



The Laurel Light

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The Laurel Light
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The Laurel Historical Society, Inc.
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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

Planned Giving: a planned gift is any major gift, made in lifetime or at death as part of a donor's overall financial and/or estate planning.

The Laurel Historical Society depends on the good will of the people who believe in the work we do researching, sharing, and preserving Laurel's past. They often become members and donate annually. If we are fortunate, they may consider a larger, more permanent gift to our organization.

I arrived in 2008 and within my first year at the LHS, Jim McCeney and I were discussing planned giving. We agreed that we should encourage our supporters to consider it. The LHS received our first planned gift of \$100,000 in 2001 from Mr. Earl Snyder. In order to maintain the Society as a solvent organization, we realized we needed to continue to encourage these large gifts.

When we receive such gifts, we follow best practices for non-profits. Even though the money has never been restricted in the past (meaning, the donor does not tell us what to do with it), we have always found the best use for large gifts is to put it into our endowment. The endowment of a non-profit organization is like the hull of a boat. It gives the organization weight and allows it to balance itself in stormy weather. Our endowment is not something we tap into for our annual

budget, but it is there in case of emergency and to generate income in the future. The stability of our endowment is essential, and it further grows through large gifts such as planned giving.

After Jim and I began spreading the word that we were open to planned giving, we received an email in 2010 from Mr. Donald Quigley informing us that he was considering including the LHS in his estate planning. Great news we said, although we assured him we hoped we would not receive his gift anytime soon. Recently, we were informed that Mr. Quigley had passed away and that his estate was almost settled. It is possible that we will receive another large gift through his generosity and forethought.

In 2013, we had another big surprise. Ms. Florence Graff left us a gift of \$50,000 in memory of her parents, R. Travis Hill and Grace W. Hill. Ms. Graff was a longtime supporter of the LHS, usually giving to the Annual Appeal, but never gave us any indication that we would be so fortunate in the future. We were very thankful for her generosity.

Last year, Jim and Bobbi McCeney decided to honor Jim's long time support of planned giving and make their own sizable donation to the Society. The McCeneys have always been very generous in the past, through their volunteer efforts and financial support and this gift was very much appreciated.

What strikes me most about these gifts is how essential these funds are in providing stability to our organization. The Laurel Historical Society is small, but we do good work in the community and we hope to continue to do that work for many years to come. By contributing in such a way, the aforementioned members have invested in the future of Laurel's history, something I believe to be a quite worthy local cause.

Lindsey Baker

BOARD MEETING SCHEDULE

LHS Board meetings are held the 4th Thursday of each January, April, July, and October. The next meeting is April 28, 2016. Members are welcome to attend. They are held in the Pool Meeting Room at 7:30 PM.

LEVELS OF GIVING CONTRIBUTIONS FROM JANUARY 1, 2015 TO DECEMBER 31, 2015

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 annual publication of names and donation levels. Without all of you, we would not be able to continue the work of the Society. **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.**

The Society would like to thank the following donors for their support in the form of contributions, sponsorships and advertisements:

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Successful Holiday House Tour

Submitted by Jeanie Anastasi

On a beautiful spring-like day in December, I attended the biannual Holiday House Tour. The event chairman and committee did a wonderful job of assembling homes and businesses for the visitor to see. Many sites were walking distance from each other adding a very festive feeling to the tour path. As a past committee member, participant and volunteer of this event, I enjoyed the tour on my own for the first time. I chose to visit the sites in the reverse order as published in the tour booklet but have detailed them in booklet order for this review.

The first stop on the tour, A. M. Kroop and Sons located at 26 C Street, excites all the senses. The wonderful smell of leather, the feel of the boots and shoes, and the vast array of machines used in the process add to the appeal of this historic business. Randy Kroop continues on with her family business making custom boots and shoes for a varied clientele. The machines used to make the custom footwear date back to as early as 1916.



