

SOCIETY HILL

# Reporter

www.societyhillcivic.com

## Pennsylvania Hospital Hosts November Meeting



**Timothy O. Morgan,**  
Executive Director,  
Pennsylvania Hospital

If the rapid changes in hospital ownership over the past decade have left you confused, bring your questions to the November meeting of the Society Hill Civic Association (SHCA). Timothy O. Morgan, executive director of Pennsylvania Hospital, will kick off a lively and informative program in the hospital's Zubrow Auditorium. His comments will focus on the future of Pennsylvania Hospital and its relationship with our neighborhood. With a BA in nursing from LaSalle and a master's in business administration from Temple University, Morgan served as a consultant in the establishment of trauma centers at ten hospitals. In 1995, he joined the Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania. In 1999 he was named to his present post, where he oversees the operations of not only Pennsylvania Hospital but also its affiliates — Benjamin Franklin Clinic, J. Edwin Wood Clinic, Hall Mercer Hospital, Women and Children's Health Services and Delancey Corporation. (See page 9 for more on Pennsylvania Hospital.)

People from all over the world travel to Philadelphia to receive care at our renowned hospitals, which are in the forefront of medical advancement. Suitable lodging is often a problem for individuals who are being treated as outpatients and for family members who

accompany them. Director Mike Aichenbaum will explain how Hosts for Hospitals, a nonprofit agency, fulfills this need and also how we can assist in this endeavor. (See page 8 for more on Hosts for Hospitals.)

Finally, former SHCA president Malcolm Lazin will present an up-to-date report on Penn's Landing. Roberts, Wallace & Todd, architects specializing in land planning, will display the vision that was developed for this important waterfront parcel through input obtained from 11 community organizations, including SHCA. It is hoped every Society Hill resident will take this opportunity to compare the result of the community effort with plans proposed by the developers selected by the city.

### Let Us "Teller" You About Our Social

Bank on having a great time at our Fall Social on Thursday, November 13 from 7 to 9 p.m. The friendly folks at Commerce Bank, 2nd and Lombard, are right on the money when it comes to hosting a fun-filled evening for neighbors. An open bar and yummy hors d'oeuvres are free for SHCA members. Non-members can join the association at the door. RSVP to Matt DeJulio, 215-629-1288, by November 10. We count on seeing you there!

WED.

November

19

### MARK YOUR CALENDAR

Society Hill Civic Association Meetings  
Wednesday, November 19, 2003

**Pennsylvania Hospital, 800 Spruce Street**

**6:00 p.m. Board Meeting**

Cheston Conference Room  
2nd floor, just above the auditorium  
All SHCA members are welcome to attend.

**General Membership Meeting**

Zubrow Auditorium  
All Society Hill residents are welcome to attend.

**7:00 p.m.** Meet Your Neighbors

**7:30 p.m.** Meeting and Program

### ROLL UP YOUR SLEEVES!

Clean Up Day Saturday, Nov. 15

SHCA will join with Washington Square West Civic Association on Saturday, November 15 to spiff up our historic neighborhood. Meet at Three Bears Park after 8 a.m. to grab brooms, trash bags and gloves and then get hustling! After you sweep your sidewalks, streets and alleys, leave bagged leaves and trash (no household rubbish)

by 1 p.m. at major intersections on Locust, Spruce, Pine and Lombard where they cross numbered streets. Return the brooms to Three Bears Park by 2 p.m. Clean Up Day occurs rain or shine. If you have any questions, problems or would like to volunteer, contact Tania Rorke at 215-370-6485 or TRorke@aol.com.

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SOCIETY HILL

# *Reporter*

### November/December

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### Deadlines for

#### January/February issue

Editorial: Dec. 11, 2003  
Advertising: Dec. 1, 2003  
Signed letters to the Editor  
are always welcome and  
may be published.

Send submissions to:

Society Hill Civic Assn.  
P.O. Box 63503  
Philadelphia, PA 19147  
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### January/February

#### Reporter Editors

Bernice Hamel  
Carole LeFavre-Rochester

### Visit our website

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

### To Submit Copy to the Reporter

One of the goals of the *Reporter* is to print news of interest to Society Hill residents — especially happenings in and around our community. If your organization would like to have information about an event it is sponsoring included in this newsletter, copy should be submitted to the SHCA office by e-mail (MattDeJulio@aol.com), mail (Society Hill Civic Association, P.O. Box 63503, Philadelphia, PA 19147) or fax (215-629-9914). Material must be submitted in writing and include the name and phone number of a contact person. Promotional items may appear if there is space; otherwise, upcoming events will be listed in the calendar. Copy may be edited.

The deadline for submission of material is around the tenth of the month in February, April, June, August, October and December. The deadlines for the next issue are listed above. The *Reporter* is distributed between the third and tenth day of January, March, May, July, September and November.

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Noteworthy Neighbor:  
John Alchin

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

## Quality of Life in Society Hill: Assembly Required

We chose Society Hill as our community because our quality of life here is high. Tree-lined streets, attractive architecture, proximity to numerous amenities, and the opportunity to meet many wonderful people who live here are just some of the most obvious reasons Society Hill is a great place to call home.

That said, we know our neighborhood faces real issues. Some are mere nuisances; others call into question our personal safety. How we face these problems will determine whether or not we will be successful in overcoming them. If we can count on your participation, we will all be better off.

When difficulties arise, the first step is always to identify the problem and its cause. The next step is to take a strategic approach to solving it. Our civic association has an excellent track record of facing these challenges. Recent examples include:

**Problem:** *Vandalism and theft*

**SHCA Action:** The formation of Safe and Sound Society Hill, a new SHCA committee, focuses on neighborhood vigilance and building awareness of how to deal with crime when it happens. In addition, Society Hill Town Watch, under the auspices of the citywide Operation Town Watch, was recently resurrected and facilitates a working relationship with Philadelphia police.

**Problem:** *Dilapidated public spaces*

**SHCA Action:** Examples include creation of an architectural design plan for Foglietta Plaza (at Spruce near Columbus Boulevard) with fundraising in support of revitalizing that area; formation of a new Gardening Committee;

securing funds for fountain renovation at Washington Square; and endorsement and financial support for the refurbishment of playground equipment at Three Bears Park.

**Problem:** *Potentially inappropriate development adjacent to Society Hill*

**SHCA Action:** In concert with Councilman DiCicco and ten other civic associations, SHCA is rejecting the current administration's rushed efforts to develop Penn's Landing and instead is lobbying for a community-driven approach to deciding what happens at this important waterfront site so close to our doorsteps.

This is just a sampling of the work your Association regularly and pro-actively performs on behalf of the neighborhood. Not one of these actions would have occurred if concerned neighbors hadn't volunteered their time and talents to identify and address the problem. We should all be grateful for their involvement, but we need your help, too.

We — the SHCA Board of Directors and SHCA committee members — are always open to complaints and criticism, but we'd much rather have your ideas about how to improve a challenging situation. So come to our meetings, give us a call, or send us an e-mail. Help us do a better job of helping Society Hill. Our goal is to work with you to ensure that the reasons we love Society Hill remain intact and that our quality of life here is never compromised.

On behalf of the SHCA, I wish you the very best for Thanksgiving, Hanukkah and Christmas, and I look forward to working with you in 2004!



Liza Seltzer  
SHCA president

## TOWN WATCH MEMBERS WALK THE WALK

After many years in hibernation, Society Hill Town Watch has made a long-awaited successful return! With more than 60 members signing up in the first six weeks alone, Society Hill Town Watch promises to play a major role in keeping our neighborhood safe and sound.

We are now patrolling the streets four times each week. These patrols, which have been scheduled according to the date and time preferences of each member, consist of at least four persons walking (or occasionally riding bikes) in teams throughout Society Hill, plus a base operator ready to provide assistance. The participants are equipped with walkie-talkies

and follow a protocol that stresses safety. Whether you want to make new friends, get some exercise or play an active role in your community, Society Hill Town Watch delivers. What a great way to give something back to a neighborhood that gives all of us so much!

