

What's Inside

Martha Cornog

Our warmest thanks to retiring editor **Lynn Miller** for his enthusiastic and capable editorship of *on the House*. I have had the great pleasure of writing articles under his guidance for eight years, and am excited as well as challenged to assume the editorship now. We all wish Lynn the R&R he has earned, and expect to continue publishing his writing as he contributes ad hoc.

Hopkinson House residents and owners will soon be facing several major projects necessary for our building's survival. **LJ Steinig**, President of the Hopkinson House Owners' Association Council, reassures us about how Council and its multiple committees are assessing and responding to these challenges to arrange for repair and renewal.

Gary van Niekerk, our General Manager, updates us with key information

about ongoing and forthcoming building projects, from concerns regarding the roof down to the lower lobby and garage.

In her usual Committee Corner, Hopkinson House Council member **Jean Papaj** pulls together brief, informative reports from Hopkinson House committees that handle building matters and resident life.

Concha Alborg introduces us to Francis Hopkinson, our illustrious neighbor born 289 years ago and the namesake of Hopkinson House. Indeed, his body rests not far off, in the Christ Church Burial Ground at 5th and Arch Streets. With a complicated legacy via contributions to the new republic in government, law and business, literature, and even music, no wonder he was considered a "Renaissance Man."

Coming up soon on May 19th is the annual Pennsylvania primary

on the HOUSE

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Hopkinson House • Spring 2026



election for local, state, and national offices.

Larry Meehan, our Democratic committeeperson, fills us in on the races, the location and logistics for voting, and he provides links for further information.

Michael Neff's graphic meditation on the beguiling appeal of feline companions is sure to appeal to our cat owners throughout the building.

A long life yields challenges and rewards, while leaving behind various objects commemorating small and large events. But what happens to these objects? **Ramona Johnson** reflects poignantly on revisiting many of them.

History Committee member **Joseph Quinn** continues his assessment about how the similarities and differences of Hopkinson House architect Oscar Stonorov compared to sometime-collaborator Louis Kahn shaped their careers and their influence upon Philadelphia-area buildings. Hopkinson House resident **Mary Tracy** is our condominium representative to the Society Hill Civic Association. And that is our local sister organization to the Washington West Civic Association, the Bella Vista Neighbors

Association, and many other Philadelphia groups that encourage citizen participation in neighborhood issues. Why should we, as individuals, join SHCA? Mary tells us why.

Looking back into our country's two-and-a-half century past, I reflect on the differences and yet commonalities of head coverings. How have wigs obsessed and challenged us, and why?

This issue's recipes from **Johanne Lamarche** lean into comfort—the kind that fills the kitchen with warmth and fragrance. Rosemary, garlic, and parmesan transform humble beans into a bubbling, savory bake, while pecans and orange zest create a fragrant, flourless cookie that's both nourishing and sweet. These small pleasures deliver with minimal effort and are lovely to share.

Throughout the issue, we revisit several recent Hopkinson House events through the friendly lens of photographer **Bari Shor**: the Green Committee's tasty Meatless Monday Veggie/Vegan Potluck, the Social Committee's Bubbly and Sweets Valentine party, and a welcome stop-in from our representative in the Pennsylvania State House: Mary Isaacson. ■

In Washington Square, a lone umbrella braves a spring rain



on the HOUSE

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on the House at
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Message from Council

LJ Steinig

Friends and Neighbors, I can't believe that my first two years on Council, and my first year as President, are coming to a close. In my career as a Lead Teacher and an Instructional Coach, I've always identified with the phrase "Servant Leadership." It's my job to help both my students and my colleagues. I have the same perspective being on Hopkinson House Council. Servant Leadership is what my fiduciary duty means to me. It's my job to serve Hopkinson House and the people in it, with all the joys and challenges that come with it.

The Joys

Strategic Planning

The Strategic Planning Committee is hard at work. So far, we're in the data gathering phase, and it has been fascinating. We've interviewed local realtors, our employees, and managers of comparable buildings. We've taken tours of those buildings and learned how their communities and facilities compare with our own. And now, as I write, the Survey Subcommittee is preparing to send out the survey to our entire community. I've been so impressed with their work ethic that I need

to thank them publicly: Council Member Judy Zatz, Strategic Planning Chair Sandy Garz, and SPC members Mindy Bartscherer and Charlene Compher have put so much time and energy into creating, revising, and formatting this survey, so please honor that hard work and take it seriously. We want to hear from everyone—renters, owners, and investors—you are all part of our community, and your opinions matter. I am so excited to start diving into your wants and needs for our home as we start looking forward.

The Green Committee

I've been trying to make Hopkinson House a greener place since the day I moved in four years ago. Shortly after I landed on Council, we started composting with Bennett Compost. A year later, after I became President, we launched the Green Committee. Already, we've held two successful events: a vegan/vegetarian potluck with a speaker who taught us about the health and environmental benefits of a plant-based diet, and an evening with Bennett Compost and Rabbit Recycling. I know a lot of you are frustrated with our recycling company, so

I do hope you were able to sign up with Rabbit.

The Challenges

A Learning Experience

I'm a teacher. While the education I have received over the past two years about leading an association has been challenging, in truth, it has also been a joy. I could go into the details about all I've learned, but the most important thing I already knew: Surround yourself with experts who know more than you. My leadership of this community is only as strong as the people I learn from every day. Working with smart people who I can trust is the key to success, and I am lucky to work alongside Bruce Chamberlin, Rob Krebs, Gary van Niekerk, Michael Perez, Mike Garz, Ann Roantree, and the entire Council. And I am lucky to work with the consultants we've hired to get us through the next few years of projects.

Projects + Assessment

By the time you read this, many of you will have already attended our March 26th Town Hall. You now have a clearer understanding of the projects that our

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Residents' Corner

Residents wishing to make comments or observations on the current issue may e-mail them to: "The Editor," c/o martha.cornog@gmail.com.

Those who do not have a computer can place their comments 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 *on the House*.

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.

Message from Council

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building is facing, and an estimate of the upcoming assessment needed to pay for the building site and roof waterproofing, garage repairs, and elevator modernization. I know that the next few years are going to be challenging, but we're going to get through it, and we're going to get through it *together*.

I've said from day one that transparency is my priority. This building belongs to *all* of us, and we are *all* going to be affected by these projects both financially and materially, so we *all* need to be informed. When I bought my unit in February 2022, the HVAC system project had started, and I only knew of the elevator issues on the horizon. Fast forward to today, I could get angry and cast blame; I could lose sleep ruminating about how we got here. But that isn't going to help me, you, or us. Instead, we must look to the future.

But as we look to the future, in the spirit of that transparency, because you deserve to learn what I have learned, I want to give you this English teacher's perspective on how we got here. This entire process is brand new to me, as I'm sure it would be for many of you, and I need you to understand how hard this Council, as well as the Committees, have worked to get us here.

Because there are three projects altogether, the overall effort requires a lot of consultants. The process of hiring engineers, architects, construction managers, and project managers is nothing short of arduous. First; we ("we" mostly being Bruce!) write RFPs (requests for proposals), and these are detailed. Then, the consultants come for tours of our building site before even writing their proposals. Once we receive

the proposals, we read and evaluate them before scheduling interviews with each team. Finally, we choose a team, and they send us a contract, which must be reviewed by our attorney and revised before we sign it. All that before any actual work begins!

The next stages vary from consultant to consultant. They might take samples of our concrete and develop drawings of all the necessary repairs (engineers). They might draw schematic designs of what our finished products could look like (architects). They might plan the phasing and pricing of the entire construction effort including all sub-contractors (construction managers). Or they might tell us the hard truths

and keep everyone else in line (project managers). And that takes us to where we are now. I wish we had known two years ago how extensive and expensive the building site and garage project would be. I wish we could focus less on essential structural repairs and more on the beauty and upgrades you've been asking for. But alas, that is not our current reality.

