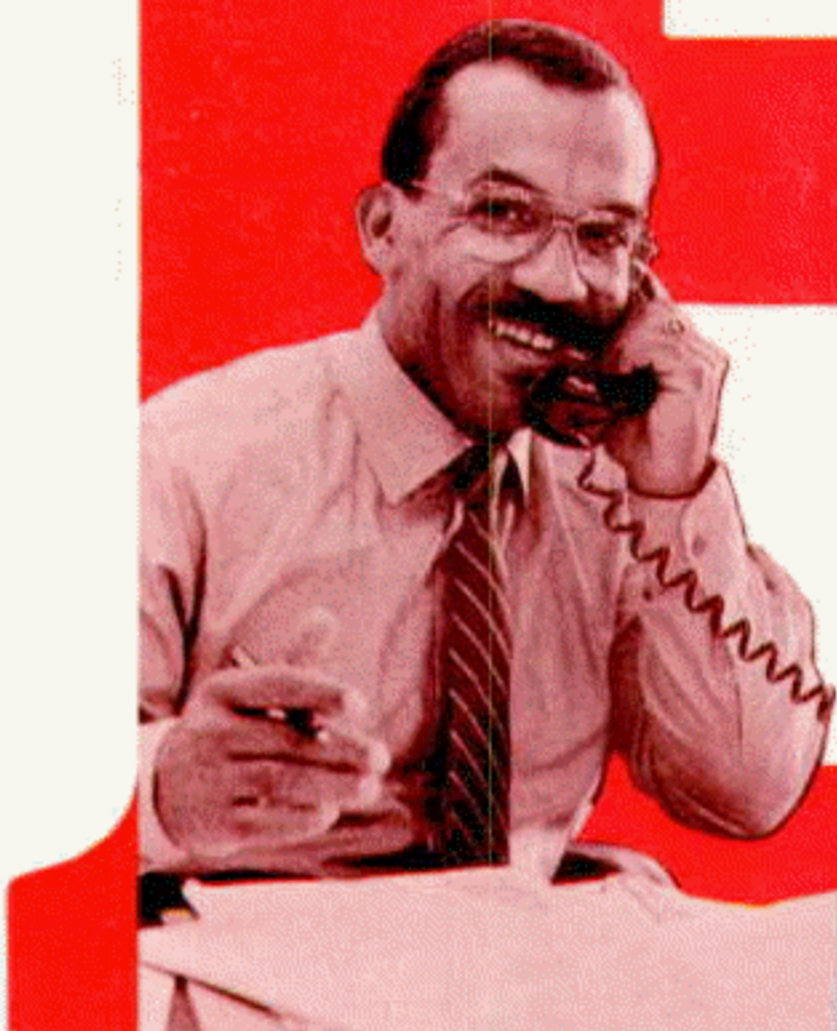


THE PRS



Open season begins this month— See page 16

'Sorority' of SSA employees in the 1940s

When Social Security ran a rooming house

"It was like a sorority house. All of us were young women--in most cases fresh out of high school or college--and we all belonged to the same 'club'--Social Security. We shared bedrooms and bathrooms, played pranks on each other, double dated, and gathered in the parlor most evenings to talk about our new jobs in a new city."

That's how a retired employee remembers life at the Social Security-sponsored Eutaw Place Home in Baltimore during the early 1940s. How did we get

Because housing was scarce in Baltimore, Social Security's personnel office arranged accommodations for some of the new female employees in two buildings located at 1800 and 1801 Eutaw Place. These late-19th-century brownstones were originally private residences. During the war years they were converted into a rooming house called Eutaw Place Home.

OASIS spoke to three retired employees who lived there.

"My first job with SSA was as a

there," said Millie. "We all worked for Social Security, so we had a lot in common, and it was fun living with other women and sharing experiences. I shared a room with four others. I was one of the few residents who had a radio, and I remember that when Frank Sinatra was on the air, everyone would crowd into our room to swoon over him."

Millie recalled that she spent some of her evenings studying and writing her thesis for her masters degree in public administration. "I needed a quiet place to work. The housemother allowed me to use the library, which ordinarily was not a room available to the residents. It was a beautiful mahogany-paneled room with stained glass windows--a reminder of the elegant mansion that it once was."

ELIZABETH BOKROS left her home in Johnstown, PA, in March 1943 to work as a correspondence clerk on the night shift in the Candler Building. "Some of us who lived at Eutaw Place worked on the day shift and others on the night shift. I can remember the fun we used to have. The day shift played tricks on the night shift such as tying knots in our pajama legs and stuffing our bedroom slippers with paper.

