

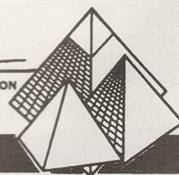
In 1646, a court in Dutch New Amsterdam convicted Jan Creoli, a man of African descent, of sodomy with another male. Creoli was ordered to be "conveyed to the place of public execution, and there choked to death and then burnt to ashes."

This map is dedicated to the memory of Creoli and to the accomplishments, in the face of persecution, of all of the lesbians and gay men who have preceded us in New York City.

In addition to the numerous individuals and sources that have been consulted during the production of this guide, the Preservation + History Committee is grateful for the generous assistance of historians George A. Chauncey and Steven Watson. This map is part of a larger effort to publish a guidebook to buildings and sites with historical and cultural significance to the lesbian and gay community in New York City. If you have historical information of interest to this project, we would like to hear from you. Please write to us at: OLGAD Preservation + History Committee, P.O. Box 927, Old Chelsea Station, New York, N.Y. 10113.

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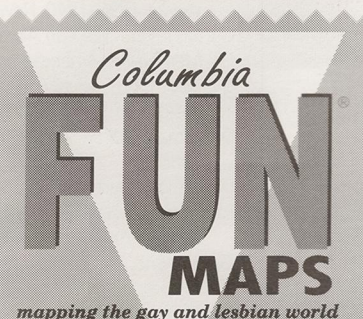
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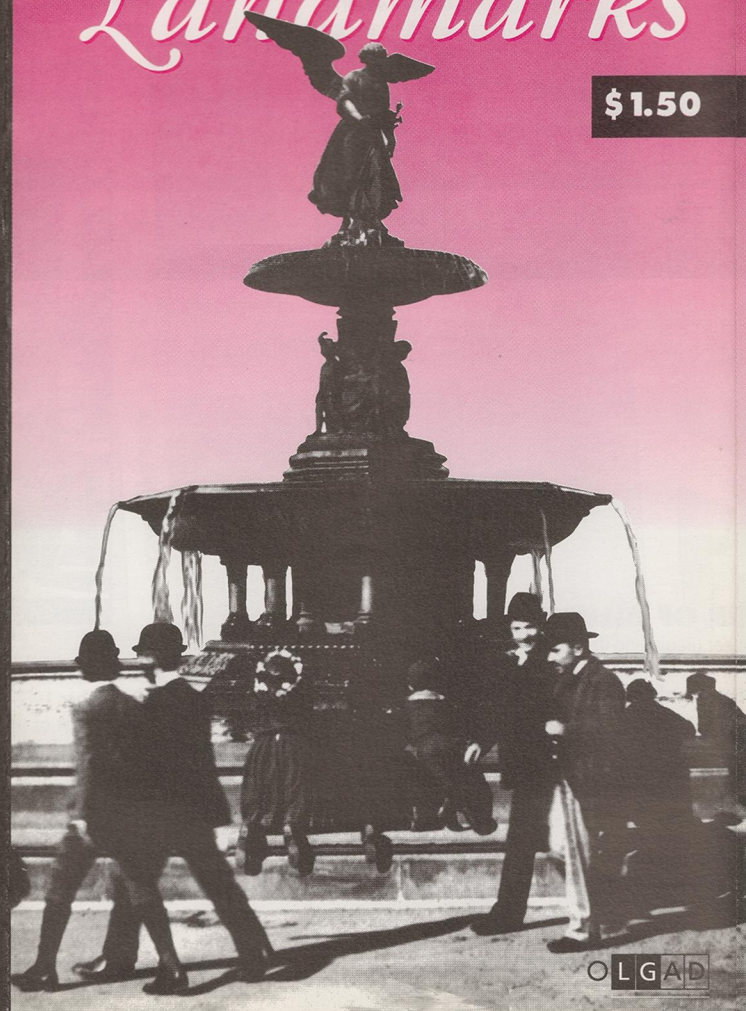
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A GUIDE TO

Lesbian & Gay NEW YORK Historical Landmarks

\$1.50



OLGAD



STONEWALL INN

celebrating the advances made since the 1969 Stonewall

Rebellion, it is not only important to look toward the future, but to also acknowledge our past. Our aim is to provide visitors and residents with a physical connection to that past.

This guide, developed by OLGAD's Preservation + History Committee, presents snapshots of our collective

identity by documenting site-specific locations associated with lesbian and gay history in three New York City



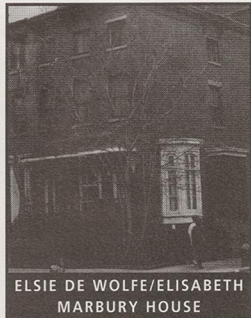
CHELSEA HOTEL

neighborhoods—Greenwich Village, Midtown, and Harlem (plus a few sites elsewhere, identified on the Manhattan map). These sites represent a sampling of the people, events, and institutions that have made New York City a magnet for lesbians and gay men since the 19th century.

