

Historic Takoma

N • E • W • S • L • E • T • T • E • R

HTI Archives Have A New Home!

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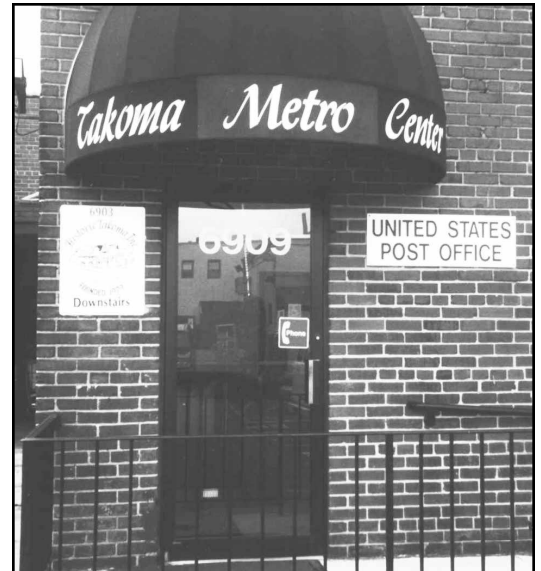
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New and Renewed Members

It's official! The HTI Archives have a new home. Donated by John Urciolo, a 360-square-foot space beneath the Old Town Post Office is ready to receive the approximately 150 linear feet of photographs, newspaper and magazine articles and other items of historic interest that comprise HTI's archives.

Soon the materials will be moved from the basement of City Hall and processing will take place in the future. Once the materials are sorted in more detail and rearranged, the physical condition of the collection will be assessed, and finding aids prepared.

A planning team has been formed by Ann Juneau, Chair of HTI's Archives Committee. The volunteer team consists of: Karen Fishman, professional archivist and former president of Historic Takoma, Edward J. Fox, systems architect, and Suzanne Pilsk, professional librarian and resident of Takoma Park. Thanks go to other members and volunteers who have been helping along the way, especially: Dorothy Barnes, HTI historian, Claire Dekle, paper conservationist, Jack Carson, HTI board officer, and Paul Long, Archives Committee member.

During the next year, the planning team ➤ *Continued on Page 3*



One entrance to the new HTI archives is behind the Old Town Post Office.

President's Message: Check Your Attics and Basements!

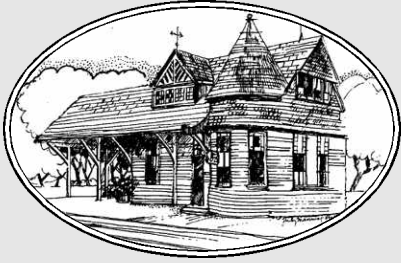
Calling all Historic Takoma material home! Do any of you have photographs, files, posters, house replicas, etc., packed away in attics and basements that at one time belonged to Historic Takoma? In the past few years, we have found a few of these treasure troves, and think that more of them most probably exist. As officers have left the board over the past years, some have retained some of these materials and records. We most especially, of course, welcome the addition of historic materials such as photographs and documents. Some of these, we believe, were stored in

members' attics simply because HTI had no place else to put them.

Now that HTI has an official home for its archives, we have room to store these items and to make them available to members and the rest of the community. If you have material, please call Dorothy Barnes at 301-270-2431 or leave a message at 301-270-1700, ext. 662.

Thank you!
Lorraine Pearsall
President

HISTORIC TAKOMA NEWSLETTER



Historic Takoma, Inc.
PO Box 5781
Takoma, Park, MD 20913
(301)270-1700, ext. 662

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Patricia Fox

Historic Takoma Newsletter is a publication of Historic Takoma, Inc. It is published quarterly for members and friends of the organization.

Letters to the editor are encouraged. Volunteers are welcome. Please contact HTI if you want to become more involved in the preservation of your community.

HTI is a membership-based non-profit organization founded in 1979 to promote historic preservation, citizen involvement, and community development in the Takoma community.

Membership is open to the public. Contributions are tax-deductible.

