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THE FOUNDING OF "BARCROFT", ESTABLISHMENT OF
"THE BARCROFT SCHOOL", ERECTION OF THE BUILDING,
AND FOUNDING OF THE "BARCROFT SCHOOL AND CIVIC
LEAGUE".

The "History of the Barcroft School and Civic League" by Charlotte Maupin Manning, September 1973, is an excellent and well-written record, carefully prepared with the use of recorded Deeds and records of The Barcroft School and Civic League. It is noted, however, that incorporation was made of earlier unauthenticated items which vary from actual facts.

These notes are prompted by an effort to determine the actual age of the building, known as the "Barcroft Community House", and the period in Arlington County History when it was "The Barcroft School", and the founding of "The Barcroft School and Civic League",

Segments of Barcroft history have been written in varying forms by a number of people. Many have been prepared from memories or recollections without benefit of appropriate aids as references. The result of human error in such instances is great. Histories written in later years and using these "memories" continue to carry forward errors in dates, names and events which distort the true history.

An article published in "The Sun" Newspaper, June 29, 1959, "Mrs. Payne is Arlington Club's Woman of the Year", contains family information, presumably from available records, regarding the arrival and, later, the permanent residence of the Bridges and Payne families in Arlington. From this, we learn that the Bridges family first rented a house near Barcroft in 1905 to get out of the heat of the city. (It is known from other records that this was a small house near Bailey's Crossroad, on Columbia Pike.) Louise Bridges, according to the article, educated in Georgetown and D. C. Schools, later was a teacher in Chevy Chase. She took an active interest in the Suffragette Movement led by Mrs. Carrie Chapman Catt in 1913.

Records of Alexandria County show that a deed was recorded in 1907 of the purchase by M. M. Bridges of Lots in Block E, Barcroft from Mrs. Abbie Fox. (These lots on Arlington Avenue between Fairfax Street and Glen Avenue, remained unimproved for some 20 years, until sold.) When the Six-Acre tract known as "Woodmeade", North of the boundary of "Cedar Hill" was purchased from its owners, Charles and Lisette Kolb, about 1913, Milton and Louise Bridges Payne, and her mother, Mrs. Bridges, took up residence there together.

Mrs. Payne was an active member of the Arlington Women's Club and chaired many of its committees. In this she participated in the establishment of a Branch Library at Columbia. She had a lively interest in horticulture, winning many prizes for the beautiful flowers raised on her home grounds. She also supported plans for the building of the Clubhouse in Barcroft, a priority of the Club since its inception about 1930.

As far as is known, neither Louise Bridges nor her son, Leverett, attended school in the old or new buildings at Barcroft. Nor is it known that the Bridges or Milton Paynes were members of the "Barcroft School and Civic League". Their son, Leverett, and his wife, have been members, and in the 1960's-70's took an active interest in it.

In the "History of Barcroft School", compiled by Mrs. Milton Barcroft Payne (Louise Bridges Payne) in 1940, Mrs. Payne performed a valuable service to the community by presenting her recollections and those of others in the area, as told to her. However, a study of the records of the Alexandria County School Board from 1905 to 1925, and of Recorded Deeds to properties sold in "Corbett" and Barcroft from 1890 to 1925 reveals discrepancies in dates, names, timing, and even reasons for events that are important to the history of the Community.

Here, there is no intention to denigrate in any way, the importance of articles which present stories of the Community from memories since they offer invaluable clues for research. This is an attempt, however, to correct some early statements and impressions through presentation of research into Alexandria/Arlington County Court and County School Board or other organizational records. These notes present a chronological record of the founding of Barcroft, the establishment of the Barcroft School, and the founding of the Barcroft School and Civic League from authoritative sources. The period covered ends with the discontinuance of the School held in The Community House in June 1925.

The attached copy of research notes covers establishment of the original Barcroft School in 1907, held in the home of Mrs. Amy Fairfax, the first teacher. They further reveal the circumstances which led to rental from the Methodist Episcopal Church of Barcroft by the Alexandria County School Board of the small, new one-room building, now The Community House, Erected in 1908 as a Church, its use as The Barcroft School was continued from that date for a period of Seventeen years.

