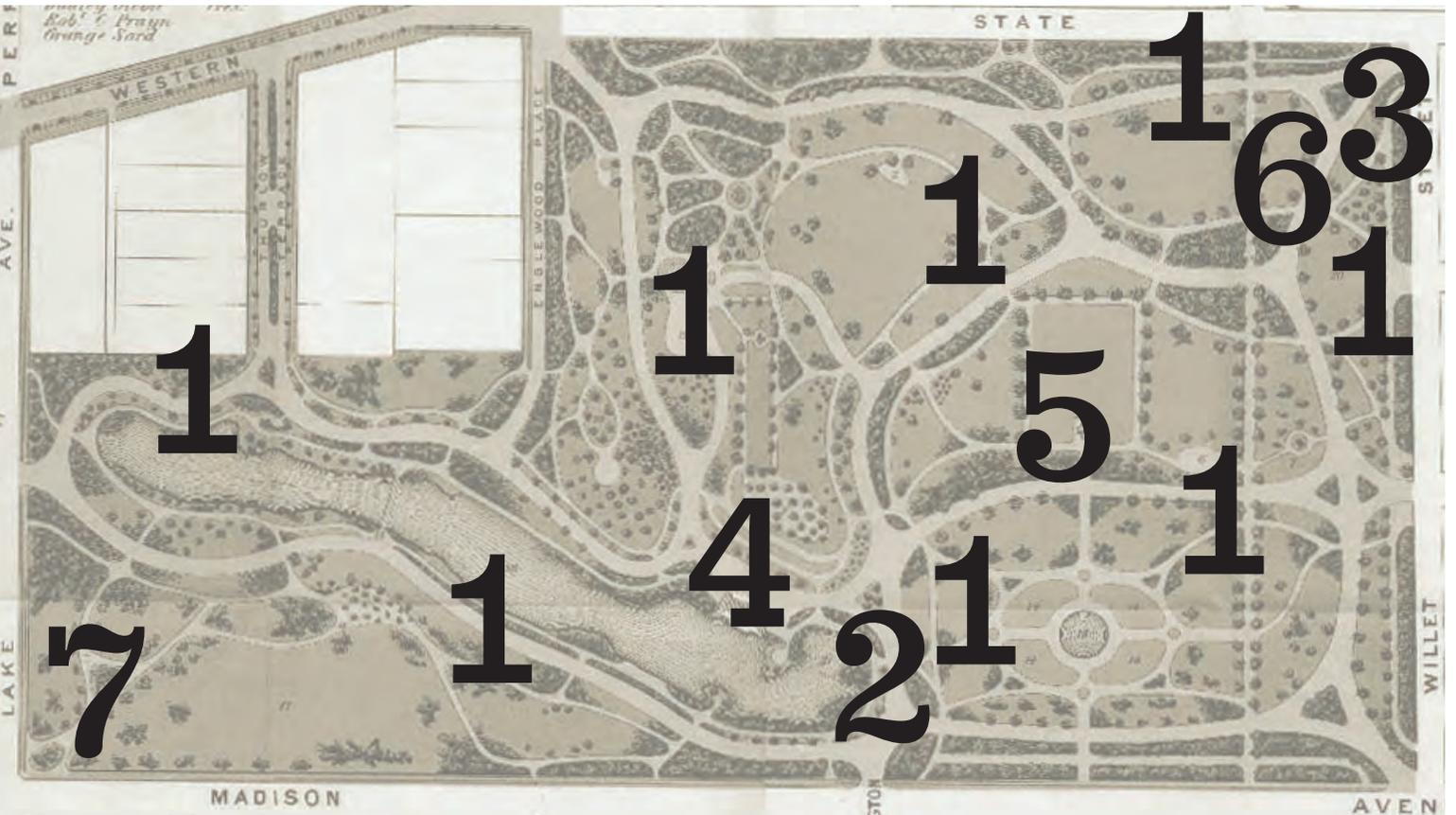




2012



# Twelve new plaques highlight park sites, past and present

# 1



If you've strolled through the park recently, you may have noticed some or all of the new wayside markers that have been installed in key locations throughout the park's 81 acres. Eight markers were installed in the summer and fall of 2012, and an additional four will be placed in spring of 2013.

