

SOCIETY HILL

# Reporter

www.societyhillcivic.org

DOING GOOD IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD

BY JEFF FOGG

## New Life for Lawrence Court Walkway

*Your SHCA  
Membership  
Dollars at  
Work*



**The Green's Court section of Lawrence Court Walkway has been repaved. More photos on Page 4.**

**M**y love of walkways grew from 15 years working and living abroad in old cities where streets built from blocks of stone spoked out from the central cathedral, marketplace, town hall, or rail station. Woven through these streets were narrower roadways, which were in turn interconnected with delightful passageways and walkways presenting occasional glimpses into isolated gardens, courtyards, and sanctuaries. Park nooks offered reprieve from a long walk via their shaded benches and water features.

Now that I am retired, what a delight to find similar experiences in moving to Society Hill with its open space network of historic alleyways, greenways, gardens, and parks. With a background in engineering and restoration of historic structures, it was just a matter of time before I got involved with Society Hill Civic Association (SHCA), its maintenance of this network, and restoration of a walkway in need of help, specifically Lawrence Court Walkway.

The east-west portion of the walkway between South 4th and 5th Streets consists of three segments, with the cornerstone of the Green's Court center segment dating back to 1815.

Other documents show that there was a rudimentary form of the South 4th Street segment in use at around this same time. But it was Edmund Bacon's urban renewal program of the 1960s that brought about the walkway's current configuration, with its mid-century modern flair juxtaposed against Federal-era row houses.

Located in the heart of Society Hill, with a commercial pull at one end and a park at the other, this walkway is well used. At Green's Court, children do what children do, both after school and nearly every evening during warmer weather. Its multiple layers of texture in the form of architectural elements, seasonal colors, and vegetation variance, make this a special place.

But over the 60 years since its last renewal, time has taken its toll. Tree roots lifted and displaced paving stones. Other elements disintegrated, succumbing to freeze/thaw cycles and damage from vehicles and equipment, leaving voids as trip points. The weight of vehicles snapped sheets of bluestone and concrete pavement framing, causing settlement, stormwater pooling, and winter freezing hazards. Small trees and rogue trees became big trees, distorting tree pits and other features. Through all this, a Society Hill centerpiece green space faded as an asset.

It was the safety issues that brought neighbors to SHCA for help. In addition to the walkway's structural problems, another issue stood out: Wholly on city-owned property, it was an orphan with no Homeowners Association or official custodian to take responsibility for its maintenance.

Recognizing this, there came strong willingness within SHCA to support the walkway advocates. But this was no easy task. Multiple issues needed to be resolved before the project became "shovel ready," like navigating city hall's labyrinth of organization charts and contacts. Ultimately, all project responsibility fell on SHCA, and entailed a lot of behind-the-scenes hard work. With project responsibility came scope of work (SOW)

*continued on page 5*

### Garden Tour: A Verdant Success!



**Story and more pictures on pages 14-15.**

Photo courtesy of Martha Levine

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SOCIETY HILL

# Reporter

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

**Submissions**

If you have news that would be of interest to Society Hillers, email the  
editor, Judy Lamirand, at [judy@parallel-design.com](mailto:judy@parallel-design.com). Materials must be  
submitted in writing and include the name of a contact person. Edited  
submissions will be considered for publication if space permits. Letters  
to the Editor must be signed, and, as above, include contact information.

**SHCA Mission Statement**

The aims and purposes of SHCA are: to promote the improvement of  
the Society Hill area of Philadelphia, including its cultural, educational  
and civic activities, and the preservation and restoration of its historic  
buildings; to represent the residents of Society Hill in matters affecting  
the City of Philadelphia generally and Society Hill in particular; and  
to interpret the value and significance of Society Hill to the public.

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## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

BY SUSAN BURT-COLLINS

## Connections

*Working with partners to care for our historic neighborhood.  
Moving forward as a responsible steward of our community.*

As the 2024-2025 term for the SHCA Board begins, we are proud to report that we have newly recruited board members, bringing various interests and experience to the board which will enhance our work.

Ellen Schwartz Siegel, a longtime resident of Society Hill, has joined the board to get more involved in what we are doing. Mike Fox, moving here from Fairmount with school-age children, is looking to be a voice for improving South Street. Joe McLaughlin, another Fairmount transplant, is a volunteer gardener in Independence Park and is hoping to work on issues of zoning and preservation. Ned Scharff, formerly leading the Athenaeum, has already dug into issues affecting South Street with the hopes of improving and revitalizing that area. We welcome them, and all our returning board members, as we look towards a productive, engaging year continuing the work we do in our neighborhood.

Our membership is steady, and, happily, some new faces are showing up, getting involved, and paying attention. To accommodate a variety of members' schedules, we almost always offer a Zoom link for our meetings. We have moved our meeting time to 6:30 p.m. on Wednesdays so that people can get home from work and also have that precious time with their children if they have kids at home. This is all part of our effort to include more people and more points of view.

SHCA was one of the leading agents moving to take care of and plan for the future of the Headhouse and Shambles, forming the New Market Headhouse Conservancy. SHCA commissioned and paid Milner Architects for a Conditions Assessment of the structure. When you read this article, Justin Detweiler will have made a presentation of their findings at our June meeting. The building needs attention, but the good news is, it is solid and can be restored. Efforts are underway to raise the dollars needed for this work.

The leaders of the Conservancy are optimistic that by 2026, we will have the Headhouse ready for prime time as part of the sesquicentennial celebrations. The changes that are underway for this space could not have been done by SHCA alone. We needed many partners and will continue to need the cooperation of neighborhood groups, experts, and the city to make the Headhouse a center of community commerce and history again.

On Washington Square, the 19th-century guardhouse is finally going to be restored according to National Park Service standards, requiring more than \$100,000 to do it right. Our charitable arm, Society Hill Preservation Foundation, is providing much of the funds, while donations from Independence Historical Trust, along with their stewardship of the work by PineMar Builders, is making the job possible. Again, partnership, with Independence Historical Trust, makes this happen. We are working towards creating a sustainable partnership, effective beyond the guardhouse, to care for our beloved Washington Square.

Finally, though we are not the police, nor are we in the business of public safety, we've been working steadily with police on South Street and in the newly formed 9th Police District (merging of 6th and the west side's 9th). Residents are feeling a tad more optimistic about reducing noise and traffic that plague our streets in the warm weather. The police are more present in cars and on bike patrols. Plans are in the works to curb or end the scourge of ATVs, dirt bikes, and slingshots that keep us awake on summer nights. Again, it is being part of the conversation on the problems, showing support to the police in our neighborhood, and listening to neighbors' concerns that help make things better.

Not to be a Pollyanna or an endless rah-rah... SHCA is on a roll of doing good stuff. I hope in the coming year you will join us in making it happen.



**Susan Burt-Collins,**  
SHCA President

**Susan Burt Collins** is a retired criminal and civil rights lawyer. She has worked to free a wrongly convicted man, taught history, and created Friends of Spring Garden School to raise money to build a playground.

## Members-Only Benefit: List of Contractors

Summer is here, and now is the time to do some outside home improvements. Do you need a list of gardeners/landscapers to help spruce up your garden? Thinking of giving your house a fresh coat of paint?

