President’s Message

by Bruce Holberg, President, Society Hill Towers Owners Association

I guess I always knew I was going to have to write this news, and now I do so with mixed happiness and sadness. Beverly Sherman, our esteemed General Manager and my close friend, has announced her retirement from Society Hill Towers. She has provided us with early notification to allow us to plan for an effective transition, while she continues in her role until the end of the year.

On an ongoing basis, Beverly shared her enthusiasm for this, the third chapter in her life, with the Council. We have been remarkably fortunate to have Beverly in our lives and for Society Hill Towers to have been the beneficiary of her unique gifts, creating profound connections with all with whom she comes into contact. She has had the responsibility of maintaining I.M. Pei’s Philadelphia treasure, Society Hill Towers, for 33 years.

Beverly has children and grandchildren in four states, from the East Coast to the West Coast and she is looking forward to spending time with them.

I look forward to staying in touch and updating you as we move toward appointing a new General Manager and the evolution of our organization.

Now, back to everyday life at the Towers. Regarding the HVAC project, we have had some challenges in balancing the systems in the north and west towers, which has resulted in less than effective air conditioning in some units. In your unit, we are re-installing various flow-controlling devices. In the mechanical rooms we are inspecting and testing a labyrinth of pipes, valves, hydraulic separators, chillers, etc. Management and our consulting engineer have been digging into the situation, and we believe we are this close to pinpointing and solving the cause. Incidentally, some residents have reported exceptionally strong A/C. Unfortunately, this balancing difficulty is not something that we could have planned for. It is just part of the trials and travails of marrying a 60-year-old system with a brand new one. As I write this in early July, it is a work in progress.

We are aware that our hallways and elevators have become banged up due to transporting materials during the project. We have estimated enough money to repaint and re-carpet the halls and clean up the elevator cars once the project is over. In the meantime, we are touching up hallway paint and ordering replacement decorative panels for the elevators to replace the two that have been damaged. It is important to maintain our standards of appearance between now and the main part of the re-do.

Most all of us have succumbed to ordering all kinds of merchandise online. It is just SO convenient. What isn’t convenient is what to do with the deluge of packages that arrive on almost a daily basis. While we have storage facilities in each tower, you certainly have seen the overflow in the lobbies. By the way… kudos to our desk clerks who deal with the avalanche of packages every day. Where we have a REAL PROBLEM are the large packages such as TVs, pieces of furniture, tires, etc. Council and management are looking for the best way to handle the package problem, especially these huge items. For now, we ask that residents BE HOME to receive these large shipments so that arrangements can be made to get them out of the lobby and up to individual units. If you have received notice that a large item is going to be delivered, please plan on being home if at all possible, or reschedule the delivery for a time that would be more convenient for you.

Here’s a handy reminder… if you are expecting guests over the summer, don’t forget about our guest apartments. There is a choice of two, the efficiency at 6E West ($90 Monday-Thursday, $100 Friday-Sunday), and now the two-bedroom at 7A North ($150 and $175). Bookings are very strong as these are great facilities at an economical price.

We now are officially on the back half of summer. Enjoy it, and be safe.

Bruce Holberg
President, SHTOA
Man of Monumental Visions

Tribute to I.M. Pei

Since the publication of the last issue of this newsletter, we’ve received some sad news. I.M. Pei, the famous architect who designed the Society Hill Towers, passed away on May 16th at the age of 102.

Pei was born in southern China and spent much of his youth in Suzhou, an area known for its beautiful gardens and canals. The Pei family's garden, called “Garden of the Lion Forest,” is a two-acre site where ponds represent lakes and large rocks represent mountains. Doors and windows frame these pictures of nature and evoke grand landscapes. The complex design of the “Lion Forest” and the way the garden deals with light, shadow, and other natural forms, had a lasting influence on Pei which we find here at the Towers.

Pei planned the Towers’ five-acre site to “frame” important views in the surrounding area, such as that of Old Christ Church, in the same way that traditional Chinese buildings frame views of gardens. He included trees, shrubs, and open grassy areas in the site design, in accord with William Penn’s original plan that Philadelphia was to be a “Greene Countrie Towne.”