Using text descriptions, maps, and historic photographs, each of the illustrative markers gives park visitors a sense of the intended atmospheres of various sections of the park, such as the open Meadow near today's playground and the Tropical Garden that once occupied a section of the park along Willett Street. Other markers illustrate the history of existing elements or point out the locations of now-missing structures like a Refectory, Croquet Pavilion, Drinking Fountain Shelter, and large wooden swings.

The wayside marker project was made possible through a generous grant from the Bender Family Foundation and offers the WPC the opportunity to inform visitors of the park's rich past while they explore and enjoy the current park.

# 2

## A new fence at lake's east end

Since the Washington Park Lake was first dug in the mid-1870s, there has been a fence at its east end, near the entrance of the park at the intersection of New Scotland and Madison Avenues. The fence is positioned to guard the lake's overflow, which runs into an underground culvert and could pose a danger to overly enthusiastic park goers considering taking a dive off the retaining wall. In the late 1950s a chain-link fence replaced the original cast- and wrought-iron installation.

This summer the WPC removed a newer, but still unsightly chain-link fence and installed a custom fabricated 5-foot-high fence more befitting the historic park setting. The new fence, fabricated by Swett & Swett Welding of Schenectady, is not a reproduction of the original, which was lower and did not adequately serve its purpose to protect the culvert. The new fence curves gracefully to conform to the stone retaining wall below, allowing the fence to be positioned closer to the lake's edge.

The new fence makes a huge improvement in a prominent and well traveled part of the park. The total project cost was \$8,500, paid for by WPC funds and donations.



# 3

## Restoration of the Soldiers and Sailors Monument

A two-year restoration of the Soldiers and Sailors Monument began in the summer of 2011, and was completed just in time for the October 5, 2012, celebration of the monuments' 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary (see number 6). Western Building Restoration undertook both phases of the work, which included protecting the structure from the elements by filling all open or damaged joints and installing metal caps on the vulnerable joints at the top of the monument. The masonry work continued with the resetting of two granite steps and the repair of another that was badly damaged by a snowplow.

The most striking change was brought about by a careful cleaning of the entire monument, which had grown quite dirty. The bronze seal of the city of Albany required extensive repair and the replacement of a missing section. In addition to the restoration work, stainless steel flanges were installed at the monument's base to better protect it from damage caused by skateboarders.

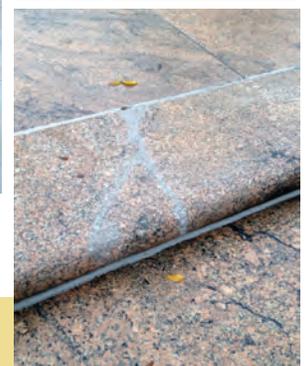
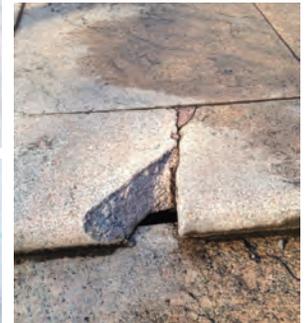
This project has produced a brighter, cleaner, and more pleasing monument more befitting our city's veterans. By undertaking projects of modest scope, such as this, the WPC aims to avoid the need for more costly repair programs such as the extensive restoration that was necessary in 1986. The two-year project was paid for by WPC funds and donations.



(Left) The plaque before and after restoration



(Right) The granite steps before and after restoration



### DID YOU KNOW?

Washington Park's noted design owes more to William Egerton, who served as park superintendent for 36 years (1872 until May 1908), than any other individual.

### DID YOU KNOW?

In 1874, the Washington Park Commissioners "respectfully declined" the gift of an alligator for the park's fledgling menagerie, which until then consisted of little more than a deer paddock.

## Second Annual September Splendor a huge success

September Splendor is Washington Park Conservancy's annual fundraising event. Located at the Washington Park Lakehouse during the month of September, the event features a botanical silent auction. Guests at this year's event enjoyed an amazing wine selection from Capital Wine, scrumptious food catered but Susan Quillio of Spoonful Catering and great jazz. It was a perfect end to the Park's beautiful summer season and a great beginning to its glorious fall.

The event raised \$25,000, which is used toward special capital projects throughout Washington Park. The silent auction included 111 items from 90 different contributors. The botanical-themed auction featured everything from jewelry to original artwork to garden parties to vintage furniture to cookies and produce to wine baskets to bushes to specimen trees and over 80 flowering perennial plants.

