

## FAQ's About the State and National Registers of Historic Places

*What are the State and National Registers of Historic Places?*

Administered by the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), which is part of the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation (OPRHP), the registers are the official lists of properties that are significant in history, architecture, engineering, landscape design, archaeology and culture within local, state and/or national contexts. More than 80,000 historic properties in New York have received this prestigious recognition.

*What are the benefits of being listed on the registers?*

The State and National Registers are a recognized and visible component of public and private planning. The registers promote heritage tourism, economic development and appreciation of historic resources. Benefits include:

- Official recognition that a property is of significance to the nation, the state, or the local community.
- Listing raises the community's awareness and pride in the past.

■ Owners of historic commercial and rental properties listed on the National Register may qualify for a preservation tax credit.

■ Not-for-profit organizations and municipalities that own listed properties are eligible to apply for New York State historic preservation grants.

■ Properties that meet the criteria for registers listing receive a measure of protection from state and federal undertakings regardless of their listing status.

*How do State and National Registers differ from designation under the New York City Landmarks Commission?*

State and National Registers listing should not be confused with local landmark designation. Many communities have enacted local historic landmark ordinances that establish local commissions and review procedures for locally designated properties. These commissions are established and operated independently from the State and National Registers, although the goals are

similar – to protect and preserve properties important in our past.

*Will State and National Register listing restrict the use of a property?*

Listing on the registers does not interfere with a property owner's right to remodel, alter, paint, manage, sell, or even demolish a historic property, local zoning and ordinances notwithstanding. If state or federal funds are used or if a state or federal permit is required, proposed alterations will be reviewed by the SHPO's staff – regardless of listing status.

*Where can I find more about the State and National Registers?*

For more information contact the Historic Preservation Field Services at (518) 237-8643 or log on to the OPRHP website at <http://www.nyparks.state.ny.us> or the Friends of the Upper East Side Historic Districts website at [www.friends-ues.org](http://www.friends-ues.org).

