



Chevy Chase Historical Society

Newsletter

Fall 2003

Fall Program To Feature Chevy Chase Vice-Mayor, William Hudnut, Speaking About His New Book on "First Tier Suburbs"

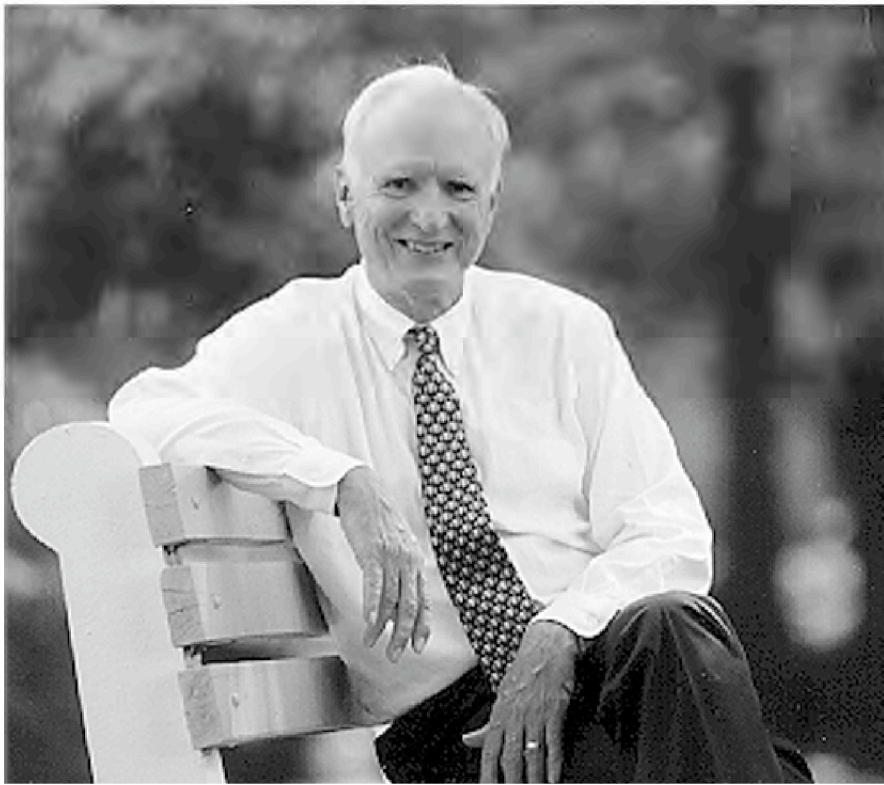


Photo courtesy of Urban Land Institute

The Chevy Chase Historical Society will hold its fall program on Thursday, November 13, 2003. The evening will begin at 8:00 p.m. at the Town of Chevy Chase's space in the Leland Community Center at 4301 Willow Lane, Chevy Chase. The guest speaker will be William (Bill) Hudnut, Senior Fellow at the Urban Land Institute. Mr. Hudnut's thought provoking new book, *Halfway to Everywhere: A Portrait of America's First Tier Suburbs*, will be the subject of his talk. CCHS invites you to attend what promises to be a very stimulating evening.

Mr. Hudnut was Mayor of Indianapolis, Indiana, for 16 years and served as a Member of Congress. He is currently Vice-Mayor of the Town of Chevy Chase. The discussion of his new book will include a slide

presentation on various local suburbs, including Chevy Chase, Bethesda, Cheverly, Seat Pleasant, Arlington, Bailey's Crossroads, and Alexandria. Mr. Hudnut also will discuss the founding of the Hamlet in the early 1920s, and how Chevy Chase managed the transition from trolley cars to automobiles.

Mr. Hudnut is a much sought-after speaker, "spirited, with high energy eloquence" (The Toledo Blade), who "gives life to the word charismatic" (The Cincinnati Enquirer). He speaks with passion about the importance of first tier suburbs—those closest to center cities—as integral to the health of the metropolitan mosaic.

