

THE BRILL BUILDING, 1619 Broadway (aka 1613-23 Broadway, 207-213 West 49th Street),
Manhattan

Built 1930-31; architect, Victor A. Bark, Jr.

Landmark Site: Borough of Manhattan Tax Map Block 1021, Lot 19

On October 27, 2009 the Landmarks Preservation Commission held a public hearing on the proposed designation of the Brill Building and the proposed designation of the related Landmark site. The hearing had been duly advertised in accordance with provisions of law. Three people spoke in support of designation, including representatives of the owner, New York State Assembly Member Richard N. Gottfried, and the Historic Districts Council. There were no speakers in opposition to designation.¹

Summary

Since its construction in 1930-31, the 11-story Brill Building has been synonymous with American music – from the last days of Tin Pan Alley to the emergence of rock and roll. Occupying the northwest corner of Broadway and West 49th Street, it was commissioned by real estate developer Abraham Lefcourt who briefly planned to erect the world's tallest structure on the site, which was leased from the Brill Brothers, owners of a men's clothing store. When Lefcourt failed to meet the terms of their agreement, the Brills foreclosed on the property and the name of the nearly-complete structure was changed from the Alan E. Lefcourt Building to the, arguably more melodious sounding, Brill Building. Designed in the Art Deco style by architect Victor A. Bark, Jr., the white brick elevations feature handsome terra-cotta reliefs, as well as two niches that prominently display stone and brass portrait busts that most likely portray the developer's son, Alan, who died as the building was being planned. A remarkable number of tenants have been music publishers, but the building is also notable for attracting an evolving roster of songwriters, booking agents, vocal coaches, publicity agents, talent agents, and performers. As the popularity of big band music and jazz increased, many performers leased offices in the building, including



Tommy Dorsey, Duke Ellington, and Nat King Cole. By the early 1960s, more than 160 tenants were involved in the music industry. While not every artist associated with the so-called "Brill Building sound" actually worked at 1619 Broadway, these creative men and women produced some of early rock and roll's most beautifully-crafted and memorable songs. Also contributing to the building's reputation have been various commercial tenants, including such fashionable restaurants as Jack Dempsey's and the Turf, and a succession of vast second floor nightclubs, including the Hurricane, Club Zanzibar and Bop City, where jazz briefly gained a prominent midtown venue and a wider audience in the 1940s.

DESCRIPTION AND ANALYSIS

Few office buildings in New York City are as closely associated with a single profession as the Brill Building. Built on speculation at the start of the Great Depression, during 1930-31, for the next half-century this 11-story Art Deco-style structure was synonymous with popular music and entertainment. A succession of tenants, including music publishers, talent agents, songwriters, and nightclubs, have contributed to the building's legendary status. Not only were more than 160 music-related businesses based here by the early 1960s but music historian Ian Inglis has written that these talented artists brought "a new professionalism and maturity to rock and roll," leading to the increased presence of women as performers and producers, as well as the development of the "singer-songwriter" – artists who compose and record their own material.² And Ken Emerson, author of *Always Magic in the Air: The Bomp and Brilliance of the Brill Building Era*, observed: "The music publishers and songwriters who worked there routinized the creation and production of rock 'n' roll. They smoothed the rough edges . . . Reigning in the unruliness of rock 'n' roll made it safe for teenage America and profitable in the mass marketplace."³ During this period, the Brill Building became the unofficial center of pop music in the United States. While not all of the artists and companies associated with the so-called "Brill Building sound" actually leased space here, such myths demonstrate the structure's longstanding importance, from its early ties to Tin Pan Alley and the Big Band era to the present day.

The Music Industry in New York City

Nineteenth-century Manhattan provided various settings to enjoy popular music, such as concert saloons, music halls, and theaters. Music publishers, who collaborated with songwriters and song-pluggers to produce and promote new material, tended to locate close to these venues, first, along the Bowery, and later near East 14th Street and Union Square. In the mid-1890s, a large concentration of these businesses gathered along West 28th Street, between Broadway and Sixth Avenue. This block (and the local music industry) became known as "Tin Pan Alley" because of the cacophony of overlapping piano notes that emanated from these converted row houses. In the era before radio and recordings, profits were closely tied to sheet music sales, peaking at two billion copies in 1910. When the theater district began to expand, pushing slowly north along Broadway, past Herald Square to Longacre (later Times) Square, these businesses followed, opening offices throughout the theater district, at 1547 Broadway (Herts & Tallant, 1909, demolished), 148-50 West 46th Street (1922), and other locations.

Technology reshaped the music industry in the 1920s. Radio broadcasting became much more widespread, sound motion pictures were introduced, and electric phonographs, with greatly improved fidelity, became widely available. These innovations hurt sheet music sales but the business survived and thrived. Journalist Issac Goldberg commented in 1930:

Tin Pan Alley is forty years old. Beginning as a musical zone of New York City it blazed a trail along Broadway in close pursuit of the theater. The moving picture did not destroy it; the radio poured new life into its veins, the talkies adopted it, until they found that the child was endangering its foster parents; the coming of television can have no adverse effect upon this singing fool; if anything, the contrary.⁴

Sound film had an especially significant impact on New York's music industry. It was the ideal medium to promote songs and in the late 1920s film studios formed publishing companies to maintain access to new and old favorites. More importantly, many local music publishers were sold and became east coast "offshoots" of the film industry, providing a vital link between Broadway and Hollywood.

The Site

The Brill Building occupies the northwest corner of Broadway and West 49th Street. It was named for the Brill Brothers – Samuel, Max and Maurice – who operated a Manhattan chain of men's clothing stores for more than five decades. Founded by Samuel and Maurice Brill in late 1886, their first store was located in lower Manhattan at 45 Cortlandt Street, near Church Street. The Brills began leasing the Broadway site in 1909 and a branch opened here in October 1910. *The New York Times* reported:

The steady growth of Times Square and the adjoining streets as the business centre of Manhattan is proved this morning by the opening of a new clothing store . . . it covers half the block on the Broadway side and 75 feet in Forty-ninth Street.⁵

The site was originally owned by Archibald D. and Albertina Russell, who conveyed it to the financiers Moses Taylor and Percy R. Pyne (1857-1929) in 1919. The Ruspyn Corporation was established following Pyne's death and the lease with the Brill Brothers was extended 85 years. This set the stage for a sublease to the 1619 Realty Corporation, which agreed to erect a building of at least six stories, valued at more than \$400,000. In addition, the contract stipulated that any plans be approved by the Brills.⁶

The Developer and Builder

The 1619 Realty Corporation was headed by Abraham (A. E.) Lefcourt (1877-1932) who controlled several real estate companies under different names. Raised on Manhattan's Lower East Side, he began his career as a manufacturer of women's clothing. He entered the real estate field in 1910, commissioning a 12-story neo-Classical style loft building at 48-54 West 25th Street, containing his own factory on the first two floors. Several years later, under the name Alan Realty Company, named for his recently-born son, he erected a similar commercial structure at 142 West 37th Street (George & Edward Blum, 1914). Lefcourt and the Blums also collaborated on 42 West 38th Street (1916), 237 West 37th Street (1922), 246 West 38th Street (1922), and the Lefcourt-Marlborough Building at 1359 Broadway (1924). He was described as "a pioneer in the new garment trade centre," who specialized in "buying and selling of first class properties; the financing of building loan mortgages; the purchasing of first-class second mortgages, and the advancing of moneys on incoming rentals."⁷

Operating as Landcourt Realty, Lefcourt constructed a post office facility at 223-41 West 38th Street (John T. Dunn, 1920-22) that was said to be the "largest of its kind in the country."⁸ Completed in "record-breaking time," this project solidified his reputation as an extremely reliable and efficient builder. In subsequent years, he began to invest outside the garment district, erecting the International Telephone and Telegraph Building (Ely Jacques Kahn, 1927-30) at Broad and Beaver Streets, the Lefcourt-Colonial Building (1928-30) at 295 Madison Avenue, Essex House (Frank Grad & Sons, 1929-31) on Central Park South, and the 35-story Raymond-Commerce Building (Frank Grad & Sons, 1929-30, now apartments) in Newark, New Jersey.

