



# ABOUT TOWN

News, events and resources for Kensington Historical Society members and friends

PO Box 453, Kensington MD 20895 May 2009

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**Kensington's Windmills**



See how "green" Kensington was long before it was cool to be green!  
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## UPCOMING MEETING Tues., May 12, 2009 Montgomery County & Maryland Gold Mining History

Was gold mined in Kensington? The Historical Society Meeting will feature a slide show and talk by author **Walter Goetz**. He will share anecdotes and historical facts of this little known piece of County and State history. Mr. Goetz draws from his collection, the largest in existence, of Maryland, DC and Northern Virginia documents, photographs and personal interviews with former local gold miners. He has spent 35 years collecting this history and verifying mine locations. He has authored 3 books on this subject: Maryland Gold Fever, Montgomery County (MD) Gold Fever, and Fairfax (VA) Gold Fever. (Available at the program, priced \$8 to \$10)

**Come for coffee at 7:00 pm, lecture at 7:30 pm**, followed by the business meeting. Kensington Town Hall/Armory, Lower Level, 3710 Mitchell Street at Armory Avenue.

We will also have *The Kensington Walking Tour* available (\$3.00) and *The Spirit of Methodism in Kensington 1881-2007* (\$25).

## "The greenest building is one that is already built!"

-- Carl Elfante

There is a lot of information available on *new* building methods to create "green buildings." **Susan Soderberg** answers different questions in this article for The Preservationist: **"Green Rehabilitation of Historic Buildings."**

...But what about existing buildings? Tearing down existing buildings creates pollution and contributes to the landfill waste stream! Can an old building be made more energy efficient through retrofitting and rehabilitation without expending the energy and new materials cost of tearing it down and building a new structure? The answer to this question is Yes!

In fact, "Green" and "Historic" are not contradictory terms. According to Richard Moe, President of the National Trust for Historic Preservation, "We can't build our way out of our environmental problems. New buildings will always have an impact on the environment. We can only mitigate this

impact, not reverse it. The only way to reduce the impact of buildings on the environment is to address the performance of existing structures." It was noted architect Carl Elfante who coined the phrase, "The greenest building is one that is already Built" in a 2007 article for the journal of the National Trust for Historic Preservation. He says, "To fully capture the value of the existing building stock... requires an understanding of how to respect and renew what is already here and a vision for where and how to transform the legacy of the past into the promise of tomorrow."

Many old buildings may already have some energy efficient components.

See GREEN on page 3

Montgomery Preservation Inc. President **Wayne M. Goldstein**, 56, died from a heart attack on April 27. Wayne believed wholeheartedly in civic activism and a government that was directed by and responded to the citizens it governed. He worked tirelessly within that framework in many positions with the Montgomery County Civic Federation, as a columnist for the Sentinel Newspaper, and as an officer of the Kensington Heights Citizens Association. He was serving his fourth term as President of Montgomery Preservation Inc. through which he led the on-going fight to protect the Historic Preservation laws of Montgomery County and through these laws, its tangible history. He will be missed in many arenas.

## Knapp Preservation Amendment 09-1 Update

By Julie O'Malley

Since 1979, Montgomery County has had a Preservation Ordinance as part of its Master Plan for Historic Preservation. County Councilmember Michael Knapp has proposed an amendment to this Ordinance which will seriously damage the protection of our county resources.

The Ordinance establishes processes to identify and designate areas and structures deserving of protection, for owners of historic resources to know that their modifications are respectful of the history, and for owners to receive tax incentives to offset some of the expenses associated with maintaining a historic property.

Montgomery County and its historic preservation laws are nationally respected and admired as a model by communities all over the country. They strike a balance of protecting historic resources without being onerous to the property owner – last year, of 179 applications for work permits in historic areas, 176 were approved! An additional bonus to owners of historic properties is the ability to work with professional staff of the Historic Preservation Commission to optimize their designs.

On March 31st, the County Council held a hearing on an amendment to the Montgomery County Preservation Code introduced by Councilmember Michael Knapp. The changes to the code which appear in this amendment would:

Overturn a time-honored national standard as a criterion for historic significance.

Eliminate the County Council from the decision-making process in certain situations and sharply curtail citizen input on historic significance during designations.

Allow owner objection to remove the site from consideration for historic designation in all but exceptional cases.

