

SOCIETY HILL

# Reporter

www.societyhillcivic.org

## Philly's Own Ellis Island



**Historical Marker at Washington Avenue and Columbus Boulevard.**

The Society Hill Civic Association (SHCA) invites all neighbors to its General Membership Meeting on January 21, when Pennsport neighbor Susan McAninley will speak about Pier 53, a Philadelphia treasure steps from our own community.

Susan McAninley is a graphic artist and a lifetime resident of Philadelphia. When she made her home three blocks from the Delaware River in 1991, the riverfront was long abandoned and barricaded. In 2008, the Central Delaware Advocacy Group launched a 10-year strategic plan to implement a new civic vision for the waterfront.

The first area developed was the Washington Avenue Green Park, at the foot of Washington Avenue and Columbus Boulevard. An overgrown Pier 53, abandoned since 1965, extended from that park into the river.

Little was known about Pier 53, even though the site played a part in the Revolutionary War and the War of 1812; served as a boatbuilding shipyard and the nation's first Naval Yard; and welcomed and dispatched Civil War soldiers. From 1876 into the 1920s, it was an immigration pier — the Ellis Island of Philadelphia — for incoming immigrants from Europe, welcoming about a million new residents.

Susan became interested in the stories of immigrants and has been collecting family histories from descendants. She will share with you the Pier's history and some of those family stories.

Remember that everyone is welcome to attend our General Membership Meeting. Simply arrive at Pennsylvania Hospital's Zubrow Auditorium, located on the first floor inside the main entrance at 8th Street near Spruce, before 7:30 p.m. All members interested in Society Hill issues are welcome at our monthly Board Meeting, 6 p.m. at the Great Court Conference Room.

### WEDNESDAY

January

21

6:00 p.m.

#### Board of Directors Meeting

Pennsylvania Great Court Conference Room  
All SHCA members are welcome.

7:30 p.m.

#### General Membership Meeting

Pennsylvania Hospital Zubrow Auditorium  
All neighborhood residents are invited to attend.

**Speaker:** Susan McAninley

**Topic:** Pier 53 — Its History and Immigrant Arrivals

### MARK YOUR CALENDAR

Society Hill Civic Association Meetings  
Wednesday, January 21, 2015

**Pennsylvania Hospital  
8th & Spruce Streets**



**NELSON**, a global design firm, recently sent a team of volunteers to McCall School to provide many additions to the school's interior and exterior. With parents and students, they painted doors and murals, planted new vegetation and used reclaimed wood from Independence National Historical Park to build benches that help tell the history of our neighborhood.





**mw** designgroupllc.com

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SOCIETY HILL

*Reporter*



**Managing Editor**  
Sandra Rothman

**Columnists**  
Marilyn Appel  
Claire Batten  
Jane Biberman  
Matt DeJulio  
Martha Levine  
Jim Murphy

**Contributors**  
Fred Manfred  
Lilyan Maitin  
Susan McAninley  
Diane Stein

**Photographer**  
Bonnie Halda

**Graphic Design**  
Judy Lamirand  
judy@parallel-design.com

**Press Release Liaison**  
c/o Matt DeJulio  
mattdejulio@aol.com

**Advertising Manager**  
Lenore Hardy  
Hardy@drexel.edu

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**Society Hill  
Civic Association**  
P. O. Box 63503  
Philadelphia, PA 19147  
Tel. 215-629-1288

**Website**  
Find past issues of the  
*Reporter* with color photos  
at [www.societyhillcivic.org](http://www.societyhillcivic.org).

**Submissions**

We want to hear from you. Our goal is to print news of interest to Society Hillers – happenings in and around our community for residents, businesses and professionals. Direct your editorial submissions and/or queries to Sandra Rothman by phone at 717-715-5791 or email [sandra.rothman@aol.com](mailto:sandra.rothman@aol.com). To publicize an event, submit all press releases directly.

Materials must be submitted in writing – via mail or email – and must include the name of a contact person. Edited submissions will be considered for publication if the subject matter is community related and if space allows. Otherwise, upcoming events of interest may be listed in the Community Calendar. Letters to the Editor will be considered for publication only if signed and the writer provides contact information.

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# Bulletin Board

*Snapshots of the people who make SHCA work.*



**Mary Purcell**, a native of New Jersey, moved to Philadelphia by way of Chicago in 1994 and has been a resident of Society Hill Towers since. Mary's professional expertise is in project management and employee benefits administration, most recently as a principal at Mercer, a Marsh & McLennan company.

Mary is fond of the wonderful community at the Towers, as well as the historic Society Hill community in which we are lucky to live. When she is not in the gym, cooking or watching HGTV and the Food Network, she enjoys membership at a number of our cultural gems, including the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts and the Philadelphia Museum of Art. She volunteers at WHY

and subscribes to the Philadelphia Orchestra. Additionally, Mary enjoys time with her large extended family, including her feisty parents, who are in their 80s and going strong. Mary is past chair of the Society Hill Towers Community PAC and joined the SHCA board in 2009. She coordinates SHCA socials and participates in various committees.

**Mary Tracy**, president of Scenic Philadelphia, has served on SHCA's Zoning and Historic Preservation Committee for three years. As a community advocate in Philadelphia, Mary led efforts to restore the historic Overbrook Train Station. She helped secure removal of five illegal billboards in Overbrook Farms, and co-founded the citywide coalition SCRUB (Society Created to Reduce Urban Blight) in 1990, partnering with community groups and local officials to pass laws protecting neighborhoods from billboard blight.

She has also been an advocate for protecting parkland and organized the legal challenge resulting in a landmark court decision that upheld the will of Robert Waln Ryerss, which saved Burholme Park from private development. This precedent deterred similar land deals throughout the state. Mary moved to Society Hill from Overbrook Farms four years ago. Her son Bryan and daughter Kate live and work in New York City, and her daughter Clare lives and works in Philadelphia. Mary has one grandchild and one

on the way! This extremely busy woman relaxes by playing fiddle for the band Irish Mist, which she has been doing for the past 30 years.



**The Society Hill Civic Association is fortunate to recruit talented, hard-working neighbors who love our community and work hard to make it even better. Consider adding your time and talents to an SHCA committee. You'll meet interesting people and make meaningful contributions to Society Hill, one of America's premier neighborhoods. Find a list of all of SHCA's committees at [www.societyhillcivic.org](http://www.societyhillcivic.org).**

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## MARK YOUR CALENDAR

## Washington Square Affair :: June 10, 2015



**M**ark your calendar! SHCA's fourth Washington Square Affair will take place on Wednesday, June 10. It promises to be the best celebration since 1776!

The tented Affair will be held in Washington Square from 6:30 to 9 p.m. We hope you will join us for an exciting evening with friends, neighbors and local businesses, as we gather and mingle in celebration of this historic neighborhood jewel. The Affair will feature a variety of foods from area restaurants and caterers, wine, music and festive entertainment.

The earlier Patron cocktail party will be held on Friday, May 15 from 6 to 8 p.m. at Pamela and Ajay Raju's sensational Pine Street residence. Guests will enjoy their Italianate New York-style brownstone with a magnificent formal garden, all of which overlook the picturesque grounds of historic Pennsylvania Hospital. Oprah Winfrey's project *Beloved* was filmed in this grand mansion.

All proceeds from this event are used solely for the benefit of Washington Square. Your support of past Affairs has funded many park enhancements. The planting beds are improved every year and maintained on a weekly basis from May through the end of November. The ongoing design and care of the flower beds ensures that there is always something in bloom for spring, summer and fall.

