



THE ANTHEMION

Spring/Summer 2000 The Greenwich Village Society for Historic Preservation

GVSHHP Defends Integrity of Washington Square Park

The Greenwich Village Society for Historic Preservation has been closely monitoring New York University's latest plans for two major development projects on the south side of Washington Square Park, urging the University - through discussion and demonstration - to respect the historic character of the park and its surrounding neighborhood.

The first project is a 12-story, 206,000-square foot student center to be built on the site of the recently-demolished Loeb Student Center (on the corner of LaGuardia Place and Washington Square South). Designed by the architectural firm of Kevin Roche/John Dinkeloo Associates, the proposed Kimmel Student Center building will include a 1,000-seat performing arts center, an auditorium and dining space, spaces for student clubs and activities, and a rooftop conference and gathering center.



Human Shadow demonstration in Washington Square Park.

Concerned that the proposed architectural design is incompatible within the context of Washington Square and the adjacent Greenwich Village Historic District, members of GVSHHP's

continued on page six

Protecting the Gansevoort Market

As part of a larger goal of safeguarding historic resources in the Greenwich Village waterfront neighborhood, one of the Society's most important ongoing initiatives is an effort to protect the



North side of Gansevoort Street, looking east from Washington Street.

historic Gansevoort Market area.

Roughly bounded by 14th Street, Hudson Street, Jane Street and Tenth Avenue, the Gansevoort Market area is architecturally and historically significant and worthy of protection as the only remaining, virtually intact streetscape of 19th century market buildings in New York City. The Gansevoort Market has served the city as a wholesale food market continuously since as early as the 1830s.

There are many buildings in the Gansevoort Market of high architectural merit, designed by distinguished architects such as Boring & Tilton, Trowbridge & Livingstone and Joseph M. Dunn. Further, they have shown themselves time and again to have a remarkable resilience and capacity for adaptive re-use. Woven

continued on page six

FROM THE DIRECTOR

At about this time last year, the Greenwich Village Society was contacting movers, packing boxes, selecting new file cabinets, and making final arrangements for our move to an exciting new location - the newly-created Neighborhood Preservation Center located in the historic Ernest Flagg Rectory of St. Mark's Church in-the-Bowery.

After renting a small space in the Salmagundi Club for many years, the opportunity to have a "real home" is something that the Society has dreamed about since our founding in 1980. Now in our 20th anniversary year, I am pleased to report that we have achieved this long-held goal - and much more - thanks to the generous support of our members.

Three groups have come together in a unique partnership to create the Neighborhood Preservation Center: the St. Mark's Historic Landmark Fund, steward of the restoration of the St. Mark's Church complex; the Historic Districts Council, a city-wide advocate for New York's historic neighborhoods; and, of course, the Greenwich Village Society for Historic Preservation, founded to preserve and protect the architectural heritage and cultural history of the Village. These three organizations are the Center's "Resident Partners."

The Neighborhood Preservation Center is much more than a beautiful building. In addition to housing the Resident Partners, the Center is a community resource serving groups working to improve and preserve the diverse cultural heritage and historic neighborhoods throughout New York City. Here, organizations concerned about neighborhood preservation and improvement throughout New York City and community groups at work in the immediate neighborhood will avail themselves of the Center's services.

These include:

Resource Referral Service

Open to the public, this service will link users with organizations, institutions, and individuals that can assist them with inquiries related to neighborhood improvements, community revitalization, and historic preservation.

Public Meeting Space

The Center has three beautiful public meeting spaces for use by eligible groups.

Virtual Offices

Eligible groups from New York City that have no base of operations can receive mail at the Center, and gain access to fax, telephone and computers.

continued on page two

continued from page one

Incubator Space

The Center offers space to fledgling groups in need of a temporary home.

Offices for Out-of-Town Associates

The Center will provide office space to organizations based outside of New York City.

Continuing east beyond Fifth Avenue on my way to work each morning, I can't help but miss some of the lovely, odd, sometimes aggravating, quirks of the Salmagundi Club: the five flights of winding stairs to our top floor office; the strict building schedule that forced us to maintain much more civilized hours; open still life painting classes on Saturday mornings; the ever-changing parade of portraits that lined the interior walls.

But once I climb the cast-iron stoop of 232 East 11th Street, I am greeted by all that our new home offers: the opportunity to work with a community of like-minded professionals on a daily basis; the beautiful setting of St. Mark's Church and its charming gardens; a lovely facility where we can welcome our members and friends; and the opportunity to become further involved in the life of the East Village.

