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Centennial Booklet: A Pictorial History of Bala Cynwyd



THE NEIGHBORHOOD
CLUB OF
**BALA
CYNWYD**
100 YEARS OF SERVICE 1906-2006

The Oldest Civic Association on the Main Line

1906 2006

Protecting Bala Cynwyd's
Residential Character
Promoting Vital
Commercial Districts
Fostering Civic Pride



Above: Toll Gate No. 3, at the intersection of Old Lancaster Road and Montgomery Avenue, c.1900. The Club worked with other associations to abolish toll roads in the township. The Club's efforts were successful when all toll gates along Montgomery Avenue were removed in 1917. The road was then taken over by the State. This toll gate was replaced with a concrete island which sits in the middle of the busy intersection today. A few years ago The Club constructed a large planter on the island, and with volunteers from the Beautification Committee they maintain the annuals and perennials growing there.

THE NEIGHBORHOOD
CLUB OF

BALA
CYNWYD

100 YEARS OF SERVICE 1906-2006

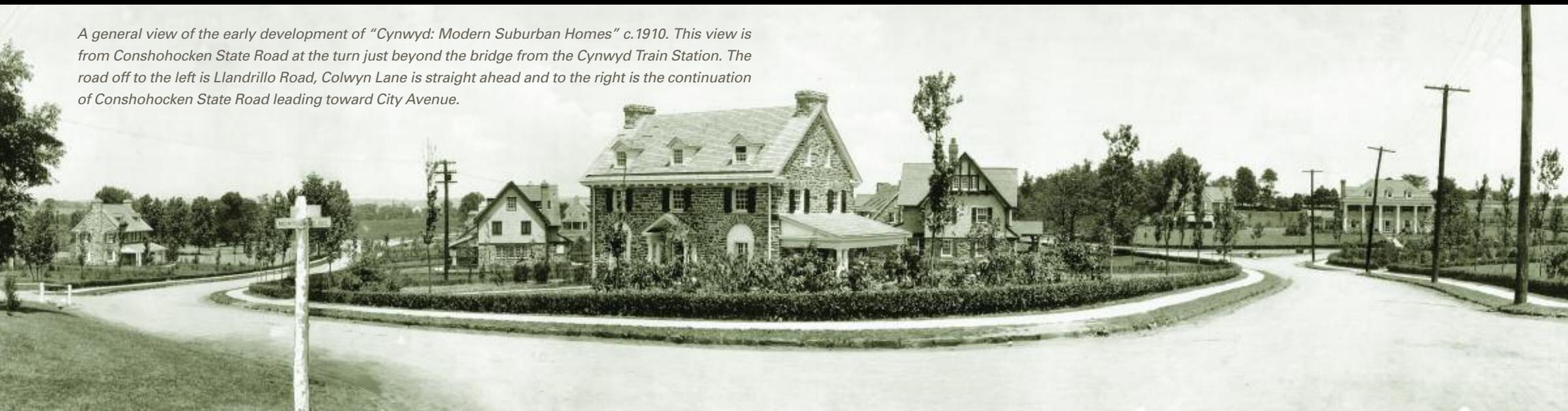


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OUR MISSION

THE NEIGHBORHOOD CLUB OF BALA CYNWYD, the civic association for Bala and Cynwyd, was established in 1906 and chartered in 1912. Since then, The Neighborhood Club has continuously worked to preserve the residential character of our neighborhood and to promote civic welfare and community spirit. The Neighborhood Club also supports the businesses in our area, recognizing that strong commercial areas contribute to the quality of community life.

A general view of the early development of "Cynwyd: Modern Suburban Homes" c.1910. This view is from Conshohocken State Road at the turn just beyond the bridge from the Cynwyd Train Station. The road off to the left is Llandrillo Road, Colwyn Lane is straight ahead and to the right is the continuation of Conshohocken State Road leading toward City Avenue.



The Neighborhood Club board meetings are public and open to all residents. They are forums for neighbors' concerns and also function as town meetings to discuss local issues.

Currently, there are twenty-one Committees staffed by The Neighborhood Club volunteers. These committees are:



Meetings are held at: **Lower Merion Academy
506 Bryn Mawr Avenue
Bala Cynwyd, PA 19004
(adjacent to the Bala
Cynwyd Middle School)**

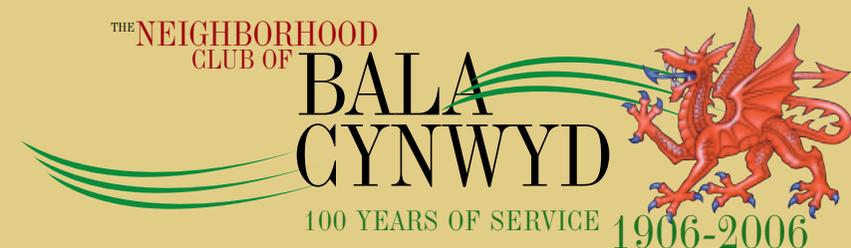
We meet on the second Tuesday of each month, September through June, at 7:30pm. The Board of Directors, all volunteers, includes six Officers (President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, Solicitor, Immediate Past President) and fourteen Directors.

