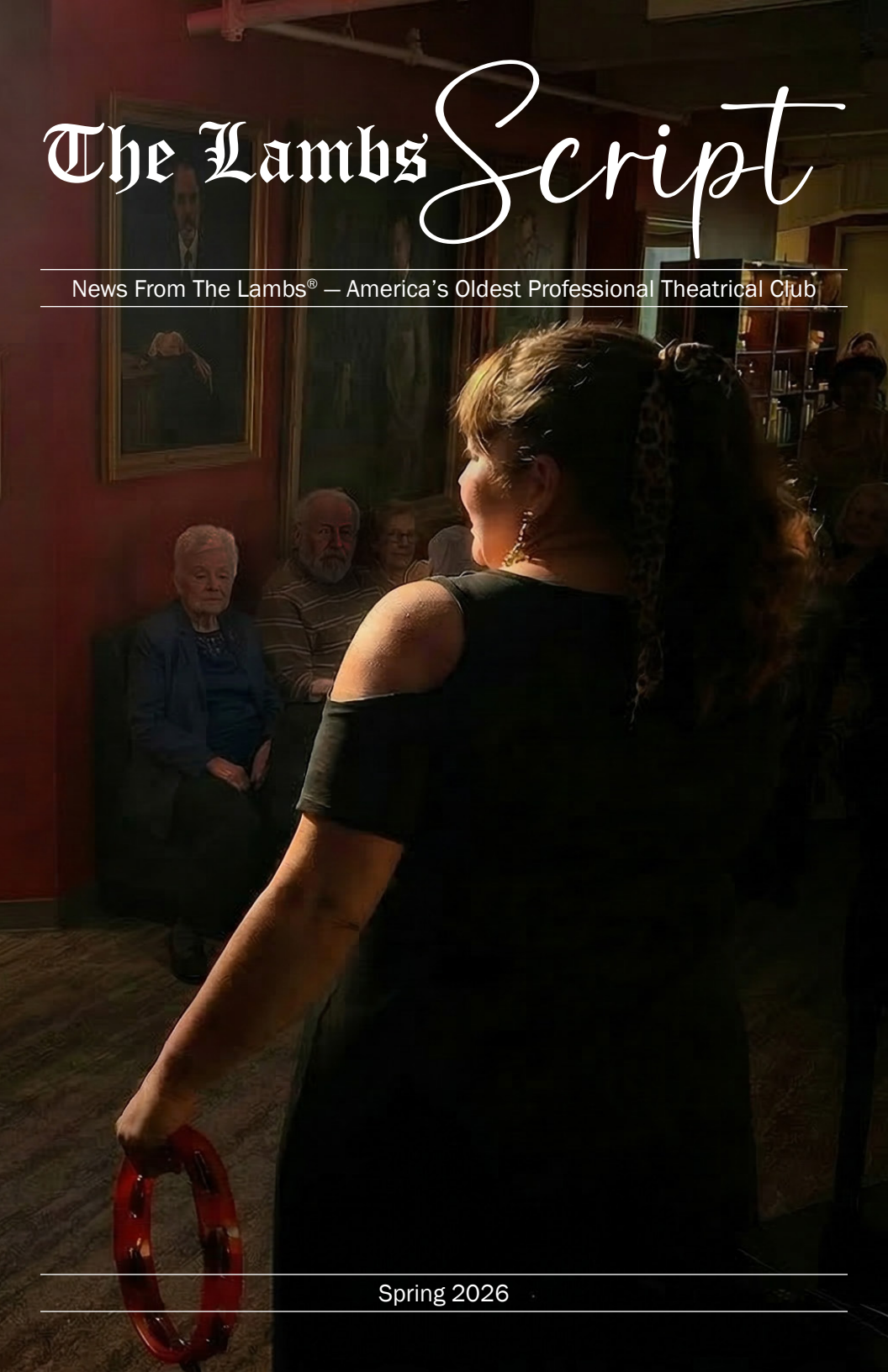


The Lambs Script

A woman with long dark hair in a ponytail, wearing a black sleeveless dress, is seen from the back and side. She is holding a red tambourine in her right hand. She is in a room with red walls. On the wall behind her are several framed portraits. In the background, a group of people are seated and watching her. The lighting is warm and focused on the performer.

News From The Lambs® — America's Oldest Professional Theatrical Club

Spring 2026

**Congratulations
to all Lambs on
the new clubhouse.**

**I am overjoyed to be
celebrating my second
anniversary as a Lamb.**

*Wendy Marquez
Theatrical Member*

The Lambs Script

Published by The Lambs since 1932

Editor

Laura Pittenger

Associate Editors

Kevin C. Fitzpatrick

Dr. Luke A.L. Reynolds

Business Manager

Raymond Basso

Photos

Svetlana Dale

Douglas DeMarco

Marcus Maddox

Jim Manley

Lambs Archives

Layout

Daniel O'Shaughnessy

Clubhouse

The Lambs

1674 Broadway, 3rd Floor

New York, NY 10019

212-586-0306

Email us: contact@thelambsclub.org

Official website: the-lambs.org

 The Lambs on Facebook: [TheRealLambs](https://www.facebook.com/TheRealLambs)

 The Lambs on X: [@TheLambsInc](https://twitter.com/TheLambsInc)

 The Lambs on Instagram: [@TheLambsInc](https://www.instagram.com/TheLambsInc)

#TheLambs

#TheRealLambs

#TheLambsClub

The Lambs Council, 2026

Officers

Kevin C. Fitzpatrick, Shepherd

Peter Kingsley, Boy

Joanie Brittingham, Corresponding Secretary

Eileen Lacy, Recording Secretary

Rozanne M. Scarpelli, Treasurer

Alexandra Nader, Historian/Librarian

Directors

Karen Beluso (2026)

Seth Lipton (2026)

Spence Porter (2026)

Gus Rosendale (2026)

Melody Cohen (2027)

Bob Greenberg (2027)

Don M. Spiro (2027)

Martha Cohen Stine (2027)

Peter Dizozza (2028)

Jenna Esposito (2028)

Dr. Luke A. L. Reynolds (2028)

Marc Baron, Shepherd Emeritus

Cover

Photo by Douglas DeMarco



The Lambs Script, Spring 2026. All content copyright © 2026 The Lambs, Inc., all rights reserved. No part of this issue may be reprinted or reproduced in any form without written permission from The Lambs.

