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A HISTORY OF CHEVY CHASE VILLAGE

Interview
with
Edith Claude Jarvis

by
Paula Locker

July 16, 1971

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(TRANSCRIPT OF A TAPE RECORDING.)

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ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM

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BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION ON EDITH CLAUDE JARVIS (Mrs. William T.)

PRESENT ADDRESS: 9 East Melrose St, Chevy Chase, PHONE 01. 2-2725
Maryland 20015

BIRTHPLACE: Columbia Hospital, Washington, D.C.

RESIDENCE: Chevy Chase Lake (first Five years)
childhood: Chevy Chase Village

Montgomery County, Maryland: 19 02 to 19 73

EDUCATION: Elementary: E.V. Brown School
High School: Central High School
Colleges: Wilson Normal School
Harvard Univ., Cornell Univ.

BUSINESS & PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCES:
Teacher, D.C. public elementary school--6 years
Founder, Francis Scott Key Bookshop (Georgetown)
Owner-Director, Jarvis School Bureau
President, Soroptomist Club of Washington, D.C. 1948-1949

COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES:
Served on Board of Managers, Chevy Chase Village--1950-1962
Women's Board of Montgomery County General Hospital--1959-1967
President, Garden Club of Chevy Chase--1967--1969
Director, Montgomery County Historical Society
Executive Board National Society of Colonial Dames of America
in State of Maryland
Executive Board of the Camellia Society of the Potomac Valley
1st Vice President, Society of Sponsors of the U.S. Navy--
1971-1973
Director, Central High School Alumnae Association

PUBLIC OFFICE:

SPECIAL HONORS & AWARDS:

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P R O C E E D I N G S

1
2 MS. LOCKER: This is Paula Locker, interviewing
3 Mrs. Edith Claude Jarvis, an authority on the history of
4 Chevy Chase Village.

5 The interview is being held in Mrs. Jarvis'
6 lovely home at 9 East Melrose Street, Chevy Chase, Maryland,
7 on July 16th, 1971.

8 Mrs. Jarvis, I understand that you've been a
9 lifelong resident of Chevy Chase Village, and members of
10 your family were deeply involved in the development and
11 life of the Village.

12 Will you identify the members of your family who
13 have a place in this history?

14 MRS. JARVIS: Yes, that is really quite true.

15 My paternal grandparents came from Annapolis,
16 Judge and Mrs. Dennis Claude.

17 My father preceded them because he was a young
18 civil engineer, who had an opportunity in the early develop-
19 ment of the (street) railway, and after arriving in
20 Washington, he very soon brought his parents and his
21 sisters from Annapolis.

22 My grandfather on my mother's side was here many
23 years before that, and was really a character who was color-
24 ful, who was dramatic, and who was very interested in pro-
25 moting his own ideas. His name was Col. George A. Armes,

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and he, after winning the Civil War according to himself, had settled in a fantastic house mid-way between DuPont Circle and Chevy Chase Village as we know it today.

He was a dreamer. He was very interested in the development of real estate, after his experiences in the war. And he brought to the attention of two or three Congressmen his idea for the development of a very large and interesting project which later became the suburb known today as the Chevy Chase Village.

He lived on Connecticut Avenue, and he was really instrumental in developing a new suburb. And I doubt very much if the word "suburb" even entered his mind. He was really interested in increasing his own financial standing.

He approached several very wealthy Congressmen with an idea that he had dreamed about, and that was to develop an area out of Washington that would be a very superior and well-planned real estate development.

He approached these gentlemen, one of them was Senator Stewart from Nevada, another was Congressman Newlands from Nevada, who was then a Congressman but later became a Senator.

And because Senator Newlands had married into the fabulously wealthy family of the (Sharons), he had access to a large amount of money.

These gentlemen met at the old Shoreham Hotel, and

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1 decided to --

2 MS. LOCKER: Excuse me, can you tell me what year
3 this is?

4 MRS. JARVIS: This was in 1890. And they decided
5 to buy up all of the land that they possibly could between
6 what is now the Shoreham Hotel on Calvert Street out beyond
7 the Columbia Country Club to what is now the Jones Mill
8 Road.

9 And they asked my grandfather to be the one to
10 buy the land, acre by acre, but not to divulge his reasons
11 for buying the land.

12 Now, this was a very hard thing to do, because as
13 he purchased each farm, he had these deeds recorded and in
14 a very short time the newspaper reporters found out that
15 there was much sale of land going on. But since my grand-
16 father had been sworn to secrecy, he could not divulge
17 why. He could not divulge his reasons of why he was pur-
18 chasing this land.

19 Finally, after a few months, the newspapers were
20 dogging his footsteps, and he was forced to admit that he
21 was buying land for a syndicate which was to develop an area.

22 As soon as he divulged this information, he was
23 fired from his job. Thus came into being the establishment
24 of the Chevy Chase Land Company.

25 This was headed by Senator Newlands, and Mr.

ngb 1 Stellwagen became one of the officers. He later became the
2 President of the Union Trust Company.

3 They went forward in selecting a very famous
4 landscape architect by the name of Nathan Barrett from New
5 York City.

6 Mr. Barrett's plans were very elaborate and very
7 beautiful. His plans were for a suburb with beautiful
8 streets, trees that were to be imported from various
9 countries -- particularly from Japan and from Norway. Mr.
10 Barrett's plans called for streets that were wide. There
11 were to be no alleys. There were to be no commercial
12 establishments, and generally it was just to be a residential
13 area.

14 I think that his plans were well accepted by
15 everyone, and at that time they had not only to build
16 Connecticut Avenue straight through from Washington, but
17 they had to build two bridges -- the Calvert Street bridge
18 and the (Klinge) bridge.

19 All in all, I've been told they spent well over
20 \$3 million in the acquisition of land and in the building
21 of the bridges and the street railway.

22 MS. LOCKER: How many farms were involved in
23 this land acquisition, do you have any idea?

24 MRS. JARVIS: There were many, many small farms
25 and small areas, and soon it became known that Col. Armes

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1 was buying up this property, and the speculators began to
2 get to work and up their prices. Some of the land sold for
3 as little as \$200 an acre, some of it sold as high as
4 \$6,000 an acre.

5 MS. LOCKER: That's quite a range. Do you have
6 any idea who were the investors in the development other
7 than the Senators Stewart and Newlands?

