

# The Mayor is In

The official blog spot for Mayor Ellen Moyer of the City of Annapolis, Maryland

**Sunday, August 30, 2009**

Third Installment

The Week of Highs and Lows.....August 17 – August 29

I took 3 days off, the first not city related business that I can remember in quite awhile. Last weekend I was not thinking about city matters but exploring antique shops and reading and writing for fun. I found a wood cut of Annapolis harbor and Sadlers Hardware store by a P.Trout in one of the stores. A goggle search for P.Trout came up empty. If anyone knows the artist please let me know.

Over the last two weeks the city has finished the under-grounding of wires on Hanover Street. Fifteen years under consideration, the worse of the streets and sidewalks in the city is now the envy of those who hope to have their streets fixed too. Maryland Ave. is next and the design phase is to begin soon.

This city is a happening town. The Mayor is the chief advocate and welcomes groups of people who choose Annapolis for conferences. But I also attend book signings and Navy football parties and Events sponsored by other organizations and ribbon cuttings for new businesses. One of the big events this past week was the re-opening of the Museum at the Naval Academy. This is a special place and a must stop for the history buff.

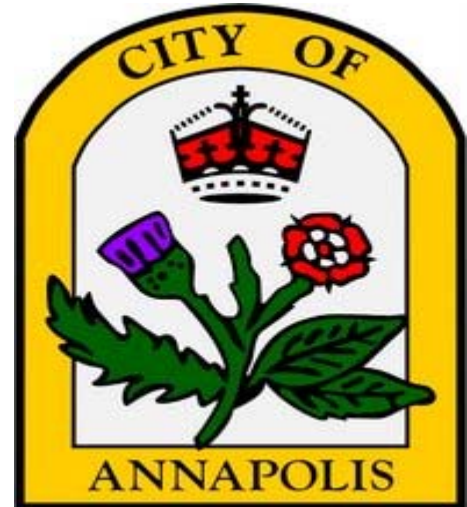
While the town is bustling with high energy happenings, I seldom see the faces of those Annapolitans who appear at City Council meetings or those who regale us with emails and venom filled blogs enjoying the downtown city life.

The low for the week came in a copy of a newspaper article I received. The article was written in the Washington Post on July 23, 1994 by reporter Richard Tapscott and is titled Md. Housing Official Quits Amid Pay Probe of Advisor.

I quote the opening paragraphs...

"A high-ranking Maryland housing official has resigned following disclosures that she authorized the state's financial advisor on millions of dollars in bond issues to receive two kinds of compensation from public funds.

"Trudy P. McFall, the longtime director of the Community



Development Administration, abruptly left the post last month. The move came weeks after the state attorney general began investigating whether it was proper for the outside adviser,.....,to be paid \$225,000 a year directly from the state and draw additional pay from the bond proceeds.....

"The alleged dual compensation, which investigators called unusual, came to light in April when the state began complying with new Securities and Exchange Commission disclosure rules.

"McFall, who left after 13 years with the agency, declined to comment on....pay or Curran's investigation"  
the story in the Post continues for 20 more paragraphs.

I appointed Ms. McFall to the Housing Authority Board believing her experience with affordable housing would be an asset to the agency. I did not check her background and I have to assume some responsibility for what transpired in the Housing Authority under her leadership. As the Boards Chair the Housing Authority reached an all time high in drug and homicide incidents and received an all time low failing score from HUD on issues related to administration and management. The city as a whole has paid the price for this mismanagement.

Question to ponder...Let's stick with last weeks question from the Dan Rather challenge on news reporting. Through a glitch I am not sure it was ever available.

(Response to the issue of the unpaid worker....at 6 am on a Saturday there was no way to verify the accuracy of her story and no fund exists for the Mayor to write a check on. She was advised to meet with the Human Resources staff first thing on Monday morning. There was no further contact from the employee.)

*Posted by Mayor Ellen Moyer at 4:39 PM 0 comments*  
**Sunday, August 16, 2009**

### **The Week of Highs and Lows**



I first created a blog several years ago when I visited some of the city of Annapolis sister cities. Impressions and experiences on this trip were posted on the site for city staff and others to follow. My personal family and a few friends are probably the only ones who actually followed the international visit.