# 4

# 5

## Plantings

The City of Albany continues to benefit from the strong support of the Conservancy, which has financed the important tree replacement and landscape restoration efforts in Washington Park. As with every season there were losses of significant specimen plantings; fortunately, these losses were met with fourteen new trees in 2012.

White Pines were planted in the State St. sector to fill the existing groves. Purple (copper) Beech west of the lake bridge addressed the loss of a senior. Sugar Maple, Black Walnut, English Oak, and Serbian Spruce were planted as well.

These additions along with the eleven specimen plantings of 2011 have increased the plant diversity in the park providing shape and color for every season. We look forward to continued partnership in 2013 and the opportunities that will shape the park for the seasons to come.

Tom Pfeiffer (Forester, City of Albany)

### DID YOU KNOW?

**During a “Skating Carnival” held in the park’s early days, refreshments served at the park’s newly completed Refectory were highlighted by “oysters and hot cocoa” - we certainly hope not at the same time!**

### DID YOU KNOW?

**The plot of land now occupied by the Moses statue was originally intended for a memorial for Revolutionary War General Philip Schuyler. In 1925 a statue of Schuyler was placed in front of City Hall.**

## The Soldiers and Sailors Monument’s 100th Birthday & 150th anniversary of the Civil War

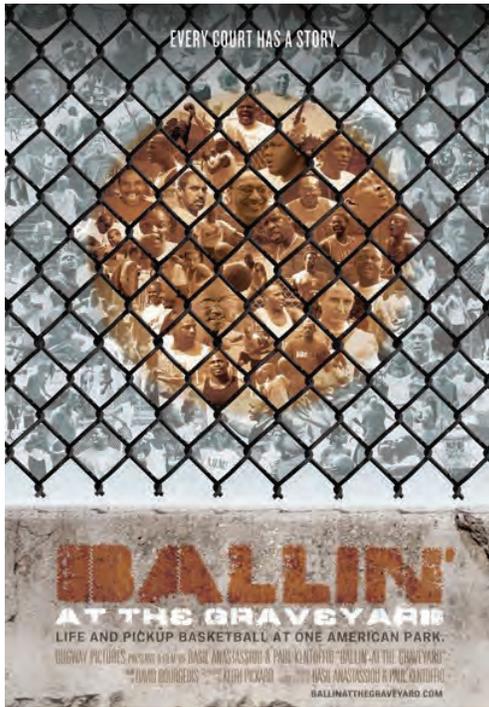
# 6



On October 5, 2012, the Washington Park Conservancy hosted a rededication of the city’s Soldiers and Sailors Monument. The event, which also doubled as the city’s official observation of the 150th anniversary of the beginning of the Civil War, celebrated the largest monument in Washington Park, and was held one hundred years to the day after the monument’s dedication on October 5, 1912.

More than a hundred park visitors and history-buffs turned out to enjoy a spirited performance by the 77th New York Regimental Balladeers, who in authentic period dress played songs heard at the 1912 dedication, including “The Battle Hymn of the Republic” and “Auld Land Syne.” The ceremony was also attended by the Sons of Union Veterans, who acted as the color guard. Between musical performances remarks by Mayor Jerry Jennings, former Assemblyman Jack McEneny, Albany City Historian Tony Opalka, and 1912 Presidential candidate Theodore Roosevelt.....Wait. What????

Okay, so it was not actually TR, but rather Joe Wiegand, a nationally renowned -- and remarkably convincing -- Theodore Roosevelt reprinter who gave a resounding in-character patriotic speech. Following the ceremony the WPC hosted an extremely well-attended reception at the University Club, at which Prof. John Pipkin, vice president of the WPC, presented a lecture on the history of the park. Many thanks to all involved in the Monument’s 100th birthday festivities.



## Movie Highlights Washington Park Tradition

# 7

The Washington Park Conservancy is happy to note that the park's basketball courts were the setting of a well-received 2012 documentary, *Ballin' at the Graveyard*. The film, by Albany residents Basil Anastassiou and Paul Kentofio, played to appreciative audiences for several weeks this summer at the Spectrum 8 Theater. Per the film's website, the documentary "takes a gritty and intimate look into the culture and community of pick-up basketball...and provides a revealing glimpse into the off-the-court struggles and triumphs of a core group of players who call the court their home."

