

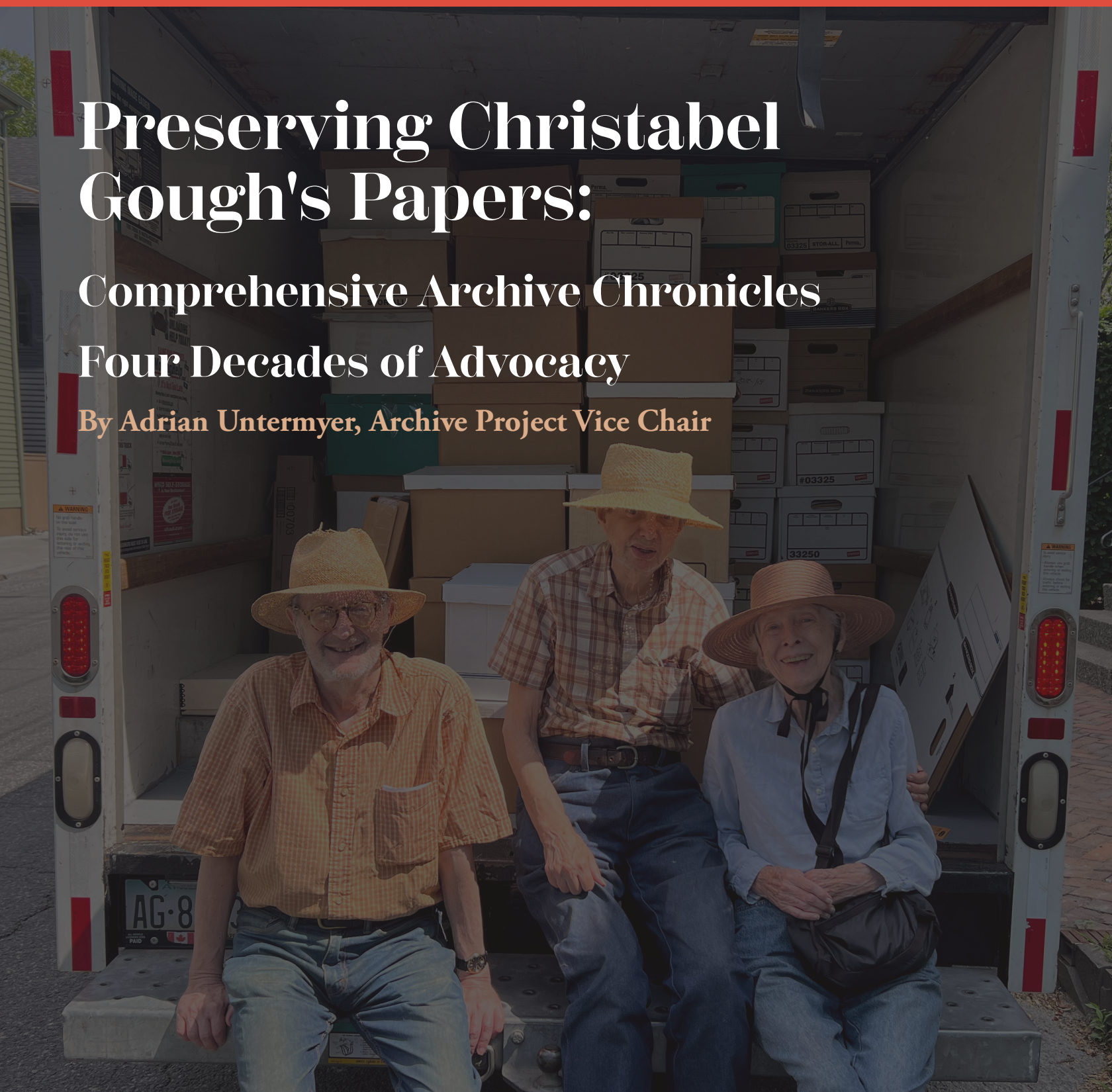
**The New York
Preservation
Archive Project**

NEWSLETTER

42nd Edition - Fall 2025

Preserving Christabel Gough's Papers: Comprehensive Archive Chronicles Four Decades of Advocacy

By Adrian Untermeyer, Archive Project Vice Chair



Welcome to the 42nd edition of the New York Preservation Archive Project's newsletter.

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 brings these stories to light.

