

THE MANOR MONITOR

A Monthly Publication of The Vint Hill Manor Homeowners Association
October/November 2006

Document, Document, Document

Still Within Your 1st-Year Warranty Period?

If there are problems with your house that have not yet been resolved to your satisfaction make sure you properly document them with the builder:

- ◇ Fill out the Four Seasons "Warranty Service Request" form;
- ◇ Get it to Ron Proctor, Homeowner Service Manager, in a timely manner and have him sign and date it;
- ◇ Keep the appropriate copy (yellow) for your records;

Ron can be reached at 703-878-2851, or on his cell phone at 703-898-9676. Check with Ron if you need the form and/or assistance in completing it.

Maintain, Maintain, Maintain

To keep our homes safe, comfortable and beautiful, it is necessary to periodically check on a variety of systems and other components, and perform maintenance as necessary.

This can be a daunting task when we consider all the things in and around our homes that could develop problems if we're not checking on them.

Fortunately our builder, KHovnanian (KHov), has prepared checklists to guide us through the things we need to be aware of. Periodically they mail this checklist to each resident, and the contents tend to be seasonal. The most recent mailing had a cover letter dated September 29, 2006, and the envelope was postmarked October 13, 2006. If you need a copy please contact Ron Proctor and he will get one to you.

This current checklist describes a variety of common day-to-day, ongoing, year-round types of maintenance actions; but it also focuses on some items that are appropriate for the Fall and Winter seasons. With the freezing nights already here, don't overlook the process of turning off and draining your outdoor hose bibbs. In your basement locate the cutoff valve for each of the pipes going to the front and rear bibbs, and turn them off securely. Then go outside to the hose bibb handles and open the valves. Go back inside the house and on each of the cutoff valves locate the small round fitting on the side of the valve (it's a knurled knob). When you turn it counter-clockwise it will drain the pipe between the outside valve and the inside valve thus preventing the water in the pipe from freezing and bursting and leaking. Grab a bucket to catch the water which will drain and then unscrew the small knob (NOT the valve). The fine stream it shoots can be directed into the bucket. The first winter here, we had a number of homes experience the sad results of frozen pipes because they weren't drained.

In their letter, KHov offers help if you have any questions regarding maintenance of a particular system or component. Call Ron and KHov will be "...happy to help you learn about taking proper care of your home".

Architectural Review Committee (ARC) Meeting Schedule

The next ARC meeting will be held on November 28. The open meetings are regularly held at the home of the Chairman, George Mendez, 3661 Osborne Drive at 7PM. on the second and fourth Tuesdays.

Board Meetings

The October meeting of the Board of Directors (BOD) of the Vint Hill Manor Homeowners' Association (HOA) was held on the 3rd of the month, at 7 PM, in the Conservancy Conference Room at 4263 Aiken Drive, as advertised in the previous Newsletter. Various items discussed at the meeting are covered in this newsletter.

NOTICE: There will be a change in the date for the November meeting. It will be held on Tue, November 14. Same time and location.

Vacant Board Post Filled

Anne Grabowski was elected by the Board to fill the Director's position vacated by the untimely death of her husband, Norb. The BOD expressed its appreciation to the other candidates with the hope they will continue their interest in our HOA matters and will get involved in other ways.

AARP Driver Safety Program

The first offering of our Programs Committee was a great success. Held locally, in the Conference Room of the Vint Hill Economic Development Authority on Aiken Drive over a two day period, the course provided a great many helpful tips on safe driving, with special emphasis on areas of interest to "...motorists age 50 and older." As we mature our reaction times tend to change to our disadvantage. The course helps us prepare for these and other situations that we confront in a fast-moving traffic world. The conduct of the course allowed ample time for interaction and exchanges of personal experiences. Plans are in the works to offer this training on, at least, an annual basis.

Tree Experience Needed

If you have experience with or interest in trees you may be eligible to assist the ARC. A subcommittee is being formed to study the subject of the trees which are specified for our lots and streets. The County and the Conservancy standardized the original tree-type specifications based on a number of factors.

We have had a number of requests to change tree types which we are unable to grant, especially until KHov has had their performance bond released. To be prepared for that time we need to begin the study now. Please call George Mendez at 540-341-8386 if you can help us.

The Beat Goes On

The Architectural Review and Covenants Committee (ARC) reported that the average number of applications processed remains at about a dozen a month. The evidence of cooperation among our homeowners is encouraging. The fact that any modifications that affect the outside appearances of our homes and lots in any way requires HOA/ARC approval is becoming more and more a matter of common knowledge.

Remember the ARC motto - WHEN IN DOUBT, CHECK IT OUT! Give George Mendez, the Chair of the ARC, a call at 540-341-8386, or you may contact our property management contractor, The Austin Realty Management and Investment Company (ARMI) at 540-347-1901.

