

THE VILLAGE NEWS

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Tuesday, November 30 Citizens Association meeting. 8 PM. Clara Barton School (see story this issue)

Friday, December 3 (also December 17) Riverside Assembly of God. Youth Services for High School and College Students. 7:30 PM.

Sunday, December 12 Cabin John Annual Holiday Party. 5 to 7 PM. Clara Barton School (see enclosed announcement)

MACARTHUR SQUARE

IS FILLING UP
The commercial center next to the Fire House is finally filling up. The Village News welcomes these new members of our community.

Organizations renting space on the second floor include a number of consulting contractors to the David Taylor Model Basin: the American Naval Development Corp.; ORI, Inc.; Traco, Inc.; and General Offshore Corporation. Also located on the second floor are TAB Products Co., which manufactures and sells filing and computer accessories, and the Leadership Foundation, a non-profit educational group.

A recent new tenant is the Asociación de Señoras del BID (the Inter-American Development Bank Wives Association) which helps Latin American families adapt to life in the USA and promotes inter-American friendship.

On the ground floor CONDO (Condominium Rentals Ltd.) has recently moved in. This business is headed by Mike Gravel, ex-Senator from Alaska (who will soon become a Cabin John resident when he moves into a Wishbone Terrace townhouse). CONDO rents apartments, furnishes them, equips them with a software package, and re-rents them on a transient basis.

Getting to Know

The People of Cabin John

CABIN JOHN'S OLDEST COUPLE

By Barbara Martin

Buck and Irene Worsham are Cabin John's oldest couple. Buck (Lewis Elmer) is 96 this month. Irene is 92. They have known each other since they were children; they have been married 65 years. They smile at each other, and the look that passes between them shines with love and a storehouse of shared memories.

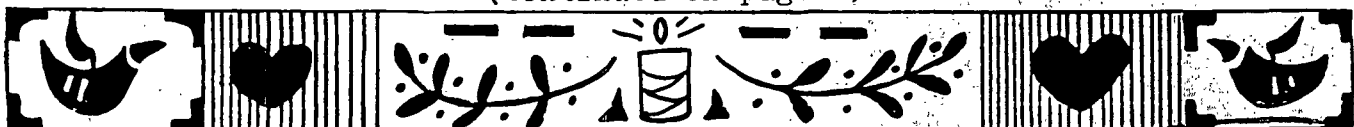
They were born in farm country in Pittsylvania County, Virginia, 230 miles south of Washington. The nearest town was Alta Vista. School was a one-room schoolhouse. Irene was the youngest of nine children, Buck the oldest of six. Both were raised on tobacco farms, and, as very young man, Buck grew tobacco and corn.

At 19, he went to Filbert, West Virginia, and worked as a carpenter. Carpentry was to be his lifelong trade and art. In 1913, after the famous Ohio flood, he went to Dayton and worked on rebuilding projects. After four years, he came back to Pittsylvania County and married Irene.

The Worshams moved to Newport News during World War I, and Buck worked in the shipyards for four years. By 1922 there were no more battleships to be built, so Buck and Irene came to Washington where carpentry work was available.

The Depression dried up carpentry work but about this time the restoration of Williamsburg was begun, and Buck found a market for his skills there. He worked on the Williamsburg Inn, the Craft House, and several residences.

(Continued on page 2)



NEW BOOK RECALLS CANAL HISTORY

"Home on the Canal," a new book by Elizabeth Kytte of Cabin John, is due off the press early next year.

The 276-page book, with 57 photographs, features first person reminiscences based on Mrs. Kytte's taped interviews with 11 of the few surviving men and women who lived on the boats or in the lockhouses along the C&O Canal from the early 1900's until its last operating season in 1923.

The reminiscences are preceded by an informal history of the canal, including the strikes, riots, cholera epidemic, floods, and constant struggles with the B&O Railroad.

Mrs. Kytte is the author of "Time Was: A Cabin John Memory Book," which she wrote for the community Bicentennial celebration in 1976.

Her new book will be published by the Seven Locks Press, a Cabin John-based publishing house.

