

The History of the Chelsea Reform Democratic Club



Tammany Hall, a political club at 14th St & 3rd Ave was seat of Boss Tweed and corrupt overlords who controlled not only the police and courts, but also all the election candidates.



In the movie, *On The Waterfront*, corruption controls the Longshoremen locals along the Hudson.

The movie was based on 1949's Pulitzer Prized series of 24 stories written by Malcolm Johnson for the New York Sun.

In 1958 Carmine DeSapio personally picks Frank Hogan at the Democratic Convention, upsetting the party who preferred Thomas Finletter, former Secretary of the Air Force. The papers and Republican Nelson Rockefeller seize upon DeSapio's act of arrogance, and Rockefeller goes on to win his first of 3 1/2 terms as the 49th New York State Governor.



Nelson Rockefeller

In a tight District Leader race, candidates, Emily Scheuer and Al Wehren lose the club's first election to Horatio Seymour Club, 2100 to 1600. But its surprising good showing lays the foundation for the success of future campaigns.

1900s

1950's

1958

1959

Manhattan was long under control of old line politicians and the democratic party was stagnant. In the fifties, Chelsea's Horatio Seymour Democratic Club was under the thumb of Carmine DeSapio of the Village's Tamawa Club. He regularly rewarded his cronies and loyal membership, that included the Longshoremen's Union, with city and no-show jobs.



Horatio Seymour, 18th Governor of New York, and the Democratic nominee for the 1868 U.S. presidential election against Grant.



Chelsea Piers in 1910, Lusitania docked.

Four people meet at the White Horse Tavern: Bob Clampitt, John Flory, Tom McBride and Robert Trentlyon. They conceive of a plan for new reform political club to go against The Horatio Seymour Democratic Club in the following year's election of District Leaders and Democratic Committee members.



Robert Trentlyon, first president of the club



One of the club's first fundraisers is held at Jim and Emily Scheuer's London Terrace penthouse. Eleanor Roosevelt is guest of honor.



Eleanor Roosevelt comes to Chelsea to support the club.

The club took pride in hosting Monday community based forums. Although many meetings centered on neighbors with rent and housing problems, there were also discussions of a playground for PS 11, and a junior high school to be built on eighteenth street, and special events with prominent invites that discussed the War on Hunger and the Civil Rights battle in Mississippi, among other social issues.

In 1960, the club wages its' first successful primary fight. Former assistant district attorneys Bill Ryan and Manfred Ohrenstein, also a Korean War veteran, win the democratic designation and then the general election. Ryan serves in congress till his death in 1972 and Ohrenstein serves till he retires in 1994.



Bill Ryan



Manfred Ohrenstein



Ray Guenther

CRDC's Ray Guenther and Anna Zuckerman run and win District Leader seats. Guenther serves til 1973.



PS11

A citywide teachers strike called by UFT's Albert Shanker closes most schools. CRDC votes to keep the schools open. Dave Smith cuts the chains on PS 11's doors, and parents and some teachers cross the picket lines. Practically all the teachers among the club's membership walk out and never return.

The club honors its' most illustrious member, Judge Dorothy Kenyon, one of the founders of most better government groups in NYC including ACLU, with a dinner at Tavern on the Green.



Tavern on the Green

1960

1963

1965



In the fall of '60, the club worked vigorously in promoting the Kennedy / Johnson ticket.



1961

The club successfully backs Theodore (Ted) Weiss for City Council.



Ted Weiss



1962

Esther Smith, an activist, who, during the early fifties successfully fights against the exclusion of Blacks from Met Life's Stuyvesant Town, moves to Chelsea with the opening of Penn South. She and her husband Dave get active with Chelsea's CRDC.



Esther Smith

On the club's third election try, it finally wins Chelsea district leadership, with the election of Ira Shein and Anna Zuckerman.

The executive committee attributes the club's success to extensive community work that garnered its needed influence. Dave and Esther Smith, Mike and Flora Rubel, Ruth Levy, Ray Guenter, Marilyn Schiff, Rebecca Cooperman, and a host of others celebrate the victory. The influx of 8,000 new residents in the Penn South ILGWA project also helps.



Ira Shein



Anna Zuckerman



1968

The club hosts a debate for the N.Y. City Council race, which is partially televised on CBS News.

