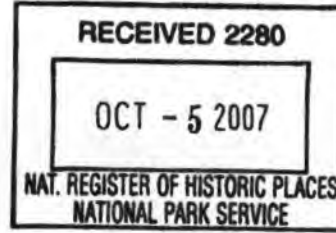


United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service



1178

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word process, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Montrose Park

other names Montrose, Elderslie

2. Location

street & number R Street and Lovers' Lane (Reservation 324) not for publication

city or town Washington vicinity

state D.C. code DC county n/a code 001 zip 20007

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments).

Joe Wallis 10-2-07
Signature of certifying office/Title Date

National Park Service

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. (See continuation sheet for additional comments).

DAVID MALONEY, DEPUTY SHPO 9-10-2007
Signature of certifying office/Title Date

DC HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE
State or Federal agency and bureau

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register.
 - See continuation sheet.
- determined eligible for the National Register.
 - See continuation sheet.
- Determined not eligible for the National Register.
- removed from the National Register.
- other (explain): _____

Edson H. Beall 11.15.07
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

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5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)

- Private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

- building(s)
- District
- Site
- Structure
- Object

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1		buildings
3		sites
7	1	structures
3		objects
14	1	Total

Name of related multiple property listing
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

N/A

number of contributing resource previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function of Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC: single dwelling

INDUSTRY: manufacturing facility

AGRICULTURE: horticultural facility

RECREATION and CULTURE: outdoor recreation

EXTRACTION: extractive facility

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

LANDSCAPE: park

RECREATION and CULTURE: outdoor recreation

RECREATION and CULTURE: monument

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

No Style

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation N/A

walls

roof

other

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets)

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DESCRIPTION

Montrose Park, established by Congress in 1911, is located in the heights of Georgetown within the Georgetown Historic District (NHL listing 1967, amended 2003). The property, also known as Reservation 324 and managed by the National Park Service, is comprised of 15.69 acres that historically were associated with a Federal-era residence. Nearly rectilinear, the park is bounded by R Street to the south, Oak Hill Cemetery to the east, Rock Creek and Potomac Parkway along the north, and Lovers' Lane at the west. The southern half of the property incorporates a plateau, whereas the northern half includes portions of two steep converging embankments that follow Rock Creek and one of its tributaries. The park is used for passive and active recreation; its landscape design, 1912-1919, developed by landscape architect George E. Burnap and architect Horace W. Peaslee has a variety of features including an entrance terrace, with the Sarah Louisa Rittenhouse Memorial (architect, Gertrude E. Sawyer), lawns, boxwood gardens, tennis courts, play areas, woodlands, and paved and unpaved paths; apart from a restricted parking pad, the park does not accommodate vehicular circulation. The park also incorporates a mixture of structures, including a ca. 1856 summerhouse, a 1914 pergola, and a 1917 lodge.

A low stone wall along Lovers' Lane, a dense hedge of osmanthus along the R Street sidewalk, and a chain link fence along the cemetery delineate the western, southern, and eastern limits, respectively. The northern boundary of the park is obscured because of the adjacent properties: a narrow area of woodland comprising the westernmost extension of the Rock Creek and Potomac Parkway (NPS unit) and the woodland in Dumbarton Oaks Park (NPS unit) situated immediately to the north of this section of the parkway. The wooded slopes of Oak Hill Cemetery, located to the east of the park, help to obscure the chain link fence (with a barbed wire top) boundary. As such, the park experience and vistas are enhanced by the adjacent woodlands. The dry-laid, random rubble, nineteenth-century wall (contributing structure) extends along most of the western boundary on the east side of Lovers' Lane. The wall is capped by large bluestone ashlar slabs. Portions of the wall have fallen over because of tree roots growing too close to the wall or erosion from the hill above. Granite pavers, installed in 1913, form a gutter at the base of the wall (west side).¹ The northern end of Lovers' Lane (contributing structure) falls within the boundary of the park reservation.

The geologic compilation of Montrose Park, like all of the hills above Georgetown, is Mafic Igneous Rocks (tonalite with inclusions—metadiorite, gabbro, amphibolite, and undifferentiated rock).² The woodland in Montrose Park is dense; its southern area contains a thick understory layer of shrubs, multiflora rose (*Rosa multiflora*), and several types of invasive vines. Earthen paths wind amidst rock outcroppings and traverse the embankment. As the elevation drops toward the north, the understory lessens, with only the occasional shrub or rhododendron. The large trees are primarily American beech (*Fagus grandifolia*) and sycamore (*Platanus occidentalis*). An abandoned nineteenth-century granite quarry (contributing site) is located along the northeast edge of the property.

¹ A retaining wall along the west side of Lovers' Lane delineates the eastern boundary of Dumbarton Oaks Gardens.

² USGS, *Geologic Map of Washington, D.C. and Vicinity*, 1958.

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The park's southern plateau incorporates a designed landscape, aspects of which derived from the vernacular landscape that evolved throughout the nineteenth century. The landscape design (contributing site) was initially developed in 1913 by landscape architect George Burnap with the Office of Public Buildings and Grounds (OPBG) and was completed by OPBG architect Horace Peaslee in 1919. The design scheme developed around a central axis that reflected an historic ropewalk-turned-path, as a means of conveying an important aspect of the historic significance of the nineteenth century estate.

The formal entrance to the park is located near the mid-point along R Street. Designed by Peaslee in 1917 and completed in 1919, the entrance ellipse (part of contributing site) extends across the area where the Federal-era residence formerly stood. The herringbone-patterned brick terrace, measuring approximately 76' x 60', and connects to the R Street sidewalk by three broad brick steps. The land has settled in various places beneath the ellipse which has caused large cracks in the brickwork. The terrace, framed by azaleas, allows for clear views to the open western lawn.

To the east, the paved path known as the "ropewalk," measuring 10-feet in width, bifurcates the southern plateau extending from the sidewalk along R Street in a northeasterly direction for 500 feet. It follows the alignment of the original ropewalk, established in 1804; the nineteenth-century materials, and whether or not it incorporated a covered structure, are unknown.³ After the original ropewalk burned in 1814, its footprint remained as a path/drive of unknown material. The OPBG poured a 10'-wide x 509'-long exposed aggregate concrete walk with brick borders along this alignment in 1914.⁴ Photographs from the 1940s reveal that the ropewalk retained its brick edging.⁵ In 1986, the extant exposed aggregate concrete center panel and brick borders were replaced in-kind. The circular terminus at the northern limit was added in 2000 in conjunction with the new children's playground. Apart from the round endpoint, the ropewalk represents a contributing structure in terms of its location and alignment.

At the southwestern end of the walk, the croquet court (laid out in 1913) existed as late as 1964; thereafter, varieties of shrubs were planted in this area. Immediately to the north, a tennis court with a north-south axis was constructed (completed in 1915). Sometime between 1922 and 1925 (after Peaslee had left the OPBG), this single court was replaced by two courts with an east-west orientation (contributing structure). This modification compromised the Burnap-Peaslee landscape design because it broke the western limit of the features flanking the ropewalk axis. The courts altered the adjacent western lawn and obscured parts of the boxwood garden immediately to the north which was intended to be fully appreciated, in conjunction with the

³ A long linear footprint was necessary so that individuals could walk a long, unobstructed distance while twisting strands of hemp together in order to create rope.

⁴ U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, *1914 Annual Report of the Office of Public Buildings and Public Parks*, p. 3346.

N.B. The Office of Public Buildings and Grounds became the Office of Public Buildings and Public Parks on Feb. 26, 1925. Earlier Annual Reports with the later name represent the appellation for the office at the time of binding. For an early photograph, see George Burnap *Parks their Design, Equipment and Use* (Philadelphia: J.B. Lippincott Co., 1916) p. 99.

⁵ See Architrave, Rhodeside & Harwell, and Robinson & Associates. *Montrose Park: Cultural Landscape Report August 2004*. (NPS Doc. No. D-118), p. 65.

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western lawn, from the park's formal entrance.⁶ The view from the terrace was intended to enable the visitor to appreciate the feeling of the former estate garden. Although the most important view within Montrose Park was compromised, the particular active recreational amenity was maintained from the original plan.

To the north, boxwood gardens were planted around a central Greek-cross-shaped pergola (contributing structure) built in 1914. The Burnap designed structure is nearly eleven-feet tall, with a footprint of approximately twenty-feet by twenty-feet. The ground plan incorporates linear brick paving outlining rectangular, exposed aggregate, concrete panels. The brick corner piers measure 16"x 16"x 9' tall and support rafters with elongated tails. Orthogonal wood trellises at the corners incorporate seats. (An 1888 topographic survey depicted an orchard in this area.⁷)

Nine Newport-style gas lampposts (contributing object) are located along the length of the ropewalk.⁸ The ropewalk's east side is bordered by a row of Osage orange (*Maclura pomifera*) trees. A playground (noncontributing structure) with children's play equipment, installed in 2000, is located along the northeast end of the walk. Beyond the playground, a heavily-wooded slope extends northward with hard-packed foot trails, which incorporate remnants of the historic informal path system.

The east lawn of the southern plateau contains large specimen trees, such as white oak (*Quercus alba*), red oak (*Quercus rubra*), tulip poplar (*Liriodendron tulipifera*), maple (*Acer* sp.), and hickory (*Carya* sp.) that create an expansive canopy. The west lawn is open; a few trees demarcate its edges, including a tulip poplar close to the lawn's northern limit and a large Nordman fir (*Abies nordmanniana*) near the center of the east side. The fir was planted in 1926 by the Georgetown Garden Club. Asphalt paths (contributing structure) following historic alignments traverse the two lawns.

The lodge (contributing building) stands in the southeast corner of the park. Designed by Peaslee and approved by the Commission of Fine Arts in January 1917, this one-story, rectangular brick building features simplified Colonial Revival details. Measuring 36'-0" x 12'-8", its symmetrical five bays incorporate large recessed brick panels that suggest pilasters, a central door flanked by high casement windows, and brick dentils. The slate, hipped roof supports two symmetrical chimneys located where the ridges intersect. The central door leads to a storage area and the ends incorporate restrooms. A brick wall extends from the north elevation. The wall

⁶ In addition to the diminished integrity of the landscape design, the two tennis courts themselves have poor design quality because of their east-west orientation; one player always has to hit the ball while looking into the sun, a distinct disadvantage for his/her game.

⁷ *Topographic Map of Washington and Vicinity*, 1888, Sheet 44.

⁸ The 1913 Annual Report of the Office of Public Buildings and Grounds states that fifteen gas lampposts were installed in Montrose Park. Old *Washington Star* articles on the park mention the presence of seventeen gas lampposts; for example see, Charles Yarbrough, "Montrose Park Clings to its Historical Past Down to Last Gas Lights and Lamplighter," *Washington Star* Jul. 7, 1948. The lampposts were located along various paths in the park, see the photograph in *The Commission of Fine Arts: Eighth Report* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1920) p. 121. All of the gas lampposts in the rest of the city had been replaced by electric lights by 1939. The Progressive Citizens' Association of Georgetown lobbied for the preservation of the gas lampposts in Montrose Park which were left for "aesthetic reasons." See "Gas Street Lights to be Removed," *Washington Star* Jun. 13, 1939.

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screens a storage area and varies in height from six-feet to eight-feet, to accommodate the sloping grade. A parking pad located immediately to the south of the lodge is restricted to NPS maintenance vehicle use.

As designed, the center of the entrance ellipse called for an oval-shaped pool. As built, the oval was planted with roses. In preparation for the installation of the Sarah Louisa Rittenhouse Memorial in 1956, brick diagonal paths that intersected with a paved circle, with a central planting bed, were constructed. The center point of the oval features the Sarah Louisa Rittenhouse Memorial (contributing object) designed by architect Gertrude E. Sawyer. The memorial has a rectangular, four-foot high, limestone pedestal that supports a bronze armillary sphere.⁹ The pedestal's southern face incorporates the following inscription:

IN TRIBUTE TO
SARAH LOUISA
RITTENHOUSE
1854 — 1945

THROUGH HER VISION
AND PERSEVERANCE THIS
LAND BECAME
MONTROSE PARK

The north face of the limestone base is inscribed with:

ERECTED BY THE
GEORGETOWN GARDEN CLUB
1956

The bronze armillary sphere, with a diameter of approximately 21", is an equinoctial dial. Thus, it is comprised of three rings: the horizontal ring features the signs of the zodiac; the interior vertical ring incorporates Roman numerals; and the outer vertical ring is plain and aligns with the inclined gnomon, the arrow that is parallel to the axis of the earth. The armillary was cleaned and a protective coating was applied to the bronze in 2005.

Descending from the western end of the entrance ellipse are sets of large-slab bluestone steps along a curved path of deteriorated asphalt. The path leads northwesterly to the summerhouse (contributing structure) and two tennis courts (contributing structure). The ca. 1856 summerhouse was originally erected as a free-standing structure located to the west of the Federal-era residence; it was repaired in 1915-1916 and moved to the existing site in 1918 by the OPBG under the direction of Peaslee. The summerhouse was relocated to an 18' x 18' x 1'-3" high concrete platform, bordered by granite paving with low walls (contributing structure) at the edges. The wooden piers and railings incorporate decorative open-work and the pagoda-shaped roof is sheathed with standing-seam tin; a wooden bench extends around the perimeter. The summerhouse stands between two gates leading to two tennis courts that were incorporated in the landscape design by at least 1915. A chain link

⁹ Various newspaper articles and the NPS 1985 brochure "Sculpture in the Parks of the Nation's Capital" inaccurately describe the pedestal as marble.

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fence, supporting old wisteria vines, encloses the courts; a berm partially obscures the courts and fence from R Street. A deteriorated Newport-style gas lamppost (contributing object) and a concrete water fountain with an integral step (contributing object), which may date from 1931, are located next to the asphalt path that runs north from the summerhouse.¹⁰ This path then follows the edge of the western lawn before curving east to meet the northern end of the ropewalk.

The northwest corner of the park slopes down toward a tributary (beyond the park boundary) draining into Rock Creek. Formerly a grassy hill, portions of the slope are overgrown with shrubs and vines.¹¹ Although this contributing site has lost some of its integrity, the area nevertheless, can be considered open in comparison to the woodland to the east.

A 1908 article about Lovers' Lane included a description of the natural features and vegetation on the Montrose estate, many of which remain a century later. The article also establishes that contemporary citizens considered the private estate to be a public park (designated as such in 1911):

The precipice in Montrose Park is a surprise. Many feet it raises its crest...above the creek, and is inaccessible from that side. From its rugged incline spring noble forest trees; one spreading oak is a veritable monarch of its species.

Recrossing the brook one may roll under the wire fence into Montrose.... On these graceful wooded slopes flourish many varieties of native forest trees in their prime, oaks predominating, though an immense tulip poplar attracts most attention. On the beeches have been graven initials and often full names of members of well known Georgetown families. The leisurely walker may pause to gather a late arbutus, some violets, anemones and other spring flowers and to admire the waxen blossom of the mandrake sheltered by its twin umbrellas, the swaying ash, the crimson red-bud and the gay dogwood. The lawn and gardens are dotted with bunches of jonquils and daffodils and beds of the fragrant English violets. Rare imported trees—pecans, pink dogwood, English larch and many others are surrounded by great oaks. Lilacs and roses are budding in the hedges, tulips and hyacinths blooming about the entrance, while the clean graveled walks bear witness to the unremitting care bestowed upon the place.¹²

¹⁰ In 1931, the Georgetown Garden Club persuaded the Office of Public Buildings and Public Parks to install the park's first water fountain. See D.C. Public Library, Georgetown Branch, Peabody Room, Georgetown Garden Club, Box 1, Vol. 3, pp. 147-148. The *Montrose Park: Cultural Landscape Report August 2004*, however, also documents a water fountain along the ropewalk, see p. 65 N.B. An extensive fire at the Georgetown library on April 30, 2007 may have destroyed/damaged these records and any other record or file with a Peabody Room citation listed below.

¹¹ For many years ending in the 1940s, the hill was the site of an Easter Egg Roll on the Monday of Easter Week. Today, the slope remains a popular place for winter sledding.

¹² Corra Bacon-Foster, "Down Lovers' Lane," *Washington Star*, May 3, 1908, part 4, p. 3.

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CONTRIBUTING

Ropewalk (structure)
Stone Retaining Walls (structure)
Summerhouse (structure)
Pergola (structure)
Two Tennis Courts along R Street (structure)
Two Tennis Courts along Ropewalk (structure)
Northern portion of Lovers' Lane within Reservation 324 (structure)

Quarry (site)
Designed Landscape (site)
The Designed Landscape incorporates historic path (concrete/brick, concrete, and asphalt) alignments, stone walls/steps/paving, west lawn, east lawn, woodland, northwest open area, boxwood gardens, Osage orange trees, R Street hedge, and entrance ellipse.
Nordman fir (site)

Gas Lampposts (object)
Concrete Water Fountain (object)
Sarah Louisa Rittenhouse Memorial (object)

Lodge, including Brick Wall extending to the north (building)

NONCONTRIBUTING

Children's Playground and Equipment (structure)

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8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing)

- A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad pattern of our history.
- B** Property associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D** Property as yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply)

Property is:

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location.
- C** a birthplace or grave.
- D** a cemetery.
- E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F** a commemorative property.
- G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets)

Previous documentation on files (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record _____

Area of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

 Landscape Architecture
 Community Planning and Development
 Entertainment/Recreation
 Social History

Period of Significance

1804 - 1956

Significant Dates

1804 (ropewalk constructed) 1856 (summerhouse)
 1911 (park designated)
 1912-19 (initial OPBG landscape design executed)
 1926 (Nordman fir planted) 1956 (SLR memorial erected)

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

Cultural Affiliation

n/a

Architect/Builder

George E. Burnap (landscape architect)
 Horace W. Peaslee (architect)
 Gertrude E. Sawyer (architect)

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository:

NPS, National Capital Region, Rock Creek Park

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SUMMARY STATEMENT

Public spaces provide the glue that holds society together and enhance sustainable communities. After 160 years of existence, Georgetown gained its first public park, Montrose Park, in 1911. The land included an open plateau and wooded slope and comprises an important component of the park system of the Nation's Capital. Although the property was a private estate for the previous 100 years, the site had been a place of public gatherings for social and recreational purposes throughout that time. In 1804, Richard Parrott purchased approximately fifteen acres east of the road that became known as Lovers' Lane in the heights above Georgetown. He immediately constructed a ropewalk and thereafter built a Federal-style house along Road (R) Street. Over the years, additions to the residence, outbuildings around the estate, and garden modifications on the plateau occurred, along with changes in ownership. At the beginning of the twentieth century, the property remained intact and prolonged effort by the Georgetown Citizens' Association, the Washington Board of Trade, and a tenacious community activist named Sarah Louisa Rittenhouse convinced Congress to pass legislation to authorize the purchase of the estate for a public park. The land was transferred to the D.C. Commissioners and then conveyed to the Office of Public Buildings and Grounds, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. Although the main residence was torn down in 1914, the country house character of the estate was furthered by landscape designs completed and implemented by the Office of Public Buildings and Grounds between 1912 and 1919. In the following decades the park became subject to the care and attention of the Georgetown Garden Club, and as such is representative of the garden club movement in America. Montrose Park meets National Register Criterion A for "community planning and development," "entertainment/recreation," and "social history" and Criterion C in the area of "landscape architecture." The period of significance begins in 1804—the year the ropewalk was constructed—and ends in 1956—the year the Rittenhouse Memorial was dedicated. The property was transferred to the National Park Service in 1933 and is presently managed by the Rock Creek Park unit of the National Capital Region.

