



THE LAUREL LIGHT

October 2005 Volume IX, Number 1

News from the Laurel Historical Society and The Laurel Museum

www.laurelhistory.org

Upcoming Calendar & Meeting Notice:

Oct. 27th Thursday, Board of Directors

Meeting 7:30 at Pool Meeting Room

Nov. 12th Saturday, Program:

“If This Place Could Talk:

Researching the History of an Old House”

10:00 A.M. at the Pool meeting Room

Dec. 10th Saturday, Holiday House Tour

3:00 to 7:00

Dec. 21st Last day of current exhibit “Wish You Were Here”

Jan. 26th Thursday, Board of Directors

Meeting 7:30 at Pool Meeting Room

Feb. 5th Exhibit Opening: “Stories from the Attic”

April 1st Annual Gala

Visit our web site for updated information about exhibits, programs and new special events. If you missed the Horace Capron at 200 Exhibit you can see it now at:

www.laurelhistory.org

Letter from the President:

It was great to see so many of you touring the Postcard exhibit, at the Gala, the festivals, special events, Thursday programs, and family pot luck picnic. 2006 will be a special year for the Society as we celebrate the 10th anniversary of the museum. I look forward to seeing you and other Society members as well as guests at our 2005-2006 programs and events. Membership renewals will be sent soon.

See President page 2

The Laurel Historical Society is Proud
To Have

The Citizens National Bank

As a Community Business and Professional
Partner.

SAT. DEC. 10 3:00-7:00PM

Holiday House Tour

Visit lovely Homes Dressed for the Holidays and celebrate Laurel at this popular event. Tickets on sale in November. For

more information visit

www.laurelhistory.org.

or call

301 561 4252

Letter from the Museum Director:

The past year has been an eventful one for the Laurel Museum. In February 2005 we opened our exhibit, “*Wish You Were Here: Postcards of Laurel.*” Approximately 140 postcards of Laurel, most lent to the Museum by community members, document the 20th century history of Laurel. Schools, churches, military and civic buildings, hotels, restaurants, the racetrack, the cotton mill, Main Street landmarks, the Laurel Sanitarium and much more are depicted in the display of photographs. The exhibit runs until December 21, 2005. To accompany the current exhibit, one of our basement rooms

See Director page 3

SAT. NOV. 12 10:00 AM

IF THIS PLACE COULD TALK:

Researching the history of an old house

Discover your home’s past with house history expert Michael Dixon. Free. For more information visit www.laurelhistory.org.

Michael Dixon’s appearance is arranged through the Maryland Humanities Council Speakers Bureau

See the Enclosed Flier

Activities: I appreciate your suggestions for activities in lieu of some of our monthly Society programs. As a result, we planned more *Main Street Walking Tours* to cover four-block segments at a time, *In Your Back Yard Tours* of historic sites nearby and a Saturday morning workshop on researching your house. Joe Robison, our excellent historian and tour guide will conduct the final leg of the Main Street tours, from 4th Street to the Train Station in the spring.

Kudos to the Map & Marker Committee. That is working on site markers and a walking tour map.

Volunteers Needed: As we celebrate the 10th anniversary next year, volunteers are needed for special events as well as on going functions. Please email me at pollarr@erols.com or call me at 301-776-5229 if you can volunteer a few hours for any of these committees or services:

10th Anniversary Committee: Plan events to celebrate this milestone.

Exhibit Committee: Develop and mount the 2006 exhibit, "Stories from the Attic" and plan a permanent exhibit to tell the history of Laurel.

Grants Committee: Identify and prepare grant applications for funding

Outreach Committee: Publicize museum, programs and special events. Prepare press releases & posters. Help is especially needed to post notices in libraries, businesses and community buildings.

Gala Committee: Volunteers needed for a variety of subcommittees to plan and hold the annual gala.

Landscape Committee: Chris Erdle can use more helpers to maintain the museum grounds.

Docents: Volunteers only need to commit 4 hours per month and choose whether to work in the Museum Shop or as guides. Inge Gill and Helen Green are both moving, so the shop

especially needs volunteers to replace them.

Festivals: Help set up and staff a Museum booth at community events, such as Main Street Festival and Riverfest.

Special Skills: Join our roster of individuals with expertise to prepare AV material, to conduct research via computer or in the museum library, or to paint walls and construct exhibit displays.

Refreshment Chairperson and Assistants: Coordinate or volunteer to donate goodies or serve refreshments at special events.

Volunteers enjoy the camaraderie of working with a great group of people, the joy of accomplishment, and the appreciation of the community served by the Society.