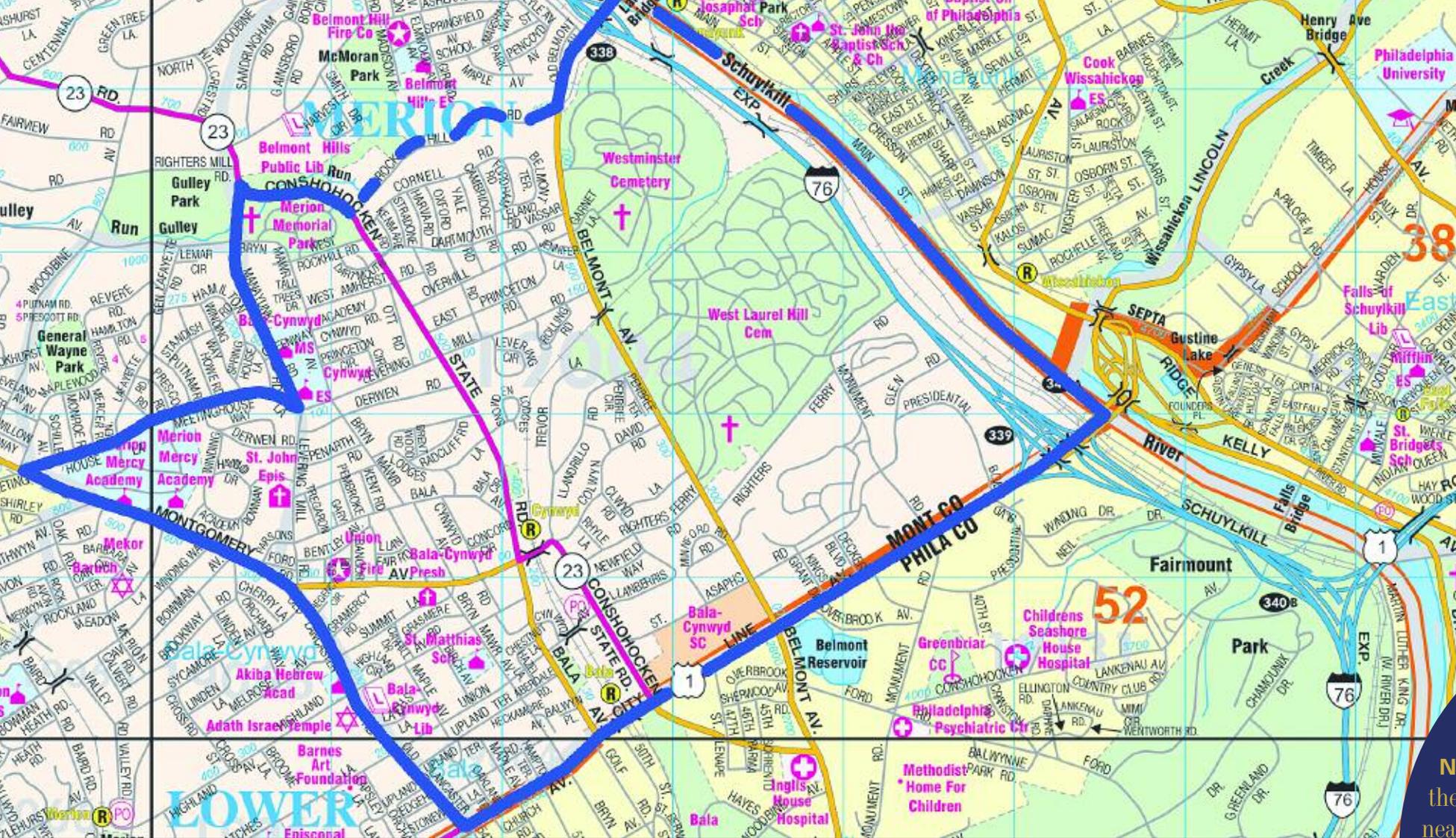
Audit
Bala Avenue Business District
Beautification
Budget
Buildings (Architect Review)
City Avenue and St. Joseph's University
Federation of Civic Associations

Historic Preservation
Independence Day Celebration
Membership
Merion Cynwyd Business District
New Neighbors
Nominating
Programs

Public Service and Improvements
Publicity/Newsletter/Website
Rock Hill Road District
Schools
Transportation
Union Fire Association
Zoning

You can contact us on the web at BalaCynwyd.org. Our website has additional information such as lists of Board Members, Committees, and our Elected Officials as well as Membership information, and By-Laws. The website has a "Club Activities" section which will keep you up-to-date on Meeting Schedule, Meeting Minutes, July 4th Celebration, Beautification Committee, and Newsletter. There is also a section which tells you about our history and landmarks and provides a scenic tour of our community.





The Neighborhood Club boundaries encompass the Bala Cynwyd area which is defined by:
 City Avenue to the southeast, the Schuylkill River to the northeast, Rock Hill Road to the north, and Manayunk Road, Meeting House Lane, Montgomery Avenue, Old Lancaster Road to the west.

The Meaning of Our Name

Neighborhood - the people who live near one another or in a particular district or area.
Club - a group of people organized for a common purpose, especially a group that meets regularly.

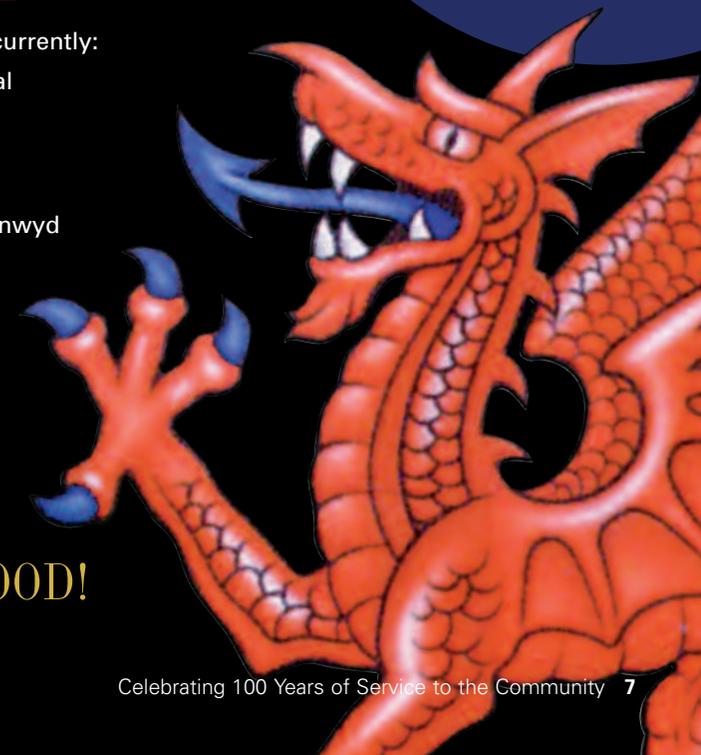
BE A GOOD NEIGHBOR AND JOIN THE CLUB

Membership in the Neighborhood Club is open to all residents and businesses in the area. Please join us to help make Bala Cynwyd a better place to live and work. The annual dues support the work of The Club.

Our annual membership dues are currently:
 \$30 for a household or an individual
 \$50 for a business

Make your check payable to
 The Neighborhood Club of Bala Cynwyd
 and send it to our mailing address:
 The Neighborhood Club
 of Bala Cynwyd
 P.O. Box 717
 Bala Cynwyd, PA 19004.

IT'S AN INVESTMENT IN THE FUTURE OF YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD!



What Attracted our Forefathers to Live in this Area?

We begin this chronicle by examining the living landscape. Our unique heritage gives us a sense of place and therefore makes the Bala Cynwyd community a special place to call home.

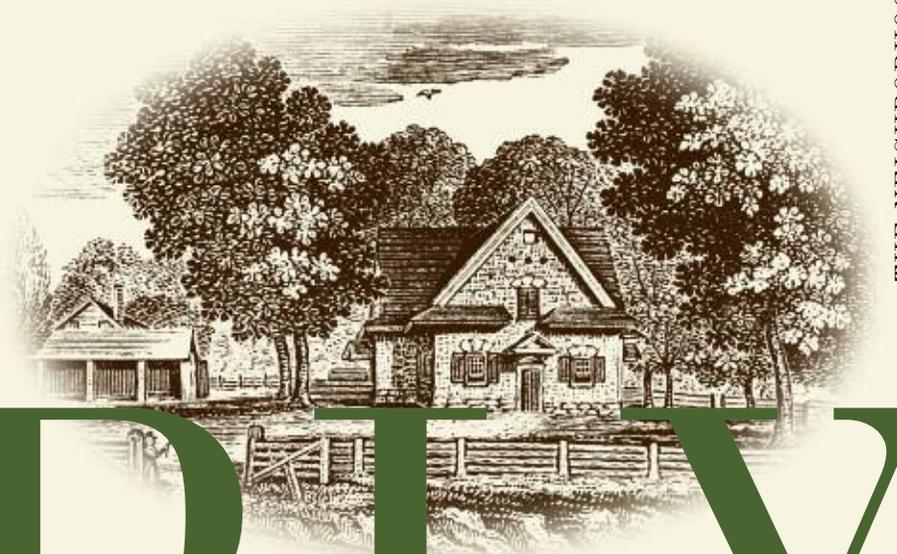
More than 12,000 years ago the first inhabitants of this area were a group of Native Americans who were part of a loose confederation of the Algonquin Nation called the Lenape. The Lenape who lived in this region were of the Unami Tribe which translates to "People From Down River." They encamped along Ganoshowanna (Schuylkill River) and enjoyed the natural beauty of the region.

