

## **Arlington and the 350th Anniversary Celebration**

*By George E. Schnabel*

It was significant for Arlington County to undertake an ambitious program as her share in the celebration of the 350th Anniversary of the Founding of Virginia. It was significant because few expected Arlington to do much about it. While it is true that parts of our program failed to materialize, on the whole what was accomplished put Arlington among the first counties of Virginia and proved that Arlington was very much a part of the Old Dominion.

It all began on March 19, 1955, when the County Board, at the request of the Governor and the Virginia 350th Anniversary Commission, appointed a Committee for Arlington's participation in the Jamestown Festival of 1957, celebrating America's 350th Birthday.

Three members of the clergy of Arlington were chosen to head the Committee. They were: Reverend George E. Schnabel, Chairman, and Rabbi Noah Golinkin and Father R. D. Beattie, Co-Chairmen. Selected to serve with them were representatives of the following civic and professional groups in the County: Chamber of Commerce, Junior Chamber of Commerce, Women's Division Arlington Chamber of Commerce, Zonta Club, Quota Club, Soroptimist Club, Rotary Club, Kiwanis Club of Arlington, Optimist Club, Northwest Lions Club, Host Lions Club, South Arlington Lions Club, Kiwanis Club of Old Dominion, Civitan, Evening Optimists, Arlington Knights of the Round Table, Arlington Business & Professional Women's Club, Rotary Club, Opti-Mrs. Club, Inter-Service Council, Arlington Association of University Women, P.T.A. Council, Arlington Civic Federation, Arlington Federation of Women's Clubs, and Neighborhood Garden Club.

This Committee was enlarged to include community leadership not touched by these other organizations.

The first Committee meeting was held at St. Mark's Church on Tuesday, November 8, 1956. At this time a series of sub-committees were organized to carry out the program outlined by the Chairman. It was a rather ambitious program which was submitted in the hope that at least the more important events could be carried out. Nearly all of the Committee members gave unstintingly of their time to make the 350th Anniversary Celebration an historic event as far as Arlington was concerned.

Through the good offices of Delegate Harrison Mann we invited the Jamestown Festival Committee to send the Susan Constant, the Godspeed, and the Discovery up the Potomac to Arlington. This invitation opened the way to a larger participation with the District of Columbia. The ships reached the Washington Channel on March 21st, 1957 and during the next four days an estimated 500,000 people came to see the three symbols of our heritage. This was an auspicious beginning.

The next important event was the reception jointly given by the Arlington Historical Society and the 350th Anniversary Committee for Canon and Mrs. Selwyn Gummer, the Church of England's representative to the Jamestown Festival. This reception was held on April 26th at 8:30 P.M. at St. Mark's Church. The highlight of the reception was the showing of the church record from St. George's Church, Gravesend, England with the record of the death of Rebecca Rolfe (Pocahontas). We are indebted to Mr. and Mrs. Frank Ball, Sr. for bringing Canon and Mrs. Gummer to Arlington.

On May the 21st Arlington had the privilege of viewing the Harrison Mann Collection of Historic Maps at the Barnes and Kimel Auditorium. This exhibit added much to our knowledge of the difficulties our founding fathers had in establishing themselves on our Virginia shores.

While all of our Committee meetings were being held and plans were being formulated and carried out, Mr. Robert Nelson Anderson, Jr. was working on a scale model of a Virginia Indian Village. It was meticulously done, with every detail perfectly executed. On May the 24th this Indian Village and Arlington Indian Artifacts supplied by the Smithsonian Institution, were unveiled at the County Court House. Miss Cornelia B. Rose, Jr. did much of the research that went into this exhibit. To both of these people we owe a debt of gratitude.

One of the finest accomplishments in this discovery of our past through the 350th Anniversary Celebration was the publishing of a book by the County Board entitled "Indians of Arlington County". Miss Cornelia B. Rose, Jr. is the author. She brought her fine abilities as a researcher and historian together and the result is a fascinating story of our Indian heritage preserved for us. At a meeting of the County Board on Saturday, May the 25th, an edition of 5,000 of these books were presented to the 350th Anniversary Committee. These are now in the public schools of Arlington, as well as the libraries. Additional copies may be re-

ceived at the offices of the Arlington Chamber of Commerce.

