

# What's Inside

Lynn Miller, [www.lynn-miller.net](http://www.lynn-miller.net)

The days are getting longer, as is our hope for brighter days with the prospect that increased vaccinations may bring an end to our pandemic at last. Spring is about reawakening, and that rebirth is very much in evidence in this spring issue of *on the House*. It's literally so in articles and photos of how our property is greening up. We're also sprucing up our residence to make it run more efficiently and cost-effectively for many years to come.

In her message, Council President **Theresa Kowalski** explains how the replacement of our HVAC system is moving forward, and what we can expect by way of schedules and disruptions when construction begins in earnest by next fall. You won't want to miss a town hall meeting coming up soon that will shed further light on how this massive project will play out.

**Erica Alles**, our manager, reminds us of the April 22nd annual meeting and election of officers for our condo association. She is justifiably pleased that everyone in our community is now eligible to receive COVID-19 vaccinations, which are already underway right here in our own home.

Our building engineer, **Tony Kelly**, also spreads cheer about our ever greater energy efficiency. Read his article to see how these improvements continue to decrease our heating and cooling costs.

**Concha Alborg** details how a number of women, led by our resident Marie Nowak, have put their knitting and crocheting skills to work to create much needed hats, blankets and other accessories for destitute men, women, and children in our community. The contributions of these women may inspire you to join them, or to aid the needy in other ways.

A piece of the history of our own Washington Square is the subject of **Martha Cornog's** fascinating investigation. Popularly known as Congo Square in the years before it became the manicured public park we love today, it was, from the colonial period, a place where Philadelphia's free black population both socialized and buried their dead. You'll also learn how Philadelphia played an important role in the abolitionist movement.

# on the House

The Newsletter of  
Hopkinson House • Spring 2021



On behalf of our landscape committee, **Lisa Schwab** reports on the move, already underway, to increase the number and amount of native species to be installed in our planters, both in the courtyard and in front of our building. Installing such perennials, which are hardy and acclimated to our climate, will eliminate the need for the seasonal planting of annuals.

**Joseph Quinn** continues his exploration of historic buildings in our neighborhood. It's the Farm Journal Building facing the southwest corner of Washington Square that engages him here. Although the *Farm Journal* itself is long gone, its handsome headquarters,

listed on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places, now serves Penn Medicine.

My own essay chronicles the recent acquisition of a part of Joseph Bonaparte's country estate by the state of New Jersey to become a state park. On this land, only a few miles up the Delaware and across the river, Bonaparte built one of the grandest mansions in the nation, where he entertained lavishly during his thirty-year exile here.

In her Chef's Corner, **Jane Hickman** shares a resident's delicious recipe for salmon cakes.

Thanks to Robin Siddall of Parallel Design, Inc., for her design of this issue. ■

Occasional Photo by Dennis McGlade



Witch hazel in the south garden, March 2021.

# on the HOUSE

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*on the House* at  
www.thehopkinsonhouse.com

## Message from Council

Theresa Kowalski



**M**y article in this newsletter will be largely devoted to what's going on with the HVAC project. Work is picking up in the design and planning phase, but most of that is still not visible to many homeowners. Construction has already started on the catwalk in the mezzanine and on the chillers in the top floor mechanical room, and if you live anywhere around them, I'm sure you've heard it.

### What happened to my wet bar? Betterments and Improvements

Unfortunately, the HVAC project will in some cases disturb betterments and improvements installed in units by current or past

owners (to the extent these are located near the current fan coil units and their associated stacks).

After in-depth discussions and consultation with legal counsel, it has been determined that the HHOA bears responsibility for restoring the units only to the condition, and using materials, that closely match those installed originally. Although the Association and its contractors intend to minimize any such disturbances, responsibility for improvements, special finishes, and upgrades therefore rests with the unit owner.

The Hopkinson House Declaration of Condominium expressly vests in the Council an easement "for the inspection, maintenance, repair and replacement of the common elements... accessible from the Apartments" (Section 6.05). Section 7.02 of the Declaration states that "No unit owner may obstruct the Common Elements in any way." Finally, Section 3314(c) of the Uniform Condominium Act provides that "common expenses which benefit fewer than all Units shall be assessed against the Units receiving the benefit."

Accordingly, unit owners will be responsible for disassembling any special treatments that obstruct access to stacks containing pipes to be replaced, and also for re-assembling any special treatments and betterments thereafter. There will be help available to all residents to locate and

line up small contractors, if needed, from a soon-to-be-hired resident communication coordinator.

### Mezzanine Work Surface, AKA the Catwalk

You'll recall that last year, one of the newsletter articles explained that the mezzanine, located directly above the lobby, functioned as the access point for much of the mechanical equipment and the pipes being replaced as part of this project. It will function as the work surface for accessing the bottoms of the stacks and pipes, and the large heavy valves that shut them off. In order to strengthen the mezzanine surface upon which crews will be working, steel plates currently are being used to build/reinforce the work surface for safety. Fabrication of the steel plates for the work surface was slower than is expected, but it is still due to be finished by the end of April. To give you an idea of how confined this work-space is, please refer to the photo of Bob, one of our maintenance techs, in the mezzanine showing where the steel plates will replace the plywood sheets.

