

Tony Homes With Built-In Advantages

Soundproofing, Elevators, Spiraling Stairs at the Glebe

By SUSAN STRAIGHT
Special to The Washington Post

Aaron Stoner can tell you a lot about his neighborhood, the Glebe, an elegant pocket of 30 townhouses north of Country Club Hills in northern Arlington County.

For example, of the 30 original purchasers, 28 opted to have elevators installed in their homes.

Stoner knows a lot about the neighborhood because he's an original owner and former homeowners association president, and because for 20 years he was president of the local company that built the houses between 1979 and 1981, now Gruver-Cooley of Leesburg.

Stoner, 89, spent 54 years with Gruver-Cooley, and he remembers many of the Glebe's design details, including measurements of the homes.

The homes are two basic sizes, with myriad design variations inside and out. From the outside, differences include porch features, front walk types and landscaping. Inside designs vary by type of stairwell, number of full and half baths, location of rooms, and entry on the first or middle floor. Some have no garage; others have garages for one or two cars. All of the homes have three floors.

The smaller homes, which originally sold for \$215,000, are 25 feet wide by 45½ feet deep, Stoner said. The larger homes, which first sold for \$250,000, are the same depth but wider. Those prices were luxury level at the time.

"We always stressed quality," Stoner said of his old employer.

Gruver-Cooley included soundproofing and fireproofing between homes in the form of a masonry wall and "two-by-four studding to insulate the sound," Stoner said.

About the fireproofing and soundproofing elements, "people who are familiar



Mette Parker's Glebe townhouse includes a sunken living room and, like Beverly Flowers's (far left, with the balcony), a circular stairway.

with that would say, well, that's a Gruver-Cooley house," Stoner said.

Originally, the neighborhood had been planned as single-family houses. However, with the support of neighboring homeowners associations, Gruver-Cooley received county approval to change that to townhouses with generous common space. "Because of the contour of the land, we didn't think it was possible to make a nice subdivision," Stoner said. "You'd have to cut most of the trees and

do a lot of grading to make the land level. It wouldn't be as attractive a development."

Households pay an annual fee of \$1,800 to the association for maintenance of common space, including all exterior landscaping around residents' homes, tending of a large green space of old-growth trees, maintenance of two tennis courts and snow removal.

Beverly Flowers bought her home at the Glebe in 1984. She wanted to down-

size from her nearby house in Merrywood on the Potomac after her first husband died. "A lot of people who have moved here have downsized," she said. Many specifically wanted to be close to Washington Golf and Country Club. Most families don't have children — she knows of only one.

Flowers heard about the community from a real estate agent who was showing another property she visited. That agent was Bob Groom, who had originally sold

THE GLEBE



BY LANE GARRETT — THE WASHINGTON POST

BOUNDARIES: North Glebe Road to the west, North Tappan Street to the south and east, and 38th Road North to the north.

SCHOOLS: Jamestown Elementary, Williamsburg Middle and Yorktown High schools.

HOME SALES: In the past 12 months, three townhouses have sold at prices from \$900,000 to \$1.15 million, according to Billy Buck of Buck & Associates in Arlington. There are no properties currently listed for sale.

WITHIN FIVE MINUTES BY CAR:

Washington Golf and Country Club, Chain Bridge, Route 123, Washington, Fort Ethan Allen Park, Glebe Road Park, Gull Branch Nature Center, Potomac Overlook Regional Park, Fort Marcy Park, George Washington Memorial Parkway.

the land to Gruver-Cooley for development of the Glebe.

When Flowers toured the home that is now hers, she was pleased. "I loved it," she said of her three-bedroom, 3½-bath home. "I didn't find anything I liked as

See GLEBE, C2, Col. 1



Generous common space, and homeowner fees to maintain it, mark the Glebe. This section is behind townhouses on North Tazewell Street.

Residents Say Glebe's Quality Still Shows

GLEBE, From C1

much. . . I like the openness."

Her foyer opens onto the first-floor landing of a circular staircase that spirals up to the bedroom level and down to the ground-floor patio level. She does not have a garage, but there is plenty of parking on her cul-de-sac.

Flowers leads the landscaping committee for the neighborhood; her husband, Douglas Frost, is president of the homeowners association. Flowers said current is-

sues for the association mostly have to do with maintenance, such as care for the grand old trees, as the property approaches its 30th birthday.

"It's an older community. We like the way it looks and want to keep it that way," she said.

"I love the convenience to D.C.," she said, noting that she has been a docent at the Corcoran Gallery for nearly 20 years. "It's a very congenial neighborhood. We don't get in each other's way, but people are very friendly."

People who move to the Glebe

generally hear about it through friends or current residents, according to Billy Buck of Buck & Associates, an Arlington real estate firm. "It's a tight-knit community, so everyone talks to each other," he said.

Mette Parker, a docent for 20 years at the Octagon Museum in the District, moved with her husband to the Glebe 15 years ago. They had lived in nearby Chesterbrook Woods in a large single-family house and decided after 25 years there that they would rather not bother with a lawn. However,

they still wanted a large living space, and the elevator helps them navigate the three floors. "It's very handy when you have a heavy suitcase or something," Parker said.

Parker's three-bedroom, 3½-bath house has a large stone-tiled patio fenced in by cast-iron railing. In pleasant weather, she can sit on her patio looking out on the wooded area separating the neighborhood from four-lane Glebe Road. In cold weather, she enjoys her three gas fireplaces, one on each level.



PHOTOS BY OLGA STROHFOR FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

Some foyers at the Glebe in Arlington feature spiral staircases.

Parker's home, like the homes of many of her neighbors, has an impressive circular stairway and marble tile in the foyer. Parker, a former employee of the Swedish Foreign Service who met her husband in Paris in 1952, is the second owner of her home. She particularly likes the sunken living room, with its high ceiling that al-

lows her to hang an heirloom baroque mirror.

Sitting on her walled back patio gazing out across the common wooded area, she is far enough from the traffic to be relatively unbothered. Old trees and gentle landscaping stretch behind her home. "I just love this place," she said.