Some of the more ambitious endeavors have been collaborative efforts between SHCA, Independence National Historical Park, private donations and the community. One of the first major projects was the design and installation of a park-wide sprinkler system, critical in maintaining the health of the flower beds and grassy areas.

Thanks to the generous support of the Philadelphia Fountain Society, we were finally able to install the central Water Lily fixture, which was outlined in the original plan, as well as repair and restore the basin. Two years ago, Joan and Bernard Spain's generous contribution led the way for both guard houses to undergo historic restorations. Most recently, Suzanne and Norman Cohn's donation funded critical maintenance and cleaning of the memorial site.

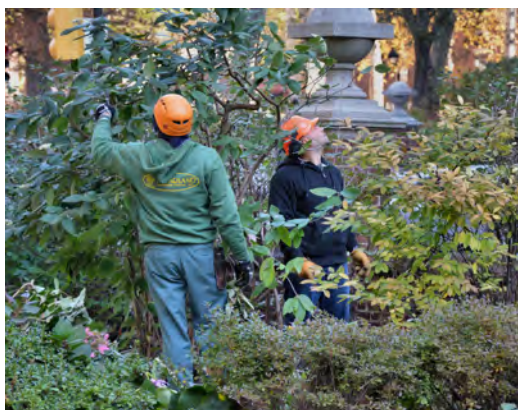
Individuals and businesses have the opportunity to support the 2015 Washington Square Affair. In doing so, they also support the park that is enjoyed in so many ways by our community and visitors from around the world. For questions or more information about sponsorship opportunities, contact Washington Square Affair :: 2015 Chair Fred Manfred at 215-687-8687. We look forward to seeing you under the tent!

**Tickets are limited for both the Patron Party and the Square Affair. Make your reservations now!**

## WASHINGTON SQUARE WINTERIZATION

**McFarland Tree & Landscape Services**

donated a two-man working crew and equipment for a full day in order to prune all 15 flowerbeds in Washington Square. Winterizing the beds minimizes possible damage from ice, wind and winter storms, and protects evergreen plants from winter burn. Last winter was so cold and harsh that many hydrangeas either didn't bloom or had fewer blooms than in the past. We greatly appreciate Peter McFarland's generous donation, and we thank the wonderful workers who did such a great job accomplishing this huge task. We look forward to an even more beautiful spring and summer in 2015!





*All Gloria Dei's venerable trees remained standing in Hurricane Sandy, preserving the historic graves below.*

## HISTORIC TREES UNHURT IN HURRICANE SANDY

**... Thanks to Liberty Tree & Landscape Management**

When Hurricane Sandy pummeled the city in late October, 2012, not one of the many 200+-year-old trees at Gloria Dei Church on Columbus Blvd. came down. Pastor Joy Segal credits that feat to the outstanding work of Liberty Tree and Landscape Management.

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**SORTING THINGS OUT**

BY MARTHA LEVINE

# Recycling Dos and Don'ts

**A**lthough most Society Hill residents are fastidious about recycling, some confusion exists. For instance, even though you may have carefully put your recyclables in a plastic bag and put the bag in the large blue bins provided by the city for this purpose, you might see the collectors throw the bag in the regular trash collection truck. This is because plastic bags can be very harmful to the recycling separation machines.

You don't need a blue bin, just a rigid container large enough to hold your recyclables. You can put them directly into this container or into a paper bag first. You can break down your cardboard boxes for recycling, but do not use cardboard boxes to hold recyclables on your curb, because they can fall apart in inclement weather. The rule of thumb is:

**Put your trash in plastic bags.**

**Put your recyclables in rigid containers.**

Here is a list of what to recycle from [www.philadelphiastreet.com/recycling](http://www.philadelphiastreet.com/recycling):

**Plastics:** all plastics with number one to seven on the bottom, food and beverage containers, detergent and shampoo bottles, plastic cold drink cups and lids, plastic pails and garden pots.

**Metals:** aluminum, steel and tin cans, empty paint cans, empty aerosol cans, jar lids and bottle caps, clean aluminum foil, metal trays and baking dishes.

**Glass:** all bottles and jars.

**Paper:** newspapers, magazines, brochures, writing paper, phone books, paper bags, junk mail, envelopes, catalogues, paperback books and non-metallic greeting cards.

**Cartons:** milk, juice, ice cream, wine and soup containers.

**Cardboard:** paper towel rolls, clean pizza boxes, egg cartons, flattened corrugated cardboard shipping boxes and dry food boxes that are free of grease and food.

Remember to empty and rinse all plastic, metal, glass and cartons.

**Do not recycle the following, because they can damage recycling equipment:**

plastic bags, styrofoam, food waste, wet or food-soiled paper, waxed-paper plates, cups and take-out containers, greasy pizza boxes, tissues, paper towels, napkins, light bulbs, cassette tapes, needles and syringes, electronics, garden hoses and porcelain.

**Electronic and hazardous waste** should not be put out for regular trash collection! Take it to 3033 South 63rd Street (near Passyunk). This is the closest drop-off for our area. Check the website below for times.

**Bulk Trash Collection**

Philadelphia no longer has free bulk trash collection. Mattresses, appliances such as refrigerators, computers, TVs and auto tires must be taken away at your expense — you haul it or hire someone to do it.

**Philly's Residential Christmas Tree-Recycling Program** will run from January 5 through 17. There will be 23 designated drop-off sites throughout the city. To learn more, visit [www.philadelphiastreet.com/holiday/2015-christmas-tree-recycling-program](http://www.philadelphiastreet.com/holiday/2015-christmas-tree-recycling-program).

Find more information about recycling at [www.philadelphiastreet.com/recycling](http://www.philadelphiastreet.com/recycling). Also, remember your correct trash day, which can be delayed one day due to a holiday.

**Don't put any plastic bags in curbside recycling collection bins.**

Even though plastic shopping bags have a printed recyclable symbol, they are NOT curbside recyclables.

Plastic bags tear and wrap around moving parts in recycling separation machines, leading to equipment damage and increased maintenance costs. In order to safely recycle plastic shopping bags, return them to the specially-marked recycling bins at the front of most supermarkets.

This applies, as well, to the plastic sleeves on circulars and newspapers. They make wonderful "pooper-scoopers." If you don't have a pet, consider donating them to PAWS.

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RESERVATIONS RECOMMENDED

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**WELCOME BASKET PROGRAM**


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BY MARTHA LEVINE

## SHCA Partners With Local Businesses

**Society Hill Society****Melange Tea and Spice**

SHCA partners with 62 local businesses and organizations that make up our family of Welcome Basket contributors. Some of our contributors have been with us since its inception, and some have just joined us this year.

In 1999, during the real estate boom, there was an influx of new homeowners into our neighborhood. At that time, our membership was less than 500 households. An idea germinated — to create an awareness of SHCA and to attract these new owners to join our organization by presenting them with a welcome gift. We started the Welcome Basket program with the help of several businesses that contribute fresh foods like bread, bagels, apples, cakes and coffee. As the program continued, we added other resources — gift certificates to area theaters, restaurants, shops, services and museums.

As we approach our 725th basket, we extend our sincere thanks to all of our long-time contributors and ask you to help show our thanks by patronizing their establishments. We welcome these brand new contributors:

**Society Hill Society, 400 S. Second Street (2nd & Pine) on Head House Square**

Inspired by Philadelphia's colonial past, SHS has a corner tavern atmosphere. This is truly a neighborhood restaurant, with a menu inspired by classic Pennsylvania flavors. Full bar seating. Hours: Dinner, Sunday–Wednesday 5–10 p.m., Thursday–Saturday 5–11 p.m. Sunday Brunch, 11 a.m.–2 p.m., Cocktails daily, 4 p.m.–2 a.m.

