

# Village of Friendship Heights The First 100 Years

Melanie Rose White, *Editor*  
with Julian P. Mansfield  
and Robert A. Shapiro

# Celebrating Our Centennial Year—2014



Left: Former Village residents Sam Bogley (left) and Austin Kiplinger participated in a panel discussion sharing memories of the Village when it was a community of houses.

Betty Ardizzone, Facilities Manager, and Susan Bick, former Village staff member, admire the Centennial wall displays at the Village Center.



A new Village flag was displayed on Community Day—April 13.



The train at our annual July 4th celebration is always a big hit with residents young and old.



Centennial-themed cupcakes were featured at our New Year's Day celebration.

Inside: An aerial view of the Villages of Friendship Heights and The Hills from the late 1970s.



Former Village Council Chairman/Mayor Alfred Muller, M.D., participated in several Centennial programs during the year.





**Village of Friendship Heights**  
The First 100 Years  
1914–2014

**Melanie Rose White, *Editor***  
*with* Julian P. Mansfield  
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Village of Friendship Heights  
4433 South Park Avenue  
Chevy Chase, Maryland

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# The First 100 Years

1914–2014

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### On the Covers

*Front, top:* Mr. and Mrs. Richard Ough and family, circa 1906;

*bottom:* sculpture by J. Seward Johnson, Jr., “When Now Becomes Then,” purchased in 1992. The sculpture is located in Hubert H. Humphrey Friendship Park.

*Inside front cover, back:* An aerial photograph of the Village from the late 1970s.

*Inside back cover:* Tax assessor’s map of the Village from 1935.

*Back:* Bronze plaque from Friendship Gate. The original plaque is now displayed on the outside of the Village Center.

### Cover Photo Credits

*Front cover, top:* Village of Friendship Heights collection

*Front cover, bottom:* Julian P. Mansfield

*Inside front cover, from top left, clockwise:* Julian P. Mansfield, Lew Berry, Joel Williams, Julian P. Mansfield, Luigi Deturro, and Lew Berry

*Inside front cover, back:* Tim Edwards collection

*Inside back cover:* William Offutt collection

*Back cover:* Julian P. Mansfield

# Contents

Acknowledgments.....	iv
Introduction.....	v
Part 1	
The Early Days of Friendship Heights.....	1
Part 2	
The Village Takes On an Urban Character .....	21
Part 3	
A New Community Emerges.....	39
Evolution of the Village Charter .....	60
Village of Friendship Heights—By the Numbers.....	61
Other Buildings in the Village.....	62
Photo Credits.....	64
Centennial Events and Activities .....	65

# Acknowledgments

It takes 100 years to mark a centennial, and, in our case, nearly 365 days to write about it. Our original plan was to print *Village of Friendship Heights: The First 100 Years* in the spring of 2014, long before many Village Centennial events occurred. As the year went on, however, we decided to publish this commemorative volume at the end of our celebration so that we could include a few details about how our community observed this milestone.

Condensing 100 years of history into a 72-page book was a challenge, but Village staff members Julian Mansfield and Bob Shapiro completed the job with their usual enthusiasm, diplomacy, and close attention to detail. Many thanks to both for identifying and then writing about the highlights of our community's first 100 years and for helping illuminate the reasons why the Village remains such a unique place.

As they were compiling the manuscript, Julian and Bob contacted several residents (current and former) and asked each to write about specific aspects of Village history, which we included in this book as sidebars. I am grateful to Deborah Edwards Demaree; Alfred Muller, M.D.; Barbara Tauben; and Joel Williams for their efforts.

Throughout this book, you will also find sections and sidebars created from recollections of earlier residents and from interviews with contemporary figures. How fortunate we are that these individuals took the time to record their impressions of our community throughout its transitions. This book is all the richer, thanks to the writings of Lillian Shoemaker Brown, Mark Shoemaker, and Anne Sheiry; and for the sentiments expressed by Leonard Abel and Irene Pollin.

As important as it is to *write* our history, we also want to *show* it, and for that we rely on the marvelous collection of photos that fill these pages. Many of the pictures are from the archives of Thelma "Tim" Edwards. Thank you to the Edwards family for inviting staff and volunteers to your home to look through the extensive collection that Tim amassed. Thank you, as well, for granting permission to reproduce these images.

Of course there would not be any images if not for the photographers who documented life in the Village during the last century. Unlike today, with our cell phone cameras always at the ready, taking a picture 60 or 70



Members of the Village Council during the swearing-in ceremony on May 21, 2013. Standing, from left: Alvan Morris, D.D.S.; Melanie Rose White; John Mertens, Robert Schwarzbart; seated, from left: Elizabeth Harris; Maurice Trebach, and Leonard Grant.

years ago was a bit more cumbersome. I am glad these photographers took the time to create these photos. I am also grateful that our current resident photographer, Joel Williams, is always taking photographs both inside the Center and out and continues to capture history-in-the-making on any given day in the Village.

And finally, I thank the Village Centennial Committee for making this book one of its priorities and the Village Council for agreeing to financially support the book's publication. In 2012 the Village Council created the Centennial Committee and appointed select members of the Village Council, Center staff, and residents to oversee all Centennial-related activities and resources. Committee members included Leonard Grant, *Chairman*; Betty Ardizzone; Jennie Fogarty; Elizabeth Harris; Julian Mansfield; Alfred Muller, M.D.; Stephanie Olshan; Anne O'Neil; Rachael Schacherer; Robert Shapiro; Melanie Rose White; and Joel Williams. Work on this project took a considerable number of staff hours, and I appreciate the Council's willingness to back this ambitious project.

# Introduction

Planning for the Centennial celebration in the Village of Friendship Heights began one quiet night in 2009 at a monthly meeting of the Village Council. Former Council Chairman and Village Mayor, Alfred Muller, M.D., reminded the Council that it wasn't too early to start thinking about our Centennial and the year-long festivities. More than one Council member probably thought, "Oh, we still have plenty of time left to start on *that* project..." Dr. Muller was right, though, and before we knew it, the Village Center's conference room table was stacked high with photographs, maps, files bulging with old newspaper clippings, cassette tapes with historic interviews, and other pieces of Village memorabilia, even a ceremonial hard hat!

Since then, I've marveled at how lucky the Village is to have access to this vast collection of material—each piece a "snapshot" of life in Friendship Heights. I could not imagine trying to celebrate a centennial without these resources. The actual photos alone are amazing and clearly show the progression of our community from a tranquil, rural farmland to a bustling, urban development. This book showcases those photos because they are just too remarkable to keep buried in a drawer, and the photos provide such an invaluable synopsis of the Village's first 100 years—1914 to 2014.

In addition to reproducing as many of these photographs as possible, we knew this Centennial book should also relay the story of our community, through writings and recollection, compiled during the past century. Over the years, the Village has published small booklets—designed to orient new residents—with Mark Shoemaker's historical account from the 1950s. We wanted this Centennial book to be more comprehensive and to elaborate on events that have impacted the lives of Village residents. For example, one of the sidebars explains how renters first won the right to vote in local elections. Another section takes a look at how our Village shuttle bus has made it possible for residents to "age in place."

As mayor of the Village, I'm often asked by newcomers or county/state representatives about living here—how many residents are there, what's the average age, are there really no single-family homes? And, although I can rattle off my "30-second elevator speech" in response to a lot of these questions, this book provides so much more infor-



Council member Clara Lovett was appointed to the Village Council in July 2014 after the resignation of Council Chairman Maurice Trebach. Clara participated in the Centennial Saturday Series in November 2014.

mation about the Village, its history, and what it is like to live and/or work in this community.

As you read through these pages, I think you will find that each chapter reveals more than just a timetable of historical events. The Village footprint is quite small—about a square mile or so—but the story of its residents and their vision and determination is decidedly large. From the Shoemaker family to Tim Edwards to Cleo Tavani, *The First 100 Years* outlines how our residents shaped this neighborhood and helped set it apart from those nearby.

After living in Friendship Heights for more than 30 years, I cannot help but think our residents continue to have a different outlook and are seeking a different lifestyle from people who call Bethesda, Rockville, Silver Spring, or northwest D.C. home. Life in a high-rise can be both delightful and daunting, but it is just one of the many things that bind us together as a community. Our residents, once settled, also tend to stay put because the Village government provides a broad range of services that aid seniors. The Village of Friendship Heights is a NORC—a Naturally Occuring Retirement Community—a distinction that I think would have made our earliest residents very proud.

Thanks to our Village shuttle bus and easy access to excellent public transportation, it is possible to live in Friendship Heights without owning a car, as I have done since I moved here. Riding the Metro every day means that you spend quite a bit of time walking to and from the subway station, taking in the sights and sounds (and smells!) of your neighborhood. As much as I love seeing those impish squirrels scampering up the magnolias, or hearing our fountain splashing in Humphrey Park, or breathing in the aroma



Village resident, Cleonice Tavani, helped tell the story of Friendship Heights at two Centennial Saturday series events. She also donated many items to the Village's Centennial collection.

of fresh bread from a café, I do feel a little wistful when I look at the mid-century photos of our Village in this book. It must have been a joy to live so close to our nation's capital and yet have the amenities of a mid-20th century suburban neighborhood—backyards, quiet streets, and a charming array of homes.

I recently visited the Tenement Museum in New York City and had the opportunity to see two apartments pretty much intact from how they originally appeared (one from the 1870s and the other from the 1920s). My tour guide asked if anyone in my group lived in an apartment, and a few hands went up. She asked us to consider the challenges of multi-family living and whether any of those challenges today could be similar to the ones faced by the tenement dwellers a century or more ago. My first thought was of how much harder life must have been in those tiny, cramped

units with no hot water and none of the amenities that we associate with modern apartments. I wonder, though, if those brave and resilient immigrants would look at our lifestyle and wonder how we could live so independently, often far from our immediate families. Perhaps they would have considered our lives to be the more difficult.

Whether or not you consider 1914 to be part of the “good old days,” I hope that this book gives you a better understanding of what Friendship Heights was like from its first decade forward and how 100 years later it shines as the jewel of Montgomery County.

—Melanie Rose White  
*Village of Friendship Heights*  
*Chevy Chase, Maryland*

# Part 1

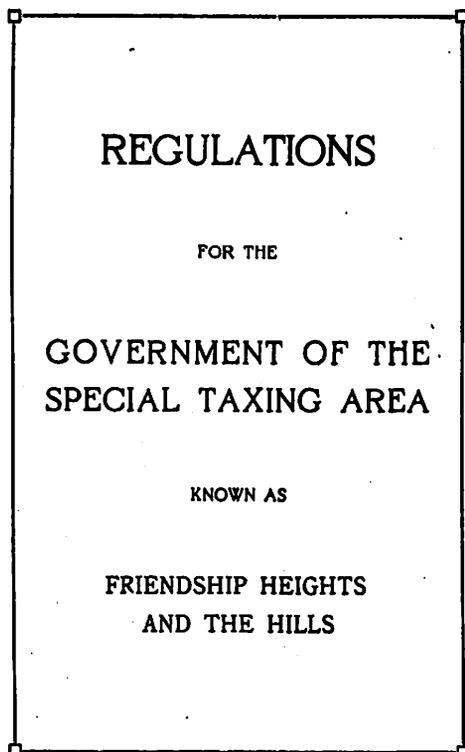
## The Early Days of Friendship Heights



*Preceding page: Looking south on Wootton Avenue (now The Hills Plaza)*

# The Early Days of Friendship Heights

In 1959, near the dawn of what might be called the modern era of Friendship Heights, when the Village consisted of single-family housing and before the first high-rise building went up, the elected “Citizens’ Committee” (which later was to be called the Village Council) published a booklet called “Information for the Citizens of Friendship Heights.” In it appeared “A Brief History of the Special Taxing Area of ‘Friendship Heights and The Hills,’” written by Committee member Mark Shoemaker. Excerpts from Mr. Shoemaker’s history follow, with editorial comments or clarifications added in brackets. Punctuation and capitalization follow the original text.



Cover of “Regulations for the Government of the Special Taxing Area Known as Friendship Heights and The Hills” (circa 1919)

In the broad aspect of the area in which we live, we find that it is part of what was originally a vast grant of land by the King of England to one individual. This grant extended from what is now Cleveland Park to Rockville, and took place long before the District of Columbia was in existence. This tract was called “Friendship.” The Friendship Station Post Office on Wisconsin Avenue, just south of “Tennallytown” derives its name from this source as also did the naming of the subdivision called “Friendship Heights.” The former lush estate of John R. McLean in Cleveland Park, and now McLean Gardens, was also called “Friendship.”

In more detail, the special taxing area designated as “Friendship Heights and The Hills,” is a wedding (for administrative purposes only, of course) of two subdivisions; one was called “Friendship Heights,” and the other “The Hills,” which together with some adjacent property that, at the time of the nuptials, had not been

incorporated into either of the two areas, as named above, formed the special taxing area.

This wedding was blessed in 1914 by Act of the General Assembly of Maryland, responding to the desire of residents of the two communities to achieve partial autonomy, so as to insure a fair return to the area of the tax dollar collected by the County and State, rather than face the possibility of its diversion to more politically favored areas.

The history of the taxing area involved, substantially, two farms, the Shoemaker farm [the author being a descendant of that original farm family] which, in part, became “The Hills;” and the Eld Farm, which became “Friendship Heights.” “The Hills” is bounded on the north by High Street as far as the first turn, and then continuing, on the projected line of High Street [now South Park Avenue] to its intersection with Willard Avenue at Willoughby Street [now Shoemaker Farm Lane]. It is bounded

on the south by the north side of Willard Avenue—this was part of the Isaac Shoemaker Farm. The entire farm included the area now occupied by Woodward & Lothrop [now Wisconsin Place] and Geico, extending along Western Avenue to River Road. It was acquired by the Shoemaker family about 1791. The remainder of the taxing area along Willard Avenue, west of Willoughby, and which is bounded on the north, roughly, by High Street [this portion is now North Park Avenue], was also a part of the Shoemaker farm. This area was never a part of the two named subdivisions, but in recent years was subdivided in part and largely developed by Mr. Lester Cook, and known as the Cook subdivision.

The other subdivision, “Friendship Heights,” occupies that portion of the taxing area north of High Street and extends west as far as 4615 High Street (Sarah Hannan’s). This was part of the Eld Farm. The Elds came from England in 1811, and occupied the old farmhouse at 4531 High Street, now and for the past 54 years, lived in by Mrs. Anne Sheiry, who is one of our earliest and most loved residents. High Street originally was the farm



*Austin and Gogo Kiplinger at their home at 351 Willard Avenue (the current site of 4701 Willard Apartments) in January 1946*



*Wisconsin Avenue at the Maryland/Washington border looking north, 1942*

road leading to and terminating at the Eld Farmhouse (that is why it is so crooked). It is interesting that here was an even earlier wedding of the two areas in that the Shoemaker and Eld families intermarried.

“Friendship Heights” and “The Hills” together, are among the oldest subdivisions in the Washington suburban area. Albert Shoemaker subdivided “The Hills” in 1900, and built many of its residences. The first house was at 4503 Willard Avenue [in 1959 the Latterner’s, now The Carleton]; the second at 4511 Willard Avenue [in 1959, Mark Shoemaker’s], built in 1901 [now The Willoughby].

Closely following this effort, Mr. Henry Offutt bought the 16 acres comprising “Friendship Heights,” subdivided it, and over a span of

years built most of its homes. The first home to be built in Friendship Heights, after subdivision, was probably Offutt's, now the Thomases' [now the southwest corner of Humphrey Park]. The writer smoked his first cigar at 5 in front of Offutt's, and never smoked again until 21.

Richard Ough was the builder of most of the Offutt houses and lived in the house just to the north of Offutt's (Thomases'). The Susie Pyles family home at 4611 High Street is also one of the oldest, being the tenant house of the Eld farm. We understand that the house now occupied by Mrs. Frank Pyles was the barn of the same Eld farm.

Historically, the members of the first Citizens' Committee were named by the Legislature in the Act of 1914, which created the special taxing area. These were: Henry W. Offutt, *Chairman*; Walter Balderston, Charles E. Roach, John A. Garrett, Emory H. Bogley, J.W. Bogley, and William Tyler Page.

At that time, elections were required to be held yearly. In 1921 or 1922, the Legislature made certain amendments to the Act, one of which was a requirement that elections be held once every two years. In this Act, as amended, the Legislature again designated the initial Committee members—they were: Claude H. Woodward, *Chairman*; Henry W. Offutt, Charles E. Roach, Charles W. Rippey, John A.P. Farnum, George W. Offutt, Jr., and Emory H. Bogley.

It would be only fitting that we here recognize those citizens of the early days who still live among us and who were witnesses to and made their contributions to the growth of this community during its formative years. (It must be admitted that Mr. Henry Offutt once claimed that the writer's contribution was destructive rather than constructive, having cut down a street tree that he had just planted—but then, so did George Washington.)

When arbitrarily selecting the pe-

riod dating from the first construction, about 1900, to 1921, when the State Legislature designated the members which were to comprise the initial committee for the special taxing area which followed the Act of 1921, it is found that only a relative handful yet remain of those residents of that period. The remainder have either moved away or have bowed to the normal processes of time. Of a present population of over 400, only some seventeen "Old Timers" can now be counted. These we list as follows, but with considerable trepidation, as it is inevitable that some one will inadvertently be excluded or resent being called an "Old Timer": Mrs. Ethel Patrick Carrigan, Mrs. Addie Constantine, Lester Cook, Mrs. Emily Kline, Col. James S. McAuliffe, Mrs. Myrtle Duckett Pursell, John Pursell, Mrs. Susie Pyles, Mrs. Frank Pyles, Mrs. Aubrey Woodward Shoemaker, Mark Shoemaker, and Claude H. Woodward.



The Dunn house, 5516 Wootton Avenue (corner of South Park Avenue and The Hills Plaza), in the 1970s. The house was previously owned by Mr. and Mrs. Richard Ough. Mr. Ough built a number of the original houses in the Village.

