National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

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	EGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES NATIONAL PARK SERVICE	

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or 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 an 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 listed in the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of	Property:
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historic name Bellevue Country Club	
other names/site number	
2. Location	
street & number 1901 Glenwood Avenue. [city or town Syracuse [state New York code NY county Onondaga code 067	not for publication X vicinity
	zip code _13207
3. State/Federal Agency Certification	
As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I certify that this request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. I meets does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered and professional requirements set for additional comments.	n my opinion, the property
State or Federal agency and bureau	
In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See additional comments.	continuation sheet for
Signature of certifying official/Title Date	
State or Federal agency and bureau	
4. National Park Service Certification	
I hereby certify that this property is:	Date of Action
See continuation sheet.	2.5.14
<pre>determined eligible for the National Register. See continuation sheet.</pre>	· · · ·
determined not eligible for the National Register.	
removed from the National Register.	
other, (explain:)	

Bellevue Country Club

Name of Property

Onondaga County, New York County and State

5. Classification		
Ownership of Property	Category of Property	
(Check as many boxes as apply)	(Check only one box)	(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)
X private	building(s)	Contributing Noncontributing
public-local	district	<u> </u>
public-State	X site	1 sites
public-Federal	structure	<u> 0 0 structures</u>
	object	0 objects
		2 Total
Name of related multiple propert (Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a		Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register
6. Function or Use		
Historic Functions		Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)		(Enter categories from instructions)
RECREATION & CULTURE: Outdo	or Recreation/Golf Course	RECREATION & CULTURE: Outdoor Recreation/Golf Course
	<u> </u>	
7 Description		
7. Description Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)		Materials (Enter categories from instructions)
· · · ·	I. C. Calanial Davianal (Chalabarran)	foundation Other: Hollow Clay Tile (clubhouse)
LATE 19TH AND 20TH CENTURY REVIVA	LS: Colonial Revival (Clubhouse)	
		walls Other: Hollow Clay Tile (clubhouse)
		roof <u>Slate (Clubhouse)</u>
		other
Narrative Description		

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

Bellevue Country Club

Onondaga County, New York

Name of Property

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.)

X A	Property is associated with events that have made
	a significant contribution to the broad patterns of
	our history.

- **B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- X 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 has 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.
- **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

Record #

Bibliography

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

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

preliminary determination of individual listing (36	x State Historic Preservation Office
CFR 67) has been requested	Other State agency
previously listed in the National Register	Federal agency
previously determined eligible by the National	Local government
Register	University
designated a National Historic Landmark	Other
recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey	Name of repository:
#	
recorded by Historic American Engineering	

County and State

Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions) LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE

RECREATION/ENTERTAINMENT

Period of Significance

<u>1915-1917</u>

Significant Dates

<u>1915, 1916, 1917</u>

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Donald Ross (course designer): Justus Moak Scrafford (clubhouse architect)

Primary location of additional data

Onondaga County, New York

Name of Property

agaraphical Data

County and State

10. Geographical Data	
Acreage of property 155.14	
UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)	
1 18 Zone Easting Northing 2	 <i>Zone Easting Northing</i> 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 Travis M. Bowman	
organization <u>NYS SHPO</u>	date <u>3/18/2013</u>
street & number Peebles Island State Park.	telephone (518) 237-8643
city or town <u>Waterford</u>	state <u>New York</u> zip code <u>12188</u>
Additional Documentation	
Submit the following items with the completed form:	
Continuation Sheets	
Maps	
A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the p	property's location.
A Sketch map for historic districts and properties having	ng large acreage or numerous resources.
Photographs	
Representative black and white photographs of the p	roperty.
Additional items (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)	

Property Owner (Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.) name Bellevue Country Club, Inc.

street & numb	er 1901 Glenwood Ave		telephone		
city or town	Syracuse	state	NY	zip code	13207-1016

Paperwork Reduction Act 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 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 from 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 Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET Section number 7 Page 1 Bellevue Country Club Onondaga County, New York

Narrative Description:

The nominated Bellevue Country Club consists of an eighteen hole, private golf course and a large clubhouse, situated in the south-southwest portion of the Syracuse and the northeast corner of the Town of Onondaga, Onondaga County, NY. Designed in two nine-hole sections in 1916 the course followed the original contours of the land. A large contributing clubhouse was built in 1917, along with other passive and active recreation facilities (tennis courts, a pool, etc.).

Course

Overall the course occupies an irregularly shaped parcel bounded by Bellevue Ave/Glenwood Ave. on the north, Velasko Rd on the east and Winkworth Parkway on the west. On the north, east and west, the course is surrounded by compact twentieth century residential development; on the south, the course is bounded by a wooded hillside, which separates the course visually and physically from late twentieth century development along Ball Road and Ponderosa Drive. The property is situated on an elevation high above (+300') the city of Syracuse and slopes upward roughly from north to south. The topography is characterized by rolling hillsides and ridges throughout. Fairways, tees and greens are covered in bent grass (*Agrastis*). Bellevue is a retuning nines course—the routing returns at the ninth hole and then goes out again, not returning until the eighteenth hole. The routing begins at the clubhouse and is compact, with the green of each hole near the tee of the following hole; this design allows for the topography of the course to affect multiple holes and for large elevation changes to be played in multiple directions. Fairways are narrow and often long, and most are lined with large trees (deciduous and coniferous). Bunkers are large and grass-faced, typical of Donald Ross's designs. Each hole will be described individually below.

Hole 1

The 1st hole is a 413 yard par-4 with a bunker to the right of the green. The tee is southeast of the clubhouse, the fairway runs slightly uphill in a roughly straight line paralleling Glenwood Ave with trees screening.

