

(right) Nave, Church of St. Francis Xavier. Photograph by Whitney Cox, courtesy of EverGreene Architectural Arts

(below) Father Joe Costantino welcomes the Victorian Society New York to the Church of St. Francis Xavier. Photograph by Ashley Shedd





Annual Meeting and Awards Ceremony 2012

On the warm spring evening of May 22, 2012, the Victorian Society New York held its annual meeting and awards ceremony in the luminous sanctuary of the Church of St. Francis Xavier. Chairing this meeting for the first time as Chapter president, Frampton Tolbert introduced our host, Father Joe Costantino, who graciously welcomed the group to the magnificent setting. Father Costantino pointed out features of the recent interior renovation, which earned a VSNY award in 2011 for its excellence, so evident to the gathered audience (for images of the interior, see "Embellishments" in this issue).

The annual meeting reviewed the VSNY's activities of the past year—including lectures, tours, preservation activism and advocacy, and educational initiatives—and then turned to celebrating the achievements of others with the presentation of the annual awards and the Margot Gayle Fund grants. Alta Indelman, Margot Gayle Fund Chair, presented the grants. Awards Committee members presented awards in the categories of books, exhibitions, scholarship, preservation and advocacy, as well as in a new category, New Media, and also honored two individuals for their achievements.

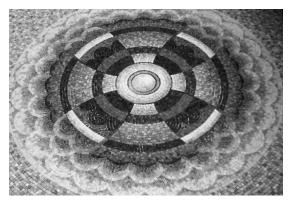
Two Gayle Fund grants—to the Stanton Street Shul and the Bowery Alliance of Neighbors—were announced. The award for New Media was granted to the New York Public Library's innovative On the Menu project, a crowdsourced digital transcription of its extensive menu collection. Gladys Montgomery received the Publication Award for her beautifully illustrated book, An Elegant Wilderness: Great Camps and Grand Lodges of the Adirondacks, 1855–1935. Two outstanding New York City-based exhibitions, the

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Embellishments

This issue's Embellishments come from the Church of St. Francis Xavier, host to the 2012 Victorian Society New York annual meeting and recipient of a VSNY Interior Restoration Award in 2011. Located at 30–36 West 16th Street in Manhattan, the 1882 church was designed by Patrick Keely, one of America's best-known ecclesiastical architects.

Keely's interior design mixes Beaux-Arts forms with Eastlake-inspired details, resulting in an eclectic American expression of traditional European church architecture. Throughout the sanctuary, plaster detail—painted to resemble carved stone—creates an intimate, human dimension within the cavernous space.



The 2011 restoration combined conservation with sensitive adaptive reuse to bring the interior up to date while carefully maintaining its historic character and restoring its beauty. This included replacing plaster elements, conserving 35 statues of saints, and interior repainting. Conservators cleaned and restored murals, and architects moved the high altar forward to accommodate a new sacristy, adding a baptismal font that closely matches the altar's existing marble. Original oak flooring that was no longer needed was taken up and made into an accessibility ramp. Unobtrusive climate control and electrical and speaker systems were subtly integrated with architectural features, while extensive new lighting illuminates murals, plasterwork and trompe l'œil painted decoration in the highest corners of the sanctuary. The original lighting also remains, repaired and matched as necessary. Remarkably, the entire restoration was completed in less than one year, resulting in a refreshed, reinvigorated and truly inspirational space.



(top) Intricate plasterwork detail above column supporting the sanctuary's dome. Photograph by Whitney Cox, courtesy of EverGreene Architectural Arts

(center) Baptismal font mosaic. Photograph courtesy of the Church of St. Francis Xavier

(bottom) Restored east transept. Photograph courtesy of the Church of St. Francis Xavier

The ornament on this page is taken from stenciling in the church sanctuary.





ANNUAL MEETING

continued from page 1

Metropolitan Museum's Victorian Electrotypes: Old Treasures, New Technology and The Greatest Grid: The Master Plan of Manhattan, 1811-2011 at the Museum of the City of New York, also received awards. Nineteenth-century buildings in Bedford-Stuyvesant and Harlem garnered honors for architectural projects completed during 2011: Mount Lebanon Baptist Church, Brooklyn, for restoration of its roof and exterior, and the cast-iron Picker Building, 313-315 West 125th Street, Manhattan, for its contribution to neighborhood rehabilitation with a renewed facade. Susan Tunick, president of the Friends of Terra Cotta, was honored for her longtime preservation advocacy, and Barbara Veith was recognized for decorative arts scholarship on the work of Edward Lycett and Brooklyn's Faience Manufacturing Company.

