



SYKESVILLE HISTORIC DISTRICT NEWS

Autumn, 2002

Chairman's Letter

As Chairman of the Sykesville Historic District Commission, it is very gratifying for me to see all the great improvements being made. I hope all citizens of Sykesville are watching these and other great things happening in town. In particular, I would like to mention the following projects: 7606 Main Street now under roof and awaiting the storefront and siding, 7411 Springfield Avenue with a fresh coat of exterior paint and 7526 Main Street with a new metal roof. I know that all of these projects have been in the works for years and I am very happy the property owners are working on or completing these projects. Other projects in the early stages include the satellite Post Office in the Interlocking Tower, landscaping at 7318 Springfield Avenue and new windows and doors at E.W. Beck's.

The Commission is anxiously awaiting the first application for permit from the Warfield Complex. The guidelines are completed and have been approved. With the guidelines in place, the town can now begin the process of evaluating proposals for the use of this historic site.

On August 12, 2002 the Mayor and Town Council appointed me to the vacant position on the Sykesville Town Council. I look forward to continuing my service to the Town in this new capacity. As I leave my post as Chairman of the Historic District Commission, I leave with a feeling of accomplishment. The great changes that have occurred since 1995 have made Sykesville the best town in Carroll County. We have a charming preserved Main Street, a small town feel in our residential communities, excellent police and public works departments and a world-class museum located at the Gate House. Thank you for the opportunity to serve and I hope that I can count on your support as I assume the role of Town Council Member.

Mark Rychwalski, *Chairman*
Sykesville Historic District Commission

Prolific Architect Designed Town's RR Station

Why is Baldwin's Station called Baldwin's Station? It was named for its architect, Ephraim Francis Baldwin (1837-1916). A native of Troy, NY, he moved to Baltimore as a child. His knowledge of architecture came from work at the famous Baltimore architectural firm, Niernsee and Neilson.

E. Francis Baldwin established his own private practice in 1867 and formed two other partnerships during his career. He is credited with over 500 projects in 10 states including the Annapolis Court of Appeals Building, additions to the Basilica of the Assumption in Baltimore and the Casino at Sheppard Pratt Hospital in Towson.

By far his most famous building was designed when he was the architect for the B&O Railroad from 1872 until the 1890s. Baldwin designed over 100 railroad stations including

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Betty Baldwin with her grandfather's portrait.

Architect, cont'd.

the Mount Clare passenger car shop, now known as the Roundhouse and used as the main exhibit space of the B&O Railroad Museum in Baltimore. The Roundhouse, measuring 235 feet in diameter and 123 feet high, is called the world's largest circular industrial building.

In 1884 the Sykesville station was built and remained in use until 1949 when passenger service ended. Then for over 30 years just the freight office was open until the town bought the building and renovated it. Now it is operated as Baldwin's Station & Pub.

His granddaughter, Betty Baldwin, maintains a keen interest in his work and visits Sykesville to admire the train station. She has numerous photos of the restoration of Baldwin's Station as well as photos and illustrations of E. F. Baldwin's buildings. Her favorite building of his is the Mount Clare Roundhouse, "But of course I love the Sykesville station," she said recently. Family members hold weddings and receptions in his buildings whenever they can.

Rockville resident Carlos Avery is writing a book called *E. Francis Baldwin, Architect: B&O, Baltimore, and Beyond*. Baldwin wrote faithfully in notebooks and ledgers, which the family has loaned Mr. Avery for his research. He plans to have the book out early next year.



The Casino building at Sheppard Pratt.

Neighbor News

A new business moved into town quietly last year and, unlike most businesses, wants to stay that way. "Anonymity," is what made Sykesville attractive to **Mark Oakes**, owner of Intellimar. "Clients can come in and out the back door without being noticed."

Intellimar markets anti-terrorism products and services to federal, state and local governments as well as to private industry. Bulletproof and blast-resistant doors, window film and safety drapes for glass protection, guard booths and vault doors are just some of the products they represent. Recently, they supplied the Smithsonian Institution with 600 precast concrete planters for perimeter security protection.

"Most of our salesmen spend the day in Washington because we do so much work for the State Department and the Department of Defense. But they enjoy coming back to a country setting," marketing director **Kathy Wright** said. The business started six years ago and moved here from Ellicott City. Two employees who lived in Howard County moved to Sykesville and others plan to soon, while some lived in Carroll County already.

Intellimar is on Main Street in the Greenberg Building, which was built around 1907 by architect J.H. Fowble and originally called the Arcade Building.

Long-time Sykesville resident **Diane Raymond** just added a fresh coat of paint to her house at 7411 Springfield Avenue. All of the original Victorian wood windows were repaired and repainted. The construction date of 1919 can be seen in the concrete walkway beside the wrap-around porch. John Edwin Hood, who built the structure where E. W. Beck's Pub is located, also built this house.



Diane Raymond enjoying her porch.

At The Museum

Kari Greenwalt assumed the position of curator of the Gate House Museum this July. A recent Towson University graduate with a major in history, Kari has worked for the museum since it opened five years ago. Jim Purman, past curator, is now the archivist. Kari is busy with fall events:

- Over 25 museum volunteers were acknowledged at lunch on September 7th at the Interlocking Tower. Three prizes were awarded in a drawing and lifetime memberships were granted to Mike Shenk and George Horvath.
- A World War II USO dance on October 12th will benefit the museum expansion fund. Tickets for the buffet dinner will cost \$19.97 to commemorate the year the museum opened. Swing music by the Hunt Valley Jazz big band will entertain diners and an exhibit featuring Sykesville's contributions to the war effort will be on display. The event will take place at E. J. Beck's catering facility on Main Street. Tickets are for sale at the museum but buy yours early - only 48 are available.



