



Annual Village Awards for 1992

The second Annual Village Awards will be presented in June at the Society's Annual Meeting. Nominations are invited from all Society members and friends; please use the nomination form enclosed with this issue of The Anthemion.

The awards honor people and places that have contributed significantly to the quality of Village life. The first recipients in 1991 were Paul Egita, a superintendent on West 12th Street for almost 50 years; First Presbyterian Church for its restoration program; Florent Morellet and Restaurant Florent; the Jefferson Market Garden; the Mercer-Houston Dog Run Association; and Three

Lives & Company Bookstore.

The Awards Committee, which will consider all nominations, consists of Board Vice-President James Stewart Polshek; Board members Penelope Bateau, Richard Barnett, Julie Rinaldini and Judith Stonehill; Executive Director Scott Marshall; Preservation Consultant Dr. Regina M. Kellerman; Kent Barwick, President of the Municipal Art Society; and author Calvin Trillin. Please forward all nominations by April 1, 1992 to the Awards Committee at the address provided on the enclosed form.

December Holiday Event Celebrates Historic Tile Club

On December 12 over 150 friends and members of the Society gathered at No. 58 West Tenth Street to celebrate the illustrious history of this longtime Village landmark. Now the home of the Alexander S. Onassis Center for Hellenic Studies of New York University, No. 58 (built in 1835-36) was the headquarters in the late 19th century for the Tile Club, an artists' club whose membership included Winslow Homer, Augustus Saint-Gaudens, Stanford White, Childe Hassam, Edward Austin Abbey, William Merritt Chase, George Maynard, and J. Alden Weir, among others. In 1890 the building (with its rear house) was purchased by Maitland Armstrong, the well-known designer and developer of opalescent-style stained glass. The house was occupied until 1973 by his son, Hamilton Fish Armstrong, the editor of Foreign Affairs magazine, who spent his entire 80 years there. The Onassis Center for Hellenic Studies purchased the property in 1987.

A highlight of the evening was the recreation of an 1886 drawing by A.B. Frost of the Tile Club fireplace through the generous efforts of Ruth Reininghaus, Kenneth W. Fitch and Al Smith, co-curators of the Salmagundi Club. All three lent paintings, *objets d'art*, and several rare publications about the Tile Club. In addition, seven artists' palettes of original members of the Tile Club were on display from the Salmagundi Club collection. A private collector also loaned an original painting by Tile Club founding member F. Hopkinson Smith to complete the decoration of the room.

Members and friends also had the opportunity to preview the new map of Greenwich Village by Incentra International, Inc. (see related article on page 4). A program detailing the full history of No. 58 West Tenth Street was also distributed to everyone attending.

The Society extends its deepest appreciation to Dr. Speros Vyronis, Director, and Dr. Athena Coronis of the Onassis Hellenic Center of New York University for making it possible for the Society to hold one of its most memorable December Events in their significant historic Village home.



A fireplace in the Tile Club; drawing by A.B. Frost from The Book of the Tile Club, 1886.



The same fireplace today, decorated for the evening by Ruth Reininghaus, Al Smith and Kenneth W. Fitch, co-curators of the Salmagundi Club.

Tony Alfieri



At the December Holiday Event: (l-r) Terry Miller, author of Greenwich Village and How it Got That Way; Society Executive Director Scott Marshall; and newly-elected City Councilmember Tom Duane. Not pictured is newly-elected City Councilmember Antonio Pagan, who also attended the Event.

Tony Alfieri

The Society Surveys Its Membership

During 1991 the Society for the first time mailed out membership surveys to learn more about its members, their interests and their thoughts concerning Society programming and events. From the high number of surveys returned, the Board and staff have determined some of the following information: the vast majority of respondents have been members of the Society for more than 4 years, and two-thirds have been long-term Village residents for more than 10 years. A majority feel that the Society's most important work is as a community watchdog on preservation issues and to present public programs (such as lectures, walking tours and visits to historic interiors). The frequency of the Society's activities was deemed by most to be "about right", while over half of those who responded favored the scheduling of programs at 6:00 PM as the best time of day for their participation.

