

THE LIVING NEW DEAL

ANNUAL ACTIVITIES REPORT FOR 2022

This has been another busy year for the Living New Deal. The amount we accomplish with our small staff and volunteers is quite astonishing when you add it all up at the end of the year. Our annual activities reports grow longer every year as we grow in numbers of staff, volunteers, and contributors.

Highlights of the Year

On November 14th, the PBS NewsHour featured a segment by Jeff Brown on the Living New Deal, with interviews with LND Director Richard Walker and LND Founder Gray Brechin. The PBS Cultural Affairs team did a great job of transmitting our message about the New Deal legacy, with wonderful images of New Deal sites around the Bay Area and additional praise by Newshour anchor, Judy Woodruff.

Our first New Deal book award was given to Scott Borchert for his book, *Republic of Detours: How the New Deal Paid Broke Writers to Rediscover America* (Farrar, Strauss & Giroux, 2021). Borchert was given a plaque and award check for \$1,000 at the annual Summer Reading Festival of the FDR Presidential Library at Hyde Park NY on June 18th. Mary Jane Appel's book, *Russel Lee: A Photographer's Life and Legacy*, was the runner-up for the award.

We have received 12 nominees of New Deal books published in 2022, which are now before the review committee chaired by Eric Rauchway, Distinguished Professor of History at UC Davis and author of *Why the New Deal Matters*. Thanks are due to the four other university historians serving for the second year on the committee and to Kurt Feichtmeir for organizing the award and event.

Research and Mapping

Our most basic function is the research, documentation and mapping of New Deal public works and art sites around the country. We made significant advances in 2022.

- After a long recovery from the major hack we suffered in 2020, we added upwards of 1,500 new sites to the National Online Map, passing 17,500 in total late in the year. Credit for all the new contributions goes to our National Associates, researcher-at-large Evan Kalish, Dick Walker and dozens of new volunteer contributors. Special thanks to Research Director Elena Ion, who does most of the actual entries to the database and map.

- We made key improvements to our online map, which has to work on a variety of computer and smartphone formats. The filters allowing users to select specific categories of sites on the map are now functional; the icons that indicate classes of sites were improved; and the sliding information panels were redesigned to be more compact and readable. Thanks to the work of webmaster Lisa Thompson and contractor Abdullah Darwesh for these upgrades.

- We made major strides researching and mapping New Deal sites in Oregon, thanks to a grant from the Kinsman Foundation and the work of our Northwest Coordinator, Judith Kenny. Oregon is closing in on 300 sites on the national map. In addition, Judith produced an excellent 8-minute video, "In Landscape Harmony: New Deal Bridges for the Oregon Coast," which can be viewed on LND's YouTube channel.

- The *On the Road* section of the website expanded in 2022. *On the Road* authors write about their experiences traveling to visit New Deal sites, with historical reflections, personal insights and photographs. We gained two new contributors over the year. Glory-June Greiff of Indiana began her, "Historian's Journal: In Search of the New Deal" and Professor Oak McCoy of California added the new approach of creating virtual tours in his series, "A Legacy Of Recreation: The New Deal's Development Of National and State Parks". Meanwhile, Cambridge-based Fern Nesson's pioneering series on traveling to places up and down the East Coast that were written up in the WPA Guidebooks has grown to over fifty entries!

Public Outreach and Education

The New Deal legacy is all around us and the Living New Deal is making the American public aware of the New Deal's importance to US history and its continuing relevance today. We do this outreach through a variety of means, including our online map, website, newsletters, webinars, teaching aides, social media and more.

- Our online newsletters, *The Fireside* and *The Lowdown*, reach over 4,000 followers via Mailchimp. Communications Director Susan Ives and her team of designers do marvelous work publishing an array of content by leading authors and experts on historical and current topics, as well as news items, events and more. Some themes of this last year's *Fireside* were Art for All, Lungs of Our Land, Achievement Through Adversity, Creativity and Conscience, and America's Portfolio.

- We produced a dozen webinars, which have become an essential media for reaching a national audience numbering in the thousands. These lectures and panels reach Zoom participants and are broadcast via Facebook, then are made available as recordings on Facebook, YouTube and through our website. Thanks to Susan Ives and the New York City chapter director, Peggy Crane, for producing the outstanding series for 2022.

