Hotel Martinique, 1260 Broadway, aka 1260-1268 Broadway, 49-51 West 32nd Street, and 54-58 West 33rd Street, Manhattan. Built 1897-98, 1901-03, 1909-11; architect, Henry J. Hardenbergh.

Landmark Site: Borough of Manhattan Tax Map Block 834, Lot 11.

On February 10, 1998, the Landmarks Preservation Commission held a public hearing on the proposed designation of the Hotel Martinique (Item No. 2). The hearing was duly advertised according to the provisions of law. There were two speakers in favor of designation and the representative of the owner stated that they were not opposed to designation.

Summary
The Hotel Martinique, a major work of the prominent designer Henry J. Hardenbergh, was constructed in three phases, in 1897-98, 1901-03, and 1909-11. Developer William R. H. Martin, who had invested heavily in real estate in this area of the city, built and expanded the hotel in response to the growth of entertainment, shopping, and transportation activities in this busy midtown section. Martin hired the distinguished architect Henry J. Hardenbergh, who had acquired a reputation for his luxury hotel designs, including the original Waldorf and Astoria Hotels, as well as the Plaza. In his hotel and apartment house designs, Hardenbergh created picturesque compositions based on Beaux-Arts precedents, giving special care to interior planning and appointments. For the sixteen-story, French Renaissance-inspired style Hotel Martinique, the architect capitalized on the openness made possible by Greeley Square, to show off the building’s boldly-scaled mansard roof, with its towers, and ornate dormers. The glazed brick, terra cotta, and limestone-clad structure also features rusticated stonework, balconies and prominent cartouches on all three of its main facades: Broadway, 32nd Street and 33rd Street. Despite having been created in three sections, the building maintains a harmonious street presence on all three facades.
DESCRIPTION AND ANALYSIS

William R. H. Martin (1842-1912)

The owner of this property and the developer of the hotel was William R.H. Martin, a large landowner in Manhattan at the turn of the century and a founding member of the clothing firm of Rogers, Peet & Company. Martin was born in St. Louis and lived in Brooklyn as a child. He entered the clothing business with his father John T. Martin, who had been a large army contractor during the Civil War. Later the Martins formed a wholesale clothing business with Marvin Rogers; it was known by several different names before becoming Rogers, Peet & Co. Martin served as head of the company from 1877, but had retired from active involvement with it several years before his death in 1912. Martin used his wealth to invest heavily in Manhattan real estate, and at the time of his death his holdings were valued at more than $10,000,000. These investments included such properties as the Marbridge Building (an office building located on the northeast corner of Broadway and 34th Street¹), as well as the Martinique Hotel which he named for himself, and nearby property at Broadway and 31st Street. Martin also built and supported the Trowmart Inn, a home for working girls.

Martin clearly thought the 34th Street-Broadway area was a vital, growing section for business and investment. Rogers, Peet & Co. opened a store at 1260 Broadway in 1889, even before such big department stores as Macy’s and Saks moved to 34th Street.² Martin began purchasing property for himself on this block in 1892, and made further purchases in 1893 and 1895 until he owned a large, irregularly-shaped parcel facing West 33rd Street, West 32nd Street and Broadway.³ Martin chose to build his new hotel on this property, close to Greeley and Herald Squares because, at this time the location was beginning to offer many opportunities for shopping, theater, and restaurants to attract the tourist trade, and was close to several modes of transportation.

