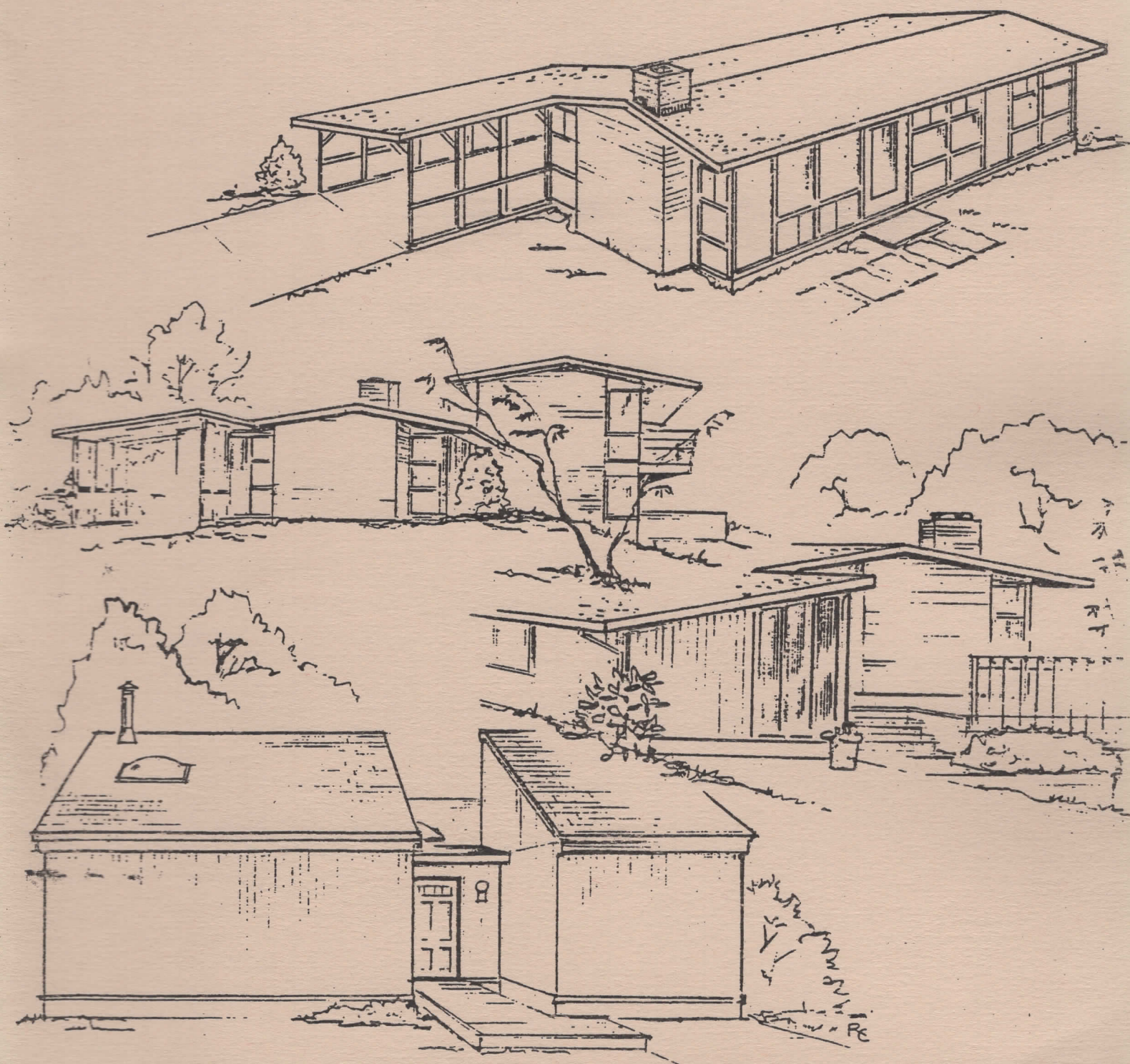
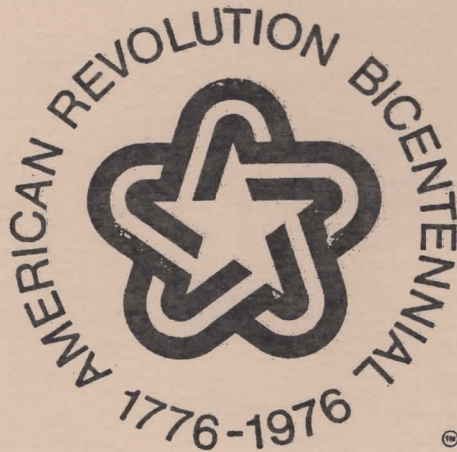


Holmes Run Acres: The Story Of A Community Volume II





Certificate of Appreciation

for Meritorious Support of the Nation's Bicentennial
Accorded to

Holmes Run Acres Civic Association

By the
American Revolution
Bicentennial Administration

John W. Warner

John W. Warner, Administrator

Charles R. Anderson

Regional Director

About This Book

In 1976, Holmes Run Acres: The Story of a Community was published in celebration of the 25th anniversary of our community. Today, in 1991, we are again celebrating -- we are now 40 years old! This publication is "Volume II", a continuation of Holmes Run Acres' story. It covers what has happened within our vital community between 1976 to 1991. An effort has been made to update, not duplicate Volume I. The history and background in the first publication is extensive and fascinating, and we encourage you to pull your copy off the shelf and reread it. Copies are available for purchase, if you do not have one, or can be found at the Fairfax County public library.

Holmes Run Acres remains a haven from the surrounding, mushrooming development of Fairfax County. Our Community remains active, cohesive and a very special neighborhood to live in, as told in the following chapters.

Publication Staff

Editor

Mia Gardiner

Writers

Mary Lou Cooper
Janice Covert
Anne Ekstrom
Mia Gardiner
Dot Hammerschmidt
Sarah Lahr
George Lawson
David Sayre
Louise Sayre
Vivian Smith
Jane Underhill

Others Who Helped

Pete Arnold
Richard Cooper (Cover)
Keith Gardiner (Editorial Assistant)
Joan Gottlieb
Helen Gutmann
Marion-Gray Kraft
Dena Leep
Judy McKnight
Hugh Wynn

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Holmes Run Acres

Celebrating its 40th Anniversary in 1991!

COMMITTEE CHAIRMEN FOR THE **CELEBRATION WEEKEND**:

40th Anniversary Chairman.....	Vickie Indre
40th Anniversary Cook Book Editor.....	Mary Lou Cooper
Correspondence with former residents.....	Audrey Mowson
Entertainment.....	Jim Carscadden
Fund Raising.....	John Purvis
Public Relations.....	Vivian Smith
Publications.....	Mia Gardiner

There are many people working on the various committees. They will be listed and acknowledged in an upcoming issue of 'The Holmes Runner'. Our thanks to all of them for their time and effort that they are putting into organizing a wonderful celebration weekend. See page 11 for the schedule of events.

Architecture: Watching Our Houses Expand

Several articles have been written about Holmes Run Acres since our 25th anniversary in 1976. They all focus on the tenacity of the residents and the adaptability of the neighborhood. In a Washington Post "Living in Style" article (Sept 12, 1976), Sarah Booth Conroy outlined those qualities of building design and site planning which had made Holmes Run Acres the special place that it is.

To paraphrase her article, they are: the apparently random positioning of the houses on their lots - a product of the architect's concern for topography, orientation for views and for solar orientation rather than the more traditional orientation to the curb and street, open planning, large windows - to take advantage of the sensitive site planning, basic materials, finishes, and modular construction. "These are design features that expand what could be a cramped shoebox into pavilions in the woods" she wrote. In 1951, the successful combination by architects Lethbridge and Satterlee of these design elements, together with a functional program of minimal area, produced an innovative design and a future problem: the need for more space. As the editors of the 25th anniversary publication Holmes Run Acres: The Story of a Community, stated, "Many of us have by-passed upward mobility to remain here for enough years to have grown a well developed root system." In some respects, many of us have become "root bound"; we need more room, but we want to stay and additions are the answer.

In the fall of 1990, Deena Leep, Marion Gray-Kraft and I drove through the neighborhood to refresh our outlook on the older additions and to discover new ones. Needless to say, there was a lot of "Do you remember when...?" conversation. As I was the newest HRAer of the three, having moved here 25 years ago in 1965, I was hard pressed to keep up! Without an accurate census, however, we estimated that nearly 2/3 of the houses have had additions or major remodeling projects. There are, in fact, so many that to discuss all of them in detail would be an improbable assignment and an impossible task. I hope many of the additions, old and new, will be on the 1991 house tour so that you can see them for yourselves.

Holmes Run Acres additions come in all sizes and shapes to extend the living space in all directions: up (a difficult design problem to solve successfully on a one level design), back, front and sides; and range from guest rooms, dining rooms, new kitchens, kitchens with a wine cellar, bedrooms, utility rooms, free standing storage, and workshop areas. Boris Weintraub, a former HRA resident, said in an article in The Washington Post (May 7, 1978) "One of the key aspects of their (Lethbridge & Satterlee's) design was that the houses could be easily 'manipulated'." The variety of plans and solutions which have been devised is a testament to the adaptability of the basic design.

However, despite the simplicity of the original design and materials, some of the more important character givers, the tongue

and groove roof decking and siding, for example, are more difficult and expensive to purchase today than substitute materials which are currently on the market, making compatibly designed additions a greater challenge.

Many of our neighbors have started the process of planning an addition but have opted to move to another Acres house for a variety of reasons, not the least of which is the confusion and inconvenience of "open house surgery" while they are still conscious. For those who are thinking about adding or remodeling, here are some points to consider: 1) make your wish list, cut it by 50%, cut this by 50%, and finally pare this list by 50% to get near to reality, 2) get a copy of your plat showing the location of your house in relation to the property lines, 3) check with the County regarding the zone and minimum setback requirements (Fairfax County Zoning Dept.: 246-2474), 4) call or visit neighbors whose additions are aesthetically and functionally appealing to you, 5) ask for recommendations for architect, contractors, and designers who have completed successful additions in the neighborhood, and finally, 6) take out divorce insurance.

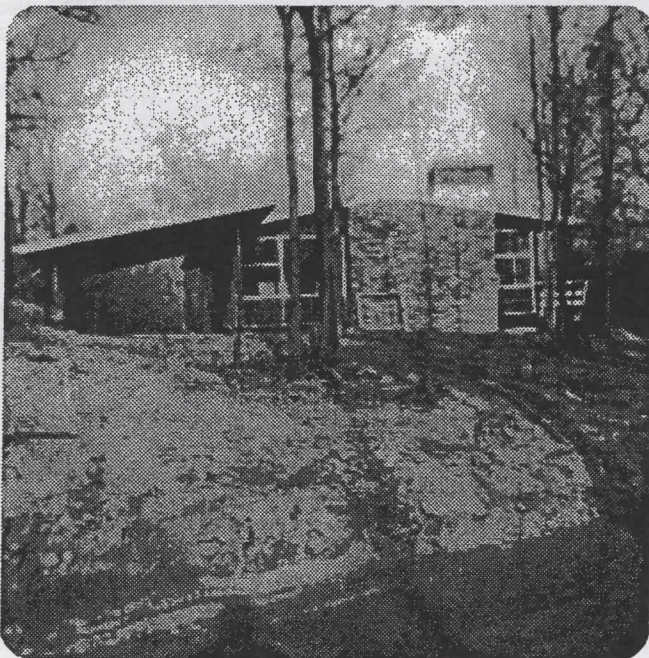
Consideration of the various aspects of your final requirements with respect to your existing situation and lifestyle is a most important ingredient in a successful addition project. Keep an open mind about changing the space uses in your home to allow a more creative solution to be explored which may use space more efficiently and may reduce the required area.

"In 1969 they added a master bedroom across the back of the house, to bring the footage to 1110 and moved the storage wall to enlarge the living-dining area (turning the old dining area into a breakfast room). In 1971 they enlarged the kitchen, enclosed the carport to make a breakfast and family room with a utility/storage wall against one side. The old dining room became the foyer." (Sarah Booth Conroy, The Washington Post, Sept. 12, 1976.) I can attest that with subsequent additions the foyer is now the breakfast area again!

"Walk through" the proposed addition in your mind picturing the furniture, the access, the views, and where the conflicting adjacencies exist (noisy next to quiet), as well as where the traffic patterns and life styles conflict (up all night versus early to bed). Finally, give consideration to how your addition will affect your neighbors. What will they see out of their windows? How will your addition affect their privacy and outdoor space? What will it look like and is it compatible? It is easier to make changes on paper than it is to live with a poorly planned addition, both for you and your neighbors. Andrea O. Dean, writing in the November 1976 A.I.A. Journal stated: "The intention of the Holmes Run Acres' architect and builder was to create a contemporary, efficient, attractive house that could easily be varied throughout a development and adapted without difficulty to the owner's needs." Two hundred additions, more or less, confirm this observation.

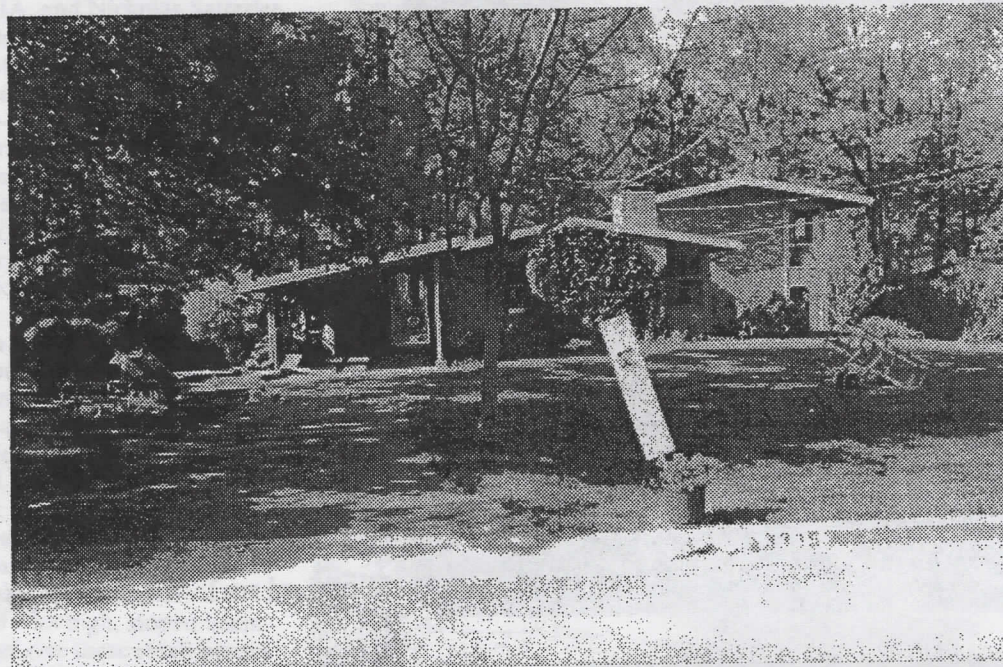
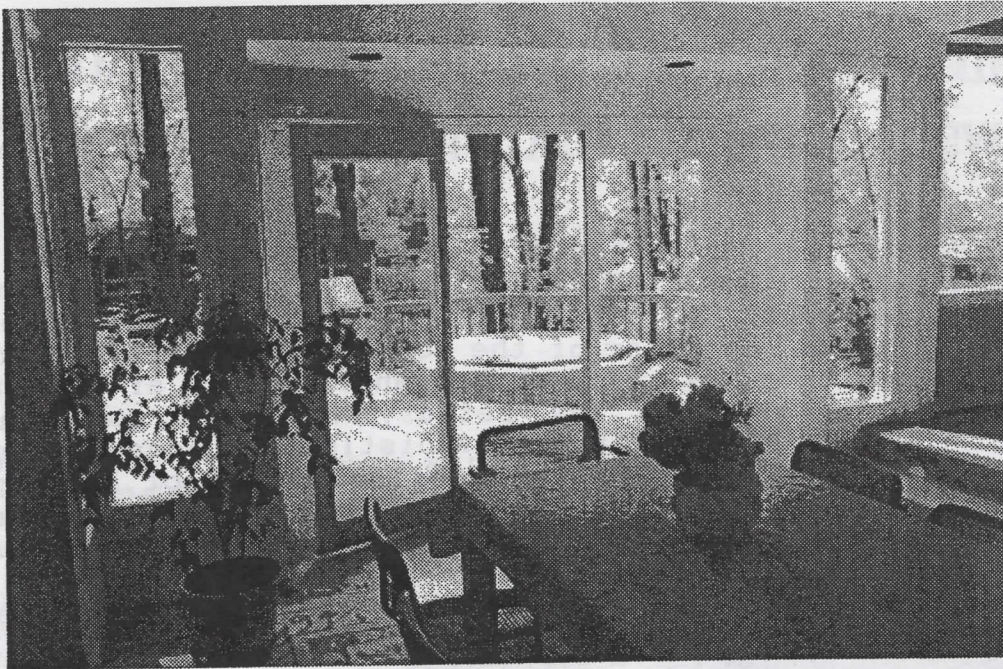
I was very interested to read, in the November 1990 Holmes Runner, a reprinted 1963 article of George Janson's, "Some Thoughts on Additions", which was concerned with the design and architectural character of the Holmes Run houses and additions. I would like to quote the last sentences of his article, for I cannot state these thoughts any better, and they could not be more appropriate. "And yet they are distinctive houses. Much thought, hard work, understanding and design talent of high caliber went into designing our community, our houses. . . Let us add or alter if we must, but only with understanding and restraint."

George Lawson



←original HRA house





The Civic Association: Continuing Contributions

While it may all have begun over a back fence (as reported in our 25th Anniversary Book), our association nurtures and sustains itself in our living and family rooms. That is where Holmes Run Acres Civic Association (HRACA) board members and others come together to plan how the board will act on the needs of the community. Every month, board members meet to discuss the past month's activities and plan for the future. Some months the meetings are short, allowing for a social time afterwards when old and new board members examine the host's additions. On other months the meetings may take longer as the association's formal position on some issue or some association expenditure is debated.

The association is small--only 350 homes--when compared to many associations in Fairfax County, but membership participation--constantly around 80 percent--is cause for envy in many of those larger associations. As the county grows, and more and more communities become active and involved, Holmes Run Acres' uniqueness tends to be overshadowed. But what is constant and gives our community its continuity and its strength is the participation level of our members. Take a look at the old Holmes Runners from the first 25 years or the 25th Anniversary Book. Then look at the past 15 years' worth of Runners and this book. An individual will have been a board member or president for awhile; then a decade or so later that individual--still living in the community--rejoins the board and becomes a leader again. All the while, new individuals join the association and become active.

It is this strength of participation and willingness to contribute that allows the association to continue its many longtime programs and efforts, while at the same time adding new events and programs.

Beginning with the announcement in June 1976 that Yeonas Corporation planned to build 250 tract homes in the woods north of us, development of the Chiles Tract dominated the civic association for many of its last 15 years. The Chiles Tract was the last remaining large undeveloped piece of land inside the beltway in Virginia, and it attracted the attention, first, of local companies and, then, multinational firms. Civic Affairs Committee members, board presidents, and others attended countless comprehensive plan review meetings, public hearings, and strategy sessions to try to lessen the impact of the surrounding development on the Acres. Although HRACA boards initially hoped to have some of the adjacent land remain undeveloped and to have Yeonas build compatible contemporary houses, they were unable to achieve these goals, although not for lack of trying. They did obtain rezoning restrictions that prohibit vehicular through access in the Acres, so at least our streets have not become commuter thoroughfares.

After Yeonas cut down the woods to build Holmes Run "Woods," Mobil Oil began work on its headquarters on the southwest quadrant of the Chiles Tract. At that time, Acres residents were fortunate that Mobil Oil had the money and concern about being a good neighbor, which led them to build a complex that retained much of the woods. Cadillac Fairview, a large Canadian real estate firm, developed the southeast quadrant into a mix of low-rise multifamily residential, hotel, and commercial offices. They too tried to retain some trees and built the overpass connecting the

southeast and northeast quadrants of the Chiles Tract. The northeast quadrant was developed into a similar high-density, mixed-use area. Providence District Recreation Center also was built in the southeast quadrant. Given the size of the developments in the southeast and northeast quadrants and the changes in the business climate in Northern Virginia, construction in these areas has not yet been completed.

No doubt with increasing land values and development pressures in Fairfax County, there was no way to stop the changes that occurred on the Chiles Tract. Newer residents don't even remember the woods. Just as one of the chief responsibilities of the association in its first 25 years was securing services for the community, the association in the last 15 years has focused on protecting what we had achieved from outside encroachment by large developers.

In the last decade the Civic Affairs Committee also dealt with the Gallows Road/Route 50 intersection, the development of the Walnut Hill Estate, and Metro bus service along Gallows Road.

On issues within the Acres, the civic association initiated a Neighborhood Watch program in 1981 in reaction to a rash of burglaries and vandalism incidents in the Acres. Initially, only a night-time activity, a day Watch began in 1986. Although the Watch periodically has suffered from a lack of volunteers, it continues today with new equipment, and new and long-time participants.

