

Published  
Since 1983

# Gary & Diana Ditto's Newsletter

Fall 2026

## The Kensington Train Show – *All Aboard!*

Saturday and Sunday, September 12 & 13

The Kensington's very own Train Show is back the weekend after Labor Day, bringing model trains, live music, and family fun to Town Hall. The National Capitol Trackers travel from across the region to set up their modules, and to keep the trains moving and on track all weekend.

The display is a little different every year. Hearing a train approach blowing its horn, rounding a corner, coming into view, emerging from a tunnel, or crossing a trestle, captivates all ages.

—Details inside



Kensington and the railway circa 1900 by Bertha Clum

### Inside this issue:

Railroad Library...Coffeehouse  
at St Paul...Thien Kim Barber  
Shop...Mystery Mansion...  
Pilgrimage House & Garden  
Tour...Kensington Car Show...  
KTown Chess Festival...and  
more.

## Inside the Kensington Town Archives

By Antoinette Kranenburg

In her copy of *Kensington: a Picture History*, Kristie Hughes, of Gaithersburg, found a 'Gary and Diana Ditto's Newsletter' from May 2012 with a familiar name. The featured story about Ed and Connie Kellie, mentioned a familiar name, Frank Kennedy.

—Continued on page 2

THE DITTO GROUP  
experience • knowledge • community

Long & Foster Real Estate, Inc.  
One Bethesda Office  
7373 Wisconsin Ave., Suite 1700  
Bethesda, MD 20814



Gary Ditto 301-215-6834  
Diana Ditto 301-215-6904  
gd@thedittogroup.com  
diana@thedittogroup.com

—Town Archives continued

Hughes wrote Gary Ditto “Frank Kennedy and his wife Lorraine were my aunt and uncle. My grandfather, Earl M. Jones had a house on the corner of Metropolitan Avenue and St. Paul Street, across the street from the old Mizell lumber yard. He sold the property which is now the Pepco substation.” She hoped to find more issues with stories of Kensington and its residents.

By then, the entire Ditto newsletter collection was in the Kensington’s Town Archives. “Diana and I were honored that the Town of Kensington could house my collection of newsletters, all forty plus years of them.” Gary replied to Hughes. Town archivist, Lisa W. Carney, could help her with newsletters in PDF or digital format.



*Manakee House  
circa 1900*



*William Mannakee  
and Earl Jones Sr.*

Gary remembers getting together on Everett Street with writers Cherry Wunderlich, Diane Arsano, and Barbara Collins about his newsletter, and making it something people would like to read and find useful.

“On average we wrote and mailed four issues per year, well over 170 issues!” starting in 1983.

The boxes of materials were in good order, and many issues were already digitized, making processing easier. Next comes indexing the newsletters for easy searching.

The Archives are on the ground floor of Town Hall, in the same room where dedicated Kensington Historical Society volunteers have collected and cared for local historical materials since 1977. Photographs, sketchbooks, journals, articles, and more document Kensington’s history from the 1800s through today, about 100 linear feet of material!

In September 2023, Lisa Carney became the Town’s part-time professional archivist. She loves doing research and helping the public. “The minute someone is interested in something, I am interested.” In Kensington she enjoys the variety of doing every job archivists do, from reference work, processing and conserving collections, and accepting donations, to outreach, teaching, and exhibits.



Carney is from Torrington, Wyoming, a small town founded by her great-grandfather in 1910 near a railroad stop. Born in 1885, he was a young homesteader who came from Torrington,

Connecticut, a farming community and headed west. The house he built still stands.

The Archives is open by appointment Monday through Thursday, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Archivist Carney is welcoming and helpful, and an archive website is in the future. To schedule a visit, make an inquiry, or submit research request, email [archives@tok.md.gov](mailto:archives@tok.md.gov).

## **Railroad Library Opens**

Saturday, September 12, 2026

***In Kensington Row Bookshop***

3786 Howard Avenue, Kensington, MD



Great news, the Martin F. O’Rourke Railroad Library is moving from the Pennsylvania Railroad Tower in Bowie into the Kensington Row Bookshop! It is a terrific addition to Kensington with its rich railroad roots.

After a long search, and match making by Ed Beaver of the National Capital Trackers, the professional reference library has a new home in the Bookshop.

The collection focuses on the historic railroads serving Washington, D.C. and the Mid-Atlantic region. It was assembled by the Washington, D.C. Chapter of the National Railway Historical Society (DCNRHS). The library is named for lifelong railroad buff and historian, Martin F. O’Rourke, born in Keyser, WV in 1935, and chapter member for 75 years.

Look for the railroad library’s table at the Kensington Train Show to meet DCNRHS volunteers and share railroad questions and stories.

Then drop by Kensington Row Bookshop to see the railroad library. Volunteers may still have boxes to unpack, but they are excited to meet their new neighbors and chat. A grand opening is planned for October.

The library and Bookshop hours are the same: Tuesday through Saturday 11 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Visit [www.railroadlibrary.org](http://www.railroadlibrary.org) for much more, including an on-line catalogue.



## ***Congratulations***

**Thien Kim Barber Shop!**

Best of Kensington 2026 Award  
10515 Metropolitan Ave,  
Kensington

Open 9 a.m. daily  
240-899-8994

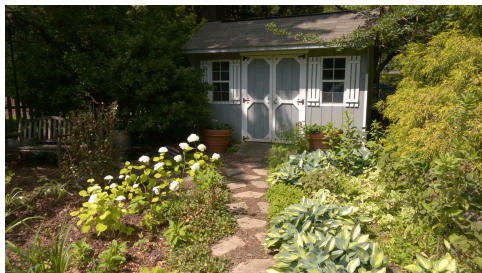


## Kensington Shines!

What a day! The **Maryland House & Garden Pilgrimage 2026 Kensington Tour** drew more than 700 ticket holders and strong Tour Book ad sales, raising over \$32,000 for the Noyes Children's Library Foundation. Visitors were charmed not only by the homes and gardens, but by the warm welcome throughout Town.