To join Town Watch, or to obtain more information, contact Michael Erdos at michael.erdos@phila.gov or 215-629-5857. All Society Hill residents are welcome to participate. And be on the lookout in the months ahead for window stickers, new street signs and other paraphernalia that will announce the presence of Town Watch.





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A New Committee Reports for Duty

# Safe and Sound Society Hill

Safe and Sound Society Hill (SSSH) is a newly formed SHCA committee that was created in late spring after we became aware of an increase in vandalism and a perceived lack of police presence on our streets. The committee's purposes are to educate neighbors about crime prevention, support law enforcement and address quality-of-life issues. In furtherance of these objectives SSSH has already begun a dialogue with the Sixth District police.

If you are witness to or the victim of a crime, take the following steps. Immediately call 911 to have a police officer come to the scene and generate a written report. No matter how minor the crime, it should be reported. This cannot be done over the phone. Be sure to record the officer's name and badge number. Follow up a few days later to see if the report has been filed and is accurate. Contact Marilyn Appel, a SSSH committee member whose task is to maintain a database of all crime in Society Hill. She can be reached at [harmara@juno.com](mailto:harmara@juno.com) or 215-922-2626. By compiling our own statistics, we will acquire the knowledge we need to initiate crime prevention measures.

Please be aware that if we underreport crime, the police assume all is okay and provide less coverage. If someone breaks your front window or destroys your plant containers, it is a crime and must be reported. Do not assume that because you can afford to replace the damaged item, you should not bother the police with such a small matter. It is their job. There are officers assigned to our area and we deserve a response from them.

Prevention of crime is, of course, our goal. Burglars look for the easiest target, so make your house look secure. Here are some tips on being "city smart" when it comes to protecting our homes and personal safety.

- Good lighting is a deterrent to crime. Every exterior doorway of your home should have an exterior light burning throughout the night. Use a motion detector in the back garden. A timer or photo sensor will turn on your outdoor lights even when you are away and make it appear that you are home. Use timers on interior lights as well.
- When away, ask neighbors to keep an eye on your home.
- Keep doors locked at all times. Deadbolts provide the best security.
- Turn on your security alarm when you are away or sleeping.
- Prune trees at the front of your house if branches are blocking light and creating dark spots where someone can hide.
- Use a peephole or busybody to see who's at your door before opening it. And never open it if you don't recognize the person.
- Never leave any object visible inside your car.

Police respond to your 911 call based on the severity of the crime, so response time will vary. It may take officers longer to respond to vandalism than to a home break-in. The committee needs your assistance to track police response time. Please contact Marilyn Appel with this information. Let's try to keep crime from happening!

Report all crimes, no matter how minor, to the police. If crimes go unreported, police will assume all is well and provide less coverage.



## DRAGON SLAYERS, TAKE NOTE

Several years ago someone had an idea to erect townhouses on the southeast corner of 3rd and Lombard Streets. A dozen homes were built and are occupied, except for one that sits forlorn with litter gathering at its doorstep. An additional six units were started, but abandoned long ago.	The fencing surrounding these derelicts is in disrepair and fails to prevent trespassers from accessing the trash-strewn premises. The rumor mill grinds out tales of disputes among purchasers, contractors and developer; lawsuits; bankruptcy filings; squatters; illegal drug use; and other unsavory behavior.	Meanwhile, the unfinished units show signs of further deterioration with every passing day and can easily be considered rubbish. The area is not only a blight upon our historic neighborhood, but also presents a dangerous condition. Who will be the hero that slays this dragon?
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## Coalition to “IMBARC” on a New Mission

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### An Alternative Safety Plan for Independence Mall

A group of nearby residents and businesses opposed to the closing of vehicular and pedestrian traffic on the 500 block of Chestnut Street — designed to be a protective measure for Independence Hall following the terrorist events of 9/11 — is happy to report that after 19 months of efforts to make Independence Park accessible, its efforts were rewarded. The block was re-opened on April 1, 2003, and now members of this group, called the Independence Mall Business and Residents Coalition (IMBARC), have turned their attention to the ongoing challenge of creating an Independence Mall permanently accessible to residents and tourists. The latest threat is the National Park Service’s (NPS) intention to fence in the block behind Independence Hall and the entire block facing Independence Hall, which is now home to the new Liberty Bell Center. Although the Park Service says it is reviewing other ideas, the only plan that was publicly announced will require just one security screening area located at the corner of 5th and Market. This scheme includes a tunnel built under Chestnut Street.

In contrast to this approach, which has been described as “creating a corral,” IMBARC presented the NPS with a feasible and sensible security alternative devised by noted architect Laurie D. Olin, who was responsible for the widely acclaimed Master Plan for the park and mall, providing open spaces, walkways and crosswalks. In brief, the Olin plan, fully

supported by IMBARC, calls for screening at the entrance to the Liberty Bell Center (a considerable distance from the Bell itself) as well as in a building adjacent to Independence Hall. This alternative plan satisfies the dictates of the U.S. Department of the Interior, which has jurisdiction over the Park Service, and would protect two of America’s icons — Independence Hall and the Liberty Bell. The Olin-IMBARC Plan was enthusiastically endorsed in a lead *Philadelphia Inquirer* editorial, dated October 5, 2003, and aptly titled “Let Freedom Ring Defiantly on Independence Mall.”

In order to pursue its mission to make the Independence National Historic Park area “secure, beautiful and a treasured resource for all,” IMBARC has been incorporated as a Pennsylvania nonprofit organization, so that all contributions are tax deductible. IMBARC’s chairman is Carter Buller and its secretary is Robert Lonergan, both of whom are members of the Society Hill Civic Association. Ann Meredith, president of Lights of Liberty, is president of IMBARC and Ken Kaiserman, owner of the Bourse, is treasurer. Along with Judge Edward Becker of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit, they comprise the organization’s executive committee, while all its 15 directors are made up of representatives from the area’s businesses and civic groups. Visit IMBARC’s web site at [www.freeindependencehall.com](http://www.freeindependencehall.com).



**IMBARC has alternative security plans for the “Independence Corral.”**

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## Pursuing Innocent Pleasures

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### Gardening on the Square

There is a Chinese saying that if you want to be happy all your life, become a gardener. Does this resonate with you? Well, we happen to know a grand old place in need of some tender, loving care. Consider seven acres with a water feature, lots of benches and mature growth, not to mention an eternal flame complete with revolutionary soldiers! And the kicker is the larger-than-life bronze statue of our first president surveying his namesake, Washington Square.

In brief, we are searching for gardeners in search of a garden to join an SHCA sponsored volunteer group committed to caring for Washington Square after it is turned over

to the National Park Service. We seek a diverse assortment of men, women and young people and offer a variety of ways to help beautify our beloved neighborhood Square.

Are you, for instance, interested in learning more about your roots? Dig in the dirt with your family and see what happens. Do the birds and the bees interest singles in our community? Then watch out, romance could bloom in the flower beds. And if you are the type of person who makes sweeping generalities, give serious thought to tidying our walkways! Interested? Call Sandy Rothman, 267-671-0554, or Kelly Nelson, 215-925-6799.



## Hosts for Hospitals – Can You Help?

Receive so much more than you give.

In the summer of 2000 a wonderful new Agency began providing free lodging in response to the housing needs of the many patients and their families who travel from far and wide to receive treatment at Philadelphia's world-renowned hospitals. As a volunteer for the Ronald McDonald House, I have first-hand knowledge of both the need for suitable, inex-

pensive housing and the lack of such facilities. It is so heart wrenching to tell a family the House is full, or that they do not meet the purpose for which the House was founded — providing accommodations for parents of sick children. Then along came Hosts for Hospitals! What a relief to be able to refer patients and families to this caring organization.

During the past three years, over 120 local hosts have opened their homes to provide lodging for more than 325 families. The families, stressed by illness and facing the financial burden of expensive medical care, are ever so grateful for a comfy bed on which to rest a weary head. But the hosts claim they receive so much more than they give. In fact, they find it so gratifying that they recruit friends and neighbors to participate in the program.