Early Site History

In 1703, Ninian Beall, who had emigrated from Scotland near the end of the seventeenth century, acquired the 795 acres situated northwest of the confluence of the Potomac River and Rock Creek. He named his property "Rock of Dumbarton," after the distinct outcropping known as Dumbarton Rock on the banks of the River Clyde, near Glasgow. Unlike many contemporary land-holders in the Potomac Valley, Beall settled his land. During the following decades, the title passed through the hands of his descendants. In 1751, after tobacco planters and merchants petitioned for a town to serve as a tobacco station, the Maryland Assembly established George-Town.¹³ The town, named after King George II, was located where the "rolling road"—for hogsheads full of tobacco—leading south from Frederick, Maryland, met the Potomac River. The original town of sixty acres incorporated an orthogonal street

¹³ The name had changed to Georgetown by 1807. Over the years, the spelling periodically reverted to the original form, with or without the hyphen, in the titles of maps or books.

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grid and eighty lots of equal size; the limits were established by Gay (N), Jefferson, and Frederick (34th) Streets. Georgetown's population increased over the following decades such that in 1785, Beall's Second Addition was annexed in order to extend the street grid (on the eastern side of town) northward from Back (Q) Street to Road (R) Street.¹⁴

Parrott Estate: Elderslie

In 1804, Thomas Beall (Ninian's grandson) sold Richard Parrott the land located north of Road (R) Street and east of Lovers' Lane.¹⁵ Parrott immediately constructed a ropewalk that bifurcated the property (along the north-south axis) near the mid-point.¹⁶ Between 1806 and 1809, Parrott built a Federal-style house, to the west of the ropewalk, and named it Elderslie. The five-bay, brick structure incorporated a gable roof and chimneys at either end. Typical of Georgetown, its details were simple and representative of the mid-Atlantic, residential, vernacular building tradition. Parrott's residence, however, was not characteristic of the other houses in Georgetown heights, in that it was erected along the street edge and the principal façade faced north, rather than toward the river. (In addition, this is the only known estate which incorporated an industrial use.) Historic maps indicate that Parrott planted a garden and an orchard northwest of the ropewalk. Parrott also purchased the textile mill (constructed prior to 1800) located near the intersection of Back (Q) and Mill (27th) Streets. Wool and cotton were carded and spun at the mill.¹⁷

On November 21, 1810, Parrott's Grove was the site of the second exhibition of the Columbian Agricultural Society. (The first exhibition had been held on May 16, 1810 in Georgetown at Union Tavern located at the corner of M and 30th Streets, N.W. This event is recognized as the first authentic agricultural exhibition in the United States.) Visitors at the second exhibition included President James and Dolley Madison, Washington Irving, Joel Barlow, Dr. William Thornton, and the Russian Minister

¹⁴ The present boundaries of the Georgetown neighborhood were established by 1796.

¹⁵ The eighteenth century roadbed officially became Lovers' Lane in 1900, long after the colloquial name had been coined for this popular place for trysts and inscribing the initials of lovers. Present-day Rock Creek Drive, located east of Massachusetts Avenue, also follows the path of the historic road. The road had fewer travelers after 1788, when Georgetown erected the first structure for vehicular traffic across Rock Creek, atop a well-used ford at the end of Bridge (M) Street. In 1848, the banker William W. Corcoran purchased fifteen acres of land just east of Elderslie for Oak Hill Cemetery. The land was acquired from descendents of Thomas Beall, George C. Washington (a distinguished lawyer and the great nephew of the first President), and his son Lewis W. Washington of Charles Town, West Virginia. The Cemetery Company was incorporated by a Congressional Act on March 3, 1849 and thereafter Corcoran donated the land to the company. He retained civil engineer Capt. George De la Roche to design the cemetery which was completed in 1852. An additional seven acres to the east was added to the grounds later in the century.

¹⁶ In the nineteenth century, ropewalks were critical to the national and local economies. Ropewalks required long linear tracts of land to allow for unobstructed twisting of hemp; many walks incorporated posts that supported a roof. The ropes used by ships had to be dipped in tar as a preservative. The cauldrons of boiling tar always produced noxious fumes, and often started fires due to sparks landing on hemp. The term rope walk is synonymous with rope yard.

¹⁷ Allen Clark, "The Old Mills," *Records of the Columbia Historical Society* (Vols. 31-32, 1930) 96-100.

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to the U.S. Parrott's Grove was the venue for the next two shows on May 15, 1811 and the following November. Thereafter, the exhibition became one of the casualties of the War of 1812.¹⁸

Elderslie was associated with other war tragedies. On Sept 1, 1812, the funeral for General James Maccubbin Ligan (1751-1812) was held at the estate. Ligan, born in Frederick County, Maryland and related to the prominent Carroll family on his maternal side, had moved to Georgetown as a young man and worked in a tobacco warehouse owned by a relative. When the Revolution began, he was commissioned a lieutenant in the Continental Army. After the war, General Ligan returned to Georgetown and resumed work as an important merchant and commissioned what is now known as Prospect House (3508 Prospect Street).¹⁹ In 1790, President Washington appointed Ligan Collector of the Port of Georgetown. Three years later, Ligan became one of the incorporators of the town's first bank, the Bank of Columbia located at 3210 M Street.²⁰ General Ligan was beaten to death by a Baltimore mob on July 28, 1812 because he had helped defend the editor of the *Federal Republican*, who had criticized the United States regarding its participation in the War of 1812.²¹ Ligan's murder became a national sensation and was one of the earliest instances that gave rise to the freedom of the press political debate. General Ligan's funeral with military honors was held at Elderslie because no church in Georgetown was large enough to hold the service. The eulogy was given by George Washington Parke Custis of Arlington.

In 1814, British troops' burned the ropewalk.²² Parrott decided to not rebuild the structure. The susceptibility to fire and the stench—a hazard and nuisance adjacent to his residence—undoubtedly influenced his decision. After a fire, ca. 1820, destroyed Parrott's textile mill, he abandoned his estate.

Boyce Estate: Montrose

In 1828, local banker Clement Smith purchased the property Parrott had forsaken.²³ Smith, the first cashier at Farmers and Mechanics' Bank and later its president, retained the estate's name.²⁴ Smith lived at the Elderslie for a few years and then moved to Dalecarlia, an estate he had assembled from land

¹⁸ Harold Pinkett, "Early Agricultural Societies in the District of Columbia," *Records of the Columbia Historical Society*, vols. 51-52, p. 36.

¹⁹ Ligan bought three vacant lots in 1788 and sold them in 1793 to John Templeman; the difference in value between the two transactions is indicative of a house being erected on the site during this period. Nearby 36th Street, was originally known as Ligan Street. Ultimately, Ligan moved to Washington City (on what would become 19th Street between M and N Streets).

²⁰ The bank was greatly involved in the development of Washington City, the Potomac Canal, and U.S. government financing.

²¹ Ligan had a financial interest in the press.

²² Interestingly, the British chose not to destroy Henry Foxall's foundry nearby.

²³ "Old-Time Mansion Falls into Decay," *Washington Star* Jan. 8, 1914, p. 3.

²⁴ Farmers and Mechanics' Bank was established in 1814 and located at 3068-3072 M Street, N.W.

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located northwest of Georgetown, and rented his town property to Col. George Crogan, Inspector of the U.S. Army. In 1837, Smith sold Elderslie to a trust for Mary McEwen Boyce.

Mary Boyce was the wife of William M. Boyce, an 1822 graduate of the U.S. Military Academy. He had acquired the rank of captain by 1836, when he resigned from the army in order to become the assistant chief of the U.S. Coast and Geodetic Survey. The Boyces renamed the estate in honor of their ancestral ties to the earls of Montrose—daring and romantic Scottish noblemen-soldiers.²⁵ Mary Boyce owned Montrose for the next five decades and made various alterations to the property over time, including: a frame greenhouse attached at the south eastern corner of the Federal residence; a brick kitchen structure erected to the east; a small frame stable and a larger brick stable built northeast of the residence; a gardener's house erected near the midpoint of the ropewalk; and a summerhouse, ca. 1856, located to the west of the of the principal residence.

Mary Boyce was evidently an avid gardener. Grace Dunlop Ecker, a fourth-generation Georgetownner and an amateur historian, mentioned her in *A Portrait of Old Georgetown*. Ecker recorded the story about a neighbor who walked by Montrose one day and called out: "How lovely your roses are, Mrs. Boyce!" "They are not my roses," she said... "I plant them there for the public."²⁶ It seems likely that Mary Boyce used this pastime as a means to channel grief after her husband died in 1855, from injuries received from a railroad accident that had killed their daughter.²⁷ After Mary died in 1879, the estate remained in the family and locals continued to use and appreciate the land.²⁸

Throughout the nineteenth century, all outdoor celebrations in Georgetown were held at Elderslie-Montrose. For example, at Fourth of July celebrations, a stand would be erected on the lawn, from which the Declaration of Independence was read and other patriotic orations delivered by distinguished members of the community.²⁹

On May 3, 1908, the *Sunday Star* published the article "Down Lovers' Lane" which discussed Montrose and mentioned that members of the Boyce family had not resided there for several years: "the grounds, however, have always been kept in exquisite order by a faithful and interested custodian, who has been

²⁵ James M. Goode, *Capitol Losses: A Cultural History of Washington's Destroyed Buildings* (Washington: Smithsonian Books, 2003) p. 20.

²⁶ Grace Dunlop Ecker, *A Portrait of Old Georgetown* (Richmond: Garrett and Massie, Inc., 1933) p. 252. Ecker also noted that Boyce's roses were still blooming in 1933.

²⁷ Although the *Evening Star* reported in 1914 that a daughter also died in the accident, there may have been more family members involved. (See "Old Time Mansion Falls Into Decay," *Star* January 8, 1914.) The Boyces were buried at Oak Hill Cemetery, lot 294. A total of four Boyces were buried in the family mausoleum in November 1855; Oak Hill records, however, do not clarify if any burials represented remains that had been exhumed from elsewhere.

²⁸ William and Mary Boyce (and descendents) were buried in Oak Hill Cemetery, lot 294.

²⁹ Bacon-Foster, p. 3.

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on the place for over forty years, coming when a lad from Ireland to take a position there."³⁰ Despite the maintenance being performed, in the early part of the twentieth century the large tract of land became attractive to residential developers because of its economic potential.

Turn-of-the-Century Efforts to Establish a Park in Georgetown: The Georgetown Citizens' Association and the Washington Board of Trade

The Georgetown Citizens' Association was founded in 1899 in part to advocate before Congress for improvements that would benefit the community.³¹ In January 1900, health-conscious members of the association took an interest in having the Boyce tract become a park. They recognized the need as critical because Georgetown predated the L'Enfant plan for the city of Washington, and thus it did not include a single public square or park. The association adopted the following resolution and notified the Washington Board of Trade (established in 1889) for informational purposes:

Resolved, that the association recommend to the Committee of Congress that additional appropriations beyond those recommended by the [District] commissioners shall be made for...the acquisition of a park for Georgetown, extending from Road [R] Street to the Zoo, including the Boyce tract, running along the west side of Rock Creek to the Zoo; And be it further Resolved, That there is an imperative demand for a bridge across Rock Creek, at or between M or Q Streets which shall not be obstructed by a railway of any kind so that the citizens of West Washington may drive into the city without the annoyance of obstructions of this character.³²

Although the Board of Trade read the motion into its record and members offered positive support for the bridge, the issue of the park was not addressed. The lack of response is understandable, because from its inception the Board of Trade sought to promote Washington City and thereafter undeveloped areas of the northwest section of Washington County, not Georgetown.

Despite the general lack of interest, two months later, Henry F. Blount, Chairman of the Board of Trade's Committee on Parks and Reservations, presented the following motion to the Executive Committee: "Resolved, that the Committee on Parks and Reservations and the executive officers of the Board of Trade...present to the appropriate Congressional Committees the plan for the continuation of the National Park system along Rock Creek, from the Zoological Park south to Massachusetts Avenue

³⁰ Bacon-Foster, p. 3.

³¹ In 1963, the Georgetown Citizens' Association merged with the Progressive Citizens' Association of Georgetown (founded in 1926) to form the Citizens' Association of Georgetown, which remains active today.

³² See George Washington University, Special Collections, Washington Board of Trade Papers, Record Group I, Oversize Box 5, Meeting Minutes Nov. 14, 1899 - Feb. 23, 1910, entry for Jan. 19, 1900.

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on the east side, and Road (U) [*sic*] Street on the west...³³ The resolution was adopted. It is important to recognize that Blount had purchased "The Oaks" for his residence in 1891, the year he became a Vice President of the American Security and Trust Company.³⁴ The Oaks was located just west of Lovers' Lane and the Boyce property. (The Oaks ultimately became Dumbarton Oaks with world-class gardens commissioned by Robert and Mildred Bliss and designed by Beatrix Farrand.) Blount probably succeeded in gaining support because he re-phrased the proposal so it was not perceived as a park for Georgetown, but rather as a part of the link between the Zoological Park and the Mall. A sylvan connection between these two parks via the lower Rock Creek Valley had been advocated by the Board of Trade since 1890.³⁵

Senate Park Commission, 1901-1902

Although the Georgetown Citizens' Association and the Washington Board of Trade were not able to convince Congress to designate Montrose as parkland at this time, the advocates received empathy from the Senate Park (McMillan) Commission.

The Senate Park Commission was created in the spring of 1901 to study Washington, D.C. and make recommendations for a park system for the entire city. The commission was comprised of four preeminent design professionals of the day: Daniel H. Burnham, Charles F. McKim, Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr., and Augustus Saint-Gaudens; Charles Moore served as secretary.

In its report, primarily written by Olmsted and Moore, the commission included a section on the so-called "Georgetown Parkway." This stretch of parkland was designed to link the proposed Rock Creek and Potomac Parkway with the Potomac Palisades. The report discussed the benefits of the link and concluded with the following statement: "...in addition to these absolute requirements, a projecting piece of land [the Boyce tract] of about 13.5 acres is included in order to provide a dignified and convenient entrance to the park system from U [*sic*] street, Georgetown, and at the same time to afford a much-needed local park and playground."³⁶

Specifically, the Georgetown Parkway would extend westward from the western-most bend in the Rock Creek and Potomac Parkway (in the area of present-day Whitehaven Street north of Dumbarton Oaks Park), but would also incorporate a southern extension to include the Boyce tract. The Georgetown

³³ Board of Trade Papers, Oversize Box 5, Board of Directors Meeting Minutes Nov. 14, 1899 - Feb. 23, 1906, entry for Mar. 23, 1900.

³⁴ The young Blount had made his money as a successful manufacturer of ploughs and farm implements in the Midwest. Blount also was responsible for reassembling "The Oaks," which had been subdivided by the descendants of the previous owner.

³⁵ Congress approved legislation to establish the Rock Creek and Potomac Parkway on March 4, 1913.

³⁶ Charles Moore, ed. *The Improvement of the Park System of the District of Columbia* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1902) p. 98.

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Parkway would follow a southwesterly path through the neighborhood of Burleith and then pass the western limits of Georgetown College (now Georgetown University), and finally through the southern end of Foundry Branch Valley, which ended in the Palisades. As intended, the Boyce tract would function, for the residents of Georgetown, as the entrance to the city's proposed system of contiguous parks and parkways. (It is also worth noting that the Senate Park Commission's map D-287, dated November 1901, depicted existing streets as well as the planned streets established by the Permanent System of Highways Act of 1893, and thus indicated Lovers' Lane as widened and paved.)

The Senate Park Commission's plan was accepted and approved on January 15, 1902 by the Senate Committee on the District of Columbia, chaired by James McMillan (D-MI), and endorsed by President Theodore Roosevelt. With the death of Senator McMillan in 1902, Senator Francis Newlands (D-NV) became the leading political advocate for implementing the plan. Despite initial congressional interest and significant popular support, it was not until 1910, predominantly through the efforts of Newlands and the American Institute of Architect's Secretary Glenn Brown, that a congressional act established the Commission of Fine Arts to uphold the plan's principles.³⁷

While the Senate Park Commission's plan was on exhibit to the public at the Corcoran Gallery of Art, the Executive Committee of the Washington Board of Trade invited all members to the venue and arranged to have Charles Moore speak to them about the plan.³⁸ In April 1902, a motion from the Committee on Parks and Reservations was read to the Board of Directors that recommended the organization urge Congress to adopt the Senate Park Commission's plan for the development of a park system in the District of Columbia. Interestingly, there was no discussion about any other aspect of the plan.³⁹

³⁷ The May 1910 legislation gave the Commission of Fine Arts the authority to review statues, fountains, and monuments. The following October, President Taft, who had consistently supported programs for the development of Washington, signed an executive order that expanded its authority to federal buildings erected in Washington. In 1913, President Wilson supplemented the commission's purview with structures, and eight years later Harding added the design of medals, insignia, and coins produced by the executive departments.

³⁸ Board of Trade, Oversize Box 6, Board of Directors Meeting Minutes Nov. 14, 1899 – Jan. 13, 1903, entry for Jan. 27, 1902.

³⁹ Board of Trade, Oversize Box 6, Board of Directors Meeting Minutes Nov. 14, 1899 – Jan. 13, 1903, entry for Apr. 14, 1902. See also Board of Trade, Oversize Box 5, Board of Directors Meeting Minutes Nov. 14, 1899 – Feb. 23, 1906, entry for May 2, 1902.

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Further Efforts by the Georgetown Citizens' Association and the Washington Board of Trade

On January 13, 1903, Henry F. Blount, who still chaired the Board of Trade's Parks and Reservations committee, made a statement to the directors about its endorsement of the "plans of the Officer of Public Buildings and Grounds for the improvement of Potomac Park, also the proposition to join Rock Creek and Potomac Parks, as to the Boice [*sic*] tract in West Washington...."⁴⁰

In April, recognizing congressional resistance, the Georgetown Citizens' Association began looking for other neighborhood properties that could serve as a park. The association passed a resolution that requested the District Commissioners to allow the children of Georgetown and their nurses to access the grounds at Western High School (now Duke Ellington School of the Arts) at 35th and R Streets and to authorize the police to include the playground in their patrol. The association passed another resolution to establish a three-person committee, chaired by Smith Thompson, Jr., to consider the advisability and feasibility of converting the Presbyterian graveyard that transversed the block between 33rd, 34th, Q, and R Streets into a park.⁴¹ One member also suggested that the association encourage the District Commissioners to establish a park south of the C&O Canal and west of Wisconsin Avenue.⁴² The following month, Thompson reported that the commissioners denied their request for permission to use the grounds at Western High as a public park, but stated that they supported transforming the graveyard into a park.⁴³ The subject of parks was not raised at the meetings throughout the remainder of 1903.

Although the Georgetown Citizens' Association had not specifically mentioned the Boyce tract at its recent gatherings, in July, Frederic L. Moore, a member of the Washington Board of Trade's Parks and Reservations Committee, recommended to the Directors that the "Board of Trade should join with the citizens of Georgetown in their efforts to have the Boice [*sic*] tract turned into a park." Like Blount, Moore had a personal interest in establishing this park. He resided approximately 300 feet away from the Boyce property at 1680 31st Street, N.W.⁴⁴ The President of the Board of Trade, Thomas W. Smith, was not swayed and responded, "more money should be spent on the National [Rock Creek] Park."⁴⁵

⁴⁰ Board of Trade, Oversize Box 6, Board of Directors Meeting Minutes Nov. 14, 1899 – Jan. 13, 1903, entry for Jan. 13, 1903.

⁴¹ After 1911, the District Commissioners slowly began acquiring the residences in the block along Q Street and those located near the corner of 34th and R Streets in order to establish what is now known as Volta Park.

⁴² D.C. Public Library, Georgetown Branch, Peabody Room, Georgetown Citizens' Association Papers, Box 1, entry for Apr. 6, 1903.

⁴³ Georgetown Citizens' Association, Box 1, entry for May 4, 1903.

⁴⁴ Moore made his fortune from the F.L. Moore Agricultural Company.

⁴⁵ Board of Trade Papers, Oversize Box 6, Board of Directors Meeting Minutes, Jan. 22, 1903 – Nov. 16, 1906, entry for Jul. 20, 1903.