Hole 2

The 2nd hole is a 365 yard par-4 set perpendicular to hole 1. The tee is accessed via a short asphalt-paved cart path from the 1st hole green. Hole 2 plays on two long fairways running roughly south-southwest, with a small stream separating the two. The green is protected by two bunkers.

Hole 3

The 3rd hole is a short, 95 yard, par-3 roughly perpendicular to hole 2. The #3 tee is adjacent to the #2 green and is played from a raised tee across a sloped fairway to a raised green surrounded by deep bunkers.

Hole 4

The 4th hole is a 418 yard par-4, which runs downhill roughly south to north from the 3rd hole green to area between the 1st Hole Green and the 2nd Hole tees; both sides of the fairway are lined with tree and the final quarter of the fairway doglegs slightly to the right.

Hole 5

The 5th hole is a long, 475 yard, par-5, running roughly parallel with the hole #4, but played in the opposite direction (i.e. north to south); it is aligned to nearby Velasko Rd, with a dogleg to the right on the green approach. The 5th hole tee is located adjacent to the 4th hole green and the 5th hole green is located adjacent to the 6th hole tee.

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET Section number 7 Page 2 Bellevue Country Club Onondaga County, New York

Hole 6

The 6th hole is a 345 par-4, which runs roughly southeast to northwest from the 5th hole green to the 7th hole tee. The green is protected by two large side bunkers and the fairway is bordered thick tree growth on the southern axis.

Hole 7

The 7th hole is an 136 yard par-3, which runs downhill, north-northeast from the 6th hole green to the 8th hole tee. The green is protected by bunkers and sloped to the rear.

Hole 8

The 8th hole is a 359 yard par-4 that runs downhill from the 7th hole green to the 9th hole tee, near the 1st hole green. Near the right dogleg is a large spring-fed water feature (pond) and, the hole has side bunkers protecting the green.

Hole 9

The 9th hole runs from the 8th hole green back to the clubhouse. It is initially aligned east-west, but then doglegs slightly north-northwest to the green, which is protected by a large side bunker. A number of large trees line fairway on both sides.

Hole 10

The 10th hole begins a short cart ride from the clubhouse and is a 495 yard par-5. It runs northeast for about ³/₄ of its length then doglegs to the east. The green is protected by two large bunkers.

Holes 11-14

These holes are part of the 1968 expansion of Bellevue (see Integrity, Section 8) and although consistent with the original use of the course, are not part of Ross's design. The area was a limestone quarry when the course was originally laid out.

Hole 15

Hole 15 is a 153 yard Par 3 that runs roughly east to northwest near the southern edge of the 1916 design. The hole is played up hill to a terraced green, protected on all sides by bunkers. In the original 1916 design, this was hole #14.

Hole 16

The tee at 16 begins near the 15th green. The hole is a 434 yard par-4 that runs downhill, almost straight from south to north-northwest. The tee, along with that of the 18th hole, offers a particularly good, panoramic view of Syracuse and Onondaga Lake. In the original 1916 design, this was hole #15.

Hole 17

This 316 yard par-4 runs parallel to the 16th, except that it's played uphill, and thus in the opposite direction. Like most holes on the course, the tee is a short, walkable distance from the previous hole's green. The hole doglegs slightly left near the last fifth, and the corner hides a green protected by large bunkers on two sides. In the original 1916 design, this was hole #16.

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Bellevue Country Club Onondaga County, New York

As noted, the tee area for final hole has an exceptional view of the city, but it also previews the 433 yard, par-4 challenge ahead. Played downhill across an undulating fairway, southwest to north, the hole features cross-bunkers at various intervals and a protected green.

Clubhouse (1917, contributing; modified 1960s, 1970s, 2000s)

In plan, the historic portion of the clubhouse consists of two rectangular wings set into a larger, rectangular central block to form an "I." Adjoining the central portion of the structure at the rear, basement level are two long rectangular wings, set at an angle to the "I," by a trapezoidal block; the main portion of the clubhouse was built onto a hillside, so the rear angled blocks actually connect to the basement level of the main block. Additions to the historic plan include a large circular addition on the south elevation of the central block, a porte-cochère on the east elevation, a larger, two-story, trapezoidal block connecting the two angled rear wings and a rectangular block (rounded on the south and angled on the north) to the west. The original portion is steel framed, with hollow clay tile walls, covered in stucco, and rests on a poured concrete foundation. Except for the circular addition on the southern elevation, which is a glazed curtain wall separated by Doric order columns, the non-historic portions are also steel framed and stuccoed to match, utilizing modern materials. The roofline of the center block of the original "I" is a gabled, with very high pitched gables crossing the main roofline for the smaller wings at the ends of the "I," the whole is clad in polychromatic slate tiles. The angled rear wings have flat roofs and are covered in tar and gravel. All of the non-historic block also have flat roofs and are covered in asphalt or EPDM. Fenestration varies by block and elevation. Several dormers break the rooflines. On the long portion of the "I" are curved ventilator dormers spread symmetrically across the elevation; the openings are louvered and dormers are covered in the same slate tiles as the main roof. The high pitch gable ends of the "I" have large gable dormers and shed dormers project from the main block near the intersection of the gable roofs; the shed dormers actually connect to the gable dormers on the interior corners. Ornamentation on the dormers echoes that on the main elevation openings-moulded wooden cornices terminating in returns. Windows on the historic "I" block are wood framed, set into moulded wooden surrounds with brick sills and decorative soldier course brick lintels; they are grouped into threes, separated by wide wood piers, and are multi-paned. Window on the dormers are also tripartite grouped and multi-paned; only those openings that face south have decorative lintels and sills, those that face east/west, parallel to the main roofline, are fixed and lack both lintels and sills. The (former) doorway openings on the historic "I" are arched, with decorative brick surrounds springing from Doric order columns, faux-stone keystones and side glazing; these openings previously held French doors, but are now filled entirely with fixed glazing. Window openings on the rear elevation of the historic block are rectangular, with brick sills and soldier course brick lintels; the windows are wood-sash, but fixed. Window openings on the non-historic portions are all metal sashed and fixed.

