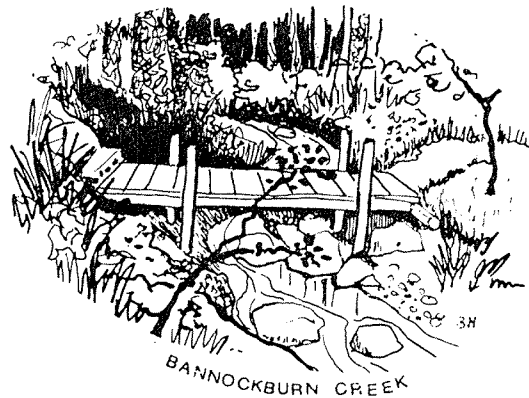


# **BANNOCKBURN**

**The Story of a Cooperative Community**

**1984 UPDATE**



**The Bannockburn Community Club, Inc.**

**Bethesda, Maryland**

**1984**

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## FOREWORD

This second edition of Bannockburn, The Story of a Cooperative Community, was motivated by numerous requests for the original history, published in 1977, that has long been out of print. These requests have come from old residents whose volumes were "borrowed," as well as from new residents who, often to their surprise, have found themselves in the midst of a unique community and infected with its spirit.

After seven years, merely reprinting the history seemed inadequate, so we have tried to provide a selective update of significant happenings during the intervening years. During the seven years, about 50 of the 273 houses on the original golf course tract changed ownership (probably considerably less than typical for the highly mobile Washington area), and 113 homes -- 41% of the community -- are still owned by their original owners after a time span approaching 35 years.

Times change, but much remains the same. Simply the passage of seven years has not altered many of the issues and problems that either continue or recur periodically. But during this period two troublesome concerns of the past have, we hope, been put to rest -- taxation of the Clubhouse and its land, and the predominance of BCI shares held by nonresidents.

Other problems and issues persist: aircraft noise, Clubhouse maintenance and usage, and a County government unable or unwilling to provide and maintain satisfactory services and facilities for its constituents.

As with all Bannockburn endeavors, the updating and reissue of this volume was the result of the contributions of time and effort of a number of people. Thanks go to Leslie and Diane Weisz, Harry Greenspan, Joe Maltz, Herb Blinder, John Swank, Elaine Wilcox, and Helen Hirsch for their research and additions to the text; to Irene Jaworski for her encouragement and advice and careful preservation of the original volume; to Madeleine Sigel for her archive of Spring Show programs; to Harriet Cobern for her editing and word processing; to Arthur McDowell for recovering and framing the invitation from Bannockburn, Scotland, now hanging in the Clubhouse and reproduced on page 12 of the addendum (see page 53 of the first edition); and to the BCC Board members for their time at long meetings and their continuing desire and efforts to make this community an interesting and pleasant place to live.

Morris Cobern

Bannockburn  
Bethesda, MD  
April 24, 1984

## **BANNOCKBURN COMMUNITY CLUB/BANNOCKBURN COOPERATORS, INC.**

BCC/BCI events of the seven years since the first edition of this history are entwined with a number of common themes, and some controversial issues. The one pervasive thread for six of the years was the burden created in 1976 by the sudden imposition of property taxes on the Clubhouse, and the five years of, finally successful, attempts to restore the exemption.

Because BCC and BCI were joined for about 13 years before being separated (but not divorced) in 1980, an attempt to recount their histories individually would be redundant. Thus they are combined in this section.

### Tax Reform - Bannockburn Style

The struggle to restore the tax exemption for the Clubhouse and the remaining land owned by BCI started soon after the exemption was removed in 1976 by the Maryland Department of Assessments and Taxation. John Burke, of Arent, Fox, Kintner, Plotkin & Kahn, was retained as counsel on a pro-bono basis. Through Charles Donnenfeld, a former Bannockburner and member of the same firm, he presented arguments for restoration of the tax exemption to the Tax Assessment Board in February 1977. These were unsuccessful, presumably because it was held that BCI, as a nonprofit stock corporation, could be converted to a for-profit organization by a vote of its shareholders.

