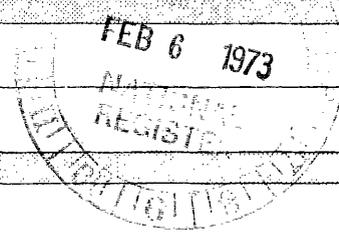


PH0001729

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE:	
COUNTY:	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE
	APR 11 1973



1. NAME

COMMON:  
United States National Arboretum

AND/OR HISTORIC:

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:  
24th and R Streets, N.E.

CITY OR TOWN:  
Washington (Congressman Walter E. Fauntroy, District of Columbia)

STATE District of Columbia	CODE 11	COUNTY: District of Columbia	CODE 001
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3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Building <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Public <input type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Park <input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/> Religious <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)
			<input type="checkbox"/> Comments Arboretum

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME:  
United States of America DEPT of AGRICULTURE

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN: STATE: CODE

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC:  
Recorder of Deeds

STREET AND NUMBER:  
6th and D Streets, N.W.

CITY OR TOWN: STATE: CODE  
Washington District of Columbia 11

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY: Proposed District of Columbia Additions to the National Register of Historic Properties recommended by the Joint Committee on Landmarks

DATE OF SURVEY: March 7, 1968     Federal     State     County     Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:  
National Capital Planning Commission

STREET AND NUMBER:  
1325 G Street, N.W.

CITY OR TOWN: STATE: CODE  
Washington District of Columbia 11

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

STATE:
COUNTY:
ENTRY NUMBER
DATE
FOR NPS USE ONLY

7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION

(Check One)

Excellent     Good     Fair     Deteriorated     Ruins     Unexposed

(Check One)

Altered     Unaltered

(Check One)

Moved     Original Site

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The National Arboretum was established by Congress in 1927. Washington, D.C. was viewed as the ideal site for such an institution due to its many visitors, the great number of scientists in this area, and its congenial climate which results from its location at the juncture of the North and South.

The Arboretum is located in northeast Washington and is bordered on the east by the banks of the Anacostia River. The site is marked by Mount Hamilton on the west and Hickey Hill on the east with a broad central valley and Hickey Creek running through the center. Initially, 189 acres were purchased in 1928; another 196 acres, in 1934; and additional acquisitions in 1938, 1948 and 1949 and other minor changes have increased the size of the Arboretum to its present 412 acres.

A 1930 preliminary plan for the Arboretum by Arthur A. Shurtleff (with the assistance of F.L. Olmsted, Jr., and others) was never executed, and it was not until 1947-48 that a master plan by the Public Buildings Administration was completed. The plan called for the main visitors' entrance at M Street and the administration building, greenhouses, and service areas along the Arboretum's northwestern border, away from the exhibition area. The plan proposed a lack of design emphasis on Hickey Creek because of its polluted state, but the various springs on the Arboretum's campus have been used to great advantage in developing ponds and exhibition water areas. The plan also provided a circuitous road system which fit naturally into the hilly topography and provided dramatic hilltop observation points. With only some modifications, this plan has served as the basis for the Arboretum's development since that time.

Appropriations for the Arboretum's development were minimal during its first two decades and the only major work was accomplished by the Civilian Conservation Corps in the 1930's. Underbrush was removed, soil was prepared, six bridges were built, ponds were constructed, and some truck and foot trails were laid, but at the end of World War II the Arboretum site remained to a large extent unimproved.

Construction of the permanent road system began about 1949, but paving was not completed until 1958. By 1962, a series of five greenhouses were ready for use. These greenhouses--rectangular shaped aluminum and glass structures with low pitched roofs--are located at the rear of the administration-laboratory building, out of the view of visitors, and it is in this area that one gets a sense of the Arboretum's research program.

The Arboretum's main structure, the administration-laboratory building, located at the R Street entrance, was dedicated in 1964, and its designers, Deigert and Yerkes, received an AIA award for their efforts. Wolf Von Eckardt, the architectural critic, considered this white concrete structure with gold, anodized, aluminum screening to be possibly the finest recently designed government building in the Washington area when it was opened in 1964--"a graceful almost delicate garden pavilion, set in a pool...it seems to stand by itself, mirrored in the water."

