

THE EVENING STAR CUP

By WILLIAM G. WATT *

Civic leaders are usually the unsung heroes in the development of any community. Here in Arlington they work for the improvement of our county with no thought of reward other than an inward glow of satisfaction for what they have accomplished. Their tangible monuments may be seen in our beautiful parks and playgrounds, modern libraries, excellent school facilities, and the many other attributes that go to make up the modern county we call Arlington.

Back in 1927, Oliver Owen Kuhn, then managing editor of the *Washington Star* newspaper, who was very active in civic affairs concerning Montgomery County, Maryland, presented a trophy to the Chamber of Commerce in Bethesda, to be awarded annually by that organization for outstanding civic work. Mr. Kuhn died in July 1937. The following year, the *Star*, carrying out the tradition established by Mr. Kuhn, presented silver loving cups to the following four civic federations: Arlington County Civic Federation; Prince Georges Federation of Civic Associations; Federation of Citizens Associations of the District of Columbia; and the Federation of Civic Associations D.C. These cups were to be awarded annually as each federation saw fit. The Arlington County Civic Federation decided that the cup would be awarded to "the delegate or committee of the Federation having made the greatest contributions to civic endeavor during the year."

Our *Star* Cup was first awarded in 1938 to Robert Plymale, Chairman of the Public Utilities Committee, which had conducted an active campaign on the issue of a municipal power plant for the county. The work of his committee resulted in much needed reforms in the electric utilities field. The second recipient was Julian Simpson who had served as Secretary of the Federation for six years and had headed many of the Federation's committees. In 1940, the Cup was awarded to Albert Carretta for his efforts which led to a liberalization of the Hatch Act as it applied to government workers. The Cup was not awarded in 1941 as the Federation did not deem the work of any delegate or committee that year to be outstanding. The Hospital Committee, under the chairmanship of Carlton Lewis, received the Cup in 1942 for its work in the establishment of the Arlington Hospital. Dr. Victor Meyers, Chairman of the Parks and Playgrounds Committee, was awarded the Cup in 1943, for spearheading the bond issue to acquire sites for parks and playgrounds. In the following year, the work of the Public Welfare Committee, Chairman Florence Arnheim, was recognized for its efforts in bringing the Y.M.C.A. to the county.

