

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.

THE LAUREL LIGHT HAS A NEW LOOK!

Many thanks to those of you who commented on our last newsletter and made submissions to this one. We appreciate your encouragement and look forward to including your story ideas! Please email The Laurel Light editor, Jeanie Anastasi jmanastasi@verizon.net with your comments or suggestions.

A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

In these difficult economic times, it is inspiring to see so much support from so many people for the Laurel Historical Society. It is that support that made it possible for us to open the Laurel Museum in 1996, and this year to undertake many exciting new ventures from our current exhibit, *Shake Rattle 'n' Roll* to our expanded public and children's programming. Community support comes to us in many ways. Some of that support is financial, through donations and bequests. Our annual gala is our major fund-raiser and I particularly want to thank this year's Gala committee, our generous sponsors and our Silent Auction donors. Other support comes from those who volunteer their time – to be docents, undertake research, speak to groups, help direct

and enhance our educational programs, catalogue our collection, and serve on committees and the Board of Directors. Still others show their support by sharing precious artifacts and stories that expand our understanding of Laurel's history and our ability to tell that story. Our partnership with the City of Laurel has been exceptional, and the support we receive is not only welcomed but is often enthusiastically given by dedicated city employees. Part of what makes Laurel a special community is the demonstrated commitment of its citizens in preserving and understanding its history. On behalf of the Laurel Historical Society, thank you, our members, for your support.

Karen A. Lubieniecki, President

A MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Thank you all so much for your support of the Laurel Historical Society. Since I joined the Society last June, we have worked hard to build upon the wonderful foundation of a quality institution. In our efforts to become an integral member of the community, we have raised the bar in our outreach, education, and exhibition efforts and will

continue to do so through your support! In researching for our current exhibit, *Shake Rattle 'n' Roll: Laurel in the 1950s* we learned a lot about what Laurel was like 50 years ago. Many of the things we learned have parallels to the Laurel community today. What stood out most to us as we did our research was the importance of community. I believe that in many ways this sense of community is still what defines Laurel. The overwhelming community support that the Society receives is proof of that sense of community. It is because of each and every one of you that the Laurel Historical Society exists and is able to do the work that we do. Thank you!

Lindsey Baker, Executive Director

BOARD MEETING SCHEDULE

LHS Board meetings are held the 4th Thursday of each January, April, July, and Oct. The next meetings are July 23rd, Oct 22nd, and January 28, 2010. Members are most welcome to attend these exciting meetings. They are at 7:30 PM in the Pool Meeting Room. Our Annual Meeting this year is on May 14th.

MUSEUM NEWS

The newest exhibit, *Shake, Rattle 'n' Roll: Laurel in the 1950s*, opened in February. In 1950 the population of the City of Laurel numbered just over 4,000. During the 1950s changes in society shook basic beliefs and fears rattled the status quo. As Laurel rolled into the future its residents found their lives shifting in many ways. By 1960, Laurel's population doubled to over 8,000 and the social and commercial centers had shifted.

What happened to Laurel between 1950 and 1960? How did national trends affect Laurel? Why did the town change so drastically? Join us as we explore Laurel in the 1950s, a community in transition.

What's Your Story?

The Laurel Historical Society is interested in hearing YOUR story about the 1950s. Whether you lived in Laurel or lived somewhere else, we want to hear from YOU! If you weren't alive in the 1950s but you'd like to share what you've heard from your parents, grandparents, movies, television and more, we also want to hear from YOU! Join us at the museum or on line (laurelhistoricalsociety.org) and tell us your story.

Museum Shop News

Karen Lubieniecki and Frieda Weise, along with representatives from the consulting agency MudPuddle, presented at the Small Museum Conference in February about our on-line shop. They discussed the design, content selection, management and maintenance of the shop as well as the process for filling orders. Way to represent the LHS ladies!

Don't forget to visit the Museum shop (in person or on-line) to purchase your Laurel items and shop our "Fifties Corner" for objects related to our current exhibit. Check out the new LHS logo t-shirts and sew on patch.

Children's Corner

We have had several successful programs for the children in our community. The recent *Have a Blast in*

the Past! was well attended and featured 1950s music, toys and games as well as a soda shop. We also have created an Educator's Corner on our website that includes lesson plans and resources to be utilized by teachers, scout leaders, home school groups and others. Our research library is available for children and their parents to research topics of interest related to Laurel History. Check it out!

The entire student body of Laurel Elementary School is visiting the Museum for tours and activities in April and May. This is the first time that the entire school has visited and we are very excited about this partnership.

The museum is open Wednesday 10AM – 2PM, Friday 10AM – 2PM and Sunday 1PM – 4PM and by appointment.

