

HISTORY OF 5312 STUDELEY AVENUE



1911-2025

The House at 5312 Studeley Avenue Norfolk, VA 1911-2022

Norfolk's Story

Norfolk's founding dates from 1636 but English settlers came to the area in the early 1600s, settling in Jamestown in 1609. At the time, Susan's many-times great-grandfather, John Watkins, one of the earliest of Norfolk residents, was living here with his wife, Frances and son John II. He owned 200 hundred acres of land on what is now downtown Norfolk. He died here and his will was probated in Lower Norfolk County in 1638. The original will is preserved in the Chesapeake Library.

Norfolk was formally laid out and established as a town in 1682. As it grew and developed, it became a borough in 1736 and was finally incorporated as a City in 1845.

In 1776, Norfolk was burned to the ground during the Revolutionary War. British Royal Navy ships entered the harbor and began shelling the town. Landing parties came ashore to burn specific properties. The loyalist population had fled and the revolutionary forces from Virginia and North Carolina were in residence, but did nothing to stop the flames. After three days, most of the town had been destroyed, principally by the actions of the revolutionary forces. A cannonball from that battle is lodged in the wall of St. Paul's Episcopal Church in downtown Norfolk.

In June of 1855 a ship, the *Benjamin Franklin*, unknowingly carrying yellow fever, was allowed to dock in Norfolk for repairs. Within days, yellow fever spread from the dockside tenements to Norfolk and Portsmouth. Thousands became ill and thousands more fled. Life in both cities ground to a halt, with businesses, churches, and markets closed and the harbor shuttered. City government essentially collapsed in the two cities, and the remaining residents survived only because of hastily formed civic aid organizations and outside help. In the end, an estimated 3,000 people died in Norfolk, approximately one-third of the entire population, while upward of 1,000 died in Portsmouth.

By the late 19th century, the Norfolk and Western Railway with its line to the west established the community as a major coal ore exporting port. A large trans-loading facility was constructed at Lambert's Point.

1907 brought both the Virginian Railway and the Jamestown Exposition to Sewell's Point. The Jamestown Ter-Centennial Exposition marked the three hundredth anniversary of the founding of Jamestown and the Virginia colony. Commemorating the 300th anniversary of the founding of Jamestown, the exposition brought many prominent people including

