

A graphic featuring a white silhouette of the New York State Pavilion against a dark blue background. The top half of the image has a torn paper effect, revealing a light blue background underneath. The word "REVIVING" is in large white capital letters, with "the" in smaller white lowercase letters below it. The words "New York State" are in large black serif font, with "New" and "York" on one line and "State" on the line below. The word "pavilion" is written vertically in white lowercase letters on the right side of the image.

REVIVING  
the

New  
York  
State

pavilion

A Vision for Reviving the Historic New York State Pavilion

By The Flushing Meadows - Corona Park World's Fair Association | David Oats, Founder and Chairman | Greg Godfrey, President

[www.newyorkstatepavilion.org](http://www.newyorkstatepavilion.org)

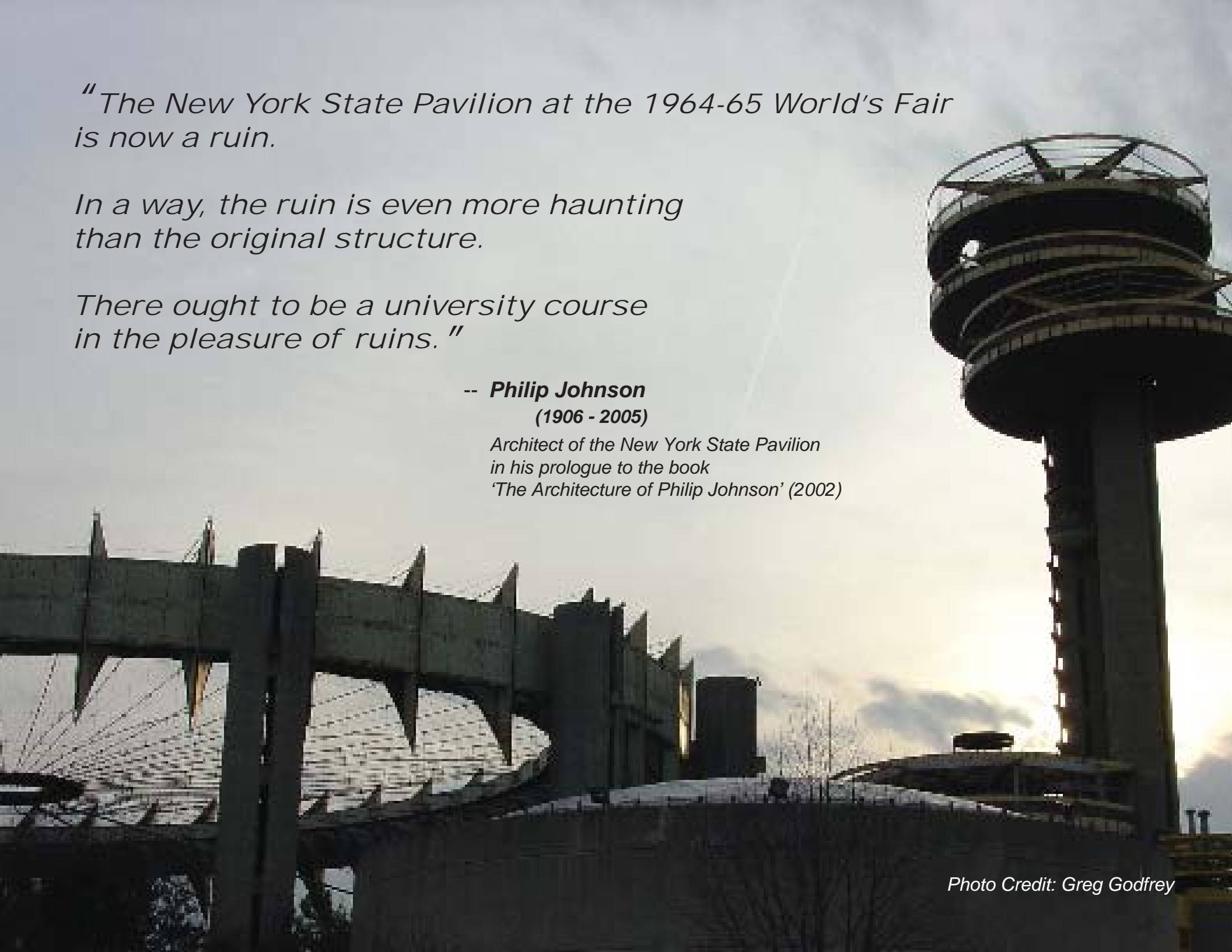
*"The New York State Pavilion at the 1964-65 World's Fair  
is now a ruin.*

*In a way, the ruin is even more haunting  
than the original structure.*

*There ought to be a university course  
in the pleasure of ruins. "*

**-- Philip Johnson**  
**(1906 - 2005)**

*Architect of the New York State Pavilion  
in his prologue to the book  
'The Architecture of Philip Johnson' (2002)*



*Photo Credit: Greg Godfrey*

25 August 2009

"We believe it is no exaggeration to say that  
two World's Fairs have produced here in the very center of New York,  
on the scene of a notorious ash dump,  
one of the very great municipal parks of our country."

-- Robert Moses

From the Post-Fair Engineering Report on Flushing Meadows - Corona Park, July 23, 1965

Ms. Carol Ash  
Commissioner of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation

Dear Commissioner Ash,

The New York State Pavilion is America's Stonehenge.

The New York State Pavilion reaches across the ocean to reference the themes found in the original, back into time to the architecture forms of the ancients, and grasps the future with its hope and futuristic and revolutionary construction.

Let it stand forever and let the future marvel at who we were for saving our dreams.