One of their villages was named Netopcum and was located in the area where City Avenue today meets the Schuylkill River. They lived a simple life with the forests and streams providing them with all the necessities of life.

In 1681, William Penn received a charter from Charles II of England for Penn's Woods, or as we know it, Pennsylvania. Penn was an English Quaker, and Pennsylvania was to be a refuge of religious tolerance in the New World. He called this vision his Holy Experiment, a secure and peaceful haven for all the people of Europe who were persecuted for their religious beliefs.

In 1682, the first Welsh immigrants arrived from the region of Bala and Cynwyd, Merionethshire, North Wales. This group was called Edward Jones and Company of 17 Families - Company Number 1. These Welsh Quakers had purchased 5,000 acres from William Penn and were seeking a place to practice their Quaker faith and to live in peace. Upon their arrival in the New World, they set up a camp near the village of Netopcum where the Lenape offered them food and comfort. Thus began the blending of these two cultures when peace-loving Lenapes met the non-violent Quaker immigrant population.

Below: *The Merion Friends Meeting House. This is a view of the old stone Meeting House which was built in 1695 and was covered with plaster in 1830. This engraving is from "A Short Historical Sketch of the Old Merion Meeting House" 1917.*



EARLY

THIS STORY

During these early years, hundreds of immigrants came through this area. Some moved on to other parts of the township while others stayed in the immediate area close to Philadelphia. John and Gainor Roberts, Welsh Quakers who arrived in 1682, belonged to the family which had the largest impact on this region.

Their strip of land, which began at the Schuylkill River, formed part of the eastern border of the present township and was named Pencoyd for John Roberts' ancestral holdings in Caernarvonshire, Wales.



Pencoyd - from the Welsh meaning head of the woods - was the largest farm in the vicinity. To the west, the village of Academyville (named after the Lower Merion Academy) was developed, and to the south the village of Merionville was established. There was a mixture of farming along a network of roads as well as milling, ice harvesting, and quarrying along Gulley Run. Heavy industry, called the Pencoyd Iron Works, ran along the Schuylkill River .

Facing Page: A view of City Avenue going north near the front gate of "Pencoyd Farms" and on to the Schuylkill River. From the family photo album of George B. Roberts c.1883. **Above:** The main house "Pencoyd Farms." of the estate of the Roberts family. Today, "Pencoyd Farms" would be located on City Avenue, an active commercial district. The location of their house is approximately where the Saks Fifth Avenue Store is located.

EARLY HISTORY

Residential Development of Bala and Cynwyd

In the nineteenth century, the communities of Pencoyd and Academyville can be characterized as farming villages. The area had a small population which consisted of a few farms and estates. In the winter, when cut off by snow from Philadelphia, the people had to make their own amusements by organizing sleigh rides, skating parties, and other

country pleasures. Where the Cynwyd Station is now there was a blacksmith shop. At what is sometimes referred to as Four Corners, at Montgomery Avenue and Levering Mill Road, was another smithy, a little red wooden building used as a general store, and three or four houses. This hamlet was known as Merionville.

1906-2006



Above: The blacksmith and carriage shop of Luther C. Parsons was a necessary fixture at the busy corner of Montgomery and Parsons Avenues. Parsons was a community leader and involved in many community associations; one such group was "The Society for the Detection & Prosecution of Horse Thieves and Recovery of Stolen Horses." **Below:** Miss Marker, in her sleigh, ready for a winter drive around Cynwyd. **Facing Page:** The T.H. Lukens Dry Goods store was located on Montgomery Avenue near the Mile 7 marker. This 1885 photo shows Thomas H. Lukens on his delivery wagon, his wife Kate, their two sons Elwood and Rudolph, and daughters-in-law Florence and Elizabeth, and grandchildren. The second floor was used as a Temperance Hall and a meeting place for the suffragettes. The section to the right was the Academy Post Office; in 1918 the Woman's Club rented this room and used it as a Tea Room. Today it's the site of a township municipal parking lot.



This 1885 photo shows Thomas H. Lukens on his delivery wagon, his wife Kate, their two sons Elwood and Rudolph, and daughters-in-law Florence and Elizabeth, and grandchildren. The second floor was used as a Temperance Hall and a meeting place for the suffragettes. The section to the right was the Academy Post Office; in 1918 the Woman's Club rented this room and used it as a Tea Room. Today it's the site of a township municipal parking lot.

