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#LUCYISMARGATE: A COMMUNITY'S EFFORTS TO SAVE THEIR TOWN'S

RESIDENT PACHYDERM

By

ANNE MARIE HAMILTON

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ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS

#LucyisMargate: A Community's Efforts to Save Their Town's Resident Pachyderm

By ANNE MARIE HAMILTON

Thesis Director:
Dr. Rui Gomes Coelho

Lucy the Margate Elephant is a historic structure located in Margate, New Jersey. She was constructed by James V. Lafferty in 1881 and is shaped like an Asian elephant. The elephant was in danger of demolition but was saved by a group of volunteers in the 1970s known as the Save Lucy Committee. In this thesis, I examine the emotions and connections people feel toward Lucy and try to determine why the campaign for her preservation has been so successful. To do so, I discuss notions of community and heritage and provide a general background on zoomorphic architecture and roadside attractions in the United States.

The methodology used in this study was a mixture of interviews and document analysis. Interviews with individuals connected with Lucy and documentary evidence suggested that people connect with Lucy because she is a unique and singular structure. She is also frequently associated with childhood memories and serves in many ways as a symbol for her community and as an outlet for people's feelings about change in the community's character.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Typically, when one speaks of endangered elephants, it calls to mind the plight of the African and Asian elephants that are currently threatened with extinction. However, a battle persists to save a different kind of elephant in a slightly less exotic location: Margate City, New Jersey. Since 1970, residents and visitors to the town of Margate united to form the Save Lucy Committee, which has been fighting to save their town's unique landmark—Lucy the Elephant—from threats of destruction for more than 40 years.

Lucy's preservation story is unique not only because she represents an uncommon form of architecture, but also because of the efforts of the local community to protect her. Because of this, I investigated the question, Why has Lucy the Elephant survived to the present day and become such a valued fixture to the community of Margate while other similar attractions have not managed to withstand the test of time? I believe Lucy's entanglement with the town of Margate's identity might be the true key to her enduring attraction and her preservation value, and I would like to examine this hypothesis further to see if it is true.

From a broader heritage perspective, I believe that answering the proposed research question would provide some commentary on how communities identify with their local heritage. If our current perspectives and values create heritage value rather than some level of intrinsic importance, what is it that individuals see in Lucy that has allowed members of the local community to incorporate her into their local identity and to continuously advocate for her? To answer this question, in this introduction I provide a brief history of Lucy the Elephant and the surrounding area of Atlantic City and Margate.

In Chapter 2, I review the available literature about Lucy the Elephant and about preservation questions that link to her. Chapter 3 provides an overview of the methodological design used for this project, and in Chapter 4, I explore and discuss the data gathered. Chapters 5 and 6 include the conclusions I have drawn and outline areas of future research interest.

Historical Overview: Lucy the Elephant

Lucy the Margate Elephant (Figure 1, Figure 2) is a 137-year-old structure in Margate, New Jersey, a town that is 5 miles south of Atlantic City on Absecon Island. She was constructed in 1881 by Philadelphia real estate developer James Vincent de Paul Lafferty, Jr. as an attraction to bring increased real estate sales to the Margate (then South Atlantic City) area from the Atlantic City and Philadelphia areas (Westfield Architects & Preservation Consultants 1992). She takes the form of an enormous six-story-tall elephant, and was originally intended to draw customers as a curiosity. Once visitors ascended the stairs in her rear leg and viewed her interior, they were then led to an outdoor observation platform on the elephant's back where they would be afforded a perfect view of Margate City and Lafferty's available real estate. She allegedly cost \$38,000 to build and is constructed primarily of a wood frame box sheeted in 12,000 square feet of tin (Westfield Architects & Preservation Consultants 1992). Her interior is largely composed of a large domed room (Figure 3) with doors on either side to reach the upper level, called the *howdah* (Figure 4). *Howdah* is an Indian term for a box fastened to the back of a real elephant for travel. In Lucy's case, this structure acts as an observation platform (Westfield Architects & Preservation Consultants 1992). Lafferty patented the elephant in 1882, a year after it was built, but only retained ownership of the building

until 1887, when he sold it to either Anton or Henry Gertzen (Roberts and Youmans 1993). Lafferty was involved in the construction of two other similar large-scale elephant buildings, one in Cape May and one in Coney Island. Lucy's fellow elephants did not last to see the turn of the twentieth century and today she remains the only surviving example of this unique architectural form.

Lucy is an example of an architectural folly, or more specifically, a type of architecture that can be termed zoomorphic vernacular architecture (Westfield Architects & Preservation Consultants 1992). Rather than serving as a type of novel architecture, this architecture relies on whimsical forms that were intended to entertain and provide a spectacle (also known as *kitsch*); in Lucy's case, to draw visitors as part of Lafferty's real estate scheme. It should be noted here that kitsch architecture does not follow established conventional architectural forms and "good taste" forms, but instead attempts to emulate a look that is gaudy and distinct. Lucy is considered the oldest surviving roadside attraction in the United States (in fact, she predates the rise of the automobile altogether) and her form—a scaled up version of a real-life object intended to draw in visitors and intrigue them—is characteristic of the roadside attraction genre in general (Marling, Harrison, and White 2000).

Lucy's survival is due in large part to the care of the Gertzen family who owned her for the next 83 years (Roberts and Youmans 1993). Although Lucy's tenure under their care eventually ended with the city of Margate condemning her as an eyesore and a fire hazard, the family also took care of Lucy through hurricanes, storms, and stints as a tavern and a summer home. In the first decade of the twentieth century she was even raised and moved by a local house mover 50 feet further back from the beach to protect

her after she was buried up to her knees in sand by a large storm (Roberts and Youmans 1993, 146). The Gertzen family operated Lucy as a tourist attraction, charging ten cents for tours and guiding visitors through her interior (Roberts and Youmans 1993). In addition to Lucy, the Gertzens also operated the Turkish Pavilion as a hotel next to Lucy. This building was constructed for the 1876 World's Fair in Philadelphia but was purchased by Anton Gertzen and moved to Margate as a tourist attraction (Roberts and Youmans 1993, 146). After Sophia Gertzen took over care of Lucy following her husband John's death, she created a tourist camp along the beach where visitors could live in tents. When the city banned these tents from the beach, Sophia converted the Turkish Pavilion into a rooming house where visitors could stay (Roberts and Youmans 1993, 147).

Sophia Gertzen was also responsible for christening the elephant, which had previously been regarded as a "he," as Lucy and was quoted as saying "We've had Lucy so long that she's one of the family. I call her my oldest daughter" (Roberts and Youmans 1993). However, by Sophia's death in 1963, the elephant had fallen into disrepair and was in danger of a permanent death herself (Figure 5). Storms and a lack of maintenance had caused the decline of Lucy's structure and a Margate building inspector ordered her to be closed in June of 1964 (Roberts and Youmans 1993, 148). However, even as she fell into disrepair, her historic nature was recognized. In 1966, the building inspector who closed her even sent Margate's mayor a framed copy of the original patent application for Lucy. On the reverse of the frame, he wrote "Please don't make me the first building inspector in America to condemn a historical structure" (Figure 6). Although many members of the local community in Margate wanted Lucy to survive, by 1969

negotiations were underway with a developer who wished to buy the land Lucy stood upon. At this time, an enterprising group of individuals, led by Margate locals Josephine Harron and Sylvia Carpenter, formed the Save Lucy Committee with the mission of moving Lucy to an available piece of land owned by Margate City. The group was tasked by the city with raising \$24,000 within 30 days to move the elephant to the new plot of land, and Lucy was successfully moved a few blocks to her new home on July 20, 1970. This date has now been officially declared Lucy's birthday, and a public celebration is hosted in the park at her feet on this day every year (Boucher 1970).

Importantly, the primary force behind the Save Lucy Committee was housewives (Gwen Meade, pers. comm.). Although several of their husbands also contributed, the women on the committee led the campaign and even donated large sums of money. They had little to no experience running a campaign like this—one story tells that they took recommendations from a local printer to take out a loan with the bank (Gwen Meade, pers. comm.). The high involvement of housewives in the project is likely due to Margate's status as a heavily residential community, and it is an excellent example of community stakeholders participating in heritage preservation.

A great number of historical and documentary studies detail Lucy's history and physical condition, owing to her placement on the National Register of Historic Places. A very detailed preservation plan of Lucy the Margate Elephant was prepared by Westfield Architects and Preservation Consultants in September of 1992 that details Lucy's (then) current physical condition, architectural features, and historical background. The plan also provides a detailed guide of the future restoration work that will need to be carried

out to improve Lucy's condition going forward (Westfield Architects & Preservation Consultants 1992).

Historical Overview: Atlantic City and Margate City, New Jersey

Margate and Atlantic City are located on Absecon Island, which was known to the Lenape as *Absegami*. The island had little habitation until the latter half of the 1800s and was considered a desolate place with only sand, mosquitoes, snakes, and brambles (Levi and Eisenberg 1979, 2; Levi and Eisenberg 2004). In 1850, only seven houses existed on the entirety of Absecon Island. Even the mainland in that area was sparsely inhabited; when Atlantic County separated from Gloucester County in 1837, only 850 residents lived in the entire county (Cunningham 1978). One of the main reasons for the desolate nature of Atlantic County and most of the coastal areas of New Jersey at that time was the difficulty visitors faced to reach the shore. Travel was limited to "Jersey wagons," which were very uncomfortable freight-hauling wagons or stagecoaches, and visitors were plagued by flies for the entirety of the trip (Roberts and Youmans 1993). Several other shore towns such as Cape May began to grow at this time, due to the arrival of steamship travel, but Absecon Island would have to wait for the arrival of the railroad (Roberts and Youmans 1993).

Around 1850, Dr. Jonathan Pitney, a physician and important citizen in the nearby mainland village of Absecon, began to speculate on developing the beach on Absecon Island by bringing in a railroad. He had long been a proponent of the beach in the area due to its mild and healthy climate (Roberts and Youmans 1993), and believed it could surpass Cape May as the primary resort destination for people in the Philadelphia area. Cape May is much further south than Absecon Island, which is only 60 miles due east of

Philadelphia (Funnell 1975). Pitney enlisted local southern New Jersey businessmen with land and manufacturing interests in the area—particularly glass and iron makers—and with their backing, created a railroad company (Funnell 1975; Roberts and Youmans 1993). By 1852, Pitney had enlisted Richard B. Osborne, a young engineer who also shared his vision for a resort in the area. Osborne envisioned the resort as the “lungs of Philadelphia” (Funnell 1975, 125). Osborne also christened the resort Atlantic City and the city was incorporated in 1854 (Cunningham 1978). A few months later the first train rolled into Atlantic City from Camden. By 1860, the population had grown to 700, with accommodations for up to 4,000 tourists at a time. One particularly attractive feature of Atlantic City was its proximity to Philadelphia. Although visitors faced a long boat ride to the more established Cape May, a trip to Atlantic City could be made in a few hours one way and visitors saw it as an attractive spot to make a day trip and return in the evening (Roberts and Youmans 1993). Even further growth occurred after a rival railroad was built in 1877, sparking a price war between the two railroads. Inexpensive train fares caused the population of Atlantic City to double from three to six thousand in the four years after the new railroad was built (Roberts and Youmans 1993).

Despite the success that Atlantic City experienced at this time, when Lafferty arrived in Margate (then known as South Atlantic City) and built Lucy in 1881, the town was still desolate and could only be reached at low tide (Roberts and Youmans 1993, 143). In 1882, Margate and the nearby city of Longport began to be developed when promoters chartered a special train from Philadelphia and transported visitors by carriage to Longport (Mathis 2004). In Lucy’s early years, visitors would travel from Philadelphia to Atlantic City along the railroad lines and then transfer to a trolley that would take them

to South Atlantic City. Lafferty's asking price was reportedly \$25 per lot, but very few visitors became buyers. By 1923, lots in Margate were selling for \$200, and by 1926 they were selling for up to \$10,000. This price increase was linked to Margate's emerging status as a vacation spot along the Shore.

Atlantic City began to see a decline after World War II as visitors began to be enticed by Florida and other destinations (Levi and Eisenberg 2004). By the 1970s, the city's poverty rate was the highest in New Jersey and tourists to the city were often poor or elderly (Levi and Eisenberg 2004). By the 1960s, passenger train service between Camden and Atlantic City had significantly decreased due to increased automobile usage and the construction of the Atlantic City Expressway (Levi and Eisenberg 2004, 675). As a result, the city was far more accessible in 1895 than it was in the 1970s (Funnell 1975, 93). The city's decline was somewhat reversed by the legalization of gambling in 1976, but results were mixed. The most successful improvement has come from the Casino Redevelopment Association, which has provided an influx of funds for urban renewal (Levi and Eisenberg 2004).

