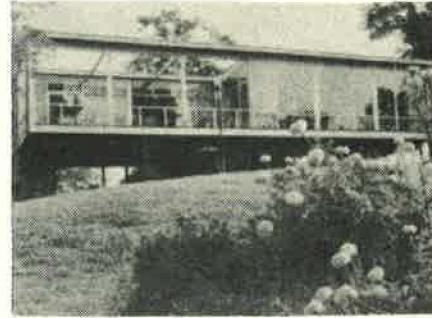




10 Years of Hollin Hills



This booklet  
reprinted in 1989  
as part of the Hollin Hills  
40th Anniversary  
Celebration



List of Awards and Recognition



- 1950 Revere Quality House—Southwest Research Institute
- 1951 Southwest Research Institute—Certificate of Merit
- 1951 Parents' Magazine—Best Home for Family Living—2 awards
- 1954 A.I.A. National Honor Award Program—Award of Merit Original Square house design
- 1955 The Evening Star—A.I.A. Award in Residential Architecture  
Clarence O. Skinner Residence—6 Recard Lane  
Casper Neer Residence—400 Paul Spring Road
- 1956 The Evening Star—A.I.A. Award in Residential Architecture  
M. E. Odoroff Residence—1241 Rebecca Drive
- 1957 Parents' Magazine—Best Home of Family Living  
Special Merit Award for Distinctive Design  
R. Randall Vosbeck Residence—407 Brentwood Place
- 1957 A.I.A. Regional Award Competition  
Award of Merit—1241 Rebecca Drive  
Honorable Mention—Residence—607 Sherwood Hall Lane
- 1957 A.I.A. Centennial Exhibit—100 years of American Architecture  
Selected as one of ten "Milestones in future of American Architecture"  
Exhibited National Gallery of Art



"I have tried to tie one lot into the other so the landscaping would be effective and make the community look as if there were no individual lots but a beautiful park."  
Barney Voight





## We Talk to Davenport

Many of the building details of the houses were determined by the contours of the lots. Also the people themselves helped determine the house. The original concept had been to build houses with two bedrooms. But the demand was for larger houses.

Hollin Hills was the first community in this area made up of contemporary houses. Like-minded souls tended to gather in them. Among sub-divisions, it is unusual to have houses of various price levels. It was even more unusual to have landscape plans that went with the houses.

So here is Hollin Hills today. Fort Hunt Road is paved and it occasionally gets cleared of the snow. Families now move in *after* the facilities are in. The Nelles, first family to occupy a house here, lived for two months with no sewer and a fifty-five gallon water drum on a hill with a long hose. Instead of a four room school at Hollin Hall which was heated by a pot-bellied stove, we have a big modern school house right at the entrance to Hollin Hills.

Talking to Robert Davenport, it becomes apparent that this community was hacked out—shaped together—pressed into mold—partially by design and partially by accident, but behind it all lay the builders expression of a new concept in living.

Ten year ago contemporary housing was virtually unknown in the East. Builders were building and people were buying neat boxes set in straight rows. One of the major hurdles to getting Hollin Hills started was financing it. FHA valued a \$22,000 house at \$9,500. Today that same austere agency places a value of \$23,700 on a \$23,400 house. Ten years ago the foreman and carpenters were so afraid that the fragile construction of glass and brick would collapse on them that they set braces against the nearby trees to hold the blamed thing up.

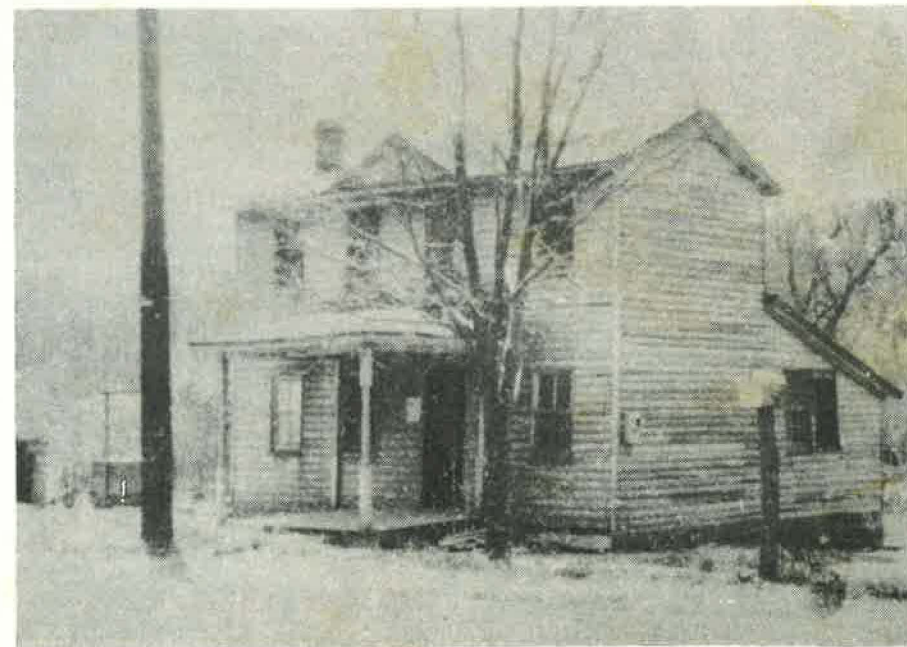
The whole project started prosaically enough. Bob Davenport and Morris and S. Rodman became interested in a two hundred and twenty-five acre block of land that had originally been part of the old Hollin Hall estate.

When the bidding for the land was opened, Mr. Davenport's offer was only third high but a chance conversation with the highest bidder revealed that all the offers were to be rejected and the land was to be auctioned off that afternoon publicly. Mr. Davenport had been over the whole tract and was struck by its potential. So without the vaguest idea of where the money to pay for it would come from, he bid for and bought the land at auction.

Government housing people, recommended an architect, Charles Goodman. He was to lay out the plan for the use of the land—then it became apparent a different type of house was necessary, too.

When the model house was first opened, the response of the public was tremendous. Mr. Davenport remembers long lines waiting to go through the house. Some brave souls actually bought.

You know this better as the Hollin Hills office!



## The Dauntless Decade

A BALLAD OF THE FIFTIES

The flaming hoes rang out  
On stern and rockbound soil  
As pioneers went faring forth  
Their backs bent o'er in toil.

They fought the poison ivy leaf  
The honeysuckle vine  
They burrowed into stubborn clay  
And planted oak and pine

From dawn to dusk they fed the earth  
With nitrogen and mulch  
They changed the contours of the land  
And filled each gorge and gulch

They planned and dreamed and built  
and schemed  
While fearing not the risk  
And now and then a grunt was heard  
As someone slipped a disc.

They dug and scraped and paid the bills

For patios and pools  
And voted millions cheerfully  
To build the shining schools.

Through hail and fog and rain they trudged

To meetings with their neighbors  
To PTA and Den they gave  
Their parliamentary labors

And so the years rolled by within  
Each cot contemporary  
"Suburbia" became a word  
In Webster's dictionary

The satellites now fill the sky  
The crabgrass fills the yard  
And greetings fill the heart of this  
Now ten-year-old bard!

Irv Shapiro



## We Talk to Goodman

and creating a physical climate conducive to self-examination. This doesn't mean conformity—trying to make yourself the same as others—just the opposite."

The intensity and passion of this wiry, disciplined man becomes apparent as he speaks of his feeling of involvement with the human scene. He claims his interest in politics, the theatre, the arts is all part of being an architect.

"Architecture is an intangible profession—it reflects the social phenomenon, I say again, it insists that man needs beauty and needs it deeply.

### Dial: Beauty

"All the antennae of a true architect must be tuned to beauty. Believe me, beauty is a rare commodity wherever man has been. Man has an uncanny knack for fouling his environment. Then we appoint committees to try to see what can be done with the awful mess we have made of things. A committee never did anything yet."

What pains Goodman about his profession is that most architects are very conservative, more businessmen than artists. The concept of an architect as a true professional man seems to be going out.

### Land Is All

Goodman feels that architects and builders must develop "fresh thinking on how to use land properly and



humanely. And by properly, I mean, leaving as much of it in its natural beautiful state as possible."

Goodman feels that architects and builders should not so much build houses but communities. He is appalled by sub-divisions where trees have been leveled and where the people are all the same age group, intimidated by the same things, have the same goals, the same income. "People of every age must be part of the vital community." A characteristic of Hollin Hills which he "had hoped for but didn't dare expect was the moving of families, according to their needs, from one house to another in the same community." Smaller houses as the children grow up—larger houses during the middle years when the family is full and bursting the seams of a house quite adequate during the early years.

### Relation To H H

Are you proud of Hollin Hills we wanted to know. Everything he said indicated it but we like to nail things down. He was incredulous? "Proud? Very proud!"

Is it true that everybody knows how to design a house? Does an architect get free advice? This was like turning on the faucet marked "hot!" "Nobody tells a lawyer how to plead a case or a doctor how to stitch you up, but everybody tells an architect what to do. People who ought to know better, big tycoons are brim full of ideas—and their sensitive wives have thought of

more ideas. If mistakes are made, the architect is to blame. If things go well, it is because the tycoon's wife—bless her—had the insight to tell the stupid architect to include it."

"Blind faith!" Charles Goodman, Hollin Hills architect, stated emphatically. "Blind faith is what keeps me going." No, he wasn't surprised Hollin Hills houses were popular and sold—that the community developed to the extent that it did. Nor was he surprised by the kind of people it has attracted. "Let's say these houses attract the kind of people who don't think the world is perfect. Actually, the setting that people live in can create the climate for provocative living—living as dignified human beings."

