On April 18—a crisp, clear Sunday afternoon—60 members and guests hopped aboard the Old Town Trolley for the Cleveland Park Historical Society’s trolley tour. Judy Garland wasn’t there to sing “The Trolley Song,” but Judy Hubbard, a knowledgeable neighbor, provided an informative narrative. The tour followed a chronological route, highlighting history, architecture, and former residents, all of which help make Cleveland Park a special neighborhood. The route was also designed to showcase the CPHS Call Box Project. Judy began her narrative with background information about the call box restoration and introduced the call box artists who were on board: Di Stovall, Eleanor Oliver, and designer John Woo. Lois Orr and Dick Jorgensen, former CPHS Presidents, coordinated the event.

The tour began and ended at Rosedale. Its yellow frame farmhouse is the oldest house in Cleveland Park (and in DC) dating from 1793-94. And, right across the street is the copper-clad newest house, built in 2007. Other estates on the route were Tregaron and Twin Oaks, with information about their architecture and famous residents: Marjorie Merriweather Post at Tregaron (now Washington International School) and the Taiwanese Economic and Cultural Representative at Twin Oaks.

Anecdotal information provided a light touch about some of the famous people who lived in Cleveland Park; no current residents were mentioned in order to protect their privacy. Grover Cleveland’s country home, Red Top on Newark (no longer extant), was built for his new bride Frances Folsom, a much younger beauty who was extremely popular with the public. Cleveland sold Red Top after his first term, but his name remains.

Many political figures and their families have lived in the neighborhood. Among the Senators were Bill Bradley, Tim Wirth, William Proxmier, Daniel Moynihan, Paul Tsongas—who’s wife Nikki serves now in the House—and Charles Godell—whose son Roger is now NFL Commissioner. Two resident Senators gained higher office: Vice President Fritz Mondale and President Harry Truman, who had a small apartment at Tilden Gardens before Mrs. Truman and Margaret joined him in the larger “Truman House” apartment further up Connecticut Avenue. Attorney-General Nicholas Katzenbach lived on Highland Place; see TROLLEY on page 5.

Join Today for a Better Tomorrow

By Tony Bullock, Membership Chair

If you live within or near the Cleveland Park Historic District, you know how special this community is. For more than two centuries, Cleveland Park has become synonymous with community involvement and a strong sense of place. For the past 25 years, the Cleveland Park Historical Society (CPHS) has played a big role in making sure that Cleveland Park will always be a great place to live.

The CPHS is not a government agency or an affiliate of any larger organization; it is an independent non-profit organization founded in 1985 by a group of neighbors to promote interest in the history of Cleveland Park, and to encourage preservation of its architectural heritage.

A quarter century later, the CPHS has grown into a sophisticated and vibrant organization that monitors zoning and legislative initiatives that could impact our community. Through its Architectural Review Committee, the CPHS reviews building permit applications and architectural plans within the Historic District providing recommendations for new construction and remodeling proposals to the DC Historic Preservation Review Board.

We all have a stake in the area to make sure that our community continues to value our past; in particular the buildings and places that help define Cleveland Park. As a non-profit organization, we cannot survive without new members and dedicated volunteers. If you or your neighbors are not already members, won’t you consider joining today? see MEMBERSHIP on back page 7.
Cleveland Park, a Wonderful Place to Live

By Melanie Gibbons

Most of us chose Cleveland Park for many of the same reasons: a leafy neighborhood in an urban location, situated between major thoroughfares and lined with beautiful, historic homes. The open spaces, quiet side streets, abundance of children and dogs feels reminiscent of neighborhoods from our collective memory. But the convenience of nearby merchants and Metro gives us the "the best of both worlds."

For those of us who are relatively new to CP—meaning less than 10 years, and including myself—might not be aware of our former and current neighbors’ efforts to make and keep Cleveland Park so special. From homespun initiatives, like babysitting and food co-ops in the 70s to the modern Listserv that keeps us all connected today, much has happened over the last several decades to shape where we live.

