



Chevy Chase Historical Society

Newsletter

Winter 2006

Society to Celebrate 25th Anniversary at Special Spring Gala



Photo lent by Leroy Morgan

Dudlea at One Quincy Street

The Chevy Chase Historical Society will hold its 25th Anniversary Gala at the historic Chevy Chase, Maryland home of Mr. and Mrs. B. Francis Saul II on Sunday, April 30, from 6:00 to 9:00 p.m. The Sauls' elegant home, *Dudlea*, at One Quincy Street, was built in 1909 by Dr. James Dudley Morgan as a summer house. *Dudlea* occupies one of the most spacious lots laid out by the Chevy Chase Land Company. It stands between Bradley Lane and Quincy Street, facing a sweeping park-like lawn that overlooks Connecticut Avenue.

Today the house looks remarkably as it did when the photograph, above, was taken in 1910. The left-facing porch wing has undergone some modification, but the stuccoed main house remains true to its Colonial Revival roots, with hipped roof, prominent dormers, side chimney, and one story porch. The entrance is emphasized by Greek Revival columns and piers, three-part windows, and porch balustrades. These de-

tails, along with the house's symmetry and strong horizontal lines, create a dwelling of classical grace enhanced by the energetic variety of early 20th century eclecticism.

Mr. and Mrs. Saul purchased the house in 1969 from Carroll Morgan, becoming the first owners of the property who were not members of the Morgan family. Their loving care has increased the house's beauty inside and out and has created an ambience that promises to provide a spectacular venue for the society's champagne buffet celebrating its 25th anniversary.

In mid-March, CCHS will mail invitations to its members and to those on its mailing list. Priority will be given to members. The society recommends prompt response in order to secure a reservation. Please direct questions about reservations to Helen Secrest, Corresponding Secretary, at (301) 652-4878.

Chevy Chase Historical Society Newsletter



Chevy Chase Historical Society
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Tuesdays and by appointment.

The Chevy Chase Historical Society is a non-profit organization founded in 1981 to discover, record, and preserve the history of the Maryland and Washington neighborhoods known as Chevy Chase.

Recent Acquisitions

"Recent Acquisitions" is a regular feature in the newsletter, describing documents and other items that are acquired for the society's Archives and Research Center.

1. Newsletters from Leland Street, 1973-2003. Also, miscellaneous items relating to Fred Karl Zimmerman, who founded Zimmerman Park, including ephemera and a description of the history and dedication of the park. Donated by Sylvia Jones on behalf of the residents of the 4100 block of Leland Street.
2. A photograph of the Kindergarten Class of 1930 at Chevy Chase Elementary School. Lent by Edmund Imrie.
3. Reproduction of a photograph of an 1879 map of the Bethesda Chevy Chase area. Also, an article titled "Five Small Houses at Chevy Chase," attributed to the *Country Life in America* magazine of February 1910. Donated by Julie Thomas.
4. Correspondence, deeds, and articles relating to Abraham Bradley, who came to Washington in 1800 as Assistant Postmaster General. A few years later he purchased a piece of the Chevy Chase tract, which became known as the Bradley Farm. It is now the site of the Chevy Chase Club. Donated by Charles H. Bradley, a direct descendant of Abraham Bradley.

"WANT ADS"

Wanted: Volunteers for "Chevy Chasing" History: A Community Fair, on Saturday, Oct 7 (see box, p.3). We need volunteers to help with a wide variety of projects and tasks, both before and during the fair. Contact Shelly Brunner at 301-907-8072 or brunnerall@aol.com.

Wanted: A volunteer to work with a longstanding Chevy Chase resident on our extensive historical photograph collection.

Are you ready to try a new adventure?

Are you interested in your community's history?

Do you love to explore eBay, libraries, and dusty attics for photographs?

If so, we have the job for you! Tasks include responding to requests for copies of existing photographs; scanning photos into our data base; mining libraries and other historical societies for photos not in our collection; identifying photographs that have unknown provenance; and labeling, indexing, and recording new photographs, and occasionally taking photos of houses and streetscapes that are undergoing change.

Compensation: the opportunity to work with interesting, intelligent history buffs, to learn about the history of Chevy Chase, and to make great friends among your neighbors. Call Mary Ann Tuohey at (301) 656-1779.

Wanted: House histories and deeds. If you have deeds or other historical documents regarding your house, we will appreciate your allowing us to copy them for our archives. We will return them promptly! Contact Alice Kinter at (301) 656-3642 or gkinter@bellatlantic.net.

