

The background of the image is a photograph of a residential street in Hollin Hall Village during sunset. The sky is a mix of orange, yellow, and purple. In the foreground, a paved road with yellow double lines leads towards a small sign that reads "Hollin Hall Village". The sign is set in a landscaped area with some bushes. To the left of the road, there are parked cars and trees. To the right, there are more trees and a utility pole with power lines. The overall atmosphere is peaceful and nostalgic.

A History of Hollin Hall Village

Celebrating the Neighborhood's Diamond Jubilee

1943-2018

**A Look at the History, Development
and Memories of Hollin Hall**

Foreword

One of the most extraordinary things about Hollin Hall Village is the neighborhood camaraderie. This couldn't have been more evident than when we set out to write this booklet commemorating the 75th anniversary of the establishment of the neighborhood.

When we were in the earlier planning stages of celebrating the milestone, we pictured drafting a special edition newsletter, but after overwhelming interest and support from the community, the idea grew from being a 10-page newsletter to a more than 50-page booklet, complete with pictures, stories and interviews from long-time residents and historical documentation.

This booklet is organized to take the reader through the early history of the land, the development of the neighborhood, including an interview with the son of the developer of Hollin Hall, Mr. John McPherson, Jr., the development of the shopping center, the history of the elementary

school and emergence of the Senior Center, and the history of the Mount Vernon Park and Pool, and the Hollin Hall Village Citizens Association. It also includes a touching article about the story behind the naming of Hummel Fields, as well as shared memories of Hollin Hall by former and current residents.

We spent countless hours conducting research and interviews, and spent days organizing all the materials and writing the stories. Of course, memories are not always perfect or complete, and the ones presented here may differ from your own recollections. In some cases, we obtained conflicting dates and stories, and tried to do our best to substantiate our research and be as accurate as possible. We hope you that you will find it an interesting and an amazing account of our neighborhood. If you have additional materials or recollections to contribute, we would appreciate hearing from you. There's always a chance we could do a second edition of this booklet.

Acknowledgments

We certainly could not have created this history book without the support from the community. To that end, I want to take this opportunity to thank everyone who gave their time to sit down for interviews, submitted pictures and memorabilia, wrote stories and provided financial support.

I particularly want to thank Tom Harvey for his financial support, reaching out to long-time residents and assisting with arranging an interview with Mr. McPherson. I also want to thank John Harris, whose family has been involved with Hollin Hall since the beginning, for his contribution of pictures, memories and guidance.

My sincere thanks also go out to Joe Nedbal, who I have become great friends with throughout this process. He contributed numerous pieces of memorabilia and pictures, including a Native American arrowhead found near the Hollin Hall Shopping Center.

I also want to thank Mary Hummel for sharing the story and pictures behind the naming of Hummel Fields after her late husband, Al Hummel. Mr. Hummel was emblematic of the community spirit and dedication of Hollin Hall residents, and I hope the story in this booklet captures that essence.

Many thanks also go out to other key contributors of pictures, memorabilia, stories and assistance, including: Tesa Jones, Sue Baker, Robert Dooley, Bobby Suggs, Dave and Maye

Barnard, Paulette Beighley, Mary Stauss, Cindy Baker, Joe Gililland, Kendra Chambers, Jennifer Coffey, Jen Crowther, Ginny Houston Lima, Mark Welch and Rachel Riley.

We also could not have pulled this off without the support from the Hollin Hall Village Citizens Association. In particular, I want to extend sincere thanks for key contributions and research by Leo Milanowski, who spent days researching and drafting the article about the history of the land, as well as Vinny Fusaro, who drafted the history of the citizens association and spent hours conducting research and assisting with organizing the celebration. In addition, Tammy Loverdos was critical in overseeing the layout and development of the booklet.

And finally, I want to thank my wonderful wife, Mary Godbout, who assisted with coordinating the booklet and put up with me for the last several months while I worked on it, as well as for her drafting of the article about the Mount Vernon Park and Pool.

We hope you enjoy this history of Hollin Hall Village for many years to come and carry on the spirit of our community!

With warm regards,
Ted Godbout, President
Hollin Hall Village Citizens Association



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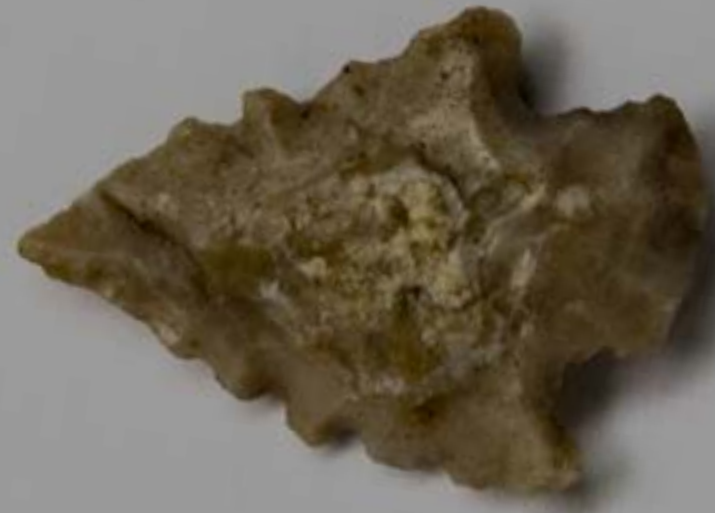
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BEFORE 1943

Early History of the Land

this is the prequel to Hollin Hall Village.

It traces a history of our area's original inhabitants—the Native Americans; the early English explorers and settlers; the great estates; the smaller farmers; and the developers who changed that farmland into homes, surprisingly enough, beginning in the late 1800s. It hopes to provide some small insight to what happened here before our neighborhood was platted, permitted, construed and constructed.



Native American Arrowhead found near Hollin Hall Shopping Center.

The First Citizens

No one knows exactly when the first native Americans arrived in our area, but reports suggest they were here by 9000 BC. The earliest known inhabitants were a Stone Age people, who experts call the Paleoindians. They lived within small interrelated groups, but probably didn't spend their lives in one place, instead traveling throughout the mid-Atlantic region and interacting with other original groups.

Around 8700 BC, major climatic change and resultant environmental change began. The Ice Age was ending and the great glacier covering North America began to melt. The population increased, and less migration occurred. Family groups—related through blood and marriage—lived in small encampments and employed hunting and gathering patterns employed by their ancestors.

About 2,000 years later, as the climate continued to change to a warmer and drier environment, the water from melting glaciers began to form the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries. Surrounding areas became rich biologically. River transportation became common. The first citizens of Fairfax prospered with these changes, harvesting and utilizing new plants and animals, and became a more water-going people.

Between 2000 BC and 800 AD, the native people settled in larger and more permanent settlement, but maintained their reliance on hunting and gathering. They developed ways to store provisions, both under and above ground, and with the abundant food from the river, there was less pressure to move around to find food. At certain times of the year, various settlements would come together to jointly harvest migratory game and fish. Although many North American Indians practiced agriculture for a thousand years before it became important in our area, and the local people here knew of these groups, the bounty of the area was so great the locals choose not to adopt those practices.

By 800 AD, this had changed and crops were regularly grown for food. This accounted for as much as 25% of their diet. The need for fertile growing lands led them to “slash and burn” methods to clear lands. They abandoned croplands after they overused, and both small hamlets and larger villages moved every 10 years or so.

In the early 1600s, when the English explored the Potomac River, they encountered towns and villages of local natives. The English called the native people in our area the Doeg, later changed to the Dogue. The native people were scattered along both sides of the Potomac from Prince William County to Alexandria City, and inland as far west as Centreville. English explorers located the main village of the Dogue – called Tauxenent

– near the mouth of the Occoquan River, but another Dogue village was located on the Potomac shore near the current Collingwood Mansion. They were an agricultural, as well as hunting and gathering people, who lived in villages and farms along the River. For parts of the year, they would travel away from the River into the countryside, living in small family groups, where they continued to hunt and gather.

The Dogue did not keep written records, and so not much is known about their social organization or language. They migrated into our area shortly before 1300 AD, displacing previous inhabitants, who probably spoke a different language. Before the settlers forced the Dogue from this area around 1676, they faced a declining population, brought about by the ravages of European introduced diseases.

The Dogue also developed a reliance on English-introduced technologies, which helped to diminish traditional Indian culture. In the end, they succumbed to both, and from a lack of unity by all Indians against the English. Once the Dogue were gone, the English moved into Dogue settlement sites and cultivated their farmland. This made settlement by the English much easier.

Not much remains in the area to remind us of the Dogue today, but one place many are familiar with is Dogue Creek, between Mount Vernon and Fort Belvoir.

Explorers, Settlers & the Great Estates

In June 1588, 30 soldiers and sailors, sailing under the flag of Spain, and under the command of Captain Vincente Gonzalez, explored the Potomac River—they called the river, San Pedro. In 1608, one year after the English settled in Jamestown, Captain John Smith explored the Potomac River as far north as the current Georgetown. Smith sought gold and the Northwest Passage but found neither.

Instead, he found a land rich in natural resources and populated with native people friendlier than the Powhatan he had met at Jamestown. His journals document contact with the Dogues, who lived in and around our part of the now Fairfax County.

For nearly the next 20 years, there was no English settlement along the Potomac River. New English expeditions restarted in 1623, and soon after, non-native peoples began to stake out claims and the native peoples were pushed out. The earliest settlers were, for the most part, ordinary people, tradesmen and adventurers, all mostly of English origin. They were given 50 acres by the Crown for which they paid a small rent. The settlers were protected by a police force called the Potomac Rangers, who continually sailed up and down the Potomac and its tributaries to protect the settlers. It took over 100 years to

completely push the natives out, but by 1722, a treaty was made between the native people and the royal Virginia confining the native people beyond the Blue Ridge. Another treaty in 1744, gave title to all land in the colony to Virginia's colonial government.

The English Crown made large land grants to those English noblemen who remained in its favor. An especially large grant was made in our area. In 1649, a royal grant deeded all lands bounded by the Rappahannock and Potomac Rivers to seven noblemen loyal to the King. The entire grant—nearly 5.7 million acres—was eventually claimed in its entirety by Lord Culpepper. It was inherited by his grandson, Thomas Baron Cameron, the sixth Lord Fairfax in 1719. In 1734, he appointed his cousin, Colonel William Fairfax, to manage the property in his absence. He remained an absentee landlord for many years but came to Virginia in 1747. Lord Fairfax's grant was the genesis of the three great estates built in Fairfax County in the mid-18th century: Belvoir, Mount Vernon and Gunston Hall.

Belvoir—meaning “beautiful to see”—was the home of Lord Fairfax's cousin and property manager, Colonel William Fairfax. He purchased the 2,300-acre site soon after he arrived in Virginia and completed the house around 1743. He was elected to the Virginia House of Burgess and was the leader of efforts to establish Fairfax County. His efforts were rewarded on June 17, 1742,



when Fairfax County was established by law. He died in 1757, and his estate passed on to his son, Thomas William Fairfax, a childhood friend of George Washington. The younger Fairfax returned to England in 1773 and never returned to Belvoir. His estate was leased and the home was destroyed by fire in 1783. To add insult to injury, the British shelled the ruins in 1814, after coming under attack by American shore batteries and musketeers. The ruins of the mansion still remain.

The best known of the great estates is Mount Vernon. In 1674, John Washington, the great grandfather of George Washington, together with Nicholas Spencer, acquired 5,000 acres between Dogue and Little Hunting Creeks. Data is inconclusive as to whether or not they built homes on the tract. After their deaths, the property was equally divided between their heirs, with Lawrence Washington taking control of his portion in 1690. Some evidence exists that he built the first home on the property, known then as Little Hunting Creek plantation. On Lawrence's death, sometime before 1726, his daughter Mildred inherited the property. She sold the property to her brother Augustine—George Washington's father—in 1726, and he and his family moved there in 1735, when George was three years old.

On Augustine's death, the property went to George's older brother, (a second) Lawrence Washington. He renamed the estate Mount Vernon, in honor of an admiral he had served with in the Royal Navy. He died in 1752, and the estate was willed to George Washington. He inherited the 2,500 acres of the original grant.

Once the estate was his, George Washington began acquiring adjoining properties, and at its peak he owned over 8,000 acres, divided into five farms. One of these acquisitions was acreage on Clifton Neck across Little Hunting Creek from Mount Vernon.



Map of George Washington's Farm, December 1793.

Earlier in Fairfax history, the land mass bordering the Potomac River between Little Hunting Creek and Alexandria City was known as Clifton Neck, one William Clifton being the large landowners there. Clifton operated a river ferry from what is today approximately the Potomac River terminus of Wellington Road extended, where he built his home "Wellington" in 1740. He lived there until 1767, when he sold 1,806 acres to George Washington for 1,210 pounds in

Virginia currency. Washington renamed his acquisition River Farm.