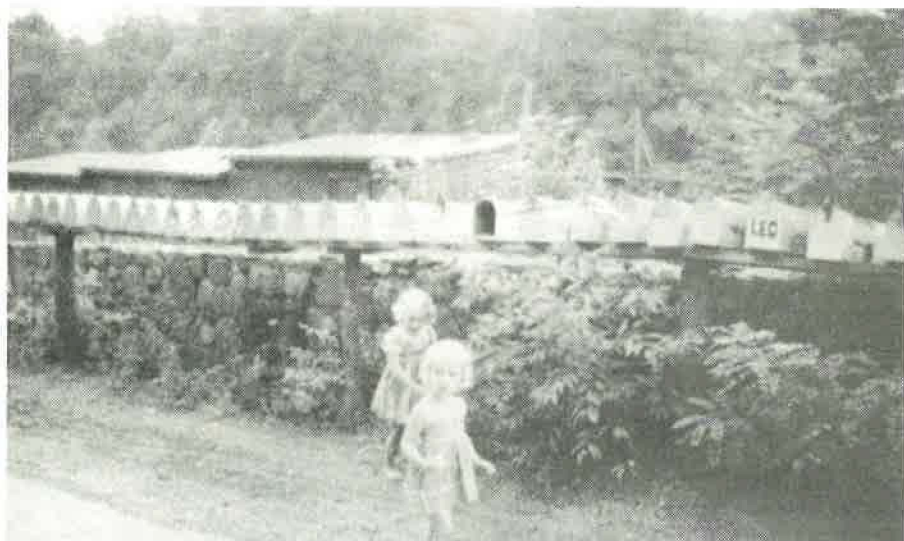
"An ingredient of this blind faith of mine was my feeling that in a community of this kind there should never appear intolerance—intellectual or otherwise. Tolerance, of course, is a civilized quality. I'm interested in civilized architecture. Tolerance comes from self-respect. If one respects one's integrity, one respects the individuality of one's neighbor. I never worry about Hollin Hills on any big issue—I do hear things about the community on petty things that worry me. Take the swimming pool, I hear they said "Nobody from New Hollin Hills can come in." Ridiculous! If they say "Our swimming pool can only take care of such and such number of families adequately, well, this you respect. I don't like the other way of putting it."

### Philosophy of Designer

"Let's get back to this civilized architecture. Architecture reflects the social phenomenon. What we yearn for and need is the flowering of the individual. We deeply need more off-beat personalities, more people with unique interests, more people strong enough to stand unafraid and be themselves. We need them not just in houses but in communities where their influence can be felt. We need unity of diverse interests."

"The dignity of the individual can come about only by self-examination





### Ten Years Ago In Hollin Hills

My daughter, Sue, was the first Hollin Hills baby, born May 7, 1950. We Randalls thought this was mighty important, but Bob Davenport didn't even cancel the mortgage!

That first summer, getting telephones was one of the major subjects of conversation and consternation. Most of those who had phones were on ten-party lines. For several months the Randalls had the last phone in the block, so lots of neighbors dropped by to visit and, incidentally, make a phone call.

No buses ran on Ft. Hunt Road, and the nearest stores were the Safeway and Acme on Franklin near Washington.

The "Parent-Sitters Co-op" was organized in October, 1950, with seven members. We got our pattern from Sara Ehrman in Tauxemont who was a member of their pool. A year later there were 21 members and Pool 2 was formed:

Christmas of 1951, the community presented Mr. Yaeger with a sign for his truck which read "Official Garbage Collector for Hollin Hills."

Our children, the few who were school age, attended a four-room cinderblock school at Hollin Hall that first winter. Later four more rooms were added and it was faced with brick. The cafeteria was a still later addition. Buses took the children back and forth.

The water tank, though an eye-sore, was also a test for growing up. To make the climb from the pipe and to shimmy up the end of the tank, then to stand and beam on the little kids who couldn't reach yet, was a real achievement.

#### Our Continuing Bang

The fireworks display was a high point of the summer. Several times it was held at the gravel pit (site of the new Hollin Hills school). Later

Popkins pasture was the setting. Many will remember the old-fashioned bar-b-que we had there with our first home production on the outdoor stage.

When the construction sheds stood where the swimming pool is now, we walked to Fort Hunt Road for our mail. There a line of some thirty boxes ranged against the stone wall.

At Christmas Bob Davenport donated a large community Christmas Tree each year. We placed it at the corner of Stafford Road and Paul Spring Road, decorated it and sang around it on Christmas Eve. Mr. D. also added joy to the season with his azalea gifts—and once there was champagne.

When the unenlarged Alexandria library was the closest place to get a book, Doreen Weston volunteered her home as a Bookmobile stop for the Fairfax County Library.

The only church nearby was St. Lukes, which served the community alone for many years.

Things I remember: The way Hollin Hills stopped at MacMichael's, the dusty roads that first summer, the fun we had coasting before West Grove Boulevard was finished, the garden Kyle planted a month after we had moved in, and the garden house he built that fall, how pleased I was when I found I could clean the windows on the outsides around the house in three-quarters of an hour.

Ruth Randall



### Why Do Hollin Hills People Differ From Others?

Why is it Bob Randall and Frank Gutchess set the styles in bathing trunks?

Why is it we all wear Bermudas in the middle of the winter?

Why is it the children look like they haven't changed clothes in a year?

For one reason Bob and Frank like to be different. We wear Bermudas because we hope other people will see us and copy us so then everybody will be different. (But then nobody will be different and when that happens we will all wear long pants.) And the reason the kids wear sloppy clothes is because they are too lazy to change clothes.

—Susan Gutchess  
Age: going on 11







## We Talk With Brick

### The Buck Stopped Here

The calls didn't just come at the office, either. They'd come at home, too. "June really got quite adept at telling people what to do or else she used the same slimy excuses I always used. Sometimes during heavy rain, we just didn't answer the phone. One time, someone called at 2 a.m. to tell us that a smoldering tree had burst into flames and what should she do. June told her to call the damn fire department!"

"One year at Christmas, Davenport gave a bottle of champagne to each house. Russell and I were delivering the stuff and sampling a couple of bottles on the way. The reaction of the people was interesting. Some were stunned with surprise, overcome with gratitude—others opened the door, grabbed the stuff and said Thanks! And now, about that list of stuff that needs fixing . . ."

### This Reminds Me—

"Did you ever hear about the time Eleanor Grahl got locked out? Well don't know if you knew that the men used to go to lunch at 12—they'd bolt their sandwiches and then play poker. Well, Eleanor called about 12:05—David was a baby then and screaming in his playpen inside. Miller took the call in the office. He knew ordinarily he'd never get the men away from their poker game to go up and let her in until after lunch. So he said, "There's a lady up at Lot 135 who's locked out and she doesn't have anything on but her pants and a bra!"

"In the early days, Bob Davenport had a goat. Among my duties, and believe me, they were many and varied, I had to take care of the goat. The damned thing was always breaking loose—usually around daybreak." Morning after morning on the way to work, Steve Leo would come roaring out, growling at Brick to get the stupid animal out of his yard where he was eating the leaves off Leo's shrubs.

"The wildest things would happen. Like the time Jean Luce called to ask that the dead cat be removed from the top soil they had just delivered; like the time Becky Toner's washing machine came unbolted and lurched its way across the room sounding as if the house was going to blow up, etc."

The men dropped their poker hands, leaped to the truck, and, to their consternation, unlocked the door to admit Eleanor who unfortunately had all her clothes on.

"Speaking of no clothes on, if you'd see the grading crew in one spot for quite awhile, you could be pretty sure some gal whose drapes weren't up yet was getting dressed or undressed."

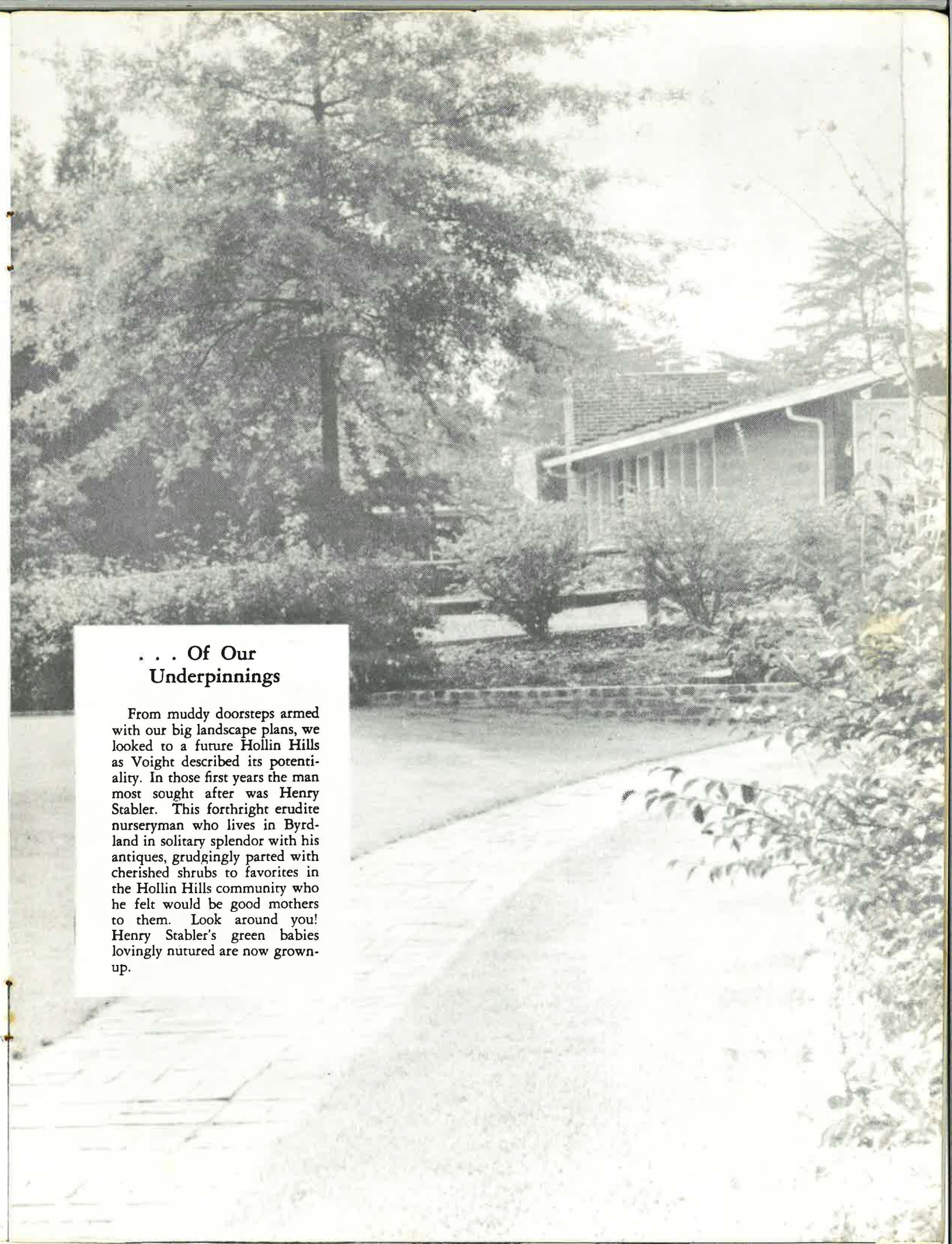
"The crew always called Davenport the "Green Horner"—remember, he had that old green station wagon? He drives like a madman anyway and he was always getting stuck."