Is that roof in need of repair? SHCA can help by providing our 11-page List of Contractors free to all current members on request. To receive a copy of the list, contact us at [info@societyhillcivic.org](mailto:info@societyhillcivic.org).



NEW LIFE FOR LAWRENCE COURT WALKWAY



Damaged paving before restoration work began



Work in progress



Pool caused by hump in sidewalk



Dry sidewalk after drain was installed



Project engineer and locals talk history.



Completed restoration work



**NEW LIFE FOR LAWRENCE COURT WALKWAY**

*continued from page 1*

development, which included structures, tree roots, safety, landscaping, and stakeholder input considerations, as well as funding procurement, first-time contract development and approval, contractor vetting and material sourcing.

SHCA’s board approved \$30,000 for the project, but balancing the project’s SOW against the funds available got confusing and messy, until a *New York Times* article appeared describing a similar project underway at New York City’s Central Park. The article’s detailed description and numbers revealed New York City was budgeting five times more per square foot of walkway than SHCA, for the same type work. Given budget restrictions, the scope of Lawrence Court Walkway’s project was reduced to focus solely on Green’s Court, lessen square footage, and get our walkway more closely aligned with Central Park in terms of cost per square foot.

All this was done through SHCA’s management by committee. It took months to get everything worked out, but persistence won the day. Renovation by McFarland Tree and Landscape Services began in the early April rain.

Issues arose immediately. The surface of Green’s Court consists of two separate patterns, and the two integral pavers involved are no longer in production. The larger pavers needing replacement, measuring 8×8×2 inches, were counted and recounted. A pallet of special, made-to-order pavers was procured prior to start of work.

But the first step of power washing revealed the pavement to be in much worse condition than initially perceived. The needed quantity of made-to-order pavers doubled from one pallet to two, requiring a second, time-delaying special order.

By this time, neighborhood residents were getting engaged, with two neighbors agreeing to fund repair of a tree pit and sidewalk patch at the 4th Street end of the walkway — items that were a part of the original SOW but later

removed. This bonus work and funding filled in time while we waited for the special-order pavers.

Back again at Green’s Court, within the two original pavement patterns was a smaller 2×8×2 inch paver that somehow got missed in tallying up material required for the restoration. These smaller pieces had not held up well over the years, requiring McFarland to custom-cut nearly 100 replacement pieces from larger-format bricks. Use of the masonry saw created ear-splitting noise.

Limiting the project to Green’s Court took major tree root issues off of the table, except for one leaning zelkova tree at Lawrence Street, where a large root created a sidewalk hump. This hump, while not itself a safety hazard, created a pool of stormwater and snowmelt run-off that could create a hazard in winter. Any involvement with this hump, however, entailed extensive work likely jeopardizing health of the tree. There was no resolution to this dilemma in sight as the project was winding down. At this point, McFarland was three weeks into a project estimated to take only two, so pressure was on to scrap resolution of the water-pooling issue.

Then the project engineer came up with an eleventh-hour solution to the problem of how to drain the water pool. McFarland’s final *pièce de résistance* was integration of a custom-made drain into the brick trim of an adjacent bluestone panel, leaving the hump still in place and the tree undamaged.

The pavement, bluestone, and landscaping borders of Green’s Court have been tweaked and restored. The storm water pooling point now has drainage. The 4th Street entrance/exit point has never been more safe or better looking within recent memory. Best of all, there is now an ad hoc band of local volunteers with the knowledge and incentive to tweak other structural needs of the walkway. Congratulations, SHCA. You’ve done urban planner Ed Bacon proud!



**McFarland mason making ear-splitting custom cuts to bricks with a masonry saw.**



**Jeff Fogg** is a world traveler, retired engineer, builder of things, and SHCA board member who has resided in Society Hill Towers for five years after a recent move to Philly.



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# PennDOT Needs to Re-think Plans for I-95

BY MARY PURCELL, CHAIR SHCA I-95 TASK FORCE

On June 6, PennDOT presented long-range plans for changes to I-95 to be implemented beginning in the late 2030s. Task Force members Jeff Fogg, Mark Keener and Mary Purcell attended, along with representatives of affected communities as far south as Whitman. The presentation is available at [www.95revive.com/news/june-2024-csp-planning-study-sac-meeting-slideshow/](http://www.95revive.com/news/june-2024-csp-planning-study-sac-meeting-slideshow/).

**All communities shared serious concerns about the process and proposals. SHCA's Task Force believes that PennDOT needs to completely re-think their approach, starting with elevating community needs as the primary consideration.**

Society Hill and Pennsport both pushed back on road-widening and new ramps. Whitman noted the proposals would harm beloved neighborhood ballparks. Our concerns relate to pollution, noise and traffic, the lack of strategies to promote mass transit and, in general, we seek more focus on communities rather than vehicles.

In the May *Reporter*, we shared information about the proposals. Specifically we are questioning:

- Adding highway lanes from Pine to Christian;
- Widening ramps and shoulders;
- Adding an off-ramp at Lombard Street;
- Removing southbound on-ramp at Market Street without addressing local impacts.

Last October, PennDOT rolled out its website asking Philadelphians to choose between three different sets of changes to the highway. The winner by a 17-point margin was "None of the Above" at 47 percent.

**PennDOT is targeting another public meeting early in 2025, including possible changes in our area.**

**To learn more and give feedback...** visit the PennDOT website outlining the proposals at <https://aecomviz.com/195-CSP-360/>. Also available is a five-minute video at <https://vimeo.com/850636283>.

Feedback is taken by selecting "General Comments Leave Your Feedback" on the PennDOT site, or by sending an email to [info@95revive.com](mailto:info@95revive.com).

**PennDOT encourages us to advocate for our Foglietta Plaza design, so please put in a word for this important Society Hill initiative as well.**

Also...the SHCA I-95 Task Force is exploring hiring a transportation planning consultant to advise us, and we're researching a 1975 settlement of a federal lawsuit in which we and other communities were involved, related to the construction of the highway and ramps. We will continue to keep you posted on developments.



**Mary Purcell** is a SHCA Board member, Chair of the I-95 Task Force, and Foglietta Plaza Committee Chair.

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**SOUTH STREET REPORT**

BY NED SCHARFF

# Making Plans for Improvements to South Street

As a recently elected SHCA board member, I've been asked to help improve conditions on South Street. The quality-of-life challenges there often spill over onto side streets and into our neighborhood on warm-weather evenings. This article is my initial report, based upon my evolving and far-from-comprehensive understanding of the forces contributing to South Street's deterioration over the years.

First, I can report that our neighbors to the south, in Queen Village and Bella Vista, share Society Hill's concerns about South Street. They are willing partners in addressing problems. The same is true of the Philadelphia Police Department and its South Street commanding officer, Lt. Steven Ricci. We should also be grateful that our First District Councilmember, Mark Squilla, is deeply committed to addressing our concerns and finding collaborative ways to improve matters on South Street.

One clear challenge on South Street is this: The interests of some small business operators are very different from the interests of surrounding neighborhoods. Many operators engage in nuisance behavior to generate revenues for their businesses. In addition, no one, not even the police, can predict when a parade of ATVs, "slingshots" (the three-wheelers), and other obnoxious vehicles will invade our neighborhood with their dangerous driving habits and ear-splitting stereo and exhaust systems. The rise of these assemblages in recent

years has been a national phenomenon and is not limited to South Street.