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COVER PHOTO *From Left:* Ron Kopnicki, Christabel Gough, and Matt McGhee in front of U-Haul loaded with Gough's archival papers | Courtesy of Adrian Untermyer

Fall 2025 Archive Project News

As we approach the end of the year, we are looking back at some highlights of the New York Preservation Archive Project's recent work celebrating New York City's preservation history. Here are some updates since our Spring 2025 newsletter:

Saving Papers

Beverly Moss Spatt Papers

Beverly Moss Spatt's papers, donated to the Archive Project in 2024 and featured in the previous edition of the Archive Project's newsletter, have found a permanent home at The New-York Historical. These papers highlight Spatt's celebrated career as a preservationist, planner, and the first female Chair of the Landmarks Preservation Commission (LPC) from 1974 to 1978. The New-York Historical already holds the papers of Spatt's predecessor, Harmon Goldstone, and the addition of the Spatt papers represents a significant contribution to the archival record of the LPC's early years.

City and Suburban Homes Company First Avenue Estate Papers

In September 2025, Archive Project Executive Director Emily Kahn picked up eight boxes of materials about the successful battle to save the landmarked City and Suburban Homes Company First Avenue Estates. Originally designated as a New York City landmark in 1990, two buildings within the estate were removed from the designation and then later re-designated—an action that sparked a multi-year preservation battle to uphold the site's landmark status and prevent demolition.

Elizabeth McCracken, a long-term resident of the First Avenue Estate and a prominent advocate in its preservation campaign, donated the papers which represent the power

of community-based advocacy in New York City's preservation history. Archive Project Jeffe Fellow Matt Goff has begun processing the papers, with the aim of finding a permanent repository for them in the near future.

Archival Assessment of the New York Amsterdam News Collection

Through a subgrant from the Mellon Foundation's Humanities in Place program, the Archive Project is overseeing an archival assessment of historical materials housed in the Harlem headquarters of the *New York Amsterdam News*—the oldest Black newspaper in New York City.

The Amsterdam News Educational Foundation, in collaboration with AYON Studio and Jerome Haferd Studio, is currently in the planning phase of revitalizing its historic headquarters. This work includes assessing and preserving both the building's structure and its significant archival contents.

The archival collection documents more than a century of Black life and culture in Harlem and beyond, and uniquely chronicles changes to Harlem's built environment over decades. The Archive Project is now in the final stages of hiring an archivist to conduct a comprehensive assessment of the building's holdings. This work will include evaluating the scope and condition of the collection, providing recommendations for conservation, housing, and digitization, and offering guidance for both the short- and long-term stewardship of this vital cultural resource.

Staff

The Archive Project's Administrative Coordinator, Coco Nelson, departed the organization in July 2025. We thank Coco for her diligent work with daily nonprofit management and programmatic initiatives, including processing numerous new oral histories.

Strategic Planning Retreat


On September 26, 2025, staff and board members from the Archive Project gathered at the Woolworth Chapel at Woodlawn Cemetery for a strategic planning retreat. Vicki Weiner, a former Archive Project board member, facilitated a discussion focused on the organization's strengths, areas for improvement, and ongoing challenges. The insights and outcomes from this retreat will

help guide the Archive Project's administrative and programmatic work in the years ahead. The Archive Project last conducted a strategic planning process in 2018.

Oral History

OHMA Fieldwork Partner

The New York Preservation Archive Project is serving as a fieldwork partner of Columbia University's Oral History Masters of Arts (OHMA) program for the Fall 2025 semester. Through this partnership, current OHMA student Caitlin Hawke is conducting three interviews for the Archive Project's oral history collection. Caitlin is interviewing 2024 Preservation Award recipient Richard Moylan and 2025 Preservation Award

recipient Rosemary Vietor. She is also interviewing Nina Rappaport as part of the Preserving Modernism series co-sponsored with DOCOMOMO/US New York Tri-State. 