A note regarding format: where evidence indicates an individual's being

lesbian or gay, the name is in **boldface** (it is necessary to take into account cultural and historical context—for instance, a number of these people were married, even though research points to their involvement in same-sex relationships.) Finally, please remember that many of the sites highlighted here are privately owned and are not open to the public—please respect people's privacy.

OLGAD, the Organization of Lesbian + Gay Architects and Designers welcomes you to New York City, the East Coast's epicenter of lesbian and gay life, culture, and history. In



ELSIE DE WOLFE/ELISABETH MARBURY HOUSE



APOLLO THEATER

Manhattan

S E L E C T E D S I T E S

ANSONIA HOTEL [1]

2101-2119 Broadway at West 73rd Street. Since its completion in 1904, the Ansonia has been home of countless notable musicians, composers, singers, conductors, and writers, including the tenor **Lauritz Melchior**. The Ansonia also housed the famous **Continental Baths** where Bette Midler first launched her career.

DAKOTA APARTMENTS [2]

1 West 72nd Street at Central Park West. The Dakota has been home to generations of prominent figures in New York's cultural life, including the conductor **Leonard Bernstein**, dancer **Rudolf Nureyev**, playwright **William Inge**, actress **Judy Holliday**, and critic **Rex Reed**. In the 1970s, the Dakota's coop board refused to admit **Mart Crowley**, the playwright of *The Boys in the Band*, apparently because he was an out gay man.

BETHESDA FOUNTAIN [3]

Bethesda Terrace, north of 72nd Street Transverse Road, Central Park (cover photograph). Currently featured as the central image in the last scene of the *Perestroika* section of **Tony Kushner's** *Angels in America*, the *Angel of the Waters* figure atop this fountain is the masterpiece of sculptor **Emma Stebbins**. Stebbins lived much of her life with actress **Charlotte Cushman**. They were two of a group of lesbian artists referred to as the "jolly female bachelors."

EMPIRE STATE BUILDING [4]

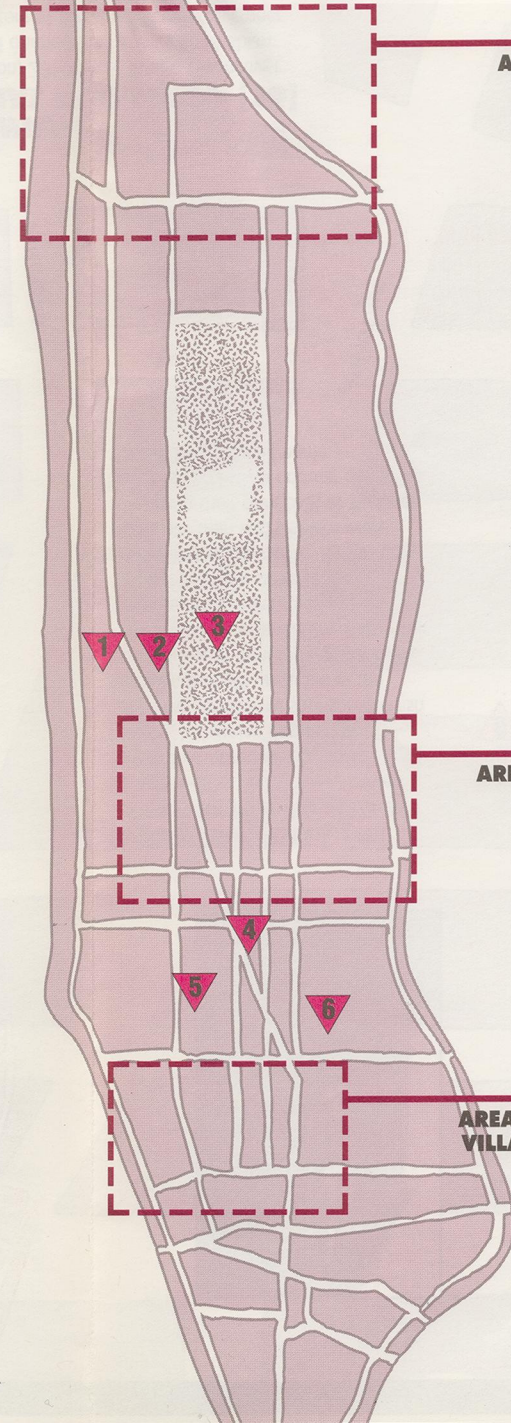
350 5th Avenue at 34th Street. Every year since 1990 this famous skyscraper has been illuminated with lavender light during the last weekend of June for Gay Pride.

CHELSEA HOTEL [5]

222 West 23rd Street between 7th and 8th Avenues. The Chelsea has been described as "the world's most tolerant, non-expendable, third-rate hotel." Over the years it has provided accommodation to hundreds of famous artists, writers, and musicians, including composer **Virgil Thomson**, painter **Larry Rivers**, fashion designer **Charles James**, writers **William Burroughs** and **Brendan Behan**, and rock superstar **Janis Joplin**. **Andy Warhol's** *Chelsea Girls* and episodes of the television series *An American Family*, featuring **Lance Loud**, were filmed here.

