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STORE PETITION GOES TO CITY COUNCIL

Report by Paul Silverstein

The Society Hill Area Residents' Association has from its very inception maintained a policy of advocating the retention of the retail stores, which represent shopping services essential to a residential community. This policy was first enunciated at SHARA's general meeting, held on December 15, 1958 with respect to Unit No. 1, under consideration at that time. Subsequent thereto this policy was implemented by the organization of committees, hearings and representation at City Council.

Your association has consistently and actively supported this policy as evidenced by the action of the Executive Board of SHARA on January 19, 1960.

At this meeting the Board adopted the procedure of circulating a Petition requesting that favorable consideration be given the retention of these shopping services by the proper authorities. What was proposed by this Petition was nothing new. It was merely a continuation of the existing policy with respect to Unit No. 2. The principal remained the same, only the method of operation changed.

The reaction of the residents of the area to this Petition was spontaneous. In a few short days more than 1000 adult residents of the area showed their solid support by signing this Petition. The same has been forwarded to City Council and the Redevelopment Authority.

The stage is now set. The chances of success rest with you. Your continued support of this policy will help insure its success. Plan now to attend the public hearings which will be conducted by City Council within the next few months.

SHARA will continue to spearhead the campaign but its measure of success will to a large extent depend upon your active participation.

United we stand—divided we fall.



News Staff Instigates Mosquito Investigation

Many residents of the Society Hill Section are gravely concerned about the existing mosquito problem which, in some areas, has become alarming.

Through members of the Society Hill News staff, an interview was arranged at City Hall with Dr. Nevelle E. Good, Director of Health. Dr. Good graciously explained that although there are many causes for the breeding of mosquitoes, there must be stagnant or near-stagnant water in the area in order for them to breed.

Dr. Good has assigned Mr. Stephen Nowleski, District Sanitarian, to conduct an investigation in the area in order to determine the causes which are creating the present onslaught of mosquitoes. This investigation is now underway.

If residents know of any existing stagnant pools of water which might be part of this cause, please contact Mr. Nowleski at the Health Department's Broad and Lombard Streets office. The phone number is KI 6-0955.

J.M.



Share your views...air your complaints...join SHARA! It's inexpensive and you need only be a resident. Mrs. Sophie Gaev, 279 So. 5th St. will be delighted to send you an application.

SHARA Officers Elected

The slate of officers proposed by SHARA's Nominating Committee, headed by Philip Valvardi, was accepted and voted into office immediately: Benjamin Schoenfeld, President; Arnold Nicholson, 1st Vice President; Mrs. Charles Lewis, 2nd Vice President; Rev. Joseph Cawley, S.J., 3rd Vice President; Robert V. Levins, Sr., Treasurer; Mrs. Daisy Primo, Recording Secretary; Mrs. Robert Moore, Corresponding Secretary.

Members-at-large elected by the membership included: Arnold Blumberg, Dewey Lee Curtis, L. E. Martin, Oscar Stern, Philip A. Valvardi, Alfred Spause, Dr. Meyer Gansky, Helen Buerklin, Charles Peterson, Thomas Congdon.

* * *

Family Service Award Presented

While the votes were being counted at SHARA's Annual Meeting on Tuesday, May 10, retiring President Paul Silverstein presented SHARA's Family Service Award. This citation, saluting the family who, during the past year, made significant contributions to the community, is accompanied by a walnut plaque, suitably inscribed. President Silverstein handed both to Anthony F. (Frank) Gogolski, of 242 Delancey Street, as representative of the whole family honored by the Award.



HISTORICAL LANDMARKS IN JEOPARDY

According to present Unit 2 plans, two of Philadelphia's greatest colonial houses still standing on Second Street are in danger of partial demolition. They are still unnamed in any history book and, occupied until now by a burlap bag company, have been generally overlooked. Recent researches, however, have established their identity and the names of many important 18th century personages are closely associated with them. Much more could be learned with a little effort.