## FRIENDS of the UPPER EAST SIDE HISTORIC DISTRICTS

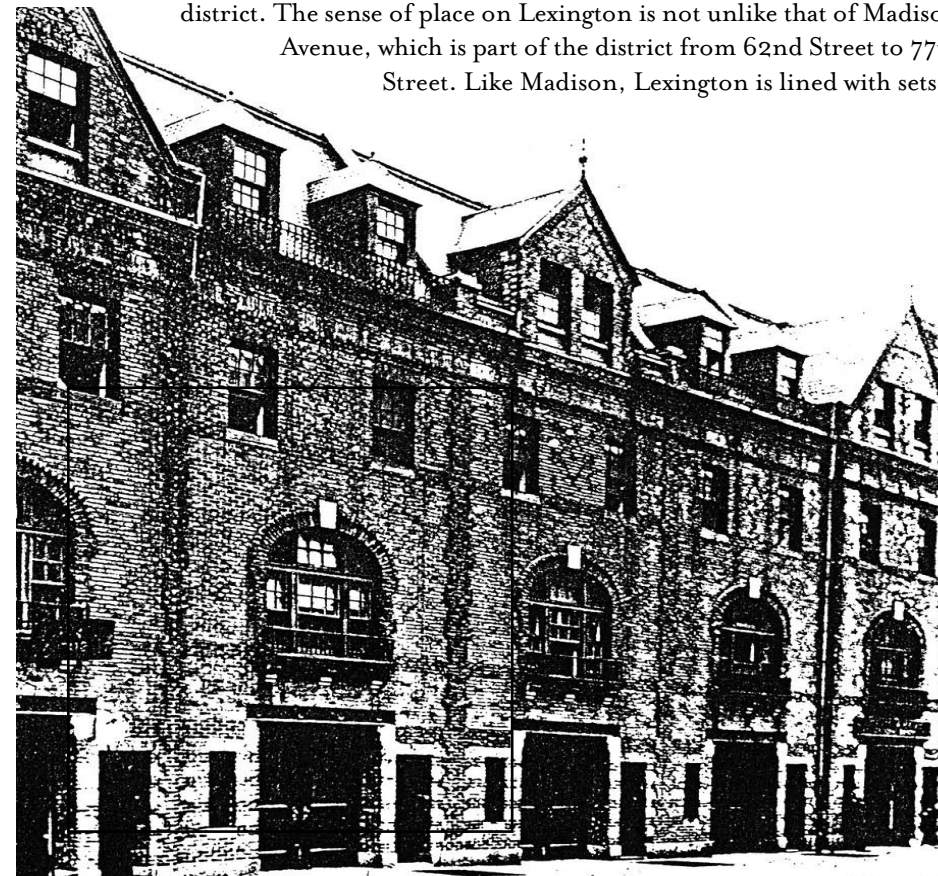


# NEWS from FRIENDS

WINTER 2005

## Lexington Avenue Update

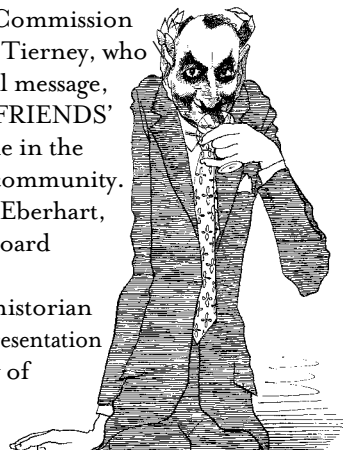
Friends of the Upper East Side Historic Districts is pleased to announce that an expansion of the Upper East Side Historic District on the State and National Registers of Historic Places will be considered by New York State, this winter. For more than five years, FRIENDS volunteers, staff and interns surveyed and researched over 450 buildings along Lexington Avenue from East 59th to East 79th Streets, as well as undesignated side streets from Park Avenue to Third Avenue. We are very grateful to the Kress Foundation and the Preservation League of New York State for supporting this important work. Lexington Avenue is such an important artery on the Upper East Side; it is surprising that very little of it is included in the designated historic district. The sense of place on Lexington is not unlike that of Madison Avenue, which is part of the district from 62nd Street to 77th Street. Like Madison, Lexington is lined with sets



## Fall Benefit Honoring Louis Auchincloss

On September 27, 2005, nearly 150 "friends" from across the city gathered at the Colony Club's ballroom for our Second Annual "Ambassador" to the Upper East Side award dinner honoring Louis Auchincloss on the occasion of his 88th birthday. Louis Auchincloss, the quintessential Upper East Sider, is a retired partner in Hawkins Delafield & Wood and a prolific novelist of manners. His 60th novel, *East Side Story*, was published last year.

Our annual benefit was not only a successful fundraiser but also a delightful and entertaining social event. After cocktails, FRIENDS' loyal supporters gathered in the Colony Club's sumptuous ballroom for dinner. FRIENDS' president Anne Millard introduced Landmarks Preservation Commission Chair Robert Tierney, who read a mayoral message, and spoke of FRIENDS' significant role in the preservation community. Then Franny Eberhart, a FRIENDS board member and architectural historian gave a lively presentation on the history of



## FRIENDS of the UPPER EAST SIDE HISTORIC DISTRICTS

Founded in 1982, FRIENDS is an independent, not-for-profit membership organization dedicated to preserving the architectural legacy, livability, and sense of place of the Upper East Side. In addition to safeguarding the future of the Upper East Side's six historic districts and 125 individual landmarks, and as an advocate for sound preservation policies for the city, Friends has also been a leader in successful efforts to improve dramatically the zoning laws governing the area's avenues and residential side streets.

For further information please telephone 212.535.2526 or visit [www.friends-ues.org](http://www.friends-ues.org).

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## Save the Date

Join FRIENDS for our Twenty-Third Annual Meeting and Awards Ceremony Wednesday, February 8, 2006 from 6:00-8:00 pm at The New York School of Interior Design, 170 East 70th Street. The public is welcome to attend but reservations are required.

Please call (212) 535-2526.

## FRIENDS of the UPPER EAST SIDE HISTORIC DISTRICTS

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# East Side Church Survey

During November and December 2004 FRIENDS' board members, Erin Gray and Bannon McHenry, surveyed 30 East Side Roman Catholic churches. For the



most part these churches lie east of Third Avenue, from 22nd Street to 125th Street, an area outside designated historic districts.

Information for each church includes date and architect, photographs of the façade, sanctuary, adjoining rectories and schools, notes on style and materials, and brief remarks regarding condition. From the modernist Church of the Epiphany on Second Avenue at 22nd Street to the Gothic Revival St. Monica on 79th Street, to Church of St. John Nepomecene at 411 East 66th Street. These corner and



mid-block buildings in revival styles ranging from Classical to Medieval to 20th century Arts and Crafts, are important documents in our changing urban fabric. The continuing survey, sponsored by the Landmarks Conservancy, covers all Manhattan Catholic churches and will examine each for eligibility on the National Register of Historic Places.

From Left to Right: (1) Church of St. John Nepomecene, 411 E. 66<sup>th</sup> Street, (2) Interior of Church of St. John Nepomecene, (3) Church of St. Catherine Siena, 411 East 68<sup>th</sup> Street



## Lexington Avenue Update

of four and five-story 19th century row-houses, with shops on the first and often the second floors, and apartments above. Groups of these low-scale buildings are interspersed with larger apartment houses, which also feature shops on their ground floors. Although the architecture is simpler than that in parts of the Upper East Side Historic District, the building stock is nonetheless of a high quality. FRIENDS initiated this project both to celebrate the excellence of the architecture and also protect it from inappropriate alterations and demolition.