The third great estate was Gunston Hall. George Mason II (George was a favorite name of the Mason family; there were at least five of them) acquired 2,100 acres in 1696. It was called "Doeg's Island" at the time but is largely Mason Neck today. By the time of his death in 1716, he had acquired additional holdings running

north from Gunston Hall to Georgetown. George Mason III inherited the property and enjoyed his inheritance until his death in 1739. Ten years after his father's death, when he reached legal age, George Mason IV inherited the estate and all its holdings. Mason IV was the author of the Virginia Declaration of Rights that Thomas Jefferson drew from when writing the Declaration of Independence. The mansion he completed in 1758 still stands today.

One of the Mason holdings was Hollin Hall, a property that straddled today's Sherwood Hall Lane. This property consisted of four tracts totaling 676 acres. It was west of and adjacent to Washington's River Farm parcel. It is believed that Mason II erected a fort there for protection from the natives in 1693, and that the first home on the property was built on the fort's foundation around 1720. It is also believed that Mason III lived on the property after 1721 until his death. Mason IV transferred ownership, as a wedding gift, to his son Thomson Mason between 1781 and 1786. Thomson built a home that he completed by 1788 and lived there until his death in 1820.

Upon his death, the plantation was bequeathed to his second son, (another!) George Mason, but he advertised the property for sale in 1822. By then, it consisted of the several buildings including the original house and 740 acres. Before he could sell

the property, in 1824, a fire destroyed the house that was built by his father—the original building, Little Hollin Hall (aka, The Spinning House), was not harmed, and still stands and is occupied today.

Important to our discussion about the property where Hollin Hall Village is constructed are the boundaries between the Washington and Mason properties. Around the time of the Revolution, the two families were the major landholders on Clifton Neck, each owning nearly half of the available acreage. River Farm's boundaries extended north along the Potomac from Little Hunting Creek to a point on the river just below the southern leg of today's Southdown Road. From that point, River Farm's northern boundary extended to the intersection of where Lafayette Drive and Fairfax Road intersect in Hollin Hall Village today. This boundary closely followed the branch of Little Hunting Creeks that runs under Lafayette Drive back toward Fort Hunt Road, Tauxemont/Wellington Estates, and the George Washington Parkway. Continuing on to the southwest, the boundary followed the stream until it approached Collingwood Road, and as near as can be told, followed what is today Riverside Road to its intersection with a small tributary of Little Hunting Creek directly adjacent to Stratford Landing Elementary school. At that point, it followed the waters of Little Hunting Creek to its intersection with today's Richmond Highway and beyond. The adjacent property was owned by Mason.

Given these boundaries, most of today's Hollin Hall Village—from Lafayette Drive to Paul Spring Parkway, and Karl Road to Fort Hunt Road—its on acreage that was once a part of George Mason's Hollin Hall. The remainder of Hollin Hall Village was built on the northwestern edge of River Farm.

Subdividing Clifton Neck

In the last years of the 18th century and through the middle of the 19th century, significant portions of the Washington/Mason landholdings on Clifton Neck where sold or transferred. Washington began to divide up Mount Vernon before his death in 1799. Family members were the main recipients, but River Farm was given to Tobias Lear as a life estate. Lear was Washington's secretary and a tutor at Mount Vernon. On Lear's death, it returned to the Washington estate, and in 1859, Charles Washington sold 652 acres of his inheritance, including Clifton's original home—Wellington—to Stacey and Issac Snowden. The purchase included all of the River Farm estate. In 1866, the Snowden's sold off 280 acres, centered around where the Alexandria Avenue Bridge is today, to a partnership of Mssrs. Baker, Frost, and Smith. The property retained by the Snowden's stretched from the Potomac to today's Coleman

Cemetery on Collingwood Road. This stretch included that part of Hollin Hall Village associated with River Farm.

The record shows that the Snowden's were a primary developer of our area between the Potomac and Fort Hunt Road. In 1892, William Snowden sub-divided his property into seven parcels, and offered them for sale; he called the development "Arcturus." By 1912, they and the descendants of the Baker, Frost, Smith partnership had sold many lots, some as small as one-half acre. The properties location on the construction path of an electric rail line from Alexandria to Mount Vernon afforded easy transport to the area. By 1906, 26 passenger trains and four freight trains traveled daily between Mount Vernon and Washington DC. By the mid-1930s, areas close to the train had year-round residences that were newly built or winterized summer homes.

Hollin Hall was also being parceled out, but in much bigger chunks. It was put up for sale in 1822, but was not purchased until 1852, when Edward and Eliza Gibbs bought Little Hollin Hall and 500 acres of the estate for \$8,000. They lived at Little Hollin Hall and farmed the property until 1869 when they divided it into two parcels and sold it. The first parcel, consisting of 300 acres and Little Hollin Hall, were sold to the Thompson family. They established Hollin Hall Dairy, a widely known dairy farm, that would expand into one of the

major dairy product packagers in the Washington, DC area.

The remaining 200 acres were sold to Charles Ballinger who started Sherwood Farm, just to the south of Little Hollin Hall on Sherwood Hall Lane. The original Sherwood farmhouse still stands on Midday Lane and remained in the family until 1999.

Both farms contributed to most of the acreage that Hollin Hall Village occupies today. In addition, both were dairy farms, as were most of the area's farms before 1932. For many years, dairy was Fairfax County's biggest industry. But only six small farms continued after 1932. A new kind of purpose was on the horizon.

Subdivision Continues

Breaking up acreage in our area is not new. Mount Vernon got smaller and other large estates couldn't sustain themselves. By 1860, most of the Mount Vernon estate had passed to smaller farmers or developers. Hollin Hall lasted a little longer and still remained a single parcel until 1943, but did change hands quite a bit. Egbert Thompson, Edward Thompson's son, sold Hollin Hall Dairy to Robert G. Smith in 1906. In 1910, Smith sold it to J. Jernan and D. Wolfford, who sold it back to the Hollin Hall Thompson Dairy in 1911. The Dairy

sold it again in 1912 to R.G. Pettitt, who sold it to Harley P. Wilson from New York in 1913. The reason for the rapid changes are unclear, but the Wilson's purchase brought some stability and much growth.

The Wilsons lived in the Spinning House after acquiring the farm. They soon started to build a home higher up on the property, and in 1919, moved into a 25-room mansion at top of Mount Hybla. Today, the Unitarian Church owns the mansion and 10 acres surrounding it. When they moved to the mansion, Mrs. Wilson's sister continued to live in the Spinning House on the original homesite. By 1929, the Wilson's had acquired additional acreage increasing their estate to 608 acres.

The Wilsons both died in 1934, and their estate, although marketed, remain unsold until 1941, when Merle Thorpe bought the mansion and 89 acres surrounding it. John E. McPherson of Alexandria acquired the 297 acres of Hollin Hall Dairy, including Little Hollin Hall. The remaining acreage was pared off into subdivisions.

By 1943, McPherson had filed the necessary paperwork with the County to begin Hollin Hall Village. Sections 1 and 2 were approved in December 1942 and March 1943 respectively. These plats fall within the boundaries of Lafayette Drive, Fort Hunt Road and Fairfax Road. The remainder of Hollin Hall was platted in 14 individual sections between 1950 and 1956.

Establishment of HOLLIN HALL VILLAGE

1943



JOHN McPHERSON SR., the main developer in Hollin Hall Village, has "quite a bit of confidence in the future development of the community and the rest of Fairfax County." Considered a "pioneer" in the area, by his associates, Mr. McPherson said he has seen a great amount of improvement since he first came to Northern Virginia in 1933. He describes his present status as "semi-retired." A native of Cheraw, S. C., Mr. McPherson lives in Belle Haven with his wife, Eileen, and enjoys a game of golf (at the Belle Haven Country Club opposite his home) and quail shooting in his native state.



Aerial images of Hollin Hall, circa 1955; notice the shopping center was not completely developed.

Interview with John McPherson, Jr.

As alluded to in the previous chapter, Hollin Hall Village took its name from a nearby house built in the 1720s by George Mason III. Hollin Hall reportedly also had been the name of the ancestral home of Mason's wife, Ann Thompson in Yorkshire, England.

Mason's son, George Mason IV of Gunston Hall inherited Hollin Hall around 1749, and in turn, gave the land to his son, Thomson, in 1779, then building a new house for his son and new daughter-in-law around 1792. This most recent Hollin Hall burned in 1824, with Thomson Mason and family moving into an outbuilding used by Irish and Scottish spinners that became known as Little Hollin Hall.

Fast forward to the early 1900s when the Wilson family owned Hollin Hall and several farms in the surrounding area. As previously noted, the Wilsons both died in 1934, and their estate remained unsold until 1941. John McPherson, Sr., of Alexandria acquired 297 acres of Hollin Hall Dairy, including Little Hollin Hall, while the remaining acreage was pared off into subdivisions.

It's hard to overstate the importance of John McPherson, Sr., to the establishment of Hollin Hall Village. In fact, the neighborhood probably wouldn't exist as it is known today

without the influence and dedication of the McPherson family.

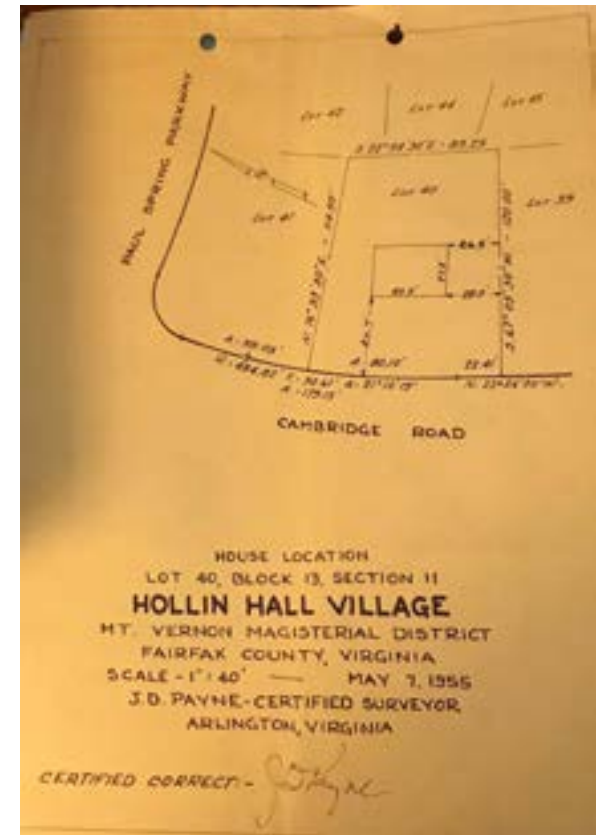
To learn more about how Hollin Hall Village came to be, we had the honor of conducting an interview with John McPherson, Jr., who is the son of the senior McPherson. McPherson, Jr., is currently 87 years old and grew up living in the original Little Hollin Hall.

According to McPherson, the family owned approximately 500 acres of property in the surrounding area and developed other nearby neighborhoods, in addition to Hollin Hall Village and the shopping center.

McPherson, Jr. noted that he was still in elementary school when his father developed Hollin Hall Village and the shopping center. McPherson, Sr., also gifted the land for the establishment of then Hollin Hall Elementary School, and the land for the establishment of the Mount Vernon Park and Pool.

He describes growing up in the house as fantastic. "We lived in the house. The 500 acres was our farm, and the beautiful house is still up there," McPherson explained.

