

# FRIENDS



## OF THE UPPER EAST SIDE HISTORIC DISTRICTS

Volume 10, No. 2

Spring/Summer 1998

### The Lot on 92nd Street

*Editor's note:* A vacant lot on East 92nd Street between Park and Lexington Avenues in the Carnegie Hill Historic District has become the subject of heated debate. The 92nd Street Y, which owns the site, proposes to build a new facility on the lot. Since the lot is within the Carnegie Hill Historic District, the new building must be approved by the Landmarks Preservation Commission (LPC). On March 31, 1998, the LPC held a public hearing to determine the appropriateness of the proposed design. 47 people testified—21 in favor and 26 opposed (including FRIENDS). Before a decision can be made, the Commissioners will make a site visit and weigh all the evidence they saw and heard at the March 31 hearing. Although the decision from the LPC is pending, you may read the positions of the two opposing sides now.

#### "Y" Of Course!

by Shelly Friedman, Counsel to the 92nd Street Y

It's not often that a single landmarks application presents an opportunity to reflect upon as many underlying assumptions about the nature of community as does the application of the 92nd Street Y for its new senior adult education center at the presently



Proposed new building at 125 East 92nd Street. (Photo courtesy Fox & Fowle Architects.)

vacant and formerly rubble-strewn lot at 125 East 92nd Street. Happily, the continuing progress of the Y's application shows that spirited debate and diverse opinion over historic preservation objectives need not conflict with the community's support for the Y's essential role in the community and its need to build on this site. The Community Board's overwhelming

#### "Y" A Blockbuster?

by Norman Marcus, Counsel to Friends of Historic 92nd Street

Since the New York City Landmarks Preservation law was passed in 1965, seventy three historic districts have been designated, among them the Carnegie Hill Historic District running irregularly from 98th down to 86th Street, from Fifth Avenue east to Lexington. But when you look at the map, Carnegie Hill's critical core runs east-west along historic 92nd Street.

In the midst of facing cascading rows of 3 1/2 story town houses with framing cornice lines and rear open spaces, the YM/YWHA has proposed seven levels of adult classrooms extending the full length of the lot—100 feet—for three levels, 90 feet for a fourth level, 80 feet for the fifth level, and 70 feet for the sixth and seventh levels.

With parapets and bulkheads, the structure rises 68 feet in the midst of 43-45 feet high residential rows. It also excavates 28 feet down into Carnegie Hill bedrock endangering surrounding residences built on nineteenth century shifting rubble foundations. For maximum classroom yield generating

continued on pg. 2

continued on pg. 2



Halina Rosenthal  
**First President (1982-1991)**

**Board of Directors**

Tony Rosenthal  
**Honorary Chairman**  
 Anne L. Millard  
**President**  
 Rita C. Chu  
**Vice President**  
 Robert K. Lindgren  
**Vice President**  
 Helen S. Tucker  
**Vice President**  
 O. Kelley Anderson, Jr.  
**Treasurer**  
 Robert C. Quinlan  
**Secretary**

Christopher C. Angell  
 Kent L. Barwick  
 Nicholas A. Brawer  
 Reita Cash  
 Judith Churchill  
 Christina R. Davis  
 Walter Longstreet Deane  
 Andrew S. Dolkart  
 Franny Eberhart  
 Noushin Ehsan  
 Lionel Goldfrank III  
 Allison Spear Gomez  
 Tammy Grimes  
 Mark Hampton  
 E. William Judson  
 David I. Karabell  
 Arie L. Kopelman  
 Henry Lambert  
 Mimi Levitt  
 Norman Marcus  
 Joyce Matz  
 Alice McGown  
 Bannon McHenry  
 Richard Meier  
 Frederic S. Papert  
 Margaret Parker  
 Li Chung Pei  
 Peter Pennoyer  
 Judith Price  
 William P. Rayner  
 Genie Rice  
 Khalil R. Rizk  
 Alexandra Schlesinger  
 Thomas Schulhof  
 Patricia B. Selch  
 Teri Slater  
 Jane Stubbs  
 Patricia F. Sullivan  
 Margot Wellington  
 William S. Whyte

20 East 69th Street  
 NY, NY 10021  
 Tel: (212) 535-2526  
 Fax: (212) 535-2155

Newsletter design by  
 Mongrel Creative.

support for the application, the demonstration of public support at the LPC's public hearing by local residents and the submission of petitions signed by over 3,000 persons transmits the fundamental community view that while the LPC has a vital and important role to play in the design of this building, the Y's 11-classroom program for this site must be assured.

Of all the City's civic associations, FRIENDS, Carnegie Hill Neighbors, and the Historic Districts Council are the three opposing the Y's application, each based on carefully deliberated and well-articulated, if not uniformly held, concerns regarding the facade, scale and massing of the proposal. At least we share a common view that many of the appropriateness issues in this case present very close and difficult calls. After all, vacant lots in historic districts are relatively rare and the factors which should predominate in an "infill" situation are many and subjective. For example, are the goals of the historic district truly better served by maintaining that the lot should remain vacant until a building more residential in character comes along, even though several were

conservatively 1,500 students daily, the structure splits the continuity of historic 50-foot rear open spaces on the block which have nurtured its generations with gardens and playgrounds.

The Y's lot is clearly too small for its needs. One wonders why it has not pursued alternatives as urged by Councilman Eristoff; Assemblymen Ravitz and Grannis; Congresswoman Maloney; and CIVITAS. The proposal, whatever its internal merits, is a classic bad neighbor in its blockbusting impacts on modest surroundings: loss of sunlight into the block's residential rear open spaces, vastly increased taxi traffic and noise on a narrow residential street.

It is not hard to agree with David Todd, a past Chairman of the LPC, who in a letter to Jennifer Raab, current LPC Chairman, says that "the design is inappropriate with respect to height, scale, architectural expression, and contextual relationship to the special character of the historic district." In addition, he sees "an egregious rear yard intrusion."

