

BUILDING

A story of the construction of 18 houses built by a single builder between 1929 and 1953, showing the evolution of pre-war, post-war, and midcentury housing typical of the Near West End neighborhood.

A monumental avenue
richmond, virginia

Kathi C. Wong

NEIGHBORHOOD

Building a Neighborhood

Monumental Avenue in Richmond, Virginia

by Kathi C. Wong

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Monumental Avenue in Richmond, Virginia

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Monumental Avenue in Richmond, Virginia

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Deborah Teel's assignment was to write a story about a model home that would be open this weekend in the West End. She had already written several articles in the last year about open houses like this one in the Richmond suburbs, including another one by this same builder, and the challenge had become to make this story different and interesting. She had visited the house this morning, and it had already been turning out to be a beautiful spring day in Richmond. The paper's driver had taken her out there, and when he turned the corner at Monument and Libbie avenues, she was immediately struck by the sight of the tall pines. When she stepped out of the car in the neighborhood, a gentle breeze carried the evocative scent of fresh pine needles, and she knew right then that the lead, at least, of this story would practically write itself.

Later, back at her desk at the Times Dispatch, she inserted the paper into her typewriter and began to write, "Out amidst the pungent pines at 5504 Monumental Street, George Mancos has built a house distinctive in the details of its design, alive with the elements of gracious dignity and serene hospitality created by its planning, its basic color harmonies, and the furnishings placed and meticulously arranged by the Hawkes Furniture Company. Its colonial door will be open to everyone today between 3 and 9 o'clock and on weekdays between 3 and 8."¹

The May 18, 1941, article and accompanying photographs and advertisements for the open house at 5504 Monumental Street (re-numbered and settled down in nomenclature in the late 1950s to 5704² Monumental Avenue), provides a relatively rare, detailed look at what prewar and post-war houses in the Richmond suburbs actually looked like. In particular, George Mancos was not one to re-invent the wheel; many features of his houses were repeated in his homes, both in the interior and on the exterior.

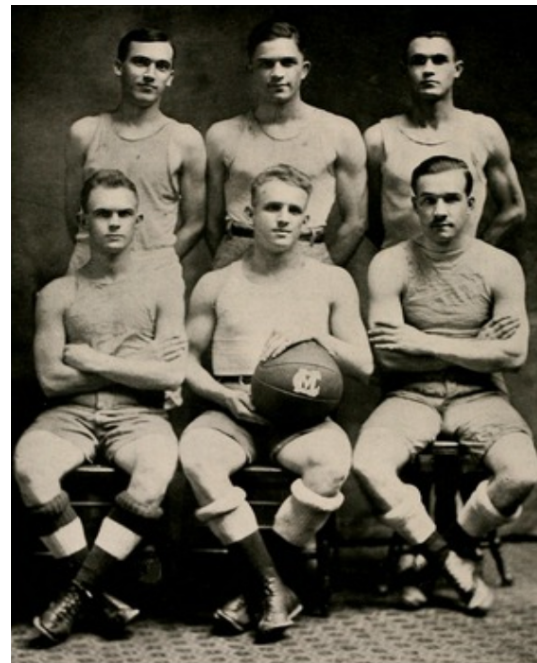
But let's start at the beginning...

¹ Punctuation, spelling, and grammar conventions of quoted items in this narrative have been edited to reflect 2020 norms.

² Addresses of the houses on the upper part of Monumental and the two houses on Libbie where Monumental intersects with Libbie have changed, sometimes more than once, over the years. A discussion of the changes of address and other issues dealing with the street names begins on page 42. To avoid confusion, addresses as they are in 2020 are used from here forward in this document.

George Mancos (Jr.) was born on February 2, 1893, in Duquesne, Pennsylvania, the first child of recent Eastern European immigrants. His father, George Mancos, Sr., who earlier had used the last name spelling of Manezos, had married his mother, Anna Vagas, on May 21, 1890, in Braddock, Pennsylvania. George, Sr., was born on April 22, 1869, in Trebixov, Kosickey, Slovaki, an agricultural region of the world variously described in different historical contexts as being part of Slovakia, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, or Austria. At the age of 22, he joined a half-million ethnic Slovaks who left the region, likely part of a large-scale immigration to escape forced Hungarian acculturation. More than half of those settled in Pennsylvania, and George, Sr., was no different. The path Anna, born on December 5, 1868, took to Pennsylvania is less certain, but in early 20th century U.S. censuses, she is listed as being from the same Slovak area as George, Sr. It is not known whether they knew each other first in Slovakia or whether they met in Pennsylvania. George, Jr., and two siblings were born in Pennsylvania before the family followed another Slovak migration to farms south of Richmond, Virginia, in about 1899. Cheap farmland was plentiful in Virginia after the Civil War, and Czech and Slovak families who had at first settled in Pennsylvania and in the Midwest, and even those still in the old countries in Eastern Europe, moved to Prince George County to buy farmland in and around Disputanta. The area is still very rural in 2020, and descendants of these Czech and Slovak immigrants continue to live in the area, holding an annual fall festival to celebrate their heritage.

George's (Jr.) early life journey is not known, but when he was 17, the census shows he was living with his parents and six siblings, in Disputanta. He was in school, likely at Disputanta's early high school for white students, and was working on the family farm where he likely gained the basics of skills he would use later in life. He disappears from the record for a short time, showing up in the 1914 freshman class of the Medical College of Virginia (MCV), precursor to Virginia Commonwealth University's (VCU) Medical Center. Slovakia was already deeply involved in the world war, and though the United States would not enter the conflict until 1917, the American press, including the Richmond Times



One of these men in this 1915 photo of MCV's basketball team is George Mancos. No other photo of George Mancos has been discovered. The photograph is from the 1915 MCV yearbook which is available online.

Dispatch, were carrying more and more news about the European fight. Perhaps hearing the drums of war, in 1914 George signed on as a private with the Virginia Signal Corps based in Richmond, a new militia (militias evolved into the National Guard) mustered by Col. Jo Lane Stern, whose claim to fame was that at age 14 he had joined the Confederate Army and became Robert E. Lee's personal telegraph operator, with Lee even at the 1865 surrender in Appomattox. Whether George joined the militia out of a sense of patriotic duty or because he was interested in the athletic opportunities it offered can be debated. George played baseball, basketball, and ran track with teams formed by the Signal Corps. He also played on athletic teams fielded by MCV.

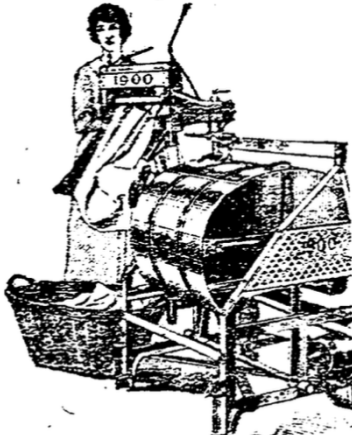
The length of his tenure with the Signal Corps is not known, but he did not serve in World War I. And his MCV career was cut short -- though he appears in both 1916 and 1917 class listings as a sophomore, he disappears after that, though others in those classes are shown to have graduated as seniors at expected dates in later years. Perhaps he frittered away his study time with sports at MCV: the yearbook description of the 1915 MCV basketball team's exploits noted that the "basketball season...was unfortunately short." It continued, "When a call was issued for candidates, no difficulty was encountered in securing a large squad of men showing basketball ability. But when the playing season had begun, the men began to feel the press of work and to drop away until the squad was reduced to Remine, Ransone, Holding, McLean, Mancos, and Amick. These men stuck it out for several weeks but finding that practice could not be had sufficient to enable them to do themselves justice on the floor and that studies were suffering, they reluctantly resolved to give it up." The team ended that season with one win and four losses, the most humiliating being their last one when they lost on December 12 to team Howitzers, 19-45. George may also have been distracted in his studies by his marriage to Edna May Leistra on January 18, 1916. He was 22; she was 19. Edna, who would become a partner in his business ventures through the years, was born on May 10, 1896, in Amelia, Virginia. Both were from areas generally south of Richmond, but it is not known how the couple met. Her father, also born in Amelia, was the son of Dutch parents, both of whom had immigrated from the Netherlands to the United States in the early 1800s in a wave of farmers escaping high Dutch taxes and low wages. Edna's mother's family had come from New York to Amelia County sometime between 1880 and 1889, but their route to New York is unknown.

Gem Electric Shop

In 1917, George was working for C&P Telephone Company, and he appears to have run, for at least a short time, Pero Garage, located at 329 West Main, which on January 21, 1917, advertised "special rates of automobile repairing and overhauling by first-class mechanics, special inducements to jitneys." But on September 7, 1919, a display ad

appeared in the Times Dispatch, announcing the opening of George and Edna's new "electric store" on 1212 East Main Street in Richmond. The ad uses the pronouns "we" or "our" more than once indicating it was a mom-and-pop shop in the truest sense of the word. It would sell, according to the ad, the "most up-to-date electrical, labor, and time-saving devices." In fact, the ad noted, Richmond housewives "owe it to themselves to visit our store which we want to make your own." Called Gem Electric Shop, in the first months the shop focused on selling washing machines and vacuum cleaners, often touting the appliances as labor-saving devices for women. The ads claimed it wasn't only women who would benefit, however: one ad in December 1920 noted that men could get their "pal" back by purchasing these devices for the home, giving the wife more time to spend with her husband.

1900 Electric Washing Machine



Washes Everything

Costs 1 to 2 cents for electricity to do the family wash. A gift for the home that will last a lifetime.

Gem Electric Shop
1212 East Main.

OHIO Electric Cleaner



Cleans without beating and pounding.
Not only sweeps, but cleans.
Transforms disagreeable house work into pleasant pastime.
Come and see demonstration.

Gem Electric Shop
1212 East Main.

At first, George and Edna -- he was 27 and she was 25 -- lived over the shop at 1212 East Main, frugally helping to make ends meet by including a boarder in their rented apartment, an 80-year-old man, a printer by profession, who was listed in the 1920 census only by his last name, Long. The census also made it clear that Gem Electric was the couple's shared enterprise: George was listed as an electrical merchant and Edna as an electrical clerk. In 1920, they moved the shop to 209 East Grace Street, one block off Broad, "Richmond's Fifth Avenue." They advertised about twice a week, sometimes multiple ads in a given edition, about a hundred ads a year. They expanded their inventory, selling electric "ironers," fans, massagers, heating pads, floor lamps, sewing machines, ranges, light bulbs, and Christmas lights. They marketed their products creatively, holding presentations of "actual washing done in our store every Wednesday morning," bringing in a factory

representative to demonstrate the vacuum cleaners, exhibiting at the county fair, and holding a contest with small electrical appliances as prizes for three winners who could come the closest to guessing how many lightbulbs they had displayed in the front window. They sold used appliances, they offered repairs, they delivered, they offered a free week's use of the washing machine. At times, their marketing had an almost feminist edge, perhaps reflecting Edna's influence: "Men now use machinery operated by power. Why should women not do likewise?"

But their timing was off. A sharp deflationary recession hit the United States after the end of the World War at the exact moment they were founding and expanding their business; it lasted from January 1920 to July 1921. They couldn't recover, and in December 1921, even before the final Christmas rush, George E. Mancos, trading as Gem Electric Shop, filed for bankruptcy.

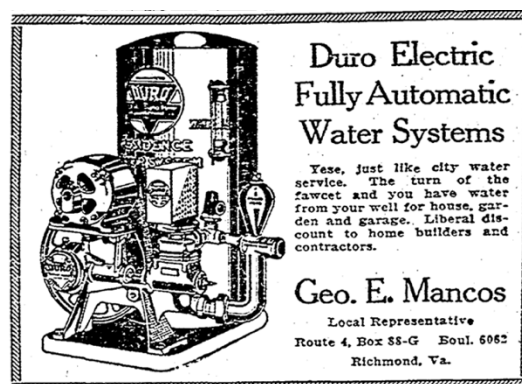
Moving On: Building Houses and Selling Them

Somehow the couple bounced back. They likely moved back with George's parents near Disputanta at least temporarily and perhaps had a go at farming. But an ad placed in the Times Dispatch in October 1922 showed that George, Sr., at least, was ready to let the farm go: "On account of bad health and lack of help, I will sell either or both of my 150-acre farms in Prince George County." Two months later, George, Jr. and Edna placed their first known real estate ad offering to sell their "new 5-room stucco cottage, easy terms, Stop 45, Lakeside." They offered to take back a mortgage on the property: "small cash payment, balance like rent," so cash flow seems at least less important than selling the house. Private versus bank mortgages were the norm rather than the exception for 1920s buyers who didn't have the cash to pay for a home out of hand, but where the Mancoses got the seed money to purchase the property and then build a house on it is not known. Perhaps one or both sets of their parents were wealthy enough from their farming endeavors to invest in George and Edna's fledgling construction business.

"Mrs. Mancos" was shown as selling contact for the Lakeside home until just prior to the birth of the couple's first daughter, Betty, on January 30, 1923; they announced the birth with a captioned photo that noted they lived on Bloomingdale Avenue. The home apparently sold around March 1923, since advertisements for it disappeared about that time, but by April 30, 1924, George was advertising a second house: "Lakeside carline, my beautiful home, eight rooms and sun parlor, large lot. Heat, water, sewerage, electric lights, three garages, tool house. Just about completed. Apply Mr. Mancos, owner within," indicating that the couple and their child had likely moved into the house until it sold. No other address or

contact information was provided, so apparently what was in the ad was sufficient for prospective owners to find the house in the early 1920s.

Over the next few years, the Mancoses built up their construction business, one house at a time, often living in it when completed until it sold. Sometimes a sale would take two to four months or longer, and they appeared to move back to the Mancos family farm during those times when they had no house to live in. They also diversified into other businesses -- for a while George sold pumps for water systems -- likely to provide their family with a more dedicated monthly income as opposed to the relatively large, but less frequent, amount of cash generated at the sale of a house. They advertised their ventures heavily in the Richmond Times Dispatch, sometimes several times a week, usually less-expensive classified ads but sometimes more-expensive but small display ads.



In March 1926, they added their second and final child, another daughter, Mildred, to their family. A couple of months later, George's younger sister Emily did what he couldn't do: she graduated from MCV, with a degree in nursing. George and Edna became active in the church that they would keep life long as their home church, Lakeside Presbyterian. And they ran into a glitch or two: In November 1926, George was rushing Edna's sister, Hazel Kidd, and her 18-month-old baby to a hospital downtown for a potentially life-saving emergency operation when he crashed with another car at the corner of Belvidere and Franklin streets. No one was seriously hurt, and a passing car took the baby and mother on to the hospital after the accident, but both drivers were arrested and bailed for appearance in police court. The child apparently did not ultimately survive, since in subsequent censuses no one of that age is listed in the Kidd household. The outcome of George's court appearance is unknown.

On February 7, 1928, an odd society note in the Times Dispatch added another postscript about their personal lives: "Mr. and Mrs. George Mancos of Richmond are staying at the Grace Dodge Hotel in Washington for an extended period. With them is H. L. Wyland, also of Richmond." It begs the question of why the couple was in Washington for an "extended period" (although it may have been only a few days). Also, who was H. L. Wyland? Though it is not known why George and Edna were in Washington, the answer to the identity of Wyland perhaps brings up as many more questions as to why he, in particular,

was with them. The 1930 census shows Wyland, 34, a World War I veteran, was a construction worker, undoubtedly working for Mancos since he was boarding at their home. In contrast, in the 1920 census, he was a laborer in one of the Richmond iron works factories, and in the 1940 census, the 44-year-old Wyland had moved on from working with Mancos and was an investigator for the ABC Board of Virginia, living on Barton Avenue with his 25-year-old wife and two-year-old son. There appears to be no other connection between Wyland and the Mancoses except that he was working for George. It is not so strange that he was working for or boarding with them, but why they would take him along on an “extended” stay in Washington, D.C., still remains a mystery. Another question arises: where were the children during this “extended” trip? Betty was 5 and the youngest daughter, Mildred, was 2. Finally, and most curiously, is why they chose to stay at the Grace Dodge Hotel. Other than convenience -- the Grace Dodge was located just outside Washington’s Union Station -- it was built for a very specific purpose: it specialized in offering professional women traveling alone to the Capital “a top-notch hotel experience, free from harassment by men,” and it was managed and operated by an entirely female staff. Many features catered directly to women clients: special suites for mothers with heaters for baby’s milk as well as a sitting room on each floor where women guests could socialize in the absence of men. It also was known for instituting a no-tipping policy meant to lead the way for abolishment of the “barbaric custom” from throughout the United States.³



**“See Richmond’s
New Model Home!”**

**Facing Westwood Golf Course
Libbie Avenue and West Grace Street**

THIS splendid 8-room brick home is situated on a large corner lot in one of the most desirable sections of the suburban West End. Beautiful shrubs decorate the lawn . . . in front . . . the verdant, rolling landscape of Westwood stretches far ahead. Truly, the ideal spot for a home.

FIRST FLOOR: Large living-room with fireplace; sun-parlor, hall, dining-room, spacious kitchen with large double drain kitchen sink and built-in china-press on each side; frigidaire, breakfast nook and pantry; lavatory in rear hall entrance off back porch. Large basement, laundry tubs and furnace.

SECOND FLOOR: Three large bedrooms with closets, hall-room and tile bath with shower stall. Entire bathroom equipped with Spring-green fixtures.

UNUSUAL FEATURES include hardwood floors throughout, colonial electric fixtures, hot-water heat, slate roof, two-car brick garage in alley; woodwork in house finished in green enamel.

**OPEN DAILY FOR INSPECTION
COME OUT!**

George E. Mancos,
Owner and Builder
Libbie and Monumental Avenues
Phone Boulevard 5581

A May 5, 1929, ad appearing in the Times-Dispatch listing the home at Libbie and Grace.

³ <https://ggwash.org/view/8981/lost-washington-the-grace-dodge-hotel>, dated April 13, 2011. Accessed February 11, 2020. This article fills in more wonderful details about this hotel.

Monument/Libbie Area

In May 1929, George made his first known foray into building homes in the Monument/Libbie area, advertising for sale at Libbie and Grace⁴ a two-story colonial facing the now-defunct Westwood Golf Course. In his ads of the time, he portrayed his small business -- many other builders in Richmond were larger companies with construction managers -- as an advantage to prospective home buyers: “Mancos-built homes are always recognized as homes of the highest quality. One of the chief reasons for their superiority lies in the fact that only a few houses are built each year. By limiting the quantity, it affords time to give personal supervision of every detail from the initial choice of location to final completion of the home.”⁵

While the extent to which Edna participated in the business cannot be completely assessed now, several ads for the Mancos’ houses over the years noted that she was the seller contact and/or would be showing a particular home. Remembering that much of the Gem Electric products and promotions were aimed at women, it is tempting to think that she had something to do with the marketing of that business -- the 1930 census definitely stated she worked there -- and if so, that she continued to work in the family real estate business marketing the Mancoses houses, at least coordinating the large volume of ads they placed. Certainly, if George was as involved in the “personal supervision” as he claimed in the ad selling the house at 1501 Libbie, at the intersection with Grace, it seems logical that he would have relied on her to help in other areas of the business. At Gem Electric, though the business had failed, they certainly had learned the value of creative marketing (we imagine that during the Gem Electric bankruptcy, they had been sure to pay off, or at least to minimize, any debt to the newspaper). Regardless of whom was in charge of the relentless real estate ads they were placing in the Times Dispatch, the Mancoses advertised heavily. A classified or display ad touting Mancos properties appeared nearly every day in the paper, several hundred a year, and over the lifetime of their business, several thousands.

Regardless of whether or not it was through a personal effort by Edna and/or George’s apparent good standing with the accounting department at the Times Dispatch, it must have been very good news to them that the home at Libbie and Grace was chosen on July 22, 1929, as the seventh of seven “quality” homes across Richmond and Henrico County the paper featured that summer.⁶ As a model house, it was what today we would call staged (they called it “decorated”), and again, it is likely that Edna would have taken on this part of

⁴ The house, located at 1501 Libbie, is beside and currently the property of Monument Heights Baptist Church.

⁵ Richmond Times Dispatch. July 21, 1929.

⁶ The article is reproduced in Appendix 1 of this narrative.

the family business and coordinated this project. She would probably have chosen paint colors (the July 21 ad noted the woodwork in the house was finished in green enamel, though perhaps this was only in the bathroom which had “spring-green” fixtures), wallpaper, and other decorative details. She may, in fact, have had an impact on the architectural design to make sure it would appeal to women. Perhaps she and George were a kind of 1920s version of HGTV’s JoAnna and Chip Gaines. Whatever the case, and perhaps keeping in mind the lessons learned at Gem Electric in marketing to women, the description seems to emphasize the features of the house that women, particularly, might desire: a kitchen with “a number” of built-in conveniences such as electrical refrigeration, a Standard electric stove, cabinets on each side of the kitchen sink, a sewing room equipped with a Sears Roebuck and Co. sewing machine, washing and ironing machines, a full-length mirror in a large closet, flowers supplied by Kendall, Inc. But the size of the house and its furnishings were also clearly designed to attract a couple: a new Victor radio set and the proximity of the golf course no doubt were features meant to entice a man of the house. The intrinsic value of the newspaper article was amplified a week later by ads from companies that had furnished the house, indicating their contributions.⁷

Though George touted the personal attention he provided as a small company to home buyers, he was very busy building homes. On the same day the Quality Home No. 7 article ran, he ran a large ad showing four other, similar, colonial homes which he had recently built, though the time frame for building them was not mentioned. The previous May, even before the Quality Home No. 7 article appeared, he had advertised himself as owner and developer of Chesterfield Gardens subdivision, “South Richmond’s Choice Suburbs,” noting that more than 100 home sites were being “laid off” in this area on the Richmond-Danville-Atlanta Highway out Hull Street, three minutes’ drive from the city limits, perhaps not coincidentally also on the road to Amelia, Edna’s hometown; in fact, it might have been property belonging to her parents.

The 1920s Richmond area real estate market, fed by the national trend of farm-to-urban migration, was hot: the real estate section of the Times Dispatch was filled with



**THE NEW
VICTOR-RADIO**
Micro-Synchronous
With Electrola
SEE IT!...HEAR IT!
**IN QUALITY HOME
NO. 7**
Furnished and
Demonstrated
by
**COLUMBIA
FURNITURE COMPANY**
213-215 West Broad

A July 28, 1929, ad appearing in the Times-Dispatch showing a Victor radio of the kind found in “Quality Home No. 7”, the Mancos house for sale at Libbie and Grace.

