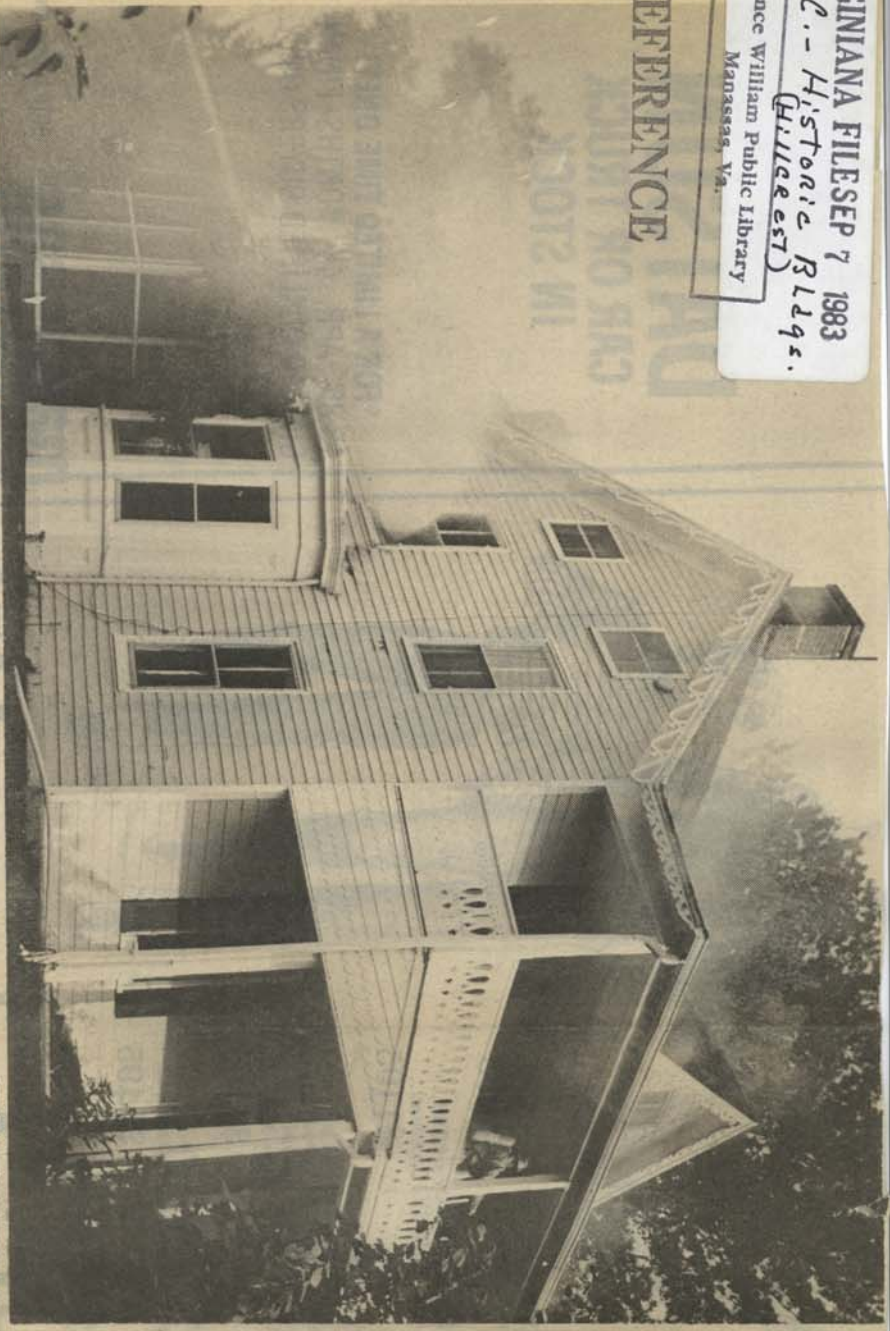


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REFERENCE



Jimmy Peters-The Journal Messenger

Smoke and water billow from the second floor of historic Hillcrest while firefighters battle a blaze that damaged the home Sunday evening

Journal Messenger 8/17/81 p A1

# Fire Damages Historic Home

By JIMMY PETERS  
JM Staff Writer

Investigators from the State Fire Marshal's Office were looking through the charred areas of historic Hillcrest in Occoquan this morning to determine the cause of a blaze that gutted a portion of the three-story frame house Sunday evening.

The preliminary cause of the blaze, according to Occoquan-Woodbridge-Lorton Volunteer Fire Chief Billy Spicer Jr., was an electrical problem with a dehumidifier in a downstairs closet of the home.

Fire and rescue personnel were called to the home of Ray Rainwater, at 127 Washington Street, Occoquan, about 6:45 p.m. Surly after Occoquan Town police Officer Ray Houser discovered smoke billowing from the second floor.

Prince William County police Cpl. Mike Johnson and Officer Tom Hughes and D.H. Little arrived on the scene shortly after Houser.

Johnson and Hughes, also volunteer firefighters, discovered an unlocked window to the downstairs parlor.

They entered the smoke-filled house and searched the lower level to see if anyone was in the house.

Johnson said the stairway was engulfed in flames and the rear of the house was filled with thick smoke. It was determined no one was home at the time.

Firefighters from OWL-Botts, Lake Ridge and Friends stations, Dale City, Hillendale and Fairfax Co. 19 (Lorton) responded to the scene.

According to Spicer, Rainwater had taken a friend to National Airport and returned to his damaged home later in the evening.

Spicer said the fire apparently spread from the downstairs closet to an upstairs bedroom. Firefighters contained the flames in the bedroom, stairway and hall. The second floor and attic sustained heavy smoke damage and the front part of the first floor sustained smoke and water damage. The rear of the house suffered moderate smoke and water damage.

It was not known how long the fire lasted.

See "FIRE" on A-3.

# Fire

Continued from A-1

had been burning when it was discovered. Firefighters broke out all the windows on the second floor to ventilate the heat and smoke. Some flames could be seen shooting from second floor windows in the center of the house.

The fire was under control within 45 minutes. One volunteer firefighter sustained a cut to his arm while battling the blaze.

During mopping-up operations firefighters dragged a smoldering carpet and mattress from the upstairs. Some antiques were also set outside.

Spicer said Rainwater moved his motor home from Fairfax to his home last night and remained outside the residence.

According to some neighbors, Hillcrest was built more than 110 years ago. It sits atop a hill overlooking the west end of the Town of Occoquan.

No dollar figure has been set on the damage. The State Fire Marshal's Office is investigating the blaze because the Prince William County Fire Marshal's Office does not have jurisdiction in the Town of Occoquan.