James Cuorato to speak at SHCA Meeting

James J. Cuorato, City Representative and Director of Commerce, City of Philadelphia, will speak at the Society Hill Civic Association meeting at 8:00 PM, Wednesday, January 17, 2001.

Mr. Cuorato is a lifelong Philadelphian with 25 years of experience working in public sector economic development. His undergraduate degree is from St. Joseph’s and his MBA is from Drexel. He was Executive Vice President of Penn’s Landing Corporation from July 1994 to July 2000.

His background, present position and memberships on the boards of the City Planning Commission and the Philadelphia Historical Commission, make Mr. Cuorato preemminently the ideal person to answer the concerns that Society Hill residents have about the future of their neighborhood, their city and their region.

Take this opportunity to listen to James Cuorato and to ask him all your questions.

SPECIAL NOTICE

The office of Society Hill Civic Association Treasurer is vacant. If you wish to serve, or if you wish to nominate an Association member to serve, phone Malcolm Lazin: 215-732-7376.

General Meeting
Zubrow Auditorium, Pennsylvania Hospital
8th and Spruce Streets
Wednesday, January 17, 2001
Meet and Greet Your Neighbors: 7:30 PM
Meeting: 8:00 PM

SHCA event raises $20,000 for library

If the atmosphere at the SHCA’s Major Donor Event on Tuesday, December 5, to benefit the Independence Library was any indication, Society Hill is very excited about its new branch, due to open in February 2001. Held at the Locks Art Gallery on Washington Square, the cocktail party drew more than 130 friends and supporters of the library together to celebrate the new branch, and in doing so, raised a net of approximately $20,000.

Although most of the money raised came from neighbors who attended the event, many neighbors who were unable to come sent generous donations nonetheless.

Naturally, Independence Branch Fund-raising Committee Chair Barbara “Bobbie” Gohn was in attendance; under her able leadership, the committee has raised over $180,000 for the library’s special and basic collections. Mel Buckman, former SHCA president and early advocate for the new branch, attended with his wife, Lee Gutman.

Herbert Keane and Joyce Mozenter were reunited with old friends Vivian and Bill Seltzer, while Diane Molas was spotted in a stunning jacket truly befitting an art gallery event. Other familiar faces included: Ruth and John McKevitt, Janet and Al Zeebooker, Jim and Jean Bodine, Nelly and Scott Childress, Cynthia and Jim Eiseman, Jon Seltzer, Bumie and Alan Halpern, Arthur Kaplan, Becky Stoloff, Duane Perry, Sissie and Herb Lipton, and Dorothy and Dave Stevens. And recently arrived Society Hill residents Fred Dirkska and Marie Forish found the perfect venue for meeting many new neighbors. Chris Jefferson, Director of Development, Free Library, was talking Howard Magen into selling more Independence Branch raffle tickets.

While most guests were busy discussing library matters, others were inspired by the event’s dramatic backdrop: an impressive exhibition of Frank Stella sculptures and paintings. Dan Behrend and Jean Ferson were overheard debating the artist’s intentions. Gallery owner Sueyun Locks told Harry Freeman and Wesley Wei how thrilled she was both with the turnout for the event and about having the new library so close by.

With so many exciting neighbors to mingle with, we were all thankful that speeches were short. SHCA President and event co-chair Malcolm Lazin welcomed guests. He hailed the choice of location for the branch, 18 South 7th Street in the Balez Institute for Ethnic Studies, as especially noteworthy since Thomas Jefferson penned the Declaration of Independence immediately next door to that site. Free Library of Philadelphia president Elliot Shellcrot introduced our new branch librarian, Jennifer Chang, while event co-chair and neighbor Liza Seltzer reminded guests that there is still $50,000 to be raised before the branch’s collections will be fully funded.

It’s not too late to be a major donor! For contribution information, please see page 12.
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Society Hill REPORTER

A publication paid for by Civic Association membership dues and advertisers
Editor-in-Chief, January 2001
Cirel Magen
Editorial Board
Amy Foran and Bernice Hamel
Business Manager
George Koch
January Contributors:
Cherry Bombeck, Jean Bodine, Malcolm Lavin,
Martha Levine, Seymour Mednick, Kelly Nelson, Chris Palmer,
Liza Seltzer, and David Woods

SHCA Officers, Directors, Editors and Contributors may be reached throughout the SHCA office at 215-629-1288 or fax 215-625-9914
SHCIVICA@AOL.COM

Signed letters to the editor are welcome.
SHCA, P.O.Box 3, Philadelphia, PA, 19105
Next Reporter Deadline
Wednesday, February 14, 2001

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Happy Holidays and best wishes for a good New Year.

