

architects created more than two hundred houses, accessory buildings, and gardens—many of which remain intact today.

The architects' visions were realized through the sweat and skills of immigrant Italian and Slovakian laborers, who swelled the population of New York at the turn of the last century and for whom a workers' village was erected on the other side of the Gates of Tuxedo Park.

*Tuxedo Park: The Historic Houses* chronicles the rich social and architectural history of Tuxedo Park—a microcosm of America's march of progress—from the mid-1880s to 1945. It captures, through some 250 commissioned color photographs and fifty vintage postcards, the natural beauty of Tuxedo Park, bejeweled by historic houses sited to take brilliant advantage of the mountainous terrain and splendid views of three lakes.

Tuxedo Park is listed on the National Register of Historic Places in recognition of its distinctive architecture.

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TUXEDO PARK The Historic Houses

Christian R. Sonne & Chiu yin Hempel

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Edited by Christian R. Sonne & Chiu yin Hempel  
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Tuxedo Park was synonymous with upper-class living in the first three decades of the 20th century. The tuxedo jacket was first worn here, and William Waldorf Astor, before he made his home in England, remarked that “there was no fit place for a gentleman in America, with the possible exception of Tuxedo Park.” Yet as late as 1885 this region some forty miles north-west of Manhattan was described as a forbidding terrain of huge granite boulders, rocky soil, and shallow bedrock not suitable for even marginal farming.

Through sheer vision and willpower, within nine months (October 1885–June 1886) Pierre Lorillard IV, heir to a tobacco fortune, built Tuxedo Park as a private hunting reserve. Over the next fifteen years he oversaw its transformation into an exclusive, year-round community centered on a sporting and social club.

Residents of this gated enclave spanned the American elite, from blue-blooded Kents, Mortimers, Tuckermans, and Van Burens to financial giants George F. Baker (Chairman of the First National Bank, which became Citibank), Richard Delafield (Chairman of National Park Bank, a predecessor of J.P. Morgan Chase) and Alfred Lee Loomis, financier *cum* scientist, whose pioneering role in developing radar helped America win World War II.

A veritable roster of America's greatest architects from the Age of Elegance worked here: Carrère & Hastings, Delano & Aldrich, Wilson Eyre Jr., Hoppin and Koen, William Lescaze, McKim, Mead & White, John Russell Pope, Bruce Price, and Warren & Wetmore. Inspired by European historical precedents and motivated by the courage to experiment with Shingle style, Arts and Crafts, and even with Modernist avant-garde, these and other

*Ruth Hill Beard House, “Chastellux”*

1929

McKim, Mead & White



*The original Bruce Price cottage on the site designed for William Kent.*



*The house enlarged by Ruth Hill Beard.*

This eclectically French mansion was designed by McKim, Mead & White in 1929, one year before the death of William Mead, the last surviving partner of this prestigious architectural firm. It was built on the original grounds of the William Kent house, designed in 1886 by Bruce Price for Pierre Lorillard’s daughter, Emily and her husband, who was also the founder’s lawyer.

In 1916 Ruth Hill Beard, daughter of railway entrepreneur James J. Hill,

who built the Great Northern Railway, purchased the William Kent house from the estate of Emily Lorillard Kent. She significantly expanded the original cottage. In the late 1920s, Beard sold sufficient shares to build a new house, which was completed following the death of her husband in 1930. The house, the largest in Tuxedo Park, was given the name “Chastellux” because it was said to have been built on the spot where the Marquis de Chastellux, who visited America in 1780 and traveled on the



nearby Continental Road, first set eyes on the Tuxedo Lake.

In 1931 Beard married Pierre Lorillard V (Peery, also known as the Squire,) the son of the founder of Tuxedo Park, who had been a widower since

his wife’s apparent suicide in 1909. The Lorillards lived in “Chastellux” until Peery’s death in 1940, whereupon Mrs. Ruth Hill Beard Lorillard donated the house to the Academy of Mount St. Vincent,



a Catholic girls' boarding school. Mrs. Lorillard then bought the stone and shingle house, "Boulder Point," across the lake, and for the remaining years of her life had a direct view of the castle she had built.

The history of this lakefront property tells a typical tale of how, at the turn of the 20th century, small, picturesque shingled cottages in American suburbs were either expanded or replaced by revival-style structures as the wealthy elite opted for grand mansions to show off – and perhaps also to legitimize – their new wealth.