In keeping with its role as protector

continued on pg. 3

continued on pg. 3

*Friends of the Upper East Side Historic Districts, founded in 1982, 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 five historic districts and 133 individual landmarks, and being an advocate for sound preservation policies for the city, FRIENDS has also been a leader in successful efforts to dramatically improve zoning laws governing the area's avenues and residential side streets.*

**PREMIUM GIFTS**

**For a donation of \$50:**  
 FRIENDS T-shirt.

**For a donation of \$100 or more:**  
 The 3rd Edition of the *AIA Guide to NYC* by Elliot Willensky and Norval White.

**For a donation of \$250 or more:**  
*Stanford White's New York* by David Garrard Lowe.

**Membership Form**

- ☐ \$25/Individual  
☐ \$50/Family  
☐ \$100/Supporting  
☐ \$250/Patron  
☐ \$500/Best Friend  
☐ \$1,000/Landmark

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address \_\_\_\_\_  
 City/ST/Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
 Home Ph. (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_  
 Work Ph. (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_



Please return this form with your check to:  
 FRIENDS, 20 East 69th Street, NY, NY 10021  
 or call (212) 535-2526

attempted and failed prior to the Y's purchase of the lot in late 1996? And more importantly, when there is not historic fabric on the site with which to work, should Fox & Fowle's proposal for the facade, a clearly and thoughtfully contemporary celebration of the historic district's diversity, taking its cues from the materials, proportions and details of much of the adjacent building, be faulted because it is not more literal in responding to its 19th century neighbors?

This application does not end with LPC approval. A variance is required from the Board of Standards and Appeals in order to lessen the impact of the otherwise compliant rear yard extension, an expansion opportunity to which so many other institutions have recently turned. That will serve as the forum for land use, environmental, and operational issues. Suffice to say, the Y believes that the impacts of eleven classrooms will be minimal.

To the site's immediate neighbors, whose concerns understandably gravitate toward excavation, construction, and operational issues, the Y's trustees and administration restate their pledge to work closely with them regarding both the construction phase and the operation of the new building. There is much collaborative work to do here, and the Y looks forward to the day when the public discussion turns to the quality of life issues which the present "not on my block" clamor obscures. ■



*East 92nd Street as it appears today. Vacant lot is fourth from the right.*

of the City's historical heritage, the LPC should deny this application for a Certificate of Appropriateness because it weakens the specific character of this stretch of East 92nd Street rather than strengthening it. To strengthen that character, a Y infill proposal would maintain the cornice cascade along the facing 92nd Street rows, match the rear open space penetration of its unassuming neighbors, and take on quite a bit of the street's "look." ■

## President's Message

### A New York Terrace

Like Rip Van Winkle I went to sleep last October and suddenly now, in April, I awake. It is a rite of spring—the flowers, the vines, and the gardening.

When fall ends we clean up and we wave good-bye to neighbors. We close umbrellas, shut windows, and pull blinds. The beginning of winter, new love affairs and the start of cozy fires and dinners with candles and wine.

Then suddenly the sun sets higher, the days are longer. The buds, be it azalea, daffodils, roses—start to peep out tickling us and seducing us to step out and grab our clippers. Then the birds. Oh! The magic of their sounds. The water towers are the bell towers of terrace living. Looking north, a magnificent sea gull turns with the breeze. My cats are suddenly aware of city summer life. It starts before sun up—the morning doves and the cats switching their tails and the birds chattering and the magic begins. Looking south is a cocky, cheeky crow announcing his arrival and becoming our alarm clock for the summer. Suddenly, there is planting, cleaning up and the awareness of new neighbors, new loves, and new excitement as terrace doors open to summer.

We wave good-bye to winter and await what beckons us to our new adventures. A warm welcome to the summer of 1998 and the magic of New York City. It is an exciting love affair about to begin. Some may end, some may survive, and some may last, like mine, for 40 years!

It's still magic and I'm still in love.

*Gene M. Land*

## Tribute to Brendan Gill

Photo by Steven Tudor



Brendan Gill

The New Year started out on a sad note for FRIENDS of the Upper East Side Historic Districts. We (and all New Yorkers) lost our beloved Board Member Brendan Gill. Brendan died on December 27, 1997, at the age of 83. He was lovingly and joyously remembered at a spirited memorial on April 11th at Town Hall, attended by more than 1,500 people. Writer, preservationist, wit, and bon-vivant, FRIENDS was honored and lucky to have had such a talent serve on our Board. Following is a passage on the architect William Adams Delano from Brendan's 1990 book, *A New York Life: Of Friends and Others* (Poseidon Press). By printing it here, Brendan's charm, sophistication, and eloquence will speak. FRIENDS cannot think of a more fitting tribute. ■

Billy was far from obtuse when, a few years later, it came time to follow the instructions of the building committee of the Knickerbocker Club. The windows on the main floor of the old clubhouse, on Fifth Avenue and Thirty-second Street, had provided its members with an excellent view of the crowds of pedestrians flowing by. In those crowds, Billy was advised, were many pretty young women, who had begun at that time (the period of the First World War) to reveal daring, if fugitive, glimpses of ankle and lower shin. It was imperative that the windows in the new clubhouse, on Fifth Avenue and Sixty-second Street, should grant the same unacknowledged but indispensable satisfactions. Did the building committee make itself clear? Billy nodded: carefully he sketched sightlines on the blueprints to indicate to the building committee that a member seated in the library or lounge of the new building would have the same excellent view of passersby that he had been able to obtain in the old building.

The building committee remained skeptical; much was at stake. At last it was required of Billy, that before the walls of the new building had begun to rise out of its newly poured concrete foundations, he erect a scaffold at the same height above Fifth Avenue as the proposed library and lounge. Wooden planks were placed on the scaffold and with considerable effort big leather club chairs from the old building were hoisted into place on the platform. Then half a dozen portly, middle-aged members of the building committee were also hoisted into place and seated in the chairs. As the crowd of pedestrians flowed past, the committeemen sat eyeing them with their usual expertise. After an hour or so, they agreed that Billy's sightlines had been all that he had promised them they would be; let the building be completed as quickly as possible.

