



SOCIETY HILL

Reporter

www.societyhillcivic.com

Membership Meeting on September 17

Old Pine Church to Host the Candidates' Forum

Society Hill Civic Association's fall General Membership Meeting is always an important gathering, which often helps set the agenda for the year. In a mayoral election year, it is especially important that we have an opportunity to hear the candidates and question them on issues that affect the city at large and our neighborhood in particular. Old Pine Church, always generous in providing space for our meetings, again comes forward to make room in its beautiful sanctuary on September 17 at 7:30 p.m.

So plan to come and hear the candidates. At press time, our association has a definite response from Republican candidate Sam Katz. We are still awaiting word from Mayor John Street, the Democratic incumbent. Issues that concern our community most directly include: controlling the rise in property taxes and providing equity in these taxes, lowering the wage tax, keeping crime to a minimum, attracting businesses to Philadelphia, and much more (see President's Message on page 3). We have asked that the candidates be available to answer our questions following their talks.

By the way, if you have not yet registered to vote for this important mayoral election, you can do so in several ways — no later than October 6 — assuming you are a U.S. citizen and a Pennsylvania resident 18 or older by Election Day. In-person registration nearby is available at Riverview Place, 520 N. Delaware Avenue or at City Hall in Room 142. Mail-in registration forms are available at local post offices, libraries and state liquor stores. Voters can also register when applying for or renewing a motor vehicle license. Voter registration is not yet available on-line. For more information, call the Voter Registration Division at 215-686-1505.

About Old Pine Street Church

Historic Old Pine Street Church, at 4th and Pine Streets, is the only pre-Revolutionary Presbyterian house of worship in Philadelphia. Erected in 1768, the church has undergone two renovations but still remains, as Thomas Brainerd wrote in 1859, "a beautiful and classic temple; uniting...venerated antiquity with...modern taste." Today Old Pine is famous for its Jazz Vespers and its openness to the community for a variety of activities suitable for young and old.



Society Hill Civic Association Fall Clean Up Day

Tentatively scheduled for a Saturday in early November. To volunteer, please call Tania Rorke at 215-925-4544.

WED.	MARK YOUR CALENDAR
September 17	Society Hill Civic Association Meetings Wednesday, September 17, 2003
	Old Pine Church, 4th and Pine Streets
6:00 pm	Board Meeting All SHCA members are welcome to attend.
7:00 pm	General Membership Meeting All Society Hill residents are welcome to attend. Meet Your Neighbors
7:30 pm	Business Meeting and Candidates' Forum



I.M. Pei, renowned architect, accepts an award for designing Society Hill Towers at the Towers' 40th anniversary celebration on July 28.



SOCIETY HILL

Reporter

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Deadlines for
Nov./Dec. issue:
Editorial: Oct. 15, 2003
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Signed letters to the Editor
are always welcome and
may be published.

Send submissions to:
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November/December

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Vicki Chatley
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Visit our website:

www.societyhillcivic.com

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Monday Trash Pickup Alert

Identity theft is a growing national problem! Let's prevent this crime while keeping our sidewalks tidy.

A reminder to all our neighbors: Weekly trash pickup on Mondays occurs in the evening — not during the daytime! Some homeowners put out their trash on Monday mornings or in the early afternoon. We understand that many neighbors leave for work early in the mornings, but putting out trash which sits on the curb for hours on end can invite a more serious problem than cleaning up messy urban sidewalks — because identity theft is a growing national problem!

To discourage passersby or serious trash scroungers from searching for your personal papers, old bills, and identifying characteristics, we ask that you do everything you can (including asking your immediate neighbors for their help) to delay setting out your trash and recyclable items until after 4 p.m. on Mondays. Also, please be as tidy as possible by placing your trash into tightly closed, adequately sized receptacles that are not easy to look into or break into. In addition, we recommend using a personal shredding machine prior to tossing your private papers into the trash. Shredders can be purchased at local stores for as little as about \$40, and they are well worth the cost for your peace of mind!

On our part, we are requesting that the city change its hours of trash pickup in Society Hill from Monday evening to Monday morning before noon. We'll let you know if and when that happens.

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P R E S I D E N T ' S M E S S A G E

Vote!

This fall we'll have the opportunity to decide who our next mayor will be. Voting is a privilege, but I feel strongly that it also should be regarded as an obligation. If you vote in November's election, your voice will join others to impact the direction of our city. If you choose not to vote, for whatever reason, you give up your chance to be heard, and in doing so diminish the value of the democratic process. No matter which candidate you favor, you owe it to yourself and the neighborhood to make voting this November a priority.

Some of the "closest-to-home" issues Society Hill neighbors should consider when making their decisions at the polls include:

Taxes

Last year, most Society Hill residents suffered dramatic property tax increases. This year, many of us will get yet another increase. While the city claims that the increases are necessary to keep Philadelphia in the black, there are alternatives to the current system, such as the proposed land-value tax system. In addition, wage taxes are a subject of perpetual hot debate, and the outcome of the election may have an impact on how much neighbors who work in the city pay. Finally, whether businesses choose to locate in Philadelphia — which has an important and direct impact on our local economy — is largely dictated by our business tax structure, so the candidates' positions on these issues concern us all.

Safety

The current administration has been active in getting illegal vehicles off our streets and in boarding up derelict properties. Whether these programs continue and to what extent depends on who wins the election. The SHCA has been proactive on safety concerns by improving lighting throughout the neighborhood and by facilitating the creation of a new Town Watch. (Please see page 9).

Schools

We're fortunate to have in our midst the McCall School, one of the strongest elementary schools in the Philadelphia Public School system. The SHCA is participating in an initiative to help McCall become even stronger by encouraging more parental and neighborhood participation. The mayoral candidates' positions on the school system as a whole could influence whether McCall might be an option for your children.

Public Space

What, if anything, happens at Penn's Landing, or whether Society Hill neighbors will have a say in the outcome, will be determined by our next mayor. He will also have a major impact on whether the SHCA will be successful in implementing our ambitious plan to transform Foglietta Plaza into a state-of-the-art public facility. Even the long overdue transfer of Washington Square to the National Park Service will be impacted by the efficiency of the mayoral administration.

These are just some of the reasons you need to vote on November 4. If you are not registered to vote or have any question about where you are supposed to vote, please see Voter Information below or call us immediately (215-629-1288) so we can help you help our neighborhood by participating in this important process.



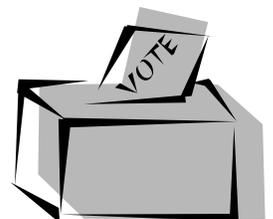
Liza Seltzer
SHCA president

VOTER INFORMATION

Deadline for voter registration forms to be received is October 6. Absentee ballots to be received by October 31. Voters who need to know the location of their polling places should call The Committee of Seventy at 215-557-3600, or go on-line at www.seventy.org.

Society Hill Polling Places

- Society Hill Towers, 261 St. James Place
- Old Pine Community Center, 401 Lombard Street
- Hopkinson House, 6th & Washington Square
- Star Garden playground, 6th & Lombard Streets
- Penna. Hospital, Preston Bldg. 8th & Spruce Streets
- Salvation Army, 222 S. 3rd Street
- McCall School, 6th & Delancey Streets



In this Issue...

Page 5

Ride the Ducks meets the Neighbors

Page 9

Safe and Sound Society Hill: Town Watch Resurrected

Pages 10 and 11

Neighbors Confront Crime & Scams

Page 15

Juneteenth Celebration at Mother Bethel

Page 27

The Bookshelf: *Benjamin Franklin: An American Life*

Page 30

Noteworthy Neighbors: Richard and Judy Gelles



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Rights of Tourists and Neighbors Clash

Duck Boats: Fair or “Fowl?”

Ride the Ducks, a new profit-making tourist attraction, is generating lots of discussion in our neighborhood. These amphibious sight-seeing vehicles began cruising our streets in May, carrying tourists throughout the Historic District, South Street and Penn’s Landing. The company plans to operate each year from May through October. Many tourists love these rides, and the vehicles are often filled to capacity for the 80-minute tour that includes a floating trip on the Delaware River to view the ships docked at Penn’s Landing.