ELSIE DE WOLFE/ELISABETH MARBURY HOUSE [6]

122 East 17th Street at Irving Place. Although the plaque on the facade of this house erroneously states that it was the residence of Washington Irving, it was the home of the lesbian couple **Elsie de Wolfe**, America's first professional interior designer, and theatrical producer **Elisabeth Marbury**. Here they ran a famous salon in the 1890s and first years of the 20th century.



AREA OF HARLEM
DETAIL MAP

AREA OF MIDTOWN
DETAIL MAP

AREA OF GREENWICH
VILLAGE DETAIL MAP

Harlem

267 WEST 136TH STREET [2]

(Demolished). In the 1920s, this building was owned by a philanthropic black woman who offered a rent-free haven to young African-American writers and artists who nicknamed it "Niggerati Manor." Among the residents were **Wallace Thurman**, a leader among the avant-garde writers of the Harlem Renaissance, and painter and writer **Richard Bruce Nugent**, author of the homoerotic *Smoke, Lilies and Jade*.

JUNGLE ALLEY [5]

West 133rd Street between Lenox Avenue and Adam Clayton Powell, Jr. Blvd. This block was the center of the "Sporting Life," a wild, anything-goes area that tolerated homosexuality. In "the Jungle" the tuxedoed singer and piano player **Gladys Bentley** found a place to be herself. She played at several clubs, including Harry Hansberry's Clam House in the 1920s and the Ubangi Club in the 1930s. Her popularity was based on an ability to rework lyrics so that they were filled with double entendres. Bentley lived openly with a white woman and "married" her in a highly publicized ceremony.

APOLLO THEATER [7]

253 West 125th Street. Although built in 1913-14 as a burlesque theater, the Apollo became world renowned after it began to feature the leading African-American performers in a permanent variety show format in the 1930s. Nearly every important black American entertainer, from that time into the 1970s, played the Apollo. Among these were **Alberta Hunter**, "Moms" Mabley, **Johnny Mathis**, **Little Richard**, **Bessie Smith**, and **Ethel Waters**. The drag Jewel Box Revue, with 25 men and one woman, was a popular attraction in the 1960s.

ETHEL WATERS APARTMENT [1]

580 St. Nicholas Avenue. Located in Sugar Hill, this was one of Harlem's best addresses. **Ethel Waters**, widely considered the first black female star of stage, screen, and television, as well as a prominent singer, was among its notable residents. During the 1920s, Waters was well known in Harlem's lesbian circles.

NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY, COUNTEE CULLEN BRANCH [3]

104-110 West 136th Street. **Countee Cullen** was one of the finest writers of the Harlem Renaissance. Although briefly married to the daughter of W. E. B. DuBois, Cullen was gay, preferring the company of handsome teacher **Harold Jackman** (Jackman accompanied Cullen on his honeymoon!). The library, the first in New York named for an African-American, replaced the home of heiress A'Lelia Walker, daughter of Madame C. J. Walker who made her fortune marketing beauty products to black women. The house was used for lavish entertainments known for the many homosexuals in attendance. While not everyone was happy with this, Walker let it be known that those who wished to attend her parties would have to accept her friends. Gay men, particularly **Caska Bonds** and **Edward Perry**, helped plan the parties, but A'Lelia always had a group of good-looking women about her.

YMCA [4]

181 West 135th Street. For many young men who arrived in Harlem (**Langston Hughes** included), the YMCA was their first residence. For others, it was a place to stay when money was short. **Claude McKay**, a prominent African-American literary figure, who was open about his homosexuality at a time when almost everyone else hid it, often made the YMCA his residence when in New York.

LANGSTON HUGHES HOUSE [6]

20 East 127th Street. **Langston Hughes** began his literary career during the Harlem Renaissance and continued to be a major literary figure until his death in 1967. In 1947 Hughes moved into the top floor of this rowhouse. Here he wrote poetry and books exploring black culture. Hughes was generous with his time and talent, but not his personal life. Although many of those surrounding Hughes were gay and several intimate relationships are surmised, the exact nature of Hughes's personal life remains a mystery.

HOTEL OLGA [8]

42 West 120th Street. **Alain Locke**, a 1907 graduate of Harvard, was the first African-American Rhodes scholar and one of the intellectual lights of the Harlem Renaissance (he was known as the "Proust of Lenox Avenue"). Locke was a professor at Howard University in Washington, but since Harlem was the place to be, he could frequently be found staying at the Olga.

