

NEW YORK CITY LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION

GUIDE TO

NEW YORK CITY

LANDMARKS

WRITTEN BY ANDREW S. DOLKART / INTRODUCTION BY BRENDAN GILL

GUIDE TO NEW YORK CITY LANDMARKS



The complete pocket-sized guide to New York City's officially designated historic sites—900 landmarks and 55 historic districts encompassing more than 19,000 buildings in all—with quick reference maps, photographs, and drawings.

The Preservation Press
National Trust for Historic Preservation

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BRENDAN GILL

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ANDREW S. DOLKART

Marjorie Pearson, Project Director


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Flatiron Building. Grapple hooks attached to the
Flatiron's cornice were used during cleaning.

Back cover: Central Park West's skyline overlooks a
peaceful setting with Bow Bridge in Central Park. Both
photos: Caroline Kane

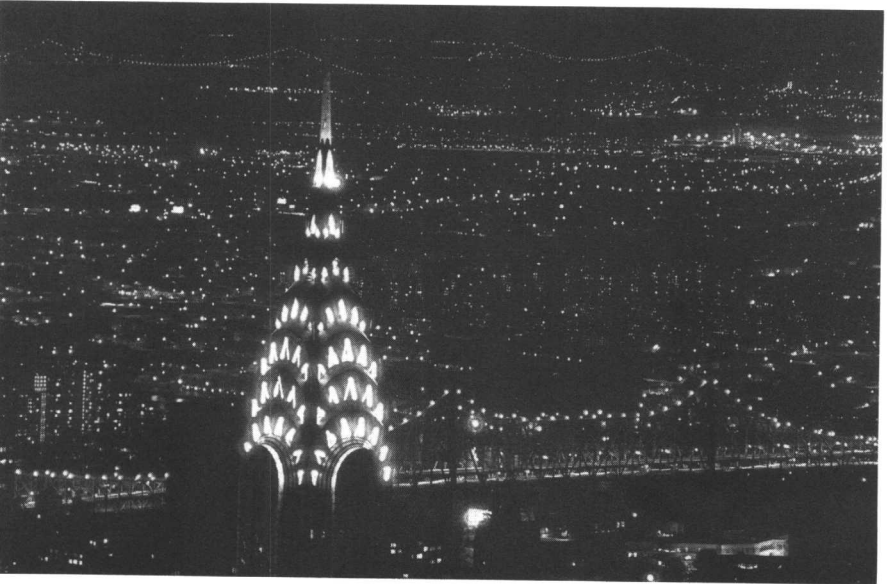
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INTRODUCTION

The landmarks in this book survive not by chance, but because some 27 years ago a number of concerned citizens, perceiving that the architectural and historic heritage of New York City was threatened in many cases with mutilation, and in other, more desperate cases with outright destruction, brought about the establishment of an official New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission. The board of commissioners is composed of New Yorkers of appropriate professional backgrounds—architects, urban planners, real estate professionals, and the like—appointed by the mayor. The chairman of the board is a paid city official; the other commissioners, 10 in number, serve without pay, at meetings and hearings that often require them to manifest an exceptional measure of what Mayor Fiorello LaGuardia used to call patience and fortitude.



Chrysler Building at night with the Queensborough Bridge in the background. Photo: Andy Freeberg

Assisted by a small, well-trained staff, the commission exercises its powers of designation with deliberation and discretion, acting much as a good neighbor might do in identifying individual properties and even whole districts whose worth has hitherto gone unrecognized and unprotected. The staff also offers expert practical advice as to the rehabilitation of endangered structures and the new uses to which they may be put. The commission often works alongside the New York Landmarks Conservancy, the Municipal Art Society, and other local philanthropic organizations that share its goals.

At first glance, the mandate of the Landmarks Preservation Commission might appear to be limited to matters of brick and mortar, but in a broader sense it can be said to embrace a civic amenity not visible to the naked eye—the psychological good health of millions of anonymous New Yorkers. The densely woven fabric of a city, especially that of a city long settled and bearing the stamp of many generations of ambitious builders, is a source of emotional nourishment to its inhabitants. Whether we are conscious of it or not, we draw strength and reassurance from all those evidences of the past that bear witness to the successful outcome of struggles not unlike our own, undertaken in times that must have seemed every bit as difficult as those we face today. It is not too much to say of the buildings, streets, parks, and monuments that we have inherited—and not merely the best of them, mind you, but the most characteristic—that they are indispensable to our well-being. Silently, as we dwell among them, they help to make us aware of ourselves as members of a community.