Another tack was to seek the enactment of special legislation on behalf of the Clubhouse. On November 16, 1977, 40 Bannockburners attended a hearing in Rockville before a subcommittee of the Montgomery County delegation to the State House of Delegates. Nancy Kopp, Marilyn Goldwater and John Ward, long-time friends of Bannockburn, were sponsoring a bill to provide a tax exemption specifically for the Clubhouse and BCI land. Testifying for BCI/BCC were Gene Granof, Judy Johnson, Betty Wagman, Herb Raskin, and counsel John Burke. Testimony was also presented by Mary-Ellen Sayre, president of the Bannockburn Civic Association, Helen Levine, chair of its Committee on Taxation and Public Finance, and by Madeleine Sigel, Democratic Precinct Chairman. Jill Karpf organized carpools to attend the meeting. County officials opposed special legislation, as did some members of the county delegation to the State legislature. Legislation was not enacted at that time.

The membership at the June 1979 annual meeting of BCI/BCC again instructed the Board of Directors to pursue a tax exemption, and actions to obtain the exemption were discussed at every meeting of the Board in the following year. The Board decided to proceed on three routes toward the exemption -- a

transfer of the property to the Community Club, an appeal to the State court of the ruling of the State agency, and the passage of special legislation. Gladys Hirsch agreed to become our attorney on a pro-bono basis and Madeleine Sigel again took responsibility for the legislative efforts.

Finally, the property tax exemption was restored in 1982 by skillful legal and political tactics on two fronts. Gladys Hirsch prepared the successful legal arguments for the appeal of the adverse ruling of 1976 by the Department of Assessments and Taxation and obtained a refund of taxes and interest of \$11,059. A parallel political effort, orchestrated by Madeleine Sigel, was successful in securing passage of a special tax exemption, again sponsored by Delegates Nancy Kopp and Marilyn Goldwater for the Clubhouse and its land through the Maryland legislature. The legislation was passed on the same day the attorney for the State decided not to contest Bannockburn's appeal of the initial 1977 ruling of the Department of Assessments and Taxation. In brief, the argument for property tax exemption was that the membership of the Club is composed of owners of homes in the vicinity of the Clubhouse. The Clubhouse enhances the value of these homes, resulting in higher assessments and taxes than comparable homes lacking such a facility.

#### BCI/BCC Separation

Ten years after the merger of the BCC and BCI Boards in 1967, questions arose about the organization's financing and its ability to raise enough funds to maintain and improve the deteriorating Clubhouse. (This coincided with the reimposition of property taxes.) In 1977 Clare Belman chaired a committee composed of Bob Greenberg, Helen Hirsch, Irene Jaworski, and Joe Maltz to explore the relationships between revenues and expenditures. In the course of its work the committee reconstituted the BCI archives and updated the BCI shareholder list.

With the reimposition of the property tax, attention shifted to the question of ownership of the building. The route to the tax exemption that was considered most promising by Gladys Hirsch necessitated a transfer in trust, and eventual sale, of the Clubhouse and land to the Community Club, which is not a stock corporation and not potentially a for-profit organization.

In 1967 it was planned that all Community Club members would own at least one share of BCI stock. However, during the next ten years this plan was neglected. New members of the Community Club who were not shareholders of BCI voted for directors of the joint Board. By 1979 a majority of the directors were not BCI shareholders. The joint BCI/BCC board sponsored a meeting on May 21, 1980, limited to BCI shareholders, to consider the transfer of the Clubhouse to BCC and to elect a separate BCI Board. The proposal to transfer the Clubhouse received 100 favorable and 46 unfavorable votes. However, because the total number of votes did not meet the requirement in

the building was treated to prevent future termite damage. Insulation was added in ceilings and a furnace timer installed to save on heating costs. During the renovation the Club was fortunate to have the pro-bono professional advice and services of Susan and Peter Kimmel, and the work was constantly supervised by Harry Greenspan.\*

The cost of these improvements was about \$28,000 -- the largest amount ever spent in a single year on Clubhouse repair and renovation. More than half the money came from budget surpluses accumulated during previous years. The remainder came from a combination of sources. Family dues were raised from \$15 to \$20 in 1980. An effective membership drive led by Harriet Cobern added about 50 families to the Club in 1981. Rents for Clubhouse use were increased and the cash assets that had accumulated earned the high money market rates of 1979-82.