As with any change, one can't help but look back on what was. But in our new home, it seems easier to look to the future.



GVSHHP Secures National Register Recognition for Stonewall

This February, Secretary of the Interior Bruce Babbitt designated the site of the Stonewall Uprising as a National Historic Landmark, recognizing the site's exceptional importance to the history of our nation. This honor follows the site's earlier designation, in May of 1999, on the National Register of Historic Places, the federal government's official list of the nation's most important historic properties. While the National Register contains more than 67,000 historic sites, only about 2,200, or roughly 3 percent, have been selected for the higher designation as a National Historic Landmark. Stonewall is the first site to earn a place on either list for its association with gay and lesbian history.

The Greenwich Village Society for Historic Preservation, together with the Organization for Lesbian and Gay Architects and Designers (OLGAD), sponsored the nomination for both designations.

The rebellion at Stonewall is regarded as the single most enduring event in the history of the gay and lesbian civil rights movement. The uprising began early in the morning of Saturday, June 28, 1969, as gay men and women resisted a routine police raid on the Stonewall Inn (located at 51-53 Christopher Street). The raid set off six days and nights of rioting, street demonstrations, and protests as thousands of gay people took to the streets in Greenwich Village to demand an end to police harassment. This insurrection gave birth to the gay liberation phase of the lesbian and gay rights movement, transforming the struggle for homosexual equality from a small group of activists into a mass movement, making possible a rapid series of political successes.

The designation process was a collaborative effort. GVSHHP worked closely with representatives of the Department of the Interior and the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation throughout the process. Architectural historian Andrew Dolkart was the primary author of the report. David Carter, a historian currently writing an in-depth history of the Uprising for St. Martin's Press, was the primary researcher on the project. The Jeffrey B. Soref Fund of Stonewall Community



Assistant Secretary of the Interior John Berry presents National Register plaque for Stonewall to GVSHHP Executive Director Kim Stahlman Kearns and congratulates David Carter, primary researcher of the designation report. Richard Burns, Executive Director of the Lesbian & Gay Community Services Center, looks on. Photo courtesy of R. Paluch

Foundation provided financial support for the initiative.

According to Kimberly Stahlman Kearns, the Society's Executive Director, "These important designations represent a major milestone for the American Historic Preservation movement. They demonstrate a commitment to a more inclusive approach to historic preservation that goes beyond recognizing architectural monuments to also honor the rich and diverse cultural heritage of the American population."

The Greenwich Village Society for Historic Preservation will oversee the installation of a bronze plaque attesting to the national significance of the Stonewall site.

GVSHP Programs

Every season, the Greenwich Village Society offers a wide variety of educational and social programming highlighting the architectural and cultural history of Greenwich Village. We hope you were able to attend and enjoy one or more of our spring 2000 events.

EXHIBITION

The Photographs of Therese Mitchell
Municipal Art Society's Urban Center
March 30th through May 14th

Perhaps no 20th century writer caught the life of everyday and out-of-the-way New York City as did Joseph Mitchell. While he captured the city in the dozens of stories he wrote for the New Yorker, his wife Therese captured many of the same places on film. GVSHP and the Municipal Art Society of New York presented the newly found photographs of Therese Mitchell.

BOOK READING

Featuring Christine Stansell, author of
"American Moderns: Bohemian New York and the Creation
of a New Century"
Thursday, May 18th
Neighborhood Preservation Center in the
Historic Ernest Flagg Rectory of St. Mark's Church In-the-Bowery

In the early years of the twentieth century, an exuberant band of talented individuals living in Greenwich Village set out to change the world. Committed to free speech, free love and politically engaged art, they swept away sexual prudery, stodgy bourgeois art, and political conservatism as they clamorously declared the birth of the new. The Society presented Christine Stansell, author and professor of history at Princeton University, reading and discussing her new book that offers the first comprehensive history of this legendary period.

EXHIBITION

Rudy Burckhardt and Friends: New York Artists of the 1950s and '60s
Grey Art Gallery
May 9th - July 15th
T, Th & F: 11-6; W: 11-8; Sa: 11-5

Visit the Grey Art Gallery for the first American museum exhibition to focus on the photographs of Rudy Burckhardt, a multi-talented artist who died in August 1999 at the age of 85. The show consists of Burckhardt's photographic portraits of New York artists from a twenty-odd year period - many of them taken in Greenwich Village -- displayed alongside works by them from the Grey Art Gallery's collection. Featured artists include Willem and Elaine de Kooning, Philip Guston, Jackson Pollock, Alex Katz, Joan Mitchell, and Marisol. In addition, the exhibition features a selection of Burckhardt's remarkable Manhattan cityscapes and pioneering independent films.