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The First Bill on Montrose Park

At long last, a homeopathic doctor-turned-senator responded to the citizens' pleas. On January 11, 1904, Senator Jacob H. Gallinger (R-NH), who chaired the Committee on the District of Columbia, introduced bill S. 3288 to purchase Montrose for public parkland at a cost not to exceed \$150,000.⁴⁶ Four days later, Miss Sarah Louisa Rittenhouse, who had engaged the support of many women in the community, testified before the Senate on the pending legislation.

Sarah Louisa Rittenhouse (1845-1943)

As time elapsed and development pressures continued to increase, Sarah Louisa Rittenhouse emerged as an outspoken proponent for converting the Boyce estate into a neighborhood park and erecting a bridge across Rock Creek at Q Street.⁴⁷ Born in the heights above Georgetown, she became a community activist at the beginning of the twentieth century, when many important families were relocating to new exclusive neighborhoods, like Kalorama, 16th Street, and Cleveland Park. In addition to not leaving Georgetown, Sarah Louisa Rittenhouse was unusual because most of the neighborhood advocates in her day were male. Her status as a single woman meant that she was not overloaded by family responsibilities and thus could devote extensive time to the public cause and social stability.

Louisa (she went by her middle name or "Miss Loulie") was the second child of Sarah Matilda Whittall (1822-1892) and Charles Edwin Rittenhouse (1813-1880).⁴⁸ Sarah Whittall had inherited her parents'

⁴⁶ Gallinger received a degree from New York Homeopathic College and served as New Hampshire's surgeon general before becoming a state legislator. In Washington, he resided at the Dewey Hotel located in the 1400 block of L Street, N.W. The relative value of \$150,000 in 1904 is equivalent to \$3,167,159 in 2004. This calculation and all that follow were obtained from www.eh.net using the consumer price index formula.

⁴⁷ At the turn-of-the-century, Rittenhouse was one of many Georgetowners, especially those who lived in the heights, who wanted convenient and unimpeded (by streetcars) access to Washington City. A bridge at Q Street would require Rittenhouse Place to be condemned; the estate had been purchased by Howard Hinkly from the Rittenhouse heirs in 1896. The former heirs were not opposed to the condemnation proceedings, if the residence—which stood in the proposed right-of-way—was relocated. See, "Opening of Q Street under Discussion," *Washington Times*, May 7, 1903, p. 2. Dumbarton (Q Street) Bridge, designed by Glenn and Bedford Brown, was erected between 1912 and 1915. The house was move in 1915.

⁴⁸ Louisa was a great-great-niece of Philadelphia's illustrious colonist David Rittenhouse (1732-1796). Historically, the relationship carried significance within the Georgetown community, because Colonial associations were valued greatly. David Rittenhouse was a clock and instrument maker, Revolutionary political figure, pioneer American astronomer, professor of astronomy, trustee and vice-provost at the College of Philadelphia (later University of Pennsylvania), the successor to Benjamin Franklin as president of the American Philosophical Society, first director of the United States Mint, and in the last year of his life, a foreign member of the Royal Society of London. He was also the most competent and ambitious builder of orreries, mechanical representations of the solar system invented in England in the early-eighteenth century to demonstrate the principles set forth by Copernicus and Newton. At the time, the miniature solar systems embodied man's attempt to understand his place in the universe and Rittenhouse's orreries were recognized as the greatest mechanical marvels of the New World.

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home, Bellevue, in Georgetown heights.⁴⁹ Sarah Whittall Rittenhouse raised her family at Bellevue (also known as Rittenhouse Place) and lived there until her death in 1892. The five remaining Rittenhouse children sold the property to Howard Hinkly four years later.⁵⁰ At the time, Louisa, her widowed sister Mary (also known as Mamie), and Emily, had been living at Bellevue. Thereafter, Louisa resided nearby on 28th Street for several years, then moved to the Washington Sanitarium in Takoma Park, MD, and finally lived with relatives in Ohio where she ultimately died. Sarah Louisa Rittenhouse was buried in Oak Hill Cemetery in an unmarked grave near her parents.

Testimonies Before and About Congress

Louisa Rittenhouse's campaign strategy for Montrose Park included gathering signatures on a petition from women in support of the park and the Q Street Bridge and producing a small pamphlet entitled, "A Short Sketch of the History and Needs of That Part of Washington Known as Georgetown." Although brief, the pamphlet was full of facts and associations that sought to establish authority. It began with references to George Washington and Thomas Jefferson, mentioned that the neighborhood sheltered the "builders of the city," and also noted that early senators and representatives enhanced the "refined and distinguished social life." Then the piece cited the city's recent capital improvements, and the objections began. The "ugly approaches to Georgetown" were mentioned, followed by the protest that its residents had been taxed at the same rate as Washingtonians without gaining any development benefits for "nearly a generation." The document contended that nine-tenths of the property owners in the District were women and that the ladies were "alive to the needs of the rising generation." After appealing for an iron bridge, the petition concluded with, "Air, light, water and highways are primary conditions of civilization, and next to that human life needs exercise. No child, boy or girl, should be forced to play in the gutter; no youths reduced to lounging in the street."⁵¹ Rittenhouse's oral testimony

⁴⁹ The partially-complete structure was purchased by Joseph Nourse in 1804 and named Cedar Hill. Nourse sold the property to Charles Carroll (a cousin of the signer of the Declaration of Independence) in 1813; he named it Bellevue. In 1820, Carroll leased the house to Samuel Whittall and Lydia Newbold. Sarah Whittall was born in the house two years after her parents moved in. When Charles Carroll died in 1841, the property was purchased by the Whittalls. Sarah inherited the property when her father died in 1855; at that time the property became known as Rittenhouse Place.

⁵⁰ In 1912, John L. Newbold, who may have been a cousin of Louisa, purchased the property from Hinkly. Three years later, he contracted with the D.C. Government to have the Federal-era residence moved; the main block was relocated approximately 100 feet to the northeast (the wings were disassembled and reassembled, because they lacked basements). Newbold's wife sold the residence with the remaining land in 1928 to the National Society of the Colonial Dames of America. The society bought the property for its headquarters and renamed it Dumbarton House. Interestingly, the first regular meeting of the National Society of the Colonial Dames of America convened in 1893 in Georgetown heights at Tudor Place, 1605 32nd Street.

⁵¹ "A Short Sketch of the History and Needs of That Part of Washington Known as Georgetown," pages not numbered. A pamphlet is located in the "Montrose Park" vertical file located in the Peabody Room, Georgetown Branch, District of Columbia Public Library. The "Short Sketch" was transcribed (with errors) as part of "Petition for Certain Improvements in Georgetown, D.C." S. Doc. 89, 58th Cong. 2nd Sess. (Jan. 15, 1904).

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before the Senate in early 1904 summarized the "Short Sketch," but she also added a few flourishes, including:

Whereas the men of [Georgetown]...have appealed in vain for some recognition of the fact on the part of our legislators, we, the women undersigned, citizens of Washington, do hereby earnestly request prompt attention to the great need for a bridge at Q Street.... In said part of the District, containing about 30,000 inhabitants, and taxed since 1871, at equal rate with every other portion of the District, there is no park. [After describing the Boyce tract]...we, the undersigned, desiring to save the beautiful sod and the primeval trees, earnestly request favorable consideration and prompt action in the matter.⁵²

In addition to submitting the pamphlet, Rittenhouse presented her petition with signatures from 213 women. The overwhelming majority lived in Georgetown, but quite a few lived in Washington City.

In February, Henry B.F. MacFarland, President of the D.C. Board of Commissioners, testified on Gallinger's bill in May. MacFarland told the senate committee that many citizens had lobbied for a park at the site of the Presbyterian graveyard, but the commissioners had voted in favor of establishing one at the Boyce property, because it offered three times the amount of land for essentially the same price. MacFarland also mentioned that the commissioners believed the natural characteristics at Montrose, especially the woodland, enhanced the value of this site.⁵³ The bill passed the Senate on March 12 and the Act was sent two days later to the House of Representatives where it lingered.

Three weeks before the congressional session ended, the Georgetown Citizens' Association undoubtedly knew the House's intentions because in early April the association passed the following motion: "Resolved, that the President appoint a committee of three whose duty it shall be to spread abroad through the District and if possible through the press and otherwise through the United States, the present unsatisfactory condition of the attitude of Congress towards the development of Washington City as a National Capital."⁵⁴ By mid April the *Evening Star* ran an article with the title: "No Park This Year—Georgetown Project Necessarily Abandoned—Condition of Finances Such That Favorable Report Cannot Be Made by House Committee."⁵⁵

In the 1905 Annual Report made by the Parks and Reservations Committee of the Washington Board of Trade, Chairman Blount discussed his long-held concern for the Boyce tract. Responding to the general

⁵² "Petition for Certain Improvements in Georgetown, D.C.," pp. 1-6.

⁵³ S. Report No. 1036, 58th Cong. 2nd Sess. (Feb. 27, 1904).

⁵⁴ Georgetown Citizens' Association, Box 1, entry for Apr. 4, 1904.

⁵⁵ "No Park This Year—Georgetown Project Necessarily Abandoned—Condition of Finances Such That Favorable Report Cannot Be Made by House Committee," *Evening Star* Apr. 16, 1904.

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population increase in the District, he also endorsed the views of residents from the Columbia Heights neighborhood. Addressing the President, Blount wrote:⁵⁶

In view of the lack of parking facilities within reasonable distance of our citizens living in West Washington and on Columbia Heights, your committee recommends that Congress during its coming session be strongly urged to take necessary steps for the purchase of the Boice [*sic*] tract between Oak Hill Cemetery and Lover's Lane and that bounded by Florida Avenue and Erie Street and Fifteenth and Sixteenth Streets for the use of these two very important sections of our city.

The attention of the Board is called to the urgent necessity of such action by the authorities as will provide a driveway of considerable width along both sides of Rock Creek from Georgetown to the Zoological Park, which will forever obviate the danger of the banks of that beautiful stream and the approaches to bridges across it becoming the back yards of city residences.⁵⁷

Blount's promotion of a parkway, for automobile and carriage owners, was consistent with the Board of Trade's advocacy for a connection between the Mall and the National Zoological and Rock Creek Parks via the lower Rock Creek Valley. Over the years, its various proposals called for an entrance via Lovers' Lane.

On February 5, 1906, the Senate passed a second bill (S.54), with an appropriation of \$150,000, to purchase Montrose for a public park.⁵⁸ The bill was sent to the House of Representative's Committee on Public Buildings and Grounds three days later. The following month, William Dougal, who was the Treasurer of the Georgetown Citizens' Association—and lived two blocks from Montrose Park at 3259 R Street—convinced the members to instruct the Secretary, G.D. Miller, to write a letter to the Chairman of the House of Representative's District Committee about support for the purchase of the Boyce tract for a park.⁵⁹ With three more months left in the session, the citizens' association appointed a nine-member special committee to urge congress to establish Montrose Park. The *Evening Star* advocated for the establishment of the park in May.⁶⁰ Once again, the legislation died the following month in the House.

In his 1906 Annual Report, Chairman Blount discussed the Parks and Reservations Committee's efforts to break the impasse. He reiterated that his group had received pressure from citizens across the city

⁵⁶ It is critical to recognize that at this time, the term "parking" meant public parkland and nothing to do with automobiles.

⁵⁷ Board of Trade, *1905 Annual Report*, p. 60. The streets cited in the Columbia Heights neighborhood ultimately became the boundaries for Meridian Hill Park.

⁵⁸ The value of \$150,000 in 1906 is equivalent to \$3,137,833 in 2004.

⁵⁹ Georgetown Citizens' Association, Box 1, entry for Mar. 7, 1906.

⁶⁰ See "Beautiful Montrose," *Evening Star* May 26, 1906.

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wanting more parks and that they had worked with the Congressional Committee on Public Buildings and Grounds to add a section (No. Twenty-five) to the current Public Buildings Act regarding parkland in the District which stated: "That a committee of three senators, to be appointed by the President of the Senate, and three members of the House of Representatives, to be appointed by the Speaker of the House, be constituted to take into consideration the advisability of purchasing the proposed addition to Rock Creek Park [Piney Branch Parkway]...and the so-called Montrose tract on Georgetown Heights for a park located in the District of Columbia, and to report their conclusions to the Congress at the commencement of the second session of the Fifty-ninth Congress." Blount concluded his report with a bit of exasperation: "It would seem that when nearly every city of any importance in the United States is making such strenuous efforts to obtain breathing space in the way of parks and reservations that the National Capital should not be behind in this matter."⁶¹

Desperate for open space, the Georgetown Citizens' Association altered its strategy. In June 1907, at the request of J.W. Bogley, the association adopted a resolution to urge the District Commissioners to recommend the purchase of the Presbyterian Cemetery for a public playground.⁶² The following November, William Dougal reported on his efforts to have the High Service Reservoir, located at Wisconsin Avenue and R Street, removed and the land transformed into a park.⁶³ Despite the other possibilities, a tenth person was added to the Special Committee for Montrose Park established the previous December and all were instructed to continue their efforts. In December 1907, at the start of the 60th Congress' first session, the association adopted the following resolution:

Whereas, the Georgetown Citizens' Association, has repeatedly urged upon Congress the need of its section for a public park; Whereas, the District Commissioners have endorsed the project by urging on Congress the feasibility of the Montrose tract; and Whereas, by the purchase of this tract it will carry out the scheme of the [Senate] Parking Commission, as one of its entrances to the National Park on the West; therefore, BE IT RESOLVED That the Georgetown Citizens' Association, stand[s] by that endorsement and urge[s] the District Commissioners to use their good offices for the purchase of said tract, as the most important adjunct to the scheme of the Parking Commission.⁶⁴

Perhaps the final embellishment was mentioned because the years of repeating a reasonable request had got them nothing.

In 1908, the *Washington Star* featured an article about Lovers' Lane which noted that the owners of Montrose had offered the estate to the U.S. government for \$150,000—in keeping with the earlier bills

⁶¹ Board of Trade, *1906 Annual Report*, p. 73.

⁶² Georgetown Citizens' Association, Box 1, entry for Jun. 3, 1907.

⁶³ Georgetown Citizens' Association, Box 1, entry for Nov. 4, 1907.

⁶⁴ Georgetown Citizens' Association, Box 1, entry for Dec. 2, 1907.

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in the Senate.⁶⁵ After highlighting various trees and flowering plants at Montrose, the author made the following concluding statement:

Seldom, think the Georgetown inhabitants, has a city the good fortune to acquire a pleasure ground so ready for immediate enjoyment without the expenditure of large sums to make it available for the unrestricted use of the public; this good fortune accompanies Montrose. Georgetown, with its narrow streets and the open spaces about the old mansions now being rapidly filled up with solid blocks, has, it is thought, greater need of breathing spaces than other portions of Washington, but has not even a public square. With open Montrose in its midst, the want will be supplied bountifully and beautifully.⁶⁶

The Georgetown Citizens' Association's meeting minutes throughout 1908 and 1909 make no mention of Montrose Park. Nevertheless, significant frustration is evident in the resolution adopted in February 1910:

BE IT RESOLVED—That the Georgetown Citizens' Association representative of 23,000 men, women and children, residing in that portion of Washington, known historically as Georgetown, again commend the Montrose Tract as a most suitable site for a Public Park, and pray the Congress of the United States to act with favor upon the bill now before it for its purchase. This section has no park at all. The righteousness of our request, the desirability, need, small cost of the site, and all the data concerning the same are thoroughly known at the Capitol, as the bill has been passed by the Senate three times. A rehearsal of further facts seems unnecessary.⁶⁷

Discontent was also manifest in the House of Representatives. During 1910, Democrats and several disgruntled Republicans stripped numerous powers from the position of Speaker of the House, held by Joseph G. Cannon (R-IL) since November 1903.⁶⁸

⁶⁵ In 1908, the value of \$150,000 is equivalent to \$3,053,027 in 2004.

⁶⁶ Bacon-Foster, p. 3.

⁶⁷ Georgetown Citizens' Association, Box 1, entry for Feb. 14, 1910.

⁶⁸ Cannon was a member of the House of Representatives from 1873 to 1922. It is generally acknowledged that the power of the Speaker of the House peaked while Cannon held the position. He determined the agenda of the House, appointed members to all committees and chose each chair, headed the Rules Committee, and decided which committee heard a bill. Although much of the power was stripped from the position in 1910 (and Cannon was not reelected as Speaker at this time), most of the authority was restored more than fifteen years later when Nicholas Longworth (R-OH) served as Speaker; Longworth was a member of the House from 1903 to 1932. The dominance of these two men was reiterated with the naming of subsequent buildings erected for the House of Representatives: Cannon House Office Building (Carrère and Hastings, Independence and New Jersey Avenues, NE, 1905-1908) and Longworth House Office Building (Allied Architects of Washington, Independence Avenue and South Capitol Street, SE, 1929-1933).

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In June 1910, Congress passed a public buildings omnibus act predominantly for post offices located throughout the country.⁶⁹ Section thirty-seven of the bill authorized the purchase of Montrose for the creation of a park and an appropriation for \$150,000. The money was appropriated in the typical half and half formula, i.e. half of the money was to come from District revenues and half from the U.S. Treasury.⁷⁰

Municipal Court Judge Charles S. Bundy, the new Chairman of Parks and Reservations, referenced the legislation in his portion of the 1910 Annual Report. Bundy also discussed the Meridian Hill tract in Columbia Heights: "While these two parks are of a more local character than either Potomac Park or the grounds already mentioned south of Union Station Plaza, they are only a little below these great parks in the estimation of the great body of the people of the District. Congress, by providing for their acquisition, has responded to repeated recommendations of the Board of Trade."⁷¹ Undoubtedly, Meridian Hill held a special interest for Bundy because he lived nearby at 1422 Irving Street, N.W.

Despite approved legislation and an authorized appropriation, the issue of the establishment of Montrose Park was not yet over. It seems that someone either slipped the section on Montrose into the omnibus act or opinions changed, because when the next D.C. appropriations bill passed on March 2, 1911, forty thousand dollars less were earmarked for Montrose Park.⁷² Congress' interest in establishing a park for the residents of Georgetown is highly questionable, because in addition to the reduced dollar amount the new bill also stated that if the Boyce tract could not be acquired, then the \$110,000 was to be spent on the acquisition of the 14-foot wide alley extending north from the unit block of G Street, N.W. The alley closing had been approved by an Act in 1898, so that the Government Printing Office could erect an addition.⁷³ The D.C. appropriations bill passed on the 61st Congress' penultimate day of its third session which was also the last session in which Joseph Cannon served as Speaker of the House. In the Board of Trade's 1911 Annual Report, Charles Bundy asserted:

Since our last report, lands for two large parks have been acquired by Act of Congress; one in Georgetown, to be known as Montrose Park, of sixteen acres, at a cost of \$110,000, and the other on Meridian Hill, east side of Sixteenth Street, of ten acres, more or less, at a cost of \$490,000.... These are the first steps taken to supply the long deferred parking to those portions of the District lying outside of the original limits of the city of

⁶⁹ 61st Cong., 2d sess., chap. 383, pg. 701. H.R. 26987, P.L. 265, Jun. 25, 1910. (Statutes at Large, microfiche, vol. 36., pt. 1, card 11.)

⁷⁰ The value of \$150,000 in 1910 is equivalent to \$2,972,684 in 2004.

⁷¹ Board of Trade, *1910 Annual Report*, p. 61.

⁷² 61st Cong., 2d sess., chap. 192, pg. 1005. H.R. 31856, P.L. 44, Mar. 2, 1911. (Statutes at Large, microfiche, vol. 36., pt. 1, card 15.) Like the earlier bills, the District and the Federal governments were to split the cost in half.