As outside development plans were set in place, civic association boards from 1983 to 1985 looked inward to the Acres as a community. Revitalization of the Acres--of the community spirit and appearance--became a major issue. The association conducted a special opinion poll of residents to learn of their feelings about living in the Acres and their concerns about the community. Association members held lengthy meetings to try to come up with ways to address these concerns. Out of this revitalization came several continuing activities intended to foster pride in our community and its uniqueness, as well as a renewed sense of neighborhood. In the area of physical appearance, the board instituted an annual spring clean-up program, with a community-wide yard sale, and relaunched the Acres House and Garden Tour.

Community Facilities Committee members worked long and hard to prod the state into repairing and replacing our curbs and gutters, work that was completed in 1989, followed by repaving of our streets in 1990. During the 1984-85 board, the issue of sidewalks again came up, but the board was able to convince the county that we didn't want or need them. This issue came up again this spring as part of the Fairfax County Trails Plan, and the civic association took a strong stand against sidewalks. The county Planning Commission has agreed not build sidewalks in the Acres and, hopefully, this issue will never be mentioned again.

Luria Park also received \$20,000 in improvements during 1979-80, including completion of the full-circle jogging/walking path. Other improvements have been made to the bridges in the park and to the tot play area, and replacement of the play equipment is scheduled for 1991. Both Acres entrance signs at the top of Holmes Run Drive and by Friendship Methodist Church were refurbished and landscaped. Although plans were drawn up for an entrance sign with landscaping at the top of Executive Avenue, the civic association deemed the project too expensive and elaborate, and it was dropped.

The Program and Social Committee continued to host the annual International Dinner. Other events sponsored included a Bluegrass Festival in Luria Park, a Community Day (including the Falls Church High School marching band), and several Day in the Park s. Several of these activities grew out of the revitalization efforts of the 1983-85 boards. Although not all of these activities have developed into an annual tradition like the International Dinner, they gave residents the opportunity to meet and talk.

The Youth Committee maintained another Acres tradition, that of a visit by Santa Claus to the homes of residents with young children. In recent years, this activity has resulted in many delighted children in the Acres and many toys collected for the ACCA Child Care Center in Annandale. The Halloween party, which raised money for UNICEF and was cosponsored by the civic association and Friendship Methodist Church, lapsed after 1980. In its place, a revitalized Youth Committee sponsors a Halloween Parade in the fall and an Easter egg hunt in Luria Park in the spring, two events that have grown in popularity and participation.

The Publication and Publicity Committee continued to publish the Holmes Runner and the Holmes Run Acres Directory. Although these publications also periodically suffer from a shortage of volunteers, someone always makes the commitment to take on the responsibility of editing the Runner and the Directory.

Over the last 15 years, just as over the previous 25 years, the civic association served the community as one of the mechanisms available to us for collective action. The vitality of our civic association structure remains evident as the standing committees continue to function and perform their designated and traditional tasks, while new challenges such as crime and the need for revitalization receive the attention of ad hoc groups formed by the board.

But what enables the association structure to serve our diverse needs has been, and hopefully will continue to be, the widespread participation and efforts of our residents. Over the last 15 years, those efforts have been directed toward maintaining high membership, entertaining our children and ourselves, preserving and enhancing our community, publishing and distributing our collective voices, and representing our community in print and in person.

We cannot name every individual involved or every activity undertaken. But for those of you who have served our community through the civic association, the recreation association, or the PTA s, as you look through this book, stop and take pride in what you have contributed and accomplished.

David & Louise Sayre

There are:

- 353 houses in the community
- 283 paid members of the Civic Association
- 6 40-year residents, 17 35-to-39-year residents
- 6 second-generation families
- Approximately 177 exterior additions to the houses

PRESIDENTS OF THE HOLMES RUN CIVIC ASSOCIATION

1976 - 1991 (1953 - 1976 listed in Volume I)

(* indicates those still residing here)

	1976-77	Ed Zimmerman
*	1977-78	Pete Peterson
*	1978-79	Frank Spielberg
*	1979-80	David Sayre
*	1980-81	Larry Rosenberg
	1981-82	Deedee Kaman
	1982-83	Deedee Kaman
*	1983-84	Louise Sayre
*	1984-85	Scott Steele
*	1985-86	Larry Wolford
	1986-87	Pam Allen
*	1987-88	Donald McCarthy
*	1988-89	David Howe
*	1989-90	Phil Waggener
*	1990-91	David Parker

Holmes Run Acres Civic Association

Celebrating its 40th Anniversary in 1991!

*SATURDAY, MAY 18 HOUSE AND GARDEN
TOUR
Registration 12-2 pm at the Woodburn
School parking lot.
House Tour 12-4 pm
15 houses on tour!*

*DINNER/DANCE -
FAIRVIEW PARK
MARRIOTT HOTEL
Cocktails 6:30 pm, Dinner 7:30 pm*

*SUNDAY, MAY 19 DAY IN THE PARK
1-4 pm at Luria Park
Games for kids, moon bounce, food, art
exhibits, music, clowns and more!
Area dignitaries
Smith Sisters singing children's songs*

The Holmes Runner: An Enduring Voice

Who among us has not read the Holmes Runner? It whets the appetite of the curious newcomer (who are these people anyway? what are they interested in?...heh, that guy's name is familiar-I think he lives right behind me..) and provides all of us with topical news and views involving our small triangular world tucked away just inside the beltway.

The Holmes Runner has been around for nearly as long as the community itself, quickly evolving from its initial status as a brief newsletter in November, 1952 to the monthly magazine sponsored by the Holmes Run Acres Civic Association that is familiar to us all. The challenges we have confronted as a community have changed from what we like to call the "pioneering" days of the early fifties to the present, but the Runner format has remained remarkably consistent.

The minutes of the monthly Civic Association Board meetings have faithfully chronicled the issues, from transportation and county land use to the plans and progress of special community events like the International Dinner or the children's Halloween party. Though less official but possibly more widely read, the "gossip" column- variously named "Chitter Chatter," Grapevine," currently "Talk of the Acres" and at one time, simply "Gossip!"- has been with us nearly as long. This of course, is where we get our news of personal events: the comings and goings, births and marriages, travels, school and other achievements of the many individuals who make up this unique community.

Initially, advertising space was solicited from local merchants to pay for publication expenses, but this practice was abolished in the seventies. The "Want Ads" have appeared steadily, however, offering used goods and minor services on an informal basis. Where else could you find custom drapes for a Luria house or storm windows for a Gaddy?

Another regular feature throughout the years has been the cooking column. Each contributor has had her own style and title, from "A La Carte" to "Cooking in the Holmes" and my own personal favorite, "Edibles From Ethel." The recipes have been invariably great. Audrey Mowson has edited several published cookbooks since her stint on the Runner, and both she and Liz Lawson, another food editor, have had their own cooking shows on cable television. (You saw it here first, folks.)

School news has found its way into the Runner from time to time, and new principals from Woodburn, Luther Jackson and Falls Church High School have all been interviewed. A special section written completely by teenagers ("Teen News" and then "Teen Scene") was initiated in the seventies. Sometimes just an announcement or two, though occasionally pages of prose, poetry and

reviews, it was an attempt to make the publication more inclusive than ever.

The Runner has always been a great resource for coming to terms with the various anomalies of our houses. In 1979, we were introduced to something called the Orangeburg pipe which could evidently disintegrate and cause a great deal of woe to a "Holmes Runner" unlucky enough to have one. In 1980, we covered the gamut from the serious business of smoke detector locations to the structural limitations of installing hot tubs. By 1981, there was a regular column titled "The House Doctor," dispensing advice on repairs and improvements.

Moving outside, we sounded the alarm in '82 on rats and rabid raccoons, soon to be followed by the ongoing and pervasive gypsy moth problem- threatening the very trees which had persuaded many of us to settle here initially. We may have been pioneers in the early fifties, but by the eighties, we were struggling to preserve what we already had. If we were breaking any new ground it was in the garden, and we welcomed any advice we could get on crabgrass, mulching, and growing just about anything in the shade. Long-time contributor, John Purvis, kept us apprised of property values, and the annual spring clean-up was trumpeted through many an issue as well.

Much of the community activism which characterized the previous two decades had concentrated on managing the development of the Chiles Tract (extending from our borders to Arlington Boulevard) while maintaining the essential character of the neighborhood. In our hearts, we knew even our best efforts could not prevent the surrounding woodlands from severely diminishing. What still remains is a precious commodity, to be preserved and savored, and we have done so every month through Pete Peterson's column. Hardly a fox or a migrating mallard could escape his attention.

If we were to choose one common concern which has remained with us throughout our forty year history, it would surely be that other of nature's creatures, the dog. Though sometimes unleashed, untamed, and an occasional cause for "squishiness" under foot, even the dog has had its advocates in the Runner, predominantly from long-time resident and ironically former postman, Jim Lemon.

The 25th anniversary book for Holmes Run Acres pointed out what a unifying force the publication has been for our neighborhood, but diversity of opinion as well as tolerance have characterized the best issues, and our desire for community has not kept us from serious self-examination. The Runner provided a forum for a series of letters published twelve years ago examining the question of just how easy it is for a newcomer to settle into the neighborhood and feel "at home." The discussion cen-

tered around whether we might be confusing our formal neighborhood institutions like the Civic Association, network of block hostesses, annual gatherings, and yes, the Holmes Runner with genuine "one on one" hospitality.

On the production end, the idiosyncratic mimeograph machine which we had managed to coax into producing three hundred fifty copies every month was finally retired, and in 1980, the Runner got a slick new look thanks to the photocopy machine. Graphics had always decorated its pages, but now we were able to reproduce photographs as well. The monthly collating and stapling sessions also became a thing of the past as these chores were taken over by the printer. Similarly, the arrival of the word processor has pretty much eliminated the need for legions of typists.

Perhaps what is most remarkable about the Holmes Runner is its sheer longevity. In an age where most of us struggle to find enough time for work and family, the fact that we are still able to find people willing to write, edit, type, draw, print, and otherwise put the thing together nine times a year is no small achievement. That there have always been volunteers willing to help out speaks to the importance we residents have placed on continuing our traditions and preserving a sense of community.

Anne Ekstrom

HOLMES RUNNER EDITORS
1976-1991 (1953-1976 listed in Volume I)

1976-78	David and Louise Sayre*
1978	Julia Evans and Jean Taylor
1979	Jean Taylor
1980	Carol Sizemore
1981	Bita Lanys*
1982	Charlotte Mahood
	Bill and Rae Parmenter
1983-85	Mia Gardiner*
1985	Jean-Marie Seidman*
1986	Judy and Randy Mcknight*
1987-88	Judy Mcknight*
	Mari Reeves* and Therese Keegan
1989	Judy Mcknight*
1990	Gloria Nappo*

(* Indicates those still residing here.)



Our Schools: Seeing Them Evolve

The first forty years of Holmes Run Acres coincide with a period of great growth and development in Fairfax County. It was a switch from a largely farming locality to a populous urban/suburban jurisdiction. Not all the changes can be called improvements, of course, but in the sphere of education enormous strides have been achieved. I believe good schools have always been of primary concern to residents of HRA.

By today's standards public schooling in Fairfax County was pretty stark forty years ago. Some of the history of change is recorded in the 1976 Twenty Fifth Anniversary booklet. In the time since then our schools have continued to evolve and refine the curriculum, the accountability of teachers, and the services provided children and parents. Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS), constitute the tenth largest system in the country. FCPS comprise 208 facilities: 129 elementary schools, 19 intermediate schools, 3 secondary schools, 20 high schools, 17 special education centers and 20 alternate schools. FCPS have earned a high reputation nationwide, taking advantage of factors virtually unknown in schools of 1951.

For example, although parents have always participated in activities at schools attended by their children and indeed at one time, were expected to supply necessities like library books and teaching materials to our bare bones schools, the business and professional community was seldom involved in education. Well today praise be it is, and it was money and expertise from the Fairfax County world of business that made possible Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology (Jefferson Tech, or TJ) for students gifted in math and science. Some Holmes Run young people attend this magnet school.

In 1991 communications between people, businesses, professions, even governments have changed dramatically since 1951. Use of computer hardware and software, so intensively utilized at TJ (whose students won a million dollar computer in a national competition) is also built into instruction at all our schools. Woodburn Elementary School, HRA's local school has now a total of 23 computers and word processors of assorted manufacturers including three, with software, gained from the recent collection of Safeway and Giant Food cashier receipts.

Another change which has occurred since Holmes Run Acres "was a pup" is the growth of programs for children with special needs: those who are impaired physically, visually, auditorially, emotionally, developmentally or who have problems of speech or learning disabilities. These programs include special classes and special centers plus many forms of part-time help. Those who don't remember when handicapped children were denied access to school or

Reprints of Articles About Holmes Run Acres

were taught ineptly in catch-all isolated classes may take this extensive progress for granted. I for one am glad that the cruel, stigmatizing, bad old days are pretty much over in Fairfax County.

Gifted and talented students also have special needs which are addressed, in one form or another, in every Fairfax County School. There are centers with gifted and talented programs to challenge those elementary students who qualify. The remarkable growth of FCPS Special Educations, which has come in the 'lifetime' of HRA, is due in no small measure to parent and citizen pressure.

A deficit in American education perceived by many is in foreign language instruction. In the early days at Woodburn School optional after-school classes in French were offered. In some other schools the language taught was Spanish. Instructors were recruited by parents or the school PTA and paid by them. Quality control was difficult and coordination with in-school programs at the intermediate level was poor. I believe all such classes have been discontinued. Now a new pilot program in elementary foreign language instruction--the partial immersion program--is being tested in several configurations. First and Second graders in a few pilot schools spend half a day learning in, and speaking only, a language other than English--Spanish, French or Japanese.

At the high school level, in addition to the traditional French, German, Spanish and Latin, FCPS high schools teach Japanese, Russian, Italian, Chinese and Sign Language. Intermediate schools offer the first four as well as one class in Japanese. Upper level students may participate in Humanities Study/Travel classes. These climax with intensive orientation on the countries to be visited before two weeks of travel to either Japan or Europe.

None of these studies should be confused with the FCPS growing "English as a Second Language (ESL)" program for students whose native tongue is one of dozens of languages other than English. Basic proficiency in English must be acquired before the children can be "mainstreamed" into classes which are instructed in English. Of course, many foreign-born students are already fluent in English and, indeed, become the high achievers and honors earners in pressure-cookers like TJ. But some not only don't speak English, but have had minimal schooling in their native country. The largest group of foreign-born students is Spanish; at Falls Church High School the enrollment is 15% Spanish.

With the prevalence of single-parent families compounded by the employment of well over half of the women of child-bearing age in Fairfax County a public solution has been found for what was once considered a private problem--Day Care for children of working mothers. The program for meeting this special need is known as School Age Child Care (SACC) which has a new two-room component at Woodburn and is available at many other elementary schools. This

provides a supervised program before and after the regular school day for children whose mothers are working, in school, or medically unable to care for a child. In another program, youngsters from low-income households are prepared to enter school via the Early Childhood Education Program (formerly Head Start). ECEP also provides health and social services for the families in the program, which operates during the regular school day. Demand for SACC and ECEP exceeds capacity.

One of the most emotion-wrought subjects added to FCPS instruction at all levels since 1951 is "human life education," or sex education. It is mandated by the Virginia Board of Education, but parents may refuse permission for their children's participation in the courses. How much did we know of AIDS and substance abuse in 1951? Yet human life education remains--will always remain--a "hot potato" issue.

The most dramatic change concerning FCPS teachers in the past forty years is probably merit pay. It was introduced and promoted by the current Superintendent of Schools. This concept ties pay to performance, which sounds so simple and obvious but is genuinely fraught with complex difficulties. Assessing classroom performance, even with guidelines, is a subjective process and not all instructors are happy with the outcome. Nonetheless, the school system is committed to merit pay and jurisdictions all over the country are watching to see how we work it out--if we do.

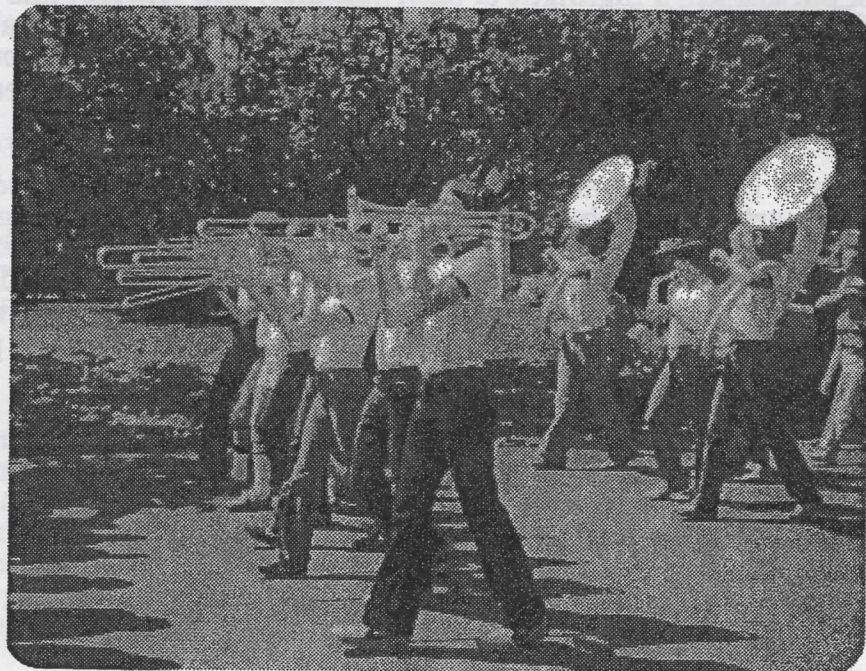
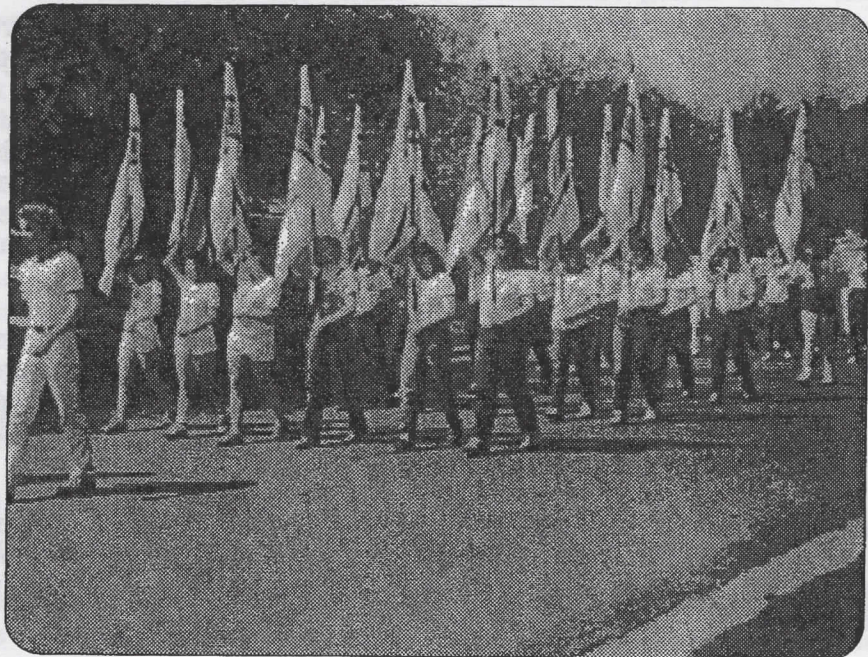
A newer, but also controversial change involves the grouping of grade levels. In 1951, grades in FCPS schools were divided 7 - 5: seven years at the elementary level, five in high school. Kindergarten (still half-day) has been added at the lower level and grades 7 and 8 were spun off to "intermediate schools." Now this configuration is being changed to place the sixth grade with grades 7 and 8 in "middle schools." Implementation of the new concept will be phased-in gradually, system-wide, but it's quite possible that HRA children will be involved at the outset this fall. They may be reassigned from Luther Jackson Intermediate to Poe, a new middle school, and could be switched from Falls Church High to Annandale H S.

Changes in the demographics of Fairfax County also continually affect the school system. With greatest growth occurring in the western sections, thereby creating the greatest demand for schools and other County services in what was fairly recently farmland, school-aged population has diminished in the eastern or "older" parts of the County, which includes our area. School houses no longer needed as schools are put to many other uses, FCPS administrative offices, senior centers, adult education centers, diagnostic centers, residential facilities, community centers, Head Start centers, even places to assemble teaching materials. The former Annandale Elementary School is such a converted facility.

The Fairfax County Police Department, Public Safety Communications Center, Operations Support Bureau, and Public Safety Academy are located in another converted school building on Woodburn Road. A site near HRA that was purchased many years ago for a high school which was never built (across from Woodburn Village) is now used for baseball, gardening plots, even a woodchip mulch distribution point. Some way or another, FCPS properties are put to public use.

In sum the salient fact about our school system is that it changes often and in many ways. And it will always do so. I can't wait to read what the education report for the HRA 75th Anniversary Booklet has to tell us!

Sarah Lahr



The Recreation Association: Summer's Highlight

Many pools in Northern Virginia are surrounded by barren concrete that affords no relief from the heat or the sun. But HRARA is still a "jewel in a sylvan setting" of tall trees and grass. The "pioneers" who built HRARA's pools chose a beautiful location that has been enjoyed, maintained, and improved over the years. But there have been many changes at HRARA in the last 15 years, some caused by demographics/economics, and others by the need to replace an aging physical plant.

HRARA was built by enthusiastic, young families who all lived in a new development--the Acres. But those young families moved out or their families grew up, and they no longer flocked to HRARA in large enough numbers to support it. Voting membership was opened to all shareholders, and now the majority of all shareholders live outside the Acres.