### The New Frontier

"In those early days, (of course everybody was younger then) the early settlers had a kind of pioneer spirit. At that time these houses were wildly unconventional. Besides, nothing worked right—the roads weren't in—sometimes the sewer wasn't in—nothing but bare dirt around—what the people put up with was astounding! Furthermore, most of 'em had come from apartments, and they didn't know how to do a damn thing anyway."

### The Non-Us

"You'd run into people who detested the way the houses looked on the outside—but loved the inside. So they'd settle down and make themselves at home, complete with frilly lace curtains. Boy, Munday, the painter, had a touchy job. Odd colors? He was asked to match a faded blue dishcloth and a straw purse. Poor man, he never made it. You know Mac, that man has standards of housekeeping worthy of an old maid. People would ask his men to take off their shoes before coming into the house. Mac would come back swearing saying the place looked like such a pigsty he couldn't see what difference it made."



## . . . Of Our Underpinnings

From muddy doorsteps armed with our big landscape plans, we looked to a future Hollin Hills as Voight described its potentiality. In those first years the man most sought after was Henry Stabler. This forthright erudite nurseryman who lives in Byrdland in solitary splendor with his antiques, grudgingly parted with cherished shrubs to favorites in the Hollin Hills community who he felt would be good mothers to them. Look around you! Henry Stabler's green babies lovingly nurtured are now grown-up.





## We Talk To Mac

had the rescue squad out but our own men dug 'em out. One colored man was dead—the other we thought was a goner—in the hospital for weeks but he got alright. Works for me now."

"Then there was this carpenter, Mr. Bennett. Driving home one day, he dropped dead on Popkins Lane. We all took off and went to his funeral.

Another man, Harold Gray, did all the grading around here, a real artist with a bulldozer. Well he took our equipment and went down below Tauxement to do a job—the bulldozer turned over and smothered him."

### The Bailer-Outer

Mac shook his head. These were the bad times. Change the subject. When he was doing the houses on Martha's Circle, he had about one hundred men on the payroll. If a guy goldbricked he was sent to collect his pay. Fired. No nonsense! But he always used to be called out of bed nights when somebody would get in jail. What for? "Oh, mostly drunk! Some cuttings, too—darned near everything." Never had any trouble getting them out, though. The justice of the peace's mother was his school teacher so he'd just go up and sign his name—and often take 'em home and make them sleep it off.

Mac laughed about the early days recalling. "I can remember going down the street in the jeep. I'd see a woman roaring out of every house to flag me down and tell me what was leaking or needed fixing—sometimes when I'd see them coming, I'd just take off and take a short cut through the woods." As a woman who used to flag Mac down regularly, I asked, "Could you really get across the creek in your jeep?" "Yes, Mam!" Mac stated with the authority of a man who knew.

Speaking of the red jeep, "Every year Davenport gave a Christmas party for the crew. Gave them up, though. Men got drunk and the wives complained something fierce. Last party we had was in the basement of the uncompleted Brunner's house on the corner of Stafford and Martha's Road. Had mixed drinks, popcorn—mostly, mixed drinks. Well, that night it began to snow—I mean, snow! Bailey and I were pulling cars out of the ditch with the jeep most of the night."

### Cleaned-Up Flavor

Funny things happen? "Yes, Mam, lot of them I can't remember—a lot I'd be scared to tell you. Oh, there was one. See, we had a couple of clean-up men in a house we'd just finished. One was leaning on a broom and they were yakking when up drives Davenport. One grabs the broom the other was leaning on—they both fell flat on their faces."

"Yeah, and then a house we were making repairs on, the lady says to me, 'I've just taken a couple of sleeping pills so I can get a nap, will I be

safe with these men here?' I took a look at her and says, 'Yes Mam!' Just to be sure though, I sent Mr. Poole around."

"You better tell these people to get extra keys to their houses and give them to neighbors. I musta let a hundred people in their homes this past year. Some day I might not be home."

### Facts of Life

"You quickly learn driving around Hollin Hills it's the kids that got right of way." Little girl, about three years' old, without a stitch of clothes on stopped him the other day. "I say where do you live?" To Mac's obvious delight, she said, "I want to go home with you."

Building for Hollin Hills people do you get a lot of advice? "Sure do. I been in construction work since 1932 but there's people out here who know a lot more about it than I do. I've had run-ins with folks around here, a few of them, but generally we turn out friendly."

Mac has done a lot of additions. He likes the extra work and, in terms of priority, Hollin Hills always comes first.

## We're New Here

For two years before we moved here, we eyed Hollin Hills with some reservations. Wasn't life too collectivized? With so much glass and community spirit, what happened to privacy? Weren't people too much of the same mind and too wrapped up in running the Government?

A year later, screened by a fence at the right places (Robert Frost was right, "Good fences make good neighbors.") In between tending the Hollin Hills parks for the Community Association, visits from the neighborhood play school, high kicking square dances up at the Thorpe Estate, sociable afternoons at the pool (swimming), and sociable mornings and evenings in the pool (car), we have seen the light (to say nothing of the beacon in Farmer Popkins field). You can take or leave community work (and you had better help keep those parks up, hear); curtains, fences and house location do a lot for privacy (and a lighted Christ-

mas tree visible through a Goodman glass wall ought to be seen anyway); and we *have* met in Hollin Hills (a.) a Republican, (b.) a native Virginian and (c.) several readers of *Life Magazine*.

Hollin Hills is a real estate bargain; it is a wonderful place to raise small children; and over the years Hollin Hills householders and the Community Association have clawed, seeded and fertilized their way toward a very considerable amount of garden beauty.

Moved by the above, I have written an ode to Hollin Hills (in the style of the late, great Falstaff Oppenshaw):

### "Athens Move Over . . ."

Hail to thee, oh Hollin Hills,  
Home of glass walls and pyracantha;  
Where we are the "New Frontier"  
Toasting champagne tastes in beer,  
Knowing for the Good Life here we  
have the antha."

Tim Atkeson

A certain well-known psychiatrist has been heard to remark "Who is this Macauley? So many of my patients have fantasies about him!"

Well, who is this Macauley? He's Davenport's construction superintendent, been with Davenport for fourteen years, and lives in a trailer near the construction sheds on Rebecca Road. He's a tough, shrewd, handsome Irishman, a day dream to have around the house apparently, and for sure, he was decent and obliging about fixing the dozens of things that can and did go wrong in our new houses.

As we reminisced, Mac said, "I didn't like Hollin Hills houses at first—too much glass. You know they were something new in building. I was afraid with all that glass they'd never stand up. But, after awhile they kinda grew on me. Never thought Hollin Hills would get built up like this."

"I used to be with Davenport two years at Tauxement before we started here. When we first came up here we had a crew of twenty-five men. The only equipment we had was a \$75 used truck, a Ford tractor and Davenport had one beat-up Studebaker. The men used to tell the story then that when Davenport went to Washington he'd drive around and around until he found a meter that still had time in it."

