

# GREENWICH VILLAGE SOCIETY FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION ANNUAL REPORT

GREENWICH VILLAGE SOCIETY FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION

232 East 11th Street, New York, NY 10003

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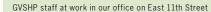
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# Greenwich Village Society for Historic Preservation

232 East 11th Street New York, NY 10003 phone: 212.475.9585 fax: 212.475.9582

www.gvshp.org

GREENWICH VILLAGE SOCIETY FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ANNUAL REPORT 2006–2007





Former Frank Stella Studio—saved from demolition, for now

# A Note from the President

# Mary Ann Arisman

The past year has been an extraordinary one for GVSHP. Just some of our accomplishments over the last twelve months have included:

- Securing landmark status for three more buildings in the Far West Village. This followed the extension of historic district protections in the area in 2006 and the downzoning of the area in 2005, both initiated by GVSHP.
- Winning landmark status for two federal-era (1790-1835) houses in Lower Manhattan and hearings on another three which GVSHP proposed for designation; this followed landmark designation of five other federal houses nominated by GVSHP in recent years.
- Stopping the demolition of a turn-of-thecentury horse-auction mart which had served as the studio of artist Frank Stella for nearly thirty years.
- Submitting a 95-page proposal for a South Village Historic District, which would be the largest historic district designated in Greenwich Village since 1969, and the first in the city to honor immigrant history.

- Gaining approval of our proposed Gansevoort Market State and National Register Historic District, covering the entire Meatpacking District.
- Helping begin the process of a sweeping rezoning of the East Village, to protect neighborhood character and prevent overdevelopment.
- Uncovering and correcting a flaw in city records which left 15% of the landmarked structures in our neighborhood without the landmark status and protections to which they are entitled.
- Establishing an expanded monitoring system to track illegal billboards and other zoning and landmarks violations to ensure they are removed or corrected.
- Expanding our children's education program to include a new curriculum focusing on immigrant history in the South Village.
- Beginning the process of updating and reviewing our extensive historic archives and oral histories, in order to maximize their usefulness as research tools and resources.

# Support Preservation: Join GVSHP

Your support makes GVSHP a more effective preservation leader. All members receive copies of the Anthemion newsletter (published twice each year), priority invitations and discounts to our many lectures and tours, and access to the Society's research sources. Contribute \$250 or more, and receive a set of Greenwich Village notecards. Contribute \$500 or more, and receive an invitation to a special event at a unique Village location.

Yes! I support the Greenwich Village Society for Historic Preservation and its preservation work:

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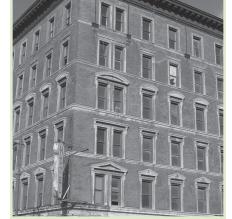
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Greenwich Village Society for Historic

O \$25 Gift Membership—Special offer for

part of GVSHP's efforts to Save the Far West Village



The long-neglected Keller Hotel was landmarked as

funds through the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation.

# IN-KIND DONORS

We also acknowledge those who have generously provided donations, services, and space in-kind: Balthazar Restaurant, The Caring Community, The Cherry Lane Theatre, Florence Prime Meat Market, Frederick Wildman and Sons, Ltd., Gourmet Garage, Alexander Kaplen, Jefferson Market Library, Judson Memorial Church, Joseph Lovett & James E. Cottrell, M.D., Murray's Cheese, Out of the Kitchen, Paula Perlis, Salviati, Shearman & Sterling, the Stephan Weiss Foundation, and Wine & Food Associates.

# Finance Committee

Katherine Schoonover, Chair Members: Mary Ann Arisman, Elizabeth Ely, Arthur Levin, Andrew Paul, Jonathan Russo, Fred Wistow, Linda Yowell, F. Anthony Zunino

Due to the organization's growing base of membership support and fundraising capacity, GVSHP has been able to expand its budget, add a new staff member, and invest in important infrastructure, while at the same time building our modest reserves in order to ensure the Society's future and ability to weather the inevitable "rainy days." For the fifth year in a row, income exceeded projections while expenditures were kept below budget. The Society has continued its long-standing policy of not embarking upon any major projects unless funding sources for them have been identified. As a result, the organization's financial strength and security has grown, while its ability to take on new projects and increase activity has also expanded.