8 MRS. JARVIS: It was mostly Senator Newlands,
9 Francis G. Newlands, who later became a Senator and whose
10 family were the fabulously wealthy (Sharon) family, who'd
11 made a vast fortune in developing the Comstock Lode.

12 MS. LOCKER: Is it true that the Village, as we
13 know it today, represents only part of the land originally
14 purchased?

15 MRS. JARVIS: Yes, that is true. There is still
16 a vast amount of land that is undeveloped, that the Chevy
17 Chase Land Company still holds.

18 MS. LOCKER: I see, and where are these areas?

19 MRS. JARVIS: Principally along Connecticut Avenue,
20 the Van Ness Center is one of the areas, the area all along
21 Connecticut Avenue that is unoccupied is owned by the Chevy
22 Chase Land Company.

23 MS. LOCKER: Did Col. Armes ever live in the
24 Village?

25 MRS. JARVIS: He never lived precisely in the

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1 Village. He lived halfway between Washington and the
2 Village.

3 MS. LOCKER: You say that Mr. Stellwagen was the
4 successor to your grandfather?

5 MRS. JARVIS: Yes.

6 MS. LOCKER: And did he, at one time, own any
7 farmland in the Chevy Chase area?

8 MRS. JARVIS: He owned no farmland. I think that
9 Mr. Stellwagen came from another state. I don't believe that
10 he was a Washingtonian even.

11 MS. LOCKER: And did you say that he was President
12 of the Union Trust Company?

13 MRS. JARVIS: Yes, he was at one time.

14 MS. LOCKER: And is the Union Trust Company
15 involved with the Chevy Chase Land Company today?

16 MRS. JARVIS: To some extent, yes. They certainly
17 take care all of the affairs of the Chevy Chase Land Company
18 and the Thomas J. Fisher Company, which is a subsidiary of
19 the Chevy Chase Land Company.

20 MS. LOCKER: You said in one of your articles
21 that Chevy Chase was one of the first planned suburbs.
22 Now, was the plan actually carried out as the landscape
23 architect planned it?

24 MRS. JARVIS: Yes. I would say that almost
25 entirely his ideas were used and, to a large extent, it

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1 was executed just as he had planned it.

2 I've seen the original plans done in watercolor,
3 and they're quite beautiful and they are owned by the
4 Chevy Chase Villare.

5 MS. LOCKER: Where can they -- can they be seen?

6 MRS. JARVIS: They're at the office of the Chevy
7 Chase Village.

8 MS. LOCKER: I see, that's very interesting.

9 You said in one of your articles that the Chevy
10 Chase Land Company did a great deal for the comfort and
11 convenience of the residents. Can you tell me what they
12 did beyond what other real estate companies did, other
13 development companies?

14 MRS. JARVIS: Yes, for one thing, they gave the
15 land for the first church in the Village, which was the
16 All Saints Church. They gave the land for the first school,
17 which was the E. V. Brown School.

18 They provided the residents with mail service,
19 with the upkeep and maintenance of the Village. They even
20 had a freight car that came out every day from the City of
21 Washington with the mail and with anything that anyone had
22 bought from the old Boston House, which is today known as
23 Woodward & Lothrop.

24 Even if one needed to buy just a spool of thread,
25 it could be brought out on the freight car.

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1 MS. LOCKER: A spool of thread?

2 MRS. JARVIS: Yes.

3 MS. LOCKER: Would that we had that service today.

4 There was a school site and a church site and
5 landscaping and sewer and water systems?

6 MRS. JARVIS: Yes.

7 MS. LOCKER: Can you give me some details about
8 the sewer and water system?

9 MRS. JARVIS: The sewer and water was really
10 rather primitive, but very effective.

11 There were about 20 or 22 artesian wells that were
12 drilled throughout the Village. They pumped the water into
13 one single stand pipe, which no longer exists but which was
14 very picturesque.

15 The water of Chevy Chase was very pure and
16 sparkling and clear. People used to drive out -- or rather
17 ride out on the streetcars and bring bottles and
18 nitchers to a central area where they would fill them with
19 pure water from Chevy Chase and take them back to Washington.

20 The water was very pure and very clean, and it
21 was much later that the water supply had to be turned over
22 to the Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission.

23 MS. LOCKER: Do you know when that was?

24 MRS. JARVIS: My guess would be in the late
25 Twenties. Now, I may be wrong about that, but certainly

1 the late Twenties or very early Thirties.

2 MS. LOCKER: What was the attitude of the residents
3 to that?

4 MRS. JARVIS: They were not too pleased about
5 drinking water from the Potomac River, but it was more
6 efficient and they agreed that it was the best thing because
7 the Village was growing so rapidly.

8 MS. LOCKER: You, in our previous conversations,
9 described the trolley ride which I thought was quite
10 interesting out to the amusement park.

11 Could you tell me something -- give me something
12 about that now?

13 MRS. JARVIS: Well, in the summertime, it was
14 really a remarkable thing because the street -- the summer
15 streetcars were picturesque, and they would bring hordes
16 of people from the City on hot summer nights to the Chevy
17 Chase Lake, which was a venture that my father was interested
18 in.

19 He helped to build an artificial lake, and around
20 the lake there were electric lights and on the banks nearby
21 there was amusement -- much as we know of Glen Echo today.

22 The Marine Band came out every evening and played
23 semi-classical music on the hillside. They played in a
24 large shell that was glittering with electric lights and
25 which was a sounding board for the music which thousands of

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1 people would sit on benches to hear.

2 After about an hour of this amusement, the musicians
3 would go down to the lake where there was a large pavillion
4 and there they would play dance music.

5 It was interesting that all sorts of people of
6 the day were chosen to come and exhibit their dancing,
7 including Irene and Vernon Castle, who introduced their
8 version of the cakewalk to the vast amusement of the on-
9 lookers.

10 MS. LOCKER: When was this?

11 MRS. JARVIS: This could have been between 1905
12 and 1910.

13 MS. LOCKER: And you were too young to --

14 MRS. JARVIS: I don't remember them precisely.

15 MS. LOCKER: May I ask you in what year you were
16 born?

17 MRS. JARVIS: I was born in 1902.

18 MS. LOCKER: And was Chevy Chase Village established
19 as a community at that time?

20 MRS. JARVIS: Oh, yes, indeed.

21 MS. LOCKER: Now, your father settled here in what
22 year?

23 MRS. JARVIS: Father came from Annapolis in about
24 1891. He was a young civil engineer, and he had had some
25 experience in the building of railroads. And his job at

rrb 1 first was in the building of the street railway from
2 downtown Washington to the Chevy Chase Lake.

