

September 1992

Dear McLean Gardens Resident,

This booklet is the result of many hours of research, writing, editing, design, fundraising and coordination—all of which were donated freely by some very talented residents of our community.

We are especially proud of the fact that production costs were covered by proceeds from the sale of commemorative items and through the generosity of sponsors.

It gives us great pleasure to present you with this complimentary keepsake of the 50th Anniversary Celebration of McLean Gardens. We do so with the hope that it will not only heighten your awareness of McLean Gardens' history, but that it will also serve to strengthen your sense of pride in the community in which you live.

Board of Directors
50th Anniversary Committee



McLEAN GARDENS





he McLeans and "Friendship" In 1898, newspaper publisher John Roll McLean purchased a 75-acre lot from Georgetown College (now Georgetown University), on which he planned to build his summer home. The small lot, a former Jesuit retreat, was named "Friendship" after the 3,000 acre land tract to which it had originally belonged. The name "Friendship" supposedly came about because of the friendship between James A. Stoddart and Colonel Thomas Addison, previous owners. The actual house was located near the center of today's Rodman Street. When completed, the country estate included a Georgian Revival house, designed by famed New York architect John Russell Pope, an 18-hole golf course, added by John McLean's son for President Harding, a cast iron swimming pool, a watch tower, a tennis court, stables, Italian gardens, giant fountains, and other luxuries. The entire estate was enclosed by a tall iron fence. Entry to the estate was gained through the ornate wrought iron and cast iron gates located at 3600 Wisconsin Avenue. These gates, constructed around 1905, were so heavy, that they had to be set in stone posts and set on wheels that would swing them to and fro.

Frequent visits by Presidents Harding and Coolidge, Senator Henry Cabot Lodge and other political notables soon made the estate the meeting place for Washington socialites during the early 1900s.

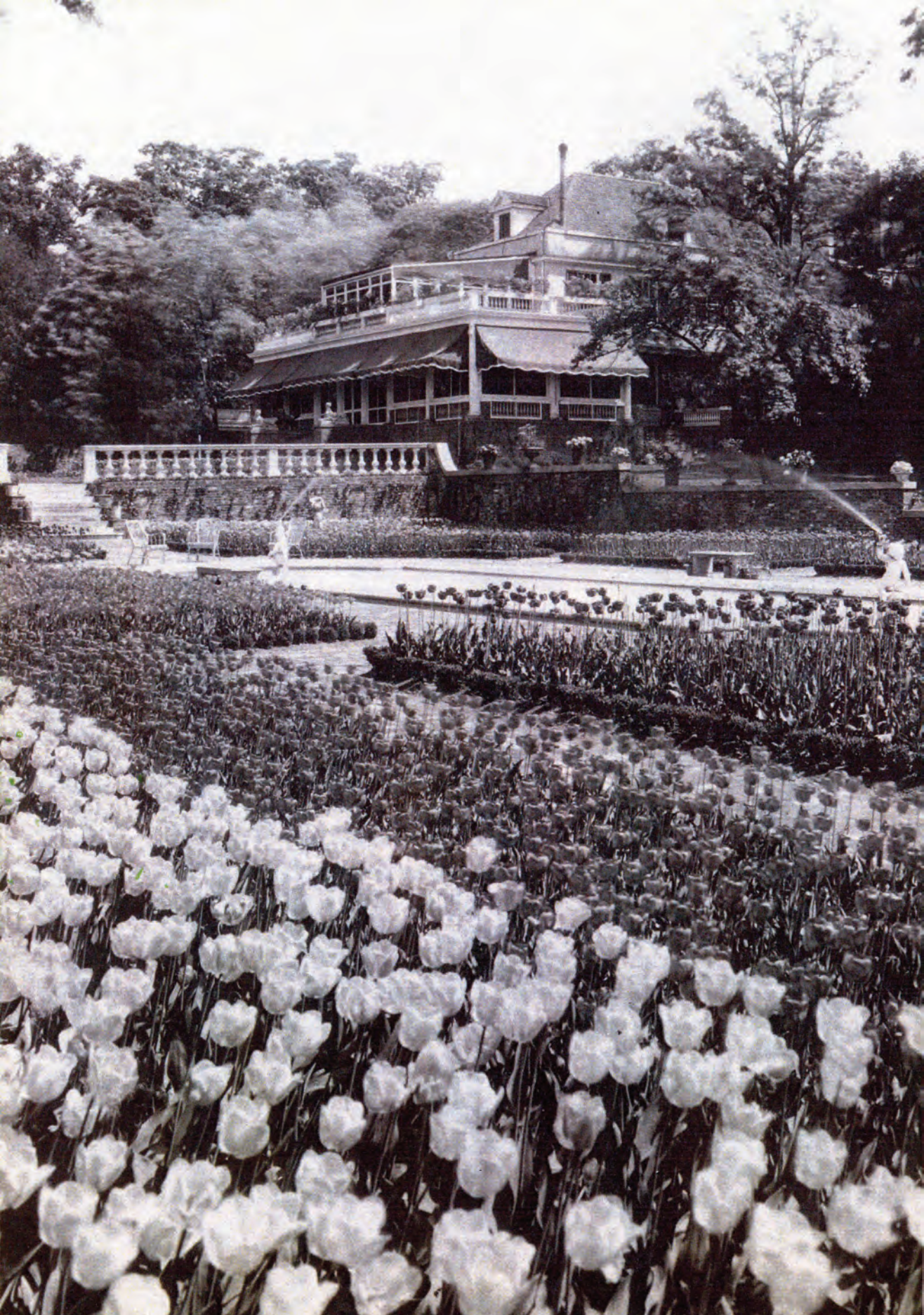
In 1907, John R. McLean's only child, 20-year-old Edward Beale ["Ned"] McLean married 21-year-old Evalyn Lucille Walsh, a family friend and daughter of Thomas Walsh, owner of the Camp Bird [gold] Mine. By the time he married Evalyn, Ned McLean was an alcoholic. But Evalyn, strong willed and much in love, believed she could change him for the better. The couple had four children: Vinson Walsh McLean, born in 1909; John Randolph ["Jock"] McLean, born in 1916; Edward Beale McLean, Jr., born in 1918, and Emily Beale McLean, born in 1921. Vinson, the eldest child, was nicknamed "The \$100 Million Baby" because, at the time, he was the sole heir to his family's multimillion dollar fortune, and he was the recipient of so many outrageously expensive gifts. For instance, King Leopold of Belgium, an investor-friend of Evalyn Walsh McLean's father, gifted Vinson with a \$25,000 rosewood

The drawing room in the original Friendship house was filled with beautiful furnishings and valuable works of art.



crib inlaid with gold and a gold bath tub of inestimable value.

