

LAUREL HILL MANSION NEWS

SPRING TEA
2 pm SATURDAY
14 MAY 2022

JOIN WFGP FOR OUR ANNUAL
SPRING TEA FUNDRAISER
AT LAUREL HILL MANSION

ENJOY TEA, SAVORIES, SWEETS, GOOD
COMPANY & CONVERSATION
BOXED LUNCHES BY
JACK FRANCIS CATERERS

\$25 DONATION VIA PAY PAL:
[HTTPS://](https://www.laurelhillmansion.org/pages/spring-tea.html)

[WWW.LAURELHILLMANSION.ORG/PAGES/
SPRING TEA.HTML](https://www.laurelhillmansion.org/pages/spring-tea.html)

OR SEND CHECK TO: KAREN PHINNEY
2054 FARLEY ST, PHILA., PA 19124

INFORMATION: 215-554-2003 OR
EVENTS@LAURELHILLMANSION.ORG
PLEASE REGISTER BY MAY 1ST, 2022



Special Garden Dedication

Free Parking



MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

As I saw the bravery and strength of conviction of women of all ages in many parts of the world, I think back to the women who began our organization. Recently I was looking through some of the early news clippings from the forming of WFGP. These women faced many obstacles. In an article from the Philadelphia Daily News dated Sat. 08/16/1972 "Bicentennial Women Prod Pros for Share of Action," the Women for the Bicentennial (precursor to Women for Greater Philadelphia) demanded full participation in the planning of events. As one of the founders of our group, Marian Carson, noted, "They're counting on the women, as men usually do, to provide the hospitality, help with the tours, and provide all the niceties."

The members of that original group demanded input into the planning of the Bicentennial celebrations. Some of those women participated in our organization as volunteers for close to 50 years. Their strength and talents are quite a legacy to live up to. The world is very different than it was when we began. We still continue to have many challenges. As our membership ages, we need to think about welcoming new members into our fold and carrying on the mission begun by our founding members. With the strength and ingenuity of our members, I have no doubt that can be accomplished.

Barbara Frankel, President WFGP/LHM

HOUSE NEWS



Laurel Hill Mansion is reopening Thursdays to Sundays, 10 am-4 pm beginning April 21.

Guided tours will be given by Anita McKelvey, Park Historian and House Guide. Admission is \$8 per adult; free for children.

Reservations are encouraged, please call **215-235-1776** or email visit@laurelhillmansion.org

Laurel Hill Mansion.
3487 Edgley Drive
Philadelphia, PA. 19121

Free Parking

www.laurelhillmansion.org

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



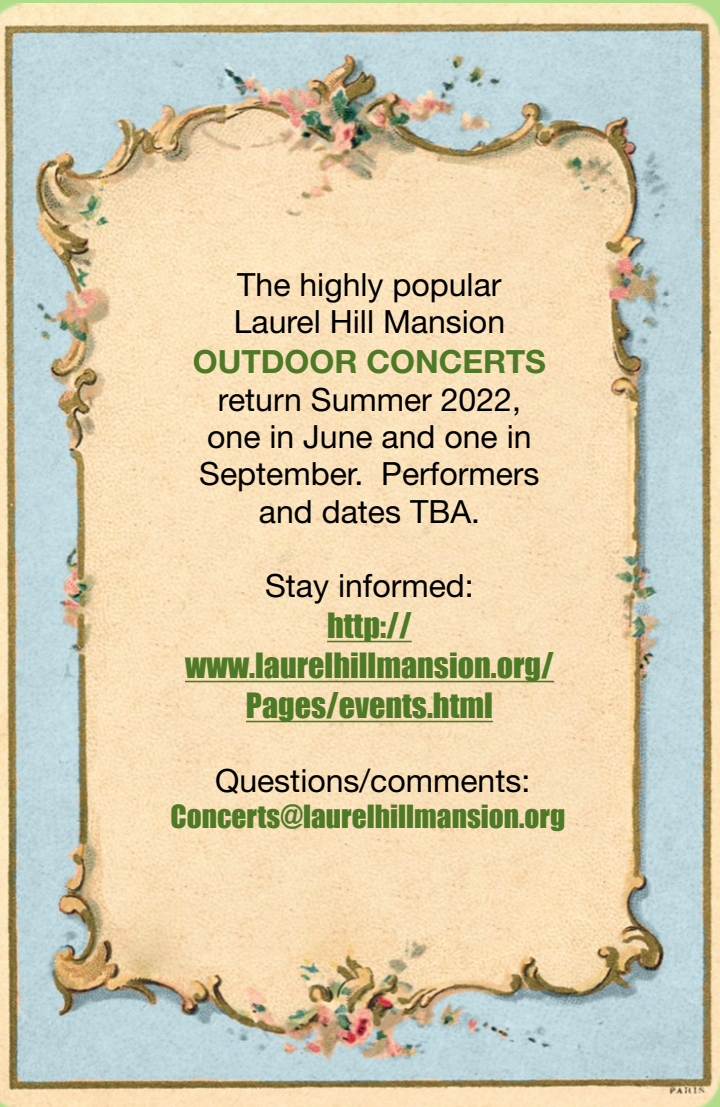
*LHM is a **BLUE STAR MUSEUM** offering free admission to active military members and their families from Memorial Day - Labor Day.*