OHMA student Caitlin Hawke | Courtesy of Caitlin Hawke



Archive Project board members participate in a strategic planning retreat led by Vicki Weiner | Courtesy of The New York Preservation Archive Project

Taking Albert Bard on the Road



Anthony C. Wood at live taping of *Person Place Thing* hosted by Archive Project Chair Lisa Ackerman with music by Archive Project Vice Chair Adrian Untermyer on July 16, 2025 | Courtesy of *Person Place Thing*


Albert Bard may be an unsung New York hero, but his life and legacy are engaging audiences well beyond the five boroughs. Whether at Edith Wharton's The Mount in Lenox, Massachusetts, or in Pennsylvania at the Pittsburgh History & Landmarks Foundation Annual Donor Reception, or at the Roslyn Landmarks Society on Long Island, or at the Village Preservation Society of East Hampton's Annual Meeting, audiences have been inspired by Bard's life-long dedication to preserving civic beauty, his national efforts to combat the proliferation of billboards, and his establishing the legal basis for landmark laws.

New York audiences at Village Preservation, Victorian Society New York, FRIENDS of the Upper East Side Historic Districts, and at the Museum of the City of New York have seen in Bard the type of civic activist New York City needs today. In conversations with Michelle Young, Joe Rose, Bob Jaeger, Emily Kahn, and Ronda Wist, author Anthony

Wood has lifted up Bard's legacy. The archival journey behind Wood's *Servant of Beauty: Landmarks, Secret Love, and the Unimagined Life of an Unsung New York Hero*, the definitive biography of Albert S. Bard (1866-1963), has also inspired audiences about, and increased their appreciation of, the work of the New York Preservation Archive Project in securing the archives that future authors writing about preservation in New York City will need.

This fall Bard's story traveled to the Charleston Literary Festival with a conversation between Paul Goldberger and Wood. Next year, in a run up to Bard's 160th birthday on December 19, 2026, additional "Conversations With the Author" programs about Bard and his work are scheduled for New York City and such other ports of call as his hometown, Norwich, Connecticut. Bard has also taken to the airwaves with the Bowery Boys (Podcast 459), a virtual program with the Preservation League of New York State, and

on *Person Place Thing* with Randy Cohen.

If you know an audience that would be excited by a program about Bard, please contact Emily Kahn at ekahn@nypap.org. 

Want more information about *Servant of Beauty*?

Visit the Archive Project's website or scan the QR code at right to read book reviews, view upcoming events, and order your own copy.



UPCOMING EVENT

2025 Bard Birthday Breakfast Benefit to Honor Rosemary Vietor

As the holidays draw near, we are excited to head to the New York City Bar Association for the 23rd annual Bard Birthday Breakfast Benefit. The event's namesake, Albert Sprague Bard, contributed decades of civic service to New York State, culminating in the 1956 Bard Act which paved the way for New York City's own Landmarks Law in 1965. Since 2015, the Archive Project has presented its Preservation Award honoring outstanding contributions to the documentation, preservation, and celebration of the history of preservation in New York City at the Bard Breakfast.

This year we are thrilled to honor Rosemary S. Vietor for her stewardship of the Bowne House, the oldest residence in Queens and an internationally significant site in the history of religious freedom. In addition to the preservation of this circa 1661 house, Rosemary's inspired and dedicated leadership of the Bowne House Historical Society has led to the digitization and public accessibility of 350 years of archival materials connected with this New York City landmark and the families who lived there for generations. The New York Preservation Archive Project supported some of this work in 2022 with a grant from its Shelby White & Leon Levy Archival Assistance Initiative.

Rosemary S. Vietor, President of the Bowne House Historical Society, has served on numerous boards, including the Colonial Dames of America, New York Committee of the Garden Club of America, and New York State Archives Partnership Trust. Prior to retirement, she was a Vice President at J.P. Morgan. In 2025, her article "One House, One Family, Three Centuries of American History" appeared in Barbaralee Diamonstein-Spielvogel's book *Beyond Architecture: The New New York* in celebration of the 60th anniversary of New York City's Landmarks Law.

The Bard Breakfast will also feature a talk

from Loretta Howard about researching place-based stories of pioneering women artists in New York City. Loretta Howard is the co-founder and Executive Director of On This Spot NYC: Stories of Pioneering Women Artists, a nonprofit she launched with producer and collector Tony Ganz. Through short-form archival documentaries, the project recenters women artists. Now in its third year, On This Spot NYC has produced over 50 videos. On This Spot NYC has been recognized with a New York Foundation for the Arts award and is featured on the Bloomberg Connects platform.

