

PROCEEDINGS OF THE ARLINGTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Meeting of September 13, 1974

The Society met at the Arlington Historical Museum. There were 237 members in the Society at that time.

Mr. Dean Allard announced that the Society had been offered the Ball-Sellers House, probably the oldest home in Arlington, as a gift from Mrs. Marian Sellers.

Professor Francis Grubar of George Washington University spoke on "Clark Mills, Sculptor."

Meeting of November 8, 1974

The Society met at the Arlington Historical Museum. The treasurer reported a balance of \$2,373.45. Proceeds from the Historic Arlington Day house tour were \$1,395.00.

Elizabeth Cannon Kimball (Mrs. D. Blaine) spoke on "Washington-Lee High School in the Early Years, 1924-1939."

Meeting of January 10, 1975

The Society met at the Arlington Historical Museum. The treasurer reported a balance of \$2,715.03. In addition, the Ball-Sellers House Fund stood at \$1,625.00.

Mrs. Ann Fuqua, site supervisor at Arlington House, spoke on "George Washington Parke Custis."

Meeting of March 14, 1975

The Society met at the Arlington Historical Museum. The treasurer reported a balance on hand of \$2,506.37 on the operating account and \$2,430.50 on the Ball-Sellers House Fund.

Mr. Dean Allard, Chairman of the Ball-Sellers House Fund, reported that the house had passed to the Society's title on February 1, and a dedication ceremony had been held on the grounds of the property.

Mr. Edward Sayle, Chairman of Arlington's Bicentennial Commission, outlined the plans for the County's participation in the celebrations.

Meeting of May 9, 1975

The Society met at the Arlington Historical Museum. The treasurer reported a balance on hand of \$2,180.78 on the operating account and \$2,338.57 on the Ball-Sellers House Fund account.

Mr. Dean Allard, Chairman of the Nominating Committee, presented the following slate of officers for 1975-76, which was elected unanimously:

President, June B. Verzi; First Vice President, Ruth M. Ward; Second Vice President, Willard J. Webb; Treasurer, Munson H. Lane, Jr.; Secretary, Joan E. Young; Directors, Doris C. Bangs, Hyman J. Cohen, Lee E. Metcalf, Donald J. Orth, Jeanne Rose, Patricia D. Shipley.

Historic Arlington Day

The annual observance of Historic Arlington Day began with a candlelight tour of Arlington House on Friday evening, October 11, followed by the house tour and open house at the Museum on Saturday, October 12, from 1 to 5 p.m. The following places were visited on the tour: Bloomingdale, home of Mr. and Mrs. Lawrence

S. Lewin, 3015 N. Tacoma St.; Allencrest, home of Col. and Mrs. Quentin L. Zell, 2450 N. Powhatan St.; Bellevue, home of Mr. and Mrs. William H. Dempsey, 3311 N. Glebe Rd.; the Mary Carlin House, home of Mr. and Mrs. Charles E. Titus, 5512 N. Carlin Springs Rd.; and the home of Mr. and Mrs. William C. White, 2305 S. Pierce St.

The Aurora Hills Woman's Club served refreshments at the Museum.

Christmas Reception

On Sunday, December 15, 1974, Dr. and Mrs. William T. Back opened their lovely home to the Society for the annual Christmas reception. About 150 members attended and enjoyed the holiday decorations by candlelight.

Gifts: 1974-1975

Mr. W. Glenn Bixler: Ten old firefighting pictures.

Mrs. W. W. Brown: English Staffordshire ironstone bowl with blue transfer and panelled body.

Mrs. Garnett K. Corder: Spools of thread.

Mr. James Gentry: Ten colored slides of archeological dig at the Ball-Sellers House.

Leonard T. Golden: Original plans of old Arlington County Court House.

League of Women Voters of Arlington: "Your Virginia State Government."

Mr. Talbott Marcey: 100-year-old cutting box.

Mrs. Elsie H. McNeely: Opera cape and patchwork quilt with pieces dating from 1891.

Anne Reppin: Three 45 rpm records "The Echo" series by Washington-Lee High School.

Joseph B. Roberts: Two prints of the old Aqueduct Bridge.

Mrs. Marian Sellers: Twelve prints of the Ball-Sellers House.

Mrs. T. M. Swain: 1881 Graduate Program, Georgetown University Law School.

Ruth M. Ward: Fire extinguishers for the Ball-Sellers House.

