



# THE ANTHEMION

Spring 1994

THE GREENWICH VILLAGE SOCIETY FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION

Vol. 7 No. 3

## 4th Annual Village Awards

To Be Presented at the June 14 Annual Meeting

The Annual Village Awards, honoring people, places, and organizations that have contributed significantly to the quality of life in Greenwich Village, were first presented by the Greenwich Village Society for Historic Preservation in 1991. The awards have been enthusiastically received for the past three years, and seem to have become something of a Village tradition.

The Fourth Annual Awards will be presented at the June 14th meeting at Scholastic Inc., 555 Broadway, at 6 p.m. There are six recipients, and a Front Stoop Award for improvement to the streetscape:

**Cooper Union Forum of Public Programs** The historic Great Hall lectures and non-credit (continued)



President Clinton in Cooper Union's Great Hall

## Profile: Village Square

The History of an Overlooked Landmark

The present condition of Ruth Wittenberg Square, the barren triangle at the intersection of Christopher Street, Greenwich and Sixth Avenues, belies its colorful history. In the early 1600s, Christopher Street was a lane meandering from the Bowery to the Hudson River, forming a boundary between Dutch tobacco farms. It was officially named by the British in honor of Charles Christopher Amos, and intersected Monument Lane, now Greenwich Avenue. In 1817 the *Commissioners' Plan* created Sixth Avenue, which completed the triangle.

In the 19th century, the site became one of New York City's busiest crossroads. By the 1830s, the Jefferson Meat Market stood north of the triangle. The market was later incorporated with the 3rd Judicial District Court House and Prison. A dramatic change took place in 1879 when the Gilbert Elevated Railroad

opened. The triangle became a platform for an ornate iron stairway that led to its 8th Street station. Later known as the Sixth Avenue El, the line provided cheap, rapid transportation (and noise, smoke, and congestion) from South Ferry to 53rd Street. When the El was demolished in the late 1930s, the triangle was auspiciously named Village Square, but left barren. In 1992, at the urging of Community Board 2 (CB2), it was renamed Ruth Wittenberg Square to memorialize the late Village activist and the Society's Honorary President.

As it is situated in the heart of the village, most residents agree that the the Squire deserves design attention. CB2 has formed a committee to consider proposals, such as a fountain or tourist information booth.

The GVSHP plans to work with CB2 on this project. If you have thoughts or suggestions, please phone Vicki Weiner at 924-3895.

## FROM THE DIRECTOR

Board Adopts New Mission Statement

Recently, the Trustees held a special meeting to discuss the long-range plans of the GVSHP. One topic that arose was the phrasing of the Society's statement of purpose. It was acknowledged that a mission statement guides the activities of the organization, and that it should be reconsidered periodically so that it maintains its relevance. The following is the revised mission statement approved by the Trustees at the May Board Meeting:

*The Greenwich Village Society for Historic Preservation works to preserve the architectural heritage and cultural history of Greenwich Village. Established in 1980, the Society is a leader in protecting the sense of place and human scale that define the Village's unique community. Its programs include:*

- Educational outreach in the form of public lectures, tours, exhibitions and publications, and a school program that teaches children about Greenwich Village history and architecture
- Preservation leadership on such issues as preservation of the Village waterfront and expansion of the Greenwich Village Historic District
- Preservation projects that promote an understanding of the Village's historic importance
- Consultation services on a wide variety of preservation issues, serving as historian, educator, archival resource and technical advisor

In the coming year, the staff and Trustees of the GVSHP will be discussing specific ways to fulfill this important mission. We welcome comments and suggestions from members, and I hope to hear from some of you over the summer.

Vicki Weiner

*Village Awards...*



*The Pink Teacup*



*Terry Miller, Curator, with J. Lake, Designer, B. Green, Federation*



*Film Forum*

courses in continuing education have been offered since the school's founding in 1859. The programs have met the needs and interests of an urban public with diverse ethnic, racial, and cultural backgrounds. They continue to fulfill Peter Cooper's wish to provide "useful knowledge" and enrich the quality of life in the community and city.

