



GUIDELINES

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The Newsletter of the Guides Association of New York City

SUMMER 2014

JOANN FYNKE PRESENTS A TRIPLE PLAY ON THE NORTH SHORE OF STATEN ISLAND by Dave Gardner

This included 1) Pier 76, a restaurant 2) the Flagship Brewing Company, a brewery and 3) the Staten Island Yankees Stadium
It was a sneak preview with tastings and customized tours for GANYC members.

We started at Pier 76 (an Italian & Seafood Restaurant with a capacity of 75 people) at 76 Bay Street, not far from the Staten Island Ferry. The reception was a tasting feast with a personalized talk by co-owner Jeremy Pappalardo who shared his family history, what he believes is the secrets to their success, and the connection to the famous Joes & Pat's on Victory Boulevard, also on Staten Island. Among other things, the soon-to-be built Staten Island Ferris Wheel was definitely a big topic. Right now, the largest in the world is in Las Vegas, with a revolution of about 30 minutes. The New York City one will be larger at about 38 minutes. Each pod, we were told, can take about 40 people. The area of St. George will also be revitalized by not one, but two hotels.

At the restaurant, the tour guides were then addressed by Linda Donto concerning lighthouses. She said that from 1864-1939 the United States Lighthouse Service controlled all the lighthouses in the US and that today there are about 15,000 lighthouses in the world. Regarding New York City, the American Lighthouse Coordinating Committee searched 16 places for a museum and Staten Island was selected. (Numbers #2 and #3 were Michigan and Maine). Even George Washington enters the story because when he signed the Lighthouse Bill on August 7th, 1789, he became not just the Father of our Country but the Father of our Lighthouses. Linda told us that Staten Island presently has five lighthouses on land. (The previous one at Old Orchard was destroyed by Hurricane Sandy).

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SUBMIT MATERIAL TO: ItsIDave@hotmail.com or lfisher718@gmail.com. The editor strongly encourages contributors to submit their work via email. Mailed submissions ATTENTION: NEWSLETTER EDITOR at the address above.

"On A Personal Note..."

News and Notes about the current lives of our members.

On March 2, 2014, Gabriela Dyami and Gareth Eyota Boone Johnson were born in NYC to proud parents and fellow guides *Sherry Boone* and *Albert Christmas Johnson*. . . *Michael Zufolo's* daughter Jessica "finally" married Ed Hill of Hartford, Ct., on Sunday, May 25 in Harbour Island, Bahamas, overlooking the turquoise Atlantic from the deck of the Pink Sands Hotel. The service was officiated by the Commiss. of Tourism of Eleuthera. The Bahamian menu was superb, the music hot, and the wine never stopped flowing... On Sunday March 30, 2014, *Marc Landman's* younger daughter Casey Beth married Justin Lerner in Point Pleasant Beach along the Jersey shore. It was a beautiful ceremony... *Yue (Moon) Mayr's* daughter graduated from high school. She won: Academic Achievement Award, Valedictorian Award and Recognition for Outstanding Leadership Award. After her speech she was invited to have BBQ with the mayor in the Mayor's Mansion... *Remo Madsen's* oldest daughter, Anne, is expecting twins on September 11... His wife, Jo Ann, is thrilled and he is wondering what grandfather-hood might be like!... After Rizzoli Bookstore, the NYC institution, was evicted from their lovely 57th Street & 5th Avenue location *Jerry Travis* was able to use his skills as a former corporate strategic consultant to help them prep a new as-yet-undisclosed location that preserves the most important "DNA" of their old shops... *Harvey Paul Davidson* represented WFTGA at the UN in New York at a presentation introducing an "International Handbook on Tourism and World Peace" ... *Tim Ries* celebrated four years of work at Friends of the High Line. As Director of Park Services, he has helped in the preparations for the opening of the final section later this year... *Sheila Evans* has been voted Chairperson of the United Tenants Association of Cathedral Parkway Towers. (UTACPT) She replaces former chair Cecil Sells, an attorney who held the position for more than twenty years. Sheila also serves on the board of the Black Alumni Association of the City College of New York... *Dave Gardner's* cousin, Clare, got married.