Even with the addition of members from outside of the Acres, it has frequently been a struggle to keep the membership above 325 (out of a possible 400 shares). Some explanations for this are: in many families both parents now work, and there is little time for leisure activities at the pool; many area residents are from countries or cultures that don't have joining a pool as a priority; and there is competition nearby from other pool associations, and from Providence Recreation Center and the Marriott pool. The Board has lowered the cost of share purchase in an effort to attract more members, but the problem of maintaining our membership at a high level is still with us.

But HRARA is more than water, trees, and grass--it is a meeting place for its members. It is the group of neighbors and friends who get together at the pool for Sunday brunch; it is the parents and tots at the baby pool; the children and parents of the Swim Team; the lap swimmers and sunbathers; and all the members who attend the Steak Nights and parties.

The pool is one of the few places where you can meet your neighbors informally and is still a focus for social activities within the community. When meeting a pool acquaintance in the outside world, it is common to say, "I didn't recognize you with your clothes on!"

Pool parties are a highlight of each summer, and HRARA has tried many different themes and types of parties. The reigning favorite party is Steak Night. This is an informal, family-oriented cook-out where you bring whatever you want to grill, and HRARA provides salad, rolls, corn, plates and utensils. It's an easy family dinner or a fun way to entertain friends.

We have had pig roasts, kids' parties, cook-outs of all descriptions, and many Caribbean parties, but the most unique party was held in celebration of the 25th anniversary of HRARA. The "new" bath house was under construction in 1978 and while the baby pool and lower pool were in use, the grounds were not safe or conducive for a party to celebrate the 25th anniversary. This anniversary was celebrated with dinner and dancing at La Guinguette Restaurant, prefaced by cocktails and hors d'oeuvres at the pool.

The 35th anniversary was noted in 1988 by a weekend of parties--a pig roast one evening and a "birthday party" complete with cake, politicians and entertainment that included a mariachi band and the Woodburn Wildcat Jump Rope Team.

Another social outlet is the Swim Team--the Holmes Run Hurricanes. While the kids do the swimming, the parents are needed to transport swimmers, to organize and run the meets, to run food sales to help finance the team activities, and to plan and run parties after meets and the end of the season bash.

HRARA was a charter member of the Northern Virginia Swimming League, and we have a legacy of some fast times (pool and NVSL records) from our illustrious swimmers. To celebrate this proud history, a record board was installed in the bath house that lists the year, the time and the name of the swimmer who holds the pool record in each stroke. The record board is a piece of Acres history and bears such familiar names as Barzdukas, Hartzler, Kirkpatrick, Peterson, Stephens, Underhill, Steele, and Campbell.

The Hurricanes were the Division XI Champions in the NVSL in 1989--our first championship ever. Another first and only came in 1978 when HRARA hosted the NVSL All-Star Meet. At All-Stars the swimmers in the Division with the fastest recorded times in each stroke compete. In typical fashion HRARA rose to the occasion and hosted more than 2,000 spectators.

The upkeep and improvement of the physical plant of HRARA has been a constant battle for the Board of Directors. In 1977 the Board of Directors finally went ahead with building a new bath house after several years of debate. The old upper bath house was too small, did not provide locked storage for pool possessions, and was in danger of being cited by the County as unsanitary. The plans for the new bath house were drawn up by HRA resident and architect, Arvydas Barzdukas. The design was contemporary and in harmony with Acres homes and the natural environment. Construction began in the spring of 1978, with completion expected by June 15; however, construction delays caused by heavy rains put off completion of the new bath house until the first week of August.

The new bath house was designed with a desk and gates in order to monitor who entered the facility, and the first new check-in procedure was begun with picture passes. Use of the pool by non-members had been a continuing problem, but this has been resolved through the use of pool passes and gate guards.

As HRARA grew older, more repairs and replacements were required for the equipment. All 3 pools have been sandblasted and re-whitecoated within the past few years, and we have found that this process needs to be repeated approximately every 10 years. The electrical service has been upgraded and the wires have been buried. New lights, a new barbecue and deck, and an L-shaped deck at the baby pool have all been added. And our magnificent stairway/deck has made entry to the pool both more convenient and more attractive. County regulations have required that we install foot showers and fences wherever the grass leads to the pool.

The building, repairs, maintenance, and management of HRARA had traditionally been carried out by the voluntary labor of the shareholders. But, as more and more work was being done by increasingly fewer people, the Board had to make some changes.

In 1977, HRARA hired its first professional pool management company to run the pool. The management company hires the managers and the guards, and is responsible for the general upkeep of the pools and for enforcing pool rules. The Board still sets policy, but no longer needs to be so intimately involved with the day-to-day operations of the pool. HRARA has used a number of different companies but will never return to self-management because of the difficulty of finding volunteers

able to devote enough time to run the pool. Volunteers still come to rake leaves in the fall and spring and to help with clean up projects to ready the pool for opening and for closing. However, a work fee has been added to give shareholders the option of paying for the privilege of not helping out.

In 1985 HRARA granted a lifetime membership to Fred Dunn in recognition of the thousands of hours that Fred has contributed as a volunteer at the pool. Since the founding of HRARA, Fred Dunn has helped wherever and whenever he could--be it with his cooking or his engineering skills. Whenever there is some question about the ancient motors in the pool machinery, Fred knows the answer.

We have tried to be innovative and have attempted many new endeavors, keeping some and discarding others. The old high diving board came down because the insurance costs became too high. The pool slide met a similar fate. We tried accepting VISA and MASTERCARD as payment for pool fees. We tried a snack bar for several summers under different management each year. But there were always complaints and problems, so we will probably have to content ourselves with the soft drink machine, calls to Domino's, and the arrival of the Good Humor truck.

On Sundays we have designated the upper pool for "adults only," which has become a popular tradition. Since 1984, we have allowed a summer camp to use our pools in the early morning hours. The money earned from this contract helps to defray operating fees for our members. We've tried early-bird lap swimming, a volley ball court at the lower pool and water volleyball in the upper pool, and water aerobics, as additions to the usual fare of swimming and sunbathing. We've also added a tradition of inviting the graduating sixth grade class at Woodburn to have their own private pool party.

HRARA is about having fun and taking time out of busy schedules to relax; to spend some quality time with our families; and to get acquainted or re-acquainted with our neighbors.

Janice Covert

Holmes Run Acres Recreation Association Presidents (1953-1976 listed in Volume I)

1976	Pete Gratto**/Jim Carscadden**
1977	Jim Carscadden**
1978	Fred Dunn**
1979	Gary Larson**
1980	Lee Howard*
1981	Bill Hartzler**
1982	Barbara Vollmer
1983-85	Ted Evans**
1986	Mike Giblin**
1987	Bill Jordan/Bruce Campbell**
1988	Bruce Campbell**
1989-90	Mike Giblin**
1991	Peter Skoro

* indicates those who were Acres residents

** indicates those who still reside here

Luria Park: A Place For All Seasons

Reprise

Luria Park - that irregularly shaped tract - that four or more acres of marshy real estate unsuitable for building because of poor drainage - that foundling piece of land, deeded to Fairfax County by Luria Bros., builders, and duly named for its donors - did not spring full blown from the swamp surrounding it for the pleasure and enjoyment of the citizens of Fairfax County and Holmes Run Acres in particular. Rather, this park has taken almost twenty-five years a-borning!

As you see it today, leveled and smoothed with grass, with proper flood control, lovely plantings, ingenious and safe tot-land, rustic wooden bridges, picnic tables, baseball diamond, multi-purpose black top area, well defined paths for walking and bicycling, so must the first dreamers have seen it in their minds' eye! What we have today started with this innocent report in the Holmes Runner of February, 1954: "The Garden Club is planning to request permission and assistance from the Fairfax County Park Authority for developing the 'park' land near the lower end of Holmes Run Drive and Executive Avenue as a recreational area."

1991

That was the birth of Luria Park, heart-land, that connects the two arms of Holmes Run Acres. It was nurtured through the ensuing years by successive residents of this community who have watched over it, reported on its progress and its problems, and have enjoyed its open space, its placid stream and the peace and serenity it offers.

During the years, the bridges have been replaced or repaired, the entrance signs have been enlarged, re-worded, re-painted. The car barriers have been maintained and new picnic tables, new benches, a new barbecue pit have been put in place. Trash cans have appeared as if by magic.

Some of that magic has come about as a direct result of vigilance on the part of the Community Facilities Committee of Holmes Run Acres Civic Association, those residents bordering the park, and other civic-minded individuals who keep an eye peeled for natural deterioration and vandalism. They have never ceased to monitor the park, the equipment and the environs.

The most recent upgrade report by the Community Facilities Committee states: . . . that the County has repaired the elevated walkways in Luria Park with steel beams and reinforcement, replaced planking, placed rip-rap on the banks (to inhibit erosion) and cleaned up the area. The playground equipment has been painted and walkways resurfaced with gravel.

Fairfax County maintains the park on a regular basis, i.e. grass is mowed, trash is collected, vandalism is noted and reported, and drainage ditches are cleared. The Park Authority is currently analyzing ten parks in Area II (that includes Luria Park), checking on the age and condition of play equipment to

confirm the need to replace it with more modern and safer equipment. If Luria Park is so designated, this could occur within the next calendar year.

The original play fort constructed by enterprising and hard working Holmes Runners no longer exists. While it stood, it was a bastion for our children, who clambered aboard and ruled an imaginary kingdom with shouts of joy and laughter. In its place are the more sophisticated pieces installed by the Fairfax County Park Authority. The swings, seesaws, slides, climbing equipment and bouncy animals make the tot area an entertainment center for the littlest ones. The baseball diamond, complete with backstop and bleachers is still there, as is the blacktop area with basketball standards.

The Day in the Park is a good example of how much our community enjoys Luria Park. We gather in goodly numbers, with a goodly mix of mothers, fathers, children, and because we are now forty, we bring grandchildren along to hear music by the young groups. Two of these young performers, Debbi and Megan Smith grew up in Holmes Run Acres. There's music and singing and hot dogs and lemonade for all. Even the family dog is welcome, on its leash.

In this sylvan setting, we spread blankets, we unfold chairs, we invite friends to enjoy with us. We love to share this park with them. We are proud of it. We had a hand in its creation.

It is appropriate to close with a sigh of satisfaction that Luria Park is still a green spot, an open space in our community, a haven, and one of the important amenities enjoyed by all Holmes Runners, and it is appropriate to repeat to all:

LURIA PARK - ENJOY! DO NOT DESTROY!

Mary Lou Cooper



Social Life: The Good Times Go On

Social life in Holmes Run Acres rolls along. Since the neighborhood's 25th Anniversary celebration in 1976, many traditions have continued, some with ups and downs, and socializing has headed in a few new directions.

The 25th Anniversary was a three-day affair with a craft show, a House and Garden Tour, and a May 7th gala dinner dance at Caesar's Forum in McLean which was attended by more than 150 people. Other big events of the summer of '76 were a Blue Grass Festival in Luria Park and HRA's participation in the nation's bicentennial: Holmes Runners packed three chartered Metrobuses to go the Washington Monument grounds for the Fourth of July extravaganza. A 30th Anniversary celebration in 1981 had activities spread over three weekends in May. Planning for this year's 40th Anniversary events began in September 1988.

One of the most consistent community-wide activities since its beginning in 1966 is the International Dinner. The usual format is a potluck type supper with international flavor held at a church (usually Friendship) or Woodburn School followed by entertainment. For about five years in the mid-1980's, the potluck dinner was organized in progressive style with about 10 host homes: cocktails and hors d'oeuvres at one home, dinner at another with a different set of guests, dessert and entertainment for everyone at Friendship or Woodburn afterward. Attendance varied over the years, sagging badly in 1987; but in 1991 the dinner, held at Friendship with an Irish band for entertainment, was back to a "normal" 125.

Santa visits at Christmas (with Santa picking up gifts from those visited to distribute to needy kids) continued over the past 15 years. In 1980, the gifts, which had been going to needy children in D.C., were presented by the HRA Santa to the ACCA Day Care Center in Annandale, and the Center has been gratefully receiving them ever since. We know this tradition has been going on for a long time because a number of HRA families who had Santa visit their children are now inviting him in to visit their grandchildren!

An annual community-wide Halloween party for the children is another tradition which continues. For many years it was held at Friendship Church with money being collected for UNICEF. In 1983 a parade was added to the program with costumed revelers meeting in Luria Park, marching up Executive Avenue and around Hartwell Court back to the park. Games and costume contests with plenty of prizes are featured. For spring fun, an Easter Egg Hunt in Luria Park was introduced by Mary Campbell, Youth Activities Chairman, in 1984 and seems to be becoming another tradition.

Luria Park is naturally the focus of a lot of HRA socializing. Organized activities have included Dixieland and Bluegrass and folk music concerts, sometimes combined with a Fun Run/Walk, a dog show or a picnic for a Community Day in the park. For several years in the early 1980's the Falls Church High School Band (with a number of Holmes Runners in the ranks) marched through the neighborhood and gave a brief concert in the park to kick off Community Day. In 1981 (30th anniversary) Scooby Doo came up from Kings Dominion to ride in the parade, and there was a bike decorating contest and a bluegrass band, too.

The Holmes Run Acres Book Club is one of the community's most durable organizations with many people who have moved out of the Acres still active. In 1980 the club celebrated its 20th year and honored Gloria Nappo (the group's guiding force) with a subscription to The New Yorker (with instructions to report on the book reviews). The Book Club is still going strong.

So what else is new since the 25th anniversary?

Providence Recreation Center opened in 1982 and offers a wide range of workshops and classes as well as opportunities for swimming and other sports year round. Many Acreites take advantage of this fine facility.

Groups of Runners have often gone "off campus" for entertainment and cultural events. In 1981, a Dessert/Theater, the Friendship Players, was established at Friendship Church and a number of Runners were involved. The Barter Theater from Abingdon, Virginia, did several winter seasons at George Mason University's Harris Theater beginning in 1981; and with HRA's Audrey Mowson as the group's volunteer coordinator, naturally Acreites were involved (both as patrons and volunteers). In 1985, a group of 50 attended the Lazy Susan Dinner Theater, and fairly large groups have gathered on the lawn at Wolf Trap for summer concerts. Since 1986 Bill and Kathy Hartzler, members of the Paul Hill Chorale, have organized group rates for Runners for the Chorale's concerts at the Kennedy Center.

In the summer of 1980, it was announced that cable television was on the way. It did arrive and added a new dimension to quiet evenings at home. An HRA Singles Club was active for a while. Mia Gardiner founded a quilters' group in 1984. It meets monthly in members' homes and is still going strong - adding one more chapter to a long history of Acres arts and crafts activities.

Memories: Growing Up In The Acres

In October of 1978, Dave and Vivian Smith proposed informal Friday evening get-togethers to visit with old friends and meet new ones. In January 1979, 32 people attended the first gathering at the Smiths', the group was dubbed "Open Holmes", and it's been a going concern ever since. No-stress, low-key socializing is the rule - no agenda, no committees, minimum preparation by the host. It began meeting every Friday, met once a month for a while, and has settled into an every-other-Friday mode. Attendance varies from five to 35 with the usual being 10 or 12. Some people attend often, some two or three times a year -- that's fine, no attendance rules either. Information on "Open Holmes" is available frequently in the Runner. Y'all come!

Another aspect of social life in Holmes Run Acres, from its first days to the present time, is hob-nobbing with the critters. Kids growing up in Holmes Run, and many adults as well, have taken advantage of this location to get to know the birds and animals which abound. It was not unusual in the early days to spot a deer or a fox -- for after all HRA was sort of "out in the country", but fortunately even the rampant development around us has not erased this part of our social life.

In the early 80's, Glen Moore of Sherwood Ct. wrote an account for the Runner of a relationship with a hawk he and Ruth nursed back to freedom after its attempt to self-destruct on one of their windows. Marki Lowenstern wrote an entertaining piece about her family's encounters with a family of raccoons which apparently wished to share their home. Marion-Gray Kraft started a pet registry, which continues today, to guard the health and safety of our domesticated animal friends and see them safely home if they get lost. Here are excerpts from "Nature Notes" which Marion-Gray wrote for the September 1982 Runner:

"Here we sit in Holmes Run Acres, encircled by the beltway, with Gallows Road, Rt. 50 and Annandale Road as boundaries, a neat little package tied by a streaming ribbon of cars, but still we lie under the edge of the Atlantic flyway, still under a sweep of big sky mostly blocked from our view. These Geese remind us---

"We are still sharing the neighborhood with some original occupants; beavers have a lodge in the creek, possums poke around here and there, raccoons have raised their young in our chimneys. They are adolescent at this time of year, - out on nighttime raiding parties with the folks. We even have a woodchuck or two around. It's been a great year for snakes - maybe this is why we have fewer frogs than usual? The resident bird dog rounds up a snake a day in the pachysandra, ivy, periwinkle. She doesn't hurt them - just points them, pokes them and sends them slithering through the undergrowth to some safe hole."

The flying over of Canada Geese which prompted the above notes is still observed. In fact, geese seem to have taken a fancy to the lake created with the recent development of the Marriott Hotel and other large buildings in our back yards. And, I know from personal observation that 1991 is another "great year for snakes".

Bird watching is a popular pastime, and there are bat lovers among us as well. (An Elm Terrace resident has even constructed bat hotels!) Mary Lou Cooper has chronicled wonderful relationships with snakes, chipmunks and spiders, and nature columns - currently being written by Pete Peterson - have become a regular feature of the Runner.

The social activities of the 40th Anniversary weekend will bring together old friends - some original HRA settlers, many who have been here more than 20 years, many who have been here less time but who have already formed lasting bonds with the neighborhood and its people, and hopefully many who are just beginning to develop roots here. Former Holmes Runners who return for the festivities will reminisce about old times, about how their attachments began -- maybe at some structured social event, but more likely sitting around the baby pool, walking the dog, raking the leaves, jogging in the park, enjoying the woods and the critters. Happy Anniversary!

Jane Underhill







The Woods: Smaller, But Still There

The woods were lovely, dark and deep.

So it once was, when Holmes Run Acres was in its first decade Woods, left to grow for years, bounded the Acres on the north, crossing Gallows Road to the west, and Route 50 to the north - hundreds of acres of woods and wildness unchanged for decades.

Trees arched over and shaded the winding two-lane Gallows Road which ran from Annandale to Route 50, then on to tiny, still rural Merrifield where Holmes Runners sometimes visited the old-fashioned grocery/post office/general store.

The villages nearby offered little, but the woods had places to discover and name, mysteries, and wild things. Five-foot black rat snakes wandered onto the lots nearest the woods. There were DeKay snakes, garter and ribbon snakes, and ring-necked and king Snapping turtles and box turtles. Raccoons, deer, foxes, possums, owls hooting and singing their wrenching love songs. Hawks, kingfishers. Quail strutting across the back of lots nearest the woods, followed by puffballs of chicks. Whip-poor-wills whipping through the nights. Virginia rails. Song birds, ducks, wood peckers, the great pileated woodpecker. Wildflowers, rocks, trees.

The list of wild things was fascinating and growing. Explorations by generations Holmes Run youngsters uncovered more delights and mysteries and traces of the past. There was Wooden Nickel Point-The Swamp-The Creek-The Hanging Tree. There were hollows in trees, discovered to have nests within. There were fish and frogs and polliwogs and crawdads and spring peepers.

And then there was "The Plantation", found far back as the young explorers pushed farther into the wilderness. It was a partly open area, a pleasant site on a little rise near the bank of Holmes Run. And there were the remains of foundations. Young archaeologists set to work, enthusiastically if unprofessionally, excavating, finding part of a fireplace, parts of the foundation walls, turning up an occasional coin, bullets (Civil War, of course), a grove of walnut trees, a spring with watercress growing in the trickling overflow, a well, and the dump, source of shards of pottery and glass and who knew what other treasures.

This was an old pre-Civil War homestead, the Dulin place. It appeared on a 1863 map, which showed a long lane leading to it from Gallows Road, starting about opposite what is now the main entrance to the Hospital. Its small area of fields was surrounded on all sides by woods. Neighbors were far away. There were several buildings near the house, barns, perhaps another house, and then miles of woods.

We early settlers of Holmes Run Acres found these same woods on our northern boundary, but less wild. Not long before the first houses of the Acres were built old timers hereabouts hunted turkey in these woods, and boys walked back the long lane from Gallows Road to swim in the run.

The Acres was far out in 1951, way out in the country, an enclave. Nearby, on Gallows Road near where the 7/11 is now, there was a stable. And lacing the area there were riding trails. Occasionally a horseback rider would emerge from the trees on our north, look confused, then urge his horse across the lots abutting the woods, leaving great hoof prints in the newly rolled and seeded lawns. And on a crisp winter day, when there was a thick cover of snow on the ground, the owners of the stable would hitch up a sleigh and jog through the Acres, bell jingling, picking up the youngsters for a jolly sleigh ride. On these snowy days the woods had more mysteries and delights. There were tracks to be found, followed, deciphered. The marshes and the creek froze enough for skating and could be explored in places unreachable in summer. And there was the silence and beauty of snow, making the familiar strange and new.

So it was for 25 years.