Interior

The interior of the clubhouse is laid out according to function and includes the Room on the Green (a large dining room/banquet space), a members bar/grill, meeting rooms, staff offices, a fitness room, a pool, the Bellevue Ballroom, the Iroquois Room (a small dining room) and locker rooms for both sexes. The 30 x 45' Bellevue Ballroom and the Iroquois Room are historic interior spaces from the original clubhouse design. The former has plaster walls, varnished wood floors and ornamental brick fireplaces at each end; the room's most notable feature is the elaborate oak ceiling truss with hammered copper and opalescent glass chandeliers. A row of French doors connects the room to the newer blocks, echoing the historic fenestration. The Iroquois Room has a varnished paneled ceiling and varnished paneled wainscoting on the walls. It also has an ornamental brick fireplace. Finishes

Bellevue Country Club Onondaga County, New York

throughout the rest of the building are non-historic; they include carpeted floors, gypsum board walls and ceilings and recessed lighting.

Pro Shop (Late 20th century, noncontributing).

Located directly west of the clubhouse is the Pro shop. It is a wood framed building, resting on the poured concrete foundation, and it is clad in vinyl siding. The main roofline is side-gabled, with hipped roof extensions and a wide overhang.

Maintenance Sheds (Late 20th century, *noncontributing*).

Near the 9th hole tee and the practice range is the maintenance complex. There is a large "L" shaped butler building with a low-pitched gable roof and a smaller gable roofed butler building open shed; both are used for equipment storage.

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET Section number 8 Page 1

Statement of Significance:

Bellevue Country Club Onondaga County, New York

Bellevue Country Club is a locally significant under Criterion C in the area of Landscape Architecture as an outstanding, intact example of a returning nines course designed by renowned golf course architect Donald Ross. Designed in 1915, all eighteen holes were completed by the end of the following year. Scotsman Donald Ross (1872-1948) is considered a master course designer from golf's "Golden Age" of design. Bellevue features many of Ross's characteristic design features, which focus on strategy and punishing overly aggressive shots, like uphill par-4s, cross bunkers on long holes, fallaway slopes on greens and deep bunkers on doglegs. Ross is considered a genius for his short, compact routings that feature little walking between holes and Bellevue is an excellent example of this design. In addition to the course itself, Bellevue County Club was designed for a wide variety of recreational activities. The 1917, architect-designed, clubhouse was built to serve as a year-round social center for club members and their families and features a lavishly appointed club room, various dining facilities, meeting rooms and locker rooms.

Historic Context

Bellevue Country Club began with a meeting of a small group of golf enthusiasts at Schrafft's Restaurant in downtown Syracuse in 1914. On January 5, 1915 a Certificate of Incorporation legalized the Bellevue Country Club. The organization was made up of "prominent local, social, business and professional men," and William Paige Hitchcock, a jewelry wholesaler and Democratic Party leader, was chosen as the first president of the executive committee. Other original stockholders, incorporators and directors included George D. Kirtland, vice president, C. B. Moak, secretary-treasurer, A. G. Velasko, Donald M. Dey Jr., Joseph B. Murphy, Frank M. Shattuck, Irving S. Merrell, Alan C. Fobes, Fred R. Peck, Judge W. G. Cady, J. S. Conway, Ralph Tiffany and E. A. O'Hara. The board's stated objective was "to establish and maintain with the county of Onondaga, golf links, tennis grounds, croquet grounds, rifle range, a club house and other lawful sports, games and amusements." Envisioning a year-round destination, the club began a search for a suitable site, which it located on the hills to the southwest of the city. The land, 138 acres in lot No. 74 in the Onondaga Reservation, was purchased from the Wadsworth family, who had been farming it since least the 1850s. Period photographs show rolling pastures lands with few trees and a small rocky, but forested, area to the south.

Location was the key consideration for the new course—the golfers wanted a locale that was easily accessible to the city. The Wadsworth farm was just outside of the city lines; the headline in a January 15, 1915 *Syracuse Herald* article read: "New country club to have ideal location at the very door of the city." According to club founders, building a golf course in this location was so ideal because it could be "reached by trolley in a comparatively short time by the business and professional man leaving his office for the day."¹ The high elevation of the Wadsworth farm location also provided Bellevue with spectacular views. Adjacent Velasko Road, which rises over 300 feet in less than two miles, was termed "inviting" by the *Syracuse Herald*, which waxed about the vista:

Perched several hundred feet above sea-level, the club site looks out over the stretches of Onondaga Valley and takes in a view of the industrial and business parts of Syracuse and Onondaga Lake beyond...[and] includes miles of fertile hill and farm country in the valley, in a section noted for the beauty of profiled landscape.²

While the convenience of the location and the impressive views from the site were advantageous to the club incorporators, ultimately it was the excellent natural topography of Wadsworth farm that made the location so

¹ "New country club to have ideal location at the very door of the city," *Syracuse Herald*, January 15, 1915. <u>www.fultonhistory.com</u>. ² Ibid.

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET Section number 8 Page 2 Bellevue Country Club Onondaga County, New York

superb for golf course design. According to the *Syracuse Herald*, "so enthusiastic have those who viewed the site become, that it is planned to start building operations as soon as possible." Following the natural "hill and dale, wooded slope, rolling turf and level orchard lane" the course would capitalize on "a hundred subtle revelations of charms" and the high ground would afford "many natural hazards and bunkers for golf."³ All of the landscape, structure and elevation provided an excellent canvas for golf course design, but it required a master to engineer the course to its true potential; many golf architects of the era designed a course and selected a piece of real estate to fit the design—Bellevue needed an architect to design a course to fit perfectly on a pre-selected piece of property the club had acquired. The master chosen by Bellevue was Donald Ross.

