Landmarks Preservation Commission
June 20, 2000; Designation List 315
LP-1888

BAIRD (now ASTOR) COURT, NEW YORK ZOOLOGICAL PARK (Bronx Zoo), Bronx Park, south of East Fordham Road, The Bronx. Primates' (Monkey) House, Lion House, Large Bird House (now Administration West), Elephant House (now Zoo Center), Administration Building (now Administration East), and the North and West Stairs. Built 1899-1910; Heins & La Farge, architects; Harold A. Caparn; landscape architect. Sculptural decoration by Eli Harvey, Charles R. Knight, and Alexander Phimister Proctor. National Collection of Heads and Horns (now Security, Education and International Conservation Offices). Built 1922; Henry D. Whitfield, architect.

Landmark Site/Boundaries: Borough of the Bronx Tax Map Block 3120, Lot 20, in part, consisting of the area bounded by a line beginning at the northwest corner of the outside retaining walls of Baird (now Astor) Court, extending easterly along the outside of the north retaining wall to the west side of the North Stairs, northerly along the west side of the North Stairs, easterly along the northern edge of the North Stairs, southerly along the east side of the North Stairs, back to the outside of the north retaining wall, then easterly to the northeast corner of the retaining walls of Astor Court, then southerly along the outside of the east retaining wall, easterly along the north side of the National Collection of Heads and Horns (now Security, Education and International Conservation Offices), southerly along the east side of the Security, Education and Conservation Offices, westerly along the south side of the Security, Education and Conservation Offices, then southerly along the east retaining wall to the south end of the east retaining wall, then west across the path leading toward the Monkey House to the west side of the path, along the west side of the path, curving west and then south along the east edge of Astor Court, across the path entering from the southeast, to the east end of the east fence leading to the north side of the Elephant House (now Zoo Center), then westerly and southerly along the fence to the north side of Zoo Center, easterly along the north side of Zoo Center, southerly along the east side of Zoo Center, westerly along the south side of Zoo Center, northerly along the west side of Zoo Center, easterly along the north side of Zoo Center to the west fence leading to Zoo Center, then northerly and westerly along the west fence leading to the outer path, across the outer path to a point on a line extending southerly from the outside of the south end of the west retaining wall to the path, north along said line to the outside of the west retaining wall, and northerly along the west retaining wall to the point of beginning, including the West Stairs leading to the service road adjacent to the west retaining wall.

Testimony

On June 2, 1992, the Landmarks Preservation Commission held a public hearing on the proposed designation as a Landmark of a portion of the New York Zoological Park (Bronx Zoo) and the proposed designation of the related Landmark Site (Item No. 4). The hearing had been duly advertised in accordance with the provisions of law. At the hearing the Landmark Site consisted of the Concourse Entrance, including Rainey Gates; Concourse; Rockefeller Fountain; and Baird (now Astor) Court, including the Large Bird House, Administration Building, National Collection of Heads and Horns (now Security, Education Offices and Membership Building), House of Primates (Monkey House), Lion House, Elephant House, and Sea Lion Pool; Zebra House (now Educational Services Building); Pheasant Aviary; Small Deer House; Ostrich House/Small Mammal House (now Mouse House); and Reptile House. Five witnesses spoke in support of designation. Three witnesses, two representatives of the Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) and a representative of the Department of Cultural Affairs, spoke in opposition to designation as proposed. The hearing was continued on December 8, 1992 (Item No. 3), at which time two witnesses spoke in favor of designation and four witnesses, including three representatives of the WCS, spoke in favor of designating Baird (now Astor) Court portion alone. No witnesses spoke in opposition to designation. On June 20, 2000, the Landmarks Preservation Commission designated Baird (now Astor) Court and its six buildings, as well as the North and West Stairs.

Summary

Baird (now Astor) Court, New York Zoological Park, is a portion of the Bronx Zoo, consisting of the raised, landscaped terraces named Astor Court, the North and West Stairs leading up to the Court, and its six detached, brick and limestone neo-classical style buildings around the central Sea Lion pool. Financed by the City of New York and the New York Zoological Society (now called the Wildlife Conservation Society), it is located in the north central Bronx, in the vicinity of East Fordham Road and Southern Boulevard, close to the Zoo's north entrance. Like the "Court of Honor" at the World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago in 1893, which helped popularize the "City Beautiful" Movement, the plan is symmetrical and longitudinal, terminating at one end with a monumental domed Elephant House. With a master plan prepared by the architects Heins & La Farge, and landscaping by Harold A. Caparn, the Zoo featured natural woodlands fashioned into animal habitats, as well as exhibition structures based on contemporary zoological practice in Europe.

Five of the buildings on Astor Court -- the Primates' (Monkey) House, Lion House, Large Bird House (now Administration West), Elephant House (now Zoo Center), Administration Building (now Administration East) -- were constructed between 1899 and 1910 to designs by Heins & La Farge, of which four are richly embellished with large, realistically modeled, stone and terra-cotta sculptures of animals by Eli Harvey, Charles R. Knight and Alexander Phimster Proctor. These works of art were commissioned to illustrate the animals housed in each building. The sixth building, the National Collection of Heads and Horns (now Security, Education and International Conservation Offices), was constructed in 1922 to designs by the architect Henry D. Whitfield.

By 1909 annual attendance had reached four million visitors and William Temple Hornaday, the Zoo's first director, ranked it among the six top institutions for "public betterment" in New York City. It was clear that the Society was succeeding in reaching its primary objectives, the enjoyment and education of the general public and the preservation of animals. Combining a neo-classical aesthetic with symmetrical planning, Astor Court stands as a monument to the founders of the Bronx Zoo. A scientific institution of international renown, its varied collections and magnificent physical setting have made the Wildlife Conservation Society and its various buildings one of New York City's major cultural attractions.

DESCRIPTION AND ANALYSIS

Historical Development of the New York Zoological Park[1]

In 1857 a competition was held to choose a design for Central Park. The winners, Frederick Law Olmsted (1822-1903) and Calvert Vaux (1824-1895), proposed a naturalistic landscape, punctuated by a variety of picturesque features, including fountains, rustic shelters, as well as an elaborate stair terrace leading down to a man-made lake. Completed by the mid-1870s, the park was a popular success, inspiring not only the creation of Prospect Park in Brooklyn (1866-1873), but also the New York City Municipal Park Commission. In June 1884, the Commission acquired 3,800 acres of new parkland, including the future site of Bronx Park.[2] Located in the north central Bronx, the site originally consisted of 662 undeveloped acres.

In 1887, Theodore Roosevelt and ten wealthy huntsmen formed the Boone and Crockett Club, an organization devoted to "game protection" and the "establishment of game refuges." During the years that followed, support for a large zoological park that would be open to the public without admission fees, grew among the members. A committee was subsequently formed, chaired by the reformer Madison Grant, to seek public support for such an enterprise. With encouragement from Andrew H. Green, a lawyer and public official long interested in the establishment of scientific institutions, the New York State Legislature agreed to incorporate the New York Zoological Society (now Wildlife Conservation Society), and to allocate an unspecified amount of park land above 155th Street for its use. This legislation was passed in April 1895, and less than a month later, the park's first Board of Managers was elected. The Board consisted of thirty-six members, nine of whom belonged to the Boone and Crockett Club, including Grant and the park's future architect, Christopher Grant La Farge.

Henry Fairfield Osborn, the head of the Department of Vertebrate Paleontology at the American Museum of Natural History, was elected Chairman of the Executive Committee.[3] Together with La Farge, he prepared a "Preliminary Plan for the Prosecution of the Work of the Zoological Society" and presented it to the Society's Executive Committee in November 1895. Their scheme called for a park of about three hundred acres where "both native and foreign animals of the tropical, temperate and colder regions" could be exhibited under conditions similar to their natural habitats.[4]

The renowned zoologist and founding director of the National Zoological Park in Washington, D. C., William Temple Hornaday, was appointed the Zoo's first director by the Executive Committee in April 1896.[5] Later that month, he recommended that the Society acquire approximately 261 acres in the southern half of Bronx Park, near East Fordham Road and straddling the Bronx River. Convenient to nearby elevated trains, the park's unspoiled and varied topography made it an ideal site to gather and display living animals. During the months that followed -- while Hornaday was abroad surveying European zoological gardens -- negotiations with the Commissioners of the Sinking Fund of the City of New York progressed,[6] and in March 1897 a resolution was passed "allotting South Bronx Park for the use of the New York Zoological Society (now WCS)."[7]

In its first *Annual Report* (March 15, 1897), the Society identified its primary objectives: first, to establish a free zoological park "with North American and exotic animals, for the benefit and enjoyment of the general public, the zoologist, the sportsman and every lover of nature;" second, to create "a systematic encouragement of interest in animal life, or zoology, among all classes of people;" and third, to cooperate with similar organizations in the preservation of the native animals of North America and to encourage the "growing sentiment against their wanton destruction."[8]

Hornaday later wrote that the park was financed through a "perfectly harmonious joint effort on the part of a powerful philanthropic organization and the taxpayers of the City of New York."[9] The City Comptroller was empowered to issue stock to provide the improvements needed on the grounds and to maintain those improvements, and the Society was mandated to provide equipment, animals, and management. The Society assumed control of the grounds on July 1, 1898, and work on the complex began almost immediately.