# **GVSHP Fiscal Year 2006**

#### INCOME:

Benefit (net)	118,890
Grants	110,500
Earned Revenue	48,663
	\$469,019

# **EXPENSES:**

Programs	24,979
Personnel	227,712
undraising & Membership	4,191
Rent	16,319
Office Supplies & Expenses	22,104
elecommunications	3,156
Printing & Mailing	10,533
Accounting Fees	5,151
ayroll Fees	1,586
Other Fees	6,776
Other Operating Expenses	4,736
und Balance, Restricted	20,000
und Balance, Unrestricted	121,776
	\$469,019

- Staging our largest and most successful Annual Benefit House Tour ever.
- Hosting our first-ever fundraising dinner in honor of Jane Jacobs at Balthazar Restaurant, featuring Paul Goldberger and Calvin Trillin.
- Conducting more than a dozen educational programs, including first-ever lectures about early public housing in the East Village and the recently uncovered photography of Robert Otter.
- Forming a Junior Committee to help reach out to younger neighborhood residents, and a brokers' partnership to mobilize and work with the real estate community.
- Increasing membership by nearly 20% and membership support by nearly 30%, following more than five years of consistent expansion in both areas.
- Adding three new board members with extensive expertise in fundraising, membership development, and real estate.
- Adding a new staff position to increase the organization's capacity for research, education, advocacy, and membership building.

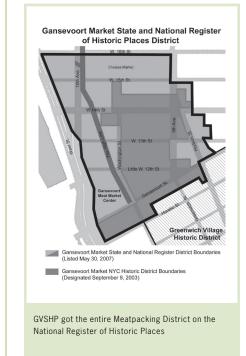
As development pressure in our neighborhoods steadily increases, the challenges we face are growing as well. But I am proud to say that GVSHP is better positioned than ever to carry out its mission of promoting the special architectural and cultural heritage of our neighborhoods and ensuring that this special heritage continues to survive and thrive for generations to come.

# **Archives Committee**

Vicki Weiner, Chair Members: Mary Ann Arisman, Martica Sawin Fitch, Nancy Langsan, Cynthia Penney, Jay Shockley, Cas Stachelberg, Judith Stonehill, George Vellonakis, Anthony Wood

GVSHP began the formal process of reviewing our Preservation Archives and Oral Histories to ensure their preservation for the future. On the recommendation of the Archives search committee, GVSHP hired an experienced archivist, Joseph Ciccone, in March 2007 to oversee a thorough assessment of the collections of photographs, papers, clippings, ephemera, and oral histories. Mr. Ciccone will determine proper storage and preservation measures, draft a

new collections policy for future acquisitions, suggest procedures for deaccessioning when appropriate, develop a database to govern control over the collections, and help improve access to the material for researchers.



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GVSHP members re-elected Trustees Penelope Bareau, Arthur Levin, Peter Mullan, Katherine Schoonover, Judith Stonehill, and Arbie Thalacker and elected three new candidates. John Bacon, Thomas Harney, and Cynthia Penney, at the 2007 Annual Meeting at the Cherry Lane Theater in June. John Bacon, Director of Planned Giving at the New York Public Library, has been an active member of the Development and Program committees for several years and has served as a volunteer for GVSHP's Annual House Tour. Thomas Harney. a GVSHP Preservation Committee member. is head of real estate at Bear Sterns. Cynthia Penney was very active in GVSHP's campaign to downzone and landmark the Far West Village. She served on the 2006 Awards Committee and the Archives Committee, and this year served as the volunteer coordinator for the Annual House Tour. Immediately following the Annual Meeting, the Trustees unanimously re-elected the following slate of officers: Mary Ann Arisman, President: Arthur Levin, Vice

President; Linda Yowell, Vice President; and Katherine Schoonover, Secretary/Treasurer.

The nominating committee, along with the entire board, would like to thank George Vellonakis for his six years of service on GVSHP's Board of Trustees. We are pleased he has agreed to continue his involvement in the Archives Committee and welcome him to the Board of Advisors.

#### **Education Committee**

Meredith Bergmann and Linda Yowell, Co-chairs Members: Mary Ann Arisman, Jane Cowan, Dana English, Lisa Feitel, Amy Hitchcoff, Anita Isola, Judith Langer, Shirley Wright

GVSHP's children's education program, *History* and *Historic Preservation*, continued to teach children across Manhattan about the diverse history and architecture of the Village. This year, almost 1,000 students participated in the program from seventeen different city schools.

