



Malcolm X Boulevard

Virtual Tour of Living Landmarks and Lenox Shadows

Archived Content

This page describes Malcolm X Boulevard as it appeared in 2001. The tour was developed as part of the Malcolm X Boulevard Streetscape Enhancement Project.

Welcome!

Welcome to Malcolm X Boulevard in the heart of Harlem! This online virtual tour highlights the landmarks of Harlem and is available [in printable text form](#).

Introduction:

This tour was developed by the Department of City Planning as part of its Malcolm X Boulevard Streetscape Enhancement Project. The project, which extends from West 110th to West 147th Street, seeks to complement the ongoing capital improvements for Malcolm X Boulevard and take advantage of the growing tourist interest in Harlem. The project proposes a program of streetscape and pedestrian space improvements, including new pedestrian lighting, new sidewalk and median landscaping and the provision of pedestrian amenities, such as seating and pergolas. The Department has been working with Cityscape Institute, the Upper Manhattan Empowerment Zone, the New York City Department of Transportation, and the Department of Design and Construction, and has received implementation funds totaling \$1.2 million through the federal TEA21 Enhancement Funding program for the proposed pedestrian lighting improvements.

As one element of the project, the Department developed this guided tour of the boulevard and neighboring blocks. The tour provides an overview of local area history, and highlights architecturally significant and landmarked buildings, noteworthy cultural and ecclesiastical institutions and other points of interest. A listing of former famous jazz clubs, such as the Cotton Club and Savoy Ballroom, is also provided. Envisioned as an information resource for residents and visitors, the tour is also available in printable text format for use as a hand-held guide for a self-guided walking tour along the boulevard.

How to Get Around:

Harlem is well-served by public transportation. Take either the Number 2 or 3 subway lines to West 110th Street station, or the M2, M3, M4, or M18 buses and get off at Malcolm X Boulevard and Central Park North. The tour begins at Malcolm X Boulevard and Central Park North/West 110th Street.

A Brief History of Malcolm X Boulevard Neighborhood:

First known as Sixth Avenue, the portion of the Boulevard above Central Park from West 110th Street/Central Park North to 147th was named Lenox Avenue in 1887 after a millionaire philanthropist and book-collector. James Lenox donated his private collection as part of the founding material of the New York Public Library. In the late 1980's, the street was again renamed, this time to honor the slain civil rights leader.

Until the mid-19th century, Harlem was a sparsely settled agricultural area. Changing from farmland to a recreational area for New Yorkers, the area was subdivided into lots primed for residential development beginning in the 1850's-60's. The arrival of elevated subway trains (known as the "El") in 1872 began the transformation of Harlem into a suburb for the rapidly growing city. Malcolm X Boulevard runs through five blocks of the Mount Morris Park Historic District. This district features buildings representative of architecture styles spanning a period of more than four decades. Until the end of the 19th century, Mount Morris Park was home to a wealthy Protestant community that supported the many churches on the avenue. Developers, anticipating the arrival of the east side subway line, began building churches, public buildings and elegant speculative houses in the area. Notable New York developers William B. Astor, Oscar Hammerstein, Henry Morgenthau and Oswald Ottendorfer engaged the prominent architects of the day, including Arnold W. Brunner, Hugo Lamb of the firm of Lamb & Rich, George F. Pelham, William A. Potter, J. R. Thomas, Thom & Wilson and James E. Ware. These well-preserved structures, designed in such architectural styles as Romanesque Revival, the French Neo-Grec, and Queen Anne, rival those found on prestigious Fifth and Park Avenues.

In the late 19th century, German and Eastern European Jews moved into the area. These residents built new synagogues and converted several churches for their religious services. During the 1920's, the boulevard became a center for a growing African-American community and the synagogues once again were used as churches. Most notable is the former Temple Israel of Harlem at Malcolm X Blvd. and West 120th Street, the present-day Mount Olivet Church.

The 1930's brought West Indian and Caribbean immigrants to the area, a trend that continues today and is reflected in the restaurants in the neighborhood. Today one sees the growing influence of African immigrants.

The building boom of the 1970's resulted in the construction of new housing projects in Harlem and Malcolm X Blvd. was included in the frenzy. Many low-rise residential buildings from the early 20th century were replaced by superblock developments. Also, lost in that spurt of "urban renewal" were many famous jazz clubs. This guide leads you to their former sites, and also introduces you to those that were spared the fate of "modern improvements."

One of the broadest streets in Manhattan with sidewalks that measure thirty-five feet in width, Malcolm X Boulevard is primarily residential. Convenient public transportation, easy access to New York airports, and recent real estate developments have seen an increase in its function as a main commercial and transportation strip. The future of Harlem in general and Malcolm X Blvd. in particular is looking bright as both investors in the public and private sectors recognize it as the next new place for expansion and development. As we enter the new millennium, the face of Harlem seems destined to change once again.

Have a great tour!

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Virtual Tour of Living Landmarks and Lenox Shadows

Welcome!

Welcome to Malcolm X Boulevard in the heart of Harlem! This virtual tour highlights the Boulevard's landmarks.

The map on the lower left of this page shows the location of the Boulevard in relation to neighboring areas of Manhattan and the Bronx.

Getting around this tour:

Malcolm X Boulevard stretches for about two miles through Central Harlem. There are architectural, historical, cultural and artistic sites along the entire length of the Boulevard. To make it easier to get around, the tour is divided into five sections, each covering from five to eight blocks.

To visit the sites, first select one of the five sections from the map to the right or from the list below:

- [110th to 117th Streets](#)
- [118th to 126th Streets](#)
- [127th to 132nd Streets](#)
- [133rd to 139th Streets](#)
- [140th to 147th Streets](#)

Have a great tour!





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Map of Malcolm X Boulevard - 110th St. to 117th St.

Sites:

1. Central Park, The Harlem Meer - Central Park North/Fifth Avenue

2. The Semiramis - Central Park North between Malcolm X Blvd. and Adam C. Powell Jr., closer to Malcolm X Blvd.

3. Art Underground, Part I - Cathedral Parkway/110th Street and Malcolm X Blvd.

4. Malcolm Shabazz Plaza - W. 110th Street at the confluence of Malcolm X Blvd. and St. Nicholas Avenue

5. P.S. 208 and P.S. 185

Public School 208, Manhattan,
The Alain L. Locke School - 21 W. 111th Street between Malcolm X Blvd. and Fifth Avenue

Public School 185, Manhattan,
The John Mercer Langston School - 20 W. 112th Street between Malcolm X Blvd. and Fifth Avenue

6. Martin Luther King, Jr. Houses - Malcolm X Blvd, between 112th and 115th Streets

7. Masjid Malcolm Shabazz Mosque - (previously Mohammed Temple of Islam), 102 West 116th Street, southwest corner of the Boulevard

8. Intersection of Malcolm X Boulevard and 116th Street

9. Art Underground, Part II - 116th Street Subway Station

10. Malcolm Shabazz Harlem Market - southwest corner of 116th and Malcolm X Blvd.



Maps of the Malcolm X Boulevard Tour:

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1. Central Park, The Harlem Meer

Central Park North/West 110th Street from Malcolm X Boulevard east to Fifth Avenue

This beautiful pond was refurbished by the Central Park Conservancy in 1993. The site of a Parks-sponsored fishing tournament each summer, it is a wonderful place to rest and contemplate the beauty of nature in an urban setting. The Meer is home to geese, ducks, swans, the occasional egret, and, of course, fish and frogs. Central Park encompasses 840 acres in which a wide variety of wildlife thrives. For more information, stop by the **Charles A. Dana Discovery Center**, designed in 1993 by Buttrick, White, Burtis, near Fifth Avenue and Central Park North and ask for a *Harlem Meer Walking Tour Guide*, available in English and Spanish. The Center is open Tuesday to Sunday from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. April to October, and until 4:00 p.m. November to March.



