



# **ARLINGTON COUNTY'S MOST ENDANGERED HISTORIC PLACES 2009**



## **ARLINGTON'S MOST ENDANGERED HISTORIC PLACES – 2009**

**ARLINGTON COUNTY**, like other jurisdictions around the country, is facing an economic crisis. In this climate, preservationists face a tougher battle than ever to protect the County's historic resources while allowing for positive growth and economic revitalization. In a recession, it is even more important that citizens have meaningful and historic places to visit that are affordable and close to home—such as public libraries, neighborhood eateries, and nature centers. We have emphasized locations like these on AHA's 2009 list of Arlington's most endangered historic places.

Modeled after the National Trust for Historic Preservation's "11 Most Endangered Historic Places" list, this ninth-annual local list highlights some of the County's most beloved places and building types: **the Gulf Branch Nature Center, Neighborhood Branch Libraries, the MoMA Lustron, Neighborhood Shopping Centers, and Early Arlington Houses.**

In this report, we discuss the threats facing these endangered places and why they are so significant to Arlington County's identity. We also give updates on other important places in our annual Watch List: the **Tomb of the Unknowns**, the **Wilson School, Columbia Pike, and Civil War Earthworks**, as well as the soon-to-be-demolished **Crystal City Industrial Buildings**. Some of these places are still at risk; others need to be monitored to ensure that they are protected in the future.

Founded in 1989 and celebrating its 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary this year, the Arlington Heritage Alliance is the only private, nonprofit organization in Arlington County, Virginia, devoted to the protection and promotion of Arlington's historic and natural resources. If you'd like to learn more about preservation in Arlington, or to get involved in one of our ongoing projects, visit our web site at [www.arlingtonheritage.org](http://www.arlingtonheritage.org).



## **ENDANGERED:**

### **GULF BRANCH NATURE CENTER**

- \* Arlington County's first nature center, located in a historic 1920s bungalow, was threatened with closure and demolition and still has an uncertain future.

#### Threat

This spring, the Arlington County Board included a proposal in its fiscal year 2010 budget to close and demolish the Gulf Branch Nature Center. Located in a historic building, it is a widely used community service. After widespread objection to the proposal, which led to public testimony by AHA, the Arlington Historical Society, and the Friends of Gulf Branch group at County budget hearings, the Board backed off from its initial proposal and agreed to fund the nature center on a reduced schedule.

Under the new plan, the nature center will stay open but operating hours will go from five and half days a week to four and a half days for the first six months. If, after six months (1/1/10), the community has not raised at least \$10,000 in additional funds, the nature center will be open only three and a half days a week. In addition, the County has not restored the director's position for the nature center, which was eliminated in the proposed budget.

Although AHA is pleased that the County Board elected to keep the nature center and not demolish the building, we believe that placing the burden on the community to raise funds—without considering other funding mechanisms such as charging special fees—does not signal a strong commitment to the site over the long term. As long we lack a long-term plan for the building's protection and programmatic use, AHA considers the Gulf Branch Nature Center endangered.

#### History

Gulf Branch Nature Center was established in 1966 as the County's first nature center, in recognition of the community's commitment to preserving the environment and to promoting community education and recreation. Since then, generations of Arlingtonians have visited the nature center, participated in its education programs and Pioneer Day events, and hiked along its trails. It is a prominent manifestation of the County's early and ongoing concern for preserving the natural environment.

The Gulf Branch Nature Center is located in a 1920s fieldstone-and-quartz bungalow that is nestled into a 38-acre stream valley. The building serves as an important reminder of the neighborhood as it appeared before the County's intensive suburban development. In addition to being one of the neighborhood's few remaining houses from that time period, the Nature Center building is a good example of the Craftsman bungalow style that characterized many inner-ring



suburbs such as Arlington in the 1920s. With its dark roof and stone façade meant to complement the surrounding natural landscape, the building also is suggestive of the rustic park architecture that gained prominence in the 1910s with the creation of the National Park Service and that was widely associated with the Civilian Conservation Corps in the 1930s. It is believed that the stone and wood were locally produced, an environmentally sustainable practice.