Now I am reactivating this site. I hope to share my experience and concerns in



public ire on a weekly basis. I would like to engage in a civil thoughtful dialogue on issues of concern.

I am increasingly troubled by the growth of a mean spirited social climate. An inability to think about things substantively or to ask the questions how and why cripple the democratic and representative way of life that has inspired others in this world of ours to emulate. Once we were called the ugly Americans. Is that an undeserved title? I think so. Americans are welcoming and gracious and caring people. Yet there are a handful of hate mongers...the bad apples that spoil the bushel. So on this blog comments that include profanity or personal attacks or inappropriate material or anonymous commentary will be removed. Bullies not allowed. Civil commentary, new ideas, new facts welcome.

I will begin each week with a story of the highs and lows in my experience of life in the public arena. Obviously this is my personal observation. I will end each week with a question to think about and comment on in civil lets talk.

## Second Installment

The week of highs and lows...August 9 to August 16.

### The highs...

This week we cut the ribbon for the revitalized Market House and Annapolitans celebrated its return to city management. I am happy to have it back in City hands. Market House is alive again! It is clear from the reception it has received that visitors and residents will make MH a must stop and a place to meet and eat and shop.

Memories in the public arena are oft times short. Who remembers the 2004 citizen's committee support for privatizing the management of the MH, an action urged by downtown merchants and residents including Ward I? The City Council of 2001-2005 listened to the public demand and voted to privatize MH management. The selection of Site Reality for this position by another committee was a wrong fit for this town. The private management company was found to be negligent in its relationship with its tenants by Judge Caroom.

Today MH vendors with fresh produce and flowers and desserts and soup and sandwiches and the art work of area artists are breathing new life into the center of our downtown. The music and clip-clop of horses, the stalls of the farmers market, the tents protecting the craft vendors on the Third Sunday Festival, the

profusion of flowers, the coming and goings of boats in ego alley speak to the special positive joyous community spirit that has defined Annapolis since Colonial days.

If you haven't been downtown lately and if you like a festive occasion, come on down and participate in your community and the Market House as a place to meet, eat and shop.

The low

The Capital newspaper is still beating the negative drum on the MH or more specifically the Mayor calling it "at the center of the Mayoral race". Since most candidates support the same thing...city management with an array of produce similar to what it is today what is the point?

Some years back the previous editor and publisher of the local newspaper waged a 25 year campaign to tear the MH down. This was finally supported by 6 to 2 vote of the City Council in 1968. The decision was reversed by another Mayor Moyer in 1969 and the sale of the newspaper brought the demolition campaign to an end.

Isn't it time for this local newspaper to change its tune and with a little happy talk celebrate with the community? Privatizing the MH was a City Council decision and I have paid the price for that wrong decision. Let's look forward to community support to meet, eat and shop at MH, a 300 year establishment central to the life of this city.

Point to Ponder

On August 9, writing in the Washington Post, Dan Rather called for a commission to address "the perilous state of Americas new media". He questioned the way news is delivered and the quality of information the public receives which he defined as "more opinion commentary and marketing masquerading as news". Seeing "this a crisis that...threatens our democratic republic at its core", Rather called for a public discussion on the "role news is meant to play in our democratic system of government".

What do you think?

First Installment

The week of highs and lows...August 1 to August 8.

The highs...

This week I was notified that Annapolis, the City I and many

dedicated public servants lead, was selected as one of 10 finalists for an International Award for Livable Communities. The judging criteria for the finalists from 6 Countries concern enhancement of the landscape, heritage management, environmentally sensitive practices, community sustainability, healthy lifestyles and planning for the future. The awards ceremony is October 12 in this years host city Pilsen, Czech Republic. This recognition has inspired staff creativity as we prepare a 12 minute DVD on our fabulous city for the international audience. I hope the citizens of Annapolis and the State feel the same sense of pride as the city staff on the selection of the capital city as one of ten liveable communities around the world.

This week Annapolis was selected as a destination of the week by green city living and green travel. Journalist Carrie Madren write "Beyond its claim as the sailing capital of the world, Annapolis has grown into the environmental hub of the Chesapeake Bay region...400-year-old Annapolis is a colonial city evolving into modern, sustainable life...encouraging ecosystem restoration, green practices and environmental designs throughout its domain."

