

the Village News

Volume 41 Issue 4

Serving the people of Cabin John and beyond

Unveiling of Panel for Meeting Hall and Cemetery Draws Dignitaries, Volunteers and Descendents

by Burr Gray

On October 21, 2007, a warm fall day, years of effort by the Cabin John Citizens Association (CJCA) and Cabin John volunteers resulted in a very nice and meaningful ceremony that featured the unveiling of a 2 x 3 ft. panel and base located just off Seven Locks Road next to Cypress Grove Lane. The panel celebrates several sites of historic interest in Cabin John: Moses Hall (a former community center founded in 1887), the related cemetery, and the Gibson Grove A.M.E. Zion Church (Founded 1898). Following the unveiling, there was a short walk through the woods to the Moses Hall cemetery along the path recently re-established as part of the effort to preserve the cemetery. We had a number of dignitaries attend, including Montgomery County Councilmember Roger Berliner, Commissioner



From left to right: Warren Fleming, Judy & Edgar Bankhead, Roger Berliner, Colleen & Trav Daniel with daughter Marley, Bill Bronrott, and Burr Gray.

Warren Fleming from the Historic Preservation Commission, and Delegate Bill Bronrott. We were also honored to have Pastor Edgar Bankhead and his wife Judy, and members of the First Agape AME Zion Church at Gibson Grove.

Members of the CJCA were prompted by former Cabin John resident Diane Leatherman years


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Holiday Crafts Show Set For Dec. 2

Friends of the Clara Barton Community Center will be staging their Holiday Crafts Show on Sunday, December 2, 2007 from 1 to 6 pm at the Clara Barton Center. The fundraiser is an opportunity to purchase the work of local artisans and support the community center at same time. The show will feature textiles, paintings, wood crafts, glass, paper crafts, jewelry, photographs, pottery, and much more. Baked goods will also be available for purchase.

Admission is free. We look forward to seeing you there! — 





Neighborly News

by Barbara Martin

Joe LaCurto died in October from complications following heart surgery. As an Air Force captain, Joe was a Vietnam veteran. He was with NASA for over 30 years and retired a few years ago. His widow, **Phyllis Anderson**, and children **Mike** and **Amanda**, live on Little Leigh Court.

Flags up for Veterans Day!! **David Murphy** studied the method of erecting flags used by the city of Gaithersburg, and brought the new system to Cabin John. With helpers **Reed Martin** and **Burr Gray**, the team put up 27 flags in less than an hour, using special poles and brackets—but no ladders.

Susan Gelb was featured in the holiday issue of the *Behnke Garden News*. She's a Master Gardener who has more than 20 year's experience with area nurseries dispensing her horticultural wisdom.

Please let me know of any news items about your family, your neighbors, or former Cabin Johners—births, marriages, deaths, new residents. Barbara Martin 301-229-3482 or barbmartin@comcast.net.

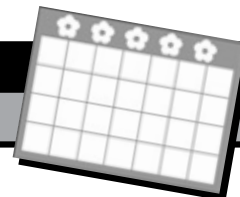
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Community Calendar



NOV

27CJCA Meeting
Clara Barton Center
7:30 pm

DEC

2Holiday Craft Show
Clara Barton Center
1 - 6 pm

9Annual Holiday Party
Clara Barton Center
5 - 7 pm (see insert)

16First Agape Art Fundraiser
3309 Bunker Hill Rd
Mount Rainier, MD
2 - 8 pm (see p. 6)

JAN

7Fitness Classes Begin
Clara Barton Center
various times (see p. 12)

The Third House on the Left (Part 2)

by Ger Quinn

Editor's Note: In Part 1 of Ger Quinn's story, which ran in last month's Village News, he described his discovery of his house's architectural history and the initial steps he took in making modifications to the structure.

One of the most important changes I made was to move the front door of the house. This had several good effects, mainly that it re-orientated the house to make the best advantage of the lot. The house now looks at the woods instead of looking at the street from its uncomfortably close distance. After I had finished moving the front door I discovered the original blueprints for the house in yet another box of old things Mrs. Jessup left behind in a back shed. The plans showed the front door in exactly the location I had moved it to. The change required an elevated porch on the side of the house that I extended into a deck across the back. It was a major change and a challenge to do it in a way that looks consistent with the 1953 design. I designed sleek, steel railings for the deck that don't interfere with the view. I bought raw steel stock, cut and welded it, and painted the railings with a multi coat automotive enamel system in a metallic teal Cadillac color that merges well with the woods. It was a lot of trouble, well spent. After 18 years, the paint job finally needs to be redone.