Not all Society Hill neighbors share their enthusiasm, however. A number of residents have complained about the vehicles, mostly because of their increased noise, their obviously commercial appearance, and above all, their quacking noisemakers. SHCA Vice President Martha Levine has observed drivers on 6th Street between Walnut and Spruce encouraging rowdy behavior and quacking at pedestrians: “See those people, let’s go get ’em!” and the passengers give a loud quack in unison. Then the drivers say, “Okay, you did a great job, give yourselves a big cheer!” According to Martha, “It’s ironic that we have so many restrictions put on us as homeowners, yet we allow this carnival-like invasion in our residential, historic neighborhood.”

Because the SHCA received numerous complaints in June, Levine and SHCA President Liza Seltzer met with Scott Lewis, general manager of Ride the Ducks in Philadelphia. As a result of that meeting, substantial progress was made toward reducing the presence of the Duck vehicles and their related noises within Society Hill. Duck traffic on Pine Street has been diminished, their noisy loudspeakers have been lowered, and no music is played. Drivers have been heard announcing, “This is a quackless neighborhood.” These changes were a direct result of SHCA intervention.

Still, problems remain. There are ongoing reported incidents of unreasonable noise on 6th near Spruce, as well as on the 200 block of Spruce. Seltzer remains in contact with Lewis about these outstanding issues, and his response has been favorable: “I will again remind our captains to abide by our policy of respect for the residents of this neighborhood. We will continue to respond to the concerns of Society Hill and make every effort to pursue a

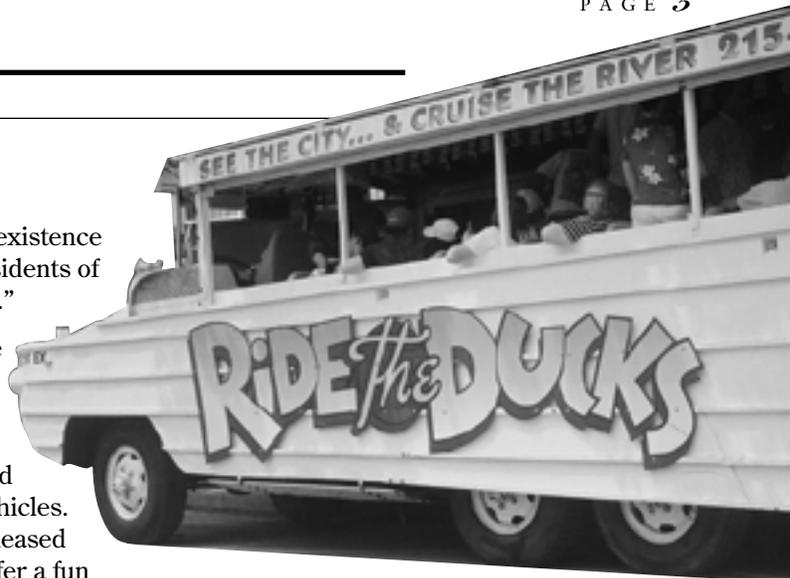
peaceful coexistence with the residents of that district.”

It should be noted that not all neighbors are bothered by these vehicles. Some are pleased that they offer a fun

option for tourists and that their added noise is a small price to pay for the increased visibility and popularity of our historic neighborhood. In fact, although the SHCA has asked the Ducks to consider eliminating Spruce and 3rd Streets from their tour routes to minimize the time they spend in Society Hill, other neighbors active in promoting the Powel House (which the tour highlights) object to this change because that historic site benefits from the exposure. (To date, the Ducks have declined to make this change officially, although drivers with groups that seem to be unruly are instructed to take a different route.)

Because there is diversity of opinion about the presence of these vehicles in our neighborhood, the SHCA position on this matter is simply that if they are to share our streets, they need to be clean and reasonably quiet, just as we ask other tour operators to be. The SHCA has made progress toward this end, and our opinion, after discussions with their Publicity Director Sharla Feldscher (215-627-0801, sfeldscher@aol.com), is that Ride the Ducks wants to have a good relationship with the Society Hill community and wishes to be informed if there are problems. Scott Lewis’s e-mail is: slewis@phillyducks.com and his phone number is 215-351-0307.

Most community residents value visitors to our historic neighborhood and appreciate tourism as a way of adding friends as well as revenue to the city. For the record and for safety purposes, we offer one final point: If you take your children on these rides, please be certain that they wear the life jackets that are equipped on these amphibious vehicles. We consulted the Coast Guard about the issue of wearing life jackets and were told that life jackets are recommended but not required for all children. It’s always better to be safe than sorry.



Duck Boats Arrive in Society Hill with mixed reviews from residents.

“This is a Quackless Neighborhood”

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Design Advocacy Group's Public Forum

Questions For The Mayoral Candidates

According to the Design Advocacy Group of Philadelphia (DAG), our next mayor will make many crucial decisions that will change the face of Philadelphia. On September 19, this volunteer association of approximately 180 design professionals and other advocates of high quality urban design, architecture, and preservation in the region, will be conducting its second "Pride of Place Forum." They will ask the city's two mayoral candidates to address a variety of topics related to such key issues as waterfront development, historic preservation, and parking garage locations.

According to DAG, "Good design makes a city a good place in which to live and do business." The group believes that Philadelphia must adopt sound planning and design principles that apply equally to every project and developer. It must appoint the most skilled and expert professionals to regulatory boards such as the Historical Commission, City Planning Commission, and the Zoning Board of Adjustment. When crucial decisions are made, the public belongs at the table.

In rebuilding the city for the 21st century, DAG believes that Philadelphia must be pedestrian friendly, retaining enough people to support the amenities of urban life, which will be enlivened by a mixture of residential, commercial and public uses. With scarce resources, much of the money needed to realize this vision must come from the private sector. DAG believes that every private development dollar must be used to best advantage, guided by a city administration that is committed to design excellence and accountability to the people.

Philadelphians who care about these issues will want to attend this "Pride of Place Forum," scheduled for Friday, September 19, from 5:30-7:30 p.m. at the Franklin Institute on the Parkway. DAG will have the candidates address these topics, as well as answer questions from its distinguished panel after each has had the opportunity to make his opening statement.

"Good design makes a city a good place in which to live and do business."



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SHCA Safety Committee Meets With Police

Police and Citizens Agree on Cooperation

Our civic association's new Safe and Sound Society Hill Committee, which addresses crime and safety issues, was active over the summer. In late July committee members met with Captain Brian Korn, commanding officer of the Sixth Police District (which includes Society Hill), Community Relations Officer Tanya Brown and Officer Bob Donahue, who patrols our neighborhood on bicycle.

Captain Korn reported that the number of serious crimes is decreasing but "quality of life" incidents are rising. In an effort to reduce certain nuisance crimes, officers are being trained and equipment purchased to enforce new noise regulations. Captain Korn would appreciate being notified of low priority, on-going problems by e-mail to police.co_06@phila.gov, by fax to 215-686-3004 or by phone to 215-686-3060. Officer Brown can also be reached by phone. Police have been checking regularly on places where frequent complaints have been made, such as Three Bears Park.

At least one police car patrols Society Hill 24 hours a day in a sector running from Delaware Avenue to 8th Street between Chestnut and Lombard. This coverage is supplemented by a police van and Officer Donahue's bicycle patrol. Though we don't always see the police, they are providing protection in our neighborhood.

To report a crime all calls should initially be placed to 911. If the call turns out to be "unfounded," because there is no visible evidence of a crime and no witnesses, no report will be generated. For this reason it is important to notify Captain Korn or Officer Brown also, as well as Marilyn Appel (215-922-2626), chair of the Sixth Police District Advisory Council (PDAC) and member of our safety committee. Captain Korn emphasized the importance of noting details when reporting a suspected crime. These include: precise time of the incident; vehicle description — including license plate numbers; and personal characteristics of suspects, such as gender, clothing, facial hair, age and other specific identifiers.