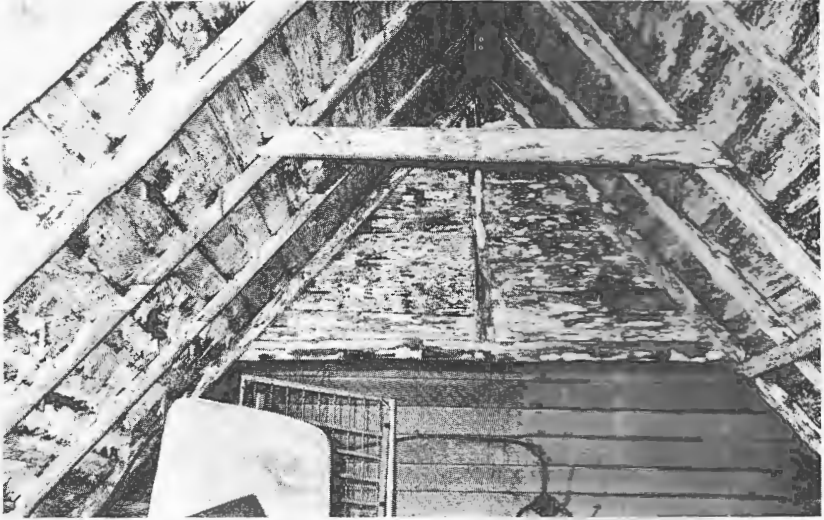
Mr. and Mrs. Henry W. Wibert: Loan of wooden cradle, large meat cleaver, candle mold, pitcher, and wash bowl.

Ball-Sellers House

In early 1975, Mrs. Marian Sellers of Vienna, Virginia, donated the historic Ball-Sellers House to the Arlington Historical Society for preservation. The Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission placed the house on the Virginia Landmarks Register of Historic Places. The house was entered in the National Register in July. The following is an excerpt from the Commission's nomination report describing the architectural features of the house:

The Ball-Sellers House stands at 5620 South Third Street on an open lot amidst a late-nineteenth-century development in the Glencarlyn section of Arlington County. Presently consisting of a one-story log structure and a two-story frame wing, it has had a complex structural history.

The log section is probably the original house and dates from the mid- to late eighteenth century. It is a single-cell structure with opposed front and rear doors, a single window opening on the front, and another on the east gable end, which presumably gave access to a no-longer extant wing. The exterior is covered with "German" or novelty siding, so it is not possible to determine the type of corner timbering used. A later porch roof sweeps close



Clapboard roof from the loft



Clapboard roof showing protective roof built around it

to the ground across the length of the front of the log section. The cellar framing of this section indicates that there was a chimney with a seven-foot fireplace opening at the west end.

Soon after the log house was built, a frame lean-to ell was added to the original building. Like the interior of the log section, it is plastered roughly and retains portions of double-beaded chairboard. Two early vertical-beaded-board doors lead into the log section, and from the log section into the lean-to. The latter has a handsome early latch. Architrave door frames complete the interior trim. The ceiling of the ell is plastered, but that of the main room has roughly hewn exposed joists. Access to the loft is obtained through a hole in the southeast corner of the main room, where the marks of a former stair framing can be seen.

The loft is the most notable feature of the Ball-Sellers House, for it contains a rare clapboard roof, protected by a later roof built around it but independent of it, thus preserving the original almost intact. It consists of riven oak clapboards, about four feet long, attached to roughly split rafters with collars which were raised at an early date to allow more headroom. The undersides of the clapboards and the rafters are whitewashed. There survive portions of the light lathing used to steady the rafters while the clapboards were being attached and sections of the whitewashed clap daubing used to caulk the angle where the roof meets the loft floor.

Another early wing, attached to the east end of the log section, is visible in an early-twentieth-century photograph, but has since been removed.

At the west end of the log section, a frame wing was attached in the late eighteenth or early nineteenth century. This was taken down and replaced by the present plain, two-story wing in 1885. Two mantels from the demolished wing were reused in the new one—a plain Greek Revival mantel on the first floor and a Federal mantel with an architrave surround and an unsupported molded mantel shelf with dentil work. Some six-panel, raised-panel doors were also reused.

In the yard are a well head and a small log barn. The latter is now covered with novelty siding. . . .¹

¹ Letter, Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission to Donald Orth, July 1, 1975, encl. (1), Nomination Form to the National Register of Historic Places. Arlington Historical Society Archives.