**Melange Tea and Spice, 1042 Pine Street (corner of 11th and Pine)**

Part of the vibrant Pine Street community, Melange is the new guy on the block with a fresh, bright interior. It offers a broad range of high-quality 100 percent natural GMO-free culinary spices, gourmet salts and hot chilies, as well as a variety of fine loose teas and accessories. Hours: Wednesday–Sunday 11 a.m.–8 p.m.

If you are a new home or condo owner in Society Hill as of 2014, please let us know, and we will contact you to set up an appointment to present you with a Welcome Basket in your home. Email [marthalev6@gmail.com](mailto:marthalev6@gmail.com) or call 215-629-0727.

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 City Tavern, 138 S. 2nd Street  
 Creperie Beau Monde, 624 S. 6th Street  
 Fork, 306 Market Street  
 Garces Group:  
 Amada, 217 Chestnut Street;  
 Rosa Blanca, 707 Chestnut Street and others  
 High Street on Market, 308 Market Street  
 La Buca Ristorante, 711 Locust Street  
 Le Pain Quotidien, 801 Walnut Street  
 Mustard Greens (Chinese), 622 S. 2nd Street  
 Positano Coast Restaurant, 2nd & Walnut Streets  
 Ristorante Panorama, 14 N. Front Street  
 Serpico, 604 South Street  
 Society Hill Society, 2nd & Pine Streets  
 Talula's Daily (café & take out), 208 W. Washington Square  
 The Farm & Fisherman, 1120 Pine Street  
 Twisted Tail, 509 South 2nd Street



**Specialty Foods**

Homemade Goodies by Roz, 510 S. 5th Street  
 Cookies By Design, Society Hill Towers  
 Melange Tea & Spice, 1042 Pine Street  
 Metropolitan Bakery, 262 S. 19th Street (Rittenhouse Square)  
 South Street Bagels, 613 S. 3rd Street  
 The Bagel Factory, 510 Walnut Street (Penn Mutual Building)

**Specialty Shops**

Adornamenti (jewelry), 1106 Pine Street  
 Happily Ever After (toys), 1010 Pine Street  
 Head House Books, 619 S. 2nd Street  
 Industry (fashion accessories), 1020 Pine Street  
 Kitchenette (cookware), 117 S. 12th Street (12th & Sansom)  
 Lolli Lolli (children's clothing/toys), 713 Walnut Street  
 Paper On Pine (invitations/stationery), 115 S. 13th Street  
 Show of Hands Gallery (crafts), 1006 Pine Street  
 SOTA—Spirit of the Artist, 1022 Pine Street  
 Yarnphoria (yarn and supplies), 1016 Pine Street

**Other Services**

Judy Moon Massage Therapy, Hopkinson House, 604 Washington Square  
 Liberty Tree & Landscape Management, 215-725-3637  
 Petmoir, A Memoir of Your Pet. 215-803-0723  
 Riff Cleaners, 314 S. 5th Street  
 SCULPT—Personal Trainer, 215-803-0723  
 The Worth Collection (women's fashions), 215-925-8813

**Coffee Shops**

Old City Coffee, 221 Church Street/Reading Terminal Market  
 Starbucks Coffee Inc., 8th & Walnut Streets

**Theaters/Entertainment**

Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts, 3680 Walnut Street  
 Arden Theater, 40 N. 2nd Street  
 Ballet X at Wilma Theater, 265 S. Broad Street  
 1812 Productions (all comedy theater), 215-592-9560  
 Ghost Tours of Philadelphia, 610-587-8308  
 Historic Philadelphia Inc., SW corner 6th & Chestnut Street  
 Independence Seaport Museum, 211 South Columbus Blvd.  
 InterAct Theater Company, 2030 Sansom Street  
 Lantern Theater Company, 10th & Ludlow Streets (south of Market)  
 Lights of Liberty - featuring Liberty 360, 6th & Chestnut Streets  
 Museum of American Jewish History, 5th & Market Streets  
 National Liberty Museum, 321 Chestnut Street  
 Pennsylvania Ballet, Academy of Music, Broad & Locust Streets  
 Penn's Landing Playhouse @ the Seaport Museum, 211 S. Columbus Blvd.  
 Philadelphia Chamber Music Society 215-569-8080  
 Philadelphia History Museum, 15 S. 7th Street  
 Philadelphia Shakespeare Theatre, 2111 Sansom Street  
 Philadelphia Society for the Preservation of Landmarks, 321 S. 4th Street  
 Philadelphia Theatre Company, S. Roberts Theater, Broad & Pine Streets  
 Piffaro, The Renaissance Band, 215-235-8469  
 Society Hill Playhouse, 507 S. 8th Street  
 The Chamber Orchestra of Philadelphia, Kimmel Center, 215-545-1739  
 The Philadelphia Chamber Ensemble, Old Pine Church  
 Wilma Theater, 265 S. Broad Street

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Middle & Upper School tours depart at 8:30 am.*

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ZONING AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

BY LORNA KATZ-LAWSON

# Preserving Our Neighborhood's Historic Integrity

SHCA's Zoning and Historic Preservation (ZHP) Committee monitors residential and commercial applications for zoning variances. It then reports to the board on issues that effect the integrity of our historic neighborhood.

**500 Walnut Street**

SHCA and representatives from Washington Square East Condominium Association, both parties to a private agreement with the developer dating back to 2005, have since met to work on revising some of the points of the agreement. All parties have agreed to continue negotiations.

**423 Lombard Street**

The Presbyterian Society reaffirmed the use of the site for multifamily housing with an over-the-counter permit.

**516 Cypress Street**

Building finishes and roof drainage are being reworked with the developer. The city will correct its poor repairs to the cobblestone street.

**613 Pine Street**

An application for a glazed roof over part of an open metal structure to cover a parked car was approved by ZHP. This revised design preserves more than the minimally required open space.

**502½ Delancey Street**

The Zoning Board of Adjustment (ZBA) approved the legalization of two-family use in the single-family classified property. SHCA and near neighbors had requested denial. ZBA made its decision based on record of the building having had two gas meters, although there were never any documents shown or found to prove the use had been allowed previously by variance.

**Crosstown Coalition (CC) Meeting**

Councilman Mark Squilla convened a meeting with the Center City Zoning Committee, representatives of the Building Industry Association (BIA), Philadelphia City Planning Department and a representative from Council President Darrell Clarke's office. The purpose of the meeting was to obtain more detailed information on what had prompted BIA to ask for zoning changes and to provide better analysis of the last year of ZBA variance requests and grants. In addition, the groups decided to provide visualizations to show the potential impact on neighborhoods like Society Hill if Bill #140519 were approved as currently written, and to discuss ways to modify the bill to prevent negative impacts. All parties agreed to continue meeting.

**Historic Streets**

ZHP met with city officials to inquire about repairs to Thomas Paine Way, a street on the Philadelphia Historic Register. It learned that the total annual budget for all Philadelphia "historic" streets is \$200,000. There are 289 historically certified streets, most of which are in the City's central district. The Historical Commission has been given the task of producing a hierarchical list of the streets based on historic importance. The list will govern when each street gets fixed. Emergencies, such as sinkholes, will be attended to out of ordinary street funds without regard to historic designation.