⁷³ The alley was located in Square 624 and was 175-foot long. The 55th Congress passed the legislation for the alley closing and the GPO addition on July 1, 1898 (2d sess., chap. 546, pp. 649-650). (Statutes at Large, microfiche, vol. 30, card 10.)

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Washington. Only a small appropriation will be required to prepare the Montrose Park for use, and this will afford the people of Georgetown their first public park.⁷⁴

The disparate sale prices between the Georgetown tract and the one in Columbia Heights, which incorporated nearly half the amount of land, reflects the difference in social status of the neighborhoods at the time.⁷⁵

The District Commissioners promptly purchased the Boyce property and in June 1911 officially transferred it to the Office of Public Buildings and Grounds, under jurisdiction of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.⁷⁶ On the evening of August 3, 1911, the Fifteenth U.S. Cavalry Band, stationed at Fort Myer, performed at the informal opening of Montrose Park. Despite inclement weather, several thousand city residents attended the event.⁷⁷

A Proposal for Lovers' Lane

Even though it took years of concerted effort to establish Montrose Park, its integrity was challenged immediately. On August 13, 1911, the *Washington Post* published an article that discussed the District Commissioner's plans to create an approximately one mile-long avenue between R Street and Massachusetts Avenue to enable a more convenient connection between Georgetown and the developing neighborhoods north of Florida Avenue. The intent was to widen and pave Lovers' Lane; the land acquisition and road work costs were estimated at \$34,000.

The commissioners' plan was consistent with a pending bill in the Senate to establish a parkway in the lower Rock Creek Valley that would link the Mall and Washington Monument Grounds to the National Zoological and Rock Creek Parks. (The Washington Board of Trade had started lobbying for such a parkway in 1890. Legislation for the Rock Creek and Potomac Parkway passed on March 4, 1913.) A few days after the plan for Lovers' Lane was announced, Col. Henry F. Blount and his wife dedicated to the District a strip of land along the entire length of the eastern edge of their estate, "The Oaks," to make the condemnation proceedings less cumbersome. The commissioners also planned to take the western edge of Montrose Park for the proposed avenue.⁷⁸ Although the proposal was never realized, the concept would reemerge at various times in the coming decades. Had the lane been paved, and necessarily widened, the historic stone wall and the western and northwestern boundary of Montrose Park would have been destroyed.

⁷⁴ Board of Trade, *1911 Annual Report*, p. 46.

⁷⁵ The 1911 sale prices represent \$2,179,968 and \$9,710,768 in 2004 dollars, respectively.

⁷⁶ Colonel Spencer Cosby was in charge of the OPBG from 1909-1913.

⁷⁷ "Park Opened Informally," *Washington Post* Aug. 4, 1911, p. 12.

⁷⁸ "Opening Lovers' Lane," *Washington Post*, Aug. 18, 1911, p. 6.

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The Office of Public Buildings and Grounds and the Commission of Fine Arts

On July 1, 1910, George E. Burnap began working as the landscape gardener for the Office of Public Buildings and Grounds.⁷⁹ George Elberton Burnap (1885-1938) was born in Hopkinton, Massachusetts and received a degree in landscape architecture in 1906 from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.⁸⁰ Four years later, he obtained a master's degree from the Rural Art Program at Cornell University; while he completed this coursework, he lectured undergraduates.

After working at the OPBG for a year, Burnap brought his former student at Cornell, Horace W. Peaslee, to the office to fill the surveyor and draftsman position. Horace Whittier Peaslee (1884-1959) was born in Malden Bridge, New York. Peaslee received his Bachelor of Architecture from Cornell in 1910 and remained there as a fellow during the following academic year. He moved to Washington, D.C. after the fellowship ended. Beginning in the fall of 1912, Peaslee took a leave of absence from the OPBG and taught architecture at the University of Illinois for the academic year.⁸¹

Because of a lack of funding, the OPBG could not do anything at the Montrose property until October 1912. The initial work involved filling cesspools and cisterns with earth, demolishing old brick walls near the residence, and general maintenance on the grass and vines. The following month, the OPBG sought the design expertise of the Commission of Fine Arts (CFA) regarding the estate buildings. Following a site visit, the commissioners concluded that the stables and all of the small out buildings should be removed, but the two-story brick residence should be preserved if Congress could be persuaded to appropriate funds to restore the structure in the "pure Colonial style." (Congress never authorized funds for the restoration of the house.) The commission members also proposed that the kitchen wing (to the east of the main residence) undergo a renovation for use as a comfort station.⁸² In December 1912, the significantly deteriorated gardener's house and the stable were demolished.

Burnap's initial design for Montrose Park sought to reinforce "the character of a large country place."⁸³ The plan established a formal entrance—where the main residence was located—which featured a terrace with an ornamental fountain to be surrounded by either stone benches or rustic seats; a lodge to the west was introduced to mirror the former kitchen wing at the east. In addition, the scheme included:

⁷⁹ Burnap v. United States, 252 U.S. 512 (1920). It is noteworthy that after Burnap was hired, the position listed in the OPBG Annual Reports was cited as a landscape architect; see *1910 Annual Report* (issued Sept. 30, 1910), p. 2691. It is also interesting to recognize that Burnap began working at the OPBG after Congress passed legislation to establish Montrose Park, but before the legislators reduced the appropriation to purchase the estate.

⁸⁰ In 1900, Harvard established the first landscape architecture program in the country. Two years later, the Massachusetts College of Agriculture (later University of Massachusetts, Amherst), the University of Pennsylvania, and MIT became the next schools to establish departments.

⁸¹ *ASLA Bulletin* No. 10 (Mar. 1950), p. 89.

⁸² Commission of Fine Arts, Meeting Minutes, Nov. 15, 1912, p. 181.

⁸³ *1913 Annual Report of the Office of Public Buildings and Public Parks*, p. 3210.

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a band stand on axis with the formal entrance; a pergola; one tennis court; a croquet court; hedges along all four park borders; an automobile entrance from Lovers' Lane that linked to a drive that circumvented the park; and a flight of stone stairs with several landings that led to Rock Creek.⁸⁴

An appreciation of Burnap's design intent can be ascertained from various statements in *Parks: Their Design, Equipment and Use* which he wrote in 1915.⁸⁵ The chapter titled Design Principles included a photograph of Montrose Park to illustrate his fifth principle: Expressions of Character. He noted, "the design may be an outgrowth of original conditions and will have character if made to conform to and express natural lines of grade."⁸⁶ In the chapter on Neighborhood Parks, Burnap maintained: "the general aim of a neighborhood park must be to provide the residents in that locality with rest, outdoor enjoyment, and recreation. The latter term... is limited in its application to the sort of park development that recreates the eye and mind rather than that entailing considerable or excessive physical exertion."⁸⁷ He also stated that parks in middle-class neighborhoods (Georgetown at that time) "should provide for ample circulation."⁸⁸ In the chapter on Planting Design, he used another photograph of Montrose Park with the caption: "Planting should be interpretive as well as pictorial. Rhododendrons and laurel, for example, express the spirit of the woods."⁸⁹

By June 1913, a significant amount of work had been accomplished at the Montrose property, including: installation of a new roof on the kitchen wing and its renovation as a comfort station; construction of cinder walks surfaced with a light coat of gravel; ground preparation for the croquet court; preparation of the adjacent ground for the tennis court and the erection of backstops comprised of iron pipes and wire; placing 413 square yards of sod; planting 300 osage orange (*Maclura pomifera*) plants and 140 pines and junipers; preparation of a large bed on the east side of the park which was then planted with 600 rhododendrons (*Rhododendron sp.*); infilling the boxwood borders in the old flower garden and planting 700 rose bushes (*Rosa rugosa*); and constructing 250-feet of cobblestone gutter along Lover's Lane.⁹⁰

The Federal-era main residence was demolished in the early part of 1914. A set of plans for the park was submitted to the Commission of Fine Arts the following May. At the time, the CFA often appointed its landscape architect member, Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr., as a committee-of-one to review the landscape plans and make recommendations. The plans were approved in concept so that the OPBG

⁸⁴ See "Old-Time Mansion Falls into Decay," p. 3, and National Capital Region, Land Resource Program, Prints and Drawings Collection No. 891/80015.

⁸⁵ For an example of his later writing see: George Burnap, "Style Gardens," *Architectural Record* Aug. 1923 (Vol. 54), pp. 121-136.

⁸⁶ George Burnap, *Parks: Their Design, Equipment and Use* (Philadelphia: J.B. Lippincott Co., 1916 Reprint) p. 71.

⁸⁷ Burnap, *Parks* p. 98.

⁸⁸ Burnap, *Parks* p. 106.

⁸⁹ Burnap, *Parks* p. 225.

⁹⁰ 1913 Annual Report of the Office of Public Buildings and Public Parks, p. 3212-3213.

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could generate cost estimates, but the office was directed to return to the commission with final working drawings. The OPBG did not return to the commission for an entire year. Nevertheless, the next month (June 1914), a 10-foot wide by 509-foot long concrete walk, with large exposed aggregate and brick edging, had been poured along the alignment of the former ropewalk. The site of the gardener's house had received a Greek-cross-shaped pergola designed by Burnap, flanked by two boxwood gardens. Flagstone paths and steps (315 linear feet) had been laid as a curvilinear circulation system and two perennial planting beds, 1025 herbaceous plants, 350 linear feet of hedges, forty-six evergreens, and twenty-five dogwoods had been planted.⁹¹

The next annual report, ending June 30, 1915, recorded a significant amount of new work completed in the park. The document cited: made 450 square yards of gravel walks; repaired 350 square yards of existing gravel walks; prepared one large bed for rhododendrons; prepared one bed for laurel; planted one bed of roses; planted 740 trees and shrubs; planted hedge; laid 611 feet of water pipes and 308 feet of drain pipes; removed five large dead trees; constructed seventy-five linear feet of rough stone wall to hold leaf mold; laid 135 linear feet of flagstones for steps and terraces; repaired the existing summerhouse and prepared it for a new tin roof; erected a Victorian-era lodge that previously stood in Lincoln Park on Capitol Hill; and made two tennis courts.⁹²

Following the CFA meeting on May 20, 1915, commissioner Daniel Chester French sent a note to Fredrick Law Olmsted, Jr. and enclosed a letter about the park that he had just received from Louisa Rittenhouse which mentioned tennis courts. The sculptor wrote:

Miss Rittenhouse [has asked] me to stop over till the next day to meet her and a committee of ladies who wished to express their views on what had been done and what it was intended to do to Montrose Park. ...it is evident that Miss Rittenhouse is an old lady and I seem to see under her verbosity an affection for this whole estate that excites my sympathy. I do not know anything about these tennis courts and things that she speaks of, but I am sure you will feel disposed to respect her wish that the old place shall not be injured by any misuse of it.... I wonder what she will think of the imposing entrance that Mr. Burnhap [*sic*] has suggested!⁹³

Olmsted's reply, despite condescending remarks, indicates that he appreciated Rittenhouse's concerns and had reservations about the commission's prior action:

⁹¹ 1914 Annual Report of the Office of Public Buildings and Public Parks, p. 3346.

⁹² 1915 Annual Report of the Office of Public Buildings and Public Parks, p. 3714.

⁹³ Daniel Chester French to Fredrick Law Olmsted, Jr., May 25, 1915. A copy of the letter is located in the files on Montrose Park maintained by the Cultural Resource Manager at Rock Creek Park.

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Like you I am amused by the literature of Miss Rittenhouse's letter.... Like you also I feel much sympathy for the point of view of which a few lucid suggestions can be perceived through her prattle.

...I don't think we have gone out of our way to do much original thinking about the park or to be sure that the designs for it were being guided by a suitable general conception of the quality to be secured in the park as an artistic whole. ...at the last meeting...we recognized and pointed out a distinct lack of artistic harmony with...features of the designs then submitted and with the general atmosphere of the park as it stands today. Personally I had some doubts...about the appropriateness of the big brick-walled entrance feature. I begin to be afraid that this little park may be in the same case that has afflicted Potomac Park so badly; that there is no general conception of a controlling artistic quality as a whole, and that each little piece of work has been considered as an almost independent problem in design.

I will send Colonel Harts a copy of this letter and try to find time at my next visit to Washington for some serious thinking [and] looking toward the definition of suitable controlling motives, both artistic and practical, for guiding the details of improvement and maintenance at Montrose Park.⁹⁴

Harts's written response to Olmsted revealed his disdain for Rittenhouse and female advocates in general. He wrote:

Miss Rittenhouse's letter is typical of a large number, equally disconnected, on file here from her. ...she is one of those hysterical ladies who get unduly excited whenever their personal point of view in any matter is not given the value they think should be given to it. She visits me at periodic intervals with her importunities. To more than balance her objections as to tennis courts and the like, we have received many letters of commendation regarding these features, some requesting even more of them.⁹⁵

The disparaging remarks notwithstanding, the letter establishes that Rittenhouse's advocacy continued beyond the enactment of the park legislation. Harts concluded the reply by mentioning his desire to engage in a future discussion with Olmsted about his ideas on "controlling motives."

Between May 1914 and June 1916, the OPBG made six presentations on Montrose Park to the Commission of Fine Arts. In its annual summary for the fiscal year ending that June, the CFA concluded: "Not a little difficulty has been experienced in preparing plans for turning the old Montrose

⁹⁴ Fredrick Law Olmsted, Jr. to Daniel Chester French, May 27, 1915. A copy of the letter is located in the files on Montrose Park maintained by the Cultural Resource Manager at Rock Creek Park.

⁹⁵ Col. William W. Harts to Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr., June 2, 1915. A copy of the letter is located in the files on Montrose Park maintained by the Cultural Resource manager at Rock Creek Park.

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estate into a park to combine the needed facilities for sports like tennis and croquet, while at the same time retaining the naturalistic features of the noble slopes and deep ravines."⁹⁶ The Office of Public Buildings and Ground's response to the protracted approval process was to suspend Burnap from his duties and pay on September 14, 1915 "in order to promote the efficiency of the service."⁹⁷ The following month, however, when the FY 1914 Annual Report was issued, the OPBG requested an increase in salary for the landscape architect's position by twenty-five percent for the Fiscal Year 1916 budget with the following explanation:

An increase is recommended in the pay of the landscape architect from \$2,400 to \$3,000 per annum. The present compensation of this position is not commensurate with its duties and responsibilities, which have been greatly increased during the past few years. The problems involved in laying out the large areas in Potomac Park and in designing the improvements for Montrose and Meridian Hill Parks, recently added to the system, call for a higher degree of skill than has heretofore been necessary in the landscape architect. It is absolutely [*sic*] essential that he should be a trained and experienced expert if the parks of Washington are to be of the high standard which should be maintained at the National Capital. Such an expert is difficult to get and keep at the present salary.⁹⁸

Despite landscape degrees from MIT and Cornell, it seems that at this point in his career Burnap lacked certain skills.⁹⁹ Burnap believed his suspension was illegal and thus, continued to show up and work at the OPBG; nevertheless, he was officially discharged on August 3, 1916.¹⁰⁰

Thereafter, the Commission of Fine Arts, following a site visit during its April 1917 meeting, concluded: "the whole park should be redesigned." The members advised that the new design should eliminate the ropewalk, including the Osage orange hedge and box border, and establish a hedge along R Street.¹⁰¹ Col. Harts went to the commission the following month with a proposal that included a retaining wall and the boxes relocated from along the ropewalk to the street edge. Olmsted recommended against this proposal and advised Harts to come back to the commission with two schemes, one that eliminated the ropewalk and all border plantings and another that preserved the ropewalk without the border treatments.

⁹⁶ *Report of the Commission of Fine Arts, Fiscal Year ending Jun. 1916* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1917) p. 15.

⁹⁷ *Burnap v. United States*. Col. William W. Harts assumed the chief officer of the OPBG, from Col. Spencer Cosby on Oct. 14, 1913. Harts served until Sept. 24, 1917.

⁹⁸ *1914 Annual Report of the Office of Public Buildings and Public Parks*, p. 1525.

⁹⁹ Perhaps part of Burnap's troubles at work were related to the fact that his book *Parks* (1915) required time and energy.

¹⁰⁰ *Burnap v. United States*.

¹⁰¹ Commission of Fine Arts, Meeting Minutes, Apr. 20, 1917, pp. 456-457.

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On July 13, 1917, Col. Harts returned with several plans and informed the commission that his office had been authorized \$10,000 to complete the work. The meeting included a site visit during which a variety of issues were settled, including: demolishing the kitchen wing-turned-comfort station (a new station had been approved in January for the southeast corner of the property); relocating the pagoda-inspired summerhouse to the central axis of the two tennis courts in the southwest corner of the park; reducing the width of the ropewalk; thinning the Osage orange hedge along the walk to allow vistas across the entire park; eliminating the single tennis court along the ropewalk; approving the elliptical pool at the formal entrance; and the suggestion of the use of hornbeam for the gaps in the hedge along R Street.¹⁰²

Despite the relative success before the commission and his plea to Congress for an "expert" in landscape architecture, Harts appointed Horace Peaslee, trained as an architect, to the landscape architect position on July 28, 1917.¹⁰³ Peaslee held the position in OPBG until 1922.¹⁰⁴

Apart from the removal of the tennis court along the ropewalk, the work as discussed at the July 1917 CFA meeting was carried out the following year. The lodge and the low stone walls around the summerhouse were also erected at this time. During FY 1919, the OPBG installed seventeen Newport-style gas lampposts along the walks in the park.¹⁰⁵ At the end of this period, the CFA concluded that it had been "greatly interested in the development of Montrose Park.... The aim has been to adapt the landscape treatment to the topography.... It was formerly a large estate well developed, with the peculiar charm of the old colonial homesteads, and it has been the endeavor to retain this charm while adapting this place to the larger park uses by the public."¹⁰⁶

Over the years, the OPBG organized monthly summer concerts performed by the U.S. Marine Band, the Navy Yard Band, and the Cavalry Band from Fort Meyer. Arguably, the most significant social event that occurred in the park during its early years was a speech by Newton D. Baker. In March 1916,

¹⁰² Commission of Fine Arts, Meeting Minutes, Jul. 13, 1917, pp. 6-8.

¹⁰³ See: Burnap v. United States; William Bushong, et. al., *A Centennial History of the Washington Chapter, 1887-1987* (Washington: Washington Architectural Foundation Press, 1987), p. 149.

¹⁰⁴ Clarence S. Ridley was the chief officer of the OPBG from Sep. 24, 1917 to Mar. 21, 1921; thereafter, Clarence O. Sherrill held the position through 1925. In 1918, Peaslee also established his own private practice at 1504 H Street, NW (later at 1228 Connecticut Avenue, NW); over the years, he employed several women. During the Great Depression, he served as Director of Housing for the Public Works Administration and consequently, encouraged architects to restore historic structures. Peaslee was President of the Washington Chapter of the A.I.A. (1929-1930) and Second Vice-President (1930-1934). He also served a one-year term on the Commission of Fine Art's Shipstead-Luce Panel beginning in June 1958.

¹⁰⁵ Immediately after World War I, the OPBG installed the Newport-style lamppost in many circles and squares, and around the Smithsonian grounds. The lamppost design acquired its name because officials in Newport, Rhode Island selected this style in the early 1910s for the streets with the most significant edifices.

¹⁰⁶ *Report of the Commission of Fine Arts: Eighth Report Jan. 1, 1918-Jul. 1, 1919* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1920) p. 120.