The Lambs® is a registered trademark of The Lambs, Inc.

Shepherd's Letter

We turned an office into a Clubhouse. During the first Low Jinks in the new clubhouse, I poked my head into the pantry to see a chef and eight others prepping meals for thirty-five Lambs and friends. Was this really happening?

The Lambs have arrived on Broadway. We are settling into our new home. We are learning how to make the space work for us. Committees are organizing the business of running an all-volunteer social club. I could not be prouder of how everyone has pitched in. I am continually impressed by the level of devotion to the Club that so many have, in large ways and small, to keep The Lambs not just going, but *thriving*.

The sound system set up and managed by Lamb Eric Hoffman is marvelous and clear and makes everyone sound great. Lamb Patrick Marran designed and refined our bar to run like the finest saloons in the city. (It was only a small matter at our first sit-down catered dinner at Low Jinks to run out of forks.)

Now that we are fully moved in, we can work together on building up our membership, see our friends regularly in the lounge, and plan fun events (Comedy Night? Magic? Burlesque? Shakespeare?). In a future issue, we will talk about the black box and our plans for a Theatre Board.

Lambs, we need your help in any way you can. Just two hours of your time a month helps. Peter Kingsley and I are here to talk to you about any time you can donate to help us achieve our goal to be the best private social club in New York. Our clubhouse is only a building. It is members like you who make up the club, and that's why we are doing so well.

To sing "The Lambs Song" together, knowing pedestrians on Broadway can hear us? See us? Magical.

Floreat Agni!

Kevin C. Fitzpatrick
36th Shepherd of The Lambs



Peter Kingsley, The Boy; Kevin Fitzpatrick, Shepherd; Jenna Esposito, Entertainment Committee Chair; and Dr. Luke A.L. Reynolds, Admissions Committee Chair, March 2026 (Photo by Douglas DeMarco).

Calendar of Events

March

March 26: Low Jinks, Jackie Draper Hosts

March 27: Carol Berman Book Launch,
Blisstopia

March 31: Poetry Salon, Anne Keyes Brewer
Hosts

April

April 2: Lambs Pool Clinic, Dr. Luke Reynolds
Hosts

April 8 & 22: Lambs Chorus, Drew Young,
Chorus Master

April 13: Council Meeting (members only)

April 14: Playwright Night, Maura Campbell
Hosts

April 15: Comedy Night, Bob Greenberg
Hosts

April 16: Low Jinks, Wendy Marquez Hosts

April 21: Songwriters Salon

April 23: Shakespeare Celebration, John
Osburn Hosts

April 27: Book Club, *The Scarlet Pimpernel*

April 30: Low Jinks, Jason Trachtenburg Hosts

May

May 3: Yankees Game

May 4: Screening, *Il Mio Posto A Tavola*

May 7: Hirschfeld Broadway Tarot Cards Night
*Check the Club website and app for up-to-date
information, and to RSVP.*



JENNY LYNN STEWART
Heart-Stirring Songstress
presents
**Mrs. Claus
Celebrates
Christmas**
She's in the spotlight now!

**FOR BOOKINGS please contact jennylynnstewart@gmail.com
TO LEARN MORE visit www.manhattandiva.com**

Steve DePass, Elected in 1960

Only one Lamb has been a member for sixty-six years and has visited every clubhouse since 1960. He has known twelve shepherds and watched the world change. Of course, we can only mean legendary Lamb Steve DePass. I conducted an oral history interview with Steve in the summer of 2023, my first year as shepherd. Now that we are publishing regular issues of *The Script*, the time is perfect to share these memories of his incredible life and career. An extended interview with Steve is available on the Lambs Archives website (link below).

Steve's Story

My father Noel DePass was born in Jamaica, the former British West Indies, and graduated from St. George's College. Ironically, now I function largely on a stipend from the St. George's Society, which is directly connected with St. George's College. It was a largess of Queen Elizabeth. King Charles III has taken over that charity and it rewards people who have some connection with the College. My father was the youngest graduate of St. George's. From there he went on to Oxford. He studied languages and eventually came here to America. He married my mother, who's also from Jamaica, though they met here.

Her name was Enid Louise Schloss. Her mother was Black Jamaican. Her father was German, so she was mulatto. My mother had seven children. I was the fifth boy, then two girls. I was born in Queens, December 5, 1932. I was born in the Depression and I was an extreme preemie. I was only 26 ounces at birth, and they were sure I would never make it through that vicious winter of 1932. They packed up and took me back to sunny Jamaica at two months old so I could survive.



Steve DePass in the Lambs Gambol, December 2024. (Photo by Marcus Maddox)

I returned to New York to perform in 1938. I was a prodigy and I was performing at local fairs. I found my way on Broadway at five years old in the Palace Theater. I was in a Vaudeville revival. I was the original Little Stevie Wonder. I was with Clayton, Jackson, and Durante. I did songs, improvisations, and patter with Jimmy Durante. My older brother, Howard, served as my chaperone and took care of me pretty well. I was with a studio children's company. I did minstrel shows. They all did blackface and so on. I sang Stephen Foster songs and I danced. I was in the original *Carmen Jones* at ten.

I went to parochial schools, Our Lady of Sorrows in Queens, and I was taught by the good Sisters of St. Joseph, which accounts for my sterling character even today. I went to Flushing High School and NYU. I was a Phys Ed major and graduated in 1954. I had a penchant for creating lyrics and songs and improvisation, which later on became my hallmark. I always performed. Always. Even in high school, I did a lot of writing and performing. In the Forties, I did a couple of Broadway shows. I did a lot of the traveling with the Vaudeville revivals and the minstrel shows. And it was not only the minstrel shows, but it was also called *entr'acte* ("between the acts"). I was paid for it all. Professional stuff.