A Little Bit of History

Beginnings of the Chevy Chase Historical Society

The title of this retrospective, "A Little Bit of History," derives from one of the society's previous brochures. We consider this "borrowing back" by CCHS of its own wordsmithing to be a propos in light of the society's 25 year history.

Before CCHS was formed, there had been a number of Annual Chevy Chase Village House Tours to raise funds for the Citizens Coordinating Committee for Friendship Heights. The House Tour Committee wanted to feature the history of Chevy Chase as part of the tours, so each year, exhibits of old photographs, scrapbooks, milk bottles, etc., were set up in one of the houses on the tour. These artifacts were borrowed from local residents and returned after the tours. Each year people said it was too bad that these "treasures" had to be returned. If only we had an historical society to collect and preserve them!

Another impetus for forming an historical society was that there were long time residents like Edith Jarvis who had been born and raised here. Many were in their eighties. Each had a story to tell. It was important to record and save their memories.

Then, in the late 1970s, we learned that the boarded-up trolley station next to Parkview Cleaners (formerly Grandma's Attic Antique Shop) was to be demolished or sold. At the same time, another property, the High's Dairy store site on Brookville Road at Quincy Street, now a park, was being sold to a bank. At this point an advisory committee was formed of people interested in preserving the history of

the neighborhood. We discussed the feasibility of acquiring the trolley station and moving it to the Brookville Road site, where it could serve as a nonprofit, historical society headquarters. A decision was required in a short period of time, and the advisory committee decided that while we needed an historical society, it would not be possible for a brand new organization with few resources to acquire the property or the trolley station, and to renovate and maintain the latter.

Those interested in establishing an historical society continued to meet. We asked ourselves many questions: Why at this point did we want an historical society separate from the Montgomery County Historical Society? What about Chevy Chase, D.C.? Who would join? What would we collect? What would we do for a headquarters? How would we build financial support? The group decided to risk believing that over time others who valued the history of our neighborhood would decide to join in, and help to answer these questions, not all of which could be dealt with at the outset.

In March 1981, approximately 20 of these residents of greater Chevy Chase came together to establish CCHS. Bob Elliott filed for our incorporation and tax exempt status, and the nomination committee presented its first candidates for office: Mary Anne Tuohey, President; Robin Reed, Vice President; Harriette Hobbs, Secretary; Peggy Nalls, Treasurer; and Flora Gill Jacobs, Edith Jarvis, and Bob Elliott, Directors at Large. Then we took off! At our first annual meeting on May 18, 1981, in the Chevy Chase Village Hall, the slate of candidates was elected. Afterward, Edith Jarvis gave a slide lecture on the history of Chevy Chase. And the rest, as they say, is history.

In the very beginning . . .



1982 Chairman, Jean Slavin, Judy Elliott and Mary Anne Tuohey



Joan Marsh chats with waitress



Duo pianists Suzanne Ferrall and Joan Hollander



Harriette Hobbs cuts the cake for Edith Jarvis

. . . there was tea and music at the Hollanders'

A Valuable Piece Of Land

Part I (1890-1950)

By Julie Thomas and Bill Offutt

Between Colonel Belt's Chevy Chace land grant to the south and Jones' Clean Drinking home and mill and the Rev. Williamson's Hayes Manor on the north lay the sprawling No Gain tract. The Maccubbins were the long-term, 18th-century owners of these fertile acres, and they built the shaded home that still stands on Brookeville Road. Today much of Sections 3 and 5 of the Village of Chevy Chase are on No Gain land east of Connecticut Avenue, and Section 4, now the Town of Chevy Chase, includes much of that plantation west of the new road. It was and is, for the most part, high and gently rolling real estate with several free-flowing springs, a valuable piece of land.



Chevy Chase College and Seminary students circa 1914

Very likely a tobacco farm in the old days, as were most Montgomery County farms, No Gain was probably growing wheat and corn by the time the idea of a suburban community gestated in the mind of Major George Armes, and he interested Senator Stewart and what came to be called the Sharon or California Syndicate in such a project. One of silver lobbyist (later to be Congressman and Senator) Francis Newlands' straw men, a young lawyer named George Hamilton, negotiated the purchase of 140 No Gain acres from Hilleary and Kate Offutt in March 1890. The recently married Offutts hung on to a couple of acres around their home, but later gave that up at a much better price when it looked like the street car line might run through their dining room. They moved way out on the Pike and bought the farm that later became Georgetown Prep, Wickford and Dietle's store.¹