WALKING TOUR

Proper Bohemians: New York Artists Downtown
Saturday, May 20th

In conjunction with the Grey Art Gallery's Rudy Burckhardt exhibition, GVSHP invited members to join Architectural Historian Matt Postal for a walking tour tracing the cultural history of Greenwich Village. This fascinating tour included sites where the artists featured in the exhibition lived, worked, and hung out--among them the Artists' Studio School, the Cedar Tavern, and the Club.

FOOD AND THOUGHT

An Evening with Vincent Katz,
Co-curator of Rudy Burckhardt and Friends: New York Artists of the
1950s and '60s
Wednesday, May 24th
Grey Art Gallery, 100 Washington Square East
Haveli Restaurant, 100 Second Avenue (between 5th and 6th streets)

Part of GVSHP's ongoing local restaurant series, which invites friends to dine with acclaimed historians in the places where Village history and culture happened, this program began with a gallery talk by Vincent Katz, co-curator of Grey Art Gallery's Rudy Burckhardt exhibition. The evening continued with an exclusive opportunity to join Mr. Katz for an Indian meal and discussion of Burckhardt, his friends, and the downtown art of the '50s and '60s. This event was co-sponsored by the Grey Art Gallery.

DON'T FORGET TO SAVE THE DATE!

**GVSHP's Annual Meeting and Presentation
of the Tenth Annual Village Awards
Thursday, June 29th at 5:30 p.m.
The Provincetown Playhouse**

SPRING HOUSE TOUR

May 7th was the date for "Art and Architecture: Elements of Style," a tour highlighting some spectacular homes in Greenwich Village. Tour-goers were delighted by the beautiful facades as well as the interior splendor of the residences of Pat Steir & Joost Elffers on MacDougal Street, Nancy Dine on Barrow Street, Anne Kennedy & Peter Nadin, Howard & Katia Read, and Genevieve Faure on Grove Street, and Scott Newman & Gregory Long on Commerce Street.

This special section of Greenwich Village embodies nineteenth-century character and history. Its picturesque winding streets contain many of the city's most exquisite houses, many lovingly restored. Behind the facades are many wonderful surprises that the passersby can only imagine.

The Society's tour offered a rare opportunity to experience the interior beauty of these remarkable homes. From a three story townhouse with a grand staircase, to a sunny open loft, and much more in between, the Society's architectural tour presented stunning examples of the Village's finest architecture and the brilliant style contained within them.



Village Mailbag

The GVSHP office frequently receives inquiries about Greenwich Village, from the very specific (details about a Greek Revival doorway on Grove Street) to the general (defining the boundaries of the Village). We try to answer your questions or send you to the appropriate source, which may be a city agency or a particular book in our library. Some of the most-asked, and most intriguing, questions will be answered in this newsletter and following editions.

Q: Since Greenwich Village is landmarked, how is it that so much new construction is now being allowed in the waterfront district?

A: Designated in 1969, the Greenwich Village Historic District protects over 2,000 structures in the Village, but encompasses just one-third of the Village. The western boundary of the district falls short of the waterfront, excluding the historic Gansevoort Market area and much of the waterfront to the south. Without the protection of the landmarks law, historic buildings in these areas are vulnerable to eradication, and new development is guided only by the zoning ordinance. Even these regulations can be circumvented through variances granted by the Board of Standards and Appeals.

Q: Can you tell me the derivation of some of the Greenwich Village street names? For example, how did Bank Street get its name?

A: In 1798, the Bank of New York on Wall Street bought eight lots on a Greenwich Village lane in order to build a branch there when the down-

town bank had to be closed during the yellow fever quarantine. Bank Street boomed when the 1822 epidemic forced hundreds of city residents and businesses to the healthier climate of the Village. (Information found in *The Street Book: An Encyclopedia of Manhattan's Street Names and their Origins* by Henry Moscow. A copy resides in the GVSHP library. A paperback edition can be found at many local Village bookstores.)

Q: If my building is located within the historic district, do I need the Landmark Preservation Commission's permission to make ordinary exterior repairs?