Midtown

CARNEGIE HALL [2]

West 57th Street and Seventh Avenue. Since its opening in 1891 with a series of concerts conducted by **P. I. Tchaikovsky**, Carnegie Hall has been the center of American musical life and history. Among the artists associated with the theater are the conductor/composers **Gustav Mahler** and **Leonard Bernstein**; the pianist **Vladimir Horowitz**; and composers **Samuel Barber**, **Benjamin Britten**, **Aaron Copland**, and **Virgil Thomson**.

CITY CENTER [3]

131 West 55th Street. Built as a Shriners temple, this Moorish confection was turned into a performing arts center in 1943 and is especially famous as a dance theater. In recent years, City Center has been a venue for works by such choreographers as **Alvin Ailey**, **Gerald Arpino**, **Merce Cunningham**, **Robert Joffrey**, **Murray Louis**, **Lar Lubovitch**, **Alwin Nikolais**, and **Paul Taylor**.

PAINE WEBBER BUILDING [6]

1281 Sixth Avenue. As part of an upgrading of this building in the mid-1980s sculptor **Scott Burton** designed the public plazas with their tables, chairs, benches, and planters. Burton, who died of AIDS in 1989, pioneered in the creation of pieces that are part works of art and part furniture.

TIMES SQUARE/THEATER DISTRICT [12]

Approximately from 6th to 8th Avenues, 42nd to 50th Streets. During the 1920s and 30s, the area around Times Square, already a popular entertainment destination, took on an additional dimension to gay men as one of the community's most important centers. The presence of theaters, hotels, bars, and restaurants that welcomed or tolerated their patronage, contributed to the area's attraction. Bars at the Astor Hotel (demolished) and the Hotel Taft (closed) were particularly popular with middle-class gay men, while Bryant Park attracted working-class gay men and 42nd Street became a center for male hustlers.

OLD METROPOLITAN OPERA HOUSE [14]

Northwest corner Broadway and West 39th Street (demolished). A plaque on the banal office building at this corner marks the site of the Old Met, built in 1893. The Met not only featured many gay artists, but until its demolition in 1967 was a popular gay meeting spot, in part because, as a prominent cultural venue, the police were not likely to raid the place.

PLAZA HOTEL [1]

Fifth Avenue at 59th Street. The Plaza offered gay men a variety of alternatives for socializing in the 1950s and 60s. The Oak Bar was one of the most popular "businessmen's bars" that gay men patronized knowing that it would not be raided. The hotel was also the site of private parties attended by lawyer **Roy Cohn** and F.B.I. Chief **J. Edgar Hoover** (in drag). In one of the defining moments of 1960s social life, author **Truman Capote** hosted the Black and White Ball at the Plaza in November 1961.

ST. REGIS HOTEL, KING COLE BAR [4]

2 East 55th Street. In the mid-1950s the King Cole Bar had a reputation as a meeting place for gay men. Hotel bars provided a fashionable alternative to the clandestine atmosphere of many gay establishments, and due to their prestige, were rarely raided. The King Cole Bar's management, concerned about the bar's gay following, concocted a successful scheme to intimidate the gay clientele—they hired a private detective to dust each glass for fingerprints.

THE BIRD CIRCUIT [7-9]

The Blue Parrot Cafe [7], 162 East 52nd Street (demolished); The Swan Club [8], 780 Third Avenue (demolished); The Golden Pheasant Restaurant [9], 143 East 45th Street (demolished). During the early 1950s, a night on the town in gay New York had to include a visit to these three bars on the "Bird Circuit." Considered "piss-elegant" in their decor, the bars were convenient to the many men who resided in the gay enclave located in the East 50s.

ALGONQUIN HOTEL [13]

59-61 West 44th Street. The Algonquin's fame is associated with its illustrious guest list and restaurant patrons that included many well-known writers and actors. The hotel hosted the Round Table, a luncheon gathering of wits that began meeting in 1919; members included *New York Times* drama critic **Alexander Woollcott** and writer Dorothy Parker. Actresses **Talullah Bankhead**, **Estelle Winwood**, **Eva LeGallienne**, and **Blyth Daly** were such frequent visitors that they were dubbed "the four horsemen of the Algonquin." Overnight guests included **Noel Coward**, **Tennessee Williams**, **Gore Vidal**, **Gertrude Stein**, and **Alice B. Toklas**.

SUTTON PLACE [5]

The elite Sutton Place development of private townhouses overlooking the East River was created in the 1920s when wealthy people, including several lesbians, stylishly redesigned the old houses. The presence of producer/playwright **Elisabeth Marbury** at No. 13 (she kept rooms for her former lover, interior designer **Elsie de Wolfe**), **Anne H. Vanderbilt** at No. 1, and **Anne Morgan** at No. 3, led to rumors of Sapphic revels.

242 EAST 52ND STREET [10]

This elegant 1950 townhouse, among the earliest International Style dwellings in New York, was designed by controversial architect **Philip Johnson**. Johnson, who later designed the Four Seasons Restaurant and dozens of office towers across America, lived here for several years.

