

Potomac News

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Group tries to save battlefield house

By MIKE FUCHS
Manassas Bureau



A Northern Virginia history group has criticized plans to demolish a house at Manassas National Battlefield Park, citing one family's centuries-long roots there.

In a June 19 letter to National Park Service Director Roger Kennedy, the Northern Virginia Association for History Inc. wrote that the house, known as Portici III, "is part of the 226-year history of one family and the land they owned."

The group urged the park service to salvage the house despite battlefield park Superintendent Kenneth Apschnikat's view it should be razed. Apschnikat has said the house, built several years after the Civil War ended in 1865, holds no historic value.

The state's historic preservation officer has also backed that view.

The two-level farmhouse was built by Francis Waring Lewis and his wife, Fannie, on top of the burnt foundation of their home destroyed in the early 1880s.

Francis Lewis inherited the property in the 1850s from a long line of ancestors who had owned the land since 1724.

The abandoned, dilapidated structure currently stands in the southeast corner of the 5,100-acre park.

The history association's president, Burke real estate agent Thomas H. Bland, said his group is concerned the

The abandoned, dilapidated structure currently stands in the southeast corner of the 5,100-acre battlefield park.

park service is destroying a house that could help provide insight into how families coped after the Civil War.

"This is a unique opportunity of preserving a site where so much history is tied to it," said Bland, whose group is comprised of several Northern Virginia preservation organizations and historians.

Apschnikat disagreed, arguing it lacks architectural and historical significance. "It would be the lack of its association with the park's primary purpose, which is the Civil War," he said.

Repairing the home's leaky roof and making other renovations would cost \$40,000, Apschnikat said. Because funding is tight, that is money that should be spent elsewhere in the park, he said.

Bland said he knows the park service is strapped for cash. "We recognize there is limited funds and the NVAH does not have an answer to that situation," he said. "It's possible for historical organizations and other interested parties to get together and solicit funding."

Choosing Disney for a neighbor

Woman hopes project will spark new business

By ANA VALLE
Manassas Bureau

HAYMARKET — Adrienne Crafton-Masterson was in a transition of her own last fall when she heard about the changes planned for this small town in western Prince William County.

After a two-year sabbatical from selling real estate, Crafton-Masterson was planning to settle in Winchester to start up her business anew. But the market was not moving as quickly as she had hoped and she started to track The Walt Disney Co.'s history theme park project planned northwest of Haymarket.

Now she is hoping to cash in on the town's potential for growth.

On Feb. 27, Crafton-Masterson visited Haymarket, planning to attend church. Although she missed the Sunday service she had hoped to catch, the ushers at Christian Fellowship Church greeted her so warmly she knew what she had to do.

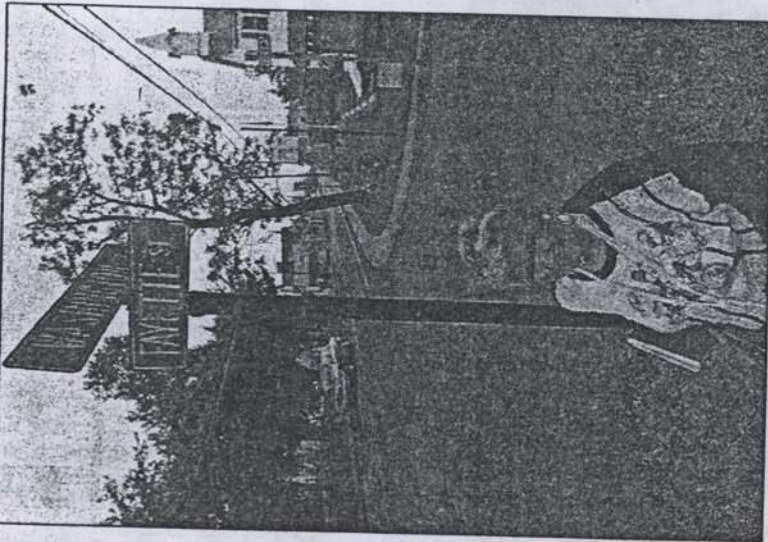
"I think I have found a church. Now I can look for a house," Crafton-Masterson recalls, thinking to herself.

About two weeks later, a real estate agent directed her to a recently remodeled early 20th century two-story home facing Washington Street in Haymarket. She immediately decided to rent it to use as her combined home and office.

The living quarters seem organized but the office of her new real estate business is in partial disarray. Boxes overflow with papers, but autographed pictures of former President Harry Truman are up on the walls.

Crafton-Masterson, 69, worked as an assistant appointment secretary to presidents Truman and Dwight Eisenhower from 1951 to 1953. She then went back to work for Sen. Theodore Francis Green of Rhode Island, her home state.

In 1962, she became a real estate agent,



By Chris Moorhead-Potomac News

Adrienne Crafton-Masterson rents a home and an office in Haymarket.

then a broker, and now specializes in land sales.

With 30 years of experience in real estate, Crafton-Masterson decided Haymarket has reached critical growth period that she could capitalize on. She packed up and moved.

Disney is slated to open its American history theme park, Disney's America, on 3,000 acres along Interstate 66 and U.S. 15 in 1998. Residential and commercial development is also planned for the site.

The real estate activity has already begun in and around town.

H/P Cos., a firm founded by Tyson's Corner developers John "TJ" Hazel and Milton Peterson, bought almost 400 acres in Prince William County and 45 acres in town, including

15 acres next to the lot Crafton-Masterson rents.

Crafton-Masterson is negotiating the sale of a church site in Gainesville and working with the new owners of a historic house that had been home to prominent Haymarket physician Wade Payne after World War I, and most recently to former Mayor Muriel Gilbertson.

Payne was a family practitioner who delivered just about all the town babies for 40 years, according to Haymarket historian Sarah Turner.

Crafton-Masterson said she is familiar with Disney projects. While living in Florida between 1991 and late 1993, she toured Walt Disney World in Orlando with industrial real estate agents who were shown the infrastructure and utilities.

She likes to quote Theodore Roosevelt to describe her attitude toward land use: "The nation behaves well if it treats the natural resources as assets — which it must turn over to the next generation increased and not impaired in value. Conservation means development as much as it does protection."

"That's why I was very distressed when I heard what the environmentalists were saying about Disney," Crafton-Masterson said, referring to their opposition to the project.

"Nothing would have ever been built in this country had we insisted on keeping the wilderness."

Crafton-Masterson considers herself an environmentalist and served in the Fairfax Environmental Quality Advisory Council in the late 1970s. In Fairfax, she also volunteered to promote the arts and history issues.

In Haymarket, she is already volunteering with the town's Historical Commission and was recently appointed to the Architectural Review Board.

In May, she attended a "Keep Virginia Beautiful" meeting held in Westmoreland County on the revitalization of small towns, where she confirmed what she already suspected.

"Haymarket is considered a little jewel."



Author, Edmund Raus, standing in the trenches of the 19th Virginia Infantry overlooking Lewis Ford.



"Today the barren ridge makes no statement and the winds that sweep across it carry no voices of the past." Looking North, "Porter" is the site of the mound atop the ridge in the center of the photograph.

ocean billows against the great barn-like house, while the rain drops dashed themselves into a spray against the windowpanes." Undoubtedly when the meal was finished, chairs scraped across wooden floors to cluster before the fire, cigars were lit, conversation turned light, and thoughts drifted to other firesides far away. Soon the "cheery" scene was interrupted by the arrival of an orderly with instructions for the detachment to return to Centerville. The soldiers stood hunched in their overcoats in front of Portici before marching off to a new campaign on the Virginia Peninsula, leaving Portici dark and empty.

In August of 1862 the opposing armies returned to the Plains of Manassas. For two days Union General John Pope struck repeated blows against Stonewall Jackson's defensive line along a railroad bed running north of the Warrenton Turnpike. On the morning of August 30, Pope received word that Confederate troops were threatening his left, south of the Warrenton Turnpike. Pope ordered his newly appointed

cavalry chief, General John Buford, to take his brigade, cross Bull Run over the lower fords, and scout the left of the army.

Soon Buford's troopers were splashing across Ball's Ford near Portici and heading out the road to New Market. Although Portici was still abandoned by its owners, it was probably a stopping place for wounded Union soldiers traveling from the battlefield to the central hospital established at Mitchell's Ford. If there were soldiers watching from the house, they had a ringside seat for one of the biggest cavalry battles fought thus far in the war.

After scouting out the Ball's Ford road, Buford drew his troops back to the high ground opposite Portici. The 1st Michigan formed in front, then the 4th New York, with the 1st West Virginia and 1st Vermont behind. Moving toward him, guarding the right of the Confederate army, was General Beverly H. Robertson's Brigade of General J.E.B. Stuart's cavalry. Col. Thomas T. Munford's 2nd Virginia Cavalry led the Confederate brigade.

When Buford learned of the Confederate approach he ordered his first two regiments to deploy for battle. One young soldier of the 1st Michigan remembered: "The order came, 'by fours front into line.' The men came up in fine style and then came the order, 'by platoons right about wheel; draw sabres. . . . I held my breath for a moment, for this was our first charge. I thought of home and my friends. The bugle sounded the 'charge,' and away we went, the lines crashed together, and men and horses went down and rolled over in the dust." Colonel Munford reported: "My regiment in line of battle going at a gallop, we went through the first line of the enemy and engaged part of the second.

A terrible hand-to-hand fight ensued. The two commands were thoroughly intermingled. . . ." The Confederates were thrown back. Col. Munford emerged from the fight on foot, stunned by a saber blow across his back which had dismounted him.

Col. Munford remounted and determined to renew the fight. The 12th Vir-

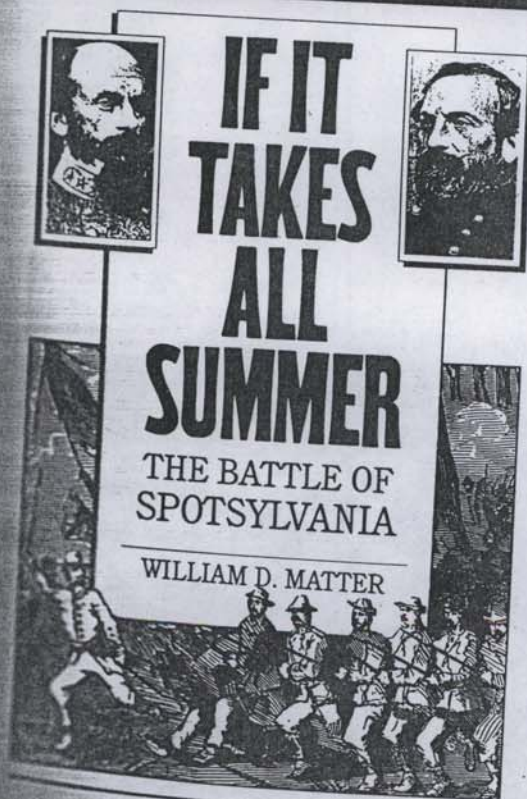
"Matter's book weaves massive scholarship into a superb narrative that finally makes clear, for the first time, the critical events at Spotsylvania 125 years ago."

—Robert K. Krick, chief historian, Fredericksburg and Spotsylvania National Military Park

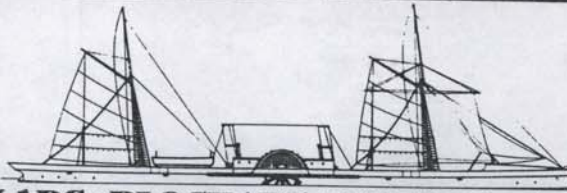
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ginia Cavalry hurried forward and before fully formed in line of battle, thrust into the center of the 1st Michigan, driving the Northern regiment back on its supports. The 7th Virginia now swung to the left of the 12th on orders "to charge with drawn sabers [the enemy's] right flank, which the whole command obeyed. . . , charging upon them with shouts that made the very welkin ring and routing [the] entire line on our left. . ." Fearing being cut off, Buford fell back fighting across Bull Run at

Lewis Ford. When he arrived back at the Warrenton Turnpike, Buford found the dejected columns of Pope's defeated army retreating toward Centreville.

Sometime in late 1862 Portici suffered the legacy of its name and was destroyed by fire. One story goes that disgruntled Pennsylvania troops set the house ablaze during Pope's retreat. Perhaps the culprit was simply a careless, houseless stranger. When the end came, one can imagine those broad brick pillars, struggling to support the

flaming structure before all came crashing down. The scene would be repeated throughout the South until the Confederacy itself succumbed to war's flame.

The charred remains of Portici were etched against the skyline until time smoothed the earth and the memories were forgotten. Today the barren ridge makes no statement and the winds that sweep across it carry no voices of the past. The exultant shouts of victory and the piercing cries of the wounded are lost to us. Where bugle calls split the air and sabers flashed in the evening sunlight, modern traffic hums along a super highway. At Ball's Ford the State Information Center directs tourists to distant historical sights. At Lewis Ford, unmarked, leaf-covered mounds of earth recall that hot July day when war was still a grand adventure. West of Portici, piles of stones mark the site of a hut village where Confederate soldiers suffered through that first winter of the war. Soon the Battlefield Business Park will alter the landscape forever. And so the voices of Portici fade as a new generation looks to its own interests. ☆

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