Architectural Gems of Downtown Brooklyn

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Architectural Gems of Downtown Brooklyn

- Polytechnic Institute Building
- Brooklyn Fire Department Building
- New York & New Jersey Telephone Company Building
- Dimes Saving Bank
- St. James Cathedral
- Offerman Building
- Gage & Tollner Building
- Borough Hall Building
- Post Office Building
A little about Downtown Brooklyn

The area was inhabited by Lenapee Native Americans until the 17th century.

The Dutch took over in the 17th century and then called DB Breuckelen.

The City Planning Commission together with the President’s Office came together and developed a master plan for the Civic Center after WWII. This plan included major housing, the widening of streets and buildings for City & State agencies.
Tour Information

- Showcases buildings which contributed to the development of DB (Downtown Brooklyn)
- Seasonal Tour (summer & spring)
- $25.00 per person
- 75 minute walking tour
- Marketed towards: City Tech Students, Residents of York and Tourists
- Marketed via the internet, fliers and text messaging
Tour Information

- Every 3rd Saturday of the month
- Gather in front of City Tech Building
  300 Jay Street, Brooklyn, NY 11201
- Transportation: A, C, F, R Trains to Jay Street
  2, 3, 4, 5 Trains to Borough Hall
- Tour is operated from 12:00 p.m. to 1:15 p.m.
Difference of Landmark and National Register of Historic Places

- **Landmark**

The New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission is the New York City Agency in charged with administering the city's Landmark Preservation Law. A building must be at least thirty years old before the Commission can declare it a landmark.

The goal of New York City's landmarks laws is to preserve the aesthetically and historically important buildings, structures, and other objects that make up the New York City vista.

- **National Register of Historic Places (NRHP)**

  Is the United States Federal Government's official list of districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects deemed worthy of preservation.
Polytechnic Institute
33 Jay Street

- Charter school for young men – 1853
- Chartered with the Brooklyn Collegiate School – 1854
- 265 young men were welcomed - 9/10/1854
- Polytechnic Institute of Brooklyn - 1889 to 1973
- PIB relocated to 333 Jay Street - 1957
- Became Polytechnic University - 1985
- Official name change to Polytechnic Institute of New York University – 2008
Polytechnic Institute Before

Polytechnic Institute Now
Brooklyn Fire Department Building
365-367 Jay Street

- Completed construction in 1892
- Romanesque Revival design
- Fire Dept. vacated in 1970
  Leased to Polytechnic University
- NYC Landmark in 1966
- Recognized on the National Register of Historic Places – 1972
- Served as Brooklyn Fire Headquarters until 1898
- Now serves as an apartment building
Fire Department Before

Fire Department Now
New York & New Jersey Telephone & Company
81 Willoughby Street

- Currently the BellTel Loft Condominium, ASA Institute, offices
- It was built in 1898 by R.L. Daus
- Renaissance Revival style
- Brooklyn’s first telephone headquarters
- It served Long Is., Staten Is., & N. New Jersey
- Provided telephone service for 16,000 subscribers
New York & New Jersey Telephone Company

Before

Present
Dimes Saving Bank
9 Dekalb Avenue

- **Built between 1906-1908**
- **It is a wedge-shaped ionic temple**
- **Columnned Roman Revival Palace**
- **Original fluted columns describing its Greek design as it resembles the lines of the Pantheon in Rome or the Parthenon in Greece.**
Dimes Savings Bank
Before Interior & Exterior
Offerman Building
5 Fulton Street

- Romanesque Revival style
- Constructed in 1890 by Henry Offerman
- Wechsler Dept. Store – 1897
- Darlington’s Dept. Store – 1907
- Martin’s Dept. Store – 1924 until closed in 1979
- NYC Landmark – 2005
- Housed:
  MTA Adjudication Bureau
  Job Agencies
  Conway (retail store)
Offerman Building
Before

Offerman Building
At Present
Gage & Tollner Building
372 Fulton Street

- **Four story late Italianate style brownstone building**
- **Existed since 1892 to February 12, 2004**
- **Replaced by accessory/costume jewelry shop**
Gage & Tollner Interior
1892 to 2004

Gage & Tollner Interior at Present
Brooklyn Borough Hall
9 Joralemon Street

- Designed by Calvin Pollard & Gamaliel King
- Greek Revival Style
- Completed in 1848 for use as City Hall
- Brooklyn Borough Hall – 1898
- Demolished Common Council room – 1902
- Designated NYC landmark – 1966
- Recognition - National Register of Historic Places January 10, 1980
- Renovations completed - 1989
Post Office
71 Cadman Plaza E.

- **Romanesque Style Design**
- **Planning & Design** took place in 1885
- **Architect:** Mifflin E. Bell
- Functioned as a:
  - Post Office
  - Courthouse with 4 courtrooms
- Became seven story building in 1933
- National Register of Historic Places on October 9, 1974
- Designated NYC Landmark on July 16, 1966
Post Office Building Before

Post Office Building At Present
C. James Cathedral
3go Cathedral Place

- Roman Catholic Cathedral Basilica of St. James
- Located on Jay Street bet. Cathedral Place and Cathedral Street
- It was built in 1903; designed by George H. Streetton; Neo-Georgian style
- The church was renamed the Pro-Cathedral by the 2nd Bishop
St. James Cathedral Before

St. James Cathedral at Present
Reflection

We walk through the streets and neighborhoods of Downtown Brooklyn everyday, and have failed to realize the richness of this area.

This assignment has opened our eyes, broaden our minds and taken us to a different level on perception of Brooklyn. We learned how these buildings came about and the contribution they brought to Downtown Brooklyn before its transformation in 2004.

We are grateful for the opportunity we had to conduct this search prior to putting this walking tour together.
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It was a pleasure taking you on such a wonderful tour exploring the Architectural Gems of Downtown Brooklyn.

😊Thank You😊