Development of the Area

Near the end of the nineteenth century, the area of Broadway and West 34th Street, or Greeley Square⁴ gained prominence as an entertainment district. Just as different residential areas had their highs and lows of popularity in the continuing northward migration of New Yorkers from the tip of Manhattan Island, so too did quarters for shopping, business and amusements. New Yorkers first began to take a strong interest in the theater and related activities in the early 1850s, with the establishment of Niblo’s Garden, near Prince Street and Broadway. By the 1860s, the most fashionable playhouses and the Academy of Music were located near Union Square. The construction of Madison Square Garden edged New York’s rialto up to 23rd Street, along with the fashionable shopping establishments of the Ladies Mile, with the accompanying hotels and restaurants which catered to those in this busy area. By the 1880s Broadway, between 23rd and 42nd Street became New York’s glittering “Great White Way” (because of all the electric lights along this section of the street). This section of Broadway and vicinity was soon lined with theaters and elegant department stores. Restaurants and luxurious hotels followed, serving the many visitors who flocked to this part of town. The Metropolitan Opera House, located at Broadway and 39th Street opened in 1883, and sparked a theatrical move uptown. The Casino Theater, the Manhattan Opera House, and Harrigan’s (later the Herald Square Theater) were all soon located nearby. In 1893 the Empire Theatre opened at Broadway and West 41st Street, sparking further development in the area of Longacre Square (later called Times Square). Saks & Co, and R.H. Macy’s anchored the shopping at 34th Street, having led the move, beginning in 1901-02, of department stores from below Madison Square. Restaurants such as Rector’s and Delmonico’s satisfied the gastronomical needs of New York’s wealthy, while they stayed at such hotels as the Marlborough, the Normandie, or the Vendome.

To the east, Fifth Avenue had a different tone, set by the establishment of B. Altman’s and the Gorham Silver Company, as well as the Knickerbocker Club. This was confirmed by the opening, in 1893 and 1897, of the lavish Waldorf and then the Astoria Hotels (both designed by Henry J. Hardenbergh, architect of the Martinique) on Fifth Avenue, between 33rd and 34th Streets. One block to the west of Greeley Square, the planned Pennsylvania Station promised much future development. Sixth Avenue and 34th Street was also the site of cross-town streetscars, the Sixth Avenue Elevated, and the Hudson Tubes to New Jersey.

Henry Janeway Hardenbergh (1847-1918)⁵

Born in New Brunswick, N. J., of Dutch lineage, Henry Janeway Hardenbergh attended the Hasbrouck Institute in Jersey City, and received
architectural training from the Beaux-Arts-trained Detlef Lienau in 1865-70. Hardenbergh, who began his own architectural practice in New York in 1870, became one of the city’s most distinguished architects. Recognized for their picturesque compositions and practical planning, his buildings often took their inspiration from the French, Dutch, and German Renaissance styles. Hardenbergh was a prolific architect and designed many types of buildings, including: office buildings such as the Western Union Telegraph Company Building at Fifth Avenue and 23rd Street (1884, located in the Ladies Mile Historic District), the Astor Building on Wall Street (1885, demolished), and an early 12-story, steel-framed skyscraper, the Dutch Renaissance John Wolfe Building at Maiden Lane and William Street (1895, demolished); Romanesque Revival commercial buildings such as the warehouse at Broadway and West 51st Street (1892, demolished) and the Schermerhorn Building at 376-380 Lafayette Street (1889-90, a designated New York City Landmark); as well as numerous individual houses, both freestanding country homes and city rowhouses. Of the later type, some of his best-known examples include the picturesque rows on West 73rd Street (in the Upper West Side/Central Park West Historic District) built in 1882 for Edward S. Clark, in the course of the early development of the Upper West Side.

Hardenbergh is best known, however, for his luxury hotel and apartment house designs. Among the earliest of these are the German Renaissance-style Dakota Apartments (1880-84, 1 West 72nd Street, a designated New York City Landmark and located within the Upper West Side/ Central Park West Historic District) and the Hotel Albert, now Albert Apartments (1882, 75-77 University Place, aka 42 East 11th Street). His three earliest midtown hotels, the Waldorf (1893-95, Fifth Avenue and West 33rd Street), the Astoria (1895-97, Fifth Avenue and West 34th Street), and the Manhattan Hotel (1896, Madison and East 42nd Street) have all been demolished, but when constructed they set the standard for luxury hotel design, both on the exterior and the interior. The turrets, gables and balconies seen on the exteriors formed a picturesque composition, while the comfortable interior arrangements, and fine decoration added to the sumptuousness of the visitor’s experience. Hardenbergh continued to perfect his luxury hotel designs in the Plaza Hotel (1905-07, 2 Central Park South, a designated New York City Landmark), and in Washington, D.C., at the Raleigh Hotel (1898/1905/1911, demolished) and the Willard Hotel (1900-01), as well as the Hotel Windsor (1906, with Bradford Lee Gilbert) in Montreal, and the Copley Plaza Hotel (1910-12) in Boston.

