



## THE QUEENS MUSEUM NEW YORK WORLD'S FAIR ASSOCIATION

**...THE QUEENS MUSEUM** New York World's Fair Association held a World's Fair Reunion Day this past November 12, attracting over 500 guests and bringing together such World's Fair notables as filmmaker Francis Thompson and Unisphere engineer Peter Martecchini. We hope you read about the Reunion in *The New York Times* article that appeared the next day.

In this issue, read about our next and most ambitious undertaking, a two-day celebration timed with the April opening day anniversaries of the New York Fairs; find out about Fair-related happenings in the metropolitan area during 1989; and learn about the Disney influence at the 1964 exposition—and much more.

Many thanks to our friends who have written and shared their Fair knowledge. Send your letter to: *World's Fair Newsletter*, The Queens Museum, New York City Building, Flushing Meadow Park, Flushing, New York 11368.

### Opening Days Herald Brave New Worlds

Two kinds of statistics characterize the opening days of the New York Fairs: attendance and temperature. Morning ceremonies for opening day April 30, 1939 proceeded under blue skies, while on April 22, 1964 the weather was cold, rainy and (as described by *The New York Times*) "cruel."

On that first day in 1939, the National Cash Register Company's giant register clicked in over 600,000 visitors—an impressive number, but still short of the Fair Corporation's prediction of one million visitors. In 1964, however, the opening day gate totaled only 92,600, out of an expected volume of 250,000.

In retrospect, the opening days can be seen as harbingers of significant social change—in ways that Fair organizers could not always have predicted. In 1939, *President Franklin D. Roosevelt* addressed the opening day crowd with predictions of peace; yet today the content of his speech is eclipsed by the fact that it was televised. This first national television broadcast was viewed simultaneously by visitors in the RCA Pavilion, where 9" x 12" "home receivers" had been installed. "Home receivers"—i.e. TV sets—went on sale for the first time that day, with price tags of \$200 to \$1,000.

*President Lyndon B. Johnson* opened the 1964 Fair, noting that prospects for peace were greater than in 1939 and that the Fair's theme, "Peace Through Understanding," was closer to fulfillment. It is a sign of those times that his speech was heckled and repeatedly disrupted by civil rights protesters.

The New York Fairs are cherished by many as the last of the great world expositions. Ironically, a look at their opening days reveals two of the forces that have contributed to the diminution of world fairs: television and organized political protest. However, although lines of demonstrators and police introduced a jarring note into the 1964 festivities, most visitors remembered only immaculate grounds, imposing pavilions and streams of colored light. The 1964 Fair was the last time that New Yorkers visited a perfect world at home.



### World's Fair Anniversary Weekend

Activities commemorating the 50th and 25th Anniversaries of the 1939 and 1964 World's Fairs will take place at The Queens Museum on Saturday and Sunday, April 29 and 30, 1989. On each day, hours for the general public are noon to 5 p.m.

**Saturday and Sunday:** There will be the dealers' bourse at the Museum sponsored by the World's Fair Collectors Society. Over 20 dealers from around the country will bring souvenirs from every exposition under the sun, from buttons and bows to carpet sweepers and dinette sets. *World's Fair Associates please note: Get first pick at the many bargains—your membership entitles you to preview the bourse at 11 a.m. on Saturday.*

Continuous film screenings and slide talks on a variety of '39 and '64 World's Fair topics will be shown in the Museum Theater. For refreshments, hungry fairgoers can enjoy authentic World's Fair waffles, served up by the original wafflemaker from the 1964 Fair, Maurice Vermersch. For stamp enthusiasts, the U.S. Post Office is setting up a special station in the Museum to post mark postcards and letters with a uniquely designed cancellation commemorating the World's Fairs Opening Day Anniversaries.