My initial thought is that SHCA and our neighborhood partners should view South Street from both a near-term and long-term perspective. In the near term, what specific steps can we take to quell both the perceptions, and, at times, the reality that the street is unsafe and unpleasant? For the longer term, what can we do to help South Street evolve into a true community asset — an attractive and fun stretch of retail, commercial, and residential properties that are a positive addition to surrounding neighborhoods and our city as a whole?

With the urging of Councilmember Squilla, police, and community associations like ours — the city's Streets Department has agreed to a few measures that should ameliorate, if not eliminate, both noise and vehicular speeding on South Street:

- The city will install rubber speed cushions on the Street's 400 and 500 blocks.
- The Streets Department is ordering 96 bollards (upright posts) to line South Street corners from 6th to Front Streets, which will discourage parking and idling.
- The city will also post some 20 signs that remind South Street visitors that substantial fines can be levied for excessive noisemaking.
- Other measures under consideration include installing additional varieties of road bumps and rumble strips as

well as cameras that result in tickets for traffic violators.

Again, these are short-term measures that may help alleviate South Street's traffic and noise problems. Longer-term solutions are another matter. I expect to report to you regularly as we gain understanding and refine our approach to these issues. Meanwhile, please contact me via [info@societyhillcivic.org](mailto:info@societyhillcivic.org) with any suggestions you may have.

One additional request: as a community, let's go out of our way to support the exceptional small businesses struggling valiantly to make South Street more inviting for residents. My reports to you will tout such businesses and suggest that you give them a try, because they are run by pioneering souls who already are invested in making South Street better. Here are three for starters: **Bridget Foy's**, the warm, family-friendly eatery at Second and South that has re-emerged, phoenix-like, from a devastating fire a few years ago; **Sam Shaw's Treatory** at 306 South, an appealing gift boutique and fresh-baked cookie emporium; and **Wim** at 226 South, an informal and welcoming internet café that is open for breakfast and lunch, with drinks and snacks between.



**Ned Scharff** is a recently elected member of the SHCA board. He and his wife Nancy have lived in Society Hill for 15 years. He is a former president of The Athenaeum of Philadelphia.

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## STEPPING BACK IN TIME

BY MARC S. RASPANTI, ESQUIRE

## Fond Memories of Head House Square Culinary Landmarks

*Part Two*

I thank all who took the time to read and comment on Part One of this article on past restaurants, published in the May/June 2024 *Reporter*. What follows is Part Two.

For Part Two, I crossed over to the west side of Head House Square and explored some establishments that were enjoyed by many long-time Society Hill residents, but sadly are no longer around. Fortunately, some have been replaced with equally fun and interesting establishments.

**Café Nola**

Many remember the colorful bar and restaurant Café Nola. Café Nola inhabited the space now occupied by delightful wine, cocktail, and creative eatery Bloomsday Café, located at 412 South 2nd Street. Café Nola was considered a forerunner of the early restaurant renaissance movement in Philadelphia. While this eatery served both Cajun and Creole cuisine, Italian food was also on the menu. It seems Italian food in Philadelphia is never far from any menu. Perhaps, in hindsight, the cuisine should have been billed more appropriately as Philly Cajun. Café Nola introduced Philadelphia to New Orleans cuisine before such cuisine became nationally



Café Nola Mardi Gras Poster



Cafe Nola

popular. Memorable dishes included Angels on Horseback (oysters wrapped in bacon), jambalaya, shrimp etouffee, flaming Bananas Foster and, of course, beignets! The most memorable artifacts for many were the annual Mardi Gras posters. The Café created limited-edition art each year featuring lavish Fat Tuesday themes, some of which are still floating around curio shops throughout Philadelphia.

In its heyday many celebrities visited Café Nola, including a young Bruce Springsteen. The place had a unique vibe. It was softly lit, romantic, and whimsical, boasting a Euro Café feel well before such an ambiance was more prevalent in Philadelphia. The restaurant opened in 1981, enjoyed a 15-year run on South Street before making a series of moves throughout the neighborhood, and closed around 1996. While everyone I interviewed thought Café Nola was better when it occupied its original location, many local residents loved Café Nola. Unfortunately, the luster diminished as time went on. However, in its heyday, it was a unique place to savor while pretending that you were in New Orleans.

**The Artful Dodger**

Another Head House haunt was The Artful Dodger, located until 2012 at 400 South 2nd Street. That historic space is now a cozy Argentine restaurant, Malbec, owned and curated by a true Argentinian, Walter Aragonéz. In



The Artful Dodger

addition to a great bar and restaurant, it serves the best empanadas in Philadelphia. Like the Dickens Inn, which I wrote about in Part One, The Artful Dodger, or the “Dodgy” as many people referred to it, followed a London pub theme, replete with old world trappings.

The fare included fish and chips, roast beef, potato nachos, shepherd’s pie, hearty sandwiches, and meatloaf, and there was, of course, a well-used dart board. It was a quiet place that included cozy booths where one could enjoy an ale, a well-poured pilsner, or a hard cider while watching the Phillies, Eagles, Sixers, and Flyers. Many Society Hill residents were regulars, and those I interviewed still remember fondly “Meatloaf Monday,” served together with a libation for less than \$20. I could not find a local who did not enjoy the Dodgy in its day. It was considered a local’s lounge where everyone was a regular and on a first name basis. The Dodgy lasted for almost three decades, an accomplishment in itself.

**Lautrec/Borgia Cafe**

Philadelphia has a long French tradition going back to the American Revolution. France was a pivotal ally, helping a fledgling America defeat the British. In fact, in the 1790s, many exiles from France and other French-speaking colonials opened shops and restaurants in the city.

*continued on page 9*



STEPPING BACK IN TIME

*continued from page 8*

This long French tradition has embraced both fine and casual French restaurants. One such establishment, once located at 408 South 2nd Street, (most recently the closed Mexican restaurant Xochitl) was Lautrec and the downstairs Borgia Café. The November 1976 *Society Hill Resident* newsletter heralded Lautrec as a place to dine and drink. Despite this high praise, many residents and commentators felt that the media overlooked Lautrec when reviewing the restaurants that made up Philadelphia’s early 70s restaurant renaissance.

Many Society Hill residents revered the cozy upstairs-downstairs layout at this establishment. Upstairs was Lautrec, a small, elegant French restaurant with a memorable and intimate bar. Downstairs was the romantic Borgia Café, which *The Philadelphia Inquirer* wrote had some of the most consistently good jazz performed in the city. A great brunch was served on Sundays, with carafes of French wine brought to the table along with a complimentary copy of the Sunday *New York Times*, all for less than nine dollars. It was a go-to spot for special occasions.

The former Lautrec space has been under extensive renovation for almost a year. I have peeked in several times and an interesting space is emerging.

According to newspaper reports, a new French restaurant will soon open up at this site. Provenance, as it will be known, will focus on seafood prepared using French methods. Executive Chef Bazik has steered the kitchens at The Good King Tavern and Lacroix at The Rittenhouse. It sounds like a wonderful French inspired addition to the Square scheduled to be opened this summer.

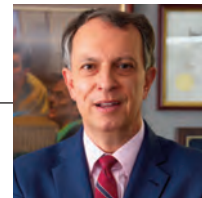
I have enjoyed this stroll down memory lane. I hope you have as well. With each new restaurant opening, not only are extensive repairs made to these ancient buildings, some of which were built before the first shot was fired in the Revolution, but Society Hill residents also have the opportunity to forge their own dining memories in classic Philadelphia red brick structures. May the past be prologue for a newly emerging Head House Square. Onward!

