

# Historic Takoma

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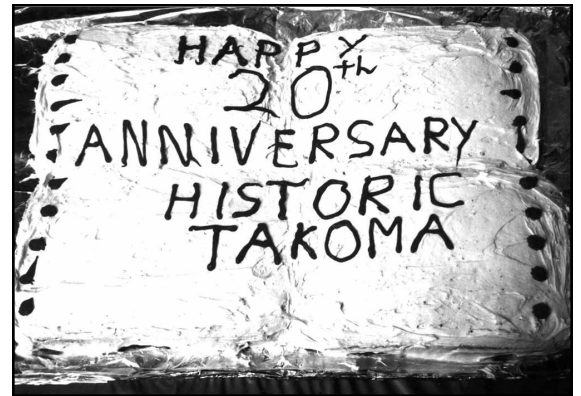
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## Historic Takoma Celebrates Its 20th Anniversary

**H**istoric Takoma celebrated its 20th anniversary on Sunday, May 16, 1999 at the Thomas-Siegler Carriage House Museum on Tulip Avenue. Under beautiful sunny skies, more than 150 members and well wishers came to enjoy the day and celebrate the organization's two decades of service to the Takoma communities and its many accomplishments in helping to preserve our small town architecture and ambiance and to safeguard the documents and photographs that chronicle our history.

As part of the anniversary celebration, HTI unveiled the 1891 Essex Trap carriage and (wooden) horse on loan from the Thrasher Carriage Museum. The two-seater carriage is likely similar to the one that originally was housed in the older carriage house portion of the building and is a perfect fit in the space. The horse occupies the stall where his real-life predecessor also stood. Cutting the ribbon to welcome the carriage were Kathy Porter, Takoma Park Mayor, Bruce Williams, Takoma Park Councilmember, Peter Franchot, Maryland State Delegate, and Deborah Miller from the Thrasher Carriage Museum.

The day's festivities included a delicious buffet of cakes and other desserts prepared by HTI members, entertainment by Dave Lorenz, who played piano ragtime, and a



HTI's 20th-anniversary cake.

►Continued on Page 3

## *Presidents – and a Mayor – Salute HTI's Birthday!*



**F**our past presidents, including two of of HTI's founders, were on hand to celebrate the organization's 20th anniversary. Also saluting the birthday was Kathy Porter, Takoma Park's mayor and a past HTI treasurer. Pictured from left are Kathy Porter, Doug Harbit, Lorraine Pearsall (HTI's current president), Ellen Marsh, Roland Halstead, and Karen Fishman. Ellen Marsh and Roland Halstead were two of the original four founders. Loretta Neumann, a third founder, also attended the party but too late to appear in the picture. Phil Vogel, the fourth founder, passed away last year.

## HISTORIC TAKOMA NEWSLETTER



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

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### Newsletter Editor/Design

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



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## AROUND TOWN

### Co-Housing Project Reviewed

The co-housing project, with its 40+ units to be located next to the Takoma Theater, has been undergoing design review by the DC Historic Preservation Division (HPD). HTI reviewed plans, worked with HPD staff member Steve Callcott and testified at a hearing before the DC review board on improvements that are necessary for the project to fit in aesthetically with our historic community. Improvements will include chimneys in stucco rather than siding, trim around windows and doors, more suitable combination of materials on the tower element (clapboard and shingle rather than clapboard and brick), the addition of porches, and more traditional window treatments.

### Demolition by Neglect

HTI and a resident of Takoma Junction testified on April 11th before the Historic Preservation Commission on the property located at 7316-7318 Carroll Avenue. The building's early 20th-century storefront is the most intact example of its kind in the Junction. The commission requested many corrections on the property, including the restoration of deteriorating wooden frames on the storefront windows, the replacement of a five-paneled

wooded door and the removal of black paint on the inside of the windows.

### Historic Designation for the Davis Warner Inn

HTI testified on April 28th before the Historic Preservation Commission on the importance of designating the Davis Warner Inn as a significant historic resource. The mid-19th-century property is one of the best examples of Victorian stick-style architecture in the county. The Davis Warner Inn lies outside the historic district and is thus vulnerable to encroachment by development. The property is now protected by Historic Takoma due to the Historic Preservation Easement granted by owners Doug Harbit and Robert Patenaude. The county designation would confer additional protection on this treasure.

### Doug Harbit Joins HPC

HTI is pleased to inform our members that former HTI president Doug Harbit has been appointed to the Montgomery County Historic Preservation Commission. As we reported earlier, HTI had endorsed Doug's candidacy. The HPC is charged with enforcing Montgomery County's historic preservation ordinances. Congratulations and good luck, Doug!