### Chillers Rebuild

Water chillers are an integral part of an HVAC system. They remove heat from the system by cooling and dehumidifying the air. Hopkinson House has two large chillers on the top floor that were expected to be replaced as part of this HVAC project. However, due to good, routine continued on page 3

Photo by Theresa Kowalski



Hopkinson House technician Bob in mezzanine space



maintenance over the years, the Trane Company, chiller suppliers and rebuilders, has advised that they only need to replace or rebuild the chiller parts without having to remove and replace the outside cast iron frame. This will have significant savings, since removal of the cast iron frame parts would have required either helicopters or a large crane to lift the parts out of the roof. Trane has completed revitalizing and retubing about half of the east chiller, and will soon start on the west chiller. This is expected to be finished sometime in May. In case you are not friends with the maintenance guys who will take you in to see the work, here are some photos. All of the cast iron elements painted green are part of the chiller outside frame which has been salvaged. The photo with the Trane worker on top of the ladder gives you an idea of the scale of the chiller.

### When are we starting? The construction schedule, AKA the logistics plan

Alderson, the design engineering firm, and Goldner, the mechanical contractor, have finished the schematic designs for the HVAC system and now are working on details, refining cost estimates and developing a more detailed schedule. The firms are incorporating different approaches and technology into the construction process in an attempt to shorten the overall project time, as well as the individual unit time:

- Orbital welding, a newer technology used extensively by Goldner in “clean” pharmaceutical applications, will be used to join the new pipes as they are placed in the stacks. This will speed up the process because it is a “cold” welding rather than one using hot torches and needing special fire watch accommodations, creating a lot of smell, mess and fire hazard. The stainless steel pipes will be fabricated off-site.
- Prefabricated containment enclosures will be used in each unit during the initial demolition and abatement work, which will preclude the need to put up and take down plastic protection each day. These containment enclosures are expected to be up in a unit only one to two days.
- Prefabricated column enclosures are under development as another means to cut down on messy and time-consuming work within the units.

The actual work within individual units now is expected to begin sometime

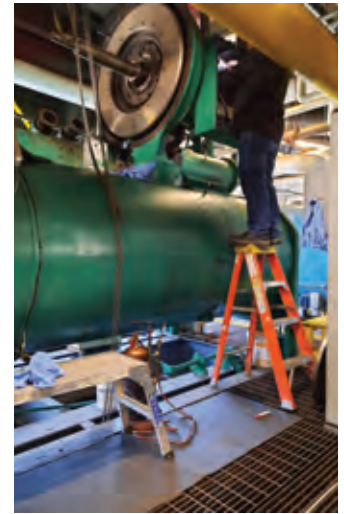
in August or early September. The latest proposed schedule suggests that workers will be moving through the building in teams addressing “stacks” of ten units, with that ten-unit group at this point taking about 33 work days from beginning to end. While your assigned group may take 33 workdays to complete, each individual unit may only have workers in it for 5 to 6 days, some of those days only being partial. Lounges and work areas are being planned now for those who wish to or must spend their construction time out of their unit. Special accommodations for those who are unable to move easily out of and back into their units will be developed. And, of course, no one has forgotten the pets!

### Town Hall

We are expecting in about four to six weeks to hold a Town Hall meeting, at which point some of this work and schedule will be more detailed, and we expect to be able to answer your questions more definitively.



Chiller Frames



Trane worker with chillers

At that time we also expect to have a proposed guaranteed maximum price (GMP) for the construction part of the project. The resident coordinator will be onboard and will explain their role and how they'll be able to help you through the construction period.

### Financing

The HHOA received approval from the final underwriting review with Alliance Association Bank, and the closing papers will be signed within two weeks. At that time we expect to begin working with the bank to develop a detailed cash flow analysis for the project, since we'll have a proposed GMP and a more definitive schedule, and can therefore develop different models for best times to draw from reserves, draw from the loan, or begin assessments.

You all should have been vaccinated by the time you read this. So enjoy spring, and I'll see you at the Town Hall, probably in May! ■



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# Message from Management

Erica Alles



As this is being printed, the Association is already in receipt of additional furnishings for the courtyard, and more are coming! The four new tables and sixteen new chairs — plus new umbrellas — will help you enjoy and make good use of your beautiful outdoor space,

Photo by Lynn Miller



New courtyard furnishings

especially with the native planting garden which is coming soon. Thank you to Council for approving the improvements, and the Design and Landscape Committees for bringing them to us! Your neighbors are hard at work on behalf of the Association.

**Association Fun Fact:** Condominium Associations and Homeowner Associations are established to provide guidelines for the maintenance and upkeep of Common Areas and to define who (homeowner or Association) is responsible for upkeep of individual homes.

Did you know that every owner of a unit in an Association (Condo, HOA) becomes an automatic member of the association? Like joining a club, all owners may reap the benefits and protections of the Association and must also adhere to the governing documents as well as applicable state codes and statutes.

The owners of the 536 units at HHOA comprise “the Association.” No other entity is part of the Association, nor is any other entity ultimately responsible for HHOA.

At Hopkinson House, like many associations, ownership is based on the square footage of the unit owned (a.k.a. “percentage of interest” and the ownership of all units totals 100 percent).

Please be sure to attend Hopkinson House’s annual meeting, which will be held Thursday, April 22nd at 7 p.m. via Zoom. Please also vote in the Council election! Votes are due by April 21st at 5 p.m.

To reiterate the message that HHOA President Terry Kowalski mentioned in her recent update about the Comcast contract, we are very pleased that Hopkinson House is able to offer such competitive cable and internet rates for residents. Internet will play an important role with communications considering

the communication that will be necessary during the coming years for the HVAC replacement project.

It wouldn’t be a spring update if I didn’t remind you to use care when watering plants on balconies. If water gets onto your floors, it will likely spill directly onto neighbors below. Also, I must share the Association’s rules that plants (and furnishings) may not be higher than your balcony walls so as not to be visible outside of your balcony. Thank you for keeping this in mind when decorating.

