Records & Information Services

Municipal Library Notes - May 5, 2024

Spotlight on: World's Fair 1964-1965

By Christine Bruzzese, Director, Municipal Library

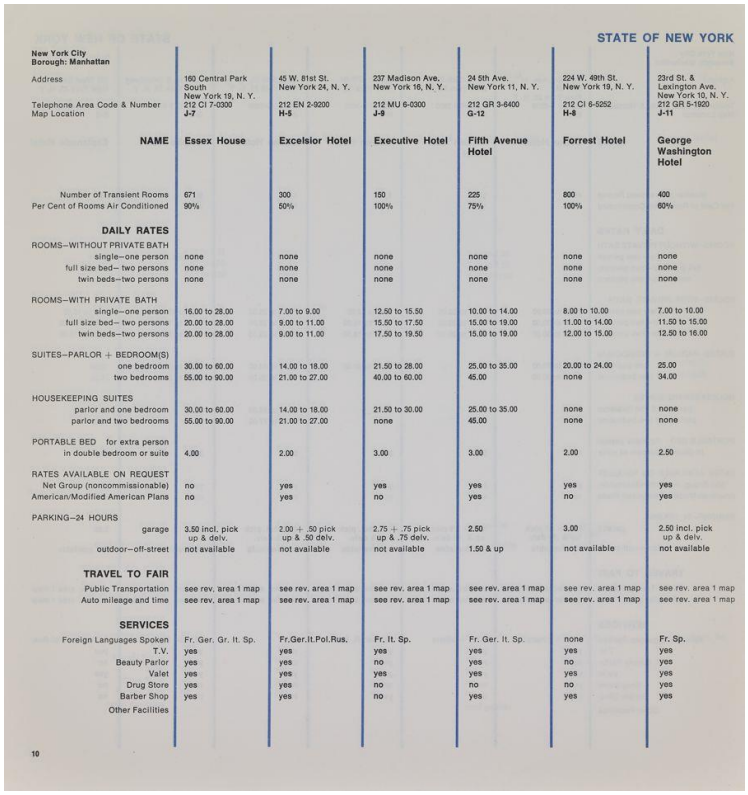
The New York City World's Fair opened on April 22, 1964, and ran until October 18. The 1965 term extended from April 21 to October 17. It took place 25 years after the 1939 World's Fair at the same Flushing Meadow Park location. The year 1964 was chosen to commemorate the 300th anniversary of New Amsterdam becoming New York. Mayor Robert Wagner appointed Robert Moses as the chairman of the World's Fair Corporation. Moses, of course, had a great deal of experience in managing public works projects and had overseen the construction of Flushing Meadow Park in the 1930's.

From science and technology to art and culture, the World's Fair featured many exhibits, pavilions, rides, product demonstrations and more. There seemed to be something for everyone who attended.

Here are some proposed designs for pavilions and structures from the New York World's Fair 1964-1965 Progress Report no. 7, dated January 24, 1963.

The New York World's Fair Corporation partnered with the New York Convention and Visitors Bureau to establish a World's Fair Housing Bureau. The Housing Bureau worked with hotel and motel owners, travel agents, government representatives and others to help visitors to the Fair find accommodations.

Here is an excerpt from a listing of Manhattan hotels.