⁷ The ad is reproduced in Appendix 2 of this narrative.

advertisements for new developments, open houses for new homes, lots for building, and builders seeking lots and land to purchase in order to build more houses and developments. The classified ads section carried more ads for new houses. Separate stories detailed reports of multiple contractors building houses nearing completion. Most of the growth was in the suburbs, the West End, Northside, and Southside. But houses selling even in the booming real estate market of the 1920s could take several weeks to sell, and so the Mancoses would not have been overly concerned that Quality Home No. 7 did not sell right away.

Mancos pressed forward. On February 25, 1927, he had already purchased the first lot he would buy at Monumental: on the southwest corner of Libbie and Monumental avenues. The lot was in the new subdivision, Monument Avenue Crest, which had just been developed in February 1926 by Sterling Realty Corporation⁸. Exactly two years later, he bought the neighboring lot next to it to the south on Libbie Avenue: these two lots together are the property which in 2020 has the address 1307 Libbie. He began to build a house at 1307, similar to the houses at 1501 and 1503 Libbie on this new property composed of the combined two lots. All three houses were colonial in architectural style, they each had three windows at the top story with the middle one being proportionally smaller than the

How mortgages worked in the 1920s

The 30- or 15-year mortgage, with which most of us are familiar today, did not exist in the early twentieth century. More typical is the April 19, 1927, \$5,900 trust the Mancoses secured from the sellers of the property at 1307 Libbie using as collateral the future house. The agreement was that the Mancoses would pay \$900 (of the \$5,900 -- the interest on \$5,000) with \$150 payments each at 6, 12, 24, 30 and 36 months. The remaining \$5,000 would be paid as a balloon payment at the end of three years.

For an excellent and complete discussion of mortgages in the United States, see DRKA Snowden, 2014, "Mortgage Banking in the United States, 1870-1940" (available by searching online -- the discussion on mortgages begins on page 52). Also, the following Wikipedia link provides a quick overview of the crisis in mortgage lending which was a cause of the Great Depression: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/National_Mortgage_Crisis_of_the_1930s (accessed February 24, 2020).

⁸ A discussion of the history of the land where Monumental Avenue is today, as well as a table that shows when individual lots were purchased, begins on page 42 of this narrative. The original plat of Monument Avenue Crest appears in that section, on pages 60-61.

outer two, two sets of double windows at the bottom story flanked a center front door with a small portico, and there was a sunporch to one or both sides.⁹

The Mancoses had stopped advertising their water pumps in late 1926, but perhaps again in an effort to help with cash flow, on April 28, 1929, they began advertising a new venture: selling lightning rods, “pure copper cable, scientifically installed and 100% protection guaranteed by old resident dealer,”¹⁰ adding a line in later ads that it is “better (to) be safe than sorry.”¹¹ The business address conformed to the address which today is 1307 Libbie. Because the date of the first lightning rod ad was less than two months since he had bought the second lot of the property, probably not enough time to complete the home, George may have just moved his operations to the address at that point, but by at least the 1930 census, the entire family had indeed moved to the house at 1307 Libbie from where they had been living in Lakeside.

The Stock Market Crash

On October 24, 1929, the U.S. stock market crashed, ushering in what was up to that point the worst economic downturn in the history of the industrialized world. Perhaps the Mancoses did not believe the Depression would be so profound; maybe they were just rolling the dice, hoping they would be well-positioned following what they hoped would be just a setback: whatever the reason, they went forward on November 15, 1929, with the purchase of an additional eight lots in Monument Avenue Crest -- four of them being on Monumental (these are the lots where houses in 2020 use the addresses of 5707, 5705, 5704, and 5701 Monumental), three on Wythe, and one on what is today Bromley Lane where it comes off Libbie Avenue (it was called Mt. Vernon Avenue on the original Monument Avenue Crest subdivision plat). They had previously purchased two lots on Monumental on April 27, 1927, at today’s addresses of 5711 and 5709 Monumental.

Fortunately, they had recently sold a couple of their houses over in Lakeside and Chesterfield. And rather than having most of their assets in merchandise which depreciates in value over time, which had been the case at Gem Electric, what they had now were properties that historically appreciate in value, at least eventually. They may have extended some private mortgages to buyers, some of whom might have been slower to pay in bad economic times, but mortgages generally would be high priority on a debtor’s list. Perhaps in late 1929 they had sensed the underlying economic rumblings and had started the lightning rod

⁹ There is a fourth house like these further down on Libbie toward Patterson. It is almost certainly a Mancos house built a bit later -- the house is not included in this research.

¹⁰ First known ad for the Mancos lightning rods appeared on April 28, 1929, in the Richmond Times Dispatch.

¹¹ The second line of the ads appeared, for example, in the July 21, 1929, Richmond Times Dispatch.

business as a fallback to bring in what they probably considered at the time to be petty cash. They were lucky in the fact that Richmond would be less affected by the downturn than many other parts of the United States. Its diversified economy cushioned the worst effects: unemployment here was half the national mid-Depression average of 24%, and a Chamber of Commerce report indicated that Richmond's industrial output actually increased 44% between 1929 and 1937.¹²

Still, times were tough, and the housing industry was hit particularly hard.

At the time of the stock market crash, other than Quality Home No. 7 at 1501 Libbie, George was also nearing completion of the one next door to it at 1503 Libbie. He also appears to have owned a row house in Byrd Park, though from the style and likely era of the home he likely did not build it, he had only acquired it somehow and was now trying to sell it. The Mancoses no longer appeared to have had houses for sale in Lakeside, though they may still have had some lots there. He was developing the land in Chesterfield, and he very likely had other projects in the works for the West End, Lakeside, Southside, and other places. But a headline in the Times Dispatch's much-withered real estate section noted on October 12, 1930, almost on the anniversary date of the stock market crash, that "Realtors Find Need of More Small Dwellings." The homes Mancos had for sell were not small dwellings. The two opposite Westwood Golf Course, at 1501 and 1503 Libbie, were 7- and 8-room homes with two-car garages and servants' quarters. The Mancoses also put up for sale the house in which they were living at what is today 1307 Libbie, but it too was a big house with an almost identical floor plan to those at 1501 and 1503, plus it had several outbuildings that he was probably using for his businesses.



The three virtually identical Mancos houses on Libbie in 2020 (from left, 1503, 1501, and 1307 Libbie. There is at least one more home of the same style on Libbie closer to Patterson which is more than likely a Mancos house. A major difference among the three houses is the lack of hip roof and corbels on the home at 1501. It is not unusual for builders, even today, to make small changes on the exteriors of houses to make them look different and less "cookie cutter." Photos by Google Maps.

¹² <https://richmondmagazine.com/news/depression-and-denial/>, August 24, 2015. Accessed February 9, 2020.

Mancos advertised the three homes for sale over and over again, sometimes not differentiating among the three houses in ads, basically offering the same offer for any of them. In January 1930, he employed a bit of deceptive advertising when he posted that he would sell the Libbie and Grace house (1501 Libbie), a “\$14,500 value,” for \$12,750 (in fact, it was never listed as \$14,500; it was originally listed at \$12,750 in May 1929 -- \$192,000 in 2020 buying power¹³). In March 1930, he offered a private mortgage to potential buyers (he had done this previously with other houses he had built, but it is the first time in several years he appeared to have done it again). In June 1930, he noted that all three houses were available at “below market price.” In October 1930, he noted that to sell the home at Libbie and Grace, he “will sacrifice.” In December 1930, he sold the house at Libbie and Grace for an unknown price. In May 1931, he offered a reduced price at \$9,875 for one of the homes, but for which house is unclear; probably either of the two remaining houses. In February 1932, he offered to trade equity (apparently for either of the two homes) for lots, which would be less expensive real estate assets for him to carry. In May 1932, he advertised a for-the-times rare open house at 1503 Libbie. In April 1933, again probably talking about both as-yet unsold houses (at 1503 and 1307 Libbie), he claimed they cost \$10,500 to build but would take \$8,750. In June 1933, he offered to rent one of the houses (probably 1503 since they were

A Delightful Country Home Just Outside Richmond



**1207
LIBBIE AVE.**

This lovely home is on a lot 138 by 160, with flowers and shrubbery, in a setting which will be especially attractive to homebuyers. Be sure and call Monday morning for appointment to inspect.

View of Lovely Formal Garden in Rear of Home.

Home is brick; well built of finest construction materials. On first floor are dining room; sun parlor and living room; all at front; in rear are kitchen; pantry and breakfast room. There are plenty of cupboards, and the general layout would delight any housewife.

On second floor are 4 bedrooms and sleeping porch with 2 tile baths; also a bath with shower; and an additional lavatory. House has hot water heat; full basement and servant's toilet. There is a summer house and 4-car garage.

This home lies just one block south of Monument Avenue.

Call J. H. Redd, 2-1631
ROSE & LAFON, INC.

The May 2, 1937, ad for the property which today has the address of 1307 Libbie. The ad is unusual in that it is offered by a real estate broker. Nearly without exception, the Mancoses sold their houses themselves, but in the difficult times of the Depression, they must have experimented with something new.

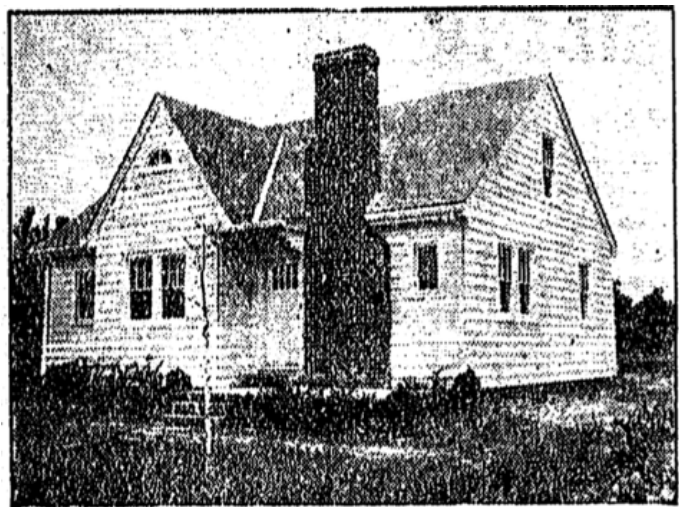
¹³ To compute values of prices to 2020 norms, the following website was used: <https://data.bls.gov/cgi-bin/cpicalc.pl>, accessed 4 March 2020. The site calculates “buying power” of a dollar amount, but as can be seen with this calculation, it does not accurately reflect early 2020 real estate prices. It is interesting to see the difference in what a house cost at the time (buying power) compared to what we know houses actually cost today. Housing was a comparatively good deal in days gone by.

living in 1307) for \$60 a month. And in December 1934, he sold 1503 Libbie to LeRoy and Johanna Crowder for a bargain price of only \$6,500.

It isn't at all clear how the family survived the lean times of the early 1930s. Ads also show that George was still trying to sell lots out at Chesterfield Gardens, and maybe he was successful a few times. He was able to rent out the row house he had in Byrd Park after a couple of years, so that income might have helped. He was still running his ads for lightning rods, and so he may have brought in some income with that. The family had often resorted to selling unneeded items in the classified ads over the years, but there were more of them than usual in the early 1930s, including a "brand new" Frigidaire that he may have taken out of one of the houses listed for sale; they also listed their Hudson automobile ("nice condition, cost \$1,500, will take \$200 cash"), a water tank, a shotgun, and two rabbit hounds (though perhaps the gun and dogs belonged to his father on the farm). On the other hand, the 1930 census shows that they had a live-in maid at least at the time of the census, and in September 1932, George and Edna and her mother went to Maryland to attend the Havre de Grace races. In 1934, George and Edna found the money to offer a reward when their water spaniel puppy "with new collar" disappeared, and again a year later, they offered another reward when their white spotted toy terrier got lost (perhaps an investment in a fence would have been a good idea).

Better Times

On June 16, 1935, the Times Dispatch ran a full-page ad on the front page of a special real estate section with the headline that a "Wave of Modern Building to Sweep Country under Federal Housing Act." Sixty-five builders, realty agents, mortgage companies, and contractor and home supply stores signed on to the ad. George Mancos was one of them. The future looked bright, but recovery was still slow, and George took a cautious approach, offering smaller houses built with less expensive materials. In May 1935, he advertised what appears to be his first house he had built since the crash, a "semi-bungalow" at 5508 Mt. Vernon Avenue (now Bromley Lane), with more economical clapboard, not brick, siding. It did not sell until



New home at 5508 Mt. Vernon Avenue, near Westhampton School, built by George Mancos, and held open for inspection today.

The August 11, 1935, ad for the property on what was called Mt. Vernon Avenue, but today is Bromley Lane.

November, but that was much faster than what he had experienced in the early 1930s. He also continued to offer lots in Chesterfield, and he still also occasionally listed the lot at today's 1403 Libbie across Monumental from the home where they were living at today's 1307 Libbie (both houses were on Monumental and Libbie). In April 1936, he offered a 5-room bungalow probably in Chesterfield Gardens, advertising for the first time that a Mancos home could be bought with FHA financing. In June 1936, he offered his 1.5-story Cape Cod at 1505 Libbie, still a smaller home than others that he had built before the Depression, but this time he had upgraded the siding to brick.

Business was picking up, and George and Edna must have started to become more optimistic, despite the fact that she was listed in a November 1936 Times Dispatch legal notice as being delinquent on taxes on .23 acres of land on Southside, owing a sum of 69 cents (\$12.71 in 2020 buying power) (for whatever reason, the land was in her name and her name alone -- not altogether surprising in their history of real estate dealings as deeds show George sometimes filed titles, perhaps for tax purposes, that gave her half or whole interest in property he may have originally bought legally in his name alone). Their daughter, Mildred, was surely optimistic about Christmas, and she wrote a letter in December 1936 to the Times Dispatch Children's Club entitled, "Christmas Enthusiasm":

*"Dear Club Members,
I am writing a letter hoping a club member will take pity on me and write me a letter. Well, now that Christmas is almost here we are thinking about gifts we will give and receive. Are you going to hang up your stocking in good old Christmas style? I am, and if Santa finds I've been good, which I think I have, I'll get lots of pretty picture puzzles, and don't I love to work 'em. We have an outdoor deodar spruce tree¹⁴ which we are going to decorate instead of an indoor tree. I can't think of anything more to say so I'll close. And I hope you all get what you want Santa to bring you.
A new club member,
Mildred Page Mancos
1207¹⁵ Libbie Ave., Richmond"*

Business, indeed, became brisk. Edna pitched in again, showing houses now and again in Forest Hill, Chesterfield (in other locations than in just what George called

¹⁴ There appear to be several Deodar cedars (not spruce) on this property still today, perhaps descendants of this original one -- it is not known which might have been the original and, in fact, might have even been planted on one of the adjoining, at-the-time-undeveloped lots the Mancoses owned. There are other Deodar cedars scattered around this area of the West End; it is tempting to think that they also are descendants of this tree.

¹⁵ Today's 1307 Libbie.

Chesterfield Gardens), and Westhampton (the Mancoses considered Westhampton to be any of his houses from Patterson up to Broad). George was making up for lost time, and construction was underway for multiple houses at a time despite his assurances a decade earlier that he gave individual attention to his projects. In Forest Hill, alone, he listed four or five houses within weeks of each other.

The Mancoses were also betting that bigger houses were in vogue again. On May 2, 1937, they advertised for sale the house they were living in, today's 1307 Libbie, with a photo highlighting "the flowers and shrubbery," and again on August 15, 1937, with an ad which mentioned as features lightning protection (undoubtedly provided by George's other business interest), three garages, servant's quarters, informal garden with summer house, rock garden, and pools, "truly a country estate."¹⁶ The house sold much more quickly than they were accustomed to: on September 8, 1937, Junias W. Smith, 53, an automobile salesman, and his wife, Jessie Smith, 51, bought it, moving in with their children, Wilton, 22, who worked as a lead burner helper at a cellophane plant, and Raymond, 18, and Verna Lee, 15, both students.

The Move to 1403 Libbie

On January 30, 1938, a photograph appeared in the Richmond Times Dispatch announcing the listing of the just-completed Mancos home built at today's 1403 Libbie across the street (Monumental) from where the Mancoses had been living; the Mancoses had likely already moved into it (1403), but building a house, moving into it (perhaps not completely finished), selling



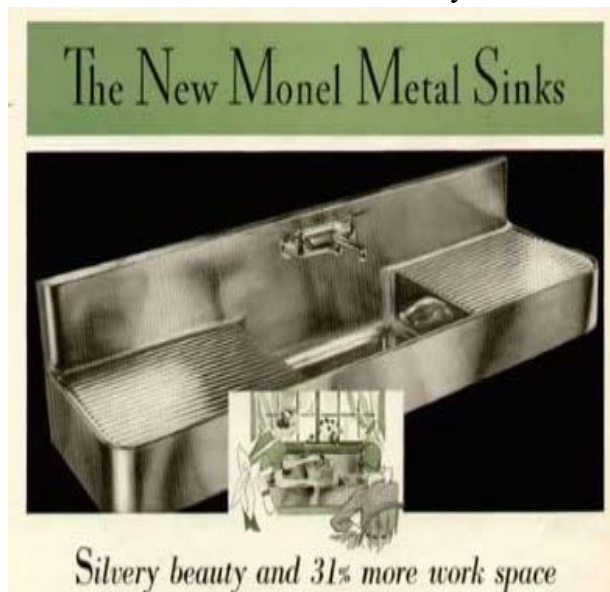
Residence just completed by George E. Mancos at 1209 Libbie Avenue and held open for inspection today.

First offering of house at what is today 1403 Libbie. Richmond Times Dispatch, January 30, 1938.

¹⁶ It is difficult to believe that all these features could have been present on the property as it appears today. Perhaps they encroached on adjoining property that the Mancoses owned. This was not researched; but if the historical deeds show the property at 1305 Libbie was once owned by the Mancos, perhaps the gardens and garage were located there.

it, and then moving on again was something they had done before. In May, an ad appeared in the Times Dispatch adding details about 1403 Libbie: “charming Cape Cod design, five bedrooms, three tiled baths, modern kitchen, Monel sink, den, large recreation room, oil heat, insulated, weather stripped, copper screened, caulked, attached two car garage, large corner lot in pine grove.” The Mancoses were still listing it for sale as late as May 14, 1939: “Westhampton section. Nestled in a grove of pine trees, corner lot, 130x160 early American brick home. Ten rooms, three tile baths, full basement, recreation room, oil heat, three-car garage, servants’ quarters.”

Maybe Edna just wanted that Monel sink. Maybe she told George that the servants’ quarters in the sprawling home could be rented out to help with cash flow, after all, they had had boarders before. Whatever the reason, what might have been meant as a temporary stay in the 1403 Libbie home until they sold it ended up with their living in the home for the next



An excerpt of a 1931 national ad for the Monel sink.

several years. In August 1938, and perhaps in a bid by Edna to George to convince him that staying at what is today 1403 Libbie was not only financially viable but also economically advantageous, they sought lodgers: “beautiful front room, private bath, in new modern home, oil heat, two meals, \$75 to business couple.” Perhaps the ad initially didn’t attract any comers (what is a “business couple”?), and so they refined it a couple of weeks later: “New home, continuous hot water. To cultured gentleman or couple” and then in June 1939, “Large, cool room, private bath; gentleman or couple; constant hot water; two meals.” The third time seemed to be the charm: by July 1939, Fred Walker was using the Mancoses’ home address and telephone number as contact information, advertising “Hay fever, asthma: immediate relief guaranteed, or your money refunded. Revolutionary inhalation therapy.” Sharing their telephone with their lodger may have gotten old very fast for George and Edna: the ads only ran two weeks and then stopped. And the 1940 census does not show Fred Walker¹⁷ living there.

¹⁷ No other information is known about Fred Walker.

There are hundreds, if not thousands, of mentions of George Mancos in the Richmond Times Dispatch over the course of his lifetime, the vast majority of them in the Mancos real estate ads. Very few of the press mentions deal with his personal life, although there are a handful of articles that mention his leadership at Lakeside Presbyterian. There is never a photograph of George in any of the press ads or articles. The photographs of George which appeared in the yearbook of the Medical College of Virginia during his unsuccessful stint there are all group photos, and individuals are not specifically identified (the yearbook published individual pictures of seniors with their names, but because he did not make it to his senior year, his photograph is not among them). The only description of him known to exist is when, on April 27, 1942, as required by law, George Mancos signed up for the draft. He was 5'-11", 148 pounds, brown eyes, black hair¹⁸, and light complexion. He wore glasses. George did not serve in World War II; he was 50 at the time he filled out the required registration.

Edna's appearances in the newspaper, however, are a different story, and it's possible to glean a lot of information about her personal interests in the ads and newspaper articles that mentioned her (or, in the case of classified ads, the family telephone number). When the family moved to Libbie from Lakeside, she had become active in the Henrico Garden Club, and every May after that, like clockwork, and even through the worst years of the Depression, her name was mentioned in the press as winning prizes for flower arrangements, rose quality, or for other areas of expertise in the Club's annual flower show. As time went on, her picture appeared in the paper for being on this or that committee of the Club. Given her interest in gardening, she also more than likely had been the one who placed the occasional Mancos ads since 1934 seeking to sell pansies, narcissus bulbs, Virginia bluebells, and boxwood plants (in 1936 alone, she placed an advertisement for selling 50 12-year-old boxwood plants), and she was probably responsible for the planting of the Deodar cedar (not spruce) her daughter mentioned in the Christmas letter to the Times Dispatch that year. In April 1937, she helped bring Richmond PTAs into alliance with the garden club, appearing in a photo with PTA members in the garden of the old Windemere mansion on Cary as they worked to provide tours of significant gardens in Richmond for the state PTA meetings that were to be held in the city that year. She also continued to dabble in antique collecting: ads placed in late 1938 showed her selling old silver spoons, glasses, blue china, an amber canister set, and "bric-a-brac" which, the ads noted, would make "unusual" Christmas gifts. Over the next



Edna Mancos, on the committee for planning the 1933 spring flower show. Richmond Times Dispatch photo appearing April 4, 1933.