**Lorna Katz-Lawson** is a practicing architect with John Lawson Architects. She has been a Society Hill resident since 1973 and currently chairs SHCA's Zoning and Historic Preservation Committee.



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## EXPLORING THE CITY

BY JIM MURPHY

## Reading Terminal Market

*Near death in the 1970s, this unique food market has bounced back with a flourish.*

If the 123-year-old Reading Terminal Market (RTM) were a boxer, it would have been knocked out in the 1970s.

In 1979, eight years after the Reading Company declared bankruptcy, the once-proud market was stumbling badly. The building was a mess. It was only 20 percent occupied. The future looked bleak.

The sales of Bassetts Ice Cream, today's only remaining original vendor, barely totaled \$25 some days.

**Fortunately, during the 1970s,** Philadelphia preservationists staved off efforts by Market East developers to demolish the building. In 1980, after emerging from bankruptcy, the Reading Company began investing in the market again.

Slowly RTM gained strength, especially with the addition of Amish farmers. By 1983, it was 60 percent occupied.

In 1990, the Pennsylvania Convention Center bought the Market, and the non-profit Reading

Terminal Market Corporation was appointed to manage it. The old fighter began winning again.

#### **Competition and Sales are Both Way Up**

Today, Reading Terminal Market is 100 percent occupied, says Paul Steinke, general manager of the market from 2001. (Days after our interview, Steinke resigned effective December 31, 2014, to run for a City Council seat.)

Despite great pressure from competitors like Trader Joe's, Whole Foods, and a slew of outdoor neighborhood markets, sales are 20 to 30 percent higher than 10 years ago, Steinke says.

**Big numbers:** Six million people visit the Market's 77 full-time and 12 part-time vendors annually — spending \$50 million in the process.

Steinke credits much of the turnaround to Millennials, children of Baby Boomers who are roughly 18 to 33 years of age. They love cities, he says, and are interested in local, unique foods and business. "Many cities have no local entrepreneurial class. We do."

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EXPLORING THE CITY



**Steinke is most surprised** that RTM is here at all, noting that Philadelphia is one of very few major U.S. cities to still have a central market. RTM is also one of the oldest and largest.

“We descended from Philadelphia’s first market,” he says. “No one has what we have here.”

Today, RTM attracts 118,000 people weekly, or almost enough to fill up Lincoln Financial Field twice. The biggest complaint Steinke hears: “We’re not open late enough. We close at 6 p.m.” The market is open seven days a week. Amish merchants are there Tuesday through Saturday.

**Interesting Oddities**

- By written charter, the Market does not want or permit “national chains” inside its doors, Steinke says. RTM leases to local food entrepreneurs only, and gets about 140 requests a year to fill two or three openings.
- Opened in 1892, RTM was first named “One of 10 Great Public Spaces in America” in 2014 by the American Planning Association.
- RTM employs modern technology to keep its momentum going and growing. It networks through Facebook and Instagram, provides free Wi-Fi, and recently announced a partnership with Instacart for same-day delivery to area residents from 32 market vendors.

FAST FACTS	
<b>Name:</b>	Reading Terminal Market
<b>Address:</b>	51 N. 12th Street, Philadelphia, PA 19107
<b>Year Opened:</b>	1892
<b>Retail Space:</b>	78,000 square feet
<b>Parking Discounts Issued:</b>	6,000 to 7,000 per month
<b>Films Shot Here:</b>	<i>Blow Out, Twelve Monkeys</i> and <i>National Treasure</i>
<b>Hours:</b>	Monday through Saturday, 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. Sunday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Pennsylvania Dutch Vendors: Tuesday to Saturday, with somewhat shorter hours.
<b>Phone:</b>	215-922-2317
<b>Website:</b>	readingterminalmarket.org

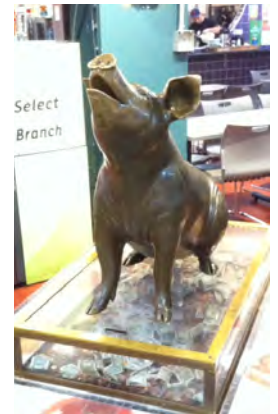
- Children love to put money into the mouth of Philbert the Pig, the Market’s 225-pound, cast bronze mascot located near the central seating area. Funds go to the Food Trust, which began in 1992 at RTM as the Reading Terminal Farmers’ Market Trust.

No wonder even *New York Times* food journalist and blogger Mark Bittman looks lovingly 80 miles south to Reading Terminal Market as “the grandest market ‘we’ have.”

Bemoaning the lack of a Big Apple central market, he says, “... we can find groovy retail just about anywhere, but to find a really fantastic indoor food market, we have to go to Philly.”

Fine praise for a venerable institution that almost went out of business some 30 to 35 years ago, and is still fighting the good fight today.


**Jim Murphy**, a freelance direct-response copywriter, has run his own marketing consulting business since 2004. He’s also a certified member of the Association of Philadelphia Tour Guides.



**Philbert the Pig, the Market’s cast bronze mascot.**

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PHILLY FOOD LOVERS

BY CLAIRE BATTEN

# Much More Than Gelato

I have visited **Capofitto**, located next door to the Vape Lounge at 233 Chestnut Street, three times since it opened in September. The first visit was driven by curiosity; a new restaurant in our neighborhood demands the Philly Food Lovers' attention. The second time, I treated Marica, an Italian friend, for her birthday — I thought this would prove handy for determining if the food rang true with a discerning Roman. The third time ... I was just in the mood for a scoop of their bitter chocolate gelato.

The fact that I kept coming up with excuses to revisit this Old City pizzeria and gelateria gives you an idea of just how good it is. As Center City denizens, it's often difficult to keep up with the latest and greatest restaurants. But this one is worth adding to your "must try" list.

If Capofitto sounds familiar, it's because it is the sister restaurant of **Capogiro** — by far the best gelateria in Philadelphia. The company now has three additional locations: 119 South 13th Street; 117 South 20th Street; and 1625 East Passyunk Avenue. Capofitto literally translates as "throwing oneself headfirst into an enterprise with gusto." Is it any surprise then that Capofitto's pizzas are as good as Capogiro's renowned gelato?

My only criticism is that the restaurant is difficult to find. Every time I visit, I walk past the unassuming storefront. There is no distinct signage to let you know this is more than just a gelateria. The tiny windows don't do justice to the elegantly designed space quietly tucked away behind the coffee and gelato. Persevere, though; the food is worth it.

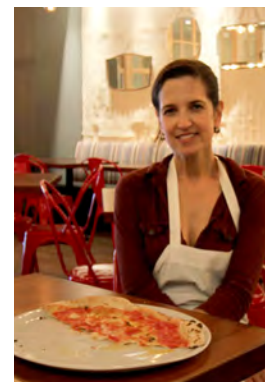
On my first lunch visit, I sampled the fennel salad and, because it was lunch, pizza. The pizzas are described as "personal," just enough for one person, but I decided to split it. This is not a good idea. The authentic Italian pizza, with crisp, thin crust is too good to share. You won't want to! Capofitto has an oversized wood-fired stove that bakes the crust to perfection. It is light and crispy with a nice wood-smoked char in places. Expect to find classic pizzas alongside more unusual seasonal variations. The kitchen is happy to customize your pizza so you can get whatever you want. At least by sharing, I felt good about going for a double scoop of gelato. I had pistachio and

chocolate-laced stracciatella, whereas my dining companion had a seasonal melon concoction and a scoop of Thai coconut gelato. As you can tell, I adore gelato. Gelato, distinct from ice cream, has less fat and less air whipped into it. I prefer the lush denseness of gelato to ice cream any day.

