

Holiday Shopping in 1925 Herndon

By Barbara Glakas

Found in a December 1925 issue of the *Herndon Observer* newspaper was an “Observette” column entitled “Advice to Shoppers.” The author advised readers to patronize Herndon stores for their holiday shopping, saying,

“Are you in the shopping area of Herndon? Come over early. Park your car or your horse and look around. What do you want? Look Wilkin’s Store over and drop in at Moultrup’s. Stop at Coberth’s for a dainty lunch. Take in the lovely display at Chamblin’s Pharmacy. If you are not loaded up by this time, look around some more. Make a social day of it and don’t fail before leaving to order a supply of Fairlou, from Hoge Grain and Feed Company. Look over Mill’s radios and go to DeButts for your Christmas morning lamb chops or porterhouse steak.”

In 1925 Herndon was predominantly a farming community with most of Fairfax County’s leading dairy farmers located around the greater Herndon area. Downtown Herndon supported the farmers and their families with its many retail and wholesale stores, as well as service-related businesses. Some of the businesses mentioned in the *Herndon Observer* article are described below.

Magnus T. Wilkins operated Wilkin’s Store, a general store located at the corner of Elden and Spring Streets, in a building now occupied by Jimmy’s Old Town Tavern and Roaches in the Attic Antiques.

Fred C. Moultrup operated a hardware store where visitors could buy household goods and supplies, ranging from Congoleum flooring, to Velocipede scooters, to kitchen ranges.

Mr. and Mrs. George Coberth operated the old Herndon Hotel, formerly located on the east end of Lynn Street, near the current location of the Herndon Florist and Herndon Bakery and Bodega. Within the hotel building they also had a delicatessen which sold roast beef, baked ham, fried oysters, various soups, hot biscuits, salads, pies and breads.

Ralph Chamblin owned the local pharmacy in a building formerly located on Station Street at the intersection of Lynn Street. In addition to buying medicines and first aid supplies, customers could do their photo finishing, buy soap and school supplies, and could treat themselves to sodas, sundaes and candies. His ads boasted “You go home happy when you do your Christmas shopping here!”

The Herndon branch of the Hoge Grain and Feed Company opened in 1919 under the ownership of W. S. Hoge, Jr. and management of F.W. Robinson. Located on Center Street, in the current vicinity of ArtSpace Herndon, it was a general supply house for farmers and dairymen where

customers could buy hay, farming equipment and supplies, and various feeds and grains – including Fairlou ration.

William G. Mills owned the Herndon Garage in Town where he sold Chevrolets and tires and provided automotive services. He also sold Stewart Warner radios which were all the rage in the 1920s.

H. Grafton de Butts operated a meat house. He slaughtered and sold fresh meats as well as fish. He advertised that he had the “best grades of fresh meats, fish and oysters.”

Happy holiday shopping in Herndon!

About this column: “Remembering Herndon’s History” is a regular Herndon Patch feature offering stories and anecdotes about Herndon’s past. The articles are written by members of the Herndon Historical Society. Barbara Glakas is a member. A complete list of “Remembering Herndon’s History” columns is available on the Historical Society website at www.herndonhistoricalsociety.org.

The Herndon Historical Society operates a small museum that focuses on local history. It is housed in the Herndon Depot in downtown Herndon on Lynn Street and is open every Sunday from noon until 3:00. Visit the Society’s website at www.herndonhistoricalsociety.org, and the Historical Society’s Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/HerndonHistory> for more information.

Note: The Historical Society is seeking volunteers to help keep the museum open each Sunday. If you have an interest in local history and would like to help, contact HerndonHistoricalSociety@gmail.com.