Over the past year, with the help of our educator, Jane Cowan, GVSHP developed an alternative curriculum to complement our original program,



Students and teachers from the GO Project with GVSHP educator Jane Cowan at Winston Churchill park in the South Village. Photo courtesy of the GO Project

focusing on the immigrant architecture and history of the South Village. This new curriculum was offered first as a pilot program at Our Lady of Pompeii School where all 241 students in grades one through eight took part. Five other New York City schools participated in the new program and all praised its integration of the architecture of the South Village neighborhood in the study of immigration.

Last summer we once again offered our education program through the Grace Opportunity (GO) Project at Grace Church School for at-risk students from Lower East Side schools. We served over 100 first-grade students through the project in the summer of 2006.

Finally, our thanks to Mary Ann Arisman, who stepped down as chair of this committee in 2006 after serving for over seven years.

Frank, Prudential Douglas Elliman, Restaurant Florent, Roberta Golubock (Sotheby's International Realty), Stribling & Associates, Ltd.

John Bacon & Owen Rambow, Meredith & Marshall

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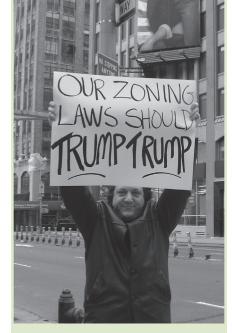
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#### GRANTS

GVSHP gratefully acknowledges the following for grants supporting our work over the last year: The Kaplen Foundation, the J.M. Kaplan Fund, and the New York State Council on the Arts.

We wish to acknowledge Manhattan Borough President Scott Stringer for securing funds through the Department of Education, City Council Speaker Christine Quinn and Councilmembers Rosie Mendez and Alan Gerson for securing funds for GVSHP through the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs and State Senator Tom Duane and Assemblymember Deborah Glick for securing



GVSHP led the anti-Trump Condo-Hotel campaign



We offer thanks to the following for their incredibly generous support over the last year:

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GVSHP also wishes to thank all our anonymous donors who have contributed so generously this year.

# 2007 BENEFIT

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Saved! 486 and 488 Greenwich Street

# **Preservation Committee**

Arbie Thalacker and F. Anthony Zunino, Co-chairs Members: Mary Ann Arisman, Penelope Bareau, Leo Blackman, Jonathan Geballe, Jo Hamilton, Thomas Harney, Regina Kellerman, Arthur Levin, Florent Morellet, Peter Mullan, Rob Rogers, Katherine Schoonover, Judith Stonehill, Linda Yowell

As always, the Preservation Committee works to ensure that our neighborhood's landmark and zoning protections are enforced and, where appropriate, extended; that valuable historic

resources in our neighborhoods are protected; and that new development is compatible in scale, character, and design to its surroundings. The past year saw significant progress in our efforts in the West Village, the Meatpacking District, the South and East Village, and Hudson Square.

At the end of 2006, GVSHP launched its

Historic South Village Preservation project, which included submission of a proposal for a 35-block, 750-building South Village Historic District (funded by Preserve NY, a grant program of the Preservation League of NY State and the NY State Council on the Arts). The South Village project is our top priority and is an enormously important undertaking for the Society in terms of efforts to honor and protect both a large and vulnerable section of our neighborhood and a previously overlooked aspect of its history and architecture. GVSHP was successful in getting 95% of the proposed historic district determined eligible for the State and National Register of Historic Places, which carries certain state and federal protections. The South Village is the largest area determined eligible for the registers in Manhattan since 2000. Additionally. GVSHP formed an advisory board consisting

of more than 40 community leaders, business and property owners, local institutions, and scholars of Italian-American history to guide the South Village preservation effort. The proposal has received strong endorsements from the National Trust for Historic Preservation, the Preservation League of NY State, the Historic Districts Council, Borough President Stringer, Congressman Nadler, State Senators Duane and Connor, Assemeblymember Glick, and City Councilmember Gerson.

In the Far West Village, following the historic downzoning of the area in 2005 and extension of historic district protections in 2006 (both of which GVSHP initiated in early 2007) three of eight additional buildings the city promised to landmark were designated—the Keller Hotel at 150 Barrow Street (at West Street), the 1839 Henry J. Wykoff House at 159 Charles Street, and the 1844 Edwin L. Brooks House at 354 West 11th Street.