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William Surasky, Editor, Esther Abercauph, Dorothy Evans, Joseph McIlvaine, Maureen Murdoch, Daisy Primo, Pat Reid, Ed Scherneck, John Sennott, Joanne Surasky, Ida Weintraub.

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EDITORIAL

There is concern among many residents of the Society Hill section that if small businesses are allowed to remain in the area, there will be an overwhelming amount of commercial enterprise.

This is not true!

Originally, the businessmen were instructed by the Redevelopment Authority to meet certain requirements in order to remain. Among these were to remodel according to specifications of the Authority and to relinquish the right to sell to another business entrepreneur.

At the present time, in the entire area of Unit 2, there are only seven businessmen who are willing to meet these requirements. This would hardly over-commercialize the area.

Upon speaking with the seven men who are interested in remaining, it was found that each was extremely civic-minded and enthusiastic about the redevelopment. In no case was there an opposition attitude.

For example, Mr. Harry Altman, proprietor of a laundry at 4th and Spruce Sts., has had Hans Egli, architect, draw extensive plans for renovation of his property. Mr. Altman has been in business and has maintained a residence in the area for the past thirty-five years.

If the purpose of the entire redevelopment idea is to preserve the area around Independence Hall, the Cradle of Liberty, should not reconsideration be given to those who for decades have been loyal and proud citizens of the neighborhood?

Joseph McIlvaine



Possible retail store rehabilitation drawn for Mr. Altman

HISTORICAL LANDMARKS CONT.

The *Abercrombie House* at 268-270 South Second Street is possibly the tallest colonial house standing in the East—a full four and a half stories high. According to fire insurance surveys it originally had a balustrade on the roof (like Independence Hall) giving a fine view over the Delaware River. The "mutule" cornice (really a stone-cutters detail) is very unusual. It is found at 338 South Fourth Street and on the Corbit House at Odessa, Delaware.

The house was built by Captain James Abercrombie, a Scottish merchant in 1759. He didn't live long to enjoy his mansion for the following year he went down with his ship and all hands in the Baltic Sea. His widow later married Charles Stedman who built the Powel House (244 S. 3rd Street) and his son James, Junior, became Assistant Rector of Christ Church and St. Peter's. Other prominent owners were Blair McClenachan, General Walter Stewart, William T. Smith and Henry Pratt. Two well known merchants who occupied the house were John Ross (who afterwards built the big house still standing at Second and Pine) and William Cramond (who built "Sedgely," formerly in Fairmount Park).

Samuel Neave's House and Store

As was customary in the early days, Samuel Neave (an English merchant who arrived in Philadelphia about 1735) lived upstairs over his business. The building (272-274 South Second) was built about the same time as James Abercrombie's and shares a party wall with it. The house was remarkable for having a garden on its south side where Tuckers Tavern stood until recently demolished. If you look on the party wall behind the remains of the tavern you will see the bricked-in windows with their marble keystones and fine rubbed-brick arches. The house had a back building fifty feet long containing the kitchen and giving access to the garden. A large part of it is still there, buried under later additions. The grounds also contained a greenhouse, coach house and stable.

Neave took an active part in Philadelphia life and was a generous donor to various colonial institutions. He died a bachelor just before the Revolutionary War and the property was sold at the London Coffee House by his executors. Thomas C. Wharton of Walnut Grove was a later owner and perhaps its best known occupant was Owen Jones, Jr., a Quaker merchant who was exiled to Virginia during the Revolution.

The Landmarks Society began its campaign to save these two houses last year and considerable interest has been expressed by historical groups who would develop them as public museums and organizational headquarters. Unfortunately, according to preliminary plans, a big ramp to a garage is to run through the back yards of the houses thus removing what remains of the backbuildings so they can never be restored. We believe that the ramp is a long ways from being built and may even be built elsewhere.

Your Board has recommended that the backbuildings be left out of the current demolition contract (of the Lashner Company) to allow further study of the matter. Every effort should be made to preserve these old houses.