A new kitchen was mandatory. The 1953 version was barely functional. I chose a strictly utilitarian approach to the cabinets, counters and appliances and have been 100% satisfied every day since—with the exception of a rather pricey Dacor range that turned out to be one of the worst purchases I ever made. I put up with it for a few years, then called Goodwill to come take it off my hands. My kitchen remodeling coincided with the renovations at the Clara Barton School in 1987, and as a result, I have oak flooring in my kitchen that I salvaged from the dumpster behind the school. There are ink stains on several of the boards, dripped by students fumbling to master their fountain pens .

A view to the north

My biggest glass exposure faces north toward the woods, although conventional wisdom says that south-facing glass is preferred. When I lived in Maine I learned to immediately distinguish the authentic old capes from the identical-in-every-detail reproductions by the simple fact that old



Continuous lines from the inside out extend the visual space, making smaller rooms seem spacious. Steel porch railings leave the view relatively unobstructed.

farm houses were always built facing south. But I've learned the unconventional wisdom of having lots of glass on the north side. First of all, this isn't New England (two seasons: Winter and Fourth of July). Our dominant season is Summer, or should I say SUMMER. South facing glass is a big liability during Summer below the 40th parallel. Secondly, a view to the South is always glarey; you're always looking into the sun. Backlit views can be dramatic, but for seeing what is out there—the Dogwoods, Redbuds, Azelias and Lilacs—front lighting is better and casts even illumination into the room. A Pepco energy auditor warned me that my walls of glass would bring a succession of woes, including faded fabrics and high heating costs. The prescription was to make the windows fewer, smaller and highly-insulated. That was bad advice all around, and I'm glad I rejected it. Not until 2006 did my heating cost exceed \$1,000 for the year, and the experience of floor-to-ceiling views of the seasons cannot be equalled by any interior decorative contrivance. But the North side of any house still suffers more from the weather,

(continued on page 5)



Looking Back in Cabin John

by Andrew E. Rice

A Brief Sketch of Cabin John's Development

This column began over 12 years ago, in March 1995, and has been appearing more or less regularly ever since. Over the years it has covered dozens of topics in Cabin John's history, from major enterprises like the famed Cabin John Bridge Hotel to important community institutions and organizations to personal reminiscences by oldtimers and much more. I'm always open to new subjects, so if you have one to suggest or have some interesting historical information to share, please don't hesitate to get in touch with me at aeric@comcast.net or 301-229-3503.

In the column below I am plagiarizing myself, since most of it appeared initially in the April 1996 Village News. I reproduce it now, with a few editorial changes and additions, because our town has been growing steadily and many of you reading it were not around in 1996 and might like to know the basic framework of Cabin John's physical development up to the middle of the last century.

The name "Cabin John" is sometimes confusing. Quite apart from the question of its origin, how do we explain Cabin John Mall, Cabin John Middle School, or Cabin John Regional Park, each of which is far removed from the community of Cabin John? The answer, of course, is that they are all located along the watershed of Cabin John Creek and it is from the creek that they derive their names.

What is known about the early history of Cabin John? The Indians who originally inhabited the area—among them the Susquehanas, the Piscataways, and the Senecas—were pushed out as European settlement expanded in the 17th century. Prince George's County was formed in 1695; it then

embraced all of what is now Montgomery County, which did not become a separate county until 1775.

Land in the Cabin John area was originally owned by several large landowners, but by the middle of the 19th century it was all in the hands of the family of Joseph G. White. After the Civil War, the family began to sell it off in pieces; the new owners included William Dowling (who built the large white house still standing on the west side of 80th Street), the Bobinger family (who built the Cabin John Bridge Hotel) and the Tuohey family (who owned the land that is now the shopping center).

The Dowling family gradually increased its holdings until, in 1912 (when it owned practically all the land except for the Bobinger and Tuohey tracts), the land was all sold (over 600 acres) for \$50,000 to the American Land Company headed by J.S. Tomlinson. This was the beginning of "modern" Cabin John.

Tomlinson called the area Cabin John Park and divided it into many lots of various sizes (although most were about 100 by 150 feet). His extensive advertising attracted many buyers, most of whom settled here but some of whom were only summer residents.

As the population increased, community life began to flourish, and the town grew further in World War II with the construction of Cabin John Gardens and Carver Road as temporary housing for war workers. Then in 1959 came a critical moment in Cabin John's history that might have led to a very different kind of community.

