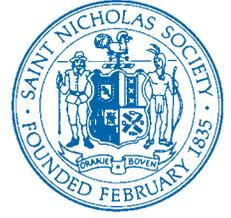


# The Weathercock



No. 64

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FALL 2005

## PAAS FESTIVAL BENEFITS ST. MARK'S IN-THE-BOWERY

The Paas Festival, on Friday, April 1, 2005, took place this year at India House, on Hanover Square, in the heart of old New York. The black-or-white-tie dinner dance was a benefit for St. Mark's Church in-the-Bowery, and the high point of the evening was the presentation to Father Torres, Rector of St. Mark's, and to Stephen Facey, Acting Chairman of St. Mark's Historic Landmark Fund, of a check for \$5,000 to put the church over the top of the funding needed for finishing roof work. President William R. Follett made the presentation, which was accepted with gracious speeches by Father Torres and by Mr. Facey.

St. Mark's was built in 1799 on the site of the family chapel of Peter Stuyvesant, Governor of New Netherland. He and many members of his family are interred in the vaults and burial grounds of the church. The church suffered a devastating fire in 1978, and underwent extensive restoration work from 1978 to 1984. The present roof work continues much-needed maintenance of the historic fabric so that the parish can keep up its work serving the neighborhood and the city. The Saint Nicholas Society has a long history of association with St. Mark's; many early members of the Society were parishioners, and are buried there, and for



After accepting a check for \$5,000 from President William R. Follett, Rev. Julio Torres (with microphone) thanked the Society on behalf of St. Mark's Church. Also in photo are Stephen Facey, Acting Chairman of St. Mark's Historic Landmark Fund (left) and John McC. Shannon, Chairman of the Paas Festival (right)

many years the Society held an annual church service at St. Mark's.

The Paas Festival ("Paas" being the Dutch word for Easter) began with cocktails and gourmet hors d'oeuvres in a suite of rooms hung with 19th-century marine paintings, of which India House has a superb collection. Nearly 100 persons attended. One Saint Nicholas member arrived wearing a top hat and opera cape, and carrying an imposing brass-knobbed walking stick.

After the call to dinner, and opening of ceremonies by Chief Steward Joseph vanBeuren Wittmann III, and President

William R. Follett, grace was said by the Society chaplain, the Reverend Thomas F. Pike, who included prayers for Pope John Paul II, then gravely ill (he died at the Vatican on Saturday evening, April 2). John McC. Shannon, Chairman of the Paas Festival Committee, was master of ceremonies for the evening. Traditional toasts were offered, beginning with one to the Queen of the Netherlands, followed by the Dutch national anthem. The Honorable Cora Minderhoud, Consul General of the Netherlands, offered an acknowledgement. The toast to the President of the United States was followed by the "Star-Spangled Banner." Music for the evening was energetically rendered by the Alex Donner Band.

Chief Steward Joe Wittmann III led the traditional procession of the Society's treasured weathercock. It has been in the possession of the Society since at least 1848, when it was mentioned as having been "lately" donated by Washington Irving. (In a later article we hope to provide further details on the provenance and antiquity of our famous bird.)

On the tables stood brightly colored bags, containing favors for each guest, including an item (such as a carafe, or a mug) with the Saint Nicholas emblem. Also included was a booklet published by the British Memorial Garden Trust (a contributor to the Paas Festival) about the history of Hanover Square (text by member Francis J. Sypher); and a copy of *Palm Beach Journal*, a magazine filled with glamorous photos and lively articles (the publisher was a contributor to the event). In the center of each table

*Continued on next page*

## Eight Inducted at Spring Meeting



President Follett poses with the newly inducted members. From left to right: Floyd Smith Sanford III, Frederick Lloyd Baker III, Brent Tappan Blake, Ronald R. Atkins, Bill Follett, George Rudd Mackenzie, Graham Phillips Sultan, Adam Van Doren and Southwick Cary Briggs

See related story on page 4

### NEW WEB SITE

Thanks to great efforts by Barry C. Howard, with assistance from Bill Follett, John Shannon, and many others, the new web site is now running. We are most grateful to Barry for his efforts, and to all who helped out.

