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Gary & Diana Ditto's Newsletter

Spring 2020

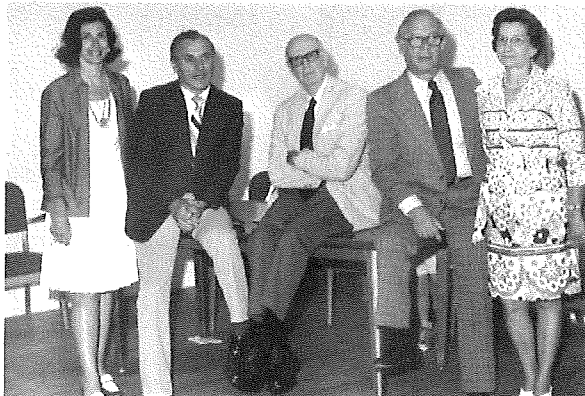
Jayne H. Plank Remembers – Part 2

by Antoinette Kranenburg

(The first part of this article describes Jayne Plank's memories of visiting Kensington as a child in the 1930s and living here with her family in the 1960s and 1970s. Jayne H. Plank served on Kensington's Town Council from 1967 to 1974. She the first woman elected mayor of Kensington and served four terms from 1974 to 1982.)

The Plank family moved to Kensington in 1962. When the house next door was to be rezoned for 7 townhouses, one for each daughter, Jayne got involved in Kensington politics. "One end of the project would have been in our living room!" she remembers. "If you don't like what they do, you either step up, or sit down!"

Plank's husband was a builder in Virginia. She would help him with zoning questions. They made sure that there was no mixing: Maryland was for her, Virginia for him.



Left to right: Mayor Jayne Plank with Council members James Komaromy, James Sheldon, Aaron Robbins and Dorothy Gooding, July 1975.

At the time in 1968, the council was getting ready to create the new master plan, which was finished in 1977.

Plank explains that there was no protection in place yet for historic properties, no historic zoning or registration to encourage people "to save what we had." Plank wrote a story, "Old Town Kensington: Restoring 1870," for the realtor magazine in 1977, the year that the Kensington Historical Society was created to preserve Kensington's small town character with a garden city history.

— Continued on page 2

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– Jayne Plank continued

The Maryland National Park and Planning Commission identified the Town of Kensington (site 31-6) as historic in their 1976 atlas of historic sites in Montgomery County.

The town records of that time were unfortunately lost. When Plank became mayor she made sure to create reading files of “every piece of material she ever had.”

Saving the Noyes Library was a big project. Jayne recounts the story of Noyes Library: “It was our library, named for Crosby Noyes, who was the first editor of the *Washington Star*. He donated the books — that’s how we had books. The charge was one dollar per year to join and that paid for the part-time librarian.”

When the Kensington Park Library was opened in 1969, Noyes Library was closed. “I just loved that library. When I was a little girl in DC we had a children’s library. I thought it was an opportunity to have the only children’s library in the whole state of Maryland!”

Checking a binder of records, she points out the letter to the county council, and the petition presenting a thousand names on 54 pages. “We got the signatures in one weekend and they approved it!” On April 27, 1970, it was the unanimous vote of the County Council to turn Noyes into a children’s library.

“They wanted to give the library back to the Town. Well, if the Town takes it over, it is costing us money.” An endowment paid for the renovation and “the county gave us Mrs. Cohen. She was our first librarian and she was wonderful.”

Mrs. Cohen created Grandparent Suitcases. “When you had children coming, you could check out a suitcase and it would have everything to entertain the children.” There were suitcases geared to different ages. In the 1980s they started using backpacks instead of suitcases.

“I had two children while I was in office, and never missed a meeting. We had meetings on a regular basis, so I could plan it a little better. I kept a box of toys in a corner of the office.” The youngest of Jayne’s five boys was born in 1972.



Noyes Children’s Library Penny Theater performance

Flinn Park was established across from the Kensington Post Office. The Park is named for Nancy (“Nannie”) Rutherford Flinn, a popular teacher of Kensington children from 1919 to 1953. After Mrs. Flinn died, the house stood empty and became an eyesore. “The town bought it for \$31,000.”

