

## **AN EARLY HISTORY OF FORD'S COLONY**

Beginning in September 1997, the *Talk of the Colony* ran a yearlong series of monthly articles on the history of our community. The author, Muriel Weaver, noted that in the early years of the development were “in some ways a period of transition from the former Middle Plantation to Ford’s Colony.”

Without realizing it, “pioneering residents were setting much of the atmosphere that has come to characterize the Colony today: informality and openness, in that all programs and social affairs were open to everyone. Interests were shared, along with the desire to relax and have fun.”

In writing a history of Ford’s Colony, Muriel laid special emphasis on the growth of the many clubs and activities that abound here today, and she sought to show how much we all owe to the early residents who gave so much time and effort to get things going. And she wanted to make sure the record is not forgotten.

In researching her articles, she “questioned friends and reached out to interview early residents,” but she acknowledges that “in no way did I reach all who mattered. I am sure I missed potential contributors with colorful tales.

“So, though far from perfection,” she hopes “that these pages portray the variety of life and activities in a caring atmosphere that prevails in Ford’s Colony.”

Muriel’s account makes abundantly clear the critical role that the work of volunteers played in the development of the Colony – and still does. Unfortunately, her account of the community’s history only takes us up to 1993. She no longer is a resident of Ford’s Colony, so there is no evidence of later chapters. Still, we are fortunate to have on record her efforts.

### **CHAPTER ONE**

What was Ford’s Colony prior to its development by Realtec? Two earlier attempts, called Middle Plantation, had failed by 1982. Before that, what went on in this place?

It was not part of the historic Middle Plantation that became Williamsburg, the land lying between the York and James Rivers from College to Queen’s Creeks. The Ford’s Colony land was the territory of the Powhatan, an Indian chief and father of Pocahontas. His thirty tribes lived in approximately 8,000 square miles from the Potomac River south to North Carolina. Powhatan Indians of the Pasbehay and Chickahominy tribes lived here, hunting, fishing, growing corn, making pottery and baskets – and war. The earliest English colonists settled along the coast, with their first permanent settlement in

Jamestown in 1607. Despite many struggles they hung on, and by 1624 tobacco had been imported from the West Indies. After they acquired their own property – at first land was owned by absentee landlords in England – their tobacco exports lifted the small trading center into prosperity.

During the Civil War in England (1641 – 1649), Virginians supported King Charles and were shocked by his execution. By the time the Cromwell regime ended many Virginians were men of middle-class origins who had made their fortunes in land. Prominent among them were John Carter and his son Robert (“King Carter”) and William Byrd, who eventually purchased Westover Plantation. Other tobacco aristocrats gaining wealth and power were Thomas Ludwell and John Page. The few cavaliers of distinguished English families were in the minority. One was Sir William Berkley who became Governor of Virginia from about 1650 to 1677. His manor house at Green Spring has been called the most important home in 17<sup>th</sup> century Virginia.

The site of the Green Spring manor house lies about four miles down Centerville Road from Ford’s Colony, at the intersection with Highway 5 (the old River Road). Berkley began with 984 acres and by 1770 a plat of Green Spring property encompassed 4300 acres. By then, the estate was in the hands of the Ludwell family after Berkeley’s widow remarried. The tobacco crop sustained Green Spring, but Berkeley also experimented with fruit trees, silk, flax, potash, wine, ceramics and glass. Philip Ludwell II, owner of Green Spring in the early 18<sup>th</sup> century, took great interest in farming operations, even exchanging specimens with Thomas Jefferson.

Property boundaries were loosely defined in those days, often listed as next to “so and so’s” land, or using a road, creek or big tree as a marker. Powhatan Creek crosses Ford’s Colony land to join Longhill Swamp (to the north) and Chisel Run (to the east) at the point where John Pott and Edinburgh meet today. Early maps, references and the sparse records suggest that much of Ford’s Colony belonged to Green Spring Plantation.

Of special interest to Ford’s Colony are neighboring events that took place in those early years. To travel from Williamsburg to the York, James and Chickahominy Rivers, one used a combination of old paths: Ironbound, Green Spring/Centerville, Brickbat (News Road today), or Longhill to River Road and hence to Barrets Ferry to cross the Chickahominy. Ford’s Colony is encircled by these roads, providing direct access to Richmond.

On the northwest corner of Richmond Road (Highway 60) and Centerville Road was Six Mile Ordinary. An ordinary was a tavern offering food, drink and lodging, popular with locals and travelers alike. In 1745, Six Mile Ordinary advertised that it “entertained travelers and had accommodation for themselves and horses.” It was a rallying point for local patriots already disenchanted with England. In 1778, a group of them announced support for American independence. A historical marker on the corner today commemorates the event.

Another such tavern closer to Ford's Colony was Spencer's Ordinary at the corner of Centerville and Longhill. Here, in 1781, battles raged between the forces of Cornwallis and Lafayette on both sides of Centerville Road and didn't end until Cornwallis' vanguard arrived. Accounts vary, but the British were probably victorious.

Green Spring also had a battle in 1781. When Lafayette's men reached the plantation, they had heard that the British had already crossed the James to head north. This false information was a trick and bloody fighting ensued. The British left Jamestown and Lafayette moved on to another farm. Green Spring, which had recovered from the devastation by Bacon's Rebellion in 1677, led by a thousand vigilantes opposed to the governor's friendly policies toward Indians who were attacking frontier settlements, was once again left in ruins. Part of Ford's Colony was probably farmed during the Revolutionary War and the years following.

## CHAPTER TWO

By 1795, Green Spring Plantation had been inherited by William Ludwell Lee, who, complaining of mosquitoes tore down the grand old manor house, scene of many historic meetings of the General Assembly, and built a new residence.

This Lee is also known for unusual attention to his slaves. In his will, he asked that young slaves be educated in the North, and adults were to be provided with food and housing on Centerville Road (at the Hot Water Plantation). This led to the establishment of a black community on an earlier Green Spring holding. During the War of 1812, in which the Americans sided with the French, their Revolutionary War allies, the British blockaded Hampton Roads, and a few ships sailed up the James. No action on Ford's Colony land has been recorded.

Later, in the Civil War, Williamsburg was taken by the Union forces approaching from the east via Fort Magruder. As they grew closer, James City court records were hastily removed for safekeeping from Williamsburg to Richmond. (But when Richmond was burned in 1865, the records were destroyed.) The College of William & Mary closed; the Wren Building was used first as barracks, then as a hospital, and finally for storage. The Confederates, hoping to defend Richmond, retreated westward. In a drenching rain, the roads to the Chickahominy were said to be "in horrible condition." Six miles from Williamsburg, the Confederates encountered a "formidable swamp" – Powhatan? – that disabled wagons and ambulances. The war in this area was essentially over by summer 1864, but there were many grim accounts of skirmishes, wounded lacking care, and the burning of fine homes, including Green Spring. No map of Civil War military activity records a landmark in Ford's Colony. We do know that the remains of Green Spring Plantation were sold to people in New Jersey and eventually to lumber companies. Today it's a federal historic site.

