

Head House Square, at Second and Pine streets, is a popular area for shopping and restaurants in Philadelphia's Society Hill.

A visit to Society Hill

By MARION BURDICK
Travel Editor

PHILADELPHIA — Society Hill, the fashionable residential area that borders Independence Park, has played a prominent role in Philadelphia since the city's earliest days. The high bluff along the waterfront was part of a land tract owned by the Free Society of Traders, a company formed to help William Penn promote and settle Pennsylvania. Originally the area was called the "Society's Hill," and today's shortened version is not a reflection of the gentry who settled here.

Today, Society Hill is a model of restoration after decades of deterioration. Narrow cobblestone streets are lined with hundreds of Federal-style townhouses, many of them painstakingly restored in the last two decades by a wave of young urban homesteaders. Also here are some of the city's most fashionable boutiques, restaurants and night spots.

In general, the Society Hill area encompasses the streets of Washington Square between Walnut and Lombard. A walking tour can take as little as one hour or as much as a day, depending on the number of serendipitous detours you make along the way.

A good place to start is Head

House Square, at Second and Pine streets. Established in 1745 as a marketplace, the square was renovated in the early 1970s. Head House, on the north side of the square, began life in 1804 as a firehouse. Today, the red brick Georgian building serves a restaurant. Stretching out in front is a brick arcade where craftsmen display their wares in good weather. On either side of the square are clusters of quaint little shops and restaurants.

AMONG THE MANY historic houses in Society Hill, several are open to visitors. The four-story Hill-Physick-Keith House, at 321 South Fourth St., was built in 1759,

and was later the home of Dr. Philip Syng Physick, who has been called the "father of American surgery" because of the many surgical techniques and tools he invented. (His toenail guillotine is on display at nearby Pennsylvania Hospital.) The impressive residence is the only remaining free-standing townhome in Philadelphia, and has been completely restored and furnished as it was when Dr. Physick had his medical office here. The house is open Tuesday through Saturday from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.; Sunday 1-4 p.m. There is no admission fee.

• see SOCIETY HILL, CC4

After 30 years, former TV exec has seen it all

By RANDY ALEXANDER
Staff Writer

NEW YORK — Three color TV consoles are lined up along a wall in the study of Mike Weinblatt's Central Park West apartment.

A five-tier etagere nearby is filled with videotapes.

This may sound reminiscent of Elvis Presley's TV room at Graceland, but Weinblatt's array of TVs serves a purpose well beyond allowing him to simultaneously follow his favorite sports teams.

Mike Weinblatt, born and raised on Trenton's west end, has been working in television since 1957, at the network, cable and syndication levels.

HAVING RISEN to the upper echelons in all three facets of television during the last 30 years, Weinblatt is at a career crossroad. Until he decides which way to turn — run another company? acquire one? start his own? — he is using his three decades of expertise by working as a part-time television consultant. He also lectures to college students about the direction the industry is headed.

That's a separate subject in itself. Basically, Weinblatt believes audience fragmentation has pointed television in many directions, and if anyone is going to suffer, it will be the networks.

"We're about halfway through a decade of the most cataclysmic changes the television industry has seen in the last 40 years," says the 57-year-old former executive, who lived on Stuyvesant Avenue in Trenton until graduating from Syracuse University. "You have more syndication stations, cable, VCRs, satellites and owners that think and operate differently. People now have a lot of alternatives. Each one just has to get a small audience."

"I think networks ultimately have to decide what their thrust should be five years from now, what they can do to maintain the quality and the hold they have over their audience, and still continue to grow economically."

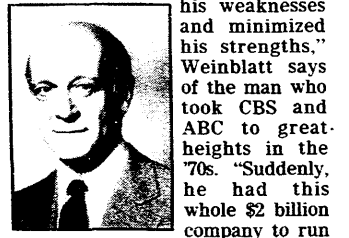
"They're beginning to recognize it," he adds, "and they keep talking about the New Era. But so far, their moves have been on the personality

and manpower side, cutting staffs and bargaining tough with the unions. But they haven't addressed the key problem: 80 percent of the cost is programming."

ALL OF THESE changes have been occurring since the '80s began; coincidentally, about the same time Weinblatt left NBC as the first president of NBC Enterprises to go to cable as president of Showtime Entertainment.

Weinblatt won't take credit for having any real vision, although he admits he knew cable was a growing force and that Fred Silverman, as NBC's chief executive officer, was bringing down the network. Weinblatt helped build for 30 years.

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Mike Weinblatt

his weaknesses and minimized his strengths." Weinblatt says of the man who took CBS and ABC to great heights in the '70s. "Suddenly, he had this whole \$2 billion company to run and nobody that could say no to him. For the first year, I had a great influence on him, but as he began to panic, nobody did."