A real estate developer, the Bogley Company, came up with a plan to buy all the houses in Cabin John and convert the area to high-rise apartments, townhouses, and a shopping center. Company agents went door-to-door with offers to buy, and a strong division of opinion emerged among citizens, with some eager to sell and others dead set against the plan. Whether the company could have obtained the extensive rezoning that the plan would have required remains a moot point; at a dramatic meeting of the Citizens Association, held in the auditorium of the firehouse, residents voted 75% against the Bogley proposal, which was then abandoned. For the present, Cabin John's unique character had been preserved.



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QUINN

cont. from page 3

and windows suffer the most. I think this is mostly due to periods of extended wetness. Mildew and rot are the result. My North window walls were in bad shape when I moved in. The South and West sides are still original and still in good condition (single pane glass and all) after 55 years. One of the unnecessary costs people accept in current construction is window replacement. Good windows don't fail when the warranty expires. They can last indefinitely. But such windows cannot be ordered from a catalog. They are usually custom made and always installed thoughtfully by somebody with a lot of skill and knowledge. Replacing my North window wall was expensive and disruptive, and I didn't want to have to repeat it in my lifetime.

I decided to make my own windows—or more accurately, my friend Carl talked me into it. I have hired Carl to help with just about everything I have done. Sometimes he is my helper, sometimes I am his, but the important thing is that he brings a vast knowledge of materials, and a strong understanding of design. I designed a new window system that matched the Charles Goodman pattern, but I changed the dimensions slightly to accommodate a different corner detail. Goodman's corners are clunky and not well resolved, so I adapted a corner detail reminiscent of Frank Lloyd Wright. Then Carl and I went shopping for wood. Finding the right lumber can be time-consuming and often a matter of luck, but it matters immensely. Sadly, there are fewer and fewer local sources of good lumber. We decided to use Douglas Fir and found some select grade boards that pleased us at Gallagers in Northeast. Carl milled the boards on big stationary tools in a commercial shop—a system of rabbets, dados, mortices and miters that we assembled in a day on site with no additional cutting. This put us right about where things were in 1953 when the old windows were new. But this time it would be different. Before we installed the glass I treated all of the rabbets and exposed exterior wood with epoxy resin. We installed the glass (double pane units) with silicone and used battens to hold the panes and weather proof the joints. The battens were milled from the select Fir and treated with epoxy on all 4 sides. Before the epoxy was fully cured I painted the battens with marine enamel. This bonds the paint to the wood almost as if they were monolithic. The battens are secured with bugle head stainless screws that were pre countersunk. I gave each one a little dab of silicone under the head before seating it. The whole

thing was more to marine standards than residential construction. After 10 years it appears exactly as new. Except for one thing. Strangely, the glass seems like the weak link. Two small corner panes that face West show indications of something I've heard described as hazing. It's a slight translucency that can develop on sun exposed glass. Thermal glass seems much more prone to it than single pane glass. I'm doubtful about many things that are supposedly energy efficient and I suspect that the energy cost of making thermal glass is greater than the savings that it yields over its lifetime. On the North side the glass should not develop a film, but eventually I may need to replace a panel or two on the West side, an energy cost that will never be recovered. If I ever decide to replace my south-facing wall, I will not use thermal glass at all.

A roof over my head

Another of the signature elements of Goodman houses is the 2/12 roof pitch—an almost flat roof. Beyond conforming to the Mid-Century aesthetic, the strengths of this are elusive. Until I replaced it, my roof was built-up asphalt surfaced with gravel. It looked good and worked fine, but when the time came to replace it, the cost/benefit equation pointed in a different direction. Many Hollin Hills houses had their original asphalt roofs replaced with shingles, and the results are mixed. In terms of practicality and cost effectiveness nothing comes even close to conventional shingles as a residential roofing material. But I decided that I didn't want shingles on my low pitch. It is the lowest pitch on which conventional shingles can be used—or at least that some people think they can be used. In the frequent freeze and thaw cycles that characterize our winters, ice dams are a common problem on any pitch, and much more so on flatter roofs. Carl and I finally settled on a

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Voice Your Concerns About Airport Noise

Citizens for the Abatement of Aircraft Noise (CAAN) is updating its mailing list. If you are interested in following aircraft noise issues and would like to be included, please respond with your e-mail and mailing addresses to nonoise@caan.org. For more information, visit their website at www.caan.org.

The Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority (MWAA) is sponsoring a committee of airline pilots to fine-tune the north departure flight path into National Airport over the Potomac River using global positioning system (GPS) navigation. A north arrival flight path over the river to the American Legion Bridge is next.

CAAN has been in operation for 21 years, and some of its members were part of earlier organizations which operated as far back as the 1970's. CAAN's original objective was to work to reduce aircraft noise in the Metropolitan Washington D.C. area. In recent years, they have broadened their horizons to include other forms of pollution, concern for safety at National, and alternative forms of transportation. —

First Agape Art Fundraiser

Please come to the fundraiser for the historical restoration of Gibson Grove Church, burned by fire, and for the limited expansion for community ministry on Sunday December 16, 2-8 p.m.

hosted by

Joe's Movement Emporium (www.joesmovement.org)
3309 Bunker Hill Road, Mount Rainer, MD 20712

Artists desiring to participate should contact Nataliya at <http://www.natyartist.com>. You may also donate securely online at www.natyartist.com/events_art_fundraiser.html or mail checks payable to:

First Agape A.M.E. Zion Church
c/o Garland Conner,
P.O. Box 7285,
Woodbridge, VA 22195-7285

Haunted House Scares Up Some Thrills

The second annual Halloween Haunted House at the Clara Barton Community Center was a frightening success, once again being scary but not too scary. The event was sponsored by Friends of the Clara Barton Community Center. New scary things had been purchased from that frightening company Oriental Trading Co. and this year featured a fortune teller, Madam Leslie (a.k.a Leslie Barden) from Egypt who was not scary and in fact kept the kids mesmerized. Many thanks go to the following Cabin John residents who helped with the effort: Melissa & Krya Bell as the cackling (and we do mean cackling) witches, Witch Lori Rieckelman, scary medical intern Ruth Rabner, Donna "Fangs" Zeigfinger, Burr Gray (who played a hungry but ultimately very polite Viking), and Bruce and Ted Wilmarth who helped with set up. Frank Rans (a very scary man in his own right) from the Community Center also helped a great deal with setup. —



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GIBSON GROVE

cont. from page 1

ago to make efforts to preserve the cemetery that was part of the Moses Hall, a former social center/school house/meeting hall for African Americans during the late 1800's to mid-1900's. Moses Hall (also known as Morningstar Tabernacle Number 88, Ancient United Order of Sons and Daughters, Brothers and Sisters of Moses) itself has disappeared but the cemetery remains. In 2005, CJCA was awarded a grant of \$1000 by the Montgomery County Historic Preservation Commission to help with the project. Those funds are administered by the Historic Preservation Section of the Montgomery County Department of Park & Planning. The funds assisted with the cost of preparing the panel and base that tells the story of Moses Hall, the cemetery, and the nearby historic Gibson Grove Church. CJCA paid for the remainder of the costs (approx \$1500) and Cabin John residents provided over 200 hours of volunteer time to research and prepare the panel. Members of the Morningstar Tabernacle and the Gibson Grove church provided critical help to the effort.

The panel itself was designed by Colleen Daniel, and the stand was designed by Trav Daniel. Angela Coppola gathered oral histories and prepared documentation. Kevin Charles provided a keen editor's eye. Burr Gray, CJCA President, provided prodding and leadership as needed. The path to the cemetery and the clearing of trees and underbrush from the cemetery has been accomplished with the critical recent help of Boy Scout Troop 233, Cub Scout Pack 1320, and Daniel Gude of DC Gude Excavating. Boy Scouts David Helmer and Charlie Black have been instrumental in organizing fellow troop members and their parents to help with this part of the process. Scott Hoffman and Trav Daniel cut up the huge tree that had fallen on the cemetery. More effort remains to properly reestablish the cemetery.



A close-up view of the new display panel.

© Bill Bronnott

History of the Two Sites

Following the Civil War, the African American community in the Cabin John and Potomac area needed a place where they could gather and socialize. Land records show that the parcel of land where Moses Hall was built had been conveyed to Morningstar Tabernacle Number 88, Ancient United Order of Sons and Daughters, Brothers and Sisters of Moses on December 28, 1887 by George and Surilla Scott. (A second adjacent parcel of land was subsequently conveyed to Morningstar Tabernacle by John D. W. Moore on September 7, 1901.) The lodge built by the Morningstar Tabernacle became know as Moses Hall. While the hall has collapsed, we are told that the structure was a simple rectangular two story structure, painted brown with a cement floor as the foundation. Each floor consisted of a single large room where dances, parties and meetings were held.

(continued on page 9)

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CJCA News

by Burr Gray

The next meeting of the CJCA will be Nov. 27, 7:30 pm at the Clara Barton Community Center.

Next CJCA Meeting Agenda— 1) presentation of revised plan by developer (Hemingway Homes) of proposed 5-home development of the lot on MacArthur Blvd/79th St., 2) identification of top three worst traffic issues in Cabin John, 3) CJCA Holiday Party, Dec. 9th (5-7 pm) at Community Center.


Minutes for CJCA meeting of October 23, 2007— 1) Support for the *Village News*, as presented by Lorraine Minor – through 2004, CJCA funded up to \$2000 per year for the *Village News*. In 2005 and 2006 due to income from advertising, CJCA did not assist in funding. This September’s wonderful color issue added \$600 to the cost. A motion was approved to allocate up to \$1000 as needed to assist in funding year 2007.

2) Aircraft Noise—presented by Annette Davis, member of Citizens for the Abatement of Aircraft Noise (CAAN). Currently, there are restrictions against landing/takeoffs at Reagan National Airport during nighttime hours unless the planes are so-called “Stage 3” aircraft, which are quieter (under 72 dB) than older airplanes. Currently,

National has approximately 400 arrivals and 400 departures per day. The Senate recently voted to allow 10 more flights per day. On takeoff, aircraft are required to follow the river for 10 nautical miles, before continuing over land, unless weather is a factor. When landing, aircraft must follow the river as well. Please visit the website for Citizens for the Abatement of Aircraft Noise: www.caan.org, or email them at nonoise@caan.org with any concerns. National Airport also has a 24-hour Noise Complaint Hotline 703-417-8020.

3) Recent Judicial Decision Regarding Denial of Pipe Stem Lot Request on 78th St.—presented by Eric Federer. Several years ago Potomac Land Associates purchased a lot on 78th Street. They wished to subdivide the lot into two lots, creating a so-called “Pipe Stem Lot.” In Sept. 2006 their request was denied by the Maryland National Capital Park and Planning Commission (MNCPPC) following input from the adjacent landowners and CJCA. Potomac filed a petition for judicial review. The Circuit Court of Montgomery County upheld the MNCPPC board’s decision on Sept. 21, 2007.

4) Summer 2008 is the 400th anniversary of Captain John Smith’s explorations of the Potomac River and parts of the Chesapeake Bay. Cabin John is a community whose name is most likely derived from the Cabin John Creek, which was listed in old land records as Captain John’s Run or Branch. And Captain John is likely Captain John Smith, founder of Jamestown and the first man to map the Potomac River near Cabin John. His travel journal dates back to 1608. A motion was passed to create a committee to plan for the summer celebration. Please contact Burr Gray (burrgray@aol.com) if you are interested in planning the summer event.



December 2007 at REDEEMER

■ SUNDAY MORNING SCHEDULE

The Holy Eucharist	8:00 am
Adult Education	9:15 am
Choral Eucharist	10:30 am
Sunday School & Nursery Care	10:30 am

■ ADVENT & CHRISTMAS

Sunday, 2 December / The First Sunday of Advent

Advent Wreath-Making	12:00 noon
Lessons & Carols for Advent	5:00 pm

Monday, 24 December / Christmas Eve

Family Service: “The Friendly Beasts”	5:00 pm
Festal Eucharist with Choral Prelude	10:00 pm

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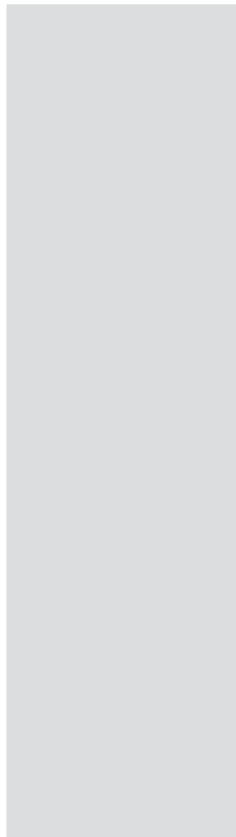


GIBSON GROVE *cont. from page 7*

The Morningstar Tabernacle/Moses Hall served as a center for freed slaves to meet, conduct business, as well as to socialize and celebrate with friends and family. It was for African Americans of all faiths who wished to become members, and included families from the church at the Pines, the Scotland church and the surrounding area in Potomac. Moses Hall was an African American lodge, sometimes referred to as a tabernacle, and was part of a larger community of lodges. It served not only as a center for social and business activity, but also provided the African American community with an identity as well as an infrastructure of support and caring. Dues were used to help those in need and to support families when wage earners were sick or passed away. The lodge was part of a network with other lodges and halls established by freed slaves throughout the metropolitan area. Moses Hall also served as a school from 1926 to 1931.

The Gibson Grove AME Zion Church was founded in 1898 by a group of ex-slaves who felt the need to have a house of worship near their small community at "Number 10", now know as Cabin John, Maryland. The congregation was named

(continued on page 11)



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Real Estate Activity in Cabin John Oct/Nov 2007

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<u>ACTIVE:</u>	<u>List Price</u>	<u>BR</u>	<u>FB</u>	<u>HB</u>	<u>Lvl</u>	<u>Fpl</u>
6416 83rd Pl	\$575,000	2	1	0	2	1
7501 MacArthur Blvd	\$995,000	5	3	1	3	1
6523 79th Pl	\$999,500	5	4	1	3	1
6410 83rd Pl	\$1,100,000	4	4	1	2	1
10 Carver Rd	\$1,185,000	6	4	1	4	1
8016 MacArthur Blvd	\$1,199,000	4	4	1	4	1
6416 83rd St	\$1,275,000	5	4	1	4	1
7410 Arden Rd	\$1,799,000	5	6	1	4	2
7711 MacArthur Blvd	\$1,895,000	6	5	1	3	1

<u>UNDER CONTRACT:</u>	<u>List Price</u>	<u>BR</u>	<u>FB</u>	<u>HB</u>	<u>Lvl</u>	<u>Fpl</u>
6424 Seven Locks Rd	\$1,475,000	5	4	1	3	4

<u>EXPIRED:</u>	<u>List Price</u>	<u>BR</u>	<u>FB</u>	<u>HB</u>	<u>Lvl</u>	<u>Fpl</u>
7864 Archbold Ter	\$525,000	3	2	1	3	0



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QUINN

cont. from page 5

modified bituminum product that's commonly used on the flat roofs of commercial buildings.

I made one major change to the roof. After we replaced some damaged plywood we covered the entire roof with 30# tar paper and then, instead of rolling out the modified bituminum membrane, we laid down 2x4s on edge directly over the roof joists and built a new roof deck raised above the old one. This created a 3 1/2 inch air space running continuously from the soffit to the ridge. This is called a "cold roof" because snow is less likely to melt on it, but there are 2 other main advantages in my case—the house is much cooler in the summer and secondly, since I have in effect 2 roofs, I'm confident that it won't leak—even though low pitch roofs are notoriously leak-prone. The added overall thickness of the roof required a new detail for the fascia boards. To have simply increased the width of the fascia boards would have made them overly massive and out of scale with the otherwise lightweight trim details. So I designed a stepped fascia that preserves the dimensions of the trim already in use. This also created an opportunity to increase the roof ventilation by making the vents continuous along the length of the soffit. The final touch was to enclose the soffits with Douglas Fir tongue and groove panelling.

Under the roof the house has cathedral ceilings. There are drawbacks to this, but I think the advantages outweigh them. Most obviously, the raised ceiling height exposes the structural and geometrical elements of the interior, and makes them the overriding visual feature. This works well to unify an open floor plan which can otherwise seem like a collection of disassociated islands. The cathedral ceilings also create space for high clerestory windows in the gable walls and make the rooms feel more spacious than they actually are. The main change I made to the ceilings was to lower the drywall half an inch by adding metal Z-strips perpendicular to the joists. The strips are designed to sound-proof rooms by isolating the drywall from the framing. But my reason for installing them was to eliminate the waviness of the ceiling drywall. The strips compress or expand enough to allow the ceiling drywall to hang perfectly flat, even though the framing is a little lumpy. Some of the main structure of the house was built from lumber that appears to have been salvaged from an old industrial building. The floor joists, for example, are full dimension, rough sawn

3X12s. The original ceiling suffered from the irregularity of the rafters, but the Z-strips have completely cured the problem. When it was all done I noticed another immediate improvement—airplane noise was greatly reduced.

What to make of change?

It has been a shock to see excavators peeling back topsoil and exposing the raw earth up and down my street. It never seems quite right again, even after the landscapers roll out a carpet of grass over the newly contoured ground. Well, when I say it never seems quite right, I mean for those of us who witnessed the process. Families who move into new houses are forward-looking and find them full of promise just as I did on the day I moved in. To me the main lesson is to try to remain forward looking myself and not see things as what they used to be. And to keep in mind that the idyllic past is only a comfortable and romantic delusion. There never was a pristine Cabin John. It used to be a rougher place than it is now. Before that it was overgrown farmland; before that, something else; before that, who knows? And at each step of the way, people were unsettled by the change.

(continued on page 13)



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Mid-Week Bible Study.... Vassar Circle

GIBSON GROVE*cont. from page 9*


Gibson Grove as a tribute to Mrs. Sarah Gibson, a very spiritual woman whose faith led her to donate part of her family's land to build a church, school and cemetery. Oral tradition tells us that Sarah, her husband Louis, and their two sons were freed by Union soldiers during the battle of Bull Run.

The original church was built from logs harvested from the Gibson's land. Baptisms took place in the Cabin John Creek which was about one-half mile to the south and east of the church. Men from the congregation dammed part of the stream to form a small pond where the baptisms could take place.

Twenty-five years later, in 1923, the church was rebuilt and moved to the current site. The beltway separates the church from the original Moses Hall site. An Ash Wednesday night fire in 2004 badly damaged the addition to the church, but the historic church was spared for the most part.

The original Gibson Grove Church had also been used as a schoolhouse until Sarah had a one room school house built near the church. Reports are scarce, but we know that Montgomery County had several African American schools which were not always properly funded in the early 1900's. There is a reference in the county books to moving the African American school to the Gibson Grove Church in 1911 and calling it the Cabin John Elementary School. That school was closed in 1922. We know that in 1922 when the school was closed, 24 African American students were left without a school for five years. In May of 1926, the school board rented Moses Hall for an African American school.

There is a graveyard next to the original Gibson Grove log cabin church, and we are told that the last burial at that location occurred in 1912. We know that there were at least three burials at the site of the current church which was built in 1923. When Sarah Gibson died in 1929, she was buried in the cemetery next to Moses Hall.

Descendants of African Americans who affiliated with Moses Hall and the Gibson Grove Church still reside in the Cabin John community or nearby. They have contributed much to the fabric of life in Cabin John and were instrumental in the early organizing and running of what is now Cabin John's main community event, the annual Crab Feast, now entering its 39th year. — 

New Winter Fitness Classes Begin January 7th

Come join your neighbors and friends for the Winter session of Fitness Classes starting January 7, 2008, at the CLARA BARTON COMMUNITY CENTER

Have you been thinking about signing up for the fitness classes that are held at your local Clara Barton Community Center? You can still register. What could be more convenient and fun than working out close to home alongside your neighbors, friends, and fellow Cabin Johners?

Here are the wonderful classes you have to choose from that are being held in the Social Hall of the Clara Barton Community Center:


DEFINITIONS LOW IMPACT AEROBICS (Class #203343): You can get your heart rate up and enjoy the best of low impact aerobics with a choreography-based, fun and creative one-hour class taught by CJ resident Judy Brookes (AFAA and CPR certified). The teaching level is beginner to intermediate. The class includes a warm-up, cardio portion, resistance and abdominal work and a long stretch with relaxation—all to dynamic and energizing music. Be prepared to enjoy yourself and work out at the same time! This class meets Monday and Friday mornings from 9:15-10:15 am for 18 sessions starting 1/7. \$104

NEW: DEFINITIONS CARDIO BUFFET (Class #204981 – listed under Definitions Low Impact Aerobics): Come try out different aerobic styles and have fun while you sweat! You will work out to exciting music with an experienced instructor and be introduced to interesting, but easy to learn, choreography. All levels are welcome; everyone can do this! Some classes will consist of 20 minutes cardio, 20 minutes floor/ab work; 20 minutes stretch and relaxation, while others will be 45 minutes of cardio work with 15 minutes of abs, stretching and relaxation. Instructor (Judy Brookes) is AFAA and CPR certified. Meets Wednesdays from 9:30-10:30 am for 9 sessions starting 1/9. \$52

DEFINITIONS STRENGTH TRAINING: Gain body strength, flexibility and endurance using free weights. This class includes 5 minutes of warm-up, 40 minutes of strength training, 5 minutes of abdominal work and a 10-minute cool down with stretching. Please bring a mat/towel and light hand weights to class. The teaching level is beginner to intermediate. This class is offered: Tuesday and Thursday - 9:15-10:15 am (Class #203344; starts 1/8 18 sessions; \$104); and Tuesday and Thursday - 7-8 pm (Class #204982; starts 1/8 18 sessions; \$104).


DEFINITIONS MAT PILATES: (Class #203346): A series of 34 exercises designed to improve overall body strength, balance, flexibility and core abdominal muscles. Rhythmic breathing taught to enhance exercise flow and mind/body connection. Bring mat/towel. Instructor ACE & CPR certified. Wednesday – 8:30-9:30 am. Starts 1/16 for 9 sessions. \$81

To register on-line (after November 18) go to: www.montgomerycountmd.gov/rec or call the Customer Service desk during business hours at (240) 777-6840 for more registration information. You can also register by picking up a Recreation Department book at any Montgomery County Rec Center and following the registration instructions.

If you have any questions about the classes, please contact Juliet Rodman at juliet@wellnesscorporatesolutions.com or Judy Brookes at judy@brookes.com. Feel free to try out a class before registering! — 

QUINN

cont. from page 11

I've become more aware of change, partly because I've now been around long enough to have seen a bit of it. And because I've made my share of changes. Even though my house was built more than fifty years ago, the changes it brought to the earth and the fragments of what preceded me are still conspicuous—the remains of barbed wire fences from the farm whose fields terminated right about where I'm sitting now, a broken plow blade that once surfaced, Mrs. Jessup's ground cover (which will likely cover the entire earth if no one takes up the battle after I am gone). And who knows what else? Some shards of China from the hotel, and someday, maybe a little buried treasure. —

Do you have an interesting story to tell about YOUR house? If so, we'd like to hear from you. Contact Tim Weedlun at tim_weedlun@msn.com or 301-320-1164.

Several Cabin John Families Help Keep Bike Path Clean

Have you noticed a cleaner Cabin John bike path this year? If so, be sure to thank these volunteers:

- The Adler-Fishmans
- The Brookes
- The Erger-Seidensteins
- The Gappa-Norris
- The Gurleys
- The Hunter-Herderschees
- The Johnsons
- The Maggios
- The Major-Jacks
- The Rieckelmans
- The Russells
- The Young-Lees

Since May, these families have been taking shifts picking up trash along the MacArthur Blvd bike path. Our goal is to keep it clean well into next year, so it will be safer and more enjoyable for everyone to use!

If you have questions or would like to help with the project, please e-mail me at rabneroo@comcast.net

—Nate Rabner, project coordinator

Neighborhood Services

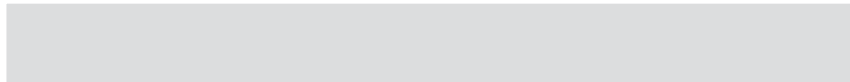
CARPENTER, HANDYMAN. Local tradesman to do all types of remodeling and renovations. Handyman services also available. Small jobs also welcome. Call Dana in Cabin John at 301-320-4206.

CLEAR AWAY CLUTTER & GET ORGANIZED. Call Melanie at 301-263-9482, or visit: www.cabinjohnorganizing.com.


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CELEBRATE your love of biking and your love of Shakespeare! Check out the tee shirts designed by Cabin John resident, Fred Zirm at www.bikingwiththebard.com. Fred gives a \$5 discount to local residents. You can e-mail him at Bikebard@aol.com.

DO YOU LOVE YOUR HOUSE? Then treat yourself to a Home Portrait by Cabin John resident, Robinwyn Lewis. Call 301-229-1623.

HELP WANTED. 2 self-employed healing arts professionals seek to share the services of an office assistant a minimum of 2 days a month (possibly more). Must be willing and able to work with Mac laptops, file, book-keep and run errands. \$20/hour. Please call Andrea @ 301-229-2852.

THE VILLAGE NEWS is published monthly except in July and December and is sent free to all 800+ homes in Cabin John. Others may subscribe for \$5 per year. Send news, ads, letters, and subscriptions to: The Village News PO Box 164 Cabin John, MD 20818 [or milerjefferson@hotmail.com]

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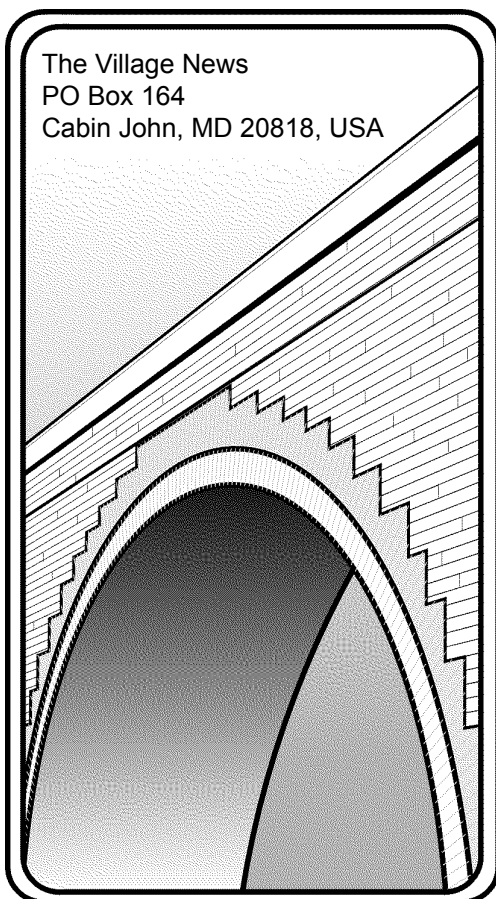
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