Back then when you left New York City, everything was segregated. You went over the bridge to Newark, it was like the Deep South. And this is the way it was. Even the theaters in which we

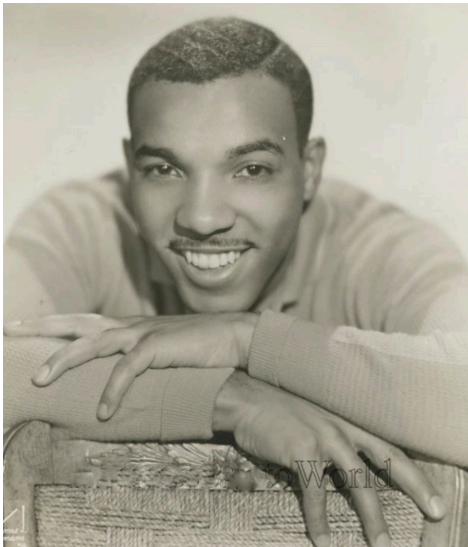
played in different places in Washington, D.C., it was totally segregated. Everything was segregated.

The environment for the traveling thespian was perilous for Black people. You could not get a hotel room. There were Black-owned establishments where you could stay if arrangements had been made, or the YMCA, things like that. It was perilous out there. You had to be careful not to show up unannounced with your Black selves in a white environment where you might be exposed to dangerous hostilities. Among the performers, it's very emotional. The white performers, when we closed out on a given night, they couldn't wait to get all their things back as they had to proceed onto the next city to make arrangements. We would cook and eat in the theater itself, where they would prepare separate meals and things. Everything was done in the theater because the white performers protected you, particularly the children. It was like a conglomerate of one family, all equal.

But the white performers, they were the protectors. They looked out for your welfare, they embraced you and protected you, and there was a lot of love, a lot of sharing, a lot of caring. But you were aware of the perils outside of the theater, where you went, how you went, and so on. They had to make arrangements with the local police departments to see that the Black entertainers were protected. This is how it was.

Read the rest of Steve's story online:
thelambs.club/club_member/depass-steve/

Interview by Shepherd Kevin C. Fitzpatrick



Steve around 1960, when he joined The Lambs.

Raising a Fold on Broadway: Settling in to 1674

By Luke A. L. Reynolds, Ph.D., FRHistS

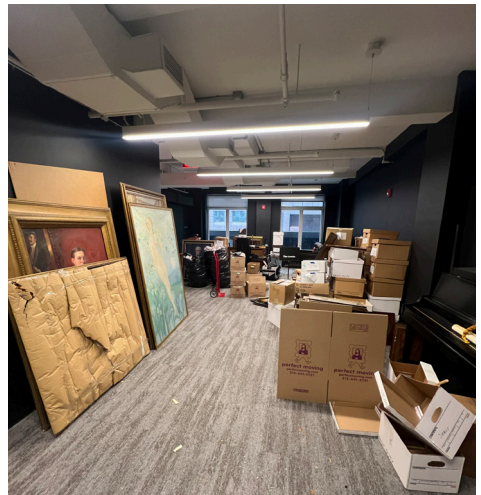
On the morning of Saturday, January 17, 2026, three moving trucks and twelve movers descended on 1674 Broadway amid snow flurries to return the Fold to the Lambs. They were greeted by a crack team of Lambs who then spent the next four straight days (and many hours after that) moving, unpacking, and sorting art, furniture, books, and ephemera. The Lambs had only received the keys from the landlord the day before, and while almost all construction and painting was complete, there remained doors and picture rails to be hung, locks to be updated, and Wi-Fi to be installed. Nonetheless the doors were open and a seemingly endless stream of cheerful movers delivered the entire contents of the Clubhouse in under five hours.

Some furniture instantly found homes – the Shepherds’ Nook and Telephone Rooms received their wingback chairs and side tables, the newly-restored meeting table took up station in the Library, and the china cabinet nestled into the pantry. Other Clubhouse items proved more complicated. Vast piles of boxes containing books, music, and miscellaneous items stretched from the wall where Shepherd

Kevin Fitzpatrick’s portrait resides to the edge of the piano deck (then just a sketch in Bill Craven’s notebook). Hundreds of pieces of art from paintings to photographs to brass plaques filled the Black Box Theatre, which was largely dominated by a ziggurat of archive bankers boxes the height of your faithful author.

Amid the chaos, the Lambs’ spirit shone through. When the “Spirit of the Lambs” portrait of our first Shepherd, Henry James Montague was unwrapped (fully intact), it was discovered that a convenient tear in his protective blanket had allowed him to keep an eye on proceedings. Beloved bygone Lambs, Shepherds, and Boys were greeted by nickname as we uncovered their portraits. Photographs of old events resurfaced, inspiring new Collies. The minute the movers unpacked our standing piano, Lamb Tom Racz was at the keys, filling the Black Box with the cheerful notes of “Lydia the Tattooed Lady.”

Slowly, but surely, we raised a Fold from bedlam. Under the supervision of Club Librarian-Historian Alexandra Nader, Peter Kingsley, Laura Pittenger, and Grant Hague filled shelf after shelf with books and music in the Library. Down the hall in the Black Box,





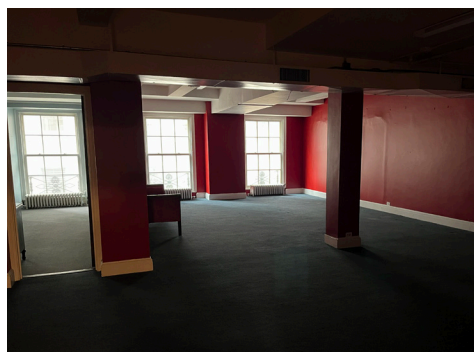
Left: A Perfect Moving truck perfectly packed with Lambs' furniture, archives, and art. Right: The shepherd's portrait is carefully wrapped for moving and storage. Opposite Left: The last keys to Clubhouse 13 are returned to the 3 West Club. Opposite Right: Before it had a stage, the Black Box Theatre was a staging ground.