Dana Discovery Center



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2. The Semiramis

Central Park North (W. 110th Street) between Malcolm X Blvd. & Adam C. Powell Blvd.

Designed in 1901 by the architect Henry Anderson, the Semiramis remains a stately apartment building that commands a breathtaking view of Central Park. The maroon brick and rough-cut stone of the facade pay homage to Semiramis, a mythical Assyrian queen known for her beauty. Unfortunately, the ornate cornice has been offered as a sacrifice to the gods of time and erosion.



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3. Art Underground, Part I

In the entrance to the subway (2 and 3 lines) on the northwest corner of Malcolm X Blvd. and W. 110th Street/Central Park North

This piece, tentatively entitled "Message from Malcolm," was created by Maren Hassinger. It consists of mosaics for the station's entrance and interior. Text from some of Malcolm X's speeches in the fashion of Islamic Kufi writing is included, along with African and African-American ideograms symbolizing unity, love, word, speech, meeting and prowess.

Art Underground Mosaic



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4. Malcolm Shabazz Plaza

W. 110th Street at the confluence of Malcolm X Blvd. and St. Nicholas Avenue

Malcolm X Blvd. is intersected by **St. Nicholas Avenue**, a street that has been traveling diagonally southeast since it crossed W. 124th Street. This merging of streets finds a graceful termination in a newly refurbished public plaza. This former traffic island was converted into a memorial to the late civil rights leader. Completed in the Summer of 2000, the design includes plantings, trees, seating and special paving treatments, creating a contemplative space at this otherwise busy intersection. Community residents plan to erect a statue of Malcolm X in the near future.

Malcolm Shabazz Plaza (looking south)



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5. P.S. 208 and P.S.185

Public School 208, Manhattan, The Alain L. Locke School (21 W. 111th Street between Malcolm X Blvd. and Fifth Avenue)

Public School 185, Manhattan, The John Mercer Langston School (20 W. 112th Street between Malcolm X Blvd. and Fifth Avenue)

Both schools, built in 1968, were designed by the firm of Katz, Waisman, Weber. Their modest schemes employ brick and exposed aggregate on the facade. They are notable for the graphic representation of the school letters which lends a sense of sophistication.

P.S. 208 (front)



Looking west from the corner of Malcolm X Blvd. and West 112th Street, you will be able to see the stately glory of **The Cathedral of Saint**

John the Divine located on Amsterdam Avenue and W. 112th Street, overlooking Harlem.

Cathedral of Saint John the Divine (looking west)



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6. Martin Luther King, Jr. Houses

East side of Malcolm X Blvd. from W. 112th to W. 115th Streets

Typical of public housing projects built in the early 1950's, these international style monoliths were erected in phases and finally completed in 1954. The portion on Malcolm X Blvd., named in memory of the slain civil rights leader, is part of a series of four contiguous public housing developments that extend from Malcolm X Blvd. east to First Avenue between W. 112th and W. 115th Streets. In 1991 there were 1,379 dwelling units and an estimated 3,534 tenants at Martin Luther King, Jr. Houses, alone. Also included in "public housing row" are the Senator Robert A. Taft Houses from Fifth to Park Avenues, James W. Johnson Houses from Park to Third Avenues and Jefferson Houses from Third to First Avenues, bringing the total to 5,652 dwelling units and an estimated 14,254 residents. This figure may be higher due to the recent increase in extended families. The complexes have playgrounds, public open space, and other amenities for the residents.

Martin Luther King Jr. Houses (from 113 looking North)



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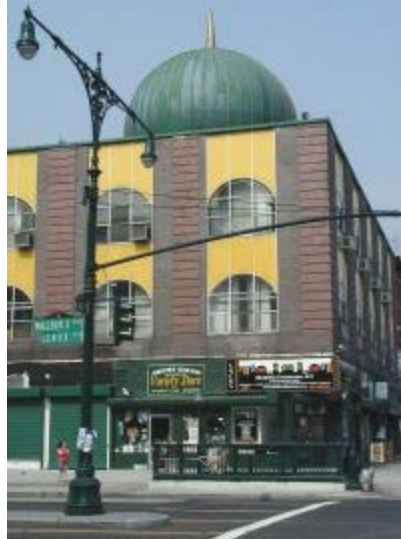
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7. Masjid Malcolm Shabazz Mosque

(previously Mohammed Temple of Islam) 102 West 116th Street, southwest corner of the Boulevard

Formerly the Lenox Casino, this building was reborn as a mosque following the assassination of Malcolm X and became the center of Muslim life in Harlem. The 1965 renovation by Sabbath Brown introduced the traditional features of middle-eastern architecture such as arches and the aluminum dome, once topped by a golden crescent.



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8. Intersection of Malcolm X Boulevard and 116th Street

Always a site of great activity, the corner of Lenox Avenue and W. 116th Street in 1880 was the venue for the "Central Park Bull-Fight." For \$1.50 one could watch "The Celebrated (Toreros) Spanish Bull-Fighters," challenge "Six Wild Texas Bulls!!!"



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9. Art Underground, Part II


In the W. 116th Street subway station (2 and 3 lines)

In the W. 116th Street Station, artist Vincent Smith has created murals featuring jazz and cultural figures from Harlem, including Miles Davis, Charlie Parker, Sarah Vaughn and Dinah Washington. It is Smith's intention to "capture the lyricism and spirit of the African Diaspora within the Harlem community." This depiction of the heroes and landmarks of Harlem is the first chapter in a story that is continued at the W. 125th Street Station and concludes at W.135th Street.

Detail of Mural: Movers and Shakers by Vincent Smith, 1999





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10. Malcolm Shabazz Harlem Market

At the mid-block on the south side of West 116th Street between Malcolm X Blvd. and Fifth Avenue

The vendors at this market are mostly immigrants from the various nations of West Africa. Their stalls feature many colorful items like textiles, wood carvings, clothing, music and foods from countries such as Ghana and Nigeria. When you enter the market, you will find a friendly atmosphere and reasonable prices.



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Sites:

11. The Mount Morris Park Historic District -

118th Street to 124th Street

12. Mount Olivet Baptist Church -

201 to 203 Malcolm X Blvd., northwest corner West 120th Street

13. 3 West 120th Street

14. Mount Morris Park West -

(serves as a detour for traffic traveling down Fifth Avenue from 124th to 120th Sts.)

15. Marcus Garvey Park

16. Fire Watch Tower -

Marcus Garvey Park around 121st to 122nd Streets

17. Commandment Keepers Ethiopian Hebrew

Congregation - 31 Mount Morris Park West, northwest corner of 123rd Street

18. 26-30 Mount Morris Park West

19. Mount Morris Ascension Presbyterian

Church - 16-20 Mount Morris Park West, southwest corner of West 122nd Street

20. 4 to 16 West 122nd Street

21. 7 to 21 West 122nd Street

22. 11 to 14 Mount Morris Park West and West 121st Street

23. 1 to 9 and 10 Mount Morris Park West -

(120th to 121st Streets)