Because of kidnapping threats (and the difficulties Evalyn McLean experienced during childbirth), Evalyn and Ned were extremely concerned about Vinson's safety. While his nursemaids were protected by armed bodyguards, young Vinson was protected by a steel perambulator. By the time their son was nine years old, the McLeans had hired six private detectives to guard him. Nonetheless, on the morning of May 9, 1919, nine-year-old Vinson, who had run across Wisconsin Avenue





Evalyn Walsh
McLean and her
son Vinson.

(unattended) to get flowers from a neighbor, was running back when he was hit by a tourist driving a slow moving car—the only car on the street. Vinson walked back to the house, seemingly unhurt, but died that night of a cerebral hemorrhage resulting from a fractured skull. Strangely, Evalyn McLean's brother, Vinson Walsh, was killed in an earlier automobile accident (and Evalyn was badly hurt in this accident) in 1907, a time when there were even fewer automobiles on the streets. In light of this and other strange occurrences in the family, the mass media and many people linked Vinson's death with the curse of the Hope Diamond. The 44 1/4 carat dark blue diamond, which was sold for \$154,000 by Pierre Cartier to Ned and Evalyn around 1911, had passed hands for three centuries, leaving its handlers and wearers (including Marie Antoinette) beheaded or guillotined or with some fate worse than death. However, less superstitious folk rationalized that the child was a victim of his parents' own love and overprotectiveness—which made him eager to be independent—and more noticeably, his attendants' carelessness. Evalyn McLean herself did not believe in the curse of the Hope Diamond.

John Roll McLean died in 1916. His will made provisions for his son Ned to receive income from his estate for as long as he lived. Evalyn Walsh McLean's father, who died in 1910, also bequeathed a vast fortune from his Camp Bird Mine holdings to his daughter. But almost as quickly as the money was received, the money was spent. Throughout the Roaring 20s, Evalyn and Ned McLean spent their inheritance on expensive jewels, foreign cars, exotic furs, wild escapades— oh yes, and parties—most of which were grand bashes that people would talk about and aspiring socialites would attempt to emulate long after the McLeans and Friendship were no more. A typical party was the \$40,000 dinner for 48 guests that took place shortly before World War I. The event, which was held at the McLean's permanent residence, located at 1500 Eye Street, NW, was in the honor of George Bakhmeteff, Russian Ambassador to the United States (and husband to John Roll McLean's sister). It was said that much of the \$40,000 was spent on thousands of orchids and yellow lilies shipped from London.

In 1923, Ned McLean became involved in the "Teapot Dome" scandal when he perjured himself for his friend, Secretary of Interior Albert Fall, during a Congressional investigation. This incident was thought to have hurt Ned's reputation as well as that of *The Washington Post*, which had been owned by the McLean family since 1905. Ned McLean's highly publicized court battles with his wife during



(Left) The Friendship
gardens and house
they appeared in
1937. (Right)
President Warren
Harding and Ned
McLean, seated
behind the wheel,
on one of their
many excursions
together.



Evalyn Walsh
McLean
wearing the
Hope Diamond
and the Star of
the East.

the 1930s were surely just as damaging to his reputation (and to the paper's reputation) as his earlier blunder. By 1933, Evalyn McLean had sued for divorce on grounds that her husband Ned was an unfaithful, wife-abusing alcoholic who had failed to financially support his wife and children. Later that year, she withdrew her suit after getting a \$7,500 a month settlement and having her husband declared insane by the Circuit Court of Towson, Maryland. That same year, the co-trustee of John McLean's estate sold *The Washington Post* to Eugene Meyer.

On March 8, 1936, Evalyn Walsh McLean released her autobiography, *Father Struck It Rich*, which described her upbringing in a working class Irish immigrant family before and after achieving fortune through a gold strike in a silver mining town. On October 4, 1937, she began writing a daily newspaper column called "My Say" for *The Washington Times*. Instead of using the paper for personal gain or self-promotion, Evalyn used the column to campaign for causes she believed in (e.g. hot lunches for school children and better healthcare for poor people); to expose people to social problems (e.g. high infant mortality rates for black infants and high recidivism rates among paroled felons); and to share her views on politics and religion (e.g. lobbied for civil rights of black Americans and linked fundamentalism with growing disinterest in religion).

The Friendship estate included an 18-hole golf course, a swimming pool, a tennis court, stables and numerous gardens.



1940

Friendship and The War

On July 28, 1941, Ned McLean died of a heart attack at the age of 55. Though deeply in debt during the latter years of his life, Ned had willed \$300,000 to his girlfriend, Rose Davies, of the wealthy Tregaron clan, and a meager endowment to his wife and children. In the end, however, it was determined that Ned McLean really had nothing to bequeath. Because he had not inherited Friendship or any other property from his father and was only allowed to receive income from the property during his lifetime, Ned McLean's personal estate was practically nil. Furthermore, the will of John R. McLean provided that Ned's children, not his acquaintances or girlfriends, would inherit what remained of the McLean fortune. Evalyn Walsh McLean, who arranged her estranged husband's funeral, still only received her dower.

Later that year, the press was having a field day with the marriage announcement of Evalyn Walsh McLean's 19-year-old daughter Evalyn Washington McLean (formerly "Emily Beale McLean") and 57-year-old Senator Robert Rice Reynolds of North Carolina. Notwithstanding, the young heiress and her four times married fiancé took their vows at the Friendship estate. The couple had one child in 1942 who was christened Mamie Spears Reynolds.

