

CLEVELAND PARK



VOL. 9, NO. 2

NEWSLETTER OF THE CLEVELAND PARK HISTORICAL SOCIETY

FALL 1995

New CPHS President Reports, Looks to Future

By Janie Hulme

President, Cleveland Park Historical Society

A profile of Janie Hulme, CPHS's fourth president, appeared in Voices, Fall 1994: "Janie Hulme and the Cleveland Park Bookshop."

It is an honor to have been selected to assume the Cleveland Park Historical Society presidency for the next two years. As both a resident and merchant within the community, I am doubly committed to preserving that which makes our neighborhood unique while serving its constituency.

The long, hot summer of 1995 has been anything but quiet for the volunteer board and committee members of CPHS. We have addressed a variety of issues and projects, and I have learned a great deal about the neighborhood's understanding and expectations with regard to CPHS, in these first months of my term.

Current Projects

In July, CPHS and the Committee of

100 on the Federal City submitted an application to designate 3901 Connecticut Avenue, a five-story apartment building, as a D.C. Historic Landmark. This is one of 162 "distinguished" Washington apartment houses cited in James Goode's *Best Addresses*, and is across Connecticut from the Cleveland Park Historic District (and Tilden Gardens). Kathy Wood will testify on the community's behalf in support of this nomination at the October 26th hearing before the D.C. Historic Preservation Review Board.

You may have noticed a series of brightly planted flower pots along the Connecticut Avenue commercial strip. Beautiful red geraniums and lively yellow marigolds grace the sidewalks and doorways of many of our favorite shops and restaurants. This successful effort enhances the individual sidewalk gardens already established by many businesses. Our thanks go to CPHS members Jane Biltchik, Dick Jorgensen and Gordon Sheridan for coordinating the project with many neighborhood merchants. Jim Shipman of Brookville Supermarket, Brother Sewing and Vacuum, Cleveland Park Liquors, CVS Pharmacy, McDonald's, Melati, NationsBank, the staff at the post office, Quartermaine Coffee Roasters, Town Jewelers, Uptown Bakers, Vace, and Wingmaster's all contributed money and water to this most successful beautification project. We look forward to undertaking a similar project in months to come with our merchants on Wisconsin Avenue

and Macomb Street.

CPHS has many more activities planned as fall sets in, notable among them the 100th Birthday Celebration House Tour on October 28 (see box below). Mark your calendars and reserve early. Space is limited and only 50 lucky CPHS members will be able to participate!

CPHS Past and Future

When planning for the future, it is often helpful to reflect upon the past.

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*CPHS members mark
your calendars!*

**100th Birthday Celebration
House Tour**

**Saturday, October 28th
(Rain date: Sunday, October 29th)
1:30 p.m.**

CPHS offers a "members only" guided tour of several classic Cleveland Park houses celebrating their 100th birthday this year. Built in 1895, all are beautiful examples of the architecture of the time and, in some cases, more recent remodeling by talented architects.

Kathy Wood, well-known architectural historian and a Smithsonian guide, will lead the walking tour, which is limited to 50 CPHS members. Tickets are \$15 per person.

CPHS members will receive more detailed information and registration forms in a special mailing. For other information, phone Alison Steadman (966-8282).

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Eleni Constantine Bows Out as CPHS President

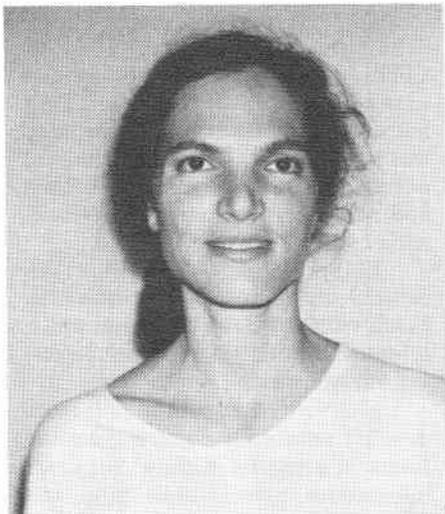
By Jean van der Tak

The Cleveland Park Historical Society is healthy, says Eleni Constantine, because it's focused and active. "We ensure the architectural integrity of the Cleveland Park historic district and try to do something about trees and streetscape. It's not a long list, but we *do* do those things." Eleni is speaking after completing her three-and-a-half years as CPHS's third president, following Tersh Boasberg and Kathy Wood, and three years before that as a member and then co-chair of CPHS's Architectural Review Committee.

