



REAL QUICK

1

TWO NEW RESTAURANTS.

Bella Luna's Italian restaurant and Jimmie & Sook's Bar and Grill are both opening downtown soon! See page 2.

2

GOING GREEN.

Downtown will be getting greener this year. Read how on page 2.

3

THE ART OF LOVE. Looking for an artful way to celebrate Valentine's Day? How about dinner downtown, followed by champagne, dessert, and some "love-ly" art? See page 3.

FIRE ON RACE STREET: ONE YEAR LATER

Rising from the ashes

It's been a year since flames shot up in downtown Cambridge, consuming two antiques businesses, causing damage to others, and changing the face of downtown. A reminder of what we've lost, what we've recovered, and what we've gained.

PHOTO BY DAVE HARP



JAN. 15, 2008: Fire struck downtown. More than 200 emergency personnel (aka heroes) prevented it from spreading further. Two businesses were lost: Shorebid Antiques and Wm. G. Willikers; and there was smoke and water damage to the Salvation Army and newly renovated apartments at 450 Race. Some feared for the future of downtown.

TODAY: The fire seemed to spark a new momentum in Cambridge: Since early 2008, 11 new businesses have opened (and more are on the way). Taste of Cambridge sold a record number of tickets in July.



JAN. 23, 2008:

Residents rallied to save the historic facade of the fire-damaged building from demolition.

TODAY: The large steel beams and concrete blocks will be replaced in coming months with an interior bracing system. Then, according to building owner Brett Summers, a replica of the original tin cornice will be installed, the steel beams and sidewalk cover will be removed, and the mural panels will be installed in the storefront sections of the façade. The structure eventually will be rebuilt.



JUNE 2008:

Artists and volunteers began creating the Mosaic Mural to dress up the facade of the fire-damaged building. The mosaic brought together community members, gained media attention on both sides of the Shore—and won mosaic artist Jen Wagner the city's first-ever beautification award from Mayor Victoria Jackson-Stanley.



NOVEMBER 2008: Not ones to let the fire win after destroying their antiques business, Karen Fishell and Kevin Davidson reopened Shorebid Antiques a couple of blocks away near the corner of Race and Washington Streets.

FIRE (ANNIVERSARY) SALE 2ND SAT. JAN. 10!

Celebrate downtown's resurgence despite the fire one year ago by coming downtown Second Saturday, Jan. 10. Look for red-hot bargains at merchants, including Never On Tuesday (buy one get one free on used hard-cover books). Plus art galleries and stores will stay open late. (See arts roundup on page 3.) Details at www.cambridgemainstreet.com.

LOOKING AHEAD TO 2009

Two new restaurants opening soon

Jimmie & Sook's: Inspired by Sunday dinners "down below" at her grandmother's house in Bishops Head, Amanda Bramble is opening Jimmie & Sook's Raw Bar and Grill in the spot that Cambridge Grill recently vacated at 421 Race Street. Starting as soon as Jan. 26, J&S will offer breakfast, lunch, and dinner daily, along with a raw bar with oysters, clams, mussels, shrimp, and king crab legs. Dishes will include everything from crab cake benedict and oysters Rockefeller to meatloaf and chicken and dumplings. Not only does she want to share the recipes of her late grandmother, she also wants to share the watermen's heritage that runs deep in her family. She'll have on display her great-grandfather's oyster tongs and other waterman tools—all

AMANDA BRAMBLE IN THE NEW JIMMIE & SOOK'S.



from Dorchester County. Ms. Bramble has managed several restaurants on the Western Shore, but, she says, "I really wanted the restaurant to be here. This is where I'm from. This is what I wanted to be part of." She also wants to keep things reasonable with "prices that both lawyers and crabbers can afford."

Bella Luna: The old High Spot at 305 High Street will soon open as a second location for Bella Luna in Royal Oak. For chef/owner Barbara Helish, the focus is on local, organic, and fresh. You may have already had a taste of her homemade mozzarella or pesto at the Main Street Farmers' Market, where she was a regular vendor. Her standards include made-from-scratch ravioli, sausage and sun-dried tomato in rosemary cream, and shrimp, olives, and oranges over fettuccine; and in the fall, an oyster stew. Bella Luna will be open for lunch and dinner seven days, plus brunch on Sunday. To sign up for Bella Luna's dining club (offering specials and discounts), call 410.745.6100 or email bhelish@bellalunarestaurant.net.



Exact opening dates to be posted soon at www.cambridge-mainstreet.com.