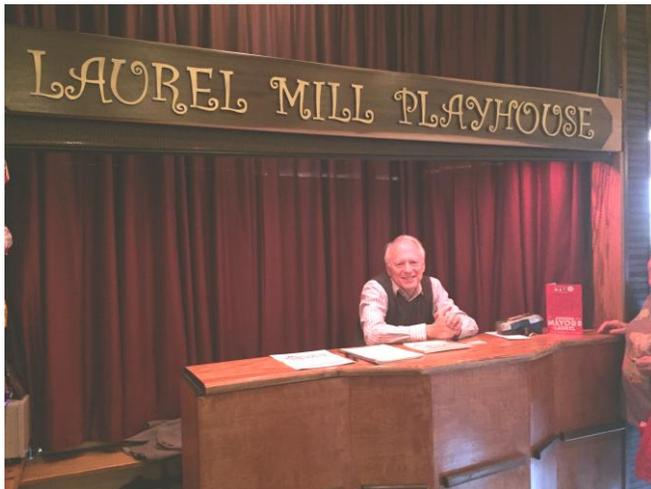
Various items produced using leftover leather

Jhanna Levin opened her circa 1878 home at 418 Main Street that is filled with her eclectic style of vintage chic décor. One particularly interesting item is the antique cash register used by her mother, Louise Eldridge, in her much loved shop on Main Street.



Antique cash register used at L & L Antiques

The Laurel Mill Playhouse at 508 Main Street served as a rest stop where homemade cookies and refreshments were served. Marvin Rogers is pictured in the new “ticket window” that is a recent addition to this historic structure.



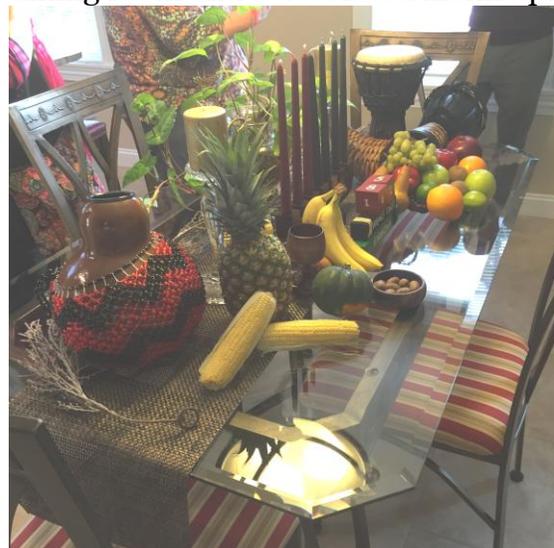
Marvin Rogers manning the ticket counter at Playhouse

Next we moved on to the 500 and 600 blocks of Prince George Street where four of the seven properties were within walking distance. Mike and Ela Peden’s home at 509 Prince George Street is a unique and imaginatively decorated home, with many features of interest one of which is featured here. The view from the back yard of the alley and the backs of Main Street properties added interesting perspective to the tour.



Iron fish used as a vent cover over the stove

Across the alleyway at 511 Prince George Street, Kevin Allen opened his home that included decorations for both Christmas and Kwanzaa, including a lovely tablescape in the dining room and a decorated mannequin.



Celebration of Kwanzaa depicted in table scape

The property at 515 Prince George Street was both a tour of the property and an exhibit for the Laurel Arts District Committee complete with live music. The view from the upper story windows and second floor porch were particularly enjoyed by this participant.



Art piece adorning wall at LADC exhibit home

Finally the home at 610 Prince George Street, owned by Albert Kleine and Rita Halpert was a wonderful blend of the old and the new. The younger, more edgy style is indicative of many new homeowners in our neighborhood.



Old meets new in the kitchen of the Kleine-Halpert home

In addition to seeing my neighbor's homes and businesses decorated for the holidays, I enjoyed a different view than can be seen driving or walking by properties. By visiting various levels and views from second story windows and backyards, one can form a much deeper appreciation for the fabric of our historic community. I highly recommend this event in 2017.

