



THE ANTHEMION

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The Greenwich Village Society for Historic Preservation

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GVSHP Prepares for the Future *Moving to the Neighborhood Preservation Center*

Plans are on schedule for GVSHP's move next spring to the Neighborhood Preservation Center on East 11th Street. It is particularly fitting that GVSHP, which works so diligently to protect Greenwich Village's architectural heritage, will be moving to an historic building designed by the notable architect Ernest Flagg. Built at the turn of the century as a rectory for St. Mark's Church In-the-Bowery, the building is being transformed into the city's first preservation resource center.

In an unprecedented partnership, GVSHP will join two preservation organizations in this venture. The Historic Districts Council, a citywide advocate for New York City's historic neighborhoods, and St. Mark's Historic Landmark Fund, which has directed the restoration of St. Mark's sanctuary and rectory, will become the Greenwich Village Society's partners in creating the Neighborhood Preservation Center.

This new location will help GVSHP to better serve its existing constituency and will also present opportunities for new growth. The larger quarters will include rooms to hold meetings and public educational events, a preservation reference library, and much-needed space for the Society's growing preserva-



tion archive and oral history project. Moving four blocks east will also allow GVSHP to expand its activities, as well as its membership, in the East Village.

Moving day is expected to be in March, with a series of preview events to be held for members during the Spring.

Major financial support for this project includes: a \$675,000 grant from the LuEsther T. Mertz Advised Fund for interior restoration, funds from the New York State Council on the Arts for architectural services, support from the Samuel H. Kress Foundation for program development, and a grant from the New York Landmarks Preservation Commission for the restoration of the stoop.

Initiating "The Next Challenge" Campaign

GVSHP has announced its first major fundraising campaign, with Board of Trustees Vice President F. Anthony Zunino as Chairman of the effort. Appropriately titled "The Next Challenge" campaign, the fundraising goal is \$150,000. A third of the campaign's total has already been pledged.

After a period of tremendous growth and accomplishment, GVSHP is entering a new phase as it moves to the Neighborhood Preservation Center next spring. The fundraising campaign will provide for the expenses associated with moving to the Center, as well as to help ensure that the organization will be finan-

cially secure in the future.

The "Next Challenge" campaign will allow GVSHP to expand its programs to include the South and East Village, invest in its educational programs to ensure their long-term growth and continuance, design a publicly accessible archive for its growing collection of materials related to preservation history, and raise its level of efficiency and professionalism by upgrading their basic office equipment and computer software.

GVSHP membership will shortly be receiving information about "The Next Challenge" campaign.

FROM THE DIRECTOR

As we draw to close another year, it seems appropriate to reflect on all that GVSHP has accomplished in 1998. In my own brief tenure as Executive Director since late April, I am encouraged by what we have been able to achieve in the past eight months alone. This issue of *The Anthemion* highlights several of these accomplishments in detail, but the full story is much richer.

GVSHP's children's education program has been strengthened with the help of a new education coordinator. Howard Stern, an architect with extensive experience in children's education, is now working with GVSHP to teach second through sixth grade children about the unique architecture and history of the Village. The program this fall was a great success. The chill of winter will allow time to plan for a busy spring season.

Gus' Place again welcomed GVSHP members each month for Preservation Café. In October conservationist Kate Burns Ottavino discussed her ongoing work to clean and repair the Washington Arch. In November, Joseph Salvo and Francis Vardy, chief demographers for the City of New York, led us on a fascinating journey through the evolution of the Village's population from the late 1800s to the present.

Walkers got a workout with GVSHP. Historian Steven Jaffe led a tour on foot to the sites of murder and mayhem in Greenwich Village in June. He also led walkers on a tour of the Far West Village, highlighting the many significant structures which remain unprotected by landmarks regulations. GVSHP was pleased to sponsor tours for NYU Parents' Weekend and to offer a free public walking tour in conjunction with Village Heritage Day in September.

GVSHP's advocacy effort remains quite active. The Society's Preservation Committee has been meeting regularly, working to protect the architecturally significant and extremely vulnerable Far West Village, which lies beyond the boundaries of the existing historic district. In addition, the Society provided public testimony and met with numerous community groups regarding a range of preservation issues.

All told, it has been an eventful and productive 1998! The new year promises an even busier

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agenda and fresh challenges, including the move of the GVSHP office from the Salmagundi Club to the Neighborhood Preservation Center in the spring. I do hope you will come and visit us there in 1999!