19th

CENTURY

Schuylkill Valley Division of the Pennsylvania Railroad Company

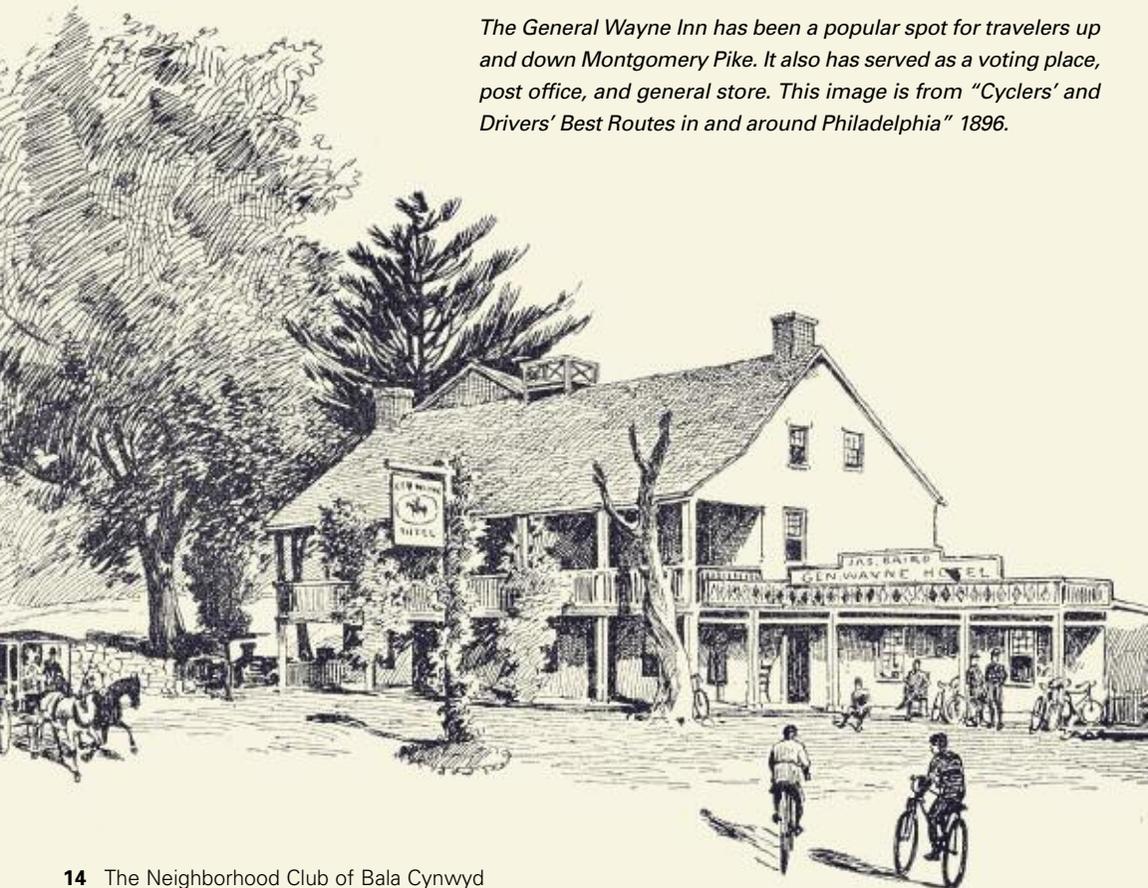
Improvements to our transportation network brought major changes. The construction of better roads and the building of a new rail service made residential development of the area possible.

Beginning in 1884, the Schuylkill Valley Division of the Pennsylvania Railroad Company was built. Three stations were located in our neighborhood and were named by Miriam Pyle Williams Roberts, the second wife of George B. Roberts,

the President of the Pennsylvania Railroad Company. The first station was named Bala because Mr. Roberts' ancestors came from Bala, Wales. Cynwyd and West Laurel Hill were the names selected for the other two stations. The names of the villages in our community were changed to match the station names: Pencoyd became Bala, and Academyville became Cynwyd. Also at this time, the village of Merionville was re-named Merion.



The General Wayne Inn has been a popular spot for travelers up and down Montgomery Pike. It also has served as a voting place, post office, and general store. This image is from "Cyclers' and Drivers' Best Routes in and around Philadelphia" 1896.



A promotional brochure published in 1894 by the Pennsylvania Railroad describes our area as, "On the western borders of the park, of which Philadelphia is so justly proud, with the county line running through it, is the beautiful suburb of Bala. The high ground, picturesque country, and other natural advantages have served to stimulate its rapid development, and place it in a most enviable position. The houses in and around the place are of the prettiest design and finish. Spacious grounds surround the larger residences, which are the equal of any in the suburban district. The accessibility to the city, either by train or driving, tends in a great measure to add to its popularity, which has taken decidedly upwards strides of late years, and with every indication of gaining even wider attention."

"Suburban Homes on the Lines of the Pennsylvania Railroad within a Radius of Thirty Miles Around Philadelphia with Useful Information for Summer-Home Seekers." by The Pennsylvania Railroad, Passenger Department, Page 25, 1894.

Top Left: The West Laurel Hill Station in 1896. One of the more interesting stations in the township was the depot at West Laurel Hill. It was the last stop in Lower Merion on the Schuylkill Division and was built to serve the nearby cemetery of the same name. Visiting cemeteries was a popular activity for Victorians and the location of this station near one of the region's largest cemeteries generated a good deal of weekend traffic. **Top Right:** The Bala Train Station in 1896. Bala was the first station in the township on the Pennsylvania's Schuylkill Division from Philadelphia to Reading and Pottsville. This neat frame structure was based on a standard design used by the railroad throughout its system. One prominent early passenger was Pennsylvania Railroad President George B. Roberts who lived in nearby "Pencoyd Farms." **Lower Right:** The Cynwyd Train Station c.1909. Cynwyd is an example of a Pennsylvania Railroad standard station design executed in both brick and frame. The station building remains today largely unchanged. It is the only surviving Schuylkill Division depot in the township.

Our Welsh Heritage

Many original settlers of this area came from the towns of Bala and Cynwyd, which are located in the lake region of northern Wales. The Red Dragon has been recognized as the emblem of Wales for well over a thousand years; it is therefore entirely appropriate that it should be featured on The Neighborhood Club's logo. The earliest written record of the red dragon as a national emblem of the Welsh is found in "Historia Brittonum," written during the ninth century and long attributed to Nennius. It tells the famous story of the battle of the red and white dragons that raged beneath the

site of Vortigern's fortress in Snowdonia, the red dragon at first having the worst of it but finally overcoming the white. Yet it was not until 1807 that the red dragon was officially declared to be the Royal Badge of Wales and not until 1959 that the Queen approved a recommendation that the national flag of Wales should show the red dragon on a green and white field.



1906-2006



BALA

is derived from the Celtic "belago" meaning the outflow of a river from a lake. Bala, Wales, is situated at the northeast tip of Llyn (Lake) Tegid where the water flows into a nearby stream.

Today, Bala is an attractive resort town deep in the Welsh countryside. The photo above shows its large lake 4-5 miles long and 1 mile wide which is very popular and used for summer and winter sports of all kinds.

CYNWYD

is a personal name of a Welsh saint/confessor who was the son of Cynfelyn ab Arthwys, of the race of Coel Goedebog. Cynwyd was one of the Men of the North who were warriors and was the Saint of Bangor Catwg at Llancarfan, Wales.

Photo of the Bridge House located at the entrance to the hamlet of Cynwyd.

Building a Modern Community

The development of a rail line through our community led to the transformation of Bala and Cynwyd into suburban villages. Due to our close proximity to Philadelphia, real estate developers began to subdivide the farms and build the infrastructure necessary to support their

plans for a model suburban community. Some of these real estate developers were Patrick J. Lawler, Edwin B. Mahoney, John H. McClatchy, C. J. McIlvaine, Thomas F. Reilly, John R. K. Scott, and The Lower Merion Reality Company (located on a portion of the Roberts' family tract of land).



