



The Laurel Light

NOVEMBER 2011
Volume XIV, Number IV

The Laurel Light
Published Quarterly by:
The Laurel Historical Society, Inc.
817 Main St. Laurel, MD 20707-3429

News and History from the Laurel Historical Society

The mission of the Laurel Historical Society, Incorporated is to encourage the understanding and preservation of the history and cultural heritage of Laurel.

A MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD

It was just a little more than a year ago that the Development Committee introduced the idea of “Planned Giving” to the Board. We did not know much about implementing the program, but we knew one important thing; it would take some time to get it off the ground (and it has). We also knew that it would be even longer before the Society would reap the benefits; we were correct in that too. I am happy to report that one couple has signed up for the program, and we now know why it is slow going. It is simply one word – procrastination! We are all guilty of it. We procrastinate on a regular basis. If income tax returns were not due on April 15th or later with extensions, we would never get around to completing that silly form. Were it not for deadlines, like getting this piece to our Editor by a certain date, we would let lots of things slide. The problem with Planned Giving is that we really don’t have a deadline (we do have one but we don’t know when it is so procrastinating is very easy). With no known deadline, you may miss providing for the Society or one of your other favorite charities as generously as you intended.

Now that I have your attention, if you are going to see your lawyer to have any documents, such as your Will or Power of Attorney updated, why not bite the bullet and do some Planned Giving? It truly is easy and we can help you lead the way. The Laurel couple who recently went through the process reported that it was painless. If you have a Will or a Revocable Trust, it is simply a matter of adding a sentence or two to your document. If you haven’t explored this topic yet, there is a Revocable Trust in addition to a Will. There are two advantages to having a Revocable Trust. Primarily it makes the job of administering your estate much easier and, secondly, what you decide to do with your estate is a private matter rather than on the public record.

So there you go. Please get started. You will have something else to brag about to your procrastinating friends. Did I forget to say that it would be a wonderful thing to do for the Society and Laurel’s future residents? If you need any help please contact Lindsey Baker at (301)725-7975.

James B. McCeney
Chairman of the Board

BOARD MEETING SCHEDULE

LHS Board meetings are held the 4th Thursday of each January, April, July, and October. The next meeting is Jan 26, 2012. Members are most welcome to attend Board meetings. They are held in the Pool Meeting Room at 7:30 PM.

A MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

When I first arrived at the LHS in 2008, the exhibit on advertising gave me an idea. What do people love and what is advertised relentlessly? Food of course! The Society's focus on supporting local businesses gave me the incentive to pursue the idea for the "Taste of Laurel" - free food to bring people into the Museum and build relationships between local businesses and our community. Executing the event was made possible through the generous support of Main Street Pharmacy.

Now, after four years of hosting the Taste of Laurel we have a successful, well established program. This year approximately 250 people attended and 12 businesses shared their "taste". Over 20 volunteers from the LHS helped guide people through the Museum and the Pool Room as they met with business owners and learned all about food choices in Laurel. The diversity of businesses and their owners brought new tastes to people who attended. Many people were happily surprised to try spicy lentils, warm samosas, perfectly cooked eggplant, delicious queso, and tasty quesadillas. Others found comfort in favorites such as sweet potato pie, chocolate covered grapes, chicken wings, donuts, lemon cake, cannoli, and delicious bar-b-que. The event had all of this and more for a well rounded taste that was uniquely Laurel.

This year, we scrapped the ticket idea and incorporated a booklet that highlighted what the LHS does, encouraged people to get involved in their community, and had information on all of the participating businesses and our sponsor. My hope is that people will save the booklet as sort of a restaurant guide for Laurel. Participants will also have information on the LHS and I think that's a great thing! As always, the Taste of Laurel would not be possible without the hard work of our volunteers, the generosity of our sponsor, and the participation of the local businesses. I'd like to say "thank you" to each of you who participated and attended.

Lindsey Baker
Executive Director

Children's Corner

Many fun and interesting Children's programs are held on the grounds of the Laurel Museum. Our next event will be held on Wednesday, December 27th from 1:30 - 2:45 PM. The Prince George's African American Museum and Cultural Center will be presenting a program exploring African American culture and heritage through story-telling, music, movement, and arts and crafts. The cost is \$7 per child or \$5 for each additional child. This is a great way to spend some quality time with your children or grandchildren during the holiday break!

