

SOCIETY HILL

# Reporter

[www.societyhillcivic.org](http://www.societyhillcivic.org)

## March General Membership



Allan Domb

The Society Hill Civic Association (SHCA) invites all neighbors to the March 18 General Membership Meeting. We will host a question and answer forum with Councilman Allan Domb.

Owner of Allan Domb Real Estate, Allan was elected to Philadelphia City Council in 2015 as a member at large. He's committed to lowering the poverty rate, collecting delinquent taxes, increasing grad-

uation rates in our city schools and promoting job growth through the retention of existing businesses and by further attracting millennials in the tech and manufacturing industries to Philadelphia.

Everyone is welcome to attend. Simply arrive at Pennsylvania Hospital's Zubrow Auditorium, located on the first floor inside the main entrance at 8th Street near Spruce, before 7:30 p.m.

### JOIN TODAY

**Without membership dues, SHCA would cease to function. Protect your neighborhood and your real estate investment by becoming a member or by renewing your current membership. See the form on page 28 or renew online at [www.societyhillcivic.org](http://www.societyhillcivic.org).**

## Seeking Nominations for Directors and Officers

If you have the time and the desire to make our wonderful community even better, we invite you to volunteer for a position on the SHCA Board of Directors and Officers. Our neighborhood continuously benefits from the input and hard work of residents who appreciate living in one of the nation's premier neighborhoods. Join a team of dedicated and hard-working neighbors who embrace SHCA's mission (see page 2) and labor on behalf of more than 5,000 residents and 3,000 households.

This year's elections will take place at our May 20 General Membership Meeting. Members will elect a president, two vice presidents, a secretary, a treasurer and up to eight directors at large, all for one-year terms. Also, four of the 12 quadrant directors will finish their three-year terms and need to be replaced. SHCA's Nominating and Election Committee proposes individuals for

these positions. Others may be nominated by petition. To nominate yourself or a neighbor, submit a petition signed by 10 SHCA members. Nomination for quadrant director requires the signatures of 10 residents of that quadrant. The committee appreciates information about the nominee.

Those being recommended for a position must live within the boundaries of Society Hill, be at least 21 years of age and be a member of SHCA. Visit [www.societyhillcivic.org](http://www.societyhillcivic.org) for more information about our civic association, its board and nominating process.

Submissions must be received by March 30 in order to be considered. Nominations will be listed in the next issue of the *Reporter*. Send to SHCA Administrator Matt DeJulio at [mattdejulio@aol.com](mailto:mattdejulio@aol.com).

Wednesday,  
March  
**18**

### MARK YOUR CALENDAR

Society Hill Civic Association Meeting  
Wednesday, March 18, 2020

**Pennsylvania Hospital  
8th & Spruce Streets**

**5:45 p.m. Board Meeting**  
Pennsylvania Hospital's Great Court Room

**7:30 - 9 p.m. General Membership Meeting**  
Pennsylvania Hospital's Zubrow Auditorium

**Speaker: Councilman Allan Domb**

**Topic: A Neighborhood Q&A Session,  
addressing topics of concern**

### WELCOME, NEIGHBORS!



**We welcome Magnolia, Jay and their kids to Society Hill! More about our Welcome Baskets on page 25.**

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SOCIETY HILL

# Reporter

**NUSA  
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2014 thru  
2019**

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April 1

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Find past issues in color  
at [www.societyhillcivic.org](http://www.societyhillcivic.org).

The views set forth in the opinion articles are the views of the authors and are not necessarily those of SHCA.

**Submissions**

If you have news that would be of interest to Society Hillers, email Sandra Rothman at [sandra.rothman@aol.com](mailto:sandra.rothman@aol.com). Materials must be submitted in writing and include the name of a contact person. Edited submissions will be considered for publication if space permits. Letters to the Editor must be signed, with contact information.

**SHCA Mission Statement**

The aims and purposes of SHCA are: 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.

## SHCA BOARD OFFICERS & DIRECTORS

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St. James Court: Sharon Simon

The St. James: Norm Lieberman

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

BY LARRY SPECTOR

Keeping Neighbors in the Loop

We worked hard over the last three years to have important features of our Master Plan enacted into law. After we succeeded in getting unanimous approval from both the City Council Rules Committee and the full City Council itself, we were surprised and disappointed to see Mayor John Kenney use a pocket veto on the last day of 2019 to prevent our bills from being enacted.

Under the leadership of Mary Purcell and the rest of our Master Plan Committee, we will continue our efforts. Meanwhile, we are left with the Mayor's public statement that our bills amounted to "exclusionary zoning" — an unfair assertion that we will work hard to correct.

SHCA engaged a dozen times over the past three years with City officials and the Bicycle Coalition of Philadelphia about adding flexible plastic posts along bike lanes in Society Hill. We recently held a special meeting of our Board to discuss the issue. With the benefit of community input, we expect that our Board will soon have a reasonable and fully informed position on the issue.

As a result of our outreach to improve our IT capability, we met with David Hitt and retained his company, Splat, Inc. This is a local firm that provides a range of digital marketing services, including web design, development and content marketing. Splat will make improvements to our website, and David will train several board members to help administer it. Our goal is to facilitate more efficient communication and

interactivity with our community and add to our social media capability. If you would like to join in this effort, please let us know.

Our Zoning and Historic Preservation Committee (ZHP) routinely meets to consider proposed building changes and new projects in our area. In recent months, it approved and supported the

Society Hill Synagogue's request for a variance to build a second-story passageway over its adjacent alley that will connect its main building to the one it will soon renovate and use for additional space at 422 Spruce Street. The Zoning Board of Adjustment then granted the variance. ZHP has also weighed in with concerns about the height of a proposed hotel at 737 Walnut Street that would follow the demolition

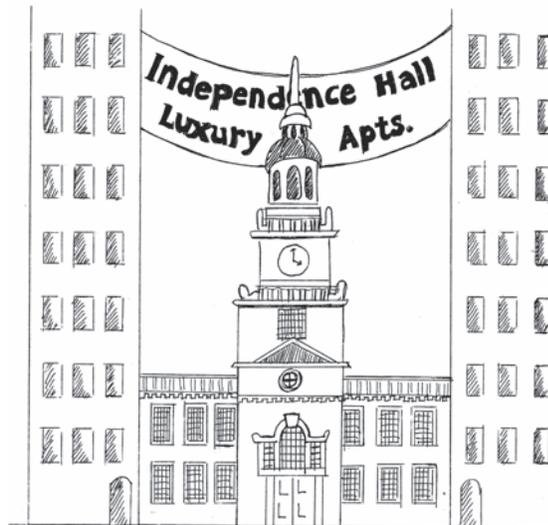
of a small retaining structure now on the site. Although South Street is just outside our boundary, ZHP is carefully monitoring two separate proposals for nightclubs on South Street.

We now have a newly constituted City Council. I encourage you to attend our next community meeting on March 18, when Councilman Allan Domb will give us his insights about possible changes to city policies that affect Society Hill.