Still, I can't help but feel hope: we finally have a solid team, and a concrete (pun intended) plan in place for all phases of the projects and the payments over the next three years. I want to thank you all for your patience as we all work together for the future of our shared home. Like I said above, **we will get through this together.** ■



LJ Steinig is a writer and a teacher, currently serving as HHOA President.

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Message from Management

Gary van Niekerk

We certainly had an unexpectedly cold and snowy winter season. I have no doubt that even those who enjoy winter are looking forward to spring and some milder weather.

Spring will look a little different at Hopkinson House this year. The Hopkinson House Owners' Association is preparing to undertake a large-scale waterproofing replacement project, as noted below under capital projects. This means that the rear courtyard and associated plant beds will not have any flowering plants. Minimal maintenance will be performed, however, and residents will have access to the rear courtyard until the project begins.

Updates to our capital projects, either planned or under consideration

Domestic Hot Water System

The first phase of the project is completed, with the new on-demand water heaters installed and operational. The second phase involves the removal of the old hot water storage tanks, followed by installation of new tanks. We anticipate that the project will be fully completed by the end of March.

Once fully completed, it may take us some time to fine-tune the equipment and better understand how it all functions within the HHOA environment. If you experience any hot water related issues, please reach out to the Management team.

Garage and Courtyard/ Site Waterproofing and Restoration

Watchdog Project Management continues to assist with this project and coordinate the consultant team. The Association recently engaged Clemens Construction as our construction manager, and they are working on pricing and coordination of the various contractors needed. Also joining the project as the architect of record is CosciaMoos Architecture.

Elevator Modernization

The elevators and associated components are original to the building (1960s). A recent assessment by an industry professional advised that the elevators are near the end of their useful life. The elevator consultant (VDA), as well as the engineer (JBCI) and architect (CosciaMoos) are working to design the replacement elevators. The construction manager will provide competitive pricing once design is completed. Timing of this project has not yet been determined and may only be scheduled once the pool and roof project is completed. This project is estimated to take between one and a half to two years to complete.

Mail Room and Lower Lobby Entrance

CosciaMoos Architecture will also be assisting the Association with the replacement of the wood paneling in the mail room/lobby. The wood paneling is damaged and in need

of replacement using a more durable material.

The lower lobby is a main point of entry for many residents and guests, and has not been renovated for some time. The Association is exploring options with the architect for replacing the flooring and wall coverings, and for removal of the "security counter."

Timing and cost of the two aforementioned projects is yet to be determined. However, if project costs are feasible, the Association would like to begin in 2026.

Pool Deck and Sun Deck Roof Replacement/Pool Refurbishment

The base scope of this project includes the replacement of both the pool and sun deck roofing system (waterproofing), along with refurbishment of the pool itself. The architect has developed some preliminary designs, and the pool consultant has provided options for the pool renovation. The construction manager will solicit competitive bids for further review.

Drain Line Replacement for the 09 Units

The Association recently completed replacement of the kitchen drain line that serves the 09 units. This was an invasive project requiring access to all 09 units and cutting open their walls. I would like

to thank all the affected residents for their patience and cooperation during the course of the project.

By collaborating closely with expert consultants, Council and Management are ensuring that all capital improvements are both strategically sound and essential for our building. Our focus remains on rigorous financial oversight and the development of a sustainable capital plan to ensure these projects are funded and efficiently managed.

Annual Meeting and Election

We would like to again remind residents that the annual meeting and election will be held in mid-April. Information packets and candidate applications have been distributed, with a deadline to return applications by April 1st.

Reminders

With spring in mind and warmer weather approaching, those with balconies may look to plant flowers. I remind residents to please use a plastic saucer beneath potted plants to help contain water. Please do not overwater flowers, as the runoff creates dirt streaks down the building façade. If you have questions or suggestions about your community, please contact the Management Office. ■



Gary van Niekerk has been managing condominiums, including both the Ayer and Lippincott condos on Washington Square, for more than fifteen years.

Committee Corner

Jean Papaj

Green Committee

Bill Stigliani, Chair

It has been a busy year for us so far. Our Veggie/Vegan Potluck kickoff event on Monday, January 19th was a big success. More than 70 residents attended, and most came with prepared dishes. The smorgasbord of appetizers, soups, entrees, and desserts put a spotlight on the wide variety of flavors, savoriness, and nutritional value inherent in recipes made from vegetables and fruits compared to meat alternatives.

We hosted another event on composting and recycling on February 16th. Representatives from Bennett Compost (serving Hopkinson House) and Rabbit Recycling (serving resident subscribers) spoke about their operating procedures and “dos and don’ts” for residents using their services. There was a lively discussion during the Q&A; questions focused on the potential for expanding their services at Hopkinson House, and the kinds of food wastes and materials that are acceptable for composting and recycling. Future plans include an Earth Day event toward the end of April.

Finance Committee

Ann Roantree, Chair

Throughout the first quarter, the Finance Committee together with Council and Management focused their attention on Reserve Planning, with a particular emphasis on mapping out multi-year Reserve Funding Strategies. These strategies support the implementation of a series of much-needed building

and grounds improvements, which were presented at the November 2025 and March 2026 Town Halls, as well as the ongoing payment of debt service for the HVAC project (the term of the loan expires July 2038). In March, we welcomed Frank Niepold as a new member of the Finance Committee.

History Committee

Victoria Kirkham, Chair

We are learning more about the remarkable Stonorov-Crowell-Bacon enclave in Charlestown (near Phoenixville) by reaching out to the second generation: Tasha Stonorov, our architect’s daughter, whom we hope to interview; and the sons of artist Lucius Crowell, Nick and Chris (kite fliers in our mural), who have shared a treasure trove about their father. Jim Hartling is untangling complex politics and financing behind the long development story of Hopkinson House. A subcommittee (Hartling, Margaret Garvin) has signed up to document our building’s interior decoration over the years.

As part of the upcoming lobby refresh, we have proposed that two of our building’s artifacts will be hung together in the lobby for the first time: the Silver Medal certificate for top residential structure from the Philadelphia Chapter of the American Association of Architects (1963), and the elegant bronze plaque marking our 35th anniversary (1998).

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Mary Isaacson, our representative for the 175th district in the Pennsylvania State House, visited Hopkinson House in February for a “meet and greet.” Isaacson is running for re-election this year.

Committee Corner

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The History Committee is looking for a volunteer with computer expertise to help us develop a platform for storing information produced by our research as we work toward our goals of online and print publication. We aim to create an archive that will include a bibliography, newsletter index, photographs, and articles of historic interest. Anyone interested should contact me: vkirkham@sas.upenn.edu.

Finally, thanks to Martha Cornog, we have entered a collaboration with the Newsletter Committee to publish one article per issue about our work.

Pool Committee

Diane GaNun, Chair

The recent ice and snow will just be a memory as we look ahead to warmer weather. The Pool Committee paused our meeting schedule during the winter but will resume in March as we anticipate and hope for another wonderful pool season! We'll stay tuned for management updates on the pool's status.

Note from Hopkinson House Management: An architect has been engaged to develop project specifications as the pool renovation process begins. Timing for an anticipated project start date is early 2027.

Social Committee

Millie Korn, Chair

We kicked off 2026 with our first event, Bubbly and Sweets, which was held on February 13th in the Solarium. The room was decorated with a Valentine theme that included a large poster of the Eiffel Tower where attendees could have their photo taken. Residents enjoyed champagne, chocolates, and baked goods.

Please mark your calendar for our upcoming events, below, with more details to follow in the coming months.

