



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

Thank you all so much for your support of the Laurel Historical Society. In the time that I've been with the LHS I've had the opportunity to meet many of you and your families, learn about your lives in Laurel, and hear what you think makes Laurel unique. I've heard personal histories that connect your lives to Laurel starting 100 years ago and histories that started 5 years ago. No matter how long you've been here, it seems that you all have one thing in common; you believe that Laurel is a great place to live, work, play, and learn. I must say I agree with you.

I have fallen in love with this town with so many interesting things going on. Building partnerships in a place with many other active organizations and institutions has been a pleasure. I am happy that the LHS has been successful in building on the foundations laid by so many dedicated volunteers, and is able to branch out into the community. Thankfully, I can say that I believe we're doing this while maintaining quality programs and exhibits at the Laurel Museum.

All of this is possible through the hard work and dedication of our volunteers and members. It is also made possible by all of you, who have realized how important the

work we do is for the community. Any support, whether it is writing a check, bringing a new friend to an event, or volunteering to help out is appreciated. It is solely because of this support that we are able to continue our mission to encourage the understanding and preservation of the history and cultural heritage of Laurel.

Thank you so much for all of your support!

Lindsey Baker
Executive Director

A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

I thoroughly enjoyed this year's Small Museum Association's conference held annually in Ocean City. I was able to attend on scholarship which was an experience all to itself; helping to secure décor for the banquet, handing out and collecting evaluations at the end of sessions, and rooming with the director/president of The Children's Museum of West Virginia.

The first session I attended was probably the most thought provoking and eye-opening for me on many levels. It was called "**Saving History with Simple Machines**". It was the story of a museum in Fairfax that increased its student tours tremendously by aligning the tour to science rather than just social studies

standards. As a STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) teacher, I have to admit that I felt a bit foolish for not connecting the dots myself. The idea is built on the fact that schools have both limited time and funds for field trips. In addition, social studies is unfortunately on the back burner in terms of “need to teach” standards. Therefore, this mill museum (a restored water-powered gristmill) realigned its tours to meet science and math standards as well. They got amazing reviews and more student tours.

What could that mean for us? We could easily turn our kitchen tour into a lesson for simple machines. Each historic item is a simple machine; a ball jar is a screw, an iron is a lever, a washboard is a wedge, and so on. It would be a great start to implementing STEM standards within our four walls, which should bring in more student groups that need experiential field trips at a reasonable rate. And this is just the tip of the iceberg. We have access to the river, the spring, and the native foliage around the perimeter of our property. Also, we can think about pairing with other close by museums to double up on a school (us, then lunch and then another close by museum like Greenbelt or the Trolley Museum).

I also attended a roundtable on “**Building Partnerships**” and I took away three main points:

1. We need to partner with other local museums to make more “bang for your buck” field trip packages for school groups.
2. We should count our lucky stars with regard to our partnership with the City. It could be WAY more difficult in so many ways.
3. Having partners in politics and in the community is crucial. It is so

important that our community and powers that be WANT to have us around and believe in our worth.

The top ten other reasons why the conference was valuable are:

1. I was able to meet the infamous Mary Alexander that everyone refers to.
2. I was able to feel very proud of Lindsey so many times.
3. I was able to overhear other museum professional talk about their Board of Directors.
4. I was able to talk at length with other museum professionals to hear what they wish their board would do or not do.
5. I was able to network with other museum board members and exchange ideas.
6. I was able to eat ice cream at 3pm on purpose.
7. I found out that our last exhibit was totally eco-friendly.
8. I found out that we are very lucky to not own or actually have to pay rent for our site-it brings us much closer to sustainability.
9. I learned more about Past Perfect; it has so many more capabilities than I thought.
10. I was able to spend some quality time with Jim McCeney and Lindsey Baker.

I will be attending next year for sure.

Yours in preserving Laurel's history...one story at a time,

Jhanna Levin
President

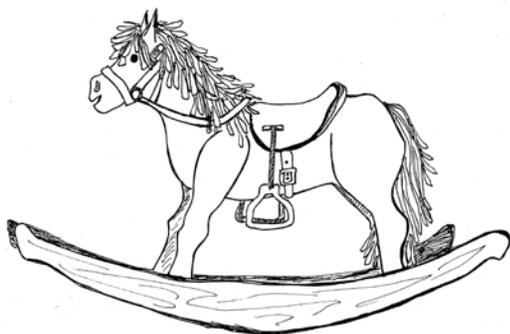
BOARD MEETING SCHEDULE

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

MUSEUM NEWS

OUR LATEST EXHIBIT, "TRUE LIFE: I AM A LAUREL MILL WORKER" HAS BEEN VERY WELL RECEIVED. PLEASE VISIT THE MUSEUM AND SHOP ON WEDNESDAYS AND FRIDAYS FROM 10:00 AM – 2:00 PM OR SUNDAYS FROM 1:00 – 4:00 PM AND CHECK IT OUT. FOR MORE INFORMATION ON THE EXHIBIT OR TO SCHEDULE A GROUP TOUR PLEASE VISIT WWW.LAURELHISTORICALSOCIETY.ORG.