Mr. Charles E. Peterson

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INTRODUCTIONS

by John Sennott

FAMILY TREE ON PINE STREET

The Siegals of 519 Pine Street are a happy family of five who would rather stay home than go on a vacation, mainly because their lovely home is completely air-conditioned and contains the books, pictures and musical instruments which make up a large part of their family life activities.

As you pass under the tree in front of the house and through the charming colonial doorway you enter Dr. Edward's Pennsylvania Dutch office and are immediately attracted to Bucks County painter Dave Ellinger's striking oil called, "At the Auction."

This book-lined office over which Mrs. Martha Siegal presides, control center in the doctor's myriad medical activities, which include such services as Chief of Radiology for the Wolfie Hospital, the Valley Forge Heart Hospital, and Director of the Isotope Department of Episcopal Hospital.

After attending local schools, South Philadelphia High School, University of Pennsylvania, he graduated from Temple University Medical School in 1931. Interning at Einstein Medical Center, he then did graduate work in X-ray at Jefferson Hospital and with the U. S. Army Medical Corps and was certified by the American Board of Radiology in 1945. He is a Fellow of the American College of Cardiology and Colonel U.S.A.R. Army Medical Corps.

On the second floor, in a friendly 18th Century living room furnished with cherry cupboards, Chippendale chairs and colorful hooked rugs, the Siegals gather to discuss such family plans as increasing the time for the Doctor's weekly swim at the Broadwood, or the coming summer camping trek of the three children to Camp Tel-Hai, at which Izetta, their twelve-year-old daughter, won the Best Camper award in 1959.

Currently being discussed are plans for Elkin's Bar-Mitzvah at Temple Beth Zion where the family worships. On the lighter vein is the Saturday night Cha-Cha lessons in the recreation room with friends.

Ira, aged seven, is practicing the piano as one leaves this home where three generations of Siegals have enjoyed the rich and happy life of the past and present Society Hill.

ST. PETER'S HOUSE

At Christmas 1958 a new family moved into one of Society Hill's oldest houses, at 313 Pine Street, known to many as St. Peter's House, the rectory of St. Peter's Episcopal Church. They are the Rev. Joseph Koci, Jr., his wife Betty, and two sons, Eric and Mark, aged six and a half and four years respectively.

As Rector of Historic old St. Peter's, Third and Pine, Mr. Koci is just across the street from his parish office.

Before coming to the neighborhood, the Kocis lived for seven years in Middletown, Delaware, where Rev. Koci ministered to the people of St. Anne's Parish and plied his life-long hobby of carpentry and cabinet-making in the restoration of this famous country church.

Class of '43, Dartmouth College, Mr. Koci worked his way through college and the Episcopal Theological School plying his carpentry trade. From 1942 through '46, he served as a Lieutenant in the U.S. Navy on a destroyer, after which he taught at Westover School, in Waterbury, Connecticut, while serving as curate at St. Margaret's Church.

While at Episcopal Theological School, he met Betty Suttner, R.N., who at the time was working in the Pediatrics Department of Boston's famous Peter Dent Brigham Hospital. Mrs. Koci is currently president of the Home and School Association at McCall Elementary School, which their son Eric attends.

In asking Rev. Koci about plans for St. Peter's, this tall, salt-and-pepper haired neighbor quoted First Corinthians, "I have planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the increase."

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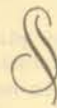
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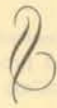
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DEDICATION PLANNED FOR DELANCEY ST PARK



According to David Schmidt, architect for the Philadelphia Recreation Department, the first part of the Delancey Street Park will be completed in the second week of June. A drinking fountain will be installed and the grill work around the trees should be finished. The play area will be filled with sand or some other suitable material, so that it may be used by small children until funds are available to buy playground equipment. SHARA and the Recreation Committee are working on plans to raise a part of this money needed to purchase the equipment.

A dedication ceremony will be held on the opening day of Delancey Street Park, to be jointly sponsored by the City Recreation Department and SHARA.



