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July 2005

WORLD MONUMENTS FUND SECURES FUTURE FOR ENDANGERED 20th-CENTURY LANDMARK, EDWARD DURELL STONE'S A. CONGER GOODYEAR HOUSE

WMF ARRANGES SALE OF ICONIC MODERN HOUSE TO NOTED DESIGNER OF CONTEMPORARY FURNITURE

For Immediate Release—New York, New York, July 26, 2005 . . . Bonnie Burnham, president of the World Monuments Fund (WMF), announced today that the **landmark A. Conger Goodyear House, designed by Edward Durell Stone, has been sold with a preservation easement that will protect its architectural integrity in perpetuity.** Located in Old Westbury (Long Island), New York, and designed in 1938-39 for A. Conger Goodyear, first president of The Museum of Modern Art, the House is considered to be one of Stone's most important residential buildings and is **one of the most important Modernist houses of its era in the Northeastern United States.**

In 2001, soon after the House was placed on the World Monuments Watch list of 100 Most Endangered Sites, WMF engineered a dramatic rescue of the building from imminent demolition. The Goodyear House was then purchased and held temporarily under a partnership created by WMF with the Society for the Preservation of Long Island Antiquities (SPLIA) with funding from the Barnett and Analee Newman Foundation. It is now also on the New York State and National Register of Historic Places.

The Goodyear House has been purchased by **Troy Halterman**, a noted designer and retailer of contemporary furniture in New York City, who plans to restore the iconic structure.

WMF President **Bonnie Burham** stated, "The successful conclusion to our three-year effort to save the Goodyear House adds impetus to WMF's efforts to draw attention to the special issues facing modern buildings. A lack of recognition and legal protection, combined with a fragility of materials, makes these buildings especially vulnerable. We are proud to have been able to save this one."

Ms. Burnham continued, "One of the greatest threats to modern buildings is the lack of an effective means to determine which buildings of our own time may be important enough to be preserved for future generations. The distance of elapsed time is sometimes necessary in order to understand how these buildings fit into the continuum of our long history of creativity or innovation. Many of the world's

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iconic modern buildings have come to the brink of destruction without their contribution to our history being fully understood and appreciated.”

“The Conger Goodyear House is a true modern classic,” said **Troy Halterman**, owner of Troy, a retail store in New York City devoted to modern design. “Its design is as fresh today as when it was built. I am very excited about living in this modern landmark—a house so full of architectural integrity, no gimmicks, just pure unadulterated Modernism. The scale and proportion of this house have inspired thousands of architects since its construction. I am proud to be part of its future and restoring it to its full glory. I am glad there are foundations such as WMF dedicated to saving such treasures as the Goodyear house.”

“It is wonderful that this significant example of modernism is now facing a secure future,” said **Robert MacKay**, Executive Director, Society for the Preservation of Long Island Antiquities (SPLIA).

The significance of the House and the importance of its preservation was brought to the attention of SPLIA and WMF by architectural historian **Caroline Zaleski**, who researched and documented its history.

THE GOODYEAR HOUSE

Edward Durell Stone (1902–75) designed the A. Conger Goodyear House in 1938. The House represents an unusually felicitous and momentous relationship between patron and architect: Goodyear was president and founder of The Museum of Modern Art (MoMA), and his personal art collection is at the nucleus of the Museum’s present-day holdings (as well as those of the Albright Knox Art Gallery, in Buffalo, New York); the year before Stone designed the Goodyear House, he and Philip Goodwin designed MoMA’s landmark building at 11 West 53 Street.

Stone worked with Frank Lloyd Wright at Taliesin West, and also met Mies van der Rohe in 1927, on the occasion of the opening of Mies’s iconic Barcelona Pavilion. Both of these influences are evident in the Goodyear House, which features a roof and glazing system similar to that of the Pavilion, as well as deep roof-overhang and rooms jutting from a large, central gallery space that are an homage to Wright.

The Goodyear House, made of concrete, brick, and glass, and once surrounded by acres of landscaped grounds, is considered to be among the finest and most elegant Early Modernist houses in the region and is arguably Stone’s masterpiece of domestic architecture. The House also contains in its entry courtyard a large *Art Moderne* mural by Pierre Bourdelle (1901–66).

