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NEWSLETTER

FALL 2015

Welcome to the 23rd edition of the newsletter of the New York Preservation Archive Project. The mission of the New York Preservation Archive Project is to protect and raise awareness of the narratives of historic preservation in New York. Through public programs, outreach, celebration, and the creation of public access to information, the Archive Project hopes to bring these stories to light.



New York State Supreme Court Building in New York City, Courtesy of Wikimedia Commons

Legal Oral History Project Launched!

Initiative Aims to Capture Memories of Legal Figures Who Have Influenced the Landmarks Law

The New York Preservation Archive Project is excited to announce the launch of a new oral history project entitled *Through the Legal Lens: Interviews with Lawyers Who Shaped NYC's Landmarks Law*. Made possible through a grant from the Arthur F. & Alice E. Adams Charitable Foundation, this initiative will capture the memories of significant legal figures who have influenced the evolution of New York City's Landmarks Law. Interviewees will include those who, over the past four decades, have defended the administration of the law, argued decisive preservation-related court cases, and worked to safeguard and augment the legal power that protects the City's architecture.

Funds will also allow the creation of an educational model, based on this oral history project, which can be used to inspire and guide similar initiatives in locations across the United States. Lastly, the grant will be used to help disseminate this model, including developing and presenting an educational session at a national forum, and creating a portal on the Archive Project website where this guide will be permanently available alongside other oral history resources.

The Archive Project is eager to begin capturing these significant stories and work towards creating a more comprehensive record of the history of preservation! ■

2015 Bard Birthday Breakfast Benefit

Honoring Barbralee Diamonstein-Spielvogel with our Preservation Award and featuring a Conversation on Preservation with Darren Walker and Paul Goldberger

December 9, 2015

8:30 - 10:00 a.m.

Yale Club

50 Vanderbilt Avenue

Tickets range from \$75-\$500

See pages 4-5 for more details.

Everything Old is New Again

By Anthony C. Wood, Founder & Chair

In the years before the 1965 passage of New York's Landmarks Law, engaged and increasingly enraged New Yorkers worked through their civic organizations to employ exhibits, tours, plaques, public programs, and special publications to educate and enlist a constituency to advocate for the preservation of New York City's threatened landmarks and historic neighborhoods. Even the airwaves were activated in 1961 with the first televised documentary on historic preservation in the City. Now, in the midst of the gala celebration of the 50th anniversary of New York City's Landmarks Law, I have been struck by the fact that these time honored education and advocacy tools—refined, reimagined and often technologically upgraded—are still being used to educate and enlist generations of New Yorkers to the cause of historic preservation.

Certainly, the 50th anniversary celebration has added some exciting new approaches to engaging the public. From marathons in Central Park to banners being flown across the City, from the illumination of the Empire State Building to the ringing of the NASDAQ bell, and from preservation advocates looming large on the Jumbotron screen in Times Square to the “Honor Our Past, Imagine Our Future” billboard on the way to Kennedy airport, countless tools have been employed to get the message out to as many New Yorkers as possible. However, what has fascinated me the most is not the wonderful new media being utilized but the continued embrace and robust deployment of the very tools that helped propel the passage of the Landmarks Law in the first place.

In the 1950s, several modest exhibitions

were mounted to help draw attention to New York City's architectural treasures. The 50th anniversary has been celebrated with no fewer than ten new exhibitions. Currently on view and extended through the end of the year is the blockbuster *Saving Place: Fifty Years of New York City Landmarks* exhibition at the Museum of the City of New York. (A virtual smorgasbord of preservation-themed

of transportation, landmarks the Scots built, lost landmarks, existing landmarks, potential landmarks; landmarks here, there, and everywhere! Those 1950s pre-law exhibits were only seen by a select crowd of a few hundred, but today's exhibitions have reached a broad and vast audience of tens of thousands.

Architectural walking tours, inaugurated in New York City by the Municipal Art Society in 1956, have long been a staple of preservation awareness. Thanks to the 50th anniversary, walking tours and bus tours have reached a new level of intensity. Whether a marathon all-day five borough bus tour of Art Deco treasures or numerous exhilarating romps through the City's historic districts large and small, near and far, New Yorkers have gotten up close and personal to their history. Walk on, New York!

The 1950s also debuted the “Landmarks of New York” plaque program of the New York Community Trust. Thanks in part to the 50th anniversary, the Cultural Medallion Program of the Historic Landmarks Preservation Center has been in high gear mounting medallions on sites linked to figures ranging from the Archive Project's own favorite, the preservation great Albert S. Bard (grandfather of our Landmarks Law and subject of an article by yours truly in the latest issue of the Museum of the City of New York's *City Courant*) to former Congresswoman Bella Abzug, former Mayor John Lindsay, and Dr. Jonas Salk, who discovered the polio vaccine.

As a young preservationist (yes, that was decades ago) I questioned the value of these old-fashioned preservation activities. Weren't



The George McAneny Award from the American Historical Preservation Society (aka the American Scenic and Historic Preservation Society), sculpted by Paul Manship, Courtesy of Medallion Art Company

exhibitions preceded it.) Organizations ranging from the Alice Austen House and the Society of Illustrators to the New York School of Interior Design and the New York Transit Museum celebrated preservation with exhibitions highlighting scenic landmarks, interior landmarks, landmarks

walking tours and plaques examples of 1950s preservation? Hadn't we progressed beyond that? Shouldn't our focus be on hard-edge preservation policy issues and the politics of preservation? Do exhibitions, walking tours, documentaries, medallions, and the vast array of public programs that have accompanied them actually save buildings? Do they really help move the needle for the cause of historic preservation?

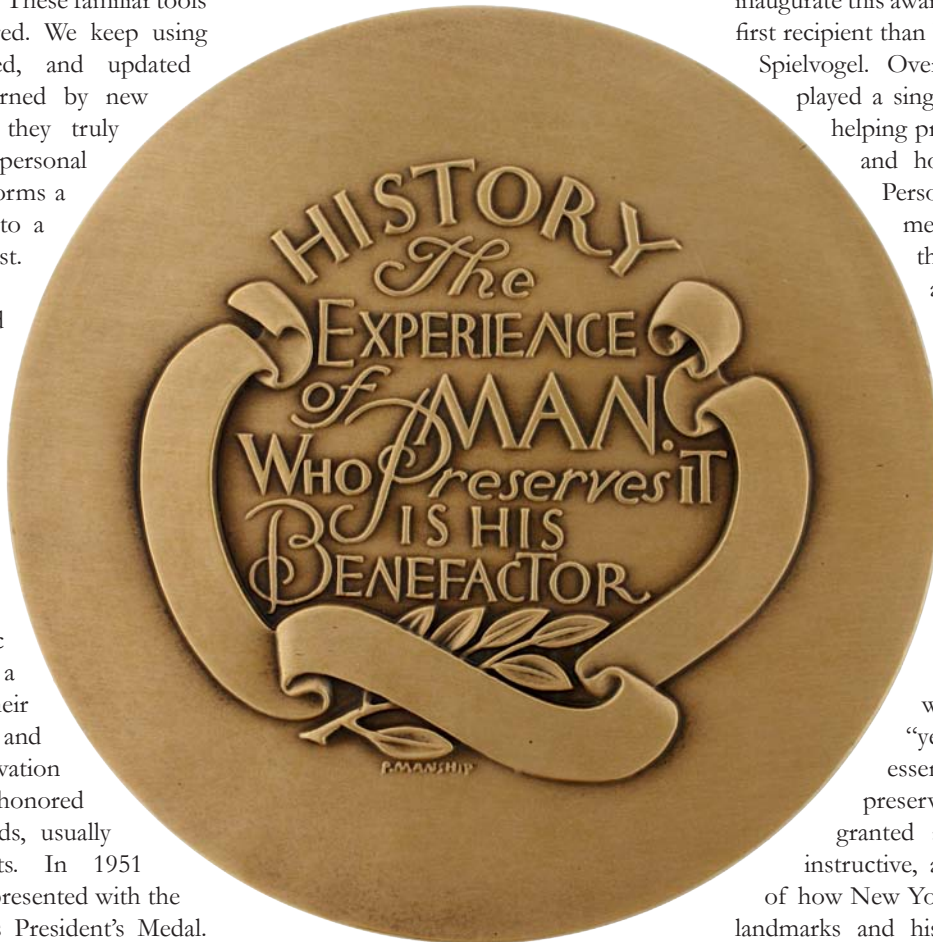
Today I have to answer that question with a resounding "yes." Not only is constant vigilance essential for preservation, so too is the constant engagement of the public, one generation after another. These familiar tools are indeed time honored. We keep using them—revised, inspired, and updated by what we have learned by new technologies—because they truly engage people. It is that personal engagement that transforms a passive New Yorker into a passionate preservationist.