Independence Branch of Free Library
Thank you for your support for our fund-raising efforts on behalf of the new Independence Branch of the Free Library of Philadelphia. The Society Hill Civic Association major donor event at the Locks Gallery generated net proceeds of over $20,000. Our thanks to everyone who supported this effort and especially to committee chair, Liza Seltzer. The Independence Branch will open in February 2001 and will contain over 50,000 books. It will also have important special collections, exhibits and have state-of-the-art information technology.

If you have not already made a contribution, we encourage you to do so. There remains a deficit of about $50,000 to be raised. Donors of $250 and above will have their names in a book plate and donors of $1,000 or more will be listed on a permanent plaque in the foyer of this new branch.

Neighborhood Improvement District study
Our effort to examine community needs as part of a neighborhood improvement district study was aborted due to a variety of community concerns. I think this was a missed opportunity to look at what the community perceived as its needs, explore how those needs could be addressed and determine whether a neighborhood improvement district was a viable modality. As you know, the Society Hill Civic Association does not have the resources to hire a full-time employee.

While there were concerns about a tax increase, the reality is that if the community wanted a District and City Council approved District, the increase would likely have been about 2% of one’s real estate tax. For someone who pays $5,000 per year in real estate taxes, the cost would have been $100. Unlike the Center City District and University City District that set up large staffs, we would have been able to subcontract service from both and others while eliminating most of the overhead.

For those that were concerned that the rate would soon be increased, there could easily have been a cap written into both the bylaws of the District and the authorization ordinance of the District by City Council.

As to governance, the neighborhood improvement district legislation was premised on community empowerment. That is, governance works best that is closest to those being served. As such, the Board of the District had no required government rep-

Continued on the next page

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JANUARY 2001
SOCIETY HILL REPORTER
3
representatives and would have been composed of your neighbors and neighborhood constituencies. As such, condominiums could have been represented commensurate with their importance within our community.

We also lost an opportunity to explore how the nation's largest urban waterfront project does not adversely affect our neighborhood. That entertainment retail project on Penn's Landing begins construction in early 2001. I am pleased that Philadelphia will benefit from a major project under the aegis of Simon DeBartolo, the nation's biggest entertainment retailer. There will be a projected 1,350 permanent jobs. The project includes an 18-screen cineplex. We can expect well over 10,000 people per week when the project opens in 2003. This project will be located within one block of Society Hill Towers and the Penn's Landing Condominiums.

Even if only one percent, or 100, of those visitors per week to this development is disruptive to our community, that could mean more graffiti, litter and/or crime in our neighborhood. That reasonably anticipated problem could have a significant impact on the perception of Society Hill, property values and, most important, our quality of life. We presently have no mechanism that we control to ameliorate those risks.

2001 will be a year of challenges. There is no worse enemy than benign neglect. It is for that reason that I am and I know we all are grateful for those who give of their time to insure the vitality and ambience of America's first neighborhood.

—Malcolm Lazin

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**Society Hill Civic Association**

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Sr. Vice President: Mary E. Suridivant  
Vice President: Jim Moss  
Recording Secretary: Diane Molas

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Southwest Quadrant: Mark Keener-Martha Levine

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Blackwell Court: Debbie Robinson  
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Independence Place: Herb Lipton  
Penn's Landing: Barbara Gelman  
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Dear Civic Association Board Members,

This letter is in reference to the first community meeting to discuss a neighborhood improvement district that was held on November 6th in Old Pine Church. I, along with many of my neighbors, was unable to attend that meeting due to a prior engagement.

However, we heard about the disgraceful behavior of a few of the attendees who apparently went with the sole intention of killing the project and not even allowing the rest of the Community to discuss the issues.

I did attend the General Membership meeting on the 15th expecting to hear more on this subject and was truly disappointed to learn that the Civic Association Board had been so easily persuaded to drop this very important project. It is true we do not want a divided neighborhood, but I am not so sure that all the condominium owners share the view of the few that were so obnoxious that night.

I have spoken to one or two who would definitely like to hear more of the plan. We would like to talk it through in a civilized manner, hearing equally from both sides. We all need to know the pros and cons of a neighborhood improvement district. It was clear that most of the dissenters had never bothered to read their Society Hill Reporter with the very well laid-out Question and Answer section.

Accepting that the city has no more money to spend on improvements or maintenance in the Center City region, and that quite a large number of the homeowners in this district feel that our neighborhood is already suffering blight from the number of visitors/transient dwellers we accommodate who do not share our pride in the surroundings, I know that the Civic Association is doing their best to seek a solution for us.

If those in condominiums are not interested in joining the rest of Society Hill in a scheme to maintain the whole of their neighborhood, let us red line them out. However, they should be responsible for the parts of the neighborhood that they look onto, not just the grounds on which their buildings stand.