This amendment will seriously erode the protection now in place for the resources it is meant to guard. Surprisingly, this amendment was drafted with NO input from the preservation specialists in the County.

The March 31st County Council hearing had 34 speakers. There were no questions from the council members. No council members were co-sponsors for this amendment. Of the 34 speakers at the hearing, all but 3 were opposed. All 3 local government entities -- the HPC, the Planning Board, and the County Executive -- came in strongly opposed. 12 organizations, 19 individuals, and 4 government entities added their voices. Leadership from the National Trust, Maryland Historical Trust, and Preservation Maryland provided detailed legal arguments against the amendment as proposed. Non-preservation groups such as Montgomery County Civic Federation and the Potomac Valley Chapter of the AIA came from different perspectives to arrive at the same conclusion: This amendment will do irreparable harm to the preservation of the historic resources in Montgomery County!

The County Council record from this hearing will remain open through May 22nd and I urge you to email the Council and President Phil Andrews at [county.council@montgomerycountymd.gov](mailto:county.council@montgomerycountymd.gov) and ask them to vote this amendment down. At this time it is especially important for your representatives to know the strength of support for preservation in this County!

My thanks to Montgomery Preservation Inc., the County's umbrella preservation organization, for some of this commentary. For more detailed information see Montgomery Preservation's web page [www.montgomerypreservation.org](http://www.montgomerypreservation.org).



## VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Summer is a great time to volunteer! Too many mosquitoes? Too hot? Join us in the cool Archives. We are looking for volunteers to do research for our 2010 Calendar; to help with the publicity and posters for our Concert Series; to scan and organize our photo collection, and more!

Please call Ann 240-423-2827 or Julie 301-942-8933. Don't forget, we are registered with Montgomery County schools for student service learning hours too!

## Join Us for Our Artful Garden Party ~ June 6

Every year our community grows a little.

This year we're planning our Annual Historical Society Garden Party to bring the community together on June 6th. Please come and share house histories and meet neighbors, new and old!

The Montgomery Arts Association (sponsors of the Labor Day Paint the Town Art Show) will have local artists exhibiting - what else? – artwork with a Kensington theme.

The artists may be willing to part with some of their work, so bring your checkbooks. (Local artists can participate through the Montgomery Arts Association – [VSurlesGraphics@comcast.net](mailto:VSurlesGraphics@comcast.net))

Party details and a reservation form will be included in our next mailing.

Save the date - June 6th!

Please patronize our sponsors. We thank them for their support!

**BENEFACTORS:** Macon Construction (Carl Mahaney), Long and Foster (Gary Ditto); **PATRONS:** Knowles Printing, Kensington Pharmacy, West Howard Antiques Association, Safeway; **SUPPORTERS:** Amicus Green Building, Café 1894 (Duane Rollins), Chesapeake Framing, Ferris Baker Watts (Hank Warner), Hardware City, Johnson's, Kensington Row Bookshop, Logan's Automotive, Jan Marfyak Designs, Mirkin Foot Associates, Mizell Lumber & Hardware, Moose, Green and Korom, PA, Osiris Books, Patrick Realty Co., Pritchard's, Harry B. Sewell, Jr., and Sub Urban!

**GREEN from page 1**

Buildings constructed before central air conditioning and heating, elevators, and flat tar roofs, were built to work with the environment, not against it. Large operable windows let in light and air; shutters could keep out either the hot summer sun or the cold winter wind; porches, window awnings and trees shaded the building in the summer but allowed the warming rays of the lower winter sun; high ceilings, transoms, attic windows, cupolas and towers let the heat rise up and out.

**Kensington's unique garden atmosphere not only defines our town, but the tree canopy cleans the air and cools our homes.**

**Celebrate Kensington's Green Day May 9th, Town Hall 9 to 1 - Plant a Tree!**

We have learned some surprising things about sustainability in our study of older buildings. We have learned that properly repaired and maintained historic wood-frame windows [reglazed and with channel inserts] do not have to be replaced to keep out the cold. In fact, with the addition of compatible storm windows historic windows can be even more efficient than the new double-paned windows, plus less costly to repair. We have learned that the old natural roofing material of wood, metal, tile or slate is actually more energy efficient than asphalt shingles. And we now know that modern energy saving tools such as geothermal heat pumps, eco-roofs, insulation and solar panels can be sympathetically installed in historic buildings, thus preserving the historical character of a building while taking advantage of these green technologies.