My own neighbors, Nancy and Troy Martin-O'Shia, became involved in Hosts for Hospitals a little over a year ago. Every day a dear friend was driving between her home on Staten Island to the facility in Connecticut where her son was being treated for an ultimately fatal condition. The Martin-O'Shias became aware of the enormous strain their friend was experiencing and decided to open their home to others facing similar situations. One or two members of seven different families have stayed with them, none for longer than two weeks. When asked if they found the experience rewarding, Nancy enthusiastically responded, "Very much so!"

There is great need for additional homes in Center City, including Society Hill. What does being a host-family require? Only that you provide a comfortable place to sleep, access to a bathroom and a feeling of home. Hosts always retain complete flexibility with respect to whether, when and for how long they choose to lodge guests. Guests are responsible for their own food and transportation, and are screened by Hosts for Hospitals ("HfH") before being accepted into the program.

If you would like further information on this worthwhile nonprofit agency and how you can help carry out its mission, please contact HfH Director Mike Aichenbaum at Hosts for Hospitals, 300 North Highland Avenue, Merion, PA 19066; telephone 610-660-6667; fax: 610-617-3659; e-mail HfHospitals@aol.com; or visit [www.hostsforhospitals.org](http://www.hostsforhospitals.org) on the web.

BY VICKI CHATLEY



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## Pennsylvania Hospital – 252 Years of History

Philadelphia is a city of “firsts,” and among them is Pennsylvania Hospital. Founded in 1751 by Benjamin Franklin and Dr. Thomas Bond, it was the first hospital in the new world. The original charter granted by the Pennsylvania legislature authorized the hospital to care for the “sick, poor and insane” wandering the streets of the city.

In 1756, the east wing opened at 8th and Pine Streets. In 1796 construction of the west wing was completed at 9th and Pine. And in 1804 the center section joined both wings. Together they comprise the Pine Building, the structure that is seen while passing by on Pine Street. The buildings are still being used today, but not for their original purposes. The east wing contained cells for mentally ill patients on the ground (basement) floor, a men’s ward on the second floor and a women’s ward on the third floor. The top floor was used as lodging for hospital employees and patients who required isolation. When the west wing was built, all mentally ill patients (who, at the time, were twice as numerous as the physically ill patients) were moved to the ground floor of the new building. The center section housed administrative functions, the apothecary and the medical library on the first floor and served as the residence for officers and servants.

The center section of the Pine Building is ever so interesting. It retains all the charm and architectural elements of the Federal style and is filled with fascinating objects. Among these is a hand-pump fire engine purchased in 1803. The hospital depended on candles for light and on fireplaces and Franklin stoves for heat, so the possibility of a fire was always present.

The stairs — lined with plaques acknowledging donors, many of them familiar historical names — lead to the nation’s first surgical amphitheater, which was used from 1804 through 1868. A skylight permitted operations to be performed between 11 a.m. and 2 p.m. on sunny days. However, a patient might prefer darkness as the old instruments on display resemble the saws and pliers found in today’s toolboxes. These devices, along with an array of knives, were used to amputate limbs; remove internal and external tumors, bladder stones and cataracts; repair hernias; and set fractured bones. Anesthesia was not used until 1846; so lucky patients were sedated with opium or copious amounts of alcohol. Those not so fortunate were rendered unconscious by using a mallet

to sharply tap their heads! Up to 180 medical students and townspeople could — and did — pay to sit on narrow benches in the gallery and watch the surgeries.

Unfortunately, another public amusement was laughing at patients who were considered “insane.” These patients exercised in dry moats surrounding the Pine Building, and on Sundays Philadelphians would stroll over to the hospital to watch them. The hospital’s board of managers tried to discourage this practice by building a wall. When the wall proved ineffective, the board resorted to charging the onlookers a fee of four pence. The proceeds were used to finance patient care. Thankfully a more humane attitude evolved, and in 1841 a separate asylum, known as the Pennsylvania Hospital for the Insane, was established at what is now 44th and Market Streets. At that time it was a large farm where patients could be cared for in a secluded environment.

Today Pennsylvania Hospital is a beehive of activity, using the most modern medical equipment and techniques. But the gardens remain a tranquil retreat. Benches invite the visitor to spend a few quiet moments enjoying the beauty of the flowering shrubs and the wonder of the Physic Garden, a plot established in 1976 to grow the plants and herbs that were used for medicines two centuries ago.



### SHOPPERS ALERT!

The Pennsylvania Hospital Bargain Shop on the 700 Block of Delancey Street has undergone a major facelift. Significant interior renovations were completed over the summer, and the store will soon carry

men’s and women’s gently worn clothing (career, casual and maternity) in addition to jewelry, accessories, small furniture and household appliances. The Bargain Shop is currently accepting tax-deductible donations

with the proceeds benefiting the Pennsylvania Hospital Women’s Auxiliary. To schedule an appointment to drop off contributions, inquire about pickup or to volunteer to be part of the Auxiliary, call 215-829-3270.



## Jazz Vespers at Old Pine Church

Sunday, November 16 @ 5 PM

**Fred Simmons Trio with Rabbi Avi Winokur**

Sunday, December 21 @ 5 PM

**“Father” John D’Amico Trio with Rev. Deborah McKinley**

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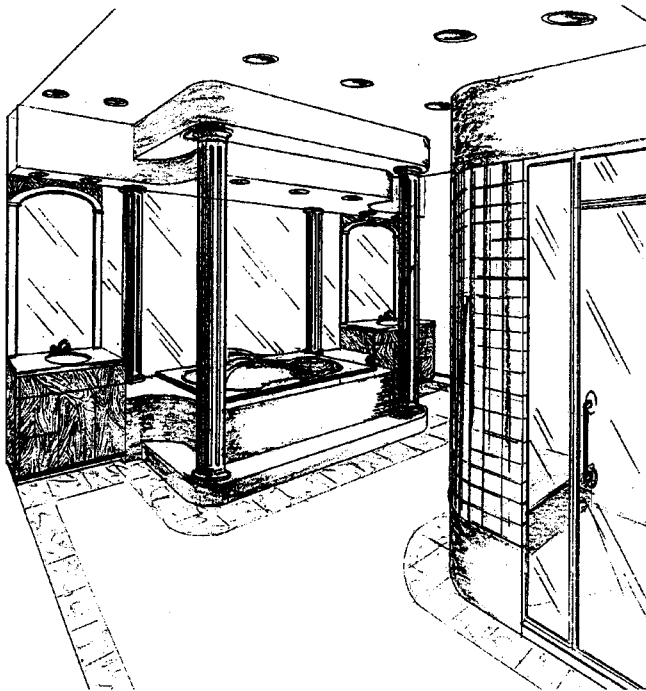
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It's a Wrap!

## Filming "National Treasure" in Society Hill

By the time you read this all the movie trailers, extra police cars, hundreds of personnel, traffic re-routing and no-parking signs throughout our neighborhood will be history! Production of the film "National Treasure" has been full of highs and lows. A sample "high" was watching Nicholas Cage run across Blackwell Court rooftops for a chase scene. Sample "lows" include not being allowed to unload groceries from your car because the street was blocked to all traffic. A definite high, which will directly benefit the city and our immediate community is that the production company (Declaration Productions of Buena Vista, California) gave SHCA a gift of \$15,000 of which \$10,000 will help fund the installation of a modern filtering system to keep water flowing in the fountain in Washington Square and \$5,000 will be spent toward major renovations at Three Bears Park. It is also our understanding that the company made a contribution to the City of Philadelphia.

We've been told a total of about eight minutes of film time will feature our hometown in this action-packed adventure movie. "National Treasure" is being produced by Jerry Bruckheimer and directed by Jon Turteltaub. It stars

Nicholas Cage, who portrays a patriotic treasure hunter who goes on the quest of a lifetime when he discovers that a map hidden on the back of the Declaration of Independence leads to a legendary treasure.

And please don't hold your breath waiting to see the film, because Touchstone Pictures expects to distribute it in time for Thanksgiving 2004! But, hey, we're in the movies! You've got to admit that movies are magical and that it's thrilling to have real-live celebrities visit our corner of the world — don't you agree?

