

The Village Way

Vol. 33, No. 1 April 2000

Join in the Fun at the April 15th Arbor Day Celebration

The 108th anniversary of the first Arbor Day in both Falls Church and the Commonwealth of Virginia will be held on Saturday, April 15 at 2 p.m. in Frady Park, the original site of that first celebration.

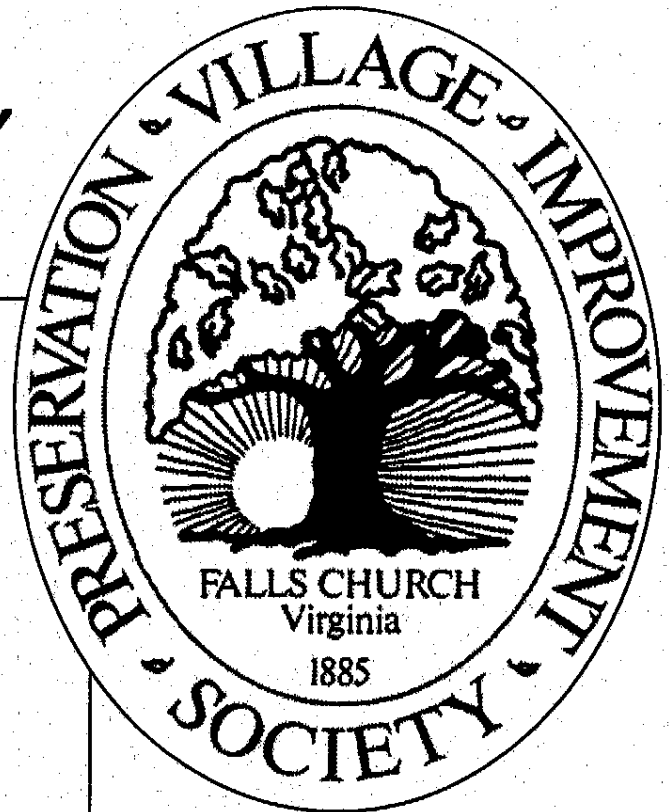
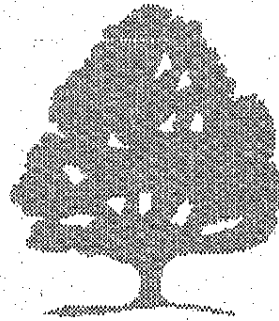
Ruth Rodgers, President of the Village Preservation and Improvement Society, will preside over the event. The Falls Church Tree Commission, The Victorian Society at Falls Church, and the Falls Church Garden Club also assist in staging this festivity.

The celebration will begin with a reenactment by the Falls Church Victorian Society of that first Arbor Day in 1892 in front of what was then the Jefferson Institute, the first Falls Church-owned public school. A tornado had torn the roof off the school and destroyed surrounding trees. Then Village Society President Judge Ambrose Rowell presided over the first Arbor Day ceremony, and helped the school children plant trees to replace the ones damaged in the storm. Victorian Society members also will participate in other living history demonstrations prior to the program.

Bruce Kulpan, chairman of the city's tree commission, will provide further historical background and significance to the development of Falls Church's Arbor Day. The "Story of Trees in Falls Church" will then be told, a tradition of recent Arbor Day celebrations.

The City of Falls Church will be presented with its 23rd Annual Tree City, U.S.A. Award from the National Arbor Day Foundation. The planting of the Arbor Day tree will follow this ceremony. The event will close with music, period refreshments offered by the Victorian Society, and informal demonstrations on how to plant and care for trees.

Arbor Day is free and open to the public.



**Falls Church Village Preservation
and Improvement Society**

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Invitation to Membership

If you are not a member, won't you join the Falls Church Village Preservation and Improvement Society and assist us in our efforts to see the city develop in a manner which will sustain the "village" atmosphere that probably attracted you to Falls Church in the first place? Call any officer or board member for information. Their telephone numbers are on page 2.

President's Message

This April issue of **The Village Way** is the first issue to be published in my term as the new President of the Village Society. The eye-catching new look for our official newsletter comes courtesy of our new corresponding secretary/publicist, Martha Lostrom. We hope the new format will be easier to read and will allow for regularly designated space for recurring features such as a report on VPIS board actions, an activities calendar and a Falls Church issues corner. It is also my hope that the subsequent issues of **The Village Way** will feature contributions from VPIS members and others on historic and preservation topics. I invite your suggestions about subjects of interest to you.

