

Coming home

Owners find connections with the properties featured on this year's Historic Garden Week Tour

BY MARY HINTERMAN

Virginia's story is one of people and their ties to the land. Sometimes, the ties go very deep and transcend generations.



Springfields, 1912

Springfields

Growing up in Middleburg, author, architect and historian Gail Babnew and her husband Joel Silverman knew they wanted to return to Virginia once their children were grown. Still searching for just the right farm on a June evening in 2000, Gail remembers she felt an instinctive connection to Springfields the first time she saw this historic home. She and Joel knew immediately Springfields was the place for them. What Gail did not know that June evening was even more dramatic.

One day in 2001, a former childhood resident of Springfields visited the property unannounced and spoke with Gail about her memories of growing up on the farm. After talking for a while, they realized that now grown child, was Gail's distant cousin! By buying Springfields, Gail had in a very real way come home to property that had been in her family in the 1800's. Over time the family connections to the house extended to the Haxell and McElroy families. Gail's family connection to Springfields is through the McElroy family. In deference to these important family ties, the small cemetery on the grounds, in which many of the original family members are interred, is carefully maintained.

Gail was so taken by the connection she spent the next 10 years researching every aspect she could find on the home and its former inhabitants. Her book, "Springfields Memories," based on detailed reference to letters, deeds, household accounts and architectural features, walks the reader through the history of the beautiful home and surrounding grounds.

The grounds at Springfield are a treasure for the trees, which are more than two centuries old, and for the lovingly cultivated gardens Gail has carefully planted. The gardens reflect the historical sense of the land and its families from the time before the European arrival, through the Revolutionary and Civil wars, and into the present day. Coming home to Springfields has been a link over time to the many peoples who have enjoyed the place Gail and her family calls their Virginia home today.



Ethel and Edwin Strange picking apples at Annadale

Annadale

Several years ago, Realtor Philip Strange got a call from a friend asking about some real estate in foreclosure near Gordonsville. The call was like a bolt out of the blue. Philip knew the piece of property well. When he was a child it had belonged to his grandparents!

His grandmother, Ethel Robinson Strange, was a master gardener, a nurseman, and a proud member of both the Dolley Madison Garden

Club and the Garden Club of Virginia. Philip remembers the extensive flower gardens around the house. His grandfather planted the 2,000 English boxwoods and 2,000 American boxwoods around the front and back of the main house at Annadale. More than 80 years ago, Philip's father and uncles planted the cedar trees that line the driveway.

The property stayed in the Strange family until 1995 when it was purchased by a developer. In time it was sold to a second developer who planned to build 291 houses on the land, and utilize the main house as a club house. The bank foreclosed on the property three years later.

Philip's friend was not interested in buying Annadale, but Philip and his wife Merrill became very keen on it. When they closed on the property in 2012, the farm returned to the Strange family after 17 years. They quickly took steps to prevent future cycles of development on their family land by placing a conservation easement on the property with the Virginia Outdoor Foundation.

Merrill and Philip see Annadale as a life-long project of maintaining the property for their family and for future owners. Philip reflects, "Moving was not on our radar, but coming home to Annadale been one of life's wonderful surprises. It has been a real pleasure to be involved with and we feel most fortunate to be a part of it."



The Remingtons' wedding day at the University of Virginia Chapel

Aerie

The Remingtons at Aerie Farm have deep Virginia roots. Jane was born in Wise County and spent her youth enjoying the best of both Virginia and Florida. She and Bill met when they were 17 and both decided to start college in Virginia; Bill at Washington and Lee and Jane at Hollins. They married in the chapel at the University of Virginia. Jane remembers, "When Bill and I were in the car leaving our wedding reception we looked at each other and promised 'we will come back here someday.'" After Bill's successful career took them to all corners of the United States, they fulfilled their promise to each other. Eighteen years ago they purchased Aerie Farm. Two years ago Jane and Bill renewed their wedding vows at the University of Virginia chapel. It was 50 years to the day, at the same hour, on the same day of the week and in the same place they were originally married. They have, indeed, come home again and planted deep roots for the next generation of Virginians.



Governor Barbour's mansion before it was destroyed by fire

Barboursville Vineyard

Thomas Jefferson would be pleased to discover that the 'estate of wine' he envisioned at Monticello has come to fruition at Barboursville Vineyard. Jefferson designed a landmark mansion for his friend, James Barbour, on this site in 1814. Construction commenced while James Barbour held

office as Virginia's Governor, and was completed in 1821.

Luca Paschina tells the next part of the story. On the other side of the Atlantic, Casa Vinicola Zonin was also being founded in 1821 - in architect Andrea Palladio's home province, the Veneto. "The assimilation of the Barbour plantation within the viticultural traditions of the Zonin family has conferred upon this place a heritage of agricultural passion and purpose that transcends eight generations on two continents."

The Ruins of the Barboursville mansion and the Barboursville vineyard don't precisely represent coming home, but perhaps the better represent coming full circle.

These properties will be open to the public on April 18, 2015 as the Dolley Madison Garden Club and the Garden Club of Virginia present "Pastures to Parterres..." , the Orange County Historic Garden Week tour. Tickets may be purchased in advance at www.vagardenweek.org.



