

Signs of age all over town

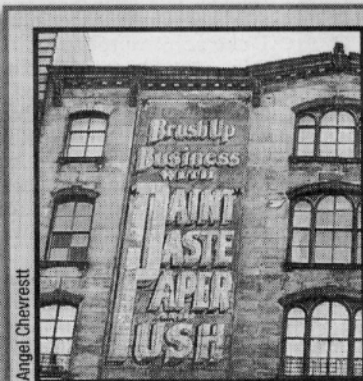
Bygone-era billboards

By HEATHER HADDON

These are not signs of the times. Despite the Big Apple's relentless march forward, ancient ads for long-shuttered businesses are still sitting pretty on city buildings.

And one city newsstand is still hawking magazines dating back years because of a broken display case.

The Post dug up some of the oldest and strangest relics of long-forgotten Gotham.



Angel Chevest

2 Brush Up
 This three-story sign has loomed over trendy TriBeCa for roughly 100 years, according to Frank Jump, a historian who chronicles old city ads.

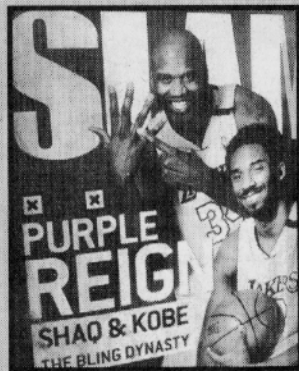
The West Broadway billboard informs spectators to "Brush Up Business With Paint, Paste, Paper, Push." City historians have been stumped by its obscure meaning, but the building's former owner just let it be.

"He didn't do anything with the building. He probably didn't want to spend the money to change it," said William Wagner, son of the building's old owner, a scissors grinder.

3 Herald Square magazine rack
 A newsstand in the Herald Square subway station at Sixth Avenue has been stuck in a perpetual loop of the year 2000. The owners can't pry open the Plexiglas window that encases the vintage publications.

"The gate is stuck. We haven't opened it for the longest time," said one of the managers.

Covers on display for more than a decade include James Van Der Beek of "Dawson's Creek" in YM magazine; Tha Eastsidaz (one-hit rap group produced by Snoop Dogg) in Yo magazine; 'N Sync and Buffy the Vampire Slayer in Teen Machine magazine; and the 2000 car-review edition of Consumer Reports.



J.C. Rice



1 Kentile Floors
 An eight-story-tall rooftop sign looming over Brooklyn — and visible for miles around — trumpets a long-closed vinyl-floor company that opened in 1898. Kentile Floors first lit up its purple neon sign on Second Avenue around 1950, and left it there after the Gowanus company went bankrupt in 1992. It no longer glows at night, but the building's new owners plan on keeping it. "It costs too much to take it down. Why bother?" said a manager for Regal Home Collections, the Manhattan owners. "We will keep it there until it falls down or it causes us problems."

J.C. Rice



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4 77 WABC
 The radio station that once featured on-air legends "Cousin Brucie" and Dan Ingram still lives on a Harlem building.

The painted sign on St. Nicholas Avenue advertises Musicradio 77, which shut down in 1982 (the station is now called NewsTalkRadio 77).

Building managers weren't sure why the blocky sign has remained there for so long. The property was landmarked in 2001, and its owners would now have to fork over extra cash to scrub it off.

5 Omega Oil
 This company once pitched its tonic on buildings all over Manhattan. For 10 cents, the elixir promised to cure sunburn, weak backs, stiff joints and sore muscles.

The ads date back to the early 20th century, with the company folding in 1924, Jump said. The other signs are long gone, but a three-story model remains on a brick building on West 147th Street.

The Brooklyn company that manages the building wasn't aware that the sign existed when asked about it, but they didn't seem to mind.



J.C. Rice