When she began her presidency in January 1992, Eleni says, "It seemed to me CPHS had a lot going for it, a lot of involved, committed people," and she envisaged broadening its "preservationist basis" to include other things "closely related" to the neighborhood's architecture and ambiance, "like tree planting, streetscape, working with the merchants."

That she has done. During her tenure, tree planting has flourished throughout Cleveland Park, the streetscape of our Connecticut Avenue shopping area has been spruced up, and seeds have been sown for merchants to take on more streetscape embellishment.

As a lawyer with a background in architectural history and urban planning, Eleni came ideally equipped for her CPHS service. And



Eleni Constantine

her attachment to Cleveland Park, where she and husband Jonathan Abram are raising their two daughters, dates back to her childhood. Born in Washington, she moved at age nine with her parents and younger sister, Maria, to the house across from Macomb Street Playground where her parents still live. She went to National Cathedral School until she was 13, when the family moved to Rome for ten years. Rome spawned the interest in architectural history that she pursued at Harvard, earning a degree with a self-designed course focused around Lewis Mumford's *The City in History*. After a year at the Warburg Art Institute in London and editorial stints with two architectural magazines back in the U.S., she says, "It struck me that urban planners had great ideas, but their lawyers had much more power to implement them." So she went to Harvard Law School, intending to combine law and urban planning, but decided to stop with the law degree.

She and Jonathan met in Austin, Texas, while both were doing legal clerkships, and moved to Washington. When it came time to buy a house, they naturally gravitated to Cleveland Park, first to 35th Street, then this August, to a 99-year-old house on 34th Place. Jonathan is an attorney with Hogan & Hartson. Eleni was in a law firm until she decided that "having two litigators in private practice" was incompatible with childrearing, and now works for the National Association of Attorneys General. Elder daughter Zoe, age seven, attends Sidwell Friends. Cleo, two-and-a-half, entered National Child Research Center this fall. It was while she was on maternity leave with Zoe that Eleni "had a bit of time" to explore where she might make a contribution in Cleveland Park and chose CPHS as "a good way to do it."

She is pleased with CPHS's tree-planting and streetscape accomplishments during her time as president. She feels the Main Street project to revitalize the neighborhood's shopping areas, supervised by hardworking CPHS Community Projects Coordinator Sam Friedman,

has been an accomplishment too, although it has languished when the merchants failed to take up the ball as much as expected. Many shopkeepers *have* taken on plantings and watering of trees in front of their shops, she points out. Eleni endorses CPHS support of vital but endangered neighborhood institutions like the library and Hearst and John Eaton schools, but resists the Society's ever moving beyond its historic-district focus to assume more of the role of a traditional citizens' association, like "expressing opinions on downtown development."

As she turns over the presidential reins to Janie Hulme, Eleni says CPHS must remain active. With her contributions—and those of our many members like her—we surely will. Thank you, Eleni.

Jean van der Tak is editor of Voices.

New President Reports *Continued from page 1*

The Cleveland Park Historical Society has now been in existence for ten years. Thanks to the efforts of our first and second presidents, Tersh Boasberg and Kathy Wood, CPHS successfully averted overdevelopment on Connecticut and Wisconsin Avenues and established Cleveland Park as an historic district. Eleni Constantine (see profile, this page) continued in their fine tradition, working to preserve and enhance the special qualities of our neighborhood. As fourth president of CPHS, it is my particular hope to clarify the role of CPHS within the community in its efforts both to preserve and to serve. While we must care for our architectural heritage, it is essential that we respond to our neighbors' ongoing concerns as well.

I am committed to working closely with the CPHS board and interested neighbors to clarify and expand the role of CPHS in the community. We seek to develop ways to expand CPHS's outreach and to create more opportunities for neighbors to participate in Cleveland Park activities. I urge you as concerned neighbors and CPHS members, to talk with me or other CPHS board members. Let us know how we can better serve you. A shared vision is essential. I look forward to working with you.