Larry Spector is an attorney handling business disputes and related litigation. He has lived in Society Hill since 1976, married, and raised two daughters here with wife, Ann.



SHCA President Larry Spector



Coming Soon?

THE ORIGIN OF THE NAME SOCIETY HILL

The name Society Hill originated with a group called the Free Society of Traders, who were Quaker merchants and speculators. William Penn deeded this group a strip of land along the Delaware River between Spruce and Pine Streets. The Society flew its flag on the top of a small hill that soon became known as "The Society's Hill" and then eventually evolved into Society Hill.

As the city grew, the area was renamed the Dock Ward and then the Fifth Ward. In the early 20th century, the neighborhood became commercialized and fell into decay. It was during the major redevelopment period of the 1950s and 60s that the name Society Hill was revived. The name was a salute to the to the Free Society of Traders, and was never intended to denote high society.

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SAVE THE DATE

BY MARTHA LEVINE

# 42nd Annual Society Hill Open House & Garden Tour

Sunday, May 17, 1 to 5 p.m.

Mark your calendars! This much-loved event, which is SHCA's **only** annual fundraiser, is coming soon.

### Houses and Gardens Wanted!

We are looking for a group of interesting and diverse houses and gardens in Society Hill for the tour. If you would consider showing your home or garden, please contact Martha Levine, at 215-629-0727 or marthalev6@gmail.com.

Many volunteers are needed to welcome guests and provide security for each property. If you wish to volunteer, please contact Linda Skale at 215-238-1040 or lcskale@gmail.com. All volunteers will receive a complimentary ticket for the tour.

Each year, the tour offers a new collection of private homes and gardens with no repeats within five years. Tour goers love visiting our unique mix of houses — large and small, historic and contemporary — and often come to get ideas for their own home decors. Much more than a local event, the tour attracts many visitors from Philadelphia and the tri-state area, as well as New York City and beyond. As one international visitor remarked, "It was so interesting to visit

these special houses where the past meets the present."

### Fundraiser Fact

From 2009 to 2019, the tour has raised more than \$135,000 for SHCA. These funds have been used for all kinds of neighborhood improvement and beautification projects that benefit not only those of us who live here, but all who visit and appreciate this treasured corner of Philadelphia!

Look for more information in the next issue of the *Reporter* and remember to check our website for updates: [www.societyhillcivic.org](http://www.societyhillcivic.org) and click on Open House Tour.

### Purchase tickets in advance

- Web: [www.societyhillcivic.org/OpenHouseTour](http://www.societyhillcivic.org/OpenHouseTour)
- Email: [mattdejulio@aol.com](mailto:mattdejulio@aol.com)
- Phone: 215-629-1288

### Purchase tickets on the tour day

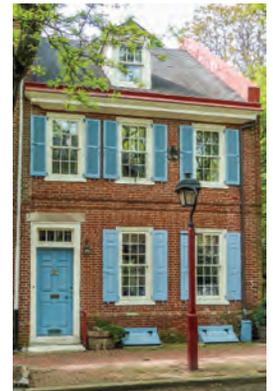
- Old Pine Community Center, 401 Lombard St.

### Ticket price and payment

- \$35 in advance; \$40 at the door
- Cash, checks and credit cards (MC & Visa) accepted



Happy tour goers visiting our great houses!



### SHCA List of Contractors

"It's like gold," said one long-time resident.

One more reason to join SHCA: Free to all current members, this 14-page list provides names and contact information for general contractors, painters, electricians, plumbers, roofers, masons, HVAC, landscapers, tree-care experts, window replacements — you name it.

To have the latest updated list mailed to you, or if you have a contractor that you would like to recommend, please contact Martha Levine at [marthalev6@gmail.com](mailto:marthalev6@gmail.com) or 215-629-0727.

Sorry, the list is not available online.



### 6th Police District News



Our 6th Police District awards "Officers of the Month" to those who have acted heroically or prevented or stopped a crime in any part of the district, which goes from Lombard to Poplar Streets and from the Delaware River to Broad Street. The award for November 2019 goes to Officer Gregory Neal at the left of the photo and Officer Charles Henry at the right. Officer of the Month for December 2019 goes to Officer Richard Alexander, who is in the middle.



We welcome Captain Matthew James, new commander of the 6th Police District. He has served on the police force for 13 years, previously assigned to the 35th, 3rd, 17th and 19th police districts.

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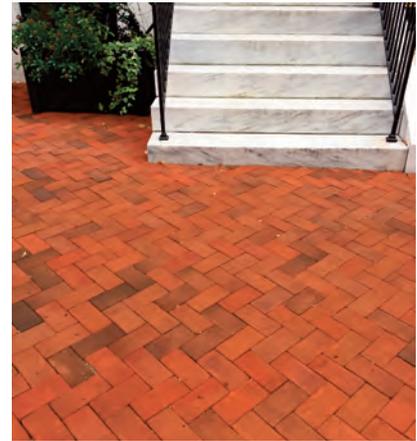
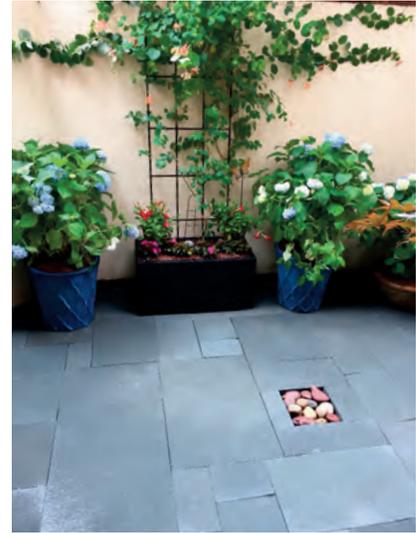
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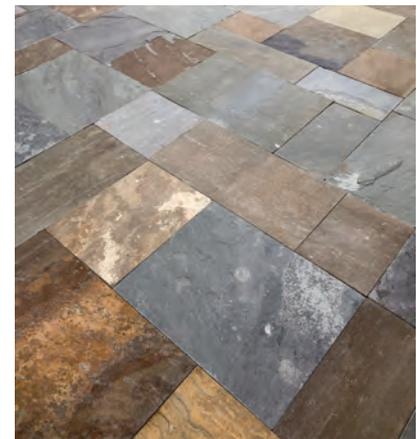
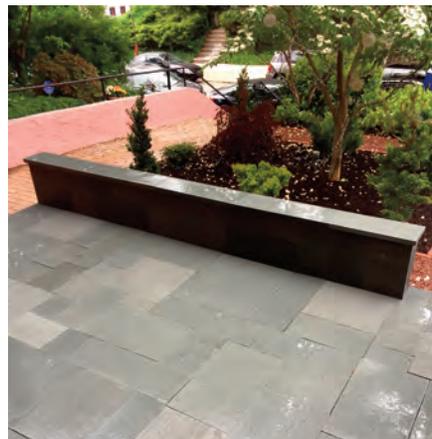
Brick sidewalks in Society Hill and downtown Philly are being renovated to provide a smooth, safe walking surface for pedestrians. We have experience and have repaired many sidewalks and patios in the city. The upheaval caused by tree roots can often be carefully corrected without removing or killing trees. Call McFarland to inquire about fixing your bricks.