GVSHP would like to thank our most generous contributors in 1998:

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Ribbon Cutting

Mrs. Astor Dedicates the Jefferson Market Fence

A ribbon-cutting ceremony to celebrate the completion of the Jefferson Market Garden fence was held on October 13th, with Mrs. Brooke Astor as the guest of honor. Parks Commissioner Henry Stern joined representatives from the Greenwich Village Society for Historic Preservation and the Greenwich Village community in thanking the Vincent Astor Foundation for the generous grant that funded the new wrought iron fence.

GVSHP was chosen by the Astor Foundation to administer the project and has worked for the last two years with the Parks Department, the Jefferson Market Library, and the Village Committee for the Jefferson Market Area in coordinating the fabrication and installation of the fence.

Many Greenwich Village residents have expressed their enthusiasm for the handsome new fence. "Mrs. Astor has recognized that the library building and the community created garden embracing it have together made a living historic jewel," said Verna Small, former chair of CB2's Landmark Committee.

"The fence secures Jefferson Market Garden as an open space, and Mrs. Astor can't be thanked enough for this magnifi-

cent gift," declared Bill Bowser, president of the West Village Committee.

Allen Pilikian and Anne Spira, co-chairs of the Village Committee for the Jefferson Market Area, noted that Mrs. Astor was instrumental in the founding of the garden in 1974. One of the most cherished places in Greenwich Village, the garden now draws more than 5,000 visitors each year.



NYC Parks Commissioner Henry Stern and Mrs. Brooke Astor cut the ceremonial ribbon and dedicate the new Jefferson Market Garden fence.

Historic Home Tax Credit

For New York State Homeowners

A bill is now under consideration in the New York State legislature that would provide significant tax credits to owners of historic homes. If enacted, the bill would entitle homeowners to receive as much as 25% credit against state income taxes for substantial rehabilitation of houses listed on the State or National Registers of Historic Places, or those locally designated as individual landmarks or within historic districts.

The bill stipulates that if a local landmark commission approves exterior work, homeowners may receive credit equal to 15% of the cost of rehabilitation work on their state income taxes. If homeowners seek and receive approval for their work on both the exterior and the interior of the house from the New York State

Office of Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation, they would become eligible for a 25% tax credit.

The proposed tax credit would offer a significant incentive for homeowners and developers to invest in historic homes throughout New York City and New York State. Given that much of Greenwich Village is within a locally designated historic district, as well as a National Register historic district, Villagers could have much to gain from this bill.

GVSHP encourages members to write or call their state senator and assembly member early next year to express support for New York's Historic Homeowners Tax Credit.

Saluting Preservation's Past

Celebrating a Milestone in Washington Square Park History

On November 1, 1958 Greenwich Village celebrated a significant victory in the battle to eliminate vehicular traffic from Washington Square Park. A ceremonial "Ribbon-Tying Ceremony" at the Washington Square Arch launched the closing of Washington Square Park to automobile traffic.

Forty years and one day later GVSHP celebrated this accomplishment -- and recognized the many years of dedicated activism that led up to it -- with a public event featuring several individuals with personal recollections of the struggle over the future of Washington Square Park.

Anthony C. Wood (Chairman and Founder of The New York Preservation Archive Project and GVSHP Trustee) provided a historic overview and moderated the discussion. Panelists included: Anthony Dapolito, chairperson of the Community Board at the time; Carol Greitzer, a member of the Village Independent Democrats; Shirley Hayes, who began the fight to eliminate cars and busses from the park; and Norman Redlich, a member of the Joint Emergency Committee. Edith Lyons, who held many organizing meetings in her living room, was unable to attend as a panelist but forwarded a personal statement that was read at that evening.



Shirley Hayes and Norman Redlich were two of the panel members who provided insight into the history of the battle over traffic in Washington Square Park. Photo: Courtesy of Beth Bianculli.

The event was part of GVSHP's Greenwich Village Preservation Archive and Oral History Project, initiated in 1996 in order to document, preserve and interpret the history of the preservation movement in Greenwich Village. By collecting oral histories, clippings, visual materials, personal papers, and documenting public events, GVSHP is piecing together the rich and complex story of grassroots advocacy that has been responsible for preserving Greenwich Village.

GVSHP Honored

GVSHP Receives the New York City Heritage Award

The Museum of the City of New York and Manhattan Borough President C. Virginia Fields recently presented GVSHP with The New York City Heritage Award in recognition of the Society's contributions to the preservation, study, and understanding of the history of New York City.

Only one organization in each of the city's five boroughs was given this award, established by the Museum of the City of New York and Tiffany & Company in celebration of the 100th Anniversary of the consolidation of New York.