South of the West Village, GVSHP led the protests against the city's approval of plans for the 45-story Trump SoHo at Spring and Varick Streets, which opens the door to similar previously-prohibited high-rise development in several parts of our neighborhood. We are now working with neighbors who are pursuing

legal options to force the city to enforce the law and prohibit this development. GVSHP is also calling on the City Planning Commission and City Council to rezone this area to prevent similarly-scaled development in the future. Nearby, GVSHP helped lead opposition to a plan by Related Companies for a massive "Vegason-the-Hudson"-style development on Pier 40; the plan was denied two key approvals this summer, and its ultimate fate remains in doubt.

In the East Village, GVSHP worked with a coalition of community groups, elected officials, and the Community Board to advance and improve a contextual rezoning plan which would impose height restrictions, limit incentives for dorm and hotel development. and preserve and create affordable housing. GVSHP has also been working to advance a community-initiated rezoning which would include the Third and Fourth Avenue corridors and the Bowery—areas of the East Village the city refused to include in the rezoning plan, Additionally, GVSHP led a campaign to save 128 East 13th Street, the city's sole surviving horse auction mart building and the former studio of artist Frank Stella. This resulted in an agreement between the city and the owner, who agreed not to demolish the building while the city considers GVSHP's

proposal to landmark it. GVSHP also joined a coalition led by Councilmember Rosie Mendez and the East Village Community Coalition in the successful fight to landmark the old PS 64/Charas Cultural Center at 9th Street and Avenue B. In addition, we supported legal efforts to block NYU's 26-story 'mega-dorm' at 120 East 12th Street.

The joint proposal by GVSHP and the NY Landmarks Conservancy to landmark 13 federal-era (1790-1835) houses in Lower Manhattan made further progress this year. 486 and 488 Greenwich Street (near Spring Street) were landmarked, and 94, 94 ½, and 96 Greenwich Street (near Ground Zero) received hearings at the Landmarks Preservation Commission. These five houses joined 127, 129, and 131 MacDougal Street and 4 St. Mark's Place (landmarked in 2004), and 67 Greenwich Street near Wall Street (landmarked in 2005), as well as 7 Leroy, 57 Sullivan, and 2 Oliver Street, which are yet to be heard, to round out our '13' proposal.



GVSHP said 'No' to plans for a Vegas-on-the-Hudson style development on Pier 40

Budny, co-sponsored by the Metropolitan Chapter of the Victorian Society in America

March 25 & June 12: The Architecture of the South Village: Walking tour with Andrew Dolkart

April 20-27: Imagery of Robert Otter: A Study of Greenwich Village in the 1960s: Gallery exhibit and public lectures

June 3: The East Village: Culture and Counter Culture: Walking tour with Joyce Gold

July 18: Our Latest Landmarks: Recent New York City Historic Districts, Panel discussion with local preservationists, co-sponsored by the Historic Districts Council

Development/Membership Committee

Judith Stonehill, Chair
Members: Mary Ann Arisman, John Bacon,
Meredith Bergmann, David Burger, Elizabeth
Ely, Cassie Glover, Leslie Mason, Ruth McCoy,
Florent Morellet, Peter Mullan, Andrew Paul,
Cynthia Penney, Arbie Thalacker

Membership continues to be the single largest source of income support for the Society, and our membership pool continues to become increasingly large and diverse.

Following five years of extensive growth in both the number of members and the amount of membership support, in the past year the number of GVSHP members expanded by almost 20%, and membership support grew by almost 30%. In addition to ongoing efforts to reach out to and attract new members, the Society has recently embarked on several new initiatives to increase and diversify support for the organization. Concerted efforts to encourage members to participate in their employers' matching gift programs have led to a marked increase in matching gift support for the Society. GVSHP has also begun a planned giving program, to allow members and supporters

to remember GVSHP in their wills. GVSHP also received increased support from government officials, including first-time grant support from Borough President Scott Stringer.