Strategic Planning Committee

Sandy Garz, Chair

The Strategic Planning Committee, with various task-oriented subcommittee members, have been pulling together the necessary information to create a Strategic Plan for Hopkinson House, to guide future decision-making and to support good governance. We thank them all for their contributions and hard work.

By the time you read this, you will have received and responded to the survey sent to owners, renters, and owner-investors. As the first survey of its kind at Hopkinson House, it is designed to represent the opinions of our entire community, so your participation has been critical. It focuses on multiple conditions and topics and is anonymous: answers to questions will not be attributed to any individual. We worked hard to include questions on as many issues and areas of interest that we could, including your vision for Hopkinson House in the next five years, while keeping the survey length reasonable. We hope you responded and shared your opinions and insight as members of our community.

Your responses will support the foundation of the Strategic Plan for Hopkinson House. It will encourage consistency in the way we operate in a changing environment and help us maintain focus and progress since Council members change with every election. Stay tuned for updates as we summarize survey findings and create a road map for the future, balancing community input with fiduciary responsibilities. ■



Jean Papaj, MBA, is a marketing, communications, and business development executive with additional experience as an adult educator.

Upcoming Events (more details to come)

April 1st: Game Days

are held the first Wednesday of every month in the lower Solarium. Hours are 2–4 p.m. and 7–9 p.m. Games and playing cards are provided.

March 25th: Quizzo

To be held in the Solarium from 7–9 p.m. This will be a BYOB event.

May 13th: Movie Night/Sing Along to Mamma Mia!

To be held in the Solarium from 7–9:30 p.m. This will be a BYOB event.

July 15th: Bingo

The event will be held on the outside lower Solarium deck from 7–8:30 p.m. This will be a BYOB event.

October 29th: Halloween Party

The theme will be Disco, and the party will be held in the Solarium from 7–9:30 p.m. This will be a BYOB event.

December 17th: Holiday Party

To be held in the Solarium from 7:30–9 p.m.

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Francis Hopkinson: Our Illustrious Neighbor

Concha Alborg

As recognition of our nation's upcoming Semiquincentennial, it is fitting that we should acknowledge a most illustrious neighbor. Francis Hopkinson was born on October 2nd, 1737 in Philadelphia, Province of Pennsylvania, British America, and died on May 9th, 1791 in a new country: our United States of America. His parents were Thomas Hopkinson, who arrived from England in 1731, and Mary Johnson Hopkinson. At fourteen years of age, Francis Hopkinson became a member of the first class at the College of Philadelphia—now the University of Pennsylvania—and graduated in 1757. He studied law at the same institution and was admitted to the bar in 1761.

In only one of his many official positions, Hopkinson was secretary to the Pennsylvania Indian Commission and helped establish a treaty with tribes of the Delaware and Iroquois. Then he moved to England for a short time, unsuccessfully seeking an appointment under the Crown. Upon his return to Philadelphia, he established a dry-goods store on Front Street, where fine textiles and port wine were sold. But by the time the Crown offered him a position, his political interests had changed to Whig ideals, and he declined. In fact, he published a satirical allegory, *A Pretty Story*, on the separation from England, and *A Prophecy*, predicting



Portrait of Francis Hopkinson by Robert Edge Pine, 1785

independence. In 1768 he married Ann Borden of Bordentown, New Jersey. They had five children: two sons and three daughters. Hopkinson was a New Jersey delegate to the Continental Congress, signed the Declaration of Independence in 1776, and served on the committee for drafting the Articles of Confederation. Then President George Washington nominated him to the position of federal judge of the United States District Court of Pennsylvania. He served until his premature death from an epileptic seizure at the age of 53. Hopkinson also had broader cultural interests. He was an accomplished musician. He began the

study of the harpsichord at seventeen and became the organist at Old City's Christ Church, in whose burial ground he is interred. By 1759 he had compiled over 200 keyboard compositions and had written an original song for voice and keyboard: "My Days Have Been So Wondrous Free," considered the first secular composition by an American. He translated the Psalms from Dutch to English for church use, and collected anthems and hymns for Christ Church and for St. Peter's Church on Pine Street. In 1788 he published an elegant volume of *Seven Songs*, dedicated to his personal friend George Washington. Although Hopkinson is often credited as designer

of the American Flag, it is not clear that he acted alone, since he was a member of the committee. Likewise, he helped with the design of the Board of Admiralty Seal and the Treasury Board Seal. In any case, he was a gentleman of many talents and accomplishments, with a reputation in his time of being a "Renaissance Man." He was the curator of the American Philosophical Society for six years and was also the judge of the Admiralty Court of Pennsylvania from 1779–1789, although his tenure was not free of conflict. In fact, he was impeached due to allegations of accepting bribes but was acquitted, and remained in office. Finally, he became a member of the Pennsylvania Convention that ratified the United States Constitution.

Why was our building named after this famous jurist? That is an interesting conundrum. One of Francis Hopkinson's descendants, Philadelphia banker Edward Hopkinson, sold the land next to Washington Square to real estate broker Albert Greenfield, with the stipulation that the building eventually erected be named after the Hopkinson family. But since this land is situated in the historical area of Society Hill, the naming decision had to be approved by the City Planning Commission and by the Old Philadelphia Development Corporation.

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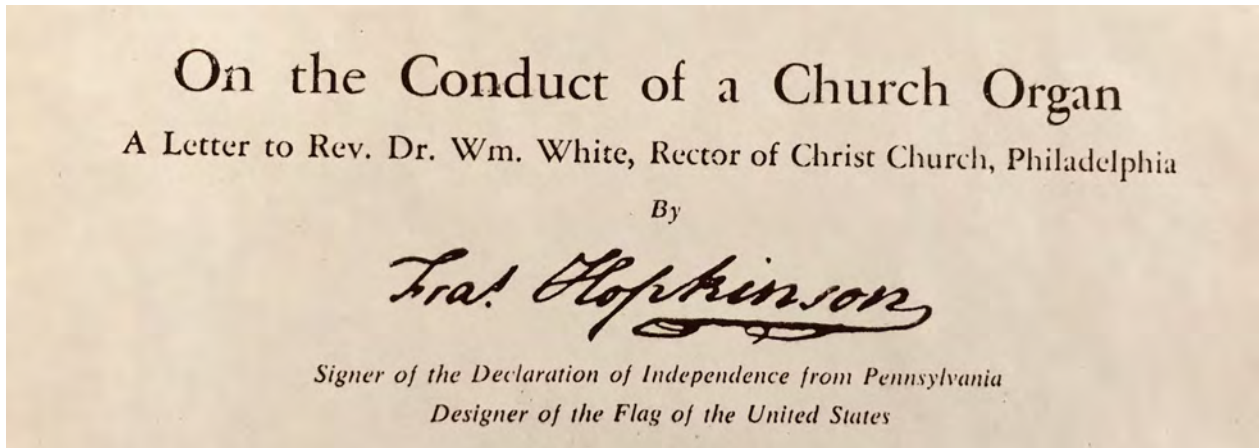
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Francis Hopkinson, Our Illustrious Neighbor

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“On the Conduct of a Church Organ” was written by Hopkinson to advise an organist how to play tastefully and with dignity, always conducive to the purposes of devotion.

So an agreement was reached with the condition that our building be named “Hopkinson House.”

Since I am a member of Christ Church, I was able to research their archives, and I found interesting information there. Hopkinson had served in the Vestry as Warden, and his home had been on Arch Street between Fourth and Fifth Streets. Like most of our founding fathers, he owned at least one slave, as did many of the church’s congregants. In other sources, it is mentioned that he and his wife Ann Borden owned two slaves: Violet (age 30),

and Dan (age 9), who were given their freedom upon her death. Hopkinson himself taught freed slaves to read and write along with the Catechism in the church school. In 2024, Christ Church Neighborhood House explored the lives of free and enslaved Black people who had worshipped at “the Nation’s Church” in colonial times. George Washington, Benjamin Franklin, John Adams, and Betsy Ross, among other renowned people, also worshipped there.

