Now that summer is behind us, it’s back-to-work time and back-to-school time. While many of us have enjoyed our vacations, several Society Hill neighbors have been busily working on behalf of the community — because, as everybody knows, “There’s always something!” Recently, there have been several “somethings” — the most significant of which is the latest security and screening proposal by the National Park Service (NPS), which would dramatically affect Independence Square. (Please see page 7 for a summary of the proposal that many lay and professional people fear would convert our city blocks into a fortress.)

In response to the NPS proposal, a panel of experts has been assembled to address neighbors about the history, archeology, security and governance of Independence Square. This panel was organized through the efforts of the Independence Mall Business and Residents Coalition (IMBARC) in collaboration with our civic association. The panel will present their findings at SHCA’s September General Membership Meeting, which will be held at 7:30 p.m. on Wednesday, September 22 at Old Pine Street Church.

Panelists include:

**Dr. Charlene Mires**, an associate professor of history at Villanova University and author of *Independence Hall in American Memory*. Dr. Mires will describe the history of Independence Hall and Square — including security history;

**Dr. Rebecca Yamin**, a leading archeologist and senior project manager at John Milner Associates, has done extensive research on Independence Square for the Park Service;

**Bill Chadwick**, president of Chadwick Associates, Inc., a Washington, D.C. risk-consulting firm that performed an independent evaluation of security measures at the park;

**Daniel Layden, Esq.**, an SHCA member, will discuss the 1736 Pennsylvania statute that established the Square and ordered that it “remain a public open green and walks forever.” He will talk about the relationship between the City of Philadelphia, which owns the land and buildings on the site, including Independence Hall, and the NPS, which manages the property under a 99-year lease signed in 1950.

Moderating the panel will be long-time Society Hill resident and SHCA member **Carter Buller, Esq.**, IMBARC’s chairman. The park’s superintendent and key NPS personnel were invited to participate at this neighborhood forum, but they declined since they expect to conduct their own public meeting on the subject.

Another issue that has raised excitement as well as concern in our immediate community is the proposal for a new playground at McCall School. We’re pleased to report that Anton Hackett of the Philadelphia School District will speak to us. Mr. Hackett is the Director of External and Community Affairs, Corporate Projects Division. (See more about the McCall School project on pages 3, 9 and 19.)

You will not want to miss this crucial and very timely assembly of neighbors. We are grateful to Old Pine Street Church for hosting our meeting, and we hope to see you there!
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CORRECTION
Trash Pick-Up Schedule

Society Hill's streets, including named streets and numbered streets up to both sides of S. 6th Street, have trash pick-up on Friday mornings before 7 a.m. Therefore, all residents on those blocks must set out their trash after 8 p.m. on Thursday nights but no later than 6 a.m. on Friday mornings. The named and numbered streets from S. 7th Street and west have trash pick-up on Thursday mornings prior to 7 a.m. These residents must set out their trash Wednesday nights after 8 p.m. but no later than 6 a.m. on Thursday mornings.
A

Two Timely Issues

utumn is often viewed as a season of change. This autumn, Society Hill may see several changes in our neighborhood. Two proposals have many residents of our community concerned. The first is the plan to improve security at Independence National Park. The second concerns construction of a playground at McCall School.

The National Park Service, in response to requirements set forth by the Department of Interior, has proposed numerous plans to improve security at Independence Square. Although the Square is not within the official boundaries of Society Hill, the proposed changes will have a dramatic effect on our neighborhood. We all have chosen to live in Society Hill for varying reasons. People from around the country and the world come to visit Philadelphia, and more specifically, Independence Square and Society Hill. Philadelphia is the birthplace of our nation, and the buildings and grounds which make up the Independence National Historic Park represent liberty and freedom. It would be ironic for our visitors to find these icons of liberty hidden behind walls. If there is a security threat, will an eight-foot-high wall and another security building protect this area from doom and destruction?

Society Hill is fortunate to have the assistance of a group called the Independence Mall Business and Residents Coalition (IMBARC). Many residents will remember not long ago when pedestrian and vehicular traffic was not permitted on the 500 block of Chestnut Street. It was through the dedication and efforts of this coalition that we now have an open Chestnut Street. IMBARC’s mission is to ensure that Independence Mall is permanently accessible to all residents and tourists to our city. (For additional information on this issue, see page 7.)

Another proposal that concerns many residents is the construction of a playground at McCall School, the elementary school for Society Hill and many neighboring communities. The Society Hill Civic Association, through the McCall School Initiative, has worked with neighborhood parents to increase community support for the school. Possibly as a result of community involvement, the number of neighborhood children enrolled in McCall School has increased. This past spring, the Philadelphia School District decided that McCall School should have a playground, as do many public and private schools in our city. (For more about this proposal, see pages 9 and 19.)

As president of SHCA, my responsibility may be to stay neutral on this issue. However, personally, and as a mother, I am in full support of McCall School getting a playground. Elementary age children need more than a blacktop at recess. The neighborhood children who attend McCall School should have the same “play opportunities” as those who attend the various private schools in and around our city. I believe that a playground can only enhance the quality of life for children who attend the school, as well as for families who live in our neighborhood. This playground has the potential of becoming a neighborhood resource. Our much used and cherished Three Bears Park is primarily geared towards children ages 2-5. The McCall School playground will be geared for children ages 5-12. At this time, it is my understanding that plans for the site are to install a play structure on a soft play surface.

As many of you know, I live across from Three Bears Park. I know what it is like to have a playground in my front yard. I can truly say that the benefits of having the playground far outweigh the drawbacks.

I have shared with you my personal opinions regarding two concerns in our neighborhood. These issues will be the focus of our upcoming General Membership Meeting on Wednesday, September 22, at 7:30 p.m. Please join us at Old Pine Church to share your opinions. If you are unable to attend, feel free to email your concerns to me at TRorke@aol.com.
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Remembering Charles E. Peterson, Visionary

Just six days short of his 98th birthday, Charles (or ‘Charlie’ as he was affectionately called) died on Tuesday, August 17. His impact on Society Hill is incalculable. He came here in the early ‘50s, saw the old and beautiful buildings, moved into and stayed in the 300 block of Spruce Street and became a passionate supporter of preservation. He was a pioneer with a mission who was the first to dub the area “Society Hill” after the Free Society of Traders, William Penn’s real estate group.

He was instrumental in encouraging friends to buy property in the area, and the neighborhood grew and flourished. Peterson’s interest in Philadelphia architecture never waned. In 1953 he wrote an extensive article on Carpenter’s Hall, which was published in The American Philosophical Society’s Historic Philadelphia. At 94, he wrote and published The Life and Works of Robert Smith, a book about the man who designed St. Peter’s Church and Carpenter’s Hall. Even at 97, he could be found in his office surrounded by books and planning writings on cements and other subjects. Long time friend Professor Roland Paxton of Heriot-Watt University, School of the Built Environment in Edinburgh, Scotland, calls Peterson a “distinguished American architectural historian and conservationist.” He says that “Peterson has exercised a greater influence on the recording and conservation of the historic built infrastructure of the United States than anyone else and is justly venerated for this achievement.”

A very abbreviated chronology of Charlie’s 98 remarkable years begins with his birth on August 23, 1906 in Minnesota, where he was raised and schooled. In 1929 his architectural career was launched with the National Park Service, where he worked on dozens of federal park projects across the country. One of Peterson’s proudest accomplishments is that he initiated, in 1933, the Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS) — which documents with photos and drawings the nation’s more than 25,000 historic buildings and structures. This is the largest archive of its type in the world and one of the few New Deal programs still in existence.

In 1956 Peterson was appointed by Mayor Dilworth as the first member of the Philadelphia Historical Commission. Under his leadership and supported by the Historical Commission, park staff began a program of cataloguing with drawings and photographs over 600 structures in Philadelphia, a record for any American city. After 34 years with the Park Service, Peterson retired in 1962. He then began his consulting practice, which continued for the remainder of his life. In effect Peterson worked more years while “retired” than during his “working” career. Few others, in any field, can claim that unique distinction!