Please see the results at:  
[www.saintnicholassociety.org](http://www.saintnicholassociety.org)

# Paas Festival

*Continued from front page*

stood a large, festively-wrapped mystery item, which to one guest looked as if it might be either a dinosaur egg or a coconut, but it was neither. It was a large Perugina chocolate Easter egg standing balanced on one end, waiting to be claimed as a prize by the winner of the traditional egg-cracking contest, for which each table was provided with a bowl of boiled eggs dyed in orange and blue.

As Saint Nicholas members know, each guest chooses an egg, and then knocks it against someone else's egg, until one egg is cracked, while the other remains intact. After everyone at the table has matched off, one unscathed egg identifies the victor at the table, and claimant of the table prize. Winners from individual tables then meet in the center of the room and repeat the egg-cracking ritual until there remain two finalists with intact eggs. The contest was spurred on by Festival Chairman John Shannon, who traveled from table to table with words of encouragement for egg combatants. The result of the finalists' friendly battle decides the winner. Mrs. Robert A. Naud received, as first prize, a large box, wrapped in orange paper and blue ribbon, and containing four decorative wineglasses. The runner-up was Dennis Leigh White, who also received a bright orange box containing decorative glass items.

The evening concluded with dancing until near midnight. Generous contributions were made by a number of guests, among whom were: (as Guarantor) R. Brandon Fradd; (as Founder) George H. McNeely IV; (as Grand Patrons) Stephen Bates Billick, Mr. & Mrs. Charles Neuhauser, Mr. & Mrs. Samuel D. Williams, and Mr. & Mrs. Joseph vanB. Wittmann, Jr.; (as Patrons) Stephen Facey, Mr. & Mrs. John C. Harvey, William Potter Johns, Dr. & Mrs. Robert A. Naud, W. Donald Redfern, Mr. & Mrs. Dennis L. White; (as Contributors) Stephen H. Bacon, Jr., Daniel Baldini, Barbara & Peter Brinkley, Eugene L. Church, John Elliott, Jr., Budd Hallberg, Peter A. Hinrichs, John W. Malcolm, Mr. & Mrs. Dennis McCrary, Daniel Ward Seitz, Dean Waldron Smith, MD, Jill Spiller, Richard B. Vietor, The British Memorial Garden Trust, and Palm Beach Journal (list incomplete).

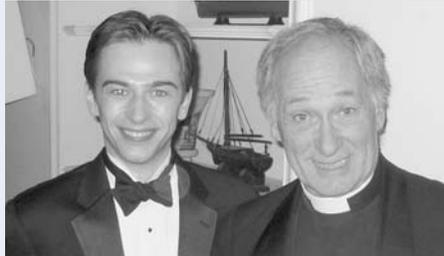
Members of the Paas Festival 2005 Committee were: John McC. Shannon, Chairman, Stephen Bates Billick, MD, Arthur Walker and Nicolette Bingham, William R. Follett, R. Brandon Fradd, John Mauk Hilliard, William Potter Johns, George H. McNeely IV, the Rev. Thomas F. Pike, W. Donald Redfern, and Samuel D. Williams.



*Dutch Consul General Cora Minderhoud with President William R. Follett*



*Jill Spiller and Francis J. Sypher, Jr.*



*Anton Konikoff and the Rev. Thomas F. Pike, DD*



*Jerry Long, Maria Torres, President William R. Follett, and the Rev. Julio Torres, Rector of St. Mark's Church in-the-Bowery*



*Jennifer Wittmann, Barbara Wittmann, Joseph vanB. Wittmann, Jr., Rachel Wittmann Maher, Joseph vanB. Wittmann III and Charles Maher*



*Peter and Barbara Brinkley; Mrs. Brinkley is President of the Society of Daughters of Holland Dames*



*John C. Harvey and Erika De Wyllie Billick*



*Lynn and Victor DuPont with Barbara Follett*



*Megan Hadalski and Brian A. Blake*

# 43 Years of *The Weathercock*, 1962-2005

The masthead of the present issue of *The Weathercock* shows on the left-hand side a small but significant new item: a series number, indicating that this is “No. 64”: that is, the 64th consecutive issue since the publication began in 1962. Simple as it seems, this number is the result of a considerable amount of research. A first examination of the *Weathercock* files at the office revealed that at certain periods our publication had appeared irregularly, or not at all, and without volume or issue numbers. At the same time, it was apparent that the files were lacking several numbers that had obviously been part of the series. Thus, it was not at first clear how many issues had been published over the years. A further complication was that two issues turned out to have been inadvertently printed with erroneous volume or issue numbers, and it required some investigation to identify their proper place in the chronological sequence.

