

MARY LOUISE and JAMES SWINDELLS

- o Residents since 1908 and 1940
- o Eaton student from 1914-1922 (J.S.)
- o Eaton parents from 1947-1961
- o 75 and 69 years old

JS--My father lived in Georgetown, built this house and moved out here in 1898, just before the turn of the century. Of course, this was country then. That's why they moved out from Georgetown. There was one house between here, 3426 Macomb, and Wisconsin Avenue....up at 36th Street. But the oldest houses in this neighborhood are on Newark Street below 34th. Other families came along later....the Livingstonsover on Lowell Street....and the Hollanders up the street.

When I grew up there were no houses within sight in the summertime, with the leaves on the trees and so on. Everything around here was woods and scrub fields. We had the advantage that we could go climb trees and get poison ivy. I can remember I could go to school by going out in the backyard and cutting across the lots here, and down a steep bank on 34th Street. The school was right across the street. I didn't pass any houses on the way. Eaton was just the NE corner building then. We used to play ball games where the church is now (SW corner of 34th and Lowell Streets).

The teachers did not have much trouble with discipline in the classes in those days. Our present next door neighbor went to Eaton and her children went to Eaton and she had the same Kindergarten teacher that her children did. She grew up in the housegrew up and stayed there, as I have.

In the old days, the best sled riding was right down Macomb Street. And until we had a bus route on 34th Street, they used to close the whole street. We could start up here at the top of the hill and go all the way down to Connecticut Avenue and turn right around the corner.

There was no Cathedral above the ground when I was growing up. That was started in 1907. The first thing they did was to build this East end. Down below there....the Bethlehem Chapel was the first part to be completed. It came up about three feet above ground and it was just tarred over there. They had services down there just as they do now.

Mr. Winsted gave me my first job. He had a hardware store up here at Wisconsin and Macomb. And when he had to give that up, he told me he would have been in business much longer if people in the neighborhood had paid their bills. So then he managed the A & P store that moved in up there.

JS--I was an Air Raid Warden during the Second World War. I went out and wandered the streets when they turned the lights off. We had practices to keep the streets safe and watch to see that people had their black-out shades and curtains pulled properly so the lights wouldn't shine out.

I worked at the Bureau of Standards. For thirty-eight years I walked to work to the corner of Van Ness and Connecticut.

We have gas heating now instead of coal. We used to have the coal truck come and dump coal into our basement window. One thing I remember was then, in winter time, I would have to go down there on a cold morning, stuff some newspaper and wood in and light a match to it. Then I'd put in a scoop of coal to get the house warm. That was when we were first married....in the early '40s.

MLS--When we were first married, during the early years of the Second World War, McLean Gardens was still Mrs. McLean's Friendship Estate (Evelyn Walsh McLean, wife of the Washington Post publisher). I remember going there and rolling bandages during the War. Mrs. McLean allowed the Red Cross to use part of her house. It looked a lot different then.

I remember when Burka's Liquor Store wasn't there. It was a DGS Grocery Store....run by Fred Burka. I remember walking up there to do my shopping. I didn't drive when we were first married. The clerks would wait on you in the store.

We put in a lot of hours and days to develop Macomb Playground. When our children were little there was nothing over there but an equipment box and a supervisor (late '40s, early '50s). That land had been set aside for a playground very early. We had money-making events and we went around with a petition all over the neighborhood so the District would allocate money to build the courts and house that are there now.

I think we started the Halloween Party when we were working on the playground plans. It was started in that era (early '50s). Every 4th of July we'd have family picnics over there. And everybody would bring their little firecrackers.

We went to regular meetings at the Cleveland Park Club and the swimming pool. That was nice when the boys were little. Of course, when they got bigger, they sort of turned up their noses at that little tiny swimming pool. We had dances for adults.

We have a marvelous mailman....Mr. Kenneth Moore; he delivers above 34th. Mr. Johnson, the postman for east of 34th, always smiles and greets me when I walk to the library.

Cleveland Park has so many advantages. It's like a small town within a city.