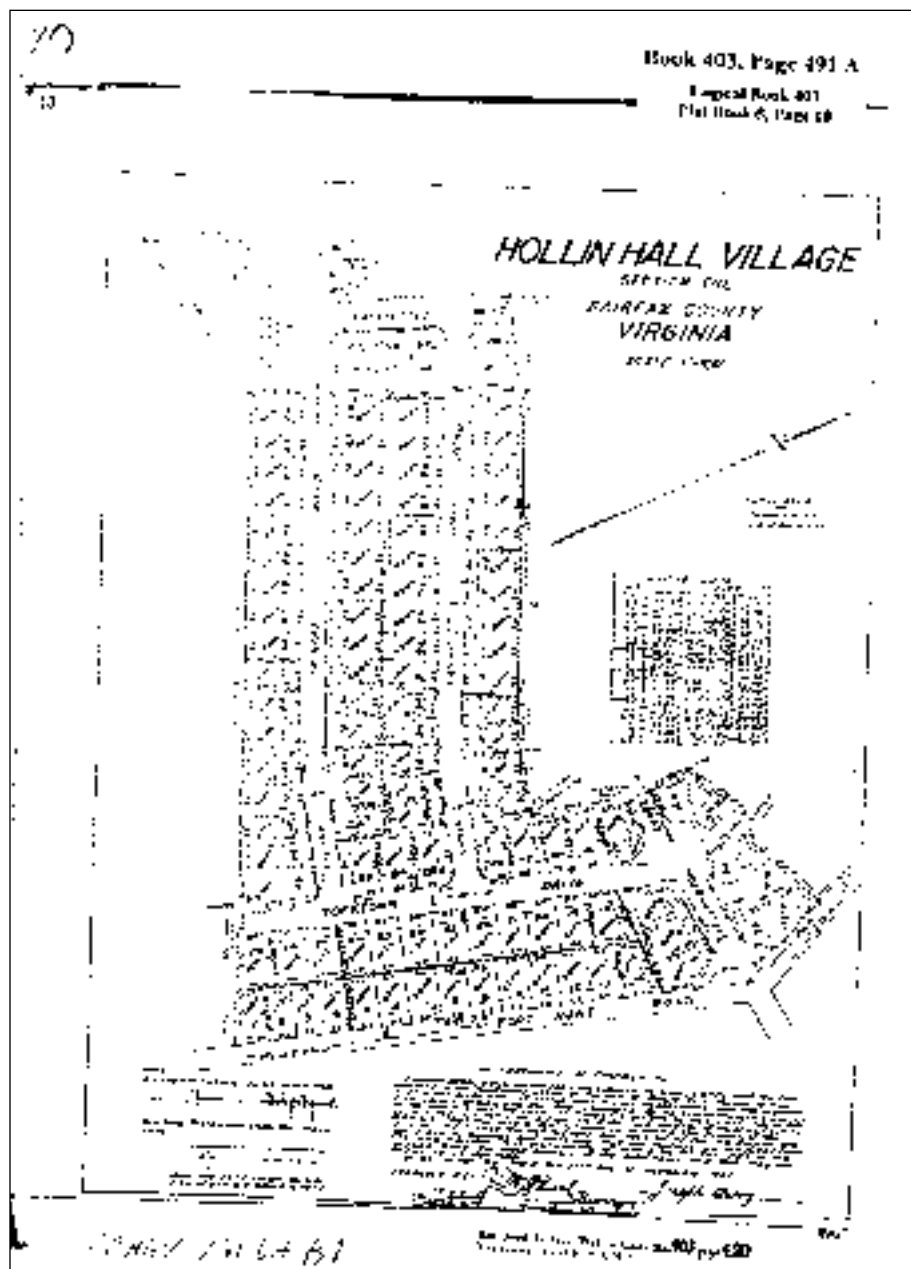
Prior to developing Hollin Hall, when the family still used the land as a farm, McPherson noted that they mostly grew corn and raised cattle. "We had 40 head of white-faced Herefords and 40 head of Black Angus that were on the farm that were sold as beef cattle," he noted.



Blueprint of 2nd section of Hollin Hall, 1955; notice Bainbridge was originally named Cambridge.

McPherson also recalled how the family used to have horses on the farm and they used to ride them around the area. The horses were kept in the barn near Paul Spring Parkway, which has since been converted to a church.

Part of the impetus for developing the neighborhood was that towards the end of



Copy of original Hollin Hall Village plat, circa 1943.

World War II, the start of the Baby Boomer generation began, with young couples leaving the city for the suburbs to start new families, and the idea was to give affordable housing to these families, he explained.

As the soldiers were starting to come home, the family began to develop the property, and subdividing off different parts. McPherson described how they got the acreage along Fort Hunt Road zoned commercially, so that at some point in the future they could build a shopping center, as well as the houses in the neighborhood.

By 1943, McPherson, Sr., had filed the necessary paperwork with the County to begin Hollin Hall Village. Sections one and two were approved in December 1942 and March 1943, respectively. Based on an original plat from 1943, it appears that the first section of Hollin Hall developed was along Fairfax Road



Sumner Meiselman on Washington Road; houses in rear of picture are along Wellington Road.

and Washington Road, and Yorktown Drive and Fort Hunt Road. It further shows that the plans for the second section extended along Wellington Road, Lafayette Drive and Bunker Hill Road.

The remainder of Hollin Hall was platted in 14 individual sections between 1950 and 1956. The section of Hollin Hall near Paul Spring Parkway apparently was one of the last sections that was built.

According to reports, building on the family's 500-acre farm commenced in 1946. McPherson explained that they developed most of the houses in the areas over an extended period.

"After we farmed it, then we subdivided it into sections, and then we built one section, and then two sections, and three sections. And what we were building were the houses that are in Hollin Hall . . . plus the land that's commercial. My father was involved in it and then I was involved in it."

McPherson explained that they started selling the houses right after the war ended. The GI financing at that time was a critical component to selling the homes, because they sold the houses to a lot of veterans who were returning from the war.

McPherson noted that they started selling the three-bedroom, one-bath houses for



- (1-4) Harris and Taylor family homes on Fairfax Road and New Orleans Drive under construction.
- (5-6) Harris children playing along Fairfax Road. The vacant land in the background is now Oakbrooke; it was a dairy farm owned by the Smeltzer family.

HOLLIN HALL VILLAGE

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\$12,500. In fact, one of the ads that we found show the houses for sale for \$15,000. Generally, the original homes all had the same floor plan, but as time went on, and different builders got involved, the floor plans and layout changed.

McPherson further described how there were three builders that oversaw the construction of the Hollin Hall homes. McPherson recalled that Eugene Cannon did the construction for most of the houses, as well as a person named Mr. Zimmerman, but he couldn't recall the name of the third builder.

The senior McPherson, who wasn't personally a farmer or developer, started in the brick manufacturing business in Washington, DC before developing Hollin Hall. While he helped manufacture new bricks, old bricks were popular because of how they look and their shapes and size, McPherson explained, as his dad set out to develop Hollin Hall.

Some houses were built with bricks, some were with wood and some with siding. Many of the houses were built with used bricks that came from Baltimore, Maryland. McPherson noted that they went to Baltimore where workers were tearing down old houses and buildings, and they got the workers to clean the mortar off the bricks so that they could reuse them. "Old bricks were very valuable and popular because of how they look and the shapes and odd sizes," he explained.

We would agree. Because of the location, the accessibility to neighborhood shops and proximity to the city, these strong and sturdy houses have served as homes for hundreds, if not thousands, of families over the years and, in fact, many families have retained ownership of their homes through several generations.



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Hollin Hall Elementary
& the Senior Center

During the development of Hollin Hall, it became clear that an elementary school would be needed to help educate all the children moving into the newly established neighborhood.

Enter once again John McPherson, who owned the land that Hollin Hall Village sits on and who was the visionary behind developing the neighborhood in the post-World War II Baby Boomer generation. McPherson gifted to Fairfax County the land to build Hollin Hall Elementary. The school reportedly was completed in 1948 and opened for classes in 1949, but that would not be enough.

“Hollin Hall School was originally a cinder block building with four very large rooms. They seemed to think they could get along with four rooms; it only lasted one year. Then they had so many children they had to add on to it....

Only two grades were housed in it while they built on. All the rest of the kids went down to Fort Hunt Park to a building that is no longer there. A wooden fire trap that would be regarded today as a total horror. It was some kind of barracks. Maybe it was a headquarters building. There were lots of rooms, some quite large...”

Previously recalled by deceased residents Jean and Carroll Hinman of Tauxemont.

Hollin Hall's First Principal

Elsie Tompkins Fletcher, who passed away at age 85 in July 1990, served as the first principal at Hollin Hall. Mrs. Fletcher moved to the area in 1929 and began teaching in Fairfax County in 1939.

She taught at Baileys Crossroads and Groveton elementary schools before she was appointed principal at Hollin Hall in 1949. She remained there for the next 25 years until her retirement in 1974.

One article we found says that the school was completed in 1954 at a total cost of \$541,427, and had an enrollment of 506 students and a teaching staff of 17.

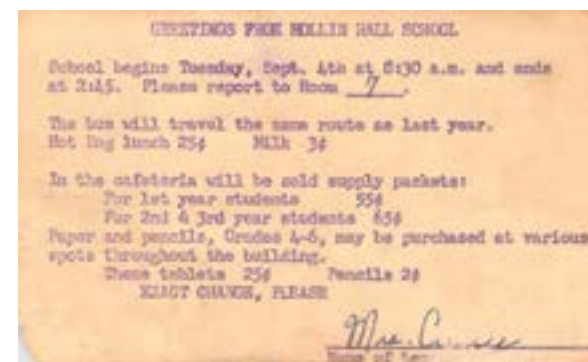
When Fletcher served as principal, a hot-dog lunch cost 25 cents, milk cost 3 cents, supply packets for first year students cost 55 cents, and pencils cost 2 cents.

At the time of the founding of the school, the area was still very much a rural area in transition.

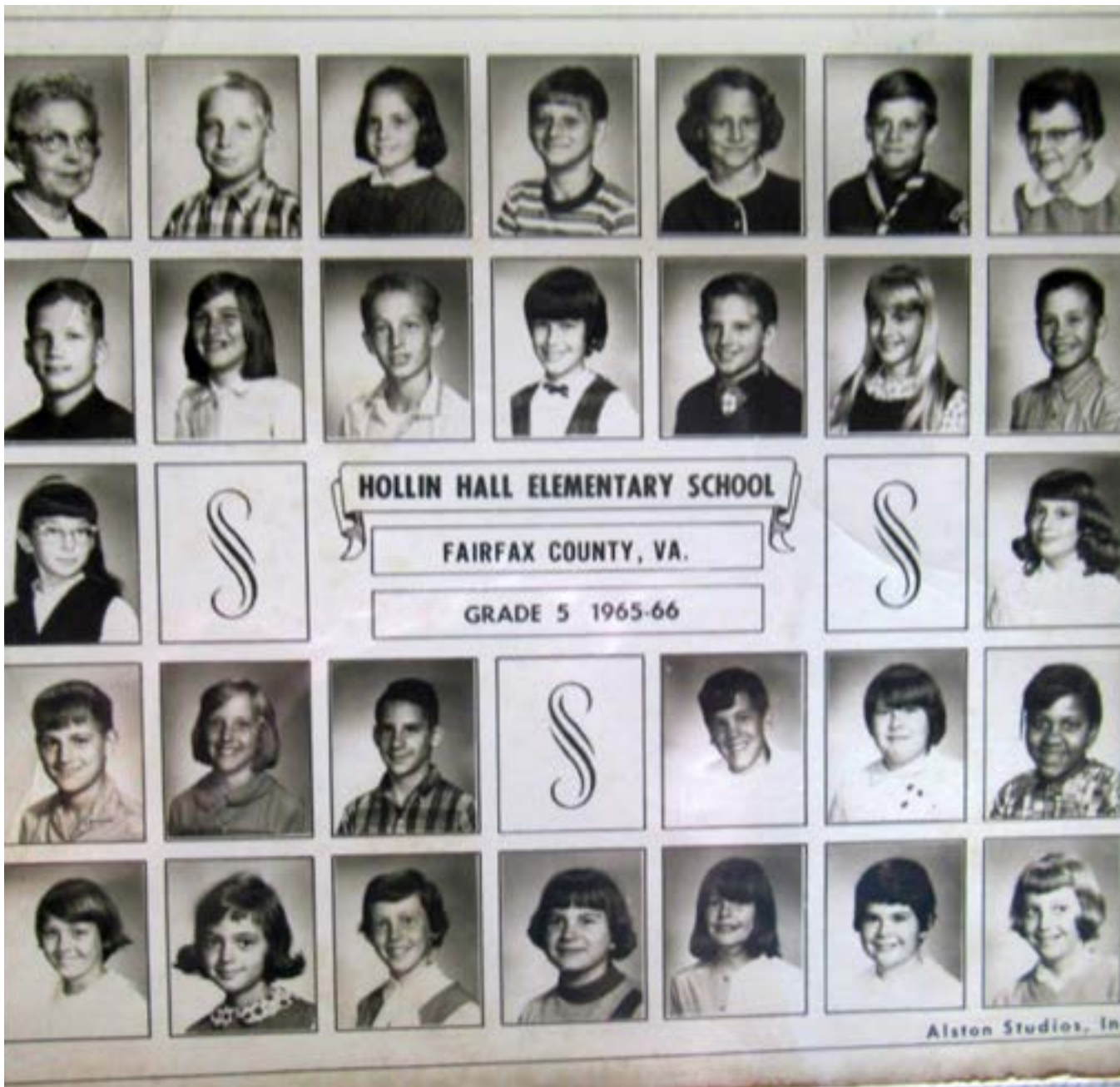
According to one resident, every morning the children said the Lord's Prayer, engaged in Bible study and sang “Jesus Loves Me”. At the end of the day, they would sing a special ‘Hollin Hall School Song’ before leaving.



Newspaper clipping documenting the establishment of the elementary school.



A back-to-school greeting card, circa 1961, when milk cost 3 cents and pencils cost 2 cents.



