

Georgetown C I T I Z E N S

VOLUME XXI / ISSUE 3 / MARCH 2007



CITIZENS ASSOCIATION
of GEORGETOWN

WWW.CAGTOWN.ORG

Your Georgetown House: Past, Present, and Future

Please join us at CAG's March 12 membership meeting to focus on preservation issues. Barbara Zartman, Chair of CAG's Historic Preservation committee, will moderate a panel of experts who will talk about several aspects of history and preservation related to historic houses:

Research: Jerry McCoy, the archivist and librarian at the Peabody Room in the Georgetown Library, will tell us about researching the history of our house. Jerry has helped numerous homeowners research the history of their houses and he will explain the resources

(including fascinating photos) and procedures individuals can use to get the story behind their residence

Renovation: Tim Dennee, of the DC Office of Planning's Historic Preservation Review Board, and recipient of CAG's Belin Award last year, will tell us about the process of renovating or adding to your home in the context of our historic village and review standards.

Conservation Easements: Peter Jost, President of the Foundation for the Preservation of Historic Georgetown, a trust that specializes in conservation easements exclusively for Georgetown, will speak about the

Next CAG Meeting

Monday, March 12, 2007

Historic Preservation and Your Georgetown Home

St. John's Church Parish Hall
Potomac and O Streets, NW

Reception 7 pm Program 7:30 pm

Parking during meeting across the street at Hyde School

benefits of protecting these historic gems for future generations.

The panel will also answer questions from the floor. Please join us to learn more about the past, present and future of your house in Georgetown.

John Dreyfuss Wows CAG at Halcyon House

Over one-hundred people enjoyed the hospitality of sculptor John Dreyfuss at Halcyon House for the February CAG Meeting. Descending the imposing staircase into Mr. Dreyfuss' large airy studio, guests marveled at the wax sculpture prototypes on display, while enjoying refreshments prior to the meeting.

Denise Cunningham welcomed the crowd, and led a round of applause for host John Dreyfuss. She delivered a positive report on the new CAG Public Safety Program: fundraising is going well, and the expanded program is up and

running. Georgetowners were urged to contribute to the program in order to ensure continuation



Sculptor John Dreyfuss answers questions on the history of Halcyon House.

through the year. CAG saluted Helen Darling, whose grassroots efforts as block captain coordinator have resulted in many neighbors joining together to work on public safety for their block. Volunteers for the block captain program are still being sought, and the audience was asked to contact Helen at 338-1355 or the CAG office at 337-7313. A new component of the monthly meetings, in which Denise asks the audience "what's on your mind", elicited a question regarding a leaning tree at Book Hill Park, to which attendee Julia Diaz Asper responded about maintenance by the Friends of Book Hill Park. A request was also made for information on the permit process for renovation of historic

Continued on page 4

PRESIDENT'S LETTER

Exciting Times, Dues Time

It's a very exciting time to be living in Georgetown. And a particularly exciting time to be a member of CAG. For 129 years this organization has been a leading force in representing the citizens' concerns for our community. Today, more than ever, we are endeavoring to engage our members and all residents in shaping an even better neighborhood. So please renew your CAG membership dues! You get a lot for your money: merchant discounts, interesting meetings, Concerts in Parks, the newsletter — to name just a few. Plus memberships dues are now totally tax-deductible. We ended 2006 with over 1100 members and we want you all back — we can't do it without you. The form is on page seven and also online at www.cagtown.org.

CAG Gets interactive Online

One very interesting project, to be launched soon, is a CAG blog (think bulletin board) accessed through our website. This will allow quicker access to all the projects and issues the association is working on without waiting for the arrival of the newsletter. In tandem with the blog, the board is investigating the development of a CAG listserve — an online community forum. This vehicle will provide a means for dialogue and exchange of information on a variety of topics from community issues to searching for recommendation for a contractor. We anticipate both these mediums will be up and running in the near future.

Public Safety

The expanded Public Safety Program is working! The two extra MPD officers, that CAG and Georgetown University pay for on Friday and Saturday nights, have already apprehended criminals in three instances. And the response to the Public Safety program fundraising so far is excellent. Many generous contributions have come in during the first month of fundraising. We are halfway to our goal and hope that, if you have not yet sent in your donation, you will do so now. Carl Rowan Jr., Vice President of Securitas for the Washington area, is personally working with CAG to improve our Guard program. He brings extensive experience (US Marshal, FBI special agent, GU law degree) with public and private organizations and will attend a CAG meeting soon.