Seventy-five years later, there the building stands—in Billy's view and in the view of most architectural historians, his most distinguished work. It is safe to say the sightlines from the windows of the library and lounge have not altered by so much as a hair's breadth during that long span of time, but the changes in women's fashions have been such that today it would take far more than the glimpse of a silken ankle on Fifth Avenue to prompt a sudden pounding of the heart behind the club's high windows.



# Fifteenth on the Fifteenth

## FRIENDS' Fifteenth Annual Meeting and Awards Ceremony

The 15th of January, 1998 was the date to hold FRIENDS' Fifteenth Annual Meeting and Awards Ceremony. After fifteen years, our many friends know that if it's mid-January, it's time to head to the Asia Society on Park Avenue at 70th Street for our Annual Meeting.

This year, FRIENDS was truly blessed in terms of what we gave and what (or rather whom) we received. The three award recipients were all recognized for their outstanding efforts which will have a substantial and lasting benefit to the Upper East Side. Our three new Board Members are gems.



*FRIENDS' President Anne L. Millard with (l. to r.) Nicholas Platt, President of the Asia Society and O. Kelley Anderson, Jr., FRIENDS' Treasurer.*

Anne L. Millard, FRIENDS' President, kicked off the evening's proceedings with a hearty and joyous welcome. She spoke briefly about FRIENDS' activities over the past year including the publication of our new pull-out magazine for children called "Young FRIENDS." (See the new edition in this newsletter.) Mrs. Millard then handed the microphone over to Rita C. Chu, FRIENDS' Vice President and Chair of the Nominating Committee, for official Annual Meeting business.

Ms. Chu proposed the slate of nominees for Directors for the Class of 2000 and the proposed slate of nominees for Officers to serve a one-year term. All were elected unanimously.



*Photo by Steven Tucker*

*Preservation notables Susan Tunick and Giorgio Cavaglieri.*

## New Directors and Officers

First-time Board Members are Kent L. Barwick, Judith Churchill, and Noushin Ehsan. FRIENDS is lucky to have a talented and energetic Board, and these three new members will certainly fit right in. Mr. Barwick might just as well change his name to Mr. Preservation—in more than 30 years in the field, he has served as the Chairman of the Landmarks Preservation Commission, President of the Municipal Art Society, and President of the New York State Historical Association. He is a founder of the Preservation League of New York State, the New York Landmarks Conservancy, and the Historic Districts Council. Ms. Churchill is an east side resident who has given her time selflessly to various civic organizations. She is dedicated to Central Park and is a long-time Board Member of the Central Park Conservancy. She has also been



*Photo by Steven Tucker*

*David Garrard Lowe, author and President of the Beaux Arts Society, with FRIENDS' Board Member and Historic Districts Council Director Franny Eberhart.*

active in the Coalition to Save the Cottages and Gardens, and still manages to find time to tutor public school children. Ms. Ehsan is an architect with over 25 years of local and international experience. She is the President of her own firm, Accessible Architecture, and has done a great deal of restoration and renovation work. In addition, she has lectured extensively at universities and institutions around the globe, including: Russia, China, Singapore, Thailand, South Africa, Iran, Turkey, Ireland, England, and the United States.

The 2000 slate of Officers consists of Tony Rosenthal, Honorary Chairman; Anne L. Millard, President; Rita C. Chu, Vice President; Robert K. Lindgren, Vice President; Helen S. Tucker, Vice President; O. Kelley Anderson, Jr., Treasurer; and Robert C. Quinlan, Secretary.



*Restoration Award winners  
Park East Synagogue, 163  
East 67th Street, and*



*the Church of the  
Holy Trinity,  
316 East 88th Street.*

## Awards

Two outstanding buildings and one outstanding group were recognized this year. In the building department, the news this year is religious properties. One church and one synagogue have demonstrated a substantial commitment to their buildings and the neighborhood by investing in superb restorations.

The Church of the Holy Trinity at 316 East 88th Street (Barney and Chapman, 1897-99) and Park East Synagogue at 163 East 67th Street (Schneider & Herter, 1889-90) each received a Restoration Award. At Holy Trinity, extensive repair, restoration, and renovation was carried out on the massive carillon, while at Park East, the head-to-toe work included stained glass window restoration, masonry cleaning and restoration, and replication of historic features. Linda Gillies, Executive Director of the Vincent Astor Foundation, presented Holy Trinity's award to a team that was headed by William Stivale Building Conservator. The Park East crew, led by Dan Peter Kopple & Associates, received their award from Manhattan Borough President C. Virginia Fields.

In recognition for their continued and indefatigable effort toward the preservation of "The Cottages and Gardens" (a complex which was identified as an unrecognized and endangered landmark in FRIENDS' 1993 exhibit), FRIENDS cited "The Coalition to Save the Cottages and Gardens" with an Advocacy Award. David Garrard Lowe, President of the Beaux Arts Alliance, presented the award to the Coalition. ■



*The Cottages and  
Gardens. The  
Coalition to Save  
the Cottages and  
Gardens was recognized  
with an  
Advocacy Award.*

# Fines Legislation Update

## by Mark Silberman

In January of 1998, Mayor Rudolph W. Giuliani signed into law the "Landmarks Protection Bill" (now known as Local Law No. 1 of 1998), which authorizes the Landmark's Preservation Commission (LPC) to seek civil fines for violations of the Landmarks Law. The bill signing marked the end of a two-year effort by the Commission, Councilmember Kenneth Fisher, and the preservation community to give the Commission what virtually every other city agency already has: the right to impose a civil fine for violating a city law.