"He had a position that magnified his weaknesses and minimized his strengths," Weinblatt says of the man who took CBS and ABC to great heights in the '70s. "Suddenly, he had this whole \$2 billion company to run and nobody that could say no to him. For the first year, I had a great influence on him, but as he began to panic, nobody did."

Weinblatt originally wanted a career in government service, but because his wife Anne, who he married overseas, was French and did not have her American citizenship, he couldn't get a job in government. Needing a job, he ended up by sheer accident as a clerk at NBC through a series of contacts.

He moved through the ranks of sales, finance and talent negotiation and ultimately became vice presi-

• see WEINBLATT, CC6

DANCE

Anne Levin

Joffrey Ballet offers Nijinsky's controversial 'Rite of Spring'

At the 1913 Paris premiere of "The Rite of Spring," a ballet choreographed by Vaslav Nijinsky to music by composer Igor Stravinsky, the squawking brass and strange rhythms so unsettled the audience that riots erupted in the theater. It was the commissioned score, more than the primitive style choreography, that caused the frenzied booing and catcalling in the aisles that night at the legendary performance by Serge Diaghilev's Ballet Russes.

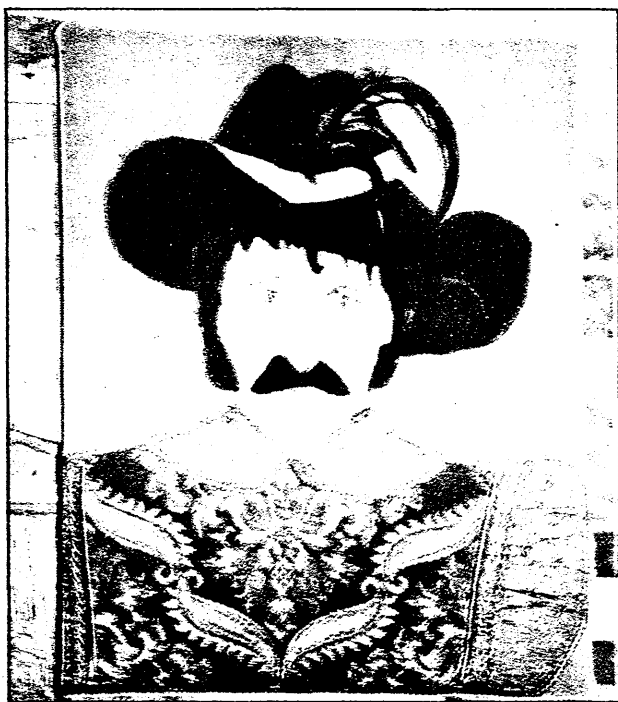
Yet Stravinsky's score went on to be considered a masterpiece of modern music, and is frequently performed throughout the world. But Nijinsky's choreography to that music never again was presented by the Ballet Russes after its nine performances that season, and since that time, had been presumed lost.

Until now, that is. The Joffrey Ballet, known for its excellent reconstructions of old and historic works, has resurrected "The Rite of Spring." It is currently on view as part of the company's annual season at New York's City Center Theater through Nov. 22.

ROBERT JOFFREY, who founded the company 31 years ago, has long been fascinated by the life of Vaslav Nijinsky and the world of Diaghilev, the impresario whose tireless output is largely responsible for popularizing ballet in the 20th century.

Nijinsky, who was Diaghilev's lover and protege until the dancer left Diaghilev and married, had a meteoric career that started brilliantly, but ended quickly and tragically after he was diagnosed as schizophrenic. His notebooks and other writings have caused many to label him a genius. He died in the early

• see BALLET, CC6



Artist Lisa Remer's fabric collage, "Chevalier des Epies," or Knight of Swords, is included in her exhibit of fiber art.

Fiber artist 'paints' with beads, thread

By CATHY VIKSJO
Staff Writer

NEW HOPE, Pa. — Layers of fabric and levels of symbolism are cleverly blended by Lambertville artist Lisa Remer in an imaginative exhibit of her fiber art collages, currently on display at the Book Gallery on Mechanic Street here.

The appearance and symbolism of these works, composed of luxurious materials, is strangely reminiscent of intricate tapestries and royal costumes, giving the show a medieval flair.

This unusual exhibit, entitled "Portraits from the Tarot," consists of portraits and illustrations inspired by the Swiss deck of

Tarot. Remer explains that the Tarot is a mystical deck of cards consisting of symbols and pictures which reveal one's destiny.

"Thousands of years ago, before 3400 B.C.," she notes, "roving bands of gypsies brought the Tarot to European crown heads who desired wisdom and divine messages." Many books about the Tarot are on display in conjunction with this show.

REMER'S APPROACH to her subject matter is exuberant and eclectic. Using the finest of brocades and silks, faux jewels, velvets and metallic braids, her collages are elegant. Picasso, after

• see REMER, CC6



Lisa Remer uses fabric and beads to create her works of art.

Photo by Ted Horodinsky