After the newly formed Chevy Chase Land Company created Chevy Chase Circle, laid down its pair of streetcar tracks and platted out its first Maryland subdivision as Section 2, now Chevy Chase Village, someone decided Chevy Chase should try to emulate the successes that Glen Echo, Cabin John, Forest Glen and Bethesda Park were having with summer

hotels. Lindley Johnson, who along with Leon Dessez was the Land Company's lead architect, designed a two-story, Colonial Revival structure with impressive columns in front and porches all around. Joseph P. Williamson built the wooden hotel for \$24,000. Originally called the Chevy Chase Spring Hotel, it opened in May 1894 and featured spacious lawns, comfortable rooms, soothing breezes and outdoor bowling. Like nearby Chevy Chase Lake, where there would soon be a band shell, dance pavilion and other attractions, plus a car barn and power plant, the Land Company leaders hoped their hotel would draw city people to the country to look at the land they had bought by the acre and were now selling by the square foot.

Soon renamed the Chevy Chase Inn, the hotel advertised "Music every evening. Plenty of amusement. Lovely surroundings. The Great Specialty is the Dollar Table d'Hote dinner, served from 5 to 8." Although *The Washington Post* called the Inn

"one of the most popular" suburban attractions, it soon was recognized as an expensive mistake, a very large white elephant. It was rented out to various hopeful entrepreneurs, but in the winters it often stood empty while its few neighbors made use of the outdoor bowling alleys. Among the earliest cold-weather tenants was the Young Ladies Seminary headed by Miss Lea M. Boulogny of New Orleans, but her school lasted only the year of 1895-96 despite giving local girls a chance to learn French.²

In 1903 Samuel Nelson Barker, who had been president of Sullins College in Bristol, Virginia, a Methodist girls' school at that time, acquired the Inn and opened the Chevy Chase College, a "residence and day school for girls and young ladies." Tuition for boarders was \$500. For almost the next half century, a girls' school operated on this valuable piece of land.³

By 1912 the publications of the Chevy Chase College and Seminary Incorporated boasted that in the school "there is an atmosphere that encourages self-reliance, perfect honesty and growth along with strong womanhood. Character building and moral training are counted more vital than

mere text-book learning.” The Barkers assured the parents of prospective students that “we are giving special attention to the class of students registered.” The school offered a three-year high school and what amounted to a junior college with either academic or terminal programs. The academic program required five years of Latin and four of a modern language. But, stated the school’s prospectus, should anyone be concerned about such a strenuous regimen, examinations had been abolished since they served only as “nervous exhaustives to hardworking, sensitive girls.” In the spring of 1911 there had been nineteen “diploma” graduates plus one in music. Speaker of the House Champ Clark, a presidential aspirant, spoke at their graduation, praised the girls’ beauty and said he expected they would all soon be married.

By that year, 1912, the Barkers were charging \$600 for boarders, and by 1914 charging \$700, with extra fees for music and art. The few day students paid \$100 for high school and \$150 for college. Gentleman callers were tolerated, but they had to produce “letters of introduction” before being admitted, and no visitors were allowed on Sundays when all the girls were expected to attend church services locally. Among the references provided by the Barkers were the Hon. Francis Newlands and Mr. Edward Stellwagen of the Thomas Fisher Company, the nabobs of the struggling Land Company.

For the young ladies at the Seminary, as it was then commonly called, days were busy: rising bell at 6:45 a.m., prayers at 7:30 a.m., breakfast at 7:45 a.m., study and recitation from 8:30 a.m. until 1 p.m., lunch, then recreation, practice, gymnastics, athletics and Domestic Science in the afternoon, dinner at 6 p.m., study from 7:30 to 9:30 p.m. and lights out at 10 p.m.



Student Red Cross exercises



Chevy Chase School in 1928

The school colors in those days were orange and black; later they became gold and black. No sororities were tolerated. As for dress, the school suggested two Peter Thompson sailor suits for school hours, a black gym suit with “full bloomers,” a tailor made suit for street and church wear with two “waists” for the suit, and two “reception” gowns. Prohibited were dresses with a “low neck, only Dutch necks allowed.”⁴

During Mr. Barker’s administration, a large, shingle-style home, originally called “Barker House” and later “Scudder House,” was built for use by the headmaster and his family as well as other members of the faculty. It was located on the north side of the campus, well removed from the school itself, between the present Kellogg Hall and the McCormick Hall.