Almost half of the respondents indicated that they had first learned

about the Society "from a friend"; the Society therefore encourages all its members to continue to invite their friends and neighbors to join and to be a part of our programming and our work.

The results of the membership survey — which are available to anyone by calling the Society's office — will continue to provide the Board of Trustees and staff with important information for both immediate and long range planning purposes. Many thanks to everyone who participated by filling out and returning their survey forms last year.



The anthemion was a standard architectural ornament of the 1830-1850 Greek Revival period in the United States. It abounds in Greenwich Village, especially as a cast-iron cresting atop fences and basement window grilles, and in modified wooden form over doorways.

Millay Centennial Exhibition Tours in February

Two special tours in February will give Society members the opportunity to have an "Inside Look" at the Edna St. Vincent Millay exhibition at the Berg Collection of the New York Public Library. The two tours, led by Francis O. Mattson, the curator of the Berg Collection and of this new exhibition, have been scheduled for February 20th and 25th to coincide with the 100th anniversary of Millay's birth on February 22, 1892.

During her lifetime Millay was America's most famous woman poet and became the first woman to receive the Pulitzer Prize for poetry. She lived for many years at various Village addresses, perhaps the most famous being the 9-1/2-foot-wide house on Bedford Street. Mr. Mattson's special tours will focus on Millay's life in Greenwich Village; following each tour there will be time to view more than 200 items, including original manuscripts, corrected proofs, photographs, and family correspondence, that offer a comprehensive portrait of the poet's life and work.

Space is limited to Society members only and reservations are required. Please call the office at (212) 924-3895 to reserve a place.

Board Notes

RICHARD B. BARNETT, former President of the Society's Board of Trustees from 1987-1991, is the guest of honor at the George Washington Birthday Ball on February 22, 1992. Barnett, a senior partner at Haight, Gardner, Poor & Havens, is being honored with John J. Iselin, President of The Cooper Union. A Village resident since 1954, Barnett is a former member of the Landmarks Committee of Community Board 2, and a current board member of the Society and the Washington Square Association. The ball will be held in the John Snow Room of Bobst Library on Washington Square South. For more information or tickets, please call (212) 764-6330.

JAMES STEWART POLSHEK, Vice-President of the Society, was honored recently in *Time Magazine* for the Best of 1991 in Design for his new headquarters for the Seamen's Church Institute on Water Street in Manhattan. According to *Time* on January 6, 1992: "Instead of creating a boringly deferential pseudo-18th century building, he has both respected tradition and done something entirely original. From a new, neighborly four-story red brick base, Polshek has popped two w-shaped floors clad in a modernist grid of white enameled metal. Such a building could be tricky and meretricious, but Polshek, one of the finest uncelebrated architects working today, is a master of restraint." Mr. Polshek is the head of James Stewart Polshek and Partners, which is located on West 13th Street in the Village.



75-1/2 Bedford Street, where Edna St. Vincent Millay lived from November 1923 until June 1925. She had become the first woman to receive the Pulitzer Prize for poetry in 1923.



Edna St. Vincent Millay, 1933 (photograph courtesy the Estate of Carl Van Vechten, Joseph Solomon, Executor, and the Berg Collection, New York Public Library)

Welcome to New Members

The Greenwich Village Society welcomes the following as its most recent new members: Thomas R. Baird, James Elliott Benjamin, Avis Berman, Noel Black, Annette Blaugrund, Eugene and Miriam Bockman, David Brashear, Adele Chatfield-Taylor and John Guare, Michael Curcio, William W. Donnell, Macy Egerton, Mr. and Mrs. Walter Flamenbaum, Mr. and Mrs. Leandro Galbran, Jill Gill, Lisa Goldberg, Michael L. Greenberg, Greenwich Mews Homeowners Association, Inc., Iola Haverstick, Michael Hourihan, Arlene Lombardo, Anne Minich, Herbert Mitchell, Steve Newhouse, Richard Nicholson, Pat Pons, Linda Rice-Mandigo, Peter Rippon/Rippon Design, Eileen Robert, John Pettit West III/Rockrose Development Corp., Tommie Rupinsky and George Randall, Mimi Salzman, Mr. and Mrs. Leslie Seff, Mr. and Mrs. Robert Segal, Cody Sidnam, Roy Strickland, Arbie Thalacker, Mr. and Mrs. Bill Thompson, Ray Wagner, Alice Ericsson and Robert Wagner, Tracy White, John H. Wilson, William Magee Wynkoop