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## KEEPING POSTED

BY AL CAVALARI

## Postcards as Social History

Postcard views of Independence Hall are very common, but there are surprisingly few views of the surrounding neighborhood. Old Philadelphia street scenes are plentiful, but they tend to be from Chestnut and Market Streets above 8th and down by City Hall. I find the neighborhood around our park to be more exciting, but there are relatively few cards of it.

I have held this card in my hand and stood out front of Independence Hall to find out exactly where the vantage point is. It is precisely from the front steps. You'll recognize the Lafayette Building, constructed in 1906, as today's Hotel Monaco. The fun aspect of this card is that it captures a moment in time from around 1913. As a historical artifact, it helps us to get back to someone else's world.

We have some horseless carriages, the nice lady's dress and a piece of social history in that fountain. The fountains were placed around town by the Philadelphia Fountain Society as part of the temperance movement. The idea was that making healthy water available to the masses would help keep them out of saloons. Indeed, we see here a customer availing himself of a refreshing cool drink. The Society's mission statement explained that its purpose was to promote "the health and refreshment of the inhabitants of Philadelphia, and for the benefit of the animals used by them."

Founder Dr. Wilson Cary Swann stated in an 1870 speech, "The greatest enemy to temperance, morality and virtue is more or less associated with thirst. Let these fountains be erected at convenient distances along our streets, and the temptation to resort to drinking saloons will soon be abated and, in time, abolished." His memory lives on in the Swan Memorial Fountain (1924), which you may visit in the middle of Logan Square.

The Society was the first of such charitable organizations, but others followed. The movement combined the goals of temperance and animal welfare groups. The latter were concerned about the punishing effect the lack of water had on our city's working horses. The oldest fountain still survives



*This postcard captures a moment in time from around 1913, including the Lafayette Building, constructed in 1906, today's Hotel Monaco.*

on Washington Square South across the street from the Hopkinson House. It is a charming addition to the Square, but it dumps precious water, a diminishing 21st century resource, into the gutter all summer long. It was originally installed at 7th and Walnut in 1870, and later moved to its present site.

The back of this card has a quirky surprise. I know it dates as early as 1913 because I have seen copies postmarked in that year. The one at hand, however, was not mailed until 1966. It is worth noting that Dr. Swann's efforts may have paid off. We do not make the list of top twenty alcohol-consuming cities. According to the World Population View website, that honor goes to Green Bay, Wisconsin. Ten of the top twenty are in that state!

**Al Cavalari** is a certified member of the Association of Philadelphia Tour Guides. For a day job, he operates the Flag Guys®, a flag business in upstate New York. Send comments to Al at [flagguys@aol.com](mailto:flagguys@aol.com).



**Philly's oldest fountain still survives on Washington Square South across the street from the Hopkinson House.**

**WHYY has a nice article about the fountain movement that is the source of information for this article at <https://whyy.org/articles/curbside-refreshment-for-man-and-beast/>.**

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## MAKING A DIFFERENCE

BY CLAUDIA CARABELLI

## Libraries Foster Literacy

*So Why Doesn't Every Child Have Access to One?*

Chances are you woke up today and immersed yourself in some routine tasks without giving them a second thought. Maybe you scanned the news headlines, deciphered a nutritional label or read emails. You may have done some research or checked social media. As disparate as these activities may seem, they're possible because of one common factor — **the ability to read**. Sadly, for 14 percent of American adults, that is not the case. Approximately 32 million people in the U.S. are illiterate.

While there are many excellent adult literacy programs, research agrees that early childhood is the ideal time to learn to read. Young brains are like little sponges that soak up new information. New neural connections allow most kids to learn the skill with relative ease. Reading to children and encouraging them to read helps foster these skills. If kids are lucky, they have books at home and someone to read with them. They have a school with a well-stocked library and a caring librarian. Unfortunately, the latter resource depends on your zip code more than anything else. While suburban schools often have state-of-the-art libraries with certified school librarians, students in our city are much less fortunate.

The city of Philadelphia has 250 schools. Those schools employ **fewer than 10 librarians** for the entire district! You read that correctly. This is the worst librarian-to-student ratio in the country.

Thirty years ago, the district had more than 170 librarians. Budgets cuts over the last three decades have eliminated many jobs. Principals are left with insufficient resources to staff their buildings. Do they hire a nurse or a librarian? Another much-needed teacher or a librarian? Whatever the choice, students lose out.

Some people mistakenly believe that with so much technology these days, libraries have become obsolete. To the



Signs from a January 24th rally advocating for more school librarians.

contrary, certified school librarians are uniquely equipped to help children navigate the information network so they can differentiate between factual, accurate information and the vast range of often dangerous misinformation. Modern technology actually affords librarians an array of even more diversified tools to educate our students. Help with a research paper? Looking to read up on a particular topic? Need a quiet place to study? A library provides all that and more.

So where are we now? Well, many schools have closed their libraries. Those that remain open usually do so only because of their committed volunteers.

At John B. Kelly School in Germantown, the library is open three mornings a week and staffed entirely by volunteers. Retired school librarian Doris Heise offers her services every Wednesday. She notes the stark contrast between Kelly School and the elementary library where she worked in Jenkintown. As she often says, "The library is really the heart of the school." In addition to all the resources it can offer, it's also a refuge for the child who can't handle the chaos of recess, the teacher who needs an ear and anyone searching for a few minutes to regroup.

The Nebinger Elementary School library at 6th & Carpenter had been shuttered due to lack of staff. It reopened last year thanks to the hard work of a local attorney/school volunteer. Students now use it two mornings per week. Dr. Vicki Bralow, a family practice doctor, spearheaded a Reading Buddies Program there that served seven students last year and now 16 this year. Just one hour a week reading with an adult had a positive impact on the children's reading skills. Imagine what leaps they could make with daily library resources and a certified librarian.

All the many volunteer efforts are certainly commendable, but should our kids really have to depend on the kindness of strangers? Don't they deserve the same resources we had throughout our educational years? House Bill No. 1355 proposes one certified school librarian for every school building in the state. It has strong bipartisan support, yet no action has been taken since May 2019.

Call your state representative to demand action! Contact your local school to see what they need. Your time, your money or your advocacy — all are immensely valuable. Our children deserve no less.

**Claudia Carabelli** is a SHCA Director at Large.



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**'FIX THE BRIX'**

BY MARTHA LEVINE

# Desperately Seeking Safer Sidewalks!

Although SHCA's "Fix the Brix" subsidy program has inspired over 230 households to level their sidewalks, many more need work.

We know that walking is healthier than driving or riding in an Uber. We live in a great walkable city, so why not make our sidewalks easier to use? No one wants to see anyone hurt from a trip-and-fall accident. Remember, homeowners are responsible for maintaining property up to the curb and are liable for any injuries that occur therein.