Webinars for 2022: A New Deal for Native Art; Preparing for War: How the New Deal Helped...; Los Tres Grandes: Mexican Muralists' and WPA art; The Harlem

Renaissance Meets the New Deal; New Deal Photography through the lens of Arthur Rothstein; The Federal Theater: Revisiting the Dream; Unfinished Business of the New Deal; Painting the Mail (Post Office art of the New Deal); Ill-Housed, then and now; Reality Makes the Dream: New Deal-era photography; Covid-19, the Great Depression, Memory & Forgetting; *Town Destroyer*. The George Washington HS Mural Controversy.

- A superb one-hour KCET-TV documentary, *How the New Deal Continues to Shape L.A. 90 Years On*, directed by LND advisor David Kipen, featured Living New Deal founder, Gray Brechin. Richard Walker offered online lectures to various groups and did podcasts for a substack series called *Non-Boring History*, a series called *This Is Revolution*, and a high school podcasting team in Ohio. We did several interviews with the mainstream press, as well.

- Despite Covid, we were able to hold a few live events for friends and donors of the Living New Deal. Susan Ives organized a tour of the WPA exhibit at San Francisco Museum of Modern Art and a screening of *Town Destroyer* on the George Washington High School mural controversy. Harvey Smith gave a Labor Fest Walking Tour of New Deal Berkeley. Live lectures were given by Gray Brechin at the San Rafael Rotary Club and Susan Ives at Greenbelt, Maryland.

- The New York City chapter organized walking tours of New Deal art in Harlem and of New Deal Central Park. The latter is the first step in a new Central Park New Deal Playgrounds Historic Markers initiative that the chapter is pursuing.

- We continued to expand our efforts on social media in order to reach a broader and younger audience. Our Twitter followers tripled over the last two years, thanks to regular posts by Project Historian Brent McKee. Meanwhile, we hired Shae Corey to be our Social Media coordinator to build our following on Instagram and Facebook.

- Our growing archive of recorded webinars, lectures and interviews is posted on the Living New Deal's YouTube Channel, reorganized and improved by Webmaster Lisa Thompson during the last year.

New Projects

We are constantly expanding into new areas that address our mission of research, education and policy concerning the New Deal legacy.

- Teaching the New Deal*

We have long nurtured the idea of providing more and better materials for educators at the high school and college levels. This last year we took steps in that direction with a new initiative, "Teaching the New Deal".

- We created a new set of short, topical bibliographies of books on the New Deal for the use teachers and students (e.g., on Public Works, Politics, the New Dealers,

etc.) We reorganized our full New Deal bibliographies for researchers and teachers in the same way. Thanks to Kurt Feichtmeir and Lisa Thompson for this work.

-We completed a curriculum guide with the DC public schools to encourage the use of our "New Deal Map and Guide to Washington DC", published in 2021, in the required DC history courses for all high school seniors in the district.

-The curriculum guide was prepared in part by three DC social studies/history teachers and a presentation to all history teachers was made by Prof. Amanda Huron of DC University.

-This project was funded by a grant from the National Trust for Historic Preservation and led by LND's Kurt Feichtmeir.

•*Making the New Deal Visible in Los Angeles*

Since publishing our print *Map and Guide to New Deal Washington DC* in 2021, we have targeted Los Angeles as the next city due for intensive research, mapping and public education. L.A. is ideal for this: it is second only to New York in the number of New Deal public works and art works, thanks to the Long Beach earthquake of 1933, and the legacy of New Deal muralism is strong there.

-Our approach to L.A. is different from previous city mapping projects, because the region is rich in organizations focused on local history and the city's citizenry is mobilized around the recovery of lost histories.

-We are partnering with the Huntington-USC Institute on California and the West, directed by Prof. William Deverell, and are developing relations around the region with public agencies, non-profit entities, and historians.

-At the end of the year, we hired a student Research Assistant, Natalie McDonald, to begin the enormous task of updating and improving our site data for L.A.

•*USS Potomac Association Visitors Center*

The USS Potomac, FDR's presidential yacht, is anchored at the Port of Oakland and the Potomac Association wants to create a major display on the New Deal at their offices at the Oakland CA waterfront. We are in discussion with the association's Executive Director, Ford Roosevelt, and members of their board to create a plan for their space. A central idea is to include interactive displays where visitors could search for New Deal sites using the Living New Deal online map.

