



VOL. III, No. 3

MARCH 1965

### THE HARPER HOUSE

Our cover design is a picture of the unusual house on Cameron Road which was converted from a barn into a home by the late Mr. Carl B. Harper and his wife. Mr. Harper died in December 1964.

Legend has it that when George Washington attended services at the nearby Falls Church Episcopal Church, where he was a Vestryman, he stabled his horse in the barn on one of the farms of his close friend and contemporary, George Mason. (Greenway Downs was once one of these farms.) Mr. & Mrs. Harper purchased the barn of this former farm in January 1934. They set about remodeling it into a home and as soon as barely habitable, they moved into it in May 1934. The barn was covered with stone cut from the quarry which is in front of the Falls Church Motel. This stone is known as Falls Church pink granite. The original walls of the barn are now the inside walls of the house. The boards are Norway pine brought from Europe in Colonial days, probably as ballast for sailing ships. The boards are 12" wide and 1" thick. The old barn was held together by wooden pegs, except for handmade nails used in the roofing. In redoing the barn, matching wood was used throughout—using boards from other old buildings including a tobacco barn. The tile roof came from a dismantled mansion in Washington. There is no plaster or wallpaper in the house.

The house has many unusual features that are the product of Mr. Harper's inventive genius. He supervised the unique construction of the remodeling job. The downstairs area, where horses and cows were once stabled, still has the old wooden pegs on which harnesses were hung. This is now the recreation room, garage, and storage area.

(continued on p. 4, see Harper House)

Published by the Greenway Downs  
Citizens Association as a service  
to the community.

EDITOR

Mrs. Irene T. Smith           JE 2-1559

ASSISTANTS

Mrs. Alice Clark               534-1382

Mrs. Frances Fisher           534-1445

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OBSERVE BURNING LAWS

All residents are reminded of the  
following regulations applying to  
the burning of trash, brush, etc.

Burning can be done only between  
4 PM and MIDNIGHT, IF THE WIND IS  
CALM. Also, burning is permissible  
when there is a clear distance of  
at least 300 feet between the fire  
and woodland or material capable of  
spreading to woodland. The law pro-  
hibits all burning between NOW AND  
MAY 15 when the wind is not calm.

The Smoke Nuisance Law prohibits  
the burning of anything which pro-  
duces obnoxious odors or smoke  
within 500 feet of a dwelling (that  
includes us all). Basically, the  
law is to prevent the burning of  
such trash as garbage, rubber pro-  
ducts, plastic items, dog and cat  
litter, etc.

Additional information on burning  
regulations can be obtained from  
the Fairfax County Central Fire  
Alarm Headquarters, CR 3-2661.

A GOOD NEIGHBOR IS A CONSIDERATE  
NEIGHBOR WHO PRACTICES THE "GOLDEN  
RULE."

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GIRL SCOUT COOKIE SALE ENDS MARCH  
29. HAVE YOU BOUGHT YOURS?

There is no meeting scheduled for  
March. The next general meeting  
will be April 27.

I would like to thank the member-  
ship and our Executive Board for  
giving me the opportunity to attend  
the Annual Evening Star Awards Din-  
ner which was held last month.  
This affair is sponsored by the  
Fairfax County Federation of Citi-  
zens Associations and was attended  
by representatives of all associa-  
tions in the County. Many digni-  
taries were on hand and the guest  
speaker was Lt. Gov. Mills Godwin  
who spoke on the progress attained  
by Northern Virginia and the bright  
future of our great State. The  
Greenway Downs area was represented  
by 8 people including my wife and  
I.

My wife and I were also invited  
to attend the annual Blue and Gold  
Banquet of our own Cub Pack #677  
in February. I was happy to have  
an opportunity at this dinner to  
acknowledge the active part Mr.  
Simounet and Mr. Jacobs have played  
in organizing and supervising the  
activities of the Cubs last year.  
The 1965 Charter was presented to  
the GDCA and I was happy to accept  
it for our Association.

The Membership Committee reports  
that the annual membership campaign  
will be kicked off in April this  
year--a little later than usual  
due to the change in house numbers.  
A complete list of street chairmen  
will be published later. Support  
your citizens association and help  
work to improve our community

JOHN J. SHARKEY

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## SPRING CLEAN-UP CAMPAIGN

With old man winter heaving his last sighs, and signs of spring popping up all over, it's a good time to think of "policing" up the homestead. If you are like most of us you have managed to accumulate quite a heap of leaves, twigs and branches, and other debris in your front and back yards, not to mention the basement!

