



## Building History Detectives, March 2017

# UPPER EAST SIDE RESOURCES FOR CONDUCTING BUILDING RESEARCH

Researching a building or neighborhood in New York can be a fun and rewarding experience. There are many resources available, with a selection of these listed below to get you started on your very own search.

### Local Library Collections & Online Archives

1. Yorkville Library  
<https://www.nypl.org/locations/yorkville>
  - Landmarked building
  - Neighborhood events and blogs
2. Friends of the Upper East Side Historic Districts  
<http://www.friends-ues.org/>
  - Historic districts and information
  - Neighborhood events
3. New York Society Library  
<https://www.nysoclib.org/collection/introduction-special-collections>
  - Collection of resources

### Books and Publications

1. Burrows, Edwin G. and Mike Wallace. *Gotham: A History of New York City to 1898*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1998.
2. Kelly, Frank Bergen. *Historical Guide to the City of New York*. New York: F.A. Stokes, 1909.
3. Stokes, I. N. Phelps. *The Iconography of Manhattan Island, 1498-1909*. NY: Robert H. Dodd, 1915-1928. *Access online at archive.org*.
4. Dolkart, Andrew. *Touring the Upper East Side*. New York: New York Landmarks Conservancy, 1997.
5. Alpern, Andrew. *Luxury Apartment Houses of Manhattan: An Illustrated History*. NY: Dover, 1992.
6. Hesselgren, G.C. Publishing Co. *Apartment Houses of the Metropolis*. NY: G.C. Hesselgren Publishing Co., 1908. *Access online at archive.org*.
7. Pennoyer, Peter and Anne Walker. *New York Transformed: The Architecture of Cross & Cross*. New York: Monacelli Press, 2014.
8. *AIA Guide to New York City*. Edited by White, Norval, Elliot, Willensky, and Fran Leadon. New York: Oxford University Press, 2010.

### Is it a City Landmark?

1. Dolkart, Andrew and Matthew A. Postal. *Guide to New York City Landmarks*. NJ: John Wiley & Sons, 2008.
2. NYC Department of Buildings' Building Information System  
<http://www.nyc.gov/bis>
  - Provides block & lot #s, permit & violation information, & landmark status
3. New York City DoITT Map  
<http://maps.nyc.gov/doitt/nycitymap/>
  - Search address to retrieve basic information
  - Click to "Show Additional Data on Map" to see landmark status

### Is it a State or National Landmark?

Some buildings & historic districts are not City landmarks but do have a state/national designation.

1. National Register of Historic Places  
<https://www.nps.gov/nr/research/>
  - Provides a spreadsheet of properties listed on the National Register
2. NY State Cultural Resource Information System (CRIS)  
<http://www.cris.parks.ny.gov>
  - Provides a database & interactive map

### Looking for Images

1. Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Online Catalog  
<https://www.loc.gov/pictures/>
2. Museum of the City of New York Collections Portal  
<http://collections.mcny.org/>
3. NYC Department of Records and Information Services  
<http://www.nyc.gov/html/records/html/home/home.shtml>
  - Photo collection includes tax photographs from 1940s & 1980s
4. Old NYC  
<http://oldnyc.org>
5. New York Public Library's Digital Collections  
<http://digitalcollections.nypl.org/>

### NYC Landmark Designation Reports

1. Neighborhood Preservation Center's Designation Reports Database  
[http://www.neighborhoodpreservationcenter.org/designation\\_reports/index.php](http://www.neighborhoodpreservationcenter.org/designation_reports/index.php)
2. NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission's Reports  
<http://www.nyc.gov/html/lpc/html/publications/designation.shtml>

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#### Finding People/Businesses

1. Genealogical Research at the New York Public Library  
<https://www.nypl.org/about/divisions/milstein/genealogy>  
• City directories, census records
2. CensusRecords.net  
[https://www.archive.org/details/us\\_census](https://www.archive.org/details/us_census)  
• US Census databases from 1790 to 1930
3. National Archives  
<https://www.archives.gov/research/census/>