Over the next year, with $250,000 in donations from such contributors as Andrew Carnegie, Cornelius Vanderbilt II, Jacob Schiff, and William C. Whitney, steps were taken to gather mammals, birds, and reptiles to stock the various exhibits.[10] The New York Zoological Park, consisting of wood structures and outdoor pens, formally opened to the public on November 8, 1899. The park was an immediate success: 525,000 persons visited during the first year, with as many as 20,000 in a single day. By the end of 1899, the Zoo's collection of living animals had grown

to nearly 1,500 specimens.[11]

By the end of its first decade of operation, the Bronx Zoo was making a significant contribution to civic life and education. No admission was charged five days of the week and by 1909 attendance had reached historic levels, with nearly four million visitors.[12] Hornaday ranked the Zoo among the six top New York City institutions for "public betterment" -- the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the New York Public Library, the American Museum of Natural History, the New York Aquarium (at the Battery) and the New York Botanical Garden (in the northern half of Bronx Park). He boasted that the park was a source of "admiration and inspiration" for all New Yorkers, writing that it:

> . . . belongs with the most prominent institutions of its kind, and when all the installations which are now in the course of preparation have been finished, it will surely be the grandest and most beautiful garden in the world.[13]

Over the past century, the Zoo's mission has grown and evolved. Whereas the founders of the Boone and Crockett club were sportsmen eager to conserve animal habitats and game for the hunt, Hornaday's agenda was primarily scientific -- to study the Zoo's collections and halt the extinction of threatened North American species. To support such goals, in November 1907 the Society contributed "fifteen head of buffalo of various strains" to stock the Witchita Mountains Wildlife Refuge, near Cache, Oklahoma.[14]

Hornaday served as the Zoo's director for three decades, retiring in June 1926. During these years, the Society developed an international reputation for scientific research and exhibitions. Under the administration of William Conway (director, 1962-1966, general director, 1966-1999), the current name, "Wildlife Conservation Society" was adopted. Since the 1960s the Zoo has also served as a refuge and breeding center for endangered species, developing innovative exhibits that allow animals to live under conditions similar to their native habitats.[15] Many new animal houses and exhibits were constructed during his tenure, including the World of Darkness (Morris Ketchum, Jr., 1969), the World of Birds (Morris Ketchum, Jr., 1972), Wild Asia (1977), and JungleWorld (1985). Today, with public facilities in Central Park, Prospect Park, Coney Island, Flushing Meadows-Corona Park, as well as Bronx Park, the WCS's programs emphasize international conservation, education, and recreation.

Architectural Development of the New York Zoological Park

While the practice of collecting and displaying wild animals dates back to antiquity, the modern zoo was born in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. London's public zoological garden, founded in 1828, set standards for subsequent zoos. Built on approximately thirty acres in Regent's Park, its design integrated elaborate garden pavilions housing animals into a landscaped park. This European model would be expanded and refined in the New York Zoological Park.

The oldest zoo in New York City is the Central Park Zoo, established in 1864. Olmsted and Vaux designed this zoo as a menagerie with cages and it reportedly opened when park workers received a bear and other animals as gifts. The Central Park Zoo was extremely popular with visitors, prompting its designers to include a similar animal facility in their subsequent design for Prospect Park (a designated New York City Landmark). This facility, which did not open until 1893, exhibited sheep, deer, and other animals. These zoos and their small collections helped generate broad public support for establishing a large zoological park.

National interest in zoology grew during the 1880s. Prior to Hornaday's arrival at the Bronx Zoo, he helped found the National Zoological Park in the northwest section of Washington, D.C. On a trip to the Rocky Mountains in 1887, he became aware of the growing threat to various animal species by western expansion. On his return east, he campaigned to build a facility that would serve as a national refuge for species on the verge of extinction.[16] A 168-acre zoo was designed for a section of Rock Creek Park, but delayed due to financial disputes between the city government and the United States House of Representatives. Hornaday resigned by 1890.

After five years in Buffalo, New York, working in real estate, Hornaday was invited to join the New York Zoological Society. To create the largest zoological park in the United States, he and the park's designers were inspired by several sources -- European zoos, rural game preserves, and "City Beautiful" planning ideals. Unlike most European facilities, which ranged in size from twenty to sixty acres, Hornaday proposed a 261-acre park. In the summer of 1896, he traveled to Europe to study contemporary zoological gardens, including those located in London, Antwerp, Rotterdam, Amsterdam, Hamburg, Berlin, Hanover, Cologne, and Paris. During the fall of 1896, Hornaday drew his preliminary plan for the future park,

combining spacious ranges, open-air yards, and cages.

Similar to his earlier plan for the zoo in Washington, D. C., the Bronx Zoo was based on two types of complexes: the small zoological park, such as Regent's Park in London, where exotic animals were visible and confined, and the vast English deer parks, where indigenous animals were allowed to run free, yet could rarely be seen.[17] He envisioned a small number of buildings grouped on or near the plateau on which Astor Court would be erected, and he set aside forests, streams, lakes, and rocky hills as environments for various North American species of large and small mammals as well as birds.[18] Hornaday wrote that he wanted "a logical and fairly symmetrical zoological arrangement" of a few centralized buildings while maintaining the major share of the park in its natural state.

Hornaday's final scheme, which included footprints for nine buildings, was approved by the New York City Department of Parks on November 22, 1897. He conceived an entry sequence of gates and a promenade concluding in a formal court surrounded by animal houses. On that plan the court was named Baird Court, for Spencer Fullerton Baird (1823-1887), an esteemed zoologist and former Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution, who established the United States Commission of Fish and Fisheries.[19] Hornaday wanted the buildings to have a harmonious appearance, writing: "It is my opinion that conformity to a uniform style of architecture is much more desirable than a succession of startling contrasts."[20]

In 1897 the Society's Executive Committee reported that the city surveyor had been ordered to produce topographical surveys of the northwest portion of Bronx Park, where "the main court" was to be located. Several architects were consulted, including Thomas Hastings, of the firm Carrère & Hastings, and Heins & La Farge, who were later appointed the zoo's architects. In addition, Beaux-Arts-trained Harold A. Caparn was appointed landscape architect, in charge of developing various architectural and landscape features for the main court.[21]

The Executive Committee formally adopted the Court's plan on November 14, 1900, only "after [its] having been submitted to the expert consideration of Mr. Charles F. McKim [of McKim, Mead & White], and approved by him." The Committee's Chairman, Henry Fairfield Osborn, wrote:

> Baird Court . . . when finished will be characterized by a classic formality, in contrast to the remainder of the Park, which will be left, as far as possible, in a natural state.[22]

When the park opened in November 1899, two buildings -- the Aquatic Bird House and the Reptile House (neither are part of this designation) -- had been completed.[23]

Although it remains unclear what role the consultants Hastings and McKim played in shaping Heins & La Farge's final design, the Court's "classic formality" reflects their shared commitment to the "City Beautiful." The tenets of this movement maintained that the architecture of classical antiquity was the most appropriate style for major cultural monuments and public spaces. Significant manifestations of the "City Beautiful" movement include: the New York Public Library, designed by Carrère & Hastings, the Brooklyn Museum of Art, and the Fifth Avenue wings of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, both designed by McKim, Mead & White (all designated New York City Landmarks).[24]

One of the most important examples of the "City Beautiful" and a probable influence on the design of Astor Court was the "Court of Honor" at the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago. Like the "Court of Honor," the plan was longitudinal, terminating at one end with a monumental domed building and organized around a central water feature. Similar to the pavilions at the Chicago exposition, most of the animal houses on Astor Court are decorated with pediments, friezes, and statuary illustrating the contents of each building. Along with Audubon Terrace (1904-1928, a designated New York City Historic District) and much of the Columbia University campus (begun 1894),[25] Astor Court is one of the few intact ensembles in New York City realized according to "City Beautiful" ideals.

Construction of Hornaday's original plan for the New York Zoological Park was completed in 1912. The Society's *Annual Report* for 1904 states that though some alterations had been made to the plan after 1897, for the most part, the "architectural treatment of the buildings themselves, planned by Messrs. Heins & La Farge, was . . . retained in its entirety."[26] Neo-classical in character, the various animal houses reflect the architects' Beaux-Arts-influenced training at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, in Cambridge, as well as turn-of-the-century taste and trends in the New York metropolitan area.

Over the past century, there have been continuous changes to Astor Court. Not only have the pavilions been adapted to current exhibition needs, but significant physical alterations have occurred, including the relocation of Rockefeller Fountain (a designated New York City Landmark) to the circular piazza now called Fountain Circle in 1910, the re-

landscaping of the North Stairs (originally known as the Italian Garden) in 1941, metal resurfacing of the roofs of various buildings from 1939 to the late 1950s, and the reconfiguration of the Sea Lion Pool in 1980-81. Many of these changes are the result of advances in the study and understanding of the needs of animals. These alterations have been made to improve their health and quality of life.

Combining a neo-classical aesthetic with symmetrical planning, Astor Court stands as a monument to the Zoo's founders and the City of New York. A scientific institution of international renown, its varied collections and magnificent physical setting have made the Bronx Zoo a popular cultural attraction for more than a century.

ARCHITECTS

Harold ap Rhys Caparn (1864-1945)[27]

Born in Newark-on-Trent, England, Harold Caparn studied at the Cathedral School, Canterbury, and the Ecole des Beaux-Arts, Paris, before immigrating to the United States by 1900. One of the first positions he held in New York was as the park's landscape architect. In association with Herbert Parsons, the consulting engineer, he attempted to maintain as much of the park's "naturalness" as possible -- a policy that remained in effect for many decades.[28] He later worked for the Brooklyn Botanic Garden and was responsible for many of its most prominent features, including the Rose Garden, the Water Gardens, as well as the Horticultural Sections and Systematic Sections with plant families arranged in botanical sequence. He was associated with the Garden for more than three decades.

Caparn also designed the campus of Brooklyn College, Lincoln Park in Newark, New Jersey, and the landscaping of the House Office Building in Washington, D. C. He designed a number of private gardens in Long Island, Westchester County, and Connecticut.

A devoted parks advocate, Caparn crusaded against such encroachments as statuary, swimming pools, and athletic fields in Central Park and other New York City parks. He served as president of the New York Chapter of the American Society of Landscape Architects, was a member of the Architectural League, and taught landscape architecture briefly at Columbia University.

Heins & La Farge[29]

Born in Newport, Rhode Island, Christopher Grant La Farge (1862-1938) was the son of the famed painter and stained-glass designer, John La Farge. He studied architecture at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) under Eugene Letang. In 1888, after a brief period in the office of Henry Hobson Richardson, La Farge formed a partnership in New York City with former MIT classmate George L. Heins (1860-1907). Heins & La Farge gained considerable renown by winning the national competition for the design of the (Episcopal) Cathedral of St. John the Divine in New York City in 1888. While their design was never completed, and the firm was later replaced by Cram, Goodhue & Ferguson, Heins & La Farge did receive numerous ecclesiastical commissions, including the Fourth Presbyterian Church on West 91st Street and West End Avenue (1893-94, in the Riverside Drive-West End Historic District) and the Clergy House of Grace Church (1902-3, a designated New York City Landmark).