Cleveland Park Personalities

Dorothy Goodman: Reforming D.C.'s Schools

By Jean van der Tak

Dorothy Goodman—founder and first head of the Washington International School, Washingtonian of the year in 1975, Cleveland Park resident since 1957—is on a crusade to foment a “Second American Revolution.” This is basic reform of the public school system that Horace Mann “and my ancestors” launched in the 1840s, particularly what she terms the “financially, morally, and intellectually corrupt” D.C. system.

“Everyone recognizes that D.C. public school children are not getting taught,” she says. But few see this is because “the school governance is wrong.” And more money is not the solution, she insists.

For starters, she advocates school vouchers “for everybody.” Allot each public school child a voucher worth the per-pupil spending cost—school officials say this is currently \$7,500; Dorothy thinks it’s really more, but the voucher system could work with less—to be applied to the school of his/her parent’s or guardian’s choice. Some independent and parochial schools would at first be flooded, she admits, but new schools would appear and, faced with competition “for the first time in their 150-year history,” public schools would be forced to shape up or wither away. She also wants tax-financed but legally independent charter schools.

Further to break the “education finance monopoly” held in the District and all 15,300 of the nation’s public school systems, she would freeze the “financial and material assets” of the system and require all D.C. school employees to reapply for their jobs. From applicants for principals’ jobs, an independent panel would choose the best and brightest—often “young missionaries fired up to save D.C.’s children.” They in turn would choose their teach-

ers. Teacher certification requirements must go, she says.

The bottom line, she explains, is to wrest control of the public school system from local government, where Mann and his followers put it in a now long outdated effort to ward off takeover by the “Papists”—Irish Catholic immigrants—and open it up to the “very personal enterprise” that education should be, between parent and teacher and teacher and child.

Though “a lifelong Democrat,” born and raised in Minneapolis, Dorothy now places her hopes for D.C. in House Speaker Newt Gingrich and his Republican colleagues. Gingrich vows to make the city an “urban jewel,” she points out. And now that his party controls Congress, they and the control board—with no state government to worry about—could be “enlightened despots,” commanding D.C. into a brave new era. She fears Gingrich may be wavering on D.C. schools—backing down on privatization and tinkering round the edges with talk of business-financed scholarships—swayed by D.C. political leaders and other conservative Democrats who are “romantics” about public schools, she says. They believe public schools “have protected blacks” and large changes in the status quo would invite resegregation. Nonsense, Dorothy counters; current law prevents that. And *de facto* segregation is rampant in D.C. public schools, while healthy, integrated schools “of choice” are mainly in the nongovernmental sector.

Dorry—as friends call her—is taking action. The day before we met in the lower Macomb Street home where she and husband Ray, a retired World Bank senior staffer, moved in 1962 and raised their four children, she had roamed the halls of Congress, buttonholing aides of congressmen on committees looking at D.C. schools. Later she attended registration for the bilingual charter school opened this fall in the Crestwood area of Northwest, which she hopes will be more independent than D.C.’s 11 other so-called charter schools. In between, she phoned Jane Fortson, Gingrich’s point person on creating an urban jewel.

She is chair of COMPASS (Committee for Public Autonomous Schools) and works with Education First Coalition, a citizens’ group seeking basic school reform. She’s pushing teachers to start charter schools and private



Dorothy Goodman

schools to serve voucher children when they appear. She is planning parent centers around the city, networked by computers manned by volunteers, to ferret out the actual number of children in D.C. schools and where parents would like them to go. She hopes this will help rouse the citizenry—including comfortable Cleveland Parkers—to force change. And she’s just landed the volunteer job of “sys op” on schools for the Washington Post’s new Digital Ink on-line service—another outlet to stimulate discussion and action on the issues.

She admits that some may view her as “that crazy Goodman woman,” but says, “They can’t completely dismiss me because of my accomplishments with the Washington International School.” Also her “color” could be seen as a bar to getting action in D.C. But she says she’s warmly welcomed at Ballou Senior High School in Ward 8, where she’s an adviser to the school’s Mathematics Science Technology Academy.