In December 1982, the furnace gave up the ghost, and was replaced using most of the proceeds from the tax refund. Also, in 1982, the BCC Board, relying on Peter Kimmel's analysis of operating costs and rental rates, sought to put the operation of the Clubhouse on a more business-like basis.

After the renovation of the Clubhouse and the transfer of shares were completed, BCC president John Gustafson and the rest of the Board moved to generate more activity at the Clubhouse. This resulted in the institution of a series of courses on such topics as home computers, auto maintenance, TV program production and bridge, as well as other activities -- movies, winter and summer parties. Many of these activities were organized and run by Sylvia Small, Henriette De Bruyn Kops and Sandy Tangri. In turn, these events created the desire to continue renovating the Clubhouse to make it a more inviting and useful facility for the whole community.

In 1983-84, family dues were raised to \$25, and the ballroom received new lighting, acoustical ceiling tiles, and a new coat of paint. A stove was cadged, and Millie and Sam Silverman donated a refrigerator to replace the worn out appliances.

Morris Cobern

*The author wishes to thank Harry Greenspan and Joe Maltz, whose pieces he has unashamedly plagiarized. He also wishes to absolve them from all errors of omission, commission and interpretation.*

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\*Susan (nee Landay) lived at 6304 Owen Place as a child. She attended Nursery school at the Clubhouse, as does her older son, Daniel, presently.

## THE SPRING SHOW

Updating the review of the annual Bannockburn shows to cover the period since 1977 presented some writing blocks. The pattern was laid down by my earlier reviews so I felt locked into that structure in the sense that some consistency of approach was required. But that means the singling out of special acknowledgments had to be minimized. To do otherwise would be slighting the people who worked on the earlier shows.

As a compromise between no lists at all and at least some general acknowledgments I've tried to credit some of the Bannockburners who helped keep the tradition alive the past seven years.

Virtually all these shows were developed by multiple contributors. Many of the earlier shows were the product of more than one writer, a process that became accepted as the standard approach. One or two persons would take the responsibility for writing some continuity and weaving the contributions into something vaguely resembling a coherent package. Throughout this period the chief weavers turned out to be Alex Bilanow (with assists from Betsy) and Ruth Darmstadter and Louise Smith (occasionally in collaboration with each other). Collaborative efforts also became the norm for directing (primarily by Al Reifman and me), musical direction (Allen Richardson, Nick Heffter, Mike Feldman, Louise Smith), producing (Helene Granof, Dodi Middlebrook, Lee Gough, Ruth Simon), and pianists (legion, but principally Beth Kellar, Janet Hofmeister, and Mike Feldman).

This truncated list does not even scratch the surface. To really understand how many contributors were involved in making the shows work, this article would have to be expanded into another book of lists. At least fifty people per show were involved, in each of the 28 shows -- a sizeable population. There are copies of the show programs floating around the community for anyone really interested in researching the process.

1978 -- FAAR OUT ENCOUNTERS OF A BANNOCKBURN KIND -- It was natural that the success of Close Encounters and Star Wars would require the Bannockburn Empire to strike back. This show featured a group of space visitors trying to figure out what this community was all about. They were exposed to various family trials, including the telephone takeover by teenagers, rebellion among the aging population, the spread of an epidemic of joggers, and

other strange behavior. The conversion of some nasty political figures was noted. Just to make sure there was no one left out, President Carter's sister Ruth saved everybody just in time for the finale.

1979 -- SUPERMENSCH -- Super Clark Kentmensch tried to straighten out the mess in the community. And there was mess aplenty. Economics was the biggie, and the nation's top economists explained it all on the Goon Show. A hot tub emporium was installed in Glen Echo. Nixon, contemplating another comeback, was "reviewing the situation." Billy Carter's charm and discreet fastidiousness were duly noted, and the political outlook looked bleak. The new "me" generation in the community was acquiring status symbols and going on exotic trips -- to China and Egypt. Finally, Supermensch decided that in matters of these kinds he was "just an ordinary man" so the cast all became super themselves.