3 MS. LOCKER: And he met your mother while he was
4 working --

5 MRS. JARVIS: My mother lived in a fantastic
6 house on Connecticut Avenue, and it was her father, my
7 grandfather, ^{Col. Armes} who donated the land through his farm which
8 now is Connecticut Avenue.

9 MS. LOCKER: And she met your father as he was
10 working --

11 MRS. JARVIS: Yes. He used to come to the house
12 many times during the day on the excuse of wanting a drink
13 of water, and my mother was a young and beautiful girl in
14 her teens, and they became very much enamored of each other.

15 MS. LOCKER: They were married and then he
16 brought his parents to live here.

17 MRS. JARVIS: His parents were among the very
18 first families to live in the very first house in the Village.

19 MS. LOCKER: Where was that?

20 MRS. JARVIS: That was at the ^{NW} corner of Connecticut
21 Avenue and Irving Street.

22 MS. LOCKER: And that is in the village?

23 MRS. JARVIS: That is in the Village, yes.

24 MS. LOCKER: And how long did they live there?

25 MRS. JARVIS: They lived there a number of years

1 and it became the first Post Office of the Village. The
2 rear part of the house had a room that was very conveniently
3 made into a Post Office.

4 And my grandfather/^{Dennis Claude} was actually the first Post-
5 master of the Village, and his daughter, my aunt, Miss
6 Jessie Claude, was the first Postmistress.

7 They later moved/^{the post office} just a block away north of where
8 their house was to what is today the Chevy Chase Village
9 Hall.

10 MS. LOCKER: How long was Miss Jessie Postmistress?

11 MRS. JARVIS: Oh, Miss Jessie was there forever.
12 She must have been there for 35 or 40 years. Until it became
13 incorporated into the regular Postal system of the Washington
14 area.

15 MS. LOCKER: Did your father stay with the Chevy
16 Chase Land Company throughout his life?

17 MRS. JARVIS: He did, yes. He became a Director
18 of the Chevy Chase Land Company, and he was the Superinten-
19 dent of the Street Railway Branch of the Capital Traction
20 Company.

21 MS. LOCKER: And where did you live in Chevy
22 Chase? Where did you live first and then --

23 MRS. JARVIS: Well, first of all, we lived in
24 North Chevy Chase which is not the Village, but which was
25 where my father built the house for his bride. It was

1 rather near the Dunlop place, -- which is called
2 (Hayes) Manor.

3 But that house burned down in 1910, a fire which
4 I'll never forget. And after that we came into the Village
5 and lived on Lenox Street and Brookville Road.

6 MS. LOCKER: Which is quite near here.

7 MRS. JARVIS: Yes, just one block away.

8 MS. LOCKER: Chevy Chase Lake was beyond Bradley
9 Lane and was outside of the Village.

10 MRS. JARVIS: Yes, it was about two miles from
11 the Chevy Chase Circle.

12 MS. LOCKER: And this is where the amusement
13 park was?

14 MRS. JARVIS: Yes.

15 MS. LOCKER: Now, how would you characterize the
16 people who chose to make their homes in Chevy Chase so far
17 as education, economics, interests, so forth?

18 MRS. JARVIS: For the most part, they were
19 Civil Service. They were people who had perhaps become
20 the heads of their departments in the Civil Service, mostly
21 government people.

22 Not too wealthy and yet not poor. Always well
23 educated -- mostly college-bred people.

24 MS. LOCKER: Can you remember some of the
25 interesting people who lived in the Village in the early

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1 days?

2 MRS. JARVIS: Oh, there were so many of them.
3 The Stevens family, Eugene Stevens was among the first;
4 the Parkers, the Dawsons, the Clephans, the Verrills,
5 the Mackrilles, the Van Dymes, and many, many others.

6 MS. LOCKER: What about the Northrops? I under-
7 stand that they had one of the first cars.

8 MRS. JARVIS: Yes, the Northrops were a wonderful
9 family. Mr. Northrop was the Chief Counsel for the Southern
10 Railway, and each summer they would go to the mountains of
11 North Carolina.

12 And one of the great treats that the neighborhood
13 children had was in seeing them off when they started for
14 Highlands, North Carolina. They had a Stanley Steamer
15 that came out from town and took them down to Union Station,
16 and the children would gather and, of course, laugh at the
17 Stanley Steamer. It was most amusing.

18 But that was among the first of the cars that
19 I remember.

20 MS. LOCKER: I assume that there weren't many
21 cars that you can remember early in your life.

22 MRS. JARVIS: Very, very few and Mrs. Chandlee
23 probably was the first woman driver. She lived on Lenox
24 Street, very near Connecticut Avenue.

25 And when she drove a car it was really a most

1 amazing thing, because she was the first of the women drivers
2 that I ever remember.

3 MS. LOCKER: What year would you say that was?

4 MRS. JARVIS: That must have been just after
5 1910.

6 MS. LOCKER: And the Corby brothers lived here?

7 MRS. JARVIS: The Corby brothers were a family
8 who had established themselves in Washington as a famous
9 bakery, and Corby's Mother's Bread was the name of their
10 family firm in Southeast Washington.

11 They seemed to make a great thing of this bread
12 which later was sold to the Bond Bread Company. And
13 because they had a formula for yeast, the Fleishmann
14 Yeast people bought them out at a fabulous sum; and they
15 became one of the wealthiest families in the Village.

16 They own the house that Senator Newlands had
17 built for himself, just to the north of Chevy Chase Circle.

18 MS. LOCKER: Senator New lands actually lived
19 there?

20 MRS. JARVIS: Yes, he lived there a short time.

21 MS. LOCKER: And then he sold it to --

22 MRS. JARVIS: Then he sold it later to the Corby
23 family, and they lived here for many, many years.

24 MS. LOCKER: Who lives there now?

25 MRS. JARVIS: No one is living there now. Mrs.

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1 Corby died about three years ago, and the property was left
2 to the Cathedral School for Girls, and we don't know what
3 the present status of the house is.