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President Woodrow Wilson replaced the pugnacious Secretary of War Lindley Garrison with Baker, a professed pacifist. Baker, subsequently, began to lease a residence at 3017 N Street in Georgetown. Wilson won his second term the following November with the campaign slogan "He kept us out of the war." In April 1917, the President asked Congress for a declaration of war. On June 5, 1918, the day Baker inaugurated the draft, he was in great demand. Baker, nevertheless, chose to speak to his neighbors. The speech was given at dusk in Montrose Park.¹⁰⁷

Georgetown Garden Club

In due course, the Georgetown Garden Club became one of the most active proponents of Montrose Park. The garden club was one of many such clubs organized throughout the nation at the beginning of the twentieth century. Local garden clubs provided a venue for members interested in exchanging information about horticulture and gardening; offered an opportunity to tour gardens (owned by members and non-members); and established a coordinated means to improve and care for nearby public spaces. Regarding the latter, the garden clubs understood their role as providing an essential public service. The clubs, consequently, were considered socially acceptable organizations for upper-middle-class women to join. They also served as an escape from the domestic routine. Recent scholarship has recognized and interpreted garden club members as progressive women.¹⁰⁸

The garden club movement built upon the legacy begun by the Mount Vernon Ladies' Association of the Union, established in 1853; the Ladies' Association undertook what would become the uncommon position of preserving an historic residence, as well as the estate's original landscape. The country's first garden club was organized in 1891 by twelve women from Athens, Georgia. Complementary developments associated with the women's movement, horticulture, and landscape architecture led to the founding of a number of clubs in the early decades of the twentieth century. For example, the Garden Club of Philadelphia was established in 1904. Seven years later, one of its members convinced her sister to start a club in Warrenton, Virginia. When the ladies from Philadelphia invited members from eleven other clubs to help establish the Garden Club of America, Warrenton was represented.¹⁰⁹ Analogous to the Victorian-era champions of Mount Vernon, the members of the Garden Club of America established a national network of organizations that served the public in valuable ways without jeopardizing the propriety of the members or challenging their reputations. During the First World War,

¹⁰⁷ Ecker, p. 253.

¹⁰⁸ See Catherine Howett, "Grounding Memory and Identity: Pioneering Garden Club Projects Documenting Historic Landscape Traditions of the American South," in *Design with Culture: Claiming America's Landscape Heritage* eds. Charles Birnbaum and Mary Hughes (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2005), p. 19-38.

¹⁰⁹ On April 30, 1913, twenty-three women from clubs in Pennsylvania (three), New York (two), New Jersey (two), Maryland (two), Virginia (one), Michigan, (one), and Illinois (one) met for lunch in Germantown, PA to establish the national organization. The first president came from the Philadelphia club, and Beatrix Jones (who later became Beatrix Jones Farrand) and Elizabeth L. Lee were appointed as garden consultants. Farrand designed the gardens associated with Dumbarton Oaks, located west and north of Montrose Park.

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for instance, the Garden Club of America encouraged the respectable ladies to grow "military gardens" for food.¹¹⁰ Thereafter, the Garden Club of America joined forces with botanists and horticulturalists to advocate for a plant quarantine law from the Department of Agriculture and in 1923, it formed a National Capital Committee to campaign for a National Arboretum.¹¹¹

Undoubtedly, the promotion for the National Arboretum, the establishment of the influential Garden Club of Virginia (1920), and the publication of the landmark *Historic Gardens of Virginia* (1923) by the James River Garden Club (which also hosted the 11th Annual Garden Club of America meeting in April 1924) inspired Mrs. Herman Hollerith to become a part of the garden club movement.¹¹² On March 27, 1924, Hollerith invited ten women who lived in Georgetown to her home at 1617 29th Street with the objective of forming a club.¹¹³ The women supported the establishment of an "informal" organization that would meet bi-monthly.¹¹⁴ Twenty-three women were present at the second meeting, which elected a committee to draw up a constitution. The eight-sentence legal document included purpose and policy statements, namely: our purpose shall be the beautifying of every corner of Georgetown which is susceptible of improvement; and our policy shall be to help with plants or seeds anyone who will use them, especially the children of the neighborhood.¹¹⁵

In late 1925, the issue of paving Lovers' Lane for motor vehicles reemerged after more than a decade of dormancy; this probably occurred because work on the northern section of the Rock Creek and Potomac Parkway had begun. Members of the Georgetown Garden Club discussed Lovers' Lane at its January 8, 1926 meeting. They were opposed to a paved surface and noted that the time was "ripe" for lobbying Frank Funk (R-IL), Chairman of the House Appropriations Committee, because he was "in a receptive mood."¹¹⁶ The following month, the issue was discussed at length. The women were irritated with the Georgetown Citizens' Association for supporting the proposal. Minutes from the club's meeting indicate that the women appreciated Lovers' Lane as an "informal path" and "a thing to be cherished and not destroyed."¹¹⁷ The women committed to keep abreast of the plans to pave the lane and advocate their position.

¹¹⁰ The term changed to "victory garden" during the Second World War.

¹¹¹ The National Arboretum Act was approved by Congress in 1927.

¹¹² The ties between Georgetown and Virginia had been strong for generations. For example, in February 1930 the Garden Club of Virginia asked the Georgetown club to participate in Virginia's Garden Week in (April) 1930. The invitation was proffered in order to increase the profits to support their current efforts to restore the grounds at Stratford Hall; the Georgetown Garden Club turned the offer down. See D.C. Public Library, Georgetown Branch, Peabody Room, Georgetown Garden Club, Box 1, Vol. 3, p. 58.

¹¹³ The minutes from the initial meeting indicate that Hollerith had researched other garden clubs prior to the meeting. For example, she explained that dues were typically between twenty-five cents and one dollar. Georgetown Garden Club, Box 1, Vol. 1, p. 35.

¹¹⁴ Georgetown Garden Club, Box 1, Vol. 1, pp. 35-36.

¹¹⁵ Georgetown Garden Club, Box 1, Vol. 1, p. 41.

¹¹⁶ Georgetown Garden Club, Box 1, Vol. 1, p. 91.

¹¹⁷ Georgetown Garden Club, Box 1, Vol. 1, pp. 92-93.

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In June 1926, the club increased annual dues from \$1.00 to \$1.50 in order to meet its goal of planting a Christmas tree in Montrose Park.¹¹⁸ On November 3, 1926, the club held a ceremony to dedicate the approximately twelve-foot-tall Nordman fir (*Abies nordmanniana*) as the community Christmas tree. The Nordman fir was planted on the east side of the central lawn near the two east-west tennis courts.¹¹⁹ (It stands today as a mature specimen at more than 100-feet tall.) Immediately thereafter, the club received a letter about the tree from Major Ulysses S. Grant, III, the current head of the Office of Public Buildings and Public Parks (PBPP, formerly OPBG), in which he wrote: "the work and effort of the club in promoting this enterprise was so much to be admired and the tree itself such a fine specimen it would be their pleasure to place a marker on it." Grant also mentioned that the actual inscription would be left to the discretion of the women.¹²⁰ The club's 1926-1927 Annual Report concluded with a discussion of the Christmas tree and ended with the following sentiment: "It is our hope that the spirit that goes with this last achievement may answer the question of our purpose in existing, and that we may all feel that we have at least fulfilled a purpose other than our personal love for gardens and flowers."¹²¹

During the late 1920s, the Progressive Citizens' Association (PCA) of Georgetown also sought to enhance the park.¹²² After the District Commissioners began the enforcement of the 1923 legislation that called for the replacement of all the city's gas street lights with electric lights, the PCA successfully campaigned to have the seventeen lampposts in Montrose Park remain in place for "aesthetic reasons."¹²³

On May 21-22, 1927, the Georgetown Garden Club sponsored a flower show, the first to be held in Washington. The event occurred under a large tent in Montrose Park.¹²⁴ (It continued annually until All

¹¹⁸ The value of \$1.50 in 1926 is equivalent to \$16.06 in 2004.

¹¹⁹ Photographs of the ceremony, which include views of the tree, are located in Georgetown Garden Club, Box 1, Vol. 1, pp. 118-120 and Scrapbook 1. The Nordman fir is native to northeast Turkey and the Caucasus Mountains located in the southwestern region of Russia. The first National Community Christmas Tree was put up in President's Park in 1923; the fir was presented to President Calvin Coolidge from Paul Moody, the President of Middleburg College, Middleburg, Vermont. The original tennis court along the ropewalk was reoriented and a second court added sometime between 1922 and 1925.

¹²⁰ No record has been found documenting whether or not the plaque was installed.

¹²¹ Georgetown Garden Club, Box 1, Vol. 1, p. 113.

¹²² Etta Taggart, a descendent of an old Georgetown family, had established the PCA in 1926 in response to the business-oriented Georgetown Citizens' Association. The Progressives sought to advocate homeowner interests and to mitigate urban nuisances.

¹²³ "Gas Street Lights To Be Removed," *Washington Star*, Jun. 13, 1939. Also see, Sarah Pressey Noreen, *Public Street Illumination in Washington, D.C.: An Illustrated History* (Washington: The George Washington University, 1975) pp. 20-22. The highpoint for gas lampposts in Washington occurred in May 1926, the last gas street light was extinguished in 1939.

¹²⁴ The Pennsylvania Horticultural Society, the nation's first horticultural society, was established in 1827 and organized the country's first flower show in Philadelphia in 1892. In 1927, the Philadelphia Flower Show began to sponsor an amateur competitive section.

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Hallows Guild instituted Flower Mart in May 1939.¹²⁵ During the spring of 1928, the garden club also organized what became its annual garden tour.¹²⁶

At the September 1929 meeting of the club, the women discussed the "bad condition" of Montrose Park and designated Mrs. Lloyd Shippen and Mrs. Edward (Lillian) Finkenstaedt from the Civic Committee to address the situation with the proper authorities.¹²⁷ Taking matters into her own hands, yet recognizing gender biases of the time, Mrs. Frank Leetch got her husband, the Chairman of the Executive Committee of the Georgetown Citizens' Association, to send a letter to Col. Grant. His written response was read aloud at the next club meeting. He thanked Mr. Leetch for his interest in Montrose Park and agreed that the conditions were "unsatisfactory," but noted that that was typical for most of the public parks in the city, because of small appropriations from Congress. Summarizing the letter, the meeting minutes document a defensive and solicitous Grant: "[He said] Montrose Park...had received nearly twice as much [money] as its acreage called for. He promised to do what he could for the park and asked the help of all Georgetown civic bodies in controlling the rowdyism which...causes more damage in Georgetown to public property than in any other part of the city."¹²⁸ Perhaps the condition of the park led the club to hold its annual Flower Show in 1930 at Cissel Chapel (associated with the Presbyterian Church of Georgetown, 3115 P Street) instead of Montrose Park.

The Georgetown Garden Club became more organized, ambitious, and influential in the 1930s. For example, talks at the meetings often featured important guest speakers, like Mary Morris Vaux Walcott, Beatrix Farrand, and Mrs. T.H.B. McKnight.¹²⁹ In 1932, the club was elected to the American Horticultural Society (founded in 1922) and five years later it became a life member of the society. Having resumed residence in Washington, Mildred Bliss became a member in 1934.¹³⁰ The club began

¹²⁵ All Hallows Guild, associated with the Cathedral Church of St. Peter and St. Paul, now known as the Washington National Cathedral, was established to plant and maintain the Cathedral grounds. For many years following 1939, the Georgetown Garden Club set up a booth at the Flower Mart fair—which continues today.

¹²⁶ The original idea for the garden tour arose from a local welfare group; proceeds were divided between the welfare group and the garden club.

¹²⁷ Georgetown Garden Club, Box 1, Vol. 3, p. 34.

¹²⁸ Georgetown Garden Club, Box 1, Vol. 3, p. 41 and p. 57.

¹²⁹ Mary Morris Vaux Walcott (1860-1940) was an artist and naturalist; in 1914, she married Charles D. Walcott, the Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution. In 1925, the institution published the five-volume *North American Wild Flowers*, which contained 400 of her watercolors with descriptions of the native flowers. Walcott spoke to the garden club on March 28, 1930 about her work during the previous twenty years documenting 700 wild flowers. She also mentioned that one hundred of her friends paid \$500 each before the Smithsonian began publication of the book. She lived at 1743 22nd Street, N.W. Farrand spoke to the club on December 14, 1934. Interestingly, at the November meeting, the club had the opportunity to select between the two topics that Farrand offered to speak on: landscape gardening or the restoration of an English Castle in Darlington. The club chose the latter. McKnight, the editor of *Bulletin of the Garden Club of America*, spoke to the women in March 1931.

¹³⁰ Mildred Barnes Bliss and Robert Woods Bliss purchased what became known as Dumbarton Oaks (located immediately to the west of Lovers' Lane and Montrose Park) in 1920.

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to publish a yearbook, which received recognition in the national press in 1939.¹³¹ Finally, honorary memberships were granted to local women with distinguished associations with plants or gardens, including Mary Morris Vaux Walcott, Rose Greely, Florence Brown Bratenahl, Frances Benjamin Johnston, and Florence Hedges.¹³²

The issue of the run-down condition of Montrose Park was raised again in January 1931 and Mrs. L. W. Bathon suggested that money from the "Special Fund" be used to hire unemployed men to clean up the park. Responding to the comment but seeking a solution that did not involve employing individuals, Mrs. Hollerith contacted Grant on her own and reported the conversation at the club's March meeting: "Col. Grant says he can take out the inner circle of hemlock around the roses and use the plants to fill the gaps in the hemlock hedge then put a lower planting around the roses, perhaps pyracantha.... This can be done for \$135. Col. Grant advises that the Garden Club appropriate money and let the government order plants and do the planting. Col. Grant has plenty of labor and guarantees care."¹³³ After a long discussion of which project to fund, the members decided to allocate \$150 to finish work previously started at the triangular reservation (No. 22) located at the intersection of M and 28th Streets and Pennsylvania Avenue. The women also voted to use "moral suasion" on Grant for Montrose Park, especially since he had claimed that the club had "stirred up the interest of his department."¹³⁴ The club's decision was probably based on the understanding that the triangular planting area demarcated the

¹³¹ In the October 15, 1939 issue of *Horticulture*, the magazine published the results of its annual garden club year book competition. Although the Georgetown club did not win one of the six prizes, the first page of the article included a large reproduction of its year book cover. The caption described the frontispiece as "particularly handsome" (p. 433).

¹³² Rose Greely (1887-1969) was a registered architect and landscape architect, she predominantly practiced the latter. She lived and had her office at 3131 O Street in Georgetown. Florence Bratenahl's husband, George, was Dean of the Cathedral of Sts. Peter and Paul (Washington National Cathedral), (1916-1936). She founded All Hallows Guild in 1916 to beautify and maintain the close. After implementing the designs of Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr., Bratenahl replaced him as the landscape designer for the close from 1928 to 1936. Frances Johnston (1864-1952) became a professional photojournalist in 1889 and documented American industry, presidents, national parks, and social programs; in the 1910s, she turned to photographing gardens and estates. Johnston lived at 2011 I Street, N.W. Florence Hedges (1878-d.?), who lived at 1312 30th Street in Georgetown, was a pathologist at the Department of Agriculture. She worked with Erwin Smith, who pioneered the concept of bacteria as a pathogen of plants. With Smith, she translated: Emil Duclaux's *Pasteur: Histoire d'un Esprit* (1896) as *Pasteur: The History of a Mind* (1920). Her books included: *A Knot of Citrus Trees Caused by Sphaeropsis Tumefaciens* (1912) and *Bean Bacterial Wilt* (1939).

¹³³ Georgetown Garden Club, Box 1, Vol. 3, pp. 114-115.

¹³⁴ Georgetown Garden Club, Box 1, Vol. 3, p. 117.

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“official” gateway to Georgetown.¹³⁵ The club’s continued pressure on Grant resulted in the installation of the water fountain in Montrose Park in late 1931.¹³⁶

At the January 1932 meeting, new member Mrs. John B. (Grace Dunlop) Ecker raised a novel subject regarding Montrose Park. The minutes recount that she urged the club to erect “some sort of a memorial in Montrose Park, preferably a sun-dial, in honor of Miss Loulie Rittenhouse, who was the originator of the idea to save the old Boyce place to [sic.] Georgetown, and also to get the Q Street Bridge erected across Rock Creek.” Ecker maintained that Rittenhouse was “untiring in her efforts in which she received help from a committee of twenty ladies who, with her, presented a petition to Congress in 1904.”¹³⁷ As a fourth-generation Georgetown, Ecker had undoubtedly been raised to honor her past.¹³⁸

The Civic Committee was directed to contact the Georgetown Citizens’ Association about the memorial and the matter was tabled until the next meeting. During the course of the following month, Miss Katherine Dougal, Chairman of the Civic Committee, learned from Lt. Butler of the PBPP that a memorial which represented a living person could not be erected. Mrs. Royal Mead, on the other hand, had spoken to Charles Moore at the Commission of Fine Arts, who stated that he would be very glad to see a memorial to Rittenhouse and thought that such a bill could pass “easily” through Congress. Moore cautioned, however, that “no memorial would be allowed which did not cost at least \$250 to conform to the dignity of the park.”¹³⁹ The club ultimately voted to send Louisa Rittenhouse a letter of appreciation with a bouquet of flowers.

¹³⁵ The “moral suasion” was undoubtedly not successful because in April Lieutenant F.B. Butler, who worked under Grant, spoke to the club about Montrose Park and the M Street reservation. He characterized the latter as “a difficult location for planting because of the heat, tree-roots and small colored boys.” (Georgetown Garden Club, Box 1, Vol. 3, p. 119.) (At the time, African-Americans occupied the houses situated between M, P, and 28th Streets and the parkway, as well as throughout the waterfront—south of M Street.) Butler presented a couple of planting options, but cautioned that \$150 would not be enough money to complete the project. The record notes that Butler thereafter mentioned Montrose Park as “a place to spend money to good advantage.” He suggested “a holly hedge about the Rose-bed, either of English Holly which has berries or of American Holly which is merely prickly.” Butler pointed out that “some holly is already at hand and \$150 would do much.” (Georgetown Garden Club, Box 1, Vol. 3, p. 120.) After Butler departed, the women discussed his presentation. They ultimately voted to keep to their original intent and appointed the Civic Committee to prepare plans for the triangular parcel at M Street. They agreed, however, that if any money remained after the work was completed it should be spent on Montrose Park—specifically, for a hedge around the rose bed. It seems that no money was spent on the park at this time, because the club’s 1930-31 (Sept.-Aug.) annual report only mentioned the M Street project.

¹³⁶ Mrs. Frank Leetch got Grant to promise to install the “water bubbler” in the park. Georgetown Garden Club, Box 1, Vol. 3, pp. 147-148.

¹³⁷ Georgetown Garden Club, Box 1, Vol. 3, p. 162. Ecker joined the club in September 1931.

¹³⁸ Ecker published a history on the neighborhood the following year, *A Portrait of Old Georgetown* (1933).

¹³⁹ Georgetown Garden Club, Box 1, Vol. 3, pp. 163-165. The value of \$250 in 1932 is equivalent to \$3,465 in 2004.

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On March 17, 1932, writing from the Washington Sanatorium in Takoma Park, Maryland, Rittenhouse expressed her gratitude with the following reply:

My dear Miss Dougal,

As you are chairman of the Club I must write to you to return thanks for the perfectly beautiful flowers, arranged with as much taste in the very pretty basket, were much admired and I made them last five days. Please thank the other ladies of the Club for the kind thought of me that gave so much pleasure. Yes, I certainly worked faithfully to acquire that Park and the Q Street Bridge when old Speaker Cannon held up both bills [for] 5 sessions of Congress and as soon as his power was broken (the result of prayer) both bills passed, but that is a long story [and] would take too long to relate on paper; only will [I] say this much that I never wrote a letter to a Senator, or Representative for their influence without having my little Bible on the table my mother gave me on a birthday when only 10 years old. Jeanie Patten, who was a Colonial Dame, always wanted me to write up my labors for five years knowing what tribulations I had when Session after Session ended without the Bill becoming an Act, and to place [the story] in keeping of the Colonial Dames, but I never have done it. I have the Senate Document with the 225 names I acquired and also the Booklet describing the needs of the old town... your mother signed the petition and all of you at home that day I called. I have been much interested reading about the Garden Club and the [flower] exhibits each Spring, but not equal myself to make the rounds, for on Feb. the 22nd I had my 86th birthday, and I hope you will be able to read this scratchy note as I am writing without glasses as the one the oculist has furnished me do not aid me. I thought your note is very well expressed, and thank you as much for sending.