Lambs Foundation Curator Luke Reynolds led J.R. Carter, Melody Cohen, Bruce Roberts, Tom Racz, and Jimmy Lawlor in sorting art and archives, placing much of it into new custom-designed storage and setting other pieces aside to be hung on our freshly-painted walls. Meanwhile, the Lounge was being shaped by the guiding hand of Fitzpatrick, who somehow managed to be in all three places at once, answering questions, making decisions, and lending a hand.

On Martin Luther King Jr. Day, Blatt Billiards delivered and assembled the century-old W.C. Fields pool table, replete with new bumpers and cloth. The next day, Fitzpatrick, Cohen, and Reynolds went furniture shopping on the Bowery in the bitter cold, ordering the tables, chairs, and banquettes that now grace the lounge. On January 21, Bill Craven, Douglas DeMarco, Melodie Wolford, Sami Muster, and Michael Frazer arrived with the piano deck in pieces to assemble it. Oscar Vargas, our redoubtable handyman, and his assistant, Alex Mateo, hung heavy paintings, plaques, and curtains; bolted the Fife Rail to the wall; and, most importantly, disassembled, reassembled, and installed the Lambs' first private bar in half a century.

The beauty of an 152-year-old institution like the Lambs is that none of our 14 Clubhouses have ever been "finished." Members new and old fill and stretch the space; creativity of all kinds shapes the stories and feel of the club; and, like the art and bonds of fellowship we create, we constantly evolve. Through the remarkable hard work of a cadre of Lambs (and a few very generous non-members), we made our first deadline (or, if you like, our full dress rehearsal). Six days after we signed for the keys, five days after the baby grand was placed on the newly constructed Piano Deck and Eric Hoffman set up our new sound system, we threw open the doors for our members-only soft launch. Old friends reunited, drink flowed, and "The Lambs' Song" was heard on Broadway for the first time in 50 years.

Post soft-launch, the piano deck was painted and carpeted, new furniture was delivered and assembled, and photographs of Lambs young and old were hung next to our paintings. Now, we turn our attention to the Black Box Theatre. The Fold will continue to evolve, but we can say with confidence that Clubhouse 14 is well and truly open. The Lambs are back on Broadway.



This page, clockwise from top: It fits! The Steinway baby grand arrives at Clubhouse 14; the fire rail returns to Broadway; the lights go out on an empty fifth floor at 3 West 51st Street.

Opposite page: Bill Craven, Sami Muster, and Michael Frazer assemble the piano deck; Henry James Montague's portrait keeps an eye on the move; the ball return system in the newly-restored billiard table.



Lambs Who Helped Us Move

The Lambs and The Lambs Foundation wish to thank the following members, without whose hard work the move would have been nigh-impossible.

Raymond Basso	David Kowarsky
Joanie Brittingham	Jimmy Lawlor
J.R. Carter	Patrick Marran
Melody Cohen	Alexandra Nader
Douglas DeMarco	Laura Pittenger
Kevin Fitzpatrick	Tom Racz
Grant Hague	Luke Reynolds
Eric Hoffman	Bruce Roberts
Katie Keck	Rozanne Scarpelli
Peter Kingsley	Melodie Wolford

JANE SEAMAN

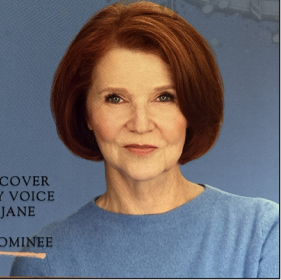
INTERNATIONAL VOICE STUDIO

Study Private Vocal Technique for Musical Theatre with Jane, Broadway veteran & “cross-over” technique expert

Watching a talent unfold, whether young or old, is my greatest joy as a singing teacher. My gift is to help a singer find their authentic voice, free tension and express the emotions in whatever style repertoire they choose. Confidence is our most cherished goal.

BOOK YOUR LESSON!





“IT’S THRILLING TO DISCOVER HOW MUCH MORE OF MY VOICE I CAN EXPLORE WITH JANE GUIDING ME.”
-BETH FOWLER, TONY NOMINEE



The 14th Clubhouse and Its Show Business History

**By Kevin C. Fitzpatrick
Shepherd of The Lambs**

Two miles. That is the distance between the fourteenth clubhouse of The Lambs and the location of the first meeting of the Club, at Delmonico's off Union Square. When the Club moved into 1674 Broadway on January 17, 2026, it carried on a tradition going back to 1874: when times are good, it is time to move.

The Lambs have signed a ten-year lease on the third floor of a 1921 building with more than a century of show business baked into its bones. This quirky yet unassuming terracotta-sheathed construction may be the best example of an entertainment landmark that has evaded the tourist guidebooks. The building opened in 1921, the year Babe Ruth walloped 59 home runs, and it was renovated exactly a century later when Taylor Swift was the No. 1 singer-songwriter in the land.

This corner of Manhattan has dozens of secrets to share. The facts of this tiny slice of Broadway could fill a book (maybe we'll write one!) with boldface names such as Count Basie and Ella Fitzgerald.



View from the terrace of M Social Hotel.

The Hotel

In the years after the Civil War, as Manhattan residents migrated north from the Battery, farmland was giving way to development. The pre-Colonial Bloomingdale Road was seeing migration uptown. The area around Longacre Square was filling up with residences and shops making carriages. A group of developers began building hotels in the area. Some carried names inspired by European towns.

Around 1880, ground was broken for a nine-story brownstone apartment building, with 61.8 feet on 52nd Street and 75.11 feet on Broadway. In November 1880, the Strathmore Apartment House was advertised in the *Times* as a “First Class Apartment House” and a wonder for this spot, offering a “Park View” from seven blocks away. The building changed hands in 1886, selling for \$125,000. The following year, apartments were advertised as “38 feet wide, all light rooms, Otis elevators running all night, steam heat.” It was lit with gas—not electricity. In 1895, the *Herald* reported that there was still grass growing in a plot outside the northeast corner of the hotel. In 1901, the building nearly burned down when a lamp in a resident's eighth floor library caught fire.