TOWN OF ORANGE PROPOSED BUDGET JULY 1, 2015 - JUNE 30, 2016

GENERAL FUND REVENUES		
BUDGET ITEM	FY-2015	FY-2016 Proposed
Taxes and Fees from Local Sources	3,522,907	3,410,332
General Reserve Fund	875,324	292,366
Revenue from the Commonwealth	2,843,916	1,854,185
TOTAL GENERAL FUND REVENUE	\$7,242,147	\$5,556,883

GENERAL FUND EXPENDITURES		
BUDGET ITEM	FY-2015	FY-2016 Proposed
Legislative	43,377	46,957
General Administration	623,601	610,562
Law Enforcement	1,355,553	1,356,881
Fire & Rescue	71,375	71,375
Elections	-	5,000
Public Works	1,698,246	1,695,093
Trash Collection	168,320	163,438
Maintenance Buildings & Grounds & Parks	88,636	89,865
Transportation System	98,459	106,577
Cultural Enrichment	110,300	115,300
Planning & Community Development	173,844	174,948
Non-Departmental	268,601	274,658
Capital Projects General Fund	2,541,935	846,229
TOTAL GENERAL FUND EXPENDITURES	\$7,242,247	\$5,556,883

ENTERPRISE FUND - WATER REVENUES		
BUDGET ITEM	FY-2015	FY-2016 Proposed
Water Sales	1,304,916	1,332,500
Water Reserve Fund	89,773	-
Water Availability Charges	4,000	4,000
Miscellaneous Water Revenues	60,100	55,240
TOTAL WATER FUND REVENUES	\$1,458,789	\$1,391,740

ENTERPRISE FUND - WATER EXPENDITURES		
BUDGET ITEM	FY-2015	FY-2016 Proposed
Water Treatment	828,629	811,001
Water Distribution	466,773	391,910
Debt Service	163,387	160,982
Capital Projects - Water Fund	-	-
Contingency	-	27,847
TOTAL WATER FUND EXPENDITURES	\$1,458,789	\$1,391,740

ENTERPRISE FUND - SEWER REVENUES		
BUDGET ITEM	FY-2015	FY-2016 Proposed
Sewer Sales	1,528,524	1,514,000
Sewer Reserve Fund	189,573	179,169
Sewer Availability Charges	16,440	12,330
Miscellaneous Sewer Revenues	163,910	166,350
TOTAL SEWER FUND REVENUES	\$1,898,447	\$1,871,849

ENTERPRISE FUND - SEWER EXPENDITURES		
BUDGET ITEM	FY-2015	FY-2016 Proposed
Sewage Treatment	911,931	918,432
Sewage Collection	162,588	165,917
Debt Service	823,928	787,500
Capital Projects - Wastewater Fund	-	-
Contingency	-	-
TOTAL SEWER EXPENDITURES	\$1,898,447	\$1,871,849

RATES

- (1) Real Estate Tax Levy - There are no proposed changes. Currently at \$0.155 per \$100 of assessed value.
- (2) Personal Property Tax Levy - There are no proposed changes. Currently at \$0.83 per \$100 of assessed value.
- (3) Machinery and Tools Tax Levy - There are no proposed changes. Currently at \$0.066 per \$100 of assessed value.
- (4) Business Licenses - There are no proposed changes. Business Licenses will only be required for carnivals/circuses, itinerant vendors/peddlers, and public service corporations - telephone companies.
- (5) Vehicle License Fees - There are no proposed changes. Currently at \$35 per automobile and \$21 per motorcycle.
- (6) Meals Tax - There are no proposed changes. Currently at 8%.
- (7) Consumer Utility Tax Other than Electric - There are no proposed changes.
- (8) Refuse Collection Fees - There is no proposed change.
- (9) Cigarette Tax - There is no proposed change. Currently at \$0.12 per pack.
- (10) Transient Occupancy Tax - There is no proposed changes. Currently at 5%.
- (11) Sewer User Fees - There are no proposed changes.
- (12) Water User Fees - There are no proposed changes.
- (13) Water and Sewer Availability Fees - There are no proposed changes.
- (14) Planning/Development Fees - There are no proposed changes.
- (15) Parking Tickets - There are no proposed changes.
- (16) Veteran's Park Shelter - There are no proposed changes.
- (17) Depot Community Room - There are no proposed changes.
- (18) Public Works Community Room - There are no proposed changes.
- (19) Pavement Millings - There are no proposed changes.
- (20) Sold Surplus Property Storage: There are no proposed changes.
- (21) Certificate of Public Convenience - There are no proposed changes.
- (22) Taxicab Driver's Permit - There are no proposed changes.

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that a Public Hearing on the 2015-16 Budget is duly established by the Town Council to be held Monday, April 20, 2015 at 7:00 p.m. in the Town of Orange Community Meeting Room, 235 Warren Street. Oral and/or written comments will be received at that time.

The complete budget document, including a listing of fees, is available for public inspection at the Municipal Building located at 119 Belleview Avenue during regular office hours, 8 am to 5 pm Monday through Friday and on the website at www.townoforangeva.org. Further particulars may be obtained by contacting the Town Director of Finance's Office at (540) 672-1020 or the Town Clerk's Office at (540) 672-5005 or via email at : directoroffinance@townoforangeva.org.

Respectfully
Gregory S. Woods
Director of Finance