One of the responsibilities of the Board of Directors of VPIS is to formulate the Society's position on Falls Church issues in accordance with the VPIS Statement of Purpose. This is a big responsibility, as the 20-person Board must decide how to respond on issues of importance to the several hundred members of VPIS. It is essential that board decisions reflect the Statement of Purpose as supported by our members. We strive to do that and at the same time maintain the ability to respond effectively, in a timely manner and in a way that can have an impact on the issue's outcome. The Board welcomes your comments during the decision-making process. Please call or e-mail me or Joanne Rodman to register your opinion on matters of importance in Falls Church that may require the VPIS Board to make policy decisions or take action.

I look forward to the year ahead and to working with the Board and VPIS members to continue the fine work the Society has done in our community to promote preservation, cultural activities, beautification and civic activism. But we need your help. Join us in addressing, in a positive way, the challenges we face in Falls Church. Help us to make a difference in the future preservation and development of our city.



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Recent Actions of the VPIS Board

December 9, 1999: Scheduled the annual retreat/brainstorming session for January to plan for the coming year's activities. Approved the expense of \$500 to pay for music entertainment at the city's 1999 New Year's Eve celebration at Broad and Washington streets. Discussed and reached consensus on the appointment of a subcommittee to study the light rail proposal for Broad Street and transportation issues in the city in general. Approved the motion: "The Board agrees to support the concept of an Arbor Day memorial, and to appoint a committee to report back at the January meeting on a plan to achieve this objective." Appointed a committee to study

the Arbor Day memorial proposal. Approved funding for the sponsorship of Operation Earthwatch for 1999-2000 in city schools.

Approved funding for renewal of membership in the Preservation Alliance of Virginia.

January 25, 2000: Meeting cancelled because of snow.

February 10, 2000: Participated in the retreat/brainstorming session that had been postponed from January. Summary of the session will be presented at the next Board meeting. Appointed an audit committee to audit the end-of-year Treasurer's report and present the findings to the Board within two months

of the audit. Set the membership fee levels for 2000. Voted to sponsor the Home Concert Series in 2000. Distributed the Arbor Day Memorial Committee report to the board for review.

Recommendations of the committee included suggesting a Victorian theme for the park, reworking the original Frady Park site plan to reflect changes already made to the park, addition of a "whispering wall" ceremonial area with a Victorian-style arbor, designation of Frady Park as an arboretum and a recommendation that the park be included in the National Register of Historic Place. Board will discuss and vote on committee report in March.

On Sunday, June 13, 1999, at the annual spring meeting of The Falls Church Village Preservation and Improvement Society, the awards were presented for the 1999 "Excellence in Design" program. This program was established by the society in 1966 to recognize and reward outstanding residential, commercial and landscape designs within the City of Falls Church. Curt and Janice Nette have chaired the award program from 1995 through 1999.

Eight entries were received in the categories of residential and landscape design. The judging took place on Sunday, May 23 with tours of each of the entries. Judges were Bill Evans, a licensed architect and partner in the architectural firm of The Lukmire Partnership, Dan Bairley, an architect in private practice in Alexandria and Bill Dennehy, also a licensed architect and owner of the design/build firm of Portico Architects.

Metal plaques designating the structure or garden as an award winner are given to projects selected as outstanding by the judges. The first wall plaque was awarded to the Smith/Earman residence at 519 Greenwich Street. The judges commented that the "addition admirably maintains the scale of the original house, was well-crafted and respectful of the existing house, and the extra effort of creating replicas to match no longer available existing materials should be commended."

A second plaque was presented to the Adcock residence garden located at 300 Lawton Street. The meticulously planned garden blooms year round. The background, composed of large mature trees creates a quiet place away from the noises of the city. The plantings include many rare varieties of no longer available flowers and bulbs from historic residences throughout the state. Judges comments were: "a beautiful old garden, lovely

Excellence-in-Design Awards Presented



space—surprisingly secluded, and reflects the life of its owner."