Rivers Carroll, neighborhood historian and resident here for 35 years, gave me a quick look back: "In the 30s and 40s, CP was home to many widows, living alone or renting our rooms and lacking the money to maintain their properties. That changed in the 50s, as families starting moving in, and especially in the 60s during the Kennedy administration, which saw large families moving up from the suburbs to the city. They built homes and yards. The 70s introduced the double-family income and a period of renovation and preservation, which continues today with the help of the Cleveland Park Historical Society."

I spoke with several long-time residents about how CP has changed over the years and all agree that the most significant and visible change has been demographic. Younger families have moved in and revitalized the area with strollers and bicycles, yet these trends to be two-income households. "So many women work long hours outside the home now," said Arlene Holen, "and just don’t have the time to devote to the kinds of neighborhood activities we used to see a lot of."

Those activities have included elaborate block parties, complete with promotional posters, to raise money for such causes as John Eaton Elementary School and the Macomb Playground. And the food co-op, which was started in 1972 and included more than 20 families who took turns volunteering to pick up fresh fruit and vegetables from a market on North Capitol Street. John Eaton, the playground, the Historical Society, the Cleveland Park Club, and the library continue to bring neighbors together and foster the small-town feel of our neighborhood.

But a benefit of the trend toward two-income families is more disposable income for home improvement. In fact, Arlene and Sheldon Holen and Embry Howell all agree that the neighborhood has become more beautiful and, as housing prices have increased, so too have the efforts to maintain houses and yards. Over the decades, there were several proposed developments that would have had a noticeable and undesirable effect on Cleveland Park. Examples include changes in McLean Gardens, Rosedale, San’s Park-n-Shop, and Tregaron. Also, a proposal for a highway through the neighborhood was defeated. In each case, neighbors mobilized, got involved and ensured a positive result. This activism is very characteristic of Cleveland Parkers, who believe in progress but not at the cost of what makes living here so desirable.

Embry Howell notes that “there’s more togetherness around modern tools such as the Cleveland Park ListServ, which keeps us current in a way that walking the neighborhood simply can’t anymore.”

And just when you might think life is less ‘neighboring’ than it used to be, something like Hurricane Isaac in 2013 hits, and someone you don’t know offers to keep your frozen food in his freezer. I definitely see it around snow storms, when everyone is helping each other—and no one believes me that I’m really shoveling snow for the workout,” said Sheldon Holen.

Cleveland Park Historical Society members attended this year’s annual meeting on May 25, 2010 at the Broadmoor. In addition to installing eight new members to the Board of Directors, the Board elected co-Presidents Dick Jorgensen and Lou Ann May, president for two year terms. Members also elected officers for the 2010-2011 year. The evening concluded with a lively presentation about The Rosedale Conservancy by Roger Pollak, President of the Conservancy.

The Rosedale Conservancy’s mission is to preserve, maintain, and as appropriate, restore the natural and historic character of the Rosedale landscape and, as much as possible, to facilitate public access to, enjoyment of, and education about Rosedale in a manner that enhances the Cleveland Park community.

Learn more about the new members of the Board on page 5.
Residents of Cleveland Park can enjoy a wide variety of nearby stores, cafes, restaurants and other city services. In addition to the merchants I visited recently, there is the movie theater, Post Office, DC Public Library, Fire Station, and an Urgent Medical Care facility opening soon. I talked with the owners or managers of 2 long-term businesses, and two recently opened places.

Wake Up Little Suzie is owned and operated by Susan Lihn with assistant Tim Bellis. The store offers a huge variety of ceramics, books, cards, and collectibles. Susan is a founding member of the Cleveland Park Merchants Association, which has been instrumental in getting the city to focus on maintenance for the neighborhood. As a result, there has been significant improvement in keeping the streets swept, garbage collected, sewers cleaned, and graffiti removed in a timely manner.