Yours sincerely,
Louisa Rittenhouse

The response illustrates Rittenhouse's tenacity, traditional Victorian morals, appreciation of history, and goodwill.¹⁴⁰

The October 1932 meeting notes mention that several oaks recently died. A member reported that Lt. Butler had stated that the trees had died in part because the playground grass and packed gravel had become too compacted, and that it was not a result of negligence on the part of the maintenance crews.¹⁴¹

¹⁴⁰ The letter is located in Georgetown Garden Club, Box 1, Vol. 3. The Washington Sanatorium opened in 1907.

¹⁴¹ Georgetown Garden Club, Box 1, Vol. 3, p. 216.

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In January 1934, Miss Frances Sortwell, Chairman of the Conservation Committee, reported on the run-down condition of Montrose Park. Sortwell noted washed-out paths, broken box shrubs, roses overgrown with honeysuckle, dying oak trees, and complained about the very limited amount of police supervision. She contended that most of the maintenance was performed by unskilled laborers and that the work was "wrong and even harmful to the shrubbery and trees." She criticized the relocation of boxwoods by "officials" and lastly, complained about sanctioned cadet drills on the lawn. After considering complaining to the press, the women accepted an offer from Mildred Bliss—who had joined the club that day—to discuss the matter with a member of the National Capital Parks (NCP, formerly PBPP). The women also passed a motion authorizing the Conservation Committee to write a letter about the problems for Bliss to present to the park official. Bliss added that she would have her estate manager (at Dumbarton Oaks) talk to school children about the importance of preserving the park.¹⁴²

The issue of paving Lovers' Lane re-emerged in 1935. The club maintained its opposition to the matter and worked in conjunction with Mildred Bliss to prevent any change. In October, Bliss spoke to the club about the lane and insisted that Georgetown would be better off if it remained a footpath. She claimed, "It never was a thoroughfare but always a personal lane leading to nowhere, touching only three pieces of property. Many fine trees would have to be sacrificed to make it a thoroughfare and it would not enhance Georgetown in anyway."¹⁴³ Although Bliss' assertion that the historic lane led to nowhere is specious, her statement was consistent with the long-held American tradition of valuing the beauty and integrity of the natural landscape.

Just prior to the October 1935 meeting of the Commission of Fine Arts, landscape architect member Gilmore Clarke met at Montrose Park with Malcolm Kirkpatrick, a landscape architect with the National Capital Parks.¹⁴⁴ Clarke discussed the site visit at the following CFA meeting, and after mentioning the fact that various persons were playing tennis, he stated, "this should not be allowed in the park." The other commissioners concurred with Clarke's position and a recommendation was made that the tennis courts be replaced with a children's playground.¹⁴⁵

Around this time, the National Capital Park and Planning Commission prevailed upon NCP Superintendent C. Marshall Finnan to seek input from the Georgetown Citizens' Association.¹⁴⁶ At the association's November meeting, Finnan presented the NCP plan for changes to Montrose Park. The design called for the removal of the playground at the northern end of the plateau in order to prevent soil erosion (because the ground was so compacted) and the removal of the two tennis courts in the

¹⁴² Georgetown Garden Club, Box 1, Vol. 3, pp. 246-247.

¹⁴³ Georgetown Garden Club, Box 1, Vol. 4, pp. 74-75. See also p. 46.

¹⁴⁴ The Office of Public Buildings and Public Parks became National Capital Parks in 1933.

¹⁴⁵ Commission of Fine Arts, Meeting Minutes, Oct. 4, 1935, p. 6.

¹⁴⁶ "Montrose Park Project is Begun" *Potomac Courier* May 14, 1936. A copy of the article is located in the vertical file on Montrose Park in the Peabody Room.

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southwest corner of the park. Finnan stressed that the proposal sought to preserve certain natural characteristics in the park, despite the fact that the plan also called for an outdoor theater to be built in the northern woodland. The Chairman of the Executive Committee of the citizens' association, Frank Leetch, was adamantly opposed to the proposal. He, and other men who had grown up in the neighborhood playing at Montrose, argued that Georgetown lacked adequate recreational facilities for children.¹⁴⁷ The next month, Kirkpatrick returned to the association seeking support for a revised scheme, but many members remained opposed to the proposal.¹⁴⁸ The modified plans, nevertheless, gained some endorsements, for example, from John Ihlder, who lived at 2811 P Street and chaired the city's Alley Dwelling Authority. It is important to recognize, however, that Ihlder's wife was one of the eleven founding members of the Georgetown Garden Club and thus was a proponent of passive recreational activities in the park.

In February 1936, Mrs. Hollerith, who at that time chaired the garden club's Conservation Committee, presented the members the current version of the NCP proposal. The minutes describe the proposed plan with the following description: remove ropewalk; cut down the "lovely" pink dogwood; remove several old box; remove all tennis courts after other courts are provided elsewhere (in the neighborhood); remove playground from present position and create a new one next to Lovers' Lane; introduce curved walks of "asphalt" with metal edging; make open air theater in the northwestern area of the park; restore old wall along Lovers' Lane; plant the western boundary to conform with plantings at the Bliss Estate; and install many new benches. Hollerith also relayed to the club that the park officials mentioned, "more people seemed to be interested in Montrose than in any other City Park."¹⁴⁹ The high-level of concern was reflected in the fact that the committee took the unusual step of submitting recommendations to the National Capital Parks in writing:

The Conservation Committee of the Georgetown Garden Club is very much interested in the proposed changes in Montrose Park. We are in favor of the removal of the playground. We suggest that instead of using the proposed plan the park be kept as it was originally as far as possible. As you know Montrose was an old home with old fashioned garden surrounded by pasture and woodland. Our idea is to recreate the atmosphere of an old estate and in doing this Montrose Park would be unique and in keeping with the atmosphere of Georgetown.

With this idea in mind we suggest: (1) That with the boxwood garden on one side and the box bordered walk in the center, this section be planted as old fashioned garden with

¹⁴⁷ "Leetch Opposes Park Alteration," *Washington Star* Nov. 26, 1935.

¹⁴⁸ "Montrose Park Plans Revised," *Washington Star* Dec. 17, 1935.

¹⁴⁹ Georgetown Garden Club, Box 1, Vol. 4, pp. 98-99. The Office of Public Buildings and Grounds was absorbed by the Office of National Parks, Buildings, and Reservations in the Department of Interior in August 1933. The cumbersome name was changed to National Park Service in March 1934 and the division of National Capital Parks was established in June 1934.

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large squares of lawn divided by paths bordered by old shrubs and hardy perennials, such as iris, peonies, day lilies, etc. (2) The boxwood be kept where it is at present and be cared for. (3) The old roses, which are becoming rare, be used in the garden plan. (4) Flowering fruit trees be planted as part of the garden and narcissus be planted near them. (5) Paths be made of fine gravel if possible, not of concrete. All paths outside the planned garden follow paths already made by use. (6) The dry stone wall along Lover's Lane be restored, as this wall gave Lover's Lane its name. (7) A few native flowering trees, such as dogwood, redbud, fringe tree, be planted on the edge of the woods. (8) The tennis courts be moved when provision is made for them elsewhere.¹⁵⁰

The women's emphasis on the "atmosphere of an old estate" reinforces Catherine Howett's research on southern garden clubs' interest in America's colonial past and landscape preservation.¹⁵¹ Their commitment to this approach, moreover, is reflected in the fact that the minutes have no reference to the outdoor theater proposed by the NCP at this time.¹⁵²

Finnan met with the Georgetown Garden Club in March to discuss its concerns. The minutes note that he stated that the tennis courts would be removed when suitable replacements were built elsewhere. He also agreed that the paths would be made of brick, the ropewalk left in place, and the stone wall along Lovers' Lane repaired.¹⁵³ Two months later, the NCP accepted defeat regarding its proposals and began work, solely, on the erosion control issues.¹⁵⁴

The annual summary in the garden club's 1940-1941 yearbook noted, "The Civic and Conservation Committee has taken a special interest in Montrose Park, calling to the attention of the park authorities the condition of the shrubbery and the trees which resulted in better care. We also succeeded in influencing them to keep Lover's Lane a walk instead of a thoroughfare."¹⁵⁵ Over the years, the club sought to protect the park from detrimental impacts caused by day-to-day play, as well as larger community events. Two of the more interesting public occasions during the 1920s and 1930s were a pageant and a folk festival.

On May 30, 1925, Montrose Park was the venue for the "Pageant of Georgetown." The play, written and directed by Alice Torbert, recounted the history of the neighborhood.¹⁵⁶ It incorporated four acts,

¹⁵⁰ A copy of the recommendations is located in Georgetown Garden Club, Box 1, Vol. 4, p. 100.

¹⁵¹ Howett, p. 28 ff.

¹⁵² See "Montrose Park Future Debated: Citizens to Decide Whether They Want Play Center or Sanctuary," *Evening Star* Feb. 2, 1936. For plans of the amphitheater see, *Montrose Park: Cultural Landscape Report August 2004*, p. 62.

¹⁵³ Georgetown Garden Club, Box 1, Vol. 4, pp. 106-107.

¹⁵⁴ "Montrose Park Project is Begun."

¹⁵⁵ Georgetown Garden Club, Box 5, "Georgetown Garden Club Yearbook, 1940-1941," p. 4.

¹⁵⁶ Torbert was an early promoter of the neighborhood's local history and published a guidebook on Georgetown, *Doorways and Dormers of Old Georgetown* (1930).

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namely: Early Exploration to the Founding of Georgetown, 1570-1751; Georgetown under the Georges, 1751-1776; Georgetown under Maryland, 1776-1800; and Georgetown under the Congress of the United States, 1800-1895. The show included minuets, folk dances, and "negro spirituals." Several of Georgetown's most prominent residents participated in the event, while many others enjoyed watching it.¹⁵⁷

On June 3, 1938, nearly 300 girls from ten playgrounds located throughout the city presented the first of four folk festivals organized for different neighborhood parks. Maude Nelson Parker, the Director of Girls' and Women's Activities for District Playgrounds, directed and made the costumes for this event. The girls from Georgetown performed a May pole dance and a country dance.¹⁵⁸

During the 1950s, the Georgetown Garden Club gained broader recognition. The club organized the National Capital Garden Club League in 1951. The organization incorporated twenty-three garden clubs and three plant societies located throughout the metropolitan region.¹⁵⁹ Three years later, the league was incorporated and the name changed to National Capital Area Federation of Garden Clubs.¹⁶⁰ The Georgetown Garden Club gained national recognition in 1955. Following years of being ignored, it was accepted into the Garden Club of America; the local Trowel Club, the Garden Club of Chevy Chase, MD, and the Alexandria Garden Club also were inducted at this time. Up to this point, the Garden Club of America considered Washington a transient place and therefore believed the capital did not, nor could, have bona fide garden clubs which merited recognition.¹⁶¹

Grace Peter and the Rittenhouse Memorial

Having spent much of her time in 1950 advocating for the preservation of the Old Stone House located at 3051 M Street, Georgetown Garden Club member Grace Peter (the former Mrs. John B. Ecker who had become Mrs. Walter G. Peter) once again picked up the torch for a Rittenhouse Memorial.¹⁶² The fact that Georgetown was celebrating its bicentennial in 1951 may have revived her interest.

¹⁵⁷ Henry R. Evans, *Old Georgetown on the Potomac* (Washington, DC: Georgetown News, 1933) p. 25.

¹⁵⁸ "300 Girls in Montrose Playground Festival," *Washington Post* Jun. 3, 1938.

¹⁵⁹ See Georgetown Garden Club, Georgetown Garden Club Scrapbook 2, p. 1970-72.

¹⁶⁰ The organization continues to operate today with 108 clubs, 28 plant societies, and approximately 3600 members.

¹⁶¹ See Patricia Simmons, "Local Gardens Rank with Best," *Washington Star*, Mar. 6, 1955.

¹⁶² Grace Dunlop's first husband, John Beard Ecker, died in 1932. Three years later, she married the architect Walter G. Peter. In addition to growing up in one of the prominent old Georgetown families, Grace's second marriage associated her with two more families in that circle, the Peters and Custises. Walter Peter graduated from MIT in 1890 and co-founded the architectural firm of Marsh and Peter in 1898. The firm's designs include: Evening Star Building, 1898; Syphax School, 1901; Edmunds School, 1903; Argyle House, 1903; Thompson School, 1910; and 1310-1322 F Street, NW, 1922-1926. Walter Peter's rendering of a Colonial Revival house with an exuberant garden was used for the paper cover on the Georgetown Garden Club's Yearbooks from 1937 to 1942 and 1946 to 1950; his image was also depicted on the re-usable vinyl binding instituted for the yearbook in 1951.

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In March 1951, Peter read a paper on the history of the garden club, discussed the critical role Rittenhouse had played in saving Montrose Park, and stated that she thought Rittenhouse's undertaking warranted a memorial tribute in the park. As part of her strategy, Peter helped organize a private garden tour for members of Congress and their wives in May 1951.¹⁶³ After the summer break, Peter gave another talk to the club about Rittenhouse's efforts to help establish Montrose Park and the Q Street Bridge, and suggested a plan to raise money for a memorial. The club responded by adopting a motion to support the memorial.

The following January, the garden club authorized Peter to investigate the likelihood of having the requisite legislation passed through Congress. Members also suggested that the memorial be a sundial. Two months later, Peter reported that Congress seemed willing to support the measure. In May 1952, Representative Robert Hale (R-ME) introduced a bill in the House to authorize a memorial for Sarah Louisa Rittenhouse. The bill passed in the House the following month, but failed to reach the Senate by the end of the session (July).¹⁶⁴

On February 4, 1953, a month after the 83rd Congress began, Senator Earle Clements (D-KY) introduced joint resolution S.J. 37 to erect a memorial in Montrose Park to honor Rittenhouse. Around this time, someone from the club contacted sculptor Felix de Weldon in order to discuss whether he would want to submit a design proposal for the memorial.¹⁶⁵ The club also began urging the National Capital Parks to improve the condition of Montrose Park; the women were especially concerned about the deteriorating boxwood. A park official thanked the women for calling attention to the matter and agreed to take "special care" of the shrubs. In March 1953, the Commission of Fine Arts reviewed the design for the memorial and recommended approval.¹⁶⁶ At that time the commission was chaired by David E. Finley,

¹⁶³ Peter noted that thirty-nine visitors, including wives, attended the May event featuring ten private gardens. See Georgetown Garden Club, Box 3, June 1, 1951.

¹⁶⁴ Georgetown Garden Club, Box 3, see entries: Mar. 14, 1952; May 16, 1952; Jun. 1952; and Jan. 9, 1953.

¹⁶⁵ Felix W. de Weldon (1907-2003) was born in Vienna, Austria. As an art student at Marchetti College, Vienna, he won a national sculpture contest. He then pursued his M.A. and Ph.D. (1929) at the University of Vienna's Academy of Creative Arts. After traveling through continental Europe and the Near East for two years, he established a studio in London. In 1935, he was commissioned to create a bust of King George V, the first of several commissions from the royal family. He moved to the United States in 1937. De Weldon is best known for his sculptural interpretation of Joseph Rosenthal's Pulitzer Prize winning photograph of the flag raising atop Mount Suribachi during WWII, Iwo Jima, 1945-1954. His other works in the area include the equestrian statue of Simon Bolivar on Virginia Avenue, N.W., the Red Cross Monument, and the portrait statue of Admiral Richard Byrd on Memorial Avenue leading to the principal entrance at Arlington National Cemetery.

¹⁶⁶ See Commission of Fine Arts, Meeting Minutes, Mar. 10, 1953, pp. 15-17.

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who lived in Georgetown, and was a major mid-twentieth century figure in Washington's artistic and cultural circles.¹⁶⁷

In June while Clements's legislation was still pending, de Weldon told Peter that "he would see that the bill is passed." When she offered to contact Senator A. Willis Robertson (the junior senator from Virginia) about the matter, de Weldon told her that that would not be necessary. Mildred Bliss was named the honorary chairman of the Rittenhouse Memorial at the June meeting.¹⁶⁸ Within the month, Bliss, Mrs. Frank McCoy of the Civic and Conservation Committee, and Harry Thompson of National Capital Parks had met regarding the memorial. Following their meeting, an official letter was sent to Felix de Weldon requesting a design.¹⁶⁹

Senator Clements's bill ultimately became Congressional Act (P.L. 152) and President Eisenhower signed the legislation on July 27, 1953 (67 Stat. 196). The act called for the memorial's siting to be approved by the Secretary of the Interior and the National Capital Planning Commission, and specified that the project could not cost the government any money. A few months later, garden club minutes note that the "park authorities prefer a fountain" and that one would cost at least \$5000.¹⁷⁰ Various club members had been suggesting the erection of a sundial for the memorial since January 1952. The women, consequently, decided to raise the money before further plans were made.¹⁷¹

¹⁶⁷ David E. Finley (1891-1977) was born in York, SC, graduated from the University of South Carolina, earned a law degree from George Washington University, served in World War I, and then took a job at the Treasury Department in 1922. Five years later, he became Special Assistant to Secretary of the Treasury Andrew W. Mellon. In 1931, Finley married Margaret Morton Eustis, a granddaughter of William W. Corcoran, and moved from downtown Washington to Georgetown. The couple initially resided at 1516 31st Street, and then moved to 3318 O Street in 1935, where they resided until his death. After accompanying Mellon on his Ambassadorship to London, Finley returned to Washington to practice law. He remained Mellon's most trusted advisor until the financier died in August 1937. A few months later, at the organizational meeting of the National Gallery of Art's Board of Trustees, Finley was appointed Director of the Gallery which opened in 1941. Finley upheld Mellon's vision until his retirement in 1956; to better perform his role, he pursued a Ph.D. in Fine Arts at Yale (1946). In 1950, Finley began a thirteen-year term as Chairman of the Commission of Fine Arts. That year, he also became the first Chairman of the National Trust for Historic Preservation, serving fifteen years; in 1964, Margaret Finley and her sister donated their parents' country estate Oatlands, Leesburg, VA, to the National Trust. One of Finley's most significant accomplishments was to lead the opposition to the 1953 legislation introduced by the General Services Administration to demolish the U.S. Patent Office (1836-1857, 7th and F Streets, NW, Robert Mills, Thomas U. Walters), today the building accommodates the Smithsonian American Art Museum and National Portrait Gallery. Finley also served on the Board of the Trustees for the Washington National Cathedral (1946-1960) and as the first Chairman of the White House Historical Association (1961-1964). In addition to living in Georgetown, the Finleys invested in the neighborhood. For example, in 1941, they retained Fred M. Kramer and Teunis Collier to design and build Colonial Revival rowhouses located at 3336-3340 Dent Place; the residences featured better quality and more sophisticated details than contemporary (or later) Colonial Revival residences in the neighborhood.

¹⁶⁸ Georgetown Garden Club, Box 3, Jun. 12, 1953.

¹⁶⁹ Georgetown Garden Club, Box 3, Jul. 11, 1953.

¹⁷⁰ The value of \$5,000 in 1953 is equivalent to \$35,297 in 2004.

¹⁷¹ Georgetown Garden Club, Box 3, Oct. 1953.

