

What's Inside

Lynn Miller

In this first issue of *on the House* in 2020, our Council president, **Theresa Kowalski** reviews a number of developments in moving forward with a new HVAC system in recent months, and discusses some of what we can expect in the way of diverse actions by the Council and projects for the building in coming months.

The manager of Hopkinson House, **Erica Alles**, provides useful reminders of important events coming up for residents, as well as thoughtful reminders of the kinds of regulations that make the life in our large, and largely vertical, community comfortable and convenient for all.

They are so familiar a sight whenever we enter or leave our building that we may scarcely notice the impressive row of ginkgo trees facing us along the southern border of Washington Square. **Dennis McGlade's** informative article will change your awareness of these ancient trees and give you a new respect for them.

The University of Pennsylvania's Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology has recently unveiled several of its reconfigured and updated galleries. Our own (and the Penn Museum's) **Jane Hickman** leads us on a tour of the new Sphinx Gallery, the Mexico and Central America Gallery, and the Africa Galleries.

Concha Alborg provides us with a portrait of an interesting young resident of Hopkinson House, Andrew Silver, and welcomes new

residents **Johanne Lamarche** and **Chris Hardinger**. **Concha**, who is a professor emerita at Saint Joseph's University, also reminds us that newcomers may receive the gift of a welcome basket from the Society Hill Civic Association.

You'll be intrigued to learn from **Martha Cornog** the possibilities for donating your unwanted items to the Philly AIDS Thrift shop, and buying those you can't resist—at very reasonable prices. It's not far from our home and is a charity worthy of your support.

My own contribution takes you inside the headquarters of our handsome neighbor, the Athenaeum of Philadelphia, for a look at the kinds of programs it offers, as well as the charms of its glorious reading room and what to find in its book collections. The Athenaeum, still flourishing today, has had its home in our neighborhood since 1814 and on Washington Square since 1845.

Finally, comes a trip to the rooftop of the world, courtesy of **Joseph Quinn**, who recently visited the Himalayan nations of Bhutan, Nepal, and Tibet. His photos reveal the exotic beauty of the landscapes and landmarks, as well as some of the people in these places halfway around the world.

Our usual feature, **Chef's Corner**, does not appear in this issue, perhaps because its author feared for all our waistlines following the holiday feasts. ■

on the House

The Newsletter of
Hopkinson House • Winter 2020



Message from Council

Theresa Kowalski



It's the first week of 2020 as I'm writing this, so Happy New Year to everyone in our Hopkinson House family. This is a

good time to take stock of what was accomplished in 2019, and lay out the work ahead for 2020.

In 2019, the HVAC upgrade/replacement project took most of the work and attention of the engineering committee and the Council. It also took a big step forward: the feasibility study of seven different options was completed and presented to the homeowners, three of continued on page 2

Occasional Photo by Dennis McGlade



*All of us connected to on the House
wish you a Bountiful, Healthy,
and Happy New Year!*

on the HOUSE

Newsletter Committee

Nelly Childress, editor,
Committee Chair
Lynn Miller, co-editor
Concha Alborg
Martha Cornog
Jane Hickman
Theresa Kowalski
Joseph Quinn

Council Liaison

Theresa Kowalski

Graphic Design

Parallel-Design.com

Advertising

Theresa Kowalski
484-557-0945
TMK.19081@gmail.com

Photography

Janet Burnham
Bari Shor

Issue Contributors

Concha Alborg
Erica Alles
Martha Cornog
Jane Hickman
Theresa Kowalski
Dennis McGlade
Lynn Miller
Joseph Quinn

Hopkinson House Council

hhoacouncil@hotmail.com

Website

Find past issues of
on the House at
www.thehopkinsonhouse.com

Message from Council

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the most promising options were then investigated in more depth, and finally, in October 2019 the Council announced that a decision had been made to proceed with a completely new replacement of the existing two-pipe HVAC system.

