

THE LIVING NEW DEAL

Annual Report

STATE OF THE PROJECT IN 2017

Greetings for the New Year to all Living New Dealers: board members, team members and national associates. Each year we offer you a brisk summary of our achievements for the preceding year; because there is so much to cover, this report is necessarily abbreviated.

The Living New Deal continues to thrive and to grow with every passing year, and 2017 was no exception. Our research deepens and coverage of New Deal sites expands, our public outreach and education are extended, and our organizational capacity grows stronger. This report is divided into three parts that follow those developments.

2017 was a special year: the 10th anniversary of the Living New Deal. We became an established research project at the University of California, Berkeley in 2007, expanded to a national project five years ago, and have never looked back since then. I thank all of you for your continued support and hard work for the project.

Richard Walker, Project Director

I. Research & Information Clearinghouse

The Living New Deal's foundation is a vigorous research program to document New Deal public works across the country and our essential means of presentation is through the Living New Deal website and map. As the database and map grow, so does the wealth of other information about the New Deal on the website: history, preservation, books and videos, discussion and news. Our website now serves as the premier clearinghouse for people searching for knowledge about the New Deal and its legacy.

New Deal site research and mapping

We have now documented and mapped almost 14,000 New Deal public works sites, an increase of 2,000, or 25%, during 2017. In addition, the database passed the threshold of 100 sites in every state and territory. Special thanks are due to Evan Kalish, who toured New England, Georgia and the Upper Midwest to gather photographs and information on hundreds of new sites and to Brent McKee, who scanned thousands of photographs at the National Archives, which are being processed by Elena Ion into a new and existing site pages. And thanks to all our National Associates who contributed site information.

Website content

The Living New Deal website continues to expand the content available to the public, in our effort to become the "Wikipedia of the New Deal". Along with the usual host of news items, book reviews, films and stories, three new features were added:

One is a "Working Together" page that addresses the thorny question of inclusion in New Deal public works, particularly racial inclusion. It features dozens of photographs of integrated work projects found by Brent McKee in the National Archives; WPA projects and CCC camps outside the South were integrated, including European Americans (many of whom were immigrants), African Americans, Asian Americans and Native Americans.

Another new page concerns "New Deal Ancestry," a handy guide for people doing research on family members who served in the CCC, worked for the WPA and otherwise participated in the New Deal. That page was also prepared by McKee with the help of Gabe Milner. A third addition is a helpful Glossary of Terms that allows users to search through our New Deal history entries by names of programs and New Dealers.

Webmaster Lisa Thompson is the person responsible for all such additions to the website, and she keeps working behind the scenes to improve the look and usability of the website in all its many dimensions, as detailed below.

Website performance

The Living New Deal website continues to attract users around the country in large numbers. Our daily visits to the site, according to Google, run at a relatively steady ~1000 per day. That they rise and fall at the end of every school semester indicates that the site is being used by teachers and students.

We continue to upgrade the performance and appearance of the website in every way possible. The website loads faster now that we have a new host, Nestify, and is more secure (https://) against hacking. A very helpful locator was installed on the map page, making it easier for users to find New Deal sites in their vicinity; state and city searches were also made easier. Several web pages were improved, like Events, Donate, History, Eblasts, etc. A most useful thumbnail locator map was added to every Project Page (click on the thumbnail and it expands to show where the project is on a larger section of the national map). Webmaster Thompson also made many other improvements invisible to the average user, especially a new, simplified format for Project Data entry for our RAs – for which they are most grateful.

We are now responding immediately to all submissions and comments by volunteer researchers and website users. Research Manager Elena Ion immediately acknowledges all those who submit project data and notifies them when their new entries have been posted. We receive hundreds of comments from the public and answer those we can; thanks to Evan Kalish, Erin Reding and Gabe Milner for handling those duties.

New Crowdsourcing Phone App

We are developing an iPhone app for crowdsourcing New Deal sites, which will allow users to photograph and video sites, provide textual and oral information on the site and send the data directly to the Living New Deal for processing by our RAs. Kevin Friedly in Indiana prepared the original app, which has been reviewed by our staff for improvements, and he is now doing on the beta version. Lisa Thompson is working on improving the look and usability.