¹⁸ This mention of black hair reduces the number of men who could be George Mancos in the MCV photograph reproduced on page 2.

year, she also listed for sale items such as a walnut chest of drawers, mahogany shaving stand, curly maple desk, pine chest of drawers, schoolmaster's desk, pine cupboard, and lamps. It is also likely it was she or the girls who loved dogs: they offered up a litter of Spitz puppies (females, \$3; males, \$5) in April 1939 and more puppies (females, \$2.50; males, \$3) in February 1940. But she also continued to be occasionally listed as the contact person for showing some of the houses George had built -- at this time especially those near Forest Hill Park. It would be remiss not to mention again that it is highly likely that Edna likely was very involved in other aspects of their business: as noted, she may have been responsible for marketing the Mancos homes, but she undoubtedly was in charge of answering the phone and making appointments for George who would have been away at job sites, and perhaps she had coordinated supply ordering and delivering and had done the business accounting which would have been very complex at this time. The business was always operated from their home address, using their home telephone number, and it would have been impossible for George to have handled all aspects.

The 1940¹⁹ census gives some hints about the Mancos business and perhaps some insight into how women viewed their place in society and business at the time: Edna, then 42, the census informant for their residence, noted in response to census questions that George, then 48, had worked 72 hours the week before and 52 weeks the year prior, but she declined to answer the question as to his income. In addition to George's work as a contractor, she reported that he had "other" income (likely from the sale of lightning rods -- and he had also, thankfully briefly, in 1939 advertised the sale and installation of asbestos shingle siding, "easy terms"). Though George had had that early short stint in medical school, Edna reported only that he had had three years of high school (at the time, the usual high school graduate would have had four years of high school: perhaps this explains his problems in and early exit from med school). In her answers about herself, she considered herself to be unemployed and to have worked zero hours the previous week (though ads shows clearly that she at the very least helped out by showing homes) and had no other income (though as noted she had indeed sold garden plants, antiques, and even dogs). She reported her own education as topping out at seventh grade. Their two daughters, Betty and Mildred, were now 17 and 14, respectively, and in school. Living in the household was a maid, Claire Johnson²⁰, 21, a

¹⁹ The 1940 census is the last census to date whose details are available to the public. For privacy reasons, the census becomes publicly available 72 years after they are conducted.

²⁰ Claire Johnson's race was noted on the census as "negro." It goes without saying that in a world where white people enjoy privilege, we know without previously defining it that the race of the Mancos family was white, and therefore their race noted on the census was "Caucasian." Though many residents of the nearby historically black neighborhood of Westview were employed as domestics for families in neighboring areas, the census notes that Claire had previously lived in Chesterfield; perhaps she was a family or professional acquaintance since the Mancoses had business ties there and Edna had family ties nearby. No further information on Claire could be found.

single woman with no reported education. Claire had worked 60 hours a week for 52 weeks the previous year for a \$180 annual salary (\$3,317 in 2020). Edna valued their home at \$12,000 (about \$221,000 in 2020 power).

The Smiths were still living next door at what is today 1307 Libbie, but the census notes that at 1307R (the abbreviation for “1307 Rear” which in census parlance refers to another building on the same property -- likely this was the summer house mentioned in the listing ad of August 15, 1937), the Smiths were renting the space to Edna’s mother, Myrtie Leistra, 65, divorced. Though Myrtie was shown as unemployed, living with her were her two sons, Milton, 31, and Leslie, 27, both of whom had worked 55 hours the previous week, 10 weeks of the previous year, as carpenters in the building construction business, unquestionably for George and Edna.

In an effort to determine the extent of work the Leistra brothers might have done on any of the houses on Monumental Avenue, a cursory check of the records reveals the following:

Milton signed up for the draft on Oct 16, 1940, indicating he was living in Capitol Heights, Maryland, and was working for Walter Valentine in Washington D.C. Milton enlisted in the Army in 1942 as a warrant officer for the duration of WWII. Records of his service were not investigated, but a January 19, 1946, marriage certificate shows him as a machine operator in Mattoax, Virginia. That marriage ended in divorce (occupation not provided) in April 1953, but a July 10, 1957, (second) marriage certificate shows him living in Richmond and indicated his occupation as carpenter. Milton died at age 49 on November 18, 1958, after falling off the steps at his home at 27 South Pine Street in Richmond and was buried in Arlington National Cemetery. His death certificate lists his occupation as carpenter.

Leslie Burton Leistra signed up for the draft on October 16, 1940 but does not appear to have served. At the time, he indicated he and his mother (next of kin) were living at what is in 2020 1403 Libbie Avenue. He listed his employer, George Mancos, with the same address. He died at age 62 on April 21, 1976, at his home at 2804 Williamsburg Road of a heart attack and is buried at Pine Grove Cemetery in Amelia. The death certificate lists his occupation as carpenter.

Expanding the Business (the 1930s and 1940s)

In the late 1930s and early 1940s, George Mancos ramped up his business. A caption under a photograph which appeared in the June 5, 1938, Times Dispatch noted the home in the picture would be open that day along with three others he had built: two of the houses

were next door to each other in Forest Hill, one was in his Chesterfield Gardens, and another was located near to today's McGuire Hospital. On September 17, 1939, a photo was published of a small, clapboard Westhampton Methodist Episcopal Church which he had built west of Westhampton School (the building does not appear to exist today). On November 3, 1940, a photograph appeared of a home at 5724 Cole Street (this street has disappeared with the construction of St. Mary's Hospital); the caption noted it was one of 10 recently built by Mancos. The Cole house, like the one at today's 5704 Monumental, was reviewed by Deborah Teel for its open house.²¹

Other ads and stories in the Times Dispatch give insight into the family's life. In February 1940, George was the driver in another car collision, this time at the intersection of Mulberry Street and Park Avenue. Edna, in the Mancos' car, and Randolph Winfree, 48, and El Anderson, 50, in the other truck, sustained injuries to an extent that they were taken to hospitals; Edna was taken to the white-serving Johnston Willis Hospital and the two men were taken to St. Philip Hospital which treated people of color. None were thought to be seriously injured, but both vehicles "were badly damaged." In March 1940, Edna's mother, Myrtie, placed an ad attempting to sell an apparent family farm near Skinquarter, Virginia. In August 1940, the Mancoses advertised small fox terrier puppies for sale. In September, Edna (most likely) advertised the sale of more antiques and furniture items: a Victorian love seat and chair, an old cradle, a French clock, and a modern bedroom suite; and in November and December, she also advertised china, glassware, gold leaf mirrors, lamps, a spool bed, a walnut chest of drawers, a loveseat, a pine corner cupboard (100 years old), old glassware, and picture frames. In October, a story mentioned that George was a superintendent of Sunday school at Lakeside Presbyterian, and a classified ad revealed that Edna (most likely) was advertising Virginia blue bells for sale.

In January 1941, their daughter, Betty, experienced the tragedy of losing her pink rimmed glasses in their blue case, and the family advertised a reward for their return. Later that same year she was pictured as a freshman in the yearbook of what is now the University of Richmond. Edna ran an ad that same month announcing she had opened an antique shop at 708 North Sheppard Street in the Fan, but ads for the shop disappeared after about four months, and in December 1941, she held a "private" antiques auction of a large number of items at her home.

On January 5, 1941, at about the same time Betty lost her glasses, a Times Dispatch article about building permits noted George had been issued one to build another brick home on Cole Street. An April 16 ad listed what was probably that home noting the availability of

²¹ The article is reproduced in Appendix 3 of this narrative.

FHA financing, perhaps a first for George. The housing shortage created by pent-up demand from the Depression as well as the continuing and concurrent country-wide migration of rural residents to urban areas unquestionably created a buyers' market in Richmond, and the availability of FHA loans meant those buyers could afford homes. George and Edna already had property to build on -- they had purchased many of the lots in the upper portion of the Monumental Avenue²² as early as 1927 -- and now they had financing opportunities that would make them easier to sell.²³

House Construction and Sales Begin on Monumental Avenue

Building the homes on upper Monumental Avenue was a big project. A May 18, 1941, ad²⁴ listed the firms that had been involved in the construction of the model home at today's 5704 Monumental Avenue, the model home featured by Deborah Teel (an imagined account of her writing the article begins this narrative) and noted that George was building nine homes all at the same time on Monumental Avenue. In fact, in 1941-1942, he built all 11 homes on upper Monumental Avenue; he also sold all of them during those two years

Real Estate

Richmond Times-Dispatch, Sunday, May 18, 1941

S

Real Estate



A view of the living room in the Mancos home at 5504 Monumental Avenue. Furnished by Hawkes Furniture Company, this house will be held open for inspection from 3 to 9 P. M. today by George Mancos, builder.



A view of the bed room in the Mancos house at 5504 Monumental Avenue. This home will be held open for inspection from 3 to 9 P. M. today by George Mancos, builder.

Photos show the living room and a bedroom of the house at today's 5704 Monumental Avenue featured in Deborah Teel's January 5, 1941, article.

²² For the purposes of this narrative, the street is divided into two sections -- "upper," which includes the houses numbered 5700-5711; and "lower," which consists of the five houses nearest the current JCC.

²³ See the table which begins on page 49 that provides information about when the Mancoses acquired the lots as well as additional available information regarding the construction of the homes on the properties.

²⁴ The ad is reproduced in Appendix 4 of this narrative.

except for today's 5709 Monumental which sold in 1943. The ad also helpfully noted to the buyer that with the home at 5704 Monumental, "Quality enters the low-price field," and the house cost a mere \$7,950 (\$142,000 in 2020 buying power).

The Deborah Teel article is worth revisiting. Deborah had written several features over the years about model home open houses in Richmond and Henrico County, and they are filled with quaint descriptions and sometimes overwrought details about the interior decorative fashion of the day -- the colors of the walls, how the homes were furnished, and the home technology available. Here are excerpts from Teel's description of the open house on Monumental:

"The Williamsburg blue of the living room walls, the lightest dove-gray of the simply carved mantelpiece, chair rails, and other woodwork are the beginnings of the lovely blues and gentle grays that follow all through the first floor and on up the stair well to contrast exquisitely with a pale-yellow room on one side and a pale green on the other side of the second-floor hall. It is an eye-soothing whole, this combination of house and furnishings, and you'll wish you could stay a long, long time, long enough anyway, to relax on the dull, dusty rose Chippendale sofa that matches the Delttox²⁵ summer rug on the living room floor while you gaze at the painting above the mantel."

Ads that the Mancoses had placed over the years show that they appreciated even in those days that kitchens sell houses, so it's not surprising that they and their suppliers outfitted the kitchen with care:

"The kitchen is a restful blending of shades of gray with splashes of brilliant colors in the linoleum and crisp white curtains. Its Bakelite worktable and chrome chairs, roomy cabinets and closet, the convenient arrangement of Philco refrigerator, sink, and electric range make you feel that here work will proceed in an orderly manner while the wind sings softly in the pines just outside the kitchen window. Meals, fit for the gods, will be prepared to be served in a dining room for the gods."

²⁵ For more information about Delttox rugs, see <https://oshkoshheritage.wordpress.com/tag/delttox-grass-rug-company/>, accessed February 4, 2020.

Buyers would also be interested in the bedrooms:

“The second floor is proof that the designer of this house remembered the blessings of closets. Each of the two large bedrooms has a closet of its own, long and roomy, while between them and connecting the green and yellow room, is an unusual closet with two sections and a window for brightness and air. There is another for linens and storage in the hallway opposite the black and white tile bath.

The soft green walls sprinkled lightly with white flowers seem receded from, rather than close, in the master bedroom, making you feel that this is the room with all the space you ever yearned for in a bedroom. The low colonial brown maple bed and the table beside it with an old-fashioned-looking brass-based reading lamp and bookshelf seem to say that here is a great rest for the weary. A dresser, vanity, chest on chest, and a jolly chintz covered cricket chair complete the furnishings, and still there is a tranquil space. Yellow ruffled curtains at the deep dormer window and at the west window and a yellow chenille bedspread give mellowness to the room and link their color to the yellow walls of the room across the hall.

The paper in the other room, however, is a somewhat paler yellow, with springs of delicate blue and green and apricot flowers. It looks like the guest room, and you’ll wish again that you could stay long enough to spend the night. In the recess of the dormer window is a deep easy chair with hassock in matching blue chintz. How you could luxuriate there, reading idly until you were sufficiently sleepy to tumble in the beautiful poster bed! The bed, the chest on chest, the dresser and the combination night table and book rack are that lustrous genuine mahogany veneered with Cuban “plum pudding” mahogany which is so appropriate for reproduction pieces. You would find utter comfort and quiet sleep here unless, of course, you stayed awake admiring the room.”²⁶

Deborah Teel was from an old Quaker family in Pennsylvania. She had graduated in 1933 from Pennsylvania’s Temple University, a liberal school which unabashedly admitted black students even in the early 1930s. Her husband, whom she had married in 1935 in a rare,

²⁶ The article is reproduced in Appendix 5 of this narrative.

very traditional Quaker ceremony near her home in Berks, Pennsylvania, was also a graduate of Temple. They moved to Richmond shortly after their marriage where her husband had taken a job with Dun and Bradstreet in Richmond. In addition to writing the many reviews of model home openings at this time in Richmond, she also wrote other kinds of feature stories, many with a liberal and/or feminist bent, and also many book reviews, showing herself to be well-read. Though the Teels appear to have lived here only until about 1944 (one of her last book reviews was entitled “Pattern for World Peace: Pacifists Plead their Case”), she still had been so proud of her work with the Times Dispatch that her relatively short 1989 Philadelphia Inquirer obituary mentioned that she had been a feature writer for the Times Dispatch in the 1940s.

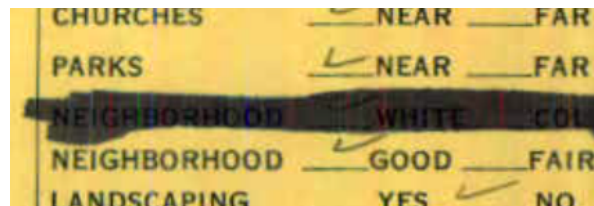
Moving from Pennsylvania to Richmond, the former Confederate capitol and now the capitol city in a state where Jim Crow laws were proliferating, must have been unnerving for this Quaker couple with a liberal education. It is easy to imagine that Deborah may have worked to change attitudes in a quiet way through her work with the Times Dispatch and through her interactions with her Times Dispatch colleagues. She does not appear to have been a full-time staff writer, but she was a regular contributor. Though most of her article about today’s 5704 Monumental Avenue dealt with the interior, at the end of her feature she wrote a sentence explaining the value of its location, “(The avenue) is an area protected with building restrictions, outside the city’s proposed annexation territory, yet close enough to be supplied with city water.”

Parsing that sentence, while considering Deborah’s educational and philosophical background, is tricky. Clearly the mention of being outside the city’s proposed annexation territory alluded to the fact of lower property taxes, but the mention of “restrictions” is more problematic. Mancos’ ads for his houses had never mentioned “restrictions” in the past; the first one found to do so was one he placed in the classified section on July 22, 1941, shortly after Deborah’s article appeared, advertising the houses on Monumental in general. After providing directions to the street, the ad notes “Restricted, not annexed; modern.” Deborah seems to try to soften the idea, calling them building restrictions, and there are indeed building covenants present in the original 1920s and 1930s deeds of the land sold by Sterling Realty Corporation in Monument Avenue Crest. For Monumental Avenue homes specifically, covenants noted that houses could not be built nearer than 25 feet to Monumental Avenue, that there could only be one house per lot, and even that board fences were not permitted.²⁷ But clauses on real estate deeds known as racial deed restrictions or restrictive covenants, key to imposing segregation of African Americans, were also present in

²⁷ Since there is no and has never been any housing association on Monumental Avenue, these kinds of codes are today unenforceable (and in the case of board fences, at least, widely ignored) and essentially have been replaced by county building codes when applicable.

the original deeds filed by Sterling Realty for the lots in their Monument Avenue Crest subdivision, including those on Monumental Avenue. In fact, the very first restriction listed in the original deeds between Sterling Realty and lot buyers was, “No part of the...real estate should be sold or leased to any person not of the Caucasian race.” Such covenants were not unique for Monument Avenue Crest -- they appear in land and home sales of the time everywhere in Richmond, Henrico County, and, indeed, in virtually every town and city across America. The shorthand in Deborah’s article and in the ads of “being restricted” was Jim Crow coded language that people of color, including possibly people of Jewish descent and others, would not be allowed to purchase the land or homes.

The practice of private, racially-restrictive covenants evolved as a reaction to the southern black migration in the early decades of the 20th century and in response to a 1917 court ruling which declared municipally mandated racial zoning was unconstitutional. The ruling, however, dealt only with legal, governmental, statutes, leaving the door open for private restrictive covenants, such as those by Sterling Land



A detail, redacted by marker at some point in history, of an original property card for a Monumental Avenue home which shows the neighborhood once marked as “white.”

Corporation, to continue perpetuating residential segregation. Such covenants were written in such a way as to “run with the land,” meaning that they were intended to remain in effect even after properties were sold to subsequent owners. The Home Owners’ Loan Corporation (HOLC) and the FHA made restrictive covenants central to home finance during the 1930s and 1940s. Borrowers could not get a mortgage guarantee without a restrictive covenant covering their home or their neighborhood. These covenants were not struck down until a U.S. Supreme Court ruling in 1948, but, as noted, they can and still do exist in original deeds.²⁸ One more personal note about racial profiling: the original property cards²⁹ in

²⁸ For an account of a (white) property owner’s discovery of racial covenants on his home in Richmond’s Lakeside community and a good discussion of how the practice impacted redlining, see <https://vpm.org/radio/news/mapping-projects-show-lasting-impact-of-redlining-racial-covenants-in-virginia>, accessed January 19, 2020. Redlining is the practice of defining areas -- notably black neighborhoods or communities -- as “poor risk” and the resultant denial of government services including the refusal of loans or insurance. The discussion of restrictive covenants in this narrative borrows heavily from <https://www.bostonfairhousing.org/timeline/1920s1948-Restrictive-Covenants.html> and <http://www.redliningvirginia.org/exhibits/show/the-national-story/restrictive-covenants>, both accessed January 1, 2020.

²⁹ The original property cards for many residences are available online at the Henrico County government site. They often contain tantalizing tidbits of information about the property. They are somewhat tricky to access; instructions for how to access them are provided on page 39.

Henrico County, including those for Monumental Avenue, at one time had an area where the race of the intended inhabitant was indicated and another which characterized the neighborhood by race. At some time in history, between the 1948 Supreme Court decision and when cards were scanned into county databases, someone went through and redacted the offensive sections.

It is worth remembering that when Deborah Teel was writing phrases such as “Its colonial door will be open to everyone today,” “you’ll wish you could stay a long, long time,” and “How you could luxuriate there, reading idly until you were sufficiently sleepy to tumble in the beautiful poster bed!”, she was really only talking about white people.³⁰

Family Life on Early Monumental Avenue

Mancos continued to advertise the homes on upper Monumental Avenue, sometimes scoring free marketing assistance when the Times Dispatch would choose to print a photograph of his houses for sale or of one which had just sold. In the meantime, the front page of the Times Dispatch was often devoted to war news from Europe. The week before Deborah’s article ran, front-page headlines noted that “Nazis claim to be only 60 miles from Antwerp,” that the “German push is unchecked,” and that an “Attack on Britain likely objective.” But life goes on, and as families moved in, the children often found an idyllic existence on the dead-end street which still had undeveloped wooded landscapes around it. Jack Andrews was 7 in 1941 when his family moved to today’s 5710 Monumental, “I have this memory of screen doors banging as kids went in and out all summer long when all the doors and windows were open. The summers were hot both day and night. Of course, there wasn’t any air conditioning and no video games, but somehow lacking those amenities didn’t

³⁰ The Richmond Times Dispatch was not considered a bastion of liberalism in the 1940s when Deborah Teel was working there. However, on April 17, 1947, the newspaper opposed efforts by Richmond City councilmen and others that would have effectively destroyed Westwood Settlement, the historically black neighborhood which is located within a couple of blocks of the Monumental Avenue homes, behind the JCC extending from there to Patterson Avenue and from Granite Avenue to Willow Lawn Drive. (It is not in the location of the old Westwood Golf Course which once existed in the area between today’s St. Mary’s Hospital and Broad Street). It’s not impossible to think that Deborah Teel had learned about the Westwood community when she visited the Monumental Avenue model home in 1942; she had clearly spoken to someone, most likely Mancos, about the presence of restrictions. It is tempting to hope Deborah had returned to the newspaper and spoken of it with newspaper colleagues in a conversation, tempered by her Quaker upbringing and liberal education, that stuck with them even after she and her husband left Richmond around 1944. For more information about the struggle of Westwood Settlement community, see <https://theshockoeexaminer.blogspot.com/2018/10/a-forgotten-civil-rights-battlefield.html>, accessed January 10, 2020.

stop us from having a good time outside,” he wrote in an undated memoir³¹ he provided to a street resident sometime in the early 2000s. “It was a close knit and caring neighborhood,” he remembered, with no adult disputes that he knew of, and families cooperated. After a severe sleet storm in winter 1943 (he believed), many of the pine trees were bent over at steep angles. “The men pitched in and helped one another jack the bent trees back to upright positions using block and tackle rigs. They then cross-tied them to undamaged trees....Those ropes stayed in place for a number of years.”

Maurice and Hjordis King (Jack phonetically spelled her Scandinavian name as Yodus, which is likely the way the residents of the street pronounced it) and their two sons lived at what is today 5701 Monumental, and since the lower part of the street had not yet been developed, the empty lot next door (today’s 5631 Monumental) became a kind of outdoor neighborhood community center. “Mr. King would bring home as many as 10 watermelons at a time from a farm³² where he worked on weekends in Glen Allen, and we’d sit in the vacant lot beside their house gorging ourselves on them...In the summers, the Kings planted a large garden on part of (the lot). That garden produced lots of corn, tomatoes, beans and such, a good portion of which they shared with those of us living on the street³³...After Christmas every year, the neighborhood kids would join forces to gather all of the dried-out Christmas trees from all the houses on the block. We’d pile them up in the Kings’ side lot, and we’d ignite the pile to create a huge bonfire.”

The underneath of the Kings’ house was also a play space for the boys of the neighborhood, “We constructed a network of roads in the dirt” in the crawlspace, “complete with bridges, gas stations, and elements of towns. It was a great place to do that sort of thing because it was extensive, and it was possible to do it even if the weather was bad.”