Please join us on December 9th to be inspired by Loretta Howard and honor the archival work of our Preservation Award recipient Rosemary Vietor. Tickets are available now. \$



The Bowne House | Courtesy of the Historic House Trust



2025 featured speaker Loretta Howard | Courtesy of On This Spot NYC



2025 Bard Birthday Breakfast Benefit

Join us in honoring **Rosemary Vietor** with the 2025 Preservation Award.

The benefit will also feature **Loretta Howard** as the guest speaker.

December 9, 2025

8:00-10:00 a.m.

The New York City Bar Association

42 West 44th Street

Tickets:

Benefit Ticket: \$175

Benefit Committee: \$625

Benefit Co-Chair: \$1,250

Benefit Benefactor: \$4,000

To purchase tickets, or if you have any questions about the event, please scan the QR code, visit the event page on our website (www.nypap.org), or contact Archive Project Executive Director Emily Kahn at ekahn@nypap.org or 212-988-8379.



Your support of the Archive Project will help us continue to celebrate, preserve, and document the history of the preservation movement in New York City. We hope you will join us on December 9th!

Preserving Christabel Gough's Papers: Comprehensive Archive Chronicles Four Decades of Advocacy

By Adrian Untermeyer, Board Vice Chair

An unassuming U-Haul lumbered down the New York State Thruway on the afternoon of July 2, 2025. To other drivers, the ten-foot box truck looked utterly ordinary. But the U-Haul's orange-and-white body masked a remarkable trove: over two tons of paper documenting a lifetime of battles at the forefront of New York City's historic preservation movement.

Spanning a whopping 142 boxes, the Christabel Gough archive depicts Gough's role as "Preservation's Dr. Watson." This Sherlock Holmes-inspired moniker was earned after she spent four decades reviewing each item that came before the Landmarks Preservation Commission. She testified on nearly every single one. (See NYPAP Fall/Winter 2022 Newsletter.)

A co-founder of the Society for the Architecture of the City, Gough complemented her public efforts with behind-the-scenes tactics. These efforts ultimately led *New York Magazine* to dub her the "quietest influence in New York," and her archive's journey to the Archive Project was the result of an extended period of dialogue. The donation process unfolded under the guidance of two executive directors (Brad Vogel and Emily Kahn) and one persistent founder (Anthony C. Wood). Each played a role in ensuring that this singular collection—one that mirrors the evolution of preservation policy and practice in New York—would be stewarded with care and vision.

What makes this trove so important is not just its size. Its scope is equally significant. Gough attended virtually every Landmarks Preservation Commission hearing for decades. She offered testimony on nearly every item. Her notes, correspondence, and clippings form an unparalleled record of the City's preservation decisions – one that is both meticulous and deeply personal.



From Left: Ron Kopnicki, Emily Kahn, Christabel Gough, Matt McGhee, and Adrian Untermeyer stand outside a U-Haul loaded with Gough's archival papers | Courtesy of Adrian Untermeyer

Now that Gough's collection is in the Archive Project's hands, the next step is to assess it with an eye toward a permanent home. The Archive Project is exploring potential institutional partners to ensure the papers are preserved, cataloged, and made accessible to future researchers, students, and advocates.

What's inside Christabel's boxes? As the Archive Project team inventories her collection, a few gems have already surfaced. Among them: a series of "spreads" from *Village Views*, the periodical Christabel published via the Society for the Architecture of the City. These "spreads" are essentially printing layouts that include two facing pages—typically a left and a right page—that are designed and viewed together as a single unit. They offer a window into Gough's community-based advocacy over decades.

Another find is a printed protest sign used at a rally. The sign reads: "It's Our History! Save St. Saviour's," and its bold lettering still echoes with urgency. The sign refers to a fierce preservation battle in Maspeth, Queens, where neighbors fought to save St. Saviour's Church, a Gothic Revival structure designed by Richard Upjohn and built in 1847. After the property was sold to a developer in 2005, the community—led by the Juniper Park Civic Association and Newtown Historical Society—rallied to preserve the church and its tree-filled grounds, proposing it be turned into a public park in a neighborhood sorely lacking one. Despite their efforts, the developer cut down all 185 trees in 2007, and the church was dismantled in 2008 with plans for reconstruction that remain unrealized.

