

# 30<sup>TH</sup>

ANNIVERSARY

1982 | 2012

# FRIENDS

*of the* UPPER EAST SIDE  
HISTORIC DISTRICTS

FALL 2012

## NEWS FROM FRIENDS

### THE UPPER EAST SIDE GAINS ITS 128TH INDIVIDUAL LANDMARK!

On Tuesday, June 12th, the Landmarks Preservation Commission voted for the individual designation of the Yorkville Bank Building at Third Avenue and East 85th Street! Built in 1905, this elegant Italian Renaissance Revival-style building stands as a powerful symbol of the German-American community that once densely populated the Yorkville neighborhood.

The Yorkville Bank, established in 1893 on the same corner the building stands today, served as a banking center for the surrounding neighborhood for more than 85 years. This newly-designated building is a prime example of the grace-

ful architecture that was designed, constructed, owned, and frequented by German-Americans. In the latter half of the 20th century, this ethnic



*Yorkville Bank, NYC Department of Finance, c. 1939-41*

community dispersed, and much of the architecture associated with it has since been lost. The Yorkville Bank Building is one of the rare, fully-intact survivors in a neighborhood marked by unsympathetic alterations and characterless new construction. At the moment, there are few New York City landmarks that reflect this rich immigrant community. This is an issue that FRIENDS hopes to rectify as we undertake our large-scale historic resource survey from Lexington Avenue to the East River, from 59th to 96th Streets. We hope that the designation of the Yorkville Bank Building is just the beginning of a new-found awareness of the neighborhood's architectural and cultural heritage. ♦

## CALL FOR ENTRIES

Each year, Friends of the Upper East Side Historic Districts awards outstanding achievements in the fields of preservation, architecture, and advocacy on the Upper East Side. Nominations are sought for our 2013 Annual Awards. If you know of a restoration or renovation project, or even a new building that is sensitive to its historic neighbors, please let us know!

Projects must be completed between December 1st, 2011 and December 1st, 2012.

## A NEW WALK WITH FRIENDS

This fall, our members will receive an updated version of *Walk with Friends*, our architectural and cultural guide to the Upper East Side. With the inclusion of the recent expansion of the Upper East Side Historic District, and two new individual landmarks, *Walk with Friends* is now fully up to date!

This project has been funded in part by the National Trust for Historic Preservation's Elizabeth and Robert Jeffe Preservation Fund for New York City, and contributions from O. Kelley Anderson, Joyce Matz, and Alice McGown.



*Oktoberfest on East 86th Street circa 1947*

Over the past summer the Yorkville Survey has made great progress! We had an amazing response to our recent call for volunteers, and these architecture buffs have

braved the heat to document the cultural and architectural heritage of Yorkville. By helping to create an inventory of our neighborhood's remaining historic fabric, FRIENDS can move forward in our fight to protect it. We thank our volunteers for generously donating their time to this worthy initiative. All the same, there is still more work to

be done, and we welcome assistance from those interested in surveying!

For more information please contact Matthew Coody at [mcoody@friends-ues.org](mailto:mcoody@friends-ues.org). ♦

## WALKING AND TALKING WITH FRIENDS



*FRIENDS tour pauses to take in the ivy-covered brownstones of Carnegie Hill.*

On a sunny summer afternoon this past July, Alfred Pommer of New York City Cultural Walking Tours led a captivating expedition through the Carnegie Hill Historic District. Characterized by a rich mixture of building types and styles, the district has a rare architectural cohesion that made the exploration a delight! The concentration of mansions has few parallels in New York City, and our group left calling cards at the historic abodes of the Carnegies, Kahns,

Whitneys, and Livingstons (just to name a few). Other stops along the tour included one of the first apartment houses on the Upper East Side, the imposing battlements of the Squadron A Armory, and the surprising mid-block onion domes of Saint Nicholas Russian Orthodox Cathedral.