RESEARCH LIBRARY HAS EXPANDED HOURS

The Museum's Research Library is open to the public on Mondays from 10 AM -12PM. If you are interested in doing research or helping in the research library, please call the Museum.

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Please welcome our new members:
Michael and Ela Peden
Amber Cook

CHANGE IN MEMBERSHIP YEAR

Please be advised that the membership year will now be July 1 through June 30. Membership renewals will be mailed in May. If you have already renewed, you are in good standing until next June 2010. If not, you will be receiving a

notice. You can now renew or join on-line!!

VOLUNTEER UPDATE

Please welcome new volunteers:
Mary Dresser: Shop and Docent
Jannie Curry: Research & Special Events
Celeste Dade-Vinson: Shop and Docent

Volunteers are needed for the following:
Museum Shop for two afternoons per month from Noon to 2:00 PM.

&

Assistant Shop Manager for approximately six hours per month to assist with shop records, ordering and sales. Hours are flexible and retail experience is helpful but not necessary.

GALA WRAP-UP

There was a *Moonlight Over Laurel: A 1950s Evening* on April 4th for the annual Laurel Historical Society Gala. Guests enjoyed a fabulous buffet dinner, dancing to the Swing Time Big Band and the always spirited and competitive Silent Auction.



Mr. and Mrs. Kim, Owners of Main Street Pharmacy

We would like to acknowledge and thank the following gala sponsors for their generous contributions:

Main Street Pharmacy

Gertrude L. Poe
Glenn Feagin, Coldwell Banker
Residential
 Brokerage
Revere Bank
Schembari Family Dentistry
Patricia Bentley-Fisher
 in memory of Elwood L. Fisher
UPS
Snow Hill Garden Club

Thank you also to our *Rebels with a Cause* who made monetary donations to the gala:

John and Lesley Brinton
Julia Brown
Larry and Barbara Eldridge
Jim and Marlene Frazier
Anne-Marie Gabor
Russell and Jean Jones
Dr. and Mrs. Akbar Masood
Maryland Massey
Jim and Bobbi McCeney
Bob and Jeanne Mignon
Lou and Carole Montesi
Bob and Bea Newkirk
Betty Wingate

Look for a listing of our generous Silent Auction donors in the next newsletter in August.

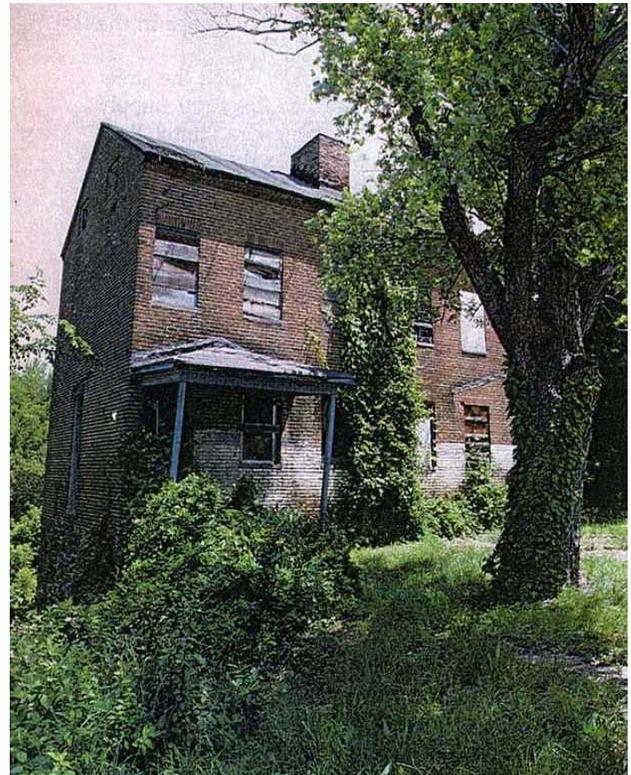
ADAPTIVE RE-USE OF BUILDINGS

Submitted by Elizabeth L. Compton

The Laurel Museum was originally a c 1840 millworker's house. It is an example of the adaptive re-use of historic buildings. It housed four families who labored in the nearby Laurel Cotton Mill in the town of "Laurel Factory" until 1875.

What better use of this structure could there be than for it to be reborn as an educational institution to tell the story of the early resident's lives and culture? Today's children have the opportunity to learn of their daily lives and the history of the development of the Laurel Community. Such re-use improves neighborhoods, fosters economy and nurtures cultural assets by depicting the unique heritage of our town.

There are many such examples of adaptive re-use of older structures, homes and businesses in Laurel. Some will be featured in future publications. Would you like to highlight their stories? If so, send an old and a current picture and as much history as you know to share with our readers and we will feature them in a future edition of the Laurel Light.