**Hotel Architecture**

Hotels have played an important role in the life of the city since the earliest taverns and inns of New Amsterdam dispensed food, drink, lodging and entertainment to colonial travelers. For many years the Astor House, built in 1836 by Isaiah Rogers, on Broadway between Barclay and Vesey Streets, provided the utmost in comfort and convenience to its guests. Not only was the building very large, but it was equipped with the latest facilities, including a bath and toilet on every floor! As the population moved northward, so did the hotel district. By 1859, the Fifth Avenue Hotel, called the "first modern New York Hotel," opened on Madison Square, offering its patrons such amenities as New York’s first passenger elevator, and luxuriously decorated interiors. As the nineteenth century progressed, hotels competed in size and grandeur. Perhaps the ultimate in nineteenth century hotel splendor was exemplified by the Waldorf and the Astoria (which functioned as one hotel), which had 1,300 bedrooms and 40 public rooms, all lavishly and individually decorated.

The Waldorf and Astoria complex was perhaps the largest, but it was certainly not unique among the grand hotels of the late nineteenth century. Fostered by economic prosperity, the large luxury hotels of this period became the venue for public life, supplying halls for promenading, dining rooms to be seen in, and private rooms in which to entertain and be entertained. Improvements in transportation during the late nineteenth century made travel between and within cities easier, and thus people became more mobile, traveling for pleasure as well as business. In addition, hotels enhanced their sense of luxury by adding all the latest technological advancements, including electricity, elevators, telephones, and central heat. By the turn of the century the tendency was observed to “include within the walls of the building all the possible comforts of modern life, facilities which formerly could be found only outside of the hotel walls. Telephones, Turkish baths, private nurses, physicians...” in addition to laundry, the services of maids and valets, barbers, and shoe shine boys. A huge staff was required to supply all these services, and this in turn, necessitated a huge building to make the whole enterprise financially sound.
The Waldorf and Astoria Hotels proved to be exemplars of hotel design on the exterior as well. Not only did Hardenbergh follow his own design precedents in his later, influential hotel designs, but other architects (such as Clinton & Russell in the Hotel Astor) did as well. A. C. David, writing in 1905, proclaimed that the new, large hotels which were appearing in most cities in the United States were "in a different class architecturally from any similar buildings which have preceded them." This new type was large, a skyscraper (i.e. built with steel-frame construction), but nonetheless was created "in such a manner that it would be distinguished from the office-building and suggest some relation to domestic life." To do this, David recommended the use of warm materials, preferably brick, and a strong roof line with dormers rather than a cornice and flat roof.

The Hotel Martinique

The Hotel Martinique was constructed in three different phases, even though it was always intended to be one unified building at the end of the process. The first section of the Martinique was built on West 33rd Street in 1897–98, five years after Martin first began purchasing property on the block in 1892. A floor plan of this section was shown in a contemporary periodical in an article about apartment hotels, suggesting that perhaps the Martinique was initially intended to be this type of hotel. However, as the later sections were completed, this use was not mentioned. In 1901–03 a second section was constructed on Broadway, Nos. 1266-1268, where the Rogers, Peet store had been. The third and final section was constructed in 1909–11, on the northeast corner of Broadway and West 32nd Street, on a site previously occupied by an apartment house, which Martin had purchased from the Sloane estate in 1895.

When Hardenbergh was hired as the architect of the Hotel Martinique, he had already established himself as a hotel designer who knew how to attract guests through well-planned interiors, enhanced by rich materials, with an exterior design that represented the best of European traditions. A wealthy clientele would be attracted to the Martinique by the rich details of its French Renaissance-inspired exterior design, such as the high mansard roof, the elaborately ornamented dormers and balconies, and the highly decorated window surrounds, as well as by the luxurious interior appointments. The hotel maintained a number of different restaurants and entertainment rooms. A New York guide book listed the numerous mural paintings in the hotel, the fact that the dining room is "modeled after the Apollo Room in the Louvre," and finished with the statement that "the decorations repay a visit." An advertising brochure for the hotel extolls its location, as being "in the heart of things," close to everything a visitor could want in New York. It also emphasizes the "warmth of atmosphere and personal attention" a guest would receive and lists some of the services available, including a representative to meet incoming steamships, and various restaurants and entertainments within the hotel. The Martinique was clearly trying to appeal to a wealthy clientele who would expect these and other services.