The business meeting concluded, and guests adjourned to a catered reception in the colonnaded lower hall. Sharp eyes may have spotted period photographs of the space's original polychrome decoration and areas where late 19th-century mural paintings have been exposed. Stay tuned, Victorians: restoration of this grand space is on the list of projects for the energetic parish.





Angel, Abbott Handerson Thayer, oil on canvas, 1887.

Photograph courtesy of the Newark Museum

Angels & Tomboys: Illustrating 19th-Century Girlhood at the Newark Museum

The Newark Museum's exhibition, Angels & Tomboys: Girlhood in 19th-Century American Art, explores the ways that 19th-century America viewed girls and girlhood. Featuring works by Winslow Homer, John Singer Sargent, Thomas Eakins, Cecilia Beaux and William Merritt Chase, the exhibition shows how artists both reflected and shaped visions of girlhood in the 1800s. Among its themes are: Victorian attitudes toward nature and nurture; fashion, health, and the home; and the Civil War's effect on families.

Typically portrayed as passive and innocent in the 19th-century culture and art, girls were also depicted in less stereotypical ways that conveyed other visions of femininity. The tomboy is an archetype that emerged after the Civil War and is still relevant today. Female child laborers appear in the prints of pioneering social photographer Jacob Riis, while paintings of girls reading reflect new educational opportunities for female students. Psychological portraits of moody teenagers emerged in the late 19th century, when doctors first recognized adolescence as a unique stage in human development. Other points of view surface in images of race and Reconstruction by Eastman Johnson, John Rogers and Edward Lamson Henry.

Curated by Holly Pine Connor, the exhibition is on view from September 12, 2012, through January 7, 2013. An accompanying catalog includes essays by five scholars of 19th-century American art and culture.

Q&A with Holly Pine Connor, Curator of *Angels* & *Tomboys*

How did the Civil War influence 19th-century American attitudes toward women and childhood?

After the Civil War, talented artists created new feminine types as a response to women's changing roles in society and to new attitudes about the nature and nurture of young girls. The image of the New Woman portrayed the first generation of women to go to college, to play sports and to have jobs previously restricted to men. Paintings of tomboys after the Civil War showed free-spirited and adventurous young girls, which was partially the result of more permissive attitudes toward energetic young girls. By the end of the 19th century, doctors and educators had a greater understanding that adolescence was a period of tremendous physical and mental development, and talented artists responded in their innovative portrayals of teenaged girls who were characterized as moody and introspective.

Are any of the works in the exhibition related to the New York City metropolitan area?

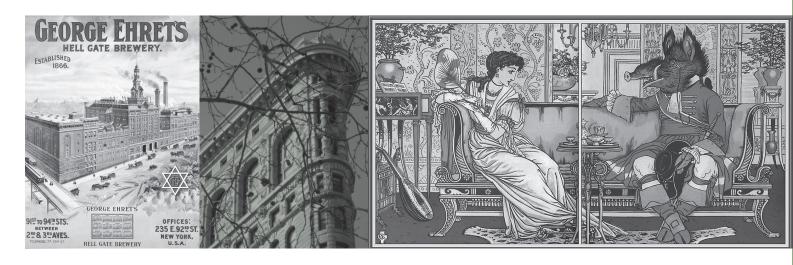
Many of the artists represented in the exhibition had studios in New York City, which was the art capital of America throughout most of the 19th century.

How much work by women artists is included? Does their viewpoint differ from that of male artists?

There are 11 works by such renowned women artists as Lilly Martin Spencer, Bessie Potter Vonnoh, Gertrude Käsebier and Cecilia Beaux. Spencer's work frequently has autobiographical references as she included portraits of herself and her family in her paintings. In a number of her works in the exhibition, she deals with the effect of the Civil War on family life from a deeply personal viewpoint. As a woman artist, Beaux was disinclined to marginalize her female sitters even when they appear with male siblings. In her powerful portrait of Harold and Mildred Colton, for example, both brother and sister were presented as strong individuals, which was atypical for the period.

How have 19th-century views of girlhood continued to affect our present-day lives?

Many 19th-century role models for young girls still resonate today. As in the past, girls are often expected to behave in an angelic manner, but tomboy behavior is also acceptable. Jo March, the well-known and beloved tomboy in Louisa May Alcott's Little Women, written in 1868 and 1869, has inspired generations of accomplished women to pursue professional careers.



