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Gary Ditto's Newsletter

JANUARY/FEBRUARY 1995

Boyhood Remembrances of Alfred D. Noyes, age 87

Alfred D. Noyes, a longtime Kensington resident, has many fond memories of his childhood years in Kensington. Now living in Barnesville, Maryland, a rural area much like what Kensington must have been like in the early days, Mr. Noyes shared some of his favorite boyhood memories with us. Through Mr. Noyes' vivid recollections, we can take a peek into what life was like in Kensington in the 1920's.

In 1911, when Mr. Noyes was only four years old, his family settled on West Washington Street in Kensington. You may recognize his name from the Kensington's Noyes Children's Library. His grandfather's cousin was Crosby Noyes, editor of The Washington Star and benefactor of the library that bears the same name.

Mr. Noyes' overall impression of growing up in Kensington was the sense of freedom that he and other children experienced. He says, "There weren't any fears of getting hurt, and our parents always knew we were within a 1-mile radius from home." On Saturdays, he was expected to do his chores in the morning, but in the afternoons he was free to do as he pleased. Mr. Noyes was quick to point out that children had certain family obligations that were expected of them.

Favorite Afternoon Excursions



Mr. Noyes fondly recalls how one of his favorite afternoon excursions was to take the country road (Connecticut Avenue!) to one of several Kensington swimming holes. His favorite was called "the Rock" because of the big rock in Rock Creek Park. Admittedly, in those days, skinny dipping was the only way to go. In the winter months, "the Old Creek," which was actually a pool of stagnant water from an old mill race, would freeze over. This was a popular place for playing hockey or ice skating. Noyes remembers how even the organist from his church, Mr. Chance, could be found doing perfect figure eights at the Old Creek.

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Boyhood Preoccupations

During the summers, Mr. Noyes' and his friends were kept busy with various summer jobs. He worked for Hopkins grocery store which was known for delivering groceries by horse and wagon. He also worked for a building contractor, and he helped dig ditches for a plumbing contractor in the summer of 1915 when the new sewer system was installed. Another big employer of young boys was Bakery McKeever's. Noyes remembers, "McKeever's made wonderful ice cream that was delivered on Saturdays in metal cans to keep the ice cream cold for Sunday dinner. Boys were hired to pick up the empty containers."

Another of Mr. Noyes' boyhood preoccupations was the sport of baseball. Mr. Noyes recounted how Mr. Filer, a government employee with no sons, took an interest in forming and coaching a junior baseball team. He bought bats and balls, and led the Kensington Athletic Club to many victories. The team enjoyed a great rivalry with the Chevy Chase Wildcats. Games were played on the 10-acre lot between the county road and Detrick Street, north of Warner Street. An inspiration to many boys, "Pop" Filer started a boys club before the days of the Boy Scouts.

Kensington Traditions

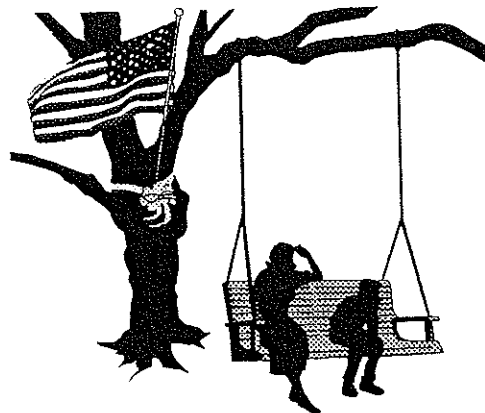
One of Kensington's longtime traditions described by Mr. Noyes was the Fourth of July festival that took place in the old ball park. It was at this site that someone important with a loud voice (usually Casper Dickson) would read the Declaration of Independence. Other patriotic activities included the Fourth of July pageant. One year, Noyes' mother (a kindergarten teacher) led a drill team of teenage girls with tennis rackets.

