

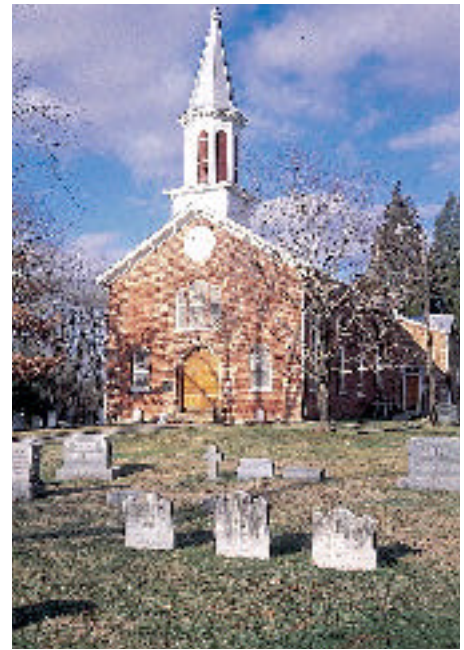
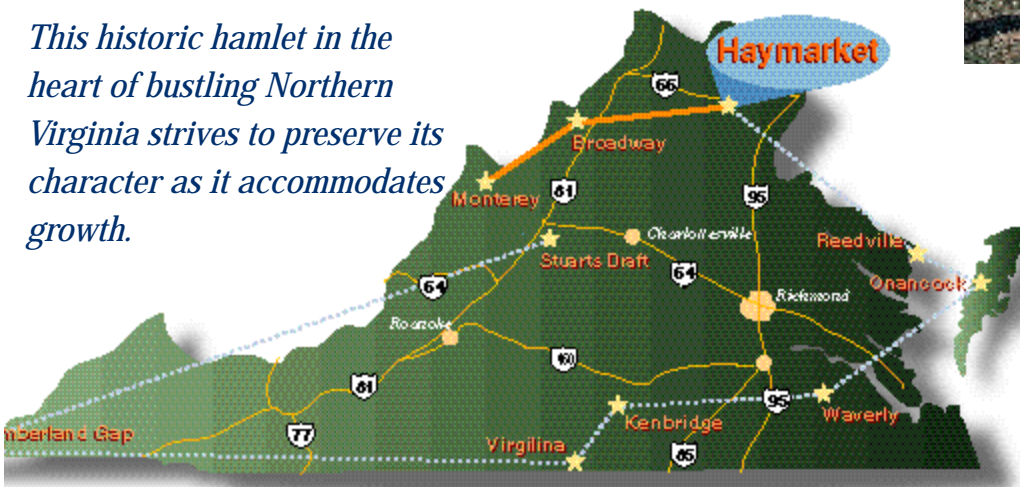
## DOWN HOME SERIES

by Bennie Scarton Jr.  
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*During 1998, we're making our way around Virginia, each issue visiting a small town and meeting some of the folks who make up the heart of electric co-op country. On this, our third stop, we'll be...*

# Down Home in Haymarket

*This historic hamlet in the heart of bustling Northern Virginia strives to preserve its character as it accommodates growth.*



Resident Danita Lemmer (l) enjoys shopping at the Red Rooster Antiques and Collectibles shop.

This is a very special time for residents of Haymarket, as they are in the midst of celebrating a noteworthy event — their 200th anniversary.

The actual bicentennial date of the town is Jan. 11, 1999, but the town simply couldn't resist a chance to celebrate all year long.

And who can blame them? The town of 530 has struggled to keep its identity separate and different from the rest of the area that is rapidly becoming a vast bedroom community of Washington, D.C.

The face of centuries-old Haymarket is changing — more so than many of its life-long residents would like.

On one hand, town historians are striving to preserve its bountiful historical past while on the other hand modern-day developers are trying to stake their claims.

It's a battle that will continue long into the future.

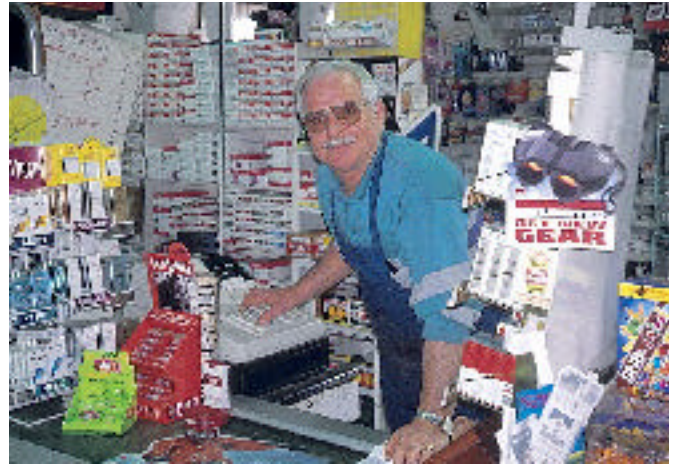
A model hometown in the urban sprawl of Northern Virginia, Haymarket is located about 35 miles west of the nation's capital, just off Interstate 66 in Prince William County. State Route 55 runs through the town, lined with a mixture of stately mansions and





Historic St. Paul Episcopal Church (far left) was originally a District Court building built in 1801-1803.