This episode is just one of many stories preserved in the Gough archive—each one a thread in the broader fabric of New York City’s preservation history. For now, this remarkable legacy dwells temporarily in a storage unit on Manhattan’s Upper East Side. But its impact is anything but dormant. These 142 boxes are filled with clues, and future researchers will undoubtedly use them to solve the mysteries of how preservation decisions were made, challenged, and executed over time.

So, the next time you see a U-Haul on the highway, consider this: it might just be carrying the history of a city as mighty as New York. If you’re inspired by Christabel Gough’s legacy, we invite you to support the Archive Project’s work by making a donation in her name. And share your ideas, as you may know of another invaluable archive needing preservation for generations to come. §

Adrian Untermeyer is an attorney, urbanist, and historian who serves as Vice Chair of the New York Preservation Archive Project.



Boxes awaiting pickup at Christabel Gough's home in Hudson, NY | Courtesy of The New York Preservation Archive Project



Archive Project Vice Chair Adrian Untermeyer unloads archival boxes on the Upper East Side | Courtesy of The New York Preservation Archive Project



Archive Project Executive Director Emily Kahn moves boxes into storage facility | Courtesy of Adrian Untermeyer



Archive Project 2025 Jeffe Fellow Matt Goff surveys Christabel Gough papers | Courtesy of The New York Preservation Archive Project

Want to learn more about Christabel Gough?

Visit the Archive Project's website or scan the QR code at right for an oral history with Christabel Gough conducted by Adrian Untermeyer in 2021.



2025 Shelby White & Leon Levy Archival Assistance Initiative Grant Awardees

The New York Preservation Archive Project is thrilled to announce the fourth cohort of Shelby White & Leon Levy Archival Assistance Initiative Grant. In keeping with our mission to document, preserve, and celebrate the history of historic preservation in New York City, the New York Preservation Archive Project established the Shelby White & Leon Levy Archival Assistance Initiative to help historic preservation-related not-for-profit organizations and similar institutions identify and maintain their archival resources related to stories of historic preservation. Generous assistance from the Leon Levy Foundation in 2022 allowed the Initiative to be reinvigorated for three additional rounds of grants. In 2025, the Archive Project received additional support from the Leon Levy Foundation to continue the grant through 2027.

Following robust deliberations, staff and board members from the New York Preservation Archive Project selected seven organizations to receive grants up to \$5,000 (doubling the maximum grant amount from previous rounds). Please join us in congratulating the following awardees of the highly competitive 2025 Shelby White & Leon Levy Archival Assistance Initiative:

The Architectural League of New York

Awarded Project: To create an oral history archive featuring interviews with key figures in the League's preservation work.

Crown Heights North Association

Awarded Project: To make accessible records and oral histories of Black preservation empowerment in Brooklyn.

Historic Districts Council

Awarded Project: To continue digitizing pre-2012 paper records pertaining primarily to the designation process for historic districts.

Landmark West!

Awarded Project: To digitize and create Optical Character Recognition (OCR) for 40 years of bi-annual organizational newsletters.

Lower East Side Preservation Initiative

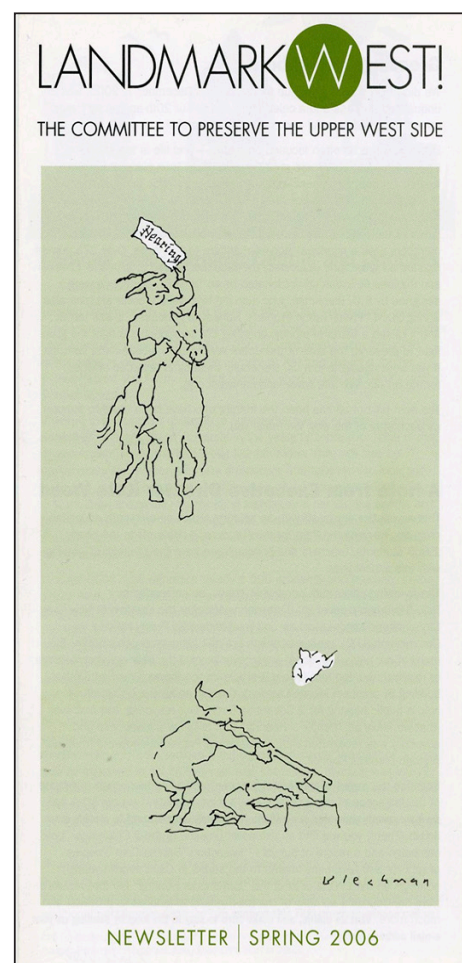
Awarded Project: To survey the Clayton Patterson and Elsa Rensaa Archive documenting how the Lower East Side has changed over time.