The Society Hill Civic Association has plans to erect a plaque honoring Peterson and also Edmund Bacon for their contributions to the revival of the neighborhood. A memorial service will be held on September 18 at 1 p.m. at Christ Church, 20 N. American Street.

We shall miss him; Charles Peterson was one of the great “movers and shakers” of our age.
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Proposed Security Measures Stir Residents

Unless you’ve been on Planet Mars in August, you have probably heard about the latest security scheme for Independence National Historical Park. The National Park Service proposes to build an eight-foot-high fence that would cleave Independence Square in two. This would block access to Independence Hall, America’s symbolic birthplace and the site of the first public reading of the Declaration of Independence. Behind this soaring fence the Park Service also proposes to install a 2,500-square-foot “blast-proof” structure for security and screening purposes, providing supplementary restroom facilities. This project, combined with another screening site at the new Liberty Bell Center, will cost $7.5 million.

Citizens, historians, civic groups and preservation leaders have joined to heap scorn upon the Park Service’s newest proposal. Their initial plan, in response to 9/11, would have closed the 500 block of Chestnut Street in front of Independence Hall to vehicular traffic. That scheme was the catalyst for the creation of a group of activists — the Independence Mall Business and Residents Coalition (IMBARC) — whose challenge stopped the blocking off of Chestnut Street, asking how many security measures can be built before we end up being less free. Needless to say, SHCA is a card-carrying member of IMBARC, and we are represented by both Carter Buller, its chair, and Robert Lonergan, its secretary.

According to Carter, there is legitimate concern for arriving at a realistic balance between access to Independence Square and appropriate security and screening measures. But the park’s newest proposal has resulted in an outcry from many quarters. An editorial (Philadelphia Inquirer, August 9) said that the proposal “…would erect a hideously inappropriate toilet/screening combo facility behind the old hall. Completing the desecration of Independence Square would be a tall fence permanently slicing the square in two.” Another Inquirer editorial by Harris Steinberg, director of the Penn Praxis program at the University of Pennsylvania, asks, “Do we want to fence in our bedrock values of freedom and liberty?” He says, “Can’t we put our vaunted technological know-how and can-do American pragmatism to better use? A spindly fence along the front of Independence Hall isn’t going to do anything but chip away at our liberties and self-esteem.”

IMBARC worked with Laurie Olin of the highly respected architectural firm, the Olin Partnership, to keep Chestnut Street open and to develop a feasible alternative for park security. IMBARC’s plan eliminates the need to fence off Independence Square. It proposes to screen visitors in either the east or west wings of Independence Hall — wings that are not considered historic. Either or both wings could be “bomb-proofed” in the way the new Liberty Bell Center is. This arrangement would be sufficient to screen visitors under most conditions. Currently IMBARC continues its efforts to have the Park Service adopt their less intrusive security and screening strategy.

Independence Park is a part of our neighborhood, and whatever security measures the National Park Service enforces will affect our quality of life. Many of us agree that the proposed fence is inimical to what the Hall stands for — freedom and liberty. Many of us also agree that a sensible security system must be put in place.

The latest security scheme proposes an eight-foot-high fence that would cleave Independence Square in two.
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Landscaping the McCall School

Campus Park or Asphalt Jungle?

A meeting held at the McCall Elementary School on Tuesday night, August 24, centered on a proposal to replace the existing vacant “asphalt jungle” into a “campus park” that will function as a school and community playground. Because the current “asphalt jungle” of open space faces houses on 7th Street and the 600 blocks of Spruce and Delancey Streets, all of these and other nearby neighbors were notified of the meeting to discuss the project and address any concerns related to security and quality-of-life issues.

The meeting was well attended by many nearby residents, as well as several SHCA members and directors. School Principal Paula Bantom-Waters and Ms. Imani Wilson, vice-president of McCall’s Home & School Association, were there to lend support to the project. Also in attendance were Senator Vincent Fumo’s chief assistant, Carl Engelke, and Brian Abernathy, a staff member in Councilman Frank DiCicco’s office. The primary speaker for the evening was none other than Paul G. Vallas, Chief Executive Officer of the School District of Philadelphia, who spoke about the opportunity to transform this vacant city-owned space into a useful and enjoyable play lot for neighborhood children. The good news is that the School District will allot approximately $100,000 toward this “campus park project,” and that our immediate community has both the opportunity and obligation to become involved in the development of the plan. “What you want is what you’ll get,” Vallas said.

One person expressed concern that perhaps the $100,000 allotment could be used for a more important pedagogical purpose. But Mr. Vallas quickly shot that notion down, because the allotment is designated only for the school’s outside recreation area. If our community does not wish to have an improved outdoor play area, then the money will go to another city school for the specific purpose of improving that school’s exterior space. So it’s a no-brainer — “the status quo is unacceptable.”

Three issues of concern expressed by neighbors related to trash, parking, and playground maintenance. Mr. Vallas said that the resolution of these issues would be decided by our neighborhood, and that the School District will comply with our requests. Design was another issue. Specifically, people wanted to know what play equipment would be chosen and whether or not park benches would be included in the plan. Again, Vallas said that our neighborhood will get only what we request — e.g. if we don’t want benches because neighbors fear the homeless will sleep on them, then we won’t have benches. If we don’t want basketball hoops that could attract teenagers who would play basketball at night (or worse!), basketball hoops will not be included in the design. If we want motion-sensitive lighting for security purposes, we will get it.

Mr. Vallas thanked those individuals who have worked so hard to get this renovation initiative under way. He suggested the need for a task force consisting of school personnel and neighbors who will speak on behalf of the entire community — so that all issues of concern will be addressed. The pace at which the task force works to create a plan will determine when the improvement project will be completed — as early as the spring of 2005 if we wish and if we work efficiently. In any case, Vallas promised that the project will reflect our neighborhood’s needs and wishes — and that the transformation of a vacant “asphalt jungle” into a “campus park” will be up to us. We will keep you posted.
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Recent Crimes Solved

**WINDOW WASHER SCAM:** It appears that a window washer scam artist has been arrested by the police — and he may be the same scammer that’s been working Society Hill for a couple of years. We urge anyone who has been a victim to contact Detective Dave Wiegart at 215-686-3093. It’s important to determine if this same man has victimized several homeowners in Society Hill in addition to the crime for which he has been arrested.

We know you’re curious, so this is how the alleged scammer was caught: he was detained by police at 3rd and Spruce because he was being investigated for stealing a large ladder from a worksite. A window washer scam victim saw the police and identified the man as the same person who had come into her home a few days before to “wash the windows.” Our officers were on the ball and knew about the scam from the many times it was noted at roll call. Thanks to the police, to SSSH for educating them and to Captain Korn for following through.

**MUGGING:** A mugger was caught at 6th and Fitzwater Streets. Early one morning in July a Society Hill resident was assaulted in the walkway between 5th and Lawrence, just south of the Super Fresh. The assailant had a knife (which may not have been visible). The victim was punched, her blouse was ripped, and her packages and purse were taken. She screamed, and neighbors immediately called 911.

Police responded within minutes and caught the mugger at 6th and Fitzwater, where some alert neighbors pinned him down. Six police cars, sirens blaring, had responded by that time, and the mugger was arrested and identified by the victim. What happened was not the victim’s fault — she did nothing wrong — but it shows that we must all be cautious.

*The morals of these stories: concerned neighbors can be instrumental in keeping the area safe; be wary of taking these walkways early in the morning or after dark.*

**ATTEMPTED BURGLARY:** Burglars tried to “jimmy” a door open on a Sunday afternoon in Lawrence Court, but they were stopped by the alarm system. Motion detector lights have also saved homes from being burglarized. If you don’t have these safety measures, you might want to think about installing them.