## Recollections By Old Timers On Some Historical Sidelights Of Events And Personalities

- Willard Avenue was originally the roadbed of the Glen Echo Railroad. After the line was abandoned, the writer spent many happy hours riding a forgotten hand-car down the tracks along now Willard Avenue—and also many unhappy hours pushing it back up again. (When abandoned on Willard Avenue, the line was moved north to enter at Somerset and to follow the stream just south of the Somerset Gate. It rejoined the original line just before it crossed River Road—the ballast for this spur is still in place, along the creek.) Just why the move was made is still a mystery.
- On a large sycamore tree overhanging the Willard Avenue creek, and

opposite Mark Shoemaker's, a man was found hanged in about 1904. Unfortunately, Wyatt Earp was not around so the culprit was never apprehended and the victim remains unnamed.

- In the early development of the community, property owners made many public improvements by the sweat of their brows. Streets were graded and coal ashes collected and spread to improve the “going” in wet weather. Delivery wagons were often mired to the axles in mud on High Street. Also, until recently, all property owners kept mowed, and otherwise maintained, the area between property lines and the street. Such things as Lawn Fetes were held to raise street improvement funds—ninety dollars was once so raised in 1914 for the purpose of tarring High Street [North and South Park Avenues].

- Pedestrians, for many years, were kept out of the mud by boardwalks (2 x 4's, on edge, with cross slats nailed thereon)—mighty hot to the barefooted kids, and splinters were as common as thorns on a cactus.
- At a time when the electric railway went past Friendship Heights on Wisconsin Avenue, grocery lists were phoned or mailed in to Georgetown, and sent out on the street car to be intercepted at the Friendship Gate by the housewife [see back cover for photo of bronze plaque from Friendship Gate]. If she missed connections, somebody went hungry—but it wasn't the motorman.
- Wisconsin Avenue [Rockville Pike], for many years was surfaced with white flint rock. Cavalry detachments from Mt. Myer [Fort Myer] frequently went past on night maneuvers. The kids would sit on



Henry Offutt's house—5500 Wootton Avenue (now The Hills Plaza and South Park Avenue)



*Baby Dorothy Sheiry Hilland in 1904, on Wootton Avenue (now The Hills Plaza). Born and raised in the Village, Mrs. Hilland died in December 1994 at the age of 90.*

the bank of the now Harper House, to watch the fireworks-like display of sparks produced by the flint and the steel of the horseshoes.

- The last house on Wisconsin Avenue, toward Somerset, is quite old, and reputed to once have been a “change station” for stage coaches. As far back as 1854, owned by the Ball family, and now by the Montgomery family [currently the site of Courtyard Chevy Chase by Marriott].

- With no County school available for a time, the community hired a teacher to teach the first three grades. Classes were held for a while in the home of Albert Shoemaker, and later in the home of Richard Ough and other private homes. Johnny Pyles was one of the students.
- One of the biggest commotions ever experienced in the area came yearly at hog killing time at the McAuliffes’ (Colonel McAuliffe’s fa-

ther) and now the property owned by the Raabs at 4518 High Street... and the Shoemaker cow was sort of noisy, too.

### **Some Remember**

- The swimming holes, built by the boys (no girls allowed!), on the two streams between Woodward and Lothrop and Geico—not the stream along Willard. They were fine swimming holes and safe places to smoke corn silk and grape leaves.

- When all sewer pipes emptied into the Willard Avenue stream (some pollution is still coming from some undetermined source).
- When there was an ornamental waiting station at “The Gate” for protection of street car commuters.
- The large blackheart cherry tree on High between Wisconsin Avenue and Wootton [now The Hills Plaza].
- When windmills and individual wells furnished the water supply for many places, and when you pumped by hand when the wind failed to blow. (In the writer’s case, it took 375 strokes to fill the tank.)
- The wonderful pear orchard, remains of the Eld’s farm, and located where the Matzens, Holmes and Crawfords lived [presently near The Carleton].
- That William Tyler Page, the author of “The American’s Creed,” was Clerk of the House of Representatives for a great many years, and was a direct descendant of President Tyler, and that Mrs. Sullivan, his neighbor, was descended from President Polk; Mr. Page’s wife was a direct descendent of Pocahontas.
- The ninety-foot well of the Eld farmstead, still existing on the Moyer property [site of Park Avenue Centre], but now covered with a concrete slab—this at 4600 High Street.
- When Mr. Shipley delivered mail in a horse and buggy.
- The community built a dam on Somerset Creek for fire protection. Fortunately, only one serious fire has ever occurred in the community, and that when Frost’s house burned to the ground with the help of the D.C. fire department. Residents formed a bucket brigade to douse nearby houses to prevent spreading—and that was a long carry from Somerset Creek. As customary, the residents had been burning off the Bergdoll tract [just to the north of the present Village boundary, now the site of the Somerset House development]. Mr. Frost had been beating out some of the fire with a broom, and later returned the smouldering broom to his back porch where it “huffed and it puffed and burned the house down.” A new house was built on

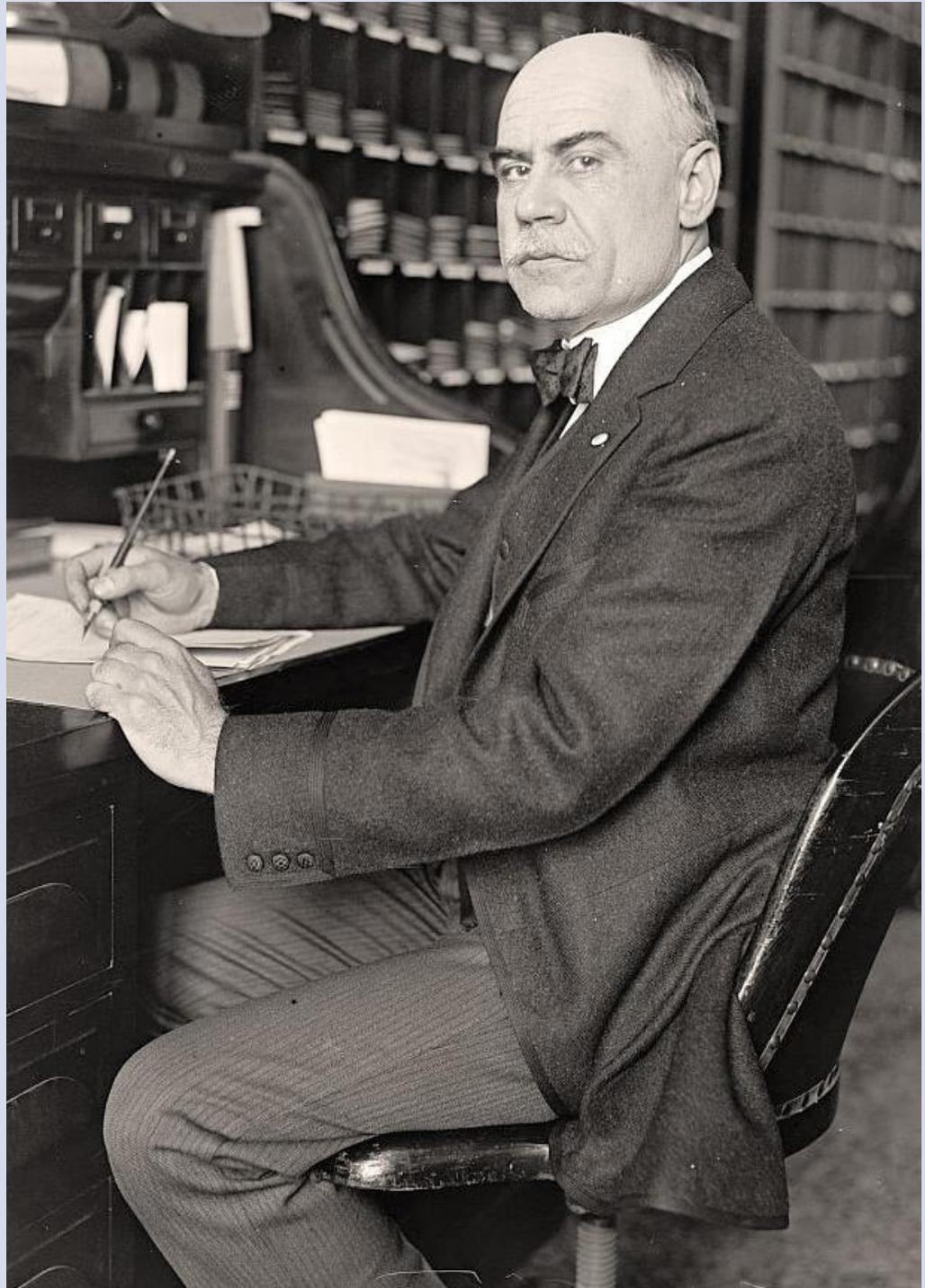


*The McAuliffe house—4520 High Street (now North Park Avenue)*

## William Tyler Page and The American's Creed

**W**illiam Tyler Page, a native of Frederick, Maryland, who grew up in Baltimore, later was elected to the first Friendship Heights Citizens' Committee in 1914 (the precursor to the current Village Council). He was a descendant of United States President John Tyler and of a signer of the Declaration of Independence, Carter Braxton. In 1918 he won a nationwide citizens' creed contest sponsored by the City of Baltimore and endorsed by President Woodrow Wilson. As reported in the May 6, 1918, issue of *The Evening Herald*, Page's submission, *The American's Creed*, was selected among thousands of entries, and he received an award of \$1,000.

The Village Council dedicated the small park between 4701 Willard Apartments and North Park Apartments to William Tyler Page. Page Park is a small, urban oasis pocketed between high-rises. It has been maintained as a pesticide-free zone and is enjoyed by residents of all ages.



### The American's Creed

"I believe in the United States of America as a government of the people, by the people, for the people, whose just powers are derived from the consent of the governed; a democracy in a republic; a sovereign nation of many sovereign States; a perfect Union, one and inseparable, established upon those principles of freedom, equality, justice, and humanity for which American patriots sacrificed their lives and fortunes.

I believe it is my duty to my country to love it, to support its Constitution, to obey its laws, to respect its flag, and to defend it against all enemies."



Mr. and Mrs. Richard Ough, seated in rockers, and family, circa 1906, on what is now the corner of South Park Avenue and The Hills Plaza. The community water tank (rear, left) was near where *The Willoughby* now stands.

the foundation—this is now occupied by the Larry Myers family [now the lawn at 5550 Friendship Boulevard]. The Citizens' Committee immediately petitioned the County for better fire protection.

- Public-spirited community builders sometimes lived dangerously in the early days. The bump in High Street in front of Clarks' (4406 High Street) [about where Highland House West stands now] was once much bigger. It is due to a large rock formation. In 1912, some citizens and laborers undertook to lower the hump. A nearby woman resident, and doubtless a lover of the rock, forced the workers to stop their labor at pistol point. She was charged with intent to kill—outcome unknown. However, she made her point, as the hump is still a landmark.
- The same resident, one day, personally painted the steep sidewalk along the entire side of her property with grey paint when children ignored her demands to cease roller skating. Obviously, this just stopped them while the paint was wet.
- The water supply for Friendship Heights once was from a large water tank close to Jesse Maury's property [where the Village Center now stands]. (Mrs. Sheiry reminds me that once, when it began to leak badly, Mr. Offutt, the owner of the facility, was advised to dump bran into the tank. The bran was supposed to enter the cracks, swell up and stop the leaks. This it did—but the stench of fermentation and decomposition was a horrible experience to the consumers. (It was the first large scale "still" in Friendship Heights until prohibition.)
- William Collins, in the early days, lived in the house now occupied by the Hannans [site of North Park Apartments]. His was a colorful personality. As an ex-cavalryman, he kept a riding horse for a number of years. No western movie ever depicted greater horsemanship than he did, in coming home from work as he guided his horse around the dusty bends of now High Street. He rode at full gallop, and at the same time, vaulted from one side of the horse to the other, his feet touching the ground for but an instant. He was a good carpenter, and built many of the houses for Albert Shoemaker in "The Hills". His greatest contribution, perhaps, was the production of three beautiful daughters [Mrs. Hilland corrected this to "Four beautiful daughters and one son"].

# Recollections of Early Friendship Heights

Long before Woodies, The Willoughby, and The Elizabeth, Friendship Heights was rolling pasture land and part of a larger tract of land first settled in 1819 by Samuel Shoemaker, Sr. The following excerpts are quoted from Lillian Shoemaker Brown's Friendship Heights, an account she presented to the Friendship Heights Village Council in 1989 on the 75th anniversary of the founding of the Village. Mrs. Brown was a lifelong Friendship Heights resident and the great-great-great-granddaughter of Samuel Shoemaker, Sr.

"There is a large piece of Maryland land that lies between Wisconsin and Massachusetts Avenues that I see from my sixteenth floor condominium [The Elizabeth] in Friendship Heights. It is beautiful now with its brilliant fall foliage, but as I look, I think about the time when my forebears settled in this area. Friendship Heights was originally a grant to Aquila Eld, who was the great grandfather of my paternal grandmother, Ann Elizabeth Eld. She married my grandfather, Louis Edwin Shoemaker, who lived on a farm across the road, now Willard Avenue.

The first Shoemaker to settle here in 1819 was Samuel Shoemaker, Sr., who came from Montgomery County, Pa., where his Quaker ancestors had lived since 1683. He bought 102 acres extending from Wisconsin Avenue, and what later became Western Avenue to

part of Westmoreland Hills. After many divisions of land among many heirs, in 1883, my grandfather inherited, from his father Isaac, the original farmhouse and land between Willard Avenue and River Road. This was the last operating Shoemaker farm.

My sister, brother, and I (Pauline, Warren, and Lillian), were born there and enjoyed the freedom of country life, always interested in the many activities on the farm. We loved wading in the streams, but most of all, my brother and I tried to outdo one another, climbing to the highest branches in the trees. What exhilaration to be so high and see so much—corn fields, pastures, and nearby windmills....

The old original farmhouse was replaced, but re-

mained at the bottom of the hill. The new and much larger house was built before the turn of the century, on the top of the hill, behind a semi-circle of Lombardy poplars, and quite a walk to the trolley on Wisconsin Avenue. On every school morning, our father, Spencer Aquila, would walk with us down the road to the trolley. En route, we would pass the place where



*Mark Shoemaker's house—4511 Willard Avenue*

my brother's goat was tethered and bleating.... On the ride to school the old Rockville trolley would rock from side to side as it sped down Wisconsin Avenue to the Tenley School....

Our old farm was the last of the original acreage to be sold.... They sold the entire farm to Mr. Woodward, of Woodward & Lothrop.... After the farm was sold, and when I was old enough to travel alone on street cars, I made many visits to Friendship Heights, where many of my relatives lived. They, and their homes are now gone, replaced by condominiums, and I, the last child, and fifth generation born on the Shoemaker farmland, am a great-grandmother."



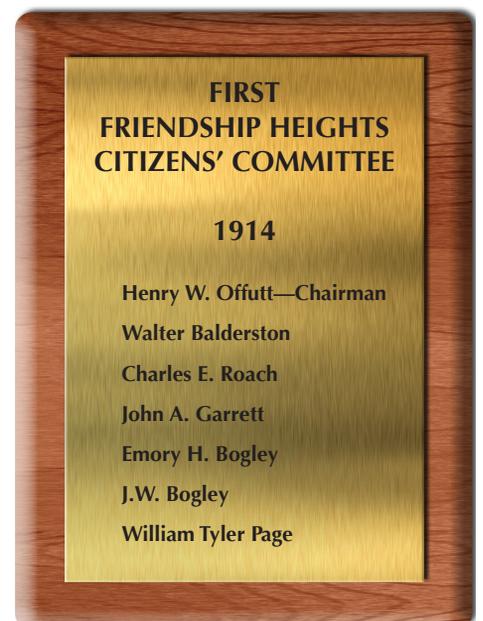
Ed and Dorothy Sheiry on the porch of the "Holly Cottage," near the site of The Elizabeth

- The recorded street names in "The Hills" are not as now accepted. Lower "Wootton" is actually "Mercer," while lower "Prospect" is actually "Cordonier," being the French for "Shoemaker." The established names are those applied to Friendship Heights Streets. [At the time of building Hubert Humphrey Friendship Park and upgrading all the streets in July 1971, the crooked High Street was renamed North Park and South Park Avenues; Wootton was renamed The Hills Plaza; Prospect was renamed Friendship Boulevard.]

There is history yet to be made in the community. Let us hope and pray that the present and future residents will achieve, at least, the same measure of wealth, health, and happiness that the "Old Timers" have entered into their ledgers of "Assets and Liabilities."

—Mark Shoemaker  
November 9, 1959

Plaque from the Village Center. The Citizens' Committee eventually became the Village Council.



## “Memories from Lamplight to Satellite”

Anne Sheiry, an early resident of the Village, moved with her husband, John Slater Sheiry, and their two sons, Edward and Russell, to 5511 Prospect Street (now Friendship Boulevard) in 1903. They paid \$2,500 for the eight-bedroom house on a 5,500 square foot lot. She later wrote down some recollections of their life in the community, which she titled “Memories from Lamplight to Satellite.”

“Our streets were just mud roads and the sidewalks were boardwalks. The streetcars had double tracks to Somerset, and the fare was five cents. A single track, with sidings, went to Rockville. Several years later, the terminus of the railway was put at the District line, and my husband, John, was instrumental in having the signs on the streetcars changed to ‘Friendship Heights.’

The cars ran on a half-hour schedule from about 5:30 a.m. to midnight. Just missing a car was very disconcerting to say the least, as there was such a long wait. The residents of our little community built a waiting station at the entrance to afford us shelter while waiting. We continued to deal with the grocery stores in Georgetown, and would phone our orders the day before delivery. There was a freight streetcar which left Georgetown at 11 a.m., which we could use for delivering things which did not come in the grocery wagons.

