

NYC Pub Crawl
Private tour
HS students (no drinking)
3/28/2015

Contact - Chris McKittrick, you can reach him at 631.576.7149

Start at 1pm and End about 3pm at:

Washington Square Arch

1. Arch (do the arch conspiracy there)
2. Provincetown Playhouse
3. MacDougal Street and Minetta Lane (I do the Jack Kerouac Fight there and Joe Gould) (brief cause it's outside)
4. Minetta Lane Walk down Bleecker head to
5. Edna Millay House,
6. Grove Court
7. Hart Crane
8. Thomas Paine
9. Stone wall Riots (either on Christopher Street or Grove Street)
10. 92 Grove Street: (Alex Haley had the interviews with Malcolm X here: <http://streeteasy.com/building/92-grove-street-manhattan>)
11. Northern Dispensary
12. Washington Square Arch.

1.

VILLAGE HISTORY

One thing you may have learned over time is that the more times you tell a story, the bigger the “fish” gets, so to speak. As stories become legend, legend becomes embellished. Often in the midst of our research we’ll find various contradicting dates, or phrasings or what have you. Many of the stories come from the writers themselves, and drunken writers have a strong tendency to “embellish” their own histories.

Critic Mary McCarthy once said of village playwright Lillian Hellman, “**every word she writes is a lie, including ‘and’ and ‘the’.**” Anais Nin, a regular here at the White Horse, was known for keeping a “Box of Lies” to help keep here stories straight between here several husbands. We have done relatively extensive research and wherever possible have tried to clear up any myths. But we still will find many variations of these stories and will share the several different versions, or certainly the most interesting.

That being said, we've found that the best way to really kick off is to give you a brief history of the neighborhood itself, how it got developed and eventually became the Village we know of today. For two centuries it's been the center of the United States' artistic community, in literature in particular. Edgar Allen Poe wrote "The Raven" at a club in Greenwich Village, Thomas Paine, who wrote "Common Sense," lived in a house that we're going to pass, Louisa May Alcott wrote *Little Women* while she lived here. Herman Melville, James Fennimore Cooper, Mark twain; Willa Cather wrote *Oh! Pioneers* here, e.e. Cummings, Jack Kerouac, JD Salinger, Edith Wharton, John Steinbeck, Henry James, Dylan Thomas, James Baldwin, Norman Mailer, the list is just stunning. They say the shorter list is writers and artists who didn't live here, and that list is: Emily Dickinson. **It is suggested that between 1920 and 1925 50 percent of all literature written in this country was written in Greenwich Village. As one historian put it, Greenwich Village was the only place where Edgar Allen Poe could score drugs in the 1840's and Henry James could stroll past grazing cows in the 1890's.**

Greenwich Village was the epicenter of not only of artistic movements, but also political and social movements. There was a sexual revolution here in the late 1800's and early 1900's, long before the hippies gave it a shot. In fact, sleeping around has so common in fact, that some folks decided to "rebel against the norm" and maintain monogamous relationships. Women like Emma Goldman, Henrietta Rodman, and Margaret Sanger were all Village figureheads espousing everything from equal rights, free love, and political anarchy. Max Eastman and "The Masses" periodical rooted much of the early socialist movements, as well as helping promote the labor unions that busted up the sweatshops that were becoming all too well known in the village and the city.

One author wrote that the early bohemians in the village of the early 1900's and 1910's felt that middle class values needed to be altered and confronted, but that in the 1920's they merely needed to be completely rejected and replaced "not with something noble" but with anything that the middle class found the most offensive and "furiously condemned."

QUICK HISTORY OF SETTLEMENT

Initially, the Dutch bought the entire island of Manhattan from the Native Americans in 1626 **LEGEND HAS IT** for approximately \$24 worth of beads and trinkets. This is the most accepted version of the story. There are two variations to this story however that merit mentioning. One is that the Natives thought it was rent and came back the following year. The Dutch allegedly asked them to "come back tomorrow" and went out that night and slaughtered them. Another story claims the Natives were a nomadic tribe, and it may have been the very first real estate scam, starting a trend of scams through New York. [The \\$24 dollar legend is based off of a transaction between Peter Minit and a branch of the Lenni Lenape tribe.](#)

The city was at the southern tip of the island where Wall Street is now. The Village at that time was just woodland and marshes, and soon became the best tobacco plantation in the

colony under the Dutch West India Company. For a short time the colony was run by William Kieft, who led a brutal campaign against the Native Americans, and lost a lot of favor and support from the settlers. The settlement was a precursor to the country that would come. It was a melting pot of religions, races and cultures. It made several attempts to become recognized as full citizens of the Netherlands, with all the voting, legal and representational rights. These attempts were constantly fought and thwarted by the final Governor of New Amsterdam: Peter Stuyvesant. Stuyvesant believed in the model that all the “citizens” of New Amsterdam were indentured servants to the Dutch West India Company and were required to show complete fealty to them and thereby him without question.