Photo Credit: Greg Godfrey

We have been an active supporter for decades and have spearheaded local activities to protect and raise awareness for this iconic structure and look to your Office and its stewardship of icons symbolic of the Empire State to recognize the very structure which bears the Empire State Name: The New York State Pavilion.

This document is an update to the one you have on file calling for this structure to be recognized and protected at the State and Federal Levels, and in time, the City level at the Public Hearing scheduled for 15 September 2009 at 10 AM at the Olana State Historic Site in Hudson New York.

Many thanks for your continued efforts to make New Yorks Park Systems the finest in the world and for protecting key and important architectural works that define American history.

We have registered for 1 minute to voice support for the New York State Pavilion at this meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Corinne Oats  
Chairwoman

Greg Godfrey  
President

**FLUSHING MEADOWS-CORONA PARK WORLD'S FAIR ASSOCIATION**





# The New York State Pavilion Cultural Icon Congressman Crowley Performances



The Queens

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## Features

### April 29, 2009

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## Crowley Performs At Kennedy Center In Celebration Of Music And Arts



It's a long way from the Queens gigs Congressman Joseph Crowley has been playing since he was a toddler barely able to hold a guitar in Elmhurst to the world acclaimed Kennedy Center for the Arts in Washington, but the lawmaker made the transition flawlessly one recent evening in pursuit of his great love of music and country.

Crowley (D- Queens/The Bronx) appeared at the performing arts center in the nation's capital, where the greatest entertainers in the nation are honored annually, with several colleagues, members of the Congressional Music Caucus and award-winning musicians to launch the caucus and the recently enacted national service initiative for artists sponsored by Crowley.

Crowley annually appears with other Queens lawmakers-turned performers for a special evening at Queens Theater In the Park in Flushing Meadows- Corona Park.

**Congressman Joseph Crowley on guitar accompanied by Josh and Cora Dunham, the husband and wife rhythm section for Grammy award winner Prince along with noted harmonica player Fred Yonnet.**

But his appearance at the Kennedy Center was extra special because it not only marked the creation of the Congressional Music Caucus, founded by Crowley, but also recognized him for his sponsorship of the Musicians and Artists Corps, which is part of the nation's new Serve America Act.

The act, which codified President Barack Obama's call for a new national volunteerism movement, was authored by U.S. Sen. Ed. M. Kennedy (D-Mass.) and Rep. John G. Dingens (D-Mich.).



The late David Oats, in front of the New York State Pavilion, displays an architectural model.  
Photo Credit: Greg Godfrey





# A Landmark by Any Other Name...



From Webster's Dictionary:

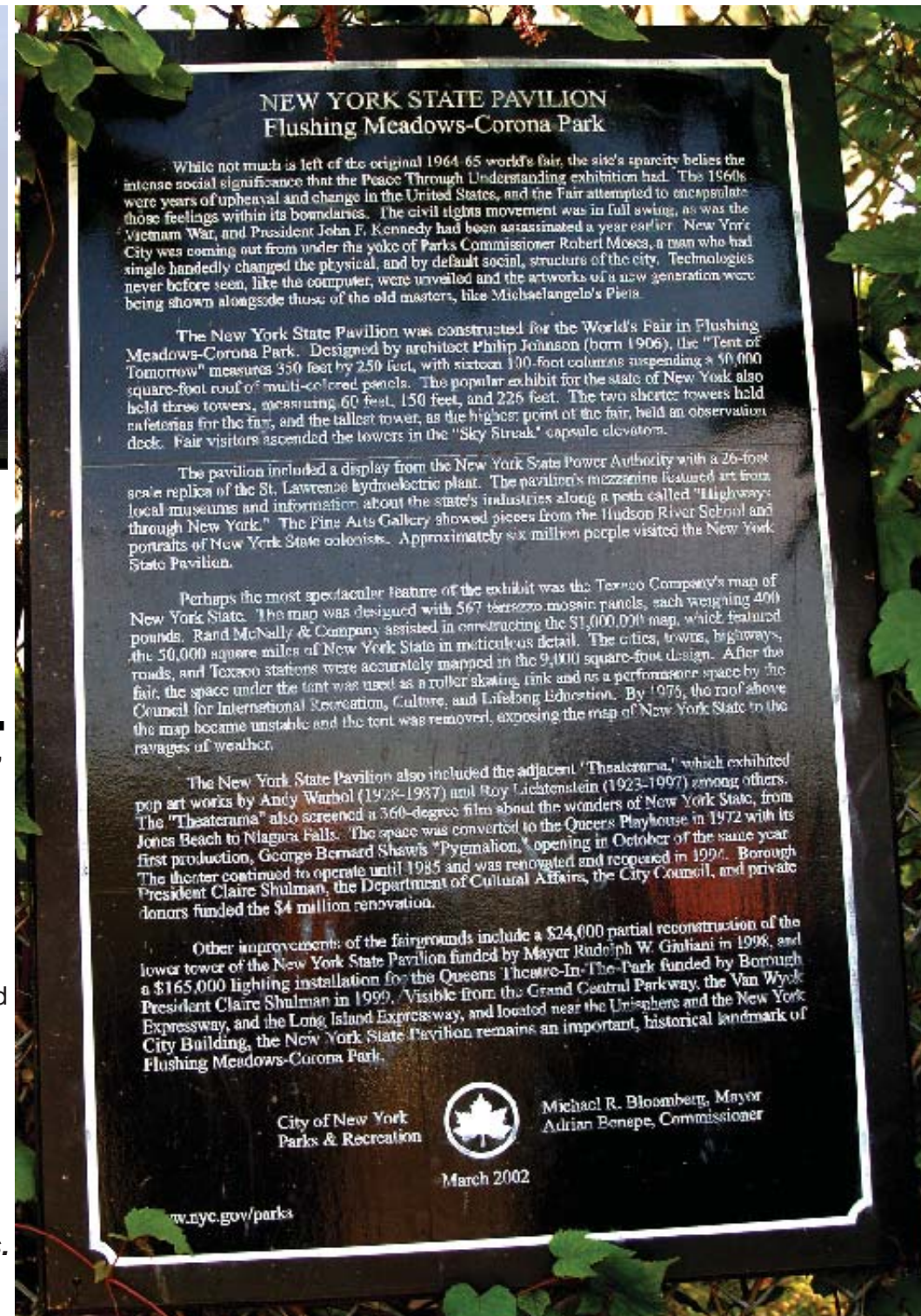
## Landmark.