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On November 21, 1953, the Saturday before the Thanksgiving holiday, the Georgetown Garden Club organized "A Preview of Thanksgiving in Georgetown" as a fundraiser for the Sarah Louisa Rittenhouse Memorial to be erected in Montrose Park. The staged event featured ten decorated dining rooms in Georgetown, one of which was at Dumbarton House—the former Bellevue—where Louisa had grown up. Dining tables and sideboards were arranged with place settings, service pieces, and displays of flowers and fruit. Despite inclement weather, the benefit raised \$1,200.¹⁷²

Between June 1953 and April 1956, the Memorial Committee was chaired initially by Mrs. Frank McCoy, then by Mrs. Edward Sturdevant, and finally landscape architect Miss Anna Carrère assumed the responsibility. The meeting minutes do not mention whether or not de Weldon ever submitted a proposal, as requested from him in June 1953. In March 1954, Mrs. Charles Bittinger showed the group pictures of sundials from her recent trip to the Huntington Gardens in San Marino, California.¹⁷³ It was Sturdevant who convinced club member and architect Gertrude Sawyer to submit a design for the memorial. Carrère, however, led the committee when Sawyer's final design was selected.¹⁷⁴

On November 9, 1956, the Georgetown Garden Club dedicated a bronze armillary sphere set on top of an inscribed limestone pedestal in honor of Rittenhouse.¹⁷⁵ Prior to the ceremony, club members

¹⁷² Georgetown Garden Club, Box 3, Jan. 8, 1954. See also: "Thanksgiving Prevue Set in Georgetown," *Washington Post* Nov. 15, 1953, p. 7-S; "Ten Homes in Georgetown Open for Pre-Holiday Tour," *Washington Times-Herald*, Nov. 15, 1953; "Georgetown Home Tour Will Aid Memorial Fund," *Washington Times-Herald*, Nov. 21, 1953, p. 1. The value of \$1,200 in 1953 is equivalent to \$8,472 in 2004.

¹⁷³ Georgetown Garden Club, Box 3, Mar. 12, 1954. Mrs. Charles Bittinger (the former Edith Gay) was married to an important local artist and lived at 3403 O Street. Her sister, Mary Gay, an art instructor at the Oxford School in Harford, Connecticut, also taught watercolor for many years at The Cambridge School (see Footnotes 170 and 177). Bittinger is most known for her initiation and promotion of Fern Valley at the National Arboretum.

¹⁷⁴ Anna M. Carrère (1888-1969) was a landscape architect and the daughter of John M. Carrère (1858-1911) of the famous Beaux-Arts-trained, New York architectural firm of Carrère and Hastings. She graduated from Bryn Mawr College in 1908 and later took classes at The Cambridge School of Architectural and Landscape Design for Women, founded in 1915. (Although The Cambridge School was always the conventional name, it is important to recognize that the school had three official titles throughout its life. In 1919, the name became The Cambridge School of Domestic Architecture and Landscape Architecture. When graduate-level courses began to be offered in 1932, the official name changed to The Cambridge School of Architecture and Landscape Architecture, an Affiliated Graduate School of Smith College. The Cambridge School closed in 1942.) Carrère may not have finished the coursework at The Cambridge School, because she considered the landscape classes were too heavily favored toward architecture. See Dorothy May Anderson, *Women, Design, and The Cambridge School* (West Lafayette, Indiana: PDA Publishers Corp., 1980) p.39. After spending five years in Peking, China, Carrère moved to Washington in 1925. She worked for Horace Peaslee during 1927. In 1930, she was elected as an "Honorary Member" to the Georgetown Garden Club and held this position until 1935. Carrère managed a dairy farm in Havre de Grace, Maryland from 1935-1945. Thereafter, she returned to Washington and resided at 3208 Reservoir Road and became an immediate neighbor of Gertrude Sawyer. She became an "Active Member" of the Georgetown Garden Club in December 1949. In 1957, Carrère moved to 3212 Reservoir Road where she remained for the rest of her life. She was a member of the garden club until poor health forced her to resign in September 1967. The following month, the club re-elected Carrère as an "Honorary Member."

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planted dwarf Ilex in the circular planting bed at the base of the pedestal and roses in the surrounding wedges that formed an oval planting bed. Armillary spheres are a type of sundial. Sundials have been used since antiquity to determine time by using an indicator to cast a shadow from the sun on a graduated surface.¹⁷⁶ The armillary sphere represents the most accurate sundial instrument.¹⁷⁷ Since the Renaissance, the sundial has been produced for scientific and artistic pleasure. Today, more people recognize them as art and garden ornaments than as scientific instruments. Fixed sundials were traditionally adorned with mottos referring to the passage of time. The inscription on the Rittenhouse pedestal includes: "Through her vision and perseverance this land became Montrose Park". The use of the word "vision" suggests the sense of farsightedness. The Sarah Louisa Rittenhouse Memorial is also significant because it is the earliest extant sculpture located in the District of Columbia that honors an American woman.¹⁷⁸

Many of the club's oldest members attended the dedication ceremony. Peter gave a brief talk about the honoree's life and the creation of Montrose Park. The amateur historian illustrated Rittenhouse's commitment by relaying a story about the advocate from her childhood memories: "I very well remember her [Rittenhouse] arriving at the wedding of my sister, June 10, 1903, with it in her hand, and her pursuance of my father to read the petition then and there!"¹⁷⁹ A relative of Rittenhouse also shared personal recollections of the activist.¹⁸⁰ It appears that neither Carrère nor Sawyer spoke at the ceremony.

¹⁷⁵ For articles (with photos) about the memorial see, "Park Monument Honor Miss Sarah Rittenhouse," *Evening Star*, Nov. 10, 1956, p. A-7, and "Theft Casts Shadow on Park—Sundial Missing," *Evening Star*, May 14, 1969, p. A3. After the story on the theft, the sundial was anonymously left in the azaleas in front of the Washington Star office building. See, "Sundial found at Star Door," *Evening Star*, May 15, 1969, p. A-1.

¹⁷⁶ The earliest recorded reference to such an instrument dates to 1300 B.C. in Egypt. In the early eleventh century A.D., the Arab culture developed the theory of time based on twenty four equal hours. By the fifteenth century and the coming of the Renaissance, the twenty four hour clock and sundial were commonly used. As clocks advanced, armillary sundials became popular.

¹⁷⁷ Its central rod (parallel to the polar axis) casts a shadow on the equatorial and celestial rings, illustrating the whole science of gnomonics.

¹⁷⁸ French women erected one of their own, Jeanne d'Arc, in Meridian Hill Park in 1922; the equestrian figure was a gesture of friendship between the two nations. In 1924, the Ladies Auxiliary of the Ancient Order of the Hibernians in America erected Nuns of the Battlefield, to honor all the nuns, representing twelve orders, who nursed casualties from both sides of the American Civil War; the legislation authorizing this memorial passed in 1918, following an uphill battle. An armillary sphere in honor of Edith Noyes was erected in Meridian Hill Park in 1934; however, it was damaged and removed from the park in the early 1970s. At present, only the location of the cupid is known, NPS Museum and Archeological Storage Facility. Information on Edith Noyes has not been located, although it is known that the armillary was commissioned by her sister, Bertha, a well-recognized Washington artist. The first portrait sculpture of an American woman in the city was of Mary McLeod Bethune, erected in 1974 in Lincoln Park. Bethune was also Washington's first portrait statue of an African American.

¹⁷⁹ Mrs. G.A. Gesell "A Memorial to Miss Sarah Louisa Rittenhouse," *Bulletin of the Garden Club of America* (May 1957) p. 60.

¹⁸⁰ Georgetown Garden Club, Box 3, Vol. 6, Nov. 9, 1956.

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Gertrude E. Sawyer (1895-1996)

Gertrude Elizabeth Sawyer was born April 2, 1895 in Tuscola, Illinois. As a child, Sawyer knew that she wanted to be an architect, but her father opposed the idea because he thought the profession was not appropriate for women. After years of pleading, she and her father reached the compromise that she would pursue landscape gardening in college. Sawyer received a B.S. in the major in 1918 from the University of Illinois at Urbana, but over the years had continued to advocate for her dream and ultimately won her father over. Upon graduation, Sawyer enrolled in The Cambridge School for Architectural and Landscape Design for Women and completed the architecture program in 1922.¹⁸¹ In November 1922, Sawyer began working as a draftsman in the office of Edward Delk in Kansas City, Missouri. After six months, she moved to Washington, D.C. By October 1923, Sawyer had landed a position in Horace W. Peaslee's architectural office.¹⁸² In April 1926, she became one of the earliest women to receive architecture registration (No. 134) in the District of Columbia.¹⁸³ Sawyer was promoted to Associate Architect in Peaslee's firm in January 1928 and remained with the office until early 1934.

She left in order to establish her own practice: Gertrude Sawyer, Architect. After an initial period of working out of her apartment, she rented studio space on Lafayette Square at 740 Jackson Place. In the late 1930s, Sawyer became licensed to practice in Maryland, Florida, Ohio, and Pennsylvania. The ability to open her own firm during the middle of the Great Depression is indicative of Sawyer's skill as a designer and businesswoman. She also had secured a large commission on her own. In 1932, Sawyer was retained by Foreign Service Officer Jefferson Patterson to design a model farm on more than 550 acres in Calvert County, Maryland. Patterson, who named his property Point Farm, retained Rose Greely to design the landscape plan (1932-33). During the following years, Sawyer oversaw the construction of twenty-six buildings, including a mansion, guest cottages, a farmer's house, outbuildings, and an important show barn for Black Angus cattle. Her contemporaneous new construction projects in Washington included 1502 20th Street, N.W. (1935), 1510-1512 33rd Street,

¹⁸¹ Architecture and landscape architecture faculty from Harvard University began teaching a handful of women in these fields in 1915. The first official academic year was 1916-1917. The Cambridge School for Architectural and Landscape Design for Women (which initially lacked the authority to grant academic degrees) issued its first certificates in 1919 to Katherine Brooks and Rose Greely. When Sawyer finished her coursework, the name of the school had changed to The Cambridge School of Domestic Architecture and Landscape Architecture. In 1934, Sawyer attended the graduation ceremonies at then-affiliated Smith College which retroactively granted her, and other former qualifying students of The Cambridge School, a graduate degree; Sawyer received a Master of Architecture. See Anderson, p. 188.

¹⁸² Washington Chapter, A.I.A. Application for Membership No. 435. Peaslee's willingness to hire women may have come from his experience studying with women while attending Cornell University. Rose Greely also began working in Peaslee's office in 1923. Greely, who completed the landscape and architecture courses at The Cambridge School in 1919, had worked in Boston for two years before returning home to Washington.

¹⁸³ In 1925, Rose Greely became the first woman architect licensed in Washington, D.C. See Charles Birnbaum and Robin Karson, eds., *Pioneers of American Landscape Design* (New York: McGraw Hill, 2000), p. 144.

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N.W. (1935), 4600 Hawthorne Street, N.W. (1935), 3300 Loughboro Road, N.W. (1936), and 2762 and 2824 Chain Bridge Road, N.W. (1937, both).¹⁸⁴

In 1939, Sawyer became a member of the Washington Chapter of the American Institute of Architects.¹⁸⁵ Her application, sponsored by Peaslee and W.H. Irwin Fleming, listed the Colonial Revival residence of the Hon. and Mrs. J. Edgar Murdock and the French Renaissance Revival residence of Mr. and Mrs. Nathan Scott, II (4400 Massachusetts Avenue, N.W.), and the Modern Junior League Building (2001 Massachusetts Avenue, N.W.), all in Washington, as projects she completed.¹⁸⁶ Today, the Scott residence is the official residence of the president of American University.

When the Second World War began, Sawyer closed her practice and started working in the Engineering Department of the Fairchild Aircraft Corporation in Hagerstown, Maryland. In June 1943, she was recruited by the U.S. Navy's Civil Engineer Corps Reserve (CEC) to serve as a senior WAVES (Women Accepted for Volunteer Emergency Service) officer; the public works officer of the Potomac River Naval Command considered it important to have women architects working for the CEC in order to create satisfactory housing for the thousands of WAVES who were coming to Washington to work. In 1944, Sawyer was promoted to Lieutenant. After the war, she remained in the naval reserve and became a Lieutenant Commander in 1951.

In February 1948, Sawyer was accepted into the Georgetown Garden Club. She participated in the club's activities for the following twenty years. In June 1948, she was one of a handful of women architects mentioned in *Architectural Record's* feature article entitled, "A Thousand Women in

¹⁸⁴ D.C. Building Permits record the construction costs as follows: 1502 20th Street, \$30,000 (a value of \$413,276 in 2004 dollars), 1510-1512 33rd Street, \$27,000 (a value of \$371,948 in 2004 dollars), 4600 Hawthorne Street, \$40,000 (a value of \$551,034 in 2004 dollars), 3300 Loughboro Road, \$18,000 (a value of \$244,978 in 2004 dollars), and 2762 and 2824 Chain Bridge Road, both at \$12,000 (a value of \$157,621 in 2004 dollars).

¹⁸⁵ She remained a member until February 1969, when she closed her practice.

¹⁸⁶ Irwin Fleming worked with Peaslee. For photographs of these residences see "A Thousand Women in Architecture," *Architectural Record* Jun. 1948(V. 103-104), p. 110.

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Architecture.” Her photograph and a brief biography (with a couple indirect disparaging remarks) accompanied four images of her residential projects.¹⁸⁷

Sawyer served as an architect on the Old Georgetown Board, 1955 to 1958(?) and 1960(?) -1963.¹⁸⁸ She closed her practice in February 1969 and simultaneously resigned from the A.I.A. The professional organization elected her Member Emeritus in April. Sawyer moved to Pomona, California in the mid 1980s.

In 1983, Jefferson Patterson donated Point Farm to the State of Maryland and the property became known as the Jefferson Patterson Historical Park and Museum. One of Sawyer’s earlier farm buildings was renovated for additional museum space in 1994. At its dedication, Governor of Maryland William D. Schaefer, proclaimed October 14, 1994 as: Gertrude Sawyer Day. More than a year later, on February 11, 1996, Gertrude Elizabeth Sawyer died at the age of 100.

¹⁸⁷ “A Thousand Women in Architecture,” p. 110.

¹⁸⁸ Records of the Old Georgetown Board (question marks reflect missing files in the OGB records). The Old Georgetown Board was established by Congress in 1950 to preserve and protect the neighborhood’s earliest architecture. It is comprised of three architects, terms are typically three years.

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10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 15.69 acres

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

1	1 8 Zone	3 2 1 4 5 5 Easting	4 3 0 9 4 5 0 Northing	3	1 8 Zone	3 2 1 4 0 1 Easting	4 3 0 9 1 0 1 Northing
2	1 8 Zone	3 2 1 4 9 9 Easting	4 3 0 9 3 9 4 Northing	4	1 8 Zone	3 2 1 2 0 3 Easting	4 3 0 9 1 5 7 Northing

x See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Eve L. Barsoum, Architectural Historian
organization National Conference of State Historic Preservation Officers date July 2007
street & number 444 North Capitol Street, N.W. telephone 202.624.5465
city or town Washington state D.C. zip code 20001

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional Items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO)

name U.S. Government, administered by the National Park Service, National Capital Region, Rock Creek Park
street & number 3545 Williamsburg Lane, N.W. telephone 202.895.6000
city or town Washington state D.C. zip code 20008

Paperwork Reduction Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 *et. seq.*).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reduction Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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UTM References (continuation)

<u>Zone</u>	<u>Easting</u>	<u>Northing</u>
18	321223	4309055
18	321245	4309162

Verbal Boundary Description

Montrose Park comprises approximately fifteen acres in the heights above Georgetown within the northwest quadrant of the District of Columbia. The boundary includes Reservation 324 and is situated northeast of the intersection of R Street and Lovers' Lane.

Boundary Justification

The boundary of Montrose Park has been historically associated with the Montrose estate, previously known as Elderslie. The parcel was purchased by the Federal Government and the District Commissioners in 1911 for park purposes.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY Montrose Park
NAME:

MULTIPLE
NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, District of Columbia

DATE RECEIVED: 10/05/07 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 10/22/07
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 11/06/07 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 11/18/07
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 07001178

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL: N DATA PROBLEM: N LANDSCAPE: N LESS THAN 50 YEARS: N
OTHER: N PDIL: N PERIOD: N PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N
REQUEST: N SAMPLE: N SLR DRAFT: N NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

ACCEPT RETURN REJECT 11-15-07 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

**Entered in the
National Register**

RECOM./CRITERIA _____

REVIEWER _____ DISCIPLINE _____

TELEPHONE _____ DATE _____

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N

If a nomination is returned to the nominating authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the NPS.



MONTROSE PARK

ENTRANCE ELLIPSE

NORDMAN FIR

WASHINGTON, DC

EVE BARSOUM

MAY 2006

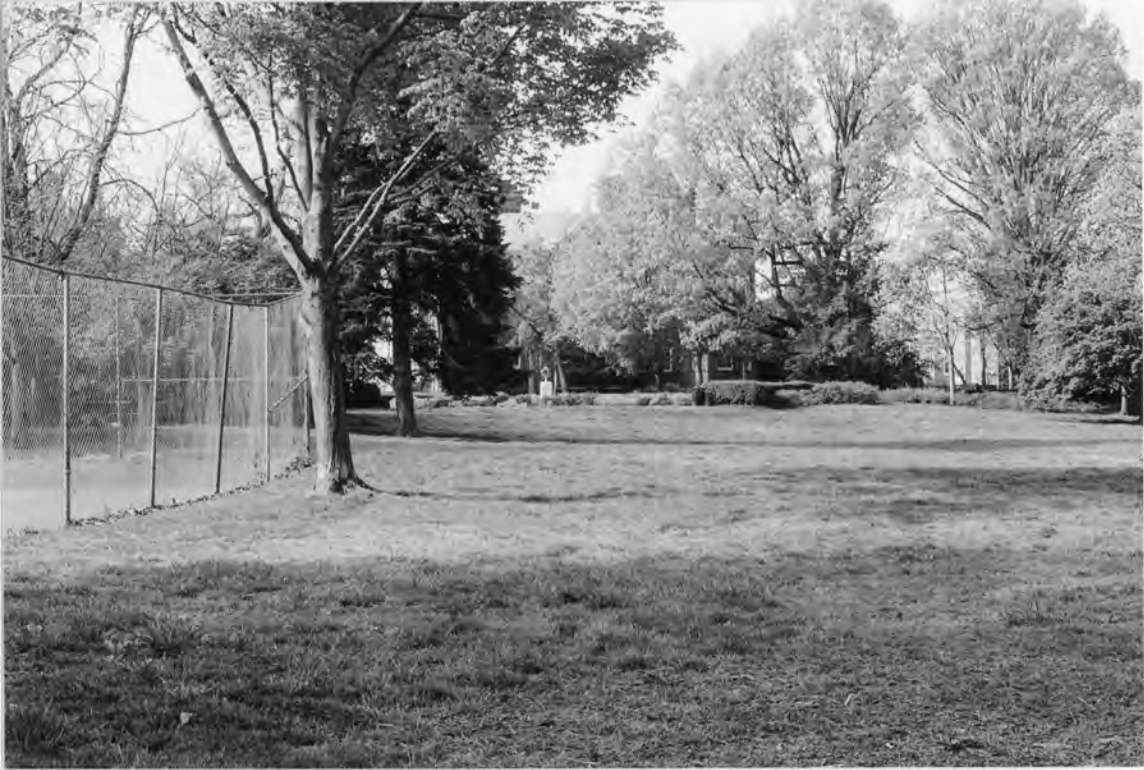
NCR, NPS

LOOKING NORTH

1



MONTROSE PARK
PITTENHOUSE MEMORIAL
WASHINGTON, DC
EVE BARSOUM
MAY 2006
NCR, NPS
LOOKING SOUTHWEST
2



MONTROSE PARK

WEST LAWN

WASHINGTON, DC

EVE PARSONS

MAY 2006

NCR, NPS

LOOKING SOUTHWEST

3



MONTROSE PARK
SUMMERHOUSE
WASHINGTON, DC
EVE BARSOUM
MAY 2006

NCR, NPS
LOOKING NORTHWEST
4





MONTROSE PARK
SUMMERHOUSE

WASHINGTON, DC

EVE PARSONS

MAY 2006

NCR, NPS

LOOKING SOUTHEAST

5



MONTROSE PARK
LOVERS' LANE

WASHINGTON, DC

EVE PARSONS

MAY 2006

NLR, NPS

LOOKING NORTH

6



MONTROSE PARK
ENTRANCE ELLIPSE
WASHINGTON, DC

EVE BARSOUM

MAY 2006

NCR, NPS

LOOKING NORTHWEST

7



MONTROSE PARK

PATH TO/FROM SUMMERHOUSE

WASHINGTON, DC

EVE PARSONS

MAY 2004

NCR, NPS

LOOKING NORTH

8



MONTROSE PARK

ROPEWALK
WASHINGTON, DC
EVE PARSONS

NOV 2005

NCR, NPS

LOOKING NORTHEAST

9.