At the same time Atlantic City was in decline, a dramatic change was happening in Margate's character and demographics. The construction of the Garden State Parkway in the 1950s and the Atlantic City Expressway in the 1960s improved access to Margate from the nearby population centers of Philadelphia and New York City, and it began to become an attractive destination for affluent homeowners in those metropolitan areas to purchase a second home. Importantly, although the City of Margate is home to a population of 6,354 residents year-round, only 44% of the homes in Margate are occupied by full-time residents (Remington, Vernick & Walberg Engineers 2017). As a

result, the city experiences a massive influx of visitors and part-time residents during the summer, with an estimated peak summer weekend population of 32,000 residents (Remington, Vernick & Walberg Engineers 2017). This was not always the case, as in 1970 Margate's population was 10,576 and 73% of the housing was occupied by full-time residents (Remington, Vernick & Walberg Engineers 2017), representing a 40% reduction in permanent population in the past 40 years. Simultaneously, home values have increased significantly, particularly since the housing boom of the late 1990s to early 2000s (Remington, Vernick & Walberg Engineers 2017). At the same time, a shift toward seasonal residency was occurring in the town, accompanying a dramatic shift away from hotels and motels in the town (Remington, Vernick & Walberg Engineers 2017). According to the City of Margate's 1981 Motel Study, no motel permits were requested or issued during the entire decade of the 1970s, whereas hundreds of motel units became residential units (Remington, Vernick & Walberg Engineers 2017). This resulted partially from changes occurring in Atlantic City. As casinos were built in Atlantic City, they required a large population of workers to support them. As Margate was more of a residential community compared to other nearby communities, new workers for the area gravitated there (Gwen Meade, pers. comm.). Thus, although Margate once had many hotels and motels, it no longer has any (Rosenberg 2019). The city also has ordinances that prohibit short-term rentals (Downbeach Buzz 2018). Most homes were converted into condominiums, as condos were seen as more profitable (Downbeach Buzz 2018; Rosenberg 2019). Despite these changes being a positive move in the short term for Margate and many other New Jersey shore towns, over time, midweek business has seen a large reduction (Downbeach Buzz 2018).

Overview of Similar Structures

Less information is available about Lucy's fellow elephants, "The Light of Asia" and "Elephantine Colossus" (Figures 7 and 8), which were located in Cape May, New Jersey, and Coney Island, New York, respectively. Most information about these similar structures is included in writings about Lucy herself, such as the chapter "I Love Lucy and Her Pals" in Roberts and Youmans's (1993) *Down the Jersey Shore* and *The Story of Lucy the Elephant* by William McMahon (1988). These structures were constructed only a few years later than Lucy but did not survive to the turn of the twentieth century. The Light of Asia, designed to be larger than Lucy but actually ended up being slightly smaller, was built in Cape May between 1884 and 1886. This elephant featured shops, concessions, and amusements inside of it as a commercial destination. The elephant, nicknamed Jumbo, was also intended to sell real estate, but like Lucy, failed to prove profitable. The elephant was allowed to fall into disrepair and was finally torn to pieces by a group of men led by Captain Samuel E. Ewing in May of 1900, less than 15 years after it opened (Roberts and Youmans 1993, 154). Similarly, The Elephantine Colossus of Coney Island was constructed in 1884 by James Lafferty, who was also Lucy's creator. The Elephantine Colossus was much more expensive than Lucy, coming in at a reported cost of \$65,000. It was also far larger than Lucy at nearly twice her height. Like the Light of Asia, this elephant took on a role as a retail establishment, with a diorama and cigar shop housed in its front legs. The Elephantine Colossus had seven stories of exhibits and guests could spend the night in various body parts of the elephant. Lucy the Elephant is frequently referenced as once having served as a hotel, when in fact it was the Elephantine Colossus. Beyond one brief summer as a rental home, Lucy never served as a

dwelling. Although the Elephantine Colossus was not designed to sell real estate, it still fell on hard financial times and was sold (Roberts and Youmans 1993, 157). On September 27, 1896, the vacant elephant caught fire, but unlike Lucy, which also experienced a fire during her days as a tavern, efforts were not made to save the Elephantine Colossus and it fell within a half hour. The Coney Island elephant's downfall may have been its location, as the area around it became disreputable over time and other nearby attractions competed with it (Rivero 2017).

Architectural Follies and Commercialized Architecture

Lucy the Elephant is a unique example of an architectural folly. The concept of an architectural folly originated during the Enlightenment era and essentialized the idea of a number of negative qualities, including extreme undesirability, absolute contradiction, foolish luxury, and a lack of function (Vidler 1983). Derived from the French word *folie* (meaning madness), the concept of an architectural folly is meant to create a distinction between architecture that is right or reasonable and that which is not. More specifically, follies are usually associated with useless buildings built on estates that serve no real purpose beyond their aesthetic design. They are expressions of emotion in architectural form, unlike traditional architecture that tends to value function over form. Their value derives not from good taste or architectural form, but rather from the ability of the building to evoke emotions in the spectator by plainly representing the intentions and emotions of the builder or designer with “uncivilized directness” (Jones 1953). Architecturally, buildings are classified into categories, and those categories are then used to define qualities that can then be observed in other well-crafted types of similar architecture (Jenks 1979). Architectural follies and other types of architecture deemed

“bizarre” defy these typical forms of classification and evaluation, and thus must be evaluated on different terms. Also, follies are highly personal in the reaction they evoke from a viewer, as their amateur quality does not invoke the same reaction that a great masterwork of architecture might, so they must rely on their individual charm to relate to the viewer (Jones 1953).

Over time, a close relationship has grown between large-scale architectural follies and commercialism. This relationship was particularly advanced when a new genre of commercial architecture arose in the early twentieth century, inspired by the Midway of the 1915 San Francisco Pan-Pacific Exposition. At the Exposition, vendors on the Midway were required to be “self-identifying without the aid of billboards or signs” (Rubin 1979, 349), which led to commercial buildings becoming advertisements themselves in either their three-dimensional forms or other visual clues. For example, one booth in the shape of two ninety-foot tall tin soldiers housed retail establishments in the soldier’s feet.

After the fair, this genre of commercial architecture was most prevalent in California, particularly in the Los Angeles region, but examples existed throughout the United States. These examples include a duck-shaped poultry store in Long Island (Figure 9), a seashell shaped gas station in North Carolina, and a dairy stand shaped like a milk bottle in Boston (Rubin 1979). Rubin details how these architectural follies were used by franchising businesses in the mid-twentieth century and have led to the association of urban commercial architecture with ugliness and a lack of cultural or aesthetic value. At the time of Rubin’s writing in 1979, a gradual shift took place among cultural tastemakers regarding the early large-scale commercial architectural follies that

remained worthy examples of urban art that deserved preservation. Although Lucy predates the Pan-Pacific Exposition by 34 years, as a similar type of large-scale architectural folly, she was designed as a commercial venture and cycled through various uses throughout her history. Like the architecture Rubin describes in her article (and unlike many structures that are classified as having heritage value), for a large portion of her lifetime Lucy has been regarded as a folly that was tasteless and a rather garish eyesore. Although she has been legitimized by her nomination to the National Register of Historic Places and her status as America's first roadside attraction, she is still regarded by some people as holding little cultural value. Throughout her lifetime, Lucy has survived due to the novelty she brings to whatever commercial venture is operating out of her, and she can perhaps be seen as a spiritual predecessor to the constructions Rubin describes.

American Vernacular Zoomorphic Architecture

Dell Upton's 1981 article, "Ordinary Buildings: A Bibliographical Essay on American Vernacular Architecture," discusses the evolution of the study of vernacular architecture in the United States from a scholarly perspective. Vernacular architecture is distinct from other forms of architecture as it is not scholarly; indeed, it has evolved from only encompassing traditional rural domestic and agricultural buildings to encompassing many other types of buildings designed by individuals who did not seek to create great monuments. Upton's article seeks to summarize the work conducted in the study of vernacular architecture and to provide resources for those who wish to evaluate vernacular architecture.

At first glance, Lucy may not seem to be an example of vernacular architecture because she certainly does not fall under the umbrella of folk architecture typically denoted by that label. However, Upton specifically mentions Coney Island and Las Vegas as particular locations that have been studied for their vernacular architecture, and Lucy as a structure falls in line well with the architecture in these locations. Architecture in these locations emphasizes large scale whimsical forms rather than pure architectural forms. Another example of how Lucy can fall under the definition of vernacular architecture can be found in Vinegar's 2008 book, *I am a Monument: On Learning from Las Vegas*. This work by Vinegar draws on ideas contained in Robert Venturi, Denise Scott Brown, and Steven Izenour's book, *Learning from Las Vegas*, which is one of the defining texts of postmodernism in architecture. Of particular use in the study of Lucy the Elephant is Vinegar's (2008) chapter, "Of Ducks, Decorated Sheds and Other Minds." The duck in this instance refers to the Long Island Duckling first discussed by Peter Blake (1964) in *God's Own Junkyard* and referenced in Barbara Rubin's 1979 article entitled "Aesthetic Ideology and Urban Design." In this article, Rubin describes the Duckling archetype in architecture and refers to a building in which the building itself is a symbol, whereas a decorated shed is a conventional structure of architecture with applied symbols. This notion is further conceptually expanded by defining the Duckling building as "building-becoming-sculpture." Although Vinegar is primarily interested in a discussion of architectural theory, his reevaluation of Venturi, Scott Brown, and Izenour's (2012) concept of the Duck and the Decorated shed is useful in evaluating Lucy as a structure of architecture. Unlike the Long Island Duckling, Lucy's form does not precisely follow her function; however, the work by Venturi, Scott Brown, and Izenour

(2012) is still useful for outlining the most relevant and specific debate about the category ‘building-becoming-sculpture,’ to which Lucy most definitively belongs. In *Learning from Las Vegas*, the authors suggest that the symbolism of the ordinary (i.e., the decorated shed) is more appropriate for the modern environment (of the mid 1970s) rather than the symbolism of the heroic, as represented by the duck (Venturi, Scott Brown, and Izenour 2012). For Venturi, Scott Brown, and Izenour (2012), the decorated shed is ordinary, whereas the duck serves as a heroic form, one that is worthy of veneration and study.

Roadside Attractions

In the nineteenth century, the only possible means of transport that allowed an individual to travel faster than foot or horseback was the train. The train opened countless new opportunities and locations of travel for the average person. In fact, Lucy the Elephant was a product of the expansion of rail. However, travelers by railroad were forced to sacrifice the freedom of other forms of travel for the advantage in speed that the railroad offered. The invention of the automobile allowed travelers to regain the freedom they enjoyed before the advent of trains, at a much greater speed, as such, the age of the automobile was born. Passengers traveling by this method were afforded a view much like a movie through their windshield of the passing environment, and architecture soon changed and became more commercialized to account for these new customers traveling at higher speeds (Liebs 1985b). Soon, roadside merchants turned to architecture that would attract drivers through their bizarre nature. The roots of these structures could be traced back to the middle ages, but it was not until the late nineteenth century that

viewing audiences began to associate these large-scale structures with recreation, tourism, and spending money (Liebs 1985a).

Authors have written a fair amount about the U.S. preoccupation with kitschy buildings and oversized roadside attractions. In particular, Karal Ann Marling, Liz Harrison, and Bruce White's (2000) *Colossus of Roads: Myth and Symbol along the American Highway* presents a detailed examination of the roadside attraction in the United States. They primarily focus on the proliferation of kitsch large-scale roadside statues in the U.S. Midwest, particularly in Minnesota. They draw a valuable conclusion by identifying the key features of the roadside colossus, one of which is its scale, intended to draw the viewer in and give them pause. In a way, the colossus is primarily meant to startle the viewer into recognition of it, to provide something so incongruous and unexpected that an unaware visitor has no choice but to wonder at it, and perhaps even to investigate further. This wonderment is primarily due to the unexpected size of the object, which is so out of scale with what one would expect in everyday life that it provides astonishment to the viewer. What could be more appropriately novel than donuts sold out of a larger-than-life donut? Marling, Harrison, and White (2000) further discuss the idea of vernacular kitsch roadside architecture, where architectural features are created by copying existing recognizable designs and ideas rather than creating new ones. In particular, Marling, Harrison, and White (2000) highlight the Statue of Liberty and Mount Rushmore as U.S. monuments that rely on scale to produce an impression on the viewer. They then briefly identify Lucy and the other two elephantine colossi as examples of this phenomenon, as well (Marling, Harrison, and White 2000).

Roadside attractions have only recently been recognized as having heritage value by institutions such as the National Register of Historic Places. A particular turning point in the recognition of roadside heritage as being worthy of saving was the first addition of a diner to the National Register of Historic Places. This discussion was spurred on by historians' concerns that a great deal of roadside architecture was being lost to time due to its relatively ephemeral nature, and resulted in the first diner being added to the list within 40 years of its creation, rather than the usual required 50-year wait. In other words, these preservationists turned to heritage as a way to protect diners as a material trace of the past that required saving (Gutman 2000). Parallels exist between this movement by diner enthusiasts and the actions undertaken by preservationists hoping to save Lucy, which occurred during roughly the same time period. In both cases, passionate groups of individuals seeking to preserve a historic structure used heritage as a protection against the threatening encroachment of the advance of time. Newer work also focused on the idea of the roadside landscape as a whole as constituting heritage. Jakle and Sculle (2011, 175) advocate for moving past "kitsch and nostalgic embrace" when advocating for a hypothetical museum of roadside culture. They put forth the idea that although the historic preservation movement's efforts to preserve single buildings as roadside heritage are worthwhile, this approach does nothing to protect the overarching landscape of a stretch of roadside architecture as a whole.

Lucy has been legitimized as a structure with historic value. This is evident from her listing on the National Register of Historic Places, her inclusion in the Historic American Buildings Survey, and particularly her designation as a National Historic Landmark (Westfield Architects & Preservation Consultants 1992). To be a National

Historic Landmark, a property must not only demonstrate a certain level of historic value but also represent a level of national impact. Although properties listed on the National Register of Historic Places must demonstrate a level of historic value on a local or state scale to be given the status of a National Landmark, a property must also represent something significant with regard to U.S. History (National Parks Service, 2018). Specifically, a property must “possess exceptional value or quality in illustrating or interpreting the heritage of the United States in history, architecture, archeology, engineering and culture and that possess a high degree of integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association” (“Parks, Forests, and Public Property,” 2019). The National Parks Service also stipulates that monuments must also have significance to the broad pattern of U. S. history, represent some great idea of the American people, or represent a type specimen of a particular style of architecture among other criteria (“Parks, Forests, and Public Property,” 2019). Importantly, the National Parks Service also stipulates that under normal circumstances a property must be in its original location, which is not the case with Lucy the Elephant (“Parks, Forests and Public Property,” 2019). However, exceptions can be made for buildings whose primary significance is their architectural form, as is the case with Lucy. Lucy shares the distinction of being a National Landmark with a select group of sites in the history of the United States (National Park Service, 1971), such as Independence Hall, the U.S. Capitol Building, and the White House. Lucy the Elephant is distinct from these other heritage sites, however, in that she represents a type of architecture that is not typically seen as having merit in traditional preservation discussions.