The Gulf Branch Nature Center has been widely associated with silent film star Pola Negri, who is thought to have spent some time at the house in the early 1930s. Although the evidence is still inconclusive, the story points to the cottage's likely origins as a summer retreat in what was then a rural enclave of Arlington County.

### Solutions

AHA believes the County should develop a long-range plan for the Gulf Branch Nature Center that would protect the building and ensure that it remains in public use, as it has for nearly a half-century. The County should investigate and implement alternative funding mechanisms for the nature center, such as fees for admission or special programs, fundraisers, or grants to offset County expenditures. Community-driven fundraising is a welcome addition to these changes, but it should not be considered in isolation.



**Gulf Branch Nature Center**, photo courtesy of Jennifer Sale Crane



## **ENDANGERED:**

### **NEIGHBORHOOD BRANCH LIBRARIES**

- \* Purpose-built and other small branches that serve County neighborhoods are threatened by budget shortfalls.

#### Threat

In tough economic times, libraries are frequently among the first services on the chopping block, and this was true yet again this year. In its proposed FY 2010 budget, the County Board proposed drastic reductions for three branch libraries: Cherrydale, Glencarlyn, and Aurora Hills. The budget called for the branches to reduce their hours to only three days a week. The ensuing public outcry—which included well-attended rallies and meetings—led to a reinstatement of most of the funding for the libraries. But questions remain about their long-term viability. One other historic library building, the Westover branch, will be replaced in Fall 2009 and is at risk of demolition because the County has made no plans for its reuse.

#### History

In the 1950s, Arlington County launched what was then called a “new era” of branch library building and service. In 1961, the County opened its first purpose-built public library branch building in the Cherrydale neighborhood. The Westover and Glencarlyn branches followed two years later. Neighborhood branch libraries fill a special niche, providing an introduction to reading and encouraging children to learn and imagine through stories and crafts. The libraries are also community meeting places and research rooms located in the heart of the neighborhoods they serve, encouraging walking rather than driving.

#### Solutions

AHA urges the County board to find ways to maintain the branch libraries for future generations even as fiscal prospects darken and capital improvements are needed. AHA also encourages the adaptive reuse of the Westover Library branch that will become vacant when the new library in the Reed School is complete.



**Cherrydale Library Branch**, photo courtesy of Arlington County



## **ENDANGERED:**

### **THE MOMA LUSTRON**

- \* Lustrons are prefabricated all-steel houses designed to revolutionize the postwar housing industry.
- \* Arlington's best-preserved Lustron, which was exhibited at the Museum of Modern Art in New York City, remains in storage with no plan for its reuse.

#### Threat

Arlington County once boasted 11 Lustron houses, which were prefabricated steel houses built to satisfy the post-World War II housing shortage. Like other modestly sized dwellings from the period, Lustrons are vulnerable to demolition and replacement with much larger houses. Of the more than 2,500 Lustrons built nationwide, as few as 1,200 are thought to remain today. All but three of the 60 Lustrons that once stood at the Quantico Marine Base in Prince William County, for example, were razed in 2006 and 2007. In Arlington, only four of the county's original 11 Lustrons remain standing.

A nearly mint-condition Lustron that was disassembled in 2006 and was the highlight of the Museum of Modern Art's acclaimed 2008 exhibit on prefabricated housing now sits in pieces in a Chantilly warehouse, with no plan for its reassembly and reuse. Another Lustron in the County has been put up for auction, and the time may soon come when the County no longer has any examples of this unique and important housing type.

#### History

Built between 1948 and 1950 in a Columbus, Ohio, factory, Lustrons are prefabricated, porcelain-enameled steel houses that were designed to meet postwar housing demand and revolutionize how houses were marketed and built. Led by founder Carl Strandlund, the Lustron Corporation offered two- and three-bedroom models in an array of colors. Exhibit homes were built in major cities such as Chicago, St. Louis, New York, and Washington. With a multimillion dollar subsidy from the federal government, Lustrons became approved homes under the guaranteed mortgage program for returning veterans. Tens of thousands of orders were pending when the corporation declared bankruptcy in 1950. Because of their novel materials and groundbreaking construction technique, Lustrons are increasingly recognized as historic, with several states successfully nominating examples to the National Register of Historic Places.