**Film crew takes up a precarious perch to capture a scene in which Nicholas Cage runs across Blackwell Court rooftops.**



## Washington Square

### Flame Kindled, Fountain Funded

With the eternal flame now brightly burning, Washington Square moves further along toward completion of its renovation project. Major repairs to the fountain will be funded by film company

Declaration Productions' \$10,000 donation and a matching contribution from the Philadelphia Fountain Society (PFS). Robert Linck, an officer of PFS, has assured SHCA that he will

take the lead on getting proposals for the complete refurbishment of the fountain—with the ultimate goal of completing all the work prior to the time when the National Park Service will take over responsibility for maintenance of the Square.

**Former SHCA president Malcolm Lazin and friends officiate at the rekindling of Washington Square's eternal flame.**



**Ben ignites the eternal flame.**



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## A Matter of Principal...

### Meet Paula Bantom-Waters

Paula Bantom-Waters, McCall School's new principal, brings with her 17 years of experience in the Philadelphia School District. Her prime vision for the year is "Building a Better McCall," in keeping with Philadelphia Schools Superintendent Paul G. Valla's citywide goal of "Building a Better District." McCall is considered one of the best public schools in the city, but Mrs. Bantom-Waters is not resting on past performance. "There is ALWAYS room for improvement," she states passionately. "We are in a high stakes business ...these are people's kids we are dealing with, and we have one chance to do it right!"

As the mother of five, Mrs. Bantom-Waters certainly knows the joys and struggles of child rearing. She recalls the time when her children were young and her husband was launching his business, EdTech, a diversified consulting firm. He was traveling constantly; she was teaching full time. As she puts it, "Something had to give." She retired for three years to manage the home front. She describes that period as "extremely educational." Becoming a one-income family, even for a short time, forced her household to appreciate what they had. She describes it as a spiritual awakening. Even now, that experience helps her to understand and empathize with people passing through change and difficulties. She hopes to use her experience to guide families to make good choices, particularly regarding their children's education.

Mrs. Bantom-Waters actively embraces the "McCall School Initiative," SHCA's program designed to unite the neighborhood and the school in a synergistic relationship. She plans to work cooperatively with SHCA to bolster community enrollment, saying, "We are a part of Society Hill...we want the neighborhood to be involved...together we can build on what we already have here and enhance and enrich the experience for the children and the neighborhood." In furtherance of this goal, Mrs. Bantom-Waters eagerly participated in the Three Bears Park Fall Festival. With her granddaughter in tow and rain gear on, she stole a few hours from the time she is spending to pursue a Ph.D. degree in the field of Special Education at Arcadia University to man the McCall information station and meet with other hardy souls who were supporting the festival.

Among the primary objectives for the current school year is the implementation of new literacy and math programs. In conjunction with the Home and School Association, Mrs. Bantom-Waters is working to install the "100 Book Challenge" at McCall and has also launched an extensive, year-long journalism project for the seventh and eighth grades. Under her enthusiastic direction, expectation is high that these goals will become reality before students are released to play in the summer sun.



Paula Bantom-Waters

## ATTENTION!

### Find Out Why More Families are Choosing McCall

Come to a neighborhood meeting on Monday, November 17, at 7 p.m. in the school auditorium (6th and Delancey Streets). For more information about the McCall School Initiative, please call Keri White at 215-592-9633 or Kelly Nelson at 215-925-6799.

## Good Morning, Philadelphia!

On Monday, September 22, area residents were surprised to turn on ABC's "Good Morning America" and see kindergarten students from McCall School happily making colorful windsocks with national weathercaster Rebecca Cole. The production crew, here for the Women's World Cup Soccer Tournament, called the Philadelphia School District requesting a diverse group of well-behaved children in an attractive educational setting for the show's weather segment. Our neighborhood school was selected. The motto "early to bed, early to rise" worked in reverse as the kids groggily arrived at school by 6:30 a.m. for the broadcast and undoubtedly hit the covers well before regular curfew with delightful memories of their national television debut playing out in their dreams!



McCall students enjoy their national television debut!

## Three Bears Park Fall Festival

The Friends of Three Bears Park would like to thank the many people who attended and supported its October 4 Fall Festival. The event was a huge success with more than \$6,000 raised for improvements, park maintenance and playground equipment.

Children enjoyed a moon bounce, pony rides, face painting, pumpkin painting and sitting in South Street Unit's fire truck and the Sixth District's police car. The activity that drew the most attention was a mosaic craft in bear paw print stepping stones by a local artist, Terry Saulin. Look for them this spring when the center planter is done.

The Festival also held a silent auction. Over \$4,000 was raised from gift certificates and special items donated by local businesses. The hottest item in the auction was a jacket donated and signed by Allison Janney of the television hit "West Wing." Bids went back and forth between Steven Chernekoff, owner of Salon at 5th, and an anonymous bidder. In the end, the anonymous bidder prevailed. The "anonymous bidder" turned out to be a small group of Park moms who gave Steven the jacket the next day for his birthday!

If you would like to become more involved with the park, contact Tania Rorke at 215-925-4544 or TRorke@aol.com.



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## New Home For The Liberty Bell

On October 9, the nation watched as the Liberty Bell was removed from its glass pavilion and very slowly, very lovingly moved into its new building — located on the first block of Independence Mall, just across the street from its first home, Independence Hall (originally the Pennsylvania State House, for which the bell was cast in 1751).

As the bell journeyed along its route, onlookers enjoyed educational and musical performances depicting various historical periods, such as the abolition movement, women’s suffrage and the fall of the Iron Curtain. A dramatic dialogue between Thomas Jefferson and Frederick Douglas was followed by the ceremonial dedication of the new Liberty Bell Center. The Center was then officially opened to the public for viewing its corridor of educational and fun exhibits prior to each person’s close-up and personal visit to the venerable relic.

The holiday season is a good time to visit the new Liberty Bell Center. Give yourself and those you love the gift of a personal journey to

see and be inspired by this pre-eminent symbol of freedom. In its new home, so close to our homes and hearts, the Liberty Bell will continue to peal its song of freedom for all to hear.



Attending the “Liberty Bell in Motion” ceremonies were Bernice T. Hamel, SHCA vice president (at left) and Rebecca T. Stoloff, former SHCA president.

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## Updates on Prior *Reporter* Articles

### The Mother Bethel Foundation

We recently reported that the Foundation for Mother Bethel A.M.E. Church is planning a major expansion adjacent to the church at 6th and Lombard Streets which will feature a library, archives and educational programs. The article publicized its need for financial donations to convert this dream of an expanded new museum into reality. The museum will relate the historical journey of African Americans for freedom and self-determination.

As a result of the article about the Foundation's endeavor to raise 20 million dollars, several gifts were received — including one in the amount of \$5,000 and another for \$1,000. If you would like to join generous neighbors in supporting this project, send your tax-deductible contribution of *any amount* to the Mother Bethel Foundation, at 419 Richard Allen Avenue, Philadelphia, PA 19147. (Or call 215-629-5667.)

### Window Washing Scam

The “scam alert” in the September *Reporter* regarding the “Window Washer Who Wasn't” generated follow-up calls. Apparently this con artist is still prowling our neighborhood. A resident of Addison Court reported a similar incident, which occurred just prior to receiving and reading about the scam in the newsletter. Our neighbor invited the window washer into his home, as the man said he charged only \$9 per window. About 45 minutes later when finished washing all the windows, the guy demanded \$500, claiming that every individual pane on each 9-pane window was a separate window. Rather than start an argument, our neighbor “compromised” and negotiated a fee of \$200 for the entire job. He was too embarrassed to notify the police.

We urge all neighbors never to allow anyone purporting to do any kind of service into your home — unless you've contacted that person first and checked out references.

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Society Hill is one of the most historic residential neighborhoods in the United States. Its extraordinary rebirth in recent decades was accomplished within the framework of overall redevelopment controls, based on preservation guidelines that helped create and protect this community that we all now enjoy. In 1999 Society Hill became an officially designated "historic district" within Philadelphia's Historic Preservation Ordinance, and this provides a level of protection for all the buildings within the district.