The gift shop at Lucy's feet is filled with elephant-themed trinkets of all shapes and sizes, but the slogan on one t-shirt seems telling: #LucyisMargate. From the observation platform on her back, a water tower painted with an image of Lucy is also plainly visible (Figure 10). The final page of William McMahon's (1988) *The Story of Lucy the Elephant: One of America's Strangest Architectural Structures and National Landmarks* is splashed with a full color image of this water tower (Figure 10) taken from Lucy's back, and references Margate's appreciation of Lucy, saying "Margate City pays tribute to Lucy as its outstanding landmark in the painting of the Elephant high above the rooftops on the community's 144 ft. high water tower" (McMahon 1988, 40). Lucy is identified here as Margate's main landmark—a thing that puts Margate on the map. In fact, Lucy has been part of Margate since before there was a Margate, and the Preservation Plan identifies her as a "symbolic figure serving as a focus of civic identity in Margate City" and speculates that without Lucy Margate City might not have come to exist in the same way that it currently does (Westfield Architects & Preservation Consultants 1995, 7). The Preservation Plan also suggests that Lucy is important as she "continues to preserve the image of Margate and acts as a visible reminder of the City's origins as a seaside resort" (Westfield Architects & Preservation Consultants 1995, 7). The hue and cry that occurred during the last year when proposed changes to the zoning in the area around Lucy were as much a product of anxiety over what Lucy's fate might be if the proposed changes occurred as they were about the fear that Margate itself might be forever changed. Residents cited fears that big hotels would cast shadows over Lucy and block views of the water while also proclaiming that Margate (a primarily residential

community today) would be forever changed if the development of boutique hotels was allowed to continue (Van Embden 2018).

Lucy the Elephant is an enduring tribute to the town of Margate's growth and the efforts of preservationists to save her. No other elephant-shaped building in the world has inspired the same level of love and affection. To close this chapter, I have included a typewritten poem that accompanied Jack E. Boucher's book *Lucy the Margate Elephant* and that I believe captures the spirit that surrounds this whimsical resident of the New Jersey Shore. This poem can be found in the appendix and is entitled "For the 'Luv' of 'Lucy.'" As evidenced by this poem, Lucy is a larger than life figure, referenced as "Margate's special girl." She has a great deal of meaning to her community and has become a dedicated cause for many individuals.

Chapter 2: Lucy the Elephant as a Heritage Object

In researching the available literature on Lucy the Elephant and related projects, I have primarily focused on topics related to Lucy herself that align with my research question. These areas are discussions of heritage, discussions of place identity, and discussions relating to a community's relationship with heritage objects. I explore each throughout this literature review.

Lucy the Elephant as Heritage

Much of the scholarly work surrounding Lucy the Elephant as a structure with heritage value has been from the perspective of what author Laurajane Smith (2006) terms the Authorized Heritage Discourse. This concept is also further explored in Trinidad Rico's book *Constructing Destruction: Heritage Narratives in the Tsunami City* (Rico 2017). The Authorized Heritage Discourse is, in brief, how people speak about heritage in the Western world. This way of communicating prioritizes notions of national identity and prioritizes expert knowledge and supposedly innate qualities of heritage (Smith 2006). When evaluating Lucy's value, the focus has been on her value as a material object and a structure with seemingly inherent value. In particular, the arguments made for her preservation have all stemmed from her unique nature and as a representation of things gone by that must be protected. In contrast, no one ever mentions what the community that formed around Lucy actually saw in her as worth preserving beyond the particularly unique nature of her physical structure.

In defining heritage, Harvey (2001) points to several definitions, including Larkham's (1995, 85) definition that heritage is "all things to all people." Harvey (2001,

324) argues that heritage is “produced by people according to their contemporary concerns and experiences,” one that “must be allowed a wider scope than simply being portrayed as something that people do to fill their free time, or as a hostage to the whims of leisure fashion.” Heritage is always constructed along the lines of its present circumstances, and its values are shaped by its temporality. “Heritage, as practiced today, is portrayed as a product of the wider social, cultural, political and economic transitions that have occurred during the later twentieth century” (Harvey 2001, 325).

With this said, it should be noted that Smith (2006) works from the idea that heritage is not a thing, a site, or a place, but rather is a series of events and processes that occur around those places in the construction of value and engagement with our understanding of the present. In other words, heritage is similar to history in that it creates an idea of belonging or continuity, but it is novel in the sense that it allows an individual or group to create a concrete sense of material reality. Smith (2006) identifies heritage as a process rather than a set “thing” that involves individuals making and remaking memories and meanings of things we label heritage. This notion is in direct contrast to the traditional view of heritage as a set attribute of a particular object or place that is monumental or aesthetically rare or impressive and often seen as important for national identity. However, Smith uses the work of Billig (1995) when noting that ordinary vernacular objects and everyday activities can often be powerful reminders of national and regional identity. Smith suggests that the process Billig identifies can also work on a sub-national level to create a sense of identity in common social, ethnic, cultural, and geographical communities. Smith (2006, 50) argues that “heritage can give

temporal and material authority to the construction of identities,” especially if a heritage management authority has legitimized it.

Heritage as Historic Places

The National Register of Historic Places was established in 1966 by the National Historic Preservation act. In the twentieth century, a widespread preservation movement occurred in which the government in several Western nations took increasing interest in heritage, followed by an increasing bureaucratization of heritage (Harrison 2013). In addition, in a trend in professionalization of heritage, in which heritage increasingly moved from being a process enacted by amateurs and hobbyists into the hands of experts. This transition distanced heritage from the everyday lives of many people. Rodney Harrison (2013) discussed this process in detail in the book, *Heritage: Critical Approaches*. Harrison (2013) also discusses the concept of heritage inherently at-risk from the beginning of the heritage movement in the nineteenth century. From the creation of national parks to the preservation of structures like Mount Vernon, groups of preservationists sought to save heritage structures from their eventual loss or demolition, also related to the ongoing process of industrialization that occurred throughout the nineteenth century. This process also came about as a result of nostalgia for a seemingly “better” past that was distant from the present, a nostalgia that led to the “heritage boom” of the late twentieth century. In short, Harrison argues that processes that began in the 1970s led to heritage becoming an issue of broader public concern. These processes include rapid technological advancement, deindustrialization, widespread commercialization, a shift in the tourist gaze, and reconfigurations in civic government (Harrison 2013). This evolution led to an increasing amount of *heritagization*, a term

coined by Kevin Walsh (as noted by Harrison 2013, 25). Heritagization is a process by which objects and things are transformed from useful objects in everyday life to something meant to be protected and preserved for display and exhibition. Heritagization led to an accelerated trend of increased visitation to heritage sites, showing that the general public's interest in heritage increased during this time, along with an increase in the number of heritage-related lobby and conservation-campaign groups and the overall number of places and exhibits (i.e., heritage sites) in general. Harrison (2013) argues that these shifts are a result of late modernity and associated shifts in political, social, and economic practices, the rapid devaluation of former industrial sites and towns, and an overall increase in a sense of vulnerability or risk for these spaces and other sites of heritage. Shifts in travel and tourism also placed new importance on heritage, so much so that "the 'experience' of heritage [became] an important way in which redundant objects, places and practices could be marketed for commercial gain" (Harrison 2013, 83).

Juan Rivero's "Saving" Coney Island: The Construction of Heritage Value

In a study of preservation efforts directed toward Coney Island, author Juan Rivero (2017) theorized that members of Coney Island's Save Coney Island group were drawn together by a shared preservationist goal. Although their shared heritage values related to a community (i.e., that of the activist group), their preservationist interests were what drew them together rather than a preexisting community-generating preservationist sentiment (Rivero 2017). One of the targets of preservation at Coney Island was the Thunderbolt roller coaster. Similar to the preservation situation of Lucy the Elephant, the roller coaster was owned and operated by one family for most of its existence but was eventually abandoned and began to deteriorate. After a minor league baseball stadium

was built next door by New York mayor Rudy Giuliani, the roller coaster was demolished by Giuliani under claim that it was a public hazard. Rivero was in contact with an individual (referenced as Jane) who arrived hours after the demolition of the Thunderbolt and removed the final remaining light bulb from its sign as a personal memento. Rivero sets out to detail the disconnection between Jane and Giuliani in which one of them saw the Thunderbolt rollercoaster as a valuable piece of history while others saw it as something to be done away with (Rivero 2017).

Jane and the other individuals have joined together to create a group called Save Coney Island, much like the Save Lucy Committee. This group formed with individuals from diverse backgrounds who were motivated by a desire to see Coney Island preserved in light of plans by the City of New York to redevelop Coney Island. Rivero (2017, 67) notes,

these individuals may or may not have been representative of all those who opposed the City's plan on similar grounds—their very involvement in rallies and public hearings suggests an unusual level of both commitment to this cause and available time during regular working hours.

Like Lucy the Elephant and her surrounding region of Atlantic City, Coney Island was a popular seaside amusement destination in the early twentieth century, but in the postwar era, the area's fortunes declined significantly. Beginning in the early twenty-first century, the New York City Economic Development Corporation began plans to rezone the Coney Island amusement park area, including most notably the addition of four high-rise hotels in the district. The Save Coney Island advocates believed that the loss of amusements and addition of high-rise hotels would fundamentally change the character of Coney Island. However, the activists had a wide ranging and somewhat undefined set of preservationist goals, as they wanted to preserve the Astroland amusement part, a

group of largely abandoned buildings along Surf Avenue and a group of businesses along the boardwalk. Ultimately, the city approved rezoning in 2009, and soon after, most of the businesses and Astroland closed or would soon close. Few of these establishments attracted attention for their historic significance until they were threatened, as is often the case in preservationist causes. The New York Landmarks Preservation Commission recognized the significance of the Coney Island district as a whole, but argued that the buildings had little architectural integrity (Rivero 2017).

As Kitson and McHugh (2015) note, heritage as a negotiation of collective identity can impact heritage value. Specifically, the encounters and engagements that first generate the intensity of feeling associated with heritage sites may very well originate as a function of collective identity found in community (Rivero 2017, Waterton and Watson 2014). One might anticipate as much, because heritage always has to belong to someone. But who is to say which community is best to identify a site's heritage value? An example can be found in Coney Island community groups that were invested in the heritage of Coney Island. These groups, which organized around the goal of saving the structures in the area, included regular visitors to Coney Island, business owners, and others in the area. Despite a lack of formal membership, and thus the line between sympathizers with the cause and actual members was blurry at best, eventually the group coalesced into a more defined membership, formed from individuals who were dedicated to the preservation of Coney Island. Although the group's agenda suggested it was formed of individuals with a deep or longstanding personal connection to Coney Island, most members had not visited Coney Island as children and were only somewhat familiar with the neighborhood's history. Nevertheless, local history was important to them and

they were invested in the idea of a “quintessential” Coney Island experience that centered on authenticity, liminality, and diversity (Rivero 2017). It is also interesting to note that the group formed as a community as a response to the threatened demolition of Coney Island rather than existing previously. As Rivero (2017, 71) puts it,

If it was the shared preservationist demands that led to the group’s formation, then the existence of the group cannot itself explain those demands. In other words, if SCI’s heritage claims and the basis of the group’s identity were one and the same, they cannot shed light on one another.

When Rivero (2017) refers to authenticity, he is suggesting the idea of an unmediated, genuine experience that individuals expected from Coney Island. The experience derived from the behavior of those at Coney Island, as well as the artistic expression and processes with longstanding associations to the place that conveyed something true about it. This idea can be interpreted as a direct contrast to the idea of authenticity that is often put forth in heritage practices that typically relate authenticity as the originality of building materials and other associated qualities. At Coney Island, advocates seemed to sense a form of authentic self-expression through presentation, performance, artwork or signage, and amusement rides. Rather than pointing to the historic value of these things (such as signage), advocates saw them as having a personal touch from the artist or designer, as if an expression that the maker genuinely cared. When speaking of aesthetic appeal, signs of wear on older objects were seen as a positive record of the passage of time and organic evidence of the evolution of the neighborhood around them. Longstanding local practices were also seen as having an air of authenticity by virtue of their having become local traditions and their connections with the neighborhood’s past.

Rivero (2017, 74) refers to his concept of diversity as “a variety of people doing a variety of things.” This notion ties to the idea of authenticity, but was more about the wide range of experiences and encounters that one could have there rather than the “realness” of those encounters. Advocates pointed to the wide variety of attractions and buildings in the area as well as the diversity of characters and life experiences that could be found at Coney Island.

Finally, Rivero (2017) suggests that liminality is an escape from everyday life that can be found at Coney Island, a sense that it is spatially and temporally separate from the rest of New York. Advocates viewed it as a place to break free of daily lives and routines. At the outermost edge of the city, it represents a physical and a symbolic threshold for its visitors.