It is for this reason, rising above others of a more matter-of-fact nature, that the citizens of New York do well to cherish the Landmarks Preservation Commission. For the commission embodies from day to day the noble precept of John Ruskin, who, in answering the question of whether it was expedient to preserve the buildings of the past, said at once and with passion, “We have no right whatever to touch them. They are not ours. They belong partly to those who built them, and partly to all the generations of mankind who are to follow us. . . . It may hereafter be a subject of sorrow, or a cause of injury, to millions, that we have consulted our present convenience when casting down such buildings as we choose to dispense with. That sorrow, that loss we have no right to inflict.”

BRENDAN GILL

Chairman Emeritus

New York Landmarks Conservancy

City Hall, City Hall Park (Joseph-François Mangin and John McComb, Jr., 1802–11), with the Municipal Building, 1 Centre Street (McKim, Mead & White, 1907–14), in the background. Photo: John Barrington Bayley

ABOUT THE GUIDE

This guide includes information on all individual landmarks, interior landmarks (which by law must be accessible to the public), scenic landmarks, and historic districts designated by the New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission from October 14, 1965 (when the commission made its first designations), through the end of 1991. The entries, written by the architectural historian Andrew S. Dolkart, briefly explain the architectural and historical significance of New York City's landmark properties (as of December 31, 1991, 904 individual landmarks, 83 interior landmarks, 9 scenic landmarks, and 55 historic districts.) The information has been collected from the commission's Research Department staff under the direction of Marjorie Pearson. Errors in earlier editions of this guide have been corrected (for example, names inaccurately assigned to properties at the time of designation have been emended), and newly discovered information previously unpublished (for example, the accurate historic names of many buildings) has been incorporated.

Listings have been divided among New York City's five boroughs: Manhattan, Brooklyn, Queens, the Bronx, and Staten Island. Governors, Liberty, and Roosevelt islands, which are under the jurisdiction of the borough of Manhattan, appear in a chapter of their own for easier reference. Within Manhattan, geographical subdivisions have been made based on street boundaries differentiating major areas. Within each section entries are listed in alphabetical order. The landmark's historic name is followed, when applicable, by other names associated with the property. Buildings without specific names are listed by address; these are alphabetized according to the name of the street (such names include the words *East* and *West*). In a few cases, where use of a historic name might lead to confusion or where a later name is much better known, the landmark is listed under its common name (for example, Fordham University, rather than St. John's College; Castle Clinton, rather than West Battery). Buildings named after individuals are alphabetized by the person's last name. Buildings such as theaters and churches are alphabetized by their specific proper names (for example, Church of the Incarnation is found under *I*; Theater Masque is under *M*). Individually designated landmarks that are part of a larger complex are listed under the name of the complex (for example, Low Memorial Library is found under Columbia University). All property names and addresses have been cross-indexed to facilitate identification.

Architects associated with the original construction and any relevant additions to the property are cited at the beginning of each entry along with dates indicating the widest determinable span of work, from design to completion.

Information about architects associated with relevant restoration or rehabilitation work, and the dates of such work, has been incorporated into the text.

Please note that the New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission does not own or operate any landmark properties. A listing in this guide is not an invitation to visit; permission must be obtained from the owner or occupant. In many cases, landmark properties are private residences, and the reader is asked to bear in mind that the owners' privacy must be respected. The entries indicate which properties are museums or otherwise open to the public; visitors to these properties are, in many cases, charged a fee. Interior landmarks, indicated in bold face in the text, are customarily open to the public. Depending on the nature and use of the space, a ticket may be required or a fee charged.

The New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission recognizes that ongoing research on the city's architecture and history will continue to bring new information to light about designated landmarks. The commission would be pleased to receive such information directed to the attention of its Research Department. Corrections of errors that may have inadvertently crept into this edition of the guide may also be addressed to this department.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This new and greatly expanded edition of the commission's guide to New York City landmarks would not have been possible without the leadership of Laurie Beckelman, Chair of the New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission. A grant from the Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts funded the work of Andrew S. Dolkart in compiling and writing the guide entries. Support for this guide was also provided by the New York Landmarks Preservation Foundation and its Chair, Barbaralee Diamonstein-Spielvogel. Additional funds were provided by Joseph E. Seagram & Sons, Inc.

