



# POTOMAC VALLEY ARCHITECT

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## THE QUAKER NEIGHBORHOOD OF SANDY SPRING, MARYLAND

by Edwin Bateman Morris, Sr.

The community near Washington called Sandy Spring (once described as not so much a community as an earnest state of mind) while modern and steadily moving on, yet pleasantly retains an appealing feel of the past. Modern urges blossom—its outstanding summer theatre, its top-flight hospital, its modern projects such as, architecturally important, its intent to have a well-studied building code. Yet the flavor of the past is there: meeting-house, bank and insurance office resting in their eloquent grove of ancient trees.

For more than two hundred years the community has been predominantly Quaker. As a result of the charter granted Cecil Calvert by Charles I, in the seventeenth century, Quakers, persecuted in England, came to Maryland. A large group came to Sandy Spring, and became well-known for efficient development and control. Their records were precise and exact, as a result of which they were not required to obtain county marriage licenses; and so on.

Their intent for a well-rounded and self-sufficient community caused them to establish an independent fire insurance company. Further a bank was set up, having twenty-four directors, two of whom administered the banking business each month. The bank was open only on Wednesday afternoons. These two institutions developed steadily and strongly and now are among the most stable organizations of their kind in the country.

A gentleman named Snowden in the early 18th century owned many thousand acres in this part of Maryland known as Snowden Manor. The best way to distribute, divide and hand on property was daughters. Snowden had two, one of whom married James Brook, a great grandson of an earlier governor. The other married John Thomas, and the process of distribution, dividing and handing on was on its way.

John Thomas in about 1740 built on this

nuptially-acquired land the house "Cherry Grove," which burned down in about 1780 and was replaced by a lovely structure. This second "Cherry Grove" is still standing and is owned and nurtured (fortunate circumstance) by the architect George Riggs. Also, about the time of the first "Cherry Grove," the fine houses "Clifton" and "Norwood" were built, both simple and dignified and marked by distinguished brickwork.

The tradition that the bricks for these houses were brought from England is probably unfounded, since the community was far, far

from any water transportation, and since there was such good clay in the vicinity. At the estate "Fair Hill" there was what was described as an "extensive pottery business," where were manufactured utensils, brick and, without doubt, tile, since these latter materials were used in the growing city of Washington.

There has always been a cooperative spirit in this community. For instance in early days there was one citizen who owned a pair of boots, which were always borrowed by anyone going to Annapolis. It would be appropriate if such boots could similarly be made available in the future for Ronald Senseman.

The settlement was called Sandy Spring because of the spring not far from the meeting house and not far from the present summer

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"CHERRY GROVE"



POTOMAC VALLEY CHAPTER  
OF MARYLAND  
American Institute of Architects

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Potomac Valley Architect

Benjamin P. Elliott, Chmn., Pub. Rel. Comm.  
8485 Fenton Street, Silver Spring, Md.  
JU. 9-2546

NEXT REGULAR MEETING

12 Noon, October 6, 1958—Stone  
House Inn  
Four Corners, Silver Spring, Md.  
November Meeting—November 3, 1958

THE QUAKER NEIGHBORHOOD

(Continued from Page 1)

house of Dean Acheson—a spring which still flows. The Acheson house was the former residence of Edward Stabler, famous for his ability as an engraver. He made the seals for most of the early Government departments. There is interesting correspondence between Robert Mills and Edward Stabler concerning the seal of the Smithsonian which Stabler cut.

A careful history of the community has been kept since 1863. Each year the neighborhood assembles to hear read the history of the past twelve months, and about every twenty years the histories are assembled into volumes. There have been five of these volumes, the earlier ones now being definitely collectors' items. In this spirit of pride in the neighborhood has been hospitality. There is the story of a Rebecca Russell who came to one of the houses to stay a few days and remained at the house until she died at the age of 102.

The Robert Brooke who was an early Governor brought over with him when he came, a number of fox-hounds. The progeny of these have during the years been owned by Maryland families. Jack Bentley, one time pitching ace for the New York Giants and a native of Sandy Spring, had until a few years ago, some of these dogs.

The coming of the automobile to an extent destroyed the withdrawn quality of the neighborhood. Many persons now live there who earn their livelihoods elsewhere. Its individuality however seems to remain. One drives through the grove by the meeting-house still with the warm feeling of the long-ago.

Ben Elliott Speaks at  
Meeting of Northeast  
Montgomery Council

On September 15th Ben Elliott gave a talk to the Northeast Montgomery Community Council, at the Sandy Springs Library, on "How the future Development of Montgomery County can be accomplished without transforming the whole country side into a low density suburban development." His recommendations were:

1. Consideration for a master County plan which would offer belts of country side, parks or farms between developed areas. This plan would closely resemble the concept of towns and villages on the perimeter of the Washington-Metropolitan area.
2. In order to accomplish such a master plan, the zoning code of Montgomery County would have to be amended to cover the conditions of development in rural areas.
3. The preservation of buildings and residences of historic value.
4. The establishment of a County Fine Arts Commission as an advisory group.
5. That the residents of Montgomery County, in seeking better quality architectural design, support the efforts of the architects to strengthen the State Registration Law.
6. To encourage the appointment of an architect-planner to the Maryland National Park and Planning Commission.

