

THE VILLAGE NEWS

Volume 29 No. 7

Serving the people of Cabin John and beyond

March 1996

Citizens Association Meeting
Tuesday, March 26 at 7:30 at the Clara Barton Community Center

PLANTINGS ALONG MACARTHUR BOULEVARD THIS SPRING. CALLING ALL ABLE-BODIED DIGGERS

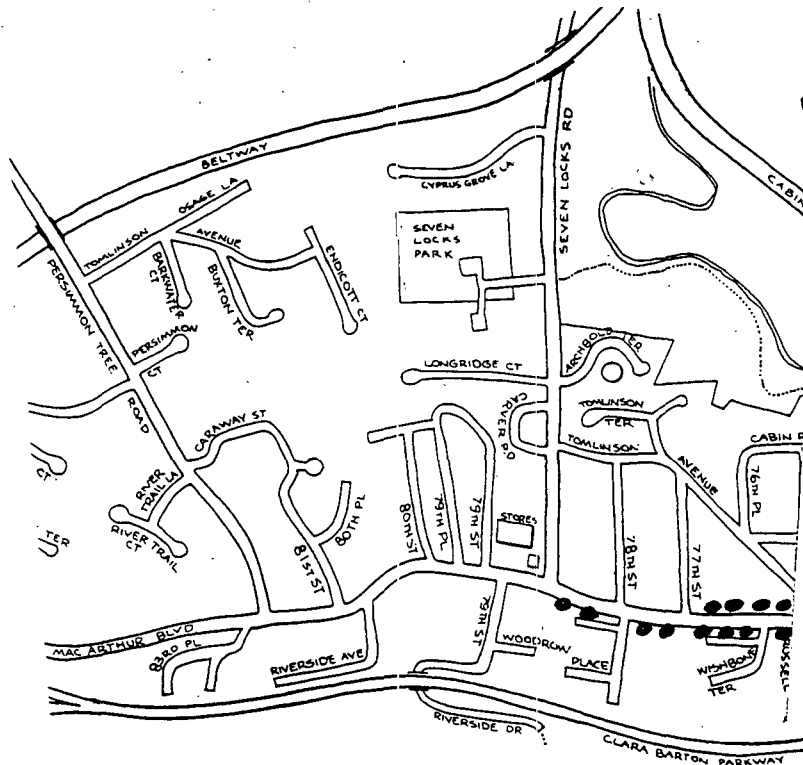
By: Helen Daniel

This month orders will be placed for the following trees, shrubs, and perennials: Hawthorns; Rem Red Honey-suckle; Serviceberry; Viburnum; Norway Spruce; and Black-eyed Susan, Coreopsis and Coneflower perennials. With spacing on the trees and shrubs at approximately ten to twenty feet apart, these plantings will cover about 2,000 to 3,000 feet along MacArthur Blvd. They will be planted primarily along the west side of MacArthur between Union Arch Bridge and Seven Locks Road. The total distance from Union Arch to Seven Locks is .8 miles or a little over 4,000 feet. The plantings will be placed in areas where the current tree/shrub coverage is non-existence or sparse. Perennials will be placed along MacArthur Blvd. from the Bridge to 75th Street. The map on this page shows the approximate location of where the trees and shrubs will be planted. A landscape plan has been worked out under the guidance of Mark Willcher, a landscape designer, and

each area will be well staked prior to planting .

All of the tree and shrub selections are ones recommended by Mark Willcher and Al Geis, Director of Research for the Wild Bird Centers of America. They provide excellent food and habitat for birds as well as being both attractive and hardy types that should fare well along a busy road. Care will be taken not to do any planting in front of individual houses but only along common ground.

Along with a shovel and strong back, your help will be most welcome for a few hours of planting one Saturday or Sunday morning in April. Hopefully, the entire order will arrive sometime between the beginning and middle of April. And, by then, the earth should finally be free of frost, ice, and snow. Please give me a call at 229-1521 if you are willing to volunteer a few hours to help with the planting.



● Plantings of: Hawthorn, Serviceberry, Viburnum Spruce, Honeysuckle

Missing Pages
384

Looking Backwards in Cabin John

The Cabin John Bridge Hotel

Around 1900 the Washington Railway and Electric Company built a streetcar line from Georgetown up the Potomac, paralleling MacArthur Boulevard. For many summers thereafter, open air trolleys carried crowds, mostly to Glen Echo Amusement Park, but many all the way to the end of the line on the eastern edge of Cabin John Creek. At the turn-around there, passengers could disembark and walk across a cast iron footbridge (parallel to the Union Arch aqueduct) directly into the grounds of the famed Cabin John Bridge Hotel.

