

beer. It is located at #1 Brewer's Row, 79 North 11th Street, Williamsburg.

Holly Cronin

Brooklyn Bridge. Steel suspension bridge across the East River between Brooklyn and Manhattan, opened on 24 May 1883. Its span of 1595.5 feet (486.3 meters) between towers was for a time the longest in the world. The bridge was the inspiration of the engineer John Augustus Roebling, the inventor of wire cable and an accomplished bridge builder who in 1867 put forth a plan to William C. Kingsley, publisher of the *Brooklyn Eagle*. He envisioned two massive stone towers, a network of steel cables suspended from the towers and embedded in anchorages at either end, vertical wires connecting the roadbed to the cables and reinforced by diagonal stays running down from the towers, and iron trusses underpinning the suspended floor from tower to tower to stiffen the roadbed. The unprecedented use of steel in a suspension bridge was intended to provide unmatched strength and stability. A bill to incorporate the New York Bridge Company, introduced in the state legislature at the behest of Kingsley by Henry Murphy, a state senator and former mayor of Brooklyn, was passed in April 1867 after an

unusually cold winter that emphasized the vulnerability of ferry service to the elements. The project suffered a severe setback in June 1869, when just as the necessary approvals had been secured Roebling was fatally injured by a ferry that toppled him from a waterfront piling. His place was taken by his son Washington Roebling, who solved many structural problems in what remained a difficult and dangerous project. So that the towers of the bridge would sit firmly on bedrock, the riverbed was excavated by men working in huge, bottomless wooden boxes called caissons. The risk of fire was ever present, and the men were susceptible to the bends (then called caisson disease and poorly understood). Roebling himself fell victim to the bends while working alongside the men sinking the western caisson in the summer of 1872 and was an invalid to the end of his life. He continued nevertheless to supervise operations through a telescope from his room on Columbia Heights while his wife, Emily Warren Roebling, relayed his instructions to workers and managers. The project continued to be plagued with difficulties: in 1878 Washington Roebling found that defective wire rope had been woven into the bridge cables, the result of graft on the part of the suppliers (he used sound wire to rein-

force the cables), and soon afterward the project ran short of money (new appropriations were made in 1879). On its completion the bridge was widely acclaimed as the "new eighth wonder of the world." Its lavish dedication was attended by the mayors of Brooklyn and New York City, Governor Grover Cleveland, and President Chester A. Arthur, but not by Roebling, whose relations with the bridge company for the last four years of the project had been deeply strained. The opening of the bridge to the public a week later was marred by the deaths of 12 pedestrians who were trampled during a panic set off by a shouted warning, anonymous and groundless, that the bridge was in danger of imminent collapse.

The Brooklyn Bridge became a highly recognizable landmark and an important cultural icon, and many artists and writers saw it as a symbol of American urbanization and industrialization. To Walt Whitman it was the work of engineering that completed Columbus's mission and helped to create a more closely linked world; to Hart Crane in the 1920s it was an affirmation of love, beauty, and the divine wholeness and unity of all history. The early twentieth-century painters John Marin and Joseph Stella saw the



Brooklyn Bridge, 2009

bridge and the skyscrapers nearby as the embodiment of the evolving new world. Henry James detested the bridge, which he characterized as a mechanical monster and a soulless loom across which the "electric bobbins" of trains wove together two cities and by extension the world. But the critic Lewis Mumford believed that the Brooklyn Bridge had become "a source of joy and inspiration to the artist, perhaps the most completely satisfying structure of any kind that [has] appeared in America." No other bridge has ever been so richly woven into American culture.

Alan Trachtenberg, *Brooklyn Bridge: Fact and Symbol* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1965); David G. McCullough, *The Great Bridge* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1972)

Ellen Fletcher

Brooklyn Bridge Park. Park stretching from Atlantic Avenue to Jay Street along the East River in Brooklyn. The park's conception began in 1998 when the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey put the 1.3-acre (0.5-hectare) site, which included six defunct cargo shipping piers, up for sale to a private developer. In 2002 Governor George Pataki and Mayor Michael Bloomberg created the Brooklyn Bridge Park Development Corporation to develop a park instead. The nonprofit Brooklyn Bridge Park Conservancy manages its funding and operations to comply with the requirement that the park be financially self-sufficient. A plan was announced in 2004 to build luxury condominiums within the park's borders; residents of these apartments will pay fees to fund the park's maintenance in lieu of taxes. The unprecedented placement of private homes inside a public park has drawn ire from the plan's opponents. An organization called the Brooklyn Bridge Park Defense Fund filed a lawsuit to stop the plan; the suit was defeated and was being appealed as of 2008. The first phases of the park opened in 2010, and the park will eventually comprise 85 waterfront acres (34.4 hectares).

