

SOCIETY HILL

Reporter

January 2002

The Newsletter
of The Society Hill
Civic Association

Reflections on Peace for 2002

SHCA General Membership Meeting

January 16th
7:00 p.m.
Old Pine Presbyterian
Church, 412 Pine St.

Prior to General Meeting,
all SHCA members are
welcome to attend the
Board meeting at 6 p.m.

On the Agenda

Hear Republican
gubernatorial candidate
Mike Fisher*

Vote on changes
to SHCA By-Laws
see page 4

Review proposed
plans for improving
Foglietta Plaza
see page 5

*All announced Penn-
sylvania gubernatorial
candidates have been
invited to speak, but at
press time, Casey, Hafer
and Rendell had not yet
confirmed. To find out if
they will attend, call the
SHCA at 215-629-1288.

No matter what our faith (if any), this New Year is an opportunity to contemplate the past few months and hope that the coming months and years will bring peace and justice. Because we in Society Hill are the direct inheritors of William Penn's 1701 revolutionary concept of living peacefully in the "city of brotherly love," independent of our religion or nationality, and because our community has such a diverse range of churches and synagogues, we have invited spiritual leaders from a sample of these to offer us their thoughts and prayers for a peaceful 2002.

New Beginning

New Years is often seen as a new beginning. But this year, January 1 seems to offer a magnified possibility for newness. The clean slate of a new year allows the possibility of leaving behind what is worn out, what no longer works, and grabbing hold of new thinking, new ways of being, new ways of doing. This year, that possibility is needed more than ever. We need to leave behind our former ways of suspicion and disrespect for those who are different than we are. We need to leave behind our hurried schedules, and focus on living fully each day, loving those we love, open to what it is that God sets before us. May God richly bless you, those you love, and those whom nobody loves in 2002.

Rev. Deborah A. McKinley
Old Pine Street Presbyterian Church

A Thankful Heart

Except the LORD build the house, they labour in vain that build it: except the LORD keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain. (Psalm 127:1)
The psalmist has comforting insight for us. Only God has the virtue to make us secure. This releases us to concentrate on other concerns. Here are a few for the new year.
1. Love others as we love ourselves. 2. Act justly, including advocate for justice. 3. Live with gratitude. A thankful heart reflects a full-filled life and a strong community. Or, as the prophet Micah records, *He hath showed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the LORD require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?* (6:8)

Rev. Dr. Jeffrey N. Leath
Mother Bethel A.M.E. Church

New Year's Reflection

Everyday, through the Modim or Thanksgiving prayer, Jewish tradition directs us to thank God for "your miracles that are with us every day, and your wonders and goodness in every season—evening, morning and noon." In 2002, in the wake of September 11, may we revitalize our lives with renewed thankfulness for those things that matter most: our loved ones, friends and community as well as the freedom and liberty of our American heritage. May we also renew our appreciation for the everyday miracles of life, and rededicate ourselves to the sacred dimension of living.

Rabbi Avi Winokur
Society Hill Synagogue

A Prayer for the New Year

Good and gracious God, once you chose a people and gave them a destiny, and when you brought them out of bondage to freedom, they carried with them the promise that all people would be blessed, that all people could be free. It happened to our ancestors who came to this land as if out of the desert into a place of promise and hope. It happens to us still, in our time, as you lead us all through faith to the blessed vision of peace. As we begin a New Year, we face doubt, uncertainty, fear. Yet we know you are near, that you have not abandoned us. Help us to be faithful to you and to one another. Fill us with courage and strength to build a better world and continue on our journey to that blessed end to which you have called us all. Amen. (*Adapted from a prayer in the Roman Catholic Liturgy*)

Leo A. Murray, S.J.
Old Saint Joseph's Church

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Deadline for the next issue: February 10.

Signed letters to Editor are always welcome and may be published.

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Malcolm Lazin
SHCA President

Reflections on September 11

I am writing to you on Thanksgiving. Sometimes we forget its simple yet poignant meaning.

Thanks. Giving.

Good transcends even the worst tragedies. The holocaust sparked international support for the founding of Israel. The AIDS epidemic brought gays and lesbians out of the closet and inspired the gay and lesbian civil rights movement.

September 11 has caused us to reexamine our Thanksgiving. On September 13, the Society Hill Civic Association called on America's first neighborhood to display the flag. We were likely one of the first organizations in the country to do so. It was a great symbolic affirmation to our ideals and commitment to fight terrorism.