For forty years, the nondescript brownstone hotel stood quietly, older than the Brooklyn Bridge, the Statue of Liberty, and predating the consolidation of the five Boroughs. But times changed in the city.

Business tycoon George H. Earle Jr. (1856-1928) bought the Strathmore in early 1911. After an unsuccessful run for mayor of Philadelphia, Earle turned to scooping up land in New York. His company planned to convert the apartments into “bachelor residences” in 1911. During the conversion, retail stores were put into the Broadway frontage.

In 1920, the neighborhood was in the era of eighty Broadway theaters, Vaudeville, silent

Search in Ruins of Collapsed Building Fails to Reveal Bodies



Fifty-Second Street aftermath of Strathmore Apartments collapse in 1920.

pictures, and a migration of show business to Times Square. The old hotel was a relic of a bygone New York – muddy streets, gas streetlamps, and horse-drawn hansom cabs. The tenants' leases were cancelled, and ownership made plans to convert the apartments to office space. The corner storefront was an automobile showroom with three models inside.

On December 1, 1920, disaster struck. Workmen piled heavy materials in the corner of the ninth floor, leaving the weight unevenly distributed. At 4:30 p.m., the structure tumbled down, raining bricks, mortar, panes of glass, and steel onto 52nd Street. Several escaped with scratches. However, John C. Smith, an ironworker, was buried alive. His remains were extracted three days later. The city investigated and declared the structure unsafe. Crews returned to tear down the building.

Within a month, plans were completed to erect a new building, the same size and shape as the footprint. The architect was Joseph Kleinberger, 39, who had designed apartment houses and office buildings. It opened ten months after the disaster on October 1, 1921. It was named the Earle Building.



Walter J. Salmon's contribution to the structural development of Broadway between Long Acre Square and Columbus Circle. The Earle Building, as it is known, replaced the old Strathmore apartment house at the northeast corner of Broadway and Fifty-second Street. The passing of the old apartment house brought back memories of Broadway when it was the center of the horse world in this part of the country. The Earle Building is the only office structure on Broadway between the Loew Building at Forty-fifth Street and the Fisk Building at Fifty-seventh Street.

Life in the Earle Building

Renting space in the nine-story building proceeded quickly, and for a century, the Earle had a diverse collection of tenants. In the 1920s, offices were leased to the music scoring and orchestral businesses of Carl Fenton and Michael Hoffman. Space was taken by salesmen. Architects. Music teachers. Publishers. Vaudeville attorneys. In *Radio News*, July 1927, an ad appeared:

Songs: We will compose melody to your song-poems for your approval. Send no money. Send poems immediately. National Song Bureau. 1674 Broadway, New York City.

In 1928, offices were held by the Playwright's Service Bureau, Reliable News Service, and music arranger Lee Terry. Artist representation and management services would stretch from the 1920s to the 2010s. Talent agent Richard Pittman advertised in 1930 in *Equity's* magazine that he was "An Authorized Personal Representative Who Personally Represents." In the 1940s, scores of music publishers leased offices and appeared in BMI guides.

Around 1935, the Negro Actors Guild of America (NGA) opened offices in Suite 501 and leased space for more than forty years. NGA's mission was to advocate for work for Black performers and combat stereotypes. The most famous Black artists of the era were in the building: W. C. Handy, Paul Robeson, Bill "Bojangles" Robinson, Noble Sissle, Fredi Washington, and Ethel Waters.

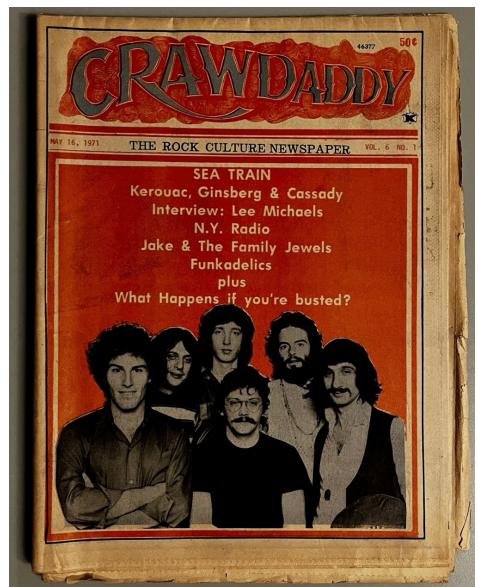
In the mid-1950s, casting offices and talent managers took up leases in the building. Suite 306 was leased to Savage Quinn Productions, agents seeking to represent youth who were instrumentalists, jugglers, and ventriloquists. Teen sensation Frankie Lymon once hid from the press in the Earle building office of his talent manager Johnnie Martinelli.

In 1971, *Crawdaddy*, an influential rock magazine which predated *Rolling Stone*, leased an office on the third floor, with its first female editor, photographer Raeanne Rubenstein, 25. "I

don't think I have the authority to sit on high on Broadway and tell a million kids what's going down," she told the *Daily News*. "I have access to information they don't have, so all I can do is provide them with what they need to know to get on with what they want to do, whether its boogie-woogieing or changing the world."

In the Seventies, H&R Block was a tenant, as was a recording studio on the eighth floor. "Singers wanted for record company," appeared in magazines. Career courses were offered in the building for bartenders, commercial truck drivers, real estate agents, security guards, and roles in the emerging solar energy industry. In 1976, the sixth floor was leased to Broadway Rehearsal Studios, where for \$15 an hour, novices could take lessons in salsa, tango, and the "hustle."

For the next thirty years, tenants large and small came and went. Many had ties to show business, but some were regular nine-to-fivers just making a living. Folks were also living in the building. Upon the building's renovation in 2018, the new owners hauled out cast iron bathtubs from offices. Legend has it two shacks were built on the rooftop and called "penthouses."



The influential rock music magazine *Crawdaddy* was briefly edited in 1674 Broadway. Right: Birdland in the 1950s.

The Basement

No history of 1674 Broadway would be complete without an overview of its colorful basement tenants. If those walls could talk, they would recount a century of good times, populated by athletes, celebrities, disco dancers, movie stars, music icons, and strippers. An era featuring raucous speakeasies to flashy gentlemen's clubs has spanned 100 years.