In 1917 Frederic Ernest Farrington became headmaster and with the help of his wife, Isabelle, ran the school until his sudden death in 1930. Farrington, with degrees from Harvard and Columbia and an interest in banking as well as education, brought wide experience to what became known as the Chevy Chase School. Its publications emphasized the many resources of the Washington, D.C., community and the field trips the girls took on Saturdays to such sites as Mount Vernon, Annapolis, the Capitol, the White House and the Library of Congress, as well as the plays and concerts they attended every month of the school year. It was still a three-year high school and a two-year junior college, and it now boasted some 60 students.

Farrington advertised Chevy Chase as the “healthiest and most attractive suburb” in the area and claimed that “a young woman who comes here during her adolescent years cannot fail to absorb something of the great pulsating activity” of the capital area. “We are *in* the country, but not *of* the country,” he claimed, and promised that all activities were under the

direct supervision of the headmaster and of his wife who lived in the "faculty house" on the spacious campus.

The school claimed that its policies stood for "the modern movement in girls' education" and not mere rote training. Instruction included emphasis on the English language, plus some math, social studies, general science, modern languages (not Latin or Greek), home economics "since most students will eventually have to manage servants," and both athletic and esthetic pursuits. As for school life, the Farringtons' stated goal was to "reproduce the conditions of a normal home," including "social training," with "properly introduced" young gentlemen who were welcomed on both Saturday evening and Sunday afternoons. The girls planned parties and formal dinners, and all were expected to attend church services every week. On the twelve-acre campus there was plenty of room for tennis, basketball and roller skating on a cement court, croquet, field hockey, and a "short seven-hole golf course."

By 1922 the cost of living and tuition had risen to \$1,100, laundry was \$45, a few private rooms were available for an additional \$100, but very small two-girl rooms and shared baths were the norm. As for wardrobe, the school suggested one-piece gowns, Peter Thompson suits, skirts and blouses, one "tailor suit," one afternoon gown, one evening gown and one or two simple dresses plus walking shoes. Horseback riding was available at nearby Meadowbrook for a reasonable fee, and there were times when a horse or two was stabled in a shed at the back of the grounds.

Annual activities at the school included student-produced plays, a much-anticipated vaudeville show, an elaborate and well-attended community festival, a May Queen, the recitation of his "Ballad of Chevy Chase" by the headmaster, a Southern Relief Ball or other benefit dance, and at graduation a Class Day and ceremonial tree planting. Some things, of course, became traditional such as high jinks on the first of April, crackers for the morning recess, and highly spiced curry on rice for Wednesday's supper. The girls often produced an annual publication called "The Chaser," with stories, pictures, and very "inside" humor.

In 1928 under Farrington's leadership, architect Arthur

Heaton designed a two-story, fireproof dormitory wing for the south end of the school's main building and then 10 years later was in charge of adding a brick veneer to the facade of the original structure. The dorm, called Barker Hall, included a new library and a recreation area. Later an art building, Sumner Milton Hall, was added, and then Effa Funk Muhse Hall, a new science building. By the outbreak of the Second World War II the school was enrolling 90 to 100 students most years and the tuition had risen to \$1,400 for boarders and \$400 for junior college day students.⁵

In June 1930 Dr. Farrington died of a heart attack at age 57. His widow, Isabelle Scudder Farrington, led the school until Philip Milo Bail, Ph.D., became president, at which time she was called "regent" and later "chairman of the board of overseers." In 1940 the school was incorporated as a non-profit institution and developed a cooperative relationship with George Washington University.⁶ Kendrick Norris

Marshall became president of Chevy Chase Junior College in 1941 and moved into Barker House. Marshall, during his brief tenure, had reorganized the social studies program as "the Chevy Chase plan" to study the federal government and international organizations with expert-led seminars and numerous visits to government installations and offices.



Graduation 1928

In 1942 the college started its forty-first year under new leadership: Carrie Sutherland, formerly dean and then president of Arlington Hall Junior College, became the first woman to head "Chevy," as most of the girls called it. Mrs. Alexander Fromhold took on the Director of Activities job, and the college promised plenty of time for war-time volunteer programs. Soon 30 girls were meeting every Monday morning in the biology lab to roll bandages and prepare surgical dressings. The memorabilia collected by Jean Roundtree Doyle, class of '42, shows that every girl "tried to do her part in some way, large or small," that defense stamps were being sold in the halls and that there were "little barrels in the Cave [a gathering spot in the basement], marked for tinfoil from cigarettes and candy bars." At war's end Headmistress Sutherland announced plans for a new humanities program and said the school was being "overwhelmed" with applications.⁷