There was no gas out here then, so we used oil cook-stoves in the summer and wood and coal ranges in winter. We had a coal furnace (hot-air) and our water was piped to a tank in the attic from a well on Mr. Ough’s property. Later it became necessary to furnish more water as more houses were built, so the community drilled a well next to our house and built a very large tank and windmill. Until that time each resident had his own windmill. When Mr William Tyler Page came out to live here, he said it reminded him of Holland.”

In 1906 the Sheiry family moved to 4531 High Street (now North Park Avenue, near the site of The Elizabeth). Their house, known as the “Holly Cottage,” was built in 1760. The local water supply became a concern:

“Soon we needed more water, so our lovely old well was added to the system. It was widened and deepened to 90 feet and a pump house built over it. We missed the cold water for drinking, which made my husband decide to dig a well on our place. He and Edward started it, and then called in a regular well digger to finish the job. They found a good supply of water at 30 feet. Some years later the Suburban Sanitary Commission was organized and took over the job of furnishing water for all the communities around.



*5511 Prospect Street, home of John and Anne Sheiry (now the site of the north Willoughby)*

Windmills, tanks, and pumphouses were taken down, and the old well across the street was covered over with a solid block of cement, and is now at the corner where Willoughby meets High Street [now the corner of North Park Avenue and Shoemaker Farm Lane]. When the streets were finally paved, a lot of dirt and old cement were dumped over the well to fill in for the building lots.”



*Above: Wisconsin Avenue in the 1920s*

*At right: The Green House, at the intersection of Wootton Avenue (now The Hills Plaza) and Willard Avenue*





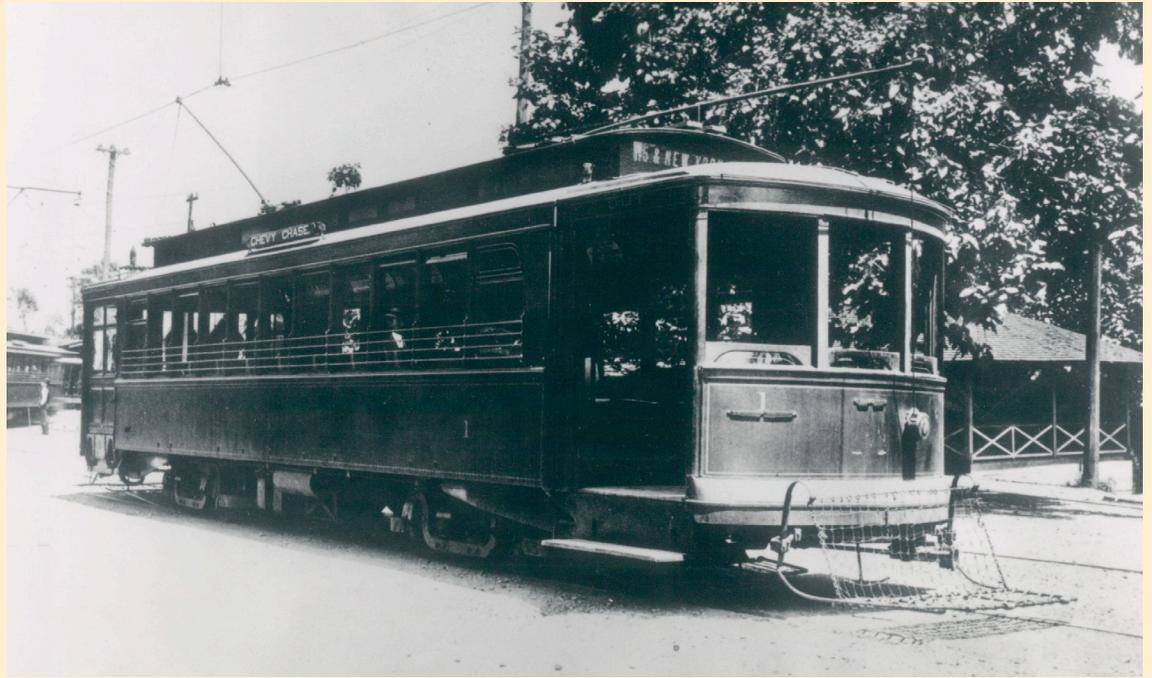
*The Harper House for tourists—5530 Wisconsin Avenue*

## Streetcars in Friendship Heights

Throughout the Washington, D.C., area, streetcars were a primary source of transportation for 100 years, between 1862 and 1962. The earliest streetcars were horse-drawn and traveled relatively short distances on flat roads. Following the introduction of electric streetcars that could climb steeper terrain, the suburbs with hills became more accessible.

In 1890, the streetcar line from Georgetown was extended to cover the new village of Tenleytown, via the present-day Wisconsin Avenue from the Potomac River to the Maryland state line. That same year it crossed the state line and went to Bethesda, including present-day Friendship Heights. By the turn of the century the entire system was electrified. There were several companies that provided streetcar service, then in 1933 the service was consolidated into one company, Capital Transit.

In Friendship Heights the streetcar line terminated at the current site of the Friendship Heights bus depot and Metro entrance (the Wisconsin Avenue/Wisconsin Circle intersection). Later, as automobiles and buses became more popular, the streetcars were scaled back, and the system was dismantled in early 1962.



*An early streetcar serving Chevy Chase.*



*A D.C. Transit streetcar heading south on Wisconsin Avenue with the Chevy Chase Center in the background.*



*A streetcar from Capital Transit*



*The Friendship Heights streetcar stop was the end of the line (now the site of the Friendship Heights Metro and bus depot).*



*Above: The Suss house, 5420 Wootton Avenue, now The Hills Plaza, the site of Highland House West apartments*



*At right: The Healy house, 4415 High Street (now South Park Avenue near Hubert H. Humphrey Friendship Park and the Village Center)*



*5515 and 5519 Prospect Street (now Friendship Boulevard, near the Village Center)*



*The McNulty house, at the corner of Willoughby Street (now Shoemaker Farm Lane) and Willard Avenue*



*The McPhillips house, 5410 Willoughby Street (now Shoemaker Farm Lane)*



*The Roach house on High Street (now South Park and North Park Avenues)*

# Part 2

## The Village Takes On an Urban Character



*Preceding page: 5532 Prospect Street (now Friendship Boulevard) with The Elizabeth in the background*

# The Village Takes On an Urban Character

## Tim Edwards moves into Friendship Heights

The Village was still a hamlet of single-family homes in 1947 when Thelma “Tim” Edwards discovered a beautiful home surrounded by gardens on a two-acre site on High Street (now North Park Avenue). Though it was a stretch financially, she and her husband Bill bought it and they and their two sons moved to the house. A third son was born in 1949. Her daughter Debby, born in 1956, describes the Village as an idyllic place to grow up.

**T**im realized that she was going to need to add to her family’s income and decided that selling houses in her own neighborhood might be a good

way to do that. She soon had her own brokerage firm and became the person her neighbors looked to whenever a house in Friendship Heights was to be sold. She began to look at the area differently, however, when she noticed construction beginning for the new Woodward & Lothrop store at Wisconsin and Western Avenues. She was then instrumental in bringing GEICO to the adjacent 26-acre tract and Lord & Taylor to a site just inside the District line. The Chevy Chase Land Company built a shopping center on the east side of Wisconsin Avenue. Soon the Village was surrounded on the east and the south by commercial development, and Tim Edwards began to see the Village as the urban center it was to become.

## High-rise buildings are allowed

In 1964 the Maryland Park and Planning Commission initiated commercial zoning in Friendship Heights and its vicinity, which allowed for



*The Barlow Building and Highland House next door were the first high-rise buildings in the Village in the mid 1960s.*

# Growing Up in Friendship Heights

by Deborah Edwards Demaree

**G**rowing up in Friendship Heights was magical. Perhaps it was living in a house with a wide porch on a hill where you could sit and watch summer thunderstorms, and later construction cranes. Perhaps it was having the woods and the creek of the Bergdoll Tract (Somerset House) to explore and roam, or the construction sites to watch everyday and seeing soaring buildings rising from the earth. Maybe it was the adventure of crossing Wisconsin Avenue headed to Peoples Drug for a cherry Coke and fries, or later going swimming on top of Highland House, with windows in the side no less. No matter which decade—the 50s, 60s, 70s or 80s—growing up in Friendship Heights was magical.



*The creek still flows between Friendship Heights and the Town of Somerset.*

I came home from the hospital to a house in Friendship Heights already occupied by three older brothers who were well-known in the neighborhood. I was always someone's little sister, be it Billy, Geoff, or Terry. My earliest memories in the 50s are of walking to the Friendship Heights entrance sign and sitting on the stone wall to watch traffic on Wisconsin Avenue. The neighborhood community picnic on the 4th of July was held in our yard. Seeing my father set up the ice bin coolers for the Cokes that would be served to everyone coming to my house was a summer highlight. The Good Humor man came down High Street (North Park Avenue), and we often went to the end of the driveway to wait for the mailman. Sledding was a community affair as well, and the Edwards's hill was where to head for a great

run. There was a huge sycamore tree close to the bottom, and if you timed it correctly you could hit one of the exposed roots and become airborne.

In the 1960s my world became a little larger, and we would travel to the backyards of houses on Wootton and High Streets (The Hills Plaza and North Park) to watch baseball games, throw footballs, or swing from the huge wisteria vine dangling from one of the trees. On Prospect Street (Friendship Boulevard) heading down the hill, there were mature ginko trees. Their stinking fruit along with crabapples in the neighborhood provided ammunition for the frequent ambushing of unsuspecting kids. Soda bottles were collected and returned to the Giant for spending

money, and roaming about at will was what children did until the streetlights came on. Our house had a mounted cast iron bell that would be rung as an additional warning that it was time to come inside. We rode our bikes in the streets and had a walking "carpool" to Somerset Elementary. We were always aware if we were headed out in the afternoon that we had better be out of the neighborhood by 4:15 p.m., otherwise Willard Avenue, which was then a two-lane road, would be blocked for half an hour with the employees heading home from GEICO. Halloween was amazing—the streets were barricaded, police protection was provided, and we roamed from house to house, back and forth, without a care.

**As the decade continued,** the constant renewal of the neighborhood was a source of endless pleasure:

Walking on the roof of the new GEICO building when it was under construction, the excitement when the western-most lane of Wisconsin Avenue fell into the excavation for the Barlow Building, and the huge size of The Willoughby hole, an entire block! Sledding down High Street (North Park Avenue) the winter it remained dirt. Leaves were burned in yards and 55-gallon drums were repurposed as bonfires to keep warm. Each week brought change and new things to explore. Each Sunday after Mass and breakfast we would return home, change our clothes, and head out for a walk to see what had happened during the week at each of the construction sites. Once Saks Fifth Avenue was completed the windows would be changed frequently, and the fashion of the 1960s was always a delight. Often I would take the DC Transit bus (Metro) home

from school at Tenley Circle to Friendship Heights and meet my mother in the fabric department of Woodward & Lothrop, (Wisconsin Place) where we endlessly made fabric selections for my wardrobe. My mother could do it all and then some, so most of my clothes were beautifully constructed. My magical mom could sew a couture dress while making a real estate deal from her office on our back porch, next to her sewing machine. That office consisted of a file drawer and a three-line telephone with a hold (!) button—a new invention. Later, when Woodies no longer carried fabric, we headed to Chevy Chase Center to the fabric store there. It was a great afternoon when the new pattern books came out and there were new designs. After the Barlow Building (5454 Wisconsin) was constructed, we would move our cars to the garage if a heavy snow was predicted, as our drive was too long to shovel. Later as with all things that were changing, the 1968 riots had an impact as well. I watched frightened from my beloved perch on the front porch at 4525 High Street as the glow of the fires in the city could be seen, as well as my father’s sadness about the destruction of the city he loved. It seemed then that the rest of the Friendship Heights neighborhood and Washington grew up overnight. Each time a building neared completion we watched for the “topping off” ceremony and the American flag raising.

**The construction of Friendship Park in 1970** brought new meaning to the neighborhood. There was now a central spot to gather. Most every evening we would walk up to the park to look at the gorgeous pink roses. I was proud to be asked to raise the American flag at the dedication. It was a very special day for all residents of Friendship Heights, both the old and new, and so many families from the past came to the dedication. Of all her accomplishments besides her family, my mother was most proud of the creation of Friendship Park.

In March 1972, my father, Eddie (William, Sr.) Edwards died in a small plane crash in upper Montgomery County. My mother decided that it was time to let the “big house” go. My brothers were married and gone. The house was demolished as part of a sloping agreement during the construction of The Elizabeth. We moved to The Irene after a “farewell party” that included as many Friendship Heights people as we could find. It was a glorious event and



*Debby and Larry Demaree*



*From left: Geoffrey Edwards, Debby Edwards, Susan Crawford, and Terry Edwards, 1957*

so many good people came back to share their happiness in their new homes and their excitement at what had been built where they formerly lived.

The rest of my life is intertwined in Friendship Heights as well. In the 1970s I was a lifeguard at Highland House and The Willoughby. Later, while in college and beyond, I worked at Saks Fifth Avenue. In the 1980s I began to work with my mother at Edwards Properties and moved to The Willoughby. There I had the opportunity to learn the commercial real estate business. One of my earliest meetings with my husband of 30 years was concerning a potential retail development in Friendship Heights. My mother constructed my Dior wedding gown, just as she had constructed Friendship Heights. Full circle.



*Plaque in Hubert Humphrey Friendship Park inscribed with dedication to Tim Edwards*



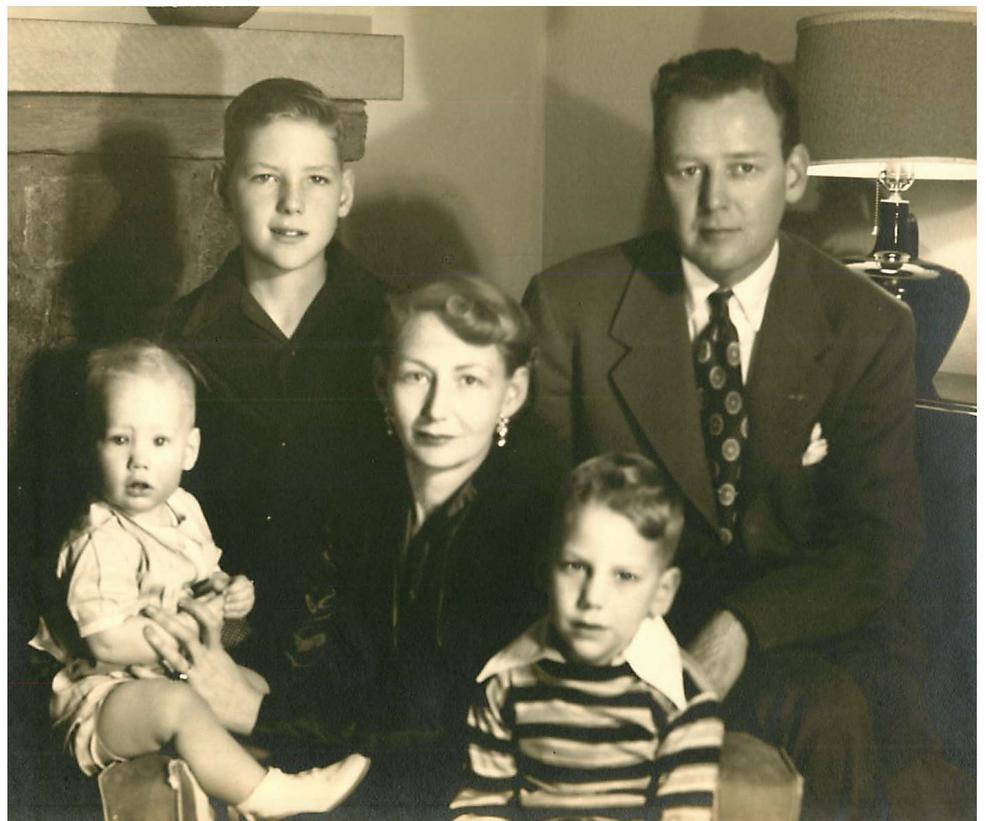
*The Edwards house, 4525 High Street, near the current site of The Elizabeth*

buildings up to 140 feet tall. Tim began working with her neighbors to assemble their land for high-rise construction. Change was to begin at a rapid pace. Houses were demolished to make way for the high-rises that would take their place.

In 1964 Milton Barlow, a former Marriott executive who became a real estate developer, built the first high-rise, The Barlow Building (5454 Wisconsin Avenue), within the borders of Friendship Heights. This 272,000 square foot office building towered over everything else in the area.

The Barlow Building was not alone for very long. The next year, Highland House, with nearly 400 apartments, was built by Milton and Howard Polinger next door at 5480 Wisconsin Avenue.

Tim continued assembling land, and developers were quick to see the potential in the Village's location



*Tim and Billy Edwards with three of their four children, circa 1950*



*High Street (now North Park Avenue) as a dirt road, with The Irene (now 4701 Willard Apartments) in the background*



5530 Prospect Street (now Friendship Boulevard), with *The Elizabeth* in the background and 4620 North Park behind it

just north of the District and at the crossroads of Wisconsin Avenue and Western Avenue. In 1966 Friendship Heights was designated as a stop for the new subway system to be known as Metrorail. This had a huge impact on the area.

Milton Barlow followed his office building with construction of the huge Willoughby apartments (now a condominium) in 1966. This brought another 800+ apartments, in two connected buildings, to the neighborhood.

The Polingers then built the Chevy Chase Building (285,000 square feet) at 5530 Wisconsin Avenue. Abe Pollin bought assembled land at the far western end of the Village (4701 Willard Avenue) and built *The Irene*, a 525-unit building, which set a new standard for apartments in Montgomery County with its large apartments with high ceilings and enclosed solariums. The roof contained a virtual

country club in the city with two swimming pools, tennis courts, and a putting green.

### Development comes to a screeching halt in 1966

As development progressed, Tim continued to assemble land. By 1966 she had pulled together about 70% of the original 108 houses and had contracts pending with developers to put up additional buildings. Then the County Council decided to halt all development of high-rises. Chaos, confusion, and lawsuits followed, along with financial losses. Then, in 1968, the Council reversed its direction and allowed new high-rise commercial buildings, but reduced density by 25%. Development in Friendship Heights started once again.

