## Herndon's Historic Homes Registry

By Carol Bruce

Visit the Walking Tour page on the Historical Society website, pick out a few of the structures from the historic registry that are listed there, and take a stroll back through Herndon history!

Herndon's wonderful array of older homes has attracted many people to the Town over the years; I am one of them. I moved here because I loved the homes and the sense of history and community that I found here. When I purchased my home on Locust Street in 1987, I was certain that I was prepared for the realities of living in a house that was almost 100 years old. And, for the most part, I was.

I could handle the fact that the water pressure was so low it was sometimes almost nonexistent—I could take a longer shower. The electrical service that hadn't been upgraded since its installation wasn't a problem—I could use one appliance at a time. And when the lights went out during virtually every storm it was a great excuse for dining by candlelight. Even the lack of air conditioning didn't curb my enthusiasm. I was living my dream!

What I hadn't counted on was a smaller problem, one that I definitely was not equipped to handle.

I wasn't alone. All those strange noises—those creaks and thumps and bumps in the night—were more than just "old house noises." I was, in fact, sharing residency in my home, which had stood empty for months before I moved in, with mice—little creatures that today as they did back then have the power to instill in me a totally irrational sense of fear.

I won't go into the details, but with professional assistance my mouse problem was quickly resolved. I began a multi-year renovation process that in all honesty will probably never be complete. And, I began to research the history of my home. Which brings me to the point of this column.

The Historical Society sponsors a registry program for the older properties within the Town. The program is, as the application form says, "intended to increase public awareness of Herndon's older homes and buildings and their contribution to the aura and feeling that provides the Town's distinctive character and spirit." I submitted my research to the Society and my home became, as it says on the plaque next to my front door, "Town of Herndon Historic Structure No. 18." There are now 24 structures (mostly private residences) on the registry, and each one is as unique and different as the people who have owned and cared for them over the years.

Several of the homes share an education connection. House No. 2, at 725 Center Street, was built in the 1860s and served as Herndon's first public school. The small bungalow at 761 Grace Street (No. 8) dates to the 1920s, when failing health caused

Mrs. Mary Castleman—who for years had lived and operated a private boarding school next door at 763 Grace Street—to build a separate residence for herself. And E. Barbour Hutchison, a prominent local educator for whom Hutchison Elementary School was named, constructed the classic colonial at 1000 Monroe Street (No. 10) in 1924.

To learn more about these and other structures on the registry, visit the Walking Tour page of the Society's website (<a href="www.herndonhistoricalsociety.org">www.herndonhistoricalsociety.org</a>) where you also will find maps that indicate exactly where each property is located. Then, pick a few of them, plan your route, and take a stroll back through Herndon history!

*Note:* If you own one of the older homes in Town that is not listed on the registry, consider documenting the history of your house and making an application for inclusion. You'll find instructions on the Society's website.