### Historic Takoma's Board of Directors



HTI's Directors pose at the 20th-anniversary party. Seated: Allison Weiss. Standing, left to right: Trevor Delafield, Kathy Brooks-Denny (Secretary), Laura DiCurcio, Dorothy Barnes, Patricia Fox, Joel Solomon, Holly Burnham, Jack Carson (Treasurer), Ted Kowaluk (Vice President), Lorraine Pearsall (President), and Ann Juneau.

► **Anniversary, Continued from page 1**

program of early 20th-century music by the Takoma Singers

The official part of the day's activities was kicked off by a brief review of HTI's accomplishments over the past 20 years by Lorraine Pearsall. This was followed by remarks and tribute to the organization by Kathy Porter and Peter Franchot. HTI member and train aficionado Rob Denny gave listeners a fascinating review of how the advent of train transportation at the turn of the century led to the development of the early suburbs, including and especially Takoma Park. Deborah Miller from the Thrasher Carriage Museum then officially presented the carriage to the organization.

In her remarks, Lorraine noted that, as it reaches age 20, HTI has much to celebrate. The need to preserve our city grew from the very real threats to many of our historic structures by plans to build a super highway through downtown in the 1960s and to creeping expansionism by Montgomery College. These threats were successfully resisted, and today few dispute the need to preserve our heritage. HTI will continue to work on preservation issues and other worthwhile causes by marshalling the volunteer power of our citizens in both Maryland and the District.



Cutting the ribbon to welcome the carriage were Takoma Park Councilmember Bruce Williams, Takoma Park Mayor Kathy Porter, Deborah Miller of the Thrasher Carriage Museum, and Maryland Delegate Peter Franchot.

## John Urciolo Donates Space for HTI Archives

John Urciolo has generously donated the use of a room beneath the Old Town Post Office to HTI for a period of five years. The large, brightly lit room, with about 350 square feet, will provide room to work on the archives, adequate storage space, and access for the community. HTI is painting the space and moving materials into it from the basement of City Hall. HTI is extremely grateful to John for his support of our activities. Thank you, John!!!

### Museum Open Sundays

The Thomas-Siegler Carriage House Museum is open Sundays in July and August from 1-3 pm. In addition to a photo exhibit on Takoma Park history, a 19th-century carriage and model horse are on display. The museum is located within the first carriage house in Takoma Park at Tulip and Cedar Avenues.

### Preservation Award from MPI

Montgomery Preservation Inc. presented HTI with an award for 20 years of distinguished service to the community in historic preservation. The award was on display during our 20th anniversary celebrations at the Thomas-Siegler Carriage House Museum and Gardens in May.

### Shakespeare in the Park

For the second year in a row, the Lumina Studio Ensemble performed Shakespeare

to sold-out crowds in the gardens adjoining the Thomas-Siegler Carriage House. Between June 7 and 20, the Lumina Studio Ensemble gave three performances of the *Tempest* on the lawn behind the historic carriage house. Another three shows took place indoors after Spring rains threatened. Under the direction of Takoma Park resident Jillian Raye, 55 actors, ranging in age from four to adult, took part. "The setting of the Carriage House is just lovely," Raye said. "It's ideal—both user and audience friendly." Hoping to make an annual event of Shakespeare in Takoma Park. Raye has already begun to consider next year's events.

### History Day Festivities

For the second year in a row, HTI participated in Montgomery County's History Day. HTI greeted visitors to the Carriage House on July 11, and set up a variety of exhibits on the history of the town.

### Fourth Grade Tours

Again this year, HTI continued its program of site visits to the Thomas-Siegler Carriage House for all 10 fourth-grade classes at the Piney Branch Elementary School. HTI volunteer Diana Kohn greeted the students and helped them understand what life was like for kids their age at the turn of the century. HTI also prepared a walking tour for the students.

### Gardens Being Developed at Museum

The Grounds Committee has developed a Victorian garden at the Carriage House, and also is making plans and requesting grant money to continue the property's beautification. Kim Grant of Countryside Gardens helped plan the current garden and Countryside provided HTI with a discount on the plants. The Grounds Committee also has developed detailed plans for the rest of the property and has submitted a grant application to the Maryland Landscapes Program of the Maryland Commission for Celebration 2000. Plans call for removing non-native plants, installing new native plants, and developing six new gardens: a new garden gateway, Victorian butterfly perennial garden, bird berry patch, fairy ring, fern and moss walk, and a showcase of grass lawn alternatives.