Prospect Park Alliance

Awarded Project: To catalog records related to Tupper Thomas, the first Prospect Park administrator, and her preservation work.

Tenement Museum

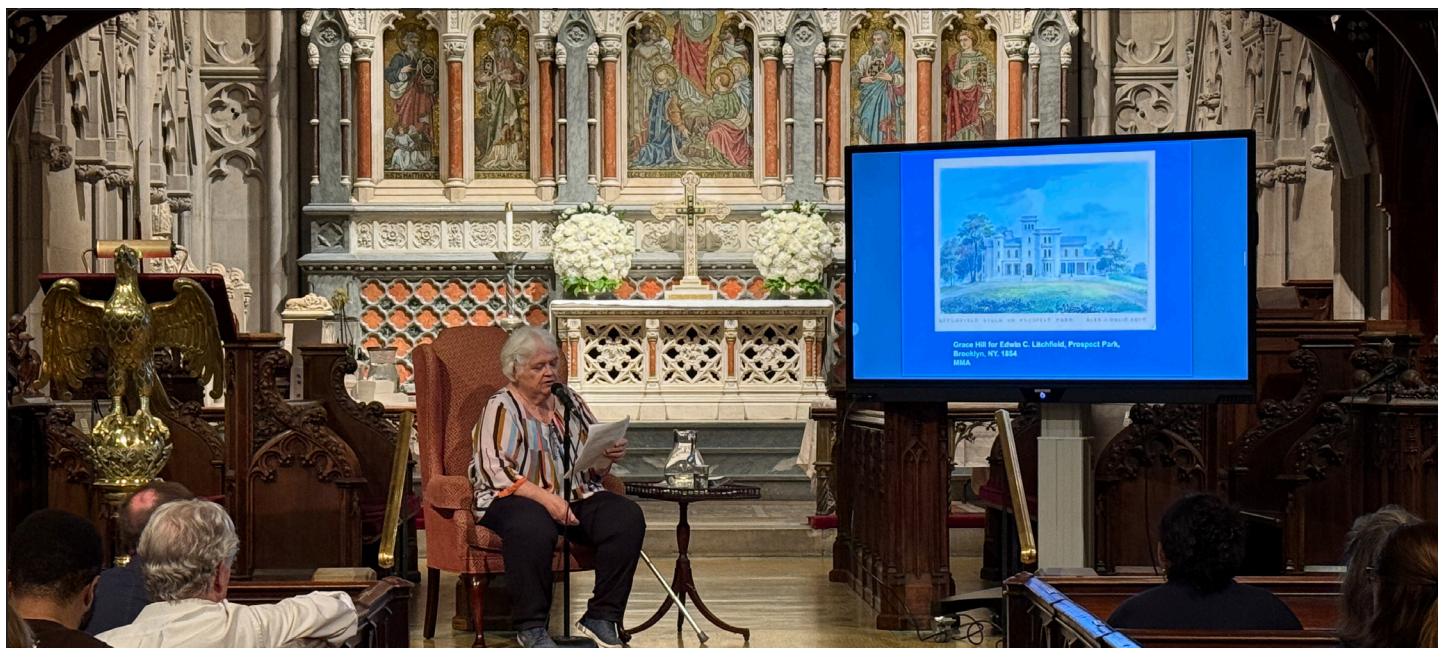
Awarded Project: To process a previously surveyed collection of records pertaining to preserving a historic tenement located at 97 Orchard Street. §



Digitized cover of Spring 2006 Landmark West! newsletter |
Courtesy of Landmark West!

To date, the Archive Project has awarded \$113,000 to 25 organizations in four boroughs through the Shelby White & Leon Levy Archival Assistance Initiative.

Re-Uniting the Archival Legacy of Alexander Jackson Davis in the Digital World



Archivist Janet Parks speaks on the archives of architect Alexander Jackson Davis | Courtesy of The New York Preservation Archive Project

On the evening of September 25, preservation and architecture enthusiasts filed into the pews of Grace Church for a free lecture with Janet Parks on the archival legacy of esteemed architect Alexander Jackson Davis. Parks, the former Curator of Drawings & Archives at Avery Architectural and Fine Arts Library at Columbia University and the recipient of the Archive Project's 2017 Preservation Award, is working to re-unite the archive online as a whole, virtually in images, and as an integrated description of its contents.