CABIN JOHN'S OLDEST COUPLE (Continued)

Returning to Washington in the mid-30s, the Worshams lived first in Tenleytown, and then in 1939 bought their home in Cabin John ("for \$6,200," Buck remembers). A white frame house, at the corner of MacArthur and 79th Street, it is one of several in town that were constructed from a Sears Roebuck kit.

Buck built houses in Takoma Park and in Tenleytown. Some he built from the ground up, on others he did restorations and repairs. Buzzy Potter, a local contractor, calls Buck Worsham "the hardest-working carpenter I ever knew." Buck never believed in breaks. "I was paid to work, not to sit around," he says, "and I worked." He continued to work fulltime until he was 82, then retired to gardening.

The Worshams had five children: Lew, Virgil, Uva, Herman, and Marvin (Buddy). All attended Glen Echo-Cabin John School (later named Clara Barton). Today Uva, who works at Army Map Service, lives with her parents and helps them maintain their family home.

All four sons were outstanding golfers, developing their interest and abilities from caddying at the old Bannockburn course, and at Chevy Chase. Lew, a pro for all his working life, is now retired and living near Newport News. Winner of the National Open in 1947 and of the World Golf Tournament in 1953, he is in the Golfers Hall of Fame at Pinehurst, North Carolina. Virgil is a pro at Jacksonville, Florida, and Herman presides over the course at Statesville, North Carolina. (Continued on page 5)

QUICK FOOD SHOP

PASTRIES*MEATS*CARRY-OUT!
GROCERIES*BREAKFAST*LUNCH
MONDAY THROUGH SATURDAY
6:30 am to 6:00 pm

HOUSING QUESTIONED
ON WILDFLOWER TRACT

Going out MacArthur Boulevard, the high ground on the right beyond Persimmon Tree Rd is the Wildflower Estate (Lemm property). The Piney Glen Construction Company has a contract to purchase it and intends to build 16 cluster houses.

The Cabin John Citizens Association has expressed concern that 16 houses would be too many for the site, which consists of one very steep hill of impervious soils.

The Planning Board has now requested the developer to re-locate lots to less severe slopes and is awaiting a new site development plan before taking action on the application.

Meanwhile the Persimmon Tree homeowners have raised questions about extending River Rock Terrace to provide access to the site. To do so would require filling a 30 foot ravine and would double the traffic on the road.

Need TRAVEL Arrangements?

Call

Irene Redecke

229-4469

The People of Cabin John

MATRIARCH OF THE CLAN

By Barbara Martin

In October, they had a 91st birthday party for Margaret Prather, and family and friends poured in. When you consider that Mrs. Prather is a mother of 10, grandmother of 25, great-grandmother of 31, and great-great-grandmother of 8 -- and that many of these relatives have spouses, it's not surprising that the party was a big one. "When we have a party, we really have a party," Mrs. Prather declares. "The food, well," she shakes her head, "you can't imagine the food."

It was supposed to be a surprise. Her daughter told her it was a christening at the Methodist Church for one of the babies. "But I knew my birthday was soon, so I was somewhat suspecting."

It's not easy to fool Mrs. Prather. She has bright eyes behind her glasses, and a quick tongue to straighten out an interviewer or a great-granddaughter who wanders into the room. She frequently visits at the home of her son Pete in the Gardens. "I helped rake leaves yesterday. In the spring I come and clean the yard. I do most of my own housework too."

Born in Shepherdstown, West Virginia (near Harpers Ferry), she moved to Cabin John in 1926 with her husband and eight children. Two more children were born here. "Five boys and five girls, and I had them boy-girl, boy-girl, five sets." (Three of her sons have died.)

The Prathers moved in with her parents into the lockhouse at Lock 8. "There was no bathroom, and until we put it in, no electricity." Canal life wasn't new to Mrs. Prather. "We lived near the Canal in West Virginia. My Aunt Kate boated, and then she lived in the house at Lock 6."

"We had wonderful gardens at the lockhouse, on each side and front and

and back. Mostly it was vegetables, but my mother had the flower gardens. Every Monday my mother took the streetcar into Washington to visit my sister."