24. 4 to 22 and 13 to 21 West 121st Street

25. Ebenezer Gospel Tabernacle -

225 Malcolm X Blvd., northwest corner of West 121 Street

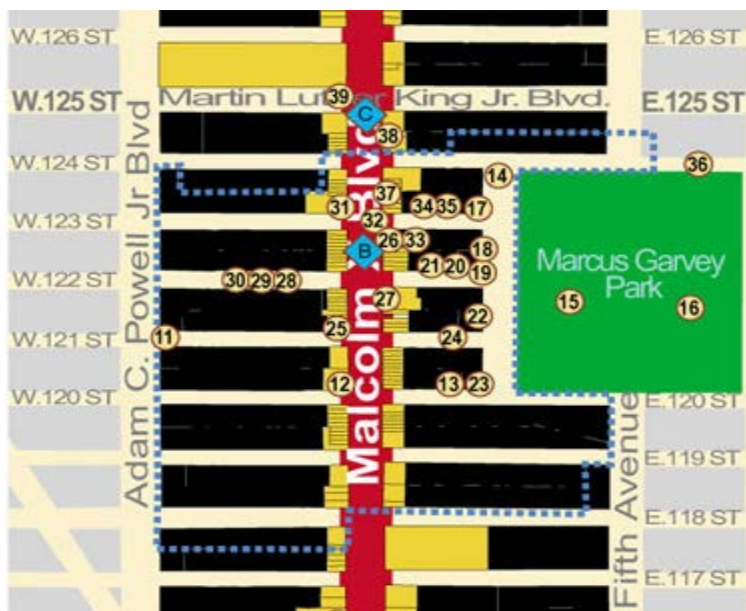
26. Victorian Row -

east side of the street, from 120th to 123rd Streets

a. 200 to 218 Malcolm X Blvd. - east side of Malcolm X Blvd. between 120th and 121st Streets

b. 220-228 Malcolm X Blvd. - east side of Malcolm X Blvd. between 121st and 122nd Streets

c. 240-24 Malcolm X Blvd. - east side of Malcolm X Blvd. between 122nd and 123rd Streets



27. St. Martin's Episcopal Church -

230 Malcolm X Blvd., southeast corner of West 122nd Street

28. 103-111 West 122nd Street -

between Malcolm X Blvd. and Adam C. Powell Jr. Blvd. on the north side of the street

29. 131 West 122nd Street -

between Malcolm X Blvd. and Adam C. Powell Jr. Blvd. on the north side of the street

30. 133-143 West 122nd Street -

between Malcolm X Blvd. and Adam C. Powell Jr. Blvd. on the north side of the street

31. Ephesus Seventh Day Adventist Church -

267 Lenox Avenue, northwest corner West 123rd Street

32. Bethelite Community Baptist Church -

34 West 123rd Street, southeast corner

33. Greater Bethel A.M.E. Church -

32 West 123rd Street, southeast corner of Malcolm X Blvd. and 123rd

34. 28-30 West 123rd Street -

West 123rd Street toward Marcus Garvey Park

35. 4 - 26 West 123rd Street

36. New York Public Library, Harlem Branch -

9-11 West 124th Street, between Fifth and Madison Avenues

37. James Van Der Zee Studio - 272 MXB at 124th Street

38. Lenox Lounge - 288 MXB between 124th and 125th Streets, east side

39. Art Underground, Part III - 125th Street Subway Station

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11. The Mount Morris Park Historic District

Malcolm X Blvd. from 119th to 121st Streets

In 1971, this neighborhood was designated an Historic District by the New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission, one of the earliest landmarked districts in the five boroughs. It encompasses a 16-block area in Central Harlem, going north from West 118th to West 124th Streets and west from Fifth Avenue to Adam Clayton Powell, Jr. Boulevard (Seventh Avenue). The district includes a remarkable cross-section of late 19th- and early 20th-century residential and church architecture representing all of the various eclectic styles associated with the Gilded Age. "Doctors' Row" (West 122nd Street), Mount Morris Park West, and Malcolm X Boulevard demonstrate the remarkable survival of substantially unaltered 19th-century streetscapes, rare in most areas of Manhattan.

The rocky hill of Manhattan mica-schist that dominates Mount Morris Park was popular among Native American tribes as a look-out point from which one could see over the entire island. Dutch colonists who established the town of Nieuw Haarlem in 1658 called it Slang Berg, which translates to Snake Hill. During the War of Independence, the hill's strategic position near the mouth of the Harlem River led to a series of skirmishes between the patriots and the British. On September 4, 1839, a residential square named Mount Morris Square was established on just over 20 acres of the old Benson family land grant farm. Shortly thereafter, it became part of the New York City public park system as Mount Morris Park.

119th to 121st Street and Malcolm X Blvd.



Many New Yorkers came up to Mount Morris Park from the more congested areas of the city to enjoy country walks and picnics well into the late 1870's. The area also enjoyed a colorful history as an entertainment venue. The Benson farm was the site of the former Harlem Trotting Course, a race track extending from 120th and 134th Streets between Madison and Fifth Avenues.

The park was renamed Marcus Garvey Park in 1973, honoring the charismatic leader of the international Pan-African movement. Garvey (1887-1940) was spokesman and President of the short-lived nation known as the "Republic of Africa," and maintained his headquarters in Harlem.

To honor the rich heritage of the Historic District and of Harlem, the Mount Morris Park Community Improvement Association (MMPCIA) was formed in 1981. These concerned and committed residents of Harlem's elegant brownstone neighborhoods and proud members of its churches are striving to create a 21st Century Renaissance. They are involved in promoting sites such as the historic Apollo Theatre, the National Black Theatre, the Schomburg Library, the Studio Museum of Harlem, and the many fine soul food, African, and Caribbean restaurants in Central Harlem. They are the sponsors of an annual Historic Neighborhood House Tour (usually the second weekend in June), featuring historic brownstones and other landmarked buildings in the area for public view.



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12. Mount Olivet Baptist Church

201-203 Malcolm X Boulevard on the northwest corner with West 120th Street - Designated New York City Historic Landmark

Typical of how both residents and churches moved around Manhattan, Mount Olivet Baptist Church and its congregation were originally located in the Rockefeller Center area. The church is housed today in the former Temple Israel of Harlem, one of the City's most noted synagogues of the early 20th-century German Jewish Community. This structure was built in the Neo-Roman Style as designed by Arnold W. Brunner in 1906-07. Brunner studied at the École des Beaux Arts in Paris and was at the forefront of the design of grand Classical Revival synagogues. The current congregation is to be commended for maintaining the building in such exemplary condition since they acquired it in 1925.



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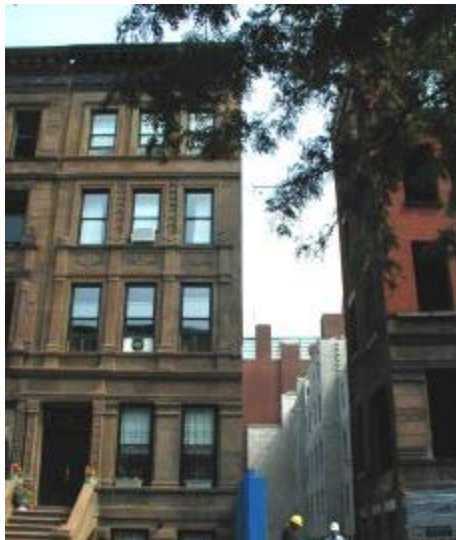


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13. 3 West 120th Street

This is the boyhood home of the songwriter Richard Rodgers, one half of the famous Rogers and Hammerstein duo. They are known for such musical theater classics as *South Pacific*, *The King and I*, and *The Sound of Music*.



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14. Mount Morris Park West

Mt. Morris Park West, between 121st and 122nd Streets

Historic Landmark

Across from Marcus Garvey Park are fine examples of late 19th century townhouses. This street, which serves as a detour for traffic traveling down Fifth Avenue from 124th to 120th Streets, is tangible evidence of the glory the area once experienced. The mere survival of this unbroken row of homes and churches facing the park speaks to the special significance of the District; it is an example rarely found in Manhattan. In the 1850's and, indeed, until much later, the streets in the District were unpaved and builders dumped surplus earth in the roads to improve the grading. A property map of the area dated 1848 indicates that Morris Park West was called "The New Avenue." That map also explains the sharp diagonal of the boundary of the Historic District, established by the direction of the old Manhattan Road.