1980 -- SPRINGTIME FOR BANNOCKBURN -- A motif of "61 Minutes" ran through this show. Anchorpeople kept showing up at intervals to give the audience an inkling of what was going on (and also to give the cast a moment for scene changes). All the prospective candidates (both parties) got a going over. Abscam and other political crookery were dealt with, plus the end of the Cronkite regime and the coronation of Rather. Louise Smith's "Second Hand Houses" celebrated the Bannockburn reality that you always live in a house identified with a former owner. Although outwardly serene, many Bannockburners feared for the possible loss of their newly gained worldly accoutrements, especially their silverware.

1981 -- HOORAY FOR BANNOCKBURN -- Democrats were very, very out while the Republicans were really in. That tough Washington press corps was totally charmed by Ronnie; and Nancy and Ronnie were totally charmed by each other. The rightwingers sang an old left wing folksong, but with new words (Jim Watt crooning "This Land's Not Your Land"). To the tune of "The Rain in Spain" ex-President Jimmy believed he'd go insane if he remained in Plains. Grown up kids were moving back with their parents, sometimes complete with grandchildren. The troubled love story of Abscam Congressman Jenrette and his modest wife Rita was presented in a moving update of "Frankie and Johnnie." The stately elegance of the Bannockburn potluck suppers was celebrated just before the finale.

1982 -- ON BANNOCKBURN POND -- Cats were definitely in, and a wandering cat made occasional visits to move the story line along. Older Bannockburners considering retirement began to look about the globe for better places to spend their leisure years. Before they learned the error of their ways, they had a chance to visit and sing about many trouble spots at home and abroad. "Trouble" was a big cast number which explored the menace of the video games down in the shopping center. A Serbo-Croatian version of "Glowworm" was a memorable part of this show. During a visit to the South, Jesse Helms, that simple defender of virtue, stated his case all too well. By special arrangement with "Brideshead Revisited" William Buckley stopped by to explain to his guest teddy bear the deeper meaning of the show. Aerobics was the answer for some. Others discovered the wonderful world of consulting,



and there was some concern by the wealthy that the disadvantaged did not fully appreciate the benefits trickling down via Reaganomics.

1983 -- THE WINDS OF BANNOCKBURN -- I counted fifteen different authors contributing material to this show which was stitched together by Alex. In one hour this show covered Jim Watt and the Beach Boys, Valley Girls and their troubles, Tootsie and tokenism, Elder Hostels, the end of MASH, the disappearance of Doonesbury, Japanese-American trade, and hard-hearted Anne Burford. The kids' number paid tribute to the long lost Glen Echo trolley line. Nuclear deployment in Europe and Chicago politics were covered. Father Sarducci came by to give us his own explanation of the Community culture. The World Football League's arrival was greeted with mixed emotions. All those Democratic candidates were handled in one complicated song. And Ron and Nancy appeared, attesting to their willingness to be concerned about anything, as long as he wasn't blamed for it.

1984 -- BANNOCKBURN DANNY ROSE -- This show is in rehearsal as this history is written. It represents another mass contribution, with stitchery by the Bilanows. Theoretically the show is a salute to the many "stars" of Bannockburn, but along the way it considers the mysterious popularity of Ronnie, the sanctity of military budgets, the mind of Ed Meese, New York City, Democratic primary finalists, merit pay for teachers, the new expensive lifestyle homes and their impact on local institutions, and the passing of Ma Bell. The Olympics and breakdancing are also dealt with in one way or another in the show. At least I think that is what the show will be about. New material is arriving as this is being written.

1985 -- etc. Will there be more shows? If Bannockburn survives 1984, bet on it!

Herb Blinder

## NEWSLETTER

As Bannockburn moves through the 1980's, the Newsletter remains a constant anchor for those in the neighborhood. As it has for 30 years, it keeps us in touch with happenings in the area, in the skies, underfoot and next door.

Newsletter features presently include Personals, Advertisements, and a Stamp of Approval column. Stamps of Approval are awarded to craftsmen and other service providers who have done exceptional work for neighborhood residents. One highly recommended electrician has worked on at least a dozen Bannockburn houses, as well as the Clubhouse, and in the process bought a former Bannockburner's car.

Also appearing in the Newsletter on a regular basis is news of BCA, BCC, BCI, the swimming pools, School News and periodic reports from the Potomac Valley League, a confederation of local civic associations that monitors development in the area. Bill Green is the long-time representative to this body. As it has since the beginning, a monthly calendar helps Bannockburners sort out their many meeting and events.