The civil fines legislation was a major initiative of LPC Chair Jennifer J. Raab. The ability to seek civil fines should significantly improve compliance with the Landmarks Law because it provides the Commission with a credible and reasonable enforcement tool. As passed, the bill authorizes two types of administrative penalties: Type A Violations (for significant alterations to important architectural details or materials, such as the removal of windows or cornice) and Type B Violations (for all other violations). The penalty for a Type A Violation is as high as \$5,000 for a first violation, and if the illegal condition is not fixed, the Commission can seek a penalty of up to \$250 for each day that building continues to be in violation. The per day penalties are computed from the day that the person was found liable or plead guilty to the first Notice of Violation (NOV). The penalty for a Type B Violation is up to \$500 for a first violation and up to \$50 per day if the violation is not cured. The bill also authorizes a \$500 per day fine for the failure to obey a Stop Work Order issued by the Commission.

Violations involving demolition or serious destruction cannot be tried in administrative court, but must be brought in regular civil court. The penalty for destroying a landmark is the fair market value of the property with or without the landmark, whichever is greater. Destruction of an interior landmark is punishable by a fine of twice the estimated cost of replacing the interior. The Commission retains its existing

right to seek a court order (an "injunction") to halt or replace illegal work.

As passed, the bill differs in some degrees from the bill that was first introduced into the City Council. (See Fall/Winter 1997 newsletter for related article.) The most significant changes are: (1) the number of penalty categories was reduced from three to two; (2) the Commission may no longer seek an administrative fine for the failure to maintain a building in good repair, known as "demolition by neglect" (although the Commission may still go to civil court to enforce the maintenance requirements); (3) landmarks viola-

tions no longer are classified as public nuisances under the Nuisance Abatement Law; (4) the criminal penalties are reduced from what was originally proposed, although they are still significantly higher than the previous levels. While the Commission sought to retain these provisions, their loss does not diminish the primary thrust of the new law, which provides for a civil penalty for 99% of all landmarks violations.

As significant as the new civil penalties are, the civil enforcement system is designed to be flexible and equitable. Its main objective is compliance, not

punishment. For most violations, the Commission is required to send a warning letter before serving a formal NOV. If the violation is not cured, an NOV is served. A person can still avoid paying a penalty by pleading guilty to the NOV and applying to cure the illegal condition. If the violation is not cured, however, the Commission will serve a second NOV for the same offense—only this time the person cannot avoid a penalty by pleading guilty and promising to cure. He or she will pay a per day penalty going back to the day that he or she plead guilty to the first NOV.

The civil penalties become effective in July. At this time the Commission has received a technology grant to upgrade our violations computer system. In addition, we are looking to hire additional staff to help implement the new enforcement program. ■

**The ability to seek civil fines should significantly improve compliance with the Landmarks Law because it provides the Commission with a credible and reasonable enforcement tool.**

*Mark Silberman is the Director of Enforcement for the LPC. He drafted the legislation on behalf of the Commission.*

# News Briefs

## Sixth Upper East Side Historic District to be Designated

The number of protected buildings on the Upper East Side (over 1,700) will increase by seven this spring. On March 10, 1998, the Landmarks Preservation Commission held a designation hearing on the proposed Hardenbergh-Rhinelanders Houses Historic District. FRIENDS testified in favor of the designation of the tiny enclave, which was featured in our 1993 exhibit, "The 11 Most Endangered Places on the Upper East Side and The Other East Side."



*The proposed Rhinelanders/Hardenbergh Houses Historic District, 1340 - 1350 Lexington Avenue, and 121 East 89th Street.*

Located on the west side of Lexington Avenue between East 89th and East 90th Streets, the assemblage comprises six houses on Lexington, and one house on East 89th Street, just west of Lexington. Named for the architect (Henry J. Hardenbergh) and the developer (estate of William C. Rhinelanders), the houses in the proposed historic district represent the type of residential development that occurred in this part of Carnegie Hill in the late nineteenth century due to transportation and street improvements.

Yorkville and Carnegie Hill have long been associated with the Rhinelanders name, as the Rhinelanders were a prominent family with vast real estate holdings in the area. All of the houses were constructed in 1888-89 to the designs of Henry J. Hardenbergh, the architect of many important New York buildings such as the Plaza Hotel and the Dakota. For the houses commissioned by the estate of William C. Rhinelanders, Hardenbergh employed a Northern Renaissance Revival style. On Lexington, the houses read as a bilaterally symmetrical row, i.e., from north to south you see design type a,b,c; c,b,a. The buildings form a remarkably intact and outstanding architectural composition. As a group, harmony is achieved through the use of common materials (red brick, brownstone and red terra cotta trim), while the lively mix of architectural elements gives the district a picturesque quality. ■

## FRIENDS' School Program Expands



*Students from the Nightingale-Bamford school and the buildings they created after participating in FRIENDS' program.*

FRIENDS' architectural education program for elementary school students was created in the summer of 1995, and by that fall, a pilot program was in place at P.S. 158. (See *Winter/Spring 1996 newsletter* for related article.) As originally conceived, the program would target fourth-graders on the Upper East Side. We chose fourth-graders because they study local history as part of their social studies curriculum. We chose the Upper East Side for obvious reasons.

Now in its third year, the program has been more popular than we ever imagined. Not only has it been regularly taught at P.S. 6, the Nightingale-Bamford School, and P.S. 59 (all on the Upper East Side), but we have also been invited into schools on the Upper West Side, Harlem, Brooklyn, and Murray Hill. Since these requests have come from teachers of many grades in many different neighborhoods, FRIENDS has had to adapt the program so that the material would be applicable. Luckily, the program was designed to be flexible so that it can be implemented in virtually any elementary school classroom in virtually any neighborhood throughout New York.

The P.L.A.C.E. Network (People Learning About City Environments) has played a key role in informing educators throughout the city about FRIENDS' program. The P.L.A.C.E. Network is an alliance of educators who focus on urban neighborhoods and environments in teaching children and adults. FRIENDS is a member.

The success of FRIENDS' program rests squarely on the shoulders of our wonderful docents, who donate their time to first learning the program, and then to visiting the school three times to lead classroom sessions and a walking tour. Our need for docents is greater now than ever before. Won't you consider giving some time to help instill in children an appreciation and love for the architectural riches that surround them? Call FRIENDS' office at 535-2526 if you would like to volunteer. If you would like more information about The P.L.A.C.E. Network, FRIENDS can mail you a poster describing the members and their programs, or you may contact the Historic Districts Council at 799-5837.

