



## Spring Gala at 1894 Colonial Revival Home Delights Winter Weary Chevy Chasers and Friends

On Sunday May 4, one of the exquisite spring days that are refreshing Washingtonians after a long, harsh winter, the Chevy Chase Historical Society held its annual Champagne Supper Gala at the home of Byrne and Pamela Murphy at 10 East Kirke Street. One hundred eighty guests attended the indoor-outdoor party at the stately 1894 Colonial Revival house – one of the oldest homes in Chevy Chase – on its double lot at the corner of East Kirke and Brookeville Road.

Noted architect Leon E. Dessez designed the house for businessman Charles J. McCubbin. A Washington native and founding member of the Washington Chapter of the American Institute of Architects, Dessez was known for his 1893 design of the superintendent's house at the U.S. Naval Observatory, now the vice president's house. He also was a director and the chief architect for the Chevy Chase Land Company.

The house has been modified by the addition of a library/music room, sleeping porches, and a bay window. According to the tour guide for the Maryland House and Garden Pilgrimage in 1970, a stage once occupied the spacious front hall. At that time, a formal boxwood garden surrounded the home, and the current owners, Pamela and Byrne Murphy, have revived and replaced many of the older plantings on the spacious lot.

CCHS is grateful to the Murphys for opening their home to the society's members and guests. And kudos to our Gala Chair Catherine Cecere and our Gala Committee, whose considerable talent and effort yielded a lovely occasion enjoyed by all. (Additional Gala coverage pages 4 through 6.)

*Celebrating One of America's First Streetcar Suburbs*



## CHEVY CHASE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

P.O. Box 15145  
CHEVY CHASE, MARYLAND 20825

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Open 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Tuesday  
and by appointment

The Chevy Chase Historical Society collects, records, interprets and shares materials relating to the history of Chevy Chase, Maryland, one of America's first streetcar suburbs. The organization provides resources for historical research and sponsors a variety of programs and activities to foster knowledge and appreciation of the community's history.

## Chevy Chase Voices: The Oral History Project

**Ms. Hoffman:** I know my father got real mad one time about something. The trolley did not wait for him. And what they used to do, they'd wait for you to come all the way down the street.

**Interviewer:** The trolley conductor would wait?

**Ms. Hoffman:** Yes, But somehow or other he didn't see Dad that morning and he got left. So I can remember that Mr. Claude himself came down to get Dad. (Note: apparently Mr. Claude was a trolley company official.)

This excerpt from an interview of Miriam Hoffman, a long time resident of 9 West Kirke Street, is one of hundreds of such insights into day to day life in early Chevy Chase to be found in the files of CCHS' Oral History Project.

The OHP is one of the least known but longest running society activities. It began in CCHS' founding year of 1981 as the society recognized the value of recording what life was like for those who called Chevy Chase home in its formative years. Founder Mary Anne Tuohey and Marjorie Zapruder, both Kirke Street residents, conducted many of the first interviews. To date, professionally trained CCHS volunteers have captured the recollections of, and sometimes been given photographs by, 122 residents.

The society's board of directors strongly supports the OHP. It has decided to reinstitute the Newsletter feature "Chevy Chase Voices," with excerpts from interviews, to share the oral histories' content and to generate interest in the collection. This article is the first in the returning series of features that reveal recollections of Chevy Chase life contained in the histories.

A second excerpt from the interview of Esther Van Dyne of 12 West Kirke Street gives us another glimpse of early Chevy Chase life. Van Dyne was born and raised on West Kirke Street. Her family moved overseas before World War I, when her father, who was with the U.S. State Department, was assigned to the West Indies, then to Algeria and to France. Van Dyne returned to the United States to attend Ohio Wesleyan University. She later became a Methodist missionary in Algeria for six years, returning stateside to care for her mother at the family home on Kirke Street and to teach school.

**In describing the families on West Kirke Street, Van Dyne mentioned that the Dessez family lived next door to her, and commented:** They lived here long years ago. I guess they were the first ones who lived--well, they had a cow, because now people who buy that house want to know why they had such a big garage, a triple garage, and I said that was a barn and they kept the cow there. But it's a triple garage now.