Rivero claims that the Coney Island preservationist sentiments come from a desire to protect an “urban experience” rather than a material artifact. Rather than a sense of collective identity, the diverse group of individuals that joined together to “save” Coney Island linked heritage value to the three dimensions Rivero outlined (i.e., authenticity, diversity, and liminality). Rather than focusing on the physical structures of Coney Island, advocates pointed to historical attributes of the neighborhood that made it unique and, in their opinion, worth saving. Individuals saw the experience of Coney Island as perpetuating in an unbroken line to the present day and this experience was what they were seeking to preserve rather than just the physical structures. In detailing the preservationist sentiments around Coney Island, Rivero rightfully notes that they arise out of common experiences that draw people together rather than an existing community that leveraged these concerns, which can also apply to Lucy the Elephant.

Social Mobilization and Heritage Preservation

Work by Rabrenovic (1996) outlines how neighborhoods can be used as a base for social mobilization and the shared interests of individuals that reside in the same place with respect to heritage preservation. Rabrenovic (1996) notes how neighborhood associations often form around land-use-change issues in their area. The issues that become prominent in these groups are often the ones that impact their most vocal members. Although Rabrenovic's work focuses on neighborhoods in Albany and Schenectady, both of which are larger scale and more broadly focused than the Save Lucy Committee in Margate City, valuable information continues to be gained by examining work similar to that of Rabrenovic concerning how community groups operate and create shared goals based on place-specific issues.

Just as heritage practice has seen an increased presence in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries, due to increased anxieties stemming from a shift between a preindustrialist and postindustrialist society in the West (Harrison 2013), local history groups have similarly seen an increase in popularity. This shift is likely due to people seeking a sense of belonging and place-rootedness, particularly among aging populations who tend to be more interested in the past. The discourse and practices of these groups often follows the traditional view of heritage as an unchanged and immutable part of a structure or place itself, or as mentioned earlier, what Smith (2006) terms the Authorized Heritage Discourse. However, Rebecca Wheeler (2017) argues that the nostalgia that local preservationist groups often invoke can be rooted in a need for a sense of belonging in a world unchanged by time but is often balanced by an interest among members in local stewardship and action. When individuals care about the past of a place and thus

have a sense of ownership of it, they also wish for some modernizing improvements to the place in the present as a form of preserving continuity. Although nostalgia is often seen as a negative force in these types of interactions, Wheeler (2017) recontextualizes it as a force that can be positive and productive. Wheeler cautions that when looking at the productive aspects of nostalgia, it is vital for communities to remember who the production benefits, because while it can be beneficial to dwell on the past, it should not be at the expense of those who are marginalized in the present (Wheeler 2017).

Ultimately Wheeler argues that the past can be useful in creating a sense of place identity that can be leveraged into social mobilization, as the past can link people to those who existed in the same place before them and contributes to a sense of belonging. However, this sentiment can also be dangerous because it can lead to an essentialization of the place, in which the past represents what the place fundamentally is and must continue to be, thereby inhibiting the growth of positive social mobilization.

Wheeler (2017) ties these local history groups (in her case located in rural England) to the movement of heritage as a whole, explaining that the heritage movement and local history groups tend to use preservation as a guise to prevent real estate developments based on more individual concerns. Wheeler (2017, 470) also suggests that rural middle-class residents have a particularly fiscal and emotional interest in protecting the idea of a “rural idyll.” Wheeler then draws together several previous studies that argue for a more productive form of nostalgia, and suggests they collectively propose a form of nostalgia that can be a “fluid, plural and active social force through which narratives of loss can be politically mobilized to shape present and future social behavior,” a point that is relevant to Lucy the Elephant as well.

Heritage, the Notion of Community, and Community Engagement

According to Laurajane Smith and Emma Waterton (2010), heritage experts and professionals use the idea of community as a means of managing and making sense of who people consider to be others. Community is a term used very heavily in academic literature, but is widely criticized (Smith and Waterton 2010) because the idea of community creates differences between the (mostly) White middle classes and everyone else and is a convenience that creates artificial homogeneity. The idea of community has also made its way into public policy discussions. In public policy, as in academic discourse, people hold nostalgia for the idea of community, seen in some ways as a cure for any number of social issues. In the heritage sector, community-based projects often are done *for* communities rather than *with* them (Waterton and Smith 2010). Although there are many examples of projects that do an excellent job of incorporating community participation (Atalay, Clauss, McGuire, and Welch 2016), this is not always the case. Community-based projects also often involve white middle classes and presuppose certain skills and identities.

Smith and Waterton (2010) go on to conceptualize the idea of community as an ongoing process rather than a noun or thing. As Brint (2001, 6) puts it, “communities are not very community like.” Communities are run through divergent interests, energies, and motivations, and are also the processes through which people form and create identities and bind themselves to others and to locations. The authors argue that the particular notion of community that the heritage sector creates can lead to “misrecognition, discrimination, lowered self-esteem and lack of parity in any engagement with heritage” (Smith and Waterton 2010, 9), as the heritage sector creates a dichotomy where heritage

professionals and White middle classes are devoid of community and “others” everyone else.

Smith and Waterton (2010) cite several works by Nancy Fraser, who creates the idea of a “status model” as a counter-response to the existing “identity model” of community. In the heritage sector, communities are seen as existing around a particular set of issues or characteristics (geographically defined, urban or rural, traditional, working class, ethnic, etc.). This status model leads to what Smith and Waterton (2010) argue is a discourse around community that has allowed White middle and upper classes to be granted greater participation in heritage management and are thus overrepresented in the national heritage experience.

Authors Groote and Haartsen (2008) discuss the idea of heritage as communication and the motivations behind creating heritage narratives. Groote and Haartsen identify that participating agents create heritage narratives for specific purposes, often to attract tourists, preserve cultural values, and reinforce place identities. Although their discussion is focused on larger scale identities than something like a “local identity,” the ideas might still be appropriate to a discussion of the city of Margate’s heritage. Groote and Haartsen (2008) also discuss how creating and maintaining regional identities often involves measures of conservation and heritage management.

Although the definition of community can be and has been debated in the literature (see Harrison 2013), community engagement has become a popular talking point for a variety of organizations that typically use heritage projects as a way to “engage the community.” Community engagement can develop in response to grass roots campaigning from community groups from an identified need or area of importance, as is

the case with Lucy the Elephant and the Save Lucy committee. As Perkin (2010) states, this can allow community engagement to potentially move toward creating meaningful ongoing collaborations between organizations and local communities. However, community-engagement projects focused on heritage preservation can also be contentious because of politics, differing agendas, and differing visions for the future. For example, Perkin's (2010) work details the effort of the Bendigo Art Gallery to partner with several local heritage groups and the local council to support local heritage groups, encourage community engagement, and raise the status and accessibility of the collections of these local heritage groups. Other examples can be found in countries such as the United Kingdom and Australia, where groups have been pushed to demonstrate economic success through "blunt measurements such as visitor numbers" (Perkin 2010, 108). Thus, the ongoing drive to maintain visitor numbers (and therefore funding) is the continual goal of museum community engagement rather than creating programming that advances a museum's role in society. This can lead to a patronizing top-down approach in which the museum or heritage institution is tasked with determining what programming and narratives communities "need."

Community heritage projects typically involve a variety of groups, viewpoints, goals, and individuals. Issues can arise between small heritage groups and larger heritage groups working on the same project. Competitiveness and disagreements can also arise as a result of personality clashes, community rivalries, and favoritism in funding. Politics in groups can also lead to decreased member involvement as a result of competing motivations and agendas among group members (Perkin 2010). Perkin (2010) also notes

that community groups can bring a great deal of good to their projects, particularly through their passion and commitment to their chosen cause.

The Politics of Heritage and Community Engagement

As Crooke (2010, 27) notes, “Community and heritage are not only malleable concepts; they are also highly emotive, closely guarded and are used to stake control and define authority.” An example of this can be found in Northern Ireland in the United Kingdom, where community engagement with the museum and heritage sector is contested and often politically charged. Community and heritage are popular ideas despite their somewhat vague and indefinable nature. As Crooke (2010) notes, the various “understandings of community will refer to the building blocks of heritage as a means to define a community by its customs, language, history, artifacts and monuments. These representations of identity are thus selected to become the heritage of nations and communities” (Crooke 2010, 17). The United Kingdom and elsewhere have seen an increasing movement to involve local individuals in the creation of museum collections. Integrating a museum with its local community can be a vital way to legitimize the existence of a museum in the first place. Yet,

despite community being for many a grass-roots concept, community policy, as it has developed in the UK, is largely a top-down approach. The community policy that has guided museum practice in recent years is that shaped by government priorities. Government agencies would, of course, argue that their policy is based on research within and amongst the identified groups, but still the agendas have been captured and packaged within the context of contemporary political agendas and has filtered through to the museum sector via the chain of cultural administration. (Crooke 2010, 18)

The constructed concept of community is constantly shifting and difficult to define, with cultural markers frequently used as defining factors. Community is a label that is applied

to simplify, and typically people prefer to avoid being labeled according to their communities and prefer to “move freely amongst multiple situations” (Crooke 2010, 19).

In Northern Ireland, community is a negotiated process, according to Dominic Bryan (as cited in Crooke 2010) that arises from “fear of the other.” This is an important point with respect to the politics of community, in that fear of the other can sometimes be used to legitimize power structures that can be dangerous to other members of the community. People can also use culture or community to justify behavior or manage responses as a means of control. This occurs particularly in political contexts, but can also be present in the actions of community groups and other agencies that use the language of community.

Crooke (2010) details a Community History Programme, created by bringing together the funding agency, the museum, and participants. Each stakeholder has particular priorities and motivations as well as authority and means of governance. Program participants were motivated by an interest in local history but also were interested in developing new social interactions, meeting new people, and learning through the experience. At Mid-Antrim Museum and many other museums in the UK and elsewhere, the top-level concern is in developing the museum’s collection and daily operation. Social value is secondary to what might be considered more “fundamental” concerns. As Crooke (2010) points out, in the worst case, public programs and other community-engagement activities can be used to gain funding or shallowly prove a commitment to local engagement. It remains an open question as to whether museums should concern themselves with community outreach, as doing so may help or hurt community efforts.

Another example of the intertwining of politics, heritage preservation, and community can be found in Norway. As Mydland and Grahm (2012, 564) note,

preservation of cultural heritage is often carried out by voluntary workers in local communities, especially when the objects are not of major national interest, not listed, and not preserved by heritage authorities. The motivation for local preservation, and for spending time and money on objects belonging to the community, is not primarily to preserve cultural heritage objects for the future, but to establish and maintain common social institutions in the local society, institutions of vital importance to the local identity.

What this viewpoint suggests is that people in Norway ascribe social value to heritage buildings in their local community, especially through the Norwegian Heritage Fund and the Norwegian Heritage Management agency, evidenced by applications to the Norwegian Heritage Fund.

Mydland and Grahm (2012) use a concept of community heritage that opposes the traditional view of cultural heritage held by official heritage institutions. In the traditional view, objects and places are assigned value and significance based on categories of international, national, regional, local, and personal significance. These “grades” are based on formal recognition, value assessments, and other means. Local heritage is often considered the least important in these categorizations. Particularly in this case, Norwegian local communities have limited authority in the preservation of cultural heritage. The Authorized Heritage Discourse argued by Smith and Waterton (2010) often fails to facilitate discourse between professionals and local people about how they understand heritage.

In Norway, stakeholders evaluate heritage based on representativeness, continuum and environments, authenticity, physical condition, identity, and symbolic values. Adding to these main values, assessments are of architectural and artistic quality. Mydland and

Grahn (2012) point out the distinction between quality and value, which they identify as primarily a material attribute. Similar to the Authorized Heritage Discourse in other places, such as in the United States, the Norwegian Authorized Heritage Discourse is primarily focused on material heritage and supposed inherent values. Social value is a secondary concern, at best, and is often forgotten altogether.

Most applications detailed by Mydland and Grahn (2012) came from nonprofit organizations. These organizations vary in purpose from local neighborhood groups to historical societies and organizations established to prevent demolition of schoolhouses (which is very similar to the establishment of the Save Lucy Committee). Unlike private owners, these nonprofit organizations focus on different aspects of the preservation process. They are often interested in the process of restoration and often plan for the building to provide an activity that is beneficial for the local community or may encourage new visitors to the community. In these projects, the preservation process is a secondary goal to gathering the people of the community at a common meeting place: the restored building. The social aspect of the preservation process is also an important aspect of these applications, in which voluntary community work is often highlighted as an important part of the restoration process. In many cases, people had little interest in museums, schools, and education; instead, the desire to preserve the buildings stemmed from a wish to preserve a shared history and bring people together.

The heritage fund (according to Mydland and Grahn 2012) does support the idea of moving an old schoolhouse to prevent demolition. Heritage institutions typically view heritage sites as being immutably tied to the location in which they exist. Without the original location of the building, institutions see the site as losing some of its supposedly

intrinsic “heritage value” because it is no longer “authentic.” In response to two applications with plans to move a building to prevent its demolition, the Heritage Fund argued “it is not the purpose of the Fund to move old houses away from their original location” and “relocation of old buildings is normally in conflict with antiquarian interests” (as cited in Mydland and Grahn 2012, 578). This is relevant to the current investigation because Lucy the Elephant was moved to prevent demolition. Does this present a difference between the Norwegian heritage system and the U.S. heritage system, or is it simply because Lucy was moved before the applications for her listing as a historic building were submitted or even considered? This is an open question and one worthy of investigation.

Summary

In a review of the available literature detailed above, I have attempted to detail the heritage discussions that are currently taking place, as well as the processes that have led to the institutionalized heritage processes that affected Lucy the Elephant. I have also attempted to discuss the motivations of community groups in similar historic preservation efforts. These groups have a wide variety of motivations, which is why I have also attempted to incorporate some discussion of whether community is a valid factor in the formation of groups focused on history and historic preservation. In addition, I have attempted to provide some background into the architectural and academic study of structures that are similar to Lucy the Elephant by detailing the history of roadside architecture and zoomorphic architecture.