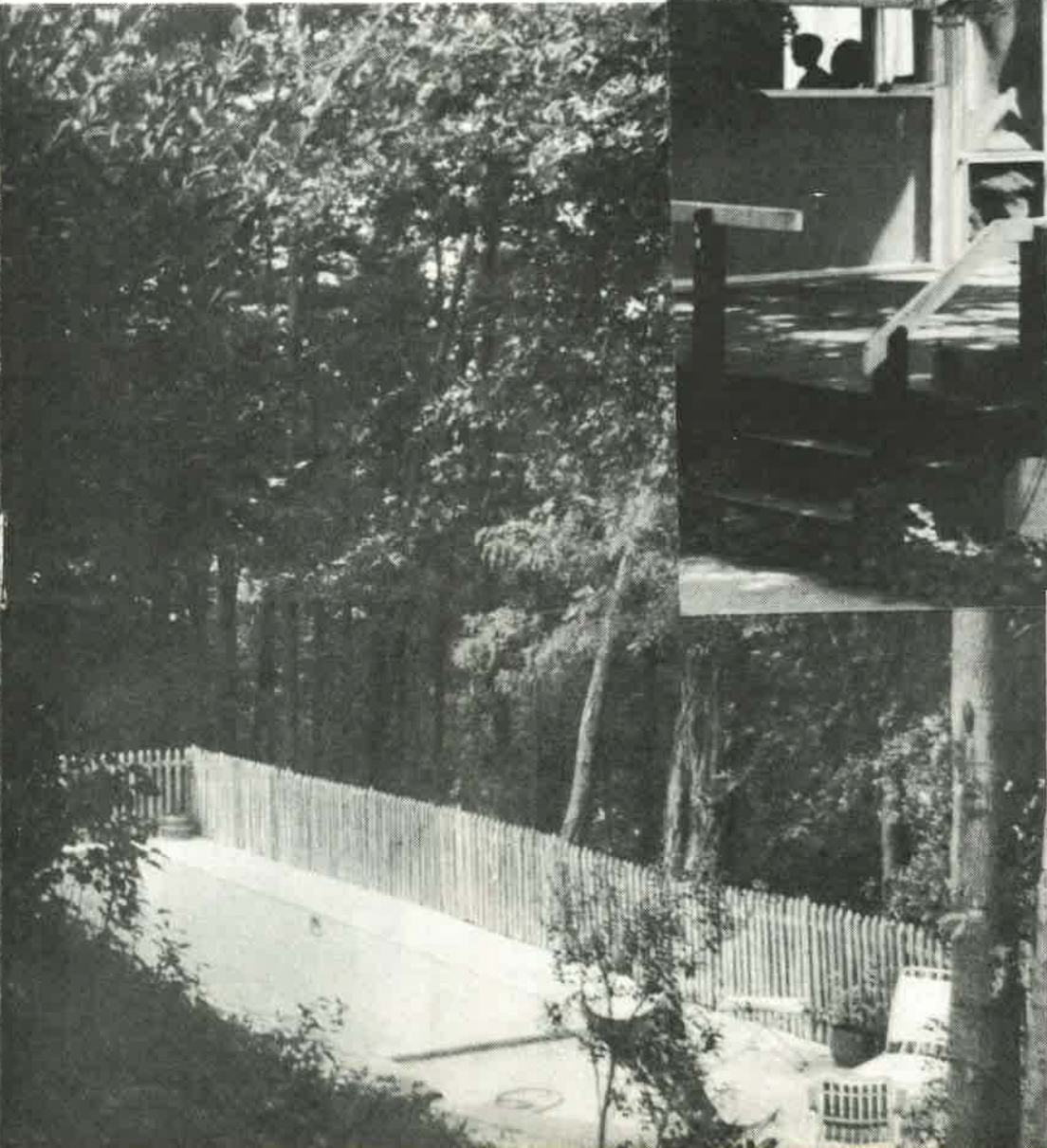
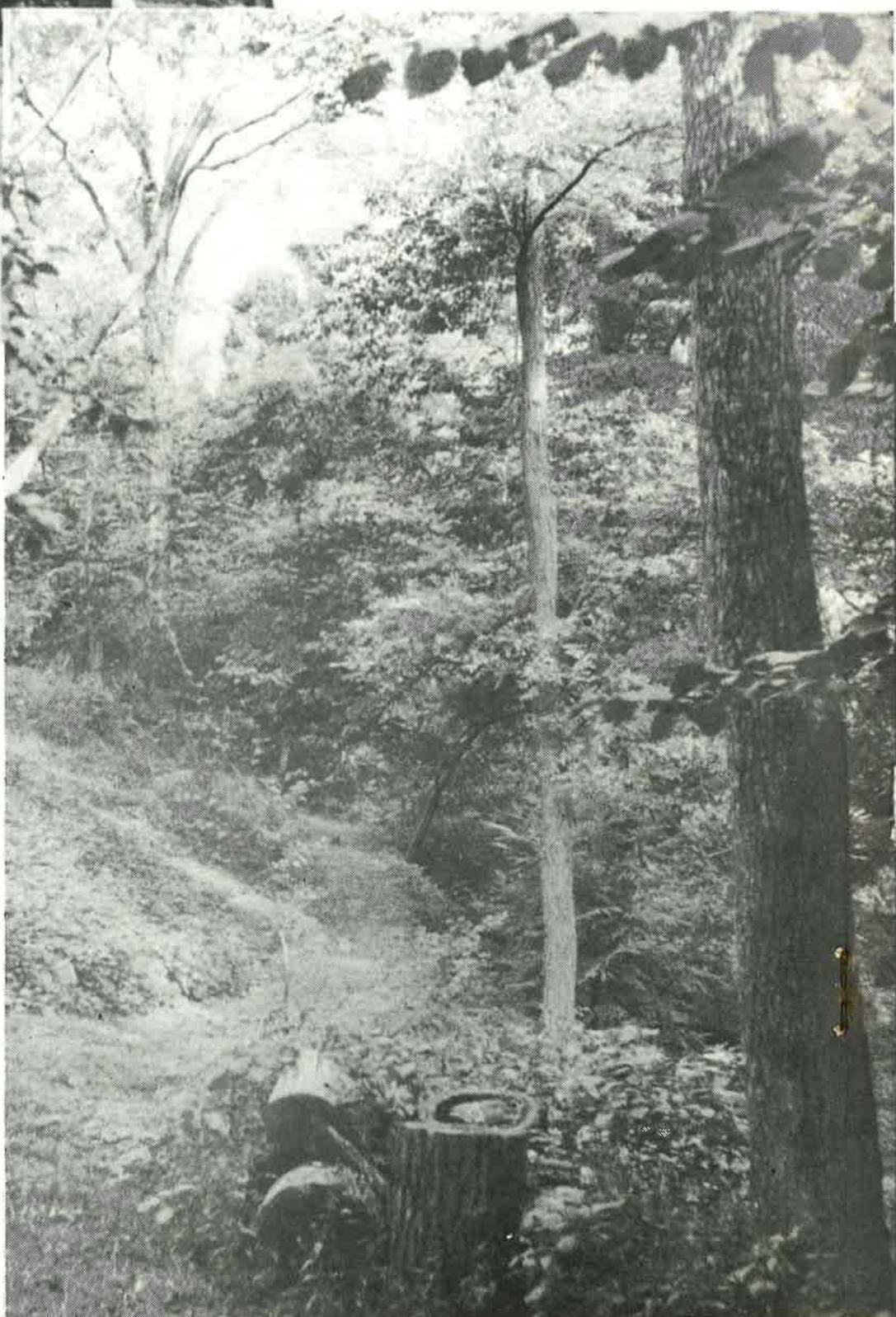
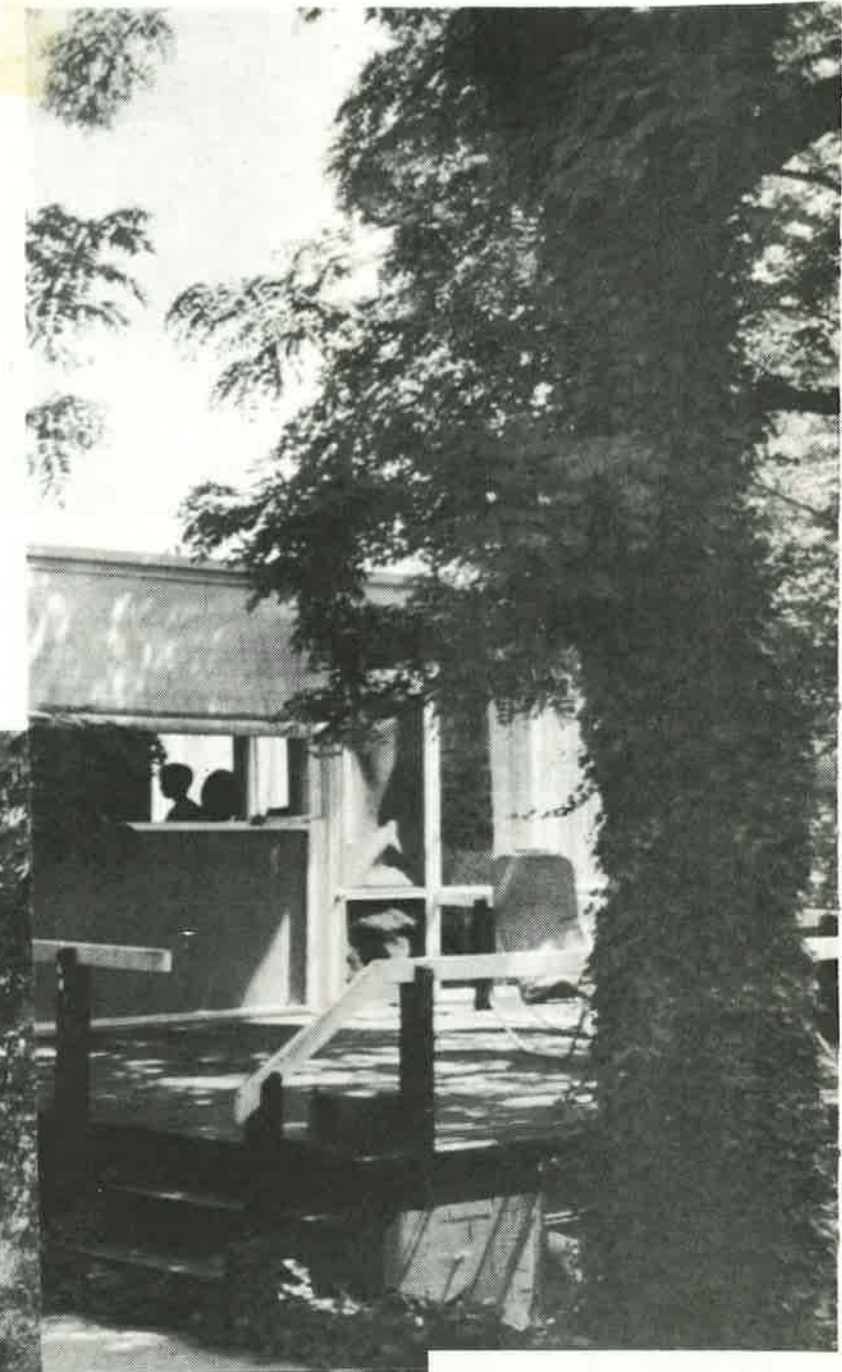
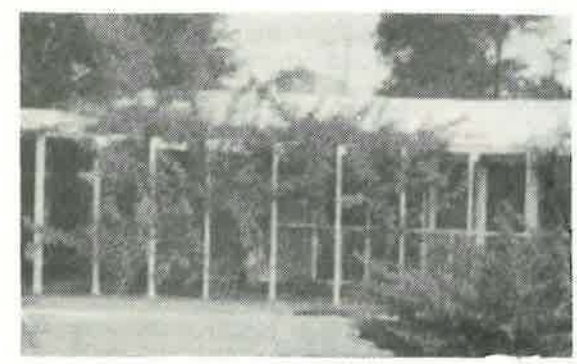
### Personnel Department