Subsequent History

The Hotel Martinique continued for many years to be an important presence on Greeley Square, in this busy section of Manhattan. While the character of the surrounding neighborhood became less grand, it was still commercially active, and good transportation remained an important attribute. The Martinique continued to house numerous stores, a restaurant, a theater, and a church, in addition to its many hotel rooms. By 1970, the Hotel Martinique, still in private ownership, was renting rooms to New York City and the Red Cross for use as emergency housing for homeless people. For nearly twenty years it served as one of New York’s most notorious welfare hotels. In 1989, the last family was moved out of the Martinique, and the hotel is currently undergoing renovations to turn it into a Holiday Inn. This latest change is due, in part, to the tremendous growth of tourism in New York and the need for more hotel rooms, especially in such a central location.

Description

The sixteen-story hotel Martinique fills an irregularly shaped lot, with facades that are five bays wide on 33rd Street, six bays on Broadway, and nine bays on 32nd Street (which also houses the building’s main entrance). Each of the facades is finished with the same materials and motifs. Set on a rusticated limestone base with non-historic ground floor storefronts and entry, the upper stories of the façades are faced in glazed brick and terra cotta. The mansard roof, a strong visual element on all three facades, has recently been clad in standing seam metal, painted green. Some copper trim remains around some of the dormer windows on the top of the building. All the windows have one-over-one, aluminum replacement sash.
West 32nd Street Facade

This facade is symmetrically arranged with a slightly projecting center section, five bays wide. The facade is subdivided at the ground story by a cornice (which was mostly hidden by the scaffolding at the time of designation), and a balcony at the fifth story, which concludes the base. The main part of the facade extends from the fifth through the eleventh stories where a molding with a Greek key design sets off the transitional twelfth and thirteenth stories. Above this, another balcony marks the final section, and a balustrade at the fifteenth story dormer windows indicates the roof level. Base - The main entrance to the Hotel Martinique is three bays wide and is centered on the ground story of the West 32nd Street facade. It has a non-historic black marble surround and a wide marquee over the entrance. Above the marquee is a narrow, original cornice with the words "Hotel Martinique" flanked by heraldic shields. To the east of the entrance, are two windows with original, cast-iron window surrounds. The rest of the ground story was covered by scaffolding at the time of designation.

Above the ground story, the slightly projecting center section is flanked by two bays at each side. The second, third, and fourth stories are faced with rusticated stone (now painted) and are topped (at the fifth story) by a balcony carried on heavy brackets, with a delicate, iron railing. The windows of this base section are fronted by simple, individual iron railings. At the third, fifth, and seventh bays, the windows of the second and third stories are linked vertically by moldings which culminate in a lintel with a broken pediment and crest above the third story. The spandrels between these two stories are also decorated, and broad moldings run horizontally across the facade at this spandrel line. The rest of the windows are undecorated in this central section. The windows in each side section carry similar pedimented lintels at the third story and simpler lintels with geometric decorations at the second story. The fourth-story windows, under the balcony, are slightly smaller and are topped by voussoirs.

Center section - Floors five through eleven are faced with glazed brick set in a rusticated pattern. Each of the windows are framed with a broad, eared terracotta molding and a simple sill. The windows of the fifth story are topped by a molded lintel with a centered volute. Within the center section, several windows are given added emphasis by balconettes, while the center window of the sixth story is also flanked by shields and topped by a pediment with a shield.

Top section - Above the Greek key molding, the walls of the twelfth and thirteenth stories are ornamented by terra-cotta shells. The windows of the thirteenth floor are set on lager sills supported by volutes and have double keystones above them. The projecting balcony of the fourteenth story is carried on large brackets which extend down between the windows, ending at a series of corbelled moldings. Above the unadorned window openings of the fourteenth story is another cornice which supports a stone balcony, composed of solid sections alternating with balusters in front of each window.