Meanwhile, Friendship was becoming a thing of the past. By 1942, the trustees of John Roll McLean's estate had sold Friendship to the Defense Homes Corporation for one million dollars, and the Defense Homes Corporation, established to secure housing for defense work-

ers, was quickly transforming the estate into apartments and dormitories, a shopping center, and a nursery. After World War II a school was added. The formal dining room, which was once filled with damask, lace tablecloths, and other fineries was now a government stock room. Valuable works of art, including Bellecour paintings and Steinway pianos, were sold at public auction. Eventually, the renowned Friendship gates were tossed into a scrap heap with toasters, lawn mowers, typewriters, and other metal objects desperately needed by the government during wartime. Noteworthy, the developers did make a concerted effort to save parts of the landscape—namely, trees and statuary.

By 1943, there was a long waiting list for living in the newly built "McLean Gardens." Tenants were moving into the buildings, paying between \$15.50 to \$18.75 semi-monthly to live in residence halls, and \$60 to \$85 monthly to live in apartments. All rooms were furnished with innerspring mattresses, storage cabinets, furniture, and utilities. In the residence halls, there was one bath for every five residents and a telephone on each floor which was answered on a cooperative basis by residents. By 1946, however, individual service was made available to all residents. Weekly maid service was provided and linens were supplied regularly. In the Administration Building, residents had access to barber and beauty shops, a Hot Shoppes cafeteria, a cashier's office, valet and laundry service, and a lounge for dances, card parties and other social events. Later, day care services and training for day care specialists were provided in



JOHN R. McLEAN

1942
Thousands of civilians flock to Washington to man the offices created to handle the war program.

November 7, 1944
FDR is re-elected president of the US, the only American president ever to win a fourth term.

August 6, 1945
Hiroshima, Japan is destroyed by the first atomic bomb to be used in war.

1948
The first Polaroid camera is sold, allowing users to process prints in one minute.

a separate building.

The eligibility requirements for living in this wartime Shangri-Las: you had to have lived in Washington less than one year, you had to be a defense worker, and you had to be white. Two years after World War II ended, vacant apartments were rented exclusively to veterans of the War and to servicemen and their families.

During the 1940s, vagaries of Evalyn Walsh McLean's carefree life caught up with her. Her inheritance was greatly depleted, and her 24-year-old daughter had died of a drug overdose, leaving Mrs. McLean to care for her 4-year-old granddaughter Mamie. Not being a beneficiary of the estate of John R. McLean, Evalyn Walsh McLean did not benefit financially from the sale of Friendship. More importantly, she was forced to find a new home at her own expense. The tenacious and spirited socialite soon found her own "Friendship" at 3308 R Street in Georgetown. Here she threw more conservative fetes for friends and family as well as informal parties, which, unlike those from her heyday, were aimed at entertaining the troops and raising money for the war effort. As WWII progressed, and food was rationed, the dinner parties became even less spectacular. However, none of this stopped her from entertaining the servicemen and

women, disabled veterans and others who were involved with the war effort. She allowed the GI's to smoke, drink and romp around her fancy home. She even let the GIs' girlfriends try on her precious jewels (other than the Hope Diamond). In a creative moment, she tried to raise money for the Dogs for Defense (which procured dogs for the Army Canine Corps) by organizing a War Dog Fund Drive in which civilian pooches could be listed in her mock Canine Army for \$1 to \$100, depending on the rank and rating desired.

In 1947, Evalyn Walsh McLean's personal battles ended. The sixty-year-old socialite-philanthropist died of pneumonia at her Georgetown "Friendship" estate. In her will she asked that her most valuable possessions, including the Hope Diamond, the Star of the East diamond, and the principal from her estate be kept in trust until her youngest grandchild, Mamie Reynolds, turned 25. Twenty years from that date, Evalyn McLean stipulated, her estate, valued at \$919,550, was to be divided among all of the grandchildren (seven at the time of her death). And so goes the end of an era.

In September 1948, Defense Homes Corporation sold McLean Gardens' residential units to Fairmac Corporation, starting a new chapter in the history of McLean Gardens.

Defense Homes Corporation began construction of McLean Gardens in 1942. Note the original Friendship house in the background.



Benning Hall was one of the three residence halls for men. There were an additional six residence halls for women. Residents lived in dorm-like rooms and shared lounging, bathing and reading areas.



A Hot Shoppes Cafeteria was centrally located in the Administration Building, which also housed a barber shop, a beauty parlor, a cashier's office, laundry service and a lounge for social events.



January 20, 1948
President Truman is inaugurated for his second term, his first elective term.

June 25, 1950
The Korean War (1950-53) begins when North Korean forces launch an invasion into South Korea.

November 4, 1952
Dwight D. Eisenhower is elected president of the U.S. Senator Richard M. Nixon of California is elected vice president.

Home Development

Although the decade began with the United States' costly involvement with the Korean War, the 1950s were very prosperous for the majority of the country. A 'baby boom' created new markets for business and industry, while increased salaries and wages created more disposable income for consumers. In fact, rents in McLean Gardens were increased by \$5 to \$17 to accommodate the economic upturn. President Eisenhower created a new cabinet post, the Department of Health, Education and Welfare. Congress authorized programs to build and improve highways in all parts of the country. The National Aeronautics and Space Administration launched the United States' first artificial satellite, Explorer I, into outer space. Before the decade came to a close, Alaska and Hawaii became the 49th and 50th states, respectively.

Dwight Eisenhower was president during much of the decade. Several notable political and military figures were living in the Gardens at this time, including Secretary of Agriculture, Charles F. Brauman, and Founder Member of the National Fraternity of Military Pilots (Daedalians), Michael Joseph Del Re.

The McLean Gardens of the 1950s was not quite as dynamic as it was during the previous

decade. With the exception of routine maintenance and refurbishment of the complex, emphasis was placed on maintaining the status quo. But, this dormancy, which was an appealing feature of the complex, was also its Achilles' heel.