Our history shifts to William J. Murdoch, the earliest record of a resident in what is now known as Ford's Colony. Murdoch was born in Edinburgh, Scotland, in 1814. When or

why he moved to Virginia we do not know, but here he found a wife, Minerva, and in the census of 1850 he is listed as a farmer. The couple lived in today's section A-17, and by 1860 Murdoch also had become a tailor. At age 51, in the waning days of the Civil War, he was found in his home "chopped in the head." Hearsay has it that he was accused of making Confederate uniforms. He was survived by his wife and six of his eight children, several of whom are buried in the little cemetery on Waterton.

Today, the cemetery holds approximately nine graves of related Murdochs and Austins. William Murdoch's great-great-granddaughter, Lorena Austin Richardson, lives nearby. She never saw the original home beside the cemetery, but believes it was destroyed by fire. Her earliest memory of the cemetery was seeing it covered with ivy, and it was once enclosed by an iron fence that has long since disintegrated. The most recent gravestone dates from 1905. Perhaps the house burned down around that time, for burials after that aren't likely as bringing a wagon up the hill on an overgrown road and through a forest would have been difficult.

The Richardson family still owns 170 acres adjoining Ford's Colony and continues to farm. In 1997, the property was conveyed as an easement to the Williamsburg Land Conservancy in an agreement that blocks further development along Centerville Road from Ford's Colony to News Road. This protects a Civil War home currently occupied by members of the Richardson family and permits the construction of only two more homes. An interesting qualification for resale: any buyer must be a farmer. Mrs. Richardson believes that her land has always been farmed and, as part of Green Spring Plantation, may have produced apples. The family hopes the land will be farmed in perpetuity.

### **CHAPTER THREE**

Longhill Road was already well known to travelers by the late 1900s when developers became interested. Some Philadelphia investors selected an area on the south side of Longhill for a planned 600-acre community called Williamsburg West. About the same time a second neighboring community was envisioned by Robert Hornsby, a developer with deep roots in Williamsburg. He named his 317 acres Windsor Forest. And in 1962, a third group of businessmen decided to try their hands as developers. Starting out with a subdivision near the others in 1973, this more ambitious undertaking of 1,410 acres was called Middle Plantation Country Club, Inc., an appealing name recalling the beginnings of Williamsburg.

The catalyst that set these plans in motion may well have been the construction of Lafayette High School, scheduled to open in 1973. The sewer connection for the school – a major asset – ran through both Windsor Forest and Middle Plantation. Windsor Forest opened in 1971.

In the 1960s, the Williamsburg West subdivision started building a golf course, planned housing and a country club overlooking a pond formed by damming up Chisel Run. One

of the earliest couples to move to Williamsburg West, Jim and Helen Bell, often went for walks in what is now Ford's Colony. They passed the beginnings of their country club, which was never completed, situated on today's Ford's Colony Lot 92, Section A6-a. Farther up the hill, on today's Section A6-b, was an old frame home with extensive plantings of beautiful yellow daffodils. Much of Williamsburg West's plans never materialized.

The Middle Plantation property presented more complex problems. Having undergone two bankruptcies, it was in such poor condition that the County could not collect taxes. The proposed golf course was so overgrown that the future designer, Dan Maples, couldn't see it. The owners were Hab Baker III, a Hampton developer (president of Middle Plantation of Williamsburg, Inc.) and Leon Perlin, one of Baker's partners in the attempted rebirth of Middle Plantation when it was formed in 1977. The property had been in trouble since 1982 and was rapidly going into the tank. Then Realtec entered the scene, with the most ambitious, most complex, and most financially demanding undertaking.

The story of Realtec is the story of the Ford family. Richard J. Ford, a marine in the Korean War, had graduated from Manhattan College with an accounting background. He worked for James Talbott, Inc., and then for Arthur Anderson LLP before going with Certain-teed Products in 1974. Certain-teed, which was engaged primarily in manufacturing and marketing building materials, became involved in real estate projects that were rapidly incurring deficits.

Certain-teed decided to put Ford in charge of the real estate development subsidiaries to minimize losses and unload the real estate portfolio. Ford worked out a plan to extricate Certain-teed from the development business, and in December 1976, a totally independent Realtec Incorporated was created. Realtec's initial job was to rescue three troubled real estate ventures in the Carolinas. It came up with three different solutions.

Connestee Falls near Ashville, North Carolina, was developed into a second home community on 3,900 acres, with a golf course, clubhouse, tennis, swimming, horseback riding, trails and four man-made lakes. Sapphire Valley, in western North Carolina, became a successful resort of 5,700 acres with two golf courses, country club, tennis and a large inn. The Keowee Key property in South Carolina turned into a retirement community with similar amenities.

Realtec's Chairman Ford and his two sons, Richard Jr. (President and Chief Executive) and Brian Ford (Vice President and General Manager), came to Virginia to see Middle Plantation. After studying the tangled situation for two years (1982-1984), they decided that the land and location had wonderful possibilities, if only they could extricate it from the debts and legal problems. They proposed to create a planned community that could benefit both the residents and the environment. They submitted to James City County a revised master plan, Ford's Colony, that lowered the density of the development.

After undergoing several years of litigation and studying proposals and appeals, the presiding bankruptcy court judge, finally settled the Middle Plantation problems in the fall of 1983 by accepting Realtec's bid. And thus, Ford's Colony became a Realtec reality.

## CHAPTER FOUR

Realtec's plan for the Middle Plantation property, now Ford's Colony, provided for paying debts totaling \$2.7 million to all creditors within three years of financing the completion of the development of Section 1, which Middle Plantation had failed to finish. Under the plan, Realtec reserved property along Centerville Road for eventual widening and gave 30 acres of land for public use. This land is the current site of the D. J. Montague School. The plan also provided for more open space, including a 250 acre nature preserve and wildlife habitat. Other proffers to James City County included a sewer pump station behind Windsor Forest and roadway improvements on Longhill, Centerville and News Roads.

In November 1985, news circulated widely that Williamsburg West was being added to the Ford's Colony development. At that time it contained 16 houses and the start of the previously-mentioned 18-hole golf course. After witnessing two failures, not everyone was wildly enthusiastic about joining a third attempt to "colonize" Middle Plantation. In addition, several homes in Williamsburg West were rented out, unoccupied or in need of repairs. Nonetheless, Realtec was poised to buy.

In the end, Williamsburg West could not muster the 100% agreement by the homeowners that was required to amend the covenants to change their association from a volunteer to a mandatory membership. Thus, the "done deal" already announced in the newspapers foundered. Williamsburg West decided to continue on its own but agreed to sell Realtec its undeveloped property. Only a few years later this area was recognized as a significant asset to Ford's Colony.