**Marc S. Raspanti**, an active Center City trial lawyer, resides with his wife in Society Hill. In addition to his passion for the law, he considers himself an amateur historian.



**Lautrec/Borgia’s when it was Xochitl**

*The “Dodgy” was a local’s lounge where everyone was a regular and was on a first-name basis.*



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## SUSTAINABLE SOLUTIONS

BY CLAUDIA CARABELLI

## A Win-Win in a Local Garden

Problems in today's world often feel insurmountable. Effecting change can seem impossible. Along the lines of "think globally, act locally," a diverse crew at Old St. Joseph's Church is making some wonderfully positive changes in our community.

Old Saint Joseph's Catholic Church, 321 Willing's Alley, was founded by the Jesuits in 1733. It is Philadelphia's first Roman Catholic church. Even with over 300 years of tradition, the congregation strives to address contemporary concerns. Their Faith, Food and Friends Group has been feeding the homeless since 1985. Three days a week, those in need show up for a nutritious lunch. The guests are seated at tables and served by volunteers who engage them in conversation. Everyone is welcome without regard to religious affiliation. Andrew Huff, who works in the Emergency Shelter Program, has been attending in hopes of connecting with the guests so they might trust him enough to accept social services. Those dealing with housing insecurity don't always have faith in the system. Connections like this can help foster relationships that pave the way toward much needed support.

Andrew noticed unsightly trash on the church property and surrounding neighborhood. Back in October, he collected some buckets and trash pick-up sticks and asked if any of the guests would like to help clean up. Several joined immediately, their numbers grew, and cleaning up before lunch became a regular activity. This fit right into the church's "Care for Creation" program. To date they've collected their 100th bucket of trash. Participants receive acknowledgment from passing neighbors and feel good about helping out.

In April of 2023, Andrew met Bill Stigliani, a very involved parishioner who was always looking for "sustainable solutions"—creative ways to engage people that would foster communications between neighbors and guests. Cleaning up debris on and around the property was one way to accomplish this.



**The Freedom Gardeners have worked together to transform the corner of 4th and Walnut.**



Another way soon came to light. The southeast corner of 4th and Walnut Streets abuts the church and was poorly maintained. Sara Canuso, a resident of the nearby Willing's, and admittedly not a gardener, wondered why the space was so neglected. Research on her part found that in 1978 the National Park Service (NPS) leased the garden to the church, who unfortunately can no longer care for it. Sadly, this cornerstone property in a beautiful historical neighborhood was decaying before our eyes.

Not so fast! This is where some outside-the-box thinking came into play. When Sara was observing the garden, Andrew approached her and asked what was being done. He asked if their guests could help as a way of giving back to the neighbors. Sara connected with Jonathan Burton, of Independence Historical Trust, who helped her work with the NPS to take back the care of the property, since the church could no longer afford to maintain it. In January of 2024, she invited guests from the feeding program to help care for the garden. Never mandatory, it was completely voluntary. She soon had a team of 6 to 15 people, sometimes more on a waiting list, who showed up 30 to 60 minutes early to clean up and plant. John Studdy of Bartlett Tree Experts offered guidance and supplies. Sherley Young of the Washington Square Committee shared gardening expertise. The participants named it "The Freedom Garden" and call themselves "The

Freedom Gardeners." They show up eagerly, even in bad weather, and take great pride in their work. Neighbors now recognize some of the Gardeners by name and regularly thank them for their efforts. They're no longer faceless homeless people coming for a meal. They're participating members of the community. Before each session, Sara gives them a pep talk. At the end, she gives them a personal thank you note with a small stipend of her own funds. T-shirts are forthcoming as is a plaque to include the names of all team members.

Where to go from here? Funding is definitely needed for supplies and stipends. Anyone have 67 cubic feet of mulch to donate? Learning will be ongoing. A landscape student willing to donate an hour or two per month would be wonderful. As of now, contributions can be made to "Old Saint Joseph's Faith, Food and Friends Program" with a notation to direct it to The Freedom Garden. NPS may use The Freedom Gardeners at other sites. The hope is that some participants have what it takes to land a job in landscaping and get back on their feet. Sara, Bill, Andrew, and the team appear to have truly found an innovative and inspiring "sustainable solution."

**Claudia Carabelli** is a former RN and retired school counselor. She co-chairs the Society Hill Tree Tenders.



# McFarland's Value Proposition

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



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## URBAN EDEN

BY MARY STURDIVANT

## Chattering Up a Blu Streak



Lil Blu peeking in the window.

Those of us familiar with the creation story in Genesis know how humankind's problems started: with a snake in the garden. Those of us who share a penchant for perusing nursery catalogs know how our garden problems continued: pesky deer munch away at plants and shrubs. For urban gardeners who relieve stress through gratitude journaling, here are two things to be grateful for in Society Hill. One: no snakes. Two: no deer. **But** (you knew that a "but" was coming), do we have squirrels! To quote Carrie Bradshaw from *Sex and the City*, "Squirrels are just vermin, but with cuter outfits." Ever notice how ads for bird feeders laud how their clever designs thwart squirrels?

In early May, I saw a field of bright orange tulips in raised flowerbeds flanking the Hopkinson House entrance. When I returned two days later to photograph the sight, all that remained were tall green stalks with a nub at the end where a bloom had been. I didn't catch any thieves in the act but, trust me, it was squirrels. Better they eat the blooms than the bulbs, but, for us, aren't the blooms the point? One former neighbor on Spruce Street used to trap squirrels in a cage in his garden and drive to Fairmount Park to release them. We teased him that the squirrels probably made it back to Washington Square before he could drive back and find a parking space.

Why here? Because this is where the food is. The Independence National



Lil Blu's squirrel-sized picnic table.

Historical Park Service can put up all the signs it wants warning us not to feed squirrels, but who is deterred? I myself brought over a variety of nuts that had been part of a Thanksgiving cornucopia centerpiece. As I scattered them in the square, author and neighbor Cordelia Biddle scolded me for not shelling them first. Seriously! The clerks at Nuts to You confirmed that neighbors come in all the time to buy nuts for the critters.

Squirrels seem to have all the rights and can come and go on private property as they please. They can eat what they want from your garden. Call the cops on them for trespassing or thieving, and all that will happen is you'll be known as the neighborhood nut case. Squirrels will have to enter your house, probably through the attic, before you can call 311 or a private exterminator to get action. **Or** you can make nice like Perry Whyte and Michael Czeredarczuk, who installed a watering and feeding station, which they call a picnic table, for squirrels and chipmunks in their backyard. Perry and Michael are hosting the third generation of visitors. The latest is named Lil Blu for the streak of blue-looking fur running down its back, a family characteristic. While I have always thought of Society Hill as more preppy than punk, with the occasional artistic or creative flair, it seems appropriate one of our native inhabitants would sport a blue streak.