Better communications was also an area of emphasis in 2019. Monthly updates, summaries of Council meeting minutes and special purpose President's letters on the HVAC project were all instituted in an effort to keep homeowners and tenants up to date. BuildingLink, an electronic communication and management system, was implemented in the fall in an effort to ease package tracking, delivery and notification; facilitate easier electronic communication with all tenants and homeowners; and enable an electronic bulletin board for all users.

The HHOA finance committee was also reconstituted and charged by the Council to provide expert analysis and recommendations in those areas. The finance committee worked closely with management in development of the budgets for 2020, bringing another layer of insight and input from owners to the Council.

The editor reserves the right to reject opinions/comments, etc., if they are deemed inappropriate or can involve the association in legal troubles.

The work in 2020 will continue to develop in many of the same areas. As I'm writing, I know that the HVAC/engineering committee is already reviewing qualifications submitted from different firms to provide project management services for the HVAC replacement project.

It's anticipated that the project manager will come on in the first quarter of 2020 and will immediately start working on an RFP (request for proposal) for HVAC design services. Design of the system will take place in 2020 immediately followed by an RFP for construction services.

The finance committee in 2020 will be focused on two primary areas. It will be formalizing and recommending an investment policy and overseeing the management of the HHOA invested reserve funds. In addition, this committee will be instrumental in the development and recommendation of different financial institutions to work with regarding the financing of the HVAC project.

Management will begin a review and update of policies and practices in the human resource (HR) area. This will include a revision of the employee handbook which will reflect the outcome of the review of existing practices to ensure that they are fair, objective and in line with current best practices.

Finally, Council, on the advice of its legal counsel, will begin in 2020 a review of HHOA governing documents. The current governing documents have not had a complete review for several decades and, therefore, one is recommended in order to deal with the following:

- obsolete provisions,
- provisions no longer observed or enforced,
- provisions that conflict with current laws,
- poorly written sections and ambiguous provisions,
- changes in technology,
- mistakes and errors,
- changes in the current living experience of owner members.

This review of the governing documents will take time, and any proposed changes to it will need to be in the form of amendments approved by homeowners.

So, the HHOA has a very full plate for 2020 and of course, we'll do our best to keep everyone updated. In the meantime, shortly, we'll begin recruiting for new members on various committees and we encourage homeowners with the appropriate skills to please consider volunteering on those committees.

It makes a difference, and, as you've seen this year with the work of the HVAC/engineering committee and the finance committee, it increases homeowner involvement and brings expertise in the process.

So, let us get on with the work! I'm wishing everyone a happy and healthy upcoming new year. ■

Residents Corner

Residents wishing to make comments or observations on the current issue may send them to: "The Editor," lynnm3@comcast.net. Those who do not have a computer can place their comment in an envelope addressed to "Editor, *on the House*" and give the envelope to the employee at the Resident Services Desk. Your comments will be published in the next issue of the newsletter. Anonymous comments will not be accepted.

Message From Management

Erica Alles



Happy New Year, HHOA residents! I wish you a peaceful, healthy and prosperous year.

Thank you for your patience and cooperation as we conduct needed work and repairs in the building, including large projects such as replacing the building's transformers. The new transformers were custom made and replaced the existing units, located in the rooftop mechanical area and in the garage, and service the entire building. This project will be complete in the beginning of the year.

Some Important Annual Reminders

Owners who are not enrolled in auto debit should have received coupon books for

the 2020 Association fees. Late fees are waived in January as a courtesy to allow owners to update their records.

Please be reminded to submit a copy of the Declaration page from your homeowner's insurance (HO6) policy to the management office, each year upon renewal.

Investor owners must submit a copy of all leases either prior to move-in, or upon renewal. It is imperative that the Association maintains current leases and tenant contact information. This will help ensure that your tenant is able to enjoy the amenities and services of the building.

The Hopkinson House Annual Meeting and Election will be held in April. If you would like to join Council and be part of the future of Hopkinson House, follow instructions in the mailing which will be sent to you in the first quarter. Council terms are for two years. All nominees must be in good standing with the Association.

