While the apartment-dwellers and owners of tiny houses in the neighborhood struggle to find a parking space at the end of another day at work, the "georgetown Elite" party at Tudor Place!

Party lines: *people, places and politics*

per: BZA Application No 16974

Gardens bloom for Georgetowners at Tudor Place

BZA
Case No. 16974
Exhibit No. 104

By Kevin Chaffee
THE WASHINGTON TIMES

"It's our little tribe, and we're having a powwow . . . ," rare book dealer **Kinsey Marable** said with droll satisfaction as a veddy proper crowd promenaded on Tudor Place's lush lawns Tuesday night.

"And we don't want anybody else to come," restaurateur **Carol Ross Joynt** added with a laugh after taking in the behatted ladies and bowtied gents along with the flowers, fresh strawberries and silver mint julep cups at what has become a "must-attend" event for Georgetowners and the "cave-dweller" set since the historic estate opened to the public in 1988.

You'd like names? You'll get names: **Ruth Buchanan** with son **Wiley Buchanan III** and wife **Janet**, Rep. **Rodney Frelinghuysen, Townsend** and **Valerie Burden, Mary Wehrmann, Brice** and **Diana Clagett, John Macomber, Arthur Gardner, Sally Chapoton, Michael** and **Elizabeth Cantacuzene, Sheila Griffin, Doda de Wolf, Elinor Farquhar, George Hill, John Irelan, Braxton Moncure, Juliet Davis, Lucy Moorhead, Jim Lemon, Frida Burling, Claire Cox, Robert Duemling, Betsey Rea, Dr. Tom** and **Jane Nigra, Albert** and **Shirley Small, Marie Gilson, Michael Sullivan** and **Katryna Carothers** all were there.

As usual, a violin, flute and harp ensemble played in the formal gardens, in full bloom after months of abundant rain. Under the marquee adjacent to the mansion, the Levine School of Music's Jazz Trio kept up a lively, if somewhat incongruous, beat of Latin-y numbers that seemed to hit the spot.

"We don't have to have Cole Porter all the time," one elderly guest muttered into his gin and tonic while settling in at the closest bar.

The tent, music, bar and buffet (cold poached salmon, roast beef, asparagus, hearts of palm and other WASPy picnic fare) are all part of the traditional scene that varies little from year to year. The radical decision to cover cocktail tables with fuchsia- and saffron-colored cloths, stylishly tapered and tied at the bottom, was, according to former event chairwoman **Georgina Owen Horsey**, the only "hot issue" at committee meetings.

Less so, of course, was the selection "by acclamation" of **Mrs. Richard Gerard Brown** as Tudor Place's grande dame of the year. The award honors longtime residents for leadership in the community, and Mrs. Brown (Maud to her friends) certainly qualified after "50 years in three houses" and decades of devotion to Georgetown's garden club and citizens association.

Committee members directed by chairman **Margaret Hanson Costan** raised more than $100,000 for Tudor Place this year, funds that are sorely needed to maintain the 1816 neoclassical residence and its 5½ acres of grounds.

"It needs everything," said trustee **Ellen MacNeille Charles**, who pointed out that much of the infrastructure of the main house is antiquated and in need of replacement. The lack of air conditioning, she added, is particularly "ruinous" for its valuable contents.

Not that the furnace is much better, considering that it dates from 1914 and completely broke down last November when heating pipes froze.

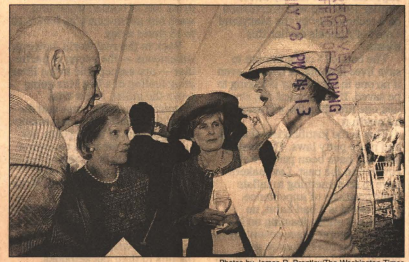
"We had to wear coats in the office and gloves to type," recalled **Leslie Buhler**, Tudor Place's executive director, who survived along with her staff for 2½ weeks before repairs were completed.

Ms. Buhler noted that the electrical wiring system dating from 1960 also needs to be redone. On top of that, the entire stucco surface of the three-story mansion is beginning to "substantially crack and come off."

Although a $100,000 federal Save America's Treasures grant will cover part of the stucco problem, other funds are hard to come by these days — especially because the estate's endowment, once estimated at $8 million, has fallen substantially because of the decline in the stock market.

"We've got a good board of trustees, including **Austin Kiplinger** and **Huntington Block**, and have just added **Boyden Gray, John Firestone** and **Jack Ritchie**," Mrs. Charles said, sounding confident that Tudor Place will have no trouble pulling through.







Photos by James R. Brantley/The Washington Times

Sis Hedden (right, above) made a point to Mike Peabody, Jean Bower and Pam Peabody. Garden party chairwoman Margaret Hanson Costan and honoree Maud Brown conferred with Charles Atherton near the entrance to the marquee.



Marjel Highet, Georgina Owen Horsey, Marcia McGhee Carter and Janet Bruce compared notes — and hats — at Tudor Place's annual garden party. Virginia Burden (right) and Peter van Roijen chatted on the lawn.