Chapter 3: Methodology

Research Question

Because Lucy the Elephant is a unique site with relation to subjects such as roadside architecture, kitsch architecture, and zoomorphic architecture, and is a site that has been seen as one of heritage, she requires a multifaceted methodological approach that can address her significance as a physical object and as part of the Margate community. To achieve this aim, the central research question for this project was to discover what specific ascribed characteristics or ascribed traits Lucy the Elephant possesses that have allowed her to survive over a century when other similar architectural features have been torn down. In other words, why has Lucy the Elephant survived to the present day and become such a valued fixture to the community of Margate while other similar attractions have not managed to withstand the test of time?

My position as an outsider to the town and to the New Jersey Shore in general allows me to look at Lucy, Margate, and the Atlantic City area with a different perspective from that of researchers who might have grown up in Lucy's shadow. My understanding of the literature on Lucy will also allow me to address Lucy as a unique piece of zoomorphic architecture. As detailed in the literature review and introduction, Lucy the Elephant is a multifaceted heritage site that has connections to community building through heritage practices, zoomorphic architecture, roadside architecture, and kitsch architecture. She has been listed onto the National Register of Historic Places by formal review, and, thus, is seen by preservation experts and community stakeholders as a valuable piece of heritage to the community.

Methodological Approach

To better understand what specific ascribed characteristics or traits Lucy the Elephant possesses that have allowed her to survive over a century, I used a qualitative methodological approach to collect interview data and relevant documents as a way to obtain information that will answer my research question. Specifically, the type of exploratory qualitative methodological approach used was a single instrumental case study. A single instrumental case study design allows a researcher to examine a question using a variety of lenses and data sources to discover different aspects of the situation at hand (Baxter and Jack 2008). When discussing case studies, Creswell and Poth (2018) cite Stake (2006) and Thomas (2015) to argue that a case study is primarily defined by the boundaries placed around the case to be studied. In particular, a qualitative case study is useful to obtain a comprehensive understanding of a case using multiple forms of qualitative data such as interviews, documents, observations, and audiovisual data (Creswell and Poth 2018). A case study is also useful for drawing an in-depth description and analysis of the case at hand (Creswell and Poth 2018). As Creswell and Poth (2018, 46) state, “we use qualitative research because quantitative measures and the statistical analyses simply do not fit the problem.”

This particular type of case study leverages the case study approach to facilitate a greater understanding of a single or particular instance of a phenomenon (Baxter and Jack 2008). A researcher uses a single instrumental case study to draw conclusions about a single issue or research question (Creswell and Poth 2018). A single instrumental case study involves the examination of a single bounded case through a research question, although the study can involve the comparison between multiple units. What is vital is

that the specific cases themselves are less important than the value they offer in comparison to each other (Thomas 2015). Lucy the Elephant works quite well as the focus of a single instrumental case study because she is a completely unique structure. Although I would like to incorporate discussions of the other two elephant buildings—The Light of Asia and the Elephantine Colossus—that existed as zoomorphic architecture at the turn of the twentieth century into this project, their contribution is limited to being compared to Lucy the Elephant rather than serving as their own separate cases.

This is the most appropriate methodological choice for this research project because answering the research question required the consideration of multiple viewpoints and opinions to come to a general conclusion. The research question is exploratory, which means that it cannot be answered by measured numerical variables. I obtained and analyzed archival documents and interview data concerning the history of the preservation of Lucy the Elephant in the context of a single instrumental case study framework.

Data Collection

For my data-collection techniques, I combined semistructured interviews and document analyses. Interviews provided valuable information about the thoughts and opinions of individuals currently involved with Lucy the Elephant and gave a diverse perspective on what Lucy's preservation means for her heritage stakeholders. My interview respondents consisted of two architects involved with the preservation of Lucy at various times, two current employees of Lucy the Elephant (one of whom was a life-long resident in Margate and another who was much newer to the area), and two individuals who were involved in the efforts to preserve Lucy the Elephant in the 1970s.

I collected a total of six semistructured interviews, as this is the amount that Guest, Bunce, and Johnson (2006) determined will lead to data saturation. As Guest, Bunce, and Johnson (2006) note, data saturation is the point in data collection and analysis at which new information provides no further information beyond what has already been gathered. In other words, data saturation is the point where answers to questions asked in a qualitative case study interview become redundant, and little new information is gathered from further case study interviews.

Fusch and Ness (2015), like Guest, Bunce, and Johnson (2005), note that researchers achieve data saturation in interviewing when enough information is present, the data being gathered through interviews becomes redundant, and the coding of interview data yields replication of information. They suggest that a small study will reach data saturation much more quickly than a large study. They also suggest that interviewers should ask all respondents the same questions, as this will ensure consistent data. As such, the interview questions I asked in a semi-structured format:

1. What do you feel Lucy means to the town of Margate as a whole?
2. Do you feel a personal connection to Lucy? If so, how or why?
3. Did something draw you to visit/work with her?
4. How do you feel about the efforts to preserve Lucy that have occurred?
5. Do you see any negatives to the presence of Lucy in Margate?
6. Should Lucy have been preserved? If so, why, and if not why not?
7. What are some future problems that might threaten Lucy in the future, both physically/structurally and socially?

8. As a national landmark with claim to being America's first roadside attraction, do you feel that Lucy represents something about America as a whole?
9. Tell me the most interesting thing you know about Lucy!
10. Tell me about the maintenance or upkeep that goes on with Lucy?
11. What are some costs associated with her care?
12. Do you think Lucy will always remain in the town of Margate? Do you think she will survive for another 137 years?
13. Do you think Lucy would have survived as long as she did if she wasn't located in Margate? (follow-up questions) Would she have been successful if she were in a location that wasn't on a beach/shore? What about her location near Atlantic City?
14. How do you think Lucy's draw as an attraction has changed from when she was built until today?
15. What do you think changed in the early twentieth century for Lucy to no longer be cared for? (follow-up question) Do you think this could possibly occur again in the future?

I also performed a detailed analysis of the available historical documentary evidence about Lucy the Elephant that has been produced throughout her existence. The documents I examined were in the form of newspaper articles, architectural plans, patents, images, advertisements, or other available documentary evidence in the public domain. In total, I analyzed about 75 distinct documents located in the Westfield Consultant's archive and also were in the public domain. I also visited the Margate Historical Society, where there is a smaller but very informative sample of documents,

artifacts and photos. Although the historical society is not primarily focused on Lucy, because of her importance to the town she is featured very prominently in both their documents and in their museum.

Data Analysis

To analyze my interview and document data, I began by performing a content analysis on the interview data. I used the process outlined in the 2017 article, “A Hands on Guide to Content Analysis,” by Christien Erlingsson and Petra Brysiewicz. I began by reading and rereading my interview transcripts to discern what the interview participants are saying. Erlingsson and Brysiewicz suggest the researcher attempt to form an idea of what the interview data is telling them as a whole, and then noting these first impressions for further reflection.

Erlingsson and Brysiewicz (2017) then recommend dividing the interview text into smaller meaning units and condensing these points further by labeling each idea with a code, and then categorizing the codes. Researchers intend these codes to encapsulate the central ideas of what the interviewees are expressing. The coding process included identifying topics relevant to the research question as well as other interesting topics that might have emerged. Throughout the process, as I created new codes, I rechecked prior interviews to ensure I applied the codes equally. Finally, I combined any duplicate codes or conceptually similar codes into a single code to ensure concise coding.

Once I had coded the interview data, I categorized the codes into overarching themes. Erlingsson and Brysiewicz (2017) suggest it is vital to keep the research question in mind when reviewing interview data. They also mention that the researcher should be careful to keep in mind personal biases when analyzing interview data. Following the

creation of a list of codes, I created broader themes by looking for similar ideas in the codes and grouping them.

The documents I gathered provided context for the historical situations and past attitudes toward Lucy the Elephant. I selected the documents by combing through Westfield Consultant's archive related to Lucy the Elephant and identifying the documents related to her history rather than the physical aspects of her preservation. Although I did not follow a standardized procedure with these documents, like I did with the interview data (since the documentary evidence took many forms and this complicated standardized analysis), I still attempted to categorize the documentary evidence I found and organized the documents by their main ideas. As with the interviews, I coded documents for their main concepts, noting historical features of Lucy, controversies that were not be discussed in interviews, and any repairs and issues.

In preparation for this project, I contacted a number of individuals with connections to Lucy the Elephant through the use of convenience sampling. As Neuman (2011) notes, convenience sampling occurs when a researcher obtains participants in a study who are easy to locate, easy to access, and have knowledge of the topic at hand. My discussions with these individuals yielded a great deal of feedback regarding my aims in this project and different avenues of further research. I also performed multiple on-site visits to Lucy the Elephant, including one in which I met with Rich Helfant, the Executive Director and CEO of Lucy the Elephant and Jeremy Bingaman, the Director of Education and COO. They provided me with information about the preservation tasks they will be undertaking in the coming year. I also contacted and spoke to Margaret Westfield, the architect who created the preservation plan in the 1990s for Lucy the

Elephant, and she graciously agreed to allow me to go through her files. These were an incredibly valuable resource of historical documentary evidence about Lucy. My other interview subjects were John Milner and Michael Mills. John Milner led the original restoration of Lucy in 1970 and Michael Mills worked on the project as a draftsman. Finally, I spoke to Ed Carpenter, who was one of the original Margate community members who formed the Save Lucy Committee. These six individuals provided the interview data that I eventually analyzed. This project was deemed exempt from institutional review board review; thus, I name the individuals associated with Lucy the Elephant in all documents reviewed, as well as the six individuals interviewed, in this thesis.

Chapter 4: Results

The documentary evidence surrounding Lucy's history and preservation and the interview data from respondents largely focused on the same specific themes and topics. These included funding, discussions of the restoration and preservation campaigns that took place around Lucy, local politics and community support surrounding Lucy, and the actions of specific individuals surrounding Lucy. Thus, the purpose of this project was to discover why Lucy the Elephant has survived to the present day and become such a valued fixture to the community of Margate while other similar attractions have not managed to withstand the test of time. I discuss the data gathered to address the purpose of the project below.

Descriptions of Lucy: A Unique Treasure with Childhood Memories

Two of the main words that emerged in the interview data and the documents to describe Lucy the Elephant were "unique" and "unusual." Participants frequently used these terms as justification for why she should be preserved. In drawing on this language, individuals were attempting to justify preservation because they see Lucy as distinct and thus irreplaceable. Many things are unique or unusual; uniqueness is not, in and of itself, justification for preserving something. In fact, most heritage sites are typically unusual, yet uniqueness is rarely cited as the primary reason for preserving, say, the Liberty Bell or the Statue of Liberty (Callahan 1999).

People tended to cite her being unusual or unique as their first descriptor of her and seem to use this as justification for preserving her. Other descriptors included describing her as a "treasure." Being a treasure was a frequent sentiment, and she was

also often justified as being irreplaceable. Other language people drew on points to Lucy as “beloved” and often tied her to childhood memories or children in general. Participants used vague words like treasure much more often than more specific language that describes why Lucy might be considered a treasure in architectural or historic value. Instead, the conversation seems to be framed around the idea of her affective value to the people who visit her and some who live in the community around her. People also seem to think of Lucy as an individual and ascribe human characteristics to her. For example, she is predominantly referenced as “she” rather than “it.” In particular, Josephine Harron and Sophia Gertzen, two of Lucy’s caretakers who have since died, considered themselves Lucy’s “mom” and thought of her as a member of their family. Table 1 provides a summary of the types of words often used in the interviews and documentary evidence to describe Lucy.

Table 1: Descriptors used in documentary evidence and interviews to depict Lucy the Elephant.

| Descriptor | Number of times used in documentary evidence | Number of individuals who used each descriptor during interviews |
|------------------------------------|--|--|
| Positive Memories/People love Lucy | 8 | 4 |
| Children/Childhood | 12 | 3 |
| Treasure/Valuable | 7 | 2 |
| Unique/Unusual | 21 | 4 |
| Beloved | 16 | 4 |
| Whimsical/Fun | 4 | 2 |
| Strange | 3 | 2 |
| Humanizes Lucy | 5 | 3 |

Importance to the City of Margate, Atlantic City, and New Jersey

Although Lucy is widely seen as the defining attraction of the town of Margate by interview respondents and town residents, as shown in the documentary evidence, and was cited as being the largest noncasino attraction in the wider Atlantic City area, the Margate city government and Lucy's representatives since the 1970s have continually battled. Specifically, several interview respondents suggested many homes in Margate are second homes for residents, and it is widely known in the area and the state of New Jersey that the town maintains a summer beach town destination status. However, in contrast to many other New Jersey shore areas, Margate has no hotels and few vacation rentals. One interview respondent (Rich Helfant, the executive director of Lucy the Elephant) suggested that local ordinances are meant to prevent short-term tourists from staying in Margate. These ordinances prohibit short-term rentals and mean that the only viable option for staying in the town is third party sites like AirBNB (Downbeach Buzz 2018). Rich suggests this is almost elitist. As a result, most tourists who visit Margate likely stay in the Atlantic City area. The townspeople discussed the idea of allowing hotels and other short-term rentals in a new hotel zone near Lucy, but outcry from citizens caused the idea to be tabled, and as of now Margate remains an almost entirely residential community (Downbeach Buzz 2018).

