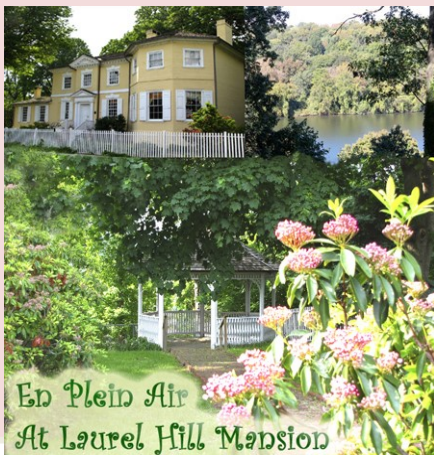


LAUREL HILL MANSION NEWS



Plein Air Painting
Workshop at
Laurel Hill Mansion
Members of Women for
Greater Philadelphia will
receive a 10% discount off the
price of a plein air workshop
to be offered this spring at
Laurel Hill Mansion and three
other historic houses. The
workshop will take place on
Friday over four weeks,
April 26 - May 17, 2024
More information on page 10.



En Plein Air
At Laurel Hill Mansion
Spring Newsletter

A Message From The President

The cold winter winds seem to be making their exit and spring begins, bringing the beauty of flowering trees and buds, yet we mourn the passing of one of our dedicated and steadfast members, Nancy Cohen. Nancy will always be remembered as a diligent volunteer and one who brought her ideas to fruition; whether it was working on our newsletter or using her creativity to decorate for events. She will always be greatly missed.

As we move into the spring, we are preparing for our Spring Tea on Sunday, May 19, 2-4 PM. The tea committee is busy planning this lovely afternoon of conversation and food. Space is limited so make your reservation ASAP.

Our summer Sunday afternoon concerts at Laurel Hill Mansion will begin on June 16 with a performance by Principally Harps. We are thrilled to welcome back harp duo Mindy Cutcher and Janet Whitman for an afternoon of music. Other concerts scheduled this summer are The Wister Quartet on July 21 and classical guitarist, Allen Krantz on August 25. For more information visit our website www.laurelhillmansion.org.

We always welcome new members to become a part of the Women for Greater Philadelphia family and hope you will take advantage of all our events and opportunities to keep history alive.

Barbara Frankl, President, WFGP



Mountain Laurel and Roses
in bloom at
Laurel Hill Mansion.

Photographs by
Karen Phinney



The Gardens
In May

Longtime Women for Greater Philadelphia member and Hospitality Committee Chair, Christine Smith was elected to the post of Vice President of the WFGP at the March 16, 2024 board meeting. Christine has agreed to assume the position for the remainder of 2023 - 2025 term. Thank You Christine

We welcome Darren Fava and Barbara Jean Maresca to the Woman for Greater Philadelphia Advisory Council.

Women for Greater Philadelphia Members Meeting
Saturday, May 4, 2024 at 11:00A.M. at Laurel Hill Mansion

RSVP

WFGP Annual Dues. \$30 per year

www.womenforgreaterphiladelphia.org/pages/membership.html

Please join us for our Spring Tea
Sunday, May 19, 2024 2:00 to 4:00
Enjoy conversation and tea, served
with sweets and savories by
Jack Francis Caterers.



Guests are
encouraged to bring their own
Teacup/Saucer and share a story or
memory about their teacup with
other guests at their table.

www.laurelhillmansion.org/Pages/spring_tea.html

Remembering Nancy Santucci Cohen



My mom Nancy was an amazing mother and person. I know every mom is important but my mom was really the best mom in the world and she made everyone feel important that was cared about. She cared so much about laurel hill mansion. She enjoyed decorating for Christmas the most and loved planning out her designs. I remember when I went into the living room once at 3am to get a drink and there she was deciding on a small manikin for that year's Christmas at Laurel Hill. She enjoy dressing up in costume at Laurel Hill Mansion, and listening to the quartet concerts. She used to love going there.

I miss her so much and so do her grandkids. Her family was everything to her especially Bailey! I wish I could just have five more minutes with her. I love her so much and she's deeply missed.