This prominent example of the towered French style is very similar to the Châteauesque styles of the 1880s. The tall, steeply pitched



*The gallery is divided into zones by a series of arches supported by Doric pilasters. The walls are fully paneled, while the plaster cornice is enriched by anthemion, reed and bead, and stylized acanthus leaves. Each central wall panel is covered with hand-painted chinoiserie paper. The grilled door leading to the entry vestibule is forged iron in the French style with Empire overtones.*





*Pilastered walls with Ionic capitals punctuate the walls of this Empire-style dining room. The ceiling features a plaster medallion in classic Empire design with anthemion and laurel wreaths surrounded by a color-accented band of stars. The sconces are ormolou, as is the crystal chandelier. The fireplace, with a gilded overmantle and a festooned surround, adds to the rich details, while the Parquet de Versailles floor anchors the overall composition.*

*This upholstered and gilt wood paneled sitting room features a vertical architectural element on each elevation. A petite stone mantle with a gilded overmantle is the focal point of the eastern elevation. The overmantle is a mirror framed with delicately carved, gilded fluttering ribbon with intertwining painted ivy. The west wall features a mirror framed in a similar way above the doorway, but here, Venus watches over a cherub sleeping under a canopy of painted fabric. The other elevations contain framed doorways that open, respectively, to a garden terrace and a loggia.*





*In the living room the carved breccia stone fireplace surround is enriched with a cartouche motif and ivy fronds. The hand-painted wall panels depict bucolic scenes. The floor is Parquet de Versailles.*

hip roof of the main block, with its double row of dormers, is flanked on every corner by massive towers, either circular or rectangular in plan. The arrangement of the windows at the roofline is offset from the shadow of the tower. This suggests that their placement was guided by the layout of interior spaces. This would also explain the predictable location of certain windows on

the stucco section as well. The stucco walls are delineated in limestone string courses, quoins, and window surrounds.

The lakeside façade grows out of the rock and follows the terrain in an angle back from the main block. The roofline mimics the ridge of the mountain beyond. It is one of the more successfully sited houses built within view of the Tuxedo Lake.

*Bruce Price House*

1897

Bruce Price



One of the suite of four cottages that Bruce Price built in 1897, this shingle house – along with two other sister houses – served as rental properties until Emily Post, who inherited the estate from her parents, subdivided the land in 1919 and sold the three houses.

Although much altered, this cottage still shows a

simplicity in organization and style similar to the Emily Post Cottage (p. 154). It has a long porch along the garden façade. The dormers above extend beyond the main body of the house, engaging the porch as part of the total mass. The railing echoes the diamond motif of the upper window sashes.



*Francis D. Carley House*

1886

Bruce Price



Originally situated across the street on a lakefront lot, this shingle cottage was moved around 1897 to its present location to make way for a Colonial Revival mansion.

The house seems very comfortably situated on its present site. It affords a prominent view of the “solemn gable,” as Vincent Scully, Yale University architectural historian, calls Bruce Price’s repeated theme for his early cottages. The undulating shingle work recalls gently lapping waves on the Tuxedo Lake.

The gable end is filled with windows, grouped to delineate a floor level. The middle set of windows is recessed so that the gable itself serves as an awning, while the balcony at this level performs the same function for the windows below. The shingle work terminates with a “pinked” edge at the trim-board.

Francis D. Carley, who joined the Tuxedo Club in 1886, bought the house furnished in December of that year for \$20,851. Originally from Fort

Wayne, Indiana, he moved to Louisville, Kentucky, in the 1860s, began selling oil, and eventually joined Standard Oil and headed the agency that controlled sales in the South. He summered in Newport, Rhode Island, and his daughter Pearl married Richard Howland Hunt, architect, Tuxedo Park resident, and son of the well-known Beaux-Arts architect, Richard Morris Hunt.



tennis courts and raised subscriptions, including \$5,000 from the TPA, to build an indoor racquet and court tennis facility designed by Warren & Wetmore near the existing lawn tennis courts. This new membership-based club was opened for court tennis in December 1899 and for racquets in February 1902. In 1901, the land was bought from the TPA under a deed specifying that members or guests of the Tuxedo Club could use the lawn tennis courts on the same basis as its members. The Tuxedo Tennis & Racquet Club was merged into the Tuxedo Club in 1909.

During this period, important community institutions were founded: St. Mary's-in-Tuxedo, the Episcopal Church;

Our Lady of Mt. Carmel, the Roman Catholic Church; the public and private schools, the hospital, the Fire Department, and the Tuxedo Electric Company.

As early as July 1886, Robert Fulton Cutting, who had rented one of the thirteen original cottages, arranged for Episcopal services to be conducted by the Rector of Christ Church in Suffern in the small schoolhouse just north of Tuxedo Park near Wild Cat Hollow, home to miners and workmen. Later that year, a three-man committee was formed which made plans to build a temporary chapel where the Gulf Station now stands. This building was designed by James Brown Lord and opened for services in June 1887. In December that

*Tuxedo Tennis & Racquet Club.*



*Covered porch at the present-day tennis clubhouse.*