STATE OF NEW YORK

New York City Borough: Manhattan						
Address	160 Central Park South New York 19, N. Y.	45 W. 81st St. New York 24, N. Y.	237 Madison Ave. New York 16, N. Y.	24 5th Ave. New York 11, N. Y.	224 W. 49th St. New York 19, N. Y.	23rd St. & Lexington Ave. New York 10, N. Y.
Telephone Area Code & Number	212 CI 7-0300	212 EN 2-9200	212 MU 6-0300	212 GR 3-6400	212 CI 6-5252	212 GR 5-1920
Map Location	J-7	H-5	J-9	G-12	H-8	J-11
NAME	**Essex House**	**Excelsior Hotel**	**Executive Hotel**	**Fifth Avenue Hotel**	**Forrest Hotel**	**George Washington Hotel**
Number of Transient Rooms	671	300	150	225	800	400
Per Cent of Rooms Air Conditioned	90%	50%	100%	75%	100%	60%
DAILY RATES						
ROOMS–WITHOUT PRIVATE BATH						
single–one person	none	none	none	none	none	none
full size bed– two persons	none	none	none	none	none	none
twin beds–two persons	none	none	none	none	none	none
ROOMS–WITH PRIVATE BATH						
single–one person	16.00 to 28.00	7.00 to 9.00	12.50 to 15.50	10.00 to 14.00	8.00 to 10.00	7.00 to 10.00
full size bed– two persons	20.00 to 28.00	9.00 to 11.00	15.50 to 17.50	15.00 to 19.00	11.00 to 14.00	11.50 to 15.00
twin beds–two persons	20.00 to 28.00	9.00 to 11.00	17.50 to 19.50	15.00 to 19.00	12.00 to 15.00	12.50 to 16.00
SUITES–PARLOR + BEDROOM(S)						
one bedroom	30.00 to 60.00	14.00 to 18.00	21.50 to 28.00	25.00 to 35.00	20.00 to 24.00	25.00
two bedrooms	55.00 to 90.00	21.00 to 27.00	40.00 to 60.00	45.00	none	34.00
HOUSEKEEPING SUITES						
parlor and one bedroom	30.00 to 60.00	14.00 to 18.00	21.50 to 30.00	25.00 to 35.00	none	none
parlor and two bedrooms	55.00 to 90.00	21.00 to 27.00	none	45.00	none	none
PORTABLE BED for extra person in double bedroom or suite	4.00	2.00	3.00	3.00	2.00	2.50
RATES AVAILABLE ON REQUEST						
Net Group (noncommissionable)	no	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes
American/Modified American Plans	no	yes	no	yes	no	yes
PARKING–24 HOURS						
garage	3.50 incl. pick up & delv.	2.00 + .50 pick up & .50 delv.	2.75 + .75 pick up & .75 delv.	2.50	3.00	2.50 incl. pick up & delv.
outdoor–off-street	not available	not available	not available	1.50 & up	not available	not available
TRAVEL TO FAIR						
Public Transportation	see rev. area 1 map	see rev. area 1 map	see rev. area 1 map	see rev. area 1 map	see rev. area 1 map	see rev. area 1 map
Auto mileage and time	see rev. area 1 map	see rev. area 1 map	see rev. area 1 map	see rev. area 1 map	see rev. area 1 map	see rev. area 1 map
SERVICES						
Foreign Languages Spoken	Fr. Ger. Gr. It. Sp.	Fr.Ger.It.Pol.Rus.	Fr. It. Sp.	Fr. Ger. It. Sp.	none	Fr. Sp.
T.V.	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes
Beauty Parlor	yes	yes	no	yes	no	yes
Valet	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes
Drug Store	yes	yes	no	no	no	yes
Barber Shop	yes	yes	no	yes	yes	yes
Other Facilities						

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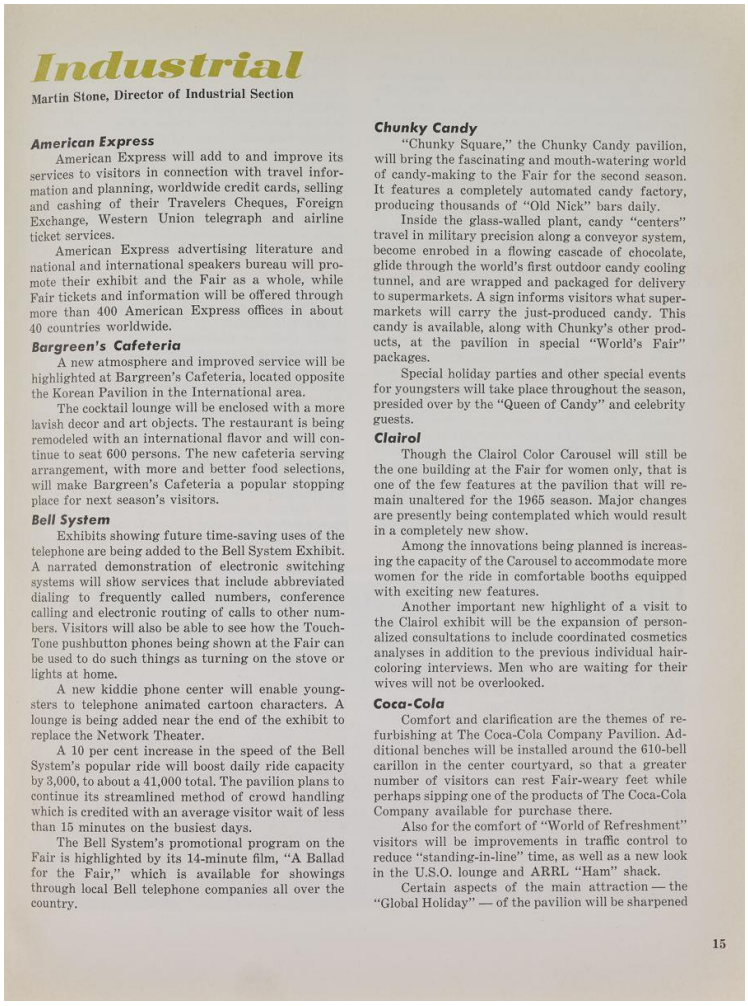
The Fair in 1965 was a progress report on exhibits, buildings, transportation, and finance.