Large dormer windows project from the tall mansard at the fifteenth story. They are supported by elongated volutes at each side and are capped by fanciful pediments, the top parts of which have been removed. A large, squared tower is located at the center of the mansard. Originally capped by cresting, it now serves as a base for a water tank. Two round windows are set near the top of the tower, while other round-headed dormer windows are located between the larger, squared dormers of the fifteenth story. Several finials (on the central dormer and on the balustrade) have been removed.

Broadway Facade

The ornament and design features described on the West 32nd Street facade extend onto this facade as well. The corner has been cut off, creating a single, separate bay which serves as a transition between the two sides, continuing all the motifs from one to the other. These include the window surrounds, the balconies and moldings as well as the wall surfaces. Of the six bays on this side, the three southernmost bays were added as part of the final construction phase of the hotel and exhibit the wider spacing seen on West 32nd Street. The three northernmost bays, in addition to having the windows more closely spaced, are also set off by a slight projection in the wall surface. The other differences include the addition of a pair of heraldic shields which are located between the three windows of the sixth story and another tower in the mansard roof located over the northern, elder section of this facade. The storefronts at the ground level have either been modernized or are not visible due to scaffolding at the time of designation.

West 33rd Street Facade

This facade, the first to be constructed, established the ornamental patterns which were followed on the other two. The ground story has been completely modernized, but the upper stories maintain the same patterns and motifs which are seen on the other two facades. Five bays wide, the central three bays project slightly above the fourth.
story. A difference in this facade is that the central bay is wider and given more emphasis throughout the height of the building. At the time of designation, the openings of this center bay were sealed. The second, third and fourth stories are faced with the same rusticated stone (now painted) and same window ornamentation.

At the sixth story, the center bay is faced by a small balcony and topped by a broad entablature ornamented by cornucopias and a shield. The windows of the second and fourth bays, on the eighth and tenth stories also have small balconies. A tower is located at the center of the mansard roof, with a large, projecting dormer window. This window has paired sash and is flanked by stone pilasters and fronted by an iron railing. To each side are two, smaller, copper-trimmed dormers, each topped by a triangular pediment. Most of the roof is not visible from the street.

The eastern party wall is visible above a low taxpayer building. It is faced in plain brick and not ornamented.

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NOTES


2. Another New York City Landmark developed by Martin as a speculative venture is the George S. Bowdo in stable at 149 East 38th Street, built in 1902.


4. On Block 833, in the section between Broadway and Sixth Avenue, Martin accumulated Lots 1-4 and 6-9 through a series of purchases from 1901 through 1909.

5. The Broadway Association, Broadway: The Grand Canyon of American Business (New York: Broadway Association, 1926), 38. In 1892, Martin personally leased the two lots on which the Rogers, Peet store was located (Block 834, lots 8 & 9, Section 3, Liber 10, p. 211. Feb. 8, 1892).


8. The square was named in 1894 for Horace Greeley, founder of the New York Tribune, whose statue, by Alexander Doyle, was a joint gift of a Grand Army Post and the Typographical Union.

9. The information on Hardenbergh was compiled from the architects' research files of the Landmarks Preservation Commission, Henry J. Hardenbergh, and especially from the architects' appendix of the Upper West Side/Central Park West Historic District Report (LP-1647).


12. This phenomenon continued well into the twentieth century. In 1923, *Rider's New York* noted that the modern American hotel was "not merely a hotel, but in a certain sense a public resort, frequented daily by a vast floating population comprised not only of casual strangers, but of resident New Yorkers, who take an unlicensed, yet undisputed advantage of a large proportion of the accommodations and privileges intended for the guests of the house. Any well-dressed stranger can enter unchallenged, use the parlors and sitting rooms as meeting places for social or business purposes, finish a day's correspondence on the hotel stationery..."

13. In addition to travelers who used the hotels on a temporary basis, another trend developed for longer term habitation, for those who maintained other residences outside the city and could not afford, or did not desire to maintain a city residence. This often included unmarried men, or young, childless couples who nonetheless wanted to maintain a high public profile. For these people, family hotels filled their needs, places with suites of rooms that were serviced by the hotel staff and thus did not require a personal staff. This type of apartment hotel first started appearing in New York in the 1880s. A. C. David's magazine article of 1905 mentioned that at that time there were almost 100 such establishments in "in the central part of Manhattan."