Many of the commission's staff made exceptional efforts. Essential encouragement, support, and enthusiasm were provided by Joan R. Olshansky, Chief of Staff. Members of the commission's Research Department, under my direction, conducted research, resulting in the designation reports that form the basis of the guide entries. In addition, Marion Cleaver of the department compiled the index. Valuable on-site building information has been obtained by members of the commission's Preservation Department while working with architects and property owners. Special recognition goes to the late Alan Burnham whose work as director of research, assisted by Ellen W. Kramer, resulted in earlier editions of this guide. Thanks to Shirley Zavín, who, while a member of the commission's Survey Department, contributed extensive new information on the landmark buildings of Staten Island. Carl Forster, Caroline Kane, and Janet O'Hare provided photographs. Many owners of landmark buildings and other interested parties, too numerous to mention individually, have provided additional information.

Last, thanks to The Preservation Press, in particular, Buckley Jeppson, of the National Trust for Historic Preservation for publishing the guide in this new format. Terry Adams and Virginia Read gave valuable editorial guidance. We anticipate that this new edition, a truly comprehensive look at the city's landmarks, will reach a much larger, and nationwide, audience of readers and building lovers who, if they haven't already, will want to come and experience the diverse architecture we have to offer. New York City, certainly a major part of our national heritage, welcomes all.

MARJORIE PEARSON
Director of Research



MANHATTAN

THE BATTERY TO FULTON STREET

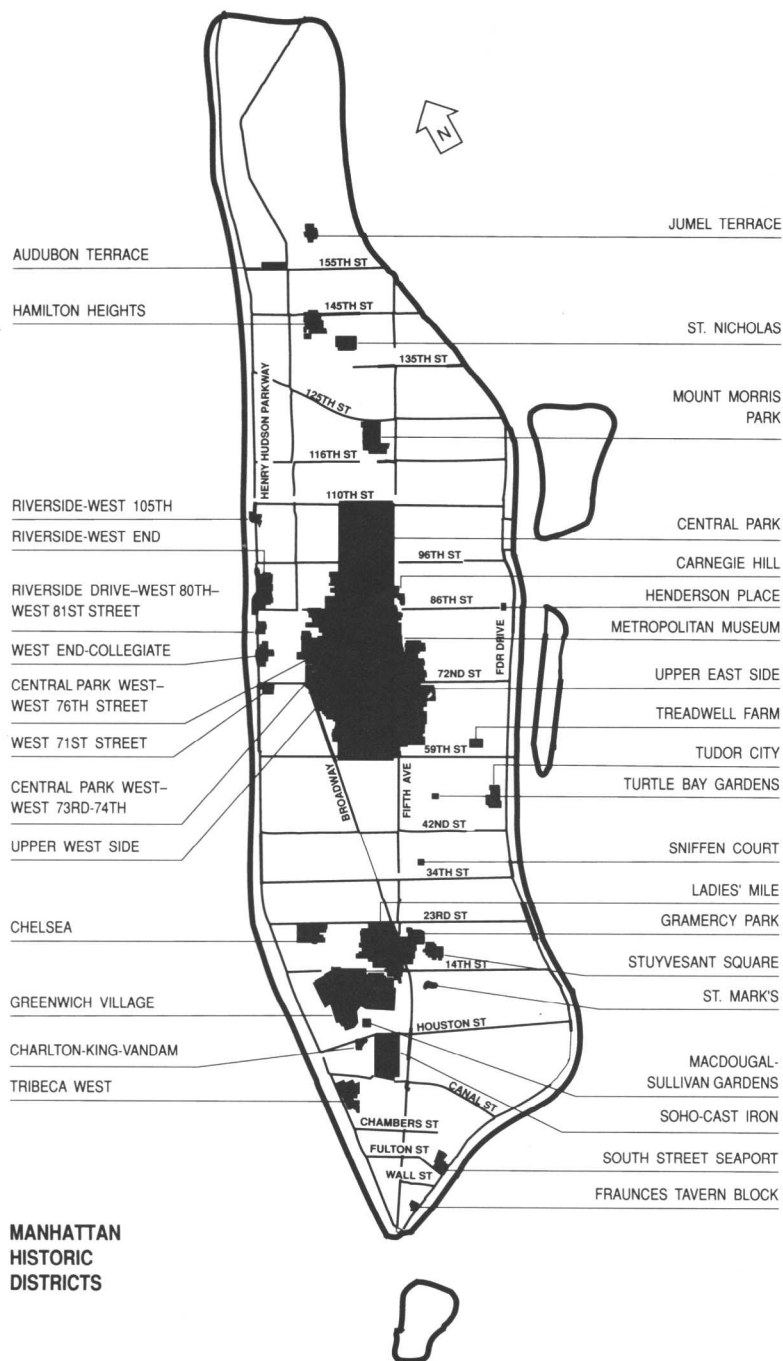
Bowling Green Fence, Bowling Green Park (1771). This simple iron fence was erected in 1771 to protect a statue of King George III. Although the statue was destroyed in 1776, the fence survives as a unique example of pre-Revolutionary War craftsmanship in New York City.

