

Greenwich Historical Society Newsletter

GREENWICH HISTORICAL SOCIETY
1931 • 2022
90
FALL
2022

History and Leadership

Historian Doris Kearns Goodwin to speak at 90th anniversary celebration event



Photo: Annie Liebovitz

On October 1, we will have the honor of welcoming Pulitzer Prize-winning presidential historian Doris Kearns Goodwin as our special guest and keynote speaker at the Greenwich Historical Society's 90th anniversary celebration. The author of seven critically acclaimed and *New York Times* best-selling books, Goodwin was awarded the Pulitzer

Prize in history for *No Ordinary Time: Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt: The Home Front in World War II*.

A well-respected television commentator, Goodwin regularly appears in documentaries, news programs and late-night talk shows. In 2020 she served as the executive producer of the History Channel's miniseries event, "*Washington*," which explores the lesser-known details of America's first president and reveals the arc of his development as a leader. Goodwin's interest in presidential leadership was inspired by her experience as a 24-year-old White House Fellow, working directly for President Johnson during his last year in the White House, and later assisting him in the preparation of his memoirs.

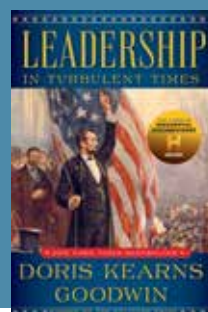
At the Historical Society event, Goodwin will share timeless insights and keen perspective drawn from her recent book, *Leadership in Turbulent Times*, the culmination of five decades of research on presidents Abraham Lincoln, Theodore and Franklin

D. Roosevelt, and Lyndon B. Johnson, who all shared a remarkable ability to meet moments of seemingly insurmountable challenge with vision, resilience and ultimate service to the common good. An inspiration to leadership in all walks of life the theme especially resonates as we reflect on this 90-year milestone, and the Historical Society's own history, flanked by eras of significant turmoil and uncertainty. At the time of our founding in 1931, the country was in the throes of the Great Depression and the Dust Bowl. Today, the global pandemic, rising economic inequality and climate change present both unprecedented challenges and new opportunities to community, business and government leaders.

“Adversity does, I think, allow a person to grow, to feel more empathy, to feel wisdom, and more importantly, to feel perspective.”

~ Doris Kearns Goodwin

In her book, Goodwin strives to make leadership less elusive and more practical through specific stories that can provide a guide and inspiration to show how—with ambition, self-reflection and perseverance—leadership skills can be developed and strengthened.



Leadership in Turbulent Times is available for purchase in the Greenwich Historical Society Museum Store.

Welcome New Staff

Ashley Aberg
Project Archivist



Ashley Aberg joins the Greenwich Historical Society as the current Project Archivist. After receiving her Master's in Library Science

from Simmons University, she founded her own business providing private cataloging and processing work for individuals in New York and Connecticut. She has worked with several large collections of art and rare books, and is enjoying providing her processing expertise to the Greenwich Historical Society.

Autumn Greetings



Dear Friends,

As the days grow shorter and the summer winds down, we are grateful to reflect on a vibrant season that offered an abundance of opportunity for enrichment, activity and community connection.

The successful launch of the **Discover Greenwich** program series brought a steady stream of new visitors to our campus to participate in informative lectures and workshops, and inspired others to explore and expand their knowledge of local neighborhoods and history through guided walking tours and a thrilling town-wide scavenger hunt. We are excited to move forward with our new Strategic Plan under the theme of telling a fuller history of Greenwich to a broader audience, with continued focus on including, engaging and representing our town's many communities.

Our Annual Meeting on Wednesday, September 14, will include the presentation of the **David Ogilvy Preservation Award**, honoring Charles M. Royce for his lifetime work preserving and restoring landmark buildings, including the Avon Theater, Deer Mountain Inn, Ocean House and Colonel Pendleton House. Our 90th anniversary celebration culminates on October 1 in a glamorous dinner dance at Easterly, one of the last Great Estates, with guest speaker **Doris Kearns Goodwin**, Pulitzer Prize-winning presidential historian. The much-anticipated, groundbreaking exhibition, *Life and Art: The Greenwich Paintings of John Henry Twachtman*, previews to members on October 18, accompanied by an array of programs, curator talks, tours and lectures on Twachtman's work in relation to his Greenwich home and family life.