By the time this is printed we should have completed our first in-house COVID-19 vaccine clinic which was made available to residents and employees. We are so pleased that the pharmacy could come right to your doors for your convenience. This was another step of many that the Association has taken to help residents through the challenging pandemic. ■

## Residents Corner

Residents wishing to make comments or observations on the current issue may send them to: “The Editor,” [lynnm3@comcast.net](mailto: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. The editor reserves the right to reject opinions/comments, etc., if they are deemed inappropriate or can involve the association in legal troubles.

## Letter to the Editor

Dear Mr. Miller,

Thank you for the quality and practical usefulness of *on the House*. I lived in HH from 1998 to 2001, and still own my unit there. I have not forgotten the safe and welcoming home HH was for me then. *on the House* keeps me connected to HH life now and the wonderful community that makes it what it is. I appreciate your hard work, and the work of the OTH staff, that allows that connection to be continued, warm and strong, year after year.

Best regards,  
Ed Bradley

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# Energy Efficiency at Hopkinson House

Tony Kelly, Chief Engineer

For six years in a row, Hopkinson House has received a 100 percent Energy Star rating. The first year we submitted our data, our result was 99 percent. So, what does this mean for you as an owner/resident, and why should we continue to strive for this rating?

It seems obvious; the more efficiently the building is run, the lower the utility cost, which can result in lower association fees.

What has Hopkinson House done over the years to make the building more efficient, and what additional benefits, other than cost savings, are there?

With the support of the Council and management, every project is geared toward efficiency. That includes, for example, installing equipment or repairing and upgrading original equipment to make it more energy efficient.

Over the years, maintenance has converted approximately 3,000 lights to LED (light-emitting diode), installed Variable Frequency Drives (VFD) to old motors, and in some cases, 1962 motors, which are original to the

building. VFD will slow a motor when it does not need to be running at 100 percent. When a motor is not running 100 percent, energy is saved.

Hopkinson House has installed state-of-the-art air handlers that service the commercial and common area spaces. These air handlers, along with other equipment, are monitored by a building automation system. This is a computerized system that can tell us anything about a certain piece of equipment, such as temperatures outside and inside, filter conditions, fan speed, etc. Also, we have set up specific parameters for operation. For instance, when Keller Williams closes at the end of the day, the system will automatically alter temperatures lower or higher, according to the season, for the best efficiency.

What other things are we doing? We are currently overhauling our 1985 chillers with new state of the art equipment, to ensure many more years of service while saving residents millions of dollars compared to the cost if we were to replace them with new chillers.

Last year we installed a new insulated rubberized reflective roof.

In 2006 and 2012 all windows in the building were replaced.

What else has been achieved? The building has a diesel emergency generator that was installed in 1985. Originally it was designed to run one elevator, every other hallway light, fire tower lights, and a few lobby lights.

Now, due to efficiency, with the same generator we can do everything mentioned plus run one house pump (so the building has water!), the phone system, one boiler, roof air handler and pumps to heat the hallways. Also, it now runs all electric doors, most lobby lights, and some outside lights. We are very close to being able to add a second elevator to our emergency system.

How do we compare to the first condo budget in 1980, uninflated actual dollars 2021, for utilities? The first 1980 budget for utilities was \$839,300 versus \$590,000 for 2021. That is \$249,000 less, uninflated!

Believe it or not, we now use about 15 percent less water than in 2008, but water costs have almost doubled because of taxes and fees.

Where do we go from here? The biggest future savings is within the units and resident daily use. The HVAC project will give us more efficient fan coil units, but people's appliances, lights, faucets, toilets, etc. can be improved.

Some of the things we do to help residents are carry low flush toilets and low flow faucets for owners to purchase.

Management has arranged for PECO to come into the building for residents' education and to provide a free re-lamping program. We will continue to offer this program in the future.

Also, management applied for, and was able to get, thousands of dollars of PECO rebates for the installation of LED lights.

Maintenance, along with Council and management will continue to strive for energy efficiency, and we ask that you join us in keeping our perfect score! ■

You are invited to join

## Washington Square Citizens League

Washington Square Citizens League is a nonprofit organization with more than 140 members.

**Membership Fee: \$10 per year.**

If you are not a member and would like to join, contact Susan Tomita  
at (215) 925-8464, or [susan.tomita@gmail.com](mailto:susan.tomita@gmail.com)

or find a link to the membership form at <https://thehopkinsonhouse.com/activities/>



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## Getting to Know Our Neighbors

## A Knitting Project: Volunteering in Times of Need

Concha Alborg, [www.conchaalborg.com](http://www.conchaalborg.com)

In 2017, Joan Slavin, a Hopkinson House resident, formed an Eldership Community within Old Saint Joseph's Church. One of their projects was to start a knitting group to make items for charities. At the beginning, there were only two members, Joan and Marie Nowak. Little by little they grew to be as many as twenty women, not all affiliated with the church. They met once a month in Marie's apartment to knit or crochet together, to share patterns, and for conversation. The first year (2018) they made scarves and hats for the men who are served at Old Saint Joseph's Faith, Food and Friends Program. They also made two large afghans that were raffled to raise funds for the program.

The Faith, Food and Friends Program (<https://oldstjoseph.org/parish-life/foodfaith-friends-about/>) is a parish-sponsored, all-volunteer outreach program that serves lunch to the homeless three days a week. It has been in operation for over thirty years. Now, during the COVID pandemic, the program still serves over 200 meals a week on a take-out basis, beginning at 11 a.m. every Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday.