These recommendations were offered to the Council for their consideration. The Northeast Montgomery Community Council displayed a tremendous interest in good architecture and good planning in the forthcoming development of the upper part of the County.

This Council is comprised of a representative group of all civic and service organizations. The Council urges that a member of the Potomac Valley Chapter, A.I.A. joins the Council. Ron Senseman, who also attended the meeting and gave comments, suggested Arthur Weidner, as he lives in the area. Mr. Weidner could keep the Chapter informed.

New Members of P.V.

We wish to welcome two new members to the Potomac Valley Chapter this month: Arthur E. Hald, Jr., Associate member, of 9917 Holmhurst Road, Bethesda and Carl Thomas Prior, Corporate member, of 1514 Constance Street, Silver Spring. Mr. Hald was with a New York firm while attending school, then went into the Air Force. He is now in Ron Senseman's office.

Gene Glasgow  
Tenders Resignation

Shortly after Gene Glasgow returned from South Dakota, our much liked and appreciated Gene Glasgow found it necessary to tender his resignation as Public Relations Counsel for the Potomac Valley Chapter. As yet, the Executive Committee has not accepted his resignation but as a necessity has explored the possibility of retaining other counsel. During the last two months the Public Relations Committee has, with considerable effort, carried the program and publications without the services of counsel. The work involved in carrying on our Public Relations program requires outside assistance as the Committee members cannot devote all the time necessary to carry out the many phases of this program. After due consideration the Executive Committee has interviewed and talked to the firm of House and Gerstin, Inc., Public Relations counselors. Mr. Gerstin has expressed a great deal of interest in working with the Chapter and has written our Executive Committee a letter as follows:

"Here are the areas in which I believe an effective Public Relations campaign could be engendered for the Potomac Valley Chapter of the A.I.A.:

1. A general study of purpose and direction to determine what civic, social, newspaper or trade activities could be undertaken.
  2. More consistent use of the Metropolitan and local press.
  3. Supervision of the monthly publication.
- I feel that the scope of Public Relations on your behalf is limited only by the amount of time you are willing to give it.

Sincerely,

House and Gerstin, Inc.

(Signed) Marvin J. Gerstin, Vice President"

The last paragraph in Mr. Gerstin's letter refers not only to the Executive Committee and Public Relations Committee but also to each member of the Chapter. Each member should daily be conscious of his obligation to the profession and assist in every way to better himself, his work and his profession. This means that some contribution on the part of each member to the public relations work will be expected.

This situation will be discussed and the membership will be asked to voice their opinions. The Executive Committee has expressed the feeling that this problem should be brought to the membership and the final decision left in their hands.

Sub-Station to  
Bagley and Soule

John Blake Murphy, County Architect, announced that Bagley and Soule are to do the Wheaton Glenmont Sub-Station of Montgomery County Police.

## Jack Cohen, Our New Treasurer Is Busy With New Apartment Projects

Our new treasurer, Jack Cohen is a very busy man these days, having increased his office staff recently to handle the influx of new apartment house projects. In addition to three others, he is working on an 8-story elevator apartment in Silver Spring—the first luxury apartment in this city. Jack has just finished the Laurel Park Apartments in Laurel, Md. and the Beth-El Synagogue on Old Georgetown Rd. in Bethesda.

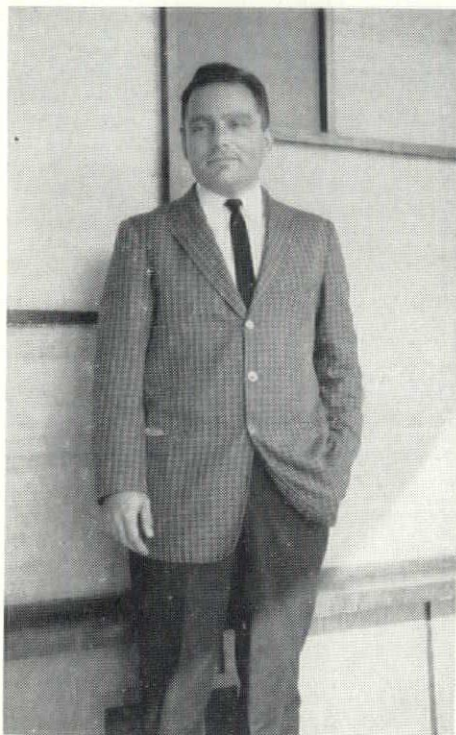
Jack is one of those comparatively rare people in this area—a native Washingtonian—and is the proud father of 3 children, the latest a baby girl, born on Sept. 4th, whose name is Harriette. He has recently built a beach cottage on Fenwick Island, Del., which, according to Jack is built on a modular basis. This, he explains, gives a maximum of efficiency in construction, together with uniqueness of design.