In particular, the Independence Place and Hopkinson House condominiums plus any surrounding homes and businesses should assume responsibility for the maintenance and clean up of Washington Square. Society Hill Towers and the condominium homes at the east end of Spruce and Front Streets should accept responsibility for the clean up of Front Street, Foglietta Park and the park in front of the Tun Tavern.

How they accomplish this will have to be their responsibility. First they should check to make sure that all their members agree with their attitude.

I urge the Board to reconsider its decision on the neighborhood improvement district. — Elspeth Ritchie

Letter to the editor:

As a Society Hill homeowner who cares deeply about this neighborhood, I am troubled that a small but vocal minority has succeeded in preventing public discourse regarding issues that concern everyone in Society Hill.

The public meetings that were scheduled to address community concerns and their possible remedies, including the implementation of a neighborhood improvement district (NID), have been cancelled. Instead of an open exploration of such issues, opponents used baseless rumors, outright misrepresentations, bullying and personal attacks to incite opposition and stop public participation.

It is essential that we, as a community, discuss ways to continue the revitalization of our neighborhood in the face of potential threats from substantial new development in this area.

To give but one example of such misrepresentations, my own condominium association, Blackwell Place, was falsely presented as having joined an anti-NID association. The paucity of respect and civility demonstrated by those seeking to stop this discussion was particularly upsetting.

Walking home last week from the Center City District, I could not help but notice the increased litter and graffiti as I entered Society Hill. It is essential that we, as a community, discuss ways to continue the revitalization of our neighborhood in the face of potential threats from substantial new development in this area.

The Society Hill Civic Association has taken a good first step at facilitating this discussion by distributing questionnaires asking about community concerns and priorities. Indeed, to my mind, it is precisely the flexibility and community-determined nature of a neighborhood improvement district that warrants its exploration as one potential solution to the challenges we face. Why was this discussion — so necessary to the continued vitality of Society Hill — allowed to be thwarted by misinformation and bullying?

I hope that homeowners will demonstrate their commitment to learning more about our options and making their own decisions by attending the next general meeting of the Civic Association on January 17.

You can also show your support for scheduling new meetings to replace the abandoned ones by contacting the SHCA office at 215-629-1288 or any SHCA director. It would be unfortunate if a few critics were allowed to dictate our community discourse and options. — Kelly Nelson
**Recommended Contractors**

Martha Levine wants you to know that the SHCA maintains a 10-page list of Society Hill Preferred Contractors, which is updated monthly. This resource can help you find a contractor, who has been used and recommended by neighbors — roofers, painters, marble experts, as well as dealers in antique mantels, lighting and hardware. The list is free by phoning Martha Levine at 215-629-0727. You can say thank you by joining the Society Hill Civic Association.

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**The Hanging Baskets**

We all struggled. Bravo to all who persevered! Weather was strange, and the plants mostly disappointing.  
We think it best to bring the baskets in for the winter. After all, they will have to come down next spring for sprucing up (not just on Spruce Street).  
Just clean off the plant material and store with soil — it will be amended on re-planting. On our block, they have gone into homes with garages or basement steps. Alleys would serve the purpose, too.  
We are planning to purchase material through the Physick House plant sale next year. Now that we have a better grasp on the conditions particular to each lamp post, results should be more rewarding.

— Cherry Bombeck

---

**Tree Tenders**

Nine new trees were planted within the Society Hill district. The trees were planted to replace dead trees. The best time of year to plant trees is in the spring so we must inventory our needs now.

If you have a dead tree or know of a dead tree in the area please notify the Tree Tenders by phoning the SHCA office at 215-629-1288 or send a message to SHCIVICA@AOL.COM.

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**Thanks To Clean-Up Volunteers**

Frank Hoban, Alan Stitle and Marc Valentine thank all those who volunteered on Clean-Up Day, Saturday, November 18. Thanks also go to the generous businesses and community institutions for their help. An extended article will appear in the March 2001 Reporter.

---

**Know Your Neighborhood**

George A. McCall, 1802-1868, was the first commander of the Pennsylvania Volunteer Corps, Army of the Potomac. McCall School was named in his memory.

Rita Donatucci is the principal with a staff of 50 professionals and para-professionals, working in the beautiful 91-year-old building. Volunteers are needed to mentor, tutor and, if available during school hours, accompany classes on trips. Phone Mrs. Reah Force at 215-351-7247 or e-mail: RForce@phila.k12.pa.us.
Society Hill Neighbors Rally for Holiday House Tour

When it comes to being volunteers, Society Hill neighbors fill the bill.

On December 1 and 2, St. Peter’s School presented its first Holiday Open House Tour of Society Hill. It was a successful benefit for St. Peter’s School Scholar Fund, attended by 206 people.