**Terry Miller**, awarded for his photographs of buildings and byways in our endangered waterfront, and his presentation of how that neighborhood evolved in the exhibition "The Historic Greenwich Village Waterfront," mounted by the Federation to Preserve the Greenwich Village Waterfront & Great Port.

**The Pink Teacup** Established in 1957 by Charles Ray, the Pink Teacup assumed its present location at 42 Grove Street in 1983. It is now owned and operated by Ray's niece, Serita Ford. One of the cooks has been there for 22 years, and another for 16. With its regular clientele of neighbors, it also draws patrons from all over the city. Walls are lined with photographs of entertainers. The

Pink Teacup is involved in its block association and community activities.

**Lesbian and Gay Community Services Center** Founded in 1983 as the second facility of its kind in the U.S., the Center is the home of a vast number of social service and cultural programs that serve the lesbian and gay community of the metropolitan area. The Center restored the facade of the 1844 former school building it occupies, and is currently raising funds for an interior renovation.

**Li Lac Chocolates** has been a Village landmark since 1923. Antique cases are filled with truffles, caramels, and chocolates. The kitchen is a museum of candy production, with vintage German molds, copper kettles, and hand-dipping stations. Li Lac is a truly a neighborhood shop, and even allows the purchase of delicious single chocolates.

**Film Forum** An exemplary arts institution, Film Forum attracts film buffs from all over the city, making a significant contribution to the area's cultural and economic growth. The tasteful renovation of its West Houston Street facility serves as a

positive example of the adaptive reuse of a historic property.

**Front Stoop Award: 25 W. 10th Street** Built in 1846 as a single family house, the building's facade was stripped around 1900. Current owners Zora and Richard Brown have been restoring it little-by-little over the last 15 years. The stoop was the biggest part of the restoration. Work also included replacement of cornices and lintels, repairing brickwork, and installing ironwork. The Browns' joy and wonder survived this long process, underscoring the magnetism preservation can have.

To select award recipients, nominations are solicited from the GVSHP membership. Winners are chosen by the Awards Committee: Trustees Penelope Bateau, Richard B. Barnett, Julie Rinaldini, Judith Stonehill, James Stewart Polshek, Betsey Greenburg, Regina Kellerman; Executive Director Vicki Weiner; and friends Kent Barwick, President of the Municipal Arts Society, architectural critic Roy Sokolov, and writer Calvin Trillin.

Annual Meeting reservations can be made by calling 924-3895.



*25 West 10th Street*



*Li Lac Chocolates*



*Lesbian and Gay Center*

# Annual Report 1993-1994

## Programs Report

Since September of 1993, the GVSHP has presented a number of lectures, tours, site visits, and meetings. Lectures included: Christopher Moore's "New Amsterdam 1643-1644: Frontier, Farms and Freedom;" a panel discussion with the authors of the highly praised book *Greenwich Village: Culture and Counterculture*; Julie Sloan's "Restoration of Stained Glass Windows at Grace Church;" and Pauline Metcalf's "Edith Wharton and Design: the Unspoken Language of Rooms." Tours offered were: Alan Neumann's "Greenwich Village Before Bohemia: Black Farms to Little Africa;" Joyce Gold's "The Ethnic East Village;" and Ken Lustbader's "Lesbian and Gay Liberation Trail." This year's site visit, "Greenwich to Greenwich," offered a talk on stained glass restoration at Rambusch Studios, an inside look at the restoration of St. Bede's Chapel in Greenwich, Connecticut, with preservation architect Alan Neumann, and a visit to the Bush-Holley House in Cos Cob, Connecticut.

The programs offered by the Society this year were chosen with the intention to broaden the public's understanding of Greenwich Village. By investigating its diversity, the GVSHP hopes to foster a great appreciation for this remarkable community, and an understanding of why its history and its architecture must be preserved.