Please review your Building Link profile/account, to verify that your guest entry permits are current. It is recommended that you review your information such as your phone number, email, and guest permissions regularly, as the staff relies on the information in order to serve you.

Keys may not be held or left at the Resident Services Desk. For example, keys may not be left in an envelope for pick-up. You should instead leave the keys to be picked up in your unit, and leave an entry permit for someone to enter your unit to retrieve the keys.

If you are planning any renovations to your unit—regardless of how extensive or small—please pick up a Renovation Requirement Package at the front desk. We can also email the package to you. Owners and contractors must complete the forms in the package and the contractor must provide an insurance certificate with a minimum of \$2,000,000 liability coverage. Contractors may not begin work in the units

until the renovation package has been approved by Hopkinson House.

Noises in a concrete building like Hopkinson House can travel from floor to floor, or from unit to unit on the same floor. While a particular noise may sound like it is coming from directly above you, it may in fact be coming from another floor or another part of the building. In order to reduce the noise or disturbances experienced by residents, Hopkinson House rules mandate that every unit have 80 percent of floors in the living room, dining room, bedrooms and hall covered with padded carpeting. The kitchen and the bathrooms are exempt from this rule. If you have a chair in an uncarpeted area, please consider rubber or felt tips to alleviate any scraping when it is moved. Likewise, the sound of shoe heels on uncarpeted areas will transmit to other units as well.

Thank you, as always, for taking considerate, neighborly actions. Enjoy the winter season. Stay warm and stay well. ■

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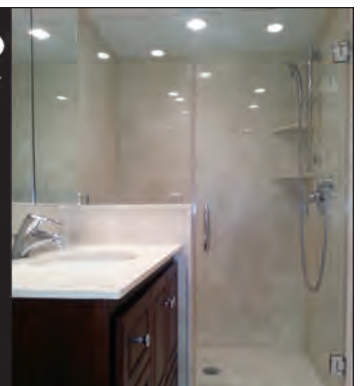
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Not Just Any Old Tree

Dennis McGlade

Not just any old tree is planted in a row in the sidewalk on the south side of Washington Square, directly in front of Hopkinson House. This is a row of twelve *Ginkgo biloba* trees. These trees greet every resident and visitor to Hopkinson House who enter and exit through the lobby to the street. All year, ten of these trees are very self-effacing and well behaved. But two of the twelve trees are female. They are extremely fertile. The stench of their fermenting seed coatings calls a very aggressive attention to themselves for a few unpleasant weeks in the autumn. When it comes to planting ginkgoes in the city, it's OK to show a preference for males trees.*

I personally love ginkgoes. They may be one of my favorite trees. Depending on the variety, their canopy can have various forms at maturity—either wide spreading and magisterial, with an irregular outline, or tightly upright, or pendulous, or some weird Dr Seuss-ian combination of all three. Their leaves have a most interesting shape—like an open fan, sometimes with a slight notch in the middle of the arc. One of the other common names for ginkgo is Maidenhair Tree, because of the similarity of leaf shapes between the maidenhair fern and the ginkgo. Under the right autumnal conditions, the foliage of ginkgoes can turn a beautiful, bright golden color.

The trees are dioecious, meaning they have male

and female flowers on separate trees (except when they don't—I will explain later). For this reason, male trees are preferred for planting in gardens, parks, and along streets. The fruits are edible—not the smelly, fermenting, fleshy outer coating but the acorn-like kernel inside. These taste and look like chickpeas, and are available canned in Asian markets. As the soft outer fruit rots and ferments, it produces a chemical compound called butyric acid. This compound produces the awful smell.

Ginkgoes are also gymnosperms. Their seeds are not protected by an ovary wall; they are naked. What this means is that ginkgoes are more like conifers (pines, spruces, and cycads) than they are like oaks or maples. Male ginkgoes produce small pollen cones. The air-borne pollen fertilizes the female parts. But just to be different, and keep everything interesting, the females do not produce cones. They produce a pair of ovules at the end of small stalks. Much to the annoyance of almost everyone, most of these ovules get fertilized and produce the nasty smelling, grape-sized fruit in copious quantities.