With all open house tours, many volunteers are needed to monitor or house sit each room of every house for security purposes. It’s our duty to the homeowners to carefully watch and protect their valuables. Volunteers also answer questions and give information about furniture, objets d’art and the history of the house. If there is a shortage of volunteer help, rooms must be closed, making the tour much less interesting.

When called upon, more than 70 neighbors came out to staff most of the houses on the tour. Although some volunteers had no previous experience, they were competent, gracious and thoroughly enjoyed the experience. Society Hill Civic Association members; Dave Stevens, Elizabeth Armour, Norma Van Dyke and Morris Chomitz distributed brochures in the neighborhood.

Above all, we acknowledge the homeowners who generously opened their homes for the Tour, committing to the time-consuming task of tidying and decorating for the holidays. The houses were magnificent to behold! Thank you.

Our utmost gratitude is extended to all who made this first time event a success. We could not have done it without you. What a great neighborhood we live in!

— Martha Levine and Nula Thanhauser
Co-chairs St. Peter’s School Holiday House Tour

Thanks for support to Farmers Market Trust
To the Editor
Thank you for all of the terrific support you gave to the Farmers’ Market Trust Farmers’ Market on Second Street this year.

During the 25-week season, 6,000 customers shopped at the market. We deeply appreciate the support of the Society Hill Civic Association, South Street Head-house District, the Police Department and Councilman Frank DiCicco for making the market a great success!

Next year, the market will open in early June, to bring you another season of fresh, locally grown food. Do you have suggestions to make the Farmers’ Market on Second Street better? Please e-mail fmtrust@libertynet.org, or mail your ideas to Farmers’ Market Trust, 1201 Chestnut St., Philadelphia, PA 19107.

The Trust Farmers’ Market at Second Street helps farmers’ markets in North Philadelphia, Chester and Camden. This year, fees paid by farmers generated over $3,750 to support other markets in inner-city communities, to provide fresh, nutritious and affordable food to needy people.

We’re sure your family and friends enjoyed the farm fresh products from the Farmers’ Market on Second Street. We look forward to serving you next June.

On behalf of all of us at the Farmers’ Market Trust, thank you!

— Duane Perry

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Historical Preservation & Zoning Committee (HPZ)

SHCA Votes To Oppose Zoning Bill # 000629:
Philadelphia City Councilman Frank DiCicco introduced Zoning Bill #000629 on October 5, 2000. The bill could negatively impact the ability of individuals, civic associations and other neighborhood or special interests groups from appealing decisions made by the Philadelphia Zoning Board of Adjustment (ZBA).

Bill No. 000629 eliminates the word “taxpayer” from the section of the Philadelphia Zoning Code, which currently allows any “taxpayer” to appeal any decision of the ZBA.

This means that our group (or any other civic group or individual) may no longer have the right to appeal decisions granting zoning variances that we (as taxpayers) may believe are not in our community’s best interests. The Bill would affect our ability to challenge all matters affecting zoning—such as new developments.

SHCA’s Board considered this Bill at the November 15th meeting after a presentation from a member of the Center City Residents’ Association’s Legislative Watch Subcommittee. SHCA’s Board voted unanimously to oppose Bill 000629.

We have joined with the Center City Residents’ Association and other groups who disagree with its intent. We have notified Councilman DiCicco that we are on record in our opposition to the bill.

Pending Projects Considered By HPZ Committee
The Historical Preservation and Zoning Committee (HPZ) at The Historical Preservation and Zoning Committee (HPZ) attempts to remain current with any Society Hill properties undergoing changes, so that the required process of meetings, hearings and decisions may occur through the Historical Commission or the Zoning Board of Adjustment.

We ask for the support of all neighbors. Whenever a red Zoning Notice appears on a property near your home, please be in direct touch with our Committee.
Names and numbers appear below.

If you are unfamiliar with what these notices look like, you can see one that recently went up at 328 Delancey Street.

Properties about which the HPZ Committee is waiting to learn more regarding specific plans, or about which we expect to attend meetings or public hearings include:

- 100 Delancey Street: revision of drawings for external elevator.
- Vacant lot at 7th & Pine Street. A development of several single-family dwellings is being proposed, pending sale of this large lot owned by Pennsylvania Hospital. The committee is planning a meeting with nearby neighbors and the property’s owner. The neighbors will be notified about the time and place of the meeting.
- 328 Delancey Street. Three properties currently housing several families — one a multiple-dwelling structure — are expected to be combined. This will result in three residential units with underground parking. The HPZ Committee has already met with the owner/developer and architect for the project, and there is a positive, direct line of communication among us.