*We'd like to thank our wonderful docents: Jane Andrews, Debra Asher, Lisa Dubin, Janis Eltz, Sanna Feinstein, Robert Lindgren, Anne Millard, Marilyn Morgan, Pat Tomkins, George van der Ploeg, and April Wahlestedt. ■*



# Preservation Committee News

The Preservation Committee continues to review a steady stream of applications for Certificates of Appropriateness (C of A). The Committee is available to meet with architects, owners, and lawyers, and express approval or voice concerns regarding the various applications. By testifying at public hearings at the Landmarks Preservation Commission, FRIENDS' Preservation Committee gives a voice to the buildings. Following, in geographic order, is a list of the C of A items for October 1997 - March 1998. The Landmarks Preservation Commission's decision is given for each application.

## East 60s



*The Metropolitan Club, 1 East 60th Street, will build a new emergency exit stair tower in this alley between the club and the Pierre Hotel.*

**1 East 60th Street:** A neo-Italianate style clubhouse built in 1892-1894 designed by McKim, Mead and White. Application to construct additions at the northern side yard and on the rooftop and to alter a door at the courtyard for barrier-free accessibility: **APPROVED. (Zoned R10-H)**

**219 East 62nd Street:** A row house built in 1873-1874 designed by R.M. Hunt. Application to construct a one-story rooftop addition: **APPROVED. (Zoned R8B)**

**5 East 63rd Street:** A row house built in 1900 and altered in 1942 by Harry Hurwitz. Application to enlarge a window opening on the west elevation: **APPROVED.**

**24 East 64th Street:** A row house built in 1881-1882 and altered in the Adamesque style in 1919-1920 by Mott B. Schmidt. Application to replace ground floor doors: **WITHDRAWN.**

**126 East 64th Street:** A row house built in 1871 and altered in 1910 and 1929. Application to construct a rear addition: **LAID OVER. (Zoned R8B)**

**129 East 64th Street:** A neo-Grec style row house built in 1876-1877 designed by John McCool and altered in 1937 by Coffin and Coffin. Application to modify an approved proposal to alter the facade and front areaway: **APPROVED WITH MODIFICATIONS.**

**129 East 65th Street, aka 122-124 East 66th Street:** An Italianate style residence designed by F.S. Barus, built in 1871-1872 and altered to the design of Thomas Harlan Ellett in 1932. Application to alter the facade: **WITHDRAWN.**

**23 East 67th Street:** A row house built in 1882-1883 and altered in the neo-Federal style in 1919 by Sterner and Wolfe. Application to legalize the installation of a sign and flagpole without Landmarks Preservation Commission permits: **DENIED.**

**13 East 69th Street:** A simplified neo-Classical style town house built in 1928 designed by William A. Hewlett. Application to raise the facade, alter the ground floor, and construct a rooftop addition: **APPROVED. (Zoned C5-1)**

## East 70s

**4 - 8 East 70th Street:** A stylized neo-Classical/Art-Deco style apartment house built in 1938 designed by Sylvan Bien. Application to construct an addition at the terrace: **APPROVED. (Zoned R8B)**

**170 East 70th Street:** A Beaux-Arts style stable built in 1901-02 designed by C.P.H. Gilbert and altered in 1925. Application to replace the entrance infill and some windows, and alter the sidewalk: **PENDING.**

**126 East 73rd Street:** A row house built in 1872 and altered in the neo-Elizabethan style in 1912 by Benjamin H. Webber. Application to construct a rooftop addition: **WITHDRAWN. (Zoned R8B)**

**136 East 73rd Street:** A neo-Grec style row house built in 1880 designed by William McNamara. Application to construct a rooftop addition: **APPROVED. (Zoned R8B/LH-1A)**

**44 East 74th Street:** A Beaux-Arts style town house built in 1904-1905 designed by George F. Pelham. Application to legalize painting the facade without Landmarks Preservation Commission permits: **DENIED.**

**9 East 79th Street:** A neo-Tudor style apartment building built in 1928-1929 designed by Hall Pleasants Pennington and Lewis. Application to alter windows and install through-the-wall air conditioner units on secondary facades: **APPROVED WITH MODIFICATIONS.**

## East 80s

**3 East 80th Street:** A row house built in 1898-1899 designed by Welch, Smith, and Provot. Application to alter the areaway and the basement windows, and to enlarge window openings on the rear elevation: **APPROVED.**

**9 East 81st Street:** A row house built in 1878-1879 and altered in the neo-Federal style by Murphy and Dana. Application to replace the entrance door: **APPROVED WITH MODIFICATIONS.**

## East 90s

**21 East 90th Street:** An Art-Deco style apartment building built in 1927 designed by George F. Pelham. Application to replace windows: **APPROVED.**



*The addition to the Convent of the Sacred Heart, 1 East 91st Street, is discreet and respects the mansion. The extant view from Fifth Avenue and the proposed view, with the addition drawn in. Rendering courtesy Buttrick White & Burtis Architects.*



**1 East 91st Street (former Otto and Addie Kahn house, now Convent of the Sacred Heart):** An Italian Renaissance style mansion built in 1913-1918 designed by J. Armstrong Stenhouse with C.P.H. Gilbert. Application to construct an addition: **APPROVED. (Zoned R10 (P1))**

**30 East 92nd Street:** A Renaissance Revival style row house built in 1892-1895 designed by Henry J. Hardenbergh. Application to replace an awning which was installed at the basement level in non-compliance with Certificate of Appropriateness #972364 and to install a new light fixture: **LAI D O V E R.**

**131 East 92nd Street:** A neo-Grec style row house with Queen Anne style detail built in 1886-1887 designed by C. Abbott French and Company and altered in 1937 by William and Geoffrey Platt. Application to install a security grille at the front door: **P E N D I N G.**

