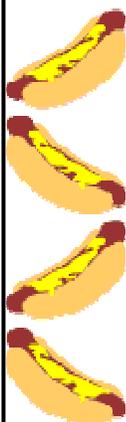


Martha Jefferson Neighborhood Association

SPRING 2008 ISSUE

APRIL 28, 2008



NEIGHBORHOOD PICNIC

May 11th 5-7 PM at 810 Locust Ave

Please come and join us for this year's Spring Picnic. Come out and enjoy the warm weather while catching up with your neighbors and friends. Please bring a dish and drink to share. The association will provide pizza.

You can find the picnic at Downing and Gail Smith's, at 810 Locust Avenue. Festivities begin at 5:00 pm and last until 7:00 pm. Hope to see you there!



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A Letter from our President, Clarence McClymonds

To the outgoing board of MJNA— Thank you, thank you, thank you! I've enjoyed working with such a great group of dedicated neighbors this past year. They brought with them several projects that had already been developed and the "know-how" to see them through.

The national register of our neighborhood as "historic" is something we can all be proud of. We now have the momentum to ho ahead with the City designation which will give official protection for preserving what is so great about our neighborhood.

We believe we are making progress in helping Martha Jefferson Hospital make a graceful departure from our midst, leaving a heritage as good neighbors. We have had god publicity on the subject from our newspapers and TV and City Council seems largely sympathetic.

Comments from city residents outside our immediate neighborhood indicate solidarity in our efforts to make our neighborhood even more desirable as a home for all of us in the central city.

Good luck to the new Board! Clarence

New "Alliance of Neighborhoods" Formed

Charlottesville's former federation of neighborhood associations faded away in the late nineties, but a new organization has been launched to restart this community-wide forum.

Called the Alliance of Neighborhoods in order to differentiate it from the old federation, this group has an interim

board and slate of officers, including our own neighborhood's Bruce Odell as President. The Alliance expects to elect officers for a longer term in the fall.

One of the Alliance's major goals is to both represent existing neighborhood associations as well as help launch new ones in un-served areas in both the

city and the surrounding "urban ring" neighborhoods of Albemarle County. Alliance founders hope that this cross-jurisdictional approach will ensure that issues impacting all of Greater Charlottesville— such as traffic, schools, water supply and growth— are consistently addressed in the various government circles in our area.

IMPORTANT DATES TO REMEMBER AND REQUESTS:

- *May 5th, Pulic Presentation by nationally recognized engineering firm, Gahagan & Bryant Associates regarding feasibility and costs of dredging the South Fork Rivanna Reservoir at the CCDC, 100 5th Street NE at 7:00 PM*
- *May 6th, City Council Work Session regarding Reservoir dredging and options at CCDC at 5 PM*
- *May 8th, Design Workshop results by students of Professor William Morrish at CCDC from 6-8 PM*
- *May 11th, Neighborhood Picnic hosted by the Smith's at 810 Locust Avenue from 5-7 PM*
- *MJH will give a presentation of the ERA Report. Dates will be provided via email.*

Memories from our neighbor Margaret Smith



Above is Mrs. Smith's home, 810 Locust

One of my first memories of moving to Hazel Street in May of 1990 was a lovely welcoming visit from our next door neighbors Downing and Margaret Smith. We were (and still are) delighted to be living next door to the grand antebellum home of Locust Grove, the plantation from which the plots on Hazel Street originated. We soon met their son Smitty and his wife Gail and young sons Brian and Russell, who are living in the "big house". Sadly Downing is no longer with us but Margaret was happy to sit down and talk about their history and some great memories of Locust Grove for this article.

Downing was the son of Lemuel & Grace Smith. He was born in West Virginia in the town of his mother's family. Lemuel was from Shadwell, attended The University of Virginia, and went on to become a justice of the Virginia Supreme Court of Appeals. The Smiths purchased Locust Grove in 1924 for \$20,000.00 and sold off the lots on Hazel Street for a \$1000.00 a piece in order to help buy this large property. Downing was seven years old when they moved from Lexington Avenue to Locust Grove. The original property was a Land Grant to Nicholas Meriwether in 1735. The house he built, occupied by many Meriwether descendants, was destroyed by fire before George Sinclair purchased the property in 1839. He built the "hipped roof, five bay Locust Grove"*

in 1844. It is adorned with blind windows – shutters put on the house for symmetry. Sheridan encamped there during the Civil War. Downing's family (there were three boys) had a cow and cow barn (still standing,) and chicken house. Margaret recalls Downing's mother telling the story of finding Downing at the top of the ramp to the chicken house rolling eggs down the ramp.

Margaret Eckford and her two sisters were born in her grandmother's home at the corner of North First and High Streets. Her brother, who still lives in Charlottesville, was born at Martha Jefferson Hospital. Margaret's mother, Elizabeth, was a Charlottesville girl.

Her father Jason was from Lynchburg and came to Charlottesville to attend The University of Virginia. When Margaret was three her family moved to Portsmouth, VA where they lived until Margaret's senior year in high school. She was not looking forward to the move— leaving a lifetime of friends. However that year at a Frys' Spring Club dance (quite the place then) she met Downing – a 2nd year student at The University. UVA had very popular formal dances four times a year and they were reported to be very lively. Downing invited Margaret, but since she was still in high school her parents would not let her go. Margaret remembers buying evening gowns at Levy's – which was on Main Street (now the Downtown Mall) – as was the Emmet Gleason Clothing Store, Tillman's, Miller & Rhodes, and the Lafayette Movie Theatre. Watching the sunset on top of Humpback Rock was the thing to do after high school graduation. Margaret's date was not interested, so Downing obliged – they continued to share a love of the outdoors and enjoyed a life of hiking, fishing, skiing, and gardening.

