



SOCIETY HILL REPORTER

An independent newsletter published by the Society Hill Civic Association
in cooperation with the East Philadelphia Sun

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NOTES from SHCA President

By Dick Ostrander
CLEANUP WEEK

Spring is here. Congratulations Society Hill on how clean and spiffy we're going to look after our Saturday, May 2nd CLEANUP DAY! The timing of CLEANUP WEEK—beginning April 26 through May 2—coincides with the Philadelphia Open House Tour for Society Hill on Sunday, May 3rd. There will be a special trash pickup for our neighborhood on Saturday, May 2nd, from 11 am to 1 pm, and we're hoping for a street cleaning demo by the big white sweeping machine supplied by Senator Vincent Fumo. Watch for the flyer for full details.

And the weekend prior to May

SOCIETY HILL REPORTER

Society Hill Civic Association
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2nd, you can visit the Physick House Annual Plant Sale (see descriptive article in this issue) to buy goodies to decorate your May basket, which will brighten your front door and our community all spring and summer long. (Maybe it's time to take down the holiday wreath?)

SHCA ISSUES

The next open-to-all Board meeting is Wednesday, April 15 at 7:30 pm at the 4th & Lombard Community Center. Issues to be covered include:

(1) Councilwoman Joan Specter plans to bring us the latest info on the city budget and will be available to answer your questions.

(2) The president of the Korean War Memorial—planned for just north of the Vietnam Memorial—will attend the meeting to explain those plans.

(3) We'll hear from Jack Downey concerning his proposal of a 2nd floor addition to his outdoor cafe at the corner of 2nd and Front Streets.

(4) We'll be revisiting the hotly debated issue of the South Street Barricades. We'll consider Councilman Joe Vignola's proposed legislative change of the present rule under which barriers can be installed—as a means of restricting automobile congestion on South Street—on Friday and Saturday nights from April through November.

(5) The SHCA by-laws update should be completed by April 15, and we'll be planning for nominations for new officers and directors, as well as making arrangements to operate a Society Hill Kiosk during the May 15-17 South Street/Head House 7 Arts Festival.

(6) Finally, we hope to learn by then about Penn Mutual's plans for their buildings on the 500 block of Walnut Street. A spokesperson for the company indicated that their studies are complete and will be reported to the neighborhood following a meeting with Independence National Historical Park. No action will be taken before these meetings are held.

The 42 Bus Stop & Man Full of Trouble

The petition by the Man Full of Trouble Museum to move the SEPTA Bus Stop from in front of the Museum (on Spruce near 2nd Street) to Mattis Street—about 70 steps northeast and around the corner from the present location—was unanimously supported by the Society Hill Civic Association meeting on March 10th, after being considered at several previous meetings.

According to the Museum's curator, Joyce Halley, it was thought that the Museum's structural problems resulted essentially from rumbling caused by the long layovers of the buses, which idled in front of the historical structure—built on marshy filled ground on the bank of what had once been little Dock Creek. The fumes from the idling of these buses, sometimes for as long as 45 minutes, also damaged the building's appearance by causing the paint to peel and the spalling of its bricks.

Last year the Museum requested of SEPTA that these layovers occur on Mattis Street. SEPTA complied, although the buses were still permitted to stop in front of the building for passenger pickup and drop-off. Since then, however, the Museum's staff noticed that the building still vibrates intensely whenever a bus stops and starts. In fact, Ms. Halley said she could see the English Delft dishes on display rattling with every stop and start of a bus. A Streets Department official said that this is due to a "washboarding effect" whereby the bus digs into the asphalt causing gullies to develop. These depressions in the road have been filled, but others continue to develop and may grow deeper. Soon, unless the buses can be rerouted (or, at least, not stop and start on these old, block-paved streets) the vibrations will be felt by ordinary automobile traffic, causing additional structural damage to the building.

The bus drivers have been inconsistent about last year's rule of not idling on Spruce Street in

front of the Museum. Most do layover on Mattis Street, but occasionally a driver will forget and idle in front of the Bus Stop.