#### History, Preservation, & Neighborhood Groups

1. Friends of the Upper East Side  
<http://www.friends-ues.org/>
2. Carnegie Hill Neighbors  
<http://carnegiehillneighbors.org/>
3. Central Park Conservancy  
<http://www.centralparknyc.org/>
4. CIVITAS  
<http://www.civitas.org/live>
5. Carl Schurz Park Conservancy  
<http://www.carlschurzparknyc.org/>

#### Building Documentation

1. A Brief Guide to Researching the History of Your NYC Home  
<https://www.nypl.org/blog/2011/10/14/guide-researching-your-homes-history>
2. Office of Metropolitan History  
<http://www.metrohistory.com>  
• Building permit database, 1900-1986
3. Real Estate Record and Builder's Guide  
<https://rerecord.cul.columbia.edu/>  
• Information on building activity in NY, 1868-1922
4. Automated City Register Information System (ACRIS)  
<http://a836-acris.nyc.gov/CP/>  
• Ownership, mortgage & sales information
5. Department of Building's Property Profile Overview  
<http://a810-bisweb.nyc.gov/bisweb/bispi00.jsp>
6. Real Estate Brochure Collection  
<https://nyre.cul.columbia.edu/>
7. I-Cards  
<http://www1.nyc.gov/site/hpd/index.page>  
• Department of Housing, Preservation and Development records of apartment houses erected before 1938, including plumbing, sketched plans, etc.  
• Especially useful for understanding conditions in tenements.
8. Rowhouse Manual  
[http://www.nyc.gov/html/lpc/downloads/pdf/lp\\_rhmanual.pdf](http://www.nyc.gov/html/lpc/downloads/pdf/lp_rhmanual.pdf)  
• a guide to protect, maintain and enhance architecturally and historically significant home.

#### Online Book & Text Repositories

1. Google Books  
<https://books.google.com/>
2. The Making of America Collection  
<http://moa.library.cornell.edu/>
3. Internet Archive  
<https://www.archive.org/index.php>
4. ProQuest  
<http://www.proquest.com/>  
• Access at a NYPL branch
5. JSTOR  
[www.jstor.org/](http://www.jstor.org/)  
• Access at a NYPL branch

#### Looking for Maps

1. David Rumsey's Historical Map Collection  
<http://www.davidrumsey.com/>
2. Library of Congress Map Collection  
<https://www.loc.gov/maps/collections/>
3. Museum of the City of New York Collection Portal  
<http://www.mcny.org/>
4. New York Historical Society  
<http://www.nyhistory.org/library/research>
5. New York Public Library Map Division  
<https://www.nypl.org/about/divisions/map-division>
6. Oasis  
<http://www.oasisnyc.net/map.aspx>
7. ZOLA- Zoning and Land Use  
<http://maps.nyc.gov/doitt/hycitymap/template?applicationName=ZOLA>
8. Historic Map Works  
<http://www.historicmapworks.com/>

#### Visit in Person

1. Department of Buildings  
<http://www1.nyc.gov/site/buildings/index.page>  
• For building records not already available through their online system
2. Municipal Archives  
<http://nyc.gov/html/records/html/archives/archives.shtml>  
• Tax assessment records, building permits & photographs
3. NYC Registrars Office  
<http://www1.nyc.gov/nyc-resources/service/2266/property-deeds-and-other-documents>  
• Conveyance records, deeds & ownership

#### Scouring the Newspaper

1. Chronicling America  
<http://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/>  
• Digitized newspapers, 1836-1922
2. New York Public Library's Newspapers  
<https://www.nypl.org/node/5623>  
• Information on how to find historic newspapers
3. New York Times Archives  
<https://www.nytimes.com/ref/membercenter/nytarchive.html>  
• Some searches require a subscription