

# THE BEDFORD CITIZEN

## CARLETON-WILLARD VILLAGE LLEWSAC HISTORY

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Forty years ago, when Carleton-Willard Village was just emerging as a concept, a group home for well elderly was a fixture at 100 Old Billerica Road. There were two wooden residential buildings connected by a tunnel.

Fewer and fewer residents today remember Llewsac Lodge. And even fewer know the origin of that unusual name. Barbara Doyle, Carleton-Willard CEO, is one of them.

Here are excerpts from that history from the Carleton-Willard website:

“In the late 19th century, Dr. Elizabeth Abbott Carleton founded an organization that grew to become the Elizabeth Carleton House, a charitable home for elderly couples in reduced financial circumstances.”

“Separately, Miss Caroline Caswell, inspired by a talk by Women’s Christian Temperance Union president Frances E. Willard, began developing a network of social services eventually organized as the Frances E. Willard Homes. Both efforts thrived.”

“In 1975, recognizing new societal needs, trustees overseeing the Frances E. Willard Homes and the Elizabeth Carleton House decided to combine the organizations’ resources to create a continuing care retirement community. In 1982, Carleton-Willard Village opened on land once occupied by the Willard Homes’ original Llewsac Lodge.”

Doyle noted that “Frances Willard never set foot on this property, but Caroline Caswell did. She would not let the organization use her name” (She didn’t say anything about using her name spelled backwards.)

“When I arrived, there were units that didn’t have names, and I named one Caswell, because she should be recognized,” Doyle said.