

## Large Crowd Enjoys History of Kennedy Years in Bronxville

The 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the birthdate of Bronxville's most famous resident—President John F. Kennedy—was honored Saturday, May 6, by a talk at the Bronxville Library about the Kennedy family's life in Bronxville. More than 60 people gathered to hear Anthony J. Czarnecki, a Westchester County Historical Society Trustee, detail highlights of the family's Bronxville years, 1929-1941, in an afternoon event sponsored by the Bronxville Historical Conservancy.

In 1929 when the family bought an estate at 294 Pondfield Road, they went in a few years from middle class Brookline, Mass. to "Bronxville's opulence," the speaker said. His article, "When the Kennedy Family Lived in Westchester County," fills the current issue of "The Westchester Historian." He spent two years researching the topic, combing published and unpublished sources for references to Bronxville and weaving them into the larger context of the years of their Village residency—from the eve of the Great Depression to a few days after the attack on Pearl Harbor.

"JFK spent a quarter of his life in Bronxville," Czarnecki pointed out. "He lived, played, worshipped and learned here." During their 12 years in the Village, the children transitioned from childhood to adulthood, and Rose Kennedy would remember it as a golden interval in their lives. One of the lessons that she worked to instill in her children during that time was based on the Biblical teaching: To whom much is given, much is required. She urged the children to give back to society and to embrace a cause larger than themselves. This was a core lesson that was nurtured in Bronxville, Czarnecki said, noting that JFK's famous inaugural phrase: "Ask not what your country can do for you—ask what you can do for your country," was grounded in this teaching.

In 1953 the Kennedy house was demolished and the estate sub-divided into lots for 16 single family homes, which Czarnecki reported are today assessed collectively at \$32 million.