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.

DID YOU KNOW?

With all the talk about the new Laurel Library lately we thought we would share with you the historical path our town library has taken. The Laurel Free Library started out in a space at 904 Montgomery Street. It was then moved to the Patuxent Bank Building at the northwest corner of Main Street and Washington Boulevard on the 2nd floor. In 1929 the library moved to the 300 block of Main Street and shared space with the Laurel Women’s Club. The current library was built on 7th street on land donated by the Stanley family.

ANOTHER BUILDING DEMOLISHED!

Many remember when the Tastee Freeze on Route 1 was the first McDonald’s complete with the iconic golden arches. Sadly, the building was demolished in March to make way for another business to be built on the site.



Demolition of Tastee Freeze/McDonald’s photograph submitted by Mike McLaughlin

LAUREL REMEMBERS...

Excerpt reprinted from a 1999 Laurel Leader article by Elizabeth L. Compton

In a town named for a species of local flora, spring is an important time of year. Neighbors re-emerge after the winter’s hibernation, and things start happening. Here are one lifelong Laurelite’s recollections of seasons past:

As another beautiful spring turns to summer, I am reminded of many spring times of my childhood in Laurel. I grew up on Second Street when it still was a narrow, tree-lined, dead-end restricted lane where tufts of grass, violets and dandelions grew in the space between the brick sidewalks and the street. It extended only from Laurel

Avenue to Main Street. This was before Route 1 or “The Boulevard” as we called it, was split into north-and south-bound lanes through Laurel.

We had wonderful neighbors who took loving care of their homes and gardens, especially at spring clean-up time. The Miller family on the north side of our house had a beautiful yard with a rose-covered gazebo on the front lawn of their Victorian home, and a gigantic sycamore tree in the back, with shrubbery and flowers dotting other areas. The yard was fenced but the much-used gate between our properties opened to the happy traffic between the families. Mrs. Miller and my grandmother traded seeds and plants until they had developed a colorful, mirror-image perennial garden fence row.

I delighted to see the bees and hummingbirds and butterflies fluttering over the bergamot and phlox outside my bedroom window, and the line of greens, pinks, lavenders and yellow blossoms. I remember my brother and I were awakened by our parents to view the white, fragrant, night-blooming cereus plant. On other summer evenings we woke to see the flaming sky of the aurora borealis. What exciting moments! There was a large open field across the street, where bales of hay were stored in a three-sided barn. Half of the field was mowed so the boys in the neighborhood could play ball. The other half grew tall grass mixed with wildflowers, honeysuckle, buttercups, daisies and chicory. A tiny stream meandered through the back of the field where polliwogs, waterbugs and little fish skittered in the shallow water.

Laurel was a great place in which to grow up! It still is!

It is encouraging to see young people moving to Laurel in new homes and restoring the older ones, taking pride in their surroundings and planting gardens. The city, business and civic organizations who have planted our streetscapes with trees and flowers should be commended.

There are many pockets of natural beauty left in Laurel and our appreciated city parks. Our own mountain laurel (*Kalmia latifolia*), which promoted our 19th century dwellers to name our town for this native plant, will be blooming in June. Watch for it!



A Quarter of Fun with the LHS

February 2009 Opening of
"Shake, Rattle 'n' Roll: Laurel in the
1950s"



Friends Old and New Enjoy the Opening

"Who Were Ozzie and Harriet" Lecture
February 2009



"Have a Blast in the Past" March 2009



Kids learn about authentic 1950s Toys

For More Images, Visit:
[www.laurelhistoricalsociety.org/
pages/photoGallery.html](http://www.laurelhistoricalsociety.org/pages/photoGallery.html)



Junior Docents lend a helping hand

Moonlight Over Laurel: A 1950s Evening



Betty Compton and Lindsey Baker



Holly and Scott Lilienthal



Mayor Craig Moe and Bobbi McCeney



Laurel Historical Society Calendar

May-June 2009

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

May 14, 2009, 7:30 pm
Annual Meeting for
Members at the Laurel Pool
Room.

May 16, 2009, 9-3 pm
In Our Backyard Tour: The
Carroll County Farm
Museum. Fun for the entire
family!!

May 23, 2009, 6:00 pm
Have you M.E.T.? Museum
Eats and Theater in Historic
Laurel. Behind the Scenes
Tour of Shake, Rattle 'n'
Roll: Laurel in the 1950s, a
1950s dinner at Oliver's
and Pillow Talk at the
Laurel Mill Playhouse.

June 11, 2009, 6:30 pm
Friends and Family Picnic
at Avondale Street Pavilion.

*June 13, 2009, 1950s Style
Fair at the Museum*

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