Early in 1980, and again in 1982, the BCA Board altered the advertising policy of the Newsletter to charge non-BCA members \$5 per ad. BCA members are allowed two free ads per family, per year. Ad revenues have helped pay for rising printing costs. The Newsletter's current, very reasonable printer -- the Work Adjustment Program of the Mental Health Association of Montgomery County -- was discovered by Molly and Neal Cornell in 1981.

In 1983 the Newsletter masthead was changed to a smaller version of the rendering of the Clubhouse appearing on the cover of this volume. The Newsletter is distributed by local teens and preteens to 290 houses in Bannockburn and mailed by BCC to its members living in the diaspora. Rose Wiener was editor from 1979 to 1981 and Elaine Wilcox and John Swank shared the editing from 1981 to 1984. Wanda Maltz continues as typist.

### Issues of Concern

As this history goes to press, the Newsletter is bringing its readers news of the possible development of the land adjacent to the school and lacking on the houses on Crathie Lane. The tract has long been known as "the woods" or "the Lentini tract" after its owner, who is proposing a townhouse development of nearly 50 houses.

Other issues of local concern discussed in the Newsletter include the battle against Japanese Beetles (milky spore was applied on most lawns), the application of High's Dairy in the Glen Echo Shopping Center to sell beer and wine (defeated), and an area-wide rabies epidemic set off by and, so far, confined to raccoons. Raccoons in Bannockburn are of special concern; many have been trapped, evicted from chimneys and attics, including some long-term residents of the Clubhouse. Still more continue to invade trash cans and inhabit the woods and storm sewers.

In late 1983 and early 1984 the Newsletter urged Bannockburners to call the Council of Governments to support the National Airport "Scatter Plan," a prematurely aborted 90-day trial of rerouting arrivals and departures to more equitably share the burden of airplane noise. The plan was defeated, but for an all-too-brief time the skies above Bannockburn were rumbling less frequently with aircraft.

In other transportation news, bus routes along Massachusetts Avenue have been preserved, at least for the time being, due to the public outcry about the changes proposed when the Metro station at Friendship Heights opens in the summer of 1984. Initially the transit authority considered operating only feeder buses to the stations.

Stay tuned. Predictions are that as long as there is a Bannockburn, there will be a Newsletter, and news to put in it. It provides a continual update of this history.

Elaine Wilcox  
John Swank

### A THIRD-GENERATION BANNOCKBURNER

Being a third-generation Bannockburner means growing up with more of a sense of community than the average person. It means being aware of (like it or not) the history of the community and community traditions (such as the Spring Show). It also means having a "reputation." On several occasions at the swimming pool and at community functions I have been approached by complete strangers who exclaim, "You must be a Weisz!" I have often been introduced as "David's daughter" or even "Murray and Yetta's granddaughter." As a third-generation Bannockburner, I feel like a member of the community.

Leslie Weisz

## CENSUS TRACT PROFILE

(Census Tract No. 7059.02, 1980 Census of Population and Housing, U.S. Bureau of the Census)

Boundaries of Census tract:

River Road, Goldsboro Road, Potomac River, Beltway

*This summary is included for those interested in some of the characteristics of our neighborhood. Be aware that our Census tract includes the other Bannockburns as well as Glen Echo, Cabin John and Fairway Hills, that the data are four and five years old now, and that some of the numbers are based on a sampling of about 1 of 6 households.*

### I. Demographics

A. <u>Persons by Race</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Total	3,461	100.0
White	3,226	93.2
Asian and Pacific Islander	153	4.4
Black	67	1.9
Amer. Indian, Eskimo, Aleut	15	0.4
(Persons of Spanish Origin)	(158)	(4.6)
B. <u>Persons by Age</u>		
Under 5 years	85	2.5
5 to 17 years	779	22.5
18 to 24 years	240	6.9
25 to 64 years	2,027	58.6
65 years and over	330	9.5
C. <u>Persons 25 Years and Over</u>		
<u>By Years of School Completed</u>		
Total	2,357	100.0
0 to 11 years	142	6.0
12 years (high school)	236	10.0
College		
1 to 3 years	319	13.5
4 years or more	1,660	70.4