Now the pieces were falling into place, but much remained to be done. By 1983, Realtec had two man-made lakes nearing completion and two 18-hole golf courses (the Red and White) ready for play. Realtec completed the development of roads, water and sewer in the previously bankrupted Section 1. On Longhill Road, an ornamental brick wall announced the entrance to Ford's Colony, 1,410 acres of lovely Virginia property. It was time to say, "Come live here."

The official Grand Opening of Ford's Colony took place the weekend of June 7-9, 1985. To begin the celebration, a helicopter landed on the first fairway and a colonial crier announced the arrival of Governor Charles S. Robb and Hays T. Watkins, chairman of the Board of CSX. Escorted to the podium, they welcomed Realtec's "Ford's Colony" to Virginia. They were followed by other speeches by the Chairman of the Board of Supervisors, James City County officials, members of the City Council of Williamsburg

and Realtec's people: President Richard J. Ford, Jr., land planner Lewis Clarke and golf course designer Dan Maples.

After their remarks, Mr. Ford drove the first ball on the 18-hole course. Next followed a sumptuous lunch, the Virginia Fife and Drum Corps, music, and a picnic and puppets for the children in their own tent, while red and white balloons filled the sky.

The following day was the now-storied Land-Rush sale, the offering of remaining lots of Section 1 and the opening of Section 2. How does anyone sell \$6.2 million of home sites in one weekend? Answer: a worthy offering and clever strategy!

Here's how it worked: a prospective buyer paid \$100 registration fee to have a look. At a tent on the site of the future country club, the prospect received a map and information on each lot to be sold: number, size and description. Off he went to see. A post on each lot bore a card with (1) lot number and (2) price. To purchase, he took off the card and drove back to the tent to settle up. Once the card was removed, the post read "SOLD". Any remaining lookers saw that this particular lot had been purchased so they rushed off to see what other lots were still available. It was the greatest land sale around here in anyone's memory.

## CHAPTER FIVE

What about the families living in Ford's Colony who bought their land and/or built under Middle Plantation? The first news of the Realtec takeover was greeted by some with a modest yawn. Having lived under several owners, what difference would another make? It was a bucolic life, country style, children and pets could roam freely and play in a beautiful, natural setting.

Apryl and Dave Altman, for example, bought a house already under construction on North Stocker Court, finished it themselves, and moved in in 1979. They started life in Middle Plantation with a paved road and working utilities (cable TV came three years later). Their three children will always remember wonderful days romping in the woods, playing on a road free of traffic and swimming in the pool at Windsor Forest. They were well settled with friends and a few neighbors. They had not been looking for planned activities or special events, but they easily adapted to life under Realtec.

Living on the other side of Middle Plantation Drive (now Ford's Colony Drive) was not so easy even though it also was in Section 1. The first family to build in the James Bray area was Mary Lou and Fred Smith. They came in 1979, took on Hab Baker of Middle Plantation as their builder and moved in the following year. No electricity, however, so the house was built using a generator for power – not an unusual situation. Street lights were also lacking. But most inconvenient was the long daily walk for mail down a dirt road to Middle Plantation Drive – muddy in the rain and winter weather. The promised paving was postponed repeatedly.

A year later, Beverly and Roger Baldwin moved into their home, also on James Bray, and encountered similar difficulties trying to get the road paved. Were the Baldwins discouraged? Not at all. In the great land rush sale, they were among the first to dash out and acquire an additional lot. Moreover, their son Scott had a great time. In summer, he was hired by Realtec to do “sprigging” (planting grass for one of the golf courses.) And in winter, time permitting, he took a friend “mud bogging” in his four-wheel-drive Bronco on the golf course. Eventually, he was hired to help build the Links townhomes.

Another early family was Jeanice and William Roberts, who, while living in Skipwith Farms in Williamsburg, bought property on John Pott Drive in 1971. This was on a small rise they called Hickory Hill because of the numerous hickories on the land. The Roberts didn't build and move until 1986. In the intervening years Hickory Hill offered a great outing in the country for hunting deer and trapping otter, beaver and muskrat. William retired after a distinguished Navy career, and while he started his *Sketches from Hickory Hill* (a 1977 series of essays on his travels and family), Jeanice's talents were rewarded by the Ford's Colony garden Club. On her wall was an elegant plaque granting her life membership in the Garden Club in appreciation of her dedicated service,. Footsteps in another direction were made by an enterprising son, who together with a friend trapped muskrats, cured the pelts and froze the meat in a second-hand freezer. The meat was sold as a nutritious delicacy down in Grove.

Just a few days before the Roberts family arrived in 1986, and within six months of the Realtec takeover, John Pott was paved, and so were the Section 1 streets, including James Bray.

Meanwhile Realtec was honing its marketing skills. Peggy and Dick Cleveland, then living in Switzerland, discovered Ford's Colony in reading Barron's magazine and bought property during their next trip back to the U.S. A flier was given to Beverly and George Hambacher, who were still in Singapore and wanted to settle somewhere greener than in California's brown hills. Mary Allen and Don Naulin's attention was caught on the way to Florida by the Wall Street Journal. Judy and Pat Callaghan thought the idea was risky but nonetheless bought their two lots two weeks prior to the Grand Opening, thus leading the way from New Jersey. Other early birds were Yvonne and John Roberts, who bought and built in Minor Court and joined Ford's Colony in 1986. They moved quickly, having located a builder in Poquoson while living on a yacht.

## CHAPTER SIX

As the first families moving into Ford's Colony were getting settled, the development was buzzing with activity. Realtec brought in a team to make the Colony a showplace as a design for living. Among the prominent figures were Dennis Canupp, Project manager; Mac Triplett, head of Fordco, a housing construction company; Drew Mulhare, an Annapolis graduate who came in 1984 as a Project Engineer; Ralph de Rosa, a very effective sales manager; and Fuzzy Zoeller, a past U.S. Open and Masters golf champion, who was named the Ford's Colony PGA golf pro.

There was tremendous activity between 1985 and 1988. A large sign encased by a brick wall announced the entrance to Ford's Colony. Realtec's priorities included completing all water, sewers and roads in Section 1, with electricity, telephone and cable TV to follow. The construction of the 23,000-square-foot Country Club, begun in 1986, was also important. Not limited to Ford's Colony residents, the club would later cater to outside golfers and gourmets. The men's locker room was to feature a grill, bar and a place to play cards. A Community Center offering swimming, tennis and a large multipurpose room for classes, meetings and parties was a priority. Smaller rooms would be available for arts, crafts and workshops.

Ford's Colony soon welcomed a flood of new arrivals. In 1987, much was in place to prepare for the influx. A new public relations director, Donna Bernard, provided a house-warming program. Newcomers received an orientation packet with information on schools, shopping and various organizations in the Williamsburg area. In January, 1988, a "suggestion box" entitled "Talk It Up" welcomed ideas. Security offered a form for newcomers that alerted the officers about planned absences and any special requests, such as mail collection and storage. However, that service had to be discontinued as the volume grew. Storage of RVs and boats with 24-hour access was provided in the maintenance area, where 11 acres were set aside to provide offices, warehousing and services, as well as space for Ford's Colony's motorized equipment.

