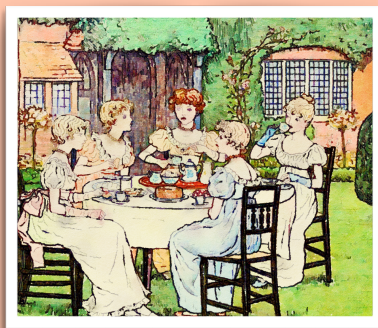


# LAUREL HILL MANSION NEWS

VIRTUAL  
SPRING TEA  
2 pm SUNDAY 05/23/21

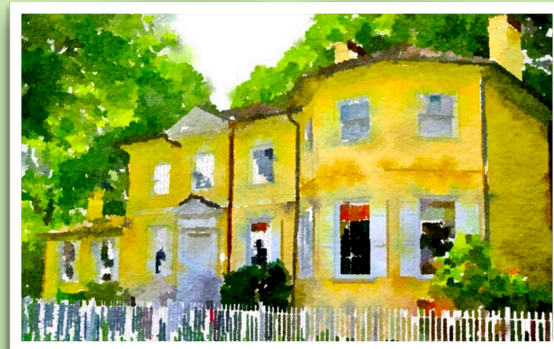
Join WGP for our annual  
Spring Tea Fundraiser  
Via Zoom  
Enjoy a Tea Party Care  
Package & an afternoon full  
of history, fun, and  
conversation



**\$15 Registration via Pay Pal:**

[https://www.laurelhillmansion.org/  
Pages/spring\\_tea.html](https://www.laurelhillmansion.org/Pages/spring_tea.html)

Information:  
[jenwarfield1@yahoo.com](mailto:jenwarfield1@yahoo.com)



## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

It has been a very long year! I am praying everyone has been staying safe. I have my date for the vaccine, and am so excited. Slowly the city is coming back to life and so is Laurel Hill Mansion. We have plans for a virtual tea. Also, some members of the Wister Quartet will perform a concert outdoors. We are all very sad not to have a live Women History Month event; however, we will have information on line. Please check out the web page [www.laurelhillmansion.org](http://www.laurelhillmansion.org) weekly.

There have been some wonderful updates to the mansion. Right before Covid hit the city we received new sun blocking shades that are remote control, thanks to the generous contribution from Tony and Carla Cooper, who have also been wonderful patrons to our concert series.

This winter a new alarm system has been installed! Although the city covers the cost of electric and heating, our organization pays for items such as alarms, internet, and phone bill. Whether or not we have events to cover the cost, we have to pay these bills. Any contribution would be greatly appreciated.

Thank you,

*Karen F. Phinney*

President, Women for Greater Philadelphia

### LAWN & GARDEN



The Garden Committee has decorated with Spring decor; the flowers, plants and trees are in bloom; and the bees are buzzing at Laurel Hill Mansion. Walk or drive by to enjoy the lovely sights.



[WWW.LAURELHILLMANSION.ORG](http://WWW.LAURELHILLMANSION.ORG)

[www.womenforgreaterphiladelphia.org](http://www.womenforgreaterphiladelphia.org)

FB: <https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100009621556713>

Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/laurelhillmansionph/>



### WOMEN FOR GREATER PHILADELPHIA

Annual Meeting 05/15/2021

**Women for Greater Philadelphia invite all members in good standing to the virtual Annual Meeting: **Saturday, May 15, 2021 at 10:00 am****  
**The Meeting Agenda will include the bi-annual election of executive officers. View the 2021 slate for officers & board members:**

[http://www.womenforgreaterphiladelphia.org/pages/2021 slate.html](http://www.womenforgreaterphiladelphia.org/pages/2021%20slate.html)



**The next meeting of the Board of Directors is **Saturday April 17, 2021, 10:00am** via Zoom**

**Meeting Information:**

[info@womenforgreaterphiladelphia.org](mailto:info@womenforgreaterphiladelphia.org)

**If your 2021 WGP membership dues are outstanding, please remit them to:**

<https://womenforgreaterphiladelphia.org/pages/membership.html>

### HOUSE NEWS

Fairmount Park announced plans to reopen Laurel Hill Mansion and other historic houses on a limited basis beginning July 2021



The house security system has been upgraded to include both a carbon monoxide and a glass shattering detector to protect Laurel Hill Mansion.