Castle Clinton, now Castle Clinton National Monument, Battery Park (Lt. Col. Jonathan Williams and John McComb, Jr., 1808–11). Originally built on an artificial island off the Battery, and referred to as West Battery, Castle Clinton—so named in 1815—was one of a series of forts, including Castle Williams (see p. 239) on Governors Island, erected to protect New York Harbor. Although the design of the brownstone fort is often attributed to John McComb, Jr., he was probably responsible only for the entrance. After becoming the property of New York City in 1823, the former fort served as a theater (Castle Garden), an immigrant station, and an aquarium, before it was restored by the federal government in the early 1970s.

Chamber of Commerce of the State of New York, now the International Commercial Bank of China, 65 Liberty Street (James B. Baker, 1900–01). This imposing Beaux-Arts building was erected by the chamber of commerce to symbolize its importance in New York's commercial life. The marble structure, occupied by the chamber until 1980, was restored in 1990–91 as part of its conversion into a bank.

Federal Reserve Bank of New York, 33 Liberty Street (York & Sawyer, 1919–24). The massive rusticated walls of the Federal Reserve Bank, constructed of stone in two colors, symbolize the strength of the Federal Reserve system and the impregnability of this building, which stores a significant part of the world's gold reserves. The Florentine palazzo form was chosen by York & Sawyer for its association with the Medicis and other leading Renaissance families whose fortunes were made, at least in part, from banking. The iron detail was crafted by the master iron worker Samuel Yellin of Philadelphia.

Church of the Transfiguration (Episcopal), also known as the **Little Church Around the Corner**, 1 East 29th Street (1849–50, 1852). See p. 64. Photo: Carl Forster



Hickson W. Field Stores, also known as the Baker, Carver & Morrell Building, 170–176 John Street (1840; addition, Buttrick, White & Burtis, 1981–82). Erected for a commission merchant, this building is a rare surviving example of a Greek Revival warehouse with an all-granite front. This building type, characterized by an austere facade and a ground floor articulated by post-and-lintel construction, represents a form first perfected in Boston and introduced to New York in 1826 by Ithiel Town at his Tappan Store (demolished) on Pearl Street. At the time of designation in 1968, the building housed the Baker, Carver & Morrell ship's chandlery. The top story was added in 1981–82 during conversion into a restaurant and apartments.

First Precinct Police Station, South Street at Old Slip (Hunt & Hunt, 1909–11). Hunt & Hunt, the firm established by the sons of the famed Richard Morris Hunt, designed this limestone police station in the form of an Italian Renaissance palazzo. The arched openings, rustication, and imposing cornice have been compared to those of the 15th-century Palazzo Riccardi in Florence. The building is currently vacant.

Fraunces Tavern, 54 Pearl Street (1719; reconstruction, William H. Mersereau, 1904–07). The original building on this site was erected in 1719 by Stephen DeLancey. In 1763 the house was converted into a tavern by Samuel Fraunces, and it was here that George Washington gave his famous farewell address to his officers. The building suffered several additions and fires in the 19th century. In 1904 the heavily altered and deteriorated building was purchased by the Sons of the Revolution, which sponsored a somewhat speculative reconstruction that is an important example of Colonial Revival design. Fraunces Tavern is now a museum and restaurant.

🍀 **Fraunces Tavern Block Historic District**. The low-rise buildings of this square block provide an unusual illustration of the early building history of Lower Manhattan. Dating primarily from the early 19th century, these buildings stand in marked contrast to the surrounding 20th-century skyscrapers. The block escaped the fire of December 1835 that devastated most of Lower Manhattan. Thus, the district retains 11 buildings erected between 1827 and 1833, including a rare example of a warehouse in the Federal style (62 Pearl

