Much information on the early years of Chestnut Hill may be found in S. F. Hotchklin, Ancient and Modern Germantown, Mount Airy, and Chestnut Hill (Philadelphia, 1889); and John J. Macfarlane, History of Early Chestnut Hill (Philadelphia, 1927). Drawing heavily on Macfarlane but containing some additional material is Horace Mather Lippincott, Chestnut Hill, Springfield, Whitemarsh, Cheltenham (Jenkintown, PA, 1948). All three of these works were written by amateur historians. Nevertheless, they contain information that cannot be found elsewhere. An excellent article on landholding and genealogy in colonial Chestnut Hill is Hanna Benner Roach’s “The Back Part of Germantown,” The Pennsylvania Genealogical Magazine (1956), pp. 77–149. Some works that deal primarily with Germantown contain valuable information on Chestnut Hill, which was once part of Germantown Township. There are also Edward J. Hocker, Germantown, 1683–1933 (Philadelphia, 1933); Naaman H. Keyser et al., History of Old Germantown (Philadelphia, 1907); and Samuel J. Pennypacker, The Settlement of Germantown, Pennsylvania (Philadelphia, 1899). More recent writings include Harry Tinkcom et al., Historic Germantown (Philadelphia, 1955); and Stephanie Grauman Wolf, Urban Village: Population, Community, and Family Structure in Germantown, Philadelphia, 1683–1800 (Princeton, 1976). The latter, by an accomplished urban historian, is helpful in understanding the population and social structure of presuburban Chestnut Hill. A good introduction to the architecture of Chestnut Hill is Willard S. Detweiler, Jr., Chestnut Hill: An Architectural History (Philadelphia, 1969). A complete list of extant structures in Chestnut Hill as of 1985, except for the Morgan Tract/Market Square area, is Jefferson Moak, Inventory of Buildings Within the Chestnut Hill Historic District, compiled for the Chestnut Hill Historical Society (1985). This work contains an abundance of information about owners, dates, architects, and builders. Also by Moak is "Street

In addition to these works, the weekly newspapers published in Germantown, nearly all issues of which can be found at the Germantown Historical Society, contain much valuable material on Chestnut Hill. These are the Germantown Telegraph (1830–1948), the Germantown Guide (1871–1926), the Germantown Independent (1882–1896), the Germantown Independent-Gazette (1896–1926), and the Germantown Courier (1936— ). A helpful guide to two of these newspapers, also located at the Germantown Historical Society, is Edward W. Hocker, Abstracts of News and Advertisements in the Germantown Telegraph (1830–1868), and Germantown Chronicle (1869–1872). Three other sources at the Germantown Historical Society draw heavily on these local newspapers. They are Jane Campbell, Scrapbooks, 49 vols.; and Edwin C. Jellett, Scrapbooks on the Wissahickon, 9 vols. Besides containing newspaper clippings, both sets of scrapbooks offer a rich assortment of drawings, prints, photographs, and ephemera that relate to Chestnut Hill—much of which is unavailable anywhere else. Also depending upon the newspapers is the Germantown Historical Society’s excellent Obituary File, which contains many entries on Chestnut Hill residents. Two other periodicals, The Germantown Crier, published quarterly since 1949 by the Germantown Historical Society, and The Beehive, a monthly magazine published in Germantown during the 1920s and 1930s, contain articles on Chestnut Hill.

Newspapers focusing on Chestnut Hill itself are the Chestnut Hill and Mount Airy Herald (1925–1929) and the Herald (1946–1962), which despite their similar names should not be confused. Issues of the earlier newspaper are located at the Germantown Historical Society; the latter is available at the Chestnut Hill Historical Society. More recent are the Chestnut Hill Cymbal (1955–1957) and the Chestnut Hill Local (1958— ), which may be found at the Chestnut Hill Historical Society. Chestnut Hill and its residents have also been given occasional coverage in the metropolitan dailies, including the Philadelphia Press, the Public Ledger, the Evening Bulletin, and the Philadelphia Inquirer, among others.