Safety of the kids in the neighborhood, even if they were “out of sight for extended periods of time,” wasn’t a big concern for the parents (“Times have changed”), but at least on two occasions, George Mancos found the boys at play where he felt they should have been taking more care. To stop them from “tight roping” logs they had lashed 8-10 feet up between trees in the woods behind the Jordan house (today’s 5711 Monumental), he gave them huge pieces of canvas they used to hang over the logs to make very large tents. Another

³¹ The memoir, which is full of anecdotes about living on the street in the 1940s and 1950s and three pages of photos Jack Andrews provided, are reproduced in Appendix 6 of this neighborhood. The photos, like the typed memoir, are copies of copies, and so are not as clear as originals would be. The Andrews family were among the first to move on to the street -- they purchased the house at today’s 5710.

³² Maurice King was living at his family’s farm in Glen Allen as of the 1940 census, and so Maurice was likely still working there.

³³ Since Maurice King had grown up on a farm, such a garden plot must have been second nature to him. But it could have also been his response to the Victory Garden effort during the war.

time they dammed up a stream (possibly Jordan's Branch) near where it crossed under Monument Avenue in a large diameter pipe so they could swim; George happened on them and shooed them out, saying they "didn't want to know what was in there" where they were swimming.

Jack Andrews misremembered, however, some of the details of a fire at today's 1307 Libbie (at the southwest corner of Libbie and Monumental). It had occurred, he said, the night after his family moved to their new home at 5710, nearly right across the street. But what he thought were explosions of stored dynamite from George Mancos' business were instead the burning (and probable explosions) of two vehicles that were parked inside the three-car garage at the rear of the house. According to an October 1, 1941, *Times Dispatch* article which recounted the events of the night before, Junias Smith had already gone to bed when his son saw a reflection of the blaze. An attempt to call the Westhampton Fire Department was futile because the fire had burned through the telephone wires. An unnamed neighbor finally succeeded in calling the firemen, but by then the building and the two vehicles in it were "at white-hot heat." Junias, who was uninsured, estimated the damage at \$2,000. He lost a "coupe" and a truck that had a new electric stove in it. Though in the 1940 census Junias said he was in the automotive sales business, in the newspaper he said he was in the electrical appliance business. The fire chief noted that the nearest water outlet was more than 1,000 feet away from the scene of the fire and for that reason firemen were unable to save the garage or its contents.

Jack remembers playing in a sawdust pile in a horseback riding stable near Westwood subdivision and it may have been that of the Deep Run Hunt Club which ran fox hunts down and around Monument Avenue, Libbie, and Broad. The *Times Dispatch* on January 1, 1940, noted that "Richmond's drag hunting season reaches its peak with the New Year's hunt, and the scarlet coats and green collars of the Keswick Hunt (Club) will blend with the scarlet and Confederate gray of Deep Run to form a colorful picture of the main spectators who always follow by motor." The drag hunt, so-called because live foxes weren't hunted but rather a scent was laid by dragging a cloth, was a big society event in Richmond, but one that was a "leveler of men, attracting a throng of spectators," according to the September 29, 1946, *Times Dispatch*. "The interest is distributed among debutantes, society folk, horse lovers, farmers, clerks, and housewives," the newspaper added, "it is an event that adds color and zest to the life of the rich and the poor, the countryman and the urbanite." The hunts were held with less fanfare and fewer social gatherings during the war and were eventually pushed further to more rural areas to escape the "spreading metropolis," ending up where it is today in Cumberland County.³⁴

³⁴ The Deep Run Hunt Club was founded in the late 1800s on the Chantilly Estate located on Deep Run Turnpike, today's Broad Street, somewhere near the intersection with the present-day Libbie Avenue. The

Building, Selling, and Expanding

At the same time that George and Edna were building and selling the homes on upper Monumental Avenue, they continued to build and sell homes in Lakeside, Southside, Chesterfield Gardens, and other areas of the West End, although in some cases George also began acting as an agent to sell homes built by others in the same areas. George and Edna built at least three more Cape Cod style houses on Libbie closer to Patterson Avenue, and, in fact, Junias Smith and his wife, Jessie, downsized from 1307 Libbie into one of them in July 1942. In November 1944, George began listing lots as the exclusive agent in Pine View, a recently platted Cobb Lumber Company subdivision north of Broad bisected by Libbie. He built some homes there -- and, in fact, some of his characteristic Cape Cod houses can be seen on Libbie behind today's Walgreens.³⁵ By 1944, George also had expanded his business as a real estate agent, listing homes even more widely spread across Richmond: houses for sale listing George as a contact included addresses on Main Street, Williamsburg Road, Ginter Park, Staples Mill, Dumbarton, Brook Hill, Jackson Avenue, Laburnum Avenue, all over the West End, and other areas. As World War II came to a close, a housing shortage loomed, and in addition to running ads for selling homes, in 1945 George was running ads looking for homes to sell, using the availability of cash buyers to try to entice sellers.

Edna Mancos -- Antiques and Gardens

Over the years, Edna was sometimes listed as the point of contact for showing a house, but, again, it is hard to believe she did not do more for the business -- it could not have been solely George's responsibility to place and delete ads, file legal documents, maintain inventories, and keep up with myriad other aspects of the business while buying, selling, and building homes as well as developing new tracts. Edna still occasionally would place an ad selling antiques or other items including in January 1944 a Steiff upright piano and in March 1945 a Whitney baby grand. She also still was an active member of the Monument Avenue Crest Garden Club, perhaps at the pinnacle of her involvement and skill: in May 1946 she received the largest number of points overall in the club's annual flower show, her points totaling 54 with the next runner up receiving only 34. In May 1947, she won

September 29, 1946, Times Dispatch article provides a history of the club on the occasion of it moving to eastern Goochland County. More information about its history is available at <https://www.deeprunhuntclub.com/about-drhc/history> (accessed February 20, 2020).

³⁵ The boundaries of Pine View were not researched, but the new townhouses being built in Libbie Mill in 2020 near the Libbie Mill library show their subdivision in MLS listings as being Pine View. Also, George was not just selling home lots; his ads indicated that he had commercial lots available. This was true throughout George's career. He wasn't averse to building or selling commercial properties, though by far his focus was on residential real estate.

the sweepstake prize for the most points won in the entire show and she won the most show blue ribbons including the one for first place in the horticulture group (even George Mancos got in on the act: he won second place in a rare “men only” competition). It is no stretch of the imagination to believe that her work with the garden club extended to knowledge for and caring of the landscaped garden in her own yard. When George and Edna once again put their own home at 1403 Libbie up for sale in May 1947 in preparation for yet another up-sizing move, the description featured the landscaping. The May 4, 1947, ad reads, “Direct from owner. One of the most admired early American brick homes in Westhampton, constructed by a local builder for his home. On a wooded corner lot, well-shrubbed, and attractively landscaped, consisting of five bedrooms, three tiled baths, and cedar lined storage closet on the second floor, first floor entrance hall and coat closet, living room, large den and dining room, modern kitchen with Monel sink, refrigerator, and electric range. To the right of the breakfast room is a lavatory and coat closet. Full basement, recreation room, stone fireplace, bar, tile floor, laundry tubs, furnace room, at grade door leading to well-laid-out flower borders and lawn. There are two flagstone terraces, shadowed by stately pine trees, (and a) one-car brick garage with maid’s quarters over is located on rear of lot. Possession September 1.” The asking price was \$29,500 (about \$341,500 in 2020 buying power).

On May 13, 1947, Walter E. Brauer, Jr., and his wife, Mable T. Brauer, bought the home at 1403 Libbie. The Mancoses, meanwhile, had moved once again into a house next door, this time to the house George had built on the southwestern corner of Monument and Libbie at 5717 Monument. And then, as the year closed out, fire trucks returned to Libbie and Monumental, only this time to Walter and Mable’s house. A fire, believed to have been caused by an overheated woodstove situated close to a wall, damaged the combination garage and servant’s quarters in the rear of the home itself. The Times Dispatch reported on December 2, 1947, that firemen from the Lakeside Fire Department had the blaze under control in a short while, estimating damage at about \$400.

Lower Monumental and Other Mancos Developments

On March 22, 1945, George, then 52, bought the undeveloped property at the lower end of Monumental Avenue (today’s 5631, 5630, 5629, 5627, and 5626) from Westview Land and Improvement Company which had, in turn, purchased it in 1927 from the Sauer Estate which also owned the land at the time where the Jewish Community Center (JCC) is located today. In this same purchase, George bought the land on Monument which today includes the two properties with homes closest to the JCC (today’s 5701 and 5703 Monument), and separately he also bought land on Monument at the southwest corner of Libbie (today’s 5717 Monument, in Monument Avenue Crest subdivision, the location of today’s “white house” and where they moved, as mentioned previously, in 1947). On

December 22, 1945, he filed a plat for the development of the land at lower Monumental extending to Monument, calling it Monument Crest Annex³⁶, dividing the property into more or less equal-sized lots. In September 1946, the Times Dispatch also reported George had been successful in changing the zoning of 22 acres of land along the north side of Broad Street Road just east of Skipwith Road -- in 1949, he described it in an ad as being a half mile past the drive-in theater -- from agriculture to residential. George divided this area, called Pine Grove, into 40 lots. He began building some homes there ("for veterans who can afford the above average house" ... "constructed under personal supervision of George E. Mancos"), advertising VA terms in his listings; but he also sold lots there, continued to sell lots at Pine View, and even put some of the lots of lower Monumental up for sale.

In 1946, George sold the vacant lot on Monumental Avenue at 5631, the one described by Jack Andrews as the site of watermelon fests, sandlot baseball, community gardens, and Christmas bonfires, to Hal and Emily P. Anderson. In 1950, George bought it back and built the first of the three identical neighboring Cape Cods (two are reverse plans of the first) at the end of the street. He sold the house at 5631 later that year to Kasper J. and Thelma B. Putze (a current resident of the street says they pronounced their name PUTT-zee). In 1951, he built what would be the third triplet house in the row (at 5627), selling it to Robert Smith Burrus and Martha Jane Burrus. Shortly after, he began construction of the middle (5629) triplet house, selling it in 1952 to Charles N. King, Jr., and his wife, Frances Brown King. Advertised as "well-built," smaller in size, but "expandable" with two unfinished rooms upstairs (and likely already plumbed for the upstairs bathrooms), the houses were meant to be more economically attractive to war veterans, and, indeed, all three were purchased by returning servicemen and their wives.

Though his realty business was expanding -- in the early 1950s George was running hundreds of ads in the Times Dispatch -- George was active in the construction industry as well, even promoting the business in general. He was director of the Richmond Home Builders Association in 1949, and in 1951 was among a handful of builders who sponsored broadcasts about industry news on weekly radio programs because, according to the Association secretary, "this is a year of crisis in the home building industry due to government-imposed controls and allocations which are too often misunderstood."³⁷ That same year, George was one of 20 area builders who showed homes for National Home Week. E. B. West, president of the Association, described 1951 home trends that would be seen in the show houses: "The kitchen ... appears destined to gobble up the glamour formerly enjoyed by the stately dining room. The modern kitchen ... tends more to the utilitarian idea. More space, more gadgets, more modern equipment, and more room for dining comfort

³⁶ The plat is reproduced on page 62 of this narrative.

³⁷ Richmond Times Dispatch, May 6, 1951.

which formerly was reserved for the separate dining room.” Emphasis would also be placed, he said, on the “use of labor-saving home equipment (and) safety ideas designed to reduce home accidents, as well as on lighting, decoration, and kitchen efficiency.”

George started to see a new generation of interested home buyer: one who was interested in one-level living. At this time, it is nearly impossible to say with absolute certainty that George built the ranch-style homes at 5630 and 5626 Monumental, but he had owned the lots they were built on, he was the realtor who listed them, and it is known that he built the ranch home behind 5626 Monumental that faces Monument (5701 Monument). He did not, however, as he had in most if not all other cases where it was true in the past, name himself as builder in the ads listing 5630 and 5626 Monumental for sale: he simply listed himself as the realty agent. Gus R. and Pauline W. Stevens were the original residents of the home at 5626, though the record is unclear whether they bought only the land from George and the house was built later either by George or another builder or whether they bought the house already built. The buyers of the home at 5630 were W. P. and Vivian B. Lewis; they purchased the house there after it had been built.

Even before the houses at 5630 and 5626 Monumental were built, George took out in 1951 the building permit for the property he owned behind 5626 on Monument -- the one located at 5701 Monument (also in the Monument Crest Annex subdivision that he had created), next door to today’s JCC. With both their daughters married and starting families elsewhere in Richmond, that same year, George and Edna, then 61 and 59, downsized from their home (the white house at the corner of Monument and Libbie at 5717 Monument³⁸) into the ranch-style home he built there.

Realty ads of another sort also began appearing under George’s name in the Times Dispatch in the early 1950s -- for building sites and homes on the Rappahannock and other river-front sites (“excellent fishing and crabbing,” “good boat harbor”) nearer the coastal area of Virginia. Those listings eventually became nearly as numerous as the ones for homes he was selling in Richmond, and they began appearing at about the same time that George and Edna built their own river-front cabin on the Rappahannock.

³⁸ A lovely ad published on May 20, 1951, in the Times Dispatch described the home at the point of sale: “This admirable brick home, 5717 Monument Avenue, built by a well-known local contractor for his home four years ago, (is) located on a well-landscaped corner ... There are four larger-than-average bedrooms, three tiled baths, and an unfurnished bedroom used for storage. On the main floor living room, (there is a) marble front fireplace, (and a) large sunroom, with fireplace and door leading to a spacious terrace. (Also, there is a) paneled den, large dining room, modern kitchen, breakfast room laundry room, utility room, attached one-car garage with tool room, maid’s quarters with running water, and a spacious attic.”

The Mystery of the Sunken Garden at 1403 Libbie

The idea of a sunken garden was very much a trend in Richmond in the early years of the 20th century. When the originally British, 15th century, Agecroft Hall was rebuilt in 1927 in what would become Richmond's Windsor Farms neighborhood, a sunken garden was a featured part of the landscape and is still a tourist attraction today. Though Agecroft Hall was a private residence until the late 1960s, the owners opened it up fairly regularly to Virginia Garden Club-sponsored tours for annual state meetings: one such tour, for example, was reported to have occurred as early as April 28, 1930, according to the March 9, 1930, *Times Dispatch*. But a source of inspiration for a sunken garden at 1403 Libbie would have been located even closer to Monumental Avenue. Opening to the public on May 7, 1927, Monumental Floral Gardens was located approximately at the location of today's Libbie Place Shopping Center on Libbie and Broad. C. F. Sauer, Sr., of Richmond spice fame, had been planning a residential area in that area, between Monument and Broad with Lake Avenue and Peachtree Boulevard as its core, envisioning a development that, like many earlier streetcar suburbs around the city, would offer an eye-catching attraction to draw homebuyers to the neighborhood. The Forest Hill and Carillon neighborhoods had amusement parks, but Sauer wanted a more contemplative retreat, and thus the idea of an expansive, sunken garden came about. Monumental Floral Gardens had a "crystal" lake with borders of ferns and flowers, statuary from Venice, and a trio of Japanese lanterns, one of which was valued at \$3,000 (\$45,000 in 2020 buying power) -- "the only one of its kind in this country." Lights around the lake illuminated it at night. There were decorative urns and marble statuary in the woods of the surrounding parklike setting. Two years before, according to the May 8, 1927, *Times Dispatch*, the property had been "a wilderness, overgrown with pine trees." More than 3,500 pounds of dynamite were used in blowing stumps out and putting the property "in shape."³⁹

³⁹ Monumental Floral Gardens no longer exists -- victim first to the economic pressures of the Depression, then World War II, and later the demands of urban growth. A better-remembered Sauer's Gardens was the Japanese garden that the Sauer family included in their development on the north side of the 4300 block of Monument Avenue. Opening somewhat earlier than Monumental Floral Gardens, Sauer's Gardens was developed with a similar model in mind: the Sauers included exotic plants, shrubs, and trees as well as statues which they brought home from their trips to Japan. It had a fountain, teahouse, a lake, and artificial "mountains." Like Monumental Floral Gardens, the Japanese garden is gone now, though there were some efforts as late as the 1960s to try to save it. Descriptions of Monumental Floral Gardens are taken from stories and advertisements of the time in the *Richmond Times Dispatch* about the gardens as they opened. Other sources for the information on Monumental Floral Gardens and Sauer's Gardens are: https://www.richmond.com/real_estate/richmond-neighborhoods/monumental-floral-gardens-the-garden-s-gone-but-the-development/article_193d8424-95b3-11e3-919c-001a4bcf6878.html, accessed January 2, 2020; <https://www.sauerbrands.com/company/history/>, accessed January 2, 2020; and https://www.richmond.com/realestate/features/richmond-neighborhoods/sauer-s-garden-the-garden-s-gone-but-the-neighborhood/article_2d639578-c1b0-11e3-b0e1-001a4bcf6878.html, accessed March 23, 2020.

But who was responsible for the sunken garden at today's 1403 Libbie (at Libbie and Monumental)? This Mancos home was first lived in from 1939 to late 1947 by George and Edna; the Brauers, who owned a grocery store and a large butcher shop in the East End, then lived there only until June 7, 1949, and then Chester D. Snell, a CEO for city and regional charities over the course of his career, and his wife, Louise H. Snell, bought the property.

It seems most likely that Edna Mancos, with her life-long self-taught gardening skills and access to the family's construction firm for heavy-lifting tasks, had done most of the planning, preparatory, and installation work as described in the May 4, 1947, ad listing the house (as noted previously: "well-shrubbed, attractively landscaped," "well laid-out flower borders and lawn," "at-grade door" in the basement, and "two flagstone terraces").⁴⁰

There is no indication that Mable Brauer was a gardener, and, anyway, the Brauer family lived in the home for only a very short time. Louise Snell, on the other hand, became



Mrs. Robert Fohl (left), and Mrs. Thomas W. Pearson admire the lily pond in the garden of Mrs. Chester Snell.

A photograph of the garden behind today's 1403 Libbie appeared in the May 4, 1952, Times Dispatch. Because of the poor reproduction quality of the photograph, it is a little difficult to discern that many features of the garden are still present today, including the many shrubs, the overhanging trees, the lily pond (at lower left), and the steps down to the pond.

⁴⁰ The terraces today still exist at different grade levels leading down into the sunken garden.

very active in Edna's garden club after the Snell family moved into the home.⁴¹ It's not hard to imagine that Edna took her under her wing as a gardening colleague, friend, and next-door neighbor -- the Mancoses were living then at 5717 Monument -- and it's not hard to imagine that Louise Snell took over the back-yard garden and either maintained what Edna had started and/or added to it to get it to the point described in a May, 4, 1952, Times Dispatch article about a local garden club tour: "The yard leads on to enchantment down through a sunken rock garden towards a lily pond. Flowering trees, sweet-scented shrubs, blossoming vines, rose bushes, and camellia in borders and niches, are rife with spring, summer, and fall flowers which furnish a continuance of bloom." It should be noted that although the home address is 1403 Libbie, the garden is in the back yard, and parallels Monumental Avenue.

Moving into the 1950s

Even after down-sizing into the ranch home at 5701 Monument, Edna followed her gardening passion. The same May 4, 1952, article that described the sunken garden at today's 1403 Libbie noted that the Mancos home at 5701 Monument, where George and Edna had lived only a year, would be on the garden club tour, "Since hers is a brand-new garden, Mrs. George Mancos at 5701 Monument Avenue is planning it as a hospitable center for birds," the article noted. "Wide borders planted in annuals and perennials, new varieties of flowering shrubs and the old-fashioned favorites, hedges of boxwood and hedges of abelia, flowering trees and straight, tall pines entice birds of all kinds of feather. Near an open terrace, in a dense growth of pine and dogwood trees, bird baths and bird houses offer further lure."

Edna's gardening exploits by this time had become legendary. In a November 1952 meeting of the garden club, the Times Dispatch reported that members answered roll call with "what have you to show for the summer?" Members talked about canning, making tomato juice, using dill for pickling, and making cider from apples. But several also remarked on the bounty they had received from a pear tree planted by Edna on Libbie Avenue "some years ago" which had "outstripped in height neighborhood telephone wires and in friendly seasons is known to bloom three times." The tree had borne so much fruit in 1952 that the pears had weighed down its branches "to the breaking point." Mrs. Boyd C. Cobb, who may have been part of the family that worked with George on the developments on Libbie to the north of Broad, reported that she lived on the block with the blooming pear tree and utilized some of the yield for preserves. Johanna Crowder, then of 321 Oak Lane (in the tony Stone Wall Court area between Patterson and Grove) at the same meeting noted that on a morning visit to Libbie Avenue, she was given a "mess of Kiefers" and turned out a pear pie.

⁴¹ The Snells lived in the home until 1958, when they sold the property to Andrew T. and Rosalie Schwarzschild Karo.

Johanna was a garden club buddy of Edna, often also appearing in articles alongside her about the club and also in articles about the Westhampton school PTA over the years. She and her husband LeRoy had known the Mancoses since at least 1934 when they had purchased the Mancos home at 1503 Libbie, the one that was next door to “Quality Home No. 7.” It is easy to imagine Edna and Johanna as life-long friends with gardening as a shared passion and their kids at the same school. In 1954, the two friends left for Europe “by plane” for Solleiteo (perhaps Solleftea), to begin a garden tour of Europe at the home of Johanna’s parents. They visited England, Holland, Italy, and France, and when they came home, over the next two years, often spoke at civic group meetings, presenting the photographs they had taken.

The JCC and St. Mary’s

The Richmond urban area was changing, and the neighborhood on Monumental Avenue was no different. Houses were starting to change hands for a second time, sometimes even a third. In 1950 Henrico County installed its first traffic light in the county at Monument and Libbie avenues, indicating increased traffic in the area (Libbie Avenue would be widened to four lanes from two in 1977).

The Jewish Community Center bought 10 acres of land which had once been part of the Sauer Estate and planned to build a community center, an effort which was opposed by an otherwise unidentified group led by R. S. Burrus who lived at 5626 Monumental Avenue, the triplet house at the end of the street closest to the shortcut through the woods that nearly all Monumental Avenue residents use to access the facility today. Burrus argued at a nine-hour December 20, 1957, County planning meeting that the JCC would destroy the “tranquility of country living.” He claimed that “noise, traffic, and dust will create a nuisance during the day as well as night when the center will be open.” While those in favor of the JCC noted that, among other things, there would be a children’s playground open to the public on the property, Burrus asserted that the nearby Westhampton School grounds were already adequate for the needs of the community. Burrus’s group lost the argument, and the JCC was built.