It seems evident that The Barcroft School and Civic League was founded in those early years. Following its Incorporation in 1914, The Barcroft School and Civic League purchased the Building and continued its rental for use as a School.

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***BARCROFT*, "THE BARCROFT SCHOOL", ERECTION
OF THE BUILDING KNOWN AS "THE BARCROFT
COMMUNITY HOUSE", "THE BARCROFT SCHOOL AND
CIVIC LEAGUE" - ERA 1900 - 1925 RESEARCH**

NOTES ON THE ABOVE:

Milton W. and Amy M Fairfax purchased Lots 1, 2, Block D, Barcroft, Virginia, on which a new house had just been built, on April 20, 1907. Alexandria County Deed Book 115, Page 364.

They had three small daughters at that time, Edith, Hilda, and Ethel. A son was born later.

County School Board minutes show that at a Regular Meeting of the Board on October 7, 1907, a Petition was read by the Clerk from the Citizens of Barcroft, Virginia, requesting that a School be established in Barcroft. It was ordered that the Clerk write the following letter (as contained in the minutes) to the President of the Citizens Association of Barcroft:

"Rosslyn, October 10, 1907

"Mr. Stephen P. Wright, President,
Citizen's Association of Barcroft, Va.

"It is inexpedient at this time to open a school at Barcroft as we have a capable teacher at Glen Carlyn, Virginia."

According to School Board Minutes, this action was immediately protested by the Barcroft residents. Most of the children were under the age of seven, and the only route from Barcroft was a long walk to Glen Carlyn along the Railroad track, a distance of over a mile.

On October 19, 1907, the School Board then instructed Mr. C. B. Munson of Columbia, Chairman of Arlington District (of the School Board), to look into the matter and see what the expenses would be to maintain a school at Barcroft.

This he did and, working with the citizens of Barcroft they came up with a plan which was duly presented to the Board. Mrs. Fairfax had agreed to teach in her home.

At a Regular Meeting of the Board on November 30, 1907, it was reported that those present were Chairman, C. B. Munson, Ralph Baldwin, William A. B. McPhee, Clerk, Mr. S. P. Wright, Mrs. Amy Fairfax and Miss Lucy Lynn. A letter had been filed from the Barcroft citizens stating that Mrs. Amy (Mrs. M.W.) Fairfax had been contacted and had consented to rent a room in her home for \$10. per month for a school. She further agreed to accept employment as a teacher, and to provide Janitor services for \$25. per month until January 30, 1908. On November 30, 1907, the same date, Mrs. Fairfax appears on the Payroll of the School Board. (Underscoring of dates added)

At a meeting of the School Board January 25, 1908, the Minutes contain the following:

"Mrs. Amy Fairfax is elected as Teacher to teach at Barcroft the balance of the School Year 1907-08".
(underscoring added)

Records of Alexandria County contain a Deed of Sale, dated May 21, 1908, by Mrs. Abbie Fox of Lots 3, 4, Block D, in Barcroft to Charles Kolb, B. P. Perrow, S. T. Marye, William Pierpoint, John R. Robinson, Benjamin Smith, Harry Dye, Henry Peagans and Kate Robinson, Trustees of The Barcroft Methodist Episcopal Church of Barcroft, Virginia, and their successors in office as trustees of said church.
(DBK 118, P. 187)

The Trustees were affiliates of the Arlington Methodist Church, of which William Pierpoint was the Minister. Charles Kolb had purchased a six-acre parcel of the estate of James Ball beyond the Cedar Hill Farm north boundary, in 1893, where he and his family lived at "Woodmeade". B. P. Perrow was the Builder from Remington, Virginia, brought in by S. P. Wright to build the new homes in Barcroft. S. T. Marye was the husband of Annie Doremus who built the first house on top of the Hill on Arlington Avenue at Fairfax Street about 1894. (It was rented until she and Mr. Marye were married in 1901.) The remaining Trustees appear to have lived in and around Columbia.

On June 2, 1908 Minutes of the School Board note: "All Teachers who taught last year and who made application are re-elected."