Sarah M. Turner (l), chairman of the Haymarket Historical Commission, displays some of her Bicentennial attire.



Glen Davis works the cash register at the Haymarket Grocery, which he has owned for 30 years.



Wendy Briand (l), owner of PW's Eatery and Dessert Shoppe, tempts the Rev. Ron Pledger and his wife, Linda, with an assortment of goodies.



Kacey Kelley polishes her artistic skills in the Haymarket Baptist Church Preschool.



Don Costello (r), president of Century Stair Co., talks with plant manager Roy Walker.

a smattering of modern-day businesses.

The special observances will begin on April 25 when, as part of the annual Spring Festival, numerous fun events will be held: a fried chicken basket auction, a pie bake-off, horse-drawn carriage rides, a horseshoe pitching contest, sack races, living history reenactors, and a horse show. Amidst it all, town residents will be dressed in Colonial attire.

While the town is celebrating its 200th anniversary, its origins actually lie in the untamed period of our nation's history, the pre-Colonial era when Native Americans roamed what is now the Piedmont region of Virginia.

The residents have worked hard to preserve the town's homey feel, and to a degree are succeeding. But can they build a "wall" around town?

Leading the charge to keep its identity separate and different from the suburban growth that is quickly closing in on the town is **Sarah M. Turner**, who has served as chairman of the Haymarket Historical Commission for the past eight years.

"We are really struggling to preserve

many of the town's old, historic homes that seem to be disappearing almost monthly," says Turner, noting that she has even approached members of the Virginia General Assembly to make the town a historic district in an effort to preserve its historic structures. She, along with **Dottie Leonard**, president of the Bicentennial Committee, is heading up plans to help the community celebrate its colorful history.

### "We're an Historic Town"

Mayor **Jack Kapp** is also championing the cause of preserving his town, recently getting a state grant to improve the town's sidewalks, lighting and landscape.

"We'd like to keep our small-town identity," says Kapp. "We're an historic town trying to maintain our long history. We're trying not to get caught up in the development that is coming at us from all sides. There are a lot of nice people in the community who enjoy living in a community where everyone knows everyone else."

One thing is a certainty in Haymarket: You can depend on its people. You can count on a great turnout for the Haymarket Day

parade, that will wind through the town and whose participants are nearly equal in number to the onlookers on the towns' sidewalks; you can count on the Haymarket Women's Club to provide an Election Day lunch to voters; you can count on town residents to always be present at monthly Town Council meetings, filling the hard, narrow benches and drinking coffee from the percolator in the back.

Haymarket is one of the few places in the county where neighbors know neighbors and have for a while. The Rev. **Ron Pledger**, pastor of the First Baptist Church, is a regular at the town's only restaurant, PW's Eatery and Dessert Shoppe.

"This is where everyone congregates to catch up on the latest news," he says while eyeing a tray full of homemade desserts from owner/waitress **Wendy Briand**.

**Don Costello**, president of Century Stair Co. Inc., is making many changes in the community all by himself. In addition to owning the largest company in town (with 100 employees), he is buying up many of the old buildings in town and restoring them. He is in the process of turning an old bank build-

ing into the town's second restaurant.

"I believe there is room for retaining the old character of the town, plus bringing new life into it," he says.

**Glen Davis**, who has owned Haymarket Grocery for the past 30 years, says he is seeing a big change in what customers in his store are buying.

"When I first took over ownership of the store, nearly everyone came in to buy fresh meats and vegetables so they could cook up a complete home-style meal. Today, prepackaged, fast-food meals are big sellers as many young couples, working long hours, don't have the time to spend cooking in the kitchen," he says.

Haymarket came into the nation's spotlight in 1993 when Disney announced plans to build a giant theme park just outside the limits of the town. However, after drawing heavy opposition, Disney abandoned its plans.

Its most noted celebrity is **Mark Moseley**, former star kicker for the Washington Redskins, who calls Haymarket his hometown.