Throughout their partnership, Heins & La Farge received many important public commissions in New York City, including the contract for the decoration of the original station interiors and entrances of the Interborough Rapid Transit System (1904-5, many of which are designated New York City Landmarks). The architect and tile manufacturer Rafael Guastavino (1842-1908) collaborated with them on the construction of City Hall Station, notably, its thin-shell vaults (in part, a designated New York City Landmark). These two firms also worked together on the design and construction of the Zoo's monumental Elephant House in 1907-1909. Within the firm, La Farge was the chief designer, while Heins was the builder and administrator. La Farge can be assumed, therefore, to have been the principal designer of five of the six buildings around Astor Court.[30]

Their partnership continued until Heins' untimely death in 1907, when La Farge formed the firm of La Farge & [Benjamin] Morris, which continued from 1910 to 1915, and then La Farge & Son, from 1931 to his death in 1938.

Henry D. Whitfield (1876-1949)[31]

A graduate of Harvard University, Henry D. Whitfield formed a partnership with Beverly S. King (1879-1935) by 1899. Five years later, in 1904, they designed a neo-Federal-style parking garage for Whitfield's father-in-law Andrew Carnegie[32] (part of the Expanded Carnegie Hill Historic District). Other extant works by the firm include the Flatbush Congregational Church on East 18th Street in Brooklyn (1899), the Engineers Club on West 40th Street (1906),

and the Phipps Houses on West 63rd and 64th Streets (1906, 1911).

Whitfield practiced independently from 1910 to 1924. He was the architect of the National Collection of Heads and Horns located on the east side of Astor Court, completed in 1922.

SCULPTORS

Eli Harvey (1860-1957)[33]

The Lion House features four marble sentinel lions, seven life-size lion heads, seven life-size tiger heads, and a cornice featuring 38 smaller heads, extending the entire length of the building and across the north and south ends. All were designed or carved by Eli Harvey, a specialist in the "study of large feline animals."[34]

Born in Ohio and trained in Paris, Harvey studied with the French sculptor Fremiet for ten years. In France he won considerable acclaim exhibiting his sculpture in various annual salons, from 1894 to 1901, and at the Paris Centennial Exposition of 1900. At the request of Henry Osborn, chairman of the Society's Executive Committee, Harvey returned to the United States in 1901 to begin decoration of the park's "finest animal building."[35]

Throughout his career, Harvey specialized in animal sculpture. One of his best-known works was a life-size bronze bear, known as "Bronze Bruno," commissioned in 1923 for the grounds of Brown University in Providence, Rhode Island. Other works by Harvey include the model for the American Elk, cast for Elks Clubs throughout the United States, as well as various commissions in Toronto and New York. Harvey's sculpture has been collected by many American museums, such as the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, the St. Louis Art Museum, and the Cincinnati Art Museum. Harvey also designed the fountain installed in the Queensboro Bridge market (a designated New York City Landmark).

Charles R. Knight (1875-1953)[36]

Born in Brooklyn, New York, Knight studied at the Art Student's League. He polished his craft by sketching in the Central Park Zoo and the American Museum of Natural History, where Henry Fairfield Osborn, the resident paleontologist -- and a New York Zoological Society officer -- "discovered" him. He was renowned for his depictions of both prehistoric and contemporary animals, which he illustrated in drawings, paintings, and sculpture. He painted Rob Roy, President Calvin Coolidge's dog, and created the Palmer Memorial Tiger, a symbol of Princeton University.

Knight was the co-winner (with Alexander Phimster Proctor) of the 1907 competition to create the sculpture for the park's Elephant House and was responsible for two large African elephant heads and one smaller African rhinoceros head that decorate the north entrance. He later designed the original ram's-head seal for the Society. His work is represented in museums of natural history in New York City, Washington D. C., Chicago, and Los Angeles, as well as in the Newark and Princeton University Museums.

Alexander Phimster Proctor (1862-1950)[37]

Born in Ontario, Canada, Proctor studied in New York City at the National Academy of Design and the Art Students League and went to Paris on scholarship to study art. In 1893 he won a commission to produce sculptures for the World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago. His hunting avocation led him to become a life-long member of the Boone and Crockett Club and a friend of Theodore Roosevelt. He won gold medals for animal sculpture exhibited at the St. Louis Exposition in 1904 and at the San Francisco Exposition in 1915. From 1900 to 1914 Proctor had a studio in New York City. Much of his time was spent assisting notable sculptors, including Augustus Saint-Gaudens, for whom Proctor helped model the bronze horse in the General Sherman Monument (dedicated 1903) in Manhattan's Grand Army Plaza. Other important public works by Proctor include the two bronze pumas (1898), on granite pedestals designed by Stanford White, that guard the Third Street Entrance to Prospect Park, Brooklyn, and the "Seven Mustangs" located on the campus of the University of Texas.

Proctor was the park's most prolific sculptor. He executed works to adorn four buildings at the New York Zoological Park, beginning in 1899 with the Reptile House (not part of this designation), and subsequently, the life-like figures for the Monkey House (1901), the Large Bird House (1905), and the heads above the south entry to the Elephant House (1908).

General Description

Astor Court consists of two monumental stairways leading up to a raised terrace, surrounded by six free-standing structures, all designed in the neo-classical style. Constructed between 1901 and 1922, the court was originally planned as part of the northern entrance to the park and is located south of the Paul J. Rainey Memorial Gates (1929-34), the Rockefeller Fountain (1910), and Fountain Circle. Each building faces onto rectangular lawns (aka the "North and South Special Exhibition Malls") and paved pathways, as well as the non-historic Sea Lion pool. From north to south, on

the court's west side is the Large Bird House (now Administration West) and the Lion House, and on the east side is the Administration Building (now Administration East), the National Collection of Heads and Horns (now Security, Education and International Conservation Offices), and the Primates' (Monkey) House. A formal garden, "planted with grass walks and evergreens," was originally laid out between the Administration Building and the Large Bird House as part of the North Stairs ensemble. Known as the "Italian Garden," the landscaping was significantly modified in 1941. At the court's southern terminus, on axis with the central lawns and North Stairs, stands the Elephant House (now Zoo Center), the tallest structure in the complex.

Of the six structures on the court, five were designed by the architects Heins & La Farge. The first building completed was the Primates' (Monkey) House (1901), followed by the Lion House (1903), the Large Bird House (1905), the original Sea Lion Pool (1906-7), the Elephant House (1908), and the Administration Building (1910). Henry D. Whitfield designed the last structure to be completed, the National Collection of Heads and Horns (1922).

Situated on a low natural hill in the Zoo's northwestern half, the east and west boundaries of Astor Court are raised above the adjoining grounds and are marked by historic stone retaining walls with granite watertables. A significant portion of the eastern ridge is marked by a non-historic metal railing. The western approach, which consists of two flights of granite stairs, is located on axis with the Sea Lion pool and the National Collection of Heads and Horns. A brass handrail, with spherical ornaments, divides the upper stairs of the western approach. The stairs are flanked by terra-cotta and concrete balusters. A solid masonry wall forms the outer edge of the court to both the north and south sides of the western approach.

Water features have always been part of Astor Court. Hornaday's 1897 "Final Plan" proposed a central seal pool with a canal extension pointing north. As built in 1906-7, the Sea Lion Pool was smaller and had an ovoid shape. The pool was completely rebuilt and enlarged in 1980-81. William Rockefeller bought an elaborate stone fountain from the Italian town of Como in 1901 and presented it to the Society the following year. Originally placed directly opposite the Sea Lion Pool and north of the Monkey House, in 1910 the fountain was moved to its present location in the circular plaza at the north entrance to Astor Court.

Three free-standing sculptures decorate the court, including two jaguars (c. 1937) by the sculptor Anna Hyatt Huntington, located on the sloping lawn within the North Stairs, and a stone eagle set on a stone pedestal in the forecourt of the National Collection of Horns and Heads.[38] While the location of the various walkways surrounding the court are original, most of the paving materials are not historic, except for the red bricks in front of the National Collection of Heads and Horns and on the North Stairs' various landings. Toward the court's south end, the approach to the Elephant House is flanked by historic terra cotta and stone balustrades. The pavement is surfaced with non-historic hexagonal stones, laid in a decorative pattern in two shades of gray. Raised and curbed planting beds flank the path.

Trees, planted individually and in straight rows, are set in square beds and bordered by non-historic concrete curbs throughout the court. Many of these trees are encircled by non-historic wood and concrete benches. The court has periodically been the site of special events and short-term exhibitions, which involve placing temporary structures in the open spaces. Currently, the central lawn is occupied by a temporary structure housing an annual butterfly exhibition that is scheduled to last through the year 2002.

General renovations, especially in and around the Elephant House, were supported by the Vincent Astor Foundation Fund, and in 1989 Baird Court was renamed Astor Court, in special recognition of long-time trustee Brooke Astor. The Large Bird House is now used for offices, the National Collection of Heads and Horns is now the Security, Education and International Conservation Offices. The restored Elephant House is now Zoo Center, providing public information and retail sales, as well as indoor and outdoor space for exhibiting elephants and rhinoceros.

PRIMATES' (MONKEY) HOUSE
Date: 1900-1
Architect: Heins & La Farge
Engineer: H. de B. Parsons
Builder: Thomas Cockerill & Son
Reliefs and sculpture: Alexander P. Proctor, manufactured by the Atlantic Terra Cotta Company
Style: neo-classical
Material: Indiana limestone, Roman ironspot brick, terra cotta, granite
Stories: 1 1 / 2
Renovations: 1957-59, Edward Coe Embury, architect

Located in the court's southeast corner, the Primates' House is the oldest structure in Astor Court. Popularly known as the Monkey House, the building was originally called the Primates' House, in reference to the zoological order which includes apes, baboons, monkeys, and lemurs. Completed in December 1901

at a cost of $64,160, the ironspot brick and limestone structure is rectangular in plan and has entry porches facing north and south, connected by a central spine. A limestone cornice with guttae and alternating dentils and corbels, surmounted by a terra-cotta frieze with monkeys and plants depicted in low relief encircles the building and demarcates the roof at the pavilions. The intersecting hipped roof was resurfaced with copper in 1954. It has brick chimneys with limestone caps enriched with guttae located at the north and south ends and skylights. Among the building's most significant features are the frieze, pediments, and baboon finials executed by the sculptor Alexander P. Proctor, who later presented the Zoo with the two Hamadryas baboons that served as his models.[39]

The building was closed in 1950 when the Great Ape House opened. It stood empty for almost nine years until it was extensively renovated under the supervision of architect Edward Coe Embury, and re-opened in 1959. At this time, the windows facing the court on the west facade and the cages on the east facade were modified.