Here is a page from the Industrial section about what companies were doing:



Industrial

Martin Stone, Director of Industrial Section

American Express

American Express will add to and improve its services to visitors in connection with travel information and planning, worldwide credit cards, selling and cashing of their Travelers Cheques, Foreign Exchange, Western Union telegraph and airline ticket services.

American Express advertising literature and national and international speakers bureau will promote their exhibit and the Fair as a whole, while Fair tickets and information will be offered through more than 400 American Express offices in about 40 countries worldwide.

Bargreen's Cafeteria

A new atmosphere and improved service will be highlighted at Bargreen's Cafeteria, located opposite the Korean Pavilion in the International area.

The cocktail lounge will be enclosed with a more lavish decor and art objects. The restaurant is being remodeled with an international flavor and will continue to seat 600 persons. The new cafeteria serving arrangement, with more and better food selections, will make Bargreen's Cafeteria a popular stopping place for next season's visitors.

Bell System

Exhibits showing future time-saving uses of the telephone are being added to the Bell System Exhibit. A narrated demonstration of electronic switching systems will show services that include abbreviated dialing to frequently called numbers, conference calling and electronic routing of calls to other numbers. Visitors will also be able to see how the Touch-Tone pushbutton phones being shown at the Fair can be used to do such things as turning on the stove or lights at home.

A new kiddie phone center will enable youngsters to telephone animated cartoon characters. A lounge is being added near the end of the exhibit to replace the Network Theater.

A 10 per cent increase in the speed of the Bell System's popular ride will boost daily ride capacity by 3,000, to about a 41,000 total. The pavilion plans to continue its streamlined method of crowd handling which is credited with an average visitor wait of less than 15 minutes on the busiest days.

The Bell System's promotional program on the Fair is highlighted by its 14-minute film, "A Ballad for the Fair," which is available for showings through local Bell telephone companies all over the country.

Chunky Candy

"Chunky Square," the Chunky Candy pavilion, will bring the fascinating and mouth-watering world of candy-making to the Fair for the second season. It features a completely automated candy factory, producing thousands of "Old Nick" bars daily.

Inside the glass-walled plant, candy "centers" travel in military precision along a conveyor system, become enrobed in a flowing cascade of chocolate, glide through the world's first outdoor candy cooling tunnel, and are wrapped and packaged for delivery to supermarkets. A sign informs visitors what supermarkets will carry the just-produced candy. This candy is available, along with Chunky's other products, at the pavilion in special "World's Fair" packages.

Special holiday parties and other special events for youngsters will take place throughout the season, presided over by the "Queen of Candy" and celebrity guests.

Clairol

Though the Clairol Color Carousel will still be the one building at the Fair for women only, that is one of the few features at the pavilion that will remain unaltered for the 1965 season. Major changes are presently being contemplated which would result in a completely new show.

Among the innovations being planned is increasing the capacity of the Carousel to accommodate more women for the ride in comfortable booths equipped with exciting new features.

Another important new highlight of a visit to the Clairol exhibit will be the expansion of personalized consultations to include coordinated cosmetics analyses in addition to the previous individual hair-coloring interviews. Men who are waiting for their wives will not be overlooked.