Neighbors on the south side of Spruce Street—in the Penn's Landing complex—also noted problems in their homes caused by these vibrations, as have several other owners of residences in the area. However, some neighbors expressed concern about having the busses stop on Mattis Street, because at night there is little pedestrian life there. It is perceived by some people to be unsafe. But, a lighting survey by the Streets Department indicated that the Mattis Street Bus Stop has considerably brighter conditions than the Spruce and 2nd Streets location.

Recently the Museum reinstated its original petition to SEPTA to totally eliminate the bus stop on Spruce Street. The Museum has received support by both the SHCA and the Penn's Landing Association. SEPTA has been asked to act on the petition expeditiously in order to prevent further structural damage to the building. A decision is expected soon.

About The Museum

The "Man Full of Trouble Tavern" was built in 1759. It was owned by Colonel Blaithwaite Jones, who was in charge of the Delaware River defenses of Philadelphia during the Revolution and John Wood, a famous clock maker. The last of the many 18th century inns of colonial Philadelphia, the building was restored in the 1960s and has been maintained as a museum by the Knauer Foundation.

The Museum is open to the public on the second Sunday of every month, from 1-4 pm. (Admission: Adults, \$2; Children 6-12 years, 50¢; under 6 years, free.) Group tours can be arranged by appointment. Call 922-1759.

YES, I want to help restore the Head House.

- Replace one roof slate at \$25
- Replace one cupola pedestal at \$50
- Repaint one shutter at \$100
- Fabricate one cornice crown molding at \$150
- Specific project of choice, such as regild the clock face

Please make your tax-deductible check payable to The Head House Conservancy. Mail to 302 South 2nd Street, Philadelphia, PA 19106. For more information, call 925-3285.

Name _____
Address _____ ZIP _____
Phone (day) _____ (eve) _____

SHCA Calendar

(clip & save)

WEEK

Saturday, May 2
SPECIAL TRASH COLLECTION FOR SOCIETY HILL
11 am-1 pm

Sunday, May 3
SOCIETY HILL SYNAGOG ANNUAL FAIR
418 Spruce Street
For information, call 922-6590

Sunday, May 3
PHILADELPHIA OPEN HOUSE "SOCIETY HILL TOUR"
Reservation: call 928-1188

Wednesday, May 20
SHCA MEMBERSHIP MEETING
Old Pine Community Center
6:30 pm-Board Meeting**
7:30 pm-Refreshments
8 pm-General Membership

** Open to all members

Wednesday, April 15
SHCA BOARD MEETING **
Old Pine Community Center
7:30 pm

Monday, April 20 thru April 26
PHILADELPHIA CELEBRATES "EARTH WEEK"
For events and info,
call 563-8276

Friday-Sunday, April 24-26
PHYSICK HOUSE ANNUAL PLANT SALE
4th & Cypress Streets
Friday: 3-6 pm
Saturday & Sunday: 10 am-6 pm

Sunday, April 26 thru Saturday, May 2
SOCIETY HILL CLEANUP

HILL-PHYSICK-KEITH NOW JUST PHYSICK HOUSE A New Identity for an Old Neighbor

The Hill-Physick-Keith House, the Federal house at 321 South 4th Street, has simplified its name to the Physick House. The change reflects the importance of Dr. Philip Syng Physick, "the Father of American Surgery," who lived and practiced in the house from 1815 until his death in 1837.

The house was built in 1786 by Henry Hill, a wine merchant, who furnished it sumptuously in the latest English taste. After his death in 1798, the house was leased until it was sold in 1815 to Abigail Physick, who in turn sold it to her recently divorced brother, Dr. Philip Syng Physick.

The 4th Street house was Dr. Physick's principal residence for seventeen years. When he bought the property in 1815, Dr. Physick, 47 years old, was the leading surgeon and teacher of surgery in the United States and was an honored member of both the British and French Royal medical societies. He taught medicine at the University of Pennsylvania and practiced surgery at Pennsylvania Hospital. But it is evident from probate documents that he maintained a medical office and large medical library at his house, as well as what may have been a laboratory for the development of the surgical inventions for which he was so famous.

