

HAZEL W. GRAVES

- o Resident since 1947
- o 87 years old

Before we had ever moved here, we had eaten at the Roma Restaurant. And we liked the section. It was 1946 that my husband took the position at the Library of Congress and there were no houses available. We didn't know what the houses looked like or anything, but the real estate agent told me about this house (it was Mrs. Benham's house) that was near the Roma. I had never seen the house until we moved in. I got here at 11:00 at night with the moving van. The real estate agent had told me that Admiral Peary lived here, so that was of interest. He had somebody build it for him in 1897, and he lived here a very, very short time. He was at that time with the North Pole Expedition. This house is as old as I am to the day -- eighty-seven years. That round window over there is what Admiral Peary thought of as a porthole. They tell me it's one of the first picture windows in the Washington area. This old house was heated mostly by fireplaces.

When I came here the people were so friendly. That's what Mrs. Benham had told Mr. Muse, our real estate agent, and Mr. Muse told me. That was borne out practically the next morning after I had gotten here. Miss Denison who lived at 2946 came down and she said, "Are you the new one here?" That was Ruth Merwin's aunt who came to call on me. She lived there at that time.

My son went to Wilson High. When he had an accident on his motorcycle and ended up in the hospital, all the children that he had met in the neighborhood took turns going down to see him in the hospital. They wrote notes when they couldn't go. All the children had a good time used to have parties....used to dance on this floor, and play games, and have dinners here.

They made all the houses around here that they could into apartments during World War II. In this house Mrs. Benham rented two rooms, the room above the living room and the back room upstairs. She had her bedroom in the dining room.

We had our clothes lines. We hung our laundry out. After a while, we got dryers and you didn't see the washing out anymore. I have a pulley line and I still put things out. I washed them myself. But lots of people had help who came in and did the laundry. Some sent it out. We used to iron. I used to have a great big ironer, that did my sheets. We don't iron sheets anymore.

I could go up on the top floor and get a dress or two and honest to goodness, this year they are almost the same as some I have up there....with these bigger sleeves and the skirts.

The people in Cleveland Park are considerate of each other. They used to be of many different professions. It's interesting now. This neighborhood seems to be mostly lawyers.