The Declaration of Independence, written by Thomas Jefferson and approved by the Continental Congress in our neighborhood, guarantees U.S. citizens life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. It establishes democratic ideals based on the dignity and primacy of each individual. As a country, we are still striving to make these ideas a reality for all of our citizens.

On September 11, victims, heroes, and mourners alike learned who we are: a diverse America, united in our convictions and dedicated to our nation. The victims and heroes of that heartbreaking day were black, white, Asian and Hispanic Americans. They were Catholic, Jewish, Protestant and Islamic. They were straight and gay.

America is well served by this diversity. Our freedom allows us to accommodate change and difference. To see the results of intolerance, we need only look at Afghanistan, Bosnia or all too many other examples. Our national tragedy has caused us to appreciate and commit ourselves to one another as fellow citizens entitled to equal respect.

We paid a very high price on September 11, but the tragedy also galvanized us to deal with the pernicious evil of terrorism. Had we not gone after the Taliban, Al Qaeda and others, we would have left ourselves open to the chance of equal or worse attacks in the future. By responding as we have, we have limited these agents' ability to do greater harm in our nation and around the world.

Each of us has his or her own reasons to be especially grateful for the blessing of being an American. I am grateful that all of my grandparents were able to come here to escape pervasive anti-Semitism that severely limited opportunity and condoned hate crimes. I have always given thanks for the freedom of religion, speech and individual opportunity that I enjoy as an American.

We share so much of the bounty of the great experiment that was fomented, nurtured and established in our neighborhood. Those of us who work to preserve and improve Society Hill pay a special tribute of stewardship to our nation and its values. Let us always be mindful both to give "thanks" and to gratefully "give" of ourselves by fulfilling these responsibilities.

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Noteworthy Neighbors: Penny & George Batcheler

Your Vote Counts!!

All SHCA members should do their best to turn out for another important vote at the General Membership Meeting on January 16th at 7:00 p.m., at Old Pine Church. The Association's By-Laws Committee has worked for many months to draft amendments aimed at improving the By-Laws and Articles of Incorporation. By turning out to vote, you'll do your part to help the SHCA run more efficiently and effectively.

SHCA General Membership Meeting

January 16th
7:00 p.m.
Old Pine Presbyterian
Church, 412 Pine St.

Prior to General Meeting, all SHCA members are welcome to attend the Board meeting at 6 p.m.

Proposed By-Laws Changes

1. Vacancy.

When a District Director's position becomes vacant, a successor shall be appointed by the Board to serve until the next annual election.

2. Assuming Office.

Persons elected to office shall assume their positions on June 1 following such election.

3. Failure to Attend Meetings.

An officer or director (other than a continuing director) will be deemed terminated if, after the sixth meeting of the Board in any year, that person has failed to attend at least half of the meetings of the Board during that year. The person may be reinstated upon the affirmative vote of a majority of the remaining members of the Board.

4. Absence of President.

Where the President is to be absent on an occasional basis (for example, unable to attend a meeting, or out of town for a short period), the President shall select one of the Vice Presidents to perform the President's duties. Where the President will be absent for an extended period (for example, on vacation or sick for 1 month), the Board shall select one of the Vice Presidents to assume such duties.

5. Hardship.

Upon application to the treasurer, payment of dues shall be waived for any person who states payment of dues would be a hardship.

6. Eligibility to Vote.

To be eligible to vote at the annual meeting, dues must have been paid or waiver statement filed by the preceding March 31st.

7. Voting by Chairs.

A committee chair who is not a member of the Board shall be permitted to vote on matters within that committee's purview. Where there are co-chairs of the committee, only one may vote (unless the other is a member of the Board, in which case both may vote).

8. Conflict of Interest.

Any director who has a direct or indirect (such as family) interest in a matter shall disclose such interest at the earliest opportunity, but may thereafter participate in the discussion and may vote on the matter.

9. Mission Statement.

The purpose clause in the Association's Articles of Incorporation shall be inserted in the By-Laws as its mission statement: "To promote the improvement of the Society Hill area of Philadelphia, including its cultural, educational, and civic activities, and the preservation and restoration of its historic buildings; to represent the residents of Society Hill in matters affecting the City of Philadelphia generally and Society Hill in particular; and to interpret the value and significance of Society Hill to the public."