"Lot of the men who were with Davenport when he started Hollin Hills are still with us. Carpenters, Guy Poole, Luther Herndon, Paul Alexander and John Davis. The real old-time laborers are Brooks, Goodman, Malcolm Fisher and Willy Snow.

Men died on the job. Once in front of Brick's house—what's the name of that street? I keep thinking of the houses by lot number. Well, we were digging a sewer line—the bank gave way—there was a cave-in. Two guys got buried under six feet of dirt. We









## Some Cogitation on the State of Change Taking in, Inevitably, These Hollin Hills

Proust, as he tasted his crumb of madeleine, saw opening before his world within rose colored world of steeple, of cobblestone streets, of the sounds and scents of Combray. Would a now-young Hollin Hiller decades hence, on finding, say a yellowed copy of the Bulletin circa 1960 feel rushing over him the thick summer air layered with the whine of mosquitoes, endless lawn mowers and hysterical dogs? Would he feel the rising nostalgia, yeastily rich, for the hoot of lifeguard Steve's "G-o-o-o-!" as he hits the pool water on a ninety-three degree morning?

And so on. Tier after tier of it. Because, for the child who has been born here, that genuine article of Hollin Hills, this is a world for him as real as Combray. And who knows, which one of them as they waver down the road on their bikes before our cars, deep in some other concentration, may choose to rekindle us all in some future remembrance of things past?



However, what of the adult and his sense of change in the past few years; he who has already brought his many worlds to roost here, and attempting to ignore their clamoring, has filched for himself along with his land and picture window some sense of the arresting of time, some uniquely different view from all the windows of the past? Sense of changes comes inevitably with the ticking of the clock, and the crabgrass which at first I viewed upon my lawn with the deliberation of ignorance, now arouses in me some sense of guilt. Though, to complete



the cycle, I know that in a few years from now I shall look upon it and feel, "Let it alone, it has a right to be there." The staidness which edges my exterior day (and which might well cause the up and coming teenager to mutter out of the side of his mouth, "Square,") may very well have nothing to do with this particular landscape; for the change, dear Brutus . . .

In that we are all at once beginning to belong, to settle into the ground almost, as a tree which newly planted seems to be awry with its background of sky, and then suddenly, overnight, the light on its leaves is no longer awkward.

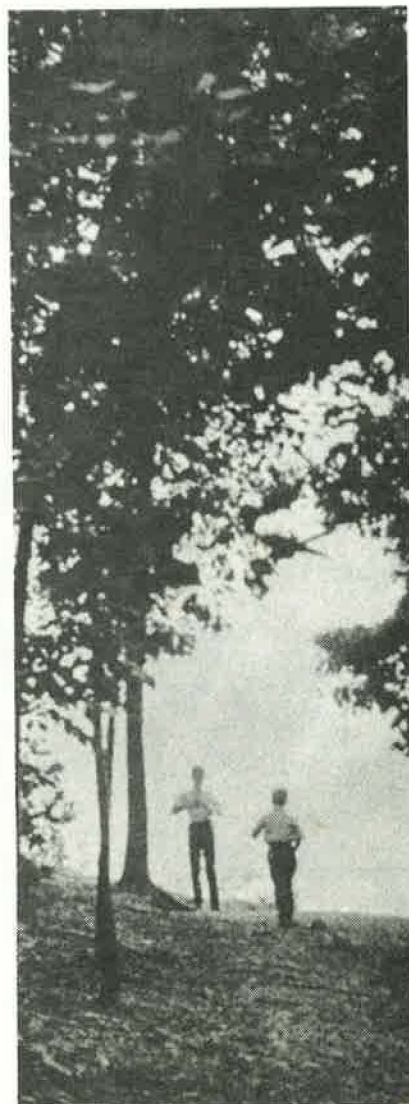
I find it easier to see where the hedges have been maintained around the original ideal. I still do not see, after seven years, any Orwellian aspidistra blossoming midst lace curtains nor a sudden late appreciation of Edgar Guest. Freud continues to be the silent guest at cocktail parties but he often wears the aspect of George Jessel, and if there is much muttering of "suburbia be damned!" and "organization, down with" and the like, it is said in the same disbelief with which we discover our first grey hair. It's for Others.

There have been as yet no militant forces exhorting me to become a member of the checkerboard quilting club, or ominous pressure groups to invite me to learn the secrets of shortbread making at midnight. My neighbors continue to invite me to clam-bakes even though I have changed the color of my hair in the interim, and furthermore, by Jove, if I choose to sing "God Save Our Gracious Queen" at said clam-bake instead of Jimmy Crack Corn, I am comfortably certain that I will not be the recipient of poison blow darts in the morning.

It is true, that a confession of my weakness for Paladin (blurted out after a second orangeade) may label me as a member of the booboidie, but I know that if I hasten to show that I am viewing Paladin as a sociological tract in order to deepen my understanding of the evils of class war, I will be immediately understood.

The view, therefore, from the window, barring satellites, continues peaceably. But, Brother, it is when you leave this lotus land for the world of the private war and the public smile that you will have some readjusting to do. The prospect may be pleasant, it depends upon your attitude toward crabgrass. 'Til then, in Hollin Hills at least, plus ca change plus ca meme chose.

—Vivian Yudkin



## The Milkman Looks at Hollin Hills

One of our milkmen drove out in his chic car to talk with us on his day off.

"The thing I can't figure about Hollin Hills. You know, these are stunning houses, lots of plantings, the folks all got maids, but if they stop taking milk, it's because of the money. I can't figure it, these are the most budget-conscious people I see. Much more so than Bucknell or Belle View Apartments. Matter of fact, people in Belle View Apartments buy the most—not just milk but eggs, orange juice, butter, etc. I figure maybe the reason is 'cause they can charge it.'

Do you like the route? "Oh yeah, I built it up from about four hundred bucks a week to over nine hundred. People are friendly. They tried to make me change routes but I wouldn't do it."

"This route gets better service than any place except the embassies. All but about ten get inside delivery. You know, I take the stuff in and put it in the refrigerators for them. Boy, people are trusting around here. I've got the keys to a batch of houses—you know, the people work and they want their milk refrigerated while they're gone."

## An Exile Returns

Since being uprooted from Hawaii three years ago, the family had been hoping for a speedy return to Hollin Hills. Eagerly searched for and missed by air, the sight of this Mecca, as approached by land, drew repeated cries of "Oh, how beautiful." Surprise was registered at the tall growth around the pool, which had been a raw hole in the bare ground when last seen six years ago. Everywhere the lush growth refreshed our eyes and we paused to admire trees we had watched Mr. Stabler plant.

Even in lovely Hawaii we missed the tall oaks and good neighbors of Hollin Hills and our Hollin Hills house. In California, thinking of them was like probing an aching tooth. There we became experts on lowgrade housing in high income areas.

After looking in vain for a planned community, we rented a handsome two-level edifice of glass and redwood siding or so we thought. Alas, the redwood proved to be a veneer over a shell of steel—to wit surplus wartime Navy hatch covers welded together,

## Consistent Inconsistency

"There's nothing you can count on about this route—you know, not consistent. Sometimes they want six dozen extra eggs—or ten quarts of orange juice to make screw drivers. (Folks out here entertain a lot, I guess.) They never give you any warning they want all this extra stuff. Another thing, I got one of the smallest routes in the dairy—but far and away, I got the biggest skim milk route."

"I don't know if you know but there's supposed to be a number of Jewish folks out here. Well, during the holidays, I carry Kosher milk—that's not the name for it, but it's been blessed by the Rabbi and all, and I mean they really do it, too—well, darned if I didn't sell a single quart of it out here."

## Kill The Dogs

"Kids out here are all right—never get in your way or anything. They don't have what you'd call formal good manners but they don't bug me. Dogs, though—that's something else again. I've been bitten more than once—and there's another dog here just dying to get a piece out of me."



Anything unique about Hollin Hills? "Yeah, they pay their bills better than anybody. Never have any trouble collecting. Another thing I can't figure—winter, when it snows, why don't these people ever clean off their sidewalks? You oughta try going up to some of these houses with twelve quarts of milk on icy steps. It's worse coming down, though. Well, I don't know if I ought to say this but there's a few of the kitchens around here that are a mess. It's surprising in such nice houses—expensive and all." A mess? "Yeah, dirty, junky, toys all over. And some of the refrigerators? Boy!"

the dream of a junk dealer, put together by his henchmen. The radiant heating system had never worked and had been replaced by three fumpy gas wall heaters which failed to warm the steel, the far reaches of which had a permanent winter coating of mould and mildew. The handsome French doors were welded shut. The inviting fireplace would not draw and its use was forbidden by the Fire Department, who pointed out that it shared one narrow vent pipe with all the gas appliances. The plumbing was higgledy-piggledy, the hot at the right here, the left there, the water pressure so low that only one faucet was operable at a time.