In their second year (2019), the knitting group added Aquinas Center and Project Home. "It was more fun and colorful knitting and crocheting for women and children," said Marie. The

members made 279 scarves, hats and baby blankets. In 2020, despite the pandemic-forced cancellation of their monthly meetings, they all worked at their own pace and donated 250 items to the three charities mentioned above. There is even a member from the Netherlands, whose sister lives in Hopkinson House!

According to their webpage (<https://staquinas.com/>), the Aquinas center is a "safe, welcoming place where neighbors and visitors can experience radical hospitality, where each person finds a seat at the table, and where beauty and belonging prevail." Many opportunities for volunteering and services are offered: English classes, gardening, a mural project, and a youth program, among others. Project Home (<https://projecthome.org/>) is a community that empowers "adults, children, and families to break the cycle of homelessness and poverty." They have provided over nine hundred units of affordable housing for individuals and families in 22 locations across Philadelphia. They also offer comprehensive health care services and employment and education opportunities.

Marie, who is experienced by now, likes to crochet when she watches television or while talking on the phone. She also takes classes at the Clay Studio and makes lovely ceramic planters, plaques and decorative animal figures. Potters use a special apron



Knitting group: Bethany Walsh, former director, Aquinas Center; Marie Nowak; Lorraine Knight (December 2019)

with long legs while holding the wheel and, not surprisingly, Marie, who likes to sew, has been making beautiful and practical aprons for her classmates. I remember that Marie was one of the first people making masks in our building last year before they were available in the stores.

One of the first things I noticed when I visited Marie's home was that she has two ovens in her kitchen — whoever said that our kitchens were small? You guessed it; she is a skilled baker and cook as well. She shared her delicious recipe for lemon bundt cake in a recent issue of *on the House*. Before she retired, Marie was the cook for the parish priests at Old Saint Joseph's from 2005 to 2018. However, her retirement didn't last long, and she is back at work, making dinner for three parish priests. She does her own shopping and prepares a full meal for them three days a week.

Marie lost her husband, Joseph, of 41 years in 2017. In part, the knitting group



Knitting group: Debbie Hluchan, Director of Faith, Food & Friends, Lorraine Knight (December 2019)



Knitting group: unknown volunteer at Aquinas Center; Marie Nowak (December 2019)

served as a support group for her. She has two wonderful daughters, Marguerite, who works for the United Nations in Syria, and Eleanor, who is a marketing director in New York City.

If you would like to volunteer and you don't know how to knit, you can learn on YouTube and then join the knitting group. Knitters and crocheters are welcome; they don't need to be members of any church or live in Hopkinson House. Donations of yarn or donations to purchase yarn would be gladly accepted at [marienowak51@gmail.com](mailto:marienowak51@gmail.com). Marie hopes to be able to meet as a group as soon as it is allowed — in the not-too-distant future. ■

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# We're Going Native!

Lisa Schwab, for the Landscape Committee

**P**urple Dome. October Skies. Blue Bird. Peachie's Pick. The Asters are coming! The Asters are coming! Summer Nights. Burning Hearts. The Heliopsis are coming! Pow Wow Wild Berry. Echinacea is coming! Asclepias Tuberosa (Milkweed). The butterflies will be coming! Lonicera, "Major Wheeler" (Honey-suckle). Maybe hummingbirds will be coming!

Starting this spring, our courtyard is going native. The L-shaped garden to the east when entering from the lobby, and the two large, raised planters will be introducing hardy native plants, as a green initiative

— though it will extend far beyond merely green. There will be red, orange, yellow, fuchsia, blue, and purple, all of which will not only promote sustainability, cultivate biodiversity, and attract and nurture butterflies, birds, and pollinators, but will also be cost-effective, as native plants are perennials which will return each year, eliminating the yearly purchase and labor required for planting to provide seasonal color. Native plants evolved in association with other local plant species, fungi, insects, pollinators, and wildlife. They have adapted to local climate and soil conditions, thereby

reducing their need for maintenance with water, fertilizer, and insecticides, allowing them to thrive, even in periods of drought.

These plantings will offer visual interest, fragrance, varying bloom times, and beauty year-round through their flower colors, textures, scale of contrasting heights, and shapes, as well as their stems, forms and/or fruit. They have been selected with all four seasons in mind. The installation will include 21 different varieties of young plants, which we expect will grow well in our predominantly very sunny and warm courtyard. It is

anticipated that the more mature, non-native plantings will slowly, over future years, be transitioned out in favor of native species of shrubs and flowering plants. And, just in case you were wondering, the intention is to use hardier, more permanent ornamental plantings in the front raised planters facing Washington Square, as well, which will also reduce the frequency of seasonal changes. Unfortunately, this year, those types of plants were not available.

Here is just a taste of what you will be seeing in our courtyard this year! ■



Purple Dome, Aster Novi



Burning Hearts Heliopsis



Asclepias Tuberosa  
(Butterfly Weed/Milkweed)



Pow Wow Wild Berry Echinacea



Rudbeckia Henry Eilers  
(Black Eyed Susan)



Aster Blue Bird



# Washington Square: Another Time, Another Name

Martha Cornog

Imagine you had a magical lens to see into Philadelphia's Colonial past! Where today the Benjamin Franklin Bridge arcs its span over the Delaware, swarm small boats and majestic sailing vessels in busy commerce with our port city. Up on Walnut Street stands not the Curtis Center but the Logonian Library, and instead of the Penn Mutual building looms the Walnut Street Gaol.

And just below us in our square, a crowd in colorful African outfits gather about — gossiping together in diverse languages, haggling with vendors offering savory African food, dancing and singing to pop-up rhythm accompaniment, praying over grave sites. Some leave offerings of food and liquor on graves of friends and family.