10. Indemnification.

Officers, directors, committee chairs and other designated representatives of the Association shall be indemnified against claims arising out of the duties they perform in good faith.

11. The Nominating and Elections Committee.

This committee shall be

appointed by September 1st. The members shall be (a) the director from each of the four districts who has the shortest time remaining on his or her term, and (b) three persons appointed by the President and approved by the Board. The President shall appoint one of its members as chair. The duties of this committee shall include (a) nominating persons to stand for election as officers and directors at the next election meeting, and (b) planning and conducting all aspects of the annual election, including determining the date and location of the committee's meeting at which petitions must be filed and at which the committee may nominate persons for office (including, if it deems it appropriate, for offices for which petitions may have been filed), and giving notice as required.

12. Quorum.

The By-Laws and the Articles of Incorporation shall be amended to provide that a quorum at membership meetings shall be equal to 10% of the members entitled to vote, but not less than 50 members.

13. Future Amendment of By-Laws.

Members may amend By-Laws by an affirmative vote of two-thirds of those then present.

The members will also vote on giving authority to the Board of Directors to approve by a two-thirds vote the precise language to be added to the By-Laws to carry out the effect of those of the foregoing proposals which the members approve at the January 16th meeting.

A Promising Future for Foglietta Plaza



Foglietta Plaza, located near the Society Hill Sheraton, just west of Columbus Boulevard between Spruce and Dock Streets, can be a meaningful place for people of all ages to enjoy sun, fresh air, strolling, play, and recreation in a safe and dynamic environment. To turn this vision into reality, a new SHCA committee has been working with the internationally acclaimed landscape architecture firm Olin Partnership.



A redesigned plaza could attract residents and visitors—not just the under-employed.

Chaired by Mark Keener, AIA, the committee includes representatives from Society Hill Towers and Penn's Landing Square, the Plaza's most immediate neighbors. Initial meetings with Olin's David Rubin have resulted in a general design concept that respects the new Korean War Memorial (currently under construction), reconnects the Plaza to the neighborhood, and showcases a new water feature. Issues such as traffic flow, safety, and maintenance were addressed in developing the design.

To solicit input from the community, the design concept will be presented to the SHCA Board of Directors and the management councils of Penn's Landing Square and Society Hill Towers. A final design concept will be presented to the public in January. By March, a compelling fundraising document for the transformation of Foglietta Plaza will be produced.

Input Sought at January SHCA Meeting

You are invited to be part of the process. Please join your neighbors at the January General Membership Meeting on Wednesday, January 16, at 7:00 p.m. for a presentation and discussion about the future of Foglietta Plaza.

What's New at the Independence Library

The Independence Branch of the Free Library of Philadelphia needs you! We currently have the highest circulation of any branch in the Free Library of Philadelphia system, and that means we need help re-shelving our books. Please call Nate Rogers at 215-685-1633.

You'd like to help but want to do something a little livelier? We're also looking for someone to run a chess club for children. Please call Sheila Levitan, also at 215-685-1633.

No time to volunteer? You can still help the branch by donating used books to the on-going sale sponsored by the Friends of the Independence Library. Funds raised are used for special programs and resources for the branch. Please drop off books and books-on-tape any time the branch is open. And while you're there, ask about the many events and workshops offered each week!

Independence Library

18 South 7th Street

Monday/Wednesday:
Noon to 8 p.m.

Thursday:
1 to 5 p.m.

Tuesday/Friday/
Saturday:
10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Horse Carriage Legislation Enacted

Late last summer, Mayor Street signed into law new legislation ensuring more humane working conditions for the horse carriage industry, increased inspections of horses and stables, and community and passenger safety protections. Also, until now, the carriage companies haven't paid for clean up—you have! In addition, a new set of regulations for stables and a point system for violations are being finalized.

SHCA Vice President William Hawkins was instrumental in effecting these changes. For this reason, the tri-state animal welfare organization, Mobilization for Animals (MFA), awarded him the fourth annual Animal Achievement Award on December 7, 2001. Hawkins noted that Councilman Frank DiCicco and the Philadelphia Department of Health also played important roles in the new legislation and deserve much credit for its success.

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City Outlines Next Steps for Washington Square

The NPS is slated to take over administration of Washington Square

A date has been agreed upon. Sort of. Funding is available. Kind of. Now it's wait and see for all of us who have been following the improvements being made to Washington Square, as we await its official transfer to the National Park Service (NPS).