DC Alert System

Board members have also been in discussions about resident participation in an expanded DC Alert system. The Georgetown Business Owners Pilot alert system has been activated in the business district and we are in discussions to tailor it to the needs of the residential com-

munity. This system allows the police department to send instant crime alerts to all registered users via cell phone, e-mail, blackberry or pagers warning participants of offenses in real time. CAG block captains and public safety committee members will participate in an initial pilot program.



Denise with a Dreyfuss sculpture prototype at the March CAG meeting.

Clean-up Day

Georgetown Clean-up Day has been set for April 22. This collaboration of University students and residents to clean up litter is always a fun and productive afternoon.

The District has set April 21 as hazardous waster disposal day. Brenda Moorman, CAG Beautification chair, is organizing a drop-off site in Georgetown. Thank you to Brenda and her husband, Jim, for arranging this convenience for residents.

CAG & BID

Board member, Seth Kirshenber, will act as CAG's liaison to the Business Improvement District Board of Directors. This very important relationship keeps the business community and the residential community informed of each other's efforts and allows us to join forces to achieve shared goals.

The Concerts Are Coming

This is the fifth year of CAG's Concerts in the Parks. Elizabeth Miller and her committee have announced the schedule: May 20, June 3, and July 1 — all at 5 o'clock on Sundays.

The popular Concerts Kick-off party will be at the very cool Blue Gin on Friday April 13 at 6:30. Look for your invitation soon.

Jennifer Altemus has agreed to chair the 2007 Fall CAG gala. Jennifer was a co-chair with Barbara Downs last year and has been active with Concerts in the Park.

Speaking of these great volunteers, I want to say thank you to all the volunteers who make CAG the active, successful organization that it is. We can always use more help — CAG committees are a wonderful way to meet people, have fun, learn about your community and help with our important work. If you feel you'd like to play a part, please let us know — and/or check the handy boxes on the Dues Renewal form.

— Denise R. Cunningham

ASPECTS OF GEORGETOWN

by Edith Schafer

IF THESE WALLS COULD TALK

Sometimes we cast about for subjects to write about. Sometimes ideas just jump into our laps, but mostly not. In this case the proposed subject was a mysterious, somewhat curious-looking dwelling and garden at 1318 33rd Street, north of N Street. A sign reads “The Stables.” Peering in through the locked iron gate, one can see what appear to be grottoes and waterfalls and garden structures that give an elfin quality to the landscape. No one answered a letter put in the mail box; the phone is unlisted.

What next? The Peabody Room, of course – it reveals all mysteries and then leads on to ever more interesting byways of history. “The Stables” actually was the stables for the much larger house just up the street. And that’s where the fun begins. A lively and attractive family has lived there for some time, since 1962 to be precise, and it’s multi-generational now.

The house was built in 1820 by a Captain Savage. He put a cupola on the top so he could observe the comings and goings of ships.

And, speaking of ships, during the same period, John Laird & Son,

tobacco merchants, shipped large quantities of tobacco to Europe every year. Laird ordered some vessels with ballast to the wharves at the foot of Frederick Street (34th Street). The ballast was dumped and with it a large number of ants from the West Indies. Being summer, they multiplied by the thousands and millions. They entered every store and dwelling, and marched north. They infested the walls of buildings so that when the wall was struck they would surface and run around in every direction. Their sting was painful; they depreciated property values. A reward of one dollar per quart for dead ants was offered. Several hundred dollars was paid out, until the cold winter of 1840-41 put an end to the ant problem.

Mrs. Alf Heiberg also once lived in the big house. She had previously been married to General Douglas MacArthur. Listening to the radio she heard a civil defense broadcast which recommended that when the A-bombs started falling, one should throw oneself in the gutter and put your hand over your face. She thought this advice left something to be desired, and, that as the former Mrs. MacArthur, she would be a

likely target, so she had a bomb shelter built. There is no trace of it now.

In 1962 enter the Martins. Mrs. Martin was an accomplished musician and patron of music. She loved to entertain, particularly to give costume parties. Her Mardi Gras parties were legendary. She was fascinated by tradition and ritual. She liked guests who were willing to wear wacky costumes. One year Mrs. Martin was the Wicked Fairy; another guest was Hickory Dickory Dock; Mr. and Mrs. Abe Fortas came as Jack and Jill, appropriate, they said, as they had just returned from Aspen. At the Martins’ house in New York, the pipes froze once and water poured down onto the guests. “I’ll get the bathing caps,” said Edith Martin and produced a number of bathing caps with brightly-colored rubber flowers (remember the sixties) and the guests danced on. There’s a lot more, all good.

So if those walls could talk, they would remember the people, the music, the parties and the fun. Like so many houses in Georgetown. So many memories. And these walls might wonder too, “Where did all the ants go?”