Lefcourt became somewhat of a celebrity and the *New York Times* published an admiring profile of his career (“A Skyscraper Builder Began as a Newsboy”) in January 1929. In addition, he controlled the Lefcourt National Bank & Trust Company, with \$10 million in deposits.

Following the 1929 stock market crash, Lefcourt’s luck changed dramatically. His 17-year-old son, Alan, died of anemia in February 1930 and in August 1930 he resigned as bank president “to devote more of his time to his real estate interests.”⁹ By the end of the year, he sold his interest in at least eight Manhattan buildings, valued at \$21 million, to the General Realty and Utilities Corporation.¹⁰ News reports, however, ignored the status of the Brill project¹¹ and it seems likely that Lefcourt failed to meet the terms of his agreement and that the Brills foreclosed on their property and subsequently renamed the structure.

As the Depression deepened, investors brought litigation against Lefcourt’s bank, asserting that he and other officers had made “improper investments” and were “using part of the money for their own purposes.” Furthermore, claims were made that his various companies had lost three to four million dollars during the previous year.¹² With a legal decision pending, Lefcourt suddenly died of a heart attack in November 1932. Though the media treated his death respectfully, calling him “one of the greatest builders in history since Louis XIV and Sir Christopher Wren,” some writers believe he committed suicide.¹³ The Brill Building was not mentioned in Lefcourt’s obituary but it was given prominence in a composite sketch of the various buildings his firms constructed, that accompanied a subsequent *New York Times* article, “A Builder Who Changed Mid-Manhattan’s Skyline.”¹⁴

The Architect

Victor A. Bark, Jr., the architect of the Brill Building, frequently worked with Lefcourt Realty. Born in New York City to Swedish parents in October 1884, his earliest known project was a 1912 addition to a neo-Renaissance style warehouse in the Tribeca North Historic District, at 415-419 Greenwich Street. He then served as a draftsman in the United States Army Transport Service during World War I and from 1927 to early 1929 was associated with the Austria-born architect Erhard Djourup (born 1877), in the firm Bark & Djourup, Inc. This short-lived partnership was responsible for the 23-story neo-Gothic style Lefcourt-Normandie Building (1926-28) at 1384-88 Broadway, at 38th Street, as well as other commercial structures. When their partnership ended in 1928, Bark maintained a working relationship with Lefcourt. In addition to the Brill Building, he produced a six-story brick addition (1929, altered) to the Lefcourt-Manhattan Building at 1418 Broadway, and his best-known skyscraper, the 40-story Lefcourt-Colonial Building, 295 Madison Avenue (1928-30, begun with Djourup), at the southeast corner of 41st Street. The latter tower is faced with brick, embellished with blue glazed terra-cotta panels and over-sized finials. Bark continued to practice until at least 1950, mainly overseeing alterations to apartment houses.

Plan and Construction

On October 3, 1929, three weeks before the stock market crash, Lefcourt announced plans to build the world’s tallest structure at the northwest corner of Broadway and 49th Street. Representing an investment of \$30 million, the *Chicago Tribune* reported:

An arrangement already settled between the builder and his client, said to be one of the largest business institutions in the country, is that the building shall not be less than the height announced.¹⁵

Not only would the 1,050-foot tower be much taller than the 538-foot Lefcourt-Colonial Building – the firm’s tallest project to date – but it would also have surpassed two of the city’s loftiest structures: the 1,046-foot Chrysler Building (completed May 1930, a designated New York City Landmark) and the 927-foot Manhattan Company Building (a designated New York City Landmark). In the weeks that followed, Lefcourt may have become uneasy about such ambitious plans. Though he remained publicly optimistic about the real estate market, a December 1929 article made no mention of the Brill Building’s height.¹⁶ This suggests that he had difficulty financing the tower or that the original height was being reconsidered, and subsequently, reduced.

Despite a tough economic climate, the project eased forward. Lefcourt and the 1619 Realty Company finalized the purchase of the lease from the Brill Brothers in January 1930 and in March 1930 plans (NB 46-1930) for a much lower structure were submitted to the Department of Buildings. The *New York Times* commented: “No definite statement could be obtained yesterday regarding the reason for changing the plans.”¹⁷ Bark was identified as the architect and the owner was the Ruspyn Corporation, with Percy P. Pyne as president. It was described as ten stories tall, with a penthouse, stores, bank and offices. The estimated cost was modest, \$1 million. Initially called the Alan E. Lefcourt Building, construction began in May 1930 and the exterior work was completed in late November 1930.

Design

The Brill Building is a handsome example of the Art Deco style. Especially popular with New York City real estate developers from the mid-1920s to the early 1930s, it grew out of Beaux Arts classicism and included decorative elements associated with structures erected at the Paris Exposition des Arts Decoratifs & Industriels of 1925, as well as other European styles. Prior to this period, American architects tended to find inspiration in historical forms, borrowing ideas not only from classical sources, but also from medieval and Byzantine models, as illustrated in such designated New York City Landmarks as: the New York Times Building (various architects, begun 1912) on West 43rd Street, the American Radiator Building (Raymond Hood, 1923-24) on West 41st Street, and the Bowery Savings Bank (York & Sawyer, begun 1921-23) on East 42nd Street. In contrast to subsequent architectural trends, particularly following the Second World War, Art Deco buildings are frequently distinguished by low decorative reliefs, vivid colors, and unusual materials.

Times Square has relatively few buildings of this style. This can be explained by the fact that most theaters were completed before 1925 when variants of neo-Classicism were at the height of popularity. With few sites open to development, only a small group of neighborhood structures would reflect the new fashion; surviving examples include: the Manufacturer’s Trust Bank (Dennison & Hirons, 1927-28, now a theater and stores) at the northwest corner of Eighth Avenue and 43rd Street; the Film Center Building (Ely Jacques Kahn, 1928-29, a designated Landmark Interior) at 630 Ninth Avenue; the Edison Hotel (Herbert J. Krapp, 1930-31) on West 47th Street; and the McGraw-Hill Building (Raymond Hood, 1930-31, a designated New York City Landmark), at 330 West 42nd Street.

In designing the Brill Building, Bark divided the Broadway and 49th Street facades into three distinct sections: a three-story base, a seven-story shaft, and penthouse. These elevations are faced with mainly white brick but the base, the central window bays, and the top story incorporate light-colored terra-cotta reliefs. This cast material was favored by early 20th-century

architects as a less costly but attractive substitute for carved ornament. While some architects used it extensively, covering entire facades, as in the Woolworth Building (Cass Gilbert, 1910-13, a designated New York City Landmark), in most instances it was used selectively to enhance specific architectural features and to enrich setbacks on the upper floors. Though the source of this building's terra cotta has yet to be identified, it may have been produced by the Atlantic Terra Cotta Company (active 1907-43), which supplied similar decorative reliefs to several contemporary buildings in Times Square.