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.

★**Dana Lee Dembrow, Maryland State Delegate**—for sending us a citation from the Maryland House of Delegates, in recognition of our 20 years of service to the Takoma community. It will be added to the HTI Awards Hall of Fame.

★**Deborah Miller of the Thrasher Carriage Museum**—for her assistance in helping us acquire the Essex Trap carriage and wooden horse.

★**Kim Grant of Countryside Gardens**—for her help in designing and implementing the new garden at the Carriage House Museum.

★**The Takoma Voice, and particularly reporter Julie Wiatt**—for the extensive pre- and post-event coverage of our 20th anniversary. The front page photo of HTI Treasurer Jack Carson with the wooden horse was very helpful in publicizing our event; the associated articles were well-written and timely.

★**The Takoma Park Newsletter, The Montgomery County Journal, and The Takoma Park Gazette**—for their efforts to get the word out, which contributed significantly to the event's success.

★**Jill Feasley**—for her tremendous help in putting together the MaryLandscapes proposal for the Carriage House grounds.

★**John Urciolo**—for his very generous

contribution of office space to house our archives (see related article). In appreciation, we have inducted him into the Benjamin Franklin Gilbert Club and awarded him a lifetime membership.

★**Ann Vogel**—for her generous \$500 donation to the Alfred P. Vogel Memorial Fund. Her contribution, made in honor of her late husband, will help ensure that Takoma's heritage is preserved. In appreciation of her donation we have inducted her into the BFG Club.

★**Mary Singh, Richard and Sherri Weil, and H. Richard Greenfield**—for their donations of \$250. We welcome them as inductees into the BFG Club.

★**Joel Solomon and Janet Fleischman**—for their generous contribution of \$100, thus qualifying them as HTI Benefactors.

★**Madeline Caliendo, Eileen Fitzgerald, Carolyn Tilley, Yuri Zelinsky, Susan Alexander, Theresa Cusick, Kathryn Desmond, and the folks at the National Security Agency**—for their donations to HTI made through the 1998 United Way and Combined Federal Campaigns. Funds received from these campaigns are an important source of income for HTI and we very much appreciate their gifts.

★**All of the many volunteers**—who helped make our 20th-anniversary celebration such a smashing success. We would like to cite The Takoma Park Singers, Dave Lorentz, Paul Chrostowski, Deborah Miller, Rob Denny, Mayor Kathy Porter, and Del. Peter Franchot.

Welcome New and Renewed Members! (4/99-6/99)

- Maija L. Hay
- Cecily & Charles Pilzer
- H. Richard Greenfield
- KIDSNET – Karen Jaffe
- Jo Pressler & Kathryn Naylor
- John & Terry Dammann
- John Urciolo
- Chris & Donna Victoria
- Madeline C. Caliendo
- Marie Ringwald & Michael Kerr
- Eileen M. Fitzgerald
- Joseph Curzon
- Susan D. Alexander
- Theresa A. Cusick
- Mary K. Feldman
- Kathryn J. Desmond
- Marcie Stickle
- National Security Agency
- Dick O'Connor
- Patti Jo McCann & Edward An
- Kim Keller
- Daniel & Gianne McNeill
- Kevin Mills & Holly Fechner
- Margaret Conway
- Hisao & Molly Yatsuhashi
- Nancy Knight
- Kathleen Long
- Elizabeth Marple Bentley
- Pierre Donahue & Elisa Massimino
- Ann B. Vogel
- Joseph D. Brame
- Wendi Poole & Sandie Spyrou
- Charles & Betty Deanes
- Hally Childs

► Cont'd on page 8

Historic Takoma  
REAL ESTATE GUIDE

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## THE WAY WE WERE

### Takoma Park After The War: Part Two

This is the second 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.

#### EDUCATION

As for educational facilities, the town of Takoma Park has a well-equipped elementary and junior high school for white students. High school students attend Montgomery Blair High School, which also serves students from surrounding localities. This is a modern, progressive school, which is viewed in two different ways by the populace. Some think the instruction is adequate; they maintain that this is proven by the number of graduates who are admitted to the University of Maryland each year while other local students are not. However, others say this is not a logical conclusion since so many factors are involved in admitting students to a university. They believe that the school gives insufficient attention to discipline and that teaching methods are so progressive that students do not have an incentive to learn or to live up to their abilities. This school of thought regards the students as rough, wild, and "fast."