Photo: The Flinn house in early 1900s by Frank T. Chapman



Howard Avenue Park was dedicated in 1971. County Council President Ida Mae Garrett was there, and Jack Hewitt from Park & Planning. “People used to call it Doctors Park, because two doctors had their office there.” Originally the building was the home of the Montgomery Press. Cornelius Clum, who had reported out west, was the paper’s editor from 1895 to 1935.

In 1972, the Mayor of Kensington, England, came over on the occasion of Queen Elizabeth’s silver wedding anniversary. “They brought us a rosebush and all kinds of things. The rosebush was planted at the library.”

That year Kensington Parkway collapsed, right by Littledale Road where the creek goes under the Parkway. The creek was diverted at some point. When and why that was done, Jayne was never able to discover.

In 1973 the Town purchased the Armory for \$65,000 from the Board of Public Works. “In one of the old handwritten minutes books from the 1920s, it said that the Armory title was okay, but it also showed the first right of refusal: Public Works had to offer it to the Town first, before they could sell it to anybody.” The Armory was dedicated on October 3, 1976, as permanent Town Hall and Community Center.

There was the Kensington house tour, Bike Kensington Day in 1976 and the “fight over the pot-bellied stove in the railroad station!”

“Gaithersburg had talked to B&O and got them to agree to let them have Kensington’s pot-bellied stove. That stove was working and was the only heat in the Kensington Station!” In time it was agreed - the stove would stay!

– Jayne Plank continued

At the dedication of the Gaithersburg station, Mayor Plank presented them with a little pot-bellied stove in a box. “I had fun,” she chuckles.

In 1977 the new sector plan added the transitional zoning and created the historic district. The plan to split the two rail lines and put the metro up the middle would have obliterated Metropolitan and Howard Avenues.

“The Town Council and Mayor were all volunteer. That meant your own car, your own baby-sitting fees. I had a part-time clerk. At tax time we brought on somebody half time; we did all our taxes in-house. For the Town and the elections.”

“I had a ball. I loved being mayor of Kensington!”

Jubilee Fashion Show

Saturday, April 18, 2020, 6 p.m.

Bethesda North Marriott

5701 Marinelli Road, Rockville

The Fashion Show features models from the Jubilee community, styled by local designers and hair and make-up artists. Join Jubilee to celebrate the beautiful people and transformative mission of Jubilee.

For tickets, sponsoring and some gorgeous photos, visit www.jubileemd.org/fashion-show-2020/.

Woman's Club of Chevy Chase

7931 Connecticut Avenue, Chevy Chase, Maryland

ART & CRAFT FAIR

Saturday, March 21, 2020, 10 a.m. - 5 p.m.

Come and be inspired by the handmade creations of 40 local artisans:

- Wearable art such as handmade jewelry, clothing, purses, and scarves
- Creative works including pottery, fused glass, hand-painted glassware, and more!
- Specialty foods such as homemade jams, chocolates, breads, and teas.

Drawings will be held for four \$25 merchant gift certificates – tickets cost \$1.00

Proceeds support local charities and building preservation.

Free admission and parking behind the clubhouse off Dunlop Street.

45th Annual Community Art Show & Sale

April 3 – 5, 2020

Are you looking to enhance home or office? This is a great show for the business owner, homeowner, stager, or interior designer!

- Beautiful, affordable art from local artists!
- Daily door prizes donated by local businesses
- A raffle of 3 original works of art
- Proceeds support art scholarships for Montgomery

College art students

Show hours are Friday 2 – 5 p.m.

Saturday 11 a.m. – 5 p.m.

Sunday 1 – 5 p.m.

Please visit wcccm Maryland.org for more details.

Meals on Wheels – Wheaton welcomes new clients and volunteers

Are you elderly, disabled, or recovering from surgery? Or do you know someone who is? Meals on Wheels-Wheaton is accepting applications for new clients.

The location at Temple Emanuel, 10101 Connecticut Avenue in Kensington, is one of a few in the area with a licensed chef who prepares healthy, fresh meals daily. Volunteers are needed to deliver a hot meal and a cold meal, Monday through Friday. For many people it is the only personal contact of the day. The service area includes Kensington, Garrett Park, Wheaton, Aspen Hill, and part of Silver Spring (including Leisure World).

Please call 301-942-1111 to apply or volunteer.

15th Annual

The Kensington Day of the Book Festival

Sunday April 26, 2020

11 a.m. – 4 p.m.

