrace in the middle. Wintertime is great to see these details as all the trees limbs are bare.***

***The Andrew Freedman Home acquired landmark designation in 1984.***

***It was open and functioning for almost 59 years. How did its surrounding neighbors view it on the Grand Concourse—over time and through the years—as the complexion of the neighborhood changed? With resigned acceptance? With envy? With disdain? Or maybe those were the shared sentiments inside or outside the Home’s walls.***

***About three years (2/8/2009) ago, The NY Times, ran an [article](#) about how difficult it is becoming to eke out a living in Manhattan on a measly \$500,000 a year. Brokenness is relative. One person’s five hundred grand could mean hitting the jackpot, for another it’s akin to the horror of using food stamps.***

***Does a modern version of the Andrew Freedman Home exist?***

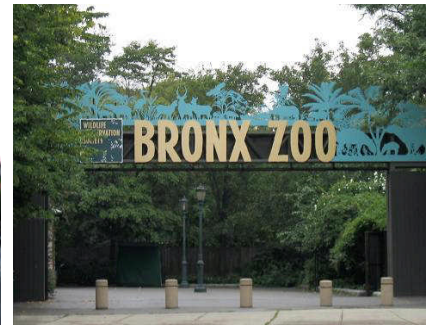
### ***Andrew Freedman: Dying Wish***

***Before Andrew Freedman died from a stroke of [apoplexy](#) in 1915, he had a fresh new philanthropic idea for his millions and put it in writing. The whole thing was sealed shut and placed in the vaults of the Hanover Trust Company.***

***He wanted half of his millions to go to his mother, sister and brother. In addition, with the other half, he wanted to build a home for people like him. People who knew fine wines and went to the theatre, but for whom, by some unfortunate twist of fate found their finances on a downward spiral landing them in the poorhouse to live out their old age.***

***He would offer them a haven to live out their twilight years in the utmost of cultured and refined surroundings with amenities to match — free of any charge — rescuing them from the disgrace and shame and the inconvenience of rubbing shoulders with the “unwashed masses”.***

***He left an estate worth \$7 million and 29 pairs of shoes. Cornelius Vanderbilt was one of his pallbearers.***



## ***THE BRONX CLUB OF VEGAS VALLEY LADIES CLUB INVITATION***

***WHERE:*** ***China Ginger, 5035 South Ft. Apache, at the  
corner of Tropicana and Ft. Apache, 876-1889***

***WHEN:*** ***Thursday May 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2012, 11:30 am***

***HOST:*** ***Susan Blonder***

***RSVP:*** ***395-6878***

***NOTES:***  
***Separate checks will be given.  
You can order from a special lunch menu. Check  
out their menu ([China Ginger | Las Vegas - Menu](#),  
tea is 25 cents a person. Let Susan know if you are  
coming or not.***

***Our April event took place at Bucca di Beppo, on Lake Mead Avenue. Our guest speaker was Dr. Daliah Wachs. The host was Phyllis Selman, the event was in honor of her husband David's 85<sup>th</sup> birthday. Following are some pictures from the event.***

***If you do not want to have your photo/name either in the Newsletter or on the website, you must respond on the website where it says respond right under the picture of the Bronx Zoo. Deadline for this is May 20.***



***Phyllis, Dr. Daliah and David Selman***



***L-R Co-chair Leslie Schoenberg and her husband Larry.  
Les Braun and his wife co-chair Sue Braun.***



***New member Marty Gold and JoAnne Geller.***



***The Held's***



***L-R the Blonder's and The Scher's***



***L-R The Robinsons and The Einhorn's***



***Birthday boy David and his wife Phyllis Selman***



***Our speaker Dr. Daliah Wachs***