One wonders if the unofficial report by the Montgomery County State Police that this town has the highest rate of delinquency in the county has anything to do with the lack of discipline at the high school, and the negligence in developing a social conscience among the students. Recently there was a news story in the local papers about a group of teenage youths who struck a Maryland policeman in a well known restaurant on upper Georgia Avenue. The policeman, at the request of the establishment, was asking a guest to leave because of his liquor drinking, which was not permitted there. A large group of "bobby soxers" gathered, got in their jalopies, and trailed the

police to the jail where they milled around and began to riot, making such a disturbance that the police threatened to put them all in jail for disturbing the peace. A large proportion of these young people were from Montgomery Blair High School. Another reason advanced for the high delinquency rate is the lack of local amusement facilities.

The Negroes have a grade school with the first through seventh grades and an enrollment of 75 pupils. There are three teachers including the principal, all of whom have a normal school education or better. The principal has a degree from Hampton Institute in Virginia and the assistant teacher is working on her degree at Howard. Only within the past few years have there been indoor lavatories, and an oil burner is soon to be installed. Although money is available from the Department of Agriculture, Food Production Division, for hot lunches for the children, the facilities to make these have not been available. The school is also going to be remodeled. The Welfare Board of Takoma Park contributes \$10

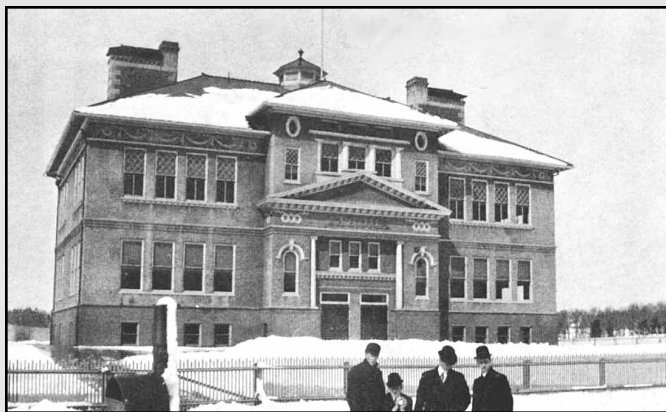
a month toward the bill of the 15 children who cannot pay for their milk.

The principal feels that local white people are broad-minded and willing to cooperate and aid the colored school in all its undertakings. At a recent graduation, she said, about half the audience was white and the mayor was present. She said that the school never has difficulty in obtaining things they request from the mayor's council. In addition to the regular courses, one afternoon a week the school teaches sewing, woodwork, and cooking to the children. A visiting nurse comes once a week. The principal has only recently organized a parent-teacher group, which raised \$31 during a recent drive, assessing each member \$.50. This shows a substantial support of the drive by parents.

The principal said that many of the Negro families were quite well off as concerns their standard of living and incomes, but that some were poor managers and had more children than they could adequately support. For instance, she gave an example of

a family where the husband made \$50 a week, but the wife frittered away the money and ended up with not enough to cover regular expenses. Another family, where the head of the house makes an adequate income, has a very low standard of living, nevertheless, since there are 12 children. The school principal says that a problem exists in the difference between the children who have just recently come from the deep south and the old-time residents. Most children are clean and neat, but the southern children bring with them a different standard of living, don't have as much respect for teachers, and often do not have good manners. Of the total 75 pupils, there is only one who is a problem, and that is because his mother will not discipline him at home, although the father attempts to cooperate with the school's requests. All the other families are responsive to the teachers' efforts to train the children.

Maryland school law states that all children must go to school until they are 14 or reach the seventh grade, and the majority of colored children go only as long as the law demands. The principal said that in her 11 years of teaching in this community, 11 children had finished high school but none had gone any higher. To check needless disappointment and disillusionment when they grow older, many colored young people learn from their elders that there is no use continuing their education as they can't use it in a "white man's society" anyway. In addition, there is no convenient colored high school and transportation to the nearest one is unsatisfactory. Colored and

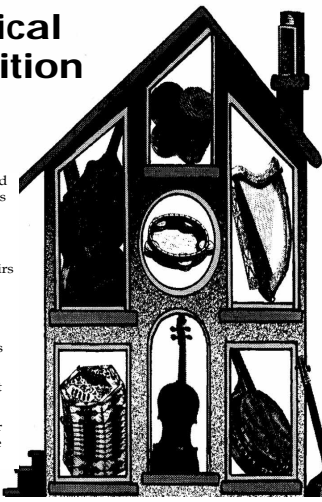


Takoma Elementary School, Piney Branch Road and Dahlia Street, NW. It was built in 1901 and educated many students from both Takoma, DC and Takoma Park, MD. It was demolished in the mid-1970s.