Another deeply rooted and cherished activity that has served historic preservation well is the presentation of awards. By recognizing the remarkable figures whose achievements represent their own values and missions, preservation and civic organizations put a public spotlight on their efforts. In the 1940s and 1950s the great preservation figures were routinely honored with medals and awards, usually presented at banquets. In 1951 George McAneny was presented with the Municipal Art Society's President's Medal. Among those sitting on the dais was Albert Bard. The banquet featured "Hearts of Celery, Queen Olives, Gumbo Creole, Breast of Rhode Island Duckling stuffed with bread and apples, watercress, asparagus vinaigrette, [and] Baba au Rhum..." The following year the award was given to Bard.

My favorite of all the preservation medals is the stunning George McAneny Award, established in 1945 and designed by Paul Manship. Awarded for years by the American

Scenic and Historic Preservation Society and named for and made possible by its longtime president, prominent New York City civil servant George McAneny, it recognized distinguished service to the cause of preservation. Over the years it went to such nationally prominent preservation figures as Major General Ulysses Simpson Grant, III, Henry Francis du Pont, C.C. Burlingham, H.P. Pell, William Sumner Appleton, and David Finley.

In recent times, sadly but perhaps understandably, bestowing awards often seems to be more about elevating an



Reverse of the George McAneny Award from the American Historical Preservation Society (aka the American Scenic and Historic Preservation Society), Courtesy of Medallion Art Company

organization's finances than elevating its mission and values. Yet the power of an award to highlight an organization's work is as real today as when the American Scenic and Historic Preservation Society launched its award in 1945. Inspired by this long history of such medals, the New York

Preservation Archive Project is having a new preservation medal cast and will present it for the first time this December at our annual Bard Birthday Breakfast Benefit (see article on pages 4-5). The Archive Project's Preservation Award will be presented to individuals whose work exemplifies the preservation, documentation, and celebration of the history of preservation, which is the focus of our work. The award will be given out periodically—when it is truly deserved.

There is no better time than the 50th anniversary of the Landmarks Law to inaugurate this award and no more deserving first recipient than Barbaralee Diamonstein-Spielvogel. Over the decades she has played a singular and decisive role in helping preservationists remember and honor their own history. Personally, I remember meeting with her to discuss the planning of the 15th anniversary celebration of the Landmarks Law!

Does preservation need another award? Another exhibition? Another walking tour or another plaque? Another documentary? Even if the wrecking ball stopped swinging tomorrow, the answer would still be an emphatic "yes." All these efforts are essential to ensuring that preservation is not taken for granted and that the inspiring, instructive, and inspirational history of how New York City has preserved its landmarks and historic neighborhoods is not lost to future generations. The various methods may be old but through reinvention and fresh audiences they are new again. For as musician Peter Allen's wonderful lyrics sing out:

*"... don't throw the past away
You might need it some other rainy day
Dreams can come true again
When everything old is new again" ■*

2015 Bard Birthday Breakfast Benefit

Inaugural Preservation Award to be Bestowed upon Diamonstein-Spielvogel at this Year's Benefit

Few New Yorkers have done more to celebrate, document, and preserve the history of preservation than Barbaralee Diamonstein-Spielvogel. From her seemingly tireless leadership in celebrating the anniversaries of the New York City Landmarks Law, to her books documenting the City's evolving preservation landscape, her spirited efforts to promote this significant history have become an invaluable asset in helping to shape the future of our City while honoring its past. Therefore, the New York Preservation Archive Project can imagine no better recipient for its inaugural Preservation Award—created to honor outstanding contributions to the celebration, preservation, and documentation of the history of preservation in New York City—than Barbaralee. The award medal, which has been designed and cast by the award-winning Atelier Sisk in the City Beautiful tradition, will be presented at the Twelfth Annual Bard Birthday Breakfast Benefit, to be held at the Yale Club on the morning of December 9th. The breakfast will also feature a conversation on preservation with Darren Walker, president of the Ford Foundation, and architecture critic Paul Goldberger.

The Bard Birthday Breakfast Benefit, the Archive Project's signature fundraising event, is held each year to memorialize civic figure Albert S. Bard (born December 1866; died March 1963). Bard was a leader in working to protect the aesthetic values of special places, drafting the New York State legislation which authorized New York City's Landmarks Law

and advocating for City Beautiful concerns ranging from billboard control to zoning.



Barbaralee Diamonstein-Spielvogel, Courtesy of Joyce Ravid

A civic figure in her own right, Barbaralee has been involved in many facets of art, design, architecture, and public policy. However, the Archive Project's Preservation Award honors her long record of calling wider attention to preservation history over the course of her 50-year career. Her dedication to and involvement in preservation began upon her appointment as White House Assistant by President Lyndon B. Johnson, where she was a driving force in creating the first, and only, White House Festival of the

Arts. She then became the first Director of Cultural Affairs in New York City, a position that involved the preservation and archiving of documented materials. Barbaralee was also the longest-serving Commissioner of the Landmarks Preservation Commission, spanning four New York City mayoral administrations from 1972 to 1987. She served as the Chair of the New York Landmarks Preservation Foundation from 1987 to 1995, where she created and underwrote the placement of historic district street signs, descriptive markers, and maps in each of New York City's historic districts. Since 1995, Barbaralee has been the Chair of the Historic Landmarks Preservation Center, where she created the Cultural Medallion Program documenting distinguished individuals, notable occurrences, and other important aspects of New York City's cultural, economic, political, and social history. Barbaralee has also been involved in celebrating the various anniversaries of the New York City Landmarks Law. Most recently, she became the founding Chair of the NYC

Landmarks50 Alliance, a diverse consortium of over 180 member organizations, who have collaborated to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the Landmarks Law through a series of programs held throughout the five boroughs.

Barbaralee also created and raised the funds for *Treasures of New York: The Landmarks Preservation Movement*, the first hour-long program about the landmarks of New York City, produced by WNET in celebration



Darren Walker, Courtesy of the Ford Foundation

heritage preservation, arts and culture, human rights, urban development, and free expression. Walker entered the not-for-profit sector as chief operating officer for the Abyssinian Development Corporation, founded in 1989 as a community development organization dedicated to building the human, social, and physical capital in Harlem. There he led efforts to develop over 1,000 units of housing for low and moderate income families, was involved in two of Harlem's largest privately-financed commercial projects in 30 years, and oversaw the development of the first public school built in New York City by a community organization. He is also a member of the boards of the Friends of the High Line and the Foundation

for Art and Preservation in Embassies.

of the 50th anniversary of the Landmarks Law. She was a founding director of the High Line, one of the most celebrated adaptive reuse projects in the City's recent history. Barbaralee is the author of 20 books, including *Buildings Reborn*, *Landmarks: Eighteen Wonders of the New York World* and *The Landmarks of New York: An Illustrated Record of the City's Historic Buildings*, with its sixth edition to be published in 2016. Three exhibitions based on this book have circulated, one to 82 countries throughout the world by the U.S. Department of State, the second across the United States, and the third now in its sixth year traveling within New York State. Barbaralee continues to be an influential proponent of the importance of preservation's past, and the New York Preservation Archive Project is thrilled to be presenting her with its inaugural Preservation Award.

Darren Walker is president of the Ford Foundation, the second largest philanthropy in the United States, with over \$12 billion in assets and \$500 million in annual giving. The foundation's mission is to advance human welfare, with a specific focus of disrupting inequality in its many forms. For more than two decades Walker has been a leader in the not-for-profit and philanthropic sectors, working on an array of issues including

The Ford Foundation has similarly been involved with preservation efforts for years, from providing support for *With Heritage So Rich*, the publication that helped pass the 1966 National Preservation Act, and supporting innovative affordable housing and preservation work in Savannah, Georgia in the 1980s, to recently funding WNET's *Treasures of New York* episode on the Landmarks Preservation Movement. Both Walker and the Ford Foundation clearly understand the role heritage preservation, the arts, and quality of life issues play in civic life. In a conversation with architecture critic Paul Golberger, Walker will offer insight on the importance of place, culture, urbanism, and community building, as well as inequality as a threat to preservation and cultural pluralism. And in honor of the 50th anniversary of New York City's Landmarks Law, Walker and Goldberger will also reflect upon where preservation has been and suggest how the movement needs to evolve in the future.

Please join us for this special event. Tickets are available now! Your generous participation at any level will help support the Archive Project's significant efforts to preserve preservation's past. ■



2015 Bard Birthday Breakfast Benefit

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December 9, 2015

8:30 - 10:00 a.m.

Yale Club

50 Vanderbilt Avenue

Tickets:

Anniversary Co-Chair: \$500

Benefit Committee: \$300

Benefit Tickets: \$150

Student Tickets: \$75

To purchase tickets, or if you have any questions about the event, please visit our website at www.nypap.org or contact Archive Project Executive Director Matthew Coody at mcoody@nypap.org or 212-988-8379.

Your support of the 2015 Bard Birthday Breakfast Benefit will enable the New York Preservation Archive Project to continue its efforts to record and document the history of the historic preservation movement in New York City. We are very excited about this upcoming event and sincerely hope you will join us on December 9th!