We look forward to seeing you this autumn!

Debra Mecky

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR & CEO

David Ogilvy Preservation Award

presented to Charles M. Royce

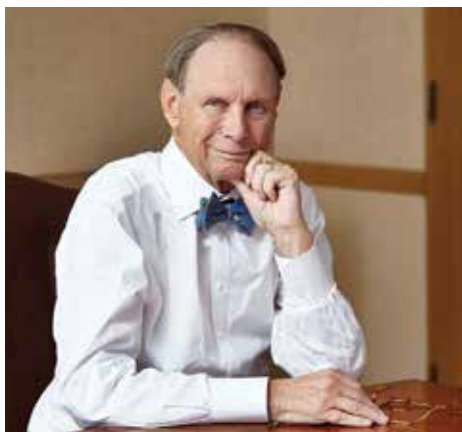


Photo: Charles M. Royce

We are pleased to honor Charles M. Royce with the David Ogilvy Preservation Award for his lifetime work preserving and restoring landmark buildings including Deer Mountain Inn, Ocean House, Colonel Pendleton House, Avon Theater and United Theater. The presentation will take place at our **Annual Meeting on Wednesday, September 14, at the Riverside Yacht Club**. Peter Malkin, Honorary Trustee of the Historical Society and Chairman of the Merritt Parkway Conservancy, will interview Royce in a fireside chat about his preservation projects.

David Ogilvy Preservation Award & Annual Meeting

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 14, 2022

5:45-8:00 PM

RIVERSIDE YACHT CLUB

GREENWICH 1931 • 2021 HISTORICAL
90 SOCIETY

Twachtman's Greenwich Home, Then and Now

In 1889 painter John Henry Twachtman, having recently secured a teaching position at New York's Art Students League, visited Greenwich in search of a home for his growing family. The artist and his 7 year-old son, J. Alden Twachtman, were about two miles outside of town when they came upon a farm, through which flowed the lively stream called Horseneck Brook. As later related by his son, the elder Twachtman is said to have thrown up his arms in delight as he shouted, "This is it!"



Twachtman house, south facade, ca. 1890.
Private collection



John Henry Twachtman, *From the Upper Terrace*, ca. 1892-93. Oil on canvas. 25 x 30 inches.
Private collection



John Henry Twachtman's Greenwich house, photographed in present day.
Photo Credit: Paul Mutino

The paintings Twachtman made of his Greenwich home and surrounding property, which eventually encompassed 17 acres, are the subject of the Greenwich Historical Society's upcoming exhibition *Life and Art: The Greenwich Paintings of John Henry Twachtman*. The artist's house appears today much as it did in Twachtman's time, although the surrounding acreage has long since been divided. Its state of preservation provides invaluable insight for modern art historians, including Lisa N. Peters, Ph.D. who curated the exhibition.

Peters made her first visit to the Twachtman house in the late 1980s when she began working on the Twachtman catalogue raisonné, a project begun at Spanierman Gallery. In 2021 the *John Henry Twachtman Catalogue Raisonné* was published digitally by the Greenwich Historical Society (available at jhtwachtman.org). Peters made many visits to the house over the years, often conferring with the present-day owner whose knowledge of the house's history and familiarity with its setting and surroundings always provided invaluable insight. Twachtman did not date his paintings after 1883 and assigned titles inconsistently, making it difficult to identify his work. The house and its surroundings therefore have been a vital primary resource for understanding his life and oeuvre.

From 1890 to 1899, while Twachtman lived there with his wife Martha and their children, five of whom survived to adulthood, the house and its surroundings became the painter's primary artistic subject.