These details have become significant in relation to the recent events at

the President’s House exhibit on Market Street, commemorating where Washington lived during part of his presidency along with his family and staff—including nine enslaved individuals. On January 22nd, the exhibits were dismantled according to the current administration’s order “to review and remove displays in National Parks that inappropriately disparage Americans past or living.” Although some of the panels of the

original exhibit have been replaced, these efforts to erase the critical role of slaveholding in the lives of this nation’s founders have provoked widespread indignation. As close neighbors of Independence National Park and the President’s House, it is important to acknowledge the facts of our nation’s and our neighborhood’s past. We can celebrate to have our building named after Francis Hopkinson, with fuller knowledge of his historical past. ■



Concha Alborg, PhD, is a retired academic and author originally from Spain. She writes fiction, creative nonfiction, and a blog “Epilogues/Epílogos.” www.conchaalborg.com

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Recent Social Events

In January, our Green Committee's **Meatless Monday** Veggie/Vegan Potluck conjured forth a dizzying smorgasbord of tasty dishes.

These partying residents changed their luck on a Friday the 13th to celebrate Valentine's Day with champagne, chocolates, and fun in a **Bubbly and Sweets** evening.



Get Ready for the May 19th Pennsylvania Primary

Larry Meehan

Pennsylvanians will vote for candidates for the following offices on May 19: member in the U.S. House of Representatives; Governor and Lieutenant Governor for the State of Pennsylvania; and state and local committeepople. While only registered Republicans and Democrats may vote for the candidates in their respective parties, all registered voters are free to weigh in on ballot questions.

The ballot questions may not be determined until a few weeks before the election. As of the date of this article, it appears that there will be a question about revising the rule requiring Philadelphia's elected officials to step down from their current positions if they wish to seek higher office. Instead of eliminating this *resign-to-run rule*, however, City Councilmember Isaiah Thomas' proposal would amend it to allow all elected city officials except the mayor to run for state or federal offices without resigning. Councilmembers would still have to step down if they wanted to

run for mayor, and mayors would still have to resign to seek any other office.

On two previous occasions, voters rejected City Council's attempts to get rid of the *resign-to-run rule*. The latest proposal, which Council approved by a vote of 15–1, requires a ballot measure because it is part of the city's Home Rule Charter.

Two other questions will appear on the ballot: a proposal to add an Office of Youth Ombudsperson to the City Charter; and the creation of the Philadelphia Retirement Savings Board to oversee a contribution retirement program for certain private-sector workers.

More information about these ballot measures may be found on the Ballotpedia.org and Committee of Seventy (seventy.org) websites closer to the election.

Where To Vote

Residents of our division (the 3rd Division of the 5th Ward) may vote on election day in the South Lobby of Hopkinson House. Of course, many will take



advantage of the option to vote by mail. Whichever option you choose, you must be registered to vote.

Unsure of your status? Check it here: vote.pa.gov/status

For more Philadelphia voter information, check here: vote.phila.gov

Early Voting Sites

Voters who wish to submit a mail-in ballot in person may do so at the office of the County Board of Elections, Room 140 at City Hall. The closest drop box for ballots is at the Independence Branch of the Free Library of Philadelphia at

18 S. 7th Street. The next closest drop box is at the South Portal of City Hall.

In almost all circumstances, only the voter may turn in a ballot. The one exception is for voters with an illness or physical disability who correctly complete a designation of agent form that enables another person to transport the ballot. Both the voter and agent must sign the form. Agents can only transport ballots for voters of one household per election. ■

If you have questions about voting procedures, email Tina Muheim, our Judge of Elections, at tmuheim@icloud.com.



Larry Meehan, a resident since 1991, is an attorney and Democratic Party committeeperson.

Important Dates

Late April Voter registration in Hopkinson House lobby for new residents and those who wish to change party affiliation

May 4th Last day to register to vote in the primary

May 12th Last day to apply for a mail-in or civilian absentee ballot

May 19th Last day for the Board of Elections to receive voted mail-in and civilian absentee ballots (must be received by 8:00 p.m.)

May 26th Last day for the Board of Elections to receive voted military and overseas civilian absentee ballots (must be received by 11:59 p.m.)

Mail-in ballots may NOT be turned in at the polling place on election day. On election day, mail-in ballots will be accepted at the County Board of Elections and at drop boxes until 8:00 p.m.

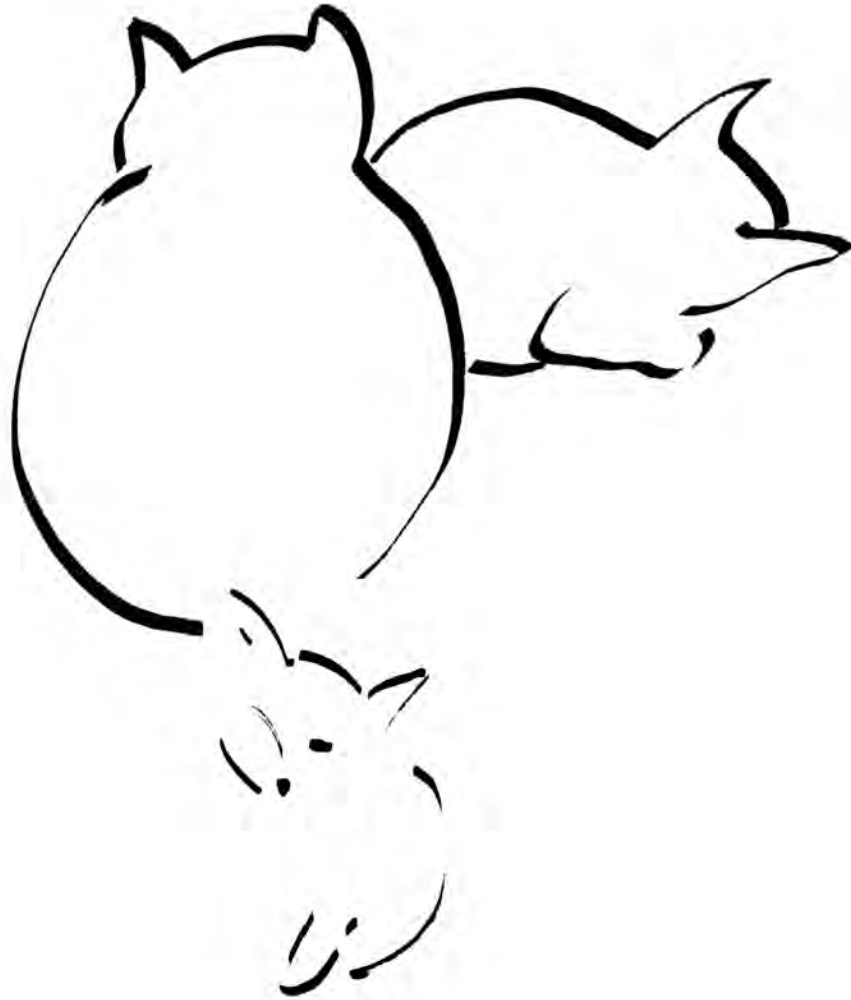
The Sage

by
Michael Neff

*If one looks at the scene from
our veranda, the impression it creates is
of a deep and thickly wooded forest, and
one feels that there is a lonely house in a
glade where some learned sage, indifferent
to fame and wealth, leads a solitary life
with only a nameless cat for his companion.*

