

A New York Bike World's Fair

@The World's Fairgrounds, in Queens, N.Y.C.

Preserving the Most Important Classic Features of these Historic Occasions:

International, Inclusive, Art, Culture, Technology, Education, Fun, Rides, Shows

Differences Between Previous Fairs

Visitors must pay a healthy sum to enter the grounds, so many never do
There is a fence around the perimeter to control entry and uniformed guards
There are large, mostly temporary, expensive and wasteful pavilions
Participants are limited to large economic interests and governments
Visitors are expected to be excited but passive observers and consumers
Exhibitors want to dazzle and impress, become your "one and only one"
This takes place over some months for one or two years and disappears
Very heavy initial expenses make economic viability questionable
The residual benefits from momentary events are often less than advertised
There will be long standing waits to enter always crowded and busy exhibits
It takes years of expensive planning to have any role whatsoever
Nearby communities often barely participate or benefit, may even suffer
There is no control over the healthfulness of food or its origins
Elements of the "World" from other places have to be brought to show off
There is no meaningful interaction among exhibitors, each one on an island
The emphasis is on the proprietary and profitable, narrow self-interest
The Industrial Scale World and the awe that it inspires is what matters most
We are told: serious work is the job of big outfits and the opposite of fun
Everybody has to come to one certain place to participate in this event

And This One, Planned for 2014

It is in a public park, admission is free to all, everyone is welcome
There are too many highways surrounding this greenery but no walls
Here are small mobile exhibits of unusual human-powered vehicles
They may sponsor individuals and small group efforts and should
There are continuous opportunities to interact, to try things
Presenters want others to join them in re-designing the world
This activity becomes a part of this park and others' regular offerings
This is a low-cost approach which encourages solvency and thrift
This is the start of a new transport infrastructure with many players
Numerous interesting small-scale entry points will proliferate
Exhibitors can decide at any time to join and be involved
All of the surrounding neighborhoods need bikes and are also a part
Lots of Local Tastes, from every tradition and pretty good for you
Many people from just about everywhere are already in Queens
This is an Open Forum on Human Powered Vehicle Design Evolution
Encouraging the public's interest in its own public spaces is key
The Human Scale dimension is the one we all must learn to live in
Yet Muscle-Powered Transportation is a lot of both at the same time
This show is about traveling, which travels, and is online and off too

IT IS 2014

One Hundred Years Ago: August 1, 1914 Germany declares war on Russia, WWI begins in earnest. Nottingham UK, stages a "Universal Exhibition".

Seventy five Years Ago: September 1, 1939 The invasion of Poland and the start of the Second World War. Here in New York City, the gates opened to a "World's Fair" that was meant to ratify the universality of our aspirations, while 3000 miles away, the deafening noises of war begin to drown out everything else. Colorful Fountain Lake, here in Flushing Meadows, the World's Fairgrounds, a year later, is re-named "Liberty Lake", in honor of the formerly free countries then falling under harsh military rule. We are being promised a consumer society, filled with cars, televisions and modern kitchen appliances, projecting a future of ease and abundance, which many would say we have far surpassed. As the world outside the Fair falls into a deep crevasse that some fear will swallow it whole, a mammoth spectacle gives people a chance to think about other things and imagine a world far different than the suddenly much more dangerous one in which they now live.

Fifty Years Ago: August 2, 1964 The Gulf of Tonkin "Incident", the beginning of the Vietnam War. In Queens we are staging another "World's Fair", again bringing together exhibits from everywhere and demonstrations of technology, new products and entertainments, never seen here before.

Twenty-five Years Ago: 1989 Russia withdraws from Afghanistan and the United States begins its overt involvement in the Civil War there. Tiananmen Square erupts. It is the 100th Anniversary of the famed Paris Exposition and its iconic Eiffel Tower.

Three Years From Now: 2014 It is the 75th Anniversary of the 1939 New York World's Fair and 50th Anniversary of the 1964 New York World's Fair.

This proposed version of a World's Fair is not the ordinary tribute to the accomplishments of large enterprises and Governments, (and their natural tilt in favor of increased consumption), but rather an opportunity for individuals and small groups to share the enjoyable results of their hard work and ingenuity, in minimizing, rather than maximizing, our need for possessions. This is meant to be a celebration of the literally "bottom-up" contributions that mere mortals can make, to peaceful, achievable solutions to the world's most pressing and dangerous problems. This is a demonstration of new strategies to reduce over-consumption and the ill health it brings, through creative, interactive, inclusive and practical explorations of our own, and a multitude of others', potential to contribute to our common good, through accelerating the development of the most evolved human-powered vehicles.