



Chestnut Hill Local

(/)
Wednesday, August 28, 2024

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Another Royal Rummage sale celebrates Hill history

Posted Thursday, August 15, 2024 12:00 am

by **Otto Mezei**

Chestnut Hill's (<https://chestnuthilllocal.com/chestnut-hill/>) annual Royal Rummage Sale, held the last weekend in July, attracted visitors from across the city – continuing a cherished tradition that began about 60 years ago. The three-day event, featuring discounts at local shops and restaurants, has long been a staple of the community, drawing people from all walks of life to this historic neighborhood.

The sale, which has been a fixture in Chestnut Hill for decades, offers something for everyone. With the town's diverse array of shops and eateries, visitors found everything from discounted books to unique home goods and local culinary delights.

However, the Royal Rummage Sale was almost completely different in the early years of its life. According to Alex Bartlett, curator and archivist at the Chestnut Hill Conservancy (https://chestnuthilllocal.com/browse.html?search_filter=Chestnut+Hill+Conservancy), the event was first developed in response to the suburban shopping malls that were opening in the area after World War II. Local stores needed a way to compete.

"In the early years, there were plans to 'colonialize' the storefronts," Bartlett said. This proposed initiative aimed to give the town a more unified feel.

However, Chestnut Hill ultimately chose a different path. Instead of homogenizing its appearance, the town embraced diversity, allowing each store to maintain its unique identity. Today, no two shops along the main thoroughfare are alike, contributing to the area's charm and appeal.

Bartlett also revealed an interesting historical tidbit:

"The name was nearly changed to 'Chestnut Hill's Clean Sweep Days' back when the sale was still young," Bartlett said. But "Royal Rummage Sale" stuck, and has since become synonymous with summer shopping in Chestnut Hill.

For some local business owners, the Royal Rummage Sale represents a rite of passage. Maura Harris, who recently opened her shop EMBER, celebrated her first sale as a proprietor. However, her history with the event extends much further back.



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"I worked on the Avenue in various stores, but a particular store I actually worked in was a candle shop in the '90s. That was my job pretty much through high school," Harris reminisced. "I remember the event from growing up in the area, and it was kind of like an exciting event."

Harris emphasized the event's importance to the community: "When we find those events that people can feel like they're connecting back to the history of the community, it's a nice way to make everybody feel really welcome and part of something bigger."

"The people coming in this week in particular and getting this humongous stack of books, that is not too much money," said Debra Gress Jansen, owner of the bookstore booked. "It's fantastic for shop owners and consumers because it gives you a great deal on something either that you were looking for or maybe you didn't know you were looking for."

Jansen, who grew up in the area and attended the sale before becoming a shop owner herself, added, "It's a comfort because we have come to depend on it. To walk into some of your favorite shops and see what they put out as far as the sale, you really can get some amazing deals. So as a consumer, it is just fantastic."

The Royal Rummage Sale serves as a testament to the power of tradition and community in an era of online shopping and big-box stores. By bringing together locals and visitors, merchants and consumers, the event fosters a sense of connection that resonates throughout the year. For shoppers and business owners alike, it's not just about the discounts or the thrill of finding a bargain; it's about being part of a longstanding tradition that celebrates the unique character of the neighborhood.

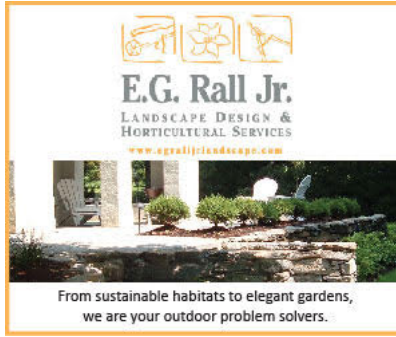
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LOCAL CALENDAR

<p>Thu, Aug 29 Read, Baby, Read... Richmond Branch Philadelphia, PA Wed, Aug 28 @8:30am Harmony Summer Camp for ages 3-8 years Beth David Reform Congregation Wed, Aug 28 @9:30am The Riverlink Ferry System on the Delaware River Waterfront Penns Landing Waterfront Wed, Aug 28 @10:00am Jill Dougherty- Glass and Petals: A Still Life Exploration Black Moth Gallery</p>	<p>Sun, Sep 01 American Political... Pennsylvania Con... Philadelphia, PA</p>	<p>Sat, Sep 14 @4:00pm Paint and Sip and Socializ... Manayunk Mark...</p>	<p>Thu, Aug 29 Read, Baby, Read... Richmond Branch Philadelphia, PA</p>	<p>Sun, Sep 01 American Political... Pennsylvania Con... Philadelphia, PA</p>
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[All Events \(https://chestnuthilllocal.com/events/\)](https://chestnuthilllocal.com/events/)

THE LATEST

CHCA Agenda (/stories/chca-agenda,33388)

To register for any of the Zoom meetings go to: <https://www.chestnuthill.org/meetings.php>



Heat wave forces some NW Philly schools to close (/stories/heat-wave-forces-some-nw-philly-schools-to-close,33387)

As Philadelphia braces for a short but intense heatwave, the city's school district has announced early dismissals for dozens of schools.

(/stories/heat-wave-forces-some-nw-philly-schools-to-close,33387)



More trains, better times: SEPTA expands regional rail (/stories/more-trains-better-times-septa-expands-regional-rail,33377)

In the face of a \$240 million budget deficit, SEPTA announced that it plans to add trains to its regional rail service starting Sept. 8.

(/stories/more-trains-better-times-septa-expands-

regional-rail,33377)



New CHH leadership charts ambitious plan for growth (/stories/new-chh-leadership-charts-ambitious-plan-for-growth,33376)

If you want to know what a hospital means to a community, just consider the impact when one is suddenly closed.

(/stories/new-chh-leadership-charts-ambitious-plan-for-growth,33376)



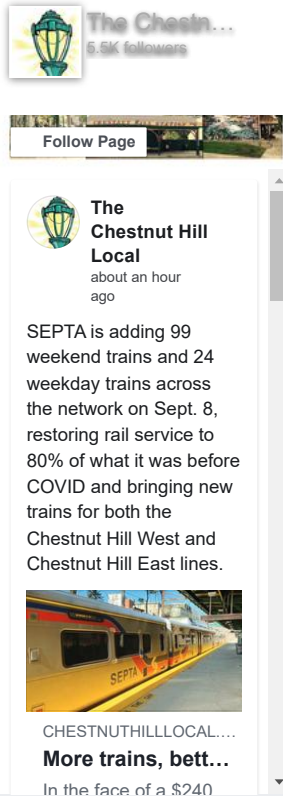
A local 'living legend' celebrates 100 years (/stories/a-local-living-legend-celebrates-100-years,33375)

Tom Fitzpatrick's life "is a tapestry of bravery, knowledge, humor and deep faith," said a close friend.

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SEPTA is adding 99 weekend trains and 24 weekday trains across the network on Sept. 8, restoring rail service to 80% of what it was before COVID and bringing new trains for both the Chestnut Hill West and Chestnut Hill East lines.



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