



The House on Henry Street: A Small House with a Big Story

Monday-Friday 10am-6pm, 265 Henry Street

(For evening & weekend hours, please visit henrystreet.org)



One-hundred-twenty-five years ago, Lillian Wald, a nurse, was teaching home-making to immigrant women on Manhattan’s Lower East Side when a young girl appeared in the classroom doorway, tearfully pleading for help. Wald followed the child through crowded, garbage-strewn streets to find the girl’s mother hemorrhaging and near death after giving birth in an unheated tenement. She had been abandoned by her doctor because the family couldn’t pay his fee.

From that experience, Wald and a “family” of nurses settled amid their Lower East Side neighbors to provide free health care to impoverished immigrants in their homes. She founded Henry Street Settlement in 1893 out of new understandings of poverty, industrialization, and immigration, and the need to improve conditions in the workplace, the home, and the school.

An Interactive Exhibit

Artifacts, photographs, and video give visitors a sense of the Lower East Side at the turn of the 20th century, when it was the most crowded neighborhood in the world.

Stories and quotations show how Progressive Era reformers came together to respond to the rapidly changing city—and Henry Street Settlement’s role in the movement.

The House on Henry Street traces the history of the neighborhood and the Settlement across six distinct eras:

- ❖ Arrival in America: Immigration skyrockets
- ❖ The Problems They Faced: Conditions create immense challenges for new immigrants
- ❖ Problems Lead to Action: Lillian Wald takes action from City Hall to the White House
- ❖ Action Spreads: The growth of public health nursing
- ❖ Come to the Table: Neighbors and world leaders exchange ideas at Henry Street
- ❖ The Legacy: Taking action continues today at Henry Street



Online Experience and Neighborhood Walking Tour

A new website, TheHouseOnHenryStreet.org, takes visitors on a virtual tour of the exhibition. It includes an illustrated **historical walking tour** of the neighborhood, accessible on mobile devices. Coming soon are curricular materials for high school and college teachers.

To arrange a tour, please email Katie Vogel at kvogel@henrystreet.org.

Henry Street Settlement opens doors of opportunity for Lower East Side residents and other New Yorkers through social services, arts, and health care programs.