



CHEVY CHASE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

NEWSLETTER

FALL 2014

Naturalist Duo to Speak at November 23 Fall Program On "Rock Creek Park: Chevy Chase's Wild, Wooded Neighbor"



The year 2015 will mark the 125th anniversary of the founding of Rock Creek Park, nature's jewel in the heart of Washington, D.C. that offers a refuge from the city for millions of visitors each year. Twice the size of New York's Central Park, Rock Creek Park was the third national park created by Congress, preceded only by Yellowstone and Sequoia. In anticipation of the anniversary, the CCHS Fall Program will focus on the park, its history, and the magnificent natural beauty it has to offer.

The program will be held on Sunday, November 23, 2014, at 4:00 p.m., at the Jane E. Lawton Community Center, 4301 Willow Lane, in the Town of Chevy Chase. It is free and open to the public. Light refreshments will be served. Please direct questions to CCHS at (301) 656-6141 or at chevychasehistory@msn.com.

Local authors Melanie Choukas-Bradley and Scott Einberger, both of whom have written newly

published books about Rock Creek Park, will speak about our neighboring wilderness area.

Naturalist, writer, and teacher Choukas-Bradley's new book, *A Year in Rock Creek Park: The Wild, Wooded Heart of Washington, D.C.* invites readers into an unexpected urban wilderness in the middle of the city. Choukas-Bradley spent a full year in Rock Creek Park, walking and skiing its trails several times a week, at all times of day, observing and recording natural events in all seasons and weather conditions. She paints a sense of place with her poetic descriptions of nature and the cultural and historical information she shares about the park.

Choukas-Bradley is well known as the author of the classic volume *City of Trees: The Complete Botanical and Historical Guide to the Trees of Washington, DC*, a unique field guide also filled with interesting stories that is in its third edition. She also has written two natural history books about Sugarloaf Mountain, Maryland. She leads field trips and tree tours for the Audubon Naturalist Society, the United States Botanic Garden, Casey Trees, the Maryland Native Plant Society, the Nature Conservancy, and other organizations in the area, and is a long time freelance contributor to *The Washington Post* and other publications.

She lives in the Town of Chevy Chase with her husband, Jim, who is president of the Sugarloaf Citizens Association.

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Celebrating One of America's First Streetcar Suburbs

Convenient Membership Envelope Enclosed!



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HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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Open 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Tuesday
 and by appointment

The Chevy Chase Historical Society collects, records, interprets and shares materials relating to the history of Chevy Chase, Maryland, one of America's first streetcar suburbs. The organization provides resources for historical research and sponsors a variety of programs and activities to foster knowledge and appreciation of the community's history.

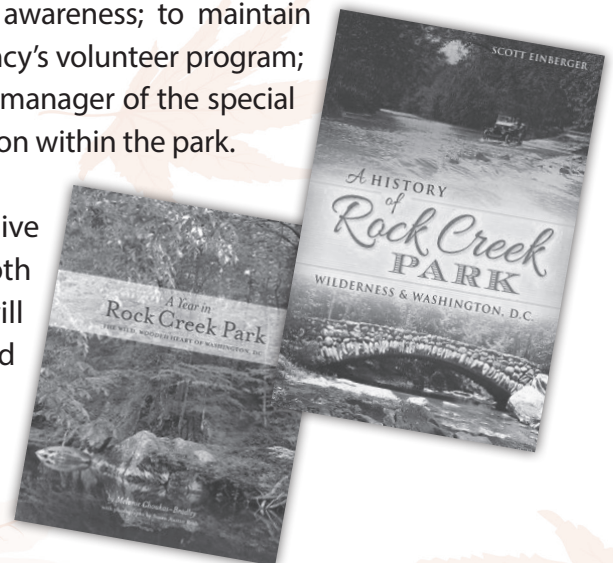
(Continued from page 1)

Scott Einberger is an environmental historian and the author of *A History of Rock Creek Park: Wilderness and Washington, D.C.* From 2006 until this fall, he served as a U.S. National Park Service interpretive park ranger. Beginning in 2010, he served as Rock Creek Park's volunteer coordinator and interpretive media specialist. In addition to Rock Creek Park, National Park System enthusiast Einberger has worked at Chamizal National Memorial in El Paso, Texas; Denali National Park in interior Alaska; Craters of the Moon National Monument in south central Idaho; Gila Cliff Dwellings National Monument in southwestern New Mexico; and Lassen Volcanic National Park in northeastern California.