Since the City of Philadelphia has no sidewalk repair program, SHCA has filled that void with the **"Fix the Brix" subsidy program**. If you are a current SHCA member, you may receive a subsidy of 40 percent up to \$400 of the repair invoice; non-members get 40 percent up to \$300.

It pays to be an SHCA member.

Here are the easy steps:

- Take a photo of your troublesome sidewalk, and email it to me at marthalev6@gmail.com.
- Select a mason or arborist to do the work; if needed, we have a short list of contractors to recommend.
- Have the work done to your satisfaction, and make sure you have an invoice marked paid by the contractor.
- Make a copy of your paid invoice and if possible, your cancelled check, and mail the original to SHCA, P.O. Box 63503, Philadelphia PA 19147.
- Receive a check within a few weeks.



**Loose bricks like these are not only unsightly, but a tripping hazard. If you have these, remove and store them or have a mason or arborist secure them in place.**

**FIRST FRIDAY, APRIL 3**

BY CLAIRE BATTEN

# PJ Clarke's Launches New Art Initiative

*Raw Nerve Presents Solo Shows by Emerging Artists*

PJ Clarke's is pleased to announce the opening of a new solo show by visual artist and poet, Sophie Brenneman, called, "Running Through Honey in the Dreamworld." The multimedia show opens at PJ Clarke's in the Curtis, 601 Walnut Street, on First Friday, April 3 at 5.30 p.m.

*Raw Nerve Presents* is a new series of arts events that will provide a showcase for emerging fine artists with ties to Philadelphia.

Thea Scotti, Director of Member Services at PJ Clarke's, explains the rationale for the company's involvement: "Philadelphia has a long-standing tradition of training fine artists, dating back to 1805 with the foundation of the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts (PAFA). There's an incredible pool of young artistic talent here in the city thanks to schools such as PAFA, Moore College of Art, Tyler, University of the Arts and Fleisher. Wherever we operate, we try to give back to the local community. We want young

talent like Sophie to be successful. PJ Clarke's can help provide a showcase for art in an unstuffy, casual setting. We're shaking things up."

"Running Through Honey in the Dreamworld" opens April 3 and closes June 10. Works for sale will include oversized charcoal drawings, charcoal miniatures and sculpture by the artist. Original works start at \$400. If any *Reporter* readers are art lovers and are interested in attending the opening, please RSVP to clairelbatten@gmail.com.

PJ Clarke's has been serving Classic American fare, skillfully made cocktails and great conversation since the 1880s. From its unique perspective at the corner of Walnut and 6th Streets, PJ's Philadelphia offers Washington Square neighbors, local business folk and visitors from all over the world a ringside seat to history. PJ Clarke's will be serving a limited edition "Dream" cocktail to coincide with the show.



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March 26, 7:30 p.m.  
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*Harmony of Nations*  
Presented by Filament  
April 16, 7:30 p.m.  
The Powel House,  
244 S. 3rd Street

*A well-tended Garden*  
by Kleine Kammermusik  
May 2, 7:30 p.m.  
The Hill-Physick House,  
321 S. 4th Street





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## SOUTH STREET HEADHOUSE DISTRICT

BY CLAIRE BATTEN

## A Window Into South Street Art

Stand on the corner of 4th and South Streets, and you'll notice something is different.

Thanks to the visionaries at the South Street Headhouse District (SSHD), the art advocacy nonprofit Visual Urban Renewal & Transformation (VURT), and UPS Store's Scott Vradelis, a new mural has recently been installed at the former Starbucks at 401 South Street.

The plan was initially hatched between VURT members Evan Lovett and Frank Chappell, along with SSHD's executive director Mike Harris, over food and drinks at Tattooed Mom, 530 South Street. (Mom's owner Robert Perry is both a creative force in the District and a long-time supporter of VURT.) Next, SSHD Projects Coordinator Dana Feinberg worked closely with Evan, Scott, and Michael Axelrod, the property owner of 401 South Street, to coordinate the project.

In total, seven windows on properties along the South Street corridor were transformed as part of a pilot project called South Street Art.

#### A Communal Effort

The artwork was generated either by capturing a painting digitally, or by creating and editing art digitally. The files were then sent to Scott at the UPS Store at 614 S. 4th Street. Working with a local printer, Scott waved his magic wand to transfer the art to banners fabricated from a vinyl mesh material. Many of the panels are on a grand scale and range in size from 10 feet high to nearly six feet wide. Evan explained, "The artwork was printed as banners so that they can be moved around the district as a property is rented, and another vacant storefront needs some attention."

How has the general public reacted to SSHD's initiative? Evan commented, "A woman was walking by the windows while we were working and asked what we were doing; she was curious to see if it was another advertisement. After I explained the project to her, she said,



**VURT team members Erica Petrini and Michelle Markellos work on the installation in the former Starbucks window.**



**401 South Street window installations.**

"I'm so glad you are doing this! Can't wait to see more."

South Street businesses also applaud this effort to create a welcoming environment for current and future tenants, as well as visitors and neighbors. They congratulate SSHD'S Mike Harris and Dana Feinberg for having

done a really amazing job making this all happen.

#### About VURT

Philadelphia-based VURT has a daring mission: To stimulate the community by engaging them with vibrant public art that engenders a better looking urban landscape. Their work often involves transforming an empty property through dynamic murals, like the "Bickering Birds" at the Rite Aid parking lot at 5th and Fitzwater in Queen Village.

According to Evan Lovett, one of the founders of VURT, "We try to make places look better by drawing attention to properties that people might prefer to overlook. We wish to bring attention to spaces in a positive way by adding color, pattern and images."

VURT is a network of likeminded artists and advocates who support each other in helping our community through the power of public art and education. They are dedicated to inspiring, diversifying, and renewing the visual landscape of Philadelphia. Their community activism doesn't stop there, however. This collective also seeks to invest resources in the next generation of artists by providing art supplies to public schools in Philadelphia and free art classes to students through a series of initiatives. To learn more, visit [www.vurtcreative.org](http://www.vurtcreative.org).

### More Than Just Your Mailbox Store

**The UPS Store** has been a fixture in our neighborhood for the last 16 years. Initially sited on South Street itself, the store moved to be closer to the Post Office store on S. 4th Street. The UPS store has grown beyond its initial roots as a mailbox location; it now provides printing, shredding and notary services.

For further information, contact [store3633@gmail.com](mailto:store3633@gmail.com).



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## WASHINGTON SQUARE COMMITTEE REPORT

BY FRED MANFRED

## Exciting Happenings in Washington Square

Society Hill is one of very few neighborhoods that can boast having a national park within its borders. In 2005, the City of Philadelphia gave the National Park Service (NPS) an easement, which transferred responsibility, but not ownership, for the park. SHCA has worked diligently to form a working relationship with NPS.

Over the past 18 months, and under the direction of Sherley Young, you've likely noticed a lot of changes. A Master Gardener, she presides over the 6.4 acres with a vision for every season and is building toward a master plan for the park.