The north elevation is five-bays wide and one-and-a-half stories high. At the center is a projecting, pedimented entry porch that is three-bays wide and one-story high. The portico is clad in limestone with Ionic columns and Tuscan-style pilasters supporting a central pediment. The entablature consists of an abbreviated architrave of two fascias enriched by guttae, a frieze of triglyphs and metopes decorated with simple discs surrounding the word "MONKEYS," which is framed by rosettes. This is surmounted by a denticulated cornice. Inside the pediment is a relief depicting a group of monkeys, from youth to old age. The monkey at the center, which is largest and appears oldest, looks directly forward and holds a stick in its hand. The raking cornice is embellished with dentils and an anethemion molding. Above the apex of the pediment is a single figure of a free-standing baboon on a stone base. To either side of the portico extend single-story wings clad in brick with flush limestone quoins, courses running horizontally at the top of the windows, and limestone bases. Each wing has non-historic aluminum Chicago-style windows, separated by Tuscan-style pilasters. The one story wings conclude with a cornice ornamented with an egg-and-dart molding, surmounted by a flat, copper-clad roof. This entry pavilion extends from a one-and-a-half story, five-bay-wide brick facade. A horizontal limestone course divides the first story from the upper half story. On the eastern side a non-historic door is set into a rectangular opening with a flat-arched limestone voussoir. On the upper level, two pairs of paired windows are located to either side of the pedimented entry portico. The windows rest on the stone courses and are surmounted by a stone lintel course. The south elevation is identical to the north elevation.

The west elevation is nineteen-bays wide and clad in brick with a limestone base. The central and end pavilions are one-story high, however, the central portion is flanked by two projecting, one-and-a-half story pavilions. All the windows on this elevation are sealed. The central section originally had a wide central bay with a metal and glass greenhouse structure framed by three bays divided by brick pilasters with limestone bases and caps to either side. The projecting pavilions are five bays wide, with two limestone Ionic columns windows demarcating the three former openings. Each end pavilion has a Chicago-style window.

An asymmetrical stair leads down from the southern end of the central spine to provide access to the service functions in the basement. In addition, several areaways, finished with concrete edges and iron grilles, provide illumination to the basement.

Two large semi-circular cages, as well as smaller cages in-between, extend along the east facade. The configuration, materials and structure of the cages have been extensively altered numerous times. Utilitarian in character, they are constructed of steel, iron, and wire-netting, and set on limestone bases. These cages are modifications of earlier cages on this general site. The long cage between the semi-circular cages at each end originally extended the entire distance between the two semi-circular cages. The long cage, including its foundation, was altered to introduce a gap between it and the semi-circular cages. Presently, only the smallest primate species are housed in the building. The outside cages are currently used for the display of red pandas.

LION HOUSE (aka Carnivore House, now closed)
Date: 1903
Architect: Heins & La Farge
Engineering: H. de B. Parsons
Reliefs and sculpture: Eli Harvey, Atlantic Terra Cotta Company
Style: neo-classical
Material: limestone, Roman ironspot brick, terra cotta, copper roofing, iron
Stories: 1 1 / 2

Situated in the southwest corner of Astor Court, the Lion House is its most richly decorated structure. Completed in 1903, it is clad in ironspot brick and limestone. That year, the Society reported that the "wealth of sculptured stone and terra cotta, presenting

realistic carvings of large feline animals, are calculated to impress the observer quite strongly; and this impression will reach its climax in the two life-size sentinel lions, carved in stone, which sit in repose on either side of the main entrance to the building."[40]

The one-and-a-half story rectangular structure has projecting entry porticoes along the north and south sides. The building sits on a limestone base and has brick walls and limestone quoins at every corner. The pitched roof has metal cladding dating from 1954, and the skylights were renovated in 1940. Two brick chimneys are located at the central section of the western roof. They have limestone quoins and a limestone cornice with brackets ornamented with foliate patterns.

The north portico, which leads to the main hall, is three bays wide, with one story wings flanking the one-and-a-half story projecting entrance pavilion. The entry is framed by a pair of limestone Ionic columns and engaged pilasters. Each pilaster has a lion head projecting from the capital. The pediment above depicts two lions in profile. The entry portico is surmounted by a bracketed roof cornice consisting of egg-and-dart and leaf-and-dart moldings that conclude in a frieze embellished with depictions of puma, jaguar and leopard heads interspersed between swags. The concrete and metal steps that lead to the entry are not historic. The interior of the deep entry porch is clad with Roman ironspot brick. To the west is a non-historic concrete ramp with benches. The smaller pavilions project from the entry, each with a single window. Flush limestone quoins define the edges of the entry and smaller pavilions. Acroteria and richly molded cornices accent the gable roofs of the smaller pavilions. The south elevation is identical to the north.

The east facade faces the center of Astor Court and features a series of outdoor animal cages set on masonry bases. The only cage to retain significant architectural features is the asymmetrical "studio" cage at the northeast corner, which still has decorative metal work with geometric and floral forms, now stuccoed over. The remainder of the cages are utilitarian in form and constructed of non-historic fabric. The cages have been altered and reconstructed several times, including a major reconstruction in 1921, as well as renovations in 1927, 1944, and 1966. Deemed unsuitable for proper animal exhibition, these cages have remained unused since 1986. Gable ends clad in brick project above the cages at either end of the building. These have rectangular windows with richly carved limestone surrounds consisting of cartouches and garlands. Open-mouthed lion and tiger heads set into richly embellished shields are located near either end of the gables. The roof fencing along this elevation consists of a geometric and curvilinear ornamental metal railing interspersed with stone balusters decorated with projecting foliated tassels set between bell-shaped ornaments. The balusters are topped with scrolls embellished with floral forms. At the center of the roof is an ornamental segmental pediment flanked by scrolls with swags. In the center is an open-mouthed lion, surrounded by the phrase "NEW YORK ZOOLOGICAL SOCIETY" and framed by a wreath with an open-winged owl at the bottom center. Pilasters sitting on brackets flank the wreath and are embellished with floral motifs. They support a cornice decorated with rosettes and a triglyph. The pediment is surmounted by a ball-topped, bracketed finial. The building no longer houses animals.

The seven-bay-wide west elevation faces a service road and is used primarily for access, via two sets of descending stairs, enclosed by utilitarian security fencing, to the public restrooms in the basement. This facade has two square-shaped wings located at either end, with a five-sided projecting bay at the center. It has a limestone base and granite watertable that is minimally visible from the court. The projecting end pavilions have paired historic windows with keyed limestone surrounds and are surmounted by limestone panels with horns-of-plenty set into the pediments. The projecting polygonal bay has limestone panels embellished with projecting enframents surmounted by swages and cartouches. To either side of this section are two Palladian windows framed by pilasters of alternating bands of brick and limestone and surmounted by richly carved moldings with foliate motifs. Each window has a bracketed keystone with a foliate pattern. A series of open-mouthed lion and tigers heads set into richly embellished shields are located right below the cornice between these windows. A bracketed terra-cotta roof cornice embellished with puma, jaguar and leopard heads demarcates the roof. Several areaways, finished with concrete edges and iron grilles, allow light into the lower level.

LARGE BIRD HOUSE (also known as the Bird House and the Large Bird House for Perching Birds, now Administration West)
Date: 1905
Architect: Heins & La Farge
Contractor: George L. Walker Co.
Sculpture and reliefs: Alexander P. Proctor
Style: neo-classical
Material: limestone, Roman ironspot brick, terra-cotta, glass, iron, copper

Stories: 1 1/2

Built to house large birds, this L-shaped building is divided into two sections, each with gable-on-hip roofs. The original glass roofs were re-surfaced with metal in 1939. The one-and-a-half story building is clad in brick and limestone and has a terra-cotta frieze. Set within the angle between the wings is a series of non-historic outdoor cages. The building originally housed nearly 1,700 specimens. Opened to the public on July 4, 1905, the building cost $118,931 to construct.

The main entrance of the former Large Bird House is on the south elevation and is three-bays wide. The Roman brick walls are trimmed with limestone quoins. The central doors are reached by four granite steps. To either side is a non-historic curving ramp with hexagonal paving stones and slender brass handrails bordered by granite curbs. The doors are flanked by limestone Doric columns set on pedestals. Around the echinus of each capital are carvings of various bird heads. Flanking the entrance are arched windows with limestone archivolts and keystones. The archivolts connect to a continuous limestone course that wraps around the entire building. The frieze of alternate metopes and triglyphs is broken at center to frame the word "BIRDS." Above is an egg-and-dart molding surmounted by alternate pairs of small and larger projecting dentils. The cornice, which extends around the entire building, consists of denticulated and egg-and-dart moldings surmounted by a continuous terra-cotta frieze of cockatoos, in which every other figure has its crest and wings raised. The corners of the building are marked by great horned owls. Centered above the main entry is an American eagle posed on a rock.[41]

The building's secondary entrance is located at the northern end of the twelve-bay wide east elevation. The projecting, five-bay wide pavilion has doors reached through a Doric portico, supported by columns, pilasters, and engaged pilasters. Each capital has small carvings of bird heads around the echinus. The non-historic doors and fanlights are framed by keyed limestone surrounds. To either side of the portico, above the ground story, is a single three-over-three window resting on a limestone molding and having a masonry keystone above. The single bay to the north of the entrance has a round-arched window with a limestone surround and keystone. A ramp descends from the north end of the portico, parallel to the east facade. The remainder of the east elevation is dominated by the one-story, utilitarian cages, built in 1990, that reflect the original footprint, but have been revised in terms of material and use. In addition, small rectilinear windows appear on the upper part of this elevation. Over the south entrance to the cages is a figure of a turkey, cast in metal. The projecting end bay of this elevation also has a round-arched window with a limestone surround and keystone. Ascending from the building's north side, the non-historic ramp that flanks the central stairs has hexagonal paving stones and brass handrails.

The north facade is nine-bays-wide with a central three-bay wide projecting wing in which each arched window, with keystone, is divided by limestone pilasters. To either side, in the main body of the building, are small, clerestory windows resting on limestone moldings. An earlier modification to the original L-shaped plan is a low, one story extension on this elevation called the "jewel room" that was once used to house hummingbirds and other small birds. The west facade, which employs a similar treatment to that of the cages on the east elevation, incorporates a non-historic extension designed by the architects Davis & Brody, with a roof that rises to meet the original west facade. This extension replaced the rear cages and houses offices.