Two excellent general histories of American suburbs are Robert Fishman, Bourgeois Utopias: The Rise and Fall of Suburbia (New York, 1987); and Kenneth Jackson, Crabgrass Frontier: The Suburbanization of the United States (New York, 1985). The transformation of gateway villages into early suburbs is explored by Henry C. Binford, The First Suburbs: Residential Communities on the Boston Periphery, 1815–1860 (Chicago, 1985). On railroad suburbs there are John Stilgoe, Metropolitan Corridor: Railroads and the American Scene (New Haven, 1983); and Michael Ebner, Creating Chicago’s North Shore (Chicago, 1988). The impact of trolley cars on suburbs is explored in
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Manuscript collections relating to the Houston/Woodward development in Chestnut Hill include the Houston Estate Papers at the Pennsylvania State Archives in Harrisburg; the Houston Estate file at the Architectural Archives of the University of Pennsylvania; and an assortment of documents and papers in the Alumni Records collection at the University of Pennsylvania Archives. The board minutes of the Pennsylvania Railroad, which shed light on Houston and his development of Chestnut Hill, may be found at the (Hagley) Elutherian Mills Historical Library near Wilmington, Delaware.


Essential to studying social class in Chestnut Hill during the early decades of the twentieth century are the Philadelphia City Directory, the Philadelphia Social Register, and Who's Who in America. Complementing this material are a number of oral histories undertaken by the author over a five-year period, the subjects of which are listed in the acknowledgments. Also revealing are several memoirs: Eleanor Ward Altemus, Chestnut Hill's Main Street Shopping, 1930–1935 (Bryn Mawr, PA, 1984); Mary Wickham Bond, Ninety Years at Home in Philadelphia (Bryn Mawr, PA, 1988); W. Thacher Longstreth, Main Line Waip (New York, 1990); William U. McClanahan, G.P. (Philadelphia, 1974); Marian Willis Martin Rivinus, A Full Life (privately printed); and Ellen Taussig, Wings on My Heels: A Newspaper Woman's Story (Portsmouth, NH, 1986).


The best sources on Chestnut Hill's improvement organizations during the Progressive Era and slightly thereafter are at the Germantown Historical Society, in its collections on Community Improvement Associations and the Germantown and Chestnut Hill Improvement Association. The latter collection contains the minutes of the Auxiliary Committee of the G&CHIA. The Germantown weekly newspapers also contain an abundance of news and information about the improvement associations, as do the Scrapbooks
(49 vols.) compiled by Jane Campbell. The memoirs and letters of Lydia Jane Clark (Boston, 1939) are useful in understanding the origins of the Chestnut Hill Community Center. The improvement association movement as a whole is explored in David P. Handlin, The American Home: Architecture and Society, 1815–1915 (Boston, 1979), pp. 141–148; Warren E. Manning, "The History of Village Improvement in the United States," Craftman (February 1904), pp. 423–435; Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr., "Village Improvement," Atlantic (June 1905), pp. 798–803; George E. Waring, Jr., Village Improvement and Farm Villages (Boston, 1877); and the already cited Wilson, City Beautiful.


Any study of postwar Chestnut Hill and the creation of quasi government must rely heavily upon the local newspapers, especially the Herald and the Local. Complementing these are minutes of the following: Chestnut Hill Community Association, Chestnut Hill Historical Society, and North Chestnut Hill Association, later called North Chestnut Hill Neighbors. Many of the above-mentioned oral histories are also concerned with this period. Lloyd Wells' "The Witness of Chestnut Hill's Mid-Century History, 1950–1975," two lectures delivered on 3 November and 10 November 1987, may be found in written form at the Chestnut Hill Historical Society. A sketch of the early history of the Chestnut Hill Community Association is Sidney Dexter, "Community Association: A History," Local, 23 October 1958. The establishment of the Chestnut Hill Historical Society is presented in Nancy Hubby, "The Evolution of an Historical Society," Crier (March 1967), pp. 20–21. For a treatment of the negotiations over the Morgan Tract/Market Square area up to 1960, see Thomas A. Bell, Negotiations Concerning the Development of the Morgan Tract, unpublished manuscript, CHHS. On community organizations in general during this time, there is Roger Ahlbrandt, Jr., Neighborhoods, People, and Community (New York, 1984). The history of historic preservation in Philadelphia is explored in Richard J. Webster, Philadelphia Preserved (Philadelphia, 1976).

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