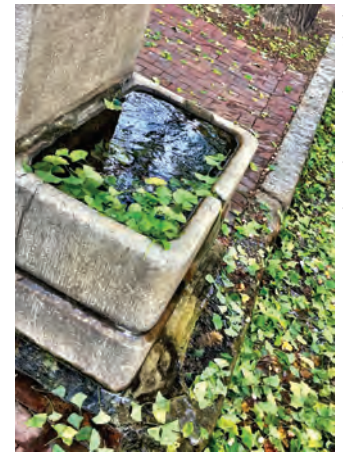
In addition to sexual reproduction through seeds, ginkgoes can also be propagated asexually by means of cuttings. Anyway, that's the way it's supposed to happen. But ginkgoes and sex can get interesting. Although rare, some individual branches

on male ginkgo trees can change sex from male to female. Male trees that grow a few female branches are called “leaky” males (draw your own conclusions). Some believe that there are positive evolutionary reasons why leaky male branches occur rather than the other way around, that is, why there are no “leaky” females (although I believe these also may have been reported).

Besides the sex reversals, what I find equally interesting about the ginkgo is its longevity on the planet. We only have the one species now and it is native to China. But in eons past there were many more species and they were found on almost every continent. Fossilized ginkgo leaves millions of years old look pretty much like those of the contemporary species.

This genus has witnessed two to three hundred million years of life on this earth. What this means is that they survived three extinctions: Permian-Triassic (which killed some 90-percent of all species about 250 million years ago); Triassic-Jurassic (which killed around 70 percent of all species about 200 million years ago); and Cretaceous-Paleocene, (which killed about 75 percent of all species—think dinosaurs and that really big asteroid—roughly 65 million years ago).

Ginkgoes saw the world before there were dinosaurs. They were contemporary with dinosaurs. They saw the end of the dinosaurs, and the rise and evolution



Ginkgo leaves

of mammals, and eventually primates and finally us.

They survived meteor impacts, continental drift, atmospheric changes (hot to cold, wet to dry and back again), changes to the ocean's chemistry, ice ages, and reversal of the earth's magnetic axis (a few times for this). Over all these millions of years they saw and survived so many insects, bacteria, viruses and fungi that the numbers cannot even be imagined.

But for me the big question is will they also survive our present Anthropocene Geologic Age? A ginkgo tree did survive the atomic bomb that fell on Hiroshima. It was growing less than a mile away from the blast site in a temple garden. It is still alive today. Ginkgoes may be the cockroaches of the plant world. Over the many millennia they proved their mettle. Hence they are tough enough to survive, thrive, and procreate even on Philly's streets. Indeed, ginkgoes are not just any old tree. ■

**Ed.: In defense of female ginkgoes, they produce zero pollen. Male ginkgo trees are rampant pollen producers, with an allergy scale rating of seven out of ten.*



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New Galleries Open at Penn Museum

Jane Hickman

What makes the Penn Museum unique among museums of archaeology and anthropology throughout the world is that many of the objects on display were excavated by or collected on expeditions sent out by the Museum. Indeed, the institution was created in 1887 to house objects from the first full-scale excavation of Nippur in ancient Mesopotamia. This means that when you visit the Penn Museum, you will not only see ancient artifacts, but you will also learn how, when, and by whom these pieces were discovered and brought back to Philadelphia.

In November 2019, the Penn Museum in West Philadelphia opened more than 10,000 square feet of redesigned spaces, including its new Sphinx Gallery, Mexico & Central America Gallery, and Africa Galleries.



[Figs 4 & 5] An Egyptian canopic jar and an effigy vessel from Peru are two of the ten objects on display in the Sphinx Gallery.

A larger main entrance and renovation of the 614-seat Harrison Auditorium were also part of the ongoing transformation of the Museum. This follows the debut in April 2018 of new Middle East Galleries.