The next time I visited, I went late in the evening, and we had the daily specials. I enjoyed a perfectly fluffy gnocchi, made in-house by Capofitto's enthusiastic chef, while my husband had homemade linguine in a delicious ragu sauce. The meal was characterized by its simplicity and reliance on fresh seasonal ingredients. Bravo! Again, we finished up with gelato.

My third visit gave rise to yet more pizza tasting. I customized a margherita, while my friend invented an artichoke and red pepper pie. Truthfully, the pizza was an excuse to be in the right place to sample yet more flavors of gelato; the signature bitter chocolate gelato was calling my name.

This is my new hot spot, and I'm not alone in this thinking. My Italian friend gives Capofitto five stars and says, "It is very genuine." She even took friends from Northern Italy to dine there, and they loved it, too. By the way, the restaurant is justly proud of its Italian craft beers and Italian wines.



**Capofitto**  
233 Chestnut Street  
215-897-9999  
capofittoforno.com

*Capofitto literally translates as "throwing oneself headfirst into an enterprise with gusto."*

**Claire Batten and Keri White** are the dynamic duo behind Philly Food Lovers. They are business partners in KCC, a marketing consultancy and copywriting agency. For more of both of their writings on food, visit [phillyfoodlovers.com](http://phillyfoodlovers.com).

## Faith, Race & Justice

Sundays at 10 a.m. January 4, 18 & 25 in the St. Peter's School auditorium at 319 Lombard St.

Issues of race and justice have been prominent in the news lately. Join us as we discuss faith, race and justice at St. Peter's Faith Matters adult forum. All are welcome!

Third and Pine Streets  
215-925-5968 | [www.stpetersphila.org](http://www.stpetersphila.org)

OUT AND ABOUT

# Happy Holidays!

One benefit of SHCA membership is invitations to our socials, where neighbors can meet and mingle. We recently kicked off the holiday season at Society Hill's Twisted Tail.

As you can see, our community really knows how to party! Thanks to Mary Purcell for organizing the event and to Martha Levine for taking these photos.



**Bob Curley and Barbara Watson, Steve Miller, Nancy and Marc Feldman**



**Jeff Berry and Frances Jensen**



**Michael DiPilla and John and Carmela Infanti**



**Kevin Yoder, Jonathan Burton, Kim and Rosanne Williams**



**Martha Levine, Kim Williams and Barbara Gelman**



OUT AND ABOUT

Wishing You a Happy New Year



Jim Murphy, Judy Lamirand and Sandra Rothman



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**\$839,900**

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**SOCIETY HILL PIONEERS REMINISCE**


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BY LILYAN MAITIN

## Our Old Neighborhood

Newly married and home alone, I was startled one night when the police SWAT team knocked on our door and asked to stake out the nearby Boslover Beneficial Association Hall. Rumor had it there was to be a holdup of winnings from the Monday night poker game. I was aghast when a policeman opened his gym bag and assembled the parts of a rifle! The hall was eventually torn down and replaced by residential houses.

In those days, Riley's lumberyard, Linsky's auto repair, and Manny's restaurant, with home-cooked food, were our neighbors. You could select and purchase a live chicken from crates that lined the sidewalk on 4th Street. The horse and wagon fruit seller traveled on Pine Street on the way south to the stables on Pemberton Street. The scissors sharpener and rag collector hawked their businesses on side streets. Sam discovered all sorts of interesting crafts and unusual objects made by Russians and Italians who had small workshops in the neighborhood south of Bainbridge Street.

Delaware Avenue was notorious as one of the bumpiest streets in Philadelphia; people jokingly claimed it could induce labor. I can attest to the truth of that!

Houses were being taken down and restored. You could see the outline of rooms, wallpaper, the stairs and the flat skeleton of the house next door. On Sundays, our entire family went on "archaeological digs" in the open spaces where houses had been. Our son, Isak, collected old bottles, coins and chipped plates.

Most of us were working on our houses and were active at McCall School. On weekends, our family went for walks along the river and took rides on a little boat called "The Good Ship Lollipop."

There were neighborhood parties on the 200 block of Delancey. Every spring, there was the annual Addison Street Flea Market, when the neighbors held a potluck dinner in the adjacent little park. We got the city to fund this park. I designed the curved space with room for trees and plantings. Children played in the red brick center, and there were benches for parents.

Everyone looked forward to the annual Pennsylvania Hospital Fair in Washington Square, with a gazebo, band concert, international foods and games for the kids. We enjoyed the square on a

daily basis, too. We held birthday parties and small picnics there. Our daughter Ani and Isak liked to play around the fountain and were frequently snapped by camera-toting tourists.

At Starr Garden, across from Levis Hot Dogs, the children roller-skated, and, on hot days, played under the water sprinkler. Several fathers taught the children soccer on the field. Three Bears Park was a wonderful place for young children. We were building our homes and Society Hill together, and together we successfully fought the proposed South Street expressway, which would have cut the north and south parts of the City off from one another.

We walked everywhere — especially with the arrival of SuperFresh on 5th. No longer did we have to drive to New Jersey for groceries.

In 1971, a group of us started a nursery school in the basement of Old Pine Street Church. We hired teachers to run the class and contributed time to help make it work well. Joan Putney pitched in and taught cooking classes to the kids. The nursery school evolved into the Old Pine Community Center. Before the center was built at 4th and Lombard, many of us planted and tended our own vegetable gardens on the land.

When our children attended McCall School, it was unique in the city because classes in English were taught to immigrants from all over — Israel, Vietnam, China, Haiti and France. The school held an annual United Nations Day, when children came to school in their country's national costumes, and parents cooked their country's foods for a big dinner event in McCall's gym.

My fondest memories revolve around our front steps. They became like a salon. Sitting there, one met up with everyone: friends, neighbors and passersby who stopped to talk. On Saturday afternoons especially, neighborhood poets, artists, writers and drop-ins sat on the stoops, laughing, chatting and discussing a variety of subjects. Life was more leisurely then.

In those days, Society Hill was much like a village. I still enjoy living here, but life will never again be the same.

### *First in an Occasional Series*

**Lilyan Maitin** moved into Society Hill in 1960 with her husband, the late artist Sam Maitin. This was long before the neighborhood became fashionable, as she relates here in loving detail.