What a century later will become Washington Square is now Congo Square — site of holiday festivals for Philly's free and enslaved black people. The square had been designated in 1706 as a potter's field for interring the "wretchedly poor," criminals, and African Americans. Only our city's black residents could turn a burial ground into a vibrant celebration.

The originally labeled "Southeast Square" would have been convenient. Society Hill was then a black neighborhood, and "a set of negro huts and sheds" once faced the square's south side, where Hopkinson House is now.

In addition to the hundreds of black bodies, the ground would also take in uncounted dead from the American Revolution and the 1793 yellow fever epidemic. A local medical professor had been stealing corpses to teach dissection, but the black community raised such a ruckus that he was dissuaded.

In New Orleans, a similarly distinctive Congo Square also began in the Colonial era, yet never ended. The area became a designated part of Louis Armstrong Park within the Tremé neighborhood, which historically has housed African-American and African-Creole people since the 1700s. Music festivals, protest marches, parades, and other gatherings continue to flourish in the square.

Why did black city dwellers call these places Congo Square? Why not Africa Square or, say, Guinea Square? Over more than twelve centuries of African enslavement by Middle Easterners, Asians, Europeans, and Americans, different areas of the continent were tapped. From the eighth century, Arab raiders drew from Ethiopia and southeast Africa. Later, Europeans — starting with the Portuguese in the 1600s — worked the northwestern Senegambia area through Guinea to Nigeria as well as the west-central Congo-Angola region. Typically, traders contracted with slave-owning African leaders, who captured Africans from other ethnic groups



Congo Square sculpture, New Orleans

Photo courtesy of Martha Cornog



Congo Square plaque, Washington Square

Photo by Lynn Miller

or through war and then exchanged them for European goods like textiles, tobacco, and guns. As demand grew throughout the 1700s from the Americas and the Caribbean, the enslaving business centered on Congo-Angola, where more New World slaves were taken than from any other region. So the expression likely had some historical accuracy.

While the Delaware River valley saw African slaves of Dutch, Swedish, and Finnish settlers as early as 1639, Philadelphia — and Pennsylvania — gradually favored freeing black people more than other North

American colonial areas. Strong antislavery convictions grew among immigrant Methodists, Baptists, and especially Quakers, who published the 1688 Germantown Quaker Petition Against Slavery and later founded the Pennsylvania Abolitionist Society. Swayed by this pressure and the ideals of liberty championed in the Revolution, many colonists freed their slaves or helped them buy their freedom. In 1780, the state passed "An Act for the Gradual Abolition of Slavery," although the law imposed conditions on freedom to apply over a period of time.



Eventually, eighteenth-century Philadelphia came to house a growing free black population as well as escaped slaves from elsewhere and those still enslaved.

Still, many of America's Founding Fathers — including our building's namesake, Francis Hopkinson — held slaves. Indeed, the namesakes suggested in 1816 for all four Philadelphia squares owned slaves; only David Rittenhouse, a name substituted in 1825, probably did not.

Accordingly, Philadelphia boasts numerous sites key to Colonial black history besides Congo Square. Let us take our magic lens and gaze further afield. Only a few blocks north at Sixth and Market stands the President's House, where George and Martha Washington are living during his term. The Washingtons hold nine slaves in Philadelphia, including Ona (Oney) Judge, who will run away to New Hampshire when the First Lady decides to present the young woman as a wedding gift to granddaughter Eliza. Much later, Judge will give several newspaper interviews, declaring that she fled not just to escape involuntary servitude, but also because Eliza was infamous for her fierce temper. The British groom-to-be had fathered several mixed-race children in India through unacknowledged liaisons, so in addition, Judge likely feared she could be forced into a mistress role herself in this new household.



Spiral Q's Rise and Reconcile: Light on Black Spaces commemorating the Black legacy of Congo Square, Philadelphia

Photo courtesy of Martha Cornog

Now let's look south, down Sixth Street. Today at Lombard stands the 1890 building of the Mother Bethel African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church, but our magic lens shows us the original church structure — a blacksmith shop hauled to the site in 1791 and renovated. Led by former slave Richard Allen, who had purchased his own freedom, the congregation includes some who had walked out of another Methodist church that required black worshippers to sit separately. A later replacement building was to become a stop on the Underground Railroad.

Sweeping southwest somewhat later in time, we can scan the South Street corridor. Where today bubble-tea shops and eclectic eateries attract the young and hungry, 1870s South Street bustles with residents of a thriving black community. The nearby Lombard Street Institute for Colored Youth teaches classical literature and

science; its principal is educator/activist Octavius Catto. Perhaps we can witness again election day, 1871, as Catto attempts to avoid armed mobs of white Irish Democrats wanting to suppress black Republican votes. But Catto, who had helped Frederick Douglass recruit slaves for the Union Army, is shot dead that day nonetheless. Among many other efforts pushing for racial equality, Catto, with his fiancée and fellow educator, Caroline LeCount, had fought to desegregate Philly's trolley car system nearly a century before Rosa Parks claimed a "whites-only" seat on a Montgomery bus.

The spirit of Congo Square lives on through the recent exuberance of Joy to the Polls. These pop-up musical concerts and dance parties appeared outside polling places in

Philadelphia and other cities during the 2020 election, staged as part of the nonpartisan Election Defenders Project by the Working Families Party and other groups. By using art, music, and fun to fight voter suppression and civic anomie, Joy to the Polls increased enthusiasm among black and youth voters, and defused conflict between factions. Moreover, our city's celebration of Juneteenth has included Washington Square because of its history as a black burial ground and site for gatherings.