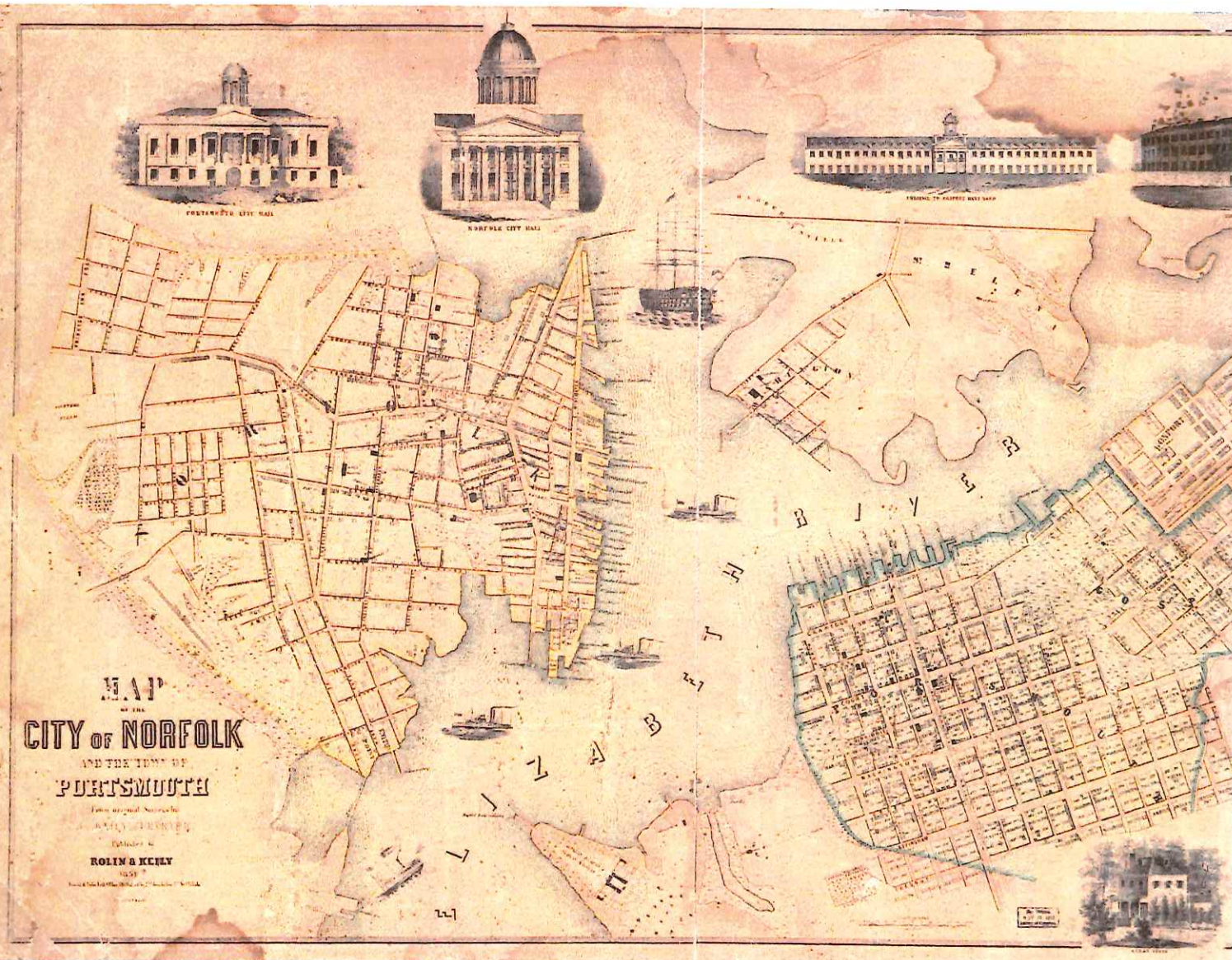
President Theodore Roosevelt, congressmen, senators, and diplomats from 21 countries. Many naval ships from different countries were present for the celebration.

The large Naval Review at the Exposition demonstrated the peninsula's favorable location, laying the groundwork for the development of a naval base. At the outset of World War I, Hampton Roads made a commitment to having a large navy presence with the establishment and development of the naval base at the site of the Jamestown Exposition, just to the north of Studeley Ave. In 1917, at the height of World War I, it became Naval Station Norfolk. The large maritime industry of shipbuilding and ship repair continued to develop quickly during the war years.

World War II brought massive growth and a huge influx of military personnel. When Pearl Harbor was attacked, Norfolk was one of only two naval supply depots in the Continental US. Norfolk's strategic location and existing facilities made it a good candidate for expansion, and by 1941, the naval base began to grow rapidly: 10,000 recruits were trained, and 16,000 officers were enlisted on the site, with 14,000 sailors on ships dispatched from Norfolk. After Pearl Harbor, the base was increased by another 5,500.