—Edith Schafer

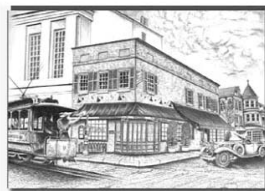
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February Wrap Up

Continued from page one

homes, and Denise referred the questioners to the CAG website.

Sean Howard, Mayor Fenty's community outreach coordinator for Ward 2, provided his email address (sean.howard@dc.gov) and office telephone number (442-8151). Joe Martin, Mayor Fenty's new neighborhood services liaison, who helps "keep the government running" by working on quality of life issues, also provided his email address (joseph.martin@dc.gov) and telephone numbers (office: 442-9509; cell: 340-7853).

John Dreyfuss thanked everyone for coming to Halcyon House, where he has lived for the past thirty years. He invited the audience to walk with him through the entire house. Built in 1789 by the first Secretary of the Navy, Benjamin Stoddert, John acquired the house in the 1970s when it was deteriorating and very much in need of repair. The Dreyfuss family restored the house, and saved it from being turned into condos. He commended the work of the strategic architect, George Stavropoulos on the enormous task of renovating Halcyon House (it took two years just to strip the entire building down). The studio, a below-ground box space designed to double as a foundation to "hold up the house", is rented out for catered events seating up to 200 people. In response to an inquiry about the photographs of celebrities throughout the house (including Keith Richards, Bob Dylan, Fidel Castro and BB King), John explained that artists exhibiting at the nearby Govinda Gallery frequently stay at Halcyon House free of charge, as long as they donate a photograph.

Led by John, everyone experienced staircases and corridors leading to a maze of rooms within the imposing block-long building on Prospect Street. The entire building holds surprise views, and fascinating nooks and crannies, plus a large ter-



John Dreyfuss explains the creative process behind his sculpture.

race on top of the studio, overlooking the Potomac River.

Dreyfuss also chatted with guests about his sculpture, including the interesting monoliths called Early 1 and Early 2, fashioned from aluminum with small concave mirrors. He spoke of his interest in objects from Chinese tombs and inspiration for helmets, lyres and vases. Dreyfuss told an anecdote about his Quill sculpture, located on the top floor: a client requested the same sculpture, but 6 inches taller, in order to fit neatly into a niche in his home, which Dreyfuss accomplished using state-of-the-art computer design and solid modeling. His studio is divided into two parts: the main studio downstairs, where CAG meeting attendees mingled, containing many wax prototypes of his monumental sculptures; and the upstairs balcony studio, housing electronic equipment, which overlooks the main studio. Rick Cunningham demonstrated the state-of-the-art digital programs that Dreyfuss uses to create his sculpture. A small multi-dimensional "print-out" of Dreyfuss' four baseball players was on view (in reality the figures would be over six-feet high), a project currently under consideration for the new baseball stadium. The creative process for his sculpture is a multi-year undertaking, resulting in colossal sculptures made of brass and various metals. John visualizes the external model, and the computer creates the interior. Various samples of his finished work were dis-

played throughout the house. An example of his work in Georgetown is the fountain centerpiece in the courtyard outside Café Leopold.

Luca Pivato, CAG public safety co-chair, demonstrated CIM (Crime Interactive Map), found on the CAG website (www.cagtown.org). This computer tool offers satellite views of Georgetown, showing locations of recent criminal activity and is updated every week. The National Park Service's Sally Blumenthal showed the latest scale model of Phase II of the Waterfront Park, answering questions and providing information using four posterboards with renditions of the pergola, the walk-through fountain, and the river stairs.

—Tara Scopelliti
Secretary



CAG Public Safety Co-chair Luca Pivato (far left) guides members (right to left) Patricia Goldman, Patrick Clawson, and Diane Salisbury through the Crime InterActive map.



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CAG Works out Liquor Sale Safeguards with Safeway

Beer and wine will be available soon at Georgetown's Safeway. In January the Alcoholic Beverage Control Board granted the store a license to sell beer and wine, the result of a process that started in November 2006.

The ABC Board decision was made only after extensive negotiations with the Safeway and numerous community groups. While many in the community welcome the convenience that sales of alcohol at the store will provide, there is real concern about the effect of such sales, particularly given the close proximity of the Hardy School and Jelleff's Boys and Girls Club.

In order to mitigate any negative impacts, representatives of CAG, the ANC, and individual members of Jelleff's Board of Directors worked with Safeway to craft a voluntary agreement. Such an agreement is a mutually agreed upon list of condi-

tions addressing areas of concern not specifically covered by ABC regulations (see box below).

