

MIRIAM and ELLIOTT MOYER

- o Residents since 1941
- o Eaton parents from 1944 to 1956
- o 74 and 76 years old

When we moved into our house in November 1941, it was not quite finished. We were having a small house warming party. The adults were listening to the Philadelphia Orchestra on the radio and the children and their friends were playing in the garden, when a sudden announcement of Pearl Harbor broke into the concert....a great shock to us all.

We all loved the neighborhood for its trees, gardens, ambience, and conveniences, such as the Five and Dime and the small Giant to which the children could walk for a loaf of bread. They could shop independentlylike being in a small town.

During World War II, housing was short. Zoning restrictions on occupancy and apartments in the District were suspended. The war mobilization effort required a multiplication of personnel and many single people moved to Cleveland Park. Any number of houses had 25 people in them, including WAC's and WAVES. The long-time residents were mainly elderly, retired business people, retail merchants, college professors, teachers, judges, scientists, newspaper people, and lawyers who were still living in the large houses where they had raised their children. In fact, there were so few children at John Eaton School at this time, that school authorities were thinking of closing it. Extra space was used for the offices of the War Rationing Board and the headquarters for a D.C. Public School reading clinic.

As an indication of the status of Cleveland Park in 1941, the finance and real estate institutions regarded this a a neighborhood that was potentially to be blighted. These big frame houses were not in demand, as families, reflecting the effects of the Depression, were small. To arrange financing to purchase our home, we had to use contacts in Baltimore. The interest rate was a point and a half higher than the usual rate because of the questionable future of this neighborhood. It was 5 1/2%. The interest rate on local mortgages has since gone as high as 15% and 18% on these properties.

The area needed a library. The drive for the library was originally stimulated by the application for a change in zoning for a large commercial development on Connecticut Avenue on the lot between Macomb and Newark Streets, originally considered in 1900 the main entrance to Cleveland Park. There was an appropriation of approximately \$35,000 in the District budget for land for a library in Cleveland Park. The appropriation was not enough to cover the price of this land, threatened by development, so the community was to raise funds of \$30,000-\$35,000 to apply toward the purchase of the land. This effort involved well up to 100 motivated citizens in the area, including the civic associations, the businessmen's association, and the library committee and extended, from the initiation of the project to the construction of the library in 1952, probably at least 6 to 7 years....a very rewarding event for Cleveland Park.