So when the British showed up in 1664, Stuyvesant shockingly was unable to muster any troops to defend him and New Amsterdam shifted to New York. At that point this area evolved into a country hamlet, first designated Grin’wich in 1713 Common Council records. In the 1740’s, Sir Peter Warren, Vice Admiral of the British Navy and commander of its New York fleet, bought a large portion of the land.

LOCATION: WASHINGTON SQUARE PARK

HOST 2:

You should be aware that underneath you are about 15,000 bodies, because this was once mass graveyard for Yellow Fever victims. As the city spread out, it became a parade ground and then a site for public executions. If you’ll look to the corner of the park to your left, you’ll see “Hanging Elm” which is the tree that people were indeed hanged from. Rose Butler was hanged here in 1820, the last person in New York State to be executed for arson. In 1826 this area was designated the Washington Military Parade Grounds, which soon was transformed into a public park.

HOST 1:

(Point out the arch without going over.)

You can see the famous arch that was built in **1889** to celebrate the 100th anniversary of George Washington’s inauguration. He served his presidency here in New York, which was the capital at the time. **Initially built as a temporary wooden structure, this more permanent marble structure was rebuilt in 1891. It shows Washington both as the general and as the statesman.**

On January 23rd, 1917 it was the site of the second attempt to secede from the nation, started by the “Arch Conspirators.” It was started by poet Gertrude Drick, who apparently tugged at an iron door in the arch repeatedly until it came open, climbed to the top of the arch and realized it’d be a great place to start a revolution. She was well known in the village, partially for her famed spells of melancholy. In fact she even printed black bordered calling cards with the word “WOE” printed on them. When asked for an explanation she said “Because Woe is me.” On the 23rd she, Marcel Duchamp and several actors from the Provincetown Playhouse climbed to the top of the arch, where

Drick read the Declaration of Independence (apparently just the word Whereas repeated several times), the group fired off cap pistols and then partied until dawn.

On the block at the north end of the park, at #18 Washington Square North (not the original building) the novelist Henry James was born. The house was the setting for his novel "Washington Square" which has been made into a movie – twice – and also adapted into a play called *The Heiress*.

MORE ABOUT THE PARK IF WE FEEL LIKE IT:

Washington Square Park is one of the best-known of [New York City's 1,900 public parks](#). At 9.75 acres

The land was once divided by a narrow marshy valley through which [Minetta Creek](#) (or Brook) ran.^[4] In the early 17th century, a [Native American](#) village known as [Sapokanican](#) or "Tobacco Field" was nearby. They also owned the land known now as Washington Square Park before the Dutch attacked and drove them out. By the mid-17th century, the land on each side of the Minetta was used as farm land by the Dutch.

It remained farmland until April 1797, when the [Common Council of New York](#) purchased the fields to the east of the Minetta (which were not yet within city limits) for a new [potter's field](#), or public burial ground. It was used mainly for burying unknown or indigent people when they died. But when New York (which did not include this area yet) went through [yellow fever](#) epidemics in the early 19th century, most of those who died from yellow fever were also buried here, safely away from town, as a hygienic measure. A legend in many tourist guides says that the large elm at the northwest corner of the park, [Hangman's Elm](#), was the old hanging tree. However, research indicates the tree was on the side of the former Minetta Creek that was the back garden of a private house. Records of only one public hanging at the potter's field exist. Two eyewitnesses to the recorded hanging differed on the location of the gallows. One said it had been put up at a spot where the fountain is now, the other placed it closer to where the Arch is now. However, the [cemetery](#) was closed in 1825. To this day, the remains of more than 20,000 bodies rest under Washington Square.

In 1849 and 1850, the parade ground was reworked into the first park on the site.

In 1889, a large plaster and wood memorial arch was erected over Fifth Avenue just north of Washington Square Park by local businessman and

philanthropist William Rhinelander Stewart (1852-1929). Stewart lived at 17 [Washington Square North](#) and he collected \$2,765 from his friends to finance the work. The temporary arch was so popular that three years later the permanent stone arch, designed by architect Stanford White, was erected.^[2]

During the excavations for the eastern pier, human remains, a coffin, and a gravestone dated 1803 were uncovered 10 feet (3.0 m) below ground level.^[3] The Arch was dedicated in 1895. In 1918, two statues of Washington were added to the north side.