2. Any conspicuous object in the landscape, which serves as a guide...; ... any prominent object in a district...
3. ... An object which is associated with some event or stage in a process; esp. an event which marks a period or turning - point in history...

Visible from the Grand Central Parkway, the Long Island Expressway, and dozens of other roads and neighborhood streets, mass transit, and by thousands of arriving and departing planes from La Guardia Airport, The New York State Pavilion is the largest and most unique structure marking Flushing Meadow Park, the Borough of Queens, and the State of New York. The NYC Parks Dept. plaque, pictured at right, and almost buried to the side of the building until the Spring of 2008 when it was removed, details some of the history of the New York State Pavilion. Signed by the Mayor, Michael R. Bloomberg, and Parks Commissioner, Adrian Benepe, it calls the building "**an important, historical landmark of Flushing Meadows - Corona Park.**"

Yet, the hypocrisy of this is that the city has never granted it official landmark status and has treated the structure like garbage. **We now are demanding that the New York State Pavilion be granted official landmark status by both the city and the state.**

**Because that is what it is.**





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## New York City Department of Parks & Recreation

Michael R. Bloomberg, Mayor · Adrian Benepe, Commissioner

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### NEW YORK STATE PAVILION

Flushing Meadows-Corona Park

While not much is left of the original 1964-65 world's fair, the site's sparcity belies the intense social significance that the *Peace Through Understanding* exhibition had. The 1960s were years of upheaval and change in the United States, and the Fair attempted to encapsulate those feelings within its boundaries. The civil rights movement was in full swing, as was the Vietnam War, and President John F. Kennedy had been assassinated a year earlier. New York City was coming out from under the yoke of Parks Commissioner Robert Moses, a man who had single handedly changed the physical, and by default social, structure of the city. Technologies never before seen, like the computer, were unveiled and the artworks of a new generation were being shown alongside those of the old masters, like Michaelangelo's *Pieta*.

The New York State Pavilion was constructed for the World's Fair in Flushing Meadows-Corona

New York State Pavilion remains an important, historical landmark of Flushing Meadows-Corona Park.

towers in the "Sky Streak" capsule elevators.

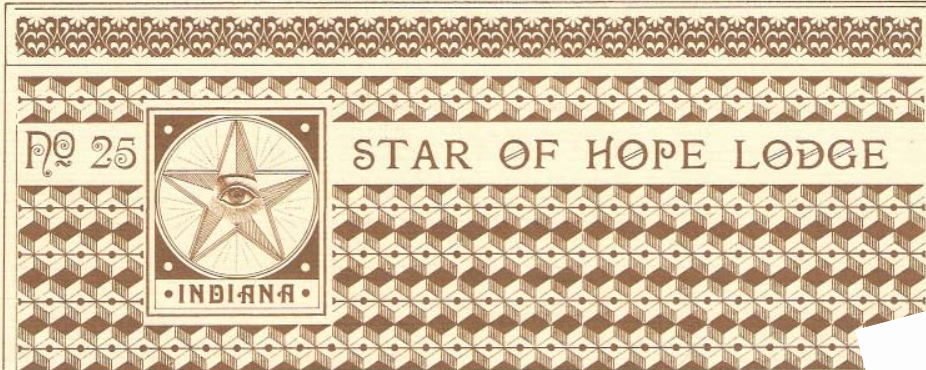
Other improvements of the fairgrounds include a \$24,000 partial reconstruction of the lower tower of the New York State Pavilion funded by Mayor Joseph W. Giuliani in 1998, and a \$165,000 lighting installation for the Queens Theatre-In-The-Park funded by Borough President Claire Shulman in 1999. Visible from the Grand Central Parkway, the Van Wyck Expressway, and the Long Island Expressway, and located near the Unisphere and the New York City Building, the New York State Pavilion remains an important, historical landmark of Flushing Meadows-Corona Park.

Saturday, Feb 02, 2002

**Additional Resources for [FLUSHING MEADOWS/CORONA PK:](#)**



## A Chorus of Support



Mr. Greg Godfrey  
Flushing Meadows  
Corona Park World's Fair Association

19  
July 10, 2009

Dear Mr. Godfrey,

I wish you all possible success in your endeavors to restore The New York State Pavilion in Flushing. Know that after 45 years my part of it is lighting the sky in Rockland, Maine. Finding more support from the citizens here than those in New York.

Many years ago I picketed with Philip Johnson against the destruction of Pennsylvania Station--- to no avail. It was he who commissioned the EAT sign, but failed to prevent its extinguishment. As you probably know I never saw it lit in New York.

Happiness at last!

