

Professional Archaeologists of New York City, Inc.

PANYC

NEWSLETTER

No. 148

March 2011

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Next Meeting:

March 23, 2011

Neighborhood Preservation Center

232 East 11th Street

New York, NY

6:45pm (*PLEASE NOTE THE TIME CHANGE!***)**

Newsletter Editor:

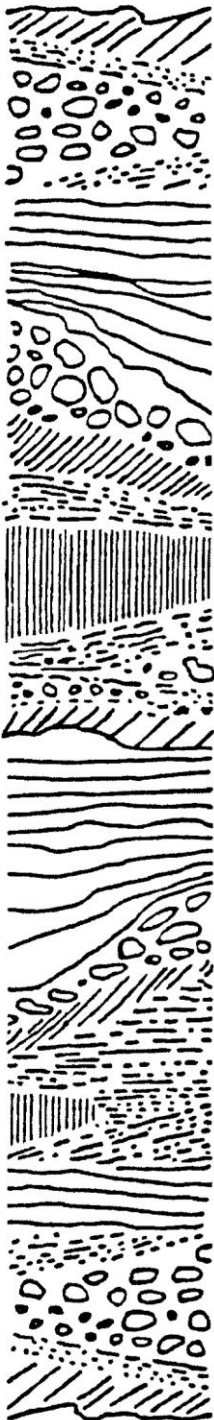
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PANYC GENERAL MEETING MINUTES
November 17, 2010, 6:30 P.M.
Neighborhood Preservation Center (NPC)
232 East 11th Street, New York, NY

Present: Linn, Wall, Cantwell, Pickman, Spritzer, MacLean, Geismar, Stone, & Freeman

Treasurer's Report / Secretary's Report

- a) MacLean thanked the board for its help to complete the general meeting minutes from May, a meeting she was unable to attend. The board, via email, unanimously accepted the minutes.
- b) There are no general meeting minutes from the October 2nd at held at Columbia University, MacLean reported, as a result of it being a joint NYAC/PANYC meeting with NYAC led agenda. MacLean will include a note in the January 2011 newsletter explaining the absence of October minutes.
- c) Treasurer Spritzer reported there are currently 38 paid members and \$3,600 in the treasury.

President's Report

- a) Linn shared that PANYC had received thank you notes from Betsy Kearns family and Sloan Kettering acknowledging the donation made in Kearns' honor. Both letters will be published in the January newsletter.
- b) Linn received notification from Landmarks Commission that there are two new historic districts being considered: a) an expansion to the Riverside-West End Historic District, and b) Morning Side Heights. Linn will write a letter urging for the archaeology of the areas to be included in the districting plans. To date, Landmarks has not included archaeology in the language of landmarks legislation.
- c) Discussion: Linn suggested that PANYC's efforts to get archaeology included in historic districts might be bolstered if we cc'd potential allies in our letters, such as Franny Eberhart, chair of the Historic House Trust; Simeon Bankoff and Nadezhda Williams of the Historic District Council; or Anthony Wood of the New York Preservation Archive. It was also suggested that we try to further disseminate our mission by utilizing extant preservation blogs.
- d) Reporting on her meeting with Frank Vagnone of the Historic House Trust, Linn shared that the Trust currently has an intern from City College compiling a database of all Trust properties that have had archaeology done in the past. Linn has a digitized copy of this list and will send it to members for feedback. If anyone has done work on any of the sites and it's not listed, please help make this a comprehensive list. The intern is also including a map of each property with the location(s) of past archaeological work highlighted. Vagnone also shared that he's trying to develop a fund to support archaeology at the Trust properties and is looking for archaeologists willing to serve pro-bono on an emergency crew of archaeologists. Linn reiterated to Vagnone that this type of "emergency" work represents the livelihood of many archaeologists working in the city and a "pro-bono" collection of archaeologists could potentially undermine the process of professional archaeology in the City.