Formerly, the Washington Square Arch was extensively defaced with [spray-painted graffiti](#). It was cleaned and restored in the 1980s.

Friday, March 25th, 2011 marks the 100th Anniversary of the Triangle Factory Fire which occurred in a building **one block from Washington Square Park**. Lack of proper factory safety protocols led to the deaths of 146 workers, mostly young women.

March 25, 1911, a fire that broke out in a bin holding scraps of fabric at the **Triangle Waist Company, just down the block from New York City's Washington Square Park**, quickly spread, fed by cotton garments, tissue paper and wooden fixtures. Though the building that housed the clothing manufacturer was modern and advertised as fireproof, the cramped layout of the factory, a locked exit door, a flimsy fire escape that soon crumpled and inadequate fire department equipment brought a staggering loss of life.

Within a half-hour, 146 workers had died, mostly young Jewish and Italian women, nearly half still in their teens. Two were only 14. More than a third of the victims jumped or fell from upper-story windows trying to escape the flames. **Each year a fire department truck raises a ladder to the sixth floor, the highest its equipment could reach in 1911, painfully short of the eighth, ninth and tenth floors, where the fire occurred.**

2.

LOCATION: PROVINCETOWN PLAYHOUSE

HOST 1:

The Provincetown Players were first established in 1915 on a wharf in Provincetown,

Massachusetts. Founders George Cram "Jig" Cook and his wife Susan Glaspell began by producing their own plays. One day the 27-year-old Eugene O'Neill showed up, though, and changed things in a very significant way. They premiered his play *Bound East for Cardiff*, which was a big hit, and then moved it to New York, right here on MacDougal Street. O'Neill managed the playhouse for the first several years and the company really established him as a major American writer. Many of O'Neill's early plays premiered here: *Bound East for Cardiff*, *The Hairy Ape*, *The Long Voyage Home*, *The Emperor Jones*, and *All God's Chillun's Got Wings*. Susan Glaspell did manage to leave her stamp in the world of theater, although it took decades for her to be recognized. She is attributed by some scholars as being one of the early contributors of the "one-act" play, but was never acknowledged because women writers weren't taken seriously and often never really read or published.

Eugene O'Neill, the playwright that reinvigorated the theatre scene in the village and the city. His plays, originally produced in Provincetown Mass, were so successful the theatre moved to the village and is arguably one of the first Off-Broadway if not the first Off-Broadway theatre in the city, bringing a fresh spirit and life to theatre that now is encapsulated in the Off-Off Broadway scene.

3.

LOCATION: CORNER OF MINETTA AND MACDOUGAL

HOST 2:

There was an article shown to us that was in the New York Times. It talked about how MacDougal Street was a street where there were a lot of bars, where the young would dress wildly, act wildly, lots of noise, people spilling out into the street how it was somewhat disruptive. The article was a reprint from the 1800's. 100 years and it still has the same reputation. Across the street you'll see Café Wha, on the next corner. This is where Dylan played his first gig in NYC in January 1961. At least that's how they've told the story. There have been contradictions (including from Dylan himself) but apparently he did play there, just back up harmonica.

The street was also a big beat hangout. There was Sam Remo, the Gaslight Café, Esperanto Café ("always open"), and the original location of the Kettle of Fish. These were the scenes of some famous beat fights. Bob Dylan had a fight there with Andy Warhol over Edie Sedgwick. Also, Jack Kerouac and Gregory Corso once got in a fight with some furniture movers from the Kettle. Apparently Kerouac's head was repeatedly bounced off the curb of the sidewalk while Corso kept shouting "My God, stop, you'll kill him."

JOSEPH GOULD

A Harvard graduate who became a bohemian dropout in the 40's, Gould wandered about scoring free meals and drinks from artists and other residents of the Village. He was known for worming his way into the well known Raven Poetry Circle (which offered free food and drink). Inevitably we would offend the poets there, most of whom were well fed and had nice homes, get kicked out, and worm his way back in for free food and drink. One of the ways he would offend them is, he claimed that he know seagulls better than any man alive, that he could in fact speak seagull, and he would translate one of their poems into seagull and squawk it out at them. Another way was his poem called "My Religion". **"In the winter I'm a Buddhist, in the summer I'm a nudist."**

He was apparently working on a 9 million word "Oral History of the World" and *New Yorker* writer Joseph Mitchell wrote an article about the man he called "Professor Seagull" in 1942. From the article and word of mouth it created, for a short while Gould became an international celebrity. People would come from all over to meet Joe Gould, donate to his "Joe Gould Fund" and hear more about the Oral History. He had deals like here in Minetta, where he would sit in the corner, tourists and others would come in, buy him beer, give him money and talk to him, and at the end of the day he'd get a plate of spaghetti and meatballs.

