

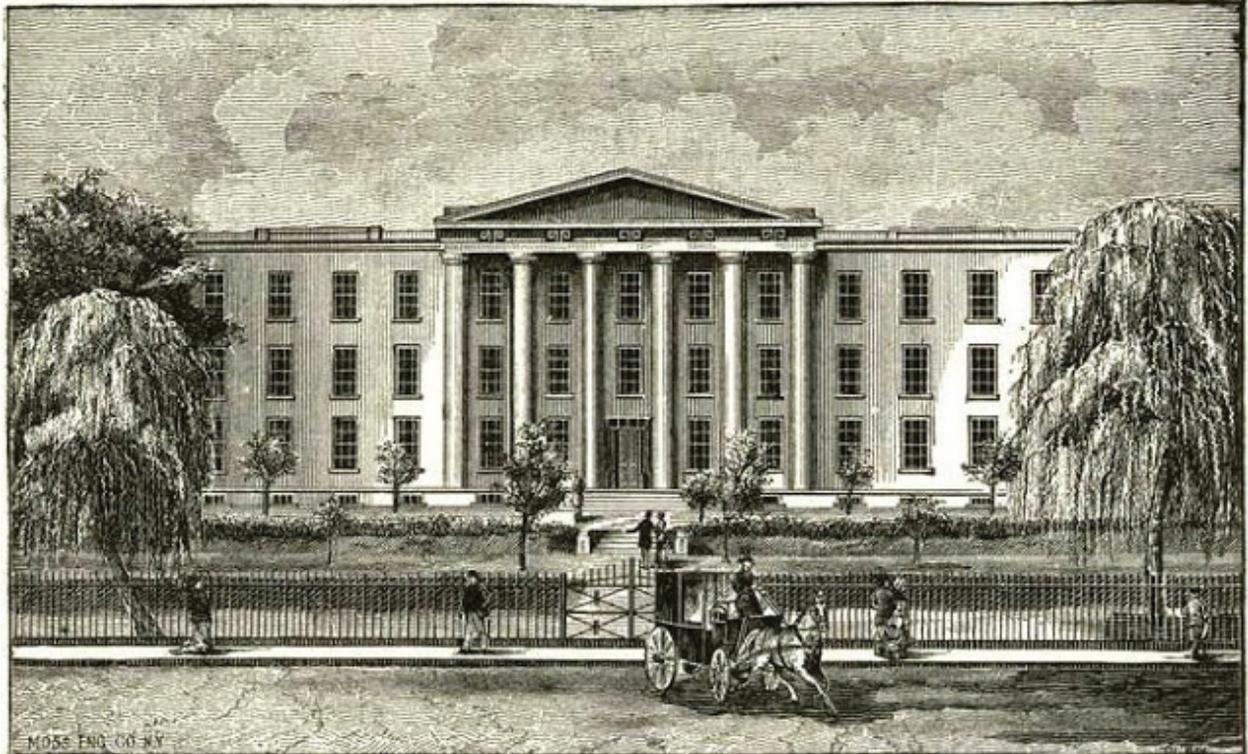
# 7 WEST 43RD STREET FOUNDATION inc.

Dedicated To Restoration & preservation of our historic façade

Newsletter No. 6

June 2016

## Change Comes To West Forty-Third Street



### Neighborhood Origins

On the west side of Fifth Avenue the land between Forty Third Street and 44th Street has been used for many different activities. Originally an open site north of the Croton Reservoir, construction of the New York Public library in 1897 and the paving of Fifth Avenue caused it to become a far more valuable address. Subsequent construction of the Century (begun in 1889) and Bryant Park (1899) were major factors in determining the current character of what has become an institutional neighborhood.

However, the first significant building to occupy this area was the Colored Orphan Asylum, fronting Fifth Avenue between 43rd and 44th streets.

“This was an impressive brick structure sitting on a high basement faced in fieldstone. Three story pilasters separated the openings, above which sat a classical pediment.” The building faced Fifth Avenue and was sponsored by several wealthy women. The Asylum, with four-stories and two wings, originally prospered with a population 250 children.

Subsequently in 1891, location of the Century Association at number 7 West 43rd Street encouraged other institutions to locate their buildings nearby, in time forming a distinct institutional neighborhood.