**BARBARA JEAN MARESCA-  
SPEAKER AT CMC-BPW**



Women for Greater Philadelphia member Barbara Jean Maresca was the featured speaker at the 2/18/2021 meeting of Central Montgomery County Business and Professional Women (CMC BPW)

Ms. Maresca spoke about house founder Rebecca Rawle and her family as she unfolded the historic background and enduring importance of Laurel Hill Mansion

**OUTDOOR CONCERT NEWS**

The world renowned FLORIAN TRIO will be performing selected chamber music on the lawn of Laurel Hill Mansion Saturday, September 11, 2021 (rain date September 12, 2021)

CDC and Philadelphia Covid-19 safety protocols will be followed as patrons enjoy the live music of Lloyd Smith, Nancy Bean, and Allen Krantz  
Tickets will go on sale this summer. Information:

**[concerts@laurelhillmansion.org](mailto:concerts@laurelhillmansion.org)**



**WOMEN’S HISTORY CELEBRATION**

The Women’s Suffrage Centennial celebration, “Valiant Women of the Vote, Refusing to be Silenced,” is extended through 2021. This year WGP was unable to host a live program; therefore, Media Chair, Smokie Kittner, has skillfully curated suffrage centennial resources online for members to peruse.

Information is divided into two categories: 1. Resources, Programs, Exhibits, and Events.  
2. Book and Reading Material Lists. Visit: [www.womenforgreaterphiladelphia.org/pages/womens\\_history\\_month.html](http://www.womenforgreaterphiladelphia.org/pages/womens_history_month.html)

*WGP member Pat Jordan, professional actress, director, and playwright, is pictured as Carrie Chapman Catt, suffragist and founder of the League of Women Voters*



## REBECCA WARNER RAWLE HAS HER CHILDREN INOCULATED FOR SMALL POX IN 1759

The current challenge of our own lives, i.e., living with the Covid-19 pandemic and securing scarce vaccinations, parallels the life of 18th century Laurel Hill Mansion heroine, Rebecca Warner Rawle Shoemaker. In colonial America contagious disease was a dangerous condition, and epidemics of smallpox, tuberculosis, typhus, cholera, malaria, scarlet fever and others were commonplace. Small pox was a deadly disease spread by respiratory droplets, and every decade saw outbreaks in most major cities and in most instances, it claimed hundreds of lives. Small pox was brought to the American colonies by European merchant ships and with it, a 40% mortality rate. The vaccine for this scourge was not invented until 1796, and until that time, the only precautions citizens could take were isolation and variolation, where pus from an infected patient was rubbed under the skin of the healthy recipient. The goal of variolation was to produce a mild, protective small pox reaction; however, it sometimes resulted in a severe infection and in 2% of the cases, death. Variolation was widely accepted in Boston, Massachusetts but the average Colonial citizen was very skeptical of the small pox inoculation.

Katherine Warner Howell, Rebecca's older sister who lived in Philadelphia, never inoculated her children and her daughter died from small pox in 1753. A daughter of family friend Hannah Callender Sansom also was not inoculated and passed away from the pox. Rebecca Rawle, a savvy woman, recognized the importance of inoculation and was determined to be pro active and protect her children from small pox, but this was difficult. In the mid 1700's, variolation was not readily available in Philadelphia; however, Rebecca and Francis Rawle convinced Dr. John Redman to call at their home and inoculate their young children. The inoculation of little William Rawle and his sisters took place November 1759 and was such a novel event that family friend, Elizabeth Sandwith visited the Rawles to witness the occasion. Rebecca's efforts to protect her family proved wise, none of her children expired from small pox.