Discussion: Geismar suggested it might be best if PANYC encourage and support the Trust's efforts to develop an archaeology fund. Linn will send Vagnone a letter commending his efforts to develop a list of archaeology on Trust properties and that PANYC will continue to support the Trust's effort, as we're able.

Committee Reports (only those making a report are mentioned)

Awards: Cantwell announced that Ralph Solecki was presented with his **lifetime achievement award (is this correct?)** at the most recent MET chapter meeting; he was very happy with the recognition.

Education: Building on conversations begun at the joint meeting with NYAC, Linn and MacLean are meeting to develop outreach strategies, in conjunction with and independent from NYAC. They are awaiting an email from Christina Rieth, chair of NYAC's education committee, listing statewide education opportunities in archaeology.

LPC: See President's Report, above, for meeting discussion about LPC.

Stone reported on the presentation she attended at Landmarks seeking approval of the mitigation plan for the archaeology at City Hall Park. A presentation of the proposed construction and mitigation plan was given by the architect followed by an overview of the archaeology unearthed during the most recent phase of construction by archaeologist Alyssa Loorya. Because it was a presentation, and not a hearing, Stone said, there was no opportunity for public comment. A "binding report" had been sent to the commissioners prior to the meeting upon which they were basing their decision, in addition to the presentations of Loorya and the architect. Stone has drafted a letter to be sent by Linn to Mayor Bloomberg lauding the attention being given to archaeology work at City Hall and to encourage the use of high-visibility interpretive signage and "preservation in place" as plans are crafted for interpreting the archaeology of city hall. The letter will be in the January issue of the newsletter.

Met Chapter/NYSAA: Wall and Cantwell reported on the interesting lecture given by Joel Schuldenrein at Columbia. Upcoming events include a guided tour of the museum at the African Burial Ground on December 6th, and a book signing party for Ralph Solecki after the New Year.

Newsletter: Our thanks to Chris Ricciardi for his continued great work with the newsletter.

NYAC: Stone reported on October's joint meeting at Columbia. It was a successful and well-attended event, and a publication of the meeting's content is forthcoming. Thanks to Britt, Linn, and Stone for their efforts in making the day possible.

Parks: Geismar reported that the Washington Square Park Phase II is nearly complete.

Public Program: Rakos has proposed that City Hall Park be the topic for the next PANYC public program Geismar will contact Rakos about developing a list of potential topics and speakers.

Repository: It was learned at the joint NYAC/PANYC meeting in October that NYAC sent a survey to all repositories in New York State about their collections but only garnered a 33% response (which is apparently quite high nationally according to Sissy Pipes).

Website: Pickman reported that he continues to add new events to the website as he learns of them.

New Business / Announcement

The next PANYC general meeting will be held on January 26, 2011.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:00 PM

Respectfully submitted by Jessica S. Maclean, PANYC Secretary.

Professional Archaeologists of New York City, Inc. (PANYC) and New York Archaeological Council (NYAC)

March 8, 2011

THIS LETTER WAS WRITTEN IN RESPONSE TO DRAFT MOA:
HTTP://WWW.NAN.USACE.ARMY.MIL/BUSINESS/BUSLINKS/ADMIRAL/
PDF/FEB11/CONSULTINGPARTYMTG_8FEB11.PDF

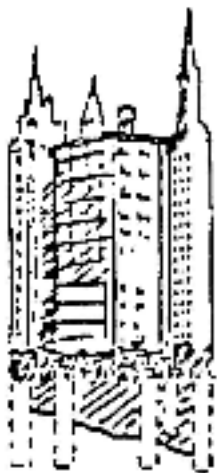
Ms. Rebecca A. Klein
NGB Cultural Resources Program Manager
Army National Guard, National Guard Bureau
Attn: NGB-ARE-C
111 S. George Mason Drive
Arlington, Virginia 22204-1382