"... the elder Twachtman is said to have thrown up his arms in delight as he shouted, "This is it!"

When not painting or teaching, Twachtman spent his time expanding and improving the house according to his own vision. His efforts also extended to the natural surroundings where he erected terraced stone walls and cultivated lush floral and vegetable gardens.

In the course of preparing for the exhibition *Life and Art*, the house's story was unfurled in greater detail than ever before. In 2019 Peters worked with architectural historian James Sexton, Ph.D. to establish the most definitive dating scheme of the structure to date, enabling a

team of collaborators that included exhibition consultant Susan G. Larkin Ph.D., Davide Strackbein, and Greenwich Historical Society staff to assign probable dates to several Twachtman canvases with greater certainty. A set of measured architectural drawings of the house were prepared by Charles Hilton Architects, and architectural draftsman Travis Olson created detailed illustrations demonstrating the phases of the house's

expansion under Twachtman's supervision between 1890 and 1895.

Glimpses of the house Twachtman once called home are immortalized in the artworks on view this fall at the Greenwich Historical Society. More than just a record of a place, these paintings, drawings and pastels invite viewers to step back in time and into the private world of one of the most original American artists of his generation.

Maggie Dimock, Curator of Exhibitions and Collections

UPCOMING EXHIBITION

LIFE AND ART

THE GREENWICH PAINTINGS OF JOHN HENRY TWACHTMAN

OCTOBER 19, 2022–JANUARY 22, 2023



This long-awaited exhibition of artworks by American Impressionist painter John Henry Twachtman (1853–1902) presents a new view into the artist's life and home in Greenwich, where he lived with his family from 1890 to 1899. The exhibition, curated by art historian and Twachtman scholar Lisa N. Peters, Ph.D., features artworks on loan from museum and private collections across the country, offering a unique glimpse into the artworks Twachtman made which depict his Greenwich home and its distinctive environs, and the way the artist shaped the land to meet his artistic aims.

John Henry Twachtman, *September Sunshine*, ca. 1892–94. Oil on canvas. 25 × 30 inches. Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art, Bentonville, Arkansas

LIFE AND ART: PROGRAMS AND EVENTS

Member Preview Party

Tuesday, October 18, 6:00–8:00 p.m.

Cocktail reception celebrating the opening of *Life and Art*.

Weekly Guided Exhibition Tours

Wednesdays at 1:00 p.m. (Free with Museum Admission)

Join Greenwich Historical Society curators, educators and docents for a weekly 30-minute guided tour of the exhibition, offering insights into a variety of topics including Twachtman's life in Greenwich and his ties to the Holley boarding house in Cos Cob.

Guided Tour of John Henry Twachtman's Greenwich Property

Saturday, October 22, 10:00 a.m.–12:00 p.m.

Step directly into artist John Henry Twachtman's world on this guided outdoor tour of the grounds surrounding the Greenwich house that was once home to the painter and his family.

Coffee with the Curator

Thursday, November 10, 10:30 a.m.–12:00 p.m.

Exhibition Curator Lisa N. Peters leads an in-depth tour of the artworks on view in *Life and Art*, offering insights into the research that shed light on Twachtman's approach to expanding and modifying the architecture and landscape of his Greenwich home.

Workshop with Dmitri Wright:

Retracing Twachtman's Footsteps: Painting *en Plein Air* in Cos Cob

Saturday, November 12, 10:00 a.m.–3:00 p.m.

Teaching artist Dmitri Wright will offer students individualized training in Impressionist painting techniques on the grounds of the Historical Society, while recapturing the spirit of the historic Cos Cob art colony.

Lecture: Twachtman and Monet: Impressionist Crosscurrents in the 1890s

Tuesday November 15, 6:00–7:00 p.m.

In this illustrated lecture, *Life and Art* curator Lisa N. Peters will explore similarities between Twachtman and Monet, placing them within the context of changes in the 1890s in the Impressionist movement that impacted both artists.