Historic preservation and the sustainability of older buildings go hand in hand. Most historic buildings can be retrofitted and

made into energy efficient places for modern operations. By keeping the façade and important historical elements intact, a commercial building can remain a historical treasure for the community and still be useful.

Even the federal government is endorsing the preservation of older buildings rather than tearing them down and building new. According to the Department of Defense Legacy Resource Management

Program, "A compelling argument can be made that appropriate rehabilitation and reuse of existing facilities, rather than new construction, is the single most important way for an installation to improve its sustainability rating while meeting current and developing mission requirements."

Green rehabilitation of older buildings is not a new idea; it is a process that is meeting our modern needs while retaining what is important for our communities. Historic preservation is not just for beautification, it is about conserving the physical pieces of our past that can inform us and help us to build a better future. And that is what sustainability is all about.

Susan Soderberg  
Education and Outreach  
Supervisor, retired  
Montgomery County  
Preservation Office

**Our History Patrons Continue to Give!**

Autographed copy of Forest Glen from Rich Schaffer and Ric Nelson.

A copy of Wheaton, by Laura Leigh Palmer, donated by the Kensington Row Bookshop.

Digital recorder for oral histories, donated by Anonymous.

Clippings related to the Carroll family, donated by Ellen Gutow.

A 1950 Kensington Elementary School Graduation Program including student list, donated by Dan Hayes.

**Wedding Traditions of Montgomery County**  
on display through June 27, 2009

**Waters House History Center**, 12535 Milestone Manor Lane, Germantown, MD

*Something Old: Wedding Traditions in Montgomery County* examines the material culture related to the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century American wedding, with a focus on the choices made by brides, grooms and families from Montgomery County. We'll go beyond the wedding dress itself to take a look at the many other aspects of a wedding, from the engagement through to the Golden Anniversary. The heart of the exhibit is the display of ten wedding gowns, one from each decade from 1870 to 1960, all worn by local brides.

**Hours:** Wednesday & Saturday, 10-4:00 and by appointment  
**Information:** 301-515-2887 / [www.montgomeryhistory.org](http://www.montgomeryhistory.org)



**2009 KHS OFFICERS & BOARD MEMBERS**

**OFFICERS:**

- President Julie O'Malley
- Vice Presidents Elisenda Sola-Sole & Steve Cohen
- Treasurer Detta Voesar
- Recording Secretary Leanne Pfautz
- Corresponding Secretary Open

**COMMITTEE CHAIRS:**

- Archives Ann Pfautz
- Calendar Janet Barnes
- Concerts Wat Stewart
- Grants Barbara Scharman
- Membership Toni Ward
- Newsletter Gary Ditto
- Oral Histories Leanne Pfautz
- Preservation John Doherty
- Programs Eli Sola-Sole & Steve Cohen

**AT LARGE MEMBERS:**

- Stuart Cohen
- Sigrid Doherty
- Jack Gaffey
- Barry Peoples
- Barbara Scharman

**Kensington Historical Society**  
**PO Box 453**  
**Kensington, MD 20895**

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**KHS MEETING**  
**Tuesday, May 12, 2009**  
7:00 p.m. Coffee  
7:30 p.m. speaker **Walter Goetz** -  
Montgomery County & Maryland Gold  
Mining. A brief business meeting follows.

*The Society wishes to thank those who have renewed their memberships for 2009! We appreciate your continued support!*

## 2009 KENSINGTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP FORM

Annual dues January 1 through December 31:

Let us know if you would like to be active on our Board of Directors: [info@kensingtonhistory.com](mailto:info@kensingtonhistory.com)  
Please send completed form to KHS, PO. Box 453, Kensington, MD 20895

INDIVIDUAL Membership \$ 20  
FAMILY Membership \$ 25  
Business (Small & Non-Profit) \$75  
Corporate \$100  
Lifetime \$500

I want to join the Kensington Historical Society \_\_\_\_ / renew membership. \_\_\_\_

Enclosed: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

NAME(S): \_\_\_\_\_  
ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_  
PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_ EMAIL: \_\_\_\_\_  
Lived in Kensington since \_\_\_\_\_

Please consider getting involved in one of our committees. Learn more about your society.

I am interested in the following committees: (Please circle)

Programs    Membership    Newsletter    Socials    Archives    Concerts    Grants    Oral Histories    Preservation



*Windmills in Kensington – A green community from the start!*