Another high was the spirit and enthusiasm expressed in the conference hosted by the Md. Dept. of Agriculture Horse Council to bring a sense of cooperation, collaboration and coordination to the States Equine Industry. We were there because the cities master plan for Recreation and Parks outlines miles of riding trails surrounding our water plant and the General Eisenhower Golf Course. This interest was first recognized during the administration of Mayor Dick Hillman decades ago.

The statewide renewed interest within this conference for the sustainability of this 1.6 billion revenue generator industry grabbed the attention of the Governor. The equine industry helps maintain our open-space and impacts many small businesses. It is also one of the fastest growing leisure sports. I hope the energy results in positive outcomes for this industry so linked to Marylands History. Thoroughbred Racing as we know it began in Annapolis in 1720. We are host to the nations oldest sporting jockey club.

Another high, a personal one, was the curiosity and thrill of my 3 year old grand son over a simple music-box gift that played Happy Birthday.

The Lows

Despite the simple meow greeting by my cats when I come home that keeps me grounded, I have not been able to put aside a stunning mean-spirited action that arouses my disgust with those whose main purpose seems to be gaining personal power by expanding a circle of hate and disruption. None of the angerites that I know have ever contributed to a city function dedicated to enhancing the communities quality of life.

To be specific, this week the city hosted three 15 year old students

from our sister city in France, Rochefort. Rochefort is a sailing community near La Rochelle the ultimate European sailing center well known by our own maritime community. The Hermonime, Lafayette's ship that sailed to America to join General George Washington in the American Revolution is being rebuilt in Rochefort and will sail to the USA and to Annapolis soon. Students in Rochefort participated in an essay contest about visiting the USA from the lessons they learned from their own history. Three were chosen and supported by the Rochefort city government to visit Annapolis if we would provide a safe haven for them when they arrived. We agreed and we did with the help of city staff, a host family, the Annapolis Sailing School and the Eastport Yacht Club. Because Annapolis is an international city (the State Department routinely brings delegations from around the globe to our city to learn about local government, a rarity in many emerging new nations) the city budget includes dollars to enable us to be good hosts just as you would hope to be with visitors in your own home. The Council has passed this budget item for several years. It is therefore a policy of the city.

Yet one council member and the local newspaper challenged our support for these students claiming the city was fiscally stressed and considering furlough of employees...none of which is true! Do not take my word for this...read the reports and analysis of multiple fiscal analysts on the city web. We are one lucky fiscally strong and stable city.

Common courtesy suggests if one wanted to raise the fiscal challenge and appropriateness of our international support program one would do so after our guests returned home and at the time of the next budget deliberation. If you met these students you would be affected by their enthusiasm, their idealism, their sense of joy and wonder and appreciation. Yet we put forth a negative you are not welcome story for them to carry home. What was the point of this action?

I am disgusted by the dishonesty and sickened by the damage to the students. The leaders in Rochefort, France must be scratching their heads on this example of American Welcome.

This example of the ugly American reminds me of the citizen that initiated international embarrassment for Annapolis when he proclaimed to the Whitbread Sailors that he did not want them in Annapolis because the supposedly raucous presence of professional sailors would ruin his nap. This action came back to haunt us when we vied for a return visit of the Volvo Around the World Race.

The low spewed by those antagonistic to this administration is the continuous half-truths or no truths when factual information is given. Unlike national issues there is no fact check site for goings on in the city. Recently I was accused of personal gain for a 16 page article on Green Annapolis published by Maryland Life. The City did not write the article, we did not research it, we did not design it. We were selected by Maryland Life (they choose a

design it. We were selected by Maryland Life (they choose a different town or agency to show case for each publication) to advocate green initiatives. Did others in the State say good things about me,

in this publication, yes. I have a long history on environmental action that goes back to the Keep America Beautiful Years. Most of the environmental legislation and programs for over twenty years in Annapolis was initiated by me. That others applaud this record of making a difference seems to have really disturbed my detractors.

The issue of course was that the City Paid for this "campaign piece". Since I am not running for office I do not know how this allocation is relevant. Funds from a private partner and a grant request for a green publication that is pending are the source of the funding. Could we have send no to Maryland Life? Of course. Frankly, consistent with my educational background and interest in sharing, if other jurisdictions can benefit from our green best practices we all benefit in this world of changing climate and need for energy efficiency. The Green Annapolis publication has already led to conferences and green travel initiatives that benefits businesses in our small town.