In 1954, the U.S. Supreme Court decided that segregation by race in public schools was unconstitutional. Segregation was the norm in most southern states (as well as Washington, D.C.), and it was practiced wholeheartedly in spite of attempts by the government to mandate change. Restaurants, department stores, golf courses, country clubs, public swimming pools, hotels, and apartment complexes were among the long list of the types of establishments which often tried and succeeded in barring blacks from their premises. African Americans and white sympathizers protested fervently all throughout the 1950s. Demanding equal rights for all U.S. citizens, blacks in the North and the South confronted their oppressors in picket lines and in courtrooms. McLean Gardens, oblivious or unyielding to rapid social changes, would soon become an icon of institutionalized racism that two young Americans would attempt to re-fashion in the early 1960s.

March 30, 1955
Marlon Brando and Grace Kelly win Best Actor and Best Actress from the Academy Awards.

October 4, 1957
The Soviet Union launches the first Earth Satellite, Sputnik I.

January 3, 1959
Alaska is proclaimed the 49th state by President Eisenhower.

November 8, 1960
John Fitzgerald Kennedy defeats Richard Nixon in a close election and becomes the 35th president of the United States.



A Sign of the Times

In 1960, John F. Kennedy became the 35th President of the United States. His program for change ("New Frontier") was aimed at correcting social and economic problems at home and abroad. The Civil Rights Movement was progressing at a fervent pace and people were privately and publicly challenging the values and the practices that were once considered acceptable. Protests, peaceful and violent, were becoming commonplace. McLean Gardens, which advertised its white-only policy during the 1940s and the 1950s, was denying the use of such practices when confronted during this time of social change. The stability of McLean Gardens during the 1950s was prologue to the problems that would besiege the complex in the 1960s.

A highly publicized example of this occurred in July 1961 when two young black women were refused transient rooms at McLean Gardens. One of the women, a 21-year-old Howard University student, said that white students obtained rooms right after she was told that there were none. The other woman, a 19-year-old Columbia University student, said that she had stayed with a white girlfriend in a McLean Gardens' room for three days and had asked for a single room when her friend left. Although she was also told by the rental office that no rooms were available, she charged that a white student obtained a room five minutes later. The two women pursued the matter and asked Assistant Corporation Counsel Charles F. King to prosecute a racial discrimination complaint against McLean Gardens. A police investigation was

made where black and white policemen applied for one of the transient rooms at the Gardens. According to King, the investigation and other evidence was not conclusive as to the presence of discriminatory practices based on race. More specifically, he argued that it could not be proven beyond a reasonable doubt that McLean Gardens was in violation of the 1872 statute prohibiting racial discrimination in renting hotel [transient] rooms to 'respectable and well behaved' people. Nevertheless, American University announced in September 1961 that it would cease using McLean Gardens' rooms as dormitory facilities for student overflows, partly because they would have built more permanent facilities on campus by the following year, and also because they wanted to disassociate themselves from the Gardens' segregation policy.

Notwithstanding King's decision, Corporation Counsel Chester H. Gray announced on October 4, 1961 that he would have Assistant Corporation Counsel Robert D. Wise prosecute the case.

While the lawyers were seeking justice in the courtroom, protestors, black and white, were seeking integration at McLean Gardens. The demonstrators picketed in front of the Administration Building for 55 days. The George Washington University and American University, which were both temporarily housing their student overflow in McLean Gardens' transient rooms, came under public scrutiny for contracting with McLean Gardens at the outset.

In mid-October, McLean Gardens entered a non-guilty plea. During the trial, they argued that

May 5, 1961
The first American in space, Navy Commander Alan Shepard, completes a successful flight.

November 22, 1963
The assassination of President Kennedy shocks the nation and the world.

1964
The Beatles rock the nation and break all existing sales records.

1968
Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and Senator Robert F. Kennedy are assassinated. Racial riots occur in many US cities.

July 16, 1969
Neil Armstrong is the first man to walk on the Moon during the Apollo 11 flight.

1969

the 21-year-old student had asked for a permanent room and none was available. (Noteworthy, the 1872 statute did not apply to permanent dwellings.) The 19-year-old woman was refused a room, according to the defense, because her roommate at McLean Gardens was not considered to be 'respectable and well behaved.' When the case ended in November 1961, a Municipal Court jury acquitted McLean Gardens on discrimination charges made by both women. This, however, was just the beginning of problems at McLean Gardens and for the country.

Before the decade would end, President Kennedy and civil rights leader Martin Luther King would be assassinated, thousands of U.S. troops in Vietnam would lose their lives, and President Kennedy's successor, Lyndon Johnson, would convince Congress to pass a civil rights bill opening up all public accommodations to blacks and guaranteeing them equal job opportunities.

In September 1968, the president of Fairmac Corporation announced that McLean Gardens and Fairlington Village (in Alexandria, Virginia)—another defense housing project—would be sold to Hartford Insurance Group of Connecticut.



Summer 1969
Woodstock Music
Festival attracts
an estimated
400,000 people
to an upstate
New York farm.



1970

The Conversion

By 1970, Hartford Insurance Group had purchased Fairmac Corporation and was planning to build a McLean Gardens metropolis including an apartment complex, a school, a hospital, a shopping center, and office buildings. In response, McLean Gardens tenants started the McLean Gardens Residents Association (MGRA) and hired lawyers to help stop the plan for a McLean Gardens mini-city. In 1974, Hartford Insurance Company gave up the fight and sold Fairmac for \$56 million to Chicago Bridge & Iron (CBI). Fairmac, now a division of CBI, announced plans to convert the apartments into condominiums and soon began to tear down dormitory buildings. With the support of D.C. Council Member Polly Shackleton, the tenants once again stopped the conversions.

