

HILDA and STURGIS WARNER

- o Residents since 1951
- o Eaton parents from 1951 to 1965
- o 70 and 65 years old

We moved to Cleveland Park in 1951 from a small house in Georgetown, which had become too cramped for our growing family. Some people referred to the area as "Georgetown Graduates' Club." Here the old houses had many rooms, porches, backyards, and could be bought for reasonable prices, as Cleveland Park was not a fashionable area.

We were impressed with the spirit shown by the community. Shortly after we arrived, a huge scrap metal drive was organized to raise money to buy the land on the corner of Connecticut Avenue and Macomb Street as the site of a new library. Neighbors emptied their cellars of junk, old pipes, and discarded metal toys and carted them down the hill in kids' wagons or cars and piled them on the lot. The cash from the sale was donated to the city as part of the neighborhood's contribution toward the purchase of the land. The old Cleveland Park Library was housed in one room at Eaton, where the offices of the counselor and nurse are at this time.

We wanted to be in the Eaton School district. All five of our children went in one door of Eaton and came out the other. We could hear the school bells from across the street right in our house, and watch all the kids playing on the playground. Early some mornings we would hear the noise of the coal for the furnace rattling down the chute on the 34th Street side of the playground.

In those days the PTA was much more active than it is now, as most mothers with small children didn't work outside the house. We had a lot of fun in the PTA, and many of my best friends today are those I worked with during those years. When we moved here, the school library consisted of a musty collection of people's discarded books, and it was a really very dreary place. We didn't have a professional librarian, but volunteers got the library turned around. We raised money, bought books, and held library hours for the various classes. Of course, the popularity of the library went up in proportion to the number of good books.

The custodian at John Eaton for years was Mr. McCarthy, a typical Scotsman. He felt that the school belonged to him, and he kept it spotless. He saved anything that might some day be useful. One day when I went to Eaton I found him straightening old nails so that he could use them again! And he was great at setting misbehaving little boys back on the right track.

We used to have really super Halloween parties at the playground. There was a big parade, led by members of the Wilson High School band. The neighborhood mothers slaved to put on this huge party, with lots of "spooky houses" and other activities.