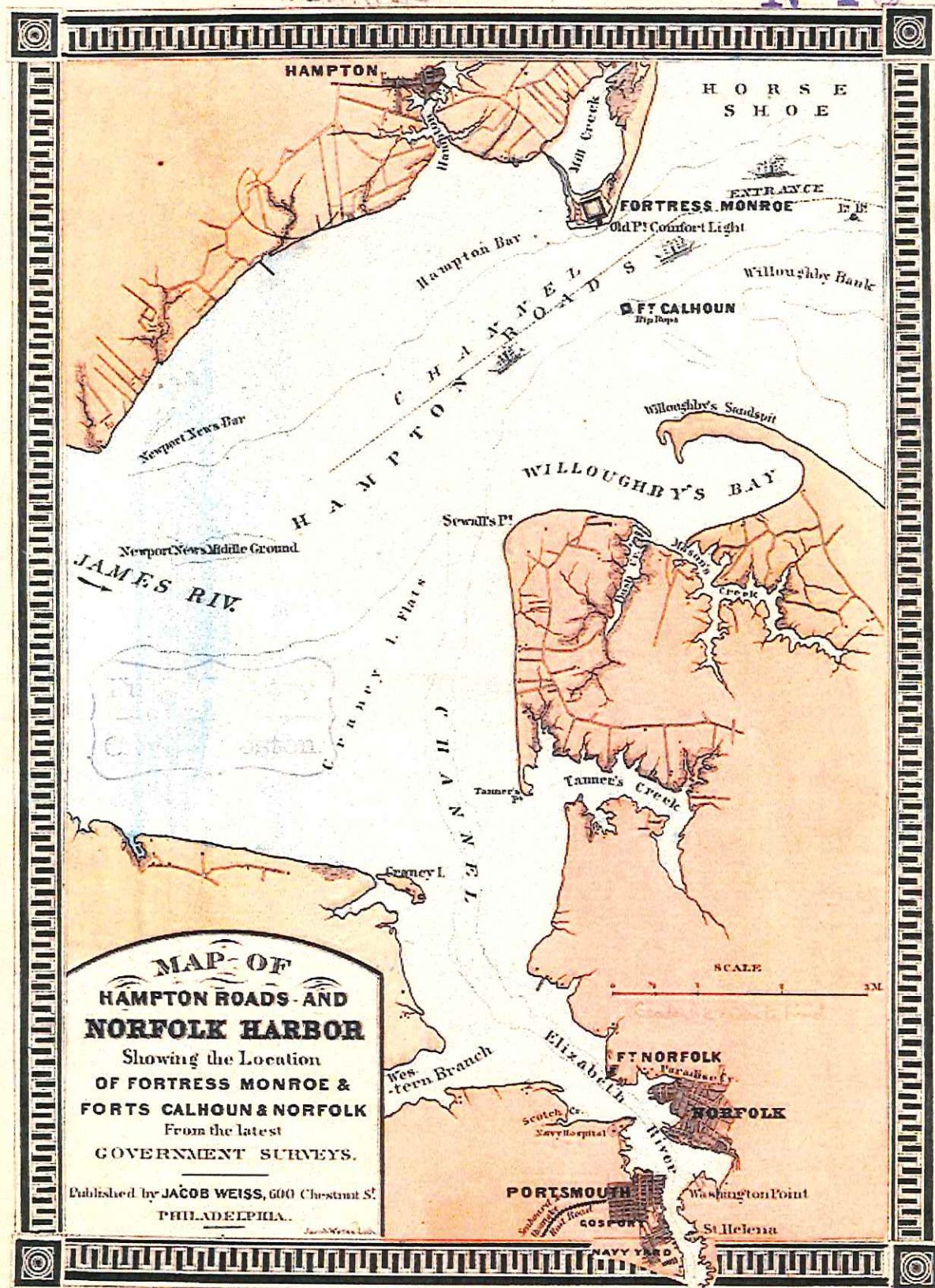
Norfolk was the primary docking station for the Atlantic fleet, which meant that many of the ships that went to fight in Europe, were built, commissioned and sent to war in Norfolk.

Today, the city of Norfolk is a major American naval and world shipping hub, with principal port facilities in four marine terminals located in Norfolk, Portsmouth, and Newport News. They sit as the as center of the Hampton Roads region, both on the southside and the peninsula to the north of the extensive harbor between the James and York Rivers, with the railroad terminus and ship construction port of Newport News on the west shore and Hampton on the south and east sides. The presence of the anchor industry of Hampton Roads today dates back to its founding in the colonial era as Virginia's original port.



Anonymous
Mar 1864

No 13



1861



**NORFOLK & PORTSMOUTH
TRACTION COMPANY'S**

Lines are shown in Red.

0 1/2 1 2 3
MILES

3884 NG 1919.1037

39949 06567 0579

718

The Neighborhood Story

During the 1600s and 1700s, the area just to the north of Studeley Ave. was known as Quarantine Point. It was there that incoming ships were quarantined before being allowed to dock in the town.

Prior to 1911 when the Studeley house was built, the area now called Larchmont/Edgewater was farmland and not yet part of Norfolk. It would not become part of the city until it was annexed in 1923.

It remained farmland until 1906 when it was conceived as an area for development by a group of Norfolk businessmen. They purchased about 200 acres in the area considered "country" by many Norfolk residents, about five miles north of downtown. The developers laid out streets, sidewalks a water system and landscaping.