Donald Ross⁴

Ross was born in the north Scottish coastal town of Dornoch, home of the Royal Dornoch golf club; Dornoch already had a two-hundred year history of golf when it invited legendary golfer, pioneer and four-time British Open champion "Old" Tom Morris to remodel the links into a first class course. Ross spent four years studying club-making with Tom Morris at St. Andrews, simultaneously refining his playing skills and learning the art of grounds maintenance. He returned to Dornach in 1893, becoming the first golf professional at the club. In 1899 Harvard astronomy professor and golf enthusiast, Robert Willson, convinced Ross to move to America and begin designing courses. After successfully redesigning Oakley Country Club near Boston, MA, Boston millionaire James Walker Tuffts invited Ross to design, develop and oversee golf operations at Tuffts' Pinehurst resort in North Carolina. Ross would design four courses at Pinehurst and would retain an association with Pinehurst for the rest of his life. Pinehurst No. 2 is considered Ross's greatest design-and one of the greatest golf course designs in America and the world. It has hosted more championships than any other site in the nation, and has been called "America's St. Andrews." Pinehurst was designated a National Historic Landmark in 1996 for its role in golf history. In his summers, Ross began designing courses throughout the country. Between 1900 and 1948, Ross was involved in the design of 413 courses, in thirty states. Ross arguably was the most influential of a handful of architects who worked during the "Golden Age of Golf Course Architecture" (roughly the first third of the twentieth century) which saw a major leap forward in the quantity and quality of American golf courses. A year before his death, Ross was a founding member, and first president of the American Society of Golf Course Architects; he was inducted into the Golf Hall of Fame in 1977. Ross's biography at the Golf Hall of Fame includes a quote from legendary golfer, Jack Nickluas, who called Ross the "Michelangelo of golf."

Ross's Design at Bellevue

By the time he began work on the nominated Bellevue Country Club, Ross's reputation as a national expert was already secured. In the spring of 1915, when Ross arrived at the future site of Bellevue Country Club for the first time, the *Syracuse Herald* proclaimed that Ross was "ranked among the world's highest authorities on links, and listed among the products of his planning are some of the most famous courses in the United States."⁵ In turn, Ross proclaimed that the club had chosen an "ideal site for golf" and that the topography was "excellent."

Ross did not disappoint once and future club members who anticipated a masterly course. After spending more than two weeks at the site, Ross revealed some of his initial thoughts to the Syracuse *Post-Standard*:

³ Ibid.

⁴ Bradley S. Klein, "About Donald Ross," Donald Ross Society, West Hartford, CT. <u>http://www.donaldross.org:</u> Tom Ferrell, "Common Vision Uncommon Ground," *LINKS, Golf Magazine.* Hilton Head Island, SC. <u>http://www.linksmagazine.com/best_of_golf/golf-course-architecture-golden-age-3;</u> "Donald Ross," History of the Royal Dornoch Golf Club. Dornoch Sutherland, Scotland. <u>http://www.royaldornoch.com</u>.

⁵ "Expert Here to Lay Golf Course/ Donald J Ross, National Authority, Starts Work," Syracuse Herald, May 10, 1915. www.fultonhistory.com.

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET Section number 8 Page 3 Bellevue Country Club Onondaga County, New York

The course will be 6,270 yards in length, slightly longer than the average up-state course, but fully as good as the links upon which famous championship battles are staged. The distance has been very nearly equally divided, the trip going out being slightly shorter than coming home. Mr. Ross planned two holes, each longer than any hole on the various links near Syracuse. They will be about 570 yards long [in Ross's final design, the longest hole was 550 yards]. To counteract the effect of these long holes, there will be a number of shorter ones...Another feature promised is a water hazard, to be developed by backing- up a spring on the grounds, forming a small pond and possibly a tiny stream [Hole 8]. This will be an innovation in Syracuse golf. Although the exact location of the clubhouse has not been determined, it is probable that sufficient space will be left near the building for a practice green. This is in keeping with the architecture of some of the greatest courses in the country. Tees No. 1 and No. 10 will be near the clubhouse, as will holes No. 9 and No. 18, making it possible for players to return to the clubhouse after completing half the game.⁶

Construction began on the back nine holes first, because Ross predicted that the last nine holes would "give particularly good opportunity for high-class golf."⁷ By September of 1915, the water system for the course was fully installed (save for a few laterals) and the back nine was "near completion"—lacking only seeding; club officers expected the back nine to ready for play by the following spring.⁸ In the spring of 1916 work began on the front nine and ground was broken for the clubhouse; by summer the front nine was almost fully complete, as was the porch and first floor of the new clubhouse. That same spring (April, 1916), Bellevue hired William Entwistle to be its golf pro, and he pronounced the course one the finest he had ever played; Entwhistle would remain the pro at Bellevue for twenty-five years.

The course was true to Ross's design principles. The routing was short and compact, with minimal walking between the green and the next tee. Ross's courses emphasized strategy over length and he used the terrain at Bellevue to create a great diversity of landing zones, lies, hazards, and greens. The extensive, hand-written, notes on his blueprints for the holes at Bellevue illustrate his desire to make the golfer think about every shot (see continuation sheets). Some of Ross's most notable designs are at 16, 17, 18, 1, 3, and 4.

Although the blueprints for Hole No. 16 have not been located, the hole today (now #17) is a classic Rossian uphill Par 4. According to the 1936 description, the tee elevation is 98, while the green is 166 and the hole is "another hard four if drive isn't placed. A narrow fairway with traps placed to catch either drive or hook. Second [shot] must carry across traps in front of the green, which is large, but rolling."