### Education Committee

Anthony Zunino, Chair. Shelly Fremont, Pi Gardiner, Elinor Ratner, Vicki Weiner, members.

With its mission to educate children, the committee has spent the past year strengthening the existing Elementary School Program by providing lectures, walking tours, and Old Merchant's House tours to nearly 300 children in 14 New York area schools during the 1993-94 school year. Newcomers to the program include Brandt School in Hoboken and United Nations International School. The committee is researching new ways to inspire children to an

early understanding of the Village's history and architecture. It is proud to report that grants have been received from the NYU Community Fund and the Chase Neighborhood Grant Program to develop a new series of free Saturday walking tours for children, slated for summer 1995.

### Preservation Committee

Richard B. Barnett and Jack Meserole, co-Chairs. Penelope Bareau, Regina Kellerman, Alan Neumann, Bob Thomas, Vicki Weiner, members.

In its first year, the committee has begun informing Trustees and members on preservation issues affecting the Village, and is researching ways to continue the Society's advocacy for the preservation of the Village waterfront. Committee members will act as liaisons between the GVSHP and other preservation organizations.

This fall, the committee will host a new program for the Society. A series of monthly week-night open meetings will feature architects, planners, developers, and city officials who will address specific preservation issues that directly affect the Village. The community may engage in an informal discussion with the people whose work can assist in, or be detrimental to, Village preservation. This "Preservation Cafe" will emphasize conversation; each speaker will briefly outline issues and answer questions raised by those assembled. The fall issue of *The Anthemion* will include an invitation to September's "Preservation Cafe."

### Membership & Finance Committees

Judith Stonehill, Chair.  
Elinor Ratner, Treasurer

The finance committee estimates 1994 expenses of \$77,500. Sources of income include membership, project funding, fundraising events, and non-member programs. The committees wish to acknowledge Senator Manfred Ohrenstein, sponsor of a \$10,000 grant from the 1993-94 State budget through the Natural Heritage Trust. Senator Ohrenstein has long been a great supporter and dedicated friend of the GVSHP.

Membership support, vital to general operations, continues to provide a solid base. Sincerest (continued)

## GREENWICH VILLAGE SOCIETY FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION

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Vicki Weiner

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## MAJOR CONTRIBUTORS SINCE JUNE 1993

### Individuals

Richard B. Barnett, Cora Cahan & Bernard Gersten, Barbara & Myron Cohen, Robert I. Cohen, Nan & Richard Davis, Colette & Paul Douglas, Joseph A. Doyle, Gordon F. DuGan, Vivian & Edwin Fancher, Christopher Forbes, Laura M. Graham Forbes, Timothy Forbes, Shelly & Vincent Fremont, Stephen Friedman, Mr. & Mrs. Leandro S. Galban, Jr., Margaret Halsey Gardiner, Elizabeth & Jonathan Greenburg, Tiziana & Hugh Hardy, Mr. & Mrs. George DeLancey Harris, Jr., Martin Hutner, Laurie Johnston, Jerry Kelly, Michael A. Matlock, Michael D. McCarthy, Pauline C. Metcalf, Joanna Migdal, Sandra & Lowell Mintz, Mr. & Mrs. Kendyl K. Monroe, Arlene & Harry Nance, Steven Newhouse, Senator Manfred Ohrenstein, James Ortenzio, Andrew S. Paul, Ellyn & James Stewart Polshek, Elinor G. Ratner, Eugenia & James Ray, Julie & Luis Rinaldini, Tommy B. Rupinski, Alice B. Sandler, Caroline N. Sidnam, Gail P. Sinai & Robert

## Annual Report...

Evans III, Katherine & Kenneth Snelson, Judith & John Jay Stonehill, Arbie R. Thalacker, Pamela Thomas, John Thompson, Henry vanAmeringen, Claude vanItallie, Anne-Marie Wiemer-Sumner, Tracy White, Dorinda & Mark Winkelman, Mr. & Mrs. F. Anthony Zunino III, Anonymous

