



# ABOUT TOWN

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

PO Box 453, Kensington MD 20895

February 2010

**Warner Circle Update**  
Page 2



**International Day of the Book**



A Kensington tradition! Mark your calendars - April 25, 2010  
Page 2

**Welcome New Members**

KHS Welcomes our new members  
Page 2



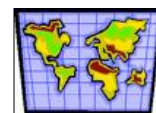
**Tax Credits for Homeowners**

Owners of any property listed in the Mo. Co. Master Plan for Historic Preservation are eligible for a credit.  
Page 3



**Donations to KHS**

See what interesting items have been donated to the Society.  
Page 3



**KHS Membership**



Join today! Membership form for new & returning members.  
Page 4

## The Society Welcomes Roy Sewall at next meeting, February 9, 2010

The Kensington Historical Society welcomes Roy Sewall, local author and leading photographer of the Potomac River and the C&O Canal. His February 9th presentation will include slides of his award winning photographs, giving his perspective of those historic waterways. Mr. Sewall has published two books, *Our Potomac, from Great Falls through Washington, D.C.* in 2005 and *Great Falls and Mather Gorge* in 2009. His photos have appeared on the National Park Service Passport Stamp Set and on banners throughout the C & O Canal National Historical Park. He's worked as the project leader to scan C&O Canal Nat'l Historical Park's entire collection of historic prints.

We invite you to attend our Kensington Historical Society meeting for his presentation, Tuesday, February 9th, at the Kensington Town Hall/Armory, 3710 Mitchell Street, ground floor. Come for coffee at 7 PM. Roy Sewall will speak from 7:30 to 8:30 followed by a brief business meeting. Mr. Sewall will have books available for purchase. ❖

## Historic Preservation Questions & Answers

**If my house is included in the historic district, does this mean I can't make changes?** No. Historic district designation does not freeze a house in time. It is a safeguard against hasty demolition of, or alterations, to a house with important architectural and historical qualities.

**Will I be forced to restore my house if I am in the historic district?** No. The Historical Preservation Commission, the board that reviews countywide historic area work permits (HAWP's), cannot require you to make alterations or changes to your property. Alterations existing at the time that the district is designated are "grand-fathered." For example, even if your house had slate roof in the past, but now has an asphalt-shingled roof, the Commission cannot require you to restore the roof with slate.

**What about general maintenance? Do I need a permit for this type of work?** No. You don't need an approval to paint non-masonry surfaces; repair roofs, gutters, trim, lights and exterior doors and windows with materials and design matching what is already in place; landscape, such as planting trees, bushes or flower beds; repair paving with matching materials; or perform general maintenance.

**I want to redo my bathroom. Do I need approvals from the Historic Preservation Commission?** No. All interior changes to your house do not need a permit. The exception would be if you want to apply for State tax credits and then your plan would need pre-approval.

**Do I need approval of the Historic Preservation Commission to alter the exterior of my house?** Yes. You need a permit from the Commission when you want to move, demolish, or alter the exterior of a house, including sidewalks and driveways. Also, if you are constructing a new building or addition on the property, regrading the property, or removing mature trees, you need a permit. For example, if you wanted to enclose a porch, you would need to obtain a permit from the Commission.

**I want to expand my kitchen and add a family room to my house. Should the addition be traditional or contemporary?** Either style could be appropriate. The design of the new addition should make clear what is original and what is new. For example, a new addition could duplicate the style and materials of a 1920s Craftsman-style house, but have a distinctively different roof height or grouping of windows. In

Continued on page 2

**IN REMEMBRANCE**

We're sorry to report the passing of KHS member, Phil McCurdy, at the age of 95. He lived nearly his whole life in Kensington and just this past fall, he and his wife Margaret celebrated their 70th Wedding Anniversary. In the 40's Mr. McCurdy bought the "tin shop" at the corner of Howard and Armory Avenues, now the Clock shop, and excavated the basement for his plumbing business. As his business grew, he built the two story building across Armory Avenue and moved his plumbing shop there. He contributed a lot to the Kensington community, including serving briefly on the Town Council.

**Warner Circle Update**

As reported in our October newsletter, the County Planning Board has approved the concept plan for Warner Circle. This includes removal of the 1950's nursing wing and kitchen extension, and building an addition and a separate oval meeting room space. Approximately 30 county park staff from the Planning, Cultural Resource, and Archaeology divisions would move from their rented space in Silver Spring. With the severe budget cuts in the County, funds for these types of improvements are on the chopping block. There will be budget hearings February 9th and 10th at the County Council building on Maryland Avenue in Rockville at 7 p.m. both nights. The Town and our State Representatives had secured a \$250,000 Bond from the State for this project but it requires matching funds from the County. Please make your voices heard by either testifying at the hearing (240-777-7803) or emailing the County Council President: councilmember.floreen@montgomerycountymd.gov, copies will go to all Council members. ❖

**THE INTERNATIONAL DAY OF THE BOOK FESTIVAL**

Sunday, April 25<sup>th</sup> from 11 to 4 PM on Howard Avenue, east. For detailed information see [www.dayofthebook.com](http://www.dayofthebook.com) or drop in the Kensington Row Bookshop.

