



The Laurel Light

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The Laurel Light
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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 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

This past January, we came together once again for our annual Volunteer of the Year event. This year we were very pleased to honor Maggie Hubbard as our Volunteer of the Year. Maggie has been an integral part of the Public Programming at the Society since we began working to serve younger audiences. She has vast amounts of experience working with children and families, as well as the insider knowledge we really need to reach out appropriately to schools and groups serving kids. Moreover, she is a pleasure to work with and always ready to find a creative solution to any challenge. So it is with great pleasure that we honor Maggie Hubbard as our Volunteer of the Year.

We were also happy to honor our hard working five year volunteers; Mike Boivin, Jane Bulla, and Vi Turley. Mike is among many things, the fearless leader of our members only Genealogy Group. Jane and Vi are hardworking docents who volunteer regularly on the "front lines."

Our ten year volunteers this year were Shirli King and Margie McCeney. Shirli King is a trustworthy docent who puts her time in on Sundays, one of our harder

days to staff. Margie has a number of roles with the Society and the Museum including being in charge of all mailings and serving as our annual Gala Chair, two invaluable contributions.

What struck me at the volunteer appreciation event was the number of volunteers we have putting in many hours in many different jobs. Thank you all so much for your continued hard work; without you nothing would be possible!

Lindsey Baker
Executive Director

Thank you City of Laurel

The Laurel Museum has a great collection but sometimes larger items regularly on display don't fit into an exhibit. For "True Life" we needed to store some big objects, including the Harmonium (Pump Organ) that usually lives in the Laurel Gallery, which is now the re-creation of the 1870 millworker's home. The City of Laurel has let us store this and several other anachronistic items for the duration. It wasn't easy to move these items and Parks and Recreation personnel were very helpful. As an added bonus, when we moved the Harmonium, not only did we discover it was in two sections (whew!), but inside was a label with a date and place of manufacture; Feb. 6, 1923, Miller Organ Company, Lebanon, Pennsylvania.

**NEW LEVELS OF GIVING
ANNOUNCED FOR
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The Laurel Historical Society depends upon the generosity of our donors to complete its mission of "Preserving Laurel's Past for the Future." In an effort to recognize and thank our contributors, we are doing our first ever publication of names and donation levels. Without all of you, we would not be able to continue the work of the Society. **Please keep in mind that this is our first try at this, and we want to know of any errors, misspellings or omissions. Please contact Lindsey Baker by email director@laurelhistoricalsociety.org or by mail, 817 Main Street, Laurel, MD 20707.**

We would like to thank the following donors for their support in the form of contributions, sponsorships, ads, and dues:

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Children's Corner

Many fun and interesting Children's programs are held on the grounds of the Laurel Museum. Stay tuned for our next event!



MAGGIE HUBBARD AND KIDS ON THE MUSEUM LAWN

GALA NEWS

Shiver me timbers! "Pirates of the Patuxent" will be held at the Laurel Racetrack on March 24, 2012.



All hands on deck!
Attend or walk the plank!
Pirate mayhem awaits March 24th when we will fly the jolly roger at Laurel Park's Carriage Room. Spirits will be flowing, provisions will be fully stocked, and there will be plenty of booty to fill your coffers. Ensure your wooden legs are securely attached, as you'll be dancing jigs as you haul in your treasure. Plunder includes wine, food, getaways, Waterford and

more, mateys. We promise not to keel haul anyone! For more information, or if you'd like to add to our stores, contact first mate Margie at mmcceney@yahoo.com or 301-776-7267. Arrr!

SUPPORT THE ANNUAL GALA!

Have you ever attended the Gala and wondered how people and businesses make it into the booklet? Gala Sponsorships are a significant source of income for the LHS and range from \$35-\$2500. If interested, please email director@laurelhistoricalsociety.org.

DID YOU KNOW?