Einberger began work on his book during the three week federal government shutdown in October 2013. With no notion of writing a book, he decided to use his new found free time to learn more about the environmental history of the Washington area. He soon became focused specifically on the history of Rock Creek Park and went on to produce a full length book on the subject. It tells the story of the park from the activities of American Indians in the Rock Creek Valley, through the park's early mills and mansions, its links to the Civil War, its famous visitors including Theodore Roosevelt, and its recreational activities from fox hunting to camping, hiking, and cycling.

He recently was appointed Program Director for Dumbarton Oaks Park Conservancy, a nonprofit organization working to revitalize the 27 acre "secret garden" in the northern end of Georgetown near Rock Creek. The organization is focused on both historic preservation and environmental protection work within Dumbarton Oaks Park. Einberger's charge is to develop and implement an interpretive program for the park to build public interest and awareness; to maintain and expand the Conservancy's volunteer program; and to serve as the onsite manager of the special restoration projects going on within the park.

He and his wife, Jenny, live in Washington, D.C. Both speakers' new books will be available for sale and signing at the program.

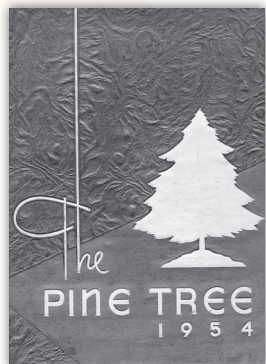


Recent Acquisitions

"Recent Acquisitions" is a regular feature in the Newsletter, describing documents and other items acquired by the society's Archive and Research Center

Donation Highlights

1. Julie Rude Thomas donated B-CC High School *Pine Tree* yearbooks from 1954, 1957, and 1958, and CCHS purchased a 1971 *Pine Tree*. Please note that we have posted a list of *Pine Tree* yearbooks on our website, as part of our *Schools of Section 4* online exhibit.



Cover of 1954 *Pine Tree* yearbook

2. Julie Thomas also donated a special postcard in memory of CCHS board member Susan Elwell. This postcard, signed by Dr. and Mrs. Barker, the principals of Chevy Chase College, is postmarked 1908. A photograph of the school appears on one side and "Easter Greetings" is printed in yellow on the other side.
3. The Kinter Family donated 19 photographs of the late Alice Kinter, former CCHS board member. These include childhood snapshots, and photos of Alice's husband and daughters at home in Chevy Chase and on their many trips abroad.
4. Richard Cole donated an invitation to a "Benefit Cocktail Party" for the Mary Louise English Circle, a group founded by a Chevy Chase resident to support the Florence Crittenton Home for unwed mothers in Washington, D.C.
5. Three 1950s alumni of Chevy Chase Elementary School donated class photographs and a short memoir of their school days. We are in the process of accessioning these. Many thanks to John Sears, Tim Wechsler, and Irene Kovakas Creed. Read about their recent tour of the renovated school on pages 4 and 5 of this issue.

Welcome Graduate Student Intern Conal Huetter



Please welcome Conal Huetter as he begins his graduate internship at CCHS for the Fall 2014 semester. He is a new student in the Master of Library Science program at the University of Maryland, and has a strong interest in archives. He also has a background in history and geography, perfect preparation for working on our maps and drawings collection. In addition, he also will be transcribing one of our recent oral history interviews and working on the preservation of some of our scrapbooks.

