



Left: Carolyn Hagner Shaw (seated) and her daughter, Carolyn Shaw Murray, decided who was in or out in Washington society for decades. Center: Shaw's mother, Helen Ray Hagner, founded the "Green Book" in 1930. Right: an early 1930's edition lists Mrs. Truxtun Beale, the last owner of "Decatur House," and Mr. and Mrs. F. Lamnot Belin, who lived at "Evermay." (Photos courtesy the "Green Book")



Beale,	Mr. and Mrs. Truxtun (Marie C. Oge)	748 Jackson Place Metropolitan 1204	Bennet
Beale,	Mr. and Mrs. William Lewis (Elna E. Sims)	1915 S Street North 7502	Bennet
"	Miss Elizabeth V.		Bennet
"	Mr. William L. Jr.		Bennet
Beall,	Mr. and Mrs. William Dent (Isabel Vaughan)	2219 California St. North 3332	Bennet
"	Miss Caroline Marbury		Bennet
Beall,	Mr. and Mrs. William Marbury (Caroline Campbell)	1670 - 31st Street West 0958	Miss F
"	Miss Elizabeth		Benois
"	Miss Caroline		"
"	Miss Sidney		"
Bean,	Mr. and Mrs. Rodney	3332 D Street West 2571	Benson
Beckwith,	Mr. and Mrs. Robert E. Lincoln (Hazel H. Holland Wilson)	6315 Ridgewood Ave. Chevy Chase, Md.	Bentle
"	Mr. James B. Wilson	Wisconsin 2522	Bentle
Behney,	Maj. and Mrs. Jacob	Fort Myer, Va.	Berri
"	Miss Mapine	West 2000	"
Belin,	Mr. and Mrs. F. Lamnot (Frances Jernyn)	"Evermay", 1623 - 28th Street North 2607	Berry
"	Mr. F. Lamnot, Jr. (Jr.)		"
Bell,	Mr. and Mrs. Alexander H. Jr.	6601 East Avenue Chevy Chase, Md. Wisconsin 2547	Berry
Bell,	Mrs. Charles J. (Grace B. Hubbard)	"Twin Oaks", Woodley Road, Cleveland 0313	Berry
Bell,	Mr. and Mrs. George T. Miss Mary Lee	The Shoreham, Adams 0700	Berry
"	Mr. George T. Jr.		Berry
Bellinger, Capt. and Mrs. John B. Jr. (Margaret Thomson)		3520 Rodman Street Emerson 7963	Berry
Belmont,	Mr. and Mrs. Perry (Jessie Hobbins)	1618 New Hampshire Potomac 3588	Beth
Benjamin, Dr. and Mrs. Marcus N. (Carolyn Gilbert)		The Highlands North 1240	"
Benjamin,	Mr. and Mrs. Raymond Miss Barbara	6101 Connecticut Ave. Chevy Chase, Md. Wisconsin 4650	Beur
"			Bick

Bible of Belonging

"The Green Book," Washington's venerable social arbiter, celebrates 80 years of mandating who's in and who's out

Those whose names appear in the "Social List of Washington" reenact a little ritual when the annual edition of the exclusive directory (known as the "Green Book" for its emerald faux suede covers) arrives in the mail each October.

First they look to see if their own names are still listed, and then those of their friends, followed by anyone who may have been "dropped" for various reasons. Finally they search for newcomers included for the first time. That's when the phone lines – these days just as likely to be emails, twitters and texts – start buzzing.

"People kill to get into the 'Green Book,'" former White House social secretary Letitia Baldrige once told a reporter. "They spend their whole life trying. It is so important to them."

In an age of "social networking" websites and ubiquitous magazine rosters of the "richest," "most beautiful" and "most powerful," some might view the publication as a quaint anachronism dating back to an era when WASP bloodlines and "old money" ties were of paramount importance.

Thomas J. Murray, whose family has been separating the *hoi* from the *polloi* since the "Green Book" was first published in 1930, begs to differ. "We have continually sought out and listed those in the metropolitan area who have dedicated themselves to the Washington community through their efforts and success in philanthropy, business and civic organizations,"

he says, pointing out that the "Green Book," while remaining a venerable local social register, is also a ready-reference guide few can do without if they wish to be au courant in the nation's capital. "We maintain up-to-date listings for all the branches of the U.S. government along with a complete listing of embassies and ambassadors, Murray, 86, says, noting that the many daily calls to his office seeking protocol advice "are testament enough to the relevant role the "Green Book" plays in Washington."

That role has been significant since 1930, when Helen Ray Hagner first began publishing an annual directory based on the guest lists she compiled for debutante parties and other major soirées in the nation's capital. Her daughter, Carolyn "Callie" Hagner Shaw, took the reins in 1942 and held sway for the next 35 years as Washington's social shepherdess, "dividing the sheep from the goats," so to speak, while upholding tradition with a firm – some would say rigid – hand. While Shaw was known to inveigh against presidential nicknames ("President Jimmy, now really!") and the gradual disappearance of white-tie diplomatic receptions at the White House, she did see fit to finally integrate the "Green Book" in 1971 by including the first (non-office-holding) African Americans.