You might think you know Albany and Washington Park, but *Ballin' at the Graveyard* brings an eye-opening and highly entertaining new view -- a must see for all Albanians, whether you're a sports fan or not.

## Washington Park Conservancy announces five Garden Parties planned for 2013

- 1. Guided tour of the new historic markers in Washington Park** followed by a cocktail reception at Beaglehurst - 381 State Street. Frank Greene, the beagle of Beaglehurst, shares his home with Bill Brandow, President of WPC, and Jessica Neidl on April 13th, 2013. \$30 per person. Limited to 12 people.
- 2. Walking History & Tree Tour of Washington Park** with lunch and wine tasting at the Morgan State House. Tour led by John Pipkin and Tom Pfeiffer. Lunch provided by Chuck Kuhtic. Wine tasting by Capital Wine. A classical string quartet will be playing during lunch. Late April 2013 - exact date TBD in January. \$100 per person. Limited to 12 people.
- 3. Pop-Up Dinner among the Tulips.** Dinner for 20 near the tulip beds in Washington Park. Hosted by Mark Brogna & John McLennan. Tuesday, May 7, 2013, 6-8pm. \$75 per person.
- 4. Roving Garden Cocktail Party.** Visit three beautiful Center Square gardens, sip cocktails & nibble hors d'oeuvres. Saturday, June 1, 2013, 6-9 pm. \$50 per person. Limited to 30 people.
- 5. Croquet Tournament.** Friendly match on the Croquet Lawn of Washington Park. Light refreshment provided, Limited to 18 people. \$40 per person. **SOLD OUT!**

**Back by popular demand, our 2013 Garden Parties offer something for everyone. Join neighbors and friends at various locations and help raise funds for the great work of the Washington Park Conservancy. Each party has a unique theme and price. All parties have limited availability so be sure to reserve your spot early.**

**RSVP to [WPCAlbany@gmail.com](mailto:WPCAlbany@gmail.com) or call 462-3173 for more information.**

Join us for the  
**Washington Park Conservancy**  
**Annual Meeting**  
 January 10, 2013, 6:00-8:00 PM  
 Fort Orange Club



**Officers**

William Brandow, President  
 John Pipkin, Vice President  
 Dennis Anderson, Treasurer  
 John McLennan, Secretary

**Directors**

Sandra Baptie  
 Joseph Burke  
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 Chelle Jenkins  
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 Charles Liddle  
 Kate McLaughlin  
 William Pettit  
 Eve Ryan  
 Herb Starr  
 Frances Tarlton

**Ex-Officio**

Nicholas D'Antonio  
 Jessica Morgan  
 Thomas Pfeiffer  
 Lemo Young

**Want to help?**

**Help Keep Washington Park Beautiful!**

Throughout the year the WPC runs interactive clean-up and other events that give conservancy members and friends the chance to lend a hand in keeping the park clean and beautiful. We invite you to come, get your hands dirty, and learn a thing or two you didn't know about Washington Park. Keep your eyes and ears peeled for upcoming clean-up and events!

**Tulips For Sale!**

When Washington Park's renowned tulips are past their peak, the flower beds are prepared for Washington Park's equally fine summer blooms. This means digging up the bulbs...it also means giving you the chance to purchase them for replanting in your own garden or tree surround at home. WPC volunteers, together with city gardener Jessica Morgan and her staff, organize a bulb sale each spring. Do not miss the opportunity to procure some of these world-class tulip bulbs for your garden.

**Lake House Update**

The Lake House is one of the jewels of Washington Park and is a treasured, and very visible, local landmark. We are happy to report that 2011-12 saw some significant improvements to the Lake House, thanks in part to efforts of and contributions to the Washington Park Conservancy. The City restored the building's historic steel windows, returning them to their original shade of brown, and installed new storms. The WPC worked with the City to determine the Lake House's original color scheme and paid to repaint and perform minor repairs on all of the Lake House's exterior doors to match the windows.

**Renew your membership!**

Your support will help the Conservancy restore, preserve, and maintain Washington Park for leisure, recreation, and the appreciation of nature for all of Albany's residents and visitors.

Please fill out and return the enclosed membership form so that you can continue to be involved.