Special thanks to board member Henry Gwiazda who helped to outline interesting internship projects. We advertised the position at Maryland, George Washington University, Georgetown University, and The Catholic University, and are pleased with our "hire." Conal will be at CCHS on Tuesdays and Thursdays, so please stop by and say hello.

The choices we make today affect
the generations of tomorrow.

You can make a lasting difference in your community
by including CCHS in your estate planning.

Your bequest of cash, securities, or other type of
planned gift will help further CCHS' mission and may
generate savings on your current and/or estate taxes.

Please think about the legacy you wish to leave,
and consider a planned gift to CCHS.

CCHS Thanks the Corporate Sponsors of Its 2014 Spring Gala.

Pinnacle Sponsors: Chevy Chase Land Company; Washington Fine Properties, LLC, and its agents

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A Special Reunion an

Generations of Chevy Chase school children have flowed through the halls of Chevy Chase Elementary School on Rosemary Circle and have fond memories of their days at the school some still affectionately call "Rosemary."



Photo by David Orzgm

The graceful school building as it appeared in 1993

Constructed in 1917 and modified through the 1970s, the u-shaped CCES building was an Art Deco gem set in greensward among mature trees. A renovation in 2000 added a two story atrium and a central courtyard that connect the two wings. Other embellishments include a substantial, well equipped gym; an art room; a research and development room; a television room with cameras, news desks, and staff that broadcasts live to classrooms on the "Chevy Chase News Network"; a dining room (the former cafeteria); and a refurbished playground. The bucolic courtyard garden has winding paths; tables, chairs, and umbrellas; a lily pond; native Maryland plantings; and "buddy benches" where students are encouraged to sit if they are feeling lonely to signal others to offer company. The interior and exterior detailing of the school harmoniously blends the new with the old.

Last summer Jim McConaughy of Andover, Massachusetts – once a member of the class slated to graduate from CCES in 1958 – was planning his attendance at the Bethesda Chevy-Chase High School Class of 1964 Reunion in early October. Since about 48 of the B-CC 1964 graduates had some connection with CCES, "perhaps just one year there, or in some cases all seven years from kindergarten to sixth grade," when McConaughy asked the B-CC reunion organizers about including a tour of CCES, they were enthusiastic: if McConaughy would arrange the tour, the B-CC organizers would promote it on the B-CC website. McConaughy relates that CCES Principal Jody Smith agreed to provide the tour,

and that the interest of the PTA and of CCHS "created a bit of excitement."

McConaughy also "took a chance and made contact with old schoolmates John Sears and Tim Weschler – they were happy to hear from me and excited about the idea, and said they would be there. As it turned out, we had three B-CC grads and three non-grads," and at some point all six had been in the CCES Class of 1958!

"We were all in the same grade at Rosemary," McConaughy explains, "and different combinations of us were in the same classes as we moved through Rosemary." (Each grade was divided into two classes.) The reunited six: Margaret Hatch Kauffman, McConaughy, Tim Wechsler, Irene Kovakas Creed, John Sears, and Alan Lando.



One half of the Class of 1958, in second grade (1953-54), with their teacher Mrs. Moeller. John Sears is fourth from the right in the back row, and Irene Kovakis is second from the left in the front row.

On September 19, Jody Smith led the alumni on an engaging tour of the interior and exterior of the school. There were moments of both silence and exclamation regarding the most dramatic changes, and the most familiar and beloved touchstones, such as the sixth grade classrooms viewed from the "Hillcrest Street porch." And there was hilarity: when Smith spoke of the replacement of radiators with central heating and of the central air conditioning to come, "Molly-coddling!" pronounced one alumnus; another plucked an animated sign admonishing, "Shhh! Talking in the hallway is disrespectful!" off a teacher's desk, to general laughter; and when the men identified windows facing the baseball field that had been broken by balls, Smith rejoined, "That's why we have t-ball now!"

d Tour at “Rosemary”

Some young students in the after school program were industriously involved with wooden building blocks and other organized play, but some were highly vocal and romping around their room and the hallway outside. The quiet activity and amusingly fractious behavior of the present students mirrored that being described by the former ones. One of the latter was heard to murmur, “Some things never change.”