LORENA HICKOK APARTMENT [11]

10 Mitchell Place. A second-story apartment in this building became the residence in 1929 of **Alice Lorena Hickok**, one of the country's leading newspaper reporters. In 1933 she left the building to work in the Roosevelt administration in Washington. Introduced in 1928, Lorena and **Eleanor Roosevelt** had a relationship, documented by personal correspondence, that spanned over thirty years.

SOME BROADWAY PRODUCTIONS OF NOTE

With the passage of the Wales Padlock Law in 1927 by the State Legislature, it became illegal to depict lesbians and gay men on the stage; theaters showing "sexual perversion" could be closed. Despite this law, which remained on the books until 1967, lesbian and gay characters did make it to the Broadway stage, often in the works of lesbian and gay playwrights. A few highlights of Broadway productions of interest to lesbians and gay men include:

APOLLO THEATER

221 West 42nd Street. Sholom Asch's *The God of Vengeance* (1923), after a successful run at the Provincetown Playhouse, became the first play on Broadway with a lesbian character. The entire cast, the producer, and the theater owner were arrested and found guilty of obscenity (later overturned), the first known instance of American entertainers convicted by a jury for "immorality."

BARRYMORE THEATER

243 West 47th Street. Three hit plays with subtle gay themes have played at the Barrymore: **Noel Coward's** *Design For Living* (1933), **Tennessee Williams's** *A Streetcar Named Desire* (1947), and **Robert Anderson's** *Tea and Sympathy* (1953).

BELASCO THEATER

111 West 44th Street. Two months after it opened, **Dorothy Baker's** lesbian drama *Trio* (1944) was shut down by the LaGuardia administration. The ensuing protest over censorship made it the last Broadway show thus threatened.

BILTMORE THEATER

261 West 47th Street. Mae West's lurid melodrama *The Pleasure Man* (1928),

which included a party scene with gay transvestites, was closed down after three performances. West's previous exploitative theatrical efforts were a prime reason for the passage of the Wales Law.

CORT THEATER

138 West 48th Street. **Laurence Olivier** made his 1933 Broadway debut as the "ward" of an older gay man in Mordaunt Shairp's *The Green Bay Tree*.

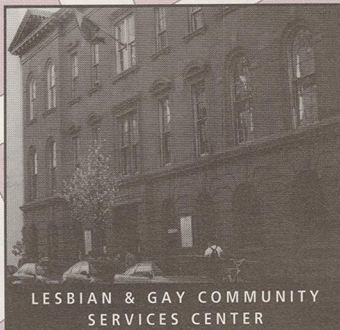
ROYALE THEATER

242 West 45th Street. Ruth and Augustus Goetz' acclaimed adaptation of **Andre Gide's** *The Immoralist* (1954) is considered one of the first American plays to present the conflict between contented self-identified and closeted homosexual characters. It also featured **James Dean's** Broadway debut (as an Arab houseboy/prostitute).

Greenwich Village

LESBIAN & GAY COMMUNITY SERVICES CENTER [1]

208 West 13th Street. Established in 1983 in this 19th-century school, the Lesbian & Gay Community Services Center is the focal point for gay and lesbian activities in the region. A meeting place for nearly 400 groups representing the rich diversity of our community, the Center serves over 4,000 people per week and has witnessed the birth of a number of nationally important organizations including GLAAD, ACT UP and Stonewall 25. Among the works of art created for the Center is the **Keith Haring** mural in the second-floor men's room.



LESBIAN & GAY COMMUNITY SERVICES CENTER

PATCHIN PLACE [9]

These modest brick rowhouses became a popular address in bohemian Greenwich Village, claiming such residents as political revolutionary **John Reed**, who lived at No. 7 in 1918, and author **Djuna Barnes**, who became a long-time resident of No. 5 after the publication of her lesbian novel *Nightwood* in 1936. (Barnes insisted that she was not a lesbian, but just happened to be in love with **Thelma Wood**, the former lover of photographer **Berenice Abbott**).

JULIUS' [10]

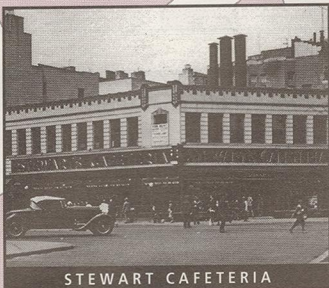
159 West Tenth Street. Opened in 1864, Julius' is reputed to be the oldest bar in the West Village. During the 1950s Julius' began attracting gay customers. Serving gay patrons was in violation of the State Liquor Authority's rules, prompting many bar owners to post signs stating "If you are gay, please go away." In 1966, members of the Mattachine Society staged a "sip-in" here and were turned away. They had the city's Commission on Human Rights bring a discrimination case, and in 1967 the state court ruled that the Liquor Authority needed "substantial evidence" of indecent behavior (not same-sex kissing or touching) to close a bar, thereby reversing years of discrimination.

