



# 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**

I have many things to share with you in this issue of *The Laurel Light* so here goes...

#### **Docent Training:**

Every year we open a new exhibit at the Laurel Museum. Our dedication to opening a new exhibit is unique in the small museum field. I do not know of any other small museum that opens a large exhibit each year. Our Exhibits Committee works VERY hard to make sure that each exhibit is done well, and is thoughtful, engaging, and interesting. But in the rush at the end of every January (in theory our "slow" month), things get a little bit hectic here at the Museum. We try to fit in docent training on the new exhibit, a volunteer appreciation event, and the grand opening all within two to three weeks. It's quite a bit of a strain not only on the staff, but also on our wonderful volunteers. One thing that has always bothered me since arriving at the LHS is that I could not find a way to fit in general training in addition to exhibit specific training each year. Because each exhibit is so different, the content of the exhibit and how it functions has always been the focus of the docent training in January.

This year, we took a completely different tactic. After attending a wonderful training

session led by the group Free Range Improv, I decided our docents could really benefit (and maybe even enjoy) the training they had to offer. I also came to the realization that I had been working with an outside museum education consultant, Beth Maloney, on various traveling trunks to use as outreach materials in the community and I had not actually worked on making sure that any of our volunteers could use the materials. So from these realizations, the impetus for the January training "Upping Your Tour Guide Game" came about.

We spent several hours on a Sunday learning from experts in the field while enjoying a hot chocolate bar as well. Dann Alagna, Director of Free Range Improv, lead a great session on creative ways to handle the unpredictable nature of working with the public. Rod Cofield, Executive Director of Historic London Town and Gardens, led a session on the top tips for tour guides. Beth Maloney, an independent museum consultant, led a session on using outreach materials to work with different audiences. We opened it up to non-LHS docents, and we drew people from area museums as far as way as the Baltimore Museum of Art and the Folger Shakespeare Library. Reviews were rave and we are VERY happy with how it went. I am considering making it an ongoing program, so if you attended and have any feedback that you did not yet share, please do so!

## Basement Redo:



We are in the last half of a major overhaul of the basement. If you have not yet visited, now is the time! Don't be surprised if you don't recognize anything. We hope you do enjoy the changes we made.

About six months ago we began thinking about ways that we could improve both the kitchen and Diven's Den to incorporate STEM ideas as well as history. I invited a very mixed group of people to "Hack the Museum" or think outside the box about potential changes. The group included museum educators, curators, families, science teachers, students, and more. Out of our conversations, surveys of the public (thanks to all who participated), and research into comparable spaces in other museums, we began to formulate our goals for the room. They are as follows:

1. We want the room to be intergenerational; a space that people can participate in no matter their age.
2. We want to be able to use the history of the mill and objects in the kitchen to investigate STEM principles.
3. We want to have a space that incorporates elements of universal design so it is accessible to all.
4. We want to create a space that is a place people want to spend time in and come back to.

So, as of Feb 8<sup>th</sup>, the space is open for visitors. Come by and take a peek. Let us know what you think. Now is the time when we'll learn the most from your participation, so don't be shy!

## Annual Appeal:

When the Development Committee started working together five years ago, we began setting financial goals for the organization. We wanted to know how much we were aiming to raise and then work hard until we reached that goal. We usually share with the membership and public our monetary goal as well as our success in achieving it.

For the most part, we've usually only had success. Unfortunately, this year's Annual Appeal is not one. Yes, we raised quite a bit of money to date; almost \$18,000. We are VERY thankful for each of our donors who chose to give, whether it was \$5 or \$500. However, \$18,000 is less than our goal of \$25,000. Quite a bit less in fact. Twenty five thousand dollars was our "lofty goal". Twenty thousand was a more realistic goal that would have kept us on track for our budget. But we're still below that amount as well.

I share this information because I believe it is important for our membership to know the state of the LHS. We are your organization and we exist due to your generosity. If I chose to just share our successes, then you would not know all you should know about your organization. I personally am very thankful for every dollar that is given. I know there are many wonderful organizations to choose from in Laurel and each time you give to us I appreciate that decision. This year we just happened to fall short of our goals and our hopes for the Annual Appeal. I share this information for transparency and honesty's sake.

But, I know you guys won't worry. I know you are all aware that there is always another occasion a couple of months down the line when we'll come knocking asking for your support. And you are right.

So with that, I ask you, to mark your calendars now for our April 18<sup>th</sup> Gala, "Stop the Presses! An Evening Honoring Jim and Bobbi McCeney." Looking forward to seeing you all there and making the evening a resounding success that will help us forget all of our Annual Appeal woes.