**Historic Preservation Q&A - continued from page 1**

another situation, an addition to a frame 1840s Gothic Revival cottage could be primarily of glass, but include pointed arches and a steep gabled roof, two distinct characteristics of an 1840s cottage. In general, new design should be differentiated from the original building, yet be compatible in style, height, scale, materials, texture or detailing. When considering a large project, talk with the staff first.

**How do I get a permit from the Historic Preservation Commission?**

Permit applications are available at the Historic Preservation Office, 1400 Spring St. Suite 500, Silver Spring 20910 (301-563-3400). Applications can be downloaded from [www.montgomeryplanning.org](http://www.montgomeryplanning.org), in the left column select "Divisions" and then "Historic Preservation." The Commission will review the application at one of its twice monthly public meetings. After considering your application, the Commission votes to approve or deny your application. Sometimes the Commission approves the application with conditions which will have been discussed with you. The staff of the Commission is

always available to answer your questions throughout the process.

**Is it difficult to get a permit application approved by the Historic Preservation Commission?**

No. More than 95% get approved. Working with the staff early in your design stage assures an easy process. You can also ask for a preliminary review by the Commission. The Commission is required to make a decision within 45 days or you are automatically approved.

**What are the benefits to living in an historic district?**

In addition to the financial benefits, historic district designation is a good measure of protection against inappropriate new construction, or unmanaged development within a neighborhood. Often, older, established communities are vulnerable to the hasty demolition or over scaled additions to existing houses. Extra lots that once served as side yards or double lots are also at risk.

**Where can I get more information?**

You can call the Montgomery County Historic Preservation Commission at 301-563-3400. ❖

**WELCOME NEW MEMBERS**

- Patience & Mark Ball
- Robin & Diana Dinerman
- Yusmedy & William Keefe
- Maura Harty & James Larner
- David Maxwell
- Joyce & Stephen Oliner
- Dr. Kristina Rother
- Ruth & Milton Spivack

**SPECIAL THANKS TO DEBRA AND MIKE McCURRY**

for opening their home to us for the KHS Holiday Party! Thanks to all the volunteers and attendees who have continued to support this event every year since 1977! We were pleased to be joined by Congressman Chris VanHollen and his wife, Katherine, and Town Councilman John Thompson and his wife Jean. Wat Stewart brought us the holiday harmonies of the a cappella group, the Augmented Eight.

**SECTOR PLAN UPDATE**

Due to our deadline we will not have the latest information on the County Council Public Hearings held February 2<sup>nd</sup> on the Kensington Sector Plan. We will try to keep you posted on our website: [www.kensingtonhistory.org](http://www.kensingtonhistory.org). The approved October Draft Plan can be seen at [www.montgomeryplanning.org](http://www.montgomeryplanning.org) under Kensington in the Planning Section.

**THANKS TO ALL WHO HAVE SENT IN THEIR 2010 DUES. 2010 SHOULD BE REFLECTED ON YOUR ADDRESS LABEL.**

Our thanks to Sam Hoxie and Gary Ditto for the new look on our website [www.kensingtonhistory.org](http://www.kensingtonhistory.org)! Let us know what else you'd like to see there.

Please patronize our sponsors. We thank them for their support! Their addresses and phone numbers may be found in our 2010 calendar - links to their websites are on [www.kensingtonhistory.org](http://www.kensingtonhistory.org) ~~~ **BENEFACTORS:** Macon Construction (Carl Mahaney), Long and Foster Realtors (Gary Ditto); **PATRONS:** Samuel S. Case Cabinetmakers, Kensington Pharmacy, Knowles Printing, Safeway; **SUPPORTERS:** State Delegate Al Carr, Amicus, Chesapeake Framing, David Gregg Tree Services, Hardware City, Johnson's, Jubilee Assoc. of MD, Kensington Caboose, Kensington Row Bookshop, Kitchen & Tile Classics, Logan's Automotive, Mizell Lumber & Hardware, Moose, Green & Korom, P.A., Osiris Books, Patrick realty Co, Sparrow's, Sub\*Urban Trading Company, Textile & Rug Museum and Susan I. Wranik Associates

## Tax Credits for Homeowners

Owners of any property listed in the Montgomery County Master Plan for Historic Preservation are eligible for a credit equal to 10 percent of documented expenses for exterior maintenance, restoration or preservation work of over \$1000 in a calendar year. The tax credit is applied towards County real property taxes.

### APPLICATION DEADLINE APRIL 1ST.

Eligible work includes: repairs, restoration, or preservation of exterior features of designated structures and homes within an historic district. Examples of eligible projects would include (but not be limited to) painting, repairing roofs or windows or replacing them in-kind, repairing architectural trim or ornament, uncovering and repairing original siding, re-pointing brick or stone foundations or chimneys, restoring a documented feature such as a dormer or porch that was previously altered or removed, and repairing and maintaining outbuildings such as barns and garages. New construction and interior work are not eligible.