I love you mom

Julia

My mom was so amazing in every way. She was the most caring thoughtful selfless grandmother and mother. She had the most amazing smile that would light up the room. We all miss her so much everyday. Love you forever Josh

Julia, Josh,

The following are thoughts from a few members of Women for Greater Philadelphia who were asked to write something. They reflect the way all of those who knew her feel about your mother.

Remembering Nancy Santucci Cohen

Nancy Cohen was a loving, gracious lady who always had a smile & positivity to share with everyone she came in contact with.

She loved history especially all that was related to Laurel Hill Mansion.

Nancy served as Vice President on the Executive Board. She contributed so much to the Mansion including the newsletters, Christmas decorating, special events, etc.

Over & above all that Nancy did for Laurel Hill Mansion, she was a dear friend. She was a delight to be with & share a lunch with laughs & conversation or a chat on the phone.

Nancy is missed but will always be remembered with many fond memories.

Chat later, Nancy. ❤️ ☐

Tish deTuro

A gracious, loving, charitable, smart, artistic & talented writer left us. Nancy Santucci Cohen's greatest love in life was her children and grandchildren, and oh, her pet Pomeranian, Bailey, who often traveled with Nancy...to Laurel Hill Mansion, out to lunch, on walks! Nancy's daughter, Julia had a sidecar on Tadhg's baby carriage, to include their beloved Bailey.

Lesson:

I was visiting Nancy one Tuesday afternoon in Ardmore, comfortably sitting in her front yard with her father-in-law visiting from the Ireland. Of course, we chatted about beer, and how to pour it into the glass (tilted) to avoid a foamy mess, then, out of the corner of my eye, I see Julia walking around the side of the house with Tadhg in the baby carriage (& Bailey. Belle was not born yet). Soon, Joshua, Nancy's son arrives, with his young son Rafael, and then Conor, Julia's husband arrives home for a brief visit from work. Me? I'm thinking how the heck is Nancy to rest with all the hullabaloo around her?

Lesson. Nancy could not have been happier than to have her family surrounding her! So much love poured from each of them to her, every day. She was blessed with spirited, kind, loving, talented children and their spouses.

Nancy's Children:

Did you know that both Josh and Julia competed worldwide on the tennis circuit? Josh started at 2 1/2 years old, and Julia, once 97th in the world, were both world-renowned tennis players. Nancy too was quite an avid tennis player.

Daughter, Julia:

It's COVID, we are all a bit weary of this pandemic and scared. Julia scheduled appointments for her family and continued further to secure appointments for Gary and me!

Now, it's December 2020, and Nancy sends an e-mail asking if I am considering getting Gary a dog for Christmas. Responded, NO! Her next message shares that Julia is looking for a dog for us, and Julia wants to know what kind of dog Gary likes. Not to be rude, I shared that he always wanted a boxer, and that I liked a brown, white and black dog. Next thing I know, Julia is looking for a dog for Gary for Christmas! To beat her to the punch, I went to a local shelter and found FELIX. We had not had a dog for 16 years, and NEVER even discussed getting another dog. FELIX will always be Nancy & Julia's dog too.

Veterans:

Nancy's volunteerism extended beyond Laurel Hill Mansion. Honoring the patriotism of military veterans, and their caregivers, hoping to nurture unity, she attended many functions for the Fairmount Park Veterans. Honoring Nancy, this 2024 year I will walk in her place, helping the more than three million volunteers place wreaths on National Wreaths Across America Day - Saturday, December 14, 2024. Won't you join your local VFW in her honor?

Barbara Jean Maresca

Remembering Nancy Santucci Cohen



Nancy loved and enjoyed being a member of Women for Greater Philadelphia.

She served on the Bylaws Committee, was Recording Secretary and later became Vice President. Nancy worked on several projects for WFGP. She provided us with a newsletter on updated events and member information.

Nancy always made herself available to volunteer for WFGP on several occasions. Her generosity during the concert season and the Christmas holidays were greatly appreciated. She made beautiful candles for the gift shop that always sold out.

Nancy was also very inspirational. She shared great ideas with members and was very respectful towards her fellow members of WFGP.