From 1974 to 1975 CBI Fairmac continued to eliminate existing dormitory buildings. During this time, they repeated history and announced plans to tear down McLean Gardens and build a mini-city. Unlike previous plans, the proposed mini-city was a \$150 million housing project designed for diplomats. The project was to include foreign embassies, international stores, offices and high rise apartments. Early in 1976, Fairmac was proposing to the D.C. Zoning Commission a new zone for the planned international district. Around this time, Ward Three Councilwoman Polly Shackleton and Councilman Marion Barry introduced a resolution calling for the Municipal Planning Office (MPO) to insti-

tute a sectional development plan. This plan would give official and equal representation to commercial, residential and institutional components of the community. Ms. Shackleton also made this proposal to Mayor Walter Washington. Soon afterwards, the U.S. Post Office began negotiating with Fairmac for the temporary use of the Administration Building for a post office. But one month later, the Residents Association publicly opposed the plan in the *D.C. Gazette*, partly because they believed that rezoning to a commercial site might occur in the future, and also because residents had not been notified of the plans. By 1978, after numerous battles in and out of court, the Residents Association was able to celebrate the D.C. Zoning Commission's ruling that the Gardens was not suitable for an embassy-chancery. Two days after the ruling, tenants received eviction notices from CBI Fairmac.

In the interim, Fairmac had already opened discussions with potential buyers of McLean Gardens. What happened after these events was a nightmare for some, a sweet dream for others. Article titles in local periodicals during that period tell the rest of the story: "Tragedy on Wisconsin Avenue" (*Regardie's*); "The Battle of McLean Gardens" (*The Washingtonian*); and "McLean Gardens Tenants Sign Pact to Buy Project" (*The Washington Post*).

By May 1978, Dwight Mize, a California builder, was the most likely buyer of McLean Gardens. The proposed contract between CBI

Fall 1979. Since the main entrance to the McLean Gardens office had to be relocated for better accessibility, the original 1942 Defense Homes cornerstone was moved from the rear to the front of the building.

May 4, 1970
Kent State
University, Ohio:
4 students are
killed by National
Guard troops
during an antiwar
demonstration.

1971
Cigarette ads
are banned from
US television.

1971
The Supreme
Court approves
school busing for
integration.

1972
The story of the
Watergate break-in
is uncovered by
journalists



Fairmac and Mize included a stipulation that no more than 275 units could be occupied at time of sale, and they took great measures to ensure that this provision could be met. They continued their eviction plan with CBI Fairmac, first offering small and somewhat effective financial incentives, and later with Mize offering much larger monetary rewards to tenants who would agree to move. Mize also offered to set aside up to 25 apartments to rent to tenants over 65 years old who might endure hardship by moving, or simply did not want to purchase condos. Meanwhile, tenants were informed that CBI Fairmac was negotiating to sell the Gardens to Mize, and the two were in the process of applying for eligibility to convert the apartments to condominiums. By the end of May, however, the D.C. City Council had passed emergency legislation to make apartment buildings/complexes ineligible for conversion if monthly apartment rents were less than \$221 for an efficiency, \$267 for one-bedroom, \$314 for two bedrooms, and \$408 for any larger apartment. This moratorium applied to McLean Gardens.

The tenants who decided to stay—about 250 families—were no longer living in an urban paradise, they were living in a ghost town. Windows of vacant units had been boarded up. Lawns were left untrimmed. Debris from some of the demolished dormitories was still sitting on the grounds. When basements were flooded, or hallway lights burned out, calls for maintenance repeatedly went unanswered. There was an inordinate number of mysterious break-ins. When some tenants complained to the police

about abandoned cars, the police expressed surprise that anyone was still living in McLean Gardens. Facing these realities each day, many residents began accusing CBI Fairmac of employing 'psychological warfare' to spook them out of McLean Gardens. Some voiced their complaints through various media including the *McLean Gardens Residents Association Newsletter* which called for CBI Fairmac to stop the 'harassment and retaliation' campaign targeted for tenants.

In August 1978, tenants obtained a reprieve from the eviction campaign after a hearing examiner from the D.C. Rental Accommodations Office (RAO) ruled that the eviction notices were invalid. It was determined that there was a false statement in the notices: the buildings would be closed by September 1. Residents celebrated on September 1, 1978, with a Candlelight Victory Rally that was held in front of the lion's head fountain on Wisconsin Avenue. "We shall not be moved" was the slogan shouted during the vigil (and later printed on t-shirts worn by rebellious tenants). There was music, food, speakers, and a candlelight procession which ended with tenants burning their eviction notices. Camaraderie and community spirit were at their peak during these difficult times.

After discussions between the MGRA and Fairmac attorneys, and a hearing with the Rental Accommodations Office, on September 6, 1978, CBI offered to sell McLean Gardens to the tenants. The Residents Association argued that Fairmac violated the D.C. Rental Housing Act of 1977 because the tenants offered to buy the

1973
The Supreme Court issues *Roe v. Wade* pro-choice decision on abortion.

February 5, 1974
Patty Hearst, daughter of publisher Randolph Hearst, is kidnaped by the Symbionese Liberation Army.

August 8, 1974
President Nixon announces in a televised address that he will resign. Gerald Ford becomes president.

1974
Streaking becomes the latest fad.



complex before Mize; but, Fairmac accepted the offer from Mize first. That same month CBI Fairmac signed a contract with the residents allowing them to purchase McLean Gardens for \$25 million. However, the terms of the sale required that the residents make an initial downpayment of \$500,000 by December 1, 1978 and pay \$18 million at closing (October 1979). Although there were difficulties getting backers, the initial downpayment for the sale was made in the nick of time by the McLean Gardens Limited Partnership, a group of investors including Arthur Rubloff & Company, William P. McCulloch, III, a real estate investor and former World Bank staffer, several other World Bank staffers and McLean Gardens residents—who contributed \$56,000 of the initial deposit. Soon, the Partnership publicized details of their \$90-million development plan for renovating the apartments, selling the renovated units as condominiums or cooperatives to the tenants, and constructing townhouses and duplex apartments, to be sold as condominiums to the public. They made an out of court settlement of \$2.15 million with Dwight Mize, and continued to search for financiers for the project. In September 1979, a month before closing, the Partnership accepted a commitment to finance the project plus a \$31-million rehabilitation loan from the Continental Illinois Bank and Trust Company in Chicago.

It was said, during the 1970s, that the purchase of McLean Gardens by the tenants was *the largest buyout by a residents association in the history of Washington, D.C.*

November 2, 1976
Jimmy Carter and Walter Mondale are elected president and vice president.