Archival Assistance Fund

Grantees Announced in Second Round of Archival Funding

The Archive Project recently announced the second set of grants from its Archival Assistance Fund, established to help not-for-profit organizations identify and maintain archival resources and organizational documents related to the historic preservation movement. This grant program is another example of outreach initiatives on the part of the Archive Project to provide practical assistance while also instilling a lasting archival mindset in the New York City preservation community.

The number of Archival Assistance Fund applications was very encouraging; many well-known candidates with significant preservation-related histories and important collections applied for grants, demonstrating the need for this kind of funding and the recognition by the preservation community that the Archive Project is there to assist with these projects. After evaluating the various proposals carefully, funding was provided to six applicants. Three of the recipients are historic house museums—the Bowne House Historical Society in Queens, the Mount Vernon Hotel Museum & Garden on the Upper East Side, and the Merchant's House Museum in NoHo. Two grantees are preservation-related not-for-profit organizations—the NYC Landmarks50 Alliance and the Greenwich Village Society for Historic Preservation. And the final recipient, Brooklyn's Evergreens Cemetery Preservation Foundation, helps preserve one of the City's historic cemeteries. Each organization cited special needs for archival assistance, ranging from basic archival supplies and consultant expertise to digitization projects and the complete re-housing of collections. (For a list of the specific projects being funded, please see the sidebar on page 8.)

Given the Archive Project's mission to safeguard and share the story of preservation in New York, each organization was required in its application to state how its archival collection is significant to the history of historic preservation. And in honor of the

50th anniversary of the passage of New York City's Landmarks Law in 2015, preference was given to applicants who clearly demonstrated their collection's significance to the past 50 years of historic preservation in New York City. The varied responses reveal that despite their unique missions and the diversity of their archival holdings, every grant recipient boasts a record of activism in preservation over the past 50 years and a demonstrated commitment to safeguarding the story of those efforts.

Register of Historic Places, as well as being both a New York City and New York State landmark. The Bowne House's collections include important Bowne/Parsons family papers and documents dating from the mid-17th through the mid-20th centuries, as well as deeds, photographs, bibles, furniture, rare books and manuscripts, and other artifacts. Also included is documentation of repairs and modifications to the structure from 1669 to the present, organizational records relating to the founding of the museum,

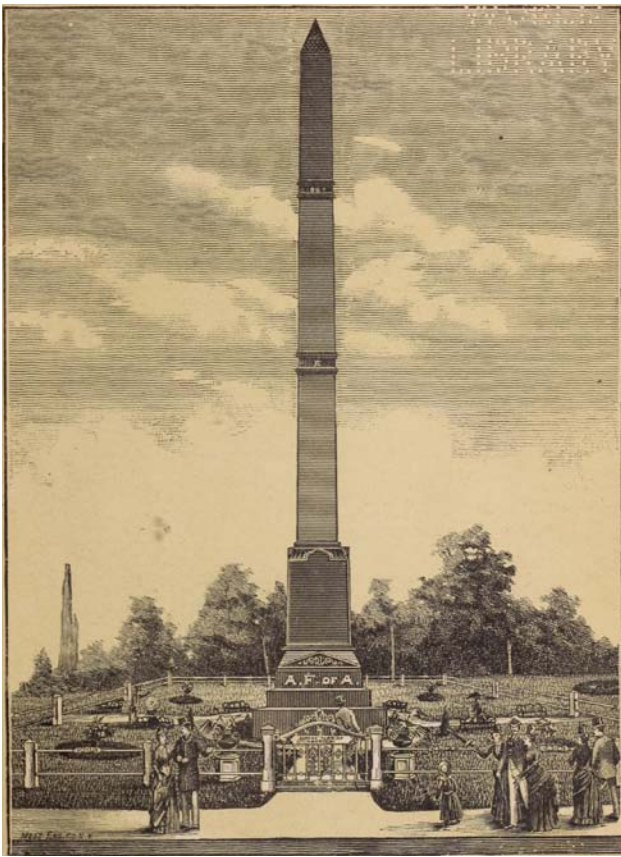


Bowne House c. 1850, Courtesy of the Library of Congress

The **Bowne House Historical Society** in Flushing, Queens, was founded in 1946 by a group of local residents for the sole purpose of purchasing the Bowne House from the Parsons family and opening it to the public as a museum. Since it successfully did so in 1947, the Society's mission has been to preserve the Bowne House, its artifacts, and grounds because of their educational and historical significance to the history of New York, especially the events that occurred there that helped to establish the important values of "freedom of conscience and religious liberty in America." The building is the oldest house in the borough of Queens (1661), and is listed on the National

Historic American Buildings Survey Reports, historic structure reports, interpretation plans, educational materials, paint analyses, and dendrochronology, archaeological, and architects' reports.

The **Evergreens Cemetery Preservation Foundation** is the custodian of an historic cemetery located in Brooklyn that was founded in 1849. The Foundation's mission is to preserve the grounds, plantings, monuments, and graves of the Evergreens Cemetery, to educate the public about the burial site through programming and educational materials, and to welcome the general public to the cemetery. The



Actors' Monument at Evergreens Cemetery c. 1888,
Courtesy of Columbia University Libraries

cemetery's design is the only one linked to renowned landscape architect Andrew Jackson Downing (who worked with Alexander Jackson Davis); other designers of the grounds have included Calvert Vaux, of Central Park fame. Because the cemetery is non-sectarian, an array of ethnicities and immigrant groups are buried here, as well as "social pariahs" who were not allowed to be buried in other cemeteries. It has therefore become the final resting place of over 526,000 people who represent the diverse history of New York City. The Foundation's archives date back to the cemetery's establishment, and include burial records, maps of the cemetery, and photographs of stained glass windows located on the premises. Also included are records of the Foundation's work to preserve and restore historic monuments and significant sites within the cemetery's grounds. These include the tract where African-American soldiers from the Civil War lie buried, the Seaman's Monument where thousands of merchant seamen have been buried over the past 150 years, an impressive Brewer's Row of mausoleums built by local brewery owners, memorials for the Triangle shirtwaist factory fire and

General Slocum disaster, and the site where displaced graves were relocated due to development pressures, including those of The Brick Church (an elegant Georgian structure on Beekman Street built in 1768 and demolished, despite outcry, for the construction of *The New York Times* Building in 1858).

The **Merchant's House Museum** at 29 East 4th Street, near Washington Square Park, educates the public about the life of the Tredwells, a prosperous merchant family, and their four Irish servants who lived in the house from 1835-1865, a transformative time in New York City history. This house is the only family residence in the City to be preserved virtually intact from the 19th century, complete with original furnishings and the personal possessions of the

Tredwell family. The individuals essential to the establishment and refurbishment of the Museum were founder George Chapman and restoration architect Joseph Roberto, who left critical archival materials that tell the story of the transformation of the house to a museum in the 1930s and its major refurbishment in the 1960s and '70s under Roberto. His records provide essential information indicating what elements were present in the house when he began his work and what he added,

thus helping ensure historical accuracy for work done in the Museum in the future.

A witness to the long-established commitment of Greenwich Village grassroots preservation efforts, the **Greenwich Village Society for Historic Preservation** (GVSHIP) has worked since 1980 to safeguard the architectural heritage and cultural history of Greenwich Village, the East Village, NoHo, and beyond through research, education, and advocacy. GVSHIP holds in its archival collection a wide range of materials that reflect the role of the Village as an icon in local and national preservation movements. GVSHIP's image collection consists of 300 photographs, prints, slides, and negatives that chronicle the preservation struggles of the Village. GVSHIP received a grant from the Archival Assistance Fund in 2013 to digitize these images and create a website that has made them publicly accessible. This visual trove is complemented by GVHSP's oral history series, in which Village preservation pioneers tell their stories for posterity, and a collection of preservation-related manuscripts featuring leading researchers in the field. All are of critical importance to the history of the preservation community.

Originally built as a carriage house in 1799 and converted into a hotel in 1826, the **Mount Vernon Hotel Museum & Garden**, at 421 East 61st Street, is a site steeped in preservation history. Purchased in 1924 by the Colonial Dames of America (one of the earliest societies involved with historic preservation) to prevent its destruction, the site was originally interpreted as the Federal-era home and garden of Abigail



Elevation of the Mount Vernon Hotel Museum, created in 1975 as part of a Historic American Buildings Survey, Courtesy of the Library of Congress

Project Grants

The **Bowne House Historical Society** will hire an archivist to develop an archival collections management policy.

The **Evergreens Cemetery Preservation Foundation** (ECPF) will review, survey, and preserve documents in its special collection entitled the “Archives of The Seaman’s Grounds,” which documents the over 2,000 seamen buried near the cemetery’s Seaman’s Monument. ECPF will also create a searchable online database and an archival management policy, which in turn will be shared with other historically-significant cemeteries to assist them with their archival needs.

The **Merchant’s House Museum** will re-house and digitally catalogue oversized materials, photographs, audiovisual materials, and slides, as well as create a finder’s guide for the Chapman and Roberto Archives.