Lectures

Admission is FREE; no reservations required. For VSNY Members only: meet the speakers at our post-lecture receptions.

NEW VENUE!

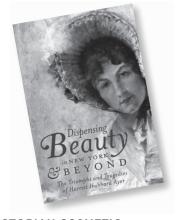
Beginning this September, all VSNY lectures will take place at the Dominican Academy at 44 East 68th Street, Manhattan. The Academy was built in 1922 as a town house for Col. Michael Friedsam, former president of B. Altman & Company, and an avid art collector. Friedsam willed much of his valuable collection—Old Master paintings along with European, Asian and Near Eastern decorative arts—to the Metropolitan Museum, but the house (designed by Frederick G. Frost) retains original stained glass windows, paintings, marble fireplaces, wood carvings and wrought-iron doors. The VSNY's lectures and receptions will be held in the mezzanine galleries that once housed the collection.

(left) George Ehret's Hell Gate Brewery, calendar illustration from Trautmann, Bailey & Blampey, NYC, 1893–1911, color lithograph. Photograph courtesy of New-York Historical Society

(center) Flatiron Building.
Photograph by Jane Gabin

(right) The Sleeping Beauty, illustration by Walter Crane, 1876. Photograph courtesy of Jane Curley

Book cover courtesy of The History Press.



VICTORIAN COSMETIC ENTREPRENEUR AND JOURNALIST

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 11, 6:00 PM
Drawing on her recent book, Dispensing Beauty in New York and Beyond: The Triumphs and
Tragedies of Harriet Hubbard Ayer, Annette
Blaugrund will discuss the life of Harriet
Ayer (1849–1903), the first woman in the
United States to own and operate a cosmetics
company. Ayer was an extraordinary Victorian
woman whose life included divorce, kidnapping, seduction and betrayal. She successfully
battled an attempt to steal her lucrative business, and was subsequently committed to an
asylum. She finally reinvented herself as the
editor of the women's pages of Joseph Pulitzer's New York World.

BREWING NEW YORK'S HISTORY

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 9, 6:00 PM
Debra Schmidt Bach, Associate Curator of
Decorative Arts at the New-York Historical
Society, will discuss the social, economic,
political and technological aspects of brewing
in 19th-century New York City. Ms. Bach
recently co-curated the Society's exhibition,
Beer Here: Brewing New York's History.

EDITH WHARTON'S NEW YORK

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 13, 6:00 PM
Jane Gabin's talk will focus on how New York
City shaped Wharton's literary output and
the insight that Wharton's work provides into
city life a century ago. It will include thenand-now images of New York City and short
excerpts from Wharton's writing. Dr. Gabin's
most recent book, American Women in Gilded
Age London: Expatriates Rediscovered, is a study
of American women who made careers for
themselves in Victorian London.

ILLUSTRATED BOOKS IN THE AGE OF VICTORIA: BRITISH PICTURE BOOKS, 1837-1901

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 11, 6:00 PM
The second half of the 19th century ushered in a golden age of children's books, designed with both aesthetic and moral issues in mind. Innovations in printing allowed such nursery greats as Walter Crane, Randolph Caldecott, Kate Greenaway and William Nicholson to create appealing mixtures of art, design and literature that are still popular today. Dr. Jane Curley, an independent scholar and curator, has curated several exhibitions at the Eric Carle Museum of Picture Book Art in Amherst, Massachusetts.

Support for these free lectures is provided by Lewis I. Haber and Victorian Society New York members.



Tours

Join us this fall for three fascinating tours of Victorian architecture and culture in the New York metropolitan area. We encourage prompt registration as these events sell out quickly.

ANGLO-JAPANESE IN BROOKLYN

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 29, 11:00 AM-4:00 PM (WALKING TOUR)

COST INCLUDING LUNCH: \$75 MEMBERS; \$85 NONMEMBERS

LIMITED TO 30 PARTICIPANTS.

Join us for a special day exploring Anglo-Japanese design in Brooklyn. Enjoy a rare private tour of the 1903 "Japanese House" in Prospect Park South, a pagoda-like building by the firm Petit and Greene. Architectural guide Matthew Postal will lead the tour of the house and its historic neighborhood. Lunch at a local restaurant will include discussion with Barbara Veith, guest curator of the Brooklyn Museum's Aesthetic Ambitions: Edward Lycett and Brooklyn's Faience Manufacturing Company. Our starting point is an easy subway trip from Manhattan.