Continued on page 17

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Restorations Performed in Society Hill …

210 Spruce St. Brick powerwashing & pointing, stucco
214 Spruce St. Chimney repairs, caulking, stucco
421 Spruce St. Facade rehabilitation, concrete removal & replacement, brick paver installation

620 Spruce St. Brick pointing, wall rehabilitation, waterproofing, marble cleaning & repair
264 S. 3rd St. Brick patio installation, brick cleaning & patch painting
268 S. 3rd St. Stucco, Brick pointing, brick paver installation
Dear Society Hill Resident,

As you know, you live in one of the most historically significant and exclusive neighborhoods in the United States. When you decide to sell your home you should be represented by one of the most reputable and successful Realtors in the nation. Your home is architecturally unique; whether it has centuries of history or is a contemporary work of art. It deserves to have its features publicized and its merits praised to an international and local clientele of real estate investors who can appreciate its rare value. Moreover, you personally deserve the most professional and personal service possible, whether it is 18-hour access to your Realtor or one of his competent assistants or a settlement that transpires so smoothly you actually enjoy it. I am inviting you to have a wonderful experience that you will actually brag about for years to come. I plan to redefine your concept of a real estate agent. Please contact my office or visit my multi award-winning website www.centercityrealestate.com for more information.

I greatly look forward to meeting you,

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- 321 S. 6th Street
- 604 Washington Square ... and over $19 million in Center City properties in 2000

- 220 W. Washington Sq
- 319 S. 3rd Street
- 100 Delancey
- 3rd & Locust
- 130 Spruce
- 1 Willing's Alley

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— Joe L'Erario—Furniture to Go, Men in Toolbelts, on The Learning Channel

"I have bought & sold several houses and I have worked with many Realtors. Antonio is one of a kind. His services, his style, his website; there is no comparison. He takes it to a whole new level. The difference is amazing. I could not ask for more.”
— Paul Theadorou—VerticalNet

"I liked Antonio immediately because he did not make me feel pressured. Antonio worked around my insane schedule and made the whole process easy. He was extremely effective and efficient. I strongly recommend!"
— Dr. Marcella Maguire, Philadelphia Behavioral Health System

"Antonio was extremely knowledgeable and courteous. He was very helpful with every aspect of a complicated situation. I enthusiastically recommend him.”
— Mary Hawkesworth—CNN Political Analyst

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From the Library Party:

From left: Elliot Shelkrot, Jennifer Chang, Liza Seltzer, Bobbie Gohn and Mel Buckman

Herbert Keane, MD, and the Hon. Joyce Mozenter

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Gifts of $1,000 or more will be recognized with the donor’s name(s) inscribed on a permanent plaque at the Independence Branch. If you’ve already made a donation of less than $1,000 but are interested in adding to it in order to reach the $1,000 level, your name would also be included on the plaque, as long as the gift or a written pledge for the gift is received before January 31, 2001. You may use the coupon on the opposite page. For more information, call Liza Seltzer: 215-625-7995.

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Ms. Joanne R. Derworth
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Mr. and Mrs. Peter Hahn

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Mr. and Mrs. Howard Lander
Mr. and Mrs. Robert LaRocca
Mr. Craig Lewis
and Ms. Dianne Semingson
Mr. and Mrs. Robert Lonergan
Mr. William L. MacMillan, III
and Ms. Donna F. Wood
Ms. Reina Marini
Mr. and Mrs. Joel Marmor
Mr. and Mrs. Herman Maretton
Lt. Col. and Mrs. Joseph McKone
Mr. Lawrence Meehan
and Ms. Susan Tomsita
Mr. Stephen W. Miller
Ms. Martha Moore
Mr. and Mrs. Archie Perlmutter
Mr. Raymond Quaglin
and Ms. Kelly Nelson
Dr. and Mrs. Robert D. Reinecke
Mr. and Mrs. Edward Robinson
Ms. Margaret Rose
Mr. Howard J. Stedman
and Ms. Martha Levine
Mr. and Mrs. B.H. Serota
Mr. and Mrs. Bernard Shuman
Mr. and Mrs. Jon C. Sirlin
Mr. and Mrs. Harvey Snyder
Ms. Norma Vandyke
Mr. Robert I. Whetlaw
and Ms. Pamela D. Laws
Mr. and Mrs. Douglas Wilkerson

Under $249 (did not attend event)
Mr. and Mrs. George M. Axilbund
Ms. Jane Biberman
Dr. and Mrs. Baruch Blumberg
Ms. Delores Brinson

Mr. and Mrs. Howard Lander
Mr. and Mrs. Robert LaRocca
Mr. Craig Lewis
and Ms. Dianne Semingson
Mr. and Mrs. Robert Lonergan
Mr. William L. MacMillan, III
and Ms. Donna F. Wood
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Lt. Col. and Mrs. Joseph McKone
Mr. Lawrence Meehan
and Ms. Susan Tomsita
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Mr. and Mrs. Bernard Shuman
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Society Hill Reporter
January 2001
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Noteworthy Neighbors

David Woods, Ph.D.