**Members of the Rosemary Class of 1958, L to R:
Alan Lando, John Sears, Tim Wechsler,
Margaret Hatch Kauffman, Irene Kovakas Creed,
and Jim McConaughy**

But things do change, and a strong sentiment that emerged among the alumni was nostalgia.

McConaughy observes that, “What I found remarkable was not only the fantastic facility and the enthusiastic principal who leads it all, but the wonderful spirit of community that we witnessed, especially while sitting outside and watching kids and parents enjoying the playground. What was the most fun was reminiscing after the tour, in the garden” (on a “buddy bench” with Sears and Wechsler).

“I remember being the only girl allowed to play on the softball team,” recalls Hatch Kauffman. “I hit a huge home run. My older brother was offended and forbid me to play forthwith.”

Kovakas Creed was moved to write a memoir, *First Day of Second Grade, Rosemary Elementary School*, and to share it with CCHS. Of mid-September 1953 she remembers, “Yup, this was going to be a great day . . . [t]he sun was shining, the air was full of the promise of Fall. We’d had a fine recess during the mid-morning and while the boys were playing ball and rough housing, we girls had pretended we were horses and ran around the playground The wooden

floors of the Long Hall made a distinctive creaking sound and smelled wonderfully ‘woody.’ We passed the table where upper grade kids would man the School Store . . . we all aspired to this prestigious duty [and to] the School Patrol where kids got to wear those cool sashes that marked their authority . . . but, not today. I was still a raw second grader mastering the alphabet, reading, writing . . . and arithmetic. Like the walls of my first grade class, the walls of Mrs. Moeller’s classroom were filled with banners of letters and numbers and examples of our work”

Sears is grateful to McConaughy for organizing the event. “I hadn’t been inside since 1958 – it was very special,” he says. “After the tour I sat on a ‘buddy bench’ on the playground with Jim and Alan, and reminisced for an hour about our Rosemary experiences.

“I’ve lived here since the late 1940s, and the school and the 1950s meant a lot to me,” Sears continues. “I get nostalgic. I knew most of the families. The many activities, the prosperity and security of the 50s, were wonderful. Those were golden days for children growing up in Chevy Chase. The close proximity of my home and the school felt good – I lived next door on Meadow Lane, and jumped over the fence on the far side of the baseball field to go home for lunch. That’s why I never had a bicycle!”



**Sears, Wechsler, and McConaughy
share memories on a “buddy bench”**

McConaughy reports that he is making good progress on his quest to document all the students of the Class of 1958 and their teachers during their years at Rosemary. He would be pleased to hear from anyone who can help identify faces or remember names. Class lists, of which Wechsler already has given him two, are particularly welcome. When his rosters are as complete as possible, he plans to donate them to CCHS. He already has donated a list of most of the 1951-58 faculty.

Chevy Chase Voices

"Chevy Chase Voices" is a regular feature in the newsletter, containing excerpts from the oral histories of Chevy Chase residents that the society has taken and transcribed as part of its Oral History Project. It highlights interesting aspects of the community's history in order to educate readers and to encourage them to further explore the wealth of information contained in the oral history transcripts at the CCHS Archive and Research Center.

In the last "Chevy Chase Voices" we provided excerpts from the oral history interview of Esther Van Dyne who lived at 12 West Kirke Street for most of her life. The interview was conducted by society founder Mary Anne Touhey and by board member Marjorie Zapruder on July 26, 1982. Ms. Van Dyne was 88 years old at the time.