This Brill Building has mostly conventional, one-over-one fenestration, but the three-story base is almost entirely glazed with a distinctive combination of gridded and fixed window panes. The main entrance was positioned at the center of the Broadway facade, opening to a small foyer and a deep hallway that leads to an elevator lobby along the west side of the building. Though the width of the entrance is relatively narrow, Bark used eye-catching materials to highlight it. Three gleaming brass-finished doors are flanked by polished black granite piers, topped with brass cruciform details that extend up and slightly cover the base of the second-story windows. The elaborate door surround features a grid of windows that resembles a ziggurat. These windows illuminate the foyer and provide visual support for the niche that contains a bust. Set on a pedestal, flanked by elaborate scrollwork and ascending panels incorporating slim vertical reliefs, the brass sculpture sits in an elaborate faceted niche, crowned by a keystone. The John Hartell Company is likely to have been responsible for executing these dazzling features since it recently had collaborated with Bark on the Lefcourt-Colonial Building.¹⁸

At the corner of each facade, above the storefronts, the outermost window bays are flanked by double-height pilasters. These flat, brown pilasters are crowned by square reliefs that suggest capitals, a device frequently used by contemporary architects. Between the second and third floors is a continuous band of polychrome (bluish gray and pink) terra-cotta reliefs. Aligned with each set of metal-framed windows, these panels are divided into three sections. The distinctive treatment of these floors suggests that the interior spaces were designed for a specific purpose. Not only would these decorative elements attract attention to the lower floors but the continuous fenestration permitted generous views south toward the heart of Times Square.

To gently lead the eye up both elevations, Bark used recessed terra-cotta panels above the three center window bays. These white panels contain foliate reliefs, crowned by a wave-like horizontal band that functions as a window sill. To cap the uppermost windows, a narrower panel was used. Less tall than the rest, it has clipped corners that when viewed together with the brick pilasters suggest curtains being pulled open. At this level, the architect also added six raised terra-cotta circles above the three side window bays. The 11th floor penthouse, recessed from 49th Street and disguised by a stepped gable, incorporates a large masonry or terra-cotta bust set into a niche, flanked by round arched windows. This massing is decorative – not only does it hide the penthouse but this feature recalls the developer's original intent to construct a much taller structure since taller buildings were generally required to have setbacks.

Roof-top signs also contribute to the Brill Building's character and its historic role in Times Square. Since as early as 1934, it has served as a platform for a steel framework that supports colorful illuminated signs. Long-term advertisers have included Camel cigarettes (1934) and Budweiser beer (c. 1958). Set atop the penthouse, at an angle to Broadway, these multi-story billboards face south and enjoy great visibility.

The Portrait Busts

Above the Broadway entrance, incorporated into the brass window surround, is a small niche displaying a bust. This sculpture, as well as the slightly larger masonry (possibly terra cotta) bust installed at the penthouse level, has frequently been interpreted as a portrait of Alan E. Lefcourt, for whom the building was originally named and who died two months before the architect filed plans with the Department of Buildings. In both busts, the subject is portrayed as dressed in a three-piece suit and tie. Whereas the head in the 11th-floor niche faces directly forward, the brass bust is turned slightly to the left.

Figurative sculptures, set into niches and roundels, were an important part of the ecclesiastical tradition in Europe, used on church facades to represent saints and occasionally religious patrons. In the late 19th century, terra-cotta sculptures of historical figures were sometimes used to decorate the exteriors of institutional structures, such as the six large portrait heads on the Brooklyn Historical Society (1878-81, part of the Brooklyn Heights Historic District) by Olin Levi Warner, and a series of portrait busts portraying figures from antiquity and physicians on the Deutsches (German) Dispensary (1883-84, a designated New York City Landmark), 137 Second Avenue, Manhattan.

In terms of commercial structures, the print dealer Frederick Keppel embellished the facade of 4 East 39th Street (George B. Post, 1904) with the “first permanent memorial” to the painter James McNeil Whistler,¹⁹ as well as a portrait of Rembrandt van Rijn, and above the entrance to the Gainsborough Studios (1907-8, a designated New York City Landmark), 222 Central Park South, is a bust of the 18th-century English portrait and landscape painter. In Times Square, at least two buildings display portraits connected to the performing arts: the elaborate north entrance to the Lyric Theater (Victor Hugo Koehler, 1903, now the Hilton Theater), 214 West 43rd Street, includes portraits of the light opera composer Reginald De Koven, for whom it was built, as well as Gilbert & Sullivan, and the south facade of the I. Miller Shoe Store (1926, a designated New York City Landmark) contains three full-length portraits, set into gilt niches. Chosen by popular vote, these sculptures represent leading actresses in their most famous theatrical roles.

The busts on the Brill Building are especially unusual because of their personal nature. When former New York governor Samuel Tilden built his house on Gramercy Park (Vaux & Radford, 1881-84, a designated New York City Landmark), he decorated the lower facade with small brownstone portraits of his favorite authors. While caricatures of individuals are sometimes incorporated as building details, such as the architect, owner, and engineer flanking the elevators in the Woolworth Building, the central and conspicuous placement of the two busts on the Brill Building is notable. Born in 1912, Alan E. Lefcourt gained some notoriety at the age of twelve when his father, Abraham, gave him ownership of a \$10 million office building, to be erected at the southwest corner of Madison Avenue and 34th Street. Abraham reportedly said that he wished to “inculcate in his son . . . a sense of thrift and responsibility.”²⁰ Alan, however, was unable to enjoy the financial returns anticipated by his father – a victim of anemia, he died in February 1930.

The only known contemporary account that mentions the brass bust appeared in November 1932, as part of Abraham Lefcourt’s *New York Times* obituary: “Alan died, he put up an eight-story building with his son’s bust over the entrance.”²¹ In 1990, David Dunlap speculated that the penthouse niche displays the “bust of the developer, Abraham E. Lefcourt.” More recently, in 1999, *New York Times* reporter Daniel B. Schneider wrote: “The subject of the two busts is uncertain . . . Evidence suggests that the one on the 11th floor is Abraham E.

Lefcourt, the building's developer, and that the other, is his son."²² Such interpretations may be based on the fact that both died early, well before average age. While it seems likely that the brass portrait is, in fact, a memorial bust, the other bust was installed by September 1930 – more than two years before Abraham's untimely death, suggesting that it, too, represents the son, or, perhaps, an idealized male tenant.

Music Tenants

A rental office opened in September 1930. With "new automatic-stop, high-speed elevators" and plans for a ground floor shopping lobby, early leases were reportedly signed with "public utility companies, law firms, certified public accountants and other professional interests."²³ Despite confident accounts in the press, a great many units remained vacant. Contemporary telephone directories list relatively few tenants and a 1934 photograph shows a two-story-high banner advertising "OFFICES" across windows along the east edge of the 49th Street facade. Furthermore, many windows were without shades or blinds, suggesting that considerable space remained available.²⁴

The Brill Building was planned as "executive office space" with floors that could be subdivided.²⁵ When this initial strategy failed, smaller spaces were created and leased – the kinds of offices that appeal to wide variety of businesses. It was under these circumstances that the popular music industry found a new base in New York City, from the last years of Tin Pan Alley to the dawn of rock and roll. Phone directories indicate there were approximately 100 entertainment-related tenants in 1940, and as many as 165 by 1962. These included an evolving roster of songwriters, music publishers, booking agents, vocal coaches, publicity agents, talent managers, and performers.