She always praised her family and loved spending time with her dog Bailey.

The confidence and strength, a woman which reflects herself externally.

Nancy Cohen, a great person and a Phenomenal Woman.

We will miss your laughter and that beautiful smile.

Jeannette M. Gonsalves.

Remembering Nancy Santucci Cohen

10-05-1952 – 01-25-2024



Women for Greater Philadelphia Vice President
 Laurel Hill Mansion / WFGP Newsletter Editor
 Member - WFGP America250 Committee
 Co-Chair WFGP Media Committee
 Member - Holiday Committee
 Member - History Committee

These are all of the Women for Greater Philadelphia titles Nancy wore and wore well but they won't tell you about her dedication to what she committed herself to or about the impact she had on those around her. It was through Women for Greater Philadelphia that I met Nancy while volunteering to help decorate Laurel Hill Mansion for the Holiday tours. She was friendly, gracious and fun to work with and we discovered a mutual love of design.

We became co-chairs of the WFGP Media Committee. Nancy created posts for Instagram and Facebook, invitations for events and became editor of WFGP's quarterly newsletter. www.womenforgreaterphiladelphia.org/pages/newsletter.html If she had done just one of those things it would have been a lot but she did all of it cheerfully even when she didn't feel well. This would have been remarkable but she was working hard on other committees too. When knowing of my love of history she asked me to join the history committee I at first said no, that I couldn't be on another committee, Then I thought of all that Nancy did and when she asked a second time I said yes. She was an example of how I would like to be, giving joyfully.

It was during the 2022 holiday tours, for which Nancy conceived the theme of and created the decorations for the retiring room at Laurel Hill Mansion that talk of the upcoming Semiquincentennial came up. Two of us that were there that day were later purposed as co-chairs with the formation of the committee at the May 2023 members meeting. It was approved. It was Nancy who initiated the first meeting of the 250 committee and involved the history committee. It was over the course of the 2023 250 committee meetings when I truly saw Nancy's courage and strength when she would take minutes and participate at meetings in spite of declining health. At the same time she was editing the newsletter and creating invitations / flyers for all of the Women for Greater Philadelphia events at Laurel Hill Mansion. This is what she meant to me but more than that she was the mother of Julia and Josh, Grandmother of Rafael, Tadhg and Bellamy and dog everything to Bailey.

Smokie Kittner Co-Chair Media Committee

I Remember Nancy C.

My name is Nancy Werner or Nancy W. as I referred to myself whenever Nancy C. and I corresponded. I must be honest. I never met Nancy C. in person as I am a newer member to the Women for Greater Philadelphia. I saw her on zoom meetings and I even looked at former videos on our LHM website and found her. She always had a beautiful smile. But I would like to share a tribute to her.

When my family took on baking the gingerbread men and women for the Holiday tours, it was Nancy C. who encouraged me to write. Tell us about the recipe, might you share a story and maybe add a photo. Well, I took the nudge and I wrote.

Then I received another nudge as to share what did I see and hear as I helped in the LHM Holiday store. Well, I did that too. I received so many thoughtful emails stating that the members loved learning about my family and about the people who came to visit. I guess, Nancy C. saw a budding writer.

Well, my story doesn't end there for she encouraged me to write about the flowers beds that Christine Mifsud and I attend. Then I wrote about gardening. With each article I shared with Nancy C., there was always a wonderful review from her. She always made my day when she returned with a "thank you" and some thoughts. I guess as an editor of our LHM newsletter, it is challenging to put out a quarterly print and have something to be read by our members.

But there is one item that I will always cherish. It was a small gift that she made for me. It arrived for the Holiday of 2022. "Thank you so much for all of your contributions to the LHM Newsletter.-I made you a holiday "junk journal." Use any free space to record thoughts, scriptures, menus, gift lists, or anything. Have a wonderful holiday." Fondly, Nancy

Let me share her fabulous little book that I am slowly filling up. I made sure to place her name inside and wrote her a thank you. Her friendship meant the world to me. But it is this kindness and mentoring that one never forgets when you join any organization but none more empowering as joining the Women for Greater Philadelphia. Nancy C. made all the difference to me. I think she would be delighted that her gentle "nudges" were welcomed by me.