Top Left: In 1876, at the great International Exhibition in Philadelphia's Fairmount Park...celebrating our nation's centennial, many states built houses to show their native products and to serve as headquarters for visitors from home. Wisconsin built a wood house, "a simple structure, not pretty, merely useful..." It stood on States Drive several blocks back of Ohio House, which still stands at the corner of Belmont Avenue and South George's Hill Road, its original spot. After the International Exhibition, the "Wisconsin House" was re-located near what is now the intersection of Union Avenue and Conshohocken State Road, approximately where the present Bala Cynwyd Post Office is situated. For many years it was used as our local hotel and the neighborhood around the building was known as "Wisconsinville." The hotel was razed in 1961. **Top Right:** Bala Cynwyd is honey-combed with springs and streams...there isn't a dry basement in the area! This 1937 photo shows a township road crew in the vicinity of Belmont Avenue, Llandrillo Road and Trevor Lane laying piping to enclose the stream. Each section of these massive pipes was 84 inches in diameter and 6 feet in length and weighed more than 6,000 pounds. **Lower Right:** The Pencoys School was on the southwestern corner of Righters Ferry and Monument Roads in Bala Cynwyd and was built of stone in the late 1800s. In 1911-13 one teacher, Ida F. Wetherill, was assigned to teach grades 1 to 4 at this school. In September 1915, 35 students were enrolled. It closed in June 1916 and was demolished c.1983. An office building was constructed on the site in 2000. **Bottom Left:** Bala School was constructed of stone in 1888 at the southeastern corner of Union and Bala Avenues. It was demolished c.1974 when the new Bala School was built on Highland Avenue and Old Lancaster Road, adjoining the Bala Cynwyd Public Library. The Bala Avenue site is now owned by the Township and has a gym and park.

Adding Essential Services

The foundation of services and neighborhood amenities for Bala and Cynwyd were quickly coming together. The township provided paved roads, sewers, schools and police. The community equipped a volunteer fire department. There were a variety of church communities, a library and clubs (the Woman's Club, Needlework Guild, Gar-

den Club and Community Chorale) to make up the town's social networks. Finally, to top it all off, there were wonderful vaudeville performances at the Egyptian Theatre.



1906-2006



Facing Page, Upper Right: c.1920. Located near the Cynwyd Train Station is the "first" Bala Cynwyd Post Office (the left portion of the building) and the Office of the Merion Title and Trust Company (the right portion of the building) where the residents of Bala and Cynwyd did their banking. **Top Left, This Page:** Across the street was King's Pharmacy "At The Station" c.1914 with its soda fountain, a small library of books that were available to the public to 'rent' and a public telephone. **Top Right, Facing Page:** Cynwyd Elementary School, Bryn Mawr Avenue, Manayunk and Levering Mill Roads. Photo c.1930s, looking northwest. This school was built in 1914 of tapestry brick and cast stone trim, and designed by Savery, Scheetz and Savery at a cost of \$57,010. It's also the home of the school's mascot, the 'Cynwyd Owl.' **Along the Bottom:** This is a series of photographs taken in 1939 by Marshall I. Groff showing the construction of his new home located at 55 Princeton Road.

20th

CENTURY

The Lower Merion Realty Company

In 1906, the Lower Merion Realty Company's advertising brochure said: "The country surrounding Cynwyd is of great beauty, with well kept roads for automobiling and driving. Montgomery Avenue (today, Conshohocken State Road) faces the property, and besides being the

main artery to all Main Line points, affords easy access to the city through Fairmount Park."

"Cynwyd: Modern Suburban Homes." Land Title Building, Philadelphia, Page 8, 1906.



HOUSE No. 10

Located on corner of Righter's Ferry Road and Rhyl Lane.



Dutch Colonial House.
12 rooms, 2 baths.
Lot, 90 x 225 feet—56-100 acre.

Price, \$12,000

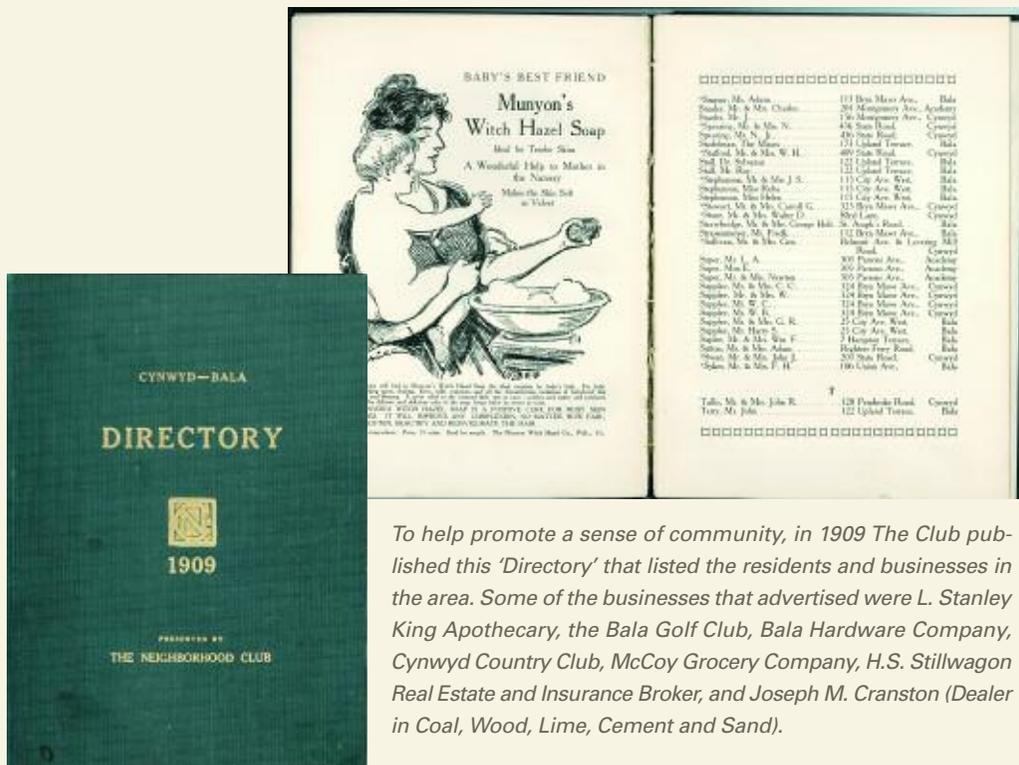
This Page, Top Left: Some of the available lots for sale at the intersection of Trevor Lane and Llandrillo Road. **Top Right:** A Brick House of Elizabethan English design located on Conshohocken State Road. **Lower Left:** A Stone and Shingle Cottage on Llandrillo Road. **Lower Right:** A Dutch Colonial House on Colwyn Lane. **Facing Page:** Excerpts from the promotional booklet "Cynwyd: Modern Suburban Homes." Like today's real estate marketing material, the use of an upscale presentation (a choice of lots, photographs, maps, and floor plans) gave the potential home-owner a comprehensive view of this housing development project.

Historical Note: The Roberts family members were the major stakeholders in this realty company. They had to construct new roads to accommodate this housing development. Following the family tradition of using Welsh names, they named the roads Clwyd, Colwyn, Llanberris, Llandrillo, Rhyl, and Trevor.

Formation of The Neighborhood Club of Bala Cynwyd

City residents began making their permanent homes in this choice "country" site. There was a housing boom and attractive houses began appearing in the country landscape, but there was a need to transform the various housing developments into a neighborhood community, namely, a neighborhood that had the amenities of a fine sub-

urban community. The solution was the formation of a civic association that would pick up where the housing developers left off. The Neighborhood Club was formed to complete the task and help build a cohesive neighborhood.



