



For Release: Immediate

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Historical Society Gala Honors Society Past President Brian Pinnola

In addition to Old World Quality Corporation owner Vinny Muldoon and Former Mayor Nick Episcopia, The Garden City Historical Society will honor Brian Pinnola at its upcoming Gala Benefit, Thursday, May 11, at the Garden City Country Club. With his passion for architecture and history, Brian Pinnola has devoted countless hours in service to the Society as trustee, vice president, and president (an unprecedented eight years), and has served as chair of the Building, and Archives and Acquisitions Committees. Please join us in thanking Brian for his exceptional dedication to the Society and his care of the Museum structure, which is listed on the National Register of Historic Places and whose restoration the May 11 Gala will support.

Brian's dad, who had a keen eye for art, antiques and architecture, enjoyed driving through Garden City and admiring the beautiful homes. Fittingly, one of Brian's earliest experiences with older buildings occurred in Garden City not far from where he now lives in the Mott section. As a teenager traveling home with his parents from his grandmother's in Glen Cove, Brian noticed that the former Amoco service station with the cupola at the southeast corner of Washington Avenue and Old Country Road (231 Washington) had been converted into an attractive office building for architect Angelo Francis Corva, retaining its slate roof and lighted cupola. During college while responding to a help wanted ad published by an industrial/commercial real estate brokerage firm seeking a salesperson, Brian was pleasantly surprised as he pulled up to 231 Washington Avenue to see that the company was located in the building that he admired as a teenager.

More than a year after being hired by the brokerage firm, then known as Bagnato Realty, Brian identified a boarded up, former Odd Fellows Hall, built 1911 in Inwood, L.I., an area he had been working in due to its proximity to JFK Airport. The brick and stone corner building had beautiful large, arched windows, a standing seam hipped roof and a cupola, and was located at a bus stop, across from the U.S. Post Office and a bank. Brian figured the adjacent vacant land would make an ideal parking lot, and the structure could be converted to offices and ground floor retail space. He approached his two brokers about an idea to form a partnership and purchase the building, and they, along with Angelo Francis Corva, the architect formerly located at 231 Washington Avenue, bought the building and renovated it into offices and retail space. They submitted an application, and the building was declared a Town of Hempstead landmark. For marketing purposes, Brian named it "The Landmark at Inwood". That project spurred his interest in architecture, historic preservation and history, and began a lifelong passion of collecting archival books and reading about those subjects, viewing and visiting sites, and joining the Historical Society board over 20 years ago, and more recently the board of SPLIA (Society for the Preservation of Long Island Antiquities). He also serves on the Board of the Rockaway Development and Revitalization Corporation.

The experience of supervising "The Landmark at Inwood" renovation was instrumental when Brian and fellow Historical Society board member George Bowen, with funds secured by NYS Senator Kemp

Hannon and former Society president Joanne Adams, managed the renovation of the interior of the Society's 1872 Apostle House, leading to the successful opening of the Museum in 2005. Brian still looks forward to the creation of a Reading room on the second floor adjacent to the Archives, which could be used for scholarly research and for general studying and viewing of the Society's archival material.

The enactment by the Village of a reasonable landmark law would be a culmination of work efforts by Brian and his colleagues on the Society's Preservation Committee. "We do not want to lose another National Register listed structure again," he says, referring to the demolition in summer 2015 of a late 1870s residence—in its place, the construction of a much larger and taller house sited among National Register listed homes in the Central Section of the Village. Brian believes that any proposed Village landmark law should also include important historic residences and commercial properties that may not be listed on the National Register. During the fall 2015, Brian, assisted by members of the Society's Preservation Committee, led a walking tour through central Garden City for the national organization, Initiatives in Art and Culture, whose annual conference was focusing on planned communities.

While recounting Brian's service from management of the historic structure's interior restoration to his leadership on the Archives Committee and day-do-day contributions, SPLIA Executive Director Alexandra Wolfe recently wrote, "Brian, in his modest way, truly walks the preservation walk."

According to Brian, "No vision-no progress. Akin to A.T. Stewart's development of a planned community on the barren Hempstead Plains, Garden City could again make a name for itself among preservationists, urban planners, architects and the public through a thoughtful, sustainable, renovation and adaptive use of St. Paul's into a Village cultural, sports and community center."

The Gala Benefit on May 11 will provide financial support for the Society's capital campaign to restore and preserve the exterior of its museum. Event sponsorships are available by contacting Albert Intreglia (516-750-3214 during business hours) or Francine Ryan at 917-796-7586. Reservations for the cocktail reception at the Garden City Country Club will be taken until May 4; tickets are \$100 per person (\$125 at the door, limited availability). For tickets, contact Gloria Jones at 516-248-0042 or 917-446-6131. 50/50 raffle tickets (\$10 each or three for \$25) are now on sale at the Society's A.T. Stewart Exchange on the lower level of the Historical Society Museum, or by contacting Mary Jane Caldwell at 516-248-5917 or 516-304-6682. Consignment shop hours are Tuesday-Friday, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. and Saturday, noon to 4 p.m.

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Caption:

Historical Society Past President Brian Pinnola will be honored at The Garden City Historical Society's Gala Benefit, May 11, at the Garden City Country Club.