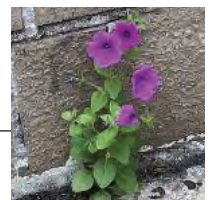
Can squirrels express gratitude? Some say yes. I have commended Joan Tropp



Washington Square trash can raider. Forget peanuts, this one forages for peanut butter and jelly sandwiches!

for picking up the litter in Washington Square. She says the square's squirrels thank her by dropping by her place on Delancey to leave gifts of peanuts in the shells in her window box. But I say beware of squirrels bearing gifts. All I have ever gotten from them are empty peanut shells in Bed 5. I am starting to identify more with farmer Mr. McGregor than with Beatrix Potter.

Here's a quick update from the last column: For those following my trials and tribulations with herb growing, the basil, oregano and rosemary from the Physick House Plant Sale are thriving indoors. The dill has joined the deceased and was so desiccated that I harvested it anyway. Apparently, dill's roots are fussy and prefer to stay where they started, like a lot of Philadelphians. I bought a packet of seeds from Whole Foods and will try again. Gardening is living in the tension between two mantras: 1) If at first you don't succeed, try, try again; and 2) Learn from your mistakes. Insanity is doing the same thing again and expecting a different result.



Long-time neighbor **Mary Sturdivant** is a passionate gardener who oversees plot #5 in Washington Square with Ruth Ann Fenton and Judyth-Ayne Harvell. She's a plucky petunia who advises, "When you find yourself between a brick wall and a cement slab, just do your bloomin' best."

## 2024 GARDENS OF SOCIETY HILL TOUR

PHOTOS BY MARTHA LEVINE

## SHCA's Only Annual Fundraiser Is a Verdant Success!

Somebody up there must like us, because our 2024 Gardens of Society Hill Tour was blessed with ideal weather. Over 500 visitors from the tri-state area attended the tour, a two-day event, held on the weekend of June 8 - 9. Attendees were lining up early, anxious to see the 17 vibrant urban gardens, in a variety of sizes and designs, all new as promised.

Our thanks to the owners who shared their beautiful gardens and worked hard to get them "show ready." We appreciate their generosity in opening their gardens to so many people. These labors of love deserve to be seen.

Thank you to our 80 volunteers who happily monitored each garden and helped visitors feel welcome. Many said it was a joy to see their neighbors and meet new people.

Highlights of the tour included a large hydroponic green wall garden, a garden recreated from the owners' Connecticut country garden, a garden with an abstract painted mural, a large garden with more than 200 perennials, a garden with an active beehive, a garden on a property that was formerly a stable, a garden with a pair of five-year-old female chickens, and a pocket park maintained by neighbors.

Many of the tour gardens have trees and plants native to our area.

Tour coordinators, Linda Skale and Martha Levine extend their thanks to all who contributed to making this year's tour a great success! All proceeds benefit SHCA.

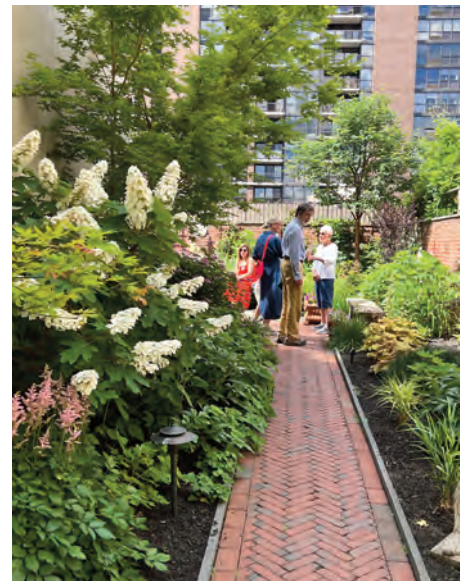


**Martha Levine** and **Linda Skale** are the Garden Tour organizers.



2024 GARDENS OF SOCIETY HILL TOUR

PHOTOS BY MARTHA LEVINE



## KEEPING POSTED

BY AL CAVALARI

## One Bank Fails, Three Buildings Survive



**The Greek Revival PSFS headquarters built at 306 Walnut Street next to the Polish American Cultural Center still stands.**

*These were the “wild west” days when banks were widely regarded with mistrust. The word “bank” would not even be used in the institution’s name.*

**This post card was published in 1931 by The Philadelphia Saving Fund Society using an image from 1928.**



When I was in first grade, my parents taught me a lesson about the most powerful force in the universe: compound interest. With only five dollars, they opened up a passbook savings account in my name. With it, I learned the satisfaction of saving money and the thrill of watching it grow. Some economists believe that, nationwide, the small accounts held by savings banks, in the aggregate, were a key factor in capital formation and economic growth of the United States in the 19th century. The lesson, that proved valuable to myself as well as to our entire economy, was made possible in large measure because of the nation’s first savings bank, the Philadelphia Saving Fund Society, which was founded right here in our little neighborhood.

Condy Raguet, politician and business executive, was a leading founder. He told a story of meeting one Richard Peters Jr. around November 20, 1816, at the southeast corner of Chestnut and 4th Streets and asking if Peters would like to join him in creating a new kind of bank that had taken hold in England. The gentlemen continued down Chestnut, turned on to 3rd heading to Walnut where, near the First Bank of the United States, they met Clement Biddle and Thomas Hale. The four continued the talk in Biddle’s office where they called a meeting for the 25th.

This bank would be something new. These were the “wild west” days of banking, and they were widely regarded with mistrust. Raguet proposed that they not even use the word “bank” in the institution’s name because it would be “unpopular with the legislature” and make it more difficult to get a charter. But this would be a philanthropic enterprise. It would encourage thrift among low-earning blue collar people who would have small accounts the commercial banks or a government agency were not interested in. It would be a “mutual” savings bank; its trustees would have

a fiduciary responsibility to place the interest of depositors ahead of their own. There would be no stockholders pressuring trustees to make risky loans in search of quick growth and aggressive returns. The word mutual meant that any profits would be shared by the depositors. Unlike commercial banks whose charters could fail to be renewed, as had happened to the First and Second Bank of the United States, whose buildings still exist, this bank would have the right of “perpetual existence.”

In just ten days, articles of association were drawn up defining the purpose as “to promote economy and the practice of saving amongst the poor and laboring classes... to assist them in the accumulation of property that they possess the means of support during sickness or old age — and to render them in a great degree independent of the bounty of others.” The articles described helping people achieve financial security to be the “duty” of those with the power to do so. A promotional pamphlet, replete with advice from Ben Franklin, touted the advantages of regular saving and preparedness for life’s challenges. Financial examples explained how an apprentice could save money to start his own business. For a time there was a limit on how large a deposit could be in order to discourage deposits from wealthy people and keep the focus on those who would otherwise be shut out of the financial sector.

The first deposit, from Condy Raguet’s black servant, was received December 2, 1816 at in the office of George Billington, the Society’s first secretary/treasurer at 22 Sixth Street between Market and Chestnut. The bank moved a handful of times. The Greek revival headquarters it built at 306 Walnut Street still stands next to the Polish American Cultural Center. The building at 7th and Walnut shown on our postcard was *continued on page 17*



**The building at 7th and Walnut shown on our post card was erected in 1868.**



**Cornerstone showing PSFS’ founding date of 1816.**



## KEEPING POSTED

*continued from page 16*



**Bank vault still visible in the skyscraper's lobby.**

erected in 1868. In 1932 a final move was made to the skyscraper built by the bank at 12th and Market, which is now a Loews Hotel where you can still see the bank vault in the lobby.