Shari Pollard

President, Laurel Historical Society

Laurel Walking Tour Markers and Map in the Works:

The Mayor, Craig A. Moe and the LHS have joined to develop a "Walking Tour of the City of Laurel". A Committee made up of Betty Compton, Chairman, Joe Robison, Jeanne Anastasi, Sidney Moore and Lou Ann Crook, Executive Assistant to the Mayor, have compiled a list of buildings or sites along or near Main Street to receive the initial bronze markers. Letters were sent to property owners requesting permission. In the positive responses many offered to pay for their markers which will feature the City Seal and the date of the building keyed to the map.

The City has provided \$5,000 for the markers. The map, an update of one published by the Society in 1976 will be developed by the committee. Councilman Tom Dernoga helped obtain a grant through Prince George County to prepare and print the map. The application process for additional markers can be initiated by contacting one of the committee members or Museum Director Elsie Klumpner at 301 725 7975

has been made into a Kids Activity Room where visitors can decorate and address their own postcards to send to friends or relatives. This room will continue to house children's activities related to the Museum's future exhibits.

2006 is the Tenth Anniversary Year of the Laurel Museum and our next exhibit will reflect that theme. The exhibit, "Stories from the Attic: 10 Years of Collecting" will put on display a myriad of items that have been donated to the Laurel Museum over the past ten years. The stories told in the exhibit will come directly from the items themselves and history attached to them by their Laurel owners.

Our collection has grown in the past year with donations ranging from a Civil War soldier's letter to a friend back home to a variety of photographs and memorabilia from the Laurel Race Course. A New Acquisitions case in the Museum basement will continue to display new items before they are placed in storage. We continue to encourage any of you who are sorting out your attic, garage or basement to keep the Museum in mind before you discard any items related to Laurel.

During the next year we will be developing a new exhibit that will be on permanent display at the Museum. This exhibit, "*Laurel: Origins and Influences*" will chronicle the history of Laurel from its earliest times to the present using objects, photographs and documents from our collection. The exhibit will serve as an introduction to Laurel's history for all future visitors. I hope to see you soon at the Laurel Museum!

Elsie Heyrman Klumpner
Director, The Laurel Museum

FAREWELL TO INGE GILL

Regretfully, this fall, we are saying good-bye to Inge Gill, our long-standing volunteer Museum Shop manager. The Gill family is moving to Pennsylvania in October. In 1998, Inge began her relationship with the Laurel Museum when she began assisting Louise Eldridge in the Museum Shop. She left briefly when the Gills returned to Germany for three years, but when she returned to Laurel we were fortunate to have her rejoin our group. Over the years, she has taken on more responsibilities than anyone ever expected. She not only manages and cleans the shop, trains shop volunteers, handles the shop finances, maintains the shop storage areas, attends local fairs and festivals (lugging half of the shop merchandise with her) publicizes the Museum and sells shop goods – she also tries to anticipate every need of the Museum that she thinks she can fill. When the Museum galleries needed painting before the installation of the current exhibit, Inge and Danny showed up with drop cloths and painting supplies and worked late into the evening. When the exhibit needed just a little decoration to make it complete, Inge went home and sewed elegant scarves for each of the four mantels. The Laurel Museum benefited from every bargain Inge found in Laurel on tables, display equipment, and shop supplies. Although we tried, we couldn't persuade her to commute to the museum from Pennsylvania, so our only choice is find a few people to replace her. We will miss her help at the Museum Shop but more importantly we will miss her shy smile, her good humor and the slamming of the front door followed by her friendly greeting, "Anybody Home?"

The Laurel Light

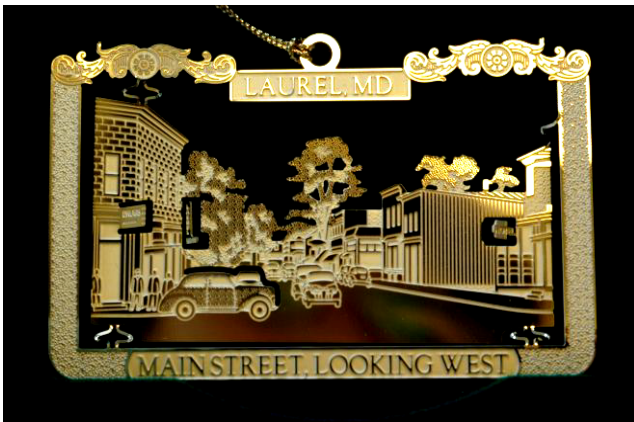
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2005 Holiday Ornament Celebrates our Exhibit “Wish You Were Here: Postcards of Laurel.”

The Laurel Historical Society’s 2005 Holiday ornament, celebrating the Laurel Museum’s 2005 exhibit *“Wish You Were Here: Postcards of Laurel,”* is now on sale in the Laurel Museum Shop. The ornament design is based on one of the postcards on display in the exhibit. The subject is Laurel’s Main Street, looking west from its intersection with U.S. Rt. 1.