According to William Mifflin, Executive Director of the Fairmount Park Commission (FPC), the Square, located between 6th and 7th Streets on Walnut, is due to pass to Federal management on or around Veteran's Day, November 11, 2002, a year later than was originally planned in 1991 and much later than we had thought just a couple of years ago. Mifflin summarized the scope and funding for the work remaining to be done in and around the Square during a meeting which was hosted by the SHCA at Councilman Frank DiCicco's office on December 6th.

Representatives of the SHCA, Independence Place and Hopkinson House condominiums heard the FPC outline the projects slated for completion:

Landscaping. This is the big-ticket item and includes pruning and removal of hazardous and diseased trees. Although 50 trees will be removed, 65 new trees will be planted. The committee will monitor the process to ensure that trees donated by local residents are protected and healthy trees are retained.

Monument. Extensive repairs will require new stone for the monument in the center of the Square.

Eternal Flame. While the flame has been refurbished, the mechanism to make the flame a little more "eternal" has yet to be completed.

Fountain. Additional coping (stone) work must be done and water jets improved.

Triangle. Repairs are scheduled for the

triangular area at 7th and Walnut Streets opposite the northwest corner of the Square.

Guardhouses. Some renovations are planned for the two guardhouses.

Interpretive signage. Historical data signs will be installed.

Benches. Additional benches will be provided. The SHCA and residents in the condos adjacent to the Square would prefer benches with armrests in the middle to prevent people from sleeping on them. The dilapidated benches in the grassy areas will be removed, but are not likely to be replaced.

Federal and city governments have allocated \$500,000 for these improvements. In addition, \$200,000 remains in the Patriots Fund, which has been a major source of money for certain elements within the Square; although this fund is more likely to be used as the basis of a trust for future needs. Another \$25,000 could be tapped from the still existing, though dormant, Washington Square Association.

Bids for the improvements will be the litmus test to determine if there is sufficient funding for all the changes.

The FPC has promised to work through Robin Schatz of Councilman DiCicco's office and our civic association to keep the residents of the high-rises on the Square informed of progress and any problems.

Specifications for the work will go out to contractors in January, 2002 and bids should be received by late February or early March. If costs are in line with the budget, work will begin in the Spring.

A final note to dog owners: once the transfer to the NPS is made, unleashed dogs will no longer be allowed in the Square.

"Neighbor of the Year" Award Announced

Send nominations to:
Becky Stoloff
234 Spruce St, 19106
rstoloff@aol.com

Know someone who deserves recognition for making Society Hill a better place to live? The SHCA Board is seeking nominations for our new "Neighbor of the Year" award, to be given at our May General Membership Meeting. If you know of a person who has given extraordinary community service on behalf of our neighborhood, please let us know.

Nominations should include the person's name, address and the reasons he/she is deserving of nomination. The deadline for nominations is February 15, 2002. Members of the SHCA Board are not eligible.

The Reporter's New Look



Family Resemblance?

Judy Lamirand, *The Reporter's* new designer, is a descendant of American painter Charles Willson Peale

We hope you will be as enthusiastic as we are about *The Reporter's* crisp new appearance. We have been working behind the scenes to expand our corps of writers and editors, and we are proud that one of the region's most talented designers, Judy Lamirand of Parallel Design, has agreed to join our newsletter team. Many neighbors may be familiar with Parallel Design's other fine products, as Judy and her partner Suzanne Lashner provide professional graphic services to countless nonprofit organizations, including The Friends of Independence National Historical Park, the National Constitution Center and Philadelphia's Historic Neighborhood Consortium.

Judy is a direct descendant of the famed American painter Charles Willson Peale, whose portraits of our founding fathers and mothers hang in the Second Bank. Her "genetic artistic inheritance" along with her love for all things historical (including buildings and their preser-

vation) has been a guiding principle in her work. In fact, if you're a member of The Athenaeum of Philadelphia, you've recently received the beautiful exhibit catalog she designed, *A Splendid Array*, which features the library's current architectural exhibition. Judy also has an impressive and varied list of commercial clients, as she manages to find time for any project she values. For example, she created all the visual and PR materials for the October 21, 2001 AIDS Walk (such as its logo, t-shirts and posters).

