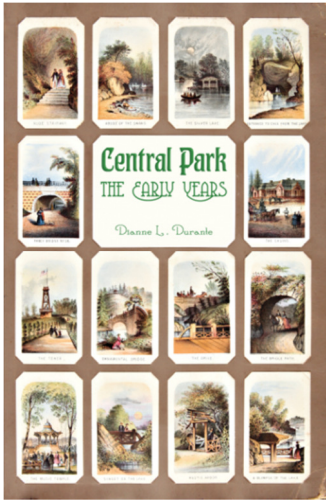


Central Park: The Early Years

By Dianne L. Durante



It's difficult to imagine Manhattan without the glorious oasis that is Central Park. But the Park's existence was not inevitable, and its design was very much a product of its time. *Central Park: The Early Years* looks at why and how Central Park was created in the 1850s and its history during the formative decades of the 1860s and 1870s. If you're new to the Park, this book is a great introduction. If you're familiar with the Park, it will make you see all the Park's amazing features in a new light.

96 pages, printed in full color with many images from the period and numerous quotes from Frederic Law Olmsted and other "Founding Fathers" of the Park.

REVIEWS

Pure delight. I must revisit the park to see all the things I have missed! – T.H.

Thoroughly researched with an eye to the essentials, making it a relaxing and retainable read. This utterly charming and informative book is a *must* have for anyone who loves cities and the parks that grace them. Especially New Yorkers! Filled with stunning details and photos which vibrantly enrich the text, it is a treasure to frequently enjoy, written in a direct and easily understood style. – M.D.

The history of the Park is fascinating, largely due to its size and complexity, but also as a result of the competing ideas and their proponents. Durante quotes Andrew Haskell Green: "While the Park is intended as a place for freedom and relaxation, for play, and not for work, it has been constructed with no ideas of encouraging habits of laziness, or in any way for the benefit of idlers and drones ... Its paramount object is to offer facilities for a daily enjoyment of life to the industrious thousands who are working steadily and conscientiously in the great city which spreads in every direction around it." The art in the Park, its sculpture and architecture, are expertly summarized by Durante, a skilled New York art historian. Read this before your first, or next, visit. – E.K.

Chapter 7 from *Central Park: The Early Years* was published on the blog of The Gotham Center for New York History (run by CUNY's Grad Center) on 8/14/18: <https://www.gothamcenter.org/blog/the-earliest-sculptures-in-central-park>

ABOUT DIANNE L. DURANTE

I'm an independent scholar, writer, and lecturer who focuses on art history and history: see DianneDuranteWriter.com and ForgottenDelights.com. Recent projects include *Central Park: The Early Years*, three volumes on Alexander Hamilton, *Innovators in Sculpture*, and a videoguide app by Guides Who Know. Sam Roberts in the *New York Times* called my *Outdoor Monuments of Manhattan* (New York University Press, 2007) "a perfect walking-tour accompaniment to help New Yorkers and visitors find, identify and better appreciate statues famous and obscure." Email DuranteDianne@gmail.com

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