The **Mount Vernon Hotel Museum & Garden** will hire an archivist to work with the curator on an archival collections management policy.

The **Greenwich Village Society for Historic Preservation** will enhance its oral history archive by hiring professional sound engineers to create short audio clips from 20 of the full-length oral history recordings in the current collection. These clips will be used to highlight important segments of the interviews for educational purposes and as a marketing tool to showcase the project. They will also enhance the user experience of the archive, and will allow greater utilization by a larger and more diverse audience.

The **NYC Landmarks50 Alliance** has kept a detailed record of its formation, development, and celebratory activities since its inception in 2012. The Alliance will reorganize and re-house this collection of materials and recordings in appropriate archival folders and boxes and hire an archivist to create a chronological and categorical finding aid for this reorganized collection.

Adams Smith, John Adams’s daughter, who owned the surrounding property briefly in 1795 but never actually lived onsite. Research for a 12-year reinterpretation project funded by the National Endowment for the Humanities led the site to change its name to the Mount Vernon Hotel Museum & Garden in 2000, and to exhibit its unique historic function as a day hotel for travelers in Jacksonian-era New York City. The museum’s extensive permanent collection of paintings, furniture, ceramics, prints, glass, and other decorative arts and

and to help develop a new audience and preservation community who will take up the responsibility of preserving the cityscape in the future. The Alliance has grown to comprise over 180 member organizations and institutions (including the Archive Project, a founding member), and each has planned a special project or program for the anniversary. The Alliance’s archive documents the formation, development, and activities of the organization from 2012 through the present, and includes correspondence, operational records,



Actress Kate Loprest singing at the NYC Landmarks50 Alliance’s event at the Four Seasons restaurant in celebration of the 50th anniversary of the Landmarks Law, Courtesy of Tina Fineberg/*The New York Times*

material culture objects was organized in 1977 by a professional curatorial staff; the collection also contains photographs and negatives, newspaper clippings, architectural renderings, and manuscripts relating to the building’s extensive history, as well as the preservation and interpretation of the building and garden in the late-19th through the 20th century.

The **NYC Landmarks50 Alliance** was formed in July 2012 to plan the commemoration of the 50th anniversary of New York City’s Landmarks Law in 2015 by encouraging the preservation community and New York City as a whole to reflect upon and embrace the importance of historic preservation in shaping the City. The Alliance’s goal is to both broaden the appreciation of and commitment to the admired architectural heritage of the City,

photographs, video and audio recordings, press clippings, and ephemera, all significant records of the ongoing history of this “landmark” anniversary celebration.

The variety and depth of these collections, which cover nearly 350 years of New York City history, remind us of the vast array of significant materials that can be found in New York City, and how important these collections are as resources of information for scholars and activists. The Archival Assistance Fund has been incredibly satisfying for the Archive Project as it engenders interaction with organizations seeking to improve the condition and organization of their archival collections. Helping to make these improvements possible, even on a modest scale, makes the Archival Assistance Fund beneficial for all those concerned. ■



Attendees gathered at the Museum of the City of New York for *Celebrating 50 Years of Preservation Public Service*, Courtesy of the Archive Project

NYPAP Events

Our Public Programs Continue to Celebrate, Educate, & Inspire

This past July the New York Preservation Archive Project joined forces with the Museum of the City of New York in **Celebrating 50 Years of Preservation Public Service** with a special gathering that honored past and present commissioners, chairs, executive directors, and staff of the New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission (LPC). Conceived as part of the Museum's current exhibition *Saving Place: 50 Years of New York City Landmarks* (extended through January 3, 2016), this unofficial reunion gathered a remarkable range of people who have been associated at some point with the Commission, from current interns to several former chairs and from local New Yorkers to an attendee traveling all the way from Japan! Guests enjoyed cake and champagne while catching up with colleagues, toured the exhibition

with curator Andrew Dolkart, and gathered together for a group photo.

The Archive Project worked closely with the City Museum to make this celebration interactive and capture the memories of those present. Via a large wall-mounted timeline, attendees were able to post their LPC story, populating the panel with brief, personal memories of their work at the Commission, prompted by such questions as, "What landmark are you most proud of preserving and why?" and "What sites do you wish were landmarks?" The Archive Project also had "roving reporters" on hand during the celebration to capture impromptu interviews. The City Museum has graciously allowed our interviewers access to several programs related to the 50th anniversary exhibition, and some incredible insight

and reminiscences have been captured. In addition, at the event the Archive Project continued to gather the names and contact information of current and former staff members of the LPC in order to create a master list. This document has the potential to be an important historical record, but it is still incomplete. If you are a former staff member or commissioner and can help provide names and contact information for past colleagues, please email us at info@nypap.org. The master list of names, as it currently stands, can be accessed on the Archive Project website at www.nypap.org.

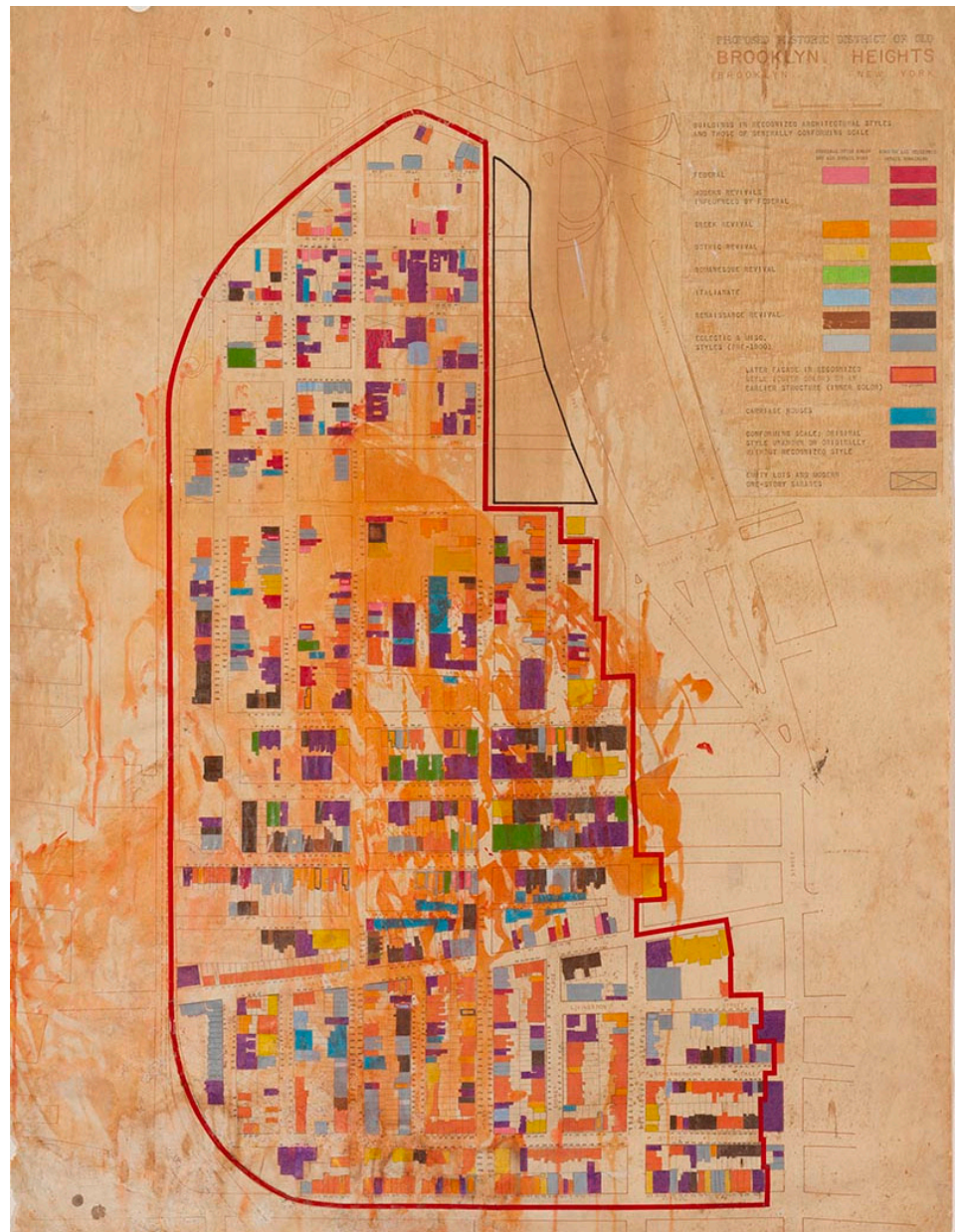
Join us at the Brooklyn Historical Society on Monday, November 23rd at 6:30 p.m. for **Cocktails and Conversation: An Evening to Honor NYC's First Historic District**. This program will celebrate the 50th anniversary of the designation of Brooklyn Heights as an historic district with cocktails and a program featuring architectural historian Francis Morrone and Anthony C. Wood, founder and chair of the

Stewardship Society

Have you taken advantage of one of the behind-the-scenes tours offered to the Archive Project's Stewardship Society? After the recent visit to the Shubert Archive's fantastic theatre-related collection, this fall there will be yet another wonderful opportunity to explore a part of New York City that is not typically accessible to the public: a tour of the Grand Masonic Lodge of New York on December 3rd! Located in the heart of Chelsea, the Grand Lodge's interiors range in lavish revival styles from Renaissance to Jacobean. Stewards will be allowed access to the Lodge's archival collections and explore the Chancellor Robert R. Livingston Masonic Library. As one of the world's foremost repositories of Masonic books (with volumes detailing such topics as Masonic symbolism and occultism) and a collection that includes ritual artifacts, jewelry, artwork, and ephemera, this collection is not to be missed.