“A ‘Wildman’s’ View of Greenwich Village” in April

What kind of wild plants are growing in the sidewalk cracks in your neighborhood? Which expected and unexpected plants may be found in Village parks and which — if any — are edible or medicinal? These questions and a host of others will be addressed by noted naturalist “Wildman” Steve Brill on a special springtime walking tour on Wednesday, April 21 from 4:00-6:30 PM. The tour is entitled “A ‘Wildman’s’ View of Greenwich Village”.

Well-known for his wild food and ecology tours in our region’s parks and for his radio show, “Foraging with the ‘Wildman’” on WBAI-FM, Brill is an expert on edible wild plants, herbal lore and environmental issues. He enjoys educating both adults and children through tours, radio, television, art exhibits and publications. A former naturalist for the N.Y.C. Dept. of Parks and Recreation, he is the author of “Shoots and Greens of Early Spring”, covering the first plants to appear in springtime.

In addition to identifying local plants, the “Wildman” will discuss native folklore concerning the peoples who once inhabited the area prior to 1609. Families and children are encouraged to attend this late afternoon tour. At the “Wildman’s” request, no smoking will be allowed at any time on the tour. Space is limited; please call the office at (212)924-3895 for reservations. Fees: \$8 members; \$12 non-members; \$6 children under 12.



Hollis Melton

“Wildman” Steve Brill giving a tour in 1989 to a class from P.S. 124.

Village Archaeology Lecture in May

A new lecture entitled “Greenwich Village — A Decade of Archaeology” will be presented on Thursday, May 7, by Diana Wall, the Director of Archaeology at the South Street Seaport Museum. The lecture, to take place in the Great Hall at The Cooper Union, is being co-sponsored by the Society, the Old Merchant’s House, the South Street Seaport and The Cooper Union, all of which have been involved in Village archaeology during the past ten years.

The lecture focuses on a number of different local digs and shows how archaeology documents the Village’s history from the late 18th century, when the area consisted of farmland and country estates, through the 19th century, when it had become a residential area fully integrated into the growing city.

The urban archaeological sites that will be discussed include Sheridan Square, which was excavated in 1982 under the primary auspices of the Greenwich Village Society as the “Community Dig”; 25 Barrow Street, excavated in 1987 under the sponsorship of New York University; and 253 West 12th Street, excavated in

1990-91 under the auspices of The Cooper Union. In addition, ongoing excavation work at the Old Merchant’s House will be scheduled for tours around the time of the lecture. A postcard reminder will be mailed to members in the weeks prior to the May 7th lecture.



Walter Nugent

The “Community Dig” in Sheridan Square in 1982, sponsored by the Greenwich Village Society for Historic Preservation.

Invite Your Friends and Neighbors to Join the Society

Supporter

- \$35 Individual
- \$60 Family/Dual
- \$100 Contributing
- \$250 Sustaining
- \$500 Sponsoring
- \$1,000 Patron

Business Supporter

- \$50 Contributing
- \$100 Sustaining
- \$500 Patron

Make check payable to:

Greenwich Village Society for Historic Preservation

Membership contributions are tax deductible. Your membership contribution can be doubled if you are employed by a firm with a matching gift program.

Please record my membership as follows:

Name/Name of Business if Applicable

Street

City State Zip

Telephone

Please send membership information to my friend:

Name/Name of Business if Applicable

Street

City State Zip

Telephone

1992 Winter/Spring Calendar of Events

FEBRUARY

Thurs., Feb. 20 12:00 noon *Inside Look:*
Edna St. Vincent Millay Exhibition (tour with Francis Mattson, the curator of the Berg Collection, New York Public Library) Meet outside Room 318, New York Public Library, Fifth Avenue at 42nd Street. Advance reservations required; please call (212) 924-3895.

Tues., Feb 25 4:45 pm Repeat of February 20th Tour
Advance reservations required; please call (212) 924-3895.