Mt. Morris Park West, between 121st and 122nd Streets



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15. Marcus Garvey Park

The 20-acre park was originally known as Mount Morris Park and was a public, residential square in 1839. It was renamed to honor Marcus Garvey, the international Pan-African leader, spokesman and President of the short-lived nation known as the "Republic of Africa", who maintained his headquarters in Harlem. Neighborhood residents takes advantage of the park's indoor and outdoor recreation spaces, such as the **Pelham Fritz Recreation Center** (entrance at Mt. Morris Park West & 122nd Street) open Monday to Friday, 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m., Saturday 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Turn right upon entering building. Men's room before, women's room past the drinking fountain. Not handicapped-accessible. The park also boasts an Olympic-size swimming pool that is free to the public. The pool is open from the 4th of July until Labor Day.



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16. Fire Watch Tower

On the highest point of Marcus Garvey Park, around W. 121st to W. 122nd Streets - Designated New York City Historic Landmark

Long before the advent of the modern methods of fighting fires, it was common to build tall bell towers for the purpose of spotting fires and summoning volunteer firefighters. Men employed as bell ringers would spend long shifts on the lookout, with minimum protection from the elements provided by the enclosure at the top. If a fire was sighted, they would send out an alarm by ringing the bell. Someone from the fire station would run to the tower to receive the location of the fire, and the horse-drawn fire wagon would rush to the scene. Bucket brigades would form at the fire and attempt to douse the blaze.

The City of New York sponsored a competition early in 1855 to erect a fire bell tower in Mount Morris Square. Although virtually unknown, a design by engineer Julius Kroehl won out over the more famous James Bogardus. To this day, Bogardus is widely known for his pioneering designs in cast-iron construction, many of which still survive in New York's SoHo district.

Kroehl's tower rises 47 feet, given extra viewing advantage by the higher elevation of the site. In 1851, a telegraph alarm system was established but the bell was still rung to call out the local firemen, a



volunteer force until 1868. As the City's real estate developed, building heights increased and the view from the fire towers became increasingly obscured. In the 1870's, the street alarm box system was expanded. By 1880, all fire watchmen were discharged and the towers demolished as the properties on which they sat were developed. The last of these civic monuments remaining in the five boroughs, the Mount Morris bell tower is also the oldest cast-iron structure in New York City and is a source of pride for the neighborhood. Its existence was saved from developers largely because it was not in the way of development but also due to the massive rock outcropping on which it rests. The rock would be expensive and difficult to remove, even with today's technology. It was designated a landmark in 1976 by the New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission.



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17. Commandment Keepers Ethiopian Hebrew Congregation

31 Mount Morris Park West, northwest corner of W. 123rd Street - Historic Landmark

This former residence was designed in 1890 by Frank H. Smith for the John Dwight family. Following the lead of McKim, Mead & White, Smith employed the neo-Renaissance style of architecture recently introduced to the neighborhood by this prominent firm; the entrance is especially noteworthy. Dwight was the baking soda baron whose famous "Arm & Hammer" brand continues to enjoy popularity today. A sanatorium for many years after the Dwights left, the mansion was acquired by the Ethiopian Hebrew Congregation which converted it into a synagogue in 1962. The Commandment Keepers are members of a centuries-old Jewish tradition which maintains that Africans are descendants of the one of the lost tribes of Israel.



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18. 26-30 Mount Morris Park West

Historic Landmark

These three brownstones by A.B. Van Dusen (1880-81) are designed in the Neo-Grec style, featuring stylized floral carving, massive stone newel posts on the stairs, and porticoed entrances.



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19. Mount Morris Ascension Presbyterian Church

16-20 Mount Morris Park West, southwest corner of West 122nd Street - Designated New York City Historic Landmark

Designed in 1905-06 by Thomas H. Poole, this edifice began its existence as Mount Morris Presbyterian Church. It was renamed Harlem-New York Presbyterian Church in 1915 after a merger, and finally became the Mount Morris Ascension Presbyterian Church. This last incarnation resulted when the remaining white congregation decamped in 1942, finding themselves outnumbered by the black parishioners. Andrew Dolkart, architectural historian, remarks that this is "Unquestionably one of the oddest church buildings in New York, ... clad in rough granite with vertical bands of gold Roman brick." (Historic Harlem, page 41)



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20. 4 to 16 West 122nd Street

Only two short years after completing this notable row of homes in 1888-89, architect William B. Tuthill found himself the fortunate recipient of the commission to design Carnegie Hall, quite unusual for a relatively unknown member of the profession. For these homes, his design is a conservative version of Renaissance carvings and stained glass. The high stoop entrances have immense newel posts and many turns, exceeded in their majesty by those on the homes across the street (next site).

Doctor's Row



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21. 7 to 21 West 122nd Street

Residential occupancy of the houses on this street, such as these designed by the architectural firm of Robert Cleverdon & Joseph Putzel , has been stable since their construction in 1887-88.



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22. 11 to 14 Mount Morris Park West and West 121st Street

Inspired by 18th-century French architecture, James E. Ware designed these five brick houses with gables and a corner tower that originally sported a conical roof and wrought iron finial. When completed in 1889, they were purchased by business and professional men with families and live-in servants. Around 1930, black families began to move into the neighborhood. Escalating rents forced them to take in boarders to supplement their incomes, and resulted in crowded living conditions, leading to the carving up of the space and the eventual rise of slums in Harlem.



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23. 1 to 9 and 10 Mount Morris Park West

Deteriorating behind a forbidding fence and situated next to a former women's prison, New York State acquired this series of once elegant houses by eminent domain in 1968. Numbers 1-5, designed by Gilbert A. Schellenger in 1893 and Numbers 6-10, designed by Edward L. Angell in 1891, were slated for demolition and the construction of a drug rehabilitation center was proposed. Thanks to community opposition, however, that plan was abandoned. In 2000, the ten sites, including the corner site (a former New York State minimum security women's prison), were acquired by the Harlem Community Development Corporation and will be developed into market-rate private homes. The proposed designs intend to respect the historic architectural traditions of the surrounding Mount Morris Park Historic District.



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24. 4 to 22 and 13 to 21 West 121st Street

The firm of Cleverdon and Putzel, architects of speculative row houses, was the most prolific design team in the Mount Morris Park area. This series of homes (1887-90) is typical of middle-class housing created by untrained designers for developers who realized reasonable profits by employing non-professionals. The capriciously carved details in the form of humorous faces add a liveliness to the otherwise standard brownstone design of the time. One wonders who the models for these characters were, and if they were flattered by their likenesses!

9 West 121st Street (detail)



4 - 14 West 121st Street



13 - 21st West 121st Street



17 West 121st Street (detail)



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25. Ebenezer Gospel Tabernacle

225 Malcolm X Boulevard on the northwest corner with West 121st Street

A design by Charles Atwood built in 1889-91, this Gothic Revival edifice was the first Unitarian church north of 34th Street. By 1919, membership at Lenox Avenue Unitarian Church had diminished substantially and the building was sold to Jewish Orthodox immigrants. The congregation of Chebra Ukadisha B'nai Israel Mikalwarie lived in nearby tenements and were mostly poor. By 1942, dwindling attendance and a change in demographics prompted a return to Christian worship. The current African-American congregation reflects this shift, which remains constant today.