The Goodyear House is a critical element of the history and culture of Old Westbury, which has been home to some of the most publicly generous families in New York and in the country, including the Phipps, Goodyear, and Whitney families, who gave generously to cultural institutions ranging from museums to gardens, some of which still bear their names. In both his public and private life, A. Conger

Goodyear shared this spirit; his house was designed not to be simply a home, but to be a piece of modern art itself.

In the late 1970s, the Goodyear family donated the house and land, originally a 110-acre estate, to the Long Island Institute of Technology for use by the school's president. In 1997 the House was sold for development. Today, encircled by its original serpentine walls on a five-acre lot, it is surrounded by "Wheatley Farms," a subdivision of large new multi-million-dollar homes.

THE THREAT: DEMOLITION

As soon as the A. Conger Goodyear House was announced as one of the sites on the 2002 Watch list, the developer that had erected "Wheatley Farms" moved forward with its intention to demolish the House and build a new one. Although the Goodyear House was in stable condition, it had been severely neglected, and had no landmark status to protect it.

Working quickly, WMF—which had been alerted to the presence of demolition equipment on the site—enlisted the help of Philip K. Howard, chairman of the Municipal Art Society of New York, who arranged for a prominent member of the Old Westbury community to call the mayor on behalf of the House. Demolition was delayed three days, until October 23, 2001.

On October 22, WMF won a restraining order in State Supreme Court, preventing the Wheatley Construction Company from demolishing the house until all parties could appear before Judge Robert Roberto at State Supreme Court on October 26. Co-plaintiffs in the petition were SPLIA and the Preservation League of New York State.

WMF held discussions with several prospective buyers who were prepared to meet the developers' asking price, and WMF had itself made a written offer to purchase the building outright for a price within the seller's requirement. At the time, WMF President Bonnie Burnham said, "WMF has never done anything like this, but felt it needed to offer to buy the house as an exceptional gesture in order to gain the time needed to develop plans for the future of this important building."

On October 26, WMF, the Village of Old Westbury and the developer came to an agreement to save the House, based on an offer of financial backing from The Barnett and Annalee Newman Foundation.

THE HOUSE RESTORED AND PROTECTED

The agreement, finalized on December 5, 2001, formed a three-way partnership among the World Monuments Fund, the Newman Foundation, and SPLIA. The Newman Foundation would provide funding to purchase the House until a buyer who understood its importance and wanted to purchase it for the long-term could be found; WMF would manager the project, provide expertise and funding to cover repairs, restoration, and marketing; and SPLIA would hold title.

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WMF underwrote and conducted much-needed stabilization and repair work, including landscaping, masonry repairs, and installation of new electrical, plumbing, and HVAC systems, as well as creating extensive on-site reports, which included documentation and analyses of original paint and materials. WMF also successfully obtained from the Village of Old Westbury a permit to rebuild the three-car garage and study (based on the original garage, which had been demolished in the 1970s).

In addition to rescuing the A. Conger Goodyear House, WMF sought to restore it to its place in the canon of architectural history as an important landmark of American modern residential design. To this end, WMF consulted the Edward Durell Stone archives, housed at Stone's alma mater, the University of Arkansas, where it uncovered previously unknown details about the House's design. Following this, WMF commissioned professional photography (including digital spherical photos: www.wmf.org/html/programs/CGDRmovie.html) and an architectural model. It assembled a group of volunteer architects and design students to complete a set of measured architectural drawings for the Historic American Buildings Survey, a partnership of the National Park Service, the Library of Congress, and such public-sector organizations as the American Institute of Architects, with holdings that represent significant achievements in American architecture and design. It also conducted educational outreach to the media and general public, including lectures, an exhibition, and tours for professional groups such groups as the Bard Graduate Center and DoCoMoMo (Documentation and Conservation of the Modern Movement), which met in New York in September 2004.

Another goal was to ensure the legal protection of the House's exterior and significant interior spaces. WMF drew up a restrictive covenant (preservation easement) that will protect the House in perpetuity from demolition, and that will govern alterations to significant interior and exterior architectural features.

Regina Waldes, manager of Prudential Douglas Elliman's Roslyn office, along with Prudential Douglas Elliman sales professionals Frances Hirshman, Stuart Bayer, and John D'Amico, found the buyer and worked together with listing agency Daniel Gale in Cold Spring Harbor, New York, a local affiliate of Sotheby's International Realty, to complete the sale.

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