"My father had planted corn in our garden, but we had trouble with Bill Swainson's goats getting into the corn. I'll tell you about Bill Swainson. He lived on the island right across from our lockhouse. Lived there with dogs, goats, any animals anybody wanted to get rid of. A strange man. One time he got into a fight with a hog of his. He poked a pitchfork at the hog and then he stumbled and while he was down the hog bit him. He came over to the drawbridge with his arm bleeding bad. I finally got a man in a truck to take him to a hospital in town."

"From Swainson's island to the Washington line there were many little cottages along the canal and the river, where people would come out on weekends. But they all got washed away in the flood of '36. There was always some flooding every spring, but '36 was the worst. We were living in the lockhouse then and it came right up in our front yard. I stood at my window and watched the water rise. I could see it covering Swainson's island. He got a lady and her children out of his house; they walked right out the door and into the boat."

Mr. Prather worked with his stonemason father-in-law, building houses. Then he took a job at Glen Echo Amusement Park. For 38 years he ran the Coaster Dip. "I had sons and brothers who worked there too," Mrs. Prather explains. "At one time there were seven relatives at the Park."

Herself one of 10 children, Mrs. Prather had several brothers and sisters living in Cabin John.

(Continued on page 4)

"Whenever I did anything or went any-
place, it was always with family."
Margaret and her sister Grace were
married to brothers. "We married one
month apart. That was the days of
horses and rubber-tired buggies; that
was all the go then."

After some years of living in
the lockhouse, the Prathers moved
into a log house nearby. "We remodel-
ed it and added two bedrooms. That
house is gone now. The government
took it when they put in the Parkway."

Later the Prathers moved to 78th
Street, to 6511 where Diane and Mark
Leatherman live now. The Prather chil-
dren went to school in the Town Hall
in Glen Echo and at the building on
Wilson Lane. When the Clara Barton
School opened, they went there. In
1958 Mr. and Mrs. Prather celebrated
their fiftieth anniversary with a
party at the Fire Hall.

Mrs. Prather shopped at Ben-
son's store (where the Alpine Vet-
erinary Hospital is now). Their
post office was in Carper's house
at MacArthur and 77th Street. For
clothes shopping, they went into
Georgetown, either by streetcar or
auto. Their first car was a Model-
T Ford, and when they moved to
Cabin John they came in a Star
touring car.

After 47 years in Cabin John,
Mrs. Prather's husband died. Today
she lives in Rock Creek Terrace in
Rockville, five minutes away from
a daughter who looks in on her fre-
quently. Her son Pete and his wife
Barbara live in the Gardens, and so
do two married granddaughters. Al-
most all her large family are near-
by, "near enough so I can enjoy
them."

REPORT ON THE MACARTHUR BOULEVARD SURVEY
SHOWS DISSATISFACTION WITH MAINTENANCE OF BIKE/JOGGING PATH

In the last issue of the Village
News, a questionnaire appeared pre-
pared by the new MacArthur Boulevard
Improvement Association. It asked
for opinions on 16 questions regarding
MacArthur Boulevard.

Summary of survey results

	Yes	No	No opin.
Speeding as problem	58%	29%	13%
Stop lights or signs	39	50	11
Crosswalks	66	21	13
Restrict commuters	34	48	18
Satisfactory appearance	66	32	2
Want better land- scaping	80	20	-
Coordinated signs	55	26	19
Underground utilit- ies	60	24	16
Designated parking areas	48	34	18
Boulevard adequate- ly lit	58	26	16
Adequate maintenance of Boulevard	11	84	5
Weight restrictions inconvenient	21	68	11
Use bike path	81	16	3
Satisfied with bike path	16	79	5
Drainage problems	68	21	11

Thirty-eight responses were re-
ceived. Four out of five (81%) re-
spondents said they used the bike/
jogging path and approximately the
same number (79%) said they were not
satisfied with its design and mainte-
nance. A number of respondents added
comments stressing the lack of main-
tenance ("gravel, glass, beer and
coke cans and road debris") and sug-
gesting design solutions such as
"separate bike path from road" and
"don't park cars on path".