Coca-Cola

Comfort and clarification are the themes of refurbishing at The Coca-Cola Company Pavilion. Additional benches will be installed around the 610-bell carillon in the center courtyard, so that a greater number of visitors can rest Fair-weary feet while perhaps sipping one of the products of The Coca-Cola Company available for purchase there.

Also for the comfort of "World of Refreshment" visitors will be improvements in traffic control to reduce "standing-in-line" time, as well as a new look in the U.S.O. lounge and ARRL "Ham" shack.

Certain aspects of the main attraction — the "Global Holiday" — of the pavilion will be sharpened

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From Science at the Fair, chemistry exhibits at the Du Pont Pavilion:

TIC-TAC-TOE MACHINE

You can play a game of tic-tac-toe with a machine developed by William Keister of Bell Telephone Laboratories, but don't expect to win. The machine can be tied but cannot be beaten. The machine represents the kinds of processes that can be built into telephone systems. It illustrates how relay-type equipment (like that used in telephone systems) makes logical decisions in connecting one caller with another.

The face of the cabinet is divided into nine squares. When you press a button near one of the squares to light it with a figure, such as "x", the machine automatically places the other symbol, in this case an "o", in another square and waits its turn for another play. The electro-mechanical brain can make three decisions. If you succeed in marking two symbols in a row, the machine makes a defensive play by filling in the third space in the row. If the machine itself has two in a row, it will fill in the third and win. If there is no immediate chance to win and no need to block you from winning, the machine marks the most advantageous square.

No matter how good you are, the best you can hope for is a draw.

THE DUPONT SHOW

Wonderful World of Chemistry

Synopsis of Chemistry Demonstrations for the Du Pont Pavilion:

1. Freezing a Flower in Freon. In this demonstration a flower such as a carnation or a rose is dipped for a few moments in Freon. Since the Freon is at about 50° below zero, the flower freezes instantly. The flower is removed from the Freon and when struck on the table top, it shatters like glass.

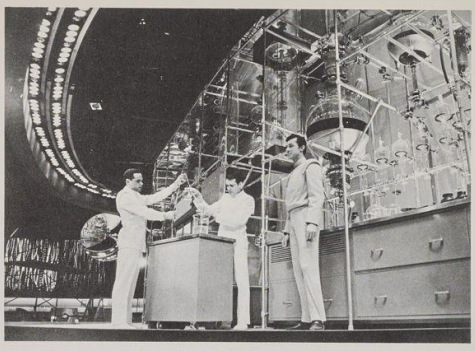
2. Rubber vs. Adiprene Balls in Freon. A rubber ball frozen in Freon will shatter like glass when dropped on the floor. A ball made of Du Pont Adiprene, on the other hand, retains its elasticity and bounces after its immersion in Freon.

3. Disappearing Blue. In this demonstration a large flask containing a clear liquid changes to a deep blue color when the flask is shaken. This blue color slowly changes back into a clear solution again. This can be done repeatedly by simply shaking the flask.

This demonstration is based on the fact that a certain indicating dye will turn deep blue when combined with air which is accomplished by the shaking. Another chemical in the flask reverses this situation and the liquid becomes colorless.

4. Hindu Rope Trick. This demonstration features Du Pont Stren which is a Nylon fishing line. It is so fine and transparent that we can reconstruct the well known Hindu rope trick by attaching the Stren to a piece of manila rope and using it to lift the rope, which then hovers in mid-air as though unsupported.

5. Conductive Paint. A tape recorder is separated from its loud-speaker by a panel of transparent plastic sheet so that although the tape recorder is mechanically operating, no sound comes out of the loud-



speaker since it is not electrically connected. An aerosol dispenser containing a paint which conducts electricity is used to "spray" 2 "wires" leading from the tape recorder to the speaker. Completion of the second "wire" electrically connects the speaker and it begins to play.

6. Instant Nylon. A large container contains 2 liquids, one of them floating on the other. Where the two liquids meet, polymerization occurs and pure nylon is produced. This film of nylon can be lifted out of the liquids by wearing rubber gloves and reaching through the top liquid. This process is continuous and a cord of nylon can be drawn continuously from this container until one of the liquids is depleted.