1978
Pope John Paul II becomes the first non-Italian pope in more than 400 years.

1978
The Camp David Accord is signed by Israel and Egypt.

1979
Three Mile Island has an accident.

Tenants Buyout

With a loan from Continental Illinois Bank, the tenants were able to start implementing their development plan—not including townhouses—for McLean Gardens. The ownership of the property was to be divided as follows: Arthur Rubloff and Company, 50 percent; McLean Gardens Residents Association, 27.5 percent; and William McCulloch, 7 percent. Other investors would own the remaining 15.5 percent.

The conversion, according to one of the 1979 plans, was to be made in three phases. The last phase for the building of 620 new units along Wisconsin Avenue was to begin in 1985. Nonetheless, the conversion took longer than planned and more money than budgeted. Mismanagement of the development seemed to be a major cause of the problems. In order to absorb the cost overruns, estimated price ranges of the condos were raised from \$40,000-\$70,000 (in 1978), to \$95,000-\$215,000 (in 1980/1981).

In October 1979, co-developer Arthur Rubloff & Co., moved on site and made its presence known at McLean Gardens.

By 1980, McLean Gardens was no longer a complex trying to provide moderately priced homes. The administration offices were now decorated with plush carpets, heavy brass ashtrays, china coffee cups, candelabras, lucite and chrome desks, and artwork leased from an art gallery. Elitism was the method used in marketing the condominiums. From pricing to selling, McLean Gardens was marketed as an exclusive community, a legendary estate, "a renaissance fable of the 1980's." The objective was not only to sell a lot of apartments, but also

to attract a certain socioeconomic class of people.

In the Administration Building, invitation-only Sunday morning crepe breakfasts (with strolling musicians) and wine and cheese parties were held. A black tie, invitation-only bash was thrown in the honor of the 'rebirth of the Gardens'—although residents did not know it had died. Spectators say that most of the party goers were business associates or friends of Rubloff employees, people who had little or no interest in the rebirth, death or second coming of the Gardens.

Unfortunately, the marketing efforts mirrored the conversion efforts. The campaign didn't meet its objective, and it did not attract or even attempt to attract potential buyers who might have met certain selection criteria. "Frozen Out at McLean Gardens" was how one *Washington Post* staff writer described the cool treatment he received before, during and after his visit to the sales office at the new Gardens.

As many insiders expected, many of the apartments—particularly, the duplexes—did not sell. In fairness, the selling of the new McLean Gardens was complicated by a depressed real estate market in mid-1981. In light of the problems, which by this time included power struggles among some of the employees, the primary owner, Arthur Rubloff and Co., fired the project manager, the executive committee, the construction company, and the marketing firm involved with the conversion project.

In May 1982, Continental Illinois Bank foreclosed on McLean Gardens after they defaulted on construction loans held by the bank. Not surprisingly, the Chicago bank purchased the

1980
Mount St. Helens
erupts in
Washington State

1981
As millions watch
their televisions,
Prince Charles
marries Lady
Diana Spencer.

1982
Vietnam Veteran's
Memorial is
unveiled in
Washington, DC.

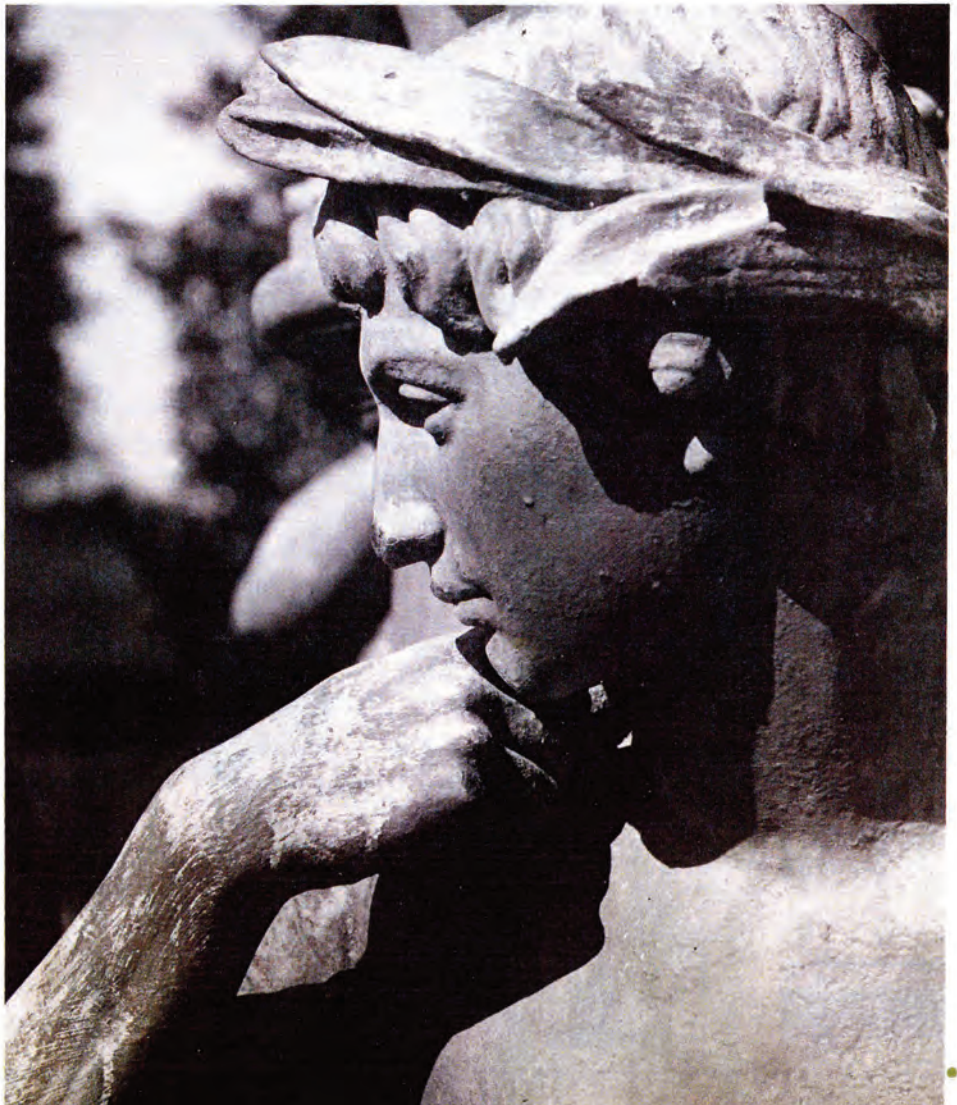
1983
Lech Walesa wins
the Nobel Peace
Prize.