Downtown Cambridge is going green

Downtown will see 25 new trees planted in the coming year, thanks to a grant of more than \$9,600 from Chesapeake Bay Trust. The trees will be planted in a 10-block area of downtown that includes the "Maple Street" district, named after the new residential revitalization effort spearheaded by Cambridge Main Street and encompassing the 400 and 500 blocks of Pine Street, as well as nearby

blocks of Muir, Gay, and High streets.

"Studies show that people tend to linger longer and shop more in areas

where more trees add to the atmosphere," said Meredith Lathbury, chair of Main Street's Green committee. "Plus, the shade trees provide often help nearby buildings stay cooler and use less air conditioning."

Main Street will be putting two other "green" grants to good use. The Maple Street district will receive \$3,000 toward planting and community cleanup efforts through Main Street Maryland's Main Street Improvement Program. Another \$2,000 in state funds will help Main Street add more plantings downtown.

To learn more or to volunteer, email office@cambridgemainstreet.com or call 410.228.0020.

Key findings of the Pine Street area report

Better housing conditions, more lighting, improved streetscapes, more job opportunities, reduced crime, and better services for families in need were top on the wishlists of residents in the Pine Street area adjoining downtown. That's part of what's contained in a 60-page report that's meant to identify the community's assets and needs and survey residents about their priorities for the future.

The report, presented to the City Council in late December, also includes an inventory of historic and cultural sites and a compilation of the general physical conditions of area build-

ings. The project will help drive the priorities of Cambridge Main Street's new Maple Street project, which aims to do residential revitalization work in a seven-block area that includes key blocks of Pine, Gay, Muir, and High Streets.

The project was a partnership among Cambridge Main Street, City of Cambridge, Dorchester Elks Lodge #223, and Neighborhood for a Better Cambridge and was funded through a mini-grant from the Heart of Chesapeake Country Heritage Area. The report will soon be available for download at www.cambridgemainstreet.com.

EVENTS

2nd
SAT.

JAN. 10

Fire (Anniversary) Sale

Red-hot sales, artist receptions and exhibits.

JAN. 19, 7 a.m.

Martin Luther King, Jr. Prayer Breakfast

Mayor Victoria Jackson-Stanley will be the speaker. Elks Lodge #223 (618 Pine St.). \$12 adults, \$6 for 12 and under. Info: Call Bill Jarmon (301.221.1732) or Herschel Johnson (410.228.6657).

FEB. 14, 7-10 p.m.

Valentine's Event at Main Street Gallery

Champagne, dessert, art, silent auction, raffle. \$25. (See page 3.)

SAVE THE DATES!

MARCH 14

Harriet Tubman Day Dinner

MAY 9

Groove City Jazz & Blues Festival

THURSDAYS,
MAY-OCTOBER

Main Street Farmers' Market

JULY 11

Taste of Cambridge

SEPTEMBER 19

Summer Send-Off Beer & Wine Block Party

SEPTEMBER 26

Choptank Heritage Skipjack Races

SEPTEMBER 27

Dorchester Arts Showcase

OCTOBER 23-25

Schooner Rendezvous

People—and a city—to watch



Meanwhile, Bistro Poplar (535 Poplar St.) was named one of "20 Hot Restaurants" in the February 2009 issue of *Chesapeake Life* magazine.

Cambridge folks cleaned up in the list of People to Watch in the January issue of *What's Up Eastern Shore*. Four out of the 12 up-and-coming men and women, all under 40, either live or work in Cambridge—and three of them are active Main Street volunteers! Congratulations to Chad Malkus (Main Street board president), Brian Roche (who helped organize the liquor license petition and rally), Jen Wagner (mosaic artist), and Keasha Haythe (director of Dorchester County Economic Development). Thanks for all you do!

ARTS & CULTURE

Main Street Gallery: Wrap It Up: **Comfort and Joy** continues through January with an intriguing mix of regional painting, sculpture, photography, mosaic, and mixed media. Gallery will be open

until 8:30 p.m. on Second Saturday, Jan. 10. The gallery is operated by Cambridge Main

Street. Also mark your calendar for a special event at the gallery Feb. 14 (see story at upper right). 413 Muir Street

ARTS



Dorchester Center for the Arts: **1** Showing the pottery of Paul Aspell, the stoneware of Signe Hanson, and the ceramics and drawings of Pamela Theis Jan. 8–31. Artists' Reception 6–8 p.m. Jan. 10 with live music and refreshments by Kay's Country Kitchen. (Hubbard's Pharmacy is sponsoring the show.) **2**

Members of the Dorchester Center for the Arts are encouraged to submit their entries for the February Members' Show Feb. 5–28, 2009. For details, call 410.228.7782. **3** Follow your New Year's resolution to explore your creativity!