There will be a short business meeting preceding Mr. Hudnut's presentation. Light refreshments will be served.

Chevy Chase Historical Society
Newsletter



Chevy Chase Historical Society
Post Office Box 15145
Chevy Chase, MD 20825-5145

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CCHS Archives and Research Center

Chevy Chase Community Library
8005 Connecticut Avenue
Tel: 301-656-6141
Fax:301-656-5114
E-mail: chevychasehistory@msn.com
Open 1:00 to 5:00 p.m. on
Tuesdays and by appointment.

The Chevy Chase Historical Society is a non-profit organization founded in 1981 to discover, record, and preserve the history of the Maryland and Washington neighborhoods known as Chevy Chase.

Recent Acquisitions

"Recent Acquisitions" is a regular feature in the newsletter, describing documents and other items that are acquired for the society's Archives and Research Center.

In recent months, CCHS has added the following material to its Archives and Research Center:

- *Catalogue from the Chevy Chase Country Day School.*
The school was located some years ago in the home of its Director, Stanwood Cobb, at 17 Grafton Street. Dr. Cobb was a philosopher and mystic as well as an educator, and CCHS has a large collection of his books. This catalogue is a rare acquisition, and was donated by Gail Redmond on behalf of the Historical Society of Washington, D.C.
- *A Crown for Henrietta Maria, Maryland's Namesake Queen,* by Frances C. Stickles.
This book is a biography for young people about Queen Henrietta Maria, the wife of Charles I of England. Frances lives in the Town of Chevy Chase, and is one of the society's most loyal volunteers. She has a masters degree in Library Science, and has been of enormous help in organizing the archives. She has kindly donated her book to the CCHS library.
- *Coffee and Sympathy, World War II Letters from the Southwest Pacific,* by Marcia W. Behr.
A memoir of an American Red Cross worker during World War II, this book was donated by Fran Schorr. The author lived for many years at 3418 Bradley Lane. The book is a complementary addition to the material CCHS is collecting for its World War II project (see page 3).
- *Shewski's Ladder,* by Katherine Zadrevac, illustrated by Sally Troyer.
This is a charming book of poetry by a former Chevy Chase resident and was donated by Sally Troyer, the owner of the Troyer Gallery. The author may be remembered for her column, "Anne's Readers' Exchange," in *The Washington Post*. All the photographs that illustrate the book are Chevy Chase scenes.



CCHS Remembers World War II

The Chevy Chase Historical Society World War II Project

The World War II Memorial on the National Mall will be dedicated on Memorial Day 2004. Over 100,000 visitors are expected to come to Washington for four days of ceremonies. CCHS is taking part in these observances by inaugurating a yearlong project to locate the veterans and other participants in World War II who live in Chevy Chase. All the municipalities that make up Chevy Chase are included in this project.

how these experiences shaped the rest of their lives. It is an appropriate time to undertake such a project because the WWII Memorial is being dedicated and many people will be focusing on the contributions made on the battlefield and at home by "the greatest generation".

The Society will use the information gathered as a result of this project to provide a picture of daily life during the war years in Chevy Chase. We will

Photo by an unknown marine



Squadron VMF 321 in the Solomon Islands, December 1942

Included are two Chevy Chase residents: Master Sergeant Robert McClosky, seated left on the wing without a uniform (formerly of 111 Hesketh St.) ; and 2nd Lt. Richard S.T. Marsh, 2nd from right, 2nd row, (now at 101 E. Kirke St.)

They are: Chevy Chase Village, Section 3 of Chevy Chase, The Town of Chevy Chase, Section 5 of Chevy Chase, and the Village of Martin's Additions.

We hope to contact World War II veterans of the military, civilians, and others who contributed to the war effort, those whose lives were affected by the war, and current residents who lived in Chevy Chase during World War II. We want to learn about the experiences of veterans and others during the war and

document how the events and experiences of World War II shaped our community. By so doing we will honor those who served in the war.