Susan established Wake Up Little Susie in Adams-Morgan. However, after 3 years and a downturn in business, in 1993 Susan moved to Cleveland Park, where there was an empty storefront previously occupied by the Artisan Lamp Company. She was already a resident of Cleveland Park and based her decision on knowing that the neighborhood was very supportive of local businesses and that the Metro was right there.

The Cereal Bowl recently opened next to the Uptown (movie theater). Owner Kristopher Campbell and business partner Mel Silicki brought the Cereal Bowl to Cleveland Park a few months ago. They selected Cleveland Park because of the value per square foot. In addition, the proximity to the Metro in a family oriented neighborhood was exactly what they were looking for.

Offerings include various oats, pastries, coffees (organic and roasted in Memphis), tea (Revolution Tea), and a selection of sandwiches. There is also a line-up of grab-and-go health bars, packets, and a large shelf of various pastries, including a not-to-be-missed Apple Caramel Crunch Cake to die for! Kristopher and his partner are looking forward to being an integral part of the Cleveland Park community by housing various community-oriented activities such as birthday parties and Girl Scout fund raisers, donating Cereal Bowl gift cards to other merchants, and expanding their menu based on market requests.

Walgreens' Pharmacy was almost fully stocked and about to open when I talked with Media Relations person Jim Cohn by e-mail. Walgreens chose Washington DC because it is a growth market for them. This will be their second store in the District. Cleveland Park provides a convenient and attractive location in an historic neighborhood close to public transportation, according to Cohn.

In renovating the old Yenching Palace restaurant, Walgreens worked with both the Historic Preservation Review Board and neighbors to ensure that the store adhered to all existing regulations. It was a challenge from an architectural standpoint because this is not the prototypical space for a Walgreens store. However, in maintaining as much of the look and feel of the neighborhood and the architectural structure itself, they are very pleased with the end result, and believe those in the neighborhood will be as well. The opening was May 7, 2010.

City Fitness, owned and operated by Dega Schembri and Lucinda LaRee, is one of the oldest businesses in San's Park and Shop. It is the only female owned and operated gym in the Washington Metropolitan area. Both Dega and Lucinda had a business relationship with the previous owners and were very familiar with the operation when the owner offered to sell them in 1996. Both Dega and Lucinda had in mind a neighborhood gym atmosphere instead of a large franchised operation. This vision fits in perfectly with Cleveland Park.

City Fitness has become a community institution where the members are known by first name, the trainers are all highly motivated physical fitness professionals, and have been long-time City Fitness employees. The ratio of trainers to members assures that everyone can benefit from staff expertise. When you call the gym you actually get to speak to a person without pushing a single button. How cool is that? In addition, City Fitness offers fitness and mind body classes, some of which are held on the unique outdoor Zen Garden Deck.

Dega and Lucinda make a significant effort to give back to the community. They support such fund raisers as events for Girls On The Run, Street Soccer USA, GrandMa's House (a local group foster home), and a drive to collect donated prom gowns for young girls living on the South Dakota Pine Ridge Indian Reservation.

Merchants of Cleveland Park

EXPLORING THE DIVERSITY ON CONNECTICUT AVENUE

By Kitty Forest

The layout of Cleveland Park preserved the natural topography of the area thanks to the influence of Frederick Law Olmsted, the founder of American landscape architecture. There are still a few trees that predate development in northwest DC; you can see them at the 4900 block of Tilden St., N.W. and the 2800 block of Northampton St. N.W.

Many trees were planted as houses were built and, now at more than 115 years of age, the older trees are reaching the end of their lives.

The Urban Forestry Administration has worked hard to assess the state of trees throughout the city. Cleveland Park, which covers 372 acres, has 59 species of trees and 2385 individual trees. Our trees average 12” in diameter, reflecting the loss of older trees and the replacement by young trees. The largest tree in our neighborhood, on the 3500 block of Newark St., N.W. measures 52 inches in diameter at breast height (about 4 ½ feet from the ground). This year the city planted 55 new trees throughout Cleveland Park, including swamp white oak, willow oak, plane tree (sycamore), redbud, dogwood, and cherry.