FEDORA'S RESTAURANT [11]

239 West Fourth Street. During a period of slow business in 1952, a mailing to several hundred gay men resulted in Fedora's becoming a popular gay watering hole. It is now New York's oldest continually operating restaurant with a large gay clientele.

STEWART CAFETERIA [13]

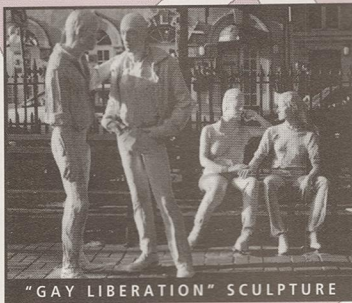
(Later, Life Cafeteria) 116 Seventh Avenue South. Stewart's opened in 1933 and quickly became a popular haunt for lesbians and gay men. Its plate-glass windows allowed those walking by to see the large congregation of homosexuals. Crowds were sometimes three to four deep, peering at the "dykes, fags, pansies, [and] lesbians" as one voyeur described the scene. Stewart's closed in the mid-1930s, subsequently replaced by the equally popular Life Cafeteria.



STEWART CAFETERIA

CHRISTOPHER STREET [24]

After the 1969 Stonewall Rebellion, Christopher Street (site of the Stonewall Inn) became the best-identified gay and lesbian street in the country. For decades, men had traveled to its terminus at the West Street Piers, a popular location for sexual encounters. However, it was not until the mid-1960s that the street became a nationally recognized cruising ground. Christopher Street's development as a gay street was due, in part, to the migration of gay life towards the West Village, from MacDougal Street in the 1920s, to Eighth Street in the 1940s, and then west to Greenwich Avenue in the 1950s, and eventually to Christopher Street. Christopher Street's permanence as a gay enclave was sustained with the emergence in the 1960s and '70s of gay-owned and gay-friendly stores, and the proliferation of gay bars.



"GAY LIBERATION" SCULPTURE

BERENICE ABBOTT STUDIO [26]

50 Commerce Street. **Berenice Abbott** went to Europe in 1921 to study sculpture and returned to New York in 1929 as a photographer. Best known for her 1930s urban views published in 1939 as *Changing New York*, she was also a sought-after portraitist. Among her lesbian subjects were New Yorker writer **Janet Flanner**, writer **Djuna Barnes**, **Jane Heap** and **Margaret Anderson**, the founders in 1914 of the avant-garde literary magazine *Little Review*; and poet **Edna St. Vincent Millay**.

CHERRY LANE THEATER [27]

38 Commerce Street. The experimental Cherry Lane Theater was formed in 1924 by **Edna St. Vincent Millay** and a group of friends. Located in a former brewery, it continued to be used as a theater after the initial company disbanded in 1926. During the early 1960s, the Cherry Lane had a close association with playwright **Edward Albee**, featuring his *The Zoo Story*, *The American Dream*, *The Sandbox*, and *The Death of Bessie Smith*. In 1969 the theater put on *To Be Young, Gifted and Black*, a retrospective look at the life and career of **Lorraine Hansberry**. Recent successes include the revival of **Joe Orton's** *Entertaining Mr. Sloane* and David Stevens's *The Sum of Us*.

EDNA ST. VINCENT MILLAY HOUSE [28]

75 Bedford Street. This tiny dwelling, often called the narrowest house in New York City, was the most notable of **Edna St. Vincent Millay's** many Village residences. In 1923, Millay became the first woman to win the Pulitzer Prize for poetry. As an undergrad at Vassar, Millay was known as "Vincent" and, although she married Eugen Boveisevin, all of her love affairs until the age of 25 are thought to have been with women.



EDNA ST. VINCENT MILLAY HOUSE

171 WEST 12TH STREET [2]

Between 1920 and 1950, many of the 24 apartments in this building housed influential women. Lesbians of note at this address included Communist Party leaders **Grace Hutchins** and **Anna Rochester**, political radical **Polly Porter**, and Democratic Party leader **Mary Dewson**. Artist **Nancy Cook** and educator **Marion Dickerman** organized the Todhunter School on East 80th Street and the Val-Kill furniture factory near Hyde Park, in partnership with their friend **Eleanor Roosevelt**.

JAMES BEARD HOUSE [3]

(Now, James Beard Foundation) 167 West 12th Street. This house was purchased in 1973 by chef **James Beard** who lived here with his lover, architect **Gino Cofacci**. Beard and Cofacci redesigned the ground-floor interior to house Beard's kitchen, the scene of his famous classes and cooking demonstrations.

MURRAY HALL HOUSE [7]

457 Sixth Avenue. This modest building contained the home and employment agency of **Murray Hall**, a prominent Tammany Hall politician, who was revealed after her death in 1901 to have been a "passing" woman. Hall began living as a man in New York in the 1870s. Her fellow politicians regarded her as an influential leader, a fearless poker player, and an "all round good fellow." She married twice and both wives had occasion to complain of their "husband's" attentions to other women.