Yours sincerely,

Robert Indiana

**Petition to Save**  
NEW YORK STATE PAVILION.ORG  
REVIVING THE HISTORIC NEW YORK STATE PAVILION  
A Project of The Flushing Meadows - Corona Park World's Fair Association

Contact: 68-60 108th Street | Apt 4E | Forest Hills, NY 11375  
E-Mail: build@greggodfrey.com | website: www.newyorkstatepavilion.org  
Founder: David Oats | Chairwoman: Corinne Oats

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Address \_\_\_\_\_  
E-Mail \_\_\_\_\_

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Name \_\_\_\_\_ Address \_\_\_\_\_  
E-Mail \_\_\_\_\_

The Flushing Meadows Corona Park World's Fair Association was founded in 1967 to preserve the unique history of the site of two World's Fairs, its environment, and structures.  
First chairman, Robert Moses (1971 - 1981)





# Landmark World's Fair Symbols

## Once Slated for Destruction, Now Preserved as Icons of Cities

Photo Credit: Corinne Oats



The Parachute Jump  
Coney Island, Brooklyn NY  
*Originally constructed in Flushing Meadows for the 1939-40 World's Fair*



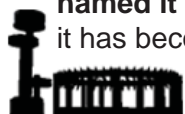
The Atomium  
Brussels, Belgium  
*Constructed as the theme symbol of the 1958 Brussels World's Fair*

Photo Credit: Greg Godfrey



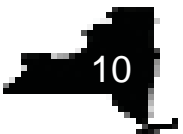
The Eiffel Tower  
Paris, France  
*Constructed as the theme symbol of the 1889 Paris World's Fair*

Three iconic symbols from World's Fairs of the past were once about to be demolished and relegated to oblivion. It is hard to believe that many Parisians thought the Eiffel Tower should have been demolished. It was saved so that they could have an aviation light and radio antennae on the top. Now, who can think of Paris or France without the majesty of the Eiffel Tower. The Atomium, symbol of the first atomic age World's Fair, was only recently saved by local citizens from demolition and now it is a glorious attraction in Brussels. **Our Association saved the 1939 World's Fair Parachute Jump from the wrecker's ball in the mid-1970's when the city's park commissioner called it "a hunk of junk." David Oats named it "The Eiffel Tower of Brooklyn" which moved the city's landmarks preservation commission to grant it landmark status.** Today, it has become the focal point for the revitalization of Coney Island itself and Brooklyn Borough President Marty Markowitz said, at the recent spectacular relighting of the structure, that "they [David Oats and Eric Ierardi, Vice-President of the Association] were visionaries."



The World Monument Fund designated  
The New York State Pavilion  
as one of the 100 most endangered sites  
for its 2007-2008 list.

The New York State Pavilion  
stands alone  
in the Northeast as a  
global symbol of architectural excellence.







# New York State Pavilion: Cultural Landmark



The movie 'Men in Black' used the New York State Pavilion as a major icon and theme. (Source: DVD Cover to 'Men in Black II').



David Oats on the set, during the making of the 1978 movie 'The Wiz,' in front of a model for this movie which featured the New York State Pavilion.



Robert Indiana created 'E.A.T.' sculpture for the New York State Pavilion in 1964. (Photograph by Gert Berliner).



Above: Today, Queens Theatre in the Park uses the Theaterama portion of the building for cultural and theatrical performances. It is currently being expanded.



Andy Warhol created the controversial 'Thirteen Most Wanted Men' mural for the Theaterama portion of the New York State Pavilion for the 1964 fair. (Copyright the Estate and Foundation of Andy Warhol, 1989).

RIGHT: Roy Lichtenstein pop art Cover for Art in America in April 1964, which featured the New York State Pavilion Towers. (Copyright Estate of Roy Lichtenstein).





# New York State Pavilion: Still a Cultural Landmark

Photo Credit: about.com



Universal Studios Florida has recreated a smaller version of the New York State Pavilion Towers featured in the movie 'Men in Black' for the Universal Studios 'Men in Black' theme-park ride.



'Let Your Fingers do the Walking' right to the symbols of Queens -- The Unisphere and the New York State Pavilion -- featured on the front cover of the 2006-2007 directory.



**The New York State Pavilion  
has proven itself  
to be an icon and landmark  
of New York.**

**It's about time  
New York State  
recognize it.**

**The HISTORY CHANNEL**  
presents:  
**In the 2006 Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade**



Photo Credit: MACY's/ The History Channel

The New York State Pavilion has continued as a cultural icon past its days as a World's Fair Pavilion. In the 1970's, it served as a grand and spectacular concert hall for some of the greatest rock bands such as The Grateful Dead, Janis Joplin, Jimmy Hendrix, The Who, and many others. The Pavilion is star in Kurt Vannegut's movie 'Space Fantasy,' TV commercials, music videos, and features prominently in the international coverage of the US OPEN at Flushing Meadows and weekly in the introduction to the hit TV program 'The King of Queens.'

Ironically, while the city allows the real New York State Pavilion to stand in disgrace, if you go to the Universal Studios theme park in Orlando Florida there is a glorious reproduction of the New York State Pavilion Towers at the entrance to their Men in Black theme ride.

Thanksgiving 2006, onlookers and millions watching the MACY'S Parade on national television saw the History Channel float featuring symbols of New York City -- including the Parachute Jump, in Brooklyn, and the Unisphere and the New York State Pavilion in Flushing Meadows.

# The New York State Pavilion... Let it Shine



*The New York State Pavilion's unique 'Tent of Tomorrow' illuminated at night along with its towers, the highest point at the World's Fair.*



*New York State Pavilion at dusk during the 1964-65 Fair.*

*(Source: Personal Collection, © Copyright 2000, Bradd Schiffman).*

During the 1964 - 65 World's Fair, the New York State Pavilion, and its glass ceiling, were illuminated allowing soft colorful glows of light to reach out.

Lighting landmarks from the Eiffel Tower to the Parachute Jump has proven that life can come back to grand structures - simply by light.

Our Association recently forced the city to relight the red safety critical aviation warning light on the top of The New York State Pavilion (see news article on page 19).