The group also focused on traffic safety and problems with homeless persons. Although very few traffic accidents occur in Society Hill, the committee mentioned several sites, including the intersections of 4th and Lombard and 6th and 7th and Locust, which residents consider dangerous. Suggestions were made on how to improve safety in these areas. Though police can arrest aggressive panhandlers, they cannot force the homeless into shelters.

The committee and Captain Korn found the meeting very helpful and informative. They plan to work together to improve neighborhood safety and security and to provide pertinent information to residents through the *Reporter*.



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Safe And Sound Society Hill

Town Watch Resurrected

Society Hill Town Watch is making a comeback! You are invited to join this group of volunteers interested in promoting a safer community through the involvement of its residents.

Sponsored jointly by the Society Hill Civic Association and citywide Operation Town Watch, Society Hill Town Watch will consist primarily of neighborhood patrols by its members, on foot (or, for the more adventuresome, on bikes or skates!) and in small groups. These patrols will be equipped with walkie-talkies programmed by Operation Town Watch to facilitate communication with police and other Town Watch members. The patrol schedules will be flexible, designed to allow each member to participate in our "walks" as often or as infrequently as he or she wishes. Moreover, the greater the number of Society Hill Town Watch members, the less frequently each person might need to walk. In fact, if we reach our goal of 300 members, each willing participant would be asked to walk only about once every two and one-half months!!

Society Hill Town Watch promises to produce many benefits for you and for Society Hill. These include:

- assisting the police in keeping our neighborhood safe and sound
- helping to monitor, and improve awareness of, crime in our neighborhood
- fostering good relations between our residents and our officers in blue

- preventing crime by sending an important message to would-be wrongdoers
- building new friendships and encouraging community activism.

In order to promote safe practices and to certify our group, Operation Town Watch will conduct a mandatory training class for Society Hill Town Watch members at Old Pine Community Center (4th and Lombard) on Tuesday, September 9, 2003 at 7 p.m. If you would like to become a member of Society Hill Town Watch, please provide me with your name, address, and phone number, and plan to attend the training class. You may contact me either by e-mail at michael.erdos@phila.gov or by phone at 215-629-5857.

You can also help the fight against crime in our neighborhood in another important way. Safe and Sound Society Hill, a committee of the Society Hill Civic Association, has recently formed in order to assess and address crime and safety in our neighborhood. If you become aware of a crime committed in Society Hill, please notify Marilyn Appel by e-mail at hamara@juno.com or by phone at 215-922-2626.

Please consider joining us to "take a bite out of crime" and improve further the quality of life in Society Hill. I thank you for your consideration and look forward to walking with you.

*Michael Erdos, Co-Chair,
Safe and Sound Society Hill*



Join SHCA's
Town Watch
and help us
reach our goal
of 300 members

Editors' Note: This article is a copy of a letter to be sent to the residents of Society Hill by the Safe and Sound Committee

Patricia Bentz, CBC
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 The Window Washer That Wasn't

 A Resident's Experience

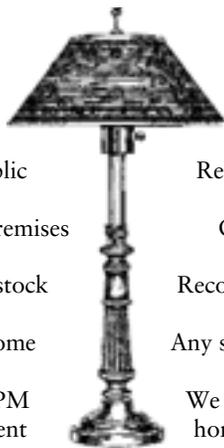
**Be alert for
scams — never
allow a stranger
into your home,
even if he claims
to be a workman.**

A few years ago, a tall, handsome, well-addressed and courteous man, probably in his mid-thirties, rang my doorbell and said he was a window washer and the son of Curtis Johnson (a professional window cleaner in our neighborhood for many years). I let the man in, showed him around, and pointed out the total number of windows throughout the house. He told me how much the total job would cost. I said OK and asked him if he'd take a check, and, of course, he said "no." So he began working on the windows in my kitchen. Although he brought in what looked like minimum equipment (a bucket and a few rags) I went to the nearby ATM to get cash to pay him.

When I returned about ten minutes later he said he had finished the entire job. I asked how that was possible, and he said simply that he "works fast." That's when I knew I had been taken! But rather than risk further problems, such as an altercation or worse, I simply handed over to him all the cash I got from the ATM (about \$150), and he left. I locked the door with

a sigh of relief that nothing else was taken. But the next day I noticed that my little stash of loose change kept on a kitchen counter (quarters amounting to about \$10) was empty. He took that money as well! I never saw this fellow again, and I vowed never to allow any stranger purporting to do work for me into my home again.

When I allowed this man into my house, I honestly thought he was Johnson's son, because he said his dad wasn't feeling well (which fit with Johnson's description somewhat, as he is an older African American gentleman). So that's my little mistake, which I am very grateful did not become a big or serious one. All I lost was some money, and there was no altercation or damage to the house or to me personally (except to my psyche for my own stupidity in allowing a stranger inside my home in the first place!) Rumor has it that this same man is now "back in business" in the neighborhood. Be aware and tell your friends! By the way, Curtis Johnson has no sons.

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Greek Picnic Unreported Activities

Bullets on Gaskill Street: A first-hand account

The Friday night of the July 2003 Greek Picnic (an annual weekend gathering of sorority and fraternity members in Fairmount Park) had proven to be relatively quiet in the South Street area. Saturday was similarly low-key. Around 1 a.m. Sunday morning I was lying in bed, only mildly disturbed by the group of people gathered at the nearby corner of 3rd and Gaskill Streets. Suddenly I heard "BANG! BANG!" "Those aren't firecrackers," I thought. By the time I reached the window there were nine police officers, including one on a motorcycle, streaming past my house. Within seconds of the gunshots being fired on the corner, the 300 block of Gaskill had been turned into a crime scene. Only the yellow tape was missing.

Police inspected both sides of the street, flashing beams of light into every dark space — not once, but several times. A searchlight brightened the darkness and a helicopter appeared overhead. Pedestrians, whether the curious or homeward bound, were politely denied access to the block. (Cars had been prohibited from

the street in the evening.) A cadre of perhaps a dozen bicycle police were seen on 3rd Street, which was also closed to vehicular traffic; foot traffic was permitted on the side opposite the crime scene. About an hour after the incident occurred an unmarked car, carrying crime scene investigators, arrived. There was no need to turn on the TV — I had a front-row seat to my own "CSI." I watched as the area was once again inspected by flashlight, and photographs and measurements were taken. By 2:30 a.m. Gaskill was once again a quiet little street with no evidence of the activity that had taken place in the wee hours of the morning.

I learned from neighbors that three males had been seen running up Gaskill toward 4th Street immediately after the shots were fired and just ahead of the police. It is our understanding that at least one arrest was made. Fortunately, no one was injured. The prompt action of the police was impressive, as was the officers' courteous professionalism in keeping pedestrians from the crime scene.

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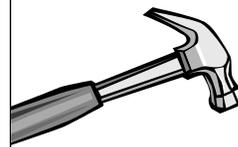
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Update: Washington Square Park

The Fountain Flows Again



No dogs allowed in Washington Square fountain; pet fur will clog the circulation system.

We are very pleased (and proud) to announce that as a result of SHCA's intervention, including a formal written request to the Fairmount Park Commission, the fountain at Washington Square Park was finally turned back on, as of July 31. (See the Zoning and Historic Preservation Report, page 17.) A condition for restoring the fountain is that SHCA has pledged to inform all residents that they cannot allow their dogs to romp in it.

The fountain's water circulation system needed repairs because it had been clogged with dog hairs. Neighbors with dogs: please keep your pets on dry ground within the park, and always on a leash. If you see people allowing their dogs to play in the fountain, please let them know (in a friendly way, of course) that this is not permitted, as it will once again jeopardize the fountain's functioning. Direct dog owners to the watering station at the southwest corner of the Square. We love our neighborhood dogs, but we love our park fountain, too.

Woof, Woof!

Eternal Flame Lighting Ceremony

Another announcement that gives us great pleasure to report is that on Wednesday, September 17th, which happens to be Constitution Day, the Eternal Flame at Washington Square Park will at last be lit. Please join us for this lighting ceremony at 12:30 p.m.