Up until the 1970s, the Society retained its philanthropic character and was among the most conservative of all savings banks. By 1850 it held more than four times the deposits of the average savings bank. Maintaining a more robust contingent fund compared to other banks allowed it to survive panics and other emergencies when, before the days of FDIC insurance, many other banks failed, wiping out their depositors' savings. The larger fund meant it paid less interest than most, but not all, competitors. But its reputation for solvency clearly appealed to the public.

How well did all this care for the financial health of the Society's customers work? Did it produce thrifty savers? Three economists studied all the deposits opened in 1850 and concluded that "among male account holders whose accounts lasted four to five years, the median balance was almost equal to annual gross income, and the annual saving rate for active accounts was around 10 to 15 percent." Their conclusion was "those who saved at PSFS had, as a fraction of their annual gross income, accumulated a large nest egg." Further "the large classes of humble and helpless, but thrifty and prudent' would have found it far more difficult to accumulate in the absence of PSFS..."

So what happened to this solid bank? Why is its world-famous skyscraper headquarters, a national landmark, now a Loews Hotel? By 1940 it was the largest bank in town, serving 80 percent of Philadelphia households. It was a great corporate citizen, working with Cecil B. Moore in his civil rights work. Its school banking program taught kids to be good savers. By the 1980s it was the nation's largest mutual savings bank. According to historian Alyssa Ribeiro, it "struggled to adapt to deregulation." To my way of thinking, it lost sight of its core principles. It absorbed the failing Western Savings Fund Society and changed its mutual structure to become a publicly traded stock company. It expanded its product lines by offering

equipment leasing, real estate development, and corporate finance. It bought a loan portfolio from General Electric for \$568 million dollars and acquired four savings and loans in Florida. It invested \$215 million in a Virginia mortgage company that went bankrupt. It also changed its name to Meritor Financial Group. Eventually this solid original old savings bank failed, was taken over by the FDIC, and liquidated in 1992.

Part of the saga included some PSFS branches being sold to Mellon Bank in 1989. At that time an "s" was added to the word "saving" in the bank name for use on branches, making it the Philadelphia Savings Fund Society. Mellon began operating its branches with the name "Mellon PSFS." It was deemed inaccurate to continue lighting the iconic bright red neon PSFS sign atop the skyscraper, so it was turned off. Public outcry convinced Mellon to turn it back on, which is why it still shines brightly in our skyline. Loews Hotel, which opened the repurposed building in 2000, agreed to keep the sign lit, but maintaining the old 27-foot tall neon letters became too costly and difficult. In 2016 they were converted to LED technology that duplicates the look of neon and allows the sign to display any color. It has changed color only twice. Once it was changed to blue at the request of the city when the NFL draft was in town. The second change was to green. That had something to do with a football team. The bank went out of business in 1992, but the sign still illuminates the night sky for 20 miles around.

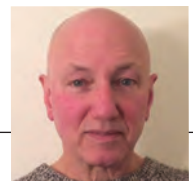
Every morning, Ben Franklin asked himself "What good can I do today?" When Condy Raguet, a graduate of Franklin's University of Pennsylvania and member of Franklin's American Philosophical Society, had that chance meeting on Chestnut Street with the other founders, he must have been thinking the same thing. I'd bet most people today have no idea that the PSFS sign represents a company that went out of business long ago. Now every time you see those letters lighting up the night sky or walk past Jefferson Urgent Care on Washington Square, you'll remember all the good that was done by the Philadelphia Saving Fund Society which was created, and originally headquartered, right here in our little Society Hill neighborhood. A penny saved is a penny earned. Where would we be without people who are willing to change the world?

**Al Cavalari** is a certified member of the Association of Philadelphia Tour Guides. Write Al at [flagguysdn@aol.com](mailto:flagguysdn@aol.com).



**In 1932, a final move was made, into the skyscraper built by the bank at 12th and Market Streets, which is now a Loews Hotel.**

*What happened to this iconic bank? Why is its world-famous skyscraper headquarters, a national landmark, now a Loews Hotel?*



## INDEPENDENCE HISTORICAL TRUST

BY JONATHAN BURTON

## Exploring Your Park for Free



When was the last time you took a **free** walking tour of our city's rich historical area? Yes, free. The Independence Historical Trust (formerly known as the Friends of Independence National Historical Park) started the tradition of offering free nightly walking tours of our National Park in 1978. Since the park's cultural attractions typically close to the public at 5 p.m., including this year, the Trust began offering free walking tours which became known as "Twilight Tours," in the summer months every single day of the week.

When the program began, it answered the need of having meaningful engagement and learning opportunities for visitors and residents when the park buildings were closed. Over the years, the Twilight Tour program, which is led entirely by volunteers, has given over 5,000 hours of volunteer support to Independence National Historical Park and has served several thousand visitors. This past year alone saw 1,506 visitors from 43 different states and 33 different countries.

Each tour has a theme and is repeated just a few times throughout the summer months. This year some themes will be: A Walk Through Historic Old City Philadelphia, A Complete Tour of the American Revolution, Philly Shaping the Nation, Living Landmarks, The Birth of the United States of America, and many more.

This summer, the Trust also has all new programming for your furry friends and even Yoga at Independence.

# YOGA

AT

## Independence



How lucky are we to have a beautiful green space right in Old City Philadelphia?

Join Independence Historical Trust on the lawn behind the Second Bank of the United States for **Yoga at Independence!**

This program is **free** and open to the public. Whether you're an advanced yogi or brand new, come and enjoy a fun hour of yoga in your National Park on July 13, August 10 and September 14. All levels and ages are welcome!

Please wear clothes you feel comfortable moving in. The Trust will have a limited number of mats to borrow for those dropping by, but please bring your own mat or towel.

Sessions are facilitated by our friends at [www.monarch-yoga.com](http://www.monarch-yoga.com).



**Happy Hour** (or Yappy Hour, if you prefer!) is the opportunity for pet owners and their dogs to socialize with pets who love Philadelphia's National Park. Events will be held once a month starting in June in the garden next to the Pemberton building off Chestnut Street. Each month will have a new activity created with your puppies in mind. During the program, they can even take the oath and become an official **B.A.R.K. Ranger** at Independence National Historical Park.

### Event Details

- Date: Second Tuesday of the month (July 9, August 13)
  - Time: 5:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.
  - Location: Pemberton Building Garden off of Chestnut Street, between 3rd and 4th Streets, along a cobblestone path.
  - Cost: **Free**
- ### Reminders
- This is a social event for pets and owners, so we ask that only well-behaved dogs who get along with other dogs and humans participate in the event.
  - Dogs must be on a leash the entire time they are on park grounds.
  - Any incidents that occur from the actions of the pet or owner will be the sole responsibility of the pet owner.

For more information feel free to email me at [Jonathan@INHT.org](mailto:Jonathan@INHT.org) or visit the website at [www.inht.org/twilight-tours/](http://www.inht.org/twilight-tours/) or <https://inht.org/events-and-programs/>



**Jonathan Burton**, Director of Development for Independence Historical Trust, is the former executive director of Philadelphia Society for the Preservation of Landmarks.

