

The King of Prussia Gazette

Preserving Upper Merion's Past to Enliven its Future

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MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

by Dave Montalvo

First, I would like to announce a few changes in our leadership. Michael Morrison has been a cornerstone of this organization since our rebirth in 2012. No one is more versed in Upper Merion history or has labored as much to educate and preserve---in spite of recent health issues. In keeping with his determination to continue working toward those goals, he has decided to transition to our board of directors as chairman. It is with some trepidation then that I step into the role of president of the Society, for those are some mighty big shoes to fill! Yet I promise you, I will do my utmost to follow Michael's example, and to build on and expand the work of preserving our history in order to enlighten our future. Shirley Funkhouser, indefatigable organizer and poster of our Friday Facts, will be transitioning from the board of directors to being secretary of the organization. For years, Shirley has worn many hats officially and unofficially in the organization, and I can honestly say that we would never have gotten to where we are now without her. She is amazing, and I can never thank her enough for her continuing service to the Society.



Second, I would like to share some of the experiences from our field trip to the Lower Merion Historical Society on June 8. The opportunity to talk to and cooperate with our sister organizations is invaluable not only for the sharing of ideas, but also for informing our quest for a home here in Upper Merion. President Jerry Francis has done an extraordinary job acquiring, outfitting, and maintaining a most amazing facility in the old Lower Merion Academy building. Always self-effacing, Jerry will tell you that it was the result of good fortune and circumstances, but I can assure you that the real good fortune was for Lower Merion to have Jerry there to take advantage of those circumstances to produce a first-class research library and archive.



The situation is ideal. The building is on school district grounds and the school district maintains the building and pays for utilities as a gesture of good will toward the community; the historical society only has to pay for a cleaning person to come in, which allows them to focus their funds on acquisitions and preservation.

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The Lower Merion Historical Society was put on sound financial footing by the proceeds from the sale of their book, THE FIRST 300: THE AMAZING AND RICH HISTORY OF LOWER MERION in the 90's.

Why can't something similar happen in Upper Merion?