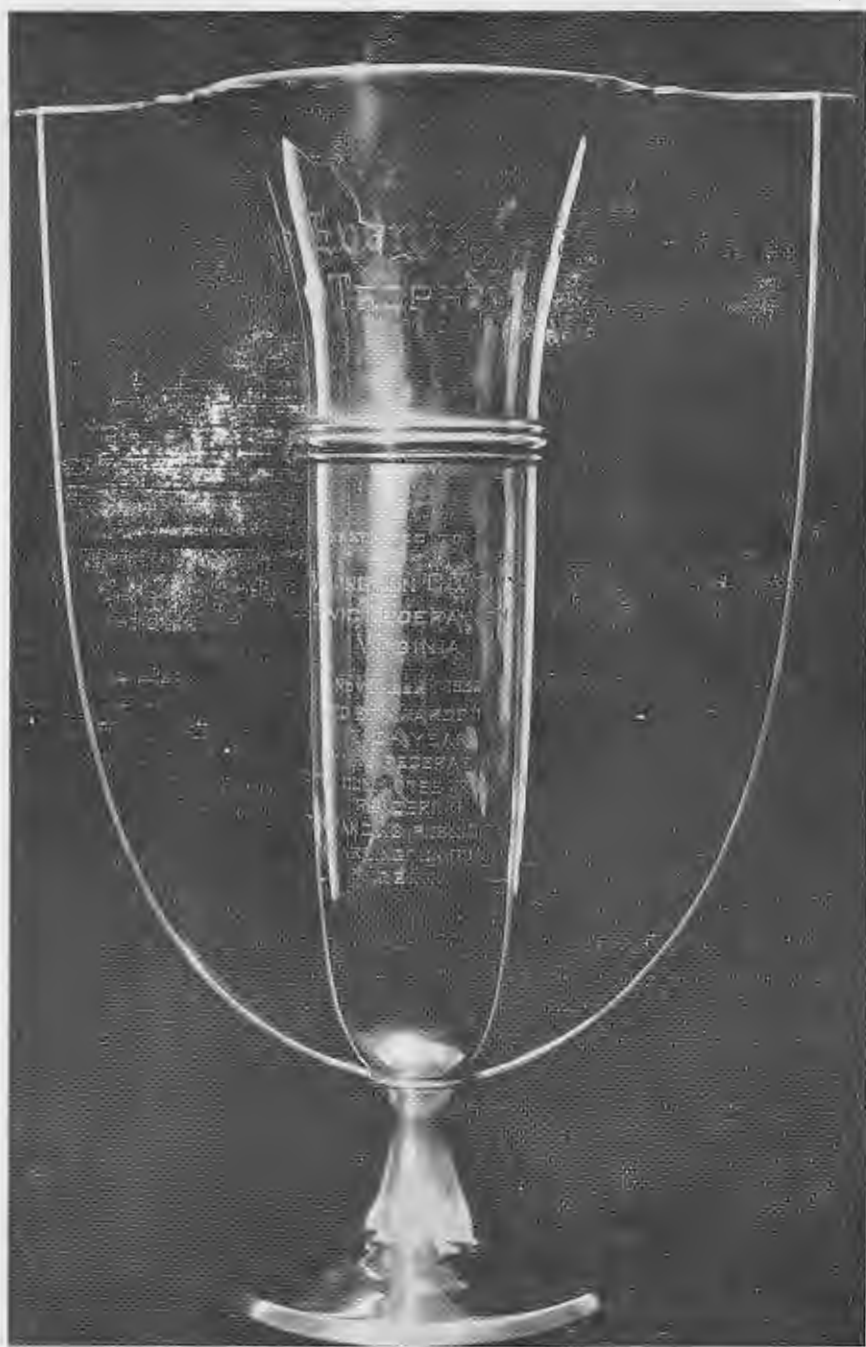
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1945 saw the establishment of a special Arlington War Memorial Committee, under the chairmanship of Beulah Goss. This committee coordinated the efforts of the various county groups in seeking to provide a suitable memorial to those who gave their lives in World War II. The concrete evidence of this effort is the War Memorial Stadium at Washington-Lee High School.

The next recipient of the Cup was William G. Watt who in 1946 was instrumental in bringing the Barter Theater to Arlington; served on the Arlington Centennial Committee; and inaugurated the Federation Bulletin which he still edits today. In 1947, the Federation honored Dr. Oscar LeBeau as the person most responsible for obtaining an elected School Board for Arlington, and also as the founder of the Citizens Committee for School Improvement. The following year, the Cup was given to Ruby Simpson as a spontaneous tribute to a President who despite illness, carried out her duties far beyond the call of duty. Her active association with other county-wide organizations did much to contribute to the success of the Federation's work. The year 1949 saw the Cup awarded to Robert W. Cox, who as Chairman of the Revenue and Expenditures Committee, had made an exhaustive study of the county's financial structure, and had presented to the County Board constructive ideas, many of which were subsequently adopted.

The Fifties were ushered in by the giving of the Cup to Malcolm D. Miller, a quiet but indefatigable worker whose committee work had been outstanding. In 1951, the Cup went to one of our most colorful delegates Harley M. Williams. He always appeared at meetings armed with a number of books, never missed a County Board meeting, and was at the time, Chairman of the Good Government Committee. Mrs. Shirley Wheeler received the Cup in 1952. Her interest lay in school matters at a time when the Arlington school system was developing into one of the foremost in the country. She was the Chairman of the Schools Committee. Another woman was awarded the Cup in 1953—Ruth O'Dell Cox, who as President of the Federation, did much to foster a better relationship with the business interests in the county, while at the same time urging much needed civic reforms. For a third year in a row the Cup was received by a woman, when Alice Campbell, who quietly but most effectively, over the years, had rendered civic service, was finally recognized by the Federation in 1954. In 1955, Walter Kingsbury, Chairman of the Public Utilities Committee, whose avocation was public utilities matters, received the Cup. He served on the county's Public Utilities Commission, and on the Public Utilities Committee of the Interfederation Council.