At (former) Hole No. 17 Ross added diagonally-aligned cross bunkers, providing only a narrow landing zone; for the green at 17, Ross's blueprints called for "grade up putting green on right side—it slopes rather abruptly. Retain punch bowl effect, grading up with flat mound not less than 6 ft. at highest point." While the fairway rewarded imaginative play and approach angles, the push-up green was challenging, and forced players to consider all options before putting.⁹ The 1936 "Hole by Hole Description of Bellevue Course" noted: "Accurate judgment of distance and a shot full to the green is essential...The apron in front of the green kicks a short tee shot down hill or into a trap while a hook catches the bunker, traps or rough." This hole was removed from play in the 1968 expansion, but provides an excellent example of how Ross's design features are visible on the landscape. If the designer were to play the former hole #17, it would still be highly recognizable.

⁶ "New Golf Links Will be Model/Bellevue Country Club Course Now Well Under Way./Longer than Average./Two Holes to Be About 570 Yards Apart—Water Hazard Will Be-Unique Feature—Practice Green Planned," The Syracuse *Post-Standard*, May 28, 1915. <u>www.fultonhistory.com</u>.
⁷ Ibid.

⁸ "Start Work on Four New Tennis Courts/Back Nine Holes of Bellevue Country Club are Now Near Completion," *Syracuse Herald*, September 29, 1915.
⁹ Ferrell, "Common Vision Uncommon Ground."

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Ross placed cross bunkers on Hole 18, designed as "pits with face raised 2 ft. Finish 4'6" deep." The 1936 description of hole reads like a hallmark of Ross design features; it warned golfers that there was "A large trap across fairway 45 yards from the green, which is flat" and that "many strong shots hop out of bounds over the ridge behind the green."

At Hole 1, Ross exposed the movement of the terrain, visually orienting the golfer to make shots within the prevailing landforms.¹⁰ A rocky mound at 170 yards was to be covered over with turf, marked and left as a rough high mound. A small ditch at 250 yards was to be cleaned out, turfed and have its face raised 2ft. "so that it can be clearly seen." The green was protected by "flat undulations at rear and left" and a bunker with a 3ft raised face. In addition, the terrain provided a sidehill lie; the 1936 description reads: "Out of bounds guard the fairway at the left and the lake catches a long fade. Fairway slopes slightly at 225 yards and second shot may have to be played from a difficult stance."

For Hole 3, Ross designed one of his signature "fallaway" slopes—the entire green was raised and leveled, with sharp slopes on three sides and a bunker on the left. A cross bunker at 100 yards encouraged a run-up shot to green, but punished an overly bold golfer who went for length over shot placement.¹¹ Ross specifically designed the hole to force the golfer to plan ahead; his notation on the Hole 3 blueprint reads "build a large Tee and keep it level of the present point where the stake is located. It is important to see all the Green."

Hole 4 was a long (427 yard) par 4 that included three cross-bunkers, a diversity of uphill and downhill lies and 3 ft. high natural mounds at 200 yards. The green had bunker to the left and a so-called chocolate drop mound to the right; the latter was described by Ross as "Mound 4ft high. Irregular in formation." The green was also set a slight angle—forcing thoughtful shot making in order to define a strategic line of play ahead of time. The 1936 description advised: "Hole favors the long, straight player who can reach home in two. A large trap to the left of the green, out of bounds over and a high, chocolate drop at the right front ruin many a second shot."

Relying completely on the landscape, Ross used almost no artificial hazards and fairways that followed the contours of the land. The result was a challenging course that was deceiving to play. A Syracuse *Post-Standard* article noted:

The new golf course of the Bellevue Country Club will not be a haven for beginners. A trip over the fairway proves that there isn't an easy hole on the course with the possible exceptions of [two] where downhill drives may serve to give the green golfer a bit of encouragement...The longest drive on the course is 550 yards to the fifth hole. No. 3 and No. 11 are short drives, but inexperienced golfers may get into trouble at No. 11. The green covers a small knoll and the drive is down hill, 173 yards. If the ball falls short or carries a few feet too far, the unlucky driver may find his score ruined.¹²

The prediction of a tough course lived up to expectations. When the course opened officially for member's medal play in 1917, after being "little used" the previous year, the lowest score was shot by clubhouse architect, Justus Scafford, who shot a 99, adjusted to an 85 with his -14 handicap.¹³ Even after twenty years, Ross's design was still frustrating golfers. The 1936 "Hole by Hole" advised that the course is "somewhat longer than it measures, for

¹⁰ The Ross Society, "Ross Restoration Guidelines." (Golf Club Atlas: Southern Pines, NC, 2005). <u>http://www.golfclubatlas.com</u>.

¹¹ Klein, "About Donald Ross."

¹² "New Bellevue Course Hard on Beginners/Country Club Golfers Will Have Trouble Making Low Scores First Year—Par is 72," Syracuse *Post-Standard*, May 13, 1916. www.fultonhistory.com.

¹³ "Scrafford Turns in Low Gross at Bellevue Club," *Syracuse Herald*, July 1, 1917. <u>www.fultonhistory.com</u>.

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET Section number 8 Page 5 Bellevue Country Club Onondaga County, New York

most of shots are made from up or down hill stances. Every round is a different game of golf, for the balls seldom land in the same spot twice."