The Arboretum grounds retain a sylvan look. This has been accomplished by retaining most of the natural woods, including beeches, oaks, and Virginia pines, which stood on the grounds when the land was purchased, and by limiting the amount of roadways. These trees "provide a ready-made backdrop for

(Continued on Form 10-300a)

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**6. SIGNIFICANCE**

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- |  |                                       |                                       |  |
|--|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Columbian | <input type="checkbox"/> 16th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 18th Century | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 20th Century |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 15th Century  | <input type="checkbox"/> 17th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 19th Century |  |

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) **1927: Arboretum established**

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- |   |  |  |   |
|---|--|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal             | <input type="checkbox"/> Education                         | <input type="checkbox"/> Political           | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning                          |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering                       | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)<br><u>Arboriculture</u> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic               | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry                          | <input type="checkbox"/> Science             | _____   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture            | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention                         | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture           | _____   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Architecture           | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Landscape Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian | _____   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art                    | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature                        | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater             | _____   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce               | <input type="checkbox"/> Military                          | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation      | _____   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications         | <input type="checkbox"/> Music                             |  |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation           |  |  |   |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Joint Committee on Landmarks has designated the National Arboretum a Category II Landmark of importance which contributes significantly to the cultural heritage and visual beauty of the District of Columbia. As the only federally supported arboretum, and probably the largest urban arboretum in the country, the National Arboretum plays a unique role. Unlike other arboretums, it breeds plants for localities throughout the country and receives unparalleled support from national horticultural groups. It also has served as a repository for international gifts and is a major element in the city's design. The land upon which the Arboretum has been constructed also has significant historic elements--evidence of previous Indian habitation and nineteenth century spring houses.

Official proposals for the establishment of an arboretum in the Washington area date as far back as the McMillan Commission of 1901. The gradual elimination of the Botanic Gardens on the Mall in the second decade of the twentieth century provided new impetus for such an undertaking, and after an "exhaustive search" the present Mount Hamilton site was found by the Commission of Fine Arts, the 1901 Commission's successor, to be the best location for such an institution. In both of these Commissions, Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr., was the chief landscape architect, and when the National Arboretum was finally established in 1927 Olmsted was on its Advisory Council and intimately involved in its planning. The National Arboretum is thus the last in a long line of Olmsted connected undertakings in the District, a succession which includes every major park project since Olmsted Sr.'s work on the Capitol Grounds in the 1870's.

As the only federally supported arboretum, the National Arboretum has a unique place in our national life. While other arboretums do work of national and international importance, they tend to orient themselves to their local areas: e.g., the Arnold Arboretum views itself primarily as a New England institution. The National Arboretum's mission, however, is to serve the entire country, and in the controlled environment of a greenhouse it breeds plants for particular localities across the nation.

National garden and commercial associations were the major force behind the Arboretum's establishment, and they continue to provide it with unparalleled national support. Aside from donating funds for major plantings, such as Fern Valley, these organizations also assist greatly in the Arboretum's daily operations, providing volunteers for guided tours, the information centers, and other activities.

(Continued on Form 10-300a)

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Advisory Council of the United States National Arboretum, Minutes of the Annual and Bi-annual Meetings, 1927-1971, Unpublished.  
 Cullinan, Frank P., "Our National Arboretum," Reprinted from The Herbarist, 1968.  
 Goodrum, Charles A., The History and Development of the National Arboretum, Publication of the Library of Congress, History and General Research Section  
 Skinner, Henry T., "U.S. Arboretum Adding Valuable Plant Collections," Reprint from the American Nurseryman.

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees	Minutes	Seconds
NW	38° 55' 02"	76° 58' 45"		°	'	"
NE	38° 55' 02"	76° 57' 12"		°	'	"
SE	38° 54' 20"	76° 57' 12"		°	'	"
SW	38° 54' 20"	76° 58' 45"		°	'	"

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 412 acres

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE:

Leonard H. Gerson, Urban Historian

ORGANIZATION

National Capital Planning Commission

DATE

8/18/72

STREET AND NUMBER:

1325 G Street, N.W.

CITY OR TOWN:

Washington

STATE

District of Columbia

CODE

11

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

As the designated State Liaison Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National  State  Local

Name

Leonard H. Gerson

Title Deputy Mayor-Commissioner

Date

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.

Robert H. Utley  
 Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date

4/11/73

ATTEST:

Wm. H. ...  
 Keeper of The National Register

Date

4-3-73

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Continuation Sheet)

STATE	
COUNTY	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE
	APR 11 1973

(Number all entries)

7. Description - National Arboretum

the introduced plantings." The result has been that, instead of simply experiencing a horticultural exhibition, one feels as if he has left the city and entered a natural preserve when one enters the Arboretum. This experience is heightened by the chipmunks and many varieties of birds that can be seen and heard on the grounds.

The exhibition areas are located either along the roadways or on pebbled paths off the roadside. Their design varies from the formal landscaping of the world renowned Gotelli Dwarf Conifer Collection on the northern shoulder of Hickey Ridge to the natural planting of crabapples along Hickey Hill Road.