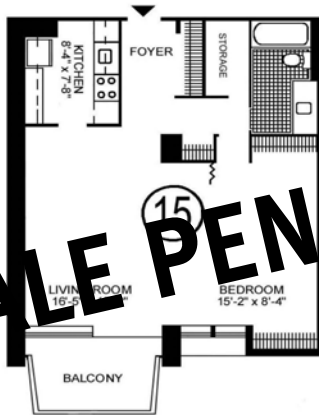


**Lilyan and her grandson Sammy.**

# Allan Domb Real Estate Presents



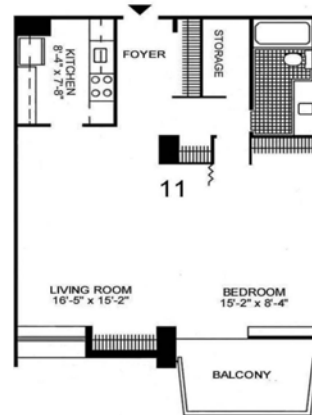
604 S. WASHINGTON SQUARE



**SALE PENDING**

## One Bedroom with South City Views

Sun-soaked one bedroom boasting south city views, a private balcony off the living room, updated bathroom and a washer and dryer hook-up. 778 sf  
**\$269,900**



## One Bedroom With Treetop City Views

South-facing one bedroom with treetop city views, wood floors, great closet space and a private balcony. 778 sf  
**\$279,900**

# Allan Domb Real Estate Presents

## The Lippincott

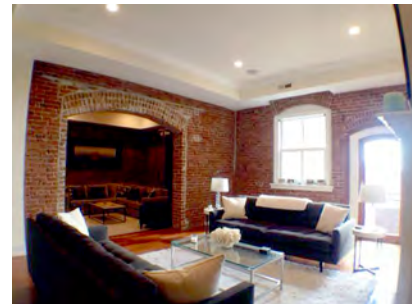
227 S. 6TH STREET



## Two Bedroom Plus Den Showplace

Two bedroom plus den, three and a half bathroom showplace overlooking Washington Square and offering southern exposure. The condominium has a Joanne Hudson kitchen, designer bathrooms, lavish master suite and wonderful entertaining and living space. 3,510 sf  
**\$3,500,000**

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## Totally Custom Three Bedroom Plus Den

Three bedroom plus den, three bathroom custom built residence with a balcony and private roof deck, as well as an open chef's kitchen, exposed brick walls and designer bathrooms. 2,306 sf  
**\$2,250,000**



**SOUTH STREET HEADHOUSE DISTRICT**

BY KERI WHITE

## South Street Grows in Exciting Ways

**M**ike Harris, executive director of the South Street Headhouse District, recently announced the arrival of two new additions to the Street: Millennium Dance Complex and South Terminal Market. Of the first he says, “The uniqueness of the studio, the vibrancy, the talent, the vision and the sheer numbers that they bring to the street are enormous assets. We are thrilled to welcome them and look forward to seeing the excitement they bring to the area.” He’s equally enthusiastic about the new grocery, stating: “South Terminal Market is a wonderful addition to the District. The gourmet market caters to the surrounding neighborhoods and also has plenty to offer tourists and other visitors looking for unique food items, snacks and gifts.”

### Millennium Dance Complex

Millennium Dance Complex (MDC) has recently “boogied down” into the space formerly occupied by Pearl Art and Craft, at 417 South Street. Owner and Studio Director Lori Long explains, “It’s been a labor of love, but it is also a good business move. Philadelphia has so much passion for performing arts and loads of local talent, but didn’t have a studio like this, offering drop-in classes in all types of choreography.”

MDC employs 65 people and offers classes in all forms of dance: ballet, tap, jazz, modern, hip-hop, contemporary, lyrical, breaking and more. There is a broad target audience. Millennium caters to performers like JLo and Justin Timberlake, who can practice their moves when in town. MDC also provides training to local dancers for specific shows or performances. And, of course, there is a recreational component.

Lori explains, “So many people dance as children and love it, but as they move into high school and beyond, they stop... not because they don’t enjoy it, but because they can’t commit to the three classes a week required to continue in the program. We recognize that some people want — or need — to dance for fun, for fitness or to relieve stress, but they are not able to devote 10 hours a week to it. Our classes are all ‘drop-in’, no commitment. We charge \$15 for a 90-minute class. This involves a 30-minute warm up and an hour of choreographed routine.”

Currently, classes are at all levels, with no age guidelines. They are not for very young children, but any dancer, likely age 10 and up, with

sufficient experience to follow along is welcome. Each studio has an outside waiting/viewing area, so parents can bring children to watch and wait until they’re ready to go solo. Eventually, MDC will develop some workshop-type classes for true beginners.

For information on MDC, visit [mdcphilly.com](http://mdcphilly.com).



**Jamie Jackson, Cris Judd, Marty Kudelka, Eddie Morales & Dave Scott at Millennium Dance Studio**

### South Terminal Market

South Terminal Market, located at 306 South Street, is a high-end gourmet shop offering specialty chocolates, fresh produce and a staggering variety of nuts, trail mixes and granolas, as well as other grocery items. Owner Olga Tsisyk, in describing the selection, says, “We use largely Amish purveyors, so the merchandise is locally sourced, all natural and very fresh. And because we buy in bulk, we get advantageous pricing, which we pass onto the customer. One goal is to provide maximum variety in a small space; we’re still working on the assortment, and we love customer feedback!”

Olga and her husband Igor emigrated to the U.S. 15 years ago from the Ukraine, where they owned a thriving grocery business. When they relocated to Philadelphia, they established a similar shop in South Philadelphia. As business took off, the couple looked to expand.

Olga explains, “We looked at over 40 locations, but South Street was perfect. It reminded me of our old shop in Ukraine. It is so lively here, and I love the diversity. I see young and old, people of different backgrounds, people here for the nightlife, neighborhood daytime shoppers — it is wonderful.” When asked about the name of the store, Olga is philosophical: “Life is like a giant train. You never know what station you’ll pull into. We ended up here, so I called it South Terminal Market. If we open another store on another street, I can vary the name but maintain the brand.”

South Terminal Market can be found on Facebook at: [www.facebook.com/SouthTerminalMarket](http://www.facebook.com/SouthTerminalMarket).

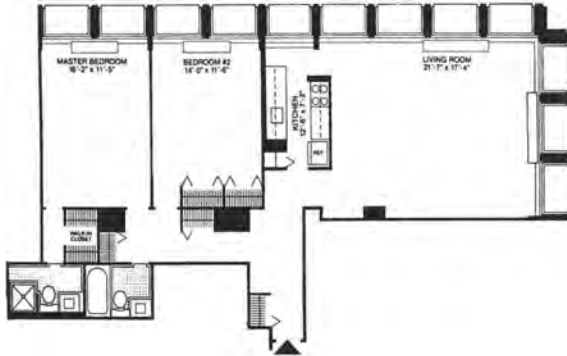


**Gourmet treats at South Terminal Market**

# Allan Domb Real Estate Presents

## SOCIETY HILL TOWERS

200-220 LOCUST STREET

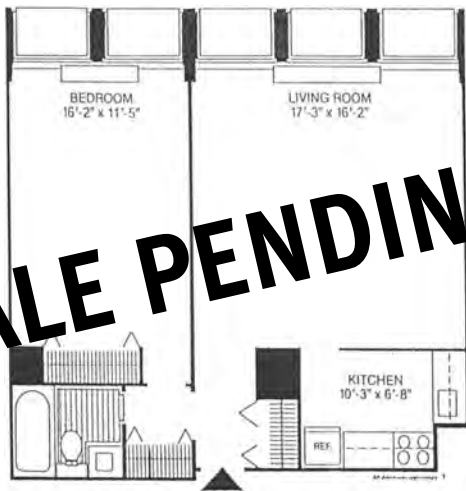


### Sun-soaked Two Bedroom with Treetop City Views

Two bedroom, two bathroom residence with floor-to-ceiling windows in all rooms offering magnificent city skyline views to the west and intimate views of Society Hill and the Ben Franklin Bridge to the north. The home has an updated kitchen, wood floors and great closet space. 1,183 sf  
**\$459,900**

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- 11G WEST
- 12G WEST
- 14C SOUTH
- 15A WEST
- 17G WEST
- 17H SOUTH
- 18E NORTH
- 19C WEST
- 19F WEST
- 22DE SOUTH
- 23G SOUTH
- 24EF SOUTH
- 24G NORTH
- 25BC SOUTH
- 28E NORTH
- 28E SOUTH
- 28GH NORTH
- 30H NORTH



