

One of the Roads to the Colony

Back in 1980, when I had completed a nine year service in the Pentagon for the Air Force and OSD, it seemed to Barbara and me that it was time to “hang it up” for military service and do something else. We lived in Annandale, VA, Barbara had become a specialist in income taxation, I had finished 25 years in Finance for the Air Force, and the kids were all of school age.

In a national magazine, there was an ad for a Finance Director at York County, VA. I had been to Langley AFB several times on business and the area seemed like a pleasant choice so I went for an interview and succeeded. I lived in our motor home down at Newport News Park while I undertook the office and Barbara and the kids wound up their lives and our home in Northern Virginia. In June of 1980, we bought a home in Queens Lake on the banks of the York River between Camp Peary and Cheatham Annex. Barbara did tax work and I was the Finance Director for the County for 13 years or so. Our son went to VA Tech, our daughter to Sarah Hudgins School and we enjoyed a delightful home.

The job at York County was exceptional. I had some 20 excellent employees working for me and the result was well thought of both in York County and in the financial operations all across the state. In addition to the actual county activity, I served on the Board of Child Development Resources (CDR in Toano) where for 16 years I worked with a wonderful gentleman by the name of General Archie Cannon. During that time, at his request, I offered him help with his efforts to create Patriots Colony. One time in my service to the County, a young man who was just graduating from Bruton High School in upper York County, came to my office in Yorktown and asked if he could work for me as an finance intern (at no cost) for the summer before he went to the University of Virginia. I agreed (I happened to know his parents who lived in Queens Lake) and he did an amazing job. I lost track of the youngster until some 25 years later when his name appeared in the newspaper as the hospital administrator at the Walter Reed Hospital in Gloucester County. Then, some years later when we moved into the Colony, I was pleased to see that he had become an officer at Riverside Hospital System – his name is William Downey.

(Neither Archie or Billy actually had anything to do with our moving into Patriots Colony some six years ago).



The reason for our selection of the Colony as our home was not particularly different from many who have come.

The house in Queens Lake had become a bit much for folks like us. It was two stories high, all bedrooms were on the second floor, there was no hope for an elevator, and the care of a large yard with 19 big oak trees was getting out of our reach. So, we started the search like many of you. We made visits to the Landing and to Chambrel, and we received thoughts from some friends of ours for Windsor Meade. Then (thank goodness) there was JoAnn Sunell and John Hardy. Need I say more. We moved into PCAW in the spring of 2009 and we are certainly not sorry.

-- Lee Hirsh --