Then there were threats to our borders, and incursions. The Beltway was cut through. Fairfax Hospital, Yorktowne Center, Bedford Village - all took tracts, chunks of the old stand of woods. Mobil took more, but did it with grace, leaving surrounding, buffering trees. Developers came up with ideas of high density development on our northern border. Holmes Runners fought this - individuals, the youngsters who enjoyed The Woods, the Civic Association. And at the end of our first quarter century that imminent threat had been staved off - stalemate - we still had The Woods.

But development was inevitable in this place and time. We watched many of the trees leveled by bulldozers. Our major win was to defeat the high density zoning. And so we now have neighbors, a delightfully diverse group of people (who bought houses on the stripped land and immediately began planting trees). There is a ribbon of mostly wasteland, flood plain, a border of trees on each side of Holmes Run - old trees, brush, bramble, swamp, which is now a part of the county stream valley park. There is a paved path through it, and an arched bridge across Holmes Run. It is much used by nature walkers who report to the Runner's naturalist, Pete Peterson, on their sightings of the wildlife which remains.

So there is still discovery and wonder and delight in The Woods.



Dot Hammerschmidt

*Ed. Note: For a more detailed description of the actual development of the Child's Tract (The Woods) see page 8

Memories: Growing Up In The Acres

I remember
cool footpaths by the creek.
Trail places
where bare feet flee silently
in games of Indians
stalking
The banks held clay
molded, left to dry,
my own artifacts

Then .. "the ruins."
Digging places
dark dirt crumbled roughly between my fingers
Imagined treasures
lay buried.
A piece of china, unearthed
Laying flushed on my back
in green grass
listening to the warblers
singing to the new leaves in the oaks

There were magic places
in those woods
Swampy places
where the flicker drummed
spring's first tatoo
Skunk cabbage
thrust up their wet heads.
Salamanders
left silver strings of eggs.

As a child
I would step out of my shoes
into the chill February mud.
Smell spring in the swamp
warm the secret in my hands
and let fly a new year.

--Susan Peterson

* * * * *

A sampling of memories of living in The Acres:

- Sledding down the Executive Avenue luge run. More ice, more speed.
- Watching trees grow from twigs to the skyscrapers they are now
- The joys and backache of raking the leaves from these trees, then getting satisfaction by setting them ablaze at the end of the driveway.
- Having the Daily News paper route and riding my bike at least 100 miles a day . to deliver 35 papers
- Exploring in the swamps of the park and returning with all sorts of different creatures Also fatal cases of poison ivy in interesting places. (Wash those hands before you .!)

- The annual contest with the Petersons to see who got up first on Christmas morning First one with the tree lit wins!
- Halloween Who's giving out the BIG candy bars this year? Where will the wicked, cackling witch be lurking this year (Bev Peterson)?
- Snowball forts, snowball fights, "knee-football" and many fishing trips with Bob Parmenter and my father Speaking of Bob, it seemed that every year he would return from vacation with a new pet reptile or furry thing
- Standing on the Gallows Road bridge watching the construction of the "Circumferential."
- Counting the number of homes with additions or structural changes. It's easier to count the ones in their original state.
- Watching the lower pool being built; it had a (gasp) high dive!!
- The annual Christmas tree bonfire at the park.
- Playing "GUNS" with Dave Currle and Don Pennie in the woods.
- Being able to say I knew Debi and Megan Smith before they became stars
- Mowing yards as my first source of income; cost, \$2.00 per yard!!
- Sharing my garage converted bedroom with every multi-legged creature imaginable.
- Bowling in the HRA Bowling League with Ethel Thies
- Sleeping through the Magee's house fire, right around the corner.
- Finally, but not leastly, asking my parents if we could move to another house because one of my friends was moving. When asked if I wanted to move out of the Acres, my response . "Why no, why would I want to do that - just move to another house IN THE ACRES Who would want to move away from here??"

--Scott Arnold

* * * * *

We certainly were lucky to have grown up in Holmes Run Acres At every age there were always many friends nearby I loved exploring the woods behind our house and catching water bugs in Holmes Run creek (in spite of the poison ivy that I would get every year) After a day at Woodburn Elementary, we would walk home past the honeysuckle, picking the blossoms and biting off the ends for a nectar treat. In the summer, we had the pool nearby and in the winter, Hartwell Court was "the best sledding hill!" (Memories from my folks' first home on Executive Avenue are of Melissa and me playing under the huge willow tree in her yard!)

As my husband and I look for a new home in the Durham/Chapel Hill area, I've noticed that he's concerned with the features of a house and I'm looking for special neighborhood features - those that I grew up with.

--Laurie (Long) Thompson

* * * * *

I remember:

- Our first house on Cypress Drive and some of the trees there, like the birch trees in our front yard. They were so little I could put my hands around them. There used to be some tall poplars at the far end of Cypress - gone now

- Walking along the woods path to school...also, think-thunk-thunking down those steps on my bicycle

Social Life: The Good Times Go On

- Going down to the creek in the winter and smashing up the ice. We all spent lots of time at the creek, and Bob Parmenter and I used to drink from it sometimes (our moms never new that!)
- People starting to fill in their carports.
- Playing baseball in the Parmenters' yard on Executive Avenue, with trees as the 4 bases. You had to watch out for the Arnolds' crabapple tree - the little branches snapped at you
- Thanksgiving and Christmas get-togethers with the Parmenters' and the Arnolds'.
- Going through the neighborhood on the Fourth of July trying to see other peoples' fireworks after ours were all shot off
- Mrs. Bledsoe at the library, "Oh, you're taking 'Mike Mulligan and his Steamshovel' out again?"

--Doug Smith

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October in The Acres:

As I walk home from school
through the thin yellow sunlight
I hear the sounds all over the neighborhood
the ringing scrape of steel rake tines,
the rattle of bamboo rakes and the
'steady rush...rush...rush' of big leaf piles
pulled down through the yards;
waist-high waves of dusty russet leaves
pushed with the flat of the rake and
shoved with legs and feet
onto the old heavy blankets and
dragged down to the curb to burn

After dinner, pretty new mothers,
in old sweaters with scarves 'round their heads,
come down to the dark court and light the leaf-fires
They stand in circles, laughing and talking,
tending the burning leaves with rakes,
brightly back-lit against pitch black
like good witches at sabbath.

When roasting acorns burst with a loud pop,
my friends and I pretend they're gunshots
(and grab our chests and shout and fall back in the dark
on the damp chill grass, then jump up quickly
away from the dark wet to wait for the next report).

And when it's late I help bank the fires:
my face grows cold as the flames die down
I stare hard and smile at the orange and black coals
softly pulsing and hissing at the dark
because I know, as all children who live
from holiday to holiday know,
that Halloween is coming soon

- Surrey Lane - hill for sledding;
- Riding bikes,
- Ice skating on pond behind Long's,
- Waving to Mrs Anderson,
- Raking, raking and RAKING leaves;
- Walking to 7-Eleven,
- Days at the pool with the gang,
- Swimming practice at the pool during "all hours;"
- Woodburn and Mrs Feigelson
- Bruce and Mark Hartzler, swim team meets and rides in Mr Barzdukas' Volvo
- Babysitting
- Cutting through Audreys to catch the bus
- Soccer games in the park
- Climbing out bedroom window for late night parties in tree fort
- "Street signs"
- Exploring woods at park - walking to FCHS
- Housecleaning
- Parties with parents away
- My graduation party - WOW
- But most of all my memory of home, always home!

--Cathy Jackson Smith

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HRA Memories

Woodburn School. I remember Mrs. Bledsoe reading us stories in the library, and keeping track of what we were checking out to read for fun. At one point she became concerned that I was reading only biographies, especially ones about Thomas Edison, and she forbid me to check out any more biographies for awhile. "How about horse books?" Mrs. Bledsoe had other advice too; she called my attention to the unattractiveness of sucking one's hair during conversation.

Mrs. Wheat, the principal, read us nature stories; I remember them as being very boring (but of good taste!). There was the memorable day she taught us how to make origami cranes.

Do the kids still chant, "I wish Woodburn would burn?"

There were days of kickball, dodgeball, red rover, and then the day that the old swings were replaced by those rubber "girdle" swings. Oy!

Neighbors. The Bledsoes lived next door, and Claire and I kept very busy. We were sea captains down on the fallen tree trunks by the creek, we were dutiful mommies feeding numerous dolls special dollfood made of Jack-in-the-Pulpits when we could find them. It was a dangerous business though we had heard we could get arrested for picking these plants. And often we were princesses and brides after the good fortune of Claire's cousins (aunts?) giving her the garb from a big wedding in Alabama.

Halloween. I bet a lot of people remember what would happen at Mrs. Peter's house on Halloween. You would knock on the door, and it would creak open, and

suddenly you'd be captured by a butterfly net and dragged over to the corner where this WITCH, and I mean a REAL WITCH, would stir her cauldron look at you wickedly and finally give you a treat. It didn't seem like Mrs Peters who was much too nice to be a witch in her off-hours, but we were suspicious, anyway.

--Laura Noble

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We moved to the Acres in the winter of 1955: I was in first grade. Although I came to the Boston area in 1971, I never really left Holmes Run. As an adult, and a mother, I have come to appreciate even more the value of neighborhood, community, safety, stability, and well-being, all provided by Holmes Runners. Woodburn, the park, and the pool stand out especially. The school's grassy playground was an expanse of western land with exhilarating plateaus and cliffs (the habitat for wild horses). School librarian Willene Bledsoe guided us with discipline and great patience through the Dewey decimal system and even managed to persuade me to read some biographies of humans (Mozart and Will Rogers) in addition to my usual choice of animal stories. The park, with its then large woods, was a wonderful place to walk. One year heavy rains transformed the whole area into a vast lake. The neighborhood's center was the pool, a place where whole families gathered and had fun. One sign of the times was the unequal pay for girl and boy guards, though we had exactly the same duties (and we eventually convinced Dick Stevens to remedy the situation).

Unlike my life now, my life then revolved around walking. A car (and a parent to drive it!) were not requirements for getting to a friend's house, to my piano lesson at Ruth Moore's, to the park, to the pool, or even to the library (remember the bookmobile?). Most houses were inhabited by someone during the day, and we knew people all over the neighborhood. Taking a walk often became a social occasion.

Looking back I realize how unusual the mix of nationalities and cultures/religions was, as well as the cohesion and sense of civic obligation. Those conditions don't exist where I now live but they do give me a sense of possibility, and sustaining memories. Holmes Run was a wonderful place for families, and for learning about others, and nature. Only as an adult does one realize the time and effort and love that go into creating a real community, and I thank my parents and all the rest of you for a very atypical upbringing.

--Katherine Kraft

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Third Generation:

Thirty-seven years ago, my Grandfather and Grandmother, Dick and Helen Gutmann, and their little daughter Janet, came to live in Holmes Run Acres. Now my little brother, Erik, and I live here, too!! My family loves this neighborhood. I never want to live anywhere else.

--Daniel Schreiber age 6.

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I remember playing with my friends all over the neighborhood depending on where they lived and whose house we'd "chosen" that day. I think we knew every nook and cranny around, always trying to find that one little "secret place" that no one else had discovered yet. I still can't believe my brother, Doug, talked me into catching tadpoles in knee-high, clay-sodden, murky waters back behind the park - yuch! But I'll treasure every memory from growing up in the Acres as long as I live

--Megan Smith

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I remember walking to Woodburn School with my friends. Becky Martin, Vicki Waggener, Nancy Bradshaw, Susie Walby and Linda Lambert. Every day we appointed a different person to be in charge of the "dawdle patrol." We used to talk and play so much on the way that it often made us late! Even in my high school years, many's the time I would miss the bus, only to find Vicki Waggener had missed it, too, and we'd have to be driven to school together. They were great times (except maybe for the parents who had to drive us to school?).

Holmes Run is such a terrific community. It was, to grow up in, and it is now, to live and raise our family in. I enjoy neighbors caring about each other, and feeling like I belong to a community (rather than being lost in one). I think that stability added a lot to my childhood.

--Debi Smith Jaworek

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The best thing about growing up in Holmes Run Acres was, for me, the anticipation of each season and its special activities. In Spring, it was getting suited-up for little league baseball and looking forward to the end of the school year. Summer was the time for "Marco Polo" at the pool, fire-flies at night, and riding bikes to Annandale to the bakery or the Sports and Hobbies store. Fall, of course, was for the raking of the huge leaf piles in the court, with everyone coming out at night for spectacular "bonfires" when we burned the leaves, sometimes sneaking a firecracker or two in at the bottom of the pile for fun. Winter was the best - hoping for snow, then when it fell, racing to the big hill behind the Hennesy's with our Flexible Flyers and saucer sleds, sledding down at top speed, then trudging back for another go - hour after hour!

Whatever the time of year, our days were filled with great fun in Holmes Run Acres.

--Neil Nappo

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My favorite memories of HRA are of tramping through the woods and playing in and around the creek behind the Smith's house. I recall those times with warm feeling, but also with some sadness, in the knowledge that my own children will undoubtedly never experience the joy that such freedom allows.

--Laurie Karlson Basalyga

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Hearing a rainstorm coming, and then rounding up neighborhood friends to run down to the park to enjoy the oncoming and inevitable flood. Catching tadpoles and gathering frog's eggs from the creek. Pancake dinners at Methodist Church - a veritable feast! Ice skating in the winter on the frozen creek/swamp and behind the Mastropolos'. Fair day at Woodburn Elementary.

--Courtney Karlson

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I remember walks with my dog, Chips, down to the park and the creek (and Kathy and her dog, Trina, too - or one of Trina's successors). The creek/park was a wonderland to me mysterious swinging vines, woodland "critters" and unexplained noises I felt like an explorer in a new world.

Kickball in the court.

Raking and burning leaves in the fall the crisp air and pungent smell!

The swimming pool in the summer - a haven from the horrible, humid heat!

Interesting, that my memories are all of the outdoors!

--Stephanie Walstedt

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I remember on summer nights a group of us little girls would go up in the woods behind my house, where we had set up a little platform as a stage We would rehearse and perform Cinderella or Little Red Riding Hood for our mothers or brothers, who would sit on picnic benches and applaud. I remember the older girls - Kathy Hennesy, the perfect baby sitter, and Melissa Kraft, who would come down to the court on summer evenings and, like the Pied Piper, attract all us kids around her - Susie Mitchell, Lisa and Kelly Barron, Karen Gaaserud, Wendy Sarasow. We all had a lot of fun.

--Jeanie Nappo

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I remember.

Sledding on Executive - endless hours at the pool - swim meets Greg Stevens - walking to 7-11 for "big buddies. The fort at the park knows lots of secrets and first kisses - long walks to the "ruins" - the log across the creek - the flooded park - swimming in the creek - Mr. Long wouldn't let me join the boy scouts loved the boy scouts - picking 4-leaf clovers in the park - the nice witch on Surrey Lane - getting lots of support for the band - Mrs. Anderson waving in her window - Mr Moore's daily walk with his matching dog sweater - lots of good friends were made - cherished memories...

Cindy (Jackson) Elcan

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Of course I remember the house construction. We moved into, I think, the second group of houses to be built - the first group was on Hemlock Drive. I was 9 years old and it was exciting to me to walk thru the skeleton of the house and try to imagine what the rooms would look like.

In the winter I remember terrific sledding. The hill in front of our house attracted many, but with a little energy, we could drag our sleds all the way to the top of Executive Avenue. If we were lucky, we could ride about two-thirds of the way down to the park.

When I was about 12 or 13 years old, someone down the block (on Holmes Run Drive, across Hemlock) gave fashion training to teenage girls.

I remember pool activities with gratefulness. The pool was a long walk away. I took Red Cross classes from Beginner to Life Saving there and worked as an assistant life guard (unpaid, I think) for awhile. The pool was so important to me as I was growing up that, as an adult, I have often wished my children could have had the same special opportunities.

Holmes Run was definitely a new community when I was growing up pre-Woodburn School. My first school experience after moving into the new house was as a 4th grader at Annandale elementary. Then for the 5th, 6th and 7th grades, we were bused to "Woodburn Annex," an ancient building in a now unrecognizable Bailey's Crossroads. The following year I was in 8th grade at the newly-opened Annandale High School. My brother, entering the 5th grade, attended the new Woodburn School at the corner of Hemlock Dr. and Gallows Road.

The woods behind our house lasted until just a few years ago. I remember taking hikes in what seemed like a vast forest. We found skunk cabbage, horseshoe prints, an old fort, logs to walk across, and some people found arrowheads.

Other Holmes Run memories for me include lots of baby-sitting and several summers of volunteering at the new Woodburn School to help with crafts. I was already in college and engaged to be married when a group of Mexican students came to Holmes Run for a 3-week stay. We were a host family. I remember the farewell dinner at Woodburn School. Anna Rosa and her daughter came for a visit this Christmas - to spend a week with mother, 29 years later!

--Ginny Noble Berkenbilt

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Holmes Run, like much of suburbia during the late 50's and early 60's, seemed a completely safe place to be, day or night. The games we could play outside all day long, and resume after dinner, and well into nightfall, are probably games children don't play anymore; if they did someone would haul them in long before dark. I spent several years sitting on a green mailbox of the kind that no longer exists, sometimes alone, more often with Paul Hennesy, waiting, in summer, for the Good Humor truck, and waving at the cars that drove past on Surrey Lane. My parents felt this was an improvement over the year I had sat upon the red white and blue mailbox on Gallows Road, waving at passing truck drivers. Suddenly, I was 18, and was sent away to U-VA, Charlottesville.

--Melissa (Kraft) Courtney

We moved to Holmes Run in 1962 when I was two years old. As a young child, I remember playing in a safe, little "cul de sac-like" atmosphere. Running to greet the popsicle man when we heard his bell sharpening our popsicle sticks on the pavement, and running around the neighborhood with Kate Gateley and Laura Bradshaw. Also, in those trusting, care-free days trekking through the woods to Evelyn Lowenstern's house.

There were great sledding days in the Blizzard of '66 when the schools closed down and we turned Executive Ave. into a sledding run! Such fun! Candlelit snow trails in our backyard and lots of hot chocolate.

Sherwood Court brings back wonderful memories of bike riding, kick-ball, and basketball games, tag games, red light, green light, playing in forts, making secret clubs, and just being plain ol' "kids!"

The sound of a lawn mower and the smell of fresh cut grass still make me think of HRARA - these are the childhood sounds and smells that one can smell today. They make you feel safe and warm inside. Always knowing that Holmes Run was such a safe and stable place to grow up in. Walking to Woodburn School, playing flashlight tag on those late summer nights, stepping on slugs, swimming, diving, life-guarding and coaching at the pool. Walking to Jennifer Gilliam's house cutting through the yards (which no one seemed to mind!) and walking home through the woods from Falls Church H.S. (which I'm sure we wouldn't do today) looking for tadpoles in Luria Park and ice skating in the woods down by the creek. And of course, spending lots of time with my good friend Mark Gardiner watching movies, dancing at parties on their deck (the fabulous 70's disco!)

I suppose my fondest memories of Holmes Run consist of my part on the HRARA Diving Team. I spent some of the best times of my life being a part of that Diving Team! Working out long hours at the pool and making good friendships. The pool was a big part of my life and I still think about those days when the summers roll around!

These are good memories of a good childhood! I hope I can give my two daughters half of these memories, and I hope they will feel the same about their neighborhood. Thanks for the Memories, Holmes Run! Happy 40th Anniversary! May the memories live on from generation to generation!

--Kelly Legate Noonan

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I remember floating down the creek in a metal wash tub, swearing I could make it to the dam on Columbia Pike!

I remember accidentally breaking little Michael Penny's leg when a group of us hit him sledding down Executive Ave. I remember my Mother trying out my new 10-speed and ending up face first in the Underhill's lawn!

--Marty Evans

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The best things about Holmes Run Acres by far are the mud-slides. Every time we had a long and hard rain that flooded the creek in Luria Park, the current would pick up enough for the kids to make a slide. A group of us would get together and spend hours just sliding from the baseball field, under the bridge and into the mud banks. That's how I learned proper use of the washing machine and clothes dryer. The really amazing thing is, nobody ever started a mud fight! Must have been all that good old-fashioned Acres parenting at work!

--Daniel Rosenberg

My "Growing Up in Holmes Run Acres" story was recently brought to mind by Doey Kessler mentioning a "screaming" sound back in the woods

It was sometime during high school ('63-'67) that Mrs Bledsoe (Woodburn's librarian) heard a terrible screaming back behind her house in the woods Who to call but Marian Grey Kraft; her daughter, Kathy, and I joined in the search (along with the Police) and we all went tramping through the woods at night and never found a thing - for which I know I was glad! Maybe no one else was scared, but I was!

(Ed note Marion-Gray Kraft says it was the call of a fox!)

--Ruth Gowell

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Things remembered:

Being able to ride our sleds from the top of Holmes Run Drive down to our corner with no worry about cars. The only cars during the day might be the milk truck and the bread truck.

Learning to parallel park on our "private" street. (It was a deadend then!)

Playing basketball on "our" street with the backboard erected right at the curb. Again - no cars!

Riding my bike on the completed, but unopened, beltway.