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FROM THE PRESIDENT



Dear GANYC Membership:

It is always helpful to have friends in the press. Sadly, we have none. After I wrote my response to the Washington DC Appellate Court decision, I found the media simply prefers lambasting tour guides to supporting them. I sent the statement,

as an op-ed piece to the Wall Street Journal, since they had run the original story. They turned me down (at least they were nice enough to send a rejection letter). Then, I tried the New York Times. They didn't want it either (and didn't send a rejection letter). But, last week, they published a Metropolitan Diary piece entitled *Correcting a Tour Guide's Errors*, in which the author holds himself up as a hero for exposing a "sinister looking" tour guide for giving his clients the wrong name for Jackson Square Park. The choice of what to publish on the topic, versus what to reject speaks volumes of our standing in the community. I have never felt so discouraged.

Discouragement must fuel the will to fight harder.

Instead of just hearing from my voice, let the media hear from all our many voices. Flood the Times and let them know we will not be represented by this one story. Flood the Journal and let them know we will not be dismissed as "old news".

I once vowed that, every time a news story came up that touched on tourism, I would submit a comment on behalf of GANYC. I will continue to do that, but I now realize it is not enough. In the words of Velma Kelly, "I can't do it alone." Every one of you is a representative of the tourism industry and the tour guiding profession. I encourage you to lift your voices in unison to demand the respect that our profession has earned. In the words of Coalhouse Walker Jr., "Make them hear you."

We have a long hard fight ahead of us. We seek the respect of our fellow New Yorkers and the leaders they elect. Both parties read the papers. So it is time to change what they're reading.

Matthew Baker GANYC President

"On A Personal Note..." continued

Svetlana Gutman would like us to know that while living in her native country, the USSR, she worked as both a heat power engineer and concertmaster of one of Kiev's theatres. As an engineer she was forced several times to visit the Chernobyl disaster, which left a long lasting terrible impression and finalized her decision to leave the USSR and come to New York. Here she started a New Era. She got her NYC tour guide license and her granddaughter was born in New York, one of the happiest events of her life. From that moment she really became a busy woman!...*Mel Wasserman* and his wife, Sandy, spent seven weeks on a service program in Israel. Since Mel is a survivor of both attacks on the WTC, while participating in this program over the past three years, he and Sandy have been sure to visit some of the 14 Israeli Memorials dedicated to the victims of September 11, 2001. Last year, at the Jerusalem 9/11 Memorial, Mel spoke about his experiences on 9/11 and described New York's 9/11 Memorial. Mel has developed a 9/11 Memorial tour highlighting the stories of the five victims of the World Trade Center with Israeli ties, for visiting Israelis, and Americans as well.

On a Personal Note from the Editor.

I had gone on a terrific tour, hosted by JoAnn Fynke and wrote a review of it for any upcoming edition of *Guidelines*. It was, however, to languish unless somebody were to publish said newsletter. Former editor and now-President Matt Baker had offered for me to produce it and I have accepted. I would be overjoyed to bequeath the privilege onto anybody else who'd like the reins but in the meantime, thank you, you're welcome, and please enjoy this issue of *Guidelines*.

WHEN IRISH GUIDES ARE SMILING

By Sheila Evans

Dublin is a magical city! I worked there in April 2014 as a Travel Director on a high-end incentive program, for East West Connection, a marvelous Event Planning Company.

We worked with an extraordinary Destination Management Company, A Touch of Ireland (TOI). The owner Sue Uda is astonishing. Every activity was first rate. Add to the mix, new vehicles, cushioned seats with belts, new microphones, stellar guides, and great drivers, and you have a recipe for touring bliss!

Our profession attracts fascinating people and Irish guides are no exception. I briefly spoke to some of the delightful, super friendly tour guides on the program. They explained that after completing a course, a 3-hour written exam, and an exam on a coach (on which, candidates can be given the microphone at any time), their tourist board, Failte, then issues an Approved Badge similar to our license.

way... he cycled every street in Dublin on his bike! He took the exam and has worked for Gray Line there. He's a regional guide.

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DISAPPEARING NEW YORK LANGUAGE by Lee Gelber

In this instance perhaps this column should be called "Now You See It, Now You Don't". A lot of the language associated with our city originated with developers and bureaucrats.

Of course many of us have used the anecdotal reference to "23 Skidoo" as we go by the Flatiron Building - the police admonition to aspiring voyeurs waiting to see that shocking glimpse of stocking created by the winds swirling around the wedge shaped building and Madison Square Park. That certainly is no longer heard except when used by our colleagues in tourism.