Natsume Soseki,
I Am a Cat





*The cat went here and there,
And the moon spun round like a top.*

William Butler Yeats



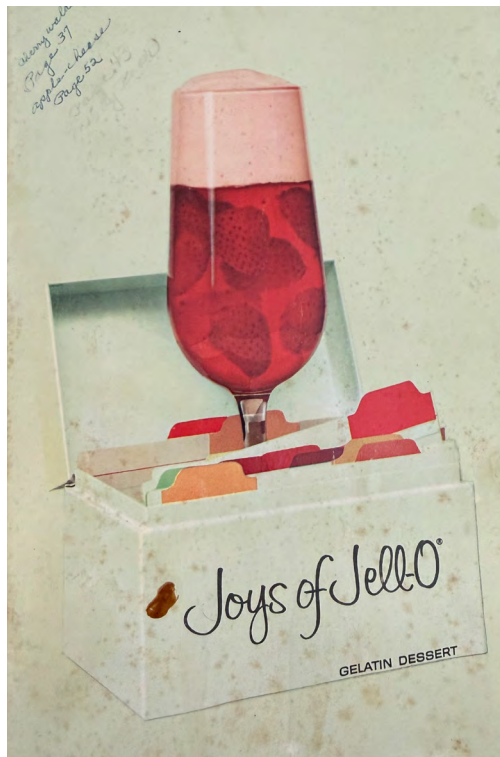
Michael Neff paints in Washington Square in summer, fall, and spring. You can see some of those, and other, pictures on his Instagram account, [@paintinginthe park](#).

Spring Cleaning and Things Not Thrown Away

Ramona Johnson

I sit in my living room, surrounded by a lifetime of things. If you think that I might have some friends over, just to catch up with our busy lives, you will soon see that this is not possible. There is no room to sit down. I hope that this is only temporary.

Some weeks ago, our son, Ben, offered to help me empty the U-Haul storage unit that Curt and I acquired when we moved from our home of more than 40 years in Queen Village to Hopkinson House. Ours was not just any storage unit. It was indoors and climate controlled, locked up like Fort Knox, with elaborate safeguards against anyone breaking and entering and perhaps living in it. Our unit was large because we needed space to accommodate some furniture when we were moving. By now the furniture had long been moved out, and at least one-half of the unit was empty. But the other half was *full* of storage bins. As I increasingly begrudged the hefty payment to U-Haul each month, Ben and I made a date to move these bins to our apartment on the first Saturday in January. The upshot is that now we are now living with big plastic bins, full of a lifetime of memories and detritus, lining the wall behind the couch in the living room. Indeed, plastic bins inhabit every nook and cranny that will accommodate them.



One of Mom's many cookbooks

I am surrounded by them. I have begun to empty them, so every surface is covered with something.

I am slowly getting a grip on the bins. Some hold the average stuff of life that people accumulate. I tell myself that everyone accumulates the photographs of children and their parents and their pets and holiday items and belongings of a sentimental nature. I have plenty of that! Five or six big boxes contain the early years of our children, the later years of our parents, and all the years of our pets. I once took a photography class. And since we had children whom I think are fascinating and beautiful, I photographed them regularly with a film-loaded Nikon camera.



My childhood braids

This happened for years on end, with many photos now in albums, most in boxes, some labeled by year, some not. I dispensed with the photography equipment—camera, projector, etc.—via BuildingLink, but everything else lingers complacently here.

I decide to begin by opening each box and doing a mental inventory. Then the job of disposing or distributing of the contents will be a breeze, right? I observe that some of these boxes are what I think of as generational detritus, from lives long expired. Each of my parents died at the advanced age of 94, former farmers who kept almost daily records of everything about the farm and a little about their four

children. Hogs to market, bushels of wheat, repairs to the tractor, everything about the weather. Both had beautiful penmanship, and one or the other of them wrote daily. There are a half-dozen Bibles, mostly tattered, mostly in English, some in German, and more than twenty hymnals. Surely my love for music grew from this music-loving family, and now for a brief moment, I think what a great project this whole thing is, because it helps me understand things about myself. Silly me!

A largish box is devoted to my mom's cookbooks. Here is *The Joys of Jell-O*. Why, I can almost taste the shimmering stuff. Is this the recipe with celery-and-cottage-cheese-in-lime Jell-O? Or is

Spring Cleaning and Things Not Thrown Away

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Storage bins behind the sofa

this the one with canned fruit cocktail and Cool Whip on top? Sometimes they are good recipes, and sometimes they are not. Many of the cookbooks are local in nature, published by every church and community group for miles around. There are clippings, too. Reading through these recipes, I am struck by how much my mom loved apples. A vast majority of recipes that she clipped relate to apples. It is amazing that I hadn't thought about this until I started going through these bins. Now I think I should have been a forensic detective of some kind instead of a lawyer. My mind is wandering as I am speculating as to what my children will be able to discern about me

by examining what I save. My fervent hope is that they will be wise enough to put my collection of saved recipes into the trash bin without examination. I am not so wise.

At a certain point, Dad was diagnosed with diabetes, and the recipes Mom saved took a different turn: recipes without sugar. "Equal" began to appear as an ingredient. I haven't thought about that for a long time, and this takes me down another path.

I open a new bin, containing a small white box I recognize instantly. Inside lay the braids cut from my head on the day that my mom took my sister Judy and me for haircuts at the home of Margie, our local

beautician. I immediately call Judy on Facetime. She still has her cut-off braids also, but she does not remember where they are. I know exactly where mine are. They on the cocktail table in my living room.

I cannot blame my parents for all these stored items. When I fell in love with opera, I scrimped for a subscription to the Metropolitan Opera and collected CDs and LPs of famous singers. I have given some of these to second-hand stores, but I still have a few favorite opera CDs—yet nothing to play them on. Also in the bins are a few *Seinfeld* DVDs, which I wish I had time to rewatch. I certainly need a good laugh.

Good news! I message Judy, who agrees to take some of the musical items for her granddaughter. But not the college yearbook from 1966 or a box of books containing *Lady Chatterley's Lover* and works by favorite black authors Dick Gregory, Richard Wright, and Langston Hughes. Another small collection holds political paraphernalia from the 1972 McGovern vs. Nixon Presidential campaign and a book published by Senator Joseph McCarthy. That should be interesting to read during

current turbulent days, and I muse about that. As soon as I finish going through these *@\$*!! bins, I will have time to sit down and read again.

Another bin contains photo albums, empty of photos. I bought them on sale—my hedge against inflation. But nobody takes print photos anymore. And there are probably some still-unexamined bins from Curt's relatives. Curt would not have kept any of it. He is the sort who would long since have lost track of these artifacts from his side of the family. Even his own mementos of his athletic prowess about which he is rightfully proud, and this scrapbook someone created for him, would have disappeared if I hadn't saved them. Is it a lucky thing that I have kept some of this for him? Or is it crazy?

You can decide. Is this a cautionary tale? The experience of doing this makes me wary of leaving too much for my own children. I remind myself that this is why we brought these big bins home to weed out. Is it part of a curse that follows my family, as they pass these things from generation to generation without a stated purpose or comment? Or do you, too, save boxes full of time? ■



Ramona Johnson, a former resident of Nebraska, Queen Village, and places in between, writes about her life as a farmer's daughter, wife, mother, grandmother, and semi-retired lawyer.



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Oscar Stonorov, Louis Kahn, and the Social Responsibility of Architecture: Part 2

Joseph Quinn

(Continuation of “Oscar Stonorov, Louis Kahn, and the Social Responsibility of Architecture: Part 1” that appeared in the Winter 2026 issue of *on the House*.)

During their professional partnership, Oscar Stonorov (1905–1970), architect of Hopkinson House, and Louis Kahn (1901–1974) worked together harmoniously on public housing projects designed in a simplified Modernist style for low- and middle-income workers.¹ Yet when their idealistic fervor for subsidized socially-conscious architecture cooled, both Stonorov and Kahn set off on career trajectories that could hardly have been more different.