Dorothy went to both public and private schools and majored in history at Bryn Mawr, which she credits with providing role models of women who combined careers and family. Interspersed with work for UNRRA, CARE, the International Refugee Organization in Austria, and founding Britain’s consumer association, she began her Ph.D. in Russian and Balkan history at Columbia and finished in London, where she met her British husband. Ray’s World Bank appointment brought

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Our Neighborhood Shopkeepers

The Abdows and the Friendship Flower Shop

By Elizabeth Wiener

The old gray risers are lined with carnations, sunflowers and gladiolas, all sheltered by a green metal awning that's graced the storefront on Wisconsin Avenue just south of Macomb as long as almost anyone can remember. Inside, too, the Friendship Flower Shop evokes another—more modest, more cluttered—era. Bouquets, ferns, vases, hanging pots, stuffed bunnies, kitsch pottery, flower arrangers, delivery men, buyers all jostle for room and attention in cheery and utter disarray. But for a quarter century, the shop has housed a flourishing family business—with the emphasis on both flourishing and family.

Meet the Abdows: Father Vic, who bought the little florist shop in 1970, and son Jeff and stepson Mike, who pretty much run the show now. With occasional help from their mom, aunts, and even a pediatrician brother who pitches in on holidays, they now employ 16 people full time, run six delivery trucks, and say they rank among the city's top florists in delivery business and bigtime events like weddings, funerals, and hotel banquets. Recent intensified competition from street vendors and supermarket chains doesn't mean a thing, says Vic, with his gravelly voice and sweet smile. "What Safeway does, they just shove 'em in, people handle 'em to death. We," he sniffs, "take care of our flowers."

Years ago the little florist shop housed Burka's delicatessen, before Burka's moved across Macomb and became a liquor store, and light years before Burka's became the present upscale emporium at Wisconsin and Idaho. What remains, according to a perhaps apocryphal tale from longtime employees, is the old Burka deli case, now a refrigerator for delicate Friendship flowers. (Poppa Abdow, who seems to enjoy debunking his sons' stories, insists it's a regular florist cooler.)

In any case—and if the vaguely contradictory stories can be pieced together correctly—a former Burka em-

ployee named Lester Holsinger decided to stay on and try his hand at selling flowers. Chuck Swett came to work there in 1959 or 60—"six weeks after the Zebra Room opened" next door—and still arranges flowers for the Abdows. Holsinger walked to work from his nearby apartment, Swett says, and his only competition was a vendor operating near what is now Cactus Cantina. "It was just one guy and he used to snarl at people going by, 'Do you want flowers?'" Holsinger eventually had four employees and did well on a modest scale. But he also had a weakness for fishing. "Snow, sleet, he went fishing on Wednesdays," Swett says. On a trip to North Carolina, he died of a heart attack, and the little florist shop sat shuttered.

Enter Vic Abdow. A native of Worcester, Massachusetts, he dropped out of school and got his start selling flowers in bars, according to son Jeff. About 1950 Vic moved down to Washington to work with his family, of Lebanese descent but rooted here for generations. First he and his brothers ran a sandwich shop, then a small restaurant. He jumped into the flower business at the city's old wholesale market at 14th and I Streets NW and even sold flowers from a stand on Columbia Road.

Vic had been eyeing the little shop on Wisconsin for several years but Holsinger refused to sell. When Holsinger died, the family came to find him and belatedly execute the deal. Thus, in 1970, the Abdows took over Friendship Flower Shop.

In those early days, Vic routinely got up at 3 a.m. to get the freshest flowers from the wholesalers, now at New York Avenue NE. He played cards with old buddies until it was time to open the shop, Jeff recalls. Jeff was six or seven when his father bought the place, and was working weekends by the time he was eight or nine. He gave up a fledgling career as a mechanic to manage the shop when the old manager retired. Stepbrother Mike ran his own shop in Georgetown before coming to work for his father. Mike's daughter also "grew up in the business" and now has her own flower business in

Chesapeake Beach. Vic's wife, during the holiday season, works at home making first Thanksgiving centerpieces, then miniature Christmas trees and Christmas centerpieces. Two elderly aunts come up from Alabama each year to work on the holiday merchandise, as does Vic's third son, a Georgetown pediatrician.

