



BROOKLYN  
HISTORICAL  
SOCIETY

For Immediate Release

Brooklyn Historical Society  
128 Pierrepont Street  
Brooklyn, NY 11201  
[www.brooklynhistory.org](http://www.brooklynhistory.org)

Press Contact: **Keara Duggan**  
718-222-4111 x226  
kduggan@brooklynhistory.org

## **Are You Related to Royals?** Mixed-Heritage Families Program at Brooklyn Historical Society

**April 11, 2011, Brooklyn, NY** -- The Brooklyn Historical Society is launching a new series: *Crossing Borders: Bridging Generations*, a series of public conversations about mixed-heritage families, race, ethnicity, culture, and identity, infused with historical perspective.

**Before you watch William & Kate's royal wedding on Friday, April 29....**

**Join BHS on Wednesday, April 27 at 7pm**

### ***Mixed-Colonial-American-Ancestry: Are You Related to Royals?***

*How an African-American author used family nicknames, DNA, and genealogy to trace her lineage to the Akan people of Ghana, in West Africa, and Scottish nobles related to royals.*

This lively multi-media presentation will speak to the blended ancestry of Kate Middleton's family and public reaction to this wedding between a Prince and a "commoner." **Pearl Duncan** will present how she uncovered her mixed ancestry in Colonial America: Maroons in Jamaica, enslaved people who rebelled and escaped to freedom; Scottish nobles related to the kings and queens of Scotland and England; brothers: one a slaveowner, the other an abolitionist; roots in Virginia and New York; and mixed-ancestry birth records as far back as 1726.

Funding provided by New York Council for the Humanities.

**Catering by Golden Krust** of Flatbush: Caribbean Cocktail Patties and Punch plus Jerk Chicken!

This event is free with museum admission. The museum will remain open between 5:00-7:00pm



Pearl Duncan



Pearl Duncan's Coat of Arms

[Pearl Duncan](#) is an ex-offshore-yacht-racing writer and an avid New York historian. She is the first person in the world to use DNA to trace her ancestors from one continent, to two other continents. Performing her DNA tests in 1999, she used the family nicknames that survived in her African-American family to trace her ancestors to families named Opare of the Akan people of Ghana, in West Africa. She then traced them to specific farmers in African villages in the 1660's. Using genealogy, she then traced her ancestors to the 1690s in Colonial America and Jamaica, and to the 1720's in Scotland. She has a Scottish male ancestor, and numerous African ancestors, whose modern-day African descendants she met and compared families' DNA to her DNA. Given her ten years of research, the Ghanaians recognized her and the Scots granted her a medieval coat of arms of ancestors who were nobles related to British royals. She was granted a coat of arms by a Scottish Court, authorized by Britain's Queen Elizabeth II.

[Golden Krust](#) entrepreneur, [Stanley Dennis](#), he Pearl Duncan are cousins, descended from great-grandmothers who were sisters; these colonials were descended from ancestors who were British nobles, Jamaican Maroons, Ghanaian village chiefs, and Colonial American merchants, including one who whose records are in New York.

**Golden Krust restaurants:**

998 Flatbush Ave., (between Albemarle and Tilden) [347-295-2232](tel:347-295-2232)

1887 Rockaway Pkwy (between Aves. M & N) [718-208-4242](tel:718-208-4242)

**Other events in the *Crossing Borders: Bridging Generations* Series:**

**Events and speakers are still being added; for up to date information please see [www.brooklynhistory.org](http://www.brooklynhistory.org)**

April 30, 2PM: **Suleiman Osman** author of [The Invention of Brownstone Brooklyn: Gentrification and the Search for Authenticity in Postwar New York](#) (Oxford University Press, 2011) talks about the gentrification of Brooklyn and its origins in the cultural upheavals of the 1960s.

SEPTEMBER 2011: **What Are You? Mixed-Heritage New York** featuring **Judith Sloan**, author of *Crossing the BLVD* (W.W. Norton) director of *Cross-Cultural Dialogue Through the Arts*, an arts mentorship and training program creating collaborations between disparate communities that grew out of EarSay's *Crossing the BLVD* project.

OCTOBER 2011: **20 Years Since the Crown Heights Riot 1991** featuring **Craig Wilder**, professor of American History at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and author of *A Covenant with Color: Race and Social Power in Brooklyn* (2000); and curator **Jill Vexler**, [Cultural Crossovers](#) both of whom were lead interviewers for the Brooklyn Historical Society's oral history collection [Bridging Eastern Parkway, 1993-1994](#).

NOVEMBER 2011: **Jungle Fever 20 Years Later**

A screening of Spike Lee's iconic 1991 movie with a discussion following.

DECEMBER 2011: ***Black-White Marriages, Civil Rights and Feminisms*** featuring: **Renee Romano**, author of *Race Mixing: Black-White Marriage in Postwar America* (Harvard University Press, 2003), and co-editor of *The Civil Rights Movement in American Memory* (University of Georgia Press, 2006). Renee Romano is a specialist in 20th century American history, with research interests in African American history, civil rights, and historical memory. She came to Oberlin from Wesleyan University, where she taught for twelve years as a member of the History Department and the African American Studies Program. And **Michele Wallace**, author of *Black Macho and The Myth of The Superwoman* (Verso 1990). Michele Wallace is a Professor of English at The City College and in the Ph.D. Program in English at The Graduate Center. She is the daughter of artist Faith Ringgold and her current work is a family history.

### **Brooklyn Historical Society**

The mission of the Brooklyn Historical Society is to connect the past to the present and make the vibrant history of Brooklyn tangible, relevant, and meaningful for today's diverse communities, and for generations to come. Founded in 1863, BHS functions as a library, museum and urban education center dedicated to the people of Brooklyn, providing opportunities for civic dialogue and thoughtful engagement.