



Record Group:	New Jersey World's Fair Commission (1938-1940)
Series:	Architectural Drawings of the New Jersey Building, Exhibit Plans, and General Fair Plans, 1937-1940
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Institutional History

New Jersey's participation in the New York World's Fair of 1939 was authorized by the state legislature on 2 March 1938 with the creation of the New Jersey World's Fair Commission (*Laws of 1938*, chap. 15). The commission comprised seven members appointed by the governor, Assembly speaker, and Senate president. At its organizational meeting, George deBenneville Keim was chosen chairman--a position he held for the duration of the commission's existence.

Foremost on the commission's agenda was the selection of an appropriate building design to represent New Jersey in the fair's "Court of States." After considerable deliberation, the commission decided on a reproduction of the Old Barracks at Trenton. The firm of Hugh A. Kelly & Associates, Architects, was chosen to plan the structure. Since the initial legislation made no monetary provision for the state's participation in the fair, two appropriations totaling \$125,000 were made by the legislature in December 1938 and July 1939 (*Laws of 1938*, chap. 421; *Laws of 1939*, chap. 141). The commission also raised \$36,081 in contributions from private sources, and a number of prominent New Jersey companies donated much of the construction materials, labor, and furnishings.

The New Jersey Building was constructed of undressed Princeton stone, two stories in height. The first floor housed a number of exhibits relating to departments of state government, industries, and municipalities. The second floor was used for administrative offices, a reception room, and storage. In the wings, at each end of the first floor, a Colonial room was reproduced in keeping with the character of the building and the period which it represented. The first-floor exhibits included: WOR-Mutual Broadcasting Studio; Thomas A. Edison, Inc.; State Board of Commerce and Navigation; Monmouth County; Atlantic County and Atlantic City; State Department of Agriculture; State Chamber of Commerce; State Highway Department; Lenox, Inc.; Cast Iron Pressure Pipe Industry; State Commission on Historic Sites; and the New Jersey Council (a development and promotional organization). In addition to promoting the state through exhibits, the commission also distributed 700,000 pieces of literature "describing the beauties and advantages" of New Jersey.

During the fair's first year, an estimated 2,250,000 persons visited the Old Barracks replica. Since the construction of the building was such that it could be placed in shape for a second year with only minor expense, the commission recommended that the legislature make an additional appropriation of \$50,000 for participation in 1940. A law to this effect was enacted and signed by Gov. Moore on 17 June 1940 (*Laws of 1940*, chap. 233). By the end of the second year, the commission estimated that four million visitors had toured its New Jersey Building.

When the New York World's Fair was originally planned, it had been determined by the New York City authorities that the site would be converted into a park at the fair's close. All of the exhibitors contracted to remove their

buildings from the grounds at their own expense. However, on recommendation of the New Jersey World's Fair Commission, the New Jersey legislature authorized the gift of the state's building to the City of New York (*Laws of 1940*, chap. 209). The New Jersey Building was one of the three, out of 142 structures at the New York World's Fair, which were accepted by New York City's Department of Parks. It was presented to the city by Chairman Keim at simple ceremonies held 17 January 1941. After standing in the new Flushing Meadow Park for a number of years, however, the structure was apparently destroyed prior to the 1964 New York World's Fair.

Bibliography

State of New Jersey. *Report of New Jersey World's Fair Commission, 1939.*

State of New Jersey. *Report of New Jersey World's Fair Commission, 1940.*

New Jersey World's Fair Commission. *New Jersey at the New York World's Fair.* (1940).

New Jersey State Building, Court of States, World's Fair, New York: Description of Building. (no date; unpublished paper in New Jersey State Library).

Content Note

This series contains primarily architectural drawings of the New Jersey Building prepared by Hugh A. Kelly & Associates of Trenton in December 1938. Also included are plans of the State Highway Department's exhibit and the Mutual Broadcasting booth, several general fair plans, and a plan of the tablet commemorating the presentation of the building to the City of New York.

Contents

1. "State of New Jersey Building, New York World's Fair" by Hugh A. Kelly & Associates, Architects, Trenton, 29 December 1938. Scale: 1/8"=1 foot, unless otherwise noted. 73 blueprints and bluelines, all approximately 18"x30", as follows:
 - a. Sheet 1: pile plan. 4 blueprint copies.
 - b. Sheet 2: foundation plan. Scale: 1/8" and 1/2"=1 foot. 4 blueprint copies.
 - c. Sheet 3: first floor plan. 8 blueline copies and 5 blueprint copies.
 - d. Sheet 4: second floor plan. 5 blueprint copies.
 - e. Sheet 5: attic floor plan. 4 blueprint copies.
 - f. Sheet 6: front elevation. 4 blueprint copies.
 - g. Sheet 7: end elevation, court elevation and section. 4 blueprint copies.
 - h. Sheet 8: rear elevation, window schedule, room schedule, and door schedule. 4 blueprint copies; 1 blueprint copy of revised door schedule, 20 January 1939, 8.5"x10.5".
 - i. Sheet 9: typical wall and porch sections, typical detail of dormers, detail of main entrance door, typical window detail, and typical detail of cornice on main building. Scale: 3/4"=1'. 4 blueprint copies.
 - j. Sheet 10: electrical riser diagram, roof plan, and plot plan. 4 blueprint copies.
 - k. Sheet 11: first floor plan - second floor framing. 4 blueprint copies.
 - l. Sheet 12: second floor plan - ceiling framing plan. 4 blueprint copies.
 - m. Sheet 13: first floor plan - showing plumbing and electrical work. 4 blueprint copies.

- n. Sheet 14: second floor plan - showing plumbing and electrical work. 4 blueprint copies.
 - o. Sheet 15: attic floor plan - showing plumbing and electrical work. 4 blueprint copies.
 - p. Sheet 16: attic floor plan - approximate section through fan, air conditioner, plenum chamber, etc. 2 blueprint copies.
2. "New Jersey State Highway Dept., World's Fair Exhibit, New Jersey Building - New York World's Fair," drawn by W. Carman Davis, 14 April 1939. Scale: 1/2"=1 foot. Blueprint, 19"x25".
 3. "Mutual Broadcasting Booth, Geo. W. McLaughlin, Designer." Scale: various. Blueprint, 18"x29", 2 copies.
 4. "Court of the States Building, New York World's Fair 1939 Inc. ... Renting Plan," 21 December 1937. Scale: not shown. Blueline, 19"x27", 5 copies.
 5. "Section I, Main Exhibit Area," no date. Scale: not shown. Printed, 15"x22", 9 copies.
 6. "General Plan, New York World's Fair 1939," drawing no. X-M-250, 11 February 1938. Scale: 1"=200 feet. Printed, 18"x51", 2 copies.
 7. Commemorative tablet for presentation of the New Jersey Building to the City of New York, [ca. 1940]. Drawn to scale. Blueprint, 31"x47".

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