At the other end of Monumental Avenue, the Catholic Church had started buying land across Libbie shortly after World War II, taking 13 years to purchase the 32 separate parcels it needed to build what is today’s St. Mary’s Hospital in the Bon Secours system, often buying the properties through third parties because of prejudices against the Catholic

Church.⁴² Some of the parcels were land with houses on them built by George Mancos (particularly on the now-vanished Cole Street). The hospital opened in 1966 and today is an employer of some Monumental Avenue residents as well as providing many health services that avenue residents find very convenient to have so close by.

Celebrity and Tragedy

In 1958, Monumental Avenue briefly became the epicenter of minor celebrity when C. Coleman McGehee, of 5704 Monumental, the same home that Deborah Teel had immortalized in her “pungent pines” article in 1941, home to the Andrew J. and Norma L. Huneycutt family in the 1940s, briefly of John Taylor and Mary E. R. Meetze in 1952 and 1953, and then to the McGehees since 1953, was named Richmond’s “young man of the year” by the U.S. Junior Chamber of Commerce through nomination by the local Jaycees organization. The banker and decorated World War II veteran with a passion for military history won the award for “outstanding civil service to the community.” The Times Dispatch on January 22, 1958, listed his abundant community achievements and followed up the next day with a society item on the woman behind the throne, giving some insight into family life on Monumental Avenue: “While her husband is out breadwinning, his wife is likely to be at home chasing (her two-year-old) off the coffee table, letting the dog out, or greeting (her five-year-old) on his return from nursery school.” According to the article, Caroline McGehee liked cooking, but she disliked ironing. She didn’t share her husband’s interest in golf, diplomatically noted that Coleman wasn’t handy around the house, and was proud enough of the family dog’s origins as a rescue dog that she mentioned they had adopted it from the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (SPCA) to the reporter who wrote the story about her. But Caroline was accomplished in her own right: she was a graduate of Sweet Briar College, was volunteering at the Virginia History Museum (which now adds “Culture” to its title) as a member of the Junior League and was also a member of the Virginia (Fine Arts) Museum Council.

Unfortunately, the family was the focus of some heart-breaking news a few months later. On September 26, 1958, Coleman and Caroline had returned at around midnight after an evening out attending an architectural exhibit at the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts and touring the new Reynolds Metals Company building on Broad Street. Coleman left to take a babysitter home, and Caroline went upstairs and removed her shoes. She heard a noise downstairs and thought it was her husband until she saw a man standing in the doorway to her bedroom. According to Caroline’s testimony at court the following April, the man suddenly lunged at her and began choking her. After throwing her to the floor, he suddenly

⁴² Mary Miley Theobald, “Bon Secours - St. Mary’s Hospital: Good Help for a Lifetime.” Dementi Milestone Publishing, Richmond, Virginia, 2016.

turned her loose. Before she could stand, the man lunged at her again and began stabbing her with a hunting knife. The man stabbed her six times, in the ribs and shoulders, and then ran downstairs and out of the house. Caroline was seriously injured, stabbed three times in the right side under her arm, twice in her right arm, and once in her left shoulder. Her right lung was punctured. She struggled to a phone outside of her bedroom and called police.

Coleman returned a few minutes later to find Caroline lying at the head of the stairs. Two responding Henrico police officers followed a trail of blood from the McGehee residence to a yard about two blocks away where they found the man, Carter White, 21, semi-conscious. During the fight in the house, he had apparently knifed himself in the left leg, severing an artery. Two days after his arrest, White allegedly admitted to police that he had gone into the house but said he did not remember attacking Caroline. He said he was drunk and was only looking for something to steal. He pleaded not guilty by reason of insanity in the non-jury trial, but the judge ruled he was sane and found him guilty. Two months later he was sentenced to 30 years in prison for the attack.⁴³

The McGehees sold the house and moved away from the Monumental Avenue neighborhood two years later to somewhere in Richmond's West End, but the exact address is not known. Coleman died of drowning at age 71 on February 12, 1995, while on vacation in Barbados with Caroline. A lengthy obituary in the Times Dispatch detailed his very successful banking career culminating in the position of CEO of Sovran Financial Corporation, his "far-ranging and diverse interests" outside of banking, and the many awards during his lifetime for community service. Caroline continued her many charitable civic works. Following the death of Coleman, she remarried, and in 2005, she donated her life-long collection of 15,000 volumes of miniature books to the University of Virginia's Albert and Shirley Small Special Collection Library, occupying two sides of compact shelves in the

⁴³ No further information on what ultimately happened with Carter White was easily obtainable. As was common in newspapers of the day, Carter White was identified as "a Negro" in the Times Dispatch articles describing the attack. The McGehees' race was not identified because the default race of persons appearing in the news was always "white" -- black Richmonders rarely were subjects of news articles in the white press except in crime stories. Gratuitously identifying people of color in news stories was standard at newspapers throughout the country at this time, and, in fact, there was not a widespread change to the policy until the late 1960s and early 1970s. Also consistent with the racial overtones of the day, the Times Dispatch in an article on October 10, 1958, tried to connect two other recent crimes allegedly involving attacks of black men on white women as a worrying trend. It apparently was a short-lived racial-stirring effort, however, appearing only in that one article. Caroline McGehee, in the several articles about the attack, never attributed a racial motive to the crime.

rare book archives. The collection is named the McGehee Miniature Book Collection in honor of Coleman.⁴⁴

Retired or Semi-Retired, a Realty Agent, no longer a Builder

In the late 1950s and early 1960s, George was transitioning more completely to a real estate agent from builder/contractor, and if, as is likely, he built the one-story ranch houses on Monumental and his own on Monument, they may have been among his last projects. By the early 1960s, he was listing homes under “Mancos Realty Corporation” and later, “G. E. Mancos, Broker.” About half the homes he listed were in the Richmond area; about half were cottages or lots along the Rappahannock or other river-front areas nearer the Virginia coast. George and Edna were preparing for retirement on their terms as the December 15, 1957, Times Dispatch explained in an article on Edna’s current gardening focus: “While (Edna’s) husband readies the 3.5 acres at Twin Shores, their Rappahannock River summer home, for growing edibles, Mrs. Mancos plants gourd seeds ... Later she prepares them to star in winter arrangements which she creates when she settles down to city living at the Mancos’ Richmond home on (5701) Monument Avenue and to garden club activity (in Richmond) ... The gourd lover is a charter member of Monument Avenue Crest Garden Club and presently is serving as chairman of the sunshine basket. Her pleasurable duties consist of sending cheery greetings and sometimes taking gifts to members whom misfortune betides. She sells her gourds to fellow garden clubbers, thereby swelling the coffers of the sunshine basket. But she also gives them as presents.” Since the article implies that George helped Edna in preparing the garden space at Rappahannock, it perhaps is one more hint that George may have also lent a hand to create the sunken garden at today’s 1403 Libbie.

The last known mention of Edna Mancos with Monument Avenue Crest Garden Club was May 22, 1966, when she was elected secretary. She died on February 1, 1970, at 73. It was the first time in her lifetime that the Times Dispatch had referred to her using her first name,⁴⁵ and even then, they misspelled it once as “Adna.” Her obituary did not mention her



One of the books from Caroline’s collection donated to the UVA library. Photo by Sanjay Suchak, University Communications.

⁴⁴ <https://news.virginia.edu/content/small-beautiful-when-it-comes-uva-library-exhibit>, accessed March 17, 2020.

⁴⁵ It was the policy of nearly every U.S. newspaper throughout Edna’s lifetime to refer to married women by putting “Mrs.” in front of their husband’s names. Amelia Earhart, for one, protested the policy in 1932, asking

life-long work with gardening nor partnership in business with George; it only listed her survivors. Her death certificate listed her occupation as homemaker.

George Mancos continued selling real estate, still about 50/50 between the West End and river properties near the coast. The last known real estate listing attributed to George appeared in mid 1968, when he was selling a house on the Potomac River. He legally dissolved Mancos Realty on June 1, 1968. He died on March 26, 1983, in a Richmond nursing home at age 90. His obituary only listed survivors, but his death certificate referred to him as a builder/contractor.

the New York Times to stop calling her “Mrs. Putnam,” and to afford her the same name privileges as women writers or actresses who were at the time referenced by their desired professional name. It worked for Amelia Earhart, but the policy did not change on a wider level until the 1970s. See <https://qz.com/1029780/in-1932-amelia-earhart-told-the-new-york-times-to-quit-calling-her-mrs-putnam/>, accessed March 18, 2020, for more information about women’s names and the practice of journalism. The names of other women in this present narrative, when they appeared in newspapers, followed the same naming style -- where possible I have found women’s first names and used them throughout the narrative; the one exception being Mrs. Boyd C. Cobb, whom I could not otherwise identify. Deborah Teel appeared as Deborah Teel in her bylines because she was a writer.

History of Place -- Monumental Avenue and the Area Around It

Street Names, Street Numbers, Historical Maps Since 1864, Subdivision Plats

On July 6, 1958, the Richmond Times-Dispatch published an article about the confusing street names and house numbering conventions in Richmond. In Richmond and in Henrico and Chesterfield counties at the time, there were 11 Grove avenues, roads, and drives, there were 13 Oaks, five Oaklands, four Oakdales, and two Oakwoods, and there were eight streets named Lee, two Leigh streets, one Lea Lane, and one Leah Road, to name just a few the reporter cited. But it wasn't only street names that were a problem, "residents seem to have seized on house numbers that appealed to them, with only the foggiest regard for logical sequence." For example, the author wrote, take Monumental Avenue, where, "moving west along this pleasant, well-developed residential street, one encounters the following sequence of house numbers on the right-hand side of the street: 5626, 5630, 5500, 5702, 5504, 5508, 5510." The article noted that the Richmond Regional Planning Commission, a new agency, would be working to bring order to the problem of duplicate street names and whimsical house numbers.

Those who live on Monumental Avenue 65 years later know that street numbering is the least of the problems in giving directions today, even with mobile-phone street-map technology: when giving the street address to a home, there is a lengthy string of words that go along with it, "It's 5631 MonumenTAL Avenue, not Monument Avenue, MonumenTAL. We're one block over from Monument. Oh, and it's not Monumental Street, either." But few residents are likely to want to change the name, it's part of the charm, right along with the pine trees, of living here.

Researching the history of the street was unquestionably made more challenging by the existence of confusing nomenclature and numbers. In addition, finding Monumental Avenue before it came into existence on the 1926 subdivision plat is tricky on old maps that show Broad Street as Deep Run Turnpike (can we change that back, please?) and Cary Street as Plank Road. Thankfully, Patterson has pretty much always been Patterson. For decades after Libbie Avenue came into existence (around 1916), it was as often spelled Libby. Cole Street, where at least a few houses were built by George Mancos, has disappeared, along with the houses, under St. Mary's Hospital. A street that parallels Monumental Avenue a couple

of blocks down toward Patterson is now called Bromley Lane, but it was originally called Mt. Vernon Avenue; its name change was probably brought about by the new 1958 Richmond Regional Planning Commission. Through the 1970s, Monumental Street (on the east side of the JCC) was as often called Monumental Avenue in the Richmond Times Dispatch as it was Monumental Street. And while we are on the subject, doesn't the word "avenue" conjure up the idea of a wide, open street, perhaps with park-like spaces running parallel along it or down the middle of it (think: Monument Avenue). Richmonders who named the streets here avenues apparently had unrealized visions of grandeur for many of them.

At the time of the 1958 Times Dispatch article, most of the houses on Monumental Avenue which today start with the number 57 began with the number 55. It is likely that the 1958 planning commission effected the change which, in any event, is known to have happened in the late 1950s. But the house at today's 1403 Libbie, the one with the sunken garden, was first referenced as being at Libbie and Monumental (though there was another existing house on the opposite corner also on Libbie and Monumental); changed to 1209 Libbie by January 30, 1938, when it was first listed for sale; became 1303 Libbie in late 1938 or early 1939 when George and Edna Mancos became the first occupants of it; and settled down to the present address of 1403 Libbie sometime between March 15 and April 19, 1942.

History of the Land where Monumental Avenue is now located

One of the clearest, earliest maps of the area where Monumental Avenue exists today is an 1864 map created by the U.S. Army Corps of



Detail of the 1864 U.S. Army Corps of Engineers map with an arrow showing the approximate location of today's Monumental Ave. The L. N. Ellett farm is marked on the map. Full map (accessed March 1, 2020) is available online at the Library of Congress. To see entire map, go to the Library of Congress Maps site and search on "Richmond Virginia 1864."

black residents in Westwood Settlement by the turn of the century were working in nearby white homes, often as domestics, and may indeed have been employed by residents of Monumental Avenue or other George Mancos homes who were known to have employed African American maids. The map shows the land where Monumental Avenue would eventually be as being owned by Dooly, Bryan, Scott, and others. In a 1911 edition of *Fuel Magazine: The Coal Operators National Weekly*, there is mention of a Bryan Coal Corporation in Richmond which had been newly incorporated in Richmond. The incorporators included Thomas B. Scott and George Cole Scott of Richmond and James H. Dooley (residence not provided). It is not known if these are the same people who owned the property where Monumental Avenue would be, but the names would otherwise certainly be coincidental. The company was only lightly researched, but it seems likely that it had quarry interests in the Henrico County area.

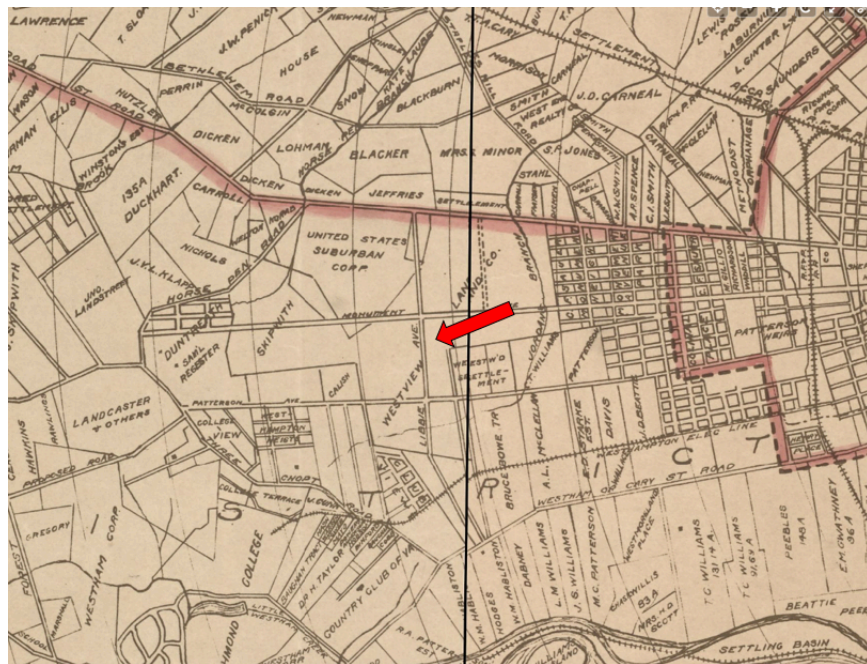
By the 1910s, the roads in the Near West End were beginning to firm up. The two maps here show the evolution from 1911 (this page) to 1916 (next page) with the red arrow

showing in both maps the approximate location of the future Monumental Avenue. Dooly, Bryan, Scott, and others had either morphed into or sold to Westview Land Company. By late May 1926, Sterling Realty Corporation, representing Westview Land Company, filed with Henrico County the plan for a new subdivision called Monument Avenue Crest (plat maps follow). The plan created nearly 100 lots in an area between



Detail of the 1911 Henrico County map with the red arrow showing the approximate location of today's Monumental Ave. Full map (accessed February 8, 2020) is available online at the Library of Congress. To see entire map, go to the Library of Congress Maps site and search on "Richmond Virginia 1911."

Monument and Patterson avenues and Libbie Avenue and Glenburnie Road. W. E. Purcell, Jr., who was an agent of some kind for the company, immediately ran an ad in the Times Dispatch: “The most desirable suburban lots can be had in Monument Avenue Crest at the lowest prices for West End lots.”⁴⁷ At the time of the filing of the plat, the name of the street one block to the southwest of Monument Avenue in the new subdivision was officially named for the first time



Detail of the 1916 Henrico County map with the red arrow showing the approximate location of today's Monumental Ave. Full map (accessed February 8, 2020) is available online at the Library of Congress. To see entire map, go to the Library of Congress Maps site and search on "Richmond Virginia 1911."

Monumental Avenue. (Maps for the 1920s and 1930s and even the 1940s of Henrico County are rare, and to this point, have not been found for the area around Monumental Avenue. Though there are atlases of Virginia county maps for those decades, Henrico County is not included because it, like a handful of other counties, did not opt at the time to be part of state control for its road systems. However, original plats of the subdivisions in which Monumental Avenue was part were duly filed at the Henrico County Clerk's office; smaller duplicates of them are reproduced in this narrative on pages 48-50.)

On February 25, 1927, the Mancoses bought their first two lots in the new Monument Avenue Crest subdivision: two contiguous lots at the southwest corner of Libbie and Monumental where today exists the home at 1307 Libbie. The Mancoses would then, over the years, go on to purchase every lot on Monumental Avenue. The sale history of many of the lots is complex, however, because lots in Monument Avenue Crest sometimes changed hands a few times before the Mancoses could buy them, and sometimes George took from

⁴⁷ Richmond Times Dispatch, May 5, 1926.

one lot to add to another lot, a practice always carefully recorded in Henrico County deed books but which is frowned upon today. In addition, George did not necessarily construct homes on the lots in the same order that he bought property, sometimes waiting several years to build. Still another complication is that the lots at the very end of the street (addresses today: 5631, 5630, 5629, 5627, and 5626) were not included in the original plat of Monument Avenue Crest subdivision: Mancos bought the undeveloped land for those latter five properties directly from Westview Land Company, and created his own lots, calling the area Monument Crest Annex (Westview had acquired the land that became Monument Crest Annex from the C. F. Sauer Company which also owned the land where the JCC is now located). Again, and even though George Mancos had created the lots in Monument Crest Annex himself, as he built homes there he still altered some of the lot lines, lawfully recording them in Henrico County deed books.

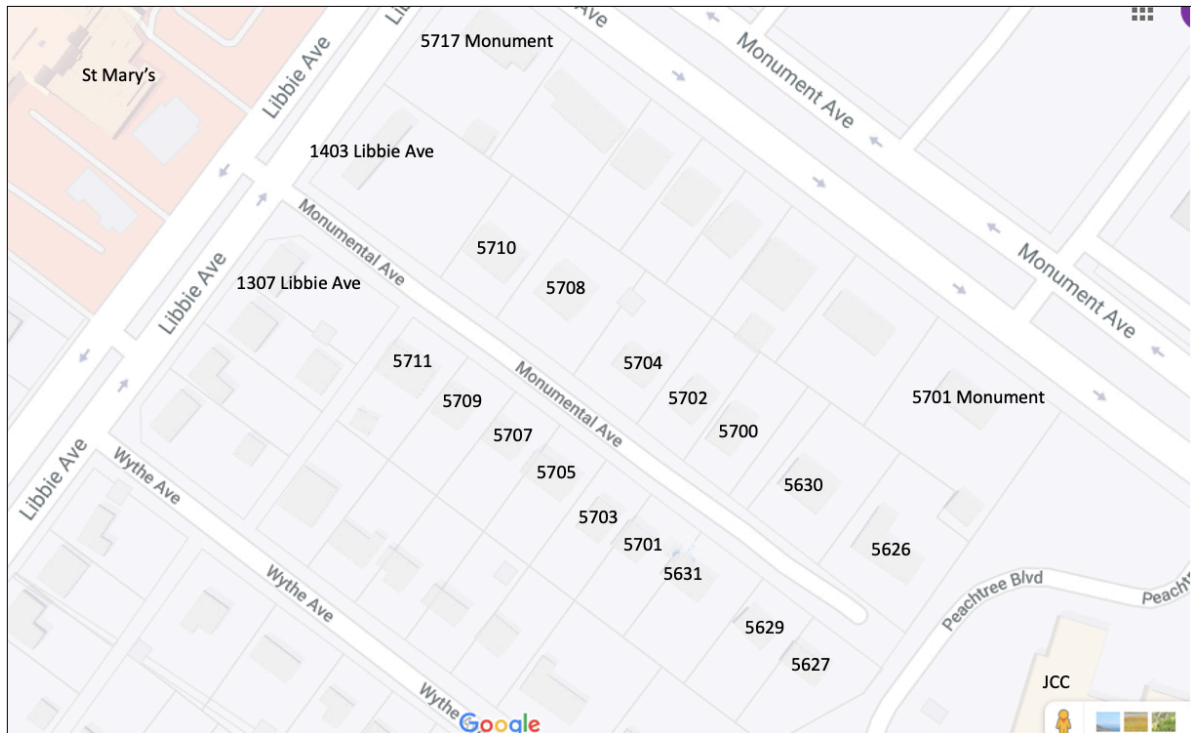
Following is a table showing significant dates, where available, for the development of each individual home on Monumental Avenue and information on their earliest residents. Current addresses are used to identify the homes. Photos of each house from the original property cards, which were taken at the time of first tax assessment (which would have been the year it was constructed or the year it was first purchased), when available, are provided. The information in the table comes from a variety of sources: land records at the Henrico County Real Estate Division, online property records including original property cards, Richmond Times Dispatch newspaper articles and advertisements, census records, and city directory records, and sometimes the combination of two or more of the records which, when combined, reveal the story. Not all information is identical or available for all properties due to anomalies over the years. For example, some clerks might write in full dates while others just a year; some attorneys wrote excruciatingly detailed deeds while others left out non-essential data. Current addresses for the properties are shown in bold at the top of the Address Information column.

The old property cards for nearly all the houses here are available online at the Henrico County Real Estate Division property records website, but they can be hard to locate. They are worth looking at. Though some are more complete than others, most of the cards, in addition to the first photos used for tax assessment (provided below), also show the original footprint of the house and many notations of interest. To access the property cards, follow these instructions:

1. Go to <https://realestate.henrico.us/ords/cam/f?p=510101:1>
2. Put in your street number in the box on the third line, and then the street name in the box on the same line -- but do NOT put the word lane, street, road, or anything like that. Then click on the “search” button.