(left) City Island landmark, 1908 postcard. Photograph courtesy of Barbara Burn Dolensek

(center) "The Japanese House," Prospect Park South. Photograph © Historic Districts Council

(right) Magen David window, Stanton Street Shul. Photograph courtesy of Stanton Street Shul

SHADES OF NEW ENGLAND IN A TINY BIT OF NEW YORK

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 13, 8:45 AM (BUS TOUR)
COST INCLUDING LUNCH: \$100 MEMBERS;
\$125 NONMEMBERS

LIMITED TO 30 PARTICIPANTS

This all-day tour starts with an introduction to the stained glass work of brothers John and William Jay Bolton at their 1843 home church in Pelham, NY. After visiting the elegant 1842 Bartow-Pell Mansion in the northeast Bronx, the tour proceeds to City Island, an area reminiscent of the New England seaside, rich in nautical history. There, the Stepping Stones Lighthouse and the Nautical Museum provide glimpses of the past. Grace Church, built by local shipwrights in 1862, features another window by John Bolton. The tour includes visits to two private houses with NYC landmark status: one built in 1867, the other as a summer house in 1900.

A STROLL IN THE JEWISH LOWER EAST SIDE

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 21, 1:00 PM-ABOUT 4:00 PM (WALKING TOUR)

COST: MEMBERS \$20; NONMEMBERS \$25
Join tour leader Justin Ferate on this special
visit to the Jewish Lower East Side. Sites
include the newly restored Eldridge Street
Synagogue; the Old Law tenement where
Eddie Cantor was born; Jarmulowsky's Bank;
Congregation Sons of Israel Kalwarie; the
Independent Kletzker Brotherly Aid Association; Mesivtha Tifereth Jerusalem, one of the
oldest yeshivas in America; the legendary
Garden Cafeteria; and the Daily Forward
Building. Other sites include the Educational
Alliance, the currently endangered Bialystoker
Home for the Aged, the Beaux-Arts mikvah

(ritual bath) on Grand Street, the Henry Street Settlement, and Ansche Chesed (now home of the Angel Orensanz Foundation) which opened in 1849. We will stop at Kossar's Bialys—known as the maker of the world's finest bialys—before ending at the remarkable Stanton Street Shul. Built in 1913, it is one of the neighborhood's few surviving "tenement synagogues." We will meet with a synagogue representative to discuss the building and its now rare *mazalot*—painted signs of the zodiac once traditional in many Eastern European synagogues. The VSNY awarded a 2012 Margot Gayle Fund grant to the shul to help restore its stained glass Magen David (Star of David) window.

Terms and Conditions of Tour Participation

Meeting places will be provided in the confirmation of registration. Participants in our tours must be in excellent health and be able to participate safely in all activities. The sites we visit may have challenging stairs; if you have any doubt about your ability to participate fully because of health conditions or disabilities, please contact events@vicsocny.org or call 212-886-3742. The Victorian Society New York reserves the right to decline to accept or to refuse to retain any person as a member of our tours at any time.

Recently Designated Victorian Landmarks

Since our last newsletter, the NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission has designated 13 landmarks or historic districts dating from the 19th and early 20th centuries.

For more information (and complete designation reports), please visit the commission's website (www.nyc.gov/html/lpc/home.html).

BRONX

Engine Company 41 (now Engine Company / Squad 41), 330 East 150th Street (South Melrose); Alexander Stevens, 1903. The Renaissance Revival building was one of seven designed by Alexander Stevens, the New York Fire Department's superintendent of buildings.

Engine Company 83, Hook & Ladder Company 29, 618 East 138th Street (Mott Haven); Robert D. Kohn, 1905. This is a neoclassical-style firehouse designed by one of the few American architects influenced by the Vienna Secession movement.

BROOKLYN

Park Place Historic District, between Bedford and Franklin Avenues (Crown Heights). Thirteen Queen Anne and Romanesque Revival-style row houses were built in 1890 to designs by Joseph Mason Kirby, a carpenter and house builder who also constructed "Lucy the Elephant," a 65-foot, wood-framed tin elephant built c.1881 in Margate, New Jersey.

Park Slope Historic District Extension. The 600 buildings, most completed by 1910, include more than 200 neo-Grec row houses and examples of the Renaissance Revival and Queen Anne styles.