The Falls Church, located at 115 East Fairfax Street, received a Certificate of Commendation. A long range plan for the maintenance and beautification of the 3.8 acre site preserved the existing trees and brick walkways while reworking them to provide barrier free access, handrails and period style lighting for added safety. The judges commented: "shows the benefit of having a proper master plan prepared and contributes to the historic aesthetic character of a magnificent site."

A second Certificate of Commendation was awarded to the Kruszewski residence garden located at 345 Little Falls Street. In addition to numerous varieties of plantings, this formal garden features a brick walk, custom gazebo and an English lawn bowling rink. The judges noted that "the garden is beautifully planted and meticulously cared for, the service areas for the house are nicely screened from the garden, and the bowling green and gazebo are nice additions to this formal garden."

All of this year's entries epitomize the spirit of the program by enhancing the visual quality of the City of Falls Church.

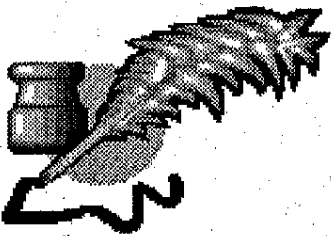
'Bill of Rights' Quilt Given to City

The Falls Church Village Preservation and Improvement Society provided the funding to preserve a quilt given to the City of Falls Church to commemorate the 200th Anniversary of the Bill of Rights. The Falls Church Chapter of Quilters Unlimited created this magnificent quilt in 1989, inspired by the Commission on the Bicentennial of the Bill of Rights.

Commission member and Past VPIS President Lou Olom was instrumental in providing the vision for the quilt. The quilt was displayed at the 16th annual Independence Day Reading on July 4, 1999, prior to its preservation and mounting.

Before its preservation, the quilt had temporary quarters in the Mary Riley Styles Public Library and in the Falls Church Community Center. In May, 1999, the City agreed to place the quilt in City Council Chambers. The quilt was framed and professionally preserved in museum-quality materials by Design Frames, a Falls Church business.

The preservation effort was completed in late August, and formally presented to the City Council at its September 13 meeting by representatives of the Society and Quilters Unlimited. It now hangs in splendor on the rear wall of City Council chambers.



2000 Membership News

I would like to take this opportunity to introduce myself; I am Melanie Griffiths and I have volunteered to be the Membership Chair for the coming year. By now, you should have received a letter encouraging you to renew your membership in the Society. As you know, VPIS participated in many special events and projects over the last year. Some of these activities include planting 21 trees in the city, and sponsoring the Arbor Day celebration, Independence Day readings, the screening of "It's a Wonderful Life," and the "Excellence in Design" Award Program.

The Society also sponsored ongoing events such as the Summer Concerts in the Park, the Home Concert Series, and the Farmer's Market information and refreshment booth. We look forward to continuing such activities in the future. These many valuable contributions to our city's character would not be possible without a strong and dedicated membership. I encourage you to fill out your renewal form and send it in, so we can continue our work to preserve and improve our community.

At our January Board Meeting, we discussed our membership, and came away with the goal of increasing our numbers. We discussed various options, and will be providing the community with more opportunities to join VPIS. While many of us have lived in the city for years, there are also many new residents who share the Society's goals and objectives, but may not be aware of its existence.

We need your help in finding these individuals, and encouraging them to join. Please contact me with names of any new friends or neighbors you believe may be interested in joining, or if you have any suggestions of ways we might encourage others to join.

My phone number is 532-5349, or e-mail me at griffithsm@fccps.k12.va.us.

I look forward to working with the Society this year, and encourage you all to send in your membership card as soon as you can.

WELCOME! to new members

as of 3/9/00:

Susanne Brander

Marion Timmons

Society Award Inspires Local Students

A funny thing happened on the way to the George Mason

Middle School Science Fair this year for six students. As a result of the Village Society's John Kalepp Award, these students studied the Falls Church environment. Each discovered something about our local life-support system that had never before been contemplated nor understood. In addition, each of their finds may have an impact on changing the way that we treat our Falls Church surroundings.

Gavin Keens, 7th Grade winner, studied what happens to the acidity of our rain-water when it is absorbed through different types of Falls Church soil. His principle finding was that soil from a forested-style yard had the best impact on neutralizing our acid rain. Yards that were common lawns were less successful. This report indicates that residential landscaping that models a forested design appears to provide healthier ground water for ours and future generations.

