



July 2015

Summer Potpourri

Narbrook Park Celebrates Their Centennial 1915-2015



Narbrook Park is a 35-unit, 14-acre housing development that was spearheaded by the Narberth Civic Association. Narberth citizens were engaged in the design and planning process. The *commons* of the development is still maintained by the Narbrook Park Improvement Association – having to look after its own road repair, plowing, and tree maintenance. In 2003, Narbrook Park was listed as a *Historic District* on the National Register of Historic Places.

Their anniversary day was celebrated on [Saturday, June 20th](#).

The day's activities included a procession around the Park, an Introductory Ceremony, a picnic in the park, and house tours of Park residences.

The Re-Purposing of the William Penn Inn... the picture says it all



The Bala Theater



Community attention is now focused on to the revitalization of the Bala (Egyptian) Theater. Along with the Historical Society's concerns, the Lower Merion Conservancy has listed the theater as Number 2 on their 2015 Preservation *WatchList*. Now the local civic association has chimed in. With permission from *The Neighborhood Club of Bala Cynwyd*,

here is a re-print from their Summer 2015 issue of *The Gateway*.

Bala Theater Dispute Drags on to Detriment of Community

To the dismay and frustration of the Bala Cynwyd community, the Bala Theatre remains closed as its owner and the most recent operator remain in litigation. The Bala Theatre has been a focal point of the community on Bala Avenue for generations. The impact of this dispute may extend beyond just access to a movie theater; the theater is an important local historical structure and its closure occurs at a time when efforts are being undertaken to revitalize the Bala Village Business District.



The possibility of protracted litigation of this dispute is expensive and time consuming for the litigants themselves, and it is often the least efficient way to solve disputes. And while the dispute drags on (and some legal observers have speculated it could drag on for years), it is not only to the detriment of the parties to the litigation but to the residents and businesses of our Bala Cynwyd community – and in complete contradiction to what *The Neighborhood Club of Bala Cynwyd* envisions as a revitalization of the Bala Avenue corridor.

We at *The Neighborhood Club of Bala Cynwyd* have continued to monitor this litigation and have urged the disputing parties to resolve their differences as soon as possible, and to restore this important neighborhood asset to our community. We welcome your views on this dispute. If you wish to share those views with the parties in the litigation, below is the caption of the case and a hyperlink to the court records in Montgomery County where you can, without logging in, find the names of the parties and their counsel. Reach out to them and tell them how you feel about the impact of their dispute on the community.

[Constantine Sotolidis, Isaak Sotolidis and Irene Sotolidis v. BTC Holdings 432, LLC, BTC Venture 18, LLC and Gregory Wax, C.A. No. 2014-25070 \(C.P. Mont. Co.\)](#)

The Manayunk Bridge... the picture says it all

Work in nearing completion with the ribbon cutting in October 2015



Installation of "Sleeper" Stone from the Philadelphia & Columbia Railway: the Main Line of Public Works of the State of Pennsylvania

Work is in progress at the *Cynwyd Station Park*. Over the past year, the Historical Society, in collaboration with *The Friends of the Cynwyd Station Park*, has been working with various segments of the community on this project. The display and interpretive sign will mark the approximate location of the right-of-way of the P&CRR (1834-1857) in Bala Cynwyd. The display will also be used as a backdrop for railroad lectures and other events in the park. Pictured are volunteers Bill Doran and his crew from West Laurel Hill Cemetery who are preparing the foundation. A September date is planned for the unveiling of the display.



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Work in progress for the Re-Dedication



A missing historical marker was recently discovered in an old house here in Lower Merion. The information on the damaged and deteriorated marker dated its installation to 1919. This lost artifact was a *Daughters of the American Revolution (D.A.R.)* marker that was placed on a hill that overlooked the main approach from Philadelphia along the road to Lancaster. The marker memorialized the encampment of a battalion of Georgia Continental soldiers in 1777, under the command of General Lachlan McIntosh, of St. Andrews Parrish, Colony of Georgia, at the time of the American Revolution. A November date is planned on the property at Saint John's

Episcopal Church.

John Adams' famous letter of July 3, 1776, in which he wrote to his wife Abigail what his thoughts were about celebrating the Fourth of July. Following is the text from his letter with his original spellings:

“The Second Day of July 1776, will be the most memorable Epoch, in the History of America. I am apt to believe that it will be celebrated, by succeeding Generations, as the great anniversary Festival. It ought to be commemorated, as the Day of Deliverance by solemn Acts of Devotion to God Almighty. It ought to be solemnized with Pomp and Parade, with Shews, Games, Sports, Guns, Bells, Bonfires and Illuminations from one End of this Continent to the other from this Time forward forever more. You will think me transported with Enthusiasm but I am not. I am well aware of the Toil and Blood and Treasure, that it will cost Us to maintain this Declaration, and support and defend these States. Yet through all the Gloom I can see the Rays of ravishing Light and Glory. I can see that the End is more than worth all the Means. And that Posterity will triumph in that Days Transaction, even altho We should rue it, which I trust in God We shall not.”



***As we celebrate our Independence Day.
From all of us at the Historical Society.
Happy Birthday, America!!!!***

Note: On July 4th, representatives from the Historical Society will be participating in *The Neighborhood Club of Bala Cynwyd's* “Independence Day Celebration.” The parade starts at 9:30am at the Union Fire House and the ends at the Bala Cynwyd Playground where there will

be music and activities for everyone to enjoy. We will have an information table, please stop by and get acquainted.

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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.