By Marlene Frazier via email

QUESTION: I'VE WONDERED FOR SOME TIME WHY IT'S CALLED BROOKLYN BRIDGE ROAD. IT'S THE ONLY ROAD SO NAMED OUTSIDE OF NEW YORK. ANYONE KNOW?

THE NAME BROOKLYN BRIDGE WAS A TONGUE IN CHEEK REFERENCE TO THE REAL BROOKLYN BRIDGE BECAUSE THIS ONE WAS SO TALL. IT DID NOT BURN, BUT COLLAPSED UNDER THE WEIGHT OF A LARGE STEAM POWERED FARM MACHINE THAT WAS BEING DRIVEN OVER IT. THE DRIVER, JOHN SEDLICK, WAS KILLED IN THE COLLAPSE. THE LAUREL MUSEUM WAS JUST GIVEN AN IMAGE OF THE MACHINE AND DRIVER.



PICTURE DONATED BY ELIZABETH LAMMERS

MUSEUM NEWS

Submitted by Karen Lubieniecki

“TRUE LIFE: I AM A LAUREL MILL WORKER” NOW OPEN!



Have you ever wondered what life might be like for the people who lived in the Laurel Museum's building and worked in the Laurel Cotton Mill? The new exhibit “True Life: I am a Laurel Mill Worker” helps answer those questions. The exhibit explores Laurel's history as a mill town and the community's early growth. Using a real 1870s family to tell the story, it introduces visitors to the lives and experiences of the hundreds of men, women and children who worked in the town's cotton mill between the 1830s-1929, when the mill closed for good.

Using the 10-member Waterman family selected from 1870s census records, visitors learn about the jobs different members of the family (including its seven children), might have performed at the cotton mill. Visitors will be given a card for one of the family members and follow them through the exhibit. An adult visitor might follow Mark Waterman, 49, who may have worked in the picking room at the mill, where once the cotton bales were moved into the room, the cotton was unpacked and debris such as twigs, leaves, and bugs were removed. He might have earned

\$7.43 per week or 11 cents an hour. A younger visitor might follow Sarah, his 13 year old daughter, who may have worked as a creeler in the weaving room, making sure there was a constant supply of fresh bobbins for the cotton emerging from the card frames. She would have earned \$4.00 per week or 6 cents an hour. In a paymaster's section of this room, and in an area in the Museum's downstairs, visitors learn firsthand what these wages might have purchased.

The exhibition's second area recreates an 1870s mill workers home in the Laurel Museum's building. This is the first time that the Laurel Historical Society has recreated millworker's quarters. Housing 10 people (9 family members and one other individual) the space would likely have been very crowded, with multiple children sharing beds and bedrolls. In addition to bedding and trunks to store items, the space includes 3 types of lighting (kerosene, candle, and oil), 2 types of heating (wood and coal), a chamber pot, sewing implements, fishing rod, baseball bat, clothing, and other items of everyday life that might have been present in a mill family home.

As you may know, the Laurel Museum building was originally 4 separate apartments, with individual kitchens for each family in the basement. The re-creation also includes a basement kitchen set up as the 1870s family might have had. It is there that we speculate Virginia Bradley, a 25 year-old white female listed as living with the family, might have slept.

Notes Executive Director Lindsey Baker: “This exhibit answers the question that we are often asked when people enter the Museum; “Who lived

here?" In "True Life: I am a Laurel Mill Worker," we have explored the lives of the people who may have lived in our house and we hope to give our visitors a glimpse into the lives of these people over one hundred years ago."

"True Life: I am a Laurel Mill Worker" will run through December, 2012.

A note to parents and grandparents: this exhibit is particularly "kid-friendly." Young people can "become" one of the Waterman children as they go through the exhibit, and in the basement figure out what they could buy with their "mill wages."

Museum Shop News

Submitted by Frieda Weise, Shop Manager

Spring is just around the corner! It's time to get out and about and visit the Laurel Museum Shop. Find a gift for a family member, a friend, or for yourself to celebrate the arrival of the new season.