Howard Avenue, Kensington MD

Street Festival, rain or shine

There will be live music, authors, children's program, speakers, poetry, arts and crafts, book sellers, cookbook demonstrations, food trucks, and so much more. Visit the festival website www.DayoftheBook.com for program information and schedules. This year features two new programs:

Catalonia on Stage – Celebrating the Origins of the “Day of the Book”

In partnership with the Smithsonian Center for Folklife & Cultural Heritage you are invited to celebrate the Catalan origins of the “Day of the Book” with Catalan authors, music, dance, children's play, and food.

Veteran Writers – Writing Our Way Home

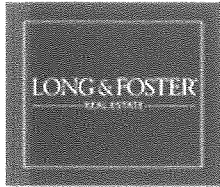
Join us to honor Veterans. Hosted by the Veterans Writing Project and The Memorial Day Writers' Project, with readings and performances by veterans – authors, poets, and songwriters!

Volunteers are needed any time between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. to help with the set-up, programs, to greet and assist the authors, and to greet the festival-goers. To volunteer, or if you have questions, please contact Theresa, volunteer coordinator, at kensingtonbookfestival2020@gmail.com

QUESTION: Would you like to receive the Ditto Group's newsletter by email?

Send your request to gary@thedittogroup.com.

Gary and Diana Ditto's Newsletter welcomes ideas and news items from community members. We are grateful to Jayne Plank for sharing her memories, and to the Kensington Archives. The editor is Antoinette Kranenburg of Kensington, assisted by Cherry Wunderlich.



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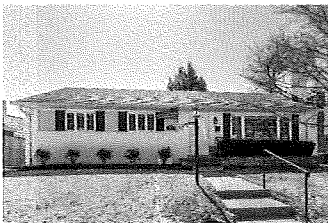
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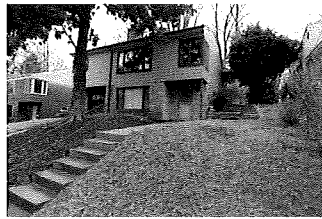
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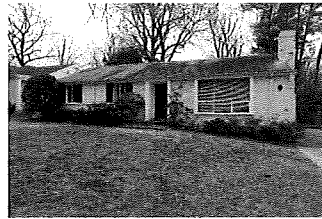
The Ditto Group Real Estate Activity



4402 Franklin St
Kensington/Parkwood
Active - \$825,000



3113 Homewood Pkwy
Kensington/Homewood
Coming Soon



9637 E. Bexhill Dr
Kensington/Rock Creek Hills
Coming Soon



10211 Montgomery Ave
Kensington/Kensington
Coming Soon



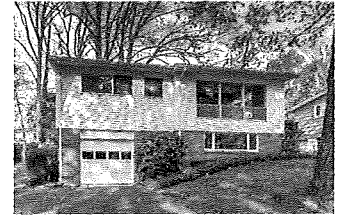
4501 Everett St
Kensington/Parkwood
Under Contract - \$649,000



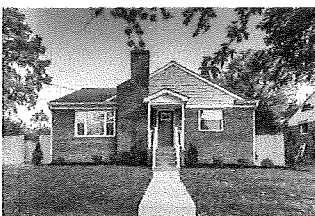
4603 Franklin St
Kensington/Parkwood
Under Contract - \$689,000



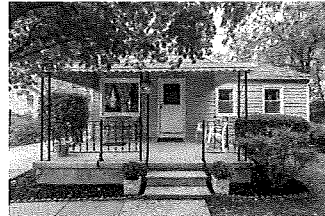
2504 Jennings Rd
Silver Spring/Stephen Knolls
Sold - \$539,000



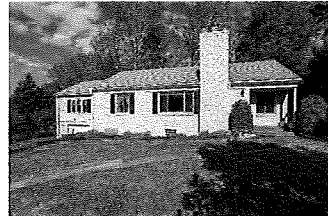
4007 Denfeld Ave
Kensington/Rock Creek Palisades
Sold - \$405,000



4915 Strathmore Ave
Kensington/Garrett Park Estates
Sold - \$620,000



10220 Day Ave
Kensington/Homewood
Sold - \$476,500



4325 Dresden St
Kensington/Parkwood
Sold - \$770,000



11011 Drumm Ave
Kensington/Kensington Heights
Sold - \$439,000