TASTE OF LAUREL A HIT!!

We would like to thank all who attended our Fourth Annual Taste of Laurel. There was great food, provided by many of our local restaurants. The event was generously sponsored by Main Street Pharmacy and attended by over 250 people!

We would especially like to thank the following participants:

The Bar B Que House
Copy Cat Cakes
FruitFlowers (one word!)
Keith's Treats and Eats
Laurel Tavern Donuts
Nuzbacks
Pasta Nostra
Salute
Sapphire
Soretti's Ethiopian Cuisine
Tampico Grill
Toucan Taco

A huge thank you to our sponsor for this event, Main Street Pharmacy. Please patronize our local restaurants and Main Street Pharmacy!

Laurel Historical Society Book Club

Do you enjoy chatting about challenging topics? Would you enjoy a glass of wine with friends to break up your week? If so, the Laurel Historical Society Book Club may be for you. We read a book a month and then come together for a lively discussion. We're a forgiving group; it's more about the discussion on an interesting topic than making sure everyone did their reading. If you're interested in books, like to have fun, and enjoy getting together with others to discuss books, than this group is for you! The LHS Book Club meets monthly to explore history and culture related topics one book at a time. We meet the third Wednesday of every Month at 7 PM at a local restaurant. Join us!

LHS Genealogy Group

The Laurel Historical Society Genealogy Group assists LHS members in conducting Genealogy research. Whether you are just thinking about beginning your journey into genealogy or you are an experienced genealogist, please join us and learn how we can help each other. For more information, contact Mike Boivin at mikeB98159@aol.com.

MUSEUM NEWS

“AND THEY’RE OFF! 100 YEARS OF LAUREL PARK“ CONTINUES UNTIL DECEMBER 18TH!



Bubbles Pick wins The Las Day Purse May 1, 1959 at Laurel Race Course. Owner: Ewart Johnson; trainer: B. Guy Bellwell.

If you haven't had a chance to see the exhibit, or if you need a second look, please visit the Museum on Wednesdays and Fridays from 10 AM – 2 PM or Sundays from 1 – 4 PM.

“TRUE LIFE: I’M A LAUREL MILL WORKER” OPENS FEBRUARY 2012

Our Exhibits Committee is working diligently, putting the finishing touches on the Museum's next exhibit opening in February. It will center on the lives of a mill worker's family that could have lived in the museum building in 1870. We are looking for some things to furnish the house that would be appropriate for the 1870's time period. If you have any of the following items, please contact Marlene.Frazier@verizon.net or call the museum: bed, table, rocking chair, old fireplace tools, fireplace grate, wooden bucket, ceramic chamber pot, or an old looking roll-top desk or one with cubby holes for a paymaster. If you are not sure if

the style would be right, please contact us and we can take a look. Thank you!

Museum Shop News

Submitted by Frieda Weise, Shop Manager

Holiday Open House

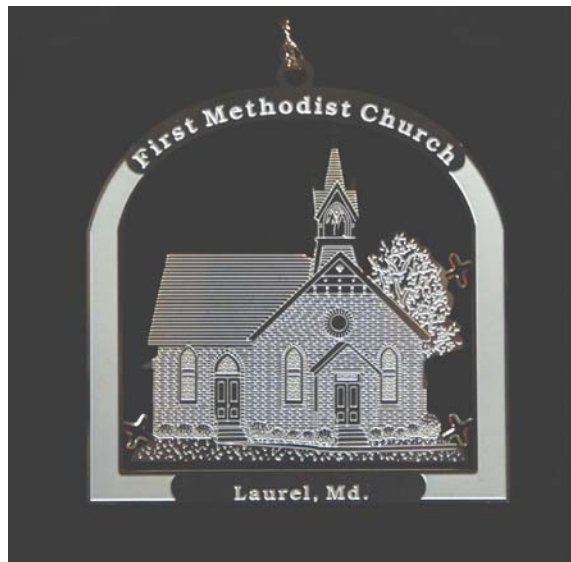
Friday, 12/2 from 10 AM – 2 PM
Saturday, 12/3 from 10 AM – 2 PM
Sunday, 12/4 from 1 PM – 4 PM

Remember those delicious cookies your Grandma used to bake for the holidays; with butter and spice and everything nice? You can have them again at the LHS Holiday Open House! Not only that but you can find the perfect gift for your family and friends, find lovely decorations to grace your home (especially the fresh pine wreaths decorated by Laurel's Snow Hill Garden Club), and buy the latest LHS annual ornament for your collection.