Many of us are native New Yorkers and we can correctly claim we were educated courtesy of this great metropolis from kindergarten to baccalaureate for free - this great bargain was tendered by two bureaus - for elementary and secondary schools that was handled by the Board of Education. If you attended a tuition free "city school" for college, that system including CCNY, Hunter, Brooklyn and Queens College(s) you were under the aegis of the Board of Higher Education. Now the elementary, middle and secondary public schools are under the umbrella of the Department of Education - that change came about with the advent of mayoral control of our public schools.

The Board of Higher Education was changed to the City University of New York with a chancellor overseeing the system. Those changes brought about tuition and in at least two cases making the former uptown Bronx campus Lehman College and the alma mater of the likes of Bess Meyerson and Sylvia Fine Kaye was the exclusive domain of Hunter College the urban campus at 68th Street and Lexington Avenue and environs. What was once considered City Downtown named for the financier Bernard Baruch, Baruch College is now autonomous like Lehman, Hunter et al.

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Aaron Tabackman has written a much larger piece about pizza in New York. The entirety can be found on our blog. Here are some excerpts:

Diary of a Pizza Education

By Aaron Tabackman

I love pizza. I'm also a tour guide. And I live in New York City. So I figured this reality made for a very tempting endeavor. And that is to find out who really makes the best pizza in New York City and, critics be damned, I am stubborn about these matters. I need my favorite place and so do ultimately my customers.

I just had to find out for myself. I wasn't gonna do what one crazy dude, Colin Hagendorf of Slice Harvest, did eat at every Manhattan pizza joint from top to bottom. No sir. I wouldn't do what the talented Scott Weiner did and open up my own pizza tour company, Scott's Pizza Tours. However, I would get a hold of TimeOut New York's pizza guide and visit who their writers thought were the twenty-five best pizza spots in the five boroughs plus three other favorites. I thought should be included in this mission. So that's twenty-eight pizzerias in about a four months span.

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WHEN IRISH GUIDES ARE SMILING (continued)

The Guides

Tony McGovern drove on a Dublin City tour. I wish I'd had more time to talk to Tony with his low-key demeanor but...he was driving. He is what is known as a driver guide.

He prepared for guiding in an unusual way... he cycled every street in Dublin on his bike! He took the exam and has worked for Gray Line there. He's a regional guide.

Dave Harrington worked for Aer Lingus 35 years. He says after 9/11, many airlines downsized. After taking an early retirement, his wife and some friends were going for a glass of wine with a guide, who was setting up a tour guide course and Dave decided to take the course. He wasn't planning to guide, just looking for something to do. The first lecture was on architecture, 3-1/2 hours! He nearly flipped. The next morning he went to the bank to see if his check was cashed; it was, he was stuck. Happily, he soon began enjoying the class. After graduation, he worked as a driver guide and found a whole new interest! Dave believes the first 10 minutes of a tour are key. He says, "It's a great profession."

Deirdre Burns says her name appears in one of the great legends...Deirdre of the Sorrows. She adds, she's not Deirdre of the Sorrows, "My husband says rather I'm Deirdre of the Horrors, but that's for another day." A former history teacher, she has been guiding 14 years. She speaks Spanish, having lived in Spain for a year studying Spanish for her degree, and also speaks French. She taught before having children. When she went back to work, she found teaching exhausting. She had done a little guiding as a student for a travel agent in Spain and had a feeling for guiding. She enrolled in a national tourist guide-training course, loved it, and now guides in 3 languages. She is passionate about Ireland, its history, and future.

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BOOK REVIEW by Pat Guida

DEATH ANGEL by Linda Fairstein

As many of you know, Linda Fairstein is one of my favorite authors. I have reviewed many of the tales about prosecutor Alex Cooper and her colleagues - detectives Mike and Mercer.

In *DEATH ANGEL*, a young woman's body is found in the lake in Central Park near Bow Bridge. As legions of police search the park for clues, much of the park's geography and history is revealed. They scour the ramble near the crime scene. They interview a number of homeless people who tell them about how some use caves in the North Woods for shelter. Alex and Mike are invited by the president of the Central Park Conservancy to attend a black tie affair in the Conservatory Gardens. An older resident tells them about his family members who once lived in Seneca Village. The search for the murderer also leads Alex and Mike out of the park to the Dakota. After enjoying this read I look forward to her new book - *TERMINAL CITY* when it is available at my library.

Pat Guida specializes in walking tours in New York and Jersey City. To book a tour with Pat, contact: pdg293@comcast.net

TRIPLE PLAY ON STATEN ISLAND (continued)

She's raising funds, because numbers two and three would be happy to accept the honor should New York fail, and part of the drive was to sell small lighthouses for a thousand US dollars. Ms. Fynke graciously pledged to raise funds to purchase one.