To help promote a sense of community, in 1909 The Club published this 'Directory' that listed the residents and businesses in the area. Some of the businesses that advertised were L. Stanley King Apothecary, the Bala Golf Club, Bala Hardware Company, Cynwyd Country Club, McCoy Grocery Company, H.S. Stillwagon Real Estate and Insurance Broker, and Joseph M. Cranston (Dealer in Coal, Wood, Lime, Cement and Sand).

From "The Neighborhood Club 1909 Directory"

"The Club was started on November 12, 1906, and was formally organized on January 28, 1907, with a roll of twenty-seven charter members. Its object was/is 'The promotion of good fellowship and the mutual welfare of its members, and the conservation of such local interest as shall engage the attention of the residents of Cynwyd and Bala.'

The membership of The Club is of two classes, Active and Associate. The Active members consist of men residents of Cynwyd and Bala, and the Associate members of such other persons as The Club shall elect. The dues are two Dollars per year for each class, payable upon admission to membership and on the first day of every calendar year thereafter.

Application for membership should be filed with the Membership Committee and accompanied by the recommendation of at least one active member in good standing.

Regular monthly meetings are held on the third Thursday of every month, from October to May inclusive, at eight o'clock P.M. in the Union Fire Association Hall, 149 Montgomery Avenue, Cynwyd.

Membership, January 1, 1909: 136 Active and 2 Associate.

Matters of civic interest may be brought before this Club either by letter addressed to the Secretary or by personal presentation at any regular meeting. The courtesies of The Club are most cordially extended to all non-members in this connection."

1906: There were 503 households and businesses in Bala and Cynwyd.

2006: There are more than 5,000 households and businesses in Bala Cynwyd.

Bala Cynwyd: With or Without the Hyphen?

Did you know that there is no such town as Bala Cynwyd? The village of Bala is located between City Avenue and Montgomery Avenue with its business district on Bala Avenue in the theater area. The village of Cynwyd is located between Montgomery Avenue and Rock Hill Road with its business district on Montgomery Avenue in the vicinity of the fire house. Both villages are serviced by one Post Office and traditionally the U.S. Postal Service used a hyphen in Bala-Cynwyd to designate a compound name. You can see the hyphenated-name on such buildings as the Bala-Cynwyd Junior High School (today the Bala Cynwyd Middle School) and the Bala-Cynwyd Library. But over the years, the postal service has dropped the use of the hyphen; we're now known as just Bala Cynwyd.



Early Days of The Club: For Community Spirit and Civic Progress

One of the first action items for The Club was to submit to the township commissioners a list of streets that should have sidewalks. Within a few months the requested sidewalks were installed. The Club quickly earned the respect and cooperation of the Township Commissioners because of The Club's positive attitude in getting the work of

the civic association done. On November 6, 1912, The Neighborhood Club was chartered by the Montgomery County Court of Common Pleas as a non-profit corporation "for the improvement of the streets and public places in Lower Merion Township and...to promote the civic welfare of the community through meetings, lectures and the like."

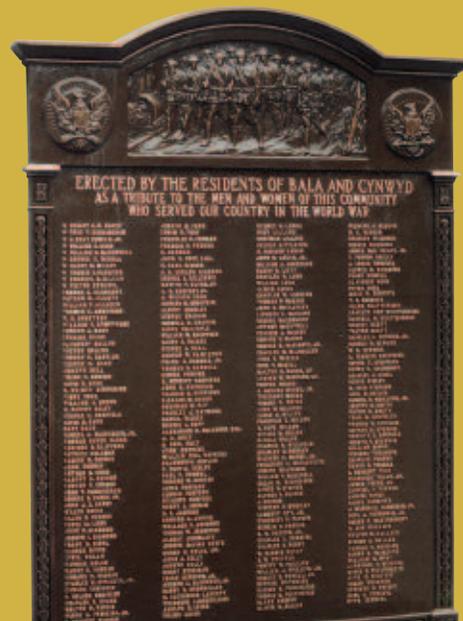
Among its successes since then, The Club has:

- Worked out a system of numbering houses.
- Promoted more frequent trolley service to Bala where there was a trolley depot at 54th and City Avenue.
- Worked with other associations to abolish toll roads.
- Obtained playground equipment.
- Coordinated the planting of hundreds of shade trees.
- Lobbied for better train service culminating in the change from steam to electricity.
- Originated action for mail delivery.
- Investigated purity of water supply, with the result that the state Department of Health ordered changes.

- Influenced the water company to lay new mains and provide pumps to supply adequate water.
- Underwrote half the cost of ninety-five candlepower lamps for streets.
- Obtained the local telephone exchange.
- Obtained over one hundred new street signs.
- Obtained improved garbage ordinances.
- Obtained many highway and sidewalk improvements.
- Instituted medical inspection in the township schools.
- Cleaned up vacant lots.
- Held programs to support the World War I effort .
- Raised funds for the War Memorial Tablet.
- Opposed increased assessment rates.
- Supported zoning ordinances.
- Secured the building of a new Cynwyd bridge over the railroad.
- Conducted the Fourth of July festivities.
- Installed flower boxes at the Cynwyd train station.
- Helped establish a park at the Cynwyd train station.
- Actively participated in and supported the Civil Defense programs connected with World War II.

The Club also followed up on many complaints such as night-time freight train noises, snow removal, tardy collection of milk bottles, and more. The Club's monthly meetings were always well attended, and on one occasion, there was a lively debate about the question: Should Bala Cynwyd secede from the Township of Lower Merion and form a borough?

The World War Memorial Tablet, now on the island at the corner of Bala Avenue and Conshohocken State Road, was dedicated shortly after World War I. The inscription reads "Erected by the Residents of Bala and Cynwyd as a Tribute to the Men and Women of the Community Who Served Our Country in the World War." The plaque names the 10 individuals who died in the conflict and names the 238 individuals who served in the war. It originally was placed at 5 East Montgomery Avenue, in front on the Bala Cynwyd Post Office and the Merion Title Trust Bank, the current location of McGarvey & Walsh Florist and Valley Press. In 1930, when the bridge over the Cynwyd Train Station was widened to four lanes, the memorial was moved to its current location.