Michal Chojnacky, 8th grade winner, studied the amount of carbon that the trees of Falls Church consume and compared it to the average amount of carbon that is produced in Falls Church by its motor vehicles. Ms. Chojnacky found that Falls Church adds approximately 55 times more carbon to the atmosphere every day than we remove. This study points out the significance to our personal, regional, and global health of reducing the amount of vehicular traffic and increasing the number of trees in Falls Church.

Davia Gonzales and Anne Wanlund studied the acidity of soils near Four Mile Run. They found that the area near the stream where people run their dogs is considerably more acidic than the surrounding areas. The study demonstrates the impact that recent changes in lifestyle habits have on the local environment. The acidic soil can alter and destroy life in the stream, pollute groundwater, and slowly kill the trees and other plants in the surrounding area.

Pat Gregg and Mac Cohe studied the acidity of the water of Four Mile Run. Their startling findings included the increasing acidity of Four Mile Run over the findings of a similar study one year ago, and the fact that the stream becomes more acidic as it flows downstream through Falls Church. This finding indicates that some new pollutant has been flowing into Four Mile Run over the past year and it appears to be flowing in from the Falls Church area. These pollutants make it impossible for certain species of stream animals to survive and damage the possibility to have clean, healthy, and safe stream water for human use.

These four projects will be receiving attention from local environmental agencies and officials. And our six budding scientists may have already made their mark on Falls Church and the world at a very young age. Congratulations to all of them.



Cay Wiant, VPIS board member and teacher at the Middle School directed the award program and presented the \$100 Savings Bond awards.

Falls Church Home Concert Series

The Falls Church Home Concert Series was created by the Board of Directors of the Village Society in 1994 to encourage the use of homes for providing citizens with the experience of hearing local professional musicians. The musicians are paid from the ticket sales and the homes and refreshments are volunteered by willing homeowners.

Sixty-three programs were produced in the 1990s and included jazz, classical, and a variety of ethnic styles of music. Many concerts included local musicians preparing for a recording date or a world tour. Musicians played saxophone, bassoon, piano, santur, harp, brandy glasses, viola, saw, guitar, cello, oud and a host of other instruments. The last concert of the century was a seven-voice Gospel choir. Such classic Falls Church homes as Tallwood, Evergreens, the Crossman House, and Copeswood, as well as more modern-day homes, have been sites of many concerts.

To protect privacy of the homeowners, locations are provided following receipt of payment. Here are the upcoming home concerts:

Friday, April 7, 7:30 p.m.

Waiting Bluegrass

Born in the arms of its Celtic ancestors, this American-made rough and tumble high-country music is played in the home, as it was originally intended, by Falls Church's own recording artist, Randy Barrett and Friends — also frequent performers at the Kennedy Center.

Friday, May 12, 7:30 p.m.

The Continental Sounds of the Accordion

Travelling through France, Germany, Italy, and Ireland without hearing the accordion played at bistros, pubs, beerstubs and cafes would be a trip without a soul. Accordion king Dale Wise puts the soul of Europe into an intimate home concert right here in Falls Church.

To purchase tickets, call 532-0884 and voice-mail your reservation request. Tickets are \$15 each or \$36 for a series ticket. There is very limited seating for each concert, so call today! After receiving verification of your reservation, send check made out to the "Village Society" and mail it to: Dave Eckert, 109 West Westmoreland Road, Falls Church, Virginia, 22046.

Board Meetings

Dates and Locations
2nd Thursdays at 7:30 p.m.

January 25

February 10

March 9

April 13 Rodman residence,
208 Patterson St.,
534-9328

May 11 Close residence, 152
Reese Place, 237-7236

June 4 (1st Sunday in June)
General Membership Meeting
2:00-4:00 p.m., City Council
Chambers

June—August No Board
Meetings

September 14 Ross residence,
318 West Rosemary Lane,
533-9418

October 12 Stewart residence,
301 Shadow Walk,
241-2339

November 9 General
Membership Meeting

December 14 Wang residence,
203 South Oak St.,
534-8394



Falls Church Village
Preservation and
Improvement Society

P. O. Box 6824
Falls Church, VA 22040

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