We are pleased that most property owners in the neighborhood take their home maintenance responsibilities seriously. And, of course, the efforts of SHCA's Zoning & Historic Preservation (ZHP) Committee help keep property owners alert to prevent inappropriate exterior alterations or unnecessary demolitions which would harm the authenticity and visual delight in our streetscape. That is why we urge all homeowners to present any alteration or demolition plans to the ZHP Committee and their neighbors — prior to seeking approvals from either the Historical Commission or the Zoning Board of Adjustment (ZBA). We invite nearby residents to attend these presentations and stay informed about changes which may occur in their immediate neighborhoods. Presentations can be arranged by contacting Paul Boni, ZHP chair, at paulboni@bonilaw.com, or Matt DeJulio, SHCA Administrator, at MattDeJulio@aol.com or 215-629-1288.

*New Fencing for St. Peter's School*

The ZHP Committee was pleased to provide its full support for the school's proposed new fencing plan at 4th and Lombard Streets. The design of the new fence is in keeping with the architecture of the neighborhood, conveying a sense of openness while also providing a safe, enclosed play area for the children. Made from galvanized tubular steel, this new fence will be a wonderful visual improvement over the school's current chain-link enclosure. We thank our good neighbor, St. Peter's School, for presenting the proposal to the ZHP Committee, which will surely enhance the school's west lawn area and the Southeast Quadrant of Society Hill.

*York Row Façades*

York Row refers to the historically significant set of three Federal era houses (built in 1807) whose façades were saved and are being incorporated as street-level retail shops at the base of the 47-story apartment tower being con-

structed at 8th and Walnut Streets as a part of the St. James complex at Washington Square. For over a year now, the ZHP Committee has expressed concern that the developer was not adequately protecting the façades of these Walnut Street buildings during the construction phase of the new tower. Though we continuously complained to the developer and to the City, we were always told that "all is well."

Well, all was not well, because the marble cornices of these venerable buildings came tumbling down — forever ruining original cornices as well as marble steps — which the developer had promised to protect. After these mishaps, the developer's representatives went before the Historical Commission's Architectural Committee seeking to replace the marble cornices with fiberglass replicas. The Architectural Committee reminded the developer that, according to federal preservation guidelines, replication of lost or damaged original materials must be made with similar materials, not substitutes, whenever possible.

However, when the developer presented its plans before the full Historical Commission in September, we were dismayed that the Commission granted the developer's request — despite their own Architectural Committee's professional recommendation and despite our community's written objection. With the support of SHCA's Board of Directors, the ZHP Committee decided to appeal this decision to the L&I Review Board, and we will press our case to advocate that real marble be used to replace what was lost.

We hope to send the message that we will not stand idly by when developers seek to replace original historic fabric with inferior materials, especially when the original fabric could have been preserved by more careful construction practices.


According to federal preservation guidelines, replication of lost or damaged original materials must be made with similar materials, not substitutes, whenever possible.

**St. James Where?**

Our neighborhood is now blessed with three St. James addresses. With the soon to be completed 47-story high rise at the corner of 8th and Walnut, "The St. James," we all need to work harder to remember which place is which. Residents of

St. James Court, on the 500 block of Locust Walk, have complained about numerous incidents of ambulances, police, taxi cab drivers, etc. not knowing where it is. Residents of St. James Place, on the 300 block of Locust Walk, part of Bingham Court,

undoubtedly face similar problems. Now with the debut of "The St. James" the risk of confusion is even greater. Already the *Philadelphia Business Journal* was caught incorrectly identifying the new high rise as "St. James Court." Directions anyone?



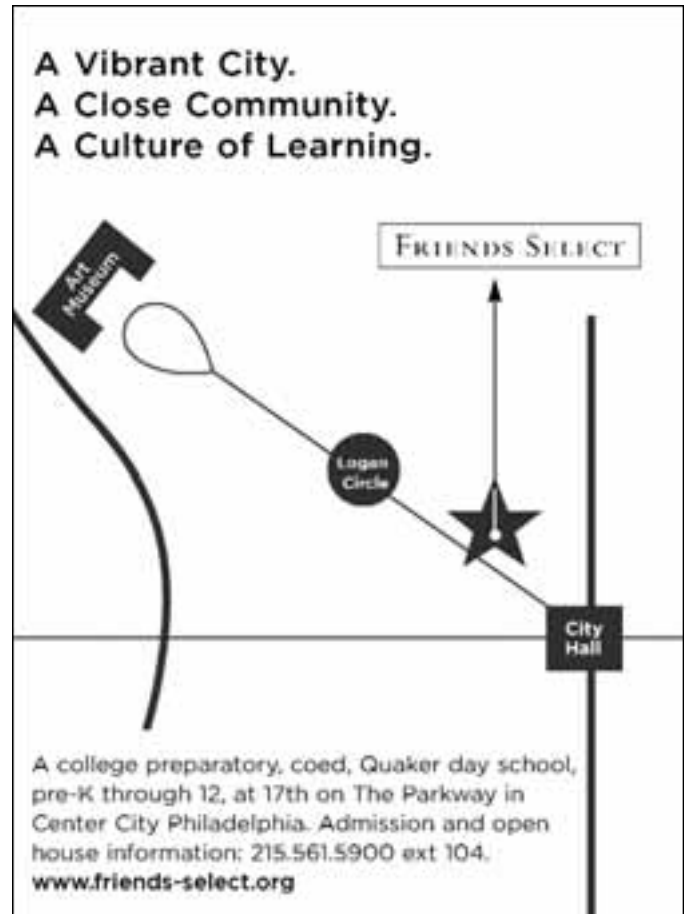
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# Kids' Beat

A COLUMN BY KERI WHITE

## The Gift of Time

It's hard to believe, but the holidays are upon us! The calendar fills up with social engagements and school activities, our "to-do" list grows longer, responsibilities increase, and our lives begin to spin out of control. What we really need is some downtime; a pause from all the shopping, homework, package wrapping, party planning, cooking and so on. As we reflect on the gifts we would like to bestow (and receive) this season, why not consider giving our loved ones the generosity of time or, to quote my 6 year old, "Mom, give me a break!"

The key to this type of gift is to unburden the receiver by giving time and freedom to kick back and rejuvenate. So present a "certificate" for a few hours of babysitting.

For example, in addition to the standard bottle of wine we all love to give and get, add a night out at a BYO restaurant. Include that gift certificate redeemable for an evening of babysitting and a list of suggested destinations. Azafran, Hosteria da Elia, Gnocchi, Chloe, and Overtures are some local choices. Take the kids out for pizza and stop at TLA Video for a family film. While the parents get a much needed night out, you and yours can have a fun evening at home with some pint-sized company.

Remember! Relaxation is the key; at this time of year it's a rare commodity. When you give that marvelous gift certificate for a spa visit, make sure you provide childcare. Whether it's an hour for a manicure or a "Day of Beauty," in the eyes of the fortunate recipient your

thoughtfulness will triple the value of the gift. In Society Hill Debbie Zak Cohen performs her magical myofascial massage therapy at 227 Pine Street. If dollars are a bit scarce — and at holiday time, this is unavoidable — try Jean Madeleine Aveda Institute on Orianna Street between South and Bainbridge. The Institute offers a diverse array of spa/salon services at discounted prices. All of its operators are in training, but, based on my personal experience, provide consistently good, professional results. For a change of pace, Dana Feinberg (215-435-1505) offers relaxing, restorative and professional yoga instruction both privately and in a class setting.

If none of these suggestions would appeal to the person on your list, perhaps time in a cafe with a gift book would be in order. Philadelphia Java Co., Cosi and Pink Rose Cafe are all wonderful places to enjoy a latte and perhaps indulge a craving for sweets.

Society Hill also offers a wealth of historical, cultural and architectural treasures. Treat a friend/spouse/neighbor/relative to a tour of the Powel House, the Physick House, the National Constitution Center or Independence Park. We all live here and send out-of-town guests to explore these gems, but do we ever make time to appreciate them ourselves?

Regardless of the gift, the key is the break it provides. Everyone needs to hit the reset button occasionally. Happy Holidays!