*By Nancy S. Cohen with research assistance from Anita McKelvey,  
site historian & tour guide at Lemon and Laurel Hill*

*Mansions: [authenticphiladelphia@gmail.com](mailto:authenticphiladelphia@gmail.com)*





## A SALUTE TO MRS. SYLVIA MYERS

It is very appropriate that her favorite color is green and her favorite bloom is the dahlia, since green represents the calming influence of nature and the dahlia is symbolic for beauty, creativity, grace, dignity, and longevity: all so Sylvia! Mrs. Myers joined the Women for Greater Philadelphia in 1976, after she met the group while her Outdoor Gardeners Club of Chestnut Hill was decorating Laurel Hill Mansion for the Christmas tours.

Once Sylvia stepped into LHM she fell in love with the little house and became increasingly involved with Women for Greater Philadelphia. Sylvia became a Director of the Board and Chair of the Garden Committee in the 1970's. Today, Sylvia still serves on the Board and many committees. She volunteers to decorate the house and hostess for the annual Christmas holiday and is a perpetual favorite of the tourists who always enjoy chatting with Sylvia.

The horticultural training and experience Sylvia received made her the perfect candidate for Chair of the Garden Committee at LHM. Sylvia attended numerous courses in flower arranging, flower show procedure and judging at Penn State University and earned a Master Certificate in Flower Arranging from the Garden Club Federation of Pennsylvania. Mrs. Myers has taught and conducted many seminars and workshops in both horticulture and flower arranging and is a Philadelphia Flower Show Judge. Sylvia is a member of numerous horticultural societies, she was the President of the Roxborough Garden Club, a member of the Philadelphia Dahlia Society, and is a lifetime member of the National Accredited Flower Show Judges. She is the recipient of the Roxborough Arbor Day Award and of Six National Arboreal Awards.

Horticulture is not Sylvia's only interest. As a wife to her late husband Nicholas and a mother of three, Sylvia has always put family first. Sylvia was continually active at her children's schools—as a volunteer and an officer in the PTA and as a librarian. She also used her training in Library Science to serve as a Librarian at the Roxborough Library. Mrs. Myers is active at St Lucy's Catholic Church where she is a Eucharistic Minister.

Sylvia's love of the past extended to researching Arcadia's History of Roxborough and she is currently the archivist of the Roxborough Historical Society. Sylvia has held offices in the Roxborough–Manayunk– Wissahickon Historical Society and the Lower Merion Historical Society. She was also a participant in the Archeological Dig at the Frederick Muhlenberg House in 2015.

A strong sense of civic duty and service is instilled in Mrs. Myers. She volunteers to help Veterans and was a hostess at the 19th Depot WWII Reunion at Valley Forge National Park. She also served as an official hostess at the 1976 Bicentennial. Sylvia served as Local Judge of Elections in 2020 and has received numerous Community service awards over the years including The Roxborough Woman of Distinction Award in 2017 and the Soroptomist International Association Woman of the Year in 1998.

Sylvia and her husband, Nicholas, who served in World War II, shared a love of travel and journeyed extensively within the United States. Sylvia's sister accompanied her to many countries including Mexico, Canada, Nova Scotia, Ireland, France, Spain, Portugal, Yugoslavia, Malta, Morocco, Bermuda, Bahamas, Israel, China, Greece, Sicily, and Sylvia's favorite, Italy, home of her ancestors. The Women for Greater Philadelphia have been very fortunate that the amazing Mrs. Sylvia Myers has devoted more than forty years of leadership and service to Laurel Hill Mansion. We express to Sylvia, "thank you, dear heart."



**Women for Greater Philadelphia, Inc. is a non-profit 501(c)(3) corporation of volunteers. The goals are to promote and enhance the historical, philosophical, educational and cultural value of Greater Philadelphia and to maintain and preserve historic Laurel Hill Mansion.**