According to Parks, the archival legacy of Alexander Jackson Davis (1803-1892) constitutes the largest surviving American architectural archive of the pre-Civil War era. The 1992 exhibition and publication at the Metropolitan Museum of Art established the scope of Davis' intellectual and artistic life, a monumental undertaking given the dispersal of his archive to four major New York collec-

tions and smaller ones as well. Descriptions of many collections can be found online, but their dispersal has made a full investigation difficult.

In addition to his magnificent watercolors and drawings of his projects, Davis left detailed diaries of his life as an architect and his "whereabouts" in the world. The diaries provide a look into the details of his architectural practice, his everyday life, how he traveled, the corpus of his prints of architecture, his family relations, the contents of his private library, and architectural education. The internet now enables researchers to identify and gather information about Davis, his clients and other people in his circle, places, and events quickly.

Parks' talk covered the history of Davis' archive and library of architectural books during his lifetime and its eventual sale or placement in institutional collections. Recently,

the Avery Library acquired a volume that Davis owned, annotated, and drew in. In the 30 years since the Met exhibition established Davis' built work, the archive's dispersal hindered further work. Following his death, Davis' children placed and sold individual items and large groups of material over several decades. Library provenance records help track the remainder of the archive sold after his children died in the 1930s. Archival records show the efforts by prominent historians and institutions to preserve Davis' legacy.

Parks hopes her ongoing research will open up a closer look at Davis as an architect and an individual in nineteenth-century New York. [S](#)

Scan the QR code to watch a video recording of Janet Parks' lecture



IN MEMORIAM

Judith Stonehill

By Yukie Ohta, Board Member



Judith Stonehill

Society for Historic Preservation), where she was a trustee from 1989 to 2024 and board chair from 1993 to 1999. During this time, Judith initiated several still-extant programs that helped steer the organization's expansion, including its Annual House Tour Benefit, Annual Village Awards, Children's Education Program, and Oral History project. Trevor Stewart, Village Preservation's president, wrote that "Judith's gifts to our neighborhoods and our organization are almost too great to count."

Judith was also a dear friend and mentor to many, including myself. She had a talent for remembering everyone she met, collecting and connecting like-minded folk whose newly kindled relationships lifted everyone up together. In this and many other ways, she made magic happen, and was adored and respected for her dedication to the people and places that were dear to her. Without Judith's support and connections, I would not be where I am today, and I am certain that there are many others who would say the same.

"New York is still the city of my dreams, after all these years," Judith wrote in her essay, after seeing her adopted hometown through a rapidly changing twentieth century and well into tumultuous twenty-first. "I love its frenetic energy and its cultural achievements and, most of all, its amazing contrasts: this remarkable city has eight Vermeer paintings, 800 Chinese restaurants, poetry readings and farmers' markets in every neighborhood, 722 miles of subway tracks as well as 270 different species sighted by avid birdwatchers in Central Park alone."

Judith loved New York, and New York loved her back. She was at once highly influential and incredibly generous. And so very modest about her many accomplishments. As such, Judith left an indelible mark on her friends and family, on her neighborhood, and on her city, and she will be long remembered and sorely missed. §

When Judith Stonehill was a child, New York City was the city of her dreams. Born in a small town in faraway upstate New York, "closer to Ohio than Manhattan," as she wrote in an autobiographical essay, Judith moved to Greenwich Village and raised a family with her husband John in an 1834 red-brick Federal house. Her historic neighborhood inspired her to "become active in helping preserve the architectural heritage and cultural history of this corner of the city." Throughout her life, Judith worked joyfully and tirelessly as an urbanist and preservationist, while also planting many seeds to grow New York's cultural landscape.

Like many women of her generation, Judith's career took many zigs and zags. After receiving a master's degree in Literature from New York University, she worked at the South Street Seaport Museum as a vice president and then as the director of the Corporate

Fund at Lincoln Center, where she fundraised for its Chamber Music Society, New York Film Festival, Metropolitan Opera, and everything in between. In 1989, she became co-owner, with Barbara Cohen, of the legendary New York Bound Bookshop on the ground floor of the Associated Press Building at 50 Rockefeller Center. The store sold all manner of Newyorkania: new and vintage books, maps, prints, photographs, and ephemera. *The New York Times* reported on the store's closing in 1997 as "a loss to the cultural life of the city."