Social activity increased. Donna Bernard started water aerobics, and in determining other areas of interest, began the Ford's Colony Social Committee. In February 1988, Star Setterstrom organized two tables of Ladies Bridge – thus the Bridge Club inauguration. Soon, the group outgrew private homes, so a few meetings were held in the Country Club's Grill Room, and then on July 25, in the new Community Center. Men became regulars when Harry Riggenbach asked if he could play too.

In August 1986, the Mulhares and Hales hosted the first block party (on Henry Tyler Drive). It was an instant success. At the "Pig Picking," another Ford's Colony hallmark, pigs were brought in from North Carolina and roasted at the Community Center (renamed the Swim & Tennis Club). Residents brought the fixings. When the pigs were declared ready, everyone passed by to "pick." Oktoberfest, with German sausages, potato salad and beer, was wonderful, too.

By the end of 1988, Ford's Colony had visibly changed. The Williamsburg West subdivision moved its entrance (Country Club Drive) on Longhill Road slightly to the west; its former route was taken over by Ford's Colony and renamed Williamsburg West Drive. The card gate entrance to Ford's Colony off Longhill wasn't opened until 1993). Between Country Club Drive and Williamsburg West Drive, Realtec raised a long berm to protect the privacy of both communities.

The completion of Williamsburg West Drive opened up 156 home sites in Section 11 bordering on the 250-acre Nature Preserve. The impressive brick entry to Ford's Colony

remained about 2.2 miles farther down Longhill, where a divided four-lane Ford's Colony Drive led to the newly finished Country Club.

## CHAPTER SEVEN

By 1988, the Ford's Colony sales office was getting very busy showing prospects around the development and explaining Realtec's plans for the future. In addition to a wide variety of individual home sites, the salespeople had three other options to offer.

One was the Links, a distinctive neighborhood of 80 colonial-style townhouses that in 1988 were declared ready for occupancy. (A few were ready in 1986-87, however, and several families moved in then). The Stein, Mange and Haramis families were closely followed by the Setterstroms and the Reynolds. Eventually, Realtec decided to disband its Fordco construction arm and thereafter pursued only marketing and development. In November 1989, the Links Townhomes Association's Board of Directors, consisting of Dick Pero, Marie Stein and Carl Setterstrom, met for the first time.

Another option was St. Andrew's Village, a special community planned as a small colonial settlement of single-family homes on 65 acres of wooded, hilly terrain. In the spring of 1988, four courtyard homes were completed for viewing. The official opening took place on July 16 and 17 in an atmosphere of a Scottish festival. A strolling bagpipe brigade wandered through the streets on both days, and Scottish dances were performed in the central village triangle.

The third option was the Berkeley Manor House. This red-brick, three-story building on Ford's Colony Drive was planned as one of five buildings to offer elegant condominium living in a setting inspired by Colonial Williamsburg. Located close to the Country Club, the Manor House opened in the summer of 1988. However, condo sales didn't meet expectations, and, in a different approach, the units were offered as packaged for weekend golf along with the opportunity to visit Colonial Williamsburg. Soon, the Manor House was filled, and the idea of selling time shares began to look attractive.

Meanwhile, a lot of other things were going on in 1988. Block seating was arranged for that fall's football games at William & Mary, and tailgate parties were kicked off. Golf was starting. In the spring, the men started playing 27 holes, and Member-Guest tournaments were begun in July. A few ladies found other golfers and held an organizational meeting in December. Fourteen ladies turned up to work on rules; Ruth Ward was selected to lead them.

A resident directory was published. Although it was highly useful for "keeping in touch," including new arrivals and providing updates soon became difficult. Neighborhood coffee and dessert parties were given by Jeanice and Bill Roberts in the spring and fall, for the "old timers" to meet the newcomers. Dottie Haramis began a Supper Club, a very popular event organized like one she had experienced in northern Virginia. One dinner menu was set by a committee, and identical dinners were served at

a number of homes. No one was burdened, and all had a fine evening. Christmas 1988 was marked by the Army/Navy Football Party, a memorable occasion of food and fun at the Swim & Tennis Club, organized by Cheri and Drew Mulhare. Essie Welch introduced the “Great Cookie Caper.” Everyone shared recipes, exchanged cookies and was inspired for holiday table settings and tree trimming.

A very special event was “Golf cart caroling,” which began at the Country Club. Seventy residents wrapped up and piled into golf carts and went caroling through several neighborhoods, stopping at one home for cookies, cider and a chance to warm up. From there, they drove on, crossing Longhill Road to serenade Heritage Woods Nursing Home (now Dominion Village). The Country Club Advisory Board provided the carts, and Security created a roadblock to enable the 35 carts to cross Longhill.

## **CHAPTER EIGHT**

With a continuing increase in property sales and construction, a service entrance to Ford’s Colony opened on the west side in late 1988. Construction vehicles entered from Centerville Road to St. Andrews. Before long, families in Section III had become so numerous that they clamored for access, too. So the electronic Manchester gate was installed, granting residents 24-hour entry.

Essential to all development was the formation of the Environmental Control Committee. Though planned in 1985, the ECC wasn’t fully functional until 1988. Its goal was, and still is, to maintain consistently high standards of site planning, architecture and landscaping. The committee was initially composed of a representative from the developers, Property manager Drew Mulhare and Professional Architectural Counsel Mac Triplet. A resident engineer, Chuck Ward, was added in 1991, little knowing he would serve six and a half years. These members were to review all proposed construction and land usage to ensure adherence to the covenants. Alterations and additions such as outbuildings, paint colors, tree removal and fences were to be approved by the committee.

Meanwhile, new residents learning to find their way around Williamsburg were getting help from both the Hospitality Committee and caring Neighbors. Donna Bernard also provided information via a “Talk It Up” program through which questions of general interest were answered promptly. And newcomers were welcomed by “old timers” who may have arrived only a few months earlier.

In July 1989, the name of the Social Activities Club was changed to the more descriptive title of Community Activities Committee, which then consisted of 16 members and 10 members at large. For the first three years, it was chaired by Dottie Haramis, a gifted organizer who believed in abiding by the approved guidelines. Once a group attained 20 members, it was entitled to have a representative on the Activities Committee. Members representing organizations served for a year, and any member missing three consecutive

meetings was replaced. And if the agenda could not be covered in two hours, items were carried over to the next meeting. The meetings began and ended on time.

Initially, four main seasonal events were held. Each representative was expected to participate in one. Activities proliferated and were well attended. A small charge was collected, and the committee found it had a growing bank account. Some newly formed organizations, such as bridge and tennis, were instant successes. Occasionally newcomers arrived ready for action even before their houses were finished. Ruth Ward sent out a call in September 1988 for interested duplicate bridge players and only three months later she found herself chairing the Ladies' Golf Plans and Rules Committee.