Up and down Wisconsin, the streetscape has changed drastically. "Murphy's and Giant and Peoples and Sullivan's were here [when the shop opened]," Vic ticks off uncertainly. "Dekun Photo [round the corner on Macomb] was here. But this block, nobody. Everybody else is gone. Everybody's new." Jeff remembers when the storefront two doors down was a video store, then a Thai restaurant, now the sparkling new Cafe Deluxe. Even the venerable Zebra Room has vanished.

But inside, change is slow. Four years ago the Abdows bought University Bakery next door and knocked down the wall between. They "went computer" three years ago, Jeff says, but thick black wires still run willy-nilly through the hanging pots up to an office and bookkeeper tucked away on the floor above. A handwritten sign scolds, "Stay out of the register." Modernize? "We've repainted, little this, little that," says Jeff, but the cluttered quaintness remains.

The flowers, however, have changed. Customers used to demand just mums, carnations, roses, snapdragons, he says. Now the Abdows stock 200 varieties, including "more exotics": Birds of Paradise, giant sunflowers, gerbera daisies, dendrobium orchids. There used to be only one flower-by-wire service, FTD. Now there are six and the Abdows serve them all.

But many longtime customers remain. An elderly woman living across the street stops in every day, wearing gloves and a hat and sometimes dropping off a piece of strawberry shortcake from Reeves Bakery downtown. Some older customers have died, but neighborhood families continue to order arrangements for weddings, then births, then funerals. A family that lived around the corner moved to Spring Valley but still gets their flowers from the Abdows.

On a summertime Friday, the shop is bustling. Jeff, Mike and several other arrangers are hastily punching flowers into styrofoam, adjusting each arrangement to the customer's order. Deliverers rush in and out, shouting destinations—"Psychiatric Institute, McLean

Gardens, Georgetown University"—like bidders at an auction.

The shop now delivers to all the suburbs, with most orders coming by phone. There are eight designers (though "everybody does a little of that," Jeff says), plus a couple of high school kids selling the flowers out front. "Mike handles the outside," says Jeff. "Everything," Mike retorts. "We all do everything," Jeff says.

Father George, a Greek Orthodox priest from Bethesda and longtime friend of Vic, is waiting edgily as Jeff cobbles together two arrangements. One is for his daughter, giving birth "right now." And ironically, Father George explains, today would have been his 38th wedding anniversary. His wife died two years ago and the other bouquet is for her grave. "I give no notice," he says. "Every time I come here they spoil me." Jeff, hastily securing roses to baby's-breath, pauses to estimate a rough price. "We stay busy," he says.

Vic, 62, still reports early each morning to order flowers—by phone now—and works till about noon. But every



Mike, Vic, and Jeff Abdow

summer Thursday he's off to Ocean City to fish away the weekend. "I've done millions of arrangements. I'm s'posed to be retired, forever," he says, stabbing a day lily into styrofoam. "I come in for a couple hours a day, help my sons out. Please say my sons own

the business." As a visitor leaves the busy shop, Vic repeats, "Just say I'm retired. I come in and help the boys."

Journalist Elizabeth Wiener, a Cleveland Park resident since 1986, is currently enjoying being a full-time mother.

Dorothy Goodman

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them to Washington in 1956, first to rural Maryland, then 34th Place in Cleveland Park and on to Macomb Street.

The "illiterate" students she encountered while teaching history part time at American University and Howard aroused her first concern about U.S. public schooling. Also, like other World Bank and International Monetary Fund parents, she sought a rigorous, bilingual, internationally recognized curriculum. So she started the Washington International School, the third such after Geneva's and New York's UN school. When the World Bank and IMF backed down on possible sponsorship, she set up class anyway, in her own basement, with three four-year-olds, in January 1966. The school had spread through seven rented church basements in Georgetown by 1969, when the Ford Foundation financed their purchase of the old Olive Street school in Georgetown. They quickly outgrew that too. So they rented space at Tregaron up the hill from Dorothy's backyard, which she had long had her eye on, and finally were able to buy "the top of the hill" in 1981. The school achieved its first gradu-

ate in the demanding International Baccalaureate in 1977, 11 years after its founding. The teachers were the best Dorothy could recruit through her university and international-community connections. But they were quasi-volunteers and by the mid-1980s were demanding higher pay, thus jeopardizing Dorothy's cherished and generous scholarship program for low-income D.C. children. Also, the growing school community balked at her desire to accord Arabic, Chinese, Japanese, and/or Russian equal status with French and Spanish in the school's bilingual program.