If you have space in your yard, you might consider planting a tree for posterity. The city tree list is being updated but here is a good website to consider tree species you might want to plant. http://www.cnvtz.edu/dendro/treeselector/search.htm This website can help you find a species of tree suited to your conditions. Place the tree well away from the house and consider planting species that are not being planted as street trees. Hickories, butternuts, and black walnuts are valuable for their nuts and wood. There are now available special elms and chestnuts that have been bred to withstand diseases that devastated these trees in the past. If you have the room, consider those species that have become rare.

One of the best inventions for trees in public spaces is an ornamental street tree fence. These fences protect trees’ roots from being trampled and when the space is planted with flowers, the trees benefit when the plants are watered. The DC city website is a great source of information; you can find the schedule of services, request tree removal or treatment of the stinky female ginkos, find the planting list, and specifications for tree fences at the city website. http://trees.ddot.dc.gov/ufa/site/default.aspx?ufaNav_GID=1621 Check the Cleveland Park Historical Society website to get information about how to take care of newly planted trees.

Many thanks to Earl Eustler and the Urban Forestry Administration for information used in this article.

Urban Tree Canopy - Cleveland Park

173 acres existing

113 acres potential

9 acres potential/impenetrable

77 acres unsuitable

Is your home 75 years old or older? Do you have a Cleveland Park Historic District marker designating it as such? If your home qualifies, you could enhance your curb appeal with such a designation, available from the Cleveland Park Historical Society. Or, do you walk around the neighborhood and wonder what those markers mean? In either case, go to www.clevelandparkhistoricalsociety.org and find out all about them.

The program of making such markers available to qualified structures was created as a way to educate the community about the age of various structures, and instill a sense of pride and respect in the neighborhood. As our housing stock ages, increasing numbers of homes will be eligible to display this marker. Is yours one of them?

TROLLEY continued

Secretary of Education Richard Reilly lived in the Broadmoor. The Washington Senators baseball team stayed in the Broadmoor when it was an apartment house, as did the Richard Nixons while house hunting and Louisiana’s Hary Long. Journalists, too, have often chosen the neighborhood, including Walter Lippmann, Sander Vanocur, and George Reedy, who was LBJ’s Press Secretary.

The trolley riders saw examples of Cleveland Park’s range of architectural styles. Judy pointed out ornate Queen Anne houses, simpler shingle and four-square homes, modest semi-detached and Sears houses, and the Faulkner and E. M. Pei examples of modern design. When the tour ended, the pleased passengers clapped as loudly as they could for Judy and the trolley driver, who had pulled off a couple of muted clang, clang, clang’s so as not to violate noise ordinances.
Cleveland Park: Hotbed of Civic Engagement

By Gwen Wright

Cleveland Park is a lovely community in which to live. For years it has attracted talented individuals who care about their neighborhood, their country and the world.

From Grover Cleveland to Walter Mondale to Tim Russert, fascinating high-powered people as well as quiet folks have populated our homes. But whether they are high octane or low, there is a shared sense of obligation to make the city and country a better place in which to live.

Some residents have taken on development issues, effectively expressing concern about increasing the heights of buildings, building large structures without adequate consideration of transportation gridlock, disturbing the beauty of the environment to the detriment of nearby homeowners, not retaining the historic character of our small commercial areas, and more.

Building new structures also is not without consequences for our homes. When the National Cathedral School for Girls built its new underground parking system, it blistered with gymnastics for days, resulting in a number of my old water pipes beginning to leak.

Others have been concerned about traffic flow and opposed repairing the washed-out part of Klineg Road, a major effort that so far has been successful and has reduced the rush of commuters racing up Woodley Road. As well, though, some of our neighbors have been instrumental in getting our pothole ridden streets repaired and even resurfaced. It’s not entirely clear what the master plan is for fixing the various streets, as some in terrible condition are ignored even though they intersect with others that are made to look like new.