MONTROSE PARK
ROPEWALK
WASHINGTON, DC
EVE BARBOUM
AUG 2006
NCR, NPS
LOOKING NORTHEAST
10

Rockville <NO> ## > 089 DN
*30-8003 001 N N N 35 1598 06.R.16 HC+01



MONTROSE PARK

PERGIOLA

WASHINGTON, DC

EVE PARSOUM

NOV 2005

NCR, NPS

LOOKING WEST

11R





MONTROSE PARK

PERGOLA

WASHINGTON, DC

EVE PARSONS

NOV 2005

NCR, NPS

LOOKING SOUTHEAST

12



MONTROSE PARK
WOODLAND
WASHINGTON, DC
EVE PARSONS
MAY 2004
NLR, NPS
LOOKING NORTHEAST
13





MONTROSE PARK

WOODLAND

WASHINGTON, DC

EVE PARSONS

MAY 2000

NCR, NPS

LOOKING SOUTHWEST

14





MONTROSE PARK

EAST LAWN
WASHINGTON, DC

EVE BARSOUM

NOV 2005

NCR, NPS

LOOKING NORTH

15



MONTROSE PARK
EAST LAWN
WASHINGTON, DC
EVE BARSOUM
NOV 2005
NCR, NPS
LOOKING NORTH
16





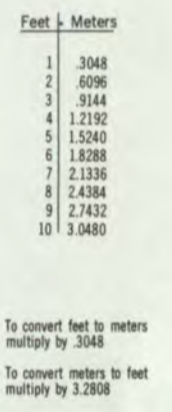
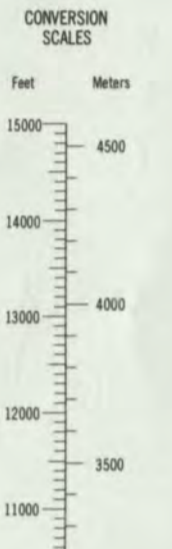
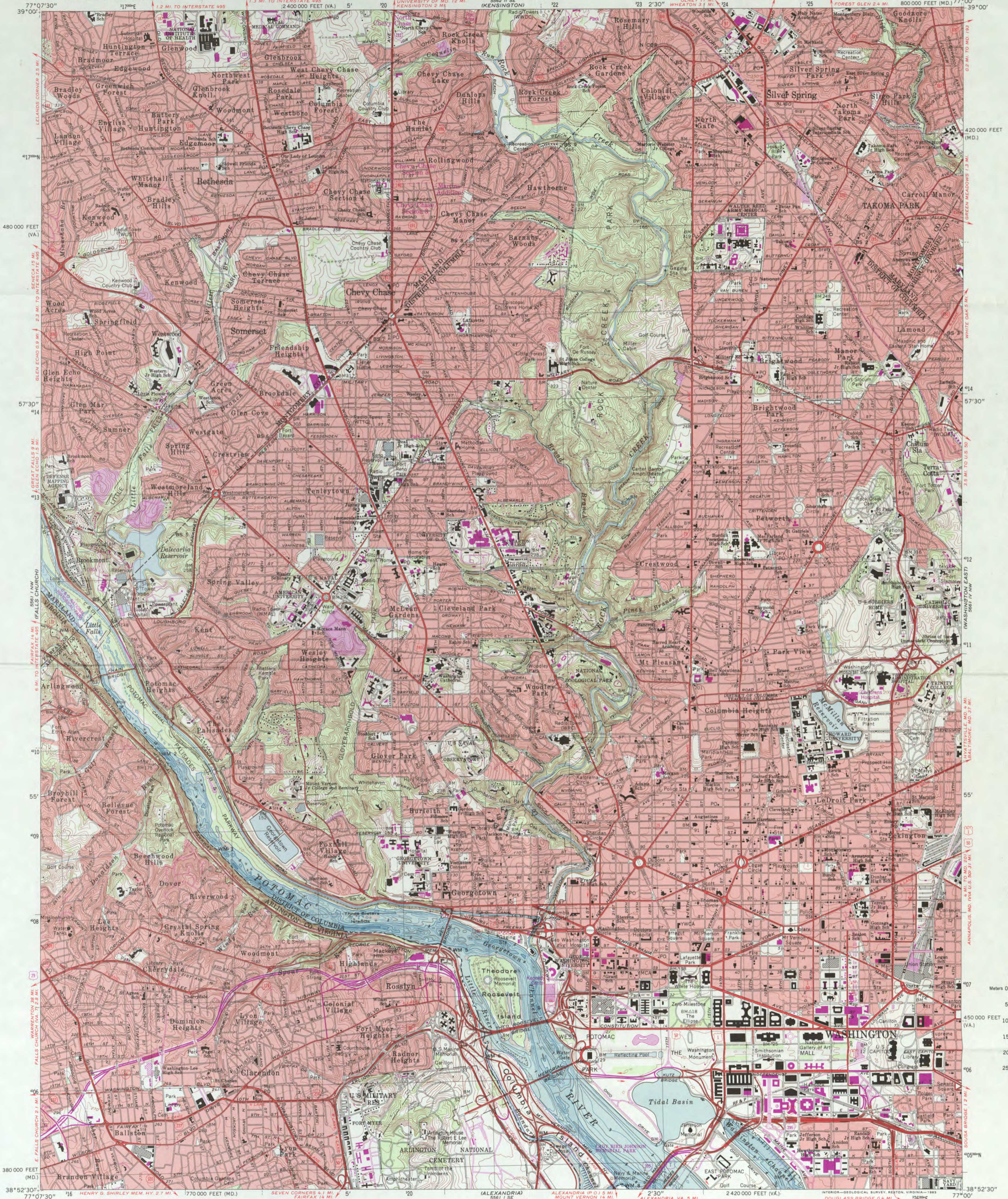
MONTROSE PARK
LODGE
WASHINGTON, DC
EVE PARSONS
AUG 2004
NLR, NPS
LOOKING NORTHEAST
17

Kodak
Royal
DIGITAL
PAPER

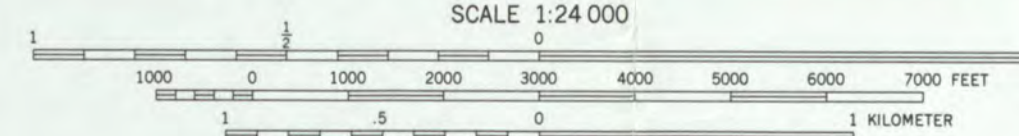
Rockville <MO> #44117-986 BM
1-800-835-9911 N N N-1-22 158296.08.16 MC-181

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

WASHINGTON WEST QUADRANGLE
DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA-MARYLAND-VIRGINIA
7.5 MINUTE SERIES
(TOPOGRAPHIC-BATHYMETRIC)



Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey and the National Ocean Service
Control by USGS, NOS/NMFS, NPS, and WSSC
Compiled by photogrammetric methods from aerial photographs taken 1955. Field checked 1956. Revised 1965
Bathymetry compiled by the National Ocean Service from tide-coordinated hydrographic surveys. This information is not intended for navigational purposes
Mean low water (dotted) line and mean high water (heavy solid) line compiled by NOS from tide-coordinated aerial photographs. Apparent shoreline (outer edge of vegetation) shown by light solid line
Polyconic projection, 10,000-foot grid ticks based on Maryland coordinate system and Virginia coordinate system, north zone
1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid, zone 18
1927 North American Datum
To place on the predicted North American Datum 1983 move the projection lines 8 meters south and 26 meters west as shown by dashed corner ticks
Red tint indicates areas in which only landmark buildings are shown
There may be private inholdings within the boundaries of the National or State reservations shown on this map
Revisions shown in purple and woodland compiled in cooperation with Commonwealth of Virginia agencies from aerial photographs taken 1981 and other sources. This information not field checked
Map edited 1983
Purple tint indicates extension of urban areas



CONTOUR INTERVAL 10 FEET
NATIONAL GEODETIC VERTICAL DATUM OF 1929
BATHYMETRIC CONTOUR INTERVAL 1 METER WITH SUPPLEMENTARY 0.5 METER CONTOURS-DATUM IS MEAN LOW WATER
THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE TWO DATUMS IS VARIABLE
THE MEAN RANGE OF TIDE IS APPROXIMATELY 0.4 METER

BASE MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS
BATHYMETRIC SURVEY DATA COMPLIES WITH INTERNATIONAL HYDROGRAPHIC ORGANIZATION (IHO) SPECIAL PUBLICATION 44 ACCURACY STANDARDS AND/OR STANDARDS USED AT THE DATE OF THE SURVEY
FOR SALE BY U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY
DENVER, COLORADO 80225, OR RESTON, VIRGINIA 22092
NATIONAL OCEAN SERVICE, ROCKVILLE, MARYLAND 20852
AND VIRGINIA DIVISION OF MINERAL RESOURCES, CHARLOTTESVILLE, VIRGINIA 22903
A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST

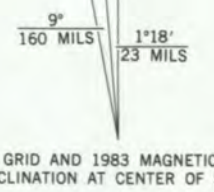
ROAD CLASSIFICATION

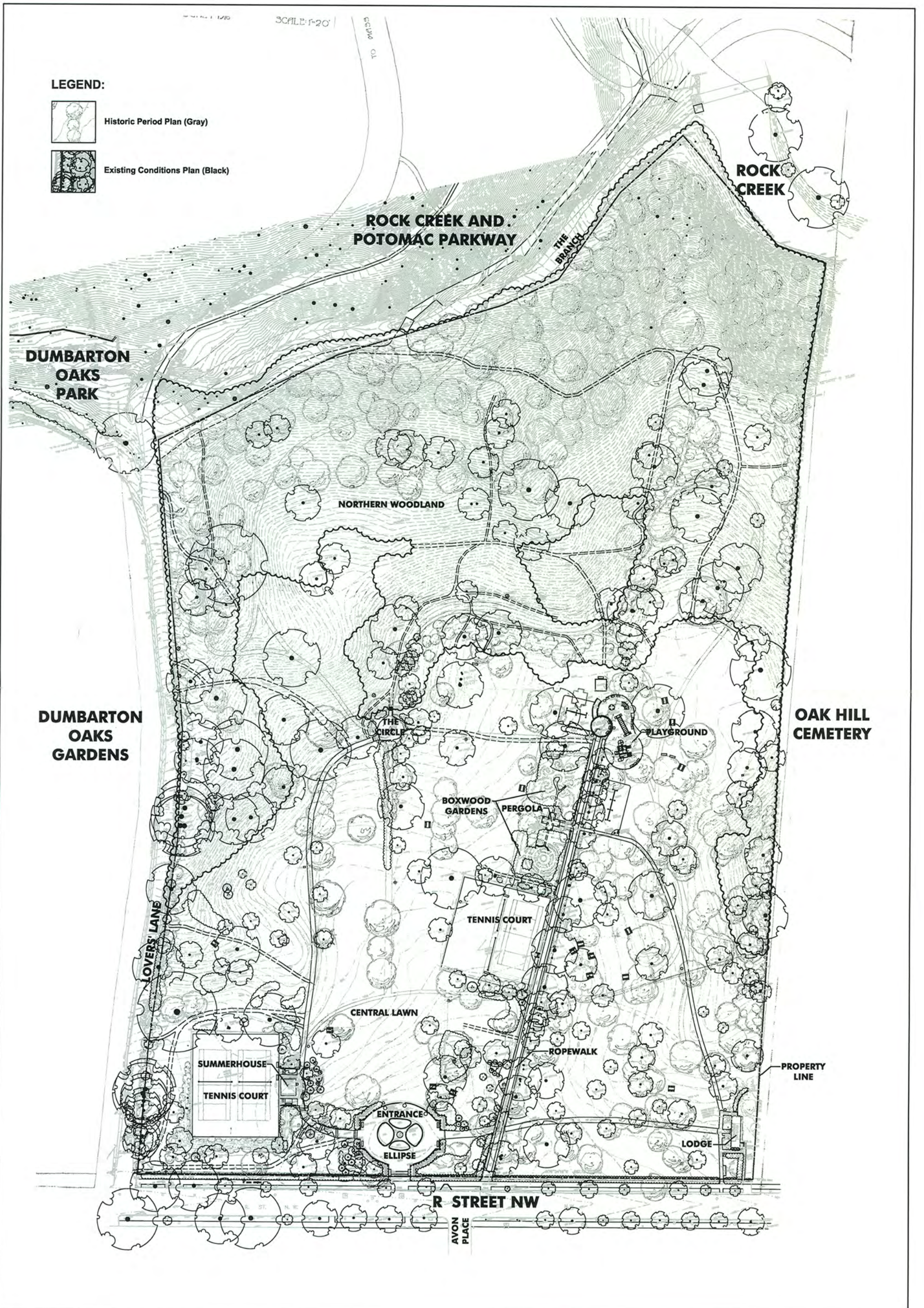
Heavy-duty	Light-duty
Medium-duty	Unimproved dirt
Interstate Route	U.S. Route
	State Route

MONTROSE PARK
WASHINGTON WEST, D. C.-MD.-VA.
38077-H1-TB-024

1965
PHOTOREVISED 1983
BATHYMETRY ADDED 1982
DMA 5561 I NE-SERIES V833

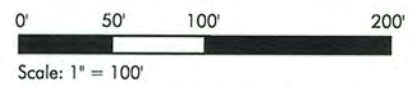
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A	10	321455		4309450
B	10	321499		4309394
C	10	321401		4309101
D	10	321203		4309157
E	10	321223		4309055
F	10	321245		4309162





Source: Contour Plan of Montrose Park by Charles Diggs, June 1, 1916. Updated in Photoshop by Rhodeside & Harwell, Inc. April 21, 2003, with Existing Conditions Plan overlay.

MONTROSE PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT
1919 PERIOD PLAN WITH
EXISTING CONDITIONS OVERLAY



Client: U.S. Department of the Interior - National Park Service - Rock Creek Park

Contract #: C300000010

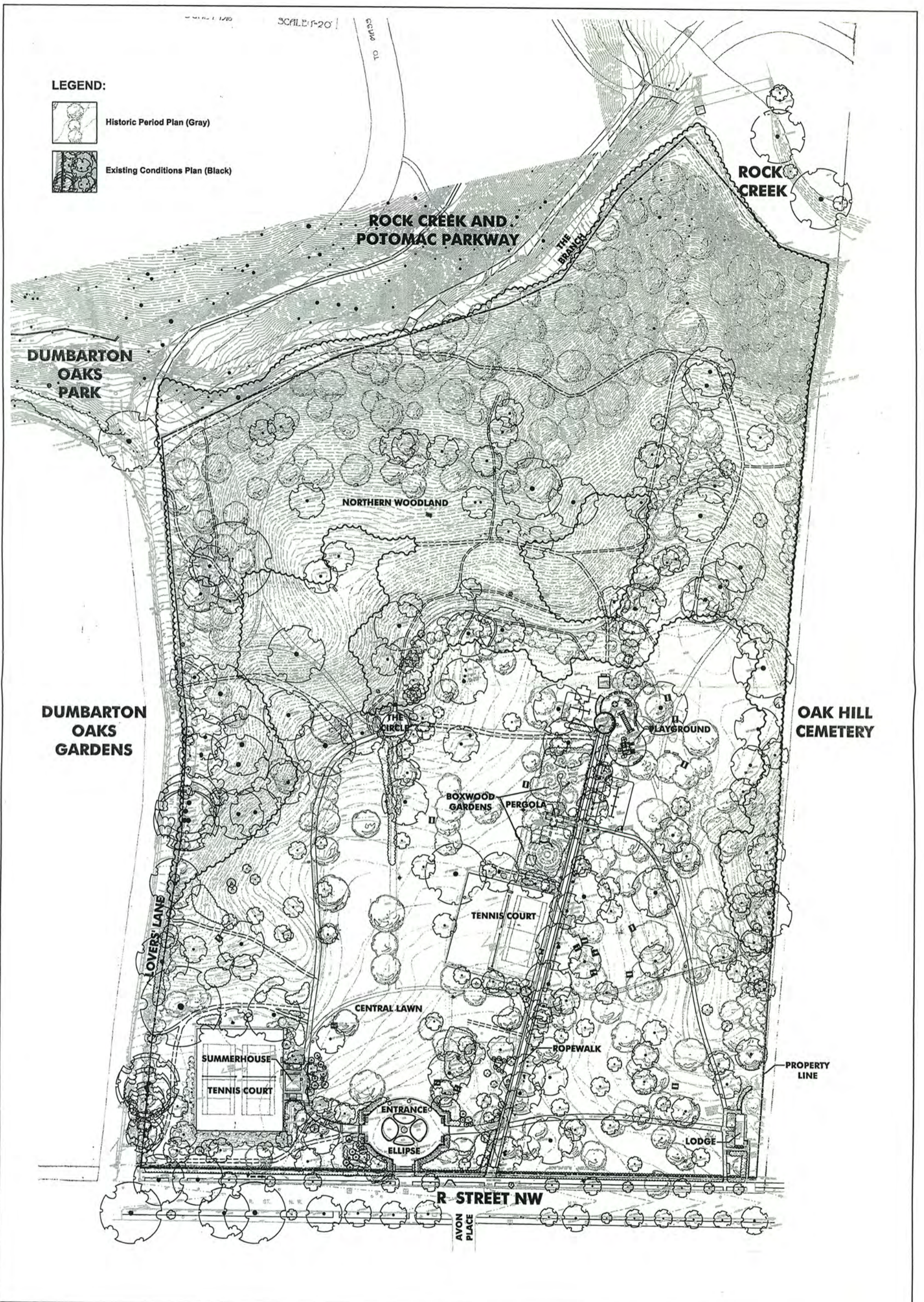
Drawing #: 891/80077

Map #: **12** of 23

Prepared By: Rhodeside & Harwell, Incorporated

Drawn By: EW / DG

Date: September 16, 2003



Source: Contour Plan of Montrose Park by Charles Diggs, June 1, 1916. Updated in Photoshop by Rhodeside & Harwell, Inc. April 21, 2003, with Existing Conditions Plan overlay.

MONTROSE PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT
1919 PERIOD PLAN WITH
EXISTING CONDITIONS OVERLAY



Client: U.S. Department of the Interior - National Park Service - Rock Creek Park
 Prepared By: Rhodeside & Harwell, Incorporated

Contract #: C300000010
 Drawn By: EW / DG

Drawing #: 891/80077

Map #: **12** of 23
 Date: September 16, 2003



United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

1849 C Street, N.W.

Washington, D.C. 20240

IN REPLY REFER TO:

H30(2261)

OCT 2 2007

Memorandum

To: Keeper of the National Register

From: Acting Federal Preservation Officer Joseph T. Wallis *Joe Wallis*

Subject: National Register Nomination for Montrose Park, District of Columbia

Attached please find for your review a nomination for the subject property, currently administered as part of Rock Creek Park, as signed by the District of Columbia's deputy Historic Preservation Officer and by me. Let me express sincere appreciation of the support this project received from park managers and Regional and park staff. My thanks go to everyone involved in this effort, including Ms. Eve Barsoum.

Please provide the park with a copy of the completed signature page, should you approve this nomination. Thank you for your consideration.

Attachment