

Social activism and counterculture movements have long been integral factors in the history of the area which was once Peter Stuyvesant's bouwerie in the 17<sup>th</sup> century. The changing demographics of the 1960s and 70s led to an era of both unrest and creative exploration during the 1980s. The counterculture bourgeoned and found a center in the Lower East Side/East Village where artists, poets, musicians, hippies, criminals, and homeless shared the neighborhood. Tensions created unrest. The area was known for its 'gritty' qualities, its challenges, and an un-abandoned boldness. This edition of the Peg-Leg Pete Bouwerie Tour identifies sites throughout the footprint of the area originally owned by Stuyvesant that influenced the way in which the 80s were lived by its residents and visitors.

1. Hilly Kristal, a club owner and musician, created the **CBGB** music club in 1973 when he leased the ground floor of the Palace Hotel lodging house at 315 Bowery. Kristal kept the original bar with many of its fixtures and renamed it CBGB & OMFUG (which stands for Country Bluegrass, Blues, and Other Music for Uplifting Gormandizers). Country, Bluegrass, and Blues was the music that he intended to showcase, but he embraced just about any and all musicians playing original music. From the early 80s until its later years, CBGB became a forum for American punk and new wave artists like the Ramones, Blondie, Talking Heads, Misfits, Patti Smith, and Joan Jett. Although it began as a venue, it transformed into a mecca of punk rock and hard-core music along with its brand name encompassing a storefront, a record shop, and a café. CBGB closed in 2006 and is listed on the National Register for Historic Places. (While outside of the Stuyvesant Farm boundaries, CBGB's significance in the history of the 1980s warranted its inclusion on this tour.)
2. East 8<sup>th</sup> Street between Astor Place and Tompkins Square Park has been known as St. Marks Place since 1831 when real estate developer Thomas E. Davis changed the name to distinguish it as fashionable address for prospective buyers. Named for its proximity to the landmark church on 10<sup>th</sup> St. & 2<sup>nd</sup> Ave., the official street name omits the apostrophe. One of the Federal style townhouses Davis built in 1831 remains at No. 4 St. Marks Place. Called the Hamilton-Holly House, it was purchased by Col. Alexander Hamilton (son of the U.S. Treasury Secretary). By 1950 the building no longer operated as a private residence and instead contained a store, club, apartments, and an auditorium. **Trash & Vau-deville** has been a tenant since 1975, occupying the basement and first-story commercial spaces. The store is famous for supplying stars like the Ramones and Debbie Harry of Blondie with clothing during the golden age of punk rock in the 70s and 80s. **IL**

3. During the 1980s and 90s, a local interfaith minister, Joyce Harwell, opened the All Craft Center at **19-23 St. Marks Place** to function as an addiction treatment and housing facility. All Craft taught women carpentry skills (the Lady Carpenter Institute) and soon expanded to include job training, self-help, and theater programs. Originally built as three separate townhouses in the early 1830s by real estate developer Thomas E. Davis, it shifted from commercial boarding houses, to a German music club, to a combination of community halls and ballrooms. In the 60s Andy Warhol and Paul Morrissey rented the upstairs space to open a psychedelic performance venue with the Velvet Underground as the house band and from 1967-1971 the famed Electric Circus nightclub and disco was in operation. The buildings were vacant until All Craft Center arrived. In 2000, a developer drastically altered the façade, gutted the interior, and converted the lower floors for retail use.
4. 110 Second Avenue, near Sixth Street, was built in 1838 and soon was occupied by Ralph Mead, a merchant, and his second wife. After the Civil War, the elegant houses on Second Avenue were converted to apartment or boarding houses. In 1874, 110 Second Avenue became known as the **Isaac T. Hopper Home**. In that year more than 300 women passed through its doors. The home catered to the Women's Prison Association, which was established in 1845 as the Female Department of the Prison Association. Still in operation today, The Isaac T. Hopper Home is now considered the world's oldest halfway house for girls and women released from prison, having continuously served the WPA mission since 1874. It is a rare presence in the ever changing neighborhood and was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 1986. **IL HD**
5. **Tompkins Square Park** is located between East 7<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> Streets and Avenues A and B. This sixteen-acre park has been the home to various riots and rallies by citizens protesting for social issues, living conditions, and political movements throughout the decades. The Tompkins Square Park Riot of August 1988 occurred when the local residents wanted action in response to the park being overrun by homeless, drug users, and troubled youth. In an effort to 'take back the park', the local Community Board issued a 1am curfew for the previously 24-hour park. This sparked a series of protests and clashes with the police, with many claiming brutality measures were taken. Mayor Ed Koch rescinded the curfew within days to quell the violence. Riot Reunion Concerts still take place on its anniversary. The park itself continues to be a gathering place for social movements, among its other uses of sports fields and children's playgrounds.