Stonorov, urbane, opinionated, a natural communicator, was at ease around developers and journalists. He enjoyed sharing his urban planning philosophy via popular venues like *The New Yorker* and *Life Magazine*. Kahn was scholarly and introspective, most comfortable in a classroom or in a loosely organized atelier working with a small group of trusted associates. He wrote and spoke with Biblical gravitas in gnomic, elliptical statements that could both mesmerize and confound listeners. Stonorov grew impatient with Kahn’s irregular office routines, constant revisions, and reluctance to bring a project to conclusion, and chose to accept solo commissions



The Terrace (formerly The Plaza), Stonorov’s apartment building on Benjamin Franklin Blvd. at 18th Street (1965). Cylindrical, in contrast to four-square Hopkinson House, but showing the importance he placed on private outdoor space.

where he could control the process and outcome. Unbeknownst to Kahn, he opened a private office in Gimbel’s department store. With such contrasting temperaments and ambitions, it was inevitable that their partnership would dissolve, as it did in 1947.

As part of the Philadelphia City Planning Commission in the 1950s, Kahn became vigorously involved in the early stages of Center City redevelopment. His futuristic proposals included designs for what became Penn Center and Market Street East. For him, “Center City is a place to go to—not go through.”² He envisioned the urban core as a pedestrian enclave



Kahn’s Richards Medical Research Laboratories, University of Pennsylvania (1957). Vertical brick towers and window grids signal his pivot from simplified Modernist housing to private commissions expressed in a powerful new architectural language.

surrounded by super-structures (“wound-up streets”) as repositories for cars, offices, hotels, and commercial spaces. But the response from other city planners was decidedly unenthusiastic.

Mill Creek Homes (1951), Kahn’s West Philadelphia high-rise complex designed to provide African American residents with modern, up-to-code housing, also proved disappointing. Kahn fought budgetary restrictions that eliminated the “greenways” he designed to connect the towers and naturalize the urban landscape. And after years of benign neglect, the complex was demolished in 2002. Indeed, throughout

his career, Kahn’s ambitious plans were often stymied by lack of sufficient funding. Of the 136 projects in his post-Stonorov portfolio, well over half were never built, usually because of budget overruns or failure to fund. After these disappointments, Kahn pivoted to a new phase of his career marked by prestigious private commissions. An original and powerful architectural language emerged in the Richards Medical Research Laboratories building for the University of Pennsylvania (1957). Dominated by slender brick towers alternating

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Oscar Stonorov, Louis Kahn, and the Social Responsibility of Architecture: Part 2

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with prominent window grids, its asymmetric design contrasts sharply with Kahn’s earlier streamlined Modernist projects. His fame rests on this and a handful of other landmark achievements, including the Salk Institute in La Jolla (1960) and the Kimbell Art Museum in Fort Worth (1966).

Independently, Stonorov completed 123 projects in Pennsylvania, 77 of them in the Philadelphia area. In 1947, Stonorov and Edmund Bacon staged *The Better Philadelphia Exhibition* at Gimbels department store, subtitled “What City Planning Means to You.” It was a multi-media demonstration of how an aging city infrastructure could be modernized through advanced

architectural design, thus foreshadowing the urban planning wave that swept through Philadelphia in the 1950s and transformed Society Hill from a “slum” to the desirable neighborhood it is today.

In this, Stonorov displayed his versatility through working for all manner of private clients, universities, department stores, hotels, and restaurants, all rooted in a dynamic urban environment. In Center City, his work is conspicuous in the form of two mid-century modern high-rise apartment developments. Pride of place goes to our own Hopkinson House (1962), followed by The Plaza (1965) on Benjamin Franklin Boulevard (now The Terrace), cylindrical

in shape but also festooned with balconies. Not all of Stonorov’s Philadelphia high-rise projects have been as successful. Two of his twenty-six story Southwark Towers (1963) went the way of other idealistically-conceived low-income, high-rise projects. They were imploded in 2000 after the complex acquired a reputation as “one of the city’s worst public housing sites.”³ Stonorov’s last major project in the U.S. was with another unlikely partner. In 1968 he created an education center and vacation retreat at Black Lake, Michigan, for members of Walter Reuther’s auto workers union. Stonorov, the European sophisticate, and Reuther, a scrappy,

working-class guy from Wheeling, West Virginia, who almost single-handedly forged and led the American labor union movement, had developed a lasting friendship and deep professional bond.⁴ For the Black Lake center, Stonorov provided not only basic utilitarian needs but enhanced the wooded site by integrating art and landscaping. Edmund Bacon called it “the opportunity to fulfill his dream—a total integration of architecture and sculpture forms.”⁵ In his housing plans, Stonorov provided art in some form to educate and delight residents. From the time he studied under Aristide Maillol in Paris, sculpture remained one

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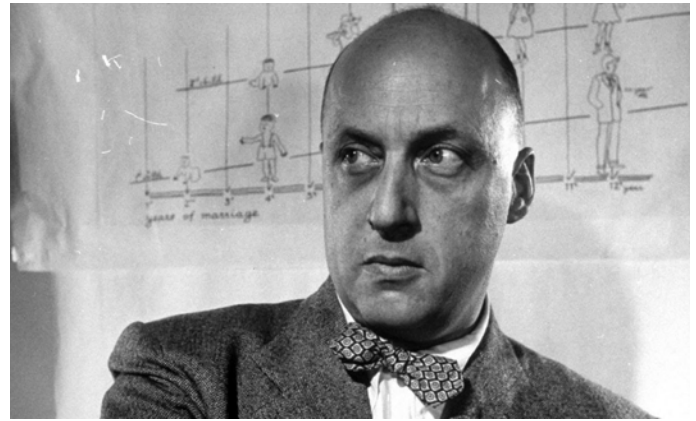


Kahn critiquing the work of architecture students at the University of Pennsylvania.

of his artistic passions. In Hopkinson House we have several pieces he created with Jorio Vivarelli: the *Four Seasons* bas-reliefs at the elevator bank and the free-standing sculpture of *Adam and Eve* hovering in the courtyard.⁶ Also in our lobby is *Philadelphia Panorama*, a mural by Lucius Crowell. The painter Crowell was part of a circle of artists and intellectuals that Stonorov entertained at Avon Lea, the house he designed for himself in Chester County.⁷

For the housing projects he designed for workers, Stonorov provided outdoor space and

natural landscaping that he believed were essential for a family's mental and physical well-being. For kids, he provided recreation spaces like playgrounds and pools to counter the toxic effects of city living. By contrast, some of Kahn's late career projects have been criticized as cold and oppressive. Often cited in this regard are the Institute of Management in Ahmedabad, India, and the capital complex of Bangladesh in Dhaka (both begun in 1962 and finished after his death). Devoid of any ornamentation that would add a sense of delight or playfulness,



Oscar Stonorov, architect of Hopkinson House

their designs express geometric abstraction in its purest form and dwarf the human element with a fortress-like monumentality.

Kahn was 73 when he suffered a heart attack in New York's Pennsylvania Station on his way home from India. Stonorov was 65 when he perished in a private plane crash while he and Reuther were on their way to inspect the Black Lake education center. Comparing their legacies now, Kahn's

reputation towers over Stonorov's. Both are highly respected for devoting their early careers to pioneering designs for worker housing combining Modernist architecture with social activism. ■

(Author's Note: This two-part series is the result of research and discussion among members of the Hopkinson House History Committee, established to explore and share the history of our Modernist landmark building designed by Oscar Stonorov.)