**TWO MORE SCAMS TO WATCH OUT FOR:**

**The Fire Department is NOT doing a survey,** as confirmed by the Fire Department. Do not let anyone into your house purporting to be a fireman doing a survey! **Licenses and Inspections (L&I) is NOT inspecting houses.** Do not let anyone into your house purporting to be from L&I asking about numbers of smoke or carbon monoxide detectors, or anything else. L&I does not send out inspectors without an appointment, and they have clearly visible IDs.

**PEDESTRIAN SAFETY:** In light of the recent tragic loss of neighbor Giovanni Petri, we are working hard to improve pedestrian safety. Speed limit signs and other traffic safety measures are being considered.

**FRANKLIN LIGHTS:** Does your street lamp have a bad bulb? Call Streets Lighting Department, 215-686-5610, provide address, and they will replace the bulb within 24 hours.

**OLD CELL PHONES:** Thanks to everyone who donated cell phones. They have been delivered to the DA’s office to be reprogrammed to call only 911. They will be given to senior citizens and abused persons. We will continue to collect them. Drop them off at 414 Spruce Street.

**FLEA MARKET:** to be held in October to raise money for the joint Police and Civilian Christmas Party for first graders from every school in the Sixth Police District. Gifts, food and entertainment purchased with proceeds will be used to give more than 200 children a memorable Christmas experience. Call Marilyn at 215-922-2626 to arrange for pickup of donated items or monetary contributions.

**THREE STEPS TO TAKE IF SOMETHING HAPPENS**

1. **CALL 911**

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2. **Make sure the police officer writes up an incident report.**

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www.LSLinsurance.com Matthew H. Levin, CIC - President
This month, Society Hill Town Watch celebrates the first anniversary of its revitalization. By all objective measures, the first year has been a hit — during this time, Society Hill Town Watch achieved the following:

- More than 90 people joined this group of neighborhood volunteers.
- 60 members engaged in “community policing” by taking part in neighborhood patrols.
- Two dozen members served as home base operators during these patrols, communicating with patrollers via walkie-talkie or cell phone.
- Patrollers disrupted several crimes in progress and helped alleviate many other hazardous conditions observed while on patrol.
- Patrollers and base operators helped police locate and arrest individuals engaged in criminal behavior.
- SHTW worked with the police to obtain updated crime reports.
- SHTW worked with Safe and Sound Society Hill to alert residents about ongoing crime sprees in our neighborhood.
- New SHTW street signs were erected.
- SHTW was recognized by the citywide Operation Town Watch and the Philadelphia Police Department as the Town Watch of the Year in the 6th District.
- SHTW members provided residents and police with a growing presence in Society Hill.

Society Hill Town Watch celebrated National Night Out and had an early birthday party on August 3rd. The weather was perfect, the food was delicious, and the turnout to Three Bears Park was tremendous! In fact, more than 60 residents participated, and 17 signed up to be SHTW’s newest members. The event concluded with a candlelit stroll through Society Hill. SHTW would like to thank the following establishments for their generous donations of food for National Night Out: Chef’s Market, Homemade Goodies by Roz, Jeffrey Miller Catering Company, Philadelphia Java Company, Super Fresh and Zeke’s Deli.

Society Hill Town Watch would also like to express its appreciation to Jane Cooper and Marilyn Appel for their hard work in coordinating the food for the event; to Martha Levine and the Society Hill block coordinators for their distribution of fliers; to Philadelphia District Attorney Lynne Abraham for attending and for her avid support of community-based efforts to fight crime; to the Sixth District Police for their presence both at the event that night and in our neighborhood every day; and to the following individuals who helped bring about a wonderful evening: Diana Anhalt, Edwin Coyle, Matt DeJulio, Philip Hodgson, Tobias Klauder, Laurie Magid, Jeff Riddle, Jennifer Spiering, and Nancy Zabaga.

Would you like to join the good people at Society Hill Town Watch as partners against crime? Please call 267-251-0749 or drop a line to michael.erdos@phila.gov.

Happy Birthday, Society Hill Town Watch!

Above, left to right, Jane Cooper and Alan Simpson joined Mike Erdos, chair of Society Hill Town Watch and co-chair of SHCA’s Safe and Sound Committee, and many other Town Watch volunteers to celebrate National Night Out.
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The Civic Association has tried for several years to preserve the historic facades of the York Row townhouses (c. 1807), located at 700-718 Walnut Street. At various times in the mid-1990s, staff members at the Philadelphia Historical Commission have described York Row as a “substantial piece of one of the earliest rows in the City;” “some of the very finest Federal style townhouses in Philadelphia;” and “some of the best of what Philadelphia has to offer.” With the approval of the Historical Commission, the developers of the St. James apartment tower were allowed to perform a “façadectomy” (as Inga Saffron would call it) on the townhouses and incorporate the façades into their overall high-rise apartment project. Although the Civic Association has written to the developers and the City over the past couple of years complaining that the façades were not being protected sufficiently, the marble cornices collapsed in February 2003 and smashed onto the marble steps below. In August 2003 we were dismayed to learn that the developers had applied to the Historical Commission for permission to replace the cornices with fiberglass reproductions. We had a glimmer of hope when the Commission’s Architectural Review Committee (ARC) recommended a denial of that request. Those hopes were dashed, however, when the members of the Commission decided not to accept the ARC’s recommendation and, instead, granted the request for replacing the marble with fiberglass reproductions. We appealed the Commission’s decision.

Our first stop was the Board of License & Inspection Review. In January 2004 this little-known City Board heard testimony from the Civic Association, the City and from the developers, who showed up unannounced on the day of the hearing with their attorneys and an expert witness. After the hearing concluded, the Board took the matter under advisement and on February 12, 2004 we received a letter from the Board advising us that they had affirmed the Commission’s decision to allow the marble cornice to be replaced with a fiberglass reproduction. We decided to appeal this decision to the Philadelphia Court of Common Pleas and hired our own attorney, Michael D. LiPuma, Esquire, a local litigator. On July 30, 2004, Mr. LiPuma, on behalf of the Civic Association, filed a 31-page brief with the Court of Common Pleas. The brief first argues that the Board of L&I Review violated the Pennsylvania Sunshine Act when, after the hearing, it took this matter under advisement and conducted a vote behind closed doors.

The brief next argues that it was improper for the developers to appear and participate in the hearing. Finally, the brief argues that, according to the historic preservation standards that are binding on the Commission, it was unlawful to allow the marble cornice to be replaced with a fiberglass reproduction. The City, and presumably the developer, have until the end of August to respond to our brief.

Meanwhile, on August 10, 2004, the City filed a motion to quash our appeal. The City’s motion seeks to have our entire appeal dismissed on the grounds, the City argues, that the Civic Association does not have the requisite legal standing (i.e., the right) to appeal the Historical Commission’s decision. Since the City’s motion could end this litigation, the City also requested a stay on other aspects of the proceedings, such as their obligation to respond to our brief.

It is too soon to tell how this litigation will end and what sort of substantive success, if any, we might obtain. However, the Board of the Civic Association is steadfast in pursuing this matter. We feel that the Historical Commission has made a wholly improper decision to allow a fiberglass reproduction under these circumstances. We also feel that the review processes (that is, the Board of L&I Review) did not afford us a proper hearing. Win or lose, we feel it is important to keep advocating for our rights. We will keep you updated.

SHCA’s Zoning & Historic Preservation Committee (ZHP) works with property owners in the neighborhood. The ZHP urges owners to present their plans to the ZHP – and to nearby neighbors who are invited to the meeting – before seeking approval from the Historical Commission or the Zoning Board of Adjustment (ZBA). Presentations can be arranged by contacting Paul Boni, ZHP chair, at paulboni@bonilaw.com, or Matt DeJulio, SHCA Administrator, at MattDeJulio@aol.com or 215-629-1288.
**SOCIETY HILL Reporter**

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**HIGH HOLIDAY SCHEDULE**

**WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 15**
Leil Rosh Hashanah * 7:30 p.m.

**THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 16**
Rosh Hashanah I* 9:00 a.m.-1:45 p.m.

**FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 17**
Rosh Hashanah II 9:00 a.m.-1:45 PM

**FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 24**
Kol Nidre* 6:15 p.m.

**SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 25**
Yom Kippur* 9:30 a.m.-6:45 p.m.
Yizkor Service approx. 4:45 p.m. Shofar 7:30 p.m.