### Kid's Quote

*Back to you, Charlie.  
"Who's Charlie?"*

**McCall School Kindergartners, on "Good Morning America."**



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## Holiday Happenings

### St. Peter's School Annual Holiday Sale

December 5-7 on the school grounds at 3rd and Lombard Streets. The market is full of lush trees, custom-decorated wreaths and swags, evergreen garland, poinsettias and books, a gift shop featuring scrumptious gourmet goodies and unique items. Purchase a tree or wreath and receive a discount coupon to the Holiday House Tour. Hours are Friday, 1-6 p.m., Saturday, 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. and Sunday, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Proceeds benefit St. Peter's School Scholar Fund. Call 215-925-3963 for more information.

### Physick House

Come to the Annual Twelfth Night Celebration in the beautiful museum house at 321 South 4th Street on Sunday, January 4 from 4:30 to 7:30 p.m. Enjoy an evening of tradition, marked by wonderful food, holiday cheer and good fellowship. Reservations are required. For additional information contact Twelfth Night Chair Jacqueline Shultz at 215-922-6926.

### St. Peter's School 4th Annual Holiday Open House Tour

Saturday, December 13, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Unique self-guided walking excursion features distinctive 18th & 19th-century private homes in Society Hill and Queen Village that are all decked out for the season. Tickets are \$35 at the door, \$30 with advance reservation and \$25 for seniors and groups of four or more. Add a five-course prix fix lunch at Sfizzio Ristorante, 2nd and Walnut Streets (\$20/person). Proceeds benefit St. Peter's School Scholar Fund. For reservations or information call 215-925-3963.



### Atwater Kent Museum

Atwater Kent Museum, 15 South 7th Street, showcases 200 Years of Toys and Games through December 29. Included are a 19th-century dollhouse, miniatures, dolls and puzzles made in the city and enjoyed by Philadelphia children.

Call 215-685-4830 for more information.



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## CONDO CORNER

## Hopkinson House: Like A Phoenix Rising

Last January Hopkinson House was the scene of a fire that captured the attention of the city. Residents of several destroyed units were forced to find alternative, temporary housing. While clean-up and restoration were underway, the upper floors continued to display outward signs of the devastation. But by mid-summer reconstruction was complete and Hopkinson House again presented a pristine façade on the south side of Washington Square where it has been an imposing structure since its opening in November 1962.

Hopkinson House is part of Philadelphia's urban renewal history. In the 1950's Philadelphia's City Planning Commission planted the seeds for the revitalization of Society Hill, which had deteriorated to the point where historic houses were in jeopardy of total destruction. There was a desire to bring apartment living to the area and the south side of Washington Square was deemed a suitable location. This was partly due to harmony with office towers on Walnut Street and partly to the fact that the structures then existing on the site seemed ready for replacement. Originally the intent was to construct a hotel/apartment building. But when Hopkinson House opened more than 40 years ago, with initial monthly rental rates ranging from \$95 for an efficiency to \$435 for a three-bedroom unit, it was devoted solely to apartments. In 1980 it was converted to condominiums.

The firm of Stonorov and Haws was chosen to design what would become the first high-rise residential building in Society Hill. The project also included the 18 townhouses on 7th Street and on Spruce Street that surround the

33-story tower named for Francis Hopkinson, a signer of the Declaration of Independence. Oscar Stonorov, a sculptor as well as an architect, was instrumental in incorporating art into the building — although it was not required by the city at the time. The mural "Philadelphia Panorama" by Lucius Crowell greets visitors to the lobby, where four bronzes depicting female forms and entitled "The Four Seasons" frame the elevator doors. Another large bronze sculpture, "Adam and Eve," graces the plaza and, along with a waterfall, can be seen through the glass wall opposite the elevators.

The artwork is only one of the amenities enjoyed by residents. The lobby provides access to a spacious, but private terrace. The Solarium, situated at the top of the building, is the site of social events and also contains a library. The rooftop swimming pool and sun-deck offer stunning views of the city.

Residents must enjoy living in Hopkinson House as many have made it their home for a decade or more. Among the notables who have inhabited the building was Wilt Chamberlain who, according to Hopkinson House lore, chose it because the freight elevator easily accommodated his tall frame!

Special thanks to George Koch, Hopkinson House representative on the SHCA board, for providing historical information.



**Hopkinson House was the first residential high-rise built in Society Hill.**

## SHCA Contractor List Is a Bright Idea

## Exterior Lights: Keep Them On from Dusk to Dawn

Since it's always a good idea to keep your home from being the target of intruders, use the Society Hill List of Contractors to arrange for the installation of a front or back door light, a timer for your light or a motion detector for the rear of your home. It's common knowledge that good lighting is an inexpensive way to deter unwanted visitors and prevent crime. Also listed are a number of security system companies to protect your property, as well as locksmiths to install the best devices available to meet your needs. The roster of carpenters might come in handy if you want to make sure windows and doors are strong and secure.

An important reminder! If you have an automatic timer for your front door light, don't forget to set it to go on at 6 p.m. and off 6 a.m. As the days get shorter, we need to make the adjustments to have a well-lit and safe neighborhood. If you manually turn on your exterior lights, please make sure they're on from dusk to dawn. To request a List of Contractors, or to receive automatic timer directions contact Martha Levine at [marthalev@aol.com](mailto:marthalev@aol.com) or 215-629-0727. The list will be mailed to you. It has been compiled from Society Hill neighbors' recommendations, although it is not endorsed by SHCA.



## NOTABLE NEIGHBORS OF THE PAST

## The “Dazzling” Anne Willing Bingham



Portrait of Anne Willing Bingham by Gilbert Stuart

This 18th-century Society Hill hostess is considered to have been the “leading salonniere in Philadelphia.”

Two well-known historic names in Society Hill are Willing’s Alley and Bingham Court, the latter attached to the 12 I.M. Pei townhouses erected during the 1960s. Our notable neighbor, Anne Willing Bingham, bore both names, a merging of two of the city’s most prominent 18th-century families. For most of her short adult life (Anne Bingham died at 37 from a cold that settled in her lungs) she was one of the premier hostesses in her Society Hill neighborhood. As the daughter of the prosperous, former Whig, merchant Thomas Willing (also the first president of the Bank of the United States) and wife of a successful land speculator turned senator, William Bingham, Anne had the wealth and leisure to plan her social gatherings.

The decade after the 1787 ratification of the Constitution was an exciting, often turbulent time in Philadelphia. The nationalistic spirit so evident after the war gave way to a more distinct class structure and financial adjustments as the city replaced a war economy with commercial ventures. There emerged a group of women who, familiar with French culture and custom, created a lively social milieu. Anne Willing Bingham was at the forefront of this scene.

The Binghams built a house at 3rd and Spruce Streets, one of the finest mansions in the area. Near neighbors were the Powells, whose patriarch, Samuel, was mayor in both the colonial and national periods. Gary B. Nash in *First City* describes the Bingham mansion as “the most pretentious residence built in the [Federalist] era.” Erected in 1789 in the style of English designer Robert Adam, it boasted a marble staircase, mirrored drawing rooms and elegant European furnishings. George Tatum in *Penn’s Great Town* notes that the well-traveled Binghams modeled their home after the residence of the Duke of Manchester in London. Damaged by fire in 1823, the renovated mansion became an inn. Another fire in 1847, however, doomed it and the once elegant house was razed at mid-century.

In 1794, 14 years after her marriage, Ann Willing traveled to Europe where she spent a couple of years traveling, visiting salons in Paris, London and The Hague. She returned determined to emulate the aristocratic women who hosted drawing rooms on the Continent. Anne’s salon became a meeting place for many French émigrés, such as the duc d’Orleans and the duc de la Rochefoucault-Liancourt.

Her parties were the place to encounter lively discussions of political issues. Abigail Adams, after an evening spent in the Bingham home wrote, “The room became full before I left it, and the circle very brilliant. How could it be otherwise, when the dazzling Mrs. Bingham and her beautiful sisters were there, the Misses Allen, and Misses Chew, in short a constellation of beauties?”