And than there was the city manager campaign folks who cried foul when Alderwoman Sheila Finlayson posted a power point she developed for the Maryland Municipal League on forms of city government on the cities blog site. The cities blog called Let's Talk has been in operation since 2006. It has had comments on it about the City Manager form of government for at least a year and a half. No one reads it. And now the city manager campaign group wants us to take it off the blog.

This demand is from the same group that did a direct mail with a stamped in red message on the envelope about a message from the Mayor. The message, by the way, was a copy of a column in the capital by a columnist who extolled the virtues of Newport, Rhode Island with a quote from their Mayor. Misleading? Does anyone know the form of government in this Rhode Island Town.? Our two cities are friendly competitors in the sailing world. One of our city department directors was a City Manager in Newport, Rhode Island. I have not met the current Mayor in Newport but no matter the form of government I respect the office she holds and for which she is responsible.

Other items that have to do with city news are also under attack by columnists in the very newspaper that fought for freedom of information legislation. Check out the cities web [www.Annapolis.gov](http://www.Annapolis.gov) or the COATV station 100 or 34 and you be the judge of the information given. The city tries to air council and committee meetings that are held in the council chambers live. Congress does this too.

At 6 am on Saturday morning I received a phone call from a city bus driver who began work on July 16 but had not been paid. What should she do? She couldn't buy gas to get to work or pay the baby



sitter and now this new job would be threatened. I advised her on action to take on Monday. What would you do?

*Posted by Mayor Ellen Moyer at [5:51 PM 0 comments](#)*

**Wednesday, December 12, 2007**

### Sister Cities

Sister Cities choose each other on the basis of one or more similar demographic, characteristic, or historical ties and agree by ordinance to participate. They look to each other for assistance and advice on matters including governance, healthcare, housing, and just about anything else facing a city today. The City of Annapolis, Maryland, is proud to take part in this program, partnering with fifteen international cities.

Annapolis first began as a Sister City in 1980, partnering with Annapolis Royal, Nova Scotia, Canada. Since then, Annapolis has twinned with many other cities, including Wexford, Ireland; Dumfries, Scotland; Tallin, Estonia; Niterói, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil; Rochefort, France; and Newport, Wales, as well as cities in South Korea, Sweden, Italy, Gambia, and Russia. In addition, Annapolis has letters of interest with the cities of Changsha, China and Tangier, Medina in Morocco, as well Hamilton, Bermuda.

Recently visiting several of Annapolis' Sister Cities, Annapolis Mayor Ellen Moyer called the program "cultural mentoring," and was surprised to find that affordable housing was a common issue. Her visits to each country are an important part of reaching out and personally showing support and a willingness to learn about each Sister City.

With over twenty years as a Sister City, Annapolis, Maryland proves the value of international partnerships through exchanges of cultural, educational, and historical knowledge and first-hand experiences. Annapolis will continue to strengthen its ties to its fifteen global partners through mutual visits, events, and exchanges of ideas and information. Through these bonds Annapolis will further its Sister City mission of creating a force for international cooperation and understanding through community involvement and people-to-people relationships.

*Posted by Mayor Ellen Moyer at [2:43 PM 3 comments](#)*

**Sunday, November 18, 2007**

### Enjoy Wexford, Ireland



A statue of Commodore John Barry faces the harbor of Wexford, Ireland near the very place where-at age 12-he entered the Navy as a cabin boy.

Mayor George Lawlor's grandfather unveiled the statue. Mayor Lawlor wonders why Annapolis doesn't do more to recognize this Naval hero.





John Barry served with George Washington in our war for independence and was listed as #1 in the American Navy. The competition between the Scots-John Paul Jones is considered by some to be a pirate- and the Irish hero, John Barry, emerges.

Mayor Lawlor, dressed in official red robe and gold chains, welcomed me to the official town chambers. The Chambers are much like a board room with little space for public participation. Pictures of past Mayors line the walls. A photo of former Maryland Senator Gerald Winegrad's visit to these chambers is included. The Mayor of New Ross, Ingrid O'Brien and Speaker in Parliament, Brendan Howlin, joined as hosts.



