



## CHEVY CHASE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

NEWSLETTER

WINTER 2016

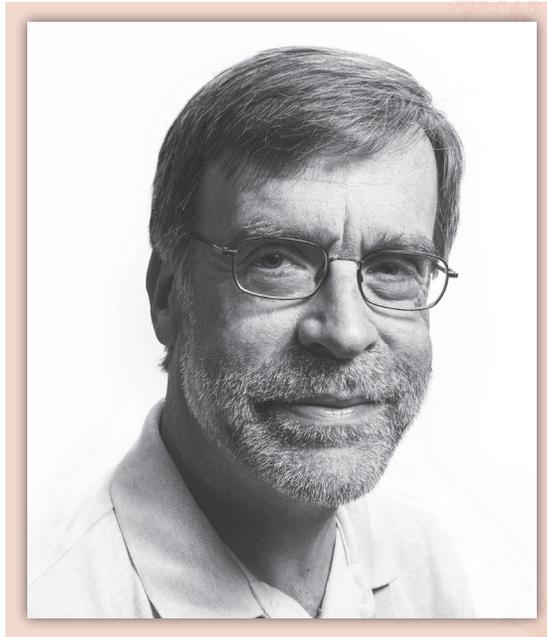
### Streetcar Suburbs: How a 10-Cent Ride Changed Washington

Chevy Chase Historical Society (CCHS) will kick off its 35<sup>th</sup> anniversary year with a program about one of Chevy Chase's most historic and colorful icons: the streetcar. The Rock Creek Railway line brought residents of the new suburb to their jobs in the city and back to their leafy and tranquil Chevy Chase community. Learn more about how Chevy Chase became one of America's first "streetcar suburbs" at the CCHS 2016 spring lecture, "Streetcar Suburbs: How a 10-Cent Ride Changed Washington".

Local historian and author John DeFerrari will describe how the advent of the streetcar changed not only Chevy Chase but communities around the nation. **His illustrated lecture is on Sunday, March 20, 2016, at 4:00 pm at the Chevy Chase Village Hall, 5906 Connecticut Avenue.** He will discuss his recently published book, *Capital Streetcars: Early Mass Transit in Washington, D.C.*

DeFerrari will lead the audience on a joyride to explore the social, economic and political conditions that gave rise to the establishment and expansion of streetcar lines. The resulting accessible, affordable and efficient transportation changed the fabric of American life forever. The streetcar lines redefined where people lived, worked and played. They also enabled growing urban populations to spread to much wider, previously inaccessible areas. The paths of diverse citizens, ranging from day laborers to Supreme Court justices, intersected on the streetcars as they never had before.

Born and raised in Washington, D.C., DeFerrari has enjoyed a lifelong passion for local history. In 2009, after admiring Washington's beautiful buildings and public spaces for



Historian and Author John DeFerrari

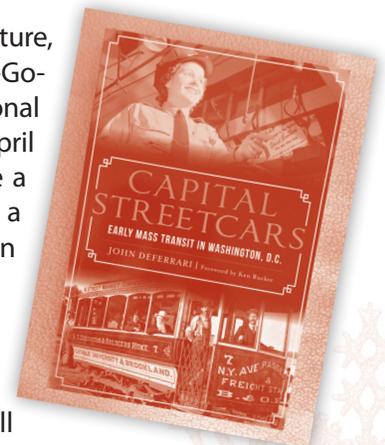
many years, DeFerrari began writing about them in his popular local history blog, *Streets of Washington*. He has also written two other books on local history: *Lost Washington, D.C.* (2011), and *Historic Restaurants of Washington, D.C.: Capital Eats* (2013).

DeFerrari is a graduate of the Catholic University of America and holds a Master's Degree in English Literature from Harvard University. He has worked for many years as an analyst for the federal government. He serves as a trustee of the D.C. Preservation League and in that role actively works to preserve the historic environment of the nation's capital.

The program is free and open to the public. Light refreshments will be served. Copies of DeFerrari's book will be available for sale and signing by the author. Questions concerning the program may be directed to CCHS at 301-656-6141 or [chevychasehistory@msn.com](mailto:chevychasehistory@msn.com).

As a counterpart to the lecture, CCHS will sponsor a History-Go-Round field trip to the National Capital Trolley Museum on April 9, 2016. Participants will have a special opportunity to ride on a vintage streetcar. (See details on page 3)

Prior to the lecture, CCHS will hold a brief annual meeting at which the membership will elect two directors-at-large. The nominees for these positions are Jean Sperling and Alex Weiner.