**Also on Saturday:** A special program will take place in the "Great Hall" of the New York Hall of Science, the science museum located on the 1964 Fair site, near The Queens Museum in Flushing Meadow Park. This event is free, but a ticket is required. *Your membership entitles you to a priority ticket for this event which can be obtained from 11 a.m. to 12 Noon at The Queens Museum.*

Closed to the public for many years, the "Great Hall" is an extraordinary space designed by architect Wallace Harrison as an undulating wave of rippling walls of mosaic glass. The program will feature singer Michael Brown, remembered by many as the composer of the score for Dupont's "Wonderful World of Chemistry [1964]." Mr. Brown is well-known for his cabaret act at The Ballroom and other New York clubs. Other invited speakers include Ian Woodner, architect for the 1939 Salvador Dali Pavilion and Hall of Pharmacy (for which Willem De Kooning executed a mural) and Joe Ivanick, President of Raymond Lester and Associates, the firm that created the Panorama.

**Also on Sunday:** There will be guided tours of Fair sites in the park from noon to three, and, of course, films and lectures at The Queens Museum throughout the day.

At left, Standing in the Court of Peace, President Roosevelt opened the 1939 Fair with a message that was telecast throughout the metropolitan area. Photo courtesy of R.C.A.

The following essay is excerpted from an upcoming book to be published by Rizzoli International in conjunction with The Queens Museum exhibition beginning September 2. Ileen Sheppard is Director of Exhibitions of the Museum.

## Walt Disney and The 1964 World's Fair, by Ileen Sheppard

The Disney presence at the Fair was enormous and its subsequent influence profound. His designed attractions--General Electric's "Carousel of Progress," Pepsi-Cola's "It's a Small World," Ford's "Magic Skyway," and the State of Illinois' "Great Moments with Mr. Lincoln"--were tremendously popular.

Visitors queued up for hours to see Disney's "Audio-Animatronics" system perfected. Now a staple of theme park wizardry, "Audio-Animatronics" was then in its infancy and had its coming-out party at the Fair. "Audio-Animatronics," based on an electro-mechanical system, combine and synchronize mechanical movement and sound effects. What one sees is a totally coordinated figure that can sing, dance, and talk.

The Disney attractions were not only popular for their sophisticated display techniques, but because they provided visitors with a ride. At Ford and Pepsi, visitors were transported through the pavilions in vehicles and at General Electric the audience moved, as the theater rotated between each scene.



Walt Disney with dolls from his memorable exhibit, "It's a Small World" / Designers: WED: Imagineering/ Photo courtesy of the Walt Disney Co. ©Walt Disney Company 1989.

Not only did the ride aspect of these pavilions contribute to their popularity, but their educational and merchandising aspects were generally disguised within an amusement park sensibility. The other most popular attraction at the Fair, the General Motors "Futurama" was also a ride, although not a Disney production. Pepsi-Cola's "It's a Small World," created in conjunction with UNICEF, was an "Audio-Animatronics" system of hundreds of figures of children, dolls and toys representing more than a hundred nations. Visitors were transported through this mechanized world by small boats.

For Ford's "Magic Skyway," visitors climbed into one of 160 Ford convertibles. many of them Mustangs [the car that made its debut at the Fair]. The ride was programmed in four languages, with narration and music played through the car radio. The display, the first to use Disney's WEDway Peoplemover system, carried over fifteen million visitors through a prehistoric jungle, scenes of dinosaur fights, the dawn of mankind, and, finally, to a space-age city. The Peoplemoving system, brought to Disneyland in Anaheim, California in 1967, is still used today in theme parks and airports.

General Electric's "Carousel of Progress" presented an "Audio-Animatronics" family that moved through history on a revolving theater to the theme song, "It's a Great Big Beautiful Tomorrow." The first scene took place in 1880, where the family members--mother, father, son, daughter, grandma, grandpa, dog, parrot, and "good ol' Cousin Orville"-- pump their water from a well and have no electricity. With a turn of the stage, the family is in 1920 and electricity is ever present. Television makes it debut in the next scene, and the finale takes places in the present--1964--with the entire home programmed to eliminate household chores, and the color television presiding. The grandparents are no longer in evidence and the narrator tells viewers, "You're probably wondering what happened to Grandma and Grandpa. Well, they are no longer with us... they have their own home in a community for senior citizens." Illinois' "Great Moments with Mr. Lincoln" was probably the most dramatic use of "Audio-Animatronics" at the Fair. The three-dimensional re-creation of Lincoln, with synchronized movements and speech reciting excerpts from the *Gettysburg Address*, was an eerily convincing display.

