

Gramercy Park celebrates 175th anniversary

The first of the Gramercy Park Block Association's events in celebration of the 175th anniversary of Samuel B. Tilden's founding of the park took place on the afternoon of Saturday, May 7th. It was an exciting walking tour attended by hundreds of area residents around Gramercy Park and led by Dr. Eugene E. Weise, a prominent ophthalmologist well known for his extensive research on the history of the park and the area around it.

The tour began at the west gate of the park at 1 p.m., and ended at 2 p.m. at the parish house of Calvary Church on the north side of the Park, where it was welcomed by the Reverend Doctor Thomas F. Pike, rector of the parish of Calvary/St. George's and a newly-elected Trustee of Gramercy Park.

Dr. Weise had promised, "I will not be doing just the usual recitation of the known, but will focus on many long-forgotten facts about the original families," and he lived up to his word.

Among the little-known items he mentioned were that in their youth Stanford White



Dr. Eugene E. Weise and Gramercy Park Block Association President Arlene S. Harrison during the GPBA sponsored walking tour around Gramercy Park

and Sara Delano (FDR's mother) were an item, but it was quashed by her disapproving father, and that "Samuel Tilden (1876 presidential loser) had to lend Leonard Jerome (Winston Churchill's grandfather) \$10,000 so his daughter Jennie could marry Randolph Churchill."

Arlene S. Harrison, president of the Gramercy Park Block Association, which sponsored the walking tour, who is also a Trustee of

Gramercy Park, expressed her thanks to Dr. Weise for his "interesting and informative stroll around our historic community."

"We are very proud that both he and Dr. Pike serve as the official archivists for our association, and are of invaluable assistance in our many historic preservation efforts."

Harrison mentioned other events her organization has planned to celebrate the park's anniver-

sary. Among them are a children's planting of flowers in the park on May 15th, an outdoor spring concert on Gramercy Park East on June 8th, and a grand celebration party at The Players on September 26th.