It was a beautiful ride out to Cabin John and a popular Sunday excursion just in itself. There were some, too, who came out in nutting expeditions. In her 1976 book, *Time Was*, Elizabeth Kyle quotes Josephine Havens' memories of those expeditions: "The hills were just covered with huge chestnut trees. Walnut and hickory and others too, but the chestnuts especially we came for. And persimmons. There were lots of persimmon trees all through this area.

Often after going nutting, instead of going back on the street car, we walked through the hotel grounds to the canal, to a lock, and, if we were lucky, a canal boat would come along and give us a ride back to Georgetown..."

The hotel grounds were something to behold, as, indeed, was the whole hotel. It grew out of refreshment stand opened by Rosa and Joseph Bobinger (recent immigrants from Alsace-Lorraine) which sold homemade lunches to the workmen building the Union Arch in the early 1860's. Later the Bobingers opened a public dining room and then, in the early 1870's, began the building of the hotel itself. Many additions followed and by the mid-90's, the hotel, situated on what is now the eastern end of Cabin John Gardens, had become a remarkable place.

As Harry and William Bobinger, grandsons of the original owners, recalled it (again as reported in Elizabeth Kyle's volume) a rathskellar occupied the whole lower area, with slot machines. On the first floor was the big dining room and on the second many private dining rooms. Staff and family lived on the third floor, but otherwise the hotel had no sleeping rooms.

Although some locally produced wine was served, some of it made by William Reading who had vineyards on both sides of Cabin John Creek, most of the wine list was fine vintages from Europe. Most of the chinaware came from Bavaria, and there were beautiful goblets and glasses of Belgian crystal. The furnishings were equally splendid, with fine oriental rugs, solid oak tables and chairs, and great potted plants all around.

An attraction of the hotel was its "orchestron" — a huge music box played by inserting big paper rolls (like a player piano). The orchestron was mounted in an octagonal glass house at the back of the hotel, and its afternoon recitals could be heard all over the 15 acres of beautifully landscaped grounds, dotted with summerhouses.

The heyday of the hotel was the period from about 1895 to 1908, but it continued in operation until 1925. It sat idle for

six years and then, on April 7, 1931, it burned to the ground, despite the presence of 33 fire engines from near and far, in a spectacular fire whose origin was never determined.

But even today, occasional fragments of broken china, with the identifying "BB" initials, can still be found where the Cabin John Bridge Hotel once stood in all its splendor.

Thanks to Village News Archivist Andy Rice for contributing this feature. If you have photos or mementos of the good old days in Cabin John, the Village News would like to use them with this feature.

Spring and Winter

by Sara Wright, Age 7

Winter days are a lot of fun,
but when Spring comes
there's a lot more fun to come!

Like birthdays and holidays,
and all the special things we do.
I'm telling you it's a lot more fun
to learn some things that are new!

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Wednesday Evening: 7:00 Prayer, Testimonies, Bible questions

Friday Morning: 10:00 Community prayer and Bible study

Collecting food and clothing for the homeless and needy.

THE VILLAGE NEWS is published monthly except in July and December and is sent free to every household in Cabin John. Others may subscribe for \$5 per year. Send news, advertisements, letters, and subscriptions to:

The Village News
 PO Box 164
 Cabin John, Maryland 20818

The next deadline is 10 AM Saturday April 6 for the issue mailing April 19.

People who make *The Village News* possible:
 Barbara and Ger Quinn, Jerry Rhodes, Barbara and Reed Martin
 Contributors: Andy Rice, Helen Daniel, Sara Wright, Dorothy Welsh

REMINDER:
THE DEADLINE FOR CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE VILLAGE NEWS IS 10 AM SATURDAY, APRIL 6TH.

WE ARE ALWAYS LOOKING FOR STORIES AND/OR DRAWINGS FROM THE COMMUNITY. CALL GER OR BARBARA QUINN AT 229 8030

To place an ad in the Village News classifieds send your ad before the first Saturday of the month to the address in the box above. The cost is 25¢ per word. If you have questions, call Jerry Rhodes at 320-5219 Carol

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