Mr. Cohen's office has specialized in builder's houses of which 1,000 such homes have been built in the Greater Washington Area—an amount which approaches 10% of such building activity.

Jack started out to be an engineer, having attended Maryland University for 1 year and Catholic University. He soon decided to be a clean-cut American boy and contribute to the heritage of American art and architecture. Therefore he associated himself with our well-known Ron Senseman, and after a couple of years established his own business.

Cohen's versatility is evidenced by his recent recognition as architect of the Mickelsons' storefront which was displayed in the special June issue of the P.V.A. announcing the annual awards.

Jack is also very busily engaged as a director of the Board of Directors of the Suburban Maryland Builders. This is an organization that largely comprises building contractors but which leaves room for 2 architects. The chapter should be happy to have one of its members in this executive position. We all wish well to Jack Cohen in his new job as treasurer of the Potomac Valley Chapter and as a new father. We know that his past success will lead to new and brighter pathways—and we are sure—to a firmer place for the chapter which he represents so well.



JACK COHEN

## Church Architectural Guild Holds Annual Conference

CHURCH ARCHITECTURAL GUILD OF AMERICA will hold its Annual Conference at Hotel Statler, in Los Angeles, February 17-19, 1959. Important features will be the annual exhibition of Church Architecture, and displays of stained glass, organs, church furnishings, works of art, building fabrics, etc. Further information may be obtained from the Guild offices, Du Pont Circle Building, 1346 Connecticut Avenue, Suite 321, Washington, D. C.

## Milt Prassas to Speak At Lutheran Banquet

MILT PRASSAS has been asked to be a speaker at the Lutheran Laymen's Fellowship of Washington at their annual banquet. Howard Mitchell, Director and Conductor of the National Symphony will be the main speaker. You may remember that Mr. Mitchell gave a talk last year to architects concerning the relationship between music and architecture. We are looking forward to his remarks at this banquet to show the relationship between religion and music.

## Committee News

The Board of Education of Prince George's County has very recently forwarded to Ben Elliott of the Public Relations Committee, a letter expressing their appreciation of a booklet sponsored by the A.I.A. This booklet, entitled "Designing a Better Tomorrow" was sent to Mr. William S. Schmidt, County Supt.

"We in public education are very grateful for this contribution on the part of your profession to our guidance program and to the possible use of this pamphlet in our high school career day programs. I have taken the liberty of referring both the material and your offer to participate in any career day program to Dr. Katherine Fossett who is the Supervisor in charge of the Guidance Program. I feel confident that Dr. Fossett will acquaint our high school counselors of the generous contribution and offer of service made by your organization."

This material is an excellent Public Relations media with which most A.I.A. members are now familiar. A copy was also sent to the Montgomery County Board of Education.

From Ted Englehardt we have the following list of the members of the office practice committee:

Jack Cohen  
John D'Epagnier  
Harold Esten  
Milton Prassas  
Ted Cromar

The committee plans to continue the seminars that have been so successful in the past. Some of the topics for discussion will include "Errors & Omission Insurance," some legal discussion on wills and agreements and there will be further work on the A.I.A. contract forms when they are sent out from the Octagon.

Also there will be speakers on the various topics and the whole chapter is invited to attend these meetings. Refreshments will be

## Information Regarding Architectural Education

ARCHITECT'S REVIEW COURSE to prepare for Registration Exams—at

Northern Va. Center—1206 N. Quincy Street, Arlington Virginia, Monday nights  
—Beginning Sept. 22. Call JA 7-3125

COURSE ON MODERN MASONRY—Five Wed. evenings in October at American University—Glover Auditorium—address W. F. Muhlbach at A.U.—Mass. and Nebraska Avenues, Washington 16, D.C.

FULBRIGHT SCHOLARSHIPS—address the Institute of International Education, Inc., 1 East 67th Street, N.Y. 21, N.Y.—for information on 1959-60 competition for graduate study abroad in many planning and architectural studies.

This is for the convenience of the members of the Kansas City Chapter, who in our copy of their September issue of the "Kansas Architect" had an entire section printed upside down.

## Nebraska Sends Roster

The Chapter has recently received a roster from the Nebraska Chapter of the A.I.A. which interests us very much. It is a 24-page cover-bound piece of distinctive typography which is an inspiration to this Chapter.

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 OL 2-1700

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**Warthen & Ward**

General Contractors  
 10410 Montgomery Ave., Kensington, Md.  
 Lockwood 5-1186

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General Building Contractors  
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**Marvin J. Duncan and Co.**

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