The New York Preservation Archive Project is pleased to offer such inimitable experiences to our Stewardship Society, which consists of our most devoted benefactors who annually contribute \$500 or more in general support. Because our work could not be done without our generous donors, the Society was created to celebrate these supporters with a series of unique tours at institutional archives and private collections throughout New York City. Since its launch in 2011, the Society has held private viewings of archival treasures at such locations as Carnegie Hall, the Explorers Club, and the Park Avenue Armory.

We hope that you will consider becoming a Steward of the New York Preservation Archive Project and thus a steward of the history of New York City's preservation movement. To join the Society, please contact Matthew Coody at mcoody@nypap.org or 212-988-8379, or just note "Stewardship Society" on your donation check or online contribution.



Hand-drawn map of the proposed Brooklyn Heights Historic District created by Otis and Nancy Pearsall c. 1950, Courtesy of the Brooklyn Historical Society

Archive Project. Designated on November 23, 1965, the Brooklyn Heights Historic District was New York City's first historic district, and as such was an important step in widening the scope of New York City's Landmarks Preservation Commission—until then only individual buildings had been considered for landmark designation by the newly-formed Commission. This precedent-setting move was prompted by a powerful local constituency advocating for the protection of their neighborhood in the face of major public projects that were insensitive to the area's significant historic fabric. These activists included nascent organizations such as the Brooklyn

Heights Association and the Community Conservation and Improvement Council, as well as concerned individuals such as Henry Hope Reed, Clay Lancaster, and Otis and Nancy Pearsall. Today the Brooklyn Heights Historic District remains largely intact and is an excellent example of how a community successfully staved off major development pressures and preserved its neighborhood. Offered in partnership with the Brooklyn Historical Society and the Brooklyn Heights Association, ticket prices for this program range from \$80-\$100. To reserve a place at this anniversary celebration, please visit the Brooklyn Historical Society's website at www.brooklynhistory.org. ■



Clockwise from left: A costumed Radio City Rockette collects signatures on a petition to preserve the historic Hall, 1978; Rockettes kick for the cameras at a photo exhibition advocating for the preservation of the Hall's Art Deco interiors, 1978; Rockette Phyllis Wujko yells with delight after the announcement that the Hall would remain open, 1978; All photographs courtesy of Flashbak.com

Preservation History in Quotes

"Landmark designation may well be the last nail in [Radio City] Music Hall's coffin." - Alton Marshall

It might be difficult to imagine New York City without Radio City Music Hall, but in the late 1970s, that was a distinct possibility. Alton Marshall, the president of Rockefeller Center and owner of the Hall, included the above statement in his testimony at a New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission (LPC) hearing that would eventually decide whether or not the iconic theater would be designated a New York City interior landmark. Marshall had announced that the Hall would close in 1978 because of a \$2.3 million deficit. Reportedly there were plans to replace the Art Deco interiors with offices. In response to this announcement, efforts were launched to protect the building,

spearheaded by Lieutenant Governor Mary Anne Krupsak and a "rescue committee" of business, government, labor, and cultural group representatives. Even the world-famous Radio City Rockettes joined in to help save the building (see above).

Despite Marshall's "nail in the coffin" testimony, on March 28, 1978, Radio City Music Hall's interior was designated a landmark by the LPC. And although the next year was fiscally unstable, the Music Hall minimized financial losses, eventually turning a profit and reopening to the public in 1980. Five years later the exterior was designated as part of the larger Rockefeller

Center complex. After a restoration in 1999, Radio City Music Hall has been shining brighter than ever. It continues to be a wildly successful venue for film premieres, The Radio City Christmas Spectacular, leading pop and rock performances, as well as televised events including the Tony Awards and the NFL Draft. Landmark designation hardly proved to be the death knell of Radio City Music Hall, and the iconic building lives on vibrantly.

To read more about the preservation history of Radio City Music Hall, please visit our Preservation Database entry on the topic at www.nypap.org. ■



Six generations of women in Yvonne Taylor's family who have lived in the Coleman-Gray House, the oldest standing house in Sandy Ground, Staten Island, Courtesy of Leyla Vural

Capturing Untold Stories

Oral History Project Focusing on Diversity and the Outer Boroughs Nears Completion

This summer the Archive Project embarked on a new oral history initiative, *Saving Preservation Stories: Diversity and the Outer Boroughs*, and over the past few months great progress has been made. The goal of this project is to capture key memories of preservation campaigns in New York City, specifically those that have been underrepresented thus far. Toward that end, we are conducting oral history interviews with leading members of preservation actions in the boroughs outside Manhattan, as well as preservation initiatives significant to minority populations. Thanks to a grant from the New York Community Trust, the Archive Project is poised to fill a gap in the historical narrative of preservation in New York City over the last century.

Since June the Archive Project has taken its first steps to highlight the great works of New York's racial and ethnic minorities. Our oral history team has so far been to Harlem, Bayside, Queens, Crown Heights, Brooklyn, and Rossville, Staten Island to interview leaders who have changed the landscape by preserving the history, architecture, and sense of place of their neighborhoods. All of the interviews conducted for the *Saving Preservation Stories* project have been recorded

in high quality audio and are accompanied by photographs. Two interviews, so far, have also been captured on video. Once all the interviews are completed they will be available to the public via our website, www.nypap.org.

Our interviewees include **Mandingo Tshaka**, a longtime community activist in Queens, who advocated for the archaeological survey and proper recognition of the Olde Towne of Flushing Burial Ground. The burial ground dates back to the 1840s and the majority of the nearly 1,000 people interred there are of African-American and Native-American descent.

Yvonne Taylor is a founding member of the Sandy Ground Historical Society in Staten Island, which was formed in the 1970s to promote the history of the Sandy Ground community and work for the preservation of its structures, some of which are New York City landmarks. Sandy Ground was built by free blacks in the decades before the Civil War, and some believe it to be the oldest continuously-held settlement established by free blacks in North America. Yvonne Taylor's house is the oldest remaining building in Sandy Ground, constructed

some time before 1859 and designated a New York City landmark in 2011.

Ronald Melichar is the current president of the Hamilton Heights-West Harlem Community Preservation Organization, which among other quality of life issues, deals with the preservation of West Harlem's architecture and its historical and cultural significance spanning from the Revolutionary War to the Harlem Renaissance. In 2008, Melichar was active in securing a new location for Hamilton Grange, Alexander Hamilton's former home, in St. Nicholas Park, and in expanding the Hamilton Heights Historic District to include Sugar Hill in the early 2000s.

Denise Brown-Puryear and **Deborah Young** cofounded the Crown Heights North Association in 2001 to advocate for the preservation of the historic buildings of Crown Heights, Brooklyn, as well as revitalization, housing stabilization, and the economic and cultural enhancement of its residents. Since that time they have lead successful campaigns to create three designated historic districts in the area that include many homes built as early as the 1870s.

In her interview, Denise Brown-Puryear described how people of color have, so far, gained little recognition for their work in the preservation field. “At the Historic Districts Council meeting, when [the Crown Heights North Association] all showed up, and we were [almost] all African-American...I saw the expressions on people’s faces, and they were surprised.” She hopes that by sharing her story, she can raise awareness about the contributions African- and Caribbean-Americans have made to the richness of New York City’s culture and



Denise Brown-Puryear and Deborah Young, cofounders of the Crown Heights North Association, photographed in Deborah’s home, a beautifully restored brownstone in the Crown Heights North II Historic District, Courtesy of Liz Strong

history. “A lot of things we do in our own communities,” she explained, “we do them quietly and silently. There’s no press. There is no publicity...they’ll come out with a sound bite about something tragic, but the positive things, which are plentiful throughout our communities and always have been, are not highlighted.” The Archive Project feels that through our mission of bringing neglected narratives of historic preservation into public view, we can begin to address this underrepresentation.

Now is the right time to be collecting these important stories. The New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission has also recognized the underrepresentation of historic outer borough sites and, in recent years, has made a concerted effort to expand its focus beyond Manhattan. However, over the years many of these long-standing campaigns have gone unnoticed, or community leaders have been unaware of or unable to access preservation resources; in the meantime many sites have fallen into decay or been swept aside by thoughtless development. In Sandy Ground for example, developers moved in quickly beginning in the 1970s. “We could see the community was changing,” said Yvonne Taylor. “Apparently the developers had a head start on us...But we thought, well, if we can’t preserve the community physically as it is, we can at

least preserve the history. They can’t take that away from us.” Thanks to the efforts of Taylor and others in Sandy Ground, four buildings have been landmarked, and the Sandy Ground Historical Society is actively engaged in outreach and education. Preservationists and organizers like Taylor have changed the landscape in New York City by fighting for recognition of the unique history and architectural character of their communities. But as neighborhoods change and grow, memories of their contributions are in danger of being lost.