Main Street connected Route 1, then the Baltimore Washington Turnpike and the site of the old Laurel Cotton Mill at Ninth Street.. Cloth from the mill was transported along Main Street to the road or the train station for distribution. This card was loaned by local residents, Frank and Sarah Jean Binder, for inclusion in the exhibit.

Other ornaments in the series feature: the Laurel Volunteer Fire Department, the Laurel Cotton Mill, the original Laurel High School, the Laurel Museum, Citizens National Bank, the B & O Railroad Station, and the Avondale Mill. Ornaments cost \$12.00 each. All ornaments are now on sale in the Laurel Museum Shop which is open Wednesday and Friday from 10AM until 2PM, Sundays from 1 – 4 PM, or by appointment. Please call 301-725-7975.

Local Officials Entertained at The Laurel Museum:

On Thursday evening, September 29, 2005, the Laurel Historical Society welcomed a group of local officials and their representatives to an Autumn celebration at the Laurel Museum at 817 Main Street. Among the attendees were: County Councilman Thomas Dernoga, Mayor Craig Moe, State Delegate Brian Moe, State Senator John Giannetti, City Council members Michael Leszcz, Gail Snyder and Jan Robison and representatives from the offices of Congressman Benjamin Cardin Senator Paul Sarbanes’ and the Maryland Comptroller’s office. Also present were several city officials, members of the Laurel Historical Society Board and Museum volunteer staff.

The event gave the attendees an opportunity to view the Laurel Museum’s current exhibit, *“Wish You Were Here: Postcards of Laurel”*, get to know the Museum Director and volunteer museum staff and learn more about the Museum’s future plans. The newest in the series of Laurel Historical Society’s Holiday Ornaments was unveiled at the gathering.

The reception was coordinated by a volunteer committee including: Liz Quill, Carol Montesi, Jim and Bobbi McCeney and Shari Pollard. Volunteers Frieda Weise and Jerry Chappell assisted during the reception.



Musicians from the Laurel School of Music Play at the Reception

HAR-LEW HALL REDISCOVERY

If you ever have doubts that the Laurel Museum needs the input of every Laurel community member past and present to be successful at preserving our history – read this.

While mounting the current postcard exhibit, we came across a few postcards that had no identification attached to them and that rang no bells for any Laurel Historical Society member who we consulted. We advertised in the Laurel Leader last year for any information available about these cards. One card in particular remained a mystery until well after the opening of the exhibit. The card depicted a large house, identified on the card as “Har-Lew Hall”, surrounded by trees with a lone woman standing in front. With the help of two recent visitors, Edwin and Franklin Hall, brothers who were born and raised on the property, the history of this card is no longer a mystery. The Hall brothers spent some time at the museum sharing their memories of Har-Lew Hall and the family who lived there. A telephone conversation with their brother, Thomas Hall, provided more details. The property was owned by Marie Ames, James Lewis (Bishop) and St. John Hartsock. Their father, Samuel Hartsock of Poughkeepsie, New York bought the property and used it as a summer residence. After the stock market crash of 1929, the Hartsock family left New York and resided at Har-Lew Hall permanently. The name Har-Lew was a combination of the family names Hartsock and Lewis. The property sat at the corner of Whiskey Bottom Road and Rt. 1. All three Hartsocks lived in the house until their deaths. Marie left the property to Mr. Reeley after her death in 1957. Since that time, the 704-acre property, has been bought and split into sections. The last section was sold for development when the Pfister’s Mobile Home Park closed in the summer of 2004.

Employed by the Hartsock family, William and Bertha Hall lived in a tenant house on the property and raised nine children there. The family lived in the house until Miss

Marie Hartsock’s death in 1957. The Hall children enjoyed a warm relationship with the Hartsocks. The Hall family history is another interesting chapter of Laurel’s past that we will explore in the future.

TRAIN STATION HISTORICAL MARKER REPAIRED AND BACK IN PLACE



The National Register historic marker that tells the story of the B&O Train Station on Main Street was re-installed on October 12th by City of Laurel Department of Public Works Staff. The marker, originally erected in 1983, was hit by a truck this spring and required extensive repair. Jim McCeney located welder Kenny Alcorn who did a remarkable repair job.

**Celebrating Our Town:
The Laurel Museum at 10
April 1, 2006**

**The Celebration! Committee could
use your help.**

It takes months of work to get to the big event and many fingers make light work. If you'd like to volunteer a little or a lot in the areas of: logistics, publicity & publications, sponsors & advertisers or auction please phone the gala hotline 301-561-4252 or email Margie McCeney :

mmcceney@yahoo.com

Don't worry if you don't know where you want to help out. We'll find a place for you!

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