Clockwise from top: Grade 5, class picnic and picture day; young boys raise the Virginia state flag at Hollin Hall Elementary; the flag ceremony (in background is land where the shopping center will reside).

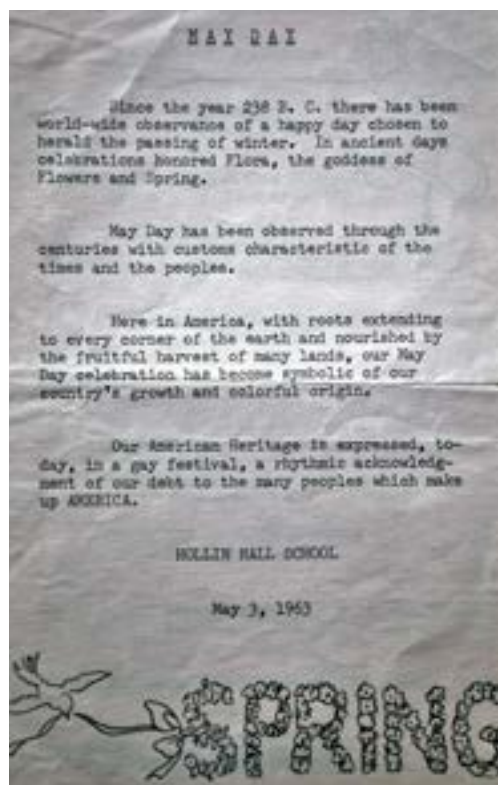
May Day

The school regularly celebrated “May Day” to mark the arrival of spring each year. The typed letter to the right, dated May 3, 1963, was provided as means of explanation.

Every year from second through sixth grade, each class did a specific dance for May Day. Mothers would make their daughters skirts to match their classmates.

Fourth grade girls were excited to dance the Virginia Reel. Fifth grade danced around the maypole with all the different streamers, and sixth grade did a grand march that had a drill team kind of configuration.

“It was exciting, and the parents came. It was where the parking lot is, but in those days the front of the school was all lawn,” a long-time resident told us.



Above: Typed letter announcing May Day and the program from 1963;
Below: Photos from Hollin Hall Elementary May Day Celebration, circa 1962.



MENUS FOR DECEMBER, 1962				
MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
(3) Barbecue-on-Bun Potato Chips Cole Slaw** Assorted chilled fruit*	(4) Shepherd's Pie Buttered Broccoli Carrot & Celery Sticks* Oatmeal Rolls Ginger Bread w/Whipped Topping	(5) Hot Turkey Sandwich Green Beans* Cherry Festival Salad** Chocolate Cake w/Butter Icing	(6) Fruit Punch ** Swiss Steak w/ Tomato-Onion Sauce Parboiled Rice Buttered Peas** Seeded Roll Cookie	(7) Mariner's Platter Tator Tots Tossed Salad** School Made French Dressing Crispy Corn Bread Pineapple Upside Down Cake**
(10) Hot-Dog-On-Bun Mustard - Relish School Made Baked Beans Smorgasbord Salad** Fudgie Cookie	(11) Meat Loaf w/ Onion Gravy Steamed Rice Chopped Kale** School Made Rolls Peach Delight**	(12) Lasagne Green Salad** Italian Dressing Crusty French Bread Chilled Pear Half U.S.D.A. Cookie	(13) Chicken Noodle Soup Peanut Butter and Jelly Sandwich Finger Salad Fresh Tangerine**	(14) Tuna Salad in Lettuce Cup French Fried Potatoes Mixed Vegetables Hot Roll ** Lemon Pie**
(17) Hamburger-on-Bun Mexican Corn Chilled Tomato Cup** Yellow Cake w/ Chocolate Icing	(18) Chipped Ham Candied Yams*** Cut Green Beans* Hot Rolls Chocolate Pudding	(19) Roast Tom Turkey w/Gravy Whipped Potatoes Cranberry Sauce Garden Peas** Seeded Roll Pumpkin Pie*	(20) Chili Con Carne Confetti Slaw** Saltines Chilled Apple Sauce* Ice Box Cookie	(21) Hot Tomato Soup Toasted Cheese Sandwich Relishes Assorted Chilled Fruit** Christmas Treat
*Vitamin A **Ascorbic Acid ***Vitamin A & Ascorbic Acid Each menu includes ½ pint milk and 2 tsp. butter				Menus subject to change if surplus commodities become available
CHRISTMAS HOLIDAYS				

School menu for December 1962.

A Period of Transition

After 34 years, the school closed in 1981 due to declining enrollment—a development that many long-time residents remain upset about to this day.

A similar fate would transpire with the closing of Fort Hunt High School in 1985. While the Fort Hunt spirit lives on, the community nevertheless has come to embrace Waynewood Elementary, Carl Sandburg Middle School, and West Potomac High School.

The building sat vacant for a couple of years. Several organizations were interested in gaining access to the building. At one point, there was concern within the community over interest by Safeway to increase its footprint. Then-County Supervisor Sandra Duckworth, School Board member Gerald Fill, Planning Commission member Peter Brintzer and representatives from the Park Authority held meetings where they heard the concerns of the community.

Ultimately, under the leadership of Fill who strenuously argued that the building should be used for the community's benefit, the School Board transferred the surrounding property to the Park Authority under a 99-year lease agreement, and the building facility was transferred to the Board of Supervisors.

The Senior Center

After serving as an elementary school for more than three decades and teaching young minds, the building sprang back to life in the form of the Hollin Hall Senior Center—this time to serve as a multiple-use community center. The building continues to be managed by the county and used as a senior citizens recreational center, as well as for child care services.

The Senior Center bills itself as a place for creative retirement—educating, enlightening, enriching lives and empowering the people of Mount Vernon. It is one of the largest and most active senior centers in the County, and it has been dubbed the “Lexus of Senior Centers.”

As the story goes, the Mount Vernon Chapter of AARP in 1982 needed a meeting place and senior citizens in this area wanted to get together. With the support of Sandy Duckworth, then Supervisor and community member, and Ann Nottingham, space in the vacant Hollin Hall School was made available to accommodate both of these needs.

The Senior Center opened on Jan. 31, 1983 and has grown by “leaps and bounds.” On the first day, 35 seniors participated in the center’s activities. Today, the center includes more than 1,600 registrants and averages more than 180 visitors every day! According to the center’s history, it has gone from three rooms with a program of six activities to 17 rooms and over 12 activities per day.

The programs are geared towards the recreational, social, physical and intellectual needs of senior adults, ages 50 and above, who are residents of Fairfax County. They offer a wide variety of activities and opportunities for companionship and fulfillment, as well as exercise and fitness activities, jazzercise, book clubs, table tennis and billiards, pottery and bridge, among others.

The center continues to thrive with support from its network of volunteers, State and County government, local clubs, citizens associations and private and non-profit groups that regularly hold events and meetings. In addition, the Hollin Hall Village Citizens Association uses the facility for its quarterly meetings.


A Child’s Place

In the same building, A Child’s Place has been serving the needs of children in the local community for more than 30 years. It takes pride in providing the working families in our area with a full-day, year-round preschool program for students ages 2–5.

The staff is committed to the care and education of children and strives to make the school a welcoming and fun place for them. In addition, they provide a morning snack, a hot catered lunch and an afternoon snack, as well as a comprehensive curriculum with emphasis on reading, math and science skills. Additionally, the children receive added enrichment each week through programs in music, art, physical education and Spanish.

For school-aged children, A Child’s Place offers before and after school care (SACC) for students in kindergarten through sixth grade, and a full-time summer camp program which begins as soon as the school year ends.

Did you know...



...the school regularly had air raid drills. The children were taught to take cover under their desks or in the hallway. Large blackout curtains were assigned to be closed when the air raid went off. We went out in the hallway and got up against the wall and squatted down.



...the bus from Fort Hunt was so full, the children said “don’t bring potato chips for lunch, they’ll get crushed on the way there!”

Hey Marty Nelson!
Here's looking
at you kid!



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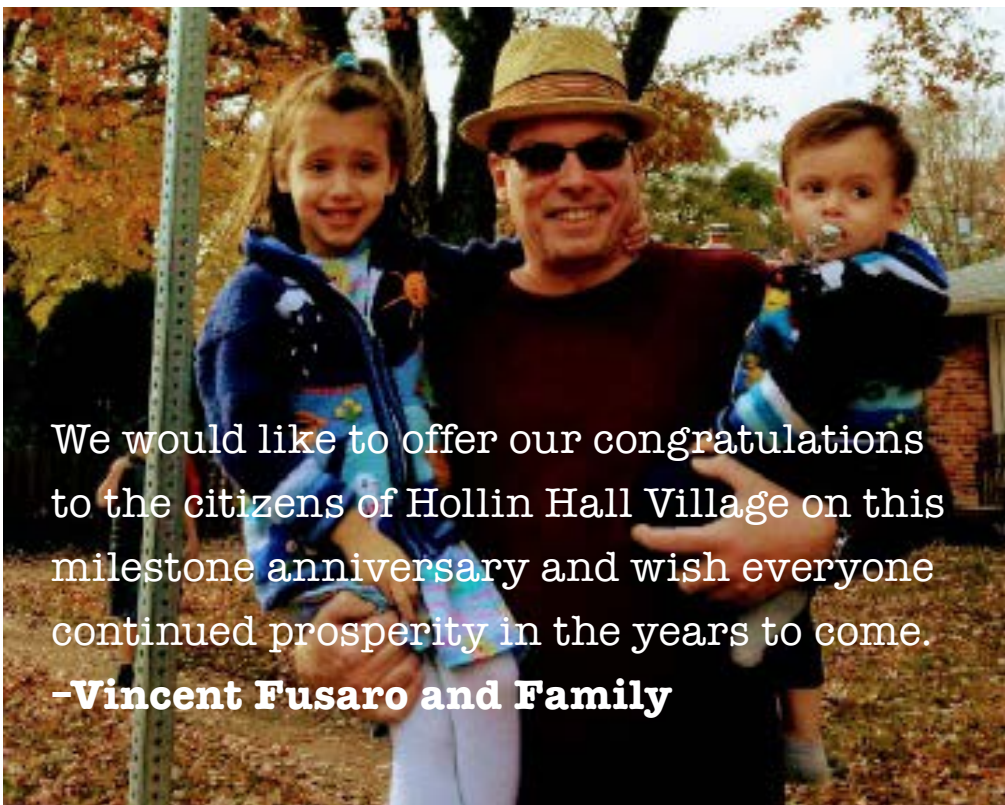
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We would like to offer our congratulations to the citizens of Hollin Hall Village on this milestone anniversary and wish everyone continued prosperity in the years to come.

-Vincent Fusaro and Family







1314 Bunker Hill Road



1316 Bunker Hill Road



1704 Jamestown Road



8037 Washington Road



1704 Jamestown Road



1503 Alexandria Avenue

The Patterson Group

PROUDLY SERVING HOLLIN HALL VILLAGE

We would like to congratulate Hollin Hall Village on their 75th Anniversary. Brittany Patterson is a proud resident of the neighborhood and is honored to serve the members of this extraordinary community.

Cheers to another 75 years.

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Despite the obvious reference to “Cheers,” when taking a stroll through the shopping center, one can’t help but notice the uniqueness of the small-town feel of the stores that take you back in time, combined with modern-day amenities. It’s a place where you consistently run into neighbors greeting each other and sharing stories.

The shopping center is one of the central components of Hollin Hall Village. While it does serve the broader Fort Hunt community, it is very much a part of Hollin Hall’s charm. In fact, if you live in Hollin Hall, you can find everything you need right here within walking distance from your home.

The shopping center has seen changes throughout the years with the composition of its stores, but amazingly, several stores have remained nearly consistent throughout the shopping center’s existence. The hardware store, barber shop and dry cleaners were three of the original stores that still exist today. The Variety Store wasn’t necessarily an original store, but it has a long and distinguished history as part of the shopping center. In addition, the local gas station has been run for decades by the Harvey family.

Other stores and shops add to the charm, including the Hollin Hall Pastry Shop, which has a wide of specialty cakes and

pastries; the River Bend Bistro featuring an array of local comfort foods; Roseinas with its specialty take-out food; Via Veneto, a casual Northern Italian restaurant; and Hunan Manor, with some of the best Chinese food in the area. The shopping center also features an animal hospital, where many local residents take their four-legged family members.

Like the homes in Hollin Hall Village itself, the shopping center was developed by John McPherson, Sr., and to this day is still owned by the McPherson family.

The shopping center was built in three sections, according to McPherson, Jr. The first section was next to Fort Hunt and Shenandoah Roads, where the current Wells Fargo Bank resides.