*Celebrating One of America's First Streetcar Suburbs*



**CHEVY CHASE  
HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

P.O. Box 15145  
CHEVY CHASE, MARYLAND 20815

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Open 10am to Noon, 1 to 3pm on Tuesday  
and by appointment

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

# Celebrating 100 Years of Community in the Village of Martin's Additions



**Harry Martin's home on Cedar Avenue (now Cummings Lane)**

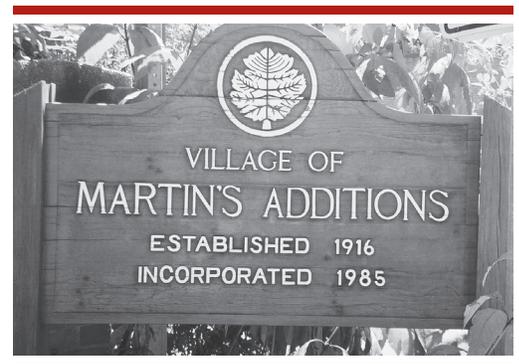
The Village of Martin's Additions will celebrate its centennial, marking 100 years of self-governance, on April 17, 2016 at the Woman's Club of Chevy Chase. The Village has formed a Centennial Celebration Committee to plan the event, which will include reminiscences from residents and lectures on Village history to be presented at the event and saved for the permanent historical record.

In 1896, Harry M. Martin began buying land parcels of 35 to 50 acres from the Chevy Chase Land Company, M. Willson Offutt, Henry N. Griffith and others. He called his acquisitions "Martin's Additions to Chevy Chase". Harry Martin's purchases extended from Quincy Street to the current site of La Ferme Restaurant at the corner of Taylor Street and Brookville Road.

On April 11, 1916, Maryland enacted Senate Bill 207 establishing a Special Taxing District known as Martin's First, Second, Third and Fourth Additions to the Village of Chevy Chase. The bill authorized the election of a Citizens' Committee that had substantial powers, including the regulation of "farm animal behavior". Regulations were added in 1937 that included the creation of a building inspector position and various building permit requirements.

Concerns over development and other pressures caused residents to seek incorporation during the early 1980s. A three-member steering committee was appointed to draft a charter and to help the village fulfill the requirements to become a municipality. By eliminating the ambiguous legal operating status of a special taxing district, continuous increased local control and legislative adaptability would be assured.

In a village-wide referendum, 92 percent of residents voted in favor of incorporation. Following approval by the Montgomery County Council (Resolution No. 10-11164, effective February 14, 1985), the state recorded the municipal incorporation of the Village of Martin's Additions on March 19, 1985. The village's first ordinances went into effect on July 9, 1989. Five council members were selected, four of whom are alive today, and three of whom still live in Martin's Additions.



## Recent Acquisitions and Activities

The staff and volunteers continue to update the CCHS online database to make searching easier for items of all sorts – photographs, maps, documents and ephemera. In addition, the graduate interns are working on transcriptions of recent oral history interviews. Any volunteer assistance with the Oral History Project would be warmly welcomed – please contact Director Gail Sansbury at the Center for more details.

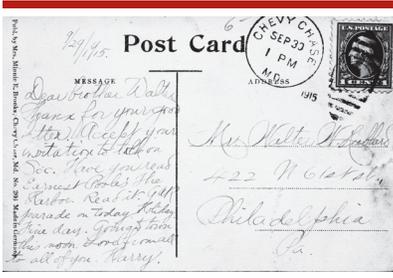
In other news, Gail Sansbury, Tyler Vachon, Graduate Intern, and Bob Andrews, Volunteer, presented their research regarding turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century literary groups at the Montgomery County History Conference in Chevy Chase on January 30, 2016. More details on this will be shared in a future newsletter.



**Minnie E. Brooke Postcard of Chevy Chase Circle, circa 1915**

A most interesting recent acquisition in the past few months is a rare postcard of Chevy Chase Circle which includes handwritten annotations by the sender. A digital scan of this Minnie E. Brooke postcard was donated to CCHS by Harold V. Silver. Postcard aficionados know about the wonderful postcards of DC, Rock Creek Park, and the Potomac published by Brooke. There are two wonderful online exhibits about her work on our website – one about her life and the other a slide show of her postcards. She was an entrepreneur, a suffragist, and a local resident who

operated the Brooke Farm Tea House (now the site of La Ferme Restaurant) in Martin's Additions.