*Restricted Seating, Members only

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Thurs. Sept. 16 8:00A.M. & 6:30 PM.
Fri. Sept. 17 8:00A.M. & 6:30 PM

——— Kippur Services ————
Fri. Kal Nidre Sept. 24 6:15 P.M.
Sat. Yom Kippur Sept. 25 8:00 A.M. All Day

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A Busy Fall Season

Music and Ritual at Houses of Worship

*Society Hill is home to some of the city’s most historic houses of worship. As autumn gets underway, we thought it a good idea to let you know what our churches and synagogues are planning for the coming season.*

**Old St. Mary’s Catholic Church**
A warm welcome to Father Dominic Chiaravalle (pronounced Key-ara-vall-a) at Old St. Mary’s. Born and raised near the old Connie Mack Stadium, Father knows Philadelphia well. He was ordained in 1965 and has spent his entire career in Philadelphia parishes, also working part-time at Philadelphia hospitals and prisons. As a frequent tour guide for friends and family, he knows the neighborhood well, but he never thought he would end up serving here. Father Chiaravalle loves opera and classical music and enjoys having them as part of the service. He has a passion for beautiful services and liturgies that inspire people to grow. He is excited about this opportunity to know his parishioners and all those who visit Society Hill and St. Mary’s.

**St. Peter’s Episcopal Church**
With great excitement and anticipation we welcome Peter Hopkins as St. Peter’s new Director of Music Ministry and Choirmaster, and his wife, Paula Pugh Romanaux, as Artist-in-Residence and Principal Organist. Peter is an international-level conductor, most recently serving as Minister of Music at Westminster Presbyterian Church in Grand Rapids, Michigan and Director of the Grand Rapids Symphony Chorus. Paula served as Organist and Adjunct Assistant Professor of Music in Michigan at Kalamazoo College and as Director of Music at St. Mark’s, Grand Rapids and St. Luke’s, Kalamazoo.

Peter and Paula make an exciting, committed team. They combine passion for their art with a strong grounding in administrative and management skills. Employing the tradition of the Royal School of Church Music, both have built successful children’s choral programs, and view their roles as teachers and mentors who will nurture the musical gifts of children to help them grow in their faith. They have a daughter who will be entering second grade in September. See [article on page 27 about The Food Cupboard.](#)

**Local Synagogues**
Look for the High Holiday schedule for local synagogues on page 16.

**Old Pine Street Presbyterian Church**
With the variety of churches and synagogues in Society Hill, Old Pine Street Church felt it important to hold interfaith group discussions. The sessions, which began on Wednesday, September 8th with a discussion of Judaism, are intended to promote dialog among people of various religions and provide a basic understanding of the religious beliefs of our international friends, co-workers, and Society Hill neighbors. (See calendar on page 36 for the schedule.)

Old Pine will have a Film Series in October. All films start at 7 p.m. in the Community Center, with discussion following. Refreshments will be served, but it is BYOP— bring your own popcorn! (See the film schedule in the calendar on page 36.) On September 21 at 7 p.m. Old Pine is showing the film “Bonhoeffer.” Dietrich Bonhoeffer was a Lutheran Theologian in Germany’s Third Reich. He was one of the first pastors to speak out against Hitler, and admonished Christians to stand in solidarity with Jews. Discovered for joining a plot to kill Hitler, he spent two years in a concentration camp and was hanged in April 1945.

On the third Sunday of every month at 5 p.m. strains of Jazz Vespers fill Old Pine Street Church. (See page 36 for the performance schedule on September 19 and October 17.) Also in October, the church will have a Fundraising Gala in the Church Yard and a Family Halloween event, but details are not yet in place. Please contact the church at 215-925-8051, or the Community Center for further information on any of these events.

**Old St. Joseph’s**
The nomination of Old St. Joseph’s for historical status goes before the National Park Service Advisory Board Landmarks Committee on Sept 21-23, in Washington D.C. We should know if the nomination is approved by the time the November/December Reporter is assembled. The listing is on the website at www.cr.nps.gov/nhl; go to news and then listings — page 2 under PA.

**Mother Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church**
On July 12, a day of retreat was held at the Downtown Club to which local historians, museum directors, architects, church leaders and other interested parties were invited. The goal was to examine the proposed Richard and Sarah Allen Archives Center from a variety of perspectives, particularly focusing on the Center’s goals and the means to obtain the funds to build and endow it. The Center will be built on the corner of Sixth and Lombard Streets, next to the historic church which now houses — in addition to its magnificent sanctuary — a museum of local African-American history, the cornerstone of which are the tombs of Richard and Sarah Allen.
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A new, community-inspired recreation area is proposed for the McCall School, which I hope will feature the latest and greatest in slides and climbing equipment atop a safe rubber surface. (Please see related articles on pages 3 and 9.) Unlike Three Bears Park, which is designed for toddlers to four-year-olds, this structure will serve the needs of kids aged 5 to 12. Careful attention is being paid to color and design that will make it respectful of our historic neighborhood. The plan avoids coverings, wide platforms, tunnel slides, and other items that can attract loiterers or vagrants.

Paul Vallas, CEO of the School District of Philadelphia, visited McCall in the spring, and the schoolyard’s lack of play apparatus disturbed him. He immediately put the school on “Campus Park Initiative” list, a program that constructs school recreation areas which are then available to neighborhood kids after hours. Paul Levy, Executive Director of Center City District and new resident of Society Hill, expressed his support for the project: “Quality public schools are key to the long-term vitality of Center City neighborhoods. Simple things, like improved landscaping and well-managed recreation amenities, can help as well. Just as Three Bears Park works for all families with younger children, a quality playground at McCall could continue to serve Society Hill families as their children grow.”

The School District’s team is working to ensure that the play space is a positive addition to the community. In July, they sent a letter inviting the immediate neighbors of McCall to voice suggestions and then hosted a Q&A in August to present the proposed design. They have been in close communication with SHCA’s Zoning & Historic Preservation Committee to insure compliance with all procedures and guidelines. Fortunately, R10 classification confirms this area as a “play and recreation space.” The team has also sought advice from Safe & Sound Society Hill and the Town Watch to maximize security in and around the recreation area, and to ask Town Watch to add the area to their patrol. Captain Brian Korn of the 6th District has been alerted to the project. Every effort will be made to maintain a safe, secure play environment for the school and our neighborhood.

Fall Festivities Planned for Three Bears Park

The Three Bears Park Annual Fall Festival
Mark your calendars for Saturday, October 2, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., for the Three Bears Park Annual Fall Festival. (Rain date is Sunday, October 3.) There will be all kinds of fun activities for the kids, plus various sales, such as a food and bake sale, a gently used toy sale, and a silent auction. A new feature for this year’s event will be the sale of handmade craft items. Many of our neighborhood moms are quite talented and have donated goodies to be sold at the Festival. If you have a talent and would like to donate an item to sell that will benefit the park, we will happily accept it.

Halloween Parade and Costume Contest
This year, Halloween falls on a Sunday! Bring your children to Three Bears Park at 4 p.m. for a Parade and Costume Contest. Prizes will be given for the best costumes. Our annual Halloween Festivities will follow, with pizza and apple juice for children. A great time is always had by all!

To volunteer for the Fall Festival, donate items or assist in the coordination of the Halloween festivities, please contact Tania Rorke at 215-925-4544 or TRorke@aol.com.

Planter Entered in Garden Contest
With the help of the Philadelphia Horticultural Society Parks Revitalization Program and friends from the neighborhood, we have replanted the round planter in the park. The Horticultural Society, deciding that we had done such a wonderful job, entered it into the City Parks Small Garden Contest. We will hear soon how we compare with other city gardens.