The second stage was where the current River Bend Bistro and Walgreens sit. The third section was on the opposite side of the shopping center, where the Variety Store is currently located.

McPherson, Jr., noted that he was part of the last development of the shopping center, while his father developed the first two.

Acme Supermarket was one of the first stores in the first section, and then it later moved to the second section of the shopping center. The Fort Hunt Drugstore was also one of the original stores in the

shopping center, which we understand had a lunch counter/diner in the back.

It also had a record store called the Music Cellar. There is a door located between the River Bend Bistro and the BB&T bank and that was the entrance to the basement record shop.



DID YOU KNOW?

- ...that Fort Hunt’s own Hoda Kotb of NBC’s Today Show worked at the Scoops ice cream store at the Hollin Hall Shopping Center.
- ...that Man’s World once provided apparel, accessories and footwear from the corner of the shopping center.



Hollin Hall Automotive

Hollin Hall Automotive is a true landmark within Hollin Hall Village with a unique story of how it began. An article from 1950 in The Washington Post explained how Mr. McPherson received approval to build a gas station at Fort Hunt and Shenandoah roads, based on a report that an undertaker once ran out of gas near that location. The Fairfax County Board of Supervisors granted the rezoning application after Mr. McPherson submitted a letter from a minister.

The letter recalled that the undertaker was on route to the minister's church for a funeral and ran out of gasoline. The service had to wait until gas could be brought from Alexandria. The BOS granted a two-acre plot in Hollin Hall Village for the gas station after receiving the notice endorsing the proposed zoning change from the Reverend Alexander Robertson, pastor of St. Luke's Church.

"It might interest you to know that one of our undertakers ran out of gas at the exact spot where I understand the gas station is to be. We had one whale of a time holding up the service until gasoline could be gotten from Alexandria," Robertson wrote. The funeral procession was of Frank Scheeler, coming from Cunningham's Funeral Home in Alexandria.

Hollin Hall Automotive was originally established as a Gulf station by Leon Harvey Sr. in 1960. Over time, Hollin Hall Automotive has been a Gulf, Chevron and Shell station, but always Harvey family owned since 1960. After Leon Harvey Sr. passed in 1966, Hollin Hall Automotive was owned and operated for decades by his wife, Ruth Ann Harvey, while raising seven boys on her own. Ruth Harvey continued to work at Hollin Hall Automotive until she retired in 2013 at the age of 90.

Today, Hollin Hall Automotive continues to be family owned and operated by Leon and Ruth son's Tom Harvey. Tom has worked at the station since he was 13 years old.

Hollin Hall Automotive has been an integral part of the community, and a generous supporter of local schools, organizations, charities, and events in the Mount Vernon area throughout the years. They've employed hundreds of kids, sponsored numerous youth league teams, funded Mount Vernon's charities and simply run a top-notch operation. Ruth Ann won the first Sponsor Award for her work with the Fort Hunt Youth Athletic Association.

Moreover, in 2011, the General Assembly passed a resolution sponsored by then-delegate Scott Surovell and state Senator Toddy Puller commending Hollin Hall Automotive on its 50-year anniversary.



Leon Harvey, Sr., Ruth Ann Harvey with park policeman, and Tom Harvey.



Newspaper clipping and the first Hollin Hall Automotive (Gulf).

The Variety Store

Ann and Ben Vennell opened The Variety Store in 1958 in the location that was the Village Wharf restaurant and is now the River Bend Bistro. “When you walk into our store you will feel like you stepped back to 1958,” according to the store’s Facebook page, which adds that, the “nostalgia and atmosphere of the store and the infinite variety of items takes you back to an earlier time.”

Like Hollin Hall Automotive, the Variety Store has employed perhaps hundreds of high school kids throughout the years.

In 1964, they move the store to its present location at the other end of the shopping center. That new location was nearly four times as large as the original store and that’s why they moved in 1964, Vennell explained in an article in the Mount Vernon Gazette.

“Over the past 50 years we have developed the items that are needed by this community. I found a long time ago it’s far better to put items at the best price for customers. It’s easier on them and easier on us and builds loyalty. We have made a good living on this philosophy, Vennell told the Gazette.

After running the store for 50 years, the Vennells sold the store in Feb. 2008 to

Doug Bentley. According to the Gazette article, when word first got out that the Vennells were going to retire and sell the store, there was somewhat of an uproar within the community. “About 10 years or so ago a rumor got out that we were closing the store, and it caused a local firestorm. Our phones were ringing off the hook and customers flocked to the store to make sure it was still open,” Ben Vennell told the Gazette.

“This store is so important to so many of the people in this area. I just want to assure them that it’s not going away and it’s not going to change. There are very few stores of this nature that are in business for 50 years. That can be attributed to our customer service philosophy and their response of loyalty,” Vennell noted.

Bentley is also a life-long resident of the area and when he and his wife, Deborah, took over the store, they assured neighbors that nothing would change with the Variety Store’s operations, personnel or vast array of products. The Bentleys also previously owned The Gift Shop, located two doors down from The Variety Store for 17 years.

“I’ve always wanted to own The Variety Store and when the opportunity presented itself I took it,” Bentley noted. “I grew up in this neighborhood. I have been coming into this store all my life. I have no intention of changing anything.”

The Village Hardware

The Village Hardware store bills itself as “rooted in excellence and committed to customer service.” Current owner Larry Gray explains that the Village, as it is affectionately referred to, is family owned and operated and is a testament to the golden age of mom and pop stores.

Gray learned the tools of the trade as a young man working with his father in construction. He took that invaluable knowledge and applied it to running his business. Established in 1979, the Village is

one of the few independent hardware stores left in the metropolitan area, and it started with a simple pledge: “Offering a high-quality product with personalized service.”

The pledge goes on to explain that nearly 40 years later, that single promise has been elevated to an art form, backed by decades of experience, an expansive range of expertise, and most of all, a wonderful willingness to help. Rest assured, if you have a question, the Village has an answer.

Like the Variety Store, you can find just about anything you need to work around the house or complete a project. The Village

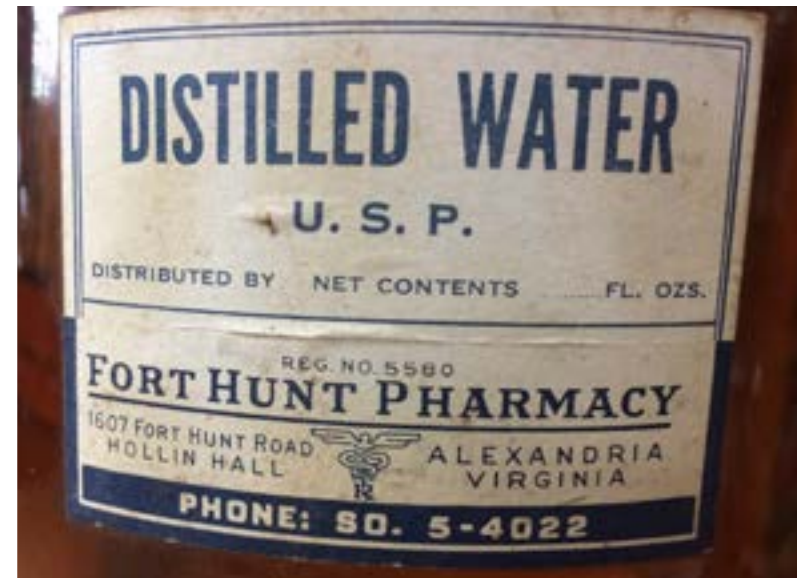
has also been a long-time supporter of Fort Hunt Youth Athletics and has employed numerous students through the years.

And in what has been described as a “mecca for grilling enthusiasts,” you must visit the basement of the store, where you will find a gold mine of the latest grills, cooking gadgets, spices and sauces.

“My three sons, daughter, and wife all play a role in the hardware store. Along with my staff, we strive to provide the best possible service, whether it is finding the screw that fits just right or delivering thirty bags of mulch on time with a smile,” Gray notes.

DID YOU KNOW?

- ...we had a little record store called the Music Cellar in the shopping center? There is a door located between the River Bend Bistro and the BB&T bank and that was the entrance to the basement record shop.
- ...the original shopping center was home to a Rex-all Drug Store which had a lunch counter/diner in the back? Wells Fargo now occupies that space.
- ...Fort Hunt Pharmacy was originally located where the hardware store is now and then moved over to where the bank, vet and Roseina's are currently located. The image on the right is a label from the early 1960s.



Alexandria Cars & Coffee

"If you think it's cool, I'm sure we will, too!"

Another unique feature of Hollin Hall Village and the shopping center is the Alexandria Cars & Coffee group that meets twice a month on Sunday morning between 8:30 a.m. and 11:00 a.m.

According to the group's website, they started meeting at the Hollin Hall shopping center in 2012 as a friendly group of people who love their cars and like meeting other people who love their cars. The group has an eclectic mix of old and new cars, including classic, sports cars, trucks, motorcycles, hot rods and exotic cars, and welcomes everyone to join.



DID YOU KNOW?



...Over the years, the crew of Davis Construction, our local builders, have found a few interesting things left in the houses...

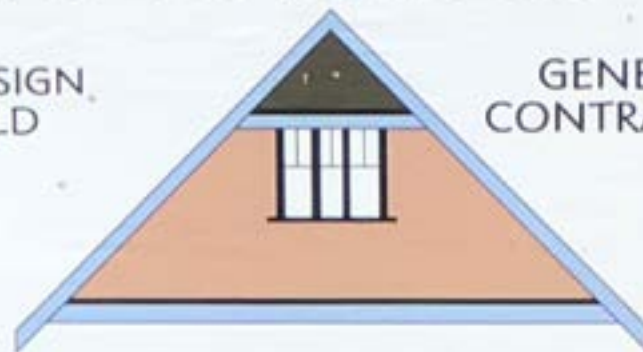
On the left, a genuine Natty Bo beer can (made in Baltimore!) found in the walls of one of our houses... The story goes that the builders of the houses with square corners left empty milk jugs (inset)!

Do you know which crew built your house?

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Cheryl Sabo, Kripalu Yoga Teacher & Hollin Hall resident



Life in Hollin Hall

Small-Town Living in the Big City

During the development of this booklet, I interviewed several long-time residents about their recollections of growing up in Hollin Hall. In addition, several residents shared handwritten stories with me, as well as comments from now-deceased neighbors. The passages below are a compilation of those conversations and stories.

June Suggs during snow storm on corner of Jackson Road and Ingram Place, 1957, when street signs were wooden.

Living in Mayberry

It's like living in Mayberry! My mother used to say, 'You better get cleaned up,' when I would run to the store, because she knew you were going to run into somebody you know."

Several residents made references to Mayberry. "I love it when you go into the store and the people that work at the store know you, because I feel safe or you run into a bunch of people you know."

"There were many dogs, kids and bikes. Open doors and open windows seemed so inviting," recalls Maye Barnard. "You could smell what was cooking for dinner."

Others recalled blowing whistles when it was time for the kids to come home for dinner.

Finding Indian head arrows near the Paul Spring Branch of Little Hunting Creek off Paul Spring Parkway also was common. The kids back then didn't have iPhones, so they played in the creek all day.

Sightings of copperhead and black snakes apparently were common. "It was a wild area for sure," one resident noted.

Gardens were also common, because the size of the yards were generous. "When the

city kids came to view our garden, we pointed out lettuce, beans and tomatoes. A four-year old boy queried, 'Which one is the meatloaf plant?'" Maye Barnard remembered.

"One of the great things about the neighborhood is that you can walk to the shopping center, and go to the Variety Store, the drug store or the then-Acme Grocery Store," explained Paulette Beighley.

The Variety Store was located where River Bend Bistro resides. What is now Wells Fargo was formerly the drug store.

Many of the stores at the shopping center existed before the advent of shopping malls. Whenever you needed something, you would go to the Hardware Store or the Variety Store.

"While they were building Hollin Hall, the construction sites and the immense erosion furnished a series of ravines in which we



Bonnie Meiselman with daughter in front of home on Fort Hunt Road, circa 1960.

used to dig caves," recalls Robert Surovell. "We would roam farmers' fields, planted in hay or corn or populated by cows. After the age of 9 or so everybody started fishing, usually at Mrs. Crim's dock. We caught white perch, cat fish and carp. I've seen baby sharks. Winter was interesting on the Potomac. I've seen huge sheets of ice 5 or 6 feet tall piled up."

Another resident also recalled a story about how a ghost allegedly lingers around Little Hollin Hall.

The Cows

When Hollin Hall Village was first developed in the late 1940s and early 1950s, it was still very much a rural area. Long-time resident Maye Barnard recalls how Shenandoah Road was a cow pasture!

The kids would cut through Little Hunting Creek and Little Hollin Hall to go sledding in the winter over by Sherwood Hall Lane. But when you were sledding, you had to keep an eye out that you didn't run into the cows.

