

## **The Simple Village Life**

By Carol Bruce

*Memories of Herndon, Virginia* chronicles the Town's early years, beginning in 1879. The author's goal was to "let recollection keep sacred the paradise of memories."

Lottie Dyer Schneider was born in Herndon in 1879, the year the Town was incorporated. In 1962, while living in Marion, Virginia, she wrote *Memories of Herndon, Virginia*, her recollection of life in her hometown. In 1979, the Herndon Historical Society reprinted the book and it remains available for purchase in the Depot today.

"My purpose in writing a chronicle of those early days," she said, "is to preserve, if possible, for those who come after me the atmosphere of the village which characterized Herndon at that period—an atmosphere that is rapidly ceasing to exist and by many scarcely remembered."

In her book, Schneider considers a range of topics, including the Civil War; the railroad; and the early homes, schools, and churches. She ends with a section entitled "Past and Present," in which she says, in part:

Herndon as I knew it was a typical compact Virginia village with the limitations and characteristics of other little towns of that period.... We shared our joys and sorrows, were sympathetic to each other. When we went down the street we knew everybody and would stop to greet each other. There was a village atmosphere of friendliness and kindness....

The village is not the same today, but the memory lives on. Progress and enterprise have stimulated amazing changes. Probably due to the new Dulles Airport at Chantilly, three miles from the center of Herndon, there has been spectacular growth in the community.

Many homes have been built on the Ballou farm [*the Ballou subdivision, which remains today, runs between Monroe Street and Park Avenue*]; the Yount place has been subdivided and 60 or more homes built there. Only the original house and 2½ acres remain as of yesteryear.... [*Homes built on the Yount property stand on Van Buren and Grant Streets and the west side of Dranesville Road south of Park Avenue. The Yount home remains at 820 Monroe Street, although the house and the land are under contract to a local developer. Plans call for the house to be moved forward and preserved and several new homes to be built around it.*]

On the northeast section of the Bowers tract there are many garden-type apartments with 40 or more in construction. The southeast section, which was woodland, is a sub-division called "The Herndon Woods," with many new homes.... [*The International Apartments remain in the 800 block of Locust Street.*

*Most of the homes in the Herndon Woods subdivision also remain, and many are noted for their large wooded lots.]*

The old Wiehle property is now called "Reston." Seven thousand acres have been purchased by a New York company which contemplates a population of 75,000 and expects to expend in time millions upon the project....

There is a new modern post office building [*now Angeethi Indian restaurant*] near the Baptist Church and daily house to house mail delivery.

A new fire-house has been built with modern engines, ambulance and oxygen service available with men on duty at all times.

The Fortnightly Club and the Library Association had built a good library building [*now the Herndon Friends Meeting on Spring Street*] and have expended \$11,000 in improvements and expect to have a full-time paid librarian....

The Barker house at "The Pines" has been torn down and the Blanchard house will be removed in short time. These two properties are old landmarks, but this land is to be used for commercial purposes.... [*The Pines Shopping Center is currently on this site.*]

Gone are the days of the simple village life; gone is that indefinable native atmosphere which I have tried in these simple annals to indelibly impress in your memory. Welcome the new day of progress and development, but let recollection keep sacred the paradise of memories.