Re: Admiral's Row, Brooklyn Navy Yard – Comments on Draft MOA

Dear Ms. Klein,

On behalf of Professional Archaeologists of New York City (PANYC) and the New York Archaeological Council (NYAC), thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) for the Disposal of the Admirals Row, Brooklyn Navy Yard Property 2011 received February 8, 2011. While the document clearly states that identified archaeological concerns must be addressed, several archaeological items require clarification and, in some cases, revision. The following is an attempt to address these items that are undoubtedly issues that will be, or have been, addressed by the NY SHPO. They include the following:

- P. 10, 3a-ii: Line 37: "...was inaccessible..."
- P. 10, 3a-ii: Lines: 42-47: "...previous Phase 1B (June 2009) evaluations ~~therein~~
~~the event that~~ to determine if ~~important~~ significant artifacts and/or features
are present [Substitute the following for Lines 43-47]: "This information is
~~captured~~ presented in the Phase 1B report that should be reviewed by the
purchaser and the project archaeologist to develop the work plan required
for additional archaeological investigations. Once developed, the
archeological work plan is to be submitted to the NY SHPO for approval."
- P. 11, 3a-iii: Line 2: "...as specified in detail in the Phase 1B report and as
requested by the NY SHPO (D. Mackey Letter, July 24, 2009).
- P. 11, 3c: Line 15: "investigation, including the processing, analysis, and reporting
of any recovered archaeological material."
- P. 11, 3d: Line 17: "...submit a draft ~~an~~ archaeological report..."
- P. 11, 3f: Line 34 and 35: "...investigations will be temporarily stored ~~where and~~
~~sent where~~ by the developer or the project archaeologist in an appropriate
facility until the final report is accepted by the NY SHPO. At that point,
they will be transferred to a facility meeting the federal guidelines for
the curation of archaeological collections approved by the NY SHPO.
- P. 12, 4c: Line 10: "~~...the expectation of~~ further archaeological discoveries are
possible and ~~that~~ additional..."
- Line 15: "and respectable respectful manner..."
- Line 17: "...to document features and/or sites, if...
- P. 12, c-i: Line 21: "... (e.g., a wall, a building foundation, a privy pit)..."
- Line 22-24: [PLEASE DELETE REFERENCE TO SPECIFIC
NUMBER OF ARTIFACTS. "Dense artifact deposit" and "area to
be considered" (i.e., 1 meter) and "number of feet to be avoided" (i.e., 50
feet) as defined by the project archaeologist will be presented in the
work plan and approved by the NY SHPO (see comment on P. 10: Lines
42-47).



PANYC



**Professional Archaeologists of New York City, Inc. (PANYC) and
New York Archaeological Council (NYAC)**

Admirals Row Draft MOA/Comments/March 8, 2011/Page 2 of 2

- P. 12, c-iii: Line 32: "The archaeologist shall ~~review~~ assess the find..."
c-iii-a: Line 35: "Once the archaeological find is documented, and if no..."
- P. 13, c-ii-d: Line 4: "...curated and then temporarily stored by the archaeologist, the
Line 5: Navy Yard, or other appropriate location prior to repatriation."
- P. 13, c-ii-e: Line 11: "Final decision on ~~what~~ information to be released to the..."
- P.13, c-iii-f: Line 14-19: "...burial context or other contexts, the Archaeologist and the excavation team ~~shall carry out documentation and recovery in consultation with associated tribes to ensure the Remains are handled appropriately and will follow the ACHP Policy Statement Regarding Treatment of Human Remains and Funerary Objects, February 23, 2007, and any other applicable federal and state laws. Should the remains prove to be Native American, excavation and documentation will be carried out in consultation with associated tribes to ensure appropriate handling."~~

General Comment: P.11: Line 17, P.13: Line 21: It is unclear whether separate reports will be required for the additional Phase 1B, the Phase 2, and the Monitoring. This issue should be addressed in the MOA, perhaps stating that the number of reports will be established by the developer and the project archaeologist in consultation with the NY SHPO.

Appendix A, P. 24; Additional Archaeological Investigation:

Time-Frame: "Pre- and During Demolition" [earlier 1B shovel testing did not adequately address the issue of in-ground backyard features, such as privy pits; finding them during construction-related activities could undermine construction schedules].