Noteworthy Neighbor columnist David Woods had two goals he really wanted to achieve. On Tuesday, November 7, 2000, (that election day), David successfully defended his doctoral thesis: “The Physician of the 21st Century: Management, Accountability and Information Technology.” to examiners gathered in Philadelphia from Canada, the United States and David’s alma mater, the University of Ulster.

Now, Dr. David Woods has attained goal number one, and in the summer of 2001, robed in scarlet, at age 61, he will join the graduate ceremonies processional in Belfast.

David was born just north of London. He had a peripatetic childhood with his Royal Air Force officer father and his mother, who also came from a military family. One of the two strongest early influences on his life was the school he attended in Schleswig-Holstein. The headmaster was a famous war hero and the students were the children of all ranks of British military personnel. Intended for England’s famed military academy, Sandhurst, David rebelled. Instead he went off to Belfast and became a teacher.

After university and three years of teaching, the always-engaging David was living in Walton-on-Thames working as a medical journalist, when he was drafted into being the Labour candidate for the local borough Council. Perhaps, if he had won, it would have been David and Shelly rather than Tony and Sheri.

Fortunately, he lost and moved to Canada, where he became the first non-physician editor-in-chief of the Canadian Medical Association Journal and the author of three books on healthcare policy.

Philadelphia native Shelly Wolfe was reason enough for David settling here and quickly monopolizing the local medical writing, editing and publishing scene. Healthcare Media International (HMI), David’s publishing company, is developing a blueprint and business plan for a periodical, Philadelphia Medi-Scene, aimed at all the key stakeholders in healthcare in this city — physicians, nurses, dentists, academics, pharmaceutical executives, and others.

“After all,” says Woods, “fourteen percent of the workforce in this town is in the healthcare industry; why not find a way to bring them together?”

David generously contributes his time and talent to write our Noteworthy Neighbors column.

Oh, yes, that other goal, that other early influence: when David was a young lad he was taken to a racetrack and was immediately smitten. Too large to be a jockey, David is now still hoping to have a stable of racehorses somewhere in Society Hill. Dream on, Dr. David!

— Cirel Magen

Neighborhood Improvement District (NID) Study Canceled!

The expected first of three exploratory, neighborhood meetings was held on November 8th. It was intended to allow the community to consider whether Society Hill could benefit from establishing a Neighborhood improvement district (NID). A NID would provide supplementary services to our residential community (such as additional police protection and improved sidewalk cleaning).

Actions by some Society Hill residents resulted in it being the last of the scheduled meetings. Residents opposed to the mere exploration of such a district were well organized and armed with reasons to nip the NID study in the bud. Opposition came primarily from some very vocal residents of Society Hill high-rises. Many high-rise owner/occupants were never offered the opportunity to learn how a neighborhood improvement district could benefit the greater Society Hill community.

A residential special services district is a self-determining entity. The high-rise associations would not have to be included in the Society Hill neighborhood improvement district if they chose not to be — according to the Pennsylvania state law, which allows such districts to become established (Bill 2858).

Most townhouse dwellers wished to learn how such a district could be of direct benefit to the community. They live closer to the ground and are more vulnerable to all sorts of problems. Many might be willing to pay an additional $40-200 per year real estate tax for the luxury of having such services provided— after careful consideration of the benefits vs. costs. They would gladly have drawn district boundaries to exclude any high-rise group that wished to remain apart. But they were never given the opportunity, due to the vigor of the high-rise opposition expressed at the November 8th meeting.

At SHCA’s November 15th Board meeting it was argued that rather than create a rupture within our community, which would be difficult to heal, it would be better to stop the exploratory process immediately.

At SHCA’s November 15th Board meeting it was argued that rather than create a rupture within our community, which would be difficult to heal, it would be better to stop the exploratory process immediately. The next two scheduled NID exploratory meetings were canceled when the Board voted to cease further evaluation of how a special services district could improve our neighborhood. The voices of our greater Society Hill community were never given the opportunity to be heard, which leaves many feeling cheated.

— Bernice Hamel

14 Society Hill Reporter January 2001
Sam Maitin

His distinctive, brightly-colored abstract works have been exhibited all over the world — in New York’s Museum of Modern Art, London’s Tate Gallery, Washington’s Smithsonian Institute and in Germany, Japan and France. Locally, they grace Philadelphia’s Museum of Art, as well as such institutions as the University of Pennsylvania’s Annenberg School of Communications, Hahnemann Hospital, Children’s Hospital, Wills Eye Hospital, and Temple University.

Yet, despite his lifelong career as an artist of considerable talent and repute, the 72-year-old Sam Maitin appears slightly bemused by his fame, but buoyant in describing his kaleidoscopic, upbeat paintings. “I am not an illustrator of agonies,” he says, noting what he calls his preoccupation with bright colors and pleasant emotions.