II. Outreach and Public Education

The Living New Deal exists not only to document the achievements of the New Deal but to keep the legacy alive by educating the American public about the amazing accomplishments of that time – demonstrating that government for the general good is possible in this country, that investment in collective goods is essential to economic vitality and that serving the public interest keeps democracy alive.

The *New Deal New York* map and guide

In April 2017, we completed a large-scale map and guide to *New Deal New York* after a year and a half of hard work from many people. Thanks to Linda Herman and Molly Roy for design and cartography; Frank da Costa and Shaina Potts for research input; and to Dick Walker and Susan Ives for conceptualizing and managing production of the map.

We are happy to report that the map received *rave* reviews all around the city. Gray Brechin and Harvey Smith joined Walker and Ives in meetings around the city to introduce the map and our work to dozens of key people and institutions.

Two major launch events were held in May for the *New Deal New York* map. The first was held at the Roosevelt House at Hunter College on May 11 and the second at the Museum of the City of New York on May 19. Both events featured panels of distinguished historians: Mason Williams, William Leuchtenburg, Marta Gutman, Ira Katznelson, Owen Gutfreund & Sarah Seidman, plus LND representatives Brechin and Walker. Both events were well attended and received very positive reviews from all; we were pleased to see Frank and Grace Roosevelt, William Vandenheuvel, Annie Rothstein, Susan DeMasi, and other friends of the New Deal in attendance.

As an added bonus, Deborah Gardner prepared a marvelous public exhibit to go along with the Roosevelt House event, which remained up for several weeks, "The New Deal in New York City, 1933-1943: Posters, Murals, Maps, and Photographs." Thanks to Deborah, Sarah Seidman and staffs at Roosevelt House and the MCNY for setting up these events, and thanks to Susan Ives and Dick Walker for organizing the events from the West Coast end.

Two additional events featuring the *New Deal New York* map were held in New York City in October. Gray Brechin spoke at the Gotham Center at CUNY on October 26th and again at a three-day event at the New School and Columbia University, October 27-29, organized by the National Jobs for All Coalition, headed by Trudy Goldberg and LND board member Sheila Collins.

New Deal New York is the second in a planned series of pocket maps & guides to New Deal public works in major cities. Our first city was San Francisco in 2014. In 2018 we will be hard at work on our third map and guide, this time for Washington, D.C.

Other Events

LND Advisor Harvey Smith curated two Bay Area exhibits on the New Deal in 2017. "Building Bridges Not Walls" at the San Francisco Main Library interpreted the contributions of immigrants to the Bay Area in the context of the construction of the two iconic bridges built during the 1930s. A companion exhibit at San Francisco's historic Canessa Gallery included photographs, artifacts and artworks celebrating the melting pot of the Bay Area and the region's commitment to diversity and tolerance.

The Living New Deal was well represented at a gathering of New Deal historians and family members of FDR's cabinet at the Franklin D. Roosevelt National Historic Site in Hyde Park, NY. Susan Ives and Harvey Smith spoke at an award ceremony honoring individuals and organizations preserving the New Deal legacy, organized by the National New Deal Preservation Association, of which Smith is President.

Newsletter and social media

Our excellent Newsletter appeared quarterly, and, as usual, the content was superb. The number of stories also keeps expanding, thanks to such contributors as Kathleen Duxbury, Alex Tarr, Gray Brechin, Robert Cherny, Harvey Smith, Ira Katznelson, Gabe Milner, Susan DeMasi, Trudy Goldberg, Jon Golinger, Leah Sprague & Jason Roblando. Thanks to Susan Ives for creating and editing the newsletters and to Gabe Milner and Lisa Thompson for production work. Lisa Thompson and Ives are now at work on a full index to past newsletter articles, which will make accessing their content on our website much easier.

We continued to generate a monthly 1-page eBlast called "The New Deal Low-Down," which is meant to keep our thousands of followers apprised of the work of the Living New Deal team and to call attention to important events, new books and preservation fights over New Deal sites in danger of destruction or privatization. Thanks to Gabe Milner and Erin Reding for producing the eBlasts. Our mailing list is still growing and topped 3000 this past year. Our newsletters, eblasts and fundraising appeals go out through MailChimp to this list.

The Living New Deal also maintains a social media presence through Facebook and Twitter, with Susan Ives, Gabe Milner and now Erin Reding for taking care of social

media duties. We just added a new feature on Instagram: "The New Deal Photo of the Week", which will highlight historic and contemporary photographs of great New Deal public works and the people who made them.