Federal ID No.: 52-114960



A member of the
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AROUND TOWN

Goodbye to a Great HTI Friend

In Memorium: Allan Marsh

It is with great sadness that HTI has learned of the death of Allan Marsh on September 30th. As a member of the Save Takoma Park Committee, Allan Marsh, together with his wife and HTI co-founder Ellen Marsh, was instrumental in saving our historic city from the destruction of the proposed North Central Freeway in the 1960s and the larger scope Metro plan of the 1970s. Allan was also a leader in Project Turnaround, a program that saved many of our most significant historic homes through concerted rehabilitation efforts. He was also a co-founder of the Old Takoma Park Citizens Association. Allan will be greatly missed in our community.

D.C. HPD Gains Momentum on Enforcement

The D.C. Historic Preservation Division has hired its own historic preservation inspector, Ms. Tony Cherry. Interestingly, after only one month of the efficient Ms. Cherry on the job, more people are applying for historic district work permits. So many are applying that the Division will need another inspector by this time next year. The HPD's officers are processing between \$17 and \$25 million in building permit work per month. Steve Raiche, Chief of the Division, reported his general sense that for the first time in a long while, historic preservation and historic district status mean something in D.C. The hiring of the inspector was related to the efforts of the D.C. Coalition for Greater Preservation Enforcement (of which HTI is a member), spearheaded by the D.C. Preservation League.

Most of the King Farm Complex to be Destroyed

The Montgomery County Council rejected the pleas of all of the historic preservation groups in the county to allow a one-year moratorium to raise

funding to save the entire King Farm complex in Gaithersburg. The council voted to provide \$420,000 to renovate and stabilize the dairy barn, but several other farm buildings will be razed. Montgomery Preservation, Inc. argued that these buildings, including the old farmhouse, could have formed the basis of a farm museum that could have provided a wonderful educational experience. Our thanks to MPI and activist Marcie Stickle for her tireless efforts to save the complex.

7316/7318 Carroll Avenue

The repairs and changes required by the Historic Preservation Commission as part of the work permit applied for by the property owner have not been made and the deadline for the required changes has past. HTI has learned that the owner has filed for bankruptcy and the property has been taken over by the lender. HTI is in the process of checking further on the status of this important commercial property in the Junction.

Help Preserve Our Historic City

Join your friends and neighbors in helping preserve Takoma Park's historic heritage, and to promote community education and neighborhood improvement.

Join Historic Takoma Today!

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Historic Takoma is a United Way Agency

will be developing a cataloging strategy and data base format. It will take time and many hours, but over the course of the next three to four years, the goal is to have a completely searchable catalog both in print form and on the internet.

A well-documented and accessible Archives will assist HTI in developing educational programs. The photographs and other materials will aid local historians, preservationists, and architects, by providing information about buildings that once existed, and to restore Takoma's treasures and help to substantiate the historical significance of buildings.

HTI's expectations are high and its goals reachable, but the endeavor is going to take enormous time and energy. Dorothy Barnes has made a tremendous contribution but she is going to need support to open the archives and assist the public to use our resources.

As our project gets underway we urge any of you who have a few hours a month of free time, organizational and/or word processing skills, experience in conservation of paper, photographic and other illustrative materials, familiarity with Takoma Park's neighborhoods and families or simply a willingness to help, to please come forth! You will be making a valuable contribution to your neighbors.



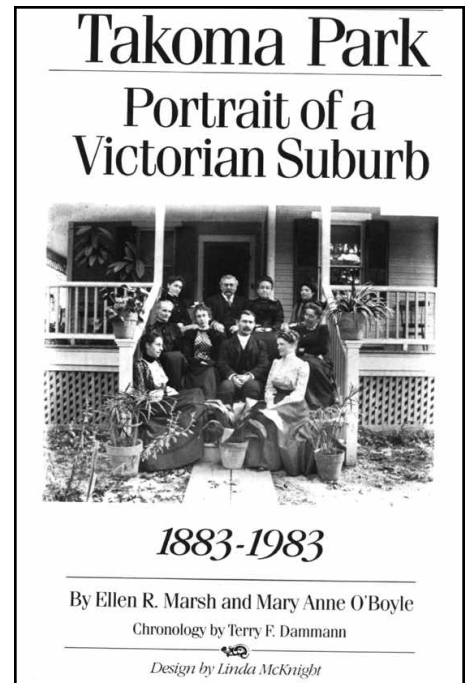
The Eastern Avenue entrance to the new HTI archives. (Official address is on Laurel Avenue.) An additional entrance is next to the back door to the Old Town Post Office.