7. Dacron 88. A strand of unstretched Dacron 88 is held and stretched to over twice its length. When the strand is released, the stretched fiber bunches up or fluffs since each individual filament has now become crimped by the stretching process.

8. Baymal. A tube about 3' long and 4" in diameter is partly filled with a thick white liquid, Baymal. This substance is thixotropic; i.e., the liquid gels or becomes firm in about 10 seconds so that if the cylinder is held vertically with the liquid Baymal at the bottom, in 10 seconds it can be turned over so that the Baymal stays at the top. The Baymal can be liquefied by simply shaking the tube after which it will gel again. This can be done endlessly.

9. Lucite Paint. Lucite Paint is also thixotropic, which is the reason for its "no-drip" qualities. To prove this, we drape an expensive fur or orlon coat over a table using it as a drop cloth. The open can of paint is placed on the coat and a panel held above the coat is painted.

Municipal Reference Library Notes Museum of the City of New York

By Christine Bruzzese, Director, Municipal Library

The April 23, 1924, issue of Municipal Reference Library Notes features a short article on the establishment of the Museum of the City of New York. The State Legislature authorized the Parks Department Commissioner for the Borough of Manhattan to lease Gracie Mansion upon approval by the Board of Estimate.

The original museum was located in Gracie Mansion but the space was limited. The City donated the present site on Fifth Avenue and 103rd Street and a competition was held to determine who would design the building. Joseph H. Freedlander was the winning architect.

The Museum of the City of New York continues to feature artwork, furniture, costumes, books and manuscripts, antique toys and other collections. All of these collections have a New York City historical theme. The ongoing exhibit, New York at Its Core, traces the history of the City from the 1600s to the present.

Here is the article:

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Museum of the City of New York

By the Laws of 1923, Chapter 220, authority is given the City of New York, acting by its commissioner of parks for the Borough of Manhattan, to enter into an agreement or lease for the preservation, use and maintenance of the old historic building known as the Gracie Mansion; appropriations for its support by the Board of Estimate and Apportionment are also authorized.

An incorporation, known as the Museum of the City of New York has been formed. Arthur M. Huntington and Francis Gallatin are originators of the plan. The directors are Phoenix Ingraham, Victor J. Dowling, Robert LeRoy, Henry Richmond Taylor, James Speyer, Lewis Gouvernor Morris, William Rhinelander Stewart, and George A. Zabriskie. Other members of the Committee of incorporation are Arthur Curtiss James, Theodore Roosevelt, Mrs. Charles Dana Gibson, Mrs. Schuyler Van Rensselaer, Coleman du Pont, Adolph Lewisohn, Michael Friedsam, and J. Henry Watson. Henry Collins Brown is acting as Director. This is the only museum devoted exclusively to the historical data of New York City. Portraits and early furniture, trophies of war, rare medals and money and photographs will form the collection. The contract and agreement with the City is similar to those of the other museums. The City furnishes the building, keeps it in repair and maintains the grounds as in any public park. The offi-

Radio Row and the Fight for Lower Manhattan

By Michael Lorenzini, Operations Manager

It has been said that nobody loved the Twin Towers until they were gone, and that is certainly true of the residents and business owners of the Manhattan neighborhood known as Radio Row. One of many such “Radio Rows” in cities throughout America, New York City’s was the largest and one of the oldest. It was roughly bounded by Dey Street to the north, Liberty to the south, between West and Church Streets. The heart of it was Cortlandt and Greenwich Streets, but another concentration of shops lined Dey Street (also known as Telegram Square for the Western Union Building at the corner of Broadway and Dey). At its peak over 400 merchants sold radios, televisions, and associated parts in this area.

It was a successful business district, even if a bit unsightly, but by the 1960s Lower Manhattan was slated for a dramatic change. The waterfront businesses essential to a port city were no longer needed, as a new era of trucking and the introduction of the cargo container took hold. In addition, airplane travel reduced the number of passenger ships coming into the Manhattan docks. The site became appealing to business interests led by David Rockefeller as a location for their proposed World Trade Center.

The radio merchants and other civic groups fought back, but in 1966 demolition of the Radio Row neighborhood commenced.

To learn more about Radio Row and the fight for lower Manhattan:

https://www.archives.nyc/blog/2024/1/5/radio-row-and-the-fight-for-lower-manhattan

Catha Grace Rambusch

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