Early tenants tended to be music publishers, some with ties to Tin Pan Alley. They included the T. B. Harms Company,²⁶ one of the earliest American firms to profit from the sale of sheet music to musical stage shows; Mills Music Inc.,²⁷ headed by Jack and Irving Mills (aka Joe Primrose), a major independent publisher of sheet music and jazz recordings; Famous Music, established in 1928 by Famous-Lasky Pictures (later Paramount Pictures) to produce and publish songs from film musicals; Southern Music Company, founded by music scout and engineer Ralph S. Peer in 1928; Crawford Music Corporation (B. G. De Sylva, Lew Brown & Ray Henderson); and lyricist/composer Irving Caesar, one of the building's longest tenants, who wrote more than 700 songs and continued to lease space until the 1970s.²⁸ According to the Times Square Alliance, of more than 1200 songs performed on the popular radio and television program *Your Hit Parade* (1935-58), 404 songs, about a third, originated with Brill Building tenants.²⁹ Other 1930s tenants included numerous attorneys; Hyman Caplan, a boxing promoter; theater producer George Choos; as well as the management offices of the Ben Bernie, Earl J. Carpenter, and George Olsen orchestras.³⁰

As the popularity of jazz and big bands grew in the late 1930s, many popular groups, some with ties to music publishers in the building, leased offices in the Brill Building, including Cab Calloway, Tommy Dorsey (aka the Embassy Music Corporation, 11th story penthouse), and Duke Ellington. Ben Barton, a former vaudevillian, founded the Barton Music Corporation in 1943. A close friend of Frank Sinatra, who performed with Dorsey's orchestra in the early 1940s, Barton's firm published and controlled much of the singer's best-known compositions, as did a related tenant, Sinatra Songs, until the mid-1960s.³¹ Vocalists Nat King Cole and Louis Prima had offices here in the 1950s, as did the influential radio disk jockey Alan Freed, Roost (later

Roulette) Records, the music publishing companies Charles K. Harris and Harry von Tilzer, and the celebrated songwriting team of (Johnny) Burke & (Jimmy) Van Heusen.

The heyday of the Brill Building was during the late 1950s and early 1960s. Not only were there more music-related tenants here than at any other time, but these tenants helped make rock and roll music part of the American mainstream. Music historian Ian Inglis wrote: “it is one of the few buildings whose name many readily evoke a particular period or circumstance – along with, for example, the Cavern, Graceland, Studio 54, and Harlem’s Apollo Theater” (1913-14, a designated New York City Landmark and Interior).³² Though not every artist, songwriter, and producer associated with the building, particularly Aldon Music, actually leased offices here, a remarkable number did.³³ In his 2003 essay on the building’s legacy, Inglis summarized:

Stylistically, its innovations can be credited with much of the responsibility for the increased presence of women as performers and producers of popular music, and for the development of the singer-songwriter. Industrially, its working practices and policies informed many of the changing emphases – and responses to them – characterizing the organization and implementation of the commercial operations of popular music. Creatively, it has been seen as a major source of inspiration for performers and musicians within a variety of popular music genres.³⁴

One of the most significant tenants during this period was Hill & Range Songs, founded by Jean and Julien Aberbach in 1948. Located in the 11th-story penthouse, this publishing company had numerous subsidiaries, including Big Top, Rumbalero and Gladys Music. Among the talented songwriters on their staff were (Jerry) Leiber & (Mike) Stoller, who wrote numerous hit songs for Elvis Presley and other artists, as well as the songwriting team of Doc Pomus and Mort Shuman – all members of the Rock and Roll and Songwriters Hall of Fame.³⁵ Red Bird Records, specializing in “girl groups,” was founded by Leiber & Stoller and was based on the ninth floor during the mid-1960s. Other memorable songwriting tenants included the team of Jeff Barry and Ellie Greenwich, who were associated with Red Bird and other recording labels.³⁶

Composer Burt Bacharach and lyricist Hal David met at Famous Music in 1957 and together would write more than one hundred songs for films and Broadway productions, as well as the singers Dusty Springfield, Dionne Warwick, and Tom Jones.³⁷ David recalled:

The preponderance of songwriters were in the Brill Building, the energy was in the Brill Building, the publishers were there, and if you had to be someplace else, you always wound up back at the Brill sometime during the day.³⁸

[he and Bacharach] started out in New York and met almost every day in the Brill building for about 17 years . . . It was still filled with music publishers when we were there. We wrote in the same little room with an upright piano. Eventually, we moved back and forth between New York and Los Angeles.³⁹

Starting the late 1960s and 1970s, the number of tenants in the entertainment industry began to decline – many moved to Los Angeles – with only a fraction remaining today.⁴⁰ They include: Charing Cross Music, Paul Simon Music; Sound One, an audio post-production facility; KMA Music, a recording studio; Saint Nicholas Music, founded by songwriter Johnny Marks in 1949

and specializing in popular holiday songs; and Broadway Video, an entertainment company and film distributor founded in 1979 by television/film producer Lorne Michaels.

Commercial Tenants

The base was planned for retail use, with street level shops and related tenants on the second and third floors. One of the first businesses to sign a lease was Joseph Hilton & Sons, a chain of men's clothing stores. To be located at the corner of 49th Street, the *New York Times* reported: "This lease, one of the largest that has been closed for many months in the Times Square district" was valued at almost \$1 million.⁴¹

Hilton & Sons, however, never moved into the building and this space became part of a much larger store operated by Brill Brothers, the property's lessee. Their clothing store opened in August 1932, with ample display windows, shaded by retractable awnings, extending along both Broadway and 49th Street. On opening day, an advertisement boasted that it was:

Distinctively a "man's store" . . . a shopping place all his own . . . in all New York there are few men's stores so fine . . . so modern . . . so satisfying. Men who know you, and know what you want will make you feel "at home" as soon as you enter. May we have the pleasure of showing you around?⁴²

During the 1930s, the company had as many as four branches, with stores at 49 Cortlandt Street, Seventh Avenue and 35th Street, and 41st Street, near Madison Avenue. Max D. Brill (1866-1938) retired in 1930 and Samuel Brill (b. 1859) died in 1931, leaving Maurice Brill (1869-1951) as head of the business. Brill Brothers closed in spring 1940 and the corner space was leased to the Turf Restaurant.⁴³

Because of the proximity to Times Square and the second location of Madison Square Garden (Eighth Avenue and 50th Street, demolished), many of the new tenants were involved in the entertainment industry. Though the ground floor was planned for stores, the earliest tenant to open was actually a pair of movie theaters operated by the Trans-Lux Movies Corporation. Located to the right of the Broadway entrance, the *New York Times* said it was:

Constructed in modern style, with a silver and black design, the two houses have turnstiles instead of doormen, daylight projection, and other innovations.⁴⁴

The Trans-Lux opened in May 1931, with one screen devoted to short features and the other to sound newsreels. To celebrate the opening, U.S. President Herbert Hoover wired Courtland Smith, the sponsor:

I extend congratulations on the opening of your New York theatres. The showing of new pictures throughout the country cannot but be educational and instructive. The bringing of world events into the lives of great numbers of our people will serve to promote better understanding and closer world relations.⁴⁵

In late 1937 the theaters closed and the space was leased to Jack Dempsey.⁴⁶ It was one of several businesses owned by the famed prize fighter, who held the world's heavyweight title from 1919 to 1926. With a streamlined storefront and interior, napkins described the "Broadway Bar and Cocktail Lounge" as "The Meeting Place of the World."⁴⁷ Dempsey remained a

prominent celebrity and the restaurant attracted both fans and musicians. It stayed at this location until 1974, when it closed following a dispute with the building's new owner. At this time, the *New York Times* described it as "one of the last survivors of the Damon Runyon era of Broadway."⁴⁸

In 1940, the large corner space became the Turf Restaurant, operated by Jack Joseph Amiel and Arnold Ruben. One location in a small chain, it gained particular notoriety in 1951 when Amiel's horse, Count Turf, won the Kentucky Derby. The restaurant specialized in lobster and steak (often called Surf and Turf), as well as cheesecake. Amiel, who later became a part owner of Jack Dempsey's, sold his interest in 1957 and the Turf closed in 1963. Popular with songwriters and musicians, Duke Ellington was a frequent customer at the Turf and aspiring actor Sidney Poitier worked as a dishwasher – his first job in New York City – during 1943.