Unfortunately, children have been seen trampling through the plants. Mothers and other caretakers, we ask you to keep your children from running through the greenery on the round planter. Have them walk along the designated path of paw prints — because we have had to replace several ruined plants.

“Don't want to go to Pietro’s; let's go to Jones!”

Annabel, age 2
Jazz Vespers at Old Pine Church

Sunday, September 19, 5:00pm
Barbara Montgomery Quartet
Rev. Mindy Huffstetler, preaching

Sunday, October 17, 5:00pm
Mary Ellen Desmond Quartet
Rev. Osvaldo Nuesch, preaching

412 Pine Street • 215-925-8051 • www.oldpine.org

No Rats, Just a Friendly Possum

There was some panic for a while with rumors of a giant rat in Lawrence Court, but a note to Matt DeJulio from J. Pattison says that the “super-sized vermin is a Virginia Opossum, better known as just a plain old Possum. I have seen him (or her) on Lawrence Court several times and the animal does all the possum-like things: it waddles, it can’t really run fast, and it sticks it’s nose to the ground as it tries to scurry into the bushes to hide….It isn’t a health problem, and because it is a nocturnal itinerant, it will probably move on.” Glad to know it wasn’t a rat playing possum!

Independence Branch Library

The Friends of Independence Library welcomes Meryl Levitz, President and CEO of the Greater Philadelphia Tourism Marketing Corporation, to speak at its fall general membership meeting on Monday, September 20. Meryl will share exciting news about “Philly’s More Fun When You Sleep Over,” the plans for the 2005 tricentennial celebration of Ben Franklin’s birth, and its new marketing campaign aimed at gay and lesbian travelers. Then learn about a storytelling program to be launched in Philadelphia and plans for an academy to train people in the art of storytelling.

The program begins at 6 p.m. with a brief business meeting. Ms. Levitz’s talk begins at 6:15. The location is 18 S. 7th Street.

Starr Garden Clean-Up

Last spring Starr Garden held its first annual “Spring Into Your Park” clean-up day. Turnout was high — approximately 40 people — drains were cleaned, branches pruned, trash collected and graffiti removed. Pannula Construction Company is now repairing the sprinkler drain and leveling the area to prevent water from pooling. Repairs should be completed by mid-October!

Nicole Kilcullen, President, and Eileen Measley, Vice President of the Starr Garden Association will serve in these positions until elections can be held in February. At present, there are openings for Treasurer and Secretary. Any interested and willing parties, please contact Nicole at Nicole.kilcullen@verizon.net.
An Institution for Mothers and Babies Opens on Spruce Street

Newcomers to Society Hill may wonder about the sturdy apartment house near 6th and Spruce with the words “Rebecca Gratz Club” etched in stone above the door. Old-timers know that the Club housed young women for a good part of the 20th century. Many more know that the Club was named after a member of one of the most famous Jewish families in early 19th-century Philadelphia. I want to focus, however, on the period after the Civil War when one of the largest immigrant groups moving into the area were Jews, most of them from Russia. One need only remember the end of “Fiddler on the Roof” to understand what drove them here — pogroms. By the end of the 19th century a good portion of Philadelphia’s Jewish population resided in the area bounded by 2nd and 7th and Christian and Lombard Streets. By 1899, the northern boundary had moved to Spruce Street.

Many of these immigrant families lived in deplorable conditions, with 20 to 25 people to a house and with one privy for a block of tenements. Numerous synagogues had sprung up to care for their spiritual needs, but there was an urgent need to provide maternity and pediatric care for indigent Jewish women. In 1873 a group of women led by Ester Amram — from the Anshe Emeth Synagogue — founded the Ezrath Nashim (Help of Women) for Jewish immigrants. For almost two decades they cared for young mothers and infants by visiting their homes with volunteer doctors and nurses. As the population grew, the need for permanent quarters with professional staff became clear.

In 1891, the group purchased a property at 532 Spruce Street (later extended to 534). Thus, the Jewish Maternity Home became a reality. Ester Amram, assisted by a group of prominent Philadelphia Jews, served as president of the Ezrath Nashim for 22 years. Supporters formed the Jewish Maternity Association, and subscribers paid 25 cents a month to belong to this benevolent association. As the Home expanded, it added a nurses’ training school in 1894. Nearly 40 women with names such as Leary, Pankhurst, Campbell, and Blum graduated in the first eight years. Some of these young women had been sent from St. Joseph’s and St. Timothy’s Hospitals for obstetrical nursing classes. In 1902 directors of the Home voted to change the name to the Jewish Maternity Hospital in keeping with its growing reputation as a medical institution. Other services had been added as needs arose: care for motherless infants (under age one) and a seaside house in Atlantic City for invalid women and children.

Records for 1901, housed at the Philadelphia Jewish Archives Center*, exemplify the Jewish Maternity Hospital’s accomplishments: 101 infants were born that year, 800 were treated in the clinic, 1,796 days of support were given to mothers and 1,414 to infants. The Hospital’s annual report noted that “with thanks to the Almighty... every mother in the Obstetric Wards was returned in health to her family.”

By 1928, the Jewish Maternity Hospital and especially its teaching facility had outgrown its quarters. Becoming more recognized for its quality obstetric care, it merged with Mt. Sinai Hospital in South Philadelphia. The Rebecca Gratz Club became the new owner, erected a new building and served women in the area until the latter part of the 20th century.

*The Philadelphia Jewish Archives Center is located within the historic neighborhood at 18 S. 7th Street.
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A Neighbor’s First-Hand Account, by Keri White

Have A Complaint? Call the Mayor’s Office of Consumer Affairs

Is there any more universal experience for the homeowner than the incompetent, unreliable, absent, dishonest contractor? Everyone has at least one horror story, and most of us have several. Sadly, this is often the reality; happily, Philadelphians now have relief and recourse. The Mayor’s Office of Consumer Affairs was created last fall to protect citizens from consumer fraud and mistreatment large and small. Lance Haver and Patricia McNamara run this program, and I have first hand experience with their efficiency and effectiveness.

After several years of resistance, we embarked on a kitchen renovation. We hired a well-known, highly regarded local design group who hand-picked a contractor with whom they had successfully worked in the past. We then selected our new kitchen cabinets and equipment, handed over a substantial amount of money, and the work began July 2003. We won’t bore you with the predictable saga, but suffice it to say that two lawsuits, three contractors, and nine months later, we finally had a new kitchen. In the midst of the nightmare, a member of the Reporter staff brought to my attention the Mayor’s Office of Consumer Affairs and suggested that they might help me get out of kitchen hell.

We contacted them immediately, and they were helpful, sympathetic, and willing to intervene on my behalf. Pat McNamara sent me some forms to fill out detailing the mishandling of our project, and requested copies of receipts and contracts. She then contacted all parties involved (the design group, the contractors, us, and the respective lawyers) to set up a meeting, with the intention of helping us to reach a settlement. The meeting took place in my unfinished kitchen — Pat’s suggestion and a stroke of genius — which made it very difficult to claim things had been completed satisfactorily when we were sitting in a construction zone. During the evening, we had serious doubts that we could reach an agreement, but Pat kept at it, telling us that she had rarely failed to reach an agreement when she assembled all interested parties. After two hours, we managed a compromise. While compensation was less than we felt we deserved, it was more than the other side felt they should pay.

The Office of Consumer Affairs uses a variety of tactics including litigation, moving to revoke operating licenses, delegation meetings (such as the one described above), and oversight of payment and reimbursement plans. In addition to these responsibilities, they research consumer protection laws in and out of Pennsylvania in a quest for the most effective and successful policies. They maintain ceaseless vigilance for potential consumer fraud and abuse.

Based on our experience, we recommend contacting them if you are faced with any of a variety of complaints, such as those who have been wronged by building contractors, car salesmen, mechanics, roofers, etc. To contact the Office of Consumer Affairs, call 215-686-7598, visit mayorofficeofconsumeraffairs@phila.gov, or email pat.mcnamara@phila.gov.