A proclamation from Borough President Fields praised GVSHP for its "vital role in researching, preserving, interpreting and presenting the history of

Greenwich Village...Its varied efforts and imaginative work have made the Greenwich Village Society for Historic Preservation an outstanding example of community-based preservation in New York."



Manhattan Borough Historian Caledonia Jones and MCNY Director Robert R. McDonald present citations to GVSHP President Judith Stonehill and former Executive Director Vicki Weiner. Photo: Peter Simmons.

BULLETIN BOARD

RECENT ACQUISITIONS

The Greenwich Village Preservation Archive has received a number of gifts this year, including a wonderful collection of photographs by Nat Kaufman, donated by his son Jonathan. Such gifts are not only a valuable resource for GVSHP but also for researchers coming to use the collection. If you are interested in donating historic images of the Village please call GVSHP at 212-924-3895 for more information.



The Washington Square Art Show, c. 1950 by Nat Kaufman.

NEW LANDMARKS

In June of this year, five Federal Period row-houses were designated individual New York City Landmarks: 281 East Broadway, and 502, 504, 506 and 508 Canal Street. GVSHP advocated for the designation of these buildings which are part of the GVSHP survey of remaining Federal Period Rowhouses in Manhattan.

MYSTERY MEMBER

GVSHP recently received a donation from St. Claire Builder's & contractors LTD., Inc. However, no information was enclosed. GVSHP's efforts to track down this business have proved unsuccessful. If you know how we might be able to contact them, we would love to thank them for their donation!

SAVE THE DATE

Save the Date for GVSHP's Spring Benefit Sunday, April 18
Join GVSHP on an architectural tour of artists studios in the Far West Village.

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Mr. & Mrs. James Stewart Polshek, Preservation League of New York State, Preserv, Kenneth & Linda Preston, Howell Raines, Elinor Ratner, Republic National Bank, Robert Eychner Associates, Inc., Jonathan Russo, Alice B. Sandler, Alan G. Straus & Katherine Schoonover, Timothy Jay Scott, Richard Seeger, Jane Haynes & John Patrick Shanley, Caroline N. Sidnam, Harry F. Smith, Katherine & Kenneth Snelson, Robert Snider, Gian Solomon, Mr. & Mrs. Monroe Sonnenborn Barbara Spiegel Square Arch Realty Corp. St. Claire Builders & Contractors LTD., Inc. Stribling Wells & Gay, Judith & John Stonehill, Eve Stuart, Jack Taylor, Willard B. Taylor, Arbie Thalacker & Deborah Garrett, Van Itallie Foundation, Village Alliance BID, Village Center for Care, Village Community School, Anthony & Maria Walsh, Arnold Warwick, Debbie Weiner, John Petit West, Clark & Diane Whelton, Wine & Food Associates, Dorinda & Mark Winkelman, Fred Wistow, Anthony C. Wood, Linda Yowell, and Mr. & Mrs. F. Anthony Zunino.

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

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GVSHP

GREENWICH VILLAGE
SOCIETY FOR
HISTORIC PRESERVATION

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Food and Thought

The People and Places of Greenwich Village

Food and Thought, the newest program organized by GVSHP, was inspired by the legendary artists and writers of Greenwich Village. This series has invited GVSHP members and friends to have dinner in a Village restaurant and to hear a talk on some interesting aspect of the history and culture of this neighborhood.

In October, author and art historian Avis Berman discussed the history of the Whitney Museum of American Art in its early years on West 8th Street. The dinner was held at Volare Restaurant, the site of the Whitney

Studio Club in 1918, when artists used to drop by "to read or use the ouija board in the library, draw from life or play at billiards, and eventually show their work."

The "Beat Generation" was the subject of the previous program, with author and historian Steven Watson talking about Allen Ginsberg, William Burroughs, and Jack Kerouac. The dinner was appropriately held at the Minetta Tavern, a favorite hang-out of the Beats.

The next Food and Thought program is being planned for early next year.

A Most Appetizing Arch

A Gingerbread Masterpiece

GVSHP submitted an award-winning entry to the First Annual Holiday Gingerbread Competition, co-sponsored by the World Monuments Fund and the Municipal Art Society. The Society's gingerbread rendition of the Washington Arch was named "Most Appetizing" by a panel of judges that included: Margot Gayle, Paul Goldberger, Tony Wood and Jacques Torres (pastry chef from Le Cirque).

GVSHP thanks its team members: Penelope Bareau, Susan De Vries, Martha Flach, Sharon Frederick, Kim Kearns, and Felicia Mayo.



Kim Kearns puts some finishing touches on the Washington Arch. Photo: Penelope Bareau.