We especially appreciate Judy's willingness to work closely with our lively group of volunteer editors who consider it a privilege to be living and working here in America's birthplace. So count on the *Society Hill Reporter* to continue its mission as a free, bimonthly resource filled with accessible and reader-friendly information for our community, one of the country's most historic neighborhoods!

More Reporter and Civic Association Changes

We thank the following wonderfully gifted individuals whose work has contributed to the overall well-being of our community.

Norman Kline

For about a decade Norman Kline has been *The Reporter's* desktop publisher. Over the years our team of writers, editors and printers has shifted, rotated and fluctuated, but Norman has always been a consistent professional, tolerating our deadlines and personal foibles. A retired English teacher who lives and works in Old City, Norman has created a successful niche for himself, whereby he produces timely and attractive materials for many local groups and organizations. Norman, we thank you from the bottom of our hearts!

Amy Foran

Amy Foran was a Society Hill resident for only six years, but, oh, how she contributed to our neighborhood! An attorney for The Day & Zimmermann Group Inc., Amy was a *Reporter* writer and editor, serving also as SHCA's Southeast Quadrant director. Last summer Amy moved a few block south into a newly built home in Queen Village. Since she's no longer a "Hiller," she has withdrawn her board position and newsletter responsibilities. We wish Amy well, and we're sure Queen Village

Neighbors will welcome and value her contributions there.

George Koch

The good news is that George Koch will remain as a SHCA director representing Hopkinson House. The bad news is that George retired from his role as *The Reporter's* advertising/business manager. Because we have decided to streamline *Reporter* functions now that Matt DeJulio is SHCA's administrator, George has been relieved of that responsibility which he handled quietly, effectively, and as a true gentleman. George, you're not completely off the hook. We'll find other projects for you to sink your teeth into!

Mark Valentine

Mark Valentine first became involved with SHCA a few years ago when he joined the Historic Preservation Committee. His interest in the neighborhood expanded when he assumed leadership for our Clean-Up Days, held each spring and fall. Mark also served as a Northwest Quadrant director for several years. But recently he has found himself with less free time, so he has offered his resignation to the board. We thank him for his efforts and hope to see him at future meetings and other neighborhood functions.

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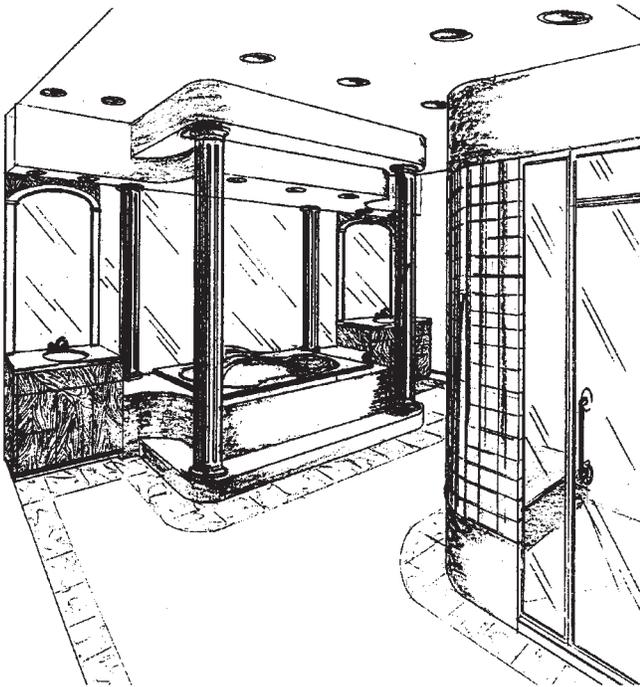
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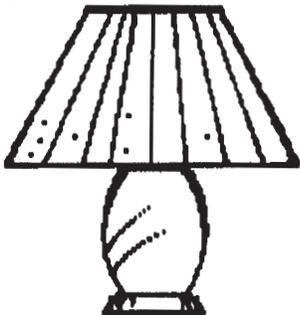
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Luxury Hi-Rise Slated for Washington Square



HIGH RISE TOWER AT WASHINGTON SQUARE: Unlike the original 1995 design, the building will be taller, slimmer and more elegant.

