



Wellington, the new headquarters of the American Horticultural Society was once the property of George Washington.

American Horticultural Society To Relocate

The American Horticultural Society is planning to move to its new headquarters site located on Potomac River which it purchased in February for \$800,000.

It was once part of George Washington's River farm, belonging to the first president's extensive Mount Vernon holdings. Washington gave it to Tobias Lear, his private secretary, who lived there until his death

after which it reverted to the Washington family. It remained in their hands for about a century.

Two years ago national attention focused on the historic property when the Soviet government sought to purchase the estate as a retreat for its embassy personnel. Considerable protest by private citizens led the U. S. Department of State to disapprove the purchase. At that time Congress enacted a law forbidding property belonging to a former president from being sold to

foreign interests.

The Society plans to develop the newly acquired Potomac riverfront site as a national center of gardening and horticulture. Activities and exhibits will stress the social as well as the esthetic role of gardening in improving the environment.

According to executive director, O. Keister Evans, the Society will move in late March from the modern office building in Alexandria where its staff is now spread on three floors. This is the second move in two years for Evans and his staff who have watched the Society blossom as its membership increased seven-fold in just 20 months.

The Horticultural Society intends to develop a National Center of Gardening and Horticulture on the site, featuring activities and exhibits that would stress the social as well as the esthetic role of gardening in improving our environment. Special programs will emphasize urban horticulture and the urban landscape while environmental activities will also be featured. A particular effort will be directed toward introducing young people to "environmental gardening" and senior citizens to "plant-oriented leisure activities."



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