Speeding was seen as a problem
by a majority of those who answered,
but only 39% saw stop lights or stop
signs as desirable. And only 34%
said they thought commuter traffic
should be restricted. Only 21% felt
that the weight restrictions on the
road were inconvenient.

Even though two-thirds were sat-

isfied with the appearance of
MacArthur, four out of five said
they would like better landscaping
and three out of five favored under-
ground utilities.



Buck and Irene Worsham in Reed Martin's 1901 Oldsmobile. (Photo by David Murphy)



(Continued)

In the late 40s, their youngest son, Buddy, won a golf scholarship to Wake Forest College and was asked by the coach if he knew anyone else who could be recruited for the golf team. Buddy recommended his friend, Arnold Palmer, who came to Wake Forest the next year. Buddy was killed in an auto accident when he was 21, and every year, for 32 years, the Worsham Memorial Golf Tournament has been held at Bethesda Country Club.

Buck and Irene have 13 grandchildren, and 12 great-grandchildren, some of whom live in Cabin John. They are members of Glen Echo Baptist Church, although they haven't been able to get to services recently. "The steps are a bit too much for us," Irene says.

Both the Worshams are bright and alert. They walk with the aid of walkers, and spend outdoor hours on their sundeck. Every year, they fly to visit their sons in Florida, North Carolina, and Virginia. Irene has soft, white hair and almost no wrinkles. Buck is a handsome, spare man who smokes a pipe and enjoys a daily glass of Country Gentleman.

What are they proudest of in a lifetime of nearly a century? Irene says, "I'm proud of living this long, and I'm proud that our children and grandchildren are so good to us." Buck looks over at his wife and nods his head. "I'm most proud of marrying this lady."

NO JOB TOO SMALL
OR TOO LARGE

Danny Saling



CONTRACTOR 320-5623

(Continued)

About 80 nationalities are represented at the Washington International School. Instruction is bilingual, with some students being taught in English and French and others in English and Spanish.

Every Thursday from 12:00 to 1:00 there are open house tours at Clara Barton. The Head Teacher, Sonja Cowies, would be glad to talk with interested parents about possible enrollment. The School's phone number is 364-1830.

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 Please send to the News at P.O. Box 164,
 Cabin John, Md. 20818)

Plans for a Teen Center

BRIEF NOTES.....

Remember the water failure in October? The cause was a break in a water main running parallel to Cabin John Creek, apparently due to old age. The water tower couldn't help. It provides supplementary water when pressure is low at times of peak usage (example, fire fighting) but doesn't help when there is no pressure at all.

The Cabin John 3 and 4 Year Old School has space for one more child (mornings, 5 days a week, \$50 a month). For details call Katy Glakas, President (229-6253) or Annette Davis, Head Teacher (229-0754).

CITIZENS MEET ON NOVEMBER 30



An opportunity to create a Cabin John Teen Center will be the focus of discussion at the November meeting of the Cabin John Citizens Association on Tuesday, November 30, at 8 PM at the Clara Barton School.

Debate will center on a request to the Montgomery County Parks Department to rehabilitate the fire-damaged recreation center (located off MacArthur Boulevard near the Union Arch Bridge) so as to turn it into a fully equipped and part-time staffed center for teen-agers. There are such centers in other parts of the County but none near Cabin John.

Teen-agers are especially welcome at the November 30 meeting, which will also complete the planning for the Christmas/Hanukkah community party on December 12. Pat Connelly, Citizens Association President, has announced that more than 200 families and individuals have thus far enrolled as Association members for 1982-83.

OUR FAITHFUL FOLDERS.....

Warm thanks go to the volunteers who fold and label each issue of the Village News, under the leadership of Veena Titus. They

are Mary Ney, Olga Long, Mildred Walker, Grace Mazzi, Elva Ludwig, Margaret Stein, Margaret Stream, Naomi Denell, Ann Stanfield, Susan Gelb and Jane Price.

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