## Fifth Avenue

**768 Fifth Avenue:** A French Renaissance style hotel built in 1905-1907 designed by Henry J. Hardenbergh. Application to alter doors and an entrance canopy on the 59th Street facade: **APPROVED.**

**912 Fifth Avenue:** A neo-Italian Renaissance style apartment building built in 1925 designed by Schwartz and Gross. Application to establish a master plan governing future window replacement: **APPROVED WITH MODIFICATIONS.**

**1025 Fifth Avenue:** A modern apartment building built in 1955 designed by Raymond Loewy William Snaith, Inc. Application to replace windows and doors, and create a new window opening on the western elevation: **APPROVED IN PART.**

**1071 Fifth Avenue:** A Modern style museum built in 1956-1959 designed by Frank Lloyd Wright and enlarged in 1988-1992 by Gwathmey Siegel and Associates. Application to permanently retain a banner previously approved for temporary installation; to modify the design of a previously approved kiosk, and to install flagpoles and banners: **P E N D I N G.**

**1120 Fifth Avenue:** A neo-Renaissance style apartment house built in 1924-1925 designed by J.E.R. Carpenter. Application to establish a master plan governing the future installation of replacement windows and HVAC equipment: **P E N D I N G.**

**1140 Fifth Avenue:** A neo-Renaissance style apartment house built in 1921 designed by Fred F. French Company. Application to establish a master plan governing the future installation of replacement windows and HVAC equipment: **P E N D I N G.**

**1150 Fifth Avenue:** A neo-Georgian style apartment house built in 1923-1924 designed by J.E.R. Carpenter. Application to establish a master plan governing the future installation of replacement windows and HVAC equipment: **P E N D I N G.**

**1158 Fifth Avenue:** A neo-Renaissance style apartment house built in 1924 designed by C. Howard Crane and Kenneth Franzheim. Application to establish a master plan governing the future installation of replacement windows and HVAC equipment: **P E N D I N G.**

**1165 Fifth Avenue:** A neo-Renaissance style apartment house with medievalizing ornament built in 1925-1926 designed by J.E.R. Carpenter. Application to establish a master plan governing the future installation of replacement windows and HVAC equipment: **P E N D I N G.**

**1170 Fifth Avenue:** A neo-Renaissance style apartment house with medievalizing ornament built in 1925-1926 designed by J.E.R. Carpenter. Application to establish a master plan governing the future installation of replacement windows and HVAC equipment: **P E N D I N G.**

1170 Fifth Avenue: Application to install one HVAC unit on a side wall: **WITHDRAWN.**

## Madison Avenue

**694 Madison Avenue:** A neo-Grec style residence built in 1878-1879 designed by J.H. Valentine. Application to install a canopy at the ground floor and awnings at the second floor: **D E N I E D.**

**717 Madison Avenue:** A neo-Grec style row house built in 1877 designed by Charles Baxter. Application to install an awning: **WITHDRAWN.**

**789 - 791 Madison Avenue:** Two Italianate/neo-Grec style row houses designed by F.S. Barus. 789 Madison Avenue was altered in 1909 by Albro and Lindeberg to accommodate a two-story addition at the rear and in 1925 to include a two-story storefront. Application to construct rear yard and rooftop additions at 789 Madison Avenue and a new storefront at 791 Madison Avenue: **APPROVED. (Zoned C5-1)**

**813 Madison Avenue:** A neo-Grec style row house built in 1881-82 designed by Charles Buek and Company. Application to construct a rear yard addition and alter the ground floor: **APPROVED.**

**814 Madison Avenue:** A neo-Renaissance style apartment building built in 1912-1913 designed by Herbert Lucas. Application to legalize the installation of windows in non-compliance with Certificate of No Effect #982080: **D E N I E D.**



*When work on the 59th Street facade of the Plaza Hotel, 768 Fifth Avenue, is complete, much of the historic appearance will return.*



*At the Westbury Hotel, 828 - 850 Madison Avenue, work will include a major face lift. Cornices and limestone balconettes will be restored, and through-the-wall air conditioner cuts will be patched with matching brick.*

**828 - 850 Madison Avenue:** A neo-Renaissance style hotel building built in 1925-1926 designed by George F. Pelham. Application to create new window openings, install storefronts, restore the facades, and construct a rooftop bulkhead: **APPROVED WITH MODIFICATIONS.** (Zoned C5-1)

**1291 Madison Avenue:** A Romanesque Revival style row house built in 1889-1890 designed by James E. Ware. Application to legalize the installation of lights, an awning, and a canopy without Landmarks Preservation Commission permits: **APPROVED IN PART.**

## Park Avenue

**570 Park Avenue:** A neo-Renaissance style apartment building built in 1915-1916 designed by Emery Roth. Application to replace two leaded glass windows: **APPROVED.**

**635 Park Avenue:** A neo-Renaissance style apartment building built in 1912-1913 designed by J.E.R. Carpenter. Application to enlarge a window opening and install four through-the-wall air conditioner units on a secondary elevation: **WITHDRAWN.**

**635 Park Avenue:** Application to enlarge a masonry opening and install two new doors on the East 66th Street elevation: **APPROVED WITH MODIFICATIONS.**

**650 Park Avenue:** An apartment building built in 1962-1963 designed by John M. Kokkins. Application to alter a window on the rear facade: **APPROVED.**

**695 Park Avenue:** A neo-Gothic style public school built in 1912-1914 designed by C.B.J. Snyder. Application to install a sign at the entrance to the Frederick Loewe Theater: **WITHDRAWN.**

**850 Park Avenue:** An apartment house built in 1913-1914 designed by Rouse and Goldstone. Application to replace a door: **WITHDRAWN.**

## Lexington Avenue

**870 and 870 1/2 Lexington Avenue:** A neo-Federal style apartment building built in 1903-1904 designed by Edwin Outwater. Application to legalize the installation of awnings without Landmarks Preservation Commission permits: **WITHDRAWN.**

**874 Lexington Avenue:** A row house built in 1871-1872 designed by E.S. Barus. Application to alter a storefront which was installed without Landmarks Preservation Commission permits: **APPROVED WITH MODIFICATIONS.**

**964 - 966 Lexington Avenue:** Two four-story residences built in 1871-1872 with storefronts added in 1927. Application to install storefronts: **APPROVED. ■**

**Call or write for a copy of  
the Second Edition of our  
Preservation Manual -  
A Guide to Working on  
New York City Landmarks**

The Preservation Manual contains information for property owners, architects, tenants, and contractors planning to perform work and informative guidelines for individuals and community groups.