New Park Committee Formed

Sissie Lipton, a SHCA Board Director representing Independence Park Place, has kindly offered to chair our new Washington Square Committee. Should you be interested in joining this committee or if you have concerns related to the park, please be in touch with Sissie at 215-925-0915 or momlipton@aol.com.

Green Thumb Alert!

Here's an opportunity for city gardeners to work on a grander scale. The National Park Service would appreciate a group of volunteers willing to help keep Washington Square beautiful. Contact Sandy Rothman, (267) 671-0554 or norfad@aol.com, for more information.

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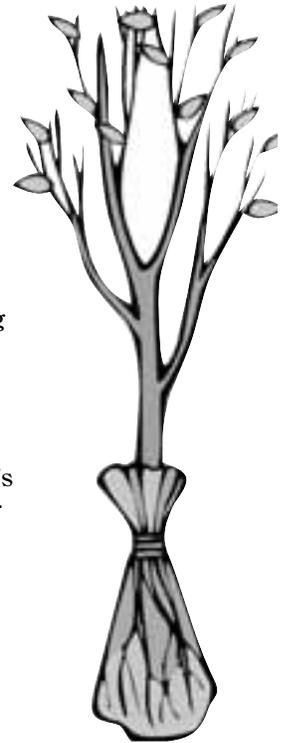
SHCA Website: Stay Informed

SHCA's website has been updated with information Society Hill residents may want to have at their fingertips. This includes the names of all current board directors and their contact numbers, a list of all committees and their chairpersons, SHCA meeting dates for the rest of this year and for 2004, and a message from our new President, Liza Seltzer. Also included is a current list of Welcome Basket donors and a comprehensive list giving the names of all our Block Coordinators. The site will also feature the association's fiscal budget for 2003-2004 — once it is approved at our Board of Directors' meeting on September 17. Currently, we are exploring future website enhancements, such as the ability to insert last-minute news or Bulletin Board announcements that miss deadlines for inclusion in the *Reporter* — such as a sudden change of venue for our meetings. Whenever you want or need information related to our neighborhood, please check out www.societyhillcivic.com — at your service!

Need A New Tree On Your Street?

Call SHCA for a \$300 Subsidy

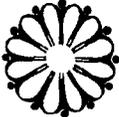
Our community association is proud to announce that SHCA's previous \$150 subsidy for planting a new street tree on your property has now been doubled, thanks to a generous \$150 grant from the Green Tree Perpetual Assurance Company. So far SHCA has not received a single call to take advantage of this generous offer, but we hope it is because so many neighbors have been on vacation during the summer season and have failed to see the announcement in our previous issue of the *Reporter*. If interested, please direct your call to Karen Skafte of Project Street Trees, at 215-925-2656 or skafte@LRSLA.com or SHCA's Administrator Matt DeJulio at 215-629-1288 or matthew.dejulio@gte.net. Let's not allow this wonderful opportunity to slip by because our newsletter notice has gone unnoticed! Help beautify our streets by planting a new tree. Call now, while the weather and the offer are still good.



SHCA will help to pay for a new street tree.

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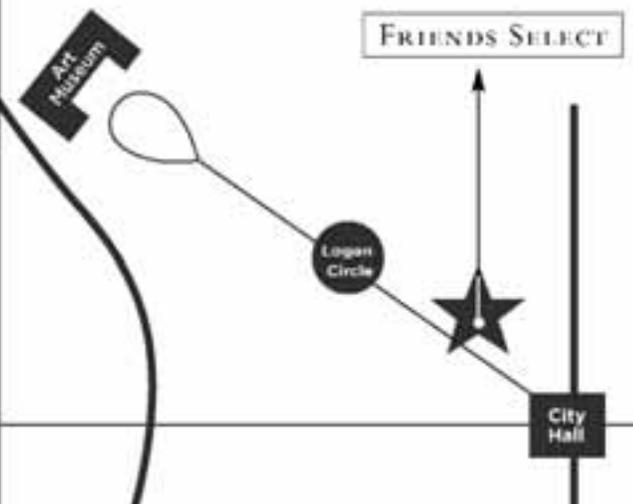
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Rosh Hashanah Services

Fri.	Sept. 26	7:00 P.M.
Sat.	Sept. 27	8:00A.M. & 7:00 P.M.
Sun.	Sept. 28	8:00A.M. & 7:00 PM

Kippur Services

Sun.	Kal Nidre	Oct. 5	6:45 P.M.
Mon.	Yom Kippur	Oct. 6	8:00 A.M. All Day

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HIGH HOLIDAY SCHEDULE

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 26 Leil Rosh Hashanah
7:30-9:00 p.m.

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 27 Rosh Hashanah*
9:00 a.m.-1:45 p.m.
9:30-10:30 Youth Service, grades K-2
10:45-12:15 Youth Service, grades 3-7

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 28 Rosh Hashanah II
9:00 a.m.-1:45 p.m.
10:45-12:15 Youth Service, grades 3-7

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 5, Kol Nidre 6:20 p.m.*

MONDAY, OCTOBER 6, Yom Kippur 9 a.m.-6:45 p.m.*
3:30 Service 4:00 p.m. Yizkor service
6:45 Shofar

***Members & Guests only**

Mother Bethel Celebration: “Juneteenth”

Too late to be included in the July 2003 issue of the *Reporter*, a most noteworthy event was held on June 19 at Mother Bethel A.M.E. Church. “An Awareness Evening of Richard Allen and Celebration of ‘Juneteenth’” commemorated the history of African Americans in America — recalling the delayed revelation of slavery’s end when on June 19, 1865 Union troops entered Galveston, Texas with the “surprising” news that all slaves had been freed. In fact, the Civil war had concluded two months prior to that date, and the Emancipation Proclamation had been announced more than two years earlier, on January 1, 1863!

Back to June 19, 2003: Mother Bethel’s pews were filled to capacity as congregants, neighbors and supporters were reminded that the hallowed ground on which they were assembled — the site of Mother Bethel Church, at 6th & Lombard Streets — is the oldest parcel of land ever owned, and continuously owned, by African Americans anywhere in the United States. Richard Allen began his fight for freedom and self-determination here, when he founded Mother Bethel A.M.E. Church in 1787, the year of the Constitutional Convention. According to Foundation chairperson Delores Brisbon, “Richard Allen’s story is not only about the African American journey, it is also about America’s journey, which deserves to be told along with the stories of Washington, Franklin and Jefferson.”

The Juneteenth celebration — co-sponsored by the Mother Bethel Foundation and Comcast — began with a warm welcome by the Foundation’s chairperson Delores Brisbon, a Society Hill neighbor. The program included magnificent musical performances by the Church choir and soloists Stacey Harcum and Sharon Gary-Dixon. After remarks from Reverend Jeffrey N. Leath, minister of the Church, and Mayor John F. Street, Mr. Ossie Davis, the renowned African American actor, playwright, director and civil rights activist was introduced.

Mr. Davis lightened the mood by saying, “Piece work on the Hollywood plantation beats picking cotton.” He paused dramatically and then said, “but not by much!” Extemporaneously he recapitulated the history of the founding of Mother Bethel Church, reminding the audience that there are many others who have followed and who continue to follow in Richard Allen’s tradition — where the actions of a single determined person can make a difference!



He also stated quite emphatically that freedom is not enough — that what all people require in addition to freedom is *equality!*

A capacity crowd celebrated Juneteenth at Mother Bethel A.M.E. Church on June 19.

All who attended this spiritual, celebratory fundraising event, including Society Hillers Jean and Jim Bodine and Bernice Hamel, felt that they too were making history — reaching out to make a difference, to spread the word and to help raise awareness of the unique historical role of Richard Allen, as the Mother Bethel Foundation endeavors to raise 20 million dollars for its new, expanded educational center.

Mother Bethel is a National Shrine, listed on the National Register of Historical Places. Its small museum contains the tomb of the Church’s founder, as well as a priceless collection of artifacts and archives that chronicle the journey of social change for African Americans from colonial days to the present. The new Center, designed by Philadelphia architectural firm Atkin Olshin Lawson-Bell, will be built adjacent to the Church and will provide historical programs about the African American experience. With its museum, library, archives, and educational programs, the expanded new Center will reach many more people than the Church’s current 15,000 annual visitors.

