

# High Bridge Press Page

Highlights from the Press

“ . . . **The High Bridge . . . is a hidden gem** of New York City that, thanks to a growing coalition of citizens, non-profit groups and government officials, is finally on its way to being reopened. . . New Yorkers on both sides of the bridge eagerly await the day this magnificent structure will be restored and available for generations to come.” *From “A Walkway From Manhattan to the Bronx,” City Section Op-ed column by David Rivel, NY Times, Nov. 27, 2005*

“**Citizens and officials are rallying** to repair and reopen High Bridge, the city’s oldest span, which once served as a pedestrian walkway . . . until its mysterious closing in the 1970s. . . It’s developed a certain sense of inevitability that it’s going to happen,” [Parks Commissioner] Benepe said. ‘There’s too much momentum behind it.’” *From “Span Doctors: Effort to fix High Bridge” by Dan Kadison, NY Post, Feb. 28, 2005*

“**It is the oldest bridge in New York City**, and when it was completed in 1848 it was hailed as an engineering marvel and an architectural gem. The High Bridge over the Harlem River was built as an aqueduct to allow water from an upstate reservoir to cross the river from the Bronx to Manhattan. A pedestrian walkway above the pipes made the multi-arched stone span, designed in the style of a Roman aqueduct, a popular spot, affording panoramic views from more than 100 feet up. . . . after years of hoping to renovate High Bridge and reopen it to pedestrians, the city’s parks officials in charge of it say they are finally making progress. . . .” *From “Finally, an Upgrade For an Old Bridge,” by Joseph P. Fried, NY Times, June 26, 2005*

“**Far above the Harlem River**, halfway between the Bronx and Manhattan, the views from the High Bridge are spectacular. In fact, the 155-year-old span is so lofty that the traffic coming off the nearby Cross Bronx Expressway is silent, the cars and trucks like toys.

“The High Bridge itself carries no vehicular traffic. It never has. Constructed in 1848 as the dramatically arched centerpiece of the Old Croton Aqueduct – New York’s first public water system – the bridge was not only a conduit for water but a sightseeing destination and a convenient shortcut between two boroughs. No longer. For decades it has been closed to all, its gates welded shut, one of New York’s lost pleasures.

“Thankfully, the loss may be temporary. A private engineering team will soon complete a full structural examination of the masonry and steel bridge. Its report, funded by the city Department of Transportation, should detail the condition of the structure and estimate what it would cost to make this engineering marvel safe once again, for pedestrians and bike riders. . . .

“Connecting the High Bridge – oldest bridge link to Manhattan – to the metropolitan area’s ever-growing network of greenways, pedestrian trails and bike paths, as well as the Old Croton Aqueduct State Park, would lure visitors to

an important piece of city history. New York can – and should – make it happen.”  
*From “High Bridge to the future,” Ideas & Opinion feature of the Daily News editorial page, May 7, 2003*

**“Countless people a day drive by** the closed High Bridge, the narrow stone span that stretches between the Bronx and Manhattan over the Harlem River, but few probably know its historic legacy. The High Bridge Coalition . . . hopes to change that . . . ‘[The bridge] represents the one aspect that made New York great,’ said Sidney Horenstein, a geologist at the American Museum of Natural History . . . ‘Without an adequate water supply, New York could not develop the way it has.’” *From “High hope for bridge,” by Sandra Wolfer, Daily News, July 14, 2002*

**“The four times that Ines Santana went to the pool** last summer, she did what many teenagers in the Highbridge section of the Bronx do. She took a mile-long, roundabout route, walking across the traffic-choked 181<sup>st</sup> Street bridge and eight blocks down Amsterdam Avenue to reach Highbridge Park in Manhattan. . . . The [High Bridge], which is practically across the street from Ms. Santana’s front door on the Bronx side and not far from the pool on the Manhattan side, was closed in the early 70’s. . . . But a number of groups are advocating reopening the bridge. Among them are local residents who want easy access to the park in Manhattan . . .” *From “Trying to Make a Historic Crossing More Than a Relic,” by Seth Kugel, NY Times, March 24, 2002.*

**“Rome, capital of the ancient world, drew its lifeblood** – its water – from its great stone aqueducts. Likewise, New York, capital of the modern world, grew to greatness on the might of its aqueducts. . . . Fortunately, there is a tangible reminder of this historic legacy: the oldest extant bridge to Manhattan, the graceful and lofty High Bridge, a Roman-style aqueduct-cum-footpath spanning the Harlem River. . . . It is time – long past time, actually – to reopen the High Bridge and capitalize on its wondrous promenade and panoramic skyline vistas. . . .” *From “Walk History’s Path,” Special Editorial, Daily News, March 11, 2001.*