In 2006, the Arlington County Board acquired a nearly mint-condition Lustron from a man named Clifford Krowne, who had offered to donate his house to the County for long-term preservation if arrangements could be made to move it off his lot. That spring, the house was carefully disassembled and placed in a Chantilly warehouse for safekeeping. Last year, the



Museum of Modern Art borrowed the house for inclusion in *Home Delivery: Fabricating the Modern Dwelling*, a highly acclaimed exhibition that received press coverage in *The Washington Post*, *The New York Times*, and *Preservation*, among other publications. In October, AHA sponsored a bus trip to New York City to tour the exhibit.

### Solutions

Preservation of modern architecture has come to the forefront in recent years, especially with the acquisition by the National Trust for Historic Preservation of such modernist icons as Philip Johnson’s Glass House in Connecticut and Mies van der Rohe’s Farnsworth House in Illinois. Arlington County has been a leader in this movement by recognizing the historic significance of Lustron houses, which were one of the most successful early attempts at mass-produced prefabricated housing. The world-class Museum of Modern Art has honored the Lustron by including it in its prefabrication exhibit, signaling to all visitors that the house is worth preserving. We urge the County Board to develop a plan for the reconstruction of the house on County property and its conversion to a new public use—as a visitor center, gallery space, artist’s studio, house museum, or some other function.



**Arlington’s Lustron house** inside the Museum of Modern Art. Above, Lustron enthusiasts from across the country help reconstruct the Lustron inside the museum. At right, a couple visits the house at MoMA in July 2008. Photo, top, courtesy of Jennifer Sale Crane and right courtesy of Kim O’Connell.





## ENDANGERED:

### NEIGHBORHOOD SHOPPING CENTERS

- \* As development continues to occur along the County's busiest arteries, historic neighborhood commercial buildings are at increasing risk.
- \* Proposals have targeted Buckingham Village and the Lee Gardens Shopping Center.

#### Threat

Across Arlington County, small-scale commercial shopping centers and commercial buildings are threatened with severe alteration and demolition, as the County continues its smart-growth approach of concentrating new development along Metro corridors and other busy arteries. While AHA supports smart growth, we are concerned about the potential loss of historic buildings and neighborhood character.

Several County shopping centers have been specifically targeted in the last couple years. At **Buckingham Village**, three commercial buildings that contribute to the historic district were targeted for demolition by a developer. Arlington County's Historic Affairs and Landmark Review Board (HALRB) denied the proposed new buildings did not deny the demolition. It is unclear what next step the developer will take, but the first round of discussion suggests that removal of the buildings is still an option.



**Buckingham's Glebe Market** building is one of three targeted in a recent development proposal.

The **Lee Gardens Shopping Center**, a mid-twentieth century commercial shopping center built after World War II on Pershing Drive as part of the Lee Gardens apartment complex, has been threatened with redevelopment for the past several years. Abbey Road Property Group proposes to raze the current historic Lee Gardens Shopping Center to replace it with approximately 190 apartment units and 33,500 square feet of commercial and retail space, at the corner of Route 50 and Pershing Drive.

In January 2008, the Arlington County Board approved the redevelopment of the Lee Gardens Shopping Center, including a land-use change to a local commercial district zoning that would



allow commercial office buildings, hotels, and apartments on the site. The businesses located at the shopping center closed their doors in summer 2008. Since then, the shopping center has stood vacant with fencing blocking access to the parking lot and the building itself. The developer had not received funding as of May of last year, but the building still faces imminent redevelopment.

Other commercial buildings that we believe are under unprecedented development pressure include the Joyce Motors building and Kirby Garage in Clarendon and the former bank building that houses Cosi in the Courthouse area.