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2003 Year in Review

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The average sale price was $602,575
The lowest priced home sold for $190,447.00
The highest priced home sold for $1,550,000.00
Homes were on the market for an average of 91 days
The average sales price increased 25% since 2000

In 2002, 63 homes sold for an average price of $561,313 in 84 days
In 2001, 54 homes sold for an average price of $541,188 in 76 days
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If you’ve ever walked along the edge of Washington Square on S. 6th Street, you have surely passed the Dilworth House. It sits inconspicuously between the Athenaeum and the Lippincott Building. While this is not a particularly old house relative to many of Society Hill’s 18th-century homes — it was built in the mid-20th century — it has historic significance as a leading edge in the resurrection of Society Hill, which had, at the time, been a rundown neighborhood teetering on the brink of decay. The house also has significant value as part of the cultural, political and historical heritage of Society Hill and, by extension, the rebirth of Center City as a residential area. The house is associated with one of the most significant leaders of Philadelphia.

The Dilworth House was the first privately built residence in this part of the city prior to Society Hill’s rebirth. Building this house on Washington Square was a show of commitment from one of the preeminent forces in City politics. The owner was the mayor of Philadelphia from 1956-1962, Richardson Dilworth, a leader in the reform movement. He felt strongly that Society Hill was a place worth saving and had faith in the potential of revitalizing the neighborhood so that it would attract more prosperous (i.e. middle-class) citizens. Dilworth commissioned the well-known architect George E. Brumbaugh to design his residence. Brumbaugh served on the Independence Architectural Advisory Committee for restoration of Independence Hall and was also responsible for designing, in 1966-67, the Presbyterian Historical Society on Lombard Street.

Dilworth’s commitment to move to this corner of the city has great symbolic significance for us all, as his fine newly constructed home served as a catalyst to other pioneers, so that a grassroots effort to rebuild the area was accomplished with the full support of City Hall.

Let’s keep an eye out for the Dilworth House — to assure that it will stand in perpetuity.

Happy Anniversary to these Historic 200-Year-Old Society Hill Properties — Here’s to 200 More!

229 Pine
built for Rebecca Leaming, widow

527 Pine
built for Isaac Watson, Merchant

507 Spruce
built by William McDonough, House Builder

600-602 Spruce
built by Edward Bonsall, House Carpenter

604 Spruce
built by Michael Fox, Brickmaker

606 Spruce
built by Thomas Bradley and Jacob Keigher, Coppersmiths

608 Spruce
built by Alexander Thompson, House and Ship Painter

610 Spruce
built by Dillaplain Ridgeway, Bricklayer, and Daniel Knight, Carpenter

612 Spruce
built by George Summers, House Carpenter

614 Spruce
built for Catherine Howell by James Pancoast, Lumber Merchant

616 Spruce

618 Spruce
built for Joseph Ingles, Accountant, by Samuel White, Carpenter

620-622 Spruce
built by George Krebs, Brickmaker

226 S. 4th
built by Edward Bonsall and William Shoemaker

418 S. 7th Street
built for John H. Brinton, Attorney, by Jasper Carter, Painter and Glazier

Source: Historical Commission building inventory, 1804 listings
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The National Italian Memorial of Greater Philadelphia

New Memorial Will Honor Italian Achievements

From the earliest days of settlement in the New World through the great waves of immigration beginning in the late 1800s and continuing to today, millions of Italians have made the journey from their native land to the United States to start a new life.

Italian contributions to America and to the City of Brotherly Love are immeasurable. For example, the belief that all men are created equal, written in Philadelphia by Thomas Jefferson, was first published by Jefferson’s dear friend Filippo Mazzei. The vestibules of both City Hall and the Wanamaker building were adorned with the mosaic tile art of Raffael Carfagno. Beyond the noble, Italian Americans have contributed some of Philly’s most endearing symbols — including, of course, hoagies and cheesesteaks!

The National Italian Memorial of Greater Philadelphia, conceived by Vernon Anastasio, president of Bella Vista United Civic Association, is a monumental project that will acknowledge the heritage and achievements of Italian Americans. It will be a relief sculpture, located just steps from the Italian Market. The site is the Fante Leone Pool, left to ruin for nearly a decade by the City of Philadelphia, which was first a community bath house for Italian immigrants and later a swimming pool and gathering place for Italian-American families.

F Viking Sculpture & Design, owned and operated by two accomplished Philadelphia sculptors, Christopher Buonomo and Michael Gaudioso, has been chosen to create the monument. An internationally renowned architect, Rocco Leonardis, has been selected as the project’s consulting architect. When completed, the memorial will be the site for open air concerts and receptions — a welcome addition to Philadelphia’s cultural scene that will likely become a popular tourist destination.

Volunteers, supporters and donors are needed to make the National Italian Memorial of Greater Philadelphia a reality. Please consider attending a “Night of Italian Song” on Monday, October 25th, which will help raise funds for this effort. A wine and cheese reception will be held from 6 to 7 p.m., prior to the concert, which will take place at the First Unitarian Church at 2125 Chestnut Street. For more information, please contact Carolyn Verdi at 215-925-2997 or ceverdi@msn.com.

Neighbors Feeding Neighbors

St. Peter’s Food Cupboard Fills a Local Need

Since 1988, the Food Cupboard, a small social outreach ministry at St. Peter’s Episcopal Church, has helped those who struggle to keep food on their shelves. Staffed entirely by church and community volunteers, the Cupboard distributes approximately 3,000 bags of groceries annually (over 49,000 total since 1988) to low and fixed income individuals, families, and the elderly. Over the past 16 years the Food Cupboard has distributed about $750,000 worth of food, right in our backyard!

Surprisingly, many of their clients are Society Hill residents with fixed incomes. Most are elderly. Many recipients rely on the Food Cupboard for proper nutrition. Clients may come to the Food Cupboard on a biweekly basis to obtain one bag of nutritionally balanced groceries.

Volunteers for the Cupboard come from all walks of life. The children at St. Peter’s School bag groceries every Thursday afternoon during the school year and adult volunteers fill in during the summer. Between 60 and 80 bags per week are handed out between 8 and 10 a.m. every Saturday morning in the parish house at 313 Pine Street. Acquiring the food is becoming increasingly difficult. Volunteers collect donated food from canned food drives, low-cost distribution centers, and the Greater Philadelphia Food Bank. Everyone works towards one goal, eliminating the hidden hunger problem within our community.

To volunteer your time and/or resources to St. Peter’s Episcopal Church Food Cupboard, contact parish administrator Kate Randall at 215-925-5968.
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Is This Town Big Enough for Warring Ducks?

An article by Jim Nolan in the August 6 issue of the Daily News cited claims of dirty dealings, insider politics and preferential treatment for the owners of Philadelphia’s latest tourist attraction, Super Ducks. This new company is affiliated with Milton Street, the Mayor’s brother, and Ed McLaughlin, formerly the city’s Commissioner of Licenses and Inspections. Super Ducks is a profit-making tourist ride in competition with Ride the Ducks, the successful moneymaking firm that began operating in the historic district in 2003. These amphibious vehicles tour through city streets and then descend for a swim into the Delaware River. Ride the Ducks features upgraded WWII-era amphibious vehicles that are 34 feet long, while the 39-foot long Super Ducks vehicles were newly designed and built.
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220+222 Spruce Street $925,000
Virtual Tour#4329713 Fabulous historic double property with impeccable charm and character with 3 bedrooms, 2 baths, refinished pine floors, fireplaces, 2-zoned central air, custom greenhouse with lap pool, and enchanting landscaped red brick garden! Said to be the oldest house in Society Hill!!

215 S. Quince Street $699,900
Beautiful completely renovated 3 bedroom, 2 bath home with finished basement, hardwood floors, historically accurate façade, master bedroom suite, balcony, plus PARKING!

423 Pine Street #3 $479,900
Virtual Tour#4393050 Lovely 1 bedroom, 1.5 bath condo with den, sunroom, custom kitchen, fireplace, master bedroom suite with Jacuzzi and spacious deck with fabulous views!