15. Hutchins, 621.


17. NB 572-1897 calls for a sixteen-story building on Nos. 54-58 West 33rd Street, 67 feet wide and costing $400,000, with a tile roof, stone and brick front and steel framing.


19. NB:1204-1900. This permit was for a sixteen-story, stone, terra cotta and brick building with tile roof, 32 feet wide, and costing $250,000. Construction started in October, 1901 and finished in March, 1903.

20. The purchase of lots 10-15 was recorded in Section 3, Liber 38, pp. 139-140. This section of the hotel was constructed under NB:702-1907. This permit allowed for a sixteen-story hotel on the corner of Broadway and 32nd Street, costing $800,000.


22. The brochure is not dated but since it mentions the "new Grand Central Terminal," one can assume it was probably written c.1910-15. This brochure is located in the vertical files at Avery Architectural Library.
FINDINGS AND DESIGNATION

On the basis of a careful consideration of the history, the architecture, and other features of this building, the Landmarks Preservation Commission finds that the Hotel Martinique 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, the Hotel Martinique was constructed in three different building campaigns in 1897-98, 1901-03, and 1909-11, in response to the growing popularity of the area; that the building was developed by William R. H. Martin, a founder of the Rogers, Peet & Co. clothing firm and a large landowner in this area of the city, who hired the prominent architect Henry J. Hardenbergh to design a luxury hotel to take advantage of the central location, close to shopping, entertainment, and transportation; that Hardenbergh had designed numerous luxury hotels and apartment houses, developing a reputation for elegant hotel designs which emphasized picturesque exterior compositions often based on Renaissance precedents, and fine interior planning and appointments; that the building's three facades, on Broadway, West 32nd and West 33rd Streets, are well-integrated and feature rusticated limestone, projecting balconies, and prominent, terra-cotta cartouches; that Hardenbergh took advantage of the choice site on Greeley Square to create a distinctive building with a boldly-scaled mansard roof topped by towers and ornamented dormers; that the building was a fine example of the numerous large-scale, luxury hotels constructed during this period which responded to the public's desire for an elegant, full-service, "home away from home."

Accordingly, pursuant to the provisions of Chapter 74, Section 3020 of the Charter of the City of New York and Chapter 3 of Title 25 of the Administrative Code of the City of New York, the Landmarks Preservation Commission designates as a Landmark the Hotel Martinique, 1260 Broadway, aka 1260-1268 Broadway, 49-51 West 32nd Street, and 54-58 West 33rd Street, Manhattan, and designates Borough of Manhattan Tax Map Block 834, Lot 11, as its Landmark Site.
Hotel Martinique, 1260 Broadway, Borough of Manhattan
West 32nd Street Facade
Photo: Carl Forster
Hotel Martinique, 1260 Broadway, Manhattan
Broadway Facade
Photo: Carl Forster
Hotel Martinique, 1260 Broadway, Manhattan
West 33rd Street Facade
Photo: Carl Forster
Hotel Martinique
Details of West 32nd Street Facade
Photos: Carl Forster
Hotel Martinique
Broadway Facade Details
Photos: Carl Forster
Hotel Martinique
Ground story and roof details, West 32nd Street Facade
Photos: Carl Forster
Hotel Martinique, Roof Detail, Broadway Facade

Hotel Martinique, West 33rd Street Facade Detail
*Photos: Carl Forster*
Hotel Martinique
Detail of corner, Broadway and West 32nd Street
Photo: Carl Forster
Hotel Martinique, Broadway, 1897
Photo: Museum of the City of New York
Hotel Martinique, 1908-09

Source: King’s Views of New York, 1896-1915
Hotel Martinique
1260 Broadway, (aka 1260-1268 Broadway, 49-51 West 32nd Street, and 54-58 West 33rd Street), Manhattan
Landmark Site: Borough of Manhattan Tax Map Block 834, Lot 11
Source: Sanborn Manhattan Landbook, 1996-97, Plate 60
Hotel Martinique
1260 Broadway, (aka 1260-1268 Broadway, 49-51 West 32nd Street, and 54-58 West 33rd Street), Manhattan
Landmark Site: Borough of Manhattan Tax Map Block 834, Lot 11
Source: Department of Finance, City Surveyor, Tax map