Participants included the club's candidate, Ted Weiss, Mark Lane, Al Lowenstein and Beutley Kassal. Ted Weiss wins.

Also, Bella Abzug wins the congressional seat over Leonard Farbstein. She becomes one of the first in Congress to support Gay rights.



Bella Abzug





The Club honors Representative Shirley Chisholm with a gala dinner. In the general election CRDC supports Eugene McCarthy against Lyndon Johnson.



Eugene McCarthy



Carole Greitzer is elected to City Council and serves until 1991.



Richard Gottfried is elected to NYS Assembly at the age of 24



Richard Gottfried



Robert Borosky

CRDC's Bob Borosky wins District Leader.



Fred Ohrenstein

Fred Ohrenstein is elected Minority Leader in the State Senate, a position he holds until his retirement in 1994.

Bella Abzug leaves congress to run for the U.S. Senate and closely loses the Democratic nomination to Daniel Patrick Moynihan. Moynihan goes on to win and serves four terms.



Bella Abzug



Daniel Patrick Moynihan



Ruth Messinger



City Council seat



Ted Weiss



U.S. Congress' seat

Ted Weiss gives up his seat on the City Council for a successful run for Congress. Ruth Messinger runs for City Council, a position she holds til 1989. CRDC's Rose Aronoff and Richard Fischbein win District Leadership.



Rose Aronoff

1969

1970

1973

1975

1976

1977

1966-73

There is little conflict within the club over the opposition to the Vietnam War. Many club members went to Washington in protest. Esther Smith spear-headed the Committee of Responsibility, which brought Vietnam children, injured in fighting, to the U.S. for medical treatment.



Ray Guenther runs with Jane Bevens as District Leaders. Both win.



Jane Bevens

1971
Esther Smith wins State Committee Woman, serving til 1994. Marina Montalvo wins District leader and holds it til '77.



Esther Smith



Marina Montalvo



Richard Fishbein

CRDC's Richard Fishbein wins district Leader.



Jerrold Nadler



Jerrold Nadler wins election to the State assembly, a seat he has til 1992.

Bella Abzug



N.Y.C. Mayor's seat

Ed Koch



The club endorses Bella Abzug in her bid for Mayor of New York City. She loses to Ed Koch.

1979
Ann McCarthy wins as female District Leader and John Stackhouse wins as male District Leader. Ann McCarthy, a Nurse Supervisor at Mount Sinai Hospital, is also an advocate and volunteer for the efforts of healthcare and housing in Chelsea, and an inspiration to many.



John Stackhouse



Ann McCarthy





Richard Gottfried

Redistricting brings N.Y.S. Assemblyman Richard Gottfried to the heart of Chelsea and the CRDC becomes his home club. The first issue worked on together is the freeze of all production and testing of Nuclear Weapons. He has since come to bat for many other important issues including tenant rights, affordable housing, reproductive rights, expanded healthcare, and LGBT issues.



Governor Mario Cuomo helps get Tom Duane and Doris Corrigan re-elected as District leaders.



Tom Duane

Tom Duane runs for City Council. Fellow CRDC member, Christine Quinn heads up his campaign and he wins battle against Liz Abzug in the primary and handily wins the general election.



Christine Quinn



US Representative Ted Weiss, dies while in office. Chelsea loses an ardent champion of federally financed programs, of AIDS research and victim support, and for many other humane causes.



Tim Gay



Doris Corrigan

Tim Gay and Doris Corrigan run for District Leaders. Tom Schuler heads up their successful campaign. The Club also endorses State Senator David Patterson for Public Advocate. He loses to Mark Green but never forgets our backing.



David Patterson



AIDS becomes an epidemic, The Club holds forum on AIDS at St. Peters Church on twentieth street.

1982

1983

1988 1989

September

1992

1993

1980-90

State Committeewoman Esther Smith is instrumental in the fight to overcome the "Not in my Backyard" attitude for building facilities for mentally ill in six Manhattan neighborhoods (PCMH).



John Stackhouse leaves his seat as Male District Leader to run for Judgeship. Tom Duane runs and wins, becoming Co-District Leader with Anne McCarthy.



Tom Duane



Ed Koch



Deborah Glick



David Dinkins



CRDC works hard to elect David Dinkins for Mayor, Ruth Messinger for Manhattan Borough and Deborah Glick for State Legislature. All three win with David Dinkins beating Mayor Koch in the primary, ending Koch's 12 year reign and then goes on to beat Rudy Giuliani in general election.