## How Grim It Can Get

Ten months, a broken lease and a threatened law suit, we departed, regretting only the community pool and a pair of warm-hearted Mid-Western neighbors. Our next abode was provided with ample bedroom space for six, but living and dining space adequate for two. The furniture over-

flowed into the garage.

Here we lived in splendid isolation. One house next door was empty, the other occupied by non-communicators. Those across the pleasant street were removed to make way for a monstrous freeway and cloverleaf. We lived in a pall of dust for two parched summers, the temperature occasionally reaching 107, listening to the tantalizing sound of uncommunicators splashing in their pools.

## The Return

Now, as we replace leafmold beneath the shrubs, cut out the brambles from the perennial border and replant, foregoing the pool in hopes of beating the ragweed pollen to the draw, we thank heaven to be home. The house is even lovelier than we had remembered, the neighbors more stimulating, friends more numerous, children more plentiful and sylvan beauty unsurpassed. Amen!

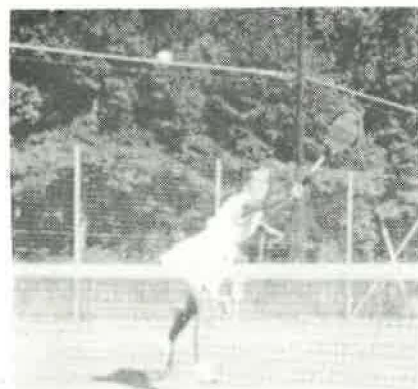
—Loris Holway



## -U and Non-U Hollin Hills

O.K. You live in Hollin Hills. Are you U or non-U? Here is the stereotype. You are Lib-Ar-All! Your husband works for the government, either as an economist or a lawyer. Your wife is actively engaged in doing good—and co-operating. Or, in self-defense, she's taken a job. You like Scotch best, but only drink it at other people's houses. Your wife gets her head sculptured by Antoine or Dr. Sweet-brains, lay analyst. You are having troubles with one child and, of course, you have children—at least in your yard. You don't brush your teeth after every meal. You don't brush your hair, either. This makes you feel guilty.

You go to the Mt. Vernon outpost of the Unitarian Church, your kids go to the Hollin Hills school—because you *believe* in public schools (either that or Burgundy Farm, if you rebel you rebel in conformity). Beyond the living room, your wife is a casual housekeeper but she's above dirt—way above—she doesn't see it. Your husband is way above money—never mind if it's handy. You belong to Group Health. You drive either a convertible, a station wagon or a foreign car. You belong to a car pool. Sometimes several. Your wife's floral arrangements are oriental masterpieces, have been for the past month. You adore the symphony but you never go. You love the theatre and you even go sometimes—like a couple of times a winter. You now read the obituary page. You never can find a pencil.



Your wife knows 15 tasty ways to prepare hamburger. Your tastes in art may be questioned—and are. You are crazy for integration but you don't know any negroes except for your maid. You give 50c to the polio, cancer and muscular dystrophy drives and a buck to the United Givers Fund because your husband gives in town.



Your husband has trouble with his sacroiliac and they can't decide to operate or not. Keeps him from working in the yard, though, and that's something! You both live in a far smaller house than your parents did. You, by God, sprang from quality. Money is no criteria of anything. You are a Decomracat, a Stevenson Democrat, because everybody else is too crass. It's funny, suddenly you're sick of do-it-yourself. You never watch TV but the tubes are always burning out.

You adore children but you don't like to either talk or eat with them. You read vociferously but you seldom buy a book. You drink—but not like your neighbors do. Your wife is clothes conscious but she never wears shoes. She goes to Antoine's but chlorine is hard on the sculptured look. Your husband finds Marilyn Monroe worthy of his consideration. Her mind, that is. Your wife is more attracted by Charlie Brown and, on occasion Linus. Remember Roberto Brazzi?

Your husband looks more distinguished than he did when you married him. Your wife understands all that jazz about aging gracefully, but wishes she were ten years younger.

You are both relaxed, intelligent, well-adjusted human beings—that is well-adjusted, insecure—I mean, integrated—well-adjusted people, damn it!



Well, this is U as opposed to Non-U. It doesn't apply to you because it doesn't apply to anybody. The only measure we have is a study done four years ago by Marj Hemmendinger and Liz Hill. They couldn't have had less to do with the above if they tried—they tried. Hit the editors! The Washington Post wrote up this survey and described Marj Hemmendinger as attractive and intense.

Thank goodness, they didn't say 'tense' or she'd have killed them. 'Tense' that's O.K. to be but nobody ought to notice. Intense is U. Tense is non-U. It's U to be attractive but non-U to lift a finger in that direction. Luckily, Mrs. Hemmendinger is naturally a doll.

Remember this survey is four years old. We are all richer, fatter, older and more cynical.



### Mel Wells Surveys the Directory

In the 1960 Hollin Hills Directory there were more families beginning with S (35 of them) than any other letter, with B the runner-up (28). I, Q, U, and X tied for last with none. The Ns and Ys were the most prolific—three children per family, the Hs the least at 1.28. I also learned that more than twice as many Hollin Hills children—57 were born in March—as were born in May—31. You may draw your own conclusions about community life in June and August. Boys outnumber girls in this community by sixteen—260 to 244. Counting the thirteen undecided (where the sex could not be defined from the name), the count is 267 to 250.

### RESULTS OF A HAND TABULATION OF SOME QUESTIONS

(For Men Only)

PROFESSION OR OCCUPATION	
Profession	Number
Lawyer	21
Economist	18
Engineer	8
Administrator	8
Businessman	7
Scientist	7
Writer	7
Statistician	6
Research Analyst	5
Architect	4
Doctor	3
Editor	3
Not Available	18
All Other	27

(For Men Only)

WORK FOR THE GOVERNMENT	
Yes	No
92	50

(For Men Only)

CURRENT ANNUAL SALARY	
Salary Range	Number
less than \$5,999	3
\$6-8,999	38
\$9-11,999	60
\$12-14,999	30
\$15,000 or over	11

(For Men Only)

OUTSIDE INCOME OF \$500 OR MORE PER YEAR	
Yes	No
42	95

WIFE OF THE SAME RELIGIOUS FAITH

Yes	No
123	19

Note: The total number of replies to the various questions is not identical, due to the fact that some participants did not answer all questions.

### AGE OF RESIDENTS

Age	Male	Female
24 or under	1	1
25-29	6	18
30-34	29	41
35-39	53	51
40-44	40	15
45-49	5	10
50-54	7	2
55-59	1	1
60 or over	1	0

### EDUCATION OF RESIDENTS

Level of Education	Male	Female
High School	6	32
College	52	80
Advanced degree	85	20

### RELIGION OF RESIDENTS

	Male	Female
Protestant (except Unitarian)	58	63
Unitarian	25	26
Jewish	28	27
Catholic	10	6
None	14	16
Other	4	2

### POLITICAL PREFERENCE OF RESIDENTS

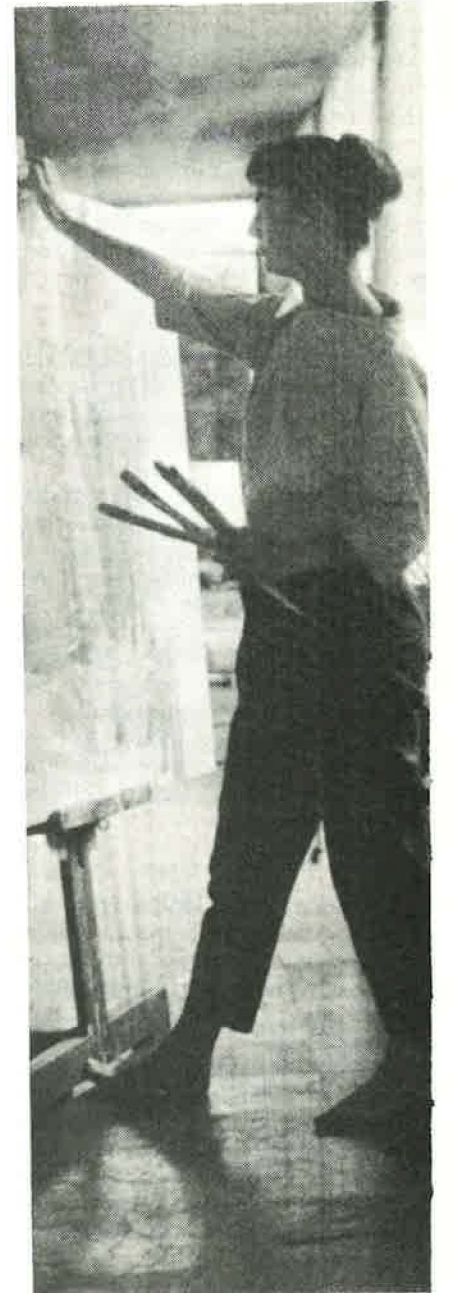
Political Preference	Male	Female
Democrat	109	105
Republican	16	15
Other	15	10
None	3	4

### POLITICAL OUTLOOK SIMILAR TO THAT OF PARENTS

a. similar to father's			
	Yes	No	Don't Know
Male	72	62	6
Female	59	72	6

b. similar to mother's			
	Yes	No	Don't Know
Male	64	60	10
Female	60	66	6





## A Candid, Provocative View—

What it's like to teach Hollin Hills Kids—

On a hot muggy night just before she was to move from 1221 Rippon Road to Westport, Connecticut, we snatched Shirley Frucht, a 6th grade teacher at Hollin Hills for the past three years, away from packing cartons of books. Shirley, Mrs. Paddy Frucht, was obviously tired but she warmed to the subject.