Sally Sells and her husband, Bill, Alcoa’s vice president in charge of Towers Development, lived in a Towers townhouse while the high-rises were still under construction. Sally commented, “I.M. Pei visited our house (also designed by him) a few times to discuss the Society Hill Project with my husband. Pei insisted that the green space (lawn) behind the Towers be left as green space, with no structures thereon. He was also very interested and had to approve the three sculptures by Jacques Lipschitz before they were purchased. Pei went with Bill to Hastings-on-Hudson to visit Lipschitz’s studio and look at the pre-casts.” Bill and Pei also went to the White House to visit President Kennedy, who had endorsed the selection of Pei for the project.

I.M. Pei was a small, unassuming man of few words. He was modest, considering his accomplishments — which included designing the new entrance to the Louvre in Paris, the first western-style hotel to be built in Communist China, the Kennedy Library in Boston, and the new wing of the National Gallery in Washington, DC. — and considering the accolades that were inevitably showered upon him. He was also a professor of architecture at Harvard University.

The world-famous architect and his works earned tributes in many forms from countries all around the world. An Argentine newspaper mentioned the Society Hill Towers among Pei’s other accomplishments, commenting: “Pei remained a committed modernist, and while none of his buildings could be called outdated or traditional; their particular modernist design is clearly clean, reserved, sharp, outstanding, with a simple use of geometry and with aspirations to monumentality.”

This observation caught the eye of our neighbor Christopher Anderson, who noted that “it presents an appropriate guideline in making decisions about Towers design projects.” Likewise, manager Beverly Sherman says, “It is in the light of Pei’s legacy that we make all decisions. Whether the project is hallways, the fountain, the swimming pool, or the landscaping, after the bids are in, the conferences with contractors completed, the advice from Council and residents received, one silent consultation remains, will this honor the vision of I.M. Pei?”

We hope that the Towers’ stewards, present and future, will continue to honor Pei’s monumental visions.
Dining Club

“Peruvian Cuisine? Never Tried It!”

By Bruce Holberg

That would be a common response, but also a loss as 25 Society Hill Towers Dining Club members found out on May 21st as we solved this mystery at Vista Peru just up Second Street. Peruvian food is really a fusion of influences from the Incas, West Africans, Spanish, and Asians.

We each started with a Pisco Sour, the signature drink of Peru, made with brandy, lime, sugar, and egg white. Then we enjoyed three appetizers, potatoes topped with a yellow pepper/cheese sauce, won ton fritters stuffed with cheese accompanied by guacamole, and a mix of fish, calamari and shrimp ceviche. The mains were the famous Lomo Saltado (steak with onions, tomatoes and fries) and shrimp fried rice. A special rice pudding buttoned it up.

We are in the planning stages of our next dinner, so be on the lookout. We always enjoy wonderful food and camaraderie at a reasonable cost. You’d fit right in.

Save the Date: September 11th

“Let’s Talk” Speaker Series Returns

How modes of travel shape the way that we live.

By Jo Holz

After a summer hiatus, the “Let’s Talk” Speaker Series returns on September 11th at 7:30 p.m. in the Community Room, with a presentation by our neighbor Jason Laughlin, a reporter for The Philadelphia Inquirer who covers transportation. Whether you are a regular user of Philadelphia’s mass transit system, prefer to drive, or like to walk, the state of the city’s transportation system affects you directly, because it is a vital element in the city’s economic, social, and civic health, and quality of life. Jason will discuss the past, present, and future of Philadelphia’s transportation systems and the ways they are looking ahead to both new opportunities and difficult challenges in the coming years. Mark your calendar for what promises to be a fascinating and informative session, and keep an eye out for a more detailed announcement.
Sue’s Produce Market is a family business founded in 1976. Cool Down with Fresh Juice

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Sue’s Produce Market is a family business founded 1976.
Poolside Tasting

Mellow Vibe for Spring Wine Tasting

By Tom Newman

The weather cooperated beyond expectations for the spring wine tasting by the pool. It was a glorious early start to summer after a cool wet spring, to everyone’s relief. The turnout reflected a higher proportion of newcomers and youthful participants than any prior Towers tasting. The vibe was mellow as dappled afternoon sunlight lit up the bubbles in the sparkling wine. Everyone had their favorites, with wines from around the world, and the exquisite food service led by Annie Uris perfectly brought out the flavors of the wines. Conversations lasted into the dark, long after the last bottle was poured. The Activities Committee approved another poolside tasting on the final evening of the pool season, so save the date: Friday, September 27th. Watch BuildingLink for details.