Margaret commuted with a group of fellow students to Farmville College (now Longwood) and Downing went to law school at UVA and attended officer training school in Fort Knox. He would later be elected Commonwealth Attorney and hold the position for twenty years. They

were married in 1942, just six months before Downing left for Egypt as an aid to General Crawford. He then served in France and England before returning home in 1944.

After the war Downing and Margaret built their house on the property behind the elder Smith's "big house". There existed the ruins of a small old brick house that predates the main house. They ingeniously added to it using bricks that were lying around the yard. They designed the house themselves – Margaret remembers driving around looking at windows – and they turned the old brick walls into a charming home. You can see where the old meets the new brick work. In 1959 Downing and Margaret moved into the main house. The kitchen had both a gas and a wood stove, but no built in cabinets – they added cabinets! Downing's mother planted many of the boxwoods which are now huge and magnificent. Margaret is always working in the yard – you can see her weeding and mowing away on the riding mower. She has been a member of the Rivanna Garden Club for many years and chaired the Daffodil Committee – they have many beautiful varieties of daffodils. The house was on the Garden Week tour in 1976 & 1981. She remembers mostly older folks in the neighborhood, not too many children. She watched the 250 bypass being built, built even after everyone said no one would use it. They too had chickens – Smitty and his sister Susan would give the chickens a ride on their bicycle handlebars.

Downing & Margaret offered the main house to both of their children. Gail & Smitty took the offer and moved back from San Francisco around 1984, the third Smith generation to bring up a family at Locust Grove. Downing and Margaret moved just a few steps away back to the charming home they built as a young couple.

* K. Edward Lay in *The Architecture of Jefferson County*

contributed by Maria Chapel

Great News!

We are pleased to announce that after much hard work, parts of the neighborhood have been added to the National Register of Historic Places and the Virginia Landmarks Register!

Maplewood Cemetery *Contributed by Anthony Smith*

Maplewood Cemetery has a long, sad history of neglect. Tragically, recent episodes of vandalism, many stones knocked over and at least one painted with graffiti, have added to the cemetery's woes. While a perpetrator has been arrested, friends and neighbors of the cemetery are convinced that the city and the community need to address the underlying conditions that allowed such crimes to be committed in the first place.

The recent vandalism, then, will hopefully be a catalyst for change. At a recent meeting in the cemetery, some twenty to twenty-five friends and neighbors of the cemetery met with Officer Jodie Weber as well as Brian Daly, Assistant Director of Parks and Recreation. At this meeting, Mr.

Daly promised that such changes, in the form of pruning, motion-detecting lights, and fixed tombstones, are on the horizon. You should begin to see some of these changes in the near future.

In the meantime, please be vigilant when you pass through the cemetery; if you see drinkers or loiterers, please call the non-emergency police number immediately: 977-9041. The future of the cemetery is in our hands, so let's make sure that the future is an improvement on the past.



Pictured above is some of the recent vandalism which has taken place at Maplewood Cemetery.

2008 Membership



2008 Membership Form

I'm already a member

My membership is below

First and Last Names

Street Address

Names of Children/ Birthdates (Month/Year)

Home Telephone

Work or Cell Telephone(s)

Emergency Telephone and Contact Name

Email(s)

Please list any family member who would like to be included on the list of babysitters, pet sitters, lawn mowers, or other services.

2007—2008 Officers

Clarence McClymonds— President

Maria Chapel - Vice-President

Ellen Wagner— Past-President

**Lois Wallenhorst— Treasurer,
Membership Chairman**

Kate Berman— Secretary

Mary and Bruce Odell— At-Large

Marina Al-Hamdani— At-Large

Buddy Weber— MJH Liaison

**Special Thanks to Joe Aust of
Real Estate III at 813 E.
Jefferson St. for printing the
newsletter.**



MJNA

Design Workshop by the

UVa School of Architecture

The Charlottesville Community Design Center invites you to learn more about the future of the Martha Jefferson Hospital site. The CCDC will be hosting the UVa's Architecture School's Design Workshop on the redevelopment of the Martha Jefferson Hospital Site. All are welcome to attend. The workshop takes place on Thursday, May 8th, from 6 — 8 pm. Please note that the CCDC has moved! It is now located on the first floor of the Market Street parking garage.



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**Burnley-Moran Student
Lend a Helping Hand**



Left, students aid with the clean-up and look at tombstones;

Below, a group of Burnley-Moran students

On the morning of April 29th, 21 3rd and 4th grade students from Burnley-Moran Elementary School came out to Maplewood Cemetery to participate in a litter pick-up. Concerned with the graffiti, beer bottles strewn about, and broken tombstones, and remembering one of the school's namesakes, Carrie Burnley, is buried in the cemetery, the Student Council Association proposed this idea to their staff facilitator, Carol Busching. Joined by Mayor Norris and NBC 29, the children partook in this event for approximately an hour. We thank them for their concern, hard work, and for bringing much needed attention to this problem to our whole city.