Our 350th Anniversary Week began on June 9th. Many civic clubs had special programs. Churches gave special recognition of the event. From the 10th to the 17th Mr. Robert Nelson Anderson, Sr. and Delegate Harrison Mann exhibited their collections of the early codes of Virginia in the Court House lobby.

The major event of this week was the Festival Banquet on Friday, June 14th at 7:30 P.M. at Arlington Towers. The Banquet Committee, under the capable Chairmanship of Congressman Joel Broyhill, planned well for this high point in our celebration. Senator Harry Flood Byrd was fittingly selected to be the guest speaker. The Vice President and Mrs. Nixon had graciously accepted our invitation to be the Guests of Honor. The Virginia Congressional Delegation and Delegates and Senators from the nearby political entities, along with the Mayors of Alexandria and Falls Church, were all invited to share this notable event. At 8:00 o'clock 412 guests sat down to Arlington's premier social event. Mr. Fague Springman, Professor of Voice at the University of Maryland, set the background gloriously as he led in singing "The Star Spangled Banner".

Due to a night session of both the House and the Senate word came through that neither Senator Byrd nor the Vice President would be able to be present. What a predicament to be in! Mr. Broyhill welcomed the guests and presented the Toastmaster, State Senator Charles R. Fenwick. Here was the test of a Toastmaster. With the two major attractions out, all that could be done was to improvise. The Washington-Lee High School Madrigal Singers, under the direction of Miss Florence Booker, extended their program and pleased everyone. Selections rendered included "My Bonnie Lass," Thomas Morley (1557-1603); "The Silver Swan", Orlando Gibbons (1583-1625); and "All Creatures Now are Merry Minded", John Bennett (c 1599). Mr. Springman, accompanied by Mrs. Springman, filled in beautifully to the delight of the assembled guests. One of our honored guests was Mrs. Ivy Baker Priest, Treasurer of the United States. She was called upon to speak and captured the hearts of all. Her ready wit and spontaneous references to our Virginia heritage helped us to forget our disappointments. With all lights dimmed and candles softly glowing on each table, Mr. Springman brought this historic occasion to a close by singing "The Lord's Prayer."

The event toward which the whole county looked with keen anticipation was the Pageant "Hushed Were Their War Cries".

This pageant was chosen by competition. Many manuscripts were submitted. A Committee of competent judges selected the manuscript submitted by Miss Margie W. Robertson. A prize of \$100.00 had been offered for the best pageant. This award was made to Miss Robertson at the meeting of the Ad Club of Washington at which time Mr. Lewis McMurrin, Jr., the Chairman of the Jamestown Festival, was the speaker.

The task of producing the pageant was in the capable hands of Mrs. Marjorie Hopkins and no one ever worked harder on a production. After trials and tribulations the first night of the pageant arrived, June the 21st.

Fort Myer had been secured as the production site. A fitting background was built and all staging details completed. Professor James Byrd of Maryland University was the Director and Miss Dorothy Madden, the Choreographer.

Would we have an audience? Arlington answered and thrilled all of us. The people came from all directions and when the lights went on 1200 people were on hand to see what Mrs. Hopkins and her Committee had produced. The audience reacted wonderfully. We all breathed easier and waited for the next night. The crowds grew and though we had several nights that threatened rain and on which rain actually came, it is estimated that at least 15,000 people saw Arlington's tribute to the Founding of Virginia "Hushed Were Their War Cries". To a host of people we owe a debt of gratitude for their participation and for hours and days of work. To our County Manager, Mr. A. T. Lundberg, who gave us kindest consideration and much help, we give our best thanks.

This Pageant will be produced again during May of 1958 at Stratford Junior High School.

We pause to salute the schools of Arlington County, public and private, for an outstanding program of anniversary events. Dr. Edward Rutter, Superintendent of Schools, Dr. Glenn Hass and Dr. Joseph Johnson of the School Administration gave the Anniversary Committee their full support. They deserve our highest praise. The same can be said for the parochial schools. Father Beattie, Co-Chairman of the Committee, did a magnificent job. The parochial schools made a 100% contribution to the Anniversary Celebration. Through the schools every child and thousands of parents were given a new and abiding indoctrination in American history. The school program included creative writing, choral reading, puppetry, dramatics, field trips, mural making,

displays, pageantry, motion pictures, film strips, and oral dramatizations.