### History

Since the 1920s, neighborhood shopping centers have made living in Arlington convenient. Instead of big-box stores set amid acres of parking on the outer edge of residential areas, our commercial centers have provided services and shopping integrated into our neighborhoods. These small-scale, pedestrian-oriented complexes provide reasonable rents for local small businesses that keep our County vibrant and unique. Successful businesses located in historic buildings include the Clarendon Ballroom, Mexicali Blues, Liberty Tavern, Tallula, Cherrydale Hardware, and Ayers Hardware, among many others.

The **Buckingham Historic District**, which is included on the National Register of Historic Places, is an excellent example of Arlington County's early garden apartment dwellings. The commercial buildings targeted for redevelopment are located at 250 and 256 N. Glebe (currently the CVS, built 1946; altered 1953), 300 N. Glebe (currently Glebe Market, built as a Safeway, 1941), and 4241 and 4235 N. Pershing Drive (1945, originally a grocery store and post office). While all have been modified (mainly by installation of Dryvit exterior cladding), some may retain integrity and all were listed as contributing resources in the National Register nomination. Buckingham Village has already undergone major changes in recent years. In June 2007, after a painstaking process involving input from AHA and other concerned groups, the Arlington County Board approved a plan that would allow redevelopment of part of Buckingham Village but also included the construction and preservation of about 300 affordable housing units. That construction is now under way.

The **Lee Gardens Shopping Center** was designed by prominent local architect Mihran Mesrobian, as part of the Lee Gardens community (now Sheffield Court) in November 1941. As a result of the U.S. entry into World War II, the project was temporarily postponed. A well-known regional architect, Allen Joyner Dickey, slightly modified Mesrobian's design and completed it in 1949, conserving the original footprint of the building. An Arlington resident who also worked in Washington, Dickey is best-known for the Lee Gardens Shopping Center, the Underwood Building in Clarendon (1938), and his work at the Pentagon in the early 1940s. Lee Gardens is identified in the National Register of Historic Places as a contributing resource to the Lyon Park Historic District.



## Solutions

AHA is concerned that the specific redevelopment proposals for the Buckingham Village and Lee Gardens shopping centers, as well as the ongoing development along the Wilson Boulevard corridor, are threatening to irrevocably harm the County's distinct and historic character. We urge the County Board to take steps to encourage the adaptive reuse of historic buildings in ways that allow for new development, while retaining the buildings and maintaining their distinctive appearances and local businesses.

At Buckingham, AHA is concerned about the precedent set by the tacit approval of the removal of three (of only five) commercial buildings that contribute to a locally and nationally recognized historic district, with no explicit statement of why their removal is justified. AHA recommends that the HALRB institute a policy that requires applicants to apply separately for a Certificate of Appropriateness for demolition of any extant buildings when proposing the redevelopment of a site within a local historic district (e.g. city of Alexandria). This would allow the HALRB to address the appropriateness of removal of historic resources separately from the assessment of the merits of a new design.



**The Lee Gardens Shopping Center** is fenced off and vacant, as plans are under way to raze the historic commercial center for redevelopment.



## **ENDANGERED:**

### **EARLY ARLINGTON HOUSES**

\* Several of Arlington's earliest residences, representing the county's pre-suburban history, need restoration, reuse, and long-term protection.

#### Threat

You've seen them: those slightly off-kilter, off-sized, or oddly placed houses that seem crunched onto suburban sized lots and don't really fit with the other houses in the neighborhood. These are the remnants of Arlington's pre-suburban past. They remain as sentinels of an era before small lots and daily commutes. These were the houses of the truck farmers and dairy farmers who sold their products at DC's public markets or to city grocers. Reevesland in Bluemont Park, the Febrey-Kincheloe house in Overlee Knolls, and the Charles Drew house are hidden jewels that remain tucked away throughout the county. These unique resources are threatened by different pressures.