Since about 1974 the corner storefront has been leased to Colony Records, also known as the Colony Record Center. Founded by Harold S. (Nappy) Grossbardt and Sidney Turk by 1948, the store was formerly located at Broadway and 52nd Street, where it developed a reputation as a gathering place for musicians. In recent decades, Colony has specialized in vintage records, sheet music, karaoke software, and souvenirs devoted to the theater district.

Nightclubs

The vast second floor was initially leased to the Paradise, a popular cabaret. Reached by stairs, located directly left of the Broadway entrance, it covered approximately 15,000 square feet and held as many as a thousand people. Planned by the celebrated architect and interior designer Joseph Urban, the cost of construction was estimated at \$500,000.⁴⁹ Large signs, obscuring the second-floor windows and projecting at an angle over the corner, claimed it was "America's foremost restaurant" with the "world's most beautiful girls." Floorshows, sometimes called "Paradise Parades," were accompanied by such well-known performers as the Paul Whiteman Orchestra and Glenn Miller.⁵⁰

During the 1940s, this space housed a succession of clubs associated with the growing popularity of jazz. Some Harlem nightspots opened midtown locations, offering big band music and later bebop. The Paradise closed in late 1939 or 1940 and became the Hurricane, with "palm trees, tropical flora and fauna" evoking the Pacific Ocean island of Tahiti.⁵¹ Operated briefly by lawyer David J. Wolper, who reportedly received ownership as part of a 1942 financial settlement with a gangster, it had a troubled existence, marred by suspicious fires and "stench bombs."⁵² Duke Ellington headlined at the Hurricane during 1943 and 1944 and some of these performances were aired nationally on the Mutual and Columbia Broadcasting Systems.

Club (Café) Zanzibar occupied the second floor from approximately 1944 to 1948. Ellington frequently performed here, as well, as did the Nat King Cole Trio, Cab Calloway, Ella Fitzgerald, the Ink Spots, and Louis Jordan.⁵³ In 1949 it became Bop City, managed by Ralph Watkins, formerly of the Royal Roost, a legendary jazz venue. He told the United Press that his staff would dress in "bop fashion," wearing berets and polka-dot ties and that "some will sport goatees, which are popular among bop players."⁵⁴ It debuted with Artie Shaw and Ella Fitzgerald on April 14, 1949; subsequent headliners included Louis Armstrong, Nat King Cole, the Dizzy Gillespie Orchestra, and Sara Vaughn. The club also maintained an enlightened policy of hiring "mixed waiters," meaning waiters of different races.⁵⁵ Despite presenting celebrated performers, Bop City struggled to find a consistent audience and closed in 1950 or 1951. In subsequent years, it functioned as the Avalon Ballroom, closing around 1966.

Later History

The Ruspyn Corporation sold the building to the Inch Corporation, later known as Breecom, in 1966.⁵⁶ Allan Rose's AVR Realty Company sold it to Murray Hill Properties and Westbrook Partners in 2007, who sold the property to Stonehenge Partners, Inc. (with INVESCO Real Estate of Dallas, Texas) in November 2007.

The Brill Building has been featured in a handful of feature films, including *The House on 92nd Street* (1945) and the *Sweet Smell of Success* (1957), in which the gilt lobby appears, as well as in several Woody Allen productions: *Broadway Danny Rose* (1984), *Hollywood Ending* (2002), and *Anything Else* (2003).⁵⁷

Description

The 11-story Brill Building, 1619 Broadway, is located at the northwest corner of Broadway and West 49th Street. On Broadway, the facade is divided into three sections: a three-story base, a seven-story shaft, and a single-story penthouse. The **main entrance** is located at the center of the ground story. Flanked by polished black granite piers, capped with elaborate brass metal work, the entrance features three brass doors with glass panels and handles on the left, surmounted by a sign for the building in capital letters set against a black background, gridded glass windows configured like a ziggurat, and a richly-decorated niche for the bust of the developer's son set on a pedestal. The stores, located on either side of the Broadway entrance, have non-historic display windows and non-historic illuminated signage. The south storefront has a corner entrance, opening onto both Broadway and 49th Street. Established by 1964, this angled configuration incorporates cast-concrete piers.

The **second and third stories** have large windows flanked by pairs of masonry piers at either end. Each pier, as well as the simple cornice that extends above the third-story windows is tinted brown, suggesting the use of a non-historic coating. The second floor windows are slightly taller than the third story. Between the floors are pink, yellow, and blue terra-cotta reliefs. Each window bay is divided into three sections. The wide center section contains a single fixed panel above a multi-pane sash. The vertical side windows are arranged in six-over-six or nine-over-nine grids. The northernmost window on the second floor has been replaced by a non-historic, tripartite ventilation grille, with horizontal metal louvers. On the third floor, the third window bay from the corner of 49th Street has been altered by the replacement of the center fixed-panel and-sash with horizontal metal louvers.

The **fourth through the eleventh floors** are faced with white brick. There are nine pairs of one-over-one windows across each floor, flanked by continuous piers. The three pairs of windows at the center of the facade are crowned by white foliate terra-cotta reliefs that incorporate a sill on top. Above the tenth floor, these terra-cotta reliefs have no sill and feature concave corners. In contrast, the three pairs of side windows display no ornamentation other than small circular reliefs above the tenth story. The top of the stepped **penthouse** level is trimmed with thin bands of terra-cotta relief. At center is an elaborate faceted niche, trimmed with terra cotta, that displays a possibly limestone bust on a projecting pedestal. To either side are small arched windows, with stone or terra-cotta sills.

The **West 49th Street facade** faces south. The base and upper floors are similar to the Broadway facade, with identical white brick and terra-cotta embellishments. The west end of the ground story, which incorporates a secondary entrance and loading area, is non-historic. Above the tenth story are small circular reliefs, as well as a raised parapet at center. Near or at the west end of the 2nd, 5th, and 8th floors, the windows have been replaced with metal ventilation grilles.

The south end of the **west (rear) facade** is visible from 49th Street. Here, due to the curved east corner of the tan brick Ambassador Theater (1919-21), two rows of windows can be seen, as well as a blank brick wall that steps up toward the center of the building, and a single metal pipe on the roof. Two windows on the eighth floor contain ventilation grilles.

