

pected the mayhem. (At one point the city painted boarded-up windows with flowers in pots and curtains to suggest a cheery domestic life within—an effort that fooled only those in town from another planet.) Conlon enjoys the fact that for decades the official Bronx flower was the titan arum, the putrid-smelling “corpse flower.”

In 2000, municipal leaders shifted the designation to the daylily and debuted a gorgeous coral-pink hybrid dubbed “The Bronx”—“more benign and much less interesting,” Conlon notes. Yet the change was emblematic of the borough’s dramatic civic comeback. Most of the South Bronx’s burned-out structures have been replaced with new housing stock, the parks are spruced up, and crime rates have dropped. (The 44th Precinct’s annual murder count, for example, stood at 17 in mid November, down 70 percent from what it was at the same time in 1990.)

But the cops won’t be laid off for lack of work anytime soon. Crimes still happen,

Conlon says, especially at night, especially in one park, where prostitution of various kinds is common. Trafficking in heroin, crack, and occasionally angel dust (PCP) is still a thriving business—and oddly integrated into daily life, as any other local company might be. The trade’s leaders are well known and their violent deaths sometimes publicly mourned. Around the corner from where Mike Murder was killed is a glossy, professional-looking, spray-painted mural featuring the beatific face of former dealer “Richie”—“RIP Dec. 9, 1978–Dec. 5, 2003”—and a nearly life-sized image of his white Lexus sedan. A shelf standing against the wall holds a heart-shaped box of fresh red carnations, a white teddy bear, and a lit candle in a glass bearing the image of Jesus. “Bad neighborhoods are just that in part because of people like Richie,” Conlon says. “There is a constituency that roots for the bad guys—partly in an old-fashioned outlaw way, because he makes money and fights the system.

Murals like that are put up and protected by his crew, fellow dealers, and criminals, but I’m sure there are other people who knew him as a person...to his family and friends he was more than just a rap sheet.”

And so “the Job” continues. At a recent reading of *Blue Blood* at the new Police Museum in Manhattan, Conlon was asked if he has anything left to say. “Oh yeah,” he answered, “I’m working on a novel.” Then he mentioned a case involving two men, one named Jesus DeJesus. The pair allegedly shot a woman who had moved into an apartment being used as a drug-packing spot. “They had words. It heated up from there,” Conlon explained. The woman ended up with a bullet nicking the Jesus tattoo on her shoulder—right in the middle of the crown of thorns. Conlon locked up Jesus that day and got the other man a week later. “Things like that happen all the time,” he added. “You knock on a door and someone has to tell you a story.” ~NELL PORTER BROWN

## Gathering Together

THE Harvard Alumni Association (HAA) has events lined up in Cambridge, Los Angeles, and Mexico this winter.

On January 22, alumni will gather in Cambridge for a half-day Alumni College on “Eggs to Extinction: Scientific Collections and the Modern Museum.” Tours of the Harvard Museum of Natural History, notably its ornithology holdings, will follow morning lectures. On March 12, a day-long “Harvard in Hollywood” session in Los Angeles offers panels that include “Balancing the Creative and Business Side of the Entertainment Industry” and “Emerging New Technology and the Digital Revolution.”

The HAA’s conference in Mexico City on March 1-2 focuses on Latin America. An opening session on “Rebuilding the U.S.-Mexico Partnership” will precede six panels featuring University scholars and professional leaders from the region; topics include “Social Enterprise in Latin America” and “Education and Democracy in Mexico.” President Lawrence H. Summers will speak at the March 2 luncheon. A cocktail reception at the fourteenth-century Chapultepec Castle is planned,

as are several sightseeing excursions.

For more information, contact the HAA at 617-495-1920 or [haa\\_alumni@education.harvard.edu](mailto:haa_alumni@education.harvard.edu) (for alumni colleges); at 617-495-5416 or [haa\\_globalseries@harvard.edu](mailto:haa_globalseries@harvard.edu) (for Mexico) or visit [www.haa.harvard.edu](http://www.haa.harvard.edu) and click the “Alumni College” and “Global Series” links.

## The Real Dan Fenn

DUE TO errors at the HAA, the entry about HAA Award winner Dan Huntington Fenn Jr. ’44, A.M. ’72, in the November-December issue contained flaws. In fact, Fenn, of Lexington, Massachusetts, has been a class secretary since 1946 and

a former president and executive committee member of the Association of Harvard College Class Secretaries. An assistant dean of freshmen from 1946 to 1949, he was also an assistant editor of the *Harvard Business Review* and editor of the *Business School Bulletin*. More recently, he has served on his class’s reunion-gift committee and led efforts to raise money for the Class of ’44 War Memorial Scholarship Fund, which totals more than \$2.3 million. He was also the first director of the John F. Kennedy Library, serving until 1986. A former faculty member at the Business School, he is now an adjunct lecturer with the Kennedy School’s executive programs.

## Comings and Goings

**Harvard clubs** host gatherings all around the country. On January 21, for example, the Harvard Club of **Cape Cod** presents Menzel research professor of astrophysics David Layzer, speaking on “Freedom and Determinism: A New Scientific Perspective.” Members of the Rocky Mountain Harvard University Club in **Denver** can learn about “The Civil War” from John Stauffer, Loeb associate professor of the humanities, on January 22. On January 27, former University marshal Richard M. Hunt talks about Nazi Germany with members of the Mid Gulf Harvard Club, for alumni in the **Mobile, Alabama**, area. For more information, visit [www.haa.harvard.edu](http://www.haa.harvard.edu) for local club websites, or contact the HAA’s clubs and programs office at 617-495-3070.