Ms. Dionto mentioned a three-hour tour (a three-hour tour) for \$60 from Pier 11 in Manhattan that goes to Lighthouses here. GANYC-member Andrea Coyle, who was present, has taken this trek.

JoAnn then sheperded us over to the Flagship Brewing Co. Their street address is at 215 Bay Street but we were shown the workspace itself (in a building that was formerly a Dodge dealership). We were given an introduction by Jay Sykes and Matthew McGinley (a previous employee at Guinness). Their opening, May 10, was right around the corner at the time. We were given a tour with a tasting of a specially crafted brewing for the GANYC members. Their flavorful beer, they told us, included crushed coriander. Flagship Brewing Co., they explained, is a fifteen barrel brewhouse that makes 30 kegs of beer - each batch ferments for two weeks. They use all-American hops here in what is the first brewery to open on Staten Island in 60 years. They project that they'll be in all five boros of New York City, Long Island and as far upstate as Kingston. (Pictured above - barrels 'n' vats)
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WHEN IRISH GUIDES ARE SMILING (continued)

Ailbag O'Riley begins by explaining her name. "Ailbag was a saint in the 7th century...a man, but it's a man or a woman's name. My last name is O'Riley. The O'Rileys were great lords of Brechney who were disinherited." She took her exam and has been guiding about 30 years, although she didn't work when she had children...but got back to it about 10 years ago. She takes courses and still teaches history. She lived in Austria for a year and speaks German. She enjoys her work going all over Ireland.

Rose O'Conner, an art history major, began as a docent in a stately home close to where she lives. She says, "I'm a natural **show-off** anyway." She heard about Tour Guides of Ireland, a franchise of the Tourist Board that trains guides. She applied, was accepted, and trained as an English-speaking guide. Her badge covers all of Ireland. After working with tour groups, she got in with a company specializing in English speakers. In the 90's, she worked all over Europe and for BBC radio (off air) promoting tours in Ireland. She worked with sheep farmers from Dartmoor and farming groups from Devin, visiting farms that raised sheep, beef and horses.

Later, Rose worked with a DMC doing high-end corporate work until 2008. In 2009 she worked **freelance** and got a nice summer gig in South Dublin, a heritage program with various heritage properties. She continues **freelancing** and clearly loves guiding. She says "It's great for the brain requiring an excellent memory!"

Time did not permit me to speak to Josephine, our transfer guide, for the farewell reception at the Guinness Storehouse. She was funny. I must also mention the super guide at the Activities Desk, Philomena Lowry who was most helpful.

Stuart Purcell, a marvel throughout the program, was especially savvy orchestrating an amazing tour/activity called Country Pursuits, which included Falconry, Archery, Skeet Shooting, Mountain Biking and Trout Fishing!

When Irish Guides are smiling, everyone has a phenomenal time!

Additionally, Blanca Suarez, and Armando Borgatta, also with TOI, worked beautifully with our team.

Diary of a Pizza Education (continued)

During my crusade I became educated on the pizza business, the history and culture of pizza. A tremendous resource was GANYC member Scott Weiner. I knew I could go to him to get a baseline of what could be considered high quality pizza. I asked him what makes for the quintessential New York pizza.

"Tough to answer because there are so many styles of pizza in New York. A New York pizza, what you really mean, is a New York slice. It's sold by the slice. It's baked in a 550 degree gas-fueled deck oven. Bake time is somewhere between 8-12 minutes. It uses low-moisture mozzarella cheese. It's served by the slice and no corner of the slice fits within the circumference of the plate that it's served on."

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WEBSITES WORTH WATCHING

by Jonathan Turer

I am glad to be back at my computer writing this column again for Guidelines after a bit of a hiatus. I was excited to hear that Dave Gardner would be taking the reins of this publication. I look forward to his tenure as the second editor of Guidelines whom I have known since, literally, my first days as a guide.

My inspiration for this column came from all around me; from segments on the radio, from speakers at GANYC meetings and from my regular explorations of the web.

Emily Thompson, Professor of History at Princeton University, wrote the book Soundscape of Modernity and then used historical data and media to map noise complaints in NYC from 1900 to 1933. There are several different ways of accessing the data, including by location, using a Board of Estimate map from the era. You can also look at a list of typical noises and access each sound and then you can use a timeline to view media reports about noise complaints along with the noises. The project is fascinatingly immersive and detailed.