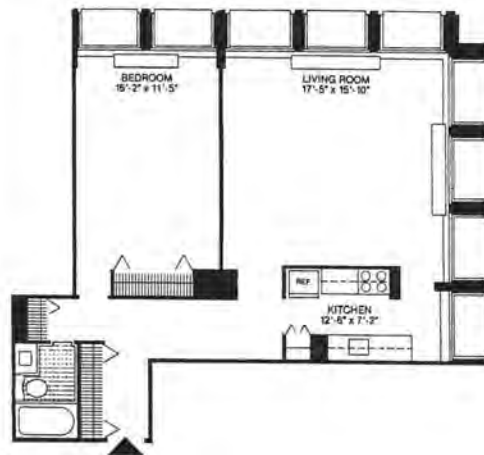
**SALE PENDING**

### One Bedroom with Open Floor Plan

One bedroom on a high floor offering dramatic southern views of the river, lots of natural light and a generous open floor plan. 712 sf  
**\$259,900**

### Corner One Bedroom Bathed in Natural Light

Corner one bedroom with great natural light, floor-to-ceiling windows, treetop city views to the south and east, kitchen with wonderful cabinet and counter space and excellent closet space. 750 sf  
**\$290,000**



SOCIETY HILL SCHOOLS

BY DIANE STEIN

Small but Impressive

Constitution High School is nestled in a corner next to the Independence Branch of the Philadelphia Free Library, at 18 South 7th Street. This small, college-preparatory high school, founded by Dr. Thomas Davidson in 2006, is just steps away from Chestnut and 7th Streets. It is easy to miss except for the sign above two unmarked doors.

Once inside, though, a visitor quickly recognizes that it is an institution where students can excel. Under the leadership of Dr. Davidson, it is the only public high school in the School District of Philadelphia that emphasizes and capitalizes on the city’s historical resources. The staff includes 15.5 teachers, one who received the Lindback Award for Distinguished Teaching in 2014.

The school emphasizes active citizenship, democratic deliberation and knowledge of history. In its student-created constitution, modeled on the Constitution of the United States, the principal is the Executive Branch, while student government members make up the Legislative Branch and faculty members form the Senate. The Judicial Branch has seven student judges and two faculty judges. All student issues go through the high school house of students. Student government members can petition the Judicial Branch using the traditional complaint process. Opinions of the Court are published for student review.

The high school curriculum includes Advanced Placement (AP) courses in Literature, United States History, Government, Biology, Spanish,

Psychology and World History. Students who qualify for other AP courses are able to take them in area high schools.

The National Constitution Center, located just a few blocks away, partners with Constitution High School. Ballard, Spahr LLP law firm provides pro bono support to the mock trial pro-gram here, and in turn, the school sends student interns to work with the firm’s staff. The firm also built a courtroom within one of the classrooms that is used for mock trial practice. Carl Ackerman, a member of the faculty who teaches history and government, is the driving force behind the program. Numerous awards and plaques that students received in mock trial competition cover the walls in the school’s office.

The Gilder Lehrman Institute for American History funds field trips and staff professional development for history-themed high schools across the country, including Constitution High. Judge Marjorie Rendell, an appellate judge for the Third Circuit Court of Appeals, is the honorary chairperson of the high school’s advisory council.

Dr. Davidson “believes in democratic decision making and the inclusion of all stakeholders.” Constitution High School, annually receiving 1,300 applications for 100 openings, is an exemplary high school showcasing education at its finest, and it’s located right here in our Society Hill neighborhood.

**Diane Stein**, an education consultant, was a teacher and special education instructor for many years.



Constitution High School, 18 South 7th Street

*First in a series about Society Hill Area Schools*

SAFE AND SOUND IN SOCIETY HILL

BY MARILYN APPEL

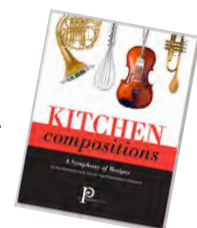
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Do you have a camera in the front or back of your house? Is it hooked up to a VCR? If so, law enforcement would be happy to know about it. If something happens within sight of your camera and you are registered with “Safe Cam,” the police can come by and see what happened and, hopefully, catch the perpetrator. Here’s how you register: Go to phillypolice.com, click on “safe cam” and fill out the form. You will not only be helping the police but will also be helping yourself and your neighbors. You must have your camera connected to a VCR in order to register.

**Used Cell Phones:** I am still collecting old cell phones and chargers. These go to the police, who reprogram the phone to reach only 911. The reprogrammed phones are given to the elderly or victims of abuse. Drop them off at 414 Spruce Street.

**Great Gift:** Need a unique gift? The *Philadelphia Orchestra Cookbook* has 150 recipes developed by its musicians. Each dish is illustrated, pages are easy to wipe, recipes are simple and delicious. All proceeds go to the Philadelphia Orchestra. Call Marilyn at 215-922-2626.

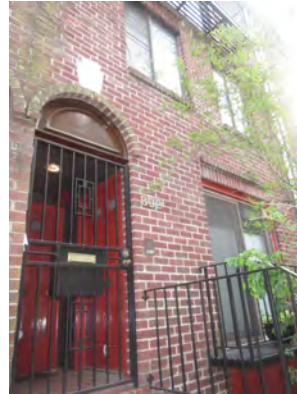
**Marilyn Appel** has served as chair of our Sixth District’s Police District Advisory Council since 1980.



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## Allan Domb Real Estate Presents

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Beautifully updated two bedroom, two bathroom with a private balcony and intimate southeast city views. The home features wood floors; an open renovated kitchen with wood cabinetry, stainless steel appliances and a large island; and two designer bathrooms with custom appointments. 1,173 sf **\$489,900**



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One bedroom plus alcove, one and a half bathroom with a private balcony providing Washington Square and city skyline views. The residence has an open floor plan, perfect for entertaining. The bedroom has an updated ensuite bathroom and a walk-in and wall closet. 1,118 sf **\$359,900**



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**IN MEMORIAM**

We are sad to announce the passing of our long-time neighbor Irvin J. Borowsky on November 25, just two days after turning 90.

Borowsky was best known as a pioneering publishing magnate who founded the precursor to TV Guide. He was also the first to present movies on television — a shocking concept at the time. In addition, he introduced the sale of magazines at checkout counters in supermarkets, an original, innovative approach.

In many ways, this native Philadelphian was a Renaissance man with a global impact on religion and the arts, combining interest in his Jewish heritage and its image around the world. He founded the National Liberty Museum in

Philadelphia in 2000, a testament to his determination to fight bigotry and teach tolerance.

Borowsky’s commitment to fighting anti-Semitism wherever it occurred was legendary. To that end, he founded the American Interfaith Institute 32 years ago to work toward excising anti-Semitic phrases from the New Testament in the hope that the corrections would encourage better understanding between Jews and non-Jews.

In addition to Laurie Wagman, his wife of 36 years, he is survived by three daughters: Gwen Borowsky, Michele Sokoloff, and Andrea Wagman Christian; three sons: Ted, Ned and Scott; two sisters: Bea Peskin and Charlotte Keil; and 13 grandchildren.



**Irvin J. Borowsky**

**EXERCISE AND SOCIALIZE**

Don’t let winter turn you into a coach potato! Bundle up and join one or both of our local groups for some walking and talking.

The **Walkie/Talkies** meet at Three Bears Park (Delancey Street between 2nd and 3rd Streets) on Tuesday and Thursday mornings at 8:15 a.m. for a one-hour stroll throughout our community.