Rudy Giuliani

1991

After three terms as District Leader Tom Duane steps down to run for City Council. The club's Paul Groncki is endorsed by the Gay Press as "the openly heterosexual candidate for District Leader." He wins.



Paul Groncki



Scott Stringer

The Democratic County Committee elects Jerrold Nadler as congressman to replace the deceased Ted Weiss on the Nov. ballot.

Scott Stringer, cousin of Bella Abzug, runs for and replaces Jerrold Nadler in the NYS Assembly.

Jerrold Nadler front and center with CRDC



The Club works hard to reelect David Dinkins as Mayor. He loses to Rudy Giuliani in the general election.



Fred Ohrenstein steps down as NYS Senator. Catherine Abate runs and serves until 1998.



Catherine Abate



1994



CRDC works hard to reelect President Clinton.

1996



Tom Duane runs for State Senate and wins. CRDC endorses Elliot Spitzer who beats Vacco for State Attorney General.

1998



Tom Duane

CRDC's Kathy Kinsella runs and wins, joining Tim Gay as District Leader



Kathy Kinsella

1999



Hillary Clinton

CRDC works hard for Hillary Clinton in her run for U.S. Senator. She wins, while another endorsed candidate, Al Gore, loses presidential election to George W. Bush.



Al Gore

2000

Less than three miles from Chelsea, the World Trade Center is an international terrorism target for the second time in a decade. The collective leadership of the country is caught off guard.

9/11 November 2002



Liz Krueger

Liz Krueger runs for 26th district in the State Senate on a platform of tenants rights, affordable housing and improved healthcare.



Ruth Messinger

1997

The club works hard on Ruth Messinger's run for Mayor against Rudulf Guiliani, and for Deborah Glick for Manahattan Borough President. Both lose but Glick remains in the NYS Assembly.



CRDC backs Eric Schneiderman and he wins Catherine Abate's seat in the NY State Senate.



Eric Schneiderman



The club campaigns hard for CRDC member,

Christine Quinn, as she runs for Tom Duane's seat on the City Council. Tom Schuler heads up another winning effort.



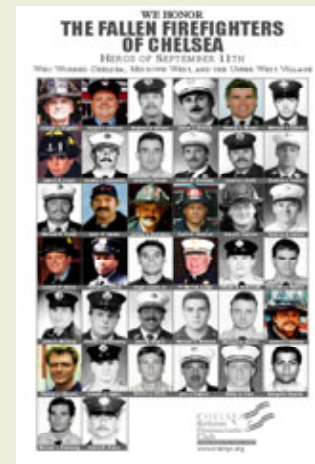
Christine Quinn



CRDC endorses Mark Green for Mayor, yet the election is overshadowed by 9/11 and the Bloomberg years begin.



Mark Green





Mary Dorman

Kathy Kinsella steps down as District Leader. CRDC's Mary Dorman runs and wins.

CRDC works hard against the construction of a football stadium in northwest Chelsea. The battle pitted a community and local electeds against developers with City Hall connections, unions demanding jobs, and the plans of an overbearing Mayor. Bloomberg was trying to lure the 2012 Olympics to NYC by rebuilding our west side with Jet stadium as the centerpiece.



Gifford Miller

Norman Siegel

CRDC backs City Council President, Gifford Miller for Mayor; club favorite Norman Siegel, an ardent civil rights lawyer, for Public Advocate; and Scott Stringer for Borough President. Gifford loses democratic primary to Fernando Ferrer. Ferrer loses to Bloomberg in the general election. Siegel loses and Stringer wins.



Scott Stringer



Hillary Clinton

CRDC supports Hillary Clinton in the presidential primary. She loses to Barack Obama, who goes on to win the presidency over John McCain.



In a controversial decision, Christine Quinn and the NYC Council vote for an extension of term limits, enabling Mayor Bloomberg and herself to run for third terms.



Barack Obama



St. Vincent's Hospital closes. With no other full service hospital on the westside south of 59th st., CRDC fights its closure. Local businesses also close as a result. City Hall ignores the plea and a developer takes over the site leaving a band-aid solution to our lack of a full service hospital.