4 MS. LOCKER: And then there was Miss Given?

5 MRS. JARVIS: Miss Ella Given was the beloved
6 Principal of the E. V. Brown School. We loved her dearly.

7 MS. LOCKER: She lived here?

8 MRS. JARVIS: She lived in the Village and was
9 undoubtedly a person who molded the character of many,
10 many of the children of the Village.

11 MS. LOCKER: And Mrs. Jesse Nicholson.

12 MRS. JARVIS: Mrs. Jesse Nicholson was a fireball.
13 She was politically inclined, a good, earnest working
14 Democrat. She was the leader and she really did get many,
15 many agencies started in the Village, such as the American
16 Red Cross, the (Pen) Women's League, the National Arts
17 Society.

18 And she was right in the thick of all of the
19 politics of the day.

20 MS. LOCKER: Do the Northrops still live here?

21 MRS. JARVIS: No. Edward Northrop is now a
22 Federal Judge living in Baltimore.

23 MS. LOCKER: And they've sold their house?

24 MRS. JARVIS: They've sold their house on Lenox
25 Street.

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1 MS. LOCKER: Do you know who lives there now?

2 MRS. JARVIS: The family now is the (Winslow)
3 family, an old Georgetown family.

4 MS. LOCKER: Was there much community activity
5 in the early days?

6 MRS. JARVIS: In the early days everyone was
7 interested in either the Literary Society or in the politics
8 of the day. The Village Hall, which we always called the
9 Library, was the center of many activities having to do with
10 politics and with dramatics and with dancing school activities.

11 It was a center of activity all the time, and I
12 remember so well the political speeches and the torchlight
13 parades, which started from the Village Hall.

14 MS. LOCKER: Was there a lot of church activity?

15 MRS. JARVIS: The church activity grew very
16 steadily. The first church was the Episcopal Church,
17 All Saints.

18 Certainly, the Catholic Church began at a very
19 early date, and they had their first services -- their
20 first services were in the Chevy Chase Village Hall until
21 they built their little chapel on Patterson Street.

22 The Christian Scientists had their first services
23 in the Village Hall.

24 Of course, since then there have been the
25 Presbyterians and the Baptists, who have beautiful churches

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1 now near the Circle.

2 MS. LOCKER: What about the Honorary Economical
3 Epicurians?

4 MRS. JARVIS: That was a group of husbands who
5 decided that they would like to have one day a week wherein
6 they could do their own cooking, and it was rather interesting
7 because they were the counterpart of the Ladies Reading
8 Class.

9 The husbands gathered together and cooked one
10 evening a week, and it must have been riotous because the
11 stories are fantastic about what they came out with in the
12 way of culinary efforts.

13 MS. LOCKER: Did they meet at different people's
14 houses?

15 MRS. JARVIS: At different people's houses each
16 week. There were eight or ten of them and they were -- I
17 have a picture of them, and they're fantastic.

18 MS. LOCKER: Do you remember the names of any of
19 the people involved?

20 MRS. JARVIS: Yes, Mr. Cliff Richards was one,
21 Mr. Tom Robertson was another, Mr. Clarence Dawson was
22 another, Mr. C. D. Parker, and there were ~~several~~ others.

23 MS. LOCKER: And how long did they meet, how
24 many years?

25 MRS. JARVIS: Oh, I suppose three or four, not

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1 more than that.

2 MS. LOCKER: You were never invited to a dinner
3 party?

4 MRS. JARVIS: We were never invited.

5 MS. LOCKER: What about political organizations?
6 Were there any political clubs?

7 MRS. JARVIS: Well, there were great fanfares
8 about (BrookeLee) in the early days, and many of these
9 civilian, Civil Service government workers were Republican.
10 And they would have their meetings at the Village Hall, but
11 I remember only the Democratic ones.

12 And they were colorful and very gay and quite
13 lively.

14 MS. LOCKER: And the political leaders?

15 MRS. JARVIS: Mrs. Nicholson was always out front
16 in those affairs.

17 MS. LOCKER: And she was a Democrat?

18 MRS. JARVIS: She was a Democrat.

19 MS. LOCKER: Who were some of the others?

20 MRS. JARVIS: Well, Mr. Dawson, Mr. Parker, and
21 Mr. Robertson, Mr. Cliff Richards, and there were many who
22 were in that Honorary Epicurian group that were all
23 Republicans.

24 MS. LOCKER: How did the vote go?

25 MRS. JARVIS: Well, as I recall, Chevy Chase was

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1 always nip and tuck. One year it would be strongly
2 Republican and the next year it would go Democratic.

3 It never seemed to be just one sided.

4 MS. LOCKER: There wasn't a pattern?

5 MRS. JARVIS: Never, never a real pattern.

6 MS. LOCKER: What about the organization of the
7 Chevy Chase Club?

8 MRS. JARVIS: The Chevy Chase Club was started
9 not at their present location, but down on the old
10 (Bannockburn) golf course, which was just in back of the
11 Episcopal Church over in what is now Saks Fifth Avenue
12 store area.

13 They were there just a very short time, and then
14 they bought the Bradley farm which is their present loca-
15 tion. But they were not started actually as a golf club.
16 They were started as a hunt club, and that meant beautiful
17 horses and fox hunting throughout the Village.

18 It was colorful and it was very interesting
19 indeed.

20 MS. LOCKER: And then when did it become a golf
21 club?

22 MRS. JARVIS: Well, golf became very popular
23 after the early 1905, 1906 era, and the Presidents would
24 often come out to play golf at the Chevy Chase Club.

25 I remember particularly President Taft/^{who} was a great

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1 member of the Chevy Chase Club, and President Wilson,
2 Woodrow Wilson later. It became a very popular and very
3 exclusive club, which it still is today.

4 MS. LOCKER: How did one become eligible for
5 membership?

6 MRS. JARVIS: I don't know the real rules about
7 it. First of all, one had to be a person who stood well
8 in his public life. It was expensive. The fees for
9 belonging to the club were very high.

10 And the qualifications were that one had to be
11 a very well thought of professional man. I remember there
12 was a time when no merchants were invited to become members
13 of the club, and I think that the diplomatic corps was
14 always welcomed as members. Doctors and lawyers were the
15 largest body of membership, I would think.