3. When your results come up, click on the little pencil icon to the left of your name.
4. In the next screen that comes up, about half-way down and about in the middle of the screen, click on the button that says “Additional Transfer & Assessments”
5. At the top right of the next page that comes up, click on the button that says “Old Property Card.”



Following the table are reproductions of the original subdivision plats. The drafters of the plats drafted fairly monotonous, equally-divided lots, but when compared to today’s lot lines -- which can be revealed either on county maps or Google, it can be seen that developers -- in the case of Monumental Avenue, George Mancos -- moved lot lines to accommodate different styles of houses, driveways, etc. Such changes are duly reflected in deeds at the Henrico County Real Estate Assessment Division (and the guarantee of that is what homebuyers pay good money for during real estate closings).







An April 16, 2020, map taken from Google Maps of Monumental Avenue and the addresses of the homes on the two-block stretch (also includes the homes that George and Edna Mancos lived in at 5717 and 5701 Monument).



Date the lot was acquired by the Mancoses	Address Information	Date house was built, or first sold
February 25, 1927	1307 Libbie The first lot developed along Monumental Avenue; faced and faces Libbie Avenue. Original address was 1207 Libbie.	Unfortunately, the original property card is not on file at the county for this home. The home was built by early 1930 or late 1929 by George Mancos, and his family originally lived in it. The Mancoses sold it on September 8, 1937, to Junias W. and Jessie V. Smith (at which time, the Mancoses moved across the street [Monumental] to today's 1403 Libbie).
April 27, 1927	5711 Monumental Original address was 5511 Monumental.	<div data-bbox="770 643 1399 1055" data-label="Image"> </div> <p>The building permit issued for the home was dated September 29, 1941. First homeowner was Helen Jordan, who bought it on January 2, 1942.</p>



<p>April 27, 1927</p>	<p>5709 Monumental Original address was 5509 Monumental.</p>	 <p>The building permit issued for the home was dated September 3, 1941. First homeowners were Walker C. and Barbara DeHart Haynes in 1943.</p>
<p>November 15, 1929</p>	<p>5707 Monumental Original address was 5507 Monumental.</p>	 <p>The building permit issued for the home was dated February 26, 1941. First homeowner was Frederick H. Powell, Jr., in 1941.</p>

<p>November 15, 1929</p>	<p>5705 Monumental Original address was 5505 Monumental.</p>	 <p>The building permit issued for the home was dated April 22, 1941. First homeowners were James Waldo and Hattie Virginia Westhaver who bought it on February 4, 1942.</p>
<p>November 15, 1929</p>	<p>5703 Monumental Original address was 5503 Monumental.</p>	 <p>The building permit issued for the home was dated March 11, 1941. First homeowners were H. S. Cauthern, Jr., and his wife, Mary K. (Cauthern), in 1941.</p>



<p>November 15, 1929</p>	<p>5701 Monumental Original address was 5501 Monumental.</p>	 <p>The building permit issued for the home was dated September 3, 1941. First homeowners were Maurice Anderson King and Hjordis Formoe, who bought it on September 8, 1942.</p>
<p>August 10, 1931</p>	<p>1403 Libbie Avenue Other Libbie addresses used: 1209 and 1303.</p>	 <p>The date of issuance of any building permit is unknown. The house was first advertised for sale in the Richmond Times-Dispatch on January 30, 1938. The Mancoses moved into it as the first residents probably in late 1937. The photo is also significant because it also shows a glimpse of Libbie Avenue in the late 1930s. Curiously, the sidewalk was already set well back.</p>

<p>August 10, 1931</p>	<p>5704 Monumental Original address was 5504 Monumental.</p>	 <p>The date of issuance of any building permit is unknown. The Richmond Times Dispatch article written by Deborah Teel notes that the home was the model home for the street, and it was open to the public on May 18, 1941. First homeowners were Andrew and Norma L. Huneycutt who bought it on August 18, 1941.</p>
<p>November 1, 1932</p>	<p>5710 Monumental Original address was 5510 Monumental.</p>	 <p>The building permit issued for the home was dated February 26, 1941. First homeowners were John H. and Edna Mae Andrews, who bought it in 1941.</p>

May 3, 1941	5708 Monumental Original address was 5508 Monumental.	 <p>The building permit issued for the home was dated February 25, 1941. First homeowners were R. W. Jacobus and Bessie E. White, who bought it on August 28, 1941.</p>
May 3, 1941	5702 Monumental Other Monumental addresses used: 5504 and 5502.	 <p>The building permit issued for the home was dated March 11, 1941. First homeowners were Edmund Milton Smith and Evelyn Crowder (Smith), who bought it in 1941.</p>

<p>May 3, 1941</p>	<p>5700 Monumental Original address was 5500 Monumental.</p>	 <p>The building permit issued for the home was dated April 22, 1941. First homeowners were Elizabeth P. and Wilbur Owen.</p>
<p>December 22, 1945</p>	<p>5631 Monumental</p>	 <p>The Mancoses had sold the lot to Hal and Emily P. Anderson in 1946, then bought it back from them for the same price some time shortly after. The building permit issued for the home was dated June 6, 1950. First homeowners were Kasper J. and Thelma B. Putze.</p>

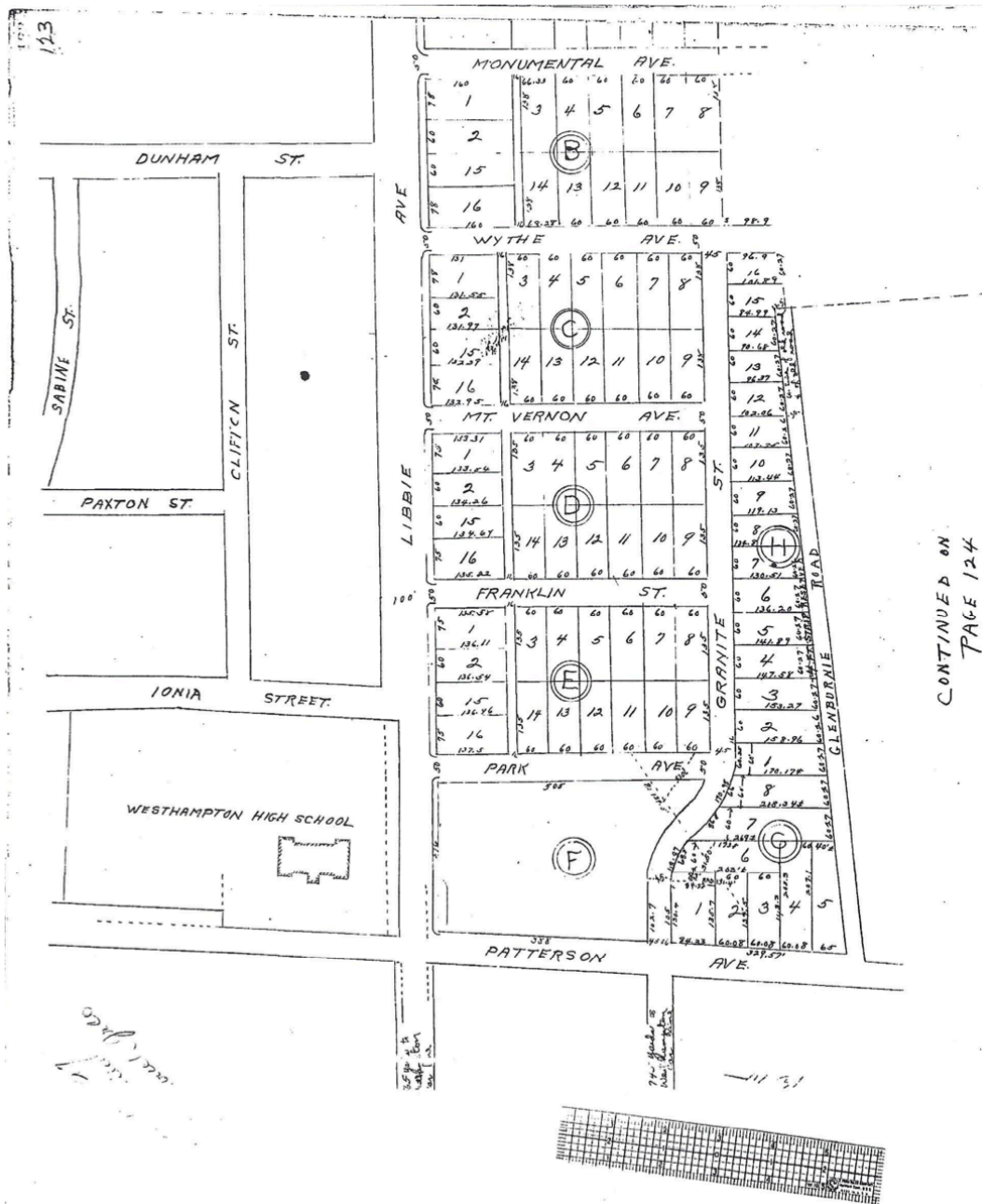
December 22, 1945	5630 Monumental	<p>(Sadly, the photograph on the original property card has been torn off; what remains of it looks like it wasn't the correct house and that is probably the reason why the photo was torn off.) The building permit issued for the home was dated January 29, 1953. The Mancoses sold the lot in 1947 to Elizabeth P. Owen. She sold it in 1951 to Robert J. and Gladys L. Grady. The building permit was taken out on January 29, 1953. The Gradys sold it in 1953 to W. P. (Jr.) and Vivian B. Lewis, who were the first residents. The first Times-Dispatch ad listing it for sale appeared on August 14, 1953; George Mancos was listed as the seller contact, but it does not specifically reference him as the builder. Direct evidence that George Mancos built the house has not been found, but all existing circumstantial evidence strongly points to that being the case. It is not known if the Gradys had the house built and then sold to the Lewises, or whether the Lewises only bought the lot and George Mancos (or possibly someone else) built the home directly for the Lewises. Checking into these issues was hampered by the 2020 coronavirus pandemic which made it impossible to check county records for information which might reveal these details.</p>
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<p>December 22, 1945</p>	<p>5629 Monumental</p>	 <p>The building permit issued for the home was dated January 12, 1951. The apparent first listing for the house appeared in the Times-Dispatch on October 21, 1951. First homeowners were Charles N. King, Jr., and Frances Brown (King) who bought the home in 1952.</p>
<p>December 22, 1945</p>	<p>5627 Monumental</p>	 <p>There is no notation on the original property card for when the building permit was issued. However, the apparent first listing for the house appeared in the Times Dispatch on October 14, 1951. First homeowners were Robert Smith Burrus and Martha Jane Burrus.</p>

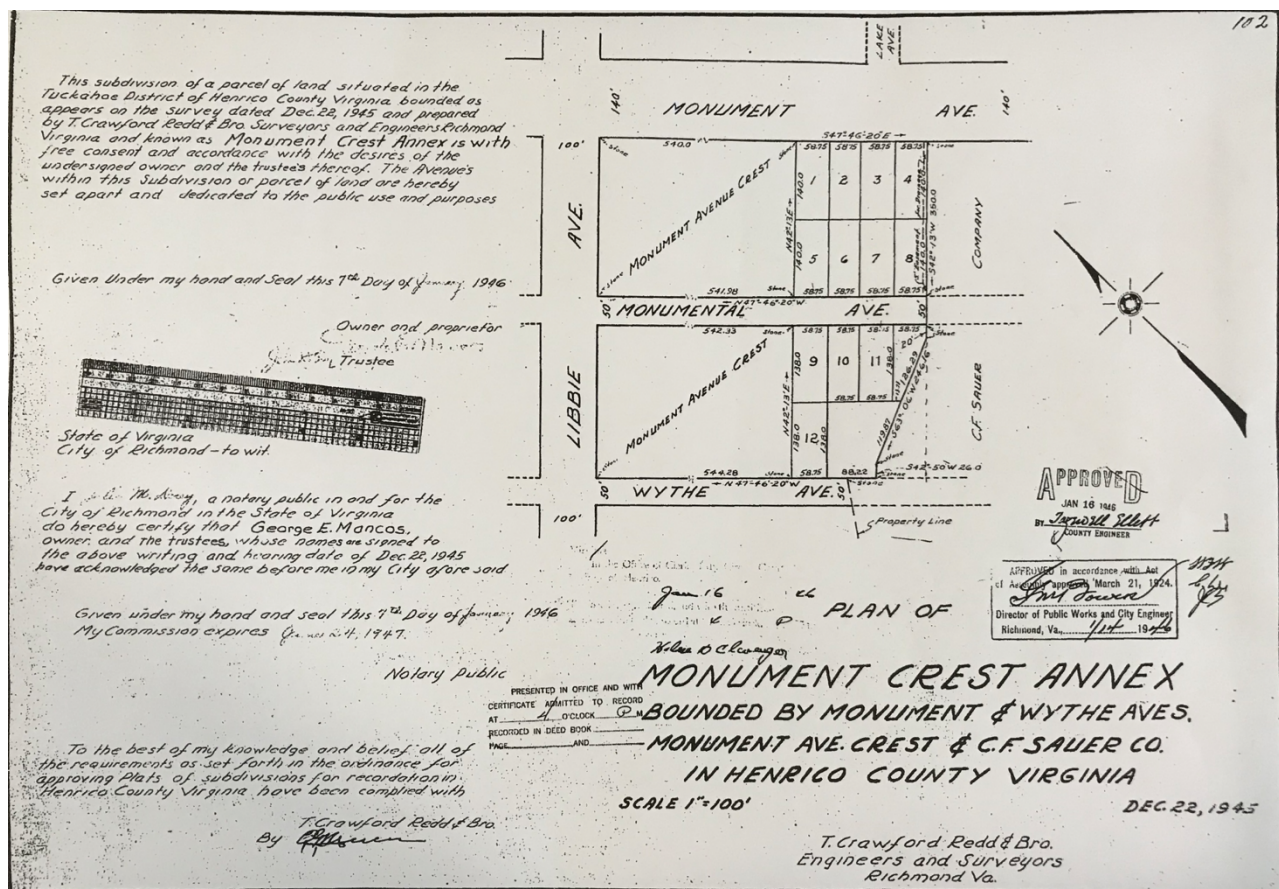
<p>December 22, 1945</p>	<p>5626 Monumental</p>	<div data-bbox="770 208 1399 643" data-label="Image"> </div> <p>There is no notation on the original property card for when the building permit was issued. The first Times Dispatch ad listing it for sale appeared on June 14, 1953; George Mancos was listed as the seller contact, but it does not specifically reference him as the builder. Direct evidence that George Mancos built the house has not been found, but existing circumstantial evidence all strongly points to that being the case. First (original) owners of the home were Gus R. and Pauline W. Stevens who likely bought it in 1953 or 1954.</p>
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(Reproductions of original subdivision plats continue on next page.)

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Henrico County Platbook Page No. 13-123, dated February 24, 1926. Together with the previous Platbook Page No. 13-124, the entire plat, all the way to Patterson Avenue, for Monument Avenue Crest Subdivision can be seen. (Monument Crest Annex, for the lower parts of Monumental Avenue, follows.)



Henrico County Platbook Page No. 13-123, dated December 22, 1945. Monument Crest Annex, for the lower parts of Monumental Avenue.

Research Challenges and Source Notes

When I started this project in December 2019 -- writing a history of Richmond's Monumental Avenue -- I anticipated it would take about three-four weeks, maybe six on the outside due to the holiday period. I'm writing these final paragraphs five months later. I have written other histories on buildings and the people who lived in them, but as I dug into this project, I found that I had no dearth of information. Because I live in one of the three identical Cape Cods on the lower end of the street, I had already done some research on those houses (not so identical in 2020 after remodeling done throughout the years). The name of George Mancos came up early: his name was listed as original property owner on two of those three identical houses on the property cards which are available online through Henrico County Real Estate Division. My original thought was to go house by house, relating each home's history, but when I started to pull on the George Mancos research thread, it became apparent that this was not only a story about the history of the street, but also the story of an independent builder who operated in the early to mid-20th century in what would become the Richmond metropolitan area. I was very fortunate that, unexpectedly, the name "Mancos" is not a common one. Though it took me a while to realize it, doing a search on "Mancos" on the now-digitized Richmond Times Dispatch available online at the Library of Virginia, would, far more often than not, bring up an article on George or his wife, Edna, than anything else. Of the about 3,500 ads and articles that the search term brought forward, it would be fair to say that less than 30 were not about them; and about 20 of those would have been about another member of the extended Mancos family (an obituary for his father, for example). Other enlightening search terms were the addresses of the various houses being investigated, the three telephone numbers the Mancoses would use in ads, and to a much lesser extent the word "Monumental," though it was often too rich because it would bring up ads and articles that did not have to do with Monumental Avenue (but rather with Monumental Church, Monumental Street, etc.).

It also became apparent that George Mancos had an important partner in Edna, who never got overt credit in her lifetime for what she did. I try to rectify the failure to recognize Edna's contribution to George's business and therefore the street, but because explicit recognition is missing in any documentation, much of what I write is based on implied evidence. But I am informed in my speculation by a comment my mother made to me in the 1970s. My mother, who would have been about Edna's age and would have lived through the same era of a perceived woman's place, once told me that it bothered her that my father got all the recognition for the weekly newspaper and the printing business that, in truth, they both owned and ran, not just him. My parents were, like I suspect were George and Edna, true partners. There was a division of work, but neither would have been successful without the other. In this sense, I believe this story of George and Edna is also the story of my mother

and father, and countless other husbands and wives who ran businesses together across the country in the early twentieth century. I hope this narrative gives some insight into that.

As just implied, I am intimately acquainted with the mid-century newspaper business. I grew up in the business and worked my way through college working for small, but well-regarded, newspapers. Other than changing from letterpress to offset printing, there was not much difference between how newspapers operated during the time when George and Edna were building their business and when I was working for newspapers a couple of decades later. Newspapers published everything, and if someone brought or called in something to the newspaper, it was considered news. There was a lot of space to fill. The Sunday, May 2, 1948, Times Dispatch had nearly 120 pages in it, and the general philosophy of editors all across the country was that it was better to fill the pages with local news, even if it was merely that a woman and her mother had gone to the horse races in Maryland over the weekend, rather than to run a recipe or other filler that subscription services provided to them in case the inevitable “hole” appeared and there was nothing else to fill it (but make no mistake about it, the newspapers of the day also fully informed their readers with stories of international, national, state, and local importance.)

A tragedy is that nearly without exception these original old newspapers were, after being conserved by libraries on microfilm, thrown away. Therefore, when the new technology of machine-readable digitization came available, the originals were no longer available, and so the microfilm was digitized instead. The digitization technology does a pretty good job, perhaps an extremely good job, of cataloguing words; however, the microfilm reproductions had already reduced photographs to something looking like black blobs. So the quality of many of the images used in this narrative, taken from photographs which had appeared in the newspaper, are, at best, poor. I did quite a lot of looking around to see if the Times Dispatch, the newspaper of record for the State of Virginia, might be available somewhere in its original form (from my old newspaper days, I know every newspaper saved a copy of every edition which would be sent to a company at the end of the year which would in turn bound them in large volumes, with at least one volume kept at the newspaper for research purposes of the journalists themselves -- in the days before digitization -- and the other shipped to the state library for safekeeping). There does not appear to be an archive anywhere of these old, bound copies of newspapers, and, in fact, I was scolded by a couple of librarians for even imagining that libraries might have been expected to keep originals of old newspapers in their scarce storage space after the papers were microfilmed.⁴⁸

⁴⁸ To learn more about the devastating loss of newspapers to the historical record, see Nicholas Baker, “Double Fold: Libraries and the Assault on Paper.” I was told by a photographer at the Times Dispatch that the paper still has a large archive of old negatives and photographs, but because newspapers themselves are endangered,

It would not be feasible to list the source for everything in the narrative; such a list would be many times over the length of the narrative itself, further complicated because sometimes a complex piecing together of several sources was required to establish a given fact. The Richmond Times Dispatch was, as noted, an indispensable source for the history; when direct quotes are used, the date of the newspaper is provided. Online Henrico County Real Estate Division information was another essential source; scanned deeds and plat books only available at the Henrico County Real Estate Division itself also helped straighten out the who, what, when, where, and how of the properties on the street and others that were central to the story. Vital records and other kinds of documents such as censuses, city directories, and yearbooks, on Ancestry.com helped piece together the history (genealogy) of many of the players in the story. The typed history that Jack Andrews did and provided to a resident several years ago was important not only for his first-hand account of what life was like on the street in the early days but also for the tip he provided that street numbers had changed. This fact helped immeasurably when I started coming across addresses in the Times Dispatch and other sources that just didn't make sense. Google, while not a source, specifically, was most helpful and a huge time saver to fill in the asides (How did mortgages work in the 1920s? What was the Grace Dodge Hotel in Washington, D.C.? What is a Monel sink?). More than one trip was made to and more than one email was exchanged with the Library of Virginia in an effort to track down maps and the odd fact here and there; and it would be remiss not to note that the best searchable portal to the digitized Richmond Times Dispatch is available online through the Library of Virginia. The detail of a local history like this would have been impossible without such a resource; it would have been beyond the desire of any human endeavor to scour the microfiche for the thousands of ads and articles that combined to make this story. Perhaps the ability to search in seconds a hundred years of newspapers for words and phrases is a reasonable, if unfortunate, trade-off for losing photograph quality on microfilm.

Neighbors on Monumental Avenue were a source of motivation for writing the overall history, and I was often amazed that so many residents knew bits and pieces of it -- I think they will be surprised at how things fit together. I know I was.

they barely have the financial wherewithal to keep publishing much less to expend precious capital tending these archives or making them available to the public. Richmond's Valentine Museum has a cache of photographs that were apparently donated to them by the Times Dispatch at one point, but the images are only vaguely categorized, and the director noted there is no discernible reason for which photographs were included in the donation. Because of the untimely closure of the Valentine due to the 2020 coronavirus crisis, I unfortunately missed my window of opportunity to visit their archives to see if there were any original photographs for the images used in the narrative; in communications with the museum director before the museum closed, however, it seemed unlikely.

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Richmond

Volume 79
Number 203

Entered January 27, 1903, at the Post-Office at
Richmond, Virginia, as Second-Class Matter.