But this past Halloween, Washington Square did become Congo Square again for a dawn commemoration of black Philadelphia's lives and legacies, part of the nonprofit Spiral Q's *Rise and Reconcile: Light on Black Spaces*, a public art series. ■

#### For More Information

Watch Spiral Q's *Rise and Reconcile: Light on Black Spaces* — Congo Square, Philadelphia  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iw7gdvqgSVU>

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# The Farm Journal Building on Washington Square

Joseph Quinn

Of all the publishers that have flourished on Washington Square — Curtis, Lippincott, Saunders — perhaps the most unlikely, it seems to us today, was the *Farm Journal*. The *Journal's* audience and subject matter might have been distinctly rural, but founder Wilmer Atkinson was eager to be among other firms in the forefront of the modern publishing industry that were establishing a presence on the square.

The Farm Journal Building, (FJB) designed by Bunting & Shrigley, opened at 230 West Washington Square in 1912. It stands out from its neighbors by virtue of its five-story height and artful mix of architectural details — an expanse of Colonial brick, a few Palladian accents, and one Italian Renaissance flourish. Nevertheless, with its conservative application of Georgian symmetry and proportion, it blends well with its Washington Square neighbors.

The first thing you notice is a pattern of grids. Thirty-five windows form a grid across the brick frontage, with each window itself an arrangement of grids (for a total of over 1,000 panes, if you care to count!). In the alternation of glass and brick, transparent and solid materials, neither dominates, and the overall effect is one of balance and harmony.

More visual interest is provided by the variety of window treatments. The tall, narrow second-story

windows resemble French doors. They are framed by brick Palladian-style arches and given a further touch of elegance by shallow Juliet balconies. At the roofline, a substantial cornice crowns an array of Palladian-style arched windows. Stories two through four are set off by the white quoin stones running vertically along both sides, and strong horizontal courses of white stone below and above the windows, creating a striking picture frame effect.

The most surprising part of this relatively sedate façade is the entrance portico: six broad steps leading up to a deep enclosure embellished with almost Renaissance exuberance. The name, FARM JOURNAL, and a shield engraved 1912, the date the building opened, are surrounded by ornate flourishes of wreaths and garlands. The signature elements, proclaiming what the *Farm Journal* represented, are two cornucopias overflowing with fruits and vegetables.

There are three chapters in the story of this address, and, curiously, all have Quaker connections. Architects Morgan Bunting and Arthur Shrigley both had close ties to the Philadelphia Quaker community. The site where they built the FJB had been occupied by the Orange Street Quaker Meeting House. It was in use from 1832 until 1872, when the membership was absorbed into the Arch Street

continued on page 17




Photos by Joseph Quinn

The brick façade of the Farm Journal Building has a striking pattern of grids made up of thirty-five windows and over 1,000 individual panes.



The entrance to the building features an elaborate portico in Italian Renaissance style. Over the entrance, cornucopias overflowing with fruits and vegetable represent what the *Farm Journal* was all about.



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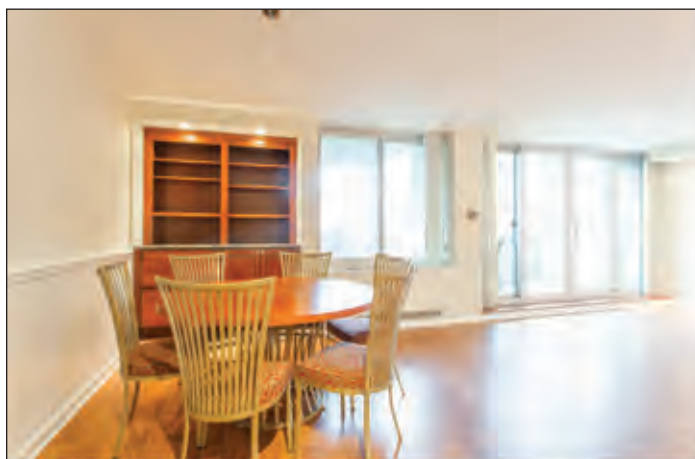
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## The Farm Journal Building

continued from page 15

Meeting. (Orange Street was the original name of Manning Street, which runs behind the FJB to the south.)

The vintage photo reproduced below was taken around 1860 and shows Washington Square looking southwest toward the Orange Street Meeting House in the distance. The oft-reproduced sketch by the prolific artist Frank H. Taylor is from around 1900 and presents a more idealized and genteel view of the same scene. (On the left in both images you can see the First Presbyterian Church, designed in Greek Revival style by John Haviland. It was built in 1820-22 and demolished in 1939. Today in its place stand a row of townhouses on the corner and, further down the block, our own Hopkinson House.)

The *Farm Journal* founder, Wilmer Atkinson (1840-1920) was born into a Quaker family in Bucks

County. He was business manager for publications in Norristown and Wilmington before settling with his family in Philadelphia in 1877. Despite his previous experience, he had some doubts about running a publication on his own, as he admits in his memoir. But he soon realized that readers liked his “crisp, clear, practical way of putting things, and the spice of humor thrown in. This was indeed a revelation to me, and opened a new vista wherein I saw promise of my farm-boy dreams coming true.”

The *Journal*, he declared, was for “cultivators of the soil” within a day’s ride of Philadelphia by buggy, and dedicated to “practical, not fancy farming.” It would consist of “eight pages printed upon fine paper with new and beautiful type.” His intentions were grounded in sober Quaker principles: “We do not

publish the *Farm Journal* for the money there is in it, but for the good we can do.”