MANHATTAN

Riverside-West End Historic District Extension I. The extension's roughly 190 brick and brownstone buildings, dating from the mid-1880s to the late 1930s, include work by McKim, Mead & White, Clarence True, George F. Pelham, and C.P.H. Gilbert. Styles include neo-Grec, Romanesque Revival, Renaissance Revival, Dutch and Flemish Renaissance Revival, Queen Anne and Beaux-Arts.

East 10th Street Historic District, between Avenues A and B. This district comprises an unusually intact row of single-family houses, some as early as the 1840s, and mid- to late 19th-century tenements, as well as the Tompkins Square Branch of the New York Public Library (c. 1904; previously landmarked).

(Former) Bowery Bank of New York Building, 124–126 Bowery; York & Sawyer, 1902. This is the earliest surviving bank by a firm known for its handsome, classically inspired financial institutions.

Bowery Mission, 227 Bowery; William Jose, 1876. The neo-Grec building has been home since 1909 to the Bowery Mission, one of the oldest Christian missions still operating in the U.S.

(Former) Citizens Savings Bank Building, 58 Bowery; Clarence W. Brazer, 1924. The grand Beaux-Arts bank shows the influence of Cass Gilbert, in whose office Brazer helped design the U.S. Custom House for lower Manhattan. Ornamental symbols in the cornice are by sculptor Charles Keck.

Hotel Mansfield, 12 West 44th Street; Renwick, Aspinwall & Owen, 1902. This is a Beaux-Arts apartment hotel.

Martha Washington Hotel, 30 East 30th Street; Robert W. Gibson, 1903. This building was the first hotel in New York City for single professional women, a growing segment of the population which had limited residential possibilities.

Yorkville Bank, 1511 Third Avenue (at 85th Street); Robert Maynicke, 1905 (expansion, P. Gregory Stadler, 1924). The founders of this Italian Renaissance Revival-style bank—built in Yorkville when the neighborhood attracted waves of German immigrants—included Oswald Ottendorfer, publisher of the Staats-Zeitung newspaper, and Jacob Ruppert Jr., scion of the Ruppert Brewery family.

Van Tassell & Kearney Auction Mart, 126–128 East 13th Street; Jardine, Kent & Jardine, 1904. This Beaux-Arts building was once used for the sale of polo ponies, thoroughbreds, coach, hunt and show horses, and carriages.

THE MARGOT GAYLE FUND

The Margot Gayle Fund encourages Victorian Society New York members and their colleagues to submit applications for grants ahead of the February 14, 2013, deadline. Proposals must relate to the preservation, conservation or interpretation of Victorian material culture in the New York metropolitan area. Previous grants have supported a range of projects, from restoring damaged plaster in a historic house museum to creating an interactive website. Forms and guidelines are available at www.vicsocny.org.

Creative ideas are welcome!



New Board Member: Damon Powell

BA, Art History, University of California, San Diego; MA, Cooper-Hewitt / Parsons Program in the History of Decorative Arts

Originally from California, Damon Powell moved to New York City in 1996, where he explored his great and enduring interest in 18thand 19th-century silver as a student in the Cooper-Hewitt/Parsons master's program. After stints at Christie's, the auction house, and the Metropolitan Museum of Art, Damon spent nine years as a silver specialist with New York City antiques dealer James Robinson, Inc. A selfdescribed "silver fanatic." Damon finds polishing silver therapeutic, even leaving his silver out to tarnish so he can polish it again. He treasures those left-behind, blackened pieces found in a basement or at a flea market—just the anticipation of seeing them sparkle again makes it all worthwhile.

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Founded in New York City in 1966, the Victorian Society in America is dedicated to fostering the appreciation and preservation of our nation's 19th-century heritage as well as that of the early 20th century (1837-1917). The Victorian Society New York (VSNY), the oldest of numerous chapters now flourishing throughout the U.S., is an independent nonprofit organization affiliated with the national Society.

Membership contributions at any level help to provide the foundation for all that we dofrom our lecture series, walking tours and excursions to our grant and awards programs honoring worthy preservation projects in New York. Members also help provide scholarships to the Victorian Society in America Summer Schools for advanced study. Donations to the Margot Gayle Fund make possible monetary grants for preservation and conservation of Victorian material culture in our region.

Passings

The Victorian Society New York notes with sadness the passing of two distinguished New Yorkers and Chapter members who were instrumental in preserving the city's Victorian heritage.