WOMEN for GREATER PHILADELPHIA ANNUAL MEETING 05/07/2022

The Annual Meeting for all current members will be Saturday, 11 am, May 07, 2022 at LHM
All WFGP members are encouraged to attend

Thank you for supporting LHM and paying your 2022 WFGP dues, still only \$30 per year:

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



The highly popular Laurel Hill Mansion **OUTDOOR CONCERTS** return Summer 2022, one in June and one in September. Performers and dates TBA.

Stay informed:

<http://www.laurelhillmansion.org/Pages/events.html>

Questions/comments: Concerts@laurelhillmansion.org

Rebecca, The SHE-MERCHANT By Christine Mifsud



Rebecca Rawle, a widow, is attributed with building Laurel Hill Mansion. She married her second husband, Samuel Shoemaker in 1767. It is near this time that the original portion of the house was constructed on 31 acres on a hill overlooking the Schuylkill River. Sam was declared guilty of "diverse treasonable acts" during the revolution. The estate was seized and sold by the Pennsylvania Legislature in 1778. While Sam waited in England for tempers to cool in Philadelphia, Rebecca (re)purchased Laurel Hill in 1784.

She writes to her husband in England about the purchase stating, "... and thee enjoy thy favorite amusement, gardening. I look forward to such a happy period....". It is this same year that Rebecca engaged in "truck gardening" while her husband was away. She grew strawberries and cabbage for sale in the Philadelphia market.

Looking at later documentation into the years 1837-1848, the grounds were used as an "investment farm," engaging tenant farmers. So we can safely say that there was a serious horticultural enterprise carried on at Laurel Hill. Rebecca had also written about her apple, cherry and peach trees which grew on the property.

In the 18th and early 19th centuries, cabbage and strawberries were important truck-gardening crops. Aside from eating cabbage raw as a salad, a common dinner menu generally included meat served with cooked turnips or cabbage. Cabbage did not spoil quickly so it was considered a "good keeper." Many kitchens utilized a cabbage plane which was a slicing mechanism or sauerkraut machine. Sauerkraut could store for winter consumption.



Growing cabbage offered challenges however. There are a vast array of bugs that destroy cabbage plants including aphids, worms, caterpillars, moths and slugs. I would bet the garden at Laurel Hill was armed with chickens to eat the offending insects.



What about the fruit? Whether dining at a wealthy table or a farm kitchen, milk with seasonal fruit was expected to be served, especially spring strawberries and summer peaches. Of course jams and preserves were common, as well as baked goods. Here are some additional fruity facts: Women were the traditional brewers and distillers of colonial wines, brandies and cordials. Cherries and strawberries produced equally good wines! Apples created cider both alcoholic and nonalcoholic. These products could also be "trucked" to weekly market fairs in Philadelphia.

Glass bottles were the most expensive component. In 1773, Henry W. Stiegel opened the first American flint-glass manufactory in Pennsylvania, which rivaled imported glass at lower prices. This allowed for selling beverages in bottles in the market place. Perhaps Rebecca also sold finished products to eager purchasers in the city!

Aside from the documented successes from her garden, all gardeners know that there is a tremendous amount of experimentation with gardening. It is note worthy that few writers testify to the full array of plantings of our colonists - like the spoils of war, only the winners receive acclaim. I believe I am safe to assume that plants like wild raspberries, roses, and even sumac, used as a dye would have been loaded onto Rebecca's wagon toward making each city bound journey a financial success, just as sea merchants loaded their ships with an array of profitable products.

Rebecca Rawle Shoemaker was a She-Merchant, a success in the farming and transport business. Buying back her home and adjoining acreage was no small feat. There is an estimate that one out of every ten colonial merchants was female. They played an important role in the early national economy.