This particular Brooke postcard has special historical value because of the handwritten notes on its face. They help us identify such things as

the telephone wires that crossed over the Circle, as well as the Maryland/DC boundary line and the relatively new All Saint's Church (identified as the P.E. Chapel). Little human figures were drawn on the road around the Circle, and they are labeled "Harry F.H.", "Harry D.H.", "Mary" and "Mable" to represent the sender and his family. The card was sent to Mr. Walter W. Hubbard in Philadelphia, on September 30, 1915 from his brother Harry in Chevy Chase. The message reads: "Dear brother Walter, Thanx for your good letter. Accept your invitation to talk on Soc. (a possible reference to socialism) Have you read Ernest Poole's *The Harbor*. Read it. GAR parade on today. Holiday. Fine day. Going to town this noon. Love from all to all of you. Harry."

For the record, Ernest Poole's book, *The Harbor*, was one of the most popular novels of 1915. A journalist and novelist, Poole wrote about social issues of the day, including child labor, union organizing and socialism. He won the first Pulitzer Prize for fiction in 1918.

According to the 1920 U.S. Census, Harry D. Hubbard and his family lived in Martin's Additions, and Harry worked as a secretary at the Bureau of Standards. In George Winchester Stone, Jr.'s memoir, *My Local Habitation and its Name: Reminiscences of the Quality of Life in Martin's Third Addition to Chevy Chase 1909-1930*, he recalls Harry F. Hubbard, who lived on Quincy Street and went on to become a leader of the U.S. Civil Service Commission.

A 100 year old postcard is much more than a pretty historical image – it provides clues that help us learn new information about former residents!

## History-Go-Round Tour of the National Capital Trolley Museum

The CCHS spring lecture about streetcars will be followed by a History-Go-Round tour of the National Capital Trolley Museum, 1313 Bonifant Road, Silver Spring on Saturday, April 9, 2016 at 12 p.m. The museum features Chevy Chase as a prime example of a "streetcar suburb", so participants will feel right at home!



By special arrangement, Director Ken Ruker will lead participants in a session where they will build models of the Rock Creek Railway line that once ran along Connecticut Avenue, and the new suburban community of Chevy Chase that grew up along that line. He will lead a discussion of the development and impact of streetcars, their effect on the establishment of streetcar suburbs like Chevy Chase, and their impact on economic and social activity.

Participants also will be treated to a ride through Northwest Branch Park on a vintage electric streetcar, and a docent-led tour of "Streetcar Hall", featuring a variety of passenger and utility streetcars.

The tour will begin at noon and conclude by 1:30 pm. After the tour, snacks will be provided and participants may visit and compare notes about their walk through our community's earliest days. Children age 7 and older are welcome. Following the planned activities, participants are invited to explore the museum further on their own until closing time at 5:00 pm. The price of the tour and snack is \$12 for adults and \$8 for children. Space is limited and reservations must be paid for by check in advance. Directions to the meeting point at the museum will be provided to all registrants. Participants will provide their own transportation, but CCHS will assist in forming carpools if requested.

To make a reservation or for further information, please email Mary Sheehan at [msheehan246@aol.com](mailto:msheehan246@aol.com).

# Chevy Chase Historical Society's 35<sup>th</sup>

The year 2016 marks the 35<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Chevy Chase Historical Society. The celebration begins by sharing its origins and how the society came to be based on remembrances of Mary Anne Touhey, its first President and one of the founding members. This article is Part one of a three-part series.



CCHS was incorporated in 1981 as a non-profit organization. The story begins in the early 1970s and is linked to the changes at the intersection of Western and Wisconsin Avenues. A group of residents from the surrounding neighborhoods were concerned about the new development there and in response, formed the Citizens Coordinating Committee for Friendship Heights (CCCFH).

In need of funds, the committee organized the Chevy Chase Village House Tour to raise money and community awareness for their cause. A tea was planned at various local historical sites, including the Corby Mansion. To prepare the grand house for the event and promote the history of the neighborhood, the group solicited historical photos and other memorabilia to display to the public.

The house tours were repeated during the 1970s, each time featuring the history of Chevy Chase as part of the tours. As time went on, many articles were added to the collection and people interested in history and preservation came forward to participate in the events. Another priority of the group was to focus on longtime residents like Edith Jarvis, born and raised in Chevy Chase and at the time



**Edith Jarvis, long time Chevy Chase Resident**

neering her 80s. Each person had a story to tell and it was important to record and save these precious memories.