Mrs. Adams was only one of Anne’s famous admirers; she was a correspondent of Thomas Jefferson, who wrote her from Paris. In one missive (February 1, 1787) he asks Anne to tell him whether she found “the tranquil pleasures of America preferable to the empty bustle of Paris.” In another chatty note (May 11, 1788), he bids Anne to send requests for Parisian items she may want since shipping between the two countries had become easier.

The Binghams’ two daughters inherited their mother’s style. Anne Louisa and Maria Matilda both married well. Daughter Anne was married to financier Alexander Baring (another famous name in Philadelphia), negotiator of the Webster-Ashburton treaty. Maria’s escapades were notorious here and abroad. She married three times: a brief union with the Comte de Tilly, then Henry Baring and finally the Marquis de Blaisel.

In *These Fiery Frenchified Dames: Women and Political Culture in Early National Philadelphia* (University of Pennsylvania, 2002) Susan Brandon writes of the pro-French upper-class women and their influence on the political life of the city. Some paraded around in cockades to symbolize solidarity with the French middle class. Others, like aristocratic Anne Willing Bingham, portrayed twice by Gilbert Stuart in sketch and painting, were determined to preserve some of the old order and its elegance.

A scholarly meeting will be held in Baltimore this month (November) focusing on Anne Willing Bingham’s influence. The Social Science History Association will have as its theme “Liberty or Luxury: The Philadelphia Salon Culture of Anne Willing Bingham.” The Association touts Mrs. Bingham as the “leading salonniere in Philadelphia,” noting that she was an important figure on the city’s social scene, “adopting the manners and material culture of European aristocracy to bring a civilizing force to the new republic.”





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- 233 Spruce Street
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## “I Think That I Shall Never See A Poem Lovely as a Tree”

As city dwellers, we never take trees for granted. They are our precious foot soldiers in the never ending battle against urban smoke and smog. Thanks to Society Hill Civic Association and a generous grant from The Green Tree Perpetual Assurance Company, 12 area residents are having trees planted in front of their homes this fall. The \$300 subsidy announced in the last two issues of the *Reporter* covers more than half the cost of a new tree.

Look for new trees at: 609 Addison, 314 S. 3rd, 350 and 265 S. 4th, 2nd and Lombard, 240 Locust, 503 Pine, 519, 621, 624 and 631 Spruce Streets and St. Peter’s School.

Thanks to Project Street Trees volunteer Karen Skafta for organizing this effort and making arrangements with Bartlett Trees. If you would like to have a new tree, contact the SHCA office at 215-629-1288.

## SHCA Membership Reaches All Time High

Your civic association’s membership has reached an all time high of 953 households and businesses. As we go to press, it is unlikely we will reach our goal of 1,000 in calendar 2003. But there is always next year. You will have an opportunity to renew your membership for 2004 just before the holidays, as this is our annual renewal cycle. Our advocacy position in dealing with the City is strengthened by the numbers we represent, so please try to recruit someone on your block. A membership form is included in this and every issue of the *Reporter* and is posted on our web site. Join now and receive credit for the remainder of 2003 and all of 2004.

We estimate that 30% of all households in Society Hill belong to SHCA — 45% among townhouse residents and 13% among condominium residents. While we have picked up 20 members from the condominiums in the past two years, we have a long way to go to convince residents of Independence Place, Hopkinson House, Society Hill Towers and Penns Landing Square that an improved Society Hill in the neighboring streets directly impacts their quality-of-life and real estate values. If you are a resident of one of these condos and are not a member of SHCA, we strongly urge you to let us know what better efforts SHCA can make on your behalf, via a letter to the editor.

## SHCA 2003-2004 BUDGET

June 1, 2003 - May 31, 2004

### Income

\$ 50,000	Membership
\$ 35,253	Reporter Advertising
\$ 8,546	Historic House Tours
\$ 2,000	Interest
<b>\$ 95,799</b>	<b>Total Income</b>

NOTE: These pie graphs do not include the recent \$15,000 donation received from Declaration Productions. See page 11.

### Expenses

\$ 36,413	Reporter
\$ 28,510	Administrative Support
\$ 20,170	Sidewalk/Clean Up/Graffiti
\$ 5,500	Miscellaneous
\$ 3,650	Trees
\$ 2,500	Membership Drive
\$ 2,000	Safety & Security
\$ 2,000	ZHP
<b>\$ 100,743</b>	<b>Total Expenses</b>

## SOCIETY HILL CIVIC ASSOCIATION

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Renewal     New

\$40 Household

\$100 Business

\$60 Businesses with under 5 employees\$

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Check if you wish to receive

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I/We would be interested in working with one of SHCA’s committees.

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

If you cannot afford membership dues, please donate what you can.

## NOTEWORTHY NEIGHBORS

A COLUMN BY DAVID WOODS

## Meet John Alchin

His move to Society Hill exemplifies an international vote of confidence.

People who come to Philadelphia from afar often develop a distinctive pride in — and affection for — their adopted city that seems almost proprietary.

One good example of this is John Alchin, an Australian who came to the United States in 1980. Before coming to Philadelphia he spent some years in Toronto, where he acquired an MBA, and in New York, where he worked for the Toronto Dominion Bank overseeing loans to the telecommunications industry.

Says John, who is now executive vice president and co-CFO of Comcast: “This is such a great place to entertain visitors. The new Constitution Center is stunning. And when I take people to the Barnes, they say ‘Why doesn’t the world know about this?’”

When he first joined Comcast, it was a small company in Bala Cynwyd. Now, says the self-confessed workaholic, “I manage billions of dollars...and that keeps me awake at night, even though we generate more than enough revenue to meet our obligations.”

John is truly a cosmopolitan. He lives in Independence Place, but is also building a house in Spring Lake, New Jersey. He describes it as differing from other shore points, with its Victorian houses, wide streets, and mix of residents and summer denizens — the latter mainly from New York. He also maintains an apartment in Sydney, Australia and travels extensively, especially to France, a country he holds in great affection despite the recent contretemps between the French and Americans. All of which makes this true internationalist’s enthusiasm for Philadelphia in general and Society Hill in particular a discerning vote of confidence. In fact, he says,



“when I first came to the U.S. in 1980, I thought the suburbs had their attractions, but I felt the pull of the city.” He first considered Rittenhouse Square, but then opted for Society Hill “because of its openness and accessibility.” A big movie fan, he also rates the Ritz theaters as a huge plus.

And, like others who come from elsewhere but throw themselves into the life of the city, John has become immersed in the life and well-being of the community, serving as chairman of Equality Forum.

From his 35th-story Comcast office with a sweeping view of his adopted city, John Alchin has a constant reminder of what it means when people say “it’s great to travel, but it’s even greater to come home.”

## Grassroots Vision for Penn’s Landing

In response to the city’s long inability to develop the 13 acres of Penn’s Landing, a coalition of 11 civic groups, including SHCA, retained the planning and design firm of Wallace Roberts & Todd to devise a plan creating a livable waterfront. Their recently revealed scheme carves out parks and open spaces as well as piers and warehouses for residential

and commercial development. It links an attractive series of neighborhoods from Penn Treaty Park south to Queen Village, bringing new residents as well as tourists to the water and connecting Center City with Penn’s Landing by raising Columbus Boulevard to fit a covered I-95. Attend the SHCA General Membership meeting November 19 to learn more.

# The Green Tree Perpetual Assurance Company

## Episode III • The Capital City

The decade of the 1790s brought new optimism and many challenges to the city of Philadelphia and to The Green Tree, as in this decade Philadelphia was once more the capital of the nation. Alexander Hamilton, appointed Secretary of the Treasury under President Washington, gained a tight control over the nation's finances and expanded sorely needed public credit when the federal government assumed the states' Revolutionary War debts. Chartered in 1791, the Bank of the United States began constructing its first permanent home on Third Street only four years later. This elegant and imposing Palladian edifice, with its elaborately ornamented pediment, was a visible emblem of the solidity and nobility of purpose of the new nation.