Although no groundbreaking date for the new facility has yet been determined, donations for the ambitious campaign are welcome and fully tax deductible. Please consider making a gift or a pledge to the Mother Bethel Foundation, at 419 Richard Allen Avenue, Philadelphia, PA 19147. For additional information or materials, call 215-629-5667.

Welcome Baskets Reach 5 Year Anniversary

It's hard to believe, but five years have passed since the SHCA delivered its first Welcome Basket! Created by Martha Levine, the basket first contained only a handful of fresh foods and some information, but over the years, grew to include gift certificates from area businesses including restaurants, theaters, shops, museums, salons, etc. The baskets are presented by appointment to new home and condo owners in Society Hill. So far, we have warmly welcomed over 265 residents. If you are a new homeowner, or know of one in Society Hill, please contact Martha at 215-629-0727 or marthalev@aol.com.

We also welcome five new businesses to our long list of contributors: The Kimmel Center, Tiramisu, The Prince Music Theater, Deux Cheminees, and New Jersey State Aquarium. Many thanks to all of our contributors. We encourage neighbors to patronize them to show your appreciation. Those listed below in italics are either advertisers in the *Reporter* or members of the association or both.



Martha Levine, Welcome Basket program founder, delivers a basket to new homeowners at Independence Place. In the past few years, 254 baskets have been delivered.

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Ghost Tours of Philadelphia
Independence Seaport Museum, 211 S. Columbus Blvd.
The Kimmel Center, Broad & Spruce Streets
Lights of Liberty, 6th & Chestnut Streets
Mann Center for the Performing Arts, 52nd & Parkside
National Liberty Museum, 321 Chestnut Street
New Jersey State Aquarium
Pennsylvania Ballet, 1101 S. Broad St.
Phila Chamber Ensemble, Old Pine, 400 Pine Street
Phila Shakespeare Festival, 2111 Sansom Street
Philomel Concerts
The Prince Movie Theater, Broad & Chestnut Streets
Ritz Theater, 2nd & Walnut Streets
Society Hill Dance Academy, 409 S. 2nd Street
Society Hill Playhouse, 507 S. 8th Street
TLA Video, 517 S. 4th Street
Wilma Theatre, 265 S. Broad Street

Restaurants

Bridget Foy's South Street Grill, 200 South Street
City Tavern, 138 S. 2nd Street
Creperie Beau Monde, 624 S. 6th Street
Cosi, 215 Lombard Street
Deux Cheminees, 1221 Locust Street
Fork, 306 Market Street

Hard Rock Café, 1113 Market Street

Judy's Café, 627 S. 3rd Street
Knave of Hearts, 230 South Street
Mustard Greens, 622 S. 2nd Street
Overtures Restaurant, 609 E. Passyunk Avenue
Panorama Ristorante, 14 N. Front Street
Sfizzio Restaurant, Society Hill Towers, 237 St. James Place
Tiramisu, 528 S. 5th

Salons

Brescia Salon, 118 South Street
East End Salon, 219 Arch Street
John Romano's, Curtis Center
Pileggi on the Square, 717 Walnut Street
Salon @5th, 316 S. 5th Street

Specialty Foods

Dairy Queen, 514 South Street
Homemade Cookies by Roz, 510 S. 5th Street
Metropolitan Bakery, 1114 Pine Street and 126 Market Street
Mom's Bake at Home Pizza, 241 S. 6th Street
Mums and Pops Confectionery, 932 Locust Street
Pink Rose Pastry Shop, 630 S. 4th Street
Rita's Water Ice, 239 South Street
Zeke's Deli, 318 S. 5th Street

Specialty Shops

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ZONING & HISTORIC PRESERVATION

BY PAUL BONI, ZHP COMMITTEE CHAIR

Recent Decisions

SHCA's Zoning & Historic Preservation Committee (ZHP) works with property owners in the neighborhood. The ZHP urges owners to present their plans to the committee — and to their nearby neighbors who are invited to the meeting — before seeking approvals 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 215-629-1288 or MattDeJulio@aol.com.

Washington Square:

The fountain should now be on! However, in order to keep it on, we must ensure that dogs are not allowed into the fountain. The fur clogs up the circulation system and results in damage. At the request of our Hopkinson House and Independence Place representatives, we successfully made our request known to the Fairmount Park Commission. We must now make sure that Fido stays out of the fountain. There is a watering station on the South side of the park where dogs can catch a break from the heat.



Washington Square fountain was turned on again, thanks to SHCA and the Zoning Board.

238 S. 3rd Street:

The ZHP again found itself in the unenviable position of deciding not to support an owner's request for a zoning variance from the Zoning Code's 70-30% limitation on covered area. (The Code requires a property owner to keep at least 30% of the property as open space.) We listened to the homeowner's proposal to expand the house to 76% of the property; and although it was a beautiful proposal in and of itself, we decided it would result in the loss of too much open space that would box in the neighboring

property. There are several reasons why the ZHP takes a strong stance on these sorts of requests:

- (1) the preservation of open space is critical to the well-functioning of our tightly-knit neighborhood;
- (2) open space is important for trees, sunlight and visibility, as well as preventing a sense of claustrophobia in our already dense neighborhood;
- (3) we would not disapprove of build-outs to 70%; however, a line has to be drawn somewhere — if we would support a 76% build-out, how could we not support 80%?;
- (4) the Zoning Code sets 70% as the limit and we feel that 70% is appropriate;
- (5) even if the neighbors agree in any particular case, are they doing so because they are avoiding a confrontation, and, if so, what about future neighbors and the community at large?; and, finally,
- (6) the Zoning Board of Adjustment may very well decide to grant the variance anyway but that does not mean that the ZHP should provide its support. If we don't advocate to keep our open space, we'll lose it.

This is one of those tough situations where we realize all too well that our position of non-support is the cause for much upset and dismay to the particular proponent of the project; however, we believe that holding the line at 70% has tremendous benefit to the neighborhood. The ZHP oftentimes supports an owner's request for a zoning variance when it comes to many of the limitations imposed by the Code, but the 30% open space requirement is one of the requirements on which we take a very firm stand.

612 Spruce Street:

The ZHP was pleased to support a request for a zoning variance to allow proposed construction for the rear of this house, including a carport. We are especially pleased that we helped the owner find a company that sells aesthetically pleasing garage doors that are in keeping with the historic feel of our neighborhood. Too often in the past, owners have considered themselves limited to the industrial steel roll-up garage doors — but alternatives do exist!



A view of The St. James at 34 floors on its way to 47 when complete.

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Kids' Beat

A COLUMN BY KERI WHITE

Sharing Philadelphia's Culture with Kids

Welcome to autumn, my favorite season in the city! The weather's fine, we are finished traveling for a while, and most of all, the kids are BACK IN SCHOOL! Now is the time to reacquaint ourselves and our children with the wonderful cultural opportunities Philadelphia has to offer. Here are a few, handpicked from the multitude available to us:

American Theater Arts for Youth

Season opens November 29 with *Babes in Toyland* as part of the Family Fun Series, which includes ten musicals, such as *Pinocchio*, *Beauty and the Beast*, and *Wizard of Oz*. Individual ticket price is \$10, with a price break for subscriptions. All performances are held at the Perelman Theater in the Kimmel Center. Call 800-523-4540 or visit www.ATAFY.org.

Theatreworks, USA

The Walnut Street Theatre offers a four-play season for children in grades K-6. This program includes *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*; *Alexander and the Terrible, Horrible, No Good, Very Bad Day*; *The Little Engine that Could*; and *Corduroy*. First performance is November 22 and the cost for the entire subscription is \$28. Call 215-574-3550, ext. 6 or visit wstonline.org.