ON OUR SHELVES

BY IZZY HALLORAN

# Summer Reading

*Searching for your next summer read? Consult HHB's Summer Reading Guide!*

**Memoir**

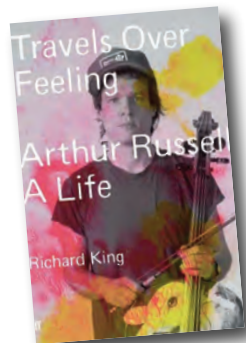
*Combat Love* by Alisyn Camerota, \$30

*Combat Love* is a memoir about the CNN anchor Alisyn Camerota's tumultuous coming of age in 1980s New Jersey. Much of *Combat Love* serves as a love letter to the sounds and people of her youth, while other portions are a reflection on the rampant drug culture and harmful patterns learned in that time. Camerota does an excellent job illustrating the joys of teenage rebellion, often recalling riveting details such as enthralling encounters and exact dialogue, while recognizing the unfortunate consequences of party culture.

**Music/Biography**

*Travels Over Feeling* by Richard King, \$50

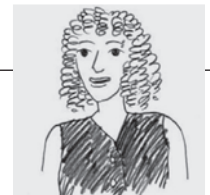
A genre-defying musician, Arthur Russell's expansive discography features a rich variety of musical genres — from folk, to disco, to instrumental compositions. *Travels Over Feeling* by Richard King is a stunning collection of photographs, handwritten letters, personal documents, musical compositions, and old concert posters. *Travels Over Feeling* chronicles Arthur Russell's life in four parts, chronologically from early life to his untimely death in 1992 from an AIDS related illness. This book is an intimate look at one of the most prolific musicians of the 20th century.



**Nonfiction/Essay**

*Summer Solstice* by Nina Maclaughlin, \$14.95

*Summer Solstice* is a short essay written by Nina Maclaughlin. A beautiful exploration of the magic of the summer months, MacLaughlin lyrical descriptions evoke universal memories, such as sleeping with the windows open, catching fireflies, and the smell of rain falling on warm pavement. Maclaughlin masterfully captures the scents, sounds, taste, and feeling of summer, instilling its essence into 72 wonderful pages.



**Izzy Halloran** is a bookseller and Events Coordinator at Head House Books, Society Hill's only local, independently owned bookstore.



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‘FIX THE BRIX’ SUBSIDY

BY MARTHA LEVINE

# Yes, Tree Pits Are Part of Our Sidewalks

Thank you to the homeowners who have used the “Fix the Brix” subsidy program to repair their sidewalks. Over the years, more than 300 households have participated.

Nonetheless, take a walk around Society Hill, and you will see far too many uneven sidewalks, mostly brick, in an unacceptable state. It is up to us homeowners to do something about it. The City of Philadelphia has no plan to fix our sidewalks — we own the sidewalks in front of our houses and are responsible for their upkeep.

**Tree pits are part of our sidewalks.** Many have loose or dislodged bricks that look terrible and are dangerous for pedestrians. Your tree deserves a nice tree pit. Imagine loose bricks in the wrong hands — I still recall the broken car and house windows a few years ago due to bricks left in piles unattended or loose around pits.

For fixing brick or concrete sidewalks in Society Hill, SHCA provides a subsidy of 40 percent of the cost, up to a maximum of \$500 for members and \$400 for non-members. Help make our

neighborhood safer and more attractive. Here are the easy steps to proceed:

- 1 Take a of your problem sidewalk area.
  - 2 Hire a mason to do the work.
  - 3 After the work is done, make sure it is to your satisfaction, and take a photo. Email a copy of the invoice, proof of payment, and photos to [info@societyhillcivic.org](mailto:info@societyhillcivic.org).
  - 4 Receive a check within a few weeks.
- Find more information about “Fix the Brix” on our website at [www.societyhillcivic.org](http://www.societyhillcivic.org).



**This is the ideal tree pit. Flat edges let rainwater flow into the tree pit. There are no loose bricks to tempt vandals.**



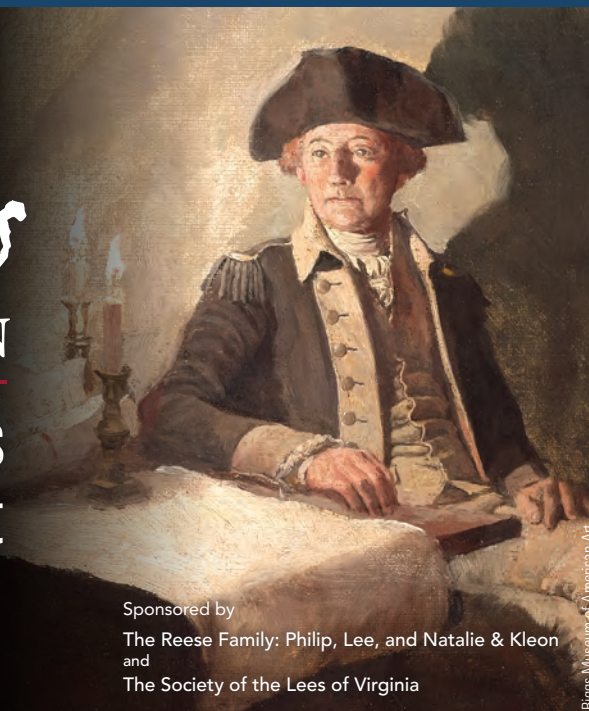
**Use the “Fix the Brix” subsidy to repair damaged tree pits like these.**

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MEMBERSHIP REPORT

BY SAMANTHA BROWN

# Your Membership Is Crucial to Help Us Continue Our Work

Annual membership gifts are critical to make all our work possible. **Right now, we're behind on our membership goals.** In 2023 we had just over 1,000 active members by June. But this year, as of our count in June, we only have 781 active members for 2024. If you've already joined for 2024, thank you!

But if you haven't renewed, or are considering membership for the first time, I ask that you please join now to help catch up.

Your membership is crucial, to help us continue our work to make Society Hill the safest, cleanest, and most beautiful neighborhood it can be.

## Three Easy Ways to Make Your 2024 Membership Gift

**1 Use this QR code** to make your gift by phone.



1. Open your phone's camera.
2. Point at the QR code.
3. Click the link that appears on the screen, and it will take you right to our web page where you can sign up!

**2 Visit this URL** to make your gift on computer:  
**[www.societyhillcivic.org/join](http://www.societyhillcivic.org/join)**

**3 Use the form** on this page to pay by check.  
Mail it to: Society Hill Civic Association  
P.O. Box 63503, Philadelphia, PA 19147

Annual Membership is critical to Society Hill Civic Association. We need your help to bridge the gap in the membership shortfall.

**Please make your 2024 Membership Gift today!**

Thank you for your support!

**Samantha Brown** is SHCA's Administrator and has called Society Hill "home" for 20 years.



## 2024 Membership Gift Form

We encourage everyone to join online by going to [www.societyhillcivic.org/join](http://www.societyhillcivic.org/join).

If you prefer to pay by check, fill out this form and follow the mailing instructions at the bottom.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

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(print clearly)

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- \$ 50 Basic Household Membership
- \$ 40 Senior/Student/Single
- \$ 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

Total Membership \$ \_\_\_\_\_

If paying membership dues by check, please make the check payable to:  
**Society Hill Civic Association**

### Donations to SHPF

Your membership is important to us, but your tax-deductible contribution will help to support our many programs. All donations to the Society Hill Preservation Foundation (SHPF), a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization, are tax-deductible.