### Stage set for continued building

In the works when development stopped were several new projects which were constructed as the 1970s began. The Holiday Inn and retail center (now the Courtyard Chevy Chase by Marriott), Highland House West, 5550 Friendship Boulevard, and 4615 North Park were built. 4620 North Park (originally marketed as Bradley House) was the first condominium in the Village and one of the earliest in Montgomery County. *The Elizabeth* soon followed as the second condominium building.

### New roads and new street names

Even while development was on hold, the Friendship Heights Citizens' Committee (later to become the Village

Council) continued its plans to widen and improve the Village roads which were poorly maintained and only 20 to 25 feet wide. This was pursuant to the County's 1964 master plan which called for streets to be widened to 80 feet. At that time, the storm sewer system was also improved, and most of the overhead power and telephone lines were placed underground (utilities in the eastern portion of the Village were not put underground until 2005). In 1969, the Montgomery County Park and Planning Commission was also petitioned to change the names of the streets.

## Hubert H. Humphrey Friendship Park

Dedicated on July 11, 1970, the beautiful Friendship Park (now Hubert

H. Humphrey Friendship Park) has become the centerpiece of the Village. Designed by noted landscape architect Boris Timchenko, who graciously donated his services, the park serves as an oasis in an urban village of high-rise buildings. In pleasant weather the benches are often fully occupied by folks eating lunch, visiting, or just watching the water cascade in the large fountain. Little kids (and their parents) are mesmerized by the J. Seward Johnson sculpture of an artist forever drawing a picture of the adjacent Village Center.

Having a park as the Village centerpiece was not always in the plans. As Tim Edwards wrote:

"Knowing the projects which were still in the planning stage, in addition to those underway and the ones already in place, it

was evident there was going to be dense development. I remember thinking at that time, why not a park? And what better site than right in the middle of the Village, on the land which had been cleared as the site for a second Barlow Building.

At the next meeting of The Village Committee I brought up the possibility of creating a park on that site, suggesting it as a project which could be funded from the increasing special tax revenue or perhaps a special assessment. At first my suggestion received no support from the other members of the committee or the chairman. Their reaction was very understandable. After all they had their properties listed with me for sale, anticipat-



*The site of The Carleton, built in 1982, with Shoemaker Farm Lane running along the side and The Willoughby next door*



4601 Willard Avenue, looking north, with The Elizabeth and 4615 North Park in the background

ing a move as soon as their sales funds were forthcoming. Any plans to benefit future tenants and office workers was certainly not of interest for the long-time resident, single-family homeowners who had been living with the inconvenience of noise and dirt resulting from years of ongoing construction... I set down the particulars of how the project [would be] accomplished. After many meetings and discussions with the chairman and each of the committee members, as well as other residents, lawyers, and especially the owners of the new high-rise developments, I gained encouragement.”

Even then, there were many obstacles to overcome. The Committee had to find the authority to purchase the necessary property and increase taxes in order to pay for it. These problems were eventually solved and the park was built. Tim continues:

“It was the goal of the Committee

to have [an opening] ceremony for the Fourth of July, however, we were a week late and even then one section of sod had not been laid. On July 11, 1970, the dedication of Friendship Park took place. The speaker for the ceremony was Austin Kiplinger, a name well-known in the publishing and other national fields. His first home had been in the Village.

“Milton Polinger and Milton Barlow joined with me in funding a glorious reception after the dedication ceremony. In those days tax money was not spent for recreational purposes. It was held in the entire then non-partitioned top floor of the Chevy Chase Building. Robert Deutsch, president of the Musicians’ Union and a former resident and chairman of The Village Committee, from 1957 to 1965, arranged for the music, both for the raising of the flags and the reception. A grand and happy occasion for many former residents and others.”

Unfortunately, the happy mood was

not to continue. In 1973, after tenants in the Village got the right to vote, the newly elected Friendship Heights Citizens’ Committee filed suit against former members alleging improprieties in the creation of the park. A countersuit was filed. Ultimately, the earlier council was exonerated, but there were no winners, and it was an unhappy time for all concerned.

Over the years, the park has been enhanced continually by the Village Council, always in keeping with Mr. Timchenko’s original design. In 2003 it was totally reconstructed to the “Bethesda Standard” with deep concrete faced by brick walkways. New lighting was installed, and the elegant fountain was replaced. In 2005, nearly all of the hedges and plantings were renewed or replaced. Most of the holly trees are original, however, and are adorned with holiday lights every winter. The park, now joined by two others, continues to be enjoyed during all seasons of the year.



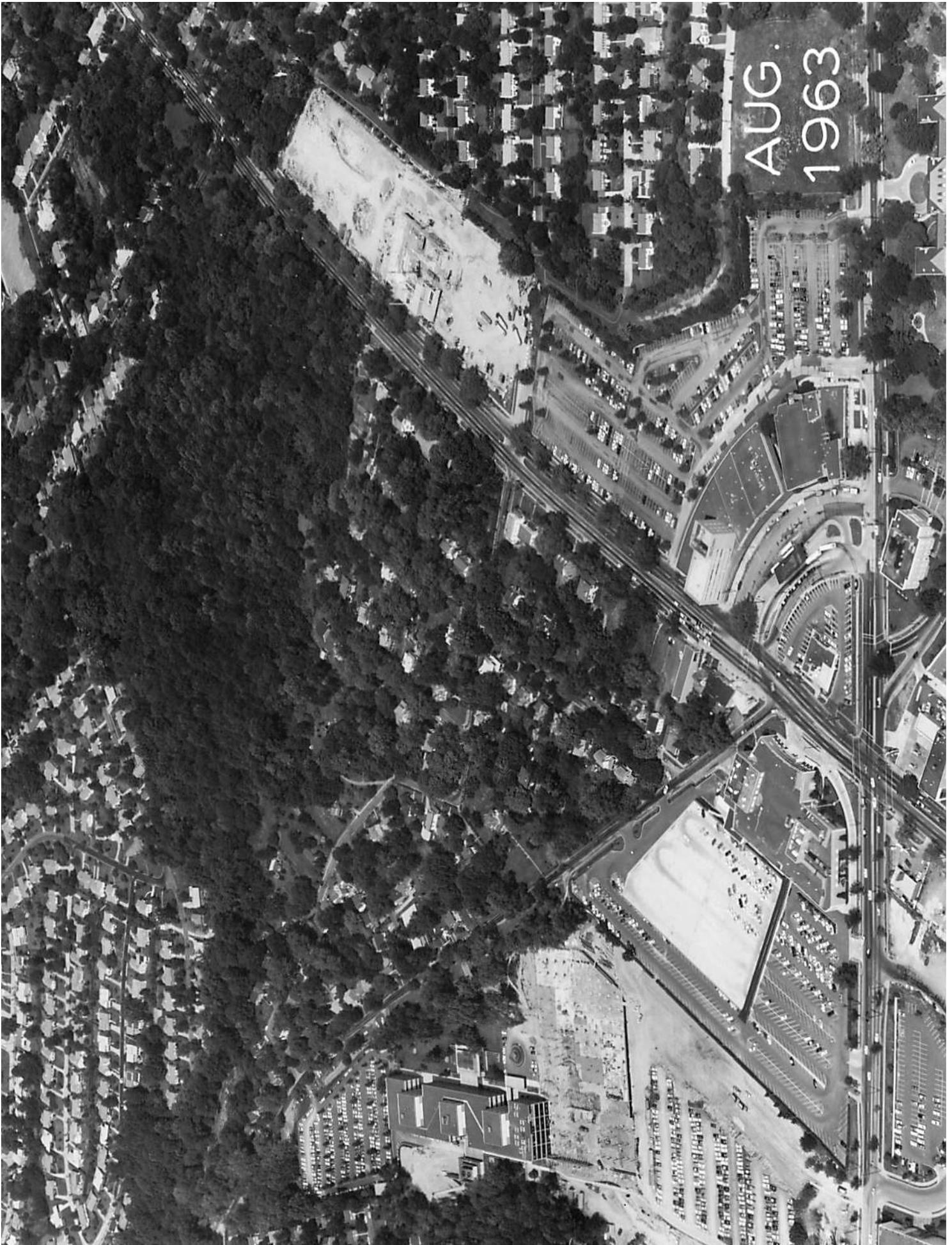
*The original Chevy Chase Center, seen from Western Avenue, with The Barlow Building and Highland House in the background*



*Built in 1908, the house at 4608 North Park Avenue is the Village's oldest remaining structure. It has been beautifully restored.*



*View of The Hills Plaza (formerly Wootton Avenue) from Willard. Finnegans Car Wash was razed for the Chase Tower project.*



*Friendship Heights in August 1963. The Village was a community of all single-family homes.*



The Eckhartt house, 5534 Prospect Street (now Friendship Boulevard), with The Elizabeth in the background

*The Story of Friendship Heights*

# Old Homes Die Slowly As Key Location. Soaring Land Values Attract Commerce

*Second In A Series*

By Martha Wedeman

When the preliminary master plan for West Chevy Chase appeared late in 1961, the Friendship Heights community was united -- practically nobody liked it.

For more than a decade the pie-shaped community of about 105 homes, tucked between Wisconsin Avenue on the east, the vacant Bergdoll tract on the north, and Willard Avenue on the south, had been agonizing over its future.

Should it yield to the commercial pressures which were slowly squeezing it from the south along Willard, from bustling Wisconsin Avenue on the east, from the north where there were pending applications for 1300 apartment units on the Bergdoll land?

A single two-night hearing was held on the preliminary plan in April, 1962. The plan covered not only the 32 acres of Friendship Heights, but also grappled with the problem of the Bergdoll tract and touched on the question of the Wisconsin Avenue corridor in providing for a total of 310 acres north of Western Avenue and River Road.

All the bitterly-divided factions of Friendship Heights turned out to testify before the

"commercial blight" from sporadic development along Wisconsin. To that end he urged the Commission to consider a new zoning category of "planned commercial area" while retaining in Friendship Heights "as much single family zoning... as possible."

Speaking for the Friendship Heights Citizens' Association, the Rev. Dr. Donald Gill noted that the area was "not what one might call... entirely homogeneous in the matter of interests of the property owners and residents."

**Resolutions Offered**

He offered a series of resolutions calling for revision of the plans with Willoughby as the dividing line between commercial and residential and urging rezoning for large tracts that "will provide for high quality development."

Commissioner Brewer commented on "deplorable" examples of spot zoning and asserted, "the only way you are ever going to correct this situa-

*The Old and the New In Friendship Heights*

## Irene Pollin Reflects on The Irene

**T**he Irene (now known as 4701 Willard Avenue), built by Abe Pollin, has anchored the western edge of the Village since 1966. Until 2012, it was owned and managed by the Pollin family.

The Irene has over 500 units. It set a new standard when it was built with extraordinarily large apartments, high ceilings, four-pipe heating and cooling, and a virtual country club on the roof. The building, along with Highland House and The Willoughby, represents the first wave of large residential buildings in the Village that transformed Friendship Heights into the neighborhood we know today.

In June 2013, Julian Mansfield and Bob Shapiro, of the Village staff, interviewed **Irene Pollin**, the widow of Abe Pollin. Mrs. Pollin was very much involved in planning The Irene, which was named in her honor. The following is excerpted from that interview.

**Q: The Irene is at the western edge of the Village, and when it was first built, there wasn't much between the building and Wisconsin Avenue. Did that seem risky at the time?**

A: Maybe a little bit. Real estate was always in our blood. The Pollins had been in the building business since the days of Morris Pollin, Abe's father. We were very aware of location. We didn't know what would happen in between The Irene and Wisconsin Avenue, so we put a bus in to shuttle residents. We knew it was a little far to walk, but it was a beautiful location.

**Q: Were there problems getting the land assembled and getting approvals to build the building?**

A: We bought the building site from Tim Edwards, and as I remember, it was ready to build on. We enjoyed working with her. Tim was very excited about development in Friendship Heights. She really saw the whole picture.

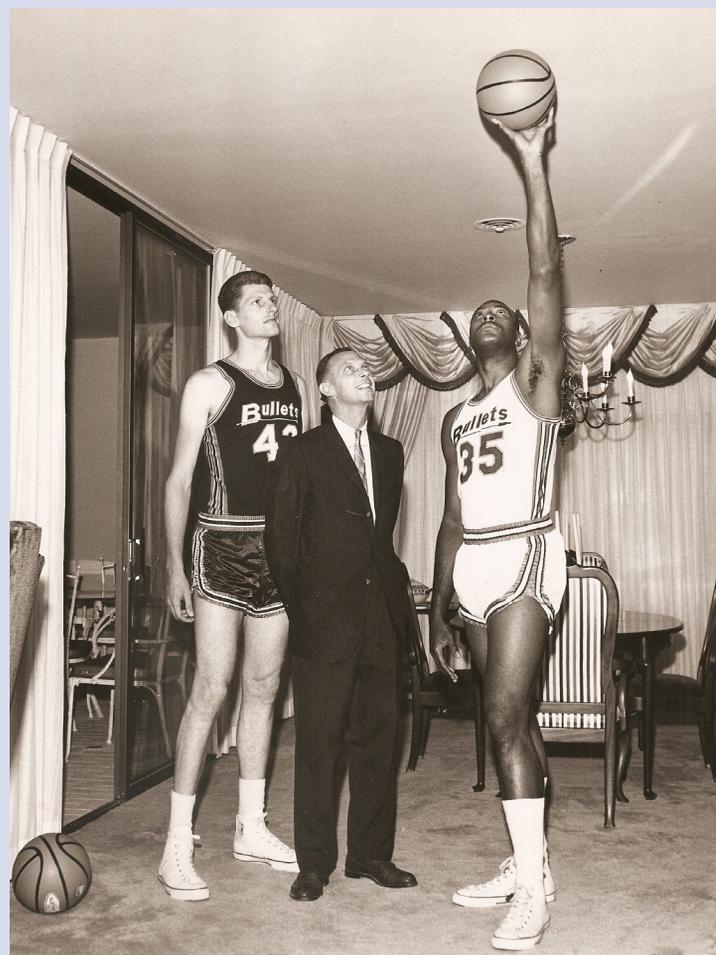
**Q: The Irene is notable for a number of innovations which have made it stand out over the years. The rooftop "country club," the solariums, the very large rooms and extra high ceilings, as examples. The same architects designed a number of other Village buildings which do not have these features. How did they come to be?**

A: We had already built a building downtown with a pool on the roof. Abe was avid about sports and wanted a diving pool and tennis courts added. In the beginning, we actually had a problem with tennis balls being hit off the roof!

Abe wanted The Irene to be the best of the best. Higher ceilings, incredible closets. I remember working on

the closets. We would spread out the plans that Abe brought home. Originally, you walked through a dark closet to get to the master bathroom. I couldn't imagine people waking up to that every morning. We created a dressing area with lights.

Balconies are a great idea, but with Washington humidity people just don't use them. We thought that a bright enclosed sunroom would be used by people all year long, and that turned out to be right. The solarium apartments have always been the most popular



*Abe Pollin shows the extra tall ceilings in The Irene with the help of two Bullets players (now the Washington Wizards).*

in the building. We both worked very hard on building features. I suggested that they put burglar alarms in each apartment rather than just having a central security system. I believe they are still in use.

**Q: Most of the buildings built by you and Mr. Pollin are named after family. Whose idea was it to name this building "The Irene?"**

A: I was the only one left! There were already Robert Towers, The James, and The Linda Pollin Memorial Housing.

There was even a building named after Abe. This came about during a dinner with Joe Abel (the building architect) and his wife Marge. They were thinking of a name for a new building to be built on New Hampshire Avenue near Dupont Circle. Marge Abel suggested that they use a name that would be hard to pronounce so that people would remember it (an interesting theory). Thus came the name the Apolliné. Abe Pollin with a French accent.

I really didn't think that The Irene was a very good name for a building. Not euphonious enough. Abe prevailed.

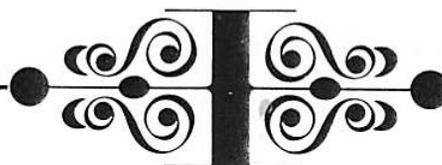
**Q: Over the years there have been many noted people who lived at The Irene. Best Addresses, by James Goode, and published by the Smithsonian Press a number of years ago, talks about a few of them. Do you have any stories you can share?**

A: There have always been a lot of embassy people there. At one time, the head of the CIA, Richard Helms, lived in the building. Either above or below him was someone from the Russian embassy. That might have been a little awkward!

Many residents have been in the building for a very long time. Some are still there from the beginning. There was no reason to move! The staff was great and consistently developed very warm relationships with the tenants. The personal touch was always appreciated. The bus driver was fabulous and would help the tenants with their groceries.

I recently went to a party and was invited to sit at a table with some residents of The Irene. They talked about their floor and how they became best friends. Like family. That was nice to hear.

## Swimmer or Diver, PICK your POOL!



The Irene—Sumptuous Resort Living in one of Chevy Chase's newest apartment residences!

This is the real thing—a resort rooftop packed with fun and relaxation! Two pools for swimmers and divers, tennis and paddle tennis courts, shuffleboard, putting green, and sun decks. The resort life awaits you now at The Irene. Go on. Take the plunge!

- Magic gas air conditioning that lets you heat or cool any room individually, any time of day or year!
- Fabulous kitchens with dishwashers, 2-door side-by-side frost-free freezers and refrigerators, Caloric gas ranges with twin eye-level ovens, pantries.
- Courtesy bus service to area shopping and D.C. Transit bus terminal.
- Round-the-clock secretarial service.
- Beauty shop, sauna bath, massage rooms (coming soon).
- The ultimate in sound engineering.
- Individual burglar alarm in each apartment.  Magnificent luxury hotel lobby.