"We paid \$5 a week rent to our housemother, who collected it for the owner of the building," Elizabeth recalled. "Our housemother took good care of us. For example, I remember when she arranged to have a representative from the YWCA come to talk to us about recreational programs at a nearby park. Another time the Baltimore



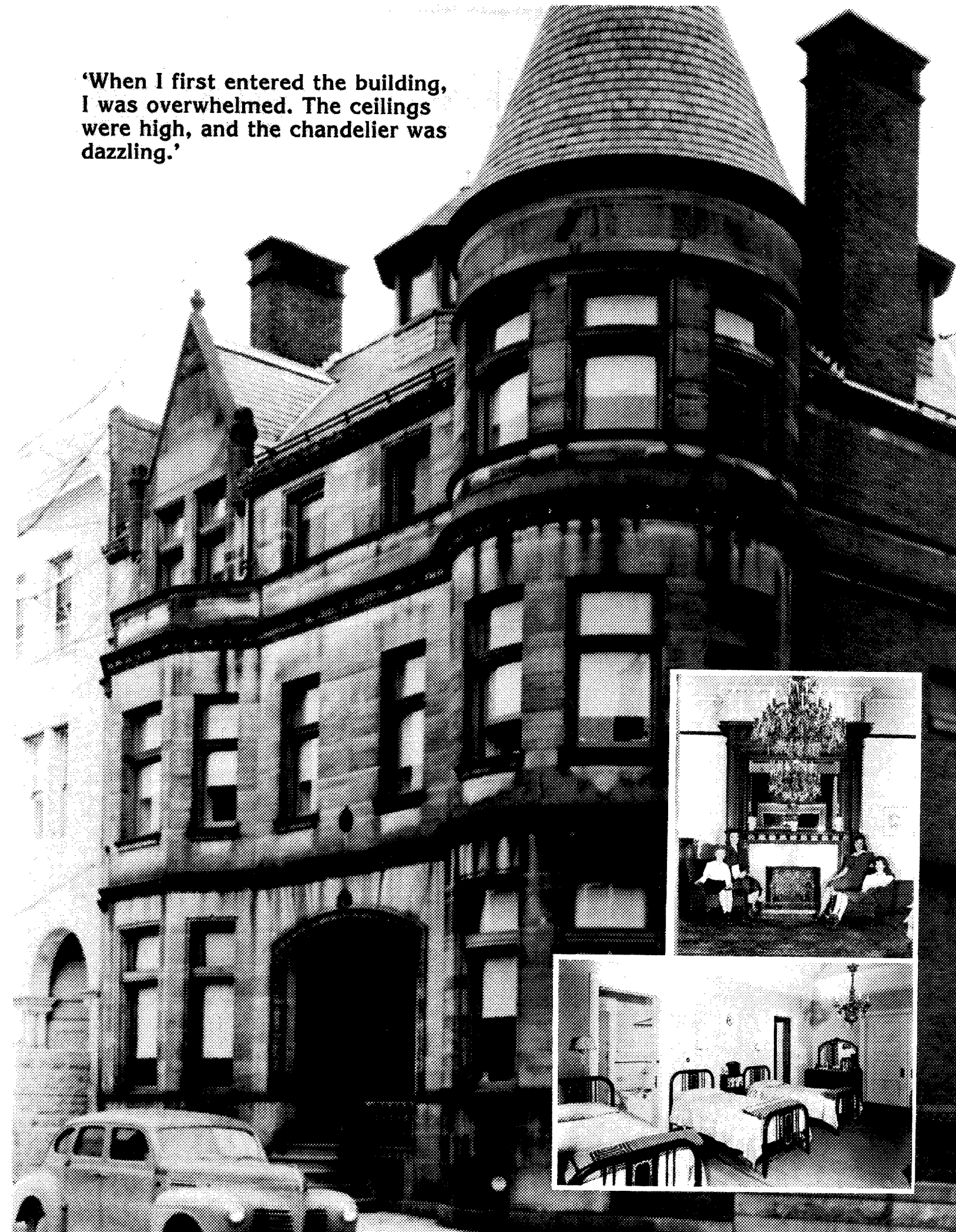
involved in this early version of a relocation service?

During World War II we were increasing our central office staff to handle a massive accounting operation and other responsibilities. Recruiters traveled to nearby States to hire people, most of them women, since able-bodied men were being drafted for service in the armed forces.

junior budget analyst in the Equitable Building on Calvert Street, which was then Social Security headquarters," recalls MILDRED TYSSOWSKI. "Men and women from across the nation were coming to Baltimore to work for Social Security. I arrived from Iowa in 1942 and roomed at Eutaw place for about 6 months.

"There were about 30 women living at the home when I was

'When I first entered the building, I was overwhelmed. The ceilings were high, and the chandelier was dazzling.'



Rocky mountain conference held for handicapped

SSA was among the 65 Federal, State and private organizations participating in the Denver meeting of the President's Committee on Employment of the Handicapped. Drawing approximately 3,000 people, the 3-day conference featured workshops, displays of new equipment to help disabled people in the workplace, and informational exhibits.