HUYLER C. HELD, a prominent attorney and civic leader, died on April 16, 2012. A longtime Victorian Society New York member, Held was known for his work with organizations such as the Society for the Preservation of Long Island Antiquities, the Cathedral of St. John the Divine, Preservation League of New York State and Friends of the Upper East Side Historic Districts. Held was also a trustee of the Peggy N. and Roger G. Gerry Charitable Trust, which generously supported the creation of the VSNY's Endangered Cast-Iron Buildings in NYC website (http://www.castironnyc.org) in 2010.

IVAN KARP, an internationally renowned gallery owner and early SoHo pioneer, died on June 28, 2012. Karp was a founder of Friends of SoHo, an organization which, along with the Victorian Society New York, led the effort to expand the SoHo Cast-Iron Historic District. Besides writing letters to prominent officials, Karp appeared at the New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission's public hearing for the SoHo extension in 2009, dazzling everyone with his testimony; the extended district was designated in May 2010. Karp also led the creation of the Anonymous Arts Recovery Society, which saved decorative elements from the facades of demolished buildings across the city, many of them from the Victorian era.

COMING SOON: Grand and Central: The First 100 Years are the Hardest

On February 1, 1913, the brand-new Grand Central Terminal opened its doors to an admiring public. On February 1, 2013, the beautifully restored terminal rescued from destruction by a seminal 1978 Supreme Court decision—will celebrate its centennial with exhibitions, events and a new book, Grand Central Terminal: 100 Years of a New York Landmark by VSNY board member Anthony W. Robins, all sponsored by the New York Transit Museum.

The terminal's creation combined engineering bravado (sinking two train yards below ground level), technological wizardry (electrifying the trains to allow them to run underground), and real-estate savvy (swapping the original street-level train yard for 16 blocks of prime midtown real estate—whose development paid for it all) with innovative planning (interior ramps and looping tracks) and European-inspired Beaux-Arts design. Watch for our spring newsletter, which will explore Grand Central Terminal in depth.



Total Enclosed: \$ $_{\pm}$

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Choose your Additional Special Contribution(s): **MEMBERSHIP LEVEL:** VSA SUMMER SCHOOL Scholarships \$ MARGOT GAYLE FUND \$ → \$40 INDIVIDUAL* Please make checks payable to: Metropolitan Chapter, VSA *Seniors and full-time students Mail this form with check to: VSNY, 232 East 11th Street, New York, NY, 10003 receive a \$10 discount at this level. Students: please provide a copy of your valid ID to Name(s) Please print receive your discount. \$60 DUAL* *Seniors receive a Address Apartment \$10 discount at this level. ○ \$75 SPONSOR City State Zip Code

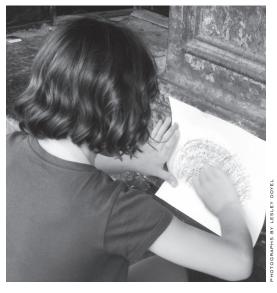
www.vicsocny.org for a complete list of benefits. Phone

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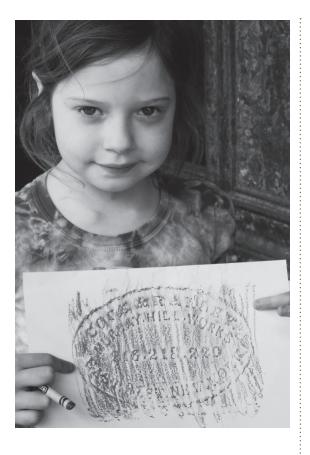
○ \$150 PATRON



VSNY Education Initiative: Students Get Their Hands Dirty



Hands On History students from P.S.11 in Chelsea use magnets to locate cast-iron doorways in the Gansevoort Market Historic District this past May. After discovering several examples, they made rubbings of foundry marks revealing the name of Cook & Radley, who established the Murray Hill Iron Works in 1867. Margot Gayle would be pleased! VSNY board member Lesley Doyel teaches the class along with instructor Jessica Griffith.



THE VSNY NEEDS YOU!

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Cast Iron Columns, Girders, Lintels, Bills, Cast and Wrought Beams, all kinds Iron Railings, Gratings, Doors, Shutters, Sky-Lights, Vault Lights, FIRE ESCAPES, Perforated Flooring for Malt Kilns, &c., and House Smithwork in general.

CORRECTION

In the Spring 2012 issue, the article "Kip Forbes Honored" incorrectly stated that the scholarship fund established by Forbes was turned over to the VSA in 2008. The fund remains independent of the VSA and is designed to support a broad range of educational programs related to 19th-century culture.