2004

2005

2006

2008

2003

Steven Skyles-Mulligan is elected president of CRDC, and he begins a decade of beating the drum for real reform. The club begins writing strong resolutions and letters that are sent across the state and country. It is a practice that continues today (please visit our website's Resolution & Letters section at www.crdcnyc.org). Steven is the current



Steven Skyles-Mulligan



Tim Gay steps down as District Leader. The club works hard for its' own Tom Schuler.



Tom Schuler

As CRDC beats the drum for John Kerry in the Presidential Election. During the Republican Convention over 1,800 demonstrators against the war in Iraq were arrested and put in the deplorable conditions of Pier 57 on the Hudson.



CRDC battles a developer who wants to sidestep zoning laws to build a 17 floor building in Chelsea's Historic District on the site of the General Theological Seminary btw, 20th & 21st St. and 9th Ave. Chelsea's Historic District prevails.

2009

The CRDC backs Bill Thompson for Mayor, Christine Quinn for city council, Norman Siegel for Public Advocate and Scott Stringer for Borough President. Bill Thompson comes close to



Christine Quinn

beating Mayor Bloomberg, Quinn wins and Stringer win, and Siegel loses to Bill deBlasio.



William Thompson

2010



The club supports Andrew Cuomo's run for Governor and also works hard in getting Eric Schneiderman elected in a hotly contested State Attorney General race. He wins on a platform to root out fraud in government pension and Medicaid.



Andrew Cuomo



With a New York State budget reflecting the harsh realities of a weak economy, social programs are slashed. Also the city's rent control laws are up for renewal. Many CRDC members turn their energies toward Albany.

CRDC's own, Muriel Beach, NYC's Chapter President of Senior Action Council, headed to Albany to help fight threatened programs for elderly, including the closing of senior centers across all five boroughs. Cuomo restores funds.



Muriel Beach

2011

CRDC's Gloria Sukenick beats the drum, for not only the renewal of rent regulation laws, but strengthening them. Members go to Albany and help stage the first ever sit-in that shuts down both chambers (State Assembly and State Senate).



Gloria Sukenick

CRDC's own Karen Smith organizes "Cuomoville," an overnight tent village to demonstrate what the city will become if the rent laws aren't renewed for over one million city units. The sleep over at Holly Aposteles on 28th and Ninth ave is months before the *other* sleep over began down at Wall Street. With our proactive efforts alongside those of Tenants & Neighbors and others, Albany's NYC rent laws are renewed and strengthened.



Karen Smith



RESOLUTIONS AND LETTERS

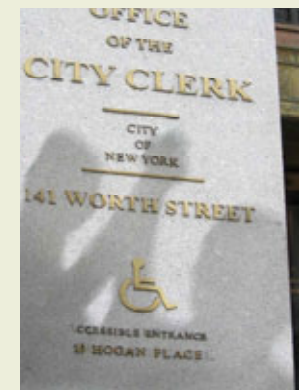
CRDC follows its heart and resolve in balancing community, city, state and country issues. The club fights for a full-service hospital, statewide prison reform, a local BRC shelter opening, a living wage



that makes sense, the ideals of Occupy Wall Street, and an ocean storm surge barrier, much like the one protecting the city of London.



CRDC also fight 'fracking' for gas that would threaten New York's watershed, and developers trying to stretch zoning laws to build on the Chelsea Market.



LEGALIZED SAME-SEX MARRIAGE is passed in Albany! It is a testament to the hard work of our club's own Richard Gottfried, who wrote the original draft for the State Assembly, Tom Duane, who fought hard for it in the State Senate, and the advocacy of Christine Quinn and the political maneuvering and perseverance of Governor Cuomo, among others.



Tom Duane



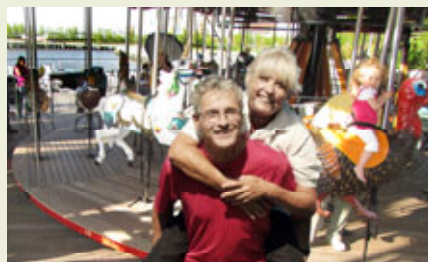
Richard Gottfried



Christine Quinn



Andrew Cuomo



Chelsea's Carasell

After 30 long years, the Chelsea Waterside park becomes a reality. It would not have happen in such a spectacular fashion without the stewardship of CRDC's own, Robert Trentlyon and Doris Corrigan. Their vision, along with others, produce a wonderful place for all of us to enjoy along the Chelsea waterfronts of Piers 62, 64 and 66.