With the goal of making Washington Square a nationally recognized historic arboretum, Sherley hand selected a talented advisory board, known as the Potting Shed Cabinet. In addition, she developed 20 planting bed mentors and assigned at least one mentor to each of the 15 beds that surround the park's perimeter.

In 2019, Sherley engaged an outside landscape and architectural firm to assist with Phase I to create the Square's master plan. This effort begins with verifying, identifying and updating a map of the park's trees.

Once the identifying process is complete, plaques will be installed. Sherley has plans to hold regularly scheduled tours designed to inform the public of the park's select inventory of trees and amazing diversity.

The entire tree canopy is being trimmed this winter. This project has many long-term benefits. It will encourage healthier trees, reduce branch damage during high winds and create new light patterns throughout the park. The additional light will also help reduce bare spots by improving conditions for grass to grow.

To date, each bed has been strategically edited. Crowded and/or poorly performing trees, bushes and plantings have been removed. In the spring and fall of last year, new trees, bushes and



**Sherley Young (in the blue apron) and just a few of the Square's volunteers.**

perennials were installed as the baseline for redesigning the beds. Annuals were installed for splashes of color.

Last year, NPS mandated that all new plantings for the park be of a native variety. This strategic decision helps to protect the animals and insects indigenous to our area. Operating within this guideline, the Potting Shed Cabinet is committed to providing seasonal interest. The Cabinet hopes the community enjoyed the hellebores, which began blooming around Thanksgiving and continued through the winter.

With a stable of almost 45 volunteers, Sherley maintained a steady stream of helpers this past hot summer to remove the grass growing around the trunks of all 188 trees in the park. Wood chips were then placed around each tree to preserve moisture and eliminate the need for weed whacking, which was damaging the tree bark and trunks.

In addition, wood chips were strategically placed close to park entrances with the hope of encouraging dog owners to direct their pets into relieving themselves on the chips.

A test installation of Carex grasses has been installed in the southern quadrant of the park under a dense tree canopy. These grasses are known to thrive in low light as well as in both wet and arid conditions.

The volunteers have worked with NPS to have the park benches repaired and steam cleaned. In addition, the monument was carefully steam cleaned this past fall.

Sherley has engaged NPS on many other projects. A pilot installation of new curbing has been completed. A park-wide curbing plan is being developed. This curbing will improve problems with run-off. In parallel, the Park Service is evaluating improved drainage throughout.

Other projects in process include repairs to the outer surround of the fountain, expansion of the security camera project and compassionate ways to deal with homeless people in the park.

The community's generous donations are what drive these initiatives. With the Washington Square Affair fundraiser just around the corner, we hope that you'll continue to donate generously and join us as we celebrate Washington Square.

**Fred Manfred** Co-Chair, Washington Square Committee and Washington Square Affair



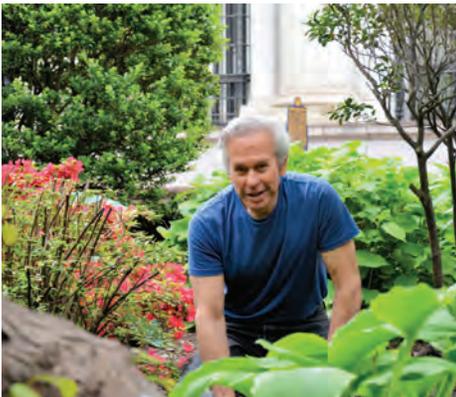
**Guests arriving at the 2018 Square Affair**

OUT AND ABOUT

PHOTOS BY FRED MANFRED

Washington Square...

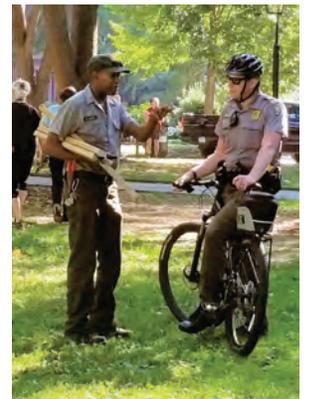
*Thanks to nearly 45 volunteers, the 15 planting beds surrounding the park's perimeter are beautifully maintained.*



OUT AND ABOUT

PHOTOS BY FRED MANFRED

It's All About Community



*Working with the NPS, park benches and the monument were steam-cleaned this past fall.*

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## TRAVELING BACK IN TIME

BY SANDRA ROTHMAN

## Finding Family Tree Roots and Branches

It was a surreal experience. As I sat on the plane traveling forward in space, I felt my mind retreating backward in time.

Our destination was a tiny village at the foothills of the Carpathian Mountains, very near today's Polish border. When my grandfather left Hubici for America in 1902, the land was called Galicia and belonged first to the Austrian Hungarian Empire and then Poland. After WWII, it became part the Soviet Union and now resides in Western Ukraine.

For more than 10 years I'd been doggedly, if not obsessively, trying to locate this little place that for me existed only in the context of the past. My son Alexander accompanied me on this journey, and neither of us could have anticipated how that past was about to collide with the present.

**New, But Familiar**

Slav, our intrepid driver, translator, historian and all-around wonderful guy, had found a new hotel in an old town full of charming Austro-Hungarian architecture that was a short drive to Hubici. I awoke at dawn to quiet conversation outside my window, as locals drove the town's cattle to pasture. The sounds and rhythms of a language I hadn't heard in decades transported me back to my childhood.

At breakfast, I was stunned to discover that we were in Dobromil — the place where my grandfather had long ago obtained his travel documents in the town hall I could see from my table. All those years of research had given me a real handle on this spot. I knew it well.



Dobromil town hall

Looking up, I recognized the onion domes of the ancient Basilan monastery that had perched above this valley for 350 years. Nearby I knew there were ruins of a small castle that was built by the Herbut dynasty in the late 1500s. This old German noble family had owned the land that my ancestors, under the feudal system, had farmed as serfs.

Turning my head, I knew precisely where the Vyrva River lay. Once it provided opportunity for adventurous young men to navigate raft-loads of lumber to distant towns. It was always the custom in this poor area for the men to go away for months on end and eventually return with their purses full. After the railroad was built — and I knew the exact location of the station — emigrants like my grandfather broke this cycle when they boarded the train and never looked back.

**Down the Road**

As we bumped down the road towards Hubici, swerving often to miss its many potholes, I marveled at how much I knew. I could even recognize the simple and elegant pysanki patterns specific to this location. A thousand years ago, these designs were important to pagan egg “writers,” who were responsible for an intricate set of rituals that connected their village's unique pattern to those of the greater community. Each was part of a prayer that needed all the pieces in place to work its magic.

I was still mentally chronicling my encyclopedic knowledge of our ancestral land when we arrived at the church doors in Hubici and waited for the service to end. I absently wondered if Anna was still alive and if she would soon exit.



Pysanki patterns are unique for each village.



Herbut Dynasty castle

**Traveling Back In Time**

*continued from page 19*

**The Kindness of Strangers**

A few years prior, I had communicated online with a Canadian businessman who made frequent trips to this part of Ukraine. A total stranger, he graciously offered to take photos of the town and search for people with my maiden surname. One photo of three women in a field touched me deeply, and I wrote to Anna, a woman in her 90s. Strangers continued to help me. One translated my letter and others formed an email chain that eventually resulted in a gentleman in Lviv posting the letter to Hubici. I thought that nothing had come of this effort, though.