In numerous meetings, the groups worked out an agreement covering hours of operation, product, sales, signage and litter. Under the Voluntary Agreement, Safeway's hours for the sale of beer and wine will be 9 am to 9 pm (Safeway wanted to sell liquor until 12 midnight) seven days a week and checkout scanners will cue cashiers when an alcohol purchase is attempted outside these hours. In order to discourage underage drinking, cashiers will be trained to check the identification of anyone who appears to be under 30 years of age. The sale of kegs and large cases of beer is prohibited, as are certain types of alcohol, such as malt liquor. Human and electronic surveillance will monitor the aisle where beer and wine are located which will be in plain view of the office and checkout counters. Further provi-

sions cover permissible signage and measures to prevent loitering and litter.

The comprehensive agreement, which becomes part of the license, is an example of CAG, our ANC, and board members of Jelleff's Boys and Girls Club working together with our commercial neighbors for the benefit of all.

—Karen Cruse
Co-Chair, CAG ABC Committee

What's a Voluntary Agreement?

With 120 liquor-licensed establishments in Georgetown we must take care to ensure they add, rather than detract, from our community. Enter the Voluntary Agreement (VA). The District Alcoholic Beverage Control board (ABC) regulations impose definitive criteria for the operation of all licensed establishments. For example, alcohol cannot be served Friday or Saturday night past 3 a.m. and specific food revenues are required in order to qualify as a restaurant. But these objective regulations only provide an outline for operation. Fortunately the regulations also state that each licensed establishment must be "appropriate" i.e., fit into its surroundings. The establishment cannot impact negatively on peace, order and quiet, or on parking, traffic or pedestrian safety. A large nightclub located downtown might be entirely appropriate; near a Georgetown residential street, much less so. To reconcile different opinions about what is "appropriate" involves [requires] a Voluntary Agreement (VA).

If a bar, restaurant or store owner seeks a new or transferred liquor license, or looks to substantially change a current operation, or has used an existing license in an improper way, the community has the right to challenge those aspects of the business with which it has concerns. Under the guidance of the ABC Board, the license applicant and any "protesting parties" (such as neighbors, community groups) meet to work out an agreement on topics such as hours, size, entertainment, and parking. If an agreement regarding these various matters is reached, it is submitted to the ABC Board for approval, and the terms become part of the license. The incentive for the business owner to sign a Voluntary Agreement is the assurance of an expedited license. The benefit to residents is a licensed establishment that is an asset, not a liability, to the neighborhood.

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Flo Stone's Environmental Film Festival

The 15th Annual Environmental Film Festival (EFF) will open on March 15. One hundred and ten exciting and innovative documentary films will be shown on screens throughout the city during its ten-day run. On March 9, author Kaiulani Lee will offer a special pre-festival production of "A Sense of Wonder", which commemorates the 100th birthday of Rachel Carson. Tickets (\$20 each) can be purchased by calling 703-748-7575 or online at www.newtonmarascofoundation.org. The EFF is always a highly anticipated event due to the creativity and masterful hand of its founder, Georgetown's Flo Stone.

Flo and Roger Stone moved to Washington from New York City in 1985, where she had already immersed herself in the environmental world, putting on festivals and running lectures featuring Margaret Mead and other experts. Her first

job here was opening an office for Earthwatch, and while attending an Earthwatch film awards conference in 1993, she mentioned the idea of creating an Environmental Film Festival to a colleague who promptly asked her to "fax me something." Working as a party of one with what she considered a good idea and not much else, Flo scrambled to get something down on paper. The next thing she knew, a foundation offered her seed money to put the idea into production. Next, she contacted the National Gallery, they agreed to show a film and, the rest is history. Flo's festival has grown in scope and stature each year, and has presented numerous award-winning films to an ever-growing audience. This year's roster of films offers diverse and compelling topics, from "25 Ways to Quit Smoking" to "An Inconvenient Truth". The films will be shown at various venues, including embassies, museums, and the-

aters throughout the Washington area and some of them are free. Directors, producers, and even some of the subjects will be on hand for discussions and Q and A's after the screenings. On March 17th the Museum of Natural History is presenting an Afternoon with Dr. David Suzuki, the award winning Canadian environmentalist, scientist and writer — one of the delicious selections on this years menu.

So, congratulations to Flo on the 15th anniversary of the Environmental Film Festival, and thanks for giving us the opportunity to travel the globe, meet amazing people, and learn more about the world we live in. As Kermit the Frog has informed us, it's not easy being green, but it's something more of us should try! For additional EFF information call: 432-2564 or email envirofilmfest@igc.org.