When crossing into the town of Margate from Ventnor City along Atlantic Avenue, a sign located on the right side of the road reads "Margate: A Residential Community by the Sea Welcomes You" (Figure 11). This sign suggests that Margate is proud of its residential status and perhaps sees it as a way to differentiate itself from the other more tourist-friendly towns along the New Jersey shore. As a quotation from James

Creaghe, Jr., in the *Los Angeles Times* (Hillinger 1985, 7) notes, “Lucy’s popularity never ceases to amaze me. ... When someone asks where you’re from and you tell them Margate, they always ask you about the Elephant.”

However, Lucy is by far the largest attraction in Margate and is the largest noncasino attraction in the Atlantic City area. Because of this, she brings a great deal of attention to the town, even to the point that she is the main thing many people associate with the city. She has also drawn celebrities to the town of Margate, including a visit by one U.S. president (Woodrow Wilson) and a letter of commendation from another (Gerald Ford). She has appeared in international publications and television programs, further extending the name recognition of the town of Margate around the world. According to a conversation I had with one of the respondents (Jeremy Bingaman), five percent of Lucy’s website traffic comes from outside the United States, which is notable. Yet many citizens of Margate seem to have little interest in the main attraction that their town has to offer. As Rich Helfant noted in our interview,

Unfortunately, and it’s not unique to Margate, but anytime you have something like Lucy in your own backyard, you tend to take it for granted. And I use the examples of, people in Philadelphia don’t rally around the Liberty Bell unless they have company, then all of a sudden, oh, let’s go see it. But otherwise it’s just there, you take it for granted. Same thing with New York City and the Statue of Liberty. People here tend to just, Lucy’s here, they take it for granted. They certainly don’t support her financially.

Lucy’s largest visitor base comes from people living in the nearest major cities and heavily populated areas: Philadelphia, New York, Washington DC, Baltimore, and northern New Jersey.

Although Lucy brings a great deal of attention to the community of Margate, the town politicians have largely taken an indifferent or somewhat hostile stance toward

Lucy and attempts to restore her. One main obstacle she faced was the expiry of the lease for the land on which the elephant sits, in December of this year. Although the Save Lucy Committee owns the structure, the city leases the parkland on which she sits to the Save Lucy Committee for her to sit on. The Save Lucy Committee had been working to extend the lease for six years, and eventually came to an agreement on a 20-year lease (Franklin 2019). Although the lack of a permanent lease obviously created uncertainty, it also endangered her for funding in the near term because most grants for funding require at least a 15-year lease, whereas Lucy's had less than a year remaining. Without the stability that a long-term lease affords, the committee had difficulty obtaining funding for the ongoing improvements needed. Although the new lease helps alleviate this problem, the conflict exemplifies the disagreements that have existed between the Save Lucy Committee and the city of Margate since the committee was founded. As one of the interviewees (Ed Carpenter) noted,

We started a group of volunteers called the Margate Civic Association, and we never got along well with the powers that be there in Margate. ... The fact that the structure has survived and is still used according to its original design is important because she continues to preserve the image of Margate and act as a visible reminder of the city's origins as a seaside resort.

A contentious history between Lucy and the City of Margate persists. Although Margate is happy to accept the recognition that having a National Historic Landmark brings, the city governance has historically resisted contributing much financial assistance to Lucy's upkeep, going back to when she was first slated for demolition. Outside of a few instances of monetary support such as a \$105,000 bond in the 1990s, the City of Margate has maintained that Lucy's upkeep is the financial responsibility of the Save Lucy Committee. As Mayor Michael Becker, noted, "emotionally there's great caring. ...

Legally I'm not sure we can lend them the money" (McKelvey 2011). The land that Lucy sits on is also valuable beachfront property and in her deteriorated state, a sizeable number of individuals believed she would depress property values in the area. This has led to continued public battles whenever the Save Lucy Committee required assistance from the city. Another problem is a personality conflict between the members of the Margate city government and the President of the Save Lucy Committee, Rich Helfant. Although frequently presented in the media as the main reason for the conflict between Lucy and the city, disagreement existed long before Helfant joined the team over the finances of preserving the elephant. Some residents also have been equally hostile toward Lucy, particularly opposing the idea of the city using taxes to provide for Lucy's upkeep. One battle involved a disagreement over Lucy's utilities. One citizen interviewed at the time noted, "If we're giving out stipends for utilities, I could use one" (Pritchard 2006, A1). The city refused to continue to contribute to Lucy's utility bills as they had in the past without the Save Lucy Committee giving them some control over the elephant.

Since 1970, when Lucy was taken over by the Save Lucy Committee, a great deal of restoration work has been performed on her (Westfield Architects & Preservation Consultants 1992). First, she was moved a block down Atlantic Avenue to her new location. To make this move, the Save Lucy Committee had to raise \$9,000 for a local house-moving firm to prepare for the move and \$15,000 for a new foundation at the new site. Although the committee's fundraising efforts were successful, they were still \$10,000 short until an anonymous donor cosigned a personal note with Josephine Harron and Sylvia Carpenter to pay for the remainder (Boucher 1970). On the day of the move, The Atlantic Beach Corporation filed a legal injunction to prevent the moving of the

elephant until after the 30-day deadline had passed, saying that Lucy would deflate the value of the property they owned next to her new site. The legal injunction was overturned and she was moved (Triefeldt 1996). The city of Margate placed all responsibility on the Save Lucy Committee for the success of the move: if the elephant fell apart, they would be responsible for the cleanup and demolition. The move was difficult but she successfully made it to her new home and work began on repairing the damage to her exterior that had occurred from years of neglect. This was accomplished with a large amount of funds raised, several federal and state grants, and local business sponsorships. They also received a generous donation during this time of a fire-suppression system from Irénée du Pont, Jr. who also took a tour through Lucy and expressed his support for the renovations (Figure 12).

In the 1990s, work was finally able to progress on restoring the interior of Lucy, as well as valuable work to repair her howdah, which has been replaced multiple times and work to fix an imbalance in the moisture cycle in the interior that was causing Lucy's skin to rot (Westfield Architects & Preservation Consultants 1995). After restoring her interior, she was able to operate tours through the interior and exterior. Some damage occurred to her exterior due to Hurricane Sandy (The Save Lucy Committee 2012; Rich Helfant, interview March 8, 2019), a windstorm that blew down a tent and damaged her tail and the area around it (McKelvey 2011), and several lightning strikes (Parry 2011; Sokolic 2006), and an incident where the tips of her tusks were stolen.

The data also clearly showed that Lucy was a recognizable figure. She was portrayed in a comic strip (Figure 13). She has also appeared on the White House Christmas tree as the state ornament for New Jersey, at the New Jersey Governor's

Mansion, and an unofficial version of her can be seen on the mantle of a fireplace in one of the Walt Disney World resorts themed around Atlantic City and beach resorts. She also appears at the New Jersey State House in a stained-glass window and as part of a mural at Newark Liberty International Airport (Rich Helfant, interview March 8, 2019). These accolades show that Lucy has also been seen as a prominent symbol and point of pride for New Jersey, for the New Jersey shore area, and as a U.S. landmark.

One of the greatest assets that Lucy has had in the fight for her preservation is a number of dedicated volunteers. These volunteers include members of the Save Lucy Committee, such as Josephine Harron and Ed Carpenter, who dedicated a great deal of time and energy to seeing Lucy preserved, as well as the individuals who provide tours at the site. After Hurricane Sandy, which caused fairly minor damage to the site, volunteers came from as far away as Maryland to help with the cleanup and to check on Lucy to make sure she was ok (Rich Helfant, interview March 8, 2019).

Other Findings and Obstacles Lucy Faces

Much of the discussion surrounding Lucy the Elephant among the people interviewed and in historical documents focused on the struggles the caretakers of the elephant have faced to secure funding for continuing maintenance and for restoration and repairs. This is largely a result of Lucy's highly deteriorated state in the mid-twentieth century and the resulting campaigns to raise money to move her and subsequently restore the exterior and interior over the course of about two decades. Not only has Lucy required repairs related to the damage that occurred as a result of deterioration, but she has also suffered a number of incidents that caused further damage, such as repeated lightning strikes, a party tent becoming airborne and causing damage to her tail, and

vandals stealing the tips of her tusks. Additionally, her seaside location causes accelerated deterioration, meaning essential maintenance such as repainting the entire structure must be performed at an accelerated rate (i.e., painting every three years when the paint should last 10 under normal conditions; Rich Helfant, interview March 8, 2019; Margaret Westfield, interview February 18, 2019).

When raising money for the project, the Save Lucy Committee and others involved in the project largely used donations from community members and businesses to match grants from state and federal governments, in addition to the revenue raised by operating a nearby refreshment stand and giving tours of Lucy. However, the documents analyzed and the people interviewed all spoke to how none of these revenue sources are reliable. Organizations are only willing to donate so much money, the Save Lucy Committee must apply for grants regularly and those grants are often not awarded, some charity benefits fail to raise money (such as a charity concert that failed to break even), and some summers do not draw as many tourists as others, due to variations in weather and other factors.

In evaluating the documentary evidence and interview responses, it is clear that funding is the primary concern around Lucy, and the lack of funding affects the programming around her as well. At one time, ongoing discussion addressed the lack of a disability accessible space for visitors because the only access to the building involves climbing a narrow spiral staircase into her interior “belly” space and then up another narrow flight of stairs onto her back. Although several newspapers (Rosenberg 2002) put forward the idea that an elevator could be added between her hind legs, the committee never considered that option. Instead, committee members created plans for a completely

new visitor center next to the elephant that would include a space where disabled visitors could view a video tour of her interior spaces (Margaret Westfield, interview February 18, 2019). This space would also offer a location for the display of objects related to Lucy and the New Jersey shore as a whole that were once displayed in her interior space but were removed as part of the renovation process. This was in large part because there was no way to keep the objects in an adequately climate-controlled space in her interior. Also, the display cases were not in keeping with her new historically reproduced interior. Although the renovation of Lucy's interior was largely well received, at least one guest thought the removal of objects from Lucy's interior was a serious mistake. As the visitor noted in an email to the Save Lucy Committee,

I was seriously disappointed that you removed all of the artifacts from within her! ... What a waste of interesting materials to be stored where no one can see them. ... As an attraction she has been ruined. She may be historically correct, but few people care about that stuff. People want to see her story, not her beautiful hardwood floors. (email to Save Lucy Committee, July 10, 2000)

The plans for a new visitors center were unable to be carried out due to a lack of funding (Margaret Westfield, interview February 18, 2019). Some artifacts remain displayed in Lucy's interior, limited to artifacts that can be stored in a non-climate-controlled space without being damaged; because of the limited space, the collection is small.

Lucy is an interesting building from a preservation perspective for many reasons, but one particular point of interest is that the building itself is landmarked whereas the site she sits on is not. Because she was moved in the past, her historic status is no longer tied to her particular location but instead to the structure itself. The only requirement is that she must remain in a seaside location, because that is her "natural" environment.

Over time, there have been occasional mentions of moving her to a new location, either in the Atlantic City area or further away. The creation of a new 20-year lease as of July 2019 has made this an unlikely possibility (Franklin 2019).

Summary of Findings

After reviewing the documentary evidence and interview responses, it is clear that the discussion around Lucy focuses on several themes: the feelings that individuals have toward Lucy and their descriptions of her, her importance to the City of Margate, Atlantic City, and the New Jersey shore area, and the obstacles she has faced in the past, particularly in funding. Some specific language around her related to her being unique or unusual, and a particular focus emerged in relating her to childhood memories while also tying her to the childhood memories of the next generation. She was also often described as a treasure or treated as if she was a person. These descriptions are interesting as they are often how people ascribe value to her and provide a reason she should be preserved. When discussing her ties to Margate, a great deal of focus is on her value to the town and the town's appreciation and disinterest in her.

The evidence does suggest that Lucy brings a great deal of recognition and attention to the town of Margate and is the town's largest attraction. However, the town has taken an oppositional role to her and refuses to give her any support, particularly financially, unless they are given partial control over her, which the Save Lucy Committee opposes. This impasse led to difficulty around the extension of Lucy's lease, which was under contention for six years. Finally, a great deal of other information emerged in the documentary and interview data. This information paints a picture of important events and struggles in Lucy's past, including the work that the Save Lucy

Committee did to obtain funding and the repairs and damage that occurred leading up to the present day.

Although the largest projects undertaken were moving her in 1970 and then undertaking exterior and interior restoration, including work to rebalance the moisture cycle in her interior, she has also been damaged by lightning three times and was affected by flooding in Hurricane Sandy. Other damage has occurred due to less natural causes such as having her tusks stolen. Even beyond these occurrences she requires extensive routine maintenance due to her seaside location and must regularly have her floors replaced as the sand on peoples feet wears them down (Rich Helfant, interview March 8, 2019). Lucy is also repainted every three years rather than every ten due to the seaside location. One of the largest new projects she requires in the near future will be stripping the paint from her exterior that has built up over the years and providing her with a fresh coat of paint. These maintenance concerns have also affected her programming, as the majority of the budget goes to her upkeep and repairs (Rich Helfant, interview March 8, 2019).

Chapter 5: Discussion

Lucy's story is significant because the history of her preservation has largely been one in which community members and nonheritage professionals organized and spearheaded the project to restore her. Although highly qualified professionals such as preservation architect Margaret Westfield are very involved in the preservation process, local individuals who were retired seniors with no preservation background started the Save Lucy Committee. The current executive director of Lucy, Rich Helfant, became involved with her as part of a school fundraiser for her and had an extensive childhood history with her. This process unfolded in direct contrast to the top-down heritage approach in which heritage professionals determine the programming and pieces of heritage that should be saved and advise local communities about what they should be doing with their heritage.