In this installment of "Chevy Chase Voices" we present additional excerpts from Ms. Van Dyne's oral history, which is rich in scenes of Chevy Chase life in the early- to mid-20th century. In the first excerpt, Ms. Van Dyne recounts children's parties in Chevy Chase, circa 1905.

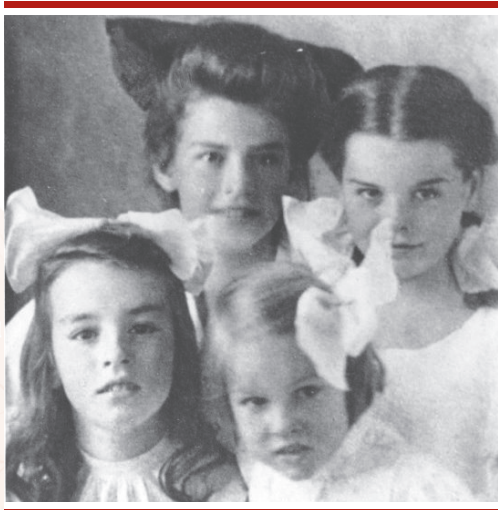


Photo courtesy of Mary A. Mantz

The young Van Dyne daughters Frances, Katherine, Esther, and Marjorie

Interviewer: Well, there was quite a bunch of children for you to play with. There was a surprising number of children here.

Van Dyne: The nicest things we had were children's parties at the Chevy Chase Library. We call it the association building now. Well, there was a man who was a cartoonist at [The Evening Star newspaper]. Chandley was his name, and he knew all the children. Whenever anybody had a birthday . . . all the children were invited and Mr. Chandley wrote a little four-line jingle describing each Chevy Chase

child. I remember the jingle for our family because it was: "F" is for Frances who like a dear little mother takes care of her sisters and looks after her brother. 'E' is for Esther with eyes, oh, so brown. She lives in the country but once lived in town. 'G' is for George. He lives on Kirke Street. He has a big ball that he kicks with his feet." [Chandley] did that for every child in Chevy Chase.

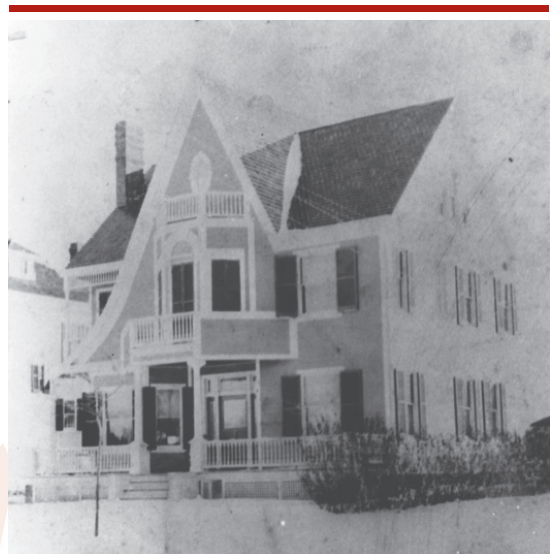
* * *

The Van Dynes were among the earlier families to build homes in Chevy Chase.

Interviewer: Your parents built this house [12 West Kirke Street], that's right?

Van Dyne: Yes . . . this was the first street in Chevy Chase . . . [t]he pretty little house across the way with the yellow door now [9 West Kirke], it didn't have that wing. That was a porch. And it was small. They've added to it a lot. [The porch] was a real estate office [where Mr. Fisher, the homeowner, conducted business].

Marjorie Fisher used to spend most of the time in the [porch] swing . . . Janet Richards [a well known lecturer on current events] lived in this second house, the only three-story house on this street . . . Miss Mackrille, who built [11 West Kirke Street], planted the [Bishop's Garden at the Washington National Cathedral] . . . she [took orders from around the nation for, and created, floral arrangements for the interior of the cathedral] . . . [and she also ministered to people by taking them out for meals].