This year the shop is featuring products that are made in the United States and, when possible, in Maryland. To that end, there are a number of beautiful items made by Alice's Cottage in Hagerstown, MD. These include wine gift totes (these were very popular during the holidays), small gift totes (about 5 by 6 inches), and flour sack towels. The latter are really wonderful for drying dishes or just for display as they are beautifully designed with floral, herbal, or wildlife motifs. For those who missed the very popular yarn necklaces, made by Debra Cross in Alburtis, PA, there is a new array of them in colors sure to complement your Spring wardrobe. Additionally, Laurel-themed bookmarks and other items are in the works.

To coordinate with the new exhibit, "True Life: I am a Laurel Mill Worker," there are many children's folk toys, as well as books. Toys include; Cup and Ball, Jacks, Pick-up Sticks, Wooden Tops, and musical instruments, such as the Kazoo and Penny Whistle.

Counting on Grace, an American Library Association award winning book relates the life and struggles of 12-year-old Grace, a girl who works in a mill. Forgotten Household Crafts describes and pictures many of the household items in use in the 19th Century, some of which can be viewed in the Museum exhibit.

These and many more items are sure to catch your fancy when you visit the LHS Museum Shop! And as always we have Laurel collectibles for your family and friends near and far, including throws with Laurel scenes and buildings, t-shirts and polo shirts, key chains, tie tacks, pendants, tote bags, and books about Laurel and environs.

The shop is open during Museum hours on Wednesday, Friday and Sunday. 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.

BOARD MEETING SCHEDULE

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

Volunteer of the Year!



Maggie Hubbard and Executive Director Lindsey Baker

Congratulations are in order for Mrs. Maggie Hubbard, our Volunteer of the Year for 2011! Maggie comes from a long line of committed Laurelites as her father, Leo Wilson served as Mayor and her mother Jean Wilson has been involved in the City and LHS for decades. Maggie is the Vice Principal at St. Mary of the Mills School and spends much of her free time involved with children at school, at St. Mary's and for the LHS. Congratulations to a deserving award recipient!

MEMBER NEWS

Please welcome our newest members:

Academy Ford Sales

Leslie Cain

Diane F. M. Grant

Helen Green

John and Arleen Leis

Barbara Mercurio

We are happy to have you!

Welcome New Volunteers!

Tom Dernoga

Scott Lilienthal

Regina Mima

Paulina Rapavi

Paula Schuman

Volunteer Needs

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

The **Communications Committee** still 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** still 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!

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.



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.org or by calling (301)725-7975.

Are you reading this newsletter in its printed form? Do you receive all of our program fliers in the mail? Are you interested in helping us save money and the environment by receiving the electronic version only? If so, send a quick email to

info@laurelhistoricalsociety.org with your name, mailing address, email address and a line saying you'd like to help us by receiving some of our mailings in electronic form!

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 at jmanastasi@verizon.net with your comments, suggestions or story ideas.

PLEASE SUPPORT OUR CORPORATE SPONSORS!



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Laurel Historical Society Calendar

MAR 2012 – JUN 2012

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

March 9 th at 7PM <i>Life After Freedom</i> <i>With the MD Archives</i> Laurel Pool Room	April 12 th at 7PM <i>Run of the Mill</i> <i>With the MD Humanities</i> <i>Council</i> Laurel Pool Room	May 10 th at 6:30 PM <i>Annual Meeting and Community</i> <i>Curators Event</i> Laurel Pool Room
March 24 th at <i>Annual Gala: "Pirates of the</i> <i>Patuxent"</i> Laurel Race Track	April 22 nd 1-4PM <i>Community Celebration</i> <i>True Life: I'm a Laurel Mill</i> <i>Worker</i> Laurel Museum	June 10 th 1:30-3:30PM <i>Kids Day at the Laurel Museum</i> Laurel Museum
		June 14 th at 6:30 PM <i>Annual Friends and Family</i> <i>Picnic</i>