

Published
Since 1983

Gary & Diana Ditto's Newsletter

March 2014

A Visit with Gloria and Dan Botkiss – 60 Years on Carroll Place

Part 2

by Antoinette Kranenburg

(The first part of this article described Dan and Gloria Botkiss's memories of settling on Carroll Place after World War II. Mr. Botkiss served on the Kensington Town Council for 3 terms. Mrs. Botkiss was a substitute teacher for 30 years.)

Both Dan and Gloria loved to travel and have seen much of the world. Dan made his career in the hotel business and could stay as guest of the hotel. In 1970 he founded his own public relations firm, with offices in Washington, New York, Chicago, Paris, London, and Caracas. He was its president until retiring in 1990.

After the 2nd World War, the first new hotel in London, England, was being built in Kensington, the British sister city of Kensington, Maryland. Mr. Botkiss invited Mrs. Walter Gumbel, Mayor of the Borough of Kensington, to visit her sister city. He offered to make arrangements for the mayor and any staff. The British mayor offered a gift of oak trees from Blenheim Palace, the estate of Sir Winston Churchill.

USDA regulations, however, did not allow the importation of live plants. Dan remembers that he called Evelyn Lincoln, secretary to president John F. Kennedy, and asked if she could check whether an exception could be made for the Sister City Act. The exception was granted.

Mayor Gumbel visited Kensington, Maryland, accompanied by her daughter and Mrs. B.L. Sundus-Smith, council member, and, as Dan remembers, a croquet champion.

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– Dan and Gloria Botkiss, continued

The good-size young trees were planted at Ernest Park and War Memorial, the triangular park at the junction of Connecticut Avenue, Baltimore, and Armory Streets. This memorial park honors Kensington residents who served in World War I and II. It had been dedicated on November 12, 1948. One of these historic oaks still survives.

Gloria and Dan Botkiss have lived in their home for 60 years now. Their daughter moved with them to the new house, and their son was born in Kensington.

For a time, neighbors stayed on in Kensington after their children grew up and moved away. Now Gloria and Dan Botkiss are the only original owners, and, once again, there are many families with children in the neighborhood.

After retiring in 1990, Dan took up sculpture. His mother was an artist and he had sculpted and painted since he was a boy. Retirement allowed him to attend Montgomery College, where he spent 13 years in the art studio. Some of his sculpture and colorful paintings are displayed around the house.

Prominent in their living room hangs a beautiful painting of the Warner Mansion. The painting is not one of Dan's works, and he is not sure of the artist's name. Dan and Gloria bought the painting at one of Kensington's annual Labor Day Weekend Paint the Town Art Shows.

A couple of years before Dan and Gloria moved to Carroll Place, the mansion across the street had become Circle Manor Nursing Home. Dan remembers that in the 1960s the Town Council approved the addition as a way to preserve the nursing home and the mansion.

When the nursing home closed, Dan became active in the efforts to preserve the mansion. He served as Treasurer of Citizens United to Save the Circle, now the Warner Circle Advisory Committee. A photo print of the original Warner Mansion painting hanging in their living room, became the emblem of the successful fight to preserve the Mansion. Contributors to the cause received a print as a thank you for their support. Now the addition has been torn down, and the mansion is being restored.

Free Program on Thyroid Cancer

On Saturday, April 19, everyone interested in thyroid cancer is invited to come to part or all of a free patient and caregiver education day. Physician specialists from around the region will speak. The workshop is held from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. at Holy Cross Hospital, 1500 Forest Glen Road, Silver Spring. A free thyroid cancer support group also meets monthly at the hospital. Details are at www.thyca.org.



Friendship Club Celebrates 40 Years!

The Friendship Club in Kensington recently celebrated its 40th anniversary with a festive lunch for active members, volunteers, guests from the community, and former members. It was like a reunion, says former club president and co-founder Mabel Baker. Brookwood School's 6th grade girls sang as part of the entertainment, and 3 Catholic University students performed.