The **north facade** is simply treated and partly visible from Broadway and 50th Street, where the upper floors can be seen above the adjoining building, as well as part of the west (rear) facade, including an engaged structure with a single window, possibly containing stairs. To the south, at the rear of the 11th story penthouse, are two additional floors. The east and north-facing facades contain simple windows with industrial sash. The rest of the north facade (fifth to tenth floor) incorporates four sets of windows; the outer sets are grouped in pairs, the inner two sets, in groups of three. At the center of this facade is a projecting rectangular chimney shaft. Between the west pair of windows, a single metal pipe extends the full height of the facade. Most are three-over-three industrial sash, except where projecting metal ventilation ducts have been installed. On the lower floors, beside the roof of the adjoining building, the windows have vertical security bars. Air conditioning units have been installed in a small number of windows, as well as some horizontal ventilation grilles. Two electric lights are attached to the center of the facade, below the seventh floor, directed down onto the adjoining roof. On the **roof**, set at a slight angle to Broadway, is a metal framework that displays two illuminated non-historic signs facing north and south.

Researched and written by
Matthew A. Postal
Research Department

NOTES

¹ The Commission previously held a public hearing on the Brill Building (LP-1534) on December 10, 1985 and March 11, 1986. Gale Harris, of the Research Department at the Landmarks Preservation Commission, provided much of the initial research used in this report.

² Ian Inglis, "Some Kind of Wonderful": The Creative Legacy of the Brill Building," *American Music*, Vol. 2, No. 2 (Summer 2003), 233. Another useful publication that focuses on the building, as well as 1650 Broadway, is Ken Emerson, *Always Magic in the Air: The Bomp and Brilliance of the Brill Building Era* (New York: Viking, 2005).

³ Emerson, XIV.

⁴ Issac Goldberg, *Tin Pan Alley: A Chronicle of the American Music Racket* (1930/2005), 320, viewed at <http://books.google.com/books>.

⁵ "New Shop in Times Square," *New York Times*, October 1, 1910, 9; for an early photograph of the site see "Investors in Midtown Zones," *New York Times*, October 3, 1909, 14. Also see "Good Place to Buy Clothing" *New York Tribune*, September 19, 1896, 10; "Samuel Brill Dies; Clothing Merchant," *New York Times*, May 14, 1931; "Max D. Brill Dies, 72, Stores Founder," *New York Times*, June 20, 1938, 23; "Maurice Brill, 82, Clothier," *New York Times*, July 7, 1951, 9.

⁶ New York County, Office of the Register, conveyance liber 3739, page 70 (August 29, 1929).

⁷ "New Finance Corporation," *New York Times*, September 10, 1922, RE1.

⁸ "Open Times Sq. Post Office," *New York Times*, June 16, 1921, 30.

⁹ "A. E. Lefcourt Resigns as Bank President," *New York Times*, August 8, 1930, 27.

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- ¹⁰ “Lefcourt Company Changes Owners,” *New York Times*, December 30, 1939, 23.
- ¹¹ In early 1933, Lefcourt’s company reported a loss of \$832,225 from “abandonment of buildings.” See “Lefcourt Realty Corp.” *Wall Street Journal*, February 16, 1933, 10.
- ¹² Arthur Pound, *The Golden Earth: The Story of Manhattan’s Landed Wealth* (Ayer Publishing, 1975), 229-30, viewed at <http://books.google.com/books>.
- ¹³ Lefcourt reportedly jumped from a top floor window of the Raymond Commerce Building in Newark. See William B. Helmreich, *The Enduring Community: The Jews of Newark and Metrowest* (Transaction Publishers, 1998), 82, viewed at <http://books.google.com/books>; “Topics of The Times: A Modern Master Builder,” *New York Times*, November 15, 1932, 20.
- ¹⁴ “A Builder Who Changed Mid-Manhattan’s Skyline,” *New York Times*, November 20, 1932, RE1.
- ¹⁵ “New York Plans New “Tallest” Building,” *Chicago Tribune*, October 4, 1929, 2.
- ¹⁶ “Lefcourt to Spend \$50,000,000 in 1930,” *New York Times*, December 2, 1929, 49; “Lefcourt Plans For 1930 Large,” *Wall Street Journal*, December 2, 1929, 6.
- ¹⁷ “Drops Skyscraper Plan,” *New York Times*, March 4, 1930, 54.
- ¹⁸ “Lefcourt Colonial Building,” *Architecture and Building* (May 1930), viewed on microfiche at New York Public Library, no page number visible.
- ¹⁹ *Putnam’s Magazine* (Vol. 3, 1908), 630, viewed at <http://books.google.com/books>.
- ²⁰ “Gives Son of 12 Years \$10,000,00 Building,” *Washington Post*, March 10, 1925, 1.
- ²¹ “Died. Abraham E. Lefcourt,” *Time* (November 21, 1932), viewed at Time.com
- ²² Daniel B. Schnieder, “FYI: Boom and Busts,” *New York Times*, March 14, 1999, viewed at <http://nytimes.com>. Earlier, Rita Reif claimed that Lefcourt “added two ornaments to the structure – a bust of himself at the top and, over the entrance, a bust of his son.” See “Tin Pan Alley in Distress,” *New York Times*, April 11, 1976.
- ²³ “Opens New Renting Office,” *New York Times*, September 28, 1930, N20.
- ²⁴ A photo-copy of this image is in the files of the Landmarks Preservation Commission. It is likely to have come from the New York Public Library. The caption reads “Brill Building – 1619 Broadway, 1934.”
- ²⁵ According to an unaccredited 1974 *New York Daily News* article, reprinted in the *Los Angeles Times*, the building was planned for motion picture tenants, with large film storage vaults, capable of storing hundreds of reels. This has not been confirmed. See “Old Echoes are Music at N.Y.’s Brill Building,” *Los Angeles Times*, November 28, 1974, A8.
- ²⁶ Warner Brothers Pictures acquired the Harms catalogue in 1929.
- ²⁷ Mills Music was located in the Brill Building until 1965. Initially, it was said to occupy the entire third floor where they “built a dozen or more tiny little cubicles looking out over Broadway; each one just large enough to hold a piano, piano stool, and maybe a chair or two.” See *New York Daily News/Los Angeles Times*.
- ²⁸ Caesar recalled in the *New York Daily News* in 1974: “This building was going all day, every day, day and night, at one time . . . It was neighborly. You could hear the other fellow’s music all day long, much to your own irritation. You’d hear the same songs played over and over again, ad nauseam.” Many early tenants are discussed in David A. Jasen, *Tin Pan Alley: An Encyclopedia of the Golden Age of Song* (Taylor & Francis, 2003). According to Jasen, Southern Music was the building’s first tenant, specializing in country music. In 1940, Peer helped organize Broadcast Music Inc., generally referred to as BMI.
- ²⁹ “The Brill Building” viewed at http://www.timessquarenyc.org/then_now/then_now_music_attractions.html
- ³⁰ Bernie (1891-1943) headed a popular orchestra in the 1920s and 1930s and often performed on the radio. His contemporary, Olsen (1893-71) led a well-known orchestra and appeared on Broadway.
- ³¹ Barton Music, which controlled as many as 17 affiliates, was located in a 408-square-foot office on the building’s 4th floor.