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Attractive "Quality Home No. 7" Nicely Equipped And Furnished

Suburban Colonial Dwelling Built With View To
Both Convenience And Comfort And In
Harmonious Taste

Cool weather and the opportunity of seeing a fine exhibition brought a record crowd to "Quality Home No. 7" yesterday afternoon and last night.

The pretty brick, Colonial design house on Libby Avenue at West Grace Street, was thronged with interested admirers for the seven hours it was open to the public. At times the attendance was so large that it almost defeated the purpose of giving the public a chance to inspect and digest the fine points of the house and its furnishings. However "Quality Home No. 7" will be open for the next two weeks daily from 2 to 9 o'clock.

"Quality Home No. 7" is in the far West End, but it can be conveniently reached by way of Patterson Avenue. Later, when the improvements along Broad Street Road are completed, another east and west thoroughfare will serve the locality in which the house is situated, which is directly opposite the Libby Avenue entrance to the Westwood Golf Club.

The house is the seventh sponsored by The Times-Dispatch in the present series. Like its predecessors, "Quality Home No. 7" represents the best in workmanship and materials. It was

built under the personal supervision of George E. Mancos, the owner and agent for the property. It is priced at \$12,750, which includes electric refrigeration, window shades, awnings and numerous built-in conveniences.

The Columbia Furniture Company looked after the furnishing of "Quality Home No. 7" and a complete job has been done. The furniture, rugs and draperies are in the very best taste and are just what would be expected in a home within the price range of "Quality Home No. 7."

The house is of dark brick. It has three rooms down and three rooms up, not counting breakfast nook, sun room and sewing room. The place has hardwood floors downstairs and rift yellow pine upstairs. The walls are papered attractively and in harmony with the house on the rear of the 60 by 150 foot lot.

One of the attractive features of "Quality Home No. 7" is the sun room on the south side of the house. This room connects with the living room by a double French door and a single French door leads to the side

Please Turn to Page Two.

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Quality Home Be Well Equipped ed And Furnished

(Continued From First Page.)

porch. The porch is equipped with awnings and is an inviting spot for a summer evening.

The location of the property is ideal for those liking a suburban atmosphere with city conveniences. The proximity to the Westwood golf links makes the location particularly attractive. The property is in the direct line of progress and the development in the neighborhood is coming rapidly. Just a few blocks to the south is the modern Westhampton High School.

On Sixty-Foot Lot.

"Quality Home No. 7" is on a sixty-foot lot which has a depth of 150 feet. The street is improved and the property has a sidewalk both front and side. Flagstones lead from the front sidewalk to the main entrance.

There are three rooms, breakfast nook and hall downstairs as well as a sun room. In the entrance hall is a large closet with full-length mirror. The living-room has a brick fireplace. It has four windows and a double French door leading to the sun room and a single French door open on the porch.

In the kitchen there are a number of built-in conveniences, including cabinets on each side of the sink. The electric refrigerator sits in the pantry and a lavatory connects with the rear hall.

There are three large bedrooms on the second floor. At the front of the house is a sewing-room. The

bathroom is of tile and has a separate shower. The room is done in colors.

In the basement is a red jacket boiler and stationary wash tubs. The basement has an entrance to the yard as well as to the rear hall on the lower floor.

Mancos Is Builder.

Mr. Mancos is the builder and owner.

Many firms co-operated in getting "Quality Home No. 7" ready for the public to enjoy. The General Electric Company installed the electric refrigerator. Sears, Roebuck & Co. put in the electric sewing machine, and washing and ironing machines. Kendall, Inc., supplied the flowers with which the rooms are decorated. The Standard electric stove was put in by B. A. Taylor Company. Galbraith Brothers supplied the window shades. Besides the regular furniture, the Columbia Furniture Company installed the New Victor radio set.

The brick for the house was furnished by the Redford Brick Company. The mill work came from the Miller Manufacturing Company. Harrison & Jones did the roofing. Sydnor, Howey & Co. furnished the lime, plaster and cement. The tile and mantels came from H. N. Francis & Co. The Smith-Warren Company furnished the paint, and George Weaver did the work. The papering was done by Harry McCann. Tom Jones Hardware supplies the hardware and Tomlinson & Co., Inc., the plumbing and heating equipment.

EVERY owner says good things about it and the HUPMOBILE speaks eloquently for itself!

**ANDERTON
AUTOMOBILE CO., Inc.
HUPMOBILE
6's—8's**

Appendix 2 - Suppliers for "Quality Home No. 7."

We Helped Build and Furnish Quality Home No. 7

<p>STANDARD ELECTRIC STOVE In the Seventh Quality Home BY C. A. Bayler Co. 104 E. Grace Street Madison 2751</p>	<p><small><i>Times-Dispatch Quality Home No. 7—The seventh Times-Dispatch Quality Home is situated on the corner of Libby Avenue and West Grace Street, and will be open to the public today and throughout the coming week.</i></small></p> 	<p>FLOORS Scraped and Polished In Quality Home No. 7 BY C. Clifford Snook 2916 Haines Avenue Randolph 6096</p>	<p>PAINT BY SMITH WARREN PAINT AND GLASS CO., Inc. 109 W. Broad. Mad. 438</p>
 <p>You are assured of the best in Electric Refrigeration, when your home is equipped with a new GENERAL ELECTRIC ALL-STEEL REFRIGERATOR COMMONWEALTH REFRIGERATION CO., Inc. 316 East Grace Street</p>	<p>Wiring and Electric Fixtures IN Quality Home No. 7 BY Chewing & Wilmer, INC. 1106 North St. Mad. 4748</p>	<p>BRICK IN Quality Home No. 7 BY REDFORD BRICK COMPANY Twelfth and Mary Madison 3383</p>	<p>MILLWORK and LUMBER Furnished By MILLER MFG. CO. INC. 716 & Stockton Bldg. M. 1340</p>



Quality Home No. 7
LIBBY AVENUE
Between Patterson and Broad
Opposite Entrance to Westwood Golf Club
Completely Furnished
and
Arranged by
Columbia Furniture Co.
In Quality Home No. 7 we are exhibiting the fall trend in what's new in home-furnishings. Visit this home today or any day during the week.
Entire Furnishings and Victor Radio
Exclusively by Us
COLUMBIA FURNITURE COMPANY



MANCOS HOMES
Mancos-built homes represent the highest quality of materials and construction. By building only a few homes each year personal supervision of every detail is assured. This means continued satisfaction to persons who are placing their earnings in a future home.
This attractive home, that is on display today, is not only built on a large lot (35'x150'), but an added advantage comes from the fact that it faces the beautiful Westwood Golf Course, and is in the section of Richmond where exclusive residential developments are fastly expanding.
On the first floor you find a spacious living-room, dining-room, sun parlor, kitchen, breakfast room, pantry, and lavatory. The second includes three large bedrooms, a bathroom and beautiful bath. A wide, attractive porch leads out to a well-turfed lawn that is dotted with shrubbery. A two-car brick garage affords ample space for your car and garden or lawn implements.
The kitchen is equipped with the General Electric Refrigerator and a Standard Electric Stove. Both of these are included in the reasonable price of \$12,750.
GEO. E. MANCOS
OWNER AND BUILDER
Monumental and Libby Avenues
Phone Root, 8581

Appendix 3 - Deborah Teel's review of Mancos home at 5700 Cole Street.

New England Cottage Open To Public View

By Deborah Teel

With a tall pine standing guard at one end and oak trees spreading their protective branches all around it, number 5700 Cole Street, just a short stone's throw from the Westhampton School, stands with door open today between 3 and 7 o'clock to receive the public.

George F. Mancos is the designer of this white clapboard house whose gables keep company with the treetops and the L. E. Walton Real Estate Company is inviting everyone to see it, all livably and discriminatingly appointed by the Hawkes Furniture Company. It has been named the Priscilla Alden Cottage and there is no doubt that Priscilla would have been overcome with ecstasy had she been offered a modern home like this so beautifully furnished. One is inclined to think that if her choice had been a toss-up between Miles Standish with the house, or John Alden without it, Miles might have been the successful suitor after all.

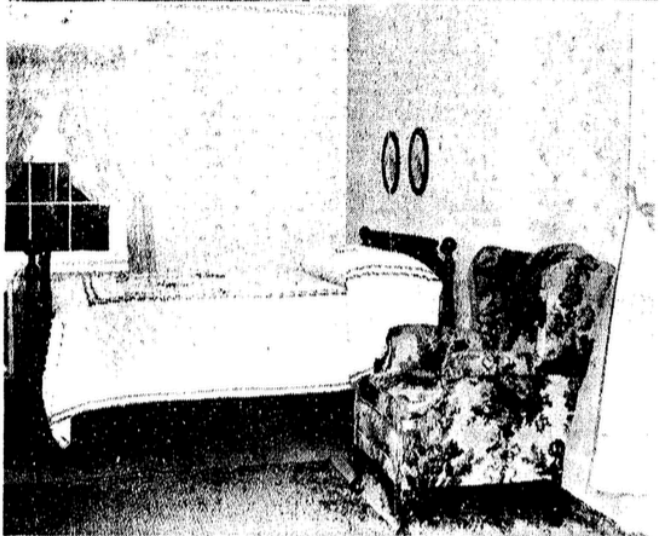
However, since the erstwhile Mrs. Alden quite likely has no use for the cottage now, you will probably wish it were all yours from its hospitable little entrance hall to the sky-roofed deck porch which opens off the master bedroom. There is a deep closet in the hall to take care of coats and overshoes and games and all those odds and ends to which a hall closet uncomplainingly gives refuge. A window at the head of the stairs sends down light into this dwelling's entrance way. To the left beyond a door is a den; to the right through an arch is the long capacious living room.

Blue and Burgundy

Here blues combine happily with burgundy against the gentle background of soft dove-gray walls. The glow of the mahogany break-front eighteenth century secretary, Pembroke end table and graceful coffee table denotes more elegance than Priscilla Alden ever dreamed of, while the handsome gilt-framed mirror above the white mantelpiece will surely reflect more frivolous faces than was the countenance of the Puritan maid's. Summery curtains and a soft blue fibre rug leave no question that this room will be a cool haven from the sweltering of sticky summer days and then, when evening breezes spring up, the porch just off the living room will be the place to lounge and be refreshed.

An archway leading to the delicate gray-green dining room balances the one into the hall at the other side of the fireplace. Duncan Phyfe's mahogany regency in this room which overlooks the studio and sunshine of the back yard. Sheer curtains and a fibre rug show that the Hawkes Furniture Company had summer comfort in mind for the dining hour at this house.

The cream, black and red kitchen is a housewife's paradise of shelves, drawers and cupboards and huge tile drainboards with room enough for a breakfast table and chairs. The housewife here--and what would Priscilla have thought of this--will cook electrically on a Westinghouse range. Adjoining the kitchen and just opposite a downstairs inventory is



Above, is shown a section of the living room in the Priscilla Alden house located at 5700 Cole Street. This home, completely decorated by the Hawkes Furniture Company, will be held open from 3 to 9 P. M. today and from 7 to 9 P. M. daily this week by the L. E. Walton & Company, Inc., agents. Below is shown the bedroom in the Priscilla Alden house.

a roomy pantry with shelves to hold a bountiful supply of groceries and floor space for brooms and mops.

Extra Room Downstairs

The extra room downstairs, which Hawkes has fitted out as a den, could be a den by day and a guest room by night, for it has a big closet and is just a step from the inventory; or it might be

furnished as a regular bedroom, or boy of the family, for someone who found going up the stairway leads to two blue and down stairs' hard, for a sick bedrooms and a tile bath with patient, or for the growing girl's shower on the second floor. Both



Appendix 4 - Ad of suppliers for home at today's 5704 Monumental Avenue.

*Quality
enters
the
Low
Price
field*

**OPEN
TODAY:**
3 TO 9 P. M.

DAILY:
3 TO 8 P. M.

Directions—
Drive out Patterson Ave.
to Libby Ave. . . . turn
right and drive to Monu-
mental Ave.

YOU'RE INVITED TO THE OPENING OF

THE "MANCOS HOME"

BEAUTIFULLY FURNISHED AND DECORATED BY

THE HAWKES FURNITURE CO.
215 WEST BROAD STREET

Located Outside of Proposed Annexation Line . . . Insuring Low Taxes



5504 MONUMENTAL AVE.
See Our Other Nine Homes Now Being Constructed on Monumental Ave.

Two-story red brick home with basement. Living-room with fireplace and damper . . . dining-room . . . den with lavatory . . . modern kitchen with steel cabinets, electric range . . . 2 bedrooms . . . tiled bath with shower . . . large closets . . . telephone outlets on both floors . . . numerous floor sockets . . . oak floors . . . full screens, insulated and weather-stripped . . . Pierce-Buller oil burner and radiators . . . wooded lot, 60x130 ft., seeded, graded and shrubbed.

\$7,950

*small
monthly
payments*

F. H. A. TERMS

BUILT BY **GEORGE E. MANCOS** **DIAL 4-4022** 1303 LIBBIE AVENUE

The firms below helped build the Mancos Home and have participated in this advertisement:

<p>All Metals in Mancos Home <small>furnished by</small> GORDON METAL CO. RICHMOND, VA. <small>Economize—Get Metal-Wise</small></p>	<p><small>Financed through</small> Virginia Building and Loan Co. <small>302 E. Grace St. 3-6668</small></p>	<p><small>Shrubbery furnished by</small> David Laird <small>Brood St. Rd. 5-4017</small></p>	<p>RICHMOND LUMBER & BUILDING SUPPLY CO. MILLWORK <small>Fourth and Everett Streets Phone 2-5831</small></p>
<p>VIRGINIA MACHINERY & WELL CO., Inc. <small>WHOLESALE DISTRIBUTOR OF</small> <small>Eljer Plumbing Fixtures Pierce-Buller Radiation & Boilers</small> <small>1319 EAST MAIN STREET PHONE 3-8401</small></p>	<p><small>These homes wallpapered by</small> Harry McCann <small>4114 Stockton St. 3-6264</small></p>	<p><small>Painting done by</small> Harry L. Tyler <small>4-8123</small></p>	<p><small>Weatherstripping done by</small> B. J. Felton <small>3-2315</small></p>
<p>W. FRANK MINTER <small>Dumbarton, Va. Dial 5-4770</small> <small>Plumbing and Heating Contractor</small></p>	<p><small>Electrical Fixtures were furnished by</small> SCHERMERHORN ELECTRIC CO., Inc. <small>114 W. Grace St. 3-2709</small></p>	<p><small>Brick Contractor</small> MAX DULING <small>Mechanicsville 2610</small></p>	<p><small>Shades and Ventian Blinds by</small> PARIS SHADE SHOPPE <small>1207 E. Main St. 3-6727</small></p>
<p>RATCLIFFE-GOOLSBY PAINT CO., Inc. <small>2 East Grace Street</small> DU PONT PAINT</p>	<p>REDFORD BRICK CO. <small>12TH and Maury</small> BRICK</p>	<p><small>TILE FURNISHED by</small> MICHEL & YAGER <small>4-1287</small></p>	<p>J. W. SOWERS <small>4015 Broad Rock Road</small> Floor-Scraping</p>
<p><small>Compliments of</small> SYDNOR & HOWEY CO. <small>2100 Bainbridge St. 3-2757—3-2768</small></p>			

Appendix 5 - Deborah Teel review of home at today's 5704 Monumental Avenue (page 1 of 2). (Pictures from the article are reproduced on page 18 of this narrative.)

Mancos Home To Be Opened For Inspection

**Distinctive Color Use
Marks New Residence**

By Deborah Teel

Out amidst the pungent pines at 5704 Monumental Street, George Mancos has built a house distinctive in the details of its design, alive with the elements of graceful dignity and serene hospitality created by its planning, its basic color harmonies and the appointments placed there and meticulously arranged by the Hawkes Furniture Company. Its Colonial door will be open to every one today between 3 and 9 o'clock and on week days between 3 and 8.

The Williamsburg blue of the living-room walls, the lightest dove-gray of the simply carved mantelpiece, chair rail and other woodwork are the beginnings of the lovely blues and gentle grays that follow all through the first floor and on up the stair well to contrast exquisitely with a pale yellow room on one side and a pale green on the other side of the second floor hall. It is an eye-soothing whole, this combination of house and furnishings, and you'll wish you could stay a long, long time, long enough, anyway, to relax on the dull, dusty rose Chippendale sofa that matches the Doltox summer rug on the living-room floor while you gaze at the painting above the mantel.

The picture is a reminder that each place in the room comple-

ments the other, for it has brought together in sky and stream and trees and house the color of rug and sofa and matted summer drape, the blues of the walls and a broadened channel back chair by the hearth, the grays and white, and the tones of prints elsewhere on the walls and flowers in a vase on the handsome round floorist coffee table. There are glints of color in the picture which seem almost like reflections of the gilt frame of an oval mirror above the radio and of bric-a-brac on the shelves of a corner bracket.

Room Harmonious

You'll wish you could stay long enough to settle down in that figured arm chair by the radio and listen to melodies as harmonious as the room itself, or to do some long postponed letter writing at the leather top mahogany kidney shaped desk that stands near the foot of the stairs.

It would be nice, too, to spend at least an evening in the den just off the living-room, or even a whole night on the long, blue striped deep sleep Simmons lounge. It's a man's den mostly, with its dark, plushy couch, a rust-colored easy chair and hassock in a corner beside a sturdy table with radio on it, and its ample smoking stands all surrounded by gray striped walls. The gray paper has a pin stripe of dark red, and the very unfeminine summery curtains at the windows, which look out into the tall pine trees, are striped in the same colors. There is, however, a goose neck rocker a little on the feminine side which will make a lady feel quite at home in this room, but perhaps its most satisfying feature is a huge closet with shelves and coat space and plenty of floor space to take care of overshoes and games and even golf clubs and baseball bats.

Kitchen Is Restful

Adjoining the den at one side is a small lavatory room and at the other side a passageway leading to the kitchen and to the basement stairs. Here in this nicely secluded spot is a niche for the downstairs telephono.

The kitchen is a restful blending of shades of gray with splashes of brilliant colors in the linoleum and crisp white curtains. Its bakelite work table and chrome chair, roomy cabinets and closet, the convenient arrangement of Philco refrigerator, sink and electric range make you feel that hard work will proceed in an orderly manner while the wind sings softly in the pine just outside the kitchen window, and monks, fit for the gods, will be prepared to be served in a dining-room fit for the gods.

It is a dining-room such as to make you wish that the old Roman custom of dining for hours on end still prevailed. Over the white background of the wall paper above the chair rail, two morning glories of heavenly blue, harmonizing with the Williamsburg blue below the rail. It is a spacious room to begin with, and the large mahogany framed mirror above the Sheraton buffet makes it seem like a vast bower of flowers. The powder blue Doltox hot weather rug and the drape of natural, dull blue and rose matching those in the living-room, combine with the walls to create an atmosphere of placid beauty and an effective setting for the genuine Draxel mahogany table, buffet, Colonial reproduction chest of drawers, break front china cabinet and shield-back chairs. Breakfasting here will be like having breakfast out of doors, with the morning glories blooming all about and candlelit dinners will seem like fairyland.

Appendix 5 - Deborah Teel review of home at today's 5704 Monumental Avenue (page 2 of 2).

Closets Remembered

The second floor is proof that the designer of this house remembered the blessing of closets. Each of the two large bedrooms has a closet of its own, long and roomy, while between them and connecting the green and yellow rooms, is an unusual closet with two sections and a window for brightness and air. There is another for linens and storage in the hallway opposite the black and white tile bath.

The soft green walls sprinkled lightly with white flowers seem to recede from rather than close in, the master bedroom, making you feel that this is the room with all the space you ever yearned for in a bedroom. The low Colonial brown maple bed, the table beside it, with an old-fashioned looking brass based reading lamp and book shelf seem to say that here is great rest for the weary. A dresser, vanity, chest on chest and a jolly chintz covered rocking chair complete the furnishings, and still

there is tranquil space. Yellow ruffled curtains at the deep dormer window and at the west window and a yellow chenille bedspread give mellowness to the room and link their color to the yellow walls of the room across the hall.

Guest Room Comfortable

The paper in the other room, however, is a somewhat paler yellow, with sprigs of delicate blue and green and apricot flowers. It looks like the guest room, and you'll wish again that you could stay long enough to spend the night. In the recess of the dormer window is a deep easy chair with hassock in matching blue chintz. How you could luxuriate there, reading idly until you were sufficiently sleepy to tumble into the beautiful poster bed! The bed, the chest on chest, the dresser and the combination night table and book rack are that lustrous genuine mahogany veneered with Cuban "plum pudding mahogany"

which is so appropriate for reproduction pieces. You would find utter comfort and quiet sleep here unless, of course, you stayed awake admiring the room.

From its welcoming entrance to its farthest closet and its second floor phone connection; from its wide white-fenced porch to its large light basement with the unobtrusive oil burner that heats the house and automatically provides hot water in summer and winter, it is a house of charm and satisfaction. Insulation and weatherstripping protect it from the excesses of heat and cold, and full screens keep out the summer insects. It is in an area protected with building restrictions, outside the city's proposed annexation territory, yet close enough to be supplied with city water. Staunchly its gables rise against the background of pines, and the front door chime waits to announce your arrival.

Appendix 6 - Jack Andrews memoir (page 1 of 11).

*
Original Owners Of Houses On 5500 Block – Monumental Ave (1941)
As Remembered By Jack Andrews

First Mancos House (Libbie Ave)	Second Mancos House (Libbie Ave)
5511 Jurdens (no children)	5510 John & Edna Mac Andrews. 1 st Son Wm H Andrews. SSgt in Army Air Corps in WWII. 2 nd Son John ("Jack") E. Andrews
5509 Haynes (one boy, Rodney). Mrs. Haynes died of cancer in about 1947. Rodney and his father moved to another location in Richmond 1948	5508 Jake & Bess Jacobus (no children)
5507 Powells (no children), Col in US Army WWII	5506 Vacant Lot
5505 Westhavers (one boy, Lawrence). – worked for US Patent Office after its trasfer to Richmond during WWII Moved back to Washington at WWII's end.	5504 Jack and ????? Honeycutt, Capt in US Army WWII. (one daughter, Joyce)
5503 Hurley & ?????Cauthorne (two girls- one named Denny & ?????: boy-Stark) – Hurley Served in WWII in heavy combat which included Battle of the Bulge. Worked for Richmond Times Dispatch before and after the war.	5502 Milton & Evelyn Smith (one daughter, ?????)
5501 Morris & Yodus King, (two boys, Maurice ["Mossie"] & Johnny). Mr. & Mrs. King moved to a new house out beyond 3 Chop Rd in the late 50's. Mr. King died after an accident when he was badly burned using gas to burn trash in a barrel. Mrs. King became unable to take care of herself, and Mossie moved her to a convalescent home where she later died.	5500 Wilbur & Elizabeth Owen. Believe he served in Army during WWII, but forget details (two boys. Tommy and John). Mrs. Owen died in the early 50's, and the family moved to Alexandria, Va after that

* POST OFFICE CHANGED THE BLOCK TO 5700 IN THE 1950's.