"Across Fort Hunt Road was a beautiful meadow, bucolic, pastoral, with cows grazing here and there and the most gorgeous, European style haystacks, curved, pretty, picturesque, not like the Midwestern haystacks we knew," deceased residents Jean and Carroll Hinman previously remembered.

"McPherson cows used to be able to graze on the property . . . and his farm hands used to ride all over chasing them. Big footprints in our yard meant that a McPherson cow had gotten loose," a former resident recalled.

"They were special. It was a hillside always dotted with black angus cattle. ... One year our Christmas card was the scene from our picture window."

Life before Woodrow Wilson Bridge

One neighbor described how her family moved to Washington, DC from Georgia during the war so that her father, who was a physicist, could work at the Naval Research Lab. Following the war, the family settled on living in Hollin Hall.

The Lab was right across from Old Town, Alexandria. At the time, there were several people who lived in Hollin Hall that worked at Naval Research Lab, which was right across from Old Town, Alexandria, but that was way before Woodrow Wilson Bridge was built, so the Navy ran a skiff from the Torpedo Factory to the lab in the morning.

Consequently, many Hollin Hall residents would carpool each morning to the Torpedo Factory to catch the skiff. When the Woodrow Wilson Bridge opened in 1961, everything changed, and it made commuting much easier for workers at the Lab who could now drive themselves to work.



The campus of the U. S. Naval Research Laboratory in late 1944, view from Alexandria.

The First Church on Fort Hunt Road

Saint Luke's Episcopal Church started as a Sunday School in 1929. In 1933, land was donated by Malcolm Mathieson, the owner of Wellington Estate, and the church moved into a brick chapel on the present site. The chapel consisted basically of one room, with a round window above the altar.

Over the years the church expanded, until 1952 when the current building was complete.



The Mount Vernon Fire Department on Fort Hunt Road that protected Hollin Hall.



Early photos of Hollin Hall and the surrounding area, from the Young family.



Ginny Houston Lima, Kerri Burnham, Marie Kahal and other girls at Hollin Hall Elementary.



Rachel Meiselman, Janet Schmidt, Ellie Griffith, Barbara Reed, Sally Walther, Susan Hernholm, Kathy Von Lewinski, Jan Pendelton, and ???



Fallon Sunday 1957



Spring 1959



January 1954



Fallon Sunday 1955



May 9 - 1st Communion

Jerry Gerard and Tim Vigotsky, Bainbridge Road, 1957; Jerry Gerard with sister Daria Gerard (Godbout/Lepisko) in front of their house on Bainbridge in the early 1950s.

Memories from the '90s



Clockwise from top: Hollin Hall/Mount Vernon Park Bike Parade, Summer 1995.

“Hollin Hall Moms” at the Hollin Hall Parade, Summer 1995.
From L to R: Missy Mossman of Washington Road, Stephanie Baker of Jackson Road, Lucy Torbert Burroughs, and Cindy and Cliff Baker of Jackson.

Inset: Lucy Torbert Burroughs of Baltimore Road, with Missy Mossman running in background.

“Mom’s Night Out,” January 1993, L to R: Missy Mossman, Toni Muckerman, Cindy Baker, Helen Price, Lucy Torbert Burroughs, Sharon Kreger, Clare Matthews, Michelle Gowen and Peggy Russo.

Did you know...

...the original house numbers were only three digits? They were changed to the “now” four-digit numbers in the early 1960s.

...the late, famous DJ Wolfman Jack would come to town to visit his sister. At the time, he wasn’t known yet and his real name was Bob Smith, and he lived in California, working at Disney. “I vividly remember him; he had this gravelly voice and he was just cool. It was exciting.”

...the average price of a brand new Hollin Hall home in 1952 was \$13,750 (no basement - two bedroom - one bathroom; the back kitchen door led to the outside/ backyard).

...the clubhouse at the pool had cotillions—a formal ball and social gathering, often the venue for presenting débutantes—in the early 1960s where dances were held on Wednesday nights.

...they used to have a great firework display at the pool—that’s where everybody went for fireworks on the Fourth. You would take your lawn chairs and sit around the pond and watch the fireworks. “It was another home town event for the community, giving you that small-town feel!”



Rejuvenation

“To see all the renovations and all the building, and people aren’t moving. I feel like this is a place that people want to live, and I think, I just love that. I love the fact that it’s not becoming just an old, beat-up neighborhood. It’s actually experiencing a rejuvenation. I can tell you who the original owners of every house were at this end of Hollin Hall, because I knew them, I grew up with them. But now we’ve got young couples.”

“I’m watching the neighborhood turn over and to talk to them, they’re excited about this neighborhood. They love this neighborhood. I just don’t see it dying. I see it coming back. I’m wondering if those folks wish they hadn’t turned it into a senior center, if they wish it was still an elementary school, because I think there’s new growth coming around, and they’re going to have to put the kids someplace.”



Congratulations to our neighbors
and friends in Hollin Hall Village on
achieving your

Diamond Jubilee 75th Anniversary

Mount Vernon Park is proud to be part of this
wonderful and vibrant community.

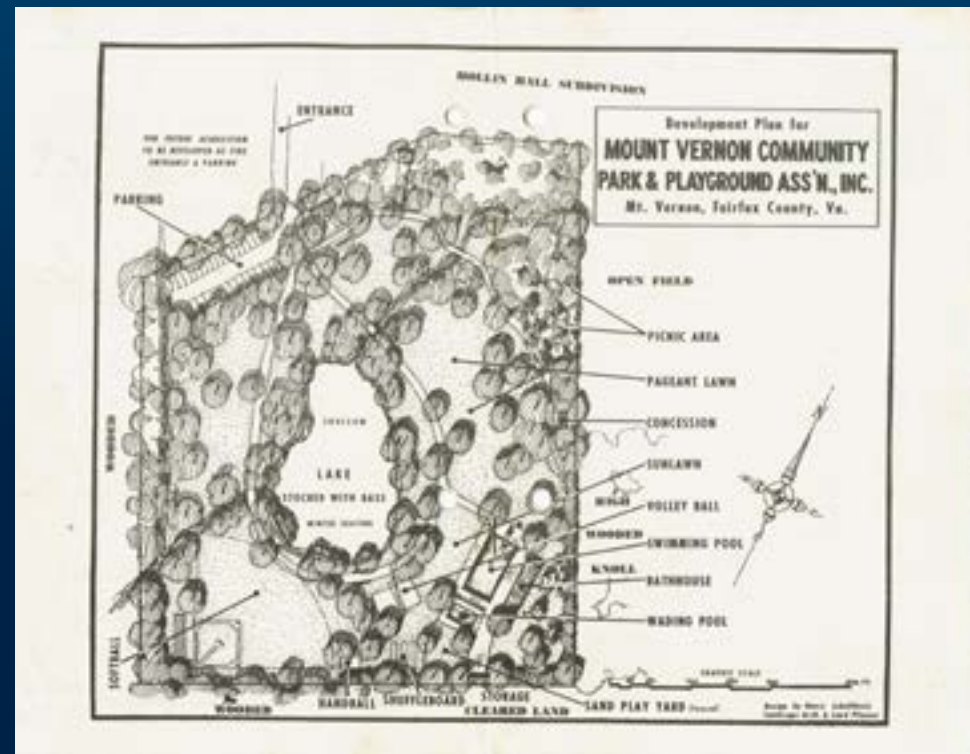
We look forward to celebrating many more
anniversaries together in the years to come.

On behalf of the Mount Vernon Park Association's
Board of Directors and Park Members



Mount Vernon Park & Pool

The Hidden Gem of Hollin Hall



There is no better place to enjoy a summer day than crossing the bridge and entering the hidden paradise in Hollin Hall Village. Founded in 1954 as The Mount Vernon Community Park and Playground Association, Inc., This private member-based Park has served as a “summer getaway” for hundreds of area residents.

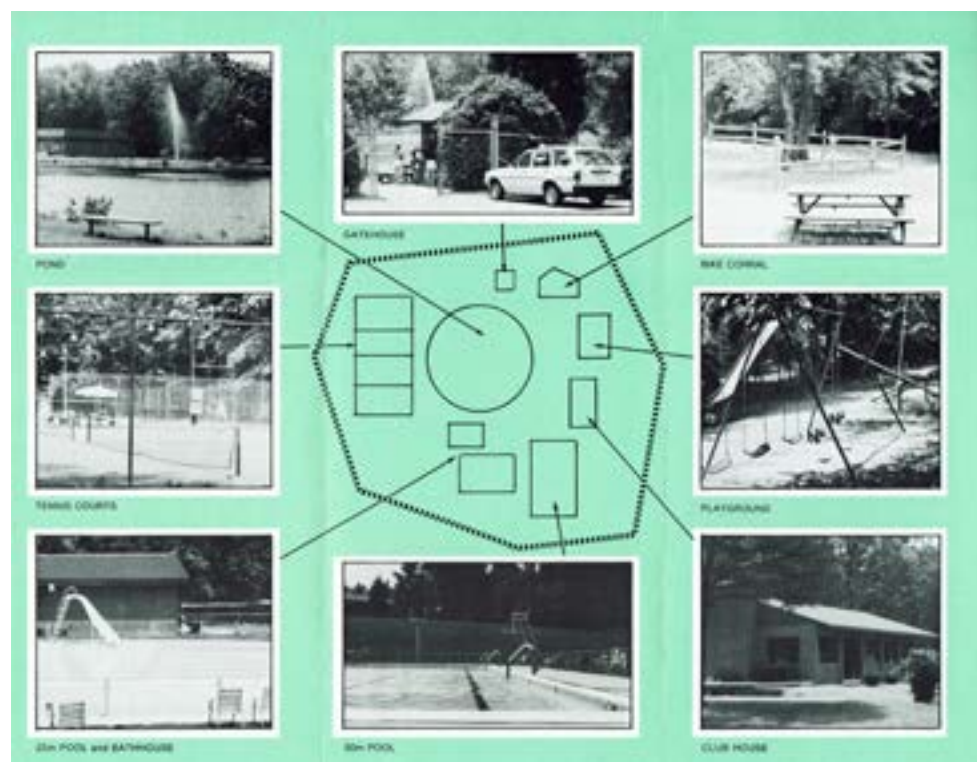
A Vision for the Community

Originally on eight acres of land donated by St. Luke’s Episcopal Church through John E. McPherson, the Park today sits on 13.2 acres located at the corner of Fairfax Road and Lafayette Drive. At the groundbreaking ceremony, the founders and first Board of Directors visualized a “magnificent recreation center and swimming pool at the lowest possible cost for family membership.”

The original site plan included a modern swimming pool, wading pool, sand play area, bathhouse, baseball diamond, volleyball court, shuffle board court, picnic area, wide walks, and a large lake stocked with bass and bluegill fish.

On August 28, 1954 the vision became a reality when the 25-meter pool was dedicated and opened for swimming the next day with 107 family memberships. By 1960, membership reached 600 families where it stands today.

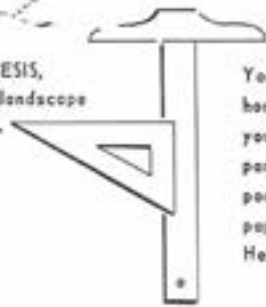
The vision was persistent as tennis courts were constructed in 1963 and in 1965 a beautiful 50-meter pool was completed. The Hollin Hall Variety Store management also ran the first clubhouse snack bar that same year. In 1975, the Park adopted the official name Mount Vernon Park Association, Inc.



Clockwise from top: Brochure of the original layout of the Mount Vernon Park and Pool; Ribbon cutting ceremony reported in the Washington Post; Washington Post photo of opening day.

OUTLINED FOR OUR COMMUNITY

by HENRY SCHULTHEIS,
nationally-known landscape
and site architect.



You wouldn't think of building a home without blueprints, would you? Neither should we plan a park, playground and swimming pool without first planning it on paper for year around appeal. Here is our plan.



PARK PLANS...

Our plans include the first great works of any community park... character, mind and body building. Through play and activities which a park affords, our young citizens are taught these assets.

RECREATION...

Learn to swim...how to fly fish... shoot a bow and arrow... play valley ball... safe swings and exercise bars... shuffle board... you name it!



PLAY BALL!

Our soft ball field will be of regulation size, with suitable "bleachers" for you to call the "umpire" a blind man.

SWIMMING POOL...

POOL your investment in our pool. It will be of a modern design which will make a big difference for your swimming pleasure. A wading pool for the baby swimmers is also planned.



PICNIC...

The woods of our area was especially selected for your pleasure in a picturesque grove of Pine trees. In addition, suitable fireplaces are to be constructed for the outdoor "Chiefs" of the area.

FISHING IS FUN...