Plans to develop the PSFS Building and “York Row,” the Federal-era row houses adjacent to it, are finally underway. The PSFS Building is located at 7th & Walnut Streets, and York Row continues on Walnut to 8th Street. Since the mid-1990’s, SHCA’s Zoning & Preservation Committee has been tracking this project, reviewing plans with the developer Peter Shaw. Stalled for financial reasons until now, the planned development will turn this historic yet derelict Washington Square site into a 47-story luxury high-rise named “The St. James,” making it both 15 stories higher than any other building on the Square and the tallest residential tower in Philadelphia.

Our committee hopes to meet with the developer soon to be brought up-to-date on any changes in his plans, but based on the plans we reviewed in 1999, the high-rise tower will be

grafted onto the back of the PSFS Building, which will serve as the building’s entrance and interior atelier. The building’s lowest nine stories will enclose a garage (concealed from the street), and its upper stories will accommodate 307 upscale rental apartments. Each of these one-to-three bedroom units will have a designated parking spot. The garage entrance will be on 8th Street, and the auto drop-off point will be located on a widened St. James Street—opposite the historic Reynolds-Morris House (1787), one of the last surviving free-standing mansions in Society Hill. The Walnut Street facades of the York Row houses will be preserved to a depth of about 15 feet, and will be allocated for retail shops, offices and a restaurant. The St. James was designed by architects Vern W. Lohman and John Lahey of Solomon Cordwell Buenz, a Chicago firm.

continued on next page

GRAFFITI WARS

“What a Nice Neighborhood...”



David Stevens
Graffiti Tsar

...and so clean.” We hear that often from visiting friends and tourists. But just five years ago, we had trash on the sidewalks that seemed to have a reproductive life of its own. In 1997 the Civic Association contracted with the Center City District to pick up litter from our sidewalks the morning after regular rubbish removal. Today this costs \$1,236 per month and gets us off to a good start for the week. But since we are hosts to a steady stream of sightseers and pamphleteers, we need, and appreciate, those conscientious neighbors who pick up litter when they see it.

We also use the Center City District’s graffiti removal team, at a cost of \$800 per day, to remove graffiti tags and paper stickers on a “when needed” basis. The following quadrant

directors help identify and remove, when possible, graffiti from signs and Franklin lamps in their areas: Kelly Nelson (Southeast), Colleen Farrell (Northeast), Gene Gaultieri (Southwest), and Morry Chomitz (Northwest). For graffiti removal from private property, owners should call the City’s Graffiti Abatement Team at 215-685-9556.

Help Keep Our Neighborhood Clean

- Join the Society Hill Civic Association. Your dues fund these projects.
- Call Dave Stevens at 215-923-1349 when you spot graffiti and he will notify the appropriate quadrant director about the location.
- Pick up two pieces of litter every day on your own block.

Z O N I N G & H I S T O R I C P R E S E R V A T I O N

continued from previous page

The PSFS Building was the former headquarters of long-defunct Philadelphia Savings Fund Society. Originally designed by Addison Hutton in 1868, its interior was remodeled by renowned Victorian architect Frank Furness in 1919. The York Row houses were designed by William Strickland, designer of the Merchants Exchange Building at 3rd and Walnut Streets.

Personnel Changes

Mark Keener, who diligently chaired the Zoning & Historic Preservation Committee for the past few years, has resigned his leadership role in order to assume the chairmanship of SHCA's Foglietta Plaza project. We're pleased, however, that Keener will remain a committee member, and we welcome Paul Boni, Esq. as the committee's new chairman. We also welcome new participating committee members Sally Smith and Steven Weixler.

Here's what our committee is monitoring:

Townhouse Development at 7th & Pine

The developer, Steve Goldner, in response to community concerns, has reduced from six to four the number of luxury townhouses proposed for this corner. Two houses will face 7th Street; one each will face Pine and Delancey. All garages will be located on and accessed from either Delancey Street or a courtyard off 7th Street. Our committee has achieved the objective of avoiding excessive traffic for 7th Street, which could have been a potential safety hazard for McCall School pupils.

Lippincott Building

The developer who proposed converting the long vacant 6th Street building at Washington Square, a former publishing house, into condominium apartments has withdrawn from the project.

313 S. Lawrence Court

The property owners applied for a variance to enclose the 4th floor (similar to additions to other houses in Lawrence Court) and to add a cantilevered rear deck. Our committee met with the owner's architect and nearby neighbors. There was no opposition to the 4th story

enclosure, but a consensus was reached to oppose the deck because it would be contrary to the scale and character of the area. The rear deck application was withdrawn voluntarily by the owners, and the Zoning Board of Adjustment approved the 4th-story enclosure on November 7. Our committee supported this recommendation before the Philadelphia Historical Commission at its December hearing.