Although there was some planting and breeding done in the 1930's and early 1940's, the first major, permanent planting was of azaleas on the south slope of Mount Hamilton in 1947. The azalea exhibition was completed in 1954 with the dedication of the Morrison Glen Dale Azalea Clonal Garden, designed by and named for the Arboretum's first permanent director, B.Y. Morrison. The garden is a somewhat formal, but simply designed rectangular shaped area with a red brick walk down the center and an approximately four foot high, red brick wall on its perimeter. Within it are labeled examples of the numerous varieties of Glen Dale hybrid azaleas planted on the Arboretum's grounds, complemented by a number of interesting trees and shrubs. Unpaved paths extend out from the garden up the slopes of Mount Hamilton where the hybrid azaleas can be seen in mass, natural plantings interspersed with the mountain's rich natural growth.

In 1952, the dogwood area in the northeast corner of the Arboretum was dedicated. "A central allée bordered by specimen plants of *Cornus florida* is set among hemlocks and informal plantings of other dogwoods." In 1965 a formal overlook with a fountain was opened in this section. The Arboretum's four overlooks are a key element in its design and provide dramatic views of the surrounding area including the Anacostia River Valley and the more distant United States Capitol.

The Arboretum's naturally planted Fern Valley is limited to ferns and other plants native to eastern North America. The rustic character of this exhibition is greatly enhanced by a stream which winds through the area, and it has been cited as a model for the grouping of fern plantings.

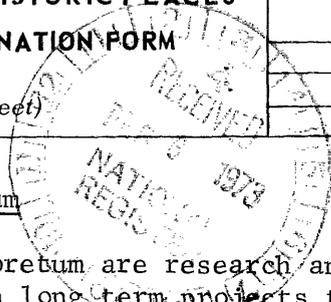
The most important area of the Arboretum which remains to be developed is on approximately thirty acre, elliptically shaped meadow, directly north of the M Street entrance. A synoptic exhibition of the various Arboretum plantings is intended for this area in a master plan now being prepared by landscape architect Hideo Sasaki, and the M Street entrance, which is now closed, is finally to be established as the Arboretum's main entrance.

FEB 6 1973

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Continuation Sheet)

STATE	
COUNTY	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE
	APR 11 1978



(Number all entries)

8. Significance - National Arboretum

The primary functions of the Arboretum are research and education and its federal support allows it to take on long term projects that are not usually attempted by other arboretums: e.g., Dr. Frank S. Santamour, Jr.'s, attempt to develop a genetically superior elm tree which can withstand the harsh urban environment. The Arboretum's first and most popular exhibition area, the azalea plantings, is the product of the pioneering research of the Arboretum's first director, B.Y. Morrison. These azaleas, first bred at the Department of Agriculture's Glen Dale nurseries, were planted and selected for distribution at the National Arboretum, and some of the original seedings still remain in the area of the Morrison Clonal Garden.