By spring 1989, the Women's Golf Association was ready to vote on its plans, and the group officially teed off in March. Also started in 1989 was the Killer Whales swim team. In the September *Talk of the Colony*, interested parties were asked to call Ralph Simmons or April Altman. The positive response was instantaneous, and on March 1, 1990, an organizational meeting was held. Ford's Colony hosted three meets that summer. In each succeeding year, additional teams participated. The Killer Whales began fund-raising by washing cars and selling tickets for a Chesapeake Bay cruise.

Bowling grew more slowly but boasted dedicated participants. Bob Crossen received minimal response in 1989 when he tried to organize a Bowling Club. There was no competition, but the few bowlers had good fun and a way to meet other residents. For two seasons, only four to ten bowlers participated. But the spirit prevailed, both men and women bowled, and the group made a concentrated effort to grow. Aided by a flier survey with personal canvassing, the club counted 40 members. The Williamsburg Bowl encouraged them by offering league lane prices. The club named Ed Flook as president, Bob Amen secretary, Van Vander Veer publicity chief and Jack Kessler as treasurer. Bowling landed a seat on the Activities Committee, and the club had 64 members by the 1992/3 season.

## CHAPTER NINE

The idea that led to the formation of Caring Neighbors was first suggested by Ann Requa, who moved here from Newport News in 1987. She and her husband Bill were joined by his parents, Williams and Jean Requa, a year later. Ann pointed out that most people living here had moved away from an earlier community of family and friends, the kind of folks you could call on for help in an emergency. But what now? Ann thought it would be wonderful if everyone in Ford's Colony would know how to find help on a short-term basis, during times of illness, accident or death.

Ann mentioned it to her mother-in-law, and together with Judy Callaghan, they decided that it was an appealing idea. Jean quickly set up two teas and asked for comments from her friends as to how they thought residents would respond. It was an easy sell, turning up 16 enthusiastic volunteers. Jean and Judy immediately went to work to set up an

entire program. They picked the name, "Caring Neighbors," and Fran Janks, a talented artist and neighbor, created a logo.

By 1990, the volunteers program offered to prepare and deliver meals and provide transportation services, such as arranging trips to medical appointments, to a pharmacy or grocery store, and even to social functions. If you were convalescing from surgery, needed to borrow an extra bed, or just wanted someone to talk with, you were urged to call. At the Activities Committee meeting in May, 1990, it was recommended that Caring Neighbors be invited to send a representative. Judy Callaghan was selected and she became the co-director, along with Jean Requa.

Meanwhile, lots of other things were happening in 1989-90. The community was celebrating all the major holidays – an Easter Egg Hunt and Halloween for the children, and for everyone, St. Patrick's Day, the Fourth of July, Thanksgiving and Christmas. Special events in 1990 featured a Mid-Summer Night's Ball and Oktoberfest with German food and entertainment.

The Activities Committee was so efficient, productive and effective that Drew Mulhare asked it to draw up guidelines for the Swim & Tennis Club. Dottie Haramis appointed Mary Garrett and Marie Stein to handle this task, dealing with rules, rental charges and time allotments for both children and adults.

In addition, residents perceived the need for a Ford's Colony newsletter, and the winner of a contest to pick a title was to receive a complimentary dinner at the country club. And the winner was – Dottie Haramis, who suggested the *Talk of the Colony*. The newsletter began to appear monthly in 1989.

In May 1989, Dottie stepped down after three years as Chair of the Activities Committee and was succeeded by Janet Mottinger.

In August, Ford's Colony bid farewell to Donna Bernard, a social pioneer of the community. The Air Force needed her husband in Alaska, so Donna went off to new horizons. Taking over as the new manager of the Swim & Tennis Club was Liz Anthony, a Williamsburg native. It was an easy transition for her and Ford's Colony: she had been a tour guide for the Hospitality House on Richmond Road and was already familiar with our lifestyle.

After activities had been utilizing the Swim & Tennis Club for over a year, there was general agreement that the appearance of the meeting room should be enhanced. How do you begin to deal with a large, bare room? A decorating committee was set up to study how to treat the windows, walls, colors and lighting, and how to make a variety of major decisions, taking into account the room's utility, acoustics and aesthetics. In 1990, a group went to work: Betty Conklin, Mary Garrett, Marie Stein and Palmer Taylor.

So, windows were trimmed with padded cornice boards covered with fabric, wall sconces softened the lighting, silk trees brought in a fresh, outdoor feeling, and 20 mounted and

framed nature photographs taken in Ford's Colony dressed up the walls. The bill totaled about \$10,000, of which Realtec paid half and residents the remainder. The project was completed, the committee disbanded, and a celebratory reception was held in October 1991.

## CHAPTER TEN

By 1989, the population of Ford's Colony had grown considerably, and the new residents coming from various states brought a wealth of experience in management, finance, engineering, entrepreneurship and government. Initially, they concentrated on settling comfortably into their new homes, getting adjusted to their new situation, getting children off to their new school and acquiring a working knowledge of the Williamsburg road map.

Leisure time was wonderful, but the time came to look ahead, beyond the next golf or tennis match, and to take an interest in the workings of Ford's Colony. People began to talk about various matters of concern. At the same time, Realtec realized that the homeowners should be made aware of future plans and the problems involved and that all would benefit from their participation. So a group of 20 homeowners gathered at Marie Stein's townhouse for dinner and to talk about the future.

After dividing into two study teams, they met again, and the group evolved into what became known as the Huddle. They focused on 17 issues to bring before Realtec's management. A public relations consultant was brought in from Atlanta and met with the Huddlers to decide how residents could best proceed. The consultant suggested that the homeowners elect five members as an advisory board to make recommendations to Realtec. Thus in the spring of 1990, the first Advisory Board was formed to act as a communications link between the homeowners and the Board of the Homeowners Association, whose members had been appointed by the developer some years earlier. The property owners elected five members to the Advisory Board from a slate of 27 nominees.

Chosen to serve as chairman was Dick Reynolds, a Virginia transplant from New York State, who had extensive experience as president of three homeowners associations in addition to working 38 years at Cooper Industries, Inc. He served as chairman for four years. The other members were James A. Bailey, a native of Texas and retired president of Goodyear Time & Rubber Co. (North American Division); Barbara Fanny, a native Virginian who had dealt with a large homeowners advisory board in New York State and had served as a lieutenant in the Marine Corps Reserve; Chuck Ward, a Tennessee native who had served 24 years in the Air Force and worked for 42 years as an engineer in design and construction, much of which involved housing units; and Agnes McGhee, a Virginian who had considerable experience in business and real estate and represented non-resident homeowners in Ford's Colony.