Website Improvements

Our website is the anchor for all the Living New Deal's work. It houses our interactive national map of New Deal sites and the enormous amount of educational content about the New Deal—past and present—we have assembled for more than a decade.

•Visits to our website have grown to around 3 million visitors per year, according to Google and other available statistics – a robust number for a small nonprofit. The data indicate that our most frequent users are teachers and students.

- As our website has grown, we recognized the need to make it more easily navigable. Lisa Thompson and Dick Walker came up with the initial design in late 2021. We also made the decision to rebuild the website from the ground up because the structure had become unwieldy. Over the first half of 2022, Lisa mapped out the entire website and secured a contractor, Tod Abbott, to do the programming.

- Programmer Tod Abbott has been at work since mid-year on the rebuild, which includes a revised system for entering site information into the database and a new photo storage system that speeds up performance while providing a double backup of thousands of photographs for added security. The website rebuild was nearing completion by the end of 2022.

Organization and Personnel

The Living New Deal has a stellar core team and a raft of impressive volunteers who keep our working going and our project growing. Organizational capacity is an essential, if not glamorous side of who we are and how we succeed.

- For the first time ever, we produced a printed Annual Report, which arrived in March 2022. The elegant 12-page brochure went out by post to all Living New Deal donors, Advisors and Associates. A downloadable PDF of the brochure was available on the website. The report was the work of Susan Ives and designer Linda Herman, and it was an important way of publicizing the achievements of the Living New Deal.

- Thanks to a major gift, we are able to hire Mary Okin as Assistant Director of the Living New Deal. Mary has a doctorate in Art History and will be leading our new initiative in Preserving New Deal Art and Architecture, as well as helping with the growing workload of managing the Living New Deal. She begins February 1, 2023.

- Our NYC Chapter Director, Margaret Crane, decided to step away from the LND at the end of 2022. Arlene Geiger, s retired professor at John Jay College (CUNY), will take over as Chapter Director on February 1, 2023.

- Our team of 55 National Associates was shepherded throughout the year by volunteer Elliott Medrich, who is always on the lookout for new recruits. Associates are responsible for a large percentage of the new sites added to the national New Deal map. They are an increasingly diverse group, with more authors, writers, and educators than in the past, and this past year Associate Mary Jane Appel was a runner up in the LND book awards competition and another Associate has a book nominated for next year's prize.

- We added new members to our Advisory Boards: Dana Walker of Colorado, retired professor of Anthropology and daughter of the late Jan Roosevelt Katten (a founding board member); Touré Reed, professor of African American history at Center Illinois

University; and Stella Lochman, Manager of Public Engagement at the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art.

- Living New Deal obtained General Liability and Officers/Directors insurance from National Association of Non-Profit Insurers (NAIC). Such insurance has become standard operating procedure for non-profits these days.

- We mourned the loss of long-time LND team member, Ying Lee, a noted activist and elected official in Berkeley and of long-time LND donor and supporter, Professor Paul Groth of the University of California, Berkeley.

- A merger with the National New Deal Preservation Association (NNDPA) is in the offing. The NNDPA Board of Directors decided to close down by this coming Spring. Living New Deal has agreed to a merger in principle, and select members of NNDPA will be invited to join the LND in various roles. NNDPA's New Mexico group wishes to become a Living New Deal Chapter, as well; details remain to be worked out.

Finances

The Annual Financial Report submitted to the LND Board of Directors shows that the Living New Deal's finances are in good shape. Both revenues and expenditures were up from 2021, as was our year-end bank balance.

- Revenues came almost entirely from donations in 2022. Most donations come from two appeals we send out annually (plus reminders), but some people donated after viewing the PBS NewsHour, attending webinars, reading newsletters, or spontaneously. About a quarter of donations came from new donors over the year, as was true in 2021.

- Expenditures came to nearly \$220,000, of which around 80% went to staff. All staff are hired as consultants; we have no permanent employees. Some staff are volunteers, as are all Advisors and Associates.

- Spending by category:

Research	29%
Outreach/Programs	28%
Website & Map	26.5%
Development	12.5%
Administration	4%

Thanks to all those who made our achievements possible in 2022!

Thank you to the Core Team, National Associates, Advisory Board members and many more volunteer contributors. Many individuals are noted in this report, and many more acknowledgements might have been added, if space allowed.

And we wish to express our deep appreciation for the hundreds of donors, large and small, who gave to the Living New Deal in 2022. Without them, none of this would have been possible!