Neighborhood 4th of July picnics, with fireworks, followed by a bonfire at the end of the street. We could have open-air fires in those days

--Judy and David Leep

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My Mom has been asking me for at least six months now, to write a paragraph on my childhood memories of growing up in Holmes Run Acres On the surface, an easy task. But, as I tried and tried to think of a single anecdotal experience that defined my thoughts and feelings about Holmes Run and how it affected me, I came to realize that the two are inseparable. Holmes Run was not where my childhood took place; Holmes Run was my childhood! It was not the stage for the play, but the play itself! And so how on earth do I condense my wonderful feelings about our neighborhood - my entire childhood - into a single story? Tough assignment. So here I sit, at 7:00 a m., giving our seven-month-old his early bottle and still trying to think of the story Well, I give up. Holmes Run is where I first experienced and learned about life It is where I got my first kiss, it is where my best friends grew up, it is where I first played sports, it is where I first got in trouble (just a little!). One paragraph - impossible!

Like most of you, I have now left my childhood home in Holmes Run, although I am fortunate that my parents still live there, so I go back quite often. I now live in a nice house in a pleasant neighborhood, and I feel at home when I pull up into my driveway. Before I lived here, I lived in a nice condo, and I felt at home when I opened my front door But a funny thing happens to me every single time I go to see my parents. I get that wonderful, warm feeling of being at home, before I open the front door and before I pull up the driveway. I know I'm home as soon as I turn off Gallows Road into our neighborhood Holmes Run Acres is my home Holmes Run Acres is my childhood Holmes Run Acres is an important part of me I'm a very lucky person!

--Scott Gardiner

Reprints Of Articles About Holmes Run Acres

Compiled by Vivian Smith, Holmes Run Acre's historian.

-if you have to have a house Quickly

By Mary Roche

You will have to buy a ready-built house in a development.

Here is a good example to use as a standard to shop against

Make your money buy the greatest amount of enclosed space and plan to add refinements later. This house outside of Washington, D.C., contains 873 sq. ft.

Shop for a house designed to expose its basic structural members, thus eliminating costs of interior finishing materials and gaining effect of additional space.

Seventy-five to 80 per cent of the houses in this country are built by operative builders. And that's no accident. There are certain advantages to buying a ready-built house which hold, whether the house itself is good, bad, or indifferent. You can get it quickly. It will be complete. You don't have to bother with financing because it has already been arranged and made available in a "package." You don't have to worry about the terms of dozens of separate contracts. All you have to do is pay your money and sign on the dotted line. And you see what you get.

But like most short-cuts, this method of getting a house has its drawbacks. Since a development house is designed to meet average requirements, it is extremely unlikely that any one house will be just the ticket for your particular requirements. In addition you are likely to be confronted with regimented design, lack of imagination and good sense in site planning, and, frequently inadequate facilities for transportation, schools, shopping.

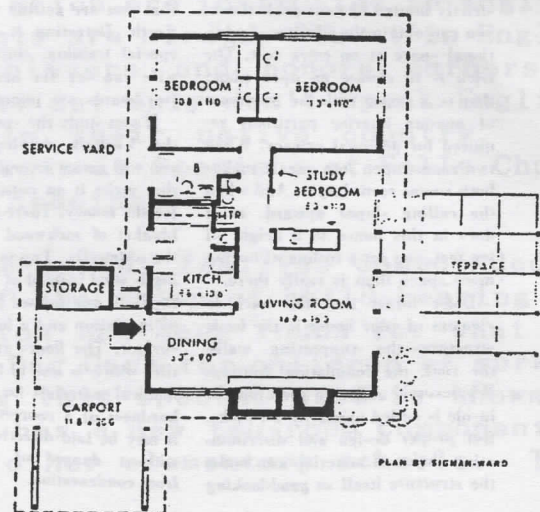
To buy a house quickly is not, as a rule, the best way to get the most house for your money. Nevertheless, good values in ready-built houses can be found, if you know how to shop for them. This house in Fairfax County, Virginia, which sells for \$13,750 on a 10,000-square-foot lot, is an excellent example. There may not be one like it in your locality, but we show it to you as a standard of value. Study the features that make it an exceptional buy in today's market, and you will learn what to shop for if you must buy a development house.

Look for a plan that is flexible, so that you can adjust it to fit your own needs by such devices as the movable storage wall in this house. (See page 104.)

Buy a house with an open plan which will give you a feeling of greater spaciousness than the actual dimensions provide. In this one, three rooms merge.

The luxury of our time is space, enclosed space, and that is the first thing to look for. Porches, patios, terraces, landscaping, you will certainly want. But these can be added at any time, at a cost that is small indeed compared to today's cost for basic shelter. The number of square feet of enclosed space you will have to move around in is all-important. Think in terms of space rather than in number of rooms.

This house contains 873 square feet, not counting the carport, and the 32 square feet of enclosed storage at the back of the carport (a highly essential item in a house with neither basement nor attic). Considering the fact that building costs in the Washington area are as high as any in the country, this is a lot of house for the money.



When you buy a house with an open plan you get a feeling of spaciousness without paying for any more space.

Keyes, Smith, Satterlee, and Lethbridge
Architects

Luria Brothers
Builders

IF YOU HAVE TO HAVE A HOUSE QUICKLY

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 105

Next, look to see how the space is divided. Study the plan. Look for a flexible plan, not one that will freeze your pattern of living as long as you live in it. You may want to make some changes immediately. You will certainly want to make others as your family changes with the years. So be sure you buy a house that can be changed at a minimum of expense. The movable storage wall shown on page 104 is one kind of device that makes it possible to add or subtract a room from your house overnight.

You will soon discover there are two kinds of operative builders. One puts up rows and rows of indifferent houses, all alike as peas in a pod. The other kind supplies a ready-built house on receipt of your order—that is, he exhibits a model house of which he will build you a duplicate. He is equipped to fill your order in a matter of weeks, as compared to the months it takes to put up a custom-designed house.

It will be well worth your while to hunt up a builder of the second type, since he usually offers a choice of certain variations. For instance: The post and panel construction of this Virginia house is designed on a module principle so that solid panels, fixed glass, and sliding aluminum windows may be placed in varying arrangements. Thus the buyer may order the amount of glass and solid wall that best meet his needs.

Whether you buy 800 square feet of space or 2,000, you will undoubtedly wish you had more. But even though the actual number of square feet you can afford is strictly limited by your pocketbook, you can obtain the illusion of additional space at no extra cost. The trick is to choose an open plan; that is, a house with the minimum of opaque interior partitions required for personal privacy. When two rooms open into one, it makes both rooms seem larger. And when the ceiling slopes upward, as it does in this house to a height of ten feet, you get a feeling of having more space than is really there.

Don't forget that the intrinsic element of your house is the basic structure—the supporting walls, the roof, the foundation flooring. Whatever is added to these on the inside is added primarily for looks. But proper design and discriminating choice of materials can make the structure itself so good-looking

that there's no need to mask it with interior finish. By eliminating the cost of that non-essential, the builder is frequently able to offer more space for the same price. So when you see well-designed, exposed structure as in our standard-of-value house, it is a safe assumption that you are getting more house for your money.

There's no use kidding yourself. Every extra that is added to a house costs you money, whether the builder adds it or you pay for it directly. So don't be misled by glittering surfaces. If the cost of them doesn't show up in a higher price or a smaller space, you can be sure that something else has been sacrificed. Ask to read the specifications and check them to see if there has been any hidden skimping.

In a cold climate, don't consider a house with concrete slab floors laid directly on the ground, unless there is some provision for warming them. This may be done by radiant hot-water heating pipes laid in the floor, or by radiant ceiling heat that hits the floor first, then bounces back. It may also be accomplished, as it is in this house, by perimeter heating—a system by which warm air circulates through ducts in the concrete before it flows through outlets into the room.

A small but significant clue to the probable values in a development house is the presence of a tree or two left standing by the builder. It is an indication of sensible site planning, and although it costs him little to leave it, it will save you considerable money later when you come to landscaping.

Careful carpentry is another sign that you are getting your money's worth. Detecting it calls for no special training, since any housewife can see for herself whether two boards are joined evenly.

If you study the specifications of the Virginia development house you will notice several other details that make it an outstanding value for the money. There is a four-inch blanket of rockwool insulation in the sidewalls. Two-inch fir plank is used instead of sheathing for the roof, and topped by two inches of insulation and a built-up gravel surface. The floors are of asphalt tile, which is one of the most economical materials for relieving the hardness of a concrete slab, since it may be laid directly on the slab without danger of deterioration from condensation.

A garbage disposer in the kitchen sink, and several built-in furniture units throughout the house are other details that add up to sound value.

Following is a list of all the important items that make this a lot of house for the money.

Construction Data

Structure: Framing lumber, West Coast Douglas Fir, Weyerhaeuser Sales Co., St. Paul, Minn.

Exterior wall surfaces: Vertical pine siding exterior wall at kitchen and bathroom. Plywood, U. S. Plywood Corp., New York, N. Y. Tempered masonite, Masonite Corp., Chicago, Illinois.

Interior wall surfaces: All walls except storage units are Gypsum drywall. Storage closet at fireplace wall is pine paneling. "Roxbord" plastic tile in bathroom. Roxdale Building Products Co., New York.

Windows and screens: "Alwintite" aluminum sliding sash. General Bronze Corp., Garden City, New York, N. Y.

Glass: All fixed glass, Libbey-Owens-Ford Glass Co., Toledo, Ohio.

Hardware: Schlage Lock Co., San Francisco and Technical Glass Co., Los Angeles, Calif.

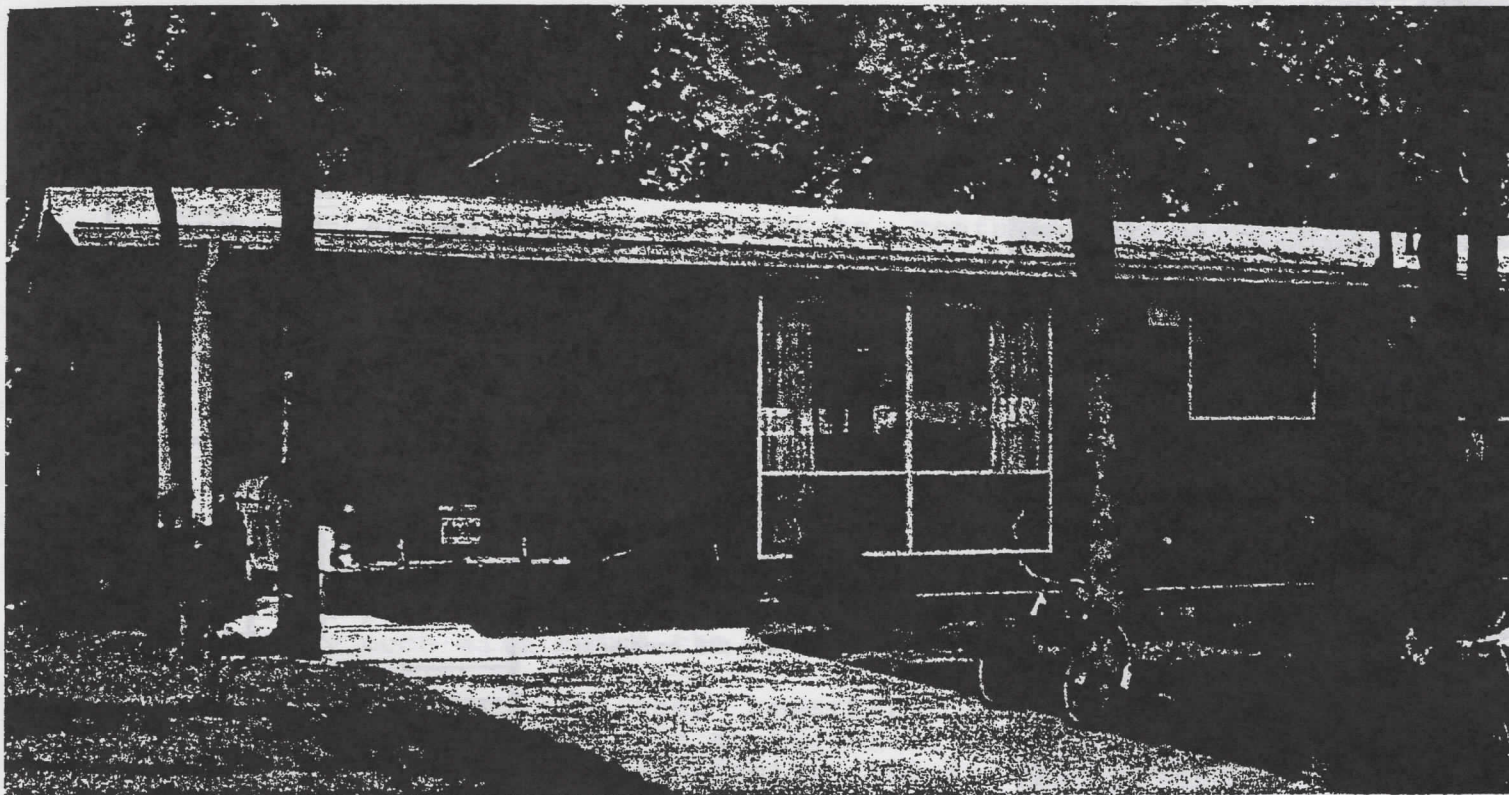
Finish flooring: "Kentile" asphalt tile, Kentile, Inc., Brooklyn, N. Y.

Plumbing fixtures: American Radiator and Standard Sanitary Corp., Pittsburgh, Pa. Gas-fired water heater, Lawson Mfg. Co., Wilkesburg, Pa.

Heating insulation: 4" rockwool blankets in sidewalls, U.S. Gypsum, Chicago, Illinois. 2" rigid over 2" plank ceiling, Certain-teed Products, Inc., York, Pa.

Lighting fixtures: General Lighting Co., New York, New York.

Kitchen Equipment: Wood cabinets, Boro Wood Products Co., Bennettsville, South Carolina. Formica counter tops, Formica Co., Cincinnati, Ohio. Garbage disposer, Insinkerator Mfg. Co., Racine, Wis. Gas range, Welbilt Stove Co., Maspeth, New York. Refrigerator, Gibson Refrigerator Co., Greenville, Michigan. Kitchen exhaust fan, Sin-Jin Products, Baltimore, Md.



From one side the house has the appearance of a long ranch house with a carport at one end

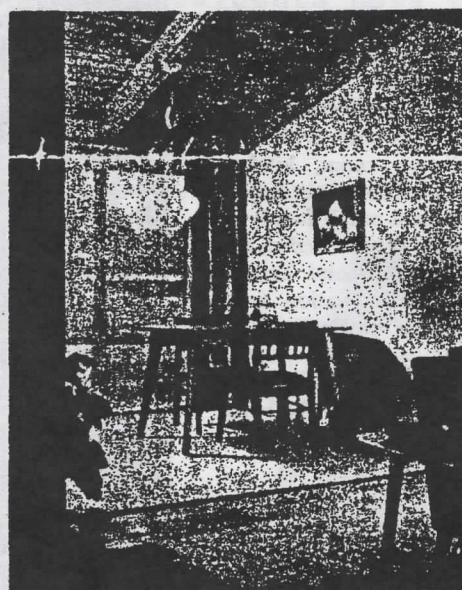
FAMILY CIRCLE - November 1955

There's a bonus in two-level living

Looking like a ranch house from one side,
it provides a second level of living space
in what would otherwise be a basement

By JOSEPH B. MASON

Living room has a bank of windows facing the balcony and trees beyond. Deep-tone wood ceiling and massive brick fireplace give a rustic warmth to the room. Door at left leads to the carport

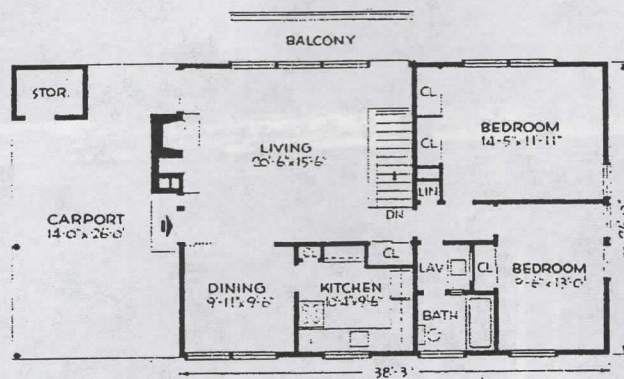
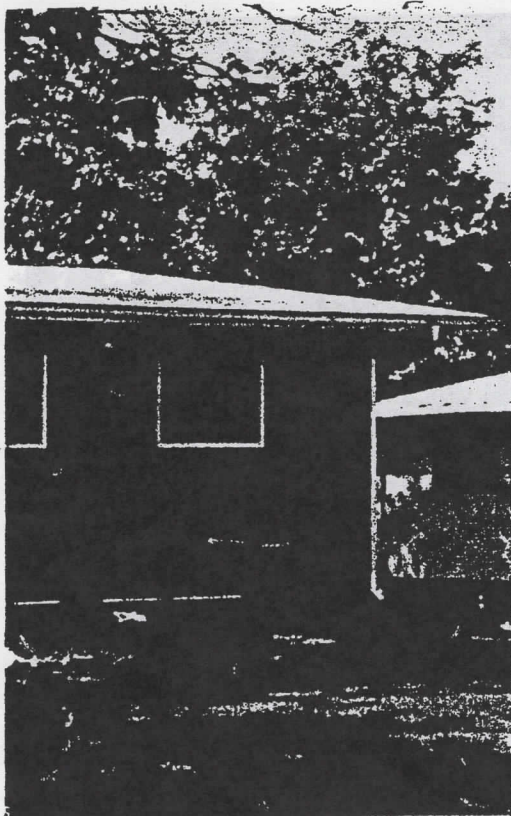


Dining room, with a window wall at one end, connects with the living room, can be closed off with a folding door

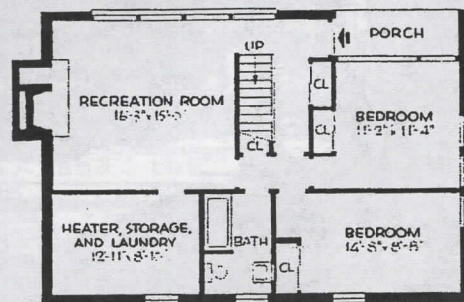


HERE'S a house with an exciting new plan that is making more than 100 homeowners in suburban Washington, D. C., happy. They like the fact that the entire below-street-level ground floor—what ordinarily would be mere basement storage space—is put to work as living space. They also like the way each house is sited to take best advantage of view, sun, and breeze, as well as of the rolling tree-covered land.

Viewed from the street, the house is a long single story with a carport at one end. But from the rear it's a two-story house, profiting by the slope of the



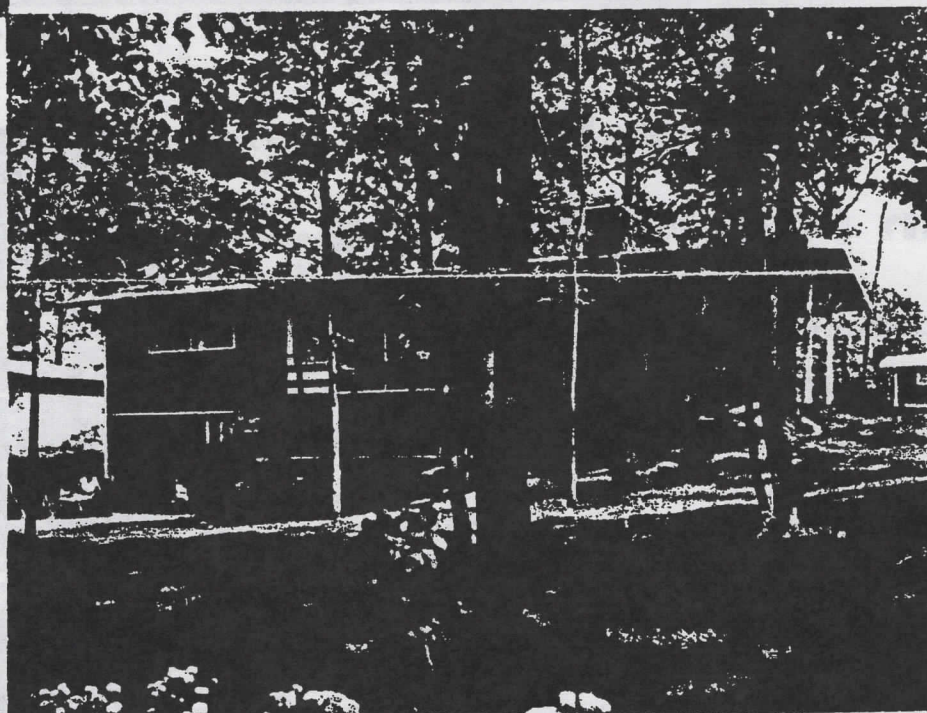
Upper level of the house provides enough living space (990 square feet) for a small family to start with. Lower level can be finished as needed. Plan can be accommodated to various site conditions



land from the street. Large strip windows make the ground-floor rooms—two bedrooms and a recreation room—light and cheerful.

The street level alone—with a living room, dining room, kitchen, bath, and two bedrooms—is a good starting point for a small family on a limited budget. When needed, two more bedrooms, a second bath, a laundry, and the recreation room can be finished on the lower level.

Designed by architects Keyes, Smith, Satterlee & Lethbridge for builders Gaddy & Gaddy, the house



House is built rapidly, with posts supporting beams, rafters. Under-side of roof doubles as a ceiling



From the opposite side (see above, left) it's a two-story house. The upper level has two bedrooms (one overlooking a concrete terrace), a bath, a laundry, and a recreation room under the living-room balcony

shown here is in a wooded section of Falls Church, Virginia. Modern construction materials—such as trussed rafters and a two-inch-plank roof—were used to keep down costs. The underside of the roof is stained and doubles as an attractive ceiling.