Through the interviews we have conducted so far, we have already uncovered important gems. We have documented reminiscences of what historic areas of the City once looked like, gained recognition for the significant work led by some who are no longer with us, and gathered valuable advice for future generations from a few of New York City’s most creative and hardworking preservationists. As Deborah Young said proudly about her neighborhood in Crown Heights, “there is a lot of history here. And history is education, and knowledge, and it’s a resource.” What we have gathered over the course of this oral history project will add to the value of those existing historical resources and build awareness.

Leading *Saving Preservation Stories: Diversity*

and the *Outer Boroughs* is Liz Strong, an experienced oral historian, who has worked for the Columbia Center for Oral History Research and the Washington State Department of Commerce, among others. She also recently completed her M.A. in Oral History at Columbia University. Assisting on this project as an interviewer is Leyla Vural, another recent graduate of Columbia’s Oral History Program. Leyla has twenty years of experience as a union staffer and consultant. She holds a Ph.D. in Geography from Rutgers University, and is passionate about using the tools of oral history for advocacy work.

Moving forward, the project will head north to focus on The Bronx, where the final interview of this phase of the project will be completed. However, the Archive Project is currently developing plans to secure additional funding so that we may continue to expand this important initiative. Therefore, if you have suggestions for interviewees, sites significant to minority communities, sites located in the boroughs outside Manhattan that might lack documentation, or any other valuable input, please contact Liz Strong, our Oral History Coordinator, at lizhibbard@gmail.com or the Archive Project’s Matthew Coody at mcoody@nypap.org. We look forward to sharing the final products of this project with the public soon. ■

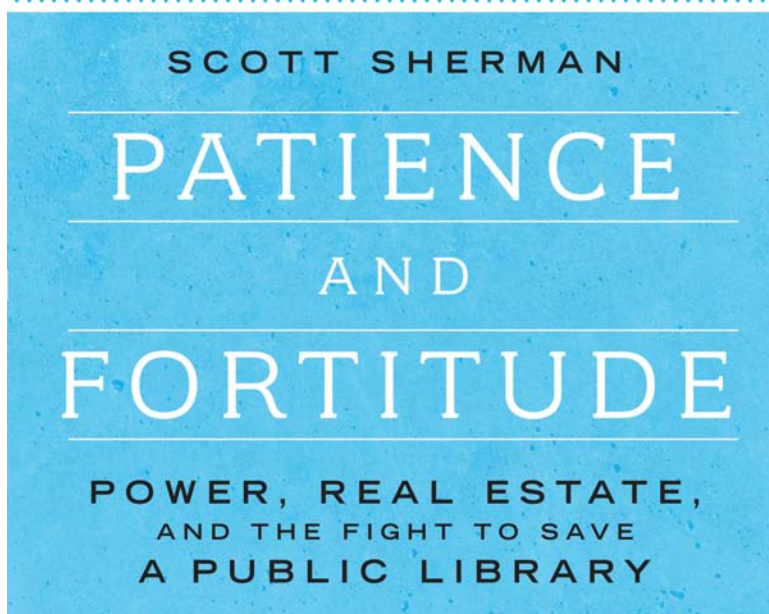
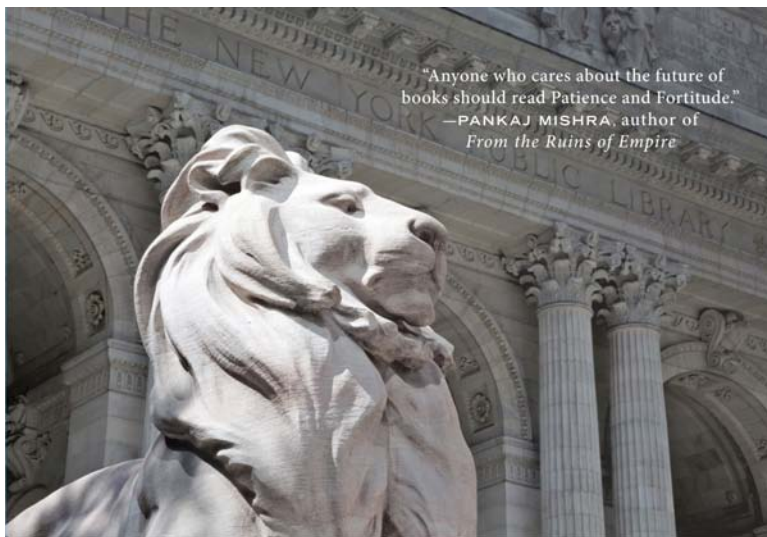
Book Review

Patience and Fortitude: Power, Real Estate, and the Fight to Save a Public Library

by Elizabeth Robn Jeffe, Vice-Chair

For anyone interested not only in preservation, but also in saving its story, *Patience and Fortitude: Power, Real Estate, and the Fight to Save a Public Library* by Scott Sherman is must reading. (“Patience” and “Fortitude” are the names given by Depression-era Mayor Fiorella La Guardia to the statues of the lions flanking the stairs at the entrance to the New York Public Library’s Main Branch at 42nd Street.) Sherman’s richly documented volume, published this year, provides a compelling account of the recent fight by a group of academics, writers, book lovers, and preservationists to save the 42nd Street library in both form and function. The battle was fought to block the implementation of the New York Public Library (NYPL) board’s Central Library Plan (CLP), which sought to redesign the magnificent Carrère and Hastings edifice, merge the other three midtown libraries into the 42nd Street library, remove all the books from the famous stacks to offsite storage, and demolish the stacks themselves. As Sherman summarizes it, this was “a brawl about democracy, architecture, and crucially, the role of books in the digital age.” Ultimately, the opponents of the CLP won the battle.

The CLP, first conceived by the NYPL Trustees in 2004 under the leadership



Cover of *Patience & Fortitude*; Courtesy of Melville House

of then-president Paul LeClerc, was a radical vision that virtually abandoned the famous landmark library’s role as a research institution in favor of remaking it into a media center and neighborhood gathering place. The engine running the CLP was a desire to gain much-needed revenues for the

library system. (Sherman does point out that contrary to its name, the NYPL is actually private and must raise its own funds. The NYPL system, serving Manhattan, Staten Island, and The Bronx, is an awkward combination of branch libraries that receive government financing, and the 42nd Street Library, which does not. The latter has been bleeding financially for many years in spite of the largesse of such patrons as Brooke Astor.) Hence, the CLP included a provision to sell some of the NYPL’s real estate, including its three midtown libraries: the Mid-Manhattan Library on Fifth Avenue between 39th and 40th Streets, the Science, Industry and Business Library at 34th Street and Madison Avenue, and the Donnell Library on West 53rd Street just off Fifth Avenue. The contents of these libraries would be moved to create a vast circulating library at the 42nd Street location in a dramatically altered physical space.

Essential to the plan was a version of the future in which digital resources would take precedence over print. This approach would essentially dismantle the long-revered function of the NYPL as a world-renowned research resource. In the opinion of many scholars, this simply would not work. As writer Caleb Crain is quoted in *Patience and Fortitude*, “I halt at the

problem of how to reproduce digitally the phenomenon of having a dozen physical books open to different pages at once on my work table. In the future, will I need to buy a dozen iPads?" With pressing financial burdens facing them, the Trustees took their cues from individuals on the board whose backgrounds were in real estate or finance. They also modeled the CLP on businesses such as FedEx and Netflix, with heavy input from consulting firms McKinsey and Company and Booz Allen Hamilton, none of which relate to libraries or scholarly pursuits. In fact, according to Sherman, as the CLP began to take shape, NYPL librarians who used to be included in discussions about library policy were shut out entirely from planning and evaluation.

In March 2008, when LeClerc announced that financier Stephen A. Schwartzman intended to give the NYPL a \$100 million gift, the CLP had been expanded to include plans to place the books in the famous stacks in offsite storage and, most shocking of all, to destroy the stacks themselves. (As Sherman points out, this new wrinkle was not mentioned in a *New York Times* article on Schwartzman's gift until the 20th paragraph. Indeed, the secrecy of the process in which the NYPL Trustees were engaged is a major theme of the book.) The final effect of the CLP, therefore, would be to destroy a beloved research institution. Gone forever would be the much-beloved experience of requesting a book, having it delivered from the stacks, and then perusing it in the Rose Reading Room. Now visitors would have to wait for books to be delivered from storage in Princeton, New Jersey. Also in 2008, British architect Norman Foster was charged with remodeling the revered Carrère and Hastings edifice at a projected cost of \$300 million. In the meantime, the noble structure was renamed the Stephen A. Schwartzman Building.