320 Walnut Street

The Archdiocese of Philadelphia plans a \$15 million project to renovate this long-vacant building into a multi-purpose Catholic Heritage Center containing a museum and education center—expected to open in 2003. The Center's plans still await approval from the Historical Commission.

Architectural Committee Reviews

Becky Stoloff represented SHCA's Zoning & Preservation Committee at the Historical Commission's Architectural Committee meeting, held on November 27th. The Architectural Committee approved, with some specific modifications, a rear deck addition at 312 Cypress Street. It also approved a rear addition at 415 S. Perth Street. SHCA's committee supported these recommendations before the December Historical Commission hearing.

Zoning Alerts

The Committee asks for your assistance regarding Zoning notices. If you come upon any Society Hill property that suddenly features an orange-colored Zoning Variance notice, please immediately contact either your Block Coordinator or SHCA's Administrator, Matt DeJulio (phone: 215-629-1288; fax: 629-9914; e-mail: matthew.dejulio@gte.net) to inform our Zoning & Preservation Committee about this proposed site alteration. With your help, the committee will contact the property owners and serve as a resource for them, providing recommendations that will respond to their needs while helping ensure that the project will become a welcome improvement or addition to the neighborhood.

NEWS YOU CAN USE



The new Visitor Center: Everything you need to discover or re-discover Philadelphia.

INDEPENDENCE VISITOR CENTER OPEN

The new 50,000 square foot Independence Visitor Center opened in November at 1 North Independence Mall West. This handsome building, stretching between Arch and Market at 6th Street, is a one-stop repository for everything you need to know about Philadelphia's five-county region. From information on tourist sites to a concierge service that can help you find a venue for a special event, the Center has everything you need to discover or re-discover Philadelphia. Log onto www.gophila.com or www.independencevisitorcenter.com for detailed information or call a concierge at 215-965-7676. Independence Visitor Center is open daily from 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. during the winter season (except Thanksgiving Day and Christmas Day). Sounds like a welcoming spot for tourists and residents alike.

NEW CENTER CITY SEPTA ROUTE

On December 3rd, bus service for SEPTA Route 76 was reborn as the new "Center City Shopping Spree." The colorfully "wrapped" SEPTA Spree loops between 6th & Market Streets and 20th & Walnut Streets, providing frequent service to shops and restaurants in Center City. Stops include Liberty Place, Rittenhouse Row, the Bellevue, the Reading Terminal Market, the Gallery at Market East, Jewelers' Row, and the new Independence Visitor Center (which opened in November at Independence Mall.) The route operates about every ten minutes between 10:30 a.m. and 5:30 p.m. every day except Sunday.

Additional changes include the PHLASH Bus Route, now extended to the Philadelphia Zoo. Also, the westbound service on SEPTA Bus Route 38 now serves the west entrance to the Philadelphia Museum of Art.

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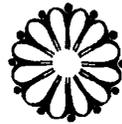


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NEIGHBORHOOD PRIDE

For the past three and a half years, SHCA has provided *The Preferred List of Contractors*, a resource for Society Hill homeowners who plan to make renovations or repairs to their properties. This frequently updated list offers the advantage that each contractor has been recommended by at least one other Society Hill neighbor. To recommend a contractor you've used or to request our list, contact Martha Levine at marthalev@aol.com or 215-629-0727. This service is free, but we hope you will consider becoming a member.

BLOCK COORDINATOR PROGRAM

You should have received a letter in late 2001 introducing the SHCA Block Coordinator for your block. Your Block Coordinator is there to facilitate communication between neighbors and the SHCA. So please don't hesitate to call or e-mail with any questions or concerns you may have—your Block Captain will put you in touch with the proper SHCA committee or individual to address your needs. If you missed the letter or aren't sure who your Block Captain is, contact Martha Levine at 215-629-0727 or marthalev@aol.com.

BREAST CANCER FOUNDATION FUNDRAISER

The Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation will be holding its annual Singles Party and Silent Auction, "Drinks, Desserts and a Date," on Saturday, January 26th, at the Hyatt Regency Hotel on Penn's Landing. The fun begins at 8:00 p.m. and features dancing to the music of the City Rhythms Orchestra. Tickets are \$85 per person in advance and \$95 per person at the door. For further information please contact The Philadelphia Affiliate of the Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation at 215-238-8900.