Lindsey Baker

## BOARD MEETING SCHEDULE

LHS Board meetings are held the 4<sup>th</sup> Thursday of each January, April, July, and October. The next meeting is April 23, 2015. Members are welcome to attend. They are held in the Pool Meeting Room at 7:30 PM.

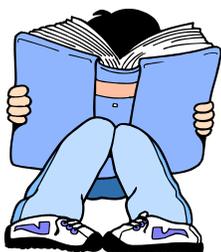
## LEVELS OF GIVING CONTRIBUTIONS FROM JANUARY 1 TO DECEMBER 31, 2014

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 **usually publish** our annual publication of names and donation levels. As of this writing, we do not have the information necessary to make accurate levels of giving. Look for this in future editions of the *Laurel Light*. We apologize for the delay.

## 2015 GALA UPDATE!

The Laurel Historical Society will be holding its Annual Gala on April 18, 2015. The yearly event will be a wonderful evening out for LHS members, family, colleagues and friends. We will be honoring Laurel’s own Jim and Bobbi McCeney for all of their contributions to Laurel. Hope to see you there!!

## CHILDREN’S CORNER



Come by and let the kids play (and join them!) in our new interactive Diven’s Den. We are in the piloting phase, so your opinion is needed as we work to bring History to Life!

## MUSEUM NEWS

Submitted by Karen Lubieniecki

*Ripped from the Headlines: Laurel in the News*



What makes the news? In Laurel, Hurricane Agnes, Spanish Flu, George Wallace, September 11<sup>th</sup>, fires, robberies, murders and integration battles made (or didn’t make) headlines. All are part of Laurel’s history. How the local media covered these and other events is the focus of the Laurel Museum’s newest exhibit *Ripped from the Headlines: Laurel in the News* which opened February 8, 2015.

A piece of the North Tower of the World Trade Center, a *Life Magazine* on the Wallace shooting signed by George Wallace, fire and police equipment, and materials salvaged from Hurricane Agnes’ flood destruction are among the objects on display. Visitors will also encounter long-forgotten names like John Sedlick, Mrs. Burroughs, John Morgan and Carol Replane, in sometimes tragic, and occasionally funny stories that gripped local attention over the past 118 years. Interspersed throughout the exhibit are advertisements for long-forgotten products and businesses that provide their own humorous look at life in Laurel since 1897. One section of the exhibit will also offer visitors a chance to share their “good news”.

*Ripped from the Headlines* is designed to be both a journey into the past, and a thought-provoking exploration of news. Visitors are encouraged not just to read the stories, but to ask questions such as; “what gets covered and why,” “what happens if stories aren’t reported,” and “how is coverage today different from the past.” The exhibit centers on stories as they were covered in our hometown paper the *Laurel Leader*, and commemorates the LHS’ acquisition of the newspaper. “Our recent acquisition and digitization of the *Laurel Leader* opens up resources beyond what we could have imagined years ago. *Ripped from the Headlines: Laurel in the News* highlights these new windows into the past while also asking our community to think analytically about news coverage over the years,” stated Laurel Historical Society Executive Director Lindsey Baker.

The exhibit is divided into seven sections. *Bad Luck Beat* uncovers tragedies of many forms, ranging from train wrecks, to the devastating 1918 Spanish Influenza, and fatal buggy accidents. *OffBeat* explores topics ranging from The Woman’s Club of Laurel to Prohibition. *Firehouse Beat* looks at some of the fires over the years that shaped the community and led to the creation of the fire department. *The Disaster Beat* focuses on Mother Nature and the floods, tornados and earthquakes that damaged property but not town spirit.

Laurel has been the focus of stories that made national news, and the *National News Desk* explores how 9/11 and the Wallace shooting were covered locally. *Law and Order* reminds us of some of the crimes that shook the community when they happened, but that today are largely forgotten, including the Basu carjacking, a Citizen’s National Bank Robbery, and the Hargis and Replane Murders. *Editorial: Integration* provides an in depth overview of the coverage that accompanied one of the most difficult and divisive eras in Laurel history including school integration, particularly from 1954 to 1985. It explores whether the coverage reflected the reality of the integration process, community values, and controversies that arose, and raises the question of whether or not the schools are in fact integrated.

*Ripped from the Headlines* runs through December 20, 2015. We would like to acknowledge Richard Friend for the panel and logo designs.



**Nozzle/Boots:** Good equipment has played a critical role in fighting Laurel fires. Left: A “play pipe” or nozzle from the 1940s. It attaches to the fire hose and is used by two firefighters at a time, each of whom would grip one side to direct or play the high pressure water coming through the hose. Right: LVFD firefighter boots. Originally from the 1950s, these were also used by later firefighters, including Laurel Mayor Craig Moe. On loan from the LVFD.