The Large Bird House is no longer used to house animals within, but retains birds in outdoor cages on the front elevation. The cages are of utilitarian design and feature non-historic materials.

NORTH STAIRS (originally part of the Italian Garden)
Date: 1905-7
Architect: Heins & La Farge
Style: Renaissance Revival
Material: limestone, brick, terra cotta, concrete, red sandstone

To complement the court's neo-classical architecture, the north end terminates in a grand Renaissance-style stair terrace linking the animal houses to the approach from Fordham Road. In 1912 *The Zoological Society Bulletin* boasted that this sequence of spaces "form a park entrance not approached in either dignity or grandeur by any other park entrance in New York."[42] Due to the park's expansion, and the fact that many visitors now enter the Zoo from parking areas to the east and west, the North Stairs no longer provide primary access to Astor Court.

The North Stairs feature two broad main stairways and a sloping grass court at center, as well as two (inactive) fountains bordered by classical-style balustrades, made of granite and concrete. The two main stairways rise in four stages, divided by three broad landings. Monumental cheek walls flank the lowest flight of stairs. At the east and west ends of the

first landing is a low stone bench with two pedestals, backed by a solid masonry wall. On the third landing, to the east, steps descend to the grass court, and, to the west, steps ascend to the adjacent Administration Building and the Large Bird House. Classical-style balustrades flank the stairs and continue along each building's north terrace. In addition, along the north edge of Astor Court is a classical style balustrade and a short flight of stairs that descends to the grass court.

At the base of the North Stairs are two identical stone fountains flanking a flight of stairs with broad curved convex risers. Each fountain features an identical carving of a fish set in a scallop shell over a shallow basin. Directly above these fountains is a thick, foliated molding with keystone, as well as garlands hung to either side. Shallow pools, now planted with grass, originally surrounded each basin. Monumental ornamental cheek walls flank the center stairs. Directly above the stair landings, on the north edge of the grass court, stand a pair of marble jaguars (c. 1937) by the sculptor Anna Hyatt Huntington. The model for these sculptures was a member of the first large cat family to arrive at the park, a jaguar named Senor Lopez, given by the acting Consul-General of Paraguay in 1902.[43]

ELEPHANT HOUSE (now Zoo Center)
Date: 1908
Architect: Heins & La Farge
Dome and tile work: Rafael Guastavino
Sculpture: Alexander P. Proctor (south) and Charles R. Knight (north)
Style: Beaux-Arts
Material: limestone, terra cotta, granite, copper roofing
Stories: 2 + dome

Located at the southern terminus of Astor Court, the Elephant House faces, on axis, the central lawns and north terrace. The building is two stories high with a central dome and is clad in limestone with some polychrome terra-cotta decoration. Roughly rectangular in plan, the structure has projecting central entry pavilions on the north and south elevations and terminates in semicircular apses to the east and west. In 1957, the gabled roof was resurfaced in metal. Generously ornamented, the Elephant House features numerous elephant and rhinoceros heads, as well as a decorative frieze incorporating twenty sculpted heads representing the different species originally contained within the building. The building underwent interior and exterior renovations during 1989, when it was converted to the Zoo Center.

The symmetrical, thirteen-bay wide north elevation has a central portion consisting of a grand arched entry beneath a copper dome. This is flanked by two wings consisting of a one-story high, four-bay wide projecting portion that connects back to the five-bay-wide, two-story section. The north facade, which faces onto Astor Court, is clad with smoothly-dressed limestone articulated with stone cornices, friezes, and decorative moldings. The three-bay wide central portion is entered through a broken-pedimented arch framed by rusticated pilasters decorated with a single elephant head with tusks at the capitol. The archivolt is embellished with voussoirs alternating with bands of geometrized floral ornament. A rhinoceros head, projecting from a cartouche, serves as the keystone. The raking cornice is enriched with denticulated and anethemion moldings. Now entirely glazed, the arched entry is configured like a Palladian window, with doors to either side and a granite watertable at center. The underside of the arch is decorated with relief panels of rosettes and urns with floral and foliate motifs, behind this, although in front of the glazing, the surfaces are covered with a base of roman brick and limestone, surmounted by brown Guastavino tiles. Flanking the arch is a six-over-six window on the east, and a metal door on the west. Both are surmounted by oval windows with keystones.

To either side of the entry are the one story wings with shed roofs. A projecting bracketed enframement setting off a swag frieze occurs at the upper level at either end of these sections. Between are arched entries with bracketed keystones, some of these entries have their original metal doors, others are sealed with concrete. To either side of the main entry pavilion on the second story are square windows that alternate with projecting animal heads. A cornice, embellished with an anethemion molding wraps around the entire second story. Portions of the first floor of the north elevation are obscured behind hedges.

The south facade is virtually identical to the north, except that the central entry pavilion has metal doors on either side of the entry. Above the north and south entry pavilions is the building's dome. Originally covered with brown and green tiles, the dome sits on a drum framed at its base by limestone balustrades. Due to water leakage, the tiles are covered with copper cladding. The drum is pierced by windows arranged in groups of three. The windows that face north and south are surmounted with curved pediments and have a larger, arched window at center. Alternating triglyphs with blue, gold and tan mosaics in geometric patterns surround the drum above the windows. Polychrome terra-cotta finials with scroll bases set on plinths accent the roof line. The dome, now clad in non-historic metal, is crowned by a slender terra-cotta lantern lit by narrow windows, and embellished with

tan and green details.

The three-bay rounded east elevation has windows set in round-arched openings with projecting stone sills. Paired rusticated pilasters flank the central opening, while a single pilaster frames either end. The limestone walls are composed of rusticated courses. The west elevation is identical to that of the east and both side elevations are substantially obscured by plantings. Restored in 1989, the Zoo Center is presently used to house and exhibit elephants and rhinoceroses, as well as an information center and store.

ADMINISTRATION BUILDING (now Administration East)
Date: 1910
Architect: Heins & La Farge
Engineer: Martin Schenck
Style: neo-classical
Material: limestone, Roman ironspot brick, terra cotta
Stories: 2

Opened to the public in November 1910, the Administration Building originally contained reception rooms, offices, and a library, as well as the "Nucleus Collection" of the future National Collection of Heads and Horns.[44] Unlike the structures that preceded it, this building was designed without animal sculpture. Located in the northeast corner of Astor Court, the Administration Building is faced with ironspot brick, limestone and terra cotta. The two-story building has a roughly cross-shaped plan.

The main entrance to the building is on the west elevation, which is symmetrical, three-bays wide and rests on a basement clad in limestone. The building has a projecting limestone porch supported by composite columns and pilasters resting on stone bases. The porch entablature has an architrave of fascia and guttae, a frieze of triglyphs, an egg-and-dart molding with volutes located above each of the triglyphs, and a molded cornice. Inside the porch, at center, is the building's entrance, framed by sidelights and engaged pilasters. Above the wood doors extends a single glazed transom. This is surmounted by an architrave with rosettes located above each of the pilasters, a frieze with panels surrounding the word "ADMINISTRATION," and a denticulated cornice. A non-historic iron fence encloses the porch.

On the first floor, to either side of the porch, and resting on the building's base, is a single window with one-over-one windows, brick voussoirs, and a limestone keystone. On the second floor, to either side of the porch, are single one-over-one windows resting on stone courses that circle the building. These windows are framed with rectilinear masonry details and have a corbeled keystone surmounted by dentil moldings. The cornice is decorated with reliefs of swags and garlands and extends around the entire building. Above the gable-on-hip roof, rises a single pediment with a small circular window at center. The original slate roof was re-clad in copper in 1954. Three chimneys punctuate the roof; two are located toward the rear of the building to the north and south, the third rises through the ridge of the central gable. The brick chimneys have limestone quoins and cornices, which are embellished with triglyphs and egg-and-dart moldings.

The north facade is seven-bays wide with a projecting three-bay wide pavilion at center. The basement is clad in limestone and limestone pilasters frame either end of the elevation. The projecting central pavilion has limestone pilasters framing the end of the pavilion and each bay. The pavilion has three windows across each story. The two first floor windows on the side wings are false windows, while the remainder are one-over-one windows resting on the stone base at the first story. All first floor windows have segmentally arched openings with brick voussoirs and limestone keystones. The second story windows sit on stone courses and have one-over-one windows set in flat-arched molded limestone surrounds.

The south facade is identical to the north, however, dense planting obscures much of the elevation. The rear (east) elevation is three bays wide with a limestone-clad basement and framed by limestone pilasters. A stone course divides the first and second stories. The three first floor windows are identical to those on the north and south elevations. The single, centrally-located second story window is placed in a rectangular opening and has a casement window with four sashes. Non-historic fencing, similar to that on the entrance porch, extends north and south along the edge of the lawn that surrounds the building.

NATIONAL COLLECTION OF HEADS AND HORNS (now Security, Education and International Conservation Offices)
Date: 1922
Architect: Henry D. Whitfield
Builder: Miller-Reed Company
Style: neo-classical
Material: Indiana limestone, buff brick
Stories: 1 + basement below terrace

Located at the eastern terminus of the east-west transverse, opposite the west stairs and Sea Lion Pool,

this structure is clad with buff brick and Indiana limestone. Designed by Henry D. Whitfield, it is only building on Astor Court that was not planned as part of the original complex. It is one-story high on the west; however, due to the steeply sloping site, the remaining elevations are one story set above a high basement. The metal-clad hipped roof has a brick chimney with a molded cap located at the southern end.

The Education Building, built in 1922, is the only structure on Astor Court that was not part of Heins & La Farge's original scheme. The main (west) facade is aligned with the eastern border of the original court and the main mass of the building projects east into the natural landscape of the surrounding park land.

The west (front) elevation consists of a five-bay, projecting, central section flanked by one-bay wings. At the center of the west facade are three arches supported by Ionic columns. The doors, approached by shallow stone steps, are set between the columns. The tympanum is embellished with projecting circles and segments of circles. Paired columns frame the central door. The three double doors are historic and each has four panels, three of which are glazed. Above the center pair, "EDUCATION" is written in metal letters. Above the arches is carved: "NATIONAL COLLECTION OF HEADS AND HORNS." A denticulated cornice stretches across the front elevation.