A congregant now tapped me on the shoulder, bringing me out of my reverie. It was Yaraslava, Anna's daughter. She had correctly assumed that I, the first Westerner to ever visit the village, had to be the letter writer. She told me that after her mother died, she did her own research in the local archives and found something that would turn our journey upside down and totally change its focus.

Although my long and extensive exploration had yielded many interesting facts, the surprising information that my grandfather had a brother who stayed in Hubici and had raised a large family there was not one of them.



**A small portion of my new family!**

**A Long "Lost" Family**

When we planned this pilgrimage to discover our roots, Alexander and I had no idea that we would be hijacked by an exuberant and interesting group of strangers linked to us by blood. The rest of our time in Ukraine was spent traveling from one table to another, each laden with dozens of small dishes full of delicious food and copious quantities of vodka. We laughed and talked and shared our histories. It was unanimously agreed that translator Slav now had an honorary branch on our family tree, with all the accompanying benefits.

**Finding Your Roots**

This journey was one of the great experiences of my life, in part for its unexpected turns, but mostly for the way it connected me to a greater whole — much like the previously mentioned pysanki designs. All four of my grandparents came from this general area, and I saw my family reflected in faces everywhere we went.

For readers wanting to visit their own familial locations, I can assure you that it's worth the effort. It will take some work, but, thanks to the internet, less than I put into it. There are certain documents in your ancestors' paper trails that list hometowns. For a start, these can include WWI draft applications, naturalization petitions, death certificates and sometimes census lists. Sites like Ancestry.com make it easy to find this paperwork. Be warned, though. It can become an addiction!

I have two blogs online with great photos and text that goes into deeper detail about this trip and the one I took a year later to reconnect with my family. If you would find it of interest, I suggest you scroll to the oldest post and read backwards: [www.forgottenancestors.blogspot.com](http://www.forgottenancestors.blogspot.com) and [www.boikoconnection.blogspot.com](http://www.boikoconnection.blogspot.com).

**Sandra Rothman** is the Reporter's Editor in Chief.

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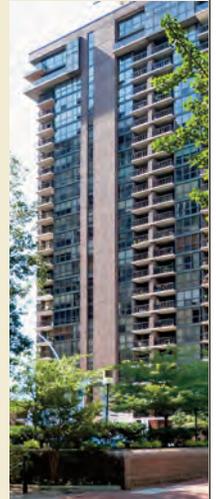
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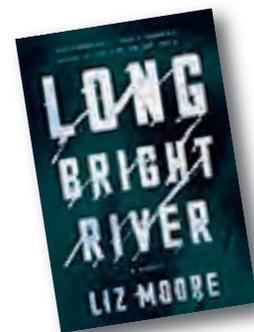
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ON OUR SHELF

BY VIKTORIA LANGE

# Long Bright River



**Bring in a copy of this review and receive 20 percent off any one title in our store or ordered online at [www.HeadHouseBooks.com](http://www.HeadHouseBooks.com).**

There is a Philadelphia that many do not know. That Philadelphia is also one that others know all too well. Local resident and bestselling author Liz Moore's third novel, *Long Bright River*, is populated with characters who are entrenched in this world. It takes place in Kensington, a neighborhood that has gained the unfortunate national reputation as a notorious hub of drug addiction.

Mickey grew up inseparable from her younger sister, Kacey, in a distinctly pre-yuppy Fishtown. The early loss of their mother and estrangement from their father, both due to addiction, makes orphans of the girls, who remain in the neglectful hands of their grieving maternal grandmother. Despite their equally rocky start in life, the girls grow further and further apart the older they get, finally ceasing contact entirely. Ever striving to please the teachers and mentors she idolizes, Mickey becomes a police officer. Kacey succumbs to addiction, living on the very same Kensington streets that have become Mickey's beat.

A rift clearly divides these sisters, one whose inciting incidents readers will uncover. What launches us into this complicated relationship, in an equally complicated setting, is a string of murders in the neighborhood. The murders share some characteristics: all of the victims are women, and all suffer from addiction. Simultaneously, Mickey realizes that she has not spotted Kacey from her patrol car in some time and

begins to feverishly search for her sister. This launches the unfolding action of *Long Bright River*.

It seems that *Long Bright River* has all the makings of a good thriller. Here is where, as an avid reader of most genres, I must capitulate. I am not typically a reader of thrillers. Possessing a hyperactive imagination, I tend to avoid them for fear of having nightmares. I also tend to feel alienated by certain authors of the genre whose writing works hard to outsmart readers, vying for shock value in the plot.

Why this confession? Because I do not want readers as "thriller-averse" as I am to miss this stunning, important novel.

The plot certainly includes some heart-pounding moments. There are definitely twists and surprises, yet Moore is far more in pursuit of crafting 360-degree characters and a sense of place over figuring out how to best foil her readers. The result is a humanizing, non-judgmental elegy for a neighborhood and its inhabitants to whom the powers that be have been deeply unfair. Anyone living in this city will not only recognize many of the locations where the novel's scenes unfold, but also its characters. Many are folks on we see on street corners, in parks or on trains. For those of us not in their circumstances, we can feel, at best, helpless to their needs. It is without pity or didacticism that Moore unfolds these characters. With a few downright villainous exceptions, we are introduced to

deeply complicated human beings. They are reproachful, ignorant, neglectful and possessive. They are also fiercely proud, loyal, witty and strong. As a result, we may come away with a heightened awareness of the many facets of our city and its citizens. If a book classified as a thriller can do that, then it must be worth the engrossing read.

Curious about other novels that take place in and around Philly? Check out the following titles:

- *Americanah* by Chimamanda Ngozie Adichie
- *The Water Dancer* by Ta-Nehisi Coates
- *In the Dream House* by Carmen Maria Machado
- *The Dutch House* by Ann Patchett
- *The Year of the Return* by Nathaniel Popkin
- *Such A Fun Age* by Kiley Reid

**Richard De Wyngaert** is the proprietor of Society Hill's only local, independently owned bookstore, Head House Books, located at 619 S. 2nd street. Events Coordinator **Viktoria Lange** wrote this article.

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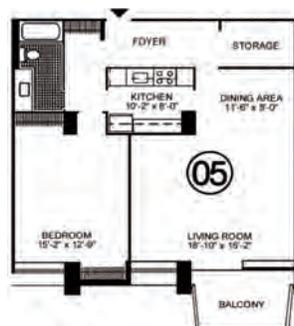
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604 S. Washington Square



Well-appointed one bedroom with a private terrace, parquet wood floors, renovated galley kitchen and updated bathroom. Great investment opportunity.  
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**1,003 sf | Offered for \$319,000**



Sun-drenched 1 bedroom with a generously sized balcony, amazing natural light, parquet wood floors and excellent storage space. Great investment opportunity.  
**778 sf | Offered for \$289,900**



**SOCIETY HILL WELCOME BASKETS**

BY MARTHA LEVINE

# A Community/Business Partnership

Over the last 20 years, many local businesses have partnered with SHCA to make the Welcome Baskets Program possible. Welcome Baskets are presented to new first-time homeowners in Society Hill, with 40 to 45 baskets presented each year. The purpose of the program was, and still is, to introduce new residents to our association with the hope that they will join and support us.