Kensington's First Volunteer Fire Department

Not everything about growing up in Kensington was fun and games, though. Because Kensington didn't have a fire department, or even a water system, the threat of fire was often on residents' minds. From the very beginning of the town government, citizens banded together to create a makeshift volunteer fire department to respond to the outbreak of fires. Mr. Noyes remembers, "At the first sign of fire, someone would ring the church bells to alert others. The Methodist Church had the loudest bell. Several bells would be ringing at once. It was not uncommon to be awakened in the middle of the night by the sound of church bells ringing and see men running with lanterns amidst smoke and flames to look for which house was on fire." To keep the fires from spreading, men would use a hand drawn hose reel that was put into a well and pumped. Mr. Noyes remembers being part of the bucket brigade as able bodied citizens rushed to pass buckets of water to people on the roof who doused the flames.

In our next issue, we'll continue Mr. Noyes' childhood reminiscences and learn how the school and transportation systems of Montgomery County have changed.

Laura Kramer



The Seventh Annual Sounds for SOME Concert

To Benefit the Hungry and Homeless



SOME
(So Others Might Eat)

Please take the time to join us at Temple Emanuel, 10101 Connecticut Ave., Kensington, Maryland on Saturday, March 4, 1995 at 7:30 PM.

\$15 per person (refreshments included). All proceeds go to SOME!

Featuring:

A playlet performed by Members of the Westmoreland United Church of Christ, based on Elliot Liebow's book **TELL THEM WHO I AM**, the compelling story of a group of homeless women.

The Capital Klezmers, performing Jewish Folk Music.

The SOME Chamber Orchestra.

Winterfest Children's Carnival Saturday,

February 4th

10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

(Snow date Feb. 11th)

A Fundraiser for the Learning Center for Young Children at Warner Memorial Presbyterian Church, 10123 Connecticut Avenue, Kensington



Bake Sale • Children's Craft Activities
Cotton Candy • Games • Pizza • Auction

Coming Soon to Kensington's Noyes Children's Library

Saturday, Feb. 4th at 9:30 a.m.

Time for Two's — "I Love You!" Stories, songs, finger plays, and simple craft activity for 2 year olds and parent or caregiver

Tuesday, Feb. 7th at 1:30 p.m.

We're Friends — Stories, film, and penny theater featuring *May I Bring a Friend*. For ages 3-6.

Saturday, Feb. 11th at 10:30 a.m.

We're Friends — Stories, film, and penny theater featuring *May I Bring a Friend*. For ages 3-6.

Wednesday, March 1st at 10 a.m.

Time for Two's — "Jungle Parade" for 2-year-olds and a parent or caregiver.

Please pre-register by calling 929-5533.



Opportunities for Seniors

Interages, the Intergenerational Resource Center located on Connecticut Avenue in Kensington, is gearing up for the new year. They are continuing their variety of programs that foster interaction between seniors and young people. Right now they are recruiting for their award-winning Grandcare Program, in its 8th year. This program offers seniors an employment opportunity with wonderful personal satisfaction as well.

Something magical happens when young children in child care centers begin to bond with the willing, caring seniors who become role models and friends. The next class for potential Grandcare workers begins on **February 14th** — very apropos because it is truly a job filled with love. For details, call Harolyn Cohen at 301-949-3551.



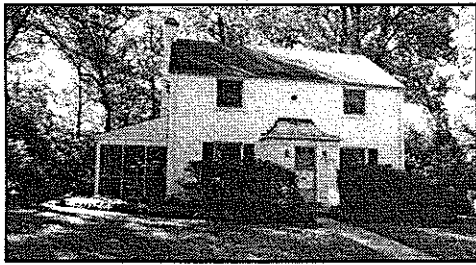
Gary Ditto's Newsletter greatly appreciates news and suggestions from community members. It is edited and designed by Kensington Communications.