While not a project of the Anniversary Committee, it would not be amiss to believe that the feature articles in the Northern Virginia Sun by Mrs. Eleanor Lee Templeman were inspired by this celebration. Mrs. Templeman gave of herself, beyond the call of duty, in literally digging into Arlington's past and producing a store of material with pictures that have both entertained and thrilled the thousands who have read them.

The Committee — at Mrs. Templeman's suggestion — has created an archives where these pictures are to be kept for future study and reference.

Aided by Mrs. Templeman's research, our Pilgrimage Committee, through extensive correspondence and much personal effort, arranged to have historical markers placed at a number of the points of historic interest throughout the County. Mrs. Alfred Krebs and Mrs. Carl Carpenter took this responsibility and on June 11, 1957 the first marker was placed at Glebe Road and Wilson Boulevard marking Ball's Crossroads. Others are being placed and it is the hope of this Committee that this work will be continued until every historic spot in the County is adequately marked.

Possibly one of the finest accomplishments of our celebration was the production of our Anniversary Program. Here we had the expert knowledge of Mr. Ben Cooper and the resources of Cooper-Trent Company to draw on. Mr. Arlo Greer of the Cooper-Trent organization did the art work, and from all who have seen what he produced has come nothing but the highest praise. Without the always gracious help of Mr. Ben Cooper, our Program would have been impossible.

The Program contains a Calendar of Events, the Festival Banquet Program, the Religious Observance Announcement, and an extensive resumé of the Pageant "Hushed Were Their War Cries", pictures and sketches of the cast and those who made the production possible. Centering the Program is a perfectly wonderful historical map of Arlington with accompanying legend. Then follows a brief history of Fort Myer. Featuring the Program is a page devoted to a list of the old families of Arlington, families going back beyond 1920. A page is given to our sponsors, without whose help this Anniversary Celebration would have been impossible. Since we were but a part of a total program, the next pages are devoted to "The Jamestown Festival", and

the two pageants presented at Williamsburg — “The Founders” and “The Common Glory”. Since the most historic spot in Arlington is the Lee Mansion, the Program carries this historic shrine as a motif. Last in the Program is a page devoted to the Arlington County Celebration Committee which is reproduced at the end of this article. Assisting in the editing of the Program was Mrs. Helen Fredlund and Mr. Robert Nelson Anderson, Sr., who contributed much to make it not only a thing of artistic beauty but something of literary value.

The last event for 1957 was the Religious Observance Service at Arlington Amphitheater on Sunday, October 6th, at 4:00 P.M. The Honorable Francis Pickens Miller was the speaker. The clergy and people of all faiths joined in this climatic service. Following the service, wreaths were placed at the graves of the Unknown Soldier of World War I and the Unknown Soldier of the Revolutionary War. Rev. William Foster was Chairman of this Committee.

In conclusion it would be inappropriate not to say that the Chairman of the Finance Committee, Mrs. Frances Woolley, aided by Mr. Robert Peck, Chairman of the Steering Committee, Mr. Robert Johnson, Secretary of the Chamber of Commerce, Dr. Joseph Johnson of the Public Schools of Arlington, Mrs. Frank Ball, Sr., and Mrs. Marjorie Hopkins, all met again and again and gave of themselves without reserve. Without their ever-ready response to help work out the many problems we faced, the celebration could not have succeeded. Also much credit is due Mrs. Jane Harlan, the Secretary at St. Mark’s Church, for her splendid cooperation throughout the whole venture.

**The Arlington County Committee  
on the  
350th Anniversary Celebration**

Reverend George E. Schnabel, *Chairman*  
Rabbi Noah Golinkin, *Co-Chairman*  
Father R. Dixon Beattie, *Co-Chairman*

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Dr. Lucas H. Blevins  
Mrs. Marie Leap  
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