**Now, we ask the new Governor of the State of New York to see to it that The New York State Pavilion, which bears the very name of the Empire State, is illuminated once again.**



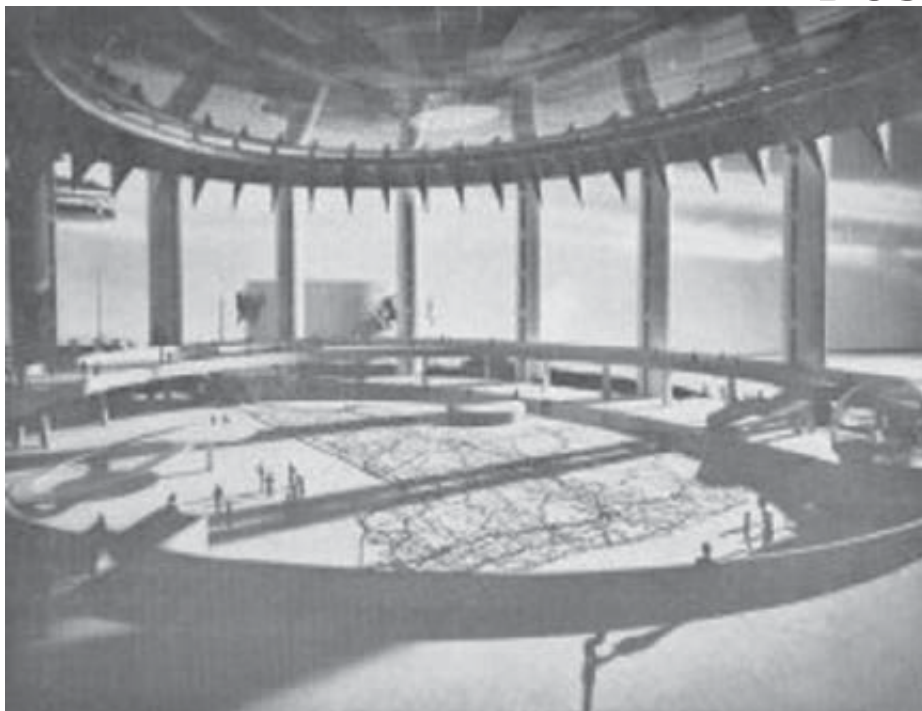
*Stunning night lighting at the New York State Pavilion during the 1964-65 Fair.*