Perhaps it was New York Bound that inspired Judith to write books about New York. Her oeuvre includes the books *Greenwich Village: A Guide to America's Legendary Left Bank* and *New York's Unique and Unexpected Places*, among others. She also created and edited *Greenwich Village Stories*, a book for Village Preservation (formerly the Greenwich Village

IN MEMORIAM

Nathan Silver

Nathan Silver, the visionary architect and preservationist who gave us his poignant 1967 book *Lost New York*—a tribute to New York's architectural treasures erased before preservation laws stood guard—died in May, in London.

A native New Yorker, Silver was a distinguished architect, author, and educator at Columbia University's architecture school. His long career and inspiring work reflects his belief that landmarks "were vessels of human history."

Silver made a rare return to New York from London to speak about *Lost New York* and the evolution of his theories on preservation at the Archive Project's 2014 Bard Birthday Breakfast Benefit.

On the significance of *Lost New York* to him, preservationist Anthony Wood once



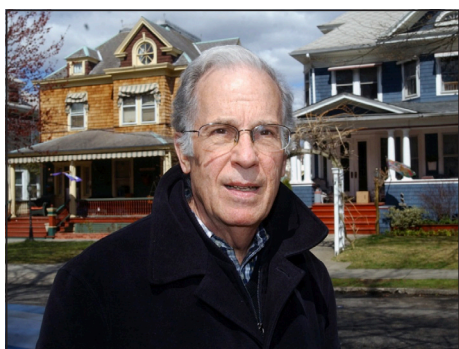
Nathan Silver speaks for the New York Preservation Archive Project in December 2014 | Courtesy of The New York Preservation Archive Project

recounted that the book "was a cri de coeur about the losses the city was experiencing [...] It gave comfort to those trying to push back against that, and provided solace to people who cared about preservation and opened the eyes of a wider public."

Silver was a driving force behind a national preservation conscience with *Lost New York*, and his legacy is defined by work that continues to inspire generations of preservationists who fight to protect historic places. §

IN MEMORIAM

Barnett Shepherd



Barnett Shepherd in 2006 | Courtesy of Staten Island Live

Legendary Staten Island preservationist Barnett Shepherd passed away in August 2025. Shepherd founded the Preservation League of Staten Island in the

1970s to raise awareness of the importance of saving historic buildings. Since then, he worked to preserve Sailors' Snug Harbor, Historic Richmond Town, and various historic properties in the borough.

Shepherd wrote several books on Staten Island history and architecture, including *Sailors' Snug Harbor, 1801-1976* and *Tottenville: The Town the Oyster Built*. He worked with the Tottenville Historic Society to survey 250 historic buildings as research for the book. He also served as the director of Historic Richmond Town for nearly 20 years, during which time he oversaw the renovation of many structures and the relocation of a few historic buildings. Additionally, he was an adviser for the Historic Districts Council.

In a 2012 oral history for the New York Preservation Archive Project, cited by *The New York Times* in his obituary, Shepherd commented that he left a career in the church because "it was not fulfilling after a number of years, that I really had the greater love for art and culture." Jessica Phillips, Chief Executive Officer of Historic Richmond Town, reflected that Shepherd's "legacy will live on in every building saved, every story told and every visitor inspired by this community he helped to shape." §

Visit the Archive Project's website or scan the QR code at right for an oral history with Barnett Shepherd conducted by Elin Juselius in 2012.



The New York Preservation Archive Project

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online to the Archive Project

Your Fall 2025 Newsletter Has Arrived!

The Archive Project would like to thank the Leon Levy Foundation, the J.M. Kaplan Fund, the Samuel H. Kress Foundation, the Achelis and Bodman Foundation, the New York Community Trust, the New York State Council on the Arts, the A. George & Mary Elizabeth Ottavino Historic Preservation Fund, Kay Ciganovic, and the Robert A. and Elizabeth R. Jeffe Foundation for their generous support. Our work could not be accomplished without their—and your—contributions.

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 on our website (www.nypap.org), or by credit card over the phone at 212-988-8379 or via the QR code at left.