Highlights of the Society's World War II Project include:

- A special edition of the CCHS newsletter featuring stories about the Chevy Chase neighborhoods during the war and listing our veterans

- A rotation of displays beginning in January at the Chevy Chase Community Library covering life on the home front, our veterans and other topics.
- On March 9, 2004 a special lecture by our renowned local historian William Offut on the war years in Bethesda/Chevy Chase
- On Thursday, May 26, 2004 a program to share memories and to honor our veterans and others connected with the war

To begin this project we have been sleuthing some “WWII Mysteries in Chevy Chase.” Can anyone tell us:

- Did Vice President Harry Truman come to Chevy Chase frequently to play poker at Clark Clifford’s house, and where was this house?
- Is it true that the Soongs (the parents of Madame Chiang Kai-Shek and Madame Mao Tse Tung) rented a house here in the 1940’s and where was the house?
- How many air raid wardens were there in Chevy Chase? Who were they and where did they meet?

Do you know of other “WWII Mysteries in Chevy Chase”? Let us know by calling 301 656-6141. Your help is needed! We hope to locate, interview, and write up the personal histories of those who have memories to share about their wartime experiences.

If you would like to be a volunteer in the World War II project, please call Mary Anne Tuohey at 301 656 1779, or online at maryanne2e@aol.com.



Avalon Theater Project Receives Preservation Award From Garden Club Of America

On October 22, the Garden Club of America (GCA) presented The Avalon Theater Project with the GCA Zone VI Historic Preservation Certificate of Acknowledgment. Marian Hill of the Peachtree Garden Club, who is National Chairman of the GCA Conservation Committee, made the presentation at the awards dinner of the bi-annual meeting of Zone VI of GCA, in Baltimore, Maryland.

The award is for “significant contribution to historic preservation, cultural enrichment, and community building.” The Avalon Theater Project was selected from among a number of nominees for the award for the GCA’s Zone VI. The Garden Club of Chevy Chase is one of 12 clubs in Zone VI, and it put forward The Avalon Theater Project for the Zone VI award. CCHS submitted a letter seconding the nomination.

Congratulations to The Avalon Theater Project for restoring Chevy Chase’s theater to operation, and for its receipt of GCA’s prestigious and well deserved award. The award to a non-member project is testament to the value of the contribution the The Avalon Theater Project has made to the preservation and cultural vitality of the Chevy Chase community.



The Library of Congress’s Veterans History Project

The World War II Memorial Commission is registering the names of all veterans, and the Library of Congress along with the American Folk Life Center has initiated the Veteran’s History Project. The Society is an “endorsing partner.” That means we will promote the Library of Congress’s project by helping to identify veterans and others and stage associated events. With the permission of those veterans we are able to identify, we will turn over their names to the Library of Congress whose volunteers may wish to contact the veterans. More information is available on the Library of Congress web site, www.gov.gov/folk-life/vets, or by writing to the Library of Congress, 101 Independence Avenue SE, Washington DC 20540, and asking for the Veteran’s History Project folder.

Circle Repairs Include Placement Of George Washington Bi-centennial Markers

According to Cindy Cox, Superintendent of Rock Creek Park, repair of Chevy Chase Circle following damage by two wayward motorists is 99 percent complete. The Senator Francis Griffith Newlands fountain basin and most of the nearby benches have been repaired. New flagstone walkways entering the inner circle area and surrounding the fountain have been completed. Replacement of plants and completion of the bench repairs are scheduled for this fall.

Marker photos by Henry Ravenel



Restored Maryland marker

Some have asked why the beautiful display of the fountain in operation delighted residents and passers-by for a short time, then disappeared. Apparently, the timer for the Circle was not functioning due to power outages, and the fountain also was turned off before hurricane Isabel. It now is back on.