Past Presidents

- Henry A. Bomberger, 1906
- Oscar Berry, 1907
- J.C. Armstrong, 1908
- Dr. Howard S. Anders, 1909
- Frederick C. Newbourg, Jr., 1910
- Alpheus G. Varney, 1911
- Frank H. Sykes, 1912
- George I. Merrill, 1913
- Joseph V.R. Titus, 1914
- Harry O. Peebles, 1915
- William A. Macan, 1916
- George C. Klauder, 1917
- Edgar S. Gardner, 1918-1919
- George M. Painter, 1920
- Leroy A. Worrell, 1921
- Henry B. McLaughlin, 1922
- Harrie A. Bell, 1923
- Carl P. Birkinbine, 1924
- Walter C. Neely, 1925
- T. Ewing Montgomery, 1926
- Frank H. Elmore, 1927
- George W. Selby, 1928
- James E. Hammer, 1929
- Walter B. Richards, 1930
- Harry R. Lenoir, 1931
- Lloyd A. Unger, 1932
- Charles E. Neville, 1933
- Joseph J. Skelton, Jr. 1934
- Charles S. Shinn, 1935
- H. Gleason Mattoon, 1936
- Percy S. Harkins, 1937
- Henry E. Sharp, 1938
- Chauncey P. Colwell, 1939
- Edmund G.S. Flannigan, 1940
- Leo D. Tyrrell, 1941-1942
- Henry J. Kite, 1943-1944
- J. Barratt Conner, 1945
- Robert F. Brown, 1946
- Richard S. Chew, 1947
- Garner C. Parr, 1948
- Harry L. Buck, 1949
- D. Alvin Kime, 1950
- Henry C. Welsh, Jr., 1951
- Eugene C. De Vol, 1952
- Joseph J. Skelton, III, 1953

Continued

The
CLUB

To Help Build a Better Community, The Club also...

- Sponsored Boy Scout Troop Bala One (the first Boy Scout Troop in the United States).
- Organized the Bala Cynwyd baseball team.
- Ran the Bala Cynwyd Musical Program which gave concerts at the Fire House.

During the Depression, The Club gave aid to the many drives for unemployment relief funds and carried on work such as distribution of coal to the less fortunate.

The Club's hospitality was extended to the entire community. Members would regularly meet at the Union Fire Association or at the larger Egyptian Theater (now the Clearview Bala Theater). Annual Banquets were held at the General Wayne Inn, The Union Fire Association, or at the Woman's Club.



In the later half of the twentieth century, The Neighborhood Club was heavily involved with complex issues arising from the commercial development of the City Avenue corridor, including the:

- buffering of the Bala Cynwyd Shopping Center,
- traffic usage and buffer restrictions in regard to the development of the Bala One and Bala Three office complexes and Sutton Terrace,
- maintenance of the Decker Square/Belmont Avenue Greenway from St. Asaphs Road through Westminster Cemetery, and the maintenance of residential classifications for the properties on the western side of St. Asaphs Road.

The Neighborhood Club is still the primary enforcer of many of the deed restrictions which encumber the properties along the eastern borders of the village of Bala.

Also more recently, The Neighborhood Club has intensely lobbied the Township of Lower Merion for capital improvements to storm water management systems, modernization of the Bala Avenue Playground, traffic signal improvements, and the maintenance of and replacement of shade trees.

Past Presidents *(Continued)*

John A. Eichman, III, 1954
 Edmund L. Bidgood, 1955
 Alfred W. Hesse, Jr., 1956
 E. Paul Huttinger, 1957
 William R. Deasey, 1958
 J. Wesley Oler, 1959
 John J. O'Brien, Jr., 1960
 Robert B. Rowan, 1961
 Albert W. Schiffrin, 1962-1963
 Sanford D. Beecher, Jr., 1964
 Francis E. Shields, 1964-1965
 Ernest C. Addy, 1966
 Richard D. Rivers, 1967
 Ernest C. Addy, 1967
 Joseph E. Hickey, 1968
 Sydney C. Orlofsky, 1968
 Frederick C. Fuchs, 1969-1970
 Walter W. Rabin, 1971
 Henry B. Poor, 1972
 Alfred F. Larson, 1973
 John R. Suria, 1974-1975
 C. George Milner, 1976
 Martin B. Pitkow, 1977
 Anita B. Brody, 1978
 Ronald A. Ervais, 1979
 Spencer Ervin, Jr., 1980
 David P. Rovner, 1981
 Saul Levit, 1982
 Kathleen J. Heist, 1983
 G. Burton Adams, 1984
 James M. Peck, 1985
 Keith E. Frederick, 1986
 Roger Moog, 1987-1988
 Patrick Broderick, 1989
 Andrea Engle, 1990
 Robert Boote, 1991
 Andrea Engle, 1992
 Fenton FitzPatrick, 1993-1994
 Bruce D. Reed, 1995-1996
 Mary Ellen Yuhag Hagner, 1997-1998
 Kenneth L. Brier, 1999-2000
 Gerald A. Francis, 2001-2002
 Jeffrey M. Lindy, 2003-2004
 Phyllis Faber Kelley, 2005-2006



Our Present Focus: Club Volunteers Working For a Better Neighborhood
 We remain committed to building a prosperous and healthy community.
 The Club's mission is a work in progress as we face new challenges
 and opportunities.

Here are some of the civic and social issues that The Club addresses today:



Zoning remains top on our list of active involvement with our neighbors. The Club monitors development plans that have been submitted to the township for implementation, applications for business licenses, and applications for home occupation and building permits. If necessary, representatives from The Club will appear before the Township's Zoning Hearing Board and/or the Planning Commission to deliver The Club's position on particular issues. As a result, numerous developments in Bala Cynwyd have been downsized or modified to minimize traffic congestion and improve the aesthetic effect on the community.

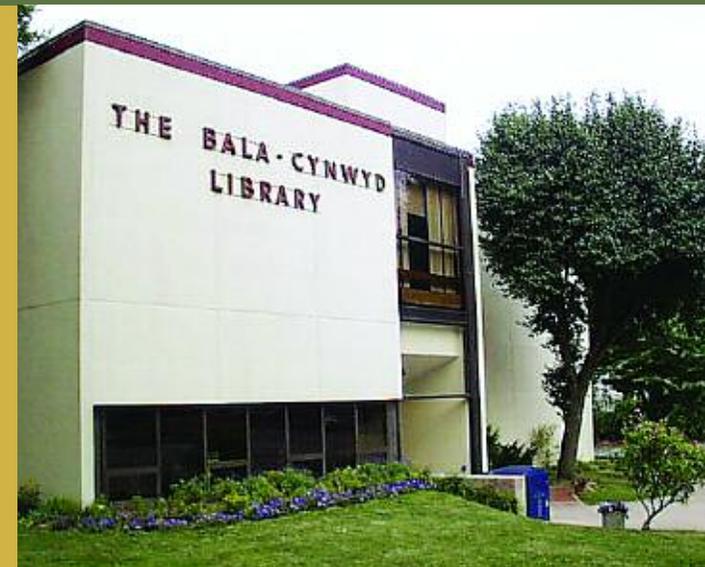


We are fortunate to have many first class schools in our neighborhood. These institutions, both private and public, which range from pre-school to university level. The Club tracks school issues and capital improvement projects and advocates excellence in education.

The Club joins in and supports the local business community because a strong commercial area contributes to the quality of life of our neighborhood. Groups which are active are the City Avenue Special Services District, the Bala Avenue Merchants Association, and the Merion Cynwyd Business Association.