The goal was to research and discuss their concerns with the Homeowners Association Board. The Advisory Board held annual elections for two or three new members, alternating for continuity. It held open door meetings monthly for nearly three years and thereafter met quarterly. Some of the first items discussed dealt with the condition of the roads (some too narrow and unpaved), setting up financial reserves and a house-check program. The appointment of a property owner to the Environmental Control Committee and the establishment of the Advisory Board were seemingly small steps toward the operation of Ford's Colony but proved immensely beneficial in terms of future development.

Destined to play a much less significant but perhaps more colorful role at this time were two white horses named Ladd and Columbo. They suddenly appeared behind a long white fence on St. Andrew's Drive directly across from the Village. The two carefully selected Percherons had been bought in as a team for an elegant black carriage built for Dick Ford. The plan was to use the carriage for residents on special occasions such as a reception, a major family event or a New Year's Eve celebration. In 1989, for example, Edie and Boots Hale were picked up at their home by the carriage and driven in splendor to their 35<sup>th</sup> anniversary dinner at the Country Club. After a year of offering rides and serving as hands-on models to teach children the feeding and care of horses, Ladd and Columbo got a new home and new duties in Colonial Williamsburg.

## CHAPTER ELEVEN

In late 1990, Lily and Norman Meyers moved into the Links. Lily was Lily Marlane to the theatrical world; blessed with a beautiful voice, she had appeared on the New York stage. Bette Crossen, a talented pianist, moved here with her husband Bob from Ann Arbor, Michigan. When Lily met Bette, sparks were lit. Lily envisioned a simple arrangement of scenes and songs from Broadway musicals such as *The Sound of Music* and *My Fair Lady* and thought that with Bette producing the music, Ford's Colony could use a bit of theater. Prospective actors, actresses and behind-the-scenes workers were urged to turn up on a Sunday afternoon at the Swim & Tennis Club. Lyna Shaw and Linda Baker were immediate "stars."

The first musical was sponsored by the Homeowners Association on June 28, 1991, as a benefit for the Activities Committee. The evening began with a picnic around the pool, followed by the Broadway Revue in the Swim & Tennis Club. Lily managed the cast of 34, Bette played the piano, John Roberts was master of ceremonies, and Howard Haynes did the choreography. The show was a great success.

The next year, the Ford's Colony Theater Club presented two programs: in May, *Ford's Follies of 1992*, and in November, a double bill, beginning with *Star Search*, a musical revue with John Roberts again as master of ceremonies and, after an intermission, a one-act Gilbert and Sullivan musical, *Trial by Jury*. This outstanding production was directed by Lily with musical direction by Bette. The cast: Dennis Horsfall (judge), Marge Tongue (plaintiff), Ben Machinist (defendant) and John Roberts (counsel for the

plaintiff). There were also bridesmaids (Linda Baker, Gerry Fredericks and Lyla Shaw), an usher (Don Naulin), a jury of five (Dan Bjick, Bob Crossen, Alan Noble, Bob Rosette and Palmer Taylor), and the public (Margaret Adams, Kathleen Horsfall, Ruth Lasko, Jean Mook, Mary Allen Naulin, Loretta Rosche, Carol Sorenson and Jean VanderVeer).

After 1992, Lily felt unable to continue, and before long she and Norman moved to Florida. But the Theater Club continued in the capable hands of the Crossens and the Shaws. Programs were henceforth selected by committee, and the momentum never waned.

But there was a nagging problem: the tired old piano could not do justice to the material or the scores. Henry Riggenbach and Howard Haynes undertook a fundraising project to purchase a 10-year-old piano. The Crossens donated their piano dolly, and the Theater Club a piano cover, as well as matching final donations. After waging a spirited campaign in the *Talk of the Colony*, a trade-in deal was concluded and the piano was ours in 1993.

Since then, the Theater Club has staged Follies in late spring and some additional entertainment in the fall. It also has arranged dinner dances, art exhibits and entertained residents of local retirement, convalescent and nursing homes. Somehow the Ford's Colony volunteers make it all work.

## CHAPTER TWELVE

In 1992, Ford's Colony was constantly changing, with more new homes, increasing population and burgeoning activities. The Travel Club, for example, began organizing trips to Europe. Bird watching was growing in popularity. Everything seemed to be in place or clearly envisioned when suddenly a startling rumor began to circulate. Was it possible that Marriott, the giant lodging corporation, might be coming to Ford's Colony?

The very idea distressed some residents and stirred general concern that our tranquil privacy was in jeopardy. The notion of timeshares in Ford's Colony apparently came up when the Berkeley Manor House began attracting golfers for special weekend packages and the 1988 program to sell condos there failed to prosper. Some residents remembered that during the 1960s and 1970s timeshares had got to be a bad name nationwide. Government regulators took action to solve some of the problems, and Marriott devised a program to raise standards.

As Realtec's Rick Ford and Marriott's Robert Miller often met at various conferences, both were increasingly attracted to the idea of timeshares. In the fall of 1992, a proposal was put before the homeowners at a meeting at the D.J. Montague School. The meeting with the homeowners went well, and the next step was to present a site plan to James City County. No objections were raised at the public hearing. The prevailing attitude was one of "wait and see."

The first of Marriott's vacation ownership resorts like the one planned for Ford's Colony was the Marriott Monarch Resort on Hilton Head, which opened in 1984. What about getting a close look at its operation? Flying down to Hilton Head were Marriott's Mr. Miller, Realtec's Dick and Rick Ford and Drew Mulhare, members of the Ford's Colony Advisory Board (Agnes McGhee, Dick Reynolds, Barbara Fanny and Dick Houston). Two intensive days were spent touring facilities and talking to timeshare owners and employees. The Marriott team presented its case, and by the time the Ford's Colony Group left, even early skeptics wondered, "How fast can we get Marriott to Ford's Colony?"

Back in the Colony, a Town Hall meeting was held at the Swim & Tennis Club for residents to voice any concerns, and on November 7 a detailed program was presented with maps, models, and information on the building plans. Thirteen acres would be sold to Marriott, including the Berkeley Manor House with 24 "villas." Five other planned buildings would include 12 acres and 120 villas, each to comfortably accommodate six, with two bedrooms, two baths, fully-equipped kitchen, formal dining room, living room with gas fireplace, three TVs, video cassette player, washer and dryer and private screened porch. A club house would include an indoor/outdoor pool, health club, convenience store and activities desk for reservations and ticket sales. Moreover, the architecture of the original manor was to be maintained. Realtec was to receive and share with the Homeowners Association fees for the upkeep of roads, use of walking trails, and 24-hour security. For its part, Realtec began construction of the third 18-hole golf course. The deal with Marriott was closed on May 12, 1993.

Realtec leased the land across the street to Marriott for tennis courts. Some years later, Marriott dropped its option to construct 80 more villas near the original Berkeley Manor House, choosing instead to build near the tennis courts.