*Stay tuned to "listen" to more Chevy Chase Voices in future Newsletter issues*

## Recent Acquisitions

### *Ruth Cain Lee Scrapbook*

*"Recent Acquisitions" is a regular feature in the Newsletter, describing documents and other items acquired for the society's Archive and Research Center*

In November 1995, Richard C. Lee of Bethesda sent CCHS copies of pages from the scrapbook his mother Ruth Cain Lee kept when she was a student at Chevy Chase Seminary in 1915-16. In 2007, Mr. Lee allowed then- CCHS board member Julie Rude Thomas to photograph some pages of the fragile scrapbook. Eleven of these are included in our Chevy Chase Seminary collection, and are an important part of the rich material about the school that Mrs. Thomas has donated to CCHS.



**Photo of two scrapbook pages**

We are creating a PDF file of the photos to post on our website. Readers will be able to turn the digital pages of Ruth Cain's pretty scrapbook, muse on her collection of souvenirs, and wonder at the prices from local restaurant menus circa 1915, without harming this priceless family heirloom.

Recently Mr. Lee told us more about his mother: "Ruth Cain Lee was born in Lawrenceville, Georgia on August 5, 1897. She was a classmate of Margaret Mitchell at Washington Seminary in Atlanta before attending Chevy Chase Seminary, and spent most of her life living in Atlanta. She married Dr. Carlton A. Lee on August 31, 1918 soon after graduating from Chevy Chase Seminary. She had one son, three grandchildren, and eight great grandchildren. She was always very pleased with her education at Chevy Chase Seminary, and showed her scrapbook to her family and friends on many occasions."



**Portrait of the young Ruth Cain**

Last fall, Mr. Lee attended our lecture on local female seminaries, including Chevy Chase Seminary. We explained that we would like to have more information on the experiences of individual students, since many of our Chevy Chase Seminary documents were school-produced. Mr. Lee offered us the opportunity to copy the entire scrapbook.

The 50 page, 98 year old scrapbook was too fragile to scan. Bill Mills, professional photographer and CCHS member and volunteer, has photographed our events but this time he "set up" in our Archive and Research Center, capturing every page in the book, as well as every page of the letters, telegrams, and pamphlets that Ruth Cain had carefully pasted in it. She also had included dance cards, invitations, recital programs, and photos of fellow students on campus as well as on tours of the Washington area.



**A trio of seminary girls enjoy a game of golf**

We are delighted to help preserve the scrapbook and to have the opportunity to create a digital version that will be viewed by successive generations of Ruth Cain Lee's family as well as visitors to our website. If you would like to share your family photos or documents about life in Chevy Chase, without parting with the originals, we are pleased to accept digital copies for our collections.



**Welcome! President Angela Lancaster, Director Mary Sheehan, Gala Chair Catherine Cecere, and Director Wendy Adams**



**Director Natasha Saifee (R) sells raffle tickets and chats with Catherine Triantis**



**Katy Farr mingles graciously**



**Dapper gents in hats!**



**Kate Carr and Kristin Gerlach share a pause for refreshment**



**Marea Grant, Jerome and Marilyn Bracken, Eriko Kennedy, Salim Saifee, and Neil Nott**

## **Fair Winds and Sunny Skies Favor Society's Spring Gala**

Washington's overdue spring delivered a pretty evening for the CCHS Spring 2014 gala champagne supper on Sunday May 4. Members and guests enjoyed the house and grounds at 10 East Kirke Street, the 1894 Colonial Revival home of hosts Pamela and Byrne Murphy. Most took advantage of the weather to drink and dine on the porches and lawns. Vice President Susan Bollendorf arranged the lovely flowers, and pianist Marshall White's music added festivity. Treasurer Carolyn Greis created an exhibit on No. 10's history, with Archive and Research Center Director Gail Sansbury, Archive Assistant Beth Meyer, photographer Bill Mills, and volunteers Lori Vitellozzi and Susan Kirby. Volunteer Diane Riker wrote the house's history. Alain Roussel and his La Ferme Restaurant staff served up icy champagne and a lavish buffet. President Angela Lancaster presented the Murphys with a commemorative plaque and a bound house history. Thanks to our Gala Chair and Committee, our "Sponsors and Friends" for their generosity (see acknowledgment on page 6), and all who attended this annual celebration of Chevy Chase history and important fundraiser.