Early access to the new neighborhood was by streetcar on tracks running down the length of Atlantic and Jamestown boulevards (now Hampton Boulevard), built to accommodate visitors to the 1907 Jamestown Exposition. Realtors T. Marshall Bellamy and J. Thomas Hough were hired to develop Larchmont-Edgewater. They placed a 1909 ad in the Norfolk Ledger-Dispatch advertising the new subdivision as "Norfolk's only high-class suburb."

In order to entice purchasers, Bellamy instituted his own bus line, the Larchmont Transit Company, which ran from Commercial Place in downtown Norfolk to Larchmont for five cents a ride.

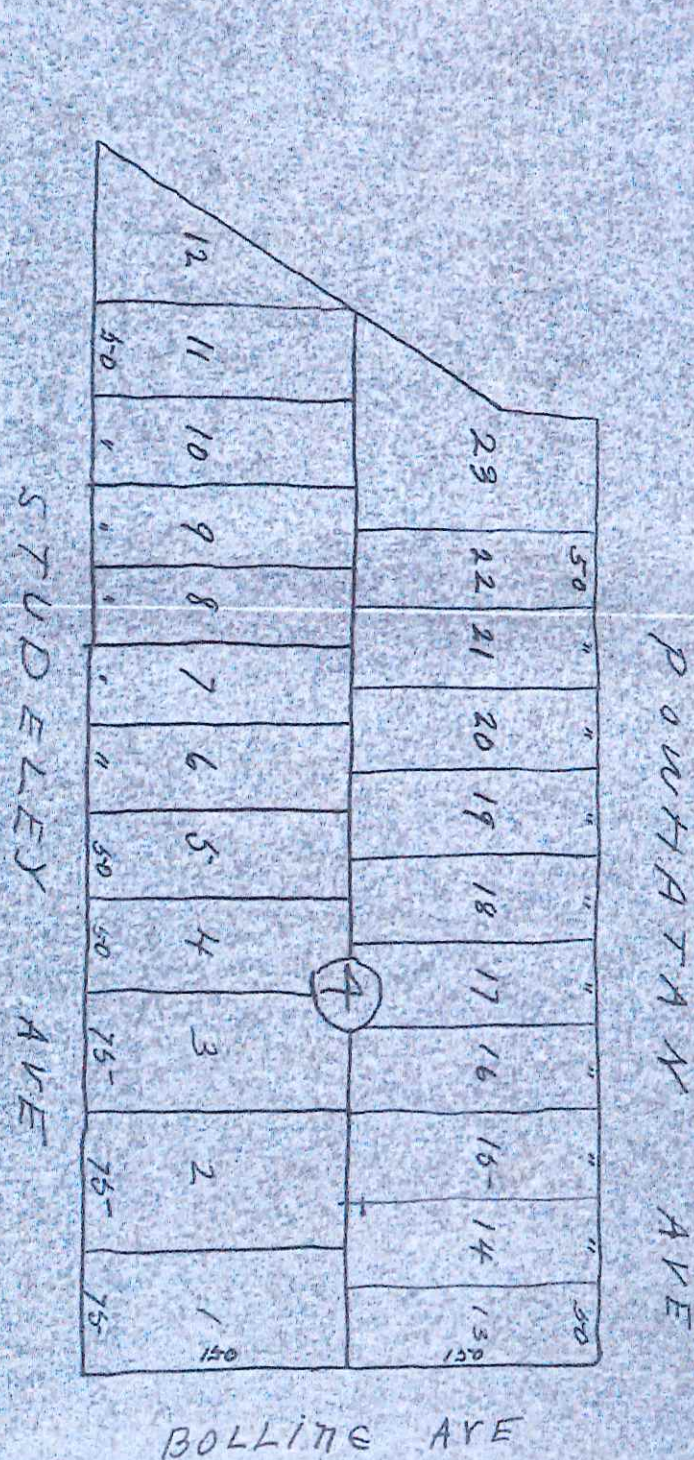
The lots on Studeley Avenue were plotted by Edgewater Company, a development company in the early 1900s. The property was divided into 25-foot lots and owners were required to purchase a minimum of two to four lots so that their houses would not be crowded together. By 1912, builders had sold 64 homes in the new neighborhood making it one of the fastest-growing Norfolk suburbs.