16 MS. LOCKER: But merchants are members now?

17 MRS. JARVIS: Oh, I'm sure they are, yes. Many
18 changes have taken place since then.

19 MS. LOCKER: You never belonged?

20 MRS. JARVIS: My father was asked to be a charter
21 member, but he, being a young married man with quite a
22 family, said, "I'm sure I can't afford to be a member of
23 the Chevy Chase Club," so while his dues and his initiation
24 fee would have been paid for, he declined the opportunity.

25 MS. LOCKER: Your mother was a member of the Ladies

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1 MRS. JARVIS: She was indeed.

2 MS. LOCKER: And what did they read?

3 MRS. JARVIS: They read all kinds of interesting
4 books of the day. I have a book of their early minutes,
5 dating from about 1907. One of them I would like very much
6 to read, on the organization of the club.

7 This is a record of the meeting dated January
8 20th, 1907, and I will read just a brief section of it.

9 They met and organized on Tuesday, January the
10 20th, 1907, at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Stevens. The
11 attendants numbered 18.

12 It was decided to hold monthly meetings on the
13 fourth Tuesday of each month, October to May, inclusive.
14 The October meeting to be the annual business meeting for
15 the election of officers and so forth.

16 There were to be no dues. Refreshments were to
17 be limited to the lightest sort, and the membership was
18 limited to the members of the Chevy Chase Association.

19 Officers for 1907 were elected. The President,
20 first President was Mr. R. P. (Teale), Secretary was Mrs.
21 S. S. (Pasche), Program Committee, Mrs. E. E. Stevens,
22 Miss Mackrille and Mr. Tom E. Robertson.

23 MS. LOCKER: This is the Ladies Reading Class?

24 MRS. JARVIS: No, this is the Literary Club, and
25 they had their mixed meetings, and they had very interesting

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1 readings. For instance, in one section in 1909 they had
2 a meeting that was most interesting. They had the first
3 part of the entertainment which was a Harvard sketch,
4 entitled "A Serious Situation in Burley's Room," and this
5 was followed the "The Rivals," a translation from the French.

6 This was done, and then they read the "Mousetrap",
7 a farce by William Dean Howell. They were always having
8 travelogues or book reviews or dramatic sketches, and it
9 is immensely interesting to look through these minutes and
10 see what sort of meetings they did have.

11 MS. LOCKER: And what was the membership at its
12 peak?

13 MRS. JARVIS: At its peak, it was about 35 members.
14 But members could bring guests, and sometimes they had --

15 MS. LOCKER: Now, this was the Literary group.

16 MRS. JARVIS: This was the Literary Club, yes.

17 MS. LOCKER: Was there another one called the
18 Ladies Reading Class?

19 MRS. JARVIS: Yes. That was in the afternoons,
20 and that was just for the ladies. This other club was a
21 mixture of men and women and took place in the evenings.

22 MS. LOCKER: And did you mention before when the
23 Library was organized?

24 MRS. JARVIS: The Library was organized by one of
25 the Newlands daughters, and -- Miss Birney, who collected a

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1 a large number of books and placed them in what is now the
2 Village Hall.

3 I don't believe they had a librarian, as we know
4 it today, but it was open certain evenings of the week, and
5 one could go and borrow books, if you signed a little book.

6 MS. LOCKER: And how long did that last in that
7 situation?

8 MRS. JARVIS: That went on for off and on a period
9 of perhaps eight years.

10 MS. LOCKER: And your mother remained a member --
11 no, I was going back to the Reading Club.

12 Is there any other interesting thing that is in
13 the minutes that you would like to mention? I think they
14 are fascinating.

15 MRS. JARVIS: Well, it is interesting to know that
16 they were very absorbed in music, and certain musicales were
17 given throughout the year. And they really were well
18 attended, and there was quite a lot of local talent, in
19 playing the piano or in singing.

20 MS. LOCKER: Are there any particular names that
21 come to mind?

22 MRS. JARVIS: My mother was one of the ones who
23 had a beautiful contralto voice. She sang not only at
24 weddings, but she sang at all the churches, regardless of
25 their type of church. She sang in the Episcopalian Church,

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1 in the Catholic Church and numerous places.

2 But I don't recall any of the other people who
3 sang particularly.

4 MS. LOCKER: Were there any musicians of note?

5 MRS. JARVIS: Not of real note, as we know them
6 today, but there was a definite interest in good music and
7 in classical selections.

8 MS. LOCKER: Did you ever attend Maryland public
9 schools?

10 MRS. JARVIS: Oh, yes -- now, wait a minute,
11 Maryland public schools?

12 MS. LOCKER: Yes.

13 MRS. JARVIS: No. I always went to the D. C.
14 public schools just on the other side of the circle. I
15 once enrolled myself in a Maryland public school, and when
16 my father heard about it, he said, "Indeed, you are not
17 going to that public school."

18 MS. LOCKER: What school was that?

19 MRS. JARVIS: This was the old Rosemary School,
20 which was just beginning and was in a private house. And
21 since several of my friends were going to go, I just went
22 up, when I was about 10 or 12 years old, and enrolled myself.

23 And when the day for attending came about, I said,
24 "I'm off to school." And my father said, "Where are you
25 going?" And I said, "I'm going to the Maryland public school."

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1 "Indeed, you are not," said my father. "You're going back
2 to the D. C. public school."

3 And there I went, although my father had to pay
4 tuition at that time for me to attend the public school in
5 the District, because he was not a government worker.

6 MS. LOCKER: Was this Rosemary School on the site
7 that the Chevy Chase Land Company had given?

8 MRS. JARVIS: No, that was outside the Village.
9 The Chevy Chase Land Company gave the land in the District
10 for the E. V. Brown School, but not for the Rosemary School.

11 MS. LOCKER: I see, and you attended the --

12 MRS. JARVIS: And I attended the D. C. school,
13 the E. V. Brown School, which had as its principal that
14 marvelous Miss Ella Given.

15 MS. LOCKER: And then you went to high school --

16 MRS. JARVIS: Then I went in town to the Central
17 High School, and then later to the Normal School, and
18 finally I became a teacher in my old gradeschool in the
19 E. V. Brown School, where I taught for five and a half
20 years.