Integrity

Regular maintenance and minor alterations aside, the course retains a high degree of integrity to Ross's design. Although a watering system was installed when the course was designed, the hilly, grassy course proved to be too fast drying to keep up coverage. In 1935 the pressure and coverage of the lines was increased and in 1960 an automated sprinkler system was installed. Overgrowth of vegetation has had an effect on the integrity. Small trees—mere fairway guides in 1916—are now towering corridors of hazards. A 2003 mater plan, however, evaluated every tree and shrub on the course and developed a master plan for dramatically removing the vegetation to be more in line with Ross's design. In addition, classic texture and vegetation, like fine fescues, are being reintroduced to the landscape. The master plan was developed by Forse Design a firm noted for its work with Donald Ross courses, and its sensitivity in helping clubs be consistent with the original design intent. Using period photographs and as much original material as possible, the 2003 Master Plan outlines an improvement strategy for maintaining and (where needed) restoring the Ross designs. The plan guides all changes at Bellevue for the foreseeable future.

By far, the largest change to Bellevue occurred in 1968 when four new holes replaced four of Ross's original ones. Bellevue was originally designed without a practice range, and by the 1960s, many members felt this was a hindrance to the club. In addition, Ross tended to utilize crossover areas between holes. While this provided a variety of direction and terrain, it also created several dangerous hitting areas—most notably where Holes 9, 10, 12 and 13 converged. At the time, the club owned about fifty unused acres, including a 30 acre, heavily wooded, abandoned limestone quarry to the south of the original course and an additional twenty acres that had been acquired in the 1920s and 40s. After commissioning a study, a Bellevue committee decided to eliminate Ross's Holes 10, 11, 12 and 17, and to create four new holes in the abandoned limestone quarry. Noted architect Francis J. Duane, then vice-president of the American Society of Golf Architects, was commissioned to design the new holes, which were created using massive amounts of fill and topsoil. Although the original Ross routing was altered on paper, fortunately the new plan had little effect on the actual landscape itself. All of the Ross design features on the now unused holes were retained and are visible—and playable—today. In fact, as part of the 100th anniversary celebration of Bellevue, the greens and tees of the former holes are being watered and mowed for full play, completely restoring the Ross routing and design. Even with the new 1968 routing, fifteen of the original eighteen holes are still played along the 1916 design.

Justus Moak Scrafford

The clubhouse was designed by Bellevue member Justus Moak Scrafford (1878-1947), an architecture professor at Syracuse University who studied at the *Ecole des Beaux-Arts* (School of Fine Arts) in Paris from 1906-1908. From graduation until his acceptance at the *Ecole*, Scrafford worked at the New York City firm of Trowbridge & Livingston. While at Syracuse, he served as editor and chief of *The Onondagan*, the junior annual of Syracuse University. He was also on the track team, and in 1900 he competed in the 800 meters at the Summer Olympics in Paris. Upon graduation from the *Ecole*, he returned to Trowbridge & Livingston for year until he became an associate professor of Architecture at Syracuse; he was made full professor in 1913. Although Scrafford completed a number of commissions in the Syracuse area, he was most active from 1910-1920. Based on period newspaper reports, Scrafford worked mainly on high end residences for wealthier clients. His work is reflective of the early twentieth century revival styles; some of the known commissions by Scrafford include:

• 114 Lancaster Ave. University Hill, Syracuse. 1910. Scrafford's own house.

Bellevue Country Club Onondaga County, New York

- Paul M. Paine Residence corner of Lancaster & Frank, Syracuse. For fellow Syracuse professor. 1911
- Albert Lathrop Commercial Block, East Onondaga St, Syracuse. 1911.
- James A Turnbull house, Brattle Road, Sedgwick Farm subdivision, Syracuse. 1912.
- Erwin Memorial Methodist Episcopal Church Society. Euclid & Roosevelt, Syracuse. 1912.
- HD Rickard House. Waverly & Comstock Ave., Syracuse. 1912.
- Thomas McE. Vickers [sic] House, Madison & Maple St., Syracuse. 1912.
- FL Torbert residence. Clarendon St., Syracuse. 1912.
- Edwin L Torbert House. Clarendon St., Syracuse. 1912.
- Grace Episcopal Church Parish House, Syracuse. 1913
- F.M. Featherly house. Lancaster Ave., Syracuse. 1913.
- Charles Healy House, Berkeley Park, University Hill, Syracuse. 1913.
- ____ Schuyler House. East Genesee St & Columbus Ave., Syracuse. 1914.
- Dr. Hugh P Baker House, E. Genesee St., Syracuse. 1915.
- W.H. Owen House., Stolp & Claremont, Syracuse. 1916.
- J.W. Breads House. 314 Lennox Ave., Syracuse. 1916
- Latta's Electric Station garage, Genesee St., Syracuse. 1920.
- Dormitory, St. John's School, Manlius. 1920
- St. Philip's Episcopal Church, 209 Almond St, Syracuse. 1921.

Architectural Analysis

Although Justus Scrafford designed the building, it was clear that Bellevue's presiding committee had many preconceived ideas. Donald Ross himself chose the location of the clubhouse—as the landscape architect it was up to him to site the building to be harmonious with the topography and, of course, the links.¹⁴ Before Ross or Scrafford began their work, Bellevue had already decided it would be a four season destination for its members and their families. Wide verandas with views of the course and city were a prerequisite, as was the "crackling warmth" of two log fireplaces and a building that would "at least attempt to harmonize with the natural beauty of the surroundings. The resulting design was in many ways indicative of Scrafford's work. The architect termed the clubhouse a "French Chateau style" although the building shares little with formal examples of that style. It does share some characteristics that could be termed French Provincial Revival—the most notable of these features are the steeplypitched gable roofs, the stuccoed exterior, arched entryways, small paned windows and the brick facing around the many of the openings. A writer for the *Syracuse Herald* described the "Chateau" features of the design:

The exterior is in white stucco, trimmed with buff tapestry brick. The shutters are green. The roof is in seagreen slate with gables sharply defined. Circular ventilators [curved dormer windows] are placed in the slopes of the roof. The verandas, which extend around the house on four sides, have floors of red quarry tile edged with concrete...The veranada from [the south] opens into the club directly through French doors...From [the veranda] a veiw of the entire course may be obtained.¹⁵

As noted in the article, the main elevation of Scrafford's design faced the golf course (south) and was strictly balanced—the two steep gable peeks, the curving dormers, the two chimneys, end porte-cocheres, and all of the

¹⁴ "Mr. Lipe and Mr. Franklin Bellevue Club Directors/Golf Course to Be Laid Out Next Month on Tract West of Syracuse," Syracuse *Post-Standard*, April 17, 1915. www.fultonhistory.com.