If you would like to share in the seasonal fun of working in Rebecca's garden, please contact us.

The Gardening Committee welcomes you. Kindly Contact: garden@laurelhillmansion.org

Women for Greater Philadelphia spotlights IM JA CHOI, M.S.



In the spirit of the 2022 Women's History theme, "*Women Providing Healing, Promoting Hope*," Laurel Hill Mansion honors Im Ja Choi, life member of WFGP. Im Ja is the founder and CEO Emeritus of PASSi-Penn Asian Senior Services, Inc., which provides hope and healing to many Asian Americans. The Mission Statement of PASSi is to promote the wellbeing of Asian American seniors and other adults who are disadvantaged by their language and cultural barriers. The vision of PASSi was to become the premier provider of supportive services for Asian American seniors and other adults for their personal healthcare, vocational training and other beneficial programs.

The concept of PASSi evolved in 2002 when Im Ja Choi recognized the need for home health care services and caregivers that Koreans and other Asians could relate to when her own 85 year old mother became ill with stomach cancer. While her mother was a patient in a traditional nursing home, she felt culturally isolated as she was unable to communicate effectively with the staff and was unable to tolerate the American food. Thus, Im Ja, who had received degrees from the Korean University and the University of Pennsylvania, resigned from an officers position at a bank and became a full time caregiver to her aging mother in Im Ja's own home.

To acquire funding for her nonprofit home health care venture, Im Ja nurtured contacts and wrote grants. She became allied with then WFGP President Alma R. Jacobs, who was also an advocate for the welfare of senior citizens and then served as the Chair of Montgomery County's Women's Leadership Council.

After its incorporation in 2004, PASSi expanded from a comprehensive home health care agency to include the Penn Asian Jubilee Center, a facility for adult day care; the Evergreen Community Center for active Asian retirees; the Kitchen Xpress, for provision of meal delivery services to home bound Asian American seniors; Pace Center to help seniors access public benefits; and the Penn Asian Vocational Institute Job Training Center.

Since PASSi's inception, Im Ja Choi and PASSi have been honored by many organizations including: Encore.org: "*Purpose Prize Fellow*," 2017; The Global Aging Network: "*The Excellence in Aging Service Award*," 2019; The PA Department of Labor and Industry: "*Governor's Award for Safety Excellence*," 2020; American Association of Retired People: "*Purpose Prize Award and Fellow*," 2020; and Women for Greater Philadelphia: "*Pioneering Woman of a Non Profit Organization*," 2015.

Im Ja Choi has provided hope and healing to many Asian Americans through her numerous PASSi programs. "I consider this job a privilege," says Choi, "when you have a dream, you somehow make it come true. Now I feel like I am doing the things that I want to do."

Currently, PASSi is the largest direct care provider in Pennsylvania for Asian LEP seniors, serving 750 clients with 650+ employees and a \$22.8M annual budget. If you or someone you know could benefit from PASSi services please contact them: PASSi, 6926 Old York Rd., Philadelphia, PA 19126. <https://passi.us> or 215-572-1234

**WFGP Women’s History Month Event:
Celebrating “WOMEN PROVIDING HEALING,
PROMOTING HOPE” with
Dr. ELLA McELWEE**



Dr. Ella McElwee

Women for Greater Philadelphia celebrated Women’s History Month in conjunction with the Pennsylvania Business and Professional Women of District 11.

Members and friends of both organizations viewed the virtual presentation of Dr. Ella McElwee, President

and CEO of Health by Choice, on March 27, 2022. Dr. McElwee addressed “*Wellness Is Beyond Healthy With One Degree Of Change.*” She emphasized the idea that with just a small positive change of habit you can see benefits to your overall health and wellness. Dr. McElwee stated “Think of a ship that makes a one degree in change and brings the ship to a totally different place” and provided her audience with numerous suggestions to promote their improved health.

Dr. Ella McElwee began her basic education in health through nursing. Afterward, she studied in Europe, advancing into fields of nutrition. She has a degree in Naturopathy and Homeopathy along with a PhD in Natural Sciences. Ella has obtained numerous certifications in a wide variety of topics.

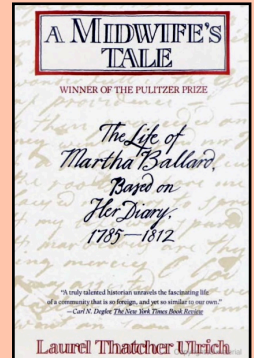


Special thanks to Nancy Werner, WFGP Board Member and BPW/PA Past State President and Member of Quakertown and Central Montgomery County BPWs of District 11, who engaged Dr. McElwee and to Jennifer Warfield, WFGP Treasurer who technically coordinated this program.