Calling All Antique Lovers

Mark your calendars for the weekend of February 24 for the return of Holy Redeemer's 28th Annual Antique Show. This year's show features restored furniture, many other items, and the teddy-bear-paw quilt raffle. The weekend show will be held at Holy Redeemer School, located at Saul Road and Summit Avenue in Kensington. Hours: 11 to 8 Friday, Feb. 24th, 11-9 Saturday, Feb. 25th, and 12-5 on Sunday, Feb. 26th. For more information, call Kathleen Dolan 907-9268.



FOR SALE
\$399,000



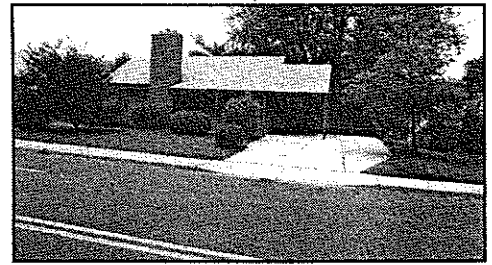
4212 Glenrose Street, Kensington
Outstanding Colonial
Lg Liv Rm w/ FP, Din Rm, Kit,
3 BR, 2 BA, Porch

FOR SALE
\$319,900



3104 Kent Street, Kensington
Renovated Ranch
New Kit, Liv Rm w/ FP, Rec Rm,
Enlarged Master Suite, 4 BR, 3 BA

SOLD
\$168,500



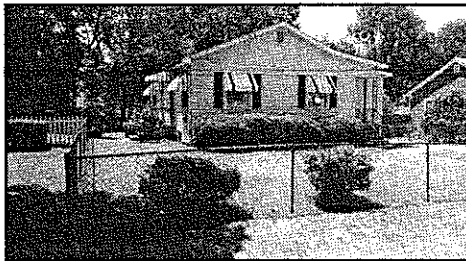
10026 Cedar Lane, Kensington
Large Ranch
Liv Rm w/ FP, Din Rm,
Rec Rm, 3 BR

FOR SALE
\$159,900



11412 Soward Drive, Kensington
Spacious Bi-Level
Rec Rm, Liv Rm, Din Rm, Patio,
4 BR

FOR SALE
\$157,000



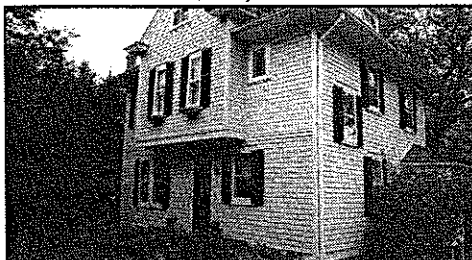
4306 Warner Street, Kensington
Modern Kitchen,
Large Liv Rm,
Den, 2 BR, 2 BA

SOLD
\$168,500



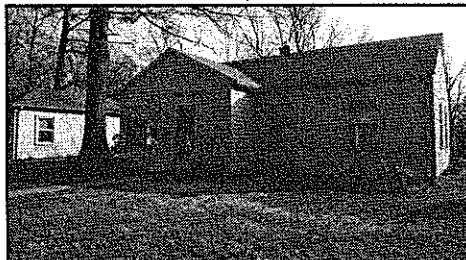
10313 Summit Avenue, Kensington
Cape Cod
New Roof, Lg Pvt Back Yard,
Screened Porch

FOR SALE
\$339,000



3824 Warner Street, Kensington
Elegant Victorian
Formal Liv & Din Rms, Beaut
Hdwd Floors, Rec Rm, TS Kitchen,
5 BR, 2 1/2 BA, Exc. Condition

FOR SALE
\$139,900



3004 Edgewood Road, Kensington
Renovated Ranch - Open Floor Plan
Liv Rm & Din Rm, 2 BR,
New Hdwd Floors, Deck

SOLD
\$242,500



10123 Cedar Lane, Kensington
Classic Ranch in Excellent Cond.
Liv Rm w/FP, Rec Rm w/ FP, Den,
4 BR, 3 BA

*Each of the homes pictured in this
newsletter is a Gary Ditto listing.*

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