The next to win the Cup was William A. Backus, the type of delegate who was always willing to walk the extra mile. Any duties entrusted to him were meticulously executed. He had those qualities of true leadership which contributed so much to the Federation's successful year of 1956. The 1957 Cup went to Mary Cook Hackman for her outstanding efforts



on behalf of the Federation particularly in relation to Civic Month. She was later to become President of the Federation. The following year, the Cup was awarded to Lorna Hutchings, as Chairman of the Schools Committee. This was during a very difficult period in the history of Arlington schools when we were about to lose our elected School Board and there were prospects of returning to the old electoral system of selecting school board members. A compromise was effected whereby the members are appointed by the County Board. In 1959, Robert Reynolds received the trophy. He had served as Chairman of the County's Route 66 Advisory Committee and was instrumental in leading it to a choice of routes most satisfactory to the community.

The beginning of the Sixties was marked by the giving of the Cup to Clarence Salisbury. One of the most hard-working delegates we ever had, with a keen legal mind, he contributed vastly to the work of the Federation. He was followed by Howard W. Gammon, another delegate with a profound knowledge of county government affairs. His citation commended him for invaluable service over the years and particularly praised his detailed evaluation of the county budget system. The Cup was awarded in 1962 to John B. Lohman for his continued effective and imaginative leadership in the field of community planning. His ideas were endorsed by the Federation and many adopted by the County Board. He later served on the Arlington County Planning Commission. In 1963, William Graham was awarded the Cup for his general ability as Chairman of the Executive Committee. He later became President of the Federation and was appointed to the Arlington School Board. The 1964 holder of the Cup was Marie Dresser who received the award for her outstanding work as Chairman of the Community Development Committee. Her knowledge of zoning throughout the county was prodigious. She had been active in civic affairs for over a quarter of a century. In 1965, the Cup again went to the Schools Committee, this time under the chairmanship of June Lehman. A blue ribbon committee, it submitted excellent reports to the Federation which were the basis of our recommendations to the school board.

Mr. and Mrs. Leslie Logan, the only husband and wife team to receive the Cup, were given this distinction in 1966. As President of the Arlingtonians for the Preservation of the Potomac Palisades, Leslie Logan, ably assisted by his wife, had led the fight to save the landscape for our children. In 1967, John McComb, the Federation's Secretary, who had carried out his duties in a most meticulous manner and had proved himself to be the most helpful of secretaries, received the Cup. James M. Warnock, as Chairman of the Revenue and Expenditures Committee, was presented with the Cup in 1968. His committee of 17 members, which had the heroic task of reviewing the proposed county and school budgets, made many constructive suggestions which were forwarded to the County Board. In 1969, the Cup was won by Edward J. Kelly who received the trophy for his "total involvement in civic work". He headed the special committees on

race relations and high density apartments; was very active in the Health and Welfare Councils; in fact, in all activities enhancing human dignity. The present holder of the Cup (1970) is Dr. Lawrence Morscher, who worked hard as Chairman of the Recreation Committee to interest the county government in public swimming pools. He was appointed by the County Board to make a study of the subject and succeeded in having a bond issue for the pools placed on the ballot. The voters endorsed the proposal and the county will build three pools.

This brief resume of the history of the Washington *Evening Star* Cup, as it relates to Arlington, is indicative of the varied interests of the Arlington County Civic Federation in its continued struggle to make the county one of the foremost in Virginia.