For the first time, GVSHP staged a fundrais-

ing dinner at Balthazar Restaurant with the generous support of noted restaurateur Keith McNally; the dinner honored the life and legacy of Jane Jacobs and featured Paul Goldberger and Calvin Trillin as speakers. A newly-formed Junior Committee will increase outreach to younger neighborhood residents, seeking their participation and support for the Society, while a recently-formed broker partnership will help leverage the resources of the real estate community to help support GVSHP's efforts and reach new property owners in the area. "Friendraiser" events have been a major focus of GVSHP's membership development work, as we have encouraged members to host gatherings in their homes for friends and neighbors to introduce them to GVSHP. Additionally, GVSHP was fortunate to receive a wide array of in-kind support for everything from printing and graphic design, to legal services, to food,

wine, and desserts for events.



Andrew Dolkart leads GVSHP on walking tour of the South Village in March

# **Program Committee**

Penelope Bareau, Chair Members: Mary Ann Arisman, Jonathan Russo, Fred Wistow, John Bacon, Ed Tristram

GVSHP offered still more programs on the cultural and social history and the architecture of Greenwich Village, NoHo, and the East Village.

With audiences ranging up to 200 people, GVSHP reached hundreds of people through thirteen public programs.

#### 2006

October 14: Architectural Digest's 'Architecture Days': A Greenwich Village preservation walking tour.

October 18: The Photography of Robert Otter: Slide lecture by his son, Ned Otter

November 19: The Dutch in New Amsterdam: Lecture by Jaap Jacobs, co-sponsored by St. Mark's Historic Landmark Fund as part of Five Dutch Days in 5 Boroughs

December 2: The Flamboyant and the Bohemian: Greenwich Village and How it Became Famous: Walking tour with Joyce Gold

#### 2007

January 18: La Grange Terrace: Slide lecture on Colonnade Row by Thomas Gordon Smith

January 30: First Houses—A Monument Of The Past—A Model For The Future?: Lecture and discussion with Warren Shaw

March 1: In the Footsteps of Jane Jacobs: Panel discussion with community activists, co-sponsored by the Historic Districts Council

March 7: Restoring/Renovating Ironwork in a Historic District: Discussion with Robin Key and Richie Lodato

March 13: New York, Artists Off Washington Square 1890s to 1920: Lecture with Virginia GVSHP also succeeded in getting the entire Meatpacking District listed on the State and National Register of Historic Places; this is particularly significant because the city carved sections of the neighborhood out of the landmark district, and Register listing offers financial incentives for maintaining and restoring historic buildings.

The Meatpacking District was one of several areas where the Society fought illegal and inappropriate billboards. Along with local merchants, we led several protests against two giant billboards erected by the Hotel Gansevoort (the legality of which is still under review) and were able to force the removal of several other billboards in the East Village, West Village, and elsewhere in the Meatpacking District. GVSHP instituted a new tracking and monitoring system for billboards and other landmark, building, and zoning code violations, to help us better enforce such protections.

GVSHP's monitoring program uncovered an enormous flaw in the city's system for protecting landmarked structures when we discovered last winter that approximately 15% of all landmarked buildings in the Village were not recorded as landmarks in city records. As a result, landmarked buildings could receive

demolition or inappropriate alteration permits and were not afforded the added level of scrutiny and protection they are entitled to when major construction work occurs nearby. Due to our efforts, all several hundred of these buildings were correctly identified as landmarks in city records. We believe this flaw may have contributed to the collapse at Chumley's at 86 Bedford Street earlier this year.

To help prevent similar increasingly-common collapses among 19th century structures, GVSHP has also urged the Department of Buildings (DOB) to consistently enforce existing regulations meant to protect older, frail structures from being undermined by construction. Additionally, GVSHP recommended that the DOB implement new measures to ensure that new work is done in the safest way possible to preserve the structural integrity of our older buildings.

Finally, GVSHP has been closely reviewing proposed new developments by institutions within our neighborhoods. GVSHP joined a task force formed by Borough President Stringer on NYU development and has staunchly advocated that the University find satellite locations outside of our neighborhoods for future development. Our analysis of NYU's 25-year plan reveals that

the university's projected growth in space needs is the equivalent of thirty-four of its new 26-story 'mega-dorms' on East 12th Street, and its student population growth is five times the size of the entire student population of Cooper Union, GVSHP also began to plan with neighbors in response to plans by the New School to build a large new facility at 14th Street and Fifth Avenue, as well as in response to their long-term growth plans. The Society has also taken a leading role in responding to plans by St. Vincent's Hospital to demolish all its existing facilities and to replace them with a single large new hospital building and a significant amount of new luxury housing, all of which would fall within the Greenwich Village Historic District. While we want to ensure that the hospital can continue to function and modernize as necessary, we wish to ensure that the scale and character of the West Village is not compromised by what could be the largest building project in Greenwich Village in more than fifty years. We have made several recommendations which would allow the hospital to build its new facilities without violating the scale of the neighborhood and destroying historic buildings.