The same floor plan can be adapted to many different site conditions by turning or reversing it. For example, where the lot slopes upward from the street (the opposite of the house we show), the plan can be reversed so the balcony side is toward the street. Entrance is then made through the lower level and the

hall adjacent to the recreation room.

Warm notes are introduced in the 1,990-square-foot interior with brick-face fireplace walls in the living room and recreation room, and the natural-wood kitchen cabinets and bedroom-closet doors that complement the deep tones of the stained ceiling. ##

PREVIEW PLAN of this house, with floor plans, elevations, other details, is available for 25c. Write to Family Circle, Dept. JH, Box 1379, New York 17, New York

SECOND IN A SERIES ON THE AMERICAN ENVIRONMENT

THE RAPE OF THE LAND

*As our cities spread out cancerously in all directions,
we are destroying—for profit—too many of the
green and open places we need to make life livable.*

THE SATURDAY EVENING POST - June 18, 1966
(Featured as one segment of Ben H. Bagdikian's
two-part series on preserving open spaces)

Dirk Mattheisen is a bright young man of 12, as is his twin brother, Mike. Their best friends are Ricky Cooper, 12, and his brother, Little Mike, a tiny towhead of seven. The four of them share an unusual awareness of all living things. One day I walked with them along Holmes Run, a creek about eight feet wide running through woods in Fairfax, Va. As we walked, the boys' eyes and ears sensed a delicate and teeming world.

Dirk spotted a goldfinch and a nuthatch. Little Mike ran to a hollow mound of mud along the creek, yelling, "A crawdad!" Big Mike said, "The proper name is crayfish, but we call them crawdads." We came to a young maple fallen across the creek. The 12-year-olds went across swiftly, letting their momentum keep their balance. Little Mike went step by step, slowly. On the other side was a stretch of moss, livened by tiny blue blossoms. Just beyond were yellow trumpet-shaped flowers opening upward in the dappled sunlight that streamed through oak and sycamore.

"See that yellow flower?" Mike asked. "It's too bad you can't see them at dawn or when the sun goes down. They open in the daytime and close at night. When we camp out here we can watch them close up at night, and if you're up at dawn, gee, you ought to see them open up, like a whole field just opening up."

A voice out of nowhere called, "Halt!" Dirk stepped out of a hollow tree, laughing. "When the grass grows around it you can hide perfectly and look through that knothole."

Little Mike's bright-red jacket flicked through a forsythia bush. "Hey raccoon tracks," he yelled. Big Mike looked carefully. "You're right," he said. "A baby raccoon."

"Some more," Little Mike pointed. "Nah," said Big Mike. "Dog paw."

The dogwood, tulip trees and black cherry gave way to marsh grass and cattails and mushy ground underfoot. "Hey, our hockey rink is still there." Ricky pointed to a ridge of mud enclosing a shallow stretch of water.

Mike Mattheisen said, "We made that last winter, and when the water froze we could play hockey. And you can skate along the little creeks here just like taking a walk through the woods, except you skate. It's really keen."

"A muskrat hole!" Little Mike yelled.

Big Mike looked and said, "Nope."

"Last winter," he said, "someone put a lot of traps in our woods. About a dozen. We tripped them all with sticks and piled the traps in one place. When we came back all the traps were gone, and they never came back. I guess whoever it was got the point. Trapping is illegal, I think."

We were walking up a gently rising greensward when Dirk jumped onto a tree stump. "The second-best Tarzan vine in the woods." He reached up and grabbed the end of an inch-thick vine hanging from the obscure top of an oak. He pushed himself backward and then, yelling, swung in a long, low, gentle arc across a small stream. He let go and dropped into some tall, lush grass.

Dirk was picking himself up when both he and Mike saw the same thing at the same time. It was a six-inch-thick elm that had been blown over, its top coming to rest in the crotch of another elm 20 feet above a bed of wild lilies. They raced for the slanting trunk. Mike got there first and ran right up the incline, his squishing sneakers throwing off drops of water. He reached the fork and surveyed the forest. "Hey, I can see the circum."

Dirk said, "That's short for circumferential. You know, Route 495, the beltway around Washington." For the first time you could hear the *whoosh-whoosh* of speeding cars. And for the first time, the boys were subdued.

The "circum" is like a thousand other highways in the United States, bringing the wooded outskirts within minutes of downtown. From a helicopter a thousand feet above Mike Mattheisen in the elm tree, the most obvious mark on the landscape would have been the cloverleaf where the beltway intersects Route 50, the highway running westward from the Lincoln Memorial through the burgeoning suburbs of northern Virginia.

Driving from the cool white-and-green elegance of the Lincoln Memorial onto Route 50, one soon leaves coolness and elegance for the usual strip of apartments, motels, shopping centers and regiments of cottages. After nine continuous miles of this, one reaches a cloverleaf with the sign, INDUSTRIAL INTERSECTION. In one quadrant of the intersection is a factory. In another, a herd of bulldozers is at work behind a sign, COMING—ULTRA-MODERN SHOPPING COMMUNITY. In a third, some dump trucks and a power shovel are making way for apartments. In the remaining quadrant is the elm tree on which Mike Mattheisen was standing, in a thicket that looks from the highway like any unremarkable half mile of untended woods.

At the edge of the same woods, on a curving suburban street with one-story middle-class houses invisible from the main highway, is the home of Mrs. William Hammerschmidt, an austere-looking blue-eyed woman with a deceptively quiet air.

Recently I sat in the Hammerschmidt living room—like most of the houses in the neighborhood, this one was designed with large windows looking onto the woods—and listened to Mrs. Richard Cooper, mother of Ricky and Little Mike, describe a routine meeting of the Holmes Run Recreation Association held one Sunday last September. The meeting had been called to discuss the possibility of a swimming pool, and someone had brought a map from the local planning commission on the chance that it might be helpful.

"We were standing around talking," Mrs. Cooper said, "when someone said, 'Say, look at this map. It shows a road going through—Hey, it's going right through my house!' We all looked, and sure enough, there was a planned road going right through some houses and right through these woods, too. It was rather a shock on a quiet Sunday afternoon."

The 276 acres of the Holmes Run woods, the neighbors discovered, were to become the site of new dwellings for 11,500 persons. The neighbors began organizing. They learned about planning commissions and hearings. They attended a hearing and protested the destruction of the woods.

The commission listened politely and recommended to the County Board of Supervisors the "development" of the woods. The neighbors had one month before the supervisors passed final judgment.

"I got cauliflower ear from being on the phone," Mary Lou Cooper said. "Morning, noon and night we talked, talked, talked. One of our members would come home from office crises in Washington and spend all night on the phone working up the fight over the woods. His wife had to bring his supper to the telephone. I reached a point where I couldn't answer a phone anymore."

Dorothy Hammerschmidt, a writer of children's stories, took what she called "unilateral action." She wrote to Mrs. Lyndon Johnson.

"We citizens of the United States," she wrote, "have been much encouraged by your interest . . . in beautification of all our land and preservation of public lands, parks and scenic spots. But on our level we seem to face juggernauts of destruction, disinterest and active and powerful opposition to saving any land in rapidly growing areas. . . ."

By special-delivery letter, in time for Mrs. Hammerschmidt to read it into the record of the hearing with considerable effect, came a reply from Mrs. Johnson:

"You know, if I were to change the names and change the figures in your message, it would correspond with truly hundreds of letters that have come to me from suburban counties all over the nation. The very attraction and appeal of suburbia—its fresh mantle of open greenery—is disappearing at an alarming rate, and I share your concern that these suburbs will be deficient in the amenities they seek to promote if positive action is not taken, and taken soon. . . ."

Mrs. Johnson said she did not know the merits of this particular struggle but she wished the neighbors well, and signed the letter, "Lady Bird Johnson."

Like most suburbs around great cities, Fairfax County had been filling rapidly in recent years. When World War II started, the county was largely an empty land of rolling hills and woods with here and there a

village—total population, 40,000. Since 1950 the push outward from Washington caused a hodge-podge of development. Today the county has 360,000 people. In 35 years it expects to have about a million.

Land that was once inexpensive and isolated has become too valuable to ignore. If the 276 acres of the Holmes Run woods remain zoned for single-family houses, as they are now, they can be sold for about \$8,000 an acre. If they are zoned for apartments, they will bring about \$20,000 an acre; if for industry, \$40,000 an acre. The woods are worth at least two million dollars, and if zoning favors the developers, \$11 million.

Two million dollars or \$11 million are hard to balance against some boys in the woods, though the boys are trying. They first circulated a petition in school, but the principal stopped that, not because it began, ungrammatically "Us boys would like to save our woods . . ." but because the school has a rule against petitions. So, in partnership with some adults, the boys turned to the neighborhood.

"We got almost everyone to sign," Mike Mattheisen said, "but one place I just couldn't understand. The woman said, 'No. I won't sign your petition. I

want the woods to come down. Children should play in their own yards.' I tried to tell her there were woods or creek or animals in the yard, but she just wouldn't listen."

"Yes," Dirk said, "and her husband agreed with her."

As a result of the neighborhood petition and petitions, the county authority will ask for a bond issue, part of which may be used to clear a strip of the woods along the creek. Most of the woods will still be open to development.

Mike Mattheisen half-slid down a slanted tree trunk. He ran like a cat to the spring and pulled out a five-foot turtle, its black carapace dotted with brilliant yellow spots. Dirk came and said, "Cool-o." Little Mike, the outrider, as usual, cried out from away, "Hey I can see where the creek was." The boys ran to the edge of the woods, to a wide strip of brown grass alongside the circum.

Ricky pointed to the highway, where a new bridge crossed it, and said, "I used to have the best forts in the woods up there before they built the circum. Trenches and everything. We had to leave it when they built the road. They may build another one in the woods. If they don't take down the woods

Holmes Run Acres Turns Muddy Tract Into Park Through Community Effort

Fruits of Their Labor Now Being Enjoyed

By MARCIA STERAGO

JEFFERSON — When citizens of Holmes Run Acres decided this spring that the community needed a park, they hauled out shovels, axes, post hole diggers, and wheelbarrows and proceeded to build their own.

In the good old-fashioned tradition of rural - barn raising, the homeowners flocked to the park grounds on Saturday morning and spent two days creating an attractive and functional recreation area. Over 80 men, women and children participated.

THE RESULT is one of the first parks in Fairfax County to be built completely by citizens with all planning, work, and money volunteered and donated.

For these efforts Holmes Run Acres received the annual award given by the Annandale Community Council and the Junior Chamber of Commerce for "Best Community Project" of the year.

This award, in the form of a plaque and an azalea bush, was presented to Walt Stine, president of the Holmes Run Acres Civic Association during the council's and chamber's annual dinner meeting late last month.

When the job is completed, Stine said, the citizens will have saved an estimated \$30,000 over the cost of a comparable park constructed by professional builders.

THE DESIRE for a park in Holmes Run Acres was not. Some 16 years ago, when the Luria Builders undertook the construction of a housing development in this area, they allotted a plot of ground in the floor plain area as a future park site. It was a tiny piece of lowland, muddy and unusable in its present condition because of poor drainage.

The Park Authority, working on a limited budget, was unable to do much to improve the ground although it did install playground equipment and create a ball diamond.

OWING TO MUD and water, the equipment served little purpose throughout most of the year. The ball field tended to be "puddly" in the outfield and balls frequently had to be retrieved from the outfield.

Occasionally, garden club volunteers did a bit of digging seedling, filling and planting of shrubs on the grounds, but the park remained unusable for the most part.

Then, last year, an ambitious project was sparked by the enthusiasm of some members of the civic association. Lee Skillman, a professional landscape architect, who was then president of the association, drew up plans for the park and presented them to the group.

The Fairfax County Park Authority subsequently studied the plans, approved them, and agreed to help. Hope for the park began to grow.

IN A LETTER sent by the civic association to every resident of the community, the citizens were told that "The Park Authority will aid by lending work equipment when possible, but in order to implement this plan at a reasonable cost, the labor must come from those of us who will most enjoy the park."

On the first weekend in April citizens responded to this call by showing up for an all-out effort. Organizing the effort were Jim Carscadden, now president of the association, and Skillman. They bought 86 tons of gravel, persuaded the Chesapeake and Potomac Telephone Co. to donate 20 telephone poles, obtained a large pile of second-hand lumber, got a promise of equipment and operators from the county recruited the work force, and straw-bossed the operation.

The response proved to be a contagious type of chain reaction. A few came and others followed. Some came for an hour and found themselves working all day; others managed to put in two days — blisters and sore muscles notwithstanding. People strolling by to chat stopped to work.

GRADE SCHOOL children wielded rakes and shovels; housewives loaded dirt into wheelbarrows; men and boys strained to lift telephone pole supports into place; amateur carpenters sawed, chopped and nailed.

More than a dozen teen-aged boys showed up and enthusiastically tackled the most strenuous jobs. Several who worked hard all day Saturday were back early Sunday morning for another full day. When the job was done these boys explained, "This be-

longs to us! This is our part in our park."

AMONG THE impressive accomplishments of that day's work are a gravel path sweeping around the southern end of the park which forms the beginnings of bicycle paths; barrier posts at both entrances to keep automobiles out; a sturdy raised play platform to challenge youngster's muscles and imaginations; two new horseshoe pits; and substantial improvements to the Little League baseball field, including new benches.

STINE ALSO commented that community officials had noted a drop in vandalism in the area and believed this might be attributed in part to a feeling of rapport established between the adults and teens at the park site.

"We had all the members of the family working together towards a common goal, and everyone, young and old, knew that the fruits of his effort belong to him, as much as to the next guy."

Although much has been accomplished, Holmes Run Acres folks are not yet ready to call the job done. Instead, they plan to set aside a second "work week end" in the fall, "to bring other facets of the Luria Park master plan to reality."

Meanwhile, the good times they all worked for are getting underway. There have been clam bakes, community farewell parties, and celebrations held in the park. Little League baseball games, father - and son baseball games and football practice are starting.

Old fashioned concerts in the park are the next thing on the agenda, according to the latest community bulletin.

A by-product of the effort — but an important one — is the feeling of community solidarity that has resulted from the two days of combined work and play.

"Something like this always does draw a community closer together," Stine said. "What made this so great was that people could come and see for themselves what was being done. It worked like a fly-trap. A few people started and others would stop by to see what was going on. Before they knew it they had picked up a shovel and pitched in. There was a real picnic type of atmosphere and everyone had a good time."

Home Life At Holmes Run Acres

By Vivien Smith

Special to The Washington Post

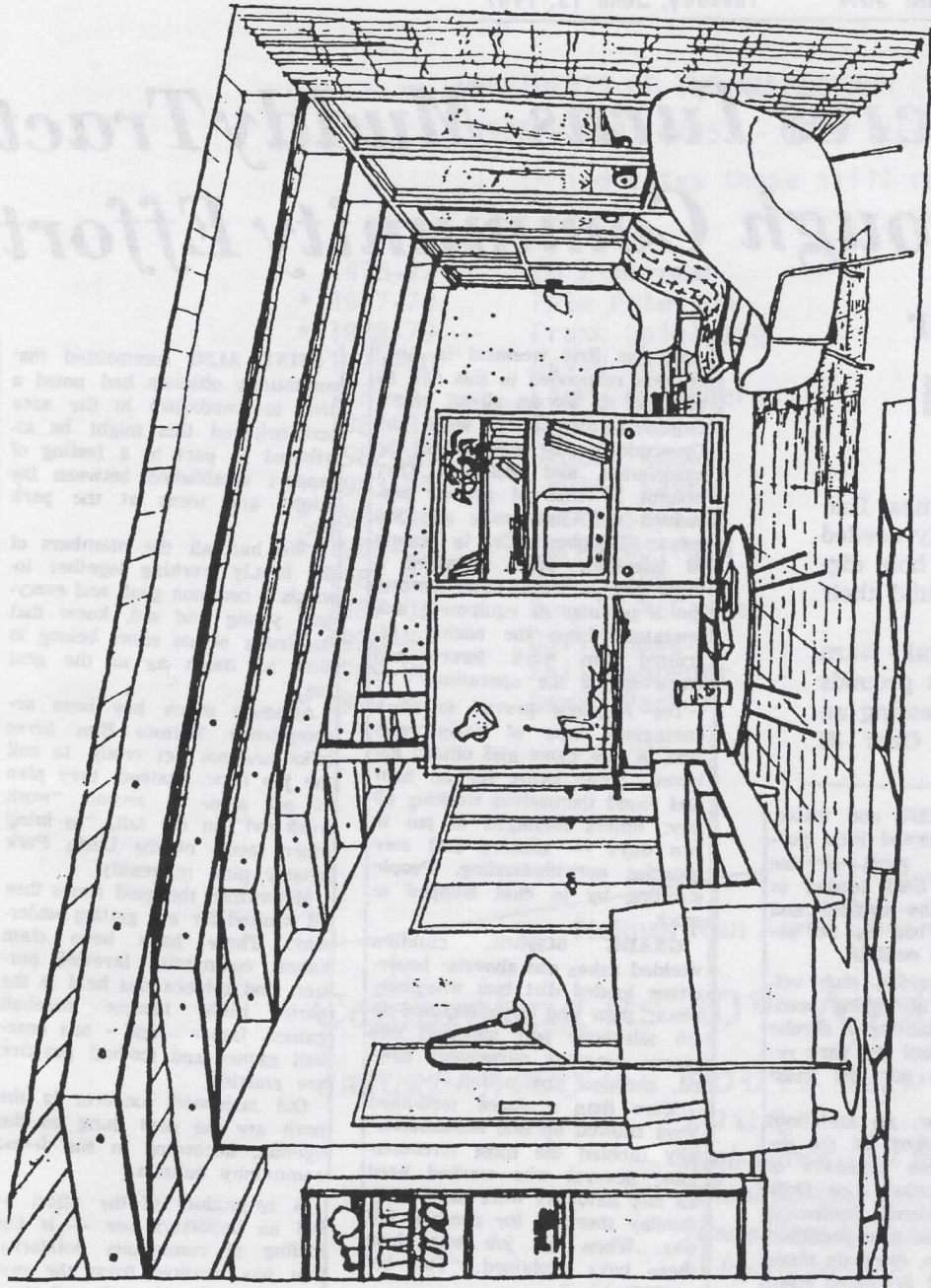
Acres that prompts many residents to bypass Upward Mobility and to lend relative stability and spice-of-life variety to the area? What attracts people to these houses in the first place? What's it like to live here—as we have done—for 22 years?

As part of their silver anniversary, residents have put together a 68-page history, "Holmes Run Acres: The Story of a Community." Intended also as a Bicentennial tribute, the book is a sort of past-present-and-promise publication.

As part of this project, many Holmes Runners responded to a questionnaire: They moved here, they say, because they liked the trees, the architecture, the "excellent site planning...with no streets through to anyplace else." "There was a sense of homeyness rather than ticky-tacky regimentation." "We saw a 1951 article in House Beautiful, so when we moved here from Kansas, we knew exactly what we wanted." "We wanted a place as informal as we are." "We didn't buy a house—we bought a community."

The location, now an attraction, was a question mark in the Acres' pioneer days: "Why ever do you want to move way out there?" Springfield then was barely a gleam in a builder's eye, Seven Corners was just that—seven corners in an open field. Holmes Run children were bused to school as far away as Fairfax, Bailey's Crossroads and Lincolnia. Telephones were apt to be eight-party lines.

The Civic Association thrived, the social life blossomed: parties in the nearby Grange Hall, dances at the Walnut Hill Estate. Community classes abounded: ballet for children (and a



Satterlee/Lathbridge

an NBC reporter, a research writer for Drew Pearson, a color printer for National Geographic, an architect, a fish and wildlife expert, a former airline hostess, military personnel. Issues centered on Japanese beetle control, proposals for a garden club, Scout troops, swimming pool and the widening of Gallows Road.

Through the years, the Runner, up to 60 pages long on occasion, has given children a place to see their names in print, to make contributions, to feel they belong somewhere. It has given adults a forum to air their views, foster their writing talents, set up carpools, keep in touch with neighbors on local issues.

It has included original comic strips, poetry, short stories, recipe columns, home maintenance and real estate tips, book reviews, humor and a medi-

few madcap mothers). First Aid (Civil Defense was big), charm school for teens and painting, potting and puttering for all.

The cohesiveness of a new community, drawn together over mutual issues, often comes unglued as the community matures. Holmes Runners work hard to maintain that "touch of the old home town" that is missing in so much of our transient society.

One of the strongest symbols of identity and continuity is The Holmes Runner, a civic association-sponsored monthly magazine published entirely by volunteers since 1952. The first issue that August was edited by the "Publicity Committee"—K.D. Flock and Frances Spatz Leighton (who went on to greater fame as a biographer of, among others, Jacqueline Kennedy). It reported on who the residents were:

cal column by a doctor. Professional artists share equal billing with children and amateurs for cover designs and illustrations. The current editor is Dave Cartwright.

The Acres has changed, of course. It has, seemingly, more renters, more singles, more career women, more volunteerism and outreach beyond the Acres itself. It is plagued by the same general problems that challenge any suburb to reach the venerable age of 25. Some complain of a certain "cliquishness," a "new-versus-old" schism.

It requires more telephone calls to get a slate of officers for the civic association these days. Still, once elected, the board ties in with the same zest and creativity that have been its pattern from the beginning.