Two groups of sources helped provide answers: institutional collections (as at the library of the New York Genealogical and Biographical Society), and runs of issues kept by Saint Nicholas members in their private libraries. Several members were especially generous in sharing information, and in donating copies of missing numbers. Thanks to very kind help from Brian P. T. Blake, Robert G. Collier, John McC. Shannon, Kent L. Straat, and Nicholas D. Ward, I have been able to assemble not only a detailed history of our journal, but also a virtually complete file for the office. Note that we are still missing the issue for October 1963 (vol. 2, no. 1).

For many years after the founding of The Saint Nicholas Society in 1835, there was no newsletter, although there were yearbooks and other publications, as for example of lectures and addresses before the Society. However, city newspapers often published reports on Society events; and articles on the Society appeared from time to time in illustrated magazines, e.g. *Frank Leslie's Illustrated*, vol. 34, no. 864 (April 20, 1872) (Paas Festival), or *Harper's Weekly*, vol. 21, no. 1096 (December 29, 1877) (Feast of St. Nicholas dinner).

At that time most Saint Nicholas members lived in or near New York City, and communication took place easily (without cell phones, or e-mail links). By 1962, however (when *The Weathercock* began publication), many members were living in suburbs, having followed a trend that began in the late 19th century, and intensified in the decades after 1900; by the 1950s and 1960s there



had been, in effect, a mass migration out of the “inner city,” as it had come to be called. Furthermore, in years following World War II, Saint Nicholas members tended increasingly, after retirement, to move to distant locations, as for example, to Florida, or to the American Southwest.

Under these conditions, *The Weathercock* has served as a convenient forum where members can keep in touch with activities, even though they may live in more or less far-flung locations, and may not be able to attend events as often as they might like. *The Weathercock* also provides a medium for maintaining a chronology of events, for announcing names of new members, and for recording necrology.

The name of our journal, *The Weathercock*, alludes of course to the antique metal vane that is traditionally paraded at Saint Nicholas dinners. It has been (as mentioned in the article on the Paas Festival) in the possession of the Society since at least 1848; in a later article we hope to provide further details. But it might be mentioned for the moment (since the circumstance is perhaps not generally known) that one reason why the weathercock had special significance for Irving and for our Society is that in Irving's *The Alhambra* (1832) there is a passage about an ancient Moorish ruin known as “*la casa del Gallo de Viento*,” that is, “the House of the Weathercock.”

To quote our author, it was so called “from a bronze figure on one of its turrets, in ancient times, of a warrior on horseback, and and turning with every breeze. This weathercock was considered by the Moslems of Granada a portentous talisman. According to some traditions, it bore the following Arabic inscription: ‘Calet el Bedici Aben Habuz, / Quidat ehahet Lindabuz.’ Which has been rendered into Spanish: ‘Dice el Sabio Aben Habuz, / Que así se defiende el Anduluz.’ And into English: ‘In this way,

says Aben Habuz the wise, / Andaluz guards against surprise.’” (I must say that I am struck by a resemblance of this legendary bronze warrior to Don Quixote de la Mancha, turning with “every breeze” on his fantastic adventures.)

In Irving's story, “The Legend of the Arabian Astronomer,” in *The Alhambra*, the bronze horseman is said normally to have stood “facing the city, as if keeping guard over it; but if any foe were at hand, the figure would turn in that direction and would level the lance as if for action.” Herein lies the source of our tradition that the Saint Nicholas weathercock stands facing northeast, to warn New Yorkers of incursions from New England. Irving aficionados among us are doubtless well aware of these antecedents, but I confess to having been totally ignorant of them until I happened to notice them recently while reading *The Alhambra*; I am not aware that these details have been pointed out in print before (perhaps because they have been considered so obvious and well-known as not to require mention).