Two other events took place in the late 1970s that contributed to the formation of the society. A boarded-up trolley station on Connecticut Avenue, formally a "collectibles" store called Grandma's Attic Antique Shop, was to be demolished or sold. In addition, the High's Dairy store on Brookville Road at Quincy Street, was up for sale. A group of around 20 residents interested in preserving local history, some of whom were involved with the House Tours, came together to discuss the formation of a historical society. Their intention was to buy the old trolley station and move it to Brookville Road. The time frame proved to be too short for funds to be raised, and the building was subsequently moved to Frederick County, Maryland. The High's Dairy store site was ultimately turned into a park.

Nevertheless, the idea to start a historical society was a seed that had taken root. In 1981, Bob Elliott filed for incorporation of the Chevy Chase Historical Society, its non-profit status was secured and Mary Anne Tuohey was elected its first president.



**Chevy Chase Historical Society**

CCHS was set up as a membership organization, open to anyone interested in local history. It would sponsor an annual fund raising event to support the archives and provide newsletters to the community. Its mission was to discover and collect historical photos, maps and ephemera, to record oral histories, to prepare house histories, and to educate Chevy Chase residents about the history of the area. Accordingly, the mission was not to be a preservation organization, but rather a historical archive and an educational group.

For the first several years, the archives were housed in a closet in the Chevy Chase Village Hall. After a renovation in 1987, everything was moved to founding member Joan Marsh's spacious attic. For many years, she acted as the archivist for CCHS and opened her home and attic to anyone interested in Chevy Chase history. In 2002, the growing collection was moved to the Chevy Chase Library on Connecticut Avenue, where it has been located ever since.

# Anniversary – Part I: Origins

## CCHS Timeline

**Early 1970s** – Citizens Coordinating Committee for Friendship Heights (CCCFH) forms in response to the development of Western and Wisconsin Avenues.

**1970s** – CCCFH holds historic house tours to raise funds.

**Late 1970s** – CCCFH and others interested in local history explore the feasibility of buying a former trolley shed and moving it to Brookville Road for the historical society.

**1981** – CCHS organized as a Maryland non-profit organization.

**1982** – First lecture program and first fund raising event — a Musicale and Victorian Tea at 7 West Kirke Street.

**1984** – First Gala at No Gain Farm, c. 1783, on Brookville Road

**1987** – Archive moves to Joan Marsh's attic and first newsletter is mailed.



**1993** - Mailing list is computerized and new CCHS logo is designed by William Sharon Farr, Jr.

**1997** – Board votes to publicly support designation of Chevy Chase Village as Chevy Chase Village Historic District.

**1998** – Last year board members and volunteers cook food for Gala.

**1999** – Board sponsors walking tour of 100 year old houses. First year that La Ferme Restaurant caters the Gala.

**2002** – Following capital campaign, society moves into renovated space in lower level of the Chevy Chase Library and establishes the Archive and Research Center, with regular hours opened to the public.



**Susan Ferrall and Joan Hollander**



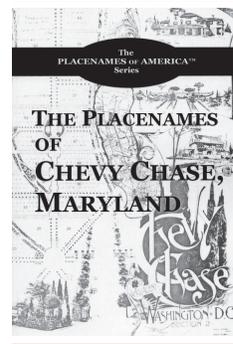
**2004** – Celebration of World War II Veterans, in honor of the World War II Memorial opening on the National Mall.



**Mary Anne Tuohey, Chris Van Hollen, Mary Sheehan**

**2007** – History-Go-Round program begins with its first event, "Clean Drinking Manor: The First Chevy Chase Estate."

**2008** – Announcement of access to digital archives via the new website, [chevychasehistory.org](http://chevychasehistory.org)

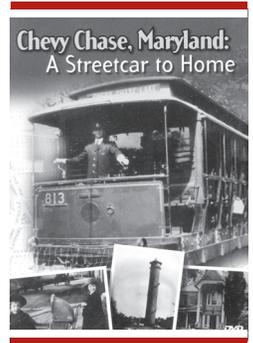


**2009** – New by-laws are adopted.

**2011** – First book published about the history of Chevy Chase, *The Placenames of Chevy Chase, Maryland*.

**2013** - CCHS chosen to participate in National Museum Assessment Program.

**2016** – Celebration of 35<sup>th</sup> Anniversary.



## Save the Date!

*For our younger audience (ages 5 to 11) and for the young at heart, CCHS will hold an **architectural scavenger hunt** on Saturday, April 30<sup>th</sup> from 4:00 to 5:30 pm. Participants will meet at the Chevy Chase Village Hall, 5906 Connecticut Avenue and join us on a hunt for interesting and historic architectural elements and neighborhood features.*