Book Corner: A MIDWIFE’S TALE

By Laurel Thatcher Ulrich

Drawing on the diaries of one woman in 18th century Maine, this intimate history illuminates the medical practices, household economies, religious rivalries, and sexual mores of the New England frontier.



Between 1785 and 1812 a midwife and healer named Martha Ballard kept a diary that recorded her arduous work (in 27 years she attended 816 births) as well as her domestic life in Hallowell, Maine. On the basis of that diary, Laurel Thatcher Ulrich gives us an intimate and densely imagined portrait, not only of the industrious and reticent Martha Ballard but of her society. At once lively and impeccably scholarly, **A MIDWIFE’S TALE** is a triumph of history.

This book won the 1991 Pulitzer Prize for History. Without the diary of this courageous but ordinary woman, we would now know little about the obstetrical practices of midwives of the period.

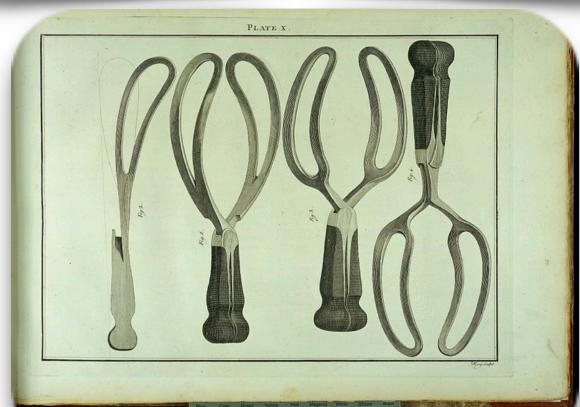


Fig. 3&4 Dr. Lowder's forceps. Engraving, 1798. London, Wellcome Library.

NURSES DURING THE REVOLUTIONARY WAR: “Women Providing Healing, Promoting Hope”

The contribution of female nurses to the American Military began during the Revolutionary War when women cared for the fallen on the battlefield and in the camps. The presence of military nurses grew out of the existence of “camp followers.” The camp followers were soldiers’ wives and daughters who were unable to support themselves at home after their men went to war so these women followed the army and received food and protection in exchange for cooking, bearing water, washing clothes and sewing for the troops.

During the War, there was also a vital need for medical care of those wounded on the battlefield and beyond. Due to demand, even Martha Washington made the rounds of the sick tents, doing what she could to keep the men alive with rudimentary medicinal foods and broths, and spending her time organizing clothing drives among village women.



In the summer of 1775, Major Horatio Gates of the Continental Army reported to Commander in Chief George Washington that “sick and wounded suffered much for want of good nurses on the battlefield and in the hospitals;” thus, it became practical and convenient for many of the women camp followers to transition to the role of unskilled nurses.

General Washington asked Congress for help and Congress approved nurses for the battlefield and one nurse for every ten patients in the Continental Hospitals at the salary of 24 cents per day plus one full daily food ration. Additionally, one matron supervised every ten nurses and received 50 cents per day plus a daily food ration.

In the hospitals, surgeons performed skilled medical duties and female nurses carried out mostly custodial work such as feeding and bathing patients, emptying chamber pots, cleaning hospital wards, and cooking occasionally.

The nurses were important as they kept the sick and wounded soldiers clean, well fed, and comfortable which was a vital factor in their recovery. Nurses made food more palatable for their patients. A popular part of the patient’s diet provided by nurses was beef tea (from beef juices) and warm ‘pap’ (milk with strained oatmeal mixed with egg yolks, butter, and orange flavor). Nurses were also inventive during the Revolutionary War, developing hot water bottles, food warmers, feeding cups, and wheelchairs.

During the War for Independence nurses dealt with many obstacles and were examples of dedication to individual soldiers and patriotic sacrifice. Nurses continued to serve in every national military conflict following the Revolutionary War, but it wasn’t until 1947 during WWII that nurses in the Army and Navy Corps were finally granted permanent commissioned officer status, which allowed them to receive the full rights, privileges, and pay that came with their rank. In appreciation of this historic beginning, we salute the women of yesterday and today who are devoted to the profession of nursing.

*By Nancy S. Cohen, M.B.A., with research assistance from Anita McKelvey, historian and tour guide at Laurel Hill Mansion:
authenticphiladelphia@gmail.com*

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.