The building of the Church was evidently carried forward immediately during the summer months and the one-room structure was ready for use by Fall..

It was evidently learned during the summer that the Fairfax home would not be available and that Mrs. Fairfax would be unable to teach during the 1908-09 term. Again it was necessary for the School Board and Citizens to work out a solution.

School Board Minutes of October 3, 1908, note that among applications received from teachers was that of Miss Beulah Adams of Hunter Station, Fairfax County. At the same meeting a letter was read from Sidney T. Marye, Secretary of the Methodist Episcopal Church of Barcroft, accepting the Board's terms for rent of the Church building for school purposes at \$10. per month. This agreement was approved by the Board and it was ordered that Mr. Marye be notified.

On November 6, 1908 the Board accepted Miss Beulah Adams as Substitute Teacher at Barcroft; at \$35. per month; and on September 28, 1908 her name appears on the payroll, at \$36.39. It remains on it the remainder of the term..

At the School Board Meeting of August 28, 1909, it was reported that applications to teach had (among others) been received from Miss Margaret Handy and Miss Beulah Adams.

On September 17, 1909, it was reported at a Special Board Meeting that although contracts had not been made, Miss Margaret Handy and Miss Beulah Adams were ordered to report as teachers. On October 5, 1909, Miss Margaret Handy appears on the School Board Payroll as Teacher at Barcroft, and Miss Beulah Adams at Clarendon.

Miss Handy, daughter of Major F. A. G. Handy who purchased a home at Arlington Avenue and Fairfax Street, in Barcroft in April 1908, lived with her parents. Her brother, Frederick C. Handy had purchased the home adjoining the Marye's on the same date, and on July 1, 1908, her brother, Walter K. Handy purchased the home adjoining his father, but facing on Glen Avenue.

Miss Handy and a number of her pupils of that school term (who are still living) recall a disastrous storm which tore off the roof of the School house. Classes were held for sometime in a large house nearby while the building was repaired.

More space became necessary and, by 1913, a small room had been added in the rear of the one-room building. School Board records show that thereafter two teachers were continuously employed to teach at Barcroft, from December ~~December~~ 1913 to the end of the term in June 1925.

Oil lamps or candles were first used in the Community House, as they were in the homes of residents, until about 1913-14. Spurred by efforts of Walter K. Handy, a petition of the people, (14 Citizens) about 1912, requested that poles be added extending electric lines from Columbia to Barcroft. With the help of his brothers and citizens, he wired the first fourteen homes, and the Community House.

A record of costs of these repairs and improvements will, no doubt be found in the early minutes of the Barcroft School and Civic League. Minutes of some of those early minutes are in existence in Pittman Shorthand, taken by Major F. A. G. Handy, a Congressional Correspondent, prior to his death in 1912. However, they have not been translated. The Citizens Association of Barcroft of 1907 evidently evolved into The Barcroft School and Civic League in 1908 when the new building was first occupied as a School. From its Incorporation in 1914, the League became the owner of the building, and, in 1982, it is still the owner. (August 21, 1914, DBk 54, P. 144)

It is not known when the Barcroft PTA was established, but it is probable that became a separate entity from the Barcroft School and Civic League about the time of first occupancy of the Brick building as a School. Minutes of the two organizations will probably give the data.

It is known that the Barcroft School and Civic League considered the elimination of the word "School" from its name, but preferred to keep it because of its association with the first School Building.

References:

Alexandria/Arlington County Court Records

Alexandria County School Board, Minutes and Payroll Data.
(Available for research by appointment only, Arlington District of Alexandria County, is fortunate to have the most complete records of any of the three Districts.)

"Barcroft, Arlington County, Virginia - A Village Metamorphosis", by Mildred H. Ritchie, Vol. 6 (Corrected to ?), No. 4, October 1980, Arlington Historical Society Magazine.

History of the Barcroft School, 1940 By (Mrs. Milton B. Payne) Louise Bridges Payne, (with additions 1958, 1971)

History of The Barcroft School and Civic League, September 1973. By Charlotte Maupin Marning (With References)

*December 15, 1982
From Research Records,
of Mildred Handy Ritchie
Re: Barcroft, Virginia*