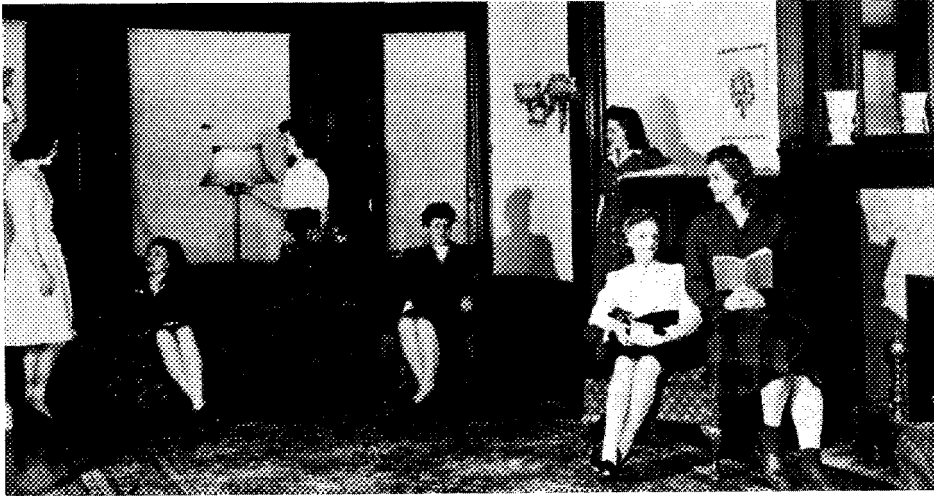
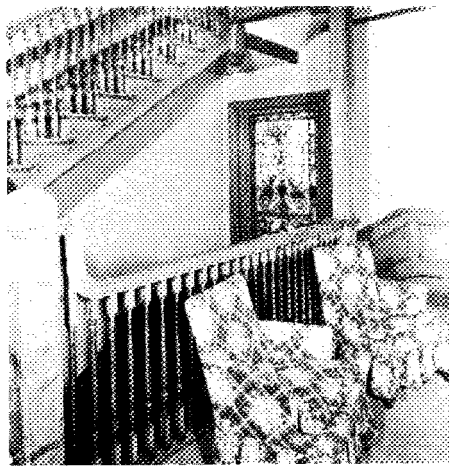
Denver District Office employees staffed SSA's exhibit, and regional office employees conducted workshops to inform people receiving title II or title XVI benefits of the assistance available to them if they attempt to work.

One workshop, "Social Security and Employment for the Disabled," provided a brief overview of work incentives and an update on current and anticipated legislation relating to disability and employment. Participants heard from David Rust, Associate Commissioner for Disability.

Regional Commissioner Leza Gooden opened our other workshop, "Social Security: Incentives for Employment," which covered counseling, training, and employment opportunities for the handicapped person. Slides of clients from Developmental Pathways, a local vocational rehabilitation agency that finds jobs for disabled people, showed the benefits of work incentives and training.

Following the slide presentation, conferees heard from a panel that included three Social Security beneficiaries who had taken advantage of work incentives.

According to RO Disability Program Specialist LINDA PRENDERGAST, who helped to coordinate SSA's participation in the meeting, "about 250 individuals attended our workshops. They were very interested in and enthusiastic about legislative changes that make it easier for people to get off the beneficiary rolls and into the job market." □



Chief of Police spoke to us about safety measures to take when walking the streets at night. We were told to always walk in pairs or groups.

"More importantly, however, was the opportunity to share experiences and problems with others from all over the country during those early months of our careers with Social Security."

JUANITA DAWKINS another Eutaw Place resident, came to work for Social Security as a keypunch operator on the night shift in 1944. "My hometown was Weston, WV," she said. "I did not know anyone in Baltimore, so I was grateful that I was referred to the Eutaw Place Home.

"When I first entered the building, I was overwhelmed. I had never seen anything quite like it. The walls in the hallway, living room, and sitting room were covered with rose-colored cloth with big white flowers. The ceilings were high, and the chandelier was dazzling. The rooms were spacious and ornate. It was a 3-story building with about 5 bedrooms and a large bathroom

on the second floor and more bedrooms and bath on the third floor."

Juanita said that "living in the building with other Social Security girls and being away from home for the first time was exciting. To all of us it was a home away from home. Also, the house was in a convenient location. Within a few blocks you could find good restaurants, churches, a library, laundromat, and an ice cream parlor." Juanita said that she lived at the Eutaw Place Home for about 6 months before moving to her own apartment.

As more of the newly hired workers found homes and apartments of their own, the need for the Eutaw Place rooming house decreased, and SSA severed our ties with it in the mid-1940s. Today, one of the brownstones is used for apartments, the other, a catering firm. And the only record of this page in our history exists in the memories of former residents. □