STONEWALL INN [12]

51-53 Christopher Street. The Stonewall Rebellion, the catalytic event in the development of the modern lesbian and gay rights movement, began on the street in front of the Stonewall Inn, a bar that originally encompassed both storefronts of this building. Twenty-five years ago, when the building housed the Stonewall, police raids on gay bars were routine. But at 1AM, on June 28, 1969, something unprecedented happened—gays and lesbians fought back! They forced the police to retreat into the bar and set off five days of rioting in nearby streets. The sense of pride and identity engendered by this rebellion gave life to the nascent Gay Liberation movement, and the anniversary of the rebellion is now celebrated internationally.

STONEWALL PLACE AND CHRISTOPHER PARK [14]

New York City has recognized the historic importance of the Stonewall Rebellion by renaming Christopher Street between Seventh Avenue South and Waverly Place) in 1989 as Stonewall Place and by placing George Segal's commemorative sculpture, *Gay Liberation* (1980), in Christopher Park in 1992. In the 1980s the park received its current design by landscape architect **Philip Winslow**, who later died of AIDS.

CAFFE CINO [25]

31 Cornelia Street. In 1958 **Joe Cino** opened a coffeehouse that became a hangout for people involved in art, photography, poetry, and theater, including many lesbians and gay men. It soon became an experimental performance space, now considered the first Off-Off-Broadway theater, as well as New York's first gay theater. Caffe Cino helped to launch the careers of playwrights **Tom Eyen**, **William Hoffman**, **Robert Patrick**, **Doric Wilson**, and **Lanford Wilson**, among others. It closed in 1968, the year after Cino's suicide.

EVE'S PLACE [21]

129 MacDougal Street. This location of a speakeasy popular with lesbians in the mid-1920s. It was run by **Eva** ("Eve Addams") **Kotchever**, a Polish Jew. After the club was raided and closed in 1926, Eve was deported on the grounds of writing an "indecent" book.

SAN REMO [29]

93 MacDougal Street. Originally a working-class bar established in 1925, the San Remo became a favored spot for artists and writers in the late 1940s and early 1950s and attracted a number of gay artists. Among these were poets and writers **James Agee**, **W. H. Auden**, **Allen Ginsberg**, and **Harold Norse**; composer **John Cage**; dancer/choreographer **Merce Cunningham**; and painter **Larry Rivers**.

ST. LUKE'S PLACE [30]

This beautiful street has been a favorite address for leaders in the arts and entertainment industry since the 1920s. Among its illustrious gay and lesbian residents were poet **Marianne Moore** (No. 14), playwright/director **Arthur Laurents** (No. 9), and painters **Paul Cadmus** and **Jared French** (No. 5), who numbered British novelist **E. M. Forster** among their houseguests. Residents who had roles in raising gay "consciousness" were author **Sherwood Anderson** (No. 12), whose 1920s novel *Winesburg, Ohio* is notable for its sympathetic treatment of gay characters, and comedian **Flip Wilson** (No. 3), whose drag character "Geraldine" flirted outrageously with handsome male guest stars on national television in the 1960s.

ELISABETH IRWIN HIGH SCHOOL [31]

34-40 Charlton Street. The **Elisabeth Irwin** High School is named for the founder of Greenwich Village's Little Red Schoolhouse, the influential demonstration school for progressive education.

DAUGHTERS OF BILITIS [32]

26-32 Charlton Street. Beginning in 1963, a basement office in this apartment building was home to the New York Chapter of the Daughters of Bilitis, the first lesbian organization in America (founded 1955). Organized in 1958 under the leadership of **Barbara Gittings**, the New York Chapter was at the forefront of the gay rights movement. New York DOB participated in such landmark events as the 1965 White House protest against federal employment discrimination and the Independence Day demonstrations in Philadelphia (1965-69) that were the precursors of contemporary Gay Pride marches.

FORBES MAGAZINE BUILDING [4]

60-62 Fifth Avenue. The Forbes Building was purchased along with an adjoining residence at 11 West 12th Street in 1925 by **Malcolm Stevenson Forbes's** grandfather, B. C. Forbes. Once Malcolm inherited *Forbes Magazine*, he had time to pursue his passions for hot air ballooning, motorcycles, and collecting antique toys, Fabergé eggs, and attractive male employees. Malcolm frequently "dropped by" and asked new male employees to dinner, a night that often included viewing his vast collection of gay erotic art, an invitation to the sauna, and sex.

THE BAGATTELLE [5]

86 University Place. Only a handful of lesbian bars existed in Greenwich Village during the 1950s. The Bagatelle, along with the Sea Colony on Eighth Avenue and the Swing Rendezvous on MacDougal Street, were among the most popular. Lesbian bars offered women the only opportunity to meet in public spaces; however, there was always the threat that plainclothes police could arrest you for transvestism if you were not wearing at least three articles of female clothing. The space is currently a restaurant.