## Early Promotion of Chevy Chase in *Public Opinion*



**Public Opinion,  
July 22, 1893 Issue**

“Public Opinion: A Comprehensive Summary of the Public Press on All Important Current Topics,” was a weekly publication first issued in Washington, DC on April 15, 1886. It provided its readers and subscribers a weekly digest of excerpts from a variety of publications on topics of current interest for \$3.00 a year. According to its masthead, “The aim of this journal is not to create but to reflect public opinion.

The utmost care is taken to treat each question upon which extracts are given in a perfectly fair, nonpartisan and unbiased manner. Absolute neutrality may therefore be relied upon in these columns.”

Compiling short excerpts from newspapers, periodicals, speeches and other public documents of timely interest, Public Opinion presented itself as a high-status periodical serving an important public function — to provide an unbiased summary of the most important topics of the day.

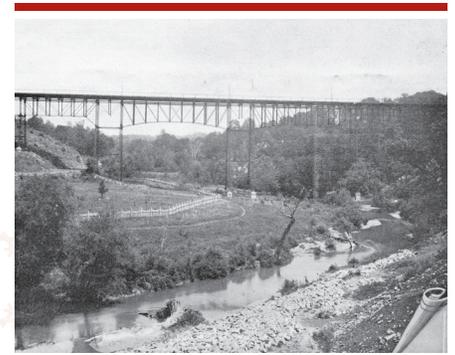
Although Public Opinion had no personal voice, its founder and editor was Frank Presbrey. A visionary leader in the fledgling field of advertising at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, he was in charge of publicity for the Denver & Rio Grande Railroad from 1878-1879, advertising manager for two newspapers from 1879-1886, founder of Public Opinion from 1886-1894 and a writer of various promotional pamphlets. In 1896, he started The Frank Presbrey Company, which became a leading Manhattan advertising agency that developed special purpose marketing magazines and also placed steamship, railroad, resort hotel and travel advertising.

With the very first issue, Presbrey declared that Public Opinion would “print excerpts without bias toward any

political party, commercial enterprise, religious sect or contending influences”. Each excerpt included the source, along with that source’s political orientation. The claim to be unbiased and impartial gave aggregate value to the collection of excerpts and led Public Opinion to be considered one of the most important weeklies in the U.S. between 1886 and 1905.

**Last year, Julie Rude Thomas, a former CCHS Board Member and a long-time resident of the Town of Chevy Chase, donated an issue of the weekly magazine *Public Opinion* (Vol. XV, No. 16, July 22, 1893) to CCHS, which includes around forty excerpts.** A special promotional

supplement was also published with this issue. Printed in red ink to distinguish it from the regular content, the 8-page supplement was written by Presbrey and would be described today as a “sponsored editorial.”



**Rock Creek Railway Bridge**

Titled “Washington: The Paris of America,” Presbrey states, “there was a time when Washington could perhaps more properly be called a city of boarding-houses than a city of homes, but it is now a ‘residence city’. Good city government, beautiful parks, institutions like the Smithsonian, and the excellent siting of the city itself – thanks to George Washington, L’Enfant and others — have created the most splendid city of them all.”

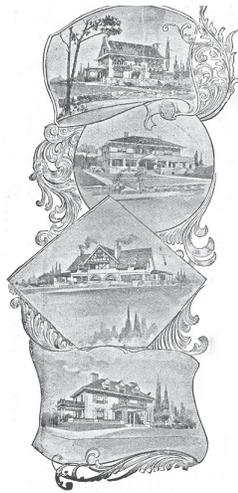
In addition to this description of the Capitol City is this arresting sentence about the new suburb of Chevy Chase to the north developed by the Chevy Chase Land Company. “It has the most beautiful suburbs of any American city, especially that adjoining the Northwestern and fashionable part of the city.”