One of three sons of Russian immigrants who came to Philadelphia not long after the 1917 revolution, Maitin said he began painting as a child; but his parents, despite their love of learning and culture, did not encourage an artistic career, deeming it a doubtful way to make a living.

Nonetheless, he won a scholarship to Philadelphia’s Museum School of Industrial Arts (now the University of the Arts) while at the same time achieving a bachelor’s degree at the University of Pennsylvania.

Thus began his career as artist and teacher, with academic appointments at the Philadelphia Museum of Art and the Annenberg School of Communications. Then, in 1968, Maitin was awarded a Guggenheim Fellowship to work and study in England. There, he developed an interest in the fusion of words, especially poetry, with art and worked with several British poets and playwrights, including Harold Pinter; more recently, that interest has resulted in his incorporating into his work Biblical themes, especially psalms, which he notes are the oldest poems in the world.

Looking back on his successful career, Maitin is able to countermand his parents’ early concerns about the fiscal stability of an artist’s life, although he admits that it can be a chancy business. “I’ve made a living,” he says, “but there have been times when I’ve made nothing.”

Sam Maitin and his wife of more than 35 years, Lilyan, an administrator at Hahnemann Hospital, have two children — Izak, a geographer and environmentalist; and Ani, a nurse practitioner. A Society Hill enthusiast, and a self-described pioneer who bought the house he and Lilyan still live in at 7th and Pine in 1960, he says that the revitalizing of the area in the 60s was a noble experiment, exciting, and “egalitarian.” The house was a mess, he recalls, but with the help of his older brother, an architect, they fixed it up, making their personal contribution to the process of urban renewal that was taking place all around them.

When he’s not at work on his multicolored paintings, Maitin lifts weights and works out — an exercise that seems to keep him as youthful and exuberant as his art.

— David Woods

"Joyce" sculpture commissioned by Luther Brady, MD, George Washington University, 21st and G Streets, Washington, DC.

Photo by Chris Palmer
SHCA Action Phone Numbers

FIRE, EMERGENCY & POLICE SERVICE .................................. 911
Sixth District Police Station (for general information) .. 215-686-3060
South Street Police Mini Station (for quality of life issues) 215-922-6706

CITY OF PHILADELPHIA
Anti-Graffiti Hotline .................................................. 215-685-1174
City Hall ................................................................. 215-686-1776
Mayor’s Action Center (Information and Complaints) .. 215-686-2250
Fairmount Park Commission (trees & Washington Square) 215-685-1835
Health Commissioner .................................................. 215-686-5000
Historical Commission ............................................... 215-683-4590
Independence Hall National Historic Park .................. 215-597-8767
Paving Authority Enforcement (9 am-5 pm) ................. 215-683-9600
(evenings & weekends) ............................................. 215-683-9773
Pennsylvania SPCA (animal control) ......................... 215-426-6300
Recycling Office/Hotline .......................................... 215-685-1770
Resident Parking Permit ............................................ 215-683-9730/9731/9732
Sanitation - Rubbish Removal (South Philly, office) ... 215-685-1770
Sanitation - Enforcement ........................................... 215-686-3082
Streets Department
Street Lights ........................................................... 215-697-8844
Alley Lights ............................................................ 215-686-5516
Repair & Potholes ..................................................... 215-686-5561
Trash Collection/Bulk Trash Pick-up ................. 215-686-5560
Voter Registration ..................................................... 215-686-1500
Water & Sewer Service & Problems ......................... 215-685-6300

POLITICAL REPRESENTATIVES
Frank DiCicco (City Council District #1) ....................... 215-686-3450
W. Curtis Thomas (State Rep.) ................................ 215-232-1210
Vincent J. Fumo (State Sen.) ...................................... 215-468-3866
Robert Borski (U.S. Rep.) ......................................... 215-335-3355
Arlen Specter (U.S. Sen.) ............................................ 215-597-7200
Rick Santorum (U.S. Sen.) ........................................... 215-864-6900

COMMUNITY
Society Hill Civic Association ...................................... 215-629-1288
South Street Head House District .............................. 215-413-3713

HOMELESS INTERVENTION
In the neighborhood: Michael Whaley at Hall Mercer ..... 215-829-3461
Outside the neighborhood: Project Home .................... 215-232-1984

Philadelphia Trash Rules for Society Hill
1. Household trash does not go into the corner receptacles
   The city removes receptacles where this is a problem.
2. Trash may not be put out until 4:00 p.m. on Mondays.
3. Newspapers should either be placed in paper bags, taped
   or tied with strings. They should not be put in the blue re-
   cycle containers.
4. Mixed paper: mail, cereal type boxes (without wax paper)
   catalogs, telephone books, office paper, magazines, etc.
   should be placed in paper bags, taped or tied. They should
   not be put in the blue recycle containers.
5. Blue recycle containers are available at 7th and Pattison.
6. All glass containers should be rinsed out and placed in the
   blue recycle container without their lids.
7. Metal food and beverage cans should be rinsed out and
   placed in the blue recycle container.
8. Aerosol cans should be placed in the blue recycle con-
   tainer without their lids.
9. Paint cans should be air-dried and put curbside with their
   lids removed.
10. The city does not recycle plastic.
11. Regular trash and recyclable trash should both be put out
    at the same time.