**... Let It Shine**

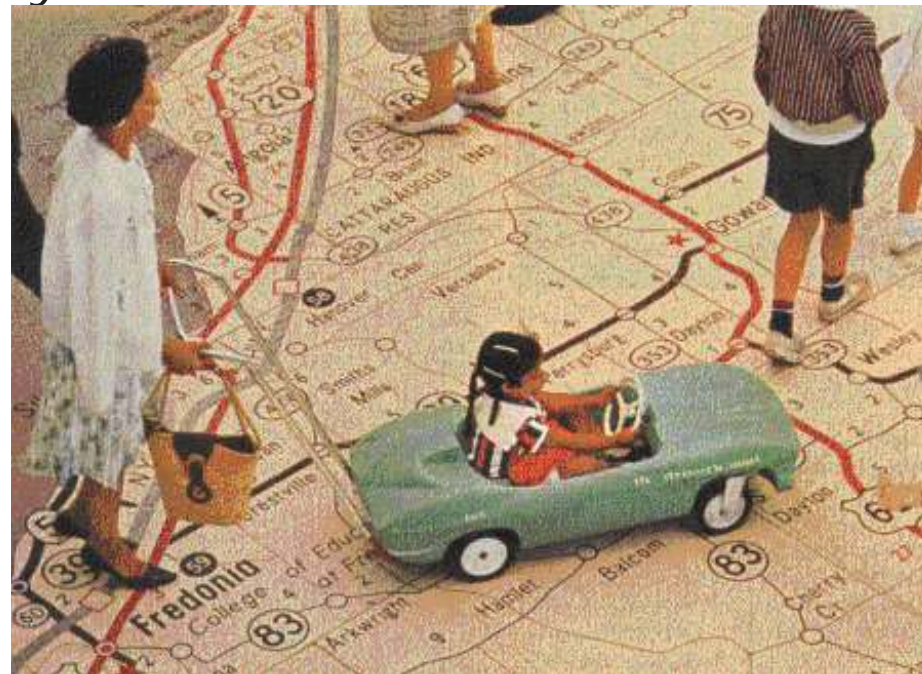




# The World's Largest Map ... Destroyed

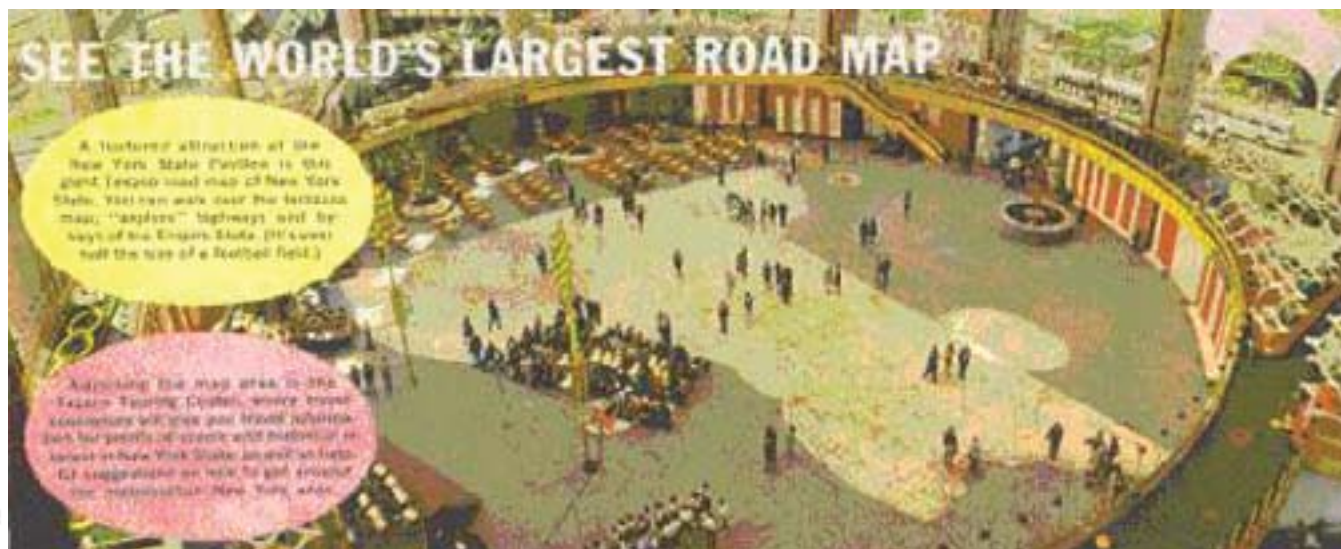


View of the New York State Map which occupied the entire floor of the New York State Pavilion at the 1964-65 World's Fair.



A young girl drives her car on the World's Largest Map underneath the "Tent of Tomorrow"

(Source: National Geographic Magazine, April 1965, Vol. 127 No. 4).



Overhead view of the World's largest map in the New York State Pavilion 1965. (Source: Texaco).

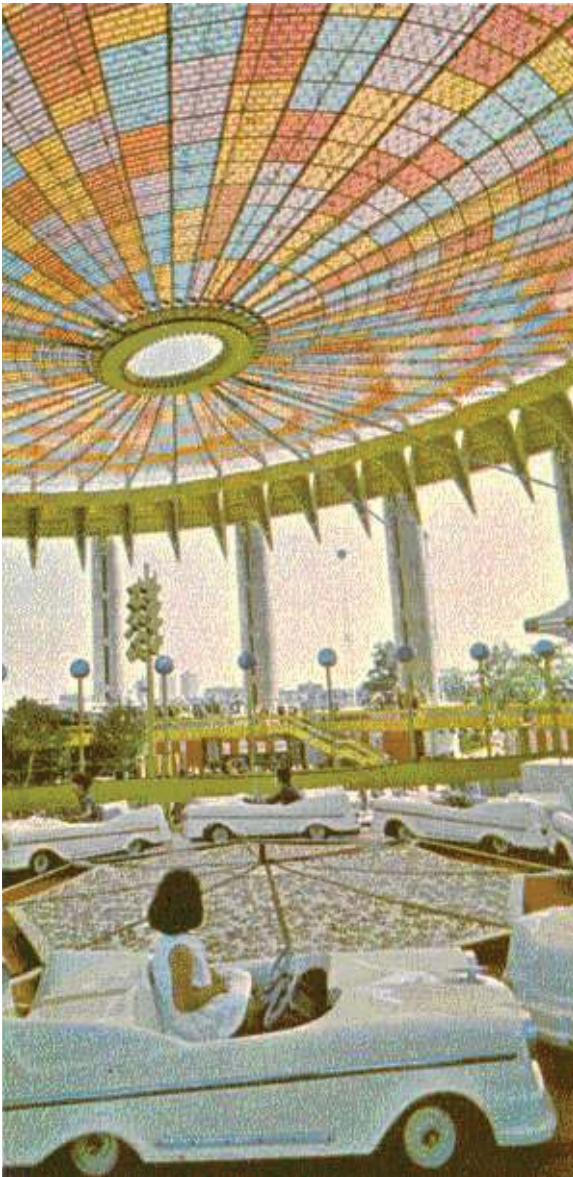
The World's Largest Map, a terrazzo splendor of the State of New York, from Niagara Falls to the lighthouse at Montauk, was a treasure allowed to deteriorate through neglect by the City of New York. Today, it is in pieces and is being used as a archeological dig by university students who are preserving its remnants for an art exhibit at the Queens Museum of Art from January 27 to May 4, 2008.

An archeological dig - yet, the map was only 40 years old.





# A Revolutionary Glass Ceiling... Destroyed



*Interior of the New York State Pavilion "Tent."*



*The New York State Pavilion as it appeared in the 1964-1965 World's Fair.*

The magnificent stained glass ceiling of The New York State Pavilion was destroyed aggressively and stupidly by the City of New York in the early 1970's and during the destruction the falling pieces helped to also ruin the map of the Empire State, The World's Largest Map, on the floor below.

The destruction of the roof became the beginning of the desecration of this magnificent structure.

**It is not too late to save what remains of this icon and true landmark structure of New York State.**





# A Historic Legacy... Almost Destroyed

Photo Credit: Greg Godfrey



*The multi-colored glass ceiling of the Pavilion was brutally hammered down and allowed to fall and destroy the map of New York State below.*

Photo Credit: Greg Godfrey



*Today, steel remains exposed to elements as does the former map below.*

Photo Credit: Greg Godfrey



*The elevator system has been left to complete ruin. The elevators have been out of service for 40 years and, along with the rotting staircase to the top, prevent building maintenance and recently required rope climbers to change the aviation warning light on top of the 226 foot towers.*

Photo Credit: Copyright 2000 BBQ Productions



*Once the broken glass ceiling panels were knocked down, they pierced the terrazzo map below and exposed its legacy to the elements, which have destroyed the map.*



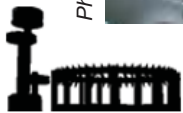


# The Disgrace Surrounds the New York State Pavilion



Photo Credit: Greg Godfrey

*Not only is the New York State Pavilion desecrated, but the New York City Parks Department has turned the surrounding acres of parkland and playing fields into gigantic parking fields on grassland during the US Open and NY METS games (photo taken: summer 2006). Is there no end to the disrespect to the citizens of New York, the users of this park?*





# Decades of Efforts to Save the New York State Pavilion



Above: David Oats with Gary Ackerman, Nettie Mayersohn and others at a rally to stop the destruction in progress of the glass ceiling of the New York State Pavilion in 1972.