The "experiment" of Prohibition wasn't even a year old when the building opened. It was the perfect location for (yet another) New York City speakeasy. The Theatre District was a hotbed of bootleg booze and late-night clubs. The Earle Building leased to Club Frivolity, "one of the best known along the Rialto." A reviewer wrote, "Only one nightclub in the city is doing turn-away business. And that, as we have told you before, is the Frivolity club. The Frivolity, featuring an undraped revue, has leaped into sensational success after being a failure for two years."

Entrepreneurial producer Nils T. Granlund saw more money running a speakeasy than working in movies; he was a publicist for Lamb Marcus Loew who led Loews Theatres. The tall Swede was a master at booking comedians, orchestras, and the very best "leg and fanny" shows to rival the Minsky brothers on Houston Street (choreographer Busby Berkeley's name is linked to the club).

On July 31, 1927, a *Daily News* headline screamed "NEW DRY MOVE INDICTS 108" and "Night Club Heads Face 2 Years in Jail." Granlund and seven others from the Frivolity were swept up with some of the most legendary Prohibition names of the era, including Texas Guinan and Helen Morgan, who ran nearby speakeasies. They were charged with conspiracy and "maintaining a house of nuisance." Granlund and the Frivolity staff were "said to be active in the management of the joy palace in the Earle Building, Broadway and 52nd Street." All charges were later dropped. The Frivolity stayed open; the following year a brawl between rowdy customers and policemen wrecked the place.

During World War II, the basement turned from dance shoes to bowling shoes. A standard ten-pin bowling lane is 60 feet long, offering just enough space for an entrepreneur to squeeze in lanes. A huge vertical billboard spelling out "BOWLING" was attached to the façade. Bowling didn't last long, as this subterranean location reverted to its underground nightlife roots, where it has remained.

Around 1953, Birdland, the world's most famous jazz spot, opened in the basement, hosting more than three million patrons in twelve years. Some of the legends to grace the 500-seat spot were Chet Baker, Count Basie, Miles Davis,



John Coltrane, Ella Fitzgerald, Sarah Vaughan, and a galaxy of jazz stars. Visitors included Gary Cooper, Frank Sinatra, Marilyn Monroe, Jane Russell, and Tennessee Williams. It was said the payroll for musicians here was greater than the combined payrolls of the New York Philharmonic and the symphonies of Boston and Philly. It shuttered in 1965.

Soon after, blues singer Lloyd Price opened a celebrated discothèque, the Turntable, with a massive billboard of his face on the façade. He advertised R&B singer “stylists,” comedians, and “turntable dancers.” The name was changed to the Black Heart Disco about 1973 and in 1975 to Boom Bamakao, booking Latin and soul bands. The basement transitioned into a nightclub, Casablanca, by 1981. Tito Puente, King of Latin Music, held Sunday afternoon residencies with his orchestra, with a \$3 cover for women and \$8 for men. Impresario-owner Bob Tirado put down a wooden dancefloor and made it the favorite Midtown location for weekend salsa dancing. The club was wildly popular in the eighties with the regional Spanish community looking for a dance floor and live music.

In 1987 it was renamed the Kit Kat Klub. With Mayor Ed Koch in office and the era of “greed is good” on Wall Street, the first topless establishment moved into the building. The breasts have never left.

The space transitioned to Flashdancers, and a generation of New Yorkers saw its ads on taxicab rooftops. The establishment was a longtime punchline for David Letterman after the talk show host moved to the Ed Sullivan Theatre in 1993. His comedy show sent sailors to stroll in, and the signage was frequently on national TV. At Christmastime 2012, the show cut to a line of Santas walking in the doorway. The club was famous for having 100 performers onstage a night, and men in yellow vests canvassing the neighborhood passing out flyers. It survived multiple crackdowns from mayors. In 2018 its streak as the longest-running strip joint ended when it was replaced by Sapphire, which already had a location in the city and has ownership in Las Vegas.



One of many recordings from Birdland.

Saving the Building

As 1674 Broadway was nearing its centennial, the building was in trouble. It still had its original 1920s plumbing, no fire protection above the first floor, original double-hung wooden windows, leaks and drafts, and a boiler on the way out. Many of the systems were not up to code. The façade was in poor shape.

“The EMMES Group of Companies is a global real estate investor, founded in 1992,” said Andrew Davidoff, the CEO. He confirmed the word “EMMES” is the Hebrew translation of “absolute, honest truth.” Davidoff, with more than 30 years in the industry, said the name resonates in markets such as New York. “Look, the world is full of people who aren’t straight shooters, we’re just trying to be straight up with people, we want to be direct. There’s no reason to go around and around. I have an old saying, ‘Cheap, Fast and Great, pick two of the three.’ In our work over the years, we have tried to focus on the Great part by searching for assets that could benefit from careful and thoughtful repositioning. 1674 Broadway is a good example.”

He added, “We strive to do the right thing by the real estate and let the rest work itself out. It’s important to us to allocate capital to those assets that have been neglected, in order to repurpose them.”

EMMES has invested in more than 450 properties in the U.S. and abroad; the company specializes in opportunities to add value and reposition real estate assets. Davidoff is respected in the industry and is candid about the challenges that 1674 Broadway presented the company. “Our stock in trade is fixing messed up, broken buildings, but a big part of that consideration is what fits the neighborhood and what can we do to re-center the building’s purpose, utility, and value,” Davidoff said. “It’s kind of like you look at a building and say, ‘What do you want to be when you grow up?’”

EMMES bought a mortgage on the building in 1994 and acquired the title to the building in 1997. The building was subject to a master lease which ran for many decades. Eventually the lessee returned the building to EMMES. Davidoff called it a “very rundown, very, tired building,” when the company got the keys. “We had to decide what are we going to do with it, and we spent about two years, planning what to do. This is Broadway, it’s the northern end of Times Square. It’s a very good location. We decided that, with our architects, to try and bring some character back to the building by injecting a little bit of that 1930s era glamour to the property, and so that was where the architectural design came from for the lobby and the canopy.”