In this decade, the social life of the capital was elegant and active. A new theater established in the city evoked strong opinions, even as The Green Tree trustees trooped over to inspect it for insurance. Charles Willson Peale, now resting in St. Peter's churchyard, was painting all the luminaries of the day from Washington on down and attracting large crowds to his Museum in Philosophical Hall. By the 1790s Philadelphia had already established itself as a leading center for artisans, and craftsmen were creating superb pieces of furniture and silver. After the austerity of the war years, new luxuries were available as a result of the recently opened China trade. A new turnpike leading from Philadelphia to Lancaster provided easier access to friends and relatives as well as easier trade routes, and it was soon followed by other turnpikes and toll roads. All of these changes contributed to a sense of optimism, purpose, and forward momentum in the capital of the new nation.

Yellow fever epidemics, however, slowed the city's progress. The first outbreak of this persistent bane occurred in 1793 and forced Congress to flee to Germantown. Many of the town's citizens and businesses evacuated as well, leaving Mayor Matthew Clarkson and a few other civic minded individuals to deal heroically with the devastation. The fever recurred almost

annually thereafter, with particularly severe outbreaks in 1797 and 1798. Like his predecessor Clarkson, Mayor Robert Wharton stayed in town to cope with the situation. The Green Tree remained in operation as well, although with a skeletal staff. The annual meeting of 1798, postponed twice, was finally held with only two trustees, Robert Wharton and Thomas Allibone, and three policyholders in attendance. The requirement for quorums fell by the wayside in such times.

Wharton and Clarkson were typical of the City's merchants and of The Green Tree's trustees. Three trustees of The Green Tree, Clarkson, Wharton, and Inskip, served as mayor of the city, and they and other trustees held the office of councilman, alderman, or commissioner. These men all had a strong commitment to Philadelphia and felt an obligation to take part in the city's public life, as, indeed, was expected of them. Not until the mid-nineteenth century did professional politicians appear on the Philadelphia political scene. To some extent, the characteristic dedication of these Philadelphians also explains the depth of the trustees' commitment to The Green Tree, for they gave years of their lives to overseeing its affairs and meeting monthly for no real personal gain other than what was gained by all members and, indirectly, the city.

In these years, the issue of Philadelphia's water supply was a high priority in a city that experienced major epidemics of yellow fever. Hopes abounded that a purified water system would alleviate these problems as well as provide additional benefits such as increased water pressure for fire fighting. A water committee was formed to consider the problem and included The Green Tree's trustee Daniel Smith. They commissioned Benjamin Henry Latrobe to design and build the works at Centre Square. Not surprisingly, The Green Tree was an early subscriber to the project, agreeing to purchase thirty shares with an advance payment of \$40 per share provided that "Interest will be given for the same from the time of subscribing."



The Green Tree's main concern, however, was to increase its subscription base while doing everything in its power to keep losses due to fire as low as possible. As an incentive to fire fighters, The Green Tree had a clause in its Deed of Settlement stipulating that "the Trustees shall have Power to Reward, out of the Company's Stock, such as are voluntarily active, in dangerous Cases to extinguish Fires." In March of 1795 the trustees authorized the first reward of \$50 to "the person that so conspicuously exerted himself at the late Fire in Pine Street." A committee was established to determine the identity of this person, whose ascent to the upper stories of a cabinetmaker's shop to cut through the roof and tear away the burning shingles saved several houses from destruction. The committee found that four men merited commendation: Henry Abbott, who had opened the roof, and Lewis Dewees, who "was very strenuous in his endeavours on the roof of Captain Allibone's house," assisted by James Simpson and George Dicks. Captain Allibone's house was of particular interest to The Green Tree, since the company was insuring it for £500. The trustees split the \$50 reward among the four men proportionately, paying Abbot in silver spoons, possibly a more stable currency at the time. The Green Tree extended its early interest in supporting the efforts of fire companies and individuals long into the future. Many members of the Board remained active members of the volunteer companies, and awards to individuals and fire companies were frequent.

*To be continued...*

**COMMUNITY CALENDAR**

**November**

Monday, November 10, 6:30 p.m.

**Book reading: What We Lost** by Dale Peck  
Independence Branch of the Free Library  
18 South 7th Street

Wednesday, November 12, 6:30 p.m.

**Book reading: Reading Terminal Market: An Illustrated History** by David O'Neill  
Independence Branch of the Free Library

Thursday, November 13, 7-9 p.m.

**SHCA Fall Social**  
Commerce Bank, 2nd and Lombard  
see page 1

Saturday, November 15, 8 a.m. to 3 p.m.

**Clean Up Day with Washington Sq. West**  
see page 1

Tuesdays, November 18 and December 9

**Taping of national radio program "Justice Talking" before a live audience**  
National Constitution Center  
call 215-409-6600 for reservation and time

Wednesday, November 19

**Society Hill Civic Association Meeting**  
see page 1 for time and place

**December**

December 5-7

**St. Peter's School Annual Holiday Sale**  
3rd and Lombard Streets  
see page 21

Wednesday, December 10, 6 p.m.

**SCHC Board of Directors Meeting**  
Old Pine Community Center  
4th and Lombard Streets

Saturday, December 13, 10 a.m. – 3 p.m.

**St. Peter's School 4th Annual Holiday Open House Tour**  
see page 21

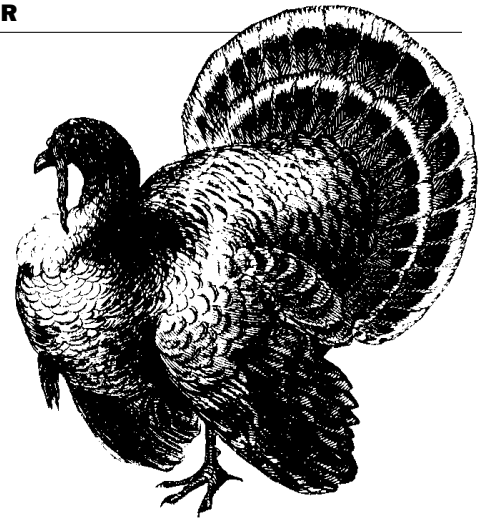
**January**

Sunday, January 4, 4:30-7:30 p.m.

**Twelfth Night Celebration**  
Physick House, 321 South 4th Street  
see page 21

Wednesday, January 21

**Society Hill Civic Association Meetings**  
6 p.m. Board Meeting  
7 p.m. General Membership Meeting  
location to be announced

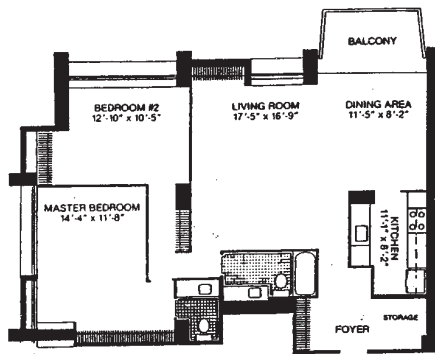


*The Society Hill  
Civic Association  
wishes you and your  
family a joyous  
holiday season.*

*'Society Hill and Washington Square's Premier Condominiums*

**Hopkinson House**

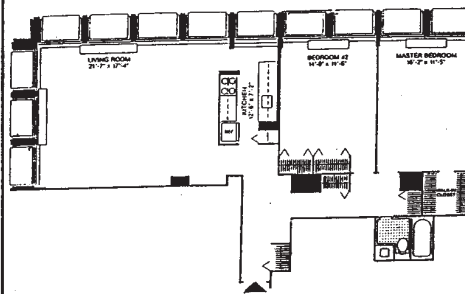
604-36 S. Washington Square



Two bedroom, 1 1/2 bath, high floor, balcony with park view  
**\$369,900**

**Society Hill Towers**

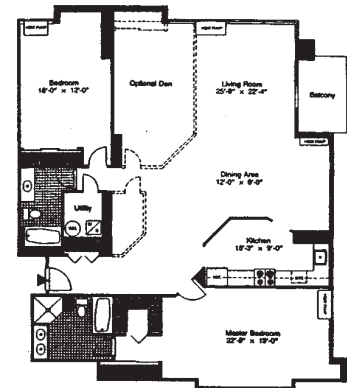
200-220 Locust Street



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  
**\$810,000**



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