## PRESERVATION PUB QUIZ



*Young preservation professionals gather for an evening of trivia.*

What is New York City's earliest-designated landmark? What mansion, which stood at the corner of East 79th Street and Fifth Avenue,

was demolished in 1964 just days before a public hearing on the forthcoming Landmarks Law? What year was the Brooklyn Bridge completed? If you know the answers to these tough questions, you should have joined us for the inaugural Young Professionals Trivia Night!

This past August, young preservationists from across the city gathered to test their knowledge of preservation history and other esoterica centered on the great metropolis that we work tirelessly to protect. Co-sponsored by Landmark West!, the Historic Districts Council, Preservation Alumni, and Pratt Historic Preservation Alumni, the competition was as fierce as the fight for Grand Central! In addition to serious bragging rights, the winning team received a one-year membership to both FRIENDS and Landmark West!, as well as an assortment of tote bags, books, and more. We hope to host more trivia events in the future, stay tuned for the next round!

# FALL 2012 EVENTS

*This year marks the 30th Anniversary of FRIENDS of the Upper East Side Historic Districts! In celebration of this milestone, FRIENDS has been revisiting each of the six historic districts that we are charged with protecting. Over the years, we have testified on countless proposals for alterations to the 1,402 buildings included in these districts, and thus we have fought many preservation battles. This fall, join us on three walking tours to rediscover the distinctive architecture that makes our neighborhood great.*

## **HARDENBERGH/RHINELANDER HISTORIC DISTRICT: A WALKING TOUR**

This tiny district consists of only seven row houses, all designed by Henry Hardenbergh, architect of the Plaza Hotel and the Dakota Apartments. The row was constructed in 1889 for William C. Rhinelander, a prominent real estate developer. The Rhinelanders emigrated from Germany in the late-17th century, prospered, and established a rich architectural legacy that expands beyond the district's boundaries. Led by Franny Eberhart, Chair of the FRIENDS Preservation Committee, and Sarah O'Keefe, Education Director at FRIENDS, we will examine the architecture of the Rhinelanders and discover the surrounding neighborhood's German roots, including "The Kaiser" and "The Rhine" (Lamb & Rich, 1886-7) and the site of Jacob Rupert's famed brewery.

*Wednesday, October 3rd, 5:30 p.m.*

*Please meet at the NW corner of  
Lexington Ave. & E. 89th St.*

*\$10 members, \$15 non-members*

## **METROPOLITAN MUSEUM HISTORIC DISTRICT: A WALKING TOUR**

Following the opening of the Metropolitan Museum of Art in 1880, the adjacent area along Fifth Avenue quickly became New York City's most fashionable neighborhood, where prominent families constructed magnificent residences. Astonishingly, many of these mansions were replaced by luxury apartment buildings only one generation later. Today, this sophisticated district displays a striking array of architectural styles from McKim, Mead & White's Classicism to Philip Johnson's Post-Modernism. Momette Broderick—author and Director of the Urban Design & Architecture Studies Program and the Historical & Sustainable Architecture M.A. Program at NYU—will lead this tour of the neighborhood, as described in her new book which will chronicle the architecture of Fifth Avenue at the height of its importance a century ago.

*Saturday, October 13th, 1:00 p.m.*

*Please meet at the NE corner of  
Fifth Ave. & E. 78th St.*

*\$10 members, \$15 non-members*

## **UPPER EAST SIDE HISTORIC DISTRICT: A WALKING TOUR**

One of the city's largest historic districts, this area contains some of the finest examples of urban residential architecture in America. Splendid townhouses, opulent mansions, and imposing apartment buildings are set among the institutions, clubs, and businesses that cater to this storied community. With such breathtaking architecture the neighborhood seems a natural candidate for a historic district, but its designation was fiercely debated. Join Anthony C. Wood, Frank Sanchis, and a special team from FRIENDS as we chronicle the long battle to designate this district, our continuing growth as a preservation advocacy organization, and our 30-year-old campaign to save the Upper East Side's architectural legacy, livability, and sense of place.

