

THE GLENMORE COMMUNITY AT THIRTY YEARS

(This is the first in a series of articles to be published by the Glenmore Community Association in celebration of the 30th anniversary of our community. Initial articles will contain information and stories about the history of the Glenmore properties and its surrounding areas.)

(In 1992, thirty years ago, the Glenmore Community was established by Frank and Peggy Kessler. They had purchased a tract of land in Albemarle County in 1989, called Glenmore, for the purpose of developing a special community of residents surrounding a beautiful golf course. Over the next 3-years, Frank was successful in encouraging people to sign up to purchase building lots, in anticipation of final approval for the community by Albemarle County. When the Albemarle County Board of Supervisors finally approved the development in 1992, lot sales began, with Frank setting October 15, 1992, the date of the first lot sale, as the founding date of the Glenmore Community. Our Community has now been in existence for thirty years)

EARLY HISTORY OF GLENMORE PROPERTIES. There is much in public records about the Glenmore property purchased by Frank Kessler in 1989, but much more exists in the stories about the people who lived here, what they did, and the legacies they left behind. As in most historical reviews, some interesting information has been lost, and some is included despite conflicting accounts in the sources that were consulted. And like most histories, the Glenmore story is a work in progress that is evolving and will not end in our lifetimes.

GRANT FROM KING GEORGE II TO HENRY RUNALDS (1732). Glenmore is a community in Albemarle County, Virginia. But, when the colonization of Virginia began, the properties were in the Shire (County) of Henrico, which had been established in 1634. In 1728, Goochland County was created out of Henrico County, and in 1744, Albemarle County was formed from Goochland County. So, technically, in 1732 the Glenmore properties were located in Goochland County. These dates are important when doing research about the area around Glenmore and the people who have influenced its development. A portion of the property that is now Glenmore was included in a grant of 400 acres from King George II to one Henry Runalds on April 11, 1732, the date on the signpost at the entry to Glenmore. William Gooch, Lieutenant Governor and Commander-in-Chief of the Virginia Colony executed the grant on behalf of the British monarch. The grant conveyed “400 acres on the north side of the Rivanna River in Goochland County to one Henry Runalds”. Runalds was a land speculator, and most likely never lived or spent much time on the property.

HENRY RUNALDS TO JOHN HENDERSON TO JOHN HENDERSON, JR. (1762) – The records are unclear as to when John Henderson may have acquired the property from Henry Runalds, but a transaction recorded in Albemarle County Deed Book 3, page 197, described an *“Indenture made this eighth day of July in the year one thousand seven hundred and sixty two between John Henderson of the Parish of Saint Anns in the County of Albemarle of one part and his Son John Henderson, Jr. of same Parish and County.”* According to this deed, John Henderson sold his son 490 acres, 200 acres of which were bought from Henry Runalds as part of the patent Runalds had received in 1732. The purchase price was 125 pounds English currency. As can best be determined, still no one had lived on “Glenmore” property, but it appears that John Henderson bought the land from Henry Runalds between 1732 and 1762.

JOHN HENDERSON, JR. TO BENNETT HENDERSON (1768) – On January 1, 1768 John Henderson, Jr. either sold or willed the same property to his son, Bennett Henderson. (John Henderson’s wife was from the Bennett family, and the name Bennett had become a family tradition.) Bennett Henderson apparently constructed the first building on the property -- a wood frame single room with a deep stone and clay basement, and he was likely the first person to reside at “Glenmore”, although there was still no record of the name “Glenmore”. The original stone, timbers, clay and whitewashing can still be viewed below the “manor house” today. It is believed that in the late 1700s Bennett Henderson also expanded this pre-Revolutionary one-room structure to include two floors with two bedrooms on each floor.

BENNETT HENDERSON TO JOHNSON AND TEMPERANCE ROWE (1799) – On June 21, 1799 Bennett Henderson sold the property to Johnson Rowe and his wife Temperance for 50 pounds, English currency. The deed indicated that 18 acres were *“excepted”* from the sale as *“the quarry of stone that is on the said land and a waggon way from the said quarry to the river”*, meaning the Rivanna River. The deed gave Bennett Henderson the rights to the quarry. However, Johnson Rowe was to *“have as many stones from the quarry as he wants for his own building”*. This quarry was said to have also provided slate for many of the initial structures built on the campus of the University of Virginia.

THE ROWES TO THOMAS ESTON AND JANE CARY RANDOLPH (1805) – Johnson and Temperance Rowe lived on the property for just over six years, and on November 30, 1805 sold the land to Dr. Thomas Eston Randolph and his wife Jane Cary Randolph. The transaction was recorded in Albemarle County Deed Book 15, page 225, and consisted of the same land conveyed from Bennett Henderson to the Rowes in 1799. One account is that the tract of land was known as “Glenmore”, but this could not be verified. If true, this means the Rowe’s first named the property “Glenmore”. In the deed, the exceptions for the stone quarry and road (“waggon way”) were included, and the purchase price was “*140 pounds English currency*”. Jane Cary Randolph was the sister of Governor Thomas Mann Randolph, then owner of nearby Edgehill. Thomas Eston Randolph became a magistrate of Albemarle County in 1807.

FROM THE RANDOLPHS TO LOUIS HUGH GIRARDIN (1813) – The first time the name “Glenmore” was found in recorded documents was when the Randolph’s sold the property in 1813 to Louis Hugh Girardin, “*a resident of Richmond and formerly of France*”. The purchase price was \$3,346. Thus it could have been the Randolph’s who established the name “Glenmore” instead of the Rowe’s. (More history will be provided in future GCA communications.)