Sheet 3572, M B 10 p 69

Note this plat was attached to deed from
Edgewater Corp to New Edgewater Corp. Dec 21, 1911
By John Graham

ORIGINAL

PLAT - 1911





HAMPSON ROADS
SANITATION DISTRICT COMMISSION
SEWAGE DISPOSAL PLANT

NORFOLK & WESTERN RY
LAMBERTS POINT
TERMINAL

EDgewater
HAVEN

U.S. PUBLIC
HEALTH
HOSPITAL

COLLEGE TOP
WASH
H & VPI

BLUES ARMORY, N.G.

FIRE STATION
POLICE STA

JAMES MADISON
SCHOOL

POWHEATON FIELD

LAMBETHS POINT

NORTH

BOULEVARD

BRUNSWICK

BUCKINGHAM

EDgewater

POWHEATON

EDgewater

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The House's Story

1911 - On May 25, 1911 Edgewater Company sold the land to a Mr. Raney and Edward P. Crockett. The deed transaction was published in the Virginian Pilot newspaper on June 2, 1911.

On August 15, 1911, Crockett took out a mortgage to build the house. There is a suggestion by a local historian and researcher that it may be a kit home. Kit homes were common at the time with the materials shipped by barge down the river to the site. Look for "makers marks" stamped on timbers in the attic or on other original parts of the framing to ascertain if it is a kit home.

The People of the House

1913 - Joseph W DeJarnette and Calvin Blackwell

Crockett sold the house and land to Joseph W De Jarnette with a record of the sale published in the Virginian pilot. DeJarnette is listed as a merchandise broker and later as a food broker in the 1921 and subsequent City Directories. The house was also occupied by DeJarnette's sister Frances and her husband, Calvin Blackwell. He is listed as "head" of household in the 1920 census with DeJarnette listed as "brother-in-law". Blackwell was a well-known and respected Baptist minister at the First Baptist church in Norfolk. Their son, Calvin Jr. lived with them. In 1923, Calvin Blackwell Sr. died suddenly of a heart attack. His widow and her son continued to live with the DeJarnette's in the house.

1923 - Larchmont/Edgewater area was annexed to city of Norfolk

1930 - The census of 1930 shows DeJarnette is "head" with his sister Frances Blackwell and her son, Calvin Jr. listed as nephew, also living there.

1940 - The census of 1940 shows Frances (Fannie) DeJarnette Blackwell as "head". As a widow, she now occupied the house alone. She died in 1946, having sold the house in 1943.

1943 - Blanche F. Webb, RN

Blanche Webb is shown as the owner of the house in the 1943 Norfolk Assessors Records. A woman ahead of her time, she was a skilled nurse and Director of the Visiting Nurse Service and Children's Clinic of the King's Daughters (now CHKD). By the mid- 1920s the King's Daughter's had a small complex of buildings devoted to their mission of public health and two Ford automobiles that carried the nurses to their visits and their many established health stations throughout the area. She was previously the Red Cross supervising nurse for the state of Virginia. She was well-educated, well-traveled, well-known and respected. She attended high-level nursing association meetings internationally. Her brother was Lewis W. Webb, Sr., whose

son, Dr. Lewis W. Webb, Jr. figures prominently in Norfolk history as the director of William and Mary Norfolk campus, later to become Old Dominion University.

To speculate, it could be that she, as sole owner of the house for a period during WWII, used it as a lodging house for other nurses or women doing war work. It was during that time that Norfolk experienced explosive growth and housing for that many new people was at a premium. As her health declined, she sold the house to family members - her niece and husband.

1945 - Lemuel Markham and Eleanor Tarleton Webb Markham

Markham was a bookkeeper for the Virginian Railway. His wife Eleanor, a schoolteacher, was the daughter of Lewis W. Webb, Sr., Blanche Webb's brother. Their daughter, also named Eleanor, born in 1938, lived with them. Eleanor Sr. died in 1948, followed by Lemuel in 1950. Their daughter was then 12 years old, a minor.

1950 - Catherine M. Phillips, guardian per will.

Catherine Phillips is listed in the Norfolk Assessor's records as the next "owner". As the younger Eleanor was a minor when she apparently inherited the house, a guardian was named to manage her assets and legal affairs. Young Eleanor then moved in with family in Magnolia Ave. It appears that Catherine Phillips, in her role as guardian, rented the house out in 1950 and 1951.