¹⁵ "Nothing Lacking in New Home of Bellevue Club," Syracuse Herald, July 1, 1917. www.fultonhistory.com.

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openings were perfectly and symmetrically placed across the elevation. Scrafford also blended revival elements into the design. Rounded Doric order columns were used to support the porch verandas and the arched entry openings, and every gable peak on the rooflines have moulded cornices terminating in returns; windows are long and narrow, multi-paned (4/4 or 6/6) and often set into groupings of three.

This electric blending of styles was a hallmark of Scrafford's works and the work of many of his contemporaries. His career coincided with the height of the colonial revival in the United States, which had begun taking shape in the middle of the nineteenth century. English architect Richard Norman Shaw helped spark the American popularity of copied English medieval detailing when he designed the offices and staff quarters of the British representatives for the 1876 Philadelphia Centennial Exposition. Shaw utilized decorative half-timbering on the buildings, distinctively fifteenth-century English Tudor in nature, and won rave reviews among the press, other architects and the American public. Shaw's timing was perfect-the Centennial Exposition was created for the purpose of looking back in time and generated fervor for all things historical and quasi-historical. Coupled with all this looking backwards, America experienced tremendous economic growth in the post-Civil War period, allowing both the new industrialists and the wealthier middle class the opportunity to afford new construction. Wealthy clients hired formal architects or talented builders to design fashionable residences; architects, in turn, began to employ historical antecedents and elements in their creations. An array of styles and motifs variously competed with one another or were blended together-Georgian, Gothic, Palladian, Adams, Elizabethan, French provincial, Tudor and Renaissance classicism. Scrafford's commissions show he had an excellent understanding of these historical antecedents; given his formal education at the Ecole and his professorship at one of the most outstanding architecture programs in the nation, it's hardly surprising that Scrafford demonstrated such skill. Almost all of his residential designs show a blending of elements and motifs. He was just as apt to employ low-pitched gable roofs, battered columns and wide eave overhangs as he was to use complex, steep rooflines, porches under overhanging roof sweeps, rambling additions, and cladding that ranged from clapboards to half-timbering to shingles. His religious commissions include a mission revival St. Philip's Episcopal Church and Erwin Memorial Methodist Episcopal Church Society, the latter of which has elements of the Prairie, Colonial Revival and Italian Renaissance.

Scrafford utilized hollow clay tile construction for Bellevue's clubhouse, a technique he had used at least twice before on residential commissions for Thomas McE. Vickers and F.M. Featherly. Hollow clay tiles had been employed by builders and architects in the United States as a lightweight alternative to brick, but after the great 1871 Chicago fire, it gained wider popularity as a fire-resistant building material for floors and interior partitions.¹⁶ By the early twentieth century, structural clay tiles were being used to build entire buildings and houses—floors, walls, ceilings, foundations, and as insulators of the structural iron or steel frames.

The site chosen for the clubhouse was a chief consideration of Bellevue's founders. As noted, Donald Ross picked the spot so that it would integrate with his landscape design, but the chosen location was on an elevated knoll to the north of the property; this location provided Scrafford with an opportunity to fulfill the club incorporators' desire to give members outstanding views from various verandas. Scrafford used verandas on both the course elevation (south) and on the cityscape elevation (north) and the Club Room (now known as the Bellevue Ballroom) opened onto both via sets of French doors. Scrafford's richly appointed Club Room was clearly the focus of the interior of his design. The architectural wrought iron and English Oak trusses, end fireplaces of ornamental brick along with the natural light from the side verandas was all designed to impress. The wide open 30 x 45' room was also connected by a service space to the 100-seat Iroquois Dining Room—making it convenient to host social events like members' dinner dances, which were the center of the social calendar. Events, luncheons, diners and parties at

¹⁶ Jeremy C. Wells, "History of Structural Hollow Clay Tile in the United States," Construction History, Vol. 22 (2007). www.jstor.org.

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Bellevue were frequently reported in the society pages of area newspapers. In addition to the two public central spaces, the clubhouse was built to serve every function the members and their families would need. It had mens and womens lounges, locker rooms, showers and dressing rooms; the mens locker could accommodate 400. There were also sleeping apartments for six men, a board room, and office space for the club. The clay tile and steel frame of Bellevue's clubhouse was built on a poured concrete foundation, allowing for full use of a large basement, which included a full service space—complete with electric dish washers, dryers, steam tables, a laundry, a refrigerator room, and a dining room for "chauffeurs."¹⁷ All in all, the *Syracuse Herald* proclaimed the building "one of the best examples of clubhouse architecture in New York State."

Over its century of use, the clubhouse underwent multiple rehabilitations, but retained its function as a social and communal center for the membership, a locker facility, and as a setting for relaxation, dining and indoor recreation. The men's grill is not mentioned in the initial reports on the building, but references appear in newspaper reports as early as 1931, so if it was not part of the original design, it was an early addition. In the 1960s the south verandah was replaced with the circular "Room on the Green" and the indoor swimming pool was moved, replaced by a bar dining room addition. The bowling alleys in the rear wings were converted to locker room space in 1990, and a fitness rom was added. The two main public rooms remain unchanged, but most of the other interior spaces were altered with new carpets, ceilings and wall treatments (though period newspaper reports indicate all of the walls were originally painted). On the exterior, the porté-cochere was added to the east elevation and the rear wing was expanded to two-stories, eliminating the rear verandah as well.