The first *Weathercock*, the issue for October 1962 (vol. 1, no. 1), was a 4-page publication in 5 1/2 by 8 1/2-inch format (a letter-sized sheet of printed orange paper, folded in half). John David Lannon was at that time president of the Society (1962-1964). On the front page appeared a decorative border (similar to the one shown in our *150 Year Record*, p. 9). The issue contained brief announcements of coming events and dates, with concise news of meetings and membership. Issues in this style appeared three times a year, in February, May, and October: 19 numbers through October 1968 (vol. 7, no. 1).

With the issue of February 1969 (vol. 7, no. 2), *The Weathercock* began to appear in a larger format, 8 1/2 by 11 (on orange paper; 9 issues thus). A new design was initiated

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## Members Inducted at Spring Meeting

The Spring Stated Meeting held on 19 May at the Racquet & Tennis Club was notable both for the high number of inductees and for the address by Ashbel Green, who spoke about his book, *My Columbia: Reminiscences of Columbia Life*. The book was recently published in connection with the celebration of the 250th anniversary of the founding in 1754 of King's College, now Columbia University.

The Society's induction process is unusual among lineage groups and verges on entertainment. The ritual requires the Chairman of the Admissions Committee to divulge biographical details and other interesting information about the new members, generally in a humorous way. Few do this better than the current Chairman, George H. McNeely IV, who is blessed with a natural and spontaneous style which is, however, the result of careful preparation and research.



*Ashbel Green conversing with President William R. Follett*



*R. Brandon Fradd and William P. Johns*



*W. Traylor McLellan and William M. Manger, Jr.*



*A cluster of Blakes: Brian A. Blake, Brent T. Blake, and Brian P. T. Blake*



*David N. Platt, Carla Darlington, Henry Darlington and Marguerite Platt*



*Past President John M. Baker*



*John Mauk Hilliard and Hayden S. Baker*

Mr. McNeely was unable to perform his duty at the meeting due to a scheduling conflict. Fortunately (or unfortunately), Mr. John McC. Shannon, First Vice President, was prevailed upon to stand in for the absent Chairman. It therefore fell to him emulate Mr. McNeely as best he could and breezily describe the eight inductees that night: Ronald R. Atkins; Frederick L. Baker III; Brent Tappan Blake; Southwick Cary Briggs; Floyd Smith Sanford III; Graham Phillips Sultan; Adam Van Doren; and Charles Rudd Mackenzie. And a fine collection of new inductees it was.

President Follett introduced the evening's distinguished speaker, Ashbel Green after the "show." Mr. Green is a vice president and senior editor at Alfred A. Knopf, where he has worked since 1964. A 1950 graduate of Columbia College with an M.A. in Eastern European History from the university, he has edited books by George Bush, Walter Cronkite, Andrei Sakharov, and Gabriel García Márquez, among others.

*My Columbia* tells of the pleasures and disappointments, the challenges and rewards, the diversions and serious issues facing those who have studied and taught at Columbia. A wealth of personal recollection, it portrays various eras at America's great urban university through the eyes of more than forty writers (and one artist), many of whom, in one sense or another, came of age at Columbia and in New York.

## Membership Party

It was a most gratifying to attend the successful and delightful membership party hosted for the Society by Joie and Dennis Delafield on February 1 at their beautiful Park Avenue penthouse. The place was positively crowded with familiar and unknown faces. Newcomers, friends, potential candidates and legacies were everywhere. It was gratifying to see old friends (some of which one had not seen in quite a while and had come from a great distance) and to meet new ones drawn by the dazzling prospect of joining our venerable Society.



*The host of the event, J. Dennis Delafield, conversing with Kent Barwick*



*George R. Mackenzie and Scott MacWhinney*

St. Nickers always behave impeccably, especially with strangers, but when it is a "membership party" and the drinks are flowing liberally, as they were, one can legitimately worry about something going awry and one thinks about the age-old stricture about not frightening the horses.

Helping to maintain the dignity of the proceedings was the Society's distinguished management, led by President Bill Follett, who embodies all that is good about the Saint Nicholas Society. Among his entourage were all the vice presidents (John Shannon, John Blake, John Hilliard, and George McNeely); the Secretary (Stephen Billick); and, for good measure, the Treasurer (William Johns). Former and present stewards were sprinkled about for added security.

In the end, heavy enforcement of good order was not required. Not only did everyone behave creditably but everyone also had a wonderful time and it will be amazing if the party does not produce a cluster of candidates for the May stated meeting. We are indebted to the Delafields for graciously hosting the affair and helping to insure the Society's future by entertaining so many prospective future members in their handsome residence.