And of course the Cleveland Park Historical Society is the ever-present protector of an environment we have for our homes. With its lectures and educational programs, the house tours, the newsletter alerts and information, we are blessed with civic concern. As a professional activist and organizer for most of my life, I relish the fascinating neighbors who make up our community.

2010 marks the 25th anniversary of the Cleveland Park Historical Society (CPHS). The Cleveland Park Historic District and CPHS’s Architectural Review Committee (ARC) are nearing their own quarter century mark. The City-designated historic district is the mechanism that not only celebrates the heritage and architecture of this wonderful neighborhood, but also provides protections to maintain its historic character. The district was designated in November 1986 after extensive research by CPHS and was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in April 1987.

CPHS knew that it was essential to have a way for district residents to provide substantive input into the historic district design review process — and so the Architectural Review Committee (ARC) was formed in 1987. The group still meets monthly to review applications for alterations, additions and new construction in the district. The ARC has reviewed changes to century-old homes, recent new construction projects and everything in between. Consisting of friends and neighbors, many of whom are architects, architectural historians, or real estate professionals, the organization represents the community view. Neighbors are also encouraged to attend meetings, particularly when they have an interest in a nearby project!

Briefly, here’s how the system works: applications for exterior alterations and new construction within a City-designated historic district (like Cleveland Park) are referred to the DC Historic Preservation Office. The preservation staff can help with questions of compatibility, zoning, design and process. They can sign off “over the counter” for minor work in historic districts such as fences, window and door replacements, and landscape work.

Larger projects, such as additions, must also go before the Historic Preservation Review Board (HPRB)—a City board with members appointed by the Mayor and City Council. The HPRB solicits input on projects in the Cleveland Park Historic District from the ARC on matters of design and compatibility. The ARC meets the second Monday of the month and may recommend the concept as presented, make recommendations for change, or recommend that the project should not be approved. The suggestions of the ARC are advisory only; they do not have the legal power. However, over the past 23 years of working with the HPRB, the ARC has generally found that the preservation staff and Board members are sensitive to the ARC’s advice.

If you have an upcoming project, please visit the CPHS website www.clevelandparkhistoricalsociety.org for more detail on the process and what materials to provide to the ARC. Email hprbcphs@gmail.com (Cleveland Park Historical Society) or call (202-237-2538) the CPHS office to be placed on the agenda of an upcoming ARC meeting.

Meet the New CPHS Board Members

By Gwen Wright

Sherry Floyd resides on Porter Street with her husband David Pomerantz. Sherry has been an attorney with the Department of Justice since 1987, where she has been involved in criminal litigation and Fifth Amendment takings law. She has also been an active volunteer at both the John Eaton and National Cathedral Schools.

Christine Carla Giraudo has been in the design/public relations business for more than twenty-five years. Christine brings to the historical society a deep knowledge of classic architecture and design. She lives in Adams Morgan and here is Arts house on 34th Street between Woodley and Klineg with her husband and two teenage children.

Wendy Gray is a Senior Associate with the Center for the Support of Families where she works as a consultant to states and the federal government on child support issues. Early in her career Wendy worked for Boston Mayor Kevin White, who appointed her to the Back Bay Architectural Commission on which she served for several years before leaving Boston. Wendy currently lives on Newark Street.

When Joan Habib of Woodley Road, last served on the CPHS board and as its President, she was responsible for acquiring the CPHS office space in the Broadmoor and in hiring the CPHS Executive Director. Joan has recently retired from her professional career and has the energy and enthusiasm to devote to CPHS issues.

Newark Street’s Robert Jenkens, has a Bachelor of Architecture and a Master of Science in Real Estate Development in addition to studying public policy. This fall, Robert worked with Carol Lynn Ward Bamford hosting Cleveland Park Historical Society’s ginger bread house decorating festival for children and families. Robert hopes to work with CPHS and Carolyn to make this an annual fund raising event, expanding the day to include a display of the children’s creations, a silent auction for ginger bread houses contributed by Cleveland Park architects and artists, and a reception.