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Pending Projects Considered, continued from page 10

Note that the HPZ Committee does not involve itself in the process of property transfers. However, once a property is owned and its owners wish to make changes to it — demolition, addition, facade alterations, etc. — we do become engaged in that process and will monitor the property to assure that the proposed changes are in keeping with the structure and will not detrimentally alter our streetscape.

As of January 2001, SHCA Director Mark Keener, architect, will be chairing the zoning portion of the HPZ Committee. Board Director Morrie Chomitz will assist in the zoning part of the work.

Bernice Hamel and Becky Stoloff will continue to co-chair the Historical Preservation portion of the Committee.

Because preservation and zoning issues frequently overlap, the two portions will continue to function as one committee. Please get in touch with us if you have questions, or when considering alterations to the facade of your home.

The Civic Association thanks Richard Bost for his service as chair of the Zoning Committee and as chair of the merged Historical Preservation Zoning Committee.

We will make every effort to respond to your inquiries as promptly as possible. And we thank you for your cooperation.

Mark Keener: 215-751-1133; E-mail: urbdesign@aol.com
Morrie Chomitz: 215-629-0245; E-mail: machomitz@aol.com
Bernice Hamel: 215-925-4363; E-mail: hamelbt@aol.com
Becky Stoloff: 215-627-4910; E-mail: rstoloff@aol.com

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Thank You To Welcome Basket Donors

The Welcome Committee extends our sincerest thanks to all who donate goods and services to make our Welcome Baskets so wonderful to receive. Newcomers to Society Hill are the recipients of these baskets. Please show your thanks for their generosity by patronizing the following:

- Arden Theatre Company - 40 North 2nd Street
- Bridget Foy’s - South Street Grill - 200 South Street
- Chef’s Market - 231 South Street
- Dickens Old Curiosity Shop - 417 South 2nd Street
- Fork - 306 Market Street
- Homemade Goodies by Roz - 510 South 5th Street
- Italia Ristorante - 318 South 3rd Street
- Judy’s Café - 627 South 3rd Street
- Knave of Hearts - 230 South Street
- Metropolitan Bakery - 1114 Pine Street
- The Mann Center for the Performing Arts - 52nd & Parkside Avenue
- Mom’s Bake at Home Pizza - 241 South 6th Street
- Mums and Pops Confectionery - 932 Locust Street
- National Liberty Museum - 321 Chestnut Street
- Old City Coffee - 221 Church Street
- The Reading Terminal Market
- The Philadelphia Chamber Ensemble – Old Pine Church, 400 Pine Street
- Philadelphia Sports Clubs – 220-250 south 5th Street
- Pileggi on the Square - 717 Walnut Street
- Pink Rose Pastry Shop - 630 South 4th Street
- Riff Cleaners - 314 South 5th Street
- Rita’s Water Ice - 239 South Street
- Ritz Theatres - 214 Walnut Street, 4th & Ranstead Street
- Salo @ 5th - 316 South 5th Street
- Sfizzio Restaurant - Society Hill Towers, 237 St. James Place
- ShopRite - 29 Snyder Avenue
- Show of Hands Gallery - 1006 Pine Street,
- Soapbox - 1216 Locust Street
- Society Hill Playhouse - 507 South 8th Street
- Starbucks’ Coffee, Inc. – 347 South Street
- Super Fresh Food Markets – 5th and Pine Streets
- TL A Video - 517 South 4th Street
- The Wilma Theatre – 265 South Broad Street
- XandO Coffee and Bar - 215 Lombard Street
- Zeke’s Deli – 318 South 5th Street

If you know of any residents who have recently moved to Society Hill, please contact Martha Levine at 215-629-0727 so that she can bring them a basket.

— Martha Levine

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Membership: Cooperation Requested

We are in the process of mailing membership renewals to all current SHCA members. We hope that you will take the time to send in your form, so that a second mailing is not necessary.

If you are not a current member, you can join by simply filling out and mailing the form on the right with a check for the appropriate dues.

We had well over 800 members for the year 2000, and have a goal of 1,000 for 2001. Thank you in advance for your continued support.

— Kelly Nelson

Join the Society Hill Civic Association!

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Phones: ____________________________________________
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□ Clean-Up Day □ Historic Preservation/Zoning Development
□ Library

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