# WINTER STATED MEETING AT CHRISTIE'S

Christie's galleries, 20 Rockefeller Plaza, provided the elegant setting for the 170th winter stated meeting of the Saint Nicholas Society, on Thursday, February 17, 2005. President William R. Follett made a brief introduction including an unforgettable anecdote about a thirsty cat and a dish of milk served upon a rare piece of antique porcelain. Next, the business of the meeting was dispatched with due respect and admirable expedition. The Reverend Barry Christopher Howard, a new member, came all the way from Denver, Colorado to be inducted into the Society.

Our host at Christie's, George H. McNeely IV, 4th vice president of the Society, as well as chairman of the Admissions Committee, gave us an informative tour of the current exhibition of works of impressionist and modern art, including paintings by Edouard Vuillard, Armand Guillaumin, André

Dunoyer de Segonzac, Suzanne Valadon, Félix Vallotton, and others. George commented on the distinctive subject matter of the impressionists, as for example in a painting of a factory by the Oise River, *L'Usine au bord de l'Oise* (1905), by Gustave Loiseau (1865-1935). At a large industrial complex on the river bank, black smoke is billowing out of several tall stacks. Such a subject contrasts with the mythological, historical, and religious scenes favored in traditional academic painting, or with the pastoral scenes favored by traditional landscape artists. The impressionists, on the other hand, were consciously celebrating modern technology, while recording scenes of contemporary life.

George also explained key points about two sides of the eternal equation that drives the art market (and indeed all markets), the buyer and the seller. For the art buyer, the

internet has become a valuable resource for finding out what is available, at what range of prices. Collectors can also post want lists, so that one can be instantly notified whenever a work of the desired kind comes on the market. From the seller's side, one of the first questions one might ask, is what sort of price a particular item might bring. George advises sellers to photograph works of art, and have the photos available to show to an expert, for an initial evaluation of sales potential.

The hall was a clean, well-lighted place (to borrow a Hemingway phrase), perfect for showing art works, and for our reception as well, with an open bar and artfully presented hors d'œuvres. Ice cubes clinked, bubbles glittered, cameras flashed, the highly polished floor glowed, and impressionist pictures silently looked on, as Saint Nicholas members gathered under the brilliant track lights.



*Michael S. de L. Neill, Daniel S. Curtis and Craig H. Weaver*



*The scene at Christie's in New York*



*Roger M. L. Schmitt, W. Seton Ijams and Brian A. Blake*



*George H. McNeely IV, John P. T. Blake and William M. Manger, Jr.*



*The Rev. Barry C. Howard was inducted into the Society by President William R. Follett*



*Dr. Francis P. Powers, Jr., Susan and Samuel Williams*



*Andrew B. Jones*



*Dr. Stephen B. Billick and John Mauk Hilliard*



*Gordon C. Wilcox and Boo Grace*



*R. Brandon Fradd and John McC. Shannon*



*President William R. Follett at the podium*

## 43 Years

Continued from page 3

with the number for November 1972 (vol. 11, no. 1). This had heavy orange covers showing a large weathercock logo, while the contents, on white or off-white stock, included articles of permanent historical and scholarly interest, as well as news of the Society, and photos taken at events. *The Weathercock* still served as a newsletter, but it was also aspiring to be, at least in part, a historical journal. Society President Robert Leighton Crawford (1970-1972) encouraged this development as a contribution toward our constitutional mandate to “collect and preserve information respecting the history, settlement, manners, etc., of the City of New York.” *The Weathercock* continued to be issued three times a year, normally in March, June, and November.

L. George Van Syckle edited *The Weathercock* from around 1971 until around 1976 (when he was awarded the President’s Medal for his service). Alexander O. Burnham, Jr. (elected in 1974) was editor from June 1977 (vol. 14, no. 1) through Autumn 1979 (vol. 16, no. 2); by this time, publication frequency had been reduced to two issues annually, one in the spring, and one in the fall (as at present).