—V V Harrison

NEWSBYTES... Casey Trees Endowment held its awards ceremony last Fall at Tudor Place to celebrate DC's largest trees. The large Tulip Poplar, under which the ceremony took place, was second in size to the Montrose Park Tulip Poplar, but Tudor Place did receive an award for the largest pecan tree in the city... The old **Reed Electric building** is frozen in litigation as the new owner, Commerce Bank, seeks a reduced price; the bank was unable to get a design of its choice approved and now believes it must demolish the existing building and, since it would be receiving just a lot, not a building, the bank thinks the price should be reduced. The sellers want to demonstrate that a design could have been approved, and several people involved in application and approval have been called as witnesses, with no end in sight... **Tudor Place** which was covered in stucco in 1816, and re-covered in 1914, will be replacing the stucco under careful curatorial guidance, because it is cracking and causing water damage—even marring the interior... A redesigned **taxi zone map**, showing updated fares will be in taxis and also on www.ddot.dc.gov (under "information", click on "maps" and "taxi zone map")... *National Treasure 2*, the sequel to Disney's 2004 hit movie starring Nicolas Cage, Jon Voight and Harvey Keitel, will be filming in the District this Spring including one day in the 3400 block of O Street — the original movie followed an archaeologist (Cage) on a search for a hidden treasure from the 1700s secretly mapped out on the back of the Declaration of Independence and the sequel will take the adventurers to "exciting destinations within America." ...Check out the March 13 Duke Ellington School's Concert Choir performance "Sing Out" from 7:30 to 10 pm.

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Time To Pay Your CAG 2007 Membership Dues

CAG Dues are Now Tax-deductible

Please use the form below to join or renew your membership now. CAG annual dues are \$50 for Individual Resident Members (voting) and \$65 for Couples Resident Members (voting). Dues are \$65 for Business or Associate Members, both of which are non-voting members. (CAG By-laws require that voting members reside in Georgetown; otherwise all members enjoy the numerous benefits of CAG.) The dues are payable to CAG (by check, Visa or Mastercard) and are now completely tax-deductible.

There are many opportunities to get involved with CAG activities and events. Please check the box on the form if you would like to assist. With your help, active involvement, and support, we can continue to preserve the historic character and uniqueness of our community and enhance its livability.

Please enroll me/us as a member of The Citizens Association of Georgetown for 2007

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I would like to volunteer to help!

My areas of interest are:

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Names/Addresses of Potential New Members: _____

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Donors to CAG's 2007 Public Safety Program (as of February 27, 2007)

Thanks to the generosity of the following people, we have raised almost half of the required revenue for the 2007 expanded Public Safety Program — in one month! We urge everyone else to contribute soon. Forms are available from the CAG office and on the website: www.cagtown.org.

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MARCH COMMUNITY EVENTS AND CALENDAR

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|---------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Tues. Feb. 27 | Partnership for Problem Solving (PPS) Meeting Sponsored by the Metropolitan Police Department to discuss community issues; 6:00 pm; Heritage Room, Georgetown Visitation, 35th & Volta Streets (before ANC meeting). |
| Tues. Feb. 27 | Advisory Neighborhood Commission (ANC) 2E Public Meeting; 6:30 pm; Heritage Room, Georgetown Visitation, 35th & Volta Streets; (agenda available at www.anc2E.com); call 338-7427 for more information. |
| Mon. Mar. 12 | Citizens Association of Georgetown Meeting featuring historic preservation; reception at 7:00 and program at 7:30 pm; St. John's Church Parish Hall, Potomac and O Streets. |
| Tues. Mar. 13 | (ALL) Alliance for Local Living Meeting; to discuss community issues with Georgetown residents and students together at GU; 6:30 pm; call GU for details at 687-4056. |
| Wed. Mar. 14 | Capital Drawings: Architectural Designs for Washington, DC; 7:00 pm; \$10: members/\$15: non-members; Tudor Place, 1670 31st Street; call 965-0400 for reservations. |
| Sat. Mar. 24 | Traveling First Class Concert featuring music of Ravel, Weber, Brahms, Kodaly, and more; 8:00 pm; Dumbarton Church, 3133 Dumbarton Street; Tickets: \$30, Seniors/students: \$26; Call 965-2000. |
| Tues. Apr. 3 | Partnership for Problem Solving (PPS) Meeting Sponsored by the Metropolitan Police Department to discuss community issues; 6:00 pm; Heritage Room, Georgetown Visitation, 35th & Volta Streets (before ANC meeting). |
| Tues. Apr. 3 | Advisory Neighborhood Commission (ANC) 2E Public Meeting; 6:30 pm; Heritage Room, Georgetown Visitation, 35th & Volta Streets; (agenda available at www.anc2E.com); call 338- 7427 for more information. |
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