David Oats, at the New York State Pavilion, interviewing the Parks Dept. Commissioner on the unsafe and illegal storage of toxic chemicals placed in the Pavilion by the City in the early 1980's.



David Oats, Gary Ackerman, and Nettie Mayersohn among others during a protest by the Flushing Meadows - Corona Park World's Fair Association to save the New York State Pavilion in 1972.



A rendering and concept for an Air and Space Museum for the Pavilion which was ignored and rejected by the City in recent years. (Architect's Rendering Courtesy: Charles Aybar, PhD, and Frankie Campione of CREATE).



NEW YORK'S HOMETOWN CONNECTION

WWW.NYDAILYNEWS.COM

# DAILY NEWS

October 30, 2006

## Flare for Dramatic Fixup

Engineers rig way to Relight N.Y.S. Pavilion

BY NICHOLAS HIRSHON  
DAILY NEWS WRITER

Rope-climbing engineers fixed the broken red light atop the tallest New York State Pavilion tower last week, bringing the building back into compliance with FAA regulations, officials said.

The light, which alerts pilots to the 226-foot structure, had not been working for three months - even though federal law requires the Federal Aviation Administration to be notified within 30 minutes if a light goes out, said David Oats, president of the Flushing Meadows-Corona Park World's Fair Association.

On Wednesday, workers installed a temporary rope system to allow them to reach the top of the tower, paving the way for easier repairs in the future, Parks Department spokeswoman Abby Loopens said.

"If I hadn't reported it, they wouldn't have even known about it," Oats contended.

Oats said he sent a letter to Mayor Bloomberg and city Parks Commissioner Adrian Benepe early this month, calling the broken light "a



Anderson NEWS

*David Oats called the broken light 'a shameful symbol of the disregard' for the park's stature and history.*

shameful symbol of the disregard for the important stature and history of this park."

The World's Fair Association also put a counter on its Web site to mark the days that went by without the light being fixed after Oats notified the FAA and the Parks Department.

FAA spokeswoman Arlene Murray said building owners - in this case, the Parks Department - should immediately inform the FAA of any broken lights so pilots can look out for tall structures.

"Basically, they should notify us right away if they know the light is out," she said.

But Loopens said the city found out about the broken light only when the Daily News reported it two weeks ago.

The New York State Pavilion, built for the 1964-65 World's Fair, included three towers, a rotunda and a theater.

The tallest tower served as an observation deck during the fair, while the others held a restaurant and an area for the governor to greet dignitaries, Oats said.

Elevators took visitors to the observation deck during the fair - and would have been useful to the engineers last week - but they broke in the 1970s because of the Parks Department's negligence, Oats said.

The tower also has a winding staircase that leads to the top, but it's been allowed to decay over the years and is now covered with bird feces, Oats said.

"The city has been a slumlord and an absentee landlord of that building," he said.





# Flushing Meadows - Corona Park World's Fair Association



*The late David Oats, Founder and Second Chairman of the Flushing Meadows Corona Park World's Fair Association, and Greg Godfrey, President, recently examine elements of the New York State Pavilion.*  
(Photo Credit: Corinne Oats).

There are certain places on earth that seem to have meaning beyond just their geography or time and space. The 1,258 acres of Flushing Meadow-Corona Park in Queens, New York, is one of those special places. We have created a proactive web site to convey the sweeping, almost magisterial message about this site's past, present and future to both protect, nurture, and preserve its unique legacy at

**[www.theparkwatchdog.org](http://www.theparkwatchdog.org)**

The association maintains two additional web sites to support its major projects:

**[www.newyorkstatepavilion.org](http://www.newyorkstatepavilion.org)** to revive the New York State Pavilion and  
**[www.flushingremonstrance.org](http://www.flushingremonstrance.org)**.

In the 1600's, the brave citizens of Flushing took a stand for the freedom of religion and free expression by signing the Flushing Remonstrance. In the 1930's, the site had become a great wasteland, immortalized by F. Scott Fitzgerald in his novel *The Great Gatsby* as "a valley of ashes." In a miracle of transformation, it became *The World of Tomorrow* of the great World's Fair of 1939-40, which on its very opening day launched the first television broadcast, and 25 years later the space age exposition of 1964-65. Kings, Queens, Popes, Presidents, Heads of State and over 100 million people came to these meadows to experience the arts, architecture, science, cultures, and entertainment's of the Earth.

In between these two seminal events, the world chose this park as the first home of the United Nations and it was there that the international community came together to adopt the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Albert Einstein himself wrote the Message to the Future for the time capsule which is buried 50 feet below the grounds of Flushing Meadows preserving the record of our civilization for 5000 years in the future.

Today this park belongs to the people. It is our belief that this special place must be protected and preserved with the dignity it deserves and also for the possibilities it presents for the future of a growing region and community.