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**INFORMATION 652-7600 or 652-4262.**

the fabulous

*Irene*

4701 WILLARD AVENUE,  
CHEVY CHASE, MARYLAND

Drive out Wisconsin Avenue to Willard Avenue (1 block north of Western Avenue). Turn left at light and follow Willard to THE IRENE. **BUILT & OWNED BY ABE POLLIN**

Rentals and Management by

**SHANNON & LUCHS**

*This ad appeared in Washingtonian magazine in 1967. Rents have changed!*

# The Carleton Continues the Village Tradition of Luxury Condominium Buildings

In 1981, The Carleton, a 149-unit high-rise, became the last residential condominium building to be built in the Village of Friendship Heights. While built under the more restrictive zoning adopted under the 1974 Sector Plan, The Carleton still offered exceptionally large apartments and many amenities.

The Carleton was built by Richmarr, an old-line Washington area developer that began building houses in this area in 1953. In September 2013, Village staff members Julian Mansfield and Bob Shapiro interviewed **Leonard Abel**, one of the partners of Richmarr. The following is excerpted from that interview.

**Q: Can you tell us a little bit about Richmarr and how you got involved with the company?**

A: I had been an executive with Giant Food from 1948 until 1971 but decided it was time to try something else before I got too old! After considering other options I thought that what I would really like to do is get into the construction business. I sought advice from a family friend, Dick Kirstein, who was one of the founders of Richmarr. Dick not only thought getting into the building business was a great idea



Leonard I. Abel

for me, but proposed that I become a partner in Richmarr since one of the partners was about to retire. I did that and have never regretted it.

At the time I joined Richmarr, the company had long been a developer of single-family homes and had built thousands of houses in Kings Park and Kings Park West in Springfield, Virginia. I was aggressive in expanding the company into additional areas. We ultimately built an additional 5,000 homes, about 4,000 garden type apartments, about 4,000 high-rise apartments, 1 million square feet of office space, and one shopping center. At our peak, we had over 500 employees.

**Q: How did the company get involved in building The Carleton? Were there problems assembling the land and getting zoning approvals?**

A: I believe The Carleton site was suggested to us by an attorney we dealt with. We thought it was a wonderful location. He was able to get approvals for us without a lot of problems. We did not seek additional density, but were content to build to the density allowed on the site.

We ended up building a 149 unit building with about 20 units designated for moderate income folks under the County MPDU program. Those apartments were all one bedroom units but were about the size of two bedroom units in buildings built today.

**Q: How was the name "Carleton" chosen?**

A: We wanted a name that connoted elegance and had originally planned to call the building "The Waldorf." Before that happened, however, we were warned that we would likely have trouble with the Waldorf-Astoria which had protected that name. I can't tell you who actually came up with "The Carleton," but it was possibly in tribute to the Sheraton-Carleton hotel downtown. Interestingly, that hotel is now the St. Regis.

**Q: What do you consider the best features of the building?**

A: The units are extraordinarily large. At the time we built the building we were still able to do that. Dick Kirstein, who handled the construction side of Richmarr, was an engineer and fanatic about quality. He insisted that every building we build was one we would be happy to live in ourselves. In fact, my wife and I seriously considered moving into The Carleton at that time. The hallways are five feet wide and also include recessed entries to the apartments. The standard for

apartment building hallways is four feet, and the additional 25% makes a dramatic difference.

Our only regret was that we did not have the space to put even more amenities. We also would have probably added another elevator.

All in all it was a fun building to build and we were very pleased with the result.

**Q: How was the market when the building opened for sale? Wasn't that a time of sky high interest rates?**

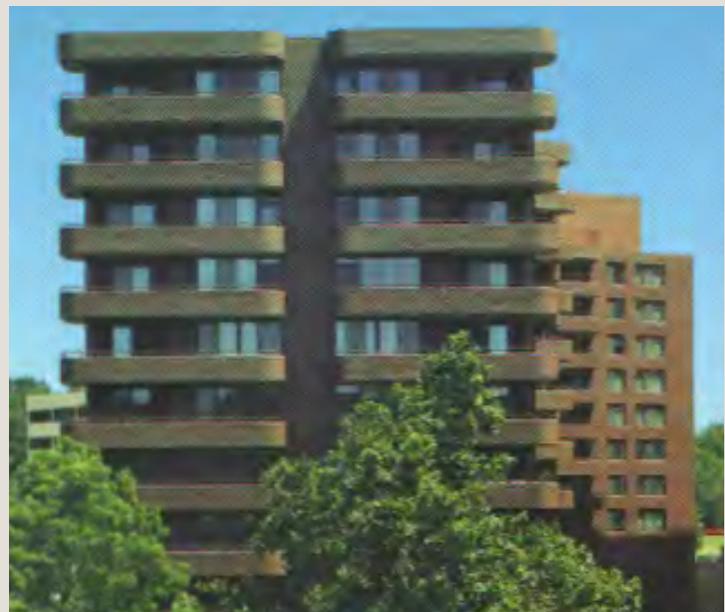
A: Interest rates were very high and that made the building less affordable for many potential purchasers. We had others, however, for whom that was not a problem and a number of people actually bought combined units and did extensive custom work to them. Many of the original purchasers were personal friends of the three Richmarr partners.

**Q: Are you still friends?**

A: Absolutely!

**Q: Have you seen the building recently? What do you think about how it has aged over the years?**

A: We used a custom brick on the building that still looks terrific. I also like the canopy that the owners have added.



*The Carleton as seen from Willard Avenue*

**Q: What are your thoughts about subsequent development in the Friendship Heights area?**

A: I love what the area has become. We recently gave up the home where we had lived for nearly 50 years and moved into the Somerset House. The area is very much like living in Manhattan. Everything we need is close by, including excellent restaurants. My wife tried to talk me into moving here years ago. I now have to tell her she was right!



**Friendship Heights Dilemma**  
This view of the Irene apartment-hotel on Willard Avenue symbolizes the dilemma faced by owners who have approved bills, but cannot sell their land because the apartment-hotel boom has fizzled. Sentinel

*Left: 4621 and 4623 High Street, with The Irene in the background. These two houses are on the site of Page Park.*

*Above: This photo of the same houses appeared in the November 3, 1966, issue of the Montgomery County Sentinel, during the sewer moratorium when construction temporarily came to a halt (see page 28).*

# Friendship Heights Tenants Get the Right to Vote

by Barbara G. Tauben

In the 1960s, as Friendship Heights was transitioning from a neighborhood of single-family homes to a high-rise urban community, a majority of the residents were being denied the right to vote for their Friendship Heights Village officials. Winning the right to vote or hold office in Village elections was to become a rallying cry, but success wasn't realized overnight.

I was a longtime, current resident, having moved to the Village in 1966, but it wasn't until 1970 that I learned this locality had its own governing body. I never heard about the existence of a local government until I contacted Montgomery County to remediate a street construction problem. At that time, Village streets were being reconstructed and walking through or around the area was almost impossible. The County told me I would have to contact the "Friendship Heights Citizens' Committee." When I did, I found out that this community had a separate governing body, chartered by the State of Maryland as a Special Tax District in 1914. I also learned that only residents owning real property could vote in local elections. The denial of basic voting rights started me on a quest to enfranchise all Village residents.

In April 1970, I contacted Maryland officials to find out more about the state law governing Friendship Heights. They provided some legislative history, the Code for Friendship Heights and The Hills, and advised that there were two proposals pending before the County delegation to abolish Friendship Heights or to change voter qualifications. That prompted more communication with state officials regarding the pending legislation and questions about the current Village leaders and the budget. Ultimately, no action was taken to change the law.

In 1972, just by chance, I saw a news article announcing a Baltimore Federal District Court ruling that provisions of Maryland municipal charters requiring property ownership as a condition for voting or holding elective office were unconstitutional, violating the 14th Amendment of the U.S. Constitution. The ruling was deemed binding throughout Maryland, where at the time 50 to 60% of other small towns had similar restrictions. I wrote to the judge for more information and I also obtained a copy of the ruling. In January 1973, I wrote to state officials, asking about any actions by the Montgomery County delegation to codify the judicial ruling. By this time, I had shared my concerns and actions regarding Friendship Heights vot-



*From left: Clerk of the Circuit Court, Irene Murphy, Barbara Tauben, Howard Shlefstein, Sarabelle Burka, Cleonice Tavani, Robert Smith, and Barbara Hendley*

ing restrictions with friends, neighbors, and like-minded residents.

Residents started to come together informally to adopt a strategy to get the vote in Friendship Heights. In March 1973, I obtained information about a rumored bill regarding voting in Friendship Heights. That pending legislation was identified as the codifying instrument to give voting rights to Friendship Heights residents who are registered and qualified to vote in Montgomery County. I learned that a bill was on the governor's desk for signature. Finally, the citizens of Friendship Heights would be enfranchised. There was only one problem, and it was a big one. The effective date of the bill was July 1, 1973, but the next election was May 1973.

Postponing voting rights for two more years ignited the coalition of friends and neighbors. Some of them mobilized to get the effective date of the legislation changed. State officials were contacted and convinced to act quickly; they recalled the bill from the governor and amended it. Then the Maryland legislature had to vote again to adopt it, and they did. The bill went back to the governor and he signed it on April 26, 1973.

At last, all qualified residents had the right to vote or hold office in their local Village government. I went on to run for office in the May 1973 election and was elected along with six others who were very active in changing the dynamic in Friendship Heights.

# Part 3

## A New Community Emerges



*Preceding page: The Village Center under construction in 1985*

## A New Community Emerges

By the early 1970s the Village had changed remarkably in character. Hundreds of tenants occupied the apartment buildings that had gone up in the 1960s and demanded a voice in Village affairs. Up until that point, only property owners could vote in Village elections. An activist group of tenants petitioned the Maryland legislature which approved “one person, one vote” and, with tenants enfranchised, the groundwork for today’s Village of Friendship Heights was laid. A new Village Council was elected, and its focus was on turning this new urban village into a community.

**L**arge new buildings continued to be constructed where single-family houses had stood only a few years before. 4620 North Park (originally Bradley House) and The Elizabeth became two of the earliest buildings built as condominiums in Montgomery County. The 810-unit Willoughby

was converted to condos. Highland House West and 4615 North Park Avenue added hundreds of new rental units. Much more was to come.

### The County Sector Plan for Friendship Heights downzones the Village

County voters had installed “balanced growth” advocates on the County Council to replace advocates for faster growth. The new Village Council, seeing the possibility that the community would soon be totally engulfed by large buildings, joined surrounding communities to form the Citizens Coordinating Committee on Friendship Heights and led a successful battle to downzone the Friendship Heights Central Business District by half as the Montgomery County Council passed the first Sector Plan in 1974. This led to lawsuits that ultimately went all the way to the Supreme Court, which, by refusing to hear the case, ratified the downzoning. While the Village and the County prevailed, suits and countersuits continued for a number of years, creating many hard



*Village Council Chairman Alfred Muller, M.D.; Vice Chairman Toby Alterman; and Council member Ann Wild in front of an early shuttle bus, circa 1980*



*By the late 1970s the Village had been completely transformed from houses to high-rise buildings.*

feelings between the “new” residents and those who had formerly been in control.

### **The beginnings of a new community**

As difficult as all of this turmoil was for everyone, the efforts to create a new community spirit continued. There was a lot going on. No longer able just to meet periodically in someone’s home, the Council took office space, first a small apartment in The Willoughby, and then an office in the Chevy Chase Building (5530 Wisconsin Avenue). A Village manager was hired in 1976, signaling the beginning of professional management of Village affairs.

### **The shuttle bus begins**

Then in 1979 shuttle bus service was instituted. This was a life changer

for many Village residents and has become, in the last 35 years, one of the most appreciated and important services. The shuttle bus connects all of the residential buildings with the Metro (opened in 1984), the Village Center (opened in 1986), and shopping. As many residents have aged in place, the bus provides a lifeline to necessary services. Many in the Village, both young and old, manage just fine without owning a car.

### **Change continues as the 1980s begin**

While many services were added over the years (the County bookmobile, a security patrol, a shopping service, a post office) there was a continuing effort to unite the community both visually and by community spirit. Friendship Park was augmented by the addition of numerous flowers, trees, and ornamental plants to soften

the high-rise architecture. In 1980, in partnership with Montgomery County, a parcel of land was purchased between The Irene (now 4701 Willard Avenue) and North Park Towers (now 4615 North Park Avenue). This allowed the creation of a second park, named after William Tyler Page, that has been maintained pesticide free as a welcoming place for children to play.

Development in the Village had slowed down considerably due both to the downzoning and the decreasing supply of developable land. The last of the high-rise condominiums, The Carleton, was built leaving just one parcel in the middle of the Village where a large building could potentially be built. The Village Council wanted to be sure that residents had some input as to how this area would eventually be developed. When one of the houses on the parcel became available, 4602 North Park Avenue, the Council purchased it. Over the

# The Village Council Introduces Shuttle Bus Service

by Alfred Muller, M.D.

The popular shuttle bus service was first proposed by Village Council Vice-Chairman Toby Alterman in 1977. Its purpose was to (1) enhance the quality of life for all residents, especially the elderly or infirm, (2) reduce vehicular traffic/congestion and gas consumption, thereby enhancing the environment, and (3) increase community spirit and identification within the Village.

What seems in retrospect to have been a simple idea took almost two years of study in order to overcome obstacles and bring it to fruition. Despite strong support voiced by most residents in public meetings, a minority of opponents insisted that the shopping center was only a short walk away, The Irene residents already had a van, and a Village bus would therefore be an unnecessary waste of taxpayer dollars.

A few of the larger property owners in the Village even threatened litigation if tax dollars were spent on such a project. County agencies and the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) had to be consulted because of their oversight in transportation matters. Our legal counsel had to review the Village charter to ascertain whether expenditures for a shuttle bus were within its legal powers. It was confirmed that under Section 66-2 of the Village charter, funds could be used for "village improvements" and for "public service."

Despite the threatened lawsuit, it was decided to proceed. Three bids were received for a two-month trial period, and a contract was awarded to Bannister Transportation Services, to begin June 14, 1979. The original bus was a leased 20-passenger Mercedes vehicle, which ran every 20 minutes from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m., six days a week, making six stops: Willoughby

South, 4615/4620 North Park Avenue, The Elizabeth, Highland House West, Highland House, and the bus depot stop near the Chevy Chase Center. At the end of the trial period more than 500 residents signed a petition requesting the service continue. Many felt the bus helped them maintain their independence, while others said it made them feel less isolated.

In November 1979 the Council voted to make the shuttle bus service a permanent Village amenity and purchased a



Mayor Melanie Rose White with former Council Chairman Maurice Trebach (right) and bus driver Juan Pineda



Mayor Melanie Rose White presents bus driver Patrick Voltaire with a certificate of appreciation in 2010. Both Patrick and Juan Pineda received certificates that year.

large, air-conditioned diesel bus to be run by a contractual, professional service. Over the years, the contract has been modified so that the bus is owned by a contractual group, which is responsible for its maintenance, repair, and backup service. The hours of service have been extended to 10 p.m. in the evenings, and to include Sundays, at the suggestion of Village Council Chairman Frank Valeo. Newer buses are now accessible for those with special needs, and additional stops include the south Willoughby, The Carleton, the Village Center, Brighton Gardens, and Whole Foods.

The shuttle bus has been in service for more than 35 years and remains the most popular amenity in Friendship Heights. It has fulfilled the original goals and is perhaps best summarized in the words of one early supporter:

"The shuttle service has changed our lives."

years, in addition to helping preserve some of the last houses in Friendship Heights, the building has been both a good investment and a home to important community amenities including a Montgomery County Police Field Office and, for five years, a branch of the Bethesda–Chevy Chase Rescue Squad.

### **The Village Center gives the community a heart**

While all of this helped create a community from a group of separate high-rise buildings where residents often didn't know their neighbors, the community still lacked a true "heart." Finally, after a 13-year struggle led by Village Council Chairman (and later Mayor) Dr. Alfred Muller, the award-winning Friendship Heights Village Center opened on April 13, 1986. The Center, costing \$3,000,000 and built

totally with Village funds and a bond issue (paid off in 1998, the earliest date possible), has become the true center of the Village and allowed the creation of the community we know today.

Services to the Village grew exponentially with the opening of the Center and have evolved over the years. In addition to a Village manager, a program director (now two) was hired to plan classes, trips, and other activities. Classes of all kinds—including exercise, art, and language—Exercise attract residents of every generation. Trips take residents to local attractions and sites farther away. Concerts, movies, and interesting speakers give added reasons to visit the Village Center. Other groups, such as a walking club, bridge, and Scrabble® players organized themselves. An active corps of volunteers help professional staff keep things running smoothly.

### **More change follows in the 1990s**

As the 1990s began, more change came both within the Village and in the immediately surrounding area. The three-building Somerset House development opened directly outside our northern border. Brighton Gardens is near the Village Center and provides an assisted living option for people who want to stay in Friendship Heights or who move here from other areas. A condominium office building was erected at 4600 North Park Avenue adjacent to the Village owned property.

### **Chase Tower**

One of the last Village parcels to be developed was also one of the most important. Several pieces of property along Willard Avenue, spanning both Friendship Boulevard and The Hills



5550 Friendship Boulevard, originally known as the Carey Winston Building, next door to The Elizabeth



*The west side of the Village Center*

A New Community Emerges

# The Village Center Is the Heart of the Community

by Alfred Muller, M.D.

The opening of the Village Center on April 13, 1986, was the culmination of a 13-year effort. It required the hard work and determination of numerous Village Council members and concerned residents to overcome a seemingly endless series of obstacles and opposition.

The evolution of the Village Center is rooted in Montgomery County's first Sector Plan which was passed by the County Council in 1974. This plan, which included Friendship Heights, downzoned the properties within the Village to CBD-1. This limited the size of future buildings, created more setback from property lines, and required that various amenities be included. One such amenity became the Village Center. The new Sector Plan was litigated vigorously (all the way to the Supreme Court), but was ultimately upheld at the end of 1977. The Village Council was now free to pursue its quest for a community center.