The large Greenhill subdivision, going up on the border of the town, is both welcomed by the town's merchants for the additional business the homeowners may bring while being looked at skeptically by historians such as Turner who feel without zoning controls the ambiance of the town will disappear.

Haymarket resident **Danita Lemmer** is one who hopes the town is able to retain its

character in the face of the onrushing suburban sprawl.

"I enjoy coming into town and gift shopping in one of the town's quaint shops," she says while coming out of the Red Rooster Antiques and Collectibles shop.

According to Turner, the town was planned and chartered by William Skinker, who owned a large plantation known as Green Hill. The activity at the crossroads of the Old Carolina Road and Dumfries Road which ran through his plantation prompted the founding of the town. The State Legislature recognized the town by an Act on Jan. 11, 1799.

Prior to the founding of the town, the location had been known as Red House because of a tavern which had been built sometime in the mid-1700's to accommodate travelers going north and south along the Carolina Road, and later east to west from Dumfries to the Shenandoah Valley.

The town was carefully planned and its 127 lots were soon occupied. The lots faced on streets 60 feet wide and were 250 feet by 350 feet, encouraging the building of gracious homes.

### Courthouse to School to Church

Shortly after its founding, a courthouse was placed in the community to serve the counties of Fairfax, Fauquier, Loudoun and Prince William. The courthouse was built on the south end of the town and brought much

activity to the fledgling community.

In 1807, however, the District Court was converted into a Circuit Court and was moved to Brentsville. The handsome brick courthouse was then purchased by a school, which occupied the premises until 1816. The building later served as a community center and then became the home of St. Paul's Episcopal Church in 1830.

During the six-year interim before the Civil War, Haymarket grew and became a productive community, boasting shoe makers, tailors, wheelwrights, a funeral parlor, two taverns and a renowned racetrack.

General Marquis de Lafayette caused quite a stir when he traveled through Haymarket in 1825 on his way to Leesburg to visit his friend, former U.S. President James Monroe. Aside from that, the town and the community have enjoyed a tranquil growth.

The town had its darkest day on Nov. 4, 1862, when the entire town was engulfed by flames started by Federal troops protesting the valiant resistance of the Confederate soldiers and townspeople to a northern invasion.

Haymarket bounced back from devastation and is now a safe haven, where only two police officers patrol the town and locking your doors isn't always a priority. It's a place residents have been proud to call home for 200 years. ■

## If You Go...

A visit to historic Haymarket (chartered in 1799) should include St. Paul's Episcopal Church which was originally a District Court built in 1801. It served as a Courthouse until 1807 and then was used as a school and community center. It has served as a church since 1830 and many Civil War dead are buried in its graveyard.

Tread in Lafayette's path along the Old Iroquois Trail (the Carolina Road), along with the Colonial Dumfries Road.

Visit Haymarket's recently acquired Southern Railroad caboose and buy a trifle to remember your visit to Haymarket.

If you are hungry, be sure to stop by PW's Eatery and Dessert Shoppe, renowned throughout the area for its superb desserts of homemade pies and cakes. Call (703) 754-7053.

Don't fail to pay a visit to Haymarket Grocery, the only old-fashioned country grocery store to survive modern encroachment in the Western Prince William County town. The store's telephone number is (703) 754-7290.

Envision, as you stroll Haymarket's streets — especially Jefferson, Fayette and Washington — the flames which engulfed Haymarket in 1862, completely devastating the thriving community of 900 people, fires started by Federal troops in protest of the resistance of the Confederate soldiers

and townspeople to a northern invasion.

Also stroll by some of Haymarket's older homes and landmarks, such as the Town Hall and Winterham, a large Victorian home built in the 1880's.

The town has three major events each year, beginning with the Spring Festival which will be held this year on April 25. It features a large craft show and children's events. Additional functions, such as a fried chicken basket auction, a pie bake-off, horse show and living history reenactors, are being added this year as part of a year-long Bicentennial observance.

General Marquis de Lafayette Day will be observed on July 25, featuring entertainment and dinner. The town's biggest observance is Haymarket Day, set for Sept. 19, which features a large parade, crafts and entertainment.

Among the town's quaint antique and thrift shops is Red Rooster Antiques and Collectibles. Call (703) 754-3936.

James S. Long Regional Park features equestrian rings, a playground, a library, ball fields, picnic pavilions, and open play areas in view of Bull Run Mountain. Call (703) 361-7126.

For more information about Haymarket call the town office at (703) 754-4816. ■