Other early Arlington houses that occupy what are today oversized lots are in danger of redevelopment with multiple houses, altering the diverse character of our historic neighborhoods. These include the side-by-side frame bungalows at 2727 and 2731 Lorcom Lane in Woodmont, which were recently sold as land for development. Ironically, the two proposed new 5,000 square-foot residences closely resemble the simple bungalow forms and style of the authentic circa-1925 structures that occupy the two lots today. The demolition of these two houses represents the loss of a significant piece in the story of how the neighborhood developed, which cannot be reclaimed. An early 20<sup>th</sup> century Tudor house at 1611 McKinley Street on a large lot in Westover faces the same fate.

#### History

Between 1900 and 1920, the total acreage of farmed land in Arlington decreased from 11,500 in 1900 to just 2,800, twenty years later. Over the same period, the number of farms dwindled from 380 to 56; by 1940, the number of remaining farms was only 27. As Arlington transformed from a rural, agrarian county to a suburb crisscrossed by rail and streetcar lines and a patchwork of residential enclaves over the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, its agricultural past disappeared. Despite the change in character and land use, remnants of the county's agricultural era remain in the houses once occupied by farm families.

#### **Reevesland/Torreyson Farm**

Owned by the County, but currently mothballed with no concrete plans for its reuse, Reevesland offers an excellent opportunity to interpret the County's agricultural past. One of the last working dairy farms in Arlington, Reevesland provides a unique resource for teaching residents



and school children about agriculture and its pivotal role in the formation of the County. Originally known as the Torreyson Farm, Reevesland was the last dairy farm in operation in Arlington County. The property is located at 400 North Manchester Street in western Arlington in what is now the Boulevard Manor neighborhood. Although Reevesland originally contained 171 acres, only 2.5 acres of land containing a turn-of-the-20<sup>th</sup>-century farmhouse and two outbuildings remain.

Three generations of the same family owned and operated the farm, which originally extended from Wilson Boulevard on the north, to beyond Arlington Boulevard to the south, and west to Seven Corners in Fairfax County. William H. Torreyson purchased the land in 1866 and the family built a tenant house nearby as early as 1878. This tenant house eventually became the kitchen wing to the existing farmhouse, which dates to circa 1899. The last private owner was Nelson T. Reeves, who was born in the house in 1900 and was the son of George Richard and Lucy Torreyson Reeves. In 1924, father and son began their dairy operation, which Nelson continued until July 1955. The farm, with the exception of the 2.5-acre parcel containing the house, garage, and milk house, was sold off and subdivided over time. The county purchased the property in 2001; it was designated a local historic district in 2004. Presently, the house awaits a master plan for Bluemont Park, a project as yet unscheduled.

### **Febrey-Kincheloe House**

The Febrey-Kincheloe House is one of Arlington's few remaining pre-suburban houses that still stand on large lots. Ernest J. Febrey, a member of a family of influential area landowners, built the impressive Queen Anne-style house circa 1880. It was later home to the Crestwood Sanitarium run by the Kincheloe family. In 1956, the Kincheloes sold the house and surrounding land (which still included an orchard) to the Overlee Community Association, which opened Overlee Pool in 1957. Overlee has maintained the iconic house as its clubhouse for over fifty years. While the building is well loved, the high cost of maintenance has drained the community association's finances. Work has begun on a long-range plan for the association's property. One proposal is to demolish the historic residence and replace it with a new clubhouse.

### **Charles Richard Drew House**

The family home of Dr. Charles Richard Drew (1904-1950), a distinguished African American medical pioneer, who made his home here from 1920 to 1939, is in need of some maintenance and restoration. One of only five National



**Charles Drew house**, photo courtesy Virginia Department of Historic Resources



Historic Landmarks in Arlington, the house is located at 2505 First Street South and was recognized in 1976 with the country's highest level of historic recognition. Dr. Drew's pioneering work in blood and plasma led to the formation of large-scale blood banks that, during World War II, saved thousands of allied lives. Dr. Drew received a patent in 1942 for a method of preserving blood, having discovered that plasma, which has a longer shelf life than whole blood and is less prone to contamination, could be separated and used in transfusions, thus paving the way for modern blood banks. After the war, Dr. Drew served as the founding medical director of the Red Cross Blood Bank in the United States. He resigned the position in protest of the government's racist policies that required that the blood of African Americans not be given to whites, a policy that Dr. Drew knew had no basis in scientific fact.