The Center was first envisioned to be built on Parcel One, which is the area on North Park Avenue between 4615 North Park Avenue and The Irene (4701 Willard Avenue), now called William Tyler Page Park. At that time it was occupied by two brick homes (4621 and 4623 North Park Avenue). Before the new zoning, these houses were expected to be replaced by another high-rise building. By acquiring the parcel for public use, Friendship Heights would not only add a needed Village amenity, but also preclude further high-rise building and a worsening "canyonization" on North Park Avenue.

After conducting a community survey, the Village Council voted on November 13, 1978, to participate in a shared purchase of Parcel One with Montgomery County, and entered into two years of negotiation with the County Council. In December 1980 the Village formally acquired Parcel One, having paid \$375,000 and the County having paid \$175,000 to purchase it. The Village Council and its Community Amenities Advisory Committee then began gathering citizen suggestions and exploring various ways of developing Parcel One for public use. After consideration of all suggestions, at a public work session in March 1981, the Village Council voted to demolish both buildings

on the parcel and develop it either as a park or a future community center.

Three finalists were interviewed on September 22, 1981, for the job of architect, and the firm of Walton Madden Cooper was selected. The firm was nominated by Village Council member Michael Pliskin, after seeing the award-winning Julia Bindeman Center in Potomac. The firm's portfolio showed extensive experience in designing educational, recreational, cultural, and religious structures.

Before proceeding on Parcel One, an evaluation and comparison of an alternate site for the future community center was made. This site would entail permanently closing the section of North Park Avenue at the north end of Hubert H. Humphrey Friendship Park, from The Hills Plaza to Friendship Boulevard. The architects and Community Amenities Committee held many public work sessions during which advantages and disadvantages of both sites were considered. An



evaluation matrix showed overwhelming preference for the North Park Avenue location, mainly because of its more central location, accessibility, and potential for a larger building. The Village Council voted unanimously at a public hearing on February 8, 1982, to build the community center on the present location, thereby keeping Parcel One as a permanent public park.

Since the Village had built and maintained that portion of the road they now wished to close, no problems were anticipated. However the County Council and Planning Board objected, saying they must approve any road closure and that they would not do so while the Village opposed any "ring road" connection of Wisconsin Avenue to The Hills Plaza and Friendship Boulevard. The Village Council opposed such a connection, fearing it would serve as a traffic shortcut between Wisconsin and Willard Avenues and would increase traffic into the residential parts of the Village.

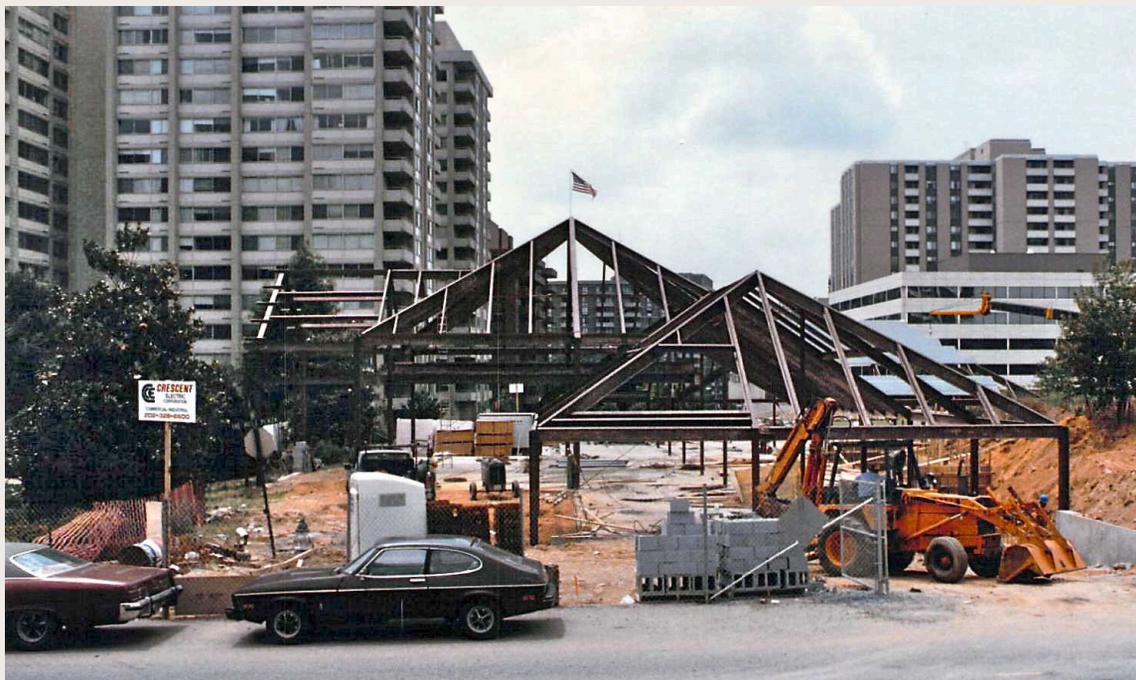
In addition to County objections, a new group, organized by some of the same large property owners/developers who had opposed the downzoning and also

the shuttle bus, started a petition to prevent building the community center adjacent to Hubert H. Humphrey Friendship Park. Their flyers went to every resident and alleged the center would be “in the wrong place, too big, too expensive, and a white elephant.” They especially opposed the planned auditorium as unnecessary since there were “infrequent mass meetings” in the Village.

After many months of negotiation with County Council and Planning Board officials, final agreement was

brokered with County Council President Esther Gelman on February 13, 1984. The County would allow Friendship Heights to close that portion of the road which they had originally built, and could construct the new community center in the former street adjacent to Hubert H. Humphrey Friendship Park. In return, the Village would remove its opposition to connecting The Hills Plaza to Somerset Terrace and not oppose extending Friendship Boulevard southward from Willard Avenue to Western Avenue. Over the ensuing months, Maryland National Capital Park and Planning Commission, DOT, WSSC, PEPCO, and other governmental agencies all agreed to this negotiated agreement. The Village then negotiated a separate agreement with Somerset House to prevent any public access from Friendship Boulevard north to Somerset Boulevard. This overall “grand compromise” allowed some increased “shortcut” traffic into the Village, but prevented any such increase down residential North Park Avenue.

By November 1984 the Village Council published an invitation for bids for the general contractor of the project, met with legal and financial advisors to consider financing methods and technical requirements associated with government borrowing, and consulted with various agencies concerning appropriate programs and activities in the new center. However the initial bids came in higher than anticipated. In response, the Village Council held a public work session on October 1, 1984, and modifications to the building plans were made, which lowered the anticipated costs by approximately \$200,000. The project was then rebid and awarded on January 14, 1985, to low-bidder Edmar Construction for \$1,649,000.



*The Village Center under construction, as seen from The Hills Plaza, with The Willoughby and The Elizabeth in the background*

A \$1.5 million public improvement bond was prepared and offered at a competitive sale on February 6, 1985, to pay for most of the new center and surrounding improvements. (This was subsequently paid off and retired at its earliest date of February 1, 1998.) In preparation for closure of the street, a number of the North Park Avenue pin oaks were replanted on Willoughby Street, subsequently renamed Shoemaker Farm Lane in honor of one of the two founding families of our community. Like the Village itself, despite a changed environment, the oaks have survived and flourished.

The Village Center officially opened and was dedicated on April 13, 1986, coincidentally honoring Thomas Jefferson’s birthday. The ceremony was attended by more than 750 residents, as well as numerous elected officials and other dignitaries, including Baltimore Mayor (and later Governor) William Donald Schaefer and retired Bishop of Washington William Creighton.

Since its dedication, the Village Center has become home to an art gallery, a diversity of educational classes, a health room with a visiting nurse, weekly movies and concerts, and guest appearances by numerous well-known journalists, authors, and elected officials, including senators and the Vice-President of the United States. The American Institute of Architects honored the Center with an Award of Excellence for its “great functional and straightforward plan, inside and out.”

As I, the Village Council Chairman, predicted at its opening: “This is where we will come together: to talk, to listen, to teach, to learn, to debate, to argue, to laugh, to remember—to be a community.” The Center has indeed fulfilled this promise.

# The Village Center Dedication: April 13, 1986



From left: Council member William Stern; Council member Joshua Rafner; Council member Jessie Gertman; Rabbi Avis Miller; Bishop William Creighton; Council member Dennis Melby; Council Chairman Alfred Muller, M.D.; Baltimore Mayor William Donald Schaefer; County Council President William Hanna; State Senator Howard Denis; Cleonice Tavani,

Friendship Heights Village Civic Association President; State Delegate Marilyn Goldwater; William Tyler Page, Jr. (obscured); Evelyn Lincoln, personal secretary to President Kennedy; Frances Howard Humphrey; and (partially visible) Roscoe Nix, President of the Montgomery County Branch of the NAACP



Baltimore Mayor William Donald Schaefer congratulates Alfred Muller, M.D., before speaking.



Village residents speak to staff members at the Village Center front desk on the day of the dedication ceremony.

## The Village Center Through the Years



*Top: This photo of the Center's health room appeared on the cover of the Maryland Municipal League magazine after the Village received an award from the MML for the Village health program in conjunction with Suburban Hospital.*

*Above: Bob and Sylvia Rothstein, longtime Village residents and volunteers at the Village Center library*

*Right: An art exhibit at the Village Center in 1987*





*Chase Tower, 4445 Willard Avenue*

## A Naturally Occurring Retirement Community (NORC)

In 2000, for the first time, the Village became a “Census Designated Place” and we were finally able to see our statistics separated from the single-family neighborhoods around us. It came as something of a surprise to discover that we had just about as many people under the age of 35 as we had over the age of 65. Not surprising was that our over 65 population (and way over) was one of the largest in Montgomery County, one third of our total.

High-rise living, in an area with good public transportation and many walkable services, is very attractive to people looking to downsize and create a more carefree lifestyle. Friendship Heights attracts many such people and many stay as long as they possibly can. This creates what has been dubbed a “NORC.”

The Village Council, recognizing this trend, began adding and tailoring services to help folks stay independent as long as possible. The shuttle bus, appreciated by younger residents, becomes a lifeline to people who no longer drive. A cooperative program with Suburban Hospital brings free blood-pressure checks and a nurse to the Center once a week. Health related lectures and programs are a regular part of the Center schedule. The University of Maryland Extension provides health insurance counseling. “Stop for pedestrian” signs are maintained in the

Plaza, was owned by the Barlow Corporation. Many uses had been discussed for the site, including a major addition to The Willoughby.

The Village Council was concerned about the impact development of that site would have on the Village and began negotiations with Barlow to arrive at a mutually acceptable plan. Ultimately, it was determined that the mass of development would be shifted to the area closest to Wisconsin Avenue with lower rise construction west of The Hills Plaza. Most important to Village residents would be a park dedicated to public use that would be built adjacent to The Willoughby on a steep piece of vacant property referred to as the “Willoughby gulch.”

Eventually, the property was sold to JBG, which developed it according to the agreed upon plan. The Chase Tower Office building was built on the

east end of the site, and a two-story retail building was constructed to the west of The Hills Plaza. The Hills Plaza was re-aligned and a portion became the roof of a garage which spans the two buildings. The beautiful Willoughby Park, with its terraces and multiple seating areas, became the Village’s third park, and opened in 2001.



*The retail portion of the Chase Tower project*

middle of each intersection, along with distinctive brick crosswalks.

As valuable as these services can be, one of the most important aspects of Village living is the opportunity for residents aging in place to connect. Whether to watch a movie, take a class, hear a speaker, volunteer, play Scrabble®, or just read a newspaper in the library, residents can take part in a Center activity seven days a week.

## THE NEW CENTURY

### The second Friendship Heights Sector Plan

More than 20 years after the first Friendship Heights sector plan downzoned the Village to CBD 1, thereby reducing future density, the second sector plan was adopted in 1998. This time the areas most affected were just outside Village boundaries, but still important to residents. The Village Council had, by this time, adopted a moderate stance and supported a reasonable amount of development. Additional construction was going to happen given the location of Friendship Heights. The goal of the Council was to work with developers, the Planning Commission, the Montgomery County Council, neighboring communities, and other interested parties to assure, as much as possible, that growth would enhance the quality of life in Friendship Heights.

The cooperative effort was largely very successful. With the new century, new buildings appeared. The Chevy Chase Land Company property, once a neighborhood retail and high-end shopping destinations. An agreement with the Village Council assured the continued presence of a grocery store throughout construction of the new Chevy Chase Center, and the Chevy Chase Land Company subsidized the Village shuttle bus to transport residents to Giant Food at Westbard.

The “Hechts site,” formerly the home of Woodward & Lothrop (now Wisconsin Place), was redeveloped

into an office building, an apartment building, and a retail area, including Bloomingdale’s. A large Whole Foods grocery store was also added to the project. Village staff worked closely with the developer to minimize any impact on the Village while construction was underway. After the development was completed, the Village shuttle bus was rerouted so residents could make stops at the new property.

## VILLAGE SERVICES CONTINUE TO EVOLVE

### The Montgomery County Police Field Office

During the first half of the 1990s, the Village Council contracted with Montgomery County to assign a police officer to the Village. While this contract was fairly successful for several years, it became increasingly difficult for the police department to staff it, and expensive for the Village to maintain it. When the contract expired, the County declined to renew it.

Staff then brainstormed with the leadership of the Bethesda District to come up with an alternative, and the field office was created in March 1997. The field office increases police presence in the Village by giving officers a reason to be here without taking them away from their other duties. Free space is provided by the Council at 4602 North Park Avenue. The County contributed furniture, signage, and computers. The Village renovated the space into a comfortable office and installed telephones. The Village continues to maintain the office and provides cold drinks and snacks. Upon request, each officer is provided with a key. While no staff is specifically assigned to the office, it is a convenient place to order out for lunch, stop for a soda, get some work done, or use the bathroom. As a result, police presence in the Village is visible all hours of the day. The office was renovated again in 2010 and continues to be a successful collaboration with the County.



The police field office at 4602 North Park Avenue opened in 1997.



The County Bookmobile began visiting Friendship Heights in 1976, providing access to library services for many residents who did not drive. Unfortunately, as the County faced difficult budgetary restraints, the service was cut back to monthly visits in 1981 and finally terminated. The Village Center reading room has partially filled the gap.

### The MVA Mobile Office

When the police field office opened in 1997, it was stocked with various brochures supplied by the police and other agencies. One of the brochures described a service of the Maryland Motor Vehicle Administration where MVA staff visited locations throughout Maryland. They traveled on a bus that served as a mobile office and provided many of the services available at MVA offices—none of which was very con-

venient to Friendship Heights. Friendship Heights needed that bus!

Although the MVA staff wanted to work with the Village, it took a while before Friendship Heights could be included because the bus schedule was already full. After much perseverance, the MVA Mobile Office started in the Village in February 1999 and was the only “down county” site in Maryland. This service is very popular with both Village residents and those from surrounding communities and

is a wonderful partnership between the Village and the state of Maryland. The unfailingly helpful staff can renew driver’s licenses, photo identifications, and vehicle registrations. They can also issue disability placards and accept returns of license tags. In 2012, they were presented with the Elizabeth Scull Outstanding Community Service Award by the Village Council.



Since 1999, the MVA Mobile Office has come to Friendship Heights every month and provides a valuable and convenient service.

## Friendship Heights gets a post office

With the opening of four new high-rise residential buildings in the 1970s, the number of residents in Friendship Heights had increased to almost 5,000. In addition, there were two new high-rise office buildings and a Holiday Inn, all of which made the need for an on-site postal facility more urgent.

In 1974 Village Council member Irene Murphy contacted eight commercial buildings in the area seeking a potential location for a postal facility, to no avail. In 1977, at the urging of the Village Council Chairman, Dr. Alfred Muller, Maryland Senator Paul Sarbanes wrote to the U.S. Postal Service requesting a full-service postal facility within Friendship Heights, again to no avail. In the same year, an offer by the owner of the Barlow Building to house a post office was rejected by the Postmaster General, who informed the Village Council Secretary that “a computer study is being done on where postal services would be located.”

In December 1978 a temporary postal facility was permitted in the Chevy Chase Office building lobby during the holidays “to test the need for a permanent facility.” It was subsequently kept open with limited service.

In 1981 Woodward & Lothrop and the Village Council requested that the Postmaster General support a full-service facility on the abandoned portion of Willard Avenue adjoining Wisconsin Avenue, again without success.

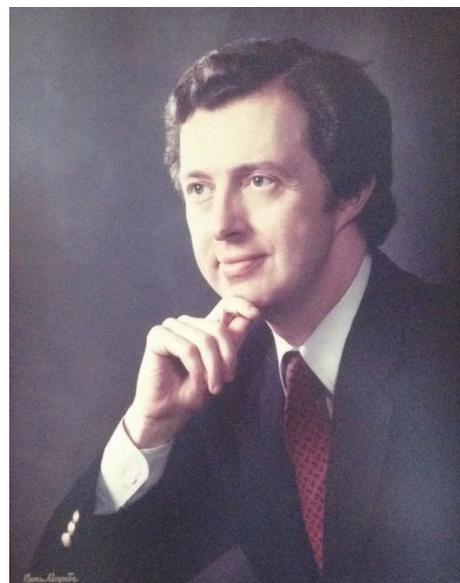
Finally, in 1984, at the request of Dr. Muller, Congressman Michael Barnes contacted the U.S. Post Office and obtained approval for the partial-service postal facility in the lobby of 5530 Wisconsin Avenue to be expanded, becoming the present much-used post office. Initially, it was open six days a week, but after a few years service was decreased to just weekdays.

In 2009 the facility was on a list

of 400 post offices around the country to be closed. In response, more than 3,500 signatures were collected on a petition from residents and businesses, along with letters of support from numerous elected officials, all of which emphasized the need for a post office in Friendship Heights. This was especially important for the many elderly residents who do not drive. And, for the many residents who do drive, the local post office would prevent untold thousands of vehicular trips to outlying post offices, thereby saving energy and lessening air pollution. Such persuasive facts, the overwhelming community support, as well as the leadership of County Executive Ike Leggett and Congressman Chris Van Hollen were decisive in having the Village post office removed from the list of facilities slated to close.