Returning to Smith's (2006) idea that heritage is not a thing, a site, or a place, but rather is a series of events and processes that occur around those places in the construction of value and engagement with our understanding of the present, in this case, the data support the line of argument that Lucy's history of preservation is less important as a process of restoring a physical structure. Rather, of importance was the process of community-making around Lucy. Lucy is a symbol of Margate and a place with which people from outside of Margate associate fond memories.

Perhaps, these memories and associations are the source of the importance people seem to place on Lucy as a symbol of childhood memories. As established in interviews and documentary data, individuals in Margate who grew up with Lucy have memories associated with her, as well as placing value on her as a tangible representation of those

childhood memories. People are invested in preserving her and providing future generations with the opportunity to engage with her.

Other individuals living in Margate who may not have personal memories of this sort instead identify her as a somewhat gaudy eyesore that could become a drain on taxpayers while providing no value to the town except name recognition. The interview data and document analysis suggests that in Margate, many homeowners are not looking for a large attraction in the backyard of their summer home; instead, they are content with the beach and perhaps a few restaurants; they only take advantage of Lucy if they have guests visiting from out of town. In sum, the interviewee and document data suggest that many residents do not support Lucy's preservation because they do not place value on her existence in Margate, and they do not have positive memories associating her with either the town of Margate or their childhoods there. In contrast, out-of-town tourists also place value on Lucy because she provides a unique experience that they cannot have anywhere else.

Some stories that involved Lucy with childhood memories emerging in the data included sneaking into her before she was restored or shooting arrows at her. These are fairly mundane events, but they demonstrate that Lucy is an important part of the fabric of her community, particularly for younger generations. In fact, one interviewee mentioned that the moniker, Lucy, is a generic term for an elephant among children in the area (Rich Helfant, interview March 8, 2019).

I think it is also notable that Lucy's original use was as a marketing device. Although many heritage attractions, as they exist today, have been converted into tourist destinations, she is somewhat rare in that attracting visitors has been her primary purpose

throughout her 138-year existence. Because of this, and because of her easily recognizable shape, she is uniquely suited to be a symbol or to represent something beyond herself. Not only does this make it easy for individuals in the Margate area to view her as a representation of their town, but it also means she can be used as a recognizable symbol. Similar to how the Liberty Bell or the Statue of Liberty's iconic shapes make them identifiable as representations of their respective cities and of the United States as a whole, Lucy's shape is well suited to be reproduced on t-Shirts, as Christmas ornaments, souvenirs, and in many other distinctive forms (Figure 14). These representations make her recognizable and allow the Save Lucy Committee to use her in their marketing easily, but it also makes her a distinctive symbol for the town of Margate as a whole. For example, Lucy's image appears on a poster encouraging concerned local citizens to vote on the issue of bar hours (Figure 15).

Perhaps here, her uniqueness provides justification for her preservation, making her distinct from almost every other historic attraction in the world.

Project Limitations

This project had several limitations that caused the availability of data to be somewhat restricted. First, many individuals involved in the early stages of the project to move and restore Lucy have died. This is understandable, as it has been nearly 50 years since the movement to save Lucy began. Because I was able to obtain archival footage of several of the members of the Save Lucy Committee speaking about Lucy, as well as a wealth of documentary evidence to document her preservation history, I was able to use this documentary data to capture some of the history that was lost due to people passing away. I also had the chance to speak to Ed Carpenter, one of the founding members of the

Save Lucy Committee. Most of my interview data came from individuals who were involved later in the process of preserving her. I stress that these interviews were no less valuable, but simply that they had a later perspective on the Lucy project than some of the earlier members might have provided. Future researchers on the topic of Lucy might benefit by keeping these points in mind and framing their research efforts to occur during her peak summer months, and particularly attending a summer event like her “birthday party” held every year on July 20th.

Along these same lines, although the documents I received from Lucy’s current preservation architect, Margaret Westfield, as part of the Westfield Consultant’s archive were invaluable, and I received a great deal of information from the Margate Historical Society, given the benefit of more time I would have attempted to find other sources of documents to further expand the information that was readily available to me. Future researchers might wish to cast a wider net when searching for historical knowledge that is currently extremely difficult to locate, such as an answer concerning why the Gertzen family chose to name a male elephant Lucy. Little information is available about the other two elephants constructed that were similar to Lucy, which is knowledge that would be worth pursuing in a more expansive project.

Implications for Future Research

Future researchers have a wealth of topics to explore about Lucy the Elephant that can be drawn from the current efforts. First, it might be interesting to examine Lucy as an example of a monument that could be affected by climate change in the future. This was a topic that was briefly touched on during the interview process that could be a valuable avenue for future researchers to explore. Although Lucy is somewhat protected from

storms such as hurricanes due to her aerodynamic shape, her lifted structure, and her location on a high plot of land, her beachside location means she may eventually have to contend with future problems such as rising sea levels. Lucy would be unlikely to face major damage unless water levels reached her interior space six stories above ground, a feat that would likely also obliterate the entire town of Margate (Rich Helfant, interview March 8, 2019). Coastal erosion due to climate change could cause a situation in the future where she must be moved again to a location further from the shore, if sea levels rise.

One final area that could be examined further is Lucy as an example of roadside architecture and the role of train travel in bringing visitors to South Atlantic City to see Lucy. Although we know that the extension of rail from Philadelphia to Atlantic City and from Atlantic City to South Atlantic City was instrumental in her construction and formative years, researchers have conducted little work that examines how Lucy functioned as a roadside attraction in the years before the automobile, although she has been described as the earliest example of a roadside attraction that exists in the United States.

Chapter 6: Conclusion

Lucy the Elephant, a six-story wood and tin structure in the shape of an elephant, was built in 1881 by a real estate speculator in the town of South Atlantic City, now known as Margate. After operating for years as a tourist attraction, she eventually deteriorated and was set to be torn down in 1970 when a group of concerned local individuals started a campaign to save her from demolition. Nearly 50 years later, after being moved and renovated, she is a National Historic Landmark and is a celebrated example of Victorian zoomorphic architecture, as well as a valuable point of pride for the town of Margate as a whole.

I happened on this project after reading news articles about Lucy being threatened by rezoning and concerns that she might be moved again. I was intrigued by her, and after reading about her history, I was struck by how interesting and varied the history of her preservation was. In attempting to examine what Lucy means to the town of Margate and individuals around the world, I hoped to find an explanation for why this particular building means so much to so many people, and in doing so, perhaps also explain why individuals feel attached to pieces of heritage in general. My primary findings were that respondents and documentary data suggested that visitors and people involved with preserving Lucy had similar sentiments when evaluating why she was worth preserving. Although her architectural value was often discussed, particularly in formalized processes such as grant applications or national landmark nominations, the grassroots organization that has kept her running for nearly a half century has been motivated by more personal concerns such as individual memories and sentiments. Lucy is a fascinating case not only because of her unique architecture but also because of the history of individuals who have

been inspired to fight for her preservation. Future researchers would find a wealth of angles to frame a discussion around her, and more work could be done to study her history and the heritage environment surrounding her.

This case study of Lucy the Elephant centered around the strong response that Lucy has generated from her community, and my goal was to find a possible explanation for why she is so beloved and cared about as a heritage site in the Margate community and further away. She is not only notable as a piece of zoomorphic roadside architecture, but also people identify with her on a more personal level as a unique attraction that sets her town apart and has a personality of her own. In relation to the heritage field, she is a valuable example of a community coming together to save something that was once perceived as having little value and preserving it for future generations. Lucy's story and identity closely link with the town of Margate's identity, and I argue that neither would exist as they are today without the other.

Appendix

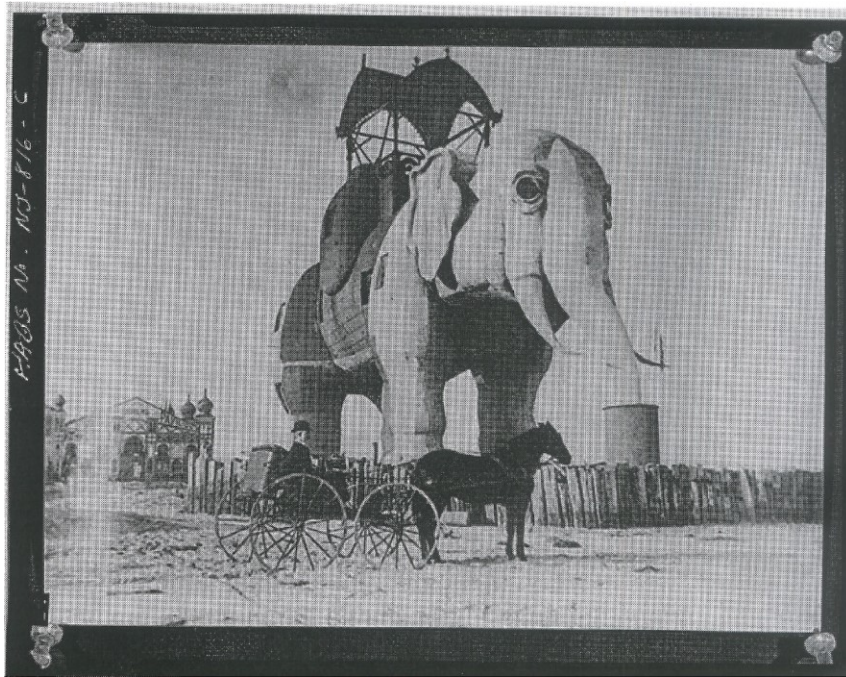


Figure 1: Lucy The Elephant as she appeared in 1895.

Photographer unknown. From Historic American Buildings Survey.



Figure 2: Modern view of Lucy the Elephant.

Photographed by Anne Hamilton, September 22, 2018.



Figure 3: Modern interior.

From Acroterion. 2019. "The interior of Lucy the Elephant, looking toward the front, Margate City, New Jersey, USA." *Wikipedia*. Updated June 5, 2019. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Lucy_the_Elephant_NJ7.jpg



Figure 4: Modern howdah.

From Hoag Levins. 2012. "View from Lucy Elephant's howdah."

<https://www.levins.com>

[/howdah.html](https://www.levins.com/howdah.html).



Figure 5: Lucy the Elephant in a deteriorated state.

Photo courtesy of the Margate Historical Society

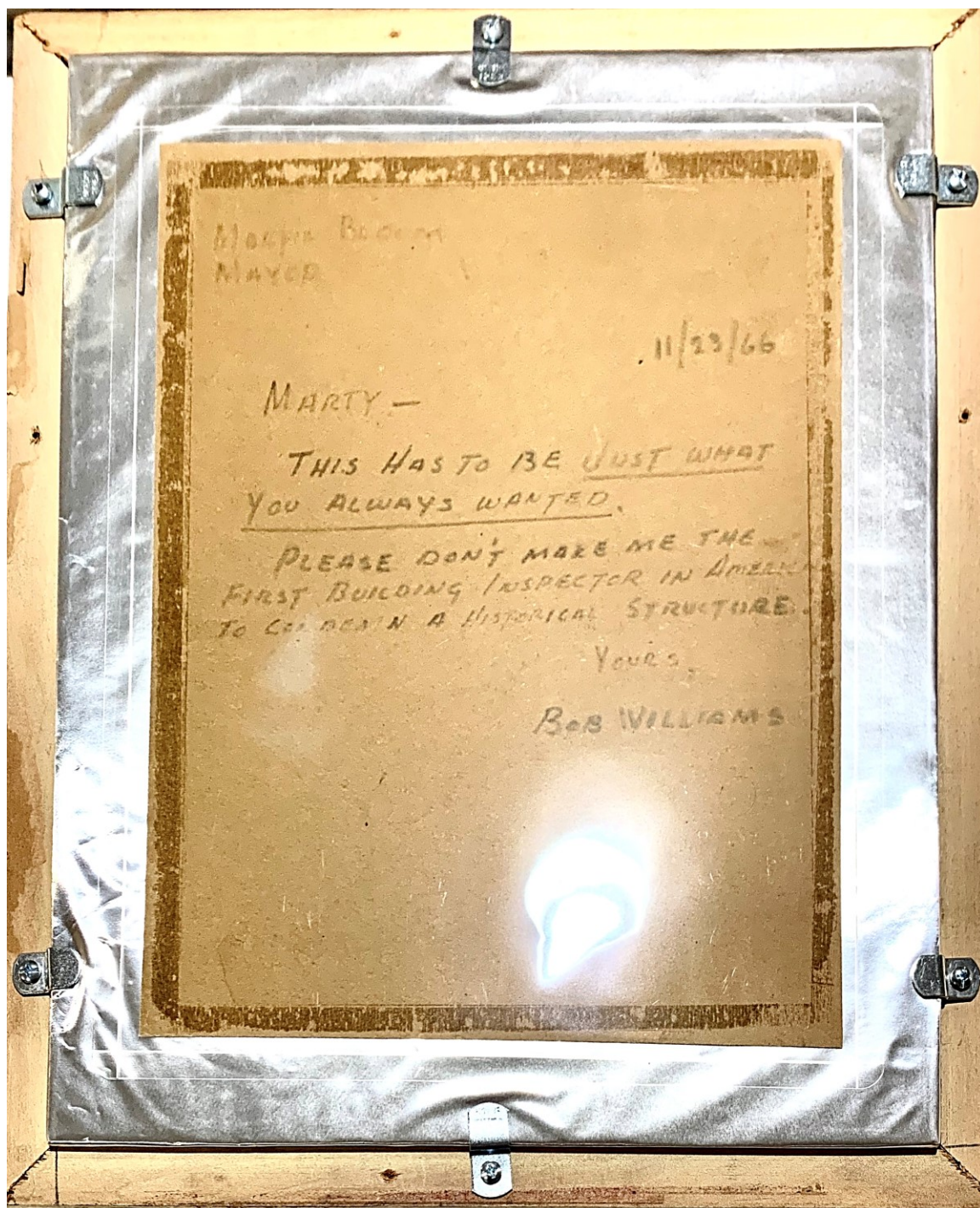


Figure 6: Gift from Margate building inspector Bob Williams to Margate Mayor Martin Bloom.