The restoration of the Physick House in 1965 was made possible by the magnificent gift of Ambassador and Mrs. Walter H. Annenberg. Upon completion of the restoration, ownership and maintenance of the house was assigned to

the Landmarks Society.

ANNUAL PLANT SALE BENEFIT

April 24-26

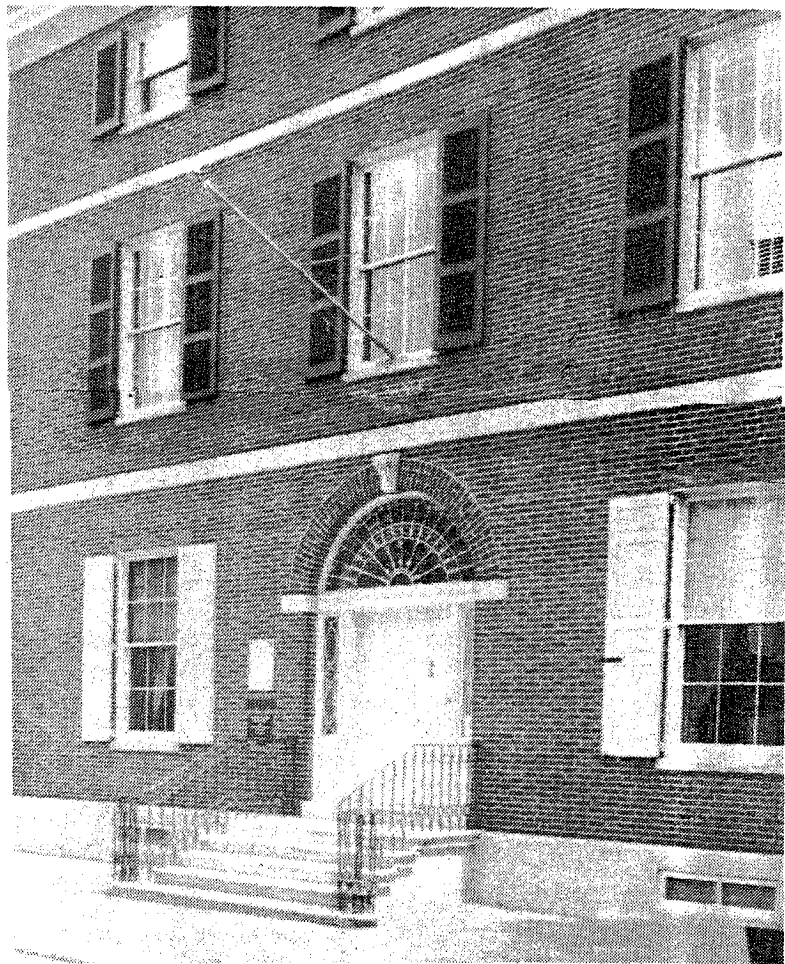
For more than twenty years, Landmarks volunteers have sponsored a Spring Plant Sale to benefit this historic house. It has become a well-attended community event, and again this year will have a

large selection of bedding plants, herbs, hanging baskets, house plants, geraniums, and decorative pots.

The dates are:

Friday, April 24 from 3-6 pm
Saturday, April 25 from 10-6 pm
Sunday, April 26 from 10-6 pm

The sale will be held—rain or shine—in the garden at the rear of the house at 321 S. 4th Street.



MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE
The Membership Committee welcomes these new SHCA mem-

Barbara Bagileo
Leslie & Robert Bradley

Bill Broom
Ann Chastain
Sr. Agnes Marie
Dorothy Patton
Ellen Schwartz
Suzanne Wescoe

THE SOCIETY HILL CIVIC ASSOCIATION

If you didn't receive a 1992 membership renewal letter... it means, naturally, that you were not a SHCA member last year
WE WANT YOU TO JOIN US THIS YEAR!

Your membership and your voice will make a difference in our neighborhood.