The Friendship Club has always been about fellowship, food, friendship, and fun. Meetings are held on the second Tuesday of the month, October through May, from 11:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. for a potluck lunch and entertainment. The June gathering is an excursion. The club is not political, and a dozen congregations are represented. There is no age requirement.

In the early 1970s there were few County or community groups dedicated to nurturing senior citizens in our community. The club's founders Jan Bache, Imogene Surrey, and Mabel Baker were active at St. Paul's and knew each other from peace and social justice activities. They thought social activities and a hot lunch would be a good thing for the older neighbors living in apartments near St. Paul's who did not drive.

Their idea for a community-wide and ecumenical club received the enthusiastic support of Reverend Charles Kirkley, the pastor of St. Paul's United Methodist Church, as well as St. Paul's United Methodist Women and the Good Neighbors club. Forty years ago on Valentine's Day, 1974, the Friendship Club had its first meeting at Heavener Hall.

To volunteer, please call club president Erma McWilliams at 301-774-2742.

Einstein ST.A.G.E. Presents Brigadoon

March 14, 15, 21, and 22 at 7 p.m.

Albert Einstein High School

11135 Newport Mill Road, Kensington

The classic 1940s Lerner and Loewe musical Brigadoon tells the story of two American tourists lost hunting in Scotland. They happen upon Brigadoon, an enchanted village that appears once every hundred years. Betrayal and romance, great songs and big dance numbers make for an exciting show!



Treat yourself to an entertaining evening and support our local high school thespians, who are raising money to travel to Scotland and perform in the Edinburgh Fringe Festival this summer. Tickets may be purchased at the door or in advance at www.showtix4u.com.

SPOTLIGHT on:

Silver Cycles Express

3731-B University Blvd. West, Kensington

Open for business since September, Silver Cycles Express offers bicycles, gear, repair, and expertise right here in Kensington. You will find the shop at the rear of the Kensington Triangle Shopping Center, next to the China Gourmet. Opening hours are Monday through Friday 10 a.m.-6:30 p.m., Saturday 10 a.m.-5 p.m. More at www.silvercycles.com, including helpful expert advice. Phone: 301-962-5577.

Kensington Park Library Volunteer Opportunity

The Kensington Park Library Advisory Committee is seeking new members to represent the community to the library and to advocate for library services and programs. The committee meets about 6 times a year on Tuesday evening in the library meeting room: 4201 Knowles Avenue, Kensington MD 20895. For more information, please contact the Library Manager, Kathie Meizner kathie.meizner@montgomerycountymd.gov.

Life in Kensington, Mid-20th Century

A Kensington Historical Society Program

Sunday, March 30th, 3 p.m.

Have you ever wondered what life in Kensington was in the mid-20th Century? Please join the Kensington Historical Society for a panel presentation.

The Town of Kensington developed from an agricultural community, with just 75 inhabitants in 1880, to the present-day one-square-mile town at the center of the 20895 zipcode. Early development flourished around the turn of the 19th century with the incorporation of Kensington in 1894. Another period of growth came after World War II.

Enjoy coffee and cookies at 3 p.m., followed by the Program and a brief business meeting in Heavener Hall, at St. Paul's United Methodist Church, 10401 Armory Avenue, Kensington. Parking is located at the bottom of Knowles Avenue, next to the church. The meeting is free and all are welcome. For more about the Kensington Historical Society please visit www.kensingtonhistory.org.

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- Our weekly "Open House" e-mail

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For dates and news of more events, be sure to visit the Community Activities Calendar on the web site:

www.thedittogroup.com

Gary and Diana Ditto's Newsletter welcomes ideas and news items from community members. The editor is Antoinette Kranenburg of Kensington, assisted by Cherry Wunderlich. Many thanks to Dan and Gloria Botkiss, and to Mabel Baker.

Congratulations Kensington Nursery School!