Nancy Werner, Board Member of the WGP



STAY A WHILE LONGER AND VISIT OUR GROUNDS

“Stay a while longer and visit our grounds,” is a dream that I hope to complete in the next few months. Our guests, who come to visit the Laurel Hill Mansion, always leave with a renewed sense of our home’s Philadelphia history. But while working the gardens, I learned from my co-worker, Christine Mifsud, that we have many plants, trees, and even the beehives that could be shared by walking the property. By creating a walking description of our property, we would be providing a more encompassing vision of our work. We do have a positive by having two benches and a gazebo to stop and rest a spell.



Now this would be a project that I would enjoy doing this spring and into early June. I took lots of photos of the plants in bloom during last summer. My one area that I still need to explore are our trees. I may know the identification of a few of them but I am a leaf identifier when it comes to trees. My husband, Fred, a former surveyor of over 50 years, knows his trees by bark. I will convince him to join me as we do our tree identification.

This flyer would not be elaborate but would provide our guests an opportunity to walk our grounds, take in the beauty of our property, and maybe learn a few plants and trees. “Stay a while longer” would be another feature to extend to our guests and hope that they would.

Nancy Werner, Member of the Garden Committee and WGP Board member

Members are invited to join one or more committees to explore new interests or spend time with a group of people sharing a common interest. More information about WFGP committees can be found at www.womenforgreaterphiladelphia.org/pages/committees.html

Setting the Stage for the Semiquincentennial

Across the Centuries From 1776 to 1824 - and - 1976 to 2026

William Rawle, Women for Greater Philadelphia, and a Time Capsule

Once again, Women for Greater Philadelphia (WFGP) and historical figure William Rawle - albeit of different centuries- will be crossing paths. How is this possible? It is through the shared desire to preserve the history of this great country for future generations so they can learn from, and appreciate, the founding of the United States of America.

The present-day common denominator for this "crossing of paths" between the famous William Rawle (1759-1836) and WFGP is the planned upcoming 2026 opening of the 1976 Time Capsule created fifty years ago by Women for The Bicentennial (the original name of the Women for Greater Philadelphia) as part of their Bicentennial celebrations and a step toward their plans for the Tricentennial.

Now you might ask, exactly wherein lies a link between 19th century William Rawle and 21st century WFGP? To begin with, William Rawle was the son of Rebecca Rawle, who - on land inherited from her late husband Francis Rawle - built what is now the historic 1767 Laurel Hill Mansion for which WFGP are the proud stewards. This colonial Mansion was renovated and opened to the public by the Women for the Bicentennial as part of their celebrations for the 200th Anniversary of America - a momentous task. The lovely Mansion is open today for visitors and events.

A second current connection with William Rawle is an outcome of his recognition of the need to collect and preserve our young nation's documents. In 1824 the Historical Society of Pennsylvania (HSP) was founded for just this purpose with Rawle being its first President. Fast forward to 1976 and fifty years ago The Society supervised the safe keeping of the Time Capsule of WFGP as part of Bicentennial celebrations. The Historical Society continues to flourish today having over 21 million items.

This year, 2024, is the 200th anniversary of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania which is marking the occasion with a variety of collaborations as well as a celebration of William Rawle. Justina C. Barrett, Chief Learning and Engagement Officer at HSP has discussed the importance of organizations donating materials for preservation. Of great importance is the access for research and educational purposes the public has to the Society's holdings in accordance with its mission. Visit their website to learn more about HSP's abundance of information and collections. www.portal.hsp.org

Further, I invite WFGP members to forward ideas regarding what they would like to see as part of our plans for the 250th celebrations to me at MLF250@wfgp.org. Our 250 Committee has begun planning, and your ideas are most welcome.