Callie's daughter, Jean Shaw Murray (Thomas Murray's late wife) took liberalization a few steps further when she ran the operation from 1977 until her death in 1986. Her first ruling was that the stigma of divorce

would no longer be an impediment to a “Green Book” listing. “If we didn’t have divorced and separated people,” she reasoned at the time, “we wouldn’t have a book anymore.”

Mrs. Murray also ended the practice of announcing who had been dropped each year (probably to avoid potential lawsuits, Mr. Murray says). The eagerly awaited annual press release always made headlines when newspapers reported juicy details of the bad behavior or unpleasant notoriety of those whose names had been struck. The un-cordially ousted occasionally struck back, often with droll results. When White House aide Hamilton Jordan was removed after a messy divorce and allegations of ungentlemanly behavior, he laughingly told the Washington Post: “My burden is heavy. I must pick up the pieces of my life and continue.”

The famous card file with the names of everyone who has ever applied or been dropped still exists although newer entries no longer contain notations like “B.D.” (Bad Drunk) and “O.F.” (Old Fool) as before. While genteel alcoholism is tolerated, public brawling or hair-pulling incidents remain grounds for dismissal. “The Green Book” still takes a stand against joint listings of unmarried live-togethers but now allows the once-*verboden* use of “Ms.” by women who request it.

“The ‘Green Book’ has not changed significantly over the years because the need for proper protocol and precedence has not changed significantly,” the publication’s newly appointed editor, Beth Ann Newton, says, noting that the product “may have been founded 80 years ago but our phone never stops ringing with questions about how to do something the ‘right’ way.”

Truly good manners never go out of style.

— Kevin Chaffee



“Green Book” publisher Thomas J. Murray and Editor Beth Ann Newton (Photo by Tony Powell)

The Green Team

Q&A WITH THE EDITOR AND PUBLISHER

WASHINGTON LIFE: How is the “Green Book” relevant to life in 21st century Washington?

BETH ANN NEWTON: The “Green Book” has continually sought out and listed those who have dedicated themselves to the larger Washington community through their efforts and success in philanthropy, business and social and civic organizations. We maintain the most up-to-date listings for embassies and [top officials] of the U.S. government. The many daily calls to our office regarding questions of protocol and precedence are testament to the relevant role the “Green Book” plays in life in the nation’s capital.

WL: Is there really a secret committee who votes on admission to the “Green Book”?

BAN: Yes. Prospective members must receive two or more written nominations from current members. These are given to the committee for consideration.

WL: Do people get dropped for bad behavior and if so, what constitutes bad behavior?

THOMAS J. MURRAY: Being in the book does not guarantee staying in the book. As for what constitutes “bad

behavior” – let’s just say you know it when you see it.

WL: What is your favorite “Green Book” tale from the past?

TJM: A woman once called to ask how to eat an orange at the captains table on the QE2! She was quite concerned that she could not find the answer in any of her etiquette books. Another favorite was the widow who asked if she could dress her recently deceased husband in a tuxedo for a viewing that would be held before 6 p.m.

WL: Are you planning an annual magazine-like supplement similar to the “Social Register Observer”?

BAN: We’re looking for ways to showcase the rich history that the Shaw-Murray family has preserved through 80 years of events and stories about the “Green Book.” One, is the launch of our first-ever website (www.thegreenbookdc.com), which we will be expanding in the months to come. There are also other ways in which we intend on connecting on a more regular basis with our “Green Book” subscribers, honorees, and friends, and a publication similar to the “Social Register Observer” may be one of those ways. **WL**

Cordially Dropped

The following individuals’ names were removed from the “Green Book” for various reasons over the years

NAME	OFFENSE
Sherman Adams	Accepting a vicuña coat and other gifts while in office
Ben Bradlee	Messy divorce
Ramsay Clarke	Far left political activities
Justice William O. Douglas	Marrying a woman young enough to be his granddaughter
Justice Abe Fortas	Ethics scandal
Jean Harris	Murdering her lover, Dr. Herman Tarnower
Alger Hiss	Espionage conviction
Rep. Wayne Hayes	Planting his mistress Elizabeth Ray on the House of Representatives payroll
Barbara Howar	Blabbing about Lynda Bird Johnson’s wedding plans to reporters
Hamilton Jordan	Allegations of coarse behavior in public
Rep. Wilbur Mills	Drunken cavorting with stripper Fanne Fox in the Tidal Basin
John and Martha Mitchell	Watergate conspiracy activities (him); bad press for erratic behavior (her)
Tongsun Park	Indictment for bribery in the “Koreagate” scandal