The proposed boundary increase consists of portions of 17 blocks in two separate areas contiguous to the original district. The largest section of the expansion extends from East 60th Street to East 65th Street, taking in buildings located on the blocks between Lexington and Third Avenues. A small expansion to the north spans the area from the south side of East 72nd Street to the north side of East 75th

Street, totaling 164 contributing buildings and 34 non-contributing buildings.

Friends of the Upper East Side Historic Districts in conjunction with the State Historic Preservation Office



held a community meeting on November 1, 2005 for property owners within the proposed expansion and any other interested parties. We discussed the need for the expansion outlining our work and what it means to be listed on the State and National Registers.

Stay tuned for our web exhibit based on our work to expand the district. Our web site will include the historical narrative from the National Register nomination, and vintage photographs, as well as a database of individual buildings searchable by address, date of construction, architect and other data.

If you have any questions or would like further information, please do not hesitate to contact Friends office at (212) 535-2526 or via email us info@friends-ues.org.

## Benefit (continued)

FRIENDS' work on the Upper East Side and our latest initiatives to expand the Upper East Side Historic District on the National and State Registers.

We were fortunate that three of Louis Auchincloss' close friends were co-hosts for this special evening; Schuyler G. Chapin, former Commissioner of Cultural Affairs for New York City, Evy Halpert, former head of Brearley School and Joseph Kanon, an author and editor at Houghton Mifflin. Each gave wonderful anecdotes about Mr. Auchincloss, expressing admiration for his 60 published novels and his famous sense of humor. Mr. Chapin remarked that Louis Auchincloss was the natural successor of Henry James and Edith Wharton. Louis Auchincloss gracefully and humorously accepted the praise with an entertaining talk about growing up on the Upper East Side. The guests toasted to Mr. Auchincloss and a cake ablaze with candles was wheeled out. With such outstanding company, it was an evening to remember!

Special thanks to the Benefit Committee and all those who helped to make the event so successful. With the money raised, FRIENDS can continue to be the curator of the Upper East Side's architectural heritage.



Image Captions: (Top) David and Simone Levinson with guest and Peter Pennoyer (Bottom) Connie Clapp with co-host Schuyler Chapin (Left) Honoree Louis Auchincloss

## FRIENDS co-sponsors City Council Districts 5 and 6 Debates

On October 18, 2005, Citizens Union sponsored a debate for City Council Districts 5 and 6 in partnership with Friends of the Upper East Side Historic Districts and Carnegie Hill Neighbors. The debate was moderated by Edward-Issac Dovere from Our Town newspaper. FRIENDS co-sponsored a second debate hosted by Lenox Hill Neighborhood House on October 29th, 2005. Both events had excellent turnouts with topics ranging from preservation to health care and transportation issues on the Upper East Side. FRIENDS was pleased to be a part of these important and informative events introducing our neighbors to the candidates. Visit our website for a transcript of the debate hosted by Citizens Union.

## LETTER from the PRESIDENT

All love affairs with New York City seem to start "small"! Tiny issues on one's block, a sassy dog who is a neighbor or the view out of a window. It is all a beginning!

The beginning for me was a call from Helena Rosenthal. I did not know her then, but it didn't take long to learn she was a dynamo on a mission. She and her husband Tony, the sculptor of the Alamo fame on Astor Place, had a carriage house on East 73rd Street between Lexington and Third Avenues. We live on the South East corner of Lexington and 73rd Street. Helena mobilized our block and we listed 14 carriage houses on the National Register.

It was a very pedestrian street with a caterer, an upholstery shop, a picture framer and not much panache. Although the "bones" of these carriage houses were pure and intact, they were the worse from not having "tender love and care". As time went by, this assemblage became more and more beloved and cared for. Neighbor knew neighbor, and each carriage house bore its new dignity with broad shoulders and great pride. We suddenly had a personality!

You may ask why? Because we realized we had something very special – a small part of New York City history. We learned about who built the houses, who lived in them and about turn of the century New York life.

And suddenly we have been discovered! The price of discovery has brought the overpowering desire to alter the very thing that attracted one in the first place. New owners are seeking approval for various additions on top of and behind these charming carriage houses. Our greatest wish would be for one and all to come take a stroll and enjoy our unique block, but please leave us to enjoy our carriage houses the way they have been for 100 years.

We welcome new neighbors to join this unique block, but we must work to maintain the lowscale character and special architecture of such a district street!

*Anne Tillard*