However Joseph Mitchell later discovered that Joe Gould hadn't really written much of any of his 9 million word oral history of the world. To Mitchell's credit, he kept the secret to himself. In 1952 Gould collapsed in the street and was admitted into Pilgrim State Hospital which was a rather famous asylum. Pilgrim State Hospital, abandoned and partially demolished now still holds the distinction of being the largest mental hospital in the world. 5 years after being admitted, Joe Gould died in 1957. A sliver of Gould's writing survives to this day. Quietly tucked away within NYU's archives are 11 dime-store composition books that make up a nearly 150,000 words or so.

June 7, 1946: "I saw Bele de Triefant. He said he had a pair of shoes for me. I had an ale at the Minetta." June 8: "De Triefant had not brought the shoes. I had a drink at the Minetta." June 11: "I saw De Triefant. He had shoes for me. I took them. I went to the Minetta. I drank." June 12: "I went to Goody's. I had some beers. I lost my shoe. I went to the Minetta."

Eve Addams was a Polish Jew named Eva Kotchever, who immigrate to New York, changed her name in a slightly gender blending fashion and eventually became nicknamed "The Queen of the Third Sex." She also ran two known speakeasies during her day. One of them was a very popular bohemian hangout called the Black Rabbit, now the Minetta Tavern. What is most ironic about that place is whilst it was an illegal drinking establishment for bohemians and writers of the village, in 1923 the very un-bohemian non-literary "Reader's Digest Magazine" was founded in the basement. The first 5,000 copies were addressed and sent from there, and

many of the drunken bohemians were hired to affix labels and stamps.

Apparently DeWitt Wallace felt that literature of his time was too wordy, too descriptive, too racy and too naughty and so he edited out all the wordy, descriptive, racy, naughty parts and created the conservative condensed novel that still wows readers on toilets throughout the country. He also apparently **inspired others to condense** famous works of art. We found a condensed version of Dylan Thomas' Do Not Go Gentle Into That good night. It goes:

**There was an old father of Dylan
Who was seriously mortally illin'
"I want" Dylan said
"You to bitch till your dead.
I'll be cheesed if you kick it while chillin.'"**

If our timelines are correct, than she was so successful at the Black Rabbit she was able to move down the block and open a second speakeasy called "Eve's Hangout." Eve had a direct response to the beloved McSorley's pub, which didn't allow women in until the 1970's by court order. Over the door of the bar was a sign that said "Men are admitted, but not welcome."

Eve was very good friend with many writers, and would often peddle some of their early works out of her tea rooms. She maintained a very close friendship with Henry Miller. He frequented her establishments regularly, and she sold copies of many of his books to costumers.

4.

LOCATION: MIDWAY DOWN MINETTA STREET

HOST 2:

I am currently standing on Minetta Street. We are about to connect with Minetta Lane, somewhere in this area was also the intersection of Minetta Court and Minetta place, all of which are named for Minetta Stream or Brook which used to run thru here, starting up at 23rd street, all the way through Washington Square Park and into the Hudson. All though it's covered over, some residents say every time it rains their basements fill up.

Many of these buildings pre-date the civil war. This area at one point was referred to as "Little

Africa,” One of the largest African-American communities at that time. This research led me to an interesting article. The first documented slave ship brought to Manhattan arrived in 1626, themselves and their ship owned by the Dutch West India Company. It is conjectured that they originated in Angola. In 1644 they petitioned the company for their freedom. They were given small, 400 square foot plots of land, some east of Hudson Street, most around present day Houston Street and at 8th and Lafayette. Paul D’Angola, one of the more famous of the slaves owned property all through this area. After the Civil War, much of the African American community was enticed up to Harlem by developers (Harlem offered indoor plumbing!).

