

McLean Hunt
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Assisted by Jean Jonnard
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Lewinsville was an early village, having its own post office and no definite dividing line between it and Langley. It was named after Troilus Lewin Turberville (1780-1803), the son of one of the early families settling in the area. In 1860 a census was taken in two books, one to record every free inhabitant, and the other for every slave inhabitant. There were 125 Lewinsville citizens who cast their votes on May 23, 1861 in the secession election; 38 of those votes were to deny secession.

The Jackson House, near the intersection of Swinks Mill Road and Old Dominion Drive, was occupied by the Jackson family until 1843. On May 24, 1861, Federal troops invaded and captured Alexandria. James Jackson, a civilian, shot and killed Colonel Ephraim Ellsworth because the Union officer had removed the Confederate flag flying above Jackson's hotel. Ellsworth was the first Union officer to die in the Civil War. In return, a sergeant of the Union Army shot and killed Jackson, who was not only the first Confederate casualty in the War, but also the first civilian to lose his life on either side.

In 1906, Lewinsville had a population of 50 with twelve farmers, one physician, one notary public and two general stores.

Most of the area which McLean Hunt now occupies was a farm, originally owned by Mrs. Marzano, with a pond and wide open spaces. The farmland on which Section 3 and 4 is located (west side of Swinks Mill Road) was deeded to the son of the original owner and he sold the land to the builders, Berlage Bernstein. Mrs. Marzano maintained her section of the property and lived in a small farmhouse. She rented the barn to several girls who boarded horses and set up a riding ring around the barn. Before Tysons II and the Spring Hill Recreation Center were built, the young people had much land in which to ride their horses. They would canter over to 7-11 at the corner of Spring Hill Road and Old Dominion Drive for a coke.

The Hunt has an impressive private entrance, gently winding roads, scenic parks, and a tranquil setting. However, the developers drained Mrs. Marzano's pond for fear that prospective owners would worry about their children falling into the water. They filled the pond with conduits so that the land can never accept a pool or be paved over. Some homeowners have suggested play areas or basketball courts be installed, but the existence of the pipes precludes that.

Dr. Hatch, a retired College Professor who, as an avocation, explored the history of McLean, explained that Old Falls Street in section 3 was a road originally running from Falls Church to the falls in Great Falls. It was used by early settlers. When McLean Hunt was being built, an old log cabin and an original spring were still visible on Old Falls Street. In the spring of 1972, after a bad storm, the spring turned into a roaring river which created a hole 15 feet deep and 30 feet across. The County repaired the spring, but part of the road was later obliterated when The Cedars development was built.

In mid-1973, with nearly all lots sold or contracted for, Berlage-Bernstein agreed to turn the organization, which had been incorporated in 1968, over to the homeowners. Several meetings were held and a Nominating Committee of eight homeowners was selected to represent all sections of McLean Hunt. The original members of the Nominating Committee were: Chairman Chuck Brutza, Ames Albro, Doris Bullock, Randy Cabell, John Chase, Jean Jonnard, Brenda Nelson, and Bob Preston. At a meeting on October 30, 1973, members elected three Directors: William P. Jackson, Aimison Jonnard and Merton Batchelder. The original officers of the Association were: President Aimison Jonnard, Vice President William P. Jackson Jr., Secretary Brenda Nelson, and Treasurer Merton Batchelder. The Parks and Maintenance Chair was Dick Bowen. Ed Joseph served as liaison to the builder.

During the early meetings of the Home Owners Association, some owners wished to have two classes of membership: A for homes on the main streets and B for homes sited on the pipestems. Although some members felt that residents of the pipestems should pay more to reflect the higher cost of maintenance and repair of the pipestems, the final decision was to have only one membership class and to have the Homeowners Association responsible for all maintenance as a single unit.

The Association was concerned that Berlage-Bernstein wanted to give up the bond that had been placed with the County before the completion of Foxhound Road, the last part of the Hunt to be developed. Association Vice President Bill Jackson, who was a transportation specialist and attorney, worked with the County to ensure pavement of the street.

The immediate efforts of the newly created Board included paying back taxes and interest, securing liability insurance, contracting for maintenance of the common grounds (parks), contacting County officials regarding completion of the streets, and ensuring that the builder met County specifications for the pipestems. Homeowner dues were \$60 for the first year.

From the beginning of the Hunt incorporation, the Association sponsored summer picnics, complete with old-fashioned three-legged races and egg and spoon contests, each with prizes. Everyone brought their prize picnic fare, spread blankets on the grass, and shared their picnic with all of their neighbors. Jean Jonnard asked all neighbors to purchase a flowering cherry tree in order to beautify the neighborhood. To this day, the trees grace the streets in early spring.

In 1977, the total income for the Hunt was \$4,716.67 and dues per home were \$50.00 per year.