So she left to pursue her passions elsewhere. In D.C., she got school superintendent Floretta McKenzie's backing for ten bilingual English-Arabic, English-Chinese, etc. kindergartens, but that project foundered after McKenzie resigned in 1988. Three superintendents have endorsed her proposed public World School of Washington, but that too is on hold, balked by the fact that "we've really got 12 superintendents in this town," the appointed superintendent and 11 elected school board members—"an impossible situation." But she's helped foster the International Baccalaureate and that's now offered in some 250 public and private schools

in the U.S., including several in the Washington metro area. The IB's broad curriculum enables graduates to go to university anywhere in the world and to enter top U.S. colleges as sophomores, she reports.

Dorothy's own children attended Beauvoir, St. Albans, National Cathedral School, and all but the eldest, Jeremy, went to Atlantic College in Wales to finish off high school with the IB. "I wanted the best-educated teachers for them and that was not to be found in D.C. public schools," she explains unabashedly. Only Sophia came along late enough to be enrolled—for much of her school career—in Dorothy's own school. Jeremy is now an astrophysicist at Princeton; Harriet is UNICEF's information officer in the U.K.; Matthew is the U.S. Treasury attaché in Tokyo; and Sophia is teaching law at Indiana University.

Dorothy invites you to join her crusade. Call her (362-2946) if you'd like more information or to volunteer at a parent center. George Washington University is offering free Saturday-morning classes in how to operate the centers' computer network.

Jean van der Tak is editor of Voices.



Cleveland Park has a couple of examples of Romantic Modern, which at its best brings a buoyant play to architecture. Drawing by John Wiebenson.

Architectural Corner

By John Wiebenson

Romantic Modern

John Wiebenson is a D.C. architect, currently teaching architecture for two years at The Chinese University of Hong Kong. This column completes a series of twelve appearing in Voices—the first ten written by Cherrie Anderson and all twelve illustrated by Wiebenson—that will be reproduced in a planned CPHS Guide to Cleveland Park houses.

Romantic Modern is well represented in Cleveland Park by the house at 3418 Newark Street (particularly with its playful use of lattice) and by the addition to the house at 2739 Macomb (particularly its bringing in of vines).

These examples show several key features of this style: generally loose massings that approach picturesque and a cheerful willingness to depart from rigid rules, as in letting planes slide out from masses and into space.

At its best, Romantic Modern brings a buoyant play to architecture; at its worst, it leaves a building without ordering elements.

Basic Form

- Geometry is usually made complex by pulling planes out from building surfaces to form porch enclosures, columns or, sometimes, just planes.
- Massings are often not symmetrical, so as to develop more picturesque compositions.
- Roofs are often steeply sloped.
- Entrances are usually not centered, so as to offer another move toward picturesque.
- Openings are usually varied in size and shape, but made generous enough to make interiors bright.

Materials

- Several materials are usually used and arranged to enrich surface textures.
- Ordinary materials, such as lattice and vines—or even corrugated fiberglass panels—are included as prominent features.

Details

- Trims are likely to proliferate, so as to add yet more texture and variety of form.
- Trims may be ordinary lumber, such as 1x4's or 1x6's, but embellished with contrasting paint or unusual location.

Many Thanks to Our Volunteers!