Appendix 6 - Jack Andrews memoir (page 2 of 11)

John (Jack) Andrews' Recollections of 5510 Monumental

Donna,

Please pardon my stubbornness. I know that the correct address is now 5710 Monumental, but I will always think of it as 5510. When I told my brother about the revised address in a recent phone conversation, he said, **"It will always be 5510 for me!"**

Our Meeting with you:

In the short time Janice and I had with you on that October Sunday morning, I sensed that you have great love and happiness in the home that once belonged to my family. And so it was with my family as the first owners. For myself, my brother, and my mother and father, it was truly a loving home. In recognizing the similarities between your affection for the house and what we felt for it, in the following pages I would like to tell you briefly of our origins, our life at 5510, and what we have done since moving away from Richmond. With regard to our lives at 5510, my intent is to give you a snapshot of what the neighborhood was like in those days, and something of the neighbors. I won't get a Pulitzer Prize for either form or organization for what follows, but do I hope you will find at least some of it interesting.

I also have one other ulterior motive for putting some effort into this that goes beyond sending you a few old photos. And that is that I intend to provide a copy of this to my son (Mike) and two daughters (Terri and Susan) so that they too will know more about the home that they know still exists on Monumental Avenue in Richmond, Virginia. I'm afraid I would never have taken the time to do this had I not met you that beautiful autumn day last October.

How the Andrews family got to Richmond, and came to 5510 Monumental:

My father (John Holmes Andrews) and mother (Edna Mae McIvor Andrews) were born in 1900 and 1905 respectively in Geneva, New York in the Finger Lakes region. They met after they graduated from high school and were married in 1924, and my brother (William H. Andrews) was born in Pittsburgh, Pa in 1925.

After living in several locations in the northeast, they moved to the Philadelphia area in 1930. My father was unemployed for a good portion of the 1930 to 1935 period during the depression. At one point, he and his brother tried to run a wholesale beer business for a time, but the business eventually failed (**Talk about a stolen legacy If the business had been a success, the possibilities purely boggle the mind!**).

My mother worked at a local horseback riding stable, and made and sold Devil's food cakes to help my dad with supporting the family. Her Devil's food cakes were special treats that my brother and myself greatly loved.

I was born in 1935 in Media, Pa which is just south of Philadelphia. Mom always used to get great pleasure in telling that she helped my dad load a beer truck the night before I was born. What a way to come into the world! My parents always insisted that my coming on the scene ended the depression for them Probably not true, but I'll take the credit anyway. About the time of my

Appendix 6 - Jack Andrews memoir (page 3 of 11).

birth, my dad got a sales job with an electrical wiring device company, Arrow-Hart & Hegeman. This job required us to move to Richmond, which was accomplished in January 1936. The move positioned dad to do traveling sales work in the southeast.

In any given week of this period of his life (really from 1936 until 1954) my dad was on the road traveling in either Virginia, North and South Carolina, and the eastern part of Tennessee except for an occasional week when he might do business in the Richmond area. As I look back on what his job was, I realize that it must have been demanding. Because of the state of development in the southeast in those years, there were few electrical jobbers in the rural areas. Consequently he had to travel the long distances between population centers where he could do business. And the automobiles probably weren't all that comfortable either. Before and after the war, he drove the trips all by himself. But during the war, because of gas rationing, he sometimes joined forces with one or two other men he knew that had business to conduct in the same areas. No matter how you cut it, the traveling life in those days must have been tough.

For our first residence in Richmond, my parents rented a house that is located at 1626 Nottoway Ave which is in the first block off of Hermitage road on the north side of Richmond. I have recollections of that house, but not many. The thing I do recall is airplanes. The then Hermitage airport with its grass runway was located across Hermitage road and slightly toward town. The site is now covered by single family homes and apartment houses. My brother and a guy by the name of Reed Clary started their aviation experiences there, and that beginning became too the catalyst for my own interest as well. As young as I was, I became very much aware of flying machines in those early years.

Years later, when I was learning to fly at Byrd Airport I heard from several different people on separate occasions the following story about my brother and his escapades at the Hermitage Airport. When these people met me and found out that Bill was my brother, they told of a sunny Sunday afternoon at the back in 1940. There were a number of pilots out in front of the hanger just hanging around and shooting the breeze. At some point they heard one of the J-3 Cubs start up behind the hanger and a minute or so later they saw it taxi out to the runway behind the hanger, do it's run-up, and take off. At that point, the guys in front of the hanger did a nose count, and suddenly determined that all of the licensed pilots that were on the airport that day were standing in their group. The only two guys missing were my brother and another guy. Things got a bit intense after that as they watched the cub circle around the airport. Bill recently told me that they didn't fly too high because they were afraid someone would see them (as if that had anything to do with anything!!!) After a short time, they returned to the airport for what turned out to be a bumpy, but survivable landing. When the Cub taxied in and shut down, Bill and the other guy climbed out to less than a hero's welcome. Apparently they had worked out the details earlier by determining that the other guy had learned to do a creditable takeoff while Bill had pretty well mastered landings. And they applied those skills for that flight on a Sunday afternoon so many years ago. As far as I know, my brother never "soloed" and airplane after that. According to the story, no one got particularly excited about the incident in-as-much as no one got hurt (particularly the airplane). As a matter of fact, that little airport was reputed to have seen a number of unorthodox stunts by the guys that hung out and flew there. A number of them no doubt went on to apply their aptitude for flying in WWII

We lived at the Nottoway house until early August 1941 when our parents bought 5510 Monumental, and we moved into the new house. According to my memory (and I think it's correct), my parents paid \$7,800 for the house.

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Before Janice and I met you on the morning of October 17, we went by the Nottoway house and found it and the neighborhood to be well kept. The houses are virtually unchanged from what they were in the late 1930's.

As a point of interest, in the wee hours of the morning after we moved into 5510, the separate garage behind the "first" Mancos house (on the left as you leave the street) caught fire and burned. The fire was punctuated by the explosions of several sticks of dynamite which Mr. Mancos had apparently stored therein. In the morning, there was quite a mess in the alley and at the garage from the debris and water left from the fire department's fire fighting efforts.

About my parents:

For my brother and myself living on Monumental Avenue, we experienced schooling culminating in high school graduations, family visits from northern relatives, his departure to and the return from World War II, one college graduation, my brother's marriage, and the beginnings of careers. And in all of that, our mother and father dedicated every fiber of themselves to ensuring that the two of us were launched off into life with the best preparation they could provide.

All the time we were growing up, I'm sure my mother and father could have used more income, but they never let my brother and myself become aware of that. They always made sure that we got the important fundamentals of life (a good family environment fortified by great love, a good place to live, church attendance, good food, and a developing education in good schools, etc).

With respect to church attendance, it might be of some interest to you to know that my mother was Catholic, and my father was Presbyterian. As a result of an agreement made between them early-on, both my brother and myself were raised as Presbyterians. In spite of the obvious contradiction in that mix of religions, the tenets of each never caused a moment of conflict in our family. On Sunday's we dropped my mother off at the Catholic cathedral in downtown Richmond, and my father, brother and myself attended the Presbyterian Church on the grounds of the Union Theological Seminary in Ginter Park on the north side of Richmond.

Commensurate with each particular stage of our development and according to their feeling as to how well we could handle ourselves responsibly, our parents permitted Bill and I the freedom to range out and grow. But they allowed not one bit more freedom than that which they saw as necessary to maintain control over the direction they thought we should be heading in life. They had a goal for us, and nothing was going to stand in the way of accomplishing that objective.

My mother always liked to tell the story of how, as she lay in the hospital in Pittsburgh after my brother was born, she looked out over the city and made a solemn vow that any children of hers would go to college. And that vow pretty much determined the direction that she and my dad gave to us. One good example revolves around the fact that in the 1940's, Monumental Avenue was approximately one block outside of the Richmond City limits (I guess that is still the same today). In the early grades, I could attend Westhampton Elementary School without charge because no county school was available within a reasonable distance. But the new Tuckahoe School in Henrico County was completed in time for me to enter the 6th grade. So I attended that school for that grade, but Mom and Dad weren't happy with the curriculum. So they paid tuition to the city of Richmond so that I could return to the city schools from the seventh grade on through to my graduation from

Appendix 6 - Jack Andrews memoir (page 5 of 11).

Thomas Jefferson High School. As indicated above, I'm sure the additional cost impacted their furnaces, but nothing was going to stand in the way of making good on that "Pittsburgh Vow!"

Typical of the effect of my mother's "education vow" occurred when my brother returned from the war. He was discharged in September 1945, and before he got home, my parents had started the initial paperwork to get him enrolled in the Aeronautical Engineering curriculum at VPI. This is not to say he wasn't for doing that, but it is a fact that they weren't going to let any moss grow under his feet in starting the process. After the enrollment was completed, the four of us went to Blacksburg to drop him off for the beginning of his first quarter. One night in that first quarter, he called my mother and said that he thought he'd come home because he wasn't sure he could do the course work. My mother told him to lay down the phone (which was a pay phone in the hall in his dorm) and to go back to his room and look out the window and down. When he returned to the phone, she asked him what he saw? He told her that she knew perfectly well that the campus steam plant was the next very close building, and that he could see the men in the plant shoveling coal into the boiler fires. She asked if he wanted to do that kind of work for the rest of his life, to which he emphatically said no! **"In that case,"** she responded, **" Get back to work on your studies You can do the work!"** He did, and the result four years later pleased my parents greatly. And that's the unreasonable way our mother and father treated us. **We were truly abused children!**

About the Andrews' family's lives at 5510 Monumental: August 1941 to March 1955:

Not so much for my brother (since he was 10 years older and was only at 5510 for about 2 years) but for me the area around Monumental Avenue was a wonderful place to grow up. In the early years after we moved there, the immediate area around the street was heavily wooded. Being inside houses in anything remotely like decent weather wasn't an option for any of us boys on the block There was simply too much fun to be had playing outdoors. I have this memory of screen doors hanging as kids went in and out all summer long when all the doors and windows were open. The summers were hot both day and night. Of course there wasn't any air conditioning (and no video games), but somehow lacking those amenities didn't stop us from having a good time outside.

There were small streams in the area, and my friends (principally the King boys: 5501 Monumental) and myself would dam them up making them good for wading, and in some cases, just deep enough for belly-skid swimming. At times the ponds expanded and the dams broke under the pressure of heavy rains. I'm sure the rapid run offs caused some consternation amongst downstream homeowners. There were small streams in the wooded areas where the hospital is now, and these fed into the larger open stream that ran on south side of Monument Ave all the way to where the Keswick Gardens Apartments were eventually built. There the stream passed through a large diameter pipe under Monument Ave and on into a heavily wooded area. At that point, on the far side of the street, we used to dam the stream up, and that made it truly deep enough to permit swimming. That was not the healthiest of situations because, as we later came to find out, the water probably wasn't as pure as it might have been. I remember that George Mancos once happened by when we were taking a dip, and he shooed us out of there making a reference to the fact **"we didn't want to know in what it was in which we were swimming!"** Whatever it was, it hasn't prevented some of us from reaching a ripe older age.

When we moved to Monumental Avenue, most of the houses on the street were still under construction. I believe that our house and the Jacobus' house were two of the first houses completed on the block. I remember this because I recall frequently hanging around the houses under construction, and talking to the workers.

Appendix 6 - Jack Andrews memoir (page 6 of 11).

Outside of some concern for bumping into the occasional Copper Head or Moccasin snake, Black Widow spiders and picking off wood ticks (in a time when polio was rampant), the safety of kids in this environment wasn't really a concern to parents in the neighborhood. In those days, the parents didn't seem too concerned if we were out of sight for extended periods of time. Times have certainly changed in that regard!

I think you mentioned that the area now known as Westwood, before it was developed had a horseback riding stable located on it. That observation tweaked my memory, and I do recall playing over there in a huge sawdust pile which was the source of bedding for the stalls in the stable.

In the summertime, there were Mason jars holding an evening's catch of lightening bugs, and at other times, tad poles from the aforementioned streams. And too, there were coffee cans with perforated tops holding grasshoppers. Turkey Buzzards continually circled over the wooded areas to feed on any thing that demised there. Bats darted around the neighborhood on warm summer evenings. In the woods there was a lot of Poison Ivy to be avoided, and there were always mosquitoes and chiggers . . . Lots of chiggers!

Many times Mr. King would bring home as many as ten watermelons at a time from a farm where he worked on weekends in Glen Allen (he and his family had move to Monumental Avenue from a farm in Glen Allen because his wife wanted to work for then Senator Byrd, and the commute from the "country" was too far), and we'd sit in the vacant lot beside their house gorging ourselves on them. That lot saw many varied uses. In the summers, the Kings planted a large garden on part of it. That garden produced lots of corn, tomatoes, beans and such, a good portion of which they shared with those of us living on the street. Us kids also built extensive undergrounds in that side lot, and we built log forts there as well in which we spent some nights sleeping. After Christmas every year, the neighborhood kids would join forces to gather all of the dried out Christmas trees from all the houses on the block. We'd pile them up in the King's side lot, and we'd ignite the pile to create a huge-short term bon fire. That area was also used to shoot off fireworks to celebrate New Year's eves. The area just beyond the end of the street was a maze of blackberry bushes, and many berry pies came to all of the tables in the neighborhood from that area. There was also lots of honey suckle in that same location, and us kids always enjoyed pulling the stems and sucking on the sweet nectar.

We built tree houses in just about every wooded area available. We built a big one in the huge old oak tree that was in the Wythe Avenue turnaround behind the King's house. A favorite play area (once a year) was the network of intertwined trees at the end of Wythe Ave behind the King's house. Early-on, we discovered that a mass of vines grew together 8 to 10 feet above the ground in the top branches of those trees. They were networked between the trees, and strong enough to permits us to dive into them without penetrating and falling through. For several days once a year we could play in those vines until they were broken down. After that, we had a neighborhood pact that none of us would go back into them until the vines had grown back . . . Typically about a year. After a few years, the vines were broken for good, and that play area was no longer available.

Every boy on the block had a BB gun. I spent a lot of hours in the back yard at 5510 snuffing out candles with BB guns. We did lots of target practice in the woods, and we also had BB gun fights as well (**BB Gun Battle Rule #1: Only shoot at the lower part of the body . . . Violators will be immediately thrown out of the game**). Fortunately, no one lost an eye in this somewhat risky pass time. It's possible that that BB gun and later 22 rifle and shotgun experience was the

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foundation of my later securing positions on Marine Corps rifle and pistol teams allowing me to travel around the country shooting matches. We also made slingshots ("gravel shooters") that could toss a fairly large rock a pretty good distance, and there were bows and arrows as well. Peashooters too were made from straight segments of bamboo limbs. And cap guns . . . There were always cap guns.

We played marbles extensively. Each of us had a bag of marbles that always included "steelies." Steelies were ball bearings out of truck wheel bearings, and the biggest ones that you could shoot with your thumb and forefinger were prized to "break" the original pack of "glassies" to get you started on "running" the other guys best marbles. We'd draw a circle in the dirt, group the glassies in the middle, and attempt to use the steelies to knock as many marbles outside the ring so that we could take them as the prize of the game. It's too long ago to remember the rules, but there were many. They were always being changed, and there were always heated arguments over which rules governed a particular day's game.

And there were "flipping card" contests. The flipping cards came in bubble gum packages that were sold as thin sheets measuring about 3" x 4". The flipping cards were the same size as the gum, and always had pictures of events taking place in the war, or weapons, vehicles and airplanes used in the war. They were greatly prized, and particularly so after chewing gum disappeared (along with the flipping cards) during the war years. Flipping cards were used in a game in which one guy would flip a card from the standing position behind an agreed to "no-cross line." When that card came to rest, another guy would attempt to flip his card in such a way as to land touching the first card. If that happened, both cards belonged to the second guy. If not, successive players would attempt to get the card touching bit until someone was successful. The objective was for individuals to be winner-take-all of the pot of cards. In flipping cards, there were as many rules as in the game of marbles. There were rules pertaining to "touchies," "leaners," "out-of-bounds," and how pots of cards got divided up. Thinking back on it all makes the rules seem irrational to me now, but today I don't possess the depth of creative thinking that I had then in the neighborhood of Monumental Avenue when I was eight or nine years old.

I've never seen any surviving examples of flipping cards, but I'm sure that any that do exist would be categorized as collectables.

All of us had toy cars, and we used to get together to play "cars." The principal place to do that was in the crawl space under the King's house. We constructed a network of roads in the dirt complete with bridges, gas stations, and elements of towns. It was a great place to do that sort of thing because it was extensive, and it was possible to do it even if the weather was bad. Of course crawling around on our hands and knees (and there was only enough room for crawling) pushing toy cars all over that area meant that we came out from under the house pretty dirty. But I don't recall that anyone seemed to care much about that.

We played in the woods behind the houses on opposite side of the street from our house a lot. We hung ropes in the trees to swing off of, and never tired of playing "guns" . . . Cowboy and Indian type games. World War II was in full swing in those days, and we would also build log forts and played war games in the woods. If the truth be known, there were probably enough imaginary Germans and Japs engaged in those woods such that it was totally unnecessary for the United States to send troops to Africa, Europe, or the Pacific. In one way or another, us kids made a significant contribution to winning the war!

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As in all other pass times, in the game of “guns,” there were rules. One principal rule (which reflected our lack of understanding of physics) was that if you shoot at someone by yelling “bang-bang,” and the guy is running . . . He didn’t have to fall down because it’s simply impossible to hit someone who’s running! Years later I found out in the business world that the principal rule really does work . . . That if a corporate officer moves fast enough and shifts his position really well . . . This likelihood of “hitting him” is so small as not to be at all consequential!

In the appropriate seasons when we were younger, we played lots of “front yard” football, and softball and baseball in the King’s side lot. At one point, we even got interested in driving golf balls in the front yards, and up and down the street until it became obvious that wasn’t really the safest thing to do. As we got older, we graduated to playing football and baseball on the Westhampton Jr. High athletic grounds. Even in those days, the Richmond Parks Department had a really nice summer program at the school for sports, and most the neighborhood boys participated in them.

There is no doubt that the neighborhood kids frequently did things that caused some of the adults to sweat. On one occasion, Mr. Mancos bribed us kids to stop “tight rope” walking logs we had lashed 8 to 10 feet up between trees in the woods behind the Jurden’s house. To get us to stop the practice, he gave us huge pieces of canvas which we promptly hung over the logs to make very large tents. In the same area, we dug deep trenches and covered them with boards, logs and dirt to make a fairly extensive system of underground tunnels.

It was a very close knit and caring neighborhood. It wasn’t so much that the adults spent a lot of time visiting one another, but the kids of the neighborhood were comfortable with all of the adults, those who didn’t have children as well as those that did. If the adults were in their yards, they spoke to us and we always found it enjoyable to stop and have a discussion with them.

I have no recollection of adult disputes on the block of any kind. There was cooperation, and it was typified by the efforts of the neighborhood men in correcting the damage done by a severe sleet storm in the winter of 1943 (I think). Many of the pine trees were bent over at steep angles (those that hadn’t broken completely). The men pitched in and helped one another jack the bent trees back to upright positions using block and tackle rigs. They then cross tied them to undamaged trees. Interestingly, those ropes stayed in place for a number of years. That was particularly true of the Jacobus’ yard. The morning after the sleet storm, it looked like a battleground. All the previous night we could hear sounds like the crack of shot guns as the branches and trunks of pine trees in the neighborhood snapped under the weight of the ice, principally in the Jacobus’ yard and in their side lot.

What I particularly remember about that sleet storm was that it provided several cold and uncomfortable days at 5510. As I recall it, my dad was traveling. Mom and I had no heat or electricity in the house during that time, and there was a bone chilling cold in the house in rooms away from the living room where we kept a fireplace fire going continually. At night there were candles burning in the principal downstairs rooms. When mom and I were sleeping, we bundled up in blankets, and stayed in the living room near the fireplace. We were very happy when the lights at last came back on, and the heat flowed once again.

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Bill With "Fluff"
~ 1944



Edna Mae Andrews
~ 1942



Jake & Bess Jacobus With "Fluff"
1948



Jack Andrews
Bringing In "V Mail" Letter Fro
Bill ~ 1945



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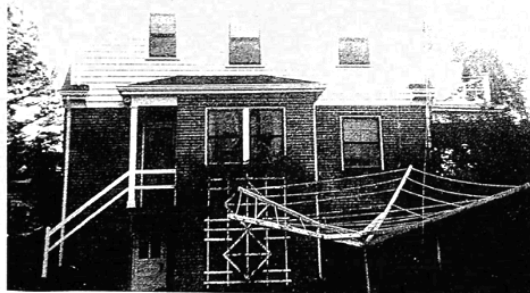
Edna Mae Andrews
In front yard ~ Early 1950's



Edna Mae & Bill Andrews on day he
left for England to fight in WWII
~ September 1944



Jack Andrews with Jacobus'
Dog "Fluff" in Jacobus back yard
~1944



Back yard ~ Late 1940's



East - 1940's



Jack Andrews with "Laddie"
~ 1944

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Edna Mae Andrews with Jacobus house backdrop ~ 1944



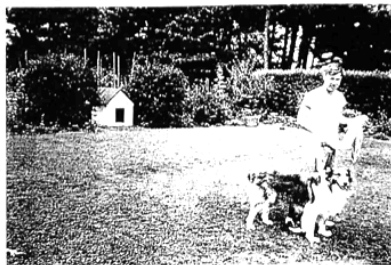
5510 Monumental in snow
~ mid 1940's



Ball game -
5510 Monumental front yard
~ 1946



Jack Andrews with Jacobus house backdrop ~ 1944



Bill Andrews with "Laddie"
5510 Monumental back yard
~ 1947

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