MUSEUM NEWS



Behind the Bricks: 20 Years of the Laurel Museum

Submitted by Karen Lubieniecki



Where do exhibit ideas come from? How is an exhibit developed? What new historical discoveries can research uncover? Looking back at topics from the Mill House to Mill Workers, from Civil War soldiers, WWII, the 1950's and Lost Laurel, *Behind the Bricks: 20 Years of the Laurel Museum*, which opened February 7th at the Laurel Museum answers these questions. The behind the scenes look explores the discoveries, collections, volunteers and staff that inspired and created more than 20 exhibits since the Laurel Museum's brick home opened to the public in May 1996.

Visitors to the exhibit will see the 1845 Laurel Cotton Mill ledger, a George Nye Diary, women's hats from the 1940s and 50s, one of Bert Sadler's early 20th century glass photographic plates, postcards, a Laurel-made grandfather clock, historical documents and more from the Museum's collection. They will also obtain insights into 20 years of exhibits.

"Visitors to the Laurel Museum often ask how we develop an exhibit and how we keep coming up with new ideas each year," stated LHS Executive Director Lindsey Baker. "***Behind the Bricks: 20 Years of the Laurel Museum*** is our opportunity to let visitors take a peek behind the scenes into how exhibits are produced at the Laurel Museum. Our goal is to let visitors learn a little bit more about how their community museum decides to shape the stories about Laurel's history year after year."

Behind the Bricks: 20 Years of the Laurel Museum is divided into 10 sections. The sections "From Idea to Exhibit," "**HATJAT: Here's A Thought, Just A Thought**,"* and "A New Twist on Old Ideas", explore the various inspirations, opportunities and materials that establish a specific exhibit theme and focus. Sometimes it's an anniversary, such as The Civil War or WWII, and other times a particular collection, such as postcards or the Sadler collection of photographs that spark the idea. The exhibit also explores how items such as the Sadler collection photographs, and *Laurel Leader* newspapers can reappear with a new and different emphasis and new interpretation, allowing visitors to see them with fresh eyes. For example, the 15th exhibit, *Snapshots in Time: Our Community in 1910 and 2010* used Sadler photos from 1910 to compare Laurel 100 years apart. Twelve years earlier, the 1997 exhibit explored Bert Sadler's photos as art as well as community photographs documenting our history.

"There's Something About the Mill" continues the new interpretive theme with a twist. Community interest, deep resources, and its role in Laurel's origins and growth all contribute to the many exhibits that have encompassed the Laurel Cotton Mill story from *George Nye and His Diaries* to *True Life: I am a Laurel Mill Worker*. "From Our

Attic to Yours" explores the Museum collection, how it grows and introduces us to some of the collectors who have helped complete various exhibits. Additional sections include, "Exhibit Development Lab," "Introduction," and a special timeline that covers the period from before the Museum had a permanent home to the present. This allows visitors to revisit all the exhibits including those displayed in various locations before the building opened to the public. Finally, the sections "Volunteer" and "Laurel Shop" including a display of all of the holiday ornaments round out the exhibit.

Behind the Bricks: 20 Years of the Laurel Museum runs through December 18, 2016. The Laurel Museum is open Wednesdays and Fridays 10 AM - 2 PM, and Sundays 1 - 4 PM and is free. Visits by school groups and tours over 10 people can be scheduled on other days by appointment. The John Brennan Research Library is open Mondays by appointment. For more information visit www.laurelhistoricalsociety.org.

*HATJAT is a word developed by LHS members Ken Skrivseth and Karen Lubieniecki that has become a frequent part of the LHS Lexicon.

MEMBER NEWS

Please welcome our newest member:

Ken Rogers

We are happy to have you!

Welcome New Volunteers

No one this time...how about you!

Volunteers Needed!

The Laurel Museum is in urgent need of volunteers for Sundays, 1 pm - 4 pm and the first and third Fridays, 10 am - 2 pm. Volunteers will guide tours, answer questions from the public and/or handle gift shop sales. Training is provided. For more information, please contact Monica at assist@laurelhistoricalsociety.org or 301-725-7975.

PEOPLE OF LAUREL: SHARE and CONNECT



Sadler Image, Laurel Museum Collection

The Laurel Arts District Committee and the Laurel Historical Society are collaborating in a unique effort to introduce neighbors and collect Laurel's community history.