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Malcolm X Boulevard

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26 a., b. & c. Victorian Row

On the east side of Malcolm X Blvd. from W. 120th to W. 123rd Streets - Designated New York City Historic Landmark

Near St. Martin's Episcopal Church at West 122nd Street, it is remarkable how the uniform design of the facades still lends a rhythm and scale to the street. The addresses are...

a. 200 to 218 Malcolm X Boulevard

With mansard roofs, classical architectural elements and a hint of Dutch design influence, this series of townhouses by the firm of de Meuron and Smith in 1888 recalls the late 19th-century residential character of the Boulevard. The interiors of such houses were usually as grand if not more so than the exteriors, with carved wood balusters and heavy paneling on the formal floors, well designed built-in storage on each floor, and gracious gardens at the rear.

b. 220-228 Malcolm X Boulevard

These structures amazingly still have their original stoops, bearing witness to the majesty of the Boulevard at the turn of the century. The formality of the entrance functions as a strong design element along a wide street such as this. It also serves as a means of establishing a hierarchy of private versus public space and classifying those who enter the home by social level, servants versus family and friends. The service entrance is located beneath the stair landing, hence the term "upstairs, downstairs."

c. 240-248 Malcolm X Boulevard

These five beautiful Victorian rowhouses are a perfect example of what a difference careful renovation can make in the appearance of the street. The building on the corner has been lovingly restored; the four adjacent buildings going north on Malcolm X Blvd. are of identical design, but survive in varying degrees of disrepair. However, they serve as a record of each other's missing elements. For example, by studying all five, one notices that the front of the restored corner version is missing an original bay window but has had the cast iron cresting detail replaced on the roof edge.

a. Victorian Row 200 to 218



b. Victorian Row 220-228



c. Victorian Row 240 to 248



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Malcolm X Boulevard

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27. St. Martin's Episcopal Church

230 Malcolm X Boulevard, southeast corner of West 122nd Street within Victorian Row - Designated New York City Historic Landmark

The Landmarks Preservation Commission named this granite structure "undoubtedly the handsomest example" of the Romanesque Revival architectural style in all of Manhattan (Landmarks Preservation Commission Designation Report, 1970, page 3). Harkening back to European buildings of the eleventh century, this church design by William A. Potter was built from 1887-89. Two fires, the latest in 1939, caused extensive damage to the building, leaving only the stone walls standing. Restoration each time speaks to the strong resolve of the congregation of St. Martin's. In the late 1940's, the members of the church commissioned the manufacture and installation of a 42-bell carillon in the tower. This largest of percussion instruments, manufactured in the Netherlands and installed in 1949, is the second largest in New York City. The church involves itself with the secular side of neighborhood life as well -- the St. Martin's Federal Credit Union is



the oldest such institution affiliated with a church. The Credit Union was founded in 1937 by Reverend John H. Johnson to make it possible for African-Americans to obtain mortgages and acquire real property, thus empowering them in a segregated society. The church has gained popularity with Japanese tourists in recent years as a site for wedding ceremonies. Concerts on the carillon are featured each June as part of the Mount Morris Park Historic House Tour.



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28. 103-111 West 122nd Street

The design firm of Thom and Wilson produced many speculative rowhouses in the neighborhood as the elevated railways opened Harlem to development. These five houses from 1887-88 exhibit ornate details such as the carved wooden doors and Moorish-style horseshoe arches. Close examination of the masonry will reward the observer with other delights such as fruits, birds, sea creatures and winged griffins.

Detail of 109 West 122nd Street



107-111 West 122nd Street



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29. 131 West 122nd Street

Architect Julius Franke exhibited the strong influence of famed architect Henry Hobson Richardson when designing this Romanesque Revival house in 1890. The rough texture of the massive blocks in the round arches and on the facade suggest the origin of the limestone brought from an Indiana quarry by rail.



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30. 133-143 West 122nd Street

Next-door neighbors to the previously mentioned home, these five rowhouses were designed by Francis H. Kimball and constructed from 1885-87. They were not, however, part of the speculative development rush of the era. Kimball's architectural training in England is evident in his design of these beautifully integrated Queen Anne-style homes which are spectacular examples of the genre.



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31. Ephesus Seventh Day Adventist Church

267 Malcolm X Boulevard on the northwest corner of West 123rd Street - Designated New York City Historic Landmark

The Gothic-inspired Reformed Low Dutch Church of Harlem (later, Second Reform Church of Harlem) was designed in 1885-87 by architect John Rochester Thomas and built of Ohio sandstone. Careful inspection of the facade's lower level reveals carved corbel details in the shape of monsters and a mysterious man with a mustache between the doors. The truncated chimney-like steeple, a victim of a fire that destroyed the church's original interior, makes the it visible for blocks up and down the Boulevard. Booker T. Washington gave a sermon at Ephesus and the famous Boys Choir of Harlem was founded here in 1968.



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32. Bethelite Community Baptist Church

34 West 123rd Street - Designated New York City Historic Landmark

Another of the Boulevard's noteworthy examples of the Queen Anne style is the present-day Bethelite Community Baptist Church. This red brick and terra cotta building with "Richardsonian Romanesque" details was designed by Lamb & Rich in 1888-89 for the Harlem Club, a group of influential Protestant families living in the neighboring new rowhouses. Due to dissension among the members, the club disbanded and a bank foreclosure in 1907 ended the affiliation. It has been used as a church since 1947. Architectural historian Andrew Dolkart writes, "The roof line of the Lenox Avenue frontage is especially fine with its central gable flanked by tall chimneys, and two spectacular hooded dormers clad in Spanish tile." ("Historic Harlem," page 38)



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33. Greater Bethel A.M.E. Church

32 West 123rd Street, southeast corner of Malcolm X Boulevard and W. 123rd Street - Designated New York City Historic Landmark

One of the oldest black churches in New York, the Greater Bethel A.M.E. was founded in Lower Manhattan in 1819 and moved into the Harlem Library building in the early twentieth century. Edgar K. Bourne, architect of this limestone and brick building constructed from 1891-1892, was also a member of the library's board of trustees. The church moved into the structure on West 123rd Street when the Harlem Library was moved to 9-11 West 124th Street after being added to the New York Public Library System in 1901.



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34. 28-30 West 123rd Street

Notice the unusual narrowness of these two dwellings -- they measure just thirteen feet wide as opposed to the typical twenty foot width of rowhouses such as those to the east. John E. Terhune designed these Queen Anne brick and stone homes in 1884-85 with a freedom from design constraints not previously accepted by clients and developers. This departure from the boxiness of traditional brownstones allowed Terhune to include lively ornamentation such as the floral panels below the windows of the parlor floor and the original wooden doors.



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35. 4-26 West 123rd Street

The "brownstone" of these homes designed in 1880-82 by Charles Baxter is the same as that employed in elegant residences found in mid-town Manhattan. Quarried for the most part in Connecticut, Indiana, or in Canada at New Brunswick's Bay of Fundy, brownstone is actually sandstone. It is prized for the rich color and its facility for carving the ornate details so popular of the style. Brownstone style is identified, in addition to the masonry, by the high stoops, incised ornamentation, and bracketed roof cornices.



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36. New York Public Library, Harlem Branch

9-11 West 124th Street, between Fifth and Madison Avenues - Designated New York City Historic Landmark

Designed by McKim, Mead & White, 1907-09, this library is one of many whose construction was funded by the philanthropic endeavors of Andrew Carnegie, a Scottish immigrant who made his fortune in the steel industry. The Harlem Center for Reading and Writing is also located here. Founded in 1985, it enriches the lives of all in the neighborhood who aspire to higher learning. Inquire at the front desk for information on rest rooms. You may be asked to check any large bags, backpacks and/or coats before venturing past the lobby.



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37. James Van Der Zee Studio

272 Malcolm X Boulevard at W. 124th Street

{ The most noted photographer of the Harlem Renaissance, James Van Der Zee had his *G.G.G.*

Photo Studio in the basement of this building designed by Charles H. Beer, 1885-86. Van Der Zee's most famous photographs chronicle the Harlem Community of the 1920's and 30's. From birth to death, in church and on the street, Van Der Zee recorded how people inhabited Harlem and its buildings. The Schomburg Center for Research in Black History has many of his photographs in their collection.



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38. Lenox Lounge

288 Malcolm X Boulevard between W. 124th and W. 125th Streets, east side

This lively jazz establishment is a classic example of art deco lounge design from the 1930's. It has operated continuously since opening over 50 years ago and still features live performances. The newly-renovated interior retains the original art deco lighting fixtures, bar, and other details that have made it a popular location for Hollywood film makers and magazine photo shoots. Stop by and savor the ambience of the days when jazz ruled Harlem. (Call 212-722-9566 for performance schedules.)