Enchantment Theatre Company

Performances with life-size puppets, magic tricks, shadow play and other creative visual media. Their season opens November 12 at the Perelman Theater in the Kimmel Center with *Firebird* and closes with *The Snow Queen* December 4 at the Mandell Theater of Drexel University. Tickets for children are \$12-14, adults \$22-26. For *Firebird*, call 215-893-1999. For *Snow Queen* 215-887-3369, or visit enchantmenttheatre.org.

Mum Puppettheatre

Season opens November 8 with *The Velveteen Rabbit*, followed in March by *Father Goose Tales*. Subscription cost is \$20 at this 115 Arch Street puppet theater. Call 215-925-7686 or visit info@mumpuppet.org.

Pennsylvania Ballet Family Matinee

Series begins December 13 with (naturally) *The Nutcracker*, followed by *Taming of the Shrew* and *Swan Lake*. Each of these performances includes a free Family Day Event with games, interaction with the dancers, and other related activities. Subscription cost \$72-\$364. Call 215-551-7000 or visit www.paballet.org.



My family has attended performances by each of these companies, mostly with success and enjoyment. Success, in this case, is defined as the absence of tantrum, meltdown, scene, or other obvious casualty. The good news is that most of the ticket prices for these events are relatively low, so if the outing is a total disaster you haven't spent much.

The quality of the performances can vary, but these shows provide a wonderful opportunity for children to begin to experience the thrill of live music, theater and dance for a relatively small investment. Most of the cultural institutions in our city offer family programs. Let's support them!

Kid's Quote

Looking at his grandmother's New Jersey backyard: "Can I play in your park?"

Ronnie, age 3, Society Hill kid

Welcome James Bishop Lane — Our Newest Neighbor!

For the past few months, our Zoning & Historic Preservation Committee has missed the active participation of Peggy Bishop Lane — but she has had a great excuse for not attending our meetings! We're delighted to report that Peggy and her husband, Christian Lane, are the proud new parents of a beautiful baby boy: James Bishop Lane was so eager to become a resident of Society Hill that he arrived about two months ahead of schedule on May 10, 2003.

We're thrilled to report that he is doing well, and we send our congratulations to Peggy and Christian, as we welcome baby James into our special little corner of the world.

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FRIENDS OF THREE BEARS PARK

BY TANIA RORKE

Dedication Pays Off for Friends of Park

Well Friends, it is that time of year again. Our Fall Festival is one month away, scheduled for Saturday, October 4, from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. — with Sunday, the 5th as our rain date. We are seeking volunteers to help run our Silent Auction, School Fair, Information Station, Kids Games, Food and Bake Sale, and “Children’s Gently Used Flea Market.”

Some exciting news! The Friends of Three Bears Park received a \$3,000 grant from Philadelphia Green, Parks Revitalization Project. The grant will repair Mama Bear’s head (someone tried to give her a lobotomy) and it will also be used to develop a children’s garden. Instead of the circular planter, we plan to make the area more child-friendly by replacing those large prickly shrubs and installing “Bear Paw Print Stepping Stones” that kids can decorate with mosaic tiles at the Fall Festival.

McCall School kids will assist in the planting, and kindergartners will participate in nurturing the seeds, which will be planted along the Paw Print pathways — thanks to neighbor Keri White. In addition, a Clean Up Day is being

planned by the Friends of Three Bears Park. Here’s your chance to do some serious, suburban-type yard work that you probably now miss since moving to the city!

We wish to thank, from the bottom of our hearts, our many generous Friends who raised all the funds needed to replace the park’s bee-infested benches. This project will be completed soon. Currently we are also trying to raise additional funds to replace the entire park’s play structure. We are consulting several equipment dealers to investigate what would be best suited for the park. Our ambitious goal is to replace the play structure and benches at the same time. However, if we are unable to secure the funding to replace the play structure in a timely manner, we will go ahead and install the new benches.

If you are interested in volunteering your time or services for any of our activities, or if you have ideas you’d like to discuss, please contact me at 215-925-454. Also, if you would like to receive regular updates, please send your e-mail address to me at TRorke@aol.com.



Come to the Fall Festival, scheduled for Saturday, October 4, in Three Bears Park.

300-Year Celebration

Silversmith Philip Syng Jr. Tercentenary

The Physick House is celebrating the tercentenary and life of colonial-era silversmith Philip Syng Jr. This friend of Benjamin Franklin produced the distinctive silver inkstand for the Speaker’s desk of the Pennsylvania State House in 1752 (now Independence Hall). Used by Benjamin Franklin and other notables to sign both the Declaration of Independence in 1776 and the Constitution in 1787, Syng’s inkstand is today the symbol of Independence National Historical Park.

On September 28 at 1:30 p.m., through the auspices of the Philadelphia Society for the Preservation of Landmarks — owner and steward of the Physick House — a Pennsylvania Historical Marker will be dedicated to mark the site of Syng’s workshop, near 15 South Front Street. Ceremonies will continue at Christ Church Burial Ground at 5th and

Arch Streets with a “renewal and rededication” of a marker beside the newly rediscovered headstone at Syng Jr.’s gravesite in the recently reopened burial ground. Both of these dedication events are open to the public. A highlight of the tercentenary celebration will be the annual Garden Party held at the Physick House on South 4th Street, named after Syng’s famous grandson, Dr. Philip Syng Physick (1768-1836), known as the “Father of American Surgery.” A booklet on Philip Syng Jr.’s contributions to the development of 18th-century Philadelphia is being produced for this special event.

Help us celebrate Philip Syng Jr.’s contributions to the City of Philadelphia! Mark your calendars now for this special event at the Physick House on September 28. Call 215-925-7866 for more information.



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Window Shutters on Spruce Street

by Charles E. Peterson

Today, one of the most distinctive features of Society Hill house fronts is the paint color of outside window shutters. This old photograph shows the first floor window shutters of 332 Spruce Street. Remarkably, they are the only original window shutters remaining on all of Spruce Street.

When I acquired ownership of this house in 1954, I found one pair of window shutters down in the cellar — converted into a coal bin. They were complete with all the original hardware. One of the first things I did was to put the pair back together, repaint them in the original color (dark green) and hang them again. Every house owner on the street followed my example and it is an important feature of the restoration of these early structures.



Man Full of Trouble

Tavern Gets Historically Accurate Facelift

The Man Full of Trouble Tavern is the only surviving tavern building from pre-Revolutionary Philadelphia. Built in 1759 on the banks of Little Dock Creek (long since filled in), this humble tavern and inn was patronized by sailors and dockhands. From the mid-1960's until 1996, the building was an idiosyncratic local museum owned and operated by a private foundation.

When the foundation offered the building to the University of Pennsylvania as a gift, it was in dire need of repairs to its cedar roof, deteriorated brick and wood trim. Penn sought to replace the rotting roof with synthetic, pseudo-slate shingles (less expensive), and the Philadelphia Historical Commission at first supported these plans. But our association's Zoning and Historic Preservation Committee went into action! With the Commission, we used the carrot, and with Penn, we used the stick! Through our efforts, both the Commission and Penn realized their error. Finally Penn accomplished a series of much needed repairs to the exterior of the building, and what you see today is a historically accurate 18th-century building with fresh paint, new masonry and a natural cedar shake roof.

Special thanks go to Committee Chair Paul Boni and members Bernice Hamel, Bonnie Halda and Richard Lush for this victory. Meanwhile, Penn is still conducting a feasibility study to determine the building's eventual use.



The Man Full of Trouble Tavern is sporting a new cedar shake roof.

