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*Prince William County*

Historic Leesylvania Tract

# Billionaire Recluse Gives 485-Acre Park to State

by William Holiver

Christmas is coming 14 weeks late in Northern Virginia, with the part of Santa Claus played by an 80-year-old shipping tycoon.

His gift is a 485-acre parcel of land, south of Woodbridge and protruding into the Potomac River, that today (Thursday) is expected to become the Leesylvania State Park. The park is in Prince William County, near the Fairfax County line.

Possibly as elusive as the late Howard Hughes, Virginia's benefactor, Daniel K. Ludwig, is thought to be one of the world's richest men, with more than \$3 billion credited to his estate.

Virginia's Commissioner of State Parks, Ben H. Bolen, was enthusiastic about the state's acquisition, calling it a "beautiful area" and an "excellent

opportunity for outdoor recreation and water sports."

The property is a peninsula on the Potomac River ideal for boating and sightseeing, according to a Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority spokesman, who termed the tract "just beautiful."

Equally proud was Del. David Brickley (D-Twentieth District), who originally introduced a measure into the state legislature last January to acquire the Ludwig property. "Its heritage is tremendous," he said, referring to the historical ruins on the property that belonged to the birthplace of Robert E. Lee's grandfather, Light Horse Harry Lee.

The bill will be signed today by Virginia Gov. John Dalton in Richmond. Ludwig, who has rarely if ever been seen in public in recent years, is scheduled to attend the signing

ceremony, according to a spokesman for Dalton.

The park, just off I-95, about 30 minutes south of Washington D.C., was sold to the state for half of the land's appraised value of \$3 million, but will be paid for by the U.S. Interior Department's matching grant program. In all, according to Brickley, the state will have to pay about \$140,000 for legal fees surveying costs, and maintenance.

The little that is known about Ludwig comes from reference materials like Who's Who and financial magazines. Originally from South Haven, Mich., Ludwig made his fortune in oil and ore shipping.

Fortune magazine, in a 1968 article, ranked Ludwig's wealth only below that of Hughes, the late J. Paul Getty, Texas oil magnate H.L. Hunt,

and one or two other publicity-shy financiers.

He is said to be the inventor of the modern supertanker, pioneering the design and construction of the most spacious ships afloat. His shipbuilding docks in Norfolk, Va. Welding Shipyards Inc. reportedly developed a revolutionary method of replacing ship joint rivets with welds.

Now based in New York City, Ludwig is the owner of, among other concerns, Sea Tankers Inc. and Universal Tankships Inc.

The Leesylvania property was previously owned by one of Ludwig's companies, Hawaiian American Steamships Inc. According to Brickley, one of the functions of the estate was as a docking point for an offshore gambling barge usually anchored on a part of the Potomac River within Maryland's border.