Congratulations to all who worked hard in advance, and special thanks to the seventy plus volunteers whose knowledge and friendliness made such an impression.

The 2026 Tour Book, now in the Maryland State archives, describes all the historic properties and preservation projects. Explore it at [www.mhgp.org](http://www.mhgp.org).



## Mystery Mansion presents ....TWISTED!

*A family-friendly haunted house experience*

Friday, October 30, 5 to 9 p.m.

Saturday, October 31, 12 to 4 p.m.

Sunday, November 1, 5 to 9 p.m.

**The Woman's Club of Chevy Chase**  
7931 Connecticut Avenue

Mystery Mansion, hosted by the Woman's Club of Chevy Chase, is ideal for ages 3 to 12. Parents are encouraged, and adult haunted house fans are welcome too!

Enter Fairytale Isle, where fairytales have gone wonderfully wrong; the Tunnel, where the storybook ends and frights begin; and, Bonfire Bash, with fire pits, live music, and spooky treats. Avoid disappointment and buy your tickets in advance at [www.mysterymansion.org](http://www.mysterymansion.org)



## Kensington Car Show

Saturday, October 3, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

(rain date Sunday, October 4)

3794 Howard Avenue, Kensington, MD

The 10th Annual Kensington Car Show brings car enthusiasts to Howard Avenue for all kinds of terrific cars, trucks, and motorcycles, including a metal monster truck. There will be prizes, music, face painting, balloon art, food trucks, and a beer garden.

The Kensington Service Station's 1926 building has always been a service station. Show proceeds will go to the Kensington Volunteer Fire Department.

To register your car, truck, or motorcycle; to order this year's commemorative shirt; and other details, visit [www.kensingtoncarshow.com](http://www.kensingtoncarshow.com).



**The Kensington Train Show** is a volunteer effort on the part of many, and benefits the Noyes Children's Library Foundation and the Kensington Historical Society.

**Admission is:** \$8 adult, \$3 child, \$20 family.

All weekend children can play the I Spy Train Game as they explore the displays. They will receive a medal from Noyes Children's Library upon completion.

Boy Scout Troop #439 will sell hot dogs and drinks.

### Saturday September 12:

Orleans Express Band 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

David Weaver & Friends Band from 2 to 4 p.m.

### Sunday September 13

Railroad songs and stories by Matthew Dodd, 1 to 4 p.m.

[www.kensingtontrainshow.com](http://www.kensingtontrainshow.com) has a great, short video.



## The Coffeehouse is Back!

Saturdays, 7 to 10 p.m.

10401 Armory Avenue, Kensington

For nearly a decade, the *Kensington Coffeehouse at St. Paul's* brought local and national musicians and original music to its stage. This fall, it reopens with original music and community.

Together with *Love People Record* and *JennyCakes*, the monthly concerts will feature diverse music and local fare in a relaxed listening room.

Local baker Jenny Smith's treats will be available for purchase to enjoy with a bottomless mug of coffee.

Join us to hear new talent, enjoy live music, and help build a welcoming home for music lovers. Opening night is Saturday, September 19, with original music by Ella Gallogly, Safety Bear, Levi Stephens, and The Sidleys.

Upcoming dates: September 19, October 24, and November 21. For the opening season tickets are \$10.

Visit [Kensingtoncoffeehouse.org](http://Kensingtoncoffeehouse.org) for details and tickets. Tickets may be available at the door if seats remain.

Live with less strain and more balance.  
*Free Alexander Technique "taster" session.*  
Contact Antoinette at 240-762-9755 or  
[ak@KensingtonAlexander.com](mailto:ak@KensingtonAlexander.com).



FREE for students in grades 2-8.

Saturday, October 10, 12:30 to 3 p.m.

Flinn Park, 10227 Kensington Parkway

Register at [chessctr.org/play/ktownchessfest](http://chessctr.org/play/ktownchessfest).

The *Gary & Diana Ditto's Newsletter* is mailed to over 10,000 households in our community. **Do you have an article or event you would like included in the next issue? Please let us know by November 15, 2026.** We are grateful to Lisa Carney. The editor is Antoinette Kranenburg of Kensington.



**Direct:** 301-215-6834

**Website:** [www.thedittogroup.com](http://www.thedittogroup.com)

**One Bethesda Office:** 240-497-1700



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## The Ditto Group Real Estate Activity



**10220 Capitol View Ave**  
**Capitol View Park/Silver**  
**Spring**  
**For Sale - \$989,000**



**9908 Thornwood Rd**  
**Parkwood/Kensington**  
**Sold - \$980,000**



**\*10206 Frederick Ave\***  
**Kensington Park/**  
**Kensington**  
**Sold - 975,000**



**\*2720 McComas Ave\***  
**Kensington Heights/**  
**Kensington**  
**Sold - 830,000**



**5009 Flanders Ave**  
**Garrett Park Estates/**  
**Kensington**  
**For Sale - \$825,000**



**3105 Fayette Rd**  
**Homestead/**  
**Kensington**  
**For Sale - \$709,000**



**1523 Jasper St**  
**Chestnut Hills/Silver**  
**Spring**  
**Sold - \$520,000**



**3211 University Blvd #11**  
**The Waterford/Kensington**  
**For Sale - \$189,000**

**\* - we represented the purchaser**