Wexford is a town founded by the Vikings. After they plundered the sea coast in the 8th century, Ireland's rich supply of wood for ship-building attracted the Vikings for permanent settlement. Wexford was a major trading center, exchanging cowhides and agricultural products for luxury goods, wine, figs and olives.

The harbor was a magnet for others expanding their territory. The Normans came in the 12th century. The town's earliest fortifications date to 1169. At the Irish National Heritage Park in Wexford, home sites reproduce the way people lived over a 9,000 year period of time. The son of Pat Collins, Wexford Administrator, explained stone age, bronze age and the 1600 year Celtic early Christian age sites.



In the 1840's, a potato blight forever changed life in Ireland. Over 3 million people died or emigrated to a strange country hoping to survive. One of them was Patrick Kennedy, the great - grandfather of President John

Fitzgerald Kennedy. He arrived destitute in Boston in 1848. The Homestead, a simple farm still owned by the family, still exists and is open to the public. John F. Kennedy returned to this homestead in Wexford County in August, 1963. Videos and pictures of the visit 44 years ago are proudly on display in Wexford shops.

In the town of New Ross, a reproduction of the Dunbrody



famine ship supported by the JFK Trust tells the stories of those leaving their homeland for America. Many died of the famine and the ships earned the macabre nickname of



"coffin ships." On the voyage researched for the Dunbrody, 8 people out of 300 died en route, including the parents of 5 children. Nothing is known of their fate when they reached Boston. While the Dunbrody carried twice its capacity, the mortality rate from fever and dysentery was low.



During WWI, German U-Boat activity created a grave yard of ships off the Wexford coast. The Lusitania, a Cunard cruise ship, was one of the victims. In 1918, the US Navy established a seaplane base at Wexford Harbor and broke the back of

the U-Boat operations. Nothing remains of this important complex today.

Nearby is Duncannon Fort, a fortress for over a 1,000 years. The fort is now owned by the County of Wexford. Duncannon is also the name given to the race horse who won the first Jockey Club Trophy, the Annapolis Subscription Plate, in Annapolis in 1745.



On the Southwest Coast of Ireland, 100 miles from Wexford, the town of Kinsale was hosting Regatta Week. Twinned with Newport, Rhode Island, the Mayor and Council members of this American city were on



hand to officially open the 10 day regatta event.

Kinsale and Wexford boast Ireland's best places to dine. Wexford enjoys the country's #1 Light Opera Company. Mayor Lawlor is a member-

another voice to join with our singing troupe during our Annapolis Alive/Charter 300 Celebration in 2008.

*Posted by Mayor Ellen Moyer at [7:55 AM](#) 0 comments*

**Friday, November 16, 2007**

**Dumfries, Scotland - Our Sister City since 1987**



My Scottish heritage on my mother's side originated in the 14th century in Dumfries. Asmall



clan, MacClish, was related to the MacQuillias and to the MacPheron (at least according to what I read in Anderson's Kilt Shop). The fight against Bonnie Prince Charles and the defeat at the Battle of

Culloden in the 1730's seems to have eliminated most of them.

Dumfries is a border town where hundreds of years of British history can be explored. It was in Dumfries where Robert the Bruce met and killed John Comyn at Grey Friars Church and declared himself King of Scotland in 1306.



Contested and embattled "Good King Robert" prevailed and Scotland became the First Nation State in Europe.



This is a region of haunting rolling hills crisscrossed by rubble stone fences and farm fields dotted white with sheep. Castles and Abbeys stand in ruins, not destroyed during World War II, but ordered dismantled in the 1400's by

King Henry VIII in his struggle against the Catholic Church and its wealthy land holdings. Iron Age remains of Roman Forts are still visible and present remarkable archeological dig sites.

Lockerbie, where the sabotaged flight of Pan American 747 crashed in 1988 is in Dumfries/Galloway. 270 people, mostly students from Syracuse University were killed in this tragedy. A memorial center is maintained in the cemetery and a memorial window is installed in the Town Hall. Each year 2 senior pupils of Lockerbie Academy receive a year's scholarship at Syracuse.



This is mournful country yet with a haunting beauty that inspired J. M. Barrie's



Fantasy Story Peter Pan and the songs and poems of Robert Burns. Robert Burns is the Heart and Soul of Dumfries. The simple sand stone house where he lived and died in 1796, at the young age of 37, is a museum.