CPHS Membership Co-chairs Barbara and Dick Jorgensen thank the many volunteers who helped with the two CPHS mass mailings in April to all residents of Cleveland Park:

Charles Atherton
 Sophia Bassman
 Elizabeth Buchanek
 Ann Clark
 Ann Dyer
 Ellen Eager
 Eileen Essaye
 Mary Jane Glass
 Jim Goff
 Joan Habib
 Mary Lou Hakuta
 Bud Hanks
 Jane Hardin
 Susan Hornbostel
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 Selig Kainer
 Barbara Kraft
 Frances Lide
 Amanda MacKenzie
 Kathe McDaniels
 Ruth Montague
 Ester Namian
 Judy Nelson
 Jerry Nisenson
 Jane Roman
 Sue Ruff
 Judy Hubbard Saul
 Alison Steadman
 Louise Steele
 Steve Turow
 Susan Zusy

And CPHS Board members Jane Biltchick, Dick Jorgensen, and Gordon Sheridan, and Friends of Cleveland Park Library President Jill Bogart thank those who helped them during the spring and summer with beautification projects along the Connecticut Avenue shopping area and at the library:

Cathy Armington
 Mary and Bert Cooper
 Alexander Gignoux
 Michael Ostheimer
 Peter Tague
 Steve Turow

(Apologies to any beautification volunteer whose name has been inadvertently omitted.)

Cleveland Park Club: 73 and Thriving

By Robert Stern

In a grove of tall oak and pine trees, on 33rd Place between Ordway and Highland Place, lies the Cleveland Park Club. It has served surrounding families for 73 years—so far. Its property consists of a typical Cleveland Park Victorian-style house with a large covered porch, a play yard, and a swimming pool smaller than that of many single families today. But there is a lot more to the Cleveland Park Club (CPC) than its property, location, and small pool.

The Club has many noteworthy dimensions, starting with its age. How is it that this institution has withstood many financial and community challenges to its existence for nearly three-quarters of a century? Let's first look at the purposes for which it was organized and then see whether those still meet current needs. Quoting from the only known remaining copy of the original CPC Members' Booklet, dated January 1923:

"The CPC has been organized [in 1922] by a group of your friends to be the social and recreational center of the best neighborhood in Washington. Doubtless new activities will be developed as time goes on, but right now the Club has to offer its members a picturesque house large enough and fully equipped enough to take care of the activities of the proposed membership, with grounds adjacent to the Club adequate for the development of outdoor pastimes such as tennis, swimming and putting."

The clubhouse, former residence of Byron Graham, was purchased with help from Miss Agnes Miller (sister of W.C. and A.N. Miller) for about \$12,000 in 1922. Of the initially grand plans for physical facilities, only the swimming pool has been realized—completed in July 1924 at a cost of \$3,202.36, including showers and lockers. Today it seems quite unlikely that the planned two tennis courts and putting green would be added, but note that the original Club property extended north to Ordway Street and west to Reno Road, as explained below.

Again from the 1923 booklet: "The Club house is open to members at all



Day camp is a feature of summer at the Cleveland Park Club, along with swimming in the small pool.

times from 9 a.m. to 8 p.m. with a caretaker in attendance, and with an electric piano, ping-pong and billiards, card room, meeting rooms, a well-furnished kitchen and miscellaneous equipment, ready for dancing, games, or social intercourse. The Club house is also open on Wednesday and Saturday evenings until midnight and informal entertainments, usually with refreshments, are provided. Entertainments this past year have been lectures on current topics, interpretative dancing, music and general dancing."

From "Notes on the History of the Cleveland Park Club," written in 1942 for the Club's 20th anniversary by Colonel Joseph Fairbanks of 3319 Newark Street—a charter member and fifth president of CPC—we learn more: "October 4, 1923, is the date on which the Club acquired title to its home. On that day, Messrs. W.C. and A.N. Miller deeded to the Club two adjacent lots, carrying the Club property through to what is now Ordway Street—to be held by the Club as long as used for Club purposes. These additional lots no doubt furnished valuable protection for the Club during its infancy, but in 1930 they were deeded back to the Miller brothers, thereby 'relieving' the Club from the continued payment of taxes thereon." There went those potential tennis courts and putting green!

Again from Colonel Fairbanks, with regard to the Club's social life in the 1920s and 30s: "No one can forget the many special parties on occasions such as Halloween, New Year's and George Washington's Birthday. Some

were masquerades and some costume parties, rivaling the Bal Boheme in original and amusing attire. Do you not recall the genuine cave-man in the person of Dr. Smith [Dr. Philip S. Smith of Newark and 33rd Streets] entering by the front door with his captive wife slung nonchalantly over his shoulder, or Arthur Heaton [3320 Highland Place] as a beggar man in rags and tatters making his entrance by tumbling down the front stairs, or another evening when the Club, within doors and out, was converted into a cafe for an Italian fiesta complete with floor show, booths and tables."