With the Spring 1979 number, *The Weathercock* began to sport a pictorial cover, with a different decorative design for each successive issue. During the 1980s editors included Robert G. Collier, Nicholas King, and Brian P. T. Blake. Several issues from the 1980s have a dozen or more pages, and include historical articles, coverage of Society events, editorial comments, and reproductions of old prints. However, because of the time, effort, and expense in-

volved in producing copy for such issues, the numbers began to appear less frequently, down to May 1991 (vol. 20, no. 3). After this, no further numbers were published until the fall of 1995 (that was the last in the journal-style format; it had no designated volume or issue number).

With the issue for May 1996 *The Weathercock* began to appear in the present newsletter format; the intention since then has been to publish on a twice-a-year basis (spring and fall), although it has not always been possible to keep up with this schedule. One reason *The Weathercock* has at certain periods appeared somewhat irregularly, is that it has been edited and produced almost entirely by members working on a volunteer basis, and editors have not always had time available for it.

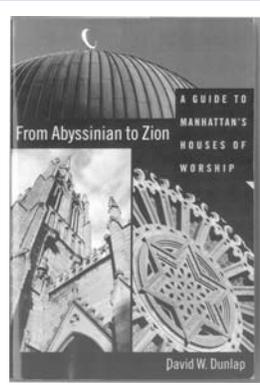
Francis J. Sypher, Jr.

## Book Review

### *From Abyssinian to Zion: A Guide to Manhattan’s Houses of Worship*

David W. Dunlap

New York: Columbia University Press, 2004  
Pp. lxxiv + 391  
Price: \$24.95 (paperback);  
\$69.50 (cloth hardcover)



from the past; but with so much generous detail being given, one has the impression that coverage is even wider. This impression is reinforced by the presence of a 50-page index, in double columns of small type. The title refers to the opening article, on the famous

Abyssinian Baptist Church, where Adam Clayton Powell, Sr. was a preacher, as was his son, Adam Clayton Powell, Jr., a congressional representative from New York, and for years a prominent figure on the national political scene. The list ends with Zion-St. Mark’s Lutheran Church, at 339 East 84th Street. One might perhaps expect to see Zion and St. Timothy’s Church (Episcopal) listed last, but since the church no longer has its own building, it appears with St. Matthew’s (merger in 1922).

A number of houses of worship are of special interest to Saint Nicholas members, for family associations, for example: the King’s Chapel (as it was known under the British; earlier the Reformed Dutch Church in the fort at New Amsterdam), built in 1642 by Governor Kieft, and served by Everardus Bogardus as minister (ancestor of many Saint Nicholas members, past and present); Congregation Shearith Israel (“Remnant of Israel”; burial ground with gravestones dating from 1683, at Chatham Square; synagogue from 1730 on Mill Street, present-

day South William Street; served from 1768 by Rabbi Gershom Mendes Seixas, a professor of Hebrew, and a Columbia trustee; his nephew Jacob Benjamin Seixas was a Saint Nicholas member, as have been numerous others connected with this distinguished family); St. George’s Chapel of Trinity Parish (built in 1752 on Beekman Street; demolished in 1868; predecessor of St. George’s Church, since 1976 merged with Calvary and with Holy Communion, as Calvary and St. George’s Church); and the Collegiate Church of St. Nicholas, (where Theodore Roosevelt, mayor of the City of New York, governor of the State of New York, and president of the United States; also a Saint Nicholas member, along with many others from the Roosevelt family, attended church as a boy; 48th Street and Fifth Avenue; demolished in 1949).

This book offers a festival of browsing. One feels (changing metaphors) like an armchair tourist (the author has already done the walking for us) as one reads about hundreds of houses of worship that one has visited or walked past over the years. At the same time, one becomes a time-traveler in New York City history, which is implicit in the history of these structures. Here one can learn more about them than one would have imagined possible ever to find included in any book, much less in a single conveniently-sized paperback volume. If after dipping into these pages, one decides to go out and pay a call on some favorite places, whether still standing

Continued on next page

St. Mark’s Church in-the-Bowery is one of 1,079 Manhattan houses of worship, past and present (an amazingly extensive coverage), profiled in this wonderful volume that combines historical scholarship, architectural expertise, original photography (by the author), connoisseurship of old prints, and lively prose style. Added to these qualities is the author’s astonishing patience and persistence in traversing hundreds of miles of New York streets during years of research on this project, which dates from 1991. David W. Dunlap is especially known for his articles on architecture and related subjects for *The New York Times*; and for the text and photography in his *On Broadway: A Journey Uptown over Time* (Rizzoli, 1990), a comprehensive historical and architectural survey of New York’s greatest street.