The **Laurel Arts District**

Committee and The Laurel Historical

Society announced a "Call to the Laurel

Community" to participate in a creative interactive

exhibit that will introduce individuals to their

unique neighbors located in all 4 corners of

Laurel. Once the project is completed, the

accumulative individual records will go into the

permanent collection of the Laurel Museum in

Laurel, Maryland.

"PEOPLE OF LAUREL: SHARE and CONNECT" is an invitation to the Laurel community to participate in a project that will introduce individuals to their community. This project will also provide historic information to add to the Laurel Museum's constantly growing collection recording life in Laurel.

In a town this large one of the best ways to "own" the collective history is through visual documentation.

We plan to do this via modern technology by the use of "Selfies". The project is open to all who consider themselves a part of Laurel's story. Individuals are asked to submit a selfie and a brief story about their life, work, or whatever other detail they wish to focus on as their story relates to Laurel. Selfies and stories will be collected from **February 1st through March 15th**.

From **April 15th through May 31st** the pictures and stories received will be artistically posted at participating businesses. PEOPLE OF LAUREL: SHARE and CONNECT coincides with *Behind the Bricks: Twenty Years of the Laurel Museum*, which explores the evolution of the Laurel Museum's 20 year history as a community organization displaying Laurel's history in a different way each year.

Laurel Arts District Committee and The Laurel Historical Society are delighted to host an event that is fun, inclusive, culturally enriching and historically valuable.

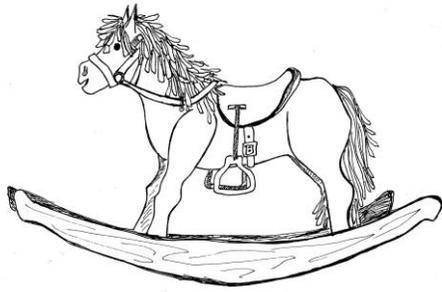
About The Laurel Art District Committee (LADC)

LADC is a 4 year old grassroots organization that believes that celebrating the arts is an important part of our town's continual creative and social development. We also strongly believe that the arts have intrinsic value for all its residents, businesses and civic leaders.

SHARE and CONNECT at

laurelhistorical.society.org or contact

info@laurelhistoricalsociety.org.



Children's Corner

Diven's Den has some new stations for kid's activities. The "den" is located on the lower level of the museum. Bring the kids for a tour and some fun! Kids Program in March!!

MUSEUM SHOP NEWS

Purchase your "I love Laurel" and "Made in Laurel" tee shirts from the shop while they last! And don't forget that you can find many of our shop items online. Check out the online shop at laurelhistoricalsociety.org/shop.

UP KEEP ON "THIS OLD HOUSE"

Our partnership with the City of Laurel means that the LHS is able to maintain our historic structure with the help of many. However, we are always in need of volunteers to continue our work in and around the grounds of the Museum. We recently had the exterior porch, windowsills, doors and outside stairwells worked on by the City. The landscaping can be challenging and we appreciate any help you can give with plantings and upkeep. Be assured that grant funding is sought regularly for this important upkeep and repairs, and that your donations are an additional source of income we depend on. Please contact Lindsey Baker at the Museum if you are able to help with our historic structure and grounds maintenance.

Richard Friend Named LHS Volunteer of the Year for 2015



Richard Friend with Executive Director Lindsey Baker
Photo by Karen Lubieniecki

On January 31st Amy and Mike Graver hosted our annual Volunteer Appreciation Party. The event was rescheduled due to weather! The LHS recognized 6 milestone volunteers:

- Sara Fox 5 years
- Charlie Hessler 10 years
- Carole Montesi 15 years
- Virginia Mentall 15 years
- Ken Skrivseth 25 years
- Karen Lubieniecki 25 years

Our volunteer of the year is Richard Friend. Richard was the design genius behind the last three exhibits, *Lost and Found Laurel*, *Ripped from the Headlines: Laurel in the News*, and *Behind the Bricks: 20 Years of the Laurel Museum*. He has also designed various other things for the LHS, including the Gala invitations! Many thanks to all of you who volunteer!

