

Unveiling the faces of Evergreen's eras: the people who made history here

By HEIDI M. BAUMSTARK
Observer staff

Unveiling the many faces of Evergreen is like being introduced to a multitude of characters. Its many faces include slaves who bore the brunt of hard labor, faithful women who sewed war uniforms and sheltered the homeless and brave battlefield survivors who fought for the cause.

Many people's faces have looked upon Evergreen; Dave Prokop is one of the current gazers. He cares about the area and served as chairman of the Manor House Preservation Fund Inc., and mustered support in efforts to preserve the history surrounding Evergreen, located on the Evergreen Country Club in Haymarket. Quietly perched along the edge of the Bull Run Mountain range, the Evergreen Manor House, built by Lewis Berkeley (1777-1836) in 1827, has a long, eventful past.

After Berkeley built the house, it passed to his first son, Edmund Berkeley (1824-1915), who was proud of the fact that as a baby, he "sat on [Marquis de] Lafayette's lap during his final American tour in 1824-1825," Prokop said. It's likely that event took place at Lewis Berkeley's home in Aldie, now called Berkeley House, since Evergreen was

not yet built when Lafayette rode through the area on Aug. 25, 1824 on his way to Oak Hill, home of former president James Monroe.

Constructed in the Greek revival style with Doric columns on the front and rear porches, the manor house's central portion is two-and-one-half stories high with a winding stairway to the third floor. Prince William County has identified the Evergreen Manor House as a Designated Cultural Resource, which promotes identification, evaluation and protection of the county's cultural resources.

Before the Berkeleys showed their faces, this land was part of Carter Burwell's 2,000-acre portion of Robert "King" Carter's Bull Run Tract. By 1822, Lewis Berkeley, a Burwell descendent, carved out a 1,064-acre plantation, on which Evergreen was built, Frances Jones wrote in her 1978 survey form for the Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission.

Lewis was the son of Mary Burwell and Edmund Berkeley IV. Lewis divided his land into smaller tracts, and built Evergreen, according to the "Dictionary of Virginia Biography." Lewis also had a son, Edmund, who inherited the manor and its lands.

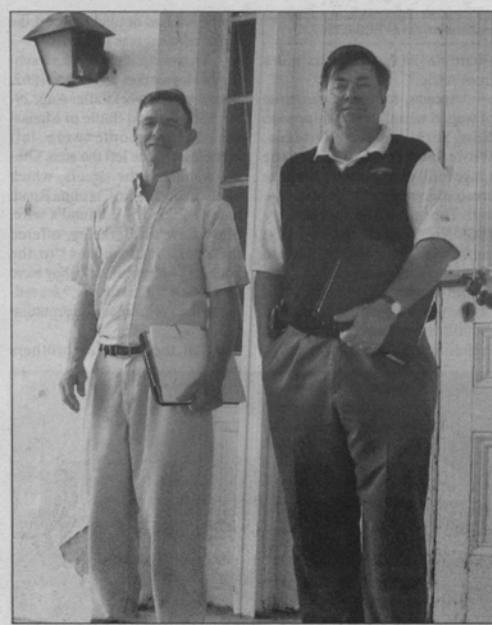
Another face-this time, an outsider's-entered the scene.

Edmund married a lady from Tennessee, Mary Lawson Williams. Her father offered her a choice of wedding gifts slaves or real estate. She chose the former. They traveled from Tennessee to Virginia with the new bride and groom, according to the April 2007 Virginia Department of Historic Resources Preliminary Information Form. Together, the Berkeleys raised 13 children, and according to the 1860 slave register, owned 52 slaves, 26 of whom were under the age of 13.

During the "antebellum" pre-Civil War years, Evergreen had about 50 cabins, forming a "street to Quarter Mile Gate, on the Mountain Road ... it is so changed in appearance ... that it is hard to picture the scene of the past," according to an April 15, 1937 Works Progress Administration of Virginia Historical Inventory document by Susan R. Morton.

The document explained how enormous crops of hay and grain were raised; however, the chief industry years before the Civil War, was a spoke mill, the first mill in Prince William County run by steam, which was "situated on land now owned by Mrs. Watson on the Mountain Road [called Ravenswood Farm], one mile from

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Heidi M. Baumstark / the Bull Run Observer

From left, Ed Tolson, historic preservation consultant with Dave Prokop, chairman of the Manor House Preservation Fund Inc., on the front portico of Evergreen. Tolson was hired to prepare an application for Evergreen's nomination on the National Register of Historic Places.

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Street names remember some who had a hand in Evergreen's development

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daddy worked for the Colonel [Edmund Berkeley] for \$12 a month. Mama was busy with the cattle and raising chickens; she'd sell butter, milk and eggs to anybody who'd come along," Lansdowne remembered. His fa-

ther, George Wade Lansdowne, born in February 1884, worked on the farm and the family lived on Quarter's Lane. The family moved to Bull Run Mountain on Jan. 1, 1925; Lansdowne remains on the mountain today with his wife.

The stone Overseer's House, at the intersection of Mountain

Road and Quarter's Lane, was once part of the Evergreen plantation. "None of the many slave cabins once lining Quarter's Lane exist today," according to the Preliminary Information Form. On private property, a slave cemetery with no headstones is located on the southern side of Quarter's

Lane. The house is for sale.

Morton wrote, "The old house [Evergreen], even in bad repair, is beautiful and dignified.... the whole home bespeaking fine living and gracious hospitality in the past."

More recent faces of Evergreen include the Delashmutts, Woolmans and others. In 1939, Thomas Delashmutt, a civil engineer, purchased Evergreen. He added the stone wings on either end of the main house in the 1940s.

Delashmutt sold his estate to Frank Caulfield, likely in the early 1950s, according to Ellie Ivancic, director of interpretation at the Haymarket Museum. Ivancic reviewed an article written on the sale by Brownie Bass Tulloss (Smith).

Bill Hunt of Haymarket recalled, "The Woolmans purchased the farm in the mid-1950s. I remember helping my dad [Eppa Hunton "Jack" Hunt] build a house on Quarter's Lane for [Henry] Woolman, Jr.'s son, Hank, who I believe, was running the farm. The one-story rambler is still there."

In the 1960s, Evergreen was sold to John Norman, owner of Norman Realty for the purpose of developing a top-notch country club and community. The corporation's

seal bears the words and date: "Evergreen Country Club, Inc., 1968."

Evergreen sits on a 175-mile-long historic corridor from Gettysburg to Charlottesville, an area soon to be designated as the Journey Through Hallowed Ground National Heritage Area, which "holds more American history than any other swath of land in the country," according to the manor house preservation fund's Web site, www.evergreenmanorhouse.org.

The preservation fund, a nonprofit organization, is a separate entity from the Evergreen Country Club. The nonprofit members' goals are to help preserve the nearly 200-year old manor house.

The nonprofit raised thousands of dollars to restore the manor house's exterior and prevent further deterioration.

Prokop expects to find out in September, with final approval in January 2008, whether Evergreen meets the National Register of Historic Places' requirements.

The 180-year-old manor house sheltered survivors of a difficult time in this country's history. Who knows what future faces will experience in eras yet to come at Evergreen.

Evergreen Farm at Evergreen Country Club, Haymarket, VA



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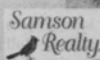
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