



THE GREENWICH VILLAGE SOCIETY FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION

PRESENTS:

Triangle Trivia



To finance the building of the Asch building, Joseph J. Asch was forced to borrow money against his large holdings on Washington Square North, including Henry James' birthplace.

The Department of Buildings (DOB) objected to the original building plans because they did not include sufficient fire egresses for such a large building, but eventually backed down after arguing with the contractor.

While the eighth floor notified the company management and the fire department when the fire broke out, no one told the ninth floor that there was a fire until it was too late.

The building had iron shutters that were always kept shut, so many workers had no idea where the fire escape was or that it existed at all.

There had been no fire drills prior to the fire.

The drop ladder at the bottom of the fire escape had never been installed, which led to women piling onto the fire escape, which could not support so much weight. It buckled and collapsed from the weight and heat.

After the fire escape had been destroyed and an exploding barrel of machine oil exploded, blocking the only other staircase, the elevators were the only way to exit. They broke down, stranding women in the building.

After the fire, people were shocked by how little damage was done to the exterior of the building which, after its original construction, had been dubbed "fire proof."

Ironically, during WWII, the eighth floor was used to train nurses.