21 MS. LOCKER: Was there another little school that
22 you went to, a little private school in the Village?

23 MRS. JARVIS: In the earliest days, when we
24 lived at the Chevy Chase Lake, my mother would put me
25 on the streetcar with our Irish setter dog, and we would

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1 get off at Bradley Lane and Connecticut Avenue and attend
2 the little school run by Miss (Maetier).

3 Now, there were probably no more than eight
4 students, and I'm sure we didn't learn a great deal,
5 because we were far more interested in the cookies on
6 the sideboard of the dining room than we were in learning.

7 But I'm sure we learned a little bit of French.
8 It was Friare Jacques that I remember most, but as for
9 real learning we were of various ages, and I'm sure we
10 didn't learn a great deal.

11 MS. LOCKER: Was this pre-school, kindergarten
12 age?

13 MRS. JARVIS: Supposedly kindergarten age, but
14 there seemed to be all ages, ranging up to about 12 years
15 of old.

16 MS. LOCKER: And the E. V. Brown School went
17 from first grade through --

18 MRS. JARVIS: First grade through eighth grade.

19 MS. LOCKER: And did most of the youngsters from
20 Chevy Chase Village go to the E. V. Brown School?

21 MRS. JARVIS: Most of them did, yes.

22 MS. LOCKER: And this was because of convenience
23 or because the Maryland schools were considered inferior?

24 MRS. JARVIS: We thought at the time -- certainly
25 my father did -- that the Maryland schools were inferior.

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1 MS. LOCKER: So even though you had to pay tuition,
2 you were sent --

3 MRS. JARVIS: To the District school, yes.

4 MS. LOCKER: Is the E. V. Brown School still in
5 existence?

6 MRS. JARVIS: No, it's been replaced by the
7 LeFayette School, and the Ben (March) School. The E.
8 V. Brown School now is a recreation center where there
9 is a very fine library and where there are facilities for
10 recreation and hobby studies, but not for formal education.

11 MS. LOCKER: In what year did the children from
12 this area start going to Maryland schools?

13 MRS. JARVIS: Well, my guess would be about 1912
14 to '14, that the Maryland schools got underway.

15 MS. LOCKER: And what schools did this area feed
16 into at that point?

17 MRS. JARVIS: That would be the Rosemary School
18 and later the Meland Junior High School and, finally, the
19 Bethesda Chevy Chase High School.

20 MS. LOCKER: The Chevy Chase Village is a special
21 taxing area with some home rule powers given by the General
22 Assembly in 1914.

23 Why did the residents seek this status?

24 MRS. JARVIS: Well, I suspect that it was because
25 of politics, that it seemed to be very one-sided, mostly

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1 Republicans were -- our first mayor of the Village was
2 Mr. William (Curtis), who had a great following of
3 Republicans, and they were ruling without Charter and
4 without benefit of being incorporated.

5 And someone had the bright idea in 1914 that the
6 Village should be incorporated.

7 MS. LOCKER: And before that you had a mayor?

8 MRS. JARVIS: Yes, Mr. Curtis was the unannounced
9 mayor. He sort of was a single dictator. He was more
10 interested than anyone else, apparently; but I don't recall
11 that there were any formal elections.

12 It just sort of took the way of least resistance.

13 MS. LOCKER: Someone was appointed?

14 MRS. JARVIS: It was rather nebulous, it was
15 finally declared unconstitutional. And it was then in
16 1914 that they got to work on really seriously being
17 incorporated.

18 MS. LOCKER: Has there ever been any resentment
19 against Village taxes?

20 MRS. JARVIS: To my knowledge, no. They have
21 always been on the low side. They now are set up so that
22 we have a Board of Managers numbering seven. We have an
23 annual meeting, much like the town meetings of New England,
24 where we set our own tax rate and where the report is given
25 each year by the Chairman of the Board of Managers.

1 The Board of Managers serve without pay, and are
2 elected for two-year terms of office. I was on the Board
3 for 12 years, and I felt that it was definitely non-political.
4 No one asked me whether I was Republican or Democrat when I
5 served on that Board.

6 MS. LOCKER: When was that?

7 MRS. JARVIS: From 1950 until 1962.

8 MS. LOCKER: I understand that in 54 years there
9 have been only six women elected to this office?

10 MRS. JARVIS: That's about right, I would guess.

11 MS. LOCKER: Is that because residents don't
12 believe in equal opportunity for women or --

13 MRS. JARVIS: I don't think so. I think it's
14 because there are not too many women who are interested
15 in projecting themselves as Village managers.

16 MS. LOCKER: In your term, were there any parti-
17 cularly crises?

18 MRS. JARVIS: We had many zoning problems. We
19 also added to the Village the section first known as
20 Section 1 and 1-A, which included the area down below the
21 Circle, on the -- Grafton Street extended section over to
22 Wisconsin Avenue over to what is the Chevy Chase Center.

23 That area was added to the Village during my
24 administration.

25 During my administration we had quite a squabble

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1 over the Saks Fifth Avenue store coming into the Village,
2 which was resolved, and I'm glad to say that the Saks Fifth
3 Avenue has proven to be a very successful venture as far as
4 the Village goes.

5 MS. LOCKER: In what respect?

6 MRS. JARVIS: Well, I think that they have brought
7 more tax money into the Village, and I think they are a
8 very dignified and well-run store, and certainly they take
9 up a large amount of space that would otherwise perhaps be
10 given over to rather honky-tonky places of business.

11 I am very glad that the Saks Fifth Avenue people
12 are so well thought of and so well managed.

13 MS. LOCKER: And is this the general feeling of
14 the residents?

15 MRS. JARVIS: I'm sure it is, although there were
16 bitter fights about it, principally by the people who lived
17 in the area of the Saks Fifth Avenue store.

18 MS. LOCKER: I remember those.

19 Were there any other particular crises that you
20 had to deal with?

21 MRS. JARVIS: Not at the time. I think that during
22 my term of office things went along very smoothly; there
23 were no big problems.

24 We didn't have as much crime in the Village then.
25 We had the use of one policeman on a part-time schedule, and

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1 I don't believe that there were any outstanding problems
2 in that period at all.

3 MS. LOCKER: How many policemen do you have now?

4 MRS. JARVIS: I think there are now three. We
5 have had to expand.

6 MS. LOCKER: How many members are on the Board of
7 Managers?

8 MRS. JARVIS: There are seven members and their
9 terms are staggered. They're voted for for terms of two
10 years, and each year there will be three that are retiring
11 and four that are to be elected. And the next year there
12 will be four to be elected and three that will be retiring.