To that end, we ask fellow citizens to submit their ideas, comments, and suggestions to **[www.theparkwatchdog.org](http://www.theparkwatchdog.org)** at **[info@theparkwatchdog.org](mailto:info@theparkwatchdog.org)**

**Flushing Meadows - Corona Park World's Fair Association**

Corinne Oats  
Chairwoman

Greg Godfrey  
President





*Corinne Oats, Chairwoman.*



*Greg Godfrey inspects the parking problem at Flushing Meadows (2006).*

## Who We Are

**CORINNE OATS** has been instrumental in all of the projects spearheaded by the late David Oats. From the tile murals at the base of the U.S. Open entrance to Flushing Meadows - Corona Park to the historic commemoration engravings set in stone by the Unisphere, Corinne's unique vision dramatically helped improve Flushing Meadows for more than two decades to preserve and enhance the legacy of this park to the World.

Corinne came to the United States of America in 1984 from a small town outside of Lille, France where she was the pioneer head of the American headquarters of a French company and continues her career in sales and marketing.

A visionary citizen, Corinne has worked tirelessly for the park. She made several visits to European headquarters at Amsterdam and Paris to distribute essential documentation to foster awareness of The Flushing Remonstrance. As well, Corinne was active in the Association's plans to locate the 2012 Olympic Stadium at the Willets Point area at Shea Stadium, by meeting with Olympic offices in Europe.

Corinne Oats serves as the Association's third Chairman.

**GREG GODFREY** has studied high speed rail, railroads, urban transportation, and pedestrian facilities in more than 50 cities on over 14 thousand miles of railways throughout Europe. He has a Masters in City and Regional Planning from Rutgers University.

Author of Voice of the City, a column in the Queens Alternative newspaper, he focused on proactive ways of solving transportation problems on Queens Boulevard. As President of the Flushing Meadows Corona Park World's Fair Association, Greg has logs about 700 miles each summer inspecting facilities at Flushing Meadows - Corona Park, met with the Bureau of International Expositions in Paris in March 2006 to discuss possibilities for a New York 2015 World's Fair, was requested to meet with members of the International Olympic Committee in February 2005 in New York, engaged officials of the International Olympic Committee at their headquarters in Lausanne Switzerland, and met with the Office of the Mayor of Amsterdam in Amsterdam in March 2006 to open a dialogue of celebration for The Flushing Remonstrance.

Greg Godfrey is at the center of control of the most strained portions of the railway systems with the greatest demand for faster and increased services in North America: he is employed as a high speed mainline train dispatcher.

A native New Yorker, Greg was born in Amityville and grew up in Seaford and would regularly bike miles to Jones Beach and other Long Island parks. He would pass the New York State Pavilion as a young kid on the way to Grandma's house. Greg Godfrey currently lives in Forest Hills.

There are many people that we would like to acknowledge for their contributions toward the betterment of Flushing Meadows - Corona Park over the years. Our first Vice- President, Eric J. Ierardi, Bill Young, author and historian of the 1964 New York World's Fair, the many people who have worked hard to contribute to the betterment of the park particularly the directors and staff of Queens Museum of Art, The New York Hall of Science, The Queens Botanical Gardens, and The Queens Wildlife Center. Particularly, in regard to this project, we want to note the great work of those who made the one part of the New York State Pavilion a working and living institution - **The Queens Theatre in the Park.**

It is a testament and an example to what this entire structure can do to serve the people who use this park and the future of this park.

**And it is to that future we dedicate this project.**







*David Oats with Flushing Meadows creator Robert Moses in 1978.*

## David Oats - Dreamer and Doer

**The late DAVID OATS** was born and raised in Flushing Queens, NY where he used the ball fields, skating rink, and swimming pool 'as his backyard'. When construction began at Flushing Meadows in 1962, for the second New York World's Fair, they closed his 'backyard.' By chance, one day while sneaking onto the site he encountered Robert Moses, the creator of the park, and President of the upcoming Fair. Oats had no idea who Moses was, but that chance encounter would lead to a working friendship that lasted while Moses was planning the post Fair park. Moses encouraged 17 year old Oats to form a citizen's group to be a watchdog for the park which Moses believed the city would not take proper care of. The Flushing Meadows - Corona Park World's Fair Association was then formed by Oats with Moses as its first honorary chairman. The Association proceeded to deal with the neglect and arrogance of the Manhattan oriented bureaucracy toward the maintenance, development, and legacy of this great park.

Oats later went on to a career in urban planning, teaching at NYU and Hofstra, but mainly serving as a journalist and editor-in-chief where he ran the largest newspaper in Queens for three decades. During that time, he exposed such abuses in Flushing Meadows of the city's coverup of asbestos in Terrace on the Park, for which the series closed the building down, forced millions of dollars of clean up, new management, and was nominated for two Pulitzer prizes. He also served as a staff assistant to Senator Robert F. Kennedy and was director of government relations for the Queens Chamber of Commerce. In founding the park Association, saved the Willow Lake wildlife sanctuary, the Louis Armstrong Stadium, bringing the USOPEN to the park, and prevented the city from placing a football stadium over the Fountain of the Planets in the park.



Our revels now are ended: these our actors,  
As I foretold you, were all spirits, and  
Are melted into air, into thin air:  
And, like the baseless fabric of this vision  
The cloud-capp'd towers, the gorgeous palaces,  
The solemn temples, the great globe itself,  
Yea, all which it inherit, shall dissolve,  
And, like this insubstantial pageant faded,  
Leave not a wrack behind: We are such stuff  
As dreams are made of...

- William Shakespeare  
- *The Tempest*

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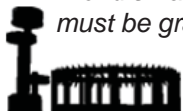


Photo Credit: Greg Godfrey





... Let It Shine

Photo Credit: Greg Godfrey

A Project of The Flushing Meadows - Corona Park World's Fair Association

David Oats, Founder | Corinne Oats, Chairwoman | Greg Godfrey, President | Robert Moses, Honorary Chairman, 1971 - 1981

The Flushing Meadows Corona Park World's Fair Association was founded in 1967 to preserve the unique history of the site of two World's Fairs, its environment, and structures.