PDAC NEEDS YOUR PHONE

The Sixth Police District's Advisory Council (PDAC), which acts as a liaison between the District and the community, is collecting old cell phones with their chargers. These cell phones, re-programmed so that they dial only 911, are distributed to senior citizens and abused women. To contribute unused phones, please drop them off at 414 Spruce Street. For more information about this or other PDAC programs, or to alert us about problems in our neighborhood, please call Marilyn Appel at 215-922-2626.

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NOTEWORTHY NEIGHBORS

“Guardian Angels” of Area’s Historic Character

Greeting me at the door of their mid-nineteenth century house on American Street, Penny Batcheler observes that the bright yellow leaves that cover the cobbled street look so lovely it would be a shame to sweep them up.

Now that’s preservation.

Describing herself as an historical architect, Penny has been in the business of preserving and restoring historical buildings since the mid-1950s, a time, she says, when there was no such job description as “preservationist.” Her husband George, who was an architect with the firm of Mirick, Pearson and Batcheler before retiring in 1992, describes Penny’s work as “archeology above ground.” George, too, is devoted to historical buildings. He has been a longtime director of Carpenters’ Hall, the landmark Georgian building located within Independence Park which was the site of major historical events, including the First Continental Congress in 1774.

Having studied under German architect Ludwig Mies van der Rohe at the Illinois Institute of Technology in Chicago, and spending two years restoring old buildings in Sweden, Penny returned to Philadelphia where she was helping to restore the museum on Elfreth’s Alley when she met her husband. “I was on a ladder washing windows,” she recalls. “And George was living on that street.”



Penny and George Batcheler

Penny went on to work with Independence National Historical Park for 37 years. During that time, she says, she learned a lot about how a building was constructed... and how to distinguish one molding from another in order to identify a building’s age. During his career, George and his architectural firm were responsible for the design and building of several local hospital projects, notably at Jefferson and Hahnemann, and served for two decades on the board of Pennsylvania Hospital. Penny, meanwhile, served for many years on the Architectural Committee of the Philadelphia Historical Commission, a group, she says, that is to be commended for its work in preserving the city’s historical landmarks.

In our own neighborhood, Penny was a leader in the restoration of historic Head House, America’s oldest extant firehouse at 2nd and Pine Streets. As the preservation architect at Independence Park, as well as in her role as a board director of the Head House Conservancy (the grassroots, nonprofit organization that accomplished the Head House restoration), Penny’s efforts helped to have the structure identified as a “threatened and endangered national landmark” by the Secretary of the Interior. This acknowledgment of the building’s fragility served as the catalyst resulting in the building’s interior renovation and complete exterior restoration.

The pair have collaborated not only in restoring their own house and others on American Street, they have designed and built a second home in New Hampshire. They are also responsible for the slogan “Maintenance is Preservation” emblazoned on banners draped around Independence Hall and other local historical monuments.

Having lived on their pretty street since 1968, Peggy and George are great fans of the neighborhood, and have watched—and contributed significantly—to its attractiveness and livability. In fact, says George, “People look to Penny as the guardian angel of the area’s historic character.”

The Batchelers are also enthusiastic mountain climbers, skiers, and boaters. Come to think of it, that, too, is a form of preservation.

—DAVID WOODS



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We thank the generous area businesses listed below whose donations of fresh foods and gift certificates make the Welcome Baskets possible. Special thanks go to **Fork Restaurant** at 306 Market Street, the only donor on the list that is also a Business Member of the SHCA!

Thank you, Welcome Basket donors!

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We have recently finished mailing the 2002 SHCA membership renewal forms. Please return your form quickly, so that we may avoid the cost of sending you a reminder notice. If you are not presently a SHCA member, fill out and return the membership application on page 22. SHCA's annual business membership rates start at only \$60, so do your part to encourage businesses you patronize to join our civic association. Remind them that dues help keep our streets—which are also theirs!—clean of litter and graffiti. Thank you for your help in keeping Society Hill special.

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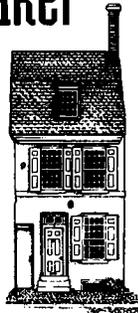


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