Paired brick Doric pilasters flank the pedimented windows to either side of the entrance. Over the south window, is a tablet on which the following is inscribed: "IN MEMORY OF THE / VANISHING BIG GAME / OF THE WORLD." Over the north window is inscribed: "ERECTED / by the / NEW YORK / ZOOLOGICAL SOCIETY / 1922."

The south (side) elevation is enlivened by rusticated corners, panels and Doric pilasters. The lower story, set one full level below Astor Court, is visible only from the court's eastern edge. A stone course runs horizontally across the wall approximately two-thirds of the way up the elevation. The building concludes in a molded limestone cornice. The north elevation is identical to the south and both facades are hidden behind dense plantings. Due to the steeply sloping site and the proximity of the building to the edge of the terrace, the rear elevation is not visible from Astor Court. The building is currently used for security services, education and international programs.

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NOTES

1. In 1989, Baird Court was renamed Astor Court, in honor of long-term trustee Brooke Astor. The New York Zoological Park is now called the Bronx Zoo. This designation report is primarily based on the following sources: William Bridges, *Gathering of animals: an unconventional history of the New York Zoological Society* [New York: Harper & Row (1974)], 2-26; Helen Horowitz, "Seeing Ourselves Through the Bars: A Historical Tour of American Zoos," *Landscape*, 25, (1981), 12-19; Journal of the NYZS, called variously *[New York] Zoological Society Bulletin*, and *Animal Kingdom* [hereafter *NYZS Bull*], October 1897 through October 1969, *passim*; *Annual Report of The New York Zoological Society* [hereafter *NYZS Annual Report*] (New York: The Society), for 1896 through 1914, *passim*.

2. Albert Fein, ed., *Landscape into Cityscape: Frederick Law Olmsted's Plans for a Greater New York City*, (Ithaca: Cornell, 1967), Introduction 1-44. *Laws of New York (1883)* Chapter 522.

3. Henry Fairfield Osborn (1857-1935) lent intellectual credibility to the enterprise. He was a member of the Boone and Crockett Club, but he was also a professor of comparative anatomy at Princeton, a professor of biology and dean of the faculty of pure science at Columbia University, and curator of vertebrate paleontology at the American Museum of Natural History. At the New York Zoological Society, Osborn was Chairman of the Executive Committee 1896-1903 and 1907-1909; and President of the Society 1909-1925. His son, Fairfield Osborn (1887-1969), an investor on Wall Street, was president from 1940 until 1969. *NYZS Bull.*, Oct 1969, 28-30. William Bridges, *op. cit.*, 13-17.

4. *NYZS Bull.*, Vol. XLIX, No. 1, 11.

5. William Temple Hornaday (1854-1937) was the director of the New York Zoological Park from 1896 until his retirement on June 1, 1926. He was the son of Iowa farmers, but while attending college in Iowa, he determined to become a taxidermist. He taught himself that art and became so adept that in 1882 he was appointed as the chief taxidermist at the United States National Museum, Washington, which was affiliated with the Smithsonian Museum. In 1887 he went to the Rocky Mountains to obtain American buffalo specimens, and discovering that of the millions which once roamed the United States territories, only about two hundred remained, he wrote an impassioned essay, "The Passing of the Buffalo," for *Cosmopolitan Magazine*. He helped to establish a national zoo in the nation's capital, and as Director of the New Zoological Park, he founded the American Bison Society and the Permanent Wild Life Protection Fund; and he petitioned governments to pass the Bayne Law that prohibited the sale of native game in New York State and the Tariff Law of 1913 that prohibits all importation into the United States of wild-bird plumage for millinery purposes. *NYZS Bull.*, March-April 1937, 46-49; *New York Times Obituary*: Dr. William T. Hornaday, March 7, 1937, 9:1.

6. Established in 1813, this fund was used to pay off public debts and finance public works.

7. "Grant of South Bronx Park to the New York Zoological Society," *NYZS Annual Report* (1899), 73.

8. *NYZS Annual Report* #2(*1896)*, 13; "This is the Way We Began," *Animal Kingdom*(January-February 1946), 9.

9. *NYZS Bull.* (August 1911), 593.

10. *NYZS Annual Report* (1909), 98.

11. *Animal Kingdom* (November-December 1949), 4.

12. Among these six institutions, only the Metropolitan Museum of Art charged admission. See entries in *Rider's New York City: A Guidebook for Travelers* (Henry Holt & Co., 1923).

13. *NYZS Bull*. (July 1908), 432.

14. Stan Federman, "Roundup on the Bison Range," *Animal Kingdom (NYZS Bull.)*, Oct. 1968, 18-23.

15. For example, a modernized methodology of exhibition, planned in 1941, called "Continental Groups" -- the African Group being the first -consists of large groupings of animals kept out in the open surrounded by moats and linked together by roads and paths. *NYZS Bull.* (March-April 1941), 35. In the early 1940s, the extension of the Bronx River Parkway south along the eastern boundary of the Zoo required the transfer back to the city of some 25 acres of land, so the total acreage became approximately 240 instead of the original 264 acres. Four parking lots also took away land from the original forests. See *NYZS Bull.*(March-April 1941), 35-36.

16. Horowitz, 14.

17. The first public zoo in the West was Louis XVI's private collection of cages with wild animals that in 1793 was put in the *Jardin des Plantes*, Paris. The London public zoological garden was established in 1828, and it set the model and standard for the type. It consisted of cages situated on approximately thirty acres of royal land at Regent's Park. A menagerie, that is, a few cages with animals, was located in Central Park near the Arsenal from c. 1864; and zoos of caged animals were set up at Cincinnati and Philadelphia in the 1870s. The largest deer park was Savernake with 4,000 acres, fifteen times larger than the New York Zoological Park. Horowitz, *op. cit.*; "Park," *Encyclopedia Britannica*, Vol. XX (1911), 827; and "Deer Park," Vol. VII (1910), 25.

18. Hornaday's preliminary plan was approved by the Executive Committee on November 27, 1896, and the next year was spent on refining it. Elevation drawings by Consulting Architect, C. Grant La Farge, accompanied the plans. *Annual Report (*1896), 42; *Annual Report (*1897), foldout map.

19. *NYZS Bull.* (Oct. 1897), 2; *Annual Report* (1897), 30-31; *Annual Report* (1909), 104. The lake to the east of Baird Court is called Lake Agassiz, named for the famed Swiss zoologist and oceanographer, Alexander Agassiz (1835-1910). S. F. Baird, for whom the court was originally named, introduced Agassiz's methodology of field study into the United States.

20. *NYZS Annual Report* #2 (1896), 40-41.

21. *NYZS Annual Report* #3 (1897), 29-30.

22. *NYZS Annual Report* #6 (1901), 37.

23. *NYZS Annual Report* (1909), 98, 104-106.

24. What is called the "City Beautiful" movement had its first great impetus with the widely approved classical designs of the "white" courts at the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago. There, McKim, Mead & White designed the Agriculture Building, its court and fountain; and John La Farge, Christopher Grant's father, had been on the board of planning for the Exposition. Thomas Hastings had trained in the offices of McKim, Mead & White. The movement combined architecture with city planning and landscape architecture to attempt to impose order and "beauty" on expanding cities. It was popularized in such publications as "The City Beautiful," *Municipal Affairs* (December 1899), a periodical of The Reform Club of NY; and particularly in articles and books by Charles Mulford Robinson, whose death in 1917 marked the end of the movement. See: Helen Horowitz, *op. cit.*; Richard Guy Wilson, "Architecture, Landscape and City Planning," *The American Renaissance: 1876-1917* (New York: The Brooklyn Museum, 1979), 74-109.

25. On the Columbia University campus, only the Low Library (1894-97, McKim, Mead & White) and Saint Paul's Chapel (1904-07, Howells & Stokes) are designated New York City Landmarks.

26. *NYZS Annual Report* #9 (1904), 41-42. Like the Court of Honor at the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago, the design of Baird Court is longitudinal, terminated at one end by a domed building, and has a central body of water. As at the Exposition, the buildings that face the court share a common cornice height, the porticos and bays are framed by columns and pilasters; and carved-stone balustrades and stairs serve as decorative approaches.

27. "H. A. Caparn Dead; Landscape Expert," *New York Times* (September 25, 1945), 25.

28. George Skeene, "42 ½ Years of Gardening In the Zoological Park," *Animal Kingdom* (November-December 1946), 211.

29. Childs and Morton, *op. cit.*, 350-351. *New York Times Obituary*: Christopher Grant La Farge, (October 12, 1938), 27:3; LPC, *IRT Subway System Underground Interior Designation Report* (LP-1076), report prepared by Marjorie Pearson (New York: City of New York, 1979), 6.

30. George L. Heins (1860-1907) was born in Philadelphia, studied architecture at MIT, Boston, apprenticed in offices in Minneapolis and St. Paul, and in 1886 established the New York firm with C.G. La Farge. Heins was particularly concerned with church architecture, and with the firm he was essentially the builder and administrator. In 1899 Heins was appointed State Architect of New York by Governor Theodore Roosevelt. Childs and Morton, *op.cit.*, 350-351; Henry Withey and Elsie Withey, *Biographical Dictionary of American Architects (Deceased)* (Los Angeles: Hennessey & Ingalls, Inc., 1970), 276-277.

31. *NYZS Bull.* (May 1922), 51; *New York Times Obituary*: Henry D. Whitfield (Feb. 14, 1949), 19:3.

32. Carnegie and his wife were great supporters of the WCS and may have helped initiate contact between Whitfield and the Society.

33. *NYZS Bull.* (January 1903), 66-67; *Annual Report* (1900), 40; *New York Times Obituary*: Eli Harvey, Feb. 14, 1957, 27:3; Joseph Lederer, *All Around the Town: A Walking Guide to Outdoor Sculpture in New York City* (New York: Scribner's, 1975), 193-94.

34. *NYZS Bull.* (January 1903), 67.

35. Ibid., 67.

36. *NYZS Bull.* (October. 1908), 450-451; *New York Times Obituary*: Charles Knight (April 17, 1953) 25:3.

37. *NYZS Bull.* (October 1908), 450-451; (November 1909), 21; *Annual Report* (1900), 40; *New York Times Obituary*: A.P. Proctor (September 6, 1950), 29:3; Lederer, 221-22.