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- 130 Spruce Street #32-B
- 233 Spruce Street
- 606 Waverly Street
- 220 Locust Street 16D-S
- 105 Lombard Street #B
- 700 Locust Street B1
- 130 Spruce Street 2A
- 119 Lombard Street
- 333 South 6th Street
- 200 Lombard Street # 748
- 521 'A' S. Randolph Ct.
- 331 S. 6th Street
- 534 Cypress Street



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- 63% of Internet users found that the Internet helped reduce their search
- The vast majority of Top-producing Realtors have 2 things in common: an in-depth website and a team of full-time professionals assisting them
- A home with a virtual tour receives 40% more showings than one without

Did you know that most real estate agents in Center City:

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- DO NOT advertise or market their own listings
- Some DO NOT even use the Multiple Listing Service

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- Access to the entire Center City Multiple Listing Service, updated DAILY!
- Get information on EVERY MLS home for sale in Society Hill & Center City
- View a virtual tour & pictures of all of my listings in Society Hill & Center City
- View all MLS homes that have sold in Center City for the past 2 years

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As a seasoned professional who lives in and sells Society Hill, I am extending my services and expertise to you by offering a **free, no obligation market analysis of your home** so that you can find out what your home is worth, learn more about my services and find out what makes the Atacan Group so different from all the others hundreds of Realtors in Philadelphia. **I think you will find, like all my other satisfied clients, that there is no comparison.**

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When we first met, I explained to them the benefits of signing a contract to work with a Buyers' Agent—making a 100% commitment to one agent who will make a 100% commitment to find them a new home. The Garramones were skeptical, but since they were referred to me by a satisfied client, they agreed. Next, I got them pre-approved for a mortgage. Being pre-approved not only helped them to focus on

a price range, it strengthened their offer by letting the seller know they were serious and could afford the home.

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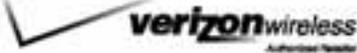


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502 Lombard Street **\$575,000**
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610 Pine **\$479,900**
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THE BOOKSHELF

REVIEWED BY CAROLE LE FAIVRE-ROCHESTER

Journalist Walter Isaacson Meets Journalist Benjamin Franklin

Benjamin Franklin: An American Life

We never get enough of Benjamin Franklin, at least not here in his adopted hometown. As Franklin's newest biographer Walter Isaacson told a full house at the Free Library in July, each generation should study Franklin with renewed vision. Isaacson, former managing editor at *Time*, recent head of CNN, and now president of the Aspen Institute "think tank," treated us to another varied picture of our local Founding Father. Isaacson's twelve-year research among Franklin's papers at Yale and his discussions with other Franklin specialists paint a full picture of our resident genius.

Isaacson's background gives him a distinct advantage as he examines the autobiography, newspaper articles, letters, and tracts that comprise the corpus of Frankliniana. The particular Franklin turn of phrase, the hoaxes, the witticisms, the common-sense advice are deftly examined. And there is a rationale behind it. Isaacson proposes that the Philadelphia sage's lifelong purpose was to give America a vision based on the virtues and morals of its middle class or "middling class." Isaacson's Franklin is a true genius, inventor, printer, type founder, scientist, agent provocateur, diplomat, and publisher. He notes the journalistic acumen of Franklin by featuring many of the sage's own words. Clearly,

Franklin knows what will sell: sex, crime, gossip and scandal pervade the writings of his alter egos, Silence Dogood, Alice Addertongue, Anthony Afterwit, to name a few.

Another picture emerges as well. Franklin was restless, always moving — from Boston to Philadelphia and back, from Philadelphia to London, to Paris. And he seemed always to be searching, probing so many aspects of life and science. This restlessness, or perhaps purposefulness, affects the private Franklin as husband and father. While he gave various female acquaintances here and in England and France a good deal of attention, wife Deborah and daughter Sally saw him less and less as he grew older. Isaacson's biography uses letters of Franklin to his family in Philadelphia, which indicate our "first citizen" wanted to be a good father and husband, but he had to weigh that desire against an even stronger one: to study science, to represent his nation in delicate diplomatic negotiations during the colonial and national periods, and to exercise his brain to its fullest potential.

This is a book for the "middling people," as Franklin would say. He believed himself one of them, the ordinary citizen with rights and obligations. **Simon & Schuster, (New York: 2003). \$30.**

Note: Carole Le Faivre-Rochester was Isaacson's researcher for *Benjamin Franklin: An American Life*.



"Be at War
with your Vices,
at Peace with
your Neighbors,
and let every
New Year find you
a better Man."

**Benjamin Franklin,
Poor Richard's
Almanac**

A Scourge Of Two Cities

Physick House Hosts Epidemics Book Author

In an age when we have learned to live with an anthrax scare and a SARS outbreak, author Jennifer Lee Carrell recounts in *The Speckled Monster: A Historical Tale of Battling Smallpox* the everyday realities and terrors of living through an 18th-century epidemic. Travel back in time with Lady Mary Wortley Montagu of London and Dr. Zabdiel Boylston of Boston as medics in these two cities battle disease.

The Physick House, 321 S. 4th Street, will host Jennifer's discussion of her book with a reception, beginning at 11:00 a.m. on Thursday, September 11. Learn about the practice of inoculation, still controversial in the 18th century. (Franklin, who promoted it, did not have his baby son inoculated!)

To attend this presentation, R.S.V.P. to the Physick House, 321 S. 4th Street, Philadelphia, PA 19106. 215-925-7866

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St. Peter's School Harvest Festival

Saturday, October 18

All neighbors are welcome at St. Peter's School annual Fall Fair where there will be Games and Prizes, Pony Rides, Gourmet Bake Sale, Face Painting, Magician, Lunch and Refreshments, Collectibles, Entertainment, Book Sale and a Raffle. Rain or Shine. Free Admission. Saturday, October 18, from 11 a.m. - 4 p.m. in St. Peter's parking lot at 3rd & Lombard Streets. For more information, call St. Peter's School at 215-925-3963.

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NOTEWORTHY NEIGHBORS

A COLUMN BY DAVID WOODS

Richard and Judy Gelles



A professor and a photographer who are focused on the family.

After 25 years at the University of Rhode Island, Richard Gelles moved to Philadelphia to become professor of social work and Dean of the University of Pennsylvania's School of Social Work. "It was my dream," he says.

Specializing in the fields of domestic violence and child abuse — the subjects of most of his 23 books — Richard also has a gentle avocational attachment to childhood: he collects antique toys, such as miniature trains, small plastic cowboys on horseback and baseball cards. Some of these he finds on eBay; others he finds in his various travels. His expanding trove of treasures occupies one designated room in the couple's 1805 house on the 600 block of Pine Street.

Judy Gelles, a talented artist and photographer, also focuses on issues of children and family — for example, the almost life-size pictures of one of their two sons juxtaposed at ages five and 25. Some she has collected in a book, "Florida Family Portraits," a charming and evocative chronology of portraits of her parents, husband and sons from 1982 up to more recent times. "Each year," she says, "I try to place family members in the same position as the year before."

And, by the way, those sons, the couple proudly announce, are "smart, attractive, eligible — and unattached." David, 25, is an associate producer

on the Today Show; Jason, 28, is a comedy writer who has produced material for TV's late-night host David Letterman, among others.

Richard and Judy met in Boston and are about to celebrate their 32nd anniversary. Family comes into play here, too, since their courtship was brought about and nurtured by Richard's uncle and aunt.

When Richard and Judy first moved here, they weren't sure exactly where to put down roots. Without relatives or friends in the area, they were starting from scratch. "I looked at houses on the Main Line," says Judy, "and I came back with a migraine." They're glad they chose Society Hill not only for the usual reasons that include the Ritz theaters and the community spirit — although they cherish those — but for the fact that the area is compact and navigable on foot. They traded a Rhode Island home with one and a half acres of land for one with a tiny but exquisite garden, which was, they agree, one of the factors that cemented their decision to buy the Pine Street house. Even more important, Judy can walk to the photo processing store. "It used to take me an hour and a half," she says.

The two New Englanders — with their focus on family — have adopted our "City of Brotherly Love."

The Green Tree Perpetual Assurance Company

By the founding of The Mutual Assurance Company in 1784, it was clear to all that having trees in front of one's property posed a hazard that would have to be offset by an additional premium on one's insurance. The price was 15 to 35 shillings for the first tree and 10 to 20 shillings for any additional trees. There had been considerable public controversy on the pleasure of shade trees versus the risk they posed to property owners and their insurers at the company's founding. The adoption of a green tree for its fire mark capitalized on the difference between The Contributionship, which banned trees, and The Mutual Assurance Company, which did not, and led to the new company's being known as the Tree insurance office and The Green Tree.