But before anything could happen, EMMES had a nine-story building that was in poor shape and was in desperate need of modernization and safety systems. “We had to gut the building down to a shell, Davidoff said. “Pretty much everything’s new. All the electrical, all the plumbing, the elevators, the air conditioning systems. We split them up so each floor has their own air conditioning system. New windows everywhere. Effectively the building’s been completely revitalized. It took a long time. Covid obviously interrupted the reconstruction plans considerably. Eventually, we got it finished. We’re very happy with the result. Even though it’s a pretty small building, it’s iconic.”

Davidoff and his team have been very gracious to The Lambs, who are the first theatrical ten-

ants in the building after the renovation and rebirth. EMMES worked directly with The Lambs to have the club’s build-out match its needs for a lounge, rehearsal space, and library. EMMES had already built out the modern pantry, restrooms, and environmental and safety systems. It was an easy fit for The Lambs to set up the fourteenth clubhouse on the entire third floor.

“Obviously, having you guys in the building, which is really a direct connection to the theatre and the theatre arts, is super important for us. But that’s what this building should be. And you know, it is a Broadway building, and for many years, had associations with theatre companies and other artistic-centric tenants. From my perspective, I think the building’s kind of come full circle, and I’m very happy about it, and I’m very proud of the work we’ve done to kind of clean it up.”

The Lambs will be calling 1674 Broadway home with a lease that extends to 2036. How we write our own history into the landmark remains to be seen, but we walk in the footsteps of legends.



Dock Do
Island in
Korea
Painter: Ki
Soo Park

929-888-6335

NY COSMOS GALLERY

547 W 27th Street #428 New York NY 10001

nycosmosgallery@gmail.com

COSMOS
GALLERY
NEW YORK **Gallery Rentals**

Individual or Group Exhibitions

Painting Sales

Meet the New Lambkins

*Please welcome some of the Lambkins who have joined the Club since the last issue of *The Script*, in November 2025. Member classes accompany their profiles: Theatrical (T), Junior Theatrical (JT), Non-Resident (NR), Patron (P), Junior Patron (JP), and Associate (A).*

2025

Maxine Kern (JT) — Maxine Kern is a playwright/dramaturg, a member of the 29th Street Playwrights' Collective, and the Past President of The League of Professional Theatre Women. She is also a new great-grandmother.



Maxine Kern

Michael Roberts (T) — Michael Roberts is the composer/lyricist of four Off-Broadway musicals, including *Golf: The Musical* and the award-winning *The Fartiste*. He was staff composer for the Emmy-award-winning *Remember WENN* on AMC. As pianist/music director, he has collaborated with a variety of Broadway and pop culture stars. He is also the President Emeritus of The American Songbook Association.



Stephen Purdy

Stephen Purdy (T) — Stephen Purdy is on the music faculty at Westminster Choir College and teaches and coaches at his private studio in Manhattan. He has accompanied and conducted Broadway show companies in New York, nationally, and in Europe. Stephen is also the author of *Musical Theatre Song* (Bloomsbury), which *The American Journal of Drama* heralded as “a major contribution to musical theatre pedagogy,” and of *Flop Musicals of The Twenty-First Century* (Routledge).



Michael Roberts

Margaret-Ann Harley (P) — Margaret-Ann Harley is a native New Yorker who spent a career in luxury retail such as Cartier and Gucci. Her appreciation for fashion is helpful in theatre to tell a story with wardrobe. She is a contributing member of Playwrights First, an associate of ACC and a subscriber to the Snarks.

Rudaba Zehra Nasir (JT) — Rudaba is a Pakistani actress, writer, singer, and transformational coach based in Manhattan. She is currently performing her solo show with live music, *HALALish*, at The Tank to rave reviews and standing ovations (www.halalishtheplay.com for details). Website: www.rudaba.com. Instagram: @RudabaNasir.



Rudaba Zehra Nasir

Carly Ozard (I) — Carly Ozard is a non-binary singer/songwriter and actor with an operatic background in Gilbert and Sullivan. Carly is a multi-hyphenate nightclub headliner, composer, topliner, arranger, with a discography of EDM (Electric Dance Music) with DJs from around the world. Find Carly on Spotify and Apple Music and discover her dance tracks and new release “Chain of Love: A Broadway Album.” IG: @CarlyOzardSings



Oli Salchert

Oliver (Oli) Salchert (JT) — Oliver (Oli) Salchert is an audio engineer who has delved into his diversification of his work, which ranges from Front of House engineering rock, musicals, orchestras and jazz, to producing electronic music and recording all styles of music and performance.

Bill Vila (I) — Bill Vila is a musician, singer, composer, actor, stage manager, playwright, and long-distance bus driver. He is equally at home behind a piano keyboard or a 19-inch bus steering wheel and is currently at work on an omnibus show about his time driving.



Bill Vila

The Final Curtain

Davida Rothberg

Elected to The Lambs 1990 (Theatrical Member)

Davida Rothberg never met a Low Jinks theme she did not like. Valentine's Day, Mother's Day – the idea of a theme drove Davida to put on the best show possible. She was the ultimate Lamb: always smiling, always ready with an idea for another club event.

Davida passed away after a brief illness on November 23, 2025, at age 85. She is survived by her devoted husband, Richard Rothberg, and daughters Suzanne and Patti.

"This lovely Lamb was ever cheerful," recalls Lamb Camille Cacciatore Savitz. "Davida was crazy for cats, with superior shopping skills, proud of her daughters, and crazy for Dick. A gatherer of people, she often had eight to ten friends at her table. A bright star! Sorely missed."

Davida was elected to the Lambs in 1990 as a Professional member. She was recruited by Lamb Beth Holland. Davida was then a working mom and talk show host, working for a video headshot business that took her to Silvercup Studios.

Davida Barbara Weiss was born July 17, 1940. Her career began at age 16 in her hometown of Marion, Indiana, when she won a radio contest, becoming one of the earliest female disc jockeys in the country. She landed an after-school job in the news and co-hosted a Saturday morning rock 'n' roll show for teens. The station sent Davida on a tour called "A Teen in Washington," where she interviewed top U.S. newsmakers.