Last summer, the 25,000-pound red granite Sphinx of Ramses II, the largest Sphinx in the Western hemisphere, was moved through the interior courtyard of the Museum into its own Gallery off of the main entrance. [Fig 1] The Sphinx is now the first “object” visitors see when they enter the Museum. [Fig 2] At the rear of the Sphinx Gallery are ten artifacts from around the world, such as a boundary stone from ancient Mesopotamia, a canopic jar from Egypt, and an effigy vessel from Peru. [Figs 4, 5] These ten objects represent each of the curatorial sections of the Museum. A small



[Fig 1] Surrounded by a team of conservators and riggers, the Sphinx was moved to its new home in the main entrance in June 2019.

gallery space nearby highlights two pairs of Native American moccasins: one pair, created by a Seminole maker, bears witness to their wearer's harsh encounters with warfare, starvation, and disease; the other, created by a highly skilled Huron-Wendat maker, includes intricate beading and quill work.

The Mexico & Central America Gallery highlights 250 objects that illustrate the artistic traditions of distinct cultures, as well as the Penn Museum's research

across the region. [Figs 6, 7, 8] Unique to this collection are its world-class sculptures, including a statue of a Water Goddess—one of two known to exist in the world—along with four majestic Maya stone monuments, one of which helped researchers crack the code in deciphering Maya writing.

The Africa Galleries showcase nearly 300 artifacts, addressing modern-day issues that surround the display of African art and material culture in the continued on page 9



[Fig 2] Visitors in the Sphinx Gallery. [Fig 3] A Global Guide gives a tour in the Mexico & Central America Gallery.



[Figs 6, 7, 8] A Zapotec funerary urn, a Colima figurine, and a gold plaque from Sitio Conte are exhibited in the Mexico & Central America Gallery.

Jody & Johanna

HOLIDAY HAPPINESS AT HOPKINSON HOUSE

"I've had the pleasure of knowing Jody Dimitruk for more than a dozen years. She helped my husband and me get into our home in Queen Village, which ultimately ended up being a particularly tricky sale. But Jody handled it all calmly and expertly. Fast forward to 2019 and Jody and Johanna assisted my mother with the sale of her condo and the purchase of her new co-op in center city. Once again, not a clean and simple transaction, but Jody and Johanna handled it (and us) with absolute professionalism and warmth. I would recommend them to anyone. "

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New Galleries Open at Penn Museum

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West. [Figs 9, 10, 11] Tracing the paths of key objects from their African makers to the Museum adds to current conversations about museums and colonialization. From a dramatic Sowe mask worn exclusively by women in Sierra Leone and western Liberia to a soldier's uniform from Sudan, remarkable objects mix with newly commissioned contemporary art works, presenting stories of Africa and its contributions to the world.

Located at 3260 South Street on the Penn campus, the Museum's outside gardens and a koi pond are also open to visitors. In addition to the new galleries, public programming has been increased. Every day



[Figs 9, 10, 11] A commemorative plaque and a statue of a Queen Mother named Idia, both from Benin, and a carved ivory armlet from Nigeria, are now on display in the Africa Galleries.

at 1:00 pm, visitors can take part in the "Daily Dig," a 15-minute conversation that allows guests to better understand one Museum object. These programs are conducted by Museum staff and graduate students and include a short lecture on the object followed by questions. The Museum has expanded its Global Guides program, which hires refugees and immigrants to conduct tours of the Museum's

galleries—bringing artifacts to life through their modern-day stories. [Fig 3] Five new Global Guides from Mexico, Central America, and Africa will join guides from Iraq and Syria who lead tours of the Middle East Galleries. Included with admission, Global Guides Tours are available Friday through Sunday.