Also included are a glossary of frequently used terms, a directory of related organizations, an over-view of the LPC and Landmarks Law. The second edition of The Preservation Manual was made possible through the generosity of The J.M. Kaplan Fund, Planning and Preservation Fund of the Open Space Institute, The Vincent Astor Foundation, and the East Manhattan Chamber of Commerce.

The cost is \$5.00 plus \$1.00 shipping.  
For further information contact  
Friends at 335-2526.

# FRIENDS

## Mark Your Calendar! Upcoming FRIENDS Events

### *Spring walking tours:*

Saturday, May 2, 1998 - Join architectural historian and professor John Kriskiewicz for a look at some of the east side's most outstanding apartment houses. The designs of J.E.R. Carpenter and Rosario Candela, masters of the type, will feature prominently on the tour.

Saturday, June 6, 1998 - Susan Tunick, author, historian, advocate, and President of the Friends of Terra Cotta will lead us on a Terra Cotta Trek, in search of the east side's most unusual examples of this fabulous material.

Call FRIENDS' office, 535-2526, for further details.

### *Spring talks:*

Watch your mail for information about upcoming panel discussions featuring lively and intelligent debates about some of the "hottest" topics in preservation today. Hope to see you soon.

NON-PROFIT ORG  
U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
Poughkeepsie, N.Y.  
Permit No. 316



Welcome to Young FRIENDS. If you like buildings, you're sure to enjoy this magazine. In it, you'll find articles, craft ideas, and all sorts of interesting information about the terrific buildings you see everyday right on your own block.

## The Lost Tracks of Time

If you have ever taken a ride on the number 6 train, you know what a sardine feels like! To travel on the Lexington Avenue local is to be crammed and crushed, trampled and trod upon, shaken and stirred, jiggled and wiggled. Some find it fun and exciting, but many New Yorkers would rather take a dip in the East River than battle the daily crunch on the subway.

It wasn't always this bad. If you lived on the Upper East Side in the late 19th-century, you would be able to cruise downtown with as much ease, access, and as many choices as the late 20th-century east sider who surfs the Net. In 1938, only 60 years ago, the Upper East Side traveler had his (or her) choice of two elevated train lines, one underground subway line, and several surface bus lines. If you think that 60 years is an eternity, consider it in geologic terms which date the earliest era of the earth to more than 4 billion years ago. Still think 60 years is forever?

So where did all this transportation go? Guess you could say that the trains hopped

the last train and hightailed it out of town. Why they went, where they went, how they went, and why they were built in the first place is an interesting story.

More than 100 years ago, in the 1860s and 1870s, most New Yorkers lived south of 59th

Street. Up in this neck of the woods, it really was pretty much just that – woods! There was some scattered development, wooden shacks, and country estates, but nothing that we would recognize today. For the people living downtown, things started getting pretty crowded because everyone was crammed together. People began to think about moving uptown, away from all the congestion. But what if your favorite restaurant was downtown in the old neigh-

borhood? What if your school or your job or your grandma were in the southern half of Manhattan as well? How would you get there?

That's where the elevated trains come in. (For the uninitiated, an elevated train is a train that travels on tracks which are elevated, that is, lifted up above the street.) Technological

*continued on pg. 2a*



innovations made these kinds of trains possible around the time of the Civil War. The first elevated (el for short) was built in 1867 on the lower west side of Manhattan.

By the 1870s and 1880s, the kinks in that first experimental line had been ironed out, and companies sprung up to build and run the els. With the els, previously inaccessible parts of Manhattan would be opened up for development—houses, schools, churches and synagogues, stores, hospitals, parks—whole neighborhoods would be created! Just because of the els.

In fact, the Upper East Side owes a tremendous debt to the two els that ran here. Without the Third Avenue El (built in 1878) and the Second Avenue El (built in 1880), much of the Upper East Side would not have been built. The els made it possible to get around town easily from the Upper East Side.

So if the els were so great, convenient, and cheap (a ride only cost a nickel up until 1948), why were they taken down? They were noisy. They were dirty. People began to think of them as old and ugly. No one wanted to live right next to them. They made the street dark. They didn't attract as many riders as they used to, so the

city decided to take them down. The Second Avenue El was dismantled in 1940, and the Third Avenue El went in 1955.

Once they were gone, the streets were sunnier, and the character of Second and Third Avenues began to change. Many old, smaller buildings were torn down, and newer, bigger, and taller buildings went up. Some say that things look better since the els were torn down. Others long for the days of the els.

But those days are gone forever. Unless of course you stand on Third or Second Avenue, close your eyes, and imagine the train rumbling

by overhead, hear the conductor announcing the next stop, smell the soot, feel the ground reverberating, and hear the clickety-clack of the passengers' feet as they descend the wooden stairs onto the street. If you can do that, then the els will live forever. ■



*The Third Avenue El in 1953. This view is from East 72nd Street. By the El, courtesy H & M Productions.*



*The same view today.*



# Art in the Subway?

By the time the els were torn down in the middle part of the 20th-century (see pg. 1a), most people regarded them as ugly, hulking eyesores. Everyone had gotten so used to them, that they stopped paying attention to the beauty of the els—in actuality, the stations had lovely stained glass and intricate iron-work.

The els are gone, but the subways are not. And yes, like the els, the subways possess unrecognized and unnoticed beauty. Beauty? In the subways? The New York City subways? Yes!