13 MS. LOCKER: And they are elected at a --

14 MRS. JARVIS: At the annual meeting, usually in
15 April.

16 MS. LOCKER: And the residents are all invited.

17 MRS. JARVIS: All are invited to come to that
18 meeting, and it's always very well attended.

19 MS. LOCKER: There is a big turn-out?

20 MRS. JARVIS: Yes, yes.

21 MS. LOCKER: And is this a vote by ballot?

22 MRS. JARVIS: Yes.

23 MS. LOCKER: You are Director of the National
24 Garden Club?

25 MRS. JARVIS: It's the Garden Club of America with

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1 headquarters in New York.

2 MS. LOCKER: And you were President of the Garden
3 Club in the Village?

4 MRS. JARVIS: Of Chevy Chase, yes, I was.

5 MS. LOCKER: And they are very active?

6 MRS. JARVIS: Yes, they are very active, and they
7 are very civic minded. Right now they are tremendously
8 interested in conservation, ecology and in recycling of
9 paper, recycling of glass, etc.

10 I think they are doing a very noble and very good
11 job.

12 MS. LOCKER: And a very important one.

13 Who are some of the residents who have given
14 civic leadership to the Community in recent years?

15 MRS. JARVIS: Well, certainly Mr. Carroll
16 (Morgan) who died about a year ago was an outstanding member
17 of the Board of Managers over a long period of time.

18 He was particularly interested in the trees of the
19 Village. He was very unhappy over the Dutch elm disease,
20 which we had for so long a time, and he was interested in
21 the finances of the Village.

22 He was a very, very keen and astute businessman
23 and very much dedicated to affairs of the Village.

24 Mr. Arthur Lambert was the Village Chairman of
25 the Board of Managers for many years. He's now on the Village

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1 Council, and he, too, has had the interest of the Village
2 very much at heart.

3 Mr. Edward Northrop, who is now Federal Judge in
4 Baltimore, was once Manager of the Village, and then the
5 Legal Advisor to the Board of Managers; and then he became
6 our State Representative in Annapolis. He was an outstanding
7 person in the Village.

8 Mr. Arthur (Defenderfer) was Chairman of the Board
9 for 17 or 18 years, and he was very aware of the needs of the
10 Village.

11 Mr. George (Ferris) served the longest time of any
12 on the Board of Managers, retiring only about a year ago.
13 He was excellent in all of his viewpoints and interests in
14 the Village.

15 There have been many others. Mr. Donald (Kistler),
16 who is the President of the Board of Managers right now, is
17 earnestly and sincerely interested in the affairs.

18 Mr. Leonard Humphrey has been a member of the
19 Board for a long time.

20 But of the earlier ones, I would say that Col.
21 (Clephane) was tremendously interested in the affairs, as was
22 Mr. William S. Garland, Mr. Herbert Hoover -- rather, not
23 Herbert Hoover, George Hoover -- I'm sorry. Mr. George P.
24 Hoover served as a Manager on the Board of Managers.

25 Mr. William Corby, Mr. (Gottlieb) were among the

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1 early members. Judge Peale was perhaps the first Manager
2 of the Village, the first Chairman of the Board of Managers.

3 There have been many. Of the women, I would say
4 Mrs. (Ord), Mrs. (Platt), Mrs. Olive Cobb, Mrs. Jessie
5 Nicholson, she was very interested in all of the affairs
6 of the Village.

7 I hope I haven't left any out. It's always true
8 that I might skip someone.

9 MS. LOCKER: Are there any families who were
10 living in the Village when you were a child who are still
11 here today?

12 MRS. JARVIS: Oh, very, very few. I think the
13 Van (Dyne) sisters on (Kirke) Street. Carroll Morgan was
14 here for many years, but he died last year. His wife is
15 still on Quincy Street.

16 But there are very few of the real old families
17 of the Village that I can recall now.

18 MS. LOCKER: What kind of newcomers seem to be
19 attracted to the Village?

20 MRS. JARVIS: They are mostly ~~with~~ with the
21 government. There are some who are retired service people,
22 Army and Navy and Marine Corps, but I would say, generally
23 speaking, they are people who are coming to work for the
24 government.

25 But we have many lawyers in the Village. A great

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1 number of doctors are living here, and scientists -- we
2 have always had a goodly number of scientists.

3 MS. LOCKER: And what do you think are the
4 particular attractions?

5 MRS. JARVIS: I think the privacy of the Village
6 is the main one. No one is gossiping about you. There is
7 a great deal of letting people alone, letting them follow
8 their own way of living.

9 I don't think that there's a great deal of community
10 spirit, but perhaps that's a good thing. Each one is here
11 just as a little island unto himself.

12 I don't think that many people want to congregate
13 and fuss and fume over issues. I think that they prefer to
14 be left alone, and it's privacy that they really desire.

15 MS. LOCKER: And the wide streets and beautiful
16 homes.

17 MRS. JARVIS: And the quietness of it.

18 MS. LOCKER: Have the property values been sus-
19 tained?

20 MRS. JARVIS: Oh, I'm sure they've gone up all the
21 time. I think that anyone owning property in the Village is
22 very apt to be very happy about it, because it can't help
23 but always be desirable.

24 There are no vacant lots on which one can build
25 in the Village now. The Village now has finished its building

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1 completely.

2 MS. LOCKER: So this is the capacity.

3 MRS. JARVIS: This is the capacity.

4 MS. LOCKER: There won't be any more houses
5 built --

6 MRS. JARVIS: I think not.

7 MRS. LOCKER: -- which in itself would be an
8 attraction, because they know exactly what the character
9 will be.

10 MRS. JARVIS: Yes.

11 MS. LOCKER: Are there any particularly difficult
12 problems that face the Village today?

13 MRS. JARVIS: Well, of course, the chief one perhaps
14 is crime. We're all very aware that we're so close to the
15 District line that we are apt to have people who come from
16 the District to commit crimes in the Village, and that's what
17 we are constantly guarding against.

18 I feel that zoning, not within the Village itself,
19 but on the areas that border on the Village, is one of the
20 prime interests of the Village. We don't want to see vast
21 high rise apartments and large business centers adjoining
22 the Village.