Dated 11/23/66. Courtesy of the Margate Historical Society.

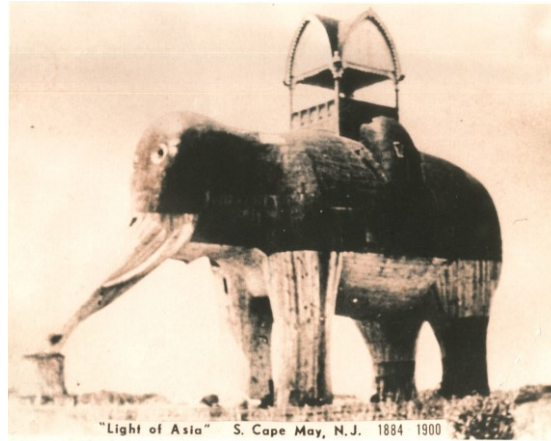


Figure 7: Light of Asia photograph.

From files of Margaret Westfield.



Figure 8: Elephantine colossus photograph.

From The Bowery Boys: New York City History. 2010. "Elephantine Colossus: Brooklyn's most unusual hotel." *The Bowery Boys: New York City History*. http://www.boweryboyshistory.com/wp-content/uploads/2010/04/8688064952_15771cbf4f_b.jpg.



Figure 9: Long Island Duck.

From Wikipedia. 2019. "Long Island Duck." https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Big_Duck.

Photograph by Mike Peel, mikepeel.net.

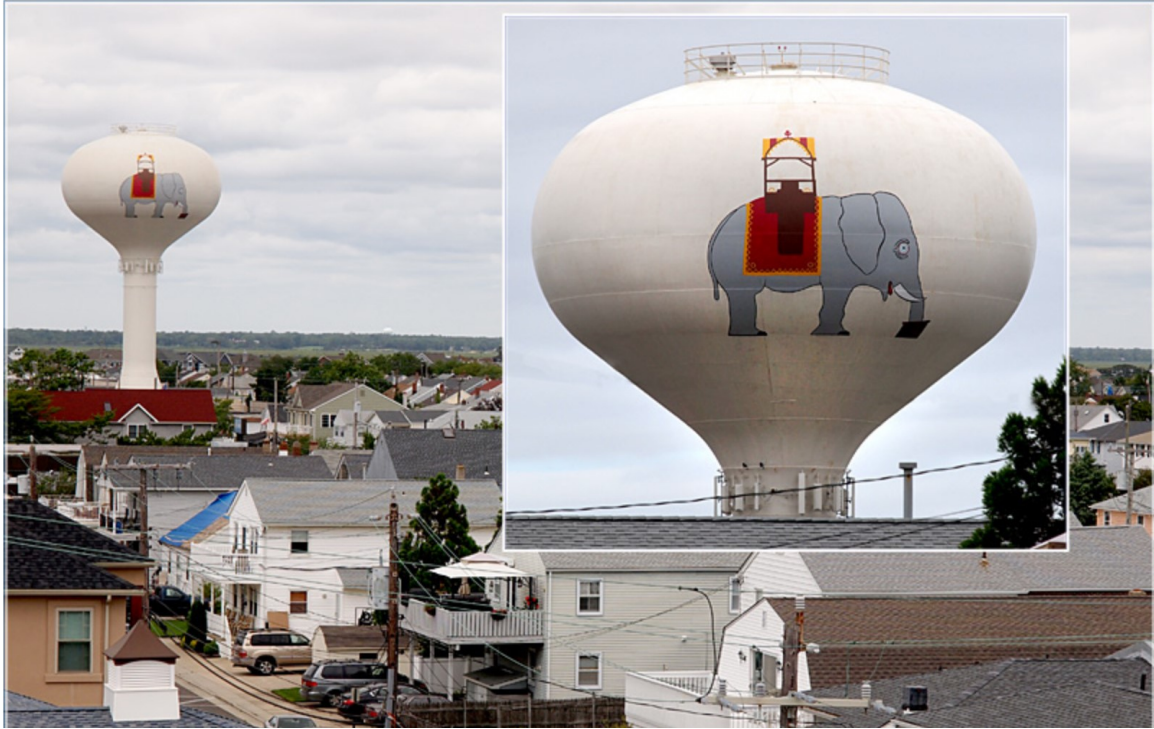


Figure 10: Margate water tower.

From Hoag Levins. 2012. "Lucy Elephant Photo Page." https://www.levins.com/lucy_pp14.html.



Figure 11: Margate Welcome Sign.

Welcome to Margate on Federicksburg Ave. in Ventnor. From Anthony Smedile.

“Welcome Signs.” *The Press of Atlantic City*.

https://www.pressofatlanticcity.com/welcome-signs/image_7af655fe-6115-59a2-aff-fae936d349a2.html.

December 7, 1976

Mrs. Josephine Harron
President
"Save Lucy Committee"
P. O. Box 3082
Margate, New Jersey 08402

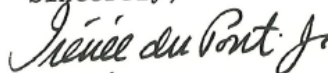
Dear Mrs. Harron:

Last June, I had the pleasure of visiting "Lucy" which is still "The Elephant Hotel" of my childhood memory. It was great to see the progress that you and your committee have made in its restoration.

Attached is my letter to Mr. DeSilets in connection with the offer I made to donate a fire protection system to the cause. I am seriously concerned that some fast-talking engineers may eucher your committee into accepting equipment that you do not want. Believe me, you must not permit people from a hundred miles away to tell you how to fix your elephant. It would be very easy to say OK to everything the architect says and one day find out that Lucy has been completely surrounded by fire apparatus.

It is only my personal opinion that the Elephant needs fire protection and I made a suggestion to Mrs. Carpenter in the form of an offer. I have communicated with the architect on the subject but I do not have a feel for how your committee has reacted to the idea. If you would like me to come to Margate to discuss the matter, I will be glad to do so.

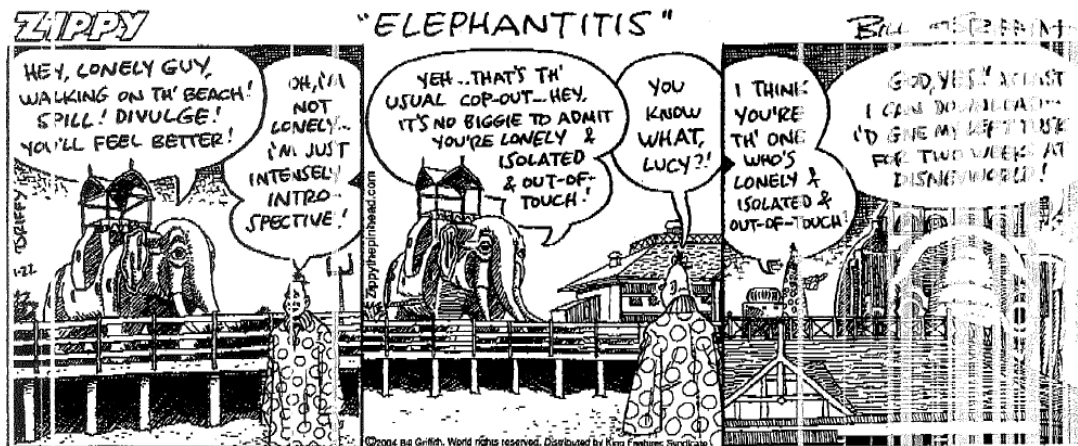
Sincerely,



Irénée du Pont, Jr.

Phone: Office (302) 774-6185
Home (302) 656-9626

Figure 12: Letter from Irénée du Pont, Jr., to the Save Lucy Committee.



11 WEIRD NJ • MAY 2005



Figure 13: Comics illustrating Lucy the Elephant.

From *Weird, NJ*, artist Bill Griffith.



Figure 14: Lucy the Elephant memorabilia.

Courtesy of the Margate Historical Society

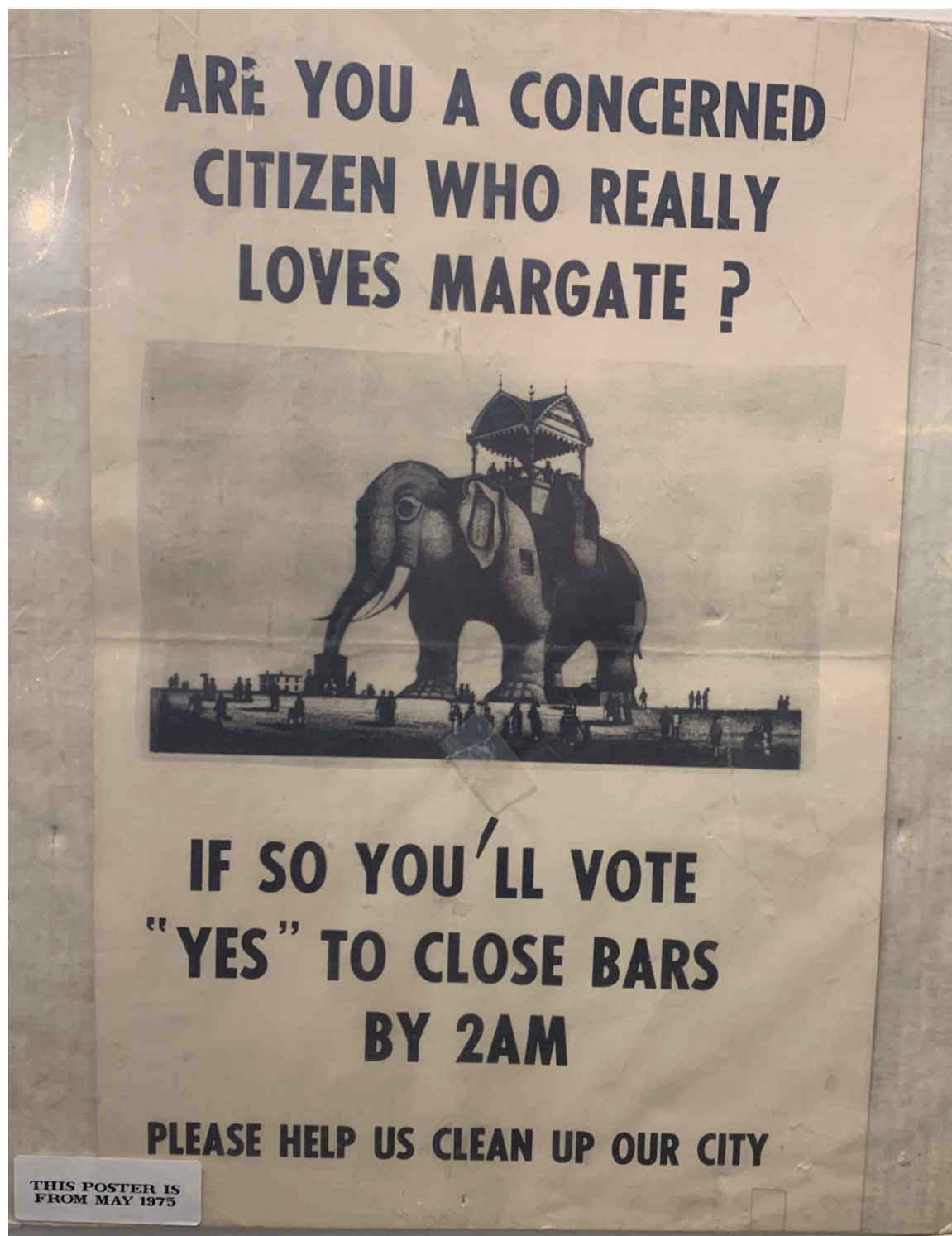


Figure 15. Poster from 1975 with Lucy the Elephant image.

Courtesy of the Margate Historical Society.

For the “Luv” of “Lucy”

Listen dear Friend
 For you're about to hear,
 A very short story
 About our “Lucy” dear
 She was built in the 19th century
 In the year eighteen eighty-one,
 By her designer, James V. Lafferty
 As a spot for lots of fun.
 She started as a real estate venture
 To help sell the seashore land,
 In South Atlantic City
 Along an undeveloped strand
 A six story elephant building
 Was certainly a sight to see,
 Folks came from almost everywhere
 To visit this curiosity.
 She's changed hands many times since then
 Become famous around the world,
 Defying the elements of her time
 And staying Margate's special girl
 Structurally she's very strong
 Amazing as it may seem,
 Hence a group of interested citizens
 Decided to save this seashore queen.

So with the help of many others
 They set about their goal,
 To make “Lucy” the glamour girl she was
 Since the years have taken their toll.
 On July 20th, 1970
 She was moved to her new park,
 At Decatur Avenue and beach
 To recapture her original spark.
 Now she's a true historic site
 In the National Registry,
 And her documentary records
 Will remain through history.
 She's the sole survivor
 Of a rare and special breed,
 Loved by her committee
 Who are plugging for her needs.
 With the help of many contributions
 Her restoration was begun,
 However building costs have risen
 And she needs more in her fund.
 So if you could help
 Make her restoration complete
 She'll thank you eternally
 For keeping her on her feet.

This poem was included in a fundraising mailer from the Save Lucy Committee. I found
 it tucked into the copy of “Lucy the Margate Elephant” by Jack Boucher located in the
 Rutgers Library Special Collections.

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