## Historic Takoma RESOURCE GUIDE

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white children whose parents are federal employees can attend D.C. schools, but the nearest one is a considerable distance away. The nearest Maryland high school for the colored is in Rockville. Bus service, however, is so poor that students either get discouraged and lose interest because they miss so much time or they get far behind other students who live nearer the school and have to repeat a semester.

The Rockville bus has to pick up students from so many different localities that it is often late, particularly in the winter. At times it does not show up at all. Students joke that most high school pupils spend half their time at the Richey (elementary) school rather than in Rockville. The bus is supposed to leave at 7:30AM from Takoma but often doesn't arrive until 9:00. Although the school in Rockville ends at 2:30, the bus seldom arrives back in Takoma by 4:00. Another reason why so few Negro children go to high school might be that they are needed to help around the house or to sup-

plement the family income.

The only adult instruction offered at night by the public schools is at the Takoma Park Junior High School, which is offers a course in creative and fine arts. Other courses have been offered in the past and will be given in the future if there is a demand for them.

As for private schooling, just outside of Takoma Park is the Cynthia Warner Private School

for children from nursery age through the third grade. There are also several private cooperative nurseries where the mothers volunteer their time. The Takoma Park War Nursery, operated by the Park and Planning Commission of Maryland and the County Board of Education, took care of a considerable number of children during the war. Since then, much of the problem has solved itself by the return of

husbands from the war and the mother to the home. The few children who still need day care are kept in the Jessup-Blair Community House in Silver Spring where a nursery is maintained for children from 2.5 to 5.5 years of age. The woman in charge of this nursery said that it is rather inconvenient for Takoma Park families, and that some children whose parents work have been placed in private nurseries or in the charge of a local woman. Takoma Park seems to have solved this problem, and child care is less of an issue than it seems to in some other localities.

The Adventists maintain two eight-grade schools, Takoma Academy, their high school, and an accredited college, Washington Missionary College, which has 557 students. It has a College Print Shop and Mill where woodwork is taught and is starting construction on a new girl's dorm. The Adventists also maintain a Home Study Institute, a correspondence school.

Coming next: Civic and Religious Life



The Seventh-day Adventist Elementary School at 8 Columbia Avenue, ca. 1935. The school was built in 1905-06. The building was later purchased by the City of Takoma Park, remodeled, and used as a municipal building and police station.

►Continued from page 3

Frederick E. Dudley & Carolyn B. Tilley  
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## REMEMBERING HAPPY TIMES IN TAKOMA PARK

Letter to the Editor

Dear Historic Takoma:

*I would like to renew my father's membership at the B.F. Gilbert level. My father, H. Richard Greenfield, was born and grew up in Takoma Park. His father, Charles I. Greenfield bought the house at 7116 Maple Avenue in 1905. When purchased, the house had not been lived in for some years and the yard was overgrown. He paid either \$3,000 or \$5,000 for the home. At that time, it had a barn, and fruit trees in the yard. My father was born in that house. His mother was Amy Banta Greenfield. My father was the third of four sons and was born on April 4, 1909. The Greenfield family owned the house until 1953 or 1954 when my grandmother was no longer able to maintain it, as my grandfather died the previous year. I remember it as a wonderful house to visit and we spent many a happy time there with grandpa playing the player piano, large family dinners in the large dining room, helping my grandmother in her great kitchen. She was a wonderful cook, and I remember loving to walk into the pantry, which was very cold in the winter. My father's oldest brother, Homer E. Greenfield, served in France during WWI and was wounded five days before the war's end. He survived, married, and lived in Chevy Chase until his death in the late 70s. He was the first official patient of Walter Reed Hospital. My grandparents were active members of the Presbyterian Church and my parents were married there in August 1941.*

*Dad is now 90 and his thoughts are often of the wonderful times he had as a child in Takoma Park. I loved walking around Takoma Park with my grandfather. He knew so many people and would always stop to speak with his neighbors. I had wonderful parents and grandparents and I am happy Takoma Park was a part of my life. He will be pleased to know his name will be listed in the Thomas-Siegler Carriage House. I hope to someday come for a visit.*

Sincerely,

Patricia G. Brown

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

### HTI Benefit Day at Mark's Kitchen

On October 19, Mark's Kitchen  
will donate 20% of all revenue  
to HTI

**MARK YOUR  
CALENDARS!**