423 Pine Street #4 $339,900
Virtual Tour#4393012 Lovely 2 bedroom, 2 bath condo with fireplace, central air, master bedroom suite with Jacuzzi tub, custom kitchen, and large deck with great view!

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Six Years of Welcome Baskets

SHCA’s Welcome Basket program marked its sixth anniversary in July 2004. During that period 300 bountiful, beautiful and valuable baskets were delivered to new homeowners — about 50 each year. These baskets were filled with fresh food, local information and gift certificates to a variety of restaurants, salons and theaters. Here is a brief sampling of notes we’ve received from recipients who expressed their appreciation.

“Thank you for the wonderful basket you gave us and your great introduction to Philadelphia and this great neighborhood.” — V.M. and A.G., Penn’s Landing Condominiums

“Thank you for welcoming us in this most gracious way. The neighborhood merchants who donated all of the wonderful items deserve much thanks. The neighborhood is a special one and we appreciate all that the association does to make it that way.” — E.K. and B.K., Delancey Street

“We enjoyed the fresh food items immediately and have now been taking advantage of the restaurant and theater gift certificates one by one. This is a great program of a great group!” — S.S. and R.S., Independence Place.

“We have greatly enjoyed our basket of local goodies and information about Philadelphia. Thank you so much for the hospitality you have shown us. It has certainly made us feel welcome.” — L.K. and T.S., Spruce Street

SHCA’s Welcome Basket coordinator, Martha Levine, is busily trying to catch up on assembling these baskets of goodies for all new Society Hill homeowners. If she’s inadvertently missed you, please contact her at 215-629-0727 or marthalev@msn.com. ...And by patronizing the businesses and institutions that make each of our Welcome Baskets “one-of-a-kind,” you will express your thanks and help us continue the success of this program.

“The neighborhood is a special one and we appreciate all that the association does to make it that way.”

### Support Our Welcome Basket Donors!

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Earthlight Images Gallery is happy to announce that we will have weekend hours starting September 4th.

The Gallery will feature the Fine Art Photography of Armond Scavo

Gallery hours:
Friday – Saturday: 11am – 6pm
(fine art framing specialist available Fridays)
Monday – Thursday by appointment

All are invited to the opening celebration that will coincide with the gallery’s participation in the Philadelphia Open Studio Tour, October 16th and 17th.

Earthlight Images Gallery
764 S. 7th Street, Philadelphia, Pa  •  215.592.8832
E-mail: armond@earthlightimages.com
www.earthlightimages.com

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Tel. (215) 546-0550, Direct (215) 790-5638, or e-mail lol@bellatlantic.net, or visit my web site at www.dream-house.net
Do YouWant Cleaner Sidewalks?

Our anti-litter campaign, initiated in September 1996, was conceived as a visible benefit for Society Hill residents. Eight workmen pick up litter from our sidewalks following weekly trash pickup. To help fund the program, SHCA annual dues were raised from $30 to $40, and a goal of doubling the number of members from 400 to 800 was set. It took several years to reach that goal, and we had to skip several months of additional clean-up service due to lack of funds.

Eventually we reached beyond our modest goal of 800 participating SHCA members — enabling us to improve the sidewalk clean-up program as follows: August 2001: Added an anti-graffiti clean-up component; June 2003: Added a mechanical sweeper to sweep along the building lines of our most heavily traveled thru-streets; October 2003: Included the south side of Lombard Street (not officially within Society Hill’s district).

Currently we are considering an additional day of follow-up cleaning — Mondays for the 2005 spring and summer tourist season. The cost is about $10,000 for a six-month period, but the number of months we will be able to fund the program will depend on your response to our upcoming membership campaign. If you want it and are willing to pay for it, it will be there! Remember: every 40 additional members who join our current group of almost 1,000 members will allow us to pay for one additional month of sidewalk clean-up on Mondays!

How you can help:

Join or rejoin SHCA in the upcoming 2005 membership drive — and if you haven’t yet joined for 2004, what are you waiting for?

Add a voluntary contribution for litter clean-up. Two-thirds of SHCA members already provide funding for one or more of our initiatives. For example, you, your firm, or a group of your block’s neighbors can co-sponsor the current sidewalk program in any of the following ways:

$25 Your own block for one month;
$300 Your own block for all year;
$140 The “green machine” for one month;
$350 the 8-person clean-up crew for one day.

It is up to those of you reading this article to determine if the Board should add a second SHCA paid-for clean-up day next spring. Let your voice be heard.

Membership Nears 1,000

Renewals 856; New 131; Total Members 987
In mid-August, SHCA’s Administrator Matt DeJulio reported that we have 987 members. Only 13 more memberships are needed to arrive at our record-breaking goal of 1000! We ask Society Hill newcomers or “old-timers” who haven’t renewed in recent years to show support for our year-round efforts by signing up now. Our activist organization gets work done on many fronts. Just read the article on this page about how we help keep our streets clean. Indeed, there would be nothing to read if our group of professional volunteers failed to keep you informed by writing and assembling this quality bi-monthly newsletter! Do fill out the coupon and send it to us today. Thanks so much.

SOCIETY HILL CIVIC ASSOCIATION

2004 Membership Application/Renewal

- Renewal  o New
- $40 Household  o $100 Business
- $60 Businesses with under 5 employees  $
- Additional contribution for  o Anti-Graffiti
  o Tree Tending  o Lighting  o Litter Control  $

Total enclosed  $

Check if you wish to receive
- Guide for Property Owners  o Historic Windowpane Plaque

I/We would be interested in working with one of SHCA’s committees.
My/Our interests include:

Name
Address  Apt. #
City, State, Zip
Home Phone
Work Phone
E-mail

Mail to Society Hill Civic Assoc., P.O. Box 63503, Philadelphia, PA 19147

If you cannot afford membership dues, please donate what you can.
Franklin Roberts is an Ernest Hemingway look-alike. Sipping a glass of Cuban rum in the luxuriant garden of the Delancey Street home that he and his wife, Lynne, built in the 1960s, he is certainly a creative force.

He’s also extremely versatile. Starting out as a sports writer after graduating in English at Penn, he went on to become a vice president for radio and TV at a New York ad agency before joining his brother’s ad agency in Philadelphia. Later, he invested in Broadway plays including “Fiddler on the Roof” and “1776” both of which won Tony Awards.

He then went on to create and produce public affairs and performing arts projects for corporate and institutional organizations. His latest includes what he calls his own bicentennial project, “Four Little Pages,” a musical play starring Benjamin Franklin.

And it’s his namesake that’s occupying Franklin Roberts now, as the tercentenary of Benjamin’s birth will be celebrated in 2006. In an age when people identify themselves by their trade or profession, Roberts’s precise métier is hard to define. “I do whatever I can get away with; I’m a thinker,” he says. His thoughts about the tercentenary have to do with creating public awareness of the myriad talents of Franklin and how, like his acclaimed historical vignettes involving Washington, Twain, Lincoln and other American icons, Roberts can create pageantry in the great philosopher’s and inventor’s honor.

Oh, and one other Hemingway connection. The author was kicked out of Cuba when Fidel Castro came to power; the Roberts’s faced a similar rebuke when they were refused entry to the country after arriving from Mexico. The Pope was visiting and security was especially tight.

The couple are true originals, not only as longtime denizens of Society Hill, and has historical antecedents of his own. He grew up in Society Hill and has lived here ever since, except for a brief period in New York. He served as the third president of the Society Hill Civic Association and initiated an earlier incarnation of the neighborhood’s newsletter.

Lynne Roberts has a background in theatre and politics, too, working in production at the Theatre of the Living Arts, running in a primary against the elder James Tayoun and helping the campaigns of George McGovern and Bill Green. A graduate of Vassar with a master’s degree from Temple, Lynne is now a director of programs and grants developer at Temple’s College of Education. She served as president of the Citizens Committee for Public Education, was associated with the McCall School, which the couple’s children Andrew and Laura attended, and was involved in the drive to prevent I-95 from being built as an elevated highway right here in our own neighborhood.