Tear off and mail to:

Society Hill Civic Association
P.O. Box 3, Philadelphia, PA 19105

Attention: Treasurer

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> New Member | <input type="checkbox"/> Household \$25 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Membership Renewal | <input type="checkbox"/> Business/Corporate \$50 |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Corporate Sponsor \$100 |

Name _____

Address _____

Zip _____ Phone (day) _____ (eve) _____

I(We) would be interested in working with the following committees:

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Membership | <input type="checkbox"/> Liquor Control |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Neighborhood Maintenance | <input type="checkbox"/> Town Watch |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Recycling | <input type="checkbox"/> Reporter/Sun newspaper |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Zoning | <input type="checkbox"/> Legislative |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify) |

YOUR HOME IS YOUR PRIMARY INVESTMENT. PROTECT IT!

OLD PINE COMMUNITY CENTER

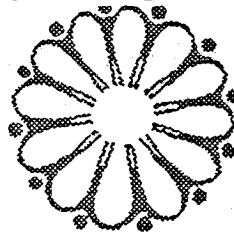
ANNOUNCES:

SUMMERCITY DAY CAMP & PLAY CAMP

July 6 - August 28

BREAKFAST & LUNCH PROGRAMS

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GYMNASTICS
MUCH MUCH MORE!**

OLD PINE COMMUNITY CENTER

401 Lombard Street, Philadelphia, PA 19147 • (215) 627-2493

Society Hill Recycles

"EARTH WEEK" Begins Monday, April 20 through Sunday April 26 throughout Philadelphia. Society Hill is doing its share by recycling. For information about Earth Week events, call the Pennsylvania Environmental Council's Earth Week # 563-8276.

WANTED AT STARR GARDEN:

Glass, Newspaper, Aluminum cans
The Starr Garden Recycling Station, located on Rodman Street between 6th and 7th Streets (much closer to 6th), has three impressive, separate igloos for clear, green, and amber/brown recyclable glass. These igloos are always open to accept your glass recyclables, since they are located on the street itself, not inside the fenced playground.

Inside the Starr Garden playground—which is separated from the igloos by a fence—is a cute white shed for recycling newspapers and aluminum cans only. The gate, for access to the white shed, is open as follows:

Monday through Friday from 9 am to 9:30 pm.

- Saturdays from 9 am to 5 pm.
- Sundays from 1 pm to 5 pm.

Society Hill's recycling program

depends on the daily involvement of SHCA President Dick Ostrander and Don McNeil. According to Dick, the site is filling more and more quickly, a good sign that the program has caught on in our neighborhood.

Thanks go to Captain James O'Donnell of Engine 11—the fire station located opposite the igloos on Rodman Street. Captain O'Donnell helps tidy and monitor the recycling center, reporting any

major problems to Dick Ostrander, including informing him when the site is filled to capacity. Thanks also to Vernon Roessler, the supervisor of Starr Garden for all his cooperation and help.

Please remember to bring only your *non-plastic disposables* to this site, because no plastics are accepted at Starr Garden! However, a new plastics only recycling program has begun operating. So do read on!

PLASTICS RECYCLING: FIRST SATURDAY EVERY MONTH

Another exciting recycling project—for plastics only—has begun Saturday, April 4th. Thereafter it will be an ongoing program for the first Saturday of every month.

Location: Ladder 11 Fire Station, 12th and Reed Streets

Hours: From 10:30 am to 12:30 pm

Please note that the only acceptable plastics are *cider, water, and milk jugs; soda and seltzer bottles; bleach, fabric softener and laundry detergent bottles.*

Some tips to remember: Please empty containers and remove

aluminum caps. String jugs together through the handles, and crush containers.

This important endeavor is co-sponsored by the South Philadelphia Environmental Action Coalition and the Firehouse Farmers Market. Proceeds will be donated for neighborhood causes. One volunteer is needed each Saturday to oversee the separation and collection at Ladder 11 Fire Station. If you can help, or would like more information, please call: Debbie Lee at 467-3377 or Joyce Roman at 467-8302.