In June 1949, the District of Columbia gave notice of its intent to fill in the veritable canyon running between Ordway and Highland Place to make Reno Road a continuous, paved thoroughfare. Therefore a short spur to the Club was extended north from Highland Place and named 33rd Place. Without moving the house, the Club's address changed from 3228 Reno Road to the one we know now: 3433 33rd Place.

Today, with an unrecorded but large number of patches applied to the swimming pool and with generations of repairs and alterations made to the clubhouse, the membership of CPC remains at capacity: 150 members, mostly families. The small pool is still the main attraction from Memorial Day to Labor Day. These two holidays are occasions for a potluck supper, featuring an amazing variety of covered dish specialties prepared by members. The rite of passage for small children of

Continued on back page

Join the Cleveland Park Historical Society

The Cleveland Park Historical Society, founded in 1985, achieved its initial aims to have our neighborhood declared a historic district and protect the low-rise commercial sections along Connecticut and Wisconsin Avenues.

Now we are focusing on increasing neighborhood interest in historic preservation and community projects like planting trees and helping to spruce up our shopping areas.

If you are not a current member, please join us now. Membership includes our newsletter, *Cleveland Park Voices*, and invitations to special programs. Send your check for \$25, payable to Cleveland Park Historical Society, to:

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Designs by Eleanor Oliver
Photos by Jean van der Tak
Desktop Publishing by Kathryn Murray
Printing by Artmaster Printers

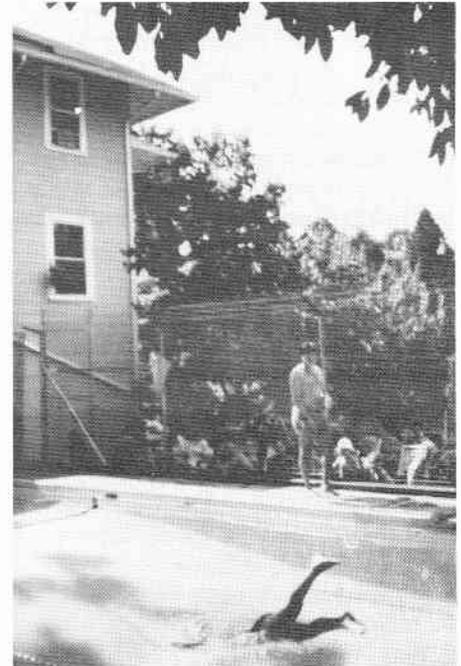
Cleveland Park Historical Society
P.O. Box 4862
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Cleveland Park Club *Continued from page 7*

members remains "passing" the swimming test; it requires the child to jump in at the deep end, tread water for one minute, then swim back and forth the full length of the pool (40 feet). Phew! The summer also features a day camp run at the clubhouse by member Rives Carroll. During the fall, winter and spring, there is an occasional Tuesday night lecture, an outing or two, square dances. At Christmastime, there is door-to-door caroling by local talent, young and old.

We conclude that remarkably little has changed in a fundamental way during the CPC's first 73 years of existence. There is still a hunger for companionship with neighbors and for access across the generations. Long live the Cleveland Park Club!

Bob Stern was president of the Cleveland Park Club in 1968-70; his wife Jinny continues to serve on the board. All four of their children passed the CPC swimming test.



Summer ends with a plunge during Labor Day swimming races at the Cleveland Park Club. See story, page 7.

For Information on the Cleveland Park Historical Society

For information on CPHS activities, membership, or the architectural review process, please call our office at 202-363-6358. Sam Friedman, CPHS Community Projects Coordinator, will be happy to assist you. Janie Hulme, CPHS President, also welcomes hearing your interests and concerns. Messages may be left for her at the above number, or you may call her during the day at 202-363-1112. When calling, please leave your name, phone number, and a brief message. Be assured your call will be promptly returned.

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