The recession of 2008 delayed the implementation of the CLP, and by 2011, Sherman's editor at *The Nation* asked him to write an article based on reports of distress that were surfacing about the NYPL Trustees' plan. Sherman's article, published in December and entitled "Upheaval at the New York Public Library," served as a wake-up call, and public outrage

ensued. Joan Scott, a historian at Princeton University, wrote an e-mail protest signed by the likes of writers Salman Rushdie and Tom Stoppard. Stanley Katz at Princeton also got on the bandwagon of protest in the early stages as did CUNY professor and bestselling biographer David Nasaw. (By this time, LeClerc was no longer president of the NYPL and his successor, Anthony Marx, was left with the task of implementing the CLP.) Early in December 2012, the venerable Ada Louise Huxtable, then the architecture critic of *The Wall Street Journal*, penned a scathing indictment of the CLP entitled "Undertaking Its Destruction." This was Huxtable's last preservation essay; she died soon after writing it.

A cadre of opponents to the CLP had organized initially under the leadership of Simeon Bankoff and the Historic Districts Council, and in May 2013 a not-for-profit organization called the Committee to Save the New York Public Library (CSNYPL) was created. Early leaders in the CSNYPL were architects Charles Warren and Theodore Grunewald as well as film director and producer Zack Winestine. In 2013, the CSNYPL managed to persuade then-mayoral candidate Bill de Blasio to speak for a few minutes in front of the library in favor of saving it from the CLP. (The City had pledged \$100 million in funding in conjunction with Stephen A. Schwartzman's gift.)

It is beyond the scope of this review to relate the entire story of the battle, and Sherman's wealth of detail and engaging narrative are well worth the purchase of the book. (For research purposes, *Patience and Fortitude* boasts an excellent index.) The most important "takeaway" for preservationists is the detailed account of how the struggle became organized and what made it effective. The CSNYPL fought a modern campaign, using Twitter, a website, a Facebook page, and other social media such as the "Humans of New York" photo page on Facebook. Yes, traditional journalism and activism (including two lawsuits) were important, but new outreach by—and to—younger preservationists was critical. Indeed, there is no small irony in the fact that the digital vision at the heart of the CLP was defeated by a strategy

that effectively used social media. The story of the fight also highlights what Sherman views as sorry performances by some elected officials and the LPC, which, according to Sherman, simply "rubber-stamped" elements of the CLP.

In the end, CSNYPL emerged victorious, and the 42nd Street library was saved from physical and functional alteration. However, some provisions of the CLP were not forestalled. The Donnell Library was indeed sold and has been temporarily housed at significant expense on East 46th Street. A hotel and apartment structure now stands in its former location. The NYPL still plans to sell the Science, Industry and Business Library, which has always been underutilized, but the Mid-Manhattan Library was retained and will be fully renovated by 2020. The saddest part of the story for scholars and "drop-in" readers may be the fact that the books removed from the stacks at 42nd Street remain in offsite storage.

Patience and Fortitude is an engrossing read in its own right as the story of a preservation battle, and Sherman certainly makes a strong case against the plan, but readers' understanding of the complexity of the issues would have been expanded had individuals on the NYPL board and other key CLP supporters agreed to be interviewed for the book. But most of them, according to Sherman, did not take the opportunity to do so. In any case, *Patience and Fortitude* serves as a playbook for preservationists on fighting a campaign to save not only a structure, internally and externally, but also an aspect of intellectual life through its focus on access to scholarly resources. Sherman's book is just the kind of precise narrative that educates activists on what to anticipate, what to be wary of, whom to listen to, and how to use all effective means to save our City's cherished public spaces and what they offer. ■

Patience and Fortitude was published by Melville House in June 2015. Scott Sherman, the author, is contributing writer to *The Nation*. His work has also appeared in *Vanity Fair*, *The Washington Post*, *the Los Angeles Times*, and other publications.



Pennsylvania Station, New York by Whitney North Seymour, Jr., July 1956; Oil on canvas, 20"x24"; Courtesy of Whitney North Seymour, Jr.

Pennsylvania Station in Paint

The History of Preservation Can Be Captured in Many Ways

Readers might know Whitney North Seymour, Jr. from his historic preservation work in Greenwich Village and the South Street Seaport, or his accomplished legal career and stint as New York State Senator in the 1960s. Maybe one would recall his term as the United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York, during which he represented the United States Government in seeking to stop *The New York Times* from publishing the Pentagon Papers. Or perhaps one is familiar with his father,

Whitney North Seymour, Sr., who leveraged his clout as a prominent lawyer and a well-respected civic leader to advance the cause of preservation in New York City over thirty years, influencing the protection of such significant structures as Grand Central Terminal and Cass Gilbert's Customs House at Bowling Green. But who knew that Whitney North Seymour, Jr. was an accomplished artist? The above work, entitled *Pennsylvania Station, New York*, was painted by Seymour in July 1956. Predating the station's

demolition by seven years, Seymour seemed to have already been captivated with the magnificent building that would become one of the preservation movement's "sacrificial lambs," propelling the Landmarks Law forward. If you are interested in learning more about Seymour's preservation work, the Archive Project completed an oral history with him in 2006. There is also an entry on Whitney North Seymour, Sr. in our online Preservation Database. Both can be accessed via our website, www.nypap.org. ■

NYPAP Farther Afield

Traveling the World to Promote the Importance of the History of Preservation

The Archive Project crossed the pond this summer for the **Victorian Society in America's London Summer School**.

The Victorian Society in America (VSA) is a national not-for-profit organization committed to the preservation, protection, understanding, and enjoyment of 19th-century heritage. It was founded in 1966 as a sister organization to the Victorian Society in the United Kingdom by such noted preservationists as Brendan Gill, Henry-Russell Hitchcock, and Margot Gayle. Since then, the VSA has fulfilled its important mission through publications, architectural tours, symposia, and its summer schools, while also making contributions to the preservation of many historic buildings.

Matthew Coody, executive director of the Archive Project, was awarded a scholarship to study architecture, interior design, art, landscape, decorative

arts, and preservation at the London Summer School, which was founded by legendary architectural historian Sir Nikolaus Pevsner in 1974. Now in its 41st year, this dynamic educational experience is the leading study program for Victorian London, with a distinguished roster of experts that includes course director Ian Cox and historian Gavin Stamp. The academically rigorous program explored a considerable amount in London and beyond, with trips to Brighton, Oxford, Birmingham, Manchester, and Liverpool, all within the span of two weeks. Matthew enjoyed lectures by leading scholars, engaging social experiences with like-minded individuals from across the world, opportunities to get behind the scenes at museums and galleries, and private tours of significant historic sites including the Foreign Office, the Palace of Westminster, the Victoria and Albert Museum, St. Pancras

Station, William Morris's Red House, and the country houses of Lutyens and Voysey.

Of special interest was a visit to the archives of the Royal Albert Hall. As the "world's most famous stage," the Hall's archive is a unique resource of culture, arts, and science heritage. The archive exists to



The Victorian Society in America's London Summer School visits the Royal Albert Hall Archive; Courtesy of Matthew Coody

record, preserve, and make accessible the records and artifacts that document the wide variety of ways in which the Hall has been used by the British and international public since its opening in 1871, and also to record information relating to the iconic building and the organization that runs it. The archive is responsible for managing a collection that includes handbills, posters, photographs, plans, prints, art works, administrative records, and ephemera such as tickets, leaflets, and merchandising. Matthew had the opportunity to speak with the archivists on how their collection was acquired, and how it is maintained, managed, and circulated to the public. As just one example of the remarkable assortment of buildings, collections, and material objects viewed during the program, one can imagine the inspirational nature of the trip and the lasting influence it will have.

The Archive Project is excited to be attending the **National Trust for Historic Preservation's PastForward Conference** this November in Washington, DC! The conference will be kicking off the 50th anniversary celebration of the National Historic Preservation Act. Passed in 1966, this legislation is intended to preserve

historical and archaeological sites in the United States, and created the National Register of Historic Places, the list of National Historic Landmarks, and the various State Historic Preservation Offices. As such, it is the most far-reaching preservation legislation ever enacted in the country. The Archive Project is looking forward to learning from the experiences that have shaped the preservation movement during the past 50 years and build the tools, resources, and inspiration to adapt and grow to meet the challenges of the changing landscape of the movement ahead.

In part because of the Archive Project's current oral history project focusing on sites significant to minority communities, the Archive Project's Matthew Coody was awarded funding from the Diversity Scholarship Program to attend the conference and share his experience working to capture diverse narratives in the preservation field. The Diversity Scholarship Program supports attendance of both community leaders new to preservation and emerging preservation professionals. To date, over 2,100 individuals from varying backgrounds have participated in the program and have helped enrich the overall preservation movement. Matthew is looking forward to sharing his knowledge and learning from others at the wide array of special programming that will support diversity in preservation. We hope to see you in Washington! ■



Join the Columns Club!