The Van Dyne home at 12 West Kirke Street

* * *

Ms. Van Dyne's family were among the first members of Chevy Chase Methodist Church. She described the church's early days in her interview.

Interviewer: Did you go to the Methodist Church on Connecticut? Has it changed a lot?

Van Dyne: There were 30 members when it started, and there are . . . about 1,600 [now].

Interviewer: Well, that's not the same building, then. They've redone [it].



1912 photograph of the shingle church where the Chevy Chase Methodist congregation first worshipped

Van Dyne: [T]hey have. . . . They had a little brown church [on the northeast corner of Connecticut Avenue and Shepherd Street]. Do you know "Little Brown Church in the Wildwood?" [W]e used to sing that [People] told us [that the congregation] would never grow because [the members] were all cousins, related. There were three English families, and they were the salt of the earth [and the principal members] . . . the Troth and Orem and Simpson [families]. I guess the Baptists owned this little brown-shingled church, before they built down here at the Circle. . . . [T]hey sold the [church] to the Methodists. [Although people said the congregation] would never grow . . . the minister Lucien Clark . . . offered his services free the first five years, I guess, until we could get on our feet and pay for a minister, and he was the tops in Methodism.

The 4-H headquarters [across Connecticut Avenue] was then the Chevy Chase Female Seminary. Their Dean of Women was a friend of Dr. Clark, and so they brought a flock of their girls over, seminary girls, and it was just wonderful.

So that's the way our church grew.

* * *

Ms. Van Dyne's career in education in Washington and overseas had its seeds in her Chevy Chase early education and her family's subsequent diplomatic travel to the Caribbean and to Europe in the 1940s.

Interviewer: Tell me where you . . . went to grammar school.

Van Dyne: [The E.V. Brown School on Connecticut Avenue in Chevy Chase, D.C.] The community center now. It was a four-room school. We had two grades in each room. . . . Dad was made consul to Jamaica [and then to Lyon], so I [missed sixth through eighth grades]. I ain't had an education. [Laughter.] [W]hen we came back I told Eb [Wilson at Central High School] I wanted to go to college And so he said, "Well, what did you learn while you were away?" I said, "Well, war broke out so Dad told us to come down to the consulate and practice typewriting . . . that we may need it sometime to earn our living. . . . And I [memorized Dad's shorthand book] so I could get a government job when I came home."

I [asked for Eb's permission to go to Ohio Wesleyan. I told him I had learned typewriting, and then I was sent to the business administration room to show that I could take dictation]. And then he let me go to Ohio Wesleyan.

* * *

Esther Van Dyne would graduate from Ohio Wesleyan, teach at the Phoebe Apperson Hearst Elementary School, and serve with a missionary society in Algiers. She and her older sister Frances were student secretaries who helped the society open and operate a student center for residential and day students.



Esther Van Dyne, sister-in-law Mrs. Fred Van Dyne, and sister Frances Van Dyne, circa 1930

Photo courtesy of Mary T. Martz



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MYSTERY!



When Judge Edward Northrop was interviewed for the CCHS Oral History Project in 1985, he let us scan photographs from a family album. We identified most of them but are not sure about several, including the one above. Judge Northrup lived at 15 East Lenox (formerly 13 East Lenox) and we have several photographs of his home from his album. But this photograph and two others show a porch and bay window not visible on the front of the Northrup family home. Perhaps the unidentified photographs were taken at the back of the house? Or at another house, perhaps nearby? Please help us identify the house and the child on the tricycle! Email CCHS at chevychasehistory@msn.com.

And, thanks to our spring "Mystery!" winners. The first person to identify the "mystery house" in the Spring 2014 Newsletter as 7707 Brookville Road was Kirsten Gardner. Just a few hours after we received her email, we got a phone message from Nancy Caffey who also identified the house correctly. (The beautiful house has a long driveway so it is only visible from the road if you take a look from the stone pillar at the entrance to the drive.)