460 unsold units for \$39.4 million at the public auction held in June 1982. By the time of the auction, Continental Illinois Bank had already retained Chicago realtor, Richard Stein, to supervise the development of the remaining condominium units. It is important to note that the strip of undeveloped land along Wisconsin Avenue where the dorms once stood was not part of the auction; it was sold to the Holladay Corporation in 1983. In 1984, after the D.C. Zoning Commission ruled that new residential construction was exempt from the local rent control law, the corporation began developing a nine-story building with 214 apartments and

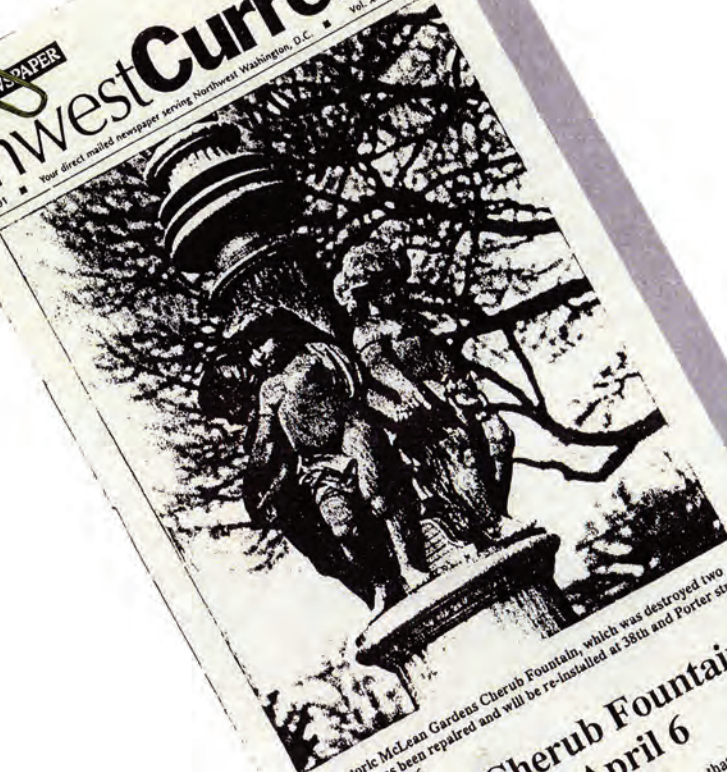
commercial space (The Tower), and a complex of four-story apartment buildings with space for 360 apartments (The Village).

In 1984, McLean Gardens Associates (MGA), an investor group based in Boston, bought the remaining 411 condominium units. MGA held the units as rental property until 1987 when they began selling individual units to individual homeowners, many of whom were already tenants at McLean Gardens and part of the community. MGA continues to sell their remaining 96 units; the vast majority of their sales are to individual homeowners who are attracted to the McLean Gardens community and setting.

Many statues were salvaged from the original Friendship estate and used to decorate the grounds of McLean Gardens today. Most of the original statuary was imported from Europe.



1986
Challenger space
shuttle disaster
kills all seven
astronauts aboard.



The historic McLean Gardens Cherub Fountain, which was destroyed two years ago, has been repaired and will be re-installed at 38th and Porter streets Saturday, April 6.

Restored Cherub Fountain to be unveiled April 6

The restored McLean Gardens Cherub Fountain, which was damaged two years ago, will be unveiled at a 2 p.m. ceremony Saturday, April 6.

The ceremony and a reception are being planned by the McLean Gardens Condominium Association and the Hollanday Corporation.

The fountain, located at the intersection of 38th and Porter streets, NW, had been damaged by a Metro bus during an ice storm two years ago.

The Cherub Fountain was part of an original fountain located on the estate of Edward Beale McLean and Evalyn Walsh McLean, owners of The Washington Post from 1905 to 1933 and owners of the Hope Diamond. This fountain was commissioned by John McLean in 1990 as part of the grand design for the Ital-

ian Gardens that surrounded the McLean Mansion. McLean was inspired by the fountains he admired in Europe.

It took three designers, five engineers and an entire school of sculptors to satisfy the McLans. At the cost of \$200,000, the final design was cast at the Royal Foundry in Munich, Germany, shipped to America by steamer and assembled at Friendship, the McLean Estate. There it remained for 40 years, until the gardens were razed during the transformation of Friendship to wartime housing and later McLean Gardens.

The New Arts Foundry of Baltimore performed by recasting job of the Cherub Fountain, the only remaining part of the original Friendship Fountain.



1989
The world cheers as the Berlin Wall comes down.

1989
The Exxon Valdez spills massive quantities of oil in Alaska.

1990
The Simpsons get their own television show.

1990

Community Involvement

During the Winter of 1989, the cherub fountain, the only remnant of the original Friendship fountain, was severely damaged by a skidding Metrobus attempting to turn on Porter Street. The fountain was recast by the New Arts Foundry of Baltimore, and the mended antique was unveiled during a ceremony held in April 1992.

Today, many committees at McLean Gardens are revitalizing community involvement the way that the New Arts Foundry restored the cherub fountain.

In the 1990s many socio-economic changes have had an impact on everyone's capacity for socializing and community involvement. We are seeing more dual income families and more single parent families, who have less time to spend on such activities. McLean Gardens, however, affords its residents many opportunities to meet their neighbors and become more involved with their community.