Robert Trentlyon



Doris Corrigan



2012



Doris
Corrigan

After many years of service, Doris Corrigan steps down from her post as County Committeewoman. CRDC's screening panel selects Silvia Di Pietro to replace Doris.



Silvia
Di Pietro



Halloween brings CRDCer's to swingstate Pennsylvania, campaigning for Obama's re-election.



Brad
Hoylman

State Senator Tom Duane chooses not to run for office again. The club works hard for Brad Hoylman, President of CB2 and a stalworth supporter for LGBT issues, affordable housing, education, jobs and economic fairness issues.

Sept.



On November 6, 2012, Barack Obama and Joe Biden won 332 electoral votes, exceeding the 270 required for him to be re-elected. The Democratic ticket defeated Republicans Mitt Romney and Paul Ryan.

Nov

Early in 2012 CRDC members gathered in support of protecting Chelsea Market from gross over-development. It is a losing battle, as changes to existing zoning laws are approved. Developers agree their request moves through the Community Board 4, City Council, and the Board of Review (community give backs were agreed too).



The clubhouse is a hive of activity as members bring back voting results from pol sites. The numbers are outstanding as all of our endorsed candidates win, including:

State Senator - 27th District:, Brad Hoylman, Surrogate, Rita Mella, Civil Court, District 3, Lisa Sokoloff, Delegate to the Judicial, Nominating Convention, Paul Groncki, Judy Richheimer, Michael Schreiber, David K. Warren, Alternate Delegate to the Judicial Nominating Convention, Lee Sinovoi, Sylvia E. Di Pietro, Mae Doris Corrigan, Francine N. Haselkorn, and Raanan Geberer.



The summer is spent petitioning for the club's endorsed candidates as well as a number of reform issues. CRDC was often joined by candidates Brad Hoylman and Lisa Sokoloff.



In the aftermath of Hurricane Sandy, CRDC's President Steven Skyles Mulligan calls an emergency meeting at the Moonstruck Diner to mobilize help for those trapped in the Fulton Houses without heat, hot water, electricity nor elevator service. Those who responded include Assemblyman Gottfried, State Senate Candidate Hoylman, Laura Morrison from Senator Duane's office, Scott Melvin and Wayne Kawadler from Council Member Quinn's office, District Leaders Mary Dorman and Tom Schuler, County Committeewoman Sylvia Di Pietro, Carol Demech, Francine Hasselkorn, Judy Richheimer, Judge Karen Smith, Maarten de Kadt, Roberta Gelb and Gary Roth.



Steven Skyles-
Mulligan

PRESIDENTS OF THE CHELSEA REFORM DEMOCRATIC CLUB



Ray Guenther



*Ann
McCarthy*



*Robert
Borosky*



Reberta Gelb



Harriet Riggs



*Kathy
Kinsella*

1950's

Robert Trentlyon
Robert Clampitt

1960's

Ray Guenther
Rebecca Cooperman
Mike Rubel
Morton Schiff
Tim Sullivan
Paul Converse
Barney O'Kane
Robert Borsody

1970's

Marvin Wasserman
Sidney Tegeler
Richard Rogoff
Claire Pritchard
Ann McCarthy
Larry Berke

1980's

Dan Kaslow
Dale Brown
Robert Morse
Charles Overton
Doris Corrigan
Paul Groncki

1990's

Harriet Riggs
Reberta Gelb
Marvin Kohl
Maarten de Kadt
Kathy Kinsella
Katharine Roberts

2000's

Tara Renee
Frank Prescott
Carole Sclar (acting)
Steven Skyles-Mulligan
Lynn Kotler
Judy Richheimer (acting)

2010's

Presiding President
Steven Skyles-Mulligan



Carole Sclar



*Maarten
de Kadt*



*Judy
Richheimer*



*Paul
Groncki*



*Steven Skyles-
Mulligan*

TIMELINE COMPILED & WRITTEN
BY DONATHAN SALKALN

Special thanks for the extensive help of Paul Groncki,
Robert Trentlyon and Doris Corrigan, Steven Sykes-
Mulligan, and Martha Seymour