Some years after this death, the citizens of Scotland took up a subscription to raise money for a proper mausoleum. The elaborate white grave site sits among ancient 5-foot high red stone



markers of Dumfries citizens in St. Michael's, the oldest church in Dumfries.



The Church itself was built in 1741 on the foundations of previous churches spanning 1300 years of time. During the last reconstruction, metal lead for the roof was purchased by the citizens of Dumfries to make shot to protect them from Bonnie Prince Charles. The Prince spent 3 days in Dumfries among the citizenry of

non-supporters, but no shot was fired. A common grave marks the site for visitors of cholera epidemics in 1832 and 1848. The first use of anesthetic was in this city.

The Globe Inn, where he ate and drank, and is still a place to eat and drink, is filled with memorabilia



and the spirit of Scotland's National Bard who gave us Auld Lang Syne, Tam O'Shanter, My Love is Like a Red, Red Rose and 100's more.



Dumfries/Galloway borders the Solway Firth - a huge estuary that separates Scotland from England and anoints Dumfries as the "Riviera of the South". It is on this coast that John Paul Jones was born, raised and learned about the sea to

become an Admiral and the Father of the American Navv. I visited



become an Admiral and the father of the American navy. I visited the Church in Kirkbeon , a 12th century village, that he attended and the cottage where he grew up. The cottage built in 1740 is now a museum thanks to the vision and work of Admiral Jerauld Wright, USN. Supported by a charitable trust, the site was opened in 1991, thirty years after Admiral Wright began his restoration effort. John Paul Jones is buried at the U. S. Naval Academy in a crypt beneath the Chapel. A battle with Ranger, a ship under his command, is featured in Art Walk at Prince George and Craig Street.



Ken Cameron, past Provost (Mayor) introduced Dumfries to Annapolis in 1987 when we became Sister Cities. Over the twenty years, delegations from Dumfries have visited Annapolis several times. We have not been so visible.

The delegation welcoming me could not have been more gracious. David Lockwood, Robert Thom, Alfred Hannay were just a few who spent hours of time introducing me to Dumfries/Galloway. We talked about challenges--affordable housing, the economy, seagulls.



Like us, Dumfries is a city of small shops, but too many young people leave town to find a job. We discussed ways to strengthen our ties, small business opportunities. I immediately thought of the sheep everywhere in view and

of woolen goods. But despite all the sheep, Ivor Hyslop, councilman and farmer, says it costs more to shear sheep than to sell the wool-an industry in decline.

Dumfries is, of course, a center for anyone interested in exploring history to visit. The Iron Age, Romans, early Christians, battles with



CHRISTIANS, battles with England, religious struggles-the stories are all here.



In 2009 Scotland is promoting a special year for those of Scottish heritage to explore this homeland. A Navy town, Annapolis and Dumfries are forever linked with John Paul Jones, the father of America's Navy. Friends of John Paul Jones Charity are under the Naval Historical Foundation.



My stay in Dumfries was concluded with a Scottish Dance and a group of students from a sister city in Germany were learning the folk dances similar to our square dances. I wanted to bring this fun to

Annapolis. Councilman Jack Groom agreed to come to Annapolis to sing with Tony Spencer and Ray Weaver. Janice Hawkins, who arranged the events, agreed to come and teach the dances. Alfie and Robert wanted to play golf. And so we agreed as we shook hands good-bye that during 2008, Annapolis' Charter Celebration year, Dumfries and Annapolis will join in a special event to showcase the history we share.

*Posted by Mayor Ellen Moyer at [6:17 PM](#) 0 comments*

**Monday, November 12, 2007**

## Welcome to Newport, Pembrokeshire, Wales



Entering the town of Newport an official highway sign says "Annapolis, MD, USA", acknowledging our Sister City Link.

Immediately I felt welcome.

Newport is an ancient and charming coastal town at the foot of Carningli and the Presili Hills and the estuary of River Nevern. Although this Norman town received its official Charter in 1197, it is much older. Stone tools place settlement as early as 7000 B. C. and burial chambers date to about 3500 B.C. A settled iron-age agricultural society established forts in the hills above. The Romans came in the 1st century, the



Celtic Saints in the 5th century and the feuding Dynasties before the Normans arrived to govern the whole of Pembrokeshire in the 12th century.