This block transformed into a dangerous ghetto where Irish and Jewish gangs hung out. Almost no one would walk it, except perhaps Stephen Crane, who wrote an essay called “Stephen Crane in Minetta Lane” in 1896. He introduces us to such character types as No-Toe Charley, Blood-Thirsty, and Black-Cat, who frequented a place called Pop Babcock's, "where sin shone from every corner like a new headlight." He described Minetta Street as, " a small becobbled alley between hills of dingy brick.” Crane was born in New Jersey in 1871 and died in 1900. He gained fame for *The Red Badge of Courage* at age 24, but he wrote a lot of other stuff, including many poems

Also, across the street there above Panchito’s you can still see the sign for the bar that used to be there; The Fat Black Pussycat. Bob Dylan was with some friends. He had his guitar and was scribbling something down, playing a few chords. When he finished it, we went over to Folk City and Bob played it for Gil Turner, who thought it was fantastic. And then Gil got up on the stage and played it for the audience, while Bob stood in the shadows at the bar. The song was Blowin' In The Wind

LOCATION: CORNER OF BLEECKER AND CORNELIA STREET

Just up the block is the Cornelia Street Café, which differs from a lot of the other places we’ve pointed out in that it’s more a *current* hot spot of Greenwich Village literary culture. They have a small theatre downstairs and almost every night host poetry readings, musical acts, presentations of new fiction, etc.

Probably the most famous name to come out of the Cornelia St. Cafe in recent years is Suzanne Vega, who was part of what was called the Songwriter’s Exchange. That was a group of songwriters that got together every Monday and played, but the rule was that you could only do songs that you had written that week. They put out an album in 1980 that won many awards called *Cornelia St. - The Songwriter’s Exchange*.

LOCATION: BLEECKER AND 6TH AVENUE.

FATHER DEMO SQUARE

Father Antonio Demo (1870-1936) was born on April 23, 1870 in Vicenza, Italy. He immigrated to Boston to do missionary work in 1896 and arrived in New York to serve as assistant pastor of Our Lady of Pompeii a few years later. In 1900 he was appointed pastor of the church.

He was noted for many charitable activities, one being his help in the 1911 Triangle Shirtwaist Company factory fire. When New York planned to extend 6th Avenue, the church was in the way. He organized the efforts to buy new property and have the new church built. The Our Lady of Pompeii you see here was dedicated on October 7th, 1928. After he died Mayor Fiorello LaGuardia named this triangle formed by Sixth, Bleecker and Carmine for Father Demo.

LOCATION: 11 THRU 17 COMMERCE STREET

HOST 2:

Here is a lesson in some of the more misleading qualities of some of the plaques you may come across in your travels. The plaque above 17 Commerce Street reads “Aaron Burr House 1802” Well, it’s kind of true. Aaron Burr did live here in 1802, but this isn’t the house. The house was built in 1830. It is the plot of land. Aaron Burr is best known in history for killing long time political rival Alexander Hamilton in a duel on July 11th, 1804. Hamilton died the next day.

HOST 1:

Number 11 Commerce Street has a plaque that is steeped in mystery deeper than even we originally knew. The plaque says “Irving House, formally the home of Washington Irving Jr.” If you take a casual glance on the internet you will find several sites that mention the house really belonged to his sister, and not he, but that this is where he wrote “Legend of Sleepy Hollow.” Washington **IRVING** wrote Legend of Sleepy Hollow. He was first generation American, and his family was so patriotic they named him after George Washington. Washington Irving Jr. was his nephew.

The joke is the plaque in the middle. A house sandwiched between two famous buildings gets an identity crisis I guess.

LOCATION: CORNER OF BEDFORD AND COMMERCE

HOST 1:

And if you notice this house on the corner, #77, you’ll see that it has a barn style roof. That style of roof is called Dutch style. Now if you’ll recall, the Dutch bought the island of

Manhattan from the Native Americans in 1626. So this house, which is obviously Dutch, is one of the oldest in Greenwich Village. It doesn't look it because it's never been land marked, but the foundation and infrastructure date back to 1799

The Building next to it, #75 1/2, is the narrowest building in the village. It's 9 and 1/2 feet wide and used to be an alley, but when you look at how much rent costs in the Village, it's understandable that someone turned it into an apartment. The building has been there since 1873. It runs approximately 30 feet deep.

5.

HOST 2: *EDNA ST. VINCENT MILLAY*

It also was once the home of a very notable poet...Edna St. Vincent Millay. Vincent, as she insisted on being called, got her first recognition in 1912 at the age of 20. She entered her poem "Renascence" into a poetry contest and, though she didn't win first prize, her poem was awarded 4th place and published in a journal. The first place winner was poet **Orrick Johns** for *Second Avenue*. When Johns saw the publication he wrote: "When the book arrived I realized that it was an unmerited award. The outstanding poem was *Renascence*...the award was as much an embarrassment as a triumph." He refused to attend the dinner to receive his award.