IMPORTANT NOTICE: If you are trying to access the LHS website and having trouble with the site as bookmarked in your favorites, please type in the address manually and save again. We have switched servers as a protective measure.



Children's Corner

We invite you and yours to learn a little bit about Laurel; history, customs, and traditions. Our next activity will be "A Laurel Fair Circa 1870" on Sunday, June 19th from 1:30 - 3:30 PM. Hope to see you there!

Mini Exhibits in City Buildings!

You may have seen the new exhibits in the Laurel Library and the Community Center, as well as the Pool Room on 9th Street. We are also hoping to bring the history of Laurel to the Maryland City at Russett Library. Check it out!

MEMBER NEWS

Please welcome our newest members:

Ruth and Brian Davila
Marilyn and Paul Johnson
Holly McClellan
PNC Bank

We are happy to have you!

Welcome New Volunteers

Michelle Freeman
Joshua Newton

Both volunteers will serve as docents, work in the shop and help with festivals. Thank you volunteers!

Volunteers Needed!

The Laurel Museum is in need of volunteers for **Sundays from 1 PM - 4 PM**. Even just once a month or every other month would help! Anyone interested in volunteering at the Museum may contact Monica at assist@laurelhistoricalsociety.org or 301-725-7975 for more information. 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!

Museum Shop News

Submitted by Frieda Weise

Spring is in the air and it's time to spruce up the spring wardrobe! What better way than to add a unique piece of jewelry? The Laurel Museum Shop may have just the thing for you. We are featuring jewelry created by three artisans, two from our local area, and one from Pennsylvania. Our newest crafter is Kirsten Anderson who is from Laurel, and works with many types of exotic beads from various countries in Africa and Europe. She creates sets with necklaces and matching earrings, as well as bracelets. Elsie Klumpner (our former Museum Director) also lives in the area and is offering beautiful bead necklaces and earrings which are a different style from Kirsten's. And we still have the popular ribbon necklaces created by Debra from Pennsylvania. You'll be sure to find something to match any outfit when you shop at the Museum Shop!



Photograph by Frieda Weise

In the near future we will also have artwork and other crafts created by local artists; these will include small paintings and other unique works of art. Stay tuned!

You can always shop from the comfort of your own home as you can find many of our items online. Please visit www.laurelhistoricalsociety.org/shop.

LHS Genealogy Group

The Laurel Historical Society Genealogy Group assists 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.



Photograph by Bonnie Oskvarek

Springtime in Laurel

By Bonnie Oskvarek

I've always considered Laurel a "town for all seasons," but it has been an especially magical spring for me this year. The long spate of fantastic weather combined with the need to walk my pups and my desire to capture the beautiful flowering trees that I'd see along the way, prompted me one day to bring my camera. I soon noticed the flowering azalea bushes, wisteria and lilacs bordering the various homes and decided to take photos of them as well. I continued to extend my walks (much to the delight of my pups) and rediscovered what a beautiful town I've been blessed to

live in. No matter how grand or modest, the homes in Old Town are a jewel in the crown of this municipality. I've truly enjoyed attempting to capture this one spring season in our dear "old" town and look forward to doing the same with the other ones...summer, fall and winter.



Photograph by Bonnie Oskvarek

All of Bonnie Oskvarek's photographs of Laurel can be viewed in beautiful color on her Facebook page under the title "Springtime in Laurel 2012."

Laurel Lake

Submitted by Joe Robison

Laurel Lake, located at the southwest corner of Cherry Land and Route 1, is formed by the Bear Branch and runs into the Crows Branch at the Railroad Bridge at Bowie Road. The history of the Lake goes back to the beginnings of Laurel. Jardin's Ice Pond was the first name of Laurel Lake. In the winter, residents would cut ice from the lake and store it until summer. The name of the lake was changed to "Cull Lake" after Laurel's first mayor, Judson T. Cull. In 1900, the City completed a public water supply system from "Cull Lake" as a source. It provided water to Laurel for 50 years from 1902 to 1952. At one time you

could buy bottled water from the City of Laurel advertised as "SPRING WATER." The water was pumped up to the filtration plant on Carroll Avenue, which was run by Superintendent Albert L. Gosnell. The Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission now provides the water for Laurel. The old trolley car tracks ran along the east side of the lake, and the Laurel Sanitarium was on the west side of the tracks. You could walk south from Laurel along the tracks and because the lake was lower than the land the banks were very high on both sides.