Takoma Park Book to be Reprinted

Over two million persons live in the Washington, D.C. region. The vast majority scurry between offices, shopping centers, and housing developments created since the Second World War. Many hours are spent each week in the automobile to far off suburbs. But Takoma Park residents have a different perspective. They live in a real community with easy access to the whole region. Thanks to the re-publication of our popular book "Takoma Park, Portrait of a Victorian Suburb," citizens can learn about the fascinating history of our unique town.

The book, published first in 1983 to mark our 100th anniversary, traces the evolution of this historic suburb and confirms that Takoma has always had something of an "alternative" lifestyle. Many early photographs detail the ideals of B.F. Gilbert, the developer who created an enclave for those hankering to escape Washington, which was still recovering from the Civil War. The railroad, and even more importantly, the streetcars brought a true suburban middle class to fill the spaces between the early Victorian mansions with Arts and Crafts bungalows.

The wonderful photographs and detailed history of our City make this a marvelous gift for the holidays. The



The cover of HTI's soon-to-be-republished book on the history of the Takoma communities.

book still has the beautiful embossed dye-cut cover. The book will be available to purchase in late November or early December.

Historic Takoma wants to thank Preservation Maryland for giving us a loan to make this printing possible.

United Way Campaign Contributors, Please Designate #8361

Historic Takoma is a participating agency in the 1999 United Way and Combined Federal Campaigns, which run through the end of the year. If you donate to either of these campaigns, PLEASE designate Historic Takoma to receive your contribution. Our United Way/CFC code number is 8361. Please write this number on the pledge form provided by your employer and give generously. If you wish HTI to be informed of your pledge check the appropriate box on the pledge form. Every pledge to HTI is important! United Way/CFC contributions are a significant source of financial support for HTI.

► Continued on Page 5.

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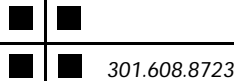


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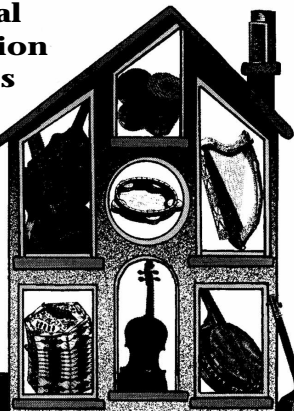
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 Howard Kohn
 1996 Takoma Park Citizen of the Year

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►HTI News, Continued from Page 3.

Annual Meeting On Dec. 12

Mark your calendars! HTI's annual meeting and holiday celebration is scheduled for December 12 from 2-5 pm at the historic Davis Warner Inn at 8114 Carroll Ave. The meeting is open to all HTI members and invited guests free-of-charge. Refreshments will be provided. The featured speaker is Dr. James Sorensen, M-NCPPC archaeologist, who will offer a fascinating slide show and lecture on Montgomery County's old mills.

Happy Birthday Montgomery County!

For the fourth consecutive year, HTI participated in the Montgomery County birthday celebration held September 12 at the Beall-Dawson Historical Park in Rockville. The annual event is a celebration of the county's history, and features speakers, archaeological digs, games, history hunts, costumes, genealogy, treasure hunts, and exhibits by County historical groups. The event is co-sponsored by the Montgomery County Historical Society and the Montgomery County Historic Preservation Commission.

HTI was ably represented by President Lorraine Pearsall, Treasurer

Jack Carson, and Historian Dorothy Barnes. The trio had a very productive day networking with sister organizations and talking with event attendees.

HTI Participates in Folk and Street Festivals

HTI was pleased at the opportunity to participate in this year's Folk and Street Festivals, which were blessed with excellent weather. Our Folk Festival table was staffed by Allison Weiss, and our Street Festival table was staffed by Kathy Brooks-Denny with help from Lorraine Pearsall and

►Continued on Page 8.

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Celebrating Happy Birthday Montgomery County: Dorothy Barnes, HTI Historian, Susan Velasquez, HPC Commissioner, Susan Soderberg, HPC Staff, Lorraine Pearsall, HTI President, Doug Harbit, HPC Commissioner, Steven Breslin, HPC Commissioner, and Robin Ziek, HPC Staff.