38. According to Steven Johnson, of the WCS, the eagle is said to have been salvaged from the post office that once stood in City Hall Park. See letter to LPC, September 20th, 1999.

39. *NYZS Annual Report*, #5 (1900), 50; #6 (1901), 37-38.

40. "The Lion House," *NYZS Bull*. (January 1903), 58.

41. *NYZS Bull.*, vol. 18 (July 1905), 222. The birds were identified by the curator of birds, C. William Beebe.

42. Herbert W. Merkel, "Beautifying the Zoological Park," *NYZS Bull.*, vol.. 16 (September 1921), 904.

43. *NYZS Bull.*, vol. 40 (November-December 1937). This jaguar arrived before the Lion House was built. The Italian Garden was removed in 1941 when four flagpoles were installed directly behind the sculptures. See Department of Parks, Drawing XL2-8100, April 16, 1941.

44. William Bridges, "The National Collection of Heads and Horns," *NYZS Bull.*, vol. XXXVIII (March-April, 1935), 41.

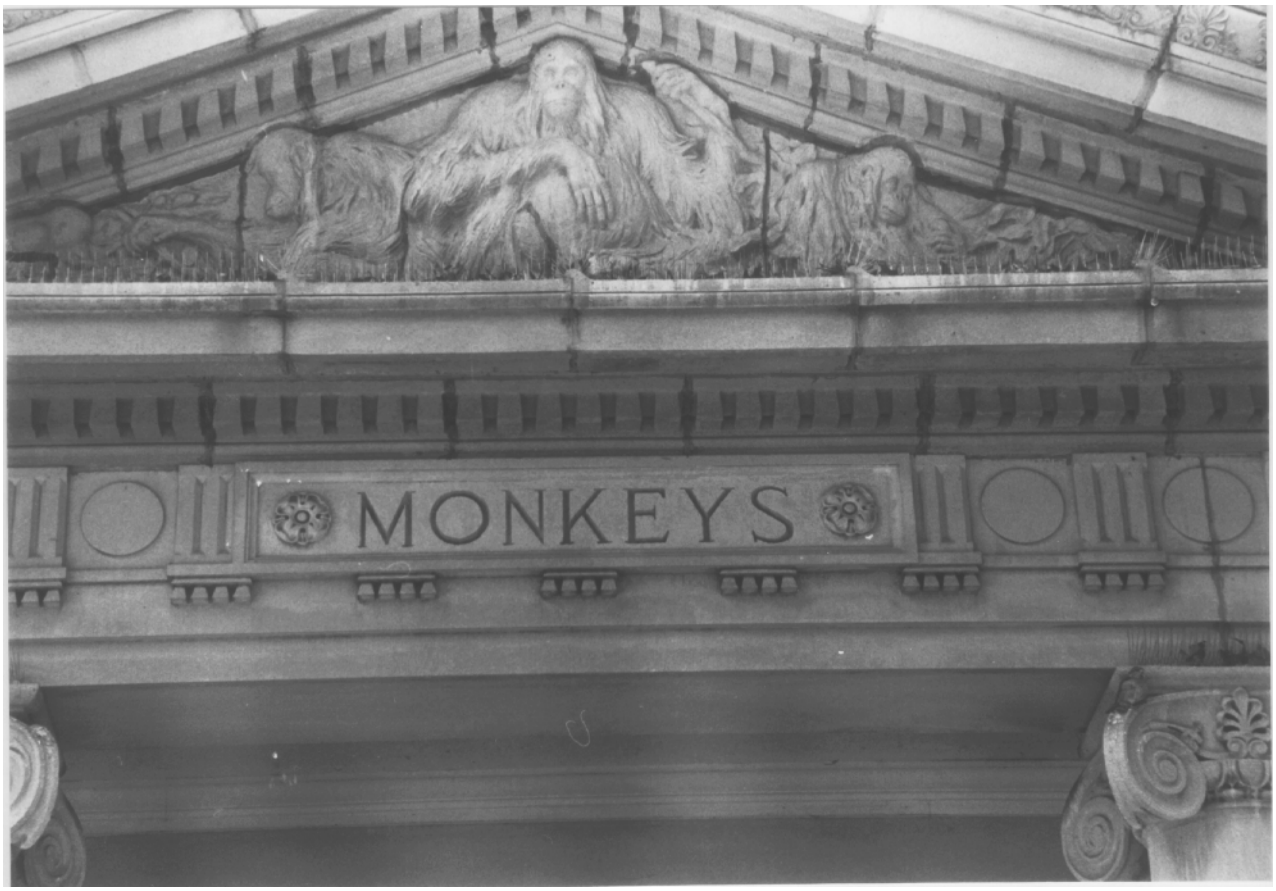
FINDINGS AND DESIGNATION

On the basis of a careful consideration of the history, the architecture, and other features of this complex, the Landmarks Preservation Commission finds that Baird (now Astor) Court, New York Zoological Park (Bronx Zoo) has a special character and special historical and aesthetic interest and value as part of the development, heritage, and cultural characteristics of New York City.

The Commission further finds that, among its important qualities, Baird (now Astor) Court, New York Zoological Park (Bronx Zoo) is one of the few intact architectural ensembles in New York City reflecting the influence of the "City Beautiful" movement to survive from the early twentieth century; that the court's classical formality was deliberately chosen to contrast with the surrounding landscape; that it was financed by the City of New York and the New York Zoological Society; that it consists of the neo-classical style North Stairs rising to a symmetrically-planned terrace known as Astor Court which is surrounded by six detached, neo-classical-style limestone, brick and terra-cotta buildings: the Administration Building (now Administration East), the National Collection of Heads and Horns (now the Security, Education and International Conservation Offices), Primates' (Monkey) House, Lion House, Large Bird House (now Administration West) and the monumental domed Elephant House (now Zoo Center) with arched entrances located at the court's southern terminus; that five of the richly-embellished buildings were built to designs by the noted architectural firm of Heins & La Farge between 1899 and 1910; that the sixth building, the National Collection of Heads and Horns was designed by the architect Henry D. Whitfield in 1922; that four of the Heins & La Farge buildings are decorated with large, realistically modeled stone and terra-cotta sculptures of animals by the sculptors Eli Harvey, Charles R. Knight and Alexander Phimster Proctor; that these works of art were designed to illustrate the contents of each building, and that for more than a century, the Bronx Zoo and its various buildings have been one of New York City's major cultural attractions.

Accordingly, pursuant to the provisions of Chapter 74, Section 3020 of the Charter of the City of New York and Chapter 3 of Title 245 of the Administrative Code of the City of New York, the Landmarks Preservation Commission designates as an Individual Landmark the Baird (now Astor) Court, New York Zoological Park (Bronx Zoo), Borough of the Bronx, and designates Borough of the Bronx Tax Map Block 3120, Lot 20, in part, consisting of the area bounded by a line beginning at the northwest corner of the outside retaining walls of Baird (now Astor) Court, extending easterly along the outside of the north retaining wall to the west side of the North Stairs, northerly along the west side of the North Stairs, easterly along the northern edge of the North Stairs, southerly along the east side of the North Stairs, back to the outside of the north retaining wall, then easterly to the northeast corner of the retaining walls of Astor Court, then southerly along the outside of the east retaining wall, easterly along the north side of the National Collection of Heads and Horns (now Security, Education and International Conservation Offices), southerly along the east side of the Security, Education and Conservation Offices, westerly along the south side of the Security, Education and Conservation Offices, then southerly along the east retaining wall to the south end of the east retaining wall, then west across the path leading toward the Monkey House to the west side of the path, along the west side of the path, curving west and then south along the east edge of Astor Court, across the path entering from the southeast, to the east end of the east fence leading to the north side of the Elephant House (now Zoo Center), then westerly and southerly along the fence