Each Welcome Basket is filled to the brim with fresh foods, neighborhood information and many gift cards and vouchers to area restaurants, theaters, shops, services and museums.

This partnership has endured and keeps growing, with new businesses joining our program each year. Many newcomers move here for the excitement of living close to all that a city can offer.

Therefore, as a show of appreciation, we invite you to patronize these generous businesses — see the list below of the 53 business supporters of our basket program. If you are a new owner as of 2019 or 2020, please let us know if you would like a basket presented to you in your home.

Please contact me at:  
marthalev6@gmail.com.

## 2020 SOCIETY HILL WELCOME BASKET CONTRIBUTORS

**Coffee Shops**

Greenstreet Coffee, 1101 Spruce Street  
La Colombe Coffee, 100 S. 6th Street  
Passero's Coffee Roasters, 834 Chestnut Street

**Food Stores**

Acme Market, 5th Street

**Restaurants**

Ants' Pants, 526 S. 4th Street  
Bistro Romano, 120 Lombard Street  
Bistrot La Minette, 623 S. 6th Street  
Cavanaugh's Headhouse, 421 S. 2nd Street  
City Tavern, 138 S. 2nd Street  
Creperie Beau Monde, 624 S. 6th Street  
Fork, 306 Market Street  
Frieda's Café, 320 Walnut Street  
Garces Group — Amada, 217 Chestnut Street, and others  
Gnocchi, 613 E. Passyunk (near 5th & South Streets)  
High Street on Market, 308 Market Street  
La Buca Ristorante, 711 Locust Street  
La Scala's Restaurant & Bar, 615 Chestnut Street  
Malbec Argentine Steakhouse, 400 to 402 S. 2nd Street  
PJ Clarke's, 601 Walnut Street  
Pizza Fresca, 703 Chestnut Street  
Positano Coast Restaurant, 2nd & Walnut Streets  
Talula's Daily, café & take out, 208 W. Washington Square

**Specialty Foods**

Homemade Goodies by Roz, 510 S. 5th Street  
Knead Bagels, 725 Walnut Street  
Metropolitan Bakery, 262 S. 19th Street (Rittenhouse Square)  
South Street Bagels, 613 S. 3rd Street



**Specialty Shops**

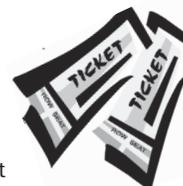
Adornamenti (jewelry), 1106 Pine Street  
Evantine Design, 715 Walnut Street  
Head House Books (independent bookstore), 619 S. 2nd Street  
Paper on Pine (invitations/stationery), 115 S. 13th Street  
Paul Morelli Design Inc. (jewelry), 1118 Walnut Street  
Show of Hands Gallery (crafts), 1006 Pine Street

**Theaters/Entertainment**

Arden Theater, 40 N. 2nd Street  
1812 Productions (all comedy theater), 215-592-9560  
Ghost Tours of Philadelphia, 610-587-8308  
InterAct Theater Company, at the Drake, 302 S. Hicks Street  
Lantern Theater Company, 10th & Ludlow Streets (south of Market)  
National Museum of American Jewish History, 5th & Market Streets  
National Liberty Museum, 321 Chestnut Street  
Pennsylvania Ballet, Academy of Music, Broad & Locust Streets  
Philadelphia Chamber Music Society, 215-569-8080  
Philadelphia Society for the Preservation of Landmarks, 321 S. 4th Street  
Philadelphia Theatre Company, Suzanne Roberts Theater, Broad & Pine Sts  
The Chamber Orchestra of Philadelphia, the Kimmel Center, 215-545-1739  
The Philadelphia Chamber Ensemble, Old Pine Church, 412 Pine Street  
The Philadelphia Orchestra, the Kimmel Center for Performing Arts, Broad & Spruce  
Wilma Theater, 265 S. Broad Street

**Other Services**

J. Sima Salon, Society Hill Towers, 257 St. James Place.  
Judy Moon Massage Therapy, 829 Spruce Street, Suite 300  
M's on the Square (salon), Hopkinson House, 604 S. Washington Square  
Lee's Cleaners, 241 S. 6th Street  
Worth Collection New York (women's fashions), 215-925-8813,  
spattison@comcast.net





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2001-II	312-I
1304-I	2404-I
1705-I	2210-II
2007-I	2211-II
1801-II	1506-II
1807-I	308-I
502-I	2107-I
502-II	1501-II
1102-I	812-II
1602-II	809-I

**IN MEMORIAM**

We regret to inform readers of the death of neighbor **Don Kaufman**, who passed away at his home on Washington Square on August 25.

Don was an executive coach and co-founder of The Kaufman Partnership. According to his son Marc, coaching was not only a business, but a calling and a way to help others. It was an ideal match for him, as he brought integrity, kindness and empathy to his clients. He was also a founding member of both the Center for Organizational Dynamics and the Psychoanalytic Coaches Association.

Don enjoyed family events, participating in charities and community activities, and golfing and sailing, including solo sails to the British and American Virgin Islands. He was an active member of Society Hill Synagogue. He also served on the Executive Board of the Friends of Independence National Historical Park.

We offer our condolences to his wife, Karen, and to sons, Marc and David.



**Volunteers Wanted**

The Old Pine Conservancy is inviting interested individuals to join its board. In addition to having an interest in the preservation of this nationally certified historic site, they are also looking to bring on board people who are proficient in the use of all current social media platforms. The Conservancy meets on the third Thursday of every month at 9:30 a.m. at Old Pine Street Church, located at 412 Pine Street. For more information please contact Alice Reyes at: [alicer463@gmail.com](mailto:alicer463@gmail.com) or at 215-603-1510.

**Exercise & Socialize**

The **Walkie/Talkies** meet at Three Bears Park, Delancey Street between 3rd and 4th Streets, on Tuesday morning at 8:15 a.m. for a one-hour stroll through our historic community. Anyone is welcome to participate in this non-stressful, one-hour exercise and socialize program.

**"Philly Is Walking In The Park!"** meets at the fountain in the center of Washington Square, 6th and Locust Streets, at 8 a.m. Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays for a half-hour, self-paced walk through our historic, beautiful park led by neighbor Dr. Lisa Unger. All are invited to join us.



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MEMBERSHIP REPORT

BY MATT DEJULIO

# 2020 Membership Drive On Par With Last Year

By early February, 880 Society Hill residents had already renewed their association membership — about the same as last time this year. Winners of the restaurant certificates for those who had renewed by December 31, 2019, were Perry Whyte and Jack Roddy. Congratulations to these lucky folks.

