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Weathering the Crunch

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By Dorothy McCardle

Most of Washington's large country clubs are being helped by the depression, say their managers.

In spite of increased monthly dues, up \$10 to \$12 per club, members are staying in town and using club facilities instead of taking the more expensive cruises or visits to winter holiday spas for sun and fun.

Large parties at most of these clubs, such as Columbia, Congressional, Woodmont, Belle Haven and Chevy Chase, are down because people are cutting down on such large affairs.

But some of the clubs have introduced informal dining areas where guests in blue jeans or even bathing suits can get a steak. And these have been very popular.

Although club operating costs are up, reflecting higher food prices and energy rates which are passed along to members in increased monthly dues, they find it cheaper to eat at the club than at restaurants of comparable charm and comfort, report local club managers.

What is true of Washington also holds for clubs all around the country, says Horace Duncan, executive director of the Club Managers Association of America, with headquarters here in Washington.

"The general picture of club life all over the United States—so far as the large clubs are concerned—is much the same," says Duncan. "People are spending time at their clubs instead of going to Europe or to other more expensive holiday sites. It's cheaper to stay home and enjoy the club."

The Netherlands Embassy has always had a corner on those flowers that bloom in the spring, what with the annual tulip invasion direct from Holland.

At parties recently in honor of the 1,600 imported tulips (34 varieties) given by Ambassador of the Nether-

lands and Mrs. Robert T. Bakker there was one item missing.

There was no Frances Ash Tulip, named for the wife of Washington lawyer Robert Ash. But Frances Ash was at the Friday reception for members of local garden clubs, and she told how she happened to have a Dutch tulip named for her.

Back in 1941 when Congress tried to enact a ban on importing foreign seeds and bulbs, Mrs. Ash was asked to speak for the garden clubs of America against any such move. She spoke so well, and so did many others, that Congress dropped the idea.

Years later when Mr. and Mrs. Ash visited Europe, they were invited particularly to visit the Netherlands where she was told a new kind of tulip was to be named for her and she was asked what color would she like. She said her home garden has pastels, and so the Frances Ash Tulip is a lovely pale rose shade.

Eventually, a shipment of the bulbs—her own namesake and other varieties, too—arrived and were planted in the Ash garden. "Just a small garden," she says, "only a couple of acres."

She had so many bulbs that she shared her wealth with the Chevy Chase Club.

A large silver plaque in the hideaway office of former President Nixon once caught the eye of Jamie Kabler, a lawyer from Norfolk, Va., who works now in the office of Rep. Robert Daniel Jr. (R-Va.). Kabler saw the secret office at the EOB before Nixon resigned.

The plaque showed two areas which had not gone Republican in the 1972 elections—Massachusetts and the District of Columbia. Under it was the legend: "For a man who has almost everything." The plaque was signed by Nixon's two best friends—industrialist Robert H. Abplanalp and banker Charles G. (Bebe) Rebozo.

Kabler told of his visit to the Nixon hideaway when he attended a party given by Beau Bogan at his Georgetown home for the cast of "Light Up the Sky" following the play's opening at Ford's Theater.

Washington author Marjorie Holmes is hard at work in a new medium. She is turning her best seller, "Two from Galilee," into a movie script.

She has signed a contract with American Video Cinema, based in Dallas, and has full supervision of the movie and the right to write the script herself. She will go to Israel soon for more research. She visited Israel when she was writing the book.

The book, turned down by some 30 publishers, was brought out in 1972 in hardcover by Fleming H. Revell and has sold 275,000 copies. The paperback edition, brought out by Bantam Books, has sold 725,000 copies.