- \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Unrestricted
- \$ \_\_\_\_\_ New Market Headhouse Conservancy
- \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Beautification of Washington Square
- \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Sidewalk Cleaning/Graffiti Removal
- \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Zoning & Historic Preservation
- \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Tree Tending
- \$ \_\_\_\_\_ McCall School
- \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Starr Garden
- \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Franklin Lights
- \$ \_\_\_\_\_ "Fix the Brix"

Total Donations \$ \_\_\_\_\_

If making a tax-deductible donation by check, make the check payable to:  
**Society Hill Preservation Foundation**

Mail this form and your check(s) to:  
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Or join online at: [www.societyhillcivic.org/join](http://www.societyhillcivic.org/join)

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WELCOME GIFT BAGS

BY MARTHA LEVINE

# 45 Welcome Gift Bags Presented Each Year

S HCA welcomes new first-time owners with a special gift: The Welcome Gift Bag. Are you a new owner as of 2023-24? If so, please let us know if you would like to receive one. The bag is presented at your home by appointment and takes about 40 minutes. The contents include a bottle of wine, coffee, chocolates, and gift cards to area businesses, plus important neighborhood information. To make

an appointment, contact me at marthalev6@gmail.com.

Please help us thank our loyal contributors listed below. They make our program possible.

**Gift Bag recipients  
Laura and Steve**



**As always, we ask you to support our long loyal business donors listed here. Without them, there would not be a Welcome Gift Bag program.**

*Restaurants*

- Bistro Romano**, 120 Lombard Street
- Bloomsgay Cafe**, 414 S.2nd Street
- Bridget Foy's**, 200 South Street
- Cavanaugh's Headhouse**, 421 S. 2nd Street
- Cry Baby Pasta**, 627 S. 3rd Street
- Fork Restaurant**, 306 Market Street
- FRIEDA** (café), 320 Walnut Street
- Gnocchi** (Italian), 613 E. Passyunk Avenue
- High Street Philly**, 101 S. 9th Street
- La Colombe Coffee Roasters**, 100 S. 6th Street
- Las Buglambillas** (Mexican), 15 S. 3rd Street
- Mahalo Hawaiian BBQ**, 117 South Street
- Malbec Argentine Steakhouse**, 400 S. 2nd Street
- Panorama**, 14 N. Front Street
- PJ Clarke's**, 601 Walnut Street
- Reading Terminal Market**, 1136 Arch Street
- Rosy's Taco Bar East**, 624 S. 6th Street
- Starr Restaurant Group**, www.starr-restaurants.com
- The Twisted Tail** (Southern), 509 S. 2nd Street

*Entertainment*

- 1812 Productions** (all comedy), 1714 Delancey
- Arden Theatre**, 40 N. 2nd Street
- Ghost Tour of Philadelphia**, 215-413-1997, ghosttour@ghosttour.com
- Lantern Theatre**, 10th & Ludlow Streets
- Phila. Chamber Ensemble** (at Old Pine Church), www.pceconcerts.org

*Retail, Services*

- Adornamenti** (jewelry), 1006 Pine Street
- BFit4Life**, 400 Walnut Street
- Head House Books**, 619 S. 2nd Street
- Judy Moon Massage**, 829 Spruce Street, Suite 300
- Lee's Cleaners**, 241 S. 6th Street
- Liberty Tree & Landscape Management**, 215-725-3637
- MASS F.I.T.** (fitness), 401 S. 2nd Street, lower level
- Naked Chocolate**, www.nkdchocolate.com
- Oggi Salon & Spa**, 1700 Locust Street
- Paper on Pine** (stationery), 1310 Sansom Street
- Pileggi on the Square** (salon), 717 Walnut Street
- Reading Terminal Market**, 1136 Arch Street
- Sam Shaw's Treatery** (culinary & lifestyle boutique), 306 South Street
- Show of Hands** (craft gallery), 1006 Pine Street
- Stump Plants**, 622 S. 9th Street

*Museums*

- Museum of the American Revolution**, 101 S. 3rd Street
- National Liberty Museum**, 321 Chestnut Street
- Physick House & Powel House** (museums), 321 S. 4th Street

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Exact Solar has been good from start to finish. They promptly answered any questions I had upfront, communicated very clearly what we can expect has the homeowner, provided relatively quick installation and managed all of the permits and inspections with township. Highly recommend.  
- Stephen G.

**Worth the Wait**  
I started working with Exact Solar in June 2021. They were consistently responsive and very helpful in all aspects of the design and permitting part of the process. Once the necessary approval and supply issues were taken care of, the installation itself was completed quickly and professionally, with the system going online in December/January. Exact Solar was also very helpful with setting up net metering and SREC accounts. I highly recommend their services!  
Charles L - Morrisville, PA

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KIDS' KORNER

BY JAIME AND MIKE FOX

# Contentious Choices, Brazen Costumes and BBQ Chicken



**Frangelli's Bakery**

847 West Ritner Street; frangellis.com

On a beautiful spring day, we took a ride to another bakery on our quest to find the finest donut in Philadelphia. Frangelli's is located on a quiet, mostly residential, street in south Philly. The selection of baked goods looked and smelled delicious. There was a good variety of donuts, which made our decision stressful and contentious. But that is why we get paid the big bucks. We eventually settled on three donuts: fruity pebbles, salted caramel, and chocolate cream. With nowhere to sit, we took our donuts to go. Although these were not our favorite donuts to date, the kids enjoyed the fruity pebbles most, followed by the salted caramel.

**Mummers Museum**

1100 S. 2nd Street; (215) 336-3050

It is impossible to count how many times we passed by the Mummers Museum without ever stepping inside. Finally, on a sunny Saturday afternoon in April, we took a long walk with our friends to experience the museum for the first time. We were impressed! This museum is dedicated to a truly unique Philadelphia tradition, making it a truly unique museum. It's filled with costumes, which you are encouraged to try on. Some of the displays are a bit worn, but that just added to the charm of the place. It is open to the public and free to enter. Donations are encouraged, or you can spend your money in their excellent gift shop. The whole museum can be toured in under an hour. Whether you are looking to take Insta-ready pictures or shopping for an interesting gift for a homesick out-of-towner, this museum is worth checking out.



**Brazas BBQ Chicken**

326 South Street; www.Brazasbbq.net

One time, we did not agree on where to eat dinner. Okay, this has happened more than once. Luckily, our neighborhood is blessed with so many great restaurant options. During our most recent dinner disagreement, Jaime and Owen chose sushi at Midori, while Mike and Jordan headed excitedly to Brazas BBQ Chicken. Located at 326 South Street, Brazas is Mike and Jordan's favorite Peruvian BBQ chicken restaurant in the world. Sure, it is a niche genre. But this place has perfected the art of making a simple BBQ chicken with sides of white rice and black beans. Always affordable and delicious, much of their whole chicken was devoured by Mike and Jordan, yet there were still plenty of leftovers to take home to share begrudgingly with our dog, Cali. Pro-tip: pay with cash to avoid the credit card fee.



**The Fox family**

moved to Society Hill in August 2019. They love to take advantage of the wonderful spaces and activities that Society Hill and Philadelphia have to offer. Kids' Korner will feature topics such as restaurants, parks, recreation, and culture. Readers feedback and suggestions are welcome.

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 HOPKINSON HOUSE #916

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