The world's record for the two types of fish we will stock in our year-around lake are: Bluegill Sunfish... 4 lbs., 12 oz. and for Black Bass (smallmouth) over 10 lbs. In Virginia, there is no closed season on "Bluegills". Bass fishing is authorized from June 1 to December 1, with exceptions.



"It's an employment for idle time not idly spent, a rest to mind, a cheerer of spirits, a diverter of sadness, a calmer of unquiet thoughts, a moderator of passions and a procurer of contentedness." That's what the Patron Saint of Fishing, Izaak Walton, said in 1653.

A Case of Arson

Unfortunately, trouble happened at the Park on February 26, 1977, when the old wood clubhouse was burned to the ground in what fire inspectors declared a case of arson. The only structure left from the old pavilion was the fireplace and outside patio. A local person was convicted of the crime and sentenced to jail. But with determination, members rebuilt the structure and in 1980, the new pavilion and a new bathhouse was complete.

Fire Destroys old Clubhouse

New Clubhouse at Mt. Vernon Park Association



Rising From The Ashes

Mt. Vernon Park Association, a swimming and tennis club located in Hollin Hall, south of Alexandria, opened its new clubhouse last Friday night with a party and ribbon-cutting ceremony. Top left shows the ribbon being cut by, from left to right, James Wild, park manager, Joe Nodhol, association vice president, Jim Wade, architect, Fred Lewis, association president, Frank Taylor, treasurer and Ed Coughlin, secretary. At top right, Roger Adams, Ruth Goffard and Martha Turner chat at the clubhouse opening. The old clubhouse burned in the ground in 1971 in what fire inspectors declared a case of arson. (Staff photos by William Baynes)



The Mt. Vernon Observer

Resident
Hollin Hall Village
Alexandria, Va.



Mt. Vernon Community Park & Playground Assn., Mt. Vernon, Va.
Vol. I, No. 1

SWIMMING POOL AND FISHING LAKE WILL BE KEYNOTE OF MT. VERNON COMMUNITY PARK AND PLAYGROUND



PROFESSIONAL PLANS DRAFTED FOR RECREATION CENTER

MOUNT VERNON, VIRGINIA—The Mount Vernon Citizens Association, meeting in the Parish Hall of St. Luke's P. E. Church recently, voted unanimously approval for a plan as submitted by its President, Marine Captain Al Robles, to form the Mount Vernon Community Park and Playground Association, Inc. The nonprofit corporation will be responsible for developing approximately eight acres of a wooded tract of property donated to the Mount Vernon Community through the St. Luke's P. E. Church, by Mr. and Mrs. John E. McPherson. The property is located west of the corner of Fairfax and Lafayette Avenue, in Hollin Hall Village.

Initially, the corporation officials will use the same as those of the Mount Vernon Citizens Association, as the Association is sponsoring a. Fifteen directors representing Hollin Hills, Marine Forest, Pinecroft Haven, Hollin Hall Village, Potomac, Wellington Heights, Wellington Park, East and West Beddards, Knicker Hills and other neighborhoods of the Mount Vernon area will comprise the Board of Directors.

The site plan as submitted by Henry Roudsback, noted Landscape Architect, includes a modern swimming pool, wading pool, sand play area, bath house, baseball diamond, roller ball court, other recreation features, picnic area, wide walks for strolling, and a large lake which will be stocked with bass and bluegill fish.

Captain Robles stated, "Everything possible has been studied in great detail since January 1, 1964 by various groups and committees to afford this magnificent recreation center and swimming pool in the finest possible and the healthiest surroundings." In addition, the outlook to complete and bring the success of this fine community project for

(Continued on Page 4)



ITS NO FISH STORY!
OUR LAKE WILL YIELD
600 LBS OF FISH PER
YEAR



MOUNT VERNON PARK ASSOCIATION

MAY 30, 1956...2 PM

OPENING DAY CEREMONIES



OFFICERS OF THE MT. VERNON PARK AND PLAYGROUND ASSOCIATION	
President	Paul T. Bishop
Vice-President	Walter C. Bond
Secretary	Paul E. Thompson
Treasurer	Clarence W. Korman
DIRECTORS	
Mrs. John Bates, Jr. Thomas R. Chambers W. Adrian Commins Donald G. Frohman John W. Hays	John C. Harris Marion G. Harlan A. J. Jarry Henry Roudsback John F. Smith, Jr.
ASSISTANTS	
Assistant Secretary	Mrs. Chester Gartin
Assistant Treasurer	Byron C. Stone
General Counsel	Dwight Ruck
Asst. General Counsel	Herbert Gidley
COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN	
Pool and Grounds	W. Dale Mosley
Program	Thomas Chambers
Flowers	Clarence W. Korman
Engineering	Donald G. Frohman
Food	Mrs. Russell R. Davis, Jr.
Membership	Adolph R. Humphreys
Publicity	W. Adrian Commins
Rules	Walter A. Bates
Building Finance	Donald R. Trumbull
Tenants	Clarence L. Korman



Left: The pool's newsletter, the Mt. Vernon Observer, announcing plans for the opening;
Above: Program from Opening Day, Young Rick Jones with the catch-of-the-day; Ice skating on the pond (1970s/80s).

Advances to the Park

Advances to the Park continued with the original managers “shack” being replaced in 1992 by a cottage-style office/garage. In 2000, the pond was drained and dredged of 45 years of silt and restocked with bass, bluegill, sunfish, catfish, and minnows. Today it serves as a vocal point for the young and old as they enjoy a relaxing day fishing around the pond.

Other recent additions include the new snack shack, which was designed and constructed by park members and opened in the summer of 2012. A grass volleyball court was also put in by members in 2014 and a permanent bonfire pit was built in 2018.

Throughout the years, the beautiful grounds and landscaping are frequently enhanced, and the picnic area continues to be improved with more kid-friendly ground cover and many more pieces of equipment than when the Park was first opened. The only original playground equipment that still stands strong is the 1955 large metal slide from the Harris family, who has been involved with the Park from the onset.



Fourth of July tug-of-war, late 1970s, early 1980s.

Family Gathering Place

Since the beginning, Mount Vernon Park has served as a family gathering place for all seasons. During the winters of the mid-1950s, ice skating on the pond was open to everyone in the community. It was open day and night with adults monitoring the activities. Night skating was especially fun with bonfires and hot apple cider.

A “red ball” was hung on the flagpole at the Hollin Hall Shopping Center Rexall Drugstore to signal the pond was ready for skating. The Fire Department would spray water on the ice each night so there would be a smother surface on the ice.

In addition, from 1956 to 1976, the Park hosted their annual Fourth of July fireworks which was also open to all Hollin Hall residents.

Over the years, MVPA has become the home for fun-filled adult, children and family events in the area. In 1965, MVPA launched it's first “Las Vegas Night.” Other early functions include a New Year's Day bash, Lobster Feast, Latin Fiesta, Teen Parties, and a Sunday Brunch by the 50-meter pool with champagne and donuts.

Today the Park continues with the original Crab Feast and 4th of July Bash, but also added new events such as family campouts, Beer & Chili Cookoff, Wine Fest, Pig Roast, Comedian Night, Author's Spotlight, MVPA Art Gallery and Oktoberfest.

Children's activities range from pony rides, a petting zoo, laser tag, Reptiles Alive, magic shows, tie-dye shirt day, and educational science and art programs. The senior group has also been very active since 1992 with their Aqua Aerobics classes which are still swimming strongly to this day.



Swim Team

The Mount Vernon Park Gator swim team started in 1957 and was one of six charter members of the Northern Virginia Swimming League. Today, MVPA has over 200 swimmers, has won many divisional championships, set numerous NVSL records and has grown to become one of the largest teams in Fairfax County.

A Real Alligator?

According to legend, the swim team got the team name “Gators” because someone brought a small alligator back from Florida and threw it into the pond. It survived and grew for three years before the caretaker, Charles Yingling, shot it with a .22 caliber rifle. This act earned him the nickname “one shot” Charlie. But if you ask others, they will say the legend of the alligator continues and it still lives on in the pump room of the guard’s office.



Anyone for tennis?

MVPA is also well-known for its co-ed Junior and Adult Tennis Teams that have been competing against other local teams in the Mount Vernon Community Tennis League since the 1970s and have won a series of championships, as well.



The Mount Vernon Park Association is a strong community of people from all walks of life who volunteer their time and efforts to make the Park what it is now and will be in the future. The MVPA is more than the pools, the playgrounds, the tennis courts and the pond. It is a way of life, where kids can be kids, and adults can take a shot at being a kid again, too. Where else in the DC area can you walk through gates and immediately feel relaxed and “at home.”

Paradise is not lost, it is alive and well at the Mount Vernon Park Association in Hollin Hall!



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MCPHERSON, TOM BRATTEN AND JAY MCCONVILLE

Hummel Fields:

A Story of Dedication and Love of Community



Have you ever played baseball or walked by the ballfields behind the Hollin Hall Senior Center and wondered what the story is behind the naming of the grounds as Hummel Fields? If so, it is a story that is emblematic of the community spirit and dedication of long-time residents of Hollin Hall Village.

Mr. Al Hummel and his wife, Mary, move to Hollin Hall in September 1965, where they raised four wonderful boys – Jeff, Steven, Christopher and Sean. The family was very well-known throughout the Fort Hunt community and you could always find them playing football, basketball and baseball.



Coaches of Hollin Hall Little League, Messrs. Essex, Chaconas and Monday, circa 1960.

The Hummels lived in Hollin Hall for over 30 years, raising their boys, who attended Hollin Hall Elementary, Waynewood Elementary, Carl Sandberg Intermediate, and Fort Hunt and West Potomac high schools.

Mr. Hummel was employed by American Airlines and managed his own roofing repair business. He was active with many community sports groups, including the Fort Hunt Youth Athletic Association, where he found time to coach and assist in administering Fort Hunt youth football, basketball and baseball programs. He maintained the recreational facilities, particularly the Hollin Hall baseball fields. He also served as a member of the Fort Hunt and West Potomac High School Booster Clubs.

Sadly, Mr. Hummel passed away from cancer in August 1998 at a young age, leaving behind his loving family and the community that he cherished. He spent countless

hours with, not only his own children, but countless others in the sports community. The very same day that Mr. Hummel passed away, long-time family friend Dr. Gil Gutierrez wrote a heartfelt letter to Ms. Hummel and family:

“While we are diminished by Al’s passing, we extend our thanks for the countless hours that the Hummel family contributed to our community and its educational and sports organizations. I shall forever remember the image of Al hauling around a group of kids to their homes after practice in his pick-up truck and the glee in his eye which always reflected a desire to compete when he walked on a softball field or a basketball court.

He embodied for me the spirit of the poet Menctus’ commentary that, ‘The great man is he who does not lose his child’s heart.’”

About two years after Mr. Hummel’s passing, Dr. Gutierrez reached out to the Fairfax County Park Authority Board to have the baseball fields named in Mr. Hummel’s honor, but naming rights can be a high hurdle to overcome.

According to the Fairfax County Park Authority Policy Manual describing the criteria for the naming of parks, the corporation or individual must have substantially contributed to the advancement of commensurate types of recreational opportunities within the Fairfax County park system and has made a significant contribution to the betterment of a specific park. Mr. Hummel not only met all of the criteria—he exceeded it!

In Dr. Gutierrez’s letter to the Park Authority, he explained that Mr. Hummel’s volunteerism as a coach, youth sports and recreational administrator was

exemplary. “I believe that Mr. Hummel’s contribution to the maintenance of recreational facilities in the Fort Hunt sports community has earned recognition within his own neighborhood and the larger community,” Gutierrez noted.

“The youth in our community not only experienced a knowledgeable coach and sportsman but a community father whose interest and commitment to their well-being and development exceeded their capacities as athletes,” he continued.

Moreover, Gutierrez noted that, “As testimony to his unique example of

meaningful community service, all of the Hummel sons gave something back to their sports community by participating as coaches and basketball officials and baseball umpires in Fort Hunt Youth sponsored activities.”

And not surprisingly, the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors and Park Authority agreed with this assessment. At the dedication ceremony in October 2000, then-Mount Vernon District Supervisor Gerry Hyland said Hummel was an individual who “made such a difference” in the lives of the Fort Hunt area youth.



Jimmy Carmalt's Little League Team - The Jets



The kids of New Orleans Court, 1957.

L to R: Cindy Gibbons, Patty Gibbons, Billy Gibbons, Tommy Brackon, Judy Burger, Mary Taylor, Kathy Taylor, and Tommy Mann.