The Laurel Lake would freeze during the winter and it was the social center of Laurel. When the ice would get rough the fire department would come and spray the ice so it would be smooth for the skaters. Hundreds of people would gather there on weekends. From novice to excellent skaters, it was great fun for all. We had fires on shore so you could warm up and to provide light at night. The old pump house was at the northeast end of the lake and it gave you good access to the lake. Everyone in Laurel owned a pair of skates and you could get them sharpened at the Laurel Sport Center run by Dave Danton and Bob Barton. After 1952 the lake was owned by Gude's Florist until Michael T. Rose purchased the property for Laurel Lakes. Today, Laurel Lake is part of Granville Gude Park which is a 29 acre park dedicated to the City as part of the Laurel Lakes Development in 1984.

Footnote

I met Joanne at the lake in 1947 during skating season and we married eight years later. During skating season, our daughters would be in car beds by the fire. As soon as they were old enough to skate, they were on the ice with us.

GALA NEWS

ATTENDEES WERE WARNED THAT THEY WERE SAILING INTO DANGEROUS TERRITORY AT LAUREL PARK. THEY WERE GREETED BY A LIVE PIRATE FROM LAUREL MILL PLAYHOUSE AND HAD TO WALK THROUGH A FLOCK OF PARROTS. WHILE ENJOYING THE EVENING'S SIGNATURE COCKTAIL, PIRATE TEA, ALL WERE ENCOURAGED TO HUNT FOR TREASURE IN THE SILENT AUCTION. TREASURE COULD BE ACQUIRED BY HIGH BIDS OR BY ANSWERING QUESTIONS AND EARNING A KEY TO A TREASURE CHEST. PAULA SCHUMAN'S KEY WAS THE ONE THAT FIT THE LOCK AND SHE WON A PAIR OF WATERFORD CHAMPAGNE FLUTES. MANY PEOPLE DRESSED IN THE PIRATE THEME, BUT THOSE WHO DIDN'T COULD POSE BEHIND A PIRATE CUT-OUT SO THEY COULD LOOK THE PART. MANY THANKS TO THOSE WHO ATTENDED, PURCHASED TABLES, SPONSORED TABLES, DONATED AUCTION ITEMS, AND/OR WERE EVENT SPONSORS. IT ALL ADDS UP. I WOULD ESPECIALLY LIKE TO THANK OUR SPONSORS: MAIN STREET PHARMACY FOR THE INVITATIONS, THE LHS BOARD OF DIRECTORS FOR THE MUSIC, LAUREL PARK FOR THE BOOKLET, COPY CATZ MEDIA FOR PHOTOGRAPHS, ACADEMY FORD FOR THE HORS D'OEUVRES, BUD MILLER ASSOCIATES FOR THE MAGNET CLIP PARTY FAVOR, BETTY AND DICK COMPTON FOR THE FOYER DECOR, GLENN FEAGIN, LONG & FOSTER REAL ESTATE FOR DESSERT, AND AKBAR MASSOOD, DDS, AND R.L. THOMPSON FOR SPONSORING AUCTION TABLES.

PHOTOS TAKEN AT THE GALA ARE AVAILABLE ON THE LHS WEBSITE, THE LHS FACEBOOK PAGE, AND AT [HTTP://S1171.PHOTOBUCKET.COM/ALBUMS/R557/NEWTINGSCollective/](http://s1171.photobucket.com/albums/r557/newthingscollective/). THE PASSWORD IS: LHS2012. SUGGESTIONS, IDEAS, AND COMMENTS ARE ALWAYS WELCOME! PLEASE CONTACT MARGIE MCCENEY AT [MMCCENEY@YAHOO.COM](mailto:mmcceney@yahoo.com). THANK YOU ALL FOR YOUR SUPPORT.



LHS President Jhanna Levin and the owners of Main Street Pharmacy

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Jeanie and Randy Anastasi pose as Pirates

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Toucan Taco

PLEASE PATRONIZE OUR SUPPORTERS!



Pirate Décor on the Gala Auction Tables

BECOME IMMORTAL!

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. You may purchase on line by visiting www.laurelhistoricalsociety.org or by calling (301)725-7975

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 jmanastasi@verizon.net with your comments, suggestions or story ideas. Thank you!

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
- *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
www.laurelhistoricalsociety.org.



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

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Laurel Historical Society Calendar

June 2012 – December 2012

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

Now through December “True Life: I am a Laurel Mill Worker”: Museum hours Wed and Fri 10 AM – 2 PM and Sun 1PM – 4 PM.	June 14 th at 6:30 PM LHS Friends and Family Picnic at the Museum.	November 4 th at 2 PM Part III of the Tasting Laurel Series: 5 th Annual Taste of Laurel at the Pool Room.
June 10 th at 1:30-3:30 PM Just for Kids at the Laurel Museum: A Laurel Fair circa 1870.	September TBA Part I of the Tasting Laurel Series: A Tour of Gorman Farm.	November TBA Part IV of the Tasting Laurel Series: A Community Conversation.
	October TBA Part II of the Tasting Laurel Series: Lecture with John Peter Thompson, Food Historian.	December 7-9 th Holiday Open House