Leaving her Indiana roots after high school, Davida moved to New York, where she attended AMIDA to train in acting, singing, and dancing. Early in her New York career, she worked for Metromedia's Channel 5 in children's TV and commercials. She also trained as a Romper Room Lady and worked for Merv Griffin Productions.



Davida Rothberg joined the Lambs' Council in 2006 and was devoted to hosting events. (Lambs Archives)

While she booked small parts in soap operas, Davida's real love remained in broadcasting. She created and hosted a half-hour radio talk show called "Not for Mothers Only" for WVOX Radio in Westchester County, from 1975 to 1979. Her first guest was Scarsdale resident and opera star Roberta Peters. From 1979 to 1983, she hosted and produced weekly talk radio programs: "Voice of the Community" and "A Family in Change" (WNBC); and "Put Yourself in Our Place" and "Youth Line" (WYNY, NBC's FM station).

Davida also produced and hosted syndicated beauty television talk programs for a national chain of beauty salons. In 1977, she led the American press corps for a Friendship Force



Lambs Anita Brown, Davida Rothberg, and Billie Stewart at Low Jinks in 2009. (Lambs Archives)

trip to Denmark with Lillian Carter, President Jimmy Carter's mother. She was a contributing writer for *Westchester Magazine* and Gannett Newspapers.

The needs of hungry children and animals of all species were a constant preoccupation for her. Davida spent many hours as a hospital play nurse for children with burns, cancer, and other afflictions.

Davida served as a member of the Lambs Council for multiple terms. She was co-chair of the Entertainment Committee. She wrote a column in *The Script*, "In the Fold" for more than 20 years. She entertained at the Actors Home in Englewood. In December 2018, she was a proud recipient of the Shepherd's Award from Marc Baron, in recognition of her many years of dedication and service to the Club. Always the broadcaster, during the COVID-19 pandemic, she kept the Lambs together by hosting virtual Low Jinks online via Zoom.

In the latest issue of *The Script*, Davida wrote: "Now that we are moving, I will be missing the old, but anxious to see the Lambs' new space!"

Davida is interred in Mount Eden Cemetery in Valhalla, Westchester County. The Lambs are planning a celebration of life.



Davida and Dick Rothberg were married for 58 years. They met in Indiana when Davida was 12 and Dick was 14.

Rita Ellis Hammer

Elected to The Lambs 2007 (Theatrical Member)

For nearly twenty years, Rita Ellis Hammer was a fixture at The Lambs, lighting up the stage at Low Jinks in her signature oversized round eyeglasses and ultra-fashionable attire. She was elected as a Theatrical member in 2007, about seventy years after her singing debut in Brooklyn at age three.

Rita passed away in Danbury, Connecticut, on October 29, 2025, after a long illness. She is survived by her daughter, the award-winning author Elissa Altman, and daughter-in-law, Susan Turner. In 2019, Elissa published *Motherland: A Memoir of Love, Loathing, and Longing*, to critical acclaim.

Rita's true age was a closely-held secret; she teased her fellow Lambs Joyce Randolph and Beth Holland about their own birthdates. Elissa said her mother once lied about her age to an EMT in the back of an ambulance.

Rita was born in Williamsburg, Brooklyn, on October 15, 1935, to Philip and Clara Elice, who owned a furniture store on Grand Street. She went to Eastern District High School, and by age fourteen, she was already on radio and early television. Rita later took the stage name Ellis. In the 1950s, she was discovered by Galen Drake while singing in the lounge of the Copacabana. Rita studied under Ethel Merman's vocal coach, Al Siegel. She performed in nightclubs for the rest of her life, developing her unique sense of style. She was married twice, to Seymour Altman and Buddy Hammer.

Rita liked dressing up at "21" and seeing Walter Winchell and Earl Wilson. Friends fondly recall her devotion to performing in a ward for patients at St. Vincent's Hospital during the AIDS epidemic. Rita could also be counted on to perform at the Actors Home with her fellow Lambs. In addition to The Lambs, she was a longtime member of the Dutch Treat Club.



Rita Ellis Hammer (Jim Manley, 2015)

In 2017, a street videographer met Rita. She was decked out in her finest and laughed as she delivered a few bars of "I've Got the World on a String," the gem composed by Harold Arlen:

I've got the world on a string

Sitting on a rainbow

Got the string around my finger

What a world, what a life, I'm in love

I've got a song that I sing

I can make the rain go

Anytime I move my finger

Lucky me, can't you see I'm in love

Life is a wonderful thing

As long as I hold the string

I'd be a silly so-and-so

If I should ever let go.

The Lambs will host a celebration of life for Rita Ellis Hammer at a date to be determined.

"MS. SOHN IS A TALENTED, CLASSICALLY TRAINED SINGER AND A FINE ACTOR WITH BIG, EXPRESSIVE EYES AND AN UNPARALLELED ABILITY TO WRING EVERY LAST OUNCE OF PATHOS OUT OF A LYRIC." - *BROADWAYWORLD*

GERRILYN SOHN

TIMELESS: A TRIBUTE TO **BERNADETTE PETERS**

DIRECTED BY LENNIE WATTS
MUSIC DIRECTOR TRACY STARK
MARCO PANASCIA ON BASS

Sunday, April 19th at 4pm

Saturday, May 2nd at 4pm

Monday, May 11th at 7pm



343 WEST 46TH STREET (BETWEEN 8TH & 9TH AVES.)

RESERVATIONS AT DONTTELLMAMANYC.COM

\$20 COVER (\$15 MAC) + \$20 MINIMUM (MUST INCL. 2 DRINKS)

CASH ONLY. FOOD MENU AVAILABLE.

gerrilynsohn.com

PHOTO: SUSAN STRIPLING DESIGN: HECTOR CORIS

Brittingham music



- voice lessons for all levels from beginner to professional
- preparation for vocal auditions, competitions, and performances
- musical theatre, contemporary, and golden age styles as well classical

 joanie@brittinghammusicllc.com
joaniebrittingham.com