Mini Exhibits in City Buildings

The history of Laurel is being displayed throughout the City and surrounding areas. Check out the mini exhibits in the Laurel Library, Greenview Pool Cabana, Gude Lakehouse, Partnership Activity Center (Police Dept.), Armory, Municipal Center Laurel Pool Room and the Maryland City at Russett Library. Can you recommend other public places in Laurel for display? Please contact Lindsey Baker at the Museum.

Save the Date: April 9, 2016



DID YOU KNOW?

The group of buildings on the south side of Main Street between 5th and 6th Streets is typical of the commercial buildings in Laurel at the turn of the century. They date from just after the largest fire in Laurel's history, which took place December 13, 1899. The fire began in Mengerts Bakery in the alley behind Main Street, and eventually engulfed 12 buildings and the Presbyterian Church. The event prompted the establishment of the Laurel Volunteer Fire Department and water system in 1902. One of these historic buildings was included in this year's house tour and is the home of The Laurel Mill Playhouse.

ASK THE LHS – NEW COLUMN!

Submit your most burning questions about Laurel to the editor and we will investigate and answer them for you! Please submit to jmanastasi@verizon.net.

Save Our Stop

LHS Helping to Save Our Stop

The LHS is actively participating in efforts to keep the Laurel train stop from being moved to a new development in Howard County at the Racetrack. Hearing from citizens is an important part of making sure the stop isn't moved. Pre-stamped postcards addressed to MDOT's Secretary Peter Rahn with a pre-printed message for commuters and non-commuters alike can be picked up at the Museum. (We'll even mail them for you). What else can you do?

1. **Sign the Petition Saying You Want to Save the Stop**
<http://www.21stdistrictdelegation.com/save-our-stop>
2. **Write/email/call Dennis Schrader**, at MDOT saying the station should stay in Laurel. If you are a commuter or were a commuter, or moved to live in Laurel because the train was there, mentioning that can help.
 - a. **Dennis R. Schrader**, *Deputy Secretary for Policy, Planning, & Enterprise Services* (410) 865-1006 e-mail: dschrader@mdot.state.md.us, P. O. Box 548
7201 Corporate Center Drive,
Hanover, MD 21076 – 0548
3. **Let Howard County Planning & Zoning officials know how you feel about plans to move the station. Be sure to mention if you live in Howard County.**
 - a. **Valdis Lazdins**, **Director**
vlazdins@howardcountymd.gov
410-313-4301
 - b. **Brenda Luber**, **Plan Review, Forest Conserv. Database**
bluber@howardcountymd.gov
410-313-4343
4. If you're on Facebook "Like" us at:
[facebook.com/SOSLaurelMainStreet](https://www.facebook.com/SOSLaurelMainStreet)

SHARE YOUR MEMORIES

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



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 or 301-725-7975.

Already have a brick? Purchase another one and ensure that you and your loved ones continue to be on Laurel's historical path!

BECOME A MEMBER

Are you reading this newsletter but not a member? We'd love for you to join!

Membership enables the Society 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
- * Access to on-line collections
- * Member's only events
- * Member 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.

Laurel Historical Society
817 Main Street
Laurel, Maryland 20707
301.725.7975
info@laurelhistoricalsociety.org
www.laurelhistoricalsociety.org

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Laurel Historical Society Calendar

February 2016 – May 2016

For more information, visit: laurelhistoricalsociety.org/pages/calendar.html

February 7th 1:00 - 4:00 PM

Exhibit Opening:
*Behind the Bricks: 20 Years of the
Laurel Museum*

March 13th 1:30 - 3:30 PM

Create Your Own Time Capsule
Children's Program
Laurel Museum

May 1st

Twentieth Anniversary Celebration

February 1st – May 31st

People of Laurel: Share and Connect

April 9th 6:30 PM

Laurel Historical Society Gala
Laurel Park Racetrack

Stay Tuned for More Events!

Programs will be added directly to the website!