23 I think we would like to keep our residential
24 atmosphere.

25 MS. LOCKER: One constantly hears that the land

1 on which the Chevy Chase Club is will probably someday will
2 be sold for development. Do you think there is any validity
3 to that?

4 MRS. JARVIS: In the earliest plans of the Village,
5 it's true that the streets that are now on the east side of
6 Connecticut ^{Avenue} were continued through the Chevy Chase Club
7 grounds.

8 For instance, Oxford Street, Primrose Street,
9 Quincy Street were extended through what is now the Chevy
10 Chase Club; that is, in the original plans.

11 But unless the Club finds it too expensive to stay
12 within the Village, I doubt there will be any changes in the
13 next ten or twenty years.

14 MS. LOCKER: And what other areas which are
15 contiguous are in danger of being rezoned?

16 MRS. JARVIS: Well, that section down to the west
17 of Wisconsin Avenue, where there is to be a terminal from
18 the subway coming out from Washington, it's apt to be very
19 changed in the future; and that is something we are hoping
20 will not bring great traffic jams and great parking problems.

21 But it's bound to be one section in which there
22 will be changes in the next few years.

23 MS. LOCKER: What are the boundaries of the Village?

24 MRS. JARVIS: Well, the boundaries of the Village
25 actually are only from the Chevy Chase Circle west to Wisconsin

rgb 1 Avenue, north to Bradley Lane, east to Brookville Road,
2 down Brookville Road to the Chevy Chase Circle again.

3 MS. LOCKER: The Chevy Chase Circle is a part of
4 the Village?

5 MRS. JARVIS: Yes, it is. The boundary line
6 goes half through the Chevy Chase Circle, between the
7 District and Maryland, but the whole area of the circle
8 is administered by the District Government, because it
9 was dedicated as a part of the public parks of Washington.
10 So it is maintained by the Capital Parks Association.

11 MS. LOCKER: But it is actually part of --

12 MRS. JARVIS: It is a part of the Village.

13 MS. LOCKER: And was this dedicated to Senator
14 Newlands?

15 MRS. JARVIS: The circle -- the fountain in the
16 circle was dedicated to him in 1933, the memorial fountain.
17 The circle itself was dedicated many years prior to that to
18 the D. C. Government because of the maintenance that it
19 required.

20 MS. LOCKER: When was this? When was the fountain
21 dedicated to Senator Newlands?

22 MRS. JARVIS: In 1933.

23 MS. LOCKER: Going back to the earlier times, you
24 described the fire service in a charming way to me the last
25 time I met you. Could you tell me about it?

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1 MRS. JARVIS: Well, the earliest fire equipment
2 was very primitive. It consisted of just a little four-
3 wheeled vehicle that I remember so well, because it had to
4 be drawn by the men of the Village. It was purely voluntary,
5 and when there was a fire, there was a great gong outside of
6 the Post Office which was a large circular ring of iron and
7 there was a great mallet that one would use to strike this
8 ring. And it made a tremendous sound that one could hear
9 all over the Village.

10 Then those who were a part of the voluntary fire
11 department would rush over to the village office and, in
12 the basement of the Village Hall there was this strange little
13 vehicle that had nothing more than a garden hose wound around
14 it. And these men would rush it down the street to the fire.

15 I'm sure it was completely inadequate.

16 In the earliest days the nearest fire service that
17 we had was from Tenleytown, which is near Sears Roebuck,
18 and that would be, oh, at least a mile and a half away from
19 the Village on Wisconsin Avenue at Tenley Circle.

20 And now, in more recent years, we have the very
21 up-to-date and excellent fire department just opposite the
22 Columbia Country Club on Connecticut Avenue, which is very
23 suitable and very adequate.

24 And we have a member of our Board of Managers ^{who} ~~is~~
25 appointed a delegate to the Fire Board or some other member from

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1 the Village is appointed by the Board to be a delegate to
2 the fire department.

3 MS. LOCKER: Were there many fires in the early
4 days?

5 MRS. JARVIS: Well, not many, but I remember the
6 few that there were. There was always great excitement,
7 and usually frame buildings -- because nearly every house is
8 a frame building in the Village.

9 MS. LOCKER: Still?

10 MRS. JARVIS: Yes, I would say that the majority
11 of the houses are wooden houses. Some are stone, a few are
12 brick.

13 MS. LOCKER: How many houses are there, do you
14 know?

15 MRS. JARVIS: I would guess somewhere between 450
16 and 475.

17 MS. LOCKER: In the entire --

18 MRS. JARVIS: In the Village itself; that is, in
19 Section ¹ and ₂.

20 MS. LOCKER: And the lots have still been maintained
21 as large, fairly large.

22 MRS. JARVIS: Yes. There is a restriction, no
23 lot can be less than 60 foot frontage. We made a change
24 in the laws about that when I was on the Board of Managers,
25 saying that no ^{lot} could be less than 75 foot frontage,

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1 because people were inclined to subdivide their lots; and
2 we felt that that was a bad thing, and that we wanted to
3 make the lots much -- make them wider.

4 So I think now one has to have a lot no less than
5 75 feet.

6 MS. LOCKER: I don't think we talked about the --
7 did we talk about the organization of the Women's Club of
8 Chevy Chase?

9 MRS. JARVIS: I don't know a great deal about that,
10 because it's just outside the Village.

11 MS. LOCKER: Oh, it's not in the Village?

12 MRS. JARVIS: It's not in the Village itself. Many
13 of my friends who live in the Village^{belong,} and the
14 building is so beautiful. It is very near the fire house
15 and near the library just opposite the^{Columbia} Country Club.

16 MS. LOCKER: I don't know what made me think that
17 was part of the Village. But you would say that quite a few
18 of the women --

19 MRS. JARVIS: Oh, I'm sure there are many here in
20 the Village who are members.

21 MS. LOCKER: Well, I think that we've covered most
22 of the political, cultural and economic history. Are there
23 any other things that you would like to add?

24 MRS. JARVIS: I can't think of anything else now.
25 It's been a great joy to live here now for more than 65 years.

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I hope I live another 20 years in the Village.

MS. LOCKER: I'm sure you will. Thank you very much.

MRS. JARVIS: Well, you're most welcome. It's been my great pleasure.

(End of tape.)

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