<http://vectorsdev.usc.edu/NYCsound/777b.html>

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DISAPPEARING NEW YORK LANGUAGE

(continued)

We have seen a rash of acronyms describing neighborhoods - SoHo, NoHo, Tribeca, Dumbo, Nolita and now NoMad - there are sillier attempts - SoBro for the South Bronx, So Ha for South Harlem - the latter two rarely used.

However, there are some working acronyms that as bizarre as they might sound are accurate descriptions - Penn South - the non-profit cooperative apartment buildings are referred to by urban planners as a NORC - Naturally Occurring Retirement Community - Southbridge Towers in the South Street Seaport area also fits that description. The original residents or tenants have aged along with the developments so the acronym is logical.

Zuccotti Park achieved a level of notoriety during the height of the Occupy Wall Street movement. The Liberty Street space has a designation as do other amenities like the space alongside 1301 6th Avenue behind the Jim Dine sculptures - they are POPS - Privately Owned Public Spaces. When you pass through some of these spaces you will see discreet signs using the term and usually the name of the owner.

One of my favorites is the official description of those large yellow plastic barrels that are often seen at highway junctions, exits and merge points - they are technically impact attenuators.

Based on the agreed on word limit it is time to attenuate this edition of Disappearing New York Language

TRIPLE PLAY ON STATEN ISLAND (continued)

Then the creative process began.

As we have it, the grains were simply to be discarded but since Mr. Pappalardo from Pier 76 had joined us, he remarked that the restaurant would be happy to take them for a possible beer bread or even a beer pizza. Linda also wanted a 'lighthouse brew' which the brewery will supply to the eatery. And Jeremy wants to design a Flagship Pie!

As tour-leader JoAnn says. "It was exciting to watch the creative process, as they stirred up the brew" Which continued because both the pizza place and the brewery will supply the Staten Island Yankee's Stadium.

Which WAS the next stop that JoAnn led us to.

We were given a brief look at the stadium (at 75 Richmond Terrace) and were then led to an inside room. We were then addressed by Brian Levine, the VP of sales and events. He told us that the 7,171-seat stadium would open June 13th. They consider a 'group' (as in group discounts) to be ten-or-more. Those group rates can drop seat prices from \$18 to \$12 and any group will receive two vouchers for any future game.

They are, in fact, affiliated with the New York Yankees. Their main rivals, the Brooklyn Cyclones, are the property of the New York Mets. Their season runs from June to September and they typically play 76 games in 80 days. Usually each game lasts about two-and-a-half hours and Of the 38 home-games, 21 are considered 'real fun'.

Levine told us that Robinson Cano (of the Seattle Mariners) got famous there, the Borough President uses the offices there, and Hideki Matsui had just pitched for batting practice and signed autographs there for two hours. 'There's much excitement about the future of the stadium' he said. 'Upcoming plans include a half-marathon and/or a country concert'. They're also looking into filling it with ice for a hockey game. They haven't gone outside baseball much but they did host a Disney event that included Aaron Carter. They're also moving towards paperless tickets where one would simply scan their phones.

As JoAnne has told many people already, we're reminded that every Friday and Saturday night the stadium puts on a fireworks show around the game with the magnificent New York Harbor as a backdrop. During games, kids 12 and under are given the opportunity to run the bases.

They put on theme-nights as well, Levine explained. Some include appreciation days for the US Military, the NYPD and the FDNY. Others include Irish night, Jewish night, and Italian night [Which is not surprising since, according to the US 2010 census, there are over 175,000 Italian Americans living in Staten Island, making up over one-third (35.7%) of the population. Further, Staten Island has a higher percentage of Italian Americans than any other county in the US. Also, roughly 65,000 Irish Americans live there, and they make up over one-eighth (13.2%) of the population. The Jewish community is large enough that it would be significant in most other parts of the country but it is slightly less numerous compared to other parts of the New York Metropolitan Area.].

They'll introduce a dollar-slice nite, dollar-dogs, and 50c wings. They're also developing a 'jersey giveaway'. (Free stuff!!!)

Seats, we were told, generally range from being as low as \$9 to Fifty-dollar luxury suites WITH food. They also addressed parking (which is \$8) since all nearby parking lots are city-owned and NOT run by the stadium so there is neither control, nor revenue. Brian Levine also told us a cliffhanger concerning their mascot, 'Scooter the Holy Cow', who will have a love interest TBA.

I would say that in the entire time, the only inquiry that Brian hedged was my query about women's involvement. Other than that, he was amazingly responsive, articulated and informed.

