



*February 2011*

Hi Friend of the Historical Society,

## ***West Laurel Hill Cemetery Supports Cynwyd Station Revitalization***

The Lower Merion Historical Society is pleased to announce it has received a \$10,000 corporate donation for the Cynwyd Train Station Revitalization Project from West Laurel Hill Cemetery. Incorporated in 1869, West Laurel Hill recognizes the importance of preserving one of the last remaining original Pennsylvania Railroad stations in the region. The restoration and preservation of the Station incorporates reused, recycled and salvaged materials, is energy efficient and incorporates strategies to improve storm water management, indoor air quality and energy and water conservation.

West Laurel Hill is proud to support this important community project. The crown jewel in the collection of other historical industrial sites along the Cynwyd Heritage Trail, the historic Cynwyd Train Station will serve as a gateway to a two-mile, multi-use recreational corridor and linear park connecting communities to their cultural and industrial heritage.



*Left to right are Ross Mitchell (Vice President), Jerry Francis (President) of The Lower Merion Historical Society, and Alexander (Pete) Hoskins (President & CEO), Deborah Cassidy (Director, Sales, Marketing and Family Services), Sarah Bonnice (Programming and Event Coordinator) of West Laurel Hill Cemetery.*

You can also help to bring the station back to life by [making a donation](#) or by buying our new book [Lower Merion and Narberth](#)...all proceeds from the sale of the book benefit the Cynwyd Train Station Revitalization Project.

## **Plans for Trail Groundbreaking**



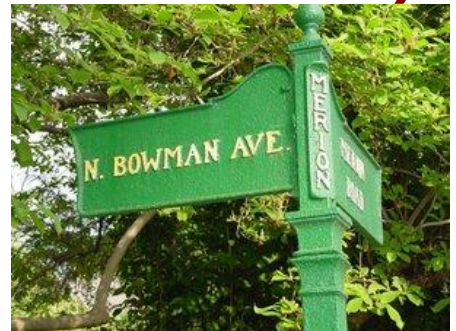
Plans are underway for an April groundbreaking ceremony for the Cynwyd Heritage Trail to be held at Barmouth Station. “What’s exciting is how extensive our invitation list is for all Trail oriented events,” remarked Christopher Leswing, Assistant Director of Building and Planning. “We would never have arrived at this juncture without the

outpouring of support from so many people, and they deserve to be recognized as we break ground.” Members of the Board of Commissioners, the Friends of the Cynwyd Heritage Trail, the Neighborhood Club of Bala Cynwyd and so many more have volunteered their time and talents. “The groundbreaking will be a brief ceremony, but we look forward to a ribbon-cutting in September to celebrate the Trail’s completion,” added Leswing. Details will follow as the groundbreaking date is finalized.

See a related story reported by the Philadelphia Inquirer about the Manayunk Bridge “[Philadelphia gets \\$1.3 million for Cynwyd Heritage Trail](#)”

## **Lower Merion Street Signs Define Our Community**

The Township of Lower Merion is fortunate to have what is likely the largest and oldest related collection of street name signs in the Commonwealth...perhaps in the nation. They stand like silent sentinels on the corner of every street in every neighborhood; their presence distinguishes the physical streetscapes and landscapes of our Township from any other. They are a direct physical link to the post industrial history of Lower Merion, when the primary mode of transportation evolved from horses to automobiles and the importance of roads surpassed that of rails. The road signs of Merion and Merion Park have stood for over ninety-five years, most of the rest for over seventy-five years—three-quarters of a century.



A coalition of community stakeholders, representatives from the Historical Architectural Review Board (HARB), the Historical Commission, the Lower Merion Conservancy, and the Lower Merion Historical Society have been working closely with the Township since last fall to find a solution to the unfunded Federal mandate that requires the replacement of our street signs.

Recently, a resolution has been drafted that states that the Township opposes the U.S. Department of Transportation, the Federal Highway Administration’s Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) that mandates the size and reflectivity of street name signs. This resolution will be introduced and likely voted on at the March 2nd Public Works Committee meeting, and then should be the before Board of Commissioners for full approval at the March 16th meeting. Public comment is welcome at both of those meetings. In the meantime enjoy these splendid, if not ubiquitous and oft maligned pieces of our local history.

See the background stories reported by the Philadelphia Inquirer “[Merion fighting to save its signs](#)” and by the Main Line Times “[Is change a sign of the times?](#)”

## **Building Photographs - To preserve Today for tomorrow's history**

Our February picture from [www.lowermerionhistory.org/buildings/](http://www.lowermerionhistory.org/buildings/), where it is part of our future history:

*In 2006 the Bryn Mawr Hospital demolished 50 or so houses, 6 or 7 of them across Bryn Mawr Ave to*

*build a parking garage. Now they are building groups of row houses on smaller lots behind the garage.*



The old house (demolished c. 2006)

The garage (built 2008)



The new houses built (2010)

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The March issue will have an announcement about our April Annual Meeting/Open House and the Election of Officers and Directors.

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***MISSION STATEMENT OF THE LOWER MERION HISTORICAL SOCIETY***

The Lower Merion Historical Society is an organization dedicated to *Preserving Our Past For The Future*. This is accomplished by stewardship of local history, education of the community, preservation of historic resources and outreach to promote awareness of the cultural heritage of the Township of Lower Merion and the Borough of Narberth.