[A wealthy woman named Caroline B. Dow heard Millay read her poems and was so impressed she offered to pay for Millay's education at Vassar.](#)

After graduating from Vassar, Vincent moved to Greenwich Village and continued to be a major force in the literary world. She first became known in the Village as an actress from the Provincetown Playhouse, and although from childhood she considered herself a poet, she came to New York City to pursue a career on stage. In 1921, she published *A Few Figs from Thistles*, in which she described female sexuality in such a way that gained her quite a bit of attention. She put forth the idea that a woman has every right to sexual pleasure and no obligation to fidelity. She also had a number of passages that were distinctly lesbian in nature.

FIRST FIG

**My candle burns at both ends:
It will not last the night;
But ah, my foes, and oh, my friends
It gives a lovely light.**

She published another volume called *Second April*, the following year, yet it was for a collection called *The Harp Weaver and Other Poems*, that she won a Pulitzer Prize in 1923

****OPTIONAL ** LOCATION: CORNER OF BEDFORD AND COMMERCE**

HOST 2:

If you look to your right, you'll see the red awning of the Cherry Lane Theatre. The building was originally built in 1836 as a brewery tobacco warehouse and a box factory. It replaced an old farm silo that had been built in 1817.

In 1924, Edna St. Vincent Millay and a group of theatre artists commissioned Cleon Throckmorton, a famous scenic designer, to convert the space into The Cherry Lane Playhouse. It considered the oldest, continuously running Off Broadway playhouse in the city. Such great playwrights as Eugene Ionesco, Samuel Beckett, Edward Albee, Eugene O'Neill, David Mamet, Sam Shepard, Harold Pinter and Lanford Wilson and have had their work done there. It's still functioning today.

6.

LOCATION: GROVE COURT

HOST 1 OR 2:

We took this little side path because we wanted to show you Grove Court. Constructed between 1848 and 1852, this used to be called "Mixed Ale Alley." It was a series of apartments that housed many of the employees of the bars, restaurants and hotels in town. At that time, it was not fashionable to live in buildings that didn't face directly onto the street, so this was essentially lower middle-income housing. When the folks living here got out of work, they would bring jugs of whatever alcohol they could steal from their place of employment and mix them into a large container that everyone would partake of. Apparently, it was quite a party spot. Also, this was the setting for O. Henry's story "The Last Leaf" about an ailing young woman and a failing artist. Many of the beams used to build the housing units are older than the building itself, having been taken from decommissioned ships from the Hudson.

LOCATION: CORNER OF GROVE AND BEDFORD

HOST 1 OR 2: *WILLIAM HYDE HOME AND JAMES BALDWIN HOME*

This building was built by William Hyde in 1822. He was a window sash maker. It is one of the only remaining freestanding wooden buildings in the village. Its literary connection is the

author James Baldwin stayed in the workshop that Hyde built in the back. Baldwin wrote very little here in the states, much like his mentor and role model Richard Wright. Both lived here in the village for a little while, but eventually left because of the harsh racism they suffered (even in the liberal, open minded, artistic residents of the village) and resettled in Paris, France, where they did most of their writing. It was so bad that Baldwin once famously said: **“All of Africa will be free before we can get a lousy cup of coffee.”** Baldwin was not only inspired by Wright, but they maintained a professional friendship/correspondence for many years. However Baldwin once wrote a literary criticism saying “Native Son” lacked credible characters. Wright was furious and broke off all contact, but not by Baldwin’s choice. **“I knew Richard and I loved him. I was not attacking him; I was trying to clarify something for myself.”**

HOST 1 OR 2: TWIN PEAKS HOUSE (102 BEDFORD ST.)

The house next to it is affectionately referred to as Twin Peaks. It was originally built as a square brick building, just like all the others in 1835. However in the 1920’s, Opera impresario Otto Kahn felt like Greenwich Village should have buildings that reflect the artistic nature of the community. He hired architect Clifford Reed Daily to redesign the building to what you see here. When it was finished, they apparently had a little christening ceremony with a Broadway singer sitting on one peak, and a Wiccan Priestess sitting on another, breaking champagne bottles etc. Daily thought he was going to get a sweet pad in the place, but Otto Kahn said “Oh No” and forced him out. The story goes that Daily buried two bottles of champagne in the basement of the building vowing to open them upon his return. He never returned.

7.