In the post-war period the senior high school program was discontinued, but the Chevy Chase Junior College seemed to be popular and prospering with about 100 students a year. Outsiders tended to look on it as a kind of “finishing school,” and many local folks enjoyed seeing the pretty girls hike down to Brookeville Road for one of “Doc’s” sodas or some snacks. Tuition was up to \$1,650 a year for boarders and \$500 for the increasing number of day students. In one of the school’s last promotional pamphlets recent graduates were pictured and quoted praising “Chevy” for the kindness of their fellow students and the faculty, for the sightseeing trips, the small classes, the helpful student leaders, the Christmas banquet, the embassy parties, the visits to the Naval Hospital to entertain the wounded, the famous speakers and the wonderful graduation ceremonies “with the Seniors in long white organdy, carrying red roses and being escorted by the Juniors in pastel shades against early summer as a background and proud parents as a foreground”⁸

Joan Plummer Russell, a member of the school’s last graduating class, married a man she met as a student, and now has nine children and 12 grandchildren plus a very successful children’s book. She remembers the school very fondly and says, regretfully, it is a symbol of “an era long gone and what a shame.” Mrs. Russell particularly recalls “James,” the African-American night watchman, “always so proper in his white jacket, he would never answer the phone until he had his tie straight and his glasses on. When one of the staff would check on us; after a certain hour we had to be on our own halls and hopefully in our own rooms but sometimes would sneak back to what was called ‘the cave’ in the school’s basement for another cigarette, and when [James was] asked if he knew where we were, he would try to duck out of telling on us.” She remembers the “good looking young drivers” of the We Cab company whom all the girls flirted with and, of course, the Hot Shoppe and the “Chinese place at the Circle.” Students who did not board were called “day hops,” and Mrs. Russell recalls “telephones, one to each dorm, and they were like a phone booth, one on Bowery, one on Upper Barker, and one on Lower Barker, for all those girls.” She also remembered many girls going in and out the window in her dorm room to meet their boyfriends since there was an outside hose connection that made it easy.

“At dinner,” she writes, “most tables had one of the staff to keep us ‘ladies.’ [We had] birthday dinners for all who had a birthday that month. I think we all wore formal dresses to that meal. Not so lovely really as we dashed from the hockey field to a quick splash of water and jammed on a long dress. If we had a formal date, [we] would have taken hours to primp.” She calls her teachers “a bizarre bunch,” and writes that “President Frances Brown seemed OK, a bit aloof.” She

recalls once-a-year waffle suppers at the president’s house with “two large tureens, one filled with creamed chicken, the other with lobster Newburg to be put on hot waffles.”⁹

The school seemed to be stable and financially healthy, accepted as a local institution like the country clubs and the swimming pool across from the car barn, part of life in Chevy Chase. And then, very suddenly, in the summer of 1950, it was gone.¹⁰

The next issue of the newsletter will include the rest of the story of this valuable piece of land, as the home of the Operations Research Office and then of the 4-H Conference Center.



Notes

1. See Offutt, *Bethesda A Social History*, for more
2. Lampl and Williams, *Chevy Chase*, p. 96 and the Town of Chevy Chase’s “Celebrating Our History,” p. 18
3. “Chevy Chase College A Resident College and Day School for Girls and Young Ladies,” a pamphlet in the collection of the CCHS.
4. Peter Thompson dresses were the ubiquitous sailor suits of the time, described thus by one source: “The style was classically standard but materials varied; the dark blue serge for every day, the cobalt blue linen for intermediate, the fine white linen for best. The top part slipped over the head and tucked into a rather full gored skirt, maybe four inches off the ground. White soutache braid bordered the sailor collar as well as the cuffs buttoned at the wrist . . . starched stiff white dickey, with almost clerical stand-up collar, was tied with tapes at the back and was embroidered with anchor and chevrons as was one sleeve. A red or black triangular silk scarf tied in a sailor’s knot completed the costume . . .” “Dutch” neck dresses came up to the chin.
5. In 1925 Headmaster Farrington had become the president of the Chevy Chase Savings Bank.
6. Almost all of the above from school yearbooks and promotional publications in the collection of CCHS.
7. Roundtree quotes from Susan Leaps’ collection of memorabilia. Offutt, *Bethesda*.
8. See “My Two Years at Chevy Chase Junior College,” in the collection of CCHS.
9. E-mail interview with Julie Thomas, Jan. 2006. Meals were served by African Americans.
10. All that registered students received was a letter from business manager W. Tracy Scudder announcing that the school was closing.

SAVE THE DATE!

Saturday, October 7, 2006

“Chevy Chasing” History: A Community Fair

The Leland Community Center

See Details in Spring Newsletter