## BOUWERIE TOUR: PUNK EDITION

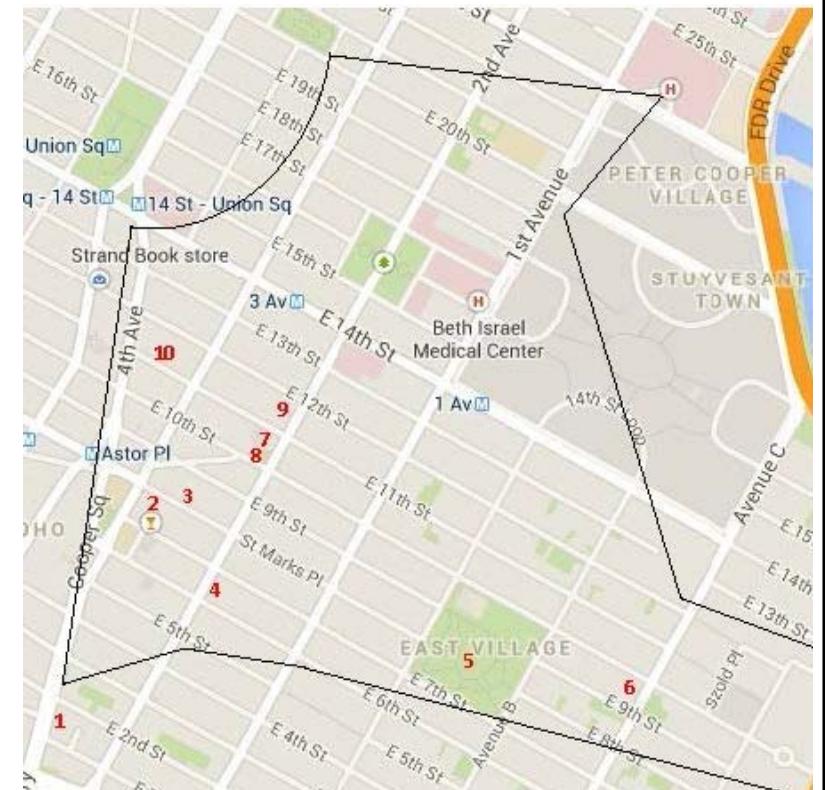
### TOUR KEY

The footprint of Peter Stuyvesant's original bouwerie is outlined in black.

**HD:** within an NYC historic district

**IL:** designated NYC individual landmark

Designation reports for NYC landmarks may be found at: [neighborhoodpreservationcenter.org/designation\\_reports/](http://neighborhoodpreservationcenter.org/designation_reports/)



The St. Mark's Historic Landmark Fund gratefully acknowledges and thanks Elizabeth Volchok and Charlene Liang for their work on this project, and Deacon Worrell for his illustration of Peg-Leg Pete. This guide uses sources including the The New York Times, Greenwich Village Society for Historic Preservation, and the New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission.