The dedication of the fountain took place on October 12,

1933. As part of the dedication, the Garden Club of America placed a pair of stone markers commemorating the bi-centennial of George Washington's birthday at the District of Columbia-Maryland line. Edward W.

Donn, architect and designer of Chevy Chase Circle, created the design for the rectangular columns, which the Garden Club also installed at five other "gateways" into Washington, D.C. For the Maryland entrances, the Lord Calvert coat of arms was carved on one side of the markers and the District of Columbia seal on the opposite side.



Restored District of Columbia Marker

Approximately five years ago, the U.S.

Park Service learned that a D.C. resident had a broken pillar in his backyard. Upon investigation, it was determined that the pillar was a George Washington bi-centennial marker. In 2000, an anonymous donor supplied funds to the Friends of Chevy Chase Circle to repair the marker. Shortly thereafter, the other entrance marker, which stood in the D.C. median strip on Connecticut Avenue south of the circle, was hit by an automobile and had to be removed for repairs. The Park Service now had two broken markers and no money with which to fix the second one. The Garden Club of Chevy Chase, many of its members, the Town of Chevy Chase, and area residents contributed funds for its restoration.

Recently, the Park Service installed the repaired markers inside the circle. 70 years after the dedication of the fountain and the markers, the Park Service is putting the finishing touches on the restoration of the beauty of the circle.

Photo by Angela Lancaster



Recent photo of Chevy Chase Circle showing the two markers, one in the foreground and one in the back to the left of the fountain

MYSTERY!



Photo by Ed Heller, CCHS Archives

The origin of two large stone walls or abutments that straddle Coquelin Run Creek at the end of Chevy Chase Lake Drive (which lies east of Connecticut Avenue), continues to elude historical detectives, including the CCHS. The structures are made of large cut blocks of stone, lifted and mortared into place. Their construction clearly was a painstaking and time consuming effort. To what purpose, however?

Theories abound regarding the structures. One of the most prevalent is that they were a sort of water routing structure, possibly associated with a mill or perhaps a dam with a movable gate. The Chevy Chase Land Company constructed a dam on Coquelin Run Creek in the late 1800s to create Chevy Chase Lake, and remains of the dam can still be seen and the creek can be heard pouring over them, from halfway along Chevy Chase Lake Drive. The structures, however, appear to predate the dam's construction.

Another "suspect" is the Metropolitan Southern Railroad. A subsidiary of the old Baltimore and Ohio Railroad, the Metropolitan Southern may have built the structures, as they appear to be substantial enough to support a train trestle.

Some believe that the structures were built as re

taining walls, a trolley bridge, a roadway bridge, or a crossing point for an aqueduct. These all are viable possibilities—after all, why does one build large stone structures astride a creek if not to cross it or to control it?

Two active sleuths are Eleanor Ford, photographic archivist for the society, and myself, member Tom Hughes. Mrs. Ford actually carries photographs of the site with her hoping to encounter those who can offer clues. I have spent much time examining the site both visually and with a metal detector, in hopes of turning up information or artifact that would point the investigation in the right direction.

Certainly, there are much larger mysteries involving old stone structures. The origins of the Egyptian pyramids and the Sphinx, of the massive stone cities of Central and South America, of the controversial Bimini Road beneath the waters of the Bahama Islands, and of Stonehenge come to mind. For the present, though, Chevy Chasers are enjoying our own little stone structure mystery.

(To be continued)

—Tom Hughes



Photo by Ed Heller, CCHS Archives

Opportunities for Researching House Ownership and Area History

CCHS continues to offer the opportunity to have Ownership of individual houses researched at Montgomery County's Land Record Office. For the fee of \$150, payable to CCHS, an experienced researcher will seek out the ownership record of the property on which your house is placed, and provide copies of deeds showing who owned it and to whom it was sold throughout its history. Unfortunately this usually does not provide the social history which can sometimes be learned by conversations with former owners or neighbors, their relatives, or village, town, or section records. If you would like to know more about this service, call Mrs. Alice Kinter at (301) 656-3642.