## II. Economics

A. <u>Household Income in 1979</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Total households	1,181	100.0
Less than \$ 5,000	7	0.6
\$ 5,000 to \$ 9,999	49	4.1
\$10,000 to \$19,999	60	5.1
\$20,000 to \$24,999	47	4.0
\$25,000 to \$29,999	75	6.3
\$30,000 to \$39,999	128	10.8
\$40,000 to \$74,999	546	46.2
\$75,000 or more	269	22.8
Median	\$55,492	
Mean (average)	\$63,546	
B. <u>Housing Units</u>		
Total	1,215	100.0
Owner occupied	1,071	88.1
Renter occupied	107	8.8
Vacant	37	3.0
Mean (average) value of specified Owner Occupied Units:	\$157,263	

# The Central No. 1 District Council

in the Parish of St. Ninians, Stirlingshire,  
Scotland

## *Greetings.*

To our friends across the sea in the Bannockburn Community  
in Bethesda, Montgomery County, Maryland, United States of  
America—and

## *Witness.*

This invitation, in perpetuity, to visit their namesake Community  
in the Old World.

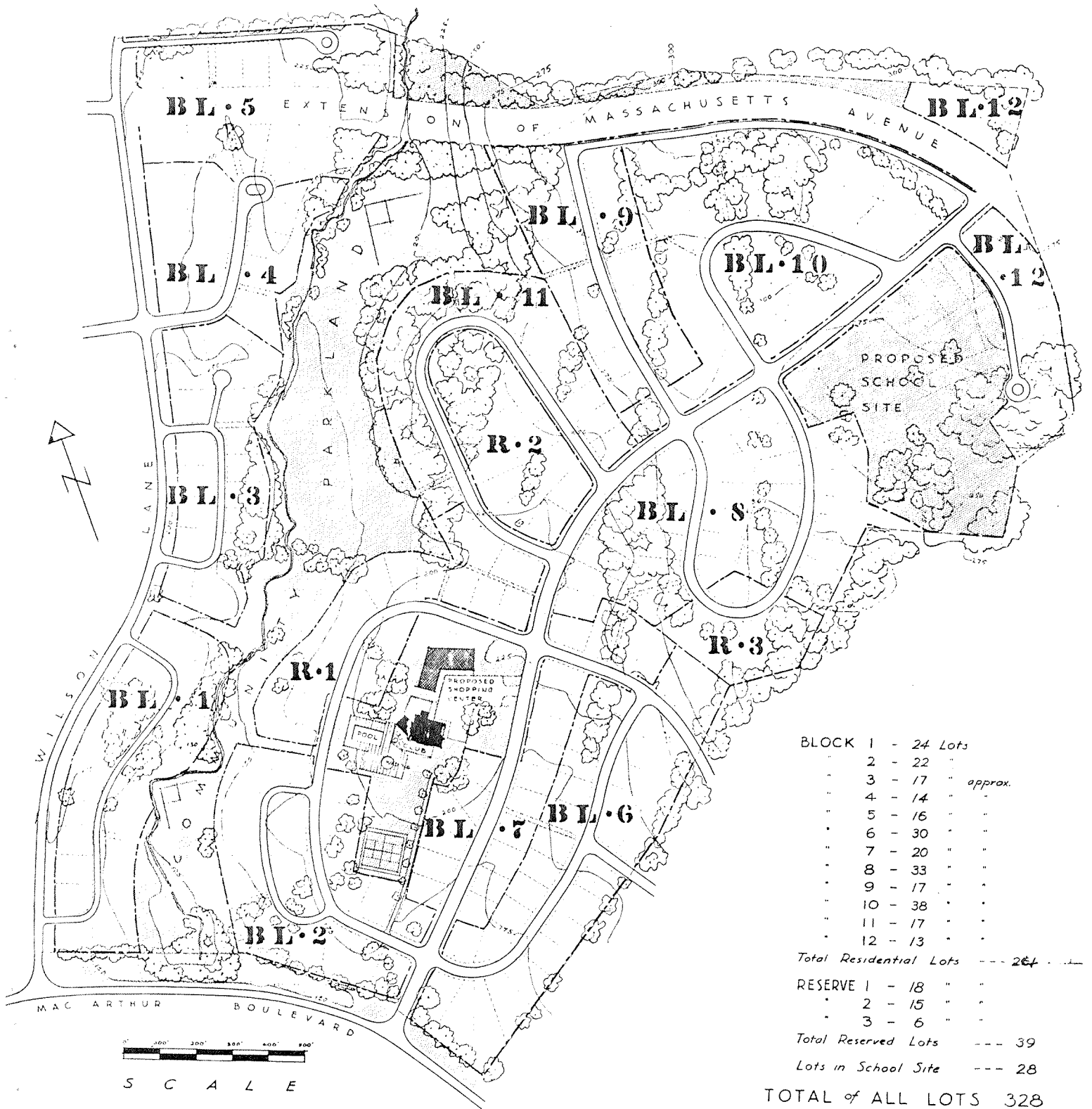
Bannockburn, Scotland, June, 1961.