Joseph Quinn is a retired technical writer who likes to write about architectural treasures in our neighborhood and his travel adventures.

Notes

- 1 For a discussion of this phase of their careers, see "Oscar Stonorov, Louis Kahn, and the Social Responsibility of Architecture, Part 1" in the Winter 2026 issue of *on the House*, 19.
- 2 Kahn in *Perspecta*, No. 4, quoted by Francesco Tentori, "Order and Form in the Work of Louis Kahn," (1960). In *Louis I. Kahn*, Alessandra Latour, ed. Rome: Edizioni Kappa, 1986, 197.
- 3 Ken Finkel, "The Rise and Fall of Southwark," *The Philly History Blog*, May 19, 2020. <https://blog.phillyhistory.org/?s=the+rise+and+fall+of+southwark>
- 4 A fascinating topic for a future article.
- 5 Susan Herrington, "Faternally Yours: The Union Architecture of Oskar Stonorov and Walter Reuther." *Social History*, Vol. 40, No. 3 (August 2015), 382.
- 6 Victoria Kirkham, "Vivarelli and Stonorov: Their Sculptural Legacy at Hopkinson House." *on the House*, Summer 2013, 19.
- 7 Victoria Kirkham, "From Paris to Philadelphia: Crowell's Mural." *on the House*, Fall 2022, 7,9.



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The Right Thing to Do

Mary Tracy

One of my neighbors asked recently, “Why should I join the Society Hill Civic Association?” She is a regular customer of the 5th Street ACME market, and she agreed that the convenience of this grocery store is a major benefit to living in Hopkinson House. She did not know that in 2017 we almost lost the ACME when Alterra Property Group purchased the property, and ACME’s fifty-year lease was nearing its end. Moreover, the new Philadelphia Zoning Code had removed the protective restrictions for “neighborhood shopping districts.” According to the new zoning code, Alterra’s plans to demolish the ACME building and replace it with a mid-rise residential tower were now a matter of right. Responding to the community’s distress over the loss of its neighborhood grocery store, the Society Hill Civic Association (SHCA) spearheaded the opposition. “Save Our Store” signs sprouted up across the community. SHCA hired an expert zoning attorney who collaborated with the association’s team of volunteer attorneys and mounted a serious challenge to Alterra’s development plans. By the summer of 2017, the two sides reached a settlement agreement in which the developer would abandon its plans for the ACME site, and the community would withhold opposition to a CVS replacing the stores across the street.

A civic association is defined as “a voluntary, community-based organization formed by residents of a specific neighborhood to promote the welfare, interests, and quality of life of that community.” SHCA is our neighborhood civic association. I joined when I moved to Hopkinson House 15 years ago, because I cared about local development and zoning, and wanted to have a say in neighborhood decisions. I knew that a recognized group has more influence when addressing zoning, development proposals, or concerns about traffic, safety, and infrastructure; and that officials will respond more favorably to a civic organization than to an individual acting alone. I had also served as president of my prior neighborhood’s civic association, and was a founding member of a coalition of civic, religious, and health organizations that successfully lobbied for a law to control the proliferation of billboards in Philadelphia. SHCA has successfully represented us in discussions with local government, including working with the Philadelphia City Planning Commission on our zoning ordinance. Volunteers have organized community events such as the Headhouse Shambles Halloween party, annual Society Hill Garden Tour, and holiday socials. The association has advocated for neighborhood improvements, addressed zoning,



safety, and development concerns, and led beautification and preservation efforts. SHCA keeps the community informed by publishing a weekly online communication titled *Society Hill Spotlight*, and a bi-monthly printed publication, *Society Hill Reporter* (available to all Hopkinson House residents via trays in the mailroom).

SHCA organizes Fall and Spring clean-ups, graffiti removal, tree plantings, and park maintenance. SHCA has raised funds to fix the fountain in Washington Square, installed a new watering system for landscaping in the park, and funded the restoration of the historic guardhouse in Washington Square in collaboration with Independence Historical Trust and the Park Service.

And are you aware that it is our civic association that is keeping our sidewalks trash-free? SHCA has a contract with the Center City District (CCD), to come into our

neighborhood every Friday to sweep and bag debris, excluding leaves, from our sidewalks. We add Mondays starting from April 1 through November 1 due to increased foot traffic during those warmer months. All sidewalks are included, including those on the smallest streets, from the South side of Walnut to Lombard Streets and the east side of 8th to Front Street. SHCA pays \$35,000 to \$40,000 annually for this service, which your membership helps fund. Membership is \$50 a year for a household or \$40 for a single student or senior membership. Visit www.societyhillcivic.org to register online and sign up for the weekly *Spotlight* while you are there. You can also email me with your name and unit number (marytracy@gmail.com), and I’ll drop off a membership form. There are many reasons to support Society Hill Civic Association, and I believe it is also the right thing to do. ■



Mary Tracy is the retired president of Scenic America and founding member of Scenic Philadelphia. She has lived in Society Hill for 15 years and chairs the SHCA Nominations Committee.

Revolutionary Hair

Martha Cornog

If we were living in Revolutionary War days, we would not patronize a place like M's On The Square Salon, or Pileggi on the Square. Hair styling happened mostly at home, with servants and slaves to help. But men 250 years ago might have visited an establishment that sold, styled, and cleaned wigs besides offering shaving and hair-cutting.

The word “wig” comes from a shortening of “periwig,” a British corruption of the French “perruque,” itself borrowed from the Italian “parrucca.” Many ancient peoples wore wigs: Egyptians, Assyrians, Jews in Israel, Greeks and Romans (hence the Italian word), others in China, Japan, and Korea. Among Roman women, enslaved fair-haired Germans were much in demand for their golden locks—harvested for wig-making.

After the Western Roman Empire collapsed in 476 CE, the practice fell out of fashion for some centuries in Europe. But gradually wig-wearing in high places brought back those head coverings. England's Queen Elizabeth I (reigned 1558–1603) was painted as wearing curly red wigs that hid smallpox scars and thinning natural hair. Then French kings Louis XIII (reigned 1610–1643), and especially Louis XIV (reigned 1643–1715), adopted dramatic shoulder-length white wigs, partly to cover premature baldness. Male citizens enthusiastically copied

their monarchs, sporting extravagant hairpieces that were gleefully caricatured by political cartoonists. Wigs soon spread throughout Europe, including to England and its colony that became the United States. Wigmakers guilds multiplied everywhere.

The song “Yankee Doodle” was meant to insult the supposedly unsophisticated American colonial man by accusing him of believing that a “feather in his cap” was as fancy a head adornment as the elaborate wigs worn by the “macaroni.” This was a British pejorative for the foppish young men who sashayed around English towns in the most gigantic wigs imaginable.

Why the craze for wigs? It wasn't just fashion. A syphilis epidemic as well as other diseases caused hair loss. And in those unsanitary times when bathing was infrequent even among the rich, lice were everywhere on unwashed, smelly bodies. Wigs were easier to clean, as well as allowing styles not easily produced with one's own locks, which may have thinned with age or illness. Yet with a wig of human hair, any diseases or infestations of the original hair owner might come along with it. Samuel Pepys of 1600s England complained in his diary of almost buying a wig crawling with “nits,” meaning lice. (Modern expressions “lousy” and “nit-picky” derive from these insect infestations.)

The 18th century British and colonial wigs, smaller



Pipe-clay curlers, heated in an oven before use.

than the elaborate French wigs, were made mostly of human hair and worn over a shaved head. (Hair from horses and goats offered cheaper alternatives.) Cleaning required fuller's earth, an absorbent clay substance. Greasy pomades of animal fat—sheep suet, pig suet—helped with styling, but powders made of scented flour were needed to reduce the smell. Such hairstyles could remain undisturbed for weeks, and collect odors from sweat and bacteria as well from fat and flour. The full wigs were worn by men, while women added supplemental hair into their natural coiffures. Off-white, grey, and bluish were the main colors.