Kate Lauber

Brooklyn Children's Museum. Museum opened in 1899 in two Victorian mansions at 5 Brooklyn Avenue and St. Mark's Avenue as the first children's museum in the United States. In 1976 a spacious new building was erected on the same site. The museum was the first to use interactive, "hands-on" exhibits to help children understand the physical and cultural world. Most of the museum is underground and not visible from the street.

Laura J. Lewison

Brooklyn College. College of the City University of New York, opened in 1910 as an extension division of City College for Teachers. In 1917 it began offering first-year evening classes to male high school graduates. In 1926

the Board of Higher Education opened the Brooklyn Collegiate Center of City College for men and the Brooklyn Collegiate Center of Hunter College for women in an office building at Willoughby and Bridge streets. The board authorized a new coeducational, four-year college in Brooklyn in 1930. The newly constructed neo-Georgian campus between Flatbush and Ocean avenues opened in 1937. Harry D. Gideonse, the president from 1939 to 1966, presided over the college's growth in the turbulent years surrounding World War II. After an investigation by the New York state legislature's Rapp-Coudert Committee in the early 1940s, the college was reputed to hold leftist sympathies and was sometimes referred to as the "little red schoolhouse" (see COMMUNISM). After the war it expanded its programs, increased enrollment, and began to enhance its academic reputation. During the Vietnam War the campus was plagued by student unrest. One demand of the protesters was an open admissions policy. When it was implemented in 1970, enrollment soared from nearly 20,000 to more than 35,000 students, putting an enormous strain on the institution's resources and causing the college to install temporary buildings on campus. Many of the new students were ill prepared, resulting in the need for remedial programs. Critics' assertions that open admissions had lowered academic standards helped scuttle the policy when the fiscal crisis struck in 1975 and free tuition was eliminated. In the 1980s the college adopted a core curriculum that garnered national attention. Newly hired distinguished professors included the poet Allen Ginsberg and the violinist Itzhak Perlman. A new state-of-the-art library opened in 2002.

Murray M. Horowitz, *Brooklyn College: The First Half Century* (New York: Brooklyn College Press, 1981)

Selma Berrol, William M. Gargan



Keyspan Park (now MCU Park), home of the Brooklyn Cyclones, 2009

Brooklyn Collegiate and Polytechnic Institute. Original name of POLYTECHNIC UNIVERSITY.

Brooklyn Cyclones. Baseball team formed in 2001 as a minor league farm team of the New York Mets. Playing in MCU Park in Coney Island, the Cyclones, named after the Coney Island roller coaster, are in the New York Penn League, the lowest level in the minor leagues. The team has drawn large crowds. They were co-champions of the New York Penn League in 2001 and won division titles in 2003, 2004, and 2007. The Cyclones became the first professional team in Brooklyn since the Dodgers left in 1957.

Steven Levine

Brooklyn Daily Times. Name from 1851 to 1932 of the BROOKLYN TIMES-UNION.

Brooklyn Dodgers. Baseball team, formed in 1883 when the Interstate Minor League granted a franchise in Brooklyn to Charles Byrne and Joseph Doyle, both businessmen from Manhattan, and Ferdinand Abell, a casino owner from Rhode Island. The team joined the major leagues in 1884 when it moved to the American Association; in 1890 it moved to the National League. The name derived from the reputed skill of residents of Brooklyn at evading the streetcars of the burgeoning trolley system; other names applied to the team in its early years included the Bridegrooms (inspired by a series of marriages by team members in 1889), the Superbas (because the manager at the turn of the century was Ned Hanlon, and a popular theatrical group at the time was called Hanlon's Superbas), and the Robins (after the manager from 1914 to 1931, Wilbert Robinson). The team played at two stadiums in South Brooklyn, each called Washington Park, and at Eastern Park in Brownsville near Broadway