The coming of Marriott has benefited both parties. Visitors to Ford's Colony like what they see, and some buy a timeshare for return visits. Some timeshare owners decide to buy a permanent residence here once they see Ford's Colony. It's a lasting, winning relationship. Ford's Colony residents enjoy the Marriott tennis courts, but perhaps most important, Ford's Colony is now listed internationally as a "top of the line" Marriott Resort.

## **CHAPTER THIRTEEN**

The arrival of the Marriott timeshares had little effect on community life in Ford's Colony, and Ford's Colony residents continued their familiar activities. Additions in the mid-90s included an Elder Council, a Youth Council and a Computer Club.

One big change in April 1994: We bid farewell to Liz Anthony, our Swim & Tennis Club manager for eight years. Fortunately, however, we had at the pool Kristen Hilton, our certified lifeguard and pool operator. Kristen took over as the new manager, directing

janitors and lifeguards, scheduling events, running children's activities, renting out the facility, and putting together the residential directory and the monthly *Talk of the Colony*.

In the fall of 1995 ten fellows, guided by Dean Couch, Bob Cookingham and Dale Merriss, produced 24 wooden benches that were strategically placed along ponds and areas of lovely views where one might want to drop down for a while, meet a friend and watch the world go by. The labor was provided by this volunteer force, assisted by Community Services. What a pleasant surprise it was to turn onto Edinburgh Drive from John Pott in March 1997 and come upon the mini-park at the intersection. The trees and shrubs were planted in celebration of Arbor Day that month. The Garden Club under Janice Wagner continued to enhance Ford's Colony by planting daffodils and crepe myrtle trees.

As the Colony grew, so did the streets. Many early street names, recalling Revolutionary War leaders, were carried over from Middle Plantation. Upon acquiring Ford's Colony, Realtec favored the use of names of golf clubs around the world. Their locations and origins were explained in a book, called *Street Wise*, edited by Jane Robinson.

As noted in previous chapters, volunteers did a lot of great work in Ford's Colony. But it's worth mentioning that even in the early years many of our residents also contributed their energy and expertise to the Greater Williamsburg community. Their efforts benefited the Williamsburg Community Hospital; Olde Towne Medical center; the James City County Library in Norge, the Williamsburg Community Library; the John D. Rockefeller Jr. Library; the Christopher Wren Association; Elderhostel; Meals on Wheels; Colonial Williamsburg; First Night; the College of William & Mary; and various churches and musical events. In addition, the Ford's Colony Craft Club produced items for sale to raise money for charities, and Caring Neighbors was always busy lending equipment and providing services to our residents.

A member of the Hospitality Committee had been calling on new arrivals since its inception in 1987, but with so many more new residents Ford's Colony needed a venue for them to meet each other as well as to learn about all the Ford's Colony and Greater Williamsburg had to offer. In July 1996, Dottie Voorhis initiated a call for all newcomers to gather at the Swim & Tennis Club to drum up some ideas. Thus the Newcomers Club was born, and Dottie and co-chair Shirley Mitchell, found themselves in charge. From the initial 14 members in 1996, membership reached 285 in 1998, and the club has proved very helpful to new residents.

In June 1998 the long anticipated renovations to the Swim & Tennis Club were completed. The multipurpose room was enlarged about 30% and could be divided for two simultaneous meetings. Among other changes: heat and air conditioning in the smaller rooms, an overhang on the deck, new furnishings, a large modern kitchen and storage area. Children got a new Tot Lot just beyond the pool. An access road was built to permit deliveries to the kitchen, and the parking area was enlarged to accommodate 54 more vehicles. Elsewhere, four adjacent properties totaling 265 acres were added to Ford's Colony.

*(And so ends Muriel Weaver's charming history of the early days of Ford's Colony, with the cast of characters instrumental in creating many of the clubs, activities and attitudes of friendliness, caring, volunteering and community spirit which have survived to this day, making Ford's Colony what it is, and why we all love living here. But what about the rest of the story? Unfortunately, we don't have Muriel to bring us up to the present, but what we do have is a wonderful archive called The Talk of the Colony, our very own chronicler of history.*

## TALK OF THE COLONY ARTICLES

*The Following blurbs were gleaned by perusing through back issues, picking up from where Muriel Weaver's History left off. While all events of note were hopefully found and recorded, a few may have slipped through. Just by leafing through the back issues it's easy to see how our community has grown and matured. Early issues were rife with articles on Easter egg hunts, Christmas decorating contests, bird watching, nutrition advice, seminars on disability insurance and wealth preservation, gardening tips, various picnics, car rallies and Employee of the Month features. But the bulk of the early Talk of the Colony issues centered on club news and social events.*

### 1993

**September** Master plan amendment approved to combine two smaller recreation areas on Williamsburg West side into a larger area to allow for more parking and room for a picnic area, ball fields and tennis courts.

### 1994

**May** 1994 Ford's Follies presented by the Theater Club; also the second annual Pig Pickin'. Committee formed to start the cookbook, "A Taste of the Colony, Vol. II."

**July** Summerfest '94 announced for August at the Williamsburg Lodge. Event includes a dance band, dining and an Arts & Crafts Exhibit, along with the Ford's Colony Entertainers.

**September** Marriott Manor Club opens four new lighted tennis courts.

### 1995

**April** Talk of the Colony starts Club News for all the activities.

**May** Ford's Colony Follies of '95 presented at the Holiday Inn-Patriot.

**July** Recreation Master Plan presented at the July Open House Meeting  
Ford's Colony celebrates 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary this summer. Over 1800 lots sold with 800 houses either completed or under construction. About 100 new homes are being built each year.  
Activities Committee is comprised of twelve clubs, Killer Whales has 67 children competing

**December** Christmas Home decorating Contest held.

### 1996

**January** The Board of Directors appoints Strategic Planning Committee to plan and make recommendations for transition to owner control with a general election of Board members. Elections to take place when 75% of the total units are sold.  
Talk of the Colony to be mailed to non-resident property owners.

**April** Strategic Plan for 2001 set in motion.

**July** Formation of a Newcomers' Group announced with a coffee at the S&T Club.

**September** Residents asked to send reports of deer sightings to Security.

**November** Strategic Plan for 1997 through 2001 published, along with an organization chart showing the FCHOA BOD in control, with Standing Committees reporting. The BOD appointed Managing Agent is depicted as advisory to the BOD.

**December** Marriott announces that the last two buildings are scheduled to open in the first half of 1997.

### 1997

**May** Activities survey published.  
Finance Committee starts to develop a Capital Reserve Study.

**August** Installation of new gate control system scheduled.  
Activities survey results show that walking or jogging is the most popular activity in Ford's Colony.

### 1998

**January** Work begins on the renovation of the Swim & Tennis Building. Budget is \$425,000 and the project will expand the parking lot by 54 spaces, expand the multi-purpose room by 1360 sq. ft., add to existing restroom facilities,

and add a new restroom by the pool deck. Also, a new kitchen and storage wing will be added. The HVAC will be renovated, the pool deck area will be increased and a tot lot site prepared.