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- ³² Inglis, 214.
- ³³ Aldon Music was located across the street, at 1650 Broadway.
- ³⁴ Inglis, 215.
- ³⁵ Lieber & Stoller had numerous hit songs, in addition to *Hound Dog* and *Jailhouse Rock*, recorded by Elvis Presley, they wrote *Stand By Me* and *Love Potion Number Nine*.
- ³⁶ Barry & Greenwich collaborated on *Be My Baby*, *Baby, I Love You*, *Then He Kissed Me*, *Chapel of Love*, and many other popular songs.
- ³⁷ Bacharach & David authored 28 top ten songs, including *Walk on By*, *I Say a Little Prayer*, and *This Guy's In Love With You*. See http://www.bacharachonline.com/bacharach_hits.html.
- ³⁸ Jasen, 52.
- ³⁹ From *Japan Times*, January 17, 2008, viewed at: <http://www.bacharachonline.com/phpBB3/viewtopic.php?f=1&t=2936&hilit=brill+17+years>
- ⁴⁰ In 1976 the building was reportedly only 60% occupied. See "Tin Pan Alley in Distress," *New York Times*, April 11, 1976.
- ⁴¹ "Large Broadway Store Leased," *New York Times*, October 2, 1930, 45.
- ⁴² Advertisement, *New York Times*, August 27, 1932, 2. In a 1974 *New York Daily News* article, the author claimed that the second floor was originally "set aside as a factory showroom."
- ⁴³ Advertisement, *New York Times*, April 23, 1940, 12; "Maurice Brill, 82, Retired Clothier," July 7, 1951, 9.
- ⁴⁴ "Broadway Welcomes Twin Screen Houses," *New York Times*, May 16, 1931, 20, also see: "Theaters Planned for Store Space," *New York Times*, December 30, 1930, 40; "Twin Movie Theatres to be Opened Friday," *New York Times*, May 12, 1931, 33.
- ⁴⁵ "Greet Twin Theaters," *New York Times*, May 19, 1931, 24.
- ⁴⁶ "Dempsey Leases Site on Broadway," *New York Times*, January 21, 1938, 36; "Dempsey's Café to Close But Bar to Stay Open," *New York Times*, June 22, 1940, 34; "Jack Dempsey's Restaurant Closed Out," *The Washington Post*, June 23, 1940, SP4.
- ⁴⁷ Viewed at <http://www.the-forum.com/collect/DEMPSEY.HTML>.
- ⁴⁸ "Jack Dempsey Is Fighting Back To Save Lease on His Restaurant," *New York Times*, December 13, 1973, 40.
- ⁴⁹ "Night Club to Seat 1,000 Guests Is Planned for Brill Building," *New York Times*, November 16, 1932, 33.
- ⁵⁰ See George Thomas Simon, *Glenn Miller and His Orchestra* (1980), 134, viewed at <http://books.google.com>.
- ⁵¹ The Hurricane opened on April 14, 1940. See "News Notes of the Night Clubs," *New York Times*, April 14, 1940, 127.
- ⁵² David L. Wolper, with David Fisher, *David L. Wolper, Producer: A Memoir* (Simon & Schuster, 2003), 7, viewed at <http://books.google.com>.
- ⁵³ See columnist Robert W. Dana (October 14, 1945), reprinted at <http://www.tipsonatables.com/Zanzibar.html>.
- ⁵⁴ "Artie Shaw's Bop Flop," *Life* (May 30, 1941), 81; John Rosenburg, United Press Staff, "Bebop to Stay, Apparently; Moving into Largest Nightclub," *Niagara Falls Gazette*, March 28, 1949, 15.
- ⁵⁵ *New Amsterdam News*, April 23, 1949.
- ⁵⁶ "New of Realty: Broadway Sale," *New York Times*, February 26, 1966, 49. Also see February 28, 1966; June 6, 1979.
- ⁵⁷ Richard Alleman, *New York: The Movie Lover's Guide* (2005), 133, viewed at <http://books.google.com/books>.

FINDINGS AND DESIGNATION

On the basis of a careful consideration of the history, the architecture, and the other features of this building, the Landmarks Preservation Commission finds that the Brill Building has a special character and a special historical and aesthetic interest and value as part of the development, heritage, and cultural characteristics of New York City.

The Commission further finds that, among its important qualities, the 11-story Brill Building is notable for its relationship to American music, from the last days of Tin Pan Alley to the emergence of rock and roll; that it occupies a prominent site in Times Square at the northwest corner of Broadway and 49th Street; that it was commissioned by the New York City real estate developer Abraham (A. E.) Lefcourt who briefly planned to erect the world's tallest structure on the site, which he leased from the Brill Brothers who operated a chain of men's clothing stores; that when Lefcourt failed to meet the terms of their agreement, the Brills foreclosed on the property and the name of the nearly-complete structure was changed from the Alan E. Lefcourt Building to the arguably more melodious, Brill Building; that it was designed in the Art Deco style by architect Victor A. Bark, Jr. and has white brick elevations with handsome terra-cotta reliefs; that there are two niches that prominently display portrait busts that most likely portray the developer's son, who died as the building was being planned; that a remarkable number of the tenants have been music publishers, as well as songwriters, booking agents, vocal coaches, publicity agents, talent agents and performers; that as the popularity of big band music and jazz increased, a great number of performers leased offices in the building, including Tommy Dorsey, Duke Ellington and Nat King Cole; that while not every artist associated with the so-called "Brill Building sound" in the late 1950s and 1960s actually worked in 1619 Broadway, these creative men and women produced some of early rock and roll's most beautifully crafted and memorable songs; and that various long-term commercial tenants also contributed to the building's reputation, including such popular restaurants as Jack Dempsey's and the Turf, as well as a succession of vast nightclubs on the second floor, such as the Hurricane, Club Zanzibar, and Bop City, where jazz briefly gained a prominent midtown venue and a wider audience in the 1940s.

Accordingly, pursuant to the provisions of Chapter 74, Section 3020 of the Charter of the City of New York and Chapter 3 of Title 25 of the Administrative Code of the City of New York, the Landmarks Preservation Commission designates as a Landmark the Brill Building, 1619 Broadway (aka 1613-23 Broadway, 207-213 West 49th Street), Manhattan, and designates Borough of Manhattan Tax Map Block 1021, Lot 19, as its Landmark Site.