A photograph of Springfield taken between 1899 and 1912.

A Look at the First Springfield Mansion

On the grounds of Springfield Hospital today stands a building called the Patterson House. In fact, it was never home to the Patterson family but was built on the site of their mansion after it burned in 1912. At that time, the ownership had passed to the state of Maryland.

Wealthy Baltimore shipping merchant, William Patterson, bought land in the late 1700s for a summer home. He called it Springfield for the abundance of water on the property. It was from Springfield that his daughter, Betsy, escaped one night in 1803 to attend a dance in Baltimore. Her purpose was to meet Napoleon Bonaparte's brother, Jerome, whom she married a few months later.

William Patterson gave his youngest son, George, the estate in 1824 and he turned it into one of the most successful farms in Maryland. In 1827 the property consisted of 1,378 acres; by 1854 it had grown to 1,759 acres, including over 400 acres from Elias Brown's land, Brown's Inheritance.

George married Prudence Brown, whose family owned the remainder of the adjoining property. Their only child, Florence, inherited Springfield in 1870 and employed her cousin, Frank Brown, to manage the farm. He was already

managing a farm on his family's homestead. After Florence's death in 1878 the property was sold to Brown. By then, Frank Brown had inherited his family's estate and the combined land totaled 2,500 acres.

The house had "... room enough for the use of home and the claims of a generous hospitality, with lawns, orchards and out houses of every description and variety," according to *Scharf's History of Western Maryland*. Painted white with green shutters, the mansion was enormous - 175 feet long by 50 feet deep. "The front has a two story porch supported by pillars. The house, which

is somewhat classical in style, is unique in its arrangements and a perfect country home."

The 1889 edition of *The Monumental City* featured a woodcut of the mansion and stated, "...the observatory on the roof affords a most extended and enchanting view of the country...Back of it are the principal woodlands of Springfield, which form the back ground of the view we give in the cut."

While Governor of Maryland in 1896, Frank Brown sold the mansion along with 728 acres to the state for a mental hospital and the mansion became home to the hospital's superintendents. Dr. Joseph Clement Clark was in residence on the morning of February 5, 1912 when, he reported, "I was aroused by the cook, who informed me that the house was on fire. The house...burned rapidly and in less than an hour was burned to the ground." The existing building was built as a replacement in 1913.

An illustration from the 1889 edition of The Monumental City.



Weathering the 1924 Drought

How did Sykesville farmers cope with the drought of 1924? According to this ad featuring a local family, Ober's Special Plant Food is the answer. Copy on the back of this postcard reads, "GOOD CORN IN 1924. Did you grow good corn in 1924? The Proughs did! Heat, cold, drought, rain and wind all conspired to lower the yield of corn in 1924. Low yields of soft, immature corn were the rule. The Proughs have never used fertilizer on corn. In 1924 they fertilized part of their crop with OBER'S SPECIAL PLANT FOOD 2-9-5, about 400 lbs per acre to see what would happen. The fertilizer overcame the bad effects of the adverse season, kept their corn growing and brought it to maturity, while their neighbors' corn was soft and of poor quality. 170 bushels of sound, mature corn per acre is a good yield in

any year but an exceptional yield for 1924. Much of this corn is being sold as seed at prices much higher than those prevailing on the market. Special Plant



The photo caption read, "P.C. Prough, Sykesville, Maryland, his sons, M.P. and Leroy and their corn, prize winner at International Show at Chicago and at local and State shows throughout Maryland. GROWN WITH OBER'S"

Food made this yield possible. Where no fertilizer was used the yield of corn was low and the quality too poor to permit its use for seed, proving that Fertilizing Corn Pays."

Town Awards Two More Grants

Mellor Avenue sports two newly renovated porches at the homes of Jim and Linda Dore and Patrick and Erin Boline. Because they did the work in accordance with the Historic District Design Guidelines, each couple received a \$750 town grant.

Schafer Honored

Historic District Commissioners hosted Sykesville native Dorothy Schafer at lunch on September 14th to mark her retirement from the Commission. Afterwards, a rose garden was dedicated in her honor at the Gate House Museum.

Financial Incentives

The Town of Sykesville grants a 10% property tax credit for qualified rehabilitation expenditures for certain historic buildings, and a 5% property tax credit for qualified expenditures for architecturally compatible new construction, located in the historic district. In addition, grants of up to \$750 for owner-occupied residential property are available to assist residents in meeting the guidelines.

The State of Maryland offers a 25% tax credit on Maryland income taxes for qualified expenditures for the rehabilitation of a certified historic structure. The federal government offers a 20% tax credit on federal income taxes for qualified expenditures for the rehabilitation of income-producing certified historic structures.

For additional information, contact the Sykesville Historic District Commission or the Maryland Historical Trust at 410-514-7626 or www.marylandhistoricaltrust.net.

A Reminder from the Guidelines

"Before a property owner begins work, the Historic District Commission must approve any exterior alterations, new construction or changes to important landscape features.... The Historic District Commission meets the fourth Tuesday of each month to review applications for permit approval. The Town Zoning Administrator's Office must receive all application materials by 4:00 p.m. on the third Tuesday of the month in which the applicant wishes to have a review."



HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

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