



817 Main Street
Laurel, Maryland 20707
301-725-7975
www.laurelhistoricalsociety.org

Ann Bennett, Executive Director
Director@laurelhistoricalsociety.org



Statement from the Laurel Historical Society

The Laurel Historical Society is saddened to learn of the passing of Joseph Robison, Director Emeritus and former chairman of the LHS Board. Our deepest sympathies go out to Joe's wife, Joan, and his daughters, Mitzi, Bette Anne and their families.

Joe Robison's commitment to the Laurel Historical Society (LHS) was long and extensive. He was instrumental in securing and supporting the renovation of the Laurel Museum at 817 Main Street. In 1991 as Mayor and with his support, the Laurel City Council adopted a resolution authorizing the Laurel Historical Society to use the mill workers' house, which the city owned, as the Laurel Museum. As Mayor he also helped in the effort to obtain funding for the building's restoration. He later served for many years as Chairman of the LHS Board.

Joe's love of Laurel was boundless, and his knowledge of our community's history was encyclopedic. His Main Street walking tours were legendary, filled with fascinating stories about people, buildings, and businesses. Firefighter that he was, they often also included details of local fires! All were part of the Laurel story. "Ask Joe" was a common response when a specific question of Laurel history arose. He was always generous with his time and his knowledge to help researchers, including the Laurel exhibit team, find the answer.

Joe's service to Laurel as Mayor and as a member of the Laurel City Council and with the Laurel Volunteer Fire Department was equally impressive, including a critical role in integrating the latter. The list of his accomplishments is too long to list here.

Laurel has lost a valued citizen. We are a better community and organization because of Joe Robison. His legacies will live on, but he will be sorely missed.

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