The home, a modest two-story frame farmhouse, remains in the Drew family and is lived in by one of Drew's grandchildren and her family. The most recent owners were the late Joseph Drew and his wife, Grace, who passed away just last month (April 2009) at age 98. Mrs. Drew was a well-known and respected Arlington resident.

As a nationally significant historic landmark, the property is eligible for special preservation grants. In addition, the owners can make use of preservation tax credits to reduce the substantial cost of rehabilitating the building. Although historic designation offers potential help for preserving the landmark building, it is not currently protected from demolition. If sold, the house, which stands on three lots, would be vulnerable because a future owner may want to demolish it and construct new residences on the property. Arlington – and the nation – cannot afford to lose this tangible link to the remarkable life and groundbreaking work of Dr. Charles Drew.

### Solutions

Land is at a premium in Arlington County, but developers, County officials, and others should resist the temptation to subdivide our last few remaining large-lot properties, which offer important examples of our agrarian, pre-suburban history. Rather than sell these properties to the highest bidder, real estate agents, developers, and property owners should work with County preservation staff and AHA to leverage tax incentives or other means to preserve historic buildings in a way that allows for expansion (say, through sensitive additions). At Reevesland, AHA hopes to work with the County to determine a long-term use for the farmhouse and property, which would make an excellent museum and historic site (possibly revenue-generating) for Arlington's residents and visitors.



## WATCH LIST

### TOMB OF THE UNKNOWNNS

Two years ago, the Tomb of the Unknowns at Arlington National Cemetery (ANC) was threatened with replacement with a replica stone because of superficial cracks that the Department of the Army and the cemetery deemed unsightly. The Arlington Heritage Alliance and the National Trust for Historic Preservation joined forces to persuade the Army and the ANC that preservation was the only sensible option with regard to one of our nation's most revered and recognized military memorials. Comments from AHA and others convinced legislators to support the Tomb's preservation. As a result, Senators Daniel Akaka and James Webb amended the Tomb to the 2008 Defense Authorization Bill requiring ANC and the Army to submit a written report to Congress addressing the condition of the Tomb and the feasibility of replacement. That study, submitted in August 2008, admitted that replacement of the monument would permanently harm the renowned historic significance of the Tomb of the Unknowns and Arlington National Cemetery and that the cracks could be repaired in a cost-effective manner.



The report also indicated that the Army and ANC have not entirely abandoned the option to replace the Tomb Monument with a replica quarried "from the original quarry and from the same marble vein." AHA, as a consulting party, will continue to monitor the situation, ensuring that appropriate conservation and maintenance work is performed for the Tomb.

### WILSON SCHOOL

The Wilson School is the oldest, extant school building in Arlington County that is still owned and maintained by the public school system. The building is also the sole survivor of early twentieth-century institutional architecture in the Fort Myers/Rosslyn neighborhood. The school was designed by Charles Morrison Robinson, a prominent Richmond-based architect who designed four hundred plus public school buildings, including five in Arlington. Robinson's Arlington commissions dated from 1909 to 1914, and only the Wilson School and the Clarendon (Maury) School remain.



Originally named the Fort Myer Heights School, it opened in 1910 and served as a neighborhood elementary school until 1968. The school was renamed the Woodrow Wilson Elementary School in 1925, the same year as the first addition was appended to the main block. The Washington, D.C., firm Upman and Adams designed the 1925 addition; in 1957 further remodeling was done. For those changes, the county turned to Washington-Lee High School graduate, architect Allen J. Dickey. Dickey practiced in the Washington, D.C., area for many years and was responsible for several Arlington projects, including the Lee Gardens Shopping Center in Lyon Park and the Underwood building in Clarendon.