### Corporations and Foundations

C. O. Bigelow Chemists Inc.\*, Chase Neighborhood Grant Program, Consolidated Edison Company of New York Inc.\*, D'Agostino Supermarkets\*, East Tenth Street Block Association, Felicia Fund, Greenwich Mews Homeowners Association\*, Industrial Heat-Tech Inc.\*, Kanelba & Robilotti\*, Natural Heritage Trust, NYU Community Fund, Pierre Duex Antiques\*, Plumsock Fund, Restaurant Florent\*, Rockrose Development Corporation\*, Scholastic Inc.\*, Tudor Investment Corporation\*, W.P. Carey & Co.\*

\*denotes Business Council member

### Volunteers

Paul Baumgarten, Jerry Berry, Gloria Carbonell, Lynn Domaschko, Paul Haydon, Virginie Martocq, Alice Sandler, Roz Schacter, Derek Trelstad

Lists in formation

Design and Layout: Paul Baumgarten  
Writing and Editing: Vicki Weiner, Jack Meserole  
Additional Editing: Derek Trelstad

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thanks go to all who continue to return as members and invite friends to join, as well as to the many generous real estate brokers who purchase gift memberships for their clients.

The membership committee proudly reports the recent formation of a Business Council, made up of business leaders from throughout the community who act in an advisory capacity. Two informative Council meetings have encouraged dialogue about Village preservation among restaurateurs, real estate brokers and developers, retailers, bankers, and consultants of all kinds. The Council has made helpful suggestions to the GVSHP regarding its mission to preserve the architectural heritage and cultural history of the Village.

### Benefit Committee

*Martin Hutner, Chair. Arlene Nance, Coordinator. Beverly Perkey, Horticultural Committee chair, Penelope Bateau, Keith Corlett, Betsey Greenburg, Tiziana Hardy, Mary Emma Harris, Hilda Hollyer, Patricia Mason, Elinor Ratner, Julie Rinaldini, Brian Sawyer, Rosalyn Schacter, Judith Stonehill, Halsied Welles, members.*

At press time, plans for "Beautiful Gardens & Houses of Greenwich Village" were under way. Special thanks go to Jennifer Bartlett, Richard Berhalter & Michael Stevenson, Cynthia Crane & Ted Story, Hilda Hollyer, Patricia & Francis Mason, Arlene & Harry Nance, Willard B. Taylor, and Richard Urowsky for lending their gardens for the Society's benefit. Thanks also to Barbara & Kendyl Monroe for hosting the

Patrons' dinner after the tour. The event was sold out; the Committee estimates a net profit of \$10,000.

### Nominating Committee

*Elinor Ratner, Chair. Tiziana Hardy, Jack Meserole, Kendyl Monroe, James Stewart Polshek, Julie Rinaldini, Judith Stonehill, members.*

In accordance with the by-laws of the GVSHP, the committee has submitted the following nominations to be voted at the Annual Meeting on June 14, 1994:

Nominated to serve a first three-year term as Trustee: Alan G. Neumann, James Ortensio. Nominated to return as Trustee for an additional three-year term: Penelope Bateau, Margaret Halsey Gardiner, Arlene Nance, James Stewart Polshek, Julie Rinaldini, Anne-Marie Wiemer-Sumner. Nominated to return as Trustee for an additional two-year term: Elizabeth Greenburg, Elinor Ratner.

The committee wishes to acknowledge the many years of dedicated and enthusiastic service of Martin Hutner, who will be retiring from the Board to become an Advisor. It also wishes to extend a heartfelt thank you from the full Board to Kendyl K. Monroe, who will be stepping down as President after four productive years at the post. Mr. Monroe will be succeeded by Judith Stonehill, who was elected President by the Board in May.



THE GREENWICH VILLAGE SOCIETY  
FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION

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