A: Ordinary exterior repairs, such as removing graffiti or replacing a broken window, do not require the Commission's approval or a permit. However, more extensive exterior changes and alterations to your home will require a permit from the Commission. If you are unsure about the repair you wish to make, or are considering altering the exterior, please contact the Landmarks Preservation Commission at 212-487-6800.

Do you have a question regarding Greenwich Village history, advocacy or violation issues, technical assistance, or anything else the Society might be able to help you with? Please send in a question for our newsletter. You may mail it to 232 East 11th Street, or e-mail it to gvshp@gvshp.org.



In commemoration of the 150th anniversary of the birth of poet Emma Lazarus, on July 27th, 1999 GVSHP Executive Director Kim Stahlman Kearns dedicated a plaque that was placed on the home where Lazarus wrote her famous work, "The New Colossus," which was inscribed on the pedestal of the Statue of Liberty. The 19th century brownstone is located at 18 West 10th Street.

The Tenth Annual Village Awards and Annual Meeting

Thursday, June 29th

Each year, the Greenwich Village Society for Historic Preservation combines its Annual Meeting with the presentation of the Annual Village Awards. The Awards are given to people, places, and organizations that make a significant contribution to the special quality of Village life, and include a special citation and the donation of a book about the history of New York City or Greenwich Village to the Jefferson Market Library. This year we will be celebrating the tenth anniversary of our Village Awards, and this promises to be a very special anniversary.

Winners are chosen by member nominations. The Society invites members to support their favorite Greenwich Village restaurant, store, garden, organization, or person! Your nomination could make a familiar Village location feel appreciated, bring to light a hidden treasure, or honor a special person. Don't miss your chance to make your feelings known!

Past Recipients

1999: Barry Benepe, Corner Bistro, Greenwich House, Hudson Triangle Garden, Squad 18 Fire Station, Tootsie's, 34 Commerce Street Restoration

1998: Bill Bowser, Cornelia Street Restaurants, Industria Superstudio, New York University's Historic House Restorations, O. Ottomanelli & Son's Prime Meat Market, West Ninth Street Block Association, West Village Nursery School,

749 Washington Street Restoration

1997: Charterhouse Antiques, Chez Brigitte, Church of the Ascension, Greenwich Village Girls Basketball League, Mrs. Brooke Astor and The Vincent Astor Foundation, The Caring Community, Zito's Bakery, 71 Jane Street Restoration

1996: El Faro Restaurant, Grace Episcopal Church Restoration, Uta Hagen and HB Studios, Hudson River Pedestrian & Bike Path, Rita Lee, Matt Umanov Guitars, Sixth Precinct Quality of Life Squad, Statue of Fiorello LaGuardia, Village Vanguard

1995: Be Seated, Garber's Hardware, Jefferson Market Library Restoration, LaGuardia Corner Gardens, "Mad About You," Verna Small, Village Alliance Eighth Street B.I.D., #68 Morton Street

1994: Cooper Union Forum of Public Programs, Film Forum, Lesbian and Gay Community Services Center, LiLac Chocolates, Terry Miller, The Pink Teacup, #25 West 10th Street

1993: Dr. Joyce Wallace, St. Mark's-in-the-Bowery Church, Goodfella's Pizza, Jackson Square Park, Bagel Restaurant, Broadway Windows, Grace Opportunity Project, Greenwich Village Little League & Soccer Club

1992: Angler's & Writers Café, Church of St. Luke's-in-the-Fields, Sheridan Square Viewing Garden, Village Community School Fence, Richard Walker, Washington Square Music Festival, West Village Committee Newsletter

1991: Paul Egita, First Presbyterian Church Restoration, Jefferson Market Garden, Mercer-Houston Dog Run Association, Florent Morellet and Restaurant Florent, Three Lives Bookstore

TRIBUTE FOR A VILLAGE FRIEND

Bill Bowser, the noted preservationist who boldly and tenaciously worked to protect Greenwich Village during the past 40 years, died on January 31st.

He was the longtime president of the West Village Committee, founded by Jane Jacobs in the early 1960s to save the Village from the rampages of urban renewal. GVSHP presented a Village Award to Mr. Bowser in 1992 for his work in publishing the West Village Newsletter.

A second Village Award was given to Bill Bowser in 1998 - the only time GVSHP has given a second award to anyone - in recognition of his accomplishments as a community activist. Known for the fierce stand he took against development, he was also known and admired for the gardens he created in the Village. His passion and clarity of vision inspired countless others to join the effort of preserving Greenwich Village.