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39. Art Underground, Part III

In the W. 125th Street subway station (2 and 3 lines)

Inspired by a Lionel Hampton composition, *Flying Home: Harlem Heroes and Heroines* by Faith Ringgold is the second chapter of **Art Underground** that tells the story of Harlem's history and heroes. An array of performers, painters, sports heroes, artists, writers, musicians, civil rights activists, and religious leaders appear to be flying joyfully through the air. She also illustrates children's story books and has created cloth dolls representing the stories' main characters. Ringgold's piece connects with those of Vincent Smith and Willie Birch, creating a three-chapter story for the subway stations at West 116th, 125th and 135th Streets.

Detail of "Flying Home: Harlem Heroes and Heroines", by Faith Ringgold, 1996"



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40. 12 West 129th Street

41. Metropolitan Baptist Church - 151 West 128th Street, northeast corner of Adam C. Powell Jr. Blvd.

42. Astor Row - 8-62 West 130th Street, between Malcolm X Blvd. and Fifth Avenue

43. Lafayette Theater Area - Harlem Shadows, Malcolm X Blvd. to Frederick Douglas Blvd., and 130th to 133rd



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40. 12 West 129th Street

Designated New York City Historic Landmark

The Moorish porch on the front of this circa 1863 home was added in 1882 and features cut-out details formed by hand using a scroll saw.



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41. Metropolitan Baptist Church

151 West 128th Street on the northeast corner of Adam C. Powell Blvd.

Originally the New York Presbyterian Church, this edifice was designed by John R. Davis in 1884; the auditorium was added in 1890 by Richard R. Davis. The white stone facade is brightened by polished orange granite columns capped by Romanesque "Afro" capitals. Note the graceful conical roof sweeping nobly towards heaven.



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Malcolm X Boulevard

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42. Astor Row

8-62 West 130th Street, between Malcolm X Blvd. and Fifth Avenue - Designated New York City Historic Landmark

A rare remnant of Harlem's suburban past, Astor Row is an excellent example of a residential neighborhood on the verge of urbanization. Sited on the former Astor family estate, these homes have gracious front yards and wooden porches reminding us of the days when neighbors socialized on summer evenings and the street was your extended family. Note the contrast in scale to the brownstone buildings across the street. The restoration of these remarkable homes is the work of Harlem architect Roberta Washington.



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Malcolm X Boulevard

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43. Lafayette Theater Historic Area

From W. 130th to W. 133rd Streets from Malcolm X Blvd. to Frederick Douglass Boulevard

This area is currently under consideration for designation as a historic district by the Landmarks Commission. Between 1915 and 1932, the Lafayette Theatre served as a venue for various black stock acting companies when there were few serious roles for black performers on Broadway. A large portion of three-story brownstone rowhouses in Central Harlem are found in this area. Similar in design, scale and scope, these homes illustrate the impact well-designed Renaissance Revival rowhouses in concentration can make in an urban setting. The Williams Christian Methodist Episcopal Church occupies the former Lafayette Theatre at 2225 Adam Clayton Powell, Jr. Boulevard, between W. 131st and W. 132nd Street, on the east side.

Brownstones along 131st Street



Williams Christian Methodist Episcopal Church



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45. J. Rozier Hansborough Recreation Center - 35 West 134th Street between Malcolm X Blvd. and Fifth Avenue

46. Art Underground, Part IV - 135th Street Subway Station

47. Pig Foot Mary's - Corner of Malcolm X Blvd. and West 135th Street

48. Harlem Branch YMCA - 180 West 135th Street, between Malcolm X Blvd. and Adam C. Powell Jr. Blvd.

49. Schomburg Library Historic Area - 135th to 136th Streets from Malcolm X Blvd. to Adam C. Powell Jr. Blvd.

50. Schomburg Center for Research in Black

Culture - 515 Malcolm X Blvd., northwest corner of West 135th Street

51. Countee Cullen Branch, New York Public

Library - 104 West 136th Street, west of Malcolm X Blvd.

52. Harlem Hospital Center

- 506 Malcolm X Blvd. between 135th and 137th Streets, east side of the street

53. Mother A.M.E. Zion Church - 151 West 128th Street, northeast corner of Adam C. Powell Jr. Blvd.

54. Abyssinian Baptist Church - 132-142 West 138th Street



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44. Lenox Terrace

West 132nd to West 135th Streets, east side of Malcolm X Blvd.

Set back from the street, this complex of sixteen-story towers designed in 1957 by S. J. Kessler and Sons for 1,100 middle-income residents, demonstrates the popularity of the 'tower in park' design of new residential development in the post-World War II period. The apartments are primarily owner-occupied co-operative units.



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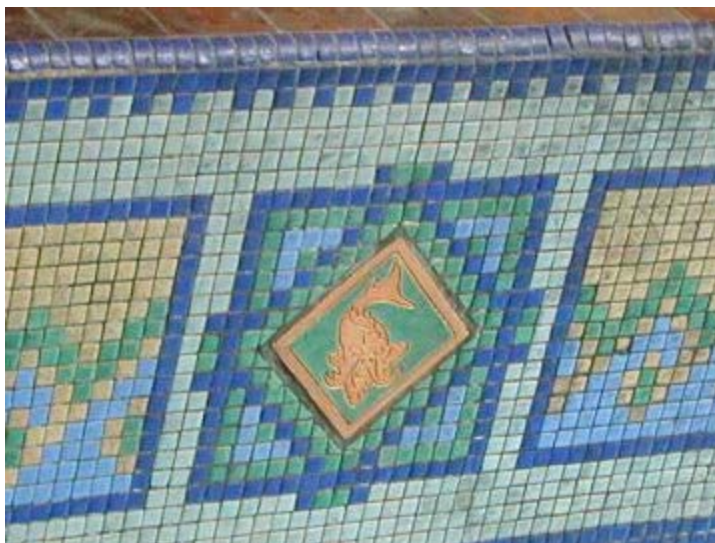
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45. J. Rozier Hansborough Recreation Center

35 West 134th Street between Malcolm X Blvd. and Fifth Avenue (to the east on West 135th Street tucked behind Lenox Terrace)

This Parks Department bath house has one of the most beautiful indoor pools in the Northeast. Construction was begun in 1907 and completed in 1925. The pool area has a magnificent skylight and elegant mosaic tiles, making the aquatic experience very enriching. It was originally designed as Turkish baths which served those living in the neighborhood in homes lacking indoor plumbing. Typical of its time, it was a very popular gathering place. The center's award-winning, senior citizen synchronized swim team, the "Honey Bears," uses this magnificent pool for training and competition.





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46. Art Underground, Part IV

In the W. 135th Street subway station (2 and 3 lines)

Artist Willie Birch and ceramicist Steve Miotto collaborated on the creation of the mosaic murals, Harlem Timeline, found at the W. 135th Street Station. A tribute to some of Harlem's notable residents and institutions, it includes Malcolm X, Charlie Parker, City College, Bill "Bojangles" Robinson, Abyssinian Baptist Church, and the famous checker players. Throughout the piece, one finds references to colorful African-American quilts, textiles, and folk art. This completes the three-part collaborative effort in the stations along Malcolm X Blvd. by Birch, Vincent Smith and Faith Ringgold, depicting Harlem heroes and landmarks.

Detail of "Harlem Timeline 1", by Willie Birch



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47. Pig Foot Mary's

Corner of Malcolm X Boulevard and West 135th Street

This corner is the former location of Mrs. Lillian Dean Harris' tiny food stand where she served her famous boiled pigs' feet. A native of Mississippi known as "Pig Foot Mary," Harris contributed to the area's vibrant cultural history, first peddling her tasty wares from a shabby baby carriage, then from a steam table in a booth she attached to a corner newsstand. She was able to parlay her profits into real estate investments that earned her several hundred thousand dollars and comfortable retirement in California, making her one of Harlem's shrewdest entrepreneurs.