**Cap:** Cap dating from the early years of the Laurel Volunteer Fire Department. The #1 signifies it belonged to Fire Company No. 1, one of three Fire companies established in October of 1902. On loan from the LVFD.



**9/11 Artifacts:** Case displaying a piece of a steel beam from the North Tower, patches from first responder services involved in the 9/11 attack on the World Trade Center, and a flag that flew over the site. On loan from the City of Laurel.

### **REQUEST FROM LINDSEY BAKER**

Our new exhibit, by its very nature, can be a little depressing. Based on some comments that have been made to me by people who have seen it already, we have a section in which we can include positive stories and we're hoping these can be "crowd curated" or come from you. If you have a story from the *Laurel Leader* that you've been holding on to, bring it in. Whether it's about you, your church, school, or just an article that you liked, bring it in. We have a bulletin board for these positive stories, and we can happily make a copy to hang if you'd rather not part with the original.

Thank you!

### **MEMBER NEWS**

Please welcome our new members:

Richard Berhard  
Valerie Cunningham  
Meet Desai  
Priscilla Dorman  
D. Kent and Patricia E. Goodger  
Linda Lemar  
Michael Oakes  
Leona and Edward Rowe  
Karen Sullivan  
Maureen Veihmeyer

We are very happy to have you!

Our membership drive will commence in May. In order to track our members better, we have devised new categories of membership and updated our dues for the first time in years. Please look in the mail for your renewal in the spring.

### **Welcome New Volunteers**

Karen Sullivan - Ms. Sullivan will be volunteering as a Docent and assisting with mailings, events and other behind the scenes activities! We love our volunteers! Thank You!

### **Volunteers Needed!**

The Laurel Historical Society is in need of volunteers for Sundays (1 pm - 4 pm) and Fridays (10 am - 2 pm) at the Laurel Museum. Volunteers are needed to serve as docents and/or handle gift shop sales. Training is provided. For more information, please contact Monica at [assist@laurelhistoricalsociety](mailto:assist@laurelhistoricalsociety) or 301-725-7975.

### **Volunteer Luncheons**

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

### **MUSEUM SHOP NEWS**

Many thanks to all who made our Holiday Open House a success! We had plenty of visitors to the Museum and shop. Thank you for your support. Stop by and take a look at our redesigned shop.

In the shop you'll find some of your old favorites—our Centennial Book, yearly ornaments, and reduced price throws. In addition you'll find new hits. The Lost Laurel Book is always a favorite. We've also created a number of packages combining items to give you a discount.

Don't forget that you can find many of our shop items online. Check out the online shop at [laurelhistoricalsociety.org/shop](http://laurelhistoricalsociety.org/shop).

**VOLUNTEERS OF THE YEAR HONORED AT ANNUAL VOLUNTEER APPRECIATION EVENT**



The Laurel Historical Society honored its Volunteers of the Year January 18<sup>TH</sup>. This year we honored the organization's Gala Committee, which over the past fourteen years has organized the LHS' major fundraising event. Some of the volunteers involved over the years left to right: Shari Pollard, Karen Lubieniecki, Sara Fox, Regina Mima, Jhanna Levin, Bobbi McCeney, Kathy Crawford, and Eileen Collins. Not pictured: Nicole St. Hilaire, Mariam Thakkar, Margie McCeney, Holly Lilienthal, and Jeanie Anastasi.



The Laurel Historical Society also recognized volunteers Sara Fox (l) who was recognized for five years of volunteer service and Charlie Hessler (r) was recognized for 10 years of service. LHS Executive Director Lindsey Baker is pictured middle.

Many thanks to volunteer Lisa Everett and her husband Dave for hosting the event in their beautiful Montgomery Street mansion!

**DR. & MRS. COMPTON VISIT JAPAN IN 1999 TO RESEARCH HORACE CAPRON**

Excerpt from a story submitted by Elizabeth L. Compton

Horace Capron, Laurel's 19<sup>th</sup> century renowned international figure's life fascinated me ever since I learned of his early years in Laurel. So when the opportunity for Dick and me to visit Hokkaido, Japan where Capron exerted such influence, we were elated. Hokkaido is a large island north of the main island of Honshu, Japan. This is the tale of our days in Sapporo, Hokkaido in 1999.