At the close of the Fair, Disney hoped to establish a theme park on its site, but Robert Moses flatly refused, insisting that Flushing Meadow become a public park, one to rival Central Park. So Disney decided to move south, and in 1971, Walt Disney World opened in Orlando, Florida. Much of the technology invented and perfected at the 1964 Fair was used at Walt Disney World and many of the Fair exhibits were relocated there or to Disneyland. The original "It's a Small World" went to Disneyland in 1966. "Talking Lincoln" was cloned in 1965 and installed in the Opera House on Main Street at Disneyland, while continuing its performance at the Fair. The "Carousel of Progress" was moved first to Disneyland, where it played for six years, and then to Walt Disney World, where it is permanently installed, but with one slight difference: Grandma and Grandpa have been reinstated into the family unit in the final scene, having given up their golden-age condominium to settle down with the family.

With the development of EPCOT [Experimental Prototype Community of Tomorrow] Center in 1982, the Fairs continue to influence theme park technology and philosophy. Today, EPCOT is the most tangible evidence of the Fair's legacy, for it aspires to be a permanent world's fair. Corporate and international government participation is enlisted to create exhibits of technological innovation and international exoticism, such as Bell System's "Spaceship Earth," Exxon's "Universe of Energy," General Motor's "World of Motion" and Kodak's "Journey into the Imagination." Robert Moses would have approved.

## DID YOU KNOW?

- that *Robert Moses*, president of the 1964/65 World's Fair Corporation, played an important role in the 1939/40 Fair as City Parks Commissioner. He was responsible for the plan to convert Flushing Meadow—site of the Corona Dump—into the Fair site, and represented Mayor La Guardia in all dealings with the '39 Fair Corporation.
- that *Gilmore Clarke*, landscape architect and designer of the Unisphere as theme center of the '64 Fair, had been on the Board of Design for the '39 Fair and is generally given credit for the basic layout of the exposition.
- that *Wallace Harrison*, architect principally responsible for the '39 Trylon and Perisphere, was designer of the '64 Hall of Science.
- that *Max Abramovitz*, who worked on the Trylon and Perisphere as a young architect with Harrison & Fouilhoux, created the '64 Bell Pavilion.
- that *Henry Dreyfuss*, the industrial designer who designed the '39 AT&T Pavilion display and "Democracy," the model of the ideal community of tomorrow featured in the Perisphere, was a member of the Board of Design for the '64 Fair and oversaw the '64 Bell Pavilion displays.
- that *Paul Manship*, sculptor, created a different "Celestial Globe" sculpture for each of the two Fairs: his '39 work stood outside the Maine Pavilion; the '64 version, which was intended as a permanent feature of the Park, but was stolen some 10 years ago, stood near the Unisphere. Other Manship sculptures at the '39 Fair were the four "Moods of Time" sculptures placed in fountains and the "Time and Fates of Man" sundial that was next to the Trylon and Perisphere.
- that *Ferde Grofe*, best-known as the composer of the "Grand Canyon Suite," conducted the New World Ensemble that played daily in the garden of the Ford Pavilion at the '39 Fair; for the '64 Fair, he composed a "World's Fair Suite" that made its debut on Opening Day, April 22, 1964.
- that *Raymond Lester*, modelmaker and creator of the '64 Panorama of the City of New York, worked on the '39 GM "Futurama" exhibit.



*Celestial Globe* by Paul Manship, c. 1939, Photo: Bob Golby, Collection of Queens Museum.



Manship's 1964 *Celestial Globe*, Photo courtesy of Pierre Montiel.