¹⁷ "Nothing Lacking in New Home of Bellevue Club."

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Newspaper Articles from <u>www.fultonhistory.com</u>.

Syracuse Herald:

"New country club to have ideal location at the very door of the city." January 15, 1915.

"Expert Here to Lay Golf Course/ Donald J Ross, National Authority, Starts Work." May 10, 1915.

"Start Work on Four New Tennis Courts/Back Nine Holes of Bellevue Country Club are Now Near Completion." September 29, 1915.

"Nothing Lacking in New Home of Bellevue Club." July 1, 1917.

"Scrafford Turns in Low Gross at Bellevue Club." July 1, 1917.

Syracuse Post-Standard:

"New Golf Links Will be Model/Bellevue Country Club Course Now Well Under Way./Longer than Average./Two Holes to Be About 570 Yards Apart—Water Hazard Will Be-Unique Feature—Practice Green Planned." May 28, 1915.

"Mr. Lipe and Mr. Franklin Bellevue Club Directors/Golf Course to Be Laid Out Next Month on Tract West of Syracuse." April 17, 1915.

"New Bellevue Course Hard on Beginners/Country Club Golfers Will Have Trouble Making Low Scores First Year—Par is 72." May 13, 1916.

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BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION:

As indicated by the heavy black line on the attached boundary map, the nominated property consists entirely of tax parcel lot numbers 089.-11-03.0 in the City of Syracuse, Onondaga County, NY and 006.-01-01.0 in the Town of Onondaga, Onondaga County, NY.

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION:

The nominated parcel includes all of the acreage obtained by the Bellevue Country Club, Inc. from 1915 to 1920, including the area used for the contributing designed landscape (golf course) and the contributing clubhouse. Although the 50 acre quarry site to the south was not used for golf until 1968, it was part of the original acreage owned by the club and today serves substantially the same function as the historic golf course.

UTMs

POINT	EASTING	NORTHING
1	402832	4764729
2	402906	4764700
3	403415	4764370
4	403446	4763575
5	402890	4763549
6	402695	4764050
7	402685	4764135
8	402725	4764318
9	402779	4764680

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET



Bellevue Country Club Onondaga County, New York

Photo Log (Prints from Digital Photos)

Name of Property:	Bellevue Country Club
Location:	Onondaga County, New York
Photographer:	Travis Bowman; Mike Okoniewski
Date:	7/26/13; 10/16/05
Location of Negatives:	NYS OPRHP; Bellevue Country Club
NY_OnodCo_BellCC	

PHOTO LOG

РНОТО	DESCRIPTION
0001	Course Aerial
0002	Clubhouse south elevation (facing course)
0003	3 rd hole green; typical Ross-designed "fallaway" slope on rear
0004	15 th hole green; signature Ross-designed, grass lined bunkers
0005	17 th hole fairway and tee; typical Ross-designed uphill Par-4
0006	Club Room, clubhouse.













UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY Bellevue Country Club NAME:

MULTIPLE NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: NEW YORK, Onondaga

DATE RECEIVED: 12/20/13 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 1/21/14 DATE OF 16TH DAY: 2/05/14 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 2/05/14 DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 13001154

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL:NDATAPROBLEM:NLANDSCAPE:NLESSTHAN50YEARS:NOTHER:NPDIL:NPERIOD:NPROGRAM UNAPPROVED:NREQUEST:NSAMPLE:NSLRDRAFT:NNATIONAL:N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

ACCEPT RETURN

2.5.14 DATE REJECT

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

Entered is: The National Register of Historic Piaces

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.



December 4, 2013

Ms. Ruth L. Pierpont Director, Division of Historic Preservation NYS Office of Parks Recreation and Historic Preservation Historic Preservation Field Services Bureau Peebles Island, PO Box 189 Waterford, NY 12188-0189

Re: Bellevue Country Club 1901 Glenwood Avenue

Dear Ms. Pierpont:

The Syracuse Landmark Preservation Board is in receipt of your letter dated November 5, 2013 regarding the Bellevue Country Club. The Board reviewed the nomination at its November 7, 2013 meeting.

The Board was pleased to review this unusual golf- and recreation-related nomination. The nomination helps to highlight the rich diversity of the historic resources in the City of Syracuse, including its designed landscapes. The Board concurs that this property meets the criteria for eligibility for the State and National Registers and strongly supports its listing in the State and National Registers.

Thank you for allowing the Board the opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,

Donald S. Radke Chairman



New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation

Division for Historic Preservation P.O. Box 189, Waterford, New York 12188-0189 518-237-8643

RE	CEIVED 2280
	DEC 20 2013
VAT. FIE	GISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

Andrew M. Cuomo Governor

> Rose Harvey Commissioner

13 December 2013

Alexis Abernathy National Park Service National Register of Historic Places 1201 Eye St. NW, 8th Floor Washington, D.C. 20005

Re: National Register Nominations

Dear Ms. Abernathy:

I am pleased to enclose six National Register nominations, all on discs, to be considered for listing by the Keeper of the National Register:

Rockaway Courthouse, Queens County New York Bible Society, New York County North Presbyterian Church, New York County Temple of Israel Synagogue, Queens County St. Anselm's Roman Catholic Church and School, Bronx County Bellevue Country Club, Syracuse, Onondaga County

Please feel free to call me at 518.237.8643 x 3261 if you have any questions.

Sincerely:

Kathleen LaFrank National Register Coordinator New York State Historic Preservation Office