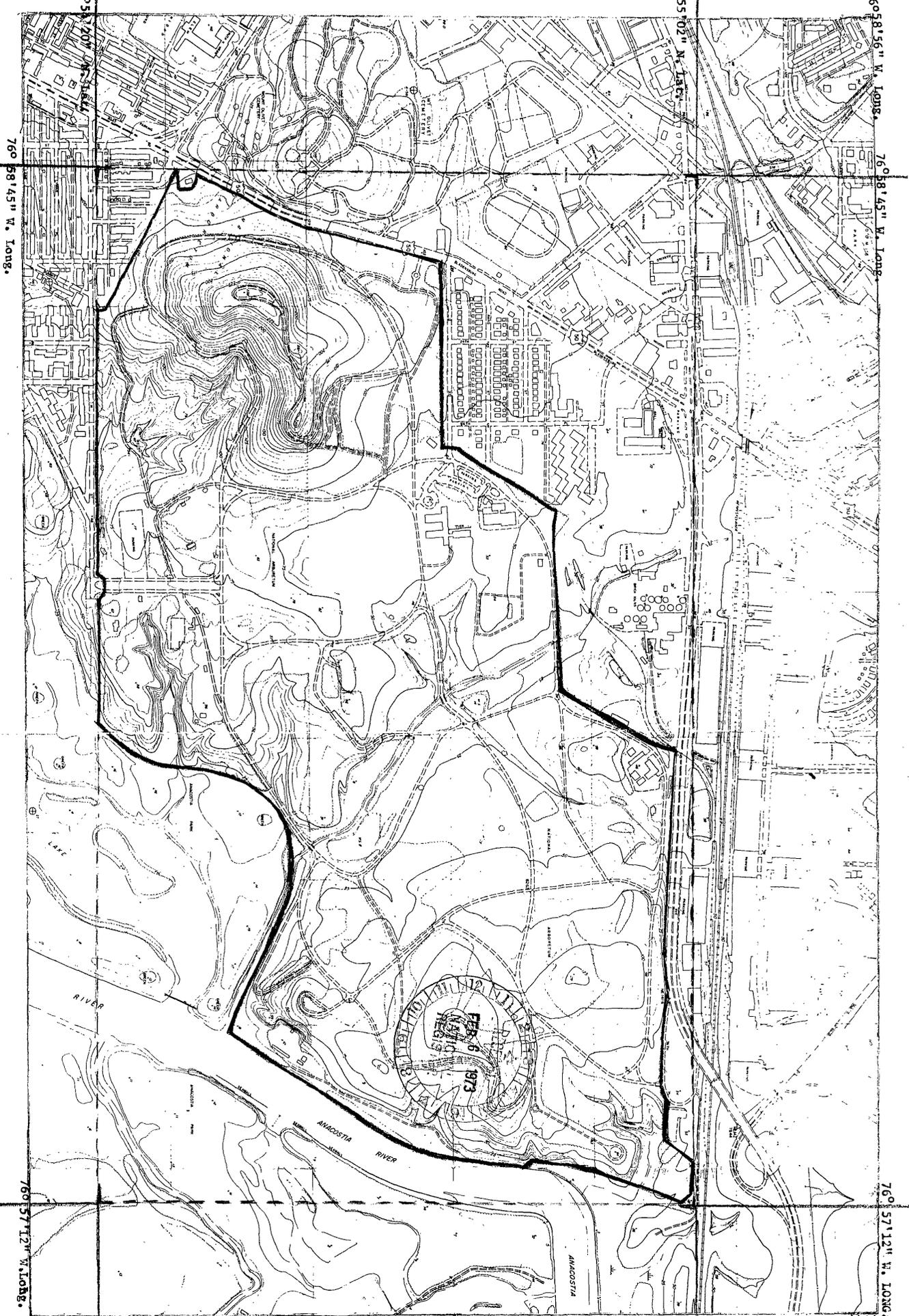
As new varieties result from foreign plant introduction or from the Arboretum's own breeding program, samples are sent throughout the nation and the world. The National Arboretum has a larger plant distribution program than any research institution of its kind in the nation.

The Arboretum also has served as a repository for national gifts. In 1954, a collection of Dutch azaleas, a gift to the United States from the Netherlands in recognition of our assistance during World War II, was dedicated by the Dutch ambassador. The Garden Club of America donated \$5,000 in 1949 for the planting of three small valleys leading down from Hickey Hill to the Anacostia River to mark the National Capital's sesquicentennial celebration.

The Arboretum is an important landmark in Washington, D.C.'s physical design. Mount Hamilton is a part of the natural bowl in which L'Enfant laid out the city, and if not for some difficulties with the local landowners the city's original boundaries would have probably extended to that point. In the Arboretum's early years Maryland Avenue was extended to its M Street entrance, and the Arboretum now functions as a dramatic terminus to this major radial. It also serves as a natural backdrop and provides major vistas for Anacostia Park which sits below it. The Mount Hamilton Overlook still provides one of the city's finest views of the Capitol.

The site upon which the Arboretum has been constructed has an interesting history of its own. It is cited on S.V. Proudfit's 1890 map of Indian sites in the District, and in the early 1930's numerous Indian relics were uncovered near the west bank of the Anacostia River. The Nacotchtank Indians, a branch of the Piscataways (or Conoys) are known to have camped in this general area, but an excavation of the Arboretum site is needed to ascertain which Indians inhabited that specific location. The Indians of the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries played a major role in the development of this region, and these Indian sites along the Anacostia are also reminders of the primary role that natural waterways played in this country's development well into the nineteenth century.

On the northern boundary of the Arboretum, adjoining the storage and service area, are two spring houses. An investigation of the records of the Washington water system and an interview with a former resident indicate that the creeks on the Arboretum grounds were used as a local water source in the 1920's and probably into the 1930's. This former resident claims that these structures were known as the Red Oak Springs and that water from this spring was sold to the area's residents in the 1870's, but much research on the construction and use of these structures remains to be done.



76° 58' 45" W. Long.

76° 57' 12" W. Long.

38° 54' 15" N. Lat

38° 54' 20" N. Lat

76° 58' 45" W. Long.

38° 55' 02" N. Lat

76° 58' 45" W. Long.

76° 57' 12" W. Long.

38° 55' 16" N. Lat

NATIONAL ARBORETUM

Scale: 1" = 600'