*Sunday, November 11th, 1:00 p.m.*

*Please meet at the NW corner of  
Fifth Ave. & E. 60th St.*

*\$10 members, \$15 non-members*

## **LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT**

This special year marks the 30th Anniversary of FRIENDS of the Upper East Side Historic Districts! Birthdays are often a time for reflection, so I would like to take a few moments to highlight some of our most important achievements over the last 30 years.

FRIENDS has always worked hard to inform the public through exhibits, lectures, walking tours and our growing education program for children. We have affected land use policy, defeated numerous inappropri-

ate additions to great landmarks, and, most recently, achieved the hard-fought expansion of the Upper East Side Historic District. Over the years, FRIENDS has received awards from the AIA, the Citizen's Committee, the Historic Districts Council, the Landmarks Preservation Commission, the New York Landmarks Conservancy, the Municipal Art Society, the Preservation League of New York State, and even the Mayor.

We are incredibly proud of all that we have accomplished over the last 30 years. Many of you have been with us from the start, and we

are glad to see so many familiar faces at our events. At the same time, we are also happy to meet new friends, as we look ahead to our next 30 years at FRIENDS. Thanks to every single one of you for supporting FRIENDS, we couldn't have done it without you!

Sincerely,



# CALL FOR CONTRIBUTIONS

## CARNEGIE MANSION PUBLICATION

The Smithsonian's Cooper-Hewitt, National Design Museum is reaching out to members of FRIENDS to participate in a project about the Carnegie Mansion. When the museum reopens in 2014, there will be a publication focusing on the historical importance of the Carnegie Mansion. Written by Heather Ewing, the publication will investigate the unique New York City residence as a backdrop to the life of well-known industrial pioneer and phi-



Carnegie Mansion © Smithsonian Institution Archives

lanthropist, Andrew Carnegie. It is the hope of the author and the Museum that residents, advocates, and friends of Carnegie Hill and the Upper East Side will help enrich this story by sharing personal and familial anecdotes revolving around the home, tales of time spent on the grounds, or any other contributions that might shed new light on this treasured building.

If you are interested in this project or have a story to share, please contact Laurel McEuen, Curatorial Fellow, at [mceuenl@si.edu](mailto:mceuenl@si.edu). ♦

# Young FRIENDS



P.S.108 students sketching the façade of the Museum of the City of New York.

What do the New York Stock Exchange and the Parthenon have in common? This is one question that 6th graders wrestled with as FRIENDS added yet another dimension to our education program. In May, a 6th grade teacher at P.S. 108 came to us with a challenge: to make our *Building Fun* program work in tandem with their study of the Ancient World. We had fun collaborating on a lesson plan and walking tour to

demonstrate that much of New York City's architecture can be traced back to Ancient Greece and Rome. The New York Stock Exchange, Federal Hall, the New York Public Library, Grand Central Terminal, and the Metropolitan Museum of Art all reveal that neoclassicism was a major influence on the architecture of New York City. We urged our students to consider and discuss why the United States and Europe looked to the Ancient World for inspiration, and how designing classical forms based on symmetry, proportion, and elegant grandeur could become symbols

of democracy and high culture. To look at an example in the school's neighborhood, we visited the Museum of the City of New York. There, students had the opportunity to sketch the façade and note the many classical details. Students and educators alike enjoyed exploring our city's past through this new lens and FRIENDS plans to develop these ideas into another full program offering! ♦

## CHECK OUT OUR NEW WEBSITE!

Our new website is complete! Please visit us online at [www.friends-ues.org](http://www.friends-ues.org) to see our new features and updated look!

# AN EVENING TO REMEMBER!

On Wednesday, September 19th, friends from around the city gathered to honor Frederic Papert at our *Ninth Annual Ambassador to the Upper East Side Award Dinner*.

For almost 25 years, Fred Papert was a partner in the advertising agency Papert Koenig Lois. But now, preservation is his passion. As president of the 42nd Street Development Corporation and its subsidiary, the 42nd Street Fund, Fred Papert initiated and carried out projects that have transformed large pieces of the City's historic fabric.