Download the 2009 Class Schedule at www.dorchesterartscenter.org or stop by the center. 321 High Street

Joie de Vivre's Easel Street Gallery: Now featuring work by fabric artist Sylvia G Snyder. The gallery will be open until 8 p.m. on Jan. 10. 410 Race Street

Maris Elaine Gallery: Presenting the work of multimedia artist Win Peterman Jan. 10–Feb. 4, with an artist reception 5:30–8:30 p.m.

Saturday, Jan. 10. And now featuring work from new resident artists from Brazil: Antonio Carlos and Paulo Molinari, Italian glass maker masters and Carlos Sobral, jewelry designer. 520 Race Street



447 Studios & Gallery: Exhibiting recent works of artists Willy Schlossbach, Mary Ann Schindler, Jen Wagner, Patti Lucas Hopkins, Sarah Stolte, Shelly Roche, Maureen Sheridan Farrell, Karen Maskell Peck, and Julie Patterson. 447 Race Street

Never On Tuesday Books: Featuring works by a half-dozen local artists, including John Root Hopkins and Antonia Burns. Open late on Jan. 10. 527 Poplar Street

Art and love, champagne, and dessert Feb. 14

After Valentine's Day dinner downtown, enjoy an artful dessert during a special fundraising event at the Main Street Gallery 7–10 p.m., Saturday, Feb. 14. Indulge in champagne and desserts while browsing works of art that will be offered through a silent auction and a raffle. Tickets: \$25 per person (includes raffle ticket). Proceeds benefit the gallery. To reserve your spot, email art@cambridgemainstreet.com or call 443.477.3699.

& MORE

Acoustic Jam:

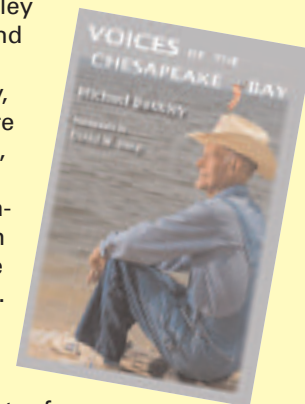
Join musicians playing bluegrass, gospel, blues, roots, and more, 9:30 a.m.–noon, Feb. 7 (and every first Saturday) at the library meeting room. Listeners welcome. For info, call 410.228.7331. 303 Gay Street

Drama: Auditions for *Love Letters*:

The Dorchester Drama Guild will present Pulitzer Prize-nominated drama *Love Letters* by A.R. Gurney. To be directed by Erica Tecce. For information on auditions, call 410.228.7782.

Voices of the Chesapeake Bay Book

Talk and Signing: Join author Michael Buckley and photographer and Cambridge resident David Harp Saturday, Jan. 24, as they share from their new book, *Voices of the Chesapeake Bay*, which features interviews with more than 50 people from all walks of life. 5–6 p.m.: wine and cheese. 6 p.m.: book talk and signing. Free. Dorchester Center for the Arts, 321 High Street.



NEWS BITS

- 1** Be a part of the **inauguration festivities** Jan. 20! Breeze Away is offering transportation to D.C.; call 410.221.8833. Or make a day of it in Cambridge: Head to the library (303 Gay St.) to watch the swearing-in ceremony starting at 11 a.m. At 3:45 p.m. there will be an Inaugural Rally at the Dorchester County Courthouse (Spring Valley). Then more celebration at Bethel Church (623 Pine St.) at 4:45 p.m. Wrap it up with the Inaugural Gala 6–7:30 p.m. at the library (ticket required, but tickets are free—pick yours up at the library).
- 2** The **Robin Hood Shop** (416 High Street) will have select items at half price Jan. 26–31.
- 3** **Scoop Station** (400 Muir St.) has gone into hibernation for the rest of January and February.
- 4** Farewell to **Orange Blossoms** (437 Race St.), which, like many flower shops nationwide, has been hit hard by the economy's woes.
- 5** **Curran-Bromwell Funeral Home** (308 High Street) was featured in the Dec. 22 *Baltimore Sun* as one of the only funeral homes in Maryland offering Orioles-themed funeral caskets. (Sorry, no Ravens-themed caskets yet.)