It has been a fantastic inaugural year for the Columns Club, an exciting way to engage a new generation of New Yorkers in the Archive Project's important mission. The Columns Club consists of young professionals ages 21-40 who donate \$75 or more annually. Members, informally known as "Columnists," are invited to special tours of historic places and archives throughout New York City, unique experiences that have been created to appeal to the wide-ranging tastes of this multifaceted group.

The inaugural event was an after-hours flashlight tour of the nooks and crannies of the Dyckman Farmhouse Museum, a Dutch Colonial-style structure that is the last remaining farmhouse on the island of Manhattan. The growing troupe of Columnists has also taken a private tour of the Cathedral of St. John the Divine and a twilight streetcar visit through Brooklyn's Green-Wood Cemetery, ending with wine, cheese, and a look through the archives. Most recently the group explored the secrets of one of New York City's greatest icons, Grand Central Terminal, afterward retreating to the Yale Club for cocktails in the beautiful Main Lounge, adorned with rich plasterwork and portraits.

If you are interesting in joining this hearty crew of urban explorers, please contact Brad Vogel at brad.vogel@gmail.com or Matthew Coody at mcoody@nypap.org.

Notes from the Board

Richard J. Moylan

The following is an installment in a series highlighting the interests of members of our Board of Directors

I am a latecomer to preservation.

My history at Green-Wood Cemetery dates back to 1972, when, as a teenager, I learned to mow lawns as efficiently as possible. As I rose through the ranks, I worried about budgets, union contracts and yes, still lawn mowing. Preservation was not foremost in my mind.

A turning point came a mere 20 years ago when I had the good fortune to meet Joseph and Adrienne Bresnan, architects, preservationists, and both Fellows of the AIA. As Vice President at Remco Maintenance, Joseph was a bidder on the restoration of our landmark-designated Gothic Arch entry gates. He recommended stripping all the coatings that had accumulated over many years. I was appalled. "The structure will look 'old,'" I protested.

Of course, Joseph was right and we have never looked back. The Bresnans are responsible for Green-Wood's "Saved in Time" monument conservation program. They made certain I joined all of the right organizations and met all of the right people such as Kent Barwick, Peg Breen, and the Archive Project's very own Tony Wood. To this day, they continue to school me on historic preservation.

A second defining moment in my growth was a trip to Europe with the Historic Cemetery Alliance, an informal group of historic cemeteries of which I am now the Chair (probably because I am the only original member left!). Then-Chairman, the visionary Bill Clendaniel of Mount Auburn

Cemetery, defined what cemeteries are and should be. While many members dared not ask their boards for permission to go, Green-Wood's wise Chairman, Payson Coleman, did not hesitate to send me. The beautiful English cemeteries and Paris's Père Lachaise were on the agenda, but most elucidating was visiting gardens and estates like Stowe, Stourhead, and Versailles. There I learned about English landscape architect Capability Brown and how the landscape could work with a built environment—yes, even a cemetery.



Richard J. Moylan, Courtesy of Green-Wood Cemetery

My historic preservation education continued in 2003 when amateur baseball historian Peter Nash penned a book about the early baseball stars buried at Green-Wood. At the end of his research, Peter handed me original 19th-century documents he had unearthed from our non-protected records. Their value, he estimated, was at least \$50,000. From that day, I became acutely aware of the value of our paper records. We continue to make great strides to protect our archives and to make the information available to the public.

Early on, the Bresnans recommended I attend the Bard Birthday Breakfast Benefit. It's an event that I will not miss. Getting to know the many extraordinary past and current board members has been a highlight of my preservation education—topped only by Tony Wood's invitation to me to join the Archive Project's Board of Directors.

As a relatively new board member, I am still learning the ropes. But it's a privilege to count myself among such a magnificent group. ■

Two New Works on Preservation History

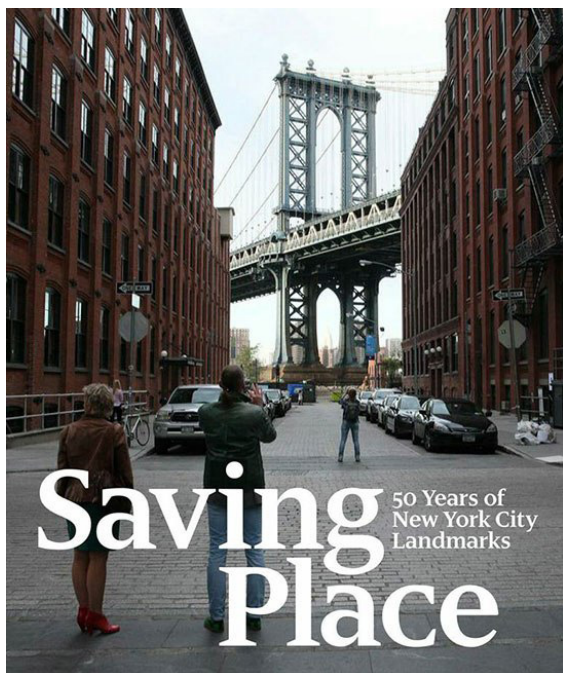
The City Museum Publishes New Additions to the Preservation Library

The Museum of the City of New York has recently published two works on preservation history that deserve to be commended. *Saving Place: 50 Years of New York City Landmarks* is a companion piece to the exhibition currently at the Museum through January 3, 2016. It tells the story of the past 50 years of New York City's Landmarks Law through essays by notable New Yorkers and preservationists including Robert A.M. Stern,

both archival photographs and specially-commissioned contemporary photographs of historic districts and landmark buildings by the distinguished Dutch architectural photographer Iwan Baan. Encompassing all five boroughs, these images capture the dynamic role landmarks play in the fabric of New York City. With such a wide scope, *Saving Place* serves as both a document of how preservation has evolved in New York City, and a case study on how to protect the character of urban places.

The Museum of the City of New York also published an in-depth article on Albert S. Bard, the “grandfather” of the Landmarks Law, in their journal, *City Courant*, the editor of which is Archive Project board member Elizabeth Rohn Jeffe. Written by Archive Project founder and chair Anthony C. Wood, the preeminent expert on Bard, “Preserving the Patrimony of the People: Albert S. Bard and the Landmarks Law” documents the tireless efforts of this civic activist, including the origins of and battle for what became known as the Bard Act of 1956. This piece of legislation gave localities across New York State the authority to pass local laws to protect landmarks,

and eventually enabled the creation of the New York City Landmarks Law. Playing out over 40 years, Bard's advocacy for the importance of aesthetics includes run-ins with urban planner Robert Moses, struggles with politicians, and collaborations with preservationists, all in his inspiring crusade to save the heart and the soul of the city he loved. Bard never lived to see the Landmarks Law get passed in 1965, but one can be certain that he would be celebrating alongside us now that the law is turning 50 years old. Make sure to catch Bard's saga in the Spring 2015 issue of *City Courant*, available through the Museum of the City of New York. ■



Cover of *Saving Place: 50 Years of New York City Landmarks*, Courtesy of the Museum of the City of New York

Adele Chatfield-Taylor, Andrew S. Dolkart, Françoise Bollack, Anthony C. Wood, and Claudette Brady. These essays narrate the preservation movement from its origins and initial successes to some of its failures and most dramatic turning points. They explain the processes behind designating buildings and also evaluate contemporary additions to landmark buildings and new construction within historic districts. The predominately African-American neighborhood of Bedford-Stuyvesant, Brooklyn, is used as a case study for grassroots community-driven preservation in one of the essays, and lastly, there is a piece on the future of preservation in New York City. The book also includes

NYPAP News



George McAneny in 1912, Courtesy of the Library of Congress

Charles Starks, Archive Project research fellow and lecturer in urban studies at Hunter College, is currently unearthing the untold preservation story of George McAneny (1869-1953). McAneny was a prominent New York City civil servant involved with many planning and preservation issues during his lifetime, including the battle to save Castle Clinton and the foundation of the National Trust for Historic Preservation. Starks will have the opportunity to share parts of his work at two academic conferences this fall. On November 7th Starks will present “‘The Slums of This Neighborhood Are Doomed’: City Beautiful Destruction in Manhattan, 1906-1915” at the Mid-Atlantic Popular & American Culture Association in Philadelphia. He is also scheduled to present “Reform Visions and Federal Power: Nationalizing Historic Preservation at Federal Hall and Castle Clinton” at Researching New York, a conference on New York State history at SUNY Albany, November 19th-20th.

Funding for this research has been provided by the Archive Project. Stay tuned for a special program detailing Starks's findings in 2016.

The Archive Project plans to undertake a major redesign of its website in the coming months. The organization is excited to present a fresh new look while also increasing functionality and access to our many resources.



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YOUR FALL 2015 NEWSLETTER HAS ARRIVED!

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We hope you will consider making a donation to support the documentation and celebration of the history of preservation in New York City. Donations can be made in the form of checks mailed to our office via the enclosed remittance envelope, securely online via PayPal on our website (www.nypap.org), or by credit card over the phone at 212-988-8379.

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