Also, references to archaeological pages and sections need to be revised to reflect current pagination.

The following are miscellaneous comments, mainly identifying typographic errors:

P. 5, d: Line 38: "...their own right for Building B shall..."

P. 7, c: Line 22: "...the condition of each..."

P. 10, 2-a: Line 6: "...will include the protection and preservation of historic trees..."

2-c: Line 20: "...the purchaser will ~~the~~ replant the trees..."

Please note that PANYC and NYAC wish to serve as concurring parties in the ongoing Section 106 process. Once again, we thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,

Meredith Linn
PANYC President

 Marie-Lorraine Pipes
NYAC President

- cc. K. Leahy, ARNG
R. Pierpont, NYSHPO
D. Mackey, NYSHPO
M. Bloomberg, Mayor of New York City
S. Leibowitz, BNYDC
A. Sutphin, NYCLPC
S. Bankoff, HDC
L. Kersavage, MAS

PLEASE NOTE

The start time for the March 23 PANYC general meeting has
been shifted to 6:45 pm

Neighborhood Preservation Center
232 East 11th Street, NY, NY
(btwn 2nd and 3rd Ave)

Please join us in welcoming special guest speaker

Ashley Bettis

Bettis, a CUNY undergraduate and intern at the Historic House Trust, will talk about her work creating a database of archaeological reports relating to the houses overseen by the Historic House Trust. At PANYC's suggestion, her work also documents where archaeological collections excavated from HHT properties are currently stored.

Sunday May 1st 2011

Museum of the City of New York

Time: TBD

Flyer will be mailed to PANYC members

The History and Archaeology of the Commons: New York City's City Hall Park

New York's City Hall sits on a property that has yielded fascinating stories through its archaeological remains. What is now New York City's only designated archaeological historic district, the "African Burial Ground and The Commons Historic District," has for three centuries been the site of civic functions that include burial grounds, institutions providing succor to the poor, Revolutionary War barracks housing British soldiers, and the seat of New York City's government. Archaeological projects in City Hall Park and vicinity undertaken over several decades offer a wealth of information about this extraordinary parcel of the city. The 31st Annual Professional Archaeologists of New York City (PANYC) Public Program will provide a glimpse into the history recovered through historical research and the archaeological record.



Oh, ship! Vessel found at the bottom of the Gowanus

BY GARY BUI SO
The Brooklyn Paper

The Gowanus Canal is filthy — filthy with a rare archeological trove, that is.

Environmental Protection Agency sonar readings have revealed several sunken vessels — including the 60-foot -long hull of a wooden vessel near Fifth Street that may date back to its glory days as an industrial highway of the 19th century.

“It looks like it might have been a working boat,” said [archeologist John Vetter](#) who found the craft.

He’s a scientist, so he conservatively suggested that the boat was at least 50 years old, but it is likely far older.

Sonar images also show the hull of a 126-foot-long barge, a 110-foot-long barge, a small boat, debris, tires, and a “mysterious U-shaped object between the Union and Carroll Street bridges,” according to EPA documents.

No human remains have yet to be discovered.

“We don’t think that’s too likely, but we’re not in a position to rule that out,” Vetter said.

The wrecks didn’t astonish those brave enough to dive in the canal — they’ve seen it all before.

“We were more surprised by the microbiology findings,” said Ludger Balan, founder of the Urban Divers Estuary Conservancy, referring to [a 2007 study that found](#) an array of sexually transmitted disease germs living in the fetid corpse of water.