The first issue, published in March 1877, featured articles about strawberries, sheep, chickens, and fertilizer. A large ad trumpeted the opening of a “New Dry Goods Emporium,” none other than John Wanamaker’s department store, inaugurated that same month. An annual subscription cost twenty-five cents.

Despite his vow not to publish “for the money,” the story Atkinson tells is one of constantly striving to increase circulation and advertising revenue. He became a savvy salesman, going so far as to sign up readers in person as he roamed about the suburban farming communities. By pioneering increasingly-sophisticated marketing strategies, the *Journal* was able to boast of 700,000 subscribers by 1912.

To accommodate his growing enterprise, Atkinson sought larger and larger quarters. Over the *Journal*’s first 30 years, he moved his operation around the city at least five times until finally arriving at 230 West Washington Square, a space large enough to accommodate “big presses.” He announced the opening of the new building in the November 1912 issue in his usual laconic fashion: “We are not going to brag much about it, preferring to let it tell its own story.”

Atkinson practiced what he preached and gained “practical farming” advice to share with his readers. In 1884 he bought 100 acres in Upper Dublin where he cultivated fruit orchards. He also found time to support social causes such as women’s rights, serving as head of the Pennsylvania Men’s League for Women’s Suffrage.

continued on page 19



Vintage photo c. 1860 showing southwest view of Washington Square with the Orange Street Meeting House at the end, where the Farm Journal Building now stands. Courtesy of the Free Library of Philadelphia, Print and Picture Collection.



Same view in an idealized sketch c. 1910 by Frank H. Taylor. Both images show the First Presbyterian Church on the left, demolished in 1939, where Hopkinson House now stands. Courtesy of the Athenaeum of Philadelphia.

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## The Farm Journal Building

continued from page 17

Still active today as the flagship of Farm Journal Media, the *Farm Journal* little resembles Wilmer Atkinson's modest eight-page circular, thanks to its foresight in adopting modern business technology. In the 1960s, it began computerizing its operations and eventually graduated to fully electronic printing and binding methods. Administrative, editorial and computer operations were still present in the Farm Journal Building as of 1989, while advertising sales and other business functions were being shifted to field offices located in the farming heartland.

After 139 years in Philadelphia at various

locations, in 2016 the *Farm Journal* moved its corporate offices, then located in King of Prussia, to Lenexa, Kansas, and is now part of a media conglomerate covering the full-spectrum of modern farming activities.

In 1997 Pennsylvania Hospital, whose principal founder, Dr. Thomas Bond, was a Quaker, acquired the FJB and renovated it for medical offices. An article posted on Penn Medicine's website in 2013 describes an interesting example of historic preservation and the serendipity it often involves. When Penn acquired the building, engineers discovered a large stone tablet in the basement inscribed with the date



The first issue of the *Farm Journal* was published in March 1877 declaring "A Nation's Greatness Depends on the Virtue and Intelligence of Its Farmers."

1832. After some sleuthing, a staff member uncovered the connection with the Orange Street Meeting House built there in 1832. Penn reunited the stone with the Arch Street Friends Meeting, thus bringing the Quaker connections full circle.

Penn Medicine continues to use the name "Farm Journal Building" in its official signage and communications. In 1999 it was placed on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places as part of the Society Hill historic district designation. ■

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# Bonaparte's Estate To Be a Park

Lynn Miller

A new public park with a distinctive pedigree is coming to the Philadelphia area. It's on land that was part of the one-time estate of Napoleon Bonaparte's older brother, Joseph, who lived there much of the time from 1816 to 1839. Point Breeze, as Joseph named the property, sits high above the point where Cross Creek flows into the Delaware, a few miles upriver from Philadelphia, in Bordentown, New Jersey. More than a century before Bonaparte landed there, William Penn had built his plantation, Pennsbury Manor, just across the river in Pennsylvania. Late in 2020, 55 acres of Point Breeze were purchased from a Catholic order by New Jersey's Department of Environmental Protection, the City of Bordentown, and the non-profit D&R Greenway Land Trust. On a small parcel of that land, Bordentown will turn a cluster of mid-20th-century buildings into a new City Hall, police headquarters, and community center. The Greenway Trust will restore Bonaparte's gardener's house — the only building from his time still standing on the property — and replicate his kitchen gardens for the enjoyment of the public.

That leaves 50 acres to become part of the New Jersey park system. The land contains fields, deep woods, steep embankments, and carriage trails for nature lovers to explore. Eventually, the park will

display interpretive signs, audio tours, and many walking trails that will take visitors past remnants of Bonaparte-era bridges, stone steps, and tunnels built to allow horse-drawn carriages to move goods underground from the wharf on the Delaware to Joseph's mansion, which, by the 1820s, was the largest in the United States apart from the White House. The new park will also serve as the southern gateway to the Abbot Marshlands between Bordentown and Trenton. Centuries before Bonaparte's time, those wetlands were home to the most important Native American settlement east of the Mississippi.

Joseph, who had been placed on the throne of Spain by his brother, tried to persuade Napoleon to flee to America with him after the final defeat at Waterloo. The former emperor refused, and soon his British conquerors sent him to the island of St. Helena far out in the South Atlantic to live out his final years. Joseph, meanwhile, hired an American brig to carry him and several aides — he left his wife and two daughters in Europe — to New York, arriving there in August, 1815. It didn't take him long to choose Philadelphia, the most cosmopolitan city in the nation, as his place of exile. A leading Philadelphia attorney, Charles Ingersoll, explained at the time that he'd been told the former king preferred Philadelphia



Joseph Bonaparte by Charles Willson Peale, courtesy of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania

society to that of New York. "Naturellement," as Joseph himself might have said.