According to the author’s introduction, *From Abyssinian to Zion* includes descriptions of 654 present-day houses of worship; also discussed are 425 houses

## Book Review

*Continued from previous page*

and in use, or whether ghosts of their former selves, turned over to secular use, and strangely transformed, one can handily carry the book along as a guide to one's tour, with maps (ingeniously arranged and keyed), and addresses, and all the practical information one might require.

One finds, for example, that a familiar cinema, the Waverley Theater, at 325 Avenue of the Americas (near West 4th Street), was once the Union Reformed Church (the author's keen eye noticed the peaked roof, and upon investigation discovered the history of the structure). On the other hand, one may encounter a structure once a movie theater, now a house of worship, such as Reverend Ike's United Palace, at 175th Street and Broadway, formerly a Loew's movie palace (pronounced either as if "low's," the more decorous pronunciation, or as if "lowey's," as by some die-hard, populist New Yorkers). A former Trans-Lux movie theater is the present home of Congregation Shaaray Tefila (see below).

Several houses of worship took on strikingly incongruous secular identities. Holy Communion's original building, at 47 West 20th Street, was sold in 1976 and became the notorious Limelight disco, closed in 1996. The Church of the Disciples of Christ in 1860 occupied on West 28th Street a structure that after being sold in 1888 became the Everard Bathhouse, which enjoyed a louche repute until it burned in 1977. St. Agnes Chapel (formerly at 92nd Street, near Columbus Avenue), a magnificent chapel of ease of Trinity Wall Street, opened in 1892, and was sold in 1943 and

demolished (including its Tiffany mosaics) in 1944 so the site could be used as a football field (the area is now occupied by buildings of Trinity School, which include the former St. Agnes parish house, the only remaining part of the extensive building complex of the chapel).

Dunlap in his capsule histories applies his wide-ranging knowledge and research to reveal fascinating metamorphoses (change over time is one of several carefully-developed themes that tie the accounts together into a unified book, rather than a mere compilation of data). Not only have structures undergone transitions from secular to religious use, and vice versa, but also transitions from one denomination or one faith to another, as neighborhood populations have shifted, especially on the Lower East Side (and environs), which has seen many waves of new immigration since its original development in the 18th century. To me, that neighborhood is one of the richest and most rewarding for a strolling house-of-worship enthusiast; Harlem is another—as Langston Hughes says: "there is so much to see in Harlem" (in *The Sweet Flypaper of Life*, 1955).

One might begin a Lower East Side tour at St. Teresa's, at 141 Henry Street, built in 1841/42 as a new home for the Rutgers Presbyterian Church (founded in 1797/98); in 1863 the building was sold for use by a Roman Catholic parish, and remains such today; in the streetscape the building presents an impressive visual focus near Straus Square and Seward Park. The attractively austere structure of the Bialystoker Synagogue (named for a Polish locality, Bialystok), 7 Bialystoker Place, began life as the Willett Street Methodist Church (1826).

The Seventh Street Methodist Church (built in 1836 at 30 East 7th Street) was taken over by the parish of St. George Ukrainian Catholic Church in 1911; the building was demolished in the mid-1970s to make way for the parish's present structure on the site, across the street from Surma (11 East 7th Street; a store that sells Ukrainian Easter eggs, cards, and other items), and also near McSorley's Old Ale House (15 East 7th Street), where the sightseer, without stepping out of history, can pause for a break during a walk uptown from the old Lower East Side.

On the way northward, one might pass the home of Congregation Tifereth Israel (Glory of Israel), 334 East 14th Street, which was built as the First German Baptist Church (1866); later the Ukrainian Autocephalic Orthodox Church of St. Volodymyr, before the site was taken over by its present owner, while St. Volodymyr moved to the Upper West Side, to occupy former home of Congregation Shaaray Tefila (Gates of Prayer), at 160 West 82nd Street. Meanwhile Shaaray Tefila moved to its present site at 250 East 79th Street (corner of Second Avenue), in a building that originally went up as a movie theater, and was for a time the local Trans-Lux; thus the building, once part of a cinema chain, is now a link in an unexpected chain of surprising transformations.