Placed on the Watch List last year, the fate of the neoclassically styled Wilson School is still under discussion by the School Board. At its March 2009 meeting the board declined to designate the school as a local landmark but urged the school superintendent to work with the HALRB as plans for its future move forward. We are encouraged that the board recognized the building's contributions to the community both as an architectural type and as an educational center. AHA feels strongly that the Wilson School building can be adapted for a new or similar use, and would like to see this handsome and solid structure reused instead of being torn down.

## **COLUMBIA PIKE**

The feel of the Columbia Pike commercial corridor is quickly changing as new redevelopment projects supplant small scale local and ethnic businesses with large out-of-scale redevelopment all along the corridor.



One of the first of these major projects is the Halstead at Arlington, an eight-story mixed use building located on the corners of Columbia Pike and S. Walter Reed Drive. The nearly complete and out-of-scale construction dwarfs Blanca's Restaurant, which survived the redevelopment of the site in part because of AHA's support of the County's Form Based Code, which identifies buildings that must be preserved.

Farther east on Columbia Pike at S. Barton Street, one seven-story building and another six-story mixed-use building are quickly rising on the corridor on the former Giant and Safeway sites. Siena Park, which is located on the former Safeway site, will have 32,000 square feet of retail space on the ground floor, office space on the second floor, and 188 apartment units on the remaining four floors. Penrose Square will open a new Giant with additional retail-space on the ground floor and apartment units on the upper floors. These construction projects are illustrative of the type of redevelopment taking place all along the corridor that is quickly transforming a neighborhood of small scale businesses with local flavor into another cookie-cutter commercial strip that fails to convey and is effacing the diversity that characterizes Arlington and especially Columbia Pike.

## **CIVIL WAR EARTHWORKS**

Because of the exposed nature of the County's remaining Civil War earthworks, they are particularly fragile and therefore endangered, except where under close supervision and maintenance by the County or the National Park Service. The exact extent and precise location of these earthworks in Arlington remains a troubling unknown. Every time an open piece of land in





Arlington County is developed, built on, or paved over, there is the potential for irreversible and unrecoverable loss of earthworks and artifacts possibly co-located therein.

Most known earthworks remaining are the partial, scarce remnants of what were once larger fortifications built as part of the perimeter defense forts, constructed from early 1861 and throughout the war. They are also connecting ramparts between and among these Arlington Forts, such as C.F. Smith, Albany, Strong, Runyon, Marcy, and others.

AHA currently has two board members who sit on the Arlington County Civil War Sesquicentennial Commission, and it is hoped that the commemoration of this important anniversary will result in better documentation of the county's lesser-known Civil War earthworks as well as plans for their long-term preservation and interpretation.

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## LOST!

### **NORTH CRYSTAL CITY INDUSTRIAL ZONE**

One of just two or three remaining areas in the County zoned for commercial/industrial enterprise, this small parcel is bounded roughly by Old Jefferson Davis Highway, Clark St., 6th and 10th Streets at the far north end of Crystal City. The CSX and AMTRAK rails run north and south along its eastern border, with Old Jefferson Davis Highway roughly paralleling on the western boundary. The zone is visible from I-395/Shirley Highway heading into Washington, D.C.



The tract currently includes about a half-dozen 1940s and 1950s-era, two-story office buildings and warehouses, with brick and sheet metal exteriors. Located in these buildings are the Clark Street Playhouse theater, a relatively new self storage facility, a former office and telecommunications center for the RF&P railroad, a County Fire Department repair center and garage, artists' studio space, and several empty warehouse and storage buildings.

This 10-acre plot of land sits within the perimeter of what was Fort Runyon, a Civil War perimeter fort built by the Union Army in 1861-62. All of these buildings are scheduled to be demolished in 2009 as part of the development of the Long Bridge Park (formerly known as "The North Tract"), which is immediately adjacent to the north, across 6th Street. The existing structures will be replaced by new residential/retail/office buildings overlooking the new park. AHA laments the fact that the industrial buildings were not better incorporated and reused in the new plans.

#### **Watch List Photo Credits:**

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