### Unpleasant Truths

"Well, of course, Hollin Hills kids are bright—really bright. This makes it terribly rewarding to work with them and, at the same time, frustrating.

How is that? "The cold fact is that most of them are far brighter than what they achieve would indicate. They flit, don't concentrate, don't organize themselves, don't have decent study habits, seem to feel that school should be fun, lack a sense of purpose. Of course, there are exceptions but this is my overall impression."

How does Shirley account for this? Do the houses contribute too little privacy? Is this a factor? Shirley doesn't know.

### Nice To Hear

"I've never met a Hollin Hills' kid who was cruel or malicious and we've really had no serious vandalism at the school—boyish mischief, nothing more. The discipline I'm concerned about is self-discipline."

"Generally speaking, most of these kids come from permissive homes where they are allowed to speak freely without restriction and to voice their opinions. This makes for an openness and receptivity which is enchanting. This openness has its disadvantages, though!"

### Smarty Pants?

"Since the opinions of these children are based on little knowledge yet have been listened to seriously and never squelched, the kids have no fear of



addressing or conversing with adults. They are poised and sophisticated—often act as if they knew more than they do."

"I feel they lack the quality of respect—respect for the teacher, ideas, knowledge and the curricula. This doesn't mean they should take the stuff verbatim, or that they should necessarily like the teacher or be thrilled with the subject matter. But, just as some people don't like Eisenhower yet respect the office of the President, children must respect the teacher and their relation to her. I've seen children allow a whole year to be shot because they didn't feel a special rapport with the teacher."

### Why It's Frustrating

"The truly frustrating part of teaching Hollin Hills children is knowing that if they could catch a real purposefulness, they'd have the world at their fingertips. They can respond to a challenge—I've seen them do it. They have the capacity."



Is it hard to deal with Hollin Hills parents? NO. Shirley claims they have been understanding, cooperative and her problems with them few. A real joy."



"By the way, put down that the kids are good sports. Well, that has its drawbacks, too. Hollin Hills kids truly aren't competitive enough—oh, they compare grades all right but day by day, they don't really try to excel either over themselves or anybody else."

"Please do say that I'm grateful to Hollin Hills for the chance to develop as a teacher here. I've been free to do it—without interference from the county, the principal or the parents."

They taught us to swim—they saved our lives—and they're now all married.

## Feeding Habits of Hollin Hills School Children

### Opus I: The Dietician's View

(From Sophie Medvin, who sees the little monsters go through the line because she runs the Hollin Hills cafeteria. A kindly, diplomatic soul, Sophie refuses to write about the table manners of HH kinds!)

"If, on the first day of school, your child was offered Pheasant under Glass or a peanut butter and jelly sandwich for his quarter, he would choose the sandwich without hesitating."

"Because all children like familiar food, we try to use the same food in different ways. For instance, instead of the usual hot dog in a roll, we bake it in bread dough. We turn hamburger into Shepard's Pie by using a mashed potato topping."

### Something To Sink Their Teeth Into

"When the children see their favorites can taste just as good in another preparation, they are more than willing to try new foods."

### From The Colt's Mouth

"Often the children tell me when they enjoy something special. (Cheery pie, for instance or 'I think your catsup and muster are best'). One little girl expressed her appreciation in writing:

Dear Mrs. Medvin,  
I enjoy the food. It was very good.  
My sister bys her lunch. I bring mine.  
Your friend,  
....."

### Opus II: The Mother's View

(Impressions from Kay Neer and Tookie Netschert who helped in the cafeteria.)

No matter how bad your kids' manners are at home, they're worse at school. It's pride, you know. No kid wants to have good table manners—it's like surrendering to the enemy. If you don't get caught, peas flip beautifully from a knife blade.

Food is not to eat, it's a sport or a chemistry experiment. Ever tried mixing catsup and mustard with potato chips. Great in the hair! Hey, duck, SHE'S watching. SHE is the teacher—if she's single, she insists they clean their plates—if she's had children herself, she knows when she's licked.

Fifth and sixth graders trade food. I mean, if you're lucky, man, you can end up with a plate of carrots.

The really serious foods are foot-long hot dogs, hamburgers, spaghetti and turkey. They all think Sophie Medvin is the world's best cook—and she is.

## Personality Traits

If your kid is aggressive when he gets to the straw dispenser, he bonks it five times for the kids behind him. If he's shy, he's back at the end of the line, waiting to get the straw he forgot.

Should you help in the cafeteria and your child is in the fourth grade or under, he will probably speak to you, otherwise, who knows. Your kid's friends, however, will speak kindly to you—after all, you really can't embarrass them by any of your idiosyncrasies.



## PLAYSCHOOLS

"Johnny isn't sharing."  
"Suzy spits and bites."  
The consensus of opinion was  
That 2-yr. olds are frights.

And so we formed a play group.  
Our intentions were most pure:  
John would learn to share his toys,  
And Suzy, was demure.  
Butchie was too withdrawn,  
Which we would overcome;  
Dickie would get toilet trained  
And NEVER suck his thumb.

A year has passed. Now they're "3"  
And all our goals we've scored.  
BUT now Suzy sucks Her thumb  
And Butchie boy is bored.  
Johnny has "reverted,"  
While Dickie will not share,  
And, in united effort,  
They both pull Suzie's hair.

But dauntless mothers, we  
know how to handle "3":  
Keep cool—

They're off to Nursery School.

Lita Talisman



## When The Water Dried Up

Long ago, in 1951, '52 and '53, when Hollin Hills was very young, the pioneers then in residence took on a war with the local water company. And won. We had the assistance of the State Corporation commission in Richmond so we can't say we won the war single-handed.

But we did nag the commission systematically and enthusiastically for more than two years and it did, bless its little heart, apply and make stick the necessary legal pressure upon you-know-who.

By the end of 1954, the blithe acceptance of new water customers (never - mind - the - old - ones - they - bought - the - houses - didn't - they?) had been halted long enough to allow some vital pipelines to be built and to allow an effective though grudging water-purchase agreement to be made by the Fairfax company with the Alexandria water company.

### Ancient History

Of the old settlers to whom glory belongs, those still here include Walter Babb, Jim Grahl and John Marion, Joe Toner, Pat Marshall and Alex Radin. In those years the utility committee of the community association meant one thing: W-A-T-E-R. The presidents' and chairman's correspondence was all about water and when they weren't writing letters about it they were trying to get the water company to answer its phone. At that time there was a special number you could call in case of emergency. When the emergency became a chronic one they simply took the phone off the hook.

### How It Started

The trouble began to appear in 1951 with periodic shortages which were annoying but not severe. In the spring of 1952, when the Richters moved in, the rains were somewhere else for a month, the temperature zoomed to 95 degrees and the water company was caught flat-footed. They had some wells, a few pumps, and an employee here and there who was supposed to turn on same when the pressure fell.

But the employees weren't always around at the critical time—whoever heard of an around-the-clock watch?—and besides a main broke and a pump got stuck and what water there was had to travel a long, looping pipeline. It was bone dry when it reached "upper" Marthas's Road.

### Drinks, Anyone?

In early June, 1952, the pipeline stayer bone dry for three days. Our block organized bucket pools to bring

pails of water from the gas station at Bellevue and then called the Post, which ran a picture of us standing in line for our rations. We took baths, if any, at the houses of friends who lived down the hill. All Hollin Hills was short of water but our street was the only one completely dried up.

John Marion, who lives on the corner started circulating a petition asking the State Corporation commission to take whatever steps necessary to persuade our water company to go into the water business. There was a feeling abroad that the company might make a start by answering its phone. Anyway, the seventeen families at the end of the line were happy to sign John's petition and shipped it off to Richmond.

### The Scientific Approach

Not long after, an engineer appeared, looked us over, and caused a pressure gauge to be installed on the water line where it ran past the vacant lot next to our house. The commission next directed the company to build an inter-connecting pipeline across the loop and to start buying water from Alexandria. These things were begun, but Alexandria itself didn't have much spare water to sell then, and besides our company didn't want to buy it—no profit in that.

### A New Way of Life

The summer ended at last, however. And then came 1953 and the wettest spring in years. Came also many waterless evenings. We learned to go to sleep lightly, ears cocked for the sound of water running back into the house lines. Then mama or daddy would hop out of bed, fill the bathtub, turn on the washing machine and dishwasher, and if there were a baby in the house, make formula.

The campaign was pursued through the summer of '53. John Marion was now president, and the community association continued to harry the water company and to ship off frequent reminders to Richmond of our plight. The letters carried where possible enclosures showing the perfidy of our utility.

### We Make Headlines

One such enclosure was an AP news clipping from Richmond quoting our water company's officer in testimony before some other state body to the effect that the supply had "dropped" and the subscribers increased.

Another time John enclosed two items dated the same day. One was an advertisement by the developer of Bucknell (who also owned the water company) offering twelve new houses



for sale. The other was a sample of the latest postcard we all had received saying the company was out of water. Again. The letter that went along with these two suggested very earnestly that the commission tell the water company to stop taking new subscribers for a while.

### How It All Came Out

A few days later the commission did just that. Our water company suddenly found it feasible to come to a new agreement with the Alexandria water company for buying adequate additional water on a continuing basis.

At about the same time the Alexandria company began building a new major pipeline from its facilities at Occoquan. They would have some water for sale and our company would be willing to buy it, what could be nicer?

Things eased off in 1954 and by around December of that year the State Corporation commission lifted the stop order off the water company. They have been in the water business, more or less, ever since.