1950 - Mark Hayer and Frances

The census shows that Mark was an aircraft mechanic and Frances, a clerk typist.

1951 - Robert S. Faris and Anne

Robert was the president of Ida Simons, Inc. Bowling Alley.

1952 - Sigmund A. Bobczynski and Jane Ives Bobczynski

Sigmund Bobczynski, born in 1915, was a career Navy officer serving in three wars, World War II, Korea and Vietnam. He was a graduate of the US Naval Academy class of 1939, retiring as a Captain. During his tenure in the Navy, he was awarded the Silver Star for gallantry in World War II while serving on the USS Archerfish in the Pacific directing torpedo attacks against the Japanese. He was honored by the Honorable John Dingell in a speech before Congress, published in the Congressional Record in 1957. He died in 1991 and is buried in San Diego, CA. His wife, Jane, was born in 1920 and died in 1996.

1970 - William B. Atherholt and Martha M. Atherholt

William Atherholt was born in 1938 is still living. He had a long and illustrious career in the Navy, training and serving as a navigator with anti-submarine aircraft. He served the US Atlantic Fleet at NAS Norfolk and later on board the USS John F Kennedy in the Combat Information Center. He left the Navy at one point and returned to Norfolk to go into business with his father-in-law who passed away suddenly six months later. He decided to return to the Navy and flew the P3 Orion, deploying to countries in Europe. After returning to Norfolk to attend

the Armed Forces Staff College, he joined the Naval IG in Washington, DC. He ended his career again in Norfolk as a Commander. He retired and moved to Maine for several years and now lives on a family farm in Eagle Rock Virginia. He is married to Martha and has four children.

1973 - Bruce J. Innes, MD and Barbara

Bruce Innes received his medical degree from McGill University in Canada, and completed his surgical residency at Montreal General Hospital. He trained in Cardiothoracic Surgery at the Bellevue Hospital and Columbia University College of Physicians and Surgeons in New York. During his career he held professional and academic appointments at the University of Virginia, Old Dominion University, Eastern Virginia Medical School, among others. He moved to Norfolk in 1969 where he began his career as a pioneer in adult and pediatric cardiovascular surgery. He was a founding faculty member of Eastern Virginia Medical School where he was named Chief of Surgery. He left Norfolk in the early 1980s after a divorce from Barbara. He has four children.

1979 - Barbara J Innes

Barbara Innes is still living. After her divorce from Bruce, she owned the house and lived there until 2004, raising four children.

2004 - Tyson P Schaedel and Carol M.

Tyson Schaedel is a retired Naval officer, currently serving as a 737 Captain with United Airlines. He graduated from UVA with a degree in Economics. His wife, Carol, is also a graduate of UVA.

2011 - David W Labrie and Jessica L.

Dr. David Labrie, PHD is a clinical psychologist, practicing at the Naval Hospital in Portsmouth, VA. He currently serves with the Coast Guard but has also held positions with the Air Force and the Navy. His wife, Jessica hails from Dallas, Texas, but has lived in Norfolk for the past seventeen years. She is a realtor with Rose and Womble, Inc. She attended Austin College in Texas where she received her BA in International Studies, with concentrations in French and economics. They have two sons, Turner, who attends the Batten School of Public Policy at UVA, and Schaefer, who attends Virginia Tech.

2022 - Mike and Susan Brazelton

It is now up to you to write your own story in this house and to leave your imprint on its history.

The research into the people who owned the house was challenging and took many hours of digging through source documents, untangling old records, researching old books and picking the brain of the Slover Library Sargent Memorial Collection director - a Norfolk history wizard named Troy. Not all sources agreed. It was also clear that it was mainly men who featured in the source documents. The women were sometimes mentioned, but rarely, and the children never. And yet, in developing the story of the house, it is certain that it was the women and the children who made the house a home, who left their mark and their stories in its structure and whose shadows still live in its timbers.

Sources:

Slover Library Sargent Memorial Collection

City Directories - 1910-1950

Wikipedia entries for Norfolk

Norfolk Circuit Court Recorder of Deeds

Norfolk Assessor's Office

US Census 1940-1950-1960

National WWII Museum website

Virginian Pilot Archives

Various and sundry obituaries

Passport application records