Another French native, Stephen Girard, who was one of America's richest citizens at the time, quickly found a house for Joseph, at 9th and Locust Streets (the house, which still survives, and its surrounding compound are today designated as Bonaparte's Court). That and another town-house Girard found for him nearer Broad Street would do for his days spent in the city, but Joseph quickly determined to create a grand estate for himself in the country.

Bonaparte spent what today would be about \$50 million to build his first house at Point Breeze.

There he entertained Philadelphia's cultural elite and began to create the largest private library in the United States along with a sizable art collection. When he was temporarily away from his estate in 1820, the house was partially destroyed in a fire. His neighbors rushed in to help save his collections and furnishings; Joseph expressed his gratitude in a letter that was printed in newspapers across the country. He then rebuilt an even grander mansion on a different site. Throughout his stay in America, Joseph was generous in opening his house and gallery to visitors. His general bonhomie assured Americans he met that they need not fear he was plotting a Bonapartist





Joseph Bonaparte mansion, Point Breeze, courtesy, Athenaeum of Philadelphia

insurrection against either the restored Bourbon monarchy or the July Monarchy which succeeded it in 1830. He even publically approved of the fact that the people of the United States were making a success of republican institutions of government. "Keep them," he said, "as a precious gift from Heaven."

Although Bonaparte's wife never joined him at Point Breeze, arguing that her poor health did not permit

such travel, his two daughters eventually did come to live on his estate. His younger daughter, Charlotte, arrived late in 1821, and took art lessons at the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, where she eventually exhibited her work. Her older sister, Zenaide, arrived at Point Breeze in 1823 with her new husband, also a Bonaparte and her first cousin. Charlotte returned to France in 1824

and soon married another cousin, the older brother of Charles Louis Bonaparte, who, years later, would become emperor as Napoleon III. Joseph, meanwhile, fathered at least three illegitimate children by more than one woman in the neighborhood, reports of which roiled some of the most staid among Philadelphia society (nor, very likely, did such tales improve his wife's health back in France).

In the more than 180 years since Joseph took final leave of Point Breeze, until a portion of his estate was acquired for parkland, its landscape was much altered. The grand mansion and other houses, the half-mile-long artificial lake and picturesque gardens all disappeared. In recent years, the property was seriously considered as a site where a mega-warehouse distribution center might be built. But in 2008, Peter Tucci, the former president of the Philadelphia chapter of the French-American Chamber of Commerce, helped organize a symposium to energize those wanting to save what still could be saved. The then-ambassador of France to the United States participated. That moved the ball forward to last December's resolution of the sale creating a new park.

So, even though much has been lost, much has been saved. In the near future, park-goers will be able both to savor a landscape that once attracted a monarch and to imagine how he transformed it into one of the great showplaces in America in its time. ■



From the gardens of the Count of Surveilliers, Joseph Bonaparte, Credit Special Collections, University Archives, Rutgers

# Un-Canny! Salmon Cakes so good, no one will suspect where they came from.

Jane Hickman

This delicious recipe for salmon cakes, made with readily available ingredients, was contributed by Hopkinson House resident **Johanne Lamarche**. An increased interest in

sustainable seafood has led to more high-quality, wild salmon that is canned quickly after being caught. Johanne tells us that excellent wild salmon—healthier for us than the

farm-raised variety—is available at Trader Joe's, Wegman's and Whole Foods. Vegetables in this recipe can be substituted for whatever you have at hand. ■

## Chefs' Corner

*Note: If you have a favorite recipe, we would love to test it and put it in this column. Send your recipes or requests to [jhickman@upenn.edu](mailto:jhickman@upenn.edu). Thank you!*

**Salmon Cakes**, yields 6 large or 10 small cakes

### Ingredients

2-6 oz cans of wild salmon  
 1/3 c diced celery  
 1/3 c diced red onion  
 1/3 c frozen corn  
 3 T olive oil, divided, if frying (1 T olive oil if baking the salmon cakes)  
 1/4 c bread crumbs  
 2 T mayonnaise  
 1 large egg, beaten  
 1 garlic clove, minced  
 salt and pepper to taste  
 1 t dill weed (1T if using fresh)  
 1/4 c Panko bread crumbs, reserved for coating

### Directions

In a skillet, heat one tablespoon oil and sauté onion and celery until softened. Add corn and sauté one additional minute.

Remove from heat, let cool, then add to the rest of the ingredients, except 1/4 cup of reserved panko crumbs for coating. Mix well, then

shape into six large or 10 small patties. Coat each cake on both sides, in panko.

Sauté in remaining oil, turning once, until golden. Conversely, you can bake them on foil or parchment paper that you have sprayed with cooking oil in a 350°F oven, middle rack, for about 20 minutes. Broil for a minute to crisp the coating if baking.

Serve with lemon wedges or your favorite aioli, remoulade, or crab cake sauce. Sides can include a green salad, potatoes or rice.



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### Occasional Picture by Michael Neff



White Cherry Trees on the Southwest Corner of Washington Square





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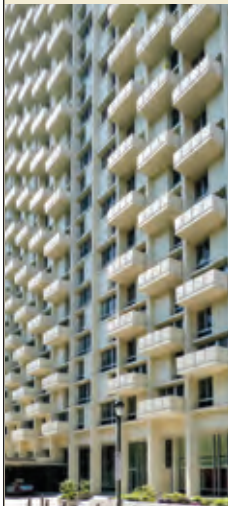
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