ESTHER LAPE/ELIZABETH READ HOUSE [8]

20 East 11th Street. Writer **Esther Lape** and attorney **Elizabeth Read**, who lived together in this house for two decades, were influential suffragists/political reformers and founders of the League of Women Voters. Their close friend **Eleanor Roosevelt** rented an apartment here from 1933 to 1942. During her years as First Lady, this address was her private haven where she could enjoy "her own company" when staying in New York City.

ELEANOR ROOSEVELT APARTMENT [15]

29 Washington Square West. First Lady **Eleanor Roosevelt** maintained an apartment here from 1942 to 1949. As early as the 1920s, Roosevelt had associations with Greenwich Village and women who lived there.

WILLA CATHER APARTMENT [17]

82 Washington Place West. Novelist **Willa Cather**, then an editor for *McClure's Magazine*, lived in this apartment building with her lover **Edith Lewis** from about 1908 to 1913.

WASHINGTON SQUARE/MACDOUGAL STREET [18 & 19]

By the early 20th century Washington Square was a cruising ground for gay men, and the park's west side was later popularly referred to as the "meat rack." During the 1920s, the block of MacDougal Street south of the square became the best known commercial strip of New York's lesbian and gay community, lined with restaurants, tearooms and speakeasies.

JUDSON MEMORIAL CHURCH [22]

55 Washington Square South. In the 1940s the activist congregation of this church began sponsoring avant-garde exhibits and performances. Playwright and minister **Al Carmine** led the church and staged his works here after 1958. In the 1960s and 1970s the church was used as a hall for gay and lesbian political gatherings, including a mass protest in 1966 after the Lindsay administration attempted to "clean up" Washington Square.

PROVINCETOWN PLAYHOUSE [20]

133-139 MacDougal Street. The Provincetown Playhouse was founded in 1916 as a serious amateur theater. Originally located in a rowhouse at No. 139, it moved in 1918 into a former stable at No. 133 (these were combined when the property was rebuilt in 1941-42). Eugene O'Neill was Provincetown's most famous early playwright, but **Edna St. Vincent Millay** and **Djuna Barnes** were also associated with the theater. The theater closed in 1929, ending what some consider the first major Off-Broadway theater experiment. In a later incarnation the theater housed **Edward Albee's** first play *The Zoo Story* (1960); **Marty Martin's** *Gertrude Stein Gertrude Stein Gertrude Stein* (1979) with **Pat Carroll**; and **Charles Busch's** *Vampire Lesbians of Sodom* (1985).



GAA FIREHOUSE

GAY ACTIVISTS ALLIANCE FIREHOUSE [33]

99 Wooster Street. Founded in December 1969 by **Marty Robinson**, **Jim Owles**, and **Arthur Evans** as an offshoot of the leftist Gay Liberation Front, the GAA was an activist group famous for its "zaps." GAA became the leading gay liberation organization of the early 1970s. In 1970 GAA moved into this firehouse, which soon became the lesbian and gay community's first organizational and social center in New York. An arson fire in 1974 forced GAA to cut back on its functions; it officially disbanded in 1981.

WEBSTER HALL [6]

125 East 11th Street. From 1913 until the late 1920s, Webster Hall hosted dances that attracted Greenwich Village's bohemian population. Various organizations sponsored lavish masquerade balls. Included in the frolicking were hundreds of gay men, many of whom attended in drag. Their presence, while tolerated, was continually under surveillance by private anti-vice societies. By the early 1920s gay men and lesbians were organizing their own balls at Webster Hall. It is currently a popular dance club under the same name.

OSCAR WILDE MEMORIAL BOOKSHOP [16]

(Original location) 291 Mercer Street. Gay activist **Craig Rodwell** opened the nation's first lesbian and gay bookstore at this storefront in November 1967. It soon became an active meeting place for the gay and lesbian community. In naming the store, Rodwell chose **Oscar Wilde** since the name was easily identifiable as gay. From the beginning, Rodwell refused to sell material that he deemed did not contribute to a positive image of the lesbian and gay community; this raised the ire of many, who charged the store with censorship. In 1973 the bookstore relocated to its current site, 15 Christopher Street.

COLUMBIA HALL ("PARESIS HALL") [23]

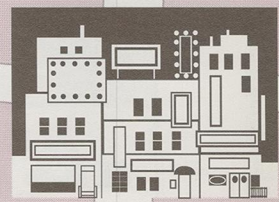
392 Bovey (demolished). During the 1890s, Columbia Hall (colloquially referred to as "Paresis Hall," paresis being a medical term for insanity) was one of the many beer gardens and dance halls on the Bovey that were the headquarters for middle- and upper-class female impersonators. Owners of these establishments encouraged the presence of "fairies" in order to attract out-of-towners wanting to see the underworld, in some instances hiring female impersonators as waiters or prostitutes. "Paresis Hall" was also the meeting site of the Cercle Hermaphroditus, possibly the first homosexual civil rights organization in the United States.

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New York City
yours to Discover

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