6. 155 Avenue C (between 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> Streets) is home to C-Squat or “See Skwat,” a squat house that was founded in a vacant tenement building in the 1980s. During this time, squatters commandeered many abandoned buildings, some because they could no longer afford the rents, others as a political stand against gentrification in the neighborhood. C-Squat had a half-pipe for skaters in the basement and regularly hosted punk rock shows in the 1990s, as well as a number of artists and activists throughout its history. When first occupied, these buildings were falling apart and the squatters themselves undertook that repairs, frequently from second hand sources. The City evicted many of the squatters, but C-Squat was one of twelve squatter buildings that survived as part of a 2002 homesteading agreement between the City and the Urban Homesteading Assistance Board, a nonprofit. The agreement provides that the residents could become the legal owners of the buildings once they brought them up to code. Today C-Squat’s ground floor is home to Museum of Reclaimed Urban Space, a volunteer-run small history museum of grassroots activism.
7. St. Mark’s Church In-the-Bowery at the intersection of 10th and Stuyvesant streets is the oldest site of continuing worship in New York City while also being an arts incubator, housing organizations including the Poetry Project and Danspace Project. In 1978 a fire nearly destroyed the Church. The Preservation Youth Project, a job training program the church had begun in 1975 that paired craftsman with the youth of the neighborhood, took on the task of restoring the Church’s steeple, sanctuary, and Parish Hall. This was the first such job training project of its kind in the country. In 1988, a fire also damaged the historic Ernest Flagg Rectory which sits adjacent to the church. In addition to serving as the home of the Rector (then David Garcia) and his family, also housed “The Silkscreen Project” (1976-1987), and the Community Documentation Workshop Project, which employed the PYP participants in documenting the lives and histories of neighborhood residents and was active from the late 1970s to the early 1980s. The PYP restored the rectory exterior and stabilized the building until a viable solution to raise the money for its restoration was found. The PYP project ended in the 1990s. **IL HD**
8. In front of St. Mark’s church sits a small plaza, Abe Lebewohl Park, named after the Ukrainian owner of the neighborhood Second Avenue Deli who was fatally shot in 1996. In the 1970s, the park had become dirty, unkempt, and a haven for alcoholics and drug addicts. In 1980, the 10<sup>th</sup> & Stuyvesant Streets Block Association began efforts to reclaim the park: petitioning a clean-up by the Parks Department, convincing the nearby liquor store to stop selling pint-size bottles of hard alcohol, in 1981 inviting the Greenmarket to set up and sell fresh produce, and in 1982 starting a summer concert series Settlement (now called Music at Abe Lebewohl Park) with the Third Street Music School. The Association also took on the task of protecting, extending (in 1984), and beautifying the St. Mark’s Historic District.
9. The Louis N. Jaffe Art Theatre, located at 182 Second Avenue, was constructed in 1925-26 by the Brooklyn lawyer and prominent Jewish civic leader. It became a central site for Yiddish theater from 1926-1945 and again during the 1970s and 1980s. Notable Off-Broadway shows “Oh! Calcutta” (1969), “Grease” (1972) and “Best Little Whorehouse in Texas” (1978) and “Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat” (1981) premiered here. In 1985, M Square Productions leased the theater and renamed it the Second Avenue Theater producing several musicals and one last Yiddish revival, then the theater was closed in 1988 because of low attendance. The interior was subsequently converted into a complex of seven movie theaters and re-opened in 1991 as the Village East City Cinemas. **IL**
10. Webster Hall, located at 125 East 11<sup>th</sup> Street, was known as The Ritz from 1980-89. Considered to be one of the first clubs to incorporate video screens into the club experience, it hosted performances by artists like Madonna, Prince, and Eric Clapton. Webster Hall was constructed in the Queen Anne style by Charles Rentz, Jr. in 1886. The building is one of the few surviving nineteenth-century assembly halls in New York City that originally catered largely to the working-class and immigrant population of the Lower East Side and embodies much about the social, political, and cultural history of downtown Manhattan and the East Village. From the late 19<sup>th</sup> century through World War II, Webster Hall was the scene for labor rallies, drag balls, costume bacchanals, and political protests. **IL**

*\*The spelling transition from the Dutch “Bouwerie” to modern “Bowery” in the street name, neighborhood, and church was not uniform. The two different spellings used in this tour were based on the usage in our sources.*



**BOUWERIE TOUR:  
PUNK EDITION**



*St. Mark’s Historic Landmark Fund is committed to the preservation of the historic Ernest Flagg Rectory of the St. Mark’s Church In-the-Bowery and sponsorship of the Neighborhood Preservation Center.*