Not surprisingly, many folks who did not wear wigs arranged and colored their hair to imitate wig styles. A major hairdo for men, whether bewigged or with natural hair, involved rolled side curls over the ears that required curling irons or clay rollers. The longer back hair was caught in a queue or braid with a tie. Even Revolutionary War soldiers kept a store of tallow and flour to shape

and powder their natural hair in military pigtails. But not everyone wore or imitated wigs. Benjamin Franklin is usually depicted with his natural brown-to-grey hair swept back from a high forehead and reaching down to his shoulders. Working-class men and farmers in Revolutionary times did not wear wigs either.

George Washington, whose natural hair was actually reddish brown, did not wear wigs but did powder his hair and fashion the longer back locks into a queue—or, rather, William Lee, his enslaved valet, did it for him. Only four U.S. Presidents wore powdered wigs with side curls and a queue: John Adams, Thomas Jefferson, James Madison, and James Monroe.

But in England, wig-wearing had dropped suddenly because of a 1795 tax on hair powder. Royalty, clergy, and a few other professions were exempt from the tax, however, and continued wearing the larger wigs to mark their profession.

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Revolutionary Hair

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In the new United States, men soon abandoned those white wigs altogether. Women continued to incorporate premade hairpieces—side curls, buns—into styling their natural hair into the 1920s and beyond. In his famous 1905 story, “The Gift of the Magi,” the writer known as O. Henry told of a poor young woman who sold her long hair to wig-makers in order to buy a watch fob for her beloved husband. By the 1960s, synthetic fibers made hairpieces much easier and cheaper to buy.

Today’s wig production has become a billion-dollar

industry, relying on synthetic hair plus human hair from India and Southeast Asia that is made into wigs in China. Celebrities and performers routinely rely on hairpieces for dramatic effects—singers Cher, Taylor Swift, and Dolly Parton all wear wigs and extensions on stage. Actors on stage and screen wear wigs and hairpieces to create and stabilize their characters’ appearance.

And on the street today, many of us wear wigs and hairpieces for similar reasons as our Revolutionary ancestors, if more realistic and odor-free than those

smelly, powdered colonial head-coverings. For hair loss from cancer or simply from aging, for drama, for gender-play, and always for fashion, both synthetic and natural hair can do the job. Coiffeurs of people with African heritage can be dramatically supplemented by woven-in locs, braids, and extensions as well completely re-envisioned through full wigs. Numerous online sources have increased availability.

Wigs helped our forebears identify as someone handsomer, healthier, younger, a more stylish self before and during Revolutionary years—and today as well. Now we can add “for fun” to the intentions. Perhaps a nearby bureau drawer may contain a wig or two bought for a costume party, an office Halloween gag, or in imitation of a beloved character in film or fiction. ■



Martha Cornog reviews graphic novels for Library Journal and graphicmedicine.org.



An 18th century English wig and barbershop, by caricaturist Thomas Rowlandson. Note different wig styles, including the shoulder-length wig for the bald man, and the side-curls and pigtail on the blue-clad employee fitting him. The uninhibited animal at bottom left suggests that the establishment is none too sanitary.

Everyday Ingredients, Unexpected Delights

Chef's Corner

Johanne Lamarche

This issue's recipes lean into comfort—the kind that fills the kitchen with warmth and fragrance. Rosemary, garlic, and parmesan transform humble beans into a bubbling,

savory bake, while pecans and orange zest create a fragrant, flourless cookie that's both nourishing and sweet. Small pleasures that deliver with minimal effort and are lovely to share. ■

If you have a favorite recipe, we would love to test it and put it in this column.

Send your recipes or requests to Johanne Lamarche at frenchgardener@comcast.net.



Johanne Lamarche is a French Canadian who came to the U.S. to study periodontics, stayed for love, and is enjoying a second career as an artist.

Cheesy Italian Baked Beans with Spinach

Serves 6–8. Adapted from Better Homes and Gardens.

Traditional Italian ingredients such as onions, garlic, tomatoes, parmesan, and rosemary transform traditional baked beans into an exciting side dish or a meatless main. Parmesan is mixed into the beans themselves and in an ooey-gooey-good gratin layer on top, making this dish decadently cheesy and filling. The rosemary prominently shines through. (Reduce the quantity for more subtlety.) The fire-roasted tomatoes add some kick, as do the red pepper flakes. Unlike traditional baked beans, these have no sugar added. At a recent potluck gathering, someone asked out loud who had made the baked beans. I sheepishly revealed myself and was singled out for rave reviews. Who knew such a simple dish, mostly from pantry staples, would be such a hit? As a bonus, they smell divine while baking. Dig in!

Ingredients

- | | |
|---|---|
| 2 tablespoons olive oil | 1 6-ounce bag of baby spinach, or more if you want extra greens |
| 1 yellow onion, coarsely chopped | 3 14-ounce cans of cannellini beans, drained and rinsed |
| 3 cloves of garlic, coarsely chopped | ¾ cup shredded parmesan cheese |
| pinch of sea salt | hot pepper flakes, salt and pepper, to taste |
| 1 28-ounce can of fire-roasted chopped tomatoes with green chili, including the juice | 1 c shredded fontina cheese (I used a 4-cheese blend that included fontina) |
| ¼ cup of fresh rosemary leaves, coarsely chopped; more for garnish | |

Directions

- 1 Preheat oven to 400°F.
- 2 In a large skillet, heat oil over medium heat, add onion and garlic, and cook until onion is translucent, about 5 minutes.
- 3 Add spinach and stir until wilted. Add pinch of salt, tomatoes, and rosemary. Bring to a boil, turn down heat, and cook, uncovered, 5 to 10 minutes to thicken slightly.
- 4 Stir in the beans, half of the parmesan, and rosemary. Add ⅛ teaspoon of hot pepper flakes. Taste, and add salt and pepper to taste. Bear in mind the tomatoes may already have salt, and the cheeses will also be salty. Cook 5 more minutes.
- 5 Transfer to a 2-quart oven-proof casserole dish. Top with remaining cheese. Bake in center of oven, uncovered, for 15 to 20 minutes until the edges begin to brown. Sprinkle with additional rosemary and serve.



Everyday Ingredients, Unexpected Delights

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Canyon Ranch Orange-Pecan Cookies

Makes 16 cookies. Adapted from Canyon Ranch Spa, Tucson, Arizona.

These nutty cookies are flourless, gluten-free, rich in good fats and protein. Made with just five simple ingredients—chopped pecans, orange zest, orange extract, very little sugar, and one egg white to bind the batter together—they could not be easier. They are a healthy, crunchy cookie that satisfies a sweet tooth without guilt.

Ingredients

1 cup chopped pecans	1 teaspoon orange extract
⅓ cup sugar	1 large egg white, lightly beaten
1 teaspoon orange zest	

Directions

- 1 Preheat oven to 350°F.
- 2 Separate one egg, beat the white until soft peaks form.
- 3 Pulse pecans and sugar together in a food processor into a sand-like texture. Transfer to a small bowl and add orange zest and extract. Gently fold in the whipped egg white.
- 4 Line a cookie sheet with parchment paper. Drop 16 heaping teaspoons of dough onto the sheet 2 inches apart and shape into balls.
- 5 Bake 8–10 minutes until edges are turning golden brown. Cool completely on sheet before handling.
- 6 Dust with powdered sugar if desired. The cookies freeze well for up to 3 months.



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If you are not a member and would like to join, contact Susan Tomita at susan.tomita@gmail.com or (215) 925-8464, or find a link to the membership form at <https://thehopkinsonhouse.com/activities/>



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