The Penn Museum is open Tuesday through Sunday, 10:00 am to 5:00 pm, and

until 8:00 pm on the first Wednesday of every month. Residents of Hopkinson House can visit by taking the 42 or 40 bus, both of which stop next to the Museum. Visit www.pennmuseum.org or call 215.898.4000 for more information. ■

Jane Hickman is Editor of *Expedition* magazine at the Penn Museum. She is an archaeologist who works primarily in Greece and Turkey.



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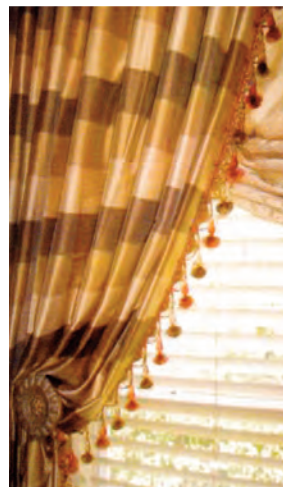
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Getting to Know Our Neighbors

Andrew Silver: A Millennial Voiceover Artist

Concha Alborg (www.conchaalborg.com)

Andrew Silver grew up in Maple Glenn and Blue Bell, Montgomery County. In 2006 he graduated with a Bachelor of Arts degree from Rider University, where he was active in the student newspaper, *The Rider News*, and Rider University Radio Station as a talk show host. While a young graduate, he held several jobs as a public relations specialist, such as a marketing intern at The Russian American United Arts Council, which was beneficial to Andrew because it introduced him to the use of video and multimedia production.

Andrew was always told that he had a good voice and he decided to hone his skills through LLC Voice Box, a professional technical voiceover training program in Narberth and Bala Cynwyd. There he studied vocal and breathing techniques for voiceover execution, concentrating on fundamental elements in commercials, narration and public announcements scripts. After this training, Andrew realized that he had found his niche as a professional voiceover actor.

Andrew provides services in all industries, striving to be the needed voice to reach a target audience. He applies innovative vocalization and articulation techniques for on- and off-camera productions. He has done promotions for a magazine and a book, as well as a narration for a public service announcement

and commercial voice acting. He also did voiceover for Marky, a cartoon produced for Philly CAM (Philadelphia Community Access Media) last year. In the second episode he changed his voice to portray three different characters in the script: a dispatcher, an arcade game announcer and Kenshiro Hayabusa (a character in the arcade game). Marky won the Cammy Award for Excellence in TV Production.

In addition to working part-time with his brother, Andrew is a contractor for his own broadcasting and media production; he is eager to discover challenging voice acting opportunities. His specialized technical equipment consists of a Blue Yeti USB microphone that records in a digital workstation entitled Garage Band. One of his latest accomplishments was to be featured on *The Other Tony Bennett Presents*, a show focusing on Philadelphia talent in entertaining, marketing and networking.

Andrew thinks that one of the wonderful aspects of Hopkinson House is how diverse the residents are age-wise. He feels very comfortable as a millennial attending holiday parties and potlucks, despite the fact that he is a pescatarian, that is, a vegetarian who eats fish but not meat or poultry. His move to the Hopkinson House ten years ago seemed very

natural to him, since he always loved Philadelphia and both his mother and his brother live nearby in Center City.

Andrew keeps busy attending spin classes at the gym, ice skating in winter and roller skating in summer at the Penn's Landing rink. He also enjoys karaoke singing, which has quite an active community in Philadelphia with nightly events.

Andrew's favorite genre is hard rock and heavy metal, which are the type of concerts he attends, music similar to Ozzy Osbourne. Although Andrew doesn't think



Andrew Silver

that he looks like the typical hard rock fan, he is proud to be part of the hard rock community! ■

Photos by Concha Alborg

Welcome Basket



Johanne Lamarche and Chris Hardinger with a basket of goodies welcoming them to Society Hill. If you are a new owner at Hopkinson House and wish to receive a welcome basket from the Society Hill Civic Association, please contact Concha Alborg: calborg@comcast.net.

Hopkinson House Holiday Party

On December 17, 2019, residents and their guests enjoyed food, drink, and conviviality at the annual holiday party in our solarium.