On the morning after our arrival, Mrs. Davidson, our interpreter and an American daughter of missionaries, accompanied us to Hokkaido University Library. Waiting outside was the recently retired curator, Professor Toshiyuki Akizuki who returned to welcome us, accompanied by the current curator, Hoppou Shiryou Kan. They showed us a permanent exhibit just inside the main entrance that contained a large collection of documents and photographs of Capron and his consultants. We then went to the second floor and on the huge table were photocopied documents of Capron's handwritten reports to Emperor Meiji, photographs of Sapporo Agricultural College and other institutions and facilities instituted by Capron and his colleagues. The staff had prepared these for us to take home to the Laurel Museum. This was a thrill for us to realize they had anticipated our needs and saved us hours of research. We expressed our gratitude and sincere appreciation when we departed with the treasured papers and cherished memory.

Through further research, we discovered that Capron and his group of educators, engineers and technicians are greatly respected throughout Japan for their role in the development of Hokkaido. One such example is a biography of Dr Isami Hiroi (1862-1928), *The life of a Japanese Christian Civil Engineer* by Tetsuro Takski. Many details of Horace Capron and his colleagues' contributions in the colonization of Hokkaido are found in this book including the suggestion Capron made when Emperor Meiji was disappointed in the slow population growth in the region. Capron suggested they pass legislation similar to the US Homestead Act with benefits to attract movement from the over populated area in the south to the open land in the north with its new industrial, farming, educational and transportation improvements. Modern Sapporo, capital of Hokkaido went from a primeval forest to a bustling, colorful city of over a million souls demonstrating the integral part played by foreign cultures during the past 100 years.

When Kiyotaka Kuroda learned of his colleague Capron's death, he wrote a letter to Mrs. Capron including these remarks. *"I have really lost one of my closest friends. Long years have passed since I bid farewell. During his stay in Hokkaido your husband's genuine sentiments and his devotion to his work touched the hearts of many people. His great and meritorious service and achievements on behalf of Hokkaido shall never fade away. Here I must regret the depth of my heart over the death of your husband."*

We barely scratched the surface of the wealth of facts relating to the interesting story of American influence in Japan in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. Numerous documents and pictures are available in the John Brennan Resource Library in the Laurel Museum. I hope this short story piques your interest and whets your appetite to inquire and enjoy details of this period in the history of Japan and America's role with our common persona of Horace Capron.

## **Join Us!**

Are you reading this newsletter but not a member? We'd love for you to join! Membership enables the LHS to:

- \* Sustain the Laurel Museum
- \* Research Laurel history
- \* Preserve artifacts
- \* House a research library
- \* Host special children's events
- \* Develop educational materials for schools and scout groups

Membership benefits include:

- \* Quarterly Newsletter with articles about Laurel history, museum exhibits and programs
- \* Member's only events
- \* Member's only discount in the museum shop
- \* Discounts on LHS events, including our annual gala
- \* Contributing to the preservation of Laurel's past and present for future generations

Join today by visiting [laurelhistoricalsociety.org](http://laurelhistoricalsociety.org).

## **THE LAUREL LIGHT NEEDS YOU!**

Have you renovated your old home or business? Have you found interesting artifacts in those old walls. Do you feel the presence of former inhabitants? Have you discovered the history of your home and the families who lived there? Do you want to share what you know?

Would you like to share your stories for the *Did You Know* and *My Memories of Laurel* sections of the newsletter? Do you have a burning question about Laurel that you would like to have answered? Do you have a recipe with Laurel roots?

If so please email The Laurel Light editor, Jeanie Anastasi at [jmanastasi@verizon.net](mailto:jmanastasi@verizon.net) with your stories, memories, recipes, comments, questions, suggestions or story ideas. Thank you in advance for your submissions!

## **BECOME A PART OF LAUREL HISTORY!**

Purchase a personalized sidewalk brick and literally become a part of Laurel's history!! 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. You may purchase on line by visiting [laurelhistoricalsociety.org](http://laurelhistoricalsociety.org) or by calling 301-725-7975. Already have a brick? Purchase another and ensure that you and your loved ones continue to be on Laurel's historical path!



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# Laurel Historical Society Calendar

## March 2015 – August 2015

For more information please visit [laurelhistoricalsociety.org](http://laurelhistoricalsociety.org)

March 12<sup>th</sup> 7:00 PM  
Goddard Space Flight Center:  
High Technology in the  
Neighborhood Since 1959

April 18<sup>th</sup> 6:30 PM  
Stop the Presses! An Evening  
Honoring Jim and Bobbi McCeney  
LHS Annual Gala

May TBD  
Annual Meeting and  
Appraisal Event  
Laurel Pool Room

June 12<sup>th</sup> 6:30 PM  
Friends and Family Picnic  
Laurel Museum

June 13<sup>th</sup> 6:00PM-9:00PM  
"Uncorked" Wine Festival  
Snow Hill Manor

August 3<sup>rd</sup>-7<sup>th</sup>  
Science in the Summer Camp  
Laurel Pool Room

More event info on line soon!