## Other partnerships

The Village Council and staff are always looking for ways to stretch limited resources. Cooperation with



*Dr. Alfred Muller served on the Village Council for 26 years, from 1975 until 2001. Under his leadership, first as Chairman and then as Mayor, the Village of Friendship Heights became a true community.*

other agencies and organizations has helped do that.

For as long as the service was available, the Montgomery County Public



*The Friendship Heights Post Office has provided a valuable service since a facility was first opened in 1978. Although threatened with closure in 2009, the Village post office is still going strong.*

Library Bookmobile stopped at the Center every other week. The Goodwill Industries truck also made regular visits. At times a “mammovan” (offering mammograms), a veterans services vehicle, and a bloodmobile scheduled stops throughout the year. For many years, the Village has worked closely with Suburban Hospital by offering health-related services, including weekly blood pressure testing.

For about five years, the Village provided space to the Bethesda–Chevy Chase Rescue squad for a remote office. The Village equipped the top floor of 4602 North Park Avenue for use by the squad, and local landlords provided furniture and appliances. The B-CC Rescue Squad staffed the office and purchased a “chase car,” a first response vehicle, that could often reach a site before an ambulance could be dispatched from the main office on Battery Lane. Ultimately, the satellite office became difficult for the Rescue Squad to manage and staff, and it was closed. While it was here, the office was a greatly appreciated service.

## Village volunteers

From the time the Village Center opened, volunteers have kept it staffed and running smoothly. At times, up to 100 volunteers have assisted the Center’s paid staff in doing everything from running the front desk, preparing and serving Tuesday Tea, facilitating the flu shot program, assisting the police at the field office, and maintaining the Center’s Reading Room to many other tasks and responsibilities. Volunteers, appointed by the Village Council, serve on the Community Advisory Committee, the Program Advisory Committee, and the Friendship Heights Transportation Management District Advisory Committee (TMD).

Village Council members themselves are also volunteers. Many served in other volunteer capacities in the Village before becoming elected to Council positions. The rebuilding of Humphrey Park (2003) and a

complete resurfacing of Village roads (2008), along with numerous projects at the Village Center, were supervised by the late Leonard “Chip” Mudd, who was a retired civil engineer. Other Council members have taken a special interest in Village parks, the Village Centennial, veterans services, and strengthening ties with the TMD and the Western Montgomery County Citizens Advisory Board.

## Village events bring the community together

For many years, the Council has hosted four annual Village-wide events. These events attract hundreds of residents and guests and provide an introduction for many to the activities at the Village Center.

The programs start with a New Year’s Day reception at the Center. This catered event, usually accompanied by a harpist, allows residents to nosh and mingle in an elegant setting.

Community Day, usually held on April 13, celebrates the opening of the Village Center on April 13, 1986. The event varies, but has evolved into a

community-wide barbecue with lively music—a fun and family-friendly affair.

The Fourth of July celebration is quite elaborate and includes free hot dogs, snow cones, popcorn, cupcakes, and lots of entertainment. It is especially popular during election years and provides politicians—at the county, state, and national levels—an opportunity to make speeches and shake hands. This celebration—in an urban village—has the feel of an old-fashioned, small-town gathering.

The fall event started as the Fall Festival and paid tribute to a different country or culture each year. In 2007, the Village dropped the Fall Festival and held its first Taste of Friendship Heights. Restaurants from the immediate area (including both sides of the District line) offer tastes of food and beverages for a nominal fee. Council members, staff, and volunteers work throughout the year to make this complex event successful. A portion of the proceeds is donated to a local charity.

## And lots of other stuff

The goal of the Village Council and



*The Village Center staff celebrated the birthday of Front Desk Receptionist Jacquie Koenig (seated at center). Left to right: Jennie Fogarty, Associate Program Director; Pauline Martin, Front Desk Receptionist; Julian Mansfield, Village Manager; Hector Garcia, Maintenance Supervisor; Anne O’Neil, Associate Program Director, Betty Ardizzone, Facilities Manager; Bernadette Salyer, Financial Assistant; Tracey Biagas, Front Desk Supervisor (seated); Annie Natali, Front Desk Receptionist; and Bob Shapiro, Assistant Village Manager/Finance Director.*

staff is to make the Village Center welcoming and useful to as many residents of the Village as possible. An art curator arranges monthly exhibits and receptions. Program staff bring in a continuing series of authors, many nationally known, to talk about and sell their books. There are seminars and lectures on an endless array of subjects. County, state, and sometimes national leaders come to the Village Center to connect with their constituencies. There are concerts and movies nearly every week. In this age of cyber snooping and identity theft, the Village even provides a “shredding-service” truck several times a year for the benefit of residents. The Village Council regularly recognizes volunteers with awards of appreciation, and welcomes residents who reach the age of 100 into the Village Centenarian Club.

The Village has come a long way from a neighborhood of just over 100 houses.

## The future

There is much more to come in Friendship Heights. The GEICO property (south of the Village on Willard Avenue) has been approved for office buildings, apartment buildings, and townhouses. South of us, in the District of Columbia, plans are underway for a number of new projects. More restaurants and more shopping, in a more walkable area, are planned. The Village’s location is unbeatable. The community is welcoming. And, the residents—both young and not so young—look forward to the next 100 years.



Mayor Melanie Rose White honors centenarian and volunteer Marianne Cook. The Village Council recognizes outstanding volunteers every year on Community Day and July 4. The Council also established a Centenarian Club for Village resident centenarians. The Club has a growing membership!

## Voting in the Village

by Alfred Muller, M.D.

The 1914 Village charter specifies that elections are to be held on the second Monday of May, every two years, but it does not specify the voting hours or where the voting will take place. These details are left to the discretion of the governing Committee, now the Village Council.

The election notice of 1971 stated that voting hours were from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. “or until everyone had voted.” With the passage of new Maryland legislation in 1973, the voting hours were changed to become consistent with state and national standards, and remain 7 a.m. to 8 p.m.

Until 1973 the elections were held in one of the Village homes or businesses. For example, in 1967 the elections were held in the Suburban Trust Bank office. In 1973 they were held in the Barlow Building lobby (5454 Wisconsin Avenue), and, in 1975, in a County bookmobile parked on North Park Avenue adjacent to Humphrey Park. For several years a tent was placed on North Park Avenue.

Since the opening of the Village Center in April 1986, elections, both local and national, have been held in the auditorium. Since 1975 Village Council elections have been overseen, and the votes tallied, by the nonpartisan League of Women Voters, to assure complete impartiality and accuracy.

## ELECTION NOTICE!

Notice is hereby given that, pursuant to Chapter 131 of the Public Local Laws enacted by the General Assembly of Maryland of 1914, entitled “An act to create a special taxing district to be known under this Act as the villages of ‘Friendship Heights’ and ‘The Hills’ . . . for the selection and succession of a committee to be named and known as ‘Friendship Heights Citizens’ Committee’ an election will be held on

**Monday, May 8, 1967**  
at the

**SUBURBAN TRUST CO. (Lower Level)**

**5410 Wisconsin Ave., Chevy Chase, Maryland**

in said villages for the purpose of electing seven members to be and constitute the “FRIENDSHIP HEIGHTS CITIZENS’ COMMITTEE,” for the next succeeding two years.

All resident taxpayers upon real or personal property situate in the said villages shall be eligible to vote at such election.

Such election will be conducted by the following Judges and Clerks duly appointed as required by said act, namely:

Judges of Election:  
FREDERICK ECKARTT  
HELEN KVEDAR  
FLORENCE WANVEER

Clerks of Election:  
BARBARA DUNN  
MARY BUTRIMAWICH

The polls will be open from 7 o’clock P.M., to 9 o’clock P.M., when the ballots shall be counted according to law.

Any person desiring to become a candidate or to nominate another person as a candidate for election as a member of said Committee, is required to notify in writing the Secretary of the Committee, Thelma Edwards, 4525 High Street, by Monday, May 1, 1967, so that the name of such person may be placed upon the ballot.

The Judges will decide all questions as to qualification of voters.  
By order of “Friendship Heights Citizens’ Committee.”

THELMA EDWARDS  
Secretary

LAWRENCE MYERS  
Chairman

## Notable Speakers at the Village Center

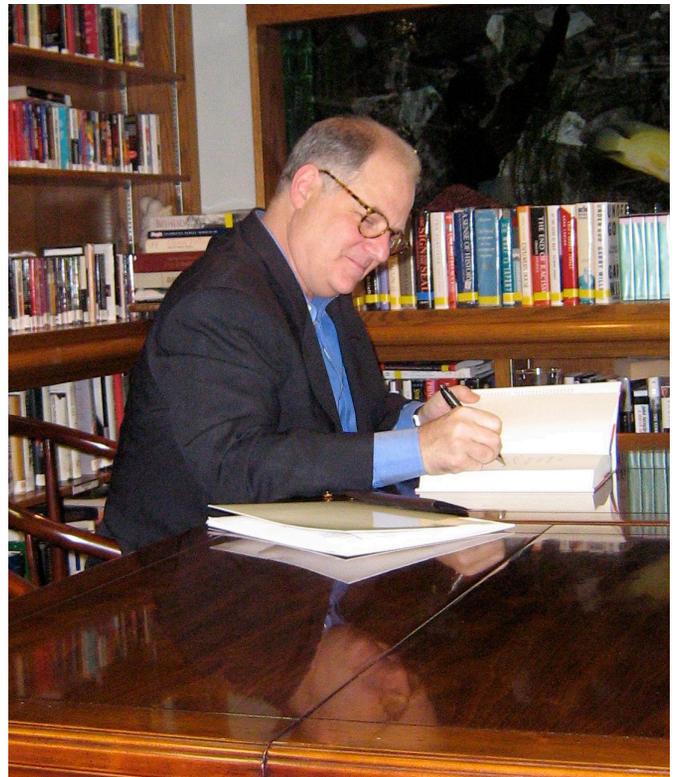


Over the years we have hosted many speakers at the Village Center, including noted authors, journalists, entertainers, elected officials, Cabinet Secretaries, and a Supreme Court Justice. A few are shown here. For a listing of all speakers between 2002 and 2014, see pages 58 and 59.

*The 1972 Democratic presidential running mates Sargent Shriver (left) and George McGovern had a reunion at the Village Center following Senator McGovern's book signing in 2006.*



*Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi greeted Village Council members and staff during her visit to the Center.*



*New York Times columnist and author Frank Rich autographed books in the Village Center library.*



*Clockwise from top left: Former news anchorman Roger Mudd; best-selling author Laura Hillenbrand; former Secretary of State Madeleine Albright; New York Times columnist Maureen Dowd; Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia, with members of the Friendship Heights Village Council; former Secretary of Defense William Cohen and his wife Janet Langhart Cohen; and New York Times columnist Gail Collins*



# List of Speakers at the Village Center, 2002 Through 2014

## 2002

Elizabeth Drew, Patricia Gaffney, Laura Hillenbrand, Johnny Holliday, Marvin Kalb, Bob Levey, Colman McCarthy, Brad Meltzer, Diane Rehm, John Rehm, Scott Simon, Kathleen Tallmadge, Helen Thomas, David Vise, Jay Winik, and Alexandra Zapruder

## 2003

Akbar Ahmed, Dale Bumpers, Tucker Carlson, Eleanor Clift, Gilbert Hahn, Walter Isaacson, Anne Keiser, Jane Leavy, Eugene McCarthy, Alice McDermott, Charles Moose, Amy Schapiro, Strobe Talbott, Evan Thomas, Judith Viorst, Milton Viorst, and David Von Drehle

## 2004

Joel Achenbach, Anne Applebaum, Matthew Brzezinski, Steve Coll, Maureen Dowd, Sarah Erdman, Thomas Hargrave, Kitty Kelley, Kate Lehrer, Jim Lehrer, James Mann, John McCain, John McCaslin, Walter Mears, Anthony Pitch, Cokie Roberts, Walter Shapiro, Sally Bedell Smith, Lila Snow, Abigail Trafford, Russell Train, and Evelyn Vuko

## 2005

Veneeta Acon; Madeleine Albright; Maurice Atkin; Julian Bond on the history of rock and roll as the history of American race relations; Kay Chernush on human trafficking; Susan Coll; John Jay Daly on “Wacky Washington”; Anthony Fauci, M.D., on Avian flu and a possible pandemic; Marc Fisher on the media; Lesley Lee Francis on her grandfather Robert Frost; Betty Friedan; Warren Getler; Georgie Anne Geyer; Linda Greenhouse; Nancy Greenspan; Henry Haller; John Harris; economist Heidi Hartmann on privatizing Social Security; Christopher Kimball; Bob Kinkead; Malcolm Lawrence; Jaedene Levy; Margit Meissner; Roland Mesnier; Baltimore Mayor Martin O’Malley on the state of the state; Charlie Peters; Robert Poole; John Prendergast on Darfur; Steve Roberts; Nancy Roman on her career at NASA where she was the first Chief of Astronomy; Jill Scharff; Roy Sewall; Taylor Seybolt on Darfur; Ron Shaffer (“Dr. Gridlock”); Curtis Sittenfeld; Katherine Skiba; Susan Stamberg on her career in radio; Jim Wallis; Kenneth Walsh; Kathy Ward on improving the quality of life; and Jules Witcover

## 2006

Daniel Benjamin; Paul Bremer; Maryland Attorney General Joseph Curran, Jr.; E.J. Dionne on the 2006 election results; Debra Galant; Erland Higinbotham on China and India; Murray Horwitz, head of AFI Silver Theatre, on the Oscars; Haynes Johnson; Christopher Kimball; David Maraniss; Senator George McGovern; Joan Nathan; Joyce Carol Oates; James Reston, Jr.; Frank Rich; Phyllis Richman on her career as *The Washington Post* restaurant reviewer; Tom Rieks; Marion Rodgers; Susan Shreve; Steven Simon; Leonard Steinhorn; Rachel Thompson on George C. Marshall; *New York Times* columnist John Tierney; Judith Warner; Frank Warren; Rosa Weinstein on the history of nursery rhymes; Michael Weisskopf; Barbara Whalen; Charles Whalen; and Colonel Larry Wilkerson, former chief of staff to Colin Powell.

Candidate forums were held for the County Executive (in July) and County Council District 1 (in October). There were also monthly lectures on health.

## 2007

Laura Cohen Apelbaum; Judith Benkendorf on genetics and disease; Betty Bigombe on Uganda; Joann Boughman, M.D.; David Brooks; Arch Campbell on retirement; Bob Deans; Janet Dechary on global warming; Tom DeFrank; Lee Hamilton on the Iraq Study Group; Joan Hart on Renoir; Saidiya Hartman; Sanford Horwitt; David Ignatius; Walter Isaacson; Edward P. Jones; Barbara Kantrowitz; Pat Wingert Kelly; Andrea Mitchell; Connie Morella on Europe–United States relations; Dana Priest on Walter Reed Medical Center; Martha Raddatz; Michel Richard; Candace Ridington in a one-woman show on Emily Dickinson; Terri Rodda on balance and fall prevention; David Sack, M.D., on positive psychology; David Saperstein on faith and politics; Paul Seder, M.D., on weight management; Eleanor Stoddard on WWII nurse Lieutenant Colonel Nola Forrest; Bob Woodruff; and Lee Woodruff

## 2008

Richard Ben-Veniste on the 9/11 Commission; Eleanor Clift; Robert Dallek; Michael Dirda on books; Kimberly Dozier; Howard Fineman; Ed Fritz on Presidents Polk, T. Roosevelt, and Wilson; Chuck Hagel; Christopher Kimball; Melissa Klein on nutrition; Howard Kurtz; Charles Lane; County Executive Isiah Leggett in a town hall–style meeting; Louis Maier; Ruth Marcus, from *The Washington Post*, on politics; Roger Mudd; Dee Dee Myers; Nancy Pelosi; Robert Samuelson; Marc Sandalow; Daniel Schorr; Ted Sorenson; David Stewart; Judith Viorst; and Natalie Wexler

## **2009**

Dan Balz; Asoka Bandarage; Richard Breitman; Peter Carlson; Janet Langhart Cohen; William S. Cohen; Gail Collins; Captain Victor Delano on Pearl Harbor; Kirstin Downey; Gwen Ifill; Haynes Johnson; Ronald Kessler; Ann Lewis on the 2008 campaign; Steve Luxenberg; Robert McCartney on local issues; George Michael on his long career in broadcasting; Aaron David Miller; Robert Musil; Mark Ozer; Tom Ricks; Cokie Roberts; Justice Antonin Scalia; Mark Stein; David O. Stewart; James Thurber on President Obama's first 100 days; Gary Walters on his career as Chief White House Usher; Richard Wolffe

The Center co-sponsored two special lectures with the Norman and Florence Brody Public Policy Forum: Susan Schwab spoke in October and David Frum in November.