- October** Master plan amendment submitted to JCC for approval to add 265 acres to Ford's Colony, bringing the total to 2765 acres.
- November** Firestone/News Road gate opened, Turnberry opens, and work along the walking trails on Andrew's and Edinburgh completed.
- December** Ford's Colony announced as winner of the 1998 Community Association of the Year Award, presented by the Central Virginia Chapter of the Community Associations Institute.  
Open meeting announced to discuss a proposed full service retirement community.

## 1999

- March** Ford's Colony's annual budget is now \$2.3 million, with 2,230 property owners. 1084 residential units are completed, with 158 under construction. Overall property values have risen from \$12 million in 1984 to over \$425 million.  
Plans to construct two model homes adjacent to the sales Office on Ford's Colony Drive announced.  
Soccer field, basketball court and nature trail at the new Westbury Recreation Park announced, along with a pedestrian bridge and bird watching area across the Chisel Run Pond.
- June** Formation of the Nominating Committee announced.
- September** Hurricane Floyd, a 100-year storm, lashes community with 17 inches of rain (8 in just in 24 hours), and 55 mph winds, knocking out power and phones for 1-3 days.  
Western Gailes section opened for sales, with 125 acres and 143 home sites.
- November** Ford's Colony named National Community Association of the year, having competed in the Very Large (over 1000 homes).  
Singles Group formed.
- December** Berkshire section opens

## 2000

- February** Transition to elected BOD begins as Realtec representation and control ends.

Final section of the walking trail on St. Andrew's planned.

**August** Model homes on Ford's Colony Drive open house staged.  
Proposal that modifies the Master Plan for Ford's Colony studied that would eliminate the recreation and pool for St. Andrews Village to permit Realtec to develop two lots on the one-acre parcel. In return, Realtec would provide \$100,000 to the HOA for the enhancement of recreational facilities in Westbury Park.

**September** 1980's Resident Reunion, a cocktail gathering of all residents who pioneered Ford's Colony in the 1980s was held. A grateful tribute was made to Dottie Haramis, the creative driving force in the early years. Dottie inspired the *Talk of the Colony*, as well as the first Supper Club. Her many contributions were honored by a donation to a trust fund scholarship for Licensed Practical Nursing program at Lafayette High School.

## 2001

**January** Realtec announced plans for the further development of the Westbury Recreation Park with the inclusion of four hydro-tennis courts in the spring to complement the ball field, basketball court and nature trail. Also, the walking trail along Edinburgh will be completed for 3.1 miles. Four million dollars is allocated to improve the Country Club, as well as for upgrades on the Marsh Hawk course. Realtec is also exploring options to partner in the development of 850 acres across Centerville Road.

**March** Steve Hein joins the staff of Realtec Community Services as Assistant Community Manager.

**May** Should we construct and staff a gatehouse at Williamsburg West?  
When will the new pool at Westbury Park be built?

**July** Possible development by Realtec of property across Centerville Road announced.

**August** August designated as Neighborhood Block Party Month.  
Westbury Park clay tennis courts open.  
Management Strategy adopted, to be followed by a Long Term Plan and a Strategic Plan as association budget reaches \$2.6 million.

**September** Ford's Colony Homeowners Association chosen by Community Associations Institute as one of five case studies dedicated to exploring Best Practices in Community Spirit.  
Board minutes added to website.

First session of the FC Computer Club held Monday, September 17.

**December** Drew Mulhare announces Section 12, undeveloped area next to Country Club Drive, to be developed as single-family home sites in a condo style association that will be responsible for grounds and exterior maintenance.

## 2002

**March** Finalization of Strategic Plan.  
Efforts stepped up to facilitate the ongoing transition from a Board of Directors controlled by Realtec to a Board elected and controlled by the homeowners.

**June** Realtec completes agreement on the 240 acre parcel across Centerville Road.  
13 housing starts announced – the start of the boom? 15 more in July.

## 2003

**January** Construction of Nottingham Place announced.

**March** Realtec announces purchase of additional 200 acres across Centerville Road, bringing the total to 430 acres.  
Final plans for Westbury Park Pool and Tennis Courts approved, both of which are enhanced by the developer in exchange for lots and no pool in St. Andrew's Village.

**August** CERT announced.

**September** Hurricane Isabel hits community, leaves much damage in her wake.

## 2004

**June** Build out halfway mark reached.

**August** 1659 homes built to date, annual budget \$3 million.

## 2005

**June** First annual Ford's Colony Picnic, held June 12<sup>th</sup>.

**July** *Talk of the Colony* gets new typography, new features and starts printing photos.  
Belvedere announced for the traffic circle in front of the Country Club that will become the community landmark.  
Official opening of Westbury Park Pool and Tennis Courts.

**December** *Talk of the Colony* starts to take paid advertisements in an effort to reduce printing/distribution costs to the HOA.

### 2006

**February** Plans for the Continuing Care Retirement Community announced.

**June** Site work begun for Eaglescliffe Condominiums.

**July** Board of Directors votes to increase size of board from five to seven members.

### 2007

**January** TOC advertising for 2006, the first full year, nearly paid for all costs of publishing and distributing the newsletter.

**February** Board of Directors ponders implementation of a Capitalization Fee.

**March** Blast telephone calling capability announced for emergencies.

**June** Cap Fee passes, but overturned later when developer to be exempted.

**July** Work Force housing plans for News Road parcel announced by Realtec. Capitalization Fee amendment to the by-laws fails to pass.

**October** Continuing Care Retirement Community plans unveiled.

**November** Agreement reached on CCRC and Work Force Housing with Realtec.

### 2008

**January** Online voting instituted for BOD elections.

**February** Westport announces plans for 3-5 acre lots.

**March** RFP for management agent contract is initiated by Board of Directors..

**April** Olde Towne Medical Center Challenge charity golf tournament raised \$62,000, bringing the total raised in 13 years to over \$300,000.

**May** Grand Opening of Westport.

**November** Ford's Colony wins Community Association of the Year Award, presented by the Central Virginia Chapter of the Community Associations Institute.

## **2009**

- July** RCS reappointed as Management Agent after lengthy RFP. New 5-year contract signed. Also, BOD receives approval from homeowners to purchase Community Services Building and maintenance facilities.
- October** First Annual All-Resident Golf Open held.  
Technology Committee announces a new community web site.

## **2010**

- April** Ford's Colony Country Club files for Chapter 11 Bankruptcy protection in an effort to reorganize.
- October** Renovation of S&T Club completed.

## **2011**

- May** FCCC emerges from bankruptcy as Prudential takes over ownership of the club and real estate. Operations are managed by Affinity Golf Partners, a professional golf club management organization.
- July** Street lights to go LED after successful tests.
- October** FCHOA 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Committee announces celebration plans.