So far 58 new members have signed up this fiscal year — down 13 percent from 67 last year at this time. Three hundred forty residents have not yet responded to two mailings, about the same as last year, which saw a membership total of 1,183. If you have delayed in sending in your renewal, or wish to join, please do so today. More and more members are renewing online at our web site, and we welcome that, since it cuts down on postage and mailing costs.

We welcome each of the over 3,600 households in our neighborhood to join SHCA. Your civic association helps protect your real estate investment by funding many of our improvement projects, as well as providing subsidies to neighbors who plant trees and fix their sidewalks. We help enhance your quality of life when we advocate on your behalf regarding zoning changes, real estate taxes, crime problems and traffic issues. All of this is accomplished through the hard work of our dedicated board of directors, committee members, block coordinators, and most importantly, your membership dues.

Without member dues, SHCA would cease to function. Protect your neighborhood and your real estate investment. **Sign up today!**

Email [Mattdejulio@aol.com](mailto:Mattdejulio@aol.com) with questions or comments, which will be shared with our board members representing every quadrant in our unique, historic neighborhood.

**Matt DeJulio** is a retired publishing executive. He has served SHCA as its administrator since 2001.

### Park, America!

A limited number of monthly parking spaces are available at the renovated lot at 511 S. Front Street, between South and Lombard Streets.

If interested, contact Ed Sullivan with Park America at 610-637-6832.



*Society Hill*  
CIVIC ASSOCIATION

## Membership Application

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ Apt. # \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Work Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email (print clearly) \_\_\_\_\_

IMPORTANT: Today, most everyone communicates via email. Please be sure that we have your current email address — so that you can receive important updates between publication of our community newsletter. All SHCA emails will be judiciously screened, and rarely will we send emails more than once a week. Nor will we share your email address with anyone else. This convenient, 21st-century system helps save our civic association postage costs, while keeping you regularly informed.

**Residential Memberships**

- \$ 50 Basic Household Membership
- \$ 40 Senior/Student/Single
- \$ 100 Federal Friend
- \$ 150 Georgian Grantor
- \$ 300 Jefferson Benefactor
- \$ 500 Washington Benefactor
- \$ 1,000 Benjamin Franklin Benefactor

**Business Memberships**

- \$ 100 Institutions — 5+ employees
- \$ 60 Institutions — fewer than 5 employees

**Additional Contributions**

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ Washington Square Beautification      \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Franklin Lights

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ Sidewalk Cleaning/Graffiti Removal      \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Tree Tenders

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ 5th Street Legal Fund      \$ \_\_\_\_\_ McCall School

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ Fix the Brix      Total Enclosed \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Charge VISA/MasterCard:

Number \_\_\_\_\_ Exp Date \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

The following topics are of special interest to me. I welcome receipt of email updates on these topics.

- Clean-Up Day
- Washington Square
- Zoning & Historic Preservation
- Franklin Lights
- Social Events
- 5th Street Development
- Dilworth House
- Property Taxes
- Local Crime Incidents
- Reporter
- Fundraising
- and Alerts

Please return completed application to:

**Society Hill Civic Association**, P.O. Box 63503, Philadelphia, PA 19147

## NIFTY NEIGHBORS IN MY OWN BACKYARD

BY CLAUDIA CARABELLI

## A Passion for Gardening Continues to Bloom



**Sherley Young and Green Bean**

Please see pages 15 – 17 for more about all the exciting things happening in Washington Square.

One would be hard pressed to find a neighbor more fitting to profile than Sherley Young. As Co-chair of the SHCA's Washington Square Committee, she presides over that 6.4-acre oasis that so many of us think of as our own backyard. With a Philadelphia ancestry on both sides of her family dating back to the 1680s, it's kind of a "full circle" moment for her to now be putting down roots in the most literal way.

You may have seen her working solo or with her team, sometimes with her little dachshund, Green Bean, by her side. Lest you think of her as a woman of a certain age puttering in the garden, know that this human dynamo has lived and continues to pursue a very interesting path in life.

A history major in college, Sherley always loved cultural anthropology. Her initial career goal was to be a lawyer. Unfortunately, the profession was quite sexist in the 1960s, with not much opportunity for women. A career reboot led her to teach high school history and, subsequently, work for Citibank in New York.

But she was always more than her paid job. After giving birth to her two daughters, she came to appreciate the great disparity in women's access to medical care and opened not one, but two non-profit centers, providing comprehensive reproductive health care for women.

She's led 14 trips with Habitat for Humanity International to six different continents. Six trips were to Africa, where twice the team lived in tents with the local villagers so as to better understand the community and its needs. On each trip, she brought multi-generational volunteers of all backgrounds, from all over the U.S.

A Philadelphian by birth, Sherley most recently resided in nearby Devon. She loved the vitality of the city, but was reluctant to give up her garden to relocate. When the opportunity arose to purchase an apartment on Washington Square, Sherley figured this could be the chance to have it all: the energy of urban living with an amazing park right outside her door. So seven years ago, she made the move. Little did she know how much a part of her life that park would soon become.

Long-time residents can attest to how poorly the park had been maintained. In 2005, the National Park Service took over responsibility for it. Like many federal agencies, they were undermanned and overwhelmed. It took years of fundraising by SHCA, most specifically board member Sissie Lipton, to begin to spruce up the Square. Over time, bureaucratic red tape got in the way and improvements slowed down. Not one to let obstacles deter her, Sherley reached out to then SHCA President Rosanne Loesch with her ideas. Next she completed a 12-week Master Gardener course and began what she calls the "best volunteer job ever."

Sherley loves that the work is multi-phased and ongoing. As she says, it takes a good seven years to build a garden. She hopes to hire a landscape architectural firm to create a master plan for the square. Native plants will eventually replace annuals to better support the ecosystem of animals and insects. Proactive tree pruning is scheduled before spring. Soon all 188 trees will be identified and labeled. The process has begun to have Washington Square become an accredited arboretum by Arbnet, the sole international program for arboreta.

Having met Sherley, no doubt all this and more is certainly possible.

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 Dr. Robert Anolik (2019), Dr. Nora Lin (2019-2017),  
 Christine Malloy, MD (2019), Shashank Sheth, MD (2019),  
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 Patrick Vannelli, MD (2019), Sandhya Desai, MD (2019)

## METRO CLUB

201 North 8th Street

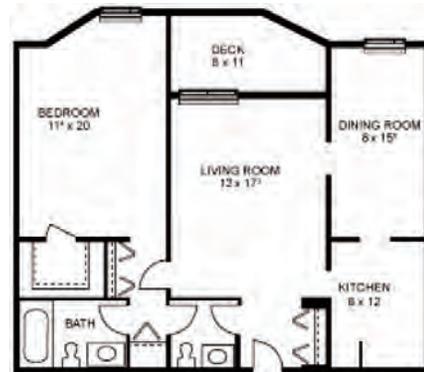


Bright and sunny 1 bedroom residence boasting sunrise city views to the east, an upgraded kitchen, marble-appointed bathroom and wood floors throughout.

**922 sf | \$325,000**

## ABBOTT'S SQUARE

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