See HOLMES, M 2, Col. 1

Home Life at Holmes Run Acres

HOLMES, From M1

With resident support, they launched a recreation association and got that swimming pool back in the '50s—the first community pool in Fairfax County. They raised money for street signs and cleared litter along Gallows Road. They were quick to join the Fairfax Hospital Association and worked with the budding County Park Authority to turn a “swamp, community dump, eye and nose sore, health hazard and danger spot for small tots” into an early neighborhood park.

Old timers recall community leaders such as Al Smith and Sarah Lahr touting a Fairfax County master plan long before such things were fashionable, while bystanders scoffed, “What’s all the fuss about?”

Today, driving down Gallows Road to Route 50 at 5 p.m., it’s obvious what all the fuss was about. The Civic Association continues to stand guard over its green oasis and push for planned development. The youth, who grow up playing in Holmes Run Creek, join in—and sometimes lead—the struggle.

There are comments, after 25 years, on a “certain shagginess,” (more kindly put by another resident as “a slightly blowy natural look”), and deterioration in spots. The civic association is using the Runner to share references as a guide to reliable and reasonable maintenance service companies.

Coordinating all this communication is a vital link, the “block hostess”—a bit of holdover sexist terminology causing the current chairman, Chip Valosio, to speculate on whether he’s

“What is there about Holmes Run Acres that prompts many residents to bypass Upward Mobility and to lend relative stability and spice-of-life variety to the area? What attracts people to these houses in the first place? What’s it like to live here—as we have done —for 22 years?”

required to throw the traditional tea and whether it should be for hostpersons. The block hostess network delivers the Runner, contacts new residents, distributes fliers and provides fast contact for emergencies. They were responsible, after a December

fire destroyed a Holmes Run home, for a collection of \$900, toys and clothing in time for Christmas.

Questionnaires for the community history drew a response from roughly a third of the residents, reflecting an age mix from the 20s to the 60s and residency from six months to 25 years.

Why do they stay? Forty-three people simply said they like it, why move? One asked, “There’s someplace else?” Cost and affordability were mentioned; there still seems to be something American-apple-pie about making that last mortgage payment. To some, staying means being able to afford a private college for the kids, a little extra travel, a bit of property in the mountains.

People stay because, “as a senior citizen, I am able to do all sorts of upkeep without climbing—I never feel shut in.” “One can be as ‘joining’ or as ‘private’ as his tastes desire. By and large a very tolerant community.” “Still a good cross-section of people—no push to keep up with the Joneses.” “There is a soul, a spirit, that we hope never changes.” “It’s still a community that cares.”

Holmes Runners, then, seem to stay because they like a way of life that’s unpretentious and relaxed, as friendly and involved as a resident cares to make it.

Mrs. Smith is a free-lance writer and a co-editor of “Holmes Run Acres: The Story of a Community.” She and her husband, an engineer, have lived in Holmes Run Acres for 22 years, and brought up their three children there.

After a 25-Year Run, Holmes Is Still Ahead

By Sarah Booth Conroy

Washington house prices are the highest in the country and many working people despair of ever being able to own their own home. For these reasons, the silver anniversary of the Holmes Run development is worth a second look. Many of the 25-year-old ideas of Holmes Run are still ahead of our time.

The basic house plan, by architects Nicholas Satterlee and Francis Donald Lethbridge, was very popular then, not only in Washington but all over the world. The house was recognized by *House Beautiful*, *House and Home*, *Popular Mechanics*, *Architectural Record* and *Family Circle*, which offered the house plan and directions for 25 cents (and sold about 30,000 of them). There are a number of other developments in Washington patterned after it.

An inordinate number of architects seek them out to buy. One reason for such popularity is that they are very easy to enlarge because of their post and panel construction, the size of the lots, and the way the houses are sited on the lots. They are sort of a basic house, to be added to as people acquire children, possessions and money. One out of three, 110 of the 340 houses, have additions.

Even in 1951, when the houses were built, their prices were considered modest, even cheap. The one-level, one-bath, 902-square-foot houses, on quarter-acre sites, were \$13,900, 10 per cent down for veterans. That same house sells today for \$45,000, but you have to know somebody who lives there to be able to catch it before it's snapped up. The more expensive hillside model has two levels, both opening out to ground, the lower level originally left unfinished. These sold for

according to Don Lethbridge), and the strong, four-foot module made up of floor-to-ceiling fixed glass interspersed with solid panels and sliding windows. The original owners were allowed to decide how much glass and how much solid, and where. It didn't matter to the builder because the construction was exposed post and panel. The walls do not support the roof, so there was considerable freedom in what you filled them with.

A number of owners have substituted sliding glass doors (which then were very expensive and came in only one size). All the structural members are left exposed, saving the builder a great deal of money, and giving the owner both a feeling of more space and a pleasantly honest and natural interior. The house is anchored to a brick fireplace, novel at that time for its lack of a mantel.

The house also gains a feeling of space because of its open plan. The living room, dining room, kitchen and study or third bedroom make up essentially one open space. Instead of wasteful walls, the divisions in the house are mostly storage units.

A wood-paneled door opens up for storage on one side of the fireplace. Open shelves and counter space divide the living room and dining room. The kitchen wall doesn't go all the way to the ceiling and has a pass through. The study was defined by a movable storage wall on wheels. Some people pushed the wall aside until the baby came, then removed it again when the baby went to college. The houses have no attic or basement. But there is a 4-by-8 foot storage room at the rear of the attached carport. In the master bedroom are two 4-foot-wide closets, with a high storage space above that for dead storage.

House Beautiful cautioned the 1950s reader: "Whether you buy 800 square feet of space or 2,000, you will undoubtedly wish you had more...The trick is to choose an open plan: that is, a house with the minimum of opaque interior partitions required for personal privacy. When two rooms open into one, it makes both rooms seem larger. And when the ceiling slopes upward, as it does in this house to a height of 10 feet, you get a feeling of having more space than is really there.

"Don't forget that the intrinsic element of your house is the basic structure—the supporting walls, the roof, the foundation flooring. Whatever is added to these on the inside is added primarily for looks. But proper design and discriminating choice of materials can make the structure itself so good looking that there's no need to mask it with interior finish. By eliminating the cost of that nonessential, the builder is frequently able to offer more space for the same price. So when you see well designed, exposed structure as in our standard of value house, it is a safe assumption that you are getting more house for your money."

It seems strange now to note that

these houses were planned to conserve energy and save on utility bills. All of the windows were weathertight sliding glass. Venting sash was positioned at floor and ceiling level above and below the fixed glass areas, to provide a chimney effect. The high ceilings also helped air circulation. Cross ventilation was provided through the house.

Furthermore—and this was a real novelty then and not as standard as it should be now—the house had heavy insulation. The walls had a four-inch blanket of rockwool. The roof had two-inch fir planking, topped with two inches of insulation and a built-up gravel surface on that. (That was about the equivalent of six inches of insulation, a good bit. Today the experts think another six inches would be better, but hardly anyone has that much. Those who do, however, are richer.)

The houses also used what is now called "passive" solar air conditioning—that is, without specific solar hardware. First, the big glass areas were on the south, where possible. And large glass areas were in the living and dining room areas, where they would be used more. The bedrooms had small clerestories for privacy and energy conservation. And, the houses had a design feature often neglected even today: a wide roof overhang, all around the house to cut off the sun's rays in summer but admit the lower sun in winter.

There was a big construction saving in putting the houses on concrete slabs; to save energy, the slab was damp-proofed and insulated. The heating ducts run around the perimeter of the house to warm the floor. One family the Douglas Parsons, say their highest heat bill last winter was \$65. Another family who keep their thermo-

Form and Function

up to \$17,500. The \$16,950 version cost \$8,350 down, and \$87.47 a month, including taxes and insurance.

After 25 years, the houses are still contemporary in design—even a shade avant garde—comfortable to live in, inexpensive to heat and maintain. Ivy and trees (builders, like doctors, plant their mistakes) have removed whatever rawness was left to the land. So now the houses are nested in grass and green.

The houses have a great many grace notes that are much sought after but seldom found today. These are design features that expand what could be a cramped shoebox into pavillions in the woods.

The feeling of space comes from cathedral ceilings, rising to 10 feet at the peak ("complicated but orderly," ac-

stat higher say their top bill was \$90. The original glass was not insulated because thermally insulated glass in large sizes was not available then.

Both the current owners and Lethbridge talk a great deal about the siting of the houses. Streets were laid out to follow the natural contours of the land, a good point both because it preserved the lay of the land and because that required less costly and destructive bulldozing. Then the houses were placed on the lots to take advantage of the views as well as the sun.

"We also presumed that with such a small house on such (comparatively) large lots, the owners would add on to the houses," Lethbridge said.

And they did. Decks and patios are the most common. But many, especially those in homes where the owner is an architect himself, have had more extensive additions. Another favorite improvement was enclosing the carport to provide a family or formal dining room.

Douglas and Harriet Parsons figure they almost doubled their floor area. They remodeled the kitchen and added a skylight, made a stepdown family room out of the carport, pushed out the dining room wall by two feet, and added a 14-by-16 bedroom and bath on the rear—with discarded original windows from a neighbor's shed. Parsons did 80 per cent of the work himself.

The current house is the Parsons' second in Holmes Run. "We had a smaller one for two years, until we had wall-to-wall babies." They bought their current house in 1970 for \$36,900 and

have spent \$8,000 for their improvements, not counting the hours of work.

Charles and Dixie Valosio added a huge kitchen to their house, turning the old kitchen into a dining room, the dining room into the entryway, and the carport into a den.

"I grew up about a mile or so away, and tried for years to talk my parents into buying one. We were really thrilled when my wife and I were able to buy this one," he said. Valosio paid \$34,000 for the house but they've added another \$16,800 in doubling the size of it and adding two more zoned heating and cooling systems. "Our architect for the additions was Ken Cogan, but it must have been hard on him. When he finished, he moved to Greece."

George Lawson, an architect himself, and Liz Lawson, his wife, bought their 840-square-foot house in 1965 for \$18,000 when they were first married. In 1969 they added a master bedroom across the back of the house (\$4,000), to bring the footage to 1,110, and moved out the storage wall to enlarge the living-dining area (turning the old dining area into a breakfast room.) In 1971 they enlarged the kitchen (\$3,000), enclosed the carport to make a breakfast and family room with a utility/storage wall against one side (\$2,500). The old dining room became the foyer. The floor space came up to 1,430. The patio was also enlarged to fit the size of the new dining/living room. In 1975, they added a study/guest room with a bath and a hall on the front of the house, changing the entry and thus reclaiming the old foyer as a breakfast room (\$7,300). Currently the square footage comes to 1,620, unless they are at it again.

In Holmes Run, the names of the original owners tend to stick like taffy to the houses. So the home of Lucy and Joe Donohoe, who have lived there seven years, is called the Nels Peterson house, after the original owner who added the spectacular two-story-high

kitchen, wine cellar and dining room at the back.

The Donohoes had previously owned another house, remodeled by architect Charles Hall, who also remodeled another house in the area. The Donohoes had paid \$17,500 for their first house and sold it after five years for \$28,500.

Billie and Jack Washburn own the other house remodeled by the Halls. They had seen Charles Hall begin remodeling a house before they moved to Hawaii. So when they were posted back to Washington, they called to ask him if it were available. Hall and his wife, an interior decorator, had used a number of Chinese motifs in the house and in the garden, just right for the Washburns' Hawaiian collections.

The other day, a few of the Holmes Runners, as they call themselves, invited Lethbridge to look around at what had happened to his project. He had a grand time, checking to see how the panels had weathered (well, though the colors have been changed to match current tastes), how the trees had grown (also well), and how people had shaped the houses to fit their own ways of living.

"I still think it was a good project. So was the similar one we did at Pine Springs. The Luria Brothers were good builders, and willing to listen to their architects. I think we could still build a house like these—for about three times the cost—but anything under \$36,000 is a bargain today.

"But you have to realize that somewhere along the way, the developers decided that people didn't want a basic three-bedroom, one-bath house (or a model T Ford). So they added garages, second ovens, two more baths, elaborate 'colonial detail woodwork', piling it all on until people just couldn't afford a house anymore.

"I think it's about time we scaled houses down a bit, and tried to build something people can buy. The additions and the luxuries can come when, and if, they can afford them."

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Another publication to look for is the 40th Anniversary Cookbook. With 219 pages of recipes collected from 'Holmes Runner' columns over the years, it makes good reading and delicious cooking.

Evaluation: Lessons of Modesty and Malleability In a 25-Year-Old Suburban Housing Development

AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF ARCHITECTS JOURNAL - November 1976

In post-World War II years, when tract housing—monotonous rows of market-designed dwellings later labeled “ticky-tacky”—was spreading inexorably across suburbia, a few builders and their architects were showing that it didn’t have to be that way. Among them were Gerald and Eli Luria, developers, and Francis D. Lethbridge, FAIA, and Nicholas Satterlee, FAIA, architects, of Holmes Run Acres in Fairfax County, Va.

Today, 25 years after its completion—when the “ticky-tacky” house is growing even larger, more elaborate and more prohibitively expensive—Holmes Run still has lessons to teach. Mainly they have to do with modesty, capacity to change over time and the durability of such design virtues as simplicity and respect for the land.

Ranging from 902 to 1,804 square feet without owner-built additions, the modular houses are small even by the standards that prevailed a quarter of a century ago. The basic one-story house sold for \$13,500 in 1951 and the two-level for around \$17,000. Today, all have appreciated at least four-fold, but are still considered a bargain by real estate values prevalent in northern Virginia.

Open interiors with high, sloped beam and plank ceilings give these small houses an illusion of spaciousness. Each living room-dining room-study is essentially one open space that can be subdivided. Windows in the open spaces are large and abundant, bringing the outdoors in and again opening up space. Brick fireplaces cover entire walls, furnishing visual anchors and counterpoints to the light panel construction.

The character of the houses, says Lethbridge, “depends on the balance of discipline and relaxation. We didn’t want to overcomplicate and mess things up. I think many people considered the houses too rustic and informal.”

He regarded the houses as “background spaces to be finished by the people who live in them,” and one of his principal

concerns was that they be easily adapted to different peoples’ needs.

Because of the post and panel, precast construction, the houses can be easily added to or altered; all the structural members are exposed, which provided savings in construction costs for the builder.

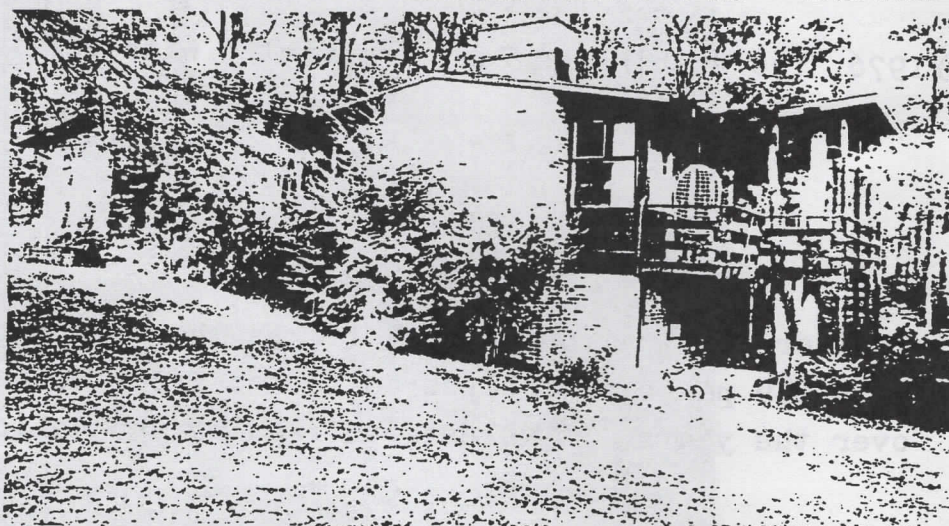
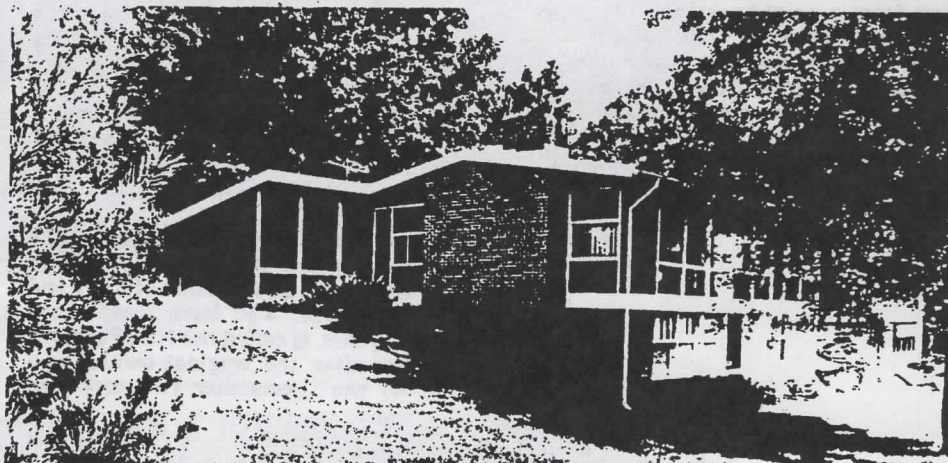
Some people have chosen to accentuate the openness of the spaces, others have enclosed them to make small rooms and almost every owner has enlarged interior space, if only to enclose the carport. Furnishings range from colonial to ultra modern.

When talking about the interiors of their homes, residents respond to and value highly the architectural concept. Typical

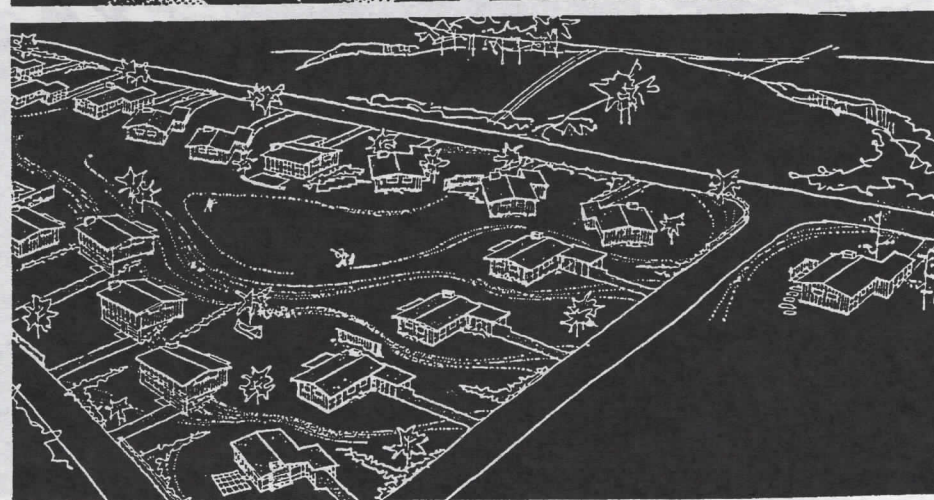
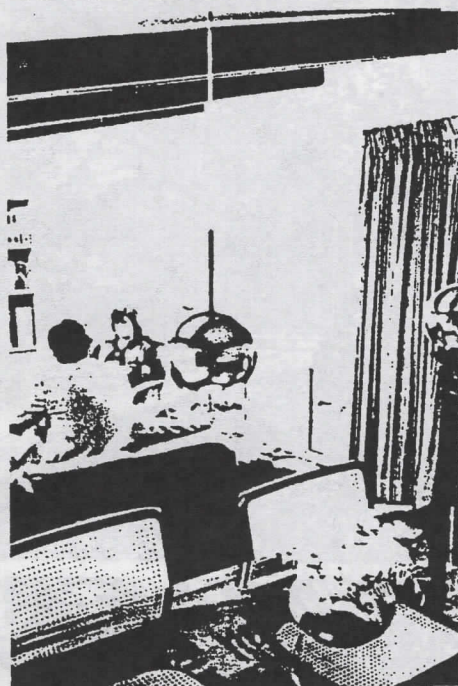
comments: “It’s the flexibility and openness of the plan we like best.” “We like the indoor-outdoor feeling, the feeling of open space.”

On the exterior the architects consciously manipulated scale, lowering the roof springline to make the houses look larger, more settled in the landscape. “We found a dozen ways of connecting carports and otherwise varying basic elements, and could thus provide more individuality,” says Lethbridge.

The houses were designed and built to be economical, meaning “energy efficient” in today’s terms. All the windows are weathertight sliding glass, and there is venting sash at floor and ceiling levels to provide a chimney effect. For insulation



Variations on a theme: a basically unchanged two-story (above) and neighbor (right) with enclosed carport and a porch.



'A lot of architects bought the houses, recognizing that they could be easily manipulated.'

there is a 4-inch blanket of rock wool in the walls; the roof has two inches of fir planking, and 1 1/2-inch fiberboard insulation. The high ceilings help air to circulate and there is cross ventilation all through the houses.

There is also what we now call passive solar airconditioning. The big glass areas are mainly restricted to southerly exposures. In bedrooms, small clerestory windows give more privacy and help conserve fuel. Wide overhangs all around the houses also cut off the sun's rays in summer. These features, combined with the cooling effect of enormous trees, result in the need for little or no airconditioning, even with Virginia's long, hot summers.