THE WAY WE WERE

Takoma Park After The War: Part Three

This is the third installment of an assessment of life in Takoma Park written soon after the end of the Second World War. It comes from our archives and details a way of life that seems familiar in some ways and in others as alien as if from another planet. Some racial and ethnic depictions are shocking, but we present the document as written (with only minor editorial corrections) because, warts and all, it gives us a window into our past. We do not know who the author is or why the document was prepared. The date appears to be about 1946.

RELIGIOUS LIFE

Religion seems to loom a little larger in Takoma Park than in the rest of the Washington area. Based on the records of local churches, I found that about 7,000 of the estimated 12,000 inhabitants are church members. It appears, therefore, that about 58% of the population are church members.

By far the largest group is the Seventh Day Adventists, which has three churches with a combined membership of about one-third of the total church population of Takoma Park. The Takoma Park Presbyterian, the oldest church in Takoma Park, is the next highest with 1,300 members, followed by Our Lady of the Sorrows Catholic Church and Trinity (D.C.) Episcopal Church, each with about 800 members. The Baptist church also has a good-sized congregation, but the remaining Lutheran, Christian, Methodist, and Congregational churches are all rather small, new groups. There is only a scattering of Jews in Takoma and they have no organized church. They meet in Green Acres and are planning to build in Silver Spring. The Negro church, First Baptist, is also small. A Free Methodist Church is now being constructed in Takoma, D.C., right across the street from the playground and the Swimming Pool.

The Seventh Day Adventist church has Chinese and Japanese and other foreign students at the college and some varied nationality groups from the community. Negro Adventists must go downtown to an Adventist Negro church. Some Jews have converted to the Adventist faith, one of the heads of the General Conference being a former Rabbi's son. Three churches

serve the Adventist group—the Takoma Park church, the Sanitarium church, and the enormous new modern secular appearing Sligo church whose auditorium, fully equipped with indirect lighting, microphones, etc., seats 2,000. The emphasis in the Adventists' services is on the Second Coming of Christ, which they believe is imminent; the resulting conclusion is that His followers must prepare for that coming and gather in the harvest while there is still time. This is called "In gathering." Each Sunday School department has an organized Parent-Teacher Association. There is an active program of evangelical activities throughout the week. A permanent camp meeting site is being planned by the Adventists at the end of Carroll Avenue.

The other Protestant churches cooperate every year on a Community Thanksgiving Service and work together through the Federation of Churches. Several

have Scout troops and other organizations for boys and girls in addition to purely denomination organizations. The Presbyterian Church conducts a Bible School each summer as do the Adventists for their members' children.

Almost all the churches are expanding, either building a new educational building or a new church. The Trinity Episcopal Church announced that it had just gone \$1,500 over its goal of \$4,500 for Reconstruction and Advance of War-damaged churches.

The newer churches have a much higher active church membership than do the older churches; two churches hold more than one service on Sunday mornings; the Catholic Church holds four masses, at least three of which are packed; the Episcopal church has two morning services.

One pastor said that a problem is a lack of civic spirit in the newer section of Takoma Park

where one-family dwellings of young married couples predominate. This minister said that people are only interested in their immediate neighborhood and that he is attempting to draw them together in a community spirit through his church. A second pastor said that most of his congregation are young married couples, many college educated. Most had gone to Sunday School as young people but had lost contact with the church. He is working on this problem through a family-organized church.

The pastor of another church saw a problem of indifference on the part of parents in seeing that their children come regularly to Sunday School and the common problem in most churches of finding well-qualified and trained teachers. This particular church used the Seventh Day Adventist Church in Takoma Park for the first four years it was organized.

The only church whose members can be distinguished by their behavior from the general populace is that of the Adventists. The women seldom wear make-up and, if they do, it is lightly applied. Jewelry is rarely worn. Theoretically, their clothes are unadorned and do not follow any extreme styles. On Saturday, their Sabbath, they flock to their churches and usually spend the rest of the day quietly at home until sundown. On Friday nights, young people rarely go out as this is the beginning of the Sabbath meeting and they have Young Peoples meeting. Divorces are granted only for adultery; members seldom marry into any other groups. Home and church training is closely interwoven resulting in a people who are loyal to regular church attendance.