Lectures, interviews and articles

Our staff are always busy getting out the word on the New Deal legacy and the work of the Living New Deal through talks and the press. Here are some examples of lectures:

- Gray Brechin spoke in NYC, Oakland, San Jose and San Francisco
- Brent McKee spoke at events in Maryland and West Virginia
- Glory-Jean Greif spoke at three events in Indiana honoring the CCC
- Frank da Cruz helped organize the Oval Park 80th anniversary in the Bronx
- Harvey Smith spoke at events in San Francisco and Hyde Park
- Susan Ives spoke to the California CCC, Marin Audubon and at Hyde Park

Our staff also wrote or were interviewed for articles on the New Deal. Dick Walker wrote two articles about New Deal New York in the *Brooklyn Rail*. Presentations on the New Deal's impact on the National Parks by Brechin, Ives and Smith at a 2016 conference, *A Century of Design in the National Parks*, were published in 2017 in the symposium proceedings, *Preserving the Built Environment in National and State Parks*. Gray Brechin and Brent McKee were interviewed by the BBC and NPR for major stories on the New Deal vs. today's need for massive infrastructure investment in the United States; Brechin was also interviewed for a piece on infrastructure by *Popular Mechanics*.

III. Organizational Capacity

The Living New Deal has a wonderful core team of people who work long hours out of a love of the New Deal and our project, along with a bevy of volunteer Research Associates across the country. We have a very supportive group of prestigious folks on our Advisory Board and Research Board and a large mailing list of followers who receive our newsletters, eblasts and appeals throughout the year. To all of those who give of their time and money to advance the Living New Deal, we give our heartfelt thanks.

Organization

Our Core Team expanded in 2017 and is no longer confined to the Bay Area. Former Associates Evan Kalish and Brent McKee, who have made so many contributions to the Living New Deal, took on larger roles: McKee is now Project Historian and Kalish is Researcher-At-Large. In addition, Elena Ion took over in the expanded position of Research Manager. The Project Manager position is also being expanded to include more national outreach work, in addition to day-to-day management. Former attorney Erin Reding took the reins as Project Manager from Gabe Milner, who moved to Los Angeles last summer to become a teacher. Among our on-campus research assistants, John

Stehlin and Shaina Potts moved on to new academic jobs, while Glenna Anton remained with the project.

Several new National Associates were added to our lengthening list in 2017:

- Anne Delano Steinert - Southern Ohio & Northern Kentucky
- Kaleinani Schoenstein – Hawaii
- Karen Daniels – Missouri
- Cara Moore - St. Louis, Missouri
- Susan DeMasi – Long Island, New York

There was only one addition to our boards in 2017: Prof. Marta Gutman of the City University of New York joined the Research Board

Fundraising

Fundraising in 2017 went very well, with a Spring Appeal and End-of-Year Appeal that brought in a total of \$110,000 to the Living New Deal non-profit and another \$40,000 to the Living New Deal research project at the University of California, Berkeley. One board member gave \$50,000 and another donor gave \$40,000. Wells Fargo Bank gave a matching grant of \$5,000. Appeals to our adherents brought in another \$20,000 in small donations. Our deepest thanks to all who donated to the Living New Deal; without them we could never keep up our great record of accomplishments. And thanks to Susan Ives, Gabe Milner and Erin Reding for handling fund appeals.

Living New Deal Inc., our non-profit arm, fulfilled its annual legal obligations of filing with the California Secretary of State and the Attorney General's office, and of providing an annual financial report to our non-profit Board. Our accountant sent out 1099 forms to all hired consultants and filed our annual tax returns with the IRS.

Planning Ahead

•We have big plans to expand the Living New Deal in the coming years, which necessarily means building our organizational and financial capacity. Our aim is to create a Living New Deal Center that acts as an institutional home for our research and mapping programs, as a museum of the New Deal and as a center for public education about the New Deal legacy and its significance for US government and society today.

We have developed a relationship with Fort Mason in San Francisco, which has space coming available and an interest in hosting a Living New Deal Center. Brechin and Walker met with a professional museum designer who wishes to work with us on plans for a study center. We are working on an expanded business plan to use for a fundraising push in the coming year.

*Submitted January 8, 2018
Berkeley CA*