Those of us who have a green thumb can meet our neighbors at the Community Gardens on Newark Street. Our athletically inclined residents enjoy tennis and volleyball at conveniently located courts and recreational areas; and, those with a love of nature and the outdoors can experience a hike in nearby Glover Park, or the serenity of a visit to the National Cathedral just a few short blocks away.

The Activities Committee organizes events including the semi-annual lawn sale, the annual pool party, and the holiday party held each December in the Community Ballroom. This committee has also brought us *International*

Night, an event which showcases traditional costumes and cuisines from the diverse nationalities and ethnic backgrounds of our residents.

The Communications Committee, just one of several committees formed by the McLean Gardens Condominium Association Board of Directors, produces our monthly newsletter, *The Lion's Roar*, which keeps residents apprised of board matters and information affecting our neighborhood. It also provides a calendar of upcoming events, a classifieds section, and most recently, a resident profile section.

Meanwhile, Finance, Neighborhood Watch, Landscape and other committees tend to business, security matters, and maintenance at the Gardens, ensuring the tranquility, safety, and overall beautification of our neighborhood. Where else in Washington can you live within the city and still be surrounded by beautifully landscaped grounds dotted with stately trees and statuary from an era gone by?

The year 1992 marks the 50th Anniversary of McLean Gardens. In celebration of this milestone, the 50th Anniversary Committee has hosted several events and has produced commemorative items (such as this booklet) designed to increase community involvement and promote community spirit. The Communications Committee has even joined the celebration by publishing a brief history of McLean Gardens in several issues of *The Lion's Roar*.

We, as residents of this landmark community in the heart of our nation's capital, owe a very special thanks to the many diligent and dedicated residents who continually volunteer their time, talent and efforts to serve as board and

1990
Nelson Mandela
is released from
prison.

1990
Gorbachev wins
the Nobel Peace
Prize.

1991
The Gulf War
begins on January
17th and ends on
February 28th

1992
McLean Gardens
celebrates its
50th Anniversary!



committee members. They, in conjunction with our skilled management staff, are instrumental in keeping McLean Gardens a flagship community we all can be proud to live in.

The fountain has served as a symbol of our

50th Anniversary this year. While it stands as evidence of the longevity of McLean Gardens and the tenacity of its residents, it will also serve as a beacon to the next fifty years.

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Booklet Credits

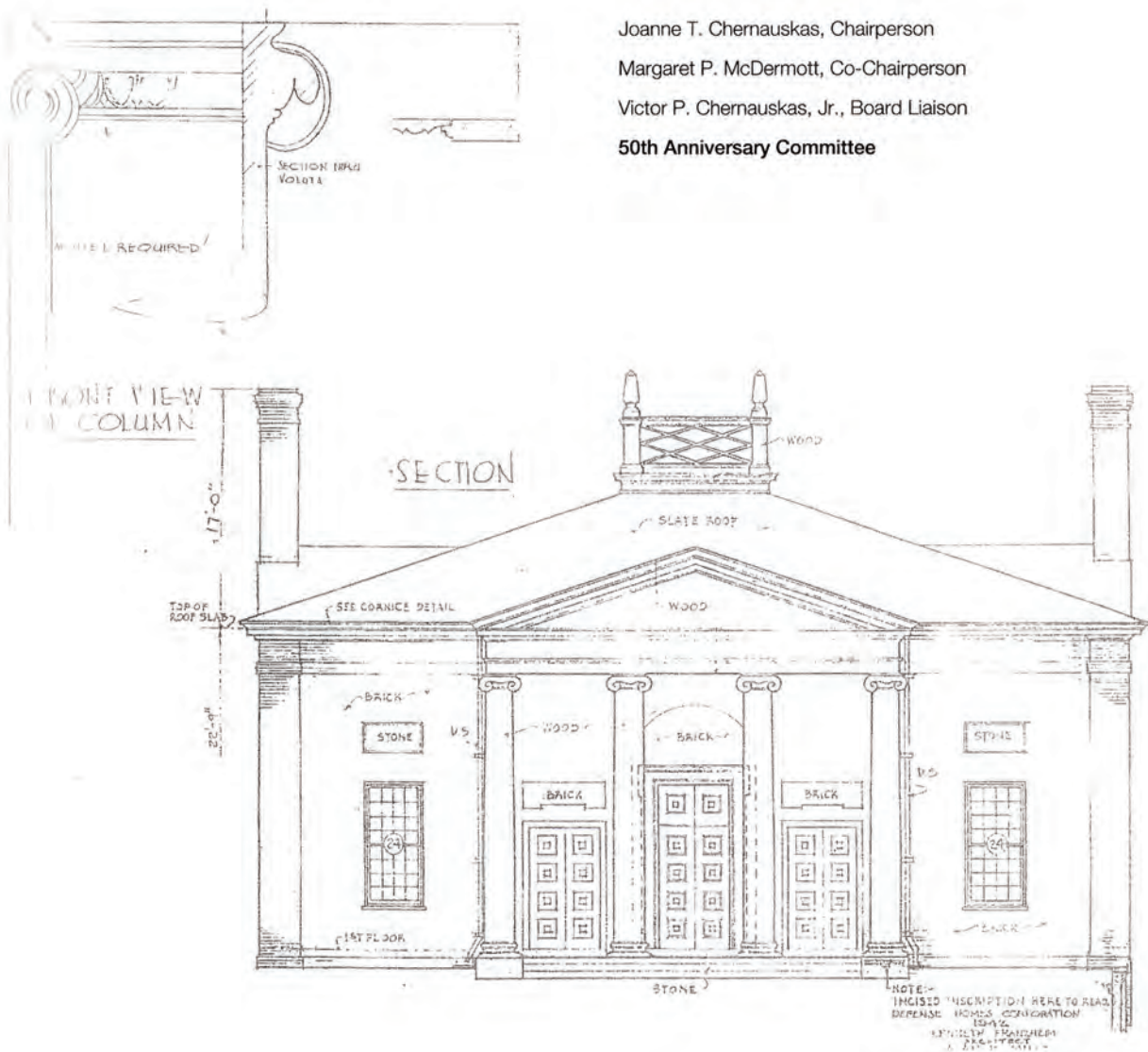
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