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48. Harlem Branch YMCA

180 West 135th Street - Designated New York City Historic Landmark

From its founding in Boston in 1851 until 1946, the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA) maintained an official policy of racial segregation. After the Civil War, African-Americans were encouraged to form separate branches, with most branches founded in the late 19th century. Built in 1931-32 as a successor to the "Colored Men's Branch" of the YMCA on West 53rd Street, the construction of this eleven-story building clad in red brick with neo-Georgian style details was designed and supervised by architect James C. Mackenzie, Jr. according to plans prepared by the Architectural Bureau of the National Council of the YMCA. The tower of this handsome structure maintains a major presence in the Harlem skyline today. The Harlem YMCA was designated a New York City landmark in February 1998; it was listed as a National Historic Landmark in 1976. Besides providing clean, safe and affordable rooms, residents and members can utilize the swimming pool, gymnasium, sauna, weightlifting and crafts rooms. To encourage youth participation in sports, Jackie Robinson and Roy Campanella of the Brooklyn Dodgers coached boys in athletics and calisthenics in 1948. The Harlem YMCA, a prominent recreational and cultural center, also served as a well-respected showcase for local talent. The stage of the "Little Theatre" was the site of Cicely Tyson's professional acting debut; other performers include James Earl Jones, Isabel Sanford, Esther Rolle, Alvin Ailey, Sidney Poitier, Eartha Kitt, Roscoe Lee Brown and Danny Glover. This branch of the "Y" garnered national attention in 2001 when former President Bill Clinton and his daughter, Chelsea, became members.



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Malcolm X Boulevard

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49. Schomburg Library Historic Area

West 135th to West 136th Streets, from Malcolm X Blvd. to Adam C. Powell Blvd.

The original library, designed to loosely resemble San Michele's Palazzo Canossa in Verona, was built in 1905 to house the collection of Arthur Schomburg, a Puerto Rican of African descent who built an outstanding collection in black history. In 1978, the building was renovated by Bond Ryder Associates as part of a modern three-building complex which includes a state of the art auditorium, expanded research facilities, a gift shop featuring African cards, jewelry, art, etc. and galleries for the preservation and display of its extensive and ever-growing collections. Today, the Schomburg Center's collection contains more than 3.5 million items, ranging from rare manuscripts and books by famous black writers to oral recordings, films and videotapes. Many renowned scholars and public figures such as W.E.B. DuBois, Langston Hughes, Paul Robeson, Eleanor Roosevelt, Ralph Bunche and Ralph Ellison have participated in programs sponsored by the Schomburg Center.



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50. Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture

515 Malcolm X Boulevard, northwest corner of West 135th Street

Designed by the architectural firm of Bond Ryder Associates and built between 1969 to 1989, this building pays homage to Arthur A. Schomburg, a noted collector of the physical history of African Americans. By placing the reading rooms and exhibit spaces at ground level, pedestrians passing by are offered a visual invitation into the library. Schomburg sold his collection to the New York Public Library in 1926 and in 1932, became the curator of this collection. The original McKim Mead & White branch library on 135th Street where Schomburg worked and the Countee Cullen Library around the corner on 136th Street complete this cultural complex that contains the ever-expanding collection of African-American literature and artifacts.



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51. Countee Cullen Branch, New York Public Library

104 West 136th Street, west of Malcolm X Blvd.

An Art Moderne-style building, this library is on the former site of Madame C.J. Walker's elaborate townhouse and beauty parlor. Madame Walker, born to freed slaves shortly after the Civil War, acquired her wealth through the creation of hair-straightening products. Her daughter, A'lelia, set aside a floor of the home to help struggling writers and artists. Her generosity was instrumental in producing the renaissance of art and literature enjoyed in Harlem during the 1920's and 30's. Countee Cullen was a prominent poet of this period and a member of A'lelia's salon society.



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Malcolm X Boulevard

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52. Harlem Hospital Center

506 Malcolm X Boulevard between W. 135th and W. 136th Streets, east side of the street

Originally housed in a 1907 beaux arts-style building on Fifth Avenue between W. 136th and W. 137th Streets, Harlem Hospital served the community with 150 beds. The first African-American doctors and nurses were added to the staff in 1919. It was here in 1958 that doctors saved the life of Martin Luther King, Jr. after he was stabbed by a deranged woman at Blumstein's Department Store (230 West 125th Street). The completion of the current structure on Malcolm X Blvd., built in 1969, was delayed by demonstrators demanding the hiring of black and Hispanic construction workers. A building that survives from the original group of buildings at the hospital complex is the

Women's Pavilion/Dental Clinic on West 137th Street between Malcolm X Blvd. and Fifth Avenue, mid-block on the south side of the street. This building was added to the Harlem Hospital campus in 1935. Just inside the entrance to the Dental Clinic are two very important murals flanking the stairway: one depicts African village and city life, the other shows scientists, agriculture and physicians. The murals were painted during the 1930's by Harlem artists in the federally-funded Works Progress Administration Program (WPA). Among the artists who participated in this effort were the painter Aaron Douglas and Morgan and Marvin Smith, brothers known for their insightful photographs of life in Harlem. Some of their work can be found in the permanent collection of the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture.

Harlem Hospital Center



Mural of "Scientists, Agriculture and Physicians "



Mural of "Village Life"



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53. Mother A.M.E. Zion Church

140-148 West 137th Street

Mother A.M.E. Zion is the oldest black church in the U.S., founded in 1796 by celebrated African-American residents of New York City. In the mid-1800's, the church was known as a "freedom church," a safe stop for slaves traveling along the Underground Railway. The present Neo-Gothic building (1923-25) was designed by George W. Foster, Jr., one of the first black architects to be registered in the U.S. Continuing a legacy of liberation theology, the congregation is committed to caring for the less fortunate member of the community. Today their members are politically active, working to ensure awareness of civil rights for all.



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54. Abyssinian Baptist Church

132-142 West 138th Street

Founded in 1808 at 40 Worth Street in lower Manhattan, Abyssinian Baptist Church served as a home base for both Reverend Adam Clayton Powell, Sr. and Jr. and played a major role in black history. The cavernous Gothic and Tudor (Neo-Gothic) structure replete with imported stained-glass windows and an Italian marble pulpit was designed by Charles W. Bolton in 1923. Known as the largest and best known black congregation (weekly attendance numbers in the thousands) in the United States, Abyssinian Baptist has a superb choir and sixty-seven rank organ. Within its halls is the **Powell Museum**, a memorial to the late Congressman Adam Clayton Powell, Jr., containing historic photographs, written documents and other items of memorabilia. Please call before you visit. The church often holds fund-raising suppers featuring fried chicken, collard greens, mashed potatoes and desserts you won't want to miss. Call ahead!



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Map of Malcolm X Boulevard - 140th St. to 147th St.