—Persis Richter



## Faire and Laissez How To Live In A Community . . .

(and call your soul  
your own.)

"Mir wurde ubel."

—Chrabalowsky

When we first moved into Hollin Hills about six years ago we found ourselves at one of the ritual introductory cocktail and buffet affairs. The conversation—ostensibly for our benefit but, as we were to discover, inexorably—soon focused on the vitals of community life: you know, how much so-and-so paid for his house, how the water heaters were holding up, whose dog was ravaging whose garbage. If the details differed in time and place, the tone was the same as in other communities we had passed through. That is, until our host fixed us with a dreamy eye. "Hollin Hills isn't a community," he told us. "It's a way of life."

I vaguely remember getting suddenly sick. It was an embarrassingly coincidental virus, a galloping virus which had given no warning. My host was a man of the world, and I've cracked many a cliché with him since, so I like to feel that I've been forgiven. But the events of that evening should have been premonition enough. My virus was nothing compared to the one that had infected him and many of my neighbors. The midwestern sociologist, Chrabalowsky, whom I quoted above, has given a name to it: "Creeping *communitas*."

Chrabalowsky is an old family friend. He spent a few days with us a while back—rather not with us but at our house. We were more out than in. First there were the couple of hours working on the storage shed roof at Tauxemont: then my wife went touring the neighborhood for U.G.F. or cancer or polio or some other disease she was selling, then there were the birthday parties—luckily both kids had invitations at the same time—which meant rushing down to the shopping center for last minute presents, getting the kids dressed and delivering them, counting the hours to the moment when they could be picked up; later on there were the Tauxemont Board meetings and the P.T.A., the Cub Scouts and the . . .

"Stop!" Chrabalowsky held his head despairingly. "You know," he told us, "der Vater und die Mutter dieser kleinen Kinde sind beike krank. Sehr krank."

"Hold off your vituperation, Chrab," I said. "Haven't you heard the phrase: 'and a little child shall lead them?'" Chrabalowsky snorted. "By the nose?"

"One thing you have to understand, my eminent social scientist, this is a well-integrated community."

"How so?"

"Well, consider. Everybody is involved in one thing or another. We have a swimming pool and a sitters pool, tennis courts and car pools, the League of Women Voters and the Unitarian Church, the Recreation Association and the Civic Association, Cub Scouts, Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts and Brownies, cookie sales and book sales, investment clubs and garden clubs, and good-fellowship seven nights a week—cook-outs and martini-ins . . ."

By now Chrabalowsky was murmuring, . . . ein von Schlangen und Krotten wimmelndes Burgverliess."

"Never you mind," I said, "it's a way of life."

By the time Chrabalowsky finished being violently sick I had begun to do some serious thinking. Now, Chrabalowsky and Riesman never got along together very well—"David Riesman ist ausgeschtunkt," Chrabalowsky always says—but before he cut short his visit, Chrab pointed out a passage in one of his essays, a line of which is eminently quotable here:

"There has developed today . . . a feeling on the part of individuals that they wanted or felt they had to spend their energies, first in making a group, and second, in attending to and improving its morale."

"Creeping *communitas*," said Chrabalowsky.

I began to see what he meant. It is quite difficult to resist. That first knock on the door—"Will you help us hang Stevenson posters on the telephone poles?"—and you're hooked. Your time and your energies and any plans you might have had disappear like a plate of Fritos on the coffee table . . . you know you shouldn't, but just one more . . .

And really, the alternative is not moving out of Hollin Hills. Creeping *communitas* is epidemic. I guarantee that whoever gets to the moon first—the Russians or us—by the time the other arrives a sitters' pool already will have been set up.

Nor am I casting a plea for the apocryphal "good old days" when your nearest neighbor was not in eyesight, and when the kids had to walk six miles to school every morning. In the snow. Without shoes.

Let's face it—by nature we're interdependent, gregarious, and lazy. I could digress here at length on how

this is a function of the age, what with extension of communications and the fear of nuclear warfare, but that's Chrabalowsky's pitch and he's going to write a treatise on it someday if he retains all his marbles. No, what I mean by "lazy" is that it is much easier to give in, to say yes instead of an adamant no—to embroil yourself in family and children and friends' families and friends' children.

You can wonder, with some justification, how all this would have affected a solitary thinker such as, say, Thoreau. I can see him sitting on the banks of Walden, writing: "This is a delicious evening, when the whole body is one sense, and imbibes delight through every pore. I go and come with a strange liberty in Nature . . ."

There's a crackling of undergrowth and a Concord gamin emerges.

"What are you doing out so late, kid?"

"Mr. Thoreau, sir, I got a message . . . Mr. Emerson asked me to bring it out to you." The boy hands Thoreau a piece of folded foolscap. Reluctantly Thoreau unfolds it and reads in the deepening twilight.

"Dear Hank,

Things are rather dead in this part of town. We'll be down a little later to kick the gong around with you. I suppose you're pretty well fed up by

(Cont. from page 25)

now, all alone out in the sticks. Well, chin-up buddyboy—Nat Hawthorne has a few side-splitters to tell you, and Louisa will pack along a bottle or two of grog—that is, if we can coax her off that 'Little Women' kick. See you in a couple of hours,

Ralphie

Thoreau crumples the paper in his fist and tosses the wad into the pond. He watches it float away in widening ripples. A pine warbler squeaks once or twice from a bayberry bush. The boy clears his throat and speaks to Thoreau:

"You got any message for me to bring back?"

"Yes, damn it. Tell Emerson I said the mass of men lead lives of quiet desperation . . ."

"Huh?"

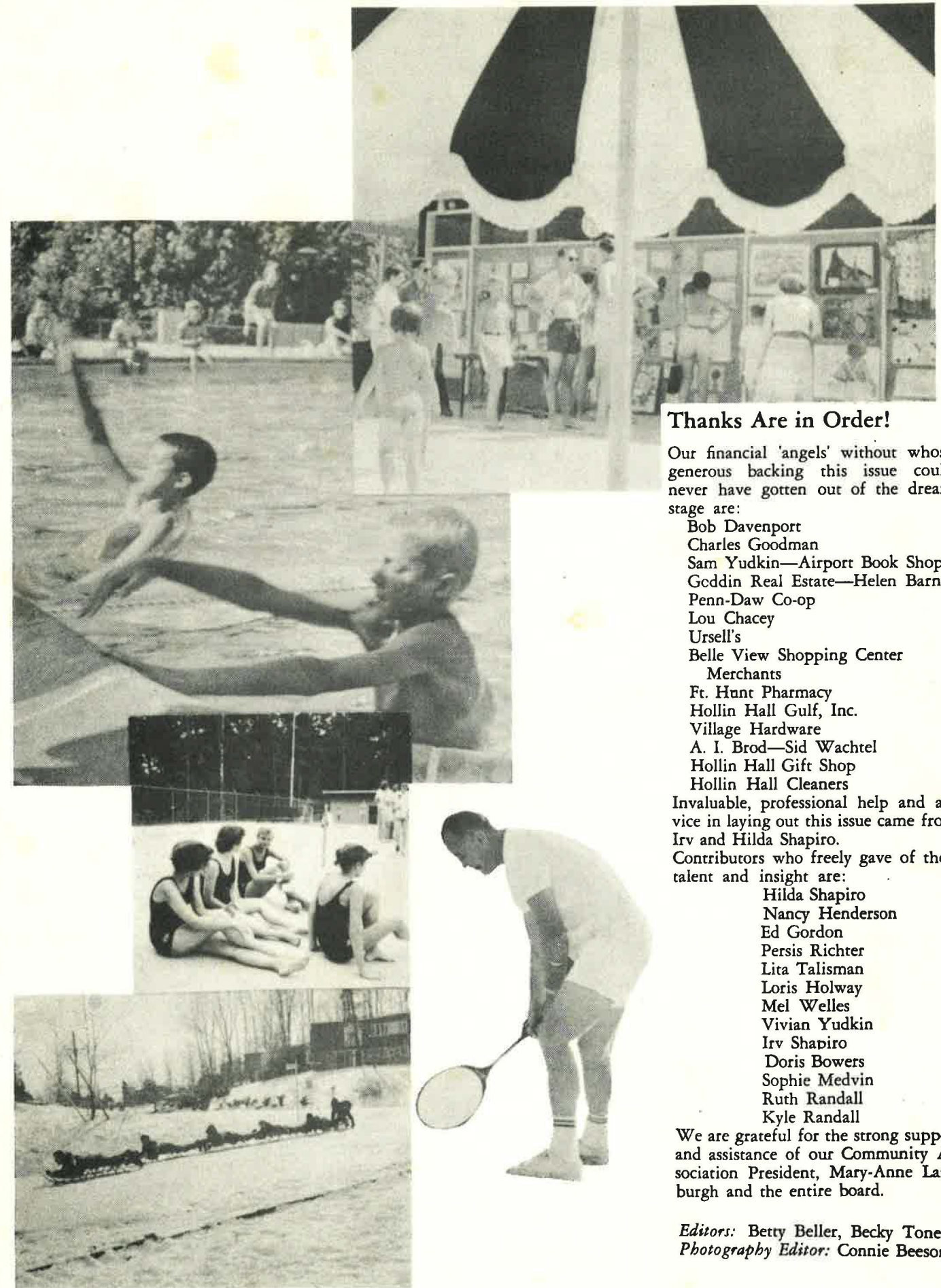
"Oh, knock off, will ya, kid!"

There's much difference between Thoreau's gentle disposition toward solitude and the violent-passive withdrawal of today's beatniks. But I think Thoreau would gladly subscribe to Jack Kerouac's thesis, that "Togetherness is — —!"

I would like to put in for a lifetime subscription myself. As soon as people stop asking me to do things, such as writing articles on communities and souls.

Ed Gordon





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