Anyone is welcome to participate in this non-stressful, one-hour exercise and socialize program.

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



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**Jan Stephano** ABR, CSR, CNE

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**HAPPY 310th BIRTHDAY, BEN!**

It's fitting that this year the theme of Philly's annual tribute to our beloved Ben Franklin is "Building the City," since Philadelphia was known as the "Athens of the New World" during Franklin's lifetime.

As master builders and carpenters erected homes ranging from simple to elaborate, Franklin turned his attention to safety features that were both useful and practical, helping to provide the infrastructure for this growing metropolis. Through his *Pennsylvania Gazette*, he stressed

the need for a better water supply, urged the formation of fire companies and suggested paving and lighting streets. In his private time, he created the Franklin stove, and his experiments with electricity gave rise to the lightning rod.

On January 16, the Franklin Birthday Celebration will present the Franklin Founders Award to Laurie D. Olin — featured in the September/October 2014 *Reporter* — in recognition of his lifetime work in landscape design and urban planning.




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MEMBERSHIP NEWS

BY MATT DEJULIO

# 2015 Membership Drive Underway

*Help us Reach our Goal  
by Renewing Now!*

As of early December, 500 Society Hill residents have renewed their Association membership — a number on par with the same time last year. Winners of the restaurant certificates for those who renewed by December 31 will be announced in the March/April issue of the *Reporter*.

If you have delayed sending in your renewal or wish to join, please do so today. Don't forget that this year — for the first time ever — a number of restaurants and other businesses are offering discounts to SHCA members who show their cards. If you have joined by the time you read this, you should have received your membership card in the mail. If you have delayed, why wait any longer and miss out on savings? See the back cover for more information.

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

Without member dues, SHCA would cease to function. Protect your neighborhood and your real estate investment.

**Sign up today!**

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

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



*Society Hill*  
**CIVIC ASSOCIATION**

## Membership Application

Name \_\_\_\_\_

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

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

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

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

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

**Residential Memberships**

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

**Business Memberships**

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

**Additional Contributions**

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ Washington Square Beautification      \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Franklin Lights  
 \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Sidewalk Cleaning/Graffiti Removal      \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Tree Tenders  
 \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Zoning and Historic Preservation      \$ \_\_\_\_\_ McCall School

Total Enclosed \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Charge VISA/MasterCard:

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

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

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

- Clean-Up Day       Washington Square       Zoning & Historic Preservation
- Franklin Lights       Social Events       Fundraising
- Dilworth House       Property Taxes       Local Crime
- Reporter*       Casino Issues       Incidents & Alerts

Please return completed application to:  
**Society Hill Civic Association**, P.O. Box 63503, Philadelphia, PA 19147

## NIFTY NEIGHBORS IN MY OWN BACKYARD

BY JANE BIBERMAN

## Sid and Shirley: The Other Curtis Institute

A visitor to the Curtiss residence on the 600 block of Spruce Street might be forgiven for thinking that its owners, Sid and Shirley, are Airedale breeders. The replica of the dog may be found on pillows, posters, paintings and rugs. Stuffed animals and china miniatures proliferate. The real thing, a handsome female named Cinnamon Bun, age 11, greets guests at the front door.



Shirley and Sid Curtiss

In fact, Sid and Shirley are distinguished musicians with impressive resumes. For 40 years, Sid played the viola with the Philadelphia Orchestra, while Shirley taught bassoon and other wind instruments at Settlement Music School.

The couple recently celebrated their 52nd wedding anniversary, and they agree that it's been a marriage made in musical heaven. "I'm from New York and began playing when I was seven," says Sid, whose parents were in Jewish Vaudeville. He attended the famous High School for Music and Art, and after the Army, came to Philadelphia thinking he'd go to Curtis — no relation. "I was 23 and naïve; the age limit is 21," he smiles.

"Instead, I went to the Philadelphia Conservatory of Music, eventually, the Philadelphia Musical Academy, now the University of the Arts. After playing in the New Orleans Symphony and the National Symphony Orchestra in Washington, I joined the Philadelphia Orchestra in 1960 under Eugene Ormandy."

One night, a musician friend invited him over to meet a few girls. One of them was Shirley. His bride-to-be was from Harrisburg, Illinois — population 7,000. She also had a musical pedigree, as both of her grandfathers played the fiddle. "I had come to Philadelphia to study bassoon with Sol Schoenbach," says Shirley. "He was principal bassoonist with the Philadelphia Orchestra and later founder of Settlement Music School."

Their honeymoon took place at the Marlboro Music Festival in Vermont. "I had been invited there for the summer, and the only way Shirley could come with me was as my wife," says Sid. "So I proposed, and she accepted." Shirley, who loves to sew, made her own wedding

dress. They went to Marlboro for the next three summers. "It's a unique experience in the world of music," says Sid. They both wanted to live in Philadelphia and were among the first pioneers to settle in Society Hill.

"We bought this house for a song — \$7,000 — 50 years ago," says Sid. "It was the only house on the block, which was a slum," recalls Shirley. Their architect was the late Henry Magaziner. But Sid is quite adept at building and is responsible for constructing his own wine cellar. Shirley has an eye for interior decorating, and one wall of their living room exhibits a fascinating collection of masks they gathered on their extensive travels. "As a member of the Orchestra, I traveled a great deal, and after I retired, we went to all the countries and continents that we hadn't visited," says Sid, listing South Africa, India, Russia and Antarctica. He also coached chamber music ensembles at Settlement. His hobby is cooking, but when he takes Shirley out, it is frequently to Paloma on South 8th Street.

"My biggest contribution to music," says Shirley, "is that I taught and coached students who became principal bassoon players in several major organizations, including The Philadelphia Orchestra, The New York Philharmonic, the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra and the National Symphony of Washington, D.C."

In 2010, the Musical Fund Society, the oldest such organization in the country, honored Sid and Shirley for their contributions to music. Settlement Music School marked Shirley's nearly 50 years of service as the founder and lead faculty member of their woodwind ensemble program by naming it after her. The school also honored Sid and Shirley for their ongoing dedication and generosity to Settlement with a special presentation for "contributions to the musical life of Philadelphia."

Today, the couple continues to give private lessons and to coach ensemble groups. Because they both feel so blessed to have lived the life they loved, they made the school the beneficiary of their will. "We never had children of our own," says Shirley. "But we have had hundreds of students."

**Jane Biberman**, former editor of *Inside Magazine*, is a freelance writer who has contributed to a variety of publications.

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| <b>Everyone’s Racquet</b><br>(Sales tennis, squash racquets & stringing)<br>130 S. 12th Street | <b>Show of Hands</b><br>(Craft gallery)<br>1006 Pine Street                | <b>Twisted Tail</b><br>(Southern-style restaurant/bar),<br>509 S. Second Street      |

**LIST OF CONTRACTORS**

Remember, another perk exclusively for members is access to the **Society Hill List of Contractors**, which can be mailed to you on request. This is a 12-page list of contractors who have been highly recommended by Society Hill residents. The list has hundreds of names of contractors under categories such as general contractors, painters, plumbers, electricians, masons, gardeners and even a miscellaneous category including glass replacement and custom wine cellars. To request a list, email [marthalev6@gmail.com](mailto:marthalev6@gmail.com) or call 215-629-0727.

**COMMUNI-TEA**



A recent “Communi-TEA” featured Dr. Lisa Unger addressing “Weight Loss and Healthy Lifestyle Tips” at The Bagel Factory, 510 Walnut Street.

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