Trees, however, were at most a side issue in the formation of this new company. It is likely, rather, that the motivating factor was a desire to expand the amount of money circulating in the city's depressed economy combined with a belief that the city could support two insurance companies. Compared to the board of The Contributionship, The Green Tree's trustees tended to be younger and less well-established, Episcopalian rather than Quaker, more enterprising fiscally, and more forward-looking politically. Most of The Green Tree trustees had taken an active role on the American side in the Revolution, while The Contributionship's board was divided politically, and some of its earlier directors had been exiled or placed under surveillance for their Tory leanings. It is possible that in a city filled with patriotic fervor for the newly independent country, the character of The Green Tree board contributed to the success of the new company.

At first meeting weekly, the trustees approved prospective properties, set rates, signed policies, and set up the framework for a successful investment policy. They determined that all policies of insurance on mortgaged houses should be assigned to the mortgagee and, further, that all money lent by the company would be payable in gold coin

at the rate of "£3 for one half Johannes weighing nine penny weight, or in Silver Coin at the rate of Seven Shillings & Sixpence per Dollar." Official financial transactions were recorded in Pennsylvania pounds. The treasurer's report for the first year showed income of £840.15.7, with £682.10 lent out at 6% interest, including the company's first loan, made to Matthew Clarkson. By its second year, the company was sufficiently well established to incorporate, and upon petition to the General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania in November 1785, a charter was granted in February 1786.

Despite the company's optimism in incorporating, the next few years were difficult. The country had been in a recession since 1783 that lasted until the late 1780s. According to *The Pennsylvania Gazette* of April 27, 1785: *In no period of the late war did the citizens of Philadelphia experience so much distress, as they have felt since the last session of the Assembly. The attack upon the Bank, by stopping the circulation of cash, has involved thousands in difficulties. Several mechanical businesses have been suspended, and the tradesmen, who have large sums of money due them, suffer from the want of market money. The wealthy merchants, whose cash formerly circulated at 6 per cent., from the Bank, now treasure it up in their iron chests, where it will not see the light of the sun perhaps for years.*

The Constitutional Convention in 1787 and the ratification of the Constitution in 1789, the election of George Washington to the Presidency and the appointment of Alexander Hamilton as Secretary of the Treasury brought, despite controversy, new excitement to the city, new optimism to the country, and aid to the depressed economy. Certainly these events were a boon to Philadelphia, which from 1790 to 1800 was once more the capital of the nation. Hamilton espoused stronger, more centralized control of the nation's finances and better public credit through the assumption of the states' Revolutionary



War debts by the sale of new securities issued through a national bank.

During the colonial period, Great Britain had prohibited the establishment of banks for fear they would issue paper money and thus depreciate the coin of the realm. The number of requests for loans and the drive to lend the company's accumulated funds as quickly as possible attest to the fact that from its beginning The Green Tree had been providing some of the services and security that banks would later offer. Finally chartered in 1791, the Bank of the United States was temporarily housed in Carpenters' Hall but by 1795 began construction of its imposing Palladian building on Third Street. This building marked the beginning of commercial architecture in the city, other firms being housed in their treasurer's dwelling, storefronts, and counting houses. The Green Tree, for example, was located first in Matthew Clarkson's house on Quarry Street and later in his successive stores.

In 1788, The Green Tree was forced to foreclose their first mortgage, and whether the trustees were growing wary of keeping all their stock in mortgages or were developing confidence in the new banking system, they purchased three shares of stock in the Bank of North America, selling at \$400 per share and paying, in 1792, a 12% dividend. The company continued to purchase bank stock and stock in the deferred debt of the United States, issued through the Bank of the United States. These purchases at Hamilton's bank were certainly a patriotic act, but they were also an excellent investment.

To be continued...

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Tuesday, September 9

Town Watch Training Session
Old Pine Community Center,
4th & Lombard Streets, 7 p.m.
See page 9

Thursday, September 11

**Book Reception by Author of
"A Scourge of Two Cities"**
Physick House, 321 S. 4th Street, 11 a.m.
RSVP: 215-925-7866
See page 27

Wednesday, September 17

National Constitution Day Celebration
Rekindling of the Eternal Flame
Washington Square Park, 12:30 p.m.

Wednesday, September 17

Society Hill Civic Association Meetings
6 p.m.: Board Meeting
7 p.m.: General Membership Meeting
(Forum for Mayoral Candidates)
Old Pine Church, 4th & Pine Streets



SOCIETY HILL

Reporter

www.societyhillcivic.com

Friday, September 19

Design Advocacy Group
Pride of Place Forum
Franklin Institute, 5:30-7:30 p.m.
See page 7

Saturday and Sunday, September 27-28

Rosh Hashanah
Check local synagogues for service times.

Sunday, September 28

Historical Marker Dedication Ceremony
Philip Syng Jr.'s workshop
15 S. Front Street, 1:30 p.m. See page 21

Saturday, October 4, 2003

Three Bears Park Fall Festival
Rain Date: Sunday, October 5th
11 a.m. to 3 p.m.
Family Fun and Fundraising
To volunteer or make a donation, please
contact Tania Rorke at 215-925-4544

Wednesday, October 8

Books Aloud Children's Program
Independence Branch of the Free Library
18 S. 7th Street, 6:30 p.m.

Monday, October 10

Yom Kippur
Check local synagogues for service times.

Saturday, October 18

St. Peter's School Harvest Festival
Parking Lot, 3rd & Lombard Streets
Games, Pony rides, Entertainment
11:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m., rain or shine
For more information, call 215-925-3963.
See page 27

Monday, October 20

Screening of Video "Angel in the Village"
Independence Branch of the Free Library
18 S. 7th Street, 6:30 p.m.

Friday, October 24, 8 p.m.

Sunday, October 26, 2 p.m.

Philadelphia Chamber Ensemble
Old Pine Street Church, 4th & Pine Streets
Tickets: \$20 at the door; student tickets,
\$5; two children or teenagers admitted free
with full paying adult

Friday, October 31, 2003,

Trick or Treat Kick Off at Three Bears Park
Come start your trick or treating in the
Park. Pizza, juice, tricks and treats!
5 p.m.

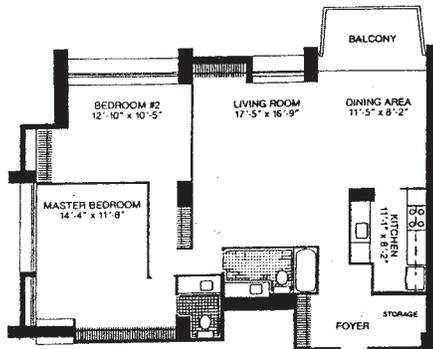
Tuesday, November 4

ELECTION DAY
See page 3 for polling places

Society Hill and Washington Square's Premier Condominiums

Hopkinson House

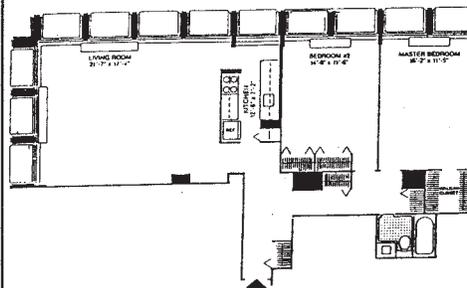
604-36 S. Washington Square



Two bedroom, 1 1/2 bath, high floor,
balcony with park view
\$395,000

Society Hill Towers

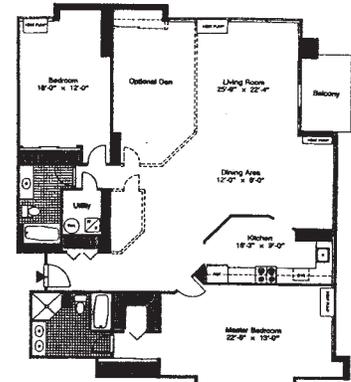
200-220 Locust Street



Penthouse two bedroom, 11 foot
ceiling height, panoramic views of
bridge, river and skyline
\$425,000

Independence Place

233 S. 6th Street



Two bedroom, 2 bath, spectacular
views of bridge, river and skyline
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