### THE QUEENS MUSEUM

New York City Building  
Flushing Meadow-Corona Park, Flushing, New York 11368

Museum Hours: Tuesday to Friday, 10 to 5; Saturday and Sunday, Noon to 5:30;  
Closed Monday

Recorded Information: (718) 592-5555 • Administrative Offices: (718) 592-2405

Free Parking

Editors: Anne Edgar, Marc Miller, Connie M. Cullen  
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### MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION The Queens Museum New York World's Fair Association

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

My check for \$25 is enclosed

Please make your check payable to:  
The Queens Museum, N.Y.C. Building, Flushing  
Meadow-Corona Park, Flushing, NY 11368.

The Queens Museum is housed in the New York City Building, which is owned by the City of New York. Its operation is supported in part with public funds from the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs. Additional support is provided with public funds from the New York State Council on the Arts.

## POSTMARKED: FLUSHING MEADOW

### Letters to the Editor

May I thank you for giving us a beautiful day on November 12th. I am very glad I made the trip to The Queens Museum.

I may be able to provide a recording of the *Belgian Village* carillon. I wish I could find a recording of the Belgian Pavilion carillon [1939-1940]. I have written an article about the carillon, at Stanford University, which is the instrument that sounded at the Belgian Pavilion in 1939/40. The article will be published soon in a bell-ringers magazine and also in the Stanford historical magazine. I will see that you receive copies of these articles for your archive.

James Lawson,  
Manhattan, N.Y.

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*Editors note: Mr. Lawson is a musician who played the carillon at the Coca-Cola Pavilion at the 1964 World's Fair.*

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First of all, I'd like to thank you very much for your wonderful newsletter. Being a collector, I enjoy reading about the great New York World's Fairs. I was only eight years old in 1964, but I can still remember that excitement the Fair generated—even "way back here" in Wisconsin! How I wish I could have attended! I now have to obtain my "memories" from collecting and through publications such as yours.

I read with interest your column "Did You Know?" where you described what became of various exhibits and buildings from the Fairs. When I first began collecting, I wrote to many of the exhibitors from the '64 Fair and asked if they had any Fair-related items in their archives. I also asked them what became of their pavilions and exhibits after the Fair closed. I thought you'd be interested in what became of some of the other 1964 buildings and exhibits.

— the *Austrian Pavilion* was purchased by a New England ski lodge. I never did find out exactly where it was moved to. Perhaps another reader would know.

— the *Parker Pen Pavilion* was purchased by The Lodge of the Four Seasons in Lake of the Ozarks, Missouri, and was moved there where it became a meeting facility at the Lodge.

— the *Travelers Insurance* exhibit "The Triumph of Man" was donated and moved to the Center of Science and Industry in Columbus, Ohio. To the best of my knowledge, it is still there. A plaque noted that it was from the New York World's Fair.

— the *Coca-Cola Company's* carillon was donated to the state of Georgia and now stands in Stone Mountain Park outside of Atlanta. A plaque still notes that it was a gift of Coca-Cola and was from the 1964 Fair.

— the *Wisconsin Pavilion* was purchased by a group of businessmen and was moved to Neilsville, Wisconsin, where it is now a gift and cheese shop, as well as the offices and studios of WCCN Radio. A replica of the famous "World's Largest Cheese" is displayed in the refrigerated van that it toured in after the Fair closed. Signs for miles around still advertise, "See the Wisconsin Pavilion from the New York World's Fair." So Wisconsin, actually has two pavilions from the Fair—the Wisconsin Pavilion and the Johnson Wax Golden Rondelle.

... My wife and I are planning to visit the museum and fairgrounds in New York sometime during the summer or fall in 1989. We're looking forward to reading more about the 25th and 50th anniversary events! Thank you for the memories.

Bill Young,  
Wisconsin Rapids, Wisconsin

## A FAIR ROUND-UP FOR 1989

### Upcoming World's Fair events in the metropolitan area:

*April 15-Aug. 20*, "Revisiting the New York World's Fair of 1939," an exhibition at the New-York Historical Society [Central Park West and 79th Street].

*April 20*, The Association for a Better New York's "anniversary" breakfast in Flushing Meadow Park.

*April 27-May 8*, an exhibition and book party at the Jack Gallery in Soho, sponsored by Harry W. Abrams publishers [138 Prince St.].