Even if your inquiry is 'after the fact', assistance is available to help with the preparation and submission of the required form(s). It may be possible to accommodate multiple requests on a single application to get your property profile up to date.

Now that the database for the entire community has been completed, the next step will be to develop a plan of action for contacting those homeowners not in compliance, and determining what sanctions may apply.

History of Vint Hill Farms Station

In this and succeeding issues as space permits, we will be reprinting information originally compiled by the U.S. Army about the origins of Vint Hill Farms and its military history. The *Manor Monitor* derives its name from some of the activities that were conducted here between 1942 and 1997. It contributed much to the communications intelligence apparatus from WWII through the Vietnam era. Our "Letters to the Editor"-type column, entitled *The Listening Post*, uses as its logo a photo of an actual listening post which was in the old barn next to Aunt Pam's Cafe. We've included a photo below of the inside of the High Speed Monitoring Room in the "barn" as it was in March 1942.

The history of Vint Hill Farms can be found in penned Old English script. The year was 1772 and contained in the deed books are records sharing the ownership of the property to Thomas and Sarah Foster. The Fosters retained ownership until October 22, 1783. The property then went to William Herndon for the sum of 210 English pounds sterling. On March 9, 1803, Thomas P. Hooe became the new legal owner of the farm, and it is at this time that we find contained in his deed to the property, the phrasing of "property now known as Vint Hill". Hence, we must assume the name originated sometime around the turn of the 19th century.

Through the historic times of the war of 1812, the Hooe family continued as owners of the land. In 1822 Thomas P. Hooe died and willed the farm to Bernard Hooe, but there was



some controversy about the will and after a suit the land ended in the hands of Miss Lucy Buckner, who in turn gave the land in 1847 to Miss Virginia Brooks, a young relative of the Hooe family. Miss Brooks' guardian, Mr. Spencer Buckner, sold the farm in 1859 to a Mr. Andrew Low. It then included 729 acres of land for which he paid the sum of \$11,229.

Through several local residents, the most prominent of which is a Miss

Katie Low, daughter of Andrew Low, information has been furnished as to the history of the farm before, during, and after the Civil War.

When Andrew Low and his wife first moved here, they took up residence in an old, ramshackle house that dated back to the days when the property was first settled. Plans were drawn up for the construction of a two-and-a-half story brick mansion and work commenced immediately.

When the initial wooden frame had been completed, Low erected an open hearth, and with materials readily available here on the property he fired and formed all the bricks needed to complete the structure. Today this building is better known as The Inn at Vint Hill, and before that the Officers' Club and BOQ. The Big House, as it was called, was not quite finished when the War Between the States broke out. At the

war's beginning the central point of conflict was located in northern Virginia, notably, around Manassas (Bull Run), Fairfax and Buckland. In an effort to preserve his new home and property from the scourge of war, Low raised the English Union Jack over his property as a symbol of neutrality. Throughout the future, battles were waged involving such forces as J. E. B. Stuart's cavalry and the armies under the command of Generals Beauregard (South) and McDowell (North). The neutrality of this area was honored by both sides. Several months after the Battle of Bull Run, the town of Warrenton fell into Union hands. Its rich pasture lands became the site of huge tent cities, and the town itself was used for housing staff and headquarters.

After the final surrender was completed at Appomattox, the surrounding countryside settled back into a semblance of the pre-war era. The Low family continued to increase until there were 11 children. The eldest son, Douglas, was married in 1890, and brought his wife back to the farm to live. His father started construction of a new two-story home for them, and upon its completion they moved in, naming their new home "Silvermead". This home served as the home of the Post Commander from early 1943 until the post closed.

By the latter part of 1899, his entire family had moved away from the farm and with the death of his wife, the burden of managing a farm of this size became too great for a man of his years. He sold the property to a Mr. O. Johnson and left to take up residence at his son's home in Kansas city where he remained but a few short weeks before returning to this area. He purchased a home in Haymarket, Virginia, where he spent his remaining days. O. Johnson maintained possession of the farm for only a short period of time before selling out to a Mr. Kohler. In 1910, the land was bought by Mitchell Harrison, a retired businessman from Philadelphia, who decided on northern Virginia and Vint Hill as a desirable location in which to establish an English type country seat for

Keeping Current With Vint Hill

The Vint Hill Economic Development Authority has a quarterly electronic newsletter featuring projects and progress at Vint Hill.

If you wish to subscribe, please go to the Vint Hill website, www.vinthill.com and add your e-mail address to the section in the lower right of the home page.

There is also a link to the current edition on the home page.

himself and his family.

This section will digress somewhat from the history of Vint Hill to take in some of the history of the adjoining area which has had a great deal to do with the history of Vint Hill itself.

In Prince William County, adjoining Vint Hill on the historic Alexandria and Warrenton Turnpike, now called Route 29/211, at a point where the pike intersects Broad Run, Mitchell Harrison, the 1910 owner of Vint Hill Farms, owned another estate called Buckland Hall.

