

History of Country Club Hills, Fairfax, Virginia

Have you been to the Fairfax Museum on Main Street? It was the first elementary school in Fairfax, and was built in 1873. The museum produces exhibits on city-related history.

If you're a quilter or a quilt aficionado then you should head over there and learn about a WPA project that employed quilters at the old Fairfax Courthouse from 1936 thru 1941. Upstairs at the museum is a permanent exhibit dedicated to the town/city of Fairfax. The exhibit traces the history of the area from when it was inhabited by Indians, through colonial times, the civil war, its time as a farming village, and the more recent suburbanization period.

There's an amusing quote on display from George Washington in regard to his experience with the roads in this area in 1774. He calls them "the worst roads that ever was trod by Man or Beast". I guess some things never change.

The exhibit at the Museum led me to wonder about the nature of our neighborhood before it became Country Club Hills. What was here before all the houses? Who owned it and what did they do with it the land? The library has numerous resources available to research City history. The Hopkin's Map published in 1878 shows the local roads and landowners. A landowner had to pay \$5 to have his name on the map, \$10 for the name to appear in large type.

Judging from this map, it's clear that the Willcoxon family owned the land that would eventually become CCH. In 1810 Rezin Willcoxon owned one thousand acres in the area, and in 1854 his son Albert bought 367 acres from this father. His land included, what is now the police station, CCH, Old Lee Hills and Daniels Run Elementary. He operated a farm, growing mostly wheat and oats and ran it with slaves. The land remained in the hands of the Willcoxon's for four generations. The family lived in the Blenheim house through the Civil War when the area was occupied by northern troops (which must have been uncomfortable for Albert, since he voted for secession). After the war the Willcoxons turned to dairy farming, like many farmers in Fairfax County.

The county was the largest dairy producer in Virginia for a long period and was very successful. Albert died in 1885, and his wife Mary in 1903. Albert's son Harry inherited the house and land on the CCH side off Old Lee Highway and his sister, Bessie inherited what is now Old Lee Hills. The green house with the high wall on the corner of Old Post Road, was her home. In 1948 the 4th generation Barbara Scott and her Mother 3rd generation Margarite Duras sold all except 12 acres, the surrounding land which become CCH.

Today, the home of Albert and the 12 acres is a City Park and houses a Civil War Museum and is open for all residents to enjoy. So there you have it. What was in our neighborhood before we all showed up? Cows. Thanks to Karen Moore of the Fairfax City Library and Andrea Lowenwarter, Historic Resources Specialist of Historic Blenheim for their help with this article.

Steve Lescure
CCH Historian 2011- 2012