A R Davidson, J.P.

*Convener of the County of  
Stirling.*

*Alex. Marshall, J.P., Chairman.*

*David W. Marshall, Clerk.*



BLOCK 1	-	24	Lots
"	2	-	22
"	3	-	17 approx.
"	4	-	14
"	5	-	16
"	6	-	30
"	7	-	20
"	8	-	33
"	9	-	17
"	10	-	38
"	11	-	17
"	12	-	13
Total Residential Lots			264

RESERVE 1	-	18	"
"	2	-	15
"	3	-	6
Total Reserved Lots			39
Lots in School Site			28

TOTAL of ALL LOTS 328

PROPOSED SUBDIVISION

JULY 1949

**BANNOCKBURN COOPERATORS, INC.** PHONE  
 1129 Vermont Ave. N.W. 13 Washington, D.C. DI 8153

## BANNOCKBURN CHRONOLOGY

- November 14, 1976 Historical evening at the Clubhouse reconstructs birth and development of the Bannockburn Cooperative (inspired by National Bicentennial).
- May 17, 1977 BCA testifies at Council of Government-FAA hearings on airport noise; urges fewer flights over the community.
- Spring 1977 Glen Echo Park funded for year-round operation by the National Capital Area Park Service.
- Summer 1978 Publication of Bannockburn: The Story of a Cooperative Community, sponsored by BCC.
- December 2, 1978 Memorial service for Mary Fox Herling, Bannockburn Clubhouse.
- May 20, 1979 Bannockburn Home and Garden Show.
- May 23, 1979 BCA designates delegates to newly formed metropolitan area Council on Airport Problems.
- May 30, 1979 BCC/BCI Annual Meeting discusses comprehensive report on structure and finances of the Clubhouse.
- March 6, 1980 "Bannockburn's Possible Dream" appears in Washington Post series on metropolitan area neighborhoods.
- September 1980 Bannockburn Cooperative Nursery School begins 30th year.
- May 21, 1980 BCI shareholders' meeting reestablishes separate BCI Board of Directors.
- November 10, 1980 BCA and Bannockburn residents testify against proposed elimination of C-1 bus service linking Glen Echo and Bethesda. (Service maintained.)



January 1981	Joint BCC/BCI questionnaire on future uses of the Clubhouse distributed in Bannockburn Newsletter.
Spring 1981	Real estate tax exemption for community property reinstated, allowing refund of taxes paid.
May 1981	25th Annual Spring Show.
January 1982	BCC/BCI sign agreement formalizing arrangements for maintenance and community use of the Clubhouse.
Winter 1982	BCC initiates extensive repairs and renovation of the Clubhouse.
September 1982	Joint BCC/BCI effort to transfer BCI shares held by non-residents to community homeowners. After transfer, over 50% of BCI shareholders (and shares) reside in Bannockburn. Terms of the transfer assure that shares will remain in the community.
May 1983	Bannockburn Newsletter's 30th anniversary.
Summer 1983	Bannockburn Swim Team's 25th season.
Fall 1983	Bannockburn supports scatter plan for flight paths.
Fall 1983	BCA successfully opposes Metro plans to discontinue N-5 direct bus service from Glen Echo to downtown Washington, DC.
December 14, 1983	BCA meets to discuss proposed development of Lentini Tract (woods adjacent to school).
April 1984	Clubhouse ballroom renovated.
<u>Looking ahead:</u> June 24, 1984	BCC sponsors party celebrating 670th anniversary of the Battle of Bannockburn (Scotland).