*April 29 and 30*, The Queens Museum's WORLD'S FAIR ANNIVERSARY WEEKEND.

*April 1-May 24*, display of New York Fair memorabilia at the Empire State Building, sponsored by the Flushing Meadow-Corona Park Development Corporation [5th Ave. at 34th St.].

*June-Sept.*, "The World's Fair: 50th Anniversary," exhibition at the 42nd St. Branch, New York Public Library [at 5th Ave.].

*June 28*, Two lectures at 6:15 p.m. with first on Museum's collection of books on the 1939 Fair and second about Fair's architecture and design. Fee is \$15. Cooper-Hewitt Museum [2 East 91st Street, New York]. Call [212] 860-6868.

*Sept. 2-Dec. 31* "Remembering the Future: The New York World's Fair from 1939 to 1964" exhibition, The Queens Museum.

*Sept. 12-Nov. 25*, "The IBM World-Wide Collection," exhibition of IBM collection from '39 Fair, at the IBM Gallery [Madison Ave. and 57th St.].

*Sept. 26-Nov. 1*, Steuben Glass will re-create its '39 Fair exhibit and re-issue several World's Fair designs [5th Ave. and 56th St.].

*Oct. 17-Aug. 12, 1990*, "Selling the World Tomorrow: New York's 1939 Fair," at the Museum of the City of New York [Fifth Avenue and 103 St.].

### NEW FAIR BOOKS...

*The World of Tomorrow*, by Herbert Rolfes, Larry Zim and Mel Lerner [Harper & Row].

*Trylon and Perisphere: The 1939 World's Fair*, by Barbara Cohen, Seymour Chwast & Steven Heller [Harry N. Abrams].

*Remembering the Future: The New York World's Fair from 1939 to 1964*, published by Rizzoli International, in conjunction with The Queens Museum [available in Sept.].

### A FAIR REQUEST...

The Museum is looking for the following items for display in its upcoming exhibition, REMEMBERING THE FUTURE.

— 1964/1965 Ford Mustang convertible

— 1939 Westinghouse dishwasher

— 1964 RCA color T.V.

— original drawings or models of/or from the 1964 pavilions  
If you have one of the above and would consider loaning it to the Museum for approximately six months, please contact Ileen Sheppard at [718] 592-2405

### MANY THANKS...

to Nicholas R. Genova for his generous donation to the Museum of an 8mm Bell and Howell movie projector.

## GETTING TO KNOW

EDWARD J. ORTH is widely acknowledged to be one of this country's preeminent collectors of memorabilia related to the 1939 Fair. Below is an account, in his own words, of how he became enamored of the Fair as a young man.

### A SHORT HISTORY OF AN AVOCATION, by Edward J. Orth

New York City announced in September 1935 that an international exposition would be held in 1939 at Flushing Meadows, Borough of Queens. From 1936 to early 1939 a mammoth land reclamation and building program transformed the former garbage dump and marshlands to the New York World's Fair of 1939 and 1940! Surprisingly, I was oblivious to this hectic activity located seven miles from home. But the Fair's existence finally came to my attention when I saw the "World of Tomorrow" for the first time in March 1939 and from Grand Central Parkway in Kew Gardens, Queens. The dominant shapes of the Trylon and Perisphere, the Fair's theme Center, were clearly visible in the distance. A curiosity was aroused and I was deeply impressed by a quick close-up view of the site from my uncle's automobile.

Shortly thereafter, displays of World's Fair picture postcards were noticed in the neighborhood candy and drug stores. A few of the cards with the wide blue borders were obtained for one penny each. Thus with that purchase, the genesis of a collection! When the Fair's opening day, April 30, 1939, arrived, 11 days after birthday No. 12, my interest intensified and the hunt for "World's Fair" pictures was on. Unfortunately, the picture angle was over-emphasized. Only two newspapers served as the principle source of Fair illustrations for a long time. These were clipped out and pasted in my scrapbook. Text and captions were ignored; hence, most of the cut-up materials have since been replaced and retained in the original form. Another factor was my very limited purchasing power and only an insignificant percentage of the vast amount of Fair literature, publicity and illustrations were obtained. My visits to the Fair during the summer of 1939 were fewer than ten, due to financial limitations. Accordingly, I usually attended the Fair solo, as my rapid walk enable me to cover more territory. Naturally, booklets and souvenir giveaways were sought after at every exhibit.