A CLEAN-UP CAMPAIGN in Greenway Downs will start on March 20, the first day of spring, and continue through April. Let's see if we can get our community all spruced up and show that we care about our property. A clean neighborhood is our best insurance against devaluation of property value. During this Clean-Up Campaign each citizen of the Downs will be urged to make his grounds as clean, neat and attractive as is possible.

To help you, we have scheduled a SPECIAL TRASH COLLECTION for FRIDAY, APRIL 2. So gather all the items not picked up by the weekly trash collection and set them at your front property line before April 2. Sticks should be not over 4' long and tied in bundles, small items should be in containers which may be disposable, this is to facilitate pickup of loose items.

Remember, for our regular weekly trash collection on Tuesday, we DO NOT HAVE TO PUT OUR TRASH OUT FRONT. The men will pick your trash up at the back of your house and return the container when emptied. This will keep our community from looking so untidy with assorted trash containers sitting in disarray up and down our streets.

## TEENAGE DANCE PLANNED

Mrs. Gladys Keys, Entertainment Chairman, is planning a spring dance for our teenagers and needs more help on this activity. If you are interested in this endeavor, please call Mrs. Keys at 533-3553.

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Won't you help keep Greenway Downs looking neat and tidy? The support of everyone is needed.

This campaign is under the direction of our Garden Committee Chairman, Mrs. Thomsen, and plans are underway to give special recognition and publicity to the cleanest street in our subdivision. To do this honor, all you have to do is clean up your own property. Don't be the one who keeps your street from being considered for this honor.

Mrs. Thomsen offers the following pointers to help you make your front yard attractive.

1. Plant grass seed now. This is the best time for it. Fertilize what you have for a pretty green lawn.

2. Paint your front door. Nothing enhances the beauty of a home more than a freshly painted entrance way.

3. Plant flowers for added beauty. If you would like information regarding the growing of flowers in your yard, you may call Mrs. Thomsen at 532-1653 between 3-6 P.M. She will also be glad to offer her advice on the beautification of your lawn, if you desire.

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WE HAVE RECEIVED WORD THAT A CAMPAIGN IS ON TO PICK UP ALL DOGS NOT WEARING THEIR 1965 DOG TAG.

The haymow is the second floor living rooms and the upper part of the haymow has been transformed into a third floor for bedrooms. The huge door that originally allowed wagons to be driven into the barn has been closed. The living room has an immense fireplace with a huge 12 foot chimney of flagstone which Mr. Harper built. Behind the fireplace is a secret stairway, the door of which is made of stone and concrete in a steel frame so delicately balanced it will open with a very light touch. The marble steps lead down to the recreation room. From the living room the third floor bedrooms are reached by an unusual drawbridge stairway which originally could be raised or lowered. The swinging balcony over the living room is copied from a French chateau and is made of wood.

Mr. Harper was an MIT graduate with degrees in aeronautical engineering. He was considered a genius in his field by those who knew him. He will be awarded a Doctor of Science degree posthumously this June from his hometown college, Davis & Jenkins at Elkins, West Virginia. He knew of the award at the time of his death and was very proud of the honor.

He was retired from active duty in the U.S. Navy in 1930 due to injuries in the line of duty. He designed the Navy catapult and the Navy flying boat equipped with hydrovanes. He flight tested the plane for Charles Lindbergh's first trans-Atlantic flight and taught Amelia Earhart how to fly twin-engine aircraft. He was one of the country's top men in the aeronautical field,

A meeting of the District Council of Falls Church Citizens Associations was held last month. Mr. Fred A. Babson, Jr., Supervisor for our district, answered questions of the association presidents attending the meeting. Mr. Babson is interested in a solution to our Custis Parkway drainage problem and is trying to help us solve it. He also gave his views on rapid transit and other problems affecting Fairfax County.

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#### CORRECTION

In the February issue it was reported that a new Boy Scout Troop was formed, #677. This is not correct as this troop has been in existence for quite a few years. The only thing new about Troop 677 is its Scoutmaster, Phil Simounet, who has been very active with the Cub Scouts until taking up this new work.

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a designer, constructor and test pilot, and was a former chief engineer at the Naval Aircraft Factory at Philadelphia. His many inventions he gave to the U. S. Government.

A tour of the barn he remodeled into a house stands as a tribute to the man. Every part of the house gives proof of his inventive mind-- a Franklin stove burns with a gas log, doors use wooden dowels for door knobs, bedroom doors slide up and down instead of out, a window cuts through the chimney on the west end of the house. All this and maybe George Washington's horse slept here!

FRANCES FISHER