Residents mention liking the fact that many houses are twisted and turned on their lots to give the best possible views, the most privacy and individuality. Says Lethbridge, "These houses were added to the site. The dominance of the landscape and fitting the houses to the terrain were very important to us." The architects' careful planning saved the builder considerable money, since it meant less grading. It also meant that more houses could be fitted on less land overall, and the extra houses paid the architects' fee.

Lethbridge explains that the builder gave him a contract that "made progressive site planning possible. The Lurias agreed to pay a significant sum for each prototype house—about 25 percent—and then a sum for each house that was built." In return the builder was able to save money, because he was left with no loose ends, poor engineering or other mistakes.

Most of the 340 families who live at Holmes Run Acres view their neighborhood with unusual pride and feel a strong sense of community. To celebrate the 25th anniversary of their neighborhood, they recently published a book, *Holmes Run Acres: The Story of a Community*, which begins by saying, "Many of us have, through choice, bypassed upward mobility to remain here for enough years to have grown a well-developed root system."

Most of the residents of Holmes Run are professional people, and over 10 percent are architects. Says Lethbridge, "A lot of architects bought the houses, recognizing that they can be easily manipulated."

Mostly the residents have been attracted by the site planning and architecture and the style of living these seem to foster.

A living room (top); a converted carport, now a family room (above left); an innovative kitchen, and site drawing.

"We came because of the contemporary architecture and excellent site planning with no streets *through* to anyplace else," says one. "We wanted some place as informal as we are," explains another. "We liked the openness and flexibility of the houses," says an architect's wife.

There is a minimum of "keeping up with the Joneses" and other forms of status expression at Holmes Run Acres. Lethbridge ventures that because the design concept is nontraditional, the people who buy the houses tend not to need the reassurance given by traditional architecture, and to have relatively high levels of education. "The houses are usually bought," he says, "by people who value individualism." He adds that these are much like houses people now build for vacation homes, "which leads one to believe that those who like them will tend to adopt an informal way of living."

Lethbridge seems to be correct in believing that people who choose to live in this community value greatly the chance to shape and fashion their own spaces—and lives. Says one homeowner: "Our friends thought we were crazy—these houses are all glass and no traditional ceiling. But we liked the freedom they gave and bought it."

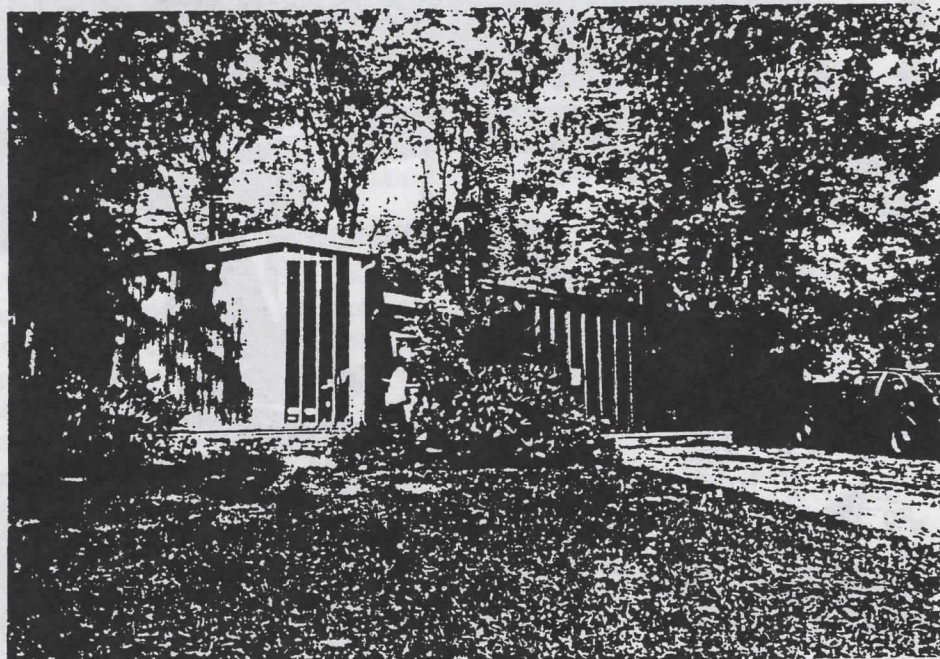
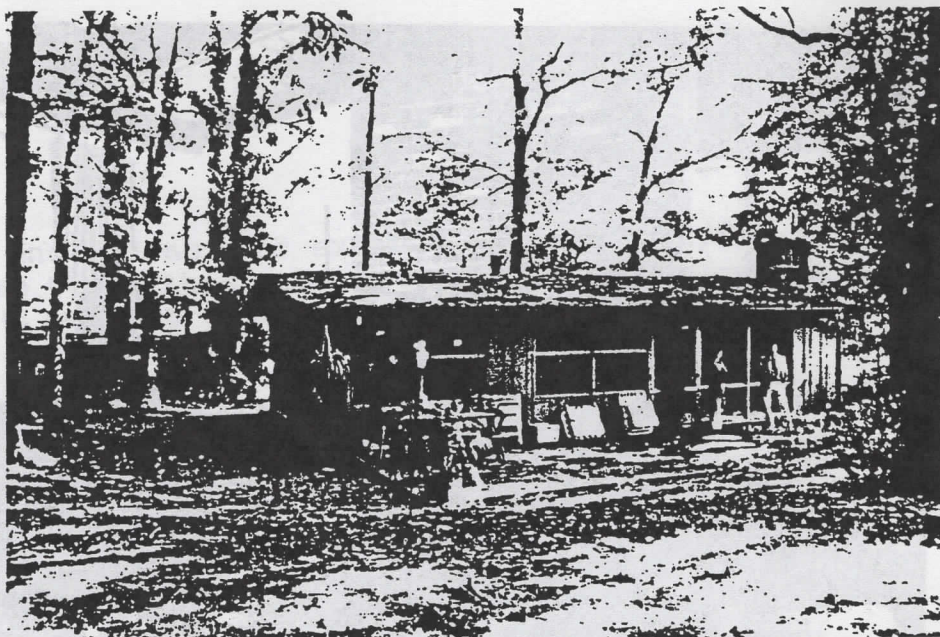
The intention of Holmes Run Acres' architect and builder was to create a contemporary, efficient, attractive house that could easily be varied throughout a development and adapted without difficulty to the owner's needs. They succeeded. True, some residents detect a certain shagginess, referred to as a "slightly blowy, natural look" by one, but this is in part a natural result of the community's tendency toward informality. In the main, the development has stood well the test of time.

As architect Lethbridge told Sarah Booth Conroy of the *Washington Post*: "The Luria brothers were good builders, and willing to listen to their architects. I think we could still build a house like these—for about three times the cost—but anything under \$36,000 is a bargain today."

"But you have to realize that somewhere along the way, most developers decided that people didn't want a basic three-bedroom, one-bath house (or a Model T Ford). So they added garages, second levels, two or more baths, elaborate 'colonial detail' woodwork,' piling it all on until people just couldn't afford a house anymore."

"I think it's about time we scaled houses down a bit, and tried to build something people can buy. The additions and luxuries can come when, and if, they can afford them." *A.O.D.*

Careful site planning and retention of trees have provided cool, irregular backyards (top) and shaded front lawns.



HOLMES RUN ACRES:

Changing and expanding
along the way

By Boris Weintraub

Who says suburban houses have to be dull? Who says that a suburban home has to look like a Williamsburg Colonial, and must be built out of red brick with white shutters, and must be placed all along an evenly aligned row of houses all just like it? Who says that a suburban development must be built on bulldozed land, with every tree torn down and every natural feature destroyed in the name of efficient construction?

And who says that, once a suburban home is built, it must stay the same for all time, and if a family outgrows it or needs more space, the

"These houses ask for work. People feel comfortable making changes. There is nothing hidden. Everything is there and simple to do, and you don't feel concerned about tearing into something and changing it."

only option is to move to a larger, more expensive home?

These things are not written down anywhere in stone as inviolable Ten Commandments of suburban development. But, a visitor to America's suburbs might think they were after a few days of looking around.

There are some exceptions, a handful of them, including some in the Washington area that prove that it doesn't have to be just this way. A suburban development can be built in contemporary architectural styles; a builder can leave the trees and the hills and the creeks alone and build in and around and among them. And that a house can be adapted, enlarged, changed to suit the needs of the family that lives in it, so that the family can remain and be part of a neighborhood, rather than a part of the transient army marching from house to house.

Holmes Run Acres in Fairfax County, between Falls Church and Annandale, is such a development, and the house owned by George and Liz Lawson is such a house.

It sometimes surprises people to learn that Holmes Run Acres was built more than 25 years ago. Utilizing colorful exterior panels, and being placed on their sites in a variety of irregular ways, the houses in the subdivision are so contemporary and, therefore, "out of place" among the many other Williamsburg-type housing developments in northern Virginia, that they seem new, exciting, different.

That difference is exactly what the builders of Holmes Run Acres, Luria Brothers, wanted when they set about planning their development, which was even more startling

in those post-war years. They chose architects, Francis Lethbridge and Nicholas Satterlee, who had a number of different ideas about suburbia, and gave them the opportunity to put their ideas into practice.

Lethbridge recalled some of those ideas late in 1976 when he was interviewed for an article about Holmes Run Acres in the *Journal of the American Institute of Architects*. The houses, he said, "were background spaces to be finished by the people who live in them. These houses were added to the site. The dominance of the landscape and fitting the houses to the terrain were very important to us."

One of the key aspects of their design was that the houses could be easily changed — "manipulated," as necessary. There were only three basic designs: one for one-story houses without a basement, and two for two-story or "double-level" houses. Each house has high, sloped, open-beam ceilings, a large living room/dining room/study area, large windows that look out onto woods and trees, interior brick walls and fireplaces.

In order to provide manipulation and adaptation, the house is built in four-foot modules, with no interior walls which bear the load of holding up the roof. Thus, rooms can be changed, walls can be torn down or added easily, by amateurs with no previous experience in construction.

Perhaps it is this flexibility, or maybe it was the contemporary architecture, that made Holmes Run Acres a magnet for architects seeking housing for their families. In a survey conducted by the community's civic association a few years ago, it turned out that 26 architects were among the 340 home owners within the subdivision.

George Lawson was one of these. He and his wife, Liz, moved into Holmes Run Acres in 1965 when they had no children. They since have had two, a son and a daughter, but they have remained in their Holmes Run Acres house, changing and enlarging it as their family grew.

The Lawsons are not alone

in adding to their home. A more recent survey of houses in the subdivision, conducted in conjunction with the community's celebration of its 25th anniversary, found out major additions had been made to 110 of the 340 homes, ranging from enclosing carports to the addition of whole wings containing three and four extra rooms.

"There is not one street or court in all of Holmes Run Acres that does not have at least one house with some kind of addition," the survey concluded.

When the Lawsons bought their home, it was basically unchanged from the original design. Only a few storage closets had been added in the open carport, and the single-level house had only two bedrooms. At the time, it was adequate, but more room was needed when the Lawsons' son, Steven, was born in 1967.

"In 1967," Lawson says, "we added a back bedroom as a master bedroom, and gave one of the others to Steve. We added a hallway, too."

When their daughter, Jenifer, was born in 1970, the Lawsons closed in their carport and converted it to a family room. As an architect, Lawson designed the addition to blend harmoniously with the rest of the house, echoing the large living room windows in the family room. The room was carpeted and set down one step from the rest of the house. In addition, the ceiling was insulated and drywalled, and the cabinets that had been installed by the previous owner were retained but antiqued.

The next project was a renovation of the kitchen.

"We gutted it and started over," Lawson says. "The original kitchen was inadequate. There was just one drawer and a few wall cabinets and a small pantry closet. We bought new appliances but kept them where the old ones had been, and built new cabinets all around them. We added about four times the cabinet space, went from one drawer to 10, added counter space with a new sink."

"Who says that, once a suburban home is built, it must stay the same for all time, and if a family outgrows it, the only option is to move to a larger, more expensive home?"

In 1976, Lawson built a new addition to the front of the house. This time, he added a guest bedroom and a second bathroom. As he had done earlier in other parts of the house, he retained the beamed ceiling approach of the earlier house, and by building out from the exposed brick wall of the living room, added an interior brick wall to the addition as well.

The most recent alterations were made last year, when Lawson pushed one wall of Jenifer's room out by two feet. In this way, he was able to add a closet which she had lacked and needed, and, by building around her bed, gave her significantly more floor space in her room.

Lawson is by no means finished. He is thinking of a new addition which will provide what he calls "informal work space," with cabinets, countertops and room for the washer and dryer which now are separated in other areas of the house.

When the Lawsons moved there in 1965, the house had about 850 square feet of floor space. Now it has just about double that, 1,700 square feet, and Lawson isn't finished yet. Still, none of the additions have altered the character of the house, and none have made the house look garish or too different or out of place in the neighborhood. In its way, that is a tribute to both Lawson, as the architect who designed the additions, and to the neighborhood.

The house is not perfection, and the Lawsons have thought occasionally about moving. But they haven't, and they probably won't.

"I miss a basement very much," Lawson says. "I wish I had one, and we've thought occasionally about buying a double level in this neighborhood. Now that we have all the space we need and the new bedroom, no, we don't have to move."

Looking back on what he has done in his own house and on the "four or five" additions he has designed for other residents of the com-

"The houses, he said, 'were background spaces to be finished by the people who live in them. These houses were added to the site. The dominance of the landscape and fitting the houses to the terrain were very important to us.'"

munity, Lawson says that the basic design provided by architects Satterlee and Lethbridge has made the alterations and adaptations far easier to conceive and execute than would have a more traditional design.

"The basic plan is so simple that you can go in any direction and have a functional layout," he says. "Because of the design, people can visualize opening the house to enlarge it or change the flow. They can visualize what another room would look like."

"These houses ask for work. People feel comfortable making changes. There is nothing hidden. Everything is there and simple to do, and you don't feel concerned about tearing into something and changing it."

Lawson reflects that when he and his wife first moved into the neighborhood, they only planned to stay five years. That was 13 years ago, and no move is imminent.

"That's the point of the additions in this neighborhood," he says. "People built them because they wanted to stay in the community."

Which is exactly what Satterlee, Lethbridge and the Luria Brothers had in mind when they built Holmes Run Acres more than 25 years ago. ☆

From FAIRFAX COUNTY, VIRGINIA
A HISTORY

Fairfax County Board of
Supervisors, Fairfax, Va 1978

The Fairfax Journal, Wednesday, March

Opinion

A good way to build community identity

As the nation's veterans came home and wartime energies shifted to peacetime tasks, Fairfax County became the site of a major boom in the construction of small, low-cost, single-family houses. These houses were built for the most part on the edges of Falls Church |

Another interesting exception in moderately priced homes was the Holmes Run Acres subdivision between Falls Church and Annandale. Here, two modest basic architectural designs, a single level and a two-level house, located on contour-designed streets and quarter-acre lots, were offered to the purchaser, with design potential for future expansion.⁹

In all, approximately 1,650 homes were eventually built in Pimmit Hills, 463 homes in Hollin Hills, and 350 in Holmes Run Acres.

Holmes Run Acres, on the east side of Gallows Road, and south of Route 50, (Arlington Boulevard), was begun in 1950 by Gerald and Eli Luria, who had recently completed several groups of colonial-style houses elsewhere. The developers wanted contemporary, efficient, economical dwellings which did not take on the appearance of rows of monotonous suburban tract houses. They engaged architects Nicholas Satterlee and Francis Lethbridge who designed a one-level and a two-level house, with several options. The structures were of wood and brick and placed on approximately one-quarter-acre lots; the original prices ranged from \$13,750 to \$17,450. Brick fireplace walls, exposed beams and extensive use of glass captured an indoor-outdoor feeling, and the lots and curbed and guttered contour streets were planned to make the most of gently rolling hillsides of woods and farm fields. The architects urged homeowners not to fence yards. In 1976, resales of Holmes Run Acres houses, now numbering approximately 340, were bringing between \$45,000 and \$80,000, depending on lot, house style, and additions.⁹

9. Architectural Forum, August 1951; House and Home, May 1952; Ben Bagdikian, "The Rape of the Land," (Philadelphia: Saturday Evening Post, 10 June 1966); Dena Leep, Rae Parmenter, and Vivian Smith, eds., Holmes Run Acres: The Story of a Community (Falls Church: Holmes Run Acres Civic Association, 1976); In 1953 Holmes Run Acres built the first community pool in Northern Virginia financed by the sale of stocks and operated on annual dues. Florence Sticker, ed., The Big Splash: A History of Our Pool (Annandale, Va.: Holmes Run Acres Recreation Association, 1963).

In 1966, the county's public affairs director wrote, "It has been said that our citizens consume more goods, read more books and have more babies than any other group..."¹⁰

After Mrs. McCulloch retired in 1969, William Whitesides, who had been with the system since 1966, was appointed director and still serves.

To find out what people were reading, a survey of the Holmes Run Acres' book club selections were studied for the years 1961-1971. The sampling produced a list of eighty-eight titles of widely varied subject matter. The club's selection process was very liberal: a book was chosen because someone had always wanted to read it, because it was on the best-seller list, because someone liked a particular author, or because the subject was of current interest. These reasons help to explain why *Exodus*, *The Prince*, *Zorba*, *the Greek*, and *Greek Plays* all appear on the list. *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men*, the Agee chronicle of the Depression, appears on the list along with poems of e.e.cummings. *Soul on Ice*, *Lady Chatterley's Lover*, *Catcher in the Rye*, *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*, *the Confessions of Nat Turner*, and *Dr. Zhivago* show a widely diversified selection among this one group of readers.

"The Holmes Runner," with a circulation of less than 500, is not one of the major publications in Northern Virginia. In fact, unless you live in the Holmes Run Acres subdivision of Fairfax County just off Gallows Road, it is quite likely that you have never heard of the Runner, which has just celebrated 30 years of continuous publication.

But despite its relative obscurity, the publication is an important and worthwhile newspaper that has contributed heavily to community development and identification since January 1953. The editors promised nine issues a year, filled with information about the brand new community, its people and its problems. And for 30 years, sponsored by the Holmes Run Acres Civic Association, they have kept the promise.

Community identity, the quality that binds neighbors together, is often lacking in Northern Virginia, which has a heavy percentage of transients — people who live here for three or four years and then move on. It takes a powerful force to establish in residents a feeling of continuity and pride in their own community. The Runner has done the job and done it well.

This neighborhood voice of the people deals with matters of vital concern to its citizens. Over the years, issues involving dogs, street lights, sidewalks, new roads, Japanese beetles, street congestion, trash collections, school integration, public transportation and classroom shortages were discussed and positions taken.

Strictly personal items weren't ignored. Births were recorded and some deaths, too. There were (and still are) recipes and want ads and personal items. And there was county news of interest to Holmes Run Acres, items such as school bond issues or new bus schedules. Sometimes, former residents wrote back and reported on what they were doing.

Sprawling Fairfax County, with its more than 600,000 people spread over 400 square miles, needs cohesive neighborhood groups to generate civic action and responsibility. Holmes Run Acres is a prime example of a strong, united community that has done much for its citizens over a long period of time. One big reason for that record of success is the Holmes Runner.

Happy 30th birthday and congratulations to the 45 editors and co-editors who have labored so hard to keep the Runner going.

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Fairfax County Board of Supervisors, 1978

Other references, not included:

THE FALLS CHURCH GLOBE - January 22, 1970 (Williamstown)

THE WASHINGTON POST - April 14, 1982
("Style" Section: Artscope)

Holmes Run Acres

Celebrating its 40th Anniversary in 1991!

CURRENTLY ACTIVE IN HOLMES RUN ACRES:

- Holmes Run Acres Civic Association - since 1952
- The Holmes Runner - since 1952
Community magazine published 9 months a year, ranging from 20 to 60 pages, featuring news items and original writings by all ages. Edited this year by a mother-son team.
- Block Host/Hostess System - since 1952
Communication network used to distribute "Runner" and other information; hosts also sponsor get-acquainted block parties.
- Annual Halloween activity for children - since 1952
Began as annual party, evolved into a parade in the park.
- Gifts to Santa - since sometime in the '50's
Children requesting visits from Santa now give him presents to be shared with ACCA Day Care Center in Annandale.
- Holmes Run Acres Telephone Directory - since 1953
- Holmes Run Acres Recreation Association - since 1953
First community swimming pool in Fairfax County, begun as a co-operative venture by residents.
- Baby-sitting co-op - since early '50's
First co-op of this type in Fairfax County.
- Annual Day in the Park - since mid-'50's
Continuing tradition of family activities in Luria Park, early Fairfax County Park, developed with resident input and labor.
- Book Club - since 1960
- House and Garden Tours - since the '60's
The 40th Anniversary Tour in 1991 will be the 6th such tour since Holmes Run Acres' 25th anniversary in 1976.
- Annual International Dinner - since 1966
Community covered dish dinner, begun to mark United Nations Week.

ACTIVITIES INITIATED SINCE 25TH ANNIVERSARY IN 1976:

- Pet Registry - identification file to help locate lost pets.
- Open Holmes - informal Friday night open houses, at which we take turns hosting each other.
- Neighborhood Watch
- Annual Spring Spruce-up and Community Yard Sale
- Quilting Club
- Annual Easter Egg Hunt
- Fortieth Anniversary Committee - published cookbook of recipes from "Runner;" updating 69-page 25-year history, "Holmes Run Acres: The Story of a Community;" planning May celebration/homecoming.