## **2010**

Anne Barton, Maurine Beasley, Itzhak Brook, Tracy Chevalier, Chris Farrell, Martha Grimes, Izzy Heller, Christopher Kimball, Anne Kornblut, Armand Lakner, Jacobina Martin, Judith Martin ("Miss Manners"), Norah O'Donnell, Mark Ozer, Sarah Pekkanen, Robert Reischauer, Steve Roberts, Curtis Roosevelt, Mark Shields, Jane Smiley, Lucie Snodgrass, Geoff Tracy, and Jerry Wolman

## **2011**

Carol Bessette on Washington, D.C., during the Civil War; resident Ambassador William Bodde on the Cuban missile crisis; John Bredar; Lieutenant Governor Anthony Brown; Judge Thomas Buerghenthal; David Elfin; State Senator Brian Frosh; Diana Henriques; Stan Hinden; Joan Marsh; Patricia Mote; Ron Nessen; Sarah Pekkanen; Dana Priest; Cokie Roberts; Steve Roberts; Daniel Serwer on peacekeeping; resident Anthony Silard on communication; Helen Simonson; Lafe Solomon on the National Labor Relations Act; Frances Stickles; Stephen Tankel; and Joe Yonan

## **2012**

Bill Bronrott, a Deputy Administrator at the U.S. Department of Transportation, held a "White House Roundtable" in February; Walter Isaacson; Douglas Kamerow; former Congressman Patrick Kennedy; County Executive Isiah Leggett held a town hall meeting; Wilbert Luck; Saralyn Mark; Cecelia Hopkins Porter; Evan Thomas; U.S. Representative Chris Van Hollen held a town hall meeting and returned in June to convene a Congressional Field Hearing on the implementation of the Mental Health Parity and Addiction Equity Act; and Kenneth Walsh

## **2013**

Anne Barton, Tara Brach, Veronica Brand, Richard Breitman, John Burgess, Ellen Cassedy, Peter Clark, Allan Lichtman, Cate Lineberry, Leslie Maitland, Hedrick Smith, Daniel Stashower, Susan Tejada, and Kenneth Walsh

## **2014**

Melissa Abrams, M.D., on skin conditions; Asoka Bandarage; Anne Barton on romance writing; Carol Bessette on sculptress Vinnie Ream; Lisa Branick on fall prevention; Kristen Callihan on romance writing; Wade Chien, M.D., on hearing loss; Clete Clark on talking with your physician; Eric Cline on excavations in Israel; Deborah Edwards Demaree; Christopher Farrell, M.D., on joint replacement; Howard Feinstein; Carol Fennelly on Hope House; Majid Fotuhi, M.D., on cognitive performance; Martin Goldsmith; Todd Goodglick, M.D., on eyelid surgery; Royce Hanson; Eva Hausner, M.D., on diagnosing heart disease; Pam Holland; Sally Hurme; Walter Isaacson; Heidi Isenberg-Feig, M.D., on allergies; Sanjay Jain, M.D., on living a healthy and balanced life; John Kelly on stories about the Village of Friendship Heights; Deborah K. Kovach on simplifying your life; Eric Lieberman, M.D., on heart disease; Mike McCurry; Nancy Mellon; Kelly Mills, M.D., on Parkinson's disease; Alfred Muller, M.D.; William Offutt; Roberta Palestine, M.D., on skin conditions; Kimberly Palmer; Hope Ramsay on romance writing; Gayatri Reilly, M.D., on diabetes; Hans Riemer; Amy Rispin on early farm families in the Village of Friendship Heights; Cokie Roberts; Steven Robins; Barbara Scheiber; Jacquelyn Days Serwer on the National Museum of African American History and Culture; David O. Stewart; Gloria Sussman on listening to music to improve the quality of life; Diane Tamayo on early farm families in the Village of Friendship Heights; Lauren Taney, M.D., on glaucoma; Cleonice Tavani; Quoc-Anh Thai, M.D., on causes of back and neck pain; Meghan Thomas, M.D., on skin conditions; Daniel Valaik, M.D., on joint replacement; Elissa Brent Weissman; Sheldon Winkler, M.D., on WWII music; Sandra Youla on architecture in the Village of Friendship Heights; and Sepideh Zarani, M.D., on eye allergies

# Evolution of the Village Charter

## Laws of Maryland 1914, Chapter 131, codified of the Montgomery County Code

 On March 20, 1914, then Governor Phillips Lee Goldsborough approved the act of the General Assembly of Maryland establishing a “special taxing district” to be known as the villages of “Friendship Heights and The Hills.”

The legal description of the villages’ boundaries set forth in the act encompasses the 33-acre triangular tract, which is now formed by Wisconsin and Willard Avenues, Somerset Terrace, and the land behind The Elizabeth, 4615 North Park Avenue, and 4701 Willard Avenue.

The act authorized the Board of County Commissioners of Montgomery County to make a special annual levy (of up to 10 cents on each one hundred (\$100) dollars of the assessable value of the real and personal property of the villages) for the purposes of “opening, improving, widening, maintaining, repairing, and lighting streets, roads, lanes, alleys, sidewalks, parking, drainage, sewerage, sanitation, and other village improvements, and for other public service, including the removal of ashes, garbage, and other refuse and the disposal thereof.”

A “Friendship Heights Citizens’ Committee” was established with the following initial members being appointed for a one-year term: Henry W. Offutt, *Chairman*; J.W. Bogley; John A. Garrett; Charles E. Roach; William Tyler Page; Walter C. Balderston; and Emory H. Bogley. Thereafter, Committee members were to be annually elected beginning the first Monday in May 1915. All resident taxpayers upon real or personal property situated in the villages were made eligible to serve on the Committee and to vote in the election.

Section 7 of the act provided that the Board of County Commissioners may upon recommendation of the Committee adopt such regulations with respect to dumping of garbage, sanitation, erection of buildings, care of property, or other police or health regulations and provide penalties for the violation thereof. The Committee was given the power to enforce such regulations.

Other provisions included the removal of Committee members by the Commissioners for malfeasance or misfeasance in office; the requirement for open bidding for expenditures for any one undertaking exceeding \$300; and the protection from personal liability of Committee members in the making of contracts and performing duties under the act.

## Laws of Maryland 1922, Chapter 343

In 1922 the act was amended to provide for the election of the Committee every two years. Provisions were added for paving, grading, or improving streets and laying of assessments to cover the cost. The Committee was authorized to borrow up to 10 percent of the assessed valuation of all

real estate within the area for the purpose of making these improvements.

## Laws of Maryland 1951, Chapter 417

References in the act to the Montgomery County Board of Commissioners were changed to the Montgomery County Council by a 1951 amendment.

## Laws of Maryland 1973, Chapter 143

In April 1973 an amendment to the act, to become effective immediately, provided that the members of the Committee shall be elected by and from all registered voters of Montgomery County residing in Friendship Heights and The Hills.

## Laws of Maryland 1975, Chapter 779

The name change from the Friendship Heights Citizens’ Committee to the Friendship Heights Village Council was enacted in 1975.

## Laws of Maryland 1977, Chapter 661

A 1977 amendment granted the Village Council the power, subject to the approval of the County Council, to adopt regulations with respect to dumping of garbage, sanitation, erection of buildings, care of property, tearing up of streets, speed regulations, removal of snow and ice, or other police or health regulations. Power of enforcement through criminal or civil actions, along with a “clean it or lien it” provision, were also enacted.

## Laws of Maryland 1980, Chapter 230

An expansion of the purposes for which the special tax may be used by the Village Council was enacted in 1980 to include acquiring, building, renovating, altering, or removing buildings for public use; providing amenities, recreation, and parks; and furnishing administrative and maintenance services.

## Laws of Maryland 1994, Chapter 81

And in 1994 the name of the special tax area was made known as the “Village of Friendship Heights” instead of the “Villages of Friendship Heights and the Hills.” The Village Council was also granted authority to assign all or part of the duties of its secretary or treasurer to one or more employees, to appoint a Village Manager, and to employ such other employees or contractors as it deems necessary to operate the Village government.

The act, as amended, is now incorporated in Chapter 66 of the Montgomery County Code (The Village Charter).

—Researched by Joel Williams

# Village of Friendship Heights—By the Numbers

The 2010 U.S. Census revealed some interesting data about Village residents. Here are some of the details.

**Total population**  
4,698

**Population in owner-occupied housing units**  
1,409

**Median age (in years)**  
47.10

**Population in renter-occupied housing units**  
3,289

**Male population**  
1,907

**Female population**  
2,791

**Family households**  
31.6%

**Householders living alone**  
58.3%  
with male head of household 18.7%  
with female head of household 39.5%

**Average household size**  
1.57

**Average family size**  
2.39

## **Race** (one race)

**White**  
77.9%

**Black or African American**  
5.7%

**American Indian and Alaska Native**  
0.1%

**Asian**  
11.8%

**Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander**  
0.1%

**Other**  
1.0%



*"Oh, It's You, Welcome," a J. Seward Johnson, Jr., sculpture was purchased in 2000.*

# Other Buildings in the Village



4600 North Park Avenue office condominium



Chevy Chase Building, 5530 Wisconsin Avenue



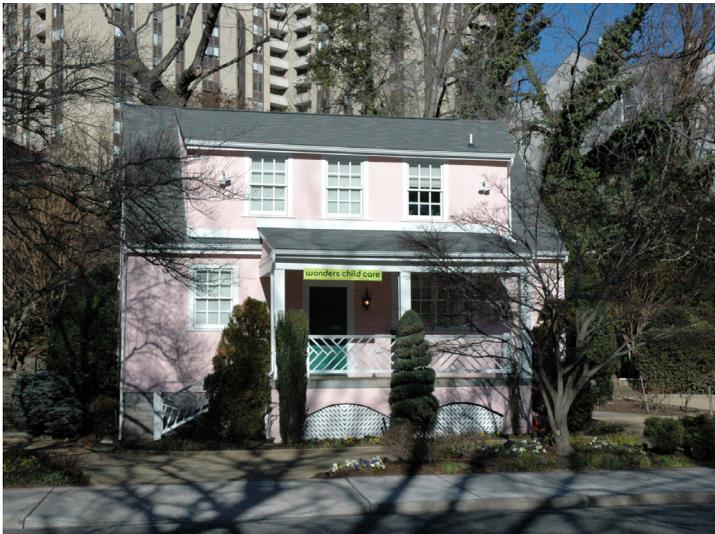
The Elizabeth condominiums, 4601 North Park Avenue



4615 North Park Avenue apartments



Highland House apartments, 5480 Wisconsin Avenue



"The Pink House," 4607 Willard Avenue



4620 North Park Avenue condominiums



Sunrise Brighton Gardens, 5555 Friendship Boulevard



Courtyard Chevy Chase by Marriott, 5520 Wisconsin Avenue



4701 Willard Avenue apartments



Highland House West apartments, 4450 South Park Avenue



The Willoughby condominiums, 4515 Willard Avenue



The Carleton condominiums, 4550 North Park Avenue

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61	Julian P. Mansfield
62	Joel Williams
63	Joel Williams
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66	Julian P. Mansfield

# Centennial Events and Activities

## Centennial Saturday Series

January 25, 2014

### “Birth of a Village”

Leonard Grant, William Offutt, and members of the Shoemaker Family

March 1, 2014

### “From High Street to High-Rises”

Deborah Edwards Demaree and Royce Hanson

May 10, 2014

### “Transition and Mobilization After 1970”

Nancy Mellon; Alfred Muller, M.D.; Steven A. Robins; and Cleonice Tavani

November 15, 2014

### “Looking At the Past and the Future”

Peg Downey; Clara Lovett; Alfred Muller, M.D.; Rachael Schacherer; Sam Solovey; and Cleonice Tavani

## Street Banners

Centennial banners were installed on Village streetlight poles throughout the community.

## Street Signs

The Village’s street signs were replaced with an upgraded design featuring the same color and design elements as the banners.

## Art Exhibit

A multi-media art exhibit was on display from December 2013 through January 2014 at the Village Center. The exhibit featured paintings created in the style of artists 100 years ago.

## Village Center Displays

New displays were installed in the Center hallways and display cases, including historical photos and a map showing some of the original homes in the Villages of Friendship Heights and The Hills.

## Fashion Show

The Center hosted a show featuring a review of fashion from 1914 through the decades.

## Seasonal Events

Three annual community-wide events spotlighted the Centennial year: New Year’s Day Open House, the official kickoff for the Centennial; Community Day on April 13, the anniversary of the opening of the Village Center; and the July 4 celebration.

## Architectural Program

Sandra Youla, Village resident and architectural historian with the Montgomery County Planning Department, talked about the history of architecture in the Village, with a special focus on post-World War II development.

## The Washington Post’s “Answer Man”

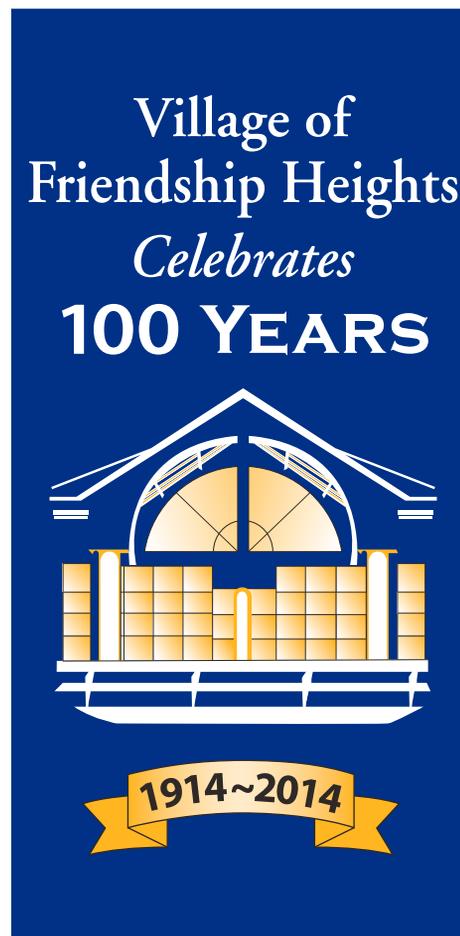
Washington Post columnist and “Answer Man” John Kelly spoke at the Village Center and shared some little-known stories about Friendship Heights and its history.

## Storytelling Program

Storyteller Ellouise Schoettler used the words and memories of Lillian Shoemaker Brown, a descendant of one of the original farm owners in the Village, to capture her story.

## The Early Farm Families

Diane Tamayo, a descendant of one of the first settler families, and Amy Rispin, author of *History of Brookdale*, spoke about the evolution of the farmland purchased in the early 19th century.



The Village Centennial street banner



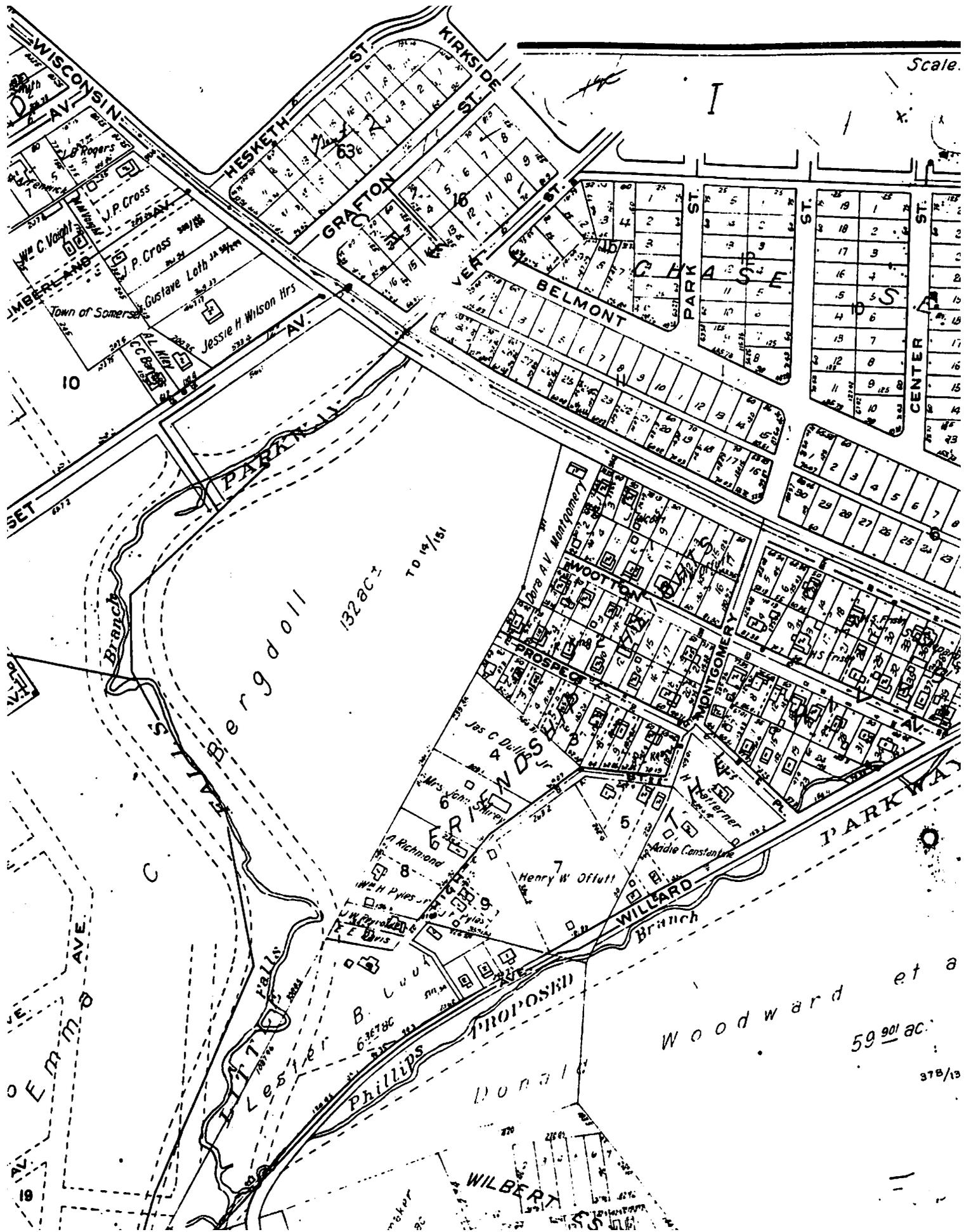
Workers install new street signs.



“...friendship is never anything but sharing.”

—Elie Wiesel

*Merlin, a 17-year-old African grey parrot, lives at the Village Center. Seen here with Alfred Muller, M.D., Merlin delights visitors of all ages with his playful antics and mimicry of human speech. Merlin's repertoire of sounds also includes the beep of a fax machine, meows, and whistles galore!*



Tax assessor's map of the Villages of Friendship Heights and The Hills from 1935



**Village of Friendship Heights**  
The First 100 Years  
1914-2014

Who could predict that the tranquil farmlands and peach orchards of Friendship Heights, Maryland, would one day become a bustling, urban enclave that is home to thousands. This book commemorates the Centennial of the Village of Friendship Heights and traces its rich history through recollections of residents and an amazing collection of photographs.

Village of Friendship Heights  
4433 South Park Avenue  
Chevy Chase, Maryland