The Shops at Newmarket

Philadelphia Savings Fund Society

Karen Hense
Client Service Counselor

Head House Office
426 South 2nd Street
Philadelphia, PA 19146
215 922-8570

Bobby Schorr's AT YOUR SERVICE

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Custom Clothing & Alterations



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COSTAS ZERVOUDIS
GENERAL MANAGER

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200 GEIGER ROAD
PHILA., PA 19118

DAVID MANN AUDIO

NewMarket 59
N.E. Corner 2nd & Lombard Sts.
Philadelphia, PA 19147
(215) 922-3000

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Koffmeyer's



Old Fashioned Cookies

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AT HEAD HOUSE SQUARE
2ND & LOMBARD STS.
PHILA., PA 19147

Bruce Koffler
215-922-0717

IRIS FLOWER SHOP, INC OF HEADHOUSE SQUARE

421 2ND STREET
574-9191

Cancedi Apothecary

404 S. 2nd ST., PHILA., PA PHONE: 922-2772

(215) 923-8688

THE EYEWORKS AND CONTACT LENS CENTER 410 South 2nd Street Philadelphia, PA 19147.

HOURS:
Mon. 10 a.m. - 8 p.m.
Tue. 10 a.m. - 8 p.m.
Wed. 10 a.m. - 7 p.m.
Thurs. 10 a.m. - 8 p.m.
Fri. 10 a.m. - 8 p.m.
Sat. 10:30 a.m. - 3 p.m.

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THEN AND NOW

Requiescat in Pace, Doctor More

The following article was written for Charter Day, March 25, 1992 by Charles E. Peterson, Convener of the annual celebration commemorating the anniversary of the chartering of the Free Society of Traders in Pennsylvania, after which Society Hill was named. The group's purpose (besides needing a good excuse to have a party!) is to "Encourage the Research and Publication of Society Hill History."



By Charles E. Peterson

Quaker Hicks' famous painting of the "peaceable Kingdom" has given most modern readers a cozy impression of the early days here. No one disputes the idealism of William Penn in founding Pennsylvania, but the realities of life in his new capital are usually overlooked. Penn in 1698 wrote that "there is no place more overrun with wickedness."

Two years ago, as we progressed southwards between the historic

sites on 4th Street, I pictured Indian kings lying drunk on street corners with glass jewels being stolen from their crowns, the poor woman down near Old Swedes' being dragged into court for bewitching her neighbor's cow, and

the escape of counterfeiter Pickering. Like today, things weren't perfect in Philadelphia. (So what's new?)

Let us give a tolerant look back on our friend Dr. Nicholas More, Society

Hill's feisty founder. More arrived here in the first wave of settlers in his own ship with 60 employees of the Free Society of Traders, of which Penn himself was a shareholder. More believed in the future of Philadelphia and wrote an optimistic letter to London which Penn published in 1687. The Pennsylvania Bar issued a facsimile of it in 1982 (as arranged by our neighbor Stanhope S. Browne, Esq.), and we put up a small, neat wooden marker

on More's waterside location—Little Dock Street at 2nd and Spruce Streets. The site was almost wiped out by our city planners, and a few weeks ago the sign was uprooted after dark. But we will put up a new one.

As it turned out, the province flourished with every man on his own. The "Society" wasn't needed, after all. Many Quakers turned against Penn, but More continued his friendship. Then, after five tumultuous years, More died at his Green Spring estate in "The Mannor of Moreland" at the north point of Philadelphia County. I suggest that he had a heart attack while chopping down trees along-

side Tomlinson Road!

Note: In 1987 Society Hill Civic Association past president Joseph C. Bright, Esq. arranged to have a facsimile of the 1682 charter reproduced from an original at the Historical Society of Pennsylvania. The pamphlet reproduces a crude ink sketch of Dr. More's house from a 1688-9 document at the Free Library of Philadelphia. It is the oldest known image of a Philadelphia dwelling. We have for sale copies at \$2 each. To order a copy, you can call us at 922-3623 or write to 332 Spruce Street, Philadelphia, PA 19106.