LOCATION: 45 GROVE STREET

HOST 2: *HART CRANE/SAMUEL CHESTER HOME*

This is #45 Grove, which was originally built in 1830 as a two-story mansion owned by Samuel Whittemore, and was once the home of the poet Hart Crane. Crane was well known in the late 1920s and early 30s, mostly for a collection called *The Bridge*, published in 1930 and also for *White Buildings* (1926). Often condemned and lauded by his peers, he has later been proved as one of the most influential poets of his day. On April 27th, 1932 at 33 years old, he was sailing back to New York from Mexico where he had been on a Guggenheim Fellowship. Just before noon, he calmly walked to the edge of the ship, wearing his pajamas, and leapt overboard. There were several reasons for his suicide: his fellowship had ended, his father had died in 1931, he had become a hopeless alcoholic and was aging prematurely, and he was part of a love triangle at the time; he loved a man, who loved a woman, who loved Crane. I’m sure the fact that he was very drunk, and had been beaten up by a crewmember after a sexual encounter added to the timing. It’s mildly ironic that Crane’s father, Clarence, a Cleveland businessman, invented the Lifesavers candy in 1912. He wanted to create a candy that wouldn’t melt in the

summer.

Another artist in residence here was the actor Samuel Chester. Perhaps you haven't heard of him. You may recognize his friend and fellow actor John Wilkes Booth. The story goes that Booth came here and stayed with his friend Samuel and tried to convince his friend to join his plot to kidnap Abraham Lincoln. Chester wouldn't join up, after both being bribed and threatened by Booth. Booth left town and decided to kill Lincoln in stead. Chester's testimony mentions both the plot and this residence. Ironically enough, both Booth and Chester met in a production of Julius Caesar.

8.

HOST OTHER: *THOMAS PAINE*

The Crisis of Marie's Crisis refers to the Crisis papers of Thomas Paine. It is so named in honor of Paine as it was on this site in the farmhouse we mentioned that Paine died in 1809. Paine had first written Common Sense to gain support and outline the reasons that the colonies should go to war with England for independence. When it was published, it was the second most commonly owned book next to the bible.

In the winter of 1776 support for the war was waning. The rebel army was losing, the soldiers were unpaid, unfed and in many casing barefoot and improperly dressed. Most of the soldiers had signed on for short periods and with the combination of all this Washington literally thought his entire army might walk out overnight. Shivering alongside these soldiers, Paine wrote the first of his many Crisis papers to help re-inspire the cause. Washington read it to the troops on December 23rd, 1776, two days before the battle at Trenton. It began with the lines:

“THESE are the times that try men's souls. The summer soldier and the sunshine patriot will, in this crisis, shrink from the service of their country; but he that stands it now, deserves the love and thanks of man and woman. Tyranny, like hell, is not easily conquered; yet we have this consolation with us, that the harder the conflict, the more glorious the triumph. What we obtain too cheap, we esteem too lightly: it is dearness only that gives every thing its value. Heaven knows how to put a proper price upon its goods; and it would be strange indeed if so celestial an article as FREEDOM should not be highly rated”

Paine was truly an idealist well ahead of his time. He was very active in the French revolution as well as the American. Thus you can see the mural behind us in honor of Thomas Paine, depicting both the French and American revolutions. *(It should be noted that it is assumed to be WPA, but this is not known for certain).* There is also a wood carving upstairs entitled “La

Convention” depicting Paine, Georges Danton and Maximilian Robespierre, which is ironic because Robespierre had Paine arrested and scheduled to be executed, but by luck he managed to survive. A guard walked through the prison placing a chalk mark on the doors of the condemned prisoners. He placed one on Paine's door — but because a doctor was treating Paine at that moment, the prison door was open. When the doctor left, the door was swung closed, such that the chalk mark faced into the cell. Later, when the condemned prisoners were rounded up for execution, Paine was spared because there was no apparent chalk mark on his cell door. He was very passionate about the freedoms of all humanity. There’s a famous exchange between Benjamin Franklin and Paine. Franklin once said, **“Where liberty is, there is my country.”** Paine responded, **“Where liberty is not, there is my country.”**

In fact Paine was very critical of the government that the colonies created, and of the constitution it had written. The reason, simply, is that this great document about the god given freedoms of man allowed for the existence of slavery and the oppression of a people. Paine abhorred slavery and was very outspoken about it.

HOST OTHER:

When Paine died, he was not very well liked anymore, by many even here in the states. The main reason for this is his criticism of major religions and was very outspoken at times about the Christian religion, or at least how it was being used and some of the abuses happening under the name of Christianity. When he was dying, he apparently would ask friends to let him stay with them, and they’d say, sure, figuring he’d die soon.