Some forty years ago this eve
A handy few who did perceive
A treasure lost to sloth and grime
Might live again in modern times
And resurrect historic myths
Faint mem’ries in the Bloody Fifth
So gingerly they ventured forth
From sheltered dens and suburbs north
Young architects with damp diplomas
Artistes sampling strange aromas
Young lawyers yet to craft a tort
Conjoined with folks of last resort
Heroic stoic pioneers
Accompanied by their dainty dears
Soon testing bricks and termite borings
Privy pits and ancient floorings
Making do with wine and gorgon’
Hauled overland from Front and Or’gon
Today the Hill is once more chaste
The formstone fronts have been erased
Cute flower pots frame Franklin Lamps
And candlelight leads tourist tramps
All hail the wheezing heroes bold
You fought decay and restored old
All now can see Ben Franklin’s dream
The perfect spot for slot machines!

David Woods can be reached at dwoods@healthpublishing.com
The Green Tree Perpetual Assurance Company

Episode VIII • Confusion After War

After the Revolution had freed us from the tyranny of King George III and in the burly-burliness that follows war and attends political improvisation, the common drive to create a new nation vied for public attention with the individual pursuit of self-interest. The passage below is from an unpublished history of The Green Tree by Clifford Lewis, Jr., who was elected Secretary of The Green Tree in 1925. In so doing, he followed his brother, Colonel David; his father, Clifford; and his grandfather, David Lewis.

The population of Philadelphia in 1784, then the largest city in the Thirteen States, was said to be between thirty and thirty-five thousand. Measuring the size of the city by built-up blocks, it may be said that Philadelphians began and ended their day within the area bounded by Sixth Street, Delaware River, Vine and South Streets. Here they lived, worked, slept, and enjoyed a leisurely social life in well-built houses.

Americans were rediscovering themselves after the War, wondering how to govern themselves, how to pay their bills, and what to do with Loyalists. They had governed themselves as thirteen separate commonwealths under the Articles of Confederation, but it was easier to unite for a common defense in time of War than to unite on a plan for governing themselves in time of Peace. The rights, jealousies, and interests of the several States had to be reconciled before an agreement on the form of government could be reached.

There was also the problem of finances, of public and private debts; a State currency rather than a National currency complicated matters, and specie was drained from the American market by an excess of foreign importations after the War. Credit was supplied through the Bank of North America until, in response to public clamor against the Bank’s monopolistic policy, its State Charter was revoked in 1785. Still to be solved was the third problem—what to do with the Loyalists. They had been deprived of all rights of citizenship during the Revolutionary War excepting the right to pay taxes. Many were exiled; others had fled to Nova Scotia or returned to England. In the course of time, the economic value of restoring Loyalists to their rights and property was finally recognized, and the odious Test Laws were repealed by the General Assembly of 1789. Loyalists were still excluded from the “Dancing Assembly,” and Free Quakers, about whom Dr. S. Weir Mitchell, a Trustee of The Green Tree from 1867 until 1914, wrote in his historical novel Hugh Wynne, Free Quaker, were actively engaged in a campaign against the proposed New Theatre “in Chestnut Street in the neighborhood of Sixth from Delaware.”

There was a roughness in the routine life of the city in 1784. Newspapers of the day told of gangs of villains who were robbing in the streets and breaking into houses almost every night and sometimes stealing Oyl from the city lamps, or even the lamps themselves! Public pumps, private wells, and numerous streams, including Dock Creek, supplied the city with water; improvements to the public roads were financed through the State Lottery Commission. During the absence of Benjamin Franklin, then in France negotiating the terms of Peace, there was no all-seeing eye to watch over the city’s housekeeping. The PACKET reported comments of a merchant revisiting the city after an absence of some little time, “It is surprising to find that Philadelphia has grown to such opulence and extent without marking the streets or numbering the houses. In a city where these are attended to, such as London, Dublin or New York, it is much easier for a stranger to find a maker of pin heads or a coal porter than it is to find the most noted merchant in Philadelphia.”

An advertisement appeared in THE GAZETTE, saying that the Street Commissioners find “that letting out the Streets to be cleaned by individuals has not had the wished for effect; that they therefore propose to employ a number of scavengers for the ensuing year, that will rake up and haul away the filth and dirt as often as necessary to keep the streets clean.” Another item in the same paper reads: “Whereas my wife, Jane Newlin, hath for several years past treated me with contempt and abuse, and upon the 16th day of October 1782 conveyed all the goods and furniture out of my house and eloped from my bed and abode... These are to forewarn any person or persons from trusting her on my account as I am determined not to pay any debts of her contracting.”

One week before The Green Tree met for organization on September 29, 1784, THE PACKET carried the following notice: “Dr. Le Mayeur, Dentist, who has been successful in transplanting Teeth in New York, proposes to be in Philadelphia the latter end of September.” In November, a further item in THE PACKET reported that “Dr. Le Mayeur, Lately from New York, who transplants Teeth, has taken lodgings at Mr. Greenfield’s, in Market Street. Any person disposed to sell their Front Teeth, or any of them, may call on Dr. Le Mayeur at his lodgings and receive Two Guineas for each Tooth.”

With the Quaker influence ever present, Philadelphians held strong views on what should be and what should not. What was liked was right, what was disliked was very wrong. The individualist prevailed, blazing the trail he had made himself. Collectively he was making a new country.

(To be continued.)
September 8 - November 17

Old Pine Church Interfaith Series
All meetings take place at 7 p.m.
on Wednesdays at 4th & Lombard
September 8: Judaism
September 22: Catholicism
September 29: Islam
October 27: Protestantism
November 3: Hinduism
November 17: Buddhism
See page 17 for more information
on this important series

Saturday, September 18
Memorial Service for
Charles E. Peterson, F.A.I.A.
Christ Church
20 N. American Street, 1 p.m.
(at 2nd & Market)

Sunday, September 19
Old Pine Church Jazz
The Barbara Montgomery Quartet
4th & Lombard, 5 p.m.

Monday, September 20
Free Library, Independence Branch
Meryl Levitz reports on Philadelphia tourism
7th & Market, 6:15 p.m.
See page 14

Wednesday, September 22
SHCA Board Meeting, 6 p.m.
SHCA General Meeting, 7 p.m.
Old Pine Church, 4th & Lombard
See page 1

Sunday, September 26
Physick House Garden Party
321 South 4th Street, 4:30-7:30 p.m.
$45 in advance; RSVP appreciated
For information call 215-922-6926

Saturday, October 2
Raindate Sunday, October 3
3 Bears Park Annual Fall Festival
Three Bears Park, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.
300 block Delancey St.
See page 19

Saturday, October 2 - October 23
Old Pine Church Film Series
All films will be screened at 7 p.m.
on Saturday evenings at 4th & Lombard
October 2: “Central Station”
October 9: “Italian for Beginners”
October 16: “Shipping News”
October 23: “Amelie”
See page 17

Sunday, October 17
Old Pine Church Jazz
The Mary Ellen Desmond Quartet
4th & Lombard, 5 p.m.

Monday, October 25
“A Night of Italian Song”
First Unitarian Church,
2125 Chestnut St., 6 p.m.
For information call 215-925-2997
See page 27

Sunday, October 31
Halloween Parade and Costume Contest
Three Bears Park, 4 p.m.
300 block Delancey St.
See page 19

Society Hill and Washington Square’s Premier Condominiums

Hopkinson House
604-36 S. Washington Square

Independence Place
233 S. 6th Street

The Lippincott at Locust Wlak
227-231 S. 6th Street

Spacious corner two bedroom, balcony, fabulous closet space
$375,000

Penthouse 2 bedroom, 2 bath, spectacular panoramic views of river & bridge, wrap-around balcony
$1,295,000

Penthouse two bedroom, 2.5 baths, bi-level home with 2,700 sq. ft., two outdoor decks, fireplace, parking available. Unfinished space priced at $1,400,000

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