A next step for WFGP is searching for those we have styled as the Time Capsule "time travelers". While it is a mystery as to all that is in the Time Capsule, we do know it includes the names of 816 children. They were ten years old and under in 1976 and signed a certificate promising to carry forward the Spirit of '76 and include their descendants in future Time Capsules. WFGP wishes to locate as many of these now adults as possible. As part of this endeavor, the following link has been created; womenforgreaterphiladelphia.org/time_capsule.html. Herein, you will find additional information and a form to collect contact information of those original "time travelers" of the 1976 Capsule. Further information will be released regarding the gathering of names to be added in the updated 2026 Time Capsule.

More to come regarding our search. Join us in this exciting and historic endeavor.

Submitted by, MonaLisa Fiorentini, PhD, MHA, MS

WFGP Board Member

250 Committee Member

Concerts by Candlelight 2024 Season
Music in the Afternoon at Laurel Hill Mansion

Sunday, June 16, 2024 at 2:00 P.M.

Principally Harps

Sunday, July 21, 2024 at 2.00 P.M.

The Wister Quartet

Sunday, August 25, 2024 at 2:00 P.M.

Allen Krantz

As a member of Women for Greater Philadelphia you have the opportunity to purchase tickets to 2024 concert performances prior to tickets becoming available to the general public. Please visit www.womenforgreaterphiladelphia.org/pages/concerts.html

For more information or to purchase tickets.



Plein Air Painting Workshop

Keith Leitner will give a workshop that will take place on four consecutive Fridays, April 26 - May 17, 2024. focused on watercolor and pastel though experienced oil/acrylic painters are welcome.

Members of Women for Greater Philadelphia will receive a 10% discount off the cost. Email events@laurelhillmansion.org for the discount code.

More information about the workshop and a link to register can be found at www.laurelhillmansion.org/Pages/plein_air.html

The board of Women for Greater Philadelphia was pleased to welcome Di Wu to their March 16, 2024 board meeting in support of her project on the roles of women in the history of Laurel Hill Mansion. We've asked Di to tell you about herself and the project.

Di Wu, currently enrolled at the University of Pennsylvania's Stuart Weitzman School of Design, is pursuing a Master of Science in Historic Preservation. Previously, I obtained a Bachelor of Arts in Architectural Studies with a minor in Visual Studies from the University of Toronto's John H. Daniels Faculty of Architecture, Landscape, and Design. My passion for historic buildings and commitment to preserving these legacies have led me on this path. My academic journey and professional experiences have focused on architectural design and the preservation of historical buildings, particularly through my practice at the Nanjing Architectural Design and Research Institute Co., LTD (NJADI), where I participated in significant historical building restoration projects, gaining valuable on-site research and design experience. Additionally, as a research assistant, I have been involved in the "Preserving Society Hill" project, delving into the Society Hill area of Philadelphia, further deepening my interest in historical architecture and urban spaces.

Project Summary: Interpretation of Women's Roles in the History of Laurel Hill Mansion

Laurel Hill Mansion, a historic building in Fairmount Park, is renowned not only for its Georgian architectural features but also for its rich historical background and the stories related to women's roles within its history. This project explores how Laurel Hill Mansion conducts modern historical interpretation work to highlight women's key roles throughout its history.

The focus of the project is twofold: firstly, on Rebecca Rawle and her significant impact during the early history of Laurel Hill Mansion; and secondly, on Women For Greater Philadelphia, an organization dedicated to preserving and transmitting the building and its history, and how they communicate and interpret these stories to the public through various cultural activities, educational programs, and preservation initiatives.

By examining the narrative of Rebecca Rawle and how Women For Greater Philadelphia maintains and interprets the house, the project aims to reveal women's pivotal role in preserving and interpreting history. This not only showcases the contributions of women to the conservation of historic buildings and cultural heritage but also reflects the important role women play in historical interpretation and the presentation of public history.

Through an in-depth study of the historical interpretation efforts at Laurel Hill Mansion, this project seeks to provide a more comprehensive perspective on women's importance in preserving historic architecture, cultural conservation, and historical education. Through this research, we can better understand the past of Laurel Hill Mansion and recognize the indispensable role women play in preserving and transmitting our shared history.

Women for Greater Philadelphia, Inc. is a non-profit 501 (c) (3) corporation of volunteers