Tina Mead has served on the Board of both the Cleveland Park Club and, briefly, the Cleveland Park Historic Society. Tina’s professional life has involved working for McKinsey in Tanzania and serving as the CFO for Reading Is Fundamental in D.C. More recently she served as the Provost-COO at the Washington National Cathedral. For the last several years she has commuted to New York City to work on a part-time basis with a small international NGO and is happy to be back on 34th Place in Cleveland Park full-time.

Lois Orr of 34th Street became involved with the activities of the CPHS when she moved to DC 12 years ago to take a senior position at the Bureau of Labor Statistics. An economist, Lois is now retired from serving as Deputy Commissioner of the Bureau for several years and Acting Commissioner for a year. Lois returns to the Board after having served as President of CPHS for 3 years. Since leaving the Board, she has continued to do work that enhances the community, spearheading the effort to transform the CP call boxes into public art. She is also a founding member of the DC Historic Districts Commission.

Susan and Jamie Parkinson live on Newark Street within the Cleveland Park Historic District with their two daughters. Both hold graduate degrees in historic preservation. After graduate school, Jamie worked at a consulting firm in Philadelphia performing reviews under the National Historic Preservation Act, and Susan worked at a preservation advocacy group in Washington. Jamie has been on the CPHS Architectural Review Committee for the past year, and is currently a director at Oatlands, a National Trust property in Leesburg, Virginia. Currently, Jamie works as a litigation lawyer and Susan consults to a trade association.

MEMBERSHIP continued

Family memberships begin at just $50 per year, and here is what you get for your membership:

• Personal stake in CPHS’s efforts to preserve and enhance the Historic District
• Tax deduction for annual dues and other financial support of the Society’s activities
• CPHS newsletter, Voices
• Discounts on Historic House Markers, Books, and CPHS Programs (house and garden tours, antique appraisal day, trolley tours, gingerbread house building, Preservation Call events, etc.)
• Member-only invitations to events
• Unity beautification programs including the adopt-a-tree partnership

Go to www.clevelandparkhistoricalsociety.org to review the numerous materials and programs available, and enroll for membership online. CPHS staff can be reached at staff@clevelandparkhistoricalsociety.org or 202-237-2538 for additional information.
The Story of Rosedale

By Mark Ozer

One of the oldest houses in the District still exists close by at 3701 Newark Street. Rosedale is the name given to the farmhouse settled by Uriah Forrest in 1793, in the midst of his almost thousand acre property that included the entire area that became Cleveland Park and Woodley Park. Rosedale was the Forrest home while a portion of the property that became the Woodley Estate was sold to his brother-in-law Phillip Barton Key whose home was Woodley, the present-day Maret School. Several other pieces were sold off leaving Rosedale with 130 acres. A portion of the Forrest farm to be called “Oak View” was bought during his presidency by President Grover Cleveland as a summer house for his new bride Frances. Hence the name “Cleveland Park” was given when a portion of the property was developed with homes starting in the 1890s. A remnant of “Red Top,” the Grover Cleveland home, still remains in the Bishop’s Garden of the Washington National Cathedral. In 1917, the Rosedale property was sold to the Coonley family from Chicago. Their daughter Elizabeth was married to the architect Waldron Faulkner who built several contemporary houses along Ordway Street. His son Winthrop, also an architect, built additional contemporary houses along 36th Street.

While the public cannot visit the homes on the Rosedale grounds, one can stroll about by entering through the driveway and gate at Newark and 35th Streets, bearing in mind the rules established by the Rosedale Conservancy, which was established in 2002. For additional information please go to www.rosedaleconservancy.org.

Mark Ozer is the author of Washington, DC: Politics and Place and Massachusetts Avenue: Palaces and Privilege. Both books are available at Politics and Prose Bookstore.