# Awards Committee

Judith Stonehill, Chair

Members: Mary Ann Arisman, John Bacon, George Cominskie, Betty Fussell, Rob Kaufelt, Robert Neborak, Rob Rogers, Katherine Schoonover, Shirley Secunda, Raymond Sokolov, Arbie Thalacker, Matt Umanov

Each year GVSHP honors people, places, and organizations that make a significant contribution to the legendary quality of life in Greenwich Village and the East Village. On June 19th, Raymond Sokolov presented the 17th Annual Village Awards to a full house at GVSHP's Annual Meeting, held at the Cherry Lane Theatre, a 2006 Village award-winner.

Recipients of the 2007 Village Awards were: the 13th Street Repertory Company (which GVSHP is helping to fight a threatened closure and demolition), for presenting distinguished and innovative productions for over thirty-five years; Florence Prime Meat Market, a South Village institution, for providing exceptional cut-to-order meat for over seventy years; the Liz Christy Community Garden, for being New York's first community garden; Porto Rico Importing Co., another South Village institution, for offering an incomparable selection of



Members of the West Village Dog Owners Group pose with their Greenwich Village Award at GVSHP's Annual Meeting in June

coffees and teas for 100 years; Kevin Shea, for lending his invaluable expertise as a zoning and building code expert to GVSHP, countless community organizations, and neighborhood preservation efforts; St. Mark's Bookshop, for serving as an iconoclastic and independent bookstore that on its thirtieth anniversary remains a magnet for new generations of readers in the city; West Village Dog Owner's

Group, for establishing a model community group that has labored successfully to create and maintain safe off-leash facilities for dogs; and the Restoration of 81 Barrow Street, for an exemplary renovation of the interior and exterior of an historic Italianate townhouse. Bowne and Co, Inc. was also presented with a special award by the GVSHP trustees for community service.



GVSHP Annual House Tour participants wait to view 11th Street house

# Benefit Committee

Elizabeth Ely and Leslie Mason, Co-chairs Members: Mary Ann Arisman, Meredith Bergmann, Jane Forman, Debbie Gimelson, Cassie Glover, Roberta Golubock, Jo Hamilton, Marlene Hartstein, Debra Kameros, Susan Kolker, Ruth McCoy, Vals Osborne, Cynthia Penney, Judith Stonehill, Jane Timken, Fred Wistow

GVSHP presented our 9th Annual Spring House Tour and Benefit on Sunday, May 6th—by far our largest and most successful ever. Seven historic homes in the West Village were open to tour guests on a beautiful spring afternoon, followed by a reception for the tour's most generous supporters. GVSHP surpassed our fundraising goals and last year's totals for this benefit and introduced many people to GVSHP's important work.

The Society is deeply grateful to our generous homeowners who enthusiastically opened their doors: Mark Fina & Caroline Schwartz; Cassie & Paul Glover; Kelley & Terry Pillow; Dubi Silverstein & Ellen Weiman; Eleanor & Don Taffner; Greg Ventra & Mark Field; and Robert Wagner & Alice Ericsson. Special thanks go

to the Greenwich House Music School, whose lovely backyard garden served as a registration site, and to the Stephan Weiss Studio, which hosted the post-tour cocktail reception for Benefactors, Patrons, and Sponsors of this year's tour.

Of course, this tour would not have been possible without the generosity of corporations and individuals who donated their time and services, especially Bowne of Detroit, for donating printing for invitations, programs, and tickets; Salviati, for providing exquisite gifts for our homeowners; and Alexander Kaplen, for designing a beautiful invitation, map, ticket, and program. We are also sincerely grateful to our more than 130 volunteer docents who helped to keep the tour moving smoothly, and to Andrew Arons of Gourmet Garage who contributed lunches to help feed them.

GVSHP would also like to recognize the tireless efforts of the Benefit Committee, who committed their time and energy to make the tour a success. Finally, thank you to everyone who purchased tickets or made a contribution to the event. Without your participation, this would not have been the most successful event to date!