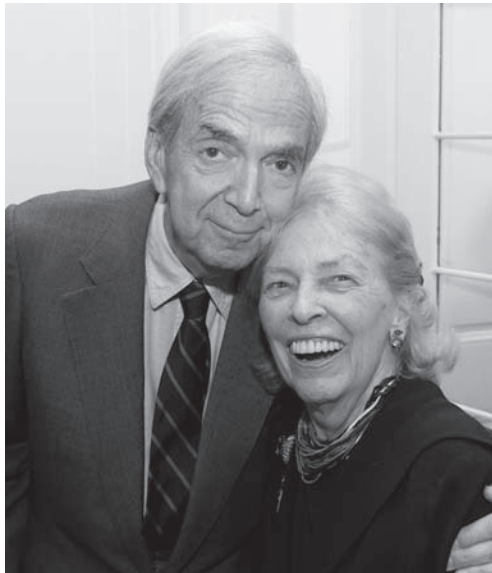
Mr. Papert is active on the boards of FRIENDS of the Upper East Side Historic Districts, the New York Landmarks Conservancy, the Henry Street Settlement, the Bryant Park Restoration Corporation, and the Municipal Art Society. Perhaps most memorably, he joined Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis, a fellow board member at MAS, in the battle to save Grand Central Terminal, achieving a victory to uphold the New York City Landmarks Law at the United States Supreme Court.

Says Papert, "the City has to both preserve and renew, and it is not always easy to achieve that balance, at least not without fighting for it. One

of the best public things that can happen to me these days is to get involved in some of the City's great preservation issues."

Admired colleagues, Laurie Beckelman and Rebecca Robertson, gave a thoughtful and engaging introduction to our honoree.

Special thanks to the Benefit Committee and all those who helped to make the evening such a success! With funds raised at our benefit, FRIENDS can continue our mission as steward of the Upper East Side's six historic districts and 128 individual landmarks.



*Honoree Frederic S. Papert and FRIENDS President Anne Millard*



*Council Member Daniel Garodnick, FRIENDS Executive Director Tara Kelly, and Council Member Jessica Lappin*



*Landmarks Preservation Commission Chair Robert Tierney, former Chair Laurie Beckelman, and former Chair Kent Barwick*

## OUR MISSION

Founded in 1982, FRIENDS of the Upper East Side Historic Districts is an independent, not-for-profit membership organization dedicated to preserving the architectural legacy, livability, and sense of place of the Upper East Side by monitoring and protecting its six historic districts and 128 landmarks. FRIENDS reviews and actively responds to all Landmarks Preservation Commission and other city government actions affecting the Upper East Side. FRIENDS educates the public about the benefits of historic preservation and appropriate urban planning, responds to residents' concerns about landmark laws and encourages compliance with those laws. FRIENDS also has played, and continues to play, an important role in maintaining and improving zoning laws governing the area's avenues and residential side streets. Through effective advocacy and successful educational programs, FRIENDS acts as a steward safeguarding the future of all Upper East Side historic districts and the designated and contributing buildings that make those districts special.

## 2012 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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## IN GRATITUDE

FRIENDS of the Upper East Side Historic Districts wishes to acknowledge the generous support of: The J. M. Kaplan Fund, The Gilbert & Ildiko Butler Conservation Fund, The New York City Department of Cultural Affairs, Council Member Daniel Garodnick and Council Member Jessica Lappin through the Department of Cultural Affairs.

## INFORMING OUR FRIENDS

FRIENDS continues to be a good neighbor. Via an e-mail list, we inform the community about important preservation issues on the Upper East Side, as well as items under review at the LPC. Members can subscribe by visiting our website at [www.friends-ues.org](http://www.friends-ues.org) or by joining us on Facebook!

FRIENDS of the Upper East Side Historic Districts  
966 Lexington Avenue, #3E  
New York, NY 10021  
t. 212-535-2526 f. 212-535-2155  
[www.friends-ues.org](http://www.friends-ues.org)



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