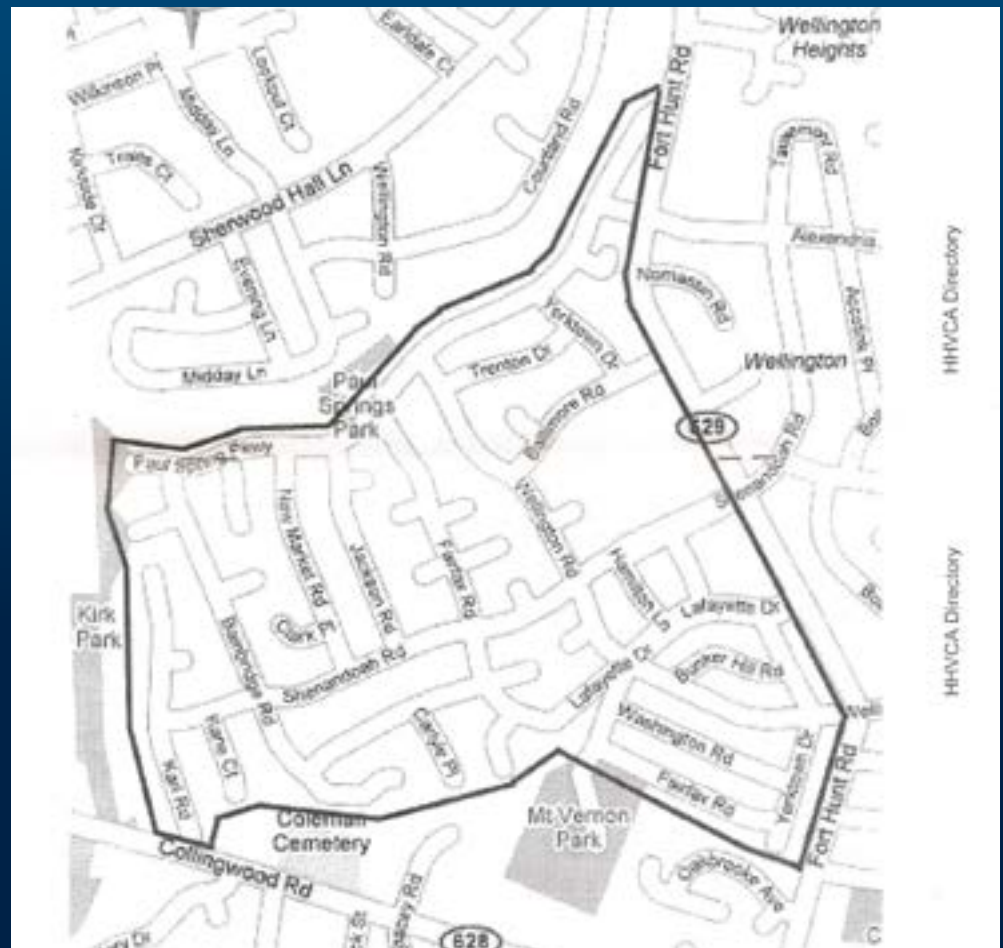
Mary Hummel, along with her sons Jeff, Steven, Christopher and Sean, and their families. Former Supervisor Gerry Hyland at podium, along with local neighbors on hand to commemorate the naming of the fields.

Early History and Legacy of Hollin Hall Village Citizen's Association

*You are cordially invited
to attend*
THE HOLLIN HALL CITIZENS' ASSOCIATION
meeting
on
January 18, 1983
at the
Hollin Hall School, 7:30 p.m.



PLEASE BRING A
DELICIOUS EDIBLE,
AND MEET A NEW
NEIGHBOR OR
REACQUAINT YOURSELF
WITH AN OLD FRIEND.
WE'LL SUPPLY THE
COFFEE AND TEA.



The Hollin Hall Citizen's Association was implemented in 1948 and organized by its first President, Louis Reed. The association started with less than 10 members. The original meetings were reportedly held in the basement of a member's home. Unfortunately, the first Hollin Hall Citizen's Association went out of existence around 1954 due to a lack of interest from the community.

Two years later in 1956, Earl R. Smith and Ida Merson began championing the effort to relaunch the Hollin Hall Citizen's Association. Mr. Smith and others sought to form the association primarily with the purpose of protecting real estate values. Mr. Smith, formally residing at 421 New Orleans Drive, issued a letter to the State Corporation Commission stating in part, "Several of my friends and neighbors and I are interested in doing the preliminary work necessary to form and promote a good sound citizen's association ..."

After much legwork and determination, the Hollin Hall Village Citizen's Association was re-launched in the fall of 1957. Earl Smith also became the first President of the newly re-established Hollin Hall Village Citizen's Association (HHVCA). By January 1958, HHVCA

exceeded 125 paid members. Membership cost in the organization was \$1 per year. Additionally, HHVCA's first newsletter, named "The Howlin' Haller" was published in January 1958. In 1957-58, HHVCA meetings were held on the third Monday of every month, with 66 citizens attending the first meeting. Earl Smith briefly served as HHVCA President briefly, before William Wallace was subsequently elected later in 1958.

Two of the new association's major challenges during those early years included, the elimination of a large colony of rats in the area by the elementary school, the installation and landscaping of the protected island in the middle of Shenandoah Road, and a rezoning issue on Fort Hunt Road. Coincidentally, the current HHVCA is working with citizens to address rezoning concerns on Lafayette Road.

HHVCA meetings have evolved from being held in a private home, to being held at a variety of locations over the years. These locations included Fort Hunt High School, the cafeteria of Hollin Hall Elementary School, the government building on Parker's Lane, Sherwood Hall Library, and Walt Whitman Intermediate School. Meetings currently are held quarterly on the second floor of the Hollin Hall Citizen's Center.



WILLIAM WALLACE



EARL R. SMITH

421 New Orleans Drive
Hollin Hall Village
Alexandria, Virginia

April 15, 1957

State Corporation Commission
Richmond
Virginia

Gentlemen:

Several of my friends and neighbors and I are interested in doing the preliminary work necessary to form and promote a good sound citizens association, and we have been told that your Commission might give us some assistance in the way of providing sample forms of by-laws, constitution, procedures for forming such associations, hints, and other suggestions. We have also been told that if you did not have any or all such information and sample forms, you could probably tell us where to write for the information.

Would you please let us have what literature and suggestions you might have along the above lines. Thank you very much.

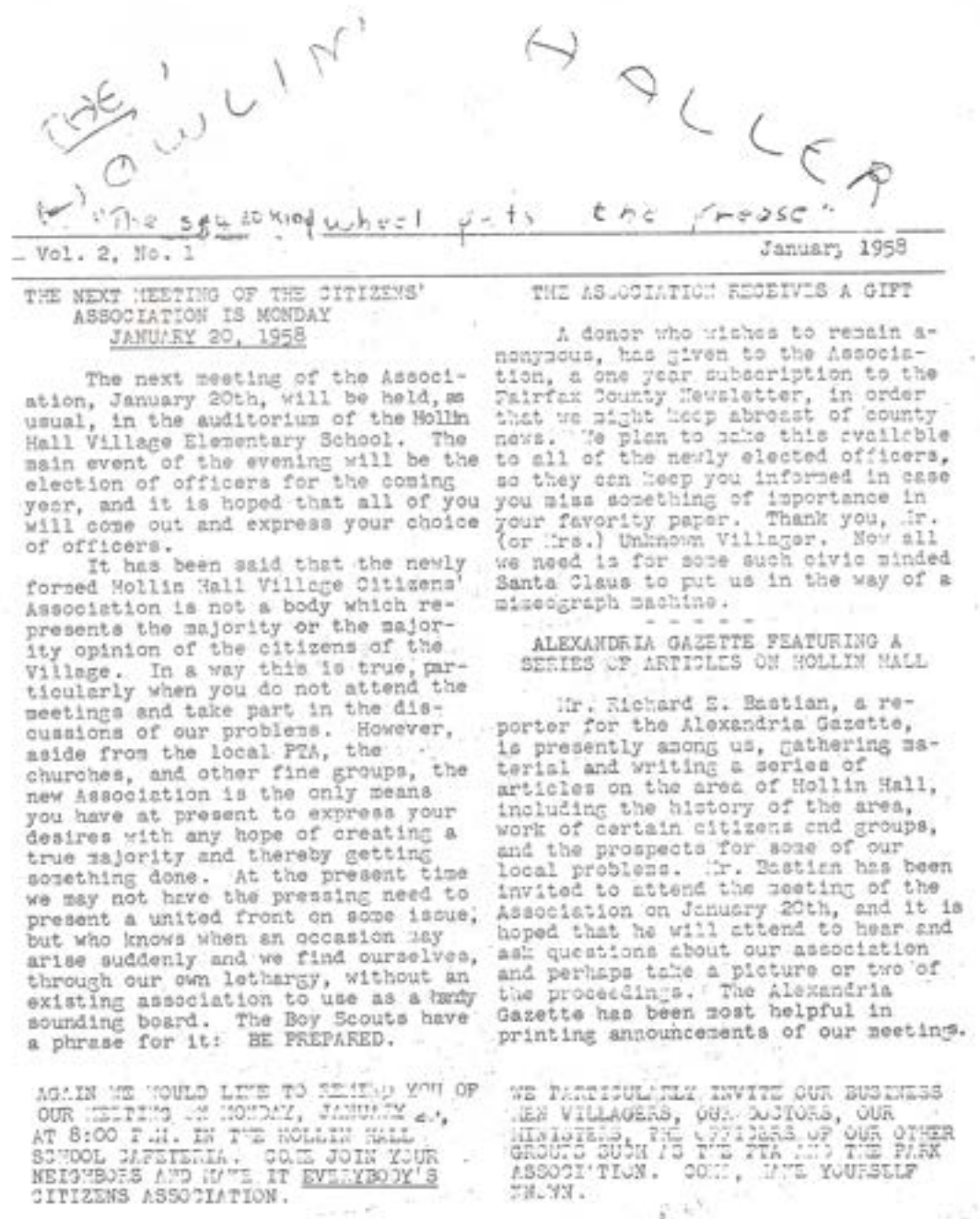
Yours very truly,

Earl R. Smith

Over the years...

HHVCA has compiled many accomplishments, including:

- Coordinating **community events** (annual National Night Out, Oktoberfest celebrations, picnics, yard sales, spring flings, parades, and Turkey Bingo events, among others)
- Installation of the **neighborhood entrance sign**.
- Watch for Children Signs** **pedestrian crossing signs** in areas of heavy foot traffic
- Addition of **stop signs** at Shenandoah and Fairfax Roads, and a **stop light** at Shenandoah and Fort Hunt Roads
- Sponsoring and coordinating the **Neighborhood Watch** program
- The **covering of the ditch** on the Lafayette Road



Under the direction of the current Board of Directors including President Ted Godbout, Vice President Vincent Fusaro, Treasurer Leo Milanowski, Secretary Carrie DePoto, General Director Tim Foerster and our committee chairs, HHVCA is carrying on Earl R. Smith's and Ida Merson's vision.

HHVCA continues to work diligently to represent our community and assure that our citizens have a voice at Mount Vernon District and Fairfax County meetings on issues which impact our area.

HHVCA represents our community at various meetings on issues such as Justice Snowden Farm and the Richmond Highway EMBARK project, and regularly communicates for HHVCA citizens, as well. And our membership dues are still just a minimal cost at only \$10 annually!

2018 marks a milestone as Hollin Hall Village celebrates the 75th Anniversary of its establishment. Please take a moment to consider all of the faithful citizens – past or present – that have served as part of HHVCA and donated their time and committed to making Hollin Hall Village a better, safer, and friendly place for all of us to live.

Membership in Hollin Hall Village Citizen's Association

Membership and active participation in the association is an effective way of making HHV a better place to live.

Our members are your neighbors and friends who come together to work on needed improvements. Our goal is to keep the community involved in all areas affecting quality of life and to work for decisions that promote our community's interests. We all work to make HHV a safe, pleasant and enjoyable place to live.

In addition to membership, we are also continuously looking for new volunteers to help with our regular activities and get involved with our various committees.

To learn about membership in the association, visit our website at www.hhvca.org or email: hollinhallvillagecitizensassn@cox.net.

Sign up for our mailing list and visit the Hollin Hall Nextdoor website (www.nextdoor.com) for regular updates about the community.





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Open an account today, with a minimum investment of \$15,000.

All investments contain risk and could generate losses.

Hollin Hall Village may just be Alexandria's best kept secret. With a comfortable, old fashioned charm where porch sitting still happens, it's hard to believe it's just minutes from DC.

Hollin Hall has the combination of natural beauty, great schools and walkable amenities that is hard to find anywhere else. As a long time resident, who could blame me for inviting all of my clients to come be our neighbors?

Happy 75th anniversary to our
HHV community and may
we have many, many more!



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Tammy Loverdos

Founder: Showcase Photo Tours

Thank you Hollin Hall Village, home away from home!
It is a pleasure to live here, where neighbors are family
and business is fun. #buminthebutter #livingtheamericandream

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