*Photos by Bill Mills*

*See many more at [www.facebook.com/chevychasehistory](http://www.facebook.com/chevychasehistory)*



**Champagne on the east lawn**



**Maryanne Kane and Tom Gilday enjoy exhibit on No. 10**



**Aaron Machado and Frank Snodgrass in conversation with hostess Pamela Murphy**



**Vice President Susan Bollendorf congratulates Josh Brady on winning the wine basket raffle**



**Susan and Jim Catlette admire the home's interior**



**Angela Lancaster presents commemorative plaque and house history to tickled hosts Pamela and Byrne Murphy**



**Guests partake of the delectable buffet**



**Dining *al fresco* on the west lawn**



**Montgomery County Council Member Roger Berliner charms Kathie Legg and Fred Cecere**



**Tete-a-tete: Mickey Kelley, Wendy Adams, and Claudia Donovan whose father wrote PT 109**



**Ricki and Michael Helfer are all smiles**



**Founder Mary Anne Tuohey (R) is delighted to see Barbara Sloat**

## **We are deeply Grateful to the Sponsors and Friends Of the Chevy Chase Historical Society Gala on May 4, 2014**

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## MYSTERY!

"Mystery!" is a regular feature in the Newsletter. We invite all sleuths to help CCHS solve "mysteries" contained in the society's archive, and those uncovered by community members such as this one that John E. Murtagh has found:

My son Eric Murtagh told me that a house he bought several years ago on East Leland Street contained a grungy looking architectural rendering that the previous owner had left in the basement. Eric brought me his find; it was in bad shape.

The grim was as black as could be. The matting around the drawing was disintegrating. The back panel was warped and had heavy water stains. When I took it all apart I found insect infestation. I cleaned the grim, and replaced the front matting and the back panel. The picture is large – approximately 18 by 36 inches – but what is the fine Tudor residence that it depicts?



**The restored rendering of a graceful Tudor home of distinction**

The information on the front says, "The House for The Hon. Lester H. Woolsey of Brookville Road, Chevy Chase, MD. Flournoy & Flournoy Archts," and has a notation of 1926. I looked up Lester H. Woolsey, and found that he had been a Special Assistant to the Secretary of State. Mr. Woolsey appears in *The New York Times'* February 3, 1917 coverage of the United States' breaking of diplomatic relations with Germany, which was our government's first step toward entering World War I. While President Wilson was speaking to Congress about breaking off relations, Mr. Woolsey was delivering the same message to the German ambassador. He also was charged with getting the ambassador and his American wife safely out of the country. (There are other newspaper articles about Mr. Woolsey.)



**An article Special to *The New York Times* on February 3, 1917 not only described Mr. Woolsey's and President Wilson's simultaneously timed communications breaking off relations with Germany, but also the spectrum of dramatic action around the country as it mobilized for war**

My son and I are familiar with almost every house in Chevy Chase, Maryland, but the one in the rendering is a mystery. I looked up Lester H. Woolsey in the 1940 census records and found him at "7007 Brookville Road, PA, Montgomery County, Maryland." The four 7000 blocks of Brookville Road, two on either side, now contain a one block commercial area and three blocks of residences, but not the house in the rendering.

The "PA" designation in the census is strange. It could be a Place or a Park or maybe a Primary Address designation. I also note that one half mile north on Brookville Road is intersected by Woolsey Road. While still in Chevy Chase, Maryland, that intersection area has much higher address numbers.

If a house of this distinction has disappeared it would be nice to have a photograph of it and/or more full information for the society's archive. The architecture firm of Flournoy & Flournoy was prominent, and also designed the gym at the University of Maryland. I checked with Jean Sperling, the Town Manager of the Village of Martin's Additions and a CCHS board member, and she did not recall the house or that number.

If you have information about this "mystery house," please send CCHS an email message at [chevyCHASEhistory@msn.com](mailto:chevyCHASEhistory@msn.com), or call the society at (301) 656-6141.



CHEVY CHASE  
HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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AND HELP KEEP THE MEMORIES ALIVE!***

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 Contact me about volunteering at the Archive and Research Center or helping with a program

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