While there were skirmishes with the Welsh to maintain control, Newport received a charter in 1197 from its founder, Lord William Martin. It became the larger of medieval towns of Wales. The first recorded Mayor was appointed

in 1275 by the Marcher Lord, an inherited position of trusted supporters, created by King William I who did not have the resources to conquer the Welsh. To this day, the Mayor of Newport, population 1,000 and the Mayor of London are the only two civic heads in the United Kingdom still appointed to office. The selection is made by the Marcher Lord on November 9th from a list of four names submitted by burgesses of the town.

Newport is on the West Coast of Wales, in Pembrokeshire, a countryside of great diversity with deep valleys, green hills, rocky cliffs and long beaches. It is on the edge of Britain's only coastal National Park that includes the drowned estuary of the River Nevern, old sea walls made from slate on edge and old lime kilns. It also includes the Presili Hills where it is believed Blue stones were quarried and transported to Stone Hedge some 200 miles away. No one knows how. Wild horses and sheep now roam this wild upland moor.



The Town Houses, a Norman Castle built in the 13th century and an historic church first built in the 7th century dedicated to Saint Curig and rebuilt by the Normans in the 13th century.



The original plan of the medieval town exists unchanged in its narrow streets and meandering lanes.

Stone-built and whitewashed cottages, and the changing light of a seaside town give it an air of



tranquility. Flowers are everywhere-purple heather and lavender color the hills. Travel posters from the turn of the century suggest Newport as the destination for those seeking scenery, health and repose.

Workshops of artists – painters, weavers, wood-turners, potters – abound. The Welsh language is spoken and taught in school. Wales in Anglo-Saxon means "foreigner"; in Celtic, Cymry, it means "fellow countrymen". Eighteen per cent of its population speak Welsh. Wales is of Celtic origin.



Mayor Barry Onions welcomed me with a walk around town. At the Parrog, a 14-foot tide was out. People and dogs played in the sand and shallow water. Today there is a bird habitat nearby. Two swans have finally returned to the area. Mayor

Onion would like more.

One of the responsibilities of the Mayor is the "Beating of the Bounds", a custom dating from the 5th century when the boundaries of a parish were established. Today, walking the boundaries takes place in Newport annually. The procession of town folk and children halt at boundary marks where small boys are whipped, afterward treated with cakes, so they will always remember where the boundaries are located. On August 12th, Mayor Barry Onion led the 8-mile procession to mark the bounds of Newport.



Retired Mayor Reverend Bob Jones and his wife Libby introduced us to St. David's, the ruined monastery of Wales Patron Saint. The Vikings, King Henry VIII and Cromwell ravaged this area. The majestic cathedral





area. The majestic cathedral has been restored, Christian services are conducted, visitors are welcome – it is a pilgrimage site. Newport

became our Sister City over 20 years ago. Maryland's late Senator Charles Mathias traces his roots to this area. Bob and Libby have visited Annapolis twice, as have others from Newport. Libby's wardrobe includes a jacket with the large red dragon of Wales that attracted the attentions of our friends in Annapolis Irish Pubs.

No one knows how the red dragon was adopted for the Welsh flag. Legend suggested it was a standard in an 8th century battle. No doubt the same side carrying it was victorious. It must have been a Welsh victory.

Libby has pointed out opportunities in Newport ripe for archeology. The town is a microcosm of 10,000 years of human history.



Our links with Wales are solid. I look forward to our friends visit in 2008. Perhaps we can present the Mayor with two white swans to meet his dream for Newport's bird refuge. Perhaps we can share our 30 year archeology

program recording the 300 year history of Annapolis.

Leaving Newport I followed an old drover's trail, the pathway where farmers walked livestock to market to industrial Newport, 150 miles, 6 hours away. Distance between towns is measured here not in miles but in travel time. Roads are narrow with little opportunity to pass. But then all of Wales seems like the slogan for visitors to Newport .... A place to enjoy beauty, secure health and repose...relax.



*Posted by Mayor Ellen Moyer at [3:03 PM](#) [1 comments](#)*

**Tuesday, October 9, 2007**

**Two Continents- One Humanity**

Although 3,000 miles away, I felt like I was home. Our Sister City, Wexford, had just completed a new fire station. Firemen were unhappy with the station's amenities. Others were complaining about the location. The local paper asserted that "after what seemed to be a lifetime in its construction ... even after all the time in planning and development... There are already several teething problems emerging." Letters to the editor complained, cast aspersions, and played the blame game.