APRIL

Wed., Apr. 21 4:00-6:30 pm *Walking Tour:*
A "Wildman's" View of Greenwich Village (Edible and medicinal plants and folklore - historic and present day) with "Wildman" Steve Brill. Meeting location to be announced when advance reservations are made; call (212) 924-3895.

MAY

Thurs., May 7 6:00 pm *Slide Lecture:*
Greenwich Village -- A Decade of Archaeology by Diana Wall, Director of Archaeology, South Street Seaport.
Location: The Great Hall, Cooper Union, 7 East 7th Street. Co-sponsored with the Old Merchant's House, The Cooper Union, and the South Street Seaport

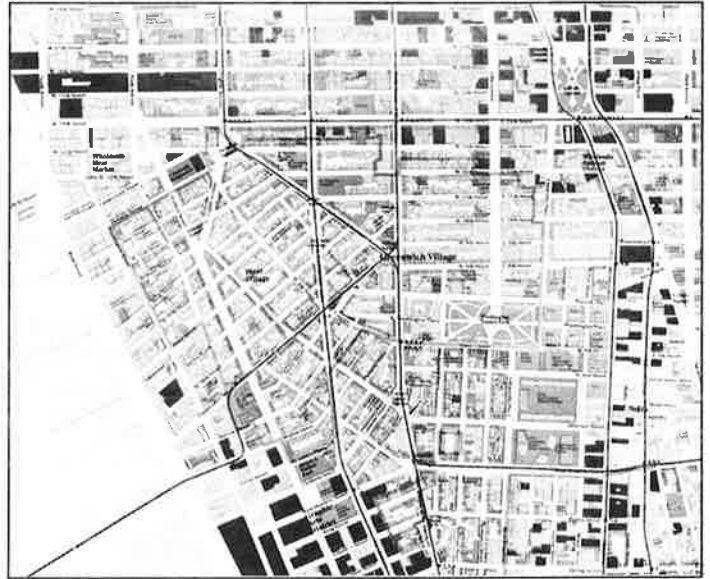
JUNE

date and location **Annual June Meeting and**
to be announced **Second Annual Village Awards**

Special Thanks

Several real estate firms that do business in Greenwich Village have recently started a program of giving new memberships in the Society to their clients who have purchased homes (including cooperatives and condominiums) in the neighborhood. The Society wishes to thank Arlene Nance and Carol Schoening of Ambrose-Mar Elia, Christopher Kanelba and Janet Robiloti of Kanelba & Robiloti, and Patricia Mason of William B. May & Co. Their gift memberships are excellent ways for new residents to learn about the Society and its work and for the Society to realize important support from prominent local businesses.

In addition, a number of Society members have doubled their membership support through matching gift programs at their places of business. The Society wishes to thank Anne M. Eudaly, Annette Fesi, Stephen Friedman, Joel C. Magyar, and Richard W. Reilly for this significant support and to remind other members that their support can also be increased if they are employed by a firm with a matching gift program.



Incentra International, Inc.

New Greenwich Village Map

A new full-color map of Greenwich Village — the most complete and inclusive map of the area ever produced — was recently published by Incentra International, Inc. Measuring 27" by 39", the map contains over 130 landmarks as well as other historical material and photographs. Every Village street, house, lot and institution are clearly delineated. The map (which has a pre-publication price of \$17.97) is available at a special members' price of \$13.99 for Society members. Contact Incentra at (212) 691-7010 for further information.

The new map and the art of mapmaking were the subjects of two special "Inside Looks" last November when several groups of Society members visited Incentra's offices on the former executive floor of the historic Westbeth Building.

Historic Preservation Calendar Available

An Historic Preservation Calendar is published quarterly by the Junior League of the City of New York with the support of the J.M. Kaplan Fund and Henri Bendel. The Calendar's purpose is to increase interest and participation in historic preservation by promoting educational preservation activities in the New York Metropolitan area. Exhibitions, tours, lectures and films which promote increased awareness of historic structures and places are listed.

The Historic Preservation Calendar is available at the introductory rate of \$15.00 for a one-year subscription. Checks may be sent to: The Historic Preservation Calendar, The New York Junior League, 130 East 80th Street, New York, New York 10021.