Poolside Music

Live Jazz Night

By J. Otis Smith

Towers residents gathered by the pool on June 23rd to enjoy live music at Society Hill Towers first Jazz Night. The Temple Avenue Jazz Quintet served up a swinging set of toe-tapping tunes, and light refreshments were served as well.
Celebrating Freedom and Independence

Dining and Dancing, Stars and Stripes

Photos by Todd Sherman
Fourth of July Festivities
Who needs Yoga?
Let us remove the stress from buying or selling

Buying a home can be stressful, challenging, emotional, hectic, and definitely monumental. We experienced all these things as anyone would, but it was Jody and Johanna who were instrumental in guiding us through the process with great success. What most impressed us, which is atypical to most realtors, is the unbelievable patience and understanding that Jody and Johanna demonstrated. If I needed time to think about things- it was respected. If I had a question or interest in a property, the response was immediate. Mostly, they are both extremely knowledgeable and caring people.

Ed and Alissa Blumenthal  July 2019

Johanna, & Jody
Thanks for your services in the selling of my condominium. Needless to say your professionalism and knowledge of the market made the transaction easy and hassle free.
Thanks again for getting a great price! Robert Goldberg, D.D.S. July 2019

Johanna & Jody,

It has been a week since the settlement on my dad’s condominium in Society Hill Towers. It has been a pleasure working with both of you at a time when my 2 sisters and I were suffering the lost of our dad and having to deal with the selling of his home. You know the market and you guided me through the necessary things needed to be done to get his place ready for sale. My phone calls and texts were answered promptly with the information I needed. I wish you both all the best and if I am asked for recommendations for realtors, there is no doubt who I will recommend!

Ronnie Leonard  June 2019

RECENTLY SOLD AT SOCIETY HILL TOWERS
19A North – two bedroom one bath
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More Room for Your Guests

Two-Bedroom Hospitality Suite Available

A second hospitality suite, this one on the seventh floor of the North Tower, has been opened to provide even more room for your guests. This two-bedroom suite can accommodate up to six guests. It’s priced at $150-$175 per night (prices varying according to the day of the week and the level of demand, which goes up and down throughout the year). The first suite, on the sixth floor of the West Tower, is still available for only $90 to $100 per night. It sleeps four.

Both units have four-star furnishings and fully functioning kitchens, allowing your guests to rest and relax in complete comfort. For more details or to make reservations call Donna in the Management Office at 215-923-4105.

Cancellation Policy

If a reservation is cancelled 14 days in advance or more, then there is no cancellation fee.

If a reservation is cancelled between five and 13 days in advance and there is no one on the waiting list to take over the reservation, then there will be a one night charge.

If the cancellation is made less than five days before the reservation date, and there is no one on the waiting list to take over the reservation, then there is a two night cancellation fee.

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**Society Hill Towers News**
Selling Society Hill Towers Condominiums for 38 Years

FOR SALE! Sun-soaked Corner Two Bedroom

Sun-soaked two bedroom, two bathroom boasting views to the east and south, recently updated kitchen with stainless steel appliances and ample entertaining space.

1,183 sf | Offered for $529,900

FOR SALE! Spacious One Bedroom

One bedroom, one bathroom with modern finishes, walls of floor-to-ceiling windows, an updated kitchen and wood floors throughout.

683 sf | Offered for $259,900

FOR SALE! Corner One Bedroom with Treetop Views

Corner one bedroom with treetop views of Society Hill and the river, new wood floors, walls of windows providing incredible natural light and great closet space throughout.

750 sf | Offered for $275,000

SOLD!
We can sell yours, too!
Selling at Society Hill Towers for 38 Years

Thinking of buying or selling a condo at Society Hill Towers?
Call us.
We are happy to help you.

Some of our recent sales at Society Hill Towers

| 3B North  | 7B North  |
| 11BCD North | 22AH West |
| 24G North  | 5B North  |
| 14C South  | 19A North |
| 28E North  | 4G North  |
| 23B South  | 31C West  |
| 26C West   | 24B West  |
| 26B West   | 2B South  |
| 10E West   | 26C West  |
| 19BCD South | PH5 South |
| 8F South   | 12G South |
| PH6 South  | 29E South |
| 21G West   | 10AH North|
| 4E South   | 21F West  |
| 2E West    | 22D North |
| 2D South   | 28F North |