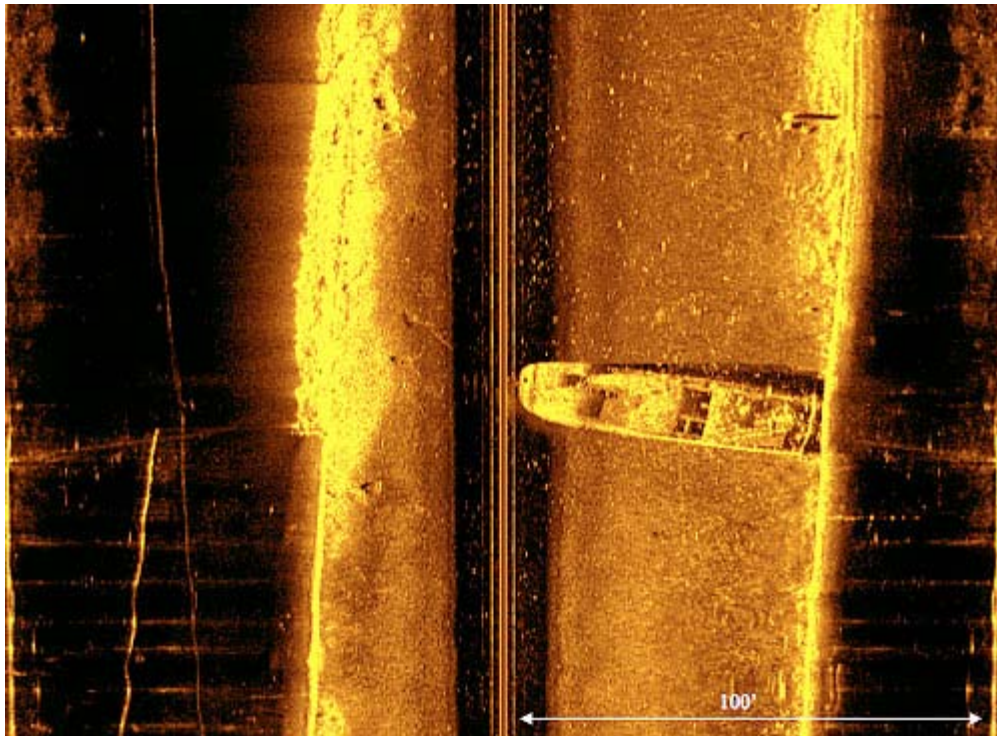
It is likely most of the items in the beleaguered canal, [named a Superfund site last year](#), will simply be junk.

If something of historical significance is discovered, it will be preserved, as federal law forbids the agency from destroying anything of archeological value.

In the upcoming months, Vetter will be performing a more detailed analysis of the sonar data, determining how and whether the canal’s 11-year, \$500 million cleanup will affect items or areas of historic value.



An old ship, possibly a smaller version of a classic 19th-century sailing vessel like this, has been spotted at the bottom of the Gowanus Canal.



EPA
Raise the Titanic! Sonar shows a mysterious 19th-century vessel submerged at the bottom of the filthy Gowanus Canal near Fifth Street.

The New York Times – N.Y./Region Section
(online at http://www.nytimes.com/2011/03/15/nyregion/15artifacts.html?_r=1&ref=nyregion)

March 14, 2011

Hoping Gowanus Canal Cleanup Turns Up Old Treasures
By MIREYA NAVARRO

Neighbors around the Gowanus Canal in Brooklyn already know their waterway is a toxic soup of heavy metals, sewage and probable carcinogens.

But some dream of treasures that might also be uncovered as a federal Superfund cleanup of the canal gets under way.

Perhaps remnants of a tidewater mill dam? A few Indian arrowheads and fishing hooks? Bullets, brass buttons and, who knows, a few human bones from the Battle of Brooklyn?

"Very few people realize that the largest battle of the Revolutionary War was fought in Brooklyn," said Kimberly Maier, executive director of the Old Stone House, a museum on the site where some 400 soldiers from Maryland were nearly wiped out while holding back a much larger British force in August 1776.

"There's always been this great mystery of where the Marylanders were buried," she said. "Were they in one specific grave about 100 feet from the curb along Third Avenue between Seventh and Eighth Streets, or dumped into the Gowanus wetlands? What turns up would be amazing."