## Draft Riots and Their Aftermath

After this peaceful beginning, New York's most extensive and violent rioting occurred, brought on by tensions in the mixed race city from reactions to The Draft Lottery, established in 1863. This legislation brought conflict between poor immigrants and wealthy citizens who could afford to buy their way out of military service. These massive protests burst open during a hot summer with four days of bloody riots, including, looting, murder and arson and remains the bloodiest outbreak

of civil disorder in American history. According to newspaper accounts, "Hundred, and perhaps thousands of the rioters, the majority of whom were women and children, entered the premises, and in the most excited and violent manner ransacked and plundered the building from cellar to garret." This unruly mob not only wanted to kill people but to destroy the orphanage itself. The building was set on flame in all parts, while the children were rescued out the back door.



On November 12, 1863 The Superintendent of Unsafe Buildings directed that the charred walls of the Colored Asylum be taken down. Efforts were put forth to rebuild the Asylum, which had a reputation of being a model institution, but the

land had become too valuable to continue its use at this address to house orphans. The Asylum was reestablished on 53rd street before finding its permanent home in Harlem on W. 143rd Street and Amsterdam Avenue where it began a new life.

## New Towers



Lower Manhattan Skyline 2020



Midtown Manhattan Skyline 2020

**We are about to see how contemporary marketplace real estate development using high-rise glass towers could alter this neighborhood.** It anticipates what would happen if we were invaded with construction of a mixed use 70-story glass tower that would require a new foundation to extend below the Century's basement by at least three stories. Although the Century will not be physically transformed with this new tower, and its landmark status would remain, our club will be seen as part of an entirely different new midtown context.

However, it is currently unclear when construction of this design will go forward. The site is too valuable to remain unoccupied for long, but it could be that new ownership will lead to a new design approach. Nonetheless, our neighborhood is sure to change further with construction of #1 Vanderbilt Avenue, a new high rise connected to Grand Central and proposals to alter midtown zoning regulations.



Fifth Avenue at 43rd Street, Spring 2016

## Committee Activities

Our most recent luncheon conversation with Peg Breen and Christopher Grey, entitled *Changing Nature of Preservation* was held on March 22nd. Our next luncheon will be a conversation between Laurie Beckelman and Hugh Hardy to discuss how new buildings for the arts represent new ideas about the changing nature of the relationship between audience and performer.

Our President has appointed an Oversight Committee, directed by Doug Larsen, to review the neighboring project and ensure all interested parties at the Century are kept informed. Construction management for the Century requires

coordination with the contractors next door to ensure the scope of construction work is confirmed.

In anticipation of work next door, our committee has approved an expenditure of \$60,000 of our funds to cover the cost of protecting existing rooftop ductwork, currently exposed. In addition we have budgeted \$32,000 to repair the skylight in the main gallery.

Although the lack of progress with our adjoining site makes future projections of cost difficult at this time, we will alert the committee as soon as we have new information.

## F i n a n c e s

### Administration and Professional Fees

Phase 1 and 2	30,000
Phase 3	180,000
Phase 4	250,000
	\$ 460,000

### Fundraising Expenses

Phase 1 and 2	\$10,000
Phase 3	10,000
Phase 4	20,000
	\$ 40,000

### Restoration Construction Cost

Phase 1	Create wheelchair ramp	95,000
Phase 2	Clean entrance, restore Lantern, hardware	95,000
Phase 3	Repair East Wall Replace and re-glaze all wood window sash	101,000 245,000
	New glazing in Birdcage	200,000
Phase 4	Clean, repoint, restore entire street façade	1,650,000
		\$2,882,000

**Total Five-Year Restoration Project Grand Total: 2,882,000**

**Donations to Date: \$870,000**

**Donations Needed: 2,012,000**

*\*Completed*

## C e n t u r y   O n g o i n g   M a i n t a n e n c e

### Foundation Members

Hugh Hardy	<i>Trustees</i>
<i>President</i>	Ned Ames
Peg Breen	Kent Barwick
<i>Secretary</i>	Susan Jones
Daniel Rose	<i>Advisors</i>
<i>Treasurer</i>	Morrison Hecksher
Jack Kerr	Wilson Nolen
<i>Legal Counsel</i>	Stacy Schiff
Byron Bell	Adele Chatfield Taylor
<i>Architectural Consultant</i>	

### A New Oversight Committee

Our President has appointed an Oversight Committee, directed by Doug Larsen, to review the project next door and ensure all interested parties at the Century are kept informed.

### Construction Manager

Construction management for the Century requires ongoing coordination with the next door contractors to ensure the scope of construction work is confirmed.

## A   R e m i n d e r

*Please support our goal: Restoration & Preservation of the Century's Historic Facade*

Please give your TAX DEDUCTIBLE donation to the 7 West 43rd Street Foundation and send it c/o Guy Smalling at the Century Association, 7 West 43rd Street.

New York, NY 10036. An addressed envelope is included in this mailing for your convenience.

There is much left to do & we can only do it with your help.