Please note: As this issue of The Anthemion goes to press we have just learned of the passing of James Marston Fitch, an influential leader in the American historic preservation movement, Village resident, and friend. We will highlight Dr. Fitch's life and accomplishments in the next issue.

JOIN THE SOCIETY - OR INTRODUCE US TO A FRIEND!

Membership benefits include a Village Map and Landmark Guide; invitations to attend our many lectures, symposia, discussion series and walking tours; regular issues of our newsletter, and a free six-month subscription to The Villager newspaper. Most importantly, your support will help to protect the Village by making GVSHP a more effective preservation leader. The Society also invites you to give gift memberships to your friends or neighbors for only \$25 (that's half price!). Please use the form below, and we will send a lovely gift packet, informing them of your thoughtful gift.

YES! I would like to join the Greenwich Village Society for Historic Preservation.

\$1,000 Patron

\$500 Sponsor

\$250 Sustainer

\$100 Contributor

\$75 Family/Dual

\$50 Individual

\$35 Student/Senior

\$25 Gift Membership -- *Special Offer for Current Members*

Name

Address

Telephone

Email

I am a member and would like to give a gift membership to my friend (named above):

Your Name

Telephone

Email

Please return this form with your check to: The Greenwich Village Society for Historic Preservation, 232 East 11th Street New York, NY 10003 (212) 475-9585.

Membership contributions are fully tax-deductible.

Executive Director
Kimberly Stahlman Kearns

President
F. Anthony Zunino III

Vice-Presidents
Elizabeth Ely
Arbie Thalacker

Secretary/Treasurer
Elinor G. Ratner

Trustees
Mary Ann Arisman
Penelope Bareau
Donald Wm DeFranco
Tiziana Hardy
Jan Hashey
Arthur Levin
Andrew S. Paul
Jonathan Russo
Katherine Schoonover
Judith Stonehill
Fred Wistow
Anthony C. Wood
Linda Yowell

*Don't forget to look up GVSHP on the web at
www.gvshp.org*

Editor: Judith Stonehill
Contributors: Kimberly Stahlman Kearns
and Heather Skilton
Layout: Susan De Vries

Washington Square *continued from page one*

Preservation Committee have engaged in a series of meetings over the past year with representatives of the University and their architect. GVSHP has strongly urged the University to consider several specific design modifications that would reduce the negative impacts of the project. GVSHP has suggested: reducing the height and bulk of the building, changing building materials (from the originally proposed granite, to brick and/or stone), using less glass, and incorporating additional active uses on the ground floor.

GVSHP is also lending support to grassroots community efforts to urge NYU to rethink the project. On Sunday, March 19th, GVSHP invited its members to Washington Square Park for a "Human Shadow" demonstration where a sea of black umbrellas was unfurled to simulate the additional shadows the proposed Kimmel Student Center would throw over portions of the

park. Demonstrators were joined by Congressman Jerrold Nadler, State Senator Thomas Duane, Assemblymember Deborah Glick, Council member Kathryn Freed, and GVSHP Trustee, Jonathan Russo.

Meanwhile, New York University Law School intends to develop a major new facility one block to the west. Working with the architectural firm Kohn Pedersen Fox Associates, the Law School is devising plans for a large mixed-use building that would incorporate classrooms, seminar rooms, clinic space and faculty residences.

As currently envisioned by the Law School, the development would necessitate the demolition of several 19th century structures on the block. These include 235-289 Thompson Street (Judson House), 85 West Third Street (Poe House) and 89 West Third Street (Fuchsberg Building). These properties are all owned by the University and are unprotected by New York City Landmarks Law.

Gansevoort Market

continued from page one
together by the surrounding cobblestone streets, these structures clearly represent the early commercial and manufacturing development of the City. Walking through the Gansevoort Market, one still has a distinct sense of being in another time and place that is like no other in the City. It is this unique character that is, in fact, attracting much of the current commercial and development interest in the market area.

Over the past year, the Society has

further documented the historic resources in the Gansevoort Market, performing a land use survey, and creating a slide presentation highlighting the area's unique sense of place. The Society has also engaged in discussions with the Landmarks Preservation Commission, the City Planning Commission and local community groups regarding the area's protection.

If you would like more information regarding these ongoing efforts, or would like to offer your support, please call the Society at 212/475-9585.



GVSHP
GREENWICH VILLAGE SOCIETY
FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION

232 East 11th Street New York, NY 10003

Nonprofit
Organization
US Postage
Paid
New York, NY
Permit #3509