South facade, Monkey House
Photo: Carl Forster

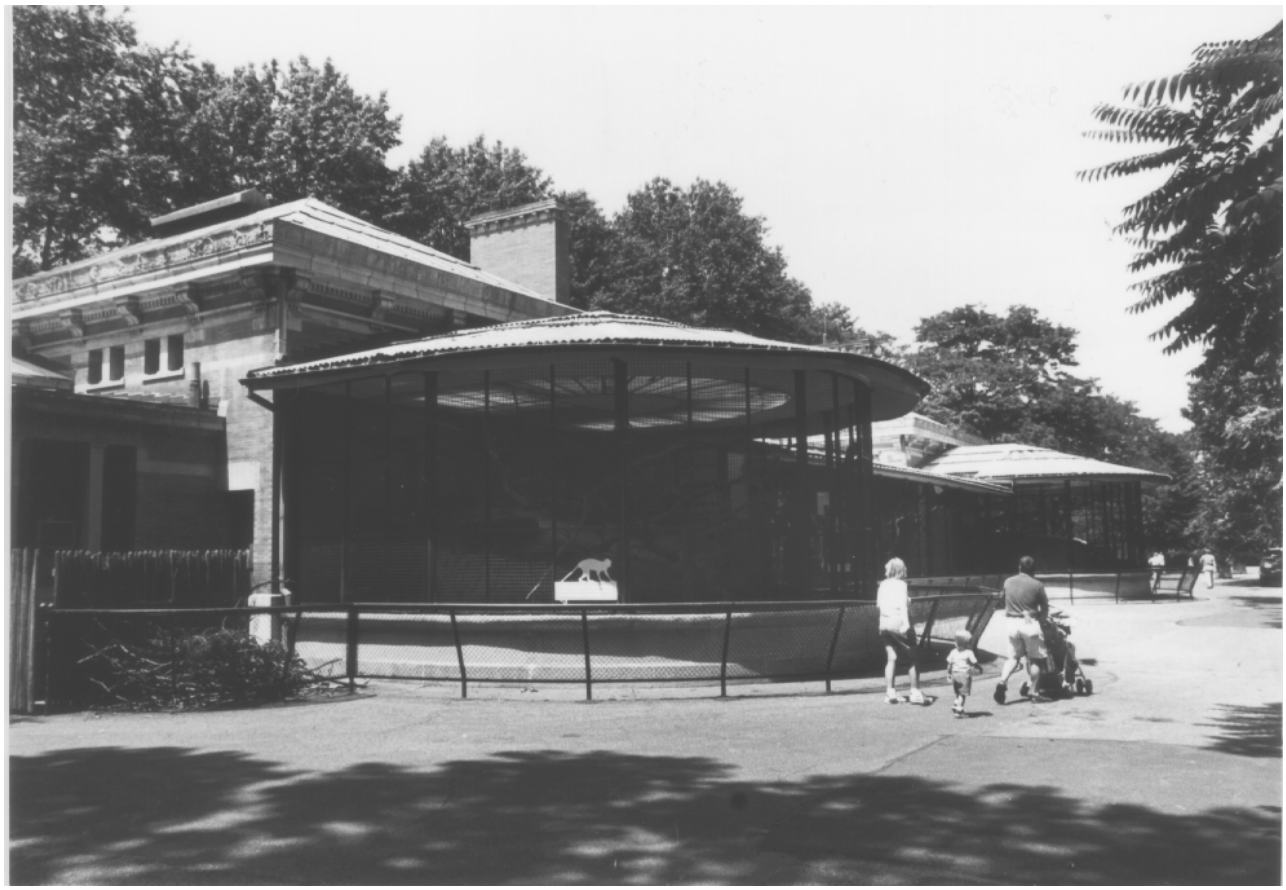


Detail, south pediment of Monkey House
Photo: Carl Forster

Southwest corner of Monkey House, facing north
Photo: Carl Forster

Detail, southeast corner, Monkey House
Photo: Carl Forster

Northeast corner, Monkey House
Photo: Carl Forster



Southeast corner, Monkey House
Photo: Carl Forster

North facade of Monkey House
Photo: Carl Forster

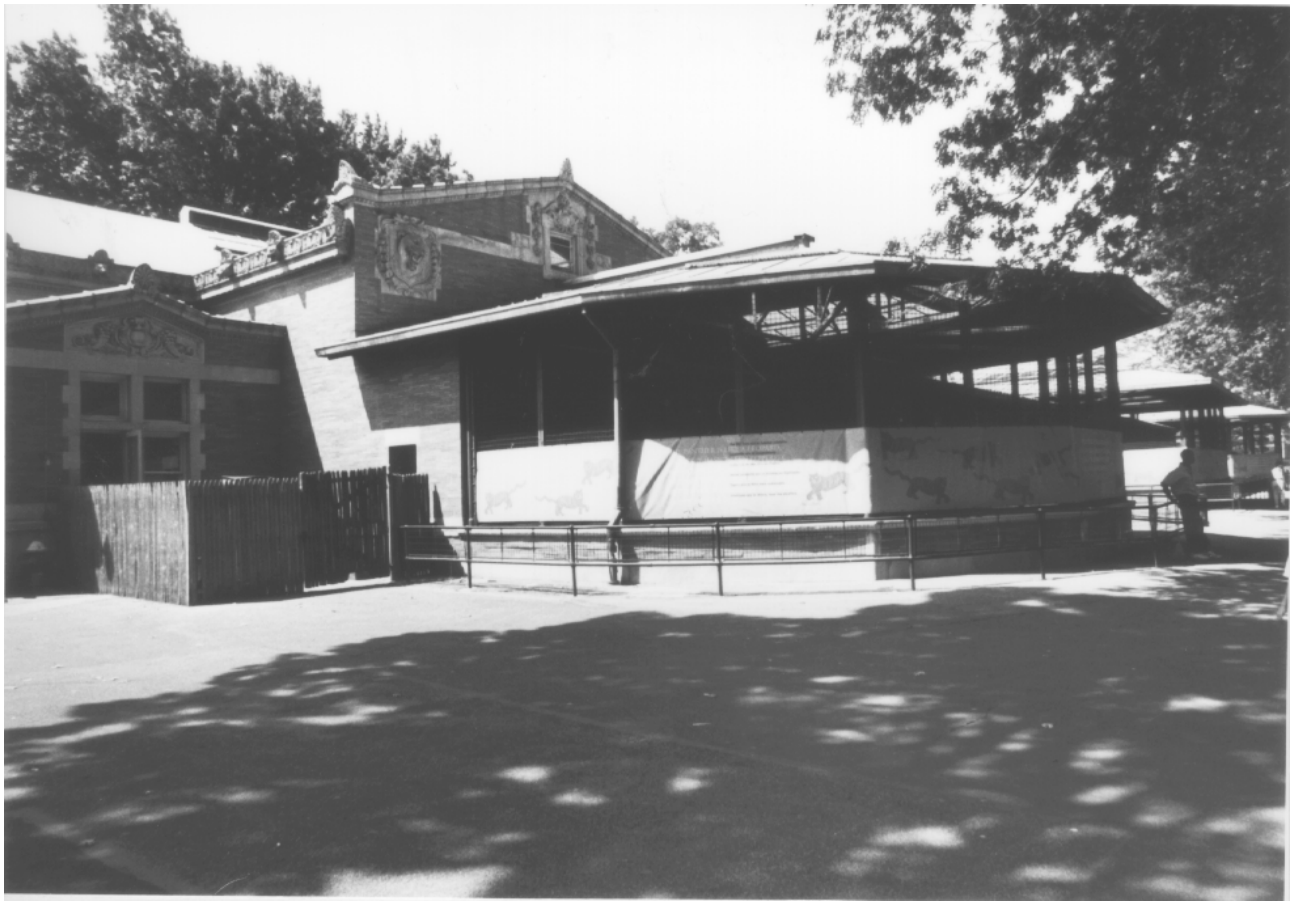
Northwest corner, Monkey House
Photo: Carl Forster

North projecting bay, west facade, Monkey House
Photo: Carl Forster

Tablet, center bay, west facade of Lion House
Photo: Carl Forster

South facade of Lion House
Photo: Carl Forster

Detail, cornice and south pediment, Lion House
Photo: Carl Forster



South cage, east facade of Lion House
Photo: Carl Forster

Center cage, east facade, Lion House
Photo: Carl Forster

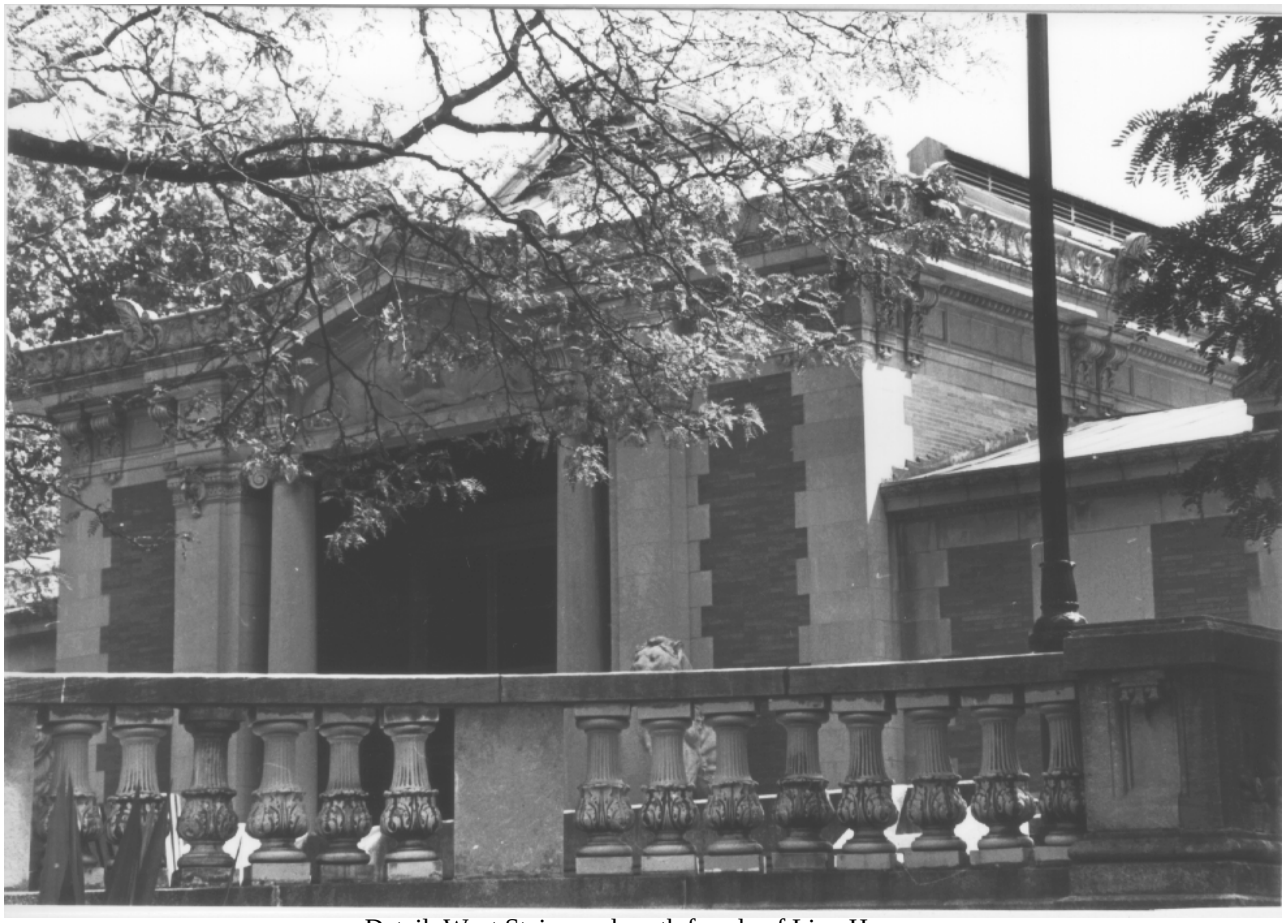
Pediment over center cage, east facade of Lion House
Photo: Carl Forster

Northeast corner of Lion House
Photo: Carl Forster

Detail, above north cage, east facade of Lion House
Photo: Carl Forster

Pediment and cornice detail, north facade of Lion House
Photo: Carl Forster

Cornice detail of east facade, near south end of Lion House
Photo: Carl Forster



Detail, West Stairs, and north facade of Lion House
Photo: Carl Forster

North facade, Lion House
Photo: Carl Forster

South end of west facade of Lion House, facing north
Photo: Carl Forster

Detail, near south end of west facade, Lion House
Photo: Carl Forster

West facade of Lion House, facing south
Photo: Carl Forster

West facade of Lion House, facing north
Photo: Carl Forster

Detail, south facade, above entrance to Large Bird House (now Administration West)
Photo: Carl Forster

South facade, Large Bird House
Photo: Carl Forster