But he kept living and would eventually have to move from place to place until eventually Margarite de Bonneville rented the building that was here and took care of him until he died. She was a dear friend of Paine’s, being a French citizen, living in America, and raising her soon, born as one of the first generation of Americans. Paine was so disliked by his death that apparently there were only a handful of people who attended his funeral, Margarite and her son, the man performing the service, two grave diggers, and a handful of freed slaves. Witnessing this, Margarite wrote the following quote:

“Contemplating who it was, what man it was, that we were committing to an obscure grave on an open and disregarded bit of land, I could not help feeling most acutely. Before the earth was thrown down upon the coffin, I, placing myself at the east end of the grave, said to my son Benjamin, 'stand you there, at the other end, as a witness for grateful America.' Looking about me, and beholding the small group of spectators, I exclaimed, as the earth was tumbled onto the grave, 'Oh! Mr. Paine! My son stands here in testimony of the gratitude of America, and I, for France!’”

HOST OTHER:

Ironically the saga of Paine does not end with his death. His friend William Cobbett felt Paine deserved a better monument to his life and also should be buried in his home town in England as he had never revoked his British citizenship. Cobbett had his body exhumed, and shipped off to England, toured the body around for awhile, couldn't raise enough funds to build a monument, put the body in storage and then Cobbett died himself. It's a little macabre, but the body became "property" was attempted to be auctioned off unsuccessfully, but somehow kept changing hands, and each time parts of him didn't make the transfer. Thus you have people claiming to have his skull, his wrist, his jawbone, and many falsely so. There's a certain metaphoric beauty in this story, as Paine truly believed of himself a citizen of the world and believed in the freedom for all.

9.

LOCATION: OUTSIDE THE STONEWALL TAVERN

HOST 1: *STONEWALL TAVERN RIOTS*

The Stonewall Inn at 51 Christopher Street opened in 1930, in street level space that was created by joining two former stables built around 1840. Popular at first for weddings, by the late 1960's the crowd was male and mostly gay.

The Stonewall was a second home to those who were considered too outrageous to be allowed entry to the strait-laced jazz club two doors down. Perhaps it was the full moon, but what started as a routine police raid on June 28, 1969 ended in a full-scale riot which marked the beginning of the gay rights movement. Things got so nasty that the cops actually barricaded themselves inside the bar.

There are variations as to the hows and where's that things got started. Allegedly 2000 protesters and 400 police clashed here the first night. Eventually the crowd dispersed, but returned again the following evening. A few days later around 1000 or so rioters came back and for a third night there were demonstrations, although mostly in property damage.

The event is commemorated every year in New York's Gay Pride Parade. Apparently in Gay Pride Parade's throughout the world there are often floats to commemorate the Stonewall Riots. The celebration taking place that night at the Stonewall was a tribute to Judy Garland who had died a few days earlier, on June 22nd.

LEAD IN TO THREE SIDED BUILDING

HOST 2:

CHRISTOPHER PARK

Across the street is Christopher Park. It's often mistaken for Sheridan Square, because it has a statue of Philip Henry Sheridan in it, Union cavalry commander and Indian fighter. He was known by some for his now offensive quote; "The only good Indian is a dead Indian."

The white figures are a sculpture by George Segal, the Gay Liberation Monument. It features two men standing and two women sitting. He used a process in which bronze casts were made from plaster moulds of actual human models, and then painted in a bright white.

10.

92 Grove Street: (Alex Haley had the interviews with Malcolm X here)

11.

LOCATION: NORTHERN DISPENSARY WAVERLY AND WAVERLY

HOST 2

If you notice the street sign you will note that we are on the corner of Waverly Place and Waverly Place. Across from us is the Northern Dispensary, our three sided building. On the third side, Grove Street and Christopher Street split right down the middle, thus one side on two streets.

This landmark was built as a clinic for the poor in 1831, with a third floor added in 1854. The dispensary's best-known patient was Edgar Allen Poe, treated for a head cold in 1837-- they could be fatal in those days. In 1960 it became a dental clinic, which in 1986 refused to treat a patient who was HIV-positive. He sued and bankrupted the clinic. The building was for awhile at least a hostel for the disabled, but appears to be unused currently.

At 139 Waverly Place- dark grey building with the wavy cement looking siding (just past Gay Street), Edna Millay lived here with her sister Norma. They were both "proper" girls from a small town in Maine. Edna was shocked and amazed at all the swearing and bad language in NYC. She decided that she and Norma would learn how to swear, but it was so foreign and uncomfortable that they needed to practice. So they had a routine, they sat opposite each other crocheting, and had

a pattern, knit, pull, loop, “swear”, knit, pull, loop, “swear” over and over until they were experts.

116 Waverly Place (not the original building) is allegedly where the very first time that the Raven was ever read before an Audience.

Boom, you’re at the arch.

All that said, keep an eye on time and pace. With a walking tour, you can’t spend too much time in one place, you’ll lose everyone, so be wary of the bigger chunks.

Thanks for doing this, you are amazing. Have fun with this!