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**Another Walk Through Woodend
The story of Clean Drinking Manor**

If you have visited Woodend, our local wildlife sanctuary, you'll be interested to know that its 40 acres were once part of a 1400-acre estate known as "Clean Drinking." This estate was named for a large spring near Rock Creek.

The owners of Clean Drinking played a part in colonial and revolutionary history. The first owner, Col. John Coates, was a colonial government official loyal to the British crown. He was a member of the Maryland Assembly and the Governor's Council. Originally a planter in "St. George's Hundred" in Maryland's Charles County, Coates obtained a colonial grant for the Clean Drinking estate in 1699.

His descendent, Elizabeth Courts (a variant on Coates"), married a local judge, Charles Jones, in 1750. Despite his wife's loyalist ancestor, Jones was one of the twelve colonial justices who formally repudiated King George III's Stamp Act in 1765. As you remember from your high school American history course, the Stamp Act required 13 colonies to contribute revenue, to the British crown to pay for royal troops. As a result of the Stamp Act, nine colonies adopted a declaration of Rights that opposed, in the now famous fraise, "taxation without representation." Through that Stamp Act it was repealed, oppressive British colonial policies continued, leading to the Revolutionary War.

Clean Drinking prospered during the 18th century. Local gentry enjoyed the manor's hospitality, and George Washington reputedly visited there.

The early owners of Clean Drinking grew tobacco for export to England. The profitable crop was shipped at first from Bladensburg and later from Georgetown. But soon the thin local soil, unsuited to large-scale tobacco farming, was exhausted. To maintain their fortunes, the Jones family planted various other crops and built a mill, after which Jones Mill Road is named.

During the 19th century, the Clean Drinking estate declined and fell. The owners became impoverished, to the extent that a folk rhyme was written.

Here lie the body and bones

Of old Walter C. Jones,

By his not thinking,

He lost "Clean Drinking,"

And by his shallow pate,

He lost his vast estate.

The name "Walter C. Jones" was an invention of the author of these much0quoted lines, through Clean Drinking was still owned by the Jones family, the descendants of Elizabeth and Charles Jones.

Clean Drinking Manor itself was built approximately upon the site of the present nursing home at 8700 Jones Mill Road. Photographs from the turn of the century depict a one-and-a-half story wooden farmhouse with two dormers in the roof. The roof extended over the front porch.

By the early 1900's the manor was in ruins. It fell down from old age and also because the neighbors scavenged the manor's planks, shingles, woodwork, etc. for their own houses. Clean Drinking Manor once had an elaborate garden, but all trace of this is gone, as are the outbuildings. The Jones mill also has disappeared. As Edith Ray Saul, our local historian, says, "There does not seem to be anyone alive today who remembers the mill structure or any of the many buildings that surrounded the old family homestead."

The last resident owner of Clean Drinking was Nicholas E. Jones, at the turn of the century. In 1916 Robert C. Jones sold Clean Drinking to Captain and Mrs. Chester Wells.

The Wells' added the Clean Drinking Property to their extensive land acquisitions from 1910 to 1929, and built the Woodend mansion in 1927-29, not on the site of Clean Drinking Manor but on a nearby hilltop. Since 1969, Woodend has been the headquarters of the Audubon Naturalist Society.

-Sara Phang

(I'd like to thank the Audubon Naturalist Society (8940 Jones Mill Road, Chevy Chase, MD 20815) for allowing the use of its publication "Welcome to Woodend: A Historical Tour" in this article. The photo is also courtesy of ANS. The history of Woodend will be continued in future newsletters. To find out more about the Audubon Naturalist Society, call 652-9188.)