ATWATER KENT MUSEUM TO HONOR CHARLES E. PETERSON

In 1989, the Atwater Kent Museum—the History Museum of the City of Philadelphia—established the Joseph Jackson Award in honor

of one of Philadelphia's most prolific local historians, Joseph F.A. Jackson (1865-1946). Since then, the museum has presented the Joseph Jackson Award to individuals for their life-long contribution to interpreting the history of Philadelphia to the general public. Previous recipients have been John Francis Marion, 1989-90, and Dennis J. Clark, 1990-91.

On April 22nd, the 1991-92 recipients will include Society Hill's own Charles E. Peterson, a historian and preservation architect who has written extensively on the architectural restoration and historic preservation of Philadelphia. Also receiving awards are Margaret Bacon, who has written extensively on women's history and Quaker history and John Lambert Cotter, a distinguished scholar of the historical archaeology of Philadelphia.

The Case of the Missing Health Club

This article was adapted from the *Independence Place News*, written by Robert Langer, a resident of Independence Place, who chaired a committee to investigate the status of the vacant Society Hill Club, also known as the Centers for Living. It is the most recent installment of the saga of the defunct health club, which is located on 5th Street, between Spruce Street and St. James Place.

Murphy's Law, which states that if something can go wrong, it will, appears to apply to this club, which has been closed since the end of November 1990.

It was expected that the thrice-postponed Sheriff's Sale would finally take place on Monday,

March 2. But lo and behold, five minutes before the bidding on this property was to commence, the attorney for the State Savings Bank of Columbus, Ohio, holder of the mortgage, asked for another 90-day postponement. Apparently, the club's owners, SHC Limited Partnership, managed to convince the bank once again that they either have a serious prospect for the property or can revive the club themselves.

According to a spokesperson for the bank, if the bank had emerged as the successful bidder at the auction, it would have immediately taken care of urgent repairs and instituted an aggressive marketing program to find a new

owner. The current owner recently repaired the roof of the club's building, but other parts of the building, including the pool, may also be in need of repair. In any case, the very obvious appearance of the building's vacancy and neglected condition is causing it to become increasingly an eyesore to our community.

Previous discussions with the bank's loan officer indicated that if the bank gains control, it would try to find a purchaser who would maintain the property as a health-related facility. However, the possibility that the club will be purchased by someone who may attempt to convert it to an undesirable usage—from the point of view of Independence Place residents, as well as all of Society Hill—cannot be ruled out. If this happens, and the continuing postponements make it more likely, the two Tower Associations, in conjunction with the Society Hill Civic Association, will have to mount an aggressive campaign to protect the interests of the neighborhood. Rumors that either the Sporting Club, located at the Bellevue, or the Posel Management Corporation, which owns the Northeast Racquet Club & Fitness Center, plan to purchase the Society Hill Club have been denied by spokespersons for both corporations. The latter, however, has shown some interest.

A reopened health club? In view of the latest postponement, the likelihood of a reopened health club for the forthcoming summer season is extremely unlikely.

PHYSICK HOUSE

321 SOUTH FOURTH

GARDEN

AND

PLANT SALE

Friday, April 24, 3-6 PM
Saturday, Apr. 25, 10-6
Sunday, April 26, 10-6

Rain or shine
in the garden at the
rear of the house.

JKST

SUMMER CAMPS

<p>Summer Enrichment AT BRUN MAWR COLLEGE The Main Line's Newest Day Program for Teens! An Exciting New England-Style Pre-College Experience for 7th thru 11th Graders!</p>	<p>SUPERSPORTS CAMP AT SHIPLEY SCHOOL Basketball * Soccer * Lacrosse * Baseball/Softball * Field Hockey * Surfing * Tennis * Golf * Squash * Volleyball</p>	<p>Tennis, Golf & Squash Day Camp AT HANOVER COLLEGE Sports for a Lifetime The Finest Teaching Professionals! For Boys & Girls Ages 7 thru 15</p>	<p>Creative Arts Camp AT HARCUM JR. COLLEGE Drama, Music Art, Dance & MORE! For Boys & Girls Ages 7 thru 15</p>
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TRANSPORTATION AVAILABLE

FOR MORE INFO, CALL: **(215) 293-0678** CALL FOR 1992 BROCHURES