Eventually more of the connections formed. Yankee Stadium will serve beer from the Flagship Brewing Co. and they will serve pizza from Pier 76.

Then free hats were offered and we were escorted out. The group then headed back to Manhattan

Diary of a Pizza Education (continued)

In contrast, Sherri Eisenberg, author of the book, *Food Lovers' Guide to Brooklyn: The Best Restaurants, Markets & Local Culinary Offerings* (2012, Globe Pequot Press) states that "at its best, a simple thin crust that's crisp at the edges and chewy in the center. It's charred to perfection and topped with a sweet tomato sauce, torn pieces of fresh basil and slices of fresh buffalo mozzarella that, when baked, polka-dot the pie rather than covering it."

That description strays somewhat from Weiner's definition which focuses on the slice. After listing some great slicerias, I asked him where our customers should go to get a great pizza. "Stay away from places that are too close to public transportation except for Pizzeria Suprema", the highly rated sliceria next to Madison Square Garden. Colin Hagendorf, a punk writer for *Slice Harvest*, agreed Pizzeria Suprema was the best in all of Manhattan.

Weiner further added, "When you are ordering a pizza in New York, get a cheese slice or a pepperoni slice. It's not about it's toppings. The basic elements--the cheese, sauce and crust. The holy trinity. That's what it is about."

I took his advice. So after visiting twenty-eight pizzerias in four of the five boroughs and spending hundreds of dollars of my own money, here are my opinions of the opinions of food writers and other critics who think they know a few things about good NYC pizza.

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WEBSITES WORTH WATCHING

(continued)

To further immerse yourself in that era, I want to re-recommend one of my favorite sites, the aerial map of the city from 1924 that is amazingly detailed and will distract you for hours. Zoom in on your block to see what's changed. Vast swaths of the city are in the process of being developed. The waterfront is bustling and long lost reservoirs and stadiums still exist. Make sure you click on the "Map Type" button on the upper right of the map itself, then choose the year you want to explore.

<http://maps.nyc.gov/doitt/nycitymap/>

The next site I want to recommend is a similar historical page called **SepiaTown**, which aggregates public archive images and maps them. It also has an appealing "Then/Now" button below the map that takes you to the Google Street View image of the same place today. Sources include the NY and Brooklyn Public Libraries and the Transit Museum. Every once in a while you can find images uploaded from users, too! (I will acknowledge that Staten Island is sadly unrepresented on this site...)

<http://sepiatown.com/info>

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WEBSITES WORTH WATCHING (continued)

Untapped Cities is not necessarily a historical site, although they do touch on history within their description of the site: Urban Discovery from a New York Perspective. Along with some really fascinating articles, they also suggest events and have the requisite Top 10 lists, but with a perspective that most of us would appreciate.

<http://untappedcities.com/>

While Carla Peterson was talking to us at the Eldridge Street Synagogue, I was writing myself a note to make sure to check out her site. I was pleased to discover that many of her stories and images can be found online. The site can be a little confusing but it is very rich and very worth exploring, especially the section "The Archives". I particularly liked the essay about the Black Aristocracy and the essay on the Draft Riots.

<http://archive.blackgothamarchive.org/>

That's all for this column, I'm looking forward to the future of Guidelines and hope it may have its own life on the web sometime soon!

Diary of a Pizza Education (continued)

Diavolo at Zero Otto Nove

This was a puffy Neapolitan-style pizzeria in Chelsea which I liked, however small it came out. Neapolitan-style crust is lightly fried first before baking. The dining room ambiance felt like a place where you should order a glass of Italian red wine to accompany the pizza. I thought the pizza was adequate but it was at Diavolo that I finally realized I much prefer New York-style over the Neapolitan-style pizza.



John's Pizza

This Greenwich Village mainstay, opened in 1929, is one of the four pizzerias that spawned off the original pizzeria; Lombardi's. It uses a coal-fired oven that gets to temperatures of 850 degrees! Legend has it that Al Capone allowed it to remain open only if it didn't sell slices. Capone had owned some Wisconsin dairy farms and when John's refused to buy his cheese, this was the ultimatum Capone imposed.

I feel that John's make an adequate, classic New York-style pie. I got the plain cheese. I thought it was very good but not great. I ruled John's out as the best in the City. However, I felt it was good enough to merit tourists paying a visit to decide for themselves. I liked the laid back, classic ambiance with the scratched tables and pictures on the wall.

For more of Aaron's pizza reviews, please visit our blog.

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