The Superfund program, administered by the Environmental Protection Agency, is known for unearthing pollutants that pose a threat to public health. But as the agency designs its projects across the country, it also plays a less well-known role - that of preservationist, documenting and often salvaging items of historical value found in contaminated soil, buildings and sediment at the bottom of rivers and canals.

That role can sometimes become as controversial as forcing polluters to pay for a cleanup or, as in the case of the Gowanus, interfering with a city's ambitious economic development plans.

Fredric L. Quivik, a professor of industrial history and archaeology at Michigan Technological University, said that in regions where E.P.A. administrators are "single-minded" about a cleanup, they may consider preservation efforts "a distraction from their mission in life." He added, "If there are local constituencies who care about these cultural resources, they'll raise a ruckus."

Federal officials said that 20 to 25 percent of some 1,300 current Superfund sites contain artifacts or structures of historical interest to their local communities or that capture whole swaths of the nation's industrial eras. Many of the sites, the officials noted, are near water, which provided transportation and livelihoods to early industry and settlements.

One of the most significant examples of preservation at a contaminated site was found in Roebing, N.J., about 10 miles south of Trenton near the Delaware River. A museum is rising up there from the wasteland of what once was the steel mill complex founded by the family that built the Brooklyn Bridge and that produced the wire rope for the Golden Gate and George Washington Bridges.

The cleanup at the former John A. Roebling's Sons Company, which operated at the site from 1905 to the 1950s, when the company was sold to new owners that operated there until the 1970s, is ridding a 200-acre site of asbestos and heavy metals like chromium, lead and copper for future commercial and recreational development by the Township of Florence, which owns the land.

In the process of demolishing contaminated buildings and dredging river and creek sediment, the E.P.A. has saved mill tools, large spools and machinery, and the employment records of thousands of immigrant workers, most of them Eastern Europeans who were often recruited fresh from Ellis Island.

The federal agency, which has spent \$115 million on the cleanup since it began in the late 1980s, has provided \$7 million to renovate the mill's former gatehouse to establish the Roebling Museum, which opened to the public last summer. (Agency officials say the costs of historic property are financed with cleanup money, which either comes from polluters or, as in the case of the Roebling project, directly from the E.P.A.)

"What we're recovering here is the part this place played in the American industrial revolution, in the immigrant experience," said George Lengel, a Roebling Museum board member and local historian. "We couldn't have done it without the E.P.A. This was too big a project for a small community."

Under the National Historic Preservation Act, the protection agency is required to consider any possible harm to cultural resources. John F. Vetter, an archaeologist and the agency's expert in historic preservation, said the investigation of potentially historic resources runs parallel to that of contaminants at the outset of a cleanup so that alternatives are weighed to avoid or minimize any damage.

Some notable discoveries, which are usually given to state museums and local communities, include Lenape Indian artifacts from the old DeRwal Chemical Company site in Kingwood, N.J., and 20-foot-long pieces of timber from Fort Edward in upstate New York. The timbers, found in the dredging of part of the Hudson River that had been contaminated with the toxic chemicals known as PCBs from discharges by two General Electric factories, is now undergoing preservation work at the Lake Champlain Maritime Museum in Vergennes, Vt., before going to the New York State Museum in Albany.)

In the case of American Indian burial grounds, Mr. Vetter said, some have been left alone, and in other cases remains have been reburied elsewhere, with the agreement of tribes. When preservation interferes with the cleanup, Mr. Vetter said, a "recordation," or documentation, takes place to at least have a public account of what was lost.

"In each case, we look at how much we can keep intact," Mr. Vetter added. "In some sites, we're successful in preserving the historic features, and in others, we lose the historic features, and we do recordations."

Yet the agency's primary mission is still the cleanup, according to Professor Quivik, and some of its administrators have been criticized by state preservation officials for doing just the minimum to comply with their obligations to history. Preservation at the sites often depends on the advocacy of state and local preservationists, he added.

"Otherwise," he said, "you demolish it, cover it over or haul it to the dump."