The Club actively interacts with and supports other public service institutions in our community. Our Township Commissioners attend Board meetings to discuss the concerns and issues of Bala Cynwyd and report on issues within the Township relevant to Bala Cynwyd. In addition, The Club works with the Bala Cynwyd Library and the volunteer Union Fire Association. We work with the Lower Merion Police Department regarding parking, traffic, crime prevention, and safety issues.



Our Present Focus: Club Volunteers Working For a Better Neighborhood

Commuter rail service is a distinct asset to our community. The Club remains committed to retention of SEPTA service to our community. Attempts by SEPTA to curtail service and reduce frequency of trains has been successfully opposed

through negotiation with local elected officials and organized public awareness campaigns of The Club.

The following is just a sample of The Club's many volunteer activities that make Bala Cynwyd a better home.

Here are some of the civic and social issues that The Club addresses today:

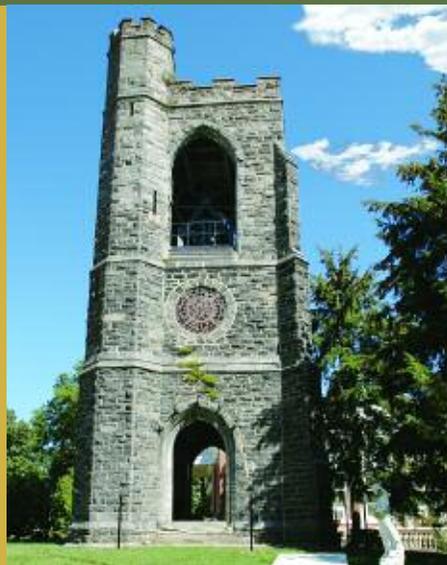


Beautification of the neighborhood has always been a priority for The Club. It's important to keep Bala Cynwyd green. An active group of volunteers plants and maintains the public gardens at the Library, the Post Office, the Cynwyd Train Station, the World War I Memorial, the Mile 7 Marker, the Bowman's Bridge Marker, and the triangle at Old Lancaster Road and Montgomery Avenue. The Club is a participant in the Township's "Adopt A Park" program and has the responsibility of maintaining and improving the Bala Cynwyd Playground and the Bala Gym site. Beautification also extends to private residences. We recognize notable neighborhood gardens by our Annual "Sidewalk Gardens Award." We co-sponsor garden lectures, and sponsor semi-annual perennial plant exchanges. Our volunteers have been the recipients of the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society's "Suburban Greening Award" for their beautiful gardens at the Bala Cynwyd Library and the Cynwyd Train Station.

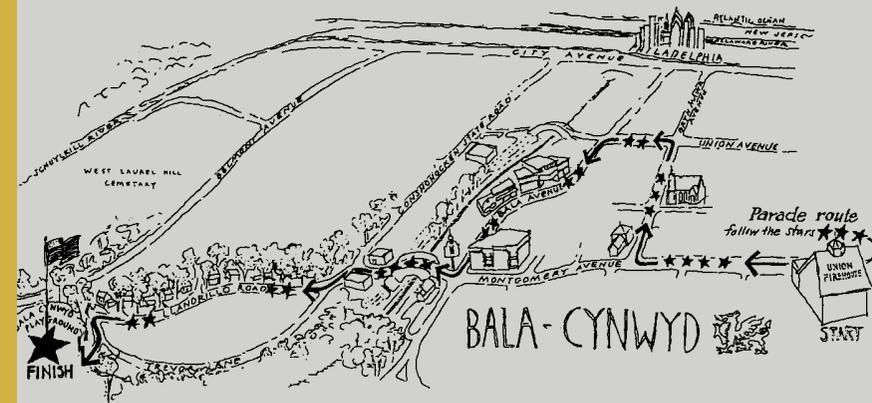


Since 1916, The Club has celebrated July 4th (Independence Day) with a parade and games. This celebration provides an opportunity for the neighborhood to come together and celebrate patriotism and community spirit. The parade, which for many years terminated at the athletic field between the Cynwyd Elementary School and the Bala Cynwyd Middle School, currently begins at the Union Fire Association, winds through Bala on Bryn Mawr, Union and Bala Avenues, then along Conshohocken State Road to Llandrillo Road, and ends at the Bala Cynwyd Playground.

Because maintaining our heritage is a quality of life issue, historic preservation is a concern to The Club. We identify historic sites and educate the community on their importance. The Club meets at the Lower Merion Academy, listed on the National Register of Historic Places, and the home of the Lower Merion Historical Society. The General Wayne Inn is also listed on the National Register; the Merion Friends Meeting is listed as a National Historic Landmark; West Laurel Hill Cemetery is a National Register Historic District, and the Merion Friends Meeting/General Wayne Inn is a local township Historic District. For almost two decades, The Club has adopted the Cynwyd Train Station and is currently involved with the planned restoration of this historic structure.



At the playground, we sponsor a patriotic ceremony, carnival games, rides and foot races for all ages. Finally, our neighborhood 'block party' would not be complete without food and prizes.



The Next 100 YEARS

Tomorrow's Challenges and Opportunities

Bala Cynwyd is a living dynamic community that will continue to face new challenges and opportunities as we step into the future.

Today, just as it was 100 years ago, Bala Cynwyd is a highly desirable place to live and work. Although densely developed, Bala Cynwyd continues to be seen as an opportune location for growth. As a result, we can expect continual, often intense, pressure to increase the density of residential, institutional and commercial uses. Because commercial uses are generally more financially rewarding to developers, the constant pressure to allow commercial uses to encroach on residential areas will continue. These pressures will require constant vigilance and effort to identify, resist, or modify land development applications. The Neighborhood Club and its volunteers will continue to work with neighbors to oversee and guide the planned growth and development of our community.

The Neighborhood Club will also continue its longstanding commitment to:

Uphold the friendliness and harmony of our neighborhood.

Maintain the quality of life.

Preserve our heritage.

Strive to make Bala Cynwyd a better neighborhood in which to live and work.

Provide a forum to resolve civic debates.

Dear Friends and Neighbors,

The Officers and Directors of your civic association, The Neighborhood Club of Bala Cynwyd, consider it a distinct honor and a pleasure to present you with this gift, a Centennial Booklet marking the start of our 100th anniversary year. Many hours have gone into the creation of this booklet, and we ask only that you enjoy it. We hope that you treasure the booklet for its many antique photos and drawings depicting life in this part of Lower Merion during the early, formative years of the community; our aim is that you be entertained as well as informed by the comprehensive history that is recorded in these pages.

To old friends and neighbors, please accept this booklet as a memento of a relationship marked by a desire to deepen the sense of community in Bala Cynwyd. To new residents of the neighborhood, we hope to hear from you soon and to begin the forging of an association that is warm, cordial and lasting.

Wishing you all the very best,



Phyllis Faber Kelley
President - 2006
The Neighborhood Club

Be a Good Neighbor and Join The Club It's an Investment in the Future of Your Neighborhood!

Editor: Gerald A. Francis, Neighborhood Club Director and Past President

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