

Much Ado About Herald Square

By Margaret Lau Created: Mar 30, 2011



MINERVA - GODDESS OF WISDOM: A monument honoring newspaper man James Gordon Bennett in Herald Square features bronze statues of the Roman goddess Minerva in front of a bell, flanked by two bell ringers atop a Milford pink granite pedestal. (Phoebe Zheng/The Epoch Times)

NEW YORK—Most non-New Yorkers would have heard of Herald Square from the song, "Give My Regards to Broadway," with the line "Remember me to Herald Square."

Written by George Michael Cohan in 1904, musicians including Andy Badale & The Beer Garden Band, The Dixieland Ramblers, Judy Garland, and Barry Manilow have crooned it.

Today, many might remember Herald Square as the finishing point for the annual Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade.

A mecca for all things in New York City, many deem Herald Square the destination for shopping, entertainment, and dining. The square draws New Yorkers and visitors like iron filings to a magnet.

Two in one Square

Although the area is [generally](#) referred to as Herald Square, it comprises two triangular plazas facing each other. Shaped like a bow tie, Herald Square is situated on the [northern](#) end while Greeley Square is positioned on the southern or downtown side of the city.

Herald Square is located at the intersection of Broadway, Sixth Avenue, and 34th Street in the borough of Manhattan whereas Greeley Square, sits between West 32nd Street and 33rd Street, and between Broadway and Sixth Avenue.

Today, the twin squares appear to be in pristine condition. "When we first got here in 1992, we removed all the graffiti, swept the streets and square, and put in security [officers](#) around the area," said Daniel Biederman, president of the 34th Street Partnership (34SP).

Enclosed by wrought-iron fences, the two squares feature planted trees, planters with flowers, and attractive hanging baskets. Both squares have [inviting](#) chairs and tables with shade for the sunny summer days, and both feature Wichcraft sandwich kiosks and free [public](#) restrooms.

In 1999, 34SP formally took over the management of the square. "We put in \$3 million of capital improvement for the two parks," said Biederman. It installed new lampposts with white lights and customized trashcans. Both the NYPD and 34SP security force patrol the parks, and according to Biederman, crime has been reduced by 80 to 90 percent in the area since 1992.

Names of the Squares

The two squares were named after two famous 19th century journalists who left an indelible mark in the history of [print](#) journalism in Manhattan.

Herald Square is named after the New York Herald, a popular daily newspaper at the time, founded by James Gordon Bennett Sr. in 1835. His son, James Gordon Bennett Jr., later succeeded the newspaper.

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Greeley Square is named after Bennett's rival, Horace Greeley, who was the founder of the New York Tribune, which was America's most influential newspaper during Greeley's time. The newspaper was known for its honest journalism and impressive lineup of contributors, including Margaret Fuller, Frederick Law Olmstead, Mark Twain, and Abraham Lincoln.

The two newspapers eventually merged to form the New York Herald Tribune in 1924, when Greeley's New York Tribune bought out the New York Herald.

Monuments in the Square

Today there are two historical monuments, one on each end of the two squares. The monuments pay homage to the two prominent 19th century New York journalists.

The James Gordon Bennett memorial stands on the northern side of Herald Square. French sculptor Antonin Jean Paul Carles created the statues on the memorial that were originally standing on top of the New York Herald Building. In 1921, the statues were dismantled from the façade of the old New York Herald Building when the newspaper moved its office.

The monument features three statues: Minerva, the Roman goddess standing in front of a large bell, flanked by two bell ringers atop a Milford pink granite pedestal. The bell-ringing blacksmiths later earned the nicknames "Stuff and Guff" or "Gog and Magog," said 34th Street Partnership archivist, Anne Kumer.

Shopper's Mania



GREELEY MONUMENT: A larger-than life-size bronze statue of Horace Greeley, founder of the New York Tribune, commands an air of resolute confidence on the southern end of Greeley Square. (Phoebe Zheng/The Epoch Times)

The area around the two squares is a busy retail hub and a shopping paradise for New York City visitors. It is home to nearly 180 department [stores](#), specialty shops, boutiques, and national affordable chain stores, such as Macy's, Daffy's, Staples, JC Penny, GAP, and Kmart.

In the evening, the area around the square is swamped with pedestrians—visitors and shoppers looking for a bargain from roadside peddlers displaying a smorgasbord of goods, ranging from accessories to perfumes and scarves.

The Square Today

The twin squares exude a quintessential aura of their vital past and modern day attraction as a retail hub. Whether it is business, leisure, or pleasure, the twin squares have something to offer visitors. They make an ideal meeting place for friends.

"I came after work for some [chat](#) and coffee. There are seats, a restroom, and a coffee hut. And it is a good place to come to do people watching," said skincare retailer Jamie Lokkeberg, 24.

For weary shoppers and visitors, they serve as a welcome sanctuary for their aching feet. For midtown [office](#) workers they are like a "lunchroom." Amidst the hustle and bustle of hectic city life, it is a place for rest and

respite for visitors, and a place where people can sit in peace to make that long phone call undisturbed.

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"I came to see a friend who [works](#) nearby," said Long Island visitor, Tyler Bodamer, 20. It was his first time to Herald Square. "There should put some heaters in the park," said Bodamer, who found the square a little loud and busy.

The nippy spring days have not deterred people from seeking [refuge](#) in the square. Two 15-year-old high school students from the Bronx, Gen Acevedo and China Ramirez, enjoyed sitting in the square for a drink after their shopping.

"I like outdoors. I can sit and relax. It's nice to watch the pigeons, watch the people, the sky, feel the wind, and know you are alive. It's just a peace of mind," said 59-year old wheel-bound retired tree planter, Jim Adam.