

THE NATIONAL 4-H CENTER

The site of the present 4-H Center was first developed in the early 1890s, when the Chevy Chase Land Company built a frame structure, the Spring Hotel, on it. The hotel was not a success. While it was full during the summer months, it was practically vacant during the rest of the year. It was modified slightly and became the Chevy Chase Inn; however, even with the changes it was still vacant much of the time.

In 1903 it became the Chevy Chase College for Young Ladies. At that time, a brick veneer was added completely covering the white colonial wood building. The name was changed in 1927 and it became the Chevy Chase Junior College. The present Turner Hall, originally the Muhse Science Hall, was completed in 1949 near the southwest corner of the main building. The present Warren Hall near the northeast corner was originally Scudder House, the school president's residence. The junior college closed in 1950.

The National 4-H Foundation purchased the property in 1951, but immediately leased it to the Department of the Army to house the Operations Research Office of the Johns Hopkins University for work relating to the Korean War. It was returned to the Foundation in 1958.

Further modifications were made to the main building, Smith Hall, when it was reoccupied in 1959. Two wings were rebuilt. Two large new buildings bracketing Warren Hall were also built. These buildings and W.K. Kellogg, McCormick, and Firestone Halls were all connected by underground passages and above-ground colonnades. In 1976 the main building except for the rear wings was demolished and a look-alike but much larger structure, renamed J.C. Penney Hall, was erected as the centerpiece of the complex. The complex now has

an overnight capacity for 650 occupants, 30 conference rooms, plus dining and banquet facilities. The Center is the scene of many national and international conferences.

Linscott Hall

The National 4-H Program

4-H is an out-of-school educational program that helps young people develop new skills, explore possible career choices, and serve their communities. The four H's stand for head, heart, hands, and health. Their slogan is "Learn by Doing." Young people participate in agricultural projects such as raising livestock and poultry, growing crops, and canning. City youngsters receive instruction in home improvement, computers, automobile care and safety, clothing, gardening in limited space, physical fitness, and drug abuse.

In the United States the movement began in the early 1900s. Federal, state, and county governments contribute to 4-H work. The state land grant universities and Extension Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture supply educational materials for 4-H members and help organize national and state events. There are about 166,000 local units. Each year about 4.7 million youths primarily 9-19 years of age participate and 300,000 attend camps. Approximately 622,500 volunteers serve as instructors and leaders.

The National 4-H Council is a not-for-profit educational organization that uses private resources to help expand and strengthen the 4-H program.

Information for this article was furnished by the National 4-H Center.



Chevy Chase College for Young Ladies on Connecticut Avenue, Circa 1908

COURTESY, NATIONAL 4-H CENTER