

# Yonkers

## Historical Bulletin



*Courtesy The Herald Statesman*

THE HENDRICK HUDSON HOTEL ON PARK HILL  
*(Story on Page 2)*

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## *When A Hotel Crowned Park Hill*

BY CHARLES R. SHAKESHAFT

One of the most majestic views in Yonkers is the one seen from Leslie Sutherland Park which towers over the intersection of South Broadway and McLean Avenue on the western slope of Park Hill. From here one can view the Hudson River and its Palisades and reflect that on this historic site once stood a 230-room hotel.

Named the Hendrick Hudson Hotel, this luxurious hostelry resembled in its architecture the famed Chateau Frontenac in Quebec. It was built at the turn of the century by the American Real Estate Company, the developers of Park Hill. Along with the hotel, plans called for the purchase of the old Dunwoodie Golf and Country Club.

All this was changed, however, when on the hotel's opening night, Sunday, March 31, 1901 a fire started and the huge building burned to the ground in what must have been a spectacular blaze that could be seen for miles around.

The hotel was built on solid rock and at the time of its demise a large elevator shaft had been drilled over forty feet straight down to connect with a 150-foot tunnel, so that guests might be transported to the Park Hill station of the Putnam Division's railroad line at the foot of the cliff.

The charred remains of the hotel including many stone arches stood for years and were known as the Park Hill "Ruins."

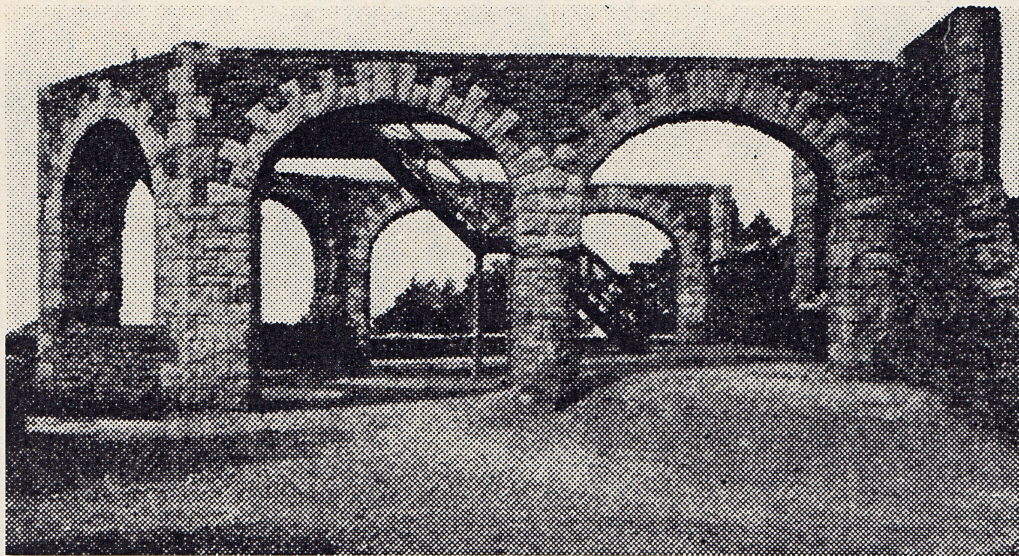
In 1923 a proposal for another hotel on the site failed to materialize.

The year 1929 saw the City of Yonkers buying the eight-odd acres as a possible site for a South Yonkers High School. This project became the subject of a lively controversy and was finally abandoned. Many years later a proposal was made for a garden apartment on the site but that plan also failed.

The old elevator shaft was finally filled in after its plank cover had become rotted and was deemed to be a dangerous situation. The tunnel, or "cave" became a scene of many stories. One such tale has it that the Bronx Beer Baron, Arthur "Dutch Schultz" Flegenheimer,

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Courtesy The Herald Statesman  
*“The Ruins” of the hotel on Park Hill as they appeared for many years after the fire. Picture is from an old post card.*

stored kegs of beer in the cave for shipment to “speakeasys” during the Prohibition era.

For a good many generations, children played around the cave and it became a place of mystery and intrigue until it was finally sealed.

In 1946 the city of Yonkers made the entire area into the Leslie Sutherland Park.

Park Hill finally had a Park!



*View of the Hudson as it appeared from the hotel site on Park Hill in the early 1900s.*