Afternoon in the Reading Room: Twachtman in His Own Words

Sunday, January 8, 2:00–4:00 p.m.

Join Greenwich Historical Society Archives and Curatorial staff for an afternoon in the Library & Archives Reading Room, delving deeper into the words and life of painter John Henry Twachtman and exploring his ties to the Holley family in Cos Cob.

Fall Calendar of Events

September

- 7 Arlene Mark Author Talk: *The Year Without a Summer*
Tavern Garden Market / Storytime
- 8 Music on the Great Lawn – Demolition Brass Band
- 10 Discover Greenwich Walking Tour – Byram
- 14 David Ogilvy Preservation Award + Annual Meeting
- 17 Discover Greenwich – Grass Island Kayak Tour
- 21 Tavern Garden Market / Storytime
- 22 Create in the Barn – Wine Tasting
- 28 Storytime
- 29 Artful Arrangements – Dahlias

October

- 1 90th Anniversary Dinner Dance – Doris Kearns Goodwin
- 5 Tavern Garden Market
- 8 Family Scarecrow Festival
- 16 Discover Greenwich Walking Tour – Montgomery Pinetum
- 18 *Life and Art: The Greenwich Paintings of John Henry Twachtman*, Member Preview Party
- 20 Create in the Barn – Pasta Making
- 22 Guided Tour of Twachtman Property
- 29 Discover Greenwich Walking Tour – Putnam Cemetery



November

- 2 Tavern Garden Market
- 3 Story Barn with Bonnie Levison
- 10 Coffee with the Curator
- 12 *Plein Air* Painting Workshop with Dmitri Wright
- 15 Curator Lecture: Twachtman and Monet
- 17 Create in the Barn – Pumpkin Succulent Centerpiece

December

- 1 Artful Arrangements: Winter White
- 1 Winter Market Opening Night Cocktail Event
- 1-3 Winter Market
- 6 Create in the Barn – Wreath Workshop
- 7 Festival of Trees Opening Night Cocktail Event
- 7-10 Festival of Trees
- 10 Holiday Family Festival / Candlelight Tour



To learn more and register for programs and events, visit [greenwichhistory.org](https://www.greenwichhistory.org)

HOLIDAY CLOSINGS

Monday, September 5, Labor Day
Monday, October 10, Indigenous Peoples' Day
Thursday, November 24, Thanksgiving Day
Sunday, December 25, Christmas Day
Monday December 26, Christmas Day Observance

OFFICE, MUSEUM STORE AND CAFÉ

Monday–Friday, 9:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m.
Saturday and Sunday, 12:00 p.m.–4:00 p.m.

MUSEUM GALLERIES

Wednesday–Sunday, 12:00 p.m.–4:00 p.m.

BUSH-HOLLEY HOUSE

Wednesday–Sunday, 12:00 p.m., 1:30 p.m. and 3:00 p.m.
Tours last 45 minutes. Call for reservations.

LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES

By appointment

ADMISSION

\$10 adults, \$8 seniors

FREE: Youth under 18, members, active military/ Blue Star. FREE for all the first Wednesday of every month.

GROUP TOURS

Available on request.

Visit all 21 museums on the Connecticut Art Trail for \$35. Buy a passport at the museum lobby desk or at ctarttrail.org.

We work to preserve and interpret Greenwich history to strengthen the community's connection to our past, to each other and to our future.

Greenwich Historical Society

90TH ANNIVERSARY
DINNER DANCE



GUEST SPEAKER
DORIS KEARNS GOODWIN

MUSIC BY
THE BOB HARDWICK SOUND ORCHESTRA

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 1, 2022

EASTERLY

LIFE AND ART
THE GREENWICH PAINTINGS OF
JOHN HENRY TWACHTMAN
OCTOBER 19, 2022–JANUARY 22, 2023



John Henry Twachtman, *Waterfall, Blue Brook*, late 1890s.
Oil on canvas. 30 × 30–1/8 inches. Cincinnati Art Museum,
Annual Membership Fund Purchase