A large photograph of the Rock Creek Railway’s bridge over the valley illustrates “one of the finest examples of structural engineering in the country.” Presbrey describes the large-scale planning efforts as an “almost stupendous plan of suburban development...upward of three millions



of dollars have been invested in the undertaking by the Chevy Chase Land Company, and the Rock Creek Railway Company, twin corporations, which has resulted in giving to the city of Washington such an outlying suburban district as is possessed by few if any American cities and having all of the required advantages of rapid transit, pure water from artesian wells, good sewerage, electric lights, an artistically beautiful and commodious new hotel, a model club-house, and above and beyond all, a commanding elevation of over four hundred feet above the city with views surpassing loveliness in every direction."

The seven-mile extension of the 130 foot wide Connecticut Avenue was "graded, drained, guttered and macadamized under the most improved methods, and together with the streets in Chevy Chase, will be brilliantly lighted with electricity." A photograph of the Rosemary Water Tower, still under construction, supports Presbrey's claim that the water supply "will provide great pressure to even the top stories of the highest residences." The higher elevation and lack of swamps in the northwest suburban developments ensure that there are "absolutely no malaria or miasmatic fogs.



**"A Group of Chevy Chase Cottages"**

Presbrey states that "Chevy Chase is a most desirable place to build a home – whether a modest cottage or a costly villa. The person of moderate means who wishes to invest his small and hard earned savings in a home, or the capitalist who seeks an opportunity to erect a beautiful mansion, can do no better than to invest at Chevy Chase at the first prices, which now prevail and which are sure to increase rapidly."

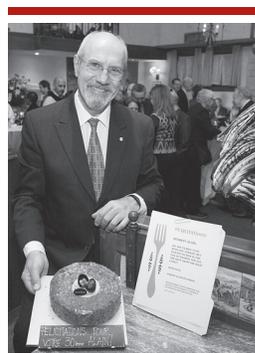
Due to a financial downturn in the market, very few lots had been sold by 1893 so "A Group of Chevy Chase Cottages" were shown in the special supplement as renderings and inspiration for those customers of more modest means. They are the very same framed illustrations that appear on the Thos. J. Fisher & Company's 1892 real estate sales map for Chevy Chase. Presbrey describes Thos. J. Fisher & Co. as the "sole agent" for the suburb, "involved with the enterprise since its inception." Their address at 1324 F Street is listed and purchasers are encouraged to contact them directly for more information.

In addition, the officers of the Chevy Chase Land Company – Newlands, Stellwagen, Nyman, and Thomas Gale, are described as men of character and business standing. The Land Company's "ample capital" has allowed the large investment and many improvements costing several millions of dollars without the "idea of an immediate return," surely meant to inspire confidence in nervous investors in the uncertain economy of the times.

Presbrey's last words demonstrate his skill as a master of promotion. He states that Chevy Chase will become one of the most well-known suburbs of an American city — a claim that has the advantage (in hind-sight) of being true! "...[T]he investments already made are a surety of the brilliant future of Chevy Chase, and it will not be many years until its name is as indissolubly associated with that of Washington as Germantown and Wayne are with Philadelphia, Walnut Hills with Cincinnati, and Brookline and Newton with Boston."

Frank Presbrey (1855-1936) sold his interest in Public Opinion and moved to New York City in 1894. His book published in 1929, *The History and Development of Advertising*, described evidence of advertising from hieroglyphics in ancient Egypt to the present day. Presbrey's stature in the field of advertising was well established by the 1920s, so the Chevy Chase Land Company's decision to hire his services in the early 1890s was prescient indeed.

## Neighborhood Favorite La Ferme Restaurant Celebrates 30 Years



Thirty years ago, in the gracious building that once housed the Brooke Farm Teahouse, Alain Roussel brought French cuisine to Chevy Chase. A gracious host and loyal supporter of the community, Roussel has catered the sumptuous CCHS Gala buffets since 1999. Residents in the Village of Martin's Additions remember the wonderful annual celebrations held at La Ferme Restaurant as well.

Best wishes to Alain Roussel for many more years in Chevy Chase and a toast to his latest addition to La Ferme — "Cognac", a bar within the restaurant set to open in the spring/summer of this year.



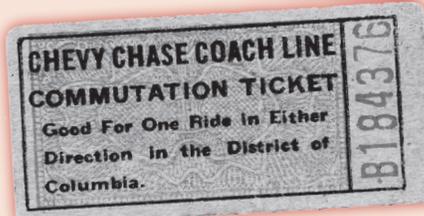
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***CCHS: Your Ticket to Local History Since 1981***