Sites:

55. Savoy Ballroom - Harlem Shadows - 596 Malcolm X Blvd. between 140th and 141st Streets, 1926-58

56. The Cotton Club - Harlem Shadows -- 644 Malcolm X Blvd., corner of 142nd Street, 1918-1946

57. Minisink Town House - 646 Malcolm X Blvd., northeast corner of 142nd Street

58. National Guard 369th Regiment Armory - 2366 Fifth Avenue between 142nd and 143rd Streets, west side

59. Colonel Charles Young Park - 143rd to 145th Street on the east side of Malcolm X Blvd. to the Harlem River Drive

60. West 145th Street Bridge - east side of MXB at 145th Street



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Malcolm X Boulevard

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55. Savoy Ballroom

Harlem Shadows - 596 Malcolm X Boulevard, between W. 140th and W. 141st Streets, 1926-58

Advertised as "The Home of Happy Feet," this famous Harlem hot spot opened on March 12, 1926. The club featured an elegant lobby with a marble staircase leading upstairs to the ballroom which was the entire length of the block. A double bandstand allowed for alternating bands to play continuous music late into the night. It was from one of these stages that the bandleader, Chick Webb, introduced a new singer, Miss Ella Fitzgerald. Webb's "Stompin' at the Savoy" debuted here in 1934. Always at the forefront for new dances, the Lindy Hop was introduced at the Savoy in 1936 and the cavernous ballroom was the venue chosen by Frank Manning to give the first demonstration of the aerial lift in swing dancing. The Savoy Ballroom was the height of sophisticated dance and music from 1920's to the 1950's. Contests called "Battle of the Bands" were held pitting bands from New York and Chicago, north and south. These competitions were so popular and attracted such loyal fans, police were sometimes called to settle disputes between the crowds. A contest between Chick Webb and Benny Goodman in 1937 drew over 20,000! The Savoy fell victim to the wrecker's ball in 1958 in the name of urban renewal and was replaced by the nondescript row of retail space that adjoin Bethune Towers/Delano Village.



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56. The Cotton Club

Harlem Shadows -- 644 Malcolm X Boulevard, corner of W. 142nd Street, 1918-1946

Just up the street from the Savoy Ballroom, this was the most famous of the NYC nightclubs in the 1920's and 30's. Renowned for the stars who started and continued their illustrious jazz careers here, the Cotton Club's black singers and dancers entertained white patrons from downtown while management banned blacks in the audience. After years of importing entertainment from Chicago, Duke Ellington was lured from the Kentucky Club on Times Square to become the leader of the house band on December 4, 1927. Billed as "The Aristocrat of Harlem," the club's radio broadcasts were heard live nationwide from in the 1930's, featuring such performers as Billy Holiday, Bill "Bojangles" Robinson, Cab Calloway, and Ella Fitzgerald. With the demise of prohibition, the club, originally started as a speakeasy, lost some of its appeal as a "den of iniquity" and closed on February 16, 1936, following the exodus of other clubs to downtown locations. In its new location at Broadway and 48th Street, it continued to present its glamorous reviews but at higher prices. It closed for good on June 10, 1940. The original site of the Cotton Club was demolished in 1958 along with the Savoy Ballroom for the construction of Bethune Towers/Delano Village; however, its legacy lives on at a new site under the same name at 666 West 125th Street.

Harlem Shadows: Jazz Clubs

The following list give the addresses of other jazz clubs that are no longer found in Harlem, their fate and/or their most famous featured band or star:

- a. Congo Room of the Capitol, West 115th & Malcolm X Boulevard, c. 1940
- b. Bamville Club, 65 West 125th Street, c. 1920-1930 - Coleman Hawkins
- c. The Plantation, West 126th near Malcolm X Blvd., c. 1930 - rivaled Cotton Club; Cab Calloway
- d. Club Cabaret, 416 Malcolm X Boulevard, c. 1923-25
- e. Club Baron, 437 Malcolm X Boulevard, c. 1940-46
- f. Goldgraben's, I.G. Café, 439 Malcolm X Boulevard, c. 1919-30; In 1964, was renamed Baron's Lounge - favorite hangout for musicians after work at other clubs
- g. Elk's Rendezvous, 464 Malcolm X Boulevard, c. 1930-45 - held social club dances
- h. Club Harlem, West 130th & Malcolm X Blvd., c. 1927-29; In 1964 was renamed Harlem Grill
- i. Gee-Haw Stables, West 132nd Street between 7th & Malcolm X Blvd., c. 1940-45; In 1964, was a Gulf Gas Station - had a horse's head over the entrance, an after-after-hours club
- j. Lincoln Theatre, 58 West 135th Street, c. 1909-1964 - installed a \$10,000 Wurlitzer organ for Fats Waller; now a church (1964 data)
- k. The Elk's Café, Malcolm X Blvd. between West 137th and West 138th Streets, c. 1917-20
- l. Capitol Palace, 575 Malcolm X Boulevard, c. 1922-50 - now a playground
- m. Brittwood Bar & Grill, 594 Malcolm X Boulevard, c. 1932-42 - Willie Gant's Musical Maniacs;
- n. Golden Gate Ballroom, Malcolm X Boulevard & West 142nd Street, c. 1939-50 - luxurious ballroom
- o. Rhone's Orchestra Club, 625 Malcolm X Boulevard, c. 1920-35 later Lenox Club, a.k.a. "The Breakfast Club," 652 Malcolm X Boulevard, c. 1935-45 - Louis Armstrong, Fletcher Henderson, Duke Ellington, 3 shows nightly with an 8-girl line; demolished 1958 for Bethune Towers/Delano Village.



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57. Minisink Town House

646 Malcolm X Boulevard, northeast corner of West 142nd Street

Located in a building dedicated in 1966, the Minisink Town House derives its name from Camp Minisink. This camp in upstate New York was one of the first coed summer camps for African American children from New York City. The New York City Mission Society initiated its Harlem program in 1920 and established Camp Sharparoon for young men in 1921 (the camp became coed in 1947). The Mission Society has a long history of community service, with a variety of programs. Today, among other valuable programs, they provide job search assistance through the Youth Employment Program. One of Minisink's proudest accomplishments is the success of the City Mission Drum & Bugle Corps which has competed successfully in parades and contests for many years.



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58. National Guard 369th Regiment Armory

2366 Fifth Avenue between West 142nd and 143rd Streets, west side

The 369th Regiment, known as "The Harlem Hell Fighters," built this armory as their place of residence between 1921 and 1933. Architects Van Wart & Wein designed the drill shed and administration building combining the medieval design forms of earlier armories with contemporary art deco elements. The 369th earned many awards for their outstanding military achievements for service in World War I, Okinawa in 1945, the Korean War and the Persian Gulf War. The Armory also houses the Harlem Tennis Center, where aspiring U.S. Open players hone their skills on professional courts.



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59. Colonel Charles Young Park

runs from West 143rd to West 145th Street on the east side of Malcolm X Blvd. to the Harlem River Drive

This 6.4-acre park is named in memory of one of the United States' first black army officers who served in World War I. The park is located on the east side of the Boulevard between W. 144th and W. 145th Streets, just south of the W. 145th Street Bridge to the Bronx.

Recreational facilities include twelve handball courts, five basketball courts, two basketball backboards for practice and one-one matches, four turf softball fields, and eight horseshoe pits. From the 1920's to the 1940's, it was the practice field for the old Negro Professional Football and Baseball Leagues, and today hosts citywide summer basketball leagues. Stop by for a game of pick-up basketball, if you think you can keep up!



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60. West 145th Street Bridge

east side of Malcolm X Boulevard, at West 145th Street

First designed in 1897, this eight-span swing bridge across the Harlem River currently carries four lanes of vehicular traffic from Manhattan at West 145th Street to West 149th Street in the Bronx and back. A lack of funding in 1899 allowed for a second look at the design, which was determined to have an overly long span and an inadequate width. Under the supervision of consulting engineer Professor William H. Burr, it was shortened from 400 feet to a span of 300 feet and 84 feet wide versus 70 feet. Construction began in October of 1900 and was completed in early 1905, but the opening was delayed until August 1905 due to the construction of the subway tunnel under the river, just south of the bridge (the Number 2 IRT line). Between each outer truss and the inner truss the bridge carried one trolley track and one roadway. Sidewalks and curbs were



reconstructed in 1938, as well as modifications to allow automobile traffic. In 1957, both the Manhattan and Bronx approaches were reconstructed to accommodate the post-war increase in automobiles. The swing span floor system was replaced twice, in 1950 and 1972. Yankee Stadium, visible from W. 145th Street, can be reached via the bridge by car, bicycle or even on foot, if you're feeling adventurous. Keep in mind, however, that the bridge measures 693'-1¼" long along the centerline between abutments!



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