

The Orange Transcript

## Local Group Forms And Presents Kin Of Library Architect

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By Chris Sykes Staff Writer

Valerie Chapman and her neighbors, Murphy Wilson, Crishelle Lytle and Cathy Reddick, recently formed the Seven Oaks Community Alliance because they said they wanted to do something positive for Orange.

Last week they conducted their first event, "An Evening with Sam White," at a new restaurant on South Essex Avenue.

The Mandeville occupies the old Chronicle building next door to the Orange Public Library and shares some architectural style, history and distinction with its neighbor.

The wine-and-cheese event on April 22, featured White, the great-grandson of famed architect Stanford White who designed the library in the early 1900's.

The fundraiser aimed to help the library raise more than \$700,000 in funds, matched by the state, so it can repair and renovate the landmark building on Main Street.

In keeping with the spirit of community service, and with an eye towards the historic and architectural significance of the structure, the ladies of SOCA invited White, who spoke about his esteemed ancestor, his works, including the library, and the significance of it all.

"We got together, somewhat inspired by President Obama's message of change and helping our community, and started our own non-profit organization with a goal of helping other organizations raise funds for their own community initiatives," Lytle said.

"The library needs to raise \$750,000 in matching funds if they want to keep the grant they already received for that same amount," Lytle continued. "Every little bit helps, but we have a set plan of different events we want to do and different groups and projects we're targeting.."

White is a partner in the architectural firm of Platt Bayard Dovel White Architects and is a renowned designer and visionary in his own right. He and his wife have authored several books, including one about his great-grandfather.

In addition to his literary success, White also is an adjunct assistant professor of fine arts at New York University and an advisory-board member with the New York School of Interior Design.

Despite his accomplishments, a woman asked if he saw echoes of his great-grandfather's work in his own.

"The chips really fell far from the tree in my case," White laughed as he responded. "I would not delude myself into thinking my work was in the same class or caliber as my greatgranddad. Stanford White was the most recognizable architect in New York City during his life, and his death generated a lot of controversy, notably from the yellow press at the time."

White was shot and killed by Harry K. Thaw in 1906 at Madison Square Roof Garden for his affair with Thaw's wife, Evelyn Nesbit.

White talked about his great-grandfather and his many accomplishments and buildings he designed that are still recognized as landmarks and the works of a master craftsman.

He also put Stanford White's work in historical context, telling the audience Orange once was the "play ground for New York's rich" who vacationed in the mostly rural setting. White's history lesson was not lost on the audience, which included Mayor Eldridge Hawkins Jr., Police Director John Rappaport, former City Councilman William Lewis and current council members Elroy Corbitt and Rayfield Morton.