1977 was also a year in which McLean Hunt hit the headlines of papers all over the country. On Thursday night, April 28, 1977 at about 8:40 PM, a twin-engine private jet took off in the rain from National Airport en route to Birmingham, Alabama. Three minutes later, after reaching an altitude of about 9,500 feet, the pilot lost contact with the tower. According to eyewitnesses, the plane exploded in mid-air, making a noise like a sonic boom and bursting into a ball of fire. The plane apparently crashed into McLean Hunt Park, and then bounced into the

Jackson home, where parts of the bodies of the two crewmen were deposited. No one in the Jackson home or anywhere else on the ground was injured by the crash, but the two passengers in the plane also died. They were the President and Executive Vice President of Southern Company Services, an electric utility company based in Atlanta, Georgia, who were on their way to a meeting at the Atomic Industrial Forum with President Carter.

One Hunt family, the Dennis Clarke family, who lived on the corner of Old Stable and Foxhound Roads, narrowly escaped injury when a section of the aircraft crashed into their house. All six members of the family escaped immediately through the garage after the plane crashed into the back of their home. One of the family's two dogs, McGregor, a four-year-old Shetland Sheep dog, was later found by a neighbor unhurt. The other dog and family cat both died in the blaze. The family was watching a TV show entitled "What's Happening," in the family room when the plane struck. The family dashed out of the house through the garage seconds before the home collapsed in flames. Scott Schlegel, a McLean Hamlet resident, recalls, "I went to school with one of the children who lived [there]. I remember him telling me that his parents had a premonition that something was terribly wrong and quickly ushered them out of the house. Had they stayed another minute, they would have been killed." Only the chimney, with a CB antenna attached, remained standing in the midst of the smoke, debris and ruins of the house. Their station wagon parked in the street was the only thing they had left other than the clothes in which they escaped.

Mrs. Marzano, the owner of the original farm, died of a heart attack, believing the world was coming to an end. One of the paramedics had a heart attack in the midst of the furor.

Many persons believed that, due to the sensitive nature of atomic energy, the plane may have been targeted. One police spokesman said that federal officials were looking into the possibility that a bomb may have been aboard the aircraft. Classified papers were strewn all over the area. Plane debris was found several miles away from the scene of the crash. One man living more than a mile from the scene told police that the bathroom door of the plane landed in his backyard. The Government investigated the cause of the crash, but no definitive answers were ever made public.

The Clarkes moved into their newly built, completely brick, home on the same lot one year later to the day.

Two U. S. Senators, Senator Reigle of Michigan and Senator Garn of Utah, lived in the Hunt for many years. Leland Brendsel, President of the Freddie Mac Corporation, purchased the Reigle's home. Another resident, Bud Nance, was National Security Director.

There was an attempted kidnapping on Foxhound Road. The intended victim was a smart young boy who told the guy to wait up until he finished a small chore. Instead, he called 911. The would-be kidnapper was gone by the time the police arrived.

About six homes in Section 2 of the Hunt, along Swinks Mill Road and Bridle Path Road, were built by another builder with different designs than the Hunt homes. Two lots in Section 4 were not available to Berlage-Bernstein and were later built by private parties. One, at the end of

Stirrup Cup Lane, was purchased by a private builder who never gave the new owners an occupancy permit. After the owners moved in with their 12 children, the County came and cut all utilities for the house. The other home, a Williamsburg Colonial built on a wooded acre lot on Foxhound Road, was purchased by a Vice President of Pulte Homes.

The home on the corner of Foxhound and Swinks Mill was at one time a tree nursery.

In 1978 the major Association concerns were resurfacing of the pipestems, dogs running loose, motorbikes in the parks and the silver burglar. By 1989, major issues still involved paving of the pipestems. New issues included delinquent dues, a new annual dues payment schedule, and removal of the basketball posts which had become a hazard. There were also complaints about contractors and neighbors doing noisy work prior to 9:00 AM on Sundays and holidays.

In 1996, residents were concerned about the dumping of debris in the parks, which was costly to remove. They were also concerned about the blockage at the end of Foxhound Road, which had been a walking path for twenty years, and for the expansion of the Korean Methodist Church at the corner of Swinks Mill Road and Lewinsville Road. That year Three Pigs Bar-B-Q catered the annual Hunt picnic. August 6, 1996 was designated as the Annual "Neighborhood Out" day. This was a time when one was to visit neighbors by welcoming any new neighbors or visiting with old ones. The annual dues increased to \$150 per household per year.

More formal Homeowners Association meetings are now held each spring at the McLean Community Center so that the Board can better represent the neighborhood. Currently, Peggy McNulty serves as Association President. She established a yearly Home Tour and reception for residents. This event has brought life back into the Hunt and provides neighbors an opportunity to meet one another. Treasurer Jim Bradley does Park Clean Up. He contracts for care and mowing of the parks, and keeps costs down by personally hauling away debris from the parks.