Union Chapel, ca. 1888-1949, Maple and Tulip Avenues. This interdenominational chapel was sold to the newly formed Takoma Park Presbyterian Church in 1893.

Thanks!

HTI wants to extend a special thanks to the following people and organizations who performed outstanding service to the organization in the past few months.

★**Heritage Building and Renovation, Inc., and Robin Broad & John Cavanagh**—for their generous donations of \$250. We welcome them as inductees into the Benjamin F. Gilbert Club which accords lifetime membership in HTI.

★**Deauville Apts. (c/o Vista Mgmt. Co.)**—for their generous contribution of \$100, which qualifies the organization to be an HTI Benefactor.

★**Jill Feasley**—for her assistance in helping maintain and improve the Thomas-Siegler Gardens, including preparation of a grant application to the Maryland 2000's MaryLandscapes grant program.

★**Paul Long**—for his many efforts on behalf of HTI, including preparation of the new archives space and distribution of the HTI Newsletter.

★**The Takoma Voice**—for publishing announcements about Benefit Day at Mark's Kitchen and HTI's participation in the 1999 United Way and Combined Federal Campaigns. We very much appreciate the Voice's longstanding support.

★**The Takoma Park Newsletter**—for donating space for our membership ad and for publishing our announcement about Benefit Day at Mark's Kitchen on very short notice.

★**Brian Mahan**—for his extensive assistance in cleaning up the Thomas-Siegler Gardens on Aug. 7, including donating two of his workers to perform the onerous task of pulling poison ivy.

★**Wendy Bell, Ashley Files, Steve Whitney, and Becky Robb**—for their help in cleaning up the grounds. The appearance of the grounds was improved significantly as a result.

★**Diana Kohn**—for conducting this year's Living History Program for the 4th graders of Piney Branch Elementary School.

★**Jamie Baylis**—for all her help with event planning and execution.

★**Steven Mackler**—for consulting with HTI on landscaping issues concerning the Thomas-Seigler Gardens.

★**The Takoma Park Gazette**—for publishing an announcement of HTI's participation in the 1999 United Way and Combined Federal Campaigns.

★**Karen Fishman**—for her help in preparing HTI's grant application to the Montgomery County Historic Preservation Commission for design of a database for HTI's archives.

Welcome New and Renewed Members

(7/99-9/99)

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► HTI News, Continued from Page 5.

Ann Juneau. Many festival-goers stopped by our tables to chat and pick up our literature.

Goodbyes and Hello

HTI bid farewell to three board members over the summer. Vice President Ted Kowaluk, Museum Committee Chair Allison Weiss, and Education Committee Chair Holly Burnham all tendered their resignations. HTI extends its appreciation to this trio for all their hard work during their tenure on the board of directors. All will be missed, especially Ted, whose affiliation with HTI spanned many years. Best wishes to all!

HTI is pleased to announcement the addition of Diana Kohn to the board of directors, as Chair of the Education Committee. Diana has been an HTI volunteer for the past year and is perhaps best known in the community for her work with the local schools. Welcome, Diana!

Historic Takoma, Inc.
PO Box 5781
Takoma Park, MD 20913

Dog Days Cleanup

Despite the weather, Historic Takoma rounded up an impressive group of volunteers on a steamy Saturday this past August 7 to tackle cleanup of the grounds at the Thomas Siegler Carriage House Museum and Gardens. HTI volunteers Joel Solomon, Laura DiCurcio, Jack Carson and Dorothy Barnes were ably joined by volunteers from the neighborhood, including Jill Feasley, Wendy Bell, Ashley Files, Becky Robb, and Steve Whitney. They worked for many hours removing invasive non-native plants, clearing dead wood, and removing ivy and other vines from under and around the azalea bushes.

A special note of thanks goes to Brian David Mahan, master gardener, and his crew of two workers who spent all morning pulling extensive stands of poison ivy from the woods and trees all over the property.

Thanks to one and all for a great job!

Reprinting Scheduled!

Takoma Park Portrait of a Victorian Suburb



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