Buckland Hall was built in 1743 for a Mr. Samuel Love and named for its architect, William Buckland. Mr. Buckland was a renowned architect of the time. Among his achievements is Gunston Hall, located 25 miles from Washington on the Potomac River, home of George Mason, author of the Virginia Declaration of Rights. Gunston Hall is now an historic shrine. Mr. Buckland came from London, England, as an indentured servant at the age of 21 and built many famous buildings in Annapolis, including the well-known Hammond-Harwood House. His portrait by Rembrandt Peale hangs in the Yale University Art Gallery.

Unlike Vint Hill under the ownership of Andrew Low, Buckland Hall Estate did not remain neutral during the Civil War. Belonging then to the famous Lee family of Virginia, one of the more famous battles of the war took place on the land contained on the Buckland estate. An account of the battle and the circumstances contributing to it

are found in an article entitled "From Gettysburg to the Coming of Grant" by Martin T. McMahan, Major General, USA.

When Mitchell Harrison bought the farm in 1915, he brought its standards to the height he had attained at Buckland. The difference was that while Vint Hill was his home, he kept Buckland Hall as a showplace and sent brochures all over the country inviting people to buy it.

It contained about 800 acres at this time and was the home of purebred Shorthorn cattle celebrated as winners of many of the great exhibitions of the north, south and west. In addition, his hunters and jumpers were annually exhibited in all the important horse shows until 1927.

In early May 1942, the property known as Vint Hill was surveyed by the U. S. Government, and negotiations were begun with Margaret Janet Harrison and John Kearsley Mitchell Harrison, heirs of Mitchell Harrison, for the purchase of the property. Although negotiations were begun at this early date, and members of the U. S. Army were stationed here in June of 1942, the final transfer of the title was not passed until July 7, 1942, due to a temporary disagreement over the purchase price which was \$127,500. After that date, work on the construction of military buildings started in full swing anticipating a large scale expansion of the post.

In early June of 1942, Lt. Robert F. Pope and 3 enlisted men arrived at Vint Hill to accomplish the many details in the activating of the station. As has been previously stated, title of ownership of this property had not yet been given but permission had been granted by the Harrisons for work to begin. When this party first arrived, the only facilities available were those that had been constructed by farmer owners. Sleeping quarters were set up on the 2nd floor of the "Big House", eventually to become the Officers' Club, and now The Inn at Vint Hill, and the 1st floor was renovated for use as a working area. *(To be continued)*

There's A Lot Goin' On Here

One of our residents informed us of a resource that some of us may wish to investigate. She is a volunteer at the Fauquier Senior Center, (formerly called the Shadow Lawn Senior Center) and loves the time she is able to spend there. She also wanted to make sure we all knew about the program. Come join the fun Monday through Thursdays! Lynn Oliver is the Coordinator there. She is at 540-347-7729.

Volunteer opportunities are also available and include one-on-one companionship with clients. The following positions are greatly needed:

- ◇ Teaching and cooking skills
- ◇ Preparing meals and delivering to home-bound seniors
- ◇ Coordinating bulletin board displays
- ◇ Leading discussions on current events
- ◇ Playing piano for various occasions

- ◇ Leading sing-alongs
- ◇ Instructing sewing projects
- ◇ Assisting in ceramics and crafts
- ◇ Coordinating birthday parties
- ◇ Performing various types of entertainment
- ◇ Persons knowledgeable in the field of pet therapy
- ◇ Repairing bicycles
- ◇ Sharing travel experiences through lectures and videos
- ◇ Driving seniors to various personal appointments

The second, and separately funded and staffed program is the Warrenton Adult Day Care Center where Molly Snurr at 347-2797 is the Program Manager. Both activities are located in the same building at 430 E. Shirley Avenue.

The Program is designed to serve persons with Alzheimer's disease, related dementias and the frail elderly. It is intended to provide respite for family caregivers, as well as socializa-

tion and stimulation for participants.

As much as possible, activities are integrated with Senior Center Activities, with special programs, such as reality orientation, geared to special needs. The Adult Day Care Program is open from 8:00AM until 4:00PM, Monday through Friday. The annual cookie-making fund-raiser is in full swing now, and you may be able to help in this way. This event is the one that finances all their activities throughout the year. It also helps pay for maintenance of much of their equipment. (They currently need \$550 to repair their big TV set.)

Both programs publish calendars of their extensive activities. Lunch is provided for \$3.50. A small hourly fee is charged for the day care, but if the cost is a deterrent to the client's participation, a sliding-scale fee schedule or scholarships are available.

It would be worth your while to drop by the center to see all that's happening.

VINT HILL MANOR

HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION

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Our thanks to Pat White at the Vint Hill Economic Development Authority for her assistance in providing the resource information for the Vint Hill historical information and photographs.

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