Friends old and new celebrated the 75th anniversary of the Kensington Cooperative Nursery School with a gala at the Kensington Town Hall on February 8th.

In 1939, a time when the nursery school idea was not widely known, a group of Kensington parents formed the cooperative nursery school. Then called the Kensington Play Group, it was the first cooperative nursery school in the Washington metropolitan area.

Parents raised funds for a permanent location for the school. In 1955 the school bought a ¾ acre lot outright in Kensington Heights. Alexander Richter, A.I.A., a former member of the school, designed the colorful modern cinderblock building at 3202 Decatur Avenue, Kensington. Tucked in the neighborhood close to St. Paul Park, the school opened in September 1957.

Kensington Nursery School provides a nurturing and enriching environment for preschool children age 2 – 4 and their families. Play is valued as the major activity through which children develop social skills, work out difficulties and exercise their physical, sensory, emotional and cognitive abilities. Parents gain skills and insights they can use at home, through participating in the classroom and the Parent Education Program. For more please visit www.knscoop.org.



Kensington Day of the Book

Howard Avenue, Old Town Kensington
Sunday April 27th, 2014, 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Rain or Shine!

Come celebrate the International Day of the Book at Kensington's afternoon street festival!

Enjoy live music, author readings, open mic, activities for children and adults, storytellers, ...and books, books, books! Meet local authors, book artists, publishers, booksellers, and literary groups.

The Nighthawks and *the Atomic Swing Club* are on the program, also Irish literature and music, Steampunk, children's entertainer *the Great Zucchini*, children's singer/songwriter Susan McNelis aka as *Oh Susannah!* and much more.

Participation is open to all local authors, book and paper artists, bookmakers, publishers, literary groups, and Kensington community organizations.

For more about the program, and how to volunteer or participate please visit www.dayofthebook.com.





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For Sale

9917 La Duke Drive
 Kensington/Rock Creek Hills
 List Price - \$899,000



For Sale

4207 Ambler Drive
 Kensington/Kensington Estates
 List Price - \$889,000



UNDER CONTRACT

4034 Glenridge Street
 Kensington/Chevy Chase View
 List Price - \$795,000



UNDER CONTRACT

10111 Cedar Lane
 Kensington/Chevy Chase View
 List Price - \$675,000



UNDER CONTRACT

9914 Parkwood Drive
 Bethesda/Parkwood
 List Price - \$650,000



For Sale

4989 Battery Lane
 Bethesda/The Whitehall
 List Price - \$595,000



UNDER CONTRACT

4215 McCain Court
 Kensington/Rock Creek Palisades
 List Price - \$499,000



FOR SALE

3701 Astoria Road
 Kensington/Newport Hills
 List Price - \$ 410,000



SOLD - 2/28/2014

3820 Washington Street
 Kensington/Kensington
 Settled Price - \$425,000



SOLD - 2/14/2014

4016 Cleveland Street
 Kensington/Chevy Chase View
 Settled Price - \$915,000



SOLD - 1/21/2014

3517 Plyers Mill Court
 Kensington/Kensington
 Settled Price - \$581,500



SOLD - 1/31/2014

3419 Plyers Mill Road
 Kensington/Kensington
 Settled Price - \$465,000



SOLD - 1/23/2014

4104 Wexford Drive
 Kensington/Rock Creek Palisades
 Settled Price - \$419,000



SOLD - 1/08/2014

5806 Johnson Avenue
 Bethesda/Ayrlawn
 Settled Price - \$ 549,900



SOLD - 2/20/2014

5015 Sentinel Drive # 82
 Bethesda/Sumner Court
 Settled Price - \$290,000

ACTIVE RENTALS

2901 Terrace Drive, Chevy Chase - \$ 2,700/month

10416 Parthenon Court, Bethesda - \$ 2,350/month

RENTALS - APPLICATION ACCEPTED

4701 Maple Avenue, Bethesda - \$3,600/month