... The final day of the New York World's Fair was Sunday, October 27, 1940. It was thrilling to participate in the record-breaking attendance of 580,000 persons. After the two fountain and fireworks displays were concluded, it was back to the world of today. But the Fair would remain firmly embedded in my memory and be responsible for my interest in architecture and a landscape design career."

*Editor's note: Ed Orth now owns over 100,000 items of 1939 World's Fair memorabilia!*



Photo courtesy of Edward J. Orth.

## COLLECTOR'S CORNER

The holiday season brought lots of gifts for the Museum's permanent collection. A highlight was the donation of all sorts of valuable, "insider" material by Walter Geibelhaus, Director of Programs at the '64 Fairs. A major donation was received from Michael Shernoff, who put together a large collection of over a 1,000 pamphlets and souvenirs as an 11-year old boy in Queens. Some favorite 'picks' are listed below:

from Michael Shernoff:

- a "Life With Archie" Comic book in which Archie, Jughead, Veronica and the Gang visit the '64 Fair;
- a computer art graphic produced by Fujitsu Limited at the Japanese Pavilion at the '64 Fair, showing President Lyndon Johnson and Japanese Prime Minister Sato and the inscription "Peace Through Understanding".

from Walter Geibelhaus:

- a copy of the film "Great Fair--Great Fun," a promotional film commissioned by the World's Fair Corporation for the '64 season from John Campbell Films.
- an original painted sketch by Domenico Mortellito for his mural "Harvest" done for the exterior of the Dome of the Heinz Pavilion at the '39 World's Fair.
- an elaborate leather-bound photo portfolio entitled "For Those Who Produced the New York World's Fair 1964-1965" which contained a complete photographic record of the Fair and was distributed by Moses to leading Fair participants.

Other recent gifts:

- from Raymond Ekeblad, "Go By All Means, World's Fair in New York 1940," poster designed by S. Ekmar.
- from John Riccardelli, the hardbound '39 "Official Catalogue of the Polish Pavilion" and two '39 posters.



"Holiday With Light"

- a record [45 rpm] with excerpts from "Holiday With Light," the musical show presented at the '64 Tower of Light Pavilion.



1940 Fair poster by S. Ekmar

## SOUVENIR SHOP

Vintage New York World's Fair material is available by mail order. Write or call Peter Balis at the Museum (718) 592-2405.

- 1939 sterling silver tie clips and insignia rings (each \$20 plus \$3 for handling)
- 1965 official guidebook (\$7.75 plus \$1.50) and souvenir map (\$13 plus \$2.50)
- *Life Magazine*, May 1, 1964 issue, [\$7.75 plus \$2.50]
- *A Visit to the New York World's Fair with Peter and Wendy*, a children's book [\$11 plus \$1.50]
- '64/65 World's Fair posters. 4 versions, 16" x 11", [pink; blue; "Come back to the Fair, nightview"; "Come back to the Fair, family"] [\$17 per poster, plus \$1.50]



"Come Back to the Fair"

- World's Fair Corporation publications: Progress reports #6, #7, #8, #9 [\$8.75 plus \$1.50 each]; "The Fair in 1965" [\$8.75 plus \$1.50]; Moses, "The Fair, The City and the Critics" [\$6.50 plus \$1]; "Science at the Fair" [\$16.25 plus \$1.50]; "Flushing Meadow and Beyond: Preliminary Report on a proposed Post World's Fair Program [rare collector's item!]" [\$27 plus \$2.50]

- "Post Fair Expansion Hall of Science" [\$16.25 plus \$1.50]; "Post Fair Plan Queens Zoological and Botanical Gardens" [\$11 plus \$1.50]; "Post Fair Engineering Report Flushing Meadow" [\$8.25 plus \$1.50]

[Prices include sales tax. Maximum shipping charge is \$5]

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