In Brooklyn, neighbors and community groups are already forming an "archaeological and historic resources committee" as part of the community advisory group overseeing the project. One committee member, Eymund Diegel, an environmental planner, said he saw the agency as an ally, but "they will have to make technical choices that don't necessarily mesh with other plans."

One brewing battle, he said, is whether to preserve or replace the canal's old bulkheads because of the need to create a barrier to prevent more contamination from the soil into the water.

"There's debate about what should be done," Mr. Diegel said. "People are now discussing whether this or that should be preserved, and that's a healthy debate because the main problem with the Gowanus has been neglect."

For all the excitement, Mr. Diegel and others acknowledged that expectations of major archaeological discoveries are low given how heavily the area has been developed over the centuries. Many residents, Mr. Diegel said, would be happy just improving the quality of water along the 1.8-mile-long canal, which was carved out of tidal wetlands and streams in the 1860s.

"Clean water," he said, "is the ultimate archaeological resource they could find."

PANyc Events Calendar

Event	Topic	Speaker	Time	Date	Location	Contact
The Society for American Archaeology Annual Meeting				March 30-April 3, 2011	Sacramento, CA	saa.org
Tenement Talks at the Lower East Side Tenement Museum	"Triangle: The Fire That Changed America"	with author David Von Drehle	06:30 PM	Mar 23, 2011	LES Tenement Museum, 95 Orchard St.	tenement.org
CUNY Grad Center Event	"Triangle Shirtwaist Fire 100 th Anniversary Commemoration"	Join historians Rich Greenwald, Annelise Orleck, Ellen Todd, Jennifer Guglielmo, writer David Von Drehle, and artist Ruth Sergel for a panel discussion about the disaster.	7-9pm	Mar 24, 2011	Grad Center, 365 Fifth Ave at 34 th St.	free admission, RSVP 212-817-8215
Conference from NYU's Institute for the Study of the Ancient World	"A World of Cities": this conference will consider the evolution and nature of early cities in worldwide perspective -- as creations, arenas of performance, administrative technologies, the distribution of power, and their countrysides					
Tenement Talks at the Lower East Side Tenement Museum	"Why Architecture Matters"	Norman Yoffee, organizer	All day	Mar 25, 2011	ISAW, 15 E.84 th St.	212-992-7800
Tenement Talks at the Lower East Side Tenement Museum	"The Bowery: Past, Present, and Future", an illustrated talk on the legendary street by the Chair of the Bowery Alliance of Neighbors	Paul Goldberger offers his own of experiencing the built world	06:30 PM	Mar 30, 2011	LES Tenement Museum, 95 Orchard St.	tenement.org
Brooklyn Historical Society	Ratzer Map from 1771 on view	David Mulkins	06:30 PM	Apr 5, 2011	LES Tenement Museum, 95 Orchard St.	tenement.org
PANyc Public Program	"The History and Archaeology of the Commons: New York City's City Hall Park"		TBA	now through May 1, 2011	Brooklyn Historical Society 128 Pierrepont Street, Brooklyn	718-222-4111
				May 1, 2011	Museum of the City of New York, 1220 Fifth Ave. at 103 rd St.	free with museum admission

MEMBERSHIP/NEWSLETTER/INFORMATION:

If you are interested in joining PANYC or if you would like to subscribe to the PANYC Newsletter, please complete the form below and return it to:

Jessica Striebel MacLean
156 Bainbridge Street
Brooklyn, NY 11233

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY/STATE: _____

ZIP (+FOUR): _____

PHONE: _____

E-MAIL: _____

Please indicate your preferences below, as appropriate.

I wish to apply for membership to PANYC and would like to receive the application form _____

The application form may also be downloaded from:
http://www.panycarchaeology.org/membership_information.html

I wish to subscribe to the PANYC Newsletter (Fee \$10) _____

I wish to make an additional donation to PANYC _____

I wish to receive the PANYC Newsletter in digital (e-format) _____

I wish to receive the PANYC Newsletter in printed (mailed) form _____

If you have any questions please email: info@panycarchaeology.org