As the mayors and I talked about the challenges we face for providing public service, the similarities between us emerged.

Most mayors are concerned about the long-term sustainability of their cities. They are concerned that as young people move away to find a job and the population ages, the pressure will increase on small businesses to close shop.

Real estate values have escalated. Affordable housing emerged at the #1 concern in every city. Budgets for museums, historic renovation, and points of interest that would attract visitors – one of the top three industries on the globe, are strained.



This was particularly true for the John Paul Jones home and Hermione and to a certain extent Dunbrody and Kiplin Hall. All are linked with U.S. history and had received initial funding from foundations in America.

But it was also hard to find strategic and coordinated marketing plans to tackle concerns.

Mayors are generally appointed by the Council for one year. They lead many ceremonial functions. In the UK and Ireland the symbols of ermine coats



and gold chains are worn on all official occasions. Municipal government is dependent on provincial, borough or county government for funding to accomplish local initiatives. Citizen participation on advisory boards and commissions is rare. The lack of space in Council meeting rooms closes out public participation as we know it in Annapolis.



There were some things that surprised me. Of all the people I talked with, no one liked retired Prime Minister Tony Blair. Universally they believed him to have abused his power and lied to the public. Interest and talk about politics is ever present. The other surprise was the abandonment of reference to England substituting U.K. – United Kingdom, in its place.

Given the thousands of years of battles on this tiny island, and England's victories over Scots and Welsh perhaps U.K. is a safer term.

### **"How does it feel to be without a nationality?"**

A curious question posed to me in a bookstore by 3 residents of Cardigan, Wales. Thousands of years of wars have established the loyalties to clan and countries and family heritage that is so important to natives of the U.K. and Ireland. Americans don't have that experience. We are a nationality of immigrants from many countries who fled to America to survive harsh conditions at home. Our family heritage is a mixture of many cultures. I can trace mine back to Holland, France, Scotland and England. America is our nationality.



Attention to the environment and meeting green goals seems a standard way of life. Hotels boast of having a green rating based on recycling, energy efficiency and use of organic foods.

Climate change is discussed freely. This year -the rainiest on record in the British Isles and the resulting floods in England - raised questions of infrastructure capacity and other environmental concerns.



In Scotland there was excitement over the return of the Osprey and the success of the re-population effort. The Park Service published brochures on the otter, the red squirrel and the Osprey's return.



Newspapers in England headlined perceived increase in crime. The BBC prepared a 10 year analysis – was crime up, down, different?



We all share similar concerns and we are all more alike than we are different.

Our hosts were generous and gracious and eager to share "their" home – 12 hours a day. I learned about Scottish folk dancing, toured museums and

industries and participated in viewing a parade of troops on Bastille Day in France. I noted that Public Housing was indistinguishable from owner occupied homes. How do they do it? I was introduced to many dignitaries who are now eager to visit Annapolis for our Charter celebration in 2008. Everywhere a framework for cultural exchange was set. Annapolis could also gain from business links in the hospitality industry and a revitalized oyster industry. Fountaine Pajot Maritime manufacturers from La Rochelle will be sailing across the Atlantic to come to the Annapolis Boat Show.

I sailed on the Queen Mary II. 1,500 miles from land the Captain announced we were turning around to inspect something he had seen in the water. The rescue boat was lowered, and a wreck of an overturned catamaran, no people, was discovered.



I was on a ship with 14 decks and great stability in rough seas. When there is no land in sight, and fog envelopes you, it can be scary. The ocean is vast, covering 71% of the globe. Dolphins play, so do flying fish. Whales larger than a sailboat surfaced.



I thought of the famine ships, tossed by the seas and the clipper ships racing goods around the world. I imagined the vessels outfitted for war as the Hermione that brought Lafayette to help in our struggle for independence and of the modern day leisure sailors such as those in the Volvo and our



ambassador ship Pride – driven by the power of the wind. I thought of those that didn't make it to a

"promised land", and I am humbled and in awe of their courage.

Next year I hope you too will have the opportunity to meet and greet and host our friends from the other side of the Atlantic Ocean.

*Posted by Mayor Ellen Moyer at [4:26 AM](#) 0 comments*

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