*From Abyssinian to Zion* shows an enduring aspect of the immense vitality of our ever-changing city, more popularly thought of perhaps in terms of banks, stores, office buildings, and other "temples of Mammon," but generously endowed with structural witnesses to the variety and energy of its omnipresent spiritual life.

## SALMAGUNDI

**Queen Wilhelmina of the Netherlands** (1880-1962), on the occasion of her marriage in 1901 to Henry, Duke of Mecklenburg-Schwerin, was presented by The Saint Nicholas Society with a Tiffany silver cup, which has recently been on exhibit at the Corcoran Gallery in Washington, together with other silver objects from the Dutch Royal Collection. The present Queen Beatrix is the granddaughter of Queen Wilhelmina.

**Henry Darlington, Jr.** has donated for the Society's collection of memorabilia a Saint Nicholas Society Delft porcelain serving dish and other items.

**Barry Christopher Howard** has donated to the Society copies of several early Saint Nicholas publications, and an original invi-

tation to a board meeting of November 29, 1842, addressed to Abraham R. Lawrence, and signed by Hamilton Fish, Secretary.

**John L. Loeb, Jr.** has donated two interesting and attractive books for the Society library: a copy of Stephen Birmingham's *The Grandees*; and a copy of *First American Jewish Families*, by Malcolm H. Stern (1991), with elaborate genealogical data.

**Stewart R. Manville** recently completed a Manville (including Manvel) genealogy, begun in 1948. A copy, fully indexed, is at the library of the New York Genealogical and Biographical Society.

**Frank Sypher** has published *Letitia Elizabeth Landon: A Biography* (Ann Arbor: Scholars' Facsimiles & Reprints, 2004). This brilliant English poet, novelist, and

critic was born in London in 1802, and died in 1838 in Cape Coast, West Africa (in present-day Ghana) where she had gone as the wife of George Maclean, a colonial official.

**Eugene Lent Church** on April 1, 2005 donated a handsome brass monogram "GWC" (of the Geotroyeerde Westindische Compagnie, i.e. "Chartered West-Indian Company"), described as an early corporate logo in the New World. His gift is in memory of Cornelius Van Texel, and his wife Catoneras, princess of the Matinicock tribe of Long Island.

**James Augustus Suydam** (1819-1865), elected in 1862, was a painter whose work will be exhibited this November at the National Academy, 1083 Fifth Avenue.

## NEW MEMBERS ELECTED

<i>Name</i>	<i>Date of Election</i>	<i>Ancestor</i>
Ronald R. Atkins	19 May 2005	Cornelis Volkertszen
Frederick Lloyd Baker III	19 May 2005	Robert Ferrier
Brent Tappan Blake	19 May 2005	John Townsend
Southwick Cary Briggs	19 May 2005	Lawrence & Cassandra Southwick
Charles Rudd Mackenzie	19 May 2005	Cornelius Janzen Van Tassel
Floyd Smith Sanford III	19 May 2005	Elnathan Satterly
Graham Phillips Sultan	19 May 2005	Naphtali Phillips
Adam Van Doren	19 May 2005	Jacob Christiaense Van Doorn

## NECROLOGY

Since publication of the last *Weathercock* the Society has received notice of the death of the following member:

<i>Name</i>	<i>Date of Election</i>	<i>Date of Death</i>
Edgar Outerbridge Appleby	3 Nov. 1941	9 May 2005

## PRELIMINARY CALENDAR 2005-06

<b>Thursday, September 15</b>	Fall Board of Managers Meeting
<b>Saturday, September 17</b>	Fall Outing to Sunnyside
<b>Thursday, October 13</b>	Fall Stated Meeting
<b>Tuesday, December 6</b>	Feast of Saint Nicholas Dinner
<b>Friday, March 31, 2006</b>	Paas Festival Debutante Ball

## THE SAINT NICHOLAS SOCIETY OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK

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### OFFICERS

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**JOHN McC. SHANNON**  
*FIRST VICE PRESIDENT*

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*SECRETARY*

**WILLIAM POTTER JOHNS**  
*TREASURER*

### *THE WEATHERCOCK*

AN OCCASIONAL PUBLICATION  
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WRITTEN, EDITED AND PRODUCED  
BY

FRANCIS J. SYPHER, JR.  
JOHN McC. SHANNON