When the New York City subway was first built in 1904, the builders knew that people might feel uncomfortable, or even frightened to travel underground. They wanted the subway to be popular and successful, so they thought that making the stations as attractive as possible would help subway riders feel more at ease. Also, many of the subway's builders and designers were influenced by the "City Beautiful" movement, which was a belief that public spaces and urban places should and could be designed as a unified whole, often by using decorative elements that recalled Ancient Greece and Rome. What better place to apply this notion of a beautiful, coherent ensemble than in the new subway?



This terra cotta plaque from 33rd Street is typical of the earliest phase of construction (roughly 1900-1908, also known as "Contract 1" and "Contract 2"). Why? When you look at this eagle, you might think sculpture – it is three-dimensional and elaborate. That's a hallmark of Contracts 1 and 2 – a sculptural quality – just think of it as something that you wouldn't want to dust! The location plaques of these stations often have fantastic mosaic decoration, with flowers, urns, and swags.

Once Young FRIENDS found out that the subway stations had been designed to be beautiful, we grabbed a camera, dug out our fare, and hopped aboard a train hoping that someone would show us the beauty! We went everywhere – East Side, West Side, all around the town in search of this fabled grandeur. Did we find it? Indeed! Do you want to know where it is? Read on.

Since each station has to have a sign announcing its location, the subway's designers decided to take advantage of all these signs and make them works of art. And art they are. Each station has signs or decorative panels that are made out of terra cotta (a kind of fired clay often used for decoration in architecture) and ceramic mosaic. These subway mosaics are not only colorful, creative, intricate, artful, and yes, beautiful, but they can also give you all sorts of neat information about the stations. For example, just by looking at the subway mosaics and ceramics you can figure out the approximate date of the station. Want to see what we mean? Come along with Young FRIENDS as we take a photographic journey through the subway's subterranean gallery.

One little factoid to bear in mind as we take our armchair trip is that the subway was essentially built in three phases. The subway art differs greatly during each period. A general rule of thumb is that as time went on, the subway ceramics got simpler. ■





The stations on the Upper East Side feature colorful, geometric, designs that are two dimensional (that is, they are flat). 86th and 96th Streets, and Lexington Avenue are typical of the station designs of this middle period of subway construction, which lasted from 1913 1920. (You might see this period referred to as the "Dual Contracts.")

In fact, if the mosaics are flat, it must be from the Dual Contracts!



The last phase of subway construction started in 1925.\* These stations are characterized by a single band of color or simple, straight-forward mosaics that only give the station's name, with no decorative panels or bands. The Broadway-Lafayette station is typical.

*\*Since the first phase was Contracts 1 and 2, and the next phase included Contracts 3 and 4 (the Dual Contracts), you would think that this last phase would be called Contract 5. Not so. Like everything else in New York, subway history is awfully complicated. Check out more in-depth subway history at your local library.*

## Test your subway know-how!

1

This scene shows some kind of fence – no, it's a wall! Where can this station be? (Hint – see the W?)



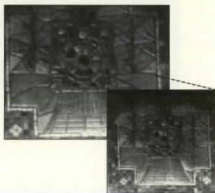
2

Hmm...flat mosaic, geometric design. This station must be approximately \_\_\_\_\_ years old.



3

Look closely at this decorative band and you will see a choo choo coming right at you. What station could this be?



4

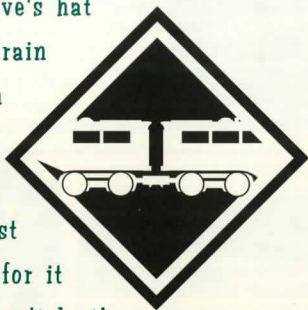
One of the oldest stations, or one of the newest?



(1: Wall Street. Yes, there once was actually a wall there. 2: 90 - 98 years old. 3: Grand Central. 4: one of the oldest.)



Wear your detective's hat  
when you next ride the train  
If you keep your eyes open  
you'll turn on your brain  
The art on the subways  
tells much of the past  
But we must care for it  
or else it won't last!



## BRAIN BUSTER!

For NYC history buffs:

Subway riders have gotten used to this beaver at the Astor Place subway station. After all, it is one of the original stations. But why on earth is a beaver on Astor Place? Young FRIENDS doesn't ever remember spotting any little critters down in the subway or — we take that back — we have spotted a rat or two, but never any beavers!

(Answer: Astor Place is named for John Jacob Astor, a wealthy philanthropist in 18th century New York. He made his money by trading beaver pelts, or skins.)

# Make Your Own Subway Mosaic

Wouldn't it be nice to have one of those subway ceramics for yourself? Better not think about it! Not only would it be nearly impossible to remove one of them intact, it's also illegal. Not to worry – Young FRIENDS has a way for you to make your own subway-style mosaic plaque for your door or wall.



## HERE'S WHAT YOU NEED:

construction paper

scissors

glue

pencil

ruler

piece of cardboard (not too thick – Young FRIENDS used the front section of a cereal box which we cut out).



★ Using the ruler, mark off 1/2" intervals along the height of the paper.



★ Still using the ruler, draw lines along the width of the paper, resulting in several lines, spaced 1/2" apart.



★ Repeat steps 1 and 2 with different colored sheets of paper. (You may use as many or as few colors as you like. Keep in mind though, that you do need at least two colors for a mosaic design.)

★ Cut along all the lines, resulting in 1/2" strips, of different colors.



★ Gather the strips together, and cut into 1/2" squares. You should now have piles of squares in different colors. Do not worry if the square size varies – it adds interest.



★ Decide what your plaque will say, and write it on the piece of cardboard.



★ Place a dab of glue on a square and place it on the lettering. Continue in this manner until you have spelled out your name or message.



★ Decide what type of border you would like, and glue the squares on. (Tip: it's o.k. to leave a tiny bit of space between the squares – it will look like grout.)



★ Fill in the background using the same technique. This is the most difficult step because you will have to cut many of the squares into tiny or irregular shapes to fill in the spaces between the lettering.

★ The completed product!



Young Friends, created by Jane Cowan for FRIENDS of the Upper East Side Historic Districts