Ballet in Society Hill

We've all been witness to the local ballet of the Society Hill sidewalks. Anyone accustomed to walking in the neighborhood has been learning to develop a fine grace and sense of timing in an effort to avoid the increasing doggie nuisance. Unfortunately a sharp eye and a nimble step are not enough protection against the multiplying odds—especially at dusk and at night.

While we don't advocate the extreme pictured in the cartoon, we do appeal to dog owners to please, please curb your dogs. More and more fine dogs are being brought into the area, and the individual casual nuisances are adding up to a total problem. Ed.

Drawing by Robert Cargill



* French: convenient city quarters.



SUMMER PLAYGROUND TO OPEN

Needed: Volunteers to help in the summer playground program sponsored by the Board of Education at McCall School. Anyone willing to spend an hour or two a week reading to children - teaching crafts or any other special activity - is urged to call Mrs. Koci at Walnut 5-0572. This program was nearly discontinued this summer because of small attendance last year. However, questionnaires sent to parents brought a return of 268 answers in favor of keeping the McCall Playground open. To make this program a success, neighborhood volunteers should be recruited as soon as possible.

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"SOCIETY HILL WEEK" THIS FALL

Kurt Winter, Chairman of the Recreation Committee, has announced a brief schedule of future plans: Opening of the first part of Delancey Street Park; Organization of a Cub Scout Pack (Sponsoring groups are needed, i.e., churches, synagogues, clubs or Legion Posts); Halloween and Christmas parties for the children of SHARA; and *Society Hill Week*, to be established in the fall.

Interested SHARA members are invited to contact Mr. Winter at MA 7-5180 after 7 P.M. or MA 7-0850 before.

Starting with the next issue this paper will accept personal advertising (items for sale, kittens for distribution, etc.) at \$2 for 3 lines. We also invite correspondence of any sort; news, advertising, comments, inquiries. Address all mail to SHARA News, 325 Pine St. and be sure to include your telephone number.

WASHINGTON SQUARE WEST AND SOCIETY HILL JOIN IN SCHOOL STUDY

McCall Grammar School at 6th and Delancey was the principle subject of discussion at a meeting of The Washington Square West Civic Association and Society Hill residents, May 2, presided over by Mrs. Pauline Fuiman, President of the Washington Square group.

Mrs. Betty Koci, President of McCall's Home and School Association, gave a comprehensive analysis of the McCall School—which serves children living between Market and South Streets, and the river to 11th Street. Mrs. Koci explained that McCall has approximately 600 students, including five special classes for non-English speaking children. The school—sometimes referred to as a "little United Nations"—has signs welcoming visitors in five languages.

"While the needs of McCall are recognized," Mrs. Koci said, "presently it is educationally on a par with other city schools, and has a reputation of having fine teachers, with classes averaging 30 students, including separate classes for slow learners. In fact, Mr. Tobias the principal, has many requests each term from teachers who are anxious to join the McCall staff. As for the building itself, it has been checked and passed by the fire department and it has an entirely new heating system. However, there is a desperate need for an ample auditorium with roof-top playground for the kindergarten, and more playground space for the older children. A new building for classes would be preferable but the old one is adequate at this time."

In answer to a question regarding discipline, Mrs. Koci replied that there is no discipline problem in the school. Mrs. Koci called on Police Community Relations Officer Thomas Centanni, who verified her remarks about the school. He said, "It has always been spotless, and only one McCall School boy has been in trouble in the past four years." Officer Centanni added that the 19th district has the lowest juvenile crime rate in the city.

Concluding the discussion, Mrs. Fuiman disclosed plans for a house-to-house survey in the West Washington Square Area and Society Hill, to determine the exact needs for public school facilities. This survey will be presented to the Board of Education, with a citizens' recommendation, sometime in the fall.

J.S.



The Society Hill House Tour, featuring the Richardson Dilworth home, will be a part of the 13th Annual Pennsylvania Hospital Day, June 8 at Washington Square. Tickets are \$5.00 for tour and luncheon, and can be obtained from Maureen Murdoch-WA 5-0100, Mrs. Arnold Nicholson-WA 2-5971, or Mrs. Frank Seymour-MA 7-7559.


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