Other do-it-yourself sleuthing can be done by selective reading in the books listed below. Many may be found in the circulation area of the Montgomery County Library, or at local bookstores. They are also available in the CCHS Archives, but must be read there.

- *The City of Washington: An Illustrated History*, by The Junior League of Washington. Edited by Thomas Froncek. Alfred A. Knopf, N.Y., 1981.
- *Bethesda: A Social History of the Area Through WW II*, by William Offitt. Innovation Game, 1995.
- *Chevy Chase - A Home Suburb for the Nation's Capital*, by Elizabeth Jo Lampl & Kimberly Prothro Williams. Montgomery County Historical Preservation Commission and The Maryland-National Capital Park & Planning Commission, 1998.
- *The Town of Chevy Chase Past and Present*. The Town of Chevy Chase, 1990
- *Washington at Home —An Illustrated History of Neighborhoods in the Nation's Capital*. Edited by Kathryn Schneider Smith. Windsor Publications, Northridge, CA, 1988.
- *Montgomery County: Two Centuries of Change*, by Jane C. Sween. Windsor Publications, Inc., Woodland Hills, CA 1984.
- *Montgomery County—A Pictorial History*, by Margaret Marshall Coleman and Anne Dennis Lewis. The Donning Co, Norfolk, VA 1984.

Volunteer News and Needs

We welcome Wendy Coerper as a new volunteer at the headquarters. Some years ago, Wendy worked with Joan Marsh in organizing the collections that were moved out of the Chevy Chase Village Hall when they had out grown storage space there. It's great to have her back.

Some volunteer opportunities are:

- Identifying and contacting those affected by World War II
- Transcribing oral history interviews
- Preparing abstracts of oral history interviews
- Maintaining the newspaper clipping files
- Processing and labeling additions to the collection of photographs
- Indexing the map collection
- Assisting visitors when the headquarters is open to the public on Tuesday afternoons

To volunteer, or to learn more, come into or call the headquarters, 301.656.6141, or call Mary Anne Tuohey, at 301. 656.1779.

Capital Campaign Nearing Goal— \$35,000 Will Take Us To The Top!

The CCHS capital campaign "Cherish Our Past, Champion Our Future," is drawing to a close. On this last, most difficult leg of our fundraising journey, the society is tantalizingly near its goal of \$350,000.

The \$315,000 CCHS has received reflects the outpouring of support from local government and from corporate and private donors. With just a little more help from our friends, CCHS can bring the campaign to a victorious conclusion.

The society's Archives and Research Center is now a reality, beautifully equipped for the 21st century. Much remains to be done in the coming years, however: Continuing conservation of historic records and photographs; expanding the oral history collection; professional staffing; and many outreach programs that will enrich the Chevy Chase community.

CCHS needs your support. Think about it. Your contribution could be the one that takes the fund drive to the top!

Membership Year Changes

CCHS is changing its "membership year" to correspond to the calendar year. The next membership year, therefore, will run from January 1, 2004 through December 31, 2004. For accounting purposes, your tax exempt payment in advance of January is encouraged. Checks should be made out to *Chevy Chase Historical Society* (a not-for-profit organization).

Please fill out the membership form below and return it with your check to CCHS, P.O. Box 15145, Chevy Chase, Maryland 20825. Also, CCHS welcomes your thoughts and suggestions on topics for society lectures and for the newsletter. Just note your ideas in the "Suggestion Box" on the form when returning it to the society.

✂

I would like to join/renew membership in the Chevy Chase Historical Society

Name: _____

Street address: _____

Change of Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip code: _____

Telephone: (home) _____ (office) _____

_____ Family Membership (\$25)

_____ Sustaining Membership (\$100)
(Become a Life Member in five years)

_____ Life Membership (\$500)

_____ Additional Contribution \$ _____

Suggestions



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