



Wall Street history revived

The history of Wall Street—from its birth as a provincial fort to its present-day standing as the world's financial capital—is now a sidewalk retrospective, thanks to a series of informative markers, mounted on signposts and designed to last for many years to come. The project was created and financed by Kenneth D. Laub & Co., Inc. The Municipal Art Society of New York was co-sponsor.

The markers, placed at strategic points along the "street of finance," illustrate the area's development, with each marker focusing on the people, events and buildings which have influenced their generations at each location. For example, markers show photographs of the infamous "Blizzard of '88"; lithographs and anecdotes about the wooden wall erected for the city's defense along the street during the 17th Century; photographs of Wall Street being consumed by the "Great Fire of 1835"; and many other landmarks and historic events.

Among those present at the project's unveiling was Mayor Edward I. Koch, who congratulated the Laub firm for its effort. "Never before has a program of this kind been undertaken in New York," he said, adding that, "this is an ambitious project that highlights the history which abounds throughout Manhattan. It is a real public service."

The historic marker project began in 1982, when Kenneth D. Laub, President of the Laub Organization, commissioned an extensive research study on Lower Manhattan history, with the aim of using the material gathered to, as he put it, "celebrate the greatness of New York." Ultimately, Wall Street was chosen as the focus of the effort, and the markers were developed as its vehicle. The aim was to bring the area's rich past to life for the greatest possible number of people, an objective which could best be met through this series of outdoor "mini-museums."

According to Mr. Laub, "One of the reasons for our interest in this project was our concern that, in a city as intense as New York, we often lose sight of our history. Buildings

and fortunes have risen and fallen; political and financial dynasties have come and gone: All too often, the pressures of commerce have overwhelmed the very human need to be in touch with our past." "This project," he said, "is a tribute to the past generations of movers and doers who laid the groundwork for the flavor and excitement which is now New York City. It is my gift to the City which has been so good to me."

One of Wall Street's new historic markers ►
Kenneth D. Laub and Mayor Edward I. Koch join in unveiling the project on Wall Street ▼