## Meeting Minutes - November 10, 2009

Immediately preceding the meeting, attendees were treated to a special Kensington Cabin 75th Anniversary cake along with coffee and cider.

President O'Malley welcomed everyone to the meeting. In recognition of Veteran's Day, John Doherty led attendees in the Pledge of Allegiance. We were honored to be joined by and the group paid special tribute to Veterans Wat Stewart, John Morris, Stuart Freeman, Gary Ditto, Dan Botkiss, Edward Kirby and Chuck Toner who were in attendance.

President O'Malley then introduced the speaker, Montgomery County's Senior Parks Historian Jamie Kuhns (who acknowledged her husband who was with her and is also a veteran). Jamie presented a very informative power point presentation to a capacity crowd. The presentation focused on the history of the New Deal, the CWA and M-NCPPC's stream valley projects, including Kensington Cabin. A copy of Jamie's powerpoint is being prepared for the County's website and [www.kensingtonhistory.org](http://www.kensingtonhistory.org) will provide a link as soon as her talk is available. After a short question and answer session, attendees were invited to give their stories about the Kensington Cabin and what it meant to them and to the community at the time.

The Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) reviews tax credit applications, certifies that project work is eligible for tax credits, and forwards recommendations to the County Department of Finance for approval. The approved tax credit is applied to a property owner's tax bill. Any unused portion of this tax credit may be carried forward for as many as five years. If the property were subsequently removed from the Master Plan for Historic Preservation, any unused portion of the tax credit would immediately lapse. A property not listed on the Master Plan for Historic Preservation at the time the work is undertaken is not eligible for the preservation tax credit.

The preservation of your property improves the entire Historic District. We strongly encourage you to apply for a county preservation tax credit if your property is listed in the Master Plan for Historic Preservation and you are doing exterior preservation work on your property. (See District addresses on the [TOK.MD.gov](http://TOK.MD.gov) website)

After the presentation, there was a short business meeting. The Treasurer reported the Society's finances are sound.

Bylaw Committee Co-Chairs Leanne Pfautz and Steve Cohen called the groups attention to the listing of proposed bylaw amendments distributed before the meeting. Upon motion duly made and seconded, the revised bylaws were approved.

Janet Barnes, Chair of the Nominating Committee, read the slate of Officer for 2010 and asked for nominations from the floor.

- President – Julie O'Malley
- Vice President – Steve Cohen
- Treasurer – Detta Voesar
- Recording Secretary – Sheila Dunne
- Corresponding Secretary – Janet Barnes

At-Large Members – Elisenda Sola-Sole, Trammell Maury, Sue Mathis

Upon motion duly made and seconded, the slate was unanimously approved. It was noted that the new term of office begins January 1, 2010.

President O'Malley noted that a sign-up sheet was circulating for the Holiday Party to be held December 12th at the McCurrys. There was a

Complete information is on [www.montgomeryplanning.org](http://www.montgomeryplanning.org), in left column select Divisions, and then Historic Preservation. In the column to the right under Resources, choose the option for tax credits. There are website links for State and Federal Tax Cuts as well. They are each for 20% but have stricter requirements and must be approved before the work begins.

**The Historic Preservation Office has moved** to 1400 Spring Street, Suite 500 W, Silver Spring, MD 20910. This is approximately 3-4 blocks from the previous location. The mailing address of 8787 Georgia Avenue Silver Spring MD, 20910 has not changed, nor has the phone number 301-563-3400. When in doubt, call the Historic Preservation staff to give you guidance on your project. If your project requires an Historic Area Work Permit, you must have one to get your tax credits.❖

### DONATIONS

A large framed Martenet & Bonds Montgomery County Map, 1865 was donated by Dan Hayes and family.

## KHS Archives Hopes to Reopen Soon

The Town has moved ahead with their plans to reconstruct the lower level bathrooms. We have been closed during the reconstruction since this is directly across from our Archives entrance. We hope to be up and running again shortly. Please contact Ann Pfautz at 240-423-2827 or Julie O'Malley 240-460-2548 if you would like to help with ongoing Archive projects such as scanning and organizing our photos and files, or interviewing for oral histories. We will post the reopening date on our website.

short report from the Town's Historic District Committee which is reviewing the historic district boundaries and a report on the Town Sector Plan which has now been approved by the Montgomery County Planning Board. The County Council will be holding a hearing on the Plan in early 2010.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Leanne Pfautz, Recording Secretary❖

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

**RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED**

NON-PROFIT  
ORGANIZATION  
US POSTAGE  
PAID  
KENSINGTON, MD  
PERMIT NO. 5022

**KHS MEETING**  
**Tuesday, February 9, 2010**

Speaker:  
Roy Sewall, local author and leading  
photographer of the Potomac River  
and the C&O Canal.

7:00 p.m. Refreshments  
7:30 p.m. Lecture

Kensington Town Hall/Armory. Lower Level,  
3710 Mitchell Street at Armory Avenue

A KHS business meeting follows the lecture.

**KENSINGTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP FORM**

Annual dues January 1 through December 31, \_\_\_\_\_ (year)

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**