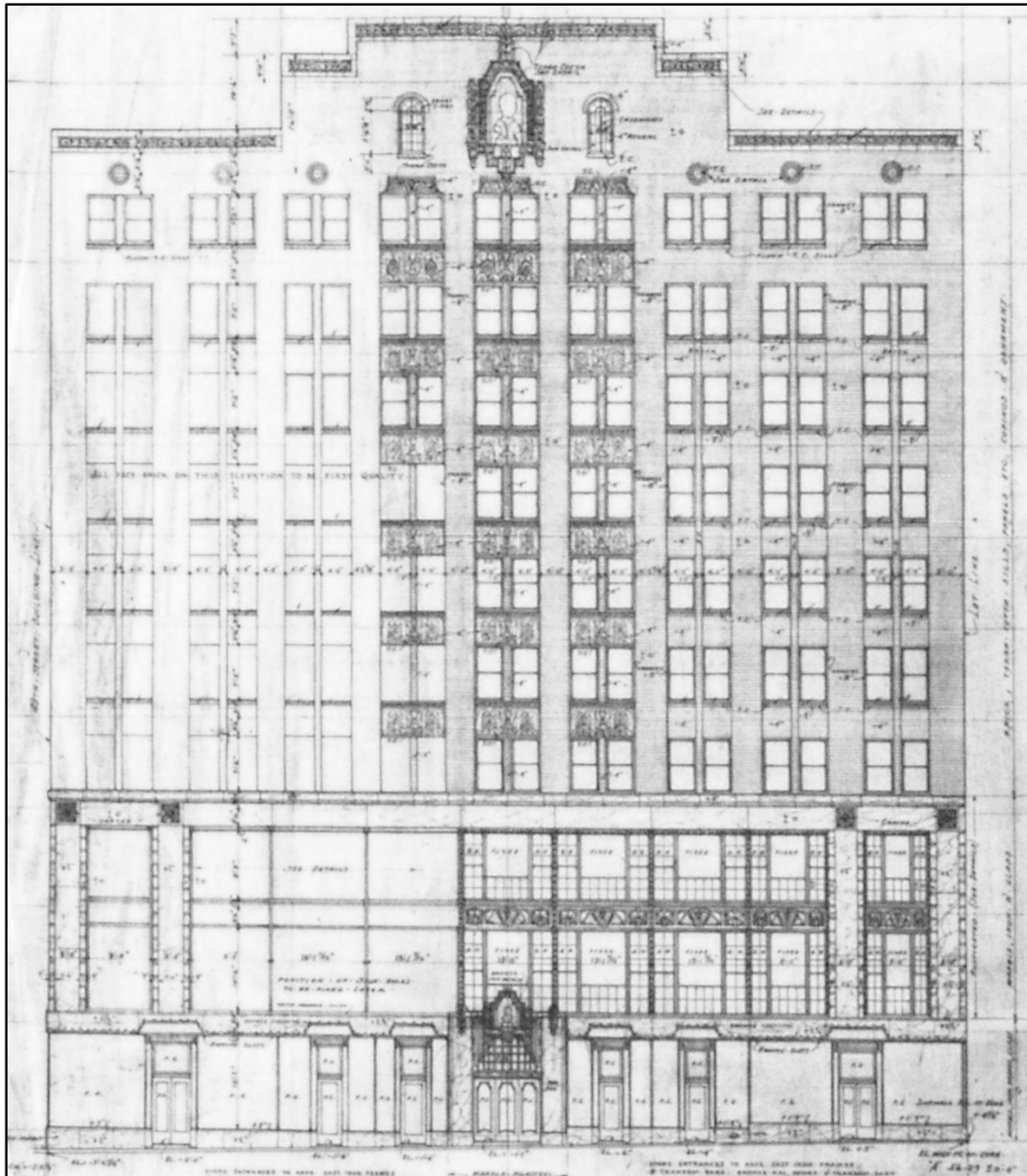
Robert B. Tierney, Chair

Pablo E. Vengoechea, Vice Chair

Frederick Bland, Stephen F. Byrns, Diana Chapin, Roberta Brandes Gratz, Christopher Moore, Elizabeth Ryan, Roberta Washington, Commissioners



The Brill Building
1619 Broadway (aka 1613-23 Broadway, 207-213 West 49th Street), Manhattan
Broadway facade
Photo: Christopher D. Braze, 2009



The Brill Building
 Broadway facade, 1930
 New York City Department of Buildings



The Brill Building
 Broadway facade
 Window details and base
Photos: Christopher D. Brazee, 2009



The Brill Building
Broadway facade
Bust above main entrance
Terra-cotta panel
Photos: Christopher D. Brazee, 2009



The Brill Building
Broadway facade
Bust, 11th story
Photo: Christopher D. Brazee, 2009



The Brill Building
West 49th Street and Broadway facades
Photo: Christopher D. Brazee, 2009



The Brill Building
 West 49th Street facade, lower floors, view toward Broadway
 Rear/west facade, upper floors, view from West 49th Street
Photos: Christopher D. Brazee, 2009

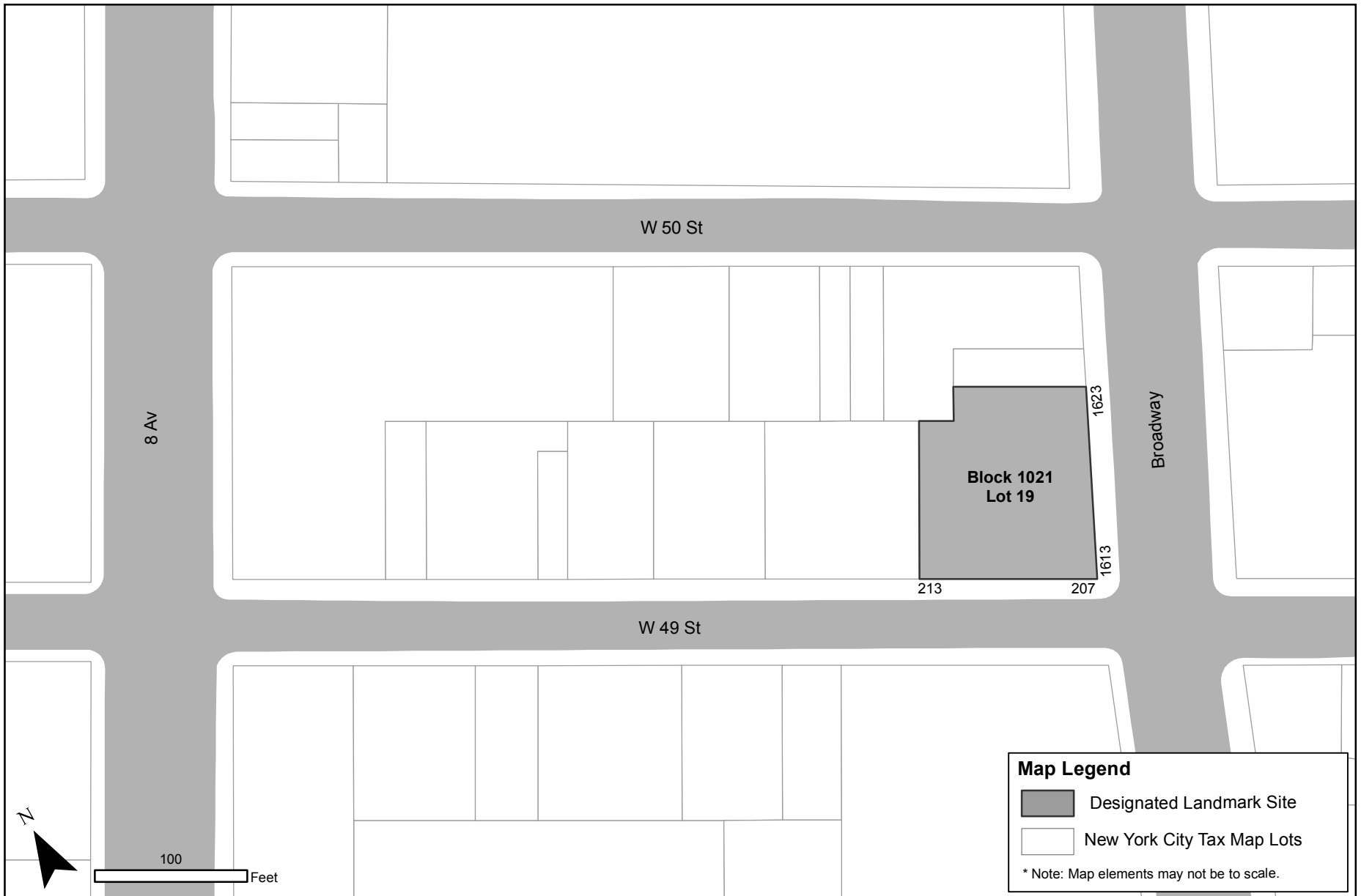


The Brill Building

North facade, upper stories, view south from Broadway and West 51st Street

North and rear/west facade, upper stories, view south from West 50th Street

Photos: Christopher D. Brazee, 2009



THE BRILL BUILDING (LP-2387), 1619 Broadway (aka 1613-23 Broadway; 207-13 West 49th Street).
Landmark Site: Borough of Manhattan Tax Map Block 1021, Lot 19.

Designated: March 23, 2010