2011 LHS Ornament

First United Methodist Church

This year the First United Methodist Church on Main Street is represented on our annual ornament.



Methodists, who organized as a congregation in Laurel in 1840, established the first Methodist church in Laurel in 1842 and occupied two other locations before construction of the First United Methodist church of Laurel on its present site in 1884. The building was enlarged in 1909, 1950, 1962 and 2001. The church lost its original wooden steeple in 1977 due to deterioration, but a new steeple was erected in 1979. The steeple continues to serve as a beacon on Main Street.

Of course our entire collection of ornaments from past years, including Laurel's Christmas Tree, will also be available. The new ornament is for sale in the Museum Shop and via the online shop to ship to your out of town friends and relatives. The cost is \$16.00.

Holiday Wreaths

Laurel's Snow Hill Garden Club is again providing beautifully decorated fresh pine wreaths, ready to hang on your door. You may order a wreath in advance at a discount price of \$30 or purchase one when you visit the Open House for \$35. All proceeds benefit the Laurel Historical Society.

Cookies, cookbooks, and more...

We will have Grandma's Cookies from Olden Times, baked by our talented corps of volunteers. The cookies will be tucked into festive holiday tins and will be a treat for you or for someone else to receive. Some of our recipes come from our wonderful collection of cookbooks; ***Victorian Christmas Celebration Cookbook*** and ***An Affair of the Heart: America's Romance with Louisiana Food***, which are available for purchase at the shop for only \$5.

Kids Stuff

We have a wide variety of historical toys such as pick-up sticks and musical instruments. Craft kits are also available for knitting and weaving, and Christmas books about times past are great stocking stuffers for children.

Laurel Collectibles

For family and friends near and far, there are throw blankets with Laurel scenes and buildings, t-shirts and polo shirts, key chains, tie tacks, pendants, tote bags, and books about Laurel and environs. Surprise someone special with a Laurel themed gift!

For those who want to shop from the comfort of home, you can find many of our shop items online at www.laurelhistoricalsociety.org/shop.

MEMBER NEWS

Please welcome our newest members:

A. M. Kroop & Sons, Inc.

The Law Office of Linda Brown

Kerri Allen

Carmen Camacho

We are happy to have you!

Welcome New Volunteers!

No one this time...how about you?

A Call to Volunteerism: Part II

Submitted by Monica Sturdivant

Not long ago, I asked myself if there was any truth to the theory of good things coming in threes. I also took on the challenge of applying that theory to my attempts at trying to encourage other people to volunteer at the museum. The plan was to tell three people three things about the Museum. I wrote an essay about it in the last newsletter with hopes of inspiring others to do the same. My results told me some things that I expected about other

people and a few unexpected things about myself.

As luck would have it, my first person approached me. It was during late July, about 4:15 pm on a Friday afternoon. I was at the Laurel Community Center and I was waiting for my daughter to finish packing up her things after a day at summer camp. While I waited, a woman whom I often saw picking up a child during the same days that I did, struck up a conversation about how much her granddaughter enjoyed the camp. She appeared to be a white female, possibly in her late 50's or early 60's. I noticed that she had glanced up at the signs displayed in the community center about the Laurel Museum. I asked her if she had ever been there. When she told me she had not, I casually told her my "three great things" about the Museum. She seemed very interested in visiting and mentioned that it would be good for her to volunteer.

I met a second person at the post office in early August. I had just left work and I had to mail a package. I was standing in a long line. A woman behind me started talking about how she hoped the line would move faster because she did not want to miss a certain television show that she had forgotten to record. Then, she told me that she used to see me walking all of the time when she drove on Main Street in the afternoons and wondered where I was walking. I explained to her that I was probably walking from the Laurel Museum to my daughter's school. When she said she did not know that there was a museum on Main Street, I took that as an opening to tell her about my "three great things." She seemed very interested and said that she planned to "drop by."

Later in the week, I met a third person in the Laurel library. While I was waiting for the computer reservation terminal, I noticed a woman looking at the signs about the Laurel

Museum that were displayed on the wall. I asked her if she had ever been to the museum and she said she had not, but it looked interesting. She was a white female with a "Class of 69" key chain, so I figured it was safe to assume that she was about my Mother's age; 60. Her key chain had the name of a high school on it that I had never heard of (not in this area) and she told me that she wanted to learn more about Laurel. I told her my "three great things" and she said that she definitely planned to visit the museum. I even noticed later as I was leaving that she had the Laurel Historical Society's website displayed on her computer screen!

After talking to these three people, I discovered some things that I expected. Namely that some people have no idea that the museum exists or what the Laurel Historical Society does. And that once they find out more information, they become curious about what happens here and that in itself increases the likelihood that they will visit. I am happy to report that as I was leaving one Friday in late August, I saw the third woman I met walk up to the museum. She said to me, "I finally got over here!" She thanked me for telling her about the museum before walking inside.

I also discovered something about myself: I tend to be more comfortable telling people about the museum if they are looking at our signs displayed at the library or at the Laurel Community Center. Also, I noticed that all three of the people I approached were white, female and over the age of 40. Even as a black female, I have to honestly ask myself whether or not it is possible that I subconsciously have an idea of who the typical Laurel Historical Society volunteer looks like. Why did I not ask any males (regardless of race or age)? Even if nothing like that is happening subconsciously, it makes me even more aware of the fact that when I am spreading the word about the

museum, broadening my horizons is always a good idea.

Therefore, I plan to continue to spread the word at least three more times. However, this time, I will make more of an effort to talk to a broader range of people. If you are also spreading the word about the museum, I encourage you to do the same! My hope is that our continuously growing community of volunteers will become more of a reflection of Laurel's diverse community.

Volunteer Needs

The **Laurel Museum** desperately needs volunteers for Wednesdays and Fridays, 10AM – 2 PM and Sundays, 1 PM - 4 PM to docent or work in the shop. Volunteer duties involve serving as a docent (telling visitors about the house and current exhibit) and/or handling shop sales in the Museum shop. Training is easy and available.

The **Communications Committee** needs a volunteer to help us get the word out about our programs. This volunteer will be putting information into different websites with calendar programs. This is an easy job for someone looking to work from home!

The **Exhibits Committee** needs a volunteer to help us on a very interesting special project. We need help transcribing the Laurel Mill ledger. This is an exciting at-home job for anyone looking to learn more about Laurel and help us interpret its history!

If you are interested in becoming a volunteer in these or any other capacity please contact Monica Sturdivant at 301-725-7975 or assist@laurelhistoricalsociety.org. Thank you!

Volunteer Luncheons

Please consider joining other volunteers for our monthly luncheons at local restaurants. Dates and times are emailed to volunteers. Bon appétit!

GALA NEWS

“Pirates of the Patuxent” will be held at the Laurel Racetrack on March 24, 2012. Save the date!

Now Recruiting!

We are looking for crew to help us swab the poop deck and search for treasure. If you would like to sign on, have an idea, or just receive some unwanted plunder over the holidays ye'd like to share, phone the museum or drop us a line at mmcceney@yahoo.com. Meetings are held in the evenings in Old Town Laurel.

MY MEMORIES OF LAUREL

Submitted by Joe Robison

When I was a little boy the movie theater was the main enjoyment we had. They had double features on Saturday and you could stay there for 3 or 4 hours. They had a serial on Saturday too and it ran four or five weeks and you didn't miss it. I remember my brother, Sonny, and I went during the week in 1946 and when we came out it was light and you could read a paper. Then the Savage Volunteer Fire Department came through the light (Traffic light at Main Street and Route 1). We followed the fire department down Route 1 and the fire was the Laurel Truck Body and it was really on fire. In those days there were no fire hydrants so Old Liz was pumping from the Lake. Later in life I dated my girl friend and we went on our first date to the movies. I earned the money by picking apples at Moore's Orchard. She later became my wife.

YOU grew up in Laurel or have lived here a very long time and you remember lots of stories!! Please email them to the Laurel Light Editor, Jeanie Anastasi, at jmanastasi@verizon.net. Thank you.



BECOME A PART OF LAUREL HISTORY!

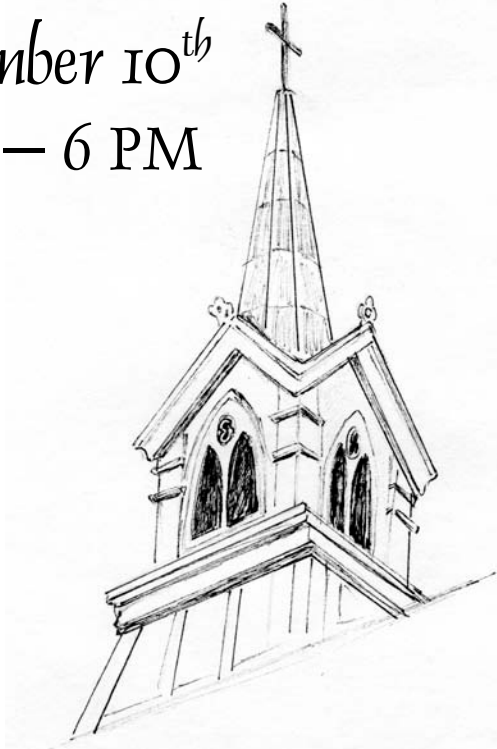
Celebrate The Laurel Museum and become a part of its history. Purchase a brick on the Laurel Museum Brick Walk and become part of the historical fabric of this 1840s building. A Laurel Museum brick is the perfect way to celebrate your children, parents, grandparents or other family members. Businesses can also show their support and ensure that their involvement and support of the Laurel community will be remembered. Contact us at info@laurelhistoricalsociety.com or by calling (301)725-7975.



ARE YOU A FACEBOOK FAN?

Friend the Laurel Historical Society and see interesting photos of artifacts in our collection and keep up with news and events!

Holiday House Tour 2011 December 10th 2PM – 6 PM



The Harrison-Beard on Montgomery Street, Photo by Frieda Weise

Please join us for an exclusive look inside some of Laurel's homes and buildings. See lovely decorations, a variety of architecture, an array of renovations, and learn a little history, too.

The Bi-Annual Holiday House Tour will be held Saturday, December 10th from 2PM – 6PM. Tickets are available at the Laurel Museum, Main Street Pharmacy, Rainbow Florist and Delectables, Hey Red! and online at the Museum's website for \$15 in advance, or at the Museum only on the day of the tour for \$18. The tour will include such treasured buildings as the "Phelps House" and the "Harrison-Beard Building". In addition, visitors will enjoy holiday goodies and music at First United Methodist Church on Main Street. Come out and take the tour!!

These are private residences, so no strollers or high heels inside, please.



"The Phelps House" on Montgomery Street, Photo by Frieda Weise



Have you ever wondered how your contributions to the Laurel Historical Society are used? You can now choose how you would like your support utilized. We are offering sponsorships of line items in our budget. Levels range in price from \$250 to \$1,000 and sponsorships are available for exhibits, landscaping, postage, supplies, software and more. Please contact us at (301)725-7975 or info@laurelhistoricalsociety.org for more information.

We would love to have your story ideas particularly for the *Did You Know, My Memories of Laurel*, and *If These Walls Could Talk* sections of the newsletter! Please email The Laurel Light editor, Jeanie Anastasi jmanastasi@verizon.net with your comments, suggestions or story ideas.



Please consider the LHS in your Planned Giving. It's easy. For more information please contact Lindsey Baker (301)725-7075.

PLEASE SUPPORT OUR CORPORATE SPONSORS!



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Laurel Historical Society Calendar

DEC 2011 – MAR 2012

For more information, visit: <http://www.laurelhistoricalsociety.org/pages/calendar.html>

December 2-4,
Holiday Open House
Laurel Museum

December 10, 2 - 6:00 PM
Bi-Annual Holiday House
Tour Meet at Laurel
Museum.

December 27, 1:30 – 2:45
Kids Day at the Laurel
Museum.
Early Keepers Program
with the Prince George's
African American Museum
and Cultural Center
Laurel Museum

February 5
New exhibit opens!
True Life: I'm a Laurel
Mill Worker
Laurel Museum

March 24
Annual LHS Gala
Pirates of the Patuxent
Laurel Race Track