

# Henderson House

JUST MUSING with marilyn mus

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# They Just Call It Home

The Henderson House, despite its storied ancestry, is "just home" for Annie Shumate and her husband, the Rev. A. H. Shumate, a retired minister.

"We have never tried to restore it from a historical standpoint," said Mrs. Shumate as she stepped through the doorway of the old brick Georgian house at Dumfries which is mentioned in history books.

Now in its 200th year, the house was named for Alexander Henderson, the man who built the home about the year 1765 after coming here from Scotland.

Henderson's main claim to fame, even though he took part in the American Revolution, was having been the father of the American "chain store." When the Scotman moved to Dumfries, and established a good business here, he set up similar branches at Colchester, Occoquan and Alexandria.

The most famous of his six sons was Gen. Archibald Henderson, who became the fifth commander of the U.S. Marine Corps serving from 1820 to 1859.

The home's original woodwork, deep window sills, nine fireplaces and much of the original plaster is still visible in the now 21-room house. Mrs. Shumate has made the home into three separate apartments.

Mrs. Shumate started her long residence in the home in 1913 when her first husband, a country doctor, Dr. D. C. Cline, bought the home. She has been living there ever since.

One end of the home was damaged during the Civil War and it was Mrs. Shumate's Grandfather Liming who restored it. A cannon ball was imbedded in the outside brick wall until it was stolen recently. The hole is still there.

During the Civil War the home served as a hospital for the wounded and a sign, "Silence, No Loitering On These Steps," became visible again during a clean-up on the walls. Hospital supplies were stored downstairs in the basement.

When Mrs. Shumate had the white wash and layers of paper removed from the livingroom and music room walls she found the original velvetlike paper which had been put on in 18-inch squares.

Fireplaces were the only means of heating the large rooms with 12-foot high ceilings, arranged off a center hall. The original,

winding stairway is still in good repair.

Mrs. Shumate remembers the house was in deplorable shape when she moved in. Its last tenants had worked in the nearby mines.

The tin-covered hip-roofed house was rented at the turn of the century for \$1.50 a month for half of the house. It was frequently rented after the Civil War.

Mrs. Shumate remembers sharing her home with 42 people shortly after she bought it. The persons were soldiers trying to get into Quantico which was then a tent town in 1917, when very little housing was available.

The house was always a place for soldiers to come during both world wars and again, now, with the war in Vietnam.

Over the years, Mrs. Shumate saw the first lights and heating system come to the Henderson House.

Recently the great-great-grandson of Alexander Henderson, from Parkersburg,

W.Va., visited the home and the nearby graveyard where Henderson and his wife are buried (near the now Country Club Estates). Henderson was a vestryman at Pohick Church at the same time as George Washington.

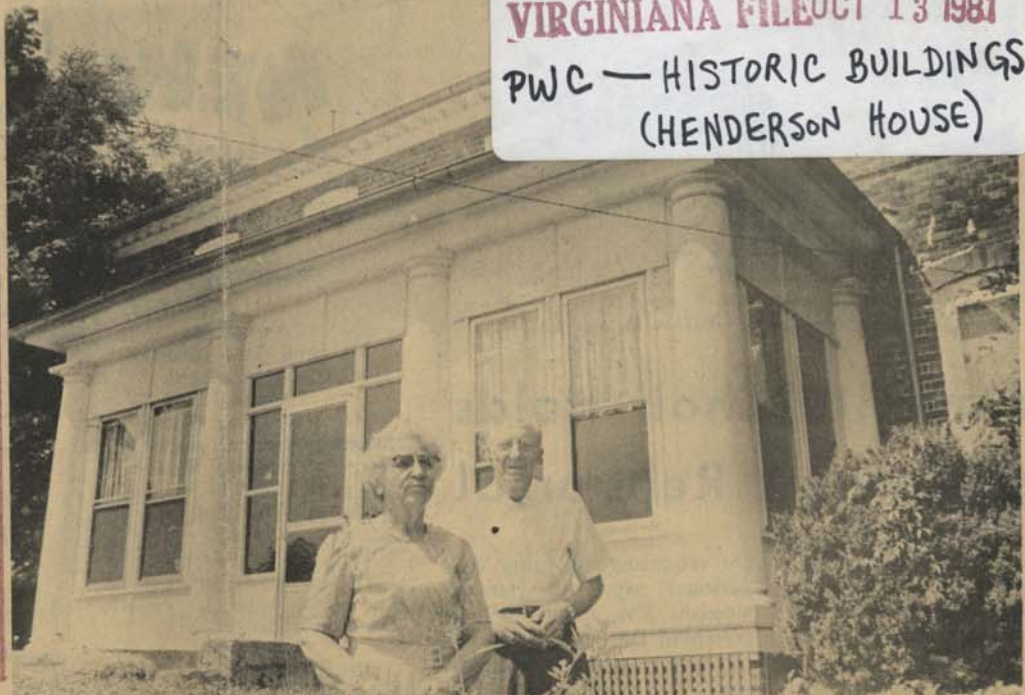
Rare Chinese export porcelain, which had belonged to the Alexander Hendersons, was presented recently by the wife of one of his ancestor's to the Marine Commandant's House. The relative was the late Cazenove G. Lee Jr., of Washington, who was also related to Gen. Robert E. Lee.

Mrs. Shumate, too, has her own relatives, who helped to shape the future of the area. Mrs. Shumate's grandmother, Annie Keys, for whom she was named, started the first cotton mill (1836) in Virginia at Occoquan. Her family had come here from Scotland. Annie Shumate's parents, were Mr. and Mrs. E. G. W. (Van) Keyes. Her father was a farmer